

Paper Name – Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.1

Lecture Title – Sources of Indian History

Script

The studying of the Indian Sources will develop an insight into the unique qualities of Indian art that is best achieved through a broad Cultural History which places art production and patronage in its social and cultural context.

Introduction:

India is a multi- cultural sub- continent resulting from a history of migrations of diverse Peoples and the establishment of the new communities. They came from as far as Greece and Asia Minor in the West and the borders of China in the east. The people often arriving as invaders or travelers carrying their baggage with them were gradually absorbed into Indian Culture. These constant infusions enriched the Culture and their values were powerfully modified in India. There is no contradiction between the diversity of regions, religions, castes, languages and the unity of shared experiences that separates India from the surrounding countries.

Significance:

The inscriptions on Asoka's rock and pillar edicts are earliest examples of Indian writings. The Buddhist Reliquaries too had such inscriptions. Though the religious literature was handed down orally the few records provide us an opportunity to understand the very roots of the society in general. Brahmins had committed the Vedas to memory. There were learned monks who knew by heart but it is through the oral recitation and dialogue that the pupil learnt it by heart and got himself educated. It is also of importance to understand that the Buddhist canon was also not written until the reign of the Sinhalese monarch Vattagamini in 29 B.C. Some of the other significant works that shed light on the Sources of Indian History are the Jataka Stories, the inscriptions the Brahmi and Kharoshti texts, the narratives and the folk lores or legends. The latter though give an idea but cannot be taken as genuine sources or authenticate the Historical evidences.

Subject Matter:

Sources of Indian History differ considerably in different periods. Broadly three periods are observed: The Ancient Period to 12th Century; 13th to 18th Century and 19th to Subsequent period.

The Ancient Period:

The Literary sources pose various lags where the absence of regular historical chronicles and the records of the kings that are prejudiced on the base of patronage and self- elation. There is dependence on rise and fall of States and Nations. The Vedic texts are important sources that need to be

looked into for attaining a clear picture of the social, economic and religious beliefs of the then society. The other religious texts available in their texts too form important sources like the Buddhist, Jain, etc. The songs and poems bespeak of the state of mind of the people and the kind of freedom they could exercise in their lives. Many a time there are available Genealogies of the Royal families and their personal records that reflect the mind of the ruler and his subjects. The Epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata 1500- 1000 B.C. are important records as they too shed light on how people lived.

Important writers like Banabhatta through his Harsha carita give us a detailed account of the life of King Harsha. The poet Vakpati's work Yasovarman was King centric and the work of poet Bilhana and the stories of the King Vikramaditya form significant records of the general life practices. Similar works are available like Vikramanka Deva Carita, Gaudavaho, Ramacarita, etc. Noted biographical works like Kumarapala carita of Jayasimha, Dvyasraya Sahasnka carita of Padma Gupta, Bhojaprabhandha by Ballala, Prithviraja carita of Chand Bardai, Prithviraja- Vijaya all contain valuable Historic information. The perspective the researcher needs to take is that prejudiced and biased opinions cannot be stamped as genuine History as their sole object was glorification of the King. They were conceived by the authors on a dictate by the King. Chachanama 13th Century is a well- known chronicle of the Sind which formed the basis of History of Asoka.

Another chief source on the History of Kashmir is the work of Rajatarangini by Kalhana in A.D. 1149-50. The works of Sage Nila i.e. Nila Purana. Kalhana gives an in- depth study of how kings ruled as per the chronological order Inclusive of criticism of men and events, judgment and the topographical interesting accounts. The Jain Rajatarangini by Srivara covers the period A.D. 1459- 86. In the chronicles of Gujarat Rasa mala, Kirti kaumudi of Someshvara, Sukrita Samkirtana of Arisiniha, Prabhandha Cintamani by Morutunga, Prabhandha Kosa by Rajasekhara, Hammira- Mada by Mardana, Vastupala- Tejapala by Prasati of Jayasimha, Sukritakirti- Kallolini of Udayaprabha, Vasanta Vilasa of Balachandra, etc. |

Archaeology:

The archeology includes the records and tabulations available to us from various sites.

The inscriptions form an important source to uncover the Political History of Ancient India. The engravings on stones and metal are to be considered contemporary document of the period it belongs to. Sometimes the dates are given either in records or inscribed on the surface. Kharoshti script is derived from Aramaic runs from Right to Left and Brahmi Script Left to Right. Prasastis or slab of stone many a time hold inscribed: the name, donations made along with the date. For example the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II provides much proof. Official and epigraphical records too need to be looked into.

The Numismatics essentially highlights the coins found from the archeological sites. This provides us with the knowledge of the metal used where studying

the Economic conditions of the society becomes easier. Dye casts, symbols and punch marks help us in identifying the craftsman and the king who had given the patronage. The religious beliefs of the people too come to light if the coin carries the motif of a Deity or has a name inscribed on it. The coins might provide information but that does not authenticate the Historical evidence. For example the coins of Alexander or Kushana, Wima Kadphises, Kanishka, Guptas, etc. can be seen for identifying the motifs they had utilized.. The Monuments form an important record of the life and spirit of the Ancient India. For example the Sites of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, the granaries and dwelling areas unearthed at Lothal, Dharma Chakra Shaped stupa from Sanghol in Punjab, and several sites can be quoted for example that are now under the Archaeological Survey of India.

Foreign Accounts:

The travelers, traders, invaders, pilgrims, etc. who had come into India to conquer, settle or study have left authentic accounts that will help in tracing the Socio- Political History. There were a number of Greek writers who arrived in India. Herodotus and Ctesias have Persian base. Megathenes has left an extensive study under Seleucus during the rule of Chandra Gupta Maurya. The defect with the records is that many a time the foreign travelers did not have knowledge of the customs, language and life of the people they were writing about. Periplus of the Erythraean Sea has several records of the ports, harbors and the merchandise. The spirit of exploration, adventure and the enthusiasm of the unknown land had led the records interesting yet historically incorrect. Arab Sailors like Sulaiman, Al Masudi too have maintained their records. Chinese Travelers Fa- Hien in 5th Century, Hieun Tsang and I-Tsing in 7th Century have rich records, experiences and dialogues with the intellectuals in India. IN the accounts of these travelers the Rituals, Practices and Memorials too can be studied. Abu Rihan, Al Beruni in 8th Century has given a Survey of the Indian Territory. He gives a detail on Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Literature, Cosmogony, astronomy, astrology, geography, philosophy, religious rites, customs, social ideas, etc. For example let's consider one such scholar al-beruni commissioned by mehmood of jhazni to produce his monumental commentary on Indian philosophy and culture. In his search for pure knowledge he is undoubtedly one of the greatest minds in Islamic History. Romila Thapar a prominent writer calls him " perhaps the finest intellect of Central Asia". His observations on Indian conditions ,systems of

knowledge, social norms and religions are probably the most incisive made by any vistor to India. He applied his talents in many fields of knowledge. Excelling particularly in astronomy, mathematics, chronology, Physics, Medicine, mineralogy and history. Al-beruni wrote his work on India to provide essential facts for any Muslim who wanted to converse to Hinuds and to discuss with them questions of religion ,science and literature. In his accounts he highlights the choice parts of the Geeta, the Upanishads, Patajali, Puranas, the Four Vedas, scientific text by Nagrajuna, Arybhata etc. Many stories from Indian mythology also became a part of his study. He compared Indian thoughts to the Greek thought of Socrates ,Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle and others. In his accounts he highlights the works on astronomy, he discussed

with approval the theory of the Earth's rotation on its axis and made accurate calculations of latitude and longitude. In those on physics he explained natural springs by laws of hydrostatic and determined with remarkable accuracy the specific weight of precious stones and metals.

For better understanding of Al-Beruni let's see in detail how we view a particular traveller. First and foremost we understand the influences of his surroundings. Al-Beruni was influenced by Aristotle, Ptolemy, Aryabhata, Mohammad, Brahmgupta, Al-Sijzi, Abu-Nasr-Mansoor and Al-Battani. Al-Beruni is regarded as one of the greatest scholars of medieval Islamic era. He became the most important interpreter of Indian Science to the Islamic world. He is given the titles -The founder of Indology and the first anthropologist. He also made contributions to earth sciences and is known for significant contributions to geography. The word 'Beruni' means outer district in Persian language. That's why he is called Al-Beruni. Briefly through the understanding of one example we get to know how the travellers, writers, scholars and other intellectuals need to be understood for the study of the sources available to us. The clarity of thought is developed by intense concentration on the subjects that we read and the sharpness of the mind of these scholars as they approached the subject. The other sources like we have seen before are the archaeology, inscriptions, numismatics and monuments which need to be carefully studied for a profound understanding of the subject.

Medieval Period:

Accounts of Muslim Turks too have been made. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* by Minhaj-ud-din, 13th Century A.D. traces the History of the Muslim Rule in India.

Many of the other sources are *Tariq-i-Firuz Shahi* by Ziya-ud-din-Barani and *Shams-i-Siraj Afif*, *Gulshan-i-Ibrahim* by Muhammad Qasim Farishta, *Ain-i-Akbari* by Abul-Fazl, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* by Nizam-ud-din Ahmad and *Muntakhab-ut-Twarikh* by Abd-ul-Qadir Budauni.

The autobiographies of the Mughal Emperors were also significant records. *Baburnama* of Babur and *Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri* by Jehangir. Records like the official dispatches, Registers, Military records, Governor's records, some personal diaries of Diplomatic agents, court diaries, news reports and other valuable sources of information. Marco-polo who visited India and Asia in the 13th Century A.D. Ibn-Batuta an African Mohammedan who visited several years in the court of Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq.

A.D. 1200- 1800 and the Modern Period:

The data is available extensively. The difficulty that poses is that the material available needs to be viewed with a keen and vigilant eye. State papers, decisions, records, correspondence, private possessions need be brought to light.

Conclusion:

The main outline to tracing of the Political History with essential details is ideal to study the Sources of Indian History. Coins, Inscriptions, texts need be carefully browsed to unfold the relative social and cultural facts. The Economic status and the perusal of art forms and the religious practices in entirety would make the sources clear. But essentially trace and sift the truth with a critical and analytical approach.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No. 10

Lecture Title – Shri Guru Nanak Dev

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the luminous and enlightened emergence of Guru Nanak who revolutionized the very concept of religion and who provided spiritual and divine balm and solace to the wounds of this society, which was reeling under the spell of caste, creed and ignorance. It is aptly written “Satguru Nanak Pragatya Miti Dhund Jag Chanaan Hoya”. With his divine message the whole world was lit with the light of the knowledge and ignorance was dispelled.

While throwing light on the contribution of Guru Nanak some basic and general questions which often come to our mind are: From which region of India Guru Nanak hailed? What is the essence and inner message of Guru Nanak’s teachings? What is his contribution as a reformer and as a preacher? What was his necessity behind founding a new religion? What is the source of inspiration to learn about the prevailing popular religions and How he describes religion in three main principles?

Guru Nanak was the founder of Sikh religion and the first of a succession of ten Sikh Gurus or prophet-teachers and disseminator of the divine intimations vouchsafed to him and became the source of a powerful current of spiritual and social renewal and regeneration. The birth of Guru Nanak Dev in this manifest world is considered a very vital event enriching its religious history because the principles, doctrines, beliefs and tenets he preached in the universe are related to the complete transformation and welfare of the entire mankind and are in no way limited to any one caste, clan, community. The Guru came on to this world like the sweet vibration of pure and pious entities through his sweet and loving words. It can also be said that Guru’s universal mission of compassion, love and peace like beautiful fragrance of a flower saturated the environment with its ecstatic sweetness.

Guru Nanak through his invaluable utterances and sweet persuasive arguments made mankind aware of the futility of hollow rituals and useless superstitions, which have least relevance with the spiritual nobility of a religion. He therefore made them retract from idol worship of the deities of various gods and goddesses and instead get united to the Absolute One. Because of his gigantic efforts he brought mankind nearer to the Divine on the one hand and created the spirit of equity and equality among humans on the other hand, so that feeling of universal brotherhood and fraternity prevail and of differentiation and discrimination abolished and also mutual love, trust and affection sprout as well as flourish.

HIS BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE:

Guru Nanak was born on Baisakhi sudi 3, 1526 Bk/ 15 April 1469 A.D. at Rai Bhoi-Ki-Talvandi, now called Nanakana Sahib, 65 km southwest of Lahore in Pakistan. As predicted, he showed exceptional interest in cosmic questions and fundamentals of life when yet a child. His father, Kalian Chand, more commonly known as Mehta Kalu, belonged to the Bedi clan of Kshatriya Hindus. He was a patvari, i.e. village accountant, in the service of Rai Bular, the local Muslim chief, and also had a few acres of his own on which he raised cattle. Guru Nanak's mother was Tripta Devi and he had one elder sister, Bibi Nanaki who became a spiritual figure in her own right.

According to the Janam Sakhis traditional accounts of Guru Nanak's life, the birth of the child was attended by prodigies and prophecies of his coming greatness. The village priest, Hardyal was sent for to cast his horoscope. The pandit spoke very auspicious words about the child. He prophesied that he would not only be an adorer of God, but also lead many others to Him. Nanak was a precocious child, who at the age of five, asked questions about the purpose of life, and who, when sent to a pandit to learn the alphabet, surprised his teacher by composing an acrostic poem with a deeply philosophical and mystic import. On the other hand, he is pictured as a dreamy child often indifferent to his studies and inattentive to everyday duties. He let the cattle entrusted to his care wander into a farmer's field and tramples his crop. Money given him for business was distributed to the poor or to wandering ascetics and described by him as 'Sacha Sauda' (good bargain). Starting in childhood and throughout his life there are reports of Guru Nanak's seeking the company of Hindu and Muslim holy men. His loving parents and sister were delighted to learn about his brilliance, but worried by his laxness in the tasks of daily life. In response to their concern it was suggested that the boy should be married. As an unfailing remedy to keep along the worldly path his father married him in 1487 to a girl named Sulakhni, daughter of a man called Mula in Batala. Two sons were eventually born to them, Sri Chand and Lakshmi Chand.

GURU NANAK'S LIFE AT SULTANPUR:

For her strained father's relief, Nanaki, Nanak's sister, took Guru Nanak to Sultanpur where her husband, Jairam managed for him storekeeper's job at Daulat Khan Lodi's Modikhana. He fulfilled his duties and won the admiration of everyone for his diligence. He gathered a group of disciples for the worship of the one God and meditation on the divine Name. A Muslim minstrel, Mardana, companion of his childhood days, joined him at Sultanpur, where they organized the singing of hymns, the sharing of a common meal and urging people to a life of simplicity and righteousness.

Guru Nanak was now thirty years old and had been at Sultanpur for seven years. Every morning he went to the local river named River Bein for his daily bath. One morning, he did not return. When searched, he was found missing, though his clothes lay on the river-bank. Everybody concluded that he had drowned. But he reappears the third day. He was set deep within him and his face glowed with a unique brilliance. He was now an Enlightened One. He

kept introspecting the whole day. The next morning he re-iterated the principle of universal brotherhood: "Nai koi Hindu na koi Musalman" and with it advanced his vision of harmony, tolerance and unity. He announced to the world the good news of life lived in communion with the one God who is beyond the religious divisions created by humankind. Leaving his family behind and taking Mardana with him as his sole companion, he left Sultanpur for twenty years of traveling. He was now a faqir, traveling from one holy place to the other, from one of the Hindus to that of the Muslims, or the Jain or the Buddhist, within the country and beyond.

TRAVELS OF GURU NANAK:

It is difficult to establish an exact itinerary of Guru Nanak's travels. Customarily they are grouped into four lengthy journeys as Udasis to the east, south, north, and west. At the end of each, he returned to the Punjab. While his travels took him also to many obscure hamlets, Guru Nanak traveled as well to the centres of religious pilgrimage. His dialogue with pandits, sadhus and yogis of every sect, as with mullas, pirs and qadis was not that of an uncommitted seeker, but that of a teacher. As the Janam Sakhis report, Guru Nanak possessed uncanny powers, which he used to challenge the religious leaders of his time. He visited the places of pilgrimage at Kurukshetra, Mathura, Haridvar, Banaras, Gaya, as well as those in Bengal, Assam and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He also visited the Sufi establishments at Pak Pattan and Multan and shrine sites along the west coast of India.

He traveled beyond India in the west to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad. There are accounts of still further travels to the east, to Tibet and China. There are legends of travel to mythical places such as Mount Sumeru. Guru Nanak's first formal disciple, the Sikh, was Bhai Lalo, a carpenter from Sayyidpur in Gujranwala, now in Pakistan, a place he had chosen to begin his itinerancy.

Guru Nanak traveled to Sialkot thenafter and met the known saint Shah Hamzah and to Achal Batala, and discoursed on theological matters with yogis and wise ones gathered there on Shivaratri. At Talwandi, he went to pay respects to his parents and in the way to Multan halted for sometime at Chhanga Manga forest to meditate and at Chuniana to meet Sheikh Daud Karamati and Sayyid Hamid Ganj Baksh. The saints at Multan sent him a bowl filled with milk to its brim suggesting that Multan already had many saints leaving him no place. Nanak sent back the bowl with a jasmine flower afloat indicating that his fragrance-like presence would only add fragrance to Multan's life. Here he met Sheikh Ibrahim and the head of Baba Farid's shrine. He reformed the notorious Sajjan Thag.

For twelve years he was in eastern part, visiting Kurukshetra on solar-eclipse ablution, Mathura, Vrindavan, Agra meeting saints, Faqirs, holy ones, pandits and maulavis teaching great ideals of love, truth, honesty and inward purity. At Kamrup, Nur Shahi, the known conjurer, tried to infatuate Baba Nanak by her extraordinary tempting charms, but her ignorance was shedded off the moment compassionate Nanak sang to her a hymn now known as Kuchchaji. Kabir panthis claim Nanak's meeting with Kabirdas at Varanasi and Vaishnavites his meeting and dancing with Chaitanya at Jagannathpuri. He

later went to south upto Rameshwaram and Sri Lanka. On his route fell Tamilnadu, Andhra, Central India and Rajasthan. In Rajasthan he had opportunity to meet Mirabai, the great poetess. While coming back to Sultanpur he chose a different route covering Kerala, Mysore, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Sind. In Gujarat he met known Vaishnava saint Vallabhacharya. When 46, headed towards north and was in Himalayan region for two years. He met yatis, sadhus and held discourse with followers of Nath sects of Gorakhnath. All were highly impressed with Nanak's mission journeying to unveil truth that darkness of falsehood enshrouded.

Guru Nanak went last to Mecca and Madina in west Asia. While turned asleep, his feet unconsciously turned towards Ka'aba, the holy shrine. A Qazi come to pray felt offended. He protested Guru Nanak of showing disrespect to God's house. Quietly came Nanak's answer, "Please turn my feet to the direction where the all pervading God is not present." Qazi was bewildered to see Ka'aba wherever he turned Guru Nanak's feet.

THE THREE BASIC GUIDELINES BY GURU NANAK:

Guru Nanak founded and formalized the three pillars of Sikhism:

1.Naam Japna: Guru Nanak led the Sikhs directly to practice Simran and Naam Japna- meditation on God through reciting, chanting, singing and constant remembrance followed by deep study and comprehension of God's Name and virtues. In real life to practice and tread on the path of Dharam (righteousness) - The inner thought of the Sikh thus stays constantly immersed in praises and appreciation of the Creator and the One Eternal God- Waheguru.

2.Kirat Karna:He expected the Sikhs to live as honourable householders and practice Kirat Karna- To honestly earn by ones physical and mental effort while accepting both pains and pleasures as God's gifts and blessings. One is to stay truthful at all times and fear none but the Eternal Super Soul. Live a life founded on decency immersed in Dharam- life controlled by high spiritual, moral and social values.

3.Vand Chakna:The Sikhs were asked to share their wealth within the community by practicing Vand Chakna- "Share and Consume together". The community or Sadh Sangat is an important part of Sikhism. One must be part of a community that is living the flawless objective values set out by the Sikh Gurus and every Sikh has to contribute in whatever was possible to the common community pool. This spirit of Sharing and Giving is an important message from Guru Nanak.

GURU NANAK- MERGED WITH GOD (Jyoti Jyot Samaye):

During his time on Earth, Guru Nanak was revered by both Hindus and Muslims and even today many, outside of the Sikh faith, revere him. It is related that he lay dying, his followers some formerly Hindu and others formerly Muslims argued whether his body should be cremated as Hindu tradition dictated or buried as in Islamic tradition. It is said that when they removed the sheet, which had covered the Guru, they found only beautiful

flowers. The Hindus burned theirs, the Muslims buried theirs.

Guru Nanak appointed Bhai Lehna as the successor Guru, renaming him as Guru Angad, meaning, "One's very own" or "part of you". Shortly after reclaiming Bai Lehna as the next Guru, Guru Nanak merged with God (Jyoti Jyot Samaye) on 22 September 1539 in Kartarpur, at the age of 70.

TEACHINGS OF GURU NANAK:

Among the many philosophical foundations laid by Guru Nanak, his characterization of God is most recognizable. His brief and simple Mul Mantra 'Ek Omkar', meaning 'there is one God', contains not only his concept of God but also the gist of his mystical experiences related to truth and salvation. It forms the opening lines of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The translation is as follows:

"There is but One God, The Supreme Truth; The Ultimate Reality, The Creator, Without fear, Without enemies, Timeless is His image, Without Birth, Self Created, By His grace revealed."

Guru Nanak's teachings can be found in the Sikh scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib, as a vast collection of revelatory verses recorded in Gurmukhi. Guru Nanak describes the dangers of the Egotism and calls upon devotees to engage in worship through the word of God. The word of God, cleanses the individual to make such worship possible. Guru Nanak warned against hypocrisy and falsehood saying that these are pervasive in humanity. All of Guru Nanak's teachings are set forth in verse. His genius was best expressed in the poetical attitude. No other way would have been adequate to the range and depth of his mood- his fervent longing for the Infinite, is joy and wonder at the beauty and vastness of is creation, his tender love for his fellowmen, his moral speculation and his concern at the suppression and exaction to which the people in his day were subject. His compositions reveal an abounding imagination and a subtle aesthetic sensitivity. The language in which his hymns were composed was Punjabi- the common tongue of the people among whom he was born.

- EQUALITY OF HUMANS:** The core of his teaching was "Equality of Humans" without distinction of caste or creed. Guru Nanak preached against discrimination and prejudices due to race, caste, status etc. He urges all the people of the world to "conquer" their minds to these evil practices. All human beings had the light of the Lord and were the same- only by subduing one's pride and ego could one see this light in all.

- CONCEPT OF GURU KA LANGAR:** Guru Nanak started the institution of Guru Ka Langar, where people have to sit together to eat without any distinction emphasizing in the common meal true fellowship and equality.

- ESTABLISHMENT OF SANGAT:** In Sangat or Devotional gatherings and assemblies, which sprang up in the wake of Guru Nanak's preaching, men and women were admitted without distinctions of caste and creed. Here his disciples regularly met to elevate themselves spiritually by singing in His praise and to strength the bonds of humanism, the equality and fraternity.

•**EQUALITY OF WOMEN:** Guru Nanak believed in equality of men and women and promoted women's rights and equality –a first for the 15th century. He elevated the position of women and scorned those who considered women to be evil and inferior to men by asking:

“Why should we call her inferior, when it is she who gives birth to great persons?”

•Guru Nanak neither practiced nor taught renunciation for he believed that house-holders could do within their own fold whatever was required for their spiritual upliftment, or their communion with the Supreme, and also help build a better society and stronger nation.

COMPOSITIONS BY GURU NANAK:

- Japji Sahib
- Sidh Gohst
- Dakhani Oankaru
- Kirtan Sohila
- Barah Maha

Summary:

Guru Nanak a true reformer and a spiritual preacher emerges as the main luminary of Bhakti movement whose fundamental teachings transformed the society in a revolutionary way both philosophically and at grass-root level, he touched the hearts and minds of millions. His writings dispelled the darkness of ignorance and people from all walks of life saw a true messenger of God in him as he preached oneness of human race and his basic teachings dwelt on truthful pious and simple life steeped in divine love and spirituality.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.#1

Lecture Title – Goswami Tulsidas

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the coveted place of Goswami Tulsidas who was a pioneer poet and saint in Bhakti Movement. While throwing light on the contribution of Goswami Tulsidas some basic and general questions which often come to our mind are: From which region of India Goswami Tulsidas hailed? During which period his work and thought philosophy influence the Bhakti movement? What are his significant literary contributions? His teachings are placed on which principles and how he was instrumental in bringing about a change in the spiritual, philosophical and social perspectives of India during his life-time?

Tulsidas also known as Goswami Tulsidas was a Hindu poet -saint, reformer and philosopher renowned for his devotion for the God Rama. A composer of several popular works, he is best known for being the author of the epic Ramcharitmanas, a retelling of the Sanskrit Ramayana in the vernacular Awadhi. Tulsidas was acclaimed in his lifetime to be a reincarnation of Valmiki, the composer of the original Ramayana in Sanskrit. He is also considered to be the composer of the Hanuman Chalisa, a popular devotional hymn dedicated to Hanuman, the divine monkey God and devotee of Rama. He was the foremost in popularizing Rama cult. His other works in Hindi are Janaki Mangal and Parvathi Mangal. In his writings, he insists the duty of a son to his parent, duty of a student to his teacher and duty of a king to his people. Tulsidas was a sarayuparina Brahmin by birth and was born in 1532 A.D. in Raipur, in the Banda district of Uttar Pradesh, India, during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar. He lived permanently and died in the city of Varanasi. The Tulsi Ghat in Varanasi is named after him. He founded the Sankatmochan Temple dedicated to Hanuman in Varanasi, believed to stand at the place where he had the sight of Hanuman. Tulsidas started the Ramlila plays, a folk-theatre adaptation of the Ramayana. He has been acclaimed as one of the greatest poets in Hindi, Indian and world literature. The impact of Tulsidas and his works on the art, culture and society in India is widespread and is seen to date in vernacular language, Ramlila plays, Hindustani classical music, popular music and television series.

MEANING OF THE WORD TULSIDAS:

The word Tulsidas is a compound of two Sanskrit words: Tulasi, which is an Indian variety of the basil plant considered auspicious by Vaishnavas (devotees of God Vishnu and his avatars like Rama) and Dasa, which means a slave or servant and by extension, a devotee. Tulsidas thus means a servant of the plant Tulsi.

INCARNATION OF VALMIKI:

Tulsidas is believed to be a reincarnation of Valmiki. In the Hindu scripture Bhavishyottar Purana, the God Shiva tells his wife Parvati how Valmiki, who got a boon from Hanuman to sing the glory of Rama in vernacular language, will incarnate in future in the Kali Yuga (the present and last Yuga or epoch within a cycle of four Yugas).

Nabhadas wrote in the Bhaktamal (literally means the Garland of Saints) that Tulsidas was the incarnation of Valmiki in the Kali Yuga. The Ramanandi sect believes that it was Valmiki himself who incarnated as Tulsidas in the Kali Yuga.

HIS BIRTH AND SAINTLY LIFE:

Tulsidas was born to Hulsī and Atmaram Shukla Dube in Raipur, Uttar Pradesh, India in 1532 A.D. He was also known as Tulsiram or Ram Bola during his childhood. He was a sarayuparīna Brahmin by birth and it is said that Tulsidas did not cry at the time of his birth, and was born with thirty-two teeth intact. Although Tulsidas's childhood was one of poverty and suffering, he was a devout follower of Lord Rama, and was taught by his Guru, Narhari-Das during his days at Sukar-khet.

2. INITIATION FROM GURU AND LEARNING:

At the age of five years, Ram Bola was adopted by Narhari-Das, a Vaishnava ascetic of Ramananda's monastic order who believed to be the fourth disciple of Ramananda, or alternately, the disciple of Anantacharya. He was given the Virakta Diksha (Vairagi initiation) with the new name of Tulsidas. Tulsidas narrates the dialogue that took place during the first meeting with his Guru in a passage in the Vinayapatrika. When he was seven years old, his Upanayana (sacred thread ceremony) was performed by Narhari-Das on the fifth day of the bright half of the month of Magha (January-February) at Ayodhya, a pilgrimage site related to Rama. Tulsidas stated his learning at Ayodhya. After some time, Narhari-Das took him to a particular Varaha Kshetra (a holy place with temple dedicated to Varaha-the boar avatar of Vishnu), where he first narrated the Ramayana to Tulsidas. Tulsidas mentions this in the Ramcharitmanas.

Tulsidas later came to the sacred city of Varanasi and studied Sanskrit grammar, four Vedas, six Vedangas, Jyotisha and the six schools of Hindu philosophy over a period of 15-16 years from Guru Shesha Santana who was based at the Panchganga Ghat in Varanasi. Shesha Santana was a friend of Narhari-Das and a renowned scholar on literature and philosophy. After completing his studies, Tulsidas came back to his birthplace Raipur with the permission of Shesha Santana. Here he found that his family was no more, with his parents dead. Tulsidas performed the Shraddha ceremony (which deals with giving offerings to the ancestors) of his parents. He started living in his ancestral home and narrating the Katha (story) of Ramayana in Chitrakuta.

FROM FAMILY MAN TO ASCETIC:

Tulsidas went on to marry Buddhimati (also known as Ratnavali), from whom he had a son named Tarak. He was passionately attached to his wife Buddhimati until the day she uttered these words: If you would develop for Lord Rama even half the love that you have for my filthy body, you would certainly cross the ocean of Samsara and attain immortality and eternal bliss. These words pierced his heart. He abandoned home, became an ascetic, and spent fourteen years visiting various scared places. It is said that Tulsidas met Lord Hanuman, and through him had a vision of Lord Rama.

TRAVELS OF TULSIDAS:

After renunciation, Tulsidas spent most of his time at Varanasi, Prayag, Ayodhya and Chitrakuta but visited many other nearby and far-off places. He traveled across India to many places, studying different people, meeting saints and Sadhus and meditating. The Mula Gosain Charita gives an account of his travels to the four pilgrimages of Hindus (Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri and Rameshwaram) and the Himalayas. He visited the Manasarovar Lake in current-day Tibet, where tradition holds he had Darshan (sight) of Kakabhushundi, the crow who is one of the four narrators in the Ramcharitmanas.

3.DARSHAN OF LORD HANUMAN AND LORD RAMA TO TULSIDAS:

Tulsidas hints at several places in his works, that he had met face to face with Hanuman and Rama. The detailed account of his meetings with Hanuman and Rama are given in the Bhakti-ras-bodhini of Priyadas. According to Priyadas's account, Tulsidas would pour some water at the base of a Banyan tree when he passed that way after his morning ablutions. A spirit that was suffering the effects of past evil deeds lived on that same tree. Tulsidas is offering relieved the spirit of its agony. The spirit was very much pleased with Tulsidas. Wanting to express gratitude to Tulsi, the spirit said, O man! Get a boon from me. Tulsidas replied, Let me have Darshan of Lord Rama. The spirit said, Go to the Hanuman temple. There Hanuman comes in the guise of a leper to hear the Ramayana as the first hearer and leaves the place last of all. Get hold of him. He will help you. The next day, Tulsidas identified the man who answered to the description and fell at his feet. The old leper told Tulsidas to go to Chitrakut, where he would have the Darshan of Sri Ram. Accordingly, Tulsidas met Hanuman and through His grace, had Darshan or vision of Lord Rama. It is well known that Hanuman is always present wherever the name Ram is being uttered.

Tulsidas remained in Chitrakut, making sandal paste and giving it to the devotees who came there. One day, while he was making the paste, Sri Ram appeared in front of him and said: Baba, give me some sandal paste. Tulsidas remained in Samadhi for three days. This was the first time he experienced Samadhi- and that through the Darshan of Sri Ram himself!

4.Miracles and Immortal Works

WANDERINGS & MIRACLES BY TULSIDAS:

Tulsidas lived in Ayodhya for some time, and then shifted to Varanasi. He once went to Brindavan to visit the temples of Lord Krishna. Seeing the statue of Krishna, he said, how shall I describe Thy beauty, O Lord! But Tulsidas will bow his head only when you take up-bow and arrow in your hands. The Lord revealed Himself before Tulsidas in the form of Lord Rama with bow and arrows.

It is believed that Tulsidas's blessings once brought the dead husband of a poor woman back to life. The Mughal emperor in Delhi came to know of this miracle and sent for Tulsidas, asking the saint to perform some miracles. He declined saying, I have no superhuman power, I know only the name of Rama, only to see himself behind the bars. Tulsidas then prayed to Lord Hanuman as countless powerful monkeys invaded the royal court. The emperor released him from prison asked Tulsidas to pardon him.

IMMORTAL WORKS OF TULSIDAS:

Tulsidas wrote 12 books, the most famous being the Hindi Ramayana-The Ramcharitmanas that is read and worshipped with great reverence in every Hindu home in northern India. An inspiring book, it contains sweet couplets in beautiful rhyme in praise of Lord Rama. Vinaya Patrika is another important book written by Tulsidas.

HIS LAST DAYS:

Towards the end of his life Tulsidas suffered from very painful boils that affected his arms. At this time he wrote the Hanuman Bahuk, which begins with a verse in praise of Hanuman's strength, glory and virtue and is followed by a prayer to relieve him of his unbearable arm pain. The disease was cured. Tulsidas left his mortal body and entered the Abode of Immortality and Eternal Bliss in 1623 A.D. at the age of 91. He was cremated at Asi Ghat by the Ganga in the holy city of Varanasi (Benaras).

5.HIS LITERARY LIFE:

Tulsidas started composing poetry in Sanskrit in Varanasi on the Prahlada Ghat. Tradition holds that all the verses that he composed during the day, would get lost in the night. This happened daily for eight days. On the eighth night, Shiva-whose famous Kashi Vishwanath Temple is located in Varanasi-is believed to have ordered Tulsidas in a dream to compose poetry in the vernacular instead of Sanskrit. Tulsidas woke up and saw both Shiva and Parvati who blessed him. Shiva ordered Tulsidas to go to Ayodhya and compose poetry in Awadhi. Shiva also predicted that Tulsidas's poetry would fructify like the Sam Veda. In the Ramcharitmanas, Tulsidas hints at having the Darshan of Shiva and Parvati in both dream and awakened state.

LITERARY WORKS OF TULSIDAS:

Twelve (12) works are widely considered by biographers to be written by Tulsidas, six (6) major works and six (6) minor works. Based on the language of the works, they have been classified into two groups as follows: -

1. Awadhi Works: - Ramcharitmanas, Ramlala Nahachhu, Barvai Ramayana, Parvati Mangal, Janaki Mangal and Ramagya Prashna.

2. Braja Works: - Krishna Gitavali, Gitavali, Kavitali, Dohavali, Vairagya Sandipani and Vinaya Patrika.

Besides these twelve works, four more works are popularly believed to be composed by Tulsidas which include Hanuman Chalisa, Hanuman Ashtak, Hanuman Bahuk and Tulsi Satsai.

ABOUT RAMCHARITMANAS:

The composition of the Ramcharitmanas was perhaps Tulsidas's own sadhana, his act of prayer and offering. It is an expression of creativity that blends the inner experience expressed in the form of legend through the medium of poetry. He wrote for two years, seven months and twenty-six days and completed it in November-December, on the anniversary of Sri Ram's marriage to Sita. He then returned to Varanasi glowing with the Bhakti inflamed during the period of writing the devotional epic and began to share his ineffable experience with others. Because of Tulsidas's good demeanor, loving personality and exquisite devotion, people would gather around him in large numbers.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF TULSIDAS:

1. Counteracting Occultism:

At that time there were four major secretive cults that cultivated the practice of supernatural powers: the Vedic sacrificial, the Tantric, the Natha and the Mahanubhava. It is natural that common people will equate religion with occultism. Tulsidas's teachings bailed out religion from this pitfall and made it plain and simple. He emphasized living a virtuous life and developing human perfection, as opposed to supernatural achievement.

2. Opposition to Left-hand Practices:

With his devotion and teachings, Tulsidas provided an alternative to the cults that showed an inclination for debauchery. Tulsidas placed before the people the ideal of chaste grihastha life.

3. Introduction of an Ideal to Emulate:

Tulsidas presented a picture of human perfection, achievable by common people, through which one could uplift and divinize one's own character. He never became attracted to miracles or money. He did not preach any particularized doctrine, nor did he found a sect or school. Yet his pure life and

enchanting, forceful and touching poetry have cast a permanent spell on society.

Goswami Tulsidas has earned the monumental stature as a popular poet, reformer, philosopher and saint due to his deep understanding of the Hindu religious philosophy and folklore. A true and devout disciple of Lord Rama, he popularized in vernacular language the essence of the epic Ramayana for the benefit of the masses who were not conversant with the classical Sanskrit language. He advocated and preached a chaste simple married life and asked people to shun a debauch life which was of temptations and sinful. Being the creator of the literary work Ramcharitmanas he resides in the hearts of religious and pious people.

SUMMARY

Goswami Tulsidas has earned the monumental stature as a popular poet, reformer, philosopher and saint due to his deep understanding of the Hindu religious philosophy and folklore. A true and devout disciple of Lord Rama, he popularized in vernacular language the essence of the epic Ramayana for the benefit of the masses who were not conversant with the classical Sanskrit language. He advocated and preached a chaste simple married life and asked people to shun a debauch life which was of temptations and sinful. Being the creator of the literary work Ramcharitmanas he resides in the hearts of religious and pious people.

Thank you.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No. 12

Lecture Title – Sufi Movement

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief the origin and development of *Sufi* Movement which had impacted spiritual and religious fabric of India right from 8th to 16th century and radically revolutionalised the very meaning of spirituality, divinity and humanism.

While studying the concept and development of *Sufi* movement a few basic and questions arise in our mind such as: what do we understand by the term Sufism? What are the fundamental perceptions derived from this movement? What are the various stages of spiritual thought in Sufism? How Sufism has impacted our cultural, social, religious and spiritual values? Which are the main Sufi Orders and who were the prominent Sufi saints related to them?

'*Sufism*' is a mystical branch of Islam, which originated in the 8th century A.D., dedicated to the elimination of the self and to union with God. '*Sufism*' is a term used to refer to mystical religious ideas in Islam. It had evolved into a well developed movement by the 11th century A.D. The *Sufis* were Muslim saints who came originally from Persian and Arabian countries. They stress on the importance of traversing the path of the Sufi *pir* enabling one to establish a direct communion with the divine. The *Sufis* derived their name from garments of coarse wool known as *Suf* which they wore as a badge of poverty as a *Faqir*. The Sufis did not form a single organized sect, nor did they have any uniform code of religious doctrines. The variety in their ideas and practices was due to the intermixture of Quranic, Christian, Neo-Platonic, Zoroastrian, Buddhist and Hindu elements. Vedanta contributed to the development to their ideas, and some practices of the *yoga*- such as *pranayama*- were an integral part of their spiritual discipline. Sufism has rightly been compared to a 'stream which gathers volume by joining of tributaries from many lands.

Among the early known Sufis were Rabia al- Adawiya, Al-Junaid and Bayazid Bastami. Fundamental to Sufism is God, Man and the relation between them that is Love. They believed that from man emerged the theories of *ruh* (soul), *qurbat* (divine proximity) and *hulul* (infusion of the divine spirit) and that from relation between God and Man ideas such as *Ishq* (divine love) and *Fana* (self-annihilation) come into being. The Sufis were regarded as people who kept their heart pure; they sought to communicate with God though their ascetic practices and doctrine of divine love and union with God. The *murid* (disciple) passes through *maqamat* (various stages) in this process of experiencing communication with the divine.

The early *Sufis* traced their ideas to some Quranic verses and Traditions of the Prophet, to which they gave a mystic or esoteric rather than a literal interpretation. Herein lay basis of their fundamental difference with the orthodox *ulama* as also with the Muslim rationalists. They claimed that their interpretation represented the true spirit of Islam although these transcended all outward forms of religion. They lived ascetic lives. After many years of travel they settled down in *Khanqahs* where their blessing, advice and free food were available for the common people. The *Khanqah* (the hospice) was the centre of activities of the various *Sufis* orders. The *Khanqah* was led by *shaikh*, *pir* or *murshid* (teacher) who lived with his *murids* (disciples). In time the *Khanqahs* emerged as important centres of learning and preaching. By the 12th century A.D., the *Sufis* were

organized in *silsilahs* (orders). The word *silsila* meant chain and it represented signifying an unbreakable chain between the *pir* and the *murid*. With the death of the *pir* his tomb or shrine the *dargah* became a centre for his disciples and followers.

In the 10th century, Sufism spread across important regions of the Islamic empire. Iran, Khurasan, Transoxiana, Egypt, Syria and Baghdad were important Sufi centres. Al-Ghazali, (1059-1111 A.D.) is among the most venerated of Sufis. He reconciled Islamic mysticism with Islamic orthodoxy, providing *Sufi* mysticism a secure place in Islam. He stressed on the need for the disciple to follow the guidance of the spiritual master. He also emphasized on the supreme authority of the holy Prophet and the need to obey laws in both letter and spirit.

The *Sufi* movement in India commenced in the 11th century A.D. 'Al Hujwiri', who established himself in north India was buried in Lahore and regarded as the oldest *Sufi* in the sub-continent. Among the important *Sufi* Orders in the history of medieval India were those of the 'Chishtiya', 'Suhrawardiya', 'Qadiriya' and 'Naqshbandiya'. 'Chishti' and 'Suhrawardi' *silsilahs* were popular during the Sultanate period. The Suhrawardis were active in Punjab and Sindh while the Chishti's were active in Delhi, Rajasthan and parts of the western Gangetic plains. By the end of the Sultanate period they had spread to the eastern regions of the Gangetic plain (Bihar and Bengal) and into the Deccan. During the medieval period the Sufis played an important role in interpreting and elaborating on Islamic theological concepts like *Wahdat ul Wujud* (unity of being) and also encourage the development of practices like *Ziyarat* (the practice of visiting tombs).

STAGES OF SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN SUFISM:-

Sufism prescribes the stages of the spiritual journey of a soul. The seeker after God is a *salik* (traveler); progress in spiritual life is *suluk* ('travel' or 'journey'). Along this journey the *salik* is guided by a *murshid* or *pir* ('guide' or 'elder') who has already reached the goal by completing the journey and become qualified to lead a seeker who is his *murid* (aspirant) to the attainment of *ma'rifat* ('knowledge' of God). While proceeding along the course of *al-Tariqat* (path) the *salik* follows the practices which are prescribed by the *murshid* according to the progress made by the seeker. Broadly speaking there are four stages (*maqamat*), each leading to the next as below:

1. **Nasut - First Stage**: It is the animal nature functioning through five senses, i.e., eating, seeing, hearing, etc. when the *salik* brings the senses to the limit of bare necessity and transcends animal nature by purification and asceticism, he reaches the second stage.
2. **Malakut- Second Stage**: It is the 'region of angels'. The *salik* conquers his pride through humble prayers to God and transcends this stage.
3. **Jabarut- Third Stage**: It is the 'region of soul'. The *salik's* duties are love, earnestness, joy, seeking, ecstasy, insensibility. When he transcends all these by forgetting self altogether he reaches the fourth stage.
4. **Lahut- Fourth Stage**: It is the stage where 'words fail'. Divine Light is 'poured forth so profusely that it absorbs all individual existences in the eyes of the pilgrim'. Here 'a creature does not become God, nor does it cease to exist.' The experience of this 'lofty state' differs in the case of different pilgrims: some attain to it only for an hour a week, some for an hour a day, some for two hours a day, and some remain absorbed for the greater portion of their time.

FEATURES OF SUFI MOVEMENT:-

The *Sufi* movement as it emerged in India had the following features:

- A. The *Sufis* were organized in a number of different *silsilahs* (Orders).
- B. Most of these orders were led by some prominent *Sufi* saint or *pir*. It is named after them and was followed by his disciples.
- C. The *Sufis* believed that for union with God one needs a spiritual guru or *pir*.
- D. The *Sufi pirs* lived in *Khanqahs* with their disciples. The *Khanqah* (the hospice) was the centre of *Sufi* activities.
- E. The *Khanqahs* emerged as important centres of learning which were different from *madrasas* the centre of theology.
- F. Many *Sufis* enjoyed the musical congregation or *sama* in their *Khanqahs*. A musical form called the *qawwali* developed during this period.
- G. The *ziyarat* or pilgrimage to the tombs of the *Sufi* saints soon emerged as an important form of ritual pilgrimage.
- H. Most of the *Sufis* believed in the performance of miracles. Almost all *pirs* were associated with the miracles performed by them.
- I. The different *Sufi* orders had diverse approached about the matters of polity and state.

IMPORTANT SUFI ORDERS OR SILSILAHS:-

There are four different types of Sufi orders or Silsilahs which are as under:

1. 'THE CHISHTI SILSILAH':

The Chishti Order was established in India by Muinuddin Chishti. He seems to have moved to India after the invasion of Muizzuddin Muhammad Ghori and subsequently to Ajmer in 1206 A.D. The fame of Khwaja Muinuddin grew after his death in 1235 A.D. his grave was visited by Muhammad Tughlaq after which the mosque and dome were erected by Mahmud Khalji of Malwa in the 15th century A.D. The patronage of this dargah peaked after the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar.

The Chishtis believed in:

- I. Love as the bond between God and individual soul.
- II. The tolerance between people of different faiths.
- III. Acceptance of disciples irrespective of their religious beliefs. Attitude of benevolence to all.
- IV. Association with Hindu and Jain yogis.
- V. Use of simple language.

The Chishti presence in Delhi was established by Qutbuudin Bakhtiyar Kaki who settled in Delhi from his homeland in Transoxiana in 1221 A.D. This was the time of the Mongol invasions when there was a steady flow of people from central Asia fleeing from the Mongols. His presence in Delhi was a threat to the Suhrawardis who sought to force him to leave by leveling charges against him. The Sultan of Delhi, Itutmish, dismissed these attempts eventually forcing the Suhrawardis to relent. The Chishti *pirs* laid emphasis on the simplicity of life, poverty, humility and selfless devotion to God. The renunciation of worldly possessions was regarded by them as necessary for the control of the senses that was necessary to maintain a spiritual life. Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti argued that highest form of devotion to God was to redress the misery of those in distress, fulfilling the need of the helpless and to feed the hungry. They refused to accept any grant for their maintenance from the Sultans.

The other important Chishti Baba Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar, established himself at Hansi (in Haryana) on the route between Multan and Lahore. Nizamuddin Auliya was the best known Chishti saint of the Sultanate period. He lived in the 14th century A.D., during a period of political change and turmoil. During his lifetime he was witness to the establishment of the Khalji rule after the death of Balban and subsequently the establishment of the Tughlaq's. There are numerous stories of his confrontations with the Sultans of Delhi. The Khwaja is said to have maintained a strict policy of not involving himself with the various groups and factions of the Sultan's court in Delhi earning him the respect of many. Nasiruddin Chirag Delhi was another of the Chishti saints of Delhi. He played an active role in the political affairs of the period. All these enabled *Sufis* to maintain a loyal and dedicated following.

In the 13th century A.D. the Chishti Order was established in the Deccan by

Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib. Between the 14th and 16th centuries many Chishti

Sufis migrated to Gulbarga. This was accompanied with a change where some of the Chishtis began accepting grants and patronage from the ruling establishment. Muhammad Banda Nawaj is among the famous *pirs* in the region. The Deccan city of Bijapur emerged as an important centre of *Sufi* activity.

2. 'THE SUHRAWARDI SILSILAH':-

This Silsilah was founded by Shihabuddin Suhrawardi in Baghdad. It was established in India by Bahauddin Zakariya. He founded the Suhrawardi Order, based in Multan, which was under the control of Qubacha. He was critical of Qubacha and openly favored Iltutmish over his rival. His ways were different from that of the Chishtis. The Suhrawardis, unlike the Chishtis, accepted, maintenance grants from the Sultans. They believed that a Sufi should possess the three attributes of property, knowledge and *hal* or mystical enlightenment. Suhrawardi saints argued that this was necessary to ensure that they served the poor better. He stressed on the observance or external forms of religious belief and advocated a combination of *ilm* (scholarship) with mysticism. Practices like bowing before the Sheikh, presenting water to visitors and tonsuring the head at the time of initiation into the Order that the Chishtis had adopted were rejected. After his death the *silsilah* continued to play an important role in Punjab and Sindh.

3. 'THE NAQSHBANDI SILSILAH':-

In India this order was established by Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi. From beginning the mystics of this Order stressed on the observance of the shariat and denounced all innovations or *biddat*. Sheikh Baqi Billah the successor to Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi settled near Delhi, and his successor Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi attempted to purge Islam from all liberal and what he believed were 'un-Islamic' practices. He opposed the listening of *sama* (religious music) and the practice of pilgrimage to the tombs of saints. He criticized the new status accorded by Akbar to many non-Muslims, the withdrawal of the *Jizyah* and the ban on cow slaughter. He believed that he was the *mujaddid* (renewer) of the first millennium Islam. He maintained that the relationship between man and God was that between the slave and the master and not the relation of a lover and beloved. He emphasized the individual's unique relation of faith and responsibility to God as creator. He tried to harmonize the doctrines of mysticism and the teachings of orthodox Islam.

4. 'THE QADRI SILSILAH':-

The Quadiriyya *silsilah* was popular in Punjab. Sheikh Abdul Qadir and his sons were supporters of the Mughals under Akbar. The *pirs* of the Order supported the concept of *Wahdat al Wajud*. Among the famous Sufis of this Order was Mian Mir who had enrolled the Mughal princess Jahanara and her brother Dara as disciples. The influence of the Sheikh's teachings is evident in the works of the prince. Shah

Badakhshani another *pir* of this silsilah while dismissing orthodox elements, declared that, the infidel who had perceived reality and recognized it was a believer and that a believer who did not recognize reality was an infidel.

During medieval period there was constant tension between the liberal and orthodox views in Islam. The *Sufis* featured on both sides, while there were those like the Chishtis who held a liberal view and argued in favor of assimilation of local traditions there were others like Sheikh Abdul Haqq of the Qadiriyya silsilah who held the view that the purity of Islam was being diluted. This orthodox view was represented by the *ulema* that argued from the perspective of being upholders of the *shariat*. The liberal opinion found its voice among many Sufis who argued the narrow definition of Islamic laws by the *ulema*.

Summary

The *Sufi* movement has played a wonderful part as a binding thread which has collected the pearls of wisdom for the whole human race and has discarded the concept of steadfast and rigid philosophies emanating from various sects and religions. It has come as a whiff of fresh air to the society which has its roots in rationalism, truthful and clear thought processes without fake and misleading perceptions. It talks about a pure and humble heart which is a pre-requisite to take a spiritual flight. It also advocated oneness of God who is the beloved of every human soul.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.13

Lecture title – Cultural Contributions of Mughal Rulers

Script

Hello students, today we are going to talk about the Cultural contributions of Mughal rulers with the aim to give a brief outline of the various contributions of the Mughals in India which would help us in understanding the cultural, political, social and economic conditions of that time.

Muslim rule in India is always depicted in the darkest possible colors and Muslim rulers are almost invariably described as tyrants and blood-thirsty monsters, whose unrestrained autocracy found its full expression in fanaticism in the forcible propagation of Islam, in the oppression of the Hindus, in the destruction of their temples and in the suppression of their genius.

But, there is enough in the existing literature on Indo-Islamic history to show that the Muslim kings of India were great conquerors, endowed with uncommon military genius, but there is very little in it to convey the least idea that they were also gifted with a keen zest for social life and gentle arts and that their victories in the arts of peace were no less remarkable than their achievements in the science of war.

Significance:

The present is an endeavor to reveal the cultural aspects of their rule, and from the ensuing account it will be evident that they made mighty contributions to almost every department of Indian life and thought- so mighty in fact that during the millennium of their rule in India they worked a complete revolution in the life and thought of her people.

Subject matter:

The political or territorial expansion of the Commonwealth of Islam went apace and the standards of Islam, bearing the emblem of crescent, were carried far and wide by the Musalmans under the ennobling influence of their religion. With the conquest of Persia and the transfer of the seat of government to Baghdad, Persian ideas and ideals began to flow fast into the rank and file of the followers of Islam, changing their spiritual outlook into one material. Coming into close contact with the Persians, the Denizens of the Desert, as the Arabs are significantly called, took an extraordinary fancy to the ideas of the former. The conquerors were literally conquered by the culture of the conquered people. They took such a fancy to the culture of the Persians that in their eager fascination for it they did not even try to pick and choose from Persian ideas but assimilated them wholesale in almost every department of administration and in every aspect of their social life. From Baghdad these ideas of kingship travelled into Ghaznin, as also to other parts of the world, and thence made their way into India with the march of Musalmans into that country. India, an ancient country

like Persia, offered a most favourable field for the cultivation of such ideas. Here the submissiveness of the people and the ancient traditions of the country furnished a most congenial atmosphere for the establishment of absolute monarchy.

The Muslim kings thus are credited for a number of important influences in the state, administrative system, social life, religion, education, architecture, gardening, painting, poetry and music.

The State , Administrative System and Social Life

(i) The State: The familiar custom of holding what are now called Darbars (courts) has been popular in Persia from times immemorial. In India it became a permanent institution during the first fifty years of the Muslim period. The Sultans of Delhi held Darbars on a number of public occasions, such as the coronation of a monarch, the commemoration of a victory or an important event, the consummation of the marriage of a royal prince or princess, the celebration of the birth of a baby or the anniversary of a member of the royal family. There were other Darbars popularly known as Jashns, which were held to celebrate certain social and religious festivals and were noted for pomp and pageantry, culminating in a lavish distribution of robes of honour and rewards.

(ii) Administrative System: The Empire was divided into a number of provinces, each of which was usually known by the name of the country or its capital. A province was, therefore, the biggest administrative division. It was placed in charge of a trusted officer who acted as the viceroy of the king in it. Each viceroy employed a large number of subordinate officials for the effective administration of his province. Further talking about law and justice, there were no such courts of law and justice as exist in these days. The king was the fountain of justice and his was the highest court of appeal. The Qazis settled the cases among the Musalmans in accordance with the Shariyat, and civil disputes relating to inheritance, succession, etc., among the Hindus were allowed to be decided by Hindu judges or Panchayats (juries). The Muslim kings were noted for their impartiality in judicial matters.

The Muslim kings maintained a well-organized police force in order to enforce law and order and to facilitate impartial dissemination of justice. The Kotwal, or the policeman-in-chief, was the custodian of public peace and security. Further on the Government Service was not the monopoly of the ruling race. It was open to all Hindus and Muslims who possessed the required qualifications. Muslim kings also showed a remarkable interest in the upkeep and development of means of communication and transport and the result was a wide-spread network of the roads and highways in the Muslim Empire.

(iii) Social life: Many Muslim kings were sincerely interested in the social as well as moral well-being of their subjects, irrespective of the sects to which they belonged or the creeds they professed. They forbade drinking and gambling and tried their best to suppress immorality. The horrible and inhuman practices of Sati and infanticide, which had eaten into the foundations of Indian society, were systematically discouraged and forbidden and widow-remarriage was legalized. Another result of the Hindu contact with the Muslims was that Muhamedan dress, etiquette and ritual came into fashion in the Hindu society. Achakan and

salwar, popular dress in northern India was introduced in the Hindu society under the Mughal influence. Muslims nobles, feudal lords and aristocrats generally leading a more luxurious life than Hindus set new fashions which were copied by the rich Hindu classes. Recreational activities were influenced by Islamic contact. Hunting, hawking, and many other games also became Mohammedanized.

Religious Influences, Education and Architecture

4) Religious Influences: Toleration in true sense was the sheet-anchor of Muslim Rule in India and the Muslim Kings never interfered with the religion of their non-Muslim subjects. They enjoined not only liberty of thought and freedom of worship, but also admitted them to all powers and privileges which they themselves enjoyed. The place that woman occupies and the privilege she enjoys in Muslim society in accordance with the commands of the Quran are in no way inferior to those of man. Man and woman are equally indispensable for each other. The Pardah system was also introduced in this country by the Musalmans. It was a sin for women to appear in public and hence Purdah was a religious duty.

5) Education : No Medieval Government had a regular department of Public instruction, but Muslim India of the Middle Ages could justly boast of possessing one which looked after religious as well as educational institutions. Hardly was there a Muslim prince of importance whose name is not associated with the opening and endowing of a school or a college in his kingdom. Muslim kings, as a rule, took a living interest in the education of their subjects. Education made mighty strides during the Muslim Period, so much so in fact that Muslim universities of Mediaeval India were thronged by thousands of students and professors had often hundreds of hearers.

Apart from houses, where individual instructors imparting education received remuneration from their pupils in the form of personal service the principal types of educational institutions were universities, Madrasas and Maktabas. While there were universities in capital cities and Maktabas and Madrasas in smaller towns, no village was without a mosque and no mosque was without a Maktab and a modest library. Mosques were not restricted to Ibadat or divine worship alone, but were also used as lecture-halls and places of instruction. Further on technical education was given in Karkhanas or workshops through the system of apprenticeship.

The boys who did not attend a Maktab or a Madrasa were sent to these workshops for receiving necessary training in arts and crafts. Arabic, the language of the Quran, was a compulsory subject in almost all schools and colleges and Persian, the language of the Court, was the medium of instruction.

Before the advent of Islam in India education was the monopoly of the Brahmans who, for reasons of their own, refused to impart it to the masses. But under the Muslim rulers of India, whose religion recognized no barriers of rank or race in the acquisition of knowledge, it therefore became the birth-right of every citizen, Muslim as well as Hindu. One of the great results of this mutually reciprocal understanding and intercourse of Hindus and Muslims, facilitated by the liberal educational policy of Muslim Kings, was the creation of a new

language, Urdu the off-spring of Persian and Hindi, which in course of time superseded its parents and became the lingua franca of Northern India.

There existed separate Maktabas for the education of girls, but usually they received their education in the same schools where the boys did, of course, up to the primary standard when sexual consciousness had not yet awakened, and after that they were segregated from them and given their education either privately or in the schools specially provided for them.

A short reference may also be made to the libraries which sprang up in India as a beneficial result of the love of learning of most of its Muslim rulers and became a valuable asset to the sacred cause of education. Muslim kings and other men of means used to collect rich stores of literature for their own use and build up big libraries which figured prominently among their proud possessions. There were libraries which were thrown open to and availed of by the public in general. In passing, we may also point out that it was the Muslims who brought paper into India about the tenth century A.C. and popularized its use there.

(vi) Architecture: The medieval period saw great developments in the field of architecture. With the coming of Muslims to India, many new features came to be introduced in buildings. There was gradually a harmonious blending between the Hindu and Muslim architectural styles and this new style of architecture is known as Indo-Islamic. The fundamental Islamic dogma is the unity of God or Allah and it is the requirement for prayer that constitute the prime progenitor of architecture in Islam. The most important buildings in Islam are religious in function like the mosques and tombs or secular like the palaces and halls. Indo-Islamic style is usually divided into three phases: the Delhi Sultanate or Pashtun style, the Provincial, and the Mughal phase.

The mode, theme or motifs or ornamentation employed in Islamic buildings also made a departure from the earlier vogues. The Hindu style or ornamentation is largely naturalistic showing human and animal forms and the luxuriant vegetation life. As among the Muslims the representation of living beings was taboo by way of decoration or ornamentation, they introduced geometrical and arabesque patterns, ornamental writing and formal representation of plant and floral life. In short the contribution of the Muslims to Indo-Muslim architecture is profound and no less interesting. Among the architectural features introduced by them mention may be made of arches, domes, minars and minarets, the pendentive, squinch arch, half domed double portals, kiosks or chhatris and the use of concrete as a factor of construction. They also introduced gilding and painting in varied colors and designs. Muslim decorative elements are usually of the nature of embroidery. Thus the Indo-Islamic architecture is entirely different in character from Muslim architecture in other countries, incorporating the best of both Hindu and, Muslim styles.

Gardens , Painting , Poetry , Music and Dance

(vii) Gardens: The garden design was another secular art much cultivated by Mughals. The bagh or gardens of the Mughals are world famous. Some of these formal gardens can still be seen in Kashmir. The idea underlying their gardens was in fact the creation of an Iram (paradise) and the realization of that object on earth. With high-walled enclosures, redolent

with fragrant flowers, gaily plumaged birds, a captured stream running through the garden in rhythmic harmony, arching trees sheltering the spring flowers, and a tank in the middle reflects the flower-beds around. The legendary paradise was fully attained and nothing beautiful that could be conceived by human mind seems to have been left wanting. Symmetry was the key-note of the Mughal art of gardening and the guiding principle of Mughal gardeners. Balance, harmony and precision were evident everywhere in the Mughal gardens.

8) Painting: The art of painting did not receive the attention and encouragement which other arts did at the hands of the early Muslim kings of India. This was mainly because it was tabooed in the early days of Islam on account of its close association with idolatry. It was only occasionally that the Muslim kings and nobles broke away from the general convention and practiced this art.

The Mughal School of painting was therefore the most significant contribution of Akbar. He established a State atelier where about a hundred artists, mostly Hindu, worked under the guidance of the two Persian masters brought to India by Humayun. Early in Akbar's reign the Portuguese had established trading-posts in India. As gifts for the emperor they brought illustrated Bibles and religious pictures which so fascinated Akbar that he immediately instructed his own painters to emulate their qualities. Thus European realism was added to the embryonic Mughal style; a number of miniatures even depict Christian subjects.

Closely connected with the art of painting is the art of illuminating books, which received a great stimulus in India under the influence of Islam. Muslims have always been very fond of illuminating manuscripts of the Quran and other religious and classic literature with beautiful gold borders on every page and of having their bindings adorned with gold. While we are speaking about books, we may appropriately make a short reference to calligraphy. The art of writing a beautiful hand had been very widely cultivated by Muslims ever since their advent in India. The state encouraged this art and employed a large number of scribes for copying books etc.

9) Poetry: Poetry has been a most popular subject among the Muslims from very early days. Their love of beauty found full scope and a most suitable expression in this art. Some practiced it as a profession, while others resorted to it as a relaxation from other pursuits. Poetry, like painting and other fine arts, reached the pinnacle of its glory under the patronage of the Great Mughals, almost all of whom were poets of distinction, vitally interested in the promotion of poetry. Poetry as well as prose, both of which were liberally encouraged by Muslim Kings and other well-to-do lovers of learning, acted, as it were, a conduit-pipe through which ideals of Islam and Islamic culture were diffused in India among non-Muslims.

10) Music: The contact of Islam with Iran, where music was most popular, and the influence of Sufis (Muslim mystics), who believed in the efficacy of music as a means of elevating the soul and as an aid to spiritual progress, brought about a great change in the attitude of Muslims toward this art and went a long way in wiping off the stigma attached to it. The position was further simplified when Muslims settled down in India and found music occupying a high place in the scheme of Hindu social and religious life. The result was that though divine service in mosques continued to be performed on orthodox lines, without extraneous aids of music, either vocal or instrumental, the art became so popular that musicians began to loom

large on almost all festive occasions. The Sufis' fondness for music brought into vogue and practice of holding semi-religious congregations, where songs of divine love called Qawwalis were sung by professional singers called Qawwals.

11)Dancing: Dancing was equally popular and pursued with remarkable zeal. It had developed its own technique. It was a necessary corollary to music, so much so that it was difficult to imagine a music party unaccompanied by dancing. Dancers had their own peculiar dresses, suiting their arts. There were regular dancing girls who could be engaged for music parties. The Devadasis are too well known to call for a special notice.

Music, in short, was most popular in Muslim India, more than we are led to believe. One reason for its popularity may be found in the fact that a vast majority of Indian Muslims were originally Hindus or off-spring of Hindus, who were too fond of it to give it up after embracing Islam, with the result that the art imperceptibly permeated Muslim ranks and became widely popular.

Conclusion:

Therefore to conclude we can say that political topics such as the State and the system of administration; social subjects such as slavery, status of woman, Pardah system, games and recreations, feasts and festivals, etc.; social legislation, aiming at the suppression of Sati and infanticide among the Hindus and of immorality, gambling and drinking among the people in general; some of the teachings of Islam and their influence on Hindu religious thought and practice; and some economic features such as encouragement of famine relief, construction of canals and well for purposes of irrigation, etc. are some other subjects of interest and importance which bring out the culture of Indian Muslim kings and their contributions to the cultural heritage of India. The achievements of Muslim kings in various departments of life may not be equal to those of their preceptors of Arabia, but they were certainly, superior to those of the contemporary crowned heads of other countries. The fact that they were able to establish their rule in a country so rich in resources and inhabited by such warlike races as the Rajputs and govern it with remarkable success for so many centuries with the co-operation and support, without offending the susceptibilities or provoking any reaction of the people over whom they ruled is a glowing tribute to the refined side of their file and a good testimony to the national character of their government. It will be only when the annals of their history are stripped of the passion and prejudice of generations and purged of the communal hatred they have been stored with that their noble efforts at establishing peace and a popular government, based on the acquiescent good-will of the people of all classes and creeds, in a disturbed and caste-ridden country, will be appreciated and their real places in history determined.

So with this we come to the end of this lecture and I hope by this time you might have got a brief but clear picture about the cultural contributions of the Mughal rulers. Thank you.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.14

Lecture Title - Kala-The Art Activity

Script

Introduction

Kala or Art connotes making or doing, essentially indicating a human activity. Doing or making pre-supposes a doer or maker with one or more objects. '*Kalakar*' '*kal*' is indicative of time and also machine and '*kar*' means doing work with hands. There is an urge that arises in every man and animal. This urge is to create and communicate through the creation. But there is a stark difference between the human and animal in their communication or expression. A bee can identify nectar and might communicate it to the other fellow bees for example but they cannot tell the direction by left or right turns.

Human emotions are replete with sentiments of pathos, joy, sympathy, etc. Man relates to his surroundings and the society in which he is brought up. The art activity is dependent upon the faculties of the mind not in isolation from the surrounding environment. The five sense organs in the body: The eyes, the nose, the mouth, the ears and the skin help man to observe with keen perception. The five elements of nature help the artist to enhance the moments of realization or perception. This encourages him to understand not alone himself but things around him and adjust to the world accordingly. At the outset it would be essential to differentiate between the folk artist and the craftsman. They were understood as one in traditional manner. The folk artist is generally a craftsman and his activity is mainly the production of utility objects. Folk artist has cumulative originality he might treat his subject often with innovation. A noted Art Historian Kramrisch Stella has described two kinds of Folk arts: 'time bound and the timeless.' The later are known to be repetitive and ritualistic. The Folk artists have a lively imagination and keep their forms simple and bold. Heroes and Heroines are more emphasized. The selection of colors is essentially bright. Shading too is eliminated and flat filling of colors is done. There is seen an exaggeration of gesture and expression. Repetitive lines, dots, form and colors is seen which emerges from the play of the sub-conscious mind and adds rhythm to the composed work. The folk artist takes no formal training but works through instinct. For example an artist might use blue color and a folk artist might use blue color but for an artist to use blue color there is no taboo on using the blue color. Jaya Appaswamy a noted Art Historian feels that 'The craftsman can make similar things over and over though he can also be innovative now and then.'

Literary Texts:

The *Vishnudharmottaram* states the fundamentals on Indian Art that need to be highlighted and states clearly that 'to be able to appreciate painting one must know the principles of *nritta* dance for the understanding of the later one must know the art of *atodya* acting, to appreciate that one must know the art of *gita song* and so on. The process in painting is more mental than physical. The first known woman artist in Ancient Indian art is understood as Chitrlekha. Usha she dreams, she tells chitrlekha of how she dreams of Anirudha and the birth of Anirudha, the princess dreams of Prince Anirudha as a handsome young man. In her description of what she had seen in her dream the birth of Anirudha, the Prince takes place with the mental concentration of Chitrlekha appears in front of the canvas. The birth of Anirudha in dream. The artist could interpret the dream through her forms and infuse the right content into the image. Thus came about the painting from not alone imagination but also emotional and intellectual thought process.

The creative imagination occupies an important role where the description at one end is reciprocated by rendering words into lines, colors and form on the other. Poet Kalidasa's in many of his *kavyas* on how an artist would conceive a painting. Shakuntala was created by the mental *rupachehaya* of Brahma who first drew her and subsequently endowed her with life. This art work is the first touch of creativity. A complete replica appears on the canvas. This infusion of life is what an artist does on the canvas. Artist's creative endeavor and critic's appreciation is shown by Kalidasa where Dushyanta is both a painter and a critic. He is known to paint her portrait from the reserves of his memory. The painting ought to have a living spark about it which is the very secret of the artistic process. To understand the word living spark a few examples are: At another instance the elephants are seen bathing in a lotus pond as depicted as murals, a lion attacks it with the claws taking him as real. A parrot is shown talking to the images of men and women on the wall taking them as real, etc. It is so realistic, this parrot that appears to be talking to the images. As if he is in communication with the images. In Meghaduta in a separation of one year the mental portrait she draws of her Lord is created by her imagination. The Yaksini in Meghaduta of Kalidasa was supposed to be painting a mental portrait of her Lord and the role of heart, hand and mind. The same idea is manifested in Malavikagnimitram when looking at the *Nayika* in life the king felt that she looked even more charming than her image. In *Kamasutra* through the Shadanga theory or six limbs of Indian art, *Rupa Bheda*, *Pramana*, *Lavanya Yojanam*, *Bhava* and the expression through Varnika Bhanga how the artist has learnt yet unlearnt what he has learnt and he works on the canvas, highlights the rendering of a painting and Manasollasa by Somesvara defines it as an image in painting which follows the realism of a *pratibimba* (reflection) in the mirror. The image looking into the mirror, the *Nayika* when she looks into the mirror and the projection of the artist looking into the mirror is what is seen as the *pratibimbha*. The self same image when an artist feels while creating art and

Sthaviravali charita too agrees to *adarsa-pratibimbha*.

What is to be understood here is that painting is the way artist perceives the subject through his eyes and with his keen perception and contemplation of the

subject brings forth a work that has perfectly independent identity. It is not only the eye for an artist which are important but it is his eyes, heart, hand and his complete system that fows with energy in the work of art. It might not be a work of art at that stage but it is the best of his that he is giving. The society plays an important role. It is not learnt art but his creativity. The work needs to give rise to *Rasa* or a pleasant feeling. Kalidasa in *Malavikagnimitram* calls Malvika's eyes as *nayanmadhu* (honey for eyes) to attract Agnimitra. Eye contact is very special. It could be maddening. *Sudraka's Mrichchhakatika* and

Bhasa's Svapnavasavadattam too emphasizes this aspect.

Creation is dynamic as it is beset with an urge to express. Communication is an important element in the theory of art, the complexity of this element varies from art to art. In an art like music, communication has no independent status and is dependent upon the artist. If the artist stops singing it leaves an impression on the mind of the audience. In arts like painting and sculpture it takes the form of an object and has an independent existence. Dramatic element in painting was derived by exaggerated postures and the human figure was derived from idealized form. One has to be self-possessed for achieving the same. Meaning should be properly expressed by means of bodily postures. As is understood from the term '*vapur visesha*' (from

Kumarasambhava). *Kumarasambhava* is a text which relates to the love of

Parvati and *Siva*. Where *Kama* is to shoot an arrow of love and *Siva* opening his third eye to destroy *kama*. *Rati* wife of *Kama* comes to *Parvati* for birth of *Kama* as she will be lonely otherwise. *Parvati* promises *Rati* coming back of *Kama* at

Vasantan and '*rupa visesha*' (from *Malavikagnimitram*). Both the communication in poetry and ordinary language are dependent on the spoken or written symbols. Removed from the stage Drama too is a form of poetry. Only the stage part (*prayoga*) transforms *Nataka* into *Natya*.

Niharranjan Ray, a prolific writer says-'The maker creates according to his world- view of things, his inner desire (*kama*) and his understanding of the nature and character of the object or objects.' He is supposedly the one to discipline and organize things in a way that the produced object is neither solely him, nor the material alone but a third entity. Art activity would encompass the inert, inanimate mater like the words, lines, colors, surfaces, volumes, stone, wood, metal, etc. and animate beings like men and animals. Art activity therefore deals with the question of inter- relationship of firstly subject and object and secondly inert, object and form. Subject and object are mutually dependent.

The need for man to make art is because of the biological urge to create (*Kama*). *Kama* is the germinal seat of all creative activities. When man wishes to communicate his emotions, desires, feelings, passions, visions, dreams, ideas, images, etc to his

fellow beings the creative side takes over. His communication is through words and sounds (music, poetry and literature), gestures and movements (dance and drama), lines, colors, surfaces, depths, volumes, tones, touch, etc. (sculpture, painting and architecture) comes to life. The level of satiation should be at the level of the one who creates it and the one who receives it as a spectator. What is being communicated must be meaningful. The communication need not be at the level of the senses but must penetrate deep at the intrinsic level. The mode and manner of communication determines the form and the content of communication.

The biological urge for communication is present in both animals and man. Man is differentiated from an animal by his faculties of physical and psychic properties and a conscious mind. Art is a moral activity of a social man and works for the improvement of the human species other than producing species of its kind. Art activity brings about order and discipline to the objects that are chaotic and disorganized. This semblance in day-to-day life adds rhythm and aesthetics in life. This is where the role of balance, harmony, rhythm, proportion, etc. referred to as the Principles of Art. is seen that enriches the human personality.

Art does not in any way imitate nature. The artist does represent it in his own style but copying is not what he does. The subject and object undergo a transformation and it is not possible for the artist to imitate nature. The artist has a profound influence of his surroundings, society and nature and that makes him take references for his representation. When we take a look upon the art work this reference picked up by the artist makes it a part of the social activity. Nature plays an important role in art. The *chitrasutra* by *Vishnudharmottara* refers to the ideal way of depiction of the sky, clouds are fluffy are full of water, mountains conical in form and in vermilion tones, trees, water bodies with fish and tortoise which jump and movement should be shown in water, land, birds, etc. The depiction of different seasons like *Vasanta Ritu* ideally should include cuckoos, bees and blossoming trees; the summer season to be shown with strong shades in the painting and animals resting under the shady trees, water ponds to be shown nearly dried up and buffaloes with smeared mud on their legs in red crimson hues, etc. Chitrakala, Chitra salas and painted chambers are known to have existed in palaces from several literary sources that show how the artist was known to the intricacies of depiction of each object in his painting. *Vishnudharmottara* observes in Chitrasutra, if an artist can draw waves, flaming fire, smoke, fog and clouds, etc. moving in the wind he is an expert painter. The master praises the line, while connoisseur appreciates the bearing, ladies like decoration while the mass is carried away by colors. The classification of portraits into *viddha*, *aviddha* and *rasacitra* points to the truth. A copy of nature like reflection in mirror is *Viddha*, an imagined form is *aviddha* and the mere sight of it that evokes Rasa of *Srngara* is *rasacitra*.

The Aesthetic Experience

The aesthetic experience according to Niharranjan Ray-‘is the experience of intrinsic perception, through intent concentration (*yoga*, *dhyana*) to an object or situation.’ The levels of understanding may vary from person to person. Secondly ‘the active process

of intent concentration is dependent upon complete detachment from practical action, complete disinterestedness from any practical ends of life and certain kind of physical distancing. It is known to have the same quality of joy and delight arising of tasting the *Brahman* or of copulation of the sexes. The experience is assumed to bring about certain psychical and physiological transformation in the perceiver. *Rasa* experience is the quintessence of aesthetic experience. *Bhava* is the given state of being. Both are essential to understand the aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience is an end in itself; it is no means to any further end. The acquiring of knowledge cannot be ruled out and keen intrinsic perception is essential.

The gaining of this aesthetic experience evokes the desire in the creative mind to share his experience with others and thus communicate these desires to others as part of the social structure. Aesthetic experience is based primarily on human emotions. It is essentially pleasurable. Mostly free from sensual elements. The aesthetic experience is a state of transcendental joy or a state of self fulfillment or sublimated emotions. It is not possible to conceive a form of beauty without some threads of emotional association. Yet the artistic emotions are distinct from the human emotions and the two cannot be identical under any circumstance. Aesthetic pleasure is kind of psycho-physical pleasure.

Between the Aesthetic experience and the making of the objective phase a few points need to be kept in mind: The sensitivity of the perceiver is more heightened and sharpened than that of others; The personality that is directly dependent upon the social order in which he was brought up; Technical process, his ideas and visions and his creative process; The process of articulation is long when an artist expands and deepens his imagination, evolves his technique and clarifies his aesthetic vision. Once the artist achieves this, his creative imagination, the depth of his personality, his ideas, visions, images, etc. are enhanced with his skill and he objectifies them. The form is the shape that can be abstract, geometrical or at random enclosing some area but ideas, visions, images, symbols, feelings, and emotions go to constitute the content of art.

There is nature outside the mind of man. When the mind with sensibility perceives nature, it not only receives impression as in a mirror but transforms according to his temperament. When this aesthetic sensibility becomes creative such creation presupposes value. The end value *paramapurusharatha* is nothing less than *moksha* or emancipation, *dharma* or moral good, *artha* or wealth and *kama* or pleasure. Human experience can be divided into three broad categories: sensual, mental and intellectual. In Bhavabhuti's words 'I cannot determine whether it is pleasure or pain, whether stupor or sleep whether working of poison or intoxication: at every touch of thing a certain sensation comes upon me which stupefying all my senses, now bewilders my consciousness, now paralyzes it.' Thus aesthetic experience is defined as a complex experience, pleasant in essence in which the emotional and intellectual elements are blended in subtle harmony.

If we look at the animals depicted in the Indus Valley Culture we observe that they not alone appear as symbols but are entities in real life, animated by and effusive of their

inner life force. In the Mauryan Period we find lion back to back, which is infused with the energy of the artist. We can find the main, which has been shown in conglomerating from sand that is infused with energy. In Sanskasia lion capital and Lauriya Nandangarh show the same energy. In the later Gupta period the images of Ganga and Yamuna with *makkar* and tortoise show a similar energy. Their mass and volume surges from within infused with the form and character of living organism. This very ancient belief gave rise to the concept of tortoise as a cosmogonic power identified with *Prajapati*-the creator or the avatar of Lord Vishnu. Vedic literature incorporates myths and legends relating to animals. The Rig Vedic poet had revealed in his superb and inimitable manner of beauty of Nature and Man. The *Brahmana* conceived the whole creation, a brilliant piece of Divine manifestation of beauty.

Conclusion

The large-scale technological-industrial civilization of today has posed a problem to contemporary art activity. It is leading ultimately to alienation of souls and hence to dehumanization of art. De-humanization of Art is a negation. However unsocial an artist may be he cannot escape being conditioned by the social order in which he finds himself. He is a connection between the tradition and inheritance, contemporary challenges and responses, dreams and visions. Art indeed is a reflection of the society and freedom exercised by the artist in projection of it with his sincere efforts. What needs to be understood in conclusion here is that Art does not grow in a vacuum. It derives its inspiration from the culture and society around it and the elements of art like the line, form, color, texture and the principles of art Harmony, Rhythm, perspective one takes, proportion and foreshortening. What is to be understood is to learn to unlearn and what is created at the end of it is the Art Activity. It is the creation of the inner most expression of telling the truth what an artist feels from within and what an artist projects on the canvas with full heart and energy. Thank You.

Paper Name- Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.15

Lecture Title - India Under Mauryan Rule

Script

Hello students!

Today in this particular lecture we aim to encase Mauryan Period in a wider perspective, which would help us to study the history and cultural development during Mauryan rule in India.

The Mauryan Period constitutes a distinctive landmark in the history and cultural development of India. This period was marked not only by the blossoming of culture and arts, the growth of the economy and increased contacts with other countries, but also by the formation of a unified state, the first in Indian history, which incorporated a greater part of the Indian subcontinent and some adjacent regions. It is no accident that the Lion Capital of Sarnath, bearing the edicts of Mauryan King Ashoka inscribed over two thousand years ago, has become the National emblem of the Republic of India.

It was in the Mauryan Period that the basic features of social structure, the Varna and caste system, and major institute of ancient Indian society and state emerged and took shape. A number of religious and philosophical trends developed; including Buddhism, which was gradually transformed from sectarian monastic teaching into one of the world's three great religions.

Significance:

The Mauryan Empire was one of the largest states not only in ancient India but also perhaps in the whole of the ancient Orient. Within its frame work it united a great number of peoples and tribes which differed from one another in ethnological and linguistic respects, which were at different cultural levels subscribed to different creeds, and followed different customs and traditions. So this long historical Mauryan Period is associated with important changes in polity, society and economy and to grasp these changes one need to examine the main trends of development of Mauryan Period.

Subject Matter:

In the history of India, the Mauryan dynasty is the first historical dynasty; about which definite historical knowledge is available. It was the first time that the rulers of this dynasty gave the country its long needed unity and began to administer India systematically. The founder of this dynasty was Chandragupta Maurya, who probably

named his dynasty as Maurya, after the name of his mother, Mura. Chandragupta liberated his country from the foreign rule and laid the foundation of a vast empire. His grandson, Ashoka, by his parental treatment towards his subjects made not only his own name and that of his dynasty immortal, but also left a living example of public service before his successors.

We seek information about the social, religious and economic conditions of the people in the Mauryan period from Megasthenes' account, Kautilya's Arthashastra, Jain and Buddhist texts and Ashoka's rock and pillar inscription.

Social and Religious Conditions:

The people were happy and prosperous on the whole they were self-sufficient. There was a high standard of social and personal morality among the Indians of his times. The whole Hindu society was based on the caste system Indian society was divided into seven classes. These list as philosophers, farmers, soldiers, herdsman, artisan, magistrates and councilors. The role of women in Mauryan society is of some significance. It was taken for granted that their position was subordinate to that of the men. The birth of a son was not necessary to Buddhist ritual as it was to Hindu ritual.

Administration:

The Empire was divided into four provinces, with the imperial capital at Pataliputra. From Ashokan edicts, the names of the four provincial capitals are Tosali (in the east), Ujjain (in the west), Suvarnagiri (in the south), and Taxila (in the north). The head of the provincial administration was the *Kumara* (royal prince), who governed the provinces as king's representative. The *kumara* was assisted by Mahamatyas and council of ministers. This organizational structure was reflected at the imperial level with the Emperor and his *Mantriparishad* (Council of Ministers).

Historians theorize that the organization of the Empire was in line with the extensive bureaucracy described by Kautilya in the Arthashastra: a sophisticated civil service governed everything from municipal hygiene to international trade. The expansion and defense of the empire was made possible by what appears to have been the largest standing army of its time.

Religious Condition:

The Indian society was divided into three sections in respect of religion – Hindu, Jain and Buddhist.

Hinduism was the major religion at the time of inception of the empire, Hindu priests and ministers used to be an important part of the emperor's court, like Chanakya. Even after embracing Buddhism, Ashoka retained the membership of Hindu Brahmana priests and ministers

in his court. Mauryan society began embracing the philosophy of *ahimsa*, and given the increased prosperity and improved law enforcement, crime and internal conflicts reduced dramatically. Also greatly discouraged was the caste system and orthodox discrimination, as Mauryans began to absorb the ideals and values of Jain and Buddhist teachings along with traditional Vedic Hindu teachings.

Ashoka initially practiced Hinduism but later embraced Buddhism; following the Kalinga War, he renounced expansionism and aggression, and the harsher injunctions of the *Arthashastra* on the use of force, intensive policing, and ruthless measures for tax collection and against rebels. He is believed to have built as many as 84,000 stupas across India and he even increased the popularity of Buddhism in Afghanistan, Thailand and North Asia including Siberia.

It is said that Emperor Chandragupta Maurya embraced Jainism after retiring. At an older age, Chandragupta renounced his throne and material possessions to join a wandering group of Jain monks. Further Samprat, the grandson of Ashoka also embraced Jainism. Thus Chandragupta and Samprat are credited for the spread of Jainism in South India. Lakhs of temples & stupas were erected during their reign.

Economic Condition, Amusements and Education

For the first time in South Asia, political unity and military security allowed for a common economic system and enhanced trade and commerce, with increased agricultural productivity. The previous situation involving hundreds of kingdoms, many small armies, powerful regional chieftains, and internal warfare, gave way to a disciplined central authority. Farmers were freed of tax and crop collection burdens from regional kings, paying instead to a nationally administered and strict-but-fair system of taxation as advised by the principles in the *Arthashastra*. Chandragupta Maurya established a single currency across India, and a network of regional governors and administrators and a civil service provided justice and security for merchants, farmers and traders. The Mauryan army wiped out many gangs of bandits, regional private armies, and powerful chieftains who sought to impose their own supremacy in small areas. Although regimental in revenue collection, Maurya also sponsored many public works and waterways to enhance productivity, while internal trade in India expanded greatly due to newfound political unity and internal peace. Under the Indo-Greek friendship treaty, and during Ashoka's reign, an international network of trade expanded.

Amusements:

People celebrated many festivals and rejoiced considerably. The change of seasons was always an occasion to be celebrated with appropriate amusements and gatherings, singings, dancing and instrumental music were widely cultivated. Among the sixty four arts which a well-educated man was supposed to know, dancing and music ranked high.

Education:

The Mauryan rulers gave much attention to the spread of education also. Asoka's edicts were written on rocks and pillars put up on important road and very prominent at that

time the majority of the population was literate. The 'Gurukulas' and monasteries were set up many places to teach the people and propagate education. The pupils stayed with their 'gurus' (teachers) to receive education. While at the residence of the guru they received education they served the 'guru' by performing domestic duties of his household. In these 'Gurukulas' and monasteries were taught all subjects like the Vedas, the Puranas, Mathematics, Astronomy, Arthashastra, and Politics etc. Taxila was the oldest and the most famous 'Vidyalyaya' (college) of ancient India. Even 500 or 600 years before the Mauryan Period it was considered an important university. The Mauryan rulers helped this university all the more and greatly raised its importance. The fame and reputation of Taxila University had spread all over the country as well as in foreign land. This university held the same position in India at that time which Oxford and Cambridge have in England now a days.

The 'Arthashastra' by Kautilya, the 'Kalpa-Sutra', by Bhadrabahu, and many 'Griha Sutas' as well as 'Dharma-Sutas' were composed in this period. The most prominent of all these is the Arthashastra by Kautilya which is a very valuable source of information about the government and administration of that time. Some of the historians are of the view that some parts of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata were also compiled in this period. The important book of Buddhism, 'Katha Vathu' in Pali and many reputed books of Jainism, as 'Bhagwat Sutra', 'Vaikalika', 'Acharang-Sutra' etc. was also written in the Mauryan period.

The Mauryan Art and Decline of the Mauryans:

The Mauryan art represented an important transition in Indian art from use of wood to stone. According to Niharjan Ray, the sum total of the Mauryan treasury of art include the remains of the royal palace and the city of Pataliputra, a monolithic rail at Sarnath, the *Bodhimandala* or the altar resting on four pillars at Bodhgaya, the excavated Chaitya-halls in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills of Gaya including the Sudama cave bearing the inscription dated the 12th regional year of Ashoka, the non-edict bearing and edict bearing pillars, the animal sculptures crowning the pillars with animal and vegetal reliefs decorating the abaci of the capitals and the front half of the representation of an elephant carved out in the round from a live rock at Dhauri.

Further Coomaraswamy was of the view that the Mauryan art may be said to exhibit three main phases. The first phase was the continuation of the Pre-Mauryan tradition, which is found in some instances to the representation of the Vedic deities (the most significant examples are the reliefs of Surya and Indra at the Bhaja Caves). The second phase was the court art of Ashoka, typically found in the monolithic columns on which his edicts are inscribed and the third phase was the beginning of brick and stone architecture, as in the case of the original stupa at Sanchi, the small monolithic rail at Sanchi and the Lomash Rishi cave in the Barabar Caves, with its ornamented facade, reproducing the forms of wooden structure.

Talking about architecture, the period marked a second transition to use of brick and stone; wood was still the material of choice. Megasthenes mentions that the capital city of Pataliputra was encircled by a massive timber-palisade, pierced by loopholes through

which archers could shoot. It had sixty-four gates and 570 towers. According to Strabo, the gilded pillars of the palace were adorned with golden vines and silver birds. The palace stood in an extensive park studded with fishponds. It was furnished with a great variety of ornamental trees and shrubs. Excavations carried out by Spooner and Waddell have brought to light remains of huge wooden buildings at Bulandibagh and Kumrahar, both near Patna. The remains of one of the buildings, a 80 pillared hall at Kumrahar are of particular significance. Out of 80 stone columns, that once stood on a wooden platform and supported a wooden roof, Spooner was able to discover the entire lower part of at least one in almost perfect conditions. It is more or less similar to an Ashokan pillar, smooth, polished and made of grey Chunar sandstone.

This period also marked a creative and impressive step forward in Indian sculpting. Although some would consider the Pillars of Ashoka as architecture, owing to their freestanding nature and elaborately carved animal capitals most of the art historians consider them as the examples of sculpture. Coomaraswamy distinguishes between court art and a more popular art during the Mauryan period. Court art is represented by the pillars and their capitals. Popular art is represented by the works of the local sculptors like chauri-bearer from Didarganj.

Discussing the court art first the Mauryan pillars were carved in two types of stone quarried from Chunar near Varanasi. The uniformity of style in the pillar capitals suggests that they were all sculpted by craftsmen from the same region. They were given a fine polish characteristic of Mauryan sculpture. These pillars were mainly erected in the Gangetic plains. They were inscribed with edicts of Ashoka on Dharma or righteousness. The animal capital is a finely carved life like representation. Noteworthy are the lion capital of Sarnath, the bull capital of Rampurva and the lion capital of Lauria Nandangarh. Much speculation has been made about the similarity between these capitals and Achaemenid works.

Apart from the mention of court art there are enough evidences of popular art during the Mauryan Period. The work of local sculptors illustrated the popular art of the Mauryan period. This consisted of sculpture which may not probably was not commissioned by the emperor. The patrons of the popular art were the local governors and the more well to do subjects. It is represented by figures such as the female figure of Besnagar, the male figure of Parkham and the whisk-bearer from Didarganj. Technically they are fashioned with less skill than the pillar capitals and they express a considerable earthiness and physical vitality. Terracotta objects of various sizes have also been found at Mauryan sites. Some appear to have been made from molds, yet there is little duplication. Terracotta's from Taxila consists of primitive idols, votive reliefs with deities, toys dice, ornaments and beads. Among the ornaments were round medallions, similar to the *bullae* worn by Roman boys. Ringstones probably associated with a fertility cult have also been found in some quantity. Terracotta images of folk gods and goddesses, which have been found having an earthy charm.

Mauryan art is also notable for a refinement in pottery Use of the potter's wheel became universal. The pottery associated with Mauryan period consists of many types of ware. But the most highly developed technique is seen in a special type of pottery known as

the Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW), which was the hallmark of Mauryan pottery. The NBP ware is made of finely levigated alluvial clay, which when seen in section is usually of a grey and sometimes of a red hue. It has a brilliantly burnished dressing of the quality of a glaze, which ranges from a jet black to a deep grey or a metallic steel blue. This ware was used largely for dishes and small bowls.

Another art piece of economic importance is the coins. The coins issued by the Mauryans are mostly silver and a few copper pieces of metal in various shapes, sizes and weights and which have one or more symbols punched on them. The most common symbols are the elephant, the tree in railing symbol and the mountain. The technique of producing such coins was generally that the metal was cut first and then the device was punched. These symbols are said to have either represented the Royal insignia or the symbol of the local guild that struck the coin.

The Decline of the Mauryans:

The exact cause of the rapid decline of the Maurya dynasty (within fifty years of Ashoka's reign) is now known. Many factors must have contributed to the final overthrow. One reason could be that Ashoka, in his enthusiasm, typical of the newly converted, to follow the tenets of Buddhism, issued a new set of rulers for the public, such as the ban on animal sacrifices, samajams (social gatherings) and other popular pastimes and festivals. This deprived the people of the freedom to worship in the customary manner their favourite deities especially the grama devatas (village gods). Furthermore, those who carried out Ashoka's orders in the various provinces were strict to the point of tyranny; so that even during Ashoka's reign we hear of rebellions being put down. This repression of the local social customs ended with the assassination of the Mauryan King Brihadratha by his commander-in-chief Pushyamitra Sunga, a Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan.

With the Sungas on the throne (c. 188 B.C. 76 B.C.), the people could return to their old customs and honor their village and nature deities, whom they represented with much skill and tender care, as seen in the monuments at Bharbhut and Bodhgaya. Perhaps this accounts for the profusion of yaksa and yaksini figures so soon after the fall of the Mauryan Empire. The Sungas, although Brahmans by faith, did not persecute the Buddhists, with the result that many Buddhist monuments were erected during this period.

Conclusion

Thus the rise of the Great Mauryan Empire was a unique event in the History of India. It was the first Empire in the Indian sub-continent came into existence by unifying the innumerable fragments of distracted territory. Great personalities have emerged as the rulers have perfected every field. Political affairs were carried in an outstanding way; worldwide religious movements were initiated and many other achievements of which the effects are still felt. Kautilya was generally considered to be the architect of the first Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta's rise to power as his Arthashastra was the most important source for the study of Mauryan Empire.

Therefore to conclude the vastness of the Mughal Empire we can say that with all its superb administration, cordial social conditions, open religious approach, high level of education, urban, conscious and civilized quality, its advanced power of visualization and full knowledge and comprehension of the third dimension in case of its court art, and abundant popular art, all together constitutes to an magnificent era in the Indian History. **Thank you.**

Paper Name-Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.16

Lecture Title- Mauryan Pillars

Script

Introduction:

Hello students!

Today we are going to talk about the Mauryan Pillars with the aim of understanding the construction and purpose behind the erection of these pillars.

The Mauryan Empire is well known for its remarkable achievements in the fields of art, architecture, literature as well as culture. The Mauryan pillars are considered to be one of the key works as well as prominent features marking the Mauryan supremacy. These pillars, till today, stand as a testimony to the rich architecture which flourished during the reign of this empire.

Ashoka ascended to the throne in 269 BC inheriting the empire established by his grandfather Chandragupta Maurya. Ashoka was reputedly a dictator at the onset of his reign. Eight years after his accession he campaigned in Kalinga where in his own words, "a hundred and fifty thousand people were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and as many as that perished..." After this event Ashoka adapted to Buddhism in regret for the loss of so many lives. Buddhism didn't become a state religion but with Ashoka's support it spread rapidly. The inscriptions on the pillars described edicts about morality based on Buddhist doctrines.

The Mauryan pillars or pillars of Ashoka also known as lats are a series of columns dispersed throughout the northern Indian subcontinent, erected or at least inscribed with edicts by the Mauryan king Ashoka during his reign in the 3rd century BC. Originally, there must have been many pillars but only nineteen survive with inscriptions. Many are preserved in a fragmented state. Averaging between forty and fifty feet in height, and weighing up to fifty tons each, all the pillars were quarried at Chunar, just south of Varanasi and dragged, sometimes hundreds of miles, to where they were erected.

Significance:

The significance of the pillars is not difficult to determine. The origin of the pillar as a structure goes back to the monolith of the prehistoric period. These were generally cut from a single block of stone and stood in an enclosure which was regarded as sacred. Sometimes they were worshipped as a phallic emblem or linga. The advantage of inscribing a text on such a pillar was that of associating the text with a place of importance. The Mauryan Pillars therefore serve as the best examples of the use of art for the purpose of propagating religion through the medium of the edicts inscribed on them.

Leaving behind their Buddhistic significance the Ashokan pillars are expressive of a very ancient widespread belief, and were in the first instance inspired by man worshipping among the groves and great trees of the forest. With the reverence for trees came veneration for huge stones and boulders, the sacred and mystical character given to them being but a prelude to shaping them into upright forms. Columns were gods in early days and the forerunner of the temples. Apart from this the terrific level of craftsmanship itself speaks volumes about the greatness of the Mauryan period.

Subject Matter: The highly polished, tall and well-proportioned columns with slightly tapering monolithic shafts, and standing free in space and complete and independent by themselves are admittedly the best representatives of the court art of the Mauryas. The pillars set up by Ashoka furnish the finest remains of the Mauryan art. Here it is important to mention the evolution of these outstanding structures.

Evolution of the Ashokan Pillars

Here it is important to mention the evolution of these outstanding structures. Possessed of great ideals, as Ashoka's policy throughout plainly indicates, one of this ruler's most earnest desires appears to have been to institute a permanent record of the establishment of the Buddhist faith within his widely-spread dominions. A craving for a symbol of stability occurs in the early evolution of most nations, a need for some substantial link which holds them to the soil and is a stage in the development of racial self-consciousness. This thought might be the reason behind initiating the carving of his famous edicts on the living rocks, proclaiming as they do, in plain terms that his efforts should result in the long endurance of the Good Law. These inscriptions, although many have survived, were not, however, sufficiently striking to suit his purpose; what was evidently in his progressive mind was the creation of a memorial of such a permanent nature that it would outlast time itself. With this in view he caused to be raised in many parts of his empire Stupas, which were circular tumuli of brick, sacred mounds commemorative of the Buddha. But as the Stupa from the nature of its structure was subject to disintegration owing to the rigours of the climate, it became necessary for the Mauryan Emperor to seek for some still more lasting method of achieving his purpose. Aware no doubt that the other nations were using stone, he began therefore to think in stone and in the course of time an impressive monument symbolizing the creed was devised in the form of a pillar, a lofty free-standing monolithic column, erected on a site especially selected on account of its sacred associations. A number of these Ashokan pillars were distributed over a wide area and a few bear ordinances inscribed in a manner similar to the edicts on the surfaces of the rock.

Discovery:

The first Pillar of Ashoka was found in the 16th century by Thomas Coryat in the ruins of ancient Delhi. Initially he assumed that from the way it glowed that it was made of brass, but on closer examination he realized it was made of highly polished sandstone with upright script that resembled a form of Greek. In the 1830s James Prinsep began to decipher them with the help of Captain Edward Smith and George Turnour. They determined that the script referred to King Piyadasi which was also the epithet of an Indian ruler known as Ashoka who came to the throne 218 years after Buddha's enlightenment. Scholars have since found 150 of Ashoka's

inscriptions, carved into the face of rocks or on stone pillars marking out a domain that stretched across northern India and south below the central plateau of the Deccan. These pillars were placed in strategic sites near border cities and trade routes.

Material used for their construction: These pillars are fashioned out of grey Chunar sandstone and stand directly on the ground without any masonry platform or base, having been kept in position by being simply buried in the ground, sometimes fixed to a socket hole in the middle of a large undressed block of stone. The shafts, plain and circular in section, have each a slight taper upwards. Each is chiseled out of a single block of stone, the capital surmounting it being of another piece and fixed to the top of the shaft by means of a copper dowel.

Various parts: The capital is divided into three sections, namely a double-curved inverted lotus (commonly known as the `Persepolitan bell`: Agarwala recognizes in this motif an inverted purna-ghata) surmounted by an abacus or socle that supports an animal sculpture or sculptures in the round. The entire column with the capital is distinguished by a precision of modeling and bears on the finished surface a highly lustrous polish the composition of which is still a matter for investigation. Several mouldings of variable designs are usually introduced to render the transition from the shaft to the capital easy and graceful. -- In this connection it may not be out of place to refer to the possibility that some of these pillars might have been standing from before the days of Ashoka. This is suggested by the Rupnath and the Sassaram edicts and Pillar edicts No. VII where Ashoka says that rescripts of the law of piety should be engraved on rocks and on stone pillars (Silathuva) , wherever such pillars might have been standing. It is not impossible, hence, that the idea of the Edict pillars was first suggested to Ashoka by some pre-existing pillars which he also thought of utilizing in his new mission. Indeed, a close examination of some of these pillars clearly indicates them as having been apart from the more well-known Edict Columns.

Description of the pillars - I

The columns that bear the edicts of Ashoka include the two pillars at Delhi (originally located at Meerut and Topra in Haryana and were brought to Delhi during the reign of Firuz Shah Tughluq in 1356), the pillar at Allahabad (is believed as originally located at Kaushambi) and the pillars found at Lauriya-Areraj, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rampurva (with lion capital), Sankasya, Sanchi and Sarnath. The columns bearing dedicatory inscriptions were found in Lumbini and Nigalisagar. The pillars found at Vaishali (with single lion capital) and Rampurva (with bull capital) do not bear any edict. The inscriptions are in Brahmi and Kharoshthi, the earliest examples of deciphered scripts from India.

The most important sculptural remains of the Mauryan period are the capitals and the crowning animal figures on the Ashokan edicts pillars. Some of the Ashokan edicts were carved on already existing pillars, as for example the Basarh-Bakhira (ancient Vaisali) lion pillar where the workmanship is crude and rough. The location of this pillar is contiguous to the site where a Buddhist monastery and a sacred coronation tank stood. Excavations are still underway and several stupas suggesting a far flung campus for the monastery have been discovered. This pillar is different from the earlier Ashokan pillars because it has only one lion capital. The lion faces north, the direction Buddha took on his last voyage. Identification of the site for excavation in

1969 was aided by the fact that this pillar still jutted out of the soil. More such pillars exist in this greater area but they are all devoid of the capital. On stylistic grounds, the figures can be divided into two groups: the sophisticated but conventional lion and the cruder but very powerfully modeled representations of the bull and elephant. The one at Basarh- Bakhira marks the earliest stage in their development; probably it is pre-Ashokan. Compared with the other columns of known Ashokan dates the shaft of this column is heavy and of a shorter proportions, and its workmanship crude and rough. The plain square abacus which is by itself an almost sure indication of an earlier date, has no integral relation with the bell-capital below, and is, moreover, out of proportion. The crowning lion *ærecouchant*Æ, though a free and independent figure, is not only rough and crude in execution, but has not yet evolved a form and appearance so as to make of itself an integrated whole together with the shaft, the capital and the abacus.

Further the elephant at Sankasya and the Rampurva bull illustrate the transition from the Basarh-Bakhira lion to the Lauriya Nandangarh capital. The Sankasya pillar itself shows an improvement in the change from a square to a round abacus, thus making the transition from the capital to the animal more harmonious. The decoration on the abacus and the manner of filling the space between the legs are rather primitive ù probably copies of wooden models.

The Rampurva bull capital shows stylistic similarities with the Sankasya capital. The bull bears a striking resemblance to those on the Indus seals. Though the technique is less sophisticated than in the lion figure , the modeling and form of the animal appears vigorous. The volume, following closely the anatomical details, reveals keen observation of nature and understanding on the animal form. Unfortunately, this naturalistic representation of the bull does not harmonies with the conventional pattern of the abacus. The decoration on the abacus, consisting of rosettes and honeysuckle, appears a little rough.

The lion capitals at Rampurva and Lauriya Nandangarh are chronologically close to the Rampurva bull capital. The Rampurva lion capital resembles an inverted lotus with the petals clearly marked. It retains some of the lustrous polish. A line of geese adorns the round abacus. The crowning statue on top represents a seated lion, with muscles, veins and paws skillfully carved. The uniform curls of the mane shows the schematic repetition of the same design. The whole is represented in a conventional way. On the tall and graceful pillars of Lauriya Nandangarh we see another seated lion. This frequent use of the lion figure could be due to the fact that it symbolized one of the cardinal directions. The lion seems to be uncomfortably fitted into the round abacus, with parts of the body projecting beyond it.

Description of the pillars - II

The quadripartite lion capitals of Sarnath and Sanchi mark the last stage in the evolution. Lion capital at Sarnath is the most celebrated pillar erected at Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh) by Emperor Ashoka circa 250 BC., also known as "Ashoka Columnö. Here, four lions are seated back to back. At present the Column remains in the same place where as Lion Capital is at the Sarnath Museum. This capital consists of an inverted lotus with gently curved petals. On the round abacus above it are high relief carvings of a lion, a galloping horse, an elephant and a bull, separated from each other by a wheel. These animals represents the four points of the compass; the lion north, the horse south, the elephant east, and the bull west, for the Buddhists believed them to be the guardians of the four cardinal points. In this abacus, they symbolize the

continuous movement and unceasing progress of the dharma chakra, destined to spread throughout the world. The freshness and naturalism of the animal figures on the abacus contrast strongly with the four conventionalized lions above. Sitting back to back on top of the abacus, they echo the essential shape of the stylized lotus. Though the rippling curls of the mane, the upturned whiskers and the shape of the lips are conventionalized, the snarling mouth and bare teeth look very real. The leg muscles and paws are powerfully modeled also, and the curved claws seem to express all the native ferocity of the animals. Originally, the lions supported a dharmachakra, the remains of which are still visible on the backs of the animals. The lion heads, with incised parallel lines representing the muzzle, and eyes in a triangular shape, resemble Persian lion figures. Though the sophisticated conception seems to confirm the Achaemenid influence, only experience could have resulted in the advance to naturalism seen in these animals. The Sarnath lion capital no longer serves as the emblem of the Indian Republic.

The Sanchi capital, resembling the one at Sarnath, is even more conventional and stylized. The higher and narrower relief of the abacus frieze eases the transition from the capital to the crowning figures better than at Sarnath.

Again, the animals forming the crowning members of the capitals of the pillars are not particularly associated with Buddhism alone. Lion, either singly or in group of four, appears on the majority of the capitals, elephant on the Sankasya, bull at Rampurwa and in a group of four at Salempur and Horse at Rummindei. These four are also represented round the abacus of the quadri-partite capital at Sarnath.

Some scholars try to find a specific Buddhist association of these animals: lion means the `lion of the Sakya clan` (Sakyasimha); elephant is associated with the legend of the conception of the Buddha; horse with that of the `Great Renunciation`; bull to denote the Buddha who was often addressed as muni-pungava or as Sakya-pungava. These animals are sacred to Brahmanism and, to a certain extent, to Jainism also. The Lauriya Araraj column, which in all probability, was crowned by the figure of Garuda, may be regarded to have a distinct Brahmanical association. In this situation it is difficult to consider these animal capitals in any sectarian context. The view of Agarwala seems to be more convincing. He identifies the lion, the elephant, the bull and the horse as the four `noble` animals (maha ajaneya pasu) held sacred in Indian tradition for a long time past and for a long time after. Raising of such animal standards must have been common and it is not impossible to regard at least some of the Ashokan pillars as but translation in stone of the primitive animals standard.

Besides these animal figures on the pillars, another piece of sculpture, the elephant at Dhauli, carved out of the living rock, strikes an essentially indigenous note quite different from the art traditions of the capitals. The voluminous mass shows plasticity and knowledge of the animal form. The slightly raised right leg and flowing trunk accentuate the animal's forward movement. Compared with this elephant, the lion figure seems too conventional. Stylistically it does not come much latter than the elephant capital at Sankasya. The unconventional Dhauli elephant as well as the Rampurwa bull and Sankasya elephant seems to belong to a different artistic tradition- perhaps that of the Indus valley. These animal forms are not schematic-nascent life seems to stir within them. This indigenous quality saw further development in the subsequent periods of the Sunga and Early Andhra dynasties.

Conclusion:

Thus to conclude we can say that these pillars are the master-pieces of Mauryan Art in the shining polish imparted to them which is supposed to be the despair of modern masons, and in the degree of perfection in which, they were shaped, dressed, and decorated in accordance with the Emperor's design. They carried to a high standard the art of the delineation of natural forms of animals and plants in stone. They are also notable as feats of engineering when it is considered that all these pillars weighing on an average 50 tons, and measuring a height of 50 feet, are all monolithic productions, showing how large masses of rocks were shaped into these pillars, and also how these great weights were handled for the purposes of their transport over distances of several hundreds of miles to their appointed sites at which they were to be located in accordance with the imperial scheme of public welfare which they were intended to serve. For instance, a chain of pillars was called for to indicate the Pilgrims Progress towards the holy lands of Buddhism from Pataliputra to the place of Buddhas nativity.

So with this we come to the end of this lecture and i am sure that by now you must have got a clear picture about the various Mauryan pillars.**Thank you.**

Paper Name- Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.17

Lecture Title- Various differences in Mauryan Pillars

Script

Introduction

Hello Students!

Today we are going to talk about the various differences that are evident in the construction of the Mauryan Pillars about which we have already studied in my earlier lecture titled Mauryan Pillars. And our aim in today's lecture would be to study in detail both the outside and Indian influences on these art pieces also known as Ashokan Pillars. We begin by a brief reference to the source of the culture from which Ashoka drew his inspiration seems to be mentioned. From 500 B.C. and the ensuing 170 years the pulse of Asiatic culture throbbed in what was then the fertile land of Persia, and as a result there developed in the capital cities of that great empire, the nearest to India, a classical art school composed of Pharoic-Hellenic-Iranian elements of a distinctively effective character. This school was probably partially dispersed by Alexander's conquest of Persia together with the downfall of the Achaemenid dynasty in 330 B.C., but the unsettled period which then ensued was rapidly followed by the extension of the Macedonian empire in the east by means of Greek colonies, such as that of Bactria, which brought the full force of Hellenism to the very borders of Mauryan India. What actually happened to the exponents of the original Achaemenid school under such conditions can only be a matter of conjecture but that they and their successors continues to flourish under the intelligent patronage of the Asiatic Greeks, producing works with still more marked Hellenistic features cannot be doubted. It was at this stage of the movement that the Indian emperor Ashoka conceived the project of erecting his imperishable and symbolic monuments to the Buddhist faith, and instinctively turned to the descendants of the workmen who had already shown such proficiency in their construction of the stately palaces of the Persian kings.

To attain his object the Mauryan monarch adopted the common practice of royal art patronage, and brought into his service a group of experienced foreign artists of a sufficiently adaptable nature to put into effect his progressive ideas. Historical instances of such a procedure are numerous, but some of those, which account for the particular character of the Achaemenid art of Eastern Persia and in the course of time of that of the Ashokan School, have a direct bearing on the style, which afterwards appeared in the Buddhist India.

In these circumstances it is not difficult to account for the form and character that the giant pillar and the other lithic productions of the Ashokan period assumed. From

the columned halls reared under the orders of the Achaemenid kings, from their sculptured reliefs and their inscriptions on the rocks, the Indian monarch obtained some of his inspiration, and from the ranks of those who produced them he secured the skill artificers to aid him in his projects. In short it may be presumed with some degree of certainty that, attracted by the emperor's assured patronage, there was eventually gathered in a quarry workshop near Chunar in Bihar a small group of imported workmen trained in Graeco-Persian traditions and engaged to collaborate with a number of selected Indian craftsmen to fashion the first dressed stone objects to be produced on Indian soil. Of the achievements of this composite school established by Ashoka, the freestanding pillars are unquestionably the most notable.

Significance:

Finding expression from wood in another and more lasting material such as dressed-stone is a decisive step in the cultural evolution of the people. But the manner in which this step was taken under Ashoka's direction, and the results it produced are both of more than ordinary significance. Appearing as these sculptured forms do, fully matured, at a time when Indian art was still in its infancy, and without any previous preparation, is a phenomenon, which needs some explanation.

Subject Matter - I

There can be no doubt that the motivation came from outside. The very sudden use of stone and that at once for monumental art of large designs and huge proportions, and the quick process of evolution from primitive to conscious, civilized and cultured form and appearance, from tribal to imperial outlook that is evident in the total effect of the columns point unmistakably in that direction. It has been repeatedly suggested, not without reason that this unnecessary motivation and inspiration came from Iran of the Achaemenid emperor; some have even suggested that Mauryan columns are but Indian adaptations of the Achaemenian prototype. As repeatedly attempts have been made to deny the alleged extent of debt, not again without a certain amount of justice; but few have seriously doubted that west Asiatic art forms in general and Achaemenian impetus and inspiration directly and in particular were at work at the root. Nor against the background of what we know of Mauryan relation with Hellenic East and the Mauryan court ideology and tradition deeply tinged with Achaemenian ideas were such impetus and inspiration unlikely, especially when we take into account the extent of Achaemenian influence on Ashokan epigraphs, his imperial idea and policy and the conception of the Mauryan Pillared Hall. But the differences that separate the Mauryan columns from the Achaemenian ones are also considerable and must not be lost sight of.

The stone columns of the Mauryan Pillared Hall were evidently without capitals whereas the columns of the pillared halls of Persepolis are provided with more or less elaborate capitals. Achaemenian columns stand either on bell shaped bases or on plain rectangular blocks or on plain circular moldings while the independent Mauryan columns have no base at all. The bell form that is used as supporting base in Persian

columns serves as capital in Mauryan ones and makes altogether a different aesthetic effect; and moreover in form, shape and appearance the Mauryan bell, which along with the Achaemenian may have originally been derived from stylized lotus design and which may have been a common art-motif in both Indian and Iranian art-heritage, is a long way off from the Achaemenian bell in which a ring of leaves and petals plays an important part in the decoration of the upper end of the motif and which has no bulge whatsoever in the middle that makes the Mauryan bell so gaily and conspicuous. Mauryan columns are all plain and circular, but evidently they did not adopt the type from Achaemenian inflated ones which had for ordinary purposes been discarded by the Achaemenians themselves. A funeral mound at Lauriya Nandangarh has yielded to the excavator's spade a plain and circular piece of a column carved out of sila wood: such columns are in our literature known as sthuna, and the primitive animal standards were evidently comprised of such sthuna columns. It is not unlikely that the Mauryan shaft was derived from such wooden originals. The assumption derives further support from the fact that Achaemenian shafts are indeed built of separate pieces or segments of stones and evidently present the essential character of the work of a mason, while the Mauryan shaft is once piece, which pertains to the character of the work of a wood-carver or carpenter. The Achaemenian capitals crowned with a cluster of stylized palm leaves after the old Egyptian manner, and formed of either of two semi bulls or unicorns or lions seated back to back, or of an upright or inverted cup, and the whole crowned with projecting double volutes have nothing whatsoever in common with the Mauryan capital which consist as we have seen, of simply a bell formed of stylized lotus-petal. The crowning abacus and the round and independent animal motif of Mauryan columns are also altogether absent from Achaemenian examples.

The result achieved by this almost thorough transformation is altogether different. The Achaemenian column intended invariably as part of a larger architectural conception is composed of much too many component parts presenting harsh contrasts and looking complex and complicated, while the Mauryan column intended to produce the effect of an independent monument at least in its latest and best specimen is simpler, more harmonious in conception and execution and gives the feeling of greater stability, dignity and strength, born perhaps of other primitive and elemental origins.

The capital at Nandangarh, which appears slightly stunted in its proportion, while the abacus and other features are somewhat different, so that it is possible that this particular example was an early and experimental effort. There may be some symbolic connexion between the campaniform capital and the bell (ghanta), as this in a conventional form, was used early in Indian decoration, and it also figures prominently in the temple ritual. But the boldly marked fluting the section of which is unmistakable, has an undoubted foreign origin, exactly similar fluting being not uncommon on Persian and Greek pillars, as may be seen on the capitals of the Ionic temples of Apollo. Above the Ashokan capital is a circular abacus having its broad edge carved with ornamental borders of a special character. On some of these are repetitions of Buddhist emblems, as for example the goose (hamsa), but on the others, as in the

case of the bull capital at Rampurva, there are such well-known conventional motifs as the honeysuckle and palmette, the bead and fillet, and the cable moulding, each one of direct Hellenic extraction.

It is however in the massive Buddhist composition poised above the abacus that the greatest imagination has been shown, and symbolism utilized to its utmost extent. Most of the superstructures consist of figures of animals, each of which has a mythological meaning. Together they symbolize the four quarters of the universe, the elephant being the guardian of the east, the horse of the south, the bull, of the west and the lion of the north. All four animals are carved in relief on the abacus at Sarnath, by far the finest of the entire group, evidently signifying that, although this pillar was primarily associated with the north by its position and conventional group of lions above, it was also intended to commemorate by the addition of the great wheel which these beasts support, the proclamation of the Good Law of the Church of the Four Quarters. Such were the Buddhist interpretations, but not a little of this animal symbolism was drawn, in the first instance, from Vedic sources. The Rig Veda gives the place of honour among all wild beasts to the lion, which roamed in the jungles of India until comparatively recent times, while a swift or galloping horse represented the sun and the bull Indra the sky-god, all of which are illustrated on the abacus of the Sarnath Capital. From this and other evidences it is clear that much of the primitive Buddhist symbolism as expressed in the art was a continuation of the Vedic mythology.

Subject Matter - II

It is somewhat curious that the lions in Mauryan art are always and invariably done in a manner that seems already to have been fixed by convention. Their formal pose and appearance, the rendering of their volume, bold and vigorous but stylized, their plastic conception in one word, and the sense of form as revealed in them are on the whole the same and already pre-determined. The trend of the style is already evident in Basarh-Bakhira lion and it is within the limits of the given trend that the style evolves and advances in treatment and execution. The aesthetic vision and imagination and the attitude and outlook of the artist do not mark any definite change. This is partly true as well of the lion, the horse and the bull on the Sarnath abacus. It raises the presumption that this style and convention came from outside where they were already fixed and well established. The horse on the Sarnath abacus in its movement modeling recalls the two horses in the relief on the Sarcophagus of the Amazons; the vigorously striding lion and the bull recalls well known Achaemenian prototypes of the same style and convention. Even the elephants on the abacus have a distant kinship with the horned elephants on the early coins of the Seleucids, though the Sarnath elephant is much less conventional and shows somewhat a different sense of form and treatment. The aesthetic vision and imagination and the conventional style and fixed expression just spoken of are most evident in the crowning lions. Compared with later figural sculptures in the rounds of Yakshas and their female counterparts or the

reliefs of Bharhut, Sanchi and Bodhgaya, they are represented by these crowning lions belongs to an altogether different world of conception and execution, of style and technique, altogether much more complex, urban and civilized. They have nothing archaic or primitive about them, and the presumption is irresistible that the impetus and inspiration of this art must have come from outside.

Marshall therefore argued for Hellenistic plastic tradition as practiced by Graeco-Bactrian artist. From what we know of the Hellenistic colonies in West Asia and the part they played in Mauryan India, it is possible, nay highly probable, that Hellenistic art and culture played also a very dominant role in Mauryan Art. The Mauryan lions indeed in their aesthetic conception and plastic vision, in their conventional modeling, advanced visualization; feeling or volume and sense of form invariably recall conventional and decadent colonial Greek works of the same art form and design. It is here that we can trace the source of the impetus and inspiration of the conventional art of the crowning lions of Mauryan columns. Here then, in a tradition familiar with lions and bulls and horses, was the convention fixed and determined. It is difficult to say anything about the nationality of the artists of the Maurya court; there is no evidence on the point. But from what has been said above, it is permissible to assume that the Dhauli elephant, the Rampurva bull and perhaps also the Sankissa elephant are works of Indian artist working in contemporary Indian style and tradition, and having a thorough mastery of the third dimension and a full consciousness of the Indian outlook. The crowning lions of the early phases, namely the Basarh-Bakhira and Lauriya Nandangarh examples are also works of Indian artists but tutored in the style and tradition of contemporary Western art; this is marked in the grappling with the problem of form and its precise execution evident in these sculptures. There is decided advance in the Rampurva, Sarnath and Sanchi specimens; this may have been achieved by the same Indian artists working increasing in the direction of contemporary Western art, or by colonial artists of the Hellenistic Orient imported by the Mauryan Court. In any case, they are in these specimens a strong and undeniable Hellenistic stamp that may not have been imprinted by Indian hands.

In sharing the credit for these masterpieces, it is felt that the symbolism and imagination, their spiritual message so to speak, was supplied by the Indian mind while most of the technical skill, together with certain decorative elements, were the work of the imported craftsmen. But the brilliant polish which gives such a finality to the work was the result of Indian thought and Labour, as there is evidence of an indigenous aptitude in this aspect of the stone-cutters' art.

Conclusion:

Thus the relationship of these edict pillars of Ashoka with those of Achaemenid Iran has often been stressed. The influence of West Asiatic factors in the art and culture of the period cannot be seriously denied in view of the close contact existing at this time between India and other West Asiatic countries. But it is rather difficult to regard the Mauryan pillars merely as imitations, or adaptations, of the Achaemenid proto-types. There are tangible differences between the two in their respective functions, as well in

their conceptions and styles. Unfortunately, such differences have usually been ignored. Not belonging to any architectural composition, the function of the Mauryan pillars is totally different—a difference that is also reflected in their design and form. The Mauryan pillar, unlike the Achaemenid, does not stand on any base, nor does it exhibit the channeling or fluting which is invariably characteristic of the latter. Moreover, the shaft of the Mauryan pillar is, without exception, monolithic; the Achaemenian invariably composed of separate segments of stone aggregated one above the other. Again, in technique, the Mauryan pillars partakes the character of wood-carver's or carpenter's work, the Achaemenian, that of a mason. Finally, the design as well as the shape of the capitals is different, due, no doubt, to the new conception of the Mauryan pillars as standing free in space. The supposed resemblance of the so-called 'bell' in the Indian pillar with that of the Persepolitan is merely superficial. It should be remembered also that the member, with which analogy is drawn, usually appears in the Achaemenid column at the base and not as the capital, as in the Indian pillars. The double curves of the Indian member surmounted by animal sculptures in the round exemplify rather a new order of capital, which is distinctive of India alone. This loti form member, representing either an inverted lotus or a purna-ghata, is entirely in accord with Indian tradition and it would be futile not to recognize its Indian origin. The real affinities with the West are recognized in the use of such decorative motifs as the honey-suckle, the acanthus, the 'knop and flower' pattern, etc. But in view of the wide divergences in form, design and conception, a borrowing from the Achaemenian pillar design cannot truly explain the Indo-Iranian affinities. India had long been a part of the West Asiatic culture complex and the key to the problem lies, as Coomaraswamy observes, in "inheritance of common artistic traditions."

Finally we can conclude by saying that the indigenous and original contribution to the creation of this item of Mauryan art is therefore undeniable. Equally undeniable is also the fact that on their lustrous varnish, in their adoption and adaptation of the bell-shaped capital, in the higher place of conception and driving idea and in the general monumental and dignified quality and appearance they exhibit, the Mauryan columns seems to reveal clearly the debt they owe to Achaemenian art, as well as to Hellenistic Art so far as the crowning member of the columns and part of the general effect are concerned. The twisted rope design, the bead-reel-cable design and so on to mark the transitions, the acanthus leaf and palmette and other designs to decorate the abacus may have however been derived from the older and common West-Asiatic art-heritage.

Summary

The unerring precision with which these Mauryan pillars were worked and chiseled show that those who quarried and carved them were no novices at their craft, as would have been Indian artificers, but had generations of experience behind them. The shapes and decorative forms employed are few of them indigenous, but on the other hand are obviously derived from the art repertory of another and more advanced people. Such exotic forms are not difficult to identify as some of them are clearly of Greek, others of Persian and a few perhaps of Egyptian extraction. This development

of the art of working in stone, therefore, which Ashoka introduced into the country, represents an Indian offshoot of that forceful Graeco-Persian culture which flourished with such vigour in Western Asia some centuries before the Christian era. Thank You.

Paper Name- Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.18

Lecture Title - Kushana Costumes

Script

The *Kushana* period will go down in the annals of Indian history as a majestic rule, as during this period there was gigantic and monumental progress in all fields of civilization such as art, culture, military might and economic progress even a glorious lifestyle. This lesson is aimed at throwing some light on the fashion and lifestyle quotient of this period as this dynasty has embraced wholeheartedly the foreign influences in their lifestyles and day-to-day working. The costumes of *Kushana* period will open new vistas of understanding in connection with historical influences and perspectives.

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the costumes and social life of *Kushanas*, which has emerged as a mosaic of Iranian, Greek-Hellenistic, Scythians and Indian influences.

While studying the costumes and social life of the *Kushanas* some pertinent questions, which come to, our mind are: who were the *Kushanas*? Which was their domain of rule? What was social milieu of the *Kushanas*? What are the elementary components of costumes of Kushanas? What are the types of costumes of *Kushanas*? What were the fabric, textile and design incorporated in costumes of *Kushanas*?

HISTORY OF KUSHANA DYNASTY

The *Kushana* Empire originally formed in the early 1st century A.D. under Kujula Kadphises in the territories of ancient Bactria around the Oxus River (*Amu Darya*) and later based near Kabul, Afghanistan. They were contemporaneous with the *Satvahana* (Andhra) and *Saka* kingdoms during part of the 2nd century A.D. The name *Kushana* derives from the Chinese term *Guishang*, used in historical writings to describe one branch of the *Yuezhi*. The ruling line of the *Kushana* descended from the *Yuezhi*, a people that ruled over most of the northern Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan, and parts of central Asia during the first three centuries of the Common Era. The *Yuezhi* conquered Bactria (northwest Afghanistan and Tajikistan) in the 2nd century B.C. and divided the country into five chiefdoms, one of which was that of the Kushanas (*Guishang*). A hundred years later the Kushana chief Kujula Kadphises secured the political unification of the *Yuezhi* kingdom under himself in 1st century A.D. The *Kushana* Empire spread from the Kabul River Valley to defeat other Central Asian tribes that had previously conquered parts of the northern central Iranian Plateau once ruled by the *Parthians*.

Unlike the political stability of the Mauryan Empire, this period was marked by continuous changes in the boundaries of power and immense cultural and linguistic differences. The only cohesive factor was trade, which has been initiated in the

Mauryan period, as a stable government ensured communication between various parts of the empire and encouraged active internal trade. Under the rule of the *Kushanas*, northwest India and adjoining regions participated both in seagoing trade and in commerce along the Silk Road to China and contact was established with many parts of western Asia and the Mediterranean by means of envoys. This naturally helped foreign trade, and the influx of foreigners, *Kushanas*, *Sakas* and the *Indo-Greeks*, gave even more impetus to trade relations with these areas. Under Kanishka-I and his successors, the Kushana kingdom reached its height. It was acknowledged as one of the four great Eurasian powers of its time (the others being China, Rome and Parthia). The Kushanas were instrumental in spreading Buddhism in Central Asia and China and in developing Mahayana Buddhism and the Gandhara and Mathura schools of art. They became affluent through trade, particularly with Rome, as their large issues of gold coins show. These coins, which exhibit the figures of Greek, Roman, Iranian, Hindu and Buddhist deities and bear inscriptions in adapted Greek letters, are witness to the toleration and to the syncretism in religion and art that prevailed in the *Kushana* Empire. After the rise of the Sasanian dynasty in Iran and of local powers in northern India, Kushan rule declined.

KUSHANA COSTUMES – STYLES AND TYPES

SOCIAL & CULTURAL LIFESTYLE OF THE KUSHANS COSTUMES:

The Social life under the Kushanas was richer in contents and comprehensive in outlook, and range of activities. This is evident from the sculptures, especially from Mathura suggesting the vivacious side of life full of bustle and activity. Evidence relating to singing, dancing, music and other items of entertainment like dramatic performances and magical shows- providing amusement to many- is afforded by the literature of this period. Inscriptions, recording donations or dedications by pious people for their respective religious orders, enjoin the sharing of merit by all the members of the family. The broader view of life aimed at a harmonious balancing of *dharma*, *artha* and *kama*-spirituality, economic pursuit, and martial happiness. The religious texts of this period have much to offer on the secular aspects, and the *Kushana* art is also not devoid of social facets of human life in its lighter vein, and marked with a sense of humour.

The outward appearance of the people in general is indicative of their taste, status and prosperity. The evidence on this aspect of social life is copious-available from sculptures and literature. There was no uniformity, and the dress varied with region and people.

ORIGIN OF TWO STYLES OF COSTUMES UNDER THE KUSHANA DYNASTY:

There are two completely distinct styles of costumes in *Kushana* art:-

1. GANDHARA STYLE:

Gandhara, in the northern part of empire, was built by craftsmen from eastern Rome who were employed by patrons of Buddhism. These craftsmen brought with them the Greco-Roman style, particularly in the drapery of the sculpture, so that the Buddhists represented there were dressed in the classical Greek and Roman garments, the *chiton*, *imation*, *stola*, *tunica*, *chlamys*, etc.

2. MATHURA STYLE:

The second style in *Kushana* art was that which arose in Mathura, the southern capital of the empire. This style was a direct continuation of the native Indian schools of Bharhut and Sanchi.

But a clear picture of the actual *Kushana* costume is seen in the sculpture at Surkh Kotal in Afghanistan, the influence on style there being Parthian (eastern Iranian). The Parthians themselves were of Scythic stock like the *Kushanas*, and their costume is much the same and resembles closely the portrait of Kanishka, the great Kushana king, found at Mathura. The latter wears, in addition to his tunic and trousers, a fur-lined coat or pustin, which is also seen at Surkh Kotal. As mentioned earlier, there was no uniformity in this period and the dress of the people too varied with each region. The ordinary dress consisted as usual of an *antariya*, *uttariya* and *kayabandh*, with a turban for men. With the advent of the *Kushanas* this was extended, and the fashion of wearing sewing garments of central Asiatic pattern seems to have made headway with all classes of Indians in north India. The cut and sewn garments, which are rarely visible in the sculptures of the previous periods, are more commonly found in this period.

TYPES OF KUSHANA COSTUMES:

The Kushana costumes may be divided into five types:

1. **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**- the *antariya*, *uttariya* and *kayabandh*.
2. **GUARDIANS AND ATTENDANTS OF THE HAREM**- usually the indigenous and sewn *kancuka*, red-brown in colour.
3. **FOREIGN KUSHANA RULERS AND THEIR ENTOURAGE.**
4. **OTHER FOREIGNERS SUCH AS GROOMS, TRADERS.**
5. **MIXTURE OF FOREIGN AND INDIGENOUS GARMENTS**-This category is of great interest as it shows how clothes changed and evolved, how some of the purely draped garments of the Indians were replaced by cut-and-sewn garments, especially in north and north-west where influences were felt more keenly, and where climatically sewn garments were more suitable.

KUSHANA COSTUMES IN GANDHARA REGION SCULPTURES:

In the Gandhara region, the ordinary dress of the people consisted of a loin cloth (*dhoti*) tied with a girdle at the waist and reaching to the anklets and a scarf and turban

(*mauli*), while the women put on a skirt (*lahanga*) and bodice (*stanamsuka*), and sometimes a *sari*. Some wore the scarf draped over both shoulders with a loose inflated length behind the head and shoulders and the ends hanging down evenly on each side. We also find a short *chiton* or tunic caught in the round and provided with scalloped turn over edge at the top. The secular scenes in the Gandhara art provide an interesting study of the social life. In a family drinking scene (now in the *Musee Guimet*, Paris) the two men are dressed differently. The older man wears *himation* only, falling from the left shoulder and leaving the body bare, while the younger one has a shirt, sleeved tunic tied with a girdle round the hips. The dress of the women consists of a long sleeved *chiton* reaching from the neck to the feet, and over it a *himation* draped from the left shoulder and across the legs.

KUSHANA COSTUMES IN MATHURA REGION SCULPTURES:

In Mathura, too different types of dresses are represented in sculptures. In one sculpture from Sarnath, the devotees are clad in long tunics with a belt above the hips. In a Bacchanalian group at Mathura a woman is clad in a long sleeved jacket and a skirt reaching her feet. She puts on plump shoes with heavy ornaments on her body. On the other side of the group a woman is dressed in Greek costume with a man on her left wearing a mantle fastened to the neck and hanging down from the shoulders in folds.

The headless statue of Kanishka in the Mathura Museum is also suggestive of the dress of foreigners. The Emperor is shown dressed in *Toga* (like the *angarkha* of the Muslim times) reaching down the knees, and held round the loins by a girdle. The long heavy boots with straps round the ankles are very conspicuous.

KUSHANA COSTUMES FOR MEN AND WOMEN

KUSHANA COSTUMES FOR MEN:

The *Kushana* (Indo-Scythian) dress has evolved from a nomad culture based on the use of the horse. It is seen at Mathura, Taxila, Begram and Surkh Kotal in Afghanistan. The dress was worn by most of Scythian and Iranian races and resembled particularly that of the Parthians. It consisted of a ruched long-sleeved tunic with a slit for the neck opening, simple or elaborately decorated. The close-fitting knee-length tunic was sometimes made of leather, and with it could be worn a short cloak or a calf-length woolen coat or *caftan*, worn loose or crossed over from right to left and secured by a belt of leather or metal. Besides these two upper garments, occasionally a third garment the *Chugha* was used. The *Chugha* was a coat-like and decorated with a border down the chest and hemline, and had slits to facilitate movement. The trousers could be of linen, silk or muslin in summer but were woolen or quilted in winter. There were loose or close-fitting trousers, *chalana*, were tucked into soft padded boots with leather trappings, *kapusa*. Along with this was worn the Scythian pointed cap of felt, *bashylk*, or peaked helmet or head band with two long ends tied at the back. Although, the clothes were simple, they were often adorned with stamped gold or metal plates, square, rectangular, circular or triangular sewn in lines or at the central seams of the tunic. Their purpose was not only decorative but functional as well, as they helped lift the tunic in

the middle for riding, by gathering the cloth along the seams. This helped to give the distinctive draped effect with four sharp pointed ends at the hemline. The drape of trousers too was held in place by means of these gold or metal plates stitched down the centre front. It is interesting to note that elaborate embroidered panels later replaced these gold or metal plates. An earlier version was used by the *Saka* warriors, where the tunic was simply picked up and tucked into the belt on two sides at centre front, to free the spread of knees when riding a horse.

KUSHANA COSTUMES FOR WOMEN:

Clothes for women were varied. At Gandhara there are figures wearing a sari-like garment, which seems to have evolved from *palmyrene* (Greco-Roman) or pure Roman dress. This is the *palla* (draped- over garment worn over a long gown with ruched sleeves, which was typical of the Roman matron) pinned at the left shoulder. The difference in some of the Gandhara female figures is that they wear, in addition, an *antariya*, which is extended in length. This long *antariya* is worn in the *kachcha* style but one end continues over the left shoulder and is broached there like the *palla*. The total ensemble looks very much like the Deccani *sari* of today. The long ruched sleeves are visible underneath and could be shortened version of Roman long gown (*stola*) worn as covering for the breasts. In addition, the typical Indian *uttariya* is worn across the back and over both arms, and Indian jewellery completes the ensemble. The wearing of an *uttariya* with the *sari* is still seen in the fisher-folk of Maharashtra. These Gandhara figures are some of the most intriguing sculptures of the Kushana period, and may well show the beginning of the *sari* and one of the earlier attempts to create a garment to cover the breast. This would fall under the category of a mixture of foreign and indigenous garments.

We also find a Persian-influenced knee or mid-thigh length tunic, *stanamsuka*, worn with the *antariya*. The latter is not passed between the legs as the *kachcha* style, but is worn crossed-over in the *lehnga* style. Simple stitched skirts, *ghagri*, with a side seam and *nada* or string to hold them up at the waist are also seen. The tunic, *stanamsuka*, is form-fitting with long sleeves, a simple round neckline, and flaring at the hemline. Besides the above mentioned, the *lehnga* style *antariya* and *uttariya* is sometimes worn. But very little in the way of elaborate jewellery is used. There are also some figures of women wearing close fitting ruched trousers with a long-sleeved jacket and an *uttariya*. In the earlier period, trousers were worn by Greek and Persian women. It is said the Amazons wearing trousers formed the royal guards of the king. These female guards adapted their own phygian costume to a tight mid-thigh length jacket with crossover at the neck and a gathered or pleated skirt worn with the *antariya*, along with a crossed *vaikaksha* with metal buckle shield and sword. Servants and dancers from many parts of the world were brought into the country from a very early period in Indian history. The *pravara* or *chaddar*, a large shawl, continued to be worn by both sexes as protection against the cold and it was known to have been perfumed with *bakul*, jasmine and other scents. The purely indigenous *antariya*, *uttariya* and *kayabandh* continued to be the main costumes of Indians with slight modifications. The *kayabandh* became a more loosely worn informal piece of attire, and was twisted sash used mainly by women in many delightful ways to enhance the suppleness of the waist.

KUSHANA COSTUMES OF MILITARY PERSONS AND RELEGIOUS PERSONS

KUSHANA COSTUMES OF MILITARY PERSONS:

It is in the military dress of the Mauryan-Sunga period we find the earliest traces of foreign influence on indigenous garments. At the Gandhara site of *Kushanas* is a soldier of Mara's (Apollo's) army wearing the Indian *antariya* and turban with a Greco-Roman style of breast-plate or coat of mail. Coats of mail are said to have been, made indigenously of metallic wires, probably iron, woven into gauze known as *jalaka*. But the soldier's coat of mail appears to be made of metal scales, attached to a backing, rather than woven wire. This could be a foreign-influenced improvement on the indigenous equipment for soldiers. Another soldier is seen wearing full of foreign garments in the same army. His coat of mail is worn over a short tunic, which is visible at the hem and sleeves, and his bare legs are encased in greaves. On his head is a three-cornered helmet, which suggests the well-known whitish grey felt cap of the *Tibetans* and *Khorezmians*. Khorez, Bactria, and Sogdiana in Central Asia, had at one time been some of the most important cultural centres of the ancient world. They were later taken over by the Persians, Greeks and then the *Kushanas*. The third soldier in this army of Mara wears the purely Indian *antariya* and has his *uttariya* wound around his waist. All three soldiers carried shields and equipments of various kinds. Foot soldiers are said to have used six-foot bows with very long arrows, tall shields made of undress ox hide, and board swords three men carried smaller shields and were equipped with two lances each, but rode without saddles.

KUSHANA COSTUMES OF RELIGIOUS PERSONS:

Brahmin hermits or ascetics continued to wear garments made of bark leaves, or animal skins, and live austere lives in forests or other isolated places. The clothes of the *Bhikshu* continued to be yellow or red in colour and consisted of same *antaravasaka*, *uttarasanga*, *samghati* and *kushalaka* as before, along with a buckled belt or *sankaksika*. Only now the cloth of their garments was most probably donated to the monastery by wealthy merchants, and was not made of rags. The sign of physical and spiritual perfection in the Buddha figures is the protuberance or *ushnisa* on the head, which evolved from the topknot worn by Brahmins. Another symbol is the *urna* or tuft of hair between the eyebrows, representing the third eye. The elongated earlobes are yet another sign of perfection.

TEXTILES AND DYES USED FOR MAKING KUSHANA COSTUMES AND SUMMARY

TEXTILES AND DYES USED FOR MAKING COSTUMES UNDER THE KUSHANA DYNASTY:

Under the *Kushana* dynasty, for the first time trade with China was directly

established through the ancient Silk Route. Indian traders settled down in Chinese Turkestan, which was annexed by Kaniksha, the *Kushana* king. This included Kashnagar, Khotan and Yarkhand. Buddhists missions too were sent to China. In Rome, Augustus encouraged trade with India and exports increased resulting in a flourishing merchant class. In the northwestern is coarse cotton and wool were used for making tunics and trousers for horsemen, hunters, foreigners and doorkeepers. In central India textiles were of lightweight cotton, *tulapansi* for making summer clothes and blankets, *kambala* for winter clothes. Both indigenous and foreign skills were plentiful but still very expensive. The clothes were also perfumed, *avasayan*. There is reference to dyers known as *rajaka* in an inscription and in literature.

The *antariya* were very rarely decorated and when they were, they appear to have been embroidered, woven, or printed in diagonal check designs enclosing small circles. Turban cloths for rich women were often diagonally striped with every third line made of pearls. This bejeweled material was also used to cover beds and seats. Many other geometric patterns of checks, stripes and triangles were also printed and woven. It is only from literary sources that we know of the textiles and dyes available in the earlier period. There is no evidence of actual fabrics being made in India before the twelfth and thirteenth century. But a large variety of fabrics were recovered from the burial grounds along the Silk Route, which can be dated to between the 1st century B.C. and the 2nd century A.D. (Han period in China). Based on this evidence we may presume that the dyes and textiles of Chinese origin available along this route would surely have found their way into India. Hence, it is possible to maintain that many of the patterns and colours would be similar, or had influenced indigenous fabrics. We know for a fact that the beautiful ultra-marine and *lapis lazuli* blue were sent along the trade route from the famous mines at Badakshan in Central Asia. There, in addition, much literary evidence of sophistication of Indian textiles from the earliest times. In a list compiled of fabrics recovered from the ancient Silk Route, fabrics in the following colour were found: bright blue, light blue, dark blue-copper, dull gold buff, bronze-brown, dark bronze-green, crimson, pink, crimson brown, rich red, yellow, yellow-brown, yellow-green, rich dark yellow-brown. There are all variants and mixtures of the colours in dyes that were available in India in this period.

SUMMARY:

The study of costumes of *Kushana* period amply establishes the fact that the people of this era enjoyed a very luxurious and fashionable lifestyle and this period absorbed numerous cultures and ethics, which developed far away from the boundaries of their empire. The rulers were very open to fresh ideas coming their way and adopted them with ease and poise. They had an amazing capacity in truthfully integrating values and ethos for the development of the society, which came as whips of fresh air to their empire.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.19

Lecture Title - Gupta Dynasty Temple Architecture

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the development of Temple architecture under the aegis of Gupta dynasty rulers.

While we study this subject some relevant questions, which prop up in our mind are: Which was their domain of rule of Gupta rulers? What are the architectural creations, which brought acclaim to this dynasty as lovers of art and architecture? What are the characteristics of Gupta style Temple architecture? What are the important sites attributed to Gupta Style Temple architecture?

HISTORY OF GUPTA DYNASTY

Under the Gupta Empire, which arose in Bihar around 320 A.D., there was an outpouring of science, literature, music and the visual arts. The empire spread across northern India and lasted over 200 years. It is seen as "India's Classical Age". The great rulers of the Gupta Dynasty- Chandragupta I, Samudragupta, Chandragupta II, Kumargupta and Skandagupta dominate the history of India of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. Consciously emulating the ancient Mauryan Empire, they established their capital at Patliputra, where they grew in power and importance until they, along with the remnants of Kushana Culture, were finally crushed by the invasion of the White Huns in the last years of the fifth centuries. Originally from eastern Uttar Pradesh, Chandragupta I, extended his rule to Magadha by marrying a Licchavi princess, an event celebrated in a series of gold coins. He was the first of the dynasty to take the title "Maharajadhiraja" means 'The Indian Great king of Great kings' or 'Supreme King'. His son Samudragupta was a noted conqueror and his grandson Chandragupta II spread the empire west and southwards with a series of conquests and marriages.

The Gupta Period is often described as "The Golden Age of Art and Architecture in India". During this period the iconographic canons of Brahmanical, Jain and Buddhist divinities were perfected and standardized, which served as ideal models of artistic expression for later centuries, not only in India but also beyond its border. It was an age of all round perfection in domestic life, administration, literature, as seen in the works of Kalidasa, in art creations and in religion and philosophy as exemplified in the wide-spread Bhagavata cult, which identified itself with an intensive cult of beauty.

EVOLUTION OF GUPTA STYLE TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

During the Gupta period, a firm foundation of temple architecture was laid when the basic elements of the Indian temple consisting of a square sanctum and pillared porch emerged. The evolved Gupta temple also had a covered processional path for circumambulation that formed a part of the worship-

ritual. Earlier temples of the period had a flat slab roof, often monolithic but the later temples in brick and stone developed a Shikhara. The gradual evolution of the Gupta style is traceable through development of the plan and the ornamentation on the pillars and door-frame, the later introducing new decorative motifs like goblins, couples, flying angels, door-keepers and a figure relief in the centre of the lintel emblematic of the deity consecrated in the temple.

Sculptures of deities, their consorts, celestial beings, couples, directional deities, composite animals and decorative motifs formed the mass of images that adorned the walls of the temples and their interiors. The deities consecrated in the sanctum were carved strictly according to religious canons and installed by performing a special consecration ceremony. The genius of the Indian Sculptor lay in his visualization of the deities ideal proportions, youthful bodies and benign expressions. Temple sculptures were not necessarily religious. Many drew on secular subject matters and decorative motifs. The scenes of everyday life consist of military processions, royal court scenes, musicians, dancers, acrobats and amorous couples. Another group of non-religious figures is the Apsaras or Devanganas (celestial women) and Vyalas (composite animals).

TYPES OF GUPTA ARCHITECTURE

A.TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

B.ROCK-CUT TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

A. TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

Important Temples of Gupta Style of Temple Architecture

- 1.Temple of Bhitaraon
- 2.Parvati Temple at Nachana Kuthara
- 3.Vishnu Temple at Tigawa
- 4.Lad Khan Temple at Aihole
- 5.Shiva Temple at Bhumara
- 6.Dasavatara Vishnu Temple at Deogarh

Temple of Bhitaraon

- 1.This temple most probably built in the 5th century A.D. at Bhitaraon in the Kanpur district lies twenty miles to the south of Kanpur town, Uttar Pradesh.
- 2.This temple is the earliest and the most remarkable example of brick building and bears resemblance to the Buddhist temple of Bodhgaya.
- 3.The temple at Bhitaraon stands at the centre of a fairly high plinth.
- 4.It is a tower-like edifice, rising in diminishing stages to a height of 70 feet.
- 5.The projected porch on the east side is approached by steps.
- 6.A passage leads to an interior chamber or cella 15 feet square.
- 7.The outer ornamentation of terracotta sculpture is certainly the most striking feature of the Bhitaraon temple.

8. The walls rise in bold mouldings, their upper portions being decorated with a row of rectangular panels alternating with ornamental pilasters.
9. Like many Brahmanical structures, it was not a temple for worshippers but a repository or a shrine for an image.
10. This is the oldest remaining Hindu shrine with a roof and a high Sikhara in which there is a series of arches.

2. Parvati Temple at Nachana Kuthara:

1. The Parvati temple earlier known as the Siva temple built in 5th century A.D. in the Ajaygadh state, about 10 miles from Bhumra, Madhya Pradesh.
2. The temple constructed on a terrace, 35 feet wide and is composed of a square sanctum, 15 feet wide.
3. The sanctum cella is 8.5 feet in diameter.
4. There is a flight of steps in front of the porch, on each side of which were discovered the plinths of two smaller shrines, measuring 8 feet by 2 feet and 5 feet by 8 feet.
5. This is a west facing temple, contrary to most of other Hindu temples which face east.
6. The sanctum doorway is surrounded by finely carved guardians with Ganga and Yamuna, river goddesses.
7. North and south walls are provided with pierced stone windows so that the light can enter the sanctum.

3. Vishnu Temple at Tigawa

1. The Vishnu temple of Kankali Devi at Tigawa, Madhya Pradesh is the typical example of a temple which retains Gupta features, in spite of later additions to its frontage.
2. The temple has a sanctum and an open portico supported on four pillars.
3. The Tigawa temple is a square structure of 22.5 feet square, and its side encloses a cella of 8 feet diameter.
4. It has porch projections in front to the extent of seven feet.
5. The façade owes its character entirely to the design of its pillars.
6. The pillars form the main elements of its frontage and each consists of a massive abacus surmounted by a device of lions, a capital resembling a broad conventional Vase, a short shaft of many sides and a plain square pedestal.
7. The pillar is a descendant of the Vishnu column at Besnagar of five centuries earlier, and the lion motif is of Ashoka's monoliths.
8. The Tigawa temple's doorway to the cella, with Yakshini motif
9. reminds of the Buddhist torana, but is transmuted in the Gupta
10. temple to suit Brahmanical text.
11. In the earlier compositions a dryad embraces a tree but here it has become an allegory of the holy waters of the Jamuna and Ganga with a river goddess standing on a tortoise on one side symbolizing the Jamuna and a similar figure standing on a crocodile or a makara on the other representing the Ganges.
12. An image of Narsimha is placed inside the sanctum.
13. The portico has an image of the Sheshashai Vishnu and another one of Chamunda (Kankali Devi).

1.Lad Khan Temple at Aihole

2.This temple built in 5th century A.D. at Aihole in the Bijapur district of the Bombay Presidency in the state of Karnataka in the Early Chalukya times.

3.It is dedicated to Shiva and is located to the south of the Durga temple.

4.The temple consists of a shrine (garba griha) with mandapa in front of it.

5.It is a rectangular building with a flat roof of stone slabs.

6.There are stone-grills on two sides to admit light.

7.The eastern end opens in the pillared porch.

8.The wall is in reality a peristyle of massive stone posts between which the latticed slabs have been placed like screens.

9.The main shrine houses a Shiva Linga with a Nandi and outer walls having many carved images alongwith floral motifs.

10.The mukha mandapa situated in front of the sanctum and consists of a set of twelve carved pillars.

11.Lad Khan temple is the earliest example of the massive bracket-like capital continued throughout the Hindu Renaissance period.

5. Shiva Temple at Bhumara

1.It resembles in type and plan to the Bhitaraon temple at Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

2.The Shiva Temple at Bhumara built in late 5th century A.D., about six miles from Unchehra railway station on Jabulpur-Itarsi section.

3.This shrine consists of a square masonry cella (garba griha) of about 35 feet with a flat slab-roof and a carved doorway having representations of river-goddesses on the jambs and a fine bust of Shiva, with flying figures on the lintel.

4.The cella contained a Shiva Lingam of the type of the still finer example existing at Khoh in the same State.

5.Around the garba griha are the scattered remains of a larger chamber, which surrounded it, providing a roofed pradaksina patha, and of a mandapam attached to and preceding this enclosure.

6.These remains consist of a great variety of columns, which are not monolithic, of richly carved lintels that supported the roofing slabs, of Chaitya-window niches from the cornice.

7.Some of the gana figures have raksasa faces on their bellies.

6. Dasavatara Temple at Deogarh

1.The early Gupta style reached its culmination by early 6th century and one of the surviving gems of Hindu architecture of the Gupta period is the Shiva temple at Deogarh in Jhansi district.

2.The most important feature of the temple is Sikhara instead of the conventional flat roof.

3. Unfortunately as the upper part of the sanctum is ruined, the details of its shape are difficult to make out, but it must not have been less than 40 feet in height.

4. The Dasavatara temple at Deogarh is 18 feet square and it is placed in the centre of a square terrace five feet high with a flight of steps in the middle of each side.

5. Another most important feature of this temple is the arrangement of its portico.

6. In the centre of the over-door slab is a plaque of Vishnu on the great naga.

7. To the right and the left at the top and outside the main zone of the frame are reliefs of the river goddess Ganga and Jamuna.

8. Dvarpalas or door guardians and female divinities are carved on the overlapping frames of the door.

B. ROCK-CUT TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

The cave architecture also attained a great degree of refinement during the Gupta period. The Chaitya and Vihara caves at Ajanta and the Ellora caves are the best specimens of cave architecture of the period.

Important sites of Rock-cut Temples of the Gupta Period

1. Ajanta Caves:

The cave temples of Ajanta are situated about sixty-two miles north of Aurangabad district, Maharashtra. The thirty temples at Ajanta are set into the rocky sides of a crescent shaped gorge in the Inhyadri hills of the Sahyadri ranges. There are two cave designs at Ajanta called Chaitya Grihas and Viharas. Chaitya Grihas were hall of worship- large, rectangular chambers separated by rows of pillars into a central nave, surrounded by aisles on three sides, for circumbulation during prayer, with a sanctuary opposite the entrance. Viharas or monasteries were rectangular shaped halls with a series of small cells attached on two sides.

2. Ellora Caves

The contemporary Viharas or monasteries at Ellora are the fine examples of Buddhist rock-cut architecture and are in direct line with Ajanta. The Ellora halls are excavated out of a ridge of low hills pushed up from the vast plateau of the Deccan. The Buddhists created twelve rock-cut halls for their creed at Ellora. This series is divided into two sub groups: Cave nos. I-V are known as 'Dhedwada group'. Each sub-group has a prayer hall and its attached monasteries. The later group of monasteries nos. VI-XII is notable for their size and extent.

3. Udayagiri Caves

The Udayagiri Caves are an early Hindu ritual site located near Vidisha in the state of Madhya Pradesh, Northern India. They were extensively carved and reworked under the command of Chandragupta II, Emperor of the Gupta Empire, in the late 4th and 5th century A.D. The most famous sculpture in the monumental figure of Vishnu in his incarnation as the boar-headed Varaha.

SUMMARY

Through this brief yet informative lesson we have been able to comprehend the basic elements of architectural value under the Gupta dynasty which have enlightened us that it truly represents a plethora of valuable and magnificent examples of fabulous architectural structures which denote that it was a Golden era in real sense of the word in terms of capturing the cultural spirit of art, culture and religion.

Paper Name – Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.2

Lecture Title – Seals in Indus Valley Civilization

Script

The time period from where the seals belong to is 2500- 1500 B.C. The areas under the Central region are Jhukar, Kot Diji, Chanu Daro and Surkotala; Western are Sotka Boh and Sutkangendo; Eastern are Alamgirpur, Kalibangan and Ropar; Southern are Lothal and Rangpur. Two significant Cultures that dominate the Indus Valley are the regions adjacent the River Zoab and the Kulli civilizations. The people migrating into the North- Western region brought along with them their traditions, art, beliefs, possessions, culture, etc. The culture was characterized by the matriarchy and a cult of productive powers of Nature and a mother goddess and by the great development of the arts of design. The art of Indus Valley culture received the confluence of Sumer.

The Indus Valley Civilization had two main centers: in the formative stage c. 2800- 2500 B.C. Harappa and Mohenjo- daro (the hill of the Dead) accompanied by a multitude of smaller towns like Chanhu- daro. The port Lothal was provided with large brick dry docks, dams and loading facilities at different levels. In the Mature stage c. 2500- 2200 B.C. other places where the remains of this or similar cultures have been found lying below the remains of Harappan settlements are: Amri, Kot Diji, Gumla in Gomal valley and Kalibangan. The script found here has about 3000 short inscriptions at the sites of Indus Valley Civilization. These range from single character to 20 characters. The maximum length of the inscription is 26 characters in three lines. Most of the writings are on seals but have been found on copper plates as well as graffiti on pottery. The writing was left to right.

The Civilization of the Indus had a strong influence of the tribes from North like the Elamites, Susians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Achaemenids, Hellenistic and Saracenic. The inhabitants were Aborigines, Negritoes, Dravidians, Minavars and Aryans. They were essentially Nature worshippers so their religious ceremonies included the worship of Gods and Deities that originated from Man, Mother Goddess, Animal, Spirits, Demon, Fairies, Kinnara, Ghosts, Totems, Hindu Gods etc. The Indus pictograms with those of the proto-Elamite and Archaic Sumerian Scripts suggest that that the Indus Civilization might be generally related to Mesopotamian.

The Sea Borne Trade and Links to Mesopotamia:

The Indus Valley Civilization used to receive a large part of its requirements of raw material most probably from other parts of India, Afghanistan and Eastern Iran. The Harappan contacts with Mesopotamia suggest a casual and indirect exchange. The main evidence of the maritime trade with the West Asia is the existence of the 'dock' at Lothal. There are two representations to prove the existence of boats: A rough drawing sketched on

a sherd of pottery and carefully executed engraving on a seal and that shows a vessel apparently made of reeds.

A list of articles of West Asian manufacture found in the Harappan areas has been given at length by a noted writer Wheeler. Among these are a few Mesopotamian type boxes found at Mohenjo- daro.

Another important writer Piggot has conjectured slave girls that were brought to the above areas. So far as Harappan materials in Mesopotamia are concerned, these are mainly seals, sealings and seal imitations found at such places as the Ur, Umma, Asmar, Kish, etc. Indo- Mesopotamian contact is also sought to be proved by finding of Carnelian beads, metal blades, metal spiral pins, dice, male figurines and stone vases. It is a possibility from the availability of seals that there were contacts between Persian Gulf with Mesopotamia and Indus.

A seal is a small mould that has a stamped impression upon it. It came in different sizes. The commonly found seals from Indus Valley Culture are square, circular, tabloid form, oblong and round. The flat face of the seal was decorated with a motif of an animal, figurine or an inscription in Pictographic script.

Many a time the swastika design and the trishul appear on the seal thereby pointing out the religious bias and following in the region. A coating of smooth glossy glaze was added to it once the seal was ready. Approximately 2000 seals have been recovered from various sites in the Indus Valley. The material used to make them is steatite, faience, limestone, clay, ivory and terra cotta. The process was for a Steatite to be cut into the desired shape by a saw. The boss was then rounded off after the groove by a knife and finished off with an abrasive. The design appears to have been cut by a too usually burin. The body was first carved before outlining other parts. That completed the process of making a seal. The material varied as per the patronage and the dictate of the head of the Tribe.

Significance:

The main use of the seals was as some form of merchandise and marking on the cargoes. Some of these seals may also have had other commercial uses. Certain animals including a mythical beast which looks like an Unicorn, seems to have been stock types in the repertoire of the engravers and one or the other was selected by a trader for his seal. To this was added a combination of pictographs as required by the merchant to make the seal distinctive.

Perhaps the lettering on the seals was no more than varying combinations of well understood symbols so arranged as to differentiate the seal of one trader from that of the other. Seals bearing only a script have also been found and this may suggest that the script was more important in a seal than the animal figurine. Some of these seals may have been used as amulets and some may have had some religious or ritualistic significance.

The main settlements of Harappa, Mohenjo- daro, Lothal, etc are at considerable distances from one another and in all probability traded among themselves. The main function of the Indus Valley Seals was not religious but purely economic. The seals were identifying symbols and signs of authority.

Wilson J.V. Kinnier (1974) a noted writer says 'They were not amulets.' Some scholars are of the opinion that the parent of the Indus Script was the Brahmi Script.

The Pictographic Script was not deciphered till late. Some of the characters have been identified. There are about 200 signs that are seen here which can be understood. Some symbols are of a fish, Horn, shell, flower, etc. The pictographic means script containing visuals or pictures.

Part of fertility ritual is seen that is depicted on the seals. There is a strong connection to the Nature Gods. The man found answers to his problems from the Mother Nature. The worship of Mother Goddess before beginning any new work was a kind of routine for the devotee. The main Deity was Siva Pasupati, the God of the animals. The animals depicted on the seals have the vibrating and pulsating energy corresponding to the animal depicted therein. The seal was identification and mark of possession on one hand and a cult practice on the other. To impose the protective taboo upon the merchandise too was its purpose.

Subject Matter:

The Indus Valley Seals exhibit the animals like rhinoceros, elephants, tigers, antelope and imaginary animals too, like the Unicorn. The short horned bull, Brahmani bull, gharial, Goat, Bull, etc. were often seen. Seals showing composite figure and tree are of importance. The conglomerate images were to show the merged powers of both the forms conjoined. Noted Art Historian Stella Kramrisch says 'There are peculiar associations of the tree with the human figure where from Indian motifs might have evolved.' Several seals are lthyphallic which means more than three heads. A goat is seen from Indus with three heads carved on the seal. The goat head seems to be in movement left, right and center. Multiplicity of the heads is depicted to highlight the power of the Deity and the animal. The few important seals are as follows:

Mother Goddess Sealing:

It is made of steatite which is portrayed by a semi-nude female figure of the mother. The mother is being worshiped for fertility. She is shown wearing a girdle around her loins. The head-dress is elaborate. Mother Goddess is shown as the Tutelary Goddess. The large seal represents a goddess among the leaves of an Asvatha tree. The hair dress is suggestive of a lunar divinity. In the foreground is a similar figure in adoration that seems to be dragging a bull like being with a half human head and zig zag horns to be sacrificed. Seven attendants in characteristic costumes follow with a saddle cloth.

Upturned Female Figure:

A woman is shown upside down on the seal. A plant is shown issuing from her womb. Human sacrifice seems to take place in front of the Earth Goddess. A river is seen gushing out from the mother's womb. The bifurcated branch of a Pipal tree depicts Mother Goddess. The goat seems to have been shown in one corner. A pictographic script which is inclusive of images and symbols seems to be indicative of the illustration on it. As the script is not entirely deciphered so far there is much controversy amongst scholars on

what the script says. The visual is dominant and self-explanatory to the thoughts of the artist.

3 Faced Deity:

Siva is a divine Yogi and as such derives his power from Yoga rather than from sacrifices. Plant and animal fertility was considered the boons emanating from the worship of Siva. Bull is identified as his vehicle. A Deity is seen seated cross-legged with a horned head-dress. He is referred to as the Tri-cephalous God as he is adorned with three horns. The phallus is in erection and the 7 letters of the pictographic script are seen to emphasize perhaps the 7 rivers. The animals that surround the Deity are elephant, tiger, buffalo, deer and rhinoceros. This seal can be understood as the Tri-mukha, Pasupati, Yogisvara or Maha Yogi. The seated Yogi is seated in Padmasana, which unmistakably links to Siva. He is shown in inverted perspective as he is depicted much larger in size than the animals accompanying him. The Deity is worshipped for fertility and protection highlighting the iconic and phallic worship.

Stella Kramrisch says concerning the understanding of the seals that 'Other devices on the seals and sealings on terra cotta are also relevant, if as motifs only, for the future, the centrifugal combination of various figure or their parts diverging from one center. The many headed divinity and the standing figure with long arms so that they touch the knees, the over high heads of the Goddess which anticipates the Ushnisha, the mode of sitting, the part played by the Naga (serpent) and the alignment of the repeated figures, as well as freely symmetrical arrangement of single figure on the surface of the relief.' This emphasizes how the artist created his work. He was inspired by the Nature and he had no academic training to draw the motifs. But by instinct and reverence he created them on the surface.

Seal with a Unicorn:

Humped Bull is seen that appears to be like an ordinary bull but yet is a fraction of an imagination of the artist. The seal representing the big humped bull is shown with crescent horns and thick, heavy dewlap. It was found from Mahenjodaro. There is seen a vigorous dynamism in the form. The powerful form was outlined by sure and strong hand. The volume is shown vibrating with energy. It is preserved in the National Museum at Karachi.

Seal of a Humped Bull:

The horns are like the crescent. The dewlap or the hanging adipose seems to exude energy and the power of the bull. Sir John Marshall, A noted art Historian writes that 'The figurines are characteristically Indian.' The pent up energy was exuded through its powerful horns. The muscles seem to ripple with energy.

Small ring stones suggest that the worship of the Yoni, the female symbol of generative energy was also prevalent. The Vedic religion was originally aniconic though the worship of the icons arising at a later stage.

Miscellaneous seals that are of importance are: Mythical animals, Semi-human figurines and ambiguous animals like the Bison or Rhinoceros. Not

very well known animals like the Unicorn, Zebu and the short horned Bull too were seen in seal form.

Vedic Sacrificial Altars, Great Baths, Ceremonial ablutions and traces of Naga Worship too have been seen on the seals with the pictographic script inscribed on it. Large steatite seal for negative stamping, with a typical Indus Valley Unicorn is seen from 3 B.C. at National Museum, Karachi. The hollow for inlays, possibly of semi-precious stones. Perhaps rather than it being a seal, the dish was an ornament or a badge.

Characteristic Features:

The composition on seals, the figurines, the animals bear an illustrious technique of depiction. The artist had a thorough knowledge of the human anatomy. The negative and positive space was well defined. There was no over-crowding of the forms. The compositions were proportionate in depiction and did not focus only on the idealization of the form. It seemed that they modeled them with their hand. The figurines were solid with naturalistic representation.

The animal engravings on the seals are often of high order and evoke our admiration. Seal engraving was a specialized craft in these trading settlements and the demand for this accessory of commerce often led to the making of the seals with intaglio of real artistic merit. The seals are mostly of steatite. At Lothal the sealings were found to be baked in a brick kiln and were known to facilitate their use on the merchandise. The hole in the seal was for tying it to the merchandise. Seals may also have been used on some kind of substance which dries rapidly, like seal is used on sealing wax.

Paper Name- Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.20

Lecture Title - General Aspects of Indo - Islamic Architecture

Script

General Aspects of Indo-Islamic Architecture

Objective

The aim is to know about the basic feature of Indo-Islamic architecture, which would give us an insight to the changing architectural trends in India during the medieval period with a comparative analysis of Hindu and Islamic architecture.

Introduction

The medieval period saw great developments in the field of architecture. With the coming of Muslims to India, many new features came to be introduced in buildings. The development of Muslim Style of Architecture of this period can be called the Indo-Islamic Architecture or the Indian Architecture influenced by Islamic Art and this style was neither strictly Islamic nor strictly Hindu.

The contacts of the Muslims with India were the result of a series of armed raids and invasions through the north-west passes from the 8th to the 18th centuries. The Muslim invaders were of different origins- Arab, Turk, Afghan, and Mughal. Mohammed of Ghazni, Mohammed of Ghor, the Mamluks and the Tughlaqs were Turks; the Khaljis were Afghan-Turks, the Lodis and Surs were Afghans; and the Mughals were Largely Turks and partly Mongols.

The coming of the Muslims brought a new and invigorating influence into Indian art. This Islamic style of architecture was not completely new. When a Hindu city was captured, the Muslims hurriedly built a mosque with materials from destroyed Hindu temples. While the Muslims supervised - as they were mainly soldiers and not artists - the Hindus did the actual work. Therefore traces of Hindu influence can readily be detected in these monuments from the very beginning. Yet the design of the architecture was truly Islamic and strikingly contrasted with the Hindu art.

Significance

The fundamental Islamic dogma is the unity of God or Allah. The supreme revelation is the Quran, dictated to Mohammad. As the book of law, the Quran spells out the conditions for submission (Islam) and the consequent moral obligations of the believer (muslim), the Five Pillars of Islam: affirmation of the Creed, prayer, fasting, alms giving and pilgrimage. Thus, it is the requirement for prayer that constitute the prime progenitor of architecture in Islam.

Subject Matter

The most important buildings in Islam are religious in function like the mosques and tombs or secular like the palaces and halls.

Mosque

The Koran prescribes a precise ritual, including prostration on a mat protecting the worshipper from the impurities of the ground, for individual prayer five times daily and congregation prayer at noon on Friday. Orientation was dictated by the designation of Mecca- the place of Abraham's sacrifice and Muhammad's birth - as the axis of prayer or qibla marked by the cubical Kaaba which stands for the first building dedicated to God, by Abraham's son Ismail. While formal provision is often made for the modest area required in individual or family worship, the principal place of worship i.e. a mosque must accommodate the considerable number of mats involved at community level in the Friday (juma) noon prayers (hence the juma-or jami-masjid) .

In plan every mosque is based on that of Mecca, but Islamic culture enriched itself by contacts with the older cultures of the Middle East. Greater elaboration of design developed, and new architectural features appeared in the fully evolved mosque in India. Mosque or masjid literally means place of prostration. It consists of the sihn, an open rectangular courtyard with a fountain for ablutions in the centre. It is surrounded by the liwan, a pillared cloister, with several entrances. Since the Muslim has to face Mecca when prostrating in prayer, a domed prayer hall stands at the western end of the courtyard. First open on the eastern side, it has an arched screen in front. In the back wall of the prayer hall is the mihrab, a niche indicating the qibla or direction for prayer. To the right of the mihrab is a mimbar or pulpit for the imam to conduct prayers. The prayer halls of the congregational mosque, the Jami Masjids, sometimes have a section screened off for women. From the minar, a high slender tower, the muazzin calls the faithful to prayer.

Fine examples of mosques can be seen in many parts of India, notably the Jami Masjids of Delhi and Agra, and the Moti masjid or Pearl Mosque of Delhi.

Tomb

Islam requires burial for the dead, the body being laid flat with the face turned towards Mecca, if possible in a vaulted chamber allowing the incumbent room to sit up when called to account. Islamic tomb architecture in India developed parallel with that of the mosque. The tomb consists usually of the hujra, a square building with one chamber standing on a raised platform and crowned by a gumbad or dome. In the centre of the hujra stands the zarih or cenotaph – possibly more than one, if a number of people are buried below. This is always a rectangular structure, placed exactly above the actual qabr or grave in the maqbara or the chamber below. The western wall of the hujra usually contains a mihrab. The ziarats which are the tombs of Muslim saints are often surrounded by mosques, pilgrim-halls and other tombs, forming a Dargah which is a place of pilgrimage.

In the early periods, the tombs resembled fortresses built of red sandstone, surrounded as they were by high, solid walls. In the Mughal period however they were set in splendid gardens and became much more refined in structure. Finally marble replaced red sandstone. Notable among the tombs of the early Mughal period is that of Humayun in Delhi, while among the later marble edifices, the most outstanding is the Taj Mahal at Agra.

Idgah and Madrasa

Minor religious buildings are the idgah and the madrasa. The idgah is actually a large open space meant to accommodate the large crowds which gather for common prayer on the day of Id-ul-Fitr, with a long wall on the side facing Mecca, containing prayer-niches and perhaps a pulpit. The madrasa on the other hand is a school or college for teaching of Islamic doctrine. It resembles the mosque from which it originates, except that the central hall and most of the entrances are replaced by lecture-halls.

Mahal

Secular buildings are based on the khana (house) which has a central courtyard around which are aiwans or halls with dalan or verandas all facing inwards. The mardana or men's quarters are always separated from the haram or zananas which are the women's habitation. A mahal is a building for rich people and the plan of these consists of the multiplication of the simple khana. Namely, there are several courtyards with buildings and garden-houses around. Rang mahals (the richly painted rooms) and sish-mahals (the mirrored halls) are set aside for special occasions. A hawa-mahal, meaning mansion of air or wind, consists of open upper terraces. There are underground rooms called sardabs or tehkhana, with a well in the vicinity or even a water tank above them, to cool the palaces during the hot season. In the royal palace there are in addition the Diwan-i-am meaning the hall of public audience, the Diwan-i-khas which is the hall of private audience and the darbar which served on very solemn occasions.

Gardens

The garden design was another secular art much cultivated by Mughals. The bagh or gardens of the Mughals are world famous. Some of these formal gardens can still be seen in Kashmir. The plan of the garden was generally square or rectangular when it was called Char-bagh. The beautiful flower-beds were separated by water channels radiating out from the central pool. Often artificial waterfalls and illuminated fountains surrounded the kushk which is the garden place, at the end of the garden, which consisted of several baradari or pillared rooms. The water channel terminated in the bhavan or the airy halls. Burj or towers were built at the corners of the enclosure, with domed colonnaded chatris.

Characteristics

Indo-Islamic style is usually divided into three phases: (1) the Delhi Sultanate or Pashtun style, (2) the Provincial, and (3) the Mughal.

(1)The Delhi Sultanate or Pashtun style : Examples of the earlier Pashtun style in stone are at Ahmadabad in Gujarat State, and in brick at Gaur-Pandua in West Bengal State. These structures are closely allied to Hindu models, but are simpler and lack sculpture of human figures. The dome, the arch, and the minaret are constant features of the style; a famous monument in this style is the mausoleum Gol Gumbaz of 17th century in Bijapur, Mysore State, which has a dome 43 m in diameter, almost as big as that of St Peter's basilica in Rome.

Another notable structure is the five-storey stone and marble tower called the Qutub Minar .Qutub Minar a tower of victory rather than a religious structure. Originally 73 metre high, is without equal in India, or indeed anywhere else in the Islamic world. It was of four diminishing storeys separated by projecting balconies, each stage different in section – stellate, with convex flutes,

or with a combination of the two; the round topmost element may represent a 14th century rebuilding. The Qutb Minar is distinguished from all other buildings of its type not only by its size but also by its work-manship, with bands of richly carved inscription from the Quran and superb stalactite bracketing under the balconies.

(2)The Provincial style reflected the continued rebellion of the provinces against the imperial style of Delhi. The best example of this phase is in Gujarat, where for almost two centuries until 1572, when Emperor Akbar finally conquered the region, the dynasties that succeeded one another erected many monuments in varying styles. The most notable structures in this phase are found in the capital, Ahmadabad.

Ahmadabad, founded in 1411 by Ahmad Shah I, was eventually to boast upwards of fifty mosques of which the finest, the Jami Masjid, finished in 1423, is perhaps the most aesthetically satisfying in the whole of India. Plainly visible through the central arch of the façade, flanked by two beautifully proportioned fluted minarets, are tall, slender, closely set pillars supporting three storeys of balconies and platforms. Through a suspended andola torana of impeccable Hindu design the colonnaded hall is entered, stretching for 64 m on either side of the central area, two storeys high and partly divided off by perforated stone screens. At one end is the zenana, set apart for women. Support is by stone beams rather than by arches and yet the general effect is one of lightness, recalling the contemporary temples of Rajasthan, with their raised halls.

(3)The Mughal phase of the indo-Islamic style, from the 16th to the 18th century, developed to a high degree the use of such luxurious materials as marble. The culminating example of the style is the Taj Mahal in Agra. This domed mausoleum of white marble inlaid with gemstones was built from 1632 to 1648 by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan as a tomb for his beloved wife. Entering through a large gateway, the visitor first sees the tomb at the end of a long garden watered by a wide canal interrupted by a fountain with large square basins. The mausoleum itself, dramatically sited on a buff overlooking the Yamuna, is faced on either side by two identical buildings, one a mosque, the other a jawab or 'answer' without religious significance. with its central arch, deeply embayed like the smaller superimposed arches in the wings, the two large chhatris balancing the raised dome on each side, and the high blind-arched plinth, the Taj brings together all the themes of Mughal architecture to form a superbly proportioned and balanced whole. The marble work is magnificent, saved by certain touches from any hint of banality. Exceptionally, the four minarets at the corners of the podium, perfectly placed, are rusticated, and their little domes are not bulbous.

Another important example of this style is the Humayun's mausoleum in Delhi built in 1565, raised largely by the unremitting efforts of a devoted widow, inaugurates the Mughal tradition, derived from their Persian heritage, of building tombs in vast formal gardens with important entrance buildings. The tomb itself also owes much to contemporary Persia. Set on a vast high podium containing rooms, it is a fore-taste of the Taj Mahal, with its great central bayed arch, flanking wings with arches of the same kind, its raised domed and its chhatris. Only the tall minarets are missing, and the facing is of red sandstone.

Other famous examples of the Mughal style are the Pearl Mosque at Agra, Uttar Pradesh State, the palace fortresses at Agra and Delhi, and the great mosques at Delhi and Lahore (now in Pakistan).

Conclusion

The most important factors common to both forms of architecture, especially in respect of mosques and temples, were that to both styles, ornamental decoration was very vital and that the open court in many cases was surrounded by colonnades. But the contrast was equally striking: the prayer chamber of the mosque was spacious, whereas the shrine of the temple was comparatively small. The mosque was light and open, whereas the temple was dark and closed. The difference between the lay-out of a temple and a mosque is explained by the essential difference between the Hindu and Muslim forms of worship and prayer. A cell to house the image of the deity, garbha-griha, and often small halls in front for the worshippers was regarded adequate for a simple Hindu temple. But the Islamic form of worship, with its emphasis on congregational prayer, requires a spacious courtyard with a large prayer hall, pointed towards Mecca, as its western end that is, to the West of India. In the rear wall of the prayer-hall, the centre is occupied by a recess or alcove, called mihrab; and indicates the direction of prayer (qibla). A pulpit (mimber) at its right is meant for the imam who leads the prayer. A tower or minaret, originally intended for the muazzin to call the faithful to the prayer, later assumed a mere architectural character. A gallery or compartment of the prayer hall or some other part was screened off to accommodate the ladies who observed purdah. The main entrance to a mosque is on the east, and the sides are enclosed by cloisters (liwans). A tank is provided for ablutions usually in the courtyard of a mosque.

The mode, theme or motifs or ornamentation employed in Islamic buildings also made a departure from the earlier vogues. The Hindu style or ornamentation is largely naturalistic showing human and animal forms and the luxuriant vegetation life. As among the Muslims the representation of living beings was taboo by way of decoration or ornamentation, they introduced geometrical and arabesque patterns, ornamental writing and formal representation of plant and floral life. In short the contribution of the Muslims to Indo-Muslim architecture is profound and no less interesting. Among the architectural features introduced by them mention may be made of arches, domes, minars and minarets, the pendentive, squinch arch, half domed double portals, kiosks or chhatris and the use of concrete as a factor of construction. They also introduced gilding and painting in varied colours and designs. Muslim decorative elements are usually of the nature of embroidery. Even though lime was known and to certain extent used in construction work in India fairly early, mud was generally used for brick work and large blocks of stones were laid one on top of the other and held by means of iron clamps. The Muslims, like the Romans, were also responsible for making extensive use of concrete and lime mortar as an important factor of construction and incidentally used lime as plaster and a base for decoration which was incised into it and held enamel work on tiles.

There was gradually a harmonious blending between the Hindu and Muslim architectural styles and this new style of architecture is known as Indo-Islamic. It is entirely different in character from Muslim architecture in other countries, incorporating the best of both Hindu and, Muslim styles. It was in this direction

that the Indo-Islamic Architecture now began to evolve, adding to it the local flavour of the provisional kingdom of Bengal, Gujarat, Jaunpur, Golconda, Malwa and the Deccan.

Summary

The medieval period saw great developments in the field of architecture. With the coming of Muslims to India, many new features came to be introduced in buildings. There was gradually a harmonious blending between the Hindu and Muslim architectural styles and this new style of architecture is known as Indo-Islamic. The fundamental Islamic dogma is the unity of God or Allah and it is the requirement for prayer that constitute the prime progenitor of architecture in Islam. Indo-Islamic style is usually divided into three phases: the Delhi Sultanate or Pashtun style, the Provincial, and the Mughal. Thus the Indo-Islamic architecture is entirely different in character from Muslim architecture in other countries, incorporating the best of both Hindu and, Muslim styles.

Paper Name – Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.3

Lecture Title – The Vedic Age

Script

It is certain that whatever the date of its origin, it was a joint product of Dravidian and Aryan cultures. The Dravidians were the original Neolithic inhabitants of India or they came to the Country like the Aryans as invaders is uncertain but the Aryans were tall, handsome, fair- skinned nomads from the wilds of Central Asia and had long searched for lands where they might win easy bread for themselves and find pastures for their sheep. The Gangetic plains in Northern India provided them with food and shelter. Nature predominated in their day- to- day life. The land of the five rivers was their first strong hold but gradually they spread to adjacent areas.

As a whole the Veda Sruti was compiled during a long period from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C. The Vedic Gods from the Greeks to the later Hindus were never clearly anthropomorphized. It is something like when we say the 'sound is heard but His form is unseen.' To understand the Vedic culture it is important to know that there were no temples and no images that form the part of the Vedic Worship. The ritual was performed on a cleared or leveled space or ground which was spread with the sacred grass and served as an altar. The fire was fed with clarified butter, milk, grain, and cow dung cakes were offered. Rams, oxen and Horses were known to be sacrificed.

The four Vedas *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharva Veda* which are hymns, prayers and sacred formulas, offered by the priests to the Gods on behalf of the rich lay- sacrificers, charms for witchcraft, medicine and other homely practice manipulated by magicians and medicine men. The *Brahmanas* which are expositions of the sacrifice, illustrated by legends in the manner of the Jewish 'Talmud' and the *Aranyakas*, including the Upanishads which contain speculations of the higher sort, philosophic, cosmic, psycho- physical and theosophical gradually growing up with and out of simpler beliefs. The *Sutras* which are the treatises containing a considerable body of set rules for the conduct in everyday life, that is distinct literature of customs and laws.

At the outset it is to understand that the knowledge of the Indo- Aryans is based on the evidence of the Vedic Literature. The chief constituents are three: The *Samhitas*, The *Brahmanas* and the *Srauta- Sutras*. The *Samhitas* are further divided into *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharva Veda*. To understand the *Samhitas* and its four limbs will bring us to the threshold of understanding the roots of our existence. Upanishads were partially the result of the popular protest against the soulless ritualism of the *Brahmanas* as was also the rise of the sects like Vaishnavas, Jainas, Buddhists, etc.

Rig Veda is neither a Historical nor a heroic poem but mainly a *Samhita* meaning a collection of hymns by a number of priestly families, recited or chanted by them with appropriate solemnity and sacrifices to the Gods. *Rig Veda* is the most important as the first document of Ancient Indian Literature. It consists of about 1000 hymns dedicated to the Gods both of the Aryan and Dravidian origination. The Aryan Gods are mostly Nature Gods. The elements fire, water, air and earth have been defined. The Aryans conceived these Gods anthropomorphically and described them as wearing clothes, bearing arms and riding in chariots. The offering of Naïve prayers too is known. The allegorical representation of the Supreme Deity is also seen here. Throughout the *Vedas* the poets have the ends of the sacrifice in view, the sacrifice where these hymns are to be sung.

Of the Gods invoked in the *Vedas* the following are the chief: *Dyaus* or *Dyaus Pitar*, (sky or father sky), *Surya* and *Savitra*, *Vishnu* the Sun God, *Usha* (the dawn), *Agni* (the fire), *Prithvi* (the earth), *Soma* the intoxicating vegetable juice, *Indra* (the God of lightening), *Varuna*, *Adityas*, *Asvins*, *Vayus*, *Rudra*, etc. As the Aryans not only borrowed their deities from the Non-Aryans but learnt from them the way to indulge in the esoteric intimacies of *Yoga* (union with God), through the practice of *Bhakti* (devotional worship). The Dravidians had built their devotional cults of the phallus and the nature spirits and mother goddess (*Yakshas* and *Nagas*), and possessed themselves of an elaborate pantheons that was adopted by the Aryans. They had evolved the philosophy of *Karma* (deeds), that good and bad actions in the past life govern the nature of birth and rebirth in *Samsara* (the Universe.)

The Aryans were proficient in carpentry, building houses and racing chariots of wood. They were well known for metal works, in making vessels of *ayas* (copper) for domestic and ritualistic use, and using gold jewelry, sewing, tanning and they made pottery. This included the symbolic, representative and abstract language and thought as seen percolating through the art of the Vedic Period. During the transition from the *Rig Veda* to the *Upanishads* through the *Sama*, *Yajur* and *Atharva Vedas* a gradual reconciliation between the Aryans and the Dravidian cultures was going on. The Soul of nature was declared in the *Brahmanas* to be one with the soul of the man, both being the essence of the higher reality, the One Being. So the elements of the rite were identified with the elements of the Universe, the Priest allying himself with nature in all her moods, by making the syllables of the *mantras* represent the seasons, the sacrificial hearth signifying the organs of the human body and the number of oblations denoting the months.

Sama Veda: '*Sama*' means melody and *Sama Samhita* is the collection of the melodies.

Yajur Veda is a collection of short magic spells used by certain Priests at the sacrifices.

Atharva Veda contains the popular beliefs and superstitions of the humble folk, as yet only partly subjugated by Brahmanism.

In the *Upanishads* the Aryans made their first constructive attempt to formulate a philosophy of life. They accepted the Dravidian doctrine of *Karma* (deeds) as governing the nature of birth and re-birth in the *Samsara* (the Universe), and declared *Moksha* (release from the circle of life and death) to be the goal of life. The Ancient *Upanishads* are: *Brihadaranyaka*, *Chandogya*, *Taittiriya*, *Aitareya*, *Kaushitaki*, *kena*; Verse *Upanishads*: *Isa*, *Katha*, *Mundaka* and *Svetasvatara*;

Later prose: *Prasna* and *Maittrayani*. The essence of what is written in them can be understood by the following example from *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*: 'lead me from the unreal to the real, lead me from the darkness to the light, lead me from death to immortality.'

Upon reflection from the queries in the mind 'On what he is, who and what is man?' The answer thereby is 'The sensational self which feels, the energetic self which acts, the mental self which thinks and the transcendental self which enjoys intuition. The Higher Self, *Atman*, God, is Universal. 'The Soul which is not this and that, nor aught else, is intangible, for it cannot be laid hold of. It is unseen, transcendent, inapprehensible, uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable, the sole essence of the consciousness of the Self, the completion of the World, the ever peaceful, all blissful, the one unit, indeed is the *Atman*.'

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* highlights the mystery of the *Brahman* through the example of a dialogue between the father and the son. The father says: 'That from which beings are born, that in which when born they live, and that into which they enter at death, that is *Brahman*.' At the end it is comprehended that the *Brahman* or reality is not realized through thought but through intuition. The essence of *Atman* (Self) and the *Brahman* (Reality) when actually realized is called *Ananda* (the state of pure bliss.) It is the unity with God where the *Atman* (self) becomes *Brahman* (Reality) and vice versa. It is Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Everlasting, Timeless, Changeless, Invisible, Incomprehensible, Supreme Spirit, immanent in *Atman* (man) and *Brahman* (Nature.)

Subject Matter: The *Samhitas*, The *Brahmanas* and the *Srauta- Sutras*.

The *Samhitas*-

***Rig Veda*:**

It is considered the *Sakala* recension consisting of 1,017 hymns, divided further into *Vatakhya* with 11 hymns and *Bashkala* with 36 hymns. They had minor roles to play in the rituals. Heroic and lyrical elements played an important role. The hymnology was dry and stereo type. The *Rig Vedic* chanting had been preserved by the Priest and his family. The hymns were utilized for sacrificial purposes. This formed a part of the elaborate ritual. Magico- Religious attitude of the mind was adopted. *Mimamsa Philosophy* was practiced. Gods were retained in the name and the ritual came to occupy the place of the Gods. *Rk*

Samhita and the mantras were recited. There are a total of 10 *Mandalas* that were arranged though not arbitrarily. 191 hymns each were contained in each of the 10 *mandalas*. 2nd to 7th *Mandalas* were composed by a family. 8th

Mandala is called *Pragatha Mandala*. 9th *Mandala* is the most elaborate and 10th seems to be the latest addition. There are many controversial views on the inclusion of the 10th *Mandala*.

What is important to be understood is that the arrangement is to be determined by 3 considerations: The Deity, The Metre and The Verses each hymn contains. For example *Jagati* coming first and *Gayatri* coming last.

Sama Veda:

Sama Veda is a collection of melodies. It is similar to musical notes in music. The texts are drawn from *Rk Samhita*. 1,603 verses are seen in totality but 99 not found in *Rk Samhita*. The literary and historical value of the *Sama Veda* is practically nil but ritual wise it is imperative. *The same Samana* can be chanted on different verses and vice versa. In the language of the ritual texts, the verse on which the *samana* is chanted is called a 'Yoni' or source. *Sama Veda* i.e. *Archika*, is a collection of 585 *Yonis*.

The importance of it lies in appreciating that the *Purvarchika*, *Aranyaka Samhita* and

Uttararchika represent the text part of the *Sama Veda*. The *Gramageyagana*, the *Aranyagayagana*, the *Uhgana* and *Uhyagana* together constitute the song part. In actual chant no verse can retain its original form and thus it is difficult to say which verse is to be chanted in which given melody. There comes the need to indicate modifications.

Yajur Veda:

It is a ritual *Veda*. It is considered a guide for *Adhvargu* priests. There is no recitation of Mantras and chanting the melodies. There are six complete recensions. The White *Yajur Veda* has two (*Madhyandina* and *Kanva*); The Black *Yajur Veda* has four (*Taittiriya*, *Kathaka*, *Maitra-yam* and *Kapishthala*.)

According to *Vajasanehi-Samhita* the White *Yajur Veda* represents the original tradition. The Black is a later variation. But the influence of the *Rig Vedic* tradition cannot be ruled out. The first 18 *Adhyayas* occur in *Taittiriya Samhita*; last 22 *Adhyayas* occur in *Taittiriya Brahman*; 19 to 21 *Adhyayas* give the *mantras* of the *Santramani* i.e. a sacrifice performed to expiate the sin of excessive indulgence in *Soma*. 22 to 25 *Adhyayas* talk of the horse sacrifice. 26- 40 *Adhyayas* were called *Khila* in the subsidiary literature.

Atharva Veda:

It was to be merged within the *Srauta* literature to be called *Vaitana Sutra*. It never accorded full recognition in the ritual of the *Soma* cult. It is like the prayer book of the simple folk, haunted by ghosts and exploited by Brahmins.

Two recensions were known *Saunayika* and *Paippalada* recensions. Each consists of 20 *kandas*. They have been quoted by *Patanjali (Panini)*. It is a kind of manual for the Priest called *Brahmanachehamsin* who had a definite though minor role to play at *Soma* sacrifice.

The *Brahmanas*:

They are the ritual texts of the pronounced types. They kind of mystify the *Brahmanical* sacrifices. The duties of the *Hotri* Priests are speculated elaborately. *Aitareya* and *Kaushitaki* (or *Sankhaya yana*) are the *Brahmanas* of the *Rig Veda*. *Jaiminiya* and *Tandya maha* are the *Brahmanas* of the *Sama Veda*. *Satapatha Brahman* of the *Yajur Veda* where numerous stories are included.

The *Srauta- Sutras*:

A fine line of demarcation is drawn between *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Srauta-Sutra* is seen. Speculative spirit had developed in the *Brahmanas*. Ritual ceremonies in *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads* were conducted. They were called the *grihya- sutras*. They were prophetic forming a contrast to *Brahmanas*. They were extensive and intelligible and had a scientific spirit.

Conclusion:

In the *Sutras*, *Brahmanical* orthodoxy fought and lost its last battle against these forces of religious liberalism before merging itself in the synthetic National Religion in India i.e. Hinduism. We understand the nature and extent of these texts: literary and linguistic. They help in tracing the roots of how the Vedic Culture had polished the concepts of ritualistic, ceremonial celebration in entirety. Logically it is indefinable because in the Supreme Soul all descriptions cease. Subject, object ends and causes all fade away into the mystery of the Divine ecstasy. All we say is *Neti! Neti!* meaning (It is not this, It is not that.) The mystic saint describes it as 'That art thou.' There is no difference left between what is within and what is without.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.4

Lecture Title - Cultural Contributions of Mauryan Kushana

Script

The study of the Cultural Contributions would enable to understand the development under the Mauryan Kushana period. The Cultural, Social, Political, artistic and Economic History would give an in- depth knowledge of the Society then. The study would bring to light various facts about the administration under the Mauryan Empire.

Introduction:

Magadha was the principal state and the chieftain was Bimbisara 440 B.C. who had relations with the Licchavi clan through matrimonial alliance. The Mauryan Dynasty was essentially developed under Chandra Gupta Maurya from the North to Central India. The time period was approximately 322- 185 BC. The territory under the Mauryan Empire was prosperous and had extensive trade with foreign Countries. It would be appropriate to mention here that **Chanakya** who served as advisor to Chandragupta through his **Artha- Shastra** had constantly helped him in his victories. Alexander invaded Magadha in 325 B.C. and killed the Nanda king and occupied Pataliputra. Chandragupta Maurya defeated Alexander and compelled him to cede extensive territories in the Kabul, Herat, Kandhar and Baluchistan which brought the Western boundaries of Magadha up to the Hindu Kush.

Emperor Asoka ruled from 272-232 B.C He embraced Buddhism after the deadly battle of Kalinga and thereafter actively patronized the developments of arts, literature, *lats* or columns and monuments. Chandra Gupta Maurya encouraged the Cultural exchange with the Greek World where Asoka is known for his monolithic *lats* or columns and monumental character of contribution. These columns were known for their Prespolitan polish (named after a small town in Iran) that made the surface shine like black jade.

The administration under the Kushanas was very well managed. It extended from Balkh and Khotan to Bihar in the East; Kashmir in the North to Upper Sindh in the South- West. The Kushana rulers followed the pattern of the Achaemenian *Satrapies*. To this category belonged *Maha Kshatrapa*, *Kharapallana*, *Kshtrapa- Vanaspara*, *Kshatrapa- Liaka* and few others whose names are noticed in Kushana records. The sources are the Buddhist Literature and Pali works like *Milindapanha*. The Kushana monarchs seemed to possess unfettered powers. There was known a council that used to assist the King in its functions as revealed in the Buddhist texts.

Significance:

By the understanding of Chandragupta Maurya's Empire we get a glimpse into the kind of administration that was prevalent. The Empire was divided into 3 provinces, each under a Viceroy, usually under the Royal family. The provincial capitals were at **Taxilla, Ujjain and Tosali**. He visited law courts and Hall of Audience (**Diwan-i-Aam. Diwan-i-Khaas**). Hunting was his favorite sport and his army consisted of elephants, chariots and cavalry. According to **Megasthenes's** observation 'All land belonged to the state. There was no private ownership in the state, famines were unknown and Irrigation received special interest. There was over all prosperity. The ruler was assisted in his duties by his ministers who took charge of various **port-folios**. There was significant importance given to trade. The second board took care of the **Foreign office and consulate, medical facilities, stamped with their passports**, etc. The third board took care of **registrations of Births and Deaths** in the state and maintained the **census for taxation** purposes. There were boards **in charge of commerce, regulated sales, stamped weights and measures, collection of tax**, etc. **Civil and criminal courts** existed separately. Cases were heard by three judges. The main articles in which the merchants dealt were muslins, finer clothes, cutlery, armor, brocades, embroideries and drugs. Ivory, gold and jewelry too were some of the other articles.

The **society and economic activity** reveals that there was centralized bureaucracy or the control of the state over economy was predominant. Early pastoral economy had change to a village economy based on agriculture. According to the account of Megasthenes the Indian Society was divided into 7 classes of philosophers, farmers, soldiers, herdsmen, artisans, magistrates and Councilors. **Strabo** a noted writer maintains that the cultivators received one-quarter of the produce from the king as a payment. The cultivators formed the majority of Indian population. The possibility of land ownership in Mauryan Society is five: The King, The State, Large Scale land owners, Communal ownership and Cultivators. A noted Historian **Romilla Thapar** mentions about the writings of Fick, drawing attention to the frequent references to *gahapatis* and *gama bhojakas* in the *Jatakas*. Both of whom appear to control large areas of land.

Arthashastra describes the buildings within the city that sheds more lights on social status of various professions. Wages were determined according to the quality of the work and the quantity produced. For example consider the wages of a weaver for instance, it was dependent on whether the threads were spun fine, coarse or of middle quality and in proportion of the quantity. In a place like Taxilla, the Indian craftsmen would also be in contact with the Iranian craftsman who already was familiar with the medium of stone. The **Trade** and sale of the merchandise was strictly supervised by the state. As far as **Taxes** are concerned there is no mention of the capital punishment for such a crime. The punishment was usually confiscation of the goods or the payment of fine.

In the inscriptions, the ruler is called *Devaputra* suggesting the divine origin of the king. *Dandanayaku* and *Mahadandanayaka* were given the Military, Judiciary and Police functions. *Gramika* and *Padrapala* built the feudal hierarchy. Mendicants, Herdsmen, Artisans, Military officials, Inspectors in the Police, etc. too found employment with the administration. Emperor Asoka fulfilled Plato's ideal of the state in which 'Kings are Philosophers and Vice versa.' Megasthenes has listed 3 classes in the society: Soldiers, Administrative officers and Councilors.

Characteristic Features of the Cultural contributions:

Social life in Northern India under the Kushanas was richer in contents and comprehensive in outlook as is evident from the sculptures. **Sir John Marshall** a noted writer says 'the work here is unsurpassed. Asokan Pillars are boldly designed, exquisitely modeled and finely balanced possessing a lustrous polish.' Elaborate vegetation motifs are seen. They are essentially the fertility symbols. The ***Purna-Kalasha*** shows a plant that is abundant and is flowing out of the pot of plenty. The ***Yakshis*** are shown with emphasized breasts as ***Vrikshika*** or the lady plucking the branch of the tree. She has the capacity to bring to life even a dead tree out of season. The dress and ornaments acquaint us to the economic conditions in the society.

The sculptures are depicted with naturalistic linear qualities. Animated **Royal Processions, domestic scenes, dancers and musicians, bullocks, animals, monkeys and elephants** are shown in procession or as an individual medallion. There is rhythm added to the sculptures by the artistic hand. The sculptor had been successful in projecting movement in the composition which comes with expertise and experience to the hand of the artist. Evidence related to singing, drawing, music and other items of entertainment like dramatic performances and magical shows providing amusement to many.

The inscriptions recording donations or dedications by pious people for their respective religious order have been found. The broader aspect of life aimed at a harmonious balancing of *dharmā, artha and kama* spiritually economic pursuit and marital happiness. The family life constituted of smaller unit in the social organization. The joint family consisted of father, Mother, (grandfather) *pitamaha*, *vadhu* (daughter- in- law), and even the senior members of the family.

Several types of attendants were known to cater to the comforts of the master and the mistress of the household. Maid servants attended on the ladies preparing cosmetics (*vilepana*) arranging for the toilet and weaving sweet smelling garlands. ***Lalitavistara*** a text too prescribes the rules and conducts of the bride. A noted writer ***Asvaghosa*** writes about the shyness of the newly wed. Marriage generally took place between the members of the same caste. **Dress and ornaments** Sculptures and Literature are rich sources of knowing the status, taste and prosperity of the people.

In the Gandhara region the dress of the people consisted of a loin cloth (*dhoti*) tied with a girdle at the waist and reaching to the ankles. Scarf and turban too were very much the part of the dress. The woman on the other hand wore a long tunic with an ornate girdle on her pelvis. The ornamentation consisted of a necklace for both men and women. Men wore a single bangle but for women the bangles were numerous. From the sculptures available it seems soft and transparent clothing was worn during summers and perhaps plain cotton (*tunda pati*) was worn during the winter. The toilet and the treatment of the hair is elaborately seen in the art works found. *Asvaghosa* mentions about toilet scene where a woman is seen holding up a mirror to her face. Ointment, perfume, clothes and sweet smelling flowers have been mentioned. *Chandana* paste too was used for the body. According to *Milindapanha* shampooing (*dhovana*), followed by tying a ribbon (*bandhana*), combing (*kocca*) and then the hair dressing (*kappaha*) and a mirror (*adarsa mandala*) have been known.

The Religious Conditions reveal that the Kushana rulers were very tolerant and liberal rulers. The monks were conscious of the unity of all religions. Different schools of Buddhism were *Sarvastivadinis*, *Dharmaguptikas* and *Mahasanghikas*. The Brahmanical hierarchy was recognized and practiced. The popular cult of snake worship is noticed in several records. Brahmanism was a living force with the performance of the sacrifices. The Jains were fairly active with their *Ganas*, *Kulas* and *Sakhas*. On the whole the religious conditions were one of understanding, toleration and broad-mindedness.

Literature too was known to occupy an important place in the society. Texts like *Mahavastu*, the *Lalitavistara*, the *Kavyas of Asvaghosa: The Buddha-Carita* and the *Sundrananda* were known. *Asvaghosa* had studied the psychology of women, their character and methods of approach where *Sundari* is shown to tempt *Ananda* as a deterrent on the path to *Moksha*. In the *Saddharmapundarika* there are references to neat and lovely gardens serving as places of recreations. Children seem to be happy playing with the sand (*sikta*) and toys (*kridanakam*.) There is a reference to juvenile enjoying games and exercising. Playing on musical instruments, dancing and singing are seen. The musical instruments included drums (*bheri*), conch (*dhundhubi*), sweet lute (*vina*), tabor (*mridanga*), drum (*kin kina*) and other minor instruments like cymbal, *tunava*, *vallaki* and *mukunda* were also played. Magic display and festivals were uniformly enjoyed.

Yaksha from Parkham, Yakshi from Didarganj, Colossal columns, Columns at Lauriya Nandangarh, Sanskasia Lion Capital, Rampurva Bull Capital, Vesantara Jataka, etc. all are replete examples of how far the value to art and architecture was provided a place in the day-to-day life. The work rendered under the Mauryas was not with entire patronage from the state. Rich merchants, land owners, travelers, high officials, common artisans too were giving liberal donations for the excellence. The Gandhara sculptures show cymbals, drums, harp, lute,

mandolin, pan- pipes and tambourine shown in various sculptures. The Mathura sculptures show tabor, flute, conch, drum and a big pipe. Besides items of entertainment, magic and magicians (*sobhika*) too were very popular. The *Kaumusi-Maha utsava* is also noticed in the *Divyavadana*.

It will be of interest to know that women from all walks of life were drawn to Buddhism. The Narratives at **Sanchi** speak of the ivory workers from Vidisa. **The Salabhanjikas** depicted here too speak of the fecundity cult. The adoration of the woman as Mother and a fertility symbol was lived through her conglomerate forms of the woman with the tree. Monks and nuns were shown shunning away the Worldly pleasures and living on the generosity of the laity. Ashok too became renowned as the patron of the Buddhist intellectual **Asvaghosa**.

The Economic Life: is understood from the variety of food that had been displayed and has been made mention of in the various texts. Cereals, pulses, fats, sweets, vegetables and non-vegetarian items were known. Flour (*saktu*), rice (*odana*), parched grain (*laja*), barley (*yava-sakta*), mustard seed (*sarshapa*), etc. were known. Certain scenes also depict women indulging in drinking. The accounts of **Pliny and Periplus** have referred to intense trade of food items between India and the West. **Guilds** were well known. Guilds are characterized as organization of Industries or professional interests on a set pattern. The head of the guild was called *Sreshthin*.

Lalitavistara refers to caravans. Besides Sea-faring merchants, Dealers, etc. were well known. Masons, mechanics and artists too were known. Workers in Metals included black smiths, needle makers, goldsmiths, workers in tins, etc. were known to serve the Mauryan society. Actors, dancers, law practitioners, writers, physicians, surgeons were known to have served

with their skill. Weights and Measurements were known to exist. *Adhaka* ($1/4^{th}$ *karsha*), *prastha* ($1/4^{th}$ *Adhaka*) and *ghatach* (4 *adhakas* or 1 *drona*) were the different weights used for measurements.

Conclusion:

Both Art and Culture are inseparable and the Cultural background seems to be indispensable for a better understanding of the basic features of artistic, sculptural and architectural forms. By taking the above view of the Cultural understanding, an inter-relation of the society and the influences on the mind of the artist is understood. Mauryan artisan's guilds are quite well known in literature where they had been engaged in Asoka's projects. Generous donations came in from all quarters for the development of arts and literature. People were sensitive to the aesthetical living and valued the Arts in their lives. The trade and Commerce with India and the West was known to profess as according to **Periplus** Indian pepper, ginger, gems, silver and gold was in much demand. General education was of the Vedic studies, grammar and lexicography. The education varied on the basis of the caste (*vaga*) as a Brahmin boy's education was different from that of a Kshatriya. The latter was to get more training in physical and military skills and that which applied to more of practical use. It would be appropriate to add here that the requirements of the society and the output of this period was not meager.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.5

Lecture Title - Cultural Contributions of Gupta Harsha

Script

The study of the Cultural Contributions would enable to understand the development under the Gupta rule. The encouragement that was given to the Arts and Literature had reached its climax as the period takes pride in welcoming the travelers from not alone China but also from other foreign countries. Classic texts, *Kavyas* and poems were composed during the rule of the Gupta Dynasty.

Introduction

The Period of Gupta Court extends from c. 320- 467 CE. Chandragupta Maurya founded it in c. 320 CE in Bihar. The Empire reached its Zenith in the reign of Samudra Gupta (c.375- 76). The Chinese pilgrims who had visited were *Fa-Hien*. *Hieun Tsang* came in 630 A.D. to study Buddhism. Nine Gems were supported in the court and *Arya Bhatta* calculated the Solar System and invented 0's and 1's. *Kalidasa* was the court poet here and *Vatsyayana's Kamasutra* a treatise on sexual pleasure was written.

Indian ideals of beauty received their canonical expression in literature and subsequently influenced the visual arts. During the Gupta period the Buddha icon became a synthesis of Gandhara and Mathura styles. It is noted by perfect oval face, serene smile, dreamy lotus eyes, elongated ears, ascetic hair, slim body, clinging light robe and elegantly carved halo. Hindu temples were products of invention and experiment where the master sculptors were well versed in different arts, *Vastu Shasta* and *Shilpa Shastra*. The Gupta Period stood at the inter- section of two traditions: The Maturity of Buddhist Arts and the Genesis of the Hindu Temple.

Chandra Gupta II died in A.D.415. He was succeeded by Kumaragupta and later Skandagupta. Harsha ruled from c. 606- 47 CE. He was the last Hindu Emperor who maintained semblance of Unity till the end of his lifetime. Harsha was 16 years old when he came to power. He had entertained the idea of retiring to a Buddhist Monastery but his brother's murder called him to take charge. He made Kanauj his capital. With the combined forces of Kanauj and Thanesar, he completed his *Digvijay* dating from his accession in 606 A.D.

Significance:

Chandragupta established himself as master of the Ganges valley. His capital was the ancient city of Pataliputra, the modern Patna. He was succeeded by his son Samudragupta in A.D. 330. Samudragupta was an accomplished and a versatile ruler. He studied music and literature besides spreading the boundary of his Empire. Fa-Hien's accounts reveal that the kingdom

under the Guptas A.D. 401- 411 was highly prosperous and it was a well- governed country. The nobles and the house holders had founded hospitals within the city, to which the poor and destitute could get healing. When cured they could depart at their convenience.

The Chief Ministers had fixed salaries like the other officials. The people did not make use of any intoxication and killing animals for food was unknown. The *Chandalas* and Pariahs ate garlic or onions. The monks and mendicants were provided for the food, clothing and shelter. The offerings were made to priests in order to accrue merits. Universities for secular and religious studies flourished at Nalanda and other centers of learning. Medical Science was widely studied and Sanskrit medical treatises were the basis of much of the later Arabian learning. In Mathematics the theorem of Pythagoras was understood.

In imaginative Literature the chief developments were the Kavyas which were in prose as well as verse drama, lyric, poetry, or prose romances and fables. Kalidasa was equally eminent as a lyric poet and dramatist. His chief poems are the *Raghuvamsa* or the story of the race of Raghu, the *Kumarasambhava* or the birth of the War- God *Kumara*, *Ritu- Samhara* or the cycle of the Seasons, *Meghaduta* or the Cloud messenger and *Shakuntala* that relates the interesting story of King Dushyant and his promise. Poet Bharatrhari's *Sringara Sataka* or Century of Love is full of charming but cynical epigrams. Dandin's *Dasa Kumara carita* or the adventures of the 10 princes and Bana's *Harsha carita* and *Kadambari* bespeak the period of rich patronage by the Gupta Empire to the poets, writer, literature and aesthetic development of the mind. *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesa* or *Book of Wise Counsel* too had been written during this period and *Bhavabhuti's Madhava and Malati and Ramacarita* or the Story of Rama has also been written.

The work on dramatic criticism too was conducted during this time. Bharata's *Natya Shastra* or the treatise on drama, *Jayadeva's Gita Govinda* or Song of the Cowherd is an example of the lyrical drama. One of the earliest of the Classical Dramas *Sudraka's Mricchakatika* or *The Toy Cart* gives us a vivid glimpse into the social life of an Indian city in the 5th Century A.D. It's a story with Vasantasena and Charudatta, the two characters of the play and the kind of difficulties they face as the play proceeds. *Visakhadatta's Mudra Rakshasa* or Seal of the Minister is a Historical play of how Chanakya overthrew the last of Nanda kings of Pataliputra. Harsha promoted the Temples, Monasteries and Museum in the town. His empire extended from the mouth of the Ganges to the Sutlej and included Malwa, Gujrat and Kathiawar. Harsha took the title of the 'Five Indies' viz. Punjab, Kanauj, Bengal, Mithila and Orissa.

Characteristic Features of the Cultural contributions:

The sources of the Imperial Gupta History are of four classes: Literary works, inscriptions, coins and monuments. The literary work includes: The *Puranas*, the play called *Kaumudi*

Mahautsava, Devi Chandra- Guptam composed by *Visakhadatta, Bana's Harsha- carita, Mahayana Buddhist Chronicle, Arya- Manjusri Mulakalpa*; the inscriptions: incised on stone and metals as in the case of copper plates or pillars; eg. Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta or the Mandasor Pillar inscriptions of Yasodharman; Coins: The Gupta coins throw light on both general and numismatics history. They present a wide variety of types shown in their legends, symbols, standard or weight and fabric; Monuments: is a source of both artistic and religious history. These schools are distinguished as Mathura, Varanasi, Nalanda, etc.

The Political conditions of the state were strong and war- like inspite of their despotic contributions and were neither enervated by luxury nor enfeebled by want of martial exercise. The Civil administration was well governed and the subjects were happy. The source of law was *Sruti* and *Smriti*. Their duty was to administer justice according to the divinely ordained law and to keep peace and order by punishing the robbers and other evil doers. They were to receive taxes from the produce of the land, trade and handicraft for performing this service. The appellation of the country was *Janapada* or people showing the changed conditions of kingdoms which no longer consisted of homogeneous people bearing particular names. *Vishya* consisted of a number of villages or *gramas*; the *grama* or the village formed the back bone of the country and its administration had fixed sites and boundaries. All the cases pertaining to the Civil and Criminal cases were dealt here, land measurements were to take place, army, nobles, courts, etc. were taken care of.

The King had an anointed wife and several other queens under him. The King was theoretically and usually practically the leader of the armies on the battle field and the dispenser of justice at home. The *Smritis* direct the King to divide his time for convenience of business into 3 proportions: dispensation of justice, the looking after of the administration and re- creation and pleasure which he followed scrupulously. Harsha was a just and able ruler. He was known for his charities. Within his empire he had set up hospitals, provided food, drinks, medicines, etc. The slaughter of animals was forbidden. Equal reverence was paid to the Gods and Deities like Siva, Surya and Buddha. He was an indefatigable worker where he devoted a part of the day to the affairs of the state and the remainder to the religious works and exercises.

According to Fa Hien the efficiency of the Gupta administration was demonstrated by the material and moral progress of the people in A.D. 399- 414. It notes that since the time of Buddha, the kings, the elders and gentry built shrines and gave land, houses, garden with men and bullock for cultivation. Rooms with beds and mattresses, food and clothes were provided for the resident and travelers. The moral progress and the public spirit of the people are shown in their liberal endowments of religious and educational institutions. Homes of charity where shelter, with bed and food was offered to the traveler were noticed by Fa- Hien. *Dharamshalas* were opened to all without distinction of caste and creed, free hospitals were known too to

help the poor, helpless patients, widowers and cripples. The sale of land was to be made to the private persons only if the land was devoid of vegetation, it was incapable of yielding revenue, no financial loss was incurred, some kind of material gain, gain in shape of *Dharma* or the sale of which will not affect the cultivable land.

The accounts of *Hieun Tsang* the Chinese traveler speaks about how the butchers, fishers, dancers, executioners, scavengers, etc. lived away from the main city. The walls are covered with lime or mud and mixed with cow dung for purity. The caste system was in operation. Brahmins were engaged in religious duties, the *Kshatriyas* were the hereditary governing class, the *Vaisyas* were the tradesmen and the *Sudras* to perform agriculture and menial work. There is no infliction of corporal punishment. When the rules of morality are broken the limb that is accused is cut. As the administration of the Government is founded on benign principles, the executive is simple. The people are not subject to forced labor. The amount in the treasury was divided into four parts. First for carrying out the affairs of the state, the second for paying the ministers, the third for rewarding the men of genius and the fourth for giving alms to the religious community.

The military was to guard the frontiers and put down disturbances. *Hieun Tsang* was struck by the prosperity of the country. The standard of living was high. Payment was made in kind but gold and silver coins were in circulation and cowrie shells and pearls were also used for the purpose. The soil was fertile and highly cultivated and a large number of fruits and vegetables were grown. The Education system was extensive and it took about 25- 30 years of life to complete the process. A number of disinterested men of wealth and position devoted their entire life to life long study. The pursuit of pleasure belongs to the worldly life, the pursuit of knowledge to the religious life. The regular curriculum consisted of grammar, mechanics, medicine, logic and metaphysics. The juniors and seniors admonished each other and through dialogue mutually helped each other to perfection.

The Mahayana doctrine was discussed in Harsha's court. His widowed sister too participated in the discussion. The position of women was of amicable standards as is proven by Harsha's sister's participation in the discussion. A great public assembly was called at Kanauj. *Hieun Tsang* delivered his discourse. *Hieun Tsang* won great honors because of his presentation and knowledge he had exuded. But there was secretly jealousy among the Brahmins who felt the king's favor upon the Buddhist monks. Several gifts, money, tokens, pearls, perfumes, etc, were bestowed upon the learned. Upon his departure *Hieun Tsang* took with him numerous relics and images of Buddha, Buddhist images in gold, silver, crystal and sandal wood. The traveler had described Harsha as man of eminent wisdom. His skill in literature was profound. He deeply respected the *Tri- Ratna: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha*.

Literature in India had always been dependent upon court patronage, and the rise of the Guptas was accomplished by great activity in many fields. The Religious conditions: Complete tolerance of religions like the Hindus, Jain and Buddhist were known. The different religions lived in peace with one another. Even in a family there was known to have the father professing a particular religion and the son practicing yet another religion of his choice. The concept of *Pravarajya* or giving up the world and ceasing to act was known. There was a belief that the World is full of misery and the soul was bound in the chain of transmigration from body to body. Each is to be paid according to his *Karma* was the common understanding. The doctrine of *Ahimsa* was acceptable to all schools

The Epics and the *Puranas* were re-arranged in their present form. *Mahabharata* which was originally a secular poem describing the fate of the *Kurus* at the hands of the *Pandavas* was re-organized. The *Dharma shastras*, or text books embodying the teaching of the Brahmanical schools or the rules of the caste were compiled from the earliest *Sutras*. The laws of the books of *Yajna valkya*, *Narada*, and most famous of all, the *Manava- Dharmashastra*, or laws of Manu, probably belong to the Gupta period. The art of the Gupta period reflects upon the religious and social practices and following of the common people. *Purana's* description of Vishnu *Bhagwana's* 10 incarnations: *Matsya* (Fish), *Kurma* (Tortoise), *Varaha* (Boar), *Vamana* (Dwarf), *Narasimha*, *Parashu Rama*, *Krishna*, *Buddha* and *Kalki* reflect the beliefs of common people. Their dress adorning the images reveal the economic condition of the people in general in order to adorn their Gods and Goddesses lavishly as shown here. The churning of the Ocean is another scene where the Gods and the demons are churning the Sea of milk to produce 14 objects for the benefit of the humanity. The *Kurma* provides it's back for the axis to rotate and help the churning process. *Krishna* playing on the flute, *The Lingam*, *Vishnu* with *Brahma* and *Lakshmi* or *Vishnuanantasayana panel*, Vishnu as the Cosmic Boar, etc. reveal the religious beliefs of the people.

The four orders of hereditary caste distinctions: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras were known from the *Harsha- carita* by *Bana*. The artistic renderings too reveal the Social conditions highlighting the dress, ornaments, customs and manners. Men seem to wind a strip round the waist and to the arm pits leaving the right shoulder bare. Women wear a long robe which covers the both the shoulders. The hair on the head of the crown is made into a coil, the rest of the hair hanging down. Some of the males shown wear moustaches. Garlands too adorn the body. The clothes known were *Kshauma* (silk), *Badura* (cotton), *Dukula* (linen), *Lalatantuja*, *Ansuka*, *Naita*, cloths glistening like the serpent's skin and the colors in use were that of a rainbow. Buddhist monks and nuns wore simple clothes. The Jewelry consisted of *tiaras* and garlands, strewn with precious stones. Bracelets, necklaces, *Kundalas*, *keyuras* and armlets were well known. Most of the women used to move around bare- foot. According to the

accounts of the travelers no child marriages were heard of and the possibilities of re-marriage were also not known.

The coins of silver and gold reveal several motifs like the archer, swordsman, *Asvamegha*, Horse-men, Lion slayer, Tiger slayer, Peacock, Elephant riders, etc. shed a light on the life of the people. Sculptures and structures too reveal the religious following and socio-economic prosperity during the Gupta Period.

Conclusion:

The Gupta period is known for the richness of art, architecture, literature, tolerance of religious followings. Harsha particularly was responsible for not only spreading of the empire far and wide but also for the overall development. Harsha organized the first assembly where the intellectuals could come together at a platform and discussed openly about their learning. Harsha was one of the greatest rulers that India has produced. He was benevolent to the extent that he gave away everything from his treasure and in the end also what he had on person. He had to borrow clothes from his sister to get back. *Kalhana*, the Historian of Kashmir says 'Endowed with rare talents and famous for his good government and piety, he fell under the influence of evil counselors, and was assassinated by his troops.' *Harsha* though set an example of good governance.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.6

Lecture Title - Bhagat Kabir

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the coveted place of Bhagat Kabir who was a great poet and saint of Bhakti Movement.

While throwing light on the contribution of Bhagat Kabir some basic and general questions which often come to our mind are: From which region of India Bhagat Kabir hailed? During which period his work and thought philosophy influences the Bhakti movement? What are his significant literary contributions? His teachings are placed on which principles and how he was instrumental in bringing about a change in the spiritual, philosophical and social perspectives of India during his life-time?

Of the religious reformers who followed the trail of Ramananda, simplifying and liberalizing his teachings and thereby making the Bhakti movement more meaningful and responsive to social urges, the greatest undoubtedly was Kabir. He was probably the most cosmopolitan of the bhagats of medieval India. Macauliffe says: 'Kabir has written works which all religious denominations can accept, and which, if perused without bigotry, are advantageous for the salvation of all persons.' Dedicated to steadfast utterance of God's name, he 'deemed worthless the rules of caste and the Hindu and Muhammadan religious observances.'

The name Kabir comes from Arabic al-kabir which means 'The Great-the 37th name of God in Islam. Kabir, the most radical disciple of Ramananda, gave a positive shape to the social philosophy of his illustrious teacher. He believed in formless God. He was the first to reconcile Hinduism and Islam. He preached a religious system strictly monotheistic, taught the absolute abolition of the caste. Kabir was neither a theologian nor a philosopher but he appears before us as a teacher. The central theme of Kabir's teaching is Bhakti "Kabir refused neither to acknowledge caste distinction nor to recognize the authority of the six schools of Hindu philosophy, or the four divisions of life prescribed by the Brahmans. Kabir played the important role of a teacher and social reformer by the medium of his writings. Apart from having an important influence on Sikhism, Kabir's legacy is today carried forward by the 'Kabir Panth' ('Path of Kabir'), a religious community that recognizes him as its founder and is one of the Sant Mat sects. Its members known as Kabirpanthis, are spread over north and central India.

HIS BIRTH:-

There are so many views are their regarding life history of Kabir:

- 1• There are many legends associated with the birth and death of Kabir (1440-

1518 A.D.). Some people say that, he was born to a family of Muslim weavers. Others claim that he was the son of a Brahmin widow.

2• It is widely accepted that he was born in 1398 A.D. (71 years before Guru Nanak). Kabirpanthis (followers of Kabir) say that he lived upto the age of 120 years and give date of his death as 1518, but relying on the research of Hazari Prasad Trivedi, a British Scholar Charlotte Vaudeville is inclined to lend credence to these dates. Which has proven that 1448 A.D. is probably the correct date of Saint Kabir's demise.

3• Kabir was born in Benaras and adopted by Neeru and his wife Neema who belonged to Julaha community, who named him Kabir ('Great' or 'the Most High'). He seems to have followed his hereditary occupation i.e., weaving, without adopting the ascetic ways of a faqir. It is clear whether he ever married, but tradition gives him a wife named Loi and two children. Kabir had a son who was named Kamal and a daughter named Kamali.

4• Kabir strove to create spirit of harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims. His early life is shrouded in mystery. It is said that he was born of a Hindu widow, who left him on the embankment of a tank in Benaras and that he was then found and adopted by a Muslim weaver named Niru. When he grew up and became disciple of Ramananda. He did not leave his home. He was a pious householder and used to earn his livelihood by weaving clothes.

5• Kabir's family is believed to have lived in the locality of 'Kabir Chaura' in Varanasi. 'Kabir matha', a matha located in the back alleys of Kabir Chaura, celebrates his life and times. Accompanying the property is a house named 'Niru tila' which houses Niru and Nima's graves. The house also accommodates students and scholars who lived there and study Kabir's work.

6• The legendary version of Kabir's first contact with Ramananda is a curious one. Originally Kabir hesitated to ask Ramananda to adopt him as his disciple due to the rigid caste system of the Hindus. Ramananda stayed in his cottage all day and only left it at about 3 o'clock in the morning to go down to the Ganges River to have a bath and perform his rites. Kabir had the knowledge of Ramananda's daily habits and so he waited one night for Ramananda by lying on the steps of Panchganga Ghat. When Ramananda accidentally stepped on Kabir on his way to bathe, he uttered "Utho! Ram ko Ram bolo" (Rise up! Say Ram to Ram). This became for Kabir, the sacred mantra. Ramananda later give him formal Diksha and accepted him as his disciple.

PHILOSOPHY OF KABIR:-

Kabir was influenced by the prevailing religious mood of his times, such as Brahmanic Hinduism, Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism, the teachings of Nath yogis and the personal devotionism of South India mixed with the imageless God of Islam. The basic religious principles he espoused are very simple. According to Kabir, all life is interplay of two spiritual principles. One is the personal soul (Jivatma) and the other is God (Paramatma). It is Kabir's view that salvation is the process of bringing these two divine principles into union.

His greatest work is the Bijak (The Seedling), an idea of the fundamental one. This collection of poems elucidates Kabir's universal view of spirituality. Though his vocabulary is replete with Hindu spiritual concepts, such as Brahman, Karma and reincarnation, he vehemently opposed dogmas, both in Hinduism and in Islam. His Hindi was a vernacular, straightforward kind, much like his philosophies. He often advocated leaving aside the Quran and Vedas and simply following Sehaja Path, or Simple/Natural way to oneness in God. He believed in the Vedantic concept of Atman, but unlike earlier orthodox Vedantins, he spurned the Hindu societal caste system and murti-poojan (Idol worship), showing clear belief in both Bhakti and Sufi ideas. The major part of Kabir's work as a bhagat was collected by the fifth Sikh Guru-Guru Arjan Dev and incorporated into the Sikh scripture-Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

POETRY OF KABIR:-

Kabir composed in a condensed and earthy style, replete with surprise and inventive imagery. His poems resonate with praise for the true guru who reveals the divine through direct experience, and denounce more usual ways of attempting god-union such as chanting, austerities, etc. Kabir, being illiterate, expressed his poems orally in vernacular Hindi, borrowing from various dialects including Avadhi, Braj and Bhojpuri. Kabir's teachings are contained in his Dohas. The devotional songs or Bhajans of Kabir called Kabir Doha. These Dohas are in the form of short poems in the Bijaka, sacred book of the Kabirpanthis, the followers of Kabir. His devotional Bhajans or Dohas appealed most to the common men, Hindus as well as Muslims.

A considerable body of poetical work has been attributed to Kabir. And while two of his disciples-Bhagodas and Dharamdas, did write much of it down, "there is also much that must have passed with expected changes and distortions, from mouth to mouth, as part of a well-established oral tradition.

Kabir and his followers named his poetic output as Banis (utterances). These include songs as above and couplets called variously Dohas, Saloka (Sanskrit Sloka) or Sakhi (Sanskrit Saksi). The later term meaning 'witness' best indicates the use that Kabir and his followers envisioned for these poems: *"As direct evidence of the Truth, a Sakhi is meant to be memorized. A Sakhi is meant to evoke the highest Truth."* As such memorizing, reciting and thus pondering over these utterances constitutes, for Kabir and his followers, a path to spiritual awakening.

IMPORTANT FEATURES OF KABIR'S POETRY:-

- 1• Kabir's poetry has ecstatic feeling and its rejection of both Hinduism and Islam in favor of a direct relationship with the divine.
- 2• Kabir used many kinds of imagery to convey ideas of religious ecstasy, but very common among them are images of music (especially 'unstuck' or unsounded music).
- 3• Kabir pointed to the inward life of the mind as the source of contact with the divine.

4• Kabir's thoughts on consciousness could express metaphysical subtlety.

TEACHINGS OF BHAGAT KABIR:-

The central teachings of Kabir are very simple. These are as follows:

1• He laid stress on 'Bhakti'.

2• He said that through 'Bhakti' or devotion one would come nearer to God; one could be released from the cycle of birth and death only by sincere love and devotion to God, which he called Bhakti.

3• He sincerely tried to emphasize the unity of Islam and Hinduism by preaching those virtues which were common to both religions.

4• He made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims.

5• To Kabir Allah and Rama were but different names of the same Supreme Being.

6• To him Hindus and Muslims were "pots of the same clay."

7• According to Kabir salvation could be attained by doing good deeds or by means of Bhakti or sincere devotion to God.

8• He did not believe in idol worship.

9• He was also against the performance of rituals and superstitions or pilgrimage to the so called holy places.

10• Kabir denounced the caste system. He said that there should be no discrimination on the basis of caste.

11• He laid great emphasis on the equality of man.

12• He preached a religion of love which aimed at promoting unity amongst all castes and creeds.

13• Kabir was a firm believer in the unity of God.

14• The message and the teachings of Kabir are gathered in his Dohas, which criticize rituals and superstitions.

15• He was a bold preacher. He said this to the Hindus and to the Muslims: "If God be within the mosque, then to whom does this world belong?"

16• Kabir condemned pride and selfishness. He wanted man to give up pride, anger, enmity and ego.

17• He appreciated brotherhood, which ultimately directed towards reaching the main objectives: "Love of God" and "Love of humanity".

18• To Kabir, Hari does not exist in the east and nor Allah in the west. They are one and reside inside the human heart. He advised everyone to seek truth within their own hearts.

19• He held that religion without Bhakti was no religion at all and that asceticism, fasting and alms-giving had no value if unaccompanied by Bhajan (devotional worship).

20• Kabir was a great satirist and ridiculed all the institutions of his time.

21• He opposed the popular beliefs in the institution of Sati. He was equally against the veiling of women.

22• Kabir refused to recognize the superiority of Brahmins as a class.

23• He refused to believe that birth in a particular caste was due to the deeds in a previous life.

24• Kabir provides us with a code of ethics; he advocated the cultivation of the quality of humility.

25• He was a spokesman for the poor and downtrodden section of society.

26• Kabir believed in a simple and natural life. He himself wove cloth and sold it in the market like any ordinary weaver.

27• He did not interpret religious life as a life of idleness; he held that all should toil and earn and help each other but no one should hoard money.

28• He said that there is no fear of corruption from wealth, if it is kept constantly in circulation in the service of humanity.

29• Kabir tried to express simple thoughts of simple hearts in the common language of the people. He said, '*O Kabir, Sanskrit is the water in a well, the language of the people is the flowing stream.*' His simple words had infinite power.

ROLE OF KABIR AS A REFORMER:-

1• He was a 'Master' or 'Satguru' of Surat Shabad Yoga, Sant Mat-Kabir Panth.

2• He was a 'Musician' and 'Poet' of 'Nirguna Bhakti' (love and devotion for the One formless God).

3• He was a great 'Teacher' of Eastern Gnosis (Gnosticism or mysticism).

4• He was a 'Peacemaker' between Hindus and Muslims

5• He was a 'Social Reformer' in India who denounced the caste system.

6• He was thought of by many in Islam to be a 'Sufi Master' or 'Murshid'.

7• He was believed by Hindus to be one of the greatest poet-mystics and Vaishnava devotees in the history of India.

8• He was considered a 'Bhagat' by the Sikhs as many of his hymns are included in the Adi Granth.

9• He was influenced by Gorakhnath and the Nath Yogis and the Nath Yogis of northern India were in turn influenced by Tantric Buddhism.

10• Kabir's spirituality is a blend of Prem and Bhakti: love and devotion for the Beloved Lord, the One God and mystical, soul travel experiences of a visionary and auditory nature (inner light and sound).

LEGEND REGARDING HIS LAST DAYS:-

After Kabir's death which perhaps occurred in 1518 at Maghar, Hindus and Muslims wrangled over his dead body, with the Hindus wanting to cremate it according to custom, while Muslims argued that he should be buried. In the midst of the argument, Kabir appeared in the air and told the disputants to pull back the cloth that covered him. They did so, and found a pile of flower petals. The petals were divided, with the Muslims burying their half and the Hindus burning theirs.

Summary:

Going by the popularity of this great poet and saint, it is a fact that Kabir was the most eloquent and vibrant philosopher who penned down his thoughts full of deep wisdom and humanity in amazingly simple rustic language which charmed a large number of people who were able to understand the real truth and strength of religion. His rich vocabulary and crafting of phrases picked from the lives of common man had a magnetic effect and thus he was able to reach to such sections of society, which were considered down-trodden, poor and neglected. His teachings are based on the equality of all mankind and he emerged as a Champion and Torch-bearer of the cause of humanism, spiritualism and uprighteous living. Thank You

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.07

Lecture Title – Bhagat Ravidas

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the coveted place of Bhagat Ravidas who was a pioneer poet and saint in Bhakti Movement. While throwing light on the contribution of Bhagat Ravidas some basic and general questions which often come to our mind are: From which region of India Bhagat Ravidas hailed? During which period his work and thought philosophy influences the Bhakti movement? What are his significant literary contributions? His teachings are placed on which principles and how he was instrumental in bringing about a change in the spiritual, philosophical and social perspectives of India during his life-time?

Guru Ravidas was a north Indian sant mystic of the Bhakti movement who was active in the 15th century A.D. Venerated in the region of Uttar Pradesh as well as the Indian state of Maharashtra, his devotional songs and verses made a lasting impact upon the Bhakti movement. He is often given the honorific 'Bhagat' or 'Sant'. Guru Ravidas is also the founder of the 'Ravidassia sect'. He was a suave socio-religious reformer, a thinker, a theosophist, a humanist, a poet, a traveler, a pacifist and above all a towering spiritual figure before whom even head-priests of Benaras lay prostrate to pay homage.

Guru Ravidas was one of the brightest luminaries in the firmament of the Bhakti movement, which was a religious renaissance in India. He upheld the equality of all mankind, giving the call "deed not the creed makes man high or low". Guru Ravidas emphasized the fundamental tenets underlying all religions. He taught in times dominated by the rigidity and narrow-mindedness of the caste system, and illuminated the atmosphere with his enlightenment. As a proponent of the 'Bhakti Movement', his contribution was truly great, spreading the philosophy of spiritual self-realization through "Bhakti" and dispelling the darkness of "ajnana", with "jnana" (wisdom). Guru Ravidas emerged as a great philosopher-poet and social reformer, for humanity at large. Born in most humble surroundings, in the house of a cobbler, Guru Ravidas had a spiritual bend of mind even in his early life and thus came in contact with spiritual men and adopted Swami Ramananda as his Guru. Gradually he started spending most of his time in the company of saints and sadhus and built himself a thatched hut wherein he received and entertained wandering ascetics. All of his devotional songs were included in the Sikh Holy Scripture, the Adi Granth, by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru.

Guru Ravidas composed many Shabads and his teachings are included in Ravidassia Holy Book- "Amritbani Guru Ravidas Ji Ki".

Ravidas was subversive in that his devotionalism implied a leveling of the social divisions of caste and gender, yet ecumenical in that it tended to promote crossing of sectarian divides in the name of a higher spiritual unity. He advocated that every person has the right to worship God and read holy texts. He opened a frontal attack against the system of Untouchability. He

rejected the tradition of Brahmin mediator to reach the Supreme Being. He became a model for his fellow beings to overcome the hierarchical barriers of Brahmanical Social Order and to establish "**Begumpura**" - a state without fear and sorrows. Guru Ravidas elevated the status of the labour by emphasizing on the fact that honest labour is empowering.

HIS BIRTH AND SAINTLY LIFE: -

The details of Guru Ravidas's life are controversial. According to some he was born in 1376/77 or else 1399 A.D. but many scholars offer later dates. Schaller estimates his lifespan as 1450-1520 A.D. While the Encyclopedia Britannica contents itself with 15th -16th century A.D. Partly this is due to traditions that make him, the Guru of Meera (according to a devotional song attributed to her- "Guru Miliyaa Raidasji"). However, as Schaller points out, the importance of such claims lies in their establishing the authority of a lineage of gurus (parampara). One may count oneself a disciple of a master without having actually met him. His origin and parents are also given differently. According to history, he was born in a village named Seer Govardhanpur, near Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. His father Baba Santokh Das was a leather merchant and Mata Kalsa Devi was his mother. He was barely five days old when Swami Ramananda visited his house and blessed the child. When he reached the age of discretion, his father inspired him to join the family business. But Ravidas was imbued with celestial and humane values. His father got him married to Mata Lona Devi at early age and according to the Ravidas Purana, he had a son named Vijaydas. The money Ravidas, received from his father for business, he spent in the welfare of the saints and needy. His father was extremely perturbed and banished him from the house. He did not resent, quietly left the house, started living in a makeshift with his wife, and set up a small wayside shop of mending shoes. A region between Ahmednagar and Benaras is named after him. He did not abandon his love for the God and built a Temple of clay walls and thatched roof. He installed an idol made out of hide in the Temple. His extreme devotion and universal love induced hundreds of people of all castes to join him in worship. It is said that the conservative Brahmins of Kashi could not stand the popularity of this "untouchable saint". A complaint was made to the king that he was working against age-old norms of social order (Varnashrama Dharma) - cobbler was not supposed to talk of God or do work of advising or teaching. The king was a man of righteousness, and put the matter to a miraculous test and arranged for an assembly of learned men. Gur Ravidas went into meditation and recited one of his hymns (Gauri Purbi P.346) and requested the Almighty, "Take pity on me that my doubts may be dispelled." His prayer was answered and his adoration acclaimed the triumph in the miraculous test. A procession was arranged (shobha yatra) and the king himself participated. To express his gratitude he sang his hymn, "Thou art sandal and I am the poor castorplant, dwelling close to thee. From a mean tree I have become sublime and Thine fragrance, exquisite fragrance, now abides in me." Ravidas's selfless devotion and casteless love for humanity spread far and wide.

Maharani Jhally of Chitaur was a noble woman of benevolence and piety. Her ardency brought her to Benaras on a pilgrimage. In spite of the

disapproval of the Brahmin priests, she straightway went to the Temple of Bhagat Ravidas. The queen Jhally presented him with costly clothes and ornaments. Ravidas was in his ecclesiastic benediction at the time, and was reciting his hymns (Rag Sorath P.658-59) . He enlightened her to by saying that the Name of God was more precious than the ornaments. Maharani was captivated. Eventually she became his disciple and abandoned all her luxurious set up. Her husband, the Maharana, had been instigated against her adopting a cobble as her Guru. He was full of rage when she returned. He was pacified by listening to some of the hymns of Bhagat Ravidas.

The incidents of his life have always been inspiration to the people.

According to one such incident one morning Guru Ravidas's disciples were going to take bath in the sacred Ganges and insisted Guru Ravidas to accompany them. Guru Ravidas had promised to deliver shoes to one of his customers on that particular day. So, he was not able to join them. When one of his neighbors persisted, then Guru Ravidas uttered his belief saying that: "Man changa tow kathoti mein Ganga". That is if your heart is pious then the holy river is right in your tub and you need not to go anywhere else.

BEGUMPURA SHEHR:-

Begumpura is a term coined by Guru Ravidas in the 15th century A.D. Benaras "Begampura". Be-gam-pura or the land without sorrow. The spirit of the verse is this: Begumpura is the name of the city where there is no suffering or anxiety, no fear or downfall/Begumpura is the city where there is sovereignty of God/Where there is lasting peace and safety for all/All are equal, no one is second or third. In the end, Guru Ravidas bhajans reflect both a sense of poverty and caste humiliation and a desire to find a utopia without suffering, taxes or property; one that is, in the hymn "Begumpura" Guru Ravidas postulates the world of his dreams. There will be no distress, no tax, no restriction from going and coming, no fear in the world.

GURU RAVIDAS AND MIRABAI:-

Guru Ravidas traveled fairly widely and visited Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, besides a number of places in the northern India such as Prayag, Mathura, Vrindavan, Haridwar, Gurgaon and Multan. At most of these places, there are monuments honouring his memory. In his lifetime, he had thousands of followers, including members of the higher castes, among them being Mirabai, the Rajput princess. Mirabai regarded Guru Ravidas as her spiritual Guru. There is a small chhatri in front of Meera's temple. It has Guru Ravidas's engraved footprint. As a respect to her Guru, Meera once wrote: "Guru Milyaa Raidaasji..."

GURU RAVIDAS AND KABIR:-

Guru Ravidas is associated with the other great north Indian saint, Kabir, in a story where a great debate between them is represented as a saguna versus nirguna (without qualities) devotion debate. They also show the aspiration to go beyond caste, though the translated poems, available from 'authenticated' collections, lack the bitter condemnation of Brahmanism and caste that can be

found in Kabir and Tukaram.

ROLE OF GURU RAVIDAS IN SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB:-

The forty hymns of Guru Ravidas are included in the Sikh Holy scripture- Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It was compiled by Guru Arjan Dev- the fifth Sikh Guru. The hymns or verses incorporated in the Adi Granth fall under Raga- Sri (1), Gauri (5), Asa (6), Gujari (1), Sorathi (7), Dhanasari (3), Jaitsari (1), Suhi (3), Bilaval (2), Gaund (2), Ramkali (1), Maru (2), Kedara (1), Bhairau (1), Basant (1) and Malhar (3).

HIS LAST DAYS:-

It is said that Guru Ravidas disappeared from the world, leaving behind only his footprints.

TEACHINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF GURU RAVIDAS:-

- Ravidas □ acknowledged the unicity and omnipresence and omnipotence of God.
- According □ to him, the human soul is only a particle of the Divine: the difference between the two is like the difference between the gold and the ornament, the water and the wave (GG.93).
- He □ rejects distinctions between man and man on the basis of caste or creed. □ To □ realize God, which is the ultimate end of human life, man should concentrate on His Name, giving up mere forms and ritualism (GG.658, 1106).
- He □ believed birth in a low caste is no hindrance in the way to spiritual development.
- The □ only condition required is freedom from duality; all else including pilgrimage to and bathing in the sixty-eight centres is in vain (GG.875).
- He □ wrote deeply impassioned devotional verses and left his mark on Hindi literature for the fusion of religious sentiment with the vernacular medium.
- The □ Dohas or Bhakti songs written by Guru Ravidas have always tried to spread love and care among the people's hearts.
- Guru □ Ravidas also tried to bring the Hindus and Muslims together and this is evident from his thoughts which have been expressed in his songs.
- Guru □ Ravidas uttered his belief saying that “**Ka Mathura, Ka Dwarika, Ka Kashi Haridwar, Ravidas Khoja Dil Apna, The Miliya Dildar**”. That is one can meet God in his own heart even if he does not go on any pilgrimage.
- His □ Shabads are packed with divine wisdom and each of them, he advocates ‘**Ram nam jap**’ and praised the usefulness of this great mantra.
- He □ taught that one is distinguished not by one's caste (jati) but by one's actions (karma).

TYPES OF PADS/ DHOHAS CONTAINED IN THE VANI (VERSES) OF GURU RAVIDAS:-

The pads of Ravidas are teachings intended to be sung at gatherings of devotees. They can be regarded as ‘texts’ in the sense that oral performances

are texts. Each pad is a glimpse into Ravidas's thoughts, experiences and beliefs. The pads in the vani (verses) of Ravidas are composed in a number of traditional genres. The main types of genre in Ravidas's vani are as follows:

1. **“Warnings” (citavani):** This is one of the most common genres in all saints' works. Its theme is the danger of the belief that life in the world is the ultimate reality, because due to this the soul neglects to consider God and is born again into the suffering of Sansar.
2. **“Entreaty” (vinaya/binati):** This is also a very common genre in Sants works. Its theme is the suffering experienced by the singer of the pad in the world and his/her entreaty to God to rescue the soul.
3. **“Love-in-separation” (virah):** The suffering of the soul in separation from God, which is seen as akin to the suffering of a woman separated from her beloved.
4. **“The Destruction of Error” (bhram vidhasan):** The falsity of image of worship and other external practices.
5. **“The Glory of Praise/the Name” (bhajan/namva pratap):** The power of praising God is described and often previous Sants and other figures are quoted to testify to the power of Praise/the Name.
6. **“Meeting with the Pure” (sadh milap):** The meeting of like-minded devotees, assembled in order to worship God.
7. **“Devotion” (bhagati):** The nature of true devotion.
8. **“The Recognition of the Beloved” (piv pichanan):** The characteristics of the Beloved, God, are described.
9. **“The Experience” (anubhai):** The experience of union with God is described.

RAVIDASIAS SECT: -

Ravidasias are the members of the Ravidasi religion consider Guru Ravidas as their founding prophet and spiritual master, whom they revere as their “Satguru”. He is one of the early northern India poet-saint. The people of this strata were particularly attracted to the path of Guru Ravidas. After being initiated as Ravidasias added suffix “Ad-Dharam” (Primal Spiritual Way) to their names.

Summary:

Life and teachings of Bhagat Ravidas present the message that divinity, spiritualism and wisdom are not governed by only caste, creed and economic strata of a particular person. His life is a shining example of pious and spiritual exuberance which emits divine messages through simple interpretations and self control over mind and senses. This great saint also personifies that the people practicing so called low professions are in no way inferior to understand the real essence of truth and wisdom and infact spirituality flows through the veins of humility and down- to-earth realities and attainment of knowledge is not the prerogative of only the rich and the so called high castes. God lives in sublime subtlety and all His creatures are equal in His eyes.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No.08

Lecture Title – Vallabhacharya

Script

This lesson explores the valuable contribution of Vallabhacharya who is considered as a stalwart in the Bhakti movement and amply explains the basic principles of his philosophy, thought processes and the main impact of his teachings on the society. It also examines the plethora of the basic tenets of his spiritual journey and equips the reader with the essence of his meditative stance.

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the coveted place of Vallabhacharya who was a pioneer poet and saint in *Bhakti* Movement.

While throwing light on the contribution of Vallabhacharya some basic and general questions which often come to our mind are: From which region of India Vallabhacharya hailed? During which period his work and thought philosophy influence the *Bhakti* movement? What are his significant literary contributions? His teachings are placed on which principles and how he was instrumental in bringing about a change in the spiritual, philosophical and social perspectives of India during his life-time?

Vallabhacharya was a devotional philosopher, who founded the Pushti sect in India, following the philosophy of Shuddha-Advaita (Pure Non-dualism). According to him, it is by God's grace alone that one can obtain release from bondage and attain Krishna's heaven. This heaven is far above the "heavens" of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, for Krishna is the eternal Brahman. Vallabhacharya called his school of thought Shuddhavaita, or pure-monism.

Vallabhacharya accepted the 'Acharya' designation of Vishnuswami Sampradaya (Rudra Sampradav) upon request of Bilvamangala Acharya, the last Vishnuswami Sampradaya Acharya before Vallabhacharya. This was after Vallabhacharya won the famous debate of Brahmavada over Shankaras in the courtyard of the Emperor Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagara Empire- the prosperous South-Indian Empire. Apart from being the acharya of Vishnuswami Sampradaya, Vallabhacharya also propagated the Pushtimarga upon the god Krishna's order and thus became the acharya of not only Vishnuswami Sampradaya but also Pushti Sampradaya.

He is the Acharya and Guru within the Vaishnava traditions as promulgated and prescribed by the Vedanta philosophy. He is associated with Vishnuswami, a prominent Acharya of Rudra Sampradaya out of the four Vaishnava Sampradayas. Within Indian philosophy, he is known as the writer of Anubhashya- a commentary on Brahm Sutra, Shodash Granth or sixteen 'stotras' (tracts) and several commentaries on the Bhagavata Purana, which describes the many lilas (pastimes) of the Avatar, Krishna. Vallabhacharya occupies a unique place in

Indian culture as a scholar, a philosopher and devotional (*Bhakti*) preacher. He is widely considered as the last of the four great Vaishnava Acharyas who established the various Vaishnava schools of thought based on Vedantic philosophy, the other three (preceding him) being 'Ramanujacharya', 'Madhvacharya' and 'Nimbarkacharya'. He is especially known as a lover and a propagator of Bhagvata Dharma. He was born in Champaranya in India. Vallabhacharya was a tailang Brahmin. He preached the worship of Vishnu in the form of Krishna. He visited Mathura, Vrindavan and many other sacred places and finally settled in Varanasi.

HIS CHILDHOOD: -

The ancestors of Vallabhacharya lived in Andhra Pradesh and belonged to a long line of Telugu Vaidiki Brahmins known as Vellanadu or Vellanatiya following the Vishnu Swami school of thought. According to devotional accounts, Krishna commanded his ancestor Yagnanarayana Bhatta that he would take birth in their family after completion of 100 Somayagnas (fire sacrifices). By the time of Yagnanarayana's descendant Lakshmana Bhatta who migrated to the holy town of Varanasi, the family had completed 100 Somayagnas. Vallabhacharya was born to Lakshmana Bhatta in 1479 A.D. on the 11th day of the dark half of lunar month of chaitra at Champaranya. The name of his mother was Illamma.

The period surrounding Vallabhacharya's birth was a tumultuous and most of northern and central India was being influenced by Muslim invaders. It was common for populations to migrate in order to flee from religious persecution and conversion. On one such occasion, Lakshmana Bhatta had to urgently move out of Varanasi with his pregnant wife. Due to terror and physical strain of the flight suffered by the mother, there was a premature birth of the child, two months in advance. As the child did not show signs of life, the parents placed it under a tree wrapped in a piece of cloth. It is believed that Krishna appeared in a dream before the parents of Vallabhacharya and signified that He Himself had taken birth as the child. According to popular accounts, the parents rushed to spot and were amazed to find their baby alive and protected by a circle of divine fire. The blessed mother extended her arms into the fire unscathed; she received from the fire the divine baby, gleefully to her bosom. The child was named Vallabha (meaning "dear one" in Sanskrit).

VALLABHACHARYA'S EDUCATION: -

Vallabhacharya's education commenced at the age of seven with the study of four Vedas. He acquired mastery over the books expounding the six systems of Indian philosophy. He also learnt philosophical systems of Adi Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarka along with the Buddhist and Jain schools. He was able to recite hundred mantras, not only from beginning to end but also in reverse order. At Vyankateshwar and Lakshmana Balaji, he made a strong impression on the public as an embodiment of knowledge. He was now applauded as Bala Saraswati.

VALLABHACHARYA'S VICTORY AT VIJAYANAGARA:-

At the behest of the great Tuluva king Krishnadevaraya, a sentional debate was conducted at Vijayanagara between the Vaishnavaites of Madhva and

Shankaraites over the philosophical question whether God is Dualistic or Non-Dualistic. Vallabhacharya participated in the discussion, considering it as a divine call.

Vallabhacharya, who had earned an epithet of Bala Saraswati, was given the opportunity to discuss the question. The discussion continued for 27 days in the conference hall. The day of victory for Vaishnavas was celebrated with great pomp at Vijayanagara. He was honored with the Kanakabhishekam ceremony by Krishnadevaraya. The title of 'Acharya' and 'Jagadguru' (world preceptor) was conferred on him. He was given vessels of gold weighing a hundred maunds. Vallabhacharya declined to accept them politely and distributed them among the poor Brahmins and the learned only after keeping only seven gold mohurs. They were used for preparing the ornaments of their Lord Govardhananatha.

VALLABHACHARYA'S PILGRIMAGE TO INDIA: -

Vallabhacharya performed three pilgrimages of India, barefooted. He wore a simple white dhoti and a white covering the upper part of his body (known as 'Upavarna', literally means "upper cloth" in Sanskrit). He gave discourses on Bhagvata. He looked very bright, brilliant and his body depicted magnificent brilliance as a celibate. He gave discourses on Bhagvata at 84 places and explained the subtle meanings of Hindu Puranic text. Even during present day these 84 places are visited by thousands of Hindu pilgrims and are referred to as "Chaurasi Bethak". He used to stay in Vraja for 4 months in each year.

SELECTION OF VALLABHACHARYA AS AN ACHARYA: -

In the traditional Vedantic belief, an Acharya, the leader of spiritual preceptors, is one who has written his personal views and comments on the 'Brahmasutra', 'Bhagavad Gita' and 'Upanishads'. Shankaracharya, Nimbarkacharya and Madhvacharya had written their comments and obtained the designation of 'Acharya'. People then addressed him as Shri Vallabhacharya.

VALLABHA'S MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE: -

Shortly before or after this event, Vallabhacharya married at Benaras a Brahmin girl by name Maha Lakshmi. Vallabhacharya, like the other reforming Vaishnavas of the day, seems to have taught that marriage and family were no hindrance to religious life and set an example in himself. Two sons were born of this marriage; the first named Gopinatha being born in 1511 A.D. and the second Vittalnathji born in 1516 A.D., in the village of Parvat. Vallabhacharya himself educated both his sons thus fitting them for their work as his successors in preaching the Vaishnavite cult. At Benaras, Vallabhacharya seems to have divided his time between Benaras and Brindavan partly residing at one place and partly at another. At first his Vaishnavite gospel could have found little following in the city of Benaras, seat of Saivism as it was and of Advaitic learning.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PUSHTI MARGAM (LITERALLY, THE PATH OF GRACE): -

It is believed that when Vallabhacharya entered Gokul, he thought about the important question of restoring people to the right path of devotion. He meditated on

Krishna who appeared to him in a vision in the form of Shrinathji deity discovered by Madhavendra Puri and disclosed the 'Brahma Sambandha' (Sanskrit for - "Relation with Brahman, the supreme Godhead") a mantra of self dedication or consecration of self to Krishna. During that time Damodardasa was sleeping next to him. In the early morning, Vallabhacharya related this experience to his worthiest and most beloved disciple, Damodardasa and asked him- "*Damala, did you hear any voice last night?*" Damodardasa replied that "*I heard something but was not able to understand the meaning of it.*" Vallabhacharya then explained the meaning of the mantra and at that time he became the first Vaishnava initiated by Vallabhacharya. He wanted to preach his message of devotion to God and God's grace called "**Pushti-Marga**". He undertook three pilgrimages of India. He performed the initiation ceremony of religious rite by conferring on them 'Nama Nivedana' mantra or 'Brahma Sambandha' mantra. Thousands became his disciples but 84 devoted servants are most famous and their life has been documented in Pushti Marg literature as the 'Story of 84 Vaishnavas'. He also met Vyas in his Himalayan cave and discussed about Krishna and his flute.

HIS LAST DAYS: -

Vallabhacharya spent the last years of his life at Benaras, surrounded by his family and disciples and composing the numerous works which now bear his name and are the chief authority of his sect in writing these works, mostly commentaries and short philosophical or devotional treatises; Vallabhacharya seems to have been aided by some scholars, perhaps his disciples. These works embody Vallabhacharya's special version of the Vaishnavite Philosophy and his notions of worship and spiritual training. His cult and doctrines resemble a great deal those of the contemporary Chaitanya.

At the age of fifty-two, Vallabha closed his days in the city of Benaras. Most legendary accounts, as usual, are given of this event. It is said that, "having accomplished his mission, he entered the Ganges at Hanuman Ghat and when stooping into the water, passed out of sight; a brilliant flame arose from the spot and in the presence of a host of spectators, he ascended to Heaven and was lost in the firmament. The last place where he made his dwelling is said to be Jethan Bir at Benaras near which a Math still subsists.

LITERARY WORK OF VALLABHACHARYA:-

The chief works of Vallabha are the following: a few of them are too small and a few including Vyasa and Jamini Sutra Bhashyas are perhaps present. Vallabhacharya composed many philosophical and devotional books during his lifetime such as:

- **Anubhashya or Brahmsutranu Bhashya:** - 4 cantons of commentaries on the Brahm Sutra of Ved Vyas in Sanskrit language.
- **Tattvaarth Dip Nibandh:** - Essays on the fundamental principles of spirituality (3 chapters) in Sanskrit language.
- **Jaimini Sutra Bkaahya:** in Sanskrit language.
- **Siddhanta Bhashya:** embodying the principles and doctrines of the sect in Sanskrit language.
- **Suhhodhini:** a commentary embodying great learning on the first 4 Adyayas

of the 10th Skanda of the Bhagvata Purana in Sanskrit language.

- **Nava Batna:** in Braj Bhasha.
- **Krishna Ashraya:** in Braj Bhasha.
- **Bhaiti Vardini:** in Braj Bhasha.

TEACHINGS OF VALLABHACHARYA:-

- One should be a good and religious person- Not a God fearing man but a God loving man.
- Always speak the truth.
- Be just and honest to all.
- Treat all persons equally.
- One should have faith in Lord Krishna and surrender yourself to Him.
- Be charitable and never harm the hungry and the weak.
- Realize that service to men and animals is service to God.
- One should believe that Krishna is our God and never slacken your faith in Him and then he will surely protect you.
- One should regard Him as the be-all and end-all of our life.
- One's ultimate good lies in serving Him, which should be done with all one's heart, mind and soul.
- Trust in His protection.
- Remember Him always in all thoughts, words and deeds.
- Be free from sorrows and anxieties concerning your future, for you are safe in my (Lord Krishna's) hands.
- Only you should love me with the love of Gopis. 0 If you do so then you will surely secure liberation.
- That is the only means of union with Me, by which you will regain your original divine nature.
- Do not give your thoughts to worldly matters.
- Be devoted to me and render service to 'Me' by all Means at your disposal.

Summary:

The message that flows through the teachings of great philosopher, thinker and saint Vallabhacharya exhort us to achieve humanistic values like humility, honesty, straightforward thinking, simple living and performing one's worldly duties with merriment in the heart and a smile on the face. Shying away from one's duties towards self, family, society and country is a sign of weakness and cowardice. One should bravely face the miseries and difficulties of life and should stand firm in his resolve to obey the latent messages of the Creator and should respectfully abandon oneself to His wishes. It is one's sacred duty to avoid unnecessary rituals and should wholeheartedly dedicate oneself to the upliftment of fellow human beings through words and actions.

Paper Name - Indian Culture and Art

Lecture No. 09

Lecture Title – Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Script

Dear students today we are going to study in brief about the coveted place of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who was a pioneer poet and saint in *Bhakti* Movement.

While throwing light on the contribution of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu some basic and general questions which often come to our mind are: From which region of India Chaitanya Mahaprabhu hailed? During which period his work and thought philosophy influence the *Bhakti* movement? What are his significant literary contributions? His teachings are placed on which principles and how he was instrumental in bringing about a change in the spiritual, philosophical and social perspectives of India during his life-time?

Chaitanya was a Vaishnava saint and social reformer in eastern India (specifically present-day Bangladesh and states of west Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Assam and Orissa of India) in the 16th century A.D., believed by followers of Gaudiya Vaishnavism to be full incarnation of Lord Krishna. Sri Krishna Chaitanya was a notable proponent for the Vaishnava School of *Bhakti Yoga* (meaning loving devotion to Krishna/God) based on the philosophy of the Bhagavata Purana and Bhagavad Gita. Specifically he worshipped the forms of Radha and Krishna and popularized the chanting of the “Hare Krishna” maha mantra and has composed Siksastakam in Sanskrit. His line of followers known as Gaudiya Vaishnavas, revere him as an Avtar of Krishna in the mood of Radharani who was prophesied to appear in the later verses of the Bhagavata Purana.

Chaitanya was also sometimes referred to by the names ‘Gaura’ (Sanskrit for Golden One) due to his light skin complexion, and ‘Nimai’ due to his being born underneath a Neem tree. There are numerous biographies available from the time giving details of Chaitanya’s life, the most prominent ones being the ‘Chaitanya Charitamrita’ of Krishnadasa Kaviraja Goswami and the earlier ‘Chaitanya Bhagavata’ of Vrindavana Dasa (both originally written in Bangla but now widely available in English and other languages) and the ‘Chaitanya Mangala’, written by Lochana Dasa.

Chaitanya, a great devotee of Lord Krishna, showed great interest in education from his very childhood and studied Sanskrit. Later at the age of 24, he renounced the worldly life and became a *sanyasi*. He traveled all over the Deccan, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. His followers regarded him as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. He helped the old and the needy. He was opposed to the inequalities of the caste system. He emphasized the need for tolerance, humanity and love. He spread the message of *Bhakti* in Bengal. He popularized ‘Sankirtan’ or public singing of God’s name. His songs are still very popular in Bengal. He was addressed ‘Mahaprabhu’ by his followers.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu defined his system of philosophy as “Achintya Bheda Abheda” (inconceivable and simultaneous oneness and difference). It synthesizes elements of monism and dualism into a single system. His philosophy is taught by the contemporary International Society for Krishna Consciousness, or “**Hare Krishna movement**” (ISKCON).

HIS BIRTH AND SAINTLY LIFE: -

According to the biography- “Chaitanya Charitamrita”, Chaitanya appeared on the full moon night of February 18, 1486 A.D. at the time of a lunar eclipse. His parents named him ‘Vishvambhar’. Sri Chaitanya was the second son of Jagannath Mishra and his wife Sachi Devi who lived in the town of Nabadwip in Nadia, West Bengal. Chaitanya’s ancestry is a debatable issue between the people of Orissa and West Bengal with Shri Chaitanya having roots in Jaipur, Orissa, from where his grandfather, Madhukar Mishra had emigrated to nearby Bengal.

Chaitanya was the tenth child of Jagannath Mishra and Sachi Devi. The first eight-all daughters- died soon after their birth. The ninth was ‘Viswarup’, a son. He abandoned the world at sixteen when he was being forced to marry and entered a monastery in South India. The women, thinking that Sachi had lost many children, gave the tenth child, ‘Vishvambhar’, the bitter name of ‘Nimai’ (derived from the name of the Neem tree) as a protection against all evil influences. The neighbours called him ‘Gaur’ or ‘Gaur-Hari’ or ‘Gauranga’ (fair- complexioned) on account of his marvelous beauty. ‘Gaur’ means fair and ‘Anga’ means body, and they called him Gaur-Hari, because he was so fond of the name ‘Hari’ that nothing could soothe him, when he cried during childhood, save Hari’s name.

In his youth, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was primarily known as an erudite scholar, whose learning and skills in argumentation in his locality were second to none. A number of stories also exist telling of Chaitanya’s apparent attraction to the chanting and singing of Krishna’s names from a very young age, but largely this was perceived as being secondary to his interest in acquiring knowledge and studying Sanskrit. When traveling to Gaya to perform the Shraddha ceremony for his departed father Chaitanya met his Guru, the ascetic Ishvara Puri, from whom he received initiation with the Gopala Krishna mantra. This meeting was to mark a significant change in Mahaprabhu’s outlook and upon his return to Bengal the local Vaishnavas, headed by Advaita Acharya, were stunned at his external sudden ‘change of heart’ (from ‘Scholar’ to ‘Devotee’) and soon Chaitanya became the eminent leader of their Vaishnava group within Nadia.

After leaving Bengal and receiving entrance into the *sanyasa* order by Keshava Bharati, Chaitanya journeyed throughout the length and breadth of India for several years, chanting the divine Names of Krishna constantly. He spent the last 24 years of his life in Puri, Orissa the great temple city of Jagannath. The Suryavanshi Hindu emperor of Orissa, ‘Gajapati Maharaja Prataprudra Dev’, regarded the Lord as Krishna’s incarnation and was an enthusiastic patron and devotee of Chaitanya’s ‘*Sankeertan*’ party. It was during these years that Lord Chaitanya is believed by his followers to have sunk deep into various Divine-Love (*Samadhi*) and performed pastimes of divine ecstasy (*Bhakti*).

CHAITANYA AS A SIX-HANDED DIVINITY: -

The followers of Chaitanya regard Chaitanya as a six-handed divinity. It is said that he showed his form with six hands to Sarvabhauma (his teacher), Ramananda Ray and Nitai (his friend), the first two hands provided with bow and arrow, the second two with a flute in the act of playing upon it and the last two with Danda and Kamandalu (staff and pot). By this manifestation Chaitanya made Nitai understand that he was Rama as well as Krishna.

PILGRIMAGES OF LORD CHAITANYA:-

Chaitanya, along with his friend Nityananda proceeded towards Orissa. He preached Vaishnavism wherever he went and held Sankirtan. He attracted thousands of people wherever he went. He stayed for some time at Puri and then proceeded to the South. He visited the Tirupathi hills, Kancheepuram and the famous Srirangam on the banks of the Cauvery. From Srirangam he proceeded to Madurai, Rameswaram and Kanyakumari. He visited also Udipi, Pandharpur and Nasik. He visited Brindavan. He bathed in the Yamuna and in several sacred pools and visited the various shrines for worship. He prayed and danced in ecstasy to his heart's content. He also visited Nabadwip, his birthplace. At last he returned to Puri and settled there. He spent his remaining days at Puri only. Disciples and admirers from Bengal, Brindavan and various other places came to Puri to pay their respects to Chaitanya. He held Kirtan and religious discourses daily.

RENOUNCED ORDER: -

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu resolved to be a citizen of the world by cutting His connection with His family, caste and creed and with this resolution he embraced position of a *sanyasi* at Katwa, under the guidance of Keshava Bharti of that town, on the 24th year of His age. His mother and wife wept bitterly for His separation. He left His little world for the unlimited spiritual world of Krishna with man in general. He predicted that the holy name of the Lord would spread to every village and town all over the world. He propagated the chanting of the Hare Krishna maha mantra.

IDENTITY OF CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU: -

According to beliefs of orthodox followers, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu united in himself two aspects: 'Ecstatic devotee of Krishna' and 'Krishna himself in inseparable union with Radha'. According to the hagiographies of 16th century authors, he has exhibited his Universal Form identical to that of Krishna on a number of occasions, notably to Advaita Acharya and Nityananda Prabhu.

CHAITANYA'S CONTRIBUTIONS: -

Despite having been initiated in the Madhvacharya tradition and taking *sanyasa* from Shankara's tradition, Chaitanya's philosophy is sometimes regarded as a tradition of his own within the Vaishnava framework - having some marked differences with the practices and the theology of other followers of Madhvacharya.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu did impart a brief teaching on the science of devotion that was comprised of eight Sanskrit verses. These were recorded and called "Shikchashtak" ('Shikcha' means teaching and 'Ashtak' means eight). The eight verses created by Mahaprabhu are considered to contain the complete philosophy of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in condensed form. Chaitanya requested a select few among his followers (who later came to be known as the Six Goswamis of Vrindavan) to systematically present the theology of Bhakti he had taught to them in their own writings. The six saints and theologians were Rupa Goswami, Sanatana Goswami, Gopala Bhatta Goswami, Raghunatha Bhatta Goswami, Raghunatha Dasa Goswami and Jiva Goswami, a nephew of brothers Rupa and Sanatana. These individuals were responsible for systemizing Gaudiya Vaishnava theology. Chaitanya's disciples, Santana Goswami, Roop Goswami and Jeev Goswami, explained in their writings the secrets of the divine and divine love that were revealed to them by him.

"Bhakti Rasamrit Sindu" and "Ujjawal Neelamani" written by Roop Goswami are considered the main authoritative books on the philosophy and ecstatic stages of divine love. "Shat Sandarbh", written by Jeev Goswami, is an elucidation of the Mahaprabhu's 'Achintya Bheda Abheda' (inconceivable dual and non-dualism) philosophy.

TEACHINGS OF CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU: -

Chaitanya has left one written record in Sanskrit called 'Siksastakam'. His epistemological, theological and ontological teachings are summarized as ten roots or maxims dasamula which are as follows:

The statements of *Amnaya* (scripture) are chief proof. These statements teach the following nine topics.

- Krishna is the Supreme Absolute Truth.
- Krishna is endowed with all energies.
O Krishna is the ocean of *rasa* (theology).
- The *jivas* (individual souls) are all separated parts of the Lord.
- In bound state the jives are under the influence of matter, due to their *tatastha* nature.
- In the liberated state the jives are free from the influence of matter, due to their *tatastha* nature.
- The jives and the material world are both different from and identical to the Lord.
- Pure devotion is the practice of the jives. O Pure love of Krishna is the ultimate goal.
- Krishna is the only lovable blessing to be received.

CUTURAL LEGACY OF CHAITANYA:-

In addition to his deep influences on Hinduism, Chaitanya's cultural legacy in Bengal and Orissa remains deep, with many residents performing daily worship to him as an avatar of Krishna. Some attribute it to a Renaissance in Bengal, different from the more-well known 19th century Bengal Renaissance. Sailmullah Khan, a noted linguist maintains, "Sixteenth century is the time of Chaitanya Dev, and it is

the beginning of Modernism in Bengal. The concept of 'Humanity' that came into fruition is contemporaneous with that of Europe."

LORD CHAITANYA'S MISSION:-

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu instructed his disciples to write books on the Science of Krishna, a task which those follow him have continued to carry out down to the present day. The elaborations and expositions on the philosophy taught by Lord Chaitanya are in fact most voluminous, exacting and consistent due to the system of disciplic succession. Although Lord Chaitanya was widely renowned as a scholar in his youth, he left only eight verses, called Sikshastaka. These eight verses clearly reveal his mission and precepts.

CHAITANYA'S VAISHNAVISM:-

Lord Chaitanya's Vaishnavism is also known as Gaudiya Vaishnavism and Hare Krishna. It is a vaishnava religious movement founded by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1534 A.D.) in India in the 16th century. "Gaudiya" refers to the 'Gauda Region' (present day Bengal/Bangladesh) with Vaishnavism meaning "the worship of Vishnu". Its philosophical basis is primarily that of the Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavata Purana, as well as other Puranic scriptures and Upanishads such as the Isha Upanishad, Gopala Tapani Upanishad and Kali Santarana Upanishad.

The focus of Gaudiya Vaishnavism is the devotional worship (*Bhakti*) of Radha and Krishna and their many divine incarnations as the supreme forms of God, Svayam Bhagavan. Most popularly, their worship takes the form of singing Radha and Krishna's holy names, such as "Hare", "Krishna" and "Rama", most commonly in the form of the Hare Krishna (mantra), also known as Kirtan. The movement is sometimes referred to as the Brahma-Madhya-Gaudiya Sampradaya, referring to its traditional origins in the succession of spiritual masters (gurus) believed to originate from Brahma. It classifies as a monotheistic tradition, seeing the many forms of Vishnu as expansions or incarnations of the one Supreme God, 'Adipurusha'.

Summary:

Peace, freedom and gay abundance which are transcended through divine rhythm and cosmic dance is the main plank of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's preaching. One can attain treasures of happiness and surmount the sorrows by abandoning oneself at the feet of the Lord, the Guru and the Master who is the personified image of the Almighty. 'Sankirtan' that is singing the song of glory in praise of the Creator and His Creations should be the goal of all human beings and self-imposed hurdles and barriers of caste, creed and race should be conquered with love and respect for each and every living being.

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