

Lesson at a Glance

- Regional cultures today are often the product of complex processes of intermixing of local traditions with ideas from other parts of the subcontinent.
- The Chera Kingdom of Mahodayapuram was established in the ninth century in the south-western part of the peninsula, part of present-day Kerala. The rulers introduced the Malayalam language and script in their inscriptions.
- The Cheras also drew upon Sanskrit traditions. The temple theatre of Kerala borrowed stories from the Sanskrit epics.
- In other regions, **regional cultures grew around religious traditions**. The best example of this process is the cult of Jagannath at Puri, Orissa. The word Jagannath literally means the lord of the world, a name for Vishnu.
- Anantavarman, the ruler of the Ganga dynasty in the 12th century, built a temple for Purushottama Jagannatha at Puri.
- The Rajputs contributed a lot to the distinctive culture of Rajasthan. From about the eighth century, most of the present-day state of Rajasthan was ruled by various Rajput families. Prithviraj was one such ruler.
- Rajput rulers cherished the ideal of the hero who fought valiantly, often choosing death on the battlefield rather than face defeat.
- Stories about Rajput heroes were recorded in poems and songs. Women were also focused in these stories. They are depicted as following their heroic husbands in both life and death. They often chose to become *sati* on the funeral pyre of their husbands.
- Not only heroic traditions are found in different regions in different forms, but dance too. Just take the history of one dance form, Kathak.
- The term *kathak* is derived from *katha*, a word used in Sanskrit and other languages for story.
- The **Kathaks** were originally a caste of story-tellers in temples of north India, who beautified their performances with gestures and songs.

- Kathak began evolving into a distinct mode of dance in the 15th and 16th centuries.
- Under the Mughals it developed in two traditions or gharanas—one in the courts of Rajasthan (Jaipur) and the other in Lucknow. Slowly and steadily it took root in Punjab, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir etc.
- *Kathak* was recognised as one of six **classical forms of dance** in the country after independence. Other classical dances are—Bharatnatyam (Tamil Nadu), Kathakali (Keral), Odissi (Orissa), Kuchipudi (Andhra Pradesh) and Manipuri (Manipur).
- The tradition of **miniature painting** is also noteworthy. Miniatures are small-sized paintings, generally done in water colour on cloth or paper. The earliest miniatures were on palm leaves or wood.
- The Mughal emperors patronised highly skilled painters.
- With the decline of the Mughal Empire, many painters moved out to the courts of the emerging regional states.
- By the late 17th century a bold and intense style of miniature painting called *Basohli* got developed in the Himalayan foothills around the modern-day state of Himachal Pradesh. Here, the Mughal artists founded the Kangra school of painting.
- Soft colours, including cool blues and greens, and a lyrical treatment of themes distinguished Kangra painting.
- Now we will see how Bengali, a regional language, grew in course of time.
- From the eighth century, Bengal became the centre of a regional kingdom under the Palas. Between the 14th and 16th centuries, Bengal was ruled by Sultans. In 1586, Akbar conquered Bengal while Persian was the language of administration, Bengali developed as a regional language.
- Although Bengali is derived from Sanskrit, it passed through several stages of evolution.
- Early Bengali literature may be divided into two categories. The first includes translations of the Sanskrit epics, the Mangala Kavyas and Bhakti literature such as biographies of Chaitanyadeva, the second includes Nath literature such as songs of Maynamati and Gopichand, stories concerning the worship of Dharma Thakur and fairy tales, folk tales and ballads.
- The cult of *pir* (a spiritual guide) became popular in Bengal and their shrines can be found there.
- A number of temples got constructed in Bengal. Now local deities began to be worshipped in temples.

- Bengal, being in a riverine plain, produces abundant rice and fish. These two items are important foods of the Bengalis. The Bengal Brahmanas too eat fish.
- Fishing has been a major occupation of the Bengalis.
- Bengali literature contains several references to fish.

■ TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED ■

Let's Recall

Q. 1. Match the following:

Anantavarnam	Kerala
Jagannatha	Bengal
Mahodayapurma	Orissa
Lilatilakam	Kangra
Mangalakavya	Puri
Miniature	Kerala

Ans. Anantavarnam	Orissa
Jagannatha	Puri
Mahodayapurma	Kerala
Lilatilakam	Kerala
Mangalakavya	Bengal
Miniature	Kangra

Q. 2. What is Manipravalam? Name a book written in that language.

Ans. Manipravalam is a language. The name of a book written in this language is *Lilatilakam*.

Q. 3. Who were the major patrons of Kathak?

Ans. The Mughals were the major patrons of Kathak.

Q. 4. What are the important architectural features of the temples of Bengal?

Ans. Important architectural features of the temples of Bengal are:

- Temples began to copy the double-roofed or four-roofed structure of the thatched huts.
- In the comparatively more complex four-roofed structure, four triangular roofs placed on the four walls move up to converge on a curved line or a point.

(iii) Temples were usually built on a square platform.

(iv) The interior was relatively plain but the outer walls of many temples were decorated with paintings, ornamental tiles or terracotta tablets.

Let's Discuss

Q. 5. Why did minstrels proclaim the achievements of heroes?

Ans. Minstrels used to recite poems and songs which depicted the stories of the Rajputs' heroic deeds. By reciting such poems and songs these minstrels inspired others to follow the examples of Rajputs. Ordinary people were also attracted by these stories.

Q. 6. Why do we know much more about the cultural practices of rulers than about those of ordinary people?

Ans. The cultural practices of rulers were carefully preserved in palaces for centuries. Hence we know much more about them. Ordinary men and women also painted on pots, walls, floors, cloth. But they did not survive for long.

Q. 7. Why did conquerors try to control the temple of Jagannatha at Puri?

Ans. The temple of Jagannatha at Puri gained importance as a centre of pilgrimage. Its authority in social and political matters also increased. Hence, conquerors tried to establish control over the temple. They felt that this would make their rule acceptable to the local people.

Q. 8. Why were temples built in Bengal?

Ans. Temple building in Bengal from the late 15th century gained momentum in the 19th century. Individuals or groups built temples to demonstrate their power and affluence. Some of the temples got constructed with the support of several low social groups. Some families belonging to these social groups availed of the new economic opportunities with the arrival of the European trading companies with the improvement in their social and economic position they also built temples to show their status. The local deities once worshipped in thatched huts in villages were now gained recognition of the Brahmanas. This recognition shifted them from the thatched huts to brick-built temples.

Let's Do

Q. 9. Describe the most important features of the culture of your region, focussing on buildings, performing arts and painting.

Ans. I live in Delhi. Right from the beginning it has been a land of mixed cultures. In old days, it was invaded by a number of foreign rulers. Some of them stayed here for sometime and some settled down permanently. They all affected its culture, language, religion, society, architecture, art and painting. Still we have buildings and monuments built by Mughal emperors, slave emperors, Rajput rulers and many more. We have temples, mosques and many other such places constructed by different rulers. Differences of cultures can still be seen in the areas of old Delhi and new Delhi.

Q. 10. Do you use different languages for (a) speaking, (b) reading, (c) writing? Find out about one major composition in language that you use and discuss why you find it interesting.

Ans. (a) For speaking I use Hindi and Punjabi.
(b) For reading I use Hindi and English.
(c) For writing I use Hindi and English.

Thus, I use different languages for speaking, reading and writing.

Q. 11. Choose one state each from north, west, south, east and central India. For each of these, prepare a list of foods that are commonly consumed, highlighting any differences and similarities that you notice.

Ans.

States	List of Foods
• Punjab (North)	Makke ki roti, Sarason ka saag, Rajma-chawal, Dal-chapatris
• Rajasthan (West)	Dalia, dal and Churma, Mama Kachori
• Kerala (South)	Rice and fish, Idli-Sambhar, Dosa, Dhokla
• West Bengal (East)	Rice and fish
• Madhya Pradesh (Central)	Dal-chapatris, chawal-dal

Q. 12. Choose another set of five states from each of these regions and prepare a list of clothes that are generally worn by women and men in each. Discuss your findings.

States	Clothes worn by men	Clothes worn by women
• Jammu & Kashmir (North) • Orissa (East) • Tamil Nadu (South) • Gujarat (West) • Chhattisgarh (Central)		

Ans. Do yourself.

