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Architecture of the Medieval Period

Lesson Plan

Contents

- ▶ An overview of the architecture in various parts of India in the Medieval Period
- ▶ To understand the progress in the different types of architecture in India during the Medieval Period

Objectives

- ▶ To understand the two major streams of architecture: forts, palaces and tombs; and temples, mosques and public buildings
- ▶ To learn the details of architectural styles used during the period
- ▶ To know about the purpose and construction of the buildings
- ▶ To appreciate the various styles of architecture as part of our heritage

Teacher's Aids

- ▶ Globe
- ▶ Pictures, charts, atlas and historical/ political wall maps
- ▶ Blackboard
- ▶ Internet

Tips for Teacher

- ▶ Explain the various art forms: Painting, music, dance, sculpture, literature, languages, etc.
- ▶ Explain the different types of architecture found in various parts of the country so that the students learn to appreciate them, and the purpose for which each type of building was made—for living [kings, merchants, peasants, etc.]; for battle and protection [forts]; for glorification [palaces, tombs, etc.]; for worship [temples, mosques]; and others [baolis, stepwells, sarais, etc.].
- ▶ Students should be encouraged to know places, locations and their placement on the maps.

■ Background and Reading

- ▶ Read the lesson aloud and explain, sharing the aids, etc., pausing to examine and explain the data in the boxes.
- ▶ Particularly focus on the variety of purposes and styles of buildings in different parts of the country.

Monumental Architecture

- ▶ AD 700 to AD 1750: Two kinds of buildings: (i) Forts, palaces and tombs; and (ii) Temples, mosques and public buildings.
- ▶ Different purposes: (a) To glorify or represent the wealth of kings, etc. (b) To defend and protect the place by fortification (c) To live in a particular style—palaces, etc. (d) To worship—temples, mosques, etc. (e) For other purposes—sarais, baolis, stepwells, etc.
- ▶ Styles of temple architecture: (i) Nagara or Northern Style (ii) Dravida or Southern Style and (iii) Central Indian or Hybrid Style.

Nagara Style

- ▶ Beehive-shaped tower called Shikhara.
- ▶ A garbhagriha, the sanctum where the idol is placed.
- ▶ Mandapam surrounding the sanctum.
- ▶ Gopuram or gateway for entrance to temple.
- ▶ Examples: Khajuraho Temple, Madhya Pradesh; Sun Temple, Konark; Jagannath Temple, Puri; Lingaraja and Mukteshwara Temple, Bhubaneswar; Dilwara Temple, Mt Abu.

Dravida Style

- ▶ Developed in the 7th century.
- ▶ Multi-storeyed pyramid-like tower called vimana with lofty gopurams.
- ▶ Pillared assembly hall called mandapam.
- ▶ Main idol kept in a sanctum called garbhagriha.
- ▶ Examples: Cholas and Pallavas were great patrons—Temples in Tanjore, Mamallapuram, Kanchi.
- ▶ Rock-cut temples by Pallavas were a significant feature; Cholas built multi-storeyed pyramidal-style temples. They are also famous for the Nataraja statue, the Shore Temple and the Rathas at Mahabalipuram.

Vesera Style

- ▶ Found in the Deccan region—a mixture of Nagara and Dravida styles—Rashtrakutas and Chalukyas known for Vesera-style temples.
- ▶ Examples: Rashtrakutas—Rock-cut Temple of Kailashnath, Ellora; Elephanta Caves.
- ▶ Chalukyas—Temples at Dwarasamudra and Badami.

- ▶ Vijayanagara–14th and 15th centuries–Hampi, Vittala, Virupaksha–their monuments form a World Heritage Site.
- ▶ Main factors influencing the construction of temples were the availability of raw material and the patronage of the rulers. The Cholas, the Pallavas, the Chandelas, and the Solankis each had their own style of construction.

Islamic Architecture

- ▶ Indo-Islamic architecture–under the rule of Turks–blend of Arabic, Persian and Indian architecture.
- ▶ Special features of Islamic art–domes, arches and minarets; calligraphy in decorating inner and outer parts of the buildings; geometrical and floral designs; used both red and yellow sandstones along with marble.
- ▶ Examples–Quwwat-ul-Islam, Qutub Minar, Alai Darwaza, Dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya, Tughlaqabad Fort, Firoz Shah Kotla, Hauz Khas, and Lodhi Gardens, all at Delhi; Adhai-Din-ka-Jhonpra at Ajmer.

Mughal Architecture

- ▶ **Akbar:** First great monument–Mausoleum of Humayun built during Akbar’s reign; 1571–city of Fatehpur Sikri; Darwaza at Fatehpur Sikri to commemorate victory over Gujarat. Monuments at Fatehpur Sikri: Panch Mahal, Birbal’s house, Jodha Bai’s palace, Diwan-i-Khas and the tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti.
- ▶ **Jahangir:** Patronised paintings and architecture–laid foundations of Shalimar Gardens, Kashmir; completed Akbar’s tomb at Sikandra; Nurjahan built a tomb to Jahangir at Shahadav near Lahore.
- ▶ **Shahjahan:** Reign described as the Golden Age–city of Shahjahanabad; built the Red Fort with its palaces and administrative buildings; made of red sandstone–completed in 1648; Diwan-i-Khas and Rang Mahal in the fort are beautiful; Peacock Throne studded with precious stones was kept there; Taj Mahal, Agra–took 22 years to complete–architect was Ustad Ahmed Lahori; Moti Masjid, Agra and laid gardens at Lahore and Srinagar.
- ▶ **Aurangzeb:** Not keen on construction–two mosques: Moti Masjid, Delhi and Badshahi Mosque at Lahore; Bibi ka Maqbara in imitation of Taj Mahal–because of his intolerant nature, many artists left the city and moved to other kingdoms where regional schools of art began to flourish.

Assessment Corner

Oral Assignment

- Ask for answers at random from the students. Confirm the right answers. Let them write down the correct answers if they like in their books.

Written Assignment

B–D. The teacher has two options—(i) Either do these exercises orally first and then ask the students to write them down. OR (ii) Ask the students to write the answers on their own. Then the teacher can announce the correct answers to the students and they can ask their partners to cross-check them.

In either case, the answers can be written as homework and teacher can check in class.

Think Tank

E. **HOTS questions:** Discuss the two questions in the class and let the students write the answers to E and F as homework. Teacher should assess individual work.