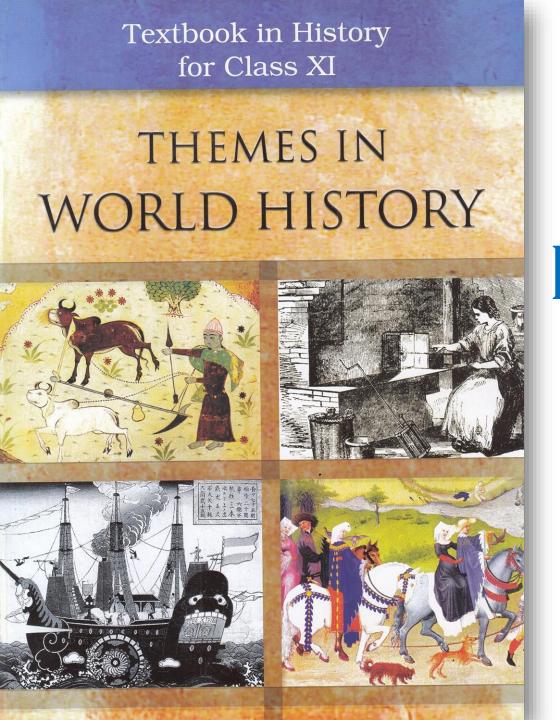


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CENTRAL ISLAMIC LANDS

This chapter is divided into two parts.

The chapter is based on the new/latest syllabus.

CENTRAL ISLAMIC LANDS

CHAPTER-4



History of central Islamic land

- Semi-historical works, such as biographies, records of the sayings and doings of the Prophet (hadith) and commentaries on the Quran (tafsir) are also available.
- The material from which these works were produced was a large collection of eyewitness reports (akhbar) transmitted over a period of time either orally or on paper. The authenticity of each report was tested by a critical method which traced the chain of transmission and established the reliability of the narrator.
- Christian chronicles, written in Syriac are fewer but they throw interesting light on the history of early Islam. Besides chronicles, we have legal texts, geographies, travelogues and literary works, such as stories and poems.

The Rise of Islam in Arabia:

- The Prophet Muhammad was an Arab by language and culture and a merchant by profession. The Arabs were divided into tribes each led by a chief whowas chosen partly on the basis of his family connections but more forhis personal courage, wisdom and generosity.
- Each tribehad its own god or goddess, who was worshipped as an idol ina shrine. Many Arab tribes were nomadic (Bedouins), movingfrom dry to green areas (oases) of the desert in search of food and fodder for their camels.
- Muhammad's own tribe, Quraysh, lived in Mecca and controlled the main shrine there, a cube-like structure called Kaba, in which idols were placed.
- Even tribes outside Mecca considered the **Kaba holy and installed their own idols at this shrine**, making annual pilgrimages to the shrine. Mecca was located on the crossroads
- Around 612, Muhammad declared himself to be the messenger of God who had been commanded to preach that Allah alone should be worshipped. The worship involved simple rituals, such asdaily prayers, and moral principles, such as distributing alms and abstaining from theft.

Islamic Calendar

- The Hijri era was established during the caliphate of Umar, with the first year falling in 622 CE. A date in the Hijri calendar is followed by the letters AH.
- The **Hijri year is a lunar year of 354 days**, 12 months (Muharram to DhulHijja) of 29 or 30 days. Each day begins at sunset and each month with the sighting of the crescent moon.
- The Hijri year is about 11 days shorter than the solar year. Therefore, none of the Islamic religious festivals, including the Ramazan fast, Id and hajj, corresponds in any way to seasons.
- There is **no easy way to match the dates in the Hijri calendar** with the dates in the Gregorian calendar (established by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 CE).
- One can calculate therough equivalents between the Islamic (H) and Gregorian Christian (C) years with the following formula: (H × 32 / 33) + 622 = C OR (C 622) × 33 / 32 = H.

The Caliphate and their contributions

- After **Muhammad's death in 632**, no one could legitimately claim to be the next prophet of Islam. As a result, his political authority was transferred to the (close friends of Ph. Muhammad)elder Muslims with no established principle of succession.
- This created opportunity for innovations .The biggest innovation was the creation of the **institution of caliphate**, in which the leader of the community became the deputy or <u>khalifa</u>of the Prophet.
- The first four caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali justified their powers on the basis of their close association with the Prophet and continued his work under the general guidelines he had provided.
- The twin objectives of the caliphate were a) to retain control over the tribes constituting the community.
- To raise resources for the state.

Abu Bakr

Following Muhammad's death, many tribes broke away from the Islamic state. The first caliph, Abu Bakr, suppressed the revolts by a series of campaigns.

• <u>Umar</u>

- The second caliph, Umar, shaped the *Muslim's* policy of expansion of power.
- He realised that rich booty could be obtained from expeditionary raids, the caliph and his military commanders **mustered their tribal strength** to conquered lands belonging to the Byzantine Empire in the west and the Sasanian Empire in the east.
- In three successful campaigns Umar brought Syria, Iraq, Iran and Egypt under the control of Arabs. Military strategy, religious fervor and the weakness of the opposition contributed to the success of the Arabs.

Uthman

- The third caliph, Uthman, to extend the control to **Central Asia**. Within a decade of the death of Muhammad, the Arab-Islamic state controlled the vastterritory between the Egypt and Afghanistan.
- The third caliph, **Uthman also a Quraysh by birth**. He packed his administration with his own men to secure greater control. This further intensified the Meccan character of the state and the conflict with the other tribesmen.
- Opposition in Iraq and Egypt, combined with opposition in Medina, led to the assassination of Uthman.

• <u>Ali</u>

- With Uthman's death, Ali became the fourth caliph. The rifts among the Muslims deepened after Ali (656-61) fought two wars against those who represented the Meccan aristocracy.
- Ali's supporters and enemies later came to form the two main sects of Islam: Shias and Sunnis.
- Ali established himself at Kufa and defeated an army led by Muhammad's wifein the Battle of the Camel.
- He was not able to suppress the faction led by Muawiya, a kinsman of Uthman and the governor of Syria.
- Soon after, Ali was assassinated by a Kharji in a mosque at Kufa. After his death, his followers paid allegiance to his son, Hussain, and his descendants.
- Muawiya made himself the next caliph in 661, founding the Umayyad dynasty which lasted till 750.

What Administrative changes were introduced by the Caliphs in the newly conqured territories

- In all the conquered provinces, the caliphs imposed a new administrative structure headed by **governors and tribal chieftains**.
- The **central treasury** obtained its revenue from taxes paid by Muslims as well as its share of the booty from raids.
- The caliph's soldiers, mostly Bedouins, settled in camp cities at the edge of the desert, such as Kufa and Basra, to remain within reach of their natural habitat as well as the caliph's command.
- The ruling class and soldiers received shares of the booty and monthly payments.
- The non-Muslim population retained their rights to property and religious practices on payment of taxes

- The Umayyads and the changes introduced by Umayyads in Politics or Administration
- The first Umayyad caliph, Muawiya, moved his capital from Medina to Damascus.
- Headopted the court ceremonies and administrative institutions of the Byzantine Empire.
- He also introduced hereditary succession (family succession) and persuaded the leading Muslims to accepthis son as his heir.
- The Umayyad state was now an imperial power, no longer based directly on Islam but on statecraft and the loyalty of Syrian troops.
- There were Christian advisers in the administration, as well as Zoroastrian scribes and bureaucrats. However, Islam continued to provide legitimacy to their rule. The Umayyads always appealed for unity and suppressed rebellionsin the name of Islam.

Changes introduced by Abdal-Malik

- Abd al-Malik adopted Arabic as the language of administration.
- He introduced an Islamiccoinage. The gold dinar and silver dirham that had beencirculating in the caliphate werecopies of Byzantine and Iraniancoins
- Abdal-Malik also made a highly visible contribution to the development of anArab-Islamic identity, by building the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

- The Abbasid Revolution and changes introduced by Abbasids
- The Abbasids, descendants of Abbas, the Prophet's uncle. The Abbasids
 portrayed the Umayyad regime as evil and promised a restoration of the original
 Islam of the Prophet.
- The Abbasid uprising broke out in the distant region of Khurasan which had a mixed Arab-Iranian population which could be mobilised for various reasons
- The Arab soldiers in Khurasan were mostlyfrom Iraq and resented the dominance of the Syrians. The civilian Arabs of Khurasan disliked the Umayyad regime for having made promises of tax concessions and privileges which were never fulfilled.
- A well-organised movement, called dawa, brought down the Umayyads and replaced them with another family of **Meccan origin, the Abbasids, in 750**.
- Their army was led by an **Iranian slave**, **Abu Muslim**, who defeated the last Umayyad caliph, Marwan, in a battle at the river Zab.

Administrative changes introduced by Abbasids

- Under Abbasid rule, Arab influence declined, while the importance of Iranian culture increased.
- The Abbasids changed their capital from Damascus to Baghdad.
- The army and bureaucracy were reorganised on a non-tribal basis to ensure greater participation by people of Iraq and Khurasan.
- The Abbasid rulers **strengthened the religious status** and functions of the caliphate and patronised Islamic institutions and scholars.
- They maintained the magnificent imperial architecture and elaborate court ceremonials of the Umayyads.

Causes for the Break-up of the Caliphate

- In 810, a civil war broke out between supporters of Aminand Mamun, sons of the caliph Harun al-Rashid, which deepened the factionalism and created a new power bloc of Turkish slave officers.
- A number of **minor dynasties arose**, such as the Tahirids and Samanids in Khurasan and Transoxiana and the Tulunids in Egypt and Syria. Abbasid power was soon limited to central Iraq and western Iran.
- In 945 the **Buyids**, a Shiite clan from the Caspian region of Iran captured Baghdad. They kept the Abbasid caliph as the symbolic head of their Sunni subjects.
- **The Fatimids**, the descendants of Fatima, the Prophet's daughter claimed that they are the sole rightful rulers of Islam. From their base in North Africa, they conquered Egypt in 969 and established the Fatimid caliphate.
- The **Turks** were nomadic tribes from the Central Asian steppes who gradually converted to Islam. They were skilled riders and warriors and entered the Abbasid, Samanid and Buyidad ministrations as slaves and soldiers, rising to high positions on account of their loyalty and military abilities.

• The Rise of Sultanates

- The **Ghaznavid** sultanatewas established by **Alptegin** (961) and it was consolidated by Mahmud of Ghazni. Ghaznavids were a military dynasty with a professional army of Turks and Indians.
- The Abbasidcaliphs were not rivals but a source of legitimacy for Ghaznavids. **Mahmud** of Ghazni was conscious of being the son of a slave and was especially eager to receive the title of Sultan from the caliph.
- The caliph was willing to support Sunni Ghaznavid as a counterweight to Shiite power. The Saljuq Turks entered Turan as soldiers in the armies of the Samanids and Qarakhanids. They later established themselves as a powerful group under the leadership of two brothers, Tughril and Chaghri Beg.
- Taking advantage of the chaos following the death of Mahmud of Ghazni, the Saljuq
 Turks conquered Khurasan in 1037 and made Nishapur their first capital. The Saljuqs next turned
 their attention to western Persia and Iraq (ruled by the Buyids) and in 1055, restored Baghdad to
 Sunni rule.
- The caliph, al-Qaim, conferred on Tughril Beg the title of Sultan in a move that marked the separation of religious and political authority. The two Saljuq brothers ruled together in accordance with the tribal notion of rule by the family as a whole.

- Causes for the Crusade Wars
- **Jerusalem** was conquered by the Arabs in **638** but it was ever-present in the Christian imagination as the place of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Christians wanted to recover Jerusalem and this was an important factor for the Crusade wars.
- Normans, Hungarians and Slavs (People of Eastern Europe) had been converted to Christianity, and the **Muslims alone remained as the main enemy of Christians**.
- There was also a change in the social and economic organisation of the Western Europe in the eleventh century which contributed to the hostility between Christian and the Islamic worlds. Christians established political stability through economic growth based on agriculture and trade. But **Muslims tried the same through violence and plunder**.
- The **death of Malik Shah in 1092** (the sultan of Baghdad) was followed by the disintegration of his empire. This offered the Byzantine emperor, Alexius I, a chance to regain Jerusalem, Asia Minor and northern Syria.
- For **PopeUrban II**, this was an opportunity to revive the spirit of Christianity. In 1095, the Pope joined the Byzantineemperor in calling for a war in the name of God to liberate the Holy Land.

What are Crusade Wars?

 Between 1095 and 1291, European Christians fought wars against Muslim of the eastern Mediterranean to recapture Jerusalem. These wars were later designated as Crusades. According to some sources Pope Urban II gifted cross to all the Christian soldiers to fight in the war that is why the war was named so.

I, II and III Crusade wars

- In the first crusade (1098-99), soldiers from France and Italy captured Antioch in Syria, and claimed Jerusalem. Their victory was accompanied by the slaughter of Muslims and Jews in the city, settled by both Christians and Muslims.
- The Franks quickly established **four crusader states in the region of Syria-Palestine**. Collectively, these territories were known as Outremer (crusader states).
- When the Turks captured Edessa in 1144, an appeal was made by the Pope for a second crusade (1145-49). A combined German and French army made an attempt to capture Damascus but they were defeated and forced to return home.
- After this, there was a gradual erosion of the strength of crusader states. Salah al-Din (Saladin) created an Egypto-Syrian empire and gave the call **for** *jihad* **or holy war against the Christians**, and defeated them in 1187.He regained Jerusalem, nearly a century after the first crusade.
- The loss of the city Jerusalem prompted **a third crusade in 1189**, but the crusaders gained little victory in Palestine and got free access to Jerusalem for Christian pilgrims. The Mamluks, the rulers of Egypt, finally drove the crusading Christians from all of Palestine in 1291. Europe gradually lost military interest in Islamand focused on its internal political and cultural development.

Impacts of Crusade wars

- The Crusades left a lasting impact on two aspects of Christian-Muslim relations. One was the harsher attitude of the Muslim state towards its Christian subjects which resulted from the bitter memories of the conflict as well as the needs for security in areas of mixed populations.
- The other was the greater influence of Italian mercantile in the trade between the East and the West even after the restoration of Muslim power.

Agricultural Development in Arabia

- Agriculture was the principal occupation of the settled populations in the newly conquered territories. Land was owned by big and small peasants and, in some cases, by the state. The estate owners collected taxes on behalf of the state. Land which was conquered by the Muslims was handed over mainly to the members of the caliph's family.
- The state had overall control of agricultural lands, deriving the bulk of its income from land revenue once the conquests were over.
 The lands conquered by the Arabs that remained in the hands of the owners were subject to a tax, which varied from half to a fifth of the produce, according to the conditions of cultivation.
- On land **cultivated by Muslims, the tax levied was one-tenth** (*ushr*) of the produce. On land cultivated by non-Muslims, the tax levied was half of the total produce.
- When non-Muslims started to convert to Islam to pay lower taxes, this reduced the income of the state. To Control this, the caliphs first discouraged conversions and later adopted a uniform policy of taxation.
- From the tenth century onwards, the state authorised its officials to claim **their salaries from agricultural revenues from territories, called** *iqtas*. Agricultural prosperity went hand in hand with political stability.
- In many areas, the state supported the construction of **dams and canals, and the digging of wells** etc. Islamic law gave tax concessions to people who brought waste land under cultivation. Through peasant initiatives and state support, cultivable land expanded and productivity rose, even in the absence of major technological changes.
- Many new crops such as **cotton**, **oranges**, **bananas**, **watermelons**, **spinach** and **brinjals** (*badinjan*) were grown and even exported to Europe.

Urbanisationin Arabia

- Islamic civilisation flourished as the number of cities grew and many new cities such as Kufa and Basra in Iraq, Fustat and Cairo in Egypt were founded, mainly to settle Arab soldiers who formed the backbone of the local administration. The population of Baghdad had reached around 1 million.
- The older towns such as Damascus, Isfahan and Samarq and received a new lease of life. Their size and
 population increased, supported by an expansion in the production of food grains and raw materials such as
 cotton and sugar for urban manufactures. A vast urban network developed, linking one town with another
 and forming a circuit.
- At the heart of the city were two building complexes radiating cultural and economic power: the **mosque**, big enough to be seen from a distance, and **the central marketplace** with shops in a row, merchants' lodgings and the office of the money-changer.
- The cities were homes to administrators, scholars and merchants who lived close to thecentre. Ordinary
 citizens and soldiers had their living quarters in the outer circle, each fitted with its own mosque, church or
 synagogue, subsidiary market and public bath.
- At the **outskirts were the houses of the urban poor, a market for green vegetables and fruits** brought from the countryside, caravan stations and 'unclean' shops, such as those dealing in tanning or butchering. Beyond the city walls were inns for people to rest when the city gates were shut and cemeteries.

Commerce in Arabia

- Political unification and urban demand for foodstuffs and luxuries enlarged the circuit of exchange. Geography favoured the Muslim empire, which spread between the trading zones of the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean.
- High-value goods suitable for long-distance trade, such as spices, textile, porcelain and gunpowder, were shipped from India and China to the Red Sea ports of Aden and Aydhaband the Gulf ports of Siraf and Basra. From here, the goods were carried overland in camel caravans to the warehouses of Baghdad, Damascus and Aleppo for local consumption or onward transmission.
- The caravans passing through Mecca got bigger whenever the *hajj* coincided with the sailing seasons in the Indian Ocean. At the Mediterranean end of these trade routes, exports to Europe from the port of Alexandria were handled by Jewish merchants, some of whom traded directly with India.
- From the tenth century, the Red Sea route gained greater importance due to the rise of Cairo as acentre of commerce and power and growing demand for eastern goods from the trading cities of Italy.
- Towards the eastern end, caravans of Iranian merchants set out from Baghdad along the Silk Route to China, via the oasis cities of Bukhara and Samarg and, to bring Central Asian and Chinese goods, including paper. Islamic coins were used for the payment of these goods.
- The fiscal system and market exchange increased the importance of money in the central Islamic lands. Coins of gold, silver and copper were minted and circulated, often in bags sealed by money-changers, to pay for goods and services.
- Gold came from Africa and silver from Central Asia. Precious metals and coins also came from Europe, which used these to pay for its trade with the East. The greatest contribution of the Muslim world to medieval economic life was the development of superior methods of payment and business organisation. Letters of credit (cheque) and bills of exchange (draft) were used by merchants and bankers to transfer money from one place or individual to another.
- Although it was customary for merchants to set up family businesses or employ slaves to run their affairs, formal business arrangements were also common in which sleeping partners entrusted capital to travelling merchants and shared profits and losses in an agreed proportion.
- Islam did not stop people from making money so long as certain prohibitions were respected. For instance, interest-bearing transactions were unlawful, although people circumvented usury in ingenious ways such as borrowing money in one type of coin and paying in another while disguising the interest as a commission on currency exchange.
- Many tales from the *Thousand and One Nights* give us a picture of medieval Islamic society, featuring characters such as sailors, slaves, merchants and money-changers.

Learning in Arabia(Religious)

- For religious scholars of Islam knowledge is derived **from the Quran and the model behaviour** of the Prophet was the only way to know the will of God and provide guidance in this world.
- The **ulamas**, religious scholars of Islamin medieval times devoted themselves to writing interpretation for Quran and documenting Muhammad's authentic hadith. Some went on to prepare a body of laws or sharia to govern the relationship of Muslims with God through rituals and with the rest of the humanity through social affairs.
- When life had become increasingly complex with urbanisation which led to the formation of four schools of law in the eighth and ninth centuries. These were the **Maliki, Hanafi, Shafii and Hanbali** schools, each named after a leading jurist.
- The **sharia** provided guidance on all possible legal issues within Sunni society, though it was more precise on questions of personal status such as marriage, divorce and inheritance than on commercial matters or penal and constitutional issues.
- A group of religious-minded people in medieval Islam, known as Sufis, sought a deeper and more personal
 knowledge of God through asceticism and mysticism. The more society gave importance to material pursuits
 and pleasures, the more the Sufis sought torenounce the world and rely on God alone.

Learning in Arabia(Secular)

- An alternative vision of God and the universe was developed by Islamic philosophers and scientists under the influence of Greek philosophy and science. In the schools of Alexandria, Syria and Iraq, Greek philosophy, mathematics and medicine were taught along with other subjects.
- The study of new subjects **promoted critical inquiry and had a profound influence on Islamic** intellectual life. Scholars and Philosophers posed wider questions on Islam and provided fresh answers.
- IbnSina a doctor by profession and a Philosopherdid not believe in the resurrection of the body on the Day of Judgement. IbnSina's medical writings were widely read. The most influential book was Canon of Medicine, a million-word manuscript that lists 760 drugs sold by the pharmacists of his day and includes notes on his own experiments conducted in hospitals.
- In medieval Islamic societies, fine language and a creative imagination were among the most appreciated
 qualities in a person. Adab forms of expressions included poetry and prose which were meant to be
 memorised and used when the occasion arose.
- **Abu Nuwas**, who was of Persian origin, broke new ground by composing classical poetry on new themes such as wine and male love with the intention of celebrating pleasures forbidden by Islam.
- By the time the Arabs conquered Iran, Pahlavi, was in decay. A version of Pahlavi, known as New Persian, with a huge Arabic vocabulary, soon developed. Rudaki was considered the father of New Persian poetry, which included new forms such as the short lyrical poem (ghazal) and

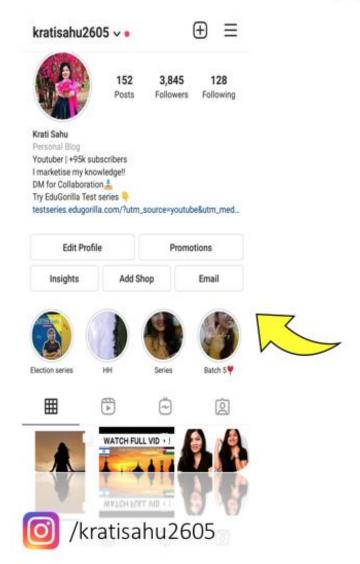
- the quatrain (*rubai*). The *rubai*is a four-line stanza in which the first two lines set the stage, the third is finely poised, and the fourth delivers the point. The subject matter of the *rubai*is unrestricted.
- Ghazni became the centre of Persian literary life. Mahmud of Ghazni gathered around him a group of poets who composed anthologies and epic poetry. The most outstanding was Firdausi, who took 30 years to complete the **Shahnama** (**Book of Kings**), an epic of 50,000 couplets which has become a masterpiece of Islamic literature. The **Shahnama** is acollection of traditions and legends which poetically depicts Iran from Creation to the Arab conquest.
- The catalogue of IbnNadimdescribes a large number of works written in prose for themoral education and amusement of readers.
 The oldest of these is a collection of animal fables called Kalilawa Dimna which is the Arabic translation of the Panchtantra. The most widespread and lasting literary works are the stories of hero-adventurers such as Alexander and Sindbad, or those of unhappy lovers known as Majnun or the Madman.
- These have developedover the centuries into oral and written traditions. The Thousand and One Nights is another collection of stories told by a single narrator, Shahrzad, to her husband night after night. The collection was originally in Indo-Persian and was translated into Arabic in Baghdad in the eighth century.
- From the ninth century onwards, the scope of writing books was expanded to include biographies, manuals of ethics, history and geography. For rulers and officials, history provided a good record of the glories and achievements of a dynasty as well as examples of the techniques of administration. Alberuni's famous Tahqiq ma lil-Hind (History of India) was the greatest attempt by an eleventh-century Muslim writer to look beyond the world of Islam.

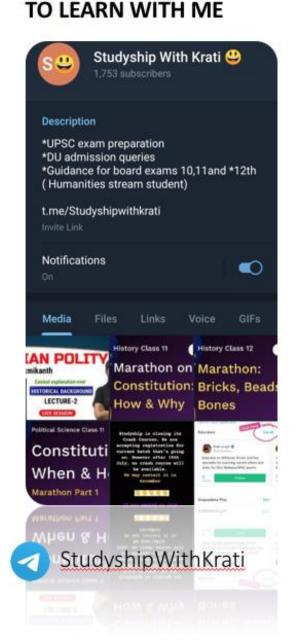
Art and Architecture in central Islamic land

- Religious buildings were the greatest external symbols of Islamic world. Mosques, shrines and tombs from Spain to Central Asiash owed the same basic design –arches, domes, minarets and open courtyards –and expressed the spiritual and practical needs of Muslims.
- In the first Islamic century, the mosque acquired a distinct architectural form which transcended regional variations. The mosque had an open courtyard where a fountain or pond was placed, leading to a vaulted hall which could accommodate long lines of worshippers and the prayer leader. Two special features were located inside the hall: aniche in the wall indicating the direction of Mecca and a pulpit from where sermons were delivered during noon prayers on Friday.
- The same pattern of construction of buildings built around a central courtyard appeared not only in mosques and mausoleums but also in **caravan serais, hospitals and palaces**. The Umayyads built 'desert palaces' in oases modeled on Roman and Sasanian architecture, were lavishly decorated with sculptures, mosaics and paintings of people.
- The rejection of representing living beings in the religious art of Islam promoted two art forms: calligraphy (the art of beautiful writing) and arabesque (geometric and vegetal designs). Small and big inscriptions, usually of religious quotations, were used to decorate architecture.
- Calligraphic art has been best preserved in manuscripts of the Quran dating from the eighth and ninth centuries. Literary works were illustrated with miniature paintings. In addition, a wide variety of illumination techniques were introduced to enhance the beauty of a book. Plant and floral designs, based on the idea of the garden, were used in buildings and book illustrations.

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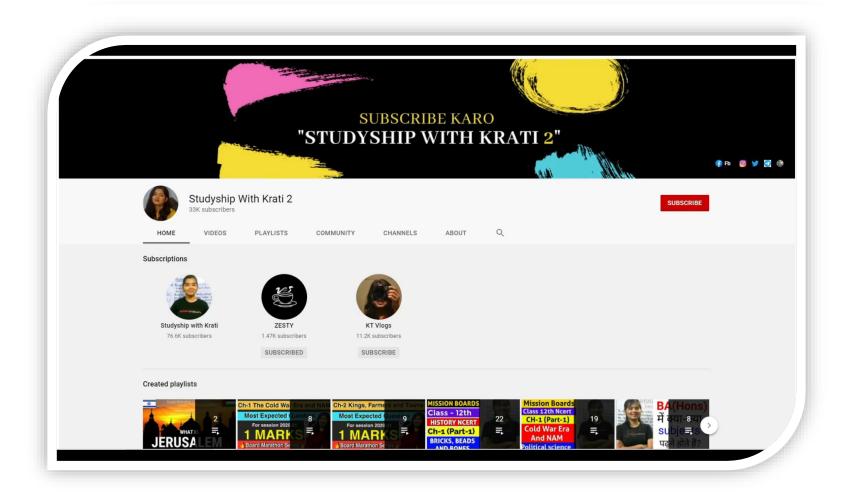








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