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CONTENTS

SECTION A: HISTORY A-1-112

| Part 1: Ancient History of India | 1-25 | Part 3: Modern History of India | 58-98 |
|--|--------------|--|---------------|
| 1. Sources for History Writing | 1-2 | 1. European Penetration in India | 58-60 |
| 2. Pre-historic Age | 2-4 | 2. British Conquest of India | 60-66 |
| 3. Indus Valley Civilization | 4-7 | 3. Economic Consequences of British Rule in India (1757- 1857) | 66-68 |
| 4. Vedic Civilization | 7-10 | 4. Social Changes in Modern India | 68-72 |
| 5. Jainism and Buddhism | 10-12 | 5. Reactions against British Rule | 72-77 |
| 6. Age of Mahajanapadas | 12-13 | 6. Administrative Changes after 1858 | 78-79 |
| 7. The Mauryan Age | 14-15 | 7. Growth of new India- The Nationalist Movement (1858- 1905) | 79-82 |
| 8. Post Mauryan & Sangam Age | 16-18 | 8. Emergence of Gandhi | 82-84 |
| 9. Gupta Age | 18-20 | 9. National Movement (1905- 1918) | 85-88 |
| 10. Post-Gupta Era | 21-24 | 10. Khilafat and Non-cooperation Movement (1919- 1922) | 88-89 |
| 11. Cultural Development in South India | 24-25 | 11. Swarajists and No-changers | 90-91 |
| Part 2: Medieval History of India | 26-57 | 12. Simon Commission and the Nehru Report | 91-92 |
| 1. Kingdoms of the South (A.D. 800- 1200) | 26 | 13. Civil Disobedience Movement | 92-95 |
| 2. Northern India : Age of the Three Empires | 26-29 | 14. Towards Freedom and Parttion (1939- 1947) | 95-98 |
| 3. The Delhi Sultanate –I (Circa 1200- 1400) | 30-31 | Part 4: World History | 99-112 |
| 4. The Delhi Sultanate –II (Circa 1200- 1400) | 31-33 | 1. Capitalism and Industrial Revolution | 99-101 |
| 5. The Age of Vijayanagara and the Bahmanis (Circa 1350- 1565) | 34-35 | 2. Revolutionary and Nationalist Movements | 102-105 |
| 6. Mughals and Afghans (1525- 1555) | 35-38 | 3. Imperialism and Colonialism | 105-106 |
| 7. Age of Akbar, Jahangir & Shah Jahan | 38-42 | 4. The First World War | 106-108 |
| 8. Cultural and Religious Development During Mughals | 42-44 | 5. The Russian Revolution | 108-110 |
| 9. Disintegration of the Mughal Empire | 44-45 | 6. The World Between Two World Wars | 110-111 |
| 10. The Marathas | 45-52 | 7. The World after World War II | 111-112 |
| 11. Bhakti-Sufi Traditions | 52-57 | | |

SECTION B: GEOGRAPHY B-1-104

| Part 1: Physical Geography | 1-37 | | |
|---|-------|--|-------|
| 1. The Earth in the Solar System | 1-3 | 7. Australia : Resources and their Utilization | 12-13 |
| 2. Latitudes and Longitudes | 3-5 | 8. Antarctica : The White Continent | 14 |
| 3. Motions of the Earth | 5-6 | 9. North America : Land, Climate and Resources | 14 |
| 4. Major Domains of the Earth | 6-10 | 10. Europe : Resources and their Utilization | 15 |
| 5. Africa : Land, Climate, Resources and their Utilization | 10-11 | 11. Asia : Land, Climate and Resources | 16-23 |
| 6. South America : Land, Climate, Resources and their Utilization | 11-12 | 12. Interior of the Earth | 24-26 |
| | | 13. Minerals and Rocks | 26 |
| | | 14. Geomorphic Process | 26-27 |
| | | 15. Landforms and their Significance | 27-30 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| 16. Composition and Structure of Atmosphere | 30-32 |
| 17. Solar Radiation, Heat Balance and Temperature | 32-33 |
| 18. Atmospheric Circulation and Weather Systems | 33-34 |
| 19. Moisture in the Atmosphere | 34 |
| 20. Classification of Climates | 34-36 |
| 21. The Profile of the Ocean Floors | 36-37 |
| 22. Ocean Waters and their Circulation | 37 |

Part 2: Geography through the Environment

38-43

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Biodiversity and Conservation | 38-40 |
| 2. Human Environment Interactions | 40-42 |
| 3. Natural Hazards and Disasters | 42-43 |

Part 3: Human Geography

44-47

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Population – Distribution, Density and Growth | 44-46 |
| 2. Human Development | 46-47 |

Part 4: Economic Geography

48-64

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Natural Resources | 48-53 |
| 2. Conservation of Natural Resources | 54 |
| 3. Economic Activities | 54-57 |
| 4. Transport and Communication | 58-62 |
| 5. International Trade | 62-64 |

Part 5: Physical Geography of India

65-78

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. India: Location | 65 |
| 2. Structure and Physiography of India | 65-68 |
| 3. Drainage System of India | 68-71 |
| 4. Climate of India | 71-72 |
| 5. Natural Vegetation of India | 73-74 |
| 6. Soils of India | 74-78 |

Part 6: Economic Geography of India

79-104

| | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Land Resources and Agriculture | 79-81 |
| 2. Water Resources | 81-85 |
| 3. Mineral and Energy Resources | 85-86 |
| 4. Manufacturing Industries | 87-89 |
| 5. Planning and Sustainable Development in Indian Context | 89-92 |
| 6. Transport and Communication | 92-94 |
| 7. Population : Distribution, Density, Growth and Composition | 94-95 |
| 8. Migration : Types, Causes and Consequences | 95-96 |
| 9. Human Development | 96-97 |
| 10. Human Settlements | 97-98 |
| 11. Geographical Perspective on Selected Issues and Problems | 98-104 |

SECTION C: POLITICAL SCIENCE

C-1-104

Part 1: Political Science & Political System: Scope, Concept & Relationship

1-29

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Political Science : Its Meaning and Scope | 1-3 |
| 2. Concept of State and its Elements | 3-4 |
| 3. Society, State and Citizenship | 4-5 |
| 4. Government : Forms and Classification | 5-6 |
| 5. Comparative Analysis of Different forms of Government | 6-8 |
| 6. Government and Its Organs | 8-10 |
| 7. Legislature : A General Profile | 11 |
| 8. Legislature in India | 12-13 |
| 9. Detailed Legislative and Financial Procedures | 14-19 |
| 10. Executive : A General Profile | 19-20 |
| 11. Executive in India | 20-23 |
| 12. Judiciary : A General Profile | 23-24 |
| 13. Judiciary in India | 24-25 |
| 14. Bureaucracy : A General Profile | 25-26 |
| 15. Civil Service in India | 26-27 |
| 16. District Administration | 27-29 |

Part 2: Indian Constitution

30-40

| | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Constitution ; Functions, Characteristics and Salient Features | 30-31 |
| 2. Landmarks in the Constitutional Development of India | 31-38 |
| 3. Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy | 39-40 |

Part 3: Local Government

41-45

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Local Government Institutions | 41-42 |
| 2. Panchayati Raj System | 42-44 |
| 3. Municipalities and Municipal Corporations | 44-45 |

Part 4: Democracy

46-72

Unit- I: Democracy and Its Characteristics

| | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Democracy and Its Features | 46-47 |
| 2. Democracy and Diversity | 47-48 |
| 3. Democracy in India and Adult Franchise | 48 |
| 4. Election Commission and Election Procedure | 49-50 |
| 5. Political Parties | 50-51 |

Unit- II: Challenges and Responses to Indian Democracy

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Challenges to Democracy | 51-53 |
| 2. Regional Imbalances and Regional Aspirations | 53-60 |
| 3. Communalism, Casteism and Political Violence | 61-62 |

Unit-III Political Development in India since Independence

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. The Era of One-party Dominance | 62-63 |
| 2. Nation Building and its Problems | 63-64 |
| 3. Politics of Planned Development | 64-66 |
| 4. India's External Relations | 66-67 |
| 5. Challenges to and Restoration of Congress-system | 68-69 |
| 6. Recent Developments and Coalition Politics | 69-72 |

Part 5: World Politics 73-91

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Cold War Era | 73-74 |
| 2. The End of Bipolarity and Disintegration of Soviet Union | 75-77 |
| 3. US Dominance in World Politics | 77-79 |
| 4. Alternative Centres of Power | 80 |
| 5. Contemporary South Asia | 81-82 |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 6. International Organizations | 83-84 |
| 7. Security in the Contemporary World | 84-86 |
| 8. Environment and Natural Resources | 86-90 |
| 9. Globalisation | 90-91 |

Part 6: India and The World 92-94

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| 1. India and United Nations | 92-93 |
| 2. India and SAARC | 94 |

Part 7: Political Theories 95-104

- | | |
|---------------------|---------|
| 1. Political Theory | 95-96 |
| 2. Freedom | 96-97 |
| 3. Equality | 97-98 |
| 4. Social Justice | 98 |
| 5. Rights | 98-99 |
| 6. Citizenship | 99-100 |
| 7. Nationalism | 100-101 |
| 8. Secularism | 101-102 |
| 9. Sovereignty | 102-103 |
| 10. Liberty | 103 |
| 11. Socialism | 103-104 |

SECTION- D : ECONOMICS D-1-54**PART 1: MICROECONOMICS 1-9**

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Introduction to Microeconomics | 1-2 |
| 2. Consumer Choice and Behaviour | 2-5 |
| 3. Production Cost, Behaviour and Supply | 5-6 |
| 4. Producer Equilibrium | 6-7 |
| 5. Price Determination | 7-8 |
| 6. Market Structure- Competitive & Non-competitive | 8 |
| 7. International Trade Factor Mobility | 9 |

Part 2: Macroeconomics 10-26

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Introduction to Macroeconomics | 10 |
| 2. Structure of the Macroeconomy : Circular Flow of National Income | 11-13 |
| 3. Aggregate Demand and Supply : Its Components | 13-14 |
| 4. Determination of Income : Employment and Output | 14-15 |
| 5. Money and Banking | 15-19 |

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 6. Government Budget and Economy | 19-21 |
| 7. Open Economy- Balance of Payment and Foreign Exchange | 22-26 |

Part 3: Indian Economy Development 27-54

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Indian Economy on the EVE of Independence | 27-30 |
| 2. Economic Development and Indicators of Development | 30-32 |
| 3. Economic Reforms Since 1991 | 32-33 |
| 4. Infrastructure | 33-34 |
| 5. Challenges in Indian Economy- Population in India | 34-37 |
| 6. Poverty | 37-40 |
| 7. Unemployment | 40-41 |
| 8. Emerging Issues and Economic Perspective | 41-44 |
| 9. Money and Credit | 44-46 |
| 10. Rural Development | 47-48 |
| 11. Sustainable Development and Environment | 48-50 |
| 12. Comparative Development of India and Its Neighbour | 50-53 |
| 13. Government Schemes | 54 |

SECTION E : GENERAL SCIENCE E-1-92**PART 1: PHYSICS 1-24**

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 1. Measurements | 1-2 |
| 2. Motion | 2-3 |
| 3. Work and Energy | 3-4 |

- | | |
|----------------|-----|
| 4. Gravitation | 4-5 |
| 5. Fluids | 5 |
| 6. Heat | 6 |
| 7. Sound | 6-9 |

| | | | |
|--|--------------|---|--------------|
| 8. Universe | 9-13 | 2. Life Processes | 46-53 |
| 9. Electricity | 14-15 | 3. The Living Organisms and its Diversity | 53-54 |
| 10. Magnet | 15-16 | 4. The Cell | 54-56 |
| 11. Light | 16-21 | 5. Tissues | 56-57 |
| 12. Nuclear Physics | 21-24 | 6. Control and Coordination | 57-60 |
| PART – 2 : CHEMISTRY | 25-44 | 7. How do Organisms Reproduce | 60-62 |
| 1. Matter in Our Surroundings | 25-27 | 8. Heredity and Evolution | 63-64 |
| 2. Chemical Reactions and Equations | 27-29 | 9. Why do We Fall ill ? | 65-67 |
| 3. Acids, Bases and Salts | 29-30 | 10. Weather, Climate and Adaptations of | |
| 4. Metal and Non-metals | 31-32 | Animals to Climate | 67-69 |
| 5. Structure of Atom | 32-33 | PART – 4 : ENVIRONMENT | 70-92 |
| 6. Carbon and its Compounds | 33-34 | 1. Natural Resources and its Management | 70-80 |
| 7. Periodic Classification of Elements | 34-37 | 2. Our Environment | 80-84 |
| 8. Synthetic Fibers and Plastics | 37-44 | 3. Improvement in Food Resources | 84-92 |
| PART – 3 : BIOLOGY | 45-69 | | |
| 1. Nutrition and Health | 45-46 | | |

Ancient History of India

1. Sources for History Writing

Types of sources and Historical Construction

Material Remains

- The Ancient Indians left innumerable material remains.
- The stone temples in south India and the brick monasteries in eastern India still stand to remind us of the great building activities of the past.
- But the major part of these remains lies buried in the mounds scattered all over the country (The mound is an elevated portion of land covering remains of old habitations).
- It may be of different types single culture, major-culture and multi-culture. Single- culture mounds represent only one culture throughout.
- Some mounds represent only Painted Grey Ware (PGW) culture, others Satavahana culture, and still others Kushan culture.
- In major culture mounds, one culture is dominant and the others are not so important.
- Multi-culture mounds represent several important cultures in succession which occasionally overlap with one another, Like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, an excavated mound can be used for the understanding of successive layers in material and other aspects of culture.
- A mound can be excavated vertically or horizontally.
- Vertical excavation means lengthwise digging to uncover the period wise sequence of cultures; it is generally confined to a part of the site.
- Horizontal excavation means digging the mound as a whole or a major part of it. The method may enable the excavator to obtain a complete idea of the site culture in a particular period.

Manuscripts

- One is to search for and read books that were written long ago. These are called manuscripts, because they were written by hand (this comes from the Latin word 'manu', meaning hand).
- Manuscripts were usually written on palm leaf, or on the specially prepared bark of a tree known as the birch, which grows in the Himalayas.
- The palm leaves were cut into pages and tied together to make books.
- Over the years, many manuscripts were eaten away by insects, some were destroyed, but many have survived, often preserved in temples and monasteries.

- Manuscripts dealt with all kinds of subjects: religious beliefs and practices, the lives of kings, medicine and science.
- There were epics, poems, plays. Many of these were written in Sanskrit, others were in Prakrit (languages used by ordinary people) and Tamil.

Inscriptions

- Inscriptions are writings on relatively hard surfaces such as stone or metal.
- In the past, when kings wanted their orders inscribed so that people could see, read and obey them, they used inscriptions for this purpose.
- There are other kinds of inscriptions as well, where men and women (including kings and queens) recorded what they did. For example, records of victories in battle.
- All inscriptions contain both scripts and languages. Languages which were used, as well as scripts, have changed over time.
- Scholars understand what is inscribed on inscription through a process known as decipherment.
- Inscriptions were carved on seals, stone pillars, rocks, copper plates, temple walls and bricks or images.
- In the country as a whole the earliest inscriptions were recorded on stone. But in the early centuries of the Christian era, copper plates began to be used for this purpose.
- Even then the practice of engraving inscriptions on stone continued in south India on a large scale.
- Most inscriptions bearing on the history of Maurya, post-Maurya and Gupta times have been published in a series of collections called Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.

Coins

- Although a good number of coins and inscriptions has been found on the surface, many of them have been unearthed by digging.
- The study of coins is called numismatics. Ancient Indian currency was not issued in the form of paper, as is being used these days, but as metal coins.
- Ancient coins were made of metal-copper, silver, gold, or lead. Coin moulds made of burnt clay have been discovered in large numbers.
- Most of them belong to the Kushan period, i.e. the first three Christian centuries. The use of such moulds in the post-Gupta periods almost disappeared.

Literary Sources

- Although the ancient Indian knew writing as early as 2500 B.C., our most ancient manuscripts are not older than the fourth century A.D., and have been found in Central Asia.
- The Sangam literature comprises about 30,000 lines of poetry, which are arranged in eight anthologies called Ettuttolkal.
- The poems are collected in groups of hundreds such as Purananuru (The Four Hundred of the Exterior) and others.
- There are two main groups Patinienkil Kannakku (The Eighteen Lower Collections) and Pattuppattu (The Ten Songs).
- The former is generally assumed to be older than the latter, and hence considered to be of much historical importance.

- The Sangam texts have several layers, but at present they cannot be established on the basis of style and content. As shown later, these layers can be detected on the basis of stages in social, evolution.

Foreign Accounts

- The Greek writers mention Sandrokottas, a contemporary of Alexander the Great who invaded India in 326 B.C. Prince Sandrokottas is identified with Chandragupta Maurya, whose date of accession is fixed at 322 B.C.
- This identification has served as the sheet-anchor in ancient Indian chronology.
- The Indika of Megasthenes, who came to the court of Chandragupta Maurya, has been preserved only in fragments quoted by subsequent classical writers.

2. Pre-historic Age

The Palaeolithic Period: Hunters and Food Gatherers

- The Earth is over 4000 million years old.
- The evolution of its crust shows four stages. The fourth stage is called the Quaternary, which is divided into Pleistocene (most recent) and Holocene (present); the former lasted between 2,000,000 and 10,000 years before the present and the latter began about 10,000 years ago.
- Man is said to have appeared on the earth in the early pleistocene, when true ox, true elephant and true horse also originated. But now this event seems to have occurred in Africa about three million years back.
- They call the earliest period the Palaeolithic. This comes from two Greek words, 'palaeo', meaning old, and 'lithos', meaning stone.
- Palaeolithic tools, which could be as old as 100,000 B.C., have been found in the Chotanagpur plateau. Such tools belonging to 20,000 B.C.- 10,000 B.C. have been found in Kurnool district in Andhra Pradesh about 55 km from Kurnool.

Phases in the Palaeolithic Age

- The Palaeolithic Age in India is divided into three phases according to the nature of the stone tools used by the people and also according to the nature of change in the climate.
- The first phase is called Early or Lower Palaeolithic, the second Middle Palaeolithic and the third Upper Palaeolithic. Unless adequate information is available about Bori artefacts the first phase may be placed broadly, between 500,000 B.C. and 50,000 B.C.; the second between 50,000 B.C. and 40,000 B.C. and the third between 40,000 B.C. and 10,000 B.C. But between 40,000 B.C. and 1500 B.C. tools belonging to both Middle and Upper Palaeolithic Ages are found in the Deccan Plateau.
- The first Palaeolithic tools were identified at the site of Pallavaram near Chennai by Robert Bruce Foote in 1863. He found many prehistoric sites when he extensively surveyed different parts of South India. Since then, numerous Palaeolithic sites have been identified and excavated all over India.

- The Lower Palaeolithic or the Early Old Stone Age covers the greater part of the Ice Age. Its characteristic feature is the use of hand axes, cleavers and choppers.
- The axes found in India are more or less similar to those of western Asia, Europe and Africa. Stone tools were used mainly for chopping, digging and skinning.
- The Early Old Stone Age sites are found in the valley of river Soan or Sohan in Punjab, now in Pakistan. Several sites have been found in Kashmir and the Thar Desert.
- The Lower Palaeolithic tools have also been found in the Belan valley in Mirzapur District in Uttar Pradesh. Those found in the desert area of Didwana in Rajasthan in the valleys of the Belan and the Narmada, and in the caves and rock shelters of Bhimbetka near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh roughly belong to 100,000 B.C.
- The Middle Palaeolithic industries are mainly based upon flakes. These flakes are found in different parts of India & show regional variations.
- The principal tools are varieties of blades points, borers and scrapers made of flakes. We also find a large number of borers and blade-like tools.
- The Upper Palaeolithic phase was less humid.
- It coincided with the last phase of the Ice Age when climate became comparatively warm.
- Caves and rockshelters for use by human beings in the Upper Palaeolithic phase have been discovered at Bhimbetka, 45 km south of Bhopal.
- An Upper Palaeolithic assemblage, characterised by comparatively large flakes, blades, burins and scrapers has also been found in the upper levels of the Gujarat dunes.

The Mesolithic Age: Hunters and Herders

- The Upper Palaeolithic Age came to an end with the end of the Ice Age around 9000 B.C., and the climate became warm and dry.

- Climatic changes brought about changes in fauna and flora and made it possible for human beings to move to new areas. Since then there have not been any major changes in climatic conditions.
- An intermediate stage in stone age culture, which is called the Mesolithic Age, it intervened as a transitional phase between the Palaeolithic Age and the Neolithic or New Stone Age.
- The mesolithic people lived on hunting, fishing and food gathering; at a later stage they also domesticated animals.
- The characteristic tools of the Mesolithic Age are microliths. The mesolithic sites are found in good numbers in Rajasthan, southern Uttar Pradesh, central and eastern India and also south of the river Krishna.
- The cultivation of plants around 7000-6000 B.C. is suggested in Rajasthan from a study of the deposits of the former salt Lake, Sambhar.

Prehistoric Art

- The people of palaeolithic and mesolithic ages practised painting.
- Prehistoric art appears at several places, but Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh is a striking site.
- Situated in the Vindhyan range, 45 km south of Bhopal, it has more than 500 painted rock shelters, distributed in an area of 10 sq km.

The Neolithic Age Food Producers

- In the world context the New Stone Age began in 9000 B.C. The only neolithic settlement in the Indian subcontinent attributed to 7000 B.C. lies in Mehrgarh, which is situated in Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan. In the initial stage, before 5000 B.C. the people of this place did not use any pottery.
- Some neolithic sites found on the northern spurs of the Vindhyas are considered as old as 5000 B.C. but generally neolithic settlements found in south India are not older than 2500 B.C., in some parts of southern and eastern India they are as late as 1000 B.C.
- The people of Burzahom used coarse grey pottery. It is interesting that the Burzahom domestic dogs were buried with their masters in their graves.
- The earliest date for Burzahom is about 2700 B.C., but the bones recovered from Chirand cannot be dated earlier than 2000 B.C. and they possibly belong to the late neolithic phase.
- The second group of neolithic people lived in south India, south of the Godavari river. They usually settled on the tops of granite hills or on plateaus near the river banks. They used stone axes and also some kind of stone blades.

- The third area from which neolithic tools have been recovered is in the hills of Assam. Neolithic tools are also found in the Garo hills in Meghalaya on the north-eastern frontier of India.
- Some of the important neolithic sites or those with neolithic layers that have been excavated include Maski, Brahmagiri, Hallur Kodekal, Sanganakallu, T. Narsipur, Piklihal and Takkalakota in Karnataka, and Palyampalli in Tamil Nadu.
- Neolithic celts, axes, adzes, chisels, etc., have also been found in the Orissa and Chotanagpur, hill areas. But traces of neolithic settlements are generally few in parts of Madhya Pradesh and the tracts of the upper Deccan, because of the lack of the types of stone which lend themselves easily to grinding and polishing.

Chalcolithic Settlements

- The End of the neolithic period saw the use of metals.
- The metal to be used first was copper, and several cultures were based on the use of stone and copper implements. Such a culture is called chalcolithic which means the stone copper phase. Technologically chalcolithic stage applied to the pre-Harappans.
- But in various parts of the country the chalcolithic cultures appear after the end of the bronze Harappa culture.
- In India, settlements belonging to the chalcolithic phase are found in south-eastern Rajasthan, western part of Madhya Pradesh, western Maharashtra and in southern and eastern India.
- In south-eastern Rajasthan, two sites, one at Ahar and the other at Gilund, have been excavated. They lie in the dry zones of the Banas valley. In western Madhya Pradesh, Malwa, Kayatha and Eran have been exposed.
- The Malwa Ware typical of the Malwa chalcolithic culture of central and western India is considered the richest among the chalcolithic ceramics.
- Some of its pottery and other cultural elements are also found in Maharashtra. But the most extensive excavations have taken place in Maharashtra.
- Several chalcolithic sites, such as Jorwe, Nevasa Daimabad in Ahmadnagar District; Chandoli, Songaon and Inamgaon in Pune district, Prakash and Nasik have been excavated. They all belong to the Jorwe culture named after Jorwe, the type-site situated on the left bank of the Pravara river, a tributary of the Godavari, in Ahmadnagar district. The Jorwe culture owed much to the Malwa culture but it also contained elements of the south neolithic culture.
- The Jorwe culture, c. 1400 to 700 B.C. covered modern Maharashtra except parts of Vidarbha and the coastal region of Konkan. Although the Jorwe culture was rural, some of its settlements such as Daimabad and Inamgaon had almost reached the urban stage. All these Maharashtra sites were located in semi-arid areas mostly on brown-black soil which had ber and babul vegetation but fell in the riverine tracts.

The Copper Hoards and the Ochre-coloured Pottery Phase

- More than forty copper hoards consisting of rings, celts, hatchets, swords.
- Harpoons, spearheads and human-like figures have been found in a wide area ranging from West Bengal and Orissa in the east to Gujarat and Haryana in the west, and from Andhra Pradesh in the south to Uttar Pradesh in the north.
- The largest hoard comes from Gungeria in Madhya Pradesh: it contains 424 copper tools and weapons and 102 thin sheets of silver objects. But nearly half of the copper hoards are concentrated in the Ganga-Yamuna doab; in other areas we encounter stray finds of copper harpoons, antennae swords, and anthropomorphic figures.

3. Indus Valley Civilization

- The Indus valley civilisation is also called the Harappan culture.
- Archaeologists use the term “culture” for a group of objects, distinctive in style, that are usually found together within a specific geographical area and period of time.
- In the case of the Harappan culture, these distinctive objects include seals, beads, weights, stone blades and even baked bricks.
- These objects were found from areas as far apart as Afghanistan, Jammu, Baluchistan (Pakistan) and Gujarat.
- Named after Harappa, the first site where this unique culture was discovered, the civilisation is dated between c. 2600 and 1900 BCE.
- In 1924, John Marshall, Director-General of the ASI, announced the discovery of a new civilisation in the Indus valley to the world.
- Geographically, this civilization covered Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Western Uttar Pradesh. It extended from Sutkagendor (in Baluchistan) in the West to Alamgirpur (Western UP) in the East; and from Mandu (Jammu) in the North to Daimabad (Ahmednagar, Maharashtra) in the South. Some Indus Valley sites have also been found as far away as Afghanistan and Turkmenistan.
- **Findings**
 - **Great bath:** The Great Bath was lined with bricks, coated with plaster, and made water-tight with a layer of natural tar.
 - There were steps leading down to Great Bath from two sides, while there were rooms on all sides.
 - Water was probably brought in from a well, and drained out after use. Perhaps important people took a dip in this tank on special occasions.
- **Granary**
 - Unicorn Seals (Most numbers of it in here)
 - Bronze dancing girl statue
 - Seal of a man with deers, elephants, tiger and rhinos around- Considered to be Pashupati Seal)
 - Steatite statue of beard man
 - Bronze buffalo

Sutkagendor

- Location- on Baluchistan on Das river
- Discovered by Stein in 1929.
- **Findings-**
 - Trade point between Harappa and Babylon
 - Flint Blades
 - Stone Vessels
 - Stone Arrowheads
 - Shell Beads
 - Pottery
 - Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex (BMAC) associated Copper-Bronze Disc

Chanhudaro

- Location-Mullan Sandha, Sind on the Indus river
- Discovered by N G Majumdar in 1931
- **Findings-**
 - Bangle Factory
 - Almost exclusively devoted to craft production, including bead-making, shell-cutting, metal-working, seal-making and weight-making.
 - The variety of materials used to make beads is remarkable: stones like carnelian (of a beautiful red colour), jasper, crystal, quartz and steatite; metals like copper, bronze and gold; and shell, faience and terracotta or burnt clay.
 - Ink Pot

Amri

- Location- Close to Balochistan, on the bank of Indus river.
- Discovered by N G Majumdar in 1935.

Harappa

- Excavated by Daya Ram Sahni in 1921.
- Situated on the bank of river Ravi in Montgomery district of Punjab (Pakistan).
- Harappa was one of the oldest cities in the subcontinent, which archaeologists found 80 years ago.
- **Findings**
 - Piece of Pottery with Indus Script
 - Cubical Limestone Weight
 - Faience Slag
 - Sandstone statues of Human anatomy
 - Copper Bullock cart
 - Granaries
 - **Coffin burials (Only founded in Harappa)**
 - Terracotta Figurines

Mohenjodaro

- Location- on Larkana District of Sind on the bank of Indus
- Discovered by R. D Banerjee in 1922.
- The settlement is divided into two sections, one smaller but higher and the other much larger but lower.
- Archaeologists designate these as the Citadel and the Lower Town respectively.

- **Findings-**
 - Antelope evidence
 - Rhinoceros' evidence

Kalibangan

- Location-Hanumangarh District, Rajasthan on the bank of Ghaggar river.
- Discovered by Amlanand Ghose in 1953.
- **Findings-**
 - Lower fortified town
 - Wooden drainage
 - Copper Ox
 - Evidence of earthquake
 - Wooden plough
 - Camel's bone
 - Fire alters
 - Camel's bones
 - Furrowed land

Lothal

- Location- Gujarat on Bhogva river near the Gulf of Cambay.
- Discovered by R. Rao 1953.
- **Findings-**
 - Port Town
 - Houses were built of mud bricks, drains were made of burnt bricks.
 - Graveyard
 - Ivory weight balance
 - Copper dog
 - First manmade port
 - Dockyard
 - Rice husk
 - Fire alters
 - Chess-playing

Surkotada

- Situated in Gujarat
- Discovered by J P Joshi 1964
- **Findings-**
 - Bones of horses
 - Beads
 - Stone Covered Beads

Banawali

- Situated at Fatehabad district of Haryana.
- Discovered by R S Bisht in 1974.
- **Findings**
 - Beads
 - Barley
 - Oval shaped settlement
 - The only city with radial streets
 - Toy plough
 - The largest number of barley grains

Dholavira

- Location- Gujarat in Rann of Katchchh.
- Discovered by R S Bisht 1985.

- **Findings**
 - Exclusive water management
 - Only site to be divided into three parts
 - Giant water reservoir
 - Unique water harnessing system
 - Dams
 - Embankments
 - Stadium
 - Rock – Cut architecture

Subsistence Strategies

- The Harappans ate a wide range of plant and animal products, including fish.
- Grains found at Harappan sites include wheat, barley, lentil, chickpea and sesame. Millets are found from sites in Gujarat.
- Finds of rice are relatively rare.
- Animal bones found at Harappan sites include those of cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo and pig.

Agricultural Technologies

- Moreover, terracotta models of the plough have been found at sites in Cholistan and at Banawali (Haryana).
- Archaeologists have also found evidence of a ploughed field at Kalibangan (Rajasthan), associated with Early Harappan levels.
- The field had two sets of furrows at right angles to each other, suggesting that two different crops were grown together.

Laying Out Drains

- One of the most distinctive features of Harappan cities was the carefully planned drainage system.
- If we look at the plan of the Lower Town we will notice that roads and streets were laid out along an approximate “grid” pattern, intersecting at right angles.

Citadels

- While most Harappan settlements have a small high western part and a larger lower eastern section, there are variations.
- At sites such as Dholavira & Lothal (Gujarat), the entire settlement was fortified, and sections within the town were also separated by walls.
- The Citadel within Lothal was not walled off, but was built at a height.

Life in the City

- Harappan city was a very busy place.
- Rulers were the people who planned the construction of special buildings in the city. Rulers sent people to distant lands to get metal, precious stones, and other things that they wanted.

Domestic Architecture

- The Lower Town at Mohenjodaro provides examples of residential buildings.

- Many were centred on a courtyard, with rooms on all sides.
- The courtyard was probably the centre of activities such as cooking and weaving, particularly during hot and dry weather.
- There are no windows in the walls along the ground level.
- Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks, with drains connected through the wall to the street drains.

Tracking Social differences

Burials

- At burials in Harappan sites the dead were generally laid in pits.
- Sometimes, there were differences in the way the burial pit was made – in some instances, the hollowed-out spaces were lined with bricks.
- Some graves contain pottery and ornaments, perhaps indicating a belief that these could be used in the afterlife.
- Jewellery has been found in burials of both men and women.

Materials from the subcontinent and beyond

- The Harappans procured materials for craft production in various ways. For instance,
 - They established settlements such as Nageshwar and Balakot in areas where shell was available.
 - Other such sites were Shortughai, in far-off
 - Afghanistan, near the best source of lapis lazuli, a blue stone that was apparently very highly valued, and Lothal which was near sources of carnelian (from Bharuch in Gujarat), steatite (from south Rajasthan and north Gujarat) and metal (from Rajasthan).
 - Another strategy for procuring raw materials may have been to send expeditions to areas such as the Khetri region of Rajasthan (for copper) and south India (for gold).
 - These expeditions established communication with local communities.
 - Occasional finds of Harappan artefacts such as steatite micro beads in these areas are indications of such contact.
 - There is evidence in the Khetri area for what archaeologists call the Ganeshwar-Jodhpura culture, with its distinctive non-Harappan pottery and an unusual wealth of copper objects.
 - It is possible that the inhabitants of this region supplied copper to the Harappans.

Contact with Distant Lands

- Recent archaeological finds suggest that copper was also probably brought from Oman, on the southeastern tip of the Arabian peninsula.
- Chemical analyses have shown that both the Omani copper and Harappan artefacts have traces of nickel, suggesting a common origin.
- Mesopotamian texts datable to the third millennium BCE refer to copper coming from a region called Magan, perhaps a name for Oman, and interestingly enough copper found at Mesopotamian sites also contains traces of nickel.
- In this context, it is worth noting that Mesopotamian texts mention contact with regions named Dilmun (probably

the island of Bahrain), Magan and Meluhha, possibly the Harappan region. They mention the products from Meluhha: carnelian, lapis lazuli, copper, gold, and varieties of wood.

- Mesopotamian texts refer to Meluhha as a land of seafarers. Besides, we find depictions of ships and boats on seals.

Ancient Authority

There are indications of complex decisions being taken and implemented in Harappan society.

- A large building found at Mohenjodaro was labeled as a palace by archaeologists but no spectacular finds were associated with it.
- A stone statue was labelled and continues to be known as the “priest-king”.
- This is because archaeologists were familiar with Mesopotamian history and its “priest-kings” and have found parallels in the Indus region.
- Some archaeologists are of the opinion that Harappan society had no rulers, and that everybody enjoyed equal status.

Cunningham's confusion

- When Cunningham, the first Director-General of the ASI, began archaeological excavations in the midnineteenth century, archaeologists preferred to use the written word (texts and inscriptions) as a guide to investigations.
- In fact, Cunningham's main interest was in the archaeology of the Early Historic (c. sixth century BCE-fourth century CE) and later periods.
- He used the accounts left by Chinese Buddhist pilgrims who had visited the subcontinent between the fourth and seventh centuries CE to locate early settlements. Cunningham also collected, documented and translated inscriptions found during his surveys.

A new old Civilisation

- Subsequently, seals were discovered at Harappa by archaeologists such as **Daya Ram Sahni** in the early decades of the twentieth century, in layers that were definitely much older than Early Historic levels. It was then that their significance began to be realised.
- Another archaeologist, **Rakhal Das Banerji** found similar seals at Mohenjodaro, leading to the conjecture that these sites were part of a single archaeological culture.
- Based on these finds, in 1924, **John Marshall**, Director-General of the ASI, announced the discovery of a new civilisation in the Indus valley to the world.
- As **S.N. Roy** noted in *The Story of Indian Archaeology*, “Marshall left India three thousand years older than he had found her.” This was because similar, till- then-unidentified seals were found at excavations at Mesopotamian sites. It was then that the world knew not only of a new civilisation, but also of one contemporaneous with Mesopotamia.
- In fact, **John Marshall's** stint as Director-General of the ASI marked a major change in Indian archaeology. **He was the first professional archaeologist to work in India**, and

brought his experience of working in Greece and Crete to the field.

- More importantly, though like Cunningham he too was interested in spectacular finds, he was equally keen to look for patterns of everyday life.

Problems of Interpretation

- Early archaeologists thought that certain objects which seemed unusual or unfamiliar may have had a religious significance.
- These included terracotta figurines of women, heavily jewelled, some with elaborate head-dresses. These were regarded as mother goddesses.
- Some animals – such as the one-horned animal, often called the “unicorn” – depicted on seals seem to be mythical, composite creatures.
- In some seals, a figure shown seated cross-legged in a “yogic” posture, sometimes surrounded by animals, has been regarded as a depiction of “proto- Shiva”, that is, an early form of one of the major deities of Hinduism.
- Besides, conical stone objects have been classified as lingas.
- A linga is a polished stone that is worshipped as a symbol of Shiva.

Major Developments in Harappan Archaeology

| | |
|------|---|
| 1875 | Report of Alexander Cunningham on Harappan seal |
| 1921 | M.S. Vats begins excavations at Harappan |
| 1925 | Excavations begin at Mohenjodaro |

| | |
|------|--|
| 1946 | R.E.M. Wheeler excavates at Harappa |
| 1955 | S.R. Rao begins excavations at Lothal |
| 1960 | B.B. Lal and B.K. Thapar begin excavations at Kalibangan |
| 1974 | M.R. Mughal begins explorations in Bahawalpur |
| 1980 | A team of German and Italian archaeologists begins surface explorations at Mohenjodaro |
| 1986 | American team begins excavations at Harappa |
| 1990 | R.S. Bisht begins excavations at Dholavira |

Reason behind Decline

- Some scholars suggest that the rivers dried up. Others suggest that there was deforestation.
- Decline could have happened because fuel was required for baking bricks, and for smelting copper ores. Besides, grazing by large herds of cattle, sheep and goat may have destroyed the green cover.
- In some areas there were floods.
- But none of these reasons can explain the end of all the cities. Flooding, or a river drying up would have had an effect in only some areas.
- In the few Harappan sites that continued to be occupied after 1900 BCE there appears to have been a transformation of material culture, marked by the disappearance of the distinctive artefacts of the civilisation – weights, seals, special beads.

4. Vedic Civilization

Vedic Civilization

- The age of the Vedic Civilization was between 1500 BC and 600 BC. This is the next major civilization after the Indus Valley Civilization till 1400 BC.

The Aryans

- The Aryans fall in the group of semi-nomadic pastoral people.
- About the original homeland of the Aryans different experts have different opinions. Some of them say that they came from the area around the Caspian Sea in Central Asia.
- This Central Asia theory is given by Max Muller. Others think that they originated from the Russian Steppes. But Bal Gangadhar Tilak was of the opinion that the Aryans came from the Arctic region following their astronomical calculations.

Early Vedic Literature (Stuti)

- According to Hindu belief, Stuti literature of Vedic literature was not composed by any living being. It was revealed by God to certain sages and they passed their knowledge orally from one generation to another.

Vedas

- The four Vedas are the most important creation of Vedic

literature. Without them, ancient Indian literature would have been incomplete.

- The hymns are regarded as invocations to the gods to bestow favors on the worshippers. There are mainly four (4) Vedas- Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samveda and Atharvaveda. One of the ancient and earliest works of Vedas is the Rigveda.
- It is a collection of 1017 hymns supplemented by 11 others which is called ‘Valakhilyas’. It is arranged into 10 mandalas of books. Yajurveda relates to the details of performing Yajanas which are performed by the priests.
- It is present in both poetry and prose and has 40 chapters and 200 mantras. It gives a picture of religious and social life of the Rigveda Aryans. Samveda have been mostly taken from Rigveda and these are sung at the time of performing Yajanas.
- It contains 1540 ‘Richayen’. Atharvaveda is present partly in prose and partly in poem. Most of the mantras deal with warding of diseases and with chains magic and spells by which one could overcome enemies and demons. It contains 5839 mantras, 20 mandalas and 731 richayen.

Brahmanas

- They are the commentaries on the various hymns in the Vedas to which they are appended. They are called liturgies. For example, Rigveda has two Brahmanas- Aitareya and knishitaki.

Aranyakas

- Aranyakas are generally called the 'forest books' as they were studied in forests away from the villages and towns. They mainly deal with the spiritual life. They were meant for the elderly people as they had passed out of Grihastha Ashram.
- They are the concluding portions of the Brahmanas. The Aranyakas deals with the philosophy and mysticism and not with the rituals.

Upanishads

- According to German scholar Schopenhauer, "In the whole world, there is no study so beautiful and as elevating as that of Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life- it will be the solace of my death."
- Upanishads are the concluding parts of Brahmanas. They occupy a very high place in the ancient Aryan literature as they mainly deals with spiritual subjects and the ultimate secrets of creation of the universe.

Vedic Civilization: Early Vedic Period and Later Vedic Period

Early Vedic Civilization or Rig Vedic Period (1500 BC – 1000 BC)

- At first, the Aryans lived in the land known as "SaptaSindhu" meaning Land of the Seven Rivers. The names of the seven rivers were: Sindhu (Indus), Vipash (Beas), Vitasta (Jhelum), Parushni (Ravi), Asikni (Chenab), Shutudri (Satluj) and Saraswati.

Political Structure

- The head of the government was known as Rajan.
- The largest political and administrative unit was Jana in Rig Vedic times.
- The name of the basic unit of political organization was 'Kula'.
- Multiple families together formed a 'grama'.
- Leader of 'grama' was called 'Gramani'.
- Groups of villages were known as 'visu', headed by 'vishayapati'.
- Tribal assemblies were known as Sabhas and Samitis. The names of tribal kingdoms are- Bharatas, Matsyas, Yadus and Purus.

Social Structure

- Women occupied respectable positions and were allowed to participate in Sabhas & Samitis. There were women poets such as Apala, Lopamudra, Viswavara, and Ghosa.
- Cows became very important among cattle.

Economic Structure

- Aryans were generally pastoral and cattle-rearing people.
- Their occupation was agriculture.
- Carpenters made chariots and ploughs.
- A huge number of articles were made with copper, bronze, and iron by workers.
- Spinning was done for making cotton and woolen fabrics.

Religion

- They worshipped natural forces like earth, fire, wind, rain, thunder, etc. by personifying them into many gods.
- Indra (thunder) was the most important god. Other gods were Prithvi (earth), Agni (fire), Varuna (rain) and Vayu (wind).

- Female gods were Ushas and Aditi.
- There were no rituals for temples and idol worship.

Later Vedic Civilization or Painted Grey Ware Phase (1000 BC – 600 BC)

Political structure

- The largest unit of political organisation was known as the 'Janapada' or 'Rashtra', and it was ruled by a king. The king was usually a Kshatriya, maintained an army and was considered a divine character.
- The two assemblies from the early period, that is, the Sabha and Samiti continued but changed in character in this period, and the king held most of the power. The Vidhata, which was the earliest tribal assembly, completely disappeared.

Transformation in the Political Structure

- The concept of territory came into existence in this period
- A territory or a state was referred to as a 'Janapada' or 'Rashtra'
- The 'Rajan' from the early Vedic age later became Kshatriyas and held power over 'Janapada' or 'Rashtra'
- Earlier wars were fought for cattle; however, in this period, wars were fought for the occupation of land
- During this period, the king started maintaining 'Ratnis' (council of advisors)
- The taxation system began in this period
- Two officials, the 'Bhagadugha' (tax collector) and the 'Sangrihitri' (treasurer), were appointed to take care of the taxes
- Two taxes from this period were the 'Bali' and the 'Bhaga'
- The Sabha and the Samiti continued but were not powerful enough to influence the king

The King

- In the later Vedic period, the king became the absolute power. Since he fought wars, the king was usually a Kshatriya. He ruled over the 'Janapada' or 'Rashtra'. Several taxes like the 'Bhaga', 'Bali' and 'Sulka' were deployed by the king.

Officials

- **Kulapati** – Head of the family
- **Gramani** – Head of the Village
- **Senani** – Commander of the army
- **Madhyamasi** – Mediator of disputes
- **Purohita** – Chief Priest
- **Spasas** – Spies/messengers
- **Vrajapati** – Officer of pastures
- **Bhagadugha** – Collector of revenue
- **Jivagribha** – Police officer
- **Mahishi** – Chief queen
- **Akshavapa** – Accountant
- **Suta** – Charioteer
- **Athapati** – Chief judge
- **Sangrihitri** – Treasurer
- **Kshatri** – Chamberlain
- **Takshan** – Carpenter
- **Palagala** – Messenger
- **Govinkartana** – Keeper of forests and games

Judiciary

- The judicial administration changed in the later Vedic period. The judicial administration in this period saw the active participation of the king. The power of the king was sometimes assigned to the 'Adhyaksha'. Sometimes, the cases were also adjudged by the tribes.
- The 'Gramyavadin' (village judge), along with other court members, decided on the petty cases at the village level. The punishments in this period were very severe. For example, if a person was held guilty of theft, he was given a death sentence, or his hands were incapacitated.

Social Structure

- The later Vedic period gave rise to miscellaneous arts and crafts. The various explorations give us some opinions about the settlements. The Later Vedic age made society more complex.
- The caste system, child marriage, dowry and many other disgusting practices blemished the society. Position and independence or freedom of women were lost. Little change took place in food, dress and ornaments of the earlier age.

The Caste System

- Society of the Later Vedic period underwent a great change. The caste system crawled into it. The society was divided into four Varnas called the Brahmanas, Rajanyas or Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the Sudras.
- Various sub-castes came later in addition to the traditional four castes. The Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas were seen as the two leading castes. The Vaishyas were superior to the Shudras. The Shudras were seen as the lowest of the four castes and were made to do all the inferior works.

Social Position of the Women

- The ladies of the Later Vedic Era forfeited their high positions which they normally had enjoyed in the Rig Veda Age. They were robbed of their privileges in the Upanayana ritual. All their customs, barring marriage, were conducted without the recitation of the Vedic Mantras. Polygamy began to exist in this society.
- Females were not allowed to observe the political masses. The conception of a daughter child became unpleasant as they were assumed as a source of misery. The concepts of juvenile marriage and dowry also crawled in.

Economic Conditions

- Similar to the political and colonial differences, the economic state of the Later Vedic period also experienced a substantial amount of changes. Due to the arrival of the concept of the caste system, diverse employment opportunities appeared.
- The brahmins were seen as the most knowledgeable and entrusted with imparting the knowledge to all the people. They were considered "Gurus" who had Ashrams (schools) of their own in which they tutored the people of other Varnas.

- The Kshatriyas were the warrior clan and worked as administrators. They had grasped all forms of mastery in weapons and ruling a territory & were politically knowledgeable too.
- The Vaishyas were mainly involved in commerce and worked as traders, agriculturalists and money lenders. The Shudras, the last Varna, were assigned to serve the other Varnas and worked under them in carrying out their daily activities as the other Varnas were their masters.

Religious Conditions

- During the later Vedic period, religious beliefs underwent a significant change. This period saw the arrival of New Gods and Goddesses.
- The Rig Veda Gods like Varuna, Indra, Agni, Surya, Usha lost their charm. Gods like Shiva, Rupa, Vishnu, Brahma, etc., made their way into the religious heavens of the later Vedic Period. The concept of rituals and sacrifices also prevailed during this period but later declined a little as some big rituals could only be carried out by highly trained and knowledgeable Brahmins.

New Divinities

- The traditional divinities line Varuna, Agni, Indra, Usha, Maruta and Saraswati made to lose their charm in public worship.
- New gods made their debut among the worship. Prominent were Brahma, the creator, Visnu, the sustainer made Maheshvara, the destroyer.
- The worship of Basudeva also was started during this period. He was regarded as Krishna Basudev, the incarnation of Visnu. His worship became very popular.
- Lesser divinities like Gandharba, Apsara, Naga, Vidyadhara etc. also came to be worshipped. The worship of Durga and Ganesh also started during the period.

Vedic Literature

Later Vedic Literature (Smriti)

- Later Vedic literature which is also called the Smriti literature deals with the laws and usage of customs of various classes. They also throw light on the status of women. Smriti literature consists of Sutras, Vedangas and Upavedas, Puranas, Epics and Dharam Shastras.

Sutras

- As the time passed, many new social customs were developed and these were collected in new books. This new type of literature came to be known as the Sutras. It is believed that the period of the Sutras can be traced from the 6th or 7th Century B.C. to about 2nd Century B.C.

Vedangas and Upavedas

- Vedangas were known as the part of Vedic texts and were mainly concerned with the preservation of the Vedic texts.

They are mainly divided into 6 (six) categories- Kalpa (religious practices), Siksha (pronunciation), Vyakaran (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Channdas (meter) and Jyotish (astronomy). Out of 6 (six) Vedangas, Siksha and Kalpa are considered to be very important.

- Each Veda has its Upaveda. They are mainly divided into 4 (four) categories- Ayurveda (medicine), Dhanurveda (art & war), Gandharv veda (art of music) and Shilpveda (architecture).

Darshanas

- There are 6(six) kinds of Darshanas. The Nyaya Darshana was written by Gautama Rishi. It is the science of sciences known to be acquired by four methods which are Pratyaksh or intuition, Anumana or inference, Upma or comparison and Sabda or verbal testimony.
- This Darshana believes in god who is full of bliss and knowledge and accepts the theory of rebirth. The Vaisesika Darshana was written by Kannada rishi. It is concerned

with 6 padarthas consisting Dravya (substance), Guna (quality), Karma (activity), Samanya (generality), Vishesha (particularity) and Samavaya (inference) and nine Dravyas consisting earth, water, air, light, time, space, soul, Manas and Akasha. The Sankhya Darshana was written by Kapila which believes in the existence of god.

Puranas

- Puranas are ancient Hindu texts eulogizing various deities, primarily the divine Trimurti god (Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar) in Hinduism through divine stories. Vyasa, the narrator of Mahabharata is considered to be the compiler of Puranas.
- Puranas are mainly 18(eighteen) in nos. which are- Agri Puran, Bhagwat Puran, Bhavishya Puran, Brahma Puran, Brahmand Puran, Garuda Puran, Kurma Puran, Ling Puran, Markandya Puran, Matsya Puran, Narad Puran, Padma Puran, Shiv Puran, Skand Puran, Brahmvaivratray Puran, Vaman Puran, Varah Puran and Vishnu Puran.

5. Jainism and Buddhism

Causes of Origin

- In post-Vedic times society was clearly divided into four varnas: brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras.
- Each varna was assigned well-defined functions, although it was emphasised that varna was based on birth and the two higher varnas were given some privileges.
- The brahmanas, who were given the functions of priests and teachers, claimed the highest status in society.
- They demanded several privileges, including those of receiving gifts and exemption from taxation and punishment. In post-Vedic texts we have many instances of such privileges enjoyed by them.

Vardhamana Mahavira and Jainism

- The Jainas believed that their most important religious teacher Mahavira had twenty-three predecessors who were called tirthankaras.
- If Mahavira is taken as the last or the twenty-fourth tirthankara, the origin of Jainism would be taken back to the ninth century B.C.
- But since most of the earliest teachers, up to the fifteenth one were supposed to have been born in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, their historicity is extremely doubtful. No part of the middle Ganga plains was settled on any scale until the sixth century B.C.
- The earliest important teachings of Jainism are attributed to Parshvanatha, the twenty-third tirthankara, who belonged to Banaras. He gave up royal life and became an ascetic.
 - According to one tradition, Vardhamana Mahavira was born in 540 B.C. in a village near Vaishali, which is identical with Basarh in the district of Vaishali, in north Bihar.
 - His father Siddhartha was the head of a famous kshatriya clan, and his mother was named Trishala, sister of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka, whose daughter was wedded to Bimbisara.

- Thus Mahavira's family was connected with the royal family of Magadha.
- In the beginning, Mahavira led the life of a householder, but in the search for truth he abandoned the world at the age of 30 and became an ascetic.
- He kept on wandering for 12 years from place to place.
- During the course of his long journey, it is said, he never changed his clothes for 12 years, and abandoned them altogether at the age of 42 when he attained omniscience (kaivalya).
- He propagated his religion for 30 years and his mission took him to Koshala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa, etc. He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 BC at a place called Pavapuri near modern Rajgir.
- According to another tradition he passed away in 527 B.C. But on the basis of archaeological evidence he cannot be placed in the sixth century B.C.

Doctrines of Jainism

Jainism taught five doctrines:

- do not commit violence.
- do not speak a lie,
- do not steal,
- do not acquire property, and
- observe continence (brahmacharya).

Spread of Jainism

- In order to spread the teachings of Jainism, Mahavira organized an order of his followers which admitted both men and women.
- It is said that his followers counted 14,000 which is not a large number: Since Jainism did not very clearly mark itself out from the brahmanical religion, it failed to attract the masses.
- According to a late tradition the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is attributed to Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 B.C.).

- The emperor became, a Jaina, gave up his throne and spent the last years of his life in Karnataka as a Jaina ascetic.
- The early Jainas discarded Sanskrit language mainly patronized by the brahmanas.
- They adopted Prakrit language of the common people to preach their doctrines.
- Their religious literature was, written in Ardhamagadhi, and the texts were finally compiled in the sixth century A.D. in Gujarat at a place called Valabhi, a great centre of education.
- The adoption of Prakrit by the Jainas helped the growth of this language and its literature.
- Many regional languages developed out of Prakrit languages, particularly Shauraseni, out of which grew the Marathi language.

Contribution of Jainism

- Jainism made the first serious attempt to mitigate the evils of the varna order and the ritualistic Vedic religion.

Gautama Buddha and Buddhism

- Gautama Buddha or Siddhartha was a contemporary of Mahavira.
- According to tradition he was born in 563 BC in a Shakyakshatriya family in Lumbini in Nepal near Kapilavastu, which is identified with Piprahwa, in Basti district and close to the foothills of Nepal.
- Gautama's father seems to have been the elected ruler of Kapilavastu, and headed the republican clan of the Shakyas.
- His mother was a princess from the Koshalan dynasty. Thus, like Mahavira, Gautama also belonged to a noble family. Born in a republic, he also inherited some egalitarian sentiments.
- Since his early childhood Gautama showed a meditative bent of mind.
- He was married early, but married life did not interest him.
- He was moved by the misery which people suffered in the world, and looked for its solution.
- At the age of 29, like Mahavira again, he left home.
- He kept on wandering for about seven years and then attained knowledge at the age of 35 at Bodhi Gaya under a pipal tree.
- From this time onwards he began to be called the Buddha or the enlightened.
- Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermons at Sarnath in Banaras.

Doctrines of Buddhism

- The Buddha proved to be a practical reformer who took note of the realities of the day.
- Gautama taught that a person should avoid the excess of both luxury and austerity.
- He prescribed the middle path.
- The Buddha, also laid down a code of conduct for his followers on the same lines as was done by the Jaina teachers.

- The main items in this social conduct are
 - (i) do not take the property of others,
 - (ii) do not commit violence,
 - (iii) do not use intoxicants,
 - (iv) do not speak a lie., and
 - (v) do not indulge in corrupt practices.

Special Features of Buddhism

- Buddhism does not recognize the existence of god and soul (atman).
- This can be taken as a kind of revolution in the history of Indian religions.
- Since early Buddhism was not enmeshed in the clap-trap of philosophical discussion, it appealed to the common people.
- It particularly won the support of the lower orders as it attacked the varna system.
- People were taken into the Buddhist order without any consideration of caste.
- Women also were admitted to the sangha and thus brought on par with men. In comparison with Brahmanism, Buddhism was liberal and democratic.
- Buddhism made a special appeal to the people of the non-Vedic areas where it found a virgin soil for conversion.
- The use of Pali, the language of the people, also contributed to the spread of Buddhism.
- It facilitated the spread of Buddhist doctrines among the common people.
- Gautama Buddha also organized the sangha or the religious order, whose doors were kept open to everybody, irrespective of caste and sex.

Fourth Buddhist Council was held at Kashmir during the reign of Kanishka. Sarvastivadins were an important sect of Buddhism. Its doctrines were compiled in Mahavibhanga.

Buddhist Literature

The Buddhist texts were compiled in **Pali**. The Pali canons are called as the **Tripitakas** (Three Baskets). They are **Vinaya Pitaka**, **Sutta Pitaka** and **Abhidhamma Pitaka**. Vinaya Pitaka deals with monastic rules and moral disciplines. Sutta Pitaka dwells upon discourses and teachings of Buddha. Abhidhamma Pitaka expounds Buddhist philosophy. The Sutta Pitaka, which contains the teachings of Buddha, is divided into **five groups** or **Nikayas**. They contain popular works such as **Theragatha** and **Therigatha** (Hymns of the Elder Monks and Nuns) and **Jataka** tales (Buddha's deeds in previous births as Bodhisattva). Other important Buddhist works include **Milinda Panha**, a discussion between Greco-Bactrian king Menander and Buddhist monk **Nagasena**, and Ceylonese chronicles **Dipavamsa** (Island Chronicles), **Mahavamsa** (Great Chronicle) and **Culavamsa** (Lesser Chronicle).

Causes of the Decline of Buddhism

- Every religion is inspired by the spirit of reform, but eventually it succumbs to rituals and ceremonies it originally denounced.
- Buddhism underwent a similar metamorphosis.
- It became a victim to the evils of Brahmanism against which it had fought in the beginning.
- To meet the Buddhist challenge the brahmanas reformed their religion.
 - They stressed the need for preserving the cattle wealth and

- assured women and shudras of admission to heaven.
- Buddhism, on the other hand, changed for the worse.
- Gradually the Buddhist monks were cut off from the mainstream of people's life, they gave up Pali, the language of the people, and took to Sanskrit, the language of intellectuals.
- The Huna king Mihirakula, who was a worshipper of Shiva, killed hundreds of Buddhists.
- The Shaivite Shashanka of Gauda cut off the Bodhi tree at Bodhi Gaya, where the Buddha had attained enlightenment.

6. Age of Mahajanapadas

- The Mahjanapadas were sixteen kingdoms or oligarchic republics that lived in ancient India during the sixth to fourth centuries BCE during the second urbanisation era.

Mahajanapadas

- In the age of the Buddha we find 16 large states called Mahajanapadas.
- They were mostly situated north of the Vindhya and extended from the north-west frontier to Bihar.
- Of these, Magadha, Koshala, Vatsa and Avanti seem to have been considerably powerful. Beginning from the east we hear of the kingdom of Anga which covered the modern districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur. It had its capital at Champa, which shows signs of habitation in the sixth century B.C.
- Magadha embraced the former districts of Patna, Gaya and parts of Shahbad, and grew to be the leading state of the time.

16 Mahajanapadas

Anga

- Capital- Champa
- The Mahabharata and Atharva Veda both mention Anga Mahajanapada.
- It was seized by the Magadha Empire under the reign of Bimbisara.
- It is found in modern-day Bihar and West Bengal.

Magadha

- Capital- Rajagriha
- The Atharva Veda mentions Magadha.
- It was near Anga in modern-day Bihar, separated by the Champa River.
- Later, Magadha became a Jain centre, and Rajagriha hosted the first Buddhist Council.

Kasi

- Capital- Kasi
- Varanasi was the location.
- According to the Matsya Purana, this city was named after the rivers Varuna and Asi.
- Kosala apprehended Kasi.

Vatsa

- Capital- Kaushambi
- Vatsa is often spelled Vamsa.
- Located on the Yamuna's banks.
- This Mahajanapada was governed in a monarchical manner.
- Kausambi/Kaushambi was the capital (which was at the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna).

Kosala

- Capital- Shravasti (northern), Kushavati (southern)
- It was in Uttar Pradesh's current Awadh area.
- Ayodhya, a significant city linked with the Ramayana, was also included in the territory.

Shurasena

- Capital- Mathura
- During Megasthenes' time, this location was a centre of Krishna devotion.
- The disciples of the Buddha also held sway.

Panchala

- Capital- Ahichchhatra and Kampilya
- Its capital for northern Panchala was Ahichchhatra (modern Bareilly), and its capital for southern Panchala was Kampilya (modern Farrukhabad).

Kuru

- Capital- Indraprastha
- Kuru Mahajanapada was probably born in the vicinity of Kurukshetra.

Matsya

- Capital- Viratanagara
- It lay to the west of the Panchalas and to the south of the Kurus.

Chedi

- Capital- Sothivathi
- This is mentioned in the Rigveda.
- Sothivati/Shuktimati/Sotthivatinagara was the capital.

Avanti

- Capital- Ujjaini or Mahishmati
- Avanti had an important role in the emergence of Buddhism.

- Avanti's capitals were Ujjaini (northern section) and Mahishmati (southern part).

Gandhara

- Capital- Taxila
- Taxila was the capital (Takshashila).
- Modern Peshawar and Rawalpindi, Pakistan, as well as the Kashmir valley.
- The Atharva Veda mentions Gandhara.

Kamboja

- Capital- Poonch
- Poonch was the capital of Kamboja.
- It is located in modern-day Kashmir and the Hindukush.

Asmaka

- Capital- Potali/Podana
- It was on the banks of the Godavari.

Vajji

- Capital- Vaishali
- The Vajjis ruled the state north of the Ganga in the Tirhut division.

Malla

- Capital- Kusinara
- It is mentioned in Buddhist and Jain scriptures, as well as in the Mahabharata.
- Malla was a democratic republic.

Rise and Growth of the Magadhan Empire

Haryanka Dynasty

- Magadha came into prominence under the leadership of Bimbisara, who belonged to the Haryanka dynasty.
- He was a contemporary of the Buddha. He started the policy of conquest and aggression which ended with the Kalingawar of Ashoka. Bimbisara acquired Anga and placed it under the viceroyalty of his son Ajatashatru at Champa. He also strengthened his position by marriage alliances.
- He took three wives. His first wife was the daughter of the king of Koshala and the sister of Parsenajit, The Koshalan bride brought him as dowry Kashi village, yielding a revenue of 100,000 which suggests that revenues were collected in terms of coins.
- The marriage bought off the hostility of Koshala and gave him a free hand in dealing with the other states. His second wife Chellana was a Lichchhavi princess from Vaishali who gave birth to Ajata shatru and his third wife was the daughter of the chief of the Madra clan of Punjab.
- The earliest capital of Magadha was at Rajgir, which was called Girivraja at that time. It was surrounded by five hills, the openings in which were closed by stone-walls on all sides. This made Rajgir impregnable.

- According to the Buddhist chronicles, Bimbisara ruled for 52 years roughly from 544 B.C. to 492 B.C.

- He was succeeded by his son Ajatashatru (492-460B.C.).

- Ajatashatru fought two wars and made preparations for the third. Throughout his reign he pursued an aggressive policy of expansion. This provoked against him a combination of Kashi and Koshala. There began a prolonged conflict between Magadha and Koshala.

Shishunaga Dynasty

- Udayin was succeeded by the dynasty of Shishunagas, who temporarily, shifted the capital to Vaishali.
- Their greatest achievement was the destruction of the power of Avanti with its capital at Ujjain.

Nanda Dynasty

- The Shishunagas were succeeded by the Nandas, who proved to be the most powerful rulers of Magadha. So great was their power that Alexander, who invaded Punjab at that time, did not dare to move towards the east.
- The Nandas added to the Magadhan power by conquering Kalinga from where they brought an image of the Jinaasa victory trophy. All this took place in the reign of Mahapadma Nanda.
- The later Nandas turned out to be weak and unpopular. Their rule in Magadha was oppressed by that of the Maurya dynasty under which the Magadhan empire reached the apex of glory.

Alexander's Invasion

During Dana Nanda's reign, Alexander invaded north-west India (327–325 BCE). In many ways, the invasion by Alexander is a watershed in Indian history. It marked the beginning of the interaction between India and the West, which spanned many centuries to follow. Greek historians began to write about India, and **Greek governors and kings ruled in the north-western region of India**, which introduced new styles of art and governance. After his conquests in the Punjab region, Alexander expressed his desire to march further east to attack the Magadha Empire. However, his already tired troops had heard about the great emperor in the east (Nanda) and his formidable army and refused to be engaged in a war against such a powerful adversary.

In 326 BCE when Alexander entered the Indian subcontinent after defeating the Persians, **Ambhi, the ruler of Taxila**, surrendered and accepted the suzerainty of Alexander. The most famous of Alexander's encounters was with **Porus**, ruler of the region between Jhelum and Beas. The two armies met in the battle of **Hydaspes** in which Porus was imprisoned. Later, impressed by the Porus's dignity, Alexander restored his throne on the condition of accepting his suzerainty. During his return, Alexander died of typhoid in Babylon.

7. The Mauryan Age

- The growth of Magadha culminated in the emergence of the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the empire (c. 321 BCE), extended control as far northwest as Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and his grandson Asoka, arguably the most famous ruler of early India, conquered Kalinga (present-day coastal Orissa).

Chandragupta Maurya

- THE MAURYA dynasty was founded by Chandragupta Maurya, who seems to have belonged to some ordinary family.
- According to the brahmanical tradition he was born of Mura, a shudra woman in the court of the Nandas.
- But an earlier Buddhist tradition speaks of the existence of a kshatriya clan called Mauryas living in the region of Gorakhpur adjoining the Nepalese terai.
- In all likelihood, Chandragupta was a member of this clan.
- With the help of Chanakya, who is known as Kautilya, he overthrew the Nandas and established the rule of the Maurya dynasty.
- The machinations Chanakya against Chandragupta's enemies are described in detail in the *Mudrarakshasa*, a drama written by Vishakhadatta in the ninth century. Several plays have been based on it in modern times.

Imperial Organization

- The Mauryas organized a very elaborate system of administration. We know about it from the account of Megasthenes and the Arthashastra of Kautilya.
- **Megasthenes**
 - He was a Greek ambassador sent by Seleucus to the court of Chandragupta Maurya.
 - He lived in the Maurya capital of Pataliputra and wrote an account not only of the administration of the city of Pataliputra but also of the Maurya empire as a whole.
 - The account of Megasthenes does not survive in full, but quotations occur in the works of several subsequent Greek writers.
 - These fragments have been collected and published in the form of a book called *Indika*, which throws valuable light on the administration, society and economy of Maurya times.
- The account of Megasthenes can be supplemented by the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya.
- Although the *Arthashastra* was finally compiled a few centuries after the Maurya rule, some of its books contain material that is genuine and gives authentic information about the Maurya administration and economy.
- Excavations show that a large number of towns belonged to Maurya times Pataliputra, Kaushambi, Ujjain and Taxila were the most important cities.

of the Mauryas, was carried on by six committees, each committee consisting of five members.

- According to the account of a Roman writer called Pliny, Chandragupta maintained 600,000 foot-soldiers, 30,000 cavalry & 9000 elephants.

Bindusara

Chandragupta's son Bindusara succeeded him as emperor in 297 BCE in a peaceful and natural transition. We do not know what happened to Chandragupta. He probably renounced the world. According to the Jain tradition, **Chandragupta spent his last years as an ascetic in Chandragiri**, near Sravanabelagola, in Karnataka.

Bindusara was clearly a capable ruler and continued his father's tradition of close interaction with the Greek states of West Asia. He continued to be advised by Chanakya and other capable ministers.

His sons were appointed as viceroys of the different provinces of the empire. Bindusara ruled for 25 years, and he must have died in 272 BCE. Ashoka was not his chosen successor, and the fact that he came to the throne only four years later **in 268 BCE would indicate that there was a struggle between the sons of Bindusara for the succession**. Ashoka had been the viceroy of **Taxila** when he put down a revolt against the local officials by the people of Taxila, and was later the viceroy of **Ujjain**, the capital of Avanti and a major city and commercial centre.

Ashoka (273-232 B.C.)

- Chandragupta Maurya was succeeded by Bindusara, whose reign is important for continued links with the Greek princes.
- Bindusara's son, Ashoka, is the greatest of the Maurya rulers.
- Ashoka was one of the greatest rulers known to history and on his instructions inscriptions were inscribed on pillars, as well as on rock surfaces.

Ashokan Inscriptions

- The history of Ashoka is reconstructed on the basis of his inscriptions.
- These inscriptions, numbering 39, are classified into Major Rock Edicts, Minor Rock Edicts, Separate Rock Edicts.
- Major Pillar Edicts and Minor Pillar Edicts. The name of Ashoka occurs only in copies of Minor Rock Edict 1 found at three places in Karnataka and at one in Madhya Pradesh.
- All the other inscriptions mention only devanampiyapradasi, dear to gods, and leave out the word Ashoka.
- The Ashokan inscriptions are found in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Altogether they appear at 47 places; and their total versions number 182.
- They were generally placed on ancient highways and

composed in Prakrit, they were written in Brahmi script in the greater part of the sub-continent.

- But in its north-western part they appeared in Aramaic language and Kharoshthi script, and in Afghanistan they were written in both Aramaic and Greek scripts and languages.
- He is the first Indian king to speak directly to the people through his inscriptions which carry royal orders.
- The inscriptions throw light on the career of Ashoka, his external and domestic policies, and the extent of his empire.

Kalinga War

- Kalinga is the ancient name of coastal Orissa.
- Ashoka fought a war to conquer Kalinga.
- He was so horrified when he saw the violence and bloodshed that he decided not to fight any more wars.
- He is the only king in the history of the world who gave up conquest after winning a war.

Ashoka's Dhamma

- Ashoka's dhamma did not involve worship of a god, or performance of a sacrifice.
- He felt that just as a father tries to teach his children, he had a duty to instruct his subjects.
- He was also inspired by the teachings of the Buddha.
- Ashoka got his messages inscribed on rocks and pillars, instructing his officials to read his message to those who could not read it themselves.
- Ashoka also sent messengers to spread ideas about dhamma to other lands, such as Syria, Egypt, Greece and Sri Lanka.

Significance of the Maurya rule

State Control

- THE brahmanical law-books again and again stressed that the king should be guided by the laws laid down in the Dharmashastras and by the customs prevalent in the country.
- Kautilya advises the king to promulgate dharma when the social order based on the varnas and ashramas (stages in life) perishes.
- The king is called by him dharmaprayatana or promulgator of the social order. That the royal orders were superior to other orders was asserted by Ashoka in his inscriptions.
- Ashoka promulgated dharma and appointed officials to implement and enforce its essentials throughout the country.

Economic Regulations

- If we rely on the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya it would appear that the state appointed 27 superintendents (*adhyakshas*) mostly to regulate the economic activities of the state.

- According to the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, a striking social development of the Maurya period was the employment of slaves in agricultural operations.
- Megasthenes states that he did not notice any slaves in India. But there is no doubt that domestic slaves were found in India from Vedic times onwards.
- In the Mauryan Empire, the silver coin known as **pana** and its sub-divisions were most commonly used currency.

Art and Architecture

- The Mauryas made a remarkable contribution to art and architecture.
- They introduced stone masonry on a wide scale. Megasthenes states that the Maurya palace at Pataliputra was as splendid as that in the capital of Iran.
- Fragments of stone pillars and stumps, indicating the existence of a 80-pillared hall, have been discovered at Kumrahar on the outskirts of modern Patna.
- Although these remains do not recall the magnificence mentioned by Megasthenes, they certainly attest the high technical skill attained by the Maurya artisans in polishing the stone pillars, which are as shining as Northern Black Polished Ware.

Causes of the Fall of the Maurya Empire

Brahmanical Reaction

- The brahmanical reaction began as a result of the policy of Ashoka.
- There is no doubt that Ashoka adopted a tolerant policy and asked the people to respect even the brahmanas. But he prohibited killing of animals and birds, and derided superfluous rituals performed by women. This naturally affected the income of the brahmanas.
- The anti-sacrifice attitude of Buddhism and of Ashoka naturally brought loss to the brahmanas, who lived on the gifts made to them in various kinds of sacrifices.
- Hence in spite of the tolerant policy of Ashoka, the brahmanas developed some kind of antipathy to him. Obviously they were not satisfied with his tolerant policy.

Financial Crisis

- The enormous expenditure on the army and payment to bureaucracy created a financial crisis for the Maurya empire. As far as we know, in ancient times the Mauryas maintained the largest army and the largest regiment of officers.

Oppressive Rule

- Oppressive rule in the provinces was an important cause of the break-up of the empire.
- In the reign of Bindusara the citizens of Taxila bitterly complained against the misrule of wicked bureaucrats (*dushtamatyas*). Their grievance was redressed by the appointment of Ashoka. But when Ashoka became emperor, a similar complaint was lodged by the same city.

8. Post Mauryan & Sangam Age

- This period witnessed the clash, the rise and fall of a number of smaller kingdoms.
- The native dynasties like Shungas, Satavahanas, and the Kanvas ruled in eastern India, central India and the Deccan region.
- Foreigners like Indo-Greeks or Bactrians, Sakas, the Parthians and the Kushanas ruled in north-western India.
- Periplus of the Erythraean Sea written by an anonymous Greek seafarer (pattern of trade between India and the Western world).

Shungas

- Capital at **Patliputra** and a second capital at **Vidisha** (under son Agnimitra's viceroy).
- **Pushyamitra Shunga** defended the country (the Gangetic valley) and its culture against foreign invasions (Greeks). Pushyamitra shunga erected Bharhut stupa.
- After Pushyamitra, his son Agnimitra ruled.
- Kalidasa's play '**Malvikagnimitra**' is a love story of the King Agnimitra and a **handmaiden Malvika**.
- A significant attempt at penetrating into India by **Demetrius I of Bactria** was countered successfully by **Vasumitra, son of Agnimitra**.
- After Agnimitra, **Vasumitra** became the King and was succeeded by 7 more kings of the same dynasty.
- Shunga's empire covered regions of **Bihar, Bengal and Uttar Pradesh and northern Madhya Pradesh**.
- Yavanarajya inscription, Dhana deva-Ayodhya inscription mentions about Shungas.
- Pushyamitra shunga erected **Bharhut stupa**.

Kanva Dynasty (73 BC – 28 BC)

- Vasudeva Kanva killed his king Devabhuti of Shunga and founded Kanva rule with Vidisha and Patliputra as their capital.
- Next came Bhumimitra, Vasudeva's son and Narayan son of Bhumimitra, together they ruled for 26 years.
- The last Kanva king Susarman was killed by the Satavahana (Andhra) king and Kanva dynasty of Brahmins ended with him.

Chedi Dynasty

- Around 1st century BC, Kingdom of Chedis or Chetis was founded in Kalinga.
- The politics of this period is known for the 3rd Chedi king of Kalinga known as Kharvela.

Satvahana

- Satvahana are referred as "Andhras" in the Puranas. Simuka was the founder of the Satvahana dynasty.
- The Satavahanas are reported from the north-western region of the Deccan in the first century BC, with their primary capital at **Pratishthana (modern Paithan in Maharashtra) on Godavari river & second Capital was Amravati**.

- important king was **Gautamiputra Satkarni** whose achievements are recorded in Nasik inscription of Gautami Balashri, his mother. Gautamiputra Satkarni (also known as Ekabrahmana) defeated Sakas, Greeks, Parthians and Nahapana (king of western Satrapa)
- Around 150 CE, Rudradaman took advantage of weak successors of Gautamiputra Satkarni and defeated them.
- 'Amatyas' and 'Mahamatras' were district officers during Satvahana rule which was called as 'Ahara'.
- Gaulmika administered the rural areas; Katakas and Skandhvaras military camps.
- Satvahanas **promoted development of architecture** in hills of the Western Ghats where caves were cut in **Ajanta, Nasik, Kaule, Bhaja, Kondain, Kanheri**.
- These caves were cut in to make **Chaityas** (Buddhist cave-temple) and **Viharas** (Buddhist rest houses).
- **Nagarjungkonda** and **Amravati** were important centres of trade and art. Stupas were constructed here, use of white marble too is reported for the first time.
- Satvahanas issued coins (Karshapanas) in a number of metals like Silver, Gold, Copper, Lead and Potin.
- **They were first native rulers to issue own coins with the portraits of the rulers.**
- Most of the inscriptions of the Satvahana rulers are in **Prakrit Language** as it was their official language.

Indo-Greek (200 BC- 100 CE)

- Indo-Greeks were the Greek people who got settled in India and became localised over a period of time.
- Indo-Greek rule in India had 3 branches, namely, Bactria i.e., North Afghanistan, Taxila (Takshashila) and Sakal or Sialkot which is now in Pakistan.
- An ambassador from the Taxila branch, Heliodorus was sent to court of King of Vidisha.
- Heliodorus got a stone pillar constructed in Greek style (different from Asokan style) which was dedicated to Lord Vasudeva.
- Demetrious and Menander or Milind are two significant rulers mentioned from Sakal or Sialkot branch of Indo-Greek.
- Menander or Milind (165 BC – 145 BC) adopted Buddhism under Nagasen who wrote "MILINDPANHO" in Sanskrit. This book is a great source of history of this age.
- Indo-Greeks were the first to issue gold coins bearing inscriptions of images of Kings and Gods. India learned Use of curtain (yavan) from Greeks. Greek term horoscope was derived from the term horasastra. They introduced practice of governorship.

Parthians

- At the end of 100 BC **few kings with Iranian names like Pahlavas of Indo-Parthians, captured north-western India.**

- In the reign of Gondophernes (the most significant of the Indo-Parthians) St. Thomas is said to have come to India for the propagation of Christianity.

Sakas (100 BC- 150BC)

- Sakas who were also known as Scythians, were from Western China.
- The first Shaka king was Maues or Moga (approx 80 BC) who is known from inscriptions and a series of coins.
- Mathura, Ujjain and Girnar were centres of Saka rulers in north India.
- They ruled in capacity of 'Satrapas' i.e., governors and Mahasatrapas.
- Rudradaman (130 CE – 150 CE) of Ujjain centre of Sakas is of significance as he finds mention in Junagarh inscription.
- This inscription is in Sanskrit unlike previous Prakrit inscriptions.

Kushanas (50 CE- 230 CE)

- Kushanas (or Yueh-Chis) too were from China, they ruled in North-West India with Purushpur (Peshawar) as their capital.
- Kanishka, a Mahayan Buddhist, was the most important Kushana ruler.
- Wem Kadphises, Huviska and Vasiska were other important Kushana rulers in India.
- The 4th Buddhist council at KundalvanVihar (Kashmir) with Vasumitra as president was held during Kanishka's reign.
- In 78 CE, the Saka era was founded by Kanishka.
- Ruling over the regions of Silk route, Kushanas greatly benefitted from it.
- They issued gold standard coins (22 or 23 carats).

The Sangam Age

- The first three centuries of the Common Era are widely accepted as the Sangam period, as the information for this period is mainly derived from the Sangam literature. More correctly this has to be called as the early historical period and starts one or two centuries earlier, from the second century BCE, as we have clear epigraphical and archaeological evidence, in addition to literary evidence.
- The Muvendar: Though the three Tamil ruling families were known to Asoka in the third century BCE itself, some individual names are known only from the Sangam poems of the first century and later. Known as muvendar, 'the three crowned kings', the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas controlled major agrarian territories, trade routes and towns. But the Satiyaputra (same as Athiyaman) found in the Asokan inscription along with the above three houses is a Velir chief in the Sangam poems.
- The Cholas controlled the central and northern parts of Tamil Nadu. Their core area of rule was the Kaveri delta, later known as Cholamandalam.

- Their capital was Uraiyur (near Thiruchirapalli town) and Puhar or Kaviripattinam was an alternative royal residence and chief port town.
- Tiger was their emblem. Kaviripattinam attracted merchants from various regions of the Indian Ocean.
- Pattinappalai, composed by the poet Katiyalur Uruttirankannanar, offers elaborate descriptions of the bustling trading activity here during the rule of Karikalan.
- Karikalan, son of Ilanjetchenni, is portrayed as the greatest Chola of the Sangam age. Pattinappalai gives a vivid account of his reign.
- Karikalan's foremost military achievement was the defeat of the Cheras and Pandyas, supported by as many as eleven Velir chieftains at Venni.
- He is credited with converting forest into habitable regions and developing agriculture by providing irrigation through the embankment of the Kaveri and building reservoirs.
- Kaviripattinam was a flourishing port during his time. Another king, Perunarkilli is said to have performed the Vedic sacrifice Rajasuyam. Karikalan's death was followed by a succession dispute between the Puhar and Uraiyur branches of the Chola royal family.
- The Cheras controlled the central and northern parts of Kerala and the Kongu region of Tamil Nadu. Vanji was their capital and the ports of the west coast, Musiri and Tondi, were under their control.
- Vanji is identified with Karur, while some scholars identify it within Tiruvanchaikkalam in Kerala. Now it is accepted by most scholars that there were two main branches of the Chera family and the Poraiya branch ruled from Karur of present-day Tamil Nadu. The Patitru pathu speaks of eight Chera kings, their territory and fame.
- The inscriptions of Pugalur near Karur mention Chera kings of three generations. Chellirumporai issued coins in his name. Imayavaramban Nedun-cheralathan and Chenguttuvan are some of the prominent Chera kings.
- Chenguttuvan defeated many chieftains and is said to have ensured the safety of the great port Musiri by putting down piracy. But the great north Indian expedition of Chenguttuvan mentioned in Silappathikaram is however not mentioned in the Sangam poems. He is said to have ruled for fifty-six years, patronising the orthodox and heterodox religions. Some Cheras issued copper and lead coins, with Tamil-Brahmi legends, imitating Roman coins. There are many other Chera coins with their bow and arrow emblem but without any writing on them.
- The Pandyas ruled from Madurai. Korkai was their main port, located near the confluence of Thampraparani with the Bay of Bengal.
- It was famous for pearl fishery and chank diving. Korkai is referred to in the Periplus as Kolkoi. Fish was the emblem of the Pandyas. Their coins have elephant on one side and a stylised image of fish on the other. They invaded Southern Kerala and controlled the port of Nelkynda, near Kottayam.

- According to tradition, they patronized the Tamil Sangams and facilitated the compilation of the Sangam poems. The Sangam poems mention the names of several kings, but their succession and regnal years are not clear.
- The Mangulam Tamil-Brahmi inscription mentions a Pandya king by name **Nedunchezhiyan** of the second century BCE. **Maduraikanchi** refers to **Mudukudumi-Peruvazhuthi** and another **Nedunchezhiyan**, victor of Talaiyalanganam, and a few other Pandya kings.
- **Mudukudumi-Peruvazhuthi** is referred to in the Velvikkudi copper plates of eighth century for donating land to Brahmins. He seems to have issued coins with the

legend Peruvazhuthi, to commemorate his performance of many Vedic sacrifices.

- Nedunchezhiyan is praised for his victory over the combined army of the Chera, the Chola and five Velir chieftains (Thithiyan, Elini, Erumaiyuran, Irungovenman, and Porunan) at **Talaiyalanganam**.
- He is also given credit for capturing **Milalai** and **Mutthuru** (Pudukottai district) two important places from a Vel chief
- He is praised as the lord of Korkai, and as the overlord of the southern Paratavar, a martial and fishing community of the Tirunelveli coast.

9. Gupta Age

- In the fourth century A.D., there arose in the Ganga valley a new dynasty which established a large kingdom over the greater part of northern India. This was the Gupta dynasty whose rule lasted for more than two hundred years.
- The first important king of the dynasty was Chandra gupta I.



Chandra Gupta I (A.D.319-334)

- The first important king of the Gupta dynasty was Chandra gupta I.
- He married a Lichchhavi princess most probably from Nepal, which strengthened his position.
- The Guptas were possibly vaishyas, and hence marriage in a kshatriya family gave them prestige.
- Chandragupta I seems to have been a ruler of considerable importance because he started the Gupta era in A.D. 319-20, which marked the date of his accession.

Samudra Gupta (A.D.335-380)

- The Gupta kingdom was enlarged enormously by Chandragupta I's son and successor Samudra gupta (A.D.335-380).
- He was the opposite of Ashoka.
- Ashoka believed in a policy of peace and non-aggression, but, Samudra gupta delighted in violence and conquest.
- His court poet Harishena wrote a glowing account of the military exploits of his patron. In a long inscription the poet enumerates the peoples and countries that were conquered by Samudra gupta.
- The inscription is engraved at Allahabad on the same pillar which carries the inscriptions of the peace-loving Ashoka.

Chandra Gupta II (A.D.380-412)

- Samudra gupta was succeeded by his son – Chandragupta II. But according to some scholars, the immediate successor was Ramagupta, the elder brother of Chandragupta II. But there is little historical proof for this.
- During Chandragupta II's reign, the Gupta dynasty reached its peak by expanding territories through conquests as well as by marriage alliances. He married Kubera, a Naga princess and had a daughter, Prabhavati with her. He married Prabhavati to a Vakataka prince, Rudrasena II (Deccan). After the death of her husband, Prabhavati ruled the territory as regent to her minor sons with the help of her father. Thus Chandragupta II indirectly controlled the Vakataka kingdom.
- Chandragupta II's control over the Vakataka kingdom in central India proved quite advantageous for him. It helped him to conquer Gujarat and western Malwa, which was under the rule of Shakas for about four centuries by that time. The Guptas reached the western sea coast which was famous for trade and commerce. This contributed to the prosperity of Malwa and its main city Ujjain, which was also Chandragupta II's second capital.
- An Iron Pillar inscription at Mehrauli in Delhi indicates that his empire included even north-western India and Bengal. He adopted the title 'Vikramaditya' (powerful as the sun) and Simhavikrama.

- He issued gold coins (Dinara), silver coins and copper coins. On his coins, he is mentioned as Chandra.
- During his reign, a Chinese traveller, Fa-Hien visited India and wrote a detailed account about the life of its people.
- His court at Ujjain was adorned by nine famous scholars known as the **Navratnas** (nine gems).

Navratnas of Chandra Gupta-II

- **Kalidasa** – He wrote Abhijnasha kuntalam, one of the best hundred literary works in the world and also the earliest Indian work to be translated to European languages.
- **Amarasimha** – His work Amarakosha is a vocabulary of Sanskrit roots, homonyms and synonyms. It has three parts containing around ten thousand words and is also known as Trikanda.
- **Varahamihira** – He wrote three important books-
 - He composed Pancha Siddhantika, the five astronomical systems.
 - His work Brihadsamhita is a great work in the Sanskrit language. It deals with a variety of subjects like astronomy, astrology, geography, architecture, weather, animals, marriage and omens.
 - His Brihat Jataka is considered to be a standard work on astrology.
- **Dhanvantri** – He is considered to be the father of Ayurveda.
- **Ghatakarapara** – An expert in sculpture and architecture.
- **Shanku** – An architect who wrote the Shilpa Shastra.
- **Kahapanaka** – An astrologer who wrote Jyotishya Shastra.
- **Vararuchi** – Author of Prakrit Prakasha, the first grammar of the Prakrit language.
- **Vetala Bhatta** – Author of Mantrashastra and was a magician.

Kumara Gupta I (c. 415 – 455 CE)

- Kumara Gupta I was the son and successor of Chandragupta II.
- Adopted the titles of ‘Shakraditya’ and ‘Mahendraditya’.
- Performed ‘asvamedha’ sacrifices.
- Most importantly, he laid the foundation of **Nalanda University** which emerged as an institution of international reputation.

Skanda Gupta (c. 455 – 467 CE)

- Adopted the title ‘Vikramaditya’.
- Junagarh/Girnar inscription of his reign reveals that his governor Parnadatta repaired the Sudarshan lake.

Gupta Administration

- Monarchy was the dominant form of government during the Gupta period. The Gupta dynasty’s rulers had their own councils.
- Mantri Parishad was the name given to the ministerial council. It was made up of high-ranking officials such as the kumaramatyas and the sandhivigrahika.

- The empire was divided into provinces called ‘bhuktis.’ The bhuktis were further classified as ‘Vishyas.’ Each bhukti was administered by a ‘uparika,’ who was appointed by the king. Vishayapatis were appointed by the provincial governor or, in some cases, the king himself to control the vishayas.
- The bhuktis were further subdivided into ‘vishayas,’ each of which was overseen by a Vishayapati.
- The village administration was overseen by the village headman. Unlike the Mauryan period, the administration in the Gupta period appears to have been managed from the ground up.

The King

- Political hierarchies during the Gupta era can be identified by the titles used. Kings were given titles like maharajadhiraja, parama-bhattaraka, and parameshvara.
- They were also associated with gods through epithets such as parama-daivata (the foremost worshipper of the gods) and paramabhagavata (the foremost worshipper of Vasudeva Krishna).

Ministers and Other Officials

- Official ranks and designations are mentioned on seals and inscriptions, but their precise meaning is often unknown.
- The term “kumaramatyas” appears on six Vaishali seals, indicating that this title represented a high-ranking officer with his own office (adikarana).
- The designation “amatya” appears on several Bitia seals, and the “kumaramatyas” appears to have been preeminent among amatyas and equivalent in status to princes of royal Kumaramatya were attached to the king, crown prince, revenue department, or a province.
- Harisena, the composer of the Allahabad prashasti (praise inscriptions), was a kumaramatyas, sandhivigrahika, and mahadandanayaka, as well as the son of Dhruvabhuti, a mahadandanayaka.

Administrative Unit Below District Level

- Clusters of settlements known as vithi, bhumi, pathaka, and peta were the administrative units below the district level.
- There are references to officials known as ayuktakas and vithi-mahattaras. Villagers elected functionaries such as gramika and gramadhyaksha.

Army of Gupta Empire

- Military designations like baladhikrita and mahabaladhikrita (commander of infantry and cavalry) are mentioned on seals and inscriptions.
- The term “senapati” does not appear in Gupta inscriptions, but it may appear in some Vakataka epigraphs.
- The ranabhandagar-adhikarana, or military storehouse office, is mentioned on a Vaishali seal.
- Another Vaishali seal mentions the dandapashika’s adhikarana (office), which could have been a district-level police station.
- The mahapratihara (chief of the palace guards) and the khadyatapakita (super intendent of the royal kitchen)

were two officials specifically connected with the royal establishment.

Trends in Trade and Agrarian Economy

- We get some idea of the economic life of the people of Gupta times from Fa-hien, who visited different places of the Gupta empire.

List of Different Kinds of Taxes

| Tax | Nature |
|--------------------|---|
| Bhaga | King's customary share of the produce normally amounting to one-sixth of the produce paid by cultivators. |
| Bhoga | Periodic supply of fruits, firewood, flowers, etc., which the village had to provide to the king. |
| Kara | A periodic tax levied on the villagers (not a part of the annual land tax) |
| Bali | A voluntary offering by the people to the king, but later become compulsory. It was an oppressive tax. |
| Udianga | Either a sort of police tax for the maintenance of police stations or a water tax. Hence, it was also an extra tax. |
| Uparikara | Also an extra tax. Scholars give different explanations about what it was collected for. |
| Hiranya | Literally, it means tax payable on gold coins, but in practice, it was probably the king's share of certain crops paid in kind. |
| Vata-Bhuta | Different kinds of cess for maintenance of rites for the winds (vata) and the spirits (Bhuta) |
| Halivakara | A Plough tax paid by every cultivator owning a plough |
| Sulka | A royal share of merchandise brought into a town or harbour by merchants. Hence it can be equated with the customs and tolls. |
| Klipta & Upaklipta | Related to sale and purchase of lands. |

Social Developments

- Land grants to the brahmanas on a large scale suggest that the brahmana supremacy continued in Gupta times.
- The Guptas who were originally vaishyas came to be looked upon as kshatriyas by the brahmanas.

State of Buddhism

- Buddhism no longer received royal patronage in the Gupta period.
- Fa-hien gives the impression that this religion was in a very flourishing state. But really it was not so important in the Gupta period as it was in the days of Ashoka and Kanishka.

Origin and Growth of Bhagavatism

- Bhagavatism centred around the worship of Vishnu or Bhagavat, and originated in post-Maurya times.
- Vishnu was a minor god in Vedic times. Here presented the sun and also the fertility cult.

- By the second century B.C. he was merged with a god called Narayana, and came to be known as Narayana-Vishnu.
- Originally Narayana was a non-Vedic tribal god. He was called bhagavat, and his worshippers were called bhagavatas. This god was conceived as a divine counterpart of the tribal chief.

Art

- The Gupta period is called the Golden Age of ancient India. This may not be true in the economic field because several towns in north India declined during this period.
- But the Guptas possessed a large number of gold whatever might be its source, and they issued the largest number of gold coins.
- Princes and richer people could divert a part of their income for the support of those who were engaged in art and literature.
- Both Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II were patrons of art and literature.
- Samudra Gupta is represented on his coins playing the lute (vina), and Chandragupta II is credited with maintaining in his court nine luminaries or great scholars.

Literature

- The Gupta period is remarkable for the production of secular literature. To this period belong thirteen plays written by Bhasa.
- The *Mrighachhaya* or the Little Clay Cart written by Shudraka, which deals with the love affair of a poor brahmana with the beautiful daughter of a courtesan, is considered one of the best works of ancient drama.
- But what has made the Gupta period really famous is the work of Kalidasa.
- Kalidasa wrote *Abhijnanasha Kuntala* which is considered to be one of the best hundred literary works in the world.
- It tells us about the love story of King Dushyanta and Shakuntala, whose son Bharata appears as a famous ruler.
 - The *Shakuntalam* was one of the earliest Indian works to be translated into European languages, the other work being the *Bhagavadgita*. Two things can be noted about the plays produced in India in the Gupta period.
 - First these are all comedies. We do not come across any tragedies.
 - Secondly, characters of the higher and lower classes do not speak the same language: women and shudras featuring in these plays use Prakrit while the higher classes use Sanskrit.

Science and Technology

- In the field of mathematics we come across during this period a work called *Aryabhatiya* written by Aryabhata, who belonged to Pataliputra.
- It seems that this mathematician was well versed in various kinds of calculations.
- A Gupta inscription of 448 A.D. from Allahabad district suggests that the decimal system was known in India at the beginning of the fifth century A.D.
- In the field of astronomy a book called *Romaka Sidhanta* was compiled. It was influenced by Greek ideas, as can be inferred from its name.
- The Gupta craftsmen distinguished themselves by their work in iron and bronze

10. Post-Gupta Era

The North

- Between 500 and 800 A.D, there was an attempt at establishing a large kingdom in northern India, but it did not last that long.
- Northern India slowly split up into small kingdoms who were continually fighting with one another.

Harsha and His Times

Harsha's Kingdom

- The Guptas with their seat of power in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar ruled over north and western India for about 160 years, until the middle of the sixth century A.D.
- Then north India again split up into several kingdoms.
- The white Hunas established their supremacy over Kashmir, Punjab and western India from about A.D, 500 onwards.

History and Extent

- The **Pushyabhuti dynasty**, also known as the Vardhana dynasty, came into prominence after the decline of the Gupta Empire.
 - He was succeeded by his elder son, Rajyavardhana.
 - After his brother's death, at the age of 16, **Harshavardhana** became the undisputed ruler of Thanesar (modern-day Haryana).
- Being one of the **largest Indian empires** of the **7th Century CE**, it covered the entire North and North-western India.
 - In the east, his empire extended till **Kamarupa** and ran all the way down to the Narmada River.
 - It is said that his empire was spread across the present day states of Orissa, Bengal, Punjab and the whole of Indo-Gangetic plains.
- The Vardhana Empire consisted of two distinct types of territories: areas directly under Harsha's rule such as Central Provinces, Gujarat, Bengal, Kalinga, Rajputana, and the states and kingdoms which had become feudatories under him including Jalandhar, Kashmir, Nepal, Sind, Kamarupa (modern-day Assam).

Harsha's Administration

- It is said that Harsha vardhana's empire **reminded many of the great Gupta Empire**, as his administration was similar to that of the administration of the Gupta Empire.
 - There was **no slavery** in his empire and people were free to lead their life according to their wish.
 - His empire also **took good care of the poor** by building rest houses that provided all the amenities required.
 - His capital **Kannauj** (present day Uttar Pradesh) **attracted** many artists, poets, religious leaders and scholars who traveled from far and wide.
- During the course of his rule, Harshavardhana built a **strong army**.

- Historical records suggest that he had 100,000 strong cavalry, 50,000 infantry and 60,000 elephants during the peak of his reign.

Hsuen Tsang's Account

- The reign of Harsha is important on account of the visit of the Chinese pilgrim Hsuen Tsang, who left China in A.D. 629 and travelled all the way to India.
- After a long stay in India, he returned to China in A.D. 645.
- He had come to study in the Buddhist university of Nalanda situated in the district of the same name in Bihar and to collect Buddhist texts from India.
- The pilgrim spent many years in Harsha's court and widely travelled in India.

Art and Education

- Harsha was a **patron** of both art and education. He himself was an author and wrote **three Sanskrit plays**, Nagananda, Ratnavali, and Priyadarshika. One-fourth of his revenue went towards patronizing scholars.
- Further, Hsuen Tsang gives a quite **vivid description** of the famous **Nalanda University** which was at its **zenith** during **Harsha's reign**.
- Nalanda had around 10,000 students and 2,000 teachers.
- The **curriculum included** Vedas, Buddhism, philosophy, logic, urban planning, medicine, law, astronomy, etc.
- Also, a famous Indian writer and poet named **Banabhatta** served as the '**Asthana Kavi**' (primary poet of the kingdom) in the court of Harshavardhana.

Buddhism and Nalanda

- The Buddhists were divided into 18 sects in the time of the Chinese pilgrim. The old centres of Buddhism had fallen on bad days.
- The most famous centre was Nalanda, which maintained a great Buddhist university meant for Buddhist monks.
- It is said to have had as many as 10,000 students, all monks. They were taught Buddhist philosophy of the Mahayana school.
- Although all the mounds of Nalanda have not been dug, excavations have exposed a very impressive complex of buildings.
- These buildings were raised and renovated over a period of 700 years from the fifth century A.D. onwards.
- The buildings exposed by excavations do not have the capacity to accommodate 10,000 monks.
- In 670 another Chinese pilgrim, I-tsing visited Nalanda; he mentions only 3,000 monks living there. This is reasonable because even if the remaining mounds are excavated, the buildings could not be so spacious as to have accommodated 10,000 monks.
- According to Hsuen Tsang, the monastery at Nalanda was supported from the revenues of 100 villages. I-tsing raised this number to 200. Nalanda thus had a huge monastic establishment at the time of Harshavardhana.

Society and Religion

- **Caste system** was prevalent among Hindus. They were divided into four castes or varnas: Brahmana, Vaishya, Kshatriya and Shudra, which among them had their own subcastes.
- The **status of women declined** as compared to the liberal era of earlier times.
- Harsha was a worshiper of Shiva in the beginning but later became a **Mahayana Buddhist**.
- Also, every five years religious ceremonies were celebrated at the ancient city of Allahabad. Here, he held the ceremony of Dana, or giving, which lasted for three months. During this, most of the wealth accumulated in the last five years was exhausted.

Harshavardhana and the Harshacharita

- Harshavardhana, ruled nearly 1400 years ago. We get information about him from his biographies.
- His court poet, Banabhatta wrote his biography, the Harshacharita, in Sanskrit. This gives us the genealogy of Harsha, and ends with his becoming king.
- Xuan Zang also spent a lot of time at Harsha's court and left a detailed account of what he saw.
- Harsha was not the eldest son of his father, but became king of Thanesar after both his father and elder brother died.

The South

The Pallavas and Chalukyas were the most important ruling dynasties in south India.

Pallavas

- The Pallavas ruled south-eastern India from the 3rd through the 9th centuries CE. Their empire covered what is today the **Tamil Nadu state**.

Early Pallavas

- Pallavas rose to power during the latter part of the Ikshvaku rule in Andhra.
- Pallava king, **Simhavarma** defeated the Ikshvaku king Rudrapurushadatta in 300 CE and established Pallava rule in Coastal Andhra, which was known at that time as, "Karmarashtra" and started as a political power in south India.
- **Nandivarman I** was the last of the early Pallava kings. During his time, the Pallava kingdom experienced the invasion of the Kalabhras.

Imperial Pallavas

- **Simhavishnu (575 – 590 CE)** was the first ruler of this line.
- Simhavishnu defeated the Kalabhras and laid **foundation** for the establishment of the "Age of the Imperial Pallavas".
- **Mahendravarman I (590 – 630 CE)** was a versatile genius.

- **Narasimhavarman I (630 – 668 CE)** was the greatest of the Pallavas who raised the power and prestige of the dynasty to an amazing height. He had the title Mahamalla or Mamalla. The Pallava-Chalukya conflict that was started by his father was successfully continued by him.
- **Mahendravarman II (668 – 670 CE)** ruled for a very short period of two years, but he was killed by Chalukya king Vikramaditya I.
- **Paramesvaravarman I (670 – 695 CE)** finally won a decisive victory over the Chalukyas and their ally, the Gangas.
- **Narasimhavarman II (695 – 722 CE)** had the title "Rajasimha". He enjoyed a peaceful reign and was credited with the construction of large and beautiful temples like the Shore temple at Mamallapuram and the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi.
- **Nandivarman II (731 – 795 CE)** was a worshipper of Vishnu and a great patron of learning.

Administration

- The Pallavas had a well-organized administrative system.
 - **Monarchy** was the order of the day.
 - The title "**Dharma-Maharaja**" assumed by the kings show that they exercised their rule righteously.
- The Pallava state was divided into **Kottams**. The Kottam was administered by officers appointed by the king.
- The **village** is the basic unit of administration.
- **Sabha and Urar** were the most popular assemblies of this period.
- **Land revenue** was the major source of income.
 - The Pallavas also levied taxes on professions, marriages, manufacture of salt, sugar and textiles, draught cattle, etc.,

Religion

- The heterodox religions, viz. Buddhism and Jainism were still very active in the Pallava kingdom, which is evident from the testimony of **Hsuen Tsang**
- Most of the Pallava kings were followers of both Vaishnavism and Saivism.
- This paved the way for the rise of **Vedic religion**.
 - Besides the performance of Vedic sacrifices, the worship of gods Brahma, Vishnu and Siva became popular.

Education and Literature

- The Pallavas were great patrons of learning.
 - The **University of Kanchi** became the nucleus of learning and intellectualism. It attracted students from different parts of India and abroad.
- Several works in Sanskrit were produced during this period.
 - The Kiratarjuniyam of **Bharavi**, Dasakumaracharita of **Dandi** and the Mattavilasaprahasana of **Mahendravarman I** were the best Sanskrit works of the period.

Art and Architecture

- The **religious revival** of the period gave an impetus to the architectural activity.
- The contribution of the Pallavas to **Indian art and architecture is immense**.
- In fact, the history of **Dravidian style of Indian architecture** in the south **began with the Pallavas**.
- The **Five Rathas** popularly called as the 'Pancha Pandava Rathas, (Rock-cut Rathas) at Mamallapuram signifies five different styles of architecture.
- The Pallavas had also contributed to the **development of sculpture**.
- Music, dance and painting had also developed under the patronage of the Pallavas.
- Also, the paintings at the caves of **Sittannavasal** belonged to the Pallava period.

Chalukyas

- The **Chalukya dynasty** refers to an Indian royal dynasty that ruled large parts of southern and central India between the **sixth and twelfth centuries**.
- During this period, they ruled as **three closely related, but individual dynasties**.
- The Badami Chalukyas began to assert their independence at the decline of the **Kadamba kingdom** of Banavasi and rapidly rose to prominence during the reign of Pulakesi II.
- The rise of the Chalukyas marked, an **important milestone** in the history of South India and a **golden age** in the history of Karnataka.
- For the **first time in history**, a **South Indian kingdom took control** and **consolidated the entire region** between the Kaveri and the Narmada rivers.

History of the Chalukyas

- **Chalukyas of Badami**
 - In the sixth century, with the **decline of the Gupta dynasty** and their immediate successors in northern India, major changes began to happen in the area south of the Vindhyas—the Deccan and Tamilaham.
 - **Pulakesin I** established the Chalukya dynasty in 550.
 - He took **Vatapi** (Badami in Bagalkot district, Karnataka) under his control and made it his capital.
 - They ruled over an empire that comprised the entire state of Karnataka and most of Andhra Pradesh in the Deccan.
 - Further, **Pulakesin II** had been perhaps the greatest emperor of the Badami Chalukyas.
 - Pulakesi II extended the Chalukya Empire up to the northern extents of the Pallava kingdom and halted the southward march of Harsha by defeating him on the banks of the river Narmada.
 - Later, the Badami Chalukya dynasty went into a brief **decline** following the death of Pulakesi II due to internal feuds.

Chalukyas of Kalyani

- The Chalukyas revived their fortunes in 973 C.E., after over 200 years of dormancy when the Rashtrakutas dominated much of the Deccan.
- The reign of the Kalyani Chalukyas had been a **golden age in Kannada literature**.
- **Tailapa II**, a Rashtrakuta feudatory ruling from Tardavadi-1000 (Bijapur district) overthrew Karka II & re-established the Chalukyan kingdom and recovered most of the Chalukya empire.
- Later, the Western Chalukyas went into their **final dissolution** in 1180 with the rise of the **Hoysalas, Kakatiya and Seuna**.
- **Eastern Chalukyas**
 - **Pulakesin II** conquered the eastern Deccan, corresponding to the coastal districts of modern Andhra Pradesh in 616, defeating the remnants of the Vishnukundina kingdom.

Art and Architecture

- The period of Badami Chalukya dynasty saw art flourish in South India.
- It brought about some **important developments** in the realm of culture, particularly in the evolution and proliferation of a new style of architecture known as **Vesara**, a combination of the **South Indian** and the **North Indian building styles**.
- One of the richest traditions in Indian architecture took shape in the Deccan during that time, called **Karnataka Dravida** style as opposed to traditional Dravida style.
- The Kalyani Chalukyas further refined the **Vesara style** with an inclination towards Dravidian concepts, especially in the sculptures. They built fine monuments in the Tungabhadra – Krishna river doab in present day Karnataka.

Literature

- The rule of the Chalukyas embodies a major event in the history of Kannada and Telugu languages.
- During the ninth-tenth century, Kannada language had already seen some of its greatest writers. The three gems of Kannada literature, **Adikavi Pampa, Sri Ponna and Ranna** belonged to that period.
- In the eleventh century, the patronage of the Eastern Chalukyas, with **Nannaya Bhatta** as its first writer gave birth to **Telugu literature**.
- Famous writers in Sanskrit from that period include **Vijnaneshwara** who achieved fame by writing **Mitakshara**, a book on Hindu law.

Coinage

- The Badami Chalukyas minted coins of a different standard compared to the northern kingdoms.
- The coins had **Nagari and Kannada languages**.
- They minted coins with symbols of temples, lion or boar facing right, and the lotus. The coins weighed **four grams**, called **honnu** in old Kannada and had fractions such as **fana** and the **quarter fana**, whose modern day equivalent was **hana** (literally meaning, money).

Religion

- The rule of the Badami Chalukya proved a period of **religious harmony**.
- They initially followed **Vedic Hinduism**, as seen in the various temples dedicated to many popular Hindu deities with **Aihole**.

- Later, from the time of Vikramaditya I, the people took an inclination towards Shaivism and sects like Pashupata, Kapalikas and Kalamukhas that existed.
- They actively encouraged Jainism, attested by one of the Badami cave temples and other Jain **temples** in the Aihole complex.

11. Cultural Development in South India

Growing Influence of Brahmanism

Perhaps the most obvious sign of the influence of Aryan culture in the south was the pre-eminent position given to the Brahmins. They gained materially through large gifts of land.

Aryanisation is also evident in the evolution of educational institutions in the Pallava kingdom. In the early part of this period education was controlled by Jains and Buddhists, but gradually the Brahmins superseded them.

- The Jains who had brought with them their religious literature in Sanskrit and Prakrit, began to use Tamil. Jainism was extremely popular, but the competition of Hinduism in the succeeding centuries greatly reduced the number of its adherents.
- In addition, **Mahendravarman I lost interest in Jainism and took up the cause of Saivism**, thus depriving the Jains of valuable royal patronage.
- The Jains had developed a few educational centres near **Madurai and Kanchi**, and religious centres such as the one at **Shravanabelagola** in Karnataka. But a vast majority of the Jaina monks tended to isolate themselves in small caves, in hills and forests.

Growing Popularity of Sanskrit

- Mahendravarman I composed **Mathavilasa Prahasanam in Sanskrit**. Two extraordinary works in Sanskrit set the standard for Sanskrit literature in the south: **Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya** and **Dandin's Dashakumaracharita**.
- Dandin of Kanchipuram, author of the great treatise on rhetoric Kavyadarsa, seems to have stayed in Pallava court for some time.

Rock-cut Temples

- Mahendravarman I is credited with the introduction of rock-cut temples in the Pallava territory. Mahendravarman claims in his Mandagappattu inscription that his shrine to Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu was made without using traditional materials such as brick, timber, metal and mortar.
- **Mahendravarman's rock temples are usually the mandapa type** with a pillared hall or the mandapa in front and a small shrine at the rear or sides.

Ellora – Ajanta and Mamallapuram Painting

Ellora

- The rock-cut cave temples in **Ellora are in 34 caves, carved in Charanadri hills**. Without knowledge of trigonometry, structural engineering, and metallurgy, the Indian architects could not have created such exquisite edifices.
- The patrons of these caves range from the dynasties of Chalukyas to Rashtrakutas.
- The heterodox sects first set the trend of creating this model of temples. Later, orthodox sects adopted it as a medium of disseminating religious ideologies.
- **These temples were linked to Ajivikas, Jainism, Buddhism, and Brahmanism**. The earliest temples are modest and simple with no artistic claims.
- But, the later temples are elegant edifices. **Mural paintings in Ellora are found in five caves**, but only in the Kailash temple are they preserved.
- Some murals in Jain temples are well preserved. Not only animals, birds, trees, flowers are pictured elegantly, but human emotions and character-greed, love, compassions like are depicted with professional skill.

Ajanta Caves

- The Ajanta caves are situated at a distance of about 100 km north of Aurangabad in Maharashtra. A total of 30 caves have been scooped out of volcanic rocks. Though chiefly famous for mural paintings, there are some sculptures too.
- The **Hinayana sect of Buddhism** started the excavation of caves in Ajanta. The patrons were the kings who ruled the Deccan plateau during the period c. 200 BCE to 200 CE. Inscriptions speak of the patrons who range from kings to merchants.
- First phase of the caves belong to the period from c. 200 BCE to 200 CE. The second phase started from c. 200 CE to 400 CE.

Mamallapuram

- The iconic Shore Temple of Pallavas at Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) was constructed during the reign of Rajasimha (700-728).

- The temple comprises three shrines, where the prominent ones are **dedicated to Siva and Vishnu**. The exterior wall of the shrine, dedicated to Vishnu, and the interior of the boundary wall are elaborately carved and sculpted. In southern India, this is one amongst the earliest and most important structural temples. Unlike other structures of the region, the Shore Temple is a five-storeyed rock-cut monolith. The monolithic vimanas are peculiar to Mamallapuram.
- The Rathas there are known as the **Panchapandava Rathas**. The **Arjuna Ratha** contains artistically carved sculptures of Siva, Vishnu, Mithuna and Dwarapala.
- The most exquisite of the five is the Dharmaraja Ratha, with a three-storied vimana and a square base. The **Bhima Ratha is rectangular in plan** and has beautiful sculptures of Harihara, Brahma, Vishnu, Skanda, Ardhanarisvara and Siva as Gangadhara.
- The most important piece of carving in Mamallapuram is the Descent of the Ganga (variously described as ‘Bhagirata’s Penance’ or ‘Arjuna’s Penance’).
- The portrayal of puranic figures with popular local stories reveals the skill of the artists in blending various aspects of human and animal life.
- The sculptural panel in the **Krishna mandapa**, where village life with cows and cowherds is depicted with beauty and skill, is yet another artistic wonder to behold.

Medival History of India

1. Kingdoms of the South (A.D. 800-1200)

In the medieval period of Indian history, there was closer contact between the northern and the southern parts of our sub-continent. This can be seen from three things in particular.

Cholas From Uraiyur to Thanjavur

- Vijayalaya chola, who belonged to the ancient chiefly family of the Cholas from Uraiyur, captured the Kveri River delta from the Muttaraiyar, they were the subordinate to the Pallava kings of Kanchipuram.
- Their kingdom grew in size and power going on to include the Pandyan and the Pallava territories to the south and north.
- Rajaraja I was one of the most powerful ruler of Chola Empire. He became the king in 985 AD, expanded his reign north and south and also reorganised the administration of the empire.
- Rajendra I was the son of Rajaraja I, he continued his father's expansion policies and even raided the Ganga valley, Sri Lanka and countries of Southeast Asia, developing a navy for these expeditions.

The Administration of the Empire

- Settlements of peasants, known as Ur and groups of villages were called Nadu. The village council and the nadu performed several administrative functions including dispensing justice and collecting taxes.

- Rich peasants of the Vellala caste exercised considerable control over the affairs of the Nadu under the supervision of the central Chola government.

Types of land

- **Vellanvagai:** Land of non-Brahmana peasant proprietors
- **Brahmadeya:** Land gifted to Brahmanas
- **Shalabhoga:** Land for the maintenance of a school
- **Devadana:** Land gifted to temples
- **Pallichchhandam:** Land donated to Jaina institutions

- The Chola kings gave some rich landowners titles like *muvedavelan* (a *velan* or peasant serving three kings), *araiyar* (chief), etc. as markers of respect, and entrusted them with important offices of the state at the centre.
- Brahmanas often received land grants or *brahmadeya*. As a result, a large number of Brahmana settlements emerged in the Kaveri valley as in other parts of south India.
- Sabha was an assembly in each *brahmadeya*, It consist prominent Brahmana landholders.
- The sabha had separate committees to look after irrigation works, gardens, temples, etc.
- Associations of traders known as *nagarams* also occasionally performed administrative functions in towns.
- Inscriptions from Uttaramerur in Chingleput district, Tamil Nadu, provide details of the way in which the sabha was organised.

2. Northern India: Age of the Three Empires (800-1000)

- After the decline of Harsha's empire in the seventh century, a number of large states arose in north India, the Deccan and south India.
- Unlike the Gupta and Harsha's empire in north India, none of the other kingdoms in north India were able to bring the entire Ganga valley under its control.

The Struggle for Kanauj

- Many of the campaigns in northern India were fought over the city of Kanauj. This had been the capital of Harsha and remained an important city. It was well-situated in the northern plain because whoever captured Kanauj could control the Ganga valley.

- Three major kingdoms were involved in this struggle and they occupied Kanauj in turn. Modern historians have referred to this as the tripartite (i.e. three party) struggle for Kanauj. The three kingdoms were those of the Rashtrakutas, the Pratiharas and the Palas.
- The Rashtrakutas were ruling in the north-western Deccan in the region around Nasik. Their capital was at Malkhed, a beautiful and prosperous city. They had an ambitious king, *Armoghavarsha*, who wanted Rashtrakuta power to be as strong in northern India as it was in the Deccan. So, he attempted to control the north by capturing Kanauj.
- The Pratiharas ruled in Avanti and parts of southern Rajasthan. They had once been a family of local officials but were now an independent dynasty of kings. They first

became powerful after defeating what the sources of the time describe as the mlechchhas. The term mlechchha means a person who is a barbarian or out-caste, and it was used to describe most foreigners. The Pratiharas after their success with the Arabs, took their arm less eastwards and by the end of the eighth century had captured Kanauj.

- The Palas ruled for about four hundred years and their kingdom consisted of almost the whole of Bengal and much of Bihar. The first Pala king was Gopala. He was elected king by the nobles because the previous ruler had died without an heir. Gopala is remembered for having established the Pala dynasty.
- Gopala's son, Dharmapala, was to make the dynasty even more powerful. In the early part of his reign he was defeated by the Rashtrakuta king. However, Dharmapala reorganised his army and attacked Kanauj. The Palas organised their power partly by building a strong army and partly by making alliances with the neighbouring kingdoms.
- But the Palas did not hold Kanauj for very long. The Pratiharas recovered their strength during the reign of king Bhoja. He ruled from about A.D. 836 to 882 and was the most renowned king of northern India at that time. He was a mighty warrior and recaptured Kanauj for the Pratiharas. However, when Bhoja tried to attack the Rashtrakutas, he was defeated by the famous Rashtrakuta king, Dhruva.
- In 916, the Rashtrakutas reorganised their power and again attacked Kanauj. But by now all three of the kingdoms interested in Kanauj—the Rashtrakutas, the Palas and the Pratiharas—were exhausted by their continuous wars against each other. They were so busy fighting among themselves that they did not realize how weak they had all become. Within a hundred years all three of these kingdoms had declined.
- The later Chalukyas were ruling in the area where the Rashtrakutas had ruled. The Pala kingdom was threatened by Chola armies and was later ruled by the Sena dynasty. The Pratihara kingdom was breaking up into a number of states some of which were associated with the rise of the Rajputs.
- Earlier historians thought that some of them belonged to certain Central Asian tribes which settled in India after the Huns had invaded northern India. Others now maintain that they were local chiefs who claimed high status. They were divided into clans.
- The Rajputs always insisted that they were of the Kshatriya caste. Their kings ordered family histories to be written which connected them with either the sun-family (surya-vanshi) or the moon-family (chandra-vanshi) of ancient Indian kings. But there were four clans which claimed that they had not descended from either of the two families, but from the fire-family (agni-kula).
- These four clans were the most important in the history of this period. They were the Pratiharas (or Partiharas), Chauhans (or Chahamanas), Solankis (or Chaulukyas) and Pawars (or Paramaras).

Mahmud of Ghazni

- Towards the end of the ninth century, Trans-Oxiana, Khurasan and parts of Iran were being ruled by the Samanids who were Iranians by descent.

- The Samanids had to battle continually with the non-Muslim Turkish tribesmen on their northern and eastern frontiers. It was during this struggle that a new type of soldier, the ghazi, was born.
- The battle against the Turks, most of whom worshipped the forces of nature and were heathens in the eyes of the Muslims, was a struggle for religion as well as for the safety of the state. Hence, the ghazi was as much a missionary as a fighter.
- He acted as a loose auxiliary of the regular armies, and made up for his pay by plunder. It was the resourcefulness of the ghazi and his willingness to undergo great privations for the sake of the cause which enabled these infant Muslim states to hold their own against the heathen Turks.
- In course of time, many Turks became Muslims, but the struggle against renewed incursions of the non-Muslim Turkish tribes continued.
- The Islamized Turkish tribes were to emerge as the greatest defenders and crusaders of Islam. But the love of plunder went side by side with defence of Islam.
- Among the Samanid governors was a Turkish slave, Alptigin, who, in course of time, established an independent kingdom with its capital at Ghazni.
- The Samanid kingdom soon ended, and the Ghaznavids took over the task of defending the Islamic lands from the Central Asian tribesmen.
- It was in this context that Mahmud ascended the throne (998—1030) at Ghazni. Mahmud is considered a hero of Islam by medieval Muslim historians because of his stout defence against the Central Asian Turkish tribal invaders.
- It is noteworthy that apparently none of the Rajput rulers came to the aid of the Shahis, although in order to exaggerate the scale of Mahmud's victory, the seventeenth century historian, Ferishta, mentions that many Rajput rulers, including those from Delhi, Ajmer and Kanauj aided Jayapala in 1001.
- However, Ajmer had not been founded by then, and Delhi (Dhillika) was a small state.
- Likewise, the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Kanauj whose sway had extended upon Thanesar at one time, were in a much weakened condition. Thus, the Shahis fought virtually alone. By 1015, Mahmud was poised for an attack on the Indo-Gangetic valley. During the next half a dozen years, Mahmud launched a series of expeditions into the Indo-Gangetic plains.
- These raids were aimed at plundering the rich temples and the towns which had amassed wealth over generations.
- The plundering of this wealth also enabled him to continue his struggle against his enemies in Central Asia. He also did not want to give time to the princes in India to regroup, and to combine against him.
- Mahmud's raids into India alternated with battles in Central Asia. For his plundering raids into India the ghazis came handy to him. Mahmud also posed as a great but shikan or 'destroyer of the images' for the glory of Islam.
- From the Punjab, Mahmud raided Thanesar the old capital of Harsha. His most daring raids, however, were against Kanauj in 1018, and against Somnath in Gujarat in 1025.

In the campaign against Kanauj, he sacked and plundered both Mathura and Kanauj. The following year, he invaded Kalinjar in Bundelkhand, and returned loaded with fabulous riches.

- He was able to do all this with impunity due to the fact that no strong state existed in north India at that time.
- No attempt was made by Mahmud to annex any of these states. Between 1020, and 1025, Mahmud was engaged in Central Asian affairs.
- In 1025, he made a plan for raiding Somnath which had a fabulously rich temple and attracted lakhs of pilgrims. It was also a rich port.

The Rajput States

- The rise of a new section called the Rajputs and the controversy about their origins have already been mentioned. With the break-up of the Pratihara empire, a number of Rajput states came into existence in north India.
- The most important of these were the Gahadavalas of Kanauj, the Paramaras of Malwa, and the Chauhans of Ajmer.
- There were other smaller dynasties in different parts of the country, such as the Kalachuris in the area around modern Jabalpur, the Chandellas in Bundelkhand, the Chalukyas of Gujarat, the Tomars of Delhi, etc. Bengal remained under the control of the Palas and later under the Senas.
- The Gahadavalas of Kanauj gradually squeezed the Palas out of Bihar. At its height, the Gahadvar kingdom extended from Mongyr in Bihar to Delhi.
- The greatest ruler in the dynasty was Govind Chandra who ruled in the first half of the twelfth century. He made Kanauj his capital, with Banaras remaining a second capital.
- Persian sources of the time call Govind Chandra the greatest ruler of Hindustan.
- The Gahadvars are reputed to be the biggest defenders against the continued Ghaznavid raids into the doab. Govind Chandra was succeeded by Jai Chandra who had to contend with the rising power of the Chauhans. The Chauhans who had served under the rulers of Gujarat established their capital at Nadol towards the end of the tenth century.
- The greatest ruler in the dynasty was, perhaps, Vigraharaj who captured Chittor, and established Ajmer (Ajayameru), and made it his capital. He built a Sanskrit College at Ajmer, and the Anasager lake there. Like the Gahadvars, the Chauhans, too, offered stout resistance to the Ghaznavid raids.
- Vigraharaj captured Delhi (Dhillika) from the Tomars in 1151, but allowed them to rule it as feudatories. Vigraharaj also came into conflict with the Paramaras of Malwa where the most famous ruler, known in legend, was Bhoja. Both Vigraharaj and Bhoja were patrons of poets and scholars.
- Vigraharaj himself wrote a Sanskrit drama. Bhoja had to fight his neighbours to the north as well to the south. He is credited with writing books on philosophy, poetics, yoga and medicine.
- The most famous among the Chauhan rulers was Prithviraj III who ascended the throne at the young age of eleven in or about 1177, but took the reins of administration in his hands when he was sixteen.
- He immediately embarked on a vigorous policy of expansion, and brought many of the smaller Rajput states under his sway. However, he was not successful in his struggle against the Chalukyan ruler of Gujarat.
- This forced him to move towards the Ganga valley. He led an expedition in Bundelkhand against its capital Mahoba. It was in this struggle that the famous warriors, Alha and Udal, lost their lives.
- The Chandel ruler of Mahoba is said to have been supported in this struggle by Jai Chandra of Kanauj. The Gahadvars had also contested the attempt of the Chauhans to control Delhi and Punjab.
- It was these rivalries which made it impossible for the Rajput rulers to join hands to oust the Ghaznavids from Punjab.
- The basis of Rajput society was the clan. Every clan traced its descent from a common ancestor, real or imaginary. The clans generally dominated a compact territory.
- Sometimes, these settlements were based on units of 12 or 24 or 48 or 84 villages. The chief would allot land in the villages to his subchiefs who, in turn, would allot it to individual Rajput warriors for the maintenance of their family and the horses.
- Attachment to land, family and honour (maan) was a characteristic of the Rajputs. Each Rajput state was supposed to be ruled over by the rana or rawat in conjunction with his chiefs who were generally his blood brothers.
- Though their fiefs were supposed to be held at the pleasure of the ruler, the Rajput notion of sanctity of land did not permit their resumption by the ruler, except in special circumstances, such as rebellion, absence of an heir, etc.
- The Rajput organisation of society had both advantages and disadvantages. One advantage was the sense of brotherhood and egalitarianism which prevailed among the Rajputs. But the same trait made it difficult to maintain discipline among them. Feuds which continued for several generations were another weakness of the Rajputs.
- But their basic weakness was their tendency to form exclusive groups, each claiming superiority over others. They were not prepared to extend the sense of brotherhood to non-Rajputs.
- This led to a growing gap between the Rajput ruling groups and the people most of whom were non-Rajputs. The Rajputs form only about ten per cent of the population in Rajasthan even today.
- The proportion of the Rajputs to the total population of the areas they dominated could not have been much higher during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.
- The Rajputs treated war as a sport. This and struggle for land and cattle led to continuous warfare among the various Rajput states. The ideal ruler was one who led out his armies after celebrating the Dussehra festival to invade the territories of his neighbours. The people, both in the villages and in the cities, suffered the most from this policy.

- Most of the Rajput rulers of the time were champions of Hinduism, though some of them also patronized Jainism. They gave rich donations and grants of land to Brahmans and temples.
- The Rajput rulers stood forth as protectors of the privileges of the Brahmans and of the caste system. Thus, the system of charging a lower rate of land revenue for Brahmans continued in some Rajput states till merging the Indian Union.
- In return for these and other concessions, the Brahmans were prepared to recognise the Rajputs as descendants of the old lunar and solar families of the kshatriyas which were believed to have become extinct.
- The period after the eighth century, and particularly between the tenth and twelfth centuries, may be regarded as marking a climax in temple building activity in north India. Some of the most magnificent temples that we have today can be traced back to this period.
- The style of temple construction which came into prominence was called the nagara. Though found almost all over India, the main centres of constructions in this style were in north India and the Deccan. Its main characteristic feature was the tall curved spiral roof over the garbhagriha or the deity room (deul).
- The main room was generally a square, though projections could be made from each of its sides. An anteroom (mandapa) was added to the sanctum sanctorum and sometimes the temple was enclosed by high walls which had lofty gates.
- The most representative temples of this type are the group of temples at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh and at Bhubaneswar in Orissa. The Parsvanatha temple, the Visvanatha temple and the Kandarya Mahadeo temple at Khajuraho illustrate this style in its richest and most finished form.
- The rich and elaborate carvings on the walls of the temples show that the art of sculpture had attained its height. Most of these temples were built by the Chandellas who ruled the area from the beginning of the ninth to the end of the thirteenth century.
- In Orissa, the most magnificent examples of temple architecture of the time are the Lingaraja temple (eleventh century) and the Sun temple of Konark (thirteenth century).
- The famous Jaganatha temple at Puri also belongs to this period. A large number of temples were built at various other places in north India —Mathura, Banaras, Dilwara (Abu), etc. Like the temples in south India, temples in north India also tended to become more and more elaborate. They were the centres of social and cultural life.

Muhammad Ghori

- Towards the end of the twelfth century came the invasion of Muhammed Ghori.
 - He was also the ruler of a small kingdom in Afghanistan.
 - But he was interested in conquering northern India and adding it to his kingdom, and not merely in getting gold and jewellery.

- Punjab had already been a part of the Ghazni kingdom. This was useful to Muhammad Ghori in planning his campaign in India.

- Muhammad's campaigns were well-organised and when he had conquered territory, he left a general behind to govern it in his absence.
- Muhammad had often to face trouble in Afghanistan, so he was always going from Afghanistan to India and back.
- His most important campaign in India was against the Chauhan ruler, Prithviraj III. Muhammad defeated him in the second battle of Tarain in 1192.
- This opened the Delhi area to Muhammad and he began to establish his power. But in 1206 he was murdered. His territory in northern India was left in control of his general Qutb-ud-din Aibak.
- This was the beginning of the Turkish rule in Delhi.

The Battle of Tarain

- Thus, a battle between these two ambitious rulers, Muizzuddin Muhammad and Prithviraj was inevitable.
- The conflict started with rival claims for Tabarhinda. In the battle which was fought at Tarain in 1191, the Ghurid forces were completely routed, Muizzuddin Muhammad's life being saved by a young Khalji horseman.
- Prithviraj now pushed on to Tabarhinda and conquered it after a twelve-month siege. Little attempt was made by Prithviraj to oust the Ghurids from Punjab. Perhaps, he felt that this was another of recurrent Turkish raids, and that the Ghurid ruler would be content to rule over Punjab.
- This gave Muizzuddin Muhammad time to regroup his forces and make another bid for India the following year.
- He rejected the proposal said to be made by Prithviraj to leave Punjab under the possession of the Ghurid ruler.
- The second battle of Tarain in 1192 is regarded as one of the turning points in Indian history.
- Muizzuddin Muhammad had made careful preparations for the contest. It is said that he marched with 1,20,000 men, including a force of heavy cavalry, fully equipped with steel coats and armour; and 10,000 mounted archers. It is not correct to think that Prithviraj was negligent of the affairs of the state, and awoke to the situation when it was too late.
- It is true that at that time Skanda, the general of the last victorious campaign, was engaged elsewhere.
- As soon as Prithviraj realised the nature of the Ghurid threat, he appealed to all the rajas of northern India for help. We are told many rajas sent contingents to help him, but Jaichandra, the ruler of Kanauj, stayed away.
- The legend that this was because Prithviraj had abducted Jaichandra's daughter, Sanyogita, who was in love with him, is not accepted by many historians.
- The story was written much later as a romance by the poet, Chand Bardai, and includes many improbable events.

3. The Delhi Sultanate-I (Circa 1200–1400)

- After death of Mohammed Ghorī there were many contenders for throne, out of which Qutb-ud-din Aibak ascended throne and started slave dynasty rule .
 - Slave Dynasty (1206-1290)
 - Khalji Dynasty (1290-1320)
 - Thuglaq Dynasty (1320-1414)
 - Sayeed Dynasty (1414-1451)
 - Lodhi Dynasty (1451-1526)

Slave Dynasty (A.D.1206–1290)

- The earliest rulers of the Delhi Sultanate were the Mamluks. The first of these kings was Qutb-ud-din Aibak, the general of Muhammad Ghorī. On the death of Ghorī, Qutb-ud-din decided to stay in India and establish a kingdom. The ruler of Ghazni tried to annex the territory held by Qutb-ud-din but failed. When Iltutmish succeeded Qutb-ud-din as Sultan, it was clear that northern India would be a separate kingdom. It was then that the new kingdom which is now called the Delhi Sultanate was established. The Sultans of Delhi gradually extended their control up to Bengal in the east and Sind in the west.

Qutb-ud-din Aibak (1206-1210)

- Qutub-ud-din-Aibak was born in Central Asia to Turkish parents. He was sold to a local Qazi as a slave and raised in Persia.
- He eventually became a slave of Muhammad of Ghor (also called Muhammad Ghorī). Aibak was able to prove himself in the service of Ghorī and was appointed to a military position.
- Ghorī conquered Delhi in 1193 and returned to Khorasan leaving his Indian conquests to the care of Aibak.
- He built mosques in Delhi and other areas. He was known as a generous king in times of peace and was honoured with the title Lakshbaksh.
- He is most remembered for laying the foundation of the **Qutb Minar** in Delhi. It was named after a Sufi saint Khwaja Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki. Qutb Minar was completed by Aibak's successor and son-in-law Iltutmish. It is a 240 ft tall tower. The construction was started in about 1192. The ground storey of the Minar was constructed over the ruins of the Lal Kot which was built by the Tomars.
- He died in a polo accident in 1210 aged about 60. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Shams ud-din Iltutmish.

Iltutmish (1210 - 1236)

- **Iltutmish was the first Muslim ruler to rule from Delhi** and that's why he was regarded as the **effective founder of the Delhi Sultanate**.
- He was also the first Sultan of India to be recognised by the Khalifa.

Iltutmish – Invasions & Policies

- Iltutmish's forces captured Bihar in the 1210s and invaded Bengal in 1225.

- During the first half of the 1220s, Iltutmish neglected Indus River Valley, which was contested between the Mongols, the Khwarazm kings, and Qabacha. Post the decline of the Mongol and the Khwarazmian threat, Qabacha took over the region, but Iltutmish invaded his territory during 1228-1229.
- He completed the construction of the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque and the QutbMinar.
- He set up administrative machinery for the kingdom.
- He built mosques, waterworks and other amenities at Delhi, making it fit to be the seat of power.
- He introduced the two coins of the Sultanate, the silver *tanka* and the copper *jital*.
- Also introduced the Iqtadari system in which the kingdom was divided into Iqtas which were assigned to nobles in exchange of salary.
- He died in 1236 and was succeeded by his daughter Razia Sultana as he did not consider his sons worthy of the task.

Razia Sultana (1236-1240)

- Razia was daughter of Iltutmish, who ascended the throne after a lot of hurdles put up by the Turkish nobles. *According to Ibn Battuta, the Moroccan traveller, 'Razia rode on horseback as men ride, armed with a bow and quiver, and surrounded by courtiers. She did not veil her face.'* Yet Razia ruled for only three and half years. The elevation of an Abyssinian slave, **Jalal-ud-din Yaqut**, to the post of **Amir-i-Akhur**, Master of the Stables, a very high office, angered the Turkish nobles. The nobles overplayed her closeness with Yakut and tried to depose her. Since Razia enjoyed popular support, they could not do anything in Delhi. But while she was on a punitive campaign against the rebel governor Altuniya in southern Punjab, the conspirators used that occasion to dethrone her.

Ghiyas ud din Balban (1266–1287 AD)

- Balban, like his master **Iltutmish**, was born into a Turkish family.
- He was abducted by the Mongols when he was young and sold to Khwaja Jamal-ud-din, a slave dealer.
- He carried him to Delhi, where Iltutmish bought him.
- Iltutmish was so pleased by Balban's knowledge and talent that he enrolled him in the legendary army of the **forty slaves** during his stay in Delhi.
- Balban was raised to the position of **Amir-i-Shikar (Lord of the Hunt)** under the **reign of Razia Sultana**.
- During Bahram Shah's reign, he successfully resisted a Mongol invasion as a famous warrior.
- He was a **kingmaker** and he played a role in the deposition of Masud and the ascension of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud to the throne of Delhi.
- Nasir-ud-din rewarded him by appointing him as the Principal adviser of the Sultan and married to his daughter.

- Balban was given the title of **Ulugh khan** by Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, who was impressed with his dedication and devotion.
- He was also given the title of **Naib-i-mamlakat**, or Deputy Sultan.
- **Re-organisation of Army**
 - As the fundamental foundation of his autocratic administration, Balban reorganised his army and made it strong and effective.
 - He appointed **Imad-ul-Mulk**, a capable and vigilant general, to be the army's Diwan-i-Ariz (Minister of War).

Mongol Invasions

- On the border, Mongol invasions were common, giving Sultan Balban a continuous headache.
- Lahore was then under Mongol influence on the western frontier, while Sind and Multan were continually at risk of invasion.
- As a result, Sultan Balban took a number of precautions to protect the western frontiers.

- He first built a line of forts along the border and garrisoned them but Mongols resumed their plundering assaults without fear.
- Balban put experienced Amirs in command of the **frontiers**, but they couldn't keep the Mongols at bay.
- Finally, he separated the border territory into two sections. His eldest son, Prince Muhammad Khan, was in control of one portion and his second son Bughra Khan was handed the second portion.
- He advanced the **Iranian Theory of Divine Rights**, which states that the Sultan is God's representative on Earth.
- He put an end to the "Corp of Forty's" influence.
- Balban had defeated the formidable slave group known as "**Chihalagani**," who were actual Ilutmish heirs.
- He assembled his military to fight the Mongols. He accomplished this by abolishing the office of Naik and establishing the **Diwan-i-arz**, a new military affairs agency. Ariz-i-Mumalik was in command of Diwan-i-arz.

4. The Delhi Sultanate-II (Circa 1200-1400)

After the death of Balban in 1286, there was again confusion in Delhi for some time. Balban's chosen successor, Prince Mahmud, had died earlier in a battle with the Mongols.

A second son, Bughra Khan, preferred to rule over Bengal and Bihar although he was invited by the nobles at Delhi to assume the throne. Hence, a grandson of Balban was installed in Delhi. But he was too young and inexperienced to cope with the situation. There had been a good deal of resentment and opposition at the attempt of the Turkish nobles to monopolize high offices.

Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316 AD)

- Alauddin Khilji was the nephew and son-in-law of his predecessor Jalaluddin Khilji.
- After Jalaluddin deposed the Mamluks and became Sultan of Delhi, Alauddin was awarded the title of Amir-i-Tuzuk.
- He was appointed governor of Kara in 1291 after suppressing a revolt against Jalaluddin and governor of Awadh in 1296, following a successful expedition on Bhilsa.
- Alauddin stormed Devagiri in 1296 and looted enough to organize a successful insurrection against Jalaluddin.
- Following Firoz Khilji's death in 1296 AD, Ali Gurshap declared himself sultan of Manikpur under the name Alauddin Khilji.

Market Control and Agrarian Policy of Alauddin Khilji

- For contemporaries, Alauddin's measures to control the markets was one of the great wonders of the world.
- In a series of orders after his return from the Chittor campaign, Alauddin sought to fix the cost of all commodities

from foodgrains, sugar and cooking oil to a needle, and from costly imported cloth to horses, cattle, and slave boys and girls.

- For the purpose, he set up three markets at Delhi—one market for foodgrains, the second for costly cloth, and the third for horses, slaves and cattle. Each market was under the control of a high officer called shahna who maintained a register of the merchants, and strictly controlled the shopkeepers and the prices.
- Regulation of prices, especially foodgrains, was a constant concern of medieval rulers, because without the supply of cheap foodgrains to the towns, they could not hope to enjoy the support of the citizens, and the army stationed there. But Alauddin had some additional reasons for controlling the market.
- The Mongol invasions of Delhi had pin-pointed the need to raise a large army to check them. But such an army would soon exhaust his treasures unless he could lower the prices, and their salaries. To realize his objectives, Alauddin proceeded in a characteristically thorough way.
- In order to ensure a regular supply of cheap foodgrains, he declared that the land revenue in the doab region, that is, the area extending from Meerut near the Yamuna to the border of Kara near Allahabad would be paid directly to the state, i.e., the villages in the area would not be assigned in iqta to anyone.
- Further, the land revenue was raised to half of the produce. This was a heavy charge and Alauddin adopted a number of measures, which we shall note later, to cope with the situation.
- Control of the prices of horses was important for the sultan because without the supply of good horses at reasonable prices to the army, the efficiency of the army could not be maintained. The position of the supply of horses had improved as a result of the conquest of Gujarat.

- Good quality horses could be sold only to the state. The price of a first grade horse fixed by Alauddin was 100 to 120 tankas, while a tattu (pony) not fit for the army cost 10 to 25 tankas. The prices of cattle as well as of slaves were strictly regulated, and Barani gives us their prices in detail.
- The prices of cattle and slaves are mentioned side by side by Barani. This shows that slavery was accepted in medieval India as a normal feature.
- Control of the prices of other goods, especially of costly cloth, perfumes, etc., was not vital for the sultan. However, their prices were also fixed, probably because it was felt that high prices in this sector would affect prices in general. Or, it might have been done in order to please the nobility.
- It appears that he was expected to maintain himself and his horse and his equipment with of this amount. Even then, this was not a low salary, for during Akbar's time, when prices were far higher, a Mughal cavalryman received a salary of about 20 rupees a month. Actually, a Turkish cavalryman during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was almost a gentleman, and expected a salary which would enable him to live as such. In view of this, the salary fixed by Alauddin was low, and the control of the market was, therefore, necessary.

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq (1325-1351 AD)

- In AD 1325, Jauna Khan succeeded his father as Muhammad bin Tughlaq.
- He was one of the most knowledgeable scholars of his time. He spoke Arabic and Persian and was well-versed in philosophy, astronomy, logic, mathematics, and physical science.
- The Sultan maintained good relations with foreigners, and the Chinese ruler sent an envoy to him.
- Toghan Timur (AD 1341) came to seek permission to rebuild Buddhist monasteries destroyed during the critical expedition in the Himalayan region.
- In 1347, the sultan granted permission and dispatched Ibn Batuta to the court of the Chinese emperor.
- Ibn Batuta was a Moroccan traveller. In 1333, he arrived in India and was appointed as the chief Qazi of Delhi by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.
- He has left an invaluable account of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's reign.

Tughlaq Dynasty

- Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq established a new dynasty which ruled till 1412.
- The Tughlaqs provided three competent rulers: Ghiyasuddin, his son Muhammad bin Tughlaq (1324—51), and his nephew Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351—88).
- The first two of these sultans ruled over an empire which comprised almost the entire country.
- The empire of Firuz was smaller but even then it was almost as large as that ruled over by Alauddin Khilji.
- After the death of Firuz, the Delhi Sultanat disintegrated and north India was divided into a series of small states.

- Although the Tughlaqs continued to rule till 1412, the invasion of Delhi by Timur in 1398 may be said to mark the end of the Tughlaq empire.

Domestic Policies of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's National treasure

- To replenish the treasury, he increased taxes in the Doab region.
- Many people fled to the forests to avoid high taxes, causing cultivation to be neglected and a severe food shortage to occur.
- To protect his capital, he relocated it from Delhi to Devagiri and ordered the common people and government officials to relocate to Devagiri; however, after much difficulty, he ordered them to return to Delhi.
- He established the **copper currency system**.

Administration of Revenue

- Muhammad Tughlaq implemented numerous measures to improve revenue administration. One of these measures was the creation of a register in which all of the princes' income and expenditures were recorded.
- The Sultan's main goal was to implement a uniform standard of land revenue across his empire and ensure that no village went untaxed.
- However, nothing is known about the system's benefits. The Sultan raised taxes in the Doab at the start of his reign.
- According to Barani, taxation was increased ten to twenty times. Taxes were raised at a time when the Doab was suffering from famine due to a lack of rain.

Department of Agriculture

- Muhammad Bin Tughlaq established a separate agriculture department and appointed a minister, Amir-i-kohi, to oversee it.
- The primary goal of this department was to increase the amount of land under cultivation.
- The government spent nearly seventy lakh rupees in three years, but the experiment failed & the scheme was abandoned after three years.

Issuance of Coins

- The Sultan declared these token coins legal tender and set their value at the same level as gold and silver coins. Previously, the copper coin was known as **Jital (Paissa)**.
- Now, the Sultan issued **Tanka (rupee)**, a silver coin as well as a copper coin. The Sultan's plan also failed miserably. Many historians blamed the Sultan for the scheme's failure.

Firoz Tughlaq (1351-1388 AD)

- Firoz Shah relied heavily on his commander, **Malik Maqbul** (who accepted Islam after he was arrested).

- Sultan used to address him as **khan-i-jahan**, which meant **true ruler**. When Firoz Shah went on expeditions, Malik acted as the ruler.
- Firoz provided the armed forces with the principle of inheritance. Officers were allowed to relax and enjoy themselves while their children were sent to the army in their place.
- Officers were not paid in cash, but rather through town land revenue. This novel method of instalment resulted in numerous misunderstandings.
- He demolished Hindu temples, as well as their books and literature. The Islamic literature has been translated into either Sanskrit or Persian.

Timur's Invasion

The last Tughlaq ruler was Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah (1394–1412), whose reign witnessed the invasion of Timur from Central Asia. Turkish Timur, who could claim a blood relationship with the 12th century great Mongol Chengiz Khan, ransacked Delhi virtually without any opposition. On hearing the news of arrival of Timur, Sultan Nasir-ud-din fled Delhi. Timur also took Indian artisans such as masons, stone cutters, carpenters whom he engaged for raising buildings in his capital Samarkhand. Nasir-ud-din managed to rule up to 1412. Later the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties ruled the declining empire from Delhi till 1526.

Sayyid Dynasty

- Timur appointed Khizr Khan as governor of Multan. He captured Delhi and founded the Sayyid dynasty in 1414.
- Kzahir Khan is succeeded by Mubarak Shah and Muhammad Shah.
- Muhammad Shah is succeeded by Allam Shah.
- Allam Shah was philosopher. He voluntarily abdicated throne to Bahalul Lodi and led peaceful life in small town outside Delhi.
- Bahalul Lodi started Lodi dynastic rule.

Lodi Dynasty (1451 - 1526 AD)

- The Afghan Ghizali tribe founded the Lodi Empire. Bahlol Lodi acted wisely and took advantage of Sayyed ruler's weak position by further capturing Punjab before entering Delhi.
- In 1451, he seized control of India from the throne of Delhi, assuming the title 'Bahlol Shah Ghazi.' His accession ended the Sharqi dynasty.
- On July 15, 1489, Bahlol Lodhi was succeeded by his second son Sikander Lodhi, who was engaged in a power struggle with his elder brother Barbak Shah.

Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517 AD)

- Sikandar Khan Lodi (r. 1489–1517) (born Nizam Khan), Bahlul's second son, succeeded him after his death on 17

July 1489 and assumed the title Sikandar Shah.

- His father nominated him to succeed him and he was crowned Sultan on July 15, 1489. He founded Agra in 1504 and built mosques.
- He relocated the capital from Delhi to Agra. He was a supporter of trade and commerce. He was a renowned poet who wrote under the pen name Gulruk.
- He was also a patron of learning and had Sanskrit medical works translated into Persian.
- He curbed the individualistic tendencies of his Pashtun nobles by asking them to submit their accounts to state audit.
- As a result, he was able to instil vigour and discipline in the administration. His most notable achievement was the conquest and annexation of Bihar.

Ibrahim Lodi

- The last Lodi Sultan of Delhi was Ibrahim Lodi (r. 1517–1526), Sikandar's eldest son. He possessed the qualities of a great warrior, but his decisions and actions were rash and impolitic.
- His attempt at royal absolutism was premature, and his policy of repression without measures to strengthen the administration and increase military resources was bound to fail.
- Ibrahim faced numerous rebellions and kept the opposition at bay for nearly a decade.
- For the majority of his reign, he was at war with the Afghans and the Mughal Empire, and he died trying to save the Lodi Dynasty from annihilation.
- In 1526, Ibrahim was defeated at the Battle of Panipat. This marked the end of the Lodi Dynasty and the rise of Babur's (r. 1526–1530) Mughal Empire in India

Disintegration of Lodi Dynasty

- By the time Ibrahim ascended to the throne, the Lodi Dynasty's political structure had crumbled due to abandoned trade routes and a depleted treasury.
- The Deccan was a coastal trade route, but by the late fifteenth century, the supply lines had failed.
- The decline and eventual failure of this specific trade route cut off supplies from the coast to the interior, where the Lodi empire resided.
- The Lodi Dynasty was unable to protect itself if warfare broke out on trade route roads; as a result, they did not use those trade routes, and their trade and treasury declined, leaving them vulnerable to internal political problems.
- In order to avenge Ibrahim's insults, the governor of Lahore, Daulat Khan Lodi, requested that the ruler of Kabul, Babur, invade his kingdom. Ibrahim Lodi was thus killed in a battle with Babur.
- The Lodi dynasty ended with Ibrahim Lodi's death.

5. The Age of Vijayanagara and the Bahmanis (Circa 1350–1565)

The Vijayanagara and Bahmani kingdoms dominated India south of the Vindhya, for more than 200 years.

They not only built magnificent capitals and cities, and beautified them with many splendid buildings and promoted arts and letters, but also provided for law and order and the development of commerce and handicrafts.

The Vijayanagara Empire—Its Foundation and Conflict with the Bahmani Kingdom

- The Vijayanagara kingdom was founded by Harihara and Bukka who belonged to a family of five brothers. According to a legend, they had been the feudatories of the Kakatiyas of Warangal and later became ministers in the kingdom of Kampili in modern Karnataka.
- After a short time, Harihara and Bukka forsook their new master and their new faith. At the instance of their guru, Vidyaranya, they were re-admitted to Hinduism and established their capital at Vijayanagar.
- Some modern scholars do not accept the tradition of their conversion to Islam, but consider them to be among the nayaks of Karnataka who had rebelled against Turkish rule.
- The date of Harihara's coronation is marked to be 1336.
- The dissolution of the Hoysala kingdom enabled Harihara and Bukka to expand their tiny principality.
- By 1346, the whole of the Hoysala kingdom had passed into the hands of the Vijayanagara rulers. In this struggle, Harihara and Bukka were aided by their brothers and by their relations who took up the administration of the areas conquered by their efforts.
- The Vijayanagara kingdom was, thus, a kind of a cooperative commonwealth at first. Bukka succeeded his brother to the throne of Vijayanagara in 1356, and ruled till 1377. The rising power of the Vijayanagara empire brought it into clash with many powers both in south and north. In the south, its main rivals were the sultans of Madurai.
- The struggle between Vijayanagara and the sultans of Madurai lasted for about four decades. By 1377, the Sultanat of Madurai had been wiped out.
- The Tungabhadra doab was the region between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra and consisted of 30,000 square miles. On account of its wealth and economic resources, it had been the bone of contention between the western Chalukyas and the Cholas in the earlier period, and between the Yadavas and the Hoysalas later on.
- The struggle for the mastery of the Krishna—Godavari basin which was very fertile and which, with its numerous ports, controlled the foreign trade of the region was often linked up with the struggle for the Tungabhadra doab.
- Military conflicts between the Vijayanagara and the Bahmani kingdom were almost a regular feature and lasted as long as these kingdoms continued. These military conflicts resulted in widespread devastation of the contested areas and the neighbouring territories, and a considerable loss of life and

property. Both sides sacked and burnt towns and villages, imprisoned and sold into slavery men, women and children, and committed various other barbarities.

- Thus, in 1367, when Bukka I assaulted the fortress of Mudkal in the disputed Tungabhadra doab, he slaughtered the entire garrison, except one man. When this news reached the Bahmani sultan, he was enraged and, on the march, vowed that he would not sheath his sword till he had slaughtered one hundred thousand Hindus in revenge.
- In spite of the rainy season and the opposition of the Vijayanagara forces, he crossed the Tungabhadra, the first time a Bahmani sultan had in person entered the Vijayanagara territories.
- The Vijayanagara king was defeated in the battle and retreated into the jungle. We hear, for the first time, of the use of artillery by both sides during this battle.
- The victory of the Bahmani sultan was due to his superior artillery and more efficient cavalry. The war dragged on for several months, but the Bahmani sultan could neither capture the raja nor his capital. In the meanwhile, wholesale slaughter of men, women and children went on.
- Finally, both the sides were exhausted, and decided to conclude a treaty. This treaty restored the old position whereby the doab was shared between the two.
- Having strengthened its position in south India by eliminating the Sultanat of Madurai, the Vijayanagara empire embarked upon a policy of expansion towards the eastern sea coast under Harihara II (1377–1404).
- After a period of confusion, Harihara II was succeeded by Deva Raya I (1404–1422). Early in his reign, there was a renewed fight for the Tungabhadra doab. He was defeated by the Bahmani ruler Firuz Shah, and he had to pay ten lakhs of huns and pearls and elephants as an indemnity.

Krishnadevaraya (1509–29)

Krishnadevaraya is considered the greatest of the Vijayanagar kings. He built upon the strong military base laid by his father and elder brother. He tried to keep the greatness of the kingdom intact, by undertaking many military expeditions during much of his reign.

He made very large donations to many of the greatest Siva and Vishnu temples of the day—Srisailem, Tirupati, Kalahasti, Kanchipuram, Tiruvannamalai, Chidambaram, etc. He added towering gopuras to many of those temples, which survive to this day. Contemporary foreign visitors like Paes and Nuniz, who visited Vijayanagar left glowing tributes to his personality, and the grandeur and opulence of the city. His court was also adorned by some great poets like Allasani Peddana. He himself is considered a great scholar and is author of the famous poem Amuktamalyada (the story of Andal). But his crowning achievement, as a clever administrator, was the reorganization of the Nayak or nayankara system and giving legal recognition to the system. This is explained below under administration.

The Bahmani Kingdom—Its Expansion and Disintegration

- The history of the rise of the Bahmani kingdom and its conflict with the Vijayanagara empire till the death of Deva Raya II (1446) has already been traced.
- The most remarkable figure in the Bahmani kingdom during the period was Firuz Shah Bahmani (1397–1422). He was well-acquainted with the religious sciences, that is, commentaries on the Quran, jurisprudence, etc., and was particularly fond of the natural sciences such as botany, geometry, logic, etc. He was a good calligraphist and a poet and often composed extempore verses.
- The king also encouraged learned men from Iran and Iraq. He used to say that kings should draw around them the learned and meritorious persons of all nations, so that from their society they might obtain information and thus acquire some of the advantages acquired by travelling into different regions of the globe.
- The most remarkable step taken by Firuz Shah Bahmani was the induction of Hindus in the administration on a large scale. It is said that from his time the Deccani Brahmans became dominant in the administration, particularly in the revenue administration. The Deccani Hindus also provided a balance against the influx of foreigners.
- Firuz Shah Bahmani encouraged the pursuit of astronomy and built an observatory near Daulatabad. He paid much attention to the principal ports of his kingdom, Chaul and

Dabhol, which attracted trading ships from the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, and brought in luxury goods from all parts of the world.

- Firuz Bahmani started the Bahmani expansion towards Berar by defeating the Gond raja, Narsing Rai of Kherla. The Rai made a present of 40 elephants, 5 maunds of gold and 50 maunds of silver.
- A daughter of the Rai was also married to Firuz. Kherla was restored to Narsing who was made an amir of the kingdom and given robes of state, including an embroidered cap.
- Firuz Shah Bahmani's marriage with a daughter of Deva Raya I and his subsequent battles against Vijayanagara have been mentioned already. The struggle for the domination of the Krishna—Godavari basin, however, continued.
- In 1419, the Bahmani kingdom received a setback when Firuz Shah Bahmani was defeated by Deva Raya I. This defeat weakened the position of Firuz. He was compelled to abdicate in favour of his brother, Ahmad Shah I, who is called a saint (wali) on account of his association with the famous sufi saint, Gesu Daraz.
- Ahmad Shah continued the struggle for the domination of the eastern seaboard in south India.
- Mahmud Gawan's major military contribution, however, was the overrunning of the western coastal areas, including Dabhol and Goa. The loss of these ports was a heavy blow to Vijayanagara. Control of Goa and Dabhol led to further expansion of the Bahmani overseas trade with Iran, Iraq, etc.

6. Mughals and Afghans (1525–1555)

Important changes took place in Central and West Asia during the fifteenth century. After the disintegration of the Mongol empire in the fourteenth century, Timur united Iran and Turan under one rule once again. Timur's empire extended from the lower Volga to the river Indus, and included Asia Minor (modern Turkey), Iran, Trans-Oxiana, Afghanistan and a part of Punjab. Timur died in 1405, but his grandson, Shahrukh Mirza (d. 1448), was able to keep intact a large part of his empire. He gave patronage to arts and letters, and in his time, Samarqand and Herat became the cultural centres of West Asia. The ruler of Samarqand had great prestige in the entire Islamic world.

First Battle of Panipat (21 April 1526)

- A conflict with Ibrahim Lodi, the ruler of Delhi, was inevitable, and Babur prepared for it by marching towards Delhi. Ibrahim Lodi met Babur at Panipat with a force estimated at 100,000 men and 1000 elephants. Since the Indian armies generally contained large hordes of servants, the fighting men on Ibrahim Lodi's side must have been far less than this figure.
- Babur had crossed the Indus with a force of 12,000, but this had been swelled by his army in India, and the large number of Hindustani nobles and soldiers who joined Babur in the Punjab. Even then, Babur's army was numerically inferior.
- Babur strengthened his position by resting one wing of his army on the city of Panipat which had a large number of

houses, and protected the other by means of a ditch filled with branches of trees. In front, he lashed together a large number of carts, to act as a defending wall. Between two carts, breastworks were erected on which soldiers could rest their guns and fire.

- Babur calls his device an Ottoman (Rumi) device, for it had been used by the Ottomans in their famous battle against Shah Ismail of Iran. Babur had also secured the services of two Ottoman master-gunners, Ustad Ali and Mustafa. The use of gunpowder had been gradually developing in India. Babur says that he used it for the first time in his attacks on the fortress of Bhira.

Battle of Khanwa (1527)

Babur decided to take on Rana Sanga of Chittor, who as ruler of Mewar, had a strong influence over Rajasthan and Malwa. Babur selected Khanwa, near Agra, as a favourable site for this inevitable encounter. The ferocious march of Rana Sanga with a formidable force strengthened by Afghan Muslims, Mahmud Lodi, brother of Ibrahim Lodi, and Hasan Khan Mewati, ruler of Mewar, confronted the forces of Babur. With strategic positioning of forces and effective use of artillery, Babur defeated Rana Sanga's forces. This victory was followed by the capture of forts at Gwalior and Dholpur which further strengthened Babur's position.

Battle of Chanderi (1528)

The next significant battle that ensured Babur's supremacy over the Malwa region was fought against Medini Rai at Chanderi. Following this victory Babur turned towards the growing rebellious activities of Afghans.

Battle of Ghagra (1529)

This was the last battle Babur fought against the Afghans. Sultan Ibrahim Lodi's brother Mahmud Lodi and Sultan Nusrat Shah, son-in-law of Ibrahim Lodi, conspired against Babur. Realising the danger Babur marched against them. In the battle that ensued along the banks of Ghagra, a tributary of Ganges, Babur defeated the Afghans. But he died on his way from Agra to Lahore in 1530.

Significance of Babur's Advent into India

- Babur's advent into India was significant from many points of view. For the first time since the downfall of the Kushan empire, Kabul and Qandhar became integral parts of an empire comprising north India.
- Since these areas had always acted as staging places for invasion of India, by dominating them Babur and his successors were able to give India security from external invasions for almost 200 years.
- Economically also, the control of Kabul and Qandhar strengthened India's foreign trade since these two towns were the starting points for caravans meant for China in the east, and the Mediterranean seaports in the west. Thus, India could take a greater share in the great trans-Asian trade. In north India, Babur smashed the power of the Lodis and the Rajput confederacy led by Rana Sanga.
- Thereby, he destroyed the balance of power in the area. This was a long step towards the establishment of an all-India empire. However, a number of conditions had still to be fulfilled before this could be achieved. Babur introduced a new mode of warfare in India.
- Although gunpowder was known in India earlier, Babur showed what a skilled combination of artillery and cavalry could achieve. His victories led to rapid popularisation of gunpowder and artillery in India. Since artillery was expensive, it favoured those rulers who had large resources at their command.
- Hence the era of small kingdoms ended. By his new military methods as well as by his personal conduct, Babur reestablished the prestige of the Crown which had been eroded since the death of Firuz Tughlaq. Although Sikandar Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi had tried to reestablish the prestige of the Crown, Afghan ideas of tribal independence and equality had resulted only in a partial success. Babur had the prestige of being a descendant of two of the most famous warriors of Asia, Changez and Timur.
- Babur introduced a new concept of the state which was to be based on the strength and prestige of the Crown, absence of religious and sectarian bigotry, and the careful fostering of culture and the fine arts. He thus provided a precedent and a direction for his successors.

Humayun (1530-1540 & 1555-1556)

Humayun, a cultured and learned person, was not a soldier like his father. He was faced with the problems of a weak financial system and the predatory Afghans. Bahadur Shah, the ruler of Gujarat, also posed a great threat.

- Humayun succeeded Babur in December 1530 at the young age of 23. He had to grapple with a number of problems left behind by Babur. The administration had not yet been consolidated, and the finances were precarious. The Afghans had not been subdued, and were nursing the hope of expelling the Mughals from India.
- Finally, there was the Timurid legacy of partitioning the empire among all the brothers. Babur had counselled Humayun to deal kindly with his brothers, but had not favoured the partitioning of the infant Mughal empire, which would have been disastrous.
- When Humayun ascended the throne at Agra, the empire included Kabul and Qandhar, while there was loose control over Badakhshan beyond the Hindukush mountains. Kabul and Qandhar were under the charge of Humayun's younger brother, Kamran. It was only natural that they should remain in his charge.
- However, Kamran was not satisfied with these poverty stricken areas. He marched on Lahore and Multan, and occupied them.
- Humayun, who was busy elsewhere, and did not want to start a civil war, had little option but to agree. Kamran accepted the suzerainty of Humayun, and promised to help him whenever necessary.
- Kamran's action created the apprehension that the other brothers of Humayun might also follow the same path whenever an opportunity arose. However, by formally granting the Punjab and Multan to Kamran, Humayun had the immediate advantage that he was free to devote his attention to the eastern parts without having to bother about his western frontier.
- After this success, Humayun besieged Chunar. This powerful fort commanded the land and the river route between Agra and the east, and was known as the gateway of eastern India. It had recently come in the possession of an Afghan sardar, Sher Khan, who had become the most powerful of the Afghan sardars.
- After the siege of Chunar had gone on for four months, Sher Khan persuaded Humayun to allow him to retain possession of the fort. In return, he promised to be loyal to the Mughals, and sent one of his sons to Humayun as a hostage. Humayun accepted the offer because he was anxious to return to Agra.
- Humayun has been blamed for wasting valuable time in these activities, while Sher Khan was steadily augmenting his power in the east. It has also been said that Humayun's inactivity was due to his habit of taking opium. Neither of these charges is fully true.
- Babur had continued to use opium, after he gave up wine. Humayun took opium occasionally in place of or in addition to wine, as did many of his nobles. But neither Babur nor Humayun was an opium addict.

- The building of Dinpanah was meant to impress friends and foes alike. It could also serve as a second capital in case Agra was threatened by Bahadur Shah who, in the meantime, had conquered Ajmer and overrun eastern Rajasthan.
- Bahadur Shah offered a still greater challenge to Humayun. He had made his court the refuge of all those who feared or hated the Mughals. He again invested Chittor and, simultaneously, supplied arms and men to Tatar Khan, a cousin of Ibrahim Lodi.

Battle of Chausa (1539) Tamil board

This battle was won by Sher Khan due to his superior political and military skills. Humayun suffered a defeat in which 7000 Mughal nobles and soldiers were killed and Humayun himself had to flee for his life by swimming across the Ganga. Humayun who had arrived at Agra assembled his army with the support of his brothers Askari and Hindal to counter Sher Khan. The final encounter took place at Kanauj.

Battle of Kanauj (1540)

This battle was won by Sher Khan and Humayun's army was completely routed, and he became a prince without a kingdom.

Humayun's Return from Exile

- After Sher Shah's death in 1545 his weak successors ruled for ten years. Humayun, who had fled after his defeat at Kanauj, had taken asylum in Persia. Humayun then went to Afghanistan with Persian troops. He succeeded in capturing Kandahar and Kabul.
- But his brother Kamran did not allow him to hold them in peace. The struggle between the brothers intensified, and yet in the end Kamran had to seek a compromise from Humayun. Meanwhile the Sur empire had fragmented, and so Humayun's invasion became easy.
- The Afghan forces in Punjab, on the approach of Mughals, began to flee. Humayun became the Emperor once again. He died very soon after regaining Delhi when he slipped down the stairs of the library in the fort at Delhi. In the colourful words of Lane Poole, "Humayun stumbled out of his life, as he has stumbled through it."

Sher Khan/Sher Shah and Sur Dynasty

- During Humayun's Malwa campaign (February 1535 to February 1537), Sher Khan had further strengthened his position. He had made himself the unquestioned master of Bihar. The Afghans from far and near had rallied round him.
- Though he continued to profess loyalty to the Mughals, he systematically planned to expel the Mughals from India. He was in close touch with Bahadur Shah who had helped him with heavy subsidies. These resources enabled him to recruit and maintain a large and efficient army which included 1200 elephants. Shortly after Humayun's return to Agra, he had used this army to defeat the Bengal king, and compel him to pay an indemnity of 13,00,000 dinars (gold coins).

- After equipping a new army, Humayun marched against Sher Khan and besieged Chunar towards the end of the year. Humayun felt it would be dangerous to leave such a powerful fort behind, threatening his line of communications. However, the fort was strongly defended by the Afghans. Despite the best efforts by the master-gunner, Rumi Khan, it took six months for Humayun to capture it.
- Meanwhile, Sher Khan captured by treachery the powerful fort of Rohtas where he could leave his family in safety. He then invaded Bengal for a second time, and captured Gaur, its capital. Thus, Sher Khan completely outmanoeuvred Humayun. Humayun should have realised that he was in no position to offer a military challenge to Sher Khan without more careful preparations.

Sher Shah And The Sur Empire (1540–55)

- Sher Shah ascended the throne of Delhi at the age of 54 or so. We do not know much about his early life. His original name was Farid and his father was a small jagirdar at Jaunpur. Farid acquired sound administrative experience by looking after the affairs of his father's jagir. Following the defeat and death of Ibrahim Lodi and the confusion in Afghan affairs, he emerged as one of the most important Afghan sardar.
- The title of Sher Khan was given to him by his patron for killing a tiger (sher) or, for services rendered. Soon, Sher Khan emerged as the right-hand of the ruler of Bihar, and its master in all but name. This was before the death of Babur. The rise of Sher Khan to prominence was, thus, not a sudden one.

Contribution of Sher Shah

- The Sur empire may be considered in many ways as a continuation and culmination of the Delhi Sultanat, the advent of Babur and Humayun being in the nature of an interregnum. Amongst the foremost contributions of Sher Shah was his re-establishment of law and order across the length and breadth of his empire. He dealt sternly with robbers and dacoits, and with zamindars who refused to pay land revenue or disobeyed the orders of the government.
- Sher Shah restored the old imperial road called the Grand Trunk Road, from the river Indus in the west to Sonargaon in Bengal. He also built a road from Agra to Jodhpur and Chittor, evidently linking up with the road to the Gujarat seaports.
- He built a third road from Lahore to Multan. Multan was at that time the staging point for caravans going to West and Central Asia. For the convenience of travellers, Sher Shah built a sarai at a distance of every two kos (about eight km) on these roads.
- The sarai was a fortified lodging or inn where travellers could pass the night and also keep their goods in safe custody. Separate lodgings for Hindus and Muslims were provided in these sarais.
- Brahmans were appointed for providing bed and food to the Hindu travellers, and grain for their horses. Abbas Khan says, 'It was a rule in these sarais that whoever entered them received provision suitable to his rank, and food and litter

for his cattle, from government.' Efforts were made to settle villages around the sarais, and land was set apart in these villages for the expenses of the sarais.

- Every sarai had several watchmen under the control of a shahna (custodian). We are told that Sher Shah built 1700 sarais in all. Some of these are still existing, which shows how strong they were. His roads and sarais have been called 'the arteries of the empire'. They helped in quickening trade and commerce in the country.
- Many of the sarais developed into market-towns (qasbas) to which peasants flocked to sell their produce. The sarais were also used as stages for the news service or dak-chowki. The organisation of these dak-chowkis has been described in an earlier chapter. By means of these, Sher Shah kept himself informed of the developments in his vast empire.
- Sher Shah did not make many changes in the administrative divisions prevailing since the Sultanat period. A number of villages comprised a pargana.
- The pargana was under the charge of the shiqdar, who looked after law and order and general administration, and the munsif or amil who looked after the collection of land revenue.
- Accounts were maintained both in Persian and the local languages (Hindavi). Above the pargana was the shiq or sarkar under the charge of the shiqdar-i-shiqdaran or faujdar and a munsif-imunsifan. It seems that only the designations of these officers were new since both pargana and sarkar were units of administration in the earlier period also.
- A number of sarkars were sometimes grouped into provinces, but we do not know how many of such provinces existed and the pattern of provincial administration. It seems that the provincial governors were all-powerful in some areas.
- In some areas such as Bengal, real power remained in the hands of tribal chiefs and the governor exercised only a loose control over them. Sher Shah apparently continued the central machinery of administration which had been developed during the Sultanat period.
- The produce of land was no longer to be based on guess work, or by dividing the crops in the fields or on the threshing floor. Sher Shah insisted on measurement of the sown land. A crop rate (called ray) was drawn up, laying down the state's share of the different types of crops. This could then be converted into cash on the basis of the prevailing market rates in different areas.
- The share of the state was one-third of the produce. The lands were divided into good, bad and middling. Their average produce was computed, and one-third of it became the share of the state. The peasants were given the option of paying in cash or kind, though the state preferred cash.
- The areas sown, the type of crops cultivated, and the amount each peasant had to pay was written down on a paper called patta and each peasant was informed of it. No one was allowed to charge from the peasants anything extra. Even the rates which the members of the measuring party were to get for their work were laid down.
- In order to guard against famine and other natural calamities, a cess at the rate of two and a half seers per bigha was also levied. Sher Shah was very solicitous for the welfare of the peasantry.

7. Age of Akbar, Jahangir & Shah Jahan

When Humayun was retreating from Bikaner, he was gallantly offered shelter and help by the rana of Amarkot. It was at Amarkot, in 1542, that Akbar, the greatest of the Mughal rulers, was born. When Humayun fled to Iran, young Akbar was captured by his uncle, Kamran. He treated the child well on the whole. Akbar was re-united with his parents after the capture of Qandhar.

Early Phase—Contest with the Nobility (1556–67)

- Bairam Khan remained at the helm of affairs of the empire for almost four years. During the period, he kept the nobility fully under control. The danger to Kabul was averted, and the territories of the empire were extended from Kabul up to Jaunpur in the east, and Ajmer in the west. Gwaliyar was captured, and forces were sent to conquer Ranthambhor and Malwa.
- Akbar played his cards deftly. He left Agra on the pretext of hunting, and reached Delhi. From Delhi he issued a farman dismissing Bairam Khan from his office, and calling upon all the nobles to come and submit to him personally.
- Once Bairam Khan realised that Akbar wanted to take power in his own hands, he was prepared to submit, but his opponents were keen to ruin him. They heaped humiliation upon him till he was goaded to rebel. The rebellion distracted the empire for almost six months. Finally, Bairam Khan was forced to submit.

- During Bairam Khan's rebellion, groups and individuals in the nobility had become politically active. They included Akbar's foster-mother, Maham Anaga, and her relations.
- Though Maham Anaga soon withdrew from politics, her son, Adham Khan was an impetuous young man who assumed independent airs when sent to command an expedition against Malwa. Removed from the command, he laid claim to the post of the wazir, and when this was not conceded, he stabbed the acting wazir in his office. Akbar was enraged and had him thrown down to his death from the parapet of the fort (1561).

Early Expansion of the Empire (1560-76)

- During Bairam Khan's regency, the territories of the Mughal empire had been expanded rapidly. Apart from Ajmer, an important conquest during this period was that of Malwa. Malwa was being ruled, at that time, by a young prince, Baz Bahadur. His accomplishments included a mastery of music and poetry.
- Stories about the romance of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati, who was famous for her beauty as well as for music and poetry are well known. During his time, Mandu had become a celebrated centre for music. The army, however, had been neglected by Baz Bahadur.

- The expedition against Malwa was led by Adham Khan, son of Akbar's foster-mother, Maham Anaga. Baz Bahadur was badly defeated (1561) and the Mughals took valuable spoils, including Rupmati. However, she preferred to commit suicide to being dragged to Adham Khan's haram. Due to the senseless cruelties of Adham Khan and his successor, there was a reaction against the Mughals which enabled Baz Bahadur to recover Malwa.
- After dealing with Bairam Khan's rebellion Akbar sent another expedition to Malwa. Baz Bahadur had to flee, and for some time he took shelter with the rana of Mewar. After wandering about from one area to another, he finally repaired to Akbar's court and was enrolled as a Mughal mansabdar. The extensive country of Malwa thus came under Mughal rule.
- The kingdom of Garh-Katanga included a number of Gond and Rajput principalities. It was the most powerful kingdom set up by the Gonds. It is said that the ruler commanded 20,000 cavalry, a large infantry and 1000 elephants. We do not know, however, to what extent these figures are dependable.
- Sangram Shah had further strengthened his position by marrying his son to a princess of the famous Chandel rulers of Mahoba. This princess, who is famous as Durgavati, became a widow soon afterwards. But she installed her minor son on the throne and ruled the country with great vigour and courage. She was a good marksman, both with guns and bow and arrow.
- She was fond of hunting and, according to a contemporary, 'it was her custom that whenever she heard that a tiger had appeared she did not drink water till she had shot it.' She fought many successful battles against her neighbours, including Baz Bahadur of Malwa. These border conflicts apparently continued even after Malwa had been conquered by the Mughals.
- Meanwhile, the cupidity of Asaf Khan, the Mughal governor of Allahabad, was roused by the stories of the fabulous wealth and the beauty of the rani. Asaf Khan advanced with 10,000 cavalry from the side of Bundelkhand. Some of the semi-independent rulers of Garha found it a convenient moment to throw off the Gond yoke. The rani was thus left with a small force. Though wounded, she fought on gallantly. Finding that the battle was lost and that she was in danger of being captured, she stabbed herself to death.
- Asaf Khan then stormed the capital, Chauragarh, near modern Jabalpur. 'So much plunder in jewels, gold, silver and other things were taken that it is impossible to compute even a fraction of it,' says Abul Fazl. 'Out of all the plunder Asaf Khan sent only two hundred elephants to the court, and retained all the rest for himself,' Kamaladevi, the younger sister of the rani, was sent to the court.
- When Akbar had dealt with the rebellion of the Uzbek nobles he forced Asaf Khan to disgorge his illegal gains. He restored the kingdom of Garh- Katanga to Chandra Shah, the younger son of Sangram Shah, after, taking ten forts to round off the kingdom of Malwa.

Rajasthan and Gujarat

- During the next ten years, Akbar brought the major part of Rajasthan under his control and also conquered Gujarat and Bengal. A major step in his campaign against the Rajput states was the siege of Chittor. This redoubtable fortress, which had faced a number of sieges in its history, was considered a key to central Rajasthan. It commanded the shortest route from Agra to Gujarat. Above all, it was a symbol of the Rajput spirit of resistance.
- After this, Akbar turned his attention to Bengal. The Afghans had continued to dominate Bengal and Bihar. They had also overrun Orissa and killed its ruler. However, in order not to give offence to the Mughals, the Afghan ruler had not formally declared himself king, but read the khuba in Akbar's name. Internal fights among the Afghans, and the declaration of independence by the new ruler, Daud Khan, gave Akbar the excuse he was seeking. Akbar advanced with a strong flotilla of boats accompanying him.
- The Afghan king was believed to possess a large army consisting of 40,000 well-mounted cavalry, an infantry of about 1,50,000, several thousand guns and elephants, and a strong flotilla of war boats.
- If Akbar had not been as careful, and the Afghans had a better leader, the contest between Humayun and Sher Shah might well have been repeated. Akbar first captured Patna, thus securing Mughal communications in Bihar. He then returned to Agra, leaving Khan-i-Khanan Munaim Khan, an experienced officer, in charge of the campaign.
- The Mughal armies invaded Bengal and, after hard campaigning, Daud was forced to sue for peace. He rose in rebellion soon afterwards. Though the Mughal position in Bengal and Bihar was still weak, the Mughal armies were better organised and led. In a stiff battle in Bihar in 1576, Daud Khan was defeated and executed on the spot.
- Thus, ended the last Afghan kingdom in northern India. It also brought to an end the first phase of Akbar's expansion of the empire.

Mansabdarji System and the Army

- Akbar would not have been able to expand his empire and maintain his hold over it without a strong army. For this purpose, it was necessary for him to organise the nobility as well as his army. Akbar realised both these objectives by means of the mansabdari system. Under this system, every officer was assigned a rank (mansab). The lowest rank was 10, and the highest was 5000 for the nobles. Princes of the blood received higher mansabs.
- Towards the end of Akbar's reign, the highest rank a noble could attain was raised from 5000 to 7000, and two premier nobles of the empire, Mirza Aziz Koka and Raja Man Singh, were honoured with the rank of 7000 each. This limit was retained basically till the end of Aurangzeb's reign.
- The mansab system under Akbar developed gradually. At first there was only one rank (mansab). From the fortieth year (1594—95), the ranks were divided into two—zat and sawar. The word zat means personal. It fixed the personal status of a person, and also the salary due to him.

- The sawar rank indicated the number of cavalymen (sawars) a person was required to maintain. A person who was required to maintain as many sawars as his zat rank was placed in the first category of that rank; if he maintained half or more, then in the second category and if he maintained less than half then in the third category. Thus, there were three categories in every rank (mansab.)
- Only the Mughal and Rajput nobles were allowed to have contingents exclusively of Mughals or Rajputs, but in course of time, mixed contingents became the general rule. Apart from cavalymen, bowmen, musketeers (bandukchi), sappers and miners were also recruited in the contingents.
- The salaries varied, the average salary of a sawar was Rs 20 per month. Iranis and Turanis received a higher salary than Rajputs and Hindustanis (Indian Muslims).
- An infantryman received about Rs 3 per month. The salary due to the soldiers was added to the salary of the mansabdar, who was paid by assigning to him a jagir. Sometimes, the mansabdars were paid in cash. It is wrong to think that Akbar did not like the jagir system and tried to do away with it, but failed as it was too deeply entrenched.
- A jagir did not confer any hereditary rights on the holder, or disturb any of the existing rights in the area. It only meant that the land revenue due to the state was to be paid to the jagirdar. The mansabdari system, as it developed under the Mughals, was a distinctive and unique system which did not have any exact parallel outside India.
- The origins of the mansabdari system can, perhaps, be traced back to Chingiz Khan who organised his army on a decimal basis, the lowest unit of command being ten, and the highest ten thousand (toman) whose commander was called khan.

- The Mongol system influenced, to some extent, the military system of the Delhi Sultanat, for we hear of commanders of hundred (sadis) and one thousand (hazaras). Under the Surs, we have nobles who were designated commanders of 20,000, or 10,000 or 5,000 sawars. But we do not quite know the system which was prevalent under Babur and Humayun.
- Persons holding ranks below 500 zat were called mansabdars, those from 500 to below 2500 were called amirs, and those holding ranks of 2500 and above were called amir-i-umda or umda-i-azam. However, the word mansabdar is sometimes used for all the three categories.
- A mansabdar with a rank of 5000 could get a salary of Rs 30,000 per month, a mansabdar of 3000, Rs 17,000 and of 1000, Rs 8,200 per month. Even a humblesadi holding a rank of 100, could get Rs 7000 per year. Roughly, a quarter of these salaries were spent on meeting the cost of the transport corps.

- Even then, the Mughal mansabdars formed the highest paid service in the world. Akbar kept a large body of cavalymen as his bodyguards. He kept a big stable of horses. He also maintained a body of gentleman troopers (ahadis).

- We do not know whether Akbar ever had any plans of building a navy. The lack of a strong navy remained a key weakness of the Mughal empire. If Akbar had the time, he might have paid attention to it. He did build an efficient flotilla of war boats which he used in his eastern campaigns. Some of the boats were over 30 metres long and displaced over 350 tons.

Relations with the Rajputs

- Akbar's relations with the Rajputs have to be seen against the wider background of Mughal policy towards the powerful rajas and zamindars of the country. When Humayun came back to India, he embarked upon a deliberate policy of trying to win over these elements.
- Abul Fazl says that in order 'to soothe the minds of the zamindars, he entered into matrimonial relations with them.' Thus when Jamal Khan Mewati, who was the cousin of Hasan Khan Mewati, 'one of the great zamindars of India', submitted to Humayun, he married one of his beautiful daughters himself and married the younger sister to Bairam Khan.
- Akbar's Rajput policy was continued by his successors, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Jahangir, whose mother was a Rajput princess, had himself married a Kacchawaha princess as well as a Jodhpur princess. Princesses of the houses of Jaisalmer and Bikaner were also married to him. Jahangir gave positions of honour to the rulers of all these houses.
- The main achievement of Jahangir, however, was the settlement of the outstanding dispute with Mewar. Rana Pratap had been succeeded by his son, Amar Singh. Akbar had sent a series of expeditions against Amar Singh in order to force him to accept his conditions. Jahangir himself was sent against him twice, but could achieve little.
- After his accession in 1605, Jahangir took up the matter energetically. Three successive campaigns were launched, but they could not break the rana's will. In 1613, Jahangir himself reached Ajmer to direct the campaign. Prince Khurram (later Shah Jahan) was deputed with a large army to invade the mountainous parts of Mewar.
- The heavy pressure of the Mughal army, the depopulation of the country, and ruination of agriculture, at last produced their effect. Some sardars defected to the Mughals, many others pressed the rana for peace.
- The rana's son, Karan Singh, who was deputed to proceed to Jahangir's court was graciously received. Jahangir got up from the throne, embraced him in darbar and loaded him with gifts. To save the rana's prestige, Jahangir did not insist upon the rana paying personal homage to him, or entering the royal service.
- Prince Karan was accorded the rank of 5000, which had been earlier accorded to the rulers of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Amber. He was to serve the Mughal emperor with a contingent of 1500 sawars. All the territories of Mewar, including Chittor, were restored.
- But in view of the strategic importance of Chittor, it was stipulated that its fortifications would not be repaired. Thus, Jahangir completed the task begun by Akbar, and further strengthened the alliance with the Rajputs.

Jahangir (1605–1627)

- Akbar was succeeded by his son Salim with the title Nur-din Jahangir. He was Akbar's son by a Rajput wife.
- His ascension was challenged by his eldest son Prince Khusrau who staged a revolt with the blessings of Sikh Guru Arjun Dev. Prince Khusrau was defeated, captured and blinded, while Guru Arjun Dev was executed.
- Jahangir also tamed the rebel Afghan Usman Khan in Bengal.
- Mewar, which had defied Akbar under Rana Udai Singh and his son Rana Pratap Singh, was brought to terms by Jahangir after a military campaign led by his son Prince Khurram (later to become Emperor Shah Jahan) against Rana Amar Singh, the grandson of Rana Udai Singh. They concluded a treaty whereby Rana Amar Singh could rule his kingdom after accepting the suzerainty of Jahangir. In 1608 Ahmad Nagar in the Deccan had declared independence under Malik Ambar.
- Several attempts by prince Khurram to conquer Ahmad Nagar ended in failure. Prince Khurram had conquered the fort of Kangra after a siege of 14 months.
- Kandahar, conquered by Akbar from the Persians in 1595, was retaken by the Persian King Shah Abbas in 1622. Jahangir wanted to recapture it. But he could not achieve it due to the rebellion of Prince Khurram.
- Jahangir's reign witnessed the visit of two Englishmen – William Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe. While the former could not get the consent of the Emperor for establishing an English factory in India, the latter, sent as ambassador by King James I, succeeded in securing permission to establish a British factory at Surat.
- Jahangir was more interested in art and painting and gardens and flowers, than in government. His Persian wife Mehrunnisa, renamed as Nur-Jahan by Jahangir, became the real power behind the throne.
- The political intrigues that prevailed because of Nur-Jahan, led Prince Khurram to rebel against his father but due to the efforts of Mahabat Khan, a loyal general of Jahangir, the rebellion could not be fruitful. Prince Khurram had to retreat to the Deccan.
- The intrigues of Nur-Jahan also made Mahabat Khan to rise in revolt which was effectively handled by Nur-Jahan. Mahabat Khan also retreated to Deccan to join Prince Khurram.
- Immediately after the death of Jahangir, Nur-Jahan wanted to crown her son-in-law Shahryar Khan but due to the efforts of Nur-Jahan's brother and Prince Khurram's father-in-law Asaf Khan, Prince Khurram succeeded as the next Mughal emperor with the title Shah-Jahan. Nur-Jahan, who ruled the empire for ten years, lost her power and influence after Jahangir's death in 1627.

Malik Ambar

He was brought as a slave from Ethiopia to India, Malik Ambar changed several hands before landing at the hands of the Prime Minister of Ahmad nagar named Chengiz Khan. Malik Ambar learnt about statecraft, military and administrative affairs from Chengiz Khan. After the death of Chengiz Khan his wife set Malik Ambar free. By dint of his hard work Malik rising through several ranks became the Military Commander and Regent of one of the south Indian Sultanates. In the Deccan Muslims and Marathas had united to resist Mughal hegemony in their bid to preserve their distinct regional and political identity. Malik Ambar was the brain behind this move. Trained by Malik Ambar the Marathas became a force to reckon with after Malik's death at the age of 78 on 14 May 1626.

Shah Jahan (1627-1658)

- When Shah Jahan ascended the throne in Agra his position was secure and unchallenged. Yet the affairs of the empire needed attention.
- The Afghan Pir Lodi, with the title Khanjahan, who had been governor of the southern provinces of the empire was hostile. Despite Shah Jahan's order transferring him from the government of the Deccan, he aligned with Murtaza Nizam Shah II, the Sultan of Ahmed-Nagar, and conspired against Shah Jahan.
- As the situation turned serious, Shah Jahan proceeded to the Deccan in person. The newly appointed governor of the Deccan, Iradat Khan, who received the title Azam Khan led the imperial army and invaded the Balaghat.
- Seeing the devastation caused by the imperial troops, Murtaza changed his attitude towards Khanjahan. Khanjahan thereupon fled from Daulatabad into Malwa, but was pursued and finally slain.
- Peace thus having been restored in the Deccan, Shah Jahan left the Deccan after dividing it into four provinces: Ahmednagar with Daulatabad; Khandesh; Berar; and Telengana. The viceroyalty of the four provinces was conferred by Shah Jahan on his son Aurangzeb, then eighteen years of age.
- Thus, the Deccan was brought under the effective control of the Mughal empire during the reign of Shah Jahan. Ahmad Nagar, which offered resistance to the Mughals, was annexed despite the efforts of Malik Ambar. Shah Jahan, with the support of Mahabat Khan, subdued the Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmad Nagar in 1636.
- When the Shi'ite Qutub Shahi ruler of Golkonda imprisoned his own minister Mir Jumla it was used as a pretext by Aurangzeb to invade Golkonda. A treaty made the Qutub Shahi ruler a vassal of the Mughal empire.
- In 1638 Shah Jahan made use of the political intrigues in the Persian empire and annexed Kandahar, conquered by Akbar and lost by Jahangir.
- The Portuguese had authority over Goa under their viceroy. In Bengal they had their chief settlements in faraway Hugli. Shah Jahan ordered the Mughal Governor of Bengal, to drive out the Portuguese from their settlement at Hugli.

- About 200 Portuguese at Hugli owned nearly 600 Indian slaves. They had forced many of them to be baptised into the Christian faith. Moreover, Portuguese gunners from Goa had assisted the Bijapur forces against the Mughals. Though the Portuguese defended themselves valiantly, they were easily defeated.
- In 1641, Shah Jahan's minister and father-in-law Asaf Khan died. Asaf Khan's sister and Shah Jahan's old enemy Nur Jahan, survived until December 1645, but lived in retirement and never caused him trouble again.
- A contemporary of Louis XIV of France, Shah Jahan ruled for thirty years. In his reign the famous Peacock Throne was made for the King. He built the Taj Mahal by the side of the Yamuna at Agra. Europeans like Bernier (French physician and traveller), Tavernier (French gem merchant and traveller), Mandelslo (German adventurer and traveller), Peter Mundy (English Trader) and Manucci (Italian writer and traveller) visited India during the reign of Shah Jahan and left behind detailed accounts of India.
- During the last days of Shah Jahan, there was a contest for the throne amongst his four sons. Dara Shukoh, the eldest, was the favourite of his father. He had been nominated as heir apparent, a fact resented by his brothers.
- Aurangzeb, the third son, was astute, determined and unscrupulous. Dara, professed the Sunni religion, but was deeply interested in Sufism. A war of succession broke out between the four sons of Shah Jahan in which Aurangzeb emerged victorious.

- Aurangzeb imprisoned Shah Jahan and crowned himself as the Mughal emperor. Shah Jahan died broken hearted as a royal prisoner in January 1666 and was buried in the Taj Mahal next to his wife.

European Factories/Settlements During Mughal Rule

Portuguese: In 1510, Albuquerque captured Goa from the ruler of Bijapur and made it the capital of the Portuguese Empire in the East. Subsequently Daman, Salsette and Bombay on the west coast and at Santhome near Madras and Hugli in Bengal on the east coast had become Portuguese settlements.

Dutch: The Dutch set up factories at Masulipatam (1605), Pulicat (1610), Surat (1616), Bimilipatam (1641), Karaikal (1645), Chinsura (1653), Kasimbazar, Baranagore, Patna, Balasore, Nagapattinam (all in 1658) and Cochin (1663).

Danes: Denmark also established trade settlements in India and their settlements were at Tranquebar in Tamilnadu (1620) and Serampore, their headquarters in Bengal.

French: Surat (1668), Masulipatnam (1669), Pondicherry, a small village then (1673), Chandernagore in Bengal (1690). Later they acquired Mahe in the Malabar, Yanam in Coromandal (both in 1725) and Karaikal (1739).

English: The Company first created a trading post in Surat (where a factory was built in 1612), and then secured Madras (1639), Bombay (1668), and Calcutta (1690). Though the company had many factories. Fort William in Bengal, Fort St George in Madras, and the Bombay Castle were the three major trade settlements of the English.

8. Cultural and Religious Development During Mughals

- There was an outburst of many-sided cultural activity in India under the Mughal rule. The traditions in the field of architecture, painting, literature and music created during this period set a norm and deeply influenced the succeeding generations.
- In this sense, the Mughal period can be called a second classical age following the Gupta age in northern India. In this cultural development, Indian traditions were amalgamated with the Turko-Iranian culture brought to the country by the Mughals.

Architecture

- The Mughals built magnificent forts, palaces, gates, public buildings, mosques, baolis (water tank or well), etc. They also laid out many formal gardens with running water.
- In fact, use of running water even in their palaces and pleasure resorts was a special feature of the Mughals.
- Babur was very fond of gardens and laid out a few in the neighbourhood of Agra and Lahore.
- Some of the Mughal gardens, such as the Nishat Bagh in Kashmir, the Shalimar at Lahore, the Pinjore garden in the Punjab foothills, etc., have survived to this day.
- A new impetus to architecture was given by Sher Shah. His famous mausoleum at Sasaram (Bihar) and his mosque in the old fort at Delhi are considered architectural marvels.
- They form the climax of the pre Mughal style of architecture, and the starting point for the new.
- Akbar was the first Mughal ruler who had the time and means to undertake construction on a large scale.
 - He built a series of forts, the most famous of which is the fort at Agra.
 - Built in red sandstone, this massive fort had many magnificent gates.
 - For their forts, the Mughals drew on the developed Indian tradition of fort-building, such as the ones at Gwalior, Jodhpur, etc.
- The climax of fort-building was reached at Delhi where Shah Jahan built his famous Red Fort.
- In 1572, Akbar commenced a palace-cum-fort complex at Fatehpur Sikri, 36 kilometres from Agra, which he completed in eight years.
- Built a top a hill, along with a large artificial lake, it included many buildings in the style of Gujarat and Bengal. These included deep eaves, balconies, and fanciful kiosks.
- In the Panch Mahal built for taking the air, all the types of pillars used in various temples were employed to support flat roofs.
- The Gujarat style of architecture is used most widely in the palace built probably for his Rajput wife or wives. Buildings

of a similar type were also built in the fort at Agra, though only a few of them have survived.

- Akbar took a close personal interest in the work of construction both at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri.
- Persian or Central Asian influence can be seen in the glazed blue tiles used for decoration in the walls or for tiling the roofs. But the most magnificent building was the mosque and the gateway to it called the Buland Darwaza (the lofty gate) built to commemorate Akbar's victory in Gujarat.
- With the consolidation of the empire, the Mughal architecture reached its climax.
- Towards the end of Jahangir's reign began the practice of putting up buildings entirely of marble and decorating the walls with floral designs made of semi-precious stones.
- This method of decoration, called *pietra dura*, became even more popular under Shah Jahan who used it on a large scale in the Taj Mahal, justly regarded as a jewel of the builder's art.
- The Taj Mahal brought together in a pleasing manner all the architectural forms developed by the Mughals.
- Humayun's tomb built at Delhi towards the beginning of Akbar's reign, and which had a massive dome of marble, may be considered a precursor of the Taj.
- The double dome was another feature of this building. This device enabled a bigger dome to be built with a smaller one inside.
- The chief glory of the Taj is the massive dome and the four slender minarets linking the platform to the main building.
- The decorations are kept to a minimum, delicate marble screens, *pietra dura* inlay work and kiosks (*chhatris*) adding to the effect. The building gains by being placed in the midst of a formal garden.
- Mosque-building also reached its climax under Shah Jahan, the two most noteworthy ones being the Moti Masjid in the Agra fort, built like the Taj entirely in marble, and the other the Jama Masjid at Delhi built in red sandstone.
- A lofty gate, tall, slender minarets, and a series of domes are a feature of the Jama Masjid at Delhi.
- Although not many buildings were put up by Aurangzeb who was economy-minded, the Mughal architectural traditions based on a combination of Hindu and Turko-Iranian forms and decorative designs, continued without a break into the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
- Thus, Mughal traditions influenced the palaces and forts of many provincial and local kingdoms. Even the Harmandir of the Sikhs, called the Golden Temple at Amritsar which was rebuilt several times during the period was built on the arch and dome principle and incorporated many features of the Mughal traditions of architecture.

Painting

- The Mughals made distinctive contribution in the field of painting. They introduced new themes depicting the court, battle scenes and the chase, and added new colours and new forms.
- They created a living tradition of painting which continued to work in different parts of the country long after the glory of the Mughals had disappeared.
- The richness of the style, again, was due to the fact that India had an old tradition of painting.
- The wall-paintings of Ajanta are an eloquent indication of its vigour. After the eighth century, the tradition seems to have decayed, but palm-leaf manuscripts and illustrated Jain texts from the thirteenth century onwards show that the tradition had not died.
- Apart from the Jains, some of the provincial kingdoms, such as Malwa and Gujarat extended their patronage to painting during the fifteenth century. But a vigorous revival began only under Akbar.
- While at the court of the shah of Iran, Humayun had taken into his service two master painters who accompanied him to India. Under their leadership, during the reign of Akbar, a painting workshop was set up in one of the imperial establishments (*karkhanas*).
- A large number of painters, many of them from the lower castes, were drawn from different parts of the country. From the beginning, both Hindus and Muslims joined in the work. Thus, Daswant and Basawan were two of the famous painters of Akbar's court.
- The school developed rapidly, and soon became a celebrated centre of production. Apart from illustrating Persian books of fables, the painters were soon assigned the task of illustrating the Persian text of the Mahabharata, the historical work Akbar Nama, and others.
- Indian themes and Indian scenes and landscapes, thus, came in vogue and helped to free the school from Persian influence.
- Indian colours, such as peacock blue, the Indian red, etc., began to be used. Above all, the somewhat flat effect of the Persian style began to be replaced by the roundedness of the Indian brush, giving the pictures a three-dimensional effect.
- Mughal painting reached a climax under Jahangir who had a very discriminating eye. It was a fashion in the Mughal school for the faces, bodies and feet of the people in a single picture to be painted by different artists.
- Jahangir claims that he could distinguish the work of each artist in a picture. Apart from painting hunting, battle and court scenes, under Jahangir special progress was made in portrait painting and paintings of animals.
- Mansur was the great name in this field. Portrait painting also became fashionable. Under Akbar, European painting was introduced at the court by the Portuguese priests. Under their influence, the principles of foreshortening, whereby near and distant people and things could be placed in perspective was quietly adopted.
- While the tradition continued under Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb's lack of interest in painting led to a dispersal of the artists to different places of the country. This helped in the development of painting in the states of Rajasthan and the Punjab hills.
- The Mughal tradition of painting was, however, revived during the eighteenth century under the patronage of the successors of Aurangzeb.
- The Rajasthan style of painting combined the themes and earlier traditions of western India or Jain school of painting with Mughal forms and styles.