

CONTENTS

Units	Page No.
Chapter 1 : Pre-Historic and Early Ancient India	
I. Prehistoric Cultures in India	03
II. Indus Valley Civilization	30
III. Megalithic Cultures	39
IV. Aryan and Vedic Period	46
Chapter 2 : Ancient India	
I. The Mauryan Empire	68
II. Post Mauryan India (B.C.200-A.D. 300)	84
III. The Guptas and their Successors	110
IV. Early Medieval India : Major Dynasties	122
Chapter 3 : Medieval India	
I. Cultural Trend and Religious Conditions (750 AD to 1200 AD)	138
II. 13 th and 14 th Centuries	154
III. 15 th and 16 th Centuries	173
IV. The Mughal Empire (1556 - 1707)	194
Chapter 4 : Later Medieval to British Era	
I. Decline of Mughal Empire (1707-1761)	211
II. British Expansion	222
III. Economic Impact of British Raj	233
IV. Cultural Encounter and Social Changes	245

SYLLABUS

MH-414

M.A. History 1st Year Indian History 1st (up to 1857)

Chapter-1

UNIT-I: Prehistoric Cultures in India:

Sources: Archaeological and Indigenous to study of Early Indian History, Prehistory and Proto history: Geographical factors, hunting and gathering (Paleolithic and Mesolithic); Beginning of the agriculture (Neolithic and Chalcolithic).

UNIT-II: Indus Valley Civilization: The Mature phase:

Origin, date, extent, characteristics, decline, survival and significance, art and architecture.

UNIT-III: Megalithic Cultures:

Distribution of pastoral and farming culture outside the Indus region, development of community life, settlements, development of agriculture, crafts, pottery and Iron industry.

UNIT-IV: Aryans and Vedic Periods:

The vedic texts; change from the Rigvedic period to later Vedic period: Religion, Upanishadic thought, Political and social organization, State formation and urbanization from the mahajanapadas to the Nandas. Jainism and Buddhism. Factors for the spread of Buddhism. Evolution of monarchy and Varna system.

Chapter-2

UNIT-I: The Mauryan Empire:

Chandragupta, Meghasthenes, Ashoka and his inscriptions, his dhāṛṇa, administration, culture and art, The Arthashastra.

UNIT-II: Post Mauryan India, B.C.200–A.D. 300:

Society: Evolution of Jatis, The Salvahanas and state formation in Peninsula, Sangam texts and society, Indo-Greeks, Sakas, Parthians, Kushans, Kanishka, Contacts with the outside world, Religion: Saivism, Bhagavatism, Minyana and Mahayana Buddhism, Culture and Art.

UNIT-III: The Guptas and their Successors:

Changes in political organization of empire, Economy and Society, Literature and Science, Arts.

UNIT-IV: Early Medieval India: Major Dynasties:

The Chola empire, Agrarian and political structures, The Rajapurtras, Extent of social mobility, Position of women, The arabs in Sindh and in the Ghaznavides.

Chapter -3

UNIT-I: Cultural Trend, Religious Conditions (750AD-1200AD):

Importance of temples and monastic institutions. Sankaracharya; Islam, Sufism, Literature and Science. Alberuim's "India", Art and Architecture.

UNIT-II: 13th and 14th Centuries:

Ghorian invasions causes and consequences. Delhi Sultanate under the "slave" rulers Alauddin Khalji; conquests; administrative; agrarian and economic measure, Muhammad Tughlaq's innovations, Firoz Tughlaq and the decline of the Delhi Sultanate, Growth of Commerce and Urbanization, Mystic movements in Hinduism and Islam, Literature, Architecture, Technologies changes.

UNIT-III: 15th and 16th Centuries:

Major provincial dynasties; Vijaynagar empire, The hoolis, first phase of the Mughal Empire: Babur, Humayun, The Suri empire and administration, The Portuguese.

Monastic movement: Kabir, Guru Nanak and Sikhism; Bhakti, Growth of regional literatures. Port and Culture.

UNIT-IV: The Mughal Empire (1556-1707)

Akbar: conquests, administrative measures, Jagir and Mansab system; policy of Sulh-I-hul, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb:

Expansion in the Sevan: religious policies, Shivaji, Culture: Persian and regional literatures, Religious thoughts: Abul Fazal; Maharashtra dharma, Painting, Architecture. Economy: conditions of peasant and artisans growth in trade; commerce with Europe, Social stratification and status of women.

Chapter-4

UNIT-I: Decline of Mughal Empire (1707-61)

Causes behind decline. Maratha power under peshwa, Regional states, The afghans major elements of composite culture. Sawai Jai Singh, astronomers. Rise of Urdu language.

UNIT-II: British Expansion:

The carnatic wars, conquest of Bengal, Mysore and its resistance to British expansion; The three Anglo Maratha wars, Early structure of British raj regulating (1773) and Pitti's India Act (1784).

UNIT-III: Economic Impact of British Raj:

Drain of wealth (Tribute): Land revenue settlements (Zamindari, ryotwari, Mahalwari); Deindustrialization; Railways and commercialization of agriculture, Growth of landlers labour,

UNIT-IV: Cultural Encounter and Social Changes:

Introduction of western education. India Renaissance, social and religious reform movements, growth of Indian middle class, The press and its impact; rise of modern literature in Indian languages. Social reform measures before 1857.

CHAPTER – 1

*Pre-Historic and Early
Ancient India*

PRE-HISTORIC AND EARLY ANCIENT INDIA

NOTES

STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Learning Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Sources of Ancient History: Archaeological and Indigenous
 - Inscriptions
 - Archaeology
- 1.4 Approaches to Study of Early Indian History
- 1.5 Geographical Factors Behind Prehistoric Settlements
- 1.6 Paleolithic Age
- 1.7 Mesolithic Age
- 1.8 Neolithic Age
- 1.9 Chalcolithic Age
- 1.10 Beginning of Agriculture
- 1.11 Origin and Extent of Indus Valley Civilization
 - Geographical Distribution
- 1.12 Mature Harappan and Characteristics
- 1.13 Declination of Indus Valley Civilization
- 1.14 Origin of Megalithic Culture
- 1.15 Distribution of Pastoral and Farming Culture Outside the Indus Region
- 1.16 Megalithic Community
- 1.17 Iron Industry
- 1.18 The Vedic Text
- 1.19 Change from Rig Vedic Period to Later Vedic Period
- 1.20 Political and Social Organization
- 1.21 State Formation and Mahajanapadas
- 1.22 The Nanda Dynasty
- 1.23 Buddhism and Jainism
- 1.24 Origin and Spread of Jainism
- 1.25 Factors for the Spread of Buddhism
- 1.26 Evolution of Monarchy and Varna System
- 1.27 Summary
- 1.28 Review Questions
- 1.29 Further Readings

NOTES

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this chapter, students will be able to:

- discuss the archaeological and indigenous sources of Ancient Indian History;
- describe the origin and geographical factors of Pre-history and Proto-history civilization;
- understand the origin, characteristics, art and culture of Indus Valley Civilization;
- state the various aspects of Megalithic Cultures;
- discuss the arrival of Aryans and Vedic Civilization.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Human colonization in India encompasses a span of at least half-a-million years and is divided into two broad periods, namely the prehistoric (before the emergence of writing) and the historic (after writing). The prehistoric period is divided into stone, bronze and iron ages. The stone age is further divided into palaeolithic, mesolithic and neolithic periods. As the name suggests, the technology in these periods was primarily based on stone.

Economically, the palaeolithic and mesolithic periods represented a nomadic, hunting-gathering way of life, while the neolithic period represented a settled, food-producing way of life. Subsequently copper was introduced as a new material and this period was designated as the chalcolithic period. The invention of agriculture, which took place about 8000 years ago, brought about dramatic changes in the economy, technology and demography of human societies. Human habitat in the hunting-gathering stage was essentially on hilly, rocky and forested regions, which had ample wild plant and animal food resources. The introduction of agriculture saw it shifting to the alluvial plains which had fertile soil and perennial availability of water. Hills and forests, which had so far been areas of attraction, now turned into areas of isolation.

Agriculture led to the emergence of villages and towns and brought with it the division of society into occupational groups. The first urbanization took place during the bronze age in the arid and semi-arid region of northwest India in the valleys of the Indus and the Saraswati rivers, the latter represented by the now dry Ghaggar-Hakra bed. This urbanization is known as the Indus or Harappan civilization which flourished during 3500–1500 B.C. The rest of India during this period was inhabited by neolithic and chalcolithic farmers and mesolithic hunter-gatherers.

With the introduction of iron technology about 3000 years ago, the focus of development shifted eastward into the Indo-Gangetic divide and the Ganga valley. The location of the Mahabharata epic, which is set in the beginning of the first millennium B.C., is the Indo-Gangetic divide and the upper Ganga-Yamuna doab (land between two rivers). Iron technology enabled pioneering farmers to clear the dense and tangled forests of the middle and lower Ganga plains. The focus of development now shifted further eastward to eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar which witnessed the events of the Ramayana epic and rise of the first political entities known as Mahajanapadas as also of Buddhism and Jainism.

NOTES

The second phase of urbanization of India, marked by trade, coinage, script and birth of the first Indian empire, namely Magadha, with its capital at Pataliputra (modern Patna) also took place in this region in the sixth century B.C. The imposition by Brahmin priests of the concepts of racial and ritual purity, pollution, restrictions on sharing of food, endogamy, anuloma (male of upper caste eligible to marry a female of lower caste) and pratiloma (female of upper caste ineligible to marry a male of lower caste) forms of marriage, karma (reaping the fruits of the actions of previous life in the present life), rebirth, varnashrama dharma (four stages of the expected hundred-year life span) and the sixteen sanskaras (ceremonies) on traditional occupational groups led to the birth of the caste system – a unique Indian phenomenon.

UNIT – I PREHISTORIC CULTURES IN INDIA

Humankind's past is divided into two broad periods: the prehistoric and the historic. The prehistoric period belongs to the time before the emergence of writing and the historic period to the time following this event. Modern humans, evolved in Africa and have lived on our planet for about 150,000 years. However, they learnt writing only about 5000 years ago. This means that only about 1% of humankind's past is known through the written word. In fact, knowledge of writing diffused very slowly and even today a large section of humanity remains illiterate. Further, before the invention of printing technology in the medieval period, written documents were few and far between, and many of them have been lost due to being written on perishable materials like tree bark, palm leaf, papyrus and cloth. This means that the story of humankind has to be reconstructed largely with the help of non-literary or archaeological sources. These sources comprise objects – tools, weapons, ornaments, structures and artistic creations which were produced and used by humans and which have survived the ravages of time.

Man differs from other creatures in his ability to learn, accumulate knowledge and pass it on to future generations. He has learnt to use various raw materials available in nature – stone, wood, bone, clay, metal, etc. – for shaping them into useful objects for satisfying his needs. Objects made of comparatively durable materials survive for varying lengths of time and constitute the main source of information for knowledge of the human past.

Like other creatures, humans too have had to adapt themselves to the environment in which they live. However, unlike other beings, they have done so with the aid of technology and material culture (material objects like tools, weapons, utensils, houses, clothes, ornaments, etc). Moreover, since the environment – landscape, climate, flora and fauna – tends to change over time, archaeologists have to reconstruct past environments as well. The biological remains of men have contributed to the understanding of not only his biological evolution but also cultural evolution. Archaeology, thus, is a multi-disciplinary study involving disciplines like geology, palaeontology, palaeobotany, biological anthropology and archaeological chemistry.

NOTES

Further, since cultural changes take place at an uneven pace in different regions, in many parts of the world, particularly in India, prehistoric ways of life have survived more or less unchanged into modern times. The study of non-industrialized societies, especially those practising hunting-gathering, fishing, primitive cultivation and pastoralism, known as ethnoarchaeology, contributes to interpreting the archaeological record.

The story of man began in the Miocene period, around twenty million years ago, when the great apes, from whom the humans evolved, flourished in large areas of the Old World. Proto humans appeared in the Pliocene period, around five million years ago, and their cultural evolution largely took place during the Pleistocene period, which began about two million years ago. While biologically humans differ from the other apes in their upright posture, ability to walk on two feet or hind limbs, extremely versatile hand, and an unusually powerful brain, culturally they differ in their ability to manufacture and use tools.

The prehistoric period is divided into three ages, namely the stone, bronze and iron ages. These ages, besides being technological stages, also have economic and social implications. The Stone Age is divided into three periods, namely palaeolithic, mesolithic and neolithic. As the name suggests, the technology in these periods was primarily based on stone. Economically the palaeolithic and mesolithic periods represent the hunting-gathering stage while the neolithic represents the stage of food production, i.e. plant cultivation and animal husbandry. The palaeolithic period is further divided into three sub-periods, namely lower, middle and upper.

A point which needs to be emphasised is about chronology. Chronology is of two types, relative and absolute. Relative chronology dates prehistoric events in relation to other events and geological deposits. It only tells us if a particular event is earlier or later than another event. Absolute chronology, on the other hand, dates events and phenomena in solar calendar years. This chronology is based on physical techniques and methods like radiocarbon, K/Ar, fission tracks, thermoluminescence, TH230/U234 and dendrochronology. While dendrochronology is applicable only to a period of a few thousand years and only in the few areas where old wood samples have been preserved, radiocarbon dating can date events up to sixty thousand years old. The other methods can, however, date events belonging to the entire prehistoric period. However, their application is dependent on the availability of suitable materials like volcanic ash and rock at archaeological sites.

1.3 SOURCES OF ANCIENT HISTORY: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND INDIGENOUS

India is a vast peninsula with a rich cultural heritage. India, the seat of an ancient civilization, still reminds the people of the splendor that she was. The sources of ancient Indian History had to be culled out from the following:— (1) Inscriptions, (2) Numismatics, (3) Archaeology (4) Literature (5) Foreign Accounts given by Greek writers, Chinese travelers and Arab writers. It is quite unfortunate that a historical chronicle is not available for the ancient period. To put it in other words the various events which occurred in different parts of the country were not arranged in a chronological order. That does not mean that the people lacked any historical sense.

Recording of events in chronological order lay scattered in different parts of the country. What was lacking on the part of the historians of the past was either their inability or lack of enthusiasm to arrange the scattered and isolated materials available in a cogent, connected and historical setting. In spite of the many intellectual and literary outbursts of the period, India produced no Herodotus or Thucydides to record the events in a historical perspective. Literary evidence can at the most corroborate but cannot form a reliable source of information.

NOTES

INSCRIPTIONS

Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions. Epigraphic evidences form the most reliable source of ancient history. They are engraved on stone tablets, metal plates, pillars, walls of caves, etc. The inscriptions represent various languages at different places and period of time. Some inscriptions give details about the political and religious activities of that time. Others are official, commemorative and historical.

The edicts of Ashoka, the pillars of Samudragupta and Rudradaman I are religious and administrative inscriptions. Sanskrit plays at Dhar and Ajmer and musical rules found in the Pudukottai, treaties on architecture inscribed on a tower at Chittor are examples of inscriptions.

Inscriptions on metal plates also cast light on the period during the Mauryans. The Mandasor copper plates, the Sohgaura plate from Gorakpur district, the Aihole inscription of Mahendra-Varman, the Uttiramerur inscriptions of Parantaka Chola I cast light on trade, taxes, currency. Some of these are dated in the Saka and Vikrama era reflects the condition of India. It gives knowledge about the boundaries of kingdoms and empire.

Inscriptions are engravings on stones & metals. One important advantage of inscriptions are that they are free from process of tampering. This is in contrast to the written books which have undergone considerable modifications over time.

The inscriptions take precedence over the written words particularly in fixing of dates and corroborating evidence from the literary sources. Major examples of inscriptions include:

1. Actual ruins like the Harrapan remains
2. Official edict eg. Asokan rock edicts & pillars (written mostly in Brahmi, but in North West areas of Indian subcontinent available in Kharoshti and Aramaic scripts)
3. Official prasastis (eulogies) written by poets
4. Official documents (charters of land grants, mostly engraved on copper plates)
5. Private documents throwing light on various aspects of social history) - many engraved in religious buildings recording pious contribution; personal diaries & personal observation of people closely related to rulers. Among the important prasastis include -
 - (i) Allahabad prasasti of Harisena describing Samudragupta
 - (ii) Gwalior prasasti of Bhoja describing the Pratiharas
 - (iii) Deopara prasasti of Vijayasena of Bengal
 - (iv) Aihole prasasti of Pulakesin-II Chalukya

NOTES

The series of Indian inscriptions opens with the memorable edicts of the great Maurya Emperor Asoka, engraved on rocks and pillars throughout his vast empire. The records of Asoka form a class by themselves and contribute largely to our knowledge of the history of the period and the spirit that animated one of the greatest men that ever sat on a royal throne.

The inscriptions of the post Asokan period may be broadly divided into two classes, official and private. The official records are in most cases either *prasastis*, i. e. eulogies of kinds written by their court-poets. Or land grants. The famous example of the former is furnished by the long record of Samundra-gupta engraved on an Asokan pillar now in the Allahabad fort, it describes in great detail the personal qualities and the military achievement of the great Gupta emperor and forms the chief document of his memorable reign.

Among other *prasastis* supplying valuable historical information made be mention that of king Vijayasena of the Sena dynasty of Bengal engraved on a slab of stone found at Deopara.

Its normal object is to record the building of a temple by Vijayasena but it is almost wholly devoted to a panegyric of the great king recording his victories and achievements in the most high-flown language. The Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II, the Chalukya king belongs to exactly the same type.

By far the largest number of official documents is charters conveying the sale or gift of lands. These are mostly engraved on copper-plates though in very rare instances they are also found on stone pillars and in temples. These charters define the boundaries of the lands and specify the object and conditions of the grant. Often enumerating other interesting details such as the price of land, the mode of its measurement, exhortations to future kings not to confiscate the grants and quotations from the scriptures threatening severe punishment after death for those who violate the grants in any way.

In case where the inscriptions are engraved on rocks or objects not easily portable their find spots become of great importance as indicating the territorial jurisdiction of the king. Sometimes the records of vassal chiefs and finds of coins corroborate the claims of territorial conquests. By these and other means it is almost always possible to make legitimate inferences from these documents about the achievements of the kings.

The series of Indian inscriptions opens with the memorable edicts of the great Maurya Emperor Asoka, engraved on rocks and pillars throughout his vast empire. The records of Asoka form a class by themselves and contribute largely to our knowledge of the history of the period and the spirit that animated one of the greatest men that ever sat on a royal throne.

The inscriptions of the post Asokan period may be broadly divided into two classes, official and private. The official records are in most.

NUMISMATICS

Numismatics is the study of coins. Coins yield information on the condition of country. The coins made of gold, silver and copper speak of the economic situation of that place in the period. Coins give us chronological information. It also gives us knowledge about the extent of influence of that particular ruler or kingdom and its relation with the distant areas. Roman coins discovered in India give us an idea about the existence of contacts with the Roman empire.

NOTES

Coins are the only source of idea knowledge of the Bactarian; Indo-Greeks and Indo-Parthian dynasty. The coins of this period brings to light an improvement in the coin artistry of India. Portraits and figures, Hellenistic art and dates on the coins of the western straps of Saurashtra are remarkable sources for reconstructing this period.

The Puranic accounts of the Satavahanas is ascertained from the Jogalthambi hoard of coins. The circulation of coins in gold and silver during the Gupta empire imparts an idea of the healthy economic condition during the rule of the Guptas.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology is the scientific study of the remains of the past. They include buildings monuments and other material relics that the inhabitants of that period were associated with. The Department of Archaeology was set up by Lord Curzon under the Director Generalship of Dr Marshal.

Excavations conducted at various sites in the valley of the river Indus, Lothal in Gujarat, Kalibangan in Rajasthan, at Sind and Punjab gives us knowledge of the civilization during about 2700 BC. Excavations at Taxila gives an idea about the Kushanas.

Similarity in monuments excavated in India and abroad establish a relations between various areas of the globe, besides this it express the Indian migration beyond India. The fine example of this is the temple of Angkor vat in Cambodia.

Excavations at south Indian sites such as Adichana Ilur, Chandravalli, Brahmagiri highlights the prehistoric periods.

The rock cut temples of Ajanta and Ellora with its sculptures and paintings express the artistic finery of that period Besides all these pots, pottery, seals, skeletal remains all are inseparable parts of the reconstructing history.

Monuments are important to understand various issues relating to building architecture, building materials used, design and construction technology etc. For early India, monuments are not the ones like we find in the medieval times (forts, mausoleums etc.), but are found more from the archaeological remains.

This is because firstly much of the construction used to be with the woods, which have perished with time, and secondly many of such remains have been destroyed by those who won wars with the particular settlers or kingdoms.

The important ones are monument remains of Harappan civilisation from which historians have made deductions relating to their religious and political and social conditions.

Then we have the artefacts on the pictorial tablets of Harappans, and those in the Asokan edict. Then we have the Stupas & temples that help to understand architecture, social & educational life of people.

This is particularly useful from places like Sanchi & Bharhut stupas that reveal existence of trade guilds, trade routes, people belonging to different professions who would visit these stupas etc. Similarly South Indian temples reveal the social life of people & role that temples played in lives of people. Unfortunately, palaces belonging to ancient times have not been found as most of them have perished with time as they were built with wood.

There are two good reasons why a historical study of Ancient India cannot realize its full potential on the basis of textual sources alone. First the sources

NOTES

which have been used, beginning with the Rigveda were not meant to be historical sources and whatever historical information has been gleaned from them is not free from questions regarding their chronology, geographical applicability and even content. Except for the history of the kings of Kashmir written by Kalhana in the 12th century there is no proper historical chronicle dating from the ancient period of Indian history.

Not only is there a paucity of professedly historical work but of very few really ancient compositions do we know with certainly the time and place origin. Great books which like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have for ages served as popular encyclopedias of national culture were frequently revised.

The authorship and the extent of such revisions are so obscure that it is hopeless to make an intelligent use of data drawn from these works. Lastly, in the few works of which we have definite knowledge in regard to authorship and provenance a great amount of space is taken up by conventional descriptions and it is seldom that we come across the plain downright statement of a fact.

The problem of sources is not limited to the texts. It affects in good measure inscriptions, coins, sculpture, painting and architecture as well although in these cases geography and chronology are not among the problems. The number of early inscriptions is severely limited. They increase in number only in the 10-12th centuries more in the south than in the rest of the subcontinent.

But inscriptions are also textual compositions and like other textual compositions devote a lot of space to conventional descriptions rather than to the enumeration of the event for which the inscription was intended in the first place. Coins come mostly from hoards—accidental non-contextual discoveries which very often end up with the coin-dealers.

A framework of the study of coins has no doubt emerged but on many occasions the study of the specimens of art and architecture. They are concerned much more with the religious life of the day in different regions and less with the issues of individual authorship and patronage. Precisely the issues which would have made them exciting as historical documents.

Over the last two centuries or more, scholars have certainly mapped out the different areas of Ancient Indian History. but in many cases this has been no more than a preliminary sketch of the terrain. It is doubtful if they could do any better. When one remembers that there is no line chronological grouping of the early Buddhist literature and that the whole of it can be put only in a broad period from the 6th to 2nd century BC, the best the historians of Ancient India could do in this regard was to offer a generalized version of Buddhist India. Further, because the geographical perspective of these texts is limited mainly to the middle Ganga plain, this generalized version can apply not to India as a whole but only to the region which it invokes.

This situation is true not merely of Buddhist India but virtually of all the epochs and geographical regions that we can think of in the context of Ancient India. In fact behind its academic curtain there are vast stretches of darkness and too many loose ends. Under the circumstances the pioneering modern historians of Ancient India could only lay the outlines of the subject moving from epoch to epoch and giving us a general scaffolding which somehow holds together. It could also be only a story of historical development in a more or less single line which in fact had the effect of historical development in a more or less single line which

In fact had the effect of blurring the multiple regional strands of India's historical growth at least for the early period.

Such basic limitations of the available sources cannot be wished away nor can the situation improve by rephrasing the historical questions in the language of the social sciences.

Architecture can greatly expand the nature of the sources in the context of ancient India. Even in the areas with a much larger mass of detailed and rigorous textual documentation archaeological research often leads to the historical landscape. In the case of Ancient India where the basic quantum and the rigour of textual documentation, archaeological research becomes more than being of ordinary significance.

Archaeology can also greatly change the nature of historical questions and it is here that the second reason of the significance of archaeology in Ancient Indian historical research is rooted.

Although modern archaeology is not afraid of handling a multitude of issues ranging from environment and subsistence to symbolism and cognition it is primarily in the reconstruction of the story of man land relationship through the ages that the subject excels.

What to be emphasized in the context of the Ancient history of such a vast land mass as the subcontinent of India is that it is only through the reconstruction of the historical development of maintained interaction in different parts of the subcontinent that the framework of a past acceptable to all segments of its population can emerge.

In order to create a non selection and multilineal image of Ancient India. Archaeology, especially aided by the scientific techniques which are now available to the cause of archaeological research, provides the most significant area of historical enquiry.

LITERARY SOURCES

The Vedic literature supplies the main source of information for the study – of the political, social, economic and religious condition of the Aryans. The two great epics – Ramayana and Mahabharata give an account of the political, social, economic and religious condition of the Aryans in the post-Vedic age. The Dharmasastras such as the smritis or law books of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Vishnu, Brihaspati, Narada, etc., supply valuable information about Hindu Society.

The Puranas such as Vishnu Purana, Vayu Purana, Matsya Purana, Brahma Purana and Bhavishya Purana constitute the main source of information between the beginning of the Epic Age and the period before the sixth century B.C. The Buddhist literature such as the Jatakas or the stories of the previous lives of the Buddha, the Tripitakas (three baskets) and the Ceylonese.

Chronicles—Deepavamsa and Mahavamsa furnish a lot of information. The Jain literature also supplies valuable information.

The Arthasastra, a treatise on statecraft written by Kautilya is a mine-house of information about the reign of Chandragupta Maurya. The Mudra-Rakshasa of Visakhadatta is also another piece of information about the Maurya period. Kalidasa's immortal works such as Sakuntala give an account of the social condition of the people during the Gupta period.

NOTES

NOTES

Devj- chandjaguptam is a political drama which states that Samudra-gupta had as elder son by name Rama-gupta who immediately succeeded him and Candra-gupta II came after him. The Harsha-Charita of Bana is one of the main sources of information about Harsha. The three dramas of Harsha-Ratnavali, Priyadarsika and Nagananda throw lights on the condition of India in the 7th century A.D.

The Gauda Vaho or Slaying of the King of Gauda of Vakpatiraja gives an account of the Digvijaya of Yasovarman of Kanauj. Vikramankadevacharita of Bilhana deals with the reign of Vikramaditya VI, the Western Chalukya ruler of Kalyani. The Rajatarangini of Kalhana is a historical text of the first order. Written in 1149-50, it forms a reliable source of information about the history of Kashmir from the seventh century A.D, onwards.

Besides these, there is a vast literature usually called pali canonical literature, which contains little material for political history but is important for the social history of the period.

Certain writers took the lives of their royal patrons as the theme of their literary work. Banbhata the great master of Sanskrit prose, wrote the Harsha charita (life of the emperor Harsha) and two poets. Vakpali and Bilhana described the exploits of Yasovarman and Vikramaditya (of the later Chalukya Dynasty) in two epics, the Gaudavaho and Vikramarkedeva Charita. There is also a curious poetical work, the Rama-Charita in which the author uses throughout verses of double entendre which taken one way, describe the story of the Ramayana and taken the other way recount the story of king Rampala of Bengal.

These and other work of the same class cannot be regarded as genuine history, although they contain valuable historical information. Their is also a curious poetical work, the Rama charita in which the author uses throughout verses of double entendre which taken one way, describe the story of the Ramayana and taken the other way recount the story of king Rampala of Bengal.

These and other work of the same class cannot be regarded as genuine history, although they contain valuable historical information Their object was the glorification of the king rather than to give a true picture of his life and time, and they were mostly conceived by their authors not as historical texts, but primarily as media for showing their literary skill and ingenuity.

Among the local chronicles the most famous is the Rajatarangini. It is a history of Kashmir written throughout in verse, by Kalhana in AD 1149-50. This is the only work in ancient Indian literature that may be regarded as an historical text in the true sense of the word.

The Sangam literature has little interest for the political history of period, but is a store house of information on social and religious history and depicts life in the Tamil land in vivid manner. of the various work produced during the Sangam age, mention may be made of Tiruvalluvar's great classic, Kural and the two great Tamil epics, Silappadikaram and the Manimekalal.

FOREIGN TRAVELLERS ACCOUNT

Chinese Traveler Fa-Hien in India

During A.D. 399-414, Chinese scholar Fa-Hien traveled to India in search of great Buddhist books of discipline. The faithful integrity of his notes and

observations are an invaluable resource available to researchers of Buddhist period studies, and of ancient India. It provides exact dates of when Buddhism was introduced to China, the many Indian dynasties, and of the austere life led by the *sages and monks of the period*.

Excerpted from English translation of secondary translations. Link to complete full-text at Project Gutenberg is provided below.

The travelers went on to the south-west for fifteen days following the foot of the mountain range. The way was difficult and rugged, (running along) a bank exceedingly precipitous, which rose up there, a hill-like wall of rock, 10,000 cubits from the base. When one approaches the edge of it, his eyes become unsteady; and if he wished to go forward in the same direction, there was no place on which he could place his foot; and beneath where the waters of the river called the Indus.

In former times men had chiseled paths along the rocks, and distributed ladders on the face of them, to the number altogether of 700, at the bottom of which there was a suspension bridge of ropes, by which the river was crossed, its banks being there eighty paces apart. Scholar Legge confirms this fact from secondary sources. The place and arrangements are to be found in the Records of the Nine Interpreters, but neither Chang K'een (a minister of the emperor Woo of Han — B.C. 140-87) nor Kan Ying (A.D. 88) had reached the spot.

The monks asked Fa-Hien if it could be known when the Law of Buddha first went to the east. He replied, "When I asked the people of those countries about it, they all said that it had been handed down by their fathers from of old that, after the setting up of the image of Maitreya Bodhisattva, there were Brahmins who crossed this river, carrying with them Sutras and Books of Discipline. Now the image was set up rather more than 300 years after the nirvana of Buddha, which may be referred to the reign of king P'ing of the Chow dynasty.

According to this account we may say that the diffusion of our great doctrines began from (the setting up of) this image. If it had not been through that Maitreya, the great spiritual master Purusha (who is to be) the successor of the Shakya (the Shakya sage), who could have caused the 'Three Precious Ones (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) to be proclaimed so far, and the people of those border lands to know our Law.' We know of a truth that the opening of (the way for such) a mysterious propagation is not the work of man; and so the dream of the emperor Ming of Han had its proper cause."

After crossing the river, the travelers immediately came to the kingdom of Woo-chang (possibly Udyana meaning a park) which is indeed a part of North India. The people all use the language of Central India, "Central India" being what we should call the "Middle Kingdom." The food and clothes of the common people are the same as in that Central Kingdom.

The Law of Buddha is very (flourishing in Woo-chang). They call the places where the monks stay as the Sangharamas; and of these there are in all 500, the monks being all students of the Hinayana. When stranger bhikshus arrive at one of them, their wants are supplied for three days, after which they are told to find a resting-place for themselves. There is a tradition that when Buddha came to North India, he came at once to this country, and that here he left a print of his foot, which is long or short according to the ideas of the beholder (on the subject). It exists, and the same thing is true about it, at the present day.

NOTES

NOTES

Here also are still to be seen the rock on which he dried his clothes, and the place where he converted the wicked dragon (Naga). "The rock is fourteen cubits high, and more than twenty broad, with one side of it smooth. From here my colleagues went on ahead towards (the place of) Buddha's shadow in the country of Nagara; but I stayed here for the summer".

Chinese Traveler Hiun-Tsiang The world outside India was always in search of this magic land. The Chinese were attracted to India for her fabulous wealth of learning since ancient times. Hiuen-Tsiang was one of the outstanding Chinese scholars who visited India in search of knowledge.

He was born at Ch'in Liu in the province of Hunan. At a young age of thirteen years he was ordained as a Buddhist priest, in the Tsing-tu temple.

He traveled extensively, in China, in search of an able teacher and when he failed he decided to visit India. In 630 A.D. at age of twenty six years he commenced his long dreamed journey without bothering, to obtain the permission of the emperor, or for his personal safety during a prolonged and tedious journey He traveled extensively in India.

He passed through Kashmir valley, visited Takshashila, and reached Mathura, where he saw the sacred traces of Lord Buddha at Kashi. He went to Kapilavastu, Kushinagar, Pataliputra, Vaishali, Mahabodhi, and stayed at the famed Nalanda university. Tsiang then visited Rajgir and Nepal. He also toured South India and paid a visit to Sri Lanka.

Hiuen Tsiang's visit to Nalanda Mahavihara meant the fulfillment of his life-long wishes which brought him to India. There he found profound learning, devotion, warm and cordial hospitality. Under the able guidance of Shilabhadra and Buddhahadra, he was able to extend his scholarship in a wider sense than he could have done elsewhere. He could study subjects like logic, grammar, linguistics, medicine, crafts and the Vedas in great detail.

He returned by the same route by which he had come to India. He collected very valuable information and manuscripts. Unfortunately while crossing the Indus river on the way back, his boat capsized and a number of documents were lost. However, some of these he was able to recover from the libraries at Kusha and Kashghar monasteries.

In the year 645 A.D. he was back in China. He had carried with him relics, golden and sandalwood statues of Lord Buddha, 224 books of the sutras, 192 Shastras, 15 works of the Sthavira schools, 67 books of the Sarvastivada school, and 17 works of the Kasyapiya school.

The emperor, although was upset by Hieun Tsiang's actions earlier, gave a hero's welcome upon return. The emperor also built a pagoda at the southern gate of the Hogn-Fu temple in Sigan-fu, in which Hiuen Tsinag's entire collection is protected and preserved. This noble act of the Chinese emperor enables the scholars of Buddhist studies could make use of this extremely valuable source material even today.

Sir William Jones The author pays tribute Sir William Jones, the great scholar and visionary, who came to India as a judge of the Supreme court, and with the help of Charles Wilkins, in 1784 started the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the journal Asiatic Researches. These two institutions were instrumental in establishing the field of Indology.

William Jones was born in London on 28th September 1746. His father died when William was only three years old, but his mother aroused boundless curiosity in him. At a tender age of twenty he became adept in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Greek, Latin and English.

His knowledge of Arabic and Persian made King Christian VII of Denmark assign him the translation of "Tariq-i-Nadiri" into French. He was made a fellow of the Royal Society in 1772 and in the following year, a member of the prestigious Literary Club of Dr. Johnson.

Jones arrived in India in September 1783 a judge in the Supreme Court in Calcutta. He realized that India had much to offer to the world in the sciences and the arts, and that the discovery of her rich past and culture could not be achieved by himself. He discussed with his colleagues and established the "Asiatic Society" on 15th January 1784, and this was a revolutionary event in the world of letters.

It marked the restoration of ancient learning in and about India. Jones realized that it was the East, which held the secrets of early history and civilization of man; and that unless the East was known, the history of man could not be written.

Jones invented the system of transliteration and translated the Laws of Manu (Manusmriti) into English. He was the first westerner to study and write a paper on Indian Classical Music, the first person to put forward a plan for classification of Indian plants and animals. He was instrumental for compilation of books on Botany, Zoology, Astronomy and Philosophy.

He declared that the Sanskrit language is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than the Latin and thus laid foundation for birth of Science of Linguistics. Thereafter, many western universities began founding chairs in Sanskrit. He translated Kalidasa's "Abhiknana Shakuntala" and "Ritu Samhara," and Jayadeva's "Gita Govinda" into English. This led to study of Indian dramatic literature and mythology. Further he also encouraged study of Indian chronology.

On 27th April 1794 he passed away because of an inflammation of liver. He was only forty eight years old, and a great progress in the study of India was untimely curtailed.

- Author interesting source of information in the accounts left by foreign writers. The earliest among them are the two Greek writers Herodotus and Ctesias both of whom must have derived their information indirectly through Persian sources. Herodotus gives some useful information along with a great deal of fairy tales. But the account of Ctesias largely consists of incredible tales.
- Far greater interest's attachment to the writing of those Greeks who accompanied Alexander to India and the account of Megasthenes.
- Though these works are mostly lost much has been preserved in books, based upon them. Written by later authors, these accounts contain a great deal of information that is both interesting and authentic but they suffer from the defects inherent in the writings of foreigners, ignorant of the language and customs of the country. While great importance naturally is attached to what they recorded from personal observation.
- Special reference must be made to the classical writers who have elucidated

NOTES

NOTES

- the geography and natural history of India The earliest of them is the anonymous author of the Periplus of the Erythraean sea.
- He was a Greek settled in Egypt, who made a voyage to the Indian coast about AD 80 and left a record of its ports, harbours and merchandise, It has preserved from oblivion a phase of the trade and maritime activity in ancient India, otherwise unknown Ptolemy wrote a geographical account of India in the second century AD on scientific lines.
 - The same may be said of Plin's account of Indian animals, Plants and minerals written in the first century AD. There were also many other writers of a later date. The same spirit was displayed a few centuries later by Arab sailors and merchants, Some of whom like Sulaiman and At Masudi have left brief records of India. The gap in the interval between the two periods is filled by Chinese writers both chronicles at home and pilgrims who visited India.
 - The writings of the Chinese travellers to India form a valuable supplement to the classical accounts. Three of them, Fa-Hien, (5th century AD) Hieun Tsang and I-tsing (7th century AD) are better known than others and have recorded their experience in fairly bulky volumes.
 - These eminent Chinese visitors were all devout Buddhist monks, whose journey to India was merely a pilgrimage to holy lands and whose outlook was purely religious.
 - Neither Fa-hien nor I-tsing refer to secular matters except very incidentally nor do they even mention the name of the king or kings whose dominions were visited by them Hiuen Tsang is not so circumscribed but gives some interesting information about his royal patron Harsha vardhana and other contemporary kings of India.
 - He also briefly refers to the political condition of the kingdom through which he passed and devotes an entire chapter to a general account of India. These are no doubt, very valuable but they form only a very small part of his extensive records which like those of Fa-Hien and I-tsing are otherwise devoted to a minute and detailed description of Buddhism to India- its rituals and practices sanctuaries and memories sects and doctrines, scriptures and traditions.

1.4 APPROACHES TO STUDY OF EARLY INDIAN HISTORY

While studying Indian history, we have to keep in mind various issues relating to the facts that we have. These facts are in form of evidence – however these facts are the raw material. These facts need to be analysed to extract useful information regarding history from such sources.

For example if we have a book from a particular period – we have to consider under what circumstances it was written, who wrote that book, what was his inclination or ideological disposition, what revisions that book has undergone, in which periods of history such revisions took place, who were the patrons of such revisions and so on.

Also, we have to keep in mind the disposition of the historians who have analysed these. This is because history is not just a reflection of past history, but also a reflection of current trends. So if a historian was closely linked to the freedom

movement, the nationalist streak becomes evident. Similarly if such historian is religious in disposition or favours certain ideological disposition, we can easily decipher such trends. We have to understand such issues because history is not just dates and chronicle of rulers, but a civilisational process. Only when we analyse it, we would be able to extract meaningful information from the sources.

Despite of India having great intellectual and literary activity, it is often complained that India lacked sense of history. This is because, India did not produce a Herodotus or Thucydides, not even a Livy or Tacitus. Also, we find absence of regular historical chronicle that we often find in other civilizations. We cannot complain of wholesale destruction as we do not find reference to such an event. Most of the cultural, traditional and religious knowledge was handed down through oral traditions. If records were kept in written mode, then, it is well possible that such materials were perishable and have perished with time.

However these does not mean that Ancient Indians lacked sense of History. We do find that there were political treaties and religious-historical texts of Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. There are also preserved long list of kings in traditional sources like Puranas and Epics. However as the matter in such texts relate to very early times, it is difficult to demarcate where the mythology ends and where the historical record begins.

The traditional sources come from different traditions / schools, and there is differences both in terms of data and interpretations, and therefore it becomes difficult to corroborate these data into meaningful history. Conclusions from these reached by different modern scholars show great divergence.

These works cannot be regarded as genuine history, as their objective was firstly, glorification of king, who were there patrons, and secondly, the authors were poets and related to literature, their goal was not to record life and times, but to show their literary and poetic skills. We therefore cannot compare the records passed on by them to be rigorous history as we understand it today.

In 7th century, Hieun Tsang noticed that kings had separate officials as chroniclers. Also, Land grants recorded genealogies of kings and family histories of the rich persons who were given such grants. There were also grants given by such kings, and merchants to religious establishments – these grants are also found and contain the family histories of such persons.

Two classes of work contributing to history were biographies and local chronicles. Many of these historical chronicles could not raise their status to sacred/religious heights of Puranas, nor they possessed critical element of texts like Rajatarangini, and so they could not survive through time. However some of these texts continue to exist in areas like Kashmir, Gujarat, Sind, Nepal etc, as these were preserved by the local rulers as part of family traditions.

All such sources calls for caution and they cannot be taken at their face value. This is because, often they may contain exaggerations regarding achievements of kings in wars and other exploits. These needs to be cross verified and can be counterchecked with any existing document/inscription of rival kings.

In terms of written records, Inscriptions are more useful and help to determine more accurately the Political history regarding the dates, dynasties and names of kings. These inscriptions being public in nature are more nearer to truth than personal records. They are also indicative of the territorial jurisdiction of kings. Records of vassal chiefs and coins also corroborate territorial claims.

NOTES

NOTES

We can also well understand the literary and linguistic styles prevalent during those times. Some indications can also be had regarding the nature of society – eg prior to Guptas, more than 95% inscriptions are in Prakrit and subsequent to Guptas, it is just the reverse. Epigraphic evidence has been the principal source of our information for ancient India as they provide us with hard and unalterable evidence, compared to written sources which have undergone multiple revisions.

Such situations have both its positives and negatives. We find a vast treasury of texts which represent the intellectual and literary activities. These deal mostly with philosophy, religion, ethics, political & economic doctrines, socio-legal texts, lyrics, kavyas, dramas etc. The interesting point is that such vast literature are mostly absent in civilisations like those of ancient Egypt, West Asia, China etc.

However, the flip side is that Ancient India did not produce any historical treatise, if current standards of history writing (critical / impartial / perspective oriented) is taken. They contain names, dynasties, events, speculative and religious philosophy and so on – the analysis and social history is absent.

13th century is the dividing line, when rigorous, detailed and content rich history started to be written. This happened with the advent of Muslim historians accompanying their warlords. Though many of them could be called secular, even they relate primarily to matters of king and state. A sound historical reconstruction should also take into account developments in other ancient societies. A comparative approach gives a better understanding of developments in our own history.

APPROACHES OF HISTORIANS

Colonial View: In India, the main development of History and Archaeology as a proper discipline took place during the colonial times. The British scholars constituted various segments – some were missionaries, indologists, officials etc, and many of them were guided by their own preferences and prejudices. Some prominent names includes William Jones (Asiatic Society), Charles Wilkins, Max Muller, VA Smith (Cambridge school) among others.

The main conclusion of their approach was that ancient Indians lacked sense of history and for them spiritualism was most important. Indians were accustomed to despotic rule, which in a way gave the imperial masters a justification for their own despotic rule in India.

They also thought that in India, traditions like caste system was more important and consequently Indians did not have feeling of nationhood leading to lack of self government among them. Such view was again a justification of status-quo for India's colonial status.

Also, their yardstick used to be the Hellenic civilisation – which in various ways tended to curb impartiality that is required in Historical analysis. British and European scholars thought they were on a civilising mission to India.

By denying the rich cultural past, they justified colonialism and despotic imperialism. And worst of that by denigrating cultural/religious aspects of India they aimed to convert people to Christianity. Element of racial superiority was evident and that clearly aimed at showing that Indians were incapable of governing themselves.

This is not to say that western scholars did not contribute anything. Ashokan inscriptions could be deciphered because of their efforts. Many of the traditional books and Vedas were translated into European languages by the indologists. This led to greater awareness of India in the west. These also affected the Indian educated class in various ways.

APPROACH OF INDIAN HISTORIANS

The challenge posed by western imperial scholars made a set of Indian scholars aim to bring social reforms in the society. This was aimed along with the aim to reconstruct and reinterpret ancient history. There were different strands among Indian historians with different objectives and orientation.

The Rationalist and Objective strand made a case for social reform. The social and political history was also reconstructed. eg. Rajendralal Mitra's 'Indo Aryans', demonstrated that in ancient times people took beef; RG Bhandarkar through his research advocated widow marriages and castigated evils of caste system and child marriages; VK Rajwade wrote history of institution of marriage; PV Kane's work 'History of Dharmashastra' enabled a study of ancient social laws.

The Nationalist Historiography wanted to challenge the imperial historians on political issues and demonstrated through their research, the ability of Indians at self governance in past. They thereby reconstructed political history of India.

This was inspired by idea of nationalism and was written at a pan Indian level. eg. DR Bhandarkar, an epigraphist published books on Asoka & ancient Indian political institutions; HC Raychaudhury reconstructed the history of India from time of Bharata war upto Gupta times; KP Jayaswal & AS Altekar emphasised importance of ruling dynasties in liberating the country from foreign rule' of Sakas and Kushans; KP Jayaswal exploded the myth of Indian despotism and showed that Republics existed in ancient times and enjoyed measure of self government in 'Hindu Polity'.

As the Hindu religious practices was under strain due to various issues relating to caste, illtreatment of widows, etc, the Hindu Revivalism aimed at making the past a glorification for Hindus so that the current quagmire into which the religion had come into could be corrected. Some of the scholars belonging to this strand were also political leaders who participated in social reform movements towards betterment of women and equality of castes. These included people like BG Tilak and Savarkar. Scholars like RC Majumdar are also considered to be part of such strand. He was the general editor of 'History & Culture of Indian People' in the post independent period.

Local History: Some Historians reserached particular areas for historical purposes. Most important among them was Nilkantha Sastri who wrote 'A history of South India' and emphasised the cultural supremacy of Brahmins and harmony that prevailed in early Indian society.

Non Political Historiography

Al Basham in 'Wonder that was India' believed that past should be read out of curiosity. For him, history was to be written with a sympathetic survey of various facets. His research became much famous and a recommended book and remains popular till date. Coming from a westerner, such a book was in sharp contrast to the prejudices displayed by British authors like Vincent Smith.

NOTES

NOTES

Marxist Historiography

Another important strand related to those historians who preferred to see history from the point of dialectics. DD Koshambi in his book *An Introduction to Study of Indian History and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline* follows material interpretation of history.

These drew inspiration from writings of Marx. History of ancient Indian society was presented by them as an integral part of development of forces and relation of production. It is quite pertinent to note that even Karl Marx had written his notes on Indian History with his observations on India. In present times Romila Thapar among others is considered to be a major exponent of this school.

Post independence, research in History has become localised with various institutions concentrating on research in history of their area. The emphasis has now shifted to social history and its various dimensions.

There has also been much cross disciplinary studies that included history with sociology, anthropology, economics and political economy. Issues like stratification, rituals, caste, kinship, religious development and their role in shaping political structures etc have now become more important.

1.5 GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS BEHIND PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENTS

A human settlement grows out of a specific geographic location, a particular spot of earth, and its characteristics, potentialities, and very destiny are derived from the qualities of that particular place. The settlement draws its sustenance from and adapts its economy to the surrounding indigenous flora and fauna, to the mineral treasures of its encompassing landforms, and to the entire resource base of its subregion, including its soils, forests, and waterways. A beneficial initial placement bestows enormous economic and strategic "comparative advantages" in relations and trade with other settlements or other societies.

The associated climatic factors involved in geographic placement will be direct influences on such details as the choice of building materials, the substance and purpose of local crafts and industries, the subsistence patterns of food production and storage, the structure of socio-cultural and kinship organization, and even the interpretation of numinous supernatural phenomena resulting in a religious or spiritual predilection. Especially in pre-industrial times, before the creation of settlements became a predominantly engineering problem with a standard blueprint applied to all situations, a human settlement could be considered a unique anthropomorphological outgrowth of specific eco-geographic circumstances, custom fit to serve a particular function within the larger whole of the composite society. With all these considerations, human geography becomes an indispensable comprehension tool in the ekistic analysis of a culture's settlement patterns.

A basic type of periodization is to divide all of time into "prehistory" and "history." Usually the distinction is based on whether or not the people left written records, but the presence of written records is very closely tied to the beginnings of agriculture. Scholars are not entirely sure about when human beings first appeared on earth, but new discoveries continue to push the date further back in time. So "prehistory," lasted for millions of years.

NOTES

The first humans probably emerged in eastern Africa, due to a happy confluence of availability of food and domesticable animals and favorable climate. For thousands of years humans sustained themselves as hunters and gatherers, and as a result were quite dependent on the abundance of food. Hunters gained skills in capturing and killing animals, and gatherers learned which plants and fruits were edible and nutritious. Technological inventions generally supported the fulfillment of these basic activities. Stones (and eventually metals) were shaped as tools and weapons, and techniques were developed for efficient gathering and storage of food.

By 8000 BCE, humans had migrated to many other areas, probably following the herds and other available food sources. Major migrations include:

- Early Africans to Australia, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia.
- Asians across the land bridge to the America.

Our knowledge of prehistoric people is limited, partly because they lived so long ago, and partly because they left no written records. However, archaeologists have found evidence of these generally shared characteristics of prehistoric people:

(1) **Social structure** - Most people traveled in small bands, and authority was based on family relationships. Men took leadership roles, but women were highly valued for their gathering skills. Labor was generally divided based on gender, with men as hunters and women as gatherers. However, status differences between men and women were generally not wide, with relative gender equality apparently characterizing their group life.

(2) **Beliefs** - Archaeological evidence suggests that prehistoric people were guided by their beliefs in spirits and sacred places. Their cave drawings and traces of their cultural objects indicate that they believed in an afterlife, although they probably did not practice polytheism, or a belief in many gods. Instead, polydaemonism, or the belief in many spirits (not specific gods), probably describes their religion more accurately. Bushes, rocks, trees, plants, or streams could be inhabited by these spirits, who often appeared to communicate with humans.

The prehistoric era includes the early stages of agriculture from about 10,000 to 4,000 BCE, but once settlement began, the stage was set for the development of reading and writing and the period known as "history."

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PERIODIZATION ISSUES

When, how, and why did people give up their wandering and settle to live in one place? First of all, it happened in different parts of the world at different times, but settled communities had developed in many places by 8000 BCE. The ability to settle was based almost entirely on successful cultivation of crops and domestication of animals. These drastic changes in human life are known collectively as the Neolithic Revolution that almost certainly happened independently in different places over a large span of time. For example, the people settling along the major rivers in China did not learn to farm because they were in contact with the people in the Indus River area. Instead, people in both areas probably figured out the advantages of settled life on their own. Although the Neolithic Revolution was one of the most significant Marker Events in world history, it occurred gradually and probably by trial and error.

NOTES

The changes that resulted include:

- **Increase in reliable food supplies** - Agricultural skills allowed people to control food production, and domestication of animals both helped to make agricultural production more efficient and increased the availability of food.
- **Rapid increase in total human population** - Reliable food supplies meant that people were less likely to starve to death. With increasing life spans came increasing reproduction, and more children meant that there were more people to tend the land and animals.
- **Job specialization** - Other occupations than farming developed, since fewer people were needed to produce food. Some early specialized jobs include priests, traders, and builders.
- **Widening of gender differences** - Status distinctions between men and women increased, as men took over most agricultural cultivation and domestication of animals. Women were responsible for raising children, cooking food, and keeping the house, but in virtually all of the early civilizations men became more and more dominant. A patriarchal system commonly developed, with men holding power in the family, the economy, and the government.
- **Development of distinction between settled people and "nomads"** - All people did not settle into communities but remained as hunters and gatherers. As more settled communities developed, the distinction between agriculturalists and hunters and gatherers grew.

THE NATURE OF CIVILIZATION

These changes in turn allowed the development of "civilization," a basic organizing principle in world history. Civilization may be defined in many ways, but it is generally characterized by:

- **Large cities that dominate the countryside around them** - Growing populations required more food production, so the cities controlled their hinterlands in order to guarantee a reliable and continuous supply of food for their inhabitants.
- **Monumental architecture and public building projects that take many forms** - They may include temples, palaces, irrigation projects, city walls, public arenas, government buildings, and aqueducts.
- **A complex political organization** - In order to coordinate activities and provide protection for the cities and hinterlands, governments developed. The larger the area and population, the more demanding political positions became, and control of the government began to move away from kinship ties. Although many early rulers passed their authority down to their sons, other factors became important, such as military prowess and ability.
- **A written language** - This important development in human history allowed societies to organize and maintain the growing political, social, and economic structure that followed settlement into agricultural areas. Those societies that developed a written language were able to communicate multiple ideas and large amounts of information that in turn encouraged greater complexity and growth.

- **Specialization of labor** - With basic food needs taken care of by fewer people, others may specialize in jobs that help to improve the quality of life. For example, engineers may construct bigger and better irrigation systems, and bureaucrats may increase their level of government services.
- **Advanced art and literature** - In prehistoric times and in simple communities, most artwork and literature was (is) produced by people who were preoccupied with activities that sustained their lives, such as hunting and gathering or farming. Art consisted of simple drawings, and literature usually took the form of oral stories passed down from one generation to the next. With the advent of civilization, some people had the time to concentrate on art and literature, making them their primary occupation.
- **Long distance trade** - As technologies improved and specialization increased, trade with other civilization centers began. This trade led to cultural diffusion, or the spreading and sharing of cultural characteristics. Not only was material culture - objects such as pottery, tools, and textiles - shared, but nonmaterial culture - such as beliefs, customs, and values - also spread, contributing to the cosmopolitan nature of cities.

NOTES

1.6 PALEOLITHIC AGE

The human beings living in the Paleolithic Age were essentially food gatherers and depended on nature for food. The art of hunting and stalking wild animals individually and later in groups led to these people making stone weapons and tools. First, crudely carved out stones were used in hunting, but as the size of the groups began to increase and there was need for more food, these people began to make "specialized tools" by flaking stones, which were pointed on one end. These kind of tools were generally used to kill small animals and for tearing flesh from the carcass of the hunted animals. The basic technique of making these crude tools was by taking a stone and flaking its sides with a heavier stone. These tools were characteristic of the Paleolithic Age and were very rough. By this time, human beings had come to make and use fire.

The period, also known as the stone age, encompasses the first widespread use of technology—as humans progressed from simpler to more complex developmental stages—and the spread of humanity from the savannas of East Africa to the rest of the world. It is generally said to have begun approximately 500,000 years ago and to have ended about 6,000 B.C.E. It ends with the development of agriculture, the domestication of certain animals, and the smelting of copper ore to produce metal. It is termed pre-historical, since humanity had not yet started writing—which is seen as the traditional start of (recorded) history. Knowledge of human life at this time is confined to generalities. Scientists do not have records of individual lives or of the achievements of individual contributors to human development. As technology enabled humans to settle in larger numbers, however, more rules were needed to regulate life, which gave rise to ethical codes. Religious belief, reflected in cave art, also became more sophisticated. Death and burial rites evolved. As hunting and gathering gave way to agriculture and as some people became artisans, trading implements they produced, even larger settlements. Art (such as the cave paintings) and music also developed as some people had more time for leisure. Human society emerged as more self-consciously

NOTES

collective. People became aware that they faced the same challenges, so cooperation was better than competition. In the early Paleolithic period, each clan or family group regarded themselves as "the people" to the exclusion of others. Strangers may not even have been thought of as human. With settlement, this changed and community identity became more important than individual identity.

To begin with the Palaeolithic Age was also called the old stone age covered the long period from the time the first ancestors of modern human beings started living in the Indian subcontinent from roughly 3 lakh B.C to 8000 or eighth millennium B.C. Archeologists divide it into three phases -the Lower or Early, the middle and the upper Palaeolithic age-according to the nature of the stone tools used by the people.

FOOD

Food sources of the early hunter-gatherer humans of the Paleolithic Age included both animals and plants that were part of the natural environment in which these humans lived, often animal organ meats, including the liver, kidneys, and brains. They consumed little dairy food or carbohydrate-rich plant foods like legumes or cereal grains.

Current research indicates that two-thirds of the energy was derived from animal foods. The fat content of the diet was believed to be similar to that of the present day, but the ratio of the types of fats consumed differed: the Omega-6 to Omega-3 ratio was about 3:1 compared to 12:1 of today.

ART

Prehistoric art can only be traced from surviving artifacts. Prehistoric music is inferred from found instruments, while parietal art can be found on rocks of any kind. The latter are petroglyphs and rock paintings. The art may or may not have had a religious function.

ROCK PAINTINGS

Rock paintings were "painted" on rock and were more naturalistic depictions than petroglyphs. In paleolithic times, the representation of humans in cave paintings was rare. Mostly, animals were painted: not only animals that were used as food but also animals that represented strength like horses, the rhinoceros or large cats. Signs like dots were sometimes drawn. Rare human representations include hand prints and half-human/half-animal figures.

The meaning of the paintings remains unknown. The caves were not in an inhabited area, so they may have been used for seasonal rituals. The animals are accompanied by signs which suggest a possible magic use.

PALEOLITHIC AGE RITUALS AND BELIEFS

Modern studies and the in-depth analysis of finds dating from the Paleolithic Age indicate certain rituals and beliefs of the people in those prehistoric times. It is now believed that activities of the Paleolithic Age humans went beyond the immediate requirements of procuring food, body coverings, and shelters. Specific rites relating to death and burial were practiced, though certainly differing in

style and execution between cultures. Several Paleolithic Age-dated sites in different parts of the world indicate traces of dancing, dancing in files, and initiation rites.

A lot of what scholars write about Paleolithic religion is speculation. However, it is surmised that Paleolithic humans thought that spirits inhabited not only animate but also inanimate objects. When they ate animal parts, they acquired the swiftness or the cunning or the strength of that animal. The world's existence may have been explained with reference to a male and a female God copulating and producing the elements. Fortune and misfortune was explained by saying that the deities were pleased or angry. Since trees and stones also had spirits, the world was regarded as at least semi-sacred. Objects, too, were to be respected. In a simple way, Paleolithic men and women may have achieved a balance with their environment, in which there were many dangers but also much that made life more bearable. Some scholars have speculated that primitive magic was used to try to control the wind and the rain but that when this proved unsuccessful, supplication was made to the spirits of the elements instead. In this view, magic was a type of primitive science, while religion was a projection of responsibility onto imaginary beings. Paleolithic people appear to have prayed for the welfare of community, rather than of individuals, so that individual welfare and group welfare merged. It has been speculated that morality was agreed through discussion.

NOTES

1.7 MESOLITHIC AGE

The Mesolithic Age lasted from 8000 B.C - 4000 B.C. In this age the size of the groups grew to form small communities. The number of mouths to feed increased and needed constant nurturing for continuation. The tools improved and became more refined and sharp. There was a drastic change in the food and clothing of man. The tools were modified and now the sharp stones were attached to strong tree branches using ropes and vines. These new weapons or hand axes could be flung on animals from a safe distance. Apart from this, farming techniques were developed and man began to grow crops. Man also learnt to draw and paint and the evidence is found in the form of cave paintings found in India.

It is the intermediate or transitional stage between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic age. The tools of this age are called microliths. Neolithic Age: Third is the Neolithic age or the new Stone Age that covered the period roughly from 4000 to 1800 BC and was marked by the use of polished stone tools.

As time passed and the size of "families" grew in small communities, there was a constant need to feed all the members of the community and to lead a life of subsistence. In the Mesolithic Age, the stone tools began to be made more pointed and sharp. To ensure a life that had abundance of food and clothing (rough animal skin garments were being worn by the Stone Age man), the stone tools began to appear in increasingly specialized way. The simple handheld stone tools were now attached to thick branches from trees with rope made from animal skin and sinew. These tools are known as hand axes, which could be flung at fast-moving animals from a distance. Apart from hand axes, they also produced crude stone-tipped wooden spears, adzes, borers, and burins. This period also saw the domestication of plants and growing of wild varieties of crops. Because of farming,

NOTES

small settlements began to take shape. Archaeological excavations have unearthed Mesolithic sites in the Chotta Nagpur area of central India and the areas south of the Krishna River. The famous Bhimbetka caves near Bhopal belong to the Mesolithic Age and are famous for their cave paintings. The art of the prehistoric man can be seen in all its glory with the depiction of wild animals, hunting scenes, ritual scenes and scenes from day-to-day life of the period. The exact date of these paintings is not certain, but the oldest paintings are as old as 12,000 years. The prehistoric artist used natural white and red pigments in depicting the various themes, which were close to his heart and sustenance.

The Mesolithic is the period of middle Stone Age, from about 10,000 - 5,000 BC years ago. It corresponds to period of primarily nomadic hunting and gathering which preceded the adoption of domesticated plants and animals.

The term Mesolithic is used to characterize that period in Europe and, sometimes, parts of Africa and Asia. That stage is usually called the Archaic in the Americas and in the rest of the world, it's usually characterized by Microliths.

This was a period when humans developed new techniques of stone working. At that time, people stayed longer in one place and gave increased attention to the domestication. There is a gap in the artistic activity of people of that epoch. Most of what has survived from the Mesolithic era is small statuette size works and paintings in shallow shelter caves.

The rich art of the Paleolithic is replaced by a Mesolithic art that is quite different. There are many changes in style as well as meaning. Upper Paleolithic cave art depicts colored drawings and expressive features of animals. A full range of color is used. Mesolithic art in contrast is schematic; no realistic figures are present and only the color red is used. This form is also found in North Africa and the northern Mediterranean.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The Stone Age in India begins with the Paleolithic and terminates after the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age). The Paleolithic dates back to the geological era of Middle Pleistocene. Paleolithic sites abound in Peninsular India, and are found more prominently at Pallavaram in Tamil Nadu, Hunsgi in Karnataka, Kuliana in Orissa, Didwana in Rajasthan, and Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh.

The Mesolithic sites far outnumber the Paleolithic ones, and are located all over the country. Synonymous with the advanced hunting, fishing, and food-gathering economy, Mesolithic usually corresponds to the immediate post-Pleistocene or early Holocene (about 10,000 years ago) period. The beginning of the disposal of dead, and the formation of band level society also characterised this period. The early rock paintings depicting hunting and ritual scenes are the period's most remarkable legacies.

1.8 NEOLITHIC AGE

The Neolithic Age (4000 BC-2500 BC) or the New Stone Age was the last phase of the Stone Age and is characterized by very finely flaked, small stone tools, also known as blades and burins. These stone blades are so sharp that the modern blades cannot match their smooth surface and cutting edges. The Neolithic Age also saw the domestication of cattle, horses, and other farm animals,

which were used for dairy and meat products. An important invention of this time was the making of the wheel.

The Neolithic Age quickly gave way to a number of small "cultures" that were highly technical. These people used copper and bronze to make a range of utilitarian tools. This phase or period is termed as the Chalcolithic Age (1800 BC-1000 BC). A number of such sites have been found in the Chotta Nagpur Plateau region, the upper Gangetic basin, Karnataka and near the banks of river Narmada.

The aceramic Neolithic (Mehrgarh I, Baluchistan, Pakistan, also dubbed "Early Food Producing Era") lasts ca. 7000 - 5500 BC. The ceramic Neolithic lasts up to 3300 BC, blending into the Early Harappan (Chalcolithic to Early Bronze Age) period. One of the earliest Neolithic sites in India is Lahuradewa, at Middle Ganges region, C14 dated around 7th millennium BC.. Recently another site near the confluence of Ganges and Yamuna rivers called Jhusi yielded a C14 dating of 7100 BC for its Neolithic levels.

In South India the Neolithic began by 3000 BC and lasted until around 1400 BC. South Indian Neolithic is characterized by Ashmounds since 2500 BC in Andhra-Karnataka region, expanded later to Tamil Nadu. Comparative excavations carried out in Adichanallur in Thirunelveli District and in Northern India have provided evidence of a southward migration of the Megalithic culture. The earliest clear evidence of the presence of the megalithic urn burials are those dating from around 1000 BC, which have been discovered at various places in Tamil Nadu, notably at Adichanallur, 24 km from Tirunelveli, where archaeologists from the Archaeological Survey of India unearthed 12 urns with Tamil Brahmi script on them containing human skulls, skeletons and bones, plus husks, grains of rice, charred rice and Neolithic celts, giving evidence confirming it of the Neolithic period 2800 years ago. This proved that Tirunelveli area has been the abode for human habitation since the Neolithic period about 3,000 years ago. Adichanallur has been announced as an archaeological site for further excavation and studies.

SOUTH AND EAST ASIA

The oldest Neolithic site in South Asia is Mehrgarh from 7000 BC. It lies on the "Kachi plain of Baluchistan, Pakistan, and is one of the earliest sites with evidence of farming (wheat and barley) and herding (cattle, sheep and goats) in South Asia."

One of the earliest Neolithic sites in India is Lahuradewa, at Middle Ganges region, C14 dated around 7th millennium BCE. Recently another site near the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers called Jhusi yielded a C14 dating of 7100 BCE for its Neolithic levels. A new 2009 report by archaeologist Rakesh Tewari on Lahuradewa shows new C14 datings that range between 8000 BCE and 9000 BCE associated with rice, making Lahuradewa the earliest Neolithic site in entire South Asia.

In South India, the Neolithic began by 3000 BCE and lasted until around 1400 BCE when the Megalithic transition period began. South Indian Neolithic is characterized by Ashmounds since 2500 BCE in Karnataka region, expanded later to Tamil Nadu.

In East Asia, the earliest sites include Pengtoushan culture around 7500 BCE to 6100 BCE, Peiligang culture around 7000 BCE to 5000 BCE.

NOTES

NOTES

The 'Neolithic' (defined in this paragraph as using polished stone implements) remains a living tradition in small and extremely remote and inaccessible pockets of West Papua (Indonesian New Guinea). Polished stone adze and axes are used in the present day (As of 2008^[update] CE) in areas where the availability of metal implements is limited. This is likely to cease altogether in the next few years as the older generation die off and steel blades and chainsaws prevail.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

During most of the Neolithic age, people lived in small tribes of 150–2000 members that were composed of multiple bands or lineages. There is little scientific evidence of developed social stratification in most Neolithic societies; social stratification is more associated with the later Bronze Age. Neolithic societies were noticeably more hierarchical than the Paleolithic cultures that preceded them and Hunter-gatherer cultures in general. The domestication of animals (8000 BC) resulted in a dramatic increase in social inequality. Possession of livestock allowed competition between households and resulted in inherited inequalities of wealth. Neolithic pastoralists who controlled large herds gradually acquired more livestock, and this made economic inequalities more pronounced. However, evidence of social inequality is still disputed, as settlements such as Lahuradewa reveal a striking lack of difference in the size of homes and burial sites, suggesting a more egalitarian society with no evidence of the concept of capital, although some homes do appear slightly larger or more elaborately decorated than others.

Families and households were still largely independent economically, and the household was probably the center of life.

SHELTER

The shelter of the early people changed dramatically from the paleolithic to the neolithic era. In the paleolithic, people did not normally live in permanent constructions. In the neolithic, mud brick houses started appearing that were coated with plaster. The growth of agriculture made permanent houses possible. Doorways were made on the roof, with ladders positioned both on the inside and outside of the houses. The roof was supported by beams from the inside. The rough ground was covered by platforms, mats, and skins on which residents slept.

FARMING

A significant and far-reaching shift in human subsistence and lifestyle was to be brought about in areas where crop farming and cultivation were first developed: the previous reliance on an essentially nomadic hunter-gatherer subsistence technique or pastoral transhumance was at first supplemented, and then increasingly replaced by, a reliance upon the foods produced from cultivated lands. These developments are also believed to have greatly encouraged the growth of settlements, since it may be supposed that the increased need to spend more time and labor in tending crop fields required more localized dwellings. This trend would continue into the Bronze Age, eventually giving rise to towns, and later cities and states whose larger populations could be sustained by the increased productivity from cultivated lands.

The profound differences in human interactions and subsistence methods associated with the onset of early agricultural practices in the Neolithic have been called the Neolithic Revolution, a term coined in the 1920s by the Australian archaeologist Vere Gordon Childe.

One potential benefit of the development and increasing sophistication of farming technology was the possibility of producing surplus crop yields, in other words, food supplies in excess of the immediate needs of the community. Surpluses could be stored for later use, or possibly traded for other necessities or luxuries. Agricultural life afforded securities that pastoral life could not, and sedentary farming populations grew faster than nomadic.

However, early farmers were also adversely affected in times of famine, such as may be caused by drought or pests. In instances where agriculture had become the predominant way of life, the sensitivity to these shortages could be particularly acute, affecting agrarian populations to an extent that otherwise may not have been routinely experienced by prior hunter-gatherer communities. Nevertheless, agrarian communities generally proved successful, and their growth and the expansion of territory under cultivation continued.

Another significant change undergone by many of these newly-agrarian communities was one of diet. Pre-agrarian diets varied by region, season, available local plant and animal resources and degree of pastoralism and hunting. Post-agrarian diet was restricted to a limited package of successfully cultivated cereal grains, plants and to a variable extent domesticated animals and animal products. Supplementation of diet by hunting and gathering was to variable degrees precluded by the increase in population above the carrying capacity of the land and a high sedentary local population concentration. In some cultures, there would have been a significant shift toward increased starch and plant protein. The relative nutritional benefits and drawbacks of these dietary changes, and their overall impact on early societal development is still debated.

In addition, increased population density, decreased population mobility, increased continuous proximity to domesticated animals, and continuous occupation of comparatively population-dense sites would have altered sanitation needs and patterns of disease.

TECHNOLOGY

Neolithic peoples were skilled farmers, manufacturing a range of tools necessary for the tending, harvesting and processing of crops (such as sickle blades and grinding stones) and food production (e.g. pottery, bone implements). They were also skilled manufacturers of a range of other types of stone tools and ornaments, including projectile points, beads, and statuettes. But what allowed forest clearance on a large scale was the polished stone axe above all other tools. Together with the adze, fashioning wood for shelter, structures and canoes for example, this enabled them to exploit their newly won farmland.

NEOLITHIC TOOLS

The stone tools of the Neolithic age bear unmistakable signs of polish either all over the tools or at the buttend and working-end, or only at the working end. They fashioned their tools out of fine-grained dark-green trap, though there

NOTES

are examples of the use of diorite, basalt, slate, chlorite, schist, indurated shale, gneiss, sand stone and quartzite.

CLOTHING

NOTES

Most clothing appears to have been made of animal skins, as indicated by finds of large numbers of bone and antler pins which are ideal for fastening leather, but not cloth. However, wool cloth and linen might have become available during the Indian Neolithic, as suggested by finds of perforated stones which (depending on size) may have served as spindle whorls or loom weights.

OCCUPATION

Neolithic settlers were cattle-herders and agriculturists. They produced ragi, wheat, barley, rice, masoor, moong, kulthi etc. Hand-made pottery is also found in the early stage. Elephant, rhino, buffalo, ox, stag remains are also found in plenty. But there is no specification of these domesticated. The pottery were well made but were coarse in nature, not that much polished.

Red, Grey, Black and Red Ware, Black Burnished Ware and Mat-impressed Wars are associated with this culture.

Tools making was another important occupation which included a variety of picks, scrapers, eyed needles, bodkins and pierced batons.

1.9 CHALCOLITHIC AGE

Towards the end of the Neolithic period began the use of metals. First metal to be used was copper and the culture of that time is called Chalcolithic culture. The earliest settlements belonging to this phase are extended from the Chhotanagpur plateau to the copper Gangetic basin. Some sites are found at Brahmagiri near Mysore and Navada Toli on the Narmada.

The transition from use of stone to the use of metals is slow and long drawn. There is no doubt that there was an overlapping period when both stone and metals were used. This is proved by the close resemblance of metallic tools and implements with those made of stone. The Chalcolithic i.e. copper bronze age or stone-copper age of India produced a splendid civilisation in the Indus Valley which spread in the neighbouring regions.

OCCUPATION

Their economy was based on subsistence agriculture, stock-raising, hunting and fishing. Their tools consisted of a specialised blade and flake of silicious material like chalcedony and chert. Copper and bronze tools were present in a limited number. The culture shares the common characteristic of painted pottery.

BURIAL PRACTICES

Another striking feature was the burial practice of the dead. The dead were buried in north-south position in Maharashtra but in east-west position in south India. In eastern India, only a fraction of population buried their dead.

Chalcolithic Settlement Pattern

- Largest - Diamabad

- Town features at Diamabad and Inamgaon
- Town Planning - Inamgaon
- Fortification - Nagada, Inamgaon, Diamabad, Balathal
- Baked Brick Evidence - Gilund
- Stone Dwellings - Ahar
- Chiefly circular and rectangular houses have been found
- Microliths have been found from Ahar
- Flat, Rectangular copper axe have been found from Jorwey and Chandoli
- Chief Crop Barley
- Evidence of Rice has been found from Inamgaon
- Fire Altars and Fire Worksip were prevalent
- Inner Funeral System
- North South direction of burials
- East West direction of burials were prevalent in South India

NOTES

About Pottery and Types

Pottery	Type
Ahar	Red Ware
Kayatha	Deep Red Ware
Malwa	Deep Brown & Black
Saalda	Pictographic (Red & Black)
Jorwe	Pictographic (Red & Black)
Prabhas	Pictographic (Red & Black)
Rangpur	Polished Red

1.10 BEGINNING OF AGRICULTURE

Indian agriculture began by 9000 BC as a result of early cultivation of plants, and domestication of crops and animals. Settled life soon followed with implements and techniques being developed for agriculture. Wheat, barley, and jujube were domesticated in the Indian subcontinent by 9000 BCE; Domestication of sheep and goat soon followed. Barley and wheat cultivation—along with the domestication of cattle, primarily sheep and goat—continued in Mehrgarh culture by 8000-6000 BCE. This period also saw the first domestication of the elephant. Agro pastoralism in India included threshing, planting crops in rows—either of two or of six—and storing grain in granaries. By the 5th millennium BCE agricultural communities became widespread in Kashmir. Cotton was cultivated by the 5th millennium BCE-4th millennium BCE.

Archaeological evidence indicates that rice was a part of the Indian diet by 8000 BCE. The Encyclopedia Britannica—on the subject of the first certain cultivated rice—holds that: "A number of cultures have evidence of early rice cultivation, including China, India, and the civilizations of Southeast Asia."

Irrigation was developed in the Indus Valley Civilization by around 4500 BCE. The size and prosperity of the Indus civilization grew as a result of this innovation, which eventually led to more planned settlements making use of drainage and sewers. Archeological evidence of an animal-drawn plough dates back to 2500 BC in the Indus Valley Civilization.

UNIT — II

INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

NOTES

The sensational discoveries made at Harappa in West Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sind have revolutionised our idea of ancient Indian history. From the meagre evidence it may be concluded that the civilization represented by these two cities commonly known as the Indus Valley Civilization belonged to the first half of the third millennium B.C. Further evidence indicates that they continued well into the second millennium B.C. Sir John Marshall the eminent Indologist opines that the civilization revealed at these two places leads one to the inference that it is not an incipient one but had begun ages earlier with many millennia of human endeavour behind it. The same high authority goes farther and declares that the civilization of India is even superior to that of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

The Indus-Valley people were well-acquainted with the use both of cotton and wool. The numerous specimens of pottery, seals, bracelets etc reveal that arts and crafts flourished. The people lived a very comfortable life in well built houses and baths. The streets were all well planned and drains regularly drained out. It was essentially urban civilization. The merchant class contributed to the general prosperity and trade contacts seem to have been established with the Sumerian and Mesopotamian civilization of those times.

There are many unsolved problems relating to the Indus Valley Civilization. For instance numerous seals have been discovered with inscriptions of the figures of animals and names in a script which is undecipherable. Sir John Marshall says that nothing that we know of in other countries bears any resemblance in point of style to the models of rams, dogs or the intaglio engravings on the seals—the best of which are distinguished by a breadth of treatment and a feeling for line and plastic form that have hardly been surpassed in glyptic art. It was not the Aryans who brought civilization to India which is rather untenable stand taken by Indo-Germanic scholars who seem to think that anything good in the world could have come from Aryan Race.

The most striking deity of the Harappa culture is the horned God inscribed on the seals. Sir John Marshall called this God proto Shiva and this horned god has certainly much in common with the Siva of later Aryan Hinduism. How the Indus Valley Civilization came to an end is still a matter in the realm of speculation. Professor Childe says that it is possible that the river Indus became inundated and destroyed the cities and villages. It is also possible that climatic changes over a long period reduced the populated part of the land into the barren desert.

1.11 ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

The Indus Valley Civilization was a Bronze Age civilization (3300–1300 BCE; mature period 2600–1900 BCE) which was centred mostly in the western part of the Indian Subcontinent and which flourished around the Indus River basin. Primarily centered along the Indus and the Punjab region, the civilization extended into the Ghaggar-Hakra River valley and the Ganges-Yamuna Doab, encompassing

NOTES

most of what is now Pakistan, as well as extending into the westernmost states of modern-day India, southeastern Afghanistan and the easternmost part of Balochistan, Iran. The mature phase of this civilization is known as the Harappan Civilization, as the first of its cities to be unearthed was the one at Harappa, excavated in the 1920s in what was at the time the Punjab province of British India (now in Pakistan). Excavation of Indus Valley Civilization sites have been ongoing since 1920, with important breakthroughs occurring as recently as 1999. Mohenjo-Daro, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is another well-known Indus Valley Civilization archeological site.

DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION

The ruins of Harappa were first described in 1842 by Charles Masson in his *Narrative of Various Journeys in Balochistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab*, where locals talked of an ancient city extending "thirteen cosses" (about 25 miles), but no archaeological interest would attach to this for nearly a century.

In 1856, British engineers John and William Brunton were laying the East Indian Railway Company line connecting the cities of Karachi and Lahore. John wrote: "I was much exercised in my mind how we were to get ballast for the line of the railway." They were told of an ancient ruined city near the lines, called Brahminabad. Visiting the city, he found it full of hard well-burnt bricks, and "convinced that there was a grand quarry for the ballast I wanted," the city of Brahminabad was reduced to ballast. A few months later, further north, John's brother William Brunton's "section of the line ran near another ruined city, bricks from which had already been used by villagers in the nearby village of Harappa at the same site. These bricks now provided ballast along 93 miles (150 km) of the railroad track running from Karachi to Lahore."

In 1872–75 Alexander Cunningham published the first Harappan seal (with an erroneous identification as Brahmi letters). It was half a century later, in 1912, that more Harappan seals were discovered by J. Fleet, prompting an excavation campaign under Sir John Hubert Marshall in 1921–22 and resulting in the discovery of the civilization at Harappa by Sir John Marshall, Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni and Madho Sarup Vats, and at Mohenjo-daro by Rakhal Das Banerjee, E. J. H. MacKay, and Sir John Marshall. By 1931, much of Mohenjo-Daro had been excavated, but excavations continued, such as that led by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, director of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1944. Among other archaeologists who worked on IVC sites before the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 were Ahmad Hasan Dani, Brij Basi Lal, Nani Gopal Majumdar, and Sir Marc Aurel Stein.

Following the Partition of India, the bulk of the archaeological finds were inherited by Pakistan where most of the Indus Valley Civilization was based, and excavations from this time include those led by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in 1949, archaeological adviser to the Government of Pakistan. Outposts of the Indus Valley civilization were excavated as far west as Suktagan Dor in Baluchistan, as far north as at Shortugai on the Amudarya or Oxus River in current Afghanistan.

CHRONOLOGY

The mature phase of the Harappan civilization lasted from c. 2600 to 1900 BCE. With the inclusion of the predecessor and successor cultures—Early

NOTES

Harappan and Late Harappan, respectively — the entire Indus Valley Civilization may be taken to have lasted from the 33rd to the 14th centuries BCE. Two terms are employed for the periodization of the IVC: Phases and Eras. The Early Harappan, Mature Harappan, and Late Harappan phases are also called the Regionalisation, Integration, and Localisation eras, respectively, with the Regionalization era reaching back to the Neolithic Mehrgarh II period. "Discoveries at Mehrgarh changed the entire concept of the Indus civilization," according to Ahmad Hasan Dani, professor emeritus at Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad. "There we have the whole sequence, right from the beginning of settled village life."

Date range	Phase	Era
7000 - 5500 BC	Mehrgarh I (aceramic Neolithic)	Early Food Producing Era
5500-3300	Mehrgarh II-VI (ceramic Neolithic)	
5500-2600		Regionalisation Era
3300-2600	<i>Early Harappan</i>	
3300-2800	Harappan 1 (Ravi Phase)	
2800-2600	Harappan 2 (Kot Diji Phase, Nausharo I, Mehrgarh VII)	
2600-1900	<i>Mature Harappan (Indus Valley Civilization)</i>	
2600-2450	Harappan 3A (Nausharo II)	Integration Era
2450-2200	Harappan 3B	
1900-1300	<i>Late Harappan (Cemetery H); Ochre Coloured Pottery</i>	
1900-1700	Harappan 4	Localisation Era
1700-1300	Harappan 5	
1300-300	Painted Gray Ware, Northern Black Polished Ware (Iron Age)	Indo-Gangetic Tradition

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The Indus Valley Civilization encompassed most of Pakistan, extending from Balochistan to Sindh, and extending into modern day Indian states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab, with an upward reach to Rupar on the upper Sutlej. The geography of the Indus Valley put the civilizations that arose there in a highly similar situation to those in Egypt and Peru, with rich agricultural lands being surrounded by highlands, desert, and ocean. Recently, Indus sites have been discovered in Pakistan's northwestern Frontier Province as well. Other IVC colonies can be found in Afghanistan while smaller isolated colonies can be found as far away as Turkmenistan and in Gujarat. Coastal settlements extended from Sutkagan Dor in Western Baluchistan to Lothal in Gujarat. An Indus Valley site has been found on the Oxus River at Shortughai in northern Afghanistan, in the Gomul River valley in northwestern Pakistan, at Manda on the Beas River near Jammu, India, and at Alamgirpur on the Hindon River, only 28 km from Delhi. Indus Valley sites have been found most often on rivers, but also on the ancient seacoast, for example, Balakot, and on islands, for example, Dholavira.

There is evidence of dry river beds overlapping with the Hakra channel in Pakistan and the seasonal Ghaggar River in India. Many Indus Valley (or

NOTES

Harappan) sites have been discovered along the Ghaggar-Hakra beds. Among them are: Rupar, Rakhigarhi, Sothi, Kalibangan, and Ganwariwala. According to J. G. Shaffer and D. A. Lichtenstein, the Harappan Civilization "is a fusion of the Bagor, Hakra, and Koti Diji traditions or 'ethnic groups' in the Ghaggar-Hakra valley on the borders of India and Pakistan."

According to some archaeologists, over 500 Harappan sites have been discovered along the dried up river beds of the Ghaggar-Hakra River and its tributaries, in contrast to only about 100 along the Indus and its tributaries; consequently, in their opinion, the appellation Indus Ghaggar-Hakra civilisation or Indus-Saraswati civilisation is justified. However, these politically inspired arguments are disputed by other archaeologists who state that the Ghaggar-Hakra desert area has been left untouched by settlements and agriculture since the end of the Indus period and hence shows more sites than found in the alluvium of the Indus valley; second, that the number of Harappan sites along the Ghaggar-Hakra river beds have been exaggerated and that the Ghaggar-Hakra, when it existed, was a tributary of the Indus, so the new nomenclature is redundant. "Harappan Civilization" remains the correct one, according to the common archaeological usage of naming a civilization after its first findspot.

EARLY HARAPPAN

The Early Harappan Ravi Phase, named after the nearby Ravi River, lasted from circa 3300 BCE until 2800 BCE. It is related to the Hakra Phase, identified in the Ghaggar-Hakra River Valley to the west, and predates the Kot Diji Phase (2800-2600 BCE, Harappan 2), named after a site in northern Sindh, Pakistan, near Mohenjo Daro. The earliest examples of the Indus script date from around 3000 BCE.

The mature phase of earlier village cultures is represented by Rehman Dheri and Amri in Pakistan. Kot Diji (Harappan 2) represents the phase leading up to Mature Harappan, with the citadel representing centralised authority and an increasingly urban quality of life. Another town of this stage was found at Kalibangan in India on the Hakra River.

Trade networks linked this culture with related regional cultures and distant sources of raw materials, including lapis lazuli and other materials for bead-making. Villagers had, by this time, domesticated numerous crops, including peas, sesame seeds, dates and cotton, as well as various animals, including the water buffalo. Early Harappan communities turned to large urban centres by 2600 BCE, from where the mature Harappan phase started.

1.12 MATURE HARAPPAN AND CHARACTERISTICS

By 2600 BCE, the Early Harappan communities had been turned into large urban centers. Such urban centers include Harappa, Ganeriwala, Mohenjo-daro in modern day Pakistan and Dholavira, Kalibangan, Rakhigarhi, Rupar, Lothal in modern day India. In total, over 1,052 cities and settlements have been found, mainly in the general region of the Indus Rivers and their tributaries.

CITIES

A sophisticated and technologically advanced urban culture is evident in the Indus Valley Civilization making them the first urban centers in the region.

NOTES

The quality of municipal town planning suggests the knowledge of urban planning and efficient municipal governments which placed a high priority on hygiene, or, alternately, accessibility to the means of religious ritual.

As seen in Harappa, Mohenjo-daro and the recently partially excavated Rakhigarhi, this urban plan included the world's first known urban sanitation systems. Within the city, individual homes or groups of homes obtained water from wells. From a room that appears to have been set aside for bathing, waste water was directed to covered drains, which lined the major streets. Houses opened only to inner courtyards and smaller lanes. The house-building in some villages in the region still resembles in some respects the house-building of the Harappans.

The ancient Indus systems of sewerage and drainage that were developed and used in cities throughout the Indus region were far more advanced than any found in contemporary urban sites in the Middle East and even more efficient than those in many areas of Pakistan and India today. The advanced architecture of the Harappans is shown by their impressive dockyards, granaries, warehouses, brick platforms and protective walls. The massive walls of Indus cities most likely protected the Harappans from floods and may have dissuaded military conflicts.

The purpose of the citadel remains debated. In sharp contrast to this civilization's contemporaries, Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt, no large monumental structures were built. There is no conclusive evidence of palaces or temples—or of kings, armies, or priests. Some structures are thought to have been granaries. Found at one city is an enormous well-built bath (the "Great Bath"), which may have been a public bath. Although the citadels were walled, it is far from clear that these structures were defensive. They may have been built to divert flood waters.

Most city dwellers appear to have been traders or artisans, who lived with others pursuing the same occupation in well-defined neighborhoods. Materials from distant regions were used in the cities for constructing seals, beads and other objects. Among the artifacts discovered were beautiful glazed faience beads. Steatite seals have images of animals, people (perhaps gods) and other types of inscriptions, including the yet un-deciphered writing system of the Indus Valley Civilization. Some of the seals were used to stamp clay on trade goods and most probably had other uses as well.

Although some houses were larger than others, Indus Civilization cities were remarkable for their apparent, if relative, egalitarianism. All the houses had access to water and drainage facilities. This gives the impression of a society with relatively low wealth concentration, though clear social leveling is seen in personal adornments.

SCIENCE

The people of the Indus Civilization achieved great accuracy in measuring length, mass, and time. They were among the first to develop a system of uniform weights and measures. Their measurements are said to be extremely precise; however, a comparison of available objects indicates large scale variation across the Indus territories. Their smallest division, which is marked on an ivory scale found in Lothal, was approximately 1.704 mm, the smallest division ever recorded on a scale of the Bronze Age. Harappan engineers followed the decimal division of measurement for all practical purposes, including the measurement of mass as revealed by their hexahedron weights.

These chert weights were in a perfect ratio of 4:2:1 with weights of 0.05, 0.1, 0.2, 0.5, 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 units, with each unit weighing approximately 28 grams, similar to the English Imperial ounce or Greek uncia, and smaller objects were weighed in similar ratios with the units of 0.871. However, as in other cultures, actual weights were not uniform throughout the area. The weights and measures later used in Kautilya's Arthashastra (4th century BCE) are the same as those used in Lothal.

Unique Harappan inventions include an instrument which was used to measure whole sections of the horizon and the tidal lock. In addition, Harappans evolved some new techniques in metallurgy and produced copper, bronze, lead and tin. The engineering skill of the Harappans was remarkable, especially in building docks after a careful study of tides, waves and currents. The function of the so-called "dock" at Lothal, however, is disputed.

In 2001, archaeologists studying the remains of two men from Mehrgarh, Pakistan, made the discovery that the people of the Indus Valley Civilisation, from the early Harappan periods, had knowledge of proto-dentistry. Later, in April 2006, it was announced in the scientific journal Nature that the oldest (and first early Neolithic) evidence for the drilling of human teeth in vivo (i.e., in a living person) was found in Mehrgarh. Eleven drilled molar crowns from nine adults were discovered in a Neolithic graveyard in Mehrgarh that dates, from 7,500-9,000 years ago. According to the authors, their discoveries point to a tradition of proto-dentistry in the early farming cultures of that region.

A touchstone bearing gold streaks was found in Banawali, which was probably used for testing the purity of gold (such a technique is still used in some parts of India).

ARTS AND CULTURE

Various sculptures, seals, pottery, gold jewelry and anatomically detailed figurines in terracotta, bronze and steatite have been found at excavation sites.

A number of gold, terra-cotta and stone figurines of girls in dancing poses reveal the presence of some dance form. Also, these terra-cotta figurines included cows, bears, monkeys, and dogs. Sir John Marshall is known to have reacted with surprise when he saw the famous Indus bronze statuette of a slender-limbed dancing girl in Mohenjo-daro:

"When I first saw them I found it difficult to believe that they were prehistoric; they seemed to completely upset all established ideas about early art, and culture. Modeling such as this was unknown in the ancient world up to the Hellenistic age of Greece, and I thought, therefore, that some mistake must surely have been made; that these figures had found their way into levels some 3000 years older than those to which they properly belonged. ... Now, in these statuettes, it is just this anatomical truth which is so startling; that makes us wonder whether, in this all-important matter, Greek artistry could possibly have been anticipated by the sculptors of a far-off age on the banks of the Indus."

Many crafts "such as shell working, ceramics, and agate and glazed steatite bead making" were used in the making of necklaces, bangles, and other ornaments from all phases of Harappan sites and some of these crafts are still

NOTES

NOTES

practiced in the subcontinent today. Some make-up and toiletry items (a special kind of combs (kakai), the use of collyrium and a special three-in-one toiletry gadget) that were found in Harappan contexts still have similar counterparts in modern India. Terracotta female figurines were found (ca. 2800-2600 BCE) which had red color applied to the "manga" (line of partition of the hair).

Seals have been found at Mohenjo-daro depicting a figure standing on its head, and another sitting cross-legged in what some call a yoga-like pose called Pashupati.

A harp-like instrument depicted on an Indus seal and two shell objects found at Lothal indicate the use of stringed musical instruments. The Harappans also made various toys and games, among them cubical dice (with one to six holes on the faces), which were found in sites like Mohenjo-Daro.

TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION

The Indus civilization's economy appears to have depended significantly on trade, which was facilitated by major advances in transport technology. These advances included bullock carts that are identical to those seen throughout South Asia today, as well as boats. Most of these boats were probably small, flat-bottomed craft, perhaps driven by sail, similar to those one can see on the Indus River today; however, there is secondary evidence of sea-going craft. Archaeologists have discovered a massive, dredged canal and what they regard as a docking facility at the coastal city of Lothal in western India (Gujarat state). An extensive canal network, used for irrigation, has however also been discovered by H.P. Francfort.

During 4300–3200 BCE of the chalcolithic period (copper age), the Indus Valley Civilization area shows ceramic similarities with southern Turkmenistan and northern Iran which suggest considerable mobility and trade. During the Early Harappan period (about 3200–2600 BCE), similarities in pottery, seals, figurines, ornaments, etc., document intensive caravan trade with Central Asia and the Iranian plateau.

Judging from the dispersal of Indus civilisation artifacts, the trade networks, economically, integrated a huge area, including portions of Afghanistan, the coastal regions of Persia, northern and western India, and Mesopotamia.

There was an extensive maritime trade network operating between the Harappan and Mesopotamian civilizations as early as the middle Harappan Phase, with much commerce being handled by "middlemen merchants from Dilmun" (modern Bahrain and Failaka located in the Persian Gulf). Such long-distance sea trade became feasible with the innovative development of plank-built watercraft, equipped with a single central mast supporting a sail of woven rushes or cloth.

Several coastal settlements like Sotkagen-dor (astride Dasht River, north of Jiwani), Sokhta Koh (astride Shadi River, north of Pasni) and Balakot (near Sonmiani) in Pakistan along with Lothal in India testify to their role as Harappan trading outposts. Shallow harbors located at the estuary of rivers opening into the sea allowed brisk maritime trade with Mesopotamian cities.

SURVIVAL

Some post-1980 studies indicate that food production was largely indigenous to the Indus Valley. It is known that the people of Mehrgarh used

NOTES

domesticated wheats and barley, and the major cultivated cereal crop was naked six-row barley, a crop derived from two-row barley. Archaeologist Jim G. Shaffer (1999: 245) writes that the Mehrgarh site “demonstrates that food production was an indigenous South Asian phenomenon” and that the data support interpretation of “the prehistoric urbanization and complex social organization in South Asia as based on indigenous, but not isolated, cultural developments.” Others, such as Dorian Fuller, however, indicate that it took some 2000 years before Middle Eastern wheat was acclimatised to South Asian conditions.

WRITING OR SYMBOL SYSTEM

Well over 400 distinct Indus symbols (some say 600) have been found on seals, small tablets, or ceramic pots and over a dozen other materials, including a “signboard” that apparently once hung over the gate of the inner citadel of the Indus city of Dholavira. Typical Indus inscriptions are no more than four or five characters in length, most of which (aside from the Dholavira “signboard”) are exquisitely tiny; the longest on a single surface, which is less than 1 inch (2.54 cm) square, is 17 signs long; the longest on any object (found on three different faces of a mass-produced object) has a length of 26 symbols.

While the Indus Valley Civilization is generally characterized as a literate society on the evidence of these inscriptions, this description has been challenged on linguistic and archaeological grounds: it has been pointed out that the brevity of the inscriptions is unparalleled in any known premodern literate society. Based partly on this evidence, a controversial paper by Farmer, Sproat, and Witzel (2004) argues that the Indus system did not encode language, but was instead similar to a variety of non-linguistic sign systems used extensively in the Near East and other societies. Others have claimed on occasion that the symbols were exclusively used for economic transactions, but this claim leaves unexplained the appearance of Indus symbols on many ritual objects, many of which were mass-produced in molds. No parallels to these mass-produced inscriptions are known in any other early ancient civilizations.

In a 2009 study by P. N. Rao et al. published in *Science*, computer scientists, comparing the pattern of symbols to various linguistic scripts and non-linguistic systems, including DNA and a computer programming language, found that the Indus script’s pattern is closer to that of spoken words, supporting the hypothesis that it codes for an as-yet-unknown language. Farmer, Sproat, and Witzel have disputed this finding, pointing out that Rao et al. did not actually compare the Indus signs with “real-world non-linguistic systems” but rather with “two wholly artificial systems invented by the authors, one consisting of 200,000 randomly ordered signs and another of 200,000 fully ordered signs, that they spuriously claim represent the structures of all real-world non-linguistic sign systems”. Farmer et al. have also demonstrated that a comparison of a non-linguistic system like medieval heraldic signs with natural languages yields results similar to those that Rao et al. obtained with Indus signs. They conclude that the method used by Rao et al. cannot distinguish linguistic systems from non-linguistic ones.

Photos of many of the thousands of extant inscriptions are published in the *Corpus of Indus Seals and Inscriptions* (1987, 1991), edited by A. Parpola and his colleagues. Publication of a final third volume, which will reportedly republish photos taken in the 1920s and 1930s of hundreds of lost or stolen inscriptions, along with many discovered in the last few decades, has been announced for

several years. For now, researchers must supplement the materials in the Corpus by study of the tiny photos in the excavation reports of Marshall (1931), Mackay (1938, 1943), Wheeler (1947), or reproductions in more recent scattered sources.

NOTES

RELIGION

In view of the large number of figurines found in the Indus valley, it has been widely suggested that the Harappan people worshipped a Mother goddess symbolizing fertility. However, this view has been disputed by S. Clark. Some Indus valley seals show swastikas which are found in later religions and mythologies, especially in Indian religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The earliest evidence for elements of Hinduism are present before and during the early Harappan period. Phallic symbols resembling the Hindu Siva lingam have been found in the Harappan remains.

Many Indus valley seals show animals. One famous seal shows a figure seated in a posture reminiscent of the Lotus position and surrounded by animals was named after Pashupati (lord of cattle), an epithet of Shiva and Rudra.

In the earlier phases of their culture, the Harappans buried their dead; however, later, especially in the Cemetery H culture of the late Harappan period, they also cremated their dead and buried the ashes in burial urns, a transition notably also alluded to in the Rigveda, where the forefathers "both cremated (agnidagdhá-) and uncremated (ánagnidagdhá-)" are invoked.

1.13 DECLINATION OF INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

Around 1800 BCE, signs of a gradual decline began to emerge, and by around 1700 BCE, most of the cities were abandoned. However, the Indus Valley Civilization did not disappear suddenly, and many elements of the Indus Civilization can be found in later cultures. Current archaeological data suggest that material culture classified as Late Harappan may have persisted until at least c. 1000-900 BCE and was partially contemporaneous with the Painted Grey Ware culture. Archaeologists have emphasised that, just as in most areas of the world, there was a continuous series of cultural developments. These link "the so-called two major phases of urbanisation in South Asia".

A possible natural reason for the Indus Valley Civilization's decline is connected with climate change that is also signaled for the neighboring areas of the Middle East: The Indus valley climate grew significantly cooler and drier from about 1800 BCE, linked to a general weakening of the monsoon at that time. Alternatively, a crucial factor may have been the disappearance of substantial portions of the Ghaggar Hakra river system. A tectonic event may have diverted the system's sources toward the Ganges Plain, though there is complete uncertainty about the date of this event, as most settlements inside Ghaggar-Hakra river beds have not yet been dated. Although this particular factor is speculative, and not generally accepted, the decline of the Indus Valley Civilization, as with any other civilization, will have been due to a combination of various reasons. New geological research is now being conducted by a group led by Peter Clift, from the University of Aberdeen, to investigate how the courses of rivers have changed in this region since 8000 years ago, to test whether climate or river reorganizations are responsible for the decline of the Harappan. A 2004 paper indicated that the isotopes of the Ghaggar-Hakra system do not come from the Himalayan glaciers, and were rain-fed instead, contradicting a Harappan time mighty "Sarasvati" river.

UNIT – III

MEGALITHIC CULTURES

*Pre-Historic and Early
Ancient India*

NOTES

A megalith is a large stone that has been used to construct a structure or monument, either alone or together with other stones. Megalithic describes structures made of such large stones, utilizing an interlocking system without the use of mortar or cement.

The word 'megalith' comes from the Ancient Greek 'megas' meaning great, and 'lithos' meaning stone. Megalith also denotes an item consisting of rock(s) hewn in definite shapes for special purposes. It has been used to describe buildings built by people from many parts of the world living in many different periods. A variety of large stones are seen as megaliths, with the most widely known megaliths not being sepulchral. The construction of these structures took place mainly in the Neolithic (though earlier Mesolithic examples are known) and continued into the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age.

The Chalcolithic age is followed by Iron Age. Iron is frequently referred to in the Vedas. The Iron Age of the southern peninsula is often related to Megalithic Burials. Megalith means Large Stone. The burial pits were covered with these stones. Such graves are extensively found in South India. Some of the important megalithic sites are Hallur and Maski in Karnataka, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh and Adichchanallur in Tamil Nadu. Black and red pottery, iron artifacts such as hoes and sickles and small weapons were found in the burial pits.

1.14 ORIGIN OF MEGALITHIC CULTURE

At the time of the Painted Gray Ware settlements in the north, South India saw the predominance of the Megalithic Culture. Simple monoliths, a cluster of stone circles or dolmens usually characterise a megalithic site. Agro-pastoral communities erected these either to commemorate a burial or to depict an actual burial site. In Kerala, the megaliths, are mushroom-shaped stone objects known as Topikal or Kodekal.

Excavations conducted in a number of megalithic sites have revealed a substantial amount of artifacts, indicative of a pastoral economy, warfare and rudimentary trade and exchange between settlements.

Some prominent megalithic sites of South India are found at Brahmagiri, Maski and Rajan Kalur in Karnataka, Bhagimari in Maharashtra and the north and south Arcot districts in Tamil Nadu. Interestingly, the Megalithic tradition has continued in certain tribal areas, especially among the Gadabas of Orissa, Gonds of Bastar, and the Bodos of northeast India, who still erect menhirs (monoliths) as commemorative symbols for the deceased.

A megalith is a large stone that has been used to construct a structure or monument, either alone or together with other stones. Megalithic describes structures made of such large stones, utilizing an interlocking system without the use of mortar or cement.

The word 'megalith' comes from the Ancient Greek 'megas' meaning great, and 'lithos' meaning stone. Megalith also denotes an item consisting of rocks hewn in definite shapes for special purposes. It has been used to describe buildings

NOTES

built by people from many parts of the world living in many different periods. A variety of large stones are seen as megaliths, with the most widely known megaliths not being sepulchral. The construction of these structures took place mainly in the Neolithic though earlier Mesolithic examples are known and continued into the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age.

1.15 DISTRIBUTION OF PASTORAL AND FARMING CULTURE OUTSIDE THE INDUS REGION

Prehistoric Megaliths or large stone constructions dating from before written history are found in huge numbers in South India. The monuments are usually found in granitic areas.

We still do not know exactly who the megalithic people were, whether they represent an immigrant group, or a local development. Since similar monuments are found in many places around the world, right from Ireland, Malta, West Asia, Baluchistan to South East Asia it is possible they represent a single group which spread all over the world. Among the possible groups are The Celts originating from Central Asia, who later became great seafarers: some group from West Asia like the ancient Elamites of Mesopotamia: the Central Asian "Scythians", who roamed all over the world: a group of early Aryan tribes: and more fanciful, the Atlanteans washed off far and wide.

During this age, when hunter-gathering began to be replaced by sedentary food production it became more profitable to keep animals close at hand. Therefore, it became necessary to bring animals permanently to their settlements, although in many cases there was a distinction between relatively sedentary farmers and nomadic herders. The animals' size, temperament, diet, mating patterns, and life span were factors in the desire and success in domesticating animals. Animals that provided milk, such as cows and goats, offered a source of protein that was renewable and therefore quite valuable. The animal's ability as a worker (for example ploughing or towing), as well as a food source, also had to be taken into account. Besides being a direct source of food, certain animals could provide leather, wool, hides, and fertilizer. Some of the earliest domesticated animals included dogs (about 15,000 years ago), sheep, goats, cows, and pigs.

The Neolithic period in the south Deccan plateau of South India seems to have begun sometime in the 3rd millennium BC. It is therefore not one of the world's earliest Neolithic transitions, nor indeed the earliest Neolithic culture in South Asia. Nonetheless, the Southern Neolithic, as it is known in India, is of significant interest to Neolithic scholars worldwide because it appears in many significant ways to represent a largely indigenous transformation.

This unit will explore the evidence for both internal processes and external influences in the genesis and subsequent transformation of Neolithic society in South India. It will in particular draw on recent studies at the site of Sanganakallu-Kupgal in the Bellary District of Karnataka, as well as a larger-scale archaeobotanical project in the south Deccan plateau, in order to examine patterns of exchange, production and ritual in the Neolithic and Megalithic periods in South India.

The Neolithic period in the south Deccan plateau of South India appears to have been ushered in sometime in the first half of the third millennium BC. Deposits from this time incorporate the first evidence for domesticated crops

NOTES

and animals, and indicate more intensive, and probably more sedentary, human occupation of the region. The Southern Neolithic, as it has become known, is thus comparable to other Neolithic cultures that developed across the Old World beginning in the early Holocene period. Its rather late date also suggests that it is rather unremarkable, and part of the general dispersal of farming populations, crops and technologies outwards from a small number of centres of origin. Recent archaeobotanical findings, however, suggest that the story is not quite as simple as indicated by the farming expansion model. A number of the earliest Southern Neolithic crop domesticates appear to have been locally domesticated, and crops from SW Asia and the Indus Valley region do not reach south India until the Neolithic is well established. In addition, there are a number of distinctive features of the Southern Neolithic – including the apparent symbolic importance of cattle, and the creation of ashmounds – that give it a notably indigenous air, and that appear to have local origins. The Southern Neolithic thus invites additional research attention, for it undoubtedly has much to teach us concerning the complex interplay between autochthonous and external elements that may be involved in generating Neolithic transformations and stimulating subsequent change.

Although there is as yet no archaeological sequence for the transition from foraging to farming in the southern Deccan, several lines of evidence from botany and archaeology suggest indigenous plant domestications in the region. One important clue is the fact that the wild relatives of some Indian crops are today found in this region. In particular, wild mungbean (*Vigna radiata*) and urd (*Vigna mungo*) are distributed in the moist deciduous forests of the Western Ghats and western Himalayan foothills, while wild mungbean alone is also found sporadically in the Eastern Ghats. Additional wild populations of urd are known from the northernmost Western Ghats and southern Aravallis, Mount Abu in Rajasthan and the eastern Satpura ranges. Wild horsegram is found throughout the savannah zone that stretches from Rajasthan through the central Deccan to south India. In addition, India as a whole is home to numerous indigenous domesticated millets, which also occur wild in south India.

Archaeological evidence is also revealing. Archaeobotanical evidence from sites of the Southern Neolithic consistently indicates the predominance of mungbean (*Vigna radiata*), horsegram (*Macrotyloma uniflorum*), and two millets (*Brachiaria ramosa* and *Setaria verticillata*). These are not crops that co-occur in earlier periods in the northwestern part of the subcontinent, such as Gujarat or the Indus valley, nor are they found at Gangetic Neolithic sites (although these species do occur in the Ganges plain during the later Neolithic). This implies that these species had earlier been brought into cultivation somewhere in south India. The particular core region of the Southern Neolithic, however, is too dry, and would probably have been so even in the mid-Holocene, to support wild stands of mungbean. Thus the zone in which domestication occurred must have been towards the sides of the peninsula where the dry savannahs intergrade into deciduous forests. Because both wild urd and mungbean occur throughout the Western Ghats, but urd is absent from the Southern Neolithic until its very latest stages, we now believe the most likely zone of the domestication was located toward the Eastern Ghats. Since Neolithic sites in the Kurnool district are known only from after 1900 BC, we suggest that the origins were likely in some region north of the Kurnool district (*i.e.*, north of the Krishna River in western Andhra

NOTES

Pradesh). While introduced crops, such as wheat and barley, are found on a few sites, at least by 1900 BC, they do not appear widespread nor as the dominant crops, and this suggests that they were adopted through processes of cultural diffusion rather than the immigration of north-western winter cereal growers.

While a relatively strong case may be made for an indigenous development of plant cultivation, animal herding on the other hand may have been introduced. Sheep and goat occur at Neolithic sites throughout the southern Deccan, despite the fact that they have no wild ancestors in the area. These species had a much longer history in the north-western part of the subcontinent, and in particular the greater Indus region. They must have been introduced to the south by the mid-third millennium BC. The same situation could be the case for cattle, but there have also been suggestions for an indigenous domestication of cattle in south India (e.g., Allchin and Allchin 1974; Naik 1978). While humped zebu cattle were certainly domesticated in Baluchistan by ca. 6000 BC, what remains unclear is whether additional domestications of this species took place elsewhere in South Asia during the Holocene. Some of the distinctive regional differences between southern and north-western zebu breeds have been suggested to be very ancient, and perhaps already reflected in artistic evidence of the third millennium BC, since cattle depicted in Indus seals differ from South Indian rock art bulls along the same lines as modern genetic breeds (Allchin and Allchin 1974, 1994-1995). Further archaeozoological work is needed on this problem. What is clear is that by the mid-third millennium BC, Southern Neolithic sites had a mixed economy of pastoralism and indigenous crop cultivation, although which came first (the domesticated plants or animals) and where precisely this happened (e.g., Western Andhra or the Shorapur Doab, etc) remains to be resolved through further research. Fire, ashmounds and the symbolic importance of cattle whatever the sequence of local domestications and species introductions, it is clear that one species in particular held pre-eminent symbolic status in the Southern Neolithic: the zebu. This can be discerned from several lines of evidence. Firstly, zebras overwhelmingly dominate the rock art images that concentrate on and around Southern Neolithic sites (Allchin & Allchin 1994-1995, Boivin 2004b). Bulls in particular are frequently depicted, and their humps and horns are commonly accentuated, whatever the style employed. Cattle also dominate the assemblages of terracotta figurines found at Southern Neolithic sites, most of which depict animals of one sort or another. Here too we find an emphasis on the hump and horns, and as with cattle figurines produced by modern-day pastoralists in southern Sudan (Evans-Pritchard 1940), these are sometimes virtually reduced to these key features.

Perhaps the most suggestive, and yet also mysterious, indication of the importance of cattle in Southern Neolithic society are the ashmounds that its members left scattered across the south Deccan plateau. While ashmounds of various sorts are found in various regions of the world at diverse time periods, those of the Southern Neolithic are not only remarkably large and ubiquitous, but also distinctive in terms of their composition. Unlike other reported mounds containing ash, Southern Neolithic ashmounds are composed almost solely of ash (and are therefore not generalised garbage heaps), and often include a substantial proportion of vitrified ash due to the high burning temperatures involved in mound creation. These mounds have been studied using chemical

NOTES

and microscopic methods, and analysis has shown that the ash they contain is the product of the burning of cow dung (Zeuner 1960; Majumdar & Rajaguru 1966; this is also demonstrated by our own unpublished micromorphological analysis). As originally pointed out by Allchin, the cow dung of which ashmounds are composed appears very much to have been deliberately set on fire (Allchin 1963). Allchin ruled out the possibility of accidental or spontaneous ignition of the mounds of dung based on the extremely limited occurrence of spontaneous combustion cases today despite the presence of dung mounds in many rural villages. He also observed that fires occurred repeatedly in the same localities, and noted the difficulties associated with accepting the notion that Neolithic peoples would not have figured out how to prevent such fires if they were accidental rather than deliberate occurrences.

The purpose of the dung burning events that led to the formation of the Southern Neolithic ashmounds nonetheless remains somewhat obscure. There is no evidence that the ash was used during Neolithic times (as it sometimes is today) as a fertiliser for crops. Nor is it easy to accept that Neolithic peoples possessed notions of hygiene of the type found in modern industrialised societies. Thus, the most promising explanation that has been offered is a predominantly ritual one, according to which dung was accumulated and set on fire for largely symbolic reasons. While Allchin acknowledged that the ashmound fires may have been understood as means of protecting cattle from disease (for example if pens were set on fire periodically, or cattle were driven through burning fires), he was also inclined towards the view that the fires were ritual events, and that the resulting ash had symbolic meaning (Allchin 1963). Allchin's conclusion is based on the systematic and detailed study of place name data for the southern Deccan region, as well as the analysis of contemporary ethnographic practices in India. In particular, Allchin observed the importance of cattle, dung and cow dung ash (known as vibhuti) in ritual and symbolic practices across the subcontinent today. Studies of post-ashmound strata and sites would seem to confirm this link between the present and the distant past, since the intervening Iron Age contains numerous examples of white ash of definite or likely ashmound origin being reused in megalithic monuments (Allchin 1963; Korisettar et al. 2001; Munn 1934; Sundara 1975, 1987). And just as Neolithic ashmounds appear to have, in some cases at least, been located at specific meaningful places in the landscape (Boivin 2004a), megaliths and Iron Age burials were in some cases located relative to the ashmounds that came before them (Allchin 1963; Korisettar et al. 2001a: 208), indicating that they continued to hold some sort of meaning for people.

Whatever the case for the long-term continuity in certain Indian symbols (though probably not meanings), it is difficult to deny the distinctively Indian air of the Southern Neolithic (Boivin 2004a). Not only are cattle clearly of ritual importance during that period, but cow dung as well appears to be a potent symbol. Pastoralism as a whole seems to be culturally accentuated and symbolically elaborated, despite the clear evidence for the cultivation of domestic plants. A remarkable number of ashmounds were created during the Neolithic period in south India, and their ubiquity in a range of contexts and phases suggests that they had a central role to play in the Neolithic belief system (Boivin *ibid.*). What is observed then is a set of cultural themes and symbols that distinguish the Southern Neolithic from other Neolithic cultures in South Asia, and

particularly the much more Near Eastern-inspired features of the Kili Ghul Mohammed Neolithic of Baluchistan. These cultural differences reinforce the notion that distinctive internal factors were key in the development of the Neolithic transition in south India.

NOTES

1.16 MEGALITHIC COMMUNITY

The word megalith refers to the burial monument. The people who lived during the last stages of the New Stone Age began to follow the megalithic system of burial. According to this system, the dead body was put in a black and red pot along with iron implements and the pot was buried. A circular tomb using big stone slabs was built upon the place of burial. This is called megalith. Such megaliths have been found in the districts of Kanchipuram, Vellore, Thiruvannamalai, Cuddalore, Tiruchirappalli and Pudukottai.

Another system of burial was known as urn burials. Urns without circular megalithic tombs have been discovered at Adhichanallur in Tirunelveli district. Bronze articles and iron implements are found in these urns. The discovery of trident or Vel in some of these urns suggests that these people worshipped Lord Muruga, the famous God of the Tamil people.

Several utensils made of bronze have been found in Adhichanallur. The hook or alagu, which is still used in religious ceremonies, has been found here. Hence, it may be said that the use of hooks in religious ceremonies was prevalent right from the megalithic period.

STRUCTURE

Most of the megaliths found appear to be graves or similar constructions. Very common are rectangular chambers made of large stone slabs. For instance near Hyderabad city the slabs are about 2 metres by one metre, about 6 cm thick.

A box like structure is formed with the slabs resting on each other without any mortar. Sometimes there is an opening cut into one of the sides. Similar megaliths are found all the way from India, Malta to Ireland but the usual dating of the Indian megaliths is much more recent than the ones of Britain/Malta.

POTTERY

Invariably large well made, well fired wheel turned pottery is found. Usually it is black and red. Some pots still retain a shiny polish.

In some areas notably Tamilnadu are urn fields, where large numbers of funeral urns filled with ashes and charred bones are seen. Sometimes terracotta sarcophagus also are found. One was of the size of a modern bathroom tub. It had a large lid and was decorated with a terracotta ram's head. Maybe some important person was buried in it.

METALS

In all the south Indian megaliths iron tools are found. It was an iron age culture. In sandstone area to the north copper tools were found, and they appear older. The iron tools are well made, massive, usually plough type and long crowbar — celts or javelins. While the "javelins" might have been used for hunting, the

NOTES

local people even today use long steel rods for excavating soil and breaking granite boulders.

Axes, arrowheads and large flat swords are seen. Horse stirrups, ladles, vessels(?), also are commonly found. In some areas bells are common, like the ones tied to necks of cows. In southern areas emblems of roosters (the cockerel, or male 'jungle hen', gallus are reported. — This has interesting implications.

ECONOMY

It seems to be based on agriculture, with efficient — in fact expert use of water and irrigation. Rice seems to be introduced by the megalithic people into India. Various other grains also are traced.

Of particular significance is the making of granite stone dams across small seasonal rivulets. Because of the impervious dense and hard granitic bedrock, these dams form little lakes after the rains and keep the land moist for a long time until the height of the following summer. Two crops can be raised in otherwise arid areas. (one of the few examples of beneficial meddling by our species).

ETHNIC ASPECTS

Most of the opinions about the megalithic peoples are unfortunately based on pet notions , imaginary scenarios and the like. Today's politics too colour the opinions. But based on the meager facts everyone is welcome to speculate, providing it is clearly understood to be speculation.

1.17 IRON INDUSTRY

The date and origin of the introduction of iron artefacts and iron working into India has remained a much debated research problem, not unconnected with the equally debatable question of its association with the supposed arrival, in the second millennium BC, of immigrants from the west, as often suggested on the basis of the Rigveda. Around the middle of the last century, iron-working origins in India were dated to c. 700-600 BC. Subsequently, a combination of an association with Painted Grey Ware (PGW) and the advent of radiocarbon dating began to push this date back towards the second millennium BC, a period which had in fact favoured by some scholars earlier in the early twentieth century.

Considering the radiocarbon dates for the iron bearing deposits at Ataranjikhera in Uttar Pradesh and Hallur in Karnataka, and stratigraphic position of iron in the lower levels mainly at Kausambi near Allahabad, Jakhera in district Etah in the Ganga Valley, and Nagda and Eran in central India, dates around 1000 BC were suggested (Subramanyam 1964; Banarjee 1965; Chakrabarti 1974; Nagaraj Rao 1974). At the same time Chakrabarti (1974: 354) challenged the view of a western origin, stating "there is no logical basis to connect the beginning of iron in India with any diffusion from the west, from Iran and beyond", and further (1976: 122) "that India was a separate and possibly independent centre of manufacture of early iron."

Since then there has been fresh evidence for even earlier iron-working in India. Technical studies on materials dated c. 1000 BC at Komaranhalli (Karnataka) showed that the smiths of this site could deal with large artefacts, implying that they had already been experimenting for centuries. Sahi (1979: 366) drew attention

NOTES

to the presence of iron in Chalcolithic deposits at Ahar, and suggested that "the date of the beginning of iron smelting in India may well be placed as early as the sixteenth century BC" and "by about the early decade of thirteenth century BC iron smelting was definitely known in India on a bigger scale". On the basis of four radiocarbon measurements, ranging between 3790 + 110 BP and 3570 + 100 BP, available for the Megalithic period (without iron) Sharma (1992: 64, 67) has proposed a range of 1550-1300 BC (uncalibrated) for the subsequent iron bearing period at Gufkral (Jammu & Kashmir).

On the basis of this evidence a date of around 1300/1200 BC has been suggested for the beginning of iron in India and c. 800 BC for the mid Ganga Valley (Allchin & Allchin 1982: 345; Prakash & Tripathi 1986: 568; Gaur 1997: 240). Chakrabarti (1992: 68, 164; 1999: 333) has observed that at Ahar it would be the first quarter of the second millennium BC and in Malwa soon after the middle of the second millennium BC. However, the early dates for iron at Ahar are refuted on the grounds of uncertain stratigraphy (Gaur 1997: 244). As far as Komaranhalli is concerned, it is stated that the TL dates have large errors and hence uncertain (Agrawala 2000: 197, 200).

More recently, early contexts containing iron at Jhusi, located on the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna in district Allahabad, have been dated to 1107-844 cal BC (Tewari et al. 2000: 93). Komaranhalli (Karnataka) has given TL dates in the twelfth – fifteenth century BC, while the radiocarbon dates for early Iron Age sites of Veerapuram and Ramapuram (Andhra Pradesh) are sixteenth – eleventh century cal BC (Deo 1991: 193; Moorti 1994: 122-23) while in Vidarbha region (Maharashtra), contexts containing iron have given radiocarbon dates between the fourteenth and tenth centuries cal BC.

UNIT – IV

ARYAN AND VEDIC PERIOD

The arrival of the Aryans in India around 1200 BC signalled the beginning of a new phase in Indian history, The Vedic Age. This particular period is significant in Indian history, the society that they set up still exists in some form or the other in today's India. This is also the first time in Indian history for which we have written records, since the Indus Valley Civilization script remains undeciphered. The Vedas while not necessarily accurate, do offer us a clue about the period.

The Aryans are believed to be of Central Asian origin who descended into the plains of India through the mountain passes of present day Afghanistan. The Aryans entered directly, bypassing Western Asia and Iran. They first spent a few generations in Afghanistan before finally descending into the plains. This is substantiated by the Vedas, which do not mention West Asia or Iran, but do mention the names of some of the rivers of Afghanistan. With the decline of the Indus Valley Civilization the Aryans became the dominant civilization of the region. However they were less advanced than their predecessors as they had yet to develop urban living. Their entry may be perceived as a step back in the development of Indian civilization but they made tremendous contributions in developing religions and philosophy. The philosophy behind Hinduism got a

NOTES

definite shape during this period. The Aryan period may not have been the glorious age in a distant past when Gods mingled with men, that it is sometimes thought to be, but the Aryans did make tremendous contribution in the development of society. Sanskrit, one of the oldest languages of India was developed during this period. Many institutions of Indian life, especially those of the Hindus, trace their origins to this period.

The Vedic Period is the period during which the Vedas, the oldest sacred texts of the Indo-Aryans, were being composed. Scholars place the Vedic period in the second and first millennia BCE continuing up to the 6th century BCE based on literary evidence.

The associated culture, sometimes referred to as Vedic civilization, was centered in the northern and northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent. Its early phase saw the formation of various kingdoms of ancient India. In its late phase (from ca. 600 BCE), it saw the rise of the Mahajanapadas, and was succeeded by the Maurya Empire (from ca. 320 BCE), the golden age, classical age of Sanskrit literature, and the Middle kingdoms of India.

1.18 THE VEDIC TEXT

The Aryans or the Indo-Europeans were nomadic tribes from the Euro-Asian plains. They were very tough and war-like people. The Saptsindhu (land of seven rivers), comprising of the present day Afghanistan, Punjab (both in India and Pakistan) and western areas of Uttar Pradesh were inhabited by the Aryans. The vedic age flourished during the Aryan civilization and gained popularity all over the world.

The vedic period (1500BC - 600BC) got its name from the four vedas written during this period. The vedas are perhaps the oldest written literature available to man today. They have been passed through various cultures for over 100,000 years. The vedic age laid the foundation of the Hindu religious philosophy. It is during this period that the great Indian epics, namely the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads, and hymns in praise of the vedas were written. The four Vedas were written in Sanskrit language and were categorized into four groups:

- Rig Veda (oldest veda)
- Yajurveda
- Samveda
- Atharvaveda

RIG VEDA

The Rig Veda is the oldest of the four Vedas and it is also the oldest recorded Indian literature. The Rig Veda consists of religious hymns dedicated to the deities. It has ten books or mandalas, a concept very central to the Buddhist religion.

YAJUR VEDA

The Yajur Veda contains prose mantras that were recited while performing sacrifices to God or Yagna. Each mantra was required to accompany a sacrificial rite or ritual.

SAMA VEDA

Sama Veda is also known as the Veda of melodies. It contains hymns of Rig Veda that are tuned for singing. It served as the songbook for priests.

NOTES

ATHARVA VEDA

The fourth Veda Atharva Veda contains spells to ward off the demons and diseases and is least related to rituals and sacrifices.

OTHER TEXTS

Other Vedas were also composed during this age. The current practice of Yoga exercises practiced all over the world are a derivative of Vedic literature. All of the major peaceful religions of the world; Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are interpretations of Vedic literatures. The major theme of the Vedic literatures was that it recognised the place of mankind in the entire universal scheme and sought to temper his ego accordingly. Vedic religions realized that not doing so can bring out the animal instincts in mankind and turn them into destructive and selfish beasts.

Sutra language: This is the last stratum of Vedic Sanskrit leading up to c. 500 BCE, comprising the bulk of the Sruta and Grhya Sutras, and some Upanishads (e.g. Kathu, Maitru). All but the five prose Upanishads are post-Buddhist). Videha (N. Bihar) as a third political center is established.

Epic and PaGinian Sanskrit: The language of the Mahabharata and Ramayana epics, and the Classical Sanskrit described by PaGini is considered post-Vedic, and belongs to the time after 500 BCE. Archaeologically, the rapid spread of Northern Black Polished Ware (NBP) over all of northern India corresponds to this period. The earliest Vedanta, Gautama Buddha, and the Pali Prakrit dialect of Buddhist scripture belong to this period.

1.19 CHANGE FROM RIG VEDIC PERIOD TO LATER VEDIC PERIOD

The Aryans, or Vedic civilization were a new start in Indian culture. Harappa was more or less a dead end (at least as far as we know); the Aryans adopted almost nothing of Harappan culture. They built no cities, no states, no granaries, and used no writing. Instead they were a warlike people that organized themselves in individual tribal, kinship units, the jana. The jana was ruled over by a war-chief. These tribes spread quickly over northern India and the Deccan. In a process that we do not understand, the basic social unit of Aryan culture, the jana, slowly developed from an organization based on kinship to one based on geography. The jana became a janapada, or nation and the jana-rajya, or tribal kingdom, became the jana-rajyapada, or national kingdom. So powerfully ingrained into Indian culture is the jana-pada, that Indians still define themselves mainly by their territorial origins. All the major territories of modern India, with their separate cultures and separate languages, can be dated back to the early jana-padas of Vedic India.

The earliest history of the Aryans in India is called the Rigvedic Period (1700-1000 BC) after the religious praise poems that are the oldest pieces of

literature in India. These poems, the Rig Veda, are believed to represent the most primitive layer of Indo-European religion and have many characteristics in common with Persian religion since the two peoples are closely related in time. In this early period, their population was restricted to the Punjab in the northern reaches of the Indus River and the Yamuna River near the Ganges. They maintained the Aryan tribal structure, with a raja ruling over the tribal group in tandem with a council. Each jana seems to have had a chief priest; the religion was focused almost entirely on a series of sacrifices to the gods. The Rigvedic peoples originally had only two social classes: nobles and commoners. Eventually, they added a third: Dasas, or "darks." These were, we presume, the darker-skinned people they had conquered. By the end of the Rigvedic period, social class had settled into four rigid castes: the caturvarnas, or "four colors." At the top of the caturvarnas were the priests, or Brahmans. Below the priests were the warriors or nobles (Kshatriya), the craftspeople and merchants (Vaishya), and the servants (Shudra), who made up the bulk of society. These economic classes were legitimated by an elaborate religious system and would be eventually subdivided into a huge number of economic sub-classes which we call "castes." Social class by the end of the Rigvedic period became completely inflexible; there was no such thing as social mobility.

In the early centuries of Later Vedic Period or Brahmanic Period (1000-500 BC), the Aryans migrated across the Doab, which is a large plain which separates the Yamuna River from the Ganges. It was a difficult project, for the Doab was thickly forested; the Aryans slowly burned and settled the Doab until they reached the Ganges. While the Rig Veda represents the most primitive religion of the Aryans during the Rigvedic Period, the religion of the Later Vedic period is dominated by the Brahmanas, or priestly book, which was composed sometime between 1000 and 850 BC. Later Vedic society is dominated by the Brahmans and every aspect of Aryan life comes under the control of priestly rituals and spells. In history as the Indians understand it, the Later Vedic Period is the Epic Age; the great literary, heroic epics of Indian culture, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, though they were composed between 500 and 200 BC, were probably originally formulated and told in the Later Vedic Period. Both of these epics deal with heroes from this period and demonstrate how Aryan cultural values, as we can understand them from the Rig Veda, are being transformed by mixing with Indus cultures.

What did the Aryans do with their time? They seem to have had a well-developed musical culture, and song and dance dominated their society. They were not greatly invested in the visual arts, but their interest in lyric poetry was unmatched. They loved gambling. They did not, however, have much interest in writing even though they could have inherited a civilization and a writing system when they originally settled India. We do not know exactly when they became interested in writing, but it may have been at the end of the Brahmanic period somewhere between 650 and 500 BC. Still, there are no Aryan writings until the Mauryan period—from Harappa (2500-1750 BC) to Maurya (300 BC) is quite a long time. The script that the Mauryans used is called "Brahmi" script and was used to write not only the religious and literary language of the time, Sanskrit, but also the vernacular languages. This script, Brahmi, is the national alphabet of India.

NOTES

NOTES

The Vedic period, then, is a period of cultural mixing, not of conquest. Although the Aryans were a conquering people when they first spread into India, the culture of the Aryans would gradually mix with indigenous cultures, and the war-religion of the Aryans, still preserved in parts of the Rig Veda, slowly became more ritualized and more meditative. By 200 BC, this process of mixing and transforming was more or less complete and the culture we call "Indian" was fully formed.

1.20 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The origin of the Vedic civilization and its relation to the Indus Valley civilization, Indo-Aryan migration and Gandhara Grave culture related cultures remains controversial and politically charged in Indian society, often leading to disputes on the history of Vedic culture. The Rigveda is primarily a collection of religious hymns, and allusions to, but not explanation of, various myths and stories, mainly in the younger books 1 and 10. The oldest hymns, probably in books 2-7, although some hold book 9, the Soma Mandala, to be even more ancient, contain many elements inherited from pre-Vedic, common Indo-Iranian society. Therefore, it is difficult to define the precise beginning of the "Rigvedic period", as it emerges seamlessly from the era preceding it. Also, due to the semi-nomadic nature of the society described, it cannot be easily localized, and in its earliest phase describes tribes that were essentially on the move.

RigVedic Aryans have a lot in common with the Andronovo culture and the Mittanni kingdoms as well as with early Iranians. The Andronovo culture is believed to be the site of the first horse-drawn chariots.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

The grama (wagon train), vis and jana were political units of the early Vedic Aryans. A vish was a subdivision of a jana or "krishti", and a grama was a smaller unit than the other two. The leader of a grama was called gramani and that of a vish was called vishpati.

The Rashtra (polity) was governed by a rajan (chieftain, 'king'). The king is often referred to as gopa (protector) and occasionally as samrat (supreme ruler). He governed the people with their consent and approval. He was elected from a restricted class of 'royals' (rajanya). There were various types of meetings such as the vidhata or "Sabha". Gana was the non-monarchical assembly that is a parallel one to the monarchical assemblies of that period headed by Jyestha the same was referred in Buddhist text named Jettaka. The Sabhâ, situated outside of settlement, was restricted to the Vratyas, bands of roving Brahmins and Kshatriyas in search of cattle, with a common woman (pumsali) while the vidatha was the potlatch-like ritual distribution of bounty.

The main duty of the king was to protect the tribe. He was aided by several functionaries, including the purohita (chaplain) and the senani (army chief; sena: army). The former not only gave advice to the ruler but also was his chariot driver and practiced spells and charms for success in war. Soldiers on foot (pattis) and on chariots (rathins), armed with bow and arrow, were common. The king employed space (spies) and dutas (messengers). He collected taxes (originally ceremonial gifts, bali), from the people which he had to redistribute.

NOTES

The concept of Varna (class) and the rules of marriage were rigid as is evident from Vedic verses (RV 10.90, W. Rau 1957). The status of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas was higher than that of the Vaishyas and Shudras. The Brahmins were specialized in creating poetry, preserving the sacred texts, and carrying out various types of rituals. Functioning as intellectual leadership, they also restricted social mobility between the varnas, as in the fields of science, war, literature, religion and the environment. The proper enunciation of verses in ritual was considered essential for prosperity and success in war and harvests. Kshatriyas amassed wealth (cattle), and many commissioned the performance of sacrifices. Kshatriyas helped in administering the polity, maintained the structure of society and the economy of a tribe, and helped in maintaining law and order.

In the Early Vedic Period all the three upper classes Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas were considered as —relatively— equal Arya, but in the Later Vedic Age the Brahmins and Kshatriyas became upper class. The Vaishyas were pastoralists and farmers; the Shudras were the lower class; they included artisans and were meant to serve the upper three classes. As the caste system became deep-rooted there were many restrictions and rules which were to be followed.

Cattle were held in high esteem and frequently appear in Rigvedic hymns; goddesses were often compared to cows, and gods to bulls. Agriculture grew more prominent with time as the community gradually began to settle down in post-Rigvedic times. The economy was based on bartering with cattle and other valuables such as salt or metals.

Families were patrilineal, and people prayed for the abundance of sons. The Society was strictly organized in a system of four varna (classes, to be distinguished from caste, jati).

VEDIC RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND THOUGHTS

The Vedic forms of belief are the precursor to modern Hinduism. Texts considered to date to the Vedic period are mainly the four Vedas, but the Brahmanas, Aranyakas and the older Upanishads as well as the oldest Shrautasutras are also considered to be Vedic. The Vedas record the liturgy connected with the rituals and sacrifices performed by the 16 or 17 Shrauta priests and the purohitas.

The rishis, the composers of the hymns of the Rigveda, were considered inspired poets and seers (in post-Vedic times understood as “hearers” of an eternally existing Veda, Śrauta means “what is heard”).

The mode of worship was performance of sacrifices which included the chanting of Rigvedic verses, singing of Samans and ‘mumbling’ of offering mantras (Yajus). The priests executed rituals for the three upper classes (varna) of Vedic society, strictly excluding the Sudras. People offered for abundance of rain, cattle, sons, long life and gaining ‘heaven’.

The main deities of the Vedic pantheon were Indra, Agni (the sacrificial fire), and Soma and some deities of social order such as Mitra-Varuna, Aryaman, Bhaga and Amsa, further nature deities such as Surya (the Sun), Vayu (the wind), Prithivi (the earth). Goddesses included Ushas (the dawn), Prithvi and Aditi (the mother of the Aditya gods or sometimes the cow). Rivers, especially Saraswati, were also considered goddesses. Deities were not viewed as all-powerful. The

NOTES

relationship between humans and the deity was one of transaction, with Agni (the sacrificial fire) taking the role of messenger between the two. Strong traces of a common Indo-Iranian religion remain visible, especially in the Soma cult and the fire worship, both of which are preserved in Zoroastrianism. The Ashvamedha (horse sacrifice) has parallels in the 2nd millennium BC Andronovo culture, in Rome and old Ireland, was continued in India until at least the 4th century AD and revived under Jay Singh in 1740 AD.

Vedic religion evolved into the Hindu paths of Yoga and Vedanta, a religious path considering itself the 'essence' of the Vedas, interpreting the Vedic pantheon as a unitary view of the universe with 'God' (Brahman) seen as immanent and transcendent in the forms of Ishvara and Brahman. These post-Vedic systems of thought, along with later texts like Upanishads, epics (namely Gita of Mahabharat), have been fully preserved and form the basis of modern Hinduism. The ritualistic traditions of Vedic religion are preserved in the conservative Srauta tradition, in part with the exception of animal sacrifice, which was mostly abandoned by the higher castes by the end of the Vedic period, partly under the influence of the Buddhist and Jain religions, and their criticism of such practices.

1.21 STATE FORMATION AND MAHAJANAPADAS

Mahajanapadas literally "Great realms", (from Maha, "great", and Janapada "foothold of a tribe", "country") were ancient Indian kingdoms or countries. Ancient Buddhist texts like Anguttara Nikaya make frequent reference to sixteen great kingdoms and republics (Solasa Mahajanapadas) which had evolved and flourished in the northern/north-western parts of the Indian subcontinent prior to the rise of Buddhism in India.

The political structure of the ancient Indians appears to have started with semi-nomadic tribal units called Jana (meaning subjects). Early Vedic texts attest several Janas or tribes of the Aryans, living in a semi-nomadic tribal state and fighting among themselves and with other Non-Aryan tribes for cows, sheep and green pastures. These early Vedic Janas later coalesced into the Janapadas of the Epic Age.

The term "Janapada" literally means the foothold of a tribe. The fact that Janapada is derived from Jana points to an early stage of land-taking by the Jana tribe for a settled way of life. This process of first settlement on land had completed its final stage prior to the times of Buddha and PaGini. The Pre-Buddhist North-west region of the Indian sub-continent was divided into several Janapadas demarcated from each other by boundaries. In PâGini, Janapada stands for country and Janapadin for its citizenry. Each of these Janapadas was named after the Kshatriya tribe (or the Kshatriya Jana) who had settled therein. The Buddhist and other texts only incidentally refer to sixteen great nations (Solasa Mahajanapadas) which were in existence before the time of Buddha. They do not give any connected history except in the case of Magadha. The Buddhist Anguttara Nikaya, at several places, gives a list of sixteen great nations:

1. Kasi
2. Kosala
3. Anga
4. Magadha

5. Vajji (or Vriji)
6. Malla
7. Chedi
8. Vatsa (or Vamsa)
9. Kuru
10. Panchala
11. Machcha (or Matsya)
12. Surasena
13. Assaka
14. Avanti
15. Gandhara
16. Kamboja

NOTES

Another Buddhist text, Digha Nikaya mentions only the first twelve Mahajanapadas and omits the last four in the above list.

Chulla-Niddesa, another ancient text of the Buddhist canon, adds Kalinga to the list and substitutes Yona for Gandhara, thus listing the Kamboja and the Yona as the only Mahajanapadas from Uttarapatha.

The Jaina Bhagvati Sutra gives a slightly different list of sixteen Mahajanapadas viz: Anga, Banga (Vanga), Magadha, Malaya, Malavaka, Accha, Vaccha, Kochcha (Kachcha?), Padha, Ladha (Lata), Bajji (Vajji), Moli (Malla), Kasi, Kosala, Avaha and Sambhuttara. Obviously, the author of Bhagvati has a focus on the countries of Madhydesa and of the far east and south only. He omits the nations from Uttarapatha like the Kamboja and Gandhara. The more extended horizon of the Bhagvati and the omission of all countries from Uttarapatha "clearly shows that the Bhagvati list is of later origin and therefore less reliable."

The main idea in the minds of those who drew up the Janapada lists was basically more tribal than geographical, since the lists include the names of the people and not the countries. As the Buddhist and Jaina texts only casually refer to the Mahajanapadas with no details on history, the following few isolated facts, at best, are gleaned from them and other ancient texts about these ancient nations.

MAGADHA DYNASTIES

Brihadratha Dynasty, Pradyota Dynasty, Harayanka Dynasty, Ujjainâga Dynasty ruled Magadha from 684 - 424 BC. Afterwards the Nanda Dynasty, Maurya Dynasty, Sunga Dynasty, Kanva Dynasty, Gupta Dynasty expanded beyond Magadha.

Amongst the sixteen Mahajanapadas, Magadha rose to prominence under a number of dynasties that peaked with the reign of Asoka Maurya, one of India's most legendary and famous emperors.

BRIHADRATHA DYNASTY

According to the Puranas, the Magadha Empire was established by the Brihadratha Dynasty, who was the sixth in line from Emperor Kuru of the Bharata dynasty through his eldest son Sudhanush. The first prominent Emperor of the Magadhan branch of Bharathas was Emperor Brihadratha. His son Jarasandha

appears in popular legend and is slain by Bhima in the Mahabharatha. Vayu Purana mentions that the Brihadrathas ruled for 1000 years.

PRADYOTA DYNASTY

NOTES

The Brihadrathas were succeeded by the Pradyotas who according to the Vayu Purana ruled for 138 years. One of the Pradyota traditions was for the prince to kill his father to become king. During this time, it is reported that there were high crimes in Magadha. The people rose up and elected Haryanka to become the new king, which destroyed the power of the Pradyotas and created the Haryanka dynasty. Due in part to this bloody dynastic feuding, it is thought that a civil revolt led to the emergence of the Haryanka dynasty.

HARYANKA DYNASTY

According to tradition, the Haryanka dynasty founded the Magadha Empire in 684 BC, whose capital was Rajagriha, later Pataliputra, near the present day Patna. This dynasty lasted till 424 BC, when it was overthrown by the Shishunaga dynasty. This period saw the development of two of India's major religions that started from Magadha. Gautama Buddha in the 6th or 5th century BC was the founder of Buddhism, which later spread to East Asia and South-East Asia, while Mahavira revived and propagated the ancient shamanic religion of Jainism. Bimbisara was responsible for expanding the boundaries of his kingdom through matrimonial alliances and conquest. The land of Kosala fell to Magadha in this way. Bimbisara (543-493 BCE) was imprisoned and killed by his son Ajatashatru (ruled 491-461 BCE) who then became his successor, and under whose rule the dynasty reached its largest extent.

Licchavi was an ancient republic which existed in what is now Bihar state of India, since before the birth of Mahavira (b. 599 BC), Vaishali was the capital of the Licchavis and the Vajjian Confederacy. Its courtesan, Ambapali, was famous for her beauty, and helped in large measure in making the city prosperous. Ajatashatru went to war with the Licchavi several times. Ajatashatru, is thought to have ruled from 491-461 BCE and moved his capital of the Magadha kingdom from Rajagriha to Patliputra. Udayabhadra eventually succeeded his father, Ajatashatru, under him Patliputra became the largest city in the world.

SHISHUNAGA DYNASTY

According to tradition, the Shishunaga dynasty founded the Magadha Empire in 430 BC, whose capital was Rajagriha, later Pataliputra, near the present day Patna in India. This dynasty was succeeded by the Nanda dynasty. Shishunaga (also called King Sisunaka) was the founder of a dynasty of 10 kings, collectively called the Shishunaga dynasty. He established the Magadha empire (in 430 BC). This empire, with its original capital in Rajgriha, later shifted to Pataliputra (both currently in the Indian state of Bihar). The Shishunaga dynasty in its time was one of the largest empires of the Indian subcontinent.

The kingdom had a particularly bloody succession. Anuruddha eventually succeeded Udayabhadra through assassination, and his son Munda succeeded him in the same fashion, as did his son Nagadasaka. Due in part to this bloody dynastic feuding, it is thought that a civil revolt led to the emergence of the Nanda dynasty.

SHISHUNAGA DYNASTY RULERS

*Pre-Historic and Early
Ancient India*

Shishunaga (430 BC), established the kingdom of Magadha, Kakavarna (394-364 BC), Kshemādharmān (618-582 BC), Kshatrujas (582-558 BC), Kalasoka, Mahanandin (until 424 BC), his empire is inherited by his illegitimate son Mahapadma Nanda.

NOTES

1.22 THE NANDA DYNASTY

The Nanda Empire originated from the kingdom of Magadha in Ancient India during the 5th and 4th centuries BC. At its greatest extent, the Nandas extended from Bengal in the east, Punjab in the west and as far south as the Vindhya Range. The Nanda Empire was later conquered by Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the Maurya Empire.

Mahapadma Nanda has been described as the destroyer of all the Kshatriyas. He defeated the Panchalas, Kasis, Haihayas, Kalingas, Asmakas, Kurus, Maithilas, Surasenans, Vitihotras, etc. He expanded his territory till south of Deccan. Mahapadma Nanda died at the age of 88 and, therefore, he ruled the bulk of the period of this dynasty, which lasted 100 years. The Nandas who usurped the throne of the Shishunaga dynasty were of low origin. Some sources state that the founder, Mahapadma, was the son of a Shudra mother, others that he was born of a union of a barber with a courtesan. Nandas were the first of a number of dynasties of northern India who were of non-Kshatriya origin.

NANDA RULE

The Nandas are sometimes described as the first empire builders in the recorded history of India. They inherited the large kingdom of Magadha and wished to extend it to yet more distant frontiers. To this purpose they built up a vast army consisting of 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 war chariots and 3,000 war elephants (at the lowest estimates). According to Plutarch however, the size of the Nanda army was even larger, numbering 200,000 infantry, 80,000 cavalry, 8,000 war chariots, and 6,000 war elephants. However, the Nandas never had the opportunity to see their army up against Alexander, who invaded India at the time of Dhana Nanda, since Alexander had to confine his campaign to the plains of Punjab, for his forces, frightened by the prospect of facing a formidable foe, mutinied at the Hyphasis River (the modern Beas River) refusing to march any further. This river thus marks the eastern-most extent of Alexander's conquests:

Asia in 323BC, showing borders of the Nanda Empire in relation to Alexander's Empire and neighbors.

"As for the Macedonians, however, their struggle with Porus blunted their courage and stayed their further advance into India. For having had all they could do to repulse an enemy who mustered only twenty thousand infantry and two thousand horse, they violently opposed Alexander when he insisted on crossing the river Ganges also, the width of which, as they learned, was thirty-two furlongs, its depth a hundred fathoms, while its banks on the further side were covered with multitudes of men-at-arms and horsemen and elephants. For they were told that the kings of the Ganderites and Praesii were awaiting them

NOTES

with eighty thousand horsemen, two hundred thousand footmen, eight thousand chariots, and six thousand fighting elephants.”

The Nandas made the methodical collection of taxes by regularly appointed officials a part of their administrative system. The treasury was continually replenished, the wealth of the Nandas being well-known. The Nandas also built canals and carried out irrigation projects. The possibility of an imperial structure based on an essentially agrarian economy began to germinate in the Indian mind.

The last of the Nandas was Dhana Nanda (called Xandrames or Aggrammes in ancient Greek and Latin sources). Dhana Nanda was dethroned after he was defeated by Chandragupta Maurya, a young adventurer born of a Nanda prince and a maid named “Mura”. He had a great potential to rule. Dhana Nanda was murdered which finally signaled the advent of the Maurya Empire in 321 BC.

1.23 BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

The sixth century B.C. was an important stage in Indian history as far as the development of new religions is concerned. In this period, we notice a growing opposition to the ritualistic orthodox ideas of the Brahmanas. This ultimately led to the emergence of many heterodox religious movements. Among these Buddhism and Jainism developed into well organised popular religions. This Unit attempts to analyse the emergence and significance of these new religious ideas.

Firstly it deals with the factors that were responsible for the emergence and growth of heterodox ideas. Then it goes on to explain how Buddha and Mahavira tried to find a solution in their own ways to end human suffering. Since the causes for the emergence of these two religions are common in nature, there is some similarity in the principles adopted by these religions. However, they differ completely on some of the basic principles.

The other heterodox religious ideas which were current during the sixth century B.C. have also been dealt with. Finally we examine the impact of these religious movements on contemporary economy and society.

RISE OF NEW RELIGIOUS IDEAS

The new religious ideas during this period emerged out of the prevailing social, economic and religious conditions. Let us examine some of the basic reasons which contributed to their emergence:

- (i) The Vedic religious practices had become cumbersome, and in the context of the new society of the period had become in many cases meaningless ceremonies. Sacrifices and rituals increased and became more elaborate and expensive. With the breakup of communities, the participation in these practices also became restricted and as such irrelevant to many sections in the society.
- (ii) Growing importance of sacrifices and rituals established the domination of the Brahmanas in the society. They acted both as priests and teachers and through their monopoly of performing sacred religious rites, they claimed the highest position in the society which was now divided into four varnas.
- (iii) Contemporary economic and political developments, on the other hand, helped the emergence of new social groups which acquired considerable

NOTES

economic power. You have seen that merchants living in cities or even rich agricultural householders possessed considerable wealth. Similarly, the Kshatriyas, whether in the monarchies or in the gana-samghas, came to wield much more political power than before. These social groups were opposed to the social positions defined for them by the Brahmanas on the basis of their heredity. As Buddhism and Jainism did not give much importance to the notion of birth for social status, they attracted the Vaisyas to their folds. Similarly, the Kshatriyas i.e. the ruling class were also unhappy with Brahmanical domination. Briefly put, it was basically the discontent generated by the dominant position of the Brahmanas in the society, which contributed to the social support behind the new religious ideas. It is worth remembering that both Buddha and Mahavira came from Kshatriya class but in their search for answers to the pressing problems of society they went beyond boundaries set by their birth. Further, when we try to find out how their ideas were received by their contemporaries, we notice that they had a range of people responding to them: Kings, big merchants, rich householders, Brahmans and even courtesans. They all represented the new society which was emerging in the sixth century B.C. and Buddha and Mahavira, and other thinkers of those times, in their own ways, responded to the problems of a new social order. The Vedic ritualistic practices had ceased to be of much relevance to this new social order.

Buddha and Mahavira, were by no means, the first to criticise the existing religious beliefs. Many religious preachers before them, like Kapila, Makkali Gosala, Ajita Kesakambalin and Pakuda Kachchayana had already highlighted the evils of the Vedic religions. They also developed new ideas on life and God. New philosophies were also being preached. However, it was Buddha and Mahavira, who provided an alternative religious order.

This was the background which helped the emergence and establishment of new religious orders in the sixth century B.C. Among these Buddhism and Jainism were most popular and well organised. We will now discuss the origin and development of Buddhism and Jainism separately.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA AND ORIGIN OF BUDDHISM

Buddhism was founded by Gautama Buddha who had been given the name Siddhartha by his parents. His father was Suddhodana, the chief of the Sakya clan and mother was Maya, princess of the Koliya clan. He was born in the Lumbini grove (modern Rumindei) in Nepal Tarai. We know this through an inscribed pillar of Asoka. The date of birth of Buddha is a matter of dispute but most of the scholars place it about 566 B.C.

The misery of the human life cast a deep spell on Gautama. In order to find a solution to the misery of mankind, he left home at the age of 29. Gautama spent six years as a wandering ascetic. From a sage named Alara Kalama he learned the technique of meditation and the teachings of the upanishadas. Since these teachings did not lead Gautama to the final liberation, he left him with five Brahmana ascetics.

NOTES

He practised rigid austerities and resorted to different kinds of self torture to find the truth. Ultimately abandoning this he went to Uruvela (near, modern Bodh Gaya on the banks of Niranjana river) and sat under a pipal tree (Bodhi tree-). Here he attained the supreme knowledge (Enlightenment) on the 49th day of his continuous meditation. Since then he was called the Buddha (the enlightened one). From here he proceeded to the Deer park at Sarnath near Varanasi and gave his first sermon which is known as 'Dharmachakra Pravartana' (setting in motion the wheel of Dharma).

Asvajit, Upali, Mogallana, Sari-putra and Ananda were the first five disciples of Buddha. Buddha laid the foundations of the Buddhist Sangha. He preached most of his sermons at Saravasti. Anathapindika, the rich merchant of Saravasti became his follower and made liberal donations to the Buddhist order.

Soon he started visiting various places to propagate his sermons. He visited Sarnath, Mathura, Rajgir, Gaya and Padmaputra. Kings like Bimbisara, Ajatasatru (Magadha), Prasenajita (Kosala) and Udayana (Kausambi) accepted his doctrines and became his disciples. He also visited Kapilavastu and converted his foster mother and his son Rahula to his faith.

At the age of 80 (486 B.C.) he died at Kushinagara (Kasia in Kushinagar district in Uttar Pradesh), the capital of the Mallas. Let us examine the teachings of Buddha which became popular and gave a new direction to the religious ideas of the time.

SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

Even during the life time of its founder, Buddhism was accepted by a large section of people. For example people of Magadha, Kosala and Kausambi had embraced Buddhism.

The republics of Sakyas, Vajjis and Mallas also followed the process. Later on, Asoka and Kanishka made Buddhism state religion and it spread into central Asia, West Asia and Sri Lanka. This appeal of Buddhism to a large section of population was because of the following factors :

- Emphasis on practical morality, an easily acceptable solution to the problems of mankind and a simple philosophy, attracted the masses towards Buddhism.
- The ideas of social equality laid down in the codes of Buddhism made many lay followers accept Buddhism.
- Merchants, like Anathapindika, and courtesans, like Amrapali, accepted the faith because they got due respect in this religion.
- The use of popular language (Pali) to explain the doctrines also helped in the spread of the religion. This was because the Brahmanical religion had limited itself so the use of Sanskrit which was not the language of the masses.
- The patronage extended by kings, was another important reason for the rapid growth of Buddhism. For example according to tradition Asoka sent his son Mahendra and his daughter Sangamitra to Sri Lanka to preach Buddhism. He also established many monasteries and contributed liberally to the Sangha.

- The institution of Sangha had helped to organise the spread of Buddhism effectively.

BUDDHIST COUNCILS

According to tradition s h d y after the death of Buddha the first Buddhist Council was held in 483 B.C. in the Saptapmi cave near Rajagriha. Mahakassapa presided over the assembly. All the teachings of Buddha were divided into two Pitakas, namely

- (a) Vinaya Pitaka, and
- (b) Sutta Pitaka.

The text of Vinaya Pitaka was established under the leadership of Upali and those of Sutta Pitaka was settled under the leadership of Ananda.

The second Council was held at Vaisali in 383 B.C. The monks of Vaisali and Pataliputra had accepted certain rules which were declared as contrary to the teaching of Buddha by the monks of Kausarnbi and Avanti. The Council failed to bring about a compromise between the two opposing groups; Nence the council ended in a permanent split of the Buddhist order into Sthaviravadins and Mahasangikas. The former upheld the orthodox Vinaya Pitaka while the latter favoured the new rules and their further relaxation.

The third Council was held at Pataliputra during the reign of Asoka under the chairmanship of Moggaliputta Tissa. In this Council the philosophical interpretations of the doctrines of Buddha were collected into the third Pitaka called Abhidhamma Pitaka. An attempt was made in this Council to free the Buddhist order from the dissidents and innovations. Heretical monks numbering sixty thousand were expelled from the order. The true canonical literature was defmed and authoritatively settled to eliminate all disruptive tendencies.

The fourth Council was held during the reign of Kanishka in Kashrnir. This council was a gathering of Hinayanists of North India. It compiled three commentaries (Vibhashas) of the three Pitalcas. It decided certain controversial questions of differences that arose between the Sarvastivada teachers of Kashrnir and Gandhara.

BUDDHIST SCHOOLS

In the second Council held at Vaisali, the Buddhist order was split into two schools namely :

- (a) Sthaviravadins, and
 - (b) Mahasangikas
- The Sthaviravadins followed strict monastic life and rigid disciplinary laws as originally prescribed.
 - The group which followed a modified disciplinary rules was called the Mahasangikas.

Mahayanism developed after the fourth Buddhist Council. In opposition to the group (Hinayana sect), who believed in orthodox teaching of Buddha those who accepted the new ideas were called the Mahayana sect. They made an image of Buddha and worshipped it as god. In the first century A.D., during the period of Kanishka some doctrinal changes were made.

NOTES

1.24 ORIGIN AND SPREAD OF JAINISM

NOTES

According to Jaina traditions, twenty four Tirthankaras were responsible for the origin and development of Jaina religion and philosophy. Of these, the first twenty two are of doubtful historicity. In the case of the last two, Parsvanatha and Mahavira, Buddhist works also confirm their historicity.

PARSVANATHA

According to Jaina tradition the twenty-third Tirthankara, Parsvanatha was the son of King Asvasena of Varanasi and his Queen Vama. He abandoned the throne at the age of thirty and became an ascetic. He received enlightenment after 84 days of penance. He died at the age of 100 years, nearly 250 years before Mahavira. Parsvanatha believed in the eternity of 'matter'. He left behind him a good number of followers. The followers of Parsvanatha wore a white garment. Thus it is clear that even before Mahavira some kind of Jaina faith existed.

MAHAVIRA

The twenty-fourth Tirthankara was Vardhamana Mahavira. He was born in Kundagrama (Basukunda), a suburb of Vaisali (Muzzaffarpur district, Bihar) in 540 B.C. His father, Siddhartha was the head of Jnatikas, a Kshatriya clan. His mother was Trishala, a Lichchhavi princess. Vardhamana was given a good education and was married to Yashoda. He had a daughter by her.

At the age of thirty, Vardhamana left his home and became an ascetic. At first he wore a single garment which he abandoned after 13 months and began to wander as a 'naked monk'. For twelve years he lived the life of an ascetic following severe austerities. In the 13th year of his asceticism, at the age of 42, he attained the 'supreme knowledge'. He was later known as 'Mahavir' (the supreme hero), or 'Jina' (the conqueror). He was also hailed as 'Nugrantha' (free from fetters).

For the next thirty years he moved from place to place and preached his doctrines in Kosala, Magadha and further east. He wandered for eight months in a year and spent the four months of the rainy season in some famous town of eastern India. He often visited the courts of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru. He died at Pawa (near Rajagriha) in Patna district at the age of 72 (468 B.C.).

SPREAD OF JAINISM

Mahavira had eleven disciples known as Ganadharas or heads of schools. Arya Sudharma was the only Ganadhara who survived Mahavira and became the first 'Thera' (chief preceptor) of the Jaina order. He died 20 years after Mahavira's death. The Jain order in the days of the late Nanda King was administered by two Theras :

- (a) Sambhutavijaya, and
- (b) Bhadrabahu.

The sixth Thera was Bhadrabahu, a contemporary of the Maurya King Chandragupta Maurya.

The followers of Mahavira slowly spread over the whole country. In many regions royal patronage was bestowed upon Jainism. According to Jain tradition, Udayin, the successor of Ajatsatru was a devoted Jain. Jain monks were seen on

the banks of the river Indus, when Alexander invaded India. Chandragupta Maurya was a follower of Jainism and he migrated with Bhadrabahu to the South and spread Jainism. During the early centuries of the Christian era Mathura and Ujjain became great centres of Jainism.

The success of Jainism was more remarkable than Buddhism. One of the important causes for the success was the popular dialect (Prakrit, Religious literature was also written in Ardhamagadhi) used in place of Sanskrit by Mahavira and his followers. The simple and homely morals prescribed to the masses attracted the people. The patronage extended by Kings helped Jainism to gain a place in the minds of the people.

JAIN COUNCILS

Towards the close of Chandragupta Maurya's rule a terrible famine broke out in South Bihar. It lasted for about 12 years. Bhadrabahu and his disciples migrated to Sravanabelgola in Karnataka. Other Jains remained in Magadha with Sthulabhadra as their leader. They summoned a council at Pataliputra at about 300 B.C. In that council the sacred teachings of Mahavira were divided into twelve *angas*.

The second Jain Council was held at Vallabhi (Gujarat) in 512 A.D. and was presided over by Devardhi Kshemasarmana. The purpose of this Council was to collect the Sacred texts and write them down systematically. However this time the 12th *anga* drawn at the first Council was lost. All the remaining *angas* were written in Ardhamagadhi.

SECTS

The split in the Jaina order is widest from the third century B.C. The differences over wearing a garment was apparent even during the times of Mahavira. The followers of Bhadrabahu, after their return from Sravanabelgola to Magadha refused to acknowledge the canon holding that all the 14 *purvas* were lost. Moreover a wide gulf had developed between those who emigrated and those who stayed in Magadha. The latter had become accustomed to wearing white garments and made a departure from Mahavira's teachings, while the former still continued going naked and strictly followed his teachings. Hence, the first split in the Jaina order was between the Digambaras (sky clad or naked) and Svetambaras (clad in white).

During the later years further splits took place among both the sections, the most important of them being one that renounced idol worship altogether and devoted itself to the worship of the scriptures. They were called the Terapanthis among the Svetambaras and the Samaiyas among the Digambaras. (This sect came into existence about the sixth century A.D.)

1.25 FACTORS FOR THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

The rise of Buddhism is closely connected to the prevalent practices in the Brahmanical religion (Early Hinduism). The Brahmanical religion had become increasingly intolerant (of the lower classes) and exclusive (open only to Brahmins and the aristocracy). The emphasis on conducting rituals (with the help of priests) was gradually alienating the masses. Sanskrit was the prerogative of the Brahmins and the aristocracy.

NOTES

NOTES

In such an environment, Buddha's teaching offered an alternative to the mainstream religion. The majority of its early followers were the merchants and the Sudras (untouchables). Buddhism provided a path to reach God. The tenets and rules of Buddhism were very simple to understand, appealing to the mass population. Buddha also preached in the local language, Prakrit. The practice of conducting rituals was seen as superfluous to reaching salvation.

Buddha set up monasteries known as the SANGHA. He also laid out rules for the conduct of his monks. Both men and women were admitted to monasteries.

A Buddhist monk (BHIKSHU) had to renounce the world and live dependent upon the generosity of the lay community. Each morning the monk would have to go begging for alms for basic meals. The monks also shaved their heads and wore simple saffron robes.

The growth of Buddhism can be attributed to two main factors:

- the support of the general population;
- royal patronage.

In his life, Buddha travelled throughout the whole of northern India spreading his message and setting up monastic orders. Since these monastic orders had to beg for their living, they were generally located near settlements, often on hillsides, etc. Often the monasteries were located on trade routes frequented by merchant caravans. They offered shelter to the merchants, who in return made generous donations.

When Buddha died, stupas or mounds were constructed to hold his ashes and relics of his life. These stupas constituted symbols of veneration. Buddha did not believe in being deified. By the second century AD, there was a major development within Buddhism. There arose a general need for representation of the Buddha in human form. A division in the faith occurred with the creation of two sects: the Mahayana and the Hinayana.

Mahayana Buddhism believed in the elevation of the Buddha to the status of a god. They also permitted the representation of the Buddha as a human being. The rules governing the monastic orders were relaxed. However in the early phase of the schism, the Mahayana remained the minority.

Hinayana Buddhism believed in upholding the traditional values of the Buddha based upon his teaching. By 250 BC, Buddhism had spread to Sri Lanka. Later, the Mahayana sect became popular. It is this school which spread to south-east Asia and China.

In the sixth century AD, Mahayana Buddhism spread to Cambodia. It was introduced by merchants who conducted trade with the country. Mahayana Buddhism spread to Thailand in the fourth century AD and to China in about 50AD.

1.26 EVOLUTION OF MONARCHY AND VARNA SYSTEM

Monarchy in ancient India was sovereignty over a territory by a king who functioned as its protector, a role which involved both secular and religious power. The meaning and significance of kingship changed dramatically between the Vedic and Later Vedic period, and underwent further development under the influence of Buddhism. Although there is evidence that kingship was not always

hereditary during the Vedic and into the Later Vedic period, by the time of composition of the Brahmanic literature, traces of elective kingship had already begun to disappear. Over time, the king evolved from the equivalent of a tribal chief to a fully divine god-king on whose sacrifices the kingdom depended for prosperity and on whose legislation society depended for order.

KINGSHIP IN THE VEDAS

Vedic ideas about the establishment of the office of the king ultimately draw upon legends about the coronation of one god as king of all others. Legends abound as to which of the gods won this position; In the Rig Veda, Indra, Agni, Soma, Yama, and Varuna are all addressed as "King." Indeed, kingship in the Rig Veda largely manifests only in the form of gods as kings. Hymns directly addressed to earthly kings, like 10.173-10.175, are the exception rather than the rule. In these hymns, the king is said to have been "established" by Indra and "made victorious" by Soma and Savit. Although this implies a close dependence of the king upon the gods, the rarity of the figure of the human king in the Rig Veda agrees with the idea that kings at this time were basically on a level with tribal chiefs and were not viewed as divine. There is a provocative line at 10.124.8 which mentions people electing their king, and 3.4.2 in the Atharvaveda seems to confirm this. Also, several hymns in the Rig Veda demonstrate the importance of the samiti (10.166.4, 10.191), the governing assembly, further indicating that the early Vedic king ruled in a tribal setting where decision making by assembly still played a major role.

As was stated above, the king was not considered divine in the early Vedic period. By the time the Brahmanas were composed, however, the king was increasingly associated with the gods through his qualities and the rituals he performed. Also by this time, kingship had transitioned to a hereditary position and the samiti began to wane in importance.

KINGSHIP IN DHARMA LITERATURE

Divinity of the King

By the time of the composition of the Manava Dharmasastra, the divinity of the king had become well established. In Manu 7.4, the king is said to be made out of divine particles of several gods, including Yama, Indra, Varuna, and Kubera. This may be seen as closely related to the earlier belief that at his coronation, the king assumed various aspects of the gods. At Manu 7.8, it is stated that even an infant king must never be treated with disrespect, because he is in reality a god on earth. Narada 18.49-50 echoes this sentiment, saying that the king's divinity is apparent in the force of his decrees: his words are law as soon as he utters them. This is in contrast to earlier Dharmasûtra texts, which seem to stress the king's subordinate status in comparison to Brahmins and make no mention of his divinity.

King as Protector

The Dharmasûtras and Dharmasastras agree that it is the special duty of the king to protect, to punish, and to preserve dharma for those in his kingdom. However, a new myth of the creation of kingship not found in the Dharmasûtras and differing from those found in previous Vedic literature is seen in the Dharmasûtras. At Manu 7.2, it is stated that the Self-existent Lord created the

NOTES

NOTES

king to restore order to the chaotic world which had existed without him. Then the Lord created Punishment (spoken of as a deity), because through punishment the world is subdued (Manu 7.22). By performing his duty as protector and punisher, the king flourishes (Manu 7.107). The weak and helpless (i.e. widows, children, the mentally ill, the destitute) were to receive royal protection. Beyond protecting his subjects against each other, the king, as a *kcatriya*, also had a duty to protect his subjects against external threats and wage war with rival kingdoms. Manu 7.87, for instance, states that a king, when challenged, must never back down from a battle; indeed, doing battle is his *dharma*.

VARNA SYSTEM

Caste marks do not, in fact, exist. The caste system, of course, does but the concept has been grossly degraded by 19th century colonialist historians who saw only its surface rigidities and made sweeping generalizations, (condemnatory for the most part), based on too little knowledge and even less experience. It is however ironic, that they never saw the parallels with the European system of guilds that divided artisans into separate social and economic entities on the basis of their specialization and sub-specializations.

For that is in simplified terms what the caste system is all about - a stratified and hierarchical socio-economic organization of society that evolved as India's ancient civilizations, (with its own social order, moral and ritual codes), absorbed the nomadic, Sanskrit speaking Aryan populations who crossed the mountain passes from the steppes of Central Asia and settled in Northern India. The ancient Hindus, literally meaning the peoples of the valley of the Indus river, soon took on functions and specializations that had little to do with tilling the soil. The four castes developed out of necessity, for with the evolution of society it was no longer possible for the tiller of the soil to assume the functions of priest, warrior, merchant, and artisan all rolled in one.

A new way of life brought with it a need for governance and order, defence and conquest, learning and trade, labourers and artisans. Roles began to be defined and people were classified according to their function, occupation and economic place in society. Brahmins' were to be the spiritual and temporal guides, teachers and exponents of law; *Kshatriya* were the warriors, princes and kings - in short, the nobility; *Vaishya*, took on the tasks of agriculture and merchantry; and *Shudra* included individuals who performed service communities - manual and agricultural labourers, artisans, masons, etc. No king was complete without his brahmin eminence *grise* and over the centuries the brahmins attained immense power, upholding the law as well as dispensing it. But power, they say, corrupts and today, although all hindu priests are brahmins, they no longer hold the people in thrall as they once did.

The 4th group, *sudra*, denotes the service communities - manual and agricultural labourers, artisans, masons, etc. Although they lived on the fringes of society, the "outcastes" or "untouchables", the 5th group in the hierarchy, were still very much a part of mainstream society as the tasks of scavenging, cleaning up after funerals, killing or hunting animals for food, working in leather and other unclean materials, all fell to them. Mahatma Gandhi in the 1940s renamed them *harijan*, which when literally translated means "the people of God". There was a 6th group too, the *malecha*, (outsiders, or foreigners) who, like the Greeks,

Kushans, Scythians and other invaders who settled in India, were gradually absorbed in the varnas (caste system) according to their profession.

The word caste is not Indian but comes from the Portuguese word *casta* (breed or race). The Sanskrit word applied to the groupings is *varna*, which means several things but is often interpreted to signify colour. In a verse from the first millennium epic, the Mahabharata, Brigu, the sage explains: "The brahmins are fair, the kshatriyas are reddish, the vaishyas yellow and the sudras are black."

According to available evidence, the majority of the people seems to be radically very mixed, and to quote the Mahabharata again, "If different colours indicate different castes, then all castes are mixed castes." The Hindus also believe that a man's *varna* is determined by his profession and deeds and not by his birth. Besides, the ancients were not racists. The truth of the matter probably lies in the fact that *varna*, like a lot of Sanskrit words, changes its meaning according to the context it is used in and can denote form, quality, class, category, race, merit or virtue.

Eventually, however, *varna* came to signify an endogamic group, its members linked by heredity, marriage, custom and profession. Professions became diversified with the evolution of society and whole groups of people took on a new identity which was associated with the economic activity of their *gotra* (clan) and became subdivisions of the varnas. The laws that govern the varnas, and particularly the taboo on inter-caste marriages, have maintained the "purity" of the "breed" thus denoting "caste."

1.27 SUMMARY

- Humankind's past is divided into two broad periods: the prehistoric and the historic. The prehistoric period belongs to the time before the emergence of writing and the historic period to the time following this event.
- India is a vast peninsula with a rich cultural heritage. India, the seat of an ancient civilization, still reminds the people of the splendor that she was. The sources of ancient Indian History had to be culled out from the following:— (1) Inscriptions, (2) Numismatics, (3) Archaeology (4) Literature (5) Foreign Accounts given by Greek writers, Chinese travelers and Arab writers.
- The human beings living in the Paleolithic Age were essentially food gatherers and depended on nature for food. The art of hunting and stalking wild animals individually and later in groups.
- The Mesolithic Age lasted from 8000 B.C - 4000 B.C. In this age the size of the groups grew to form small communities. The number of mouths to feed increased and needed constant nurturing for continuation.
- The Neolithic Age (4000 BC-2500 BC) or the New Stone Age was the last phase of the Stone Age and is characterized by very finely flaked, small stone tools, also known as blades and burins. These stone blades are so sharp that the modern blades cannot match their smooth surface and cutting edges.
- Indian agriculture began by 9000 BC as a result of early cultivation of plants, and domestication of crops and animals. Settled life soon followed

NOTES

NOTES

with implements and techniques being developed for agriculture. Wheat, barley, and jujube were domesticated in the Indian subcontinent by 9000 BCE; Domestication of sheep and goat soon followed.

- The Indus Valley Civilization was a Bronze Age civilization (3300–1300 BCE; mature period 2600–1900 BCE) which was centred mostly in the western part of the Indian Subcontinent and which flourished around the Indus River basin.
- Buddhism was founded by Gautama Buddha, who had been given the name Siddhartha by his parents.

1.28 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the main sources of historical studies?
2. Discuss the beginning of agriculture.
3. What are the main causes of decline of Indus Valley Civilization?
4. Describe the beginning of Megalithic culture.
5. What are the principal Vedic Texts?
6. Discuss the factors behind the spread of Buddhism.

1.29 FURTHER READINGS

- D.P. Agrawal and D.K. Chakravarti (ED) *Essays in Indian Protohistory*, New Delhi, 1979.
- H.D. Sankalia, *Prehistory and Protohistory of India and Pakistan*, Poona, 1962.
- D.D. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, New Delhi, 1987.
- D.N. Jha, *Ancient India: An Introductory Outline*, New Delhi, 1986.
- AL. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, New Delhi, 1986.
- Romila Thapar, *History of India, Vol. I* New Delhi, 1983.
- Allchin, Bridget and Raymond; *The Rise of Civilisations in India and Pakistan*, New Delhi, 1988.
- Kosambi, D.D; *The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, New Delhi, 1987.
- Ghosh, A, *The City in Early Historical India*, Simla, 1973.
- Wagle, N; *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, Bombay, 1966.

CHAPTER – 2

ANCIENT INDIA

Ancient India

NOTES

STRUCTURE

- 2.1 Learning Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 BC) and the Rise of Mauryan Dynasty
 - Megasthenes
- 2.4 Administration Under Chandragupta
- 2.5 Bindusara (296 BC-273 BC)
- 2.6 Ashoka (273 BC-232 BC)
- 2.7 Ashoka's Inscriptions
- 2.8 Ashoka's Dhamma and Administration
- 2.9 Art and Culture during Mauryan Period
- 2.10 The Arthashastra
- 2.11 Economy and Society of Post Mauryan Period
- 2.12 The Satavahana and State Formation in Peninsula
- 2.13 The Sangam Texts and Society
- 2.14 The Sungas
- 2.15 The Indo-Greeks
- 2.16 The Sakas
- 2.17 The Parthians
- 2.18 The Kushanas and Kanishka
- 2.19 Contact with the Outside World
- 2.20 Development of Religion
 - Buddhism and Jainism
 - Brahmanism
- 2.21 Art and Culture
- 2.22 History of Guptas
- 2.23 Changes in Political Organization of Empire
- 2.24 Economy and Society of Gupta Period
- 2.25 Literature and Science
- 2.26 The Chola Empire
- 2.27 Political and Social Structure of the Chola
- 2.28 Muslim Conquest and the Rajputs
- 2.29 Ghaznavid Period
- 2.30 Extent of Social Changes
- 2.31 Position of Women
- 2.32 Summary
- 2.33 Review Questions
- 2.34 Further Readings

NOTES

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this chapter, students will be able to:

- discuss the foundation of Mauryan Empire and its administrative system;
- describe reign of Chandragupta Murya and Ashoka;
- understand the nature of rule of post Mauryan Empire;
- state the various aspects of Gupta Dynasty;
- discuss the political, socio-economic condition during early-medieval period.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the year 327 BC Alexander crossed the Hindu Kush. With great difficulty, he conquered pieces of land along the Indus and fought the famous king Poros at the river Hydaspes, where his army encountered elephants for the first time. Alexander won the battle and wanted to move on to the Ganges, the end of the known world. This was where the Okeanos was, the stream that surrounds the entire world. But his soldiers are tired of the strange climate, the battles and the marches, and thus Alexander returned to Babylon. Four years after the crossing of the Hindu Kush, Alexander the Great died and his Empire collapsed. His most important generals fought for position, Seleukos eventually acquiring the bigger piece of land, including the valley of the Indus. At the beginning of the era that will be known as Hellenistic Age, when Greek culture was spread over much of the known world, from the colonies in Spain to the rainforests of India, another mighty general arose, this time in India. He would be the first to unite most of the Indian subcontinent. His grandson would be known as a bringer of peace. The founder of this new dynasty was Chandragupta Maurya.

UNIT — I

THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

In 324 BC. Chandragupta pushed the Macedonian garrisons in Punjab and Sindh out of India. Afterwards he attacked the kingdom of Magadha that controlled the Ganges and conquered it. His mighty army, that he used to conquer the Northern half of the subcontinent, was composed of infantry, cavalry, war elephants and chariots.

Under Chandragupta's rule trade flourished. The treasury was filled and the capital Pataliputra was one of the biggest and most beautiful cities in the world. Chandragupta used his wealth to build up a large governing body.

Just like the first ruler of united China one century later, the first Emperor of this new Empire had a very important advisor. His name was Kautilya. According to his teachings, the state should control everything. Therefore, the Empire was full of spies. However, there also was tolerance towards private enterprise and there was great local autonomy, bounded by the rules of the state. Even the monarch had his duties.

In 305 Seleukos Nikator invaded the Punjab. It is not known whether there was fighting or not, but it is certain that Chandragupta kept the Punjab

and annexed three of the richest provinces of Seleukos. The border was moved to the western side of the Hindu Kush. In this way the young empire was secured.

As he got older, Chandragupta became interested in religion. According to Jain tradition, Chandragupta left his throne to his son Bindusara in 301 BC and slowly starved himself to in a Jain monastery.

NOTES

2.3 CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA (322-298 BC) AND RISE OF MAURYAN DYNASTY

The Mauryan Empire was the first major empire in the history of India and ruled the land from 322 BC to 185 BC. Important rulers of this dynasty were Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusara, and King Ashoka. This empire reached its peak under King Ashoka. However, this mighty empire crumbled rapidly, under its own weight, soon after the death of Ashoka.

Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of the Mauryan Empire. The origin of Chandragupta is shrouded in mystery. It is not clear if he belonged to the upper caste or the lower caste. At that time, Magadh was ruled by the Nanda dynasty whose rule was unpopular. Chandragupta founded the Mauryan Empire by overthrowing the Nanda dynasty with the help of Chanakya (also Kautilya) who was an important minister in the court of the Nanda rulers. Chanakya was ill treated by the Nanda king and he vowed to destroy their kingdom. He met the young Chandragupta in the Vindhya forest. As Chanakya was well versed in politics and the affairs of the state, he groomed Chandragupta and helped him raise and organize an army. Thus, with the help of Chanakya, Chandragupta overthrew the last Nanda ruler and became the king. Chanakya became the chief minister in the court of Chandragupta. The invasion of the northwestern part of India by Alexander in 326 BC and the subsequent establishment of the rule of Seleucus Nikator (one of Alexander's general) was a thorn in the eyes of Chandragupta. Chandragupta firstly stabilized his power in Magadh and then began his campaign against Seleucus.

After a prolonged struggle, Chandragupta was able to defeat Seleucus in 305 BC and annexed the entire Punjab and areas across the Indus River. According to the peace treaty with Seleucus, Chandragupta also got Kabul, Gandhara, and parts of Persia and married his daughter. In this way, Chandragupta became the undisputed ruler of Northern India. His fame was so widespread that rulers from far off kingdoms send their envoys to his court. Chandragupta also conquered parts of Central India and united the whole of northern India under Mauryan rule. After ruling for about 25 years, he became a Jain ascetic and left his throne to his son Bindusara (296 BC-273 BC).

MEGASTHENES

Alexander the Great's conquests in Asia led to the creation of various Greek city states that came to be ruled by his successors. Alexander's main failing as a conqueror was to fail to provide for his succession adequately and so, after his untimely death, various of his commanders and members of his dynasty launched a series of wars aiming to consolidate control over some or all of the territory that he had originally seized.

NOTES

At the eastern reaches of the newly-constituted Greek world, the Seleucid (Successor) states that were created rubbed up against the emerging Maurya Empire of northern India. The Mauryan was the first empire to control most of modern day India, together with substantial portions of what is now known as Afghanistan. It was created by the heroic figure of Candra Gupta (Chandragupta), at approximately 321-5 BCE, when he defeated the previous power of Nanda in Magadha and then extending control across northern India. Candra signed a treaty with Seleucus I Nicator, whose Successor state was based in Persia, modern-day Iran. The treaty, about which details are a little vague, may have included a marriage alliance, together with 500 elephants from Candra to Seleucus and the ceding of the trans-Indus provinces in the opposite direction.

With friendly relations now established, there was considerable interaction between the two states, both of which were characterised by intellectual openness and curiosity. One implication of this was the dispatching of a Greek envoy, one Megasthenes, into the Indian world for further exchanges. While journeying, Megasthenes wrote down his impressions in a multi-volume set known as the *Indica*. The original of this work has unfortunately been lost, which has had a rather negative effect on the author's reputation since he tends to be judged on the basis of the recreations of later authors. These later authors were, principally, Strabo, Diodorus and Arrian. The *Indica*, as it is now understood, contains some apparent mistakes. For example, Megasthenes seems to have confused some details of the caste and slavery systems, failing to observe the later in action. However, he appears to have been on surer ground when he observes that much of the land was so fertile that it yielded two crops per year and that tax evasion, a common crime then as now, was thought of as such a threat to the state that it was punished severely.

2.4 ADMINISTRATION UNDER CHANDRAGUPTA

Most of our knowledge about the Mauryan period in general and the rule of Chandragupta in particular is obtained from two important literary sources: the *Arthashastra*, written by Chanakya, and *Indica*, written by the ancient Greek writer Megasthenes (who was an ambassador of Seleucus Nicator and had come to the court of Chandragupta).

The *Arthashastra* talks about the principles of governance and lays down rules of administration. It also discusses in detail the role of the king, his duties, rate of taxation, use of espionage, and laws for governing the society. The *Indica* of Megasthenes, on the other hand, gives a vivid description of the Mauryan society under the rule of Chandragupta. Megasthenes described the glory of the Mauryan capital of Pataliputra. He also talked of the lifestyle in the cities and villages and the prosperity of the Mauryan cities.

Chandragupta had united the whole of northern India under one rule and the Mauryan Empire was the first large, powerful, centralized state in India. The *Arthashastra* laid the foundation of the centralized administration of Mauryan governance. The empire was divided into administrative districts or zones, each of which had a hierarchy of officials. The top most officers from these districts or zones directly reported to the Mauryan ruler. These officials were responsible for collecting taxes, maintaining the army, completing irrigational projects, and maintaining law and order.

During Chandragupta reign, the state regulated trade, levied taxes, and standardized weights and measures. Trade and commerce also flourished during this time. The state was responsible for providing irrigational facilities, succor, sanitation, and famine relief to its masses. Megasthenes, in his writings, has praised the efficient Mauryan administration.

NOTES

2.5 BINDUSARA (296 BC-273 BC)

Chandragupta, after ruling for about 25 years, became a Jain ascetic and left his throne to his son Bindusara, who inherited a vast empire that spanned parts of modern-day Afghanistan in the northwest, to parts of Bengal in the east. It also spread through large parts of central India.

Bindusara extended the Mauryan Empire southwards in the Indian peninsula as far as Mysore. He defeated and annexed 16 small kingdoms, thus extending his empire from sea to sea. The only regions that were left out on the Indian subcontinent were that of Kalinga (Orissa) and the kingdoms to the extreme south of the Indian peninsula. As these southern kingdoms were friendly, Bindusara did not annex them, but the Kingdom of Kalinga was a problem for the Mauryan Empire.

The administration under Bindusara functioned smoothly. During his reign, Mauryan Empire had good relation with Greeks, Syrians, and Egyptians.

2.6 ASHOKA (273 BC-232 BC)

Bindusara was succeeded by his son Ashoka, the most famous of the Mauryan Kings. The Mauryan Empire reached its peak under the rule of Ashoka. He undertook military campaign against Kalinga and, after defeating it in a bloody war, annexed it. However, the sight of the large-scale carnage moved Ashoka, and he embraced Buddhism. The war of Kalinga was the turning point in the life of Ashoka to the extent that he shunned all forms of violence and became a strict vegetarian. For the rest of his life, Ashoka preached the principles of Buddhism not only in his vast empire, but also sent missions abroad. Ashoka built a number of rock edicts and pillars to spread the gospel of Buddhism.

Bindusara conquered the Deccan highland during his reign of 28 years. His wife (or wives) gave birth to seven sons, including one being rather most brave, called Ashoka.

After the of his father, a struggle for power erupted within the Empire. After four years, Ashoka was victorious and became Emperor in the year 269 BC. It took him eight years to consolidate his power. Then it was time to launch a new campaign; Ashoka invaded the kingdom of Kalinga in southern India and conquered it after a long war.

The war was a turning point in Ashoka's life. He was so shocked by the horrors that the war had caused, that he converted to Buddhism in the tenth year of his rule. He rejected the old system of spies and started to rule his Empire in a moral way. Ashoka didn't really bother about the ancient system of castes and had good relations with Buddhists, Jainas and Hindu Brahmans. There were no troops within the Empire, but civil rulers were sent to the provinces so that the central rule was able to take into account local wishes. Laws were strict, but there was peace within the Empire.

NOTES

To forge these different peoples into one nation, a common identity was required. Therefore, Prakrit was made the official language in the whole Empire with the exception of the utmost North-West, where Greek was an official language too. Ashoka spoke about the Indians as his children, made sure that free hospitals were built for both men and animals were built. During his reign, roads with halting-places were constructed. At the halting-places people could drink, sleep and read wise Buddhistic phrases and royal decrees that had been hewn into pillars.

The army was stationed in the North-West, where the Seleucid Empire was. Ashoka sent ambassadors to Hellenistic areas.

The arts flourished during Ashoka's reign. Beautiful palaces were built, and everywhere in the Empire monasteries and stupas, domes where relics were kept or that marked sacred Buddhist or Jain holy places.

The great Emperor Ashoka died in 232 BC. After his civil war erupted and the economy became instable. However, the sons of Ashoka would remain on the throne for 48 years, until the last Emperor was killed by one of his officers. India was divided again. But the Mauryans had proved that unity was possible, and Indian dynasties to follow would try to achieve a unified subcontinent, just like the Mauryans had done.

2.7 ASHOKA'S INSCRIPTIONS

The earliest written materials on the Indian subcontinent are the Edicts of Ashoka, a collection of 33 inscriptions on the Pillars of Ashoka, as well as boulders and cave walls, made by the Emperor Ashoka of the Mauryan dynasty during his reign from 272 to 231 B.C.E. These inscriptions have been found in over 35 locations throughout the areas of modern-day Pakistan and northern India, near towns, trade routes and religious centers. They were deciphered in 1837, by the Orientalist James Prinsep. In these inscriptions, Ashoka refers to himself as "Beloved of the Gods" and "King Priya-darshi." The identification of King Priya-darshi with Ashoka was confirmed by an inscription discovered in 1915 which referred to the author as "Devânampiya Asoka." The inscriptions confirmed the legends about King Ashoka which had largely disappeared in India but were preserved in other Buddhist traditions.

The inscriptions found in the eastern part of India were written in the Magadhi language, using the Brahmi script. In the western part of India, the language used is closer to Sanskrit, using the Kharoshthi script, one extract of Edict 13 in the Greek language, and one bilingual edict written in Greek and Aramaic.

PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

The Ashoka inscriptions represent the first tangible evidence of Buddhism. The edicts describe in detail the first wide expansion of Buddhism through the sponsorship of one of the most powerful kings of Indian history. According to the edicts, the extent of Buddhist proselytism during this period reached as far as the Mediterranean, and many Buddhist monuments were created.

The inscriptions proclaim Asoka's beliefs in the Buddhist concept of dhamma and his efforts to develop "dhamma" throughout his kingdom. Although Buddhism and the Buddha are mentioned, the edicts of Asoka tend to focus on

social and moral precepts rather than religious practices or the philosophical dimension of Buddhism.

The inscriptions revolve around a few repetitive themes: Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism, the description of his efforts to spread Buddhism, his moral and religious precepts, and his social and animal welfare program.

Ashoka explains that he converted to Buddhism out of remorse for his conquest of the Kalingas around 264 B.C.E. in eastern India (near the present-day state of Orissa):

"Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, conquered the Kalingas eight years after his coronation. One hundred and fifty thousand were deported, one hundred thousand were killed and many more died (from other causes). After the Kalingas had been conquered, Beloved-of-the-Gods came to feel a strong inclination towards the Dhamma, a love for the Dhamma and for instruction in Dhamma. Now Beloved-of-the-Gods feels deep remorse for having conquered the Kalingas (Rock Edict Nb13, S. Dhammika)."

Following his conversion, Ashoka traveled throughout India and visited sacred Buddhist locations, where he would typically erect a pillar bearing his inscriptions:

"Twenty years after his coronation, Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, visited this place and worshipped because here the Buddha, the sage of the Sakyans, was born. He had a stone figure and a pillar set up and because the Lord was born here, the village of Lumbini was exempted from tax and required to pay only one eighth of the produce (Minor Pillar Edict Nb1, S. Dhammika)."

Ashoka's concept of "Dhamma" seems to be synonymous with righteousness. In order to propagate the Buddhist faith, Ashoka explains he sent emissaries to the Hellenistic kings as far as the Mediterranean, and to the peoples throughout India, claiming they were all converted to the Dharma as a result. He names the Greek rulers of the time, inheritors of the conquest of Alexander the Great, from Bactria to as far as Greece and North Africa, displaying an amazingly clear grasp of the political situation at the time.

"Now it is conquest by Dhamma that Beloved-of-the-Gods considers to be the best conquest. And it (conquest by Dhamma) has been won here, on the borders, even six hundred yojanas away, where the Greek king Antiochos rules, beyond there where the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas and Alexander rule, likewise in the south among the Cholas, the Pandyas, and as far as Tamraparni (Rock Edict Nb13, S. Dhammika)."

The distance of 600 yojanas (a yojanas being about 7 miles), corresponds to the distance between the center of India and Greece (roughly 4,000 miles).

- Antiochos refers to Antiochus II Theos of Syria (261-246 B.C.E.), who controlled the Seleucid Empire from Syria to Bactria, in the east from 305 to 250 B.C.E., and was therefore a direct neighbor of Ashoka.
- Ptolemy refers to Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt (285-247 B.C.E.), king of the dynasty founded by Ptolemy I, a former general of Alexander the Great, in Egypt.

NOTES

- Antigonos refers to Antigonus II Gonatas of Macedon (278-239 B.C.E.)
- Magas refers to Magas of Cyrene (300-258 B.C.E.)
- Alexander refers to Alexander II of Epirus (272-258 B.C.E.)

NOTES

In the Gandhari original Antiochos is referred as "Amtyoko nama Yonara-ja" (lit. "The Greek king by the name of Antiokos"), beyond whom live the four other kings: "Param ca tena Atiyokena cature 4 rajani Turamaye nama Amtikini nama Maka nama Alikasudaro nama" (lit. "And beyond Antiochus, four kings by the name of Ptolemy, the name of Antigonos, the name of Magas, the name Alexander.")

It is not clear in Hellenic records whether these Buddhist emissaries were actually received, or had any influence on the Hellenic world. Some scholars however point to the presence of Buddhist communities in the Hellenistic world from that time, in particular in Alexandria (mentioned by Clement of Alexandria). The pre-Christian monastic order of the Therapeutae may have drawn inspiration for its ascetic lifestyle from contact with Buddhist monasticism. Buddhist gravestones from the Ptolemaic period have also been found in Alexandria, decorated with depictions of the Wheel of the Law (Tarn, "The Greeks in Bactria and India"). Commenting on the presence of Buddhists in Alexandria, some scholars have even pointed out that "It was later in this very place that some of the most active centers of Christianity were established."

Ashoka's proselytism also expanded to the south of the Indian subcontinent:

- The Cholas and Pandyas were south Indian peoples living outside Asoka's empire.
- Tamraparni is the name of a river that flows in the southern part of India, in and around the present day Thirunelveli district. Tamraparni can also be interpreted as Tambrabane an old name of Sri Lanka.

Inside India proper, in the realm of Ashoka, many different populations were the object of the King's proselytism: "Here in the king's domain among the Greeks, the Kambojas, the Nabhakas, the Nabhapamkites, the Bhojas, the Pitinikas, the Andhras and the Palidas, everywhere people are following Beloved-of-the-Gods' instructions in Dhamma" (Rock Edict Nb13 S. Dhammika).

GREEK COMMUNITIES

Greek communities lived in the northwest of the Mauryan empire, in the region of Gandhara, and in southern Afghanistan in the region of Gedrosia, following the conquest and the colonization efforts of Alexander the Great around 323 B.C.E. These communities therefore seem to have been still significant during the reign of Ashoka. A notable mention in one inscription references aspects of Greek society.

"There is no country, except among the Greeks, where these two groups, Brahmans and ascetics, are not found, and there is no country where people are not devoted to one or another religion" (Rock Edict Nb13 S. Dhammika).

Two edicts in Afghanistan have been found with Greek inscriptions, one of these being a bilingual edict in Greek language and Aramaic. This edict, found in Kandahar, advocates the adoption of "Piety" (using the Greek term Eusebeia for Dharma) to the Greek community:

"Ten years (of reign) having been completed, King Piodasses (one of the titles of Ashoka: Piyadassi or Priyadarsi, "He who is the beloved of the Gods and who regards everyone amiably") made known (the doctrine of) Piety (Greek: *ἁπόϋάεéá*, Eusebeia) to men; and from this moment he has made men more pious, and everything thrives throughout the whole world. And the king abstains from (killing) living beings, and other men and those who (are) huntsmen and fishermen of the king have *desisted from hunting*. And if some (were) intemperate, they have ceased from their intemperance as was in their power; and obedient to their father and mother and to the elders, in opposition to the past also in the future, by so acting on every occasion, they will live better and more happily" (Trans. by G.P. Carratelli).

NOTES

MORAL PRECEPTS

The "Dhamma" preached by Ashoka is explained mainly in terms of moral precepts, based on the doing of good deeds, respect for others, generosity and purity. "Dhamma is good, but what constitutes Dhamma? (It includes) little evil, much good, kindness, generosity, truthfulness and purity" (Pillar Edict Nb2, S. Dharmika).

"And noble deeds of Dhamma and the practice of Dhamma consist of having kindness, generosity, truthfulness, purity, gentleness and goodness increase among the people" (Rock Pillar Nb7, S. Dharmika).

Ashoka showed great concern for fairness in the exercise of Justice, caution and tolerance in the application of sentences, and regularly pardoned prisoners.

"In the twenty-six years since my coronation prisoners have been given amnesty on twenty-five occasions" (Pillar Edict Nb5 S. Dharmika).

RESPECT FOR ANIMAL LIFE

When Ashoka embraced Buddhism in the latter part of his reign, he brought about significant changes in his style of governance, which included providing protection to fauna, and even relinquished the royal hunt. He did not completely prohibit the killing of animals; he prohibited gratuitous killings (such as for sacrifices), advocated restraint in the number killed for consumption, protected some animals, and in general condemned violent acts against animals, such as castration. He may have been the first ruler in history to advocate conservation measures for wildlife. Reference to these can be seen inscribed on the stone edicts.

"Twenty-six years after my coronation various animals were declared to be protected—parrots, mainas, //aruna//, ruddy geese, wild ducks, /nandimukhas, gelatas//, bats, queen ants, terrapins, boneless fish, //vedareyaka//, //gangapuputaka//, //sankiya// fish, tortoises, porcupines, squirrels, deer, bulls, //okapinda//, wild asses, wild pigeons, domestic pigeons and all four-footed creatures that are neither useful nor edible. Those nanny goats, ewes and sows which are with young or giving milk to their young are protected, and so are young ones less than six months old. Cocks are not to be caponized, husks hiding living beings are not to be burnt and forests are not to be burnt either without reason or to kill creatures. One animal is not to be fed to another (Edict on Fifth Pillar)."

NOTES

The Major Rock Edict at Girnar, Ashoka's first rock edict, reads as follows:

"Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, has caused this Dhamma edict to be written. Here (in my domain) no living beings are to be slaughtered or offered in sacrifice. Nor should festivals be held, for Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, sees much to object to in such festivals, although there are some festivals that Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, does approve of."

The edicts also proclaim that many followed the king's example in giving up the slaughter of animals; one of them proudly states: "Our king killed very few animals."

These legal restrictions conflicted with the practices then freely exercised by the common people in hunting, felling, fishing, and setting fires in forests. One inscription mentions a 100 "panas" (coins) fine for poaching deer in royal hunting preserves.

STUDY OF BUDDHIST TEXTS

Ashoka insisted that the word of the Buddha be read and followed, in particular in monastic circles (the Sanghas):

"Piyadasi, King of Magadha, saluting the Sangha and wishing them good health and happiness, speaks thus: You know, reverend sirs, how great my faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and Sangha is. Whatever, reverend sirs, has been spoken by Lord Buddha, all that is well-spoken (Minor Rock Edict Nb3, S. Dhammika)."

"These Dhamma texts—Extracts from the Discipline, the Noble Way of Life, the Fears to Come, the Poem on the Silent Sage, the Discourse on the Pure Life, Upatissa's Questions, and the Advice to Rahula which was spoken by the Buddha concerning false speech—these Dhamma texts, reverend sirs, I desire that all the monks and nuns may constantly listen to and remember. Likewise the laymen and laywomen (Minor Rock Edict Nb3, S. Dhammika)."

THE AFTERLIFE

"One benefits in this world and gains great merit in the next by giving the gift of the Dhamma" (Rock Edict Nb11, S. Dhammika).

"Happiness in this world and the next is difficult to obtain without much love for the Dhamma, much self-examination, much respect, much fear (of evil), and much enthusiasm" (Pillar Edict Nb1, S. Dhammika).

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Ashoka, based on a belief that all religions shared a common, positive essence, encouraged tolerance and understanding of other religions.

"All religions should reside everywhere, for all of them desire self-control and purity of heart" (Rock Edict Nb7, S. Dhammika). "Here (in my domain) no living beings are to be slaughtered or offered in sacrifice" (Rock Edict Nb1, S. Dhammika).

"Contact (between religions) is good. One should listen to and respect the doctrines professed by others. Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi,

desires that all should be well-learned in the good doctrines of other religions" (Rock Edict Nb12, S. Dhammika).

SOCIAL WELFARE

NOTES

According to the edicts, Ashoka was concerned for the welfare of his subjects (human and animal), and those beyond his borders, spreading the use of medicinal treatments, improving roadside facilities for more comfortable travel, and establishing "officers of the faith" throughout his territories to survey the welfare of the population and the propagation of the "Dhamma."

2.8 ASHOKA'S DHAMMA AND ADMINISTRATION

As Ashoka became a devout Buddhist, he began to spread the teachings of Buddha by issuing edicts, which not only propagated religion but also his ideas on society and governance.

These edicts were sent to different parts of the empire, where they were engraved on rocks or pillars, for the common people to see and read them. These edicts were written in different scripts. Most of them were in Brahmi, which was common in most parts of the empire. The language was generally Prakrit (ancient language), as it was spoken by the common people, whereas Sanskrit was spoken by educated upper caste people. Some inscriptions were also written in Greek and Aramaic (an Indo-Persian language). As Ashoka wanted his message to reach all his subjects, he used the language they understood.

Ashoka believed in high ideals, which, according to him, could lead people to be virtuous, and peace loving. This he called Dhamma (which is a Prakrit form of the Sanskrit word Dharma). His rock edicts and pillar inscriptions propagated the true essence of Dhamma. Ashoka asked the different religious groups (Brahmins, Buddhist and Jain) to live in peace. His lofty ideals also included shunning violence and war, stopping animal sacrifice, respect for elders, respect of slaves by their masters, vegetarianism, etc. Above all, Ashoka wanted peace in his empire.

Ashoka believed that the King should look upon his subjects as a father treats his children. He took care of his subjects in various ways and was responsible for carrying out a lot of welfare activities during his reign like building of roads, planting of trees along these roads, wells, rest houses for travelers, hospitals for the sick, etc. The Dhamma Mahamattas (officers responsible for promoting the policy of Dhamma) looked after these welfare activities across the empire.

Ashoka had a friendly relation with his neighbors and sent and received envoys to/from them. He sent his son Mahendra to Sri Lanka to preach Buddhism there. He also propagated Buddhism to Chola and Pandya kingdoms, which were at the extreme southern part of the Indian peninsula. He also sent Buddhist missions to Burma and other Southeast Asian countries.

ADMINISTRATION UNDER ASHOKA

Before the Kalinga war, the Mauryan administration under Ashoka was not different from that of his predecessors. Ashoka, like previous Mauryan kings, was at the head of the centralized administrative system. He was helped by a council of ministers that was in charge of different ministries like taxation, army,

NOTES

agriculture, justice, etc. The empire was divided into administrative zones, each one having its hierarchy of officials. The top most officers at the zonal level had to keep in touch with the king. These officers took care of all aspects of administration (social welfare, economy, law and order, military) in the different zones. The official ladder went down to the village level.

The war with Kalinga transformed Ashoka both on a personal as well as public level. He made a number of changes in the administration. Ashoka introduced a new cadre of officials; by the name of Dhamma Mahamatta, who were sent across the empire to spread the message of Ashoka's Dhamma (dharma).

2.9 ART AND CULTURE DURING MAURYAN PERIOD

Mauryan art encompasses the arts produced during the period of the Mauryan Empire (4th to 2nd century BCE), which was the first empire to rule over most of the Indian subcontinent. It represented an important transition in Indian art from use of wood to stone. It is also notable for a refinement in pottery.

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

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

ARCHITECTURE

While the period marked a second transition to use of brick and stone, wood was still the material of choice. Kautilya in the Arthashastra advises the use of brick and stone for their durability. Yet he devotes a large section to safeguards to be taken against conflagrations in wooden buildings indicating their popularity.

Megasthenes mentions that the capital city of Pataliputra was encircled by a massive timber-palisade, pierced by loopholes through which archers could shoot. It had sixty-four gates and 570 towers. According to Strabo, the gilded pillars of the palace were adorned with golden vines and silver birds. The palace stood in an extensive park studded with fish ponds. It was furnished with a great variety of ornamental trees and shrubs. Excavations carried out by Spooner and Waddell have brought to light remains of huge wooden buildings at Bulandibagh and Kumrahar, both near Patna. The remains of one of the buildings, a 80 pillared

hall at Kumrahar are of particular significance. Out of 80 stone columns, that once stood on a wooden platform and supported a wooden roof, Spooner was able to discover the entire lower part of at least one in almost perfect conditions. It is more or less similar to an Ashokan pillar, smooth, polished and made of grey Chunar sandstone.

Many stupas like those at Sanchi, Sarnath and probably Amaravati were originally built as brick and masonry mounds during the reign of Ashoka. Unfortunately they were renovated many times, which leaves us with hardly a clue of the original structures.

SCULPTURE

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

PILLARS AND THEIR CAPITALS

These pillars were carved in two types of stone. Some were of the spotted red and white sandstone from the region of Mathura, the others of buff-coloured fine grained hard sandstone usually with small black spots quarried in the Chunar near Varanasi. The uniformity of style in the pillar capitals suggests that they were all sculpted by craftsmen from the same region. It would therefore seem, that stone transported from Mathura and Chunar to the various sites where the pillars have been found and here the stone was cut and carved by craftsmen. They were given a fine polish characteristic of Mauryan sculpture. These pillars were mainly erected in the Gangetic plains. They were inscribed with edicts of Ashoka on Dhamma or righteousness. The animal capital as a finely carved lifelike representation. Noteworthy are the lion capital of Sarnath, the bull capital of Rampurva and the lion capital of Laurya Nandangarh. Much speculation has been made about the similarity between these capitals and Achaemenid works.

POTTERY

Use of the potters wheel became universal. The pottery associated with Mauryan period consists of many types of ware. But the most highly developed technique is seen in a special type of pottery known as the Northern Black Polished (NBP) ware, which was the hallmark of Mauryan pottery. The NBP ware is made of finely levigated alluvial clay, which when seen in section is usually of a grey and sometimes of a red hue. It has a brilliantly burnished dressing of the quality of a glaze which ranges from a jet black to a deep grey or a metallic steel blue. Occasionally small red-brown patches are apparent on the surface. It can be distinguished from other polished or graphite-coated red wares by its peculiar lustre and brilliance. This ware was used largely for dishes and small bowls. It is found in abundance in the Ganga valley. Although NBP was not very rare, it was obviously a more expensive ware than the other varieties, since potshreds of NBP

were occasionally found riveted with copper pins indicating that even a cracked vessel in NBP ware had its value.

COINS

NOTES

The coins issued by the Mauryans are mostly silver and a few copper pieces of metal in various shapes, sizes and weights and which have one or more symbols punched on them. The most common symbols are the elephant, the tree in railing symbol and the mountain. The technique of producing such coins was generally that the metal was cut first and then the device was punched. These symbols are said to have either represented the Royal insignia or the symbol of the local guild that struck the coin. Some coins had Shroff marks on them indicating that older coins were often re-issued. The alloy content closely resembles that specified in the Arthashastra. Based on his identification of the symbols on the punch-marked coins with certain Mauryan rulers, Kosambi argued that the Mauryan punch-marked karshapana after Chandragupta has the same weight as its predecessor, but much more copper, cruder fabric, and such a large variation in weight that the manufacture must have been hasty. This evidence of stress and unsatisfied currency demand is accompanied by debasement (inflation) plus vanishing of the reverse marks which denoted the ancient trade guilds. This in his opinion indicated that there was a fiscal crisis in the later Mauryan period. However his method of analysis and the chronological identification has been questioned.

PAINTING

While we can be sure of Mauryan proficiency in this field based on the descriptions of Megasthenes, unfortunately no proper representative has been found to date.

2.10 THE ARTHASASTRA

The Arthashastra is an ancient Indian Hindu treatise on statecraft, economic policy and military strategy which identifies its author by the names Kautilya and Vishnugupta, who are traditionally identified with Chanakya (c. 350–283 BC), who was a scholar at Takshashila and later the prime minister of the Maurya Empire.

The original identification of Kautilya or Vishnugupta with the Mauryan minister Chanakya would date the Arthashastra to the 4th century BCE. However, certain affinities with smritis and references that would be anachronistic for the 4th century BC suggest assigning the Arthashastra to the 2nd through 4th centuries CE. Thomas R. Trautmann and I.W. Mabbett concur that the Arthashastra is a composition from no earlier than the 2nd century AD, but based on earlier material. K.C. Ojha puts forward the view that the traditional identification of Vishnugupta with Kautilya was caused by a confusion of editor and originator and suggests that Vishnugupta is in fact a redactor of the original work of Kautilya. Thomas Burrow goes even further and says that Chanakya and Kautilya are actually two different people. The end of this treatise Arthashastra, however, says: "This Sastra has been made by him who from intolerance (of misrule) quickly rescued the scriptures and the science of weapons and the earth which had passed to the Nanda king." More recently, Mital concluded that the methods used by Trautmann were inadequate to prove his claims, and therefore "there exists no direct evidence

against Kautilya being the sole author of The Arthashastra, nor evidence that it was not written during the 4th century BCE." The text was influential until the 12th century, when it disappeared. It was discovered in 1904 by R. Shamasastri, who published it in 1909 and the first English translation in 1915.

THE RAJARSHI

Arthashastra deals in detail with the qualities and disciplines required for a Rajarshi - a wise and virtuous king.

"In the happiness of his subjects lies the king's happiness, in their welfare his welfare. He shall not consider as good only that which pleases him but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects" - Kautilya.

According to Kautilya, a Rajarshi is one who:

- Has self-control, having conquered the inimical temptations of the senses;
- Cultivates the intellect by association with elders;
- Keeps his eyes open through spies;
- Is ever active in promoting the security & welfare of the people;
- Ensures the observance (by the people) of their dharma by authority & example;
- Improves his own discipline by (continuing his) learning in all branches of knowledge; and
- Endears himself to his people by enriching them & doing good to them.

Such a disciplined king should:

- Keep away from another's wife;
- Not covet another's property;
- Practice ahimsa (non-violence towards all living things);
- Avoid day dreaming, capriciousness, falsehood & extravagance; and
- Avoid association with harmful persons and indulging in (harmful) activities.

Kautilya says that artha (Sound Economies) is the most important; dharma & kama are both dependent on it. A Rajarishi shall always respect those councillors and purohitas who warn him of the dangers of transgressing the limits of good conduct, reminding him sharply (as with a goad) of the times prescribed for various duties and caution him even when he errs in private.

DUTIES OF THE KING

If the king is energetic, his subjects will be equally energetic. If he is slack (and lazy in performing his duties), the subjects will also be lax and thereby eat into his wealth. Besides, a lazy king will easily fall into the hands of enemies. Hence the Rajarishi should himself always be energetic. He shall divide the day and the night, each into eight periods of one and half hours, and perform his duties as follows:

First 1½ hrs. after sunrise	Receive reports on defence, revenue, expenditure
Second 1½ hrs. after sunrise	Public audiences, to hear petitions of city & country people

NOTES

NOTES

Third 1½ hrs. after sunrise & Last 1½ hrs. before noon	Receive revenues & tributes; appoint ministers and other high officials & allot tasks to them
First 1½ hrs. after noon	Write letters & dispatches, confer with councillors, receive secret information from spies
Second 1½ hrs. after noon	Personal: recreation, time for contemplation
Third 1½ hrs. after noon & Last 1½ hrs. before sunset	Inspect & review forces; Consult with Chief of Defence
<i>The day shall end with evening prayers.</i>	
First 1½ hrs. after sunset	Interview with secret agents
Second 1½ hrs. after sunset	Personal: bath, meals, study
Third & Fourth 1½ hrs. after sunset & First 1½ hrs. after midnight	Retire to the bed chamber to the sound of music, sleep
Second 1½ hrs. after midnight	After waking to the sound of music, meditate on political matters & on work to be done
Third 1½ hrs. after midnight	Consult with councilors, send out spies
Last 1½ hrs. before sunrise	Religious, household & personal duties, meetings with his teacher, adviser on rituals, purohitas, personal physician, chief cooks & astrologer

Or some other time table which suits the king.

Hence the king shall be ever active in the management of the economy. The root of wealth is (economic) activity and lack of it (brings) material distress. In the absence of (fruitful economic) activity, both current prosperity and future growth will be destroyed. A king can achieve the desired objectives & abundance of riches by undertaking (productive) economic activity.

An ideal king is one who has the highest qualities of leadership, intellect, energy & personal attributes.

The qualities of leadership (which attracts followers) are: birth in a noble family, good fortune, intellect & prowess, association with elders, being righteous, truthful, resolute, enthusiastic & disciplined, not breaking his promises, showing gratitude (to those who help him), having lofty aims, not being dilatory, being stronger than neighbouring kings & having ministers of high quality.

The qualities of intellect are: desire to learn, listening (to others), grasping, retaining, understanding thoroughly and reflecting on knowledge, rejecting false views and adhering to the true ones. An energetic king is one who is valorous, determined, quick, and dexterous. As regards personal attributes, an ideal king should be eloquent, bold and endowed with sharp intellect, a strong memory and a keen mind. He should be amenable to guidance. He should be well trained in all the arts and be able to lead the army. He should be just in rewarding and punishing. He should have the foresight to avail himself of the opportunities (by choosing) the right time, place and type of action. He should know how to govern

in normal times and in times of crisis. He should know when to fight and when to make peace, when to lie in wait, when to observe treaties and when to strike at an enemy's weakness. He should preserve his dignity at all times and not laugh in an undignified manner. He should be sweet in speech, look straight at people and avoid frowning. He should eschew passion, anger, greed, obstinacy, fickleness and backbiting. He should conduct himself in accordance with advice of elders.

NOTES

INTERNAL STRIFE

Kautilya says - Quarrels among people can be resolved by winning over the leaders or by removing the cause of the quarrel - people fighting among themselves help the king by their mutual rivalry. Conflicts (for power) within the royal family, on the other hand, bring about harassment and destruction to the people and double the exertion that is required to end such conflicts. Hence internal strife in the royal family for power is more damaging than quarrels among their subjects. The king must be well versed in discretion and shrewd in judgement.

COMMENTS ON VICES

Vices are corruptions due to ignorance and indiscipline; an unlearned man does not perceive the injurious consequences of his vices. He summarizes: subject to the qualification that gambling is most dangerous in cases where power is shared, the vice with the most serious consequence is addiction to drink, followed by, lust after women, gambling, and lastly hunting.

TRAINING OF A FUTURE KING

Importance of self-discipline Discipline is of two kinds - inborn and acquired. (There must be an innate capacity for self discipline for the reasons given below). Instruction & training can promote discipline only in a person capable of benefiting from them, people incapable of (natural) self-discipline do not benefit. Learning imparts discipline only to those who have the following mental facilities - obedience to a teacher, desire and ability to learn, capacity to retain what is learnt, understanding what is learnt, reflecting on it and (finally) ability to make inferences by deliberating on the knowledge acquired. Those who are devoid of such mental faculties are not benefited (by any amount of training) One who will be a king should acquire discipline and follow it strictly in life by learning the sciences from authoritative teachers.

THE TRAINING OF A PRINCE

With improving his self-discipline, he should always associate with learned elders, for in them alone has discipline its firm roots. For a trained intellect ensues yoga (successful application), from yoga comes self-possession. This is what is meant by efficiency in acquiring knowledge. Only a king, who is wise, disciplined, devoted to a just governing of the subjects & conscious of the welfare of all beings, will enjoy the earth unopposed.

SEVEN WAYS TO GREET A NEIGHBOUR

Kautilya recommended seven strategies in dealing with neighboring powers to Chandragupta Maurya.

NOTES

The strategies are:

1. Sanman - Appeasement, non-aggression pact
2. Danda - Strength, punishment
3. Dana - Gift, bribery
4. Bheda - Divide, split, separating opposition
5. Maya - Illusion, deceit
6. Upeksha - Ignoring the enemy
7. Indrajala - Faking military strength

MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER

A conducive atmosphere is necessary for the state's economy to thrive. This requires that a state's law and order be maintained. Arthashastra specifies fines and punishments to support strict enforcement of laws. The science of law enforcement is also called Dandaniti.

ECONOMIC IDEAS

The exhaustive account of the economic ideas embedded in the Arthashastra has been given by Ratan Lal Basu and by many renowned Arthashastra-experts in an Edited Volume by Sen & Basu. This book contains papers presented by authors from all over the world in the International Conference held in 1902 at the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, India to celebrate the Centenary of discovery of the manuscript of the Arthashastra by R. Shamasastri.

UNIT – II

POST MAURYAN INDIA (B.C. 200 - A.D. 300)

In Unit I, you read about the emergence and consolidation of the first empire in India, that of the Mauryas. You read in detail about the political expansion, the polity, the policy of Dhamma as envisaged by Asoka, and finally, the disintegration of the Mauryan Empire. You will recall that the final blow to the last of the Mauryan Kings was rendered by Pushyarmitra Sunga in about 180 B.C. The period which commenced from about 200 B.C. did not witness a large empire, it is historically important as one in which there were widespread cultural contacts with Central Asia, and the assimilation of foreign elements into the Indian society.

This period witnessed the emergence of a number of political regions in north and northwestern India. We will take up for our study some of the more prominent dynasties like the Sungas, the Indo-Greeks, the Sakas, the Parthians and the Kushanas. We will also study the cultural contacts in various fields, like trade, technology, art, and religion.

2.11 ECONOMY AND SOCIETY OF POST MAURYAN PERIOD

In the post-Mauryan era (200 BC. To 300 A.D.) the economy moved at an accelerated tempo. Society witnessed structural reorientation as significant groups of foreigners penetrated into India and chose to be identified with the rest of the

NOTES

community. The occupation of craftsmen was an important segment of the day's socio-economic milieu. The craftsmen were not only associated with the towns but also villages like Karimnagar in the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh. The categories of craftsmen who were known in this period bear out the truth that there was considerable specialization in mining and metallurgy. A large number of iron artifacts have been discovered at various excavated sites relating to the Kushan and Satavahans Periods. It is surprising to notice that the Telengana region appears to have made special progress in iron artifacts - not only weapons but also balance rods, sickles, ploughshares, razors and ladels have been found in the Karimnagar and Nalgonda districts. Also, cutlery made out of iron and steel was exported to the Abyssinian ports.

Equally significant was the progress made in cloth-making and silk-weaving. Dyeing was a craft of repute in some south Indian towns like Uraiyur, a suburb of Tiruchirapalli, and Arikamedu. The use of oil was also high because of the invention of oil wheel. The inscriptions of the day mention weavers, goldsmiths, dyers, workers in metal and ivory, jewelers, sculptors, fishermen, perfumers and smiths as the donors of caves, pillars, tablets, cisterns etc. Among the luxury items the important ones were ivory and glass articles and bead cutting. At the beginning of the Christian era the knowledge of glass-blowing reached India and attained its peak. Coin minting also reached a high level of excellence made out of gold, silver, copper, bronze, lead and potin. A coin mould of the Satavahans period shows that through it half a dozen coins could be turned out a time.

In urban handicrafts the pride of place goes to the beautiful pieces of terracotta produced in profuse quantities. They have been found in most of the sites belonging to the Kushan and Satavahans periods. In particular, terracotta figures of great beauty have been found in the Nalgonda district of Telengana. The terracotta figures were mostly meant for the use of upper classes in towns.

This immense manufacturing activity was maintained by guilds. At least to dozen kinds of guilds were there. Most of the artisans known from inscriptions hailed from the Mathura region and the western Deccan which lay on the trade routes leading to the ports on the western coast.

The guilds, coming from the days of the Mauryan period, became a more important factor in the urban life both in being instrumental to increase in production and moulding public opinion. The primary guilds of the day were those of the potters, metal workers and carpenters. Some guilds organized their own distribution system while owning a large number of boats to transport goods from various ports on the Ganges.

The guilds of the day fixed their own rules of work and the standards of the finished products. They exercised care regarding price also to safeguard the interest of both the artisan and the customer. They controlled the price of the manufactured articles. The conduct of the guild members was regulated through a guild court. The customary uses of the guilds had the same force as those of laws.

The extensive activity of the guilds can be known from their seals and emblems. The banners and insignia of each guild were carried in procession of festive occasions. These prosperous guilds in addition, donated large sums of money to religious institutions and charitable causes.

NOTES

Since the activity of the guilds was so buoyant, it appears that they attracted the attention of kings too. It is said that kings had financial interests in guilds. Royalty invested its money in commercial activities. This naturally led to protection being provided by State to the guilds. Regarding the activities of guilds, it appears from inscriptions that they acted as bankers, financiers and trustees although these activities were carried out by a separate class of people known as *sresthins*. Usury was a part of banking and the general rate of interest was around 15% loans extended to sea-trade carried higher interest rate. An authority of the day states that the rate of interest should vary according to the caste of the man to whom money is lent.

Interestingly, apart from the guilds, there were workers bodies also. The workers co-operative included artisans and various crafts associated with a particular enterprise. The classic example of this activity was the co-operative of builders, which has its members drawn from specialized workers such as architects. Engineers, bricklayers etc.

The immense commercial activity was bolstered by the thriving trade between India and the Eastern Roman Empire. With the movement of Central Asian people like Sakas, Parthians and Kushans, trade came to be carried across the sea. Among the ports, the important ones were Broach and Sopara on the western coast, and Arikamedu and Tamralipti on the eastern coast. Out of these ports Broach was the most important as not only goods were exported from here but also goods were received. Across land, the converging point of trade routes was Taxila, which was connected with the Silk Route passing through Central Asia. Ujjain was the meeting point of good number of trade routes.

The trade between India and Rome mostly consisted of luxury goods. To begin with Rome got her imports from the southern most portions of the country. The Roman imports were Muslims, pearls, jewels and precious stones from Central and South India. Iron articles formed an important item of export to the Roman Empire. For certain articles India became the clearing house, as for example, silk from China because of impediments posed by the Parthian rule in Iran and the neighboring areas.

The Romans, in return, exported to India various types of potters found in excavations at places like Tamruk in West Bengal, Arikamedu near Pondicherry and a few other places. Probably lead was important from Rome. It is also presumed that the Kushans had brisk trade with the Romans as they conquered Mesopotamia in 115 A.D. At a place close to Kabul, glass jars made in Italy, Egypt and Syria have come to light, apart from small bronze statues of Greko-Roman style. And the most significant Roman export to India was the gold and silver coins - nearly 85 finds of Roman coins have been found. There is nothing surprising in the lamentation of the Roman writer Pliny in the 1st century A.D. that Roman was being drained of gold on account of trade with India.

Indian kingdoms sent embassies to Rome the best known being the one sent about 25 B.C. Which included strange collection of men and animals-tigers, snakes, tortoises a monk and an armless boy who could shoot arrows with his toes. This mission reached Rome during the days of Emperor Augustus in 21 B.C.

In the southern kingdoms maritime trade occupied the pride of place. The literature of the day refers to harbours, docks, light houses and custom offices.

Large variety of ships were built, both for short distance as well as long distance voyages. According to Pliny the largest Indian ship was 75 tons. Other sources mention higher figures.

In the self-same period there was a boom in trade with south-East Asia. This was first occasioned by the Roman demand for spices. Gradually this trade grew in dimensions.

The growing number of strangers in the port towns and trade centers led to their absorbing Indian habits as their numbers grew, social laws of the day became rigid as to be seen from the law code of Manu. Further as conversions to Hinduism was technically impossible the non-Indian groups gradually grew into separate sub-castes. After all the conversion of a single individual was a problem but the device of caste made such absorption easier. Moreover the foreigners found it easier to become Buddhists instead of Aryans. Faced one theoretical knowledge confined to Brahmins and the other practical and technical knowledge which became the preserve of the professionals.

It was during this period Dharmashastras came to be written. These Shastras made the social structure to be rigid. Apart from these writings poetry and drama were also popular. The outstanding poem in Tamil was *Shilappadigaram*. Another poem in Tamil was *Manimegalai*. In Sanskrit, *Asvaghosa* and *Bhasa* were the two great dramatists. The manuscripts of *Asvaghosa* were found in a monastery in Turdan in Central Asia. Both of his plays deal with Buddhist themes. *Bhasa* appeared a couple of centuries later. His plays are based on the incident from the spics or historical romances around the exploits of king *Udayan* in *Avanti*.

In the field of plastic art. Great were the achievement of this period like the stupas at *Sanchi* and *Barhut* the caves at *Karlellora* and *Ajanta*. At *Amravati* the great age of painting began. Also the sculptures at *Amravati* show a mastery of stone sculpture and with the *Mathura* school of sculpture the Indian tradition of sculpture began.

The booming trade and commerce of the period was at the base of the urban settlements that came into existence. The important towns of northern India were *Vaishali*, *Pataliputra*, *Varanasi*, *Kausambi*, *Sravasti*, *Hastinapur*, *Mathura* and *Indraprastha*. Most of the towns flourished in the *Kushan* period as revealed by excavations. The excavations at *Sonkh* in *Mathura* show as many as seven levels of the *Kushan* are but only one of the *Gupta* period. Again in *Jalandhar*, *Ludhiana* and *Ropar* also several sites show good *Kushan* structures. The *Satavahana* kingdown also witnessed thriving towns like *Tagar*, *Paithan*, *Dhanyakataka*, *Amravati*, *Nagarjunakonda*, *Broach*, *Sopara*, *Arikamedu* and *Kaveripattanam*.

2.12 THE SATAVAHANA AND STATE FORMATION IN PENINSULA

The *Satavahana* Empire was a dynasty which ruled from *Junnar* (*Pune*), *Prathisthan* (*Paithan*) in *Maharashtra* and later *Dharanikota* or *Amaravati* in coastal *Andhra Pradesh* and *Kotilingala* (*Karimnagar*) in *Andhra Pradesh* over Southern and Central India from around 230 BCE onward. Although there is some controversy about when the dynasty came to an end, the most liberal estimates suggest that it lasted about 450 years, until around 220 CE. The *Satavahanas* are

NOTES

NOTES

credited for establishing peace in the country, resisting the onslaught of foreigners after the decline of Mauryan empire.

The archaeological evidence indicates that Kotilingala (Karimnagar) in Andhra Pradesh was the ancient site of pre-Satavahana and early Satavahana kings. In the Puranas and on their coins the dynasty is variously referred to as the Sâtavâhanas, Satakarnis, Andhras and Andhrabhrityas.

The Satavahanas ruled a large and powerful empire that withstood the onslaughts from Central Asia. Aside from their military power, their commercialism and naval activity is evidenced by establishment of Indian colonies in southeast Asia.

The Satavahanas began as feudatories to the Mauryan Empire. They seem to have been under the control of Emperor Ashoka, who claims they were in his domain, and that he introduced Buddhism among them:

"Here in the king's domain among the Yavanas (Greeks), the Kambojas, the Nabhakas, the Nabhapamkites, the Bhojas, the Pitinikas, the Andhras and the Palidas, everywhere people are following Beloved-of-the-Gods' instructions in Dhamma." —Rock Edict Nb13 (S. Dhammika)

The Satavahanas declared independence sometime after the death of Ashoka (232 BCE), as the Maurya Empire began to weaken.

It is believed that they were originally practicing Hindu religion (as per Sthala Purana of Amaravathi. Some rulers like Maharaja Satakarni are believed to have performed Vedic sacrifices as well.

They were not only worshipers of Vishnu and Shiva but also respected Buddha, but also other incarnations of, Gauri, Indra, the sun and moon. They were mostly Buddhist Vaishnavites. Under their reign, Buddha had been worshipped as a form of Vishnu in Amaravati.

EARLY RULERS

The Satavahanas initially ruled in the area (current Telangana region and some parts of Andhra areas) of between the rivers Krishna and Godavari, which was always their heartland. The Pûrânas list 30 Andhra rulers. Many are known from their coins and inscriptions as well.

Simuka (c.230-207 BCE)

After becoming independent around 230 BCE, Simuka, the founder of the dynasty, conquered Maharashtra, Malwa and part of Madhya Pradesh. He was succeeded by his brother Kanha (or Krishna) (r. 207-189 BCE), who further extended his kingdom to the west and the south.

Satakarni (c.180-124 BCE)

His successor Satakarni I was the sixth ruler of the Satavahana. He is said in the Puranas to have ruled for 56 years.

Satakarni defeated the Sunga dynasty of North India by wresting Western Malwa from them, and performed several Vedic sacrifices at huge cost, including the Horse Sacrifice - Ashwamedha yajna. He also was in conflict with the Kalinga ruler Kharavela, who mentions him in the Hathigumpha inscription. According to the Yuga Purana he conquered Kalinga following the death of Kharavela. He extended Satavahana rule over Madhya Pradesh and pushed back the Sakas from

Pataliputra (he is thought to be the Yuga Purana's "Shata", an abbreviation of the full name "Shri Sata" that occurs on coins from Ujjain), where he subsequently ruled for 10 years. By this time the dynasty was well established, with its capital at Pratishtânapura (Paithan) in Maharashtra, and its power spreading into all of South India.

Kanva Suzerainty (75-35 BCE)

Many small rulers succeeded Satakarni, such as Lambodara, Apilaka, Meghasvati and Kuntala Satakarni, who are thought to have been under the suzerainty of the Kanva dynasty. The Puranas (the Matsya Purana, the Vayu Purana, the Brahmanda Purana, the Vishnu Purana) all state that the first of the Andhra kings rose to power in the 1st century BCE, by slaying Susarman, the last ruler of the Kanvas. This feat is usually thought to have been accomplished by Pulomavi (c. 30-6 BCE), who then ruled over Pataliputra.

VICTORY OVER THE SHAKAS, YAVANAS AND PAHLAVAS

The first century CE saw another incursion of the Sakas of Central Asia into India, where they formed the dynasty of the Western Kshatrapas. The four immediate successors of Hala (r. 20-24 CE) had short reigns totalling about a dozen years. During the reign of the Western Satrap Nahapana, the Satavahanas lost a considerable territory to the satraps, including eastern Malwa, Southern Gujarat, and Northern Konkan, from Broach to Sopara and the Nasik and Poona districts.

GAUTAMIPUTRA SATAKARNI (78-106 CE)

Eventually Gautamiputra (Sri Yagna) Sâtakarni (also known as Shalivahan) (r. 78-106 CE) defeated the Western Satrap ruler Nahapana, restoring the prestige of his dynasty by reconquering a large part of the former dominions of the Sâtavâhanas. He was an ardent supporter of Buddhism.

According to the Nasik inscription made by his mother Gautami Balasri, "He is the one, who crushed down the pride and conceit of the Kshatriyas (the native Indian princes, the Rajputs of Rajputana, Gujarat and Central India); who destroyed the Shakas (Western Kshatrapas), Yavanas (Indo-Greeks) and Pahlavas (Indo-Parthians)... who rooted the Khakharata family (The Kshaharata family of Nahapana); who restored the glory of the Satavahana race"

Gautamiputra Satakarni may also have defeated Shaka king Vikramaditya in 78 BCE and started the calendar known as Shalivahana era or Shaka era, which is followed by the Gujarati, Marathi, Kannadiga and Telugu people and is the Indian National Calendar.

Gautamiputra Sâtakarni's son, Vashishtiputra Pulumâyi (r. 106-130 CE), succeeded him. Gautamiputra was the first Satavahana king to issue the portrait-type coinage, in a style derived from the Western Satraps.

SUCCESSORS

Gautamiputra's brother, Vashishtiputra Satakarni, married the daughter of Rudradaman I of the Western Satraps dynasty. Around 150 CE, Rudradaman I, now his father-in-law, waged war against the Satavahanas, who were defeated

NOTES

NOTES

twice in these conflicts. Vashishtiputra Satakarni was only spared his life because of his family links with Rudradaman:

“Rudradaman who obtained good report because he, in spite of having twice in fair fight completely defeated Satakarni, the lord of Dakshinapatha, on account of the nearness of their connection did not destroy him.” —Junagadh rock inscription.

As a result of his victories, Rudradaman regained all the former territories previously held by Nahapana, except for the extreme south territories of Poona and Nasik. Satavahana dominions were limited to their original base in the Deccan and eastern central India around Amaravati.

DECLINE OF THE SATAVAHANAS

Four or five kings of Yajna Satakarni's line succeeded him, and continued to rule till about the mid 200s CE. However, the dynasty was soon extinguished following the rise of its feudatories, perhaps on account of a decline in central power.

Several dynasties divided the lands of the kingdom among themselves. Among them were:

- Western Satraps in the northwestern part of the kingdom.
- Andhra Ikshvakus (or Srîparvatiyas) in the Krishna-Guntur region. (r. 220-320 CE).
- Abhiras in the western part of the kingdom. They were ultimately to succeed the Sâtavâhanas in their capital Pratishthanapura.
- Chutus of Banavasi in North Karnataka.
- Kadambas of Banavasi in North Karnataka.
- Pallavas of Kanchipuram, of whom the first ruler was Simhavarman I (r. 275-300 CE).

2.13 THE SANGAM TEXTS AND SOCIETY

Sangam literature is a vast collection of ancient Tamil poems. These poems are treasure troves of information, as they vividly describe the life and culture of the common people and the rulers of the southern part of India. They also point to the fact that the Cholas, the Pandyas, and the Cheras constantly fought with each other. The Cholas, not content with fighting on land, built a vast fleet of ships and attacked the kingdom of Sri Lanka. They succeeded in capturing some parts of northern Sri Lanka and held it for a few years before being pushed out. It is also described that both the Pandyas and the Cheras, maintained a huge army.

The Sangam period is the earliest historical period in the history of Tamil Nadu, spanning about the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD. It is named for the Tamil Sangams or “assemblies”. In Old Tamil, the term *Tamilakam*, (Purananuru 168.18) referred to the whole of the “Ancient Tamil country,” as distinct from the many kingdoms that existed within its boundaries, corresponding roughly to the area known as South India today, including the territories of the present-day Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Laccadives, parts of Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Karnataka, as well as the Maldives. South India was known as *Damirica*, *Dramira* or *Lymirikç* to Greco-Roman geographers.

Approximately during the period between 350 BCE to 200 CE, Tamilakam was ruled by the three Tamil dynasties of Chola, Pandya and Chera, and a few independent chieftains, the Velir.

By the medieval period, the Cholas had established a powerful empire that stretched from the Maldives through much of South East Asia, encompassing the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Sumatra, Thailand and Myanmar.

NOTES

LITERARY SOURCES

There is a wealth of sources detailing the history, socio-political environment and cultural practices of ancient Tamilakam, including volumes of literature and epigraphy.

Tamilakam's history is split into three periods; prehistoric, classical and medieval. A vast array of literary, epigraphical and inscribed sources from around the world provide insight into the socio-political and cultural occurrences in the Tamil nation.

Tamil was once the richest language found in world. It had many grammar literatures before two thousand years. In the ancient india, sanskrit and tamil flourished. In the mean time , by western influence sanskrit disappeared. Tamil still prevails as the main language of dravidians.

SANGAM LITERATURE

Sangam literature deals with emotional and material topics such as love, war, governance, trade and bereavement. Much of the Tamil literature believed to have been composed in the Sangam period is lost to us, though detailed lists of works known to the 10th century compilers have survived.

The Indologist Kamil Zvelebil quotes A.K.Ramanujan : "In their antiquity and in their contemporaneity, there is not much else in any Indian literature equal to these quite and dramatic Tamil poems. In their values and stances, they represent a mature classical poetry: passion is balanced by courtesy, transparency by ironies and nuances of design, impersonality by vivid detail, austerity of line by richness of implication. These poems are not just the earliest evidence of the Tamil genius who were part of proto-Dravidian Jain culture. The Tamil in all their 2,000 years of literary effort wrote nothing better".

SANGAM SOCIETY AND RELIGION

Majority of the people lived in villages and were engaged in agricultural activities. People living in hilly tracts did animal herding. Merchants and traders lived and operated from towns located near the coast, which facilitated sea trade. The state was ruled by a king who was assisted by Brahmin (priestly class) ministers. There was also a general assembly of all local chieftains, known as the Sabha. Important state and local matters were discussed and solved in the Sabha. Officials of the state collected taxes from farmers, herdsman, artisans, and traders, in the name of the king. Special taxes were levied on merchants when they took goods from one place to another. The life of the common people was simple and they amused themselves with music, dance, and poetry.

Though religious ideas belonging to Vedic Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism had percolated to the southern kingdoms from the north, yet people

NOTES

continued to worship and revere their old deities. People also worshipped great warriors and had immense faith in the sea god. In the first century AD, Christian missionaries arrived on coastal Kerala and brought with them the gospel preached by Lord Jesus.

2.14 THE SUNGAS

The Sungas, a brahmana family, possibly originally belonged to the region of Ujjain in Western India, where they worked as officials under the Maurya Kings. The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga who according to tradition, assassinated the last of the Maurya Kings Brihadratha in 180 B.C. This is corroborated by Bana, the Sanskrit prose writer and court poet of Harshvardhana of Kanauj. Pushyamitra appears to have been a keen supporter of Brahmanism and is known to have undertaken the performance of the asvamedha or horse sacrifice, a Vedic ritual symbolising royal glory. In the Ayodhya inscription of Dhanadeva, Pushyamitra is credited with the performance of two horse sacrifices. This is indicative of Pushyamitra's hold over a large territory and also of Brahmanical orthodoxy. Buddhist sources claim that he persecuted the Buddhists. The Buddhist tradition as is preserved in the Divyavadana depicts Pushyamitra as a destroyer of Buddhist monasteries and places of worship, particularly those constructed by Asoka.

The Puranas assign a reign of 36 years to Pushyamitra, who was succeeded by his son Agnimitra. Very little information has been gathered about his rule. Muladeva appears to be an important King with whom may have started the disintegration of the Sunga dynasty. Some historians have identified him as the King whose coins have been found at Ayodhya and he may be regarded as a predecessor of Dhanadeva described as 'Lord of Kosala' in the Ayodhya inscription. Muladeva has been regarded as the ruler of the independent principality of Kosala. The original Sungas soon came to be confined only to Magadha and the Central Indian territories only. The last Sunga King was Devabhuti. He was the fourth ruler of the line and if we believe Banabhatta, author of Harsha-Charita he fell victim to the conspiracy of his brahmana minister Vasudeva. Thus, the Sunga line came to an end around 75 B.C. and although Vasudeva started a new line of rulers, called Kanva, it lasted only four generations.

2.15 THE INDO-GREEKS

From about 200 B.C. a series of movements across the north western borders of the Indian sub-continent took place. Among the first to cross the Hindukush were the Greeks, who ruled Bactria, south of the Oxus river in the area covered by North Afghanistan. Alexander's invasion in north western India did not result in Greece and India coming together in any significant manner. The mingling of the two cultures came about in the second century B.C. through the Greek kings of Bactria who moved into northwest India and came to be called the Indo - Greeks.

After the fall of the Achaemenid rule in Iran and the death of Alexander, Iran and the Northern-Western and neighbouring areas passed under the rule of Alexander's generals. Gradually the Greek rulers Northern India of Bactria who were originally subordinate to the Seleacids, and the Arsacid rulers of Parthia started asserting their autonomy. The Greek rulers faced a severe threat from the

Scythian tribes. With the construction of the Chinese Wall the Scythians could not move towards China and in turn attacked the Greeks and Parthians. Pushed by the Scythian tribes the Bactrian Greeks were forced to move towards India. These invasions had begun by the end of the Mauryan rule and the successors of Asoka were not strong to resist them. From the first half of the second century B.C. the Indo-Greeks occupied a large part of north western India. They also undertook occasional expeditions to the Ganga basin and other parts of the country and they came as far as Panchala, Saketa and Pataliputra.

One of the most famous Indo-Greek rulers was Menander or Milinda. During the period of his rule, the Indo-Greek power extended from the Swat Valley to Punjab as far as the Ravi river. He had his capital at Sakala (modern Sialkot) in Punjab. Menander is best remembered for his conversion to Buddhism by Nagasena, a Buddhist monk and philosopher. Menander asked Nagasena many questions relating to Buddhism. These questions and Nagasena's answers were recorded in the form of a book known as *Milinda - Panha* or *The Questions of Milinda*.

The names of at least thirty Bactrian Greek rulers are known from a large number of coins. Menander's coins have been located as far as Kabul in the north and Mathura near Delhi. The history of the Indo - Greeks has been reconstructed mostly with the help of their coins bearing legends in Greek and later in Kharosthi and Brahmi as well. The evidence is sometimes confusing, as many kings had identical names and the coins of one ruler can be distinguished from those of another only with great difficulty. Influence of Indo-Greek coinage, particularly silver coinage, which was excellent in workmanship is found present in some coin series issued by some local rulers of the period. The nature of the coinage and the wide area in which it circulated suggest wide trade contacts. The Indo - Greeks are also important for their introduction of Hellenistic art features in north-western India which culminated in the Gandhara art style.

2.16 THE SAKAS

The Sakas are referred to also as Scythians. In the Indian context, the sources sometimes mention the Scythians and Parthians together as Saka-Pahlawa. Even from the names of the rulers it is at times impossible to distinguish between a Saka and a Pahlawa. Even so some families of rulers, which were associated with different regions of north-western, northern and western have been distinguished as Saka. The Sakas poured into India through the Bolan Pass and may have first settled in lower Indus region. There are coins and other sources associated with different branches of the Sakas. One branch is believed to have settled in Afghanistan. Another line of the Sakas settled in Punjab with Taxila as the capital. There was another that ruled from Mathura. A fourth branch was that which established itself in Western and Central India from where they continued their rule till about the fourth century A.D.

The Sakas were successful in destroying the Greek suzerainty over Bactria. They belonged to the nomad hordes of Central Asia. The Sakas were forced by another Central Asian tribe, the Yueh -chi to leave their habitat on the Bactrian border and follow the Greeks into India. The Sakas gradually spread their supremacy over the northern and north-western regions of India at the expense of the local Indo - Greek rulers. There are different types of sources for the

NOTES

NOTES

reconstruction of the Sakas in India. There are references to the people in Greek and Graeco-Roman annals and in early Chinese accounts. Epigraphic and numismatic sources are also useful. The earliest Indian textual reference to the Sakas is perhaps to be found in the Mahabhashya. The Puranic and epic texts also mention the Sakas along with the Kambojas and the Yavanas in the extreme north.

The first Saka King in India was Maues or Moga, who established Saka power in Gandhara. Maues is known from a series of coins and also from inscriptions, one of which contains a date. A dated copper plate inscription discovered in Taxila records the establishment of the relics of Buddha in a Stupa during the period of Maues. Maues was succeeded by Azes who successfully attacked the last of the Greek kings in Northern India, Hippostratos.

Although the Sakas established their rule in different parts of the country, it was only in Western India that they could hold power for about four centuries. The most famous of the Saka rulers of Western India was Rudradaman I (C. A. D. 130 -152). His sway extended to Sindh, Kutch, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Konkan, the Narmada Valley, Malwa, Kathiawar and Western Deccan. His military achievements, his territories and his many personal qualities are highlighted in the famous Junagadh inscription, written in 150 A.D. This inscription also records in detail the repairs which his officials undertook of the damaged Mauryan dam of Sudarsana Lake in the semi-arid zone of Kathiawar. This lake had been in use for irrigation purposes from the time of the Mauryas. This lengthy inscription is the first major inscription to be written in Sanskrit. It is evident that Rudradaman patronized Sanskrit. After the death of Rudradaman the Sakas of this area continued to rule, despite occasional upsets until the end of the fourth century A.D.

The Sakas along with the Parthians introduced the Satrap system of government which was similar to that of the Achaemenid and Seleucid systems in Iran. Under this system the kingdom was divided into provinces each under a military governor called Mahakshatrapa (great Satrap). Governors with lower status were called Kshatrapas (Satraps). These governors issued their own inscriptions and also minted their own coins. This is indicative of a more independent status than was otherwise normal in an administrative set-up. The Saka kings used such prestigious titles as 'king of kings' (rajadhiraja) in addition to 'great king' (Maharaja) which they took over from the Greeks.

3.17 THE PARTHIANS

We have already mentioned that there are references in the ancient Indian Sanskrit texts to the Sakas and the Parthians together as Saka-Pahlawas. The rule of the Sakas and Parthians was simultaneous in different pockets of north western and northern India.

The Parthians originated in Iran and families of Parthian rulers may have moved into Indo-Iranian borderlands and into north-western India as representatives of Parthian rulers. The Sakas of Seistan were in close contact with the Parthians and this is why we find among the Indian Sakas admixture of original Scythian and Iranian Parthian elements.

The most prominent Parthian King was Gondophaes. His rule extended from Kabul to Panjab and possibly included certain Iranian areas of the Parthian empire. Different stages of his coinage show his rise from subordinate to independent status. His name is believed to be associated with that of St. Thomas. There is a tradition which suggests that St. Thomas travelled from Israel and came to the court of Gondophaes. He came to India for the propagation of Christianity.

There is a conspicuous scarcity of silver coins attributed to the Parthians. This might testify to the indifferent economic condition of the Indo - Parthian empire. It has been suggested by some scholars that it is not unlikely that the large number of silver coins that were issued in these regions by their predecessors, the Sakas and the Indo - Greeks, served the needs of the higher currency of the Parthian State in India. They might have been supplemented by coins of lesser value in which a small amount of precious metal was mixed up with comparatively cheap metal.

Abdagases appears to have been the immediate successor of Gondophaes. He was for sometime the subordinate ruler under his uncle as suggested by joint issues of some coins. There are many coins which bear the names of Gondophaes and his nephew Abdagases. The end of the Parthian rule in India is marked by several groups of small coins that were excavated at the Sirkap site of Taxila. The Parthians became assimilated into the Indian society in course of time.

2.18 THE KUSHANAS AND KANISHKA

We now take up for our study another dynasty, the Kushanas who succeeded the Parthians in the extreme north-west and spread themselves in successive stages in the regions of Northern India. The Kushanas are also referred to as Yueh-chis or Tocharians. They belonged to one of the five clans of the Yueh-chi tribe. They were a nomadic people, originally from the steppes of North Central Asia, living in the vicinity of China. They were responsible for ousting the Sakas in Bactria and also the Parthians in the Gandhara region. The Kushanas first consolidated territories beyond the Indian border. Gradually their authority in India expanded and came to extend to over lower Indus basin and most of the Gangetic plain down Varanasi. Although their empire lasted for about one century and a little more, their connection with India, their assimilation into Indian society as well as their contribution to Indian culture left a deep impression on the Indian mind. Like the Sakas and Pahlavas, they too are mentioned in Epic, Puranic and other literature. The Kushanas were particularly important as their empire became a meeting point of civilizations of the Mediterranean world, Western Asia, Central Asia, China and India.

We have coins, inscriptions and other sources which provide evidence about two successive dynasties of the Kushanas. The first line was started by Kujula Kadphises who is believed to have united the five tribes of the Yueh-chi and made successful inroads into India, establishing himself in Kabul and Kashmir. Kujula Kadphises minted different types of coins in copper and one type of his coins has a Roman-style male bust on it. Kujula Kadphises was succeeded by Vima Kadphises. Vima introduced a new phase of coinage in India. The practice of issuing gold coins by Indian rulers regularly started with him. He minted different types of gold coins which broadly followed the weight system of Roman

NOTES

NOTES

gold coins and this system continued, with certain modifications, till the Gupta period. Obviously, Vima's gold coins and copper coins indicate further intensification of contact with the Roman world of the time.

The Kadphises rulers were succeeded by Kanishka I, who is the best known Kushana ruler in Indian history, particularly because of his association with Buddhism. The relationship between the first two kings (Kadphises) and Kanishka is shrouded in mystery, but he too was of Central Asian origin. He may not have been directly related to the first two kings. The Kushanas reached the zenith of their power under Kanishka I. His period is historically significant for general cultural development in Northern India as well as for the intermingling of peoples of different geographical regions.

The accession of Kanishka I to the throne has been variously dated somewhere between A.D. 78-144 and sometimes even later. An era with its initial date in A.D. 78 has popularly come to be regarded as the Saka Era and this date seems to be the most likely date for Kanishka's accession. The Kushana empire at its peak extended to Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh and to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. Mathura appears to have been the second capital city, the first being at Purushapura near modern Peshawar. At Purushapura, Kanishka erected a monastery and a huge Stupa.

Kanishka I is an important figure in the history of Buddhism as being one of its great patrons. He sponsored the fourth Buddhist council during his reign to discuss matters relating to Buddhist theology and doctrine. The doctrines of the Mahayana form of Buddhism were finalized at the council. Missionary activity was given an impetus and during his period Buddhist monks started travelling to Central Asia and to China. Kanishka was also a patron of art and Sanskrit literature.

The successors of Kanishka I continued to rule for over a century, but Kushana power gradually declined. Some of the rulers used very Indian names such as Vasudeva. The Kushana empire in Afghanistan and in the region west of the Indus was superseded in the mid-third century A.D. by the Sassanian power which began in Iran. Peshawar and Taxila were lost to the Sassanians and the Kushanas were reduced to the position of subordinates of these rulers.

2.19 CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD

The movement of foreigners into India established firmly the basis of regular trade contact between Central Asia and India. Trade contacts with Afghanistan were already existing but now Central Asia also opened up to trade with new routes. One of these routes became famous as the old Silk Route. Traders of different ethnic origins established trading stations and colonies from which the merchants operated. Examples of such places are Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, Miran, etc.

The impetus to trade was given not only by Indian merchants but also by the Buddhist missionaries. One result of trade movements was that communication with China improved.

The Kushanas controlled the silk route which started from China and passed through Central Asia and Afghanistan and Western Asia. This route was a source of great income to the Kushanas. They levied tolls from the traders. India received

NOTES

a good deal of gold from the Altai mountains in Central Asia Gold could also have been received from trade with the Roman Empire. It is significant that the Kushana rulers were the first to issue gold coins on a significant scale.

New elements in cavalry and techniques of war were introduced in India by the Sakas and the Kushanas. Horse riding gained popularity. They popularized the use of reins and saddles which find appearance in the Buddhist sculptures of this period. The passion for India : Century 200 B.C. horsemanship is evident from the numerous terracotta figures excavated from Begram in to 300 A.D. Afghanistan depicting equestrian scenes. The Central Asians also brought in cap, helmet and boots which were used by the warriors. This military technology became popular in North West India.

POLITY

The Sakas and the Kushana put great emphasis on the notion of the divine origin of kingship. The Kushana kings were referred to as Sons of God. This title may have been borrowed from the Chinese. They also sometimes used an Indian version of the Roman title Caesar. This was used to stress royal authority. Similar ideas are found in the work of the Brahmana Lawgiver, Manu.

The Sakas had introduced the satrapa system in the administrative set-up. The entire empire was divided to satraps. Evidence of governing through subordinate rulers is available. The method of administering districts and other smaller units with the help of such officials as meridarkhs was in vogue in the period of Indo - Greek rule. Epigraphic and numismatic data furnish us with names of a large number of Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas.

Some of the foreign rulers also introduced the practice of hereditary dual rule which meant two kings, holding higher and lower status, ruling in the same kingdom at the same time. For example, father and son would rule simultaneously. The practice of military governorship was also introduced probably by the Greeks. These governors were known by the title of Strategos. They were important for two reasons : (a) for maintaining the power of the rulers over the indigenous people and (b) for blocking invasions from the north west.

2.20 DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION

In previous chapter, you read about the rise of Buddhism and Jainism and their development upto 200 B.C. In this unit we take into account the conditions and development of various religions during 200 B.C. to 300 A.D. The political situation of the post-Maurya period, that is, the rise of the Sungas, the Satavahanas, and the appearance of such ruling powers as those of the Indo-Greeks, Saka-Parthians and the Kushanas in the North-West influenced to an extent the course of religion during this period. For example, after the patronage which Buddhism received from Asoka, there was royal support to Brahmanism under the Sungas. Similarly, the liberal social attitude of Buddhism made the absorption of foreigners into Indian Society comparatively easy, thus leading to social assimilation. This assimilation could very well have influenced the support extended to Buddhism by the Indo-Greeks.

We already know that Buddhism had a large following among the merchant communities. Hence, an increase in trade and commerce during this period helped the growth of Buddhism. The traders, though involved in trade, also left

traces of their personal religions in the areas they visited. We will see how all these aspects brought changes in the religions of the period. This period witnessed certain changes in orthodox Brahmanism and also in the appearance of certain sects associated with Saivism and Vaishnavism.

NOTES

BUDDHISM

The growth of Buddhism had suffered a minor setback during the Sunga Kanva period. This was because both the Sungas and the Kanvas who succeeded the Mauryas in Magadha professed Brahmanical faith.

The Buddhist work Divyavadana accuses Pushyarnitra Sunga as a veritable enemy of Buddhism. It is said that he attempted to destroy the Kukuta Arama monastery at Pataliputra. According to this source he also fixed a prize of 100 dinaras for the head of every monk.

However, although these rulers may have been personally opposed to Buddhism, it does not mean that social support to Buddhism declined on any significant scale. In fact, the Bharhut Stupa in Central India was built during the rule of the Sungas. The Sanchi Stupa was enlarged twice its size and the gateways (torana) and the railings were added in their period only.

Expansion and Patronage

We notice expansion of Buddhism in all parts of India during the period 200 B.C. to 300 A.D. Buddhism gained a strong foothold in the north western India. Many of the foreigners like the Indo-Greeks and the Kushanas, who invaded India during this time accepted Buddhism.

Among the Indo-Greek kings, it was Menander who figures prominently as the ruler who was drawn towards the doctrines of Buddhism. He accepted Buddhism. He is called king Milinda of Sakala in a Buddhist work which gives the story of how he was converted. This work, known as 'Milinda-Panha' (Question of Milinda) was written in the form of a dialogue between Menander and the Buddhist monk Nagasena.

Many Kushana kings adopted Buddhism. For example, Kujula Kadphises and Kaniska-I were followers of Buddhism. It was in Kanishka's rule that Buddhism reached a supreme position. During his period the Fourth Buddhist Council was convened on the advice of Parsva -the Buddhist monk. Though there is some controversy regarding the place of the meeting, it is generally accepted, on the evidence of many contemporary authorities, that it was held somewhere in Kashmir. Vasumitra acted as its president. A thorough discussion took place on some difficult passages of the scriptures and these discussions were compiled in the form of commentaries known as 'Vibhasha sastras'. It was in this council that Buddhism got split into Hinayana and Mahayana.

Kaniska-I helped to propagate Buddhism in different parts of the country. For example, he built a Stupa and a monastery at Peshawar which served as a great centre of Buddhist learning and culture. However, in this period monks from India carried the doctrines of Buddha also to Central Asia and China.

JAINISM

Jainism did not spread as fast as Buddhism. Further, royal patronage to Jainism was not as extensive as it was in the case of Buddhism. In spite of these difficulties, the monks were active and organised missions to spread Jainism.

By the early centuries of the Christian era it had consolidated its position in India. But Jainism, unlike Buddhism, did not attempt to spread its doctrines outside India.

Spread and Patronage

Generous patronage was extended to Jainism by some kings, and the name of Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga, stands foremost in this regard. Not only he and his queen practised Jainism but they dedicated some caves for the use of the Jaina monks in the Udayagiri hills.

In the Kushana period Jainism was popular in Mathura. The Mathura School of Art produced many images of the Tirthankaras and other objects of worship for the Jainas. In the Tamil country the Tamil kings dedicated some caves to the Jainas. Athiyar Neduman Anji dedicated a cave to the Jainas at Jambai in South Arcot district. The cave at Sittanavasal (Pudukkottai district) was dedicated by the local people to a Jaina monk. This indicates the popularity of the Jaina faith among the people of that region.

Jaina monks organised many missions to spread Jainism. These missions were originally intended to provide relief and shelter to Jaina monks who were suffering from famine or drought. However, these relief missions ultimately turned into religious missions for the spread of Jainism.

The first such mission was organised in the Mauryan period. According to tradition, Bhadrabahu, contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya, migrated to provide shelter to the monks. He, with the King Chandragupta Maurya, went south and established a centre at Sravanabelgola in Karnataka. From this place the Jainas spread to different parts of the Tamil country and the Andhra region.

A Svetambara tradition mentions in the time of Kharavela, the migration of Jaina monks from Magadha to the eastern Andhra coast. This migration is supported by a late inscription from Hathigumpha cave on the Udayagiri hills near Bhuvaneshwar.

Another tradition mentions the migration of Jainas to Mathura. The ruins of the Kankali Tila at Mathura and a number of dedicatory inscriptions testify to the existence of Jainism in Mathura during the first-second centuries A.D.

The story of Kalakacharya refers to the movement of Jainas to Malwa as early as the first century B.C. From the evidence of Junagadh inscription-it is clear that by the early centuries of the Christian era Jainism had spread to Gujarat.

BRAHMANISM

It has already been mentioned that Brahmanism received support from several kings during this period. Contemporary sources refer to the performance of certain Vedic rituals by the kings. For example Pushyamitra Sunga performed two horse sacrifices (Asvamedha Yajna). Satavahana I of the Satavahana dynasty performed Asvamedha, Rajasuya and a few other sacrifices. The Chola and the Pandya chiefs of the Tamil country are also said to have performed many sacrifices.

New Developments

Brahmanism too acquired many new features during this period and we see the gradual crystallization of what may be called Puranic Hinduism. The central feature of this was worship of gods and goddesses and not performance

NOTES

NOTES

of sacrifices. For example, the idea of a supreme deity gained strength and this deity was either Vishnu or Siva. This sharply divided the religious pantheon into two groups and led to the development of Saivism and Vaishnavism. Though both the sects believed that salvation could be attained only by devotion or bhakti, there was sharp division among the devotees of the two deities. There also arose the concept of trinity of gods. All the gods in the Brahmanical pantheon were now grouped under three major gods with Brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the protector and Siva as destroyer. Though these three deities had their origins in the Vedic age, their importance and significance rose to new heights in this period. While Siva and Vishnu attracted a large following, in the case of Brahma it was not so.

The characteristic changes apparent in this period were:

- the shift from the pure ritual to bhakti or devotion, and
- assimilation of some of the local traditions into the Brahmanical religion.

Vaishnavism, for example, absorbed a number of different gods like the Vedic Vishnu, deified sage Narayana and deified heroes Vasudeva and Balarama. The epic heroes Rama and Krishna were accepted and they gained an enviable position among the Brahmanical deities.

The Tamil deities, mentioned in the Sangam literature, were adopted into the Brahmanical faith. In the same way some of the local deities of north India were also admitted into the Brahmanical pantheon.

SAIVISM

The origin of Saivism can be traced back to the pre-Vedic times and by the early centuries of the Christian era it was a popular sect in almost all parts of India. Siva was the principle deity of this sect and was worshipped in the linga (phallus) form. This form of worship seems to have been popular from the beginning of the Christian era. Siva was also worshipped in his human form, the descriptions of which are found in some literary texts.

Saivism also received some royal support during this period. Among the Kushana kings, Wema Kadphises was an ardent devotee of Siva. On the reverse of his coins is found a representation of Siva holding a trident. Although Kaniska was a Buddhist, the reverse of some types of his coins bore the image of Siva. Worship of Siva was very popular in the Deccan from the early days. We find reference to Siva worship in the Prakrit text, Gathasaptasati of the Satavahana King Hala and one of the earliest stone sculptures of the linga comes from eastern Andhra Pradesh.

In the Tamil country, Saivism was well rooted. The Tamil Sangam works refer to Siva as the greatest of all the gods (mamudu mudalvan). Many of his exploits and his attributes are known from the Sangam works which also mention his form and other qualities. For example, he is described as having matted hair and wearing tiger skin. He was also known as the deity who destroyed the three heavenly cities (Tripurantaka).

Along with Siva many other deities were also worshipped and thus came to be formed the Saivite pantheon. Siva's consort Parvati assumed a place of importance and was adored as 'Sakti'. The idea that from her emanated all energy was now introduced. She was also considered the mother of Skanda and Ganesa.

She was worshipped in her ferocious form as Durga. In the Satavahana kingdom she was also worshipped as Gauri, another form of Parvati.

Skanda worship became popular in this period. He was regarded as the son of Siva. He was identified with the leader of the forces of the Gods. Kartikeya and Kumara were identified with him. In the Tamil country he was worshipped in the Muruga form. Many of his attributes and his temples are known from the Sangam literature.

A less popular deity in this period was Ganesa, the elder brother of Skanda. He was the leader of the Ganas (hosts of Siva) and was also known as Vinayaka. Among the Saiva sects the most popular and well represented sect was the Pasupata sect. It was started by Lakulisa in Gujarat sometime in the second century A.D. and Pasupata ascetics spread to different parts of the country. Siva was worshipped in the form of Pasupati. The Kapalika and the Kalamuka sects developed much later. All these sects emphasised that Siva was the supreme god.

VAISHNAVISM

Vaishnavism was another popular sect of Brahmanism followed by a larger group of people in all parts of India. The principal deity of this sect was Vishnu who is referred to as the protector in the Brahmanical religion. The cult of Vishnu in the early period was known by the name Bhagavatism, which was developed from the Vedic cult Vasudeva-Krishna.

Bhagavatism owed its origin to the Upanishadas. It arose around the Mathura region. It stressed upon the idea of a supreme god called 'Hari' and sacrifices and other rituals were regarded as of minor importance. Devotion to Vishnu was considered as the supreme virtue. For quite sometime it was confined to the Mathura region. By the beginning of the Christian era it spread to different regions in India. Inscriptions testifying to the worship of Vasudeva are found in Maharashtra, Rajaputana and Central India.

Vasudeva who was the central figure in the Bhagavata cult came to acquire an important position in the Brahmanical pantheon. Earlier he was considered equal to deities like Dharma and Indra. In the second century A.D., in the Satavahana kingdom, Gautamiputra Satakarni was described as equal to Balarama, Kesava, Aquana and Bhimasena, the epic heroes.

It was sometime before the second century B.C., that the Vishnu and Narayana were united. Development in Religion and identified as one deity. This kind of amalgamation probably helped Brahmanism to check the spread of Buddhism. The Bhagavata cult, centring around the worship of Vasudeva and others was also a part of Vaishnavism.

Kings like Demetrius and Menander were followers of Buddhism but some of the Indo-Greeks also embraced Bhagavatism. For example, from the Besnagar Pillar Inscription we know that Heliiodorus of Takshasila (Taxila) who was an envoy of Indo-Greek King Antialcidus to the court of a Sunga ruler was a follower of the Bhagavata cult and erected a pillar with Garuda, the emblem of Vishnu, at Besnagar (Vidisa) near Bhopal in honour of Vasudeva.

Vishnu, the chief deity of the Vaishnava sect, had manifested himself in many avatars. Vishnu, was thus worshipped also in his avatara forms. Krishna, Rama and Balarama were : most respected avatars of Vishnu. But other avatars

NOTES

NOTES

like Narasimha and Varaha were also worshipped. The emblems associated with Vishnu were also worshipped. Thus, Garuda, the vahana of Vishnu and Chakra, the circular weapon, came to be held in veneration. Garuda, his emblem, was worshipped and pillars with Garuda emblem were set up to mark a place as sacred for the Vaishnavas.

Lakshmi, Vishnu's consort was also now worshipped. Many of Vaishnava religious ideas occur in the epics Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Some of the most important ideas like the theory of Karma are explained in the Bhagavat Gita, a work supposed to have been incorporated in Mahabharata during this period. It emphasised that one has to do his worldly duties according to one's status in the society as prescribed in the scriptures. This was expected to ultimately lead him to liberation.

2.21 ART AND CULTURE

During the Mauryan period sculpture and architecture had reached a developed stage. The Asokan pillars; the animals and carvings on the pillars - all represent mature art forms. A unique feature of the specimens of Mauryan art fashioned in stone is the polish and the smooth, glassy surface not to be found during any other period. In addition to the animal figures, the most famous piece of art is the figure of Yakshini from Didarganj, Patna. This superb art piece tells us about the hairstyle, ornaments and dress of women during that period. The Mauryan levels at sites which have been excavated have yielded a large number of terracotta figurines. They indicate that artistic creations were not confined to the Imperial level alone, and even when Mauryan Imperial art declined and new forms of art emerged, the practice of producing terracotta figurines on a substantial scale continued.

In the field of architecture we get information about Chandragupta's wooden palace from Megasthenes. Excavations at Pataliputra have revealed wooden walls and columns. We also have references about the construction of Stupas during the Mauryan period from the accounts of Fa-heing, Hiuen-Tsang and in Buddhist literature. Sanchi, Sarnath, Taxila and Bharhut were some of the religious centres in which Stupas may have been originally built in the Mauryan period, and additions were made to them in the later period.

In the period between 200 B.C.- 300 A.D. certain general characteristics of art may be highlighted :

- (1) Art activities in this period were mostly related to religions practised in this period and symbols and units associated with them.
- (2) The Buddha image which began to be sculpted in this period was a departure from earlier representations of him in the form of Bodhi tree, Stupa, foot prints, etc. Making of images for worship became common among other religions as well.
- (3) The construction of Stupas, Chaityas and Viharas became popular.
- (4) The art forms and all of their symbolic representations were not exclusive to any particular religion. For example, the Bharhut and Sanchi Stupas not only depict scenes from the life of the Buddha but also the reliefs of Yakshas, Yakshinis, Nagas and other popular deities.
- (5) Similarly, we find that the artists, in order to decorate the Stupas, carved

many scenes which they observed in nature along with religious ideas. In fact, these are examples of secular art forms.

- (6) Because of regular interactions with other cultures in this period we also find elements of non-Indian art in the artistic creations of this period. This is particularly true of the Gandhara region which produced art typical to the region, in which many different elements came to be assimilated.

Let us now examine in some detail the various aspects of art and architecture of this period.

ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of this period can be broadly divided in two categories :

- (i) Residential structures
- (ii) Religious monuments

Under the first category we have very few surviving monuments since in the initial phase they were built of perishable materials like wood. However, a number of monuments have survived on unearthed through excavations which come under the second category.

Residential Architecture

In previous chapter, we have already discussed the pattern of city life on the basis of both literary and archaeological sources. We get similar kind of information for this period also. For example, the Milinda Panha describes a city with moats, ramparts, gate houses, towers, well-laidout streets, markets, parks, lakes and temples. There are references to Art and Architecture buildings of several storeys with wagon-vaulted roofs and verandas - mostly constructed of wood. This description to an extent is corroborated by archaeological sources. However, in the countryside not much change is noticed in architectural style or types of hutmments.

Temples and Towers

For this period, we have very insufficient data on temple structures from excavations. The earliest known temples for this period are :

- The temple at Jhandial (Taxila)
- The Sankarshana temple at Nagari (Rajasthan)
- The temple at Besnagar (Madhya Pradesh)
- An apsidal temple at Nagarjunakonda (Andhra Pradesh).

We know from Fa-hein's account, written several centuries, later of the existence of a tower at Purushapura (Peshawar). It was a grand structure with 13 storeys surmounted by an iron column with imposing umbrellas. The construction of this tower is attributed to Kanishka-I.

In fact the construction of temples in which deities were inshrined for worship became common only at a later date and the Buddhist Stupas and other structures were the common forms of religious architecture in this period.

Stupas

The practice of preserving the remains of an important personality below accumulated earth was long in existence. Buddhist art adopted this practice and the structure built over such a site was known as Stupa. According to Buddhist

NOTES

NOTES

sources, the remains of the Buddha's body were divided into eight parts and placed under the Stupas. These during the time of Asoka, were dug out and redistributed which led to the construction of other Stupas - the sacred places of Buddhism. The worship of Stupas led to their ornamentation and a specific type of architecture developed for their construction.

The Stupas had the shape of a bowl turned upside down. At the top, which was a bit flat, used to be its harmika, *i.e.*, the abode of the Gods. It was here that the urns containing the remains of the Buddha or a great personality connected with the religion was placed in a gold or silver casket. A wooden rod (Yashti) was placed in its middle and the bottom of the rod was fixed on the top of the Stupa. On the top of this rod were placed three small umbrella type discs symbolising respect, veneration and magnanimity. Let us briefly discuss some of the prominent Stupas:

(i) Bodha Gaya (Bihar)

Fifteen kilometres from Gaya is the site where Lord Buddha gained 'knowledge' (bodhi) and To 300 A.D. it was here that Asoka got a 'Bodhi-Manda' constructed. No trace of the original construction has survived. We have only the remains of the stone pillars constructed during the Sunga period like the railing pillars found around other Stupas and they too have sculpture the panels in relief. They illustrate storks from the Buddhist Jatakas.

(ii) Sanchi Stupa (Madhya Pradesh)

Sanchi is about 14 kilometers from Vidisa (Bhilsa) and is perhaps the most famous Stupa site in India. It has three Stupas all with gateways around them. But the most famous is the Great Stupa which was originally made of brick in Asoka's time (C. 250 B.C.). During the Sunga period this was later on nearly doubled in circumference in 150 B.C. The bricks of Asokan times were replaced by stones, and a 'Vedika' was also constructed around it. Four gates, one in each direction, were added to beautify it. From the Southern gate we get an inscription from its architrave which tell us that it was donated by King Satakarni and the incision work was done by those craftsmen who worked in ivory.

The northern gate and the panels depict stories from the Jatakas. The reliefs of Sanchi display (among other representations) the following quite prominently:

- (1) The four great events of the Buddha's life, *i.e.* birth, attainment of knowledge, dharmachakra - pravartana and Mahaparinirvana.
- (2) Representations of birds and animals like lion, elephant, camel, ox, etc. are abundant. Some of the animals are shown with riders in heavy coats and boots.
- (3) Lotus and wishing-vines have been prominently and beautifully carved out as ornamentation, and
- (4) Unique representation of forest animals in a manner which looks as if the whole animal world turned out to worship the Buddha.

(iii) Bharhut Stupa

This Stupa was located 21 kilometers south of Satna in Madhya Pradesh. The main Stupa structure no longer exists.

The important features of this Stupa structures, remains from which are now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta and other museums are:

- Gateways or toranas which are imitations in stone of wooden gateways.
- Railings spreading out from the gateways. They also are imitation, in stone, of post and rail fence, but the stone railings of Bharhut have, on top, a heavy stone border (coping).
- Uprights or posts of these railings have carvings of Yakshas, Yakshis and other divinities who come to be associated with Buddhism. Some of these divinities have inscriptions on them, giving their identifications.
- There are, as in other Stupa railings, representations of Buddhist themes like Jataka stories in combination with various natural elements.

NOTES

(iv) Amaravati

Located 46 kilometres from Guntur, the Stupa was built with white marble. Though the Stupa itself has completely disappeared its sculptured panels have been preserved in Madras and British Museums. The Stupa was primarily built with the help of the City-Chief and the donations from the public.

This magnificent Stupa was 42 metres in diameter and its height was, about 29 metres. It contained a circular prayer path which was 10 metres high and was made of stone. Vedika pillars had beautiful carvings of garlanded gods, and Bodhi-tree, Stupa, dharmachakra and the events from the life of Lord Buddha and stories from the Jatakas.

The entrance gate (torana) of the Stupa depicts four lions on the Vedika. Lotus petals have also been carved over the pillars. A number of images have also been found from the Amaravati Stupa. In the earlier stage Buddha was represented only through symbols but from first century A.D. some Buddha images began to be found along with their symbols.

(v) Nagarjunakonda

The Nagarjunakonda Stupa was built in a style different from that of North India. Here two circular walls, one at the hub and the other at the outer end, were joined by spoke like walls and the intervening space was filled with mud or small stones or pieces of bricks. The diameter of this Stupa was 30 metres and the height was 18 metres. The outer casing of the drum consisted of richly carved marble slabs. The hemispherical top of the drum was decorated with lime and mortar work. The four rectangular projections, one at each cardinal point, supported a row of five free standing pillars.

The importance of this Stupa is because of the beautiful panels which illustrate episodes from the life of the Buddha. The most important scenes are :

- (1) Gods praying to Bodhisattva to take birth on the earth.
- (2) Buddha's entry into womb in the form of a white elephant.
- (3) Birth of the Buddha under a flowering tree, etc.

(vi) Taxila

Excavations at Taxila and nearby places have exposed a number of Stupas:

- Sir John Marshall excavated the Chira-Tope Stupa at Taxila. The casing of the drum in this Stupa was of stone - ornamentally decorated with images of Bodhisattvas.
- In 1908 excavations revealed the existence of a Stupa at Shah-jhi-ki dheri near Peshawar. This Stupa was erected by Kanishka and is referred to in

NOTES

the accounts of Fahien. The sculptures and other objects of art are products of Gandhara style.

- A Stupa built in the Scytho-Parthian style was found at Jhandial. Nearby was found a small silver casket enclosing one of gold, with a relic bone inside.

Similarly, a number of Stupas have been found in many parts of the country. For example, two Stupas were found in Mathura. In fact, this was a period when Stupa architecture developed into particular styles and the presence of similar features in Stupas of various regions suggests the mobility of and interaction between artisans who built the Stupas and beautiful works of art associated with the Stupas.

Rock-Cut Architecture

Both the Buddhists and the Jainas built Chaityas and Viharas as places of worship.

A chaitya is a shrine cell with a votive Stupa place in the centre.

Viharas were primarily cut out of rocks for the residence of monks.

Most of the major Chaityas and Viharas of this period were built in western and eastern regions. For example in western India, they are located at Bhaja, Karle, Kondane, Nasik, Chitaldo, Ajanta and Kanheri, etc. Similarly, in eastern India we have them in Udayagiri (Orissa). The general features of the Chaityas are:

- They have a long rectangular hall ending in a semi-circle at the rear end.
- This long hall is internally divided into a nave, an apse and two side aisles.
- The aisles are separated from the nave by two rows of pillars.
- The pillars come round the votive Stupa placed in the centre of the apsidal part of the nave.
- The hall has a barrel-vaulted ceiling.
- The doorway is usually placed facing the votive Stupa.
- The facade has a horse-shoe shaped window called the chaitya window.

Another aspect of cave architecture is the excavation of Viharas or monasteries by both Buddhists and Jainas for the use of monks.

In the earlier examples of the western Indian caves the plan is irregular. In the latter ones a regular plan was adopted. The following are the general features of the Viharas :

- They have a square or oblong hall in the centre.
- The hall is preceded in front by a pillared veranda.
- A number of small square cells are provided.
- The cells and halls are usually provided with raised benches for the use of monks.

The earliest of the Viharas of western India are those at such sites as Bhaja, Bedsa, Ajanta, Pitalkora, Nasik and Karle.

Among the Jaina Viharas, those at Udayagiri and Khandagiri (Orissa) were excavated during the time of Kharavela. There are about 35 excavations laid out

in two groups. Some of them are provided with one cell and the others are multicelled ones with an open courtyard in the front. The inner facade consists of doorways surmounted by semi-circular arches above. The double storied Ranigumpha cave on Udayagiri hills is the largest of all the caves.

SCULPTURE ART

Sculptural art cannot be separated from architecture because sculptures form part of a total complex like a Stupa or a Chaitya. When single images were fashioned they too were generally housed in Viharas or were located at religious centres. In this period, we notice the development of regional or local styles or schools in creations of sculptural art. Gandhara and the Mathura schools developed in the north while in the south, Amaravati was the major early centre in the lower Krishna-Godavari valley.

In general, the art of the post-Mauryan period was distinct in character from earlier Imperial Mauryan Art. The Mauryan art has been described as palace art, whereas the art of the Sunga-Kanva period had a much wider social base. It is also different in motive, technique and significance.

The art of this period is mostly represented in the Buddhist images and relief sculptures carved on the railings, gateways and plinths of the Stupas and also on the facades and walls of the Viharas and Chaityas. Brahmanical sculptures for this period are very few.

However, an important development of this period is modelling of the image of the Buddha both in the Mathura and Gandhara schools. Following the Buddhists and Jainas, the Brahmanical religion also conceived of images of different gods and goddesses.

In addition to sculptures made in relief on panels, many sculptures were also made in the round. These figures are large in size and well-modelled. However, they do not conform to accurate anatomical proportions; they were not intended to do so. The Yakshas and Yakshinis occupy the most important place in this group.

Icon or image worship among the Jainas may be traced to the Sunga period. The damaged torso of a nude figure from Lohanipur (Patna) is identified with a Tirthankara. According to the Hathigumpha inscription, the existence of image worship among the Jainas of eastern India goes back to the pre-Mauryan times. Some of the Jaina images found in the votive tablets of the Jainas with ashtamangalas (eight auspicious marks) from Mathura suggest that image worship among the Jainas too was becoming common by the first century A.D.

Among the Buddhists it was the Mahayana sect that propagated image worship. Seated and standing images of Buddha were carved in Mathura and Gandhara. The bas reliefs of Sanchi, Barhut and Bodh Gaya represent an early phase in the art of reliefcarving. Most of these sculptures are found on the medallions or rectangular panels on the railings that surround a Stupa. The relief sculptures represent themes from Buddha's life and scenes from Jataka stories, and the events are depicted in a continuous narration.

Gandhara School

Gandhara is located in the north-western part of the Indian sub-continent on both banks of River Indus. It included the valley of Peshawar, Svata, Buner

NOTES

NOTES

and Bajjora. It was ruled by the Achaemenids of Iran in the sixth-fifth centuries B.C. Later it was occupied by the Greeks, Mauryas, Sakas, Pahlavas and Kusanas. As a result, this place produced a mixed culture. Its art, which was mainly Buddhist, was profoundly influenced by Hellenistic art. For example the depiction of transparent garment draped in Graeco - Roman fashion and wavy curly hair in Buddha idols. But at the same time we must remember that the chief patrons of Gandhara art were the Sakas and the Kusanas.

The main centres from where the art pieces of Gandhara School have been found are Art and Architecture Jalalabad, Hadda, Bamaran, Begram and Taxila. Gandhara art can be divided into two schools early and later. During the early school, which existed during first and second century A.D., blue-grey schist stone was used to make idols. However, in the later school instead of schist stone, mud, lime, plaster and stucco was used to make the idols. These idols give a realistic representation of the human figure clearly indicating limbs and other organs of the body. They are depicted with sharp features and anatomical accuracy. Besides idols we find beautiful carvings on reliefs and bas-reliefs the theme being the life of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. For example :

- The drum of the Chira Stupa, at Taxila, is decorated by images of Bodhisattvas placed in niches for worship.
- On the ramparts of small pillars, of the Sehibhelol Stupa, the images of Buddha, Bodhisattvas and incidents from their life have been carved out.
- A bronze reliquary was recovered from the side walls of the Stupa at Shahji-kidheri. It depicts Buddha, Kusana kings and flying geese (symbolic of wandering monks).

The Gandhara art had many other aspects also. For example a gold reliquary has been found at Bimaran in which a series of figures are contained within an arcade. Similarly ivory plaques have been found from Begram.

Mathura Art

The origin of Mathura art form is traced back to the second century B.C. By the first century A.D it had not only become a major centre of art but the art pieces of this school were in demand in far off areas. In a time span of nearly four hundred years this school produced a variety of sculptures and other pieces of art for the followers of Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical faiths. A significant dimension of Mathura art is that it also produced, like Afghanistan in the Kushana period, images of kings and other notables. This shows that Mathura artists were aware of various forms of art activities of the period and were catering to the requirements of different social groups of Indian and non-Indian origin. At the same time what they were creating, from local red stone, were uniquely of Mathura. Another aspect worth noting about this school is that it depicted various patterns of life on the votive pillars. For example, we have scenes from forests where men and women are collecting flowers; women playing with cranes or offering fruits to birds and women playing in gardens and water tanks. The votive pillars from 'KankaliTila' demonstrate how feminine beauty has been utilised by the sculptor. The themes handled by the Mathura artists are in fact many, and, as in Sanchi and Bharhut, the artist chose elements from nature to enrich his creation.

The sculptures here were carved out of red sandstone which was available locally. Let us briefly take a thematic study of the sculpture belonging to the Mathura school.

NOTES

(1) **The Buddha idols:** The earliest images of Bodhisattvas and Buddha were perhaps made at Mathura and sent also to other regions. For example, the Samath image of standing Bodhisttvas installed in the period of Kanishka-I was made at Mathura. We get Buddha images mainly in two postures - standing and sitting. Among the sitting idols the one found at Katra is among the oldest. The characteristics of this idol are:

- Buddha sitting under a Bodhi tree,
- Right hand in abhaya posture, I a Dharam chakra and tri-ratna chiselled in palms and at bottom of the feet, and
- The head is shaven except one lock.

In fact, some of the general characteristics of the Buddha idols of this age are:

- (i) They are made of white spotted red stone.
- (ii) Images started getting fashioned in the round so that they could be seen from every side.
- (iii) The head and face are shaven.
- (iv) The right hand is shown raised in abhaya posture.
- (v) There is no mark on the forehead.
- (vi) The dress is always tight on the body and the left hand holds the frill.

(2) **Jaina specimens :** Mathura was a sacred centre of the Jains as it was of the followers of Brahmanical and Buddhist faiths. It has yielded a number of inscriptions which refer to lay followers of Jainism, to Jaina monks and nuns and to donations and dedications made by them. For example, as early as the middle of the second century B.C., an inscription (pasada-torana) by a Jaina Sravaka named Uttaradasaka. Kankali Tila was the main Jaina site at Mathura and it has yielded an overwhelmingly large number of :

- Sculptures
- ayaqapatras or stone slabs with Jaina figures in centre and auspicious marks or with representations of Jaina Stupas (these were objects of worship)
- various architectural fragments like pillars, capitals, crossbars, railing - posts, etc.

The representations of the Jainas or the Tirthankaras on the ayaqapatras date before the Kushana period but regular images become common only from the Kushana period onward. Of them Parsvanatha is recognizable from his canopy of snake hoods and Rishabhanatha from rocks of hair falling on his shoulders but other Tirthankara images are not so easily identified.

(3) **Brahmanical Images:** Quite a few Brahmanical images have been found in Mathura. The earliest representations are of Siva, Lakshmi, Surya and Sankarshana or Balarma. During the Kushana period Karttikeya, Vishnu, Sarasvati, Kubera and certain other gods, including Naga images, were represented in sculpture. Some of iconographical features or features which characterize each deity are present in images of this period.

- For example Siva, though he is represented in the linga form, began to be carved in the form of Chaturmukha linga. This refers to linga with four human faces of the Siva on all four sides.

NOTES

- The Surya in the Kushana age is shown riding a chariot driven by two horses. He wears a heavy coat, a dress in the lower half of the body resembling a salwar, boots, a sword in one hand and a lotus in the other.
- Balarama has a heavy turban on his head.
- Saraswati is seated with a sary and manuscript in her hands. Dressed in a simple way she wears no ornaments and is attended by two other figures.
- Durga in her Mahisha-mardini form, is depicted as the killer of buffalo demon.

A number of Yaksha and Yakshini images have been discovered in Mathura. They are associated with all the three religions - Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism. Kubera was another deity shown with a bulging belly. He is associated with wine and with parties where participants indulge in drinks. He bears resemblance to Bacchus and Dionysius respecting the Roman and Greek gods of wine.

(4) *The images of rulers:* The Mat village in Mathura yielded big images of Kushana Kings and other notables like Kanishka, Wima and Chastana. The idea of building reliquaries or structures for housing portrait-statues of rulers and other dignitaries of the State possibly came from Central Asia. This was done to give the rulers a divine status: The dresses which the dignitaries wear were also of Central Asian origin.

Many heads of Scythian dignitaries have also been found at Mat. These discoveries indicate that Mathura was the most important centre of the eastern part of the Kushana empire. They also forcefully suggest interaction between Gandhara and Mathura art forms.

In due course Mathura art forms contributed significantly to the development of Gupta art forms.

UNIT – III

THE GUPTAS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

The foundation of the Gupta empire in the 4th century A.D. marks the beginning of another era. The Gupta monarchs were powerful upto the 6th century in North India. Art, science and literature flourished greatly during their time. The iconographic canons of Brahmanical, Jain and Buddhist divinities were perfected and standardised, which served as ideal models of artistic expression for later centuries, not only in India but also beyond its border. It was an age of all round perfection in domestic life, administration, literature, as seen in the works of Kalidasa, in art creations and in religion and philosophy, as exemplified in the wide-spread Bhagavata cult, which identified itself with an intensive cult of beauty.

With the Gupta period India entered upon the classical phase of sculpture. By the efforts of the centuries, techniques of art were perfected, definite types were evolved, and ideals of beauty were formulated with precision. There was no more groping in the dark, no more experimentation. A thorough intelligent grasp of the true aims and essential principles of art, a highly developed aesthetic sense and masterly execution by skilled hands produced those remarkable images which

were to be the ideal and despair of the Indian artists of subsequent ages. The Gupta sculptures not only remained models of Indian art for all time to come but they also served as ideals for the Indian colonies in the Far East.

In the Gupta period all the trends and tendencies of the artistic pursuits of the preceding phases reached their culmination in a unified plastic tradition of supreme importance in Indian History. Gupta sculpture thus is the logical outcome of the early classical sculpture of Amravati and Mathura. Its plasticity is derived from that of Mathura and its elegance from that of Amravati. Yet a Gupta sculpture seems to belong to a sphere that is entirely different. The Gupta artist seems to have been working for a higher ideal. A new orientation in the attitude towards art is noticed in the attempt to establish a closer harmony between art and thought, between the outer forms and the inner intellectual and spiritual conception of the people.

During the Gupta period the characteristic elements of the Indian temple emerged and the plastic forms began to be used admirably as an integral part of the general architectural scheme. The stone carving from the temples at Deogarh and those from the temples of Udayagiri and Ajanta are excellent specimens of figure sculpture in their decorative setting. The large panel of Sheshashayi Vishnu from the Deogarh temple, representing the Supreme being slumbering wakefully on the serpent Ananta, the symbol of eternity, in the interval between the dissolution of the universe and its new creation, is a magnificent example. The four-armed Vishnu is reclining gracefully on the coils of the Adishesha, whose seven hoods form a canopy over his crowned head. His consort Lakshmi is massaging his right leg and two attendant figures stand behind her. Various gods and celestials are hovering above. In the lower panel, the two demons Madhu and Kaitabha, in an attacking attitude, are challenged by the four personified weapons of Vishnu. The whole composition fashioned with a masterly skill, breathes an atmosphere of serene calm and an agitated tension, making it a superb piece of art.

2.22 HISTORY OF GUPTAS

A.S. Altekar, regarded the caste of the Guptas as Vaishya on the basis of the ancient Indian texts on law, which prescribe the name-ending with Gupta for a member of the Vaishya caste, but this injunction was more often disregarded than followed. A modern historian, K.P. Jayaswal suggested that the Guptas were Jats. His argument was based on the Pune and Riddhapura copper plate grants of Prabhavtigupta, the Vakataka regent and the daughter of Chandragupta II. In these two inscriptions, she states that she belonged to the Dharana gotra and as it was not her husband's gotra, it is the gotra of the Guptas. His view was endorsed by another modern historian, Dasharatha Sharma, who added that the Jats of the Dharana gotra still exist in the present-day Rajasthan. Another modern historian, H.C. Raychaudhuri, also accepted that the Guptas belonged to the Dharana gotra. He also believed that they were possibly related to Queen Dharini, the chief consort of Agnimitra. But the basis of this argument, the earlier accepted reading of the Riddhapura copper plate inscription may be incorrect and the correct reading possibly indicates that the family of Prabhavtigupta's mother, Kuberanaga belonged to this Dharana gotra. Recently, a historian, Ashvini Agarwal, on the basis of the matrimonial alliances of the Guptas with the orthodox Brahman

NOTES

NOTES

dynasties, assumed that they belong to the Brahman caste. However, recent excavations in Nepal and Deccan has revealed that Gupta suffix was common among Abhira kings, and Historian D. R. Regmi, links Imperial Guptas with Abhira-Guptas of Nepal.

Fa Xian was the first of the Chinese pilgrims who visited India during the reign of Chandra Gupta II. He started his journey from China in 399 CE and reached India in 405 CE. During his stay in India up to 411 CE, he went on a pilgrimage to Mathura, Kanauj, Kapilavastu, Kushinagar, Vaishali, Pataliputra, Kashi and Rajgriha and made careful observations about the empire's conditions. Fa Xian was pleased with the mildness of administration. The Penal Code was mild and offences were punished by fines only. From his accounts, the Gupta Empire was a prosperous period.

SRIGUPTA AND GHATOKKACHA

The most likely time for the reign of Sri Gupta is c. 240-280 CE. A number of modern historians, which include Rakhaldas Bandyopadhyay and K.P.Jayaswal think he and his son were possibly feudatories of the Kushans. His son and successor Ghatotkacha ruled probably from c. 280-319 CE. In contrast to their successor, Chandragupta I, who is mentioned as Maharajadhiraja, he and his son Ghatotkacha are referred to in inscriptions as Maharaja. At the beginning of the 5th century the Guptas established and ruled a few small Hindu kingdoms in Magadha and around modern-day Bihar.

CHANDRA GUPTA I

Ghatotkacha (c. 280-319 CE), had a son named Chandra Gupta. (Not to be confused with Chandragupta Maurya (340-293 BCE), founder of the Mauryan Empire.) In a breakthrough deal, Chandra Gupta was married to Kumaradevi, a Lichchhavi princess—the main power in Magadha. With a dowry of the kingdom of Magadha (capital Pataliputra) and an alliance with the Lichchhavis, Chandra Gupta set about expanding his power, conquering much of Magadha, Prayaga and Saketa. He established a realm stretching from the Ganga River (Ganges River) to Prayaga (modern-day Allahabad) by 321 CE. He assumed the imperial title of Maharajadhiraja.

SAMUDRAGUPTA

Samudragupta, Parakramanka succeeded his father in 335 CE, and ruled for about 45 years, till his death in 380 CE. He took the kingdoms of Ahichchhatra and Padmavati early in his reign. He then attacked the Malwas, the Yaudheyas, the Arjunayanas, the Maduras and the Abhiras, all of which were tribes in the area. By his death in 380, he had incorporated over twenty kingdoms into his realm and his rule extended from the Himalayas to the river Narmada and from the Brahmaputra to the Yamuna. He gave himself the titles King of Kings and World Monarch. Historian Vincent Smith described him as the "Indian Napoleon". He performed Ashwamedha yajna (horse sacrifice) to underline the importance of his conquest. The stone replica of the sacrificial horse, then prepared, is in the Lucknow Museum. The Samudragupta Prashasti inscribed on the Ashokan Pillar, now in Akbar's Fort at Allahabad, is an authentic record of his exploits and his sway over most of the continent.

Samudragupta was not only a talented military leader but also a great patron of art and literature. The important scholars present in his court were Harishena, Vasubandhu and Asanga. He was a poet and musician himself. He was a firm believer in Hinduism and is known to have worshipped Lord Vishnu. He was considerate of other religions and allowed Sri Lanka's Buddhist king Sirimeghvanna to build a monastery at Bodh Gaya. That monastery was called by Xuanzang as the Mahabodhi Sangharama.⁽¹⁹⁾ He provided a gold railing around the Bodhi Tree.

NOTES

SUCCESSION OF SAMUDRAGUPTA

According to A.S. Altekar, a king named Ramagupta intervened between Samudragupta and Chandragupta II. His theory is based on a tradition that, Samudragupta's eldest son Ramagupta, who succeeded him, was a weak ruler. After suffering a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Sakas, he agreed to surrender his wife Dhruvadevi or Dhurvasvamini to the Saka Chief (who, Altekar believes is Rudrasena II). But, Rama Gupta's younger brother Chandra Gupta II, protested against this dishonour and went to the Saka camp disguised as the queen and assassinated the Saka Chief. After this he killed his brother Rama Gupta, married Dhruvadevi and ascended to the throne. But this theory is not supported by any contemporary epigraphic evidence. The earliest version of this narrative is found in the Harshacharita of Bana. The later versions are found in a number of texts, which include the extracts of the Devichandragupta, a historical drama of Vishakhadatta found in the Natyadarpana of Ramachandra and Gunachandra and also in the Shringaraprakasha of Bhoja I. The version of this narrative given by Bana in his Harshacharita differs significantly from all the later versions, even the narrative known to the author of the Kavyamimamsa (c.900). The Harshacharita only mentions that Chandragupta II, disguised as a female, destroyed a Saka king, who coveted the wife of another, in the very city of the enemy. It does not mention anything about Ramagupta.

RAMAGUPTA

Although, the narrative of the Devichandragupta is not supported by any contemporary epigraphical evidence, the historicity of Ramagupta is proved by his Durjanpur inscriptions on three Jaina images, where he is mentioned as the Maharajadhiraja. A large number of his copper coins also have been found from the Eran-Vidisha region and classified in five distinct types, which include the Garuda, Garudadhvaja, lion and border legend types. The Brahmi legends on these coins are written in the early Gupta style.

CHANDRAGUPTA II

Chandra Gupta II, Vikramaditya (the Sun of Power), ruled from 380 until 413. Chandra Gupta II also married to a Kadamba princess of Kuntala region and a princess of Naga lineage (Nâgakulotpannnâ), Kuberanaga. His daughter Prabhavatigupta from this Naga queen was married to Rudrasena II, the Vakataka ruler of Deccan. His son Kumaragupta I was married to Kadamba princess of karnatka region. Emperor Chandra Gupta II expanded his realm westwards, defeating the Saka Western Kshatrapas of Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra in a

NOTES

campaign lasting until 409, but with his main opponent Rudrasimha III defeated by 395, and crushing the Bengal (Vanga) chiefdoms. This extended his control from coast-to-coast, established a second capital at Ujjain and was the high point of the empire.

Despite the creation of the empire through war, the reign is remembered for its very influential style of Hindu art, literature, culture and science, especially during the reign of Chandra Gupta II. Some excellent works of Hindu art such as the panels at the Dashavatara Temple in Deogarh serve to illustrate the magnificence of Gupta art. Above all it was the synthesis of elements that gave Gupta art its distinctive flavour. During this period, the Guptas were supportive of thriving Buddhist and Jain cultures as well, and for this reason there is also a long history of non-Hindu Gupta period art. In particular, Gupta period Buddhist art was to be influential in most of East and Southeast Asia. Much of advances was recorded by the Chinese scholar and traveller Faxian (Fa-hien) in his diary and published afterwards.

The court of Chandragupta was made even more illustrious by the fact that it was graced by the Navaratna (Nine Jewels), a group of nine who excelled in the literary arts. Amongst these men was the immortal Kalidasa whose works dwarfed the works of many other literary geniuses, not only in his own age but in the ages to come. Kalidasa was particularly known for his fine exploitation of the shringara (erotic) element in his verse.

2.23 CHANGES IN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF EMPIRE

The period under study was dominated by the reigns of the Guptas and Pushyabhutis in the north, of the Vakatakas, Kadambas and Chalukyas of Badami in the Deccan and of the Pallavas in southern Andhra and Tamil Nadu. There were of course a number of small kingdoms and chieftaincies in many parts of the country. The major sources for the study of the polity of this period are inscriptions, dharmasastra literature, Harshacharita of Bana and the accounts of Chinese travellers like Fa-Hien, Hiuen Tsang, etc. Broadly speaking the polity of this period was marked by hereditary monarchies ruling over small territories with one or two of them assuming wider sovereign status now and then. For example, the Guptas (from 300 A.D. to 500 A.D.) and Harsha (in the first half of the 7th century A.D.) had fairly wide areas under their control.

In this Unit we shall discuss the main features of the political organization in the period between 300 A.D. and 700 A.D. We shall also try to show how these features mark a change from the political organization of the earlier periods and thus indicate that important changes were taking place also in the political organization of the country during this period.

THE KING

Most of the country was ruled by kings. Only in a few fringe areas there lingered on the gana (tribal republic) form of government. After the military expeditions of Samudragupta in north India early in the fourth century A.D. most of these tribal republics almost disappeared from the political scene. Thus the Madra and Yaudheya in the Panjab, the Abhira in central India, etc. are not

NOTES

heard of again. Some of the tribal chieftaincies also slowly became monarchies. The King took pompous titles like *pararnamahesvara*, *rajadhiraja*, *paramabhattacharaka*, etc. which indicate their superiority over many other smaller rulers. During this period the divine right theory also came into vogue. The King in keeping with this theory held such titles as *prithvivallabha* i.e., 'the beloved of the Earth goddess'. He is called the fifth *lokapala* as the other existing four *lokapalas* or guardians of the four cardinal directions were namely *Kubera*, *Varuna*, *Indra* and *Yama*. Though the concept of the divinity of the King became dominant, it was combined with the notion of the King as guardian and protector.

Kingship was hereditary. Though succession to the throne was generally decided by law of primogeniture, that is, the eldest son succeeding his father, there were many exceptions to this rule. Sometimes kings were even elected by nobles and councillors. As head of the government, the King was overseer of all administrative activities of his realm. He was the supreme judge, and he usually led his army to the battlefields.

There are occasional references to queens acting as rulers, as in the cases of *Prabhavati*, the *Vakataka* queen who came from the ruling family of the *Guptas*, and of *Didida*, the queen, of a later period, of *Kashmir*. Generally however the queens remained in the background.

BUREAUCRACY

As compared to the *Mauryan* period, there is no clear evidence for the existence of a central *mantriparishad* or council of ministers to advise the King. There were, however, many high officials who were at times called *mantrin*. The other designations for higher officials were *sandhivigrahika*, who was minister for foreign affairs, war and peace; *mahabaladhikrita* and *mahadandanayaka*, both of which denoted superior posts in the army. Sometimes the same person was holding more than one such post; for example, *Harishena* who composed the famous *Allahabad Pillar Inscription* of *Samudragupta* is said to have been a *sandhivigrahika* as well as a *mahadandanayaka*.

Besides these, there was in the *Gupta* government a class of officials known as *kumaramatyas*. It seems that most of the high officials were selected from this class or cadre and so the *kumaramatyas* are mentioned in various capacities like *sandhivigrahika*, *mahabaladhikrita*, etc. Some of them were under the direct control of the King where as some seem to have served the princes and provincial governors. The officer called *Uparika* was in charge of a *bhukti*, an administrative division. *Ayuktaka* was a member of the bureaucracy who, like *Vishayapati*, functioned at a level higher than - villages, and he was an important intermediate administrative link between the *bhukti* and the village. The officials seem to have been paid in cash in the beginning of our period and later they were just assigned revenues of some designated territories and they were therefore called *bhogika* or *bhogapati*. This is known from *Harshacharita* which refers to the complaints made to *Harsha* by villagers against such officials. The posts also became hereditary, thereby weakening the King's authority in course of time.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

The country was organised into many divisions for administrative purposes. The highest unit among these territorial divisions was called *bhukti* which was

NOTES

under the charge of a high official called uparika. Sometimes princes were also in charge of some bhukti. Vishaya was the next administrative division below which was the lowest unit, *i.e.*, the village. In certain areas vishaya was also known as rashtra. In eastern India the vishayas were also divided into vithis over and above the village. At the level of vishaya the officials (or locally powerful people) called Vishayapatis played a leading role in the administration. In each village a headman and the village elders managed the local affairs. In urban settlements or towns there were a number of craft and merchant guilds to look after their administration.

The Samanta

Semi-independent local chiefs called samanta were an important feature of the polity of this time. We have already read that Samudragupta conquered and subjugated a number of territories. Some of the rulers of these territories which were on the fringes of the Gupta empire were made subordinate allies of the King. They became feudatories, so to say, of the Gupta King paying periodical tribute to the latter. Some of them also presented him their daughters in marriage. They were obliged to pay homage to the King by personally attending his court. The King in turn recognised their right to continue to rule over their own territories and for this he also gave them charters. These subordinate rulers were also obliged to send their men to fight in the King's army during times of war. Subject to the above obligations the feudatories or samantas were left to look after the administration of their territories, which was actually done by King's officials in the central parts of the Gupta empire.

Another factor which really introduced features of a decentralized polity was the granting of land to priests and officials for their maintenance. Generally the King not only gave the land but also parted with some of his administrative rights like taxing the people, punishing the criminals, etc. The granted territories were also given immunity from the entry of the King's army. Naturally the grantees of such lands became almost independent of the King and became samantas themselves. Consequent to this, in the 7th century A.D. and after we find officials giving themselves pompous titles like mahasamanta and 'one who obtained the privilege of five great sounds (panchamahashabda)'. Through the use of these titles, the samantas and mahasamantas proclaimed their autonomy. The presence of all these features in polity has led historians to suggest that from the Gupta period onward the political organization which developed in India represented a feudal-type of political organization.

Taxation

The government got most of its revenue through taxation. Land taxes called *baga*, *bhoga*, etc. were the main items and the land taxes actually increased through the centuries. As trade and commerce seem to have declined during this period commercial taxes are not found - prominently. The local people were also obliged to provide for the stay and food of villages.

It may be noted here that as far as the lands granted to officials and priests are concerned, the government lost much of its revenue from those lands.

Judicial System

Judicial system was more developed now compared to earlier times. Many law codes and treatises were compiled during this period and the dharmasastras elaborately dealt with legal matters.

There were different courts like Karana, adhikarana, dharmasana, etc. Criminal and civil cases were clearly differentiated from each other. Laws regarding property and inheritance were elaborate. Of course justice was based on the varna classification in society. For the same kind of crime, culprits belonging to a higher varna or caste got less punishment than those belonging to a lower varna. Dharmasastras also insisted that local usages and practices of different guilds & castes should be given due weight while dispensing justice.

NOTES

2.24 ECONOMY AND SOCIETY OF GUPTA PERIOD

You have read earlier that agricultural crops constituted the main resources which the society produced and that the major part of the revenue of the state also came from agriculture. This of course does not mean that agriculture was the only occupation of the people or that people lived only in villages. There were other occupations like commerce and production of crafts which had become specialized occupations and in which different social groups were engaged. This also means that, as in earlier periods, people lived in forests, in agrarian tracts, in towns and in cities, but certain changes had started taking place in the pattern of economic production and consequently in relations between different social groups.

AGRICULTURE

Let us begin with the pattern of agricultural production. The concern of the society with agricultural production is clear from the way various aspects associated with agricultural operations are mentioned in the sources of the Gupta period. Various types of land are mentioned in the inscriptions; land under cultivation was usually called Kshetra. Lands not under cultivation were variously called as Khila, Aprahata, etc., and inscriptions give the impression that uncultivated land was being regularly brought under cultivation.

Classification of land according to soil, fertility and the use to which it was put was not unknown. Different land measures were known in different regions, although one cannot be certain what exact measure was denoted by a term. In some areas Nivartana was the term used for a measure of land whereas in the inscriptions of Bengal terms like Kulyavapa and Dronavapa are used. It is not possible to classify the regions precisely according to the crop grown, but all the major categories of crops — cereals like barley, wheat and paddy, different varieties of pulses, grams and vegetables as well as cash crops like cotton and sugarcane were known long before the Gupta period and continued to be cultivated. Of course, you should not assume that crops like maize or vegetables like potatoes or tomatoes were known to the farmers of the Gupta period.

The concern of the society with agricultural production is also reflected in the importance given to irrigation. In the earlier Blocks you have already read about the Sudarsana reservoir (Tadaga) in Saurashtra in Gujarat. Originally built in the Maurya period, this reservoir was thoroughly repaired when it was extensively damaged in the time of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman (middle of the second century A.D.). It was again severely damaged in the time of Skandagupta. Parnadatta, his newly appointed governor of Saurashtra and Parnadatta's son Chakrapalita, undertook the repair of the reservoir this time. Another method for irrigation was to draw water from wells and supply the water to the fields

NOTES

through carefully prepared channels. A mechanism, possibly known before the Gupta period, was to tie a number of pots to a chain: the chain with the pots reached down to the water of the hull, and by making the chain and the pots rotate, it was ensured that the pots would continuously fill with water and empty it. This mechanism was known as ghati-yantra as ghati was the name used for a pot. This type of mechanism also came to be known as araghatta. In the Harshacharita of Banabhatta, which was of course written in the seventh century A.D. there is a very charming description of how cultivated fields, producing crops like sugarcane, were being irrigated with the help of ghati-yantra. In regions like Bengal, rainwater was collected in ponds and other types of reservoirs; in peninsular India, tank irrigation became gradually the norm. There were thus different systems of irrigation and the role of the state was only marginal in providing irrigation facilities to farmers. The farmers of course depended mainly on rainfall and the importance of rainfall is underlined not only in the Arthashastra of Kautilya but also in the texts written in the Gupta period.

The sources of the Gupta period suggest that certain important changes were taking place in the agrarian society. The inscriptions from Bengal refer to sale of land by district-level administration to individuals who bought them by paying cash and made gifts of purchased land to brahmanas who were expected to perform vedic sacrifices or to Buddhist or Jaina religious establishments. But land was not only purchased and gifted; the practice of gifting land to religious donees had become quite common by now. Even otherwise, remuneration for serving rulers in different capacities was received in the form of land by officials of different categories. Of course, all this was not absolutely new. But by now the number of ruling families had vastly increased and thus the number of persons who received land but did not cultivate themselves went on increasing. The virtues of giving land were highly praised and those who took away gifted land were threatened with many evil consequences.

All this led to the appearance, in society, of a class of people who enjoyed superior rights over land and by virtue of these rights and by belonging to higher varnas had high economic and social status. Of course, landrights did not belong only to those who received land. The Gupta inscriptions refer to different types of village residents like Gramikas, Kutumbis and Mahattaras who must have been village landholders, and their participation in land transactions indicates that they too were important members of rural society.

Compared with the recipients of land from the rulers and the influential categories of landowners in villages, the condition of ordinary cultivators may be considered to have been rather bad. It is believed by some historians that because of the practice of land grants, the peasant population as a whole were reduced to a very low position in society. This is not entirely true. It was the ordinary cultivators, known by various terms such as Krishibala, Karshaka or Kinass who had low economic and social status. Among the actual cultivators there were those who filled the lands of others and received only a share of the produce.

There were also slaves who worked on the fields of their masters. Even domestic female slaves were cruelly exploited, and a text like the Kamasutra, which was probably written in the Gupta period tells us how much hardship they had to go through at the hands of their masters.

There were other reasons why the condition of the ordinary cultivators declined considerably. One was that in many areas the appearance of small

NOTES

kingdoms of new rulers and their official and actions of people who did not take part in agriculture created great inequalities in society and imposed great burden on actual tillers of the soil. The number of taxes imposed by the state on the producers also increased in this period. Further, the practice of imposing *vishti* or unpaid labour was also in vogue, although we do not know for certain how much essential it was for agricultural production. All in all, the condition of the ordinary cultivators seems to have become worse than in the earlier periods.

CRAFTS PRODUCTION AND TRADE

Crafts production covered a very wide range of items. There were items of ordinary domestic use like earthen pots, items of furniture, baskets, metal tools for domestic use and so on; simultaneously a wide variety of luxury items including jewellery made of gold, silver and precious stones; objects made of ivory; fine clothes of cotton and silk and other costly items had to be made available to the affluent sections of people. Some of these items Economy. Society and were made available through trade; others were manufactured locally. Description of many luxury objects, of which no trace is generally found in archaeological excavations, may be found in the literary texts or inscriptions of the period. These sources also give us interesting hints regarding the status of different categories of craftsmen. For example, different varieties of silk cloth, called *Kshauma* and *Pattavastra* are mentioned in the texts of this period! An inscription of fifth century from Mandasor in western Malwa refers to a guild of silk-weavers who had migrated from south Gujarat and had settled in the Malwa region. Texts like *Amarakosha* and *Brihat Samhita* which are generally dated to this period, list many items, give their Sanskrit names and also mention different categories of craftsmen who manufactured them.

However, for an idea of the quantity and variety of objects manufactured in this period one has to go through reports of what have been found at various archaeological sites. Many important sites like Taxila, Ahichchhatra, Mathura, Rajghat, Kausambi and Pataliputra in the Ganges Valley and other sites in other geographical regions have yielded many craft products like earthen wares, terracottas, beads made of different stones, objects of glass, items made of metals, etc. It seems that in comparison with crafts production in the preceding Saka Kushana period, crafts production in the Gupta period suffered some setback. It has, however, not yet been possible to make a very satisfactory comparative study between these two periods from this angle.

All items were not available at all places; the movement of items for trade from one place to another, therefore, continued as in the earlier periods. You have read that India had extensive trade links with Central, West and Southeast Asia and with the Roman world in the preceding period, and trade routes connecting different regions within the country had been developing over centuries. That commercial activities continued in the Gupta period are evident. Like their Kushana predecessors the Gupta rulers too minted coins of different types, and the gold coins of the Gupta rulers show excellent qualities of craftsmanship. The Guptas also issued coins in copper, silver and lead. These coins were obviously used for purposes of commercial exchange and in some regions of the Gupta empire at least, the merchants held a high position in society. For example, two types of representatives of merchants—the *Nagarasresthi* and

NOTES

the Sarthavaha—were associated with the administration of the district headquarters in north Bengal. The seals of the Gupta period, found at Vaisali in north Bihar, suggest that the merchants constituted an important section of the population of the city of Vaisali. Literary texts of the period too show that in cities like Pataliputra and Ujjayini commercial activities were carried on briskly and people from different countries were present in them. Merchants were important communities also in these cities.

There were organizations which facilitated the functioning of both craftsmen and traders. The ancient term which was generally used for these organizations was Sreni, and the State was expected to provide the guilds protection and to respect their customs and norms. Similarly, members of the Sreni were also expected to follow the norms of the organization; otherwise, they were liable to punishment. The term Sreni is often interpreted as guild but there are different interpretations of the term and in terms of many details, we are still not quite sure what the Srenis were really like.

Although Crafts production and commercial activities were brisk in the Gupta period, there are two points we should especially remember:

- (1) There were many types of craftsmen and they were not all identical either in wealth or in social status. For example, there was vast difference between a goldsmith and his family with a shop in a city like Ujjayini and a family of basketmakers in a village. This is reflected to some extent in the Dharmasastras written by the brahmanas in this period. The Dharmasastras assign different ranks to different groups of craftsmen, although in their scheme the craftsmen and artisans held a status lower than that of the brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaisyas. The Dharmasastras also suggest that each group of craftsmen formed a jati or caste. For example, the Kumbhakaras or potters formed one caste, the Suvarnakaras or goldsmiths formed another caste and so on. Although the system of caste was not really so simple, generally the trend among craftsmen was that persons following one craft formed a jati or a caste.
- (2) Crafts production and commercial activities perhaps started declining from the Gupta period onward in most regions and according to some historians, this resulted in the decline of towns and cities and in greater dependence of society of agricultural production.

SOCIETY

You have already read that according to the scheme of society conceived by the brahmanas, society was divided into four varnas (Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra), with each varna performing the set of functions prescribed for it and enjoying whatever rights were given to it. This was the ideal social order and the state was expected to preserve it. This means that when even a small state emerged in some corner of the country, the King of that state was expected to recognize this as the ideal social order. The Brahmanas came to exert considerable influence on the kings from the Gupta period and this is quite clear from the way they received land from the kings and others. The kings, officials and others gave land not only to Individual brahmanas but also some times incited big groups of brahmanas to come and settle in remote areas. Thus, the number of brahmana settlements variously called Brshmdiyas, Agraharas and so on started increasing

and they started spreading, among other things, the idea of a varna-divided social order.

However, varna order was an ideal order and there were many groups in society whose varna identity could never be determined. Secondly, it was assumed that the varnas would perform their duties; in reality, they may not have done so. These suggest that real society was different the ideal society and this was also recognized by the brahmana writers of the Dharmasastras. They therefore tried to determine the status of various castes or jatis in the society by giving fictitious explanations of their origins. They suggested that various jatis or groups originated through varna-samkara or inter-marrriages between various varnas. The various foreign ruling families of the pre-Gupta period, of Greek or Sicythian origin, were given the semi-kshatriya status (vratyā Kshatriya) because they could not be considered to be of pure Kshatriya origin: similarly, fictitious origins were thought of for tribal groups who came to be absorbed into the Brahmanical society.

The Dharmasastras also speak of apadharmā or conduct to be followed during periods of distress. This means that the varnas take to professions and duties not assigned to them when they found it necessary to do so. In matters of profession also the Dharmasastras thus recognized that the real society was different from their ideal society. These changes of course originated much before the Gupta period, but with the spread of the Brahmanas to different parts of India, the social structure came to be very complex. The new society had to absorb many social groups thus. the actual social structure came to vary from region to region, although certain ideas were common to them:

- The Brahmanas came to be recognized as the purest and therefore the highest varna. Since they were associated with Sanskrit learning and performed priestly functions, they came to be closely connected with royal power. Even when the rulers were supporters of Buddhism, Jainism or a particular religious sect, they continued to patronize brahmanas, particularly those of high learning. This remained one of the major reasons for the economic prosperity and prestige of the brahmanas.
- Ideally, although there were four varnas, these were various groups who were kept out of this scheme. They were the antyajās or untouchables. They were considered impure; even their touch was considered impure and their physical presence in areas where higher varnas lived and moved was not allowed. The Chandalas, the Charmakaras and similar groups were considered impure and outcastes. Thus, in the Brahmanical order of society, the condition of a number of social groups remained miserable throughout.
- The position of woman or higher varnas was low. Although we hear of personalities like the Vakataka queen Prabhavatigupta who wielded considerable power, not all women were so privileged. The brahmana texts set down norms which women were expected to follow and women were expected, in the family, to function mainly as an ideal wife and ideal mother. In many Brahmana texts, women were even considered, for various reasons, to be of the same category as the Sudras. It is significant that although brahmanas were given landgrants regularly, we do not come across evidence of land being given to Brahmana women.

Another aspect of social life was that there existed great difference between the ways of life of the rich city-dwellers and people living in villages. The ideal

NOTES

NOTES

city-dweller was the nagaraka, i.e. the urbanite who, because of his affluence, lived a life of pleasure and refined culture. There are interesting descriptions of this way of life not only in Vatsyayana's Kamasutra but also in other literary texts of the period. Of course, it would be wrong to presume that all classes of people who lived in cities could afford this way of life.

2.25 LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

Aryabhatta was the famous astronomer and mathematician. He proved that the Earth is round and it goes around the Sun. He also explained the causes for the Solar and the lunar eclipses. He wrote a book called Aryabhatiyam. In this book, he describes the principles of decimal system, place value, the use of zero, square and cube roots and the value of π is equal to 3.1416. Varahamihira a master of astronomy and astrology, authored the book Jyothishasastra. His another book Brihatsamhita deals with astronomy, astrology geography and architecture. Another scholar Brahmagupta explained the theory of gravitation even before Newton and composed Brahma Siddhanta. The technology of metallurgy was well developed under the Guptas. The iron pillar found near Mehrauli in Delhi is a good example. Though it has been exposed to the inclement weather from the 4th century AD, it has not gathered rust so far. The huge Copper statue of Buddha from Sultanganj (now kept in British Museum) is another proof of the metallurgical skill of the Gupta period.

CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS MEDICINE

In the field of medicine Nagarjuna discovered many new medicines. Inoculation for small pox was known. Dhanvantri was the most famous Ayur Veda physician. Charaka and Susruta were the famous physicians. Vagabhatta wrote some books on medicine.

The flow of invasions from the Huns from central Asia aided in accelerating the demise of the glorious Gupta dynasty rule in India, although the effects of its fall was far less devastating than that of the Han or Roman at the same time. According to historian's work,

"The Gupta Empire is considered by many scholars to be the "classical age" of Hindu and Buddhist art and literature. The Rulers of the Gupta Empire were strong supporters of developments in the arts, architecture, science, and literature. The Gupta Empire circulated a large number of gold coins, called dinars, and supported the Universities of Nalanda and Vikramasila."

UNIT — IV

EARLY MEDIEVAL INDIA: MAJOR DYNASTIES

The most important dynasty to rise out of the southern India was that of the Cholas. Unlike most of the other dynasties (the Chalukyas, the Pallavas, the Pandyas or the Rashtrakutas), their origins are not traced from outside, but very much from the south itself.

The Deccan region was at this time in much turmoil. To begin with, the Cholas had managed almost immediately to reduce the Pallavas to the status of

NOTES

minor feudatories. The Rashtrakutas were in decline now, but their place was taken by a resurgent branch of the Chalukya family (imaginatively called the later Chalukyas by historians) who were gaining strength in the region of western Deccan. The power equation in the Deccan now involved the later Chalukyas, the Yadavas of Devagiri (northern Deccan; region around Aurangabad), the Kakatiyas of Warangal (Andhra Pradesh) and the Hoysalas of Dorasamudra (Mysore). Much sorting out had to be done before the Cholas finally emerged as unchallenged authorities in the south. This they managed with sheer tenacity over a period of 300 years from 900-1100 AD – and even then for a short while only.

However, by the middle of the 12th century Chola power was already deep into decline. The south was simply far too divided and no one kingdom stood out as a clear leader. The scene was again rapidly shifting to the north where much liveliness had occurred by this time.

This is the time which saw the emergence of Delhi from the mists of obscurity that it had sunk into since it was first inhabited as Indraprastha.

It was what the historians call the 'early medieval' period of India – about the 11-12th century AD – when the much travelled Rajputs were floating restlessly around looking for a home before finally finding shelter in the Rajputana area.

Here the strategic location of Delhi came to play – it was the doorway to both the fertile Punjab, the fabled land of the five rivers, and the fertile Ganges valley.

But first, just who were these Rajputs? We come across the word 'Rajput' for the first time in the 7th century AD. There is no previous record or reference of it and it is certainly not a Sanskrit word. There are as many theories as there are historians about the origin of the Rajputs, including an opinion that they were descended from foreigners, from one of the Indo-Parthian, Indo-Bactrian, Indo-Scythian, Saka, Kushana or Hun strains that were already present in India for quite some centuries.

This might just be true, considering the elaborate genealogies that the Brahmans (the priest of the Indian varna or caste system) created to accord them the Kshatriya (warrior) caste. This was a status they always insisted upon, and still do, with surprising and almost undue vehemence. The Rajputs traced their lineage from a mythical fire atop Mount Abu, a mountain in Rajasthan, (Agni Kula or the Fire Family), the sun (Suryavanshi or the Sun Family) and the moon (Chandravanshi or the Moon Family).

2.26 THE CHOLA EMPIRE

The Chola dynasty was a Tamil dynasty which was one of the longest-ruling in some parts of southern India. The earliest datable references to the dynasty are in inscriptions from the 3rd century BC left by Asoka, a northern ruler; the dynasty continued to reign over varying territory until the 12th century AD.

The heartland of the Cholas was the fertile valley of the Kaveri River, but they ruled a significantly larger area at the height of their power from the later half of the 9th century till the beginning of the 13th century. The whole country south of the Tungabhadra was united and held as one state for a period of two centuries and more. Under Rajaraja Chola I and his son Rajendra Chola I, the dynasty became a military, economic and cultural power in South Asia and South-

NOTES

east Asia. The power of the new empire was proclaimed to the eastern world by the celebrated expedition to the Ganges which Rajendra Chola I undertook and by the overthrow after an unprecedented naval war of the maritime empire of Sri Vijaya, as well as by the repeated embassies to China. During the period 1010–1200, the Chola territories stretched from the islands of the Maldives in the south to as far north as the banks of the Godavari River in Andhra Pradesh. *Rajaraja Chola conquered peninsular South India, annexed parts of what is now Sri Lanka and occupied the islands of the Maldives.*^[4] Rajendra Chola sent a victorious expedition to North India that touched the river Ganga and defeated the Pala ruler of Pataliputra, Mahipala. He also successfully invaded kingdoms of the Malay Archipelago. The Chola dynasty went into decline at the beginning of the thirteenth century with the rise of the Pandyas, who ultimately caused their downfall.

The Cholas left a lasting legacy. Their patronage of Tamil literature and their zeal in building temples have resulted in some great works of Tamil literature and architecture. The Chola kings were avid builders and envisioned the temples in their kingdoms not only as places of worship but also as centres of economic activity. They pioneered a centralised form of government and established a disciplined bureaucracy.

There is very little information available regarding the origin of the Chola Dynasty. The antiquity of this dynasty is evident from the mentions in ancient Tamil literature and in inscriptions. Later medieval Cholas also claimed a long and ancient lineage to their dynasty. Mentions in the early Sangam literature (c. 150 CE) indicate that the earliest kings of the dynasty antedated 100 CE. Parimelalagar, the annotator of the Tamil classic Tirukkural, mentions that this could be the name of an ancient king.

The most commonly held view is that this is, like Cheras and Pandyas, the name of the ruling family or clan of immemorial antiquity. The annotator Parimelazhagar writes "The charity of people with ancient lineage (such as the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Cheras) are forever generous in spite of their reduced means". Other names in common use for the Cholas are Killi, Valavan and Sembiyan Killi perhaps comes from the Tamil kil meaning dig or cleave and conveys the idea of a digger or a worker of the land. This word often forms an integral part of early Chola names like Nedunkilli, Nalankilli and so on, but almost drops out of use in later times. Valavan is most probably connected with 'valam' – fertility and means owner or ruler of a fertile country. Sembiyan is generally taken to mean a descendant of Shibi – a legendary hero whose self-sacrifice in saving a dove from the pursuit of a falcon figures among the early Chola legends and forms the subject matter of the Sibi Jataka among the Jataka stories of Buddhism. In Tamil lexicon Chola means Soazhi or Saei denoting a newly formed kingdom, in the lines of Pandya or the old country. Sora or Chozha in Tamil becomes Chola in Sanskrit and Chola or Choda in Telugu.

On the history of the early Cholas there is very little authentic written evidence available. Historians during the past 150 years have gleaned a lot of knowledge on the subject from a variety of sources such as ancient Tamil Sangam literature, oral traditions, religious texts, temple and copperplate inscriptions. The main source for the available information of the early Cholas is the early Tamil literature of the Sangam Period. There are also brief notices on the Chola

country and its towns, ports and commerce furnished by the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (*Periplus Maris Erythraei*). *Periplus* is a work by an anonymous Alexandrian merchant, written in the time of Domitian (81–96) and contains very little information of the Chola country. Writing half a century later, the geographer Ptolemy gives more detail about the Chola country, its port and its inland cities. *Mahavamsa*, a Buddhist text written down during the 5th century CE, recounts a number of conflicts between the inhabitants of Ceylon and Cholas in the 1st century BCE. Cholas are mentioned in the Pillars of Ashoka (inscribed 273 BCE–232 BCE) inscriptions, where they are mentioned among the kingdoms which, though not subject to Ashoka, were on friendly terms with him.

NOTES

EARLY CHOLAS

The earliest Chola kings for whom there is tangible evidence are mentioned in the Sangam literature. Scholars generally agree that this literature belongs to the first few centuries of the common era. The internal chronology of this literature is still far from settled, and at present a connected account of the history of the period cannot be derived. The Sangam literature records the names of the kings and the princes, and of the poets who extolled them. Despite a rich literature that depicts the life and work of these people, these cannot be worked into connected history.

The Sangam literature also records legends about mythical Chola kings. These myths speak of the Chola king Kantaman, a supposed contemporary of the sage Agastya) whose devotion brought the river Kaveri into existence.

Two names stand out prominently from among those Chola kings known to have existed, who feature in Sangam literature: Karikala Chola and Kocengannan. There is no sure means of settling the order of succession, of fixing their relations with one another and with many other princelings of about the same period.^{[91][92]} Urayur (now in/part-of Thiruchirapalli) was their oldest capital. Kaveripattinam also served as an early Chola capital. The *Mahavamsa* mentions that an ethnic Tamil adventurer, a Chola prince known as Elara, invaded the island around 235 BCE and that King Gajabahu visited Chera Cenguttuvan around 108 CE.

MEDIEVAL CHOLAS

While there is little reliable information on the Cholas during the period between the early Cholas and Vijayalaya dynasties, there is an abundance of materials from diverse sources on the Vijayalaya and the Later Chola dynasties. A large number of stone inscriptions by the Cholas themselves and by their rival kings, Pandyas and Chalukyas, and copper-plate grants, have been instrumental in constructing the history of Cholas of that period. Around 850, Vijayalaya rose from obscurity to take an opportunity arising out of a conflict between Pandyas and Pallavas, captured Thanjavur and eventually established the imperial line of the medieval Cholas.

The Chola dynasty was at the peak of its influence and power during the medieval period. Through their leadership and vision, kings such as the second Chola King Aditya I who caused the demise of the Pallavas, defeated the Pandyas of Madurai and occupied very large parts of the Kannada country and had marital ties with the Gangas, way back in 885 AD, his son Parantaka I, who conquered

NOTES

Sri Lanka known as Ilangai way back in 925 AD, Sundara Chola, also known as Parantaka Chola II who regained territories from the Rashtrakutas and expanded the Chola dominions up to Bhatkal in Kannada country, Rajaraja Chola I and Rajendra Chola I extended the Chola kingdom beyond the traditional limits of a Tamil kingdom. At its peak, the Chola Empire stretched from the island of Sri Lanka in the south to the Godavari-Krishna basin in the north, up to the Konkan coast in Bhatkal, the entire Malabar Coast in addition to Lakshadweep, Maldives and vast areas of Chera country. The kingdoms of Deccan and the eastern coast were subordinates, feudatories of the Cholas or other kingdoms like the Chalukyas between 1000-1075 AD paid tribute to the Cholas. Rajendra Chola I completed the conquest of the island of Sri Lanka and captured the Sinhala king Mahinda V prisoner, in addition to his conquests of Rattapadi (territories of the Rashtrakutas, Chalukya country, Talakkad, Kolar (where the Kolaramma temple still has his portrait statue) in Kannada country. In addition Rajendra's territories included the area falling on the Ganga-Hooghly-Damodar basin, large parts of Burma, Thailand, Indo-China Laos, Kambodia, the Malay peninsula and Indonesia. The kingdoms along the east coast of India up to the river Ganges acknowledged Chola suzerainty. Chola navies invaded and conquered Srivijaya in the Malayan archipelago.

The Western Chalukyas under Satyasraya and Somesvara I tried to wriggle out of Chola domination from time to time, primarily due to the Chola influence in the Vengi kingdom. The Western Chalukyas mounted several unsuccessful attempts to engage the Chola emperors in war and except for a brief occupation of Vengi territories between 1118-1126, all their other attempts ended in failure with successive Chola emperors routing the armies of the Chalukyas at various places in many wars. Cholas always successfully controlled the Chalukyas in the western Deccan by routing them in war constantly and levying tribute on them. It is also pertinent to note that even under the not so strong emperors of the Cholas like Kulothunga I, Vikrama Chola etc. the wars against the Chalukyas were mainly fought in Chalukya territories in Karnataka or in the Telugu country like Vengi, Kakinada or Anantapur or Gutti. In any case, in the internecine wars among the small Kannada kingdoms of the Kadambas, Hoysalas, Vaidumbas or Kalachuris, the Chalukya interference was to cause them dearly with these Kingdoms steadily increasing their stock and ultimately the Hoysalas, the Kakatiyas, the Kalachuris and the Seunas consuming the Chalukyas and sending them into oblivion. With the Kalachuris occupying the Chalukyan capital for over 35 years around 1135 AD and with the occupation of Dharwar in North Central Karnataka by the Hoysalas under Vishnuvardhana where he based himself with his son Narasimha I in-charge at the Hoysala capital Dwarasamudra around AD 1149, the Chalukya kingdom was already starting to dissolve, mainly due to incompetency of its rulers after 1120 AD.

The Cholas under Kulothunga Chola III even collaborated to herald the dissolution of the Chalukyas by aiding Hoysalas under Veera Ballala II, the son-in-law of the Chola monarch, and sounded the death-knell of the Western Chalukyas in a series of wars with Somesvara IV between 1185-1190 AD, the last Chalukya king whose territories did not even include the erstwhile Chalukyan capitals Badami, Manyakheta or Kalyani. That was the final dissolution of Chalukyan power though the Chalukyas existed only in name since 1135-1140.

In contrast, the Cholas would be stable till 1215 AD, and finally getting consumed by the Pandiyan empire and ceasing to exist by 1280 AD.

2.27 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHOLA

NOTES

According to Tamil tradition, the old Chola country comprised the region that includes the modern-day Tiruchirapalli District and the Thanjavur District in Tamil Nadu. The river Kaveri and its tributaries dominate this landscape of generally flat country that gradually slopes towards the sea, unbroken by major hills or valleys. The river Kaveri, also known as Ponni (golden) river, had a special place in the culture of Cholas. The annual floods in the Kaveri marked an occasion for celebration, Adiperukku, in which the whole nation took part.

Kaveripoompattinam on the coast near the Kaveri delta was a major port town. Ptolemy knew of this and the other port town of Nagappattinam as the most important centres of Cholas. These two towns became hubs of trade and commerce and attracted many religious faiths, including Buddhism. Roman ships found their way into these ports. Roman coins dating from the early centuries of the common era have been found near the Kaveri delta.

The other major towns were Thanjavur, Uraiyur and Kudanthai, now known as Kumbakonam. After Rajendra Chola moved his capital to Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Thanjavur lost its importance. The later Chola kings moved around their capitals frequently and made cities such as Chidambaram, Madurai and Kanchipuram their regional capitals.

NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

In the age of the Cholas, the whole of South India was, for the first time, brought under a single government, when a serious attempt was made to face and solve the problems of public administration. The Cholas' system of government was monarchical, as in the Sangam age. However, there was little in common between the local chiefdoms of the earlier time and the imperial-like states of Rajaraja Chola and his successors. Between 980, and c. 1150, the Chola Empire comprised the entire south Indian peninsula, extending east to west from coast to coast, and bounded to the north by an irregular line along the Tungabhadra river and the Vengi frontier. Although Vengi had a separate political existence, it was closely connected to the Chola Empire and, for all practical purposes, the Chola dominion extended up to the banks of the Godavari river.

Thanjavur, and later, Gangaikonda Cholapuram were the imperial capitals. However both Kanchipuram and Madurai were considered to be regional capitals, in which occasional courts were held. The king was the supreme commander and a benevolent dictator. His administrative role consisted of issuing oral commands to responsible officers when representations were made to him. A powerful bureaucracy assisted the king in the tasks of administration and in executing his orders. Due to the lack of a legislature or a legislative system in the modern sense, the fairness of king's orders dependent on the goodness of the man and in his belief in Dharma—a sense of fairness and justice.

The Chola kings built temples and endowed them with great wealth. The temples acted not only as places of worship but also as centres of economic activity, benefiting their entire community.

NOTES

Local Government

Every village was a self-governing unit. A number of villages constituted a larger entity known as a Kurram, Nadu or Kottram, depending on the area. A number of Kurrams constituted a valanadu. These structures underwent constant change and refinement throughout the Chola period.

Justice was mostly a local matter in the Chola Empire; minor disputes were settled at the village level. Punishment for minor crimes were in the form of fines or a direction for the offender to donate to some charitable endowment. Even crimes such as manslaughter or murder were punished with fines. Crimes of the state, such as treason, were heard and decided by the king himself; the typical punishment in these cases was either execution or the confiscation of property.

FOREIGN TRADE

The Cholas excelled in foreign trade and maritime activity, extending their influence overseas to China and Southeast Asia. Towards the end of the 9th century, southern India had developed extensive maritime and commercial activity. The Cholas, being in possession of parts of both the west and the east coasts of peninsular India, were at the forefront of these ventures. The Tang dynasty of China, the Srivijaya empire in the Malayan archipelago under the Sailendras, and the Abbasid Kalifat at Baghdad were the main trading partners.

Chinese Song Dynasty reports record that an embassy from Chulian (Chola) reached the Chinese court in the year 1077, and that the king of the Chulien at the time was called Ti-hua-kia-lo. It is possible that these syllables denote "Deva Kulo[tunga]" (Kulothunga Chola I). This embassy was a trading venture and was highly profitable to the visitors, who returned with '81,800 strings of copper coins in exchange for articles of tributes, including glass articles, and spices'.

A fragmentary Tamil inscription found in Sumatra cites the name of a merchant guild Nanadesa Tisaiyayirattu Ainnutruvar (literally, "the five hundred from the four countries and the thousand directions"), a famous merchant guild in the Chola country. The inscription is dated 1088, indicating that there was an active overseas trade during the Chola period.

CHOLA SOCIETY

There is little information on the size and the density of the population during the Chola reign. The stability in the core Chola region enabled the people to lead a productive and contented life. There is only one recorded instance of civil disturbance during the entire period of Chola reign. However, there were reports of widespread famine caused by natural calamities.

The quality of the inscriptions of the regime indicates a presence of high level of literacy and education in the society. The text in these inscriptions was written by court poets and engraved by talented artisans. Education in the contemporary sense was not considered important; there is circumstantial evidence to suggest that some village councils organised schools to teach the basics of reading and writing to children, although there is no evidence of systematic educational system for the masses. Vocational education was through hereditary training in which the father passed on his skills to his sons. Tamil was the medium of education for the masses; Religious monasteries (matha or gatika) were centres of learning, which were supported by the government.

2.28 MUSLIM CONQUEST AND THE RAJPUTAS

NOTES

The Muslim conquest in the Indian subcontinent mainly took place from the 12th century onwards, though earlier Muslim conquests made limited inroads into the region, beginning during the period of the ascendancy of the Rajput Kingdoms in North India, although Sindh and Multan were captured in 8th century.

Throughout its history the Indian subcontinent (encompassing modern-day Pakistan, India and Bangladesh) has been frequently subject to invasion, from the North-West by Central Asian nomadic tribes and the Persian Empire. With the fall of the Sassanids and the arrival of the Caliphates, these regions were integrated into Muslim dynasties of Central Asian heritage; initially Turkic people and later Mongol and Turco-Mongol people. Unlike earlier conquerors who assimilated into prevalent social systems, Muslim conquerors retained their Islamic identity and created legal and administrative systems that challenged and destroyed existing systems of social conduct, culture, religious practices, lifestyle and ethics.

The first foray by the new Muslim successor states of the Sassanid Empire occurred around 664 CE during the Umayyad Caliphate, led by Al Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah towards Multan in Southern Punjab, in modern day Pakistan. Muhallab's expeditions were not aimed at conquest, though they penetrated only as far as the capital of the Maili, he returned with wealth and prisoners of war. This was an Arab incursion and part of the early Umayyad push onwards from the Islamic conquest of Persia into Central Asia, and within the limits of the eastern borders of previous Persian empires. The last Arab push in the region would be towards the end of Umayyad reign under Muhammad bin Qasim, after whom the Arabs would be defeated by the Rajputs at the Battle of Rajasthan in 738, and Muslim incursions would only be resumed under later Turkic and Afghan dynasties with more local capitals, who supplanted the Caliphate and expanded their domains both northwards and eastwards.

It took several centuries for Islam to spread across India and how it did so is a topic of intense debate. Some quarters hold that Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam by the establishment of Jizya and Dhimmitude favoring Muslim citizens, and the threat of naked force. Others hold that it occurred through inter-marriage, conversions, economic integration, and through the influence of Sufi preachers.

THE ARABS IN SINDH

During Rashidun Caliphate significant conquest were made in north western and south western subcontinent (now Pakistan). These were not the whole scale invasion of subcontinent but merely extension of Islamic conquest of Persia.

Invasion of Sindh

The province of Sistan was the largest province of Persian Empire its frontiers extended from Sindh in east, to Balkh (Afghanistan) in north east.^[14] During Rashidun Caliphate, the Islamic conquest of some parts of Sindh was extension of the campaigns to conquer the Persian empire in 643 A.D by sending seven armies from seven different routs to different parts of empire. Islamic forces first entered Sindh during the reign of Caliph Umar, in 644 A.D. It was not a whole scale invasion of Sindh but was merely as extension of the conquests of the largest

NOTES

province of Persia Sistan and Makran region. In 644 A.D, the columns of Hakam ibn Amr, Shahab ibn Makharaq and Abdullah ibn Utban concentrated near the west bank of river Indus and defeated the Hindu king of Rasil (Sind) Chach of Alor, his armies retreated and crossed the river Indus. This was first confrontation between Rashidun Caliphate and Rai dynasty. In response of Caliph Umar's question about the Makran region, the Messenger from Makran who bring the news of the victory told him:

" 'O Commander of the faithful! It's a land where the plains are stony; Where water is scanty; Where the fruits are unsavory, Where men are known for treachery; Where plenty is unknown; Where virtue is held of little account; And where evil is dominant; A large army is less for there; And a less army is useless there; The land beyond it, is even worse (referring to Sind not Punjab)."

Umar looked at the messenger and said: "Are you a messenger or a poet? He replied "Messenger". Thereupon Caliph Umar, after listening that Sindh was a barren and poor land and the unfavorable situations for sending an army, instructed Hakim bin Amr al Taghlabi that for the time being Makran should be the easternmost frontier of the Rashidun Caliphate, and that no further attempt should be made to extend the conquests. This was mainly because of Umar's policy of consolidating the rule before conquering more land. The same year in 644 Umar had already rejected the proposal by Ahnaf ibn Qais, conqueror of Khurasan, of crossing Oxus river in north to invade central Asia and in west similarly he had called back Amr ibn al-Aas who marched to north Africa and had captured Tripoli. Thereupon one of the commander of Islamic army in Makran is reported to have said the following verses:

Upon the death of the Caliph Umar the areas like other regions of Persian Empire broke into revolt and Caliph Uthman sent forces to re-conquer them. Uthman also sent his agent Haheem ibn Jabla Abdi to investigate the matters of Hind, on his return he told Uthman about the cities, listening to the miserable conditions of the region he avoided campaigning in interior Sind and like Caliph Umar he ordered his armies not to cross Indus river. No campaign was undertaken during the reign of Caliph Ali.

CONQUEST DURING Umayyad CALIPHATE

In 711, the Umayyad Caliph in Damascus sent two failed expeditions to Balochistan (an arid region on the Iranian Plateau in Southwest Asia, presently split between Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan) and Sindh.

According to Muslim historical accounts such as the Chach Nama, the nature of the expeditions was punitive, and in response to raids carried out by pirates on Arab shipping, operating around Debal. The allegation was made that the King of Sindh, Raja Dahir was the patron of these pirates. The third expedition was led by a 17-year-old Arab chieftain named Muhammad bin Qasim. The expedition went as far North as Multan, then called the "City of Gold", that contained the extremely large Hindu temple Sun Mandir.

Bin Qasim invaded the sub-continent at the orders of Al-Hajjaj bin Yousef, the governor of Iraq. Qasim's armies defeated Raja Dahir at what is now Hyderabad in Sindh in 712. He then proceeded to subdue the lands from Karachi to Multan with an initial force of only six thousand Syrian tribesmen; thereby establishing

the dominion of the Umayyad Caliphate from Lisbon in Portugal to the Indus Valley. Qasim's stay was brief as he was soon recalled to Baghdad, and the Caliphates rule in South Asia shrank to Sindh and Southern Punjab in the form of Arab states, the principal of whom were Al Mansura and Multan.

Battle of Rajasthan

The Battle of Rajasthan is a battle where the Hindu Rajput clans defeated the Muslim Arab invaders under Junaid (the successor of Qasim) in 738. It should be noted that while all sources (Hindu and Muslim) agree on the broad outline of the conflict and the result, there is no detailed information on the actual battle. There is also no indication of the exact places where these battles were fought—what is clear is that the final battle took place somewhere on the borders of modern Sindh-Rajasthan. Following their defeat the remnants of the Arab army fled to the other bank of the River Indus.

COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTH-WEST

Subsequent to Qasim's recall the Caliphates control in Sindh was extremely weak under governors who only nominally acknowledged Arab control and shared power with coexisting local Hindu, Jain and Buddhist rulers. Ismaili missionaries found a receptive audience among both the Sunni and non-Muslim populations here. In 985, a group around Multan declared themselves an independent Ismaili Fatimid State.

Coastal trade and the presence of a colony in Sindh permitted significant cultural exchange and the introduction of Muslim teachers into the subcontinent. Considerable conversions took place, especially amongst the Buddhist majority. Multan became a center of the Ismaili sect of Islam, which still has many adherents in Sindh today. This region under generous patronage of the arts provided a conduit for Arab scholars to absorb and expand on Indian sciences and pass them onwards to the West.

North of Multan, non-Muslim groups remained numerous. From this period, the conquered area was divided into two parts: the Northern region comprising the Punjab remained under the control of Hindu Rajas, while the Southern coastal areas comprising of Balochistan, Sindh, and Multan came under Muslim control.

2.29 GHAZNAVID PERIOD

In the 10th century, under the ruler Sabuktigin, the Muslim Ghaznavid state found itself in conflict with the Shahi Raja Jayapala. When Sabuktigin died and his son Mahmud ascended the throne in 998, Ghazni was engaged in the North with the Qarakhanids when the Shahi Raja renewed hostilities.

In the early 11th century, Mahmud of Ghazni launched seventeen expeditions into the Indian sub-continent. In 1001, he defeated Raja Jayapala of the Hindu Shahi Dynasty of Gandhara and marched further into Peshawar and, in 1005, made it the center for his forces.

The Ghaznavid conquests were initially directed against the Ismaili Fatimids in on-going struggle of the Abbassid Caliphate elsewhere. However, once this aim was accomplished, he moved onto richness of the loot of wealthy temples and monasteries. Ghazni raided every second year after 1005 and by 1027, had

NOTES

defeated or laid waste most of Northern India and obtained formal recognition of Ghazni's sovereignty from the Abbassid Khalifah, al-Qadir Billah. The murder of non-muslims and desecrating and damaging of indigenous temples was also a part of the conquest by Ghazni.

NOTES

Ghaznavid rule in North India lasted over 175 years, from 1010 to 1187. It was during this period that Lahore assumed considerable importance apart from being the second capital, and later the only capital, of the Ghaznavid Empire.

At the end of his reign, Mahmud's empire extended from Kurdistan in the west to Samarkand in the Northeast, and from the Caspian Sea to the Yamuna. Although his raids carried his forces across Northern and Western India, only Punjab came under his permanent rule; Kashmir, the Doab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat remained under the control of the local Rajput dynasties.

In 1030, Mahmud fell gravely ill and died at age 59. He had been a gifted military commander, and during his rule, universities were founded to study various subjects such as mathematics, religion, the humanities, and medicine. Sunni Islam was the main religion of his kingdom and the Perso-Afghan dialect Dari was made the official language.

As with the Turkic invaders of three centuries ago, Mahmud's armies looted and pillaged temples in Varanasi, Mathura, Ujjain, Maheshwar, Jwalamukhi, Somnath and Dwarka. There is considerable evidence from writings of Al-Biruni, Sogidan, Uyghur and Manichean texts that the Buddhists were considered People of the Book and references to Buddha as Burxan or a prophet can be found.

2.30 EXTENT OF SOCIAL CHANGES

Islam's impact was the most notable in the expansion of trade. The first contact of Muslims with India, was the Arab attack on a nest of pirates near modern-day Bombay, to safeguard their trade in the Arabian Sea. Around the same time many Arabs settled at Indian ports, giving rise to small Muslim communities. the growth of these communities was not only due to conversion, but also the fact that many Hindu kings of south India (such as those from Cholas) hired Muslims as mercenaries.

A significant aspect of the Muslim period in world history was the emergence of Islamic Sharia courts capable of imposing a common commercial and legal system that extended from Morocco in the West to Mongolia in the North East and Indonesia in the South East. While southern India was already in trade with Arabs/Muslims, northern India found new opportunities. As the Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms of Asia were subjugated by Islam, and as Islam spread through Africa - it became a highly centralizing force that facilitated in the creation of a common legal system that allowed letters of credit issued in say Egypt or Tunisia to be honoured in India or Indonesia (The Sharia has laws on the transaction of Business with both Muslims and Kaffirs. In order to cement their rule, Muslim rulers initially promoted a system in which there was a revolving door between the clergy, the administrative nobility and the mercantile classes. The travels of explorer Muhammad Ibn-Abdullah Ibn-Batuta were eased because of this system. He served as an Imam in Delhi, as a judicial official in the Maldives, and as an envoy and trader in the Malabar. There was never a contradiction in any of his positions because each of these roles complemented the other. Islam created a

compact under which political power, law and religion became fused in a manner so as to safeguard the interests of the mercantile class. This led world trade to expand to the maximum extent possible in the medieval world. Sher Shah Suri took initiatives in improvement of trade by abolishing all taxes which hindered progress of free trade. He built large networks of roads and constructed Grand Trunk Road (1540-1544), which connected Calcutta to Kabul, of which parts of it are still in use today.

NOTES

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

The divide and rule policies, two-nation theory, and subsequent partition of India in the wake of Independence from the British Empire has polarized the sub-continental psyche, making objective assessment hard in comparison to the other settled agricultural societies of India from the North West. Muslim rule differed from these others in the level of assimilation and syncretism that occurred. They retained their identity and introduced legal and administrative systems that superseded existing systems of social conduct and ethics. While this was a source of friction it resulted in a unique experience the legacy of which is a Muslim community strongly Islamic in character while at the same time distinctive and unique among its peers.

The impact of Islam on Indian culture has been inestimable. It permanently influenced the development of all areas of human endeavour - language, dress, cuisine, all the art forms, architecture and urban design, and social customs and values. Conversely, the languages of the Muslim invaders were modified by contact with local languages, to Urdu, which uses the Arabic script. This language was also known as Hindustani, an umbrella term used for the vernacular terminology of Urdu as well as Hindi, both major languages in the Indian subcontinent today.

Muslim rule saw a greater urbanization of India and the rise of many cities and their urban cultures. The biggest impact was upon trade resulting from a common commercial and legal system extending from Morocco to Indonesia. This change of emphasis on mercantilism and trade from the more strongly centralized governance systems further clashed with the agricultural based traditional economy and also provided fuel for social and political tensions.

A related development to the shifting economic conditions was the establishment of Karkhanas, or small factories and the import and dissemination of technology through India and the rest of the world. Khurja and Siwan became renowned for pottery, Moradabad for brass ware, Mirzapur for carpets, Firozabad for glass wares, Farrukhabad for printing, Sahranpur and Nagina for wood-carving, Bidar and Lucknow for bidriware, Srinagar for papier-mache, Benaras for jewelry and textiles, and so on. On the flip-side encouraging such growth also resulted in higher taxes on the peasantry.

Numerous Indian scientific and mathematical advances and the Hindu numerals were spread to the rest of the world and much of the scholarly work and advances in the sciences of the age under Muslim nations across the globe were imported by the liberal patronage of Arts and Sciences by the rulers. The languages brought by Islam were modified by contact with local languages leading to the creation of several new languages, such as Urdu, which uses the modified Arabic script, but with more Persian words. The influences of these languages exist in several dialects in India today.

NOTES

Islamic and Mughal architecture and art is widely noticeable in Northern India, examples being the Taj Mahal and Jama Masjid. Though it is also widely argued that the Muslim rulers desecrated the magnificent Hindu temples and existing architectures of the cities after each conquest across India, raising mosques in those places to promote Islam. The cultural practices of jauhar and sati, practiced by some Hindu communities, arose in response to periods of threat during the Muslim conquest to prevent kidnapping or capturing of Hindu women to be married to Muslim rulers, nobles or high officials, which was then considered a holy act of jihad and occurred in significant numbers.

2.31 POSITION OF WOMEN

According to studies, women enjoyed equal status and rights during the early Vedic period. However, later (approximately 500 B.C.), the status of women began to decline with the Smritis (esp. Manusmriti) and with the Islamic invasion of Babur and the Mughal empire and later Christianity curtailing women's freedom and rights.

Although reformatory movements such as Jainism allowed women to be admitted to the religious order, by and large, the women in India faced confinement and restrictions. The practice of child marriages is believed to have started from around sixth century.

The Indian woman's position in the society further deteriorated during the medieval period when Sati, child marriages and a ban on widow remarriages became part of social life in India. The Muslim conquest in the Indian subcontinent brought the purdah practice in the Indian society. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauhar was practised. In some parts of India, the Devadasis or the temple women were sexually exploited. Polygamy was widely practised especially among Hindu Kshatriya rulers. In many Muslim families, women were restricted to Zenana areas.

The Bhakti movements tried to restore women's status and questioned some of the forms of oppression. Mirabai, a female saint-poet, was one of the most important Bhakti movement figures. Some other female saint-poets from this period include Akka Mahadevi, Rami Janabai and Lal Ded. Bhakti sects within Hinduism such as the Mahanubhav, Varkari and many others were principle movements within the Hindu fold to openly advocate social justice and equality between men and women.

Shortly after the Bhakti movement, Guru Nanak, the first Guru of Sikhs also preached the message of equality between men and women. He advocated that women be allowed to lead religious assemblies; to perform and lead congregational hymn singing called Kirtan or Bhajan; become members of religious management committees; to lead armies on the battlefield; have equality in marriage, and equality in Amrit (Baptism). Other Sikh Gurus also preached against the discrimination against women.

HISTORICAL PRACTICES

Traditions such as sati, jauhar, and devadasi have been banned and are largely defunct in modern India. However, some cases of these practices are still found in remote parts of India. The purdah is still practised by many Indian

women, and child marriage remains prevalent despite it being an illegal practice, especially under current Indian laws.

Sati

Sati is an old, largely defunct custom, in which the widow was immolated alive on her husband's funeral pyre. Although the act was supposed to be a voluntary on the widow's part, it is believed to have been sometimes forced on the widow. It was abolished by the British in 1829.

Jauhar

Jauhar refers to the practice of the voluntary immolation of all the wives and daughters of defeated warriors, in order to avoid capture and consequent molestation by the enemy. The practice was followed by the wives of defeated Rajput rulers, who are known to place a high premium on honour.

Purdah

Purdah is the practice of requiring women to cover their bodies so as to cover their skin and conceal their form. It imposes restrictions on the mobility of women, it curtails their right to interact freely and it is a symbol of the subordination of women. It does not reflect the religious teachings of either Hinduism or Islam, contrary to common belief, although misconception has occurred due to the ignorance and prejudices of religious leaders of both faiths.

Devadasis

Devadasi is a religious practice in some parts of southern India, in which women are "married" to a deity or temple. The ritual was well established by the 10th century A.D. In the later period, the illegitimate sexual exploitation of the devadasi's became a norm in some parts of India.

2.32 SUMMARY

- In 324 BC. Chandragupta pushed the Macedonian garrisons in Punjab and Sindh out of India. Afterwards he attacked the kingdom of Magadha that controlled the Ganges and conquered it. His mighty army, that he used to conquer the Northern half of the subcontinent, was composed of infantry, cavalry, war elephants and chariots.
- The earliest written materials on the Indian subcontinent are the Edicts of Ashoka, a collection of 33 inscriptions on the Pillars of Ashoka, as well as boulders and cave walls, made by the Emperor Ashoka of the Mauryan dynasty during his reign from 272 to 231 B.C.E.
- In the post-Mauryan era (200 BC. To 300 A.D.) the economy moved at an accelerated tempo. Society witnessed structural reorientation as significant groups of foreigners penetrated into India and chose to be identified with the rest of the community.
- The Satavahana Empire was a dynasty which ruled from Junnar (Pune), Prathisthan (Paithan) in Maharashtra and later Dharanikota or Amaravati in coastal Andhra Pradesh and Kotilingala (Karimnagar) in Andhra Pradesh over Southern and Central India from around 230 BCE onward.
- During the Mauryan period sculpture and architecture had reached a developed stage. The Asokan pillars; the animals and carvings on the pillars - all represent mature art forms.

NOTES

NOTES

- Aryabhatta was the famous astronomer and mathematician. He proved that the Earth is round and it goes around the Sun. He also explained the causes for the Solar and the lunar eclipses. He wrote a book called Aryabhatiyam. In this book, he describes the principles of decimal system, place value, the use of zero, square and cube roots and the value of π is equal to 3.1416.
- Islam's impact was the most notable in the expansion of trade. The first contact of Muslims with India, was the Arab attack on a nest of pirates near modern-day Bombay, to safeguard their trade in the Arabian Sea.

2.33 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the history behind the establishment of Mauryan Empire.
2. Which are those most important inscriptions of Ashoka? State their teachings.
3. State the relevant Sangam texts and also explain the societal structure of Sangam period.
4. Describe the evolution of Saivism and vaishnavism.
5. What are the main features of Gupta administration?
6. Explain the political and social structure of the Chola empire.

2.34 FURTHER READINGS

- Sharrna R.S; *Material Cultures and Social Formations in Ancient India*, New Delhi 1983.
- Sharma, RS; *Perspectives in the Social and Economic History of Ancient India*.
- Rornila Thaper, *A History of India Vol. I*.
- J.C. Harle, *Art and Architecture of India*, Penguin Books.
- K.A. Nilkanta Sastri (ed), *A Comprehensive History of India Vol. 2*.
- Himanshu Prabha Ray, *Monastery and Guild*, Oxford.

CHAPTER – 3

MEDIEVAL INDIA

Medieval India

NOTES

STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Learning Objectives
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Importance of Temples and Monastic Institutions
- 3.4 Shankaracharya
- 3.5 Islam and Sufism
 - *The Spread of Sufism in India*
- 3.6 Literature and Science
- 3.7 Alberuni's India
- 3.8 Art and Architecture
- 3.9 Ghorian Invasions: Causes and Consequences
- 3.10 Delhi Sultanate under Slave Rulers
- 3.11 Alauddin Khilji and His Conquest
- 3.12 Alauddin Khilji's Administration and Economic Measures
- 3.13 Muhammad Bin Tughluq
- 3.14 Firoz Shah Tughlaq
- 3.15 The Delhi Sultanate — Art and Architecture
- 3.16 The Delhi Sultanate — Literature
- 3.17 Growth of Commerce and Urban Economy
- 3.18 Technological Change
- 3.19 Major Provincial Dynasties
- 3.20 The Vijaynagar Empire
- 3.21 The First Phase of Mughal Empire: Babur and Humayun
- 3.22 *The Sur Empire and Administration : 1540-1555*
- 3.23 The Portuguese
- 3.24 Socio-Religious Movements
- 3.25 Kabir
- 3.26 Nanak and Sikhism (1539-1708)
- 3.27 Growth of Literature
- 3.28 Akbar : Conquest and Administrative Measures
- 3.29 Jahangir
- 3.30 Shah Jahan
- 3.31 Aurangzeb
- 3.32 Rise of the Marathas in the 17th Century and Shivaji
- 3.33 Summary
- 3.34 Review Questions
- 3.35 Further Readings

NOTES

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this chapter, students will be able to:

- discuss the cultural trends between 750 A.D. to 1200 A.D.;
- explain the political, economic and social conditions of 13th and 14th century;
- understand the major empires and socio-economic conditions of 15th and 16th century;
- discuss the expansion of Mughal Empire and resistance from Marathas.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces you to the developments that took place within the religious traditions, during early medieval times and also the spread of Islam and Sufism in India. In unit I and II you have read about the religious ideas, beliefs and practices of Islam. Over a period of time brahmanical religious ideas faced challenges and new religious ideas like Jainism, Buddhism emerged with strong appeal to masses.

Brahmanical religious ideas responded to the new developments by introducing many changes in its forms and features. Since the Gupta period onwards attempts were made to strengthen the brahmanical social order by recasting the existing Puranas and composing the Upa-Puranas. The growing influence of Tantric religion and the coming of foreign invaders such as the Greeks, Sakas, Kushanas, Yavanas and Andhras whose morality and customs were not in conformity with brahmanism made it essential for the Puranas to recast their contents in order to adapt to the changing needs of the society. In the light of this development we will first introduce you to the importance of temples and monastic institutions. In following units, we will discuss the political, socio economic and cultural trends in India during 13th and 14th century. The establishment of Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire will be discussed in unit III and IV respectively. Sikhism, Bhakti movement, social stratification and status of women has been covered in this chapter in detail.

UNIT – I

CULTURAL TREND AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS (750 AD TO 1200 AD)

We have examined various religions in the previous Chapters in our units on Ancient India. In these units we have also covered units on Hinduism and Buddhism. These units form an essential backdrop to our present unit on importance of temples and monastics institutions besides Sufism which are medieval religious movements.

This unit includes the growth of medieval mysticism, importance of temples and monastic institutions, Sufi-bhakti interaction and Sufi teachings. We therefore provide an adequate picture of the sufi movements in medieval times.

NOTES

You are by now familiar with certain broad stages of the religious history of early India. While archaeological material suggests that certain elements of Indian religions were present in the archaeological cultures dating prior to the Vedas, the hymns of the Rig Veda give us for the first time, an idea of how prayers were offered to deities to please them. However, the simple prayers of the Rig Veda gave place gradually to complex rituals dominated by Brahmanas and one can notice the growth of a close relationship between the Brahmanas and the rulers and warriors on this situation. Not only the wandering ascetics who moved away from the established society but also the Buddhist and the Jainas did not accept the dominance of the Brahmanas and the rigid social and moral order which the Brahmanas advocated. There thus grew the heterodox movements which received support not only from rulers and rich merchants but also from other sections of people. In the pre-Gupta period Buddhism reached the height of its glory, spread to countries outside India and Buddhist centres were constructed on a large scale. Meanwhile certain changes were taking place within Brahmanism as well as within heterodox sects. From the religious point of view the most important change was that the devotee was considered as being bound to the supreme god head by devotion (bhakti) and the god head was worshipped in the form of images.

Vaishnavism and Saivism as parts of Brahmanical religion attracted many devotees; image worship became widespread among the Buddhists who worshipped not only the Buddha or Bodhisatva but also a host of other deities, the Jainas too worshipped the images of Tirthankaras, various minor deities, stone ayagapatas and other objects.

The Brahmanas used image worship to build up pantheons of deities by assimilating gods and goddesses from diverse sources. This is how many female deities (sakti) became prominent in Brahmanical religions from the Gupta period onward. In fact, there was no homogeneity in Brahmanical religions and religious practices and beliefs varied widely.

Different sects of Saivism, such as the Pasupatas, the Kaula-Kapalikas and the Kalamukhas were opposed to the dominance of the Brahmanas. They had their own religious orders centred around mathas or monasteries and they received support from many royal families. At the same time, Brahmanas who cultivated the Vedas and continued to perform Vedic sacrifices received royal support and agrahara settlements of the Brahmanas came to be a major link in the spread of Brahmanical ideas and practices throughout the country. The temple also became an institution which drew people together and served effectively in the spread of ideas.

Although in the complex religious situation of early medieval India the Brahmanas were gaining ascendancy, one should keep in mind also the following terms:

- (1) The orthodox Brahmanical order continued to be challenged particularly by movements within Saivism, by poet saints and by those who practised tantric form of worship.
- (2) Most religions irrespective of whether it was Brahmanism, Buddhism or Saivism, developed institutional bases in the form of temples and monasteries.
- (3) Ruling powers and elite sections of society supported institutions and Brahmanas, monks, acharyas or religious heads and others by grants of

land, wealth and by other means. By these acts of patronage, the ruling powers and elite sections of society strengthened their own social base.

3.3 IMPORTANCE OF TEMPLES AND MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS

NOTES

Brahmanism had to accept the growing importance of new gods like Siva and Vishnu side by side with Vedic gods like Indra and Varuna. It also assimilated many other popular deities like Vasudeva, Skanda and so on. All these led to the growth of the Bhakti cult.

Around the fourth century B.C. the cult of Vasudeva was becoming popular. This is suggested by reference to it by classical authors like Megasthenes who came to the court of Chandragupta Maurya.

The worshippers of Vasudeva submitted to Bhakti as the proper religious approach and called themselves Bhagavatas. Several epigraphs of the early Christian era bear testimony to the prevalence of the Vasudeva cult in central India and the Deccan.

Simultaneously with the cult of Vasudeva arose the sect of Pasupatas, devotees of Pasupati or Siva, a fertility deity. This cult was kept alive in non-brahmanic circles from the days of the Harappan culture.

The popularity of these new gods increased during the Sunga and Kushana periods. Patanjali, who lived in the Sunga period, in his Mahabhashya refers to the exhibition and sale of the images of Siva, Skanda and Vishakha. These gods appear on the coins of the Kushana kings, especially Huvishka. An important characteristic of later Brahmanism was its capacity to adopt new trends. This became necessary to meet the challenge of the 'hetical sects' which were opposed to Brahmanism. Besides adopting new gods, Brahmanism gradually shifted its emphasis from Vedic ritual to Bhakti, which implied the cultivation and development of a personal relationship between God and the devotee. Thus a monotheistic concept of God, with either Siva or Vishnu as his manifestation and Bhakti (loyalty and devotion) to him was gaining strength. Soon Bhakti became the dynamic force of later Brahmanism also called Hinduism.

SYNCRETISM OF DEITIES

An important characteristic of the new Brahmanism was its genius to syncretise many local deities and to evolve a monotheistic great God. Syncretism in this context will mean that deities worshipped at different places and by different people were recognised as identical and were worshipped as manifestation of the same supreme deity. Thus Vasudeva was identified with Vishnu, a minor Vedic god and Narayana, a god of obscure origin mentioned in the Brahmana literature. Then Vishnu was closely connected with the name of Krishna, who represented the fusion between martial hero and a flute-playing pastoral deity. Vishnu could assimilate many other cults - the cult of the 'divine boar' which prevailed among some of the tribes of Malwa, the cult of Parasurama, a Brahmana hero; and Rama, the great hero of the Ramayana. Then Vishnu rose to the status of the Universal God in the Bhagavad Gita.

Similarly, Siva came to be syncretised with the Vedic Rudra and Bhairava, a tribal god and was worshipped in the form of the phallic emblem or linga. With

Siva were later associated certain other deities such as Skanda and the elephant-headed Ganesa.

These theistic cults stressed the merit of worship rather than the performance of Vedic sacrifice.

ROYAL SUPPORT TO TEMPLES AND THEISM

The Puranas highlighted the merits acquired by visiting great cultcentres like Mathura and Varanasi which were major places of pilgrimage. This gave a stimulus to the institution of the temple. In fact, the Puranas and other texts of the period list numerous places of pilgrimage (tirthas) which drew devotees in large numbers because visiting tirthas would ensure merit. The temple which housed the deity, became a place of worship and thus drew devotees away from home to an institution which became a public centre. The Gupta age marked the beginning of temple construction. It laid the foundation of the typical styles of Indian temple architecture. Among the few Gupta temples which survive, the Dasavatara temple of Devagarh, the Vishnu temple at Tigawa, and the Siva temple at Bhumara are known for their beauty. The epic and Puranic stories relating to Rama and Krishna were represented in the temple sculptures. Excellent specimens of them are still found in the Devagarh temple. The Gupta emperors patronised both Saivism and Vaishnavism. However, the personal religion of most of the Gupta rulers was Vaishnavism which led to the creation of a number of important Vaishnava centres and Vaishnava sculptures in the Gupta period. The idea of the avatars or incarnations of Vishnu in which Vishnu is born on earth as a boar, a fish, or a human being for rescuing earth from a crisis, also seems to have been systematised in the Gupta period.

In the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Saivism seems to have replaced Vaishnavism as recipient of royal patronage in northern India. Saivism counted among its followers supreme plers, foreign as well as indigenous, such as Mihirakula, Yashodharman, Sasanka and Harsha. Pasupata or Saiva acharyas are frequently mentioned in contemporary records which include inscriptions, and many literary works like those of Varahamihira, Bana and Hiuen Tsang.

IMPORTANCE OF TEMPLES

Later Ancient era was the witness when religious practices flourished the most and temples became the India's storehouse of knowledge and culture. Temples of this period are more than mere places of worship. These are sacred buildings of ultimate grace and eternal hapiness.

The temples of the early Medieval Era were varied architectural styles. The temples and the religious places built then were symbolic of the ruler and his richness and devotion. The seeds of experimentation in religious architecture were sown in medeival temples.

IMPORTANCE OF MONASTY

A Medieval monastery was a farm, an inn, a hospital, a school and a library. The uses of a Medieval monastery included the following:

- A Medieval monastery received pilgrims and travellers.
- A Medieval monastery performed many works of charity, feeding the

NOTES

NOTES

hungry, healing the sick who were brought to their doors, and distributing their medicines.

- A Medieval monastery provided education for boys who wished to become priests and those who intended to lead active lives in the world.
- A Medieval monastery copied the manuscripts of classical authors preserving valuable books that would otherwise have been lost.
- A Medieval monastery kept records of the most striking events of their time and acted as chroniclers of the medieval history of the Middle Age.

3.4 SANKARACHARYA

Shri Adi Shankaracharya or the first Shankara with his remarkable reinterpretations of Hindu scriptures, especially on Upanishads or Vedanta, had a profound influence on the growth of Hinduism at a time when chaos, superstition and bigotry was rampant. Shankara advocated the greatness of the Vedas and was the most famous Advaita philosopher who restored the Vedic Dharma and Advaita Vedanta to its pristine purity and glory.

Shri Adi Shankaracharya, known as Bhagavatpada Acharya (the guru at the feet of Lord), apart from refurbishing the scriptures, cleansed the Vedic religious practices of ritualistic excesses and ushered in the core teaching of Vedanta, which is Advaita or non-dualism for the mankind. Shankara restructured various forms of desultory religious practices into acceptable norms and stressed on the ways of worship as laid down in the Vedas.

SHANKARA'S CHILDHOOD

Shankara was born in a Brahmin family circa 788 AD in a village named Kaladi on the banks of the river Purna (now Periyar) in the Southern Indian coastal state Kerala. His parents, Sivaguru and Aryamba, had been childless for a long time and the birth of Shankara was a joyous and blessed occasion for the couple. Legend has it that Aryamba had a vision of Lord Shiva and promised her that he would incarnate in the form of her first-born child.

Shankara was a prodigious child and was hailed as 'Eka-Sruti-Dara', one who can retain anything that has been read just once. Shankara mastered all the Vedas and the six Vedangas from the local gurukul and recited extensively from the epics and Puranas. Shankara also studied the philosophies of diverse sects and was a storehouse of philosophical knowledge.

PHILOSOPHY OF ADI SHANKARA

Shankara spread the tenets of Advaita Vedanta, the supreme philosophy of monism to the four corners of India with his 'digvijaya' (the conquest of the quarters). The quintessence of Advaita Vedanta (non-dualism) is to reiterate the truth of reality of one's essential divine identity and to reject one's thought of being a finite human being with a name and form subject to earthly changes.

According to the Advaita maxim, the True Self is Brahman (Divine Creator). Brahman is the 'I' of 'Who Am I?' The Advaita doctrine propagated by Shankara views that the bodies are manifold but the separate bodies have the one Divine in them.

The phenomenal world of beings and non-beings is not apart from the Brahman but ultimately become one with Brahman. The crux of Advaita is that Brahman alone is real, and the phenomenal world is unreal or an illusion. Through intense practice of the concept of Advaita, ego and ideas of duality can be removed from the mind of man.

The comprehensive philosophy of Shankara is inimitable for the fact that the doctrine of Advaita includes both worldly and transcendental experience.

Shankara while stressing the sole reality of Brahman, did not undermine the phenomenal world or the multiplicity of Gods in the scriptures.

Shankara's philosophy is based on three levels of reality, viz., paramarthika satta (Brahman), vyavaharika satta (empirical world of beings and non-beings) and pratibhashika satta (reality).

Shankara's theology maintains that seeing the self where there is no self causes spiritual ignorance or avidya. One should learn to distinguish knowledge (jnana) from avidya to realize the True Self or Brahman. He taught the rules of bhakti, yoga and karma to enlighten the intellect and purify the heart as Advaita is the awareness of the 'Divine'.

Shankara developed his philosophy through commentaries on the various scriptures. It is believed that the revered saint completed these works before the age of sixteen. His major works fall into three distinct categories – commentaries on the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Bhagavad Gita.

The most important of the works is the commentaries on the Brahmasutras – Brahmasutrashya – considered the core of Shankara's philosophy of Advaita.

SHANKARACHARYA'S MONASTIC CENTERS

Shri Shankaracharya established four 'mutts' or monastic centers in four corners of India and put his four main disciples to head them and serve the spiritual needs of the ascetic community within the Vedantic tradition. He classified the wandering mendicants into 10 main groups to consolidate their spiritual strength.

Each mutt was assigned one Veda. The mutts are Jyothir Mutt at Badrinath in northern India with Atharva Veda; Sarada Mutt at Sringeri in southern India with Yajur Veda; Govardhan Mutt at Jaganath Puri in eastern India with Rig Veda and Kalika Mutt at Dwarka in western India with Sama Veda.

It is believed that Shankara attained heavenly abode in Kedarnath and was only 32 years old when he died.

3.5 ISLAM AND SUFISM

Islam as a world religion confronted Hinduism in full force rather than getting absorbed into it. Historically, we find that the beginning of the 10th century there were Muslim invasions. This is the time when Mahmud of Ghazni invaded the Indian subcontinent 17 times. In early 16th century, the Moghals invaded India. It was in the later half of the 17th century that the Hindus launched a counter offensive. It was particularly in the struggle by the Maratha King Shivaji, that the moral power of Hinduism received impetus and the bhakti tradition resurged as a response to the impact of Islam. The Indian tradition tried to find a response within its own spiritual condition since the Muslim ruler discriminated against

NOTES

NOTES

the Hindu who were their subjects. Further, with this contact between the two different social and cultural traditions, interaction and synthesis began particularly on the level of social custom, tradition and practice of the Hindus and the Muslims. At the same time we find that the Islamic, mystic and ecstatic, tradition of Sufism greatly influenced the bhakti saints. To understand the nature of this influence let us briefly consider what Sufism was about.

WHAT IS SUFISM?

In the beginning Sufism developed in Mesopotamia, Arabia, Iran and modern Afghanistan. It was formalized by the end of the 8th century. Right from the beginning there was a hiatus between the ulemas and the mystics. The latter claimed to be delving into the interior of religion, which depended on the heart. The Sufi and bhakti traditions are characterised by adherence to religious text, governmental authority and opposed to external ritualism of prayer. The Sufis aim for a direct relationship with God and thus their basic features incorporate strands from various sources including Hinduism.

Ritu Dewan has pointed out that as a consequence of the 12th century Mongal invasion many Sufis took shelter in India, especially in Multan, Punjab, and Sindh. One of the greatest Sufi mystics Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273) was very influenced by Indian folklore and even wrote a poem dedicated to the flute of Krishna. He founded the Maulavi Sufi order in which music and dance were spiritual methods. Soami ji Maharaj founder of the Radha Soami sect was much influenced by Rumi who he often quoted in his discourses. Guru Nanak too was inspired by Rumi. Rumi and Baba Farid's compositions (1173-1265) have been included in the Granth Sahib together with those of Kabir.

Guru Nanak was called guru of the Hindus and pir of the Mussalmans. By the end of the 16th century the Bhakti movement had covered the entire north India resulting in an intermingling of Hindu mysticism with Sufism. Kabir's following verse illustrates this:

The Mussalmans accept the Tarifat,
The Hindus, the Vedas and Puranas
but for me the books of both religions are useless
— (Kabir, 1440- 1 5 1 8).

Sufis were also against external ritualism in religion. Prayers and fasting were held to be inferior to works of charity. And Jihad not external war but a fight against the lower self of man. Some Sufis like Shah Abdul Latif and Sachal Sarmast called upon people to "strike the Mullahs".

In Bengal the influence of Chaitanya was felt on a popular level, specially on the Baul movement. Muslim Bauls followed the Sufi tradition and Hindu Bauls the Vaishnavite. Both of these traditions expressed themselves saying:

You have been to Gaya,
Bcnares and Vrindavan,
and have travelled through
many rivers and forests and
other places of pilgrinidge

But away have you seen in all
these anything of Him of Whom
you have heard?

Sufi literature of Rumi and Hafiz (d. 1389) influenced Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Devendranath Tagore, and Rabindranath Tagore. Sufi literature remains fresh today though long years have passed since it was first penned:

Is there one God in the peepul tree and
another in the babool?
If Islam was creited by Allah
then who created Kufir
If Ka'ba be the House of God
Why find fault with the temple?
The same light bums bright
within the temple and the mosque.

— (Sufi Bhai Dalpatram 1768-1 842)

Thus we see that there was a commingling of the Bhakti and Sufi movements.

Sufism, specialises in the spiritual dimension of Islam. It believes in revelation as a source of contact with the sacred and attempts to get a personal experience of the unity of God. This leads to a realization that God alone is to be adored. This is basic to Sufism. While orthodox priests of Islam feel that this desire to merge in the unity of God is anti-Islam the Sufis do not feel this is so. In fact they feel it is closely related to Islamic doctrine. The two are interdependent. Anmalogy given to clarify the relationship is that of the kernel of the walnut and the shell. Neither, can possibly do without the other.

Another example is that Islamic doctrine is like the circumference of a circle at the centre of which lies the ultimate Reality (Haququat). Sufism is a mediator between Islamic doctrine and Utlimate Reality.

Sufism can be explained through three basic religious attitudes of

- (1) Islam
- (2) Iman
- (3) Ihsan

Islam is the attitude of submission to the will of Allah.

Iman designates a firm faith in the teachings of the Islam.

Ihsan is to adore Allah though one may not see him. Sufism is the spiritual progress of a devotee from the initial stage of Islam to the ultimate stage of Ihsan.

As Islam in India, it came to enfold in its cloak, the system of monasticism and a defined way of community life. The Sufi mystic however was in no way forced to live a defined and organised life. By the 9th century, these Sufis who had come to form a brotherhood and a definite way of community life, also began wearing a particular kind of coarse woollen garment known as sufi and thus came to be called sufis. Suifis, though Muslim, are considered to be

NOTES

NOTES

pantheistic mystics. This was a basic difference with orthodox Islam but in common with the bhakti school of the Hindus.

The Sufis followed the Quran, and sought to reveal their purpose in life through their sayings, actions and the path that they followed. This path was often shared by different mystics and came to be called tariqah or sufism. The path of 'unselfishness' through either renouncing the world and ones possessions and desires or by adopting an attitude of patience, humility and charity, towards God, were essential to being a sufi. The sufis also had a special method of their own for producing the state of mind in which they would have revelations. They called this dhikr.

Its simplest form is the continual repetition of the name of Allah with intense concentration on the thought of God, and losing one's individuality in this. If we examine these teachings closely we can see how the idea of dhikr which was central to Sufi thought is similar to the idea in bhakti tradition of concentrating on the ishta deva, in one's quest for liberation particularly in the saguna tradition. Thus, Sufism mainly professed mysticism and upon this the Sufis built the basic theological doctrines of their religious movement. A major practice devised by the Sufis for stimulating religious emotion was listening to music and song or sama. These songs are capable of sending one into a trance. The subject of the songs was love, which was often erotic. One could not clearly distinguish whether the love, being talked about here was human love or the love for the deity. Once again this is similar to the love in the bhakti tradition between the bhakta and the God as was expressed for Krishna by the Gopis.

We find, many attempts were made to define the Sufi in different ways. *In general it was however agreed that the Sufi had metaphysical, social and philanthropic characteristics.* Further, the Sufi doctrine we find was moulded by different influences such as the developments in Muhammadan monotheistic ideas or the influence of Greek and Indian philosophies. Moreover, we can also include here, political, social and intellectual conditions that favoured the growth of mysticism. The Sufis were very strict about accepting disciples or murid. Slowly however, "as followers flocked to them, many Sufis became recognised as teachers of Shaikhs Medieval and Modern and Pirs and 'orders' arose within Sufism. The four major orders that arose were the (a) Qudiri (b) Suhrawardi (c) Chisti and (d) Naqshbandi. By the 13th century, Sufism had become a movement in its own right in India.

THE SPREAD OF SUFISM IN INDIA

Sufism mainly flowed into Indian from Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Iran. We have accounts of the various saints of different orders spreading Sufi teachings in different parts of India: To name a few, we have the well-known Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti who had established himself in Ajmer and Shaikh Nizarnuddin Auliya whose teachings and followers spread all over India.

As far as the spread of Sufism in India is concerned, its character changed to adapt to the Hindu environment. Thus, the metaphysical aspect was avoided and personal instruction of disciples was undertaken. Not all Sufis however took disciples. Those who did were called Shaikhs. The Shaikh besides being a teacher was regarded as a protector, friend, companion and benefactor or Wali. The teacher was also believed to possess supernatural powers or Karamah. The Shatkh or pir was regarded as the spiritual guide of the disciple or murid. We find that most of

the people who came to the Sufi saints, desired to use their spiritual powers to cure an illness or fulfil a wish. Even today we find that of the many devout who may visit the resting place of a *pir*, *i.e.*, his *dargah*, come there to seek the fulfilment of a wish or a blessing.

There were as mentioned earlier four main orders among the Sufis. Each of these we find different from the other in the emphasis of its teachings and the extent to which it spread in India. All four orders however regarded the Shariah as the spiritual guide. All four believed that a Sufi should have no worldly possessions. Each order had over time found devout disciples who in turn had reached the stature of being capable of having their own disciples and were known as *Khalifahs*. These *Khalifahs* played important roles in the spread of their order's teachings.

Of the four orders, the *Suhrawardis*, were the most orthodox and played a leading role in the spread of Sufism in the North-West of India. They believed that to be able to perform their functions better, they had to maintain good relations with the political authority of the time.

Of these orders, it is however the *Chisti Sufis* who are best known. They spread all over the country and their principal *Shaikh Nizamuddin*, settled in Delhi and gave the order its expansive character. The *Chistis* consistently maintained that the political authority was an influence to be avoided. By the time *Nizamuddin* died in 1325 and his successor *Nasiruddin* took over, in 1356, a spiritual empire had begun to form. It reached its peak in the personality of *Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya*. By this time the *Chisti* order had spread to Bihar and Bengal and had an even older order in Rajasthan that began with *Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti* in Ajmer in the 1190s. The expansion of this order into the Deccan was carried out by *Shaikh Gesu-daraz*.

It is important to note that because of the presence of differences between the order and individualistic approach of many of the *Shaikhs*, a single Muslim unified community of disciples could not be formed. Instead, each order had its devout disciples who together formed a united brotherhood. Overtime, Sufism lost its spiritual intensity and became missionary in character. By the end of the 14th century, Hinduism had evoked a response in the Sufis. The devotional character of Hindi songs and the language, had brought the Sufism and Hindu closer. An intermixing of the two people on a cultural level had begun to take place. In fact we find that a common ground had opened up in which the mutual acceptance of the aesthetic values of the Hindus and Muslims had come to be accepted by each other. This interchange of cultures will be discussed in the following section that specifically deals with the meeting of Sufism and the *bhakti* tradition.

3.6 LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

Hindi language, spoken by a large number of people in India, has its roots in the classical Sanskrit language. Hindi literature may be traced back to medieval times when poets composed in languages such as *Brajbhasha* and *Avadhi*, which are now regarded as dialects of Hindi. Prose writings came much later, and the first work of Hindi prose is generally agreed upon as being the fantasy novel *Chandrakanta* written by *Devaki Nandan Khatri*.

NOTES

Hindi poetry is divided into four prominent forms or styles, being Bhakti (devotional - Kabir, Raskhan); Shringar (beauty - Keshav, Bihari); Veer-Gatha (extolling brave warriors); and Adhunik (modern).

NOTES

ADI KAAL

In ancient period of Hindi or Adi Kaal (before 1400 AD), Hindi literature was developed in the states of Kannauj, Delhi and Ajmer. Delhi was ruled by Prithviraj Chauhan and his court poet was Chand Bardai. His eulogy on Prithviraj Chauhan called the Prithviraj Raso was considered one of the first works in the History of Hindi Literature. Kannauj's last Rathore ruler was Jayachand, who gave more patronage to Sanskrit (which was no longer the common man's language). His court poet was Harsha (whose major poetic work was Naishdhiya Charitra). Mahoba's royal poet Jagnayak (or Jagnik) and Ajmer's Nalha were other literary figures in this period. However, after Prithviraj Chauhan's defeat, most literary works belonging to this period were destroyed in Muhammad Ghori's campaign. Very few scriptures, manuscripts from this period are available and their genuineness is also doubted.

Some Siddha and Nathpanthi poets' works belonging to this period are also found, but their genuineness is again, doubted. Siddhas belonged to Vajrayana, a later Buddhist cult. Many argue that the language of Siddha poetry is not earlier Hindi, but Magadhi Prakrit. Nathpanthis were yogis who practised Hatha yoga. Some Jain and Rasau (heroic poets) poetry works are also available from this period.

In Deccan region in South India, Dakkhini or Hindavi was used. It flourished under the Delhi Sultanate and later under the Nizams of Hyderabad. It was written in the Persian script. Nevertheless, the Hindavi literature can be considered as proto-Hindi literature. Many Deccani experts like Sheikh Ashraf, Mulla Vajahi used the word Hindavi to describe this dialect. Others like Roustami, Nishati etc preferred to call it Deccani. Shah Buharnuddin Janam Bijapuri used to call it Hindi. The first Deccani author was Khwaja Bandanawaz Gesudaraz Muhammad Hasan. He wrote three prose works - Mirazul Aashkini, Hidayatnama and Risala Sehvara. His grandson Abdulla Hussaini wrote Nishatul Ishq. The first Deccani poet was Nizami.

In later part of this period and early Bhakti Kala, many saint-poets like Ramanand and Gorakhnath became famous. Earliest form of Hindi can also be seen in some of Vidyapati's Maithili works.

BHAKTI KAAL

The medieval Hindi literature is marked by the influence of Bhakti movement and composition of long epic poems. Avadhi and Braj were the dialects in which literature was developed. The main works in Avadhi are Malik Muhammad Jayasi's Padmavat and Tulsidas's Ramcharitmanas. The major works in Braj dialect are Tulsidas's Vinay Patrika and Surdas's Sur Sagar. Sadhukaddi was also a language commonly used, especially by Kabir Das in his poetry and dohas. The Bhakti period also marked great theoretical development in poetry forms chiefly from a mixture of older forms of poetry in Sanskrit School and the Persian School. These included Verse Patterns like Doha, Sortha, Chaupaya etc. This was also the age when Poetry was characterized under the various Rasas.

NOTES

Unlike the Adi Kaal (also called the VirGatha Kaal) which was characterized by an overdose of Poetry in the Vir Rasa (Heroic Poetry), the Bhakti Yug marked a much more diverse and vibrant form of poetry which spanned the whole gamut of rasas from Shringara rasa, Vatsalya Rasa, Vir Rasa, Prema Rasa etc.. Bhakti poetry had two schools - the Nirguna school (the believers of a formless God or an abstract name) and the Saguna school (the believers of a God with attributes and worshippers of Vishnu's incarnations).

Kabir and Guru Nanak belong to the Nirguna school, and their philosophy was greatly influenced by the Great Advaita Philosophy of Adi Sankaracharya. They believed in the concept of *Nirgun Nirakaar Bramh or the Shapeless Formless One*. The Saguna school was represented by mainly Vaishnava poets like Surdas, Tulsidas and others and was a logical extension of the Dvaita and Vishisht Advaita Philosophy propounded by the likes of Madhavacharya etc. This school was chiefly Vaishnava in orientation as in seen in the main compositions like Raamcharitmanas, Sur Saravali, Sur Sagar extoling Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. This was also the age of tremendous integration between the Hindu and the Islamic elements in the Arts with the advent of many Muslim Bhakti poets like Abdurrahim Khan who was a court poet to Mughal Emperor Akbar and was a great devotee of Lord Krishna. The Nirgun School of Bhakti Poetry was also tremendously secular in nature and its propounders like Kabir and Guru Nanak had a large number of followers irrespective of Caste or Religion.

SCIENCE

In the 7th century, Brahmagupta briefly described the law of gravitation, and recognized gravity as a force of attraction.

The Siddhanta Shiromani was a mathematical astronomy text written by Bhaskara in the 12th century. The 12 chapters of the first part cover topics such as: mean longitudes of the planets; true longitudes of the planets; the three problems of diurnal rotation; syzygies; lunar eclipses; solar eclipses; latitudes of the planets; risings and settings; the moon's crescent; conjunctions of the planets with each other; conjunctions of the planets with the fixed stars; and the paths of the sun and moon. The second part contains thirteen chapters on the sphere. It covers topics such as: praise of study of the sphere; nature of the sphere; cosmography and geography; planetary mean motion; eccentric epicyclic model of the planets; the armillary sphere; spherical trigonometry; ellipse calculations; first visibilities of the planets; calculating the lunar crescent; astronomical instruments; the seasons; and problems of astronomical calculations.

Brahmagupta lucidly explained the use of zero as both a placeholder and a decimal digit, along with the Hindu-Arabic numerals now used universally throughout the world. Arabic translations of his texts (around 770) introduced this number system to the Islamic world, where it was adapted as Arabic numerals. Islamic scholars carried knowledge of this number system to Europe by the 10th century and it has now displaced all older number systems throughout the world.

From the 12th century, Bhaskara, Madhava, and various Kerala school mathematicians first conceived of mathematical analysis, differential calculus, concepts of integral calculus, infinite series, power series, Taylor series, trigonometric series, floating point numbers, and many other concepts foundational to the overall development of calculus and analysis.

NOTES

Traditional Indian medicine, known as Ayurveda, was mainly formulated in ancient times, but there were a number of additions made during the Middle Ages. Alongside the ancient physicians Sushruta and Charaka, the medieval physician Vagbhata, who lived in the 7th century, is considered one of the three classic writers of Ayurveda. In the 8th century, Madhav wrote the Nidna, a 79-chapter book which lists diseases along with their causes, symptoms, and complications. He also included a special chapter on smallpox (maskrik) and described the method of inoculation to protect against smallpox.

3.7 ALBERUNI'S INDIA

The first significant intrusion of Islam into India was led by Mahmud of Ghazni who, quite justifiably, lives in Indian history as a cruel and bloodthirsty fanatic, destroyer of temples, and plunderer of their wealth, but in his own dominion he was known as a patron of the arts, literature, and science (not unlike Genghis Khan who is a great and beloved hero in Mongolia today, gracing its currency, plazas, airports, etc.). He assembled in his court and the university he established at Ghazni (in modern Afghanistan) the greatest scholars and writers of the age.

HINDU MUSLIM DIFFERENCES

Alberuni starts Indica by observing "the Hindus entirely differ from us in every respect" (Sachau:17). First and foremost difference is the language. Sanskrit is a language of enormous range, both in words and in inflections. They call one and the same thing by various names and unless one knows the context in which the word is spoken. Some of the sounds of consonants are neither identical nor resemble with the Arabic and Persian. And the Hindus write their scientific books in metrics so that they can be committed to memory and thus prevented from corruption. This metrical form of literary composition makes the study of Sanskrit particularly difficult.

Not only the language, the Hindus totally differ from us (Muslims) in religion, as "we believe in nothing in which they believe" and vice versa. He goes on to observe that on theological topics "at the utmost they fight with words, but they will never stake their soul or body or their property on religious controversy." (Sachau:19) Instead, he noted, all their fanaticism is directed against foreigners whom they call mlecchas i.e. impure and forbid any connection with them (Sachau:19). The Hindus have concepts of pollution and never desire that once thing is polluted, it should be purified and thus recovered. They are not allowed receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished to be inclined to their religion, he went on to write.

He wrote the customs and manners the Hindus differ so completely from the Muslims that "they frighten their children with us, our dress and our ways and customs" and decree us as "devil's breed". They regard "everything we do as opposite of all that is good and proper". Some of the reasons of Hindus' repugnance of Muslims are complete banishment of Buddhists from countries from Khurasan, Persis, Irak, Mosul and Syria, first by the Zoroastrians and then by Islam. And then Muhammad ibn Elkasim entered India proper, conquered the cities of Bahmanwa and Mulsthan and went as far as Kanauj – "all these events planted a deeply rooted hatred in their hearts."

NOTES

And then Sabuktigin choosing the holy war as his calling, called himself a Ghazi, built those roads on Indian frontier which his son Sultan Yamin-uddaula Mahmud, during a period of thirty years, used to utterly ruin "the prosperity of the country, and performed those wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions, and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people." He goes on to say "their scattered remains cherish, of course, the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims."

Alberuni does not talk much about Mahmud whom he calls "the lion of the world, the wonder of his time" when he remembers him for "breaking the strongest pillar of religion", and his raids into India, except a few times. Once about his ruining the prosperity of the country as quoted above and second when he writes of his demolition of the idol, in the year A.H. 416, at Somnath much revered by the Hindus. The upper part of the idol was demolished and the lower part transported to his residence in Ghazni with all its trappings. One part of it, along with the bronze idol of Chakraswamin from Thanesar, was thrown into the hippodrome and another part before the door of the mosque of Ghazni, on which people rub their feet to clean them from dirt and wet.

ON HINDUS CUSTOMS

He found Hindus to be very proud of their country, their kings, their religion, their sciences to the extent that he thought them to be "haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited and stolid."

Many customs of the Hindus, he observed, differ from Muslims' "to such a degree as to appear to us simply monstrous." Hindu customs, not only, not resemble to Muslim customs but are the very reverse; and if ever a custom of theirs resembles one of the Muslims, it has certainly the opposite meaning. He goes on to say that it seems as if "they (Hindus) had intentionally changed into the opposite".

What are these customs of the Hindus that he observed that he thought were the opposite of theirs?

"The Hindus eat singly, one by one, on a tablecloth of dung. They do not make use of the remainder of a meal, and the plates from which they have eaten are thrown away if they are earthen."

"They drink wine before having eaten anything, then they take their meal. They drink the stall of cows but they do not eat their meat."

"In all consultations and emergencies they take advice of the women."

"They do not seek permission to enter a house, but when they leave it they ask permission to do so."

"In their meetings they sit cross-legged."

"They magnify the nouns of their language by giving them the feminine gender, as the Arabs magnify them by diminutive form."

"They consider the crepitus ventris as a good omen, sneezing as a bad omen."

"They write the title of the book at the end of it, not at the beginning".

HINDU ARITHMETIC

NOTES

On Hindu arithmetic Alberuni observed the Hindus do not use the letters of their alphabet for numerical notation, as Muslims use the Arabic letters in the order of the Hebrew alphabet. The use of Arabic letters for numerals must not have been in wide use when Alberuni wrote c.1030 CE, for these have been communicated to the Arabs in the eighth and ninth centuries as he goes on to accept that "the numeral signs which we use have been derived from the finest forms of Hindu signs." Having observed the names of the orders of the numbers in various languages he had come in contact with, Alberuni found that no nation goes beyond the thousand including the Arabs. Those who beyond the thousand in their numeral system are the Hindus who extend the names of the orders of numbers until the 18th order.

HINDU CASTE SYSTEM

No discussion of India would be complete without observation on the contemporary caste system and rightly so Alberuni does miss it. He describes the traditional division of Hindu society along the four Varnas and the Antyaja — who are not reckoned in any caste; but makes no mention of any oppression of low caste by the upper castes. Much, however the four castes differ from each other, they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings. The Antyajias are divided into eight classes — formed into guilds — according to their professions who freely intermarry with each other except with the fuller, shoemaker and the weaver. They live near the villages and towns of the four castes but outside of them.

On the eating customs of the four castes, he observed that when eating together, they form a group of their own caste, one group not comprising a member of another caste. Each person must have his own food for himself and it is not allowed to eat the remains of the meal. They don't share food from the same plate as that which remains in the plate becomes after the first eater has taken part, the remains of the meal.

Alberuni wrote extensively on India and on many aspects. It is impossible to cover every topic in a rather small article but I have tried to give some of the points which would look strange or were not known to the Muslims.

3.8 ART AND ARCHITECTURE

North India was the center of power during medieval times and most of the architectural monuments belonging to this period are located here. Muslims brought with them their own style of architecture but since they had to use mostly local artisans, which in turn gave rise to Indo-muslim architecture. This gradual process can be noticed in buildings of different periods. Monuments of this period includes magnificent forts, splendid palaces, artistic havelis, beautifully carved mosques and tombs.

Islamic art and architecture in India can be classified into three sections: Delhi or the Imperial style (1191 to 1557AD); the Provincial style, encompassing the surrounding areas like Jaunpur and the Deccan; and the Mughal architecture style (1526 to 1707AD).

NOTES

Indian architecture took new shape with the advent of Islamic rule in India towards the end of the 12th century AD. New elements were introduced into the Indian architecture that include: use of shapes (instead of natural forms); inscriptional art using decorative lettering or calligraphy; inlay decoration and use of coloured marble, painted plaster and brightly coloured glazed tiles. Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque built in 1193 CE was the first mosque to be built in the Indian subcontinent; its adjoining "Tower of Victory", the Qutb Minar also started around 1192 CE, which marked the victory of Muhammad Ghori and his general Qutbuddin Aibak, from Ghazni, Afghanistan, over local Rajput kings.

In contrast to the indigenous Indian architecture which was of the trabeate order i.e. all spaces were spanned by means of horizontal beams, the Islamic architecture was arcuate i.e. an arch or dome was adopted as a method of bridging a space. The concept of arch or dome was not invented by the Muslims but was, in fact, borrowed and further perfected by them from the architectural styles of the post-Roman period. Muslims used a cementing agent in the form of mortar for the first time in the construction of buildings in India. They further put to use certain scientific and mechanical formulae, which were derived by experience of other civilizations, in their constructions in India. Such use of scientific principles helped not only in obtaining greater strength and stability of the construction materials but also provided greater flexibility to the architects and builders. One fact that must be stressed here is that, the Islamic elements of architecture had already passed through different experimental phases in other countries like Egypt, Iran and Iraq before these were introduced in India. Unlike most Islamic monuments in these countries, which were largely constructed in brick, plaster and rubble, the Indo-Islamic monuments were typical mortar-masonry works formed of dressed stones. It must be emphasized that the development of the Indo-Islamic architecture was greatly facilitated by the knowledge and skill possessed by the Indian craftsmen, who had mastered the art of stonework for centuries and used their experience while constructing Islamic monuments in India.

Islamic architecture in India can be divided into two parts: religious and secular. Mosques and Tombs represent the religious architecture, while palaces and forts are examples of secular Islamic architecture. Forts were essentially functional, complete with a little township within and various fortifications to engage and repel the enemy.

Mosques: The mosque or masjid is a representation of Muslim art in its simplest form. The mosque is basically an open courtyard surrounded by a pillared verandah, crowned off with a dome. A mihrab indicates the direction of the qibla for prayer. Towards the right of the mihrab stands the mimbar or pulpit from where the Imam presides over the proceedings. An elevated platform, usually a minaret from where the Faithful are summoned to attend prayers is an invariable part of a mosque. Large mosques where the faithful assemble for the Friday prayers are called the Jama Masjids.

Tombs: Although not actually religious in nature, the tomb or maqbara introduced an entirely new architectural concept. While the masjid was mainly known for its simplicity, a tomb could range from being a simple affair (Aurangzeb's grave) to an awesome structure enveloped in grandeur (Taj Mahal). The tomb usually consists of a solitary compartment or tomb chamber known as the huzrah in

NOTES

whose centre is the cenotaph or zarih. This entire structure is covered with an elaborate dome. In the underground chamber lies the mortuary or the maqbara, in which the corpse is buried in a grave or qabr. Smaller tombs may have a mihrab, although larger mausoleums have a separate mosque located at a distance from the main tomb. Normally the whole tomb complex or rauza is surrounded by an enclosure. The tomb of a Muslim saint is called a dargah. Almost all Islamic monuments were subjected to free use of verses from the Quran and a great amount of time was spent in carving out minute details on walls, ceilings, pillars and domes.

Universities—housing thousands of teachers and students—flourished at Nalanda and Valabhi between the 4th-8th centuries. South Indian temple architecture—visible as a distinct tradition during the 7th century CE—is described below:

“The South Indian temple consists essentially of a square-chambered sanctuary topped by a superstructure, tower, or spire and an attached pillared porch or hall (maGapa, or maGmapam), enclosed by a peristyle of cells within a rectangular court. The external walls of the temple are segmented by pilasters and carry niches housing sculpture. The superstructure or tower above the sanctuary is of the kûmina type and consists of an arrangement of gradually receding stories in a pyramidal shape. Each story is delineated by a parapet of miniature shrines, square at the corners and rectangular with barrel-vault roofs at the centre. The tower is topped by a dome-shaped cupola and a crowning pot and finial.”

North Indian temples showed increased elevation of the wall and elaborate spire by the 10th century. Richly decorated temples—including the complex at Khajuraho—were constructed in Central India. Indian traders brought Indian architecture to South east Asia through various trade routes.

UNIT — II

13TH AND 14TH CENTURIES

In the previous chapter, we took an overview of the foreign invaders, its peculiar environment, and its volatile population of nomad warriors. These nomads set out of their steppe habitat in great numbers and came into contact and collision with the surrounding civilizations of China, Europe, West Asia and India.

The empires of the Ghamauids and the Seljuqs were built on the ruins of the Abbasid Caliphate. In the final analysis, both these states were products of the acculturation of the Turks in the institutions of settled societies. The latter, too, saw considerable changes in their own mode of organisation and direction after coming into contact with the Mongols.

Under the Seljuq umbrella, the Turks had expanded into the Mediterranean and Byzantine territories. Anatolia (modern Turkey) was conquered and settled by the 'Ottoman Turks'. The Seljuq empire which ward off pressure from incoming tribes was itself engulfed by political developments drawing upon nomadic movements. The Khwarizmian empire which undermined the Seljuqs,

was swept away by the Mongols. These cataclysmic and cyclical developments convened the 'Old World' into a vast melting pot.

In this Unit we will be looking at the conquest of India by the Turks, leading to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate at the beginning of the 13th century.

3.9 GHORIAN INVASIONS: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

The period between the 9th and 11th century saw the emergence of 'warrior castes' – military ruling clans which ultimately coalesced into a single caste, that of the Rajputs, the term being derived from the Sanskrit word *rajaputra*. The four Rajput clans that claimed a special status during his time were the Pratiharas, the Chalukyas, the Chauhans (also called Chahamanas), and the Solankis.

The battle of Train proved to be a watershed in the history of India. It paved the way for the ascendancy of the Turks. From this date onwards, the Rajput power entered the phase of irreversible decay. For some time to come, the Ghorians did not think it convenient to immediately take over the administration of all the conquered territories. Wherever it seemed feasible, they allowed the Rajputs to continue, provided Turkish suzerainty was acknowledged. Thus Ajmer, for instance, was allowed to be retained by Prithviraj's son as a vassal ruler. This uneasy balance, however, was often disturbed by the recurrent conflicts between the imperial designs of the Ghorians and local rulers.

Under Aibak's leadership, the Turks continued to make territorial advance in all directions. After having refortified Hansi towards the end of 1192, Aibak crossed the Yamuna to establish a military base in the upper Doab, Meerut and Baran (modern Bulandshahr) capitulated in 1192. In 1193 Delhi was occupied. Its location and historical tradition made it most suitable as a capital for Turkish power in India. It was both close to the Ghorid stronghold in Punjab as well as conveniently placed for sending expeditions towards the east. In 1194 Aibak crossed the Yamuna for the second time and captured Kol (Aligarh).

The above military successes encouraged Muhammad Ghori to confront king Jayachandra of the Gahadavala dynasty in the vicinity of Chandwar (between Etah and Kanpur). Jayachandra, eventually lost. Afterwards, Turkish military stations were placed at Bharas, Asni and other important towns. However, the capital city of Kannauj could not be occupied until 1198-99.

The other important areas over which the Ghorians were able to extend their sway were Bayana, Gwalior and Anhilwara in 1195-96, and Badaun in 1197-98. The opening of the 13th century saw action against the 'last surviving imperial Rajputs' – the Chandellas of Bundekhand. Around 1202, Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho were occupied and grouped into a military division.

From 1203 onwards, the Turks made forays into the eastern provinces of the Indian subcontinent with varying degrees of success. Magadha was conquered for the 'Sultanate' by Bakhtiyar Khalji and his tribesmen. Under him, the Turkish intrusions could also penetrate Bengal (ruled by the Lakshmanas).

In general, during this phase, the Ghorians were able to extend their hegemony over a very considerable part of Northern India. But, as yet, they stood on shaky ground. Areas once conquered tended to slip out of control. It took several decades before their control found firm ground.

NOTES

NOTES

3.10 DELHI SULTANATE UNDER SLAVE RULERS

During the Delhi Sultanate, several Turkic and Afghan dynasties ruled from Delhi, including the Mamluk dynasty (1206–90), the Khilji dynasty (1290–1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1413), the Sayyid dynasty (1414–51), and the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526). In 1526 the Delhi Sultanate was absorbed by the emerging Mughal Empire.

The Slave Dynasty directed into India by Qutb-ud-din Aybak, a Turkic general of Central Asian birth, was the first of five unrelated dynasties to rule India's Delhi Sultanate from 1206 to 1290. Aibak's tenure as a Ghorid administrator ranged between 1192 to 1206, a period during which he led invasions into the Gangetic heartland of India and established control over some of the new areas.

Mamluk, literally 'owned', was a soldier of slave origin who had converted to Islam. The phenomenon started in 9th century AD and gradually the mamluks became a powerful military caste in various Muslim societies. Particularly in Egypt, but also in the Levant, Iraq, and India, mamluks held political and military power.

In 1206, Muhammad of Ghor died. He had no child, so after his death, his kingdom was divided into many parts by his slaves (mamluk generals). Taj-ud-Din Yildoz became the ruler of Ghazni. Mohammad Bin Bakhtiyar Khilji got Bengal. Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha became the king of Multan. Qutub-ud-din-Aybak became the king of Delhi, and that was the start of the Slave dynasty.

Aibak rose to power when a Ghorid superior was assassinated. However, his reign as the Sultan of Delhi was short lived as he expired in 1210 and his son Aram Shah rose to the throne, only to be assassinated by Iltutmish in 1211.

The Sultanate under Iltutmish established cordial diplomatic contact with the Abbasid Caliphate between 1228–29 and had managed to keep India unaffected by the invasions of Genghis Khan and his successors. Following the death of Iltutmish in 1236 a series of weak rulers remained in power and a number of the noblemen gained autonomy over the provinces of the Sultanate. Power shifted hands from Rukn ud din Firuz to Razia Sultana till Ghiyas ud din Balban rose to the throne and successfully repelled both external and internal threats to the Sultanate. The Khalji dynasty came into being when Jalal ud din Firuz Khilji overthrew the last of the Slave dynasty rulers, Muiz ud din Qaiqabad, the grandson of Balban, and assumed the throne at Delhi.

QUTB-UD-DIN AIBAK

Qutb-ud-din Aibak also called "Lakh Baksh Sultan" (the doer of hundreds of thousands) (Qutb-ud-din meaning "Axis of the Faith") was the first Muslim Emperor of North India who ruled from his capital in Delhi where he built Qutub Minar and the Quwwat Al Islam mosque. He was a Turkish warrior by descendency, Turkic ruler, the first Sultan of Delhi and founder of the Slave dynasty (also known as the Ghulam dynasty) of India. He ruled as an emperor for only four years, from 1206 to 1210 but because of his super efficient administration and farsighted vision, his name has become unseperable from the history of South Asia. Though he ruled for only four years, he was able to furnish stable law and administrative system in the country, started many constructive projects and tried the best possible alternatives for the well being of his subjects. Although he was a strict follower of Sunni Islam and his forces were aggressive

NOTES

against the native hindu population at the time of thier victorious arrival, he exercised considerable tolerance towards the local Hindu, Jain and Buddhist population after he became the emperor of the newly born sultanate. In the architectural field, his biggest contribution is the famous Qutub Minar in New Delhi which he constructed to mark two of the historical events of India. Firstly to announce about the military and official arrival of his faith Islam in the Indian Subcontinent and secondly to announce about thier triumphant victory over the Rajput forces whom they defeated in a huge battle before arrival. He was also popularly called the "Lakh Annadata" (the giver of thousands of grains) or "Lakh Baksh Sultan" because of his generous and donative nature. He was also a very prolific and refined player of the the game of polo. Unfortunately he died while playing the same game at Lahore.

Early Years

Aibak was born somewhere in Central Asia; he was of Turkic descent. While still a child he was captured and sold as a slave (ghulam). He was purchased by the chief Qazi of Nishapur, a town in the province of Khorasan in northeastern Iran. The Qazi treated him like one of his own sons, and Aibak received a good education, including fluency in Persian and Arabic and training in archery and horsemanship. When his master died, his master's sons, who were jealous of Aibak, sold him to a slave merchant. Aibak was purchased by General Shahabuddin Muhammad Ghauri, then governor of Ghazni.

Rise to Power

Starting with his native Ghor, an Aimak principality, Ghauri managed to establish control over most of present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan and northern India. Under his command, Aibak sacked Delhi in 1193. As governor of northern India, Aibak established the first verifiable Muslim administration through collection of state taxes, establishing the rule of law, equitable distribution of land and revenues to the nobles under his charge, and governance based on a mixture of locally elected representation through Mashura courts and nominated administrators.

Aibak rose through the ranks to become Ghauri's most trusted general. His greatest military successes occurred while he was directly under Ghauri's guidance and leadership. Aibak was responsible for executing and consolidating Ghauri's conquests in northern India. He was left in increasingly independent charge of the Indian campaigns and the exaction of levies from the areas in India that were under Sultan Ghauri's conquests, as after 1192 Sultan Ghauri concentrated on Central Asia.

In 1206, Ghauri appointed Qutb-ud-din Aibak as his Naib us Sultanat in India at a grand darbar (reception) at Lahore, which was attended by a large majority of the nobles and dignitaries of his kingdom. It was at this occasion that Ghauri bestowed upon Qutb-ud-din the title of Aibak, meaning "Axis of the Faith".

3.11 ALAUDDIN KHILJI AND HIS CONQUEST

Ala-ud-din Khilji was the second ruler of the Turko-Afghan Khilji dynasty in India. He is considered the most powerful ruler of the dynasty, reigning from 1296 to 1316.

His historic attack on Chittor in 1303 AD, after hearing of the beauty of queen of Chittor, Rani Padmini, the wife of King Rawal Ratan Singh and the

NOTES

subsequent story has been immortalized in the epic poem *Padmavat*, written by Malik Muhammad Jayasi in the Awadhi language in the year 1540. Alauddin is also noted in history for being one of the few rulers to repeatedly defeat the warring Mongols and thereby saving India from plundering raids and attacks.

Ala-ud-din Khalji was the nephew and son in law of Jalal-ud-din. His surname is Khilji in Persian and Arabic documents, but the original Pashto is Ghiljai. The obvious difference in spelling and pronunciation arises in lack of letters between Arabic/Dari and Pashto. At first, Jalal-ud-din appointed Ala-ud-Din as the governor of Kara near the city of Allahabad. In 1296 Ala-ud-Din killed his uncle. But Malika Jahan, the widow of Jalal-ud-din, put her younger son Rukn-ud-din Khilji on the throne. Ala-ud-din quickly marched on Delhi from Kara. He entered Delhi with his uncle's head on a pike and on October 3, 1296, proclaimed himself the King of Delhi. Arkali Khan, Jalal-ud-din's older son, and Rukn-ud-din were blinded. Malika Jahan was imprisoned.

Very soon he went about despoiling the wealth of nobles, frequently blinding, imprisoning or killing them. In 1297, Alauddin sent an army to plunder Gujarat, under the generalship of Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan. This army looted the temple of Somnath and the Shivalinga was broken into pieces and was being carried back to Delhi. Kanhad Dev Songara, the ruler of Jalore in Rajasthan attacked and defeated Ulugh Khan and captured the broken Shivalinga which was washed in the Ganges River, and the fragments were established in various temples in Jalore. Muhammad Shah helped Kanhad Dev Songara. Muhammad was a general in Khilji's army. After the war, Muhammad Shah went and stayed with Hammir Dev Chauhan at Ranthambore. Ulugh Khan apprised Alauddin who ordered him and Nusrat Khan to conquer Ranthambore. In 1299 they started out with 80,000 cavalry and a large infantry to attack Hammir Dev Chauhan. Hammir's army repulsed the attack and killed Nusrat Khan. Ulugh Khan escaped and reached Delhi. Khilji was taken aback by this defeat and wanted revenge. He finally came himself in 1301, and there was a long siege. Hammir was very well prepared. When the fort would not fall after repeated bloody skirmishes, Khilji resorted to diplomacy. Hammir was very suspicious but he heeded to his councilors who told him that the sword is not always the best recourse. Ratipal and Ranmal, who were close confidants of Hammir, were sent to the Khilji camp. Ranmal's father was hung by Hammir for treachery and his property was confiscated. Ranmal earned the trust of Hammir by being brave in battles that Hammir fought but perfidy was in his blood. Khilji bribed these two generals of Hammir's army and consequently Ranthambore fell. After the annexation of Gujarat, he took to the practice of making the innocent families of rebels against the government suffer.

MONGOL INVASIONS

Duwa Khan

When Kublai Khan died in 1294, the former Mongol Empire was divided into independent Khanates. One such Khanate was the Chagatai Khanate which covered Central Asia and its leader at that time was Duwa Khan. Duwa was active in Afghanistan, and attempted to extend Mongol rule to India, but there he was defeated by a formidable foe, General Zafar Khan of the Delhi Sultanate in 1296-1297. The two armies met at Jalandhar in 1297. Zafar Khan defeated the Mongols in this first invasion.

Saldi

The Mongols attacked again under the command of Saldi and captured the fort of Siri. Zafar Khan holding the honour of being one of the few undefeated military commanders in history had no problem crushing this army, recaptured the fort and brought 2,000 Mongols prisoners before Sultan Alauddin Khilji. It was one of the worst defeats for the Mongols. Legend has it that Zafar Khan created such great terror in the minds of the Mongols that whenever their horses refused to drink water, the Mongols would ask them if they had seen Zafar Khan. The first invasion of the Mongols was an abysmal failure with Zafar Khan almost grinding them into the dust. The Mongols thereafter repeatedly invaded northern India. On at least two occasions, they came in strength. The second time around, they took Delhi but could not keep their hold on the Sultanate.

Qutlugh Khwaja

But in 1299, the Mongols came back. It says much for the tenacious Mongol spirit that they were back so soon and in such strength that they took over the fort of Siri, just beyond Delhi, which Ala-ud-Din Khilji had built. This time they came under a leader who was a legend in his own right, Qutlugh Khwaja, the feared Central Asian warrior and son of Duwa Khan now commanding a force of 200,000 Mongols. Ala-ud-Din Khilji realized that the Mongols meant business. If Qutlugh Khwaja had come himself it meant war, not for gold but for the kingdom itself.

The situation was serious enough for the usually individualistic Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khilji to be forced into taking advice from others. Ala-ud-Din Khilji was urged to sue for peace by his advisors as Qutlugh was virtually wiping his feet at the doorsteps of Delhi. However Ala-ud-Din Khilji did not become the Sultan via cautious diplomacy. He rejected their advice and said,

If I were to follow your advice how could I show my face, how could I go into my harem? No, come what may tomorrow, I must march into the battlefield.

Ignoring their advice the young sultan attacked the Mongols. The advance guard of the army was led by Zafar Khan himself. He defeated the Mongols again and went off in hot pursuit of them as they withdrew. However, the wily Qutlugh tricked Zafar into a position where he was first surrounded and then killed by the Mongols. Ala-ud-Din Khilji took this loss calmly. Zafar Khan had been entirely too popular for his comfort anyway. However, the death of the general did not improve matters for the Mongols. In face of Ala-ud-Din Khilji's continued offensives, they had to retreat to the unconquerable heights from where they had come.

Targhi

The Mongols took, what was for them, a long time to rally from this setback. They attacked at the worst time possible for Ala-ud-Din Khilji, when he was busy laying siege to Chittor. This time the Mongols traveled light. An army of 12,000 under Targhi's leadership trickled into India like a shadow and moved to Delhi at a pace that was astonishing even by Mongol standards. Such was the swiftness of the attack that many governors could not send their troops to Delhi in time.

Ala-ud-Din Khilji was forced to duck into Siri and stay put for about two months. The Mongols stomped through and pillaged not only the surrounding

NOTES

areas, but Delhi itself. However they could not get into Siri. Although minor skirmishes were fought, a decisive win eluded both parties. This deadlock dragged on for more than a couple of months. In the end when Ala-ud-Din Khilji was fervently hoping for a miracle to help him, his prayers were answered.

The Mongols were a nomadic restless lot, and Targhi was more impatient than most of them. When Ala-ud-Din Khilji dug in his heels and stayed put in his seemingly impregnable fortress for months, Targhi lost interest in the whole affair, washed his hands of it and ordered his army to withdraw.

Barani, the contemporary historian at that time, attributed this marvel to the prayers of the Sufi mystic Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. Ala-ud-Din Khilji's defenses were so strong and enduring that the whole situation had really become quite an impasse. He wisely realized that the Mongols could not hold out forever and had to go home to Central Asia some time. That was where the Mongol power was concentrated and they could not afford to be away for too long.

Targhi had to go back with the consolation that he was leaving behind a much disturbed and thoughtful Ala-ud-Din Khilji. The seriousness of the Qutlugh Khwaja and Targhi led Mongol invasions which had left Siri panting for breath, forced Ala-ud-Din Khilji to take stock of the situation. A defensive measure like hiding in Siri till the Mongol storm blew over must have gashed his proud spirit. He had the forts along the border strengthened and equipped with larger garrisons. New, more effective fortifications were built along this area. A whole new army, with its own special governor, was created whose portfolio was managing and guarding the border areas.

Ali Beg et Tartaq

A few months later the Mongols under the leadership of Ali Beg and Tartaq, suddenly appeared in the Punjab and the neighborhood of Amroha. The Mongols plundered the Punjab and burnt everything to cinders along the way.

But this time Ala-ud-Din Khilji was ready for them. He sent a strong army led by two of his toughest generals Ghazi Malik and the famous Malik Kafur after them. They surprised the Mongols on their way back to Central Asia with their plunder. The two generals pooled in their immense talents and defeated the Mongols. The Mongol generals were captured and brought back to Siri, along with other prisoners. Ala-ud-Din Khilji had the generals trampled to death by elephants while the other prisoners were put to death and their heads hung from the walls of the fort Qasim.

Kebek

Even after the gory treatment meted out to their last expedition, the Mongols came again in 1306 under the command of Kebek son of Duwa. He crossed the Indus near Multan and was moving towards the Himalayas, when Ghazi Malik (who was by then the governor of the Punjab) intercepted his army. Kebek's army was attacked on the banks of the Indus River and suffered a high number of losses. About 50,000 Mongols were made prisoners. Ala-ud-Din Khilji put them all to death and sold their wives and children as slaves. This was one of the last Chagatayid campaigns against India to take place before a temporary cessation of the Mongol raids (1307-1327, when they were resumed under Khan Tarmashirin).

Iqbalmand Khan

The last Mongol invasion took place in 1307-1308 under Iqbalmand. He had just about managed to cross the Indus when Ala-ud-Din Khilji's armies overtook them and put them all to the sword.

After 1308, the Mongols did not attack India again. There were a number of reasons for this. Principal among these was that during their earlier descent from the mountains into the Indus plains, the Mongols became aware of their handicap in an environment of higher temperatures, humidity and their lack of dexterity in riding horses at the speeds they were comfortable at in higher & drier areas. To a lesser extent, of course that Ala-ud-Din Khilji, by repeated ruthlessness, finally managed to drive home the point that he would deal firmly and mercilessly with invaders into his territory. This was one of the greatest achievements of Ala-ud-Din Khilji. He was an original thinker and brilliant as a strategist. If the Mongols had still been serious about an Indian empire, they could have kept sending armies to India. It is to Ala-ud-din's credit that he drove the idea of an Indian empire from the heads of the Mongols.

But he did not stop there, Ala-ud-Din Khilji had to be sure that the Mongols would never come back. The only way to do that was to attack them, he sent plundering armies under the veteran general Ghazi Malik to Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul. The Mongols were already so much in awe of him that they did not even bother to defend their own territories against him. These offensives effectively crippled the Mongol line of control leading to India until the arrival of Timur Lane.

NORTH INDIAN EXPEDITIONS

Gujarat

Gujarat was the most powerful and fertile kingdom of all the kingdoms in northern India. Karnadev Vaghela II of the Vaghela Vaghela dynasty was the king of Gujarat. Alauddin Khilji sent two of his great generals Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan. Nusrat Khan started for Gujarat from Delhi on February 24, 1299 A.D., Ulugh Khan started from Sindh and joined Nusrat Khan near Chittorgarh. The army crossed Vanasa river and captured the Ravosa fort. Karnadev was defeated and fled to the kingdom of Devagiri and Gujarat was captured by Alauddin.

Ranathambor

Alauddin Khilji once again sent two of his celebrated generals Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan to Ranathamvor. Hamir Dev Chauhan of the Chauhan dynasty was the king of Ranathambor. In a valiant counter attack from the Rajputs Nusrat Khan was killed and Ulugh Khan retreated to Delhi. Alauddin Khilji then himself led the expedition to Ranathambor in 1301 A.D. After one year of siege the Muslims were able to occupy Ranathambor due to the treachery of the Rajput general Ranamal. Ironically, later Ranamal was killed by Alauddin Khilji.

Mewar

Mewar was the most powerful kingdom of all the Rajput kingdoms and never had been conquered by the Muslims. On 28 January 1303 Alauddin Khilji started for Mewar. First Alauddin Khilji captured the city of Chitor and besieged the Chitor fort. Rana Ratan Singh fought valiantly with his Rajput army. The Rajputs were able to hold their fort for seven months. But, due to the long siege,

NOTES

NOTES

there grew a severe shortage of food, drinking water and other rations. the Rajputs surrendered. Alauddin Khilji appointed Khidr Khan as the governor of Chitor. But Khidr Khan was forced to retreat due to repeated counter attacks of the Rajputs. Alauddin Khilji then appointed Maldeo, a Rajput, as the governor of Chitor. But Mewar was able to regain her independence immediately after the death of Alauddin Khilji.

Malwa

Alauddin Khilji's conquest of Mewar, Ranathambor and Gujarat struck terror in the mind of the remaining Rajput Kingdoms. But Mahlak Dev refused to give in to Alauddin Khilji so easily. He gathered 20,000 horsemen and 90,000 infantry to confront Alauddin's army. Harnanda Koka was the general of his army. On the other hand Ain-ul-Mulk Multani was on the head of a 160,000 Muslim army. After a bloody war Harnanda Koka was killed by treachery and the Rajput forces retreated. The Muslims were decimated but due to larger numbers were able to prevail. Malwa along with Mandu, Dhara and Chanderi came in the hand of Alauddin Khilji. Ain-ul-Mulk Multani was appointed the governor of Malwa. It was in year 1294 A.D. when he acquired Koh-i-noor Koh-i-Noor from Malwa and brought it to Delhi.

Marwar

Alauddin Khilji invaded Marwar in 1308. Satal Dev was the king of Marwar and the owner of the famous Siwana fort. Alauddin Khilji sent Malik Kamaluddin as the general of his army. After a fierce battle the Marwari army was defeated. Satal dev was captured and was executed.

Jalore

Alauddin Khilji invaded Jalore next. The first expedition was a failure. Alauddin Khilji then sent Malik Kamaluddin. After a hard fought battle the Rajput army was defeated and Jalor was occupied by the Muslims.

3.12 ALAUDDIN KHILJI'S ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMIC MEASURES

Alauddin khilji was a brilliant administrator. He was a trend setter. Prof. K.S.Lal says " it is as an administrator than anything else that alauddin khilji was head and shoulders above his predecessors. His accomplishments as a warrior were dwarfed by his achievements as an organiser." No Muslim ruler before the mughals could reach such a level in the administrative measures taken by them.

The main policy and reforms of alaudin khilji can be summarized as:

1. His Conception of Kingship and Sovereignty

His concept of kingship and sovereignty differed from his predecessors in that he separated the govt. from religion. In his opinion a king should be the absolute and undisputed authority. Before him the ruler was greatly influenced by the ulemas and nobles. He openly disregarded this concept and carried out his own form of monarchy.

2. Study of Causes of Rebellion

He studied and consulted a lot on the causes of the regular rebellions and revolts as he had to face himself by his own relatives like Omar Khan and nobles like Akat Khan. Four causes were given to him: (a) the disregard of state by the sultan (b) use of wine (c) intimacy, alliances and meetings of the nobles where

they hatched plots against the govt. (d) excessive wealth which created hunger for power and caused revolts.

3. Measures to Stamp Out Rebellions

He took a number of measures to stamp out these causes.

- The confiscation of land, property and villages by the elite class and nobles; end of private ownership and pension. Land either personal, as a gift or religious endowment was taken back and the half of the land produce was to be paid to the govt. the people were reduced to abject poverty and had no time to think of revolts.
- The development of efficient spy system which informed the sultan of various activities of general public and nobles.
- The prohibition of wine and intoxicating drugs, starting from the sultan himself.

All social gatherings and alliance were forbidden except by the permission of the sultan.

As a result, the life of the nobles became dull and dreary. These measures were so strict and carried out so efficiently that the rebellions were completely crushed. These restrictions were however, only for the Muslims.

HINDUS UNDER ALAUDDIN KHILJI

The main measure taken against the hindus to eliminate any cause for their rise to power were to reduce them to poverty. The chaudries, khuts and muqaddams were the main landlords who had wealth and power. Their lands were taken from them and they had to pay half of their lands produce. According to Barani " the chaudhries, khuts and muqqadams could not buy a good horse, wear fine clothes and indulge in the battles". Although Barani latter is also of the view that the law abiding Hindus rubbed shoulders with the Muslim aristocracy. Ibn Batuta supports the second view as well , so does Dr. Hussain and other historians.

REVENUE REFORMS

Alauddin khilji wanted to establish a system by eliminating corruption and introducing economic welfare. He took major revenue reforms.

New taxes were introduced to increase the treasury to support military conquests. Grazing tax, housing tax etc were introduced. The hindu faced the economic weight as they were the main landlords.

For the first time land survey and settlement system was introduced by Alauddin. It was later developed by Sher Shah and Akbar.

MILITARY REFORMS

Many military reforms were the need of the time to crush the mongol invasions and to conquer the far territories of the south.

He introduced the system of branding horses, so that unfit horses may not be brought to the field.

He also introduced the Hullah syatem or the practice of allocating descriptive rolls to the soldiers so that substitutes could not be sent for parades.

NOTES

These practices kept the nobles from cheating the Sultan.

NOTES

ECONOMIC REFORMS

Alauddin Khilji will always be remembered in the history of indo-pak as the greatest economic reformer who was way ahead of his time. According to Lanepool he was a brilliant Political economist.

His famous "Price Control System" eased the sufferings of the poorer classes. He implemented it with severity and gave strict punishments to those who didn't follow it.

Reasons for Price Control

The main reasons for price control were the maintenance of a large army and to allow the soldiers to live a life with meager means. Also the revolts of the rajputana, the low value of currency due to wealth influx from the south and prevention from Mongol invasion were other reasons.

Price Control

The prices of various articles of daily use were fixed. Wheat 7 jitals per maund, gram, dhan and mash at 5 jitals per maund, barely at 4 jitals per maund. Sugar 1.5 jitals per seer, gur $\frac{1}{4}$ jital per seer, butter 1 jital per $2\frac{1}{2}$ seer and salt $2\frac{1}{2}$ maund for 5 jitals. Similarly the prices of vegetables, fruits, clothes, arms and animals were also fixed. A brand horse at 140 tankas, a milch cow and buffalo at 4 and 6 tanka respectively.

Supply Control

The supply was also controlled by forbidding hoarding by dealers and farmers; registration of suppliers; royal granaries known as the 'sarai-adal' near Badungate for selling wheat; efficient control by magistrates and officers. Anyone having more than 10 maunds were to sell grain on fixed rates.

Transport Control

The means for transportation were vastly improved and every facility was provided to them. The transporters were registered in the daftars.

Rationing System

During draught and famine people were not freely provided with grains. No one was allowed to buy more than half a maund. Due to this rationing system the general masses did not feel the pinch of the high prices.

EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION AND APPOINTMENT OF MARKET OFFICERS

This price control system was made efficient and applicable by the Sultan and concerned officers themselves. Two officers 'shahana-i-mandi' was Malik Qabul who was the supervisor of the granaries and had many subordinates under him to check efficient sale and prevention of black marketing. The 'diwan-e-riyasat' was Yaqub who registered all the suppliers and was in charge of the cloth and general market. He also noted the amount of wheat brought in by the sellers.

RESULTS AND SUCCESS OF THE PRICE CONTROL SYSTEM

The price control system tackled the food problem efficiently. It relieved the poor masses who became to regard the Sultan with deep devotion and loyalty.

It was a 'wonder of that time' and people looked at it with awe. The success of this system was made possible due to the keen interest of the Sultan himself, the efficient spy system, efficient planning and execution by officers and their zeal and honesty. Those who disregarded the rules and regulations were severely punished and dealt with. Therefore, even being ahead of its time this system was the reason of evolution of a sound economy in Indo-pakistan.

3.13 MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLUQ

Muhammad bin Tughluq (c.1300 – March 20, 1351) was the Turkic Sultan of Delhi from 1325 to 1351. He was the eldest son of Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq. Ghiyath al-din sent the young Muhammad to the Deccan to campaign against king Prataparudra of the Kakatiya dynasty whose capital was at Warangal. Muhammad succeeded to the Delhi throne upon his father's death in 1325.

Muhammad Tughluq was a scholar versed in logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and physical sciences. He had knowledge of medicine and was skillful in dialectics. He was also a calligrapher. Ibn Battuta (Moroccan traveler) visited him during his reign.

RULE OF TUGHLUQ

Tughluq was committed to maintaining the Sultanate's expansion into the newly conquered provinces of peninsular India. To strengthen the sultanate's hold on its southern parts, Tughluq early in his reign moved the capital from Delhi to Devagiri, 700 miles (1500 km) south in the Deccan, renaming Devagiri as Daulatabad. Instead of moving just his government offices there, he forcibly moved the entire population of Delhi to the new capital. The plan proved disastrous due to Mongol Attack on North. Inadequate water supply arrangements in Daulatabad; after only two years, the capital had to be shifted back again to Delhi. Multitudes died during the two moves, and it was said that Delhi was a ghost town for years after the move back. "When I entered Delhi, it was almost like a desert", wrote the famed North African travel writer, Ibn Battuta. Tughluq also introduced token currency for the first time in India, modelled after the Chinese example, using brass or copper coins, backed by silver and gold kept in the treasury. However, very few people exchanged their gold or silver coins for the new copper ones. Moreover, the tokens were easy to forge, which led to heavy losses. It is said that after the plan failed, there were heaps of copper coins lying around the royal offices for years.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST MOKHADAJI GOHIL IN GUJARAT

Muhammad bin Tughluq was very ambitious and he was planning to attack surrounding countries. To fund his campaign he decided to accumulate wealth. He started to move his wealth from Devagiri to Delhi through the Gujarati port of Khambhat. During that time, pirate Mokhadaji Gohil ruled nearby Ghogha and Piram Bet (presently near Bhavnagar). In 1347, he got information about moving of treasure by the Delhi Sultanate through Khambhat. His navy seized the port and looted the Delhi Sultanate's cargoes. Tughluq sent his army to defeat Mokhadaji Gohil, who skillfully waged a naval war from his base at Piram Bet. The sultanate's army's strategy was to cordon Piram Bet, but they were not well

NOTES

experienced in naval warfare and were easily defeated. Thereafter, Muhammad bin Tughluq himself came to Gujarat to take charge. He established his base in Ghogha and resolved not to leave until Mokhadaji was killed. During the initial few months he was unsuccessful in his efforts to capture Piram Bet. He therefore schemed to entice pirate Mokhadaji to come ashore in order to engage him in land battle. To this end he recruited a rich Vaishnav merchant of Khambhat, who was promised trade benefits if he could convince Mokhadaji to come on land to fight. The merchant went to Piram and emotionally told Mokhadaji that the local people felt very oppressed by the sultan's occupying army, and wished to wage battle for Mokhadaji if the latter would come to them. pirate Mokhadaji heeded the plea, lost the battle, was taken prisoner near Khadarpar village, and was beheaded near Ghogha.

EXPERIMENTS WITH COINAGE

Muhammad bin Tughluq is known for his active interest in experimenting with coinage. He memorialized himself and his activities through his coinage and produced more gold coins than had his predecessors. The coins boasted fine calligraphy. He issued a number of fractional denominations.

The large influx of gold from his plundering of south Indian campaign led him to increase coinage weights. He enlarged the gold dinar from 172 grains to 202 grains. He introduced a silver coin, the adlis, which was discontinued after seven years due to lack of popularity and acceptance among his subjects.

All his coins reflect a staunch religiosity, with such inscriptions as "The warrior in the cause of God", "The trustier in support of the four Khalifs - Abubakkar, Umar, Usman and Ali". The kalimah appeared in most of his coinage. Both at Delhi and at Daulatabad coins were minted in memory of his late father. There were also mints at Lakhnauti, Salgaun, Darul-I-Islam, Sultanpur (Warrangal), Tughlaqpur (Tirhut), and Mulk-I-Tilang. More than thirty varieties of billion coins are known so far, and the types show his numismatic interests.

Unique among his coinage was the "forced currency". Tughluq had two scalable versions, issued in Delhi and Daulatabad. The currency obeyed two different standards, probably to satisfy the local standard which preexisted in the North and in the South respectively. Tughluq's skill in forcing the two standards of currency is remarkable. He engraved "He who obeys the Sultan obeys the compassionate" to fascinate people in accepting the new coinage. Inscriptions were even engraved in the Nagari legend, but owing to the alloy used, the coinage underwent deterioration. As well, the copper and brass coins could easily be forged, turning every house into a mint. Tughluq subsequently withdrew the forged currency by exchanging it with bulls and gold. this sultan is very much known for his foolish acts thus he is very famous.

3.14 FIROZ SHAH TUGHLAQ

Firoz Shah Tughlaq 1309 - September 20, 1388 in Delhi, was a Muslim ruler of the Tughlaq Dynasty, who reign over Sultanate of Delhi from 1351 to 1388. He was the son of a Hindu Rajput princess of Dipalpur. His father's name was Razzab (the younger brother of Ghazi Malik). Firuz Shah Tughlaq succeeded his cousin Muhammad bin Tughluq following the later's death from a fatal illness,

but due to widespread unrest Firuz's realm was much smaller than Muhammed's. Firuz Shah Tughlaq was forced by rebellions to concede virtual independence to Bengal and other provinces. He was known as an iconoclast.

Firuz Shah Tughlaq was the Sultan of Delhi from 1351 to 1388, and in the 1350s, he established the city of Firozabad at the site of the Feroz Shah Kotla (Literally fortress or citadel of Firoz Shah). Most of the city was destroyed as subsequent rulers dismantled its buildings and reused the spolia as building materials.

Under his rule, Hindu Brahmins were exempted from paying mandatory tax Jizya levied on Hindus.

Firoz probably learnt many lessons from his cousin Muhammad's rule. He decided not to reconquer areas that had broken away. He decided to keep nobles and the Ulema happy so that they would allow him to rule his kingdom peacefully. In fact, there were hardly any rebellions during his rule. We come to know about him from a 32-page brochure he wrote. Firoz allowed a noble's son to succeed to his father's position and jagir after his death. The same was done in the army, where an old soldier could send his son, son-in-law or even his slave in his place. He won over the Ulemas by giving them grants of revenue, which gave him political power. He increased the salary of the nobles. He stopped all kinds of harsh punishments such as cutting off hands. Firoz also lowered the land taxes that Muhammad had raised. Firuz's reign has been described as the greatest age of corruption in medieval India. It can be imagined from the fact that Firuz once gave a golden tanka to a distraught soldier so that he could bribe the clerk to pass his sub standard horse. The case of Imadulmulk Bashir, the minister of war who began his career as an inherited slave of Firuz, in course of his service is said to have accumulated wealth to the tune of thirteen crores, when the state's yearly income was six crores and seventy-five lakh tankas.

3.15 THE DELHI SULTANATE - ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Sultanate period brought to India new styles of art and architecture which were soon absorbed into the existing set up. A number of factors were responsible for events to move in such a direction. The existing Indian styles and the new ideas had many common features, which allowed them to adapt to one another. For instance both the temple and mosque had large open courtyards. Also many temples were converted in mosques by the foreign invaders, and this created a blend of Indian as well as foreign styles.

The Sultanate introduced two new architectural ideas, the dome and the pointed arch. The dome was an important decorative structure in Islamic buildings, and soon was implemented in other structures as well. The pointed or true arch that was introduced during this period, was completely different from the type of arches that were being constructed within the country earlier. The earlier Indian style of creating arches was to first put up two pillars. The pillars would then be cut at intervals accommodate 'plug in' projections. There would be a sequence of squares that would gradually decrease in size creating an arch. The new artisans introduced the true arch. This was achieved by making the

NOTES

NOTES

middle stone a key stone and to have the other stones distribute the load of on the two pillars.

The concept of the dome was also introduced. This was gradually perfected and one of the most stunning examples is the dome on top of the Taj Mahal. The dome initially started out as a conical dome as we see in the Mehrauli region in Delhi and eventually developed the ultimate bulbous onion shape on the Taj Mahal. The dome effect was achieved by an interesting method. A square base was first constructed and then at varying angles more of these squares were added to the base. This eventually create a rough dome effect. This was plastered to make it completely round and then the squares were removed. The use of concrete was also on the increase, opening up new avenues. Concrete enabled builders to build larger structures covering more area. Local Indian craftsmen were soon trained in Persian styles of art which they used to decorate the structures. They also implemented some of their own ideas, and soon traditional Hindu motifs like the lotus found their way into Islamic buildings. There were other instances as well, for instance although the Islamic buildings used the more advanced pointed arch, they also included for decoration purposes a variant of the Hindu arch.

The early dynasties of the Sultanate period, namely the Slave dynasty and the Khilji dynasty created some exquisitely designed structures, with fine works of art adorning them. During the Tughlaq period however, the mood was less decorative, and more simple and austere. This is attributed partly to the religious ideas of the Tughlaqs as well as the depleted state finances. The Sayyids and Lodis who succeeded the Tughlaqs returned to the more lavish styles with the Lodis introducing the new concept of the double dome. They also introduced a new type of decoration, most probably borrowed from Persia, enamelled tiles, which went very well with grey sandstone. Decorative work in terra-cotta continued to be popular.

It was a time of great experimentation, with most artist and engineers in India, keen to learn from the deluge of new ideas that were entering the country. They retained their indigenous techniques but also absorbed some of the new thought that was coming their way. Two unique sets of ideas were able to successfully combine to form a coherent whole.

3.16 THE DELHI SULTANATE - LITERATURE

The rise of Persian speaking people to the throne naturally resulted in the spread of the Persian language in India. It was the official language and soon literary works in the language began to appear. Initially Persian literature talked about topics which were familiar to those from Persia. Gradually however as more Indians learnt the language, the literary works began to have a more Indian theme. Amir Khusrav was a noted writer of the period, who was one of the first writers to write Persian literature about events concerning India. His inspiration came from events he saw around, his work soon grew to be appreciated and he became a court poet. He inspired many other Indians to take to writing in Persian.

Sanskrit continued to remain an important language of the time, and despite the increasingly influence of Persian, it was able to hold its ground. Many preferred Sanskrit poets as they were more established and experienced then those that

worked in the new languages. A centre for Sanskrit learning opened at Mithila (north Bihar). It preserved the tradition of classical Sanskrit literature and kept it alive. Sanskrit was however beginning to lose its popularity as an intellectual language, and the Brahmans struggled to find patrons to keep it alive.

There was also significant amount of work taking place in regional languages. Both Sanskrit and Persian were languages which the average person did not understand. Various regional languages flourished and soon literary work in these languages began to take place.

NOTES

3.17 GROWTH OF COMMERCE AND URBAN ECONOMY

The available evidence suggest that the urban economy on the eve of the Ghori conquest was on a low ebb. The towns were fewer in number and smaller in size in the centuries preceding the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. D.D.Kosambi shows that even the capital was a camp city on the move. The higher ruling class wandered from place to place along with the army while the lower ruling class was almost completely ruralized. This view of urban decline has been supported by R.S. Sharma who has convincingly reasserted his theory of urban decay with the help of enormous archaeological data painstakingly collected.

This theory of decay of towns is further corroborated by the evidence of sluggish trade: The near complete disappearance of gold and silver currencies and the almost total absence of foreign coins in the Indian coin-hoards of the period are indicators that the foreign trade was at a very low scale. Moreover, the fact that not even the coins of various regional dynasties are found in the coin-hoards of other regions suggests that inland commerce was not widespread. All this scenario changed almost immediately with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. The archaeological and numismatic evidence corroborate the literary evidence of growth of towns and - increase in commerce.

GROWTH OF TOWNS

Before discussing the evidence of increase in number and size of towns, we must first understand what we mean by town. There are two simple definitions of a town : (a) the usual modern definition of a settlement of 5000 or above, and (b) a settlement where an overwhelming majority of population (say above 70%) is engaged in occupations other than agriculture. The two definitions are not mutually exclusive but Economy of Delhi Sultanate While the archaeological evidence available for earlier period is not forthcoming from the 13th-14th centuries owing to the much less attention paid to medieval archaeology, the literary evidences testify growth of urban centres. Some major towns mentioned in the contemporary sources are Delhi (the capital), Multan, Anhilwara (Patan), Cambay, Kara, Lakhnauti and Daulatabad (Deogiri).

Lahore was a big town but decayed after the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. However, in the 14th century it flourished again. While not even a guesstimate of the population of any town is available in our sources there are reliable indications to assume that at least some of these were cities big enough

NOTES

by contemporary standards. Ibn Battuta, who visited Delhi in 1330, describes it as of enormous extent and population, the largest city in the Islamic East in spite of the fact that Muhammad Tughluq had shifted much of its population to Daulatabad. He describes the latter too, as large enough to rival Delhi in size. Some new towns were established during the period, such as Jhain (Chhain) in Eastern Rajasthan that was named 'Shahr Nau' during Alauddin Khalji's reign (1296-1316).

TRADE AND COMMERCE

We have seen that there emerged some considerably big flourishing towns as well as numerous townships during the 13-14th centuries. These towns naturally needed to be fed and supplied raw material for craft production. At the same time, there was growing practice of land revenue realization in cash. By the time of Alauddin Khalji, the cash-nexus came to be well developed and the ruling class tended to claim almost the entire peasant surplus by attempting to reduce the share of rural intermediaries.

Both these factors were conducive to the development of inland trade. To pay the land revenue in cash, the peasantry was forced to sell its surplus produce while merchants had a market in newly emerged towns for agricultural products. This trade resulting from the compulsions of land revenue system is termed as 'induced trade'

Inland Trade

The inland trade developed at two levels : (a) the short distance village town trade in commodities of bulk, and (b) long distance inter-town trade in high value goods. The village-town trade, as already explained, was a natural consequence of the emergence of towns and realization of land revenue in cash. The urban centres were dependent for supply of food grains and raw material for manufactures from the surrounding villages whereas the villages had to sell the agricultural products to receive cash for meeting the land revenue demand. The peculiar nature of this trade was the one-way flow of commodities. While the towns received grains and raw material from the villages in the vicinity, they had no need to send their products in exchange to the villages which were by and large self-sufficient. This one-way trade was owing to the land revenue demand imposed upon villages which naturally led to a continuous drain on rural sector and made the towns dependent on villages. The turnover of this trade was high in terms of volume but was low in terms of value. The commodities were food grains, that is wheat, rice, gram, sugarcane, etc. and raw material like cotton for urban manufactures.

Foreign Trade : Seaborne and Overland

During the Sultanate period, overland and overseas trade were in a flourishing state.

Seaborne Trade

The Khalji annexation of Gujarat must have enlarged trade relations between the Delhi Sultanate and the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Gujarat was connected with the Persian Gulf as well as the Red Sea. Hormuz and Basra were the chief ports for the ships passing through the Persian Gulf, while the ports of

Aden, Mocha and Jeddah along the Red Sea were important for Gujarat. Through these ports, commodities moved on to Damascus and Aleppo, on the one hand, and Alexandria on the other. Aleppo and Alexandria opened up to the Mediterranean Sea with linkages to Europe.

Merchandise of Gujarat were also carried towards the East - the port of Malacca situated at the Malacca straits and Bantam and Achin in the Indonesian archipelago.

The main export from Gujarat to Malacca was the coloured cloths manufactured in Cambay and other Gujarat towns. These cloths were in demand in these places. In exchange, the Gujarati merchants came back with spices grown there. This pattern of "spices for coloured cloths" continued even after the Portuguese advent in the Asian waters.

Overland Trade

Multan was the major trading centre for overland trade. India was connected to the Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia through the Multan-Quetta route.

3.18 TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

There has never been any human settlement which did not use some kind of technique or craft for its survival. In fact, the history of technology is no less important than political or economic studies. Technology is an inseparable part of the material culture of a society.

In this section, we are offering you a few glimpses of the state of Technology in India during the Delhi Sultanate.

One thing that will strike you is that by and large the tools, devices and implements were made of wood and earth, while iron was employed only when most necessary. Ropes, leather and bamboo, too, were used when the need arose. That is why they were inexpensive.

AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

In this part we will discuss the main technological devices related to agriculture.

Plough

The use of hoe or hoeing was replaced by plough centuries back. Archaeological evidence from Kalibangan (Rajasthan) - an Indus valley culture site - for the use of 'ironless' plough is well-known, although the doubt remains whether it drawn by men or oxen. Plough-cultivation employing oxen during the Vedic Age is, however, an established fact. The Iron Age, identified with the Aryan settlement in the Gangetic plain, contributed to the development of the plough in the sense that while the entire frame earlier was of timber, the ploughshare/courter now was of iron. This metallic piece immensely helped in the tillage of comparatively harder soil.

Sowing

For sowing, the method of broadcasting was known. The practice was to scatter seeds manually by taking them out from a cloth-bag slung over shoulders.

NOTES

NOTES

The time-scale of seed-drill in India is controversial : some would trace it back to the Vedic Age. At any rate, the only positive evidence for its use along the western coast of India comes from one Portuguese - Barbosa (c. 1510) - in connection with the wet-cultivation of rice.

Harvesting, Threshing and Winnowing

Harvesting was performed with a sickle, and threshing by using oxen who walked round and round over the ears put on the threshing floor. "Wind power" was exploited in winnowing in order to separate the chaff from the grain.

Irrigational Devices

There were many sources of water for the purpose of irrigating fields. Rain water was the natural source. Ponds and tanks received this water which was used for irrigation. Water channels formed by inundation, too, served the same purpose. But the most important controlled source was the water of the wells, especially in North India. Almost all the irrigational devices were oriented towards drawing water from wells.

The latter were more often than not masonry ones with raised walls and enclosures platforms. Kuchcha wells also existed, but these could not have been durable or strong enough for extensive water-lifting.

TEXTILE TECHNOLOGY

During the sultanate various new techniques were introduced by the turks in the field of textile.

Ginning, Carding and Spinning

Cotton cultivation belongs to agricultural technology. After picking up cotton balls, there were three basic stages before cotton could be used for weaving:

- (i) ginning or seed extraction;
- (ii) carding or fibre loosening; and
- (iii) spinning or making yarn.

The first was done in two ways:

- (a) roller and board method, and
- (b) worm-press or worm-roller (charkhi).

Weaving

A horizontal loom of throw-shuttle type was used for simple or tabby weave. It is difficult to determine whether the pit-loom (treadle loom) was in use in Ancient India, but we get the first evidence of this loom in the Miftah-ul Fuzala (c. A.D. 1469). This loom allowed the weaver to employ his hitherto idle feet to lift and depress the sets of warp threads, while his hands worked mainly upon the shuttle and the shed. This speeded up the pace of weaving.

Dyeing and Printing

Various colours derived from vegetable and mineral sources were used for dyeing. Indigo, madder and lakh, etc. were widely employed. Indigo was used for both bleaching and dyeing. For fast colours, many articles like alum were added. The Indian dyer (rangrez) employed many techniques like immersion, tie-and-dye (bandhana), etc. But block-printing (chhapa) was perhaps unknown in Ancient India. Some scholars credit the Muslims with its diffusion in India.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Medieval India

In this section our focus would be on major building construction devices introduced by the Turks in India.

Lime Mortar

The traditional basic units of construction in Ancient India consisted of clay, stones, wood and occasionally bricks. The simplest cementing material or mortar was plain earth mixed with water. An improved kind was straw (bhus) added to a mixture of clay and water which was used for plastering also. But lime mortar was definitely brought by the immigrant Muslims during the Delhi Sultanate.

The basic ingredients in lime-mortar were lime (chuna) and surkhi (pounded bricks). Lime was of various kinds, according to the material from which it was extracted. The two major sources of lime were gypsum and gravel (kankar). The latter were first burnt in kilns yielding quicklime. This quicklime was then treated with water to turn it into slake lime. Surkhi was added to this mix. Afterwards, a number of gelatinous, glutinous and resinous cementing agents like gum, pulses, jaggery, etc. were added to make the mortar more sticky.

Arch and Dome/Vaulted Roofing

One result of lime mortar was the extensive use of bricks as it made the brick buildings more durable. Another important consequence was that lime mortar paved the way for the construction of true arch (mihrab). Actually, the very arrangement of bricks or stones in making a true arch demands a strong cementing material to hold the voussoirs together. Lime mortar fulfilled this need. This explains the almost total absence of true arch in Indian buildings prior to the Turkish advent. The only exception, however, was the Kushana period: excavations at Kausambi (near Allahabad) have revealed the existence of some arches - over small windows (not gates).

UNIT III

15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

The Mughal policy towards the Rajputs contributed to the expansion and consolidation of the Mughal Empire under Akbar and his successors. For long it has been held that the Mughal alliance with the Rajputs was determined by personal religious beliefs of the individual rulers. On this basis, Akbar's liberalism and Aurangzeb's orthodoxy were considered the touchstone of their policies and its impact on the political scene. However, recently the Mughal-Rajput relations are being studied within the framework of Mughal nobility as well as the tensions within the different segments of the nobility itself.

A centralised bureaucratic empire like that of the Mughals was confronted with the problem of distribution of power between its various components. The political vicissitudes of the Mughal Empire were governed to a large extent by the struggle for supremacy or autonomy by the aristocratic elements, i.e., the Mughal bureaucracy and, the autonomous rajas anti zamindars. The socio-cultural factors and the geostrategic context of the country are equally important to be

NOTES

NOTES

taken into account. Rajasthan (which was the connecting link between the Gangetic valley and the coastal belt of western India) and Malwa in Central India played a pivotal role in determining the early course of political events in North India. The Mughal-Rajput conflict cannot be understood independently but should be seen as part of a conflict which had a past history. It developed against the backdrop of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate and the emergence of a new state system in Rajasthan, Malwa and Gujarat.

The scope of the present Unit confines itself to the process of the establishment of Mughal rule in India under Babur and Humayun. Afghans' bid to challenge and overthrow Mughal authority is also discussed. A brief survey of the Afghan rule has also been attempted. The Unit deals mainly with the territorial expansion under Babur and Humayun.

3.19 MAJOR PROVINCIAL DYNASTIES

Amber, Mewar, Marwar, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Bundi and Kota were some of the important Rajput states in Rajasthan. We will briefly discuss their emergence as powerful Rajput states and their political relations with the Mughals.

AMBER (JAIPUR)

Amber is identified with the present day Jaipur. Located in eastern Rajasthan, it was ruled by the Kachhawahas. During the early years of Akbar's reign, the rulers of Amber was Raja Bharma. We will discuss Akbar's relations with Amber in next unit.

MARWAR (JODHPUR)

The Rathor chieftains of Jodhpur came from Kannauj region and established a monarchy. Rao Jodha (1446-53) founded the city of Jodhpur and it became the seat of power. Gradually, the Rathors extended their control over the large desert tract of north-west Rajasthan. Many Rathor states, namely Merta, Bikaner, Kishangarh and Nagaur came into existence, and the ruling families of these states had lineage links with the Rathor family of Jodhpur. In 1563-64, Jodhpur under Chandrasen was subdued by Akbar. It was conferred upon Mota Raja in 1583. Matrimonial alliances were established with the ruler of Marwar and mansabs were granted to him and his sons.

MEWAR

Mewar was one of the largest Rajput states in Rajasthan. It had three strong forts, *i.e.*, Chittor, Kumbhalmer and Mandal. It was ruled by the Sisodia chiefs. The trade-route from Agra to Gujarat passed through the Sisodia territory; therefore, it had great importance for the Mughal Emperor. The Sisodia chieftains had brought many local chieftains under their hegemony. The contest of Rana Sanga with Babur will be discussed in the next section. Mewar's defeat attracted external invasions. Bahadur Shah of Gujarat attacked Mewar and succeeded in forcing the Rana to accept his suzerainty. Rana Udai Singh, the successor of Rana Vikramjit, gave shelter to Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa. Akbar led an expedition against Chittor in 1567 and captured it.

Rana Pratap succeeded Udai Singh. He refused to pay personal homage to Akbar but sent his son Amar Singh along with pesbkash to the court. The result

NOTES

was the battle of Haldighati which proved ruinous for the Rajputs. Mewar had always defied Mughal authority due to its size, terrain and geographical location. Under Akbar no favours were given to Mewar. In 1614, Prince Khurram led an expedition and forced Rana Amar Singh to submit. The Rana sent his son Kunwar Karan to the court where he was treated favourably. He was given the status of a mansabdar of panj bazari (5000 zat). However, the treaty which was contracted between the Rana and the Mughals, granted many privileges to the Rana. It was decided that the Rana would not render military service to the Mughals in person, but he would depute a person with only 1500 troopers. It was also decided that the Rana would not get the fort of Chittor repaired. The Rana enjoyed the status of 5000 zat in the Mughal mamab hierarchy. In 1619, when Rana Amar Singh died, Kunwar Karan succeeded him with the title of rana and the mamab of 5000 zat. After his death in 1628, his son Jagat Singh received the mansab of 5000 zat and 5000 sawar from Emperor Shah Jahan.

JAISALMER

In the Western Thar desert of Rajasthan, there were many Bhati chieftains independent of each other. Muhta Nainsi, a compiler of the Khyat in the second half of seventeenth century, has referred to many of them ruling over Pugal, Bikanpur, Derawar, Motasar, Hapasar and Jaisalmer. They did not have a centralized political organisation but Jaisalmer was the largest and the most powerful Bhati state among these. Rao don Karan (1528-50) subdued the chieftain of Derawar and included it in his temtory. Rawd Har Raj of Jaisalmer, who was related to the Kachhawaha family by matrimonial ties was brought by Bhagwant Das to join Emperor Akbar's service in 1570. His acceptance of Mughal suzerainty was accompanied by the marriage of his daughter to the Emperor. Further, this bond was strengthened by giving Har Raj's son Rawal Bhim's daughter in marriage to Prince Salim. She was given the title of malika-i-Jahan. Rawal Bhim (1578-1614) rendered military service to the Mughab in Sind and was given the mansab of 3000 zat by the i d of Akbar's reign.

THE RAJPUT STATES IN CENTRAL INDIA

The important Rajput states in central India were Dhandera Rewa and Orcha.

Dhandera

It was a Rajput principality in the suba of Malwa. The chieftains of chandera were connected to the Bundelas and Panwars

Orcha

A large principality in central India known as Orcha was in the possession of the Bundela Rajputs. It was situated on a strategically important route linking the North and Deccan. The Mughals taking advantage of the internal dissensions among the Bundehs curdled their power by dividing their territory among different families.

Bandhogarh or Rewa

The chieftains of Bandhogarh are known as Baghelas. Their territory was large and was a part of Allahabad suba.

NOTES

3.20 THE VIJAYNAGAR EMPIRE

During the 8-13th century, the struggle was between the Rashtrakutas and the Pallavas while the following centuries saw Vijaynagar and Bahmani kingdoms locking horns. The Bahmanis compelled the Vijaynagar rulers to expand laterally westward and eastward across the peninsula from the main centre of their power on the Tungabhadra. The Vijaynagar rulers also found it difficult to crush the Bahmani power in Raichur and Tungabhadra doab because of latter's alliance with the Velamas of Rajakonda in Warangal. These circumstances prevented Vijaynagar from advancing towards the north and forced it to expand laterally eastward and westward across the peninsula and southwards into the Tamil country.

Later however this alliance broke up which enabled Vijaynagar to expand at the cost of Bahmanis.

EARLY PHASE, 1336-1509

Rivalries in this period ensued among Vijaynagar, Bahmanis, the Reddis of Kondavidu (in the reaches of upper Krishna-Godavari delta), the Velamas of Rajakonda (in the lower reaches of Krishna-Godavari delta), the Telugu-Chodas (between Krishna-Godavari region) and the Gajapatis of Orissa over the control of the Krishna-Godavari delta, Tungabhadra doab and Marathwada (specially Konkan).

On account of constant clashes, the Vijaynagar boundaries kept on changing. Between 1336-1422, major conflicts took place between Vijaynagar and the Bahmanis with Telugu-Choda chiefs siding with the latter while the Velamas of Rajakonda and the Reddis of Rajahmugdry joined hands with Vijaynagar. This tilted the balance largely in favour of the latter.

During 1422-46, clash over the annexation of Raichur doab started between the Vijaynagar and the Bahmani rulers which resulted in Vijaynagar defeat. This greatly exposed the weaknesses of the Vijaynagar arms. It forced its rulers to reorganise the army by enlisting Muslim archers and engaging better quality horses. The muslim archers were given revenue assignments. During this period the entire Kondavidu region was annexed to the Vijaynagar empire.

Between 1465-1509 again, the Raichur doab became the cockpit of clashes. In the beginning, Vijaynagar had to surrender the western ports, i.e. Goa, Chaul and Dabhol to the Bahmanis. But, around 1490, internal disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom began with the establishment of Bijapur under Yusuf Adil Khan. Taking advantage of the situation, Vijaynagar succeeded in occupying Tungabhadra region (Adoni and Kurnool). Earlier, the loss of western ports had completely dislocated horse trade with the Arabs on which Vijaynagar army depended for its cavalry. However, occupation of Honavar, Bhatkal, Bakanur and Mangalore ports led to the revival of horse trade. This ensured the regular supply which sustained the efficiency of the Vijaynagar army.

The Gajapatis of Orissa were an important power in the eastern region. They had in their possession areas like Kondavidu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam. The Vijaynagar rulers succeeded in expelling the Gajapatis as far as Godavari and occupied Kondavidu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam. But soon in 1481, Masulipatam was lost to the Bahmanis. Vijaynagar had also to contend with the constant

rebellions of the chieftains of Udsvaairi. Ummatur (near Mysore) and Scrimantam.

KRISHNADEVA RAYA, 1509-29

This phase is marked by the achievements of Vijaynagar's greatest ruler Krishnadeva Raya (1509-29). During this period; the power of the Bahmanis declined, leading to the emergence of five kingdoms: the Nizam-Shahis of Ahmadnagar; the Adil Shahis of Bijapur; the Imad, Shahis of Berar, the Qutb Shahis of Golconda and the Barid Shahis of Bidar on the ruins of the Bahmani empire. This helped Krishnadeva Raya greatly in capturing Kovilkonda and Raichur from the Adil Shahis of Bijapur and Gulbarga and Bidar from the Bahmanis. Krishnadeva Raya also recovered Udayagiri, Kondavidu (south of fiver Krishna), Nalgonda (in Andhra Pradesh) Telingana and Warangal were taken ,from the Gajapatis.

By 1510, the Portuguese also emerged as a strong power to reckon with in Indian waters. Occupation of Goa and sack of Danda Rajouri and Dabhol provided them monopoly in horse trade since Goa had been the entrepot of the Deccan states for horse trade. Krishnadeva Raya maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese. On Albuquerque's request, Krishnadeva Raya permitted the construction of a fort at Bhatkal. Similarly, the Portuguese soldiers played a reasonable role in Krishnadeva Raya's success against Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur.

PERIOD OF INSTABILITY : 1529-42

Krishnadeva Raya's death generated internal strifes and attracted external invasions. Taking advantage of the internal situation, Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur seized Raichur and Mudgal. The Gajapati and Golconda kings also, though unsuccessfully attempted to occupy Kondavidu. During this turbulence, Krishnadeva Raya's brother Achyut Raya (1529-42) succeeded in usurping the Vijaynagar throne. But the latter's death once again led to the war of succession between Achyut Raya's son and Sadasiva, the nephew of Achyut Raya. Finally, Sadasiva ascended the throne (1542), but the real power remained in the hands of Rama Raya, the son-in-law of Krishnadeva Raya.

He followed the policy of admitting Muslims in the army and conferred important offices on them which greatly enhanced the efficiency of the army.

3.21 THE FIRST PHASE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE: BABUR AND HUMAYUN

The first half of the fifteenth century witnessed political instability with the disintegration of the Tughluq dynasty. Both the Saiyyad (1414-1451) and the Lodi (1451-1526) rulers failed to cope with the disruptive forces. The nobles resented and rebelled at the earliest opportunity. The political chaos in the North-West provinces had weakened the centre. Now let us examine what was happening in other parts of India.

In Central India there were three kingdoms: Oujarat, Malwa and Mewar. The power of Sultan Mahmud Khalji II of Malwa was, however, on the decline. Gujarat was ruled by Muzaffar Shah II, while Mewar under the leadership of Sisodia ruler Rana Sanga was the most powerful kingdom. Rulers of Malwa were

NOTES

NOTES

under constant pressure of the Lodis, Mewar and Gujarat. This was because it was not only the most fertile region and an important source for elephant supply but it also provided an important trade route to Gujarat sea-ports. Hence, it was an important region for the Lodis. Besides, for both Gujarat and Mewar it could serve as a buffer against the Lodis. The Sultan of Malwa was an incompetent ruler, and his prime minister Medini Rai could hardly hold the kingdom intact for long in the wake of internal strifes. Finally, Rana Sanga, succeeded in extending his influence over Malwa and Gujarat. By the close of the 15th century, Rana Sanga's sway over Rajputana became almost complete with the occupation of Ranthambhor and Chanderi. Further south, there were powerful Vijaynagar and Bahmani kingdoms. Towards the east, Nusrat Shah ruled Bengal.

Towards the closing years of Ibrahim Lodi's reign, Afghan chieftains Nasir Khan Lohani, Ma'ruf Farmuli, etc. succeeded in carving out separate kingdom of Jaunpur under Sultan Muhammad Shah. Besides these major powers, there were numerous Afghan chieftaincies around Agra - the most powerful ones being those of Hasan Khan in Mewar, Nizam Khan in Bayana, Muhammad Zaitun in Dholpur, Tatar Khan Sarang Khani in Gwalior, Husain Khan Lohani in Rapri. Qutub Khan in Etawa, Alam Khan in Kalpi, and Qasim Sambhali in Sambhal, etc.

While analysing the political set-up on the eve of Babur's invasion it is generally said (Rushbrooke William) that there was confederacy of Rajput principalities which was ready to seize the control of Hindustan. It is held that had Babur not intervened, the Rajputs led by their illustrious leader Rana Sanga would have captured power in northern India. It is argued that the political division of the regional states was religious in nature and that Rajput confederacy under Rana Sanga fired by religious zeal wanted to establish a Hindu Empire. This assumption is based on the famous passage of Baburnama where Babur says that Hindustan was governed by 'five Musalman rulers': the Lodis (at the centre), Gujarat, Malwa, Bahmani, and Bengal, and two 'pagans' (Rana Sanga of Mewar and Vijaynagar). Besides, the fathnama issued after the battle of Khanwa suggests that Rajput confederacy under Rana was inspired by religious zeal and organised with the intention to overthrow the "Islamic power".

However, such observations have been questioned by historians. Babur has nowhere suggested that these powers were antagonistic against each other on religious grounds. Instead, Babur himself admits that many rais and ranas were obedient to Islam. Moreover, if we see the composition of the confederacy, there were many Muslim chieftains like Hasan Khan Mewati, Mahmud Khan Lodi, etc. who side with Rana Sanga against Babur. Rather Waq'at-i Mushtaqi (1560) blames Hasan Khan Mewati for creating the confederacy to overthrow the Mughal power in India. In fact, it was not Rana Sanga, but Sultan Mahmud who proclaimed himself the king of Delhi. Though, the power of Rana was unquestionable, Babur was more anxious of Afghan menace: thus the theory of religious consideration does not seem to hold ground.

FOUNDATION OF MUGHAL RULE IN INDIA

Much before the final showdown at the battle of Panipat (1526), Babur had invaded India four times. These skirmishes were trials of strength of Mughal arms and Lodi forces.

The first to fall was Bhira (1519-1520), the gateway of Hindustan, followed by Sialkot (1520) and Lahore (1524). Finally, Ibrahim Lodi and Babur's forces

met at the historic battle field of Panipat. The battle lasted for just few hours in favour of Babur. The battle shows Babur's skill in the art of warfare. His soldiers were less in number but the organisation was superior. Ibrahim's forces though many times greater in number (approximately 1,00,000 soldiers and 1000-500 elephants as compared to Babur's 12,000 horseman) fared badly. Babur successfully applied the Rumi (Ottoman) method of warfare.

As the Afghans advanced to attack the right flank; Babur ordered his reserve forces under Abdul Aziz to move. The Afghans, greater in number, were unable to move forward nor backward. They were attacked from both sides. This created total confusion among the Afghan forces, Babur took full advantage of the situation and his right and left wings soon attacked the Afghan forces from the rear side. This was followed with the opening up of fireshots. This completely paralysed the Afghan army. Afghan casualties reported by Babur were approximately 20,000 including the Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. In the battle it was not Babur's artillery but his 'superb tactics' and the 'mounted archers' played the decisive role; a fact which Babur himself acknowledged.

The battle of Panipat, though, formally established the Mughal rule in India, it was first among the series of battles in the years to come. For example, to secure this triumph, it was equally important to overcome Rana Sanga of Mewar and the chieftains in and around Delhi and Agra. Another important opponent in the eastern India was the Afghans. To add to this, problems were mounting within his own nobility.

BABUR AND THE RAJPUT KINGDOMS

We have already discussed that Rana Sanga of Mewar was a power to reckon with. Babur, in his Memoir, has blamed Rana Sanga for breaking his promise by not siding with him in the battle of Panipat against Ibrahim Lodi. Leaving apart the controversy whether it was Rana or Babur who asked for help, the fact remains that there was some understanding on both sides to join hands against Ibrahim Lodi in which the Rana faltered. Rana expected Babur to return to Kabul and leave him free to establish his hegemony, if not over whole of Hindustan, at least over Rajputana. Babur's decision to stay back must have given a big jolt to Rana's ambitions. Babur was also fully aware of the fact that it would be impossible for him to consolidate his position in India unless he shattered the Rana's power. Rana Sanga this time succeeded in establishing the confederacy against Babur with the help of Afghan nobles. Hasan Khan Mewati not only joined the Rana but also played a crucial role in forming the confederacy. This time (1527) Hasan Khan of Bari and Husain Khan Gurg-andaz joined the Rana. Husain Khan Nuhani occupied Rapri, Rustam Khan prevailed over Koil, while Qutub Khan captured Chandawar, Pressure of eastern Afghans was so much that Sultan Muhammad Duldai had to leave Kannauj and join Babur. To add to this, the defeat of Babur's commander Abdul Aziz and Muhibb Ali at Biana and their praise of the valour of the Rajput army completely demoralised Babur's army. Ferishta and Badauni (Akbar's contemporary) comment that "the sense of defeatism was so strong that it was proposed by a majority at a council of war that the Badshah should withdraw to Punjab and wait for developments of unseen events". The Baburnama does not say anything about such a proposal, but this shows the general feeling of "despair and frustration". However, Babur prevailed over the situation with his fiery speech touching the religious sentiments of his men. Babur fortified his

NOTES

position near Sikri at the village Khanwa. Here also he planned and organised his army on the 'Ottoman' lines. This time he took the support of a tank on his left, front side again was defended by carts but ropes were replaced by iron chains. However, this time he used the strong wooden tripods connected with each other by ropes. They offered not only protection and rest to the guns but also they could move them forward and backward on the wheels. It took around 20-25 days to complete the strategy under Ustad Mustafa and Ustad Ali. In the battle (17th March, 1527) Babur made use of his artillery well. Rana Sanga got severely wounded and was carried to Baswa near Amber. Among his other associates, Mahmud Khan Lodi escaped but Hasan Khan Mewati was killed. The Rajputs suffered a big loss. In fact, there was hardly any contingent whose commander was not killed. Shyamal Das (Vir Vinod) attributes treachery of Silhadi of Raisen as the major factor behind the defeat of Rana. But, in fact, it was irrational for Rana to remain inactive for over three weeks. This provided an opportunity to Babur to strengthen himself and prepare for war. Babur's disciplined army, mobile cavalry and his artillery played most decisive role in the battle.

Though the Mewar Rajputs received a great shock at Khanwa, Medini Rai at Malwa was still a power to reckon with. We have already discussed how in 1520 Rana Sanga bestowed Malwa on Medini Rai, the chief noble of Mahmud II of Malwa. In spite of great *vaisur* with which the Rajputs fought at Chanderi (1528), Babur faced little difficulty in overcoming Medini Rai. With his defeat, resistance across Rajputana was completely shattered. But Babur had to tackle the Afghans. Mahmud Khan Lodi who had already escaped towards the east could create problems if left unchecked.

BABUR AND THE AFGHAN CHIEFTAINS

The Afghans had surrendered Delhi, but they were still powerful in the east (Bihar and parts of Jaunpur) where the Nuhani Afghans were dominant led by Sultan Muhammad Nuhani. The Afghans of Chunar, Jaunpur and Awadh were not feady to cooperate with the Nuhanis in a bid to give a united opposition against the Mughals. Instead, they surrendered meekly to Humayun (1527). In the meantime Sultan Muhammad Nuhani died (1528) and left the Nuhanis disjoined as his son Jalal Khan was still a minor. But the vacuum was soon filled by the appearance of Prince Mahmud Lodi, son of Sikandar Lodi and brother of Ibrahim. The Afghans, including the non-Nuhanis, who were a little hesitant earlier to side with the Nuhanis, now readily accepted Mahmud's leadership. Besides, even the Nuhani Afghans like Babban, Bayazid and Fath Khan Sarwani, etc. who felt leaderless with the desertion of Jalal to Bengal, welcomed Mahmud, Nusrat Shah of Bengal also, though apparently advocated friendship with Babur, secretly adopted hostile measures against him. He considered the existence of the Nuhani kingdom in Bihar as buffer between the Mughals and his own possessions in parts of Bihar.

Babur could hardly afford to ignore these developments. He mobilized his forces at Ghagra and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Nusrat Shah's army (1529). Thus ended the Afghan-Nusrat coalition and Nusrat Shah had to surrender large number of Afghan rebels who had taken asylum in his territory. The Afghans were now totally demoralized. Though Babban and Bayazid did attempt to resist at Awadh, but when pressurized (1529) they fled to Mahmud. Thus, within four

years Babur succeeded in crushing the hostile powers and now could think of consolidating himself at Delhi. But he could hardly get the opportunity to rule as he died soon after (29 December, 1530).

The establishment of the Mughal Empire under the aegis of Babur was significant. Though the Afghans and Rajputs could not be crushed completely, a task left to his successors, his two major blows at Panipat and Khanwa were certainly decisive and destroyed the balance of power in the region and perhaps was a step towards the establishment of an all-India empire.

HUMAYUN : 1530 — 1540

The situation under Humayun was quite different. Like Babur he did not command the respect and esteem of the nobility. Moreover, the Chaghatai nobles were not favourably inclined towards him and the Indian nobles, who had joined Babur's service, deserted the Mughals at Humayun's accession. Muhammad Sultan Mina, a descendant of Timur; Muhammad Zaman and Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwaja, brother-in-law of Babur, were considered worthy to aspire to the throne; especially Amir Nizamuddin Ali Khalifa, a grandee of Babur, hatched a conspiracy which failed. To sustain imperial power and hegemony, Humayun had to contend against the Afghans both in the east and the west which was supported by a large social base. But, most dangerous of all, was Humayun's brother Kamran Mirza. The situation was further aggravated by the existence of two centres of power within the empire — Humayun at the centre and Kamran's autonomous control over Afghanistan and Punjab. Humayun decided to deal, at first, with the western Afghans.

BAHADUR SHAH AND HUMAYUN

Humayun's relations with Bahadur Shah represent a curious contrast due to the circumstances. In the beginning (Jan. 1531 to mid 1533), Bahadur Shah assured Humayun of friendship and loyalty. But, at the same time he also attempted to expand his area of influence closer to Mughal frontiers. The first to taste the wrath was Malwa. Bahadur Shah was a little apprehensive of the Mughal designs on Malwa. He feared that if this buffer state between the two was left unoccupied, the Mughals might attempt to conquer it. Besides, all trade routes to Gujarat ports passed through Malwa. It was also very fertile and rich in grain production and Gujarat depended much upon this region for grain supply. After 1530, Bahadur Shah started putting up military pressure on Malwa and finally occupied it in Jan. 1531. Soon after, Bahadur Shah started making alliances with Humayun's adversaries in the east - Sher Shah in Bihar (1531-32) and Nusrat Shah in Bengal (Aug.-Sept. 1532). Nusrat Shah is also reported to have sent an embassy under Khwajasara Malik (Aug.-Sept. 1532) who was well received by Bahadur Shah. Besides, many disgruntled Afghans of the north and the east also joined him in a bid to oust Mughals in order to regain their lost pride. Sultan Alauddin Lodi, son of Bahlul Lodi, and his sons Fath Khan and Tatar Khan, Rai Nar Singh, nephew of Raja Bikramajit of Gwalior (1528) and Alam Khan Lodi of Kalpi (1531), all looked towards Bahadur Shah and extended their help against the Mughals. Even the eastern Afghans, Babban Khan Lodi (Shahu Khail), Malik Roop Chand, Dattu Sarwani and Ma'ruf Farmuli joined hands with Bahadur Shah.

NOTES

NOTES

Humayun could ill afford to ignore these developments. Situation could have worsened in case of combined Afghan attack from east and the west. In the meantime, Bahadur Shah's aggressive designs continued unabated. He occupied Bhilsa, Raisen, Ujjain and Gagraon. Thus he could well keep the Mughals away from Gwalior, Kalinjar, Bayana and Agra. While Bahadur Shah was busy in expanding towards Malwa and Rajputana Humayun was besieging Chunar. These developments forced him to rush back to Agra (1532-33). But Bahadur Shah was keen to avoid any clash with the Mughals and immediately sent an embassy under Khurasan Khan (1533-34). Humayun demanded that he should not give shelter to Mughal rebels especially Muhammad Zaman Mirza. At the same time Humayun agreed not to threaten the Gujarati establishments while Bahadur Shah promised to withdraw from Mandu. Bahadur Shah in the meantime was involved in suppressing the Portuguese menace (Sept.-Dec. 1533) and Humayun was busy in tackling the Afghans in the east.

New developments resulted in the invasion of Gujarat by Humayun in 1535. In Jan. 1534 Bahadur Shah gave shelter to Muhammad Zaman Mirza and also attacked Chittor. Chittor was important for Bahadur Shah for it could provide him a strong base. It could have also facilitated expansion towards Ajmer, Nagor and Ranthambhor. But Humayun at this point made no attempt to stop Bahadur Shah from conquering Chittor. He took a longer route to reach Chittor. It seems that Humayun was not very keen to stop Bahadur Shah from occupying Chittor. Bahadur Shah was anxious to reach Mandu before Humayun could intercept. But the latter reached there much before. Mandu was the only route to retreat from Chittor to Gujarat and that was already occupied by Humayun. He blocked Bahadur Shah's camp from all directions thus cutting the supplies. Within a month, with no hope left, Gujarati army themselves destroyed their best artillery to stop the Mughals to use it against them. Bahadur Shah fled from Mandu to Champaner, Ahmedabad, Cambay and crossed Kathiawar and reached Diu. Mughals chased him. But, again, they hardly showed any eagerness for either arresting or killing Bahadur Shah. It seems that the real aim of Humayun was just to destroy the power of Gujarat. At Champaner, when Bahadur Shah was recognised by Mughal officers, they did not arrest him. Soon Humayun had to leave Mandu and rush to Agra because his long absence from there had resulted in rebellions in Doab and Agra. Mandu was now left under the charge of Mirza Aaskari. The handling of local population by the Mughals had caused widespread indignation. People were looted and slaughtered. As a result, as soon as Humayun left Mandu people rejoiced Bahadur Shah's return from Diu. Bahadur Shah took advantage of the opportunity and defeated the Mughals at Ahmedabad. In the meantime, to check the Portuguese advance, Bahadur Shah had to return to Diu. But this time the Portuguese succeeded and Bahadur Shah was treacherously murdered (17 Feb. 1537). This created confusion everywhere. The Afghans, left with no alternative, now turned towards Sher Shah for leadership.

EASTERN AFGHANS AND HUMAYUN

The Afghans' defeat at the hands of Humayun (siege of Chunar November, 1531) resulted in the flight of Afghan nobles to Gujarat. This created a political vacuum in the east, providing an opportunity to Sher Khan to consolidate his power. The period between 1530-35 proved crucial for Sher Shah. To consolidate

his position in the east, he had to tackle with Bengal and Afghan nobles who got shelter under the Bengal ruler. On the otherhand, he was hardly in a position to face the Mughals in case of any direct clash. Fortunately circumstances took a favourable turn for Sher Shah. Considering Bahadur Shah of Gujarat a serious threat, Humayun decided to tackle him first. During this period Sher Shah was left free to consolidate himself.

Sher Shah had to face two invasions of Bengal rulers. The first attack took place under Qutub Khan, the muqti of Munger in 1532-33 during Sultan Nusrat Shah's reign, and, the second under Ibrahim Khan during Sultan Mahmud Shah's reign (1534). However, Bengal armies were defeated on both the occasions. These successes completely exposed the weakness of the Bengal army. This raised the prestige of Sher Khan. The eastern Afghans who had earlier deserted him now rushed to serve under his banner. Besides, the destruction and death of Bahadur Shah by Humayun left the Afghans with no alternative but to join him against the Mughals.

Now Sher Shah wanted to establish himself as the undisputed Afghan leader. This time (1535) he took the offensive and defeated the Bengal army in the battle of Surajgarh. In a peace settlement after the battle, Sultan Mahmud Shah of Bengal agreed to supply war elephants and financial help to Sher Shah whenever required. This grand success against Bengal, followed by his attacks on the Mughal territories in the east (from Gorakhpur to Banaras) alarmed Humayun. Humayun now deputed Hindu Beg as governor (hakim) of Jaunpur to keep an eye on the developments in the eastern region. But, Sher Shah, acting cautiously on the one hand-assured Hindu Beg of his loyalty, while on the other utilized the time for strengthening his army for his next onslaught on Mughals. As soon his preparations were over, he wrote a threatening letter to Hindu Beg. At the same time he launched his second attack on Bengal(1537). Hindu Beg, annoyed with Sher Shah's behaviour, reported his hostile intentions to Humayun. The Afghan nobles suggested Humayun to stop Sher Shah from occupying Bengal, while the Mughal nobles advised him to occupy Chunar first to use it as a base for his operations in the east. The latter option was important for maintaining the line of communications with Agra. But it took too long for Rumi Khan to capture Chunar (6 months). Historians consider it a great 'mistake' that cost Humayun his 'empire'. Though leaving Chunar in the hands of the Afghans could have been unwise, leaving Sher Shah free and unchecked in Bengal was 'equally a wrong'. Sher Shah utilized the time and captured Gaur (April, 1538), the capital of Bengal.

At this stage, Humayun asked Sher Shah to transfer Bengal and Rohtasgarh to him, but Sher Shah was not ready to surrender Bengal and the negotiations failed. Now Humayun decided to curb Sher Shah's power but he did not want to involve himself in Bengal politics. Yet, the circumstances were forcing him towards it. Sher Shah shrewdly withdrew from Bengal, and Humayun, with no obvious obstructions, reached Bengal (September, 1538).

He had to stay there for four months until he finally settled the prevailing chaos. In the meantime Sher Shah succeeded in controlling the routes to Agra thus making communication difficult for Humayun. To add to Humayun's worries, Hindal Mirza, who was sent to gather supplies for his army, assumed sovereign power. Humayun humed back to Chunar and reached Chausa (March 1539). He encamped on the western side of the river Karmnasa. At this stage Humayun

NOTES

NOTES

was still in control of the situation. On the front side he was guarded by the river, while to his rear was Chunar, which was still in the hands of his men. Sher Shah, too, showed willingness to accept truce. But at this stage Humayun unnecessarily exposed himself to danger by crossing the river. Sher Shah knowing fully well the paucity of Humayun's provisions, equipment and transport wasted no time in exploiting the situation. He, while pretending to fulfil the terms of the truce, attacked the Mughal army. Panic spread in the Mughal camp. Large number of Mughal forces were killed. Humayun and Askari Mirza managed to flee. Humayun reached Agra by way of Kara Manikpur and Kalpi (July 1539). Raja Virbhan, the ruler of Gahora, helped greatly in rescuing them. Kamran Mirza welcomed Humayun on his return to Agra with his army totally destroyed; while Sher Shah, elated by his victory, proclaimed himself an independent king. Under these circumstances, the final clash was inevitable. Humayun was defeated badly in the battle of Kannauj the banks of Ganga (1540). This paved the way for the establishment of the second Afghan empire in India. A number of factors had contributed in Humayun's debacle against Sher Shah. These include:

- (i) He faced hostility of his brothers. On many occasions he dealt with them too kindly.
- (ii) Sometime he reacted lethargically when the situation demanded swift action. This can be seen well in his Gujarat and Bengal campaigns.
- (iii) He was also victim of an 'inexorable fate'. For example Mahmud Shah of Bengal kept him unnecessarily involved in Bengal politics. This provided an opportunity to Sher Shah to gain strength.
- (iv) Humayun also lacked financial resources for continuous warfare: This weakness became very much evident when in Bengal he got stranded and lacked money and supplies (1539).
- (v) Besides, Sher Shah had the courage, experience and organising abilities; he was also skilled in exploiting political opportunities. Humayun could not match his capabilities.

3.22 THE SUR EMPIRE AND ADMINISTRATION: 1540-1555

After defeating the Mughal Emperor, Sher Shah declared himself as the sovereign ruler and started building the Second Afghan Empire. The fifteen years (1540-1555) of Afghan rule form an interlude in the history of Mughal Empire. This period, nevertheless, was significant for the administrative innovations and reorganisation.

SHER SHAH SURI

Sher Shah Suri (1486 - May 22, 1545) also known as Sher Khan (The Lion King), was a powerful Afghan (Pashtun) conqueror in medieval Delhi, India. He first served as a private before rising to become a commander in the army of Mughal leader Babur and finally the governor of Bihar. In 1537, when the new Mughal leader Humayun was elsewhere on an expedition, Sher Shah Suri overran Bengal and became the new emperor after establishing the Suri Empire.

A brilliant strategist, Sher Shah proved himself a gifted administrator as well as an able general. His reorganization of the empire laid the foundations for

the later Mughal emperors, notably Akbar, son of Humayun. During his short five year rule from 1540 to 1545, he set up a new template for civic and military administration, issued the first Rupee in use till 20th century and re-organised the postal system of India. He further developed Humayun's Dina-panah city and named it Shergarh and revived the historical city of Patna which had been in decline since the 7th century CE. He is also famously remembered for killing a fully-grown tiger with his bare hands in the jungle.

Recent research indicates that during the time of the Maurya empire in the 3rd century BC, overland trade between India and several parts of western Asia and the Hellenic world went through the cities of the north-west, primarily Taxila (located in present day Pakistan)(see inset in map). Taxila was well connected by roads with other parts of the Maurya empire. The Mauryas had built a highway from Taxila to Pataliputra (present-day Patna in Bihar, India). Great Chandragupta Maurya had a whole army of officials overseeing the maintenance of this road as told by the Greek diplomat Megasthenes who spent fifteen years at the Mauryan court.

In the 16th century, a major road running across the Gangetic plain was built afresh by Pashtun emperor Sher Shah Suri, who then ruled much of northern India. His intention was to link together the remote provinces of his vast empire for administrative and military reasons. The Sadak-e-Azam ("great road") as it was then known, is universally recognized as having been the precursor of the Grand Trunk Road.

The road was initially built by Sher Shah to connect Agra, his capital, with Sasaram, his hometown. It was soon extended westward to Multan and eastward to Sonargaon in Bengal (now in Bangladesh). While Sher Shah died after a brief reign, and his dynasty ended soon afterwards, the road endured as his outstanding legacy. The Mughals, who succeeded the Suris, extended the road westwards: at one time, it extended to Kabul in Afghanistan, crossing the Khyber Pass. This road was later improved by the British rulers of colonial India. Renamed the "Grand Trunk Road" (sometimes referred to as the "Long Walk"), it was extended to run from Calcutta to Peshawar and thus to span a major portion of India.

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Sher Shah rose from the rank of private to be emperor, reorganized the administration efficiently, organised a very well disciplined and one of the largest and most efficient armies which largely had a Pashtun population, an apt tax collection system, built roads and Travelers' inns, rest houses (sarais) and wells, improved the jurisdiction, founded refuges and hospitals, established free kitchens and organized a mail services and the police. What more could his management be proved that even one of the greatest rulers of human history, the Mughal Emperor Akbar, organised the Indian subcontinent on his measures, and even the system which lasted till the 20th century.

He was a visionary ruler and introduced many military and civil reforms. The system of tri-metalism which came to characterise Mughal coinage was largely the creation of Sher Shah Suri. He minted a coin of silver which was termed the Rupee that weighed 178 grains and was the precursor of the modern rupee. The same name is still used for the national currency in Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Mauritius, Maldives, Seychelles among other countries. Gold

NOTES

NOTES

coins called the Mohur weighing 169 grains and copper coins called Dam were also minted by his government.

Mirza Aziz Koka, son of Ataga Khan, and probably Akbar's closest friend and one the most important mansabdar's of the Mughal Empire, wrote this to Emperor Jahangir in one of his personal letters to him.

Specially Sher Khan was not an angel (malak) but a king (malik). In six years he gave such stability to the structure (of the empire) that foundations still survives. He had made India flourishing in such a way that the king of Persia and Turan appreciate it, and have a desire to look at it. Hazrat Arsh Ashiyani (Akbar the great) followed his administrative manual (zawabit) for fifty years and did not discontinue them. In the same India due to able administration of the well wishers of the court, nothing is left except rabble and jungles.

3.23 THE PORTUGUESE

The first Portuguese encounter with India was on May 20, 1498 when Vasco da Gama landed in Calicut (Kozhikode) in the present-day Indian state of Kerala. Over the objections of Arab merchants, Gama managed to secure a letter of concession for trading rights from the Zamorin, Calicut's local ruler. Unable to pay the prescribed customs duties (that Gama sought to be waived) and price of his goods in gold (as was the practice then), the King's officials detained Gama's Portuguese agents as security for payment (who were released later). This however annoyed Gama, who carried a few Nairs and sixteen Mukkuva fishermen with him by force. Nevertheless, Gama's expedition was successful beyond all reasonable expectation bringing in cargo that was sixty times the cost of the expedition.

Viceroy Nuno da Cunha (r. 1529-38) established Portuguese settlements on the east coast of India near Madras and at Hughli in Bengal. Goa on the west coast became the capital of Portuguese India in 1530. Diu in Kathiawar was captured in 1535 and was defended against a Turkish navy and the Gujarat sultan three years later and against Gujarat again in 1546. Joao de Castro (r. 1545-48) defeated Bijapur forces attacking Goa, but in 1546 the Turks took the Persian Gulf port of Basra. So many private ships were violating the King's monopoly that the Portuguese began licensing them so that they could collect customs duties from them. Trading ships were required to have a pass called a cartaz. Ships without it could have their goods confiscated and their crews killed. Modern historian R. S. Whiteway considered the Portuguese governors after Castro superstitious, corrupt, and lazy.

Portuguese envoys to Constantinople turned down a proposal to allow Turks in the Indian Ocean, though they offered to pay Portuguese duties and give them access to all Red Sea ports with factories in Basra, Cairo, and Alexandria. The Portuguese lost a fort near Calicut in a land battle in 1570. Eventually the Portuguese provided protective ships called cafilas for large fleets of small boats. The Portuguese also tried to control the horse trade from Arabia and Persia. In 1574 the Church forced buyers to come to Goa for horses, because a Papal Bull had forbidden selling them to infidels. Although Muslims were killed, captured Portuguese were often ransomed. After El-Ksar el-Kehir in 1578 several Portuguese families were nearly bankrupted buying back their relatives.

After 1540 the Portuguese settlements were dominated by the Catholic priests. That year all temples in Goa were ordered destroyed, and the next year

their lands were turned over to the priests. Goa had been given a bishop in 1538 and was declared an archbishopric in 1557. Jesuits led by Francis Xavier arrived in 1542 and converted thousands of fishermen. The Jesuits brought a printing press in 1556. By 1560 the Inquisition was established and began burning unbelievers and apostates. Nestorian Christians were so persecuted that they preferred to trade their pepper with Muslims. In 1561 Catholics in Sri Lanka captured the tooth believed to be the Buddha's. Although the king of Pegu offered more than 300,000 cruzados and a perpetual supply of rice for Melaka, the viceroy D. Constantino de Bragança had the tooth burned, ground up, and scattered at sea. A synod at Diamper in 1599 tried to suppress the Syrian Christianity of Malabar. The Catholics were so hated by the Hindus that many considered converts as losing caste but did not treat Muslim converts that way. By 1600 there were about 175,000 Christians in India, but most of these were low-caste fishers and pearl divers.

NOTES

3.24 SOCIO-RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Bhakti as a religious concept means devotional surrender to a personally conceived Supreme God for attaining salvation. The origin of this doctrine has been traced to both the Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions of ancient India and to variolous scriptures such as the Gita. But it was for the first time in South India between the seventh and tenth century that bhakti grew from a mere religious doctrine into a popular movement based on religious equality and broad based social participation. The movement which was led by popular saint-poets reached its climax in the tenth century after which it began to decline. But it was revived as a philosophical and ideological movement by a series of wandering scholars or acharyas, beginning with Ramanuja in the eleventh century. The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in early thirteenth century witnessed great *outburst of many diverse and widespread socio-religious movements in various parts of the country drawing upon the concepts of bhakti*. These movements have been seen as continuation or revival of the older South Indian bhakti movement. But each one of the later movements which grew in the Sultanate period had a historical context of its own and its own peculiarities.

Moreover, one of them, namely, the non-conformist monotheistic movement which is associated with Kabir and other "low-caste" saints bears only superficial resemblance to the variants of the movement. Its social roots, its ideology, social composition of its leadership and even its concept of bhakti and God set it fundamentally apart, from the older bhakti movement of South India as well as from the rest of the later bhakti movements. In view of these wide and at the same time even basic differences among various bhakti movements, they must be discussed individually in order to clearly bring out the characteristics of each one of them and also to discover elements of unity and diversity among them.

BACKGROUND : BHAKTI MOVEMENT IN SOUTH INDIA

The saiva Nayanar saints and vaishnava. Alvar saints of South India spread the doctrine of bhakti among different sections of the society irrespective of caste and sex during the period between the seventh and the tenth century. Some of these saints came from the "lower" castes and some were women. The saint-

NOTES

poets preached bhakti in an intense emotional manner and promoted religious egalitarianism. They dispensed with rituals and traversed the region several times singing, dancing and advocating bhakti. The Alvar and Nayanar saints used the Tamil language and not Sanskrit for preaching and composing devotional songs. All these features gave the movement a popular character. For the first time bhakti acquired a popular base. The South Indian bhakti saints were critical of Buddhists and Jains who enjoyed a privileged status at the courts of South Indian kings at that time.

BHAKTI MOVEMENT IN NORTH INDIA

There arose during the Sultanate period (13th-15th century) many popular socio-religious movements in North and East India, and Maharashtra. Emphasis on bhakti and religious equality were two common features of these movements. As has been pointed out, these two were also the features of the South Indian bhakti movements. Almost all the bhakti movements of the Sultanate period have been related to one South Indian vaishnava acharya or the other. For these reasons, many scholars believe that the bhakti movements of the Sultanate period were a continuation or-resurgence of the older bhakti movement. They argue that there existed philosophical and ideological links between the two either due to contact or diffusion. Thus, Kabir and other leaders of non-conformist monotheistic movements in North India are believed to have been the disciples of Ramananda who, in turn, is believed to have been connected with Ramanuja's philosophical order. Similar claims have been made that Chaitanya, the most significant figure of the vaishnava movement in Bengal, belonged to the philosophical school of Madhava. This movement is also believed to have been connected with Nimbarka's school because of its emphasis on 'Krishna' bhakti.

There are undoubtedly striking similarities between the older bhakti tradition of South India and various bhakti-movements that flourished in the Sultanate and Mughal periods. If we exclude the popular monotheistic movements of Kabir, Nanak and other "low" caste saints, the two sets of movements can be shown to have possessed many more common features. For example, like the South Indian bhakti movement, the vaishnava bhakti movements of North and Eastern India and Maharashtra, though egalitarian in the religious sphere, never denounced the caste system, the authority of Brahmanical scriptures and the Brahmanical privileges as such.

Consequently, like the South Indian bhakti, most of the vaishnava movements of the later period were ultimately assimilated into the Brahmanical religion, though in the process of interaction, the latter itself underwent many changes. However, the similarities end here. Bhakti movement was never a single movement except in the broad doctrinal sense of a movement which laid emphasis on bhakti and religious equality. The bhakti movements of medieval India differed in many significant respects not only from the older South Indian bhakti tradition but also among themselves. Each one of them had its own regional identity and socio-historical and cultural contexts. Thus, the non-conformist movements based on popular monotheistic bhakti contained features that were essentially different from various vaishnava bhakti movements, Kabir's notion of bhakti was not the same as that of the medieval vaishnavm saints such as Chaitanya or Mirabai. Within the vaishnava movement, the historical context of Maharashtra bhakti

was different from that of the Bengal vaishnavism or North Indian bhakti movement of Ramanand, vallabha, Surdas and Tulsidas. During the later period, when the vaishnava bhakti movement crystallised into sects, there arose frequent disputes between them which sometimes even turned violent. Among all the bhakti movements of the period between the 14th and 17th century, the popular monotheistic movements of Kabir, Nanak, Raidas and other "lower" caste saints stand out fundamentally different.

NOTES

3.25 KABIR

Kabir (1440–1518) was a mystic poet and saint of India, whose writings have greatly influenced the Bhakti movement. The name Kabir comes from Arabic Al-Kabîr which means 'The Great' - the 37th Name of God in the Qur'an.

Apart from having an important influence on Sikhism, Kabir's legacy is today carried forward by the Kabir Panth ("Path of Kabir"), a religious community that recognizes him as its founder and is one of the Sant Mat sects. Its members, known as Kabir panthis, are estimated to be around 9,600,000. They are spread over north and central India, as well as dispersed with the Indian diaspora across the world, up from 843,171 in the 1901 census.

PHILOSOPHIES

Kabir was influenced by the prevailing religious mood of his times, such as old Brahmanic Hinduism, Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism, the teachings of Nath yogis and the personal devotionism of South India mixed with the imageless God of Islam. The influence of these various doctrines is clearly evident in Kabir's verses. Eminent historians like R.C. Majumdar, P.N. Chopra, B.N. Puri and M.N. Das have held that Kabir is the first Indian saint to have harmonised Hinduism and Islam by preaching a universal path which both Hindus and Muslims could tread together. But there are a few critics who contest such claims.

The basic religious principles he espoused are simple. According to Kabir, all life is an interplay of two spiritual principles. One is the personal soul (Jivatma) and the other is God (Paramatma). It is Kabir's view that salvation is the process of bringing these two divine principles into union. The incorporation of much of his verse in Sikh scripture, and the fact that Kabir was a predecessor of Guru Nanak, have led some western scholars to mistakenly describe him as a forerunner of Sikhism.

His greatest work is the Bijak (the "Seedling"), an idea of the fundamental one. This collection of poems elucidates Kabir's universal view of spirituality. Though his vocabulary is replete with Hindu spiritual concepts, such as Brahman, karma and reincarnation, he vehemently opposed dogmas, both in Hinduism and in Islam. His Hindi was a vernacular, straightforward kind, much like his philosophies. He often advocated leaving aside the Qur'an and Vedas and simply following Sahaja path, or the Simple/Natural Way to oneness in God. He believed in the Vedantic concept of atman, but unlike earlier orthodox Vedantins, he followed this philosophy to its logical end by spurning the Hindu societal caste system and worship of murti, showing clear belief in both bhakti and Sufi ideas. The major part of Kabir's work as a bhagat was collected by the fifth Sikh guru, Guru Arjan Dev, and forms a part of the Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib.

While many ideas reign as to who his living influences were, the only Guru of whom he ever spoke was Satguru. Hence one does not find any mention of human gurus in his verses.

NOTES

3.26 NANAK AND SIKHISM (1539-1708)

Instead of choosing one of his two sons, Nanak, before he died in 1539, selected Angad to be the second Guru. Angad died in 1552, and Amar Das succeeded him. Nanak's son Sri Chand had renounced the world, and his disciples practiced celibacy and austerity. Amar Das declared that the reclusive followers of Sri Chand called Udasis were separate from the active and domestic followers of Nanak's teachings who were called Sikhs, meaning "disciples." Amar Das encouraged the disciples to be physically fit and denounced the use of intoxicants. In his congregations women did not observe purdah, and he appointed three women to be preachers. He urged monogamy and encouraged widow remarriage; he discouraged women from beating their breasts in mourning a relative. Amar Das warned devotees against avarice, selfishness, falsehood, greed, hypocrisy, and worldly desires. When Muslims broke the earthen pitchers of Sikhs drawing water from a common well, the Guru advised against taking revenge. Instead they spent three years digging a well, which was completed in 1559. Amar Das died in 1574 and chose his son-in-law Ram Das to succeed him. He had a reservoir dug at a place that became Amritsar. The Sikh religion did not grow rapidly. When Ram Das died in 1581, the number of Sikhs had only doubled in the 42 years since Nanak's death.

The guru after Ram Das was his eighteen-year-old son Arjun. He converted the religious organization into a government by sending out agents to collect taxes (10% of income) instead of merely accepting contributions. These agents were called masands, meaning "nobles," and they were allowed to keep a portion of what they received. Guru Arjun gave the masands turbans and robes of honor. The money was used for building, and Arjun began living in aristocratic style at Amritsar. He encouraged Sikhs to take up commerce as well as agriculture, and some became rich trading horses, timber, or iron; others became carpenters and masons. The famous Emperor Akbar visited Guru Arjun in 1598.

Guru Arjun collected the writings of his predecessors with his own into the *Adi Granth*, meaning "Original Book." Most of the hymns were by the gurus, but a few were by other saints, such as Nam Dev, Kabir, and Farid. Use of these devotional hymns helped develop greater understanding of the Sikh teachings. The *Adi Granth* was completed in 1604. Arjun's longest and most popular hymn is *Sukhamani*, which means "peace of mind" and is often repeated in the morning by Sikhs after the *Jap Ji*. *Sukhamani* praises the infinite attributes of God, warns against the five senses, and describes the spiritual path of God's name. God is truth, which is the highest virtue. Humans experience God by true and pure living. Arjun recommended surrendering oneself to the true Guru. God is reality and the only source of well-being. If you sing God's praises, God will take care of you. Muslims complained to Emperor Akbar that the *Adi Granth* was blasphemous to Islam; but he did not find it so and even contributed 51 gold coins.

The growing wealth and power of Arjun made enemies. He antagonized the Lahore financial administrator when he refused to marry his son to Chandu Shah's daughter. Arjun made prayers for fleeing Prince Khusrav, the rebelling

son of Jahangir, and gave him money. After the new Emperor Jahangir arrested and partially blinded Khusrau, he summoned Guru Arjun to Lahore. The Guru refused to pay a fine or make any changes to the Adi Granth. So he was tortured in the sun and finally drowned while bathing on May 30, 1606. The property of his family had been confiscated. His brother Pirthi Chand wanted to be guru; but Arjun's son Hargobind became recognized as guru even though he was only eleven years old.

Guru Hargobind immediately began wearing two swords and enjoyed hunting and eating meat. He inherited a guard of 52 soldiers, 300 horsemen, and 60 gunners, and he recruited 500 infantry. Hargobind held court and administered justice like a king. Emperor Jahangir ordered Hargobind to pay the outstanding fine of his father Arjun. When he also refused to pay, Hargobind was summoned to Delhi and in 1609 was put under house arrest where Nanak had once lived. Hargobind said he was loyal to Jahangir and was allowed to go hunting with him. The Emperor had Hargobind confined on meager rations in the fort at Gwalior. He was apparently joined by his three wives, who bore him five children before he was released in 1620. Hargobind was given some authority in the Punjab and command over 400 cavalry and a thousand infantry. Pathan mercenaries led by Painsa Khan soon joined under his banner. He went with Emperor Jahangir on his last visit to Kashmir.

Hargobind's youngest son Tegh Bahadur became the Sikh guru. He composed the following song:

He who grieves not in grief,
 From avarice, pleasures, and fear is free,
 And considers gold as good as dust;
 Who indulges not in slander or flattery,
 And is immune to greed, attachment, and vanity;
 Who in happiness and sorrow, self-poised remains,
 And is indifferent to all praise or blame;
 Who discards all hopes and desires;
 Who lives detached from the world,
 And is not affected by lust or wrath;
 In such a one shines the Light of God.
 The man who receives the Guru's grace,
 Discovers this secret of spiritual life;
 Saith Nanak: The soul of such a man blends
 With God, as water mingles with water.

Several people claimed to be the ninth guru; but the merchant Makhan Shah went to each one and dismissed them until he found Tegh Bahadur. Dhir Mal was especially resentful and sent Shihan and ruffians to assassinate his uncle. Shihan shot a bullet that grazed Tegh Bahadur on the shoulder. Kirpal and others then protected the Guru, and Dhir Mal ordered his men to flee with plundered loot. Makhan Shah arrived with armed men and stormed Dhir Mal's house. Dhir Mal and his supporters begged Tegh Bahadur to forgive them, and Makhan Shah made them leave Bakala. In November 1664 Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Amritsar. Although he was not allowed to enter a Sikh temple, he told Makhan Shah that

NOTES

he would never use force. The women of Amritsar persuaded the priests to change their minds. Tegh Bahadur taught that the world is transient. He began five years of traveling and visited Sikh centers in Mughal India and Assam.

NOTES

After Aurangzeb's 1669 order to demolish non-Muslim temples and schools, a Sikh temple at Buriya was replaced by a mosque, which the Sikhs then demolished. Tegh Bahadur in the Punjab encouraged the Sikhs to withstand these persecutions. The Emperor visited the Punjab in 1674, and his officials forced many people to convert to Islam. Kashmiri leaders appealed to Tegh Bahadur, who courageously moved into Mughal territory and advised them to announce they would convert to Islam only after he did. Aurangzeb had Tegh Bahadur arrested and taken to Delhi with five disciples. The Guru refused to perform a miracle or convert to Islam. Two disciples escaped, and the other three were tortured to death; one was sawed in two, another was boiled in oil, and the third was cut in pieces. Tegh Bahadur remained firm and offered the miracle of his sacrifice, saying that paper around his neck would not be cut by a sword; so without torture he was beheaded on November 11, 1675.

Tegh Bahadur's son, Guru Gobind Singh, made major changes in Sikh traditions during their struggles with the Mughal government. He received both a literary and military education, and he was fond of hunting wild boar. When Sikhs visited him annually, Makhwal became an armed camp. The Kahlur chief complained, and Guru Gobind Singh moved to Sirmur near the border of Garhwal. In 1688 the Garhwal invaded Sirmur, and the Sikhs helped win the bloody battle at Bhangani. The next year Guru Gobind Singh returned to Makhwal and founded Anandpur with better defenses; only those who had fought at Bhangani were allowed to live there. He also fought for Kahlur chief Bhim Chand when he refused to pay tribute to the Mughals; but after the victory when Chand agreed to pay the tribute, the Sikhs plundered one of his villages. The Sikhs at Anandpur deterred Mughal attacks, which were diverted into a campaign against the rebel chiefs in the hills during the mid-1690s. Meanwhile Guru Gobind Singh was in contact with Sikh sangats (groups), who were encouraged to send him money, supplies, and weapons.

3.27 GROWTH OF LITERATURE

There was tremendous literary activity during the Mughal period, because with the return of a stable and prosperous empire, there was once again patronage for their work. Languages like Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi and Urdu saw tremendous creative activity as did many vernacular languages.

Persian literature received a lot of attention as it was the court language. A vast number of works were written during the period of the Mughals. Broadly one can divide them into three categories, historical works, translations, poetry and novels. Our understanding of the Mughal period was greatly enhanced by these books, and most of the historical works of this period provide us with a fairly reliable source of information. The important historical works written in this time were *Ain-I-Akbari*, and *Akbarnamah* by Abul Fazl, the *Ta'rikh-I-'Alfi* by Mulla Daud. Jehangir possessed a keen interest in literature, and his autobiography is one of the finest amongst the Mughal emperors. During his reign important historical works like *Ma'asir-I-Jahangir*, the *Iqbalnamah-I-Jahangiri* and the *Zubud-ut-Tawaikh* were written.

Many important works in translation were also written during this period, with the translation of the epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana taking place. Many of the Vedas were also translated and several previous historical books were also translated. All this translation added to the wealth of Indian literature and spread ancient knowledge to a greater audience. This renewed interest in Indian literature would be an important tool used by the social reformers of the eighteenth century to educate the people about what the ancient texts really said as opposed to the distorted interpretations that were being followed.

The Mughal empire had a large number of poets and writers and hence there was a lot of work published in this era. Especially during the reign of Akbar, Jehangir and Shah Jahan they had tremendous patronage and many remarkable works were composed. Since the Mughal emperors had integrated themselves into Indian society, they patronized many Indian languages leading to some good quality literature being developed for these languages. The main themes of the period were essentially religious, covering most of the major religions of the period. One of the fine Hindu works composed during this time was Ramcharitmanasa (the pool of Rama's life) by Tulsidasa, which was a simplified version of the Ramayana. In Bengal there was a lot of work being created in Vaishnava literature. Writers like Krishnada and Kaviraj were popular authors of the time. Many biographies were written, especially of the great saint Chaitanya Deya.

The keen interest in literature that the Mughal emperors had led to the establishment of many great libraries which became repositories of tremendous knowledge. The works were properly filed and locating information was very easy. The art of calligraphy also reached a level of excellence. Literary activity did not decline with the Mughal empire and flourished even in the twilight years of the Mughal empire, in fact some of the later Mughals were better poets and writers than they were capable emperors.

THE THREE CATEGORIES OF CONTRIBUTIONS

We can easily divide the contributions of the Mughals into three categories: historical works, translations, poetry and novels. Our understanding of the Mughal period was greatly enhanced by these books, and most of the historical works of this period provide us with a fairly reliable source of information. The important historical works written in this time were Ain-I-Akbari, and Akbarnama by Abul Fazl, the Ta'rikh-I-'Alfi by Mulla Daud. Akbar, though was not educated in any formal educational institution, could contribute much to literature. Jehangir possessed a keen interest in literature, and his autobiography is one of the finest amongst the Mughal emperors. During his reign important historical works like Ma'asir-I-Jahangir, the Iqbalnamah-I-Jahangiri and the Zubud-ut-Tawaikh were written.

GREAT TRANSLATIONS

Many important works in translation were also written during this period, with the translation of the epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana taking place. Many of the Vedas were also translated and several previous historical books were also translated. All this translation added to the wealth of Indian literature and spread ancient knowledge to a greater audience. This renewed interest in Indian literature would be an important tool used by the social reformers of the

NOTES

eighteenth century to educate the people about what the ancient texts really said as opposed to the distorted interpretations that were being followed.

NEW CONTRIBUTIONS

NOTES

The Mughal empire encouraged a large number of poets and writers and hence there were a lot of new contributions published in this era. During the reign of Akbar, Jehangir and Shah Jahan the literary people had tremendous patronage and many remarkable works were composed. Since the Mughal emperors had integrated themselves into Indian society, they patronized many Indian languages leading to some good quality literature being developed for these languages. The main themes of the period were essentially religious, covering most of the major religions of the period. One of the fine Hindu works composed during this time was Ramcharitmanasa (the life of Rama) by Tulsidasa, which was a simplified version of the Ramayana. In Bengal there was a lot of work being created in Vaishnava literature. Writers like Krishnada and Kaviraj were popular authors of the time. Many biographies were also written during this period.

VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

The Mughals established a mighty empire that dominated India for more than two centuries. Their passion for nature and literature contributed much for the Indian literature. Books were very precious to the Mughal kings. Expensive and laborious contributions were as marked the symbols of royal wealth, power and intelligence. At the height of the Mughal power, the imperial studios hummed with the activity of hundreds papermakers, printers and business people of books. Today we can see and enjoy the books and manuscripts illustrated with exquisite miniature paintings of the Mughal Emperors treasured by museums around the world. The Mughal contribution to the Indian literatures is really great.

UNIT — IV

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE (1556 — 1707)

Humayun had rescued and restored the Mughal Empire in 1555. But, had it not been for Akbar, the Empire perhaps would not have sustained. It was during his rule that the Mughal Empire became a political fact and an important factor in Indian politics.

Akbar's policies were emulated by his successors with few changes or as suited the political atmosphere of their times. In this Unit we will not go into the details of administrative machinery and the creation of the ruling class. Here we will confine ourselves mainly to the territorial expansion and the problems related to it. In the course of developing a large Empire the Mughal rulers had to deal with some political powers who held sway in various regions. Important of these were the Rajputs and the rulers to the south of the Vindhya like Bijapur, Golkonda and Ahmadnagar and the Marathas.

We begin this unit with Akbar's efforts to get rid of his adversaries and to establish himself at the helm of affairs at the Mughal court.

3.28 AKBAR : CONQUEST AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Medieval India

NOTES

Humayun's 13-year-old son Akbar was in the Punjab when his father died but was proclaimed emperor. The Hindu general Himu occupied Agra and took Delhi from its governor Tardi Beg, proclaiming himself Raja Vikramaditya. Bairam Khan executed Tardi Beg while Akbar was hunting. In November 1556 Himu's army outnumbered the Mughal forces at Panipat; but after an arrow penetrated his eye, Akbar's army was victorious, capturing Himu's 1500 elephants. Bairam Khan and Akbar beheaded Himu. Young Akbar entered Delhi, and Bairam Khan sent Pir Muhammad to gain Himu's treasure and to drive Haji Khan out of Alwar. Akbar and Bairam Khan forced Sikandur Sur to leave the Mankot fort and flee to Bengal, and then they occupied Lahore and gained Multan in the Punjab. A Mughal siege of Gwalior for a year forced it to surrender in early 1558. After gaining Ajmer, the gateway to Rajasthan, Akbar returned to Delhi. The remaining Sur prince Ibrahim was defeated, and Jaunpur was annexed. Bairam Khan aroused resentment by dismissing his rival Pir Muhammad and appointing a Shi'a theologian as religious minister. Using his female relatives, in 1560 Akbar was able to remove Bairam Khan, who agreed to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. He resented being packed off by Pir Muhammad and had to be defeated by Atga Khan. On his way through Gujarat, Bairam Khan was murdered by an Afghan avenging his father's death.

Adham Khan and Pir Muhammad led the invasion of Malwa. When Adham Khan did not send the spoils to Akbar, the young Emperor went to make sure he did. Akbar did the same thing to Khan Zaman after he defeated some Afghans. In 1562 Akbar made a pilgrimage to Ajmer and married a Hindu princess. Akbar abolished the enslavement and forced conversion to Islam of war prisoners and their families. After the murder of prime minister Atga Khan, Akbar hit Adham Khan with his fist and had him thrown from a terrace twice so that he was dead. The Emperor re-appointed Mun'im Khan; but to make sure no one person controlled him, Akbar made the decisions and had them carried out by four ministers for financial, military, judicial and religious affairs, and household, which included buildings, roads, and canals. He ended pilgrimage taxes on Hindus and the hated jiziya poll tax on non-Muslims. Akbar fell in love with the beautiful wife of Shaikh 'Abdul-Wasi at Delhi and reminded him that according to the law of Genghis Khan, a husband must divorce any woman the Emperor desired. The Shaikh did so, and at her urging Akbar began searching for other noble beauties. This angered his subjects so much that the Emperor was wounded by an arrow in an assassination attempt. After that, Akbar no longer molested the wives and daughters of his subjects.

Akbar was intent on creating an empire. Among his "Happy Sayings" he wrote, "A monarch should be ever intent on conquest; otherwise his enemies rise in arms against him." He sent Kara governor Asaf Khan to subdue the kingdom of Gondwana in 1564, but he too failed to send all the captured elephants to Akbar. That year while Akbar married a Khandesh princess, another Uzbek, Malwa governor Abdullah Khan, revolted. Khan Zaman was descended from Babur's Uzbek nemesis Shaibani, and he resented the Persians at Akbar's court. After defeating Afghans in Bihar, Khan Zaman dismissed Akbar's messengers. Iskandar Khan and Ibrahim Khan joined the Uzbek revolt and defeated a Mughal army at

NOTES

Kanauj. Akbar marched out of Agra with a large army to chastise the Uzbeks but forgave them in 1566 when Khan Zaman negotiated. When Akbar's half-brother Muhammad Hakim was driven out of Kabul by a Badakhshani army, Timurid nobles proclaimed him emperor and attacked Delhi while Hakim was besieging Lahore. Loyal Mughals forced the Timurid princes (Mirzas) to retreat to Mewar and Rajasthan while Akbar forced his brother Hakim to fall back to Kabul. Akbar then attacked the Uzbeks by the Ganges; Khan Zaman was killed, and Bahadur Khan was captured and executed. Akbar marched to Allahabad and sacked Benares for closing its gates to him.

Nobles struggled for power in Gujarat as the boy Sultan Mahmud III was on the throne. A second siege of Diu had failed in 1547. Mahmud was kind to Muslims but oppressed the Hindus. In 1554 the young noble Burhan and his attendants murdered Mahmud, his prime minister Asafkhan, and twelve nobles; but Burhan was quickly cut down while sitting on the throne. I'timad Khan acted as regent for the young Sultan Ahmad Shah III. When Khandesh sultan Mubarak Shah invaded and tried to claim the throne of Gujarat, Nasir-ul-mulk took the opportunity to capture Ahmadabad; but I'timad Khan with help from Saiyad Mubarak managed to regain control. I'timad Khan did not like Ahmad Shah mixing with foreigners and had him killed in 1561, replacing him with a twelve-year-old named Muzaffar Shah III. I'timad Khan tried to deflect the powerful Changiz Khan by suggesting he invade Nandurbar, and he did so; but after failing to take Thalner, Changiz Khan turned his army on Ahmadabad and defeated I'timad Khan in 1567. Changiz Khan was murdered by Jhujhar Khan while playing polo, and I'timad Khan returned to power the next year. The death of Saiyad Miran in 1572 caused dissension in Gujarat, enabling Akbar's Mughal army to invade and take over the country. I'timad Khan and other nobles were named governors, and Akbar departed; but he had to come back the next year and defeated a larger force, ending Gujarat independence in 1573.

Akbar had his army encircle an area sixty miles in diameter near Lahore and herd the wild animals together. In five days about 15,000 animals were killed by arrows, muskets, spears, and swords. At Thanesar the Emperor observed a spectacle in which 300 feuding Sanyasis defeated 500 rival Jogis in a performance battle in which many were killed. When Akbar besieged Mewar's capital of Chitor in 1567, Maharana Udai Singh fled to the hills. After Akbar killed Jaimall with a musket shot, Rajput women sacrificed themselves in the fire of jauhar. As the fortress of Chitor fell, 30,000 were slaughtered, according to Abul Fazl's estimate. Kaviraj Shyamaldas reported that 39,000 died fighting, and Akbar executed the remaining one thousand. A thousand Kalpi musketeers managed to escape by pretending they were Mughals removing prisoners. Using such force as well as diplomacy, Akbar was able to bring the Rajputs into his empire. In 1569 Ranthambhor and Kalinjar submitted, and the next year Akbar married Bikaner and Jaisalmer princesses. Mewar's Udai Singh died in 1572, but his son Pratap raised a large army that was defeated by the Mughals in 1576 at Haldighat. Pratap escaped and survived until 1597, but Mewar suffered as he ordered killed any farmer who cultivated food for the occupying Mughal army. The fortresses of Chitor and Ranthambhor were added to the imperial bulwarks at Lahore, Agra, Allahabad, and Ajmer.

Two sons were born to Akbar in Sikri near Agra. The Emperor came there often to visit the Sufi saint Salim Chisti, who died in 1571. That year Akbar decided

NOTES

to make Sikri his capital. The next year he invaded Gujarat and occupied its capital Ahmadabad. Akbar had to go back in 1573 and with a force of only 3,000 overcame 15,000. Controlling Gujarat had great economic benefits and opened the way to sea voyages for Mecca pilgrimages. The Emperor instituted several reforms. Horses were branded according to the Khalji fashion revised by Sher Shah. Land assignments were changed into reserves, but this experiment lasted only five years. Officers were ranked in 33 grades according to how many horsemen they commanded from ten to 10,000, making local officers responsible for recruiting, pay, and command. Akbar urged his judges to be lenient with people, because sometimes they are hardened by punishment. When Afghan Sulaiman Karrani's son Daud Karrani became ruler of Bengal in 1572, he no longer recognized the authority of Akbar, who invaded in 1574. Daud fled to Orissa, where Akbar's general Mun'im Khan defeated him at Tukaroi. Daud tried to recover Bengal the next year but was defeated and killed in 1576. Yet Bengal nobles and Afghans continued to resist Mughal domination for the next thirty years of Akbar's reign, and Orissa was not annexed until 1592.

At Sikri in 1575 Akbar began sponsoring Thursday night debates on religion and theology in a House of Worship he had built; at first they concentrated on Islam. Akbar inquired into the behavior of religious authorities. Abdulla of Sultanpur shifted his wealth into his wife's hands temporarily in order to avoid giving the annual fortieth to charity. In another "monstrous slaughter" of wild animals that had been encircled in 1578 Akbar suddenly canceled the hunt and ordered all the animals set free; in a spiritual frenzy he distributed charity and gave gold to faqirs. Now Akbar included philosophers, Hindus, materialists, Jains, Christians, Jews, and Parsis in the discussions. Reason was used to examine various practices of the religions. Akbar had difficulty accepting Christianity's doctrines of the trinity and the incarnation. He eclectically accepted what was common to most religions while rejecting what was not essential. Here are a few of his sayings:

1. The source of misery is self-aggrandizement and unlawful desires.
2. The sorrows of men arise from their seeking their fortune before its destined time, or above what is decreed for them.
3. The concerns of men are personal to themselves, but through the predominance of greed and passion they intrude upon others.
4. Clemency and benevolence are the source of happiness and length of days.
5. The difficulty is to live in the world and refrain from evil, for the life of a recluse is one of bodily ease.
6. Men through blindness do not observe what is around them intent only on their own advantage.

Akbar called his religious system Divine Monotheism. He conceived of the one God as a power and essence that is omnipresent as well as a personal being. Reason was the main faculty Akbar advised people to employ. Knowledge from books he considered worse than useless if it is not applied in an active life of good works. The extremes of asceticism and indulgence in worldly pleasures should be avoided. He rejected pre-ordained rewards in heaven or punishments in hell. Rather he believed in the transmigration of souls and their gradual evolution that provide complex rewards and punishments beyond human comprehension. Akbar agreed with Abul Fazl's Sufi conception of the soul as a divine essence. The goal of life is to find spiritual perfection, and Akbar did recommend prayer and

NOTES

meditation. Yet in response to a drought in 1574 he had suggested that the omniscient Creator already knows our every thought, and his mercy does not depend on our appeals.

Akbar began his Deccan campaign by sending envoys to Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, and Golconda in 1591. The Ahmadnagar Sultanate was invaded by Prince Murad in 1595. The war was prolonged, and commander Murad died of alcoholism in 1599. In his last campaign Akbar led the army that stormed the fortress of Ahmadnagar in 1600. The Emperor then invaded Khandesh, which surrendered the next year. Akbar appointed his son Daniyal viceroy of the Deccan. While Akbar was in the south, his oldest son Salim tried to seize the fortress at Agra but failed to take it. After Akbar returned to Agra, Salim marched 30,000 cavalry against the capital. His father wrote him a letter offering him Bengal and Orissa, but Salim returned to Allahabad. In 1602 the Emperor sent his biographer Abul Fazl, but Salim had him attacked and killed. Empress Salima Sultan Begam and other women made peace between father and son, and Salim returned to court in 1604. He was temporarily denied opium and wine but succeeded after Akbar's death in October 1605.

In Mughal society the Emperor was all powerful as the supreme state authority making the laws, commanding the military, and overseeing the judicial system. Akbar also became the supreme religious authority and no longer deferred to the Caliph. Muslims still maintained an aristocratic and wealthy class over the Hindu castes, but their lands and titles were not hereditary. This often resulted in less care for their estates. Many slaves served them, and nobles could retreat into their private harems of women. The chief cities of India were considered as wealthy as any in Europe.

AKBAR'S RELIGIOUS POLICIES (POLICY OF *SULH-E-KUL*)

Akbar, as well as his mother and other members of his family, are believed to have been Sunni Hanafi Muslims. His early days were spent in the backdrop of an atmosphere in which liberal sentiments were encouraged and religious narrow-mindedness was frowned upon. From the fifteenth century, a number of rulers in various parts of the country adopted a more liberal policy of religious tolerance, attempting to foster communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims. These sentiments were further encouraged by the teachings of popular saints like Chaitanya, Guru Nanak and Kabir, the verses of the Persian poet Hafez which advocated human sympathy and a liberal outlook, as well as the Timurid ethos of religious tolerance that persisted in the polity right from the times of Timur to Humayun, and influenced Akbar's policy of tolerance in matters of religion. Further, his childhood tutors, who included two Irani Shias, were largely above sectarian prejudices, and made a significant contribution to Akbar's later inclination towards religious tolerance.

One of Akbar's first actions after gaining actual control of the administration was the abolition of jizya, a tax which all non-Muslims were required to pay, in 1562. The tax was reinstated in 1575, a move which has been viewed as being symbolic of vigorous Islamic policy, but was again repealed in 1580. Akbar adopted the *Sulh-e-Kul* concept of Sufism as official policy, integrated many Hindus into high positions in the administration, and removed restrictions on non-Muslims, thereby bringing about a composite and diverse character to the nobility. As a

mark of his respect for all religions, he ordered the observance of all religious festivals of different communities in the imperial court.

3.29 JAHANGIR

Nur-ud-din Salim Jahangir (20 September 1569 – 8 November 1627) was the ruler of the Mughal Empire from 1605 until his death. The name Jahangir is from Persian meaning "Conqueror of the World". Nur-ud-din or Nur al-Din is an Arabic name which means "Light of the Faith." Born as Prince Muhammad Salim, he was the third and eldest surviving son of Mogul Emperor Akbar. Akbar's twin sons, Hasan and Hussain, died in infancy. His mother was the Rajput Princess of Amber, Jodhabai (born Rajkumari Hira Kunwari, eldest daughter of Raja Bihar Mal or Bharmal, Raja of Amber, India).

Jahangir was a child of many prayers. It is said to be by the blessing of Shaikh Salim Chishti (one of the revered sages of his times) that Akbar's first surviving child, the future Jahangir, was born. He was born at the dargah of the Shaikh Salim Chishti, within the fortress at Fatehpur Sikri near Agra. The child was named Salim after the darvesh and was affectionately addressed by Akbar as Sheikhu Baba.

Akbar developed an emotional attachment with the village Sikri (abode of Chishti). Therefore, he developed the town of Sikri and shifted his imperial court and residence from Agra to Sikri, later renamed as Fatehpur Sikri. Shaikh Salim Chishti's daughter was appointed Jahangir's foster mother as a mark of respect to the Shaikh. Jahangir's foster brother Nawab Kutb-ud-din Khan was private secretary to the emperor Jahangir and afterwards governor of Bengal. Nawab Kutb-ud-din Khan's son Nawab Mohtashim Khan was granted by Jahangir 4,000 bigas of land in Badaun District (United Provinces) where he built a small fort named Sheikhpur, Badaun after Jahangir, who was called Sheikhu-baba in his childhood.

An aesthete, Jahangir decided to start his reign with a grand display of "Justice", as he saw it. To this end, he enacted Twelve Decrees that are remarkable for their liberalism and foresight. During his reign, there was a significant increase in the size of the Mughal Empire, half a dozen rebellions were crushed, prisoners of war were released, and the work of his father, Akbar, continued to flourish. Much like his father, Jahangir was dedicated to the expansion of Mughal held territory through conquest. During this regime he would target the peoples of Assam near the eastern frontier and bring a series of territories controlled by independent rajas in the Himalayan foothills from Kashmir to Bengal. Jahangir would challenge the hegemonic claim over Persia by the Safavid rulers with an eye on Kabul, Peshawar and Qandahar which were important centers of the central Asian trade system that northern India operated within. In 1622 Jahangir would send his son Prince Khurram against the combined forces of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda. After his victory Khurram would turn against his father and make a bid for power. As with the insurrection of his eldest son Khusraw, Jahangir was able to defeat the challenge from within his family and retain power.

Jahangir promised to protect Islam and granted general amnesty to his opponents. He was also notable for his patronage of the arts, especially of painting. During his reign the distinctive style of Mughal painting expanded and blossomed. Jahangir supported a flourishing culture of court painters.

NOTES

RELIGIOUS POLICY OF JAHANGIR

NOTES

While Sunni Islam was the state religion, there was widespread pressure to convert; indeed, Jahangir specifically warned his nobles that they "should force Islam on anyone." In the first century of Islamic expansion this attitude was taken partially because of concerns that an absence of non-Muslims would deprive the state of a valuable source of revenue. However, as the *jizya* was imposed by Jahangir, there might have been more behind this policy of toleration than mere economic reasoning. Jahangir was certainly willing to engage with other religions, and Edward Terry, an English chaplain in India at the time, saw a ruler under which "all Religions are tolerated and their Priests [held] in good esteeme." Brahmins on the banks of the Ganges received gifts from the emperor, while following a meeting with Jadrup, a Hindu ascetic, Jahangir felt compelled to comment that "association with him is a great privilege." He enjoyed debating theological subtleties with Brahmins, especially about the possible existence of avatars. Both Sunnis and Shias were welcome at court, and members of both sects gained high office. When drunk, Jahangir swore to Sir Thomas Roe, England's first ambassador to the Mughal court, that he would protect all the peoples of the book. Many contemporary chroniclers were not even sure quite how to describe his personal belief structure.

Roe labelled him an atheist, and although most others shied away from that term, they did not feel as though they could call him an orthodox Sunni. He relied greatly on astrologers, though that was not seen as unusual for a ruler at the time, even to the extent that he required that they work out the most auspicious time for the imperial camp to enter a city. Roe believed Jahangir's religion to be of his own making, "for hee envyes Mahomett, and wisely sees noe reason why he should not bee as great a prophet as hee, and therefore proffeseth him selfe soe ... he hath found many disciples that flatter or follow him." At this time, one of those disciples happened to be the current English ambassador, though his initiation into Jahangir's inner circle of disciples was devoid of religious significance for Roe, as he did not understand the full extent of what he was doing: Jahangir hung "a picture of him selfe sett in gould hanging at a wire gould chaine, with one pendent soule pearle" round Roe's neck. Roe thought it "an especiall favour, for that all the great men that weare the Kings image (which none may doe but to whom it is given) receive no other then a meddall of gould as bigg as six pence."

Had Roe intentionally converted, it would have caused quite a scandal in London. But since there was no intent, there was no resultant problem. Such disciples were an elite group of imperial servants, with one of them being promoted to Chief Justice. However, it is not clear that any of those who became disciples renounced their previous religion, so it is probable to see this as a way in which the emperor strengthened the bond between himself and his nobles. Despite Roe's somewhat casual use of the term 'atheist', he could not quite put his finger on Jahangir's real beliefs. Roe lamented that the emperor was either "the most impossible man in the world to be converted, or the most easy; for he loves to heare, and hath so little religion yet, that hee can well abyde to have any derided." Broad toleration for other religions made little sense to Europeans forged in the heat of religious conflict, while the lifestyle and pretensions Jahangir afforded himself meant that it was difficult to see him as a devout Muslim. Sri Ram Sharma argues though that contemporaries and some historians have been too disparaging

about Jahangir's beliefs, simply because he did not persecute non-believers and enforce his views on others.

This should not imply that the multi-confessional state appealed to all, or that all Muslims were happy with the situation in India. In a book written on statecraft for Jahangir, the author advised him to direct "all his energies to understanding the counsel of the sages and to comprehending the intimations of the 'ulama." At the start of his regime many staunch Sunnis were hopeful, because he seemed less tolerant to other faiths than his father had been. At the time of his accession and the elimination of Abu'l Fazl, his father's chief minister and architect of his eclectic religious stance, a strong orthodox nucleus of noblemen had gained power in administration." Jahangir did not always benevolently regard some Hindu customs and rituals. On visiting a Hindu temple, he found a statue of a man with a pig's head, which was supposed to represent God, so he "ordered them to break that hideous form and throw it in the tank." If the Tuzuk is reliable on this subject (and there is no reason to suspect that it is not), then this was an isolated case.

Guru Arjun was handed over to the Mughal governor of Lahore, and was tortured to death for refusing to convert to Islam. Jahangir ordered his execution, but it is unlikely that he also ordered Guru Arjun to be tortured and converted, for two reasons; one, because we have no other examples from Jahangir's generally tolerant reign to support the idea that he forced people to convert to Islam, and two, because Jahangir makes no note of Guru Arjun's torture, yet cheerfully describes the torture of two other rebels, as well as Guru Arjun's execution. Jahangir maintained his hostility towards the Sikhs, imprisoning Guru Hargobind, the successor of Guru Arjun, for several years.

A rana was described as an infidel, but only because he was fighting against the Mughals, and infidel was used as an everyday phrase to describe all non-Muslims anyway. Admittedly Muslims were discouraged from performing most Hindu rites, with Jahangir lamenting that many Muslims prayed at a temple dedicated to Durga, and worshipped at a black stone. With Jahangir himself occasionally taking part in Hindu ceremonies, the aforementioned example was probably one way of showing support for the idea that Muslim and Hindus should not mix their rituals. His attitude to religion in his domain was relaxed yet diligent. He saw himself as doing Allah's bidding, yet he was inquisitive enough to explore new ideas about religion, intelligent enough to understand that Hindus were in the majority and grand enough in his pretensions not to need to obey every line of the Qur'an.

3.30 SHAH JAHAN

Shah Jahan (5 January 1592 – 22 January 1666) was the emperor of the Mughal Empire in India from 1628 until 1658. The name Shah Jahan comes from Persian meaning "king of the world." He was the fifth Mughal ruler after Babur, Humayun, Akbar, and Jahangir. While young, he was a favourite of his legendary grandfather Akbar the great. He is also called Shahjahan The Magnificent.

Even while very young, he could be pointed out to be the successor to the Mughal throne after the death of Emperor Jahangir. He succeeded to the throne upon his father's death in 1627. He is considered to be one of the greatest Mughals

NOTES

NOTES

and his reign has been called the Golden Age of Mughals. Like Akbar, he was eager to expand his empire. The chief events of his reign were the destruction of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar (1636), the loss of Kandahar to the Persians (1653), and a second war against the Deccan princes (1655). In 1658 he fell ill, and was confined by his son Emperor Aurangzeb in the citadel of Agra until his death in 1666. On the eve of his death in 1666, the Mughal Empire spanned almost 750,000,000 acres (3,000,000 km²) and he was the most famous and powerful man on earth of the age who had in his empire the biggest and the most prosperous capital (Shahjahanabad) and some of the most delicate architectural masterpieces of the world.

3.31 AURANGZEB

Aurangzeb (4 November 1618 – 3 March 1707), also known by his chosen imperial title Alamgir I (Conqueror of the World), was the 6th Mughal Emperor whose reign lasted from 1658 until his death in 1707. Aurangzeb's reign as the Mughal monarch was marked by many wars of expansion.

Aurangzeb, having ruled most of the Indian subcontinent for nearly half a century, was the second longest reigning Mughal emperor after Akbar. In this period he tried hard to get a larger area, notably in southern India, under Mughal rule than ever before. A devout Muslim. After his death, the Mughal Empire gradually shrunk. Aurangzeb's successors, the "Later Mughals", lacked his strong hand and the fortunes amassed by his predecessors.

Aurangzeb was the third son of the fifth Mughal emperor Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal (Arjumand Bânû Begum). After a rebellion by his father, part of Aurangzeb's childhood was spent as a virtual hostage at his grandfather Jahangir's court. Muhammad Saleh Kamboh Salafi had been one of his childhood teachers.

After Jahangir's death in 1627, Aurangzeb returned to live with his parents. Shah Jahan followed the Mughal practice of assigning authority to his sons, and in 1634 put Aurangzeb in charge of the Deccan campaign. Following his success in 1636, Aurangzeb became Subahdar (governor) of the Deccan. At this time, he began building a new city near the former capital of Khirki which he named Aurangabad after himself. In 1637, he married Rabia Durrani. During this period the Deccan was relatively peaceful. In the Mughal court, however, Shah Jahan began to show greater and greater favoritism to his eldest son Dara Shikoh.

In 1644, Aurangzeb's sister Jahanara Begum was accidentally burned in Agra. This event precipitated a family crisis which had political consequences. Aurangzeb suffered his father's displeasure when he returned to Agra three weeks after the event, instead of immediately. Shah Jahan dismissed him as the governor of the Deccan. Aurangzeb later claimed (1654) that he had resigned in protest of his father favoring Dara.

He was appointed governor of Multan and Sindh, and began a protracted military struggle against the Safavid army in an effort to capture the city of Kandahar. He failed, and fell again into his father's disfavour.

In 1652, Aurangzeb was re-appointed governor of the Deccan. In an effort to extend the empire, Aurangzeb attacked the border kingdoms of Golconda (1657), and Bijapur (1658). Both times, Shah Jahan called off the attacks near the moment of Aurangzeb's triumph. In each case Dara Shikoh interceded and arranged a peaceful end to the attacks.

Shah Jahan fell ill in 1657. With this news, the struggle for the succession began. Aurangzeb's eldest brother, Dara Shikoh, was regarded as heir apparent, but the succession proved far from certain when Shah Jahan's second son Shah Shuja declared himself emperor in Bengal. Imperial armies sent by Dara and Shah Jahan soon restrained this effort, and Shuja retreated.

Soon after, Shuja's youngest brother Murad Baksh, with secret promises of support from Aurangzeb, declared himself emperor in Gujarat. Aurangzeb, ostensibly in support of Murad, marched north from Aurangabad, gathering support from nobles and generals. Following a series of victories, Aurangzeb declared that Dara had illegally usurped the throne. Shah Jahan, determined that Dara would succeed him, handed over control of his empire to Dara. A Rajput lord opposed to Aurangzeb and Murad, Maharaja Jaswant Singh, battled them both at Dharmatpur near Ujjain. Aurangzeb eventually defeated Singh and concentrated his forces on Dara. A series of bloody battles followed, with troops loyal to Aurangzeb battering Dara's armies at Samugarh. In a few months, Aurangzeb's forces surrounded Agra. Fearing for his life, Dara departed for Delhi, leaving Shah Jahan behind. The old emperor surrendered the Agra Fort to Aurangzeb's nobles, but Aurangzeb refused any meeting with his father, and declared that Dara was no longer a Muslim.

In a sudden reversal, Aurangzeb arrested his brother Murad, whose former supporters defected to Aurangzeb in return for rich gifts. Meanwhile, Dara gathered his forces, and moved to the Punjab. The army sent against Shuja was trapped in the east, its generals Jai Singh and Diler Khan, submitted to Aurangzeb, but allowed Dara's son Suleman to escape. Aurangzeb offered Shuja the governorship of Bengal. This move had the effect of isolating Dara and causing more troops to defect to Aurangzeb. Shuja, however, uncertain of Aurangzeb's sincerity, continued to battle his brother, but his forces suffered a series of defeats at Aurangzeb's hands. Shuja fled to Arakan (in present-day Burma), where he was executed after leading a failed coup. Murad was finally executed, ostensibly for the murder of his former divan Ali Naqi, in 1661.

With Shuja and Murad disposed of, and with his father Shah Jahan confined in Agra, Aurangzeb pursued Dara, chasing him across the north-western bounds of the empire. After a series of battles, defeats and retreats, Dara was betrayed by one of his generals, who arrested and bound him. In 1659, Aurangzeb arranged his formal coronation in Delhi. He had Dara openly marched in chains back to Delhi; when Dara finally arrived, Aurangzeb had him executed on 30 August 1659. Having secured his position, Aurangzeb kept an already weakening Shah Jahan under house arrest at the Agra Fort. Shah Jahan died in 1666.

Aurangzeb tried to stem the growing independence of the different parts of his empire by returning to autocratic rule. He abandoned the policy of separation of religion and state and turned away from the policy of religious tolerance that during the previous three generations had kept Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and others together in peace and common destiny. In 1675 he executed the Sikh guru Tegh Bahadur because of his refusal to convert to Islam. The Sikh rebellion that followed continued throughout Aurangzeb's reign; relations between Sikhs and Muslims have been strained ever since.

NOTES

NOTES

In 1679 Aurangzeb reintroduced the jizya, a poll tax for non-Muslims that had been abolished by Akbar the Great a century earlier. The result was a revolt of the Hindu Rajputs, supported by Aurangzeb's third son Akbar, in 1680 - 1681. In the south of the empire the Maratha kingdom was conquered and broken up and its ruler Sambhaji executed in 1689, which started a long and exhausting guerilla campaign by the Maratha Hindu population.

The ongoing struggles placed severe strain on the empire's finances, and increased taxation led to several peasant revolts, often but not always under the guise of religious movements.

At Aurangzeb's death the empire was larger than before but severely weakened. It survived for another 150 years but was in constant religious strife. What Akbar the Great had so splendidly begun collapsed 300 years later under the colonial onslaught, because the empire's economic progress did not lead to the political reform that would have allowed further development.

Jizyah according to Satish Chandra:-

Aurangzeb introduced the jaziya, but, cautions Satish Chandra, "it was not meant to be an economic pressure for forcing Hindus to convert to Islam, for its incidence was to be light." For this assertion Satish Chandra gives two bits of proof, so to say. First, "women, children, the disabled, the indigent, that is, those whose income was less than the means of subsistence, were exempted as were those in government service." How could even Aurangzeb have exacted a tax from those "whose income was less than the means of subsistence?" And why would he exact a discriminatory and humiliating tax from those who were in government service, that is, from those who were already serving his interests and those of the Islamic State? The second proof that Satish Chandra gives is that "in fact, only an insignificant section of Hindus changed their religion due to this tax" — but could that not have been because of the firm attachment of Hindus to their faith, because of their tenacity rather than because of the liberality of Aurangzeb?

The jaziya was not meant either to meet "a difficult financial situation". Its reimposition was in fact, says Satish Chandra, "both political and ideological in nature." Political in the sense that "it was meant to rally the Muslims for the defence of the State against the Marathas and the Rajputs who were up in arms, and possibly against the Muslim States of Deccan, especially Golconda, which was in alliance with the infidels." A parity twice-over — one, that Aurangzeb was only trying to rally the Muslims just as those opposing him had rallied the Marathas and Rajputs. And, in any case, the ones who were opposing him were "infidels"

"Jaziya was to be collected by honest; God-fearing Muslims who were specially appointed for the purpose and its proceeds were reserved for the Ulema." As the proceeds went to Ulama, there was a secular reason for exacting the tax — it was to be "a type of bribe for the theologians among whom there was a lot of unemployment,"

AURANGZEB'S ADMINISTRATION

Aurangzeb ruled for almost 50 years. During his long reign, the Mughal Empire reached territorial climax. Aurangzeb proved to be a hardworking ruler

and never spared himself or his subordinates in the task of government. He was a strict disciplinarian who did not spare his own sons, during his reign he introduced few administrative changes. According to histories, Aurangzeb brought changes in administration. Those were that the senior Hindu officers in the finance ministry were retained and even promoted, although in Banaras and some other places and Brahmans were harassed, and Hindu temples were also demolished by orthodox mobs. Aurangzeb stopped this desecration, but, in accordance with Islamic Sharia rules no new temples would be elected. A high proved mansabdar was appointed as censor of morals (muhtasib) to prevent drinking and to make Muslim changes to Quranic Laws.

There were many changes regarding festival's celebration also. Like celebration of Iranian Naw festival, which falls on the day the sun enters Aries was banned. The "Kalima", or the confession of faith, was no longer stamped on coins, to prevent the holy words from being defiled by unbelievers or heretics. These reforms in no way undermined Hindu political and economic interests. Aurangzeb also used to send gift to holy men of Mecca-Madina & those were supposed to be distributed among poor or needy but to Aurangzeb's disappointment the funds were misused. In other words some historians used different way of describing Aurangzeb's reign. They divided his reign into two phases. First phase was from 1658-1679 and second was from 1679 to his death 1707. And these were divided again into several sub-phases. Other historians define economy measures, tax, Hindu temples etc in the reign of Aurangzeb. There were many ceremonies, which were used to perform, were also stopped like the practices of the Emperor putting a Tika or saffron paste on the forehead of a new raja was stopped. Practices, which were considered against Islamic spirit, were banned. Public displays of Holi and Muharram procession were also stopped. The courtiers were also asked not to wear silk gowns or gowns of mixed silk and cottons.

AURANGZEB'S RELIGIOUS POLICY

According to historians Aurangzeb reversed Akbar's Policy of religious toleration. He basically used those policies which were already introduced by his predecessor but those were not that strong so again Aurangzeb during his reign again used those policies and one of them in Religious policy.

Aurangzeb's religious policy was largely based on his analysis of the first half of Aurangzeb's reign, which in his opinion was climaxed by the reinstitution of Jizyah (poll tax). The other orthodox measures of Aurangzeb were insidious attempts on his part to establish an Islamic state in India which in effect implied conversion of the entire population to Islam and the extinction of every form of dissent. The religion policy of Mughal was largely the reflection of the personal religious views etc. It was a very narrow and orthodox kind of policy taken by Aurangzeb. He put ban on the practice, which were considered as against Islamic spirit. And many ceremonies and festivals were banned that time. Many temples were also destroyed that time. It was earlier found that long standing temple should not be demolished but no new temples allowed to be built. But later on it was found that many temples were demolished. And this was so because Aurangzeb started fearing for his political existence because there were some temple where both Hindu & Muslim used to go and learn teachings and

NOTES

Aurangzeb thinking that these kind of practice may hamper therefore, there should be stopped so demolition took place. There was also tax, which was imposed on non-Muslims like Jizyah.

NOTES

JIZYAH

It was that tax which was reimposed by Aurangzeb on the non-muslims. Aurangzeb considered reimposition of Jizyah, but postponed the matter due to "certain political exigencies". That it was reimposed twenty-two years after Aurangzeb's accession to the throne is clear indication that its institution was on account of political considerations. Jizyah was used to be collected by honest God-fearing Muslims, who were especially appointed for this purpose. Because of this tax many got converted and enjoyed benefits but many did not left their religion and were being harassed. There were exception in this tax was that the women, children and the person who can not earn even for his own livelihood will be taken into consideration. So basically Jizyah was not an Income Tax but was a kind of property tax, which is imposed only in non-Muslim. These many let Islam grow.

POLICY'S IMPACT

There been several bad impacts of Aurangzeb's policies. Some historians had said that Aurangzeb's policies made Mughal very weak. Earlier there was no respect left for Islam and its adherents; mosques were without splendor, while idol-temples flourished; the requisites of canonical practice remained closed under bolts, while the gates of irreligious practices were flung open. That time Aurangzeb was the defender of the truth faith, converts to Islam were made much of. Many temples were given order of destruction and instead mosques built. But now because of this religious policy Mughal State had failed to yield the expected dividends. Now Aurangzeb faced difficult task of bringing under Imperial control the extensive country extending up to Jinji, populated by Hindu population and simultaneously he had to deal with Marathas. And situation became so worst that there seem like Aurangzeb need to make some modification in his policy. His attitude towards Hindu temples also varied from time to time according to circumstance that is political exigencies. And his attitude towards Marathas also varied. But policy was not changed.

During that time many festivals & ceremonies banned and all practice, which is found against Islamic spirit, were also banned. Jizyah's impact was also very bad. Altogether, Jizyah came into picture because of religious policy. This tax was for non-Muslims. And basic impact of this Jizyah was that people got converted into Islamic religion so as to escape from Jizyah and enjoy profits of being Islamic.

3.32 RISE OF THE MARATHAS IN THE 17TH CENTURY AND SHIVAJI

The Maratha Empire was located in the south west of present-day India. It existed from 1674 to 1818 and at its peak the empire's territories covered much of South Asia. The empire was founded and consolidated by Shivaji Bhosale. After the death of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb it expanded greatly under the rule of the Peshwas, the Prime Minister of the Maratha empire. In 1761, the

Maratha army lost the **Third Battle of Panipat** which halted the expansion of the empire.

A large portion of the empire was coastline and secured with a potent navy under commanders such as Kanhoji Angre. He was very successful in keeping foreign naval ships, particularly Portuguese and British, under check. Building and securing seaside as well as land based forts played an important role in Maratha's military history.

After a lifetime of exploits and guerrilla warfare with Adilshah of Bijapur and Mughal King Aurangzeb, King Shivaji the Great founded an independent Maratha kingdom in 1674 with Raigad as its capital. Shivaji died in 1680, leaving a large, but vulnerably located kingdom. The Mughals invaded, fighting an unsuccessful War of 27 years from 1681 to 1707. Shahu, a grandson of Shivaji, ruled as emperor until 1749. During his reign, Shahu appointed a Peshwa (prime minister) as head of government under certain conditions. After the death of Shahu, the Peshwas became the de facto leaders of the Empire from 1749 to 1761, while Shivaji's successors continued as nominal rulers from their base in Satara. Covering a large part of the subcontinent, the Maratha Empire kept the British forces at bay during the 18th century, until dissension between the Peshwas and their sardars (or army commanders) saw a gradual downfall of the empire.

SHIVAJI

The Marathas had lived in the Desh region around Pune for a long time, in the western portion of the Deccan plateau, where the plateau meets the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats. They had resisted incursions into the region by the Mughal rulers of northern India. Under their leader Shivaji Maharaj, the Marathas freed themselves from the Muslim sultans of Bijapur to the southeast under the leadership of Shivaji Maharaj, and became much more aggressive, frequently raiding Mughal territory and ransacking the Mughal port of Surat in 1664 and again in 1670. In 1674 Shivaji proclaimed himself king taking the title (Chhatrapati). By Shivaji Maharaj's death in 1680, the Marathas had expanded their territory to include some parts of central India but later lost it to the Mughals and the British. According to Indian historian Tryambak Shankar Shejwalkar, Shivaji was inspired by the great Vijayanagara Empire, a bulwark against Muslim invasion of South India. The victories of the then king of Mysore, Kanthirava Narasaraja Wodeyar against the Sultan of Bijapur also inspired Shivaji. According to the legend, Shivaji was the first king in India whose vision encompassed the dev (god), desh (country) and dharma (religion).

CULTURE : PERSIAN AND REGIONAL LITERATURES

Indo-Persian culture flourished to varying degrees alongside Turkish or Turkic culture during the period of the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526). The invasion of Babur in 1526, the end of the Delhi Sultanate, and the establishment of what would become the Mughal Empire would usher the golden age of Indo-Persian culture with particular reference to the art and architecture of the Mughal era.

The Mughal Era to the British Raj: Persian persisted as the language of the Mughal regime up to and including the year 1707 which marked the death of the Emperor Aurangzeb, generally considered the last of the "Great Mughals".

NOTES

NOTES

Thereafter, with the decline of the Mughal empire, the 1739 invasion of Delhi by Nadir Shah and the gradual growth of European power within the subcontinent, Persian or Persianate culture commenced a period of decline although it nevertheless enjoyed patronage and may even have flourished within the many regional "empires" or kingdoms of the subcontinent including that of the Sikh "Maharaja" Ranjit Singh (r. 1799-1837).

Persian as a language of governance and education was abolished in 1839 by the British and the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, even if his was rule was purely symbolic or ceremonial, was overthrown in 1857 by the British.

Further, C.E. Bosworth wrote about the Central Asian's Persian influence on India: "The sultans were generous patrons of the Persian literary traditions of Khorasan, and latterly fulfilled a valuable role as transmitters of this heritage to the newly conquered lands of northern India, laying the foundations for the essentially Persian culture which was to prevail in Muslim India until the 19th century."

Under the Mughals all form of literature flourished, from poetry to popular Sufi verses to learned prose and historiography. 16th and early 17th century literature in the Persian Language is relatively well known and the historical works of that period have long since been studied; however there has been a tendency to over look the fact that there was literature in languages other than Persian, much of which is first written down in Akbar's time. Arabic has always played an important role, being the language of Quran, of theology and philosophy. Elegant prose and poetry were also composed in Arabic, not only in the southern India but also in the north.

The Turkish Language or rather the Chaghatay Turkish, Babur's mother tongue also played an important role. Until the early 19th century it was still spoken to some extent in the ruler's palace and also by many of the nobility.

In the 16th century, regional languages appeared for the first time in literature, then mystical writings, followed by secular ones.

Sindhi, Punjabi and Pushto came into prominence during this time and Bengali and Kashmiri which had long been literary languages are also noteworthy.

Hindi -including the various dialects spoken in northern India, such as Braj and Purabi, played an important role and the credit goes to the translation project initiated by Akbar and his great grandson Dara Shikoh, Sanskrit also became and important literary language in the Muslim world.

Finally towards the end of Aurangzeb's era Urdu became the quintessential literary language of Indian Muslims.

3.33 SUMMARY

- Sufism flowed into Indian from Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Iran. Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti who had established himself in Ajmer and Shaikh Nizarnuddin Auliya whose teachings and followers spread all over India.
- The medieval Hindi literature is marked by the influence of Bhakti movement and composition of long epic poems. Avadhi and Braj were the dialects in which literature was developed.
- Islamic art and architecture in India can be classified into three sections: Delhi or the Imperial style (1191 to 1557AD); the Provincial style,

encompassing the surrounding areas like Jaunpur and the Deccan; and the Mughal architecture style (1526 to 1707AD).

- During the Delhi Sultanate, several Turkic and Afghan dynasties ruled from Delhi, including the Mamluk dynasty (1206–90), the Khilji dynasty (1290–1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1413), the Sayyid dynasty (1414–51), and the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526). In 1526 the Delhi Sultanate was absorbed by the emerging Mughal Empire.
- Ala-ud-din Khilji was the second ruler of the Turko-Afghan Khilji dynasty in India. He is considered the most powerful ruler of the dynasty, reigning from 1296 to 1316.
- The second phase is marked by the achievements of Vijaynagar's greatest ruler Krishnadeva Raya (1509-29).
- Bhakti as a religious concept means devotional surrender to a personally conceived Supreme God for attaining salvation.
- The first to fall was Bhira (1519-1520), the gateway of Hindustan, followed by Sialkot (1520) and Lahore (1524). Finally, Ibrahim Lodi and Babur's forces met at the historic battle field of Panipat.

NOTES

3.34 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the philosophies of Sankaracharya.
2. What is Sufism? Explain the spread of Sufism in India.
3. What were the causes and consequences of Ghorian invasions?
4. Describe the economic measures of Alauddin Khilji.
5. Explain the history of growth of Bhakti movement in India.
6. State the important conquest of Akbar.
7. What were the major policies of Aurangzeb?

3.35 FURTHER READINGS

- Tapan Raychaudhri : *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I.*
- Irfan Habib Prof. Muhammad Habib : *An Introduction to Elliot and Dowson's History of India as Told by Its Own Historians, Vol. II .*
- A.J. Qaisar : *Indian Response To European Technology and Culture.*
- Ganeri, Anita. *Looking Back: India under the Mughal Empire, 1526-1858.* Austin: Raintree Steck-Vaugh Publishers, 1999.
- J. N. Sarkar, Volume 3, *The Mughul Empire.*

CHAPTER — 4

NOTES

LATER MEDIEVAL TO BRITISH ERA

STRUCTURE

- 4.1 Learning Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 Causes of Decline of Mughal Empire
- 4.4 Maratha Power under Peshwa
- 4.5 Emergence of Regional States
- 4.6 Sawai Jai Singh
- 4.7 Rise of Urdu Language
- 4.8 The Carnatic Wars
- 4.9 Maysor and Its Resistance to British Expansion (Anglo-Maysor War)
- 4.10 Anglo-Maratha War
- 4.11 Establishment in Bengal
- 4.12 Early Structure of British Raj
 - The Regulating Act (1773)
 - Pitt's India Act (1784)
- 4.13 Drain of Wealth
- 4.14 Land Revenue Settlements (Zamindari and Ryotwari)
- 4.15 Railways
- 4.16 Commercialization of Agriculture
- 4.17 Growth of Landless Labour
- 4.18 Introduction to Western Education
- 4.19 India's Renaissance : Socio and Religious Reforms
 - Brahmo Samaj
 - Arya Samaj
- 4.20 Summary
- 4.21 Review Questions
- 4.22 Further Readings

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this chapter, students will be able to:

- discuss the various causes of decline of Mughal Empire;
- describe the techniques of British expansion and important wars;
- understand the economic impact of British rule;
- state the cultural and social changes during British rule before 1857.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

The Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama reached India in 1498. Shortly thereafter, the Portuguese established a factory at Calicut to permit the storage and transport of the valuable spices increasingly sought by Europe. Although the Portuguese soon left this location, they established other such enterprises along the Indian coast at Goa, Daman and Diu on the Gujarat coast. Portuguese domination of this lucrative trade lasted less than a century while British, Dutch, and French traders filled the vacuum.

In 1627, the Mughal Emperor Jahangir granted the British East India Company permission to build a fortified factory at the principal Mughal port of Surat. Within a decade, however, the factory at Bombay became the headquarters of the Company. Eventually the region was divided into the three presidencies of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Although each of the regions functioned independently, they were still responsible to the Court of Directors in London. Through their efforts, the Company garnered huge profits generated by a system of triangular trade that saw English gold and silver coins traded for Indian goods which were then utilized in China to subsidize purchases of commodities there.

Generally, historians consider Robert Clive's victory at the Battle of Plassey, in 1757, as being the effective inauguration of the British Raj domination of India. It would take additional victories over the French at Wandiwash in 1760, and Pondicherry, the following year, however, for English hegemony to be complete. British rule in India lasted nearly two centuries, matching the longevity of the Mughal Empire.

NOTES

UNIT – I

DECLINE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE (1707 – 1761)

Aurangzeb (1658-1707) and his successors could not command Mughal empire, but as this empire could not gather momentum and had a number of internal problems, Mughal no longer continued to survive, but the decline had set in. Art and painting flourished during Mughals. Some sources note that a few of the best Mughal paintings were made for Aurangzeb, speculating that the painters may have realized that he was about to close the workshops and thus exceeded themselves in his behalf. A brief revival was noticed during the reign of Muhammad Shah 'Rangeela' (1719-48), but by the time of Shah Alam II (1759-1806), the art of Mughal painting had lost its glory. By that time, other schools of Indian painting had developed, including, in the royal courts of the Rajput kingdoms of Rajputana, Rajput painting and in the cities ruled by the British East India Company, the Company style under Western influence.

4.3 CAUSES OF DECLINE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

The Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent in the time of Aurangzeb, but it collapsed with dramatic suddenness within a few decades after his death. The Mughal Empire owes its decline and ultimate downfall to a combination of factors; firstly Aurangzeb's religious policy is regarded as a cause for the decline

NOTES

of the Mughal Empire as it led to disunity among the people. Although the policy did lead to weakening of the empire but the major cause of decline was the lack of worthy and competent successors after him. The character of Mughal kings had deteriorated over a period of time. The successive rulers after Aurangzeb were weak and lacked the character, motivation and commitment to rule the empire strongly. They had become ease loving and cowardly. They totally disregarded their state duties and were unable to detain the declining empire from its fall.

The absence of any definite law of accession was another important factor. The war of successions not only led to bitterness, bloodshed, and loss of money and prestige of the empire over a period of time, but to its eventual fall. The degeneration of the rulers had also led to the moral degeneration of the nobility. Under the early Mughals, the nobles performed useful functions and distinguished themselves both in war and peace. But the elite under the later Mughals was more interested in worldly pursuit and self-enhancement. The nobles who had once been talented men with integrity, honesty, and loyalty, turned selfish and deceitful. Growth of hostile and rival clique in the court also undermined the strength of the government. Widespread corruption in the administration started and taking bribes became common.

The succeeding emperors were puppets in the hands of the too powerful soldiers or statesmen who raised them to the throne, controlled them while on it, and killed them when it suited their purposes to do so. The subsequent history of the empire is a mere record of ruin. In the century- and one-half that followed, effective control by Aurangzeb's successors weakened. Contenders for the Mughal throne fought each other, and the short-lived reigns of Aurangzeb's successors were strife-filled. The Mughal Empire experienced dramatic reverses as regional governors broke away and founded independent kingdoms. The Mughals had to make peace with Maratha rebels, and Persian and Afghan armies invaded Delhi, carrying away many treasures, including the Peacock Throne in 1739. For a time Mughal emperors still ruled India from Delhi. But of the six immediate successors of Aurangzeb, two were under the control of an unscrupulous general, Zul-fikar Khan, while the four others were the creatures of a couple of Sayyid adventurers, who well earned their title of the 'king-makers.' Succession to imperial and even provincial power, which had often become hereditary, was subject to intrigue and force. The mansabdari system gave way to the zamindari system, in which high-ranking officials took on the appearance of hereditary landed aristocracy with powers of collecting rents. As Delhi's control waned, other contenders for power emerged and clashed, thus preparing the way for the eventual British takeover.

From the year 1720 the breaking up of the empire took a more open form. The Nizam-ul-Mulk, or Governor of the Deccan, severed the largest part of Southern India from the Delhi rule (1720-1748). The Governor of Oudh, originally a Persian merchant, who had risen to the post of wazir, or prime minister of the empire, practically established his own dynasty as the Nawab Wazir of Oudh which had been committed to his care (1732-1743). Amidst the general disintegration of the Mughal empire, and the rise of new political powers in all parts of India, the leading part was taken by the Mahrattas, and the leading story of the eighteenth century in India is the story of Mahratta supremacy. The Marathas having enforced their claim to black-mail (chauth) throughout Southern

NOTES

India, burst through the Vindhya into the north, and obtained from the Delhi emperors the cession of Mahvd (1743) and Orissa (1751), with an imperial grant of tribute from Bengal.

The Mughals sought not only to block the historical western invasion routes into India but also to control the fiercely independent tribes who accepted only nominal control from Delhi in their mountain strongholds between the Kabul-Qandahar axis and the Indus River — especially in the Pashtun area of the Suleiman mountain range. As the area around Qandahar changed hands back and forth between the two great empires on either side, the local Pashtun tribes exploited the situation to their advantage by extracting concessions from both sides. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Mughals had abandoned the Hindu Kush north of Kabul to the Uzbeks, and in 1748 they lost Qandahar to the Safavids for the third and final time.

The Hindu subjects of the empire were at the same time asserting their independence. Akbar had rendered a great Empire possible in India by conciliating the native Hindu races. He thus raised up a powerful third party, consisting of the native military peoples of India, which enabled him alike to prevent new Muhammadan invasions from Central Asia, and to keep in subjection his own Muhammadan Governors of Provinces. Under Aurangzeb and his miserable successors this wise policy of conciliation was given up. Accordingly, new Muhammadan hordes soon swept down from Afghanistan; the Muhammadan Governors of Indian Provinces set up as independent potentates; and the warlike Hindu races, who had helped Akbar to create the Mughal Empire, became, under his foolish posterity, the chief agents of its ruin.

The Sikh sect in the Punjab was driven by the oppression of the Delhi Emperors into revolt, and was mercilessly crushed (1710-1716). The indelible memory of the cruelties then inflicted by the Mughal troops nerved the Sikh nation with that hatred to Delhi which served the British cause so well in 1857. Their leader, Banda, was carried about in an iron cage, tricked out in the mockery of imperial robes, with scarlet turban and cloth of gold. His son's heart was torn out before his eyes, and thrown in his face. He himself was then pulled to pieces with red-hot pincers; and the Sikhs were exterminated like mad dogs (1716). The Hindu princes of Rajputana were more fortunate. Ajit Singh of Jodhpur asserted his independence, and Rajputana practically severed its connection with the Mughal Empire in 1715.

While the Muhammadan governors and Hindu subjects of the empire were thus becoming independent of the Delhi emperors, two new sets of external enemies appeared; one set from Central Asia, the other set from the sea. In 1739, Nadir Shdh, the Persian monarch, swooped down on India, with his destroying host, and, after a massacre in the streets of Delhi and a fiftyeight days' sack, returned through the north-western passes with a booty estimated at 32 millions sterling. The destroying host of the Persian king was succeeded by a series of invasions from Afghanistan. Six times the Afghans burst through the passes under Ahmad Shah Duranf, pillaging, slaughtering, and then scornfully retiring to their homes with the plunder of the Mughal empire.

In 1738, Kabul, the last Afghan Province of the Mughals, was severed from Delhi; and, in 1752, Ahmad Shah obtained the cession of the Punjab from the miserable emperor. The cruelties inflicted upon Delhi and Northern India during

NOTES

these six Afghan invasions form an appalling tale of bloodshed and wanton cruelty. The wretched capital opened her gates, and was fain to receive the Afghans as guests. Yet on one occasion it suffered for six weeks every enormity which a barbarian army can inflict upon a prostrate foe. Meanwhile the Afghan cavalry were scouring the country, slaying, burning, and mutilating, in the meanest hamlet as in the greatest town. They took especial delight in sacking the holy places of the Hindus, and murdering the defenceless votaries at the shrines.

The other set of invaders came from over the sea. In the wars between the French and English in Southern India, the last vestiges of the Delhi authority in the Karndtik disappeared (1748-61). Bengal, Behar, and Orissa were handed over to the English by an imperial grant in 1765. The British obtained these three fertile Provinces as the nominee of the emperor; but the battle of Pam'pat had already reduced the throne of Delhi to a shadow. That battle was fought in 1761, between the Afghan invader Ahmad Shah and the Maratha powers, on the memorable plain of Panipat on which Babar and Akbar had twice won the sovereignty of India. The Afghans defeated the Marathas; but although the Muhammadans could still win victories, they could no longer rule India. During the anarchy which followed, the British patiently built up a new power out of the wreck of the Mughal Empire.

Puppet emperors continued to reign at Delhi over a numerous seraglio, under such lofty titles as Akbar II. or Alamgir II. But their power was confined to the palace, while Marathas, Sikhs, and Englishmen were fighting for the sovereignty of India. The last of these pensioned Mughal kings of Delhi emerged for a moment as a rebel during the Mutiny of 1857, and died a State prisoner in Rangoon, the capital of British Burma, in 1862.

The following reasons caused the decline of the Mughal Empire:

- Weak successors after Aurangzeb who could not unite the Huge Empire;
- Nadir Shah's Invasion;
- Rise of Marathas under the Peshwas;
- The rise of the British in India;
- No definite law of succession;
- Revolt of the Marathas and the Sikhs;
- religious intolerance;
- financial crisis;
- rise of sikh, and jats;

4.4 MARATHA POWER UNDER PESHWA

The term Peshwa means Prime Minister. It was King Shivaji of the Maratha Kingdom who first appointed a Peshwa to the 'Chattrapatis' (King). The Peshwas controlled the Maratha army and they later became the hereditary rulers of the Maratha Empire from 1749 to 1818. During their rein, the Maratha empire reached its zenith ruling most of the Indian Subcontinent. Prior to 1700 one Peshwa received the status of king for eight or nine years. They oversaw the greatest expansion of the Maratha Empire around 1760 with the help of Sardars (Generals) like Holkar, Shinde, Bhosale, Pantpratinidhi, Gaekwad, Panse, Vinchurkar, Pethe, Raste, Phadke, Patwardhan, Pawar, Pandit and Purandare, and also its eventual annexation by the British East India Company in 1818.

NOTES

The word Peshwa may have originated in Persian, meaning “foremost”, and was introduced in Deccan by the Muslim rulers. After his coronation as a Maratha Chhatrapati in 1674, the founder of the Maratha Empire, Shivaji appointed Moropant Trimbak Pingle as the first Peshwa. However, the first Peshwa was Sonopant Dabir, appointed by Shahaji to assist Shivaji. Duties and authorities of a Peshwa were equal to that of a Prime Minister. Shivaji renamed this designation as “Pantpradhan” in 1674 but this name was less frequently used.

MOROPANT PINGLE

Moropant Trimbak Pingle was the first Peshwa (Prime Minister) in the court of Shivaji, the founder king of the Maratha empire in western India. He joined the service of Shivaji in 1647. He was one of the warriors in the famous 1659 war against Afzal Khan. Later he also won the battle of Trimbakeshwar fort, and assisted Netaji Palkar in the battle of Wani-Dindori against Mughals and in Surat's war of 1665.

He can be credited for appropriate revenue administration techniques. He also played a role in planning the fort's resources.

When Shivaji died in 1680, he was busy at development activity Salher-Mulher in Baglan-Nashik District. He died in 1683.

LEGACY

The first Peshwa to receive the status of a king was Ramchandra Pant Amatya Bawdekar in 1689 by Chatrapati Rajaram. The first Bhat family Peshwa was Balaji Vishwanath Bhat, a chitpavan Brahmin. He was succeeded as Peshwa by his son Baji Rao I, who never lost a battle. Baji Rao and his son, Balaji Baji Rao, oversaw the period of greatest Maratha expansion (see map at right), brought to an end by the Maratha's defeat by an Afghan army at the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761. The last Peshwa, Baji Rao II, was defeated by the British East India Company in the Battle of Khadki which was a part of Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817–1818). After the defeat the Maratha Empire was merged with British India. The kingdom was annexed to the British East India Company's Bombay province, and the Peshwa was pensioned off.

4.5 EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STATES

At the end of the seventeenth century, the great Mughal Empire founded by Akbar was in a state of hopeless decay. Administration, economic life, military strength and social organisation – all seemed to be hastening to utter ruin. The endless war against the Marathas in the Deccan exhausted Aurangzeb's treasury. The best soldiers and highest officers of Aurangzeb were sent to the Deccan, while the Subahs of Hindustan were left to be governed by minor officers with small contingents.

The economic drain caused by Aurangzeb's continuous wars in the Deccan were disastrous in its effects. The operations of the imperial armies led to a total destruction of crops and countryside. When the last reserve of the Empire was exhausted, the imperial government made reckless promises of money grant and high command to enemies. But it was not possible to keep all these promises. Even when the grants of land or jagir in lieu of salary were made, they remained for years as mere orders in paper.

NOTES

Thus all classes of lawless men began to raise their heads in the north as well in the south. The proud zamindars, the Afghans, the Jats, the Mewatis and the Rajputs – all rose in defiance of the government. The local viceroys could not cope with them. The actual administration of the Mughal jagirs proved ruinous to the peasants and harmful to the State. A vicious circle was formed: political disorder led to collection of less money from the jagirs; the reduced income forced the Governors to keep less troops in their pay; military weakness encouraged lawlessness among the people which in turn led to loss of land revenue.

The weakening of imperial government led to the deterioration of the character of the Mughal nobility. They ceased to discharge the useful functions and looked only for self-interest. As Sir Jadunath Sarkar observes:

"To the thoughtful student of Mughal history nothing is more striking than the decline of the peerage. The heroes adorn the stage for one generation only. Abdur Rahim and Mahabat, Sadullah and Mir Jumla, Ibrahim and Islam Khan Rumi, who had made the history of India in the seventeenth century, were succeeded by no son, certainly by no grandson, even half as capable as themselves."

After the death of Aurangzeb on February 20, 1707, the mighty Mughal Empire fell like a house of cards. A long succession struggle among his three living sons – Muazzam (Shah Alam), Azam and Kam Baksh – followed. Muazzam ascended the throne in 1707 under the title Bahadur Shah I. He was too weak to prevent the decline of the Empire. Bahadur Shah's death in 1712 was followed by a fresh war of succession among his four sons. Ultimately Jahandar Shah (1712-13), a worthless debauch, became emperor after liquidating his three brothers. He, in turn, was murdered by Farrukhsiyar (1713-19), who succeeded him. Farrukhsiyar owed his kingship to the two Saiyyid brothers – Abdulla, Deputy Governor of Allahabad and Hussain Ali, Deputy governor of Bihar. The ascendancy of the Saiyyid brothers excited the jealousy of Farrukhsiyar who attempted to get rid of them. But the Saiyyid brothers punished the Emperor by deposing and executing him in a horrible way. The king-makers' choice now fell upon a youth who proved to be clever and disposed of them in the course of two years. This youth was Muhammad Shah (1719-48) who allowed the empire to drift to endless confusion and anarchy.

The collapse of central authority led to the declaration of independence by the Subahdars of several provinces. But all these states were primarily regional political entities interested in promoting their own growth. They had no political or national outlook. Some of these states like Bengal, Hyderabad and Awadh – became for all practical purposes independent owning a nominal allegiance to the Mughal Emperor. The Sikhs and the Jats made successful bids for political power. The Marathas profited more than any other people of India with the fall of the Mughal Empire. They established a mighty empire extending from the Punjab to Mysore.

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad or the Deccan, became independent of Mughal rule under Chin Qilich Khan, better known in history as Nizam-ul-Mulk. Chin Qilich Khan was Governor of Bijapur at the time of Aurangzeb's death. Bahadur Shah removed him from the Deccan and made him Governor of Oudh in December 1707. In

NOTES

1713 Farrukhsiyar appointed him Governor of the Six Subahs of the Deccan with the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk. But intrigues at the Delhi Court led to his recall from the Deccan. Nizam-ul-Mulk was transferred to Muradabad. Later on he became Governor of Malwa in 1719. In 1720 he showed his military power against the Saiyyids by defeating the two generals, Dilawar Ali Khan and Alam Ali Khan.

After the fall of the Saiyyids, Nizam-ul-Mulk made himself master of the Six Subahs of the Deccan. In February he was appointed Wazir by Emperor Muhammad Shah. But Nizam-ul-Mulk could not adjust himself with the intriguing politics of Delhi and left for the Deccan in disgust (December 1723). Under secret instruction from the Emperor, Mubarick Khan, Deputy Governor of the Deccan resisted him. Securing the support of the Marathas, Nizam-ul-Mulk defeated and killed Mubarick Khan at Shakarkheda in Berar in October 1724. "From this period may be dated Nizam-ul-Mulk's virtual independence and the foundation of the Hyderabad State." In 1725 Emperor Muhammad Shah recognised him as the viceroy of the south.

Soon afterwards, Nizam-ul-Mulk came into conflict with the Marathas. In 1728 he suffered a severe defeat at Palkhed near Bhopal in a battle with Peshwa Bajirao I. In 1737 he was summoned by Muhammad Shah to save the Mughal Empire from the Maratha menace. But he was unable to fulfil imperial expectations. He suffered defeat at Bhopal and made a humiliating peace with the Peshwa Bajirao I in January 1738. After securing the Subahdari of Malwa from the Marathas, the Nizam gave up the territory between the Narmada and the Chambal. The Nizam again came to the protection of the Mughal Emperor during Nadir's Shah's invasion. But he could do nothing against Nadir's supreme military power. In 1741 he returned to the Deccan and suppressed the rebellion of his second son, Nasir Jang. In 1743 he established his supremacy over the principality of Arcot as also over Trichinopoly. He died on 21 May 1748 at the age of 77. He founded a dynasty which continued to rule over the Deccan for two centuries. After his death, the question of succession gave opportunities to the Marathas, the French and the English to play a vital role in the Deccan.

CARNATIC

South of the Kistna the coastal province of the Carnatic extended to the Maratha principality of Tanjore. This was a dependency of the Nizam who maintained his control until his death in 1748. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Nizam, the Nawab of the Carnatic freed himself from the tutelage of the viceroy of the Deccan and made his office hereditary. Thus, without the formal approval of his superior, the Nizam, the Nawab Saadullah Khan of Carnatic made his nephew Dost Ali, his successor. After 1740 the Nawabship of the Carnatic became a bone of contention among the rival claimants and this provided an opportunity to the ambitious Europeans to fish in the troubled waters.

BENGAL

Bengal became a virtually independent Kingdom after Aurangzeb's death in 1707 under Murshid Quli Khan. At the time of Aurangzeb's death Murshid Quli Khan was Deputy Governor of Bengal and Governor of Orissa. He became Deputy Subahdar of Bengal in 1713 and full Subahdar in 1717. He transferred the capital of Bengal from Dacca to Murshidabad, which was named after him.

NOTES

Murshid Quli Khan established an efficient administration. His important achievement was in the field of revenue administration. He introduced Ijara system by which contracts were given for collection of revenue. In the second or third generation, these contractors or Ijaradars came to be called Zamindars. He thus created a landed aristocracy in Bengal whose position was confirmed by Cornwallis. For collection of revenue he divided the whole of Bengal into 13 circles, which were subdivided into 13 tracts under the supervision of Jagirdars and 25 areas as crown-land farmed out to contractors. To improve economic prosperity he showed favours to traders of all categories – both Indian and European. It has been observed: "During his government, the meanest peasant was secured from oppression... (He) was so impartial in his decisions, and rigid in the execution thereof that no one dared to commit oppression."

After Murshid Quli Khan's death in 1727, his son-in-law Shujaud-din Muhammad Khan (1727-39) who had been Deputy Governor of Orissa, succeeded him in the Government of Bengal and Orissa. Bihar was added to his dominion in 1733. In the early part of his regime, Shuja-ud-din was efficient, but later on the administration grew corrupt owing to his vices.

For the administration of the Bengal Subah, Shuja-ud-din created four divisions, each being placed under a Deputy Governor. He dealt firmly with the European trading companies in Bengal like the English, the Dutch, the French, the Portuguese and the Danish. The English described him as a "rash and powerful subahdar."

Shuja-ud-din died on 30 March 1739 and was succeeded by his son Sarfaraz Khan (1739-40). Lacking the essential qualities of a ruler, Sarfaraz was defeated and killed in the battle of Giria (10 April 1740) by one of his officers, Alivardi Khan, Deputy Governor of Bihar. Alivardi (1740-56) ascended the masnad and secured imperial confirmation by remitting huge sums of money to Delhi. Alivardi had some good qualities which enabled him to govern the province ably. He never forcibly realised money from the people. His attitude towards the European trading companies in Bengal was strict and impartial. But he had been denied peace during his long reign. The Maratha invaders from Nagpur and the rebellions of his Afghan General in Bihar, disturbed him very much. In 1748 Alivardi suppressed the Afghan rebellion in Bihar. In 1751 he secured peace with the Marathas by agreeing to cede Orissa and to pay Rs. 12 lakhs as Chauth. The river Subarnarekha was fixed as the boundary of the Bengal Subah. The Maratha rule in Orissa survived till 1802 when the East India Company conquered the province from the Bhonsle Raja. Alivardi died on 10 April 1756 and was succeeded by his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daula, a youth of twenty.

MYSORE

Mysore was ruled in the name of a nominal Hindu King by two brothers, Devraj and Nanjaraj. Nizam-ul-Mulk regarded Mysore as Mughal territory and his successors also considered that Mysore was a part of their Kingdom. The Marathas also repeatedly invaded Mysore. In the Anglo-French conflict Mysore involved itself but failed to make any political or territorial gain.

It was Haidar Ali, a military adventurer of humble origin, who made Mysore powerful. He entered the service of Nanjaraj and was appointed faujdar of Dindigul in 1755. Taking advantage of the prevailing anarchy in the south, Haidar

overthrew his former patron in 1758 and seized the political power. The Marathas were too busy in the north. By 1761 Haidar was unchallenged ruler of the State although he did not abolish the puppet Hindu monarchy.

In the years following the battle of Panipat Haidar conquered important places such as Sira, Bidnur and Sunda. But Peshwa Madhavao I adopted an aggressive policy; Haidar Ali was defeated at Ratehalli in May 1764. A treaty was concluded by which Haidar paid 28 lakhs as tribute and restored territories between the Krishna and Tungabhadra. Again in November 1766 the Peshwa marched against Haidar. Nizam Ali joined the Peshwa in this conflict. But Nizam Ali soon after concluded an alliance with the British. The Peshwa marched alone and compelled Haidar to submit. Haidar agreed to pay a tribute of Rs 33 lakhs to the Peshwa and got back most of his territory including Sira, Chik Balapur and Kolar, but the Marathas retained Hoskote and some other places. Nizam Ali thought it proper to come to terms with Haidar.

NOTES

THE RAJPUT STATES

Taking advantage of the weakness of the Mughal Empire, the principal Rajput states virtually freed themselves from central control. The late Mughal Emperors like Farrukhsiyar and Muhammad Shah had to appoint the rulers of Amber and Marwar as governors of Agra, Gujarat and Malwa.

The Rajput States were often divided among themselves and engaged in petty quarrels and civil wars. Thus Ajit Singh of Marwar was killed by his own son.

The most outstanding Rajput ruler of the eighteenth century was Raja Jai Singh of Amber (1699-1743). He was a great reformer and made Jaipur a veritable museum of intellectual activities. He founded the city of Jaipur on strict architectural principle. Himself a great astronomer, he erected observatories with sophisticated instruments at Delhi, Jaipur, Ujjain, Varanasi and Mathura. He drew up a set of tables to enable people to make astronomical observations. He prompted the translation of Euclid's 'Elements of Geometry' into Sanskrit as also several works on trigonometry and Napier's work on logarithmic.

RANJIT SINGH

At the end of the eighteenth century, Ranjit Singh rose into prominence. He joined the Afghan Zaman Shah in 1798 and seized Lahore in 1799. The Afghan King conferred on him the title of Raja with possession of Lahore. In 1802 he captured Amritsar. He soon threw off the Afghan yoke and gradually brought under his authority all the Sikh misls west of Sutlej. When the British forbade Ranjit Singh in 1809 to cross the Sutlej and took the Sikh states east of the river under their protection, he kept quiet and had to conclude a treaty of perpetual friendship with the English at Amritsar on April 25, 1809.

Checked in the east, Ranjit Singh sought expansion in other directions. He acquired Kangra and occupied Attock, the key to the frontier. He captured Multan in 1818 and in the following year Kashmir. In 1833 Ladakh was taken by Ranjit Singh and in 1834 Peshawar.

Ranjit Singh was in every way as remarkable a man as his two famous contemporaries, Napoleon Bonaparte of France and Mohammad Ali of Egypt.

NOTES

He defended the Northwestern frontiers of Hindustan against the Afghans, brought the Kashmiris and the Pathans under his subjection and extended his spheres of influence from the borders of China and Afghanistan in the north to Sind in the south. He set up a strong and efficient civil administration and converted the Sikh army into an engine of terrible efficiency. 'He lived the life of a soldier and like a soldier drank hard.' After his death in 1839, the Sikh state was torn by internal dissension. The English lost no opportunity to move in and conquered it.

4.6 SAWAI JAI SINGH

Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh (November 3, 1688 – September 21, 1743) was ruler of the kingdom of Amber (later called Jaipur). He was born at Amber, the capital of the Kachwahas. He became ruler of Amber in 1699 at the age of 11 when his father Maharaja Bishan Singh died. The Mughal emperor Aurangzeb bestowed upon him the title of "Sawai" which meant one and a quarter times superior to his contemporaries. This title adorns his descendants even to this date.

When Sawai Jai Singh sat on the ancestral throne at Amber, he had barely enough resources to pay for the support of 1000 cavalry — this abysmal situation had arisen in the past 32 years, coinciding with the reign of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. The Jaipur Rajas had always preferred diplomacy to arms in their dealings with the Mughals, since their kingdom was located so close to the Mughal power centers of Delhi and Agra. Under Aurangzeb, successive Kachawaha Rajas from the time of Ramsingh I were actually deprived of their rank and pay despite years of close alliance with the Emperors of Delhi. Two of their chiefs, Jai Singh I and Kunwar Kishan Singh, died in mysterious circumstances while campaigning in the Deccan.

Six months after his accession, Jai Singh was ordered by Aurangzeb to serve in his ruinous Deccan Wars. But there was a delay of about one year in his responding to the call. One of the reason for this was that he was ordered to recruit a large force, in excess of the contingent required by his mansab. He also had to conclude his marriage with the daughter of Udit Singh, the nephew of Raja Uttam Ram Gaur of Sheopur in March, 1701. Jai Singh reached Burhanpur on August 3, 1701 but he could not proceed further due to heavy rains. On September 13, 1701 an additional cut in his rank (by 500) and pay was made. His feat of arms at the siege of Kheina (1702) was rewarded by the mere restoration of his earlier rank and the title of Sawai (Sawai-meaning one and a quarter, i.e. more capable than one man). When Aurangzeb's grandson Bidar Bakht deputed Sawai Jai Singh to govern the province of Malwa (1704), Aurangzeb angrily revoked this appointment as *jaiz nist* (invalid or opposed to Islam).

DEALINGS WITH THE LATER MUGHALS

The death of Aurangzeb (1707) at first only increased Jai Singh's troubles. His patrons Bidar Bakht and his father Azam were on the losing side in the Mughal war of succession — the victorious Bahadur Shah continued Aurangzeb's hostile and bigoted policy towards the Rajputs by attempting to occupy their lands. Sawai Jai Singh formed an alliance with the Rajput states of Mewar (matrimonially) and Marwar, which defeated and expelled the Mughals from Rajputana.

Aurangzeb's rule of excluding Rajputs from the administration was now abandoned by the later Mughals—Jai Singh was appointed to govern the important provinces of Agra and Malwa. In Agra he came into conflict with the sturdy Jat peasantry.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

NOTES

Sawai Jai Singh was the first Hindu ruler in centuries to perform the ancient Vedic ceremonies like the Ashwamedha (1716) sacrifices — and the Vajapeya (1734) on both occasions vast amounts were distributed in charity. Being initiated in the Nimbarka Sampradaya of the Vaishnav religion, he also promoted Sanskrit learning and initiated reforms in Hindu society like the abolition of Sati and curbing the wasteful expenditures in Rajput weddings. It was at Jai Singh's insistence that the hated jaziya tax, imposed on the Hindu population by Aurangzeb (1679), was finally abolished by the Emperor Muhammad Shah in 1720. In 1728 Jai Singh prevailed on him to also withdraw the pilgrimage tax on Hindus at Gaya.

In 1719, he was witness to a noisy discussion in the court of Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah Rangeela. The heated debate regarded how to make astronomical calculations to determine an auspicious date when the emperor could start a journey. This discussion led Jai Singh to think that the nation needed to be educated on the subject of astronomy. It is surprising that in the midst of local wars, foreign invasions, and consequent turmoil, Sawai Jai Singh found time and energy to build astronomical observatories.

No less than five massive structures were built at Delhi, Mathura (in his Agra province), Benares, Ujjain (capital of his Malwa province), and his own capital of Jaipur. In all of these only the one at Jaipur is working. Relying primarily on Hindu astronomy, these buildings were used to accurately predict eclipses and other astronomical events. The observational techniques and instruments used in his observatories were also superior to those used by the European Jesuit astronomers he invited to his observatories. Termed as the Jantar Mantar they consisted of the Ram Yantra (a cylindrical building with an open top and a pillar in its center), the Jai Prakash (a concave hemisphere), the Samrat Yantra (a huge equinoctial dial), the Digamsha Yantra (a pillar surrounded by two circular walls), and the Narivalaya Yantra (a cylindrical dial).

4.7 RISE OF URDU LANGUAGE

The word derived from the Turki 'Urdu' meaning a military camp came into existence as a dialect among Muslims who ruled in the Deccan and South India from the 14th century onwards. The literary speech arising out of it was known as 'Dakken' and can be traced to the 15th century. This language though retaining traces of pre-Muslim dialects developed mainly by drawing its form and themes from the current Persian literature. This continued till the end of the 17th century even as the script continued to be Perso-Arabic.

The major centres of Dakhni literature were Gujarat, Bijapur, Golconda, Aurangabad and Bidar. The oldest writer in this Muslim Hindi tradition was the famous Sufi poet Sayyid Banda Nawaz Gesudoraz (author of the Me'raj ul Ashiqi) who played an important role in the politics of the Bahmani kingdom in 1422.

NOTES

Two important poets of this literary dialect flourished in Gujarat, Shah Ali Mohammad Jan and Sheikh Khub Muhammad. The major patrons of Dakhni literature were the Qutab Shahi Sultans of Golconda. Among them Muhammad Quli Qutab Shah (1580-1612) was both a poet and the romantic hero of a love poem by his court poet Mulla Wajhi. Among the notable poets residing in Golconda mention should be made of Ghawasi, Ibni Nishati and Tabi.

Ibrahim Add Shah II (1580-1626) the Sultan of Bijapur, was a great patron and himself an author of a book on music in Dakhni. Local events often featured in the works of the Dakhni poets as seen in the work of Hasan Shawqi who wrote a poem commemorating the battle of Talikoe (1565) in which the Muslim Sultans of the Deccan won a victory over the Hindu kingdom of Vijaynagar. Though most poets were Muslim like Rustumi and Malik Khusnud, the most important poet was a Hindu Brahmin who wrote under the pen-name of Nusrati. His major works were a long poem "Alinam" a eulogising his patron Ali Qdil Shah II (1656-1672), and Gulshani Ishq - a romance of a Hindu called Manohar and his love for Marlllumalati. (on the line of the Nayak-Nayika theme).

The important works of Rnsthmi included Khavar Nama. Another important poet was Wajhi, the author of Qutbo Mushtari, a masnavi and Sab Ras (a work of prose). By far the most important Urdu writer of the period was Wali Dakkani. His great contribution to Urdu poetry is that he brought Urdu ghazal in line with Persian traditions. Wali had intensity of feeling and a flexible and varied style. By 1750, Urdu became well established in the Delhi region and Dakkani declined after the conquest of the Deccan by Aurangzeb.

UNIT — II

BRITISH EXPANSION

The British East India Company arrived in India in the early 1600s, struggling and nearly begging for the right to trade and do business. By the late 1700s the thriving firm of British merchants, backed by its own army, was essentially ruling India.

In the 1800s English power expanded in India, as it would until the mutinies of 1857-58. After those very violent spasms things would change, yet Britain was still in control. And India was very much an outpost of the mighty British Empire.

After several attempts to open trade with a powerful ruler of India failed in the earliest years of the 1600s, King James I of England sent a personal envoy, Sir Thomas Roe, to the court of the Mogul emperor Jahangir in 1614.

The emperor was incredibly wealthy and lived in an opulent palace. And he was not interested in trade with Britain as he couldn't imagine the British had anything he wanted.

Roe, recognizing that other approaches had been too subservient, was deliberately difficult to deal with at first. He correctly sensed that earlier envoys, by being too accommodating, had not gained the emperor's respect. Roe's stratagem worked, and the East India Company was able to establish operations in India.

NOTES

The Mogul Empire was in a state of collapse by the 1720s. Other European powers were competing for control in India, and sought alliances with the shaky states that inherited the Mogul territories.

The East India Company established its own army in India, which was composed of British troops as well as native soldiers called sepoy.

The British interests in India, under the leadership of Robert Clive, gained military victories from the 1740s onward, and with the Battle of Plassey in 1757 were able to establish dominance.

The East India Company gradually strengthened its hold, even instituting a court system. British citizens began building an "Anglo-Indian" society within India, and English customs were adapted to the climate of India.

4.8 THE CARNATIC WARS

The Carnatic Wars were a series of military contests during the 18th century between the British and the French trading companies trading to East. It were mainly fought on the territories in India which was dominated by the Mughal Rule up to Godavari delta. As a result of these military contests, British trading company established its dominance among the European trading companies within India. The French Trading company was pushed to a corner and remained confined to Pondicherry. The French Trading people tried to meddle into internal politics of India even after that but it was the British East India Trading company which later emerged as a leading political participant in India and ultimately went to establish the British Colonial Empire in India.

In the 18th century the coastal Carnatic was a dependency of Hyderabad, within the Mughal Empire. There were three Carnatic Wars between 1744 and 1763. Though the name originates with the local name for the region (Karnataka), the English colonialists spelled the word as "Carnatic" which led to conflation of the name with carne, Spanish for "meat", leading at least one British general to jokingly term them the "Meat Wars" but it never caught on.

FIRST CARNATIC WAR (1746-1748)

The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb died in 1707 C.E. He was succeeded by Bahadur Shah I but there was a general decline in central control over the empire had already set in during the tenure of Aurangzeb. Several erstwhile Mughal colonies revolted. Carnatic was ruled by Nawab Dost Ali, despite being under the legal purview of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Dost Ali's death sparked a power struggle between his son-in-law Chanda Sahib and the Nizam's nominee, Anwar-ud-Din. The British enlisted the help of Anwar-ud-Din to oust Dupleix and the French from Madras.

The genesis of the Carnatic wars are generally attributed to ambition of Joseph François Dupleix. The Governor of the French East India Company, Joseph François Dupleix, sought to establish a French colony in India. Immediately upon his arrival in India, he organized Indian recruits under French officers for the first time. The British and French went to war over the succession to the throne of Austria, as well as to expand their colonies in the Americas. It is pertinent to note here, that the trading companies of both countries, that is Britain and France, were maintaining cordial relations among themselves in India whereas their parent countries were bitter enemies on the European continent. Dodwell writes, "Such

NOTES

were the friendly relations between the English and the French that the French sent their goods and merchandise from Pondicherry to Madras for safe custody." The Mughal power was on decline in India. It provided an opportunity for the contending European trading companies to venture out for brazen use of intrigues for obtaining hold over the land for the benefit of their respective companies. By that time, French and British trading companies had major presence among all the European companies trading in India.

After the British initially captured a few French ships, the French called for backup from as far afield as Mauritius, and on 21 September 1746, they captured the British city of Madras. Among the prisoners of war was Robert Clive.

With the termination of the War of Austrian Succession in Europe, the First Carnatic War also came to an end. In the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle (1748), Madras was given back to the British, in return for the French fortress of Louisbourg in North America, which the British had captured.

SECOND CARNATIC WAR (1749–1754)

After the death of the Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1748, the Nizam of Hyderabad, a civil war for succession broke out in the south between Mir Ahmad Ali Khan Nasir Jung (son of the Nizam-ul-Mulk) and Hidayat Muhi ud-Din Sa'adu'llah Khan Muzaffar Jung (grandson of the Nizam-ul-Mulk).

This opened a window of opportunity for Chanda Sahib, who wanted to become Nawab of Arcot. He joined the cause of Muzaffar Jung and began to conspire against the Nawab Anwaruddin Muhammed Khan in Arcot. The French allied with Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar Jung to bring them into power in their respective states. But soon the English intervened. To offset the French influence, they began supporting Nasir Jung and Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah (son of deposed Nawab Anwaruddin Muhammed Khan of Arcot). This resulted in the Second Carnatic War. Initially, the French succeeded in both states in defeating and murdering their opponents and placing their supporters on thrones in 1749. In 1751, however, Robert Clive led British troops to capture Arcot. Clive's success led to additional victories for the British and their Nizam and Arcot allies. The war ended with the Treaty of Pondicherry, signed in 1754. Muhammad Ali Khan Walajah was recognized as the Nawab of Arcot. The French leader Joseph François Dupleix was asked to return to France. The directors of the French East India Company were dissatisfied with Dupleix's political ambitions, which had led to immense financial loss. In 1754, Charles Godeheu replaced Dupleix.

THIRD CARNATIC WAR (1757–1763)

The outbreak of the Seven Years' War in Europe resulted in renewed conflict between French and British forces in India. The Third Carnatic War spread beyond southern India and into Bengal where British forces captured the French settlement of Chandernagore (now Chandannagar) in 1757. However, the war was decided in the south, as British commander Sir Eyre Coote decisively defeated the French under the Comte de Lally at the Battle of Wandiwash in 1760. After Wandiwash, the French capital of Pondicherry fell to the British in 1761. The war concluded with the signing of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, which returned Chandernagore and Pondicherry to France, and allowed the French to have "factories" (trading posts) in India but forbade French traders from administrating them. The French agreed

to support British client governments, thus ending French ambitions of an Indian empire and making the British the dominant foreign power in India.

Later Medieval to British Era

4.9 MAYSOR AND ITS RESISTANCE TO BRITISH EXPANSION (ANGLO-MYSORE WAR)

NOTES

The Anglo-Mysore Wars were a series of wars fought in India over the last three decades of the 18th century between the Kingdom of Mysore and the British East India Company, represented chiefly by the Madras Presidency. The fourth war resulted in the overthrow of the house of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan (who was killed in the final war, in 1799), and the dismantlement of Mysore to the benefit of the British and their allies.

The First Anglo-Mysore War (1766-1769) saw Hyder Ali inflicting crushing defeats on the combined armies of the Marathas, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the British. The Kingdom of Mysore gained large tracts of land to the north after this war.

The Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-1784) saw the rise of Tipu Sultan as a powerful military leader. Soldiers from Mysore decimated British armies in the east, repelled a joint Maratha-Hyderabad invasion from the north and captured territories in the south. The war was ended in 1784 with the Treaty of Mangalore, at which both sides agreed to restore the others' lands to the status quo ante bellum.

In the Third Anglo-Mysore War (1789-1792), Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore and an ally of France, invaded the nearby state of Travancore in 1789, which was a British ally. The resultant war lasted three years and was a resounding defeat for Mysore. The war ended after the 1792 siege of Seringapatam and the signing of the Treaty of Seringapatam according to which Tipu had to surrender half of his kingdom to the British East India Company and its allies.

The Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799) saw the defeat of Tipu Sultan and further reductions in Mysorean territory. Mysore's alliance with the French was seen as a threat to the East India Company and Mysore was attacked from all four sides. Tipu's troops were outnumbered 4:1 in this war. Mysore had only 35,000 soldiers, whereas the British commanded 60,000 troops. The Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas launched an invasion from the north. The British won a decisive victory at the Battle of Seringapatam in 1799. Tipu was killed during the defence of the city.

The Battles of Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1764) which established British dominion over East India, the Anglo-Mysore wars (1766-1799) and the Anglo-Maratha Wars (1775-1818) consolidated the British claim over South Asia, resulting in the British Empire in India, though pockets of resistance among the Sikhs, Afghans and Burmese would last well into the 1880s.

4.10 ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

The First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-1782) was the first of three Anglo-Maratha wars fought between the British East India Company and Maratha Empire in India. The war began with the Treaty of Surat and ended with the Treaty of Salbai.

After the death of Madhavrao Peshwa in 1772, his brother Narayanrao became Peshwa of the Maratha Empire. However, Raghunathrao, Narayanrao's

NOTES

uncle, had his nephew assassinated in a palace conspiracy that resulted in Raghunathrao becoming Peshwa, although he was not the legal heir.

Narayanrao's widow, Gangabai, gave birth to a posthumous son, who was legal heir to the throne. The newborn infant was named 'Sawai' Madhavrao (Sawai means "One and a Quarter"). Twelve Maratha chiefs, led by Nana Phadnis directed an effort to name the infant as the new Peshwa and rule under him as regents.

Raghunathrao, unwilling to give up his position of power, sought help from the British at Bombay and signed the Treaty of Surat on 6 March 1775. According to the treaty, Raghunathrao ceded the territories of Salsette and Bassein to the British, along with part of the revenues from Surat and Bharuch districts. In return, the British promised to provide Raghunathrao with 2,500 soldiers.

The British Calcutta Council condemned the Treaty of Surat, sending Colonel Upton to Pune to annul it and make a new treaty with the regency. The Treaty of Purandhar (1 March 1776) annulled that of Surat, Raghunathrao was pensioned and his cause abandoned, but the revenues of Salsette and Broach districts were retained by the British. The Bombay government rejected this new treaty and gave refuge to Raghunathrao. In 1777 Nana Phadnis violated the treaty with the Calcutta Council by granting the French a port on the west coast. The British replied by sending a force towards Pune. The tangle was increased by the support of the London authorities for Bombay, which in 1778-79 again supported Raghunathrao. Peace was finally restored in 1782.

BATTLE OF WADGAON

The East India Company's force from Bombay consisted of about 3,900 men (about 600 Europeans, the rest Asian) accompanied by many thousands of servants and specialist workers. They were joined on the way by Raghunath's forces, adding several thousand more soldiers, and more artillery. The Maratha army included forces contributed by all the partners in the federation, tens of thousands in all, commanded by the brilliant Tukojiro Holkar and General Mahadji Shinde (also known as Mahadji Sindia). Mahadji slowed down the British march and sent forces west to cut off its supply lines. When they found out about this, the British halted at Talegaon, a few hours' brisk march from Pune, but days away for the thousands of support staff with their ox-drawn carts. Now the Maratha cavalry harassed the enemy from all sides. The Marathas also utilized a scorched earth policy, burning farmland and poisoning wells. The British began to withdraw from Talegaon in the middle of the night, but the Marathas attacked, forcing them to halt in the village of Wadgaon (now called Vadgaon Maval), where the British force was surrounded on 12 January 1779. By the end of the next day, the British were ready to discuss surrender terms, and on 16 January signed the Treaty of Wadgaon that forced the Bombay government to relinquish all territories acquired by the Bombay office of the East India Company since 1773.

BRITISH RESPONSE

Reinforcements from northern India, commanded by Colonel Goddard, arrived too late to save the Bombay force. The British Governor-General in Bengal, Warren Hastings, rejected the treaty on the grounds that the Bombay officials had no legal power to sign it, and ordered Goddard to secure British interests in

the area. Goddard's 6,000 troops captured Ahmedabad in February 1779, and Bassein in December 1780. Another Bengal detachment led by Captain Popham captured Gwalior in August 1780. Hastings sent yet another force to harass Mahadji Shinde, commanded by Major Camac; in February 1781 the British beat Shinde to the town of Sipri, but every move they made after that was shadowed by the Marathas, and their supplies were cut off, until they made a desperate night raid in late March, capturing not only supplies, but even guns and elephants. Thereafter, the military threat from Shinde's forces to the British was much reduced.

NOTES

TREATY OF SALBAI

After the defeat, Shinde proposed a new treaty between the Peshwa and the British that would recognize the young Madhavrao as the Peshwa and grant Raghunathrao a pension. This treaty, known as the Treaty of Salbai, was signed on 17 May 1782, and was ratified by Hastings in June 1782 and by Phadnis in February 1783. The treaty also returned to Shinde all his territories west of the Yamuna. It also guaranteed peace between the two sides for twenty years and thus ending the war.

SECOND ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

The Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803–1805) was the second conflict between the British East India Company and the Maratha Empire in India.

The overarching ambition of Raghunathrao, Peshwa Baji Rao II's father, and the latter's own incompetence since coming into his inheritance, had long caused much internecine intrigue within the Maratha confederacy; Peshwa Baji Rao II no longer commanded the deference his predecessors had.

In October 1802, Peshwa Baji Rao II was defeated by Yashwantrao Holkar, ruler of Indore, at the Battle of Poona. He fled to British protection, and in December the same year concluded the Treaty of Bassein with the British East India Company, ceding territory for the maintenance of a subsidiary force and agreeing to treaty with no other power. The British also had to check the French influence in India.

THIRD ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

The Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817 – 1818) was a final and decisive conflict between the British East India Company and the Maratha Empire in India, which left the Company in control of most of India.

The war began with an invasion of Maratha territory by the British Governor General, Lord Hastings, supported by a force under Sir Thomas Hislop, in the course of operations against Pindari robber bands. The Peshwa of Pune's forces, followed by those of the Bhonsle of Nagpur and Holkar of Indore (see Battle of Mahidpur), rose against the British, but British diplomacy convinced the Sindhia of Gwalior to remain neutral, although he lost control of Rajasthan. British victory was swift, resulting in the breakup of the Maratha Empire and the loss of Maratha independence to the British. The Battle of Koregaon gave decisive victory to the British; the Peshwa was pensioned off and most of his territory was annexed to the Bombay Presidency, although the Maharaja of Satara was restored as ruler of a princely state until its annexation to Bombay state in 1848. The northern portion of the Nagpur Bhonsle dominions, together with the Peshwa's territories in

NOTES

Bundelkhand, were annexed to British India as the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories. The Maratha kingdoms of Indore, Gwalior, Nagpur, and Jhansi became princely states, acknowledging British control.

The Third Anglo-Maratha War left the British in control of virtually all of present-day India south of the Sutlej River. In addition, the famed Nassak Diamond was acquired by the East India Company as part of the spoils of the war.

4.11 ESTABLISHMENT IN BENGAL

The East India Company formed its earliest settlements in Bengal in the first half of the 17th century. These settlements were of a purely commercial character. In 1620 one of the Company's factors was based in Patna; in 1624–1636 the Company established itself, by the favour of the emperor, on the ruins of the ancient Portuguese settlement of Pippli, in the north of Orissa; in 1640–1642 an English surgeon, Gabriel Boughton, obtained establishments at Balasore, also in Orissa, and at Hughli, some miles above Calcutta, where the Portuguese already had a settlement. The difficulties which the Company's early agents encountered more than once almost induced them to abandon the trade, and in 1677–1678 they threatened to withdraw from Bengal altogether. In 1685, the Bengal factors, seeking greater security for their trade purchased from the grandson of Aurangzeb, in 1696, the villages which have since grown up into Calcutta, the metropolis of India, namely Kalikata, Sutanuti and Govindpur. They were given exemption from trade duties and exactions in part of Bengal in 1717 by the Emperor Farrukhsiyar. During the next forty years the British had a long and hazardous struggle alike with the Mughal governors of the province and the Maratha armies which invaded it. In 1756 this struggle culminated in the fall of Calcutta to Nawab Siraj Ud Daulah followed by Clive's battle of Plassey and recapture of the city. The Battle of Buxar established British military supremacy in Bengal, and procured the treaties of 1765, by which the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa passed under British administration. The other important institution which emerged in this period was the Bengal Army.

BATTLE OF PLASSEY

The Battle of Plassey, 23 June 1757, was a decisive British East India Company victory over the Nawab of Bengal and his French allies, establishing Company rule in South Asia which expanded over much of the Indies for the next 190 years. The battle took place at Palashi, Bengal, on the river banks of the Bhagirathi River, about 150 km north of Calcutta, near Murshidabad, then capital of undivided Bengal. The opponents were Siraj-ud-daulah, the last independent Nawab of Bengal, and the British East India Company.

The battle was preceded by the attack and plunder of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-daulah and the Black Hole tragedy. The British sent reinforcements under Colonel Robert Clive and Admiral Charles Watson from Madras to Bengal and recaptured Calcutta. Clive then seized the initiative to capture the French fort of Chandernagar. Tensions and suspicions between Siraj-ud-daulah and the British culminated in the Battle of Plassey. The battle was waged during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and in a mirror of their European rivalry, the French East India Company sent a small contingent to fight against the British. Siraj-ud-Daulah

NOTES

had a numerically superior force and made his stand at Plassey. The British, worried about being outnumbered, formed a conspiracy with Siraj-ud-Daulah's demoted army chief Mir Jafar, along with others such as Yar Lutuf Khan, Jagat Seths (Mahtab Chand and Swarup Chand), Omichund and Rai Durlabh. Mir Jafar, Rai Durlabh and Yar Lutuf Khan thus assembled their troops near the battlefield but made no move to actually join the battle. Siraj-ud-Daulah's army was defeated by roughly 3,000 soldiers of Col. Robert Clive, owing to the flight of Siraj-ud-daulah from the battlefield and the inactivity of the conspirators.

This is judged to be one of the pivotal battles in the control of South Asia by the colonial powers. The British now wielded enormous influence over the Nawab and consequently acquired large amounts of concession for previous losses and revenue from trade. The British further used this revenue to increase their military might and push the other European colonial powers such as the Dutch and the French out of South Asia, thus expanding the British Empire in Asia.

THE BENGAL CAMPAIGN

On 9 January 1757, a force of 650 men, under Captain Coote and Major Kilpatrick stormed and sacked the town of Hooghly, 23 miles (37 km) north of Calcutta. On learning of this attack, the Nawab raised his army and marched on Calcutta, arriving with the main body on 3 February and encamping beyond the Maratha Ditch. Siraj set up his headquarters in Omichund's garden. A small body of their army attacked the northern suburbs of the town but were beaten back by a detachment under Lieutenant Lebeaume placed there, returning with fifty prisoners.

Clive decided to launch a surprise attack on the Nawab's camp on the morning of 4 February. At midnight, a force of 600 sailors, a battalion of 650 Europeans, 100 artillery-men, 800 sepoys and 6 six-pounders approached the Nawab's camp. At 6:00, under the cover of a thick fog, the vanguard came upon the enemy's advanced guard, who after firing with their matchlocks and rockets, ran away. They continued forward for some distance till they were opposite Omichund's garden, when they heard the galloping of cavalry on their right. The cavalry came within 30 yards (27 m) of the British force before the line gave fire, killing many and dispersing the rest. The fog hampered visibility beyond walking distance. Hence the line moved slowly, infantry and artillery firing on either side randomly. Clive had intended to use a narrow raised causeway, south of the garden, to attack the Nawab's quarters in the garden. The enemy had barricaded the passage. At about 9:00, as the fog began to lift, the troops were overwhelmed by the discharge of two pieces of heavy cannon from across the Maratha Ditch. They were assailed on all sides by cavalry and musket-fire from all sides. The troops then made for a bridge a mile further on, crossed the Maratha Ditch and reached Calcutta. The total casualties of Clive's force were 57 killed and 137 wounded. The Nawab's army lost 22 officers of distinction, 600 common men, 4 elephants, 500 horses, some camels and a great number of bullocks. The attack scared the Nawab into concluding the Treaty of Alinagar with the Company on 5 February, agreeing to restore the Company's factories, allow the fortification of Calcutta and restoring former privileges. The Nawab withdrew his army back to his capital, Murshidabad.

NOTES

Concerned by the approach of de Bussy to Bengal and the Seven Years' War in Europe, the Company turned its attention to the French threat in Bengal. Clive planned to capture the French town of Chandernagar, 20 miles (32 km) north of Calcutta. Clive needed to know whose side the Nawab would intervene on if he attacked Chandernagar. The Nawab sent evasive replies and Clive construed this to be assent to the attack. Clive commenced hostilities on the town and fort of Chandernagar on 14 March. The French had set up defences on the roads leading to the fort and had sunk several ships in the river channel to prevent passage of the men of war. The garrison consisted of 600 Europeans and 300 sepoys. The French expected assistance from the Nawab's forces from Hooghly, but the governor of Hooghly, Nandkumar had been bribed to remain inactive and prevent the Nawab's reinforcement of Chandernagar. The fort was well-defended, but when Admiral Watson's squadron forced the blockade in the channel on 23 March, a fierce cannonade ensued with aid from two batteries on the shore.

BATTLE

At daybreak on 23 June, the Nawab's army emerged from their camp and started advancing towards the grove. Their army consisted of 35,000 infantry of all sorts, armed with matchlocks, swords, pikes and rockets and 18,000 cavalry, armed with swords or long spears, interspersed by 53 pieces of artillery, mostly 32, 24 and 18-pounders. The army also included a detachment of about 50 French artillerymen under de St. Frais directing their own field pieces. The French took up positions at the larger tank with four light pieces advanced by two larger pieces, within a mile of the grove. Behind them were a body of 5,000 cavalry and 7,000 infantry commanded by the Nawab's faithful general Mir Madan Khan and Mohan Lal. The rest of the army numbering 45,000 formed an arc from the small hill to a position 800 yards east of the southern angle of the grove, threatening to surround Clive's relatively smaller army. The right arm of their army was commanded by Rai Durlabh, the centre by Yar Lutuf Khan and the left arm closest to the British by Mir Jafar.

Clive watched the situation unfolding from the roof of the hunting lodge, anticipating news from Mir Jafar. He ordered his troops to advance from the grove and line up facing the larger tank. His army consisted of 750 European infantry with 100 Topasses, 2100 sepoys and 100 artillery-men assisted by 50 sailors. The artillery consisted of eight 6-pounders and two howitzers. The Europeans and Topasses were placed in the centre of the line in four divisions, flanked on both sides by three 6-pounders. The sepoys were placed on the right and left in equal divisions. Clive posted two 6-pounders and two howitzers behind some brick-kilns 200 yards (180 m) north of the left division of his army to oppose the French fire.

4.12 EARLY STRUCTURE OF BRITISH RAJ

British administration in India till 1858 was mainly that of the East India Company. Though the British Government passed Acts from time to time, and interfered with and regulated the Company's administration, the complete takeover by the Crown took place in 1858. Also, the Company, which began as a purely commercial corporation, gradually attained the status of a Government or While

NOTES

the British started trading operations from 1600 A.D., other foreign powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French were already in the trading business. So the British were in competition with other European powers to capture the trade in the East. Simultaneously, they competed to acquire territorial supremacy. This was possible because of the collapse of the Moghul Empire and the mutually destructive wars between princes and nawabs. For instance, through the Carnatic wars, the English secured the Northern Circars which were previously administered by the French. By winning the Battle of Plassey in Bengal in 1757 and through the Treaty of Allahabad, the British got in 1765, the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the right of administering these provinces and collecting their revenue.

In a hundred years, from the Battle of Plassey (1757) to the Sepoy Mutiny (1857), the British virtually captured the whole of India and India soon became the brightest jewel in the British Crown.

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

The East India Company, established on 31st December 1600, was a monopoly, mercantile Company, which was granted by the British crown the right-to-trade in the eastern parts. A trading station, with a number of factors was called Factory. A settlement (number of factories) was under an Agent. Factor was the term applied to an agent transacting business as a substitute for another in mercantile affairs. Employees were graded as clerks, interpreters, writers, factors and merchants.

Recruitment of officials, their nomenclature, terms and conditions of service were governed by rules and practices appropriate to commercial business. Generally, patronage was the method of recruitment and promotion in the services. Patronage was in the hands of the Proprietors or Directors of the Company.

In the early years of Company rules, officials were frequently moved around, from one district to another. They had no training on the job and learnt the hard way by trial and error. They were ignorant of the laws, customs and languages of the local people. Given very low salaries, the Company's servants were known to be corrupt.

The system of governance was commercial in character. It was basically government by Council. The Council had executive and legislative powers with the Governor or the Governor-General having the casting vote. With the acquisition of more territorial sovereignty and the need to take prompt decisions, more power came to be concentrated in the head or Chairman of the Council, but the fundamental principle of collective rule and responsibility remained.

It was also a government by Boards. After the Board of trade, the next in importance was the Military board. But the Board of Revenue had the longest history and the most distinguished record of work. Later, there was also the Railway Board. The Board made possible counseling, discussion, deliberation and even legislative and judicial activities. Questions of policy and principle, conduct and action were settled in the Board.

It was a government by record. When transactions were commercial, records were brief and manageable. But political dealings made record keeping cumbersome and voluminous. Notes, minutes, despatches and reports became an integral part of British administration. All this was in a way necessary because

NOTES

only through written reports and records could control be exercised by officials in the governmental hierarchy. With the Company headquarters in far away England, record keeping helped check absolutism and uncontrolled power.

The East India Company mismanaged administration of acquired territories in India. One example of it is through Clive's Double or Dual Government of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. While the Company took over direct responsibility for defending these territories from outside attack, internal matters, like revenue collection was still left to the Nawab and his officers who worked on behalf of the Company. This was because the Company did not know the local customs and practices and felt comfortable leaving the existing system of revenue collection intact. But this resulted in exploitation of the worst kind as maximum revenue was extracted from the people. Though it was done in the name of the Company, which got a bad name on this account, the Nawab and his men pocketed a lot and grew rich at the cost of the Company.

THE REGULATING ACT OF 1773

This Act deserves special mention because it was the first action on the part of the British Government to regulate the affairs of the Company in India. The Company, through a Charter, had only been given trading rights by the British Crown. When it acquired territories in India and slowly but surely converted itself into a ruling body, the Parliament could not accept and regularise this development. Moreover, it was believed that whatever lands the Company acquired were in the name of and on behalf of the King. Therefore, the administration of these territories had to be controlled by the Crown.

Again, merchants and traders could hardly equal the task of administration. This was proved by the growing level of corruption and mismanagement of territorial acquisitions. While the shareholders of the Company were looking for bigger dividends because the Company was playing a double role of trading and ruling, the Company was making big losses and had to be bailed out. To tide over a critical period when finances were low because of Indian wars and growing demand for increased dividends, the Company asked the British Parliament for a loan of £ 1,400,000. This gave Parliament a long-awaited chance to assert its right to control the political affairs of the East India Company. They granted the loan on condition that administration in India would be according to directions of the British Parliament. Hence, the Regulating Act of 1773 was passed.

PITT'S INDIA ACT 1784

The shortcomings of the Regulating Act soon became manifest. To remedy these defects was not easy because it involved a complete separation of commercial and political functions of the Company which was viewed with disfavour in England.

The urge for a change was very strong and it could not be suppressed for long. In 1783, a bill was introduced by Dundas, but it failed. In the same year, Fox introduced two bills but these were rejected in the House of Lords. When William Pitt came to head the Government he was determined to introduce a bill on India and see it through. At the first attempt, it was defeated by a narrow majority and on second attempt after Pitt's party was returned to power it was introduced.

NOTES

Pitt's India Act provided for a body of six commissioners popularly known as the Board of Control. It consisted of one Secretary of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and four Privy Councillors appointed by the king and holding office during his pleasure. Three of the six formed a quorum and the President possessed a casting vote in case opinion was equally divided. The Secretary of State was to preside over the meetings of the Board, which in his absence, done was by the Chancellor of the Exchequer or a Senior Commissioner.

The Board of Control was empowered to superintend, direct and control the Company's affairs in India with regard to civil, military and revenue work. The Directors of the Company had to deliver to the Board, copies of all correspondence with the company. The orders of the Board on civil and military government or revenues of India became binding on the Directors. According to the Act, the Board could transmit, through a secret committee of three Directors, secret orders to India on the subject of war, peace, or diplomatic negotiation with any of the country powers.

The Proprietors lost most of their powers. They could no longer revoke or modify a decision taken by the Directors with the approval of the Board of Council.

The Directors retained their control of commerce and right to patronage except in the appointment of the Governor-General, the Governors of Madras and Bombay and the Commanders-in-Chief of the three Presidencies.

The arrangement made by Pitt's India Act operated till 1858. Indian Government was subjected to a system of dual control in which the Company could initiate proposals subject to the revising and directing authority of the Board.

UNIT – III

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BRITISH RAJ

The effect of British rule in India is a noteworthy matter. There are two viewpoints or sides to this matter, which makes this issue complex. Some people believe that British had a positive effect on Indian people and some believe that they had negative effects on Indian people. It's had to form a unanimous opinion over this issue because each side has strong reasons to support its views. Some people see negative impact more noteworthy because the British rule resulted in exhaustion of our material reserves and making people poor. On the other hand some people see more positive impacts because British people brought with them technology and infrastructure when they came. But both viewpoints are equally important.

British colonization had both positive effects and the negative effects. British Raj brought with itself 70,000 miles of concrete road ways and 40,000 miles of well paved railroads. This made it easier to travel within India in much shorter time period. With the introduction of large scale irrigation techniques, they helped and boosted the agricultural sector in India. They also industrialized the nation. It is due to these reasons that no famines were witnessed during the colonial rule in India. The Britishers set up a prolific government and built many institutes in India. They established courts of justice and structured judicious laws.

NOTES

The best things that British accomplished in India were the social reforms they imposed for the betterment of society. The custom of Sati was abolished and steps were taken to stop female infanticide. British made education mandatory for Indian especially for women to study at least the lower grades. British even encouraged widow remarriage and intermarriages. They gave importance to health which resulted in better health standards among Indians in terms of general physical health.

Interestingly, British founded the main cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Some view that Indian would not have existed as a single state had British not come to India. It would have existed as number of separate states ruled by different monarchies.

However, there are negative effects of British rule in India too. The “drain of wealth” from India to Britain during the two centuries of colonial rule was very real, very substantial and there are strong reasons to believe that India may have looked significantly different (and far better) economically and socially had it not been for the two centuries of British rule. The British colonization of India had its set of drawbacks. The great freedom fighter Mahatma Gandhi once told the English that even though you have given us our own government but you have not given us any responsibility to run the government. Gandhi was of the view what seemed to be positive in the beginning had other hidden implications. India had no role in running its own government and natives did not hold any positions in the administration. Before the advent of British in India there were many skilled workers specializing in ship building, glassblowing, metal work and paper making. But the British broke the traditional industries causing an increase in unemployment.

4.13 DRAIN OF WEALTH

After the establishment of British rule in India there was an enormous drain of wealth from India to Britain. This adversely affected the economy of India and country became poorer and poorer day by day. This drain began in the decades following the battle of Plassey in 1757. There was a constant flow of India's wealth out of the country with no returns at all. The British officials carried home immense fortunes extracted from the Indian people. This kind of economic exploitation and the drain of Indian wealth formed the integral part of British policies. The exploitative character of British rule and its harmful impact on the lives of the Indians led to the rise of resentment and anti-British feelings in the minds of people. They tried to resist the imperialist and colonialist forces which had brought so much misery and hardship in their lives.

R C Dutta & Dadabhai Naoroji first cited the drain of wealth theory. Naoroji brought it to light in his book titled “Poverty And Un-British Rule In India”. R C Dutt blamed the British policies for, Indian economic ills in his book ‘Economic History of India’ (1901-03). Drain of wealth refers to a portion of national product of India, which was not available for consumption of its people. Drain of wealth began in 1757 after Battle of Plassey when the company's servants began to extort fortunes from Indian rulers, zamindars, merchants and common people and send home. In 1765 the company acquired the Diwani of Bengal & began purchase the Indian goods out of the revenue of Bengal and exported them. These purchases were known as Company's investment.

Duty free inland trade provided British merchants a competitive edge over their Indian counterparts.

CONSTITUENTS OF THE DRAIN.

- **Home charges:** Costs of the Secretary of State's India Office, East India Company's military adventures, cost of suppressing the Mutiny of 1857 and the compensation to the company's share holders, pensions to the British Indian officials and army officers, costs of army training, transport, equipments and campaigns outside India and guaranteed interests on railways.
- **Remittances:** To England (a part of their salaries, incomes and savings) by English Civil servants, Military and railway employee's lawyers, doctors etc.
- **Foreign trade:** The phase of finance imperialism entered India with the introduction of railways development of plantations, mines, banking and factories financed through British capital. Much of the burden of the expanding railway network was met by the Indian taxpayer through the guaranteed interest scheme.

NOTES

4.14 LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENTS (ZAMINDARI AND RYOTWARI)

In the remnant of the Mughal revenue system existing in pre-1765 Bengal, zamindars, or "land holders," collected revenue on behalf of the Mughal emperor, whose representative, or diwan supervised their activities. In this system, the assortment of rights associated with land were not possessed by a "land owner," but rather shared by the several parties with stake in the land, including the peasant cultivator, the zamindar, and the state. The zamindar served as an intermediary who procured economic rent from the cultivator, and after withholding a percentage for his own expenses, made available the rest, as revenue to the state. Under the Mughal system, the land itself belonged to the state and not to the zamindar, who could transfer only his right to collect rent. On being awarded the diwani or overlordship of Bengal following the Battle of Buxar in 1764, the East India Company found itself short of trained administrators, especially those familiar with local custom and law; tax collection was consequently farmed out. This uncertain foray into land taxation by the Company, may have gravely worsened the impact of a famine that struck Bengal in 1769-70 in which between seven and ten million people—or between a quarter and third of the presidency's population—may have died. However, the company provided little relief either through reduced taxation or by relief efforts, and the economic and cultural impact of the famine was felt decades later, even becoming, a century later, the subject of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's novel Anandamath.

In 1772, under Warren Hastings, the East India Company took over revenue collection directly in the Bengal Presidency (then Bengal and Bihar), establishing a Board of Revenue with offices in Calcutta and Patna, and moving the pre-existing Mughal revenue records from Murshidabad to Calcutta. In 1773, after Oudh ceded the tributary state of Benaras, the revenue collection system was extended to the territory with a Company Resident in charge. The following year—with a view to preventing corruption—Company district collectors, who were then

NOTES

responsible for revenue collection for an entire district, were replaced with provincial councils at Patna, Murshidabad, and Calcutta, and with Indian collectors working within each district. The title, "collector," reflected "the centrality of land revenue collection to government in India: it was the government's primary function and it moulded the institutions and patterns of administration."

The Company inherited a revenue collection system from the Mughals in which the heaviest proportion of the tax burden fell on the cultivators, with one-third of the production reserved for imperial entitlement; this pre-colonial system became the Company revenue policy's baseline. However, there was vast variation across India in the methods by which the revenues were collected; with this complication in mind, a Committee of Circuit toured the districts of expanded Bengal presidency in order to make a five-year settlement, consisting of five-yearly inspections and temporary tax farming. In their overall approach to revenue policy, Company officials were guided by two goals: first, preserving as much as possible the balance of rights and obligations that were traditionally claimed by the farmers who cultivated the land and the various intermediaries who collected tax on the state's behalf and who reserved a cut for themselves; and second, identifying those sectors of the rural economy that would maximize both revenue and security. Although their first revenue settlement turned out to be essentially the same as the more informal pre-existing Mughal one, the Company had created a foundation for the growth of both information and bureaucracy.

In 1793, the new Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, promulgated the permanent settlement of land revenues in the presidency, the first socio-economic regulation in colonial India. It was named permanent because it fixed the land tax in perpetuity in return for landed property rights for zamindars; it simultaneously defined the nature of land ownership in the presidency, and gave individuals and families separate property rights in occupied land. Since the revenue was fixed in perpetuity, it was fixed at a high level, which in Bengal amounted to £3 million at 1789-90 prices. According to one estimate, this was 20% higher than the revenue demand before 1757. Over the next century, partly as a result of land surveys, court rulings, and property sales, the change was given practical dimension. An influence on the development of this revenue policy were the economic theories then current, which regarded agriculture as the engine of economic development, and consequently stressed the fixing of revenue demands in order to encourage growth. The expectation behind the permanent settlement was that knowledge of a fixed government demand would encourage the zamindars to increase both their average outcrop and the land under cultivation, since they would be able to retain the profits from the increased output; in addition, it was envisaged that land itself would become a marketable form of property that could be purchased, sold, or mortgaged. A feature of this economic rationale was the additional expectation that the zamindars, recognizing their own best interest, would not make unreasonable demands on the peasantry.

However, these expectations were not realized in practice, and in many regions of Bengal, the peasants bore the brunt of the increased demand, there being little protection for their traditional rights in the new legislation. Forced labor of the peasants by the zamindars became more prevalent as cash crops were cultivated to meet the Company revenue demands. Although

NOTES

commercialized cultivation was not new to the region, it had now penetrated deeper into village society and made it more vulnerable to market forces. The zamindars themselves were often unable to meet the increased demands that the Company had placed on them; consequently, many defaulted, and by one estimate, up to one-third of their lands were auctioned during the first three decades following the permanent settlement. The new owners were often Brahmin and Kayastha employees of the Company who had a good grasp of the new system, and, in many cases, had prospered under it.

Since the zamindars were never able to undertake costly improvements to the land envisaged under the Permanent Settlement, some of which required the removal of the existing farmers, they soon became rentiers who lived off the rent from their tenant farmers. In many areas, especially northern Bengal, they had to increasingly share the revenue with intermediate tenure holders, called jotedars, who supervised farming in the villages. Consequently, unlike the contemporaneous Enclosure movement in Britain, agriculture in Bengal remained the province of the subsistence farming of innumerable small paddy fields.

The zamindari system was one of two principal revenue settlements undertaken by the Company in India. In southern India, Thomas Munro, who would later become Governor of Madras, promoted the ryotwari system, in which the government settled land-revenue directly with the peasant farmers, or ryots. This was, in part, a consequence of the turmoil of the Anglo-Mysore Wars, which had prevented the emergence of a class of large landowners; in addition, Munro and others felt that ryotwari was closer to traditional practice in the region and ideologically more progressive, allowing the benefits of Company rule to reach the lowest levels of rural society. At the heart of the ryotwari system was a particular theory of economic rent—and based on David Ricardo's Law of Rent—promoted by utilitarian James Mill who formulated the Indian revenue policy between 1819 and 1830. "He believed that the government was the ultimate lord of the soil and should not renounce its right to 'rent', i.e. the profit left over on richer soil when wages and other working expenses had been settled." Another keystone of the new system of temporary settlements was the classification of agricultural fields according to soil type and produce, with average rent rates fixed for the period of the settlement. According to Mill, taxation of land rent would promote efficient agriculture and simultaneously prevent the emergence of a "parasitic landlord class." Mill advocated ryotwari settlements which consisted of government measurement and assessment of each plot (valid for 20 or 30 years) and subsequent taxation which was dependent on the fertility of the soil. The taxed amount was nine-tenths of the "rent" in the early nineteenth century and gradually fell afterwards. However, in spite of the appeal of the ryotwari system's abstract principles, class hierarchies in southern Indian villages had not entirely disappeared—for example village headmen continued to hold sway—and peasant cultivators sometimes came to experience revenue demands they could not meet. In the 1850s, a scandal erupted when it was discovered that some Indian revenue agents of the Company were using torture to meet the Company's revenue demands.

Land revenue settlements constituted a major administrative activity of the various governments in India under Company rule. In all areas other than the Bengal Presidency, land settlement work involved a continually repetitive

NOTES

process of surveying and measuring plots, assessing their quality, and recording landed rights, and constituted a large proportion of the work of Indian Civil Service officers working for the government. After the Company lost its trading rights, it became the single most important source of government revenue, roughly half of overall revenue in the middle of the 19th century; even so, between the years 1814 and 1859, the government of India ran debts in 33 years. With expanded dominion, even during non-deficit years, there was just enough money to pay the salaries of a threadbare administration, a skeleton police force, and the army.

These changes introduced with a view to cornering the surplus in the form of land revenue and to make Indian agriculture an appendage of the British economy, greatly transformed the face of the countryside. It was precisely with this purpose that, as you have read earlier, the colonial authorities introduced two major tenurial and land revenue systems - the Zamindari and Ryotwari systems, whereby the position of peasant cultivators became quite precarious. They were forced to pay very high rents and were made to pay illegal dues and cesses and often had to perform forced labour.

High rates of revenue forced these peasant cultivators to take recourse to borrowing money - at equally high rates of interest - often forcing the peasant to resort to distress sales. Floods and famines aggravated the situation and made them more and more susceptible to the money-lenders grip, who in any case were being helped by the Government. This increasing grip of the money-lenders over the agrarian economy eventually enabled them to acquire the land of the distressed peasants whose pauperization was becoming a growing feature of rural life.

Side by side with the above, the British made conscious efforts to incorporate the Indian agricultural and tribal economy into the ever-expanding market of British colonialism. To this end, Indian agriculture was forced to cater to the needs of British Capital. Therefore, there was massive forced production of cash crops like cotton, indigo, sugar, tea and coffee. This spread of crops designed for export to Indian and foreign markets was one of the main forces which created a more homogeneous agrarian society in the early 19th century. Not only were tribal people and nomads being settled and subordinated to the discipline of producing an exportable surplus, but many of the gradations in status and function between people of the settled agricultural tracts which had obtained under indigenous rule were disappearing, giving way to simple distinctions of wealth and landholding.

4.15 RAILWAYS

The first inter-city railway service in England, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, had been established in 1825; in the following decade other inter-city railways were rapidly constructed in the British Isles. In 1845, the Court of Directors of the East India Company, forwarded to the Governor-General of India, Lord Dalhousie, a number of applications they had received from private contractors in England for the construction of a wide ranging railway network in India, and requested a feasibility report. They added that, in their view, the enterprise would be profitable only if large sums of money could be raised for the construction. The Court was concerned that in addition to the usual difficulties encountered in

NOTES

the construction of this new form of transportation, India might present some unique problems, among which they counted floods, tropical storms in coastal areas, damage by "insects and luxuriant tropical vegetation," and the difficulty of finding qualified technicians at a reasonable cost. It was suggested, therefore, that three experimental lines be constructed and their performance evaluated.

Contracts were awarded in 1849 to the East Indian Railway Company to construct a 120-mile railway from Howrah-Calcutta to Raniganj; to the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company for a service from Bombay to Kalyan, thirty miles away; and to the Madras Railway Company for a line from Madras city to Arkonam, a distance of some thirty nine miles. Although construction began first, in 1849, on the East Indian Railways line, with an outlay of £1 million, it was the first-leg of the Bombay-Kalyan line—a 21-mile stretch from Bombay to Thane—that, in 1853, was the first to be completed (see picture below).

The feasibility of a train network in India was comprehensively discussed by Lord Dalhousie in his Railway minute of 1853. The Governor-General vigorously advocated the quick and widespread introduction of railways in India, pointing to their political, social, and economic advantages. He recommended that a network of trunk lines be first constructed connecting the inland regions of each presidency with its chief port as well as each presidency with several others. His recommended trunk lines included the following ones: (i) from Calcutta, in the Bengal Presidency, on the eastern coast to Lahore in the north-western region of the Punjab, annexed just three years before; (ii) from Agra in north-central India (in, what was still being called North-Western Provinces) to Bombay city on the western coast; (iii) from Bombay to Madras city on the southeastern coast; and (iv) from Madras to the southwestern Malabar coast. The proposal was soon accepted by the Court of Directors.

During this time work had been proceeding on the experimental lines as well. The first leg of the East Indian Railway line, a broad gauge railway, from Howrah to Pandua, was opened in 1854 (see picture of locomotive below), and the entire line up to Raniganj would become functional by the time of the Indian rebellion of 1857. The Great Indian Peninsular Railway was permitted to extend its experimental line to Poona. This extension required planning for the steep rise in the Bor Ghat valley in the Western Ghats, a section $15\frac{3}{4}$ miles long with an ascent of 1,831 feet. Construction began in 1856 and was completed in 1863, and, in the end, the line required a total of twenty five tunnels and fifteen miles of gradients (inclines) of 1 in 50 or steeper, the most extreme being the Bor Ghat Incline, a distance of $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles at a gradient of 1 in 37.

Each of the three companies (and later five others that were given contracts in 1859) was joint stock company domiciled in England with its financial capital raised in pound sterling. Each company was guaranteed a 5 per cent return on its capital outlay and, in addition, a share of half the profits. Although the Government of India had no capital expenditure other than the provision of the underlying land free of charge, it had the onus of continuing to provide the 5 percent return in the event of net loss, and soon all anticipation of profits would fall by the wayside as the outlays would mount.

The technology of railway construction was still new and there was no railway engineering expertise in India; consequently, all engineers had to be brought in from England. These engineers were unfamiliar not only with the

NOTES

language and culture of India, but also with the physical aspect of the land itself and its concomitant engineering requirements. Moreover, never before had such a large and complex construction project been undertaken in India, and no pool of semi-skilled labour was already organized to aid the engineers. The work, therefore, proceeded in fits and starts—many practical trials followed by a final construction that was undertaken with great caution and care—producing an outcome that was later criticized as being “built to a standard which was far in excess of the needs to the time.” The Government of India’s administrators, moreover, made up in their attention to the fine details of expenditure and management what they lacked in professional expertise. The resulting delays soon led to the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons in 1857–58 to investigate the matter. However, by the time the Committee concluded that all parties needed to honour the spirit rather than the letter of the contracts, Company rule in India had ended.

Although, railway construction had barely begun in the last years of this rule, its foundations had been laid, and it would proceed apace for much of the next half century. By the turn of the 20th century, India would have over 28,000 miles of railways connecting most interior regions to the ports of Karachi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Chittagong, and Rangoon, and together they would constitute the fourth-largest railway network in the world.

4.16 COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The colonial government made institutional changes in agriculture by transforming traditionally circumscribed property rights into something more closely resembling the unencumbered private property characteristic of Western capitalism. The beneficiaries of these new rights varied in different parts of India. The top layer of Moghul property, the jagir, was abolished (except in the autonomous princely states), and the bulk of the old warlord aristocracy was dispossessed. Their previous income from land revenue, and that of the Moghul state, was now appropriated by the British as land tax. However, in the Bengal presidency (*i.e.*, modern Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and part of Madras) the second layer of Moghul property rights belonging to Moghul tax collectors (zamindars) was reinforced.

All zamindars in these areas now had hereditary status, so long as they paid their land taxes, and their judicial and administrative functions disappeared. In the Moghul period the zamindars had usually kept a tenth of the land revenue to themselves, but by the end of British rule their income from rents was a multiple of the tax they paid to the state. In Bihar, for instance, five sixths of the total sum levied by 1950 was rent and only one-sixth revenue.

However, zamindars were not really the equivalent of Western landowners. Dominant families in each village remained as their ‘tenants-in-chief’ and continued to enjoy many of the old customary rights, *i.e.*, they could not be evicted, their rights were heritable and their rental payments could not be raised easily. Lower-caste families were usually sub-tenants of the tenants-in-chief, rather than direct tenants of the zamindars. Often there were several layers of tenancy between the actual cultivator and the zamindar. Sub-tenants had less security and less defence against rack-renting than tenants-in-chief. It is worth noting that when zamindari rights were abolished around 1952 and the old zamindar

rental income was converted into state revenue, the amount involved was only about 2 per cent of farm income in the relevant areas of India. This suggests that by the end of the colonial period, the zamindars were not able to squeeze as much surplus out of their chief tenants as is sometimes suggested.

The typical zamindari estate at the end of British rule seems to have been very different from that at the end of the eighteenth century. In Bengal the total "number of landowners which did not exceed 100 in the beginning of Hasting's administration in 1772, rose in the course of a century to 154,200". In 1872 there were 154,200 estates of which "533, or 0.34 per cent, only are great properties with an area of 20,000 acres and upwards; 15,747, or 10.21 per cent, range from 500 to 20,000 acres in area; while the number of estates which fell short of 500 acres is no less than 137,920, or 89.44 per cent, of the whole".

In the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, which covered most of Southern India, the British dispossessed many of the old Moghul and Mahratta nobility and big zamindars, and vested property rights and tax obligations in individual 'peasants'. This settlement was known as the ryotwari (peasant tenure) system. However, the term peasant is misleading, because most of those who acquired land titles belonged to the traditionally dominant castes in villages. Lower-caste cultivators became their tenants. Thus there was no change in social structure at the village level, except that the new ownership rights gave greater opportunities for sale and mortgage, and the security of the tenant was less than it had been under the previous system. The change in legal status was limited by several factors. First of all, illiterate peasant did not always understand the new situation, and there were strong social ties in the joint family and the caste panchayats to prevent major deviations from old habits. Secondly, the new administration was rather remote from individual villages (with a district officer responsible for over a thousand villages), and many British administrators had a personal bias in favour of customary tenant rights because by maintaining them they could avoid political trouble. At a later stage, the government itself introduced a good deal of legislation to protect customary rights in response to peasant disturbances. Land policy was, therefore, another instance of British policy of half-Westernization. The change from custom to contract was not nearly as sharp as that brought about in Japan by the Meiji land reforms. The British were more concerned with arrangements which would guarantee their revenue and not provoke too much political disturbance rather than in increasing productivity or introducing capitalist institutions. The Utilitarians who dominated the Company from 1820 to 1850 would have liked to push in this direction, but they were displaced at mid-century by the paternalist conservatives of the Imperial raj.

Nevertheless, there were some economic consequences of the new legal situation. Because of the emergence of clear titles, it was now possible to mortgage land. The status of moneylenders was also improved by the change from Muslim to British law. There had been moneylenders in the Moghul period, but their importance grew substantially under British rule, and over time a considerable amount of land changed hands through foreclosures.

4.17 GROWTH OF LANDLESS LABOUR

India's invasion by the British brought about, in the course of time, a complete transformation in the country's land tenure system. The East India

NOTES

NOTES

Company experienced difficulty in its trading because the sale of British goods in India was insignificant. On the other hand, the exportation of gold and silver from England to pay for Indian goods was soon prohibited. The company found a solution by securing money from India to pay for Indian goods. It collected taxes for the Indian rulers which, in the beginning, brought revenues of only 10 % of the levied taxes, but, since the control over the amount of levied taxes became lax at the end of the Mogul period, its revenues increased. In addition, they were assigned areas as "jagir." The decisive breakthrough came when, in 1765, the office of 'dewan' for Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar, namely the financial sovereignty for these areas, was assigned to the Company with the concession for levying taxes in exchange for a global sum of Rs. 2.6 million per annum.

After some time of experimentation, in 1793, Cornwallis' Permanent Settlement brought a final regulation of the procedure for levying taxes, which led to decisive changes in land tenure. The British did as if all the land belonged to the state and was thus at their disposal. They registered the local tax collectors, who were called zamindars, as owners of the land in their district. These zamindars had to collect and deliver the taxes; the amount was fixed at the beginning and remained the same permanently. To give them an incentive, they were free to decide how much to demand from the cultivators. On the other hand, the fixed lump tax sum was an incentive to put more land under cultivation and, thus, have more taxpayers in one region. In order to do so, one could not bleed the individual farmers too much.

The right to the land conferred on the zamindars was alienable, rentable, and heritable. This meant the introduction of a complete novelty, in India. The privilege of utilizing land had become a saleable good. Those who had been cultivators until then obtained the status of 'occupancy tenants.' These occupancy rights were heritable and transferrable and were not tampered with as long as the holders paid their taxes. In contrast to these, the tenants who cultivated land owned by the tax collectors were "tenants at will", i.e., they could be evicted.

In the beginning, there were hardly any problems. The scarcity of cultivators prevented the zamindars from demanding too high taxes. They were interested in attracting people to cultivate the land and, thus, to increase the number of tax payers in order to increase the difference between the revenues and the fixed amount that had to be remitted.

The detrimental consequences of recognizing the tax collectors as landlords and of introducing the legal institution of saleable private landed property first became evident as, later, considerable changes occurred in India in the demographic and economic situation. The industrial revolution in England, namely, brought about a change in the British policy in India. The objective was no longer to import from India, but to sell English products in India. Since the textile industry played an important role at the beginning of industrialization in England, very large amounts of cheap products manufactured by mechanical looms were exported to India and this soon led to a collapse in the textile home industry in India. A large number of weavers became unemployed. In order to secure a basis of existence, they migrated to the rural areas and tried to lease land they could farm. The scope of this migration-Dacca's inhabitants alone decreased from 150,000 to 20,000 between 1824 and 1837- caused pressure on the rural areas and brought about a complete change in the relationships between

zamindars and tenants. The monopoly of controlling the means to secure livelihood shifted power unilaterally into the hands of the zamindars who were able to extort more and more taxes as the demand for land increased. This led to indebtedness and often to the loss of occupancy rights and relegation to tenants at will.

The great discrepancy between the fixed amount of taxes to be remitted and the increasing revenues made the zamindars wealthy. Soon they no longer went to the trouble of collecting the taxes themselves but rather sub leased this office to others while they themselves lived on the remainder between the amount claimed as taxes and that paid to the "sub assignees." The difference between the revenues and the amounts to be remitted was so great that even the "sub assignees" tried to sub lease. After some time, it became quite common to have 10 to 20 intermediaries, more or less without a specific function, between the government and the farmers, and they all had a share in the cultivation yield.

In addition, abwabs, supplements and fees for the most curious reasons were introduced; for example, for using an umbrella, for permission to sit down in the zamindar's office, for being allowed to stand up again, etc. Moreover, the "begar" unpaid work which the tenants were forced to perform on the zamindar's land, took on larger and larger proportions. On the average, it amounted to 20-25 % of the lease. Under the effect of these developments which should be regarded as late consequences of the changes in the land tenure brought about by the "Permanent Settlement," more and more cultivators became indebted, lost their occupancy rights, and dropped in status to tenants at will or agricultural labourers. On the other hand, the wealth of the zamindars kept increasing on account of the income they earned from the difference between the amount of taxes and the rentals, the increase in cultivated areas, money lending, and expropriation of debtors. In the course of time, the zamindari region was characterized by the marked difference between wealth, power, and prospects in life. Even the government experienced drawbacks on account of this system. Changes in the monetary value, prices, and the amount of cultivated areas turned the fixed tax, after 150 years, into nothing but a token sum, and considerable tax tosses ensued.

The zamindari system was not introduced in the whole of India. Because of the experience made with the system, better knowledge of the conditions in India, and liberal influences on the colonial policy, the provinces which became British possessions later were assigned other taxation systems. The ryotwari system was introduced in Madras, Bombay, and Assam. Under that system, the government claimed the property rights to all of the land, but allotted it to the cultivators on the condition that they pay the taxes. They could use, sell, mortgage, bequeath, and lease the land as long as they paid their taxes. Otherwise, they were evicted. This direct tax relation between the government and the cultivators was meant to prevent sub tax collectors, thus increasing purchasing power, and, in that way, improving the marketing prospects for English products. Here, the taxes were only fixed in a temporary settlement for a period of thirty years and then revised. This way, the government increased its revenue.

In North India and in the Punjab where villages with joint land rights were common, an attempt was made to utilize this structure in the Mahalwari system. Taxation was imposed with the village community as theoretical landlord, since it had the land rights. The village community had to distribute these taxes among the cultivators who owed taxes individually and jointly. Everyone was thus liable

NOTES

NOTES

for the others' arrears. A village inhabitant- the *lambardar*- collected the amounts and remitted them in bulk. Here, too, tax assessment was revised at intervals.

Despite this different system, the conditions for cultivators constantly deteriorated in these regions as well. The high taxes fixed by the government- half to two thirds of the net yield was the usual amount made investments impossible. Because of fragmentation resulting from inheritance, the farms became smaller and smaller. The fact that land could be used as collateral made it possible to borrow money to pay taxes in the case of crop failures. But, in that way, more and more farms passed into the hands of moneylenders, often better off cultivators in the village. In the course of time, these ceased to cultivate their land themselves and sub leased it instead. Finally, the *ryotwari* region was no longer a self cultivator region. More than one third of the land was leased and in many districts more than two thirds. The great demand for land owing to the population growth made it possible to let others work for oneself.

In the *Mahalwari* region as well, sub leasing and indebtedness became more and more common. Indeed, it was not possible to transfer the land to people who were not from the locality, but the result was that landed property became concentrated in the hands of a few wealthy people, whereas the others lost their rights. A constantly increasing number of people were or became landless. While in the middle of the last century there were still no landless, in 1931 and 1945, respectively 33 and 70 million landless labourers were registered. Others succeeded in renting some land, but on less favourable terms. Share tenancy, in particular, increased greatly.

The British land policy which lasted 150 years as well as the consequences of economic changes and the drastic population growth led to a complete change in the land tenure system in India. Whereas, formerly, the cultivators possessed the right of use and the government the right to impose taxes, now the rights in land were split into many pieces. In this process, not only did a large number of cultivators lose their valid land rights and fell in status to unprotected tenants and labourers. At the same time, the tax collectors became landlords and large landowners. A stratum of intermediaries who did not have a specific function developed, and the land passed into the hands of moneylenders. This caused an enormous differentiation in financial conditions, whereby, the mass of farmers lived in abject poverty.

To explain the further development following India and Pakistan's independence, it is very important to note that, admittedly, the economic situation of the different groups of the rural population had developed very differently, and a large part of the population became poor, but, in its main traits, the social system remained intact. There existed namely a complicated relationship pattern between landlords, cultivators, and landless people which was based on mutual rights and obligations and which provided everyone with a place- even if a poor one- within the rural society. The system aimed at satisfying the needs of everyone in the economic and social sector, and was based on the fact that all members depended upon one another.

Thus, the landlords owned land, it is true, but were dependent upon the landless tenants, agricultural labourers, and village craftsmen to cultivate it. Inversely, the landless could not utilize their labour in an agrarian society if the landlords did not give them the possibility of working on the fields. This made it

necessary for the landlords to maintain the landless' economic situation at least at a level which was not detrimental to their capacity to work, nor caused them to migrate. This not only forced the existence of a minimum wage, although very low, but also induced financial aid in emergencies, crop failures, etc. In addition, the landlords preferred to face want than not meet the obligations resulting from their labour relationships.

Such mutual relationships existed even in the social sector. The landlord assured the protection and representation of their workers externally, whereas the landless adopted a loyal attitude towards their employers and were, so to say, automatically on his side. This secured him power and influence and put him in a position to represent their interests well externally. In the wars of time these behavioural patterns became so ingrained that the obligations of the strong towards the weak became social norms, and paternalistic behaviour was a prerequisite for being recognized as a leading personality. This norm, which is typical for rural societies, sets obvious limits to exploitation. It is true that the level of these limits are very low, but they guaranteed a subsistence. It is also important to observe that the rights had been unilaterally shifted to the benefit of the landlords, but the landless did not consider themselves to be exploited. Here, religion may have played an important role, but the existence of mutual relationships even if they were unequal which granted security against threat to existence were also of extreme importance.

NOTES

UNIT – IV

CULTURAL ENCOUNTER AND SOCIAL CHANGES

British imperialism was more pragmatic than that of other colonial powers. Its motivation was economic, not evangelical. There was none of the dedicated Christian fanaticism which the Portuguese and Spanish demonstrated in Latin America and less enthusiasm for cultural diffusion than the French (or the Americans) showed in their colonies. For this reason they westernized India only to a limited degree.

British interests were of several kinds. At first the main purpose was to achieve a monopolistic trading position. Later it was felt that a regime of free trade would make India a major market for British goods and a source of raw materials, but British capitalists who invested in India, or who sold banking or shipping service there, continued effectively to enjoy monopolistic privileges. India also provided interesting and lucrative employment for a sizeable portion of the British upper middle class, and the remittances they sent home made an appreciable contribution to Britain's balance of payments and capacity to save. Finally, control of India was a key element in the world power structure, in terms of geography, logistics and military manpower. The British were not averse to Indian economic development if it increased their markets but refused to help in areas where they felt there was conflict with their own economic interests or political security.

Hence, they refused to give protection to the Indian textile industry until its main competitor became Japan rather than Manchester, and they did almost

NOTES

nothing to further technical education. They introduced some British concepts of property, but did not push them too far when they met vested interests.

The main changes which the British made in Indian society were at the top. They replaced the wasteful warlord aristocracy by a bureaucratic-military establishment, carefully designed by utilitarian technocrats, which was very efficient in maintaining law and order. The greater efficiency of government permitted a substantial reduction in the fiscal burden, and a bigger share of the national product was available for landlords, capitalists and the new professional classes. Some of this upper class income was siphoned off to the UK, but the bulk was spent in India. However, the pattern of consumption changed as the new upper class no longer kept harems and palaces, nor did they wear fine muslins and damascened swords. This caused some painful readjustments in the traditional handicraft sector. It seems likely that there was some increase in productive investment which must have been near zero in Moghul India: government itself carried out productive investment in railways and irrigation and as a result there was a growth in both agricultural and industrial output. The new elite established a Western life-style using the English language and English schools. New towns and urban amenities were created with segregated suburbs and housing for them. Their habits were copied by the new professional elite of lawyers, doctors, teachers, journalists and businessmen. Within this group, old caste barriers were eased and social mobility increased.

4.18 INTRODUCTION TO WESTERN EDUCATION

As has been noted by numerous scholars of British rule in India, the physical presence of the British in India was not significant. Yet, for almost two centuries, the British were able to rule two-thirds of the subcontinent directly, and exercise considerable leverage over the Princely States that accounted for the remaining one-third. While the strategy of divide and conquer was used most effectively, an important aspect of British rule in India was the psychological indoctrination of an elite layer within Indian society who were artfully tutored into becoming model British subjects. This English-educated layer of Indian society was craftily encouraged in absorbing values and notions about themselves and their land of birth that would be conducive to the British occupation of India, and furthering British goals of looting India's physical wealth and exploiting its labour.

In 1835, Thomas Macaulay articulated the goals of British colonial imperialism most succinctly: "We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, words and intellect." As the architect of Colonial Britain's Educational Policy in India, Thomas Macaulay was to set the tone for what educated Indians were going to learn about themselves, their civilization, and their view of Britain and the world around them. An arch-racist, Thomas Macaulay had nothing but scornful disdain for Indian history and civilization. In his infamous minute of 1835, he wrote that he had "never found one among them (speaking of Orientalists, an opposing political faction) who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia". "It is, no exaggeration to say, that all the historical information which has been collected from all the books written in Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgments used at preparatory schools in England".

NOTES

As a contrast to such unabashed contempt for Indian civilization, we find glowing references to India in the writings of pre-colonial Europeans quoted by Swami Vivekananda: "All history points to India as the mother of science and art," wrote William Macintosh. "This country was anciently so renowned for knowledge and wisdom that the philosophers of Greece did not disdain to travel thither for their improvement." Pierre Sonnerat, a French naturalist, concurred: "We find among the Indians the vestiges of the most remote antiquity.... We know that all peoples came there to draw the elements of their knowledge.... India, in her splendour, gave religions and laws to all the other peoples; Egypt and Greece owed to her both their fables and their wisdom

But colonial exploitation had created a new imperative for the colonial lords. It could no longer be truthfully acknowledged that India had a rich civilization of its own - that its philosophical and scientific contributions may have influenced European scholars - or helped in shaping the European Renaissance. Britain needed a class of intellectuals meek and docile in their attitude towards the British, but full of hatred towards their fellow citizens. It was thus important to emphasize the negative aspects of the Indian tradition, and obliterate or obscure the positive. Indians were to be taught that they were a deeply conservative and fatalist people - genetically predisposed to irrational superstitions and mystic belief systems. That they had no concept of nation, national feelings or a history. If they had any culture, it had been brought to them by invaders - that they themselves lacked the creative energy to achieve anything by themselves. But the British, on the other hand epitomized modernity - they were the harbingers of all that was rational and scientific in the world. With their unique organizational skills and energetic zeal, they would raise India from the morass of casteism and religious bigotry. These and other such ideas were repeatedly filled in the minds of the young Indians who received instruction in the British schools.

All manner of conscious (and subconscious) British (and European) agents would henceforth embark on a journey to rape and conquer the Indian mind. Within a matter of years, J.N Farquhar (a contemporary of Macaulay) was to write: "The new educational policy of the Government created during these years the modern educated class of India. These are men who think and speak in English habitually, who are proud of their citizenship in the British Empire, who are devoted to English literature, and whose intellectual life has been almost entirely formed by the thought of the West, large numbers of them enter government services; while the rest practice law, medicine or teaching, or take to journalism or business."

Macaulay's stratagem could not have yielded greater dividends. Charles E. Trevelyan, brother-in-law of Macaulay, stated: "Familiarly acquainted with us by means of our literature, the Indian youth almost cease to regard us as foreigners. They speak of "great" men with the same enthusiasm as we do. Educated in the same way, interested in the same objects, engaged in the same pursuits with ourselves, they become more English than Hindoos, just as the Roman provincial became more Romans than Gauls or Italians.."

That this was no benign process, but intimately related to British colonial goals was expressed quite candidly by Charles Trevelyan in his testimony before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Government of Indian Territories on 23rd June, 1853: "..... the effect of training in European learning is

NOTES

to give an entirely new turn to the native mind. The young men educated in this way cease to strive after independence according to the original Native model, and aim at, improving the institutions of the country according to the English model, with the ultimate result of establishing constitutional self-government. They cease to regard us as enemies and usurpers, and they look upon us as friends and patrons, and powerful beneficent persons, under whose protection the regeneration of their country will gradually be worked out."

Much of the indoctrination of the Indian mind actually took place outside the formal classrooms and through the sale of British literature to the English-educated Indian who developed a voracious appetite for the British novel and British writings on a host of popular subjects. In a speech before the Edinburgh Philosophical Society in 1846, Thomas Babington (1800-1859), shortly to become Baron Macaulay, offered a toast: "To the literature of Britain . . . which has exercised an influence wider than that of our commerce and mightier than that of our arms . . . before the light of which impious and cruel superstitions are fast taking flight on the Banks of the Ganges!"

However, the British were not content to influence Indian thinking just through books written in the English language. Realizing the danger of Indians discovering their real heritage through the medium of Sanskrit, Christian missionaries such as William Carey anticipated the need for British educators to learn Sanskrit and transcribe and interpret Sanskrit texts in a manner compatible with colonial aims. That Carey's aims were thoroughly duplicitous is brought out in this quote cited by Richard Fox Young: "To gain the ear of those who are thus deceived it is necessary for them to believe that the speaker has a superior knowledge of the subject. In these circumstances a knowledge of Sanskrit is valuable. As the person thus misled, perhaps a Brahman, deems this a most important part of knowledge, if the advocate of truth be deficient therein, he labors against the hill; presumption is altogether against him."

In this manner, India's awareness of its history and culture was manipulated in the hands of colonial ideologues. Domestic and external views of India were shaped by authors whose attitudes towards all things Indian were shaped either by subconscious prejudice or worse by barely concealed racism. For instance, William Carey (who bemoaned how so few Indians had converted to Christianity in spite of his best efforts) had little respect or sympathy for Indian traditions. In one of his letters, he described Indian music as "disgusting", bringing to mind "practices dishonorable to God". Charles Grant, who exercised tremendous influence in colonial evangelical circles, published his "Observations" in 1797 in which he attacked almost every aspect of Indian society and religion, describing Indians as morally depraved, "lacking in truth, honesty and good faith" (p.103). British Governor General Cornwallis asserted "Every native of Hindostan, I verily believe, is corrupt".

Several British and European historians attempted to portray India as a society that had made no civilizational progress for several centuries. William Jones asserted that Hindu society had been stationary for so long that "in beholding the Hindus of the present day, we are beholding the Hindus of many ages past". James Mill, author of the three-volume History of British India (1818) essentially concurred with William Jones as did Henry Maine. This view of India, as an essentially unchanging society where there was no intellectual debate, or

technological innovation - where a hidebound caste system had existed without challenge or reform - where social mobility or class struggle were unheard of, became especially popular with European scholars and intellectuals of the colonial era.

NOTES

It allowed influential philosophers such as Hegel to posit ethnocentric and self-serving justifications of colonization. Arguing that Europe was "absolutely the end of universal history", he saw Asia as only the beginning of history, where history soon came to a standstill. "If we had formerly the satisfaction of believing in the antiquity of the Indian wisdom and holding it in respect, we now have ascertained through being acquainted with the great astronomical works of the Indians, the inaccuracy of all figures quoted. Nothing can be more confused, nothing more imperfect than the chronology of the Indians; no people which attained to culture in astronomy, mathematics, etc., is as incapable for history; in it they have neither stability nor coherence." With such distorted views of India, it was a small step to argue that "The British, or rather the East India Company, are the masters of India because it is the fatal destiny of Asian empires to subject themselves to the Europeans."

Hegel's racist consciousness comes out most explicitly in his descriptions of Africans: "It is characteristic of the blacks that their consciousness has not yet even arrived at the intuition of any objectivity, as for example, of God or the law, in which humanity relates to the world and intuits its essence. ...He [the black person] is a human being in the rough."

Such ideas also shaped the views of later German authors such Max Weber famous for his "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," (1930) who in his descriptions of Indian religion and philosophy focused exclusively on "material renunciation" and the "world denying character" of Indian philosophical systems, ignoring completely the rich heritage of scientific realism and rational analysis that had in fact imbued much of Indian thought. Weber discounted the existence of any rational doctrines in the East, insisting that: "Neither scientific, artistic, governmental, nor economic evolution has led to the modes of rationalization proper to the Occident." Whether it was ignorance or prejudice that determined his views, such views were not uninfluential, and exemplified the euro-centric undercurrent that pervaded most British and European scholarship of that time.

Naturally, British-educated Indians absorbed and internalized such characterizations of themselves and their past. Amongst those most affected by such diminution of the Indian character was the young Gandhi, who when in South Africa, wished to meet General Smuts and offer the cooperation of the South African Indian population for the Boer war effort. In a conversation with the General, Gandhi appears as just the sort of colonized sycophant the British education system had hoped to create: "General Smuts, sir we Indians would like to strengthen the hands of the government in the war. However, our efforts have been rebuffed. Could you inform us about our vices so we would reform and be better citizens of this land?" to which Gen.Smuts replied: "Mr. Gandhi, we are not afraid of your vices, We are afraid of your virtues". (Although Gandhi eventually went through a slow and very gradual nationalist transformation, in 1914 he campaigned for the British war efforts in World War I, and was one of the last of the national leaders to call for complete independence from British rule.)

NOTES

British-educated Indians grew up learning about Pythagoras, Archimedes, Galileo and Newton without ever learning about Panini, Aryabhata, Bhaskar or Bhaskaracharya. The logic and epistemology of the Nyaya Sutras, the rationality of the early Buddhists or the intriguing philosophical systems of the Jains were generally unknown to them. Neither was there any awareness of the numerous examples of dialectics in nature that are to be found in Indian texts. They may have read Homer or Dickens but not the Panchatantra, the Jataka tales or anything from the Indian epics. Schooled in the aesthetic and literary theories of the West, many felt embarrassed in acknowledging Indian contributions in the arts and literature. What was important to Western civilization was deemed universal, but everything Indian was dismissed as either backward and anachronistic, or at best tolerated as idiosyncratic oddity. Little did the Westernized Indian know what debt "Western Science and Civilization" owed (directly or indirectly) to Indian scientific discoveries and scholarly texts.

Strong traces of such thinking continue to infect young Indians, especially those that migrate to the West. Elements of such mental insecurity and alienation also had an impact on the consciousness of the British-educated Indians who participated in the freedom struggle.

Unable to rise above the colonial paradigms, many post-independence scholars of Indian history and civilization continue to fumble with colonially inspired doctrines that run counter to the emerging historical record. Others more conscious of British distortions and frustrated by the hyper-critical assessment of some Indian scholars, go to the other extreme of presenting the Indian historical record without any critical analysis whatsoever. Some have even attempted to construct artificially hyped views of Indian history where there is little attempt to distinguish myth from fact. Strong communal biases continue to prevail, as do xenophobic rejections of even potentially useful and valid Western constructs, even as Western-imposed hegemonic economic systems and exploitative economic models continue to dominate the Indian economic landscape and often find unquestioning acceptance.

Thus, one of the most difficult tasks facing the Indian subcontinent is to free all scholarship concerning its development and its relationship to the world from the biased formulations and distortions of colonially-influenced authors. At the same time, Indian authors also need to study the West and other civilizations with dispassionate objectivity - eschewing both craven and uncritical admiration and xenophobic skepticism and distrust of the scientific and cultural achievements made by others.

During the 19th and 20th centuries most of the Indian princely states fell under the British Raj. The British rule during the 19th century did not take adequate measures to help develop science and technology in India and instead focused more on arts and humanities. Till 1899 only the University of Bombay offered a separate degree in sciences. In 1899 B.Sc and M.Sc. courses were also supported by the University of Calcutta. By the late 1800s India had lagged behind in science and technology and related education. However, the nobility and aristocracy in India largely continued to encourage the development of sciences and technical education, both traditional and western.

While some science related subjects were not allowed in the government curriculum in the 1850s the private institutions could also not follow science

NOTES

courses due to lack of funds required to establish laboratories etc. The fees for scientific education under the British rule were also high. The salary that one would get in the colonial administration was meager and made the prospect of attaining higher education bleak since the native population was not employed for high positions in the colonial setup. Even the natives who did manage to attain higher education faced issues of discrimination in terms of wages and privileges.

One argument for the British detachment towards the study of science in India is that England itself was gradually outpaced in science and technology by European rival Germany and a resurgent United States of America so the prospects of the British Raj adopting a world class science policy towards its colonies increasingly decreased. However, Deepak Kumar notes the British turn to professional education during the 1860s and the French initiatives at raising awareness on science and technology in French colonies. The British themselves undertook science initiatives in Canada and South Africa. Growing awareness for the need of technical education in India gave rise to establishment of institutions such as the Indian Institute of Science, established by philanthropist Jamshetji Tata in 1909. By the 1930s India had a total of only 10 institutions offering engineering courses. However, with the advent of the second world war in 1939 the "War Technicians Training Scheme" under Ernest Bevin was initiated, thereby laying the foundation of modern technical education in India. Later, planned development of scientific education under Ardeshir Dalal was initiated in 1944.

The Madras Medical College opened in 1875, and imparted medical education to women so that they could treat the female population who traditionally shied away from medical treatments under qualified male professionals. The concept of educated women among medical professionals gained popularity during the late 1800s and by 1894, the Women's Christian Medical College, an exclusive medical school for women, was established in Ludhiana of Punjab.

British education became solidified into India as missionary schools were established during the 1920s. New policies in 1835 gave rise to the use of English as a medium of education of western science. Fritz Blackwell writes: 'With the establishment of five universities in major cities in the middle of the century and the increase in primary and secondary schools, political consciousness also increased. The curriculum was Western, and the response was impressive; for example, the University of Calcutta in 1900 was reportedly the largest university in the world, with more than eight thousand students. Further, a number of Indians, including Gandhi and Nehru attended university in England.'

4.19 INDIA'S RENAISSANCE : SOCIO AND RELIGIOUS REFORMS

The India Renaissance refers to a social reform movement during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the region of India during the period of British rule. The Bengal renaissance can be said to have started with Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1775-1833) and ended with Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), although there have been many stalwarts thereafter embodying particular aspects of the unique intellectual and creative output. Nineteenth century Bengal was a

NOTES

unique blend of religious and social reformers, scholars, literary giants, journalists, patriotic orators and scientists, all merging to form the image of a renaissance, and marked the transition from the 'medieval' to the 'modern'.

During this period, India witnessed an intellectual awakening that is in some way similar to the Renaissance in Europe during the 16th century, although Europeans of that age were not confronted with the challenge and influence of alien colonialism. This movement questioned existing orthodoxies, particularly with respect to women, marriage, the dowry system, the caste system, and religion. One of the earliest social movements that emerged during this time was the Young Bengal movement, that espoused rationalism and atheism as the common denominators of civil conduct among upper caste educated Hindus.

The parallel socio-religious movement, the Brahmo Samaj, developed during this time period and counted many of the leaders of the Bengal Renaissance among its followers. In the earlier years the Brahmo Samaj, like the rest of society, could not however, conceptualize, in that feudal-colonial era, a free India as it was influenced by the European Enlightenment (and its bearers in India, the British Raj) although it traced its intellectual roots to the Upanishads. Their version of Hinduism, or rather Universal Religion (similar to that of Ramakrishna), although devoid of practices like sati and polygamy that had crept into the social aspects of Hindu life, was ultimately a rigid impersonal monotheistic faith, which actually was quite distinct from the pluralistic and multifaceted nature of the way the Hindu religion was practiced. Future leaders like Keshub Chunder Sen were as much devotees of Christ, as they were of Brahma, Krishna or the Buddha. It has been argued by some scholars that the Brahmo Samaj movement never gained the support of the masses and remained restricted to the elite, although Hindu society has accepted most of the social reform programmes of the Brahmo Samaj. It must also be acknowledged that many of the later Brahmos were also leaders of the freedom movement.

The renaissance period after the Indian Rebellion of 1857 saw a magnificent outburst of Bengali literature. While Ram Mohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar were the pioneers, others like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee widened it and built upon it. The first significant nationalist detour to the Bengal Renaissance was given by the brilliant writings of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Later writers of the period who introduced broad discussion of social problems and more colloquial forms of Bengali into mainstream literature included the great Saratchandra Chatterjee.

The Tagore family, including Rabindranath Tagore, were leaders of this period and had a particular interest in educational reform. Their contribution to the Bengal Renaissance was multi-faceted. Indeed, Tagore's 1901 Bengali novella, *Nastanirh* was written as a critique of men who professed to follow the ideals of the Renaissance, but failed to do so within their own families. In many ways Rabindranath Tagore's writings (especially poems and songs) can be seen as imbued with the spirit of the Upanishads. His works repeatedly allude to Upanishadic ideas regarding soul, liberation, transmigration and — perhaps most essentially — about a spirit that imbues all creation not unlike the Upanishadic Brahman. Tagore's English translation of a set of poems titled the *Gitanjali* won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. He was the first Asian to win this award. That was the only example at the time but the contribution of the Tagore family is enormous.

NOTES

As has been pointed out in the previous unit, by the beginning of the 19th century, the process of colonisation of India was complete. Henceforth, the foremost concern of colonial rulers was the consolidation of the gains, *i.e.*, the maintenance of colonial rule. For this they needed supporters from among the subjected which could be achieved only through cultural and ideological hegemony. The creation of a class of landlords and the educated urban middle class, most of whom were absorbed by colonial administrative system and other colonial institutions, were steps to meet the needs of British Colonialism. The colonial education and other cultural undertakings geared towards the establishment of ideological hegemony.

Many Indians realized that the reform of social institutions and religious outlook of people was a necessary pre-condition for the growth of national unity. Through successive movements they carried forward the pioneering work started by few enlightened Indians. This was a difficult task as orthodox elements formed large and strong groups in the country. During the second half of 19th century only two important laws were passed by the British government. One of these passed in 1872 sanctioned inter-caste and inter-communal marriages. The other passed in 1891 aimed to discourage child marriage.

BRAHMO SAMAJ

Ram Mohan Roy regarded as modern India's first reformer and central figure in the cultural awakening. He sought inspiration from the modern sciences of the west as well as from the ancient knowledge of India. In 1809 he wrote in Persian his famous work *Gift to Monotheism* based on the principle of one supreme God. He was convinced that to cure Hindu religion of its evils it was necessary to bring to the public knowledge the truth stated in the original Shastras. For this purpose he published the Bengali translation of the Vedas and the Upanishads and demonstrated to the people that these texts preached only one God and idol worship had no place there. In 1828 a new society called Brahmo Samaj was started which discarded idol worship, caste divisions and other many meaningless rites and rituals. Rammohan Roy fought against all kinds of social evils. He also demanded that women be given the right of inheritance and property. He also advocated English language. Later on Samaj expanded throughout the county.

ARYA SAMAJ

The Arya Samaj founded in 1875 by Swami Dayanand Saraswati undertook the task of reforming Hindu religion in north India. Swami Dayanand believed that there was only one God who was to be worshipped not in the form of images but as a spirit. He held the Vedas to be infallible and the fountain of all knowledge. Dayanand preached and wrote in Hindi. The *Sayarth Prakash* was his most important book. The Arya Samaj made rapid progress in Central India, Rajasthan, and Gujarat and particularly in Punjab where it became a very important social and political force.

The members of Arya Samaj were guided by ten principles of which the first one was studying the Vedas. The rest were tenets of virtue and morality. Dayanand framed for his disciples a code of social conduct in which there was no room for caste distinctions and social inequality. The Arya Samajis opposed child marriage and encouraged remarriage of widows. A network of schools and colleges

NOTES

was established throughout northern India to promote the objects of Arya Samaj. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School of Lahore which soon developed into a premier college of Punjab set the pattern for such institutions. Dayanand's emphasis on the super natural and infallible character of the Vedas seems to have risen from his ardent desire to give Hinduism a definite creed and equip it with a militant character. Similar in nature was his mover for the reconversion of those Hindus who had been converted. For this purpose a purificatory ceremony called Shuddhi was prescribed.

VEDA SAMAJ AND PRATHANA SAMAJ

Formed along the lines of the Brahmo Samaj, the Veda Samaj of Madras and the Prathana Samaj of Bombay were founded in 1864 and 1866 respectively. An educated middle class had arisen there too and it sought the reform of society and religion. The real force behind the Veda Samaj was K Sridharalu Naidu and behind Prathana Samaj, M.G Ranade and R Bhandarkar. The Prathana Samaj emphasized more on social reforms.

RAMA KRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA

Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a priest at a temple in Dakshineswar near Calcutta emphasized that there are many roads to God and salvation and that service of man was service of God, for man was the embodiment of God. His great disciple, Swami Vivekananda popularized his religious message. However he also called for social action to remove poverty. In 1896 Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission to carry on humanitarian relief and social work. The mission had many branches in different parts of the country. Vivekananda condemned the caste system and the current Hindu emphasis on rituals, ceremonies and superstitions and urged the people to imbibe the spirit of liberty, equality and free thinking.

4.20 SUMMARY

- The Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent in the time of Aurangzeb, but it collapsed with dramatic suddenness within a few decades after his death. The Mughal Empire owes its decline and ultimate downfall to a combination of factors; firstly Aurangzeb's religious policy is regarded as a cause for the decline of the Mughal Empire as it led to disunity among the people.
- The term Peshwa means Prime Minister. It was King Shivaji of the Maratha Kingdom who first appointed a Peshwa to the 'Chatrapatis' (King). The Peshwas controlled the Maratha army and they later became the hereditary rulers of the Maratha Empire from 1749 to 1818.
- Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh (November 3, 1688 – September 21, 1743) was ruler of the kingdom of Amber (later called Jaipur). He was born at Amber, the capital of the Kachwahas. He became ruler of Amber in 1699 at the age of 11 when his father Maharaja Bishan Singh died.
- The First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-1782) was the first of three Anglo-Maratha wars fought between the British East India Company and Maratha Empire in India. The war began with the Treaty of Surat and ended with the Treaty of Salbai.

- R C Dutta & Dadabhai Naoroji first cited the drain of wealth theory. Naoroji brought it to light in his book titled "Poverty And Un-British Rule In India". R C Dutt blamed the British policies for, Indian economic ills in his book 'Economic History of India' (1901-03).
- The India Renaissance refers to a social reform movement during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the region of India during the period of British rule. The Bengal renaissance can be said to have started with Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1775-1833) and ended with Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941).

NOTES

4.21 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What were the major causes of decline of Mughal empire?
2. Describe the important events of first Anglo-Maratha war.
3. Discuss the early structure of British Raj.
4. What do you understand by "Drain of wealth"?
5. Write a short note on 'the development of railways' in India.
6. State the most important socio-religious movements of 19th century.

4.22 FURTHER READINGS

- Aggarwal, R.N., 1962; *National Movement and Constitutional Development of India*; 4th ed., Metropolitan Book Co. (P) Ltd., Delhi.
- Mahajan, V.D., 1956, *Constitutional History of India*; S. Chand and Co. (P) Ltd., New Delhi.
- Mishra, B.B., 1956, *The Central Administration of the East India Company 1773-1834*; Oxford University Press, Mumbai.
- Alam, M., 1986. *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab, 1707-48*. Oxford University Press, Delhi.
- Bagchi, A., 1976a. *Deindustrialization in India in the Nineteenth Century: Some Theoretical Implications*. Journal of Development Studies.
- Quoted in *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part II, p. 127.
- *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Volume VII, p. 153 quoted in *Indian Idea of Freedom* by Dennis Gilmore Dalton, p. 52.
- "*Historical Evolution of India*" in *Speeches and Writings of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 100.