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Prelims Indian History-4 : Early Medieval North and South India

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Model Questions

Kindly Check the Prelims Model Questions at the end of this module.

Dynasties of Northern India from 600 AD to 1200 AD

Harsha's Kingdom

The decline of imperial Guptas led to the demise of imperial idea in India. Since most of the great empires were built in north India under great empire builders such as *Mahapadmananda*, *Chandragupta Maurya*, *Asoka*, *Kanishka* and *Samudragupta*, it was North India which felt the impacts of demise of imperial idea. From Sixth century onwards, the entire North Indian landscape was dominated by large and small regional kingdoms. Almost every individual King dreamt of a pan-India control and many of them adopted pompous titles out of sheer ego. However, it was only *Harshavardhana* in seventh century who came near to realising such control. Nevertheless, the consolidation done under Harsha also lasted only for his life time.

The reign of Harsha lasted from 606 to 648AD. Most knowledge about Harsha's reign comes from the accounts left by his two admirers. One was his friend, courtier and biographer *Banabhatta* {he wrote *Harshachartia*} while another was Chinese traveller *Huen Tsang*. From these two sources and also from Harsha's own literary works, we can discern that Harsha simultaneously played role of a conqueror, administrator and a man of intellect.

Harsha as a Conqueror

The forefathers of Harsha were minor feudatories {probably of Guptas} in the Thaneshwar (now in Haryana) belonging to a Pushyabhuti lineage. Harsha's father *Prabhakarvardhana* raised himself against the Hunas settled in north (current Punjab region) and Gurjars in South-west and assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraj* / *Paramabhataraka*.

The family of Harsha is linked to Pushyabhuti of Thaneshwar. In the later part of the 6th century, the Raja of Thaneshwar, **Prabhakarvardhana** raised himself against the neighbors including the Hunas settled in the North Western Punjab and also the clans of the Gurjars. He assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraj* and *Parama Bhataraka*.

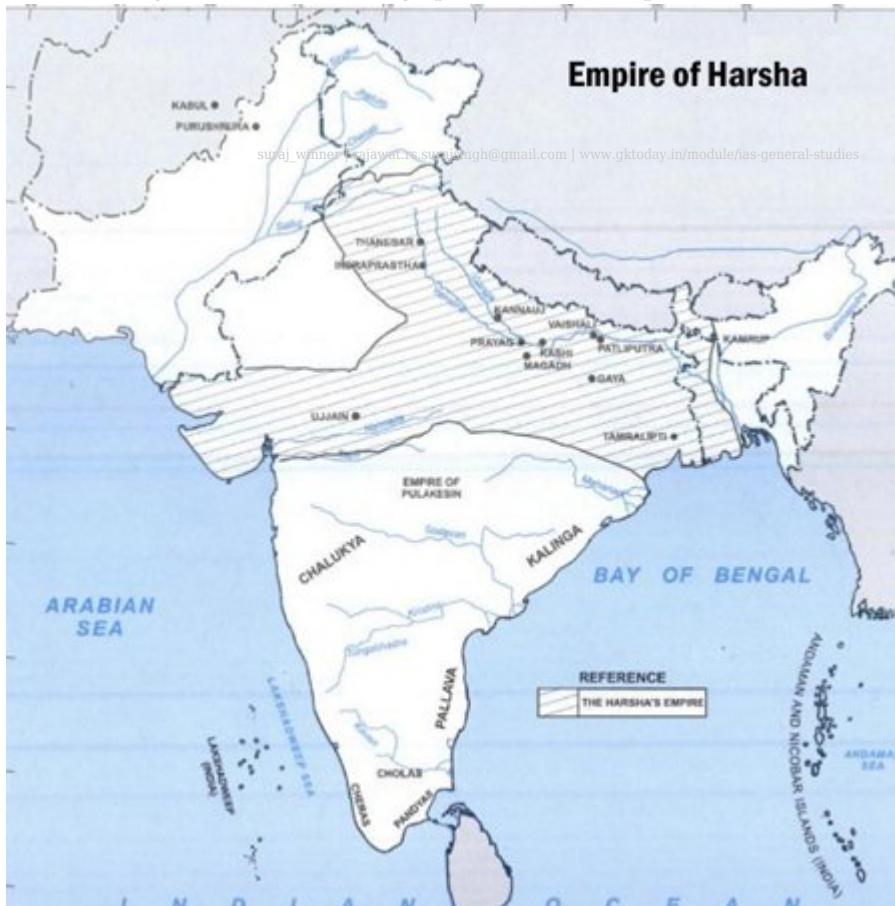
Prabhakarvardhana had two sons viz. elder *Rajyavardhana* and younger *Harshavardhana*. In 604 AD, these two siblings were sent with large army to attack Hunas in North-western frontiers. While elder advanced to the hills, younger lingered in the forests with cavalry. While in forests, Harsha heard news of near death illness of his father and returned back. It was assumed the *Rajyavardhana* might have been killed in North-West; Harsha was coroneted as new King. However, soon afterwards, the elder brother returned to assume the throne.



Their sister Rajyashri was married to a Mokhari prince Grahavarman. When Rajyavardhana was engaged in North West, one remnant of Guptas called Devagupta of Malwa attacked the Mokharis and killed his brother-in-law. To seek revenge, Rajyavardhana attacked Malwa and became victorious. However, Devagupta's friend Gaur King Sasanka laid a trap and killed Rajyavardhana by deceit. Since his son was too young, the younger brother Harsha was crowned as King.

His sister was in prison and was planning to burn herself. However, Harsha traced her and brought her back. Sasanka escaped that time but later his Gaur Kingdom was annexed in Harsha's empire. Since son of his sister was also an infant, he annexed Kanauji (capital of Mokharis of Malwa) also to his empire.

Harsha dreamt of bringing India under "one umbrella" and to fulfil this dream, he overran the entire north India. In a five years time, he conquered most of North and Central India including Gujarat in west and Bengal in East. The below graphics shows his empire:





However, his victorious career was eclipsed by great Vatapi Chalukyan king Pukeshin-II. Harsha had declared himself as *Uttarapathpathi* {lord of the northern routes} while Pulakesin-II was no less than *Dakshinapathpathi*. For a paramount like Harsha, it was painful to see such a mighty King as his southern neighbour. So, to overthrow Pulakesin-II, Harsha advanced his troops from all sides to South in 620 AD. But the passes on Narmada River were so efficiently guarded that the armies of Harsha were defeated on all fronts. The result of this defeat was that Harsha accepted Narmada River as his southern frontier.

The last major attack of Harsha was on Ganjam on Bay of Bengal coast in 642-643AD. However, after this conquest, Harsha entered into a state of self-actualization and then later part of his life was typically an imitation of Asoka.

Harsha as an administrator

Harsha's territories were among the largest in entire sub-continent that time spreading from Ganga in north to Narmada in south; Vallabhi in Gujarat to Kamarupa in Assam.

His administration was based on the Gupta model of decentralization. Principal source of revenue was rent in crown lands. The land grants were in vogue, economy was not at par with Gupta's classical age, routes were not safe as documented by Huen Tsang, there were severe punishments including mutilation of body parts and capital punishments.

Harsha as man of intellect

Harsha himself was a great patron of art and culture apart from being an accomplished author and calligraphist. He has written three plays (dramas) viz. *Nagananda*, *Ratnavali* and *Priyadarsika*. In *Nagananda*, he depicted the story of Jimutvahana's self sacrifice to save the Nagas. In *Ratnavali*, he has narrated story of a princess Ratnavali and king Udayana. Ratnavali is considered the first textual reference of Holi celebration.

Harsha's Religion

Harsha was a man of intellect and was well versed in Sammitiya School of Buddhism. After Ganjam conquest, he favoured the teachings of Buddhism. He was inclined towards Hinayana in the starting but then favoured Mahayana later. Like Asoka, he banned the slaughter of any living thing and made use of animal flesh as punishable offense. He established benevolent institutions including monasteries in various parts of his empire.

Despite his inclination towards Buddhism, Harsha was a great patron of all prevailing sects viz. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Every year, he called for an assembly at Prayag which began with worship of Surya, Shiva and Buddha. He used to donate full heartedly in this assembly including the cloths and ornaments he wore!

Reign of Harsha: Notes for UPSC Prelims



Observations of Huen-Tsang

The key objective of Chinese Traveller Huen-Tsang to visit India was to correct the incomplete & misinterpreted information provided by the earlier Chinese monks, particularly Fa Hien.

In his work Si-Yu-Ki (Journey to the West), he first states that the name of India in China should be “Yindu”. This term is still used in China for India. He gives detail of Geography, Climate, Measurement system, concept of time, glimpses in urban life, architecture, caste system, educational requirements for Brahmins, teaching of Buddha, economic practices, social and cultural norms, eating habits of Indians etc.

He had met Harshavardhana in Kannauj and has recorded his dialogue with the King which established a diplomatic relation between Harsha and Tang king of China. Most of the Buddhist pilgrimage sites and the Nalanda University were parts of Harsha’s empire during his visit. One notable thing from his writings is degraded position of the Chandals and the robbery incidence. He was attacked by robbers on the way, something which we don’t find in the narrations of Fa-Hien, who travelled in the Gupta Period. It might indicate a breakdown of administrative machinery in hinterlands of Harsha’s empire.

About Banabhatta

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Banabhatta was a friend, courtier and biographer of Harsha. The four most notable works of Banabhatta include *Kadambari*, *Harshacharitam*, *Chhandakashtaka* and *Parvatiparinaya*. *Kadambari* is one of the most celebrated prose romances in Sanskrit. This work was not completed by Banabhatta but later finished by his son Bhushanbhatta. Due to this, there are two parts of *Kadambari* viz. *Purvabhaga* and *Uttarbhaga*. *Harshacharitam* is biography of his hero Harsha. This work is considered to be first attempt of authentic biography in Indian literature.

Bhandi

Bhandi was a leading noble of Kannauj and on advice of the political leaders of Kannauj; he offered the crown of Kannauj to Harsha after death of Grahavarmana. Bhandi was later described as one of the chief officers of Harsha. When Harsha chased Shashanka for release of his sister, through Bhandi only Harsha could know that his sister has been released and Shashanka has escaped.

Simhanada

Simhanada was the General of the Harsha’s army and his Prime Minister. When Harsha was preparing to conquest the South, Simhanada warned him about the dreadful consequences. This was for the first time that Harsha did not pay attention to his seasoned councillor and paid the price for the same when Pulkesin II defeated him.

India at the Time of Arab Invasions

As we have discussed earlier, most landscape of India at the time of death of Harsha was controlled by numerous regional kings and local chieftains. Whatever consolidation was done by Harsha, it



lasted only for his lifetime. The fracturing of northern India was aggravated by the Arab invasion of Sindh, which was first foreign intrusion since Huna hordes invaded in Gupta period. Here is a brief overview of various local powers that ruled various parts of north India in those times.

Sindh [Raja Dahir]

Conquest of India, though considered exceptionally difficult, was one of the early aims of Muslim rulers of Middle East. Before the Arab invasions, Sindh was vied by both Hindus and Buddhists for power and influence. Until 622 AD, Sindh was under a Buddhist Rai dynasty. A Brahmin minister of Rai called *Chach* usurped the throne and became king. He ruled from capital Brahmanabad, which is now an insignificant town near Hyderabad {capital of Sindh province of Pakistan} in Pakistan. By the time his reign ended in 666 AD, he had alienated territories of Jats, Buddhists and other in neighborhood. The civil unrest worsened during rule of Chach's son Dahir. It was Raja Dahir who faced Arab invasion in 712 AD. He was attacked, defeated and killed by Mohammad Bin Qasim, a general of Umayyad Caliphate. For Umayyads, this was first foreign land brought under their territory which was inhabited by the non-Muslims. This was time of fanatic Muslim rulers in Arab whose sole aim was to strengthen Islam and punish those who do not accept Islam. Arab conquest of Sindh is mentioned in *the oldest Chronicle of Sindh called "Chach Nama"* general-studies

Kashmir [Karkotas]

During times of Harsha, Kashmir was ruled by a Karkota dynasty. The most important ruler of this dynasty was Lalitaditya Muktapida (reign 724-760 AD), who was able to create a vast empire ranging from Kashmir and most parts of northern India and Pakistan. He built the Martand Complex of temples in Anantnag district of Kashmir.

Afghanistan [Hindushahi]

After the decline of Kushanas, Afghanistan area came under the Kabulshahi Kings who were overthrown by a Brahmin chieftain called Lalliya. Lalliya founded the Hindushahi dynasty in Kabul. The capital of Hindushahi was Hund near modern Peshawar in Pakistan. Lalliya, Kamala Toramana, Bhimadeva, Jaipala, Anandapala, Trilochanpala, Bhimapala were the kings of this dynasty.

These kings faced most frequent attacks from Central Asia. In 977 AD, Turkic ruler of Ghazni Subuktgeen {founder of Ghaznavid Empire} had captured Kandahar to prompt Jayapala to launch a strike against him. Overconfident Jayapala's one lakh strong army was defeated and he was compelled to pay heavy tributes. He defaulted in the payments and was again attacked and defeated. In 1001, Subuktgeen's son Mahamud Ghazanavi came in Power. Once more Jayapala attacked the Ghaznavid but again defeated. Thus, repeated defeats against the Ghaznavid humiliated him and unable to tolerate these humiliations he burnt himself on funeral pyre.

Another Shahi king Anandpala stood against Mahmud Ghazanavi and is said to have entered into a peace treaty with the later, so that he could die in peace. Some historians compare Anandapala to



ancient King Porus.

Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana [Gurjar Pratiharas]

From 6 to 11th century, most parts of northern India in parts of modern Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana region remained under Gurjar Pratiharas. These kings had established Marwar in Rajasthan and built the temple city of Osean near Jodhpur. The prominent Gurjar Pratihara Kings were Nagabhatta-I, Nagabhatta-II and Mihirbhoja. These kings saved western frontiers of India for a long time from Arab invasions on account of their prowess. However, they also kept fighting with the Palas and Rastrakutas among others. The Gurjar Pratiharas were overthrown in 10th century by Palas. After their demise their feudatories such as Guhilots and Chauhans declared themselves independent and established Mewar and Ajmer respectively. Ajmer was established by Ajayraj Chauhan. His successor Vigraharaj captured Dhillika (Delhi) from Tomars. The last mighty king of Chauhans was Prithvi Raj Chauhan-III who was defeated and executed by Mohammad Ghori in 1192.

Bundelkhand [Chandelas and Kalachuris]

Bundelkhand was part of ancient Chedi Mahajanapada and it was also known as Jejakabhukti. In early medieval period, it was under Chandelas and Kalachuris. Chandellas built the famous Khajuraho temples. Similarly, in 11th century, local chieftains of Kalachuri dynasty also rose to prominence and lingered around till 16th century until their territories were annexed to either Delhi sultanate or Mughals.

Malwa [Parmaras]

Malwa was under Parmara rajputs from 9th century to 1305 AD when their territory was annexed by Alauddin Khilji. They ruled from Dhar. One of the important Kings of this dynasty was **Raja Bhoj of Dhar**, a polymath and man of intellect. He was defeated by a tripartite confederacy of Chalukyas, Rastrakutas and Kachhchawahas. After his death Parmaras were reduced to a local powers, until they were wiped out by Akbar in 1569.

Gujarat / Saurashtra [Solankis]

The Saurashtra and neighbouring region of Gujarat was under Solankis from 10th to first half of 13th century. They ruled from Anhilwara and were patrons of Somnath temple. The important sovereign ruler of this dynasty was Mularaja under whose reign Gujarati language and script developed. He was defeated by Raja Bhoj of Dhar and was reduced to a vassal. The other successors gradually lost control and by 1297 AD, Gujarat came under Delhi Sultanate.

Bihar, Bengal and Odisha [Palas and Senas]

In the early medieval India, the Palas emerged as important empire builders in eastern India. They were pious Buddhists and constructed monasteries and universities for that religion. The founder of this dynasty Gopala was also the first Buddhist king of Bengal. His son Dharamapala (770-810 AD)



became the most dominant power in the Northern and Eastern India. He altogether fought with Gurjar Pratiharas, Rastrakutas and Chalukyas. After an initial career full of defeats, including a humiliating defeat in the hands of Nagabhata-II, he was able to win the entire Bihar and Bengal. The Kings of Kannauj, Madra, Kamboja, parts of Rajputana were his Vassals.

The last notable Pala king was Mahipala. The successors of Mahipala could not hold their empire and were swept away in Mohammedan torrents. However, around the time of Mahipala's death in 1043 AD, a Vassal of Palas named Hemanta Sen founded the Sena dynasty which dominated the Rarh region of Bengal for some time. His son Ballala Sena (1160-1178) introduced the social reforms in Bengal known as Kulinism.

Notable Points about Palas and Senas

- Pala founder Gopala built Odantapuri in Bihar for Buddhist monks.
- Dharmapala established the Vikramshila University in Bhagalpur region of modern Bihar. This university was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1200 AD.
- Dharmapala also built Buddhist Viharas at Somapura (now a UNESCO world heritage site in Bangladesh) and Odantapuri. We note here that *Nalanda, Vikramshila, Somapuri, Paharpur and Odantapuri are called Five Mahaviharas*.
- **Atiśa Dipankara** was a Buddhist Scholar during the Pala dynasty and was a scholar at the Vikramshila University. He established the Sarma lineages of the Buddhism with Konchog Gyalpo and Marpa Lotsawa.

Dynasties of South India – from Earliest times to Medieval Age

Chola Empire

As per the traditions, the Chola Country or **Cholamandalam** was along the Coromandel Coast in the fertile valley of Cauvery river. Its most ancient capital was Uraiyur in Tamil Nadu. This was one of the longest lasting dynasties of South India {circa 300 BC to 13th century}. This 1500 years period has been divided into four parts viz. early Cholas, dark Period, medieval Cholas and later Cholas.

Brief Political History of Imperial Cholas

Not much authentic information about Early Cholas is available except that they had ruled between circa 200 BC and 200 AD. Ashoka inscriptions note Cholas as southern neighbour of Maurya Empire. The only notable early Chola king is Karikala Chola, who ruled around 170AD. He fought and won the Battle of Venni and established himself as a firm power in South. He is also known to have built the Kallanai Dam, which is one of earliest anicuts in world.

From third century AD to 9th century, the Chola history is obscure. During these centuries, Chola hegemony was lost and their country was under Kalabhras. Kalabhras were non-Tamil speaking



rulers who patronized Buddhism and Jainism. They were probably remnants of Satavahanas whose demise led them to create a niche somewhere in south India. They were finally driven out by Pallavas. Thus, in most part of this period, the Chola territories remained under Kalabhras, Pandyas and Chalukyas. Chola, Pandyas and Chalukyas kept fighting with each other for dominance.

In 848 AD, a Pallava feudatory Vijayalaya Chola re-established the Chola rule by capturing Thanjavur from Pandyas. He renovated the capital and built the Someshwara capital at Padukottai. His son Aditya Chola-I won over Pallavas and further strengthened the empire. The Chola empire was further extended by his son Parantaka Chola who reigned for almost half century between 907 to 955 AD. In the beginning of his career, he attacked and captured Madurai from Pandyas and assumed title *Madurakonda*. He also defeated a combined army of Pallavas and Ceylon and thus assumed another title *Maduraiyum Elamum Konda Parakesarivarman* (The conqueror of Madura and Ceylon).

The successors of Parantaka Chola were insignificant. Between 955 AD and 985 AD, the Chola country was ruled by five different princes. Finally, Chola empire was again on path of expansion when Rajaraja Chola-I ascended the throne in 985 AD. By the time he died in 1014 AD, his territories included whole of modern Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, parts of Andhra Pradesh, parts of Odisha, whole of Kerala and Sri Lanka. He built the **Rajrajeshwaram temple** (also known as Brihadeeswarar Temple or **Peruvudaiyar Kovil**) at Thanjavur. This temple dedicated to Shiva is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. He also endowed a Burmese Buddhist Temple called Chudamani Vihara at Nagapattam Port. This temple survived till 19th century before it was destroyed and replaced by Jesuit priests with a Church in 1867.

The powerful standing army and great navy of Rajaraja Chola-I achieved even greater success under next ruler Rajendra Chola-I who ruled from 1014 AD to 1044 AD. He captured Ceylon, defeated Western Chalukyan king Jayasimha-II in battle of Maski, defeated Pala King Mahipala, defeated Kalinga, Gangas etc and assumed the title Gangakonda. His naval forces subdued the Srivijaya Kingdom (Modern Sumatra) and many other south east Asian kingdoms and colonies. He maintained good diplomatic and trade relations with contemporary Song dynasty of China.

To commemorate his victory over Palas he built the Gangaikonda Cholapuram as his new capital. This capital served all the later Cholas until it was ransacked by the Pandyas. Today, a temple stands there as architectural marvel of the Cholas and is a UNESCO world heritage site. At the time of death of Rajendra Chola-I, the Chola Empire was the widest in the world and naval prestige was highest.

The benevolent imperialism of the Cholas was maintained by his successor Rajadhiraja Chola till 1059 when he was killed in the Battle of Koppam with western Chalukya King Someshwara-I over control of Vengi. His brother Rajendra Chola-II crowned himself as next Chola monarch in the



battlefield itself and reactivated the Chola army to fight with Chalukyas. He was able to defeat Someshwara-I.

In 1063, Rajendra Chola-II was succeeded by *Virarajendra Chola*, who subdued the Chalukyas and made them his tributaries. After this, the Chola Empire started declining. His successor Athiranjendra Chola could reign only for few months and was killed in a civil unrest. This ended the imperial Chola dynasty. The next line of later Cholas was basically a fresh blood arising out of Chola-Chalukya marital alliances.

Chola Administration

Cholas have left an elaborate set of information on their administration.

The King and his Officers

The Chola administration was highly organised and efficient with King at the apex. King discharged his duties with the help of an immediate group of ministers and other high officers called *Udankuttam*. They represented all the major departments of administration and advised the King on disposal of his business.

The Cholas had an elaborate and complex bureaucracy comprising officials of various grades. The officers, who tended to form a separate class in the society, were organized in two ranks viz. upper *perundanam* and lower *sirudanam*. The higher officers were known with title of *adigarigal*, while officers of all ranks were usually referred to by the general titles of *Karumigal* and *panimakkal*. They were usually remunerated by assignments of land (*jivitas*) suited to their position. Titles of honour and shares in booty taken in war formed other rewards of public service.

Provincial Administration

The empire was divided into principalities (under vassal chiefs) and *mandalams* (provinces under viceroys who were mostly royal princes) with further division of the provinces into *valanadus* (divisions), *nadus* (districts) and *Kurrams* (villages).

Town and Village Administration

There was autonomous administration for town and townships, known as *tankurrams*. Town autonomy was quite similar to village autonomy and both were administered by assemblies.

Revenue Administrations

A well organised department of land revenue, known as the *Puravu varitinaikalam*, was in existence. All cultivable land was held in one of the three broad classes of tenure which may be distinguished as peasant proprietorship (*vellanvagai*), service tenure, and tenure resulting from charitable gifts. The first type was the ordinary ryotwari village of modern times, having direct relations with the government and paying a land tax liable to revision from time to time.

All land was carefully surveyed and classified into tax-paying and non-taxable lands. In every village and town, the residential part of the village (or *nattam*), temples, tanks, channels, passing through



the village, the outcastes hamlet (paracheri), artisans' quarters (Kummanachcheri) and the burning ground (Sudugadu) were exempt from all taxes. In its turn, taxable land was classified into different grades according to its natural fertility and the crops raised on it. Besides land revenue there were tolls in transit, taxes on profession and houses, dues levied on ceremonial occasions like marriage, and judicial fines.

Military Administration

The soliders of the Cholas generally consisted of two types-the *Kaikkolar* who were royal troops receiving regular pay from the treasury; and the *nattuppadai* who were the militia men employed only for local defence. The Kaikkolar comprised infantry, cavalry, elephant corps and navy. The Cholas paid special attention to their navy. Within the Kaikkolar, the Velaikkarars were the most dependable troops in the royal service ready to defend the king and his cause with their lives. Attention was given to the training of the army and cantonments called *kadagams*.

Chola Self Government

The most important feature of the Chola administration lies in the running of autonomous institutions. There was a great deal of local self-government in the villages in the Chola Empire. Each village had its own general assembly which administered control over all the affairs of the village and was free from the control of the Central Government. It enjoyed all powers regarding the village administration. There were two types of institutions working at village level.

Ur

Ur was the general assembly of the village. The Ur consisted of all the taxpaying residents of an ordinary village. The Alunganattar was the executive committee and the ruling group of the Ur. The Ur was open to all the adult men but was dominated by the older member of the village. The members of the executive committee of 'Ur' were called '*Shashak Gana*' or '*Ganam*'. Exact number of the committee members or the procedure adopted for their election is not known.

Mahasabha

This was a gathering of the adult men in the Brahmana villages which were called *agrarahas*. These were villages settled by the Brahmanas in which most of the land was rent free. Sabha managed most of its affairs by an executive committee called *variya*m to which educated persons owning property were elected. Reporters appointed by the sabha were called *Variyar*. Generally, Variyar was assigned some or other special task. Sabha could settle new lands, and executive ownership rights over them. It could also raise loans for the village and levy taxes.

Villages were divided among sheries, roads and blocks. Each shery constituted a community. Shery was assigned many tasks for the welfare of the village Each shery had its representation in the managing committee of the village.



Chola hegemony over seas: Analysis

In the early medieval period, the maritime commerce of India was adversely affected by two significant developments. One was the replacement of the Abbasid Empire of Baghdad by Fatimids of Egypt. This severed the trade links between ports of Persian Gulf and ports of western India, which were controlled by Rastrakuta. However, under Fatimids, the trade with Red Sea ports provided greater incentive to the merchants of the far south of India. Thus, the Kerala coasts progressed at the cost of Karnataka coasts. The expansionist policy of Chola King Rajaraja-I over Ceylon, Maldives and Chera territories was part of the ongoing efforts to ensure that the merchants were not disadvantaged.

Another challenge came from the commercial opening of the China under the Song dynasty. In those times, China was ahead of other parts of world in terms of manufacturing items {as it stands today} and needed huge imports of raw material from India. The trade of Indian merchants depended on will of the rulers of Sri Vijaya (Sumatra Islands, current Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore) because they controlled the Malacca strait which was an important international shipping lane in those times also. The strait shortened the time gap between China and southern parts of India.

The Sri Vijaya rulers wanted to increase their share in profits from Chola-China trade. They decided that all the ships coming from India would need to terminate their journey in the strait and their middlemen would trans-ship the goods for respective destination. This idea miffed the merchant organizations in Chola state and thus King Rajaraja-I decided to use his substantial naval force to punish Sri Vijaya. Thus, it's quite apparent that there was no imperial motive behind attack on Sri Vijaya. The campaign was solely for safeguarding the shipping lane for Chola's merchant fleet to China by royal protection.

Pallavas

Pallavas {literally means a branch} were a prominent power in India for more than four centuries between the 6th and 9th centuries.

Origin of Pallavas

There are no records about Pallavas in the vernacular legends. They were forgotten until a copper plate grant was found in 1840. There are several theories of origin around Pallavas. As per one theory, Pallavas were earlier feudatories of Satavahanas. Another theory says that they were offsprings of Chola and Naga rulers of Ilam (Sri Lanka).

Another theory links them to Pahalavas (Indo-Parthians). This theory suggests that the Indo-Parthians were further shifted southwards from northern India and they settled in Tondaimandalam and evolved as Pallavas. They adopted the local religion Saivism and became Dravidians. This theory is supported on the basis of below arguments:



- Pahalavas were prominent in second century AD in northern parts of India and they had struggled with other outfits for survival.
- Many sculptures in Mahabalipuram have remarkable affinity with Persian features. This includes the lion symbol and tall cylindrical headdresses wore by Iranians in those times. Further, the pillars resemble with Perseopolis and the roofs of Pancharathas and tower of Kainashnath temple in Kanchipuram shows affinity with the shrines of babylon.

Political History of Pallavas

Initial territories of Pallavas seem not to be very extensive and they look similar to Kalabhras. The first known king of this dynasty was *Sivaskanda Varman* who ruled in second century AD. He raised himself against many subordinate chiefs and performed an Ashwamedha. More information is available about Simhavarman who ruled around 570 AD. He defeated the Tamil countries and kings of Ceylon and tried to extend his dominion. His son Simhavishnu was first Pallava Monarch to have a reign beyond Kanchipuram.

Bharavi

Simhavishnu was patron of **Bharavi**, the great poet who wrote the famous *Kiratrjuniya*, the dialogue between Arjuna and Shiva and in which Shiva blessed Arjuna with the *Pasupata Shastra*.

The next Pallava monarch Mahendravarman-I was a great patron of art and architecture and built the Pancharathas of Mahabalipuram. He also wrote *Mattavilasa Prahasana* or 'The Farce of Drunken Sport', a celebrated ancient Indian satirical play. Further, the rock cut temples at Mahabalipuram (Seven Pagodas) were also excavated by the Pallavas most probably under Mahendravarman I. His son Narsimhmvarman-I defeated and killed his Chalukyan counterpart Pulakesin II in 642 AD. After this victory, he assumed the title "Vatapikonda" after sacking the capital Vatapi (Badami) of Chalukyas.

Nayanmar saints like Appar and Tirugnanasambandar lived during reign of Narsimhvarman-I. Huen Tsang visited the Pallava kingdom during the reign of Narsimhavarman-I.

Among the successors the important ones were Nripatunga who defeated a Pandya King Shrimara.

Chalukyas of Badami

First half of the sixth century marks the rise Chalukyas of Badami or Vatapi as a very strong power in Deccan. The Chalukyas seem to be a race of Rajputs from North who imposed their rule upon the Dravidian inhabitants of the Deccan tableland. The Royal Emblem of Chalukyas of Badami was



“Varaha”.

The earliest reference in this dynasty is of one Jayasimha / Vallabha, however the first sovereign king was Pulkeshin-I, who made himself master of a town called Vatapi (Bijapur district, Karnataka) in around 543 AD by overthrowing Kadambas. The *Badami Cliff inscription* tells that Pulakesin-I performed all of the five yajnas which make a king paramount viz. *Hiranyagarbha, Agnistoma, Vajapeya, Bahusuvarna and Paundarika*.

The successors of Pulkeshin-I extended the empire by subjugating the Kadambas from Revatidweeapa (modern Goa). The most celebrated king of this dynasty was Pulkeshin-II (grandson of Pulkeshin-I). He defeated almost every contemporary including Kadambas, Alupas, Mauryans of Konkan, Pallava King Mahendravarman-I and Harsha. The defeat of Harsha on banks of river Narmada made him undisputed Dakshinapatheshwara. However, enmity between Pallavas and Chalukyas finally cost Pulkeshin-II his life when he was defeated and killed by Pallava King Narsimhavarman in 642 AD. His successors tried to revive the Kingdom but largely failed because of continuous growth in the power of Rastrakuta and Pandyas. They were finally destroyed by Dantidurga of Rastrakuta empire.

Literature of Chalukyas of Badami

The most important source of history of the Badami Chalukyas Dynasty is the Aihole inscription of Pulkeshin-II written by his court poet Ravikirti in Sanskrit language and Kannada script.

Famous writers in Sanskrit from the Western Chalukya period are Vijnaneshwara who achieved fame by writing *Mitakshara*, a book on Hindu law, and King Somesvara-III, a noted scholar, who compiled an encyclopaedia of all arts and sciences called *Manasollasa*. The *Karnateshwara Katha*, which was quoted later by Jayakirti, is believed to be a eulogy of Pulakesin-II.

Rastrakuta Empire

This dynasty was established by one *Dantidurga* who overthrew main branch of Chalukyas from Badami in 755 AD. He made Gulbarga his capital but was soon deposed by his uncle Krishna who completed the establishment of Rastrakuta supremacy over the dominions of Chalukyas. *Krishna carried out the most extensive and most opulent example of rock cut architecture in India in the form of Kailas Temple at Ellora*. Among his successors, the notable King was Amoghvarsha whose reign extended for 64 years. He was one of the greatest ruler among Rastrakuta and patronized the Digambara sect of Jainism.

Chalukyas of Kalyani and Chalukyas of Vengi

The main branch of Chalukyas (Badami Chalukyas) was destroyed by the Rastrakutas. They revived



after two centuries in around 972-72AD to be known as Chalukyas of Kalyani under one *Tailapa* who was a feudatory of Rastrakutas. Another branch of Chalukyas of Vengi emerged for a short period in modern Telangana region.

The Chalukyas of Kalyani are also known as **Western Chalukyas**. This dynasty made a great contribution in the modern Kannada literature as well as Sanskrit literature.

Hoyasala Empire

A family or clan named Hoyasala had attained considerable power in the present day Karnataka during the 12th and 13th century. This empire ruled almost all the present day Karnataka between the 11th to mid of the 14th century. Their capital was Belur which was later shifted to Halebidu. This period was a very important era for the development of the art, architecture and religion in the Southern countries. The Hoyasala Empire contributed in the growth of both the Kannada and Sanskrit literature.

The early Hoyasala rulers were feudatories of Chalukyas of Kalyani. Their empire was consolidated by Vishnuvardhana or Bittiga in early part of 12th century. He established his capital at Dorasamudra (modern Halebidu in Karnataka). The last great ruler of this dynasty was Veera Ballala-III who reigned from 1291 to 1343 AD. When Alauddin Khilji invaded Deccan, he was able to subdue all regional powers except Hoyasala. Veera Ballala III campaigned against the Khiljis from new capital Tiruvannamalai and founded another capital at the banks of River Tungabhadra at Hosapattana where his able commanders Harihara and Bukkaraya (popularly known as Hakka and Bukka) founded the Vijayanagar Empire in 1336. Veera Ballala III was killed in one of the battles against the Delhi Sultan in 1343.

Yadavas of Devagiri

The Yadavas of Devagiri were earlier feudatories of Western Chalukyas. Their capital was Devagiri (Modern Daulatabad) in Maharashtra and they controlled a territory in Modern Maharashtra, North Karnataka and Southern Madhya Pradesh. Devagiri was founded by Bhillama who built a mighty fort there. This fort was ransacked by Alauddin Khilji in 1294 and later plundered by Malik Kafur again 1307, 1310 and 1318. Bhillama was killed in a battle with a Hoyasala Chief in 1191 AD. The last king of this dynasty was Raja Ramachandra, who was also the last Hindu sovereign of Deccan. He was defeated by Alauddin Khilji and ransomed his life for a large treasure tribute. His son Harpala revolted against Muslims but was defeated, flayed alive and decapitated by Mailk Kafur. Such was the tragic end of Yadavas of Devgiri.

The Pandya Kingdom

Pandya was also an ancient Kingdom mentioned in Mahabharata, Puranas and also in Asoka's



inscriptions. As the legend goes, one King of this dynasty Sarangdhwaj had participated in Mahabharata war. Fish was family crest of the ancient Pandyas. The most ancient capital of Pandyas was *Korkai* in Tamil Nadu. It is home of three brothers who founded Chola, Pandya and Chera Kingdoms. Korkai was also a centre of pearl trade. Ancient Pandya country was well known to Greeks and Romans for its pearl trade.

The later capital of Pandyas was Madura. Madura, located on river Vaigai, is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities around the world. It was visited by Megasthenes in 3rd Century BC.

Marcopolo in Pandya Kingdom

Marcopolo had landed in Pandya Empire (at Kayal) in 13th century and impressed by the wealth and magnificence of the King, Prince as well as people, tagged it as **the richest kingdom in existence**.

However, not much authentic information is available regarding Pandya country before 10th century. In the times of Parantaka Chola in 10th century, Madura was under *Maravarman Rajasimha-II*. Parantaka overran his kingdom and captured Madura and assumed the pompous title of Maduraikonda. Rajsimha-II fled to Ceylon and later returned to Kerala to live under a Chera King in low profile. Similarly, Rajaraja Chola-I in 1000 AD reduced the Pandyas to tributary vassals. In 13th century, one of these Vassals **Jatavarman Kulasekaran-I** turned rebel to Cholas. But the Chola subdued him and made him surrender on humiliating terms. To seek revenge, his brother *Maravarman Sundara Pandyan* invaded Cholas in 1216. He was able to plunder Thanjavur, Uraiyur and drive the Cholas in exile. However, he returned Chola territories on interference from Hoyasala King Veera Ballala-III. However, Cholas were now reduced to vassals of Pandyas. His successor Jatavarman *Sundara Pandyan* (1251-61) was also a mighty conqueror who plundered Sri Lanka and took away huge booty. He also conflicted with the Kakatiya Kings of Warangal.

Early in the 14th century, a dispute arose about the succession of the Pandya throne and one of the claimants appealed to the Sultan of Delhi, Alauddin Khilji for help. This probably resulted in an invasion by the Sultan's forces in 1310 under **Malik Kafur**. Malik Kafur sacked, looted Madura and marched up to Rameshwaram, where he erected a mosque. After that invasion, the Pandya kings ruled sporadically at undefined territories. Malik Kafur was followed by two other expeditions from the Delhi Sultanate in 1314 AD led by Khusrav Khan and in 1323 AD by Ulugh Khan. Later Muhammad Bin Tughlaq created a southern province and placed **Sayyid Jalal-ud-Din Ahsan** as its governor. In 1333 AD Sayyid declared his independence and created **Madurai Sultanate**. **Madurai Sultanate** was replaced by the **Nayaka Governors**, who kept on ruling until arrival of British.



The Chera Kingdom

The Ashokan inscriptions have mentioned Choda (Chola), Pada, (Pandya), Ketala Puto (Keralaputra) and Satiya Puto (Satyaputra) in the south of Maurya Empire. The Keralaputra are considered to be Chera dynasty while nothing is known about Satyaputras. The Chera Kings adopted “bow and arrow” as their family insignia. Their area of dominance included North Travancore, Cochin and southern Malabar region. Early capital of Cheras was Vanchi Muthur and later Cheras were Mahodayapuram /Kulashekarapuram.

Kakatiya Dynasty

The Kakatiyas were vassals of Western Chalukyas until 1163 when one Prataparudra-I declared himself sovereign and established the Kakatiya dynasty. The capital of these dynasty rulers was Warangal and they dominated till 1323 when they were eventually annexed in Delhi Sultanate. Between 1262 to 1289, the Kakatiyas were led by *Rudrammadevi*, one of the most celebrated Indian queens of medieval era. Marco Polo had visited India during her rule and has praised her rule.

Observations / Shortnotes On Early Medieval Period

Indian Feudalism

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From the post-Maurya period, and especially from Gupta times, India's political and administrative developments tended to feudalise the state apparatus.

What is feudalism?

In Europeans sense, feudalism describes a set of reciprocal legal and military obligations among the warrior nobility, revolving around the three key concepts of lords, vassals, and fiefs. However, in context with ancient India, the system gradually **developed from the beginning of the land grants.**

The practice of making land grants to the Brahmanas was a custom, sanctified by the injunctions laid down in the Dharmashastras, Epics and Puranas. The **Anusasana Parva** of the Mahabharata devotes a whole chapter to the praise of making gifts of land (*Bhumidanaprasamsa*).

The Land Grants & Administrative Rights

The early Pali texts of the pre-Maurya period refer to the villages granted to the Brahmanas by the rulers of Kosala and Magadha. A term used for such grants was “**Brahamdeyya**”.

Earliest Land Grants

The earliest land grants belonging to the first century BC were given to the Buddhist priests and Brahmanas and other religious establishments. However, in the post-Guptas period even administrative officials were granted land. The landed beneficiaries were given both powers of taxation and coercion, leading to the disintegration of the central authority. The secular recipients of the grants and the autonomous holders of land are generally termed as fief holders and free holders.

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The major outcome was decentralization.

However, the Earliest epigraphic record of a land grants in India is a Saatavahana inscription of the first century BC, which refers to the grant of a village as a gift in the *Ashvamedha Sacrifice*. However, it is not clear, whether the administrative or revenue rights of these lands were also given to those priests or not. It has been guessed that the administrative rights were perhaps given up for the first time in the grants made to Buddhist monks by the Satavahana ruler – Gautamiputra Satakarni in the second century AD. Such a land grant included the rights that :

- The royal troops could not enter such land granted
- The government officials and district police was not supposed to disturb such lands.

Changes in Land Grants

From the period of later Mauryas, the land grants included the transfer of all sources of revenue, and the surrender of police and administrative functions. The grants of the second century AD mention that the *transfer of the king's control only over salt*, which implies that he retained certain other sources of revenue. But in some other grants, it was recorded that the donor (King) **gave up his control over almost all sources of revenue**, including pastures, **mines including hidden treasures and deposits**.

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Then, the donor not only abandoned his revenues but also the right to govern the inhabitants of the villages that were granted. This practice became more prevalent in the Gupta period. There are many instances of grants of apparently settled villages made to the Brahmanas during the Gupta era. In such grants, the residents, including the cultivators and artisans, were expressly asked by their respective rulers not only to pay the customary taxes to the donees, but also to obey their commands. All this **provides clear evidence of the surrender of the administrative power of the state**.

One of the important aspect of the Kings sovereignty was that he used to retain the rights of the punishing the culprits. In the Post-Gupta times, the king made over to the Brahmanas not only this right, but also his right to punish all offences against family, property, person, etc.

Implications of Land Grants

We see that, by giving such privileges, the state was bound to disintegrate. Out of the seven organs of the state power mentioned in literary and epigraphic sources, taxation system and coercive power based on the army are rightly regarded as two vital elements. If they are abandoned, the state power disintegrates. This was the system created by the grants made to the Brahmins. The land was granted for as long as the existence of the sun and the moon, which implies the permanent break-up of the integrity of the state.

The above discussion makes it clear that in the Post-Gupta period, the Brahmadeyya carried **freedom from taxes** , Administrative freedom and also the freedom from punishments



(**Abhayantarasiddhi**). The widespread practice of making land grants in the Gupta period paved the way for the rise of Brahmin feudatories, who performed administrative functions not under the authority of the royal officers but almost independently. What was implicit in earlier grants became explicit in grants from about 1000AD; and well recognised in the administrative systems of the Turks.

The implications were many but the major implication was the creation of powerful intermediaries wielding considerable economic and political power. As the number of the land-owning Brahmins went up, some of them gradually shed their priestly functions and turned their chief attention to the management of land. Thus, their case secular functions became more important than religious functions. The comprehensive competence based on centralised control, which was the hallmark of the Maurya state gave way to **decentralisation in the post-Maurya and Gupta periods**. The functions of the collection of taxes, levy of forced labour, regulation of mines, agriculture, etc., together with those of the maintenance of law and order, and defence which were hitherto performed by the state officials, were now systematically abandoned, first to the priestly class and later to the warrior class.

Thus, the main implications of the Indian Feudalism in early medieval period are as follows:

- **Political decentralization:** The seed of decentralization that was sown in the form of Land grants turned into a vividly branched political organization made up semi-autonomous rulers, Samantas, Mahasamantas and others such as Rajpurushas.
- **Emergence of new landed intermediaries:** The emergence of landed intermediaries- a dominant landholding social group absent in the early historical period- is linked to the practice of land grants which began with the Saatavahana.
- **Changes in agrarian relations:** Free vaishya peasants dominated the agrarian structure in early historical India and labour services provided by the Shudra. But, from the sixth century AD onwards the peasants stuck to the land granted to the beneficiaries because they were asked not to leave the village granted to the beneficiaries or migrate to tax-free village. This resulted in the immobility of the population and isolation from the rest of the world. Its implication was very profound such as development of localized customs, languages and rituals.

Other Changes in Society during Early Medieval India

The social changes in the early medieval India were mainly the product of certain economic developments, such as land grants and large scale transfers of land revenues and land to both secular and religious elements, decline of trade and commerce, loss of mobility of artisans, peasants and traders, unequal distribution of land and power etc.



Proliferation of castes

Increasing pride of birth, characteristic of feudal society, and the accompanying self-sufficient village economy, which prevented both **spatial and occupational mobility**, gave rise to thousands of castes in India.

The changes in economy were also a result of emergence of certain new castes and decline of certain old ones. For example, the constant transfer of land of land revenues made by princes to priests, temples and officials led to the rise and growth of the scribe or the Kayastha caste which undermined the monopoly of Brahmins as writers and scribes.

Similarly, the decline of trade and commerce led to the decline in the position of the Vaishyas. The process of proliferation and multiplication of castes was yet another marked feature of the social life of the period.

Many new communities, which are known to us by the generic term Rajputs, were also recognized as Kshatriyas during the period. The foreign elements, which could not be put in any three higher classes, were naturally designated as the Shudras.

The guilds of artisans gradually hardened into castes due to lack of mobility in post-Guptas times. The maximum affected people were the Shudra and the mixed castes.

Position of Brahmins

The Brahmins stood at the top of the social hierarchy during and post Gupta period. They had regained their power and were responsible for reinterpreting the regulatory canons of life as laid down by the earlier texts.

However, Brahmins had numerous subsections now divided on the basis of many criteria such as knowledge of Vedas etc.

Getting birth in a Brahmin family was a privilege. Brahmins had freedom from death-sentence, exemption from taxes, precedence on the road, lesser punishment for certain offences in comparison with other castes. Many writers have documented the exemption of the Brahmins from capital punishment. The most severe punishment for a Brahmin was banishment. When a Brahmin killed a man, the former had only to fast, pray and give alms. On the other hand, if somebody killed a Brahmin, he was ought to be greatest sinner and performed the worst crime. No punishment or remorse could wipe off the Brahman-hatya, the greatest crime of those periods!

Position of Vaishya

Vaishyas in the early medieval India were almost degraded to the Shudra community. In fact, Alberuni also did not find any difference between the Vaishyas and Shudra. One difference was that the Shudra had freedom to sell all kinds of goods, but the Vaishya were forbidden to carry on transactions in some specified articles like salt, wine, meat, curds, swords, arrows, water, idols etc.



Position of Shudras

Shudras were the most numerous sections in the community and their number increased from age to age. Some of the Shudras were regarded as mixed castes, born of anulom and pratiloma marriages. There were eight Shudra castes called “*Ashtashudras*” viz. Vyadha, Bhada, Kola, Koncha, Haddi, Doma, Jala, Bagatita, Vyalagrahi and Chandala. However, there was another Shudra caste also whose position was lower even these eight castes. These people were called the **Antyajas**. These Antyajas were beyond and below the four orders and four Varnas of the Indian society.

Antyajas

In the days of the composition of the early smritis, untouchables were called Antyajas. The Vedvyasamriti counts twelve names and includes all those who eat cow's flesh as Antyajas.

Alberuni described eight groups of people, who were members of crafts and professions, but did not belong to the four-fold caste system, namely washerman, shoemaker, juggler, basket and shield-maker, sailor, angler, hunter of wild animals and birds, and weaver. These correspond to *Rajaka, Charmakara, Nata or Sailushika, Buruda, Navika, Kaivarta, Bhilla and Kuvindaka*, who have been regarded as Chandals and Antyajas in all early Smriti texts and as Shudras by Manu. Thus, they belonged to the lowest caste.

Position of Marriage & Women

The knowledge about the traditions prevalent in the institution of marriage in that era comes from two works viz. *Smritichandrika* and *Smritiyarthasara*. The former says that the inter-caste marriage is forbidden in Kaliyuga. Savarna marriages are necessary for the performance of religious rites, while Asavarna marriages are of an inferior type as being dictated by desire.

The later says that the marriage of Brahmins with Shudra women forbidden not the same in other castes. The polygamy was prevalent in the royal class and has been well documented in *Vaijayanti*.

The women's position is far degraded from that in early eras. The husband and other male relations, to begin with must so arrange things that the wife never becomes independent. The wife must also be guarded not only against physical but also against mental unchastity for the sake of her offspring. wife's right to maintenance in case of her supersession, they provide for her residence in her husband's house as well as her maintenance even in the event of her committing adultery. When the wife is guilty of slight adultery, she must be maintained, though deprived of conjugal rights, till her performance of a penance.

Literature and science

During early medieval period, there was a considerable development in the literature. However, the



quality of the content in them was not of a high order. It was basically of general imitative and reproductive character. The list is very big; however, here we note some of the most significant artworks.

- ***Naishadhiyacharitam*** of **Shriharsha** is the most outstanding epic of this period, written under the patronage of Gahadawala king Jayachandra of Kannauj.
- ***Rajatarangini*** of Kalhana is unique as the only known attempt at true history in the whole of surviving Sanskrit literature. A few short poems were also written during this period.
- The ***Gita-Govindam*** of Jayadeva is known as the most musical song ever written in Sanskrit.
- The ***Aryasaptashati*** of Govardhanacharya is an erotic poem following the tradition of Gathasaptashati of Hala
- ***Lalitavivgraharaja-Nataka*** was a drama by Somadeva, the Harikeli-Nataka by Visaladeva, the Prasanna-Raghava by Jayadeva.
- In Lexicology, the *Abidhana Chintamani*, Deshi-Namamala, Anekarthasamgraha and Nighantushesha of Hemachandra are of worth note.
- Bhoja had written the ***Rajamriganka*** on astronomy.
- The famous mathematician Bhaskaracharya flourished in the south in the twelfth century. His Siddhanta-Shiromani comprises four parts; Lilavati, Vijaganita, Grahaganita and Gola. The last deals with astronomy.
- A very significant idea in the Siddhanta-Shiromansi is that of perpetual motion, which was transmitted by Islam about AD 1200 to Europe where in course of time it led to the development of the concept of power technology.
- The ***Rasarnava*** is a work on Tantra, which deals with metallic preparations and alchemy. The ***Dakarnava*** is a Buddhist tantric work composed in Apabhramsha. The ***Sadhanamala***, a Buddhist tantric work belongs to the twelfth century
- The field of erotic literature saw some development. *Ratirahasya* by Kokkaka, *Haramekhala* by Mahuka, *Rativilasa* by Jayamangal etc. are some important works on Kamashastra.
- In the field of music we have *Matanga*, *Dhatupatha* as codified by Bhimasena, *Kuttanimitam* of Damodargupta etc.
- Bhatta utpala wrote a work on Vastuvidya.
- On cosmetics we have *Gandhashatra* by Padmashri in his work on erotics. The Vishnudharmottara gives much attention to painting was the chitrasutra mentioned by Damodargupta. The Aparajita-Prichcha is a work on architecture which appears to have been written in Gujarata in AD 1200. The Sangita-Ratnakara of Sharangadeva was written in the



13th century in the south. The Laghvarhannitishastra of Hemachandra is a work on political science. Another work on the duties and obligations of princes was the Rajaniti-Kamadhenu of Gopala.

Development of local cultures

The foundation of various kingdoms and fiefdoms whose people were generally confined to them only led the development of localized culture, making India a diverse geographical area.

The Hunas and other foreign elements were absorbed into the Indian society and cleared the ground for the rise of larger defined units such as Rajputana. Similarly, Bengal, which was earlier divided into two parts viz. Gauda and Vanga, later the whole region was named after Vanga.

The inhabitants of the different nations differed in customs, clothing and language. For example, the Kavalayamala (8th century) notes the existence of 18 major nationalities and describes the anthropological character of 16 peoples.

Development of Vernacular Languages

Though the Sanskrit continued to be used by the ruling class at the higher administrative levels, this language later became complex, verbose and ornate. The Apabhramsha started to differentiate into proto-Hindi, Proto-Bengali, Proto-Rajasthani, proto-Gujarati, Proto-Marathi, Proto-Assamese, Proto-Ordya, Proto-Maithili languages.

From the 6th century onwards, the linguistic variation became very fast because of lack of inter-regional communication and mobility. In the tribal areas, the Brahmanas imposed various forms of Sanskrit on the existing Aryan and Pre-Aryan dialects. The consequential interaction gave rise to regional languages. The migrating Brahmanas also enriched the regional languages. This resulted in the development of regional scripts and regional grammar.

Development of Regional Art & Culture

In the field of art and architecture, this period ushered in a new age marked by regional styles in sculpture and construction of temples, which became particularly prominent in south India from the eighth century onwards.

The post-gupta iconography prominently displays a divine hierarchy, which reflects the pyramidal rank in society.

The Vishnu, Shiva and Durga became the supreme deities, lording over many other divinities of unequal sizes. The Mahayajnas and danas (donations) were gradually replaced by a system known as Puja. Puja was interlinked to the doctrine of Bhakti, which became a distinct feature of medieval religion. Both puja and Bhakti became integral ingredients of tantricism, which arose due to the acculturation of the tribal people through large-scale religious land-grants.



Sangam Literature

The scientific analysis of the Sangam literature says that this work was composed in 120-150 years and most of the literature was composed from 100 AD to 250 AD. This is entirely different from what has been mentioned in the Iraiyanar Akapporul and Sangam legend. There are 2289 poems available under Sangam Literature now; many of them are very short having only 3-5 verses. 102 of them are anonymous. The number of poets estimated is 473.

Earliest Extant Tamil Work: Tolkāppiyam

Tolkāppiyam is a work of Tamil **Grammar**, which is said to be the **earliest extant work of Tamil Literature**. There are three books in Tolkāppiyam viz. **Ezhuttadikaram**, **Solladikaram** and **Poruladikaram**, and each of them are composed of nine chapters. This work has divided the Tamil Language into two types viz. **Sentamil** (Classical Tamil) and **Kotuntamil** (Spoken Tamil). Sentamil is used in almost all literary works of the Tamil Language.

Earliest Tamil Work: Agattiyam

However, the first work on Tamil Grammar, which is not extant and is lost irretrievably, is **Agattiyam**. Rishi Agastya wrote it. Tolkappiar who wrote the above-mentioned Tolkāppiyam is said to be a disciple of Rishi Agastya. As per the Tamil traditions, Rishi Agastya invented the Tamil Language and brought its syntax from the lord Shiva.

Themes of Sangam Literature

On the basis of interpretation and context, the Sangam literature can be described into two types viz. **Agam** (inner) and **Puram** (outer). The topics of **Agam** are related to personal and human aspects such as love and sexual things. The topics of **Puram** are related to human experiences and emotions such as Heroism, Valor, Ethics and Philanthropy. The poems have also been classified on nature themes which are known as **Thinai**. The themes are as follows:

- **Kurinji** (Mountainous Theme).
- **Mullai** (Forests Theme)
- **Marutham** (Agricultural Land Theme)
- **Neithal** (Coastal Theme)
- **Paalai** (Desert Theme)

The literature was lost and forgotten. The Tamil Scholars S V Damodaram Pillai and U V Swamitha Iyer brought it into light. They printed and published different works such as Tholkappiyam, Nachinarkiniyar urai, Tholkappiyam Senavariyar urai, Manimekalai, Cilappatikaram, Pattupattu, and Purananuru in different parts of the 19th century, all with commentaries.

Classification of Sangam Literature

Broadly, we can divide the Sangam literature in 2 parts viz. **Patinenmēlkanakku** and



Patinenkilkanakku. Out of them, the **Patinenmēlkanakku** refers to the oldest surviving Tamil Poetry of the Sangam Age, dating back to 200 BC to 100 BC while the Patinenkilkanakku refers to the collection of 18 poetic works, which belongs to Post Sangam period, and date back to 100 AD to 500 AD. This classification has been further summarized as follows:

Sangam Literature			
Oldest Extant work on Grammar Tolkāppiyam		Oldest conceptual work on Grammar Agattiyam	
Published Works			
Patinenmēlkanakku (Sangam Period)		Patinenkilkanakku (Post Sangam Period)	
Total 18 Works		Total 18 Works	
Ettuttokai (The Eight Anthologies)	Pattuppāṭṭu (The Ten Idylls)	Nalatiyar	Thinaimalai Nurru Aimpathu
Ainkurunūru	Tirumurukārruppatai	Nanmanikkatigai	Tirukkural
Akananūru	Kurīñcippāṭṭu	Inna Narpathu	Thirikatukam
Puranānūru	Malaipatukatām	Iniyavai Narpathu	Acharakkovai
Kalittokai	Maturaikkāñci	Kar Narpathu	Pazhamozhi Nanuru
Kuruntokai	Mullaippāṭṭu	Kalavazhi Narpathu	Siruppanchamulam
Narrinai	Netunalvātai	Ainthinai Aimpathu	Muthumozhikkanchi
Paripāṭal	Pattinappālai	Thinaimozhi Aimpathu	Elathi
Patirruppattu	Perumpānārruppatai	Ainthinai Ezhupathu	Kainnilai
	Porunarārruppatai		
	Cirupānārruppatai		

Patinenmēlkanakku

This is the collection of the Sangam Period works. Ettutokai is a large volume of the poems which is consisting of more than 2000 poems. These works, which are called “The Eight Anthologies”, are on deferent themes such as Narrinai on love, Kuruntokai on love, Aiankurunuru on erotic love etc. So most works of Ettukottai are of Agam style. Most works of Pattuppāṭṭu are of Puram context and they have works on seasons and picturesque nature of Tamil Country. They are based upon the



themes of the nature.

Patinenkīlkanakku

Patinenkīlkanakku is the post Sangam work that is of Agam as well as Puram context. Some important points of some of these works is as follows:

- **Naaladiyar** was composed by Jain monks and the theme is the transient nature of life and youth. It was work of **Nalatiyar**.
- **Nanmanikkatiga** is the collection of 100 songs of Vilambi Naganaar and deals conditions / emotions of 4 types of people who cannot sleep in the night and they are thief, lovelorn, after money, and worrying about losing money.
- **Inna Narpathu** describes the things which should be avoided by the people. It deals with the things that bring unhappiness such as beautiful but disloyal wife, wealth of a miser, life under a tyrant and a beautiful flower without fragrance.
- **Iniyavai Narpathu** deals with the things which should not be avoided by a person and seek even in adverse situations such as learning even by begging, advice of learned persons, healthy children, and not coveting other's spouse.
- **Kalavazhi Narpathu** deals with war and politics.
- **Ainthinai Aimpathu** deals with human emotions, love, separation, lovers' quarrels.
- **Thinaimozhi Aimpathu** also deals with the Agam subjects such as love, separation, lover fights etc.
- Same is with Ainthinai Ezhupathu.
- Same is with **Thinaimalai Nurru Aimpathu**.
- **Thirukkural** is the first work in all of the Dravidian literature which deals with the ethics. It was authored by Thiruvalluvar. **It is also known as Kural** and is a collection of 1330 couplets.
- **Thirikatukam** deals with herbal medicines.
- **Acharakkovai** deals with the personal behavior and correct methods to follow.
- **Pazhamozhi Nanuru** deals with the character of the person.
- **Siruppanchamulam** deals with the nature and combines the benevolent humans with benevolent neighbors.
- **Muthumozhikkanch** deals with the right behavior and chastity.
- **Elathi** deals with human qualities and also narrates some herbal medicines.
- **Kainnilai** deals with the agam concepts.

Impact of Sanskrit on Tamil Literature



The Tamil language and literature did not flourish in isolation and was influenced by Sanskrit. The Aryans had penetrated the whole of the Tamil Land by 6th century AD and Post Sangam literature contains some traces of Aryan Culture. Influence of Sanskrit is more on the **five epics** of Tamil Literature, which were written between 1st century AD to 9th century AD. Out of them **Silappatikaram**, which was written by **Ilango Adigal**, brother of Senguvattan, a Chera King and who was a Jain monk is a highly regarded epic. The other four epics are

- *Manimegalai* which is a Buddhist Religious Work
- *Civaka Chintamani* which is a Jain Religious work
- *Valayapathi* which is also a Jain work of 9th Century
- *Kundalkesi* which is a Buddhist work of 5th century by Nagasena.

Model Questions for Prelims

1. With reference to the religion in early medieval India, which among the following observations is / are correct?
1. Bhakti became a distinct feature of religion
 2. Tantrism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, Shaivism as well as Vaishnavism
 3. Theory of incarnation became very prominent
 4. Earlier practice of Yajnas gave way to practice of Puja (worship)

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1, 2 & 4

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1, 2 & 3

[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Apart from the regional formations other aspects of culture also acquired feudal character. In the field of art and architecture this period ushered in a new age marked by regional styles in sculpture and construction of temples, which became particularly prominent in south India from the eighth century onwards. All over the country the post-gupta iconography prominently displays a divine hierarchy which reflects the pyramidal rank in society. Vishnu, Shiva and Durga appear as supreme deities, lording over many other divinities of unequal sizes and placed in lower positions as retainers and attendants. The supreme mother goddess is clearly established as an independent divinity in iconography from this time and is represented in a dominating posture in relation to several minor deities. The pantheons do not so much reflect syncretism as forcible absorption of tribal and lower order deities. The reality of unequal ranks appears in the shivite, jain and tantric monastic organizations in

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which as many as five pyramidal ranks are enumerated. The ceremonies recommended for the conservation of the Acharya, the highest in rank, are practically the same as those for the coronation of the prince.

In this period the Mahayajnas and danas gave way to a system known as puja. With the puja was interlinked the doctrine of bhakti or complete self-surrender of the individual to his god, which became a distinct feature of medieval religion, especially a distinct feature of medieval religion, especially in south india from the seventh century. Bhakti reflected the complete dependence of the tenants or semi-serfs on the landowners in early medieval times. Both puja and bhakti became integral ingredients of tantricism, which arose outside mid-india in the aboriginal , peripheral areas on account of the acculturation of the tribal people through large-scale religious land-grants. Brahmanical land rights in the new territories could be maintained by adopting tribal rituals and deities, especially the mother goddess, which eventually produced the tantras. In the fifth- seventh centuries many Brahmanas received lands in Nepal, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, central india, and the Deccan where tantric texts, shrines and practices appeared about this time. In Tamil Nadu Brahmanas settled in large number from the 8th century, and the Agamas were compiled from the 9th century. Tantricism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, shaivism and Vaishnavism, and from the seventh century continued to hold ground throughout the medieval period. The theory of incarnation, though beginning from the earlier period, became very prominent during this period. The local gods and goddesses were identified as incarnation of Vishnuu, Shiva and Durga.

Undoubtedly, the establishment of the Turkish rule introduced certain significant changes in the social, economic and political organization of the country. But most features such as feudal state organization, reversion to closed economy, proliferation of castes, regional identity in art, script and language, puja, bhakti and tantra which developed in medieval times and continued later, can be traced back to the sixth and seventh centuries. It would then appear that in these two centuries ancient India was coming to an end and medieval india was taking shape. The period is thus known as early medieval India.

2. During the early medieval India, founders of which among the following dynasty was elected by the people?
- [A] Pratiharas
 - [B] Palas
 - [C] Gangas
 - [D] Solankis



Answer: [B] Palas

The history of Bengal from the death of Harsha up to the ascendancy of the Palas is shrouded in obscurity. At this time, west Bengal was known as Gauda and East Bengal as Vanga. Bengal was subjected to internal disorder what is called Matsya Nyaya (the rule of strong devouring the weak), leading up to a revolution by which a local chief Gopala (AD 750-770) was elected (Grahita) by the people. This is however, to be taken not in a strictly democratic or constitutional sense which was not possible in these days. Perhaps the election was nothing but his acceptance as a ruler by the people.

3. The feudatories in early medieval India enjoyed which among the following rights:
1. Collection of Land revenue
 2. Awarding fines and Punishments
 3. Right to conclude treaties with other kings
 4. Right to treasure troves in their lands

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] 1, 2 & 3

[B] 1 & 2

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[C] 1, 2, 3 & 4

[D] 1, 2 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 4

4. Among the various castes in early medieval India, the “Antyaja” were those people who ____:
1. were outside the purview of the four fold caste system
 2. considered lowest and degraded outcasts
 3. allowed only work related to service of other castes

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1 & 2

5. Which among the following is / are traits of early medieval India?
1. Development of diverse regional culture of India
 2. Formation of diverse regional languages of India
 3. Reinvention of Vedic Gods in Hinduism
 4. Development of regional style in sculpture and construction of temples



Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1, 2 & 3

[B] Only 1, 2 & 4

[C] Only 1, 3 & 4

[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [B] Only 1, 2 & 4

Third statement is incorrect because there was no reinvention of vedic gods in medieval India. Infact, gods were worshiped as avatars of the Absolute Spirit during medieval India.

6. With reference to the nature of Indian economy / society in early medieval India, which among the following statements is / are correct?
1. Practice of agriculture got confined to only Vaishyas and Shudras
 2. The Vaisyas gradually lost their economic status due to decline of trade and commerce
 3. The Brahmins adopted the occupation of agriculture only in times of distress

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1 & 3 suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/module/ias-general-studies

[C] Only 2

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [C] Only 2

Agriculture was viewed more or less as a regular vocation of the Brahmin, and not as an occupation to be adopted only in distress. In fact Agriculture was included as a Samanya Dharma of all varnas.

7. Consider the following statements with reference to Tantricism in medieval India:
1. The key reason for the development of Tantricism was the absence of contact between tribal people and Brahmanas
 2. The role of woman in tantric practices is central
 3. Shudras were not allowed to practice Tantricism

Which among the above is / are correct?

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] Only 2

Answer: [D] Only 2

The major reason for the development of Tantricism was the Brahmanization and



Sanskritization of hitherto forested and tribal areas. So first statement is incorrect.

In Tantricism, women and Shudras both were allowed to be initiated. Thus, third statement is incorrect.

Third statement is correct. In tribal societies women always have been given a higher status; and sexual rituals played an important role which according to tribal society promotes the fertility of the earth. In fact the role of woman in tantric practices is central due to her ability to reproduce; hence, she symbolizes the notion of fertility.

8. During the medieval India, the Rajputs were repeatedly defeated by the Turks. What was / were the reasons of such defeats?
1. The Rajputs could not gauge the significance of the earlier Arab raids
 2. Central Asian horses did wonders in pitched battles
 3. The armies of Indian rulers were feudal levies and largely static
 4. Turkish / Afghan raiders were best in Guerrilla warfare in comparison to Indians

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1, 2 & 3 raj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/module/ias-general-studies

[C] 1, 2, 3 & 4

[D] Only 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [B] Only 1, 2 & 3

The fourth statement in this question is incorrect. Guerrilla warfare may have been one means for Indians of harassing the Afghan armies, particularly when they were on the march, but this does not appear to have been used very effectively.

9. Which among the following was / were the fallouts / results of the Feudalism in medieval India?
1. Creation of smaller nuclei of Power
 2. Creation of secure and sacrosanct political pockets
 3. Improvement in the position of Shudras to some extent

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

In the post-Gupta period, it is assumed that the position of 'Shudras' in the society had come



up to the status of peasants from their earlier position of servants and domestic slaves. Huen-Tsang, in his accounts characterises 'Shudras' as agriculturists.

10. Consider the following observations:

1. In the medieval times, both Jainism and Buddhism had become incapable of offering any serious challenge to brahmanism
2. Both Jainism and Buddhism were affected by Tantrism to almost equal extent

Which among the above observations is / are correct?

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 2

[C] Both 1 & 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [A] Only 1

Second statement is incorrect because the Jains, however, like the Buddhists, did adopt tantric practices, but it did not affect the Jain moral norms such as, chanting and meditating on mantras.

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Prelims Indian History-5 : Medieval Indian History

Target 2016: Integrated IAS General Studies

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Model Questions

Kindly Check Prelims MCQs in the end of this module.

Political History of Delhi Sultanate

The course of Indian History was invariably changed with the rise of Islam and increased Islamic invasions on India. As early as 711 AD, Muhammad-bin-Qasim had captured Sind and Multan; however, his career ended suddenly because his masters recalled him and put him to death. By 10th century, a strong Ghaznavid Empire was founded by Subuktgeen in parts of modern Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, southern Kyrgyzstan, southwest Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. His son Mahmud Ghaznavi carried out as many as seventeen raids on India between 1000 and 1026 AD.

Subuktgeen and his son Mahmud and repeatedly defeated the Hindushahi King Jayapala. Jayapala burnt himself to death due to repeated humiliation. His son Anandpala made an alliance {Rajput Confederacy} with six Rajput rulers of *Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kannauj, Delhi and Ajmer*. This combined army engaged in a battle with Ghaznavids in 1008 near Peshawar. However, Rajput army was defeated following a stampede; and Mahmud became undisputed ruler of Punjab, Multan and Sindh.

Between 1008 and 1026, Mahmud repeatedly attacked Nagarkot, Thaneshwar, Kannauj, Meerut, Mathura, Somnath, Ajmer, Kalinjer, Gwalior and other places. The Somnath temple was destroyed and its Lingam was personally hammered by Mahmud. The pieces of the Lingam were carted back to Ghazni to be used in pavements of a Jama Masjid.

After his last attack on Somnath, he returned via Thar Desert due to fear of organized army of Raja Bhoj, though Jats had confronted him. During the last invasion, he got Malaria and died in 1030 AD.

The key objective of Mahmud behind invasions on India was to loot the wealth from its rich Rajas and temples. Every time, he returned with enormous wealth. He could be defeated by the Rajputs but the Rajputs suffered from political myopia. They often fought with each other and followed epic era rules and *customs of war* such as not attacking the fleeing enemy, not attacking the enemy with no arms etc. The invaders took advantages of this lack of political foresight and the result was that within a century, all the Hindu dynasties of the country were swept away by the torrent of the Muslims.

Mohammad Ghori

In the later part of 12th century, Mohammad Ghori led a series of campaigns in India. In his first battle, he defeated a Muslim rule in Multan in 1175. In 1178, he was badly defeated in the Battle of Gujarat {also known as Battle of Kayadara} near Mount Abu by Solanki queen Naikidevi. This was



last attack of Ghori from Gujarat side. In 1191, he was defeated in the *First Battle of Tarain* by Prithviraj Chauhan; however, his life was saved by a Turkic retainer. He reverted back in 1192 in second battle of Tarain. In this battle, Prithviraj lost and tried to flee but was captured and was executed either in India or in Ghazni.

Ruthless slaughter of civilians followed this battle at Ajmer, Hansi and Delhi. Qutub-ud-din, the slave and general of Mohammad Ghori sacked Ayodhya and campaigned even to Bengal. Before his death, Mohammad appointed Qutub-ud-din as Naib-us-Sultanate (Viceroy) of his empire in India and bestowed him the title of Aibak (The axis of faith).

Mohammad Ghori was assassinated in 1206 by Khokhars in Punjab. He had no sons, so after his death, his Turkic slaves distributed the empire among themselves. In India, Qutub-ud-din became the first of the 34 Muslim Kings who ruled between 1206 to 1526. These 34 Kings belonged to five dynasties and are collectively called “Delhi Sultanate”.

- Mamluk {Slave} Dynasty (1206-1290): Turkish Origin
- Khilji dynasty (1290–1320) : Turkish Origin
- Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1413): Turkish Origin
- Sayyid dynasty (1414–51): Disputed / Arabian Origin
- Lodi dynasty (1451–1526) : Afghan Origin

The continuance of the three Turkish origin dynasties was disturbed by the **invasion of Timur** in 1398, which put an end to the Tughlaqs and the Delhi Sultanate was broken up in pieces. It was taken over by the Sayyid Dynasty which were actually nobles and claimed Arabian descent from the dynasty of Hazarat Muhammad. Lodi dynasty was last before Mughals took over Delhi.

Mamluk dynasty (1206–90)

First ruler of Mamluk dynasty was Qutub-ud-din Aibak (1206-1211). He reigned only for four years and died in 1210 due to falling from horse while playing Chaugan. He was called *Lakha Baksh* Sultan due to his generosity. He laid the foundation of Qutub Minar, named after Sufi saint *Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki* and also built Quvvat-ul-Islam mosque.

Second ruler of Mamluk dynasty was *Iltutmish (1211-1236)*, a son-in-law of Qutub-ud-din. He belonged to Ilabari tribe so some people called Slave dynasty as Ilabari dynasty also. He did some experiments in Indian Administration. During his reign, the Ilabari elite called *Chahalgani* or *Chalisa* remained dominant in administration. Some of the notable points about his reign are as follows:

- During Iltutmish reign, Mongols attacked under Chengez Khan. His eyes were set on west, so he returned quickly from Punjab towards Sindh and Multan.
- He built Hauz Shamshi in Delhi, completed the Qutub Minar works and also built India's first Islamic Mausoleum Sultan Garhi in Delhi to bury his son *Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud*.



- He organized iqta system of land revenue on salary basis. This system underwent changes in later times, which we would discuss later.
- He introduced two coins viz. Silver Tanka and Copper Jital. The Silver Tanka was weighing 175 grams. Later Balban issued Gold Tankas of same weight.
- Prior to these, the invaders had issued coins engraved with Sanskrit characters. For example, *Mohammad Ghori issued coins with seated Lakshmi in imitation to the Gahadwals*. Iltutmish became the first ruler to issue Arabic coins in India.
- He was also the first Sultan to receive the investiture of “Sovereign Sultan of Delhi” from the Caliph of Baghdad. This investiture legitimized his rule.

The third ruler of Maluk dynasty was Raziya Sultan, the military trained daughter of Iltutmish. By that time, the *Chalagani* had become very dominant and she could hold for only three and half years. She lost her life to Jats of modern Haryana.

The fourth ruler was Balban (1266-1287) who took the advantage of feebleness of successors of Iltutmish and become top noble of the Chahalgani. However, once he became Sultan, he mercilessly executed the other nobles thus putting an end to the Chahalgani dominance. He also subdued the Mewatis by clearing forests and executing lakhs of Mewatis. He also subdued the dacoits of Doab. He ruled for 21 years as per the practical requirements of 13th century India. Some other notes are as follows:

- He introduced practice of Zaminbosi {to kiss the earth} and Paibosi {kiss the feet of Sultan} as per the Iranian theory of divine rights which believed that King / Sultan is God's representative on Earth.

The successor of Balban was his grandson Kaikubad, a young boy of 17 years, who debauched himself soon. He was killed by Jalal-ud-din Firuz Khilji aka Malik Firuz. Thus slave dynasty was put to an end and Delhi slipped in hands of Khilji dynasty.

The Khilji Dynasty (1290-1320)

The founder of this dynasty was Jalauddin Khilji aka. Malik Firuz, a general of the Slaves. Kaikubad had appointed him at Baran but when he knew about the debauchery of Kaikubad, he marched to Delhi and got the sultan and also his three years old son killed. He sat on throne of Delhi at the age of 70 years. During his time, Mongol invaders Halaku and Ulugh Khan invaded but the old sultan avoided war with them. He made peace with Ulugh Khan by giving him his daughter.

Jalauddin was assassinated by his nephew Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) who became the second Sultan of Khilji dynasty. He was illiterate but a great commander who became the first Muslim invader to cross Vindhyas, Satpuras and Narmada River to conquer Deccan.

Alauddin faced most frequent Mongol attacks (under Duwa Khan, Saldi, Kutlugh Khwaja, Targhi



khan etc.). He was able to deter the Mongols. He built Siri fort his capital to save himself from Mongols. Due to the repeated invasions, horde of nomadic Mongols started staying near Delhi and accepted Islam. They were called New Muslims. The sultan sensed a conspiracy in New Muslims and ordered to eliminate all of them in one day. This led to massacre of 40,000 Mongol mans in one day. The women and children were thrown into slavery.

Alauddin also sent a strong army to Kandhar, Ghazni and Kabul to teach lesson to Mongols. After this, no Mongol happened during his life time.

The conquered the Ranthambore in 1301 with the help of a Rajput traitor Ranmal and seized Chittor in 1303. Seize of Chittor was followed by self-immolation by its queen Padmini and other ladies of the fort. Chittor was renamed as Khijrabad after Alauddin's son Khijra Khan.

He sent Malik Kafur to win over Deccan. Malik Kafur was able to march up to Rameshwaram and build a mosque there.

Alauddin died in 1316 and was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah. Like his father, he also had a beautiful Pariah from Gujarat called Khusru Khan, a Hindu castrato and covert. Mubarak Shah and entire Khilji dynasty was eliminated by Khusru Khan, who sat on the throne as Sultan Nasiruddin. He in turn was killed by Ghiyas ud-Din Tughluq, thus Delhi slipped into hands of Tughlaq dynasty.

Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1413)

The first ruler of Tughlaq dynasty was Ghiyas ud-Din Tughluq (1321-1325) aka Ghazi Malik. He was succeeded by Mohammad Bin Tughlaq in 1325. He was a man of ideas and famous for his foolish adventures. His expeditions to Khurasan and China failed and reduced him to penury. To raise the revenues, he increased taxes in doab region which in turn reduced farmers to beggars. His idea to shift capital to Daultabad to keep control over wealthy Deccan backfired.

When his wisdom strikes back, he abolished all the oppressive taxes and sets up a Department of Agriculture (Diwan-i-Kohi) and established a Famine Code to relive victims of famine.

To improve monetary conditions, he took the idea of paper money issued in China and allowed Copper and Brass coins at par with Silver Tanka. However, this experiment also backfired because of *great coin piracy by artisans*. The result was the public become rich and government became poor. Ultimately, he repealed the edict of these token coins and gave order to bring copper coins to treasury and exchange them with silver / gold. Due to these experiments of Sultan, the discontent grew among people and revolts started appearing in sultanate.

In 1351 Mohammad bin Tughlaq died and was succeeded by his cousin Firoz Shah Tughlaq, who ruled as third Tughlaq Sultan from 1351 to 1388 AD. Firozshah Tughlaq was half Muslim {his mother was a Hindu}. To prove himself equal to pure Muslims, he ruled strictly as per Shariat. He abolished all taxes {such as Octroi} which were not as per Shariat; and imposed Jaziya on Hindus. He



pulled down the temples, burnt a Brahmin alive for resisting to embrace Islam, and imposed water tax on agricultural land irrigated from state canals.

His reign is also known for plenty of public works. He established cities such as Firuzshah Kotla (Delhi), Hisar, Jaunpur (West Bengal), Fatahabad, Firozabad etc.

He moved one of the Asokan pillars from its original place and erected it in Delhi.

To support Hissar, he *constructed a Double System of Canals from Yamuna to Sutlej* (called *rajwahas* in the Indo-Persian historical texts). This canal was later repaired during times of Akbar. Firuzshah did close to 845 public works during his regime.

Firuzshah was gentle towards peasantry. He had destroyed all records of farmer debts ceremoniously to give clean chit to farmers. This was one of the major reasons that he saw no major revolt in 32 years of reign.

Death of Firuzshah brought an end to Turkish Sultans of Delhi. His successors were killed one by one and none could sustain the throne.

In 1398, Timur attacked India and returned with thousands of slaves and 90 elephants laden with treasure. Delhi lost its ascendancy and charm for many decades thereafter.

Sayyid dynasty (1414-51)

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After a series of successions, the Tughlaq dynasty ended. In 1414, Khijr Khan founded Sayyid dynasty by taking over Delhi as a deputy of Timur in India. Four kings of this dynasty remained in perpetual struggle to retain control. The last ruler of this dynasty Alauddin Alam Shah voluntarily abdicated the throne in favour of Bahlol Lodi.

The Timur invasion, followed by confusion in Delhi over control and absence of a strong ruler resulted in loss of hegemony of Delhi Sultanate over other parts of India during entire 15th century. India was disintegrated into small states and petty rulers, some of which were not larger than 20 or 30 miles. This was time of rise of Rajput chieftains in Rajputana, Bahmani Kingdom, Vijaynagar Kingdom in Karnataka etc.

Lodi Dynasty (1451-1526)

Lodi Afghans tried to gain the old power and pomp of Delhi but could not succeed. The first ruler of this dynasty was Bahlol Lodi (1451-1489). He was leader of the Lodi Afghan tribes holding the fiefdom at Sirhind. He was invited by last Sayyid ruler Alauddin Alam Shah to take the throne and control the fighting nobles. After this, Alauddin Alam Shah retired to Badun to die in peace. Bahlol Lodhi was succeeded in 1489 by his son Sikandar Lodi who was again a half Muslim like Firuzshah Tughlaq. He launched campaigns to regain the old supremacy of Delhi and subdued the Rajas of Bihar, Bengal, Dholpur, Chanderi, Gwalior, Awadh, Tirhut, Bundelkhand etc. In 1503, he established city of Agra and transferred his capital there.



His religious policy was akin to Firuzshah Tughalq, partly due to his compulsion to prove that he was equal to pure Muslims. He pulled down Jwalamukhi temple at Nagarkot, burnt Hindus alive to terrorise them to adopt Islam, and imposed Jaziya on infidels.

Sikandar died in 1517 and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Lodi, who was the last Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate. Ibrahim (1517-1526) did not know how to win friends. He was so much obsessed with royal prerogative that he forced his nobles to stand motionless with folded hands in his court. When discontent grew, he tried to subdue it by killing some of the nobles. One of his uncles Daulat Khan Lodi fled to Kabul and invited Babur to invade India. In Mewar, a new power under Rana Sanga was on its zenith. Under these circumstances Babur attacked India and closed the chapter of Delhi Sultanate.

Delhi Sultanate: Important Observation and Notes for Prelims

Contribution of Iltutmish to Administration

Iltutmish was one of the most outstanding rulers of Medieval India. In true terms, history of the Muslim sovereignty in India begins with him. He gave the sultanate a capital, a legitimate sovereign state (he got an investiture from Caliphate, and that was a proof of sovereignty in that time), monarchical form of government and a governing class or nobility called Chahalgani or Turkan-i-Chalgani or Chalisa (a group of forty) which was the ruling elite of the period. The majority of the nobles in Iltutmish's nobility were Turks followed by Tajiks who were Iranians from the transoxiana and Khurasan regions. He divided his empire into numerous big and small iqtas, as assignment of land in lieu of salary, which he distributed to his Turkish officers. Iltutmish also used this institution as an instrument for liquidating the feudal order of the Indian society and linking up the far-flung parts of the empire to one centre.

Iqta System

The conquest of Mohammad Ghori and establishment of the Sultanate brought major changes in the land revenue system in India. The Governments in those times made all attempts to increase the revenue by collecting taxes as per those in Islamic nations. The new taxes were imposed upon people and government's share in produce increased. However, till that time, the original form of Hindu system of Land tenure as per ancient Manu's laws survived with some modifications done by some of the greedy sultans and their officials.

The agricultural and land revenue system of the early Turkish Sultans rested on two foundations viz. the **Iqta** (assignment of land revenue) and **Kharaj** (Land Revenue).

The Iqta system provided an agrarian system to the country while the members of the ruling class attained income without any permanent attachment to any territory. The Iqta system was provided institutional status by Iltutmish and later this system became the mainstay of the sultanate

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administration under slave dynasty.

Iqta System

Under Iqta System, the land of the empire was divided into several large and small tracts called Iqta and assigned these Iqtas to his soldiers, officers and nobles. In the beginning, an Iqta was based upon salary. Later, under Firoz Shah Tughlaq it became hereditary.

Literally, Iqta means land or land revenue assigned to an individual *on certain conditions*. The holders of these Iqtas were the trustful agents of the Sultan. There were two kinds of Iqtas viz. **Large Iqtas** and **Small Iqtas**. The holders of large Iqta were the provincial governors, who had some administrative responsibilities also. On the other hand, the holders of the small Iqtas were the small troops holders who had no administrative responsibilities.

The small Iqta holders held and appropriated all the income obtained from the cultivators but as a *quid pro quid*, they were bound to present themselves with horses and arms whenever called upon by the Central Government. These small Iqta holders were called *Khuts* and *Muqaddams*. Amir Khusarau, for the first time, referred to Khuts as Zamindars.

The Khuts and Muqaddams became fond of luxurious living over the period of time, later, Alauddin Khilji suddenly abolished the system of small Iqtas with a stroke of pen and brought them under the central Government (thus called Khalsa land). This was regarded as one of the most important agrarian reforms of Alauddin Khilji.

Land Revenue Reforms of Alauddin Khilji

Under Alauddin Khilji, India saw one of the most harsh land revenue system in India. His land and revenue reforms are notable for two measures viz. abolition of small Iqtas and Land Measurement (Paimaish)

Abolition of small Iqtas

With a stroke of pen, Alauddin abolished almost all small Iqtas and brought these lands under Khalsa or Crown lands. Almost entire land of Doab was brought under Khalsa. *In the Khalsa lands, the revenue was collected directly by the state*. The Sultan deprived the Khuts, Maqaddams and Chaudhuris of their privileges. They were forced to pay arrears of land revenue in a newly established department of arrears called *Mustkharaj*. This Mustkharaj reduced these Khuts and Muqaddams to beggars literally.

Land Measurement and Tax rates

Alauddin Khilji made several sweeping reforms in the field of revenue system. He was the *first Sultan who paid attention to measurement* (paimaish) of the cultivable land, which he called *zabita*, and estimated *yield per Biswa was fixed as unit of revenue collection* (currently, Biswa is 20th part of Bigha).

The ancient Hindu terminology of taxes viz. Bhaga, Bhoga and Kara were still in operation in those



times but their meaning and demand had changed. Bhaga now meant Land revenue, Bhoga meant cess and Kar meant other taxes. These three were basis of assignment of land to nobles under Khilji. As far as state demand is concerned, Alauddin made the harshest possible hike in tax demand till that time. He fixed state demand to be half of the produce per Biswa yield. This scale of agrarian tax at 50% was the highest under Khilji among all other sultans and kings so far in India. Not only this, he also imposed house tax (Ghari) and pasture tax (Charai or Chari) on the agrarian population.

But these harsh measures were not sustainable. As soon as Alauddin died, the system lost into oblivion. Later, Mohammad Tughlaq somehow tried to return to the Khilji's system and he tried to implement such a pilot project in a local area in Doab, but this pilot project failed like many of his other adventures.

Amir Khusru

Amir Khusrow was a Sufi mystic and a spiritual disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya. He lived for 72 years, out of which 60 years he lived in the courts of as many as ten different rulers of the Delhi Sultanate. He was a poet as well as prolific musician. His primary language to write poems was Persian but he composed almost half a million verses in Persian, Turkish, Arabic, Braj Bhasha, Hindavi as well as the Khadi Boli. His *Khaliq-e-bari*, which is known as oldest printed dictionary of the world deals with Hindi and Persian words. He is regarded as the “father of qawwali”. He is also credited with enriching Indian classical music by introducing Persian and Arabic elements in it, and was the originator of the **khayal** and **tarana** styles of music. Khayal later reached to its zenith during the times of Mohammad Shah Rangile and today is integral part of Hindustani classical music. His association with various sultans enabled him to travel and stay in various parts of India and this gave him exposure to various local traditions. This helped him to assimilate diverse musical influences. He was patronized by three Khilji rulers successively.

Revenue and Military Reforms of Alauddin Khilji

Alauddin Khilji made several sweeping reforms in the field of revenue system. Some of his important fiscal and revenue measures were as follows:

- His first revenue regulation (zabita) related to the measurement of cultivable land as the principle for determining and revenue. Biswa (1/20th of a bigha) was declared to be the standard unit of measurement.
- The state demand was fixed as half of the produce per Biswa and assessment was done on the basis of paimash (measurement).
- Bhaga (land-revenue), Bhoga (cesses) and Kar (taxes) became the basis for the assignment of land to the nobles.
- The sultan deprived the village chiefs and Hindu revenue collectors, such as Khuts,

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Maqaddams, and Chaudhuris of their privileges. They were forced to pay land revenue and other peasants were taxed.

- Besides the land revenue, house tax (Ghari) and pasture tax (chari) were also imposed on the agrarian population.
- Most of the small iqtas were abolished and such lands were brought under Khalisa (crown lands). Doab was also brought under Khalisa.
- In the Khalisa lands the revenue was collected directly by the state.
- To support his market control system, revenue was mostly collected in kind and peasants were made to sell the surplus produce at their fields only so that they could not hoard the food grains.
- To ensure full realization of dues or arrears from the collectors, Alauddin Khilji established a new department called the Diwan-i-Mustakharaja.
- The booty captured during war was called *Ghanima*, of which the state was to receive 1/5th share called the Khums; and the rest 4/5th was to be divided among the soldiers. Alauddin reversed this and the state was now entitled to 4/5th Khums, 1/5th being distributed among the soldiers.

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Military reforms

Alauddin Khilji had the largest well equipped standing army. According to Firishta, there were 475,000 cavalymen in his army. The historian, Ziauddin Barani, informs us that the annual salary of a trained armed soldier with one horse was 243 tankas and with two horses 321 tankas. The soldiers were paid in cash. He was the first among the Delhi sultans to introduce dagh (branding of horses) and Chehra (maintain the descriptive roll of each soldier) so as to avoid fraud in the system. To keep the army satisfied with their salary, he started a strict price control mechanism which came to be known as the market reform system.

Market control or economic regulations of Alauddin

The market control system and the economic regulations issued to that effect, were the most revolutionary and remarkable reforms made by the Alauddin.

Objectives of Market Reforms

As per Barni, the basic objective of these reforms was to maintain a large and efficient army for keeping the Mongols in check. Such a large army could not be maintained and kept content out of the normal revenues of the state, unless the prices of commodities were reduced. Thus, economic regulations were primarily a military measure.

However, this view of Barni is debated because several commodities, for which the prices had been fixed, were of little or no use to the soldiers. Besides, merely for the military needs such extensive



economic reforms were not needed. This view of Barni can be supplemented with that of Amir Khusru. He says that sultan introduced these reforms for the general welfare of the people and these were intended to ensure the supply of important commodities for the benefit of common people as also collect food grains for the royal treasury at prescribed rates to combat famines.

Major Reforms

The economic regulations issued by the sultan for controlling the markets were as under:

- Zawabit or detailed regulations were made to control the prices of various commodities, from food grains to horses, cattle and slaves, which were fixed by the state. No change was permitted in the price of the commodities without the state's permission.
- He tried to control prices along with its availability and distribution. The *Karwanis or Banjaras* carriers formed a guild where they became guarantors for each other.
- The cultivators were not allowed to hoard. Only 10 mound {1 mound=40 kg} of grain they could store. Rest they had to sell into market.
- Four separate markets were established for various commodities central grain market, market for manufactured goods, market for general merchandise and market for horses, cattle and slaves. Each market was put under the charge of a Shuhna or controller of market, and all merchants were to be registered with the state. The sultan received daily reports for the markets from the three independent sources – Shuhna, barids (intelligence officers) and munshis (secret spies).
- Very strict punishment was prescribed for cheating and under-weighing. Shehna-i-mandi was appointed to keep a strict vigil.
- To reduce the prices of the costly or imported commodities, the state used to subsidize their costs. But such subsidized items were sold on a permit issued by the permit officer (*Parwana Rais*), appointed by the state.
- There was also provision for rationing during famine, drought or scarcity of food grains.
- Sarai-i-adl was the market for clothes, which was setup near the royal palace at Badayun gate.
- Horse trade was monopoly of the Afghans and Multanis. The middlemen and dalas sold them in the market. Alauddin did away with the intermediaries and asked the merchants to sell the horses directly to the Diwan-i-arz.

Impacts of Economic Regulations

The economic regulations of Alauddin were the greatest administrative achievement of the Sultanate period. The prices remained steady and there was no change in them even after lack of rain or other causes. It was a unique and remarkable achievement. The success of these economic measures was largely due to the genius and personal attention of the sultan. These measures failed to survive his



death because they operated against economic laws.

Firuzshah Tughlaq: Reverse of Alauddin Khilji

The greatest success of the reign of Firuz was the promotion of agriculture through the construction of canals by the state, bringing fresh lands under cultivation along the banks of those canals, introduction of superior crops and lying out of more than 1200 state-managed fruit gardens. He built twin canals to bring water from Ganga and Yamuna to Hissar. This canal was later repaired by Akbar and extended up to Delhi by Shah Jahan. The British repaired it again in the 19th century and this canal became the feeder to the western Yamuna canal. Firoz also built a number of dams for irrigation.

However, Firuz's progressive measures for agriculture proved counter-productive to some extent mainly because he made Iqtas hereditary basis of civil and military officers and even to ordinary troopers. Not only this, he did not streamline the state machinery in matters of revenue assessment and gave the collection work to the bidders, contractors and middlemen. He made the civil and military posts hereditary. 80% of the soldiers were paid by the grants of village.

The implication of making Iqtas hereditary was that they went into hands of the pensioners who had lost all military qualities.

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State Organization in Delhi Sultanate

In theory the Muslim state was theocracy, i.e. the head of state was also the religious head and derived his position and authority from god. Thus the caliph was the supreme head of the whole Muslim world. Although the sultans of Delhi professed formal allegiance to the Caliphate, the sultanate was always in independent state for all practical purposes. Further, the political need and the ignorance of the sultans about the Shariat had resulted in a division of the functions of the head of state. The religious side was looked after by the ulema and the administrative side was managed, organized and supervised by the sultan.

The ideal of Kingship

The ideal of kingship in the Delhi sultanate was derived from the Islamic world whereby the rulers claimed divine origin for themselves. The ruler was the representative god and was endowed with *Farr*, thus he was to be obeyed and respected due to divine origin of kingship. During the reign of Iltutmish, the position of the sultan was not considered much higher than that of an exalted noble. He treated the great Turkish nobles as his equals and professed his shyness to sit on the throne. However, Balban was fully aware of its dangerous implications. He had, therefore, to place the monarchy at a higher level than the nobility. He proclaimed himself as the vice-regent and the shadow of god on earth. He believed that the king's heart is the mirror of divine attributes.



The same idea was followed by Alauddin Khilji also. He also dreamt himself to be another prophet but his advisors brought him back to reality. Nevertheless, he assumed the title of Sikander-i-sani (the second Alexander) and kept away Ulema from his decision making periphery.

However, this trend was softened by Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, who was soft on Ulema and extremely social with nobles. The same was reversed by Firuz Shah, who strictly worked in guidance of Ulema and weakened the monarchy.

Under Lodis, kingship assumed the racial basis. They believed in superiority of their races and this lowered the dignity of the Sultans.

The sultan was a despot and bound by no law. He was not subject to any ministerial or other checks. The people had no rights but only obligations. Only two pressure groups existed with varying impacts in various times viz. nobility and Ulema.

Central / Provincial Government

Sultan was on apex of the central government who worked with imperial Diwans. The four Diwans viz. Diwani-I-Wizarat, Diwan-I-Arz, Diwan-I-Insha, Diwan-I-Risalat served as four pillars of central government.

The Delhi sultanate was divided into smaller units called Wilayat or Iqlim or Iqtas. The number of Iqtas changed, for instance, under Alauddin Khilji, there were 12 Iqtas.

Each Iqta was under a Wali, Muqti or Naib and was divided into Shiqs (districts) under a Shiqdar. Each Shiq was further divided into Pargana under an Alim and then further into a village under Khuts and Muqaddams.

Military, Police and Justice

The military organization of Delhi sultanate was based on Turkish model. The survival of the government was based on military, it got maximum importance.

Iltutmish, a Turkish ruler had thought of organizing the army of sultanate as King's army, which is centrally recruited and centrally paid. What he organized was called "Iqta army". However, usually army ranks would be disbanded as soon as a campaign was over. Balban increased the number of soldiers in army. It was Alauddin Khilji, who took more interest in army than any other Sultan. He was the first sultan to set up a permanent standing army of Delhi Sultanate. He did not disband the soldiers after a campaign was over and he recruited directly and paid them in cash from public treasury. The same policy was followed by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq but Firuz Shah adopted granting hereditary assignments of land to the soldiers. This particular decision ruined the army's position. During Lodi regime, too much emphasis was on tribal traditions and army of the Sultanate was turned into a tribal militia.

As far as Police organization is concerned, the head of the police was a Kotwal, who were responsible



for maintenance of law and order in towns. The judicial department was headed by *Qazi-ul-Quzzat*. Sultan was the supreme or highest court of justice and he sat in a court called *Mazalim*.

Society of Delhi Sultanate

The Delhi sultanate society was broadly divided into four major groups viz. nobles (Aristocrats), Priests, Towns people and Peasants.

Nobles included Sultan and his relatives, courtiers and holders of *Iqta*, Hindu and Muslim chieftains, merchants, bankers etc. Almost all the wealth and power was concentrated in this group. They lived in luxury and style.

Second group of priests included Brahmins and Ulemas. Brahmins as well as Ulemas were given tax free land grants so they were also rich and powerful. During most of Sultanate era {except under Alauddin Khilji}, the influence of Ulema was so much that it often influenced the policies of the Sultan.

The town people included urban wealthy merchants, traders and artisans. Since nobles and merchants lived in towns, they gradually became centres of administration and military. The places where Sufi saints lived became pilgrim centres. In urban centres, there was a trend of colonies of artisans, for example, weavers living in weavers' colony while Goldsmiths living in their colony. International trade was flourishing. State patronized the royal *Karkhanas* for producing goods.

The lowest stratum of the society of Delhi Sultanate was peasants. They lived in villages, paid taxes to state as land revenue. A change in dynasty generally did not brought any change in their lives. There was a rigid caste system. Intercaste marriage and dining got totally prohibited. Hindus and Muslims influenced each others' customs and traditions. Those who converted to Islam continued their old traditions and thus a composite culture of India was born.

Trade

During Sultanate era, the trade was flourishing. Communities such as Banias, Marwaris and Multanis had their own special vocation of merchandise trade. The Banjaras acted as *Couriers* and they traded in caravans. The growth of trade also encouraged use of money in place of barter. The introduction of Tanka and Jital by Iltutmish was most used currency in early periods of sultanate.

Religion

By early Sultanate era, Hinduism was India's main religion. However, it had degenerated to a great extent due to superstitions, rituals, sacrifices; and due to Brahmanic dominance. Islam was opposite to the Hinduism of the day as it talked of equality, brotherhood and monotheism. Its simple doctrine challenged the social pattern of society and most important result of this was emergence of Bhakti movement and Sufi Movement. Both of these emphasized that God was supreme, all men were equal and Bhakti or devotion to God was the way to achieve salvation.



Political History of Mughal Empire

Mughal dynasty was founded by Babur who was invited by Alam Khan Lodi, a discontented uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, to Invade India. He was a descendent of Timur through his father and Changez Khan through his mother, thus had blood of Mongols and Turks in his veins.

Babur (1526-1530)

The first attack of Babur in India was on Bajaur in 1519 in which he used Gun Powder for the first time in a war in India. Gun powder was invented in China and was introduced from there to many parts of the world. The Ottomans had built one of the greatest empires mainly by harnessing the power of the gunpowder weapons. In India, use of Gun powder was already in vogue to blow the walls of forts etc. but it was used in Canons for the first time by Babur in Bajaur.

The forces of Babur and Ibrahim Lodi met in first battle of Panipat in November 1525. Ibrahim Lodi was killed in battlefield on 21 April 1526, which marked the commencement of Mughal rule in India. After winning Delhi, he moved to Agra but his forces wanted to move back. His moral suasion held them back. He fought the battle of Khanwa in 1527 and won it solely because of use of Mughal artillery. Ruthless massacre of Rajputs followed this battle. In 1529, Babur defeated Muhammad Lodi, the last Lodi claimant of Delhi throne in battle of Ghaghra.

Babur died in 1530 of an unknown disease. His autobiography *Baburnama* or Tuzk-e Babri has vividly discussed the contemporary life in India, his use of gun powder and canons in Indian battles, his anger with Rana Sanga and other details. It was written in Chagatai Turkic, Babur's mother tongue.

Humayun (1530-1540 and 1555-1556)

Babur was succeeded by Humayun (1530-1540 and 1555-1556), a man of polished and charming manners. But his easy going nature brought him difficulties. As soon as Babur died, Gujarat's Bahadur Shah raised the banner of revolt and campaigned to win Chittor and Delhi. During seize of Chittor, Rani Karnavati had sent a Rakhi to Humayun for help but Humayun lost the opportunity to win Rajput friendship. Karnavati burnt herself in Jauhar and Chittor fell. But as soon as this happened, the forces of Humayun cut the supply of the soldiers of Bahadur Shah. The soldiers started starving. In dead of a night, Bahadur Shah fled the battlefield and his army dispersed in all sides. Thus, both Chittor and Gujarat fell into the hands of Humayun like ripe mango. Bahadur shah was chased but was neither arrested nor killed.

Meanwhile, his other adversary Shershah Suri was able to drive him off India and crown himself as the emperor. After this, Humayun wandered for about 15 years. He was able to recover back only when Shershah died in an accident and was succeeded by his son Sikandar Suri. However, he could not enjoy the empire and died soon at young age of 48 in 1556.



Akbar (1556-1605)

At the time of death of Humayun, Akbar, along with his tutor and guardian Bairam Khan, was at Kalanaur in Punjab. There itself, he was coronated in a simple ceremony by Bairam Khan, who became his regent. Meanwhile, in the turmoil of Humayun's death, Hemu, the Hindu general of Muhammad Adil Shah captured Delhi and Agra and ascended to throne as Vikramaditya.

He was challenged and defeated by Akbar in Second battle of Panipat in 1556 and was killed while unconscious in battlefield.

Akbar proved to be a capable administrator and a cultured and refined leader with political foresight. His goodwill towards all and tolerant religious policy won him most faithful race of Rajputs in crucial time. His abolition of Jajiya, his new religion Din-i-Ilahi, his land revenue policy, administrative policy etc. were such that his half century rule proved to be one of the brightest chapters in Indian History.

Jahangir 1605-1627

Jahangir aka Salim was an indolent, self indulgent and indifferent personality. When he ascended the throne, he was a man of 37 years and had become "mature". He should be noted for:

- Regulations such as forbidding sale of wine and even tobacco.
- Restoration of Mohammaden Faith. Used Hijra Chronology on coins, something his father had abandoned. But he was equally tolerant towards the Christians and Hindus.

He was active in redressing the grievance of the people and had a **Justice chain** and bell attached to the gate of his palace in Agra, so that all who wished to appeal to him could ring him up. However, it is not clear, who was eligible to ring the emperor up.

Jahangir is known for his pompous display of the Justice. He enacted 12 regulations that show his liberalism and judiciousness. He is known for prohibition of some extortion type of cesses such as Tamga and controlling the merchants by an enactment which forbade them not to open bales without permission from the government.

Shah Jahan 1627-1658

Shahjahan aka Khurram became the most "celebrated" among the Mughal emperors but not popular among the Hindus. He was a perfect orthodox Muslim who was more intolerant than his father. With Arjumand Bano Beghum, Khurram married at the age of 15 years and gave her the title Mumtaj Mahal. Mumtaj Mahal was a mother of his 14 children and died on the death of their 14th child. The exquisite monument Taj Mahal is a witness to her husband's devotion.

Throughout his tenure, Shah Jahan kept struggling with revolts. The first big revolt was in Bundelkhand in 1636 under Jujhar Singh. The revolt was suppressed and Jujhar Singh was eliminated. Another was under the Lodi remnant Khan Jahan Lodi. This revolt was also suppressed.



During Shahjahan's times, the Portuguese had established a factory at Hugli in Bengal. Portuguese had a very constrictive religious policy. It was learnt that the Portuguese often lifted the orphaned children and converted them to Christianity. This was something objectionable under the rule of a Mughal, who was a devout Muslim. During the reign of Jahangir the Portuguese lifted two slave girls that belong to Mumtaz Mahal and they were not released even after it was known to the Portuguese. In 1631, Qasim Khan was appointed as Governor of Bengal and was given authority to teach a lesson to the Portuguese.

The Portuguese were attacked, massacred and Hugli was in siege for 3 months. The Portuguese surrendered only after a huge loss of ten thousand lives. Four thousand were made prisoners, who were given an option to either convert to Islam or face lifelong imprisonment. Thus, Shah Jahan gave the Portuguese a death blow in Bengal. Later life of Shah Jahan was marred by the war of succession. He was imprisoned by Aurangzeb and later died in obscurity.

Aurangzeb 1658-1707

Aurangzeb was a bigot who created a lot of troubles for himself and lost both energy and resources in dealing with the rebellions of *Jats, Satnamis, Bundelas, Sikhs and finally the formidable Marathas*.

He stopped engraving Kalma on coins. Forbade the Parsis to celebrate their festival Navaroz. Released an order to ban the music everywhere and arrest those who listen to the music. His drink was plain water and he used to sleep on ground, something that made him a *Zinda Fakir*.

Aurangzeb had claimed the throne as the Champion of the Orthodox Islam against the heretical practices of his brother Dara. When he was told that in Banaras, the Brahmins have got habitual of teaching their "wicked science" to the Muslims, he ordered to demolish all the temples. The orders were carried out and the temple of Vishnu at Banaras and a splendid shrine at Mathura were broken to make room for a mosque. The idols were brought to Agra and buried under the steps of the Mosque.

His Rajput policy was also filled with the religious fanaticism, when he asked Raja Jaswant Singh to send his sons to Delhi so that they can be taught under his "supervision", leading their conversion. All the Rajputs except Raja of Amber were in a state of rebellion.

He ended the Mughal pomp of *Jharokha Darshan, use of almanacs, the Mughal custom of weighing the emperor in gems - distributing the wealth to the poor, on coronation anniversaries*. He reintroduced Jazia. In summary he did all that was never done by his great grandfather, grandfather and father. This was enough to shake the foundation of the Mughal Empire which was based upon religious tolerance. Aurangzeb was the last important Mughal ruler and after him the Mughal empire rapidly decayed and was finally put to an end by the British.

This King reigned for half a century and died in 1707 leaving behind a war of succession.



Bahadur Shah I (1707-1712)

Aurangzeb was succeeded by his son Muazzam, who ascended the throne as Bahadur Shah I in 1707. His reign was just 5 years till 1712, and during this time he tried to get rid of the strict edicts of his father. He was not able to eliminate Jazia but supported music, now people could hear the songs again. He tried to establish peace with the Sikhs and Marathas. He died in 1712, when he was overseeing the repair works at Shalimar Gardens at Lahore. He was followed by his son Jahandar Shah.

Jahandar Shah 1712-1713

After his father Bahadur Shah I died, he ascended the throne after eliminating his brother Azim-us-Shan. He had married to a dancing girl who became the queen consort. His nephew Farrukhsiyar attacked him and defeated him. He was arrested and Jailed by Farrukhsiyar, who later executed him.

Farrukhsiyar 1713-1719

Farrukhsiyar was a despicable poltroon who suffered similar fate six years later in 1719. He sat the throne with the help of two Vazirs of the Mughals Syed Hassan Ali Khan Barha and Syed Hussain Ali Khan Barha known as Sayyid Brothers.

In 1717, the British East India Company purchased duty free trade rights in all of Bengal for peanuts worth Rupees 3000 per year from this so called emperor. He lolled the throne as a puppet in the hands of the Sayyid Brothers, and when there was an enmity with these two King makers, they deposed him, imprisoned him, starved him, blinded him and finally finished him. The Sayyid brothers placed his cousin **Rafi ud-Darajat** on the throne in 1719.

Rafi ud-Darajat 1719

Rafi ud-Darajat, the 11th Mughal emperor was proclaimed by the Sayyid Brothers in 1719, and he could survive only for four months and died of some mysterious disease. He was succeeded by Muhammad Shah Rangile or Rangila.

Muhammad Shah Rangile 1719-1748

Mohammad Shah Rangila was able to keep the throne for around 29 years partially because the first thing he did was to eliminate the Sayyid Brothers. During his time Nadir Shah attacked and looted Delhi and took the Peacock Throne. The invasion of Nadir Shah fastened the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. During his time, the states of Hyderabad, Bengal, Awadh were established as independent Kingdoms. In due course of time, Mughal empire was confined to only Red Fort of Delhi. The last Mughal remnant Bahadurshah Zafar was not lucky enough to die in the land which his forefathers had ruled for centuries.

Notes and Observations on Mughal Empire



Mughal Land Revenue System

There was no Mughal land revenue system before Akbar. His father Humayun and grandfather Babur did not introduce any changes because they were the first conquerors of their dynasty and remained pre-occupied with subduing rebellions, consolidating empires and maintaining order.

A proper land revenue system was founded by Akbar. However, the system of Akbar was itself based on what Shershah Suri implemented during his short tenure. Thus, the land revenue system of Akbar was neither an innovation nor an invention. His indebtedness to the earlier rulers is immense but this has not diminished his fame as far as land revenue system is concerned. He followed the policy of Shershah with greater precision and correctness and then extended it to various *subah* or provinces of his empire. But this correction or precision did not come overnight. Initially was tortuous enough to turn peasants into beggars, and forcing them to sell their wives and children. But it was revised several times.

The first question is – what were the corrections and precisions Akbar did in the existing system created by Shershah? The corrections done by Akbar in land revenue system can be mainly divided into three heads as follows:

- Standardization of measurement of land
- Ascertaining the produce per Bigha of Land
- Fixation of state's share in that produce

Standardization of measurement of the land

In Akbar's administration, we find so many territorial divisions and sub-divisions for the first time in medieval history. For political as well as fiscal purposes Akbar had divided his empire into 15 *Subahs* (originally there were 12 Subahs, but by the time Akbar died, the number stood at 15), 187 Sarkars and 3367 Mahals. He ordered a standardization of measurement unit and the so called *Ilahi Gaj* was made the definite unit of land measurement. This *Ilahi Gaj* was equivalent to some 41 fingers (29-32 inches), and was shorter than the Sikandari Gaj (approx 39 inches) used by Shershah. The Gaj as measurement of land finds its origin during Sikandar Lodi's times.

Standardization of land measurement was adopted to brush aside all kinds of vagueness in defining extent of land and to reduce extortion / corruption by officials.

For land measurement (*Paimaish*), a rope called *Tenab* was used in those days. Since, this rope was subject to variation in its length due to seasonal dryness or humidity, Akbar made reforms in *Tenab* also. Instead of an ordinary rope, Akbar ordered the *Tenab* to be made of pieces of Bamboo joined together with iron rings. This made sure that the length of *Tenab* varies little during different seasons of a year.

A further change done by Akbar was to fix definite measurement to *Bigha* of land. A *Bigha* was made



of 3600 Ilahi Gaj, which is roughly half of modern acre. Several Bighas made a *Mahal*. Several *Mahals* were grouped into *Dasturs*.

Ascertainment of produce per Bigha

After the standardization of land measurement, Akbar turned towards ascertainment of the amount of produce per Bigha and the state's share in it. Shershah Suri had already divided land into four different categories. Akbar followed the system and to make a comparative estimate of the produce of lands and fixed different revenues for each of them. These four types were as follows:

Polaj

Polaj was the ideal and best type of land throughout the empire. This land was cultivated always and was never allowed to lie fallow.

Parati or Parauti

This was the land kept out of cultivation temporarily in order to recoup its lost fertility.

Chachar

Chachar was a kind of land allowed to lie fallow for three or four years and then resumed under cultivation.

Banjar

Banjar was the worst kind of land that was left out of cultivation for five years or upwards.

Fixation of state's share in produce

The best lands viz. Polaj and Parauti were subdivided into three categories viz. good, middle and bad. Average produce of these three categories, called *Mahsul* was taken as a normal produce per Bigha. One third of this *Mahsul* (average produce) was fixed as state's share. The Parauti land also was liable to pay the Polaj rate (one third of *Mahsul*) when cultivated. Chachar land was allowed to pay a concessional rate until it was cultivated again to be liable to pay the Polaj rate. Banjar lands were also not totally neglected.

Further, the peasants were given option to pay either in cash or kind, whichever was convenient to them.

It's worth note here that during British Era, the land was divided on the basis of natural or artificial qualities of soil in clay, loam, irrigated, unirrigated and so on. However, the basis of land classification by Akbar was on the continuity or discontinuity of the cultivation. Akbar's vazirs had not taken account the soil qualities for ascertaining the produce.

Fixing Rate of Assessment

Once the land was measured and state's share in produce was fixed per Bigha of land, Akbar next proceeded to fix the rate of assessment. This was the *most contentious part* and in fact several changes were done in the system till 1585. Firstly, Akbar adopted Shershah's Rai system in which cultivated



area was measured, and a central schedule was created fixing the dues of peasants crop wise on the basis of the productivity of the land. The state's share was fixed one-third of the produce under the schedule (*Dastur-i-amal*) to be paid in cash. The peasant's tax was based on annual system of collecting prices and settlements of revenues for the previous years. But there were several problems with this arrangement. Firstly, the prices of crops could not reasonably be applied to the whole empire. Prices were lower in rural areas which were far away from the urban centres. Secondly, the cultivators found it difficult to pay in cash at the official rate. Thirdly, this system was affected by corruption of the revenue collectors, particularly the **Karoris** appointed in 1573-74. Fourthly, fixing prices every year and doing settlements of revenues of previous years was a cumbersome practice. Akbar ordered that the settlement should be concluded for past 10 years. An aggregate of the rate of revenues from 1570 to 1579 was made and a decennial average was fixed as demand of the revenue. This brought certainty to collections and alleviated the problem of peasants to great extent. This was the so called **Dahsala system** or **Zabti System**, that was implemented by Raja Todarmal. This remained a standard system of revenue assessment during the greater part of the Mughal empire. During Shahjahan's era, it was introduced in the Deccan by Murshid Quli Khan.

The assessment of Akbar's land revenue system must be done on two accounts viz. annual system and Dahsala system.

Annual System

The annual system was another name of uncertainty in assessment and appointment of Karoris was disastrous for the peasants. The Karoris turned rapacious and system of paying previous years taxes in current years led the peasants to sell their wives and children. Badauni writes that by the time Karoris were made accountable to Raja Todarmal, lots of damage to life of people had been already done. The uncertainty and confusion regarding taxation rendered cultivation without any incentives.

Dahsala System

Under the Dahsala system, the peasants were relieved from the uncertainty of the taxes they would be paying. Since amount due from the peasant to government treasury was fixed, the farmers had hope to enjoy some greater profits if they improve or extend their cultivation.

Apart from this, we can also examine Akbar's land revenue system vis-a-vis ancient system. In ancient India, the share of the government was 1/6th, however, by the time of Akbar, this share had gone up to 1/3rd. This was an excessive demand because even in Akbar's times, the other Hindu sovereigns were taking 1/6th of the produce. Various historians justify this 1/3rd share arguing that Akbar reduced or abolished as many as 29 taxes including Jehat (Manufacturing tax).

Other Systems of Mughal Era

During the reign of Akbar and his successors three more systems of revenue assessment were prevalent viz. Batai or Gallabakshi System, Kankut System and Nasaq System.



Batai or Galla-bakhshi

Batai or Galla-bakhshi was a very old system which continued during the Mughal period. This was a simple method of crop-sharing in which the produce was arranged into heaps and divided into three shares, one of which was taken by the state. Under this system the peasant had the choice to pay in cash or kind.

Kankut System

Kankut system was also an old prevalent method in which, instead of actually dividing the grain (kan), an estimate (kut) was made on the basis of an actual inspection on the spot and one-third of the estimated produce was fixed as the state demand. So, it was a rough estimate of produce on the basis of actual inspection and past experience.

Nasaq System

Nasaq System was widely prevalent in the Mughal Empire, particularly in Bengal. In this system a rough calculation was made on the basis of the past revenue receipts of the peasants. It required no actual measurement, but the area was ascertained from the records.

Mansabdari System

Mansabdari System was a system introduced by Akbar for military administration and territorial commands (grant and revenue) to sustain parts of army. His experiences led him to conclude that rather than relying in the Irani and Turkish nobles, he should also include the Indian Muslims (Sheikhzadas), Afghans and Rajputs in the Mughal army.

The Mansabdari system was borrowed from the system followed in Mongolia. The Mughal officers whether Hindus or Muslims were granted territorial commands in return for the military service. They had to bring in some fixed number of **men-at-arms, horses and elephants** to the field and were rated as per the numbers which was known as *Zats*. So they were called Mansabdars of 10, 20, 100, and 1000 and so on.

- Mansingh was the first Mansabdar of 7000 zats and Bhagwan Das with 5000 zats enjoyed the privileged position in the Mansabdari system of Akbar.

But again this system was not perfect. *The greed of the Mansabdars ate all the grant or revenue and no money was left for the soldiers. There was a general corruption that the Mansabdars dressed their kith and kins, servants, dhobis and Malis as soldiers and registered them and send them back to do what they were doing earlier. The weavers and carpenters were hired to obtain a Mansab and become a **Crori**, and later not a trace of the horse brought by them would be found.*

Mughal Bureaucracy

The following were important features of Mughal Bureaucracy.

Office of Diwan

The office of the Diwan was the office of today's minister. It got strengthened in Akbar's reign. The



Chief Diwan was called Diwan-i-kul and was responsible for revenue and finance. He oversaw the imperial treasury and accounts. The Diwan had to submit a daily report to the emperor.

Mir Bakshi

The office of Mir Bakshi was in existence since Sultanate Era. He was to give appointments and salary letters to the Mansabs. The branding of the horses named Dagh was under his supervision. He was assisted by other subordinate Bakshis.

Mir Saman

Mir Saman was the in charge of Royal workshops (Karkhanas).

Sadr-us Sudur

Sadr-us Sudur was to protect the laws of the Shariat. Qazi-ul-quvvat was the chief judiciary.

Subedar

The governor of a province (Suba) was a **subedar** who was directly appointed by the emperor. The usual tenure of Subedar was 3 years.

Introduction of Persian in official works

There was one more feature of Raja Todarmal's system that virtually unified the country. It was enactment that all the government accounts should be kept in Persian, rather than Hindi. The study of Persian became necessary and it helped Hindus to learn the Persian language and the Muslims to go hand-in-hand with the "talented" Hindus.

Religious Policy

Akbar could not see the validity in the custom that the Hindus should pay more taxes than the Muslims. He also had an insatiable quest in the matters of religion and faith. He was deeply moved by the mystical doctrines of the Persian Sufis which was revealed to him by Faizi and his younger brother Abul Fazal.

Abul Fazal encouraged Akbar for debates on doctrinal and philosophical enquiries. Akbar displayed a curiosity in these discussions. The debate took place in the Ibadat Khana or Hall of Worship. The Ibadat Khana is now recognized to be the Diwan-i-Khas, which was founded in 1574 at the City of Fatehpur Sikri. It was opened for Sunni Muslims initially and was opened to all religions viz. Sufis, Shias, Christians, Zoroastrians, Hindus and Jains.

In the Ibadat Khana, initially there were disgusting arguments, some of which included a question over character of Hazarat Muhammad. These discussions, rather than clearing Akbar's doubts only increased the insatiable religious quest of the emperor.

These heated arguments, Akbar found that were only to defend the creeds of their own doctrines. In the emperor's eyes, there was a truth in all the faiths but none of the creed had the master key of the Supreme Being. In 1579, **Mahzar Nama** was declared by which Akbar pounced upon the dominance of the intolerant orthodox and allowed free development of a genuine religious spirit.



Mazhar Nama , which was actually an idea of the father of Abul Fazal and Faizi , set that the authority of the King was higher than that of a Muftahid (doctor of the faith) and if there is a variance, the emperor's decision should be binding on the Muslims of India. With this edict, Akbar's judgment was set above every legal and religious authority, so it was the promulgation of the **doctrine of Imperial infallibility**.

In 1581 the discussions at the Ibadat Khana were discontinued.

But quest of Akbar culminated in the **Tauhid-i-ialhi** (the divine monotheism) or **Din-i-Illahi**, the word Din was applied decades later. In 1582, this religious doctrine which combined mysticism, philosophy and nature worship was propounded by Akbar which **recognized no prophets**. Akbar declared himself the spiritual guide of his subjects. His religion Tauhid-i-illahi favored peace and tolerance. Tauhid-i-illahi prohibits lust, sensuality, slander and pride, considering them sins. Piety, prudence, abstinence and kindness are the core virtues of this religion. The soul is encouraged to purify itself through yearning of God. It respects celibacy and forbade slaughter of animals.

Elements of Din-i-Illahi

Din-i-Illahi was an eclectic doctrine that contained elements from very diverse fields. It overthrew almost every ceremonial rule whether Islam or Muslim, but took the good ideas from the Brahmins as well as from the missionaries and adopted "Sun" as a symbol of the worship of the creator. He started a new Illahi era. The new religion proposed:

- Forbade cow eating
- Indifference among all Indians
- Instituted worship of Sun as creator
- Incorporated the sacred fire adored by the Parsis
- Encouraged the Havana (hom sacrifice) of the Hindus.

A small band of the courtiers of Akbar including Faizi, Abul Fazal, Birbal and a few others immediately professed the new cult. But the rest remained indifferent if not hostile. This hotchpotch of philosophy, mysticism and nature worship of Akbar's divine faith practically died with him, but left footprints which partially contributed in creation of a nation, that was never a united nation before.

Fatehpur Sikri

Akbar was a devout visitor to the holy places and tombs of Muslim saints. One of his prime objects was to secure an heir to the throne. Up to the 14th year of reign, none of his children could survive and he was told to visit a holy man dwelling at Sikri village near Agra. This holy man Salim Chisti, who was one of the descendents of Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti of Ajmer promised & blessed Akbar a son. Akbar placed his wife Hura Kunwari or Jodha under the care of this saint. The Sikri, due to



frequent visits of the emperor became a cradle of development activities and numerous palaces were erected.

Salim Chisti set up a new noble Mosque in Sikri and the emperor's people built their palaces near this place. The Sikri village became the town of Fatehpur Sikri. It was blessing of this holy saint Salim Chisti, that Akbar's first son was safely ushered in this world. Akbar named this child as Salim, with due respect to the holy man. This offspring of the Great Mughal and a Rajput Princess later became Emperor Jahangir. The result of this auspicious event in Fatehpur Sikri was that Akbar showered all the taste and art of the age upon the adornment of this blessed town.

Thus, Fatehpur Sikri became the first planned city of the Mughals. It is also the place demonstrating the first heritage of the Mughal architecture, an amalgamation of the Persian, Hindu and Islamic architecture. It was virtually the capital of Akbar from 1571 to 1585. However, later it was abandoned mostly because of the problem of drinking water supply. Today, this beautiful city, though a great tourist destination, is a deserted. It was abandoned and ever since has remained the desolate and abandoned city. A few years back, some Jain & Hindu idols were found which were dated 1010 AD near the Birbal ka Tila site which have rise to a hot debate that this beautiful city was actually a great Hindu site, that was vandalized by the great Mughal. Whatever may be the truth, but palaces, tombs, mosques, baths, lake and everything at Fatehpur Sikri is a great Indian Heritage through which we recognize the grandeur and pomp of Akbar, greatest of Indian emperors.

Navratnas of Akbar

Akbar was an ardent admirer of art and learning. His court was full of many scholars and talented artists. The Nine most learned men in his court were known as Navratnas.

Abul Fazal

Abul Fazl was the chronicler of Akbarnama in three volumes over seven years, the third volume is known as the Ain-i-Akbari.

Faizi

Faizi was Abul Fazl's brother, the poet laureate of Akbar. The name of father of Abul Fazal and Faizi was Mubarak Nagori, a scholar in the philosophy and literature of Greece as well as in Islamic theology.

Miyan Tansen

Miyan Tansen was born as Tanna Mishra, in 1520. He was a disciple of Swami Haridas and later became disciple of Hazrat Muhammad Ghaus (Gwalior). He was a court musician with the prince of Mewar and later was recruited by Akbar as his court musician.

Raja Birbal

Raja Birbal, a poor Hindu Brahmin Maheshdas was appointed to the court of Akbar for his intelligence, and became the court jester. The name Raja Birbal was given by the Emperor. Birbal's



duties in Akbar's court were mostly military and administrative. He was also a poet and his collections under the pen name "Brahma" are preserved in Bharatpur Museum. Raja Birbal died in battle, in an attempt to subdue unrest amongst Afghani tribes in Northwest India.

Raja Todar Mal

Raja Todar Mal, a Hindu Khatri was Akbar's finance minister, who from 1560 onwards overhauled the revenue system in the kingdom.

Raja Man Singh

Raja Man Singh, the prince of Amber was a trusted general in Akbar's army and was the grandson of Akbar's father-in-law Bharmal. Raja Man Singh was the foremost (7000 Mansabdari) and ablest among Akbar's military commanders and assisted Akbar in many fronts including holding off advancing Hakim (Akbar's half-brother) in Lahore. He was also the Mughal viceroy of Afghanistan, led campaigns in Bihar, Orissa, Deccan and was also the viceroy of Bengal.

Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana

Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana, son of Akbar's trusted general and tutor. Best known for his Hindi couplets

Fakir Aziao-Din

Fakir Aziao-Din was a sufi mystic, and an advisor.

Mirza Aziz Koka

Mirza Aziz Koka aka. Khan-i-Azam or Kotaltash was one of the leading nobles and also foster brother of Akbar. He also served as Subedar of Gujarat.

About Mullah Do Piazza

We note here that most sources also mention the name of Mullah Do Piazza, an intelligence advisor to Akbar, as one of his nine gems. However, Mullah Do Piazza seems to be a fictional character.

Bhakti and Sufi Movements

Bhakti Movement

Bhakti movement was a spontaneous movement and there are two views on its origin. First view is that it originated in Tamil Nadu during the seventh century and then spread through Karnataka, Maharashtra and spread in almost all parts of Northern / Eastern India by 15th century. In Tamil Nadu, the movement was started by Vaishnava saints {Alvars} and Shaiva saints {Nayanars}. The Alvars sang praises of Vishnu as they moved from place to place. They established shrines such as Srirangam and spread the ideas of Vaishnavism. The compilation of their poems called Divya Prabandham developed into a powerful literature of Vaishnavas. The Alvars emphasized on Bhakti and gave reference to Bhagvata Puranas often, they were called the pioneers of Bhakti Movement. The same is applicable to the Saiva Nayanar poets. They travelled from places to places and sang songs in praise of Lord Shiva. The compilation of their songs called *Tirumurai*, developed into the

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scripture on Shaivism. Both the Vishnu and Shiva bhakti saints influenced north India and this Bhakti Movement spread from South to North.

The other view is that Bhakti Movement in South and North India developed in parallel. While the movement in South was centered on devotion to respective deity (Shiva or Vishnu); in North India, it came as a response to the arrival of Islam and subsequent Islamic rule. This view can be supported by argument that at the time of advent of Islam, Hinduism had degraded due to superstitions, Brahmanic dominance and complex rituals. Islam came with simple doctrine of brotherhood, equality and oneness of God. Its simple doctrine challenged the social pattern of society and most important result of this was emergence of Bhakti movement and Sufi Movement. Both of these emphasized that God was supreme, all men were equal and Bhakti or devotion to God was the way to achieve salvation.

However, Bhakti was not new to India. Bhakti was propounded in Upanishads and epics. However, the Jnana and Karma were on forefront of Hinduism back then. With the advent of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma went into background and devotion to God to achieve salvation became a pillar of religious practices of the people.

Key Principles

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The cardinal principle of Bhakti Cult was influencing devotion to a personal God, whose grace was the only means of attaining salvation or Mukti. It stressed the *idea of a personal God* and pointed out the absurdity of the caste system in the presence of God and the futility of external rites and ceremonies. It allowed both men and women to achieve salvation by Bhakti. The chief principles of the Bhakti Cult were the following:

Oneness of God and Indispensable Role of Guru

God is one, He alone should be worshipped. By following the path of true devotion (Bhakti) one can find salvation or (nijat, mukti). A true guru is indispensable for realizing God or attaining salvation.

Nirguna and Saguna God

The Bhakti saints emphasized on two ways of imaging the nature of the God viz. *Nirguna* and *Saguna*. Nirguna is the concept of a formless God, which has no attributes or quality. Saguna has form, attributes and quality. Both of these can be traced to the famous Vedic Hymn “*Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*” – Truth is one; sages call it many names. It is the same God, but is viewed from two perspectives. One is Nirguni, which is knowledge focussed and other is Saguni which is love-focused. Thus, the Nirguna poetry is Gyanshrayi (has roots in knowledge) while Saguna poetry is Premashrayi (has roots in love).

Those belonging to Saguna School worshiped the anthropomorphic manifestations of the divine being, particularly Rama and Krishna. Both Rama and Krishna were regarded as incarnation of God on earth. This school *remained committed to the scriptural authority of the Vedas* and *emphasised the need*

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of a human guru as religious mediator between God and man. The conformist saints like Ramananda and Chaitanya, espoused the doctrine of incarnation and worshipped the saguna Ram and Krishna respectively.

Those who followed Nirguna school conceived as Ishvara, the personal and purely spiritual aspect of godhead, beyond all names and forms (nama-rupa), and is to be apprehended only by inner (mystical) experience. This was *radical non-conformist* group, headed by Kabir, Nanak and Dadu. *Kabir was the most radical* of them. They created a religious school which *rejected the scriptural authority* and every form of idol worship and institutionalised rites and rituals. They fought against social discrimination and strove for Hindu-Muslim reconciliation.

Focus on Equality

All men are equal and there is no question of superiority or inferiority among men. There is brotherhood of mankind. The image worship and caste distinctions and class hatred were the worst enemies of man. They strongly denounced useless ceremonies and rituals and rites must be given up. They are unnecessary and do not help persons to attain salvation. Only the good actions of man can help him to attain salvation. Hence, much emphasis was laid on right actions in place of rituals. It is not necessary to leave this world and go to jungles to reach God. There should be religious toleration. There is only one God only the paths to reach there are different. Both men and women can get salvation by Bhakti and good deeds.

Major Impacts of Bhakti Movement

Surge in vernacular Literature

Bhakti Movement resulted in a surge in Hindu literature in regional / vernacular languages mainly in the form of devotional poems and music.

Development of Philosophies

The Bhakti Movement led to development of different philosophies within the Vedanta school, ranging from dvaita to advaita.

Devotional transformation of society and Inclusiveness

It led to devotional transformation of medieval Hindu society and pushed the early means to achieve salvation {Vedic rituals and ascetic lifestyles} to background and brought individualistic relationship with personally defined God on forefront. Thus, Salvation which was hitherto considered achievable only for Brahmins, Kshatriya and Vaishya castes, was not available to everyone. Thus, this movement provided inclusive path to spiritual salvation to women and members of Shudra and untouchable community. *In many ways, the impact was similar to that of Protestant Reformation of Christianity in Europe.* It was able to evoke shared religiosity, direct emotional attachment to divine and pursuit of spiritual satisfaction without overhead of institutional super structures.

New forms of Worship



Bhakti Movement led to emergence of new forms of spiritual leadership and social cohesion such as community singing, chanting together of deity names, festivals, pilgrimages, rituals etc. many of which are in vogue even today. It also led to new forms of voluntary social giving such as Seva {service}, Dana (Charity) and Community Kitchens {Bhandra / Langar etc.}. Some of the temples and Gurudwaras adopted social functions such as helping poor, providing education by establishing charity schools, charity hospitals, relief in the aftermath of natural disasters etc.

Bhakti Movement and India's Freedom Struggle

In a recent speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made a statement that “*Bhakti Movement acted as the foundation for the country's freedom struggle as the movement brought out of people an inherent quality to stand up and fight against evil forces.*” This statement can be lifted by UPSC to frame a nice question for Mains. You can discuss the statement in the light of the below facts:

- Gandhiji's favorite Bhajan “Vaishnava Jana To” which inspired his ideals of non-violence and social cause was written by Narsi Mehta, who was a Bhakti poet of 15th century
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- Sardar Patel, in the Bardoli Satyagraha had associated the landless Mali and Dubla communities with him in the freedom struggle by the imaginative use of their religious activities expressed through their bhakti movement, bhajan mandlis and symbols of their gods.
- Various reform movements in British India were directly influenced by Bhakti movement ideals.

In summary, Bhakti movement was essentially the phenomenal revolt of the marginalized segment at decentralizing the hierarchy imposed by the Brahminic domination. It rebelled against the caste ridden system of the south and fought against Vedic fanatics in north.

Notes on Bhakti Saints and Poets

Alvar Saints

The twelve Alvars were Tamil poet-saints, who lived between 6th and 9th centuries AD and espoused ‘emotional devotion’ or bhakti to Visnu-Krishna in their songs. The devotional songs of the Alvars were created during the Early medieval period of Tamil history and they helped can be called the pioneers of the Bhakti Movement in India.

The collection of their hymns is known as **Divya Prabandha**. All the saints were male except one named Andal.



Nayanar Saints

The 63 Nayanar saints were the *Shiva* devotional poets, who lived between 5th and 10th centuries. One saint “Appar” is said to have converted Pallava King Mahendravarman to Saivism. The compilation of their poetry / literature Tirumurai is also called “Tamil Veda”. These 63 Nayanar saints, along with the 12 Alvars are known as South India’s *75 Apostles of Bhakti movement*.

Ramanuja

Ramanuja was from the South and he taught in the language of the common people. His disciple was Ramananda who took his Guru’s message to the northern parts of India.

Ramananda

Ramananda was first Bhakti saint and founder of Bhakti Movement of northern India. He preached in Hindi, the language of the masses. He was a disciple of Ramanuja and a conformist saint.

Ramananda was born at Allahabad and educated at Varanasi. He preached at both these places. His 12 disciples included Anantananda, Sursurananda, Sukhanand, Naraharidāsa, Bhavanand, Bhagat Pipa, Kabir, Sen, Dhanna, Ravidas and *two women disciples* viz. Sursuri and Padyawati. Among them, Kabir was most radical and adopted non-conformist stand later on.

Kabir

He was a disciple of Ramananda. He is seen as one who balanced the life of a householder, a mystic and a tradesman. *Bijak, Sakhi Granth, Kabir Granthawali* and *Anurag Sagar* are compositions of Kabir. The hallmark of Kabir’s works consists of his two line couplets (Doha), which reflect his deep philosophical thinking.

We note here that Kabir was born in 1398 and had died in circa 1448 {not confirmed}. India was attacked by Timur in 1398 and after that Sayyids and Lodis ruled Delhi. He had died many years before arrival of Mughal.

Nanak

Guru Nanak Dev (October 20, 1469 – September 7, 1539) was the founder of Sikhism, and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus. Because of his close connection with Hazrat Sheikh Farid-ud-din Ganj Shakar, the Punjabi Sufi saint, Nanak Dev is also considered by many Muslims to be a Sufi, or adherent of Sufic tenets. He was born in Nankana Sahib in Punjab and died in Kartarpur.

Nanak, like Kabir, was also a radical saint who had strong faith Nirguna Brahma.

Chaitanya Maha Prabhu

Shri Krishna Chaitanya or Gauranga was born in Nabadwip in West Bengal. His original name was Vishvambhara Mishra. His mode of worshipping Krishna with ecstatic song and dance had a profound effect on Vaishnavism in Bengal.

At 22, he made a pilgrimage to Gaya to perform his father’s Shraddh. There he underwent a profound religious experience that transformed his outlook and personality. He returned to Nabadwip entirely indifferent to all worldly concerns.



A group of devotees soon gathered around Chaitanya and joined him in the congregational worship called Kirtan, which involves choral singing of the name and deeds of God, often accompanied by dance movements and culminating in states of trance. For Chaitanya, the legends of Krishna and his beloved, Radha, symbolized the highest expression of mutual love between God and the human soul. Bhakti (devotion) superseded all other forms of religious practice and was conceived as complete self-surrender to the divine will.

Although Chaitanya himself wrote no works on theology or religious practices, his selection of and charges to core disciples gave birth to a major Vaishnava sect in his own lifetime, called familiarly the Chaitanya Sampradaya or Gaudiya Sampradaya. Chaitanya's own frequent and prolonged experiences of religious rapture took their toll on his health; he himself diagnosed some of his seizures as epileptic.

Thus, the Gaudiya Sampradaya is an intensely emotional form of Hinduism which flourished from the sixteenth century, mainly in Bengal and eastern Orissa. It started from Nabadwip and spread. A theology for the movement was worked out by a group of Chaitanya's disciples who came to be known as the six gosvamins (religious teachers; literally lords of cows). At Chaitanya's request, this group of scholars remained in Vrindavan, near Mathura, the scene of the Krishna-Radha legends.

The six gosvamins turned out a voluminous religious and devotional literature in Sanskrit, defining the tenets of the movement and its ritual practices. Their reestablishment of the pilgrimage sites of Vrindavan and Mathura was an achievement of importance for all Vaishnavas (devotees of Lord Vishnu). Although Chaitanya appears to have been worshipped as an incarnation of Krishna even during his lifetime, the theory of his dual incarnation, as Krishna and Radha in one body, was systematically developed only by the later Bengali religious writers.

The present leaders of the sect, called gosvamins, are (with some exceptions) the lineal descendants of Chaitanya's early disciples and companions. The ascetics are known as vairagins (the dispassionate).

Among this group was the late A. C. Bhaktivedanta, known as Swami Prabhupada, who believed that Chaitanya's faith would benefit people throughout the world. He is the founder of the international Society for Krishna Consciousness or ISKCON, commonly called the "Hare Krishnas", which has attempted to establish the beliefs and practices of the Chaitanya Movement around the world.

Vallabhacharya

Another offshoot of the Bhakti Movement was the Krishna cult of Vallabhacharya. He belonged to a Telugu Brahmin family and was born in 1479 Banaras, when the family was on pilgrimage to the place. He was looked upon as prodigy. After finishing his education he went on his travels. At the court of Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar, he scored a triumph over the Saivas in public debate.



After visiting Mathura, Brindavan and other places he finally settled in Banaras. He composed many works including Bhagvata Tika, Subodhami. He taught the doctrine of *Suddha Advaita* which denied any distinction between God and individual soul and regarded Bhakti as the means for the soul to escape its bandage due to delusion. In spite of Vallabha's stress on self-control and renunciation, his doctrine came to be known as "*Pushti Marga*" for his successors laid stress on the physical side of Krishna's sports so that the creed came to be called as the "*Epicureanism of the East*".

He laid emphasis on the worship of Krishna as an incarnation of the Almighty God. He preached that there was no difference between the Atma and Parmatma (God). "It is by means of Bhakti alone that one can get salvation and merge with him."

Astachhap

Eight Disciples of Vallabhacharya are called the Ashta-chhap, meaning, eight reprints (of the Master). Surdas is considered to be the foremost among them. In the 16th century devotional renaissance in India, poems were sung when recited, and the great mystic poets of those times were often great musicians. Therefore, the poetry composed by the eight Ashta Chhap poets is meant to be sung to music. Its essence is rhythmic invocation, and its real meaning is best expressed when performed as part of devotional service.

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Mirabai

She was the great worshipper of Krishna, who preached in the common language of the people. Her songs are very popular all over India. It is Bhakti or devotion to Lord Krishna that can alone ensure salvation from the endless circle of births and deaths.

Raidas

Raidas or Ravidas was another Nirguna Bhakta disciple of Ramananda. He belonged to a family of leather workers.

Sufism

Sufism or *tasawwuf*, as it is called in Arabic, is generally understood by scholars and Sufis to be the inner, mystical, or psycho-spiritual dimension of Islam. Today, however, many Muslims and non-Muslims believe that Sufism is outside the sphere of Islam.

The Origin

The origins of Sufism can be traced to the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, whose teachings attracted a group of scholars who came to be called "*Ahle Suffe*", the People of Suffe, from their practice of sitting at the platform of the mosque of the Prophet in Medina. There they engaged themselves in discussions concerning the reality of 'Being', and in search of the inner path and devoted themselves to spiritual purification and meditation. These individuals were the founders of Sufism.



Fundamental principles

Sufis represented the inner side of the Islamic creed, which stresses on self-realisation, beautification of the soul through piety, righteousness and universal love for all. The Sufis consider that there is a particular Divine Attribute that dominates the being of every prophet and saint, such that they can be said to be the incarnation of that attribute. The aim of Sufism is the cultivation of Perfect Beings who are mirrors reflecting the Divine Names and Attributes.

Sufism and Communal Harmony

In India, Sufism helped in maintaining communal harmony and social stability by advocating religious tolerance and by borrowing spiritual techniques and practices from other religions. Sufism has adapted extensively from the Vedanta school of the Hindu philosophy.

In Sufism, a perfect being is also called a **Wali** (saint), a word that literally means 'sincere friend'. The superstructure of Sufism is built upon the concept of teacher, **pir** or **murshid**.

The cardinal doctrines of the Sufism included

1. Complete surrender to the will of God
2. Annihilation of the self
3. Becoming a perfect person

These three cardinal principles altogether make the **Doctrine of Fana** which means *annihilation of human attributes through Union with God*.

Sufism had succeeded in inculcating the sentiments of fraternity, equality and equity, coupled with sense of service to humanity, in the followers, irrespective of race, community, caste, creed and colour.

Sama

The musical and ecstatic aspect of Sufism is called Sama. This is a particular kind of devotional dance akin to Kirtana and was introduced by Jalaluddin Rumi. The Sufi, while being spiritually enraptured, gives the attention of his or her heart to the Beloved. With particular movements and often special and rhythmical music, he engages in the selfless remembrance of God.

Sufis identify two types of Sama poetry:

- First praising God (this is called Hamd), Prophet (this is called Naat) and the Sufi saints (this is called)
- The second focussing on spiritual emotion or mystical love, ecstatic states and on separation and union.

The Sama poetry is mostly sung in the form of Qawwali. Music of Sama is set within metric framework, accompanied by Dholak, Tabla, Sarangi, Harmonium and Sitar.



Prelims Model Questions

1. With reference to the Delhi Sultanate, which among the following observations is / are correct?

1. Delhi Sultanate was a theocracy based on tenets of Islam
2. Delhi Sultanate functioned according to wisdom and political pragmatism of the rulers
3. The spirit of religious toleration prevailed within the common people

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [B] Only 2 & 3

1. Delhi Sultanate was a theocracy based on tenets of Islam

This is a wrong statement. It is true that the influence of Islamic thinking and tradition definitely had a bearing on the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, but it was the need of balancing different dominant groups within the ruling elite and the local challenges which primarily governed the decision making process. The state in Delhi Sultanate was not a theocracy because shara as defined by the clergy was hardly the core concern of the sultans. Though, the Sultanate was formally Islamic in character, yet it was based not on social equality, but on hierarchy. In practice, there was little distinction between the lives of the ordinary people, Hindu or Muslim'.

2. Delhi Sultanate functioned according to wisdom and political pragmatism of the rulers

This is a correct statement. In the absence of any written law or constitution the state in the Delhi Sultanate functioned according to wisdom and political pragmatism of the rulers.

3. The spirit of religious toleration prevailed within the common people

Growth of Sufism and Bhakti movements during the rule of the Delhi Sultanate indicates the spirit of toleration (among people) prevailing within the state.

2. Who among the following were preaching in India before Delhi Sultanate fell and Mughals rose to power?

1. Dadu Dayal
2. Kabir
3. Ramananda
4. Guru Nanak

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] 1, 2 & 3



[B] 2 & 3

[C] 2, 3 & 4

[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [C] 2, 3 & 4

Delhi sultanate came to an end in India in 1526 with the defeat of Ibrahim Lodi. Dadu Dayal was born in 1544.

3. Consider the following observations with respect to early Delhi Sultanate period in India:
1. During the Delhi Sultanate, Islam propagated in India through the sword only
 2. Hindus occupied an important role in foreign as well as domestic trade
 3. The Hindu villages remained small autonomous republics even during the early Delhi Sultanate period

Which among the above observations is / are correct?

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1 & 3

[C] Only 2 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

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Answer: [C] Only 2 & 3

4. For the first time, a Famine-code was formulated in the Delhi Sultanate during the reign of ___?

[A] Slaves

[B] Tughlaqs

[C] Khaljis

[D] Lodhis

Answer: [B] Tughlaqs

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq had for the first time formulated 'famine-code' to provide relief to famine-affected people.

5. Which among the following was / were the main factors that went into the making of the administrative policy and organization of the Delhi Sultanate?
1. Model of the government of the Caliph and Persian Government
 2. The already existing machinery of the government
 3. Practices and customs of the race to which Sultan belonged to

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3



[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

All are correct statements

6. During the reign of Alauddin Khilji, the social gatherings, including parties; marriages between the families of the nobles, etc. could not take place without the Sultan's permission. What was the major objective of such restriction?

[A] To force the nobles to follow Sharia Law

[B] A preventive measure for rebellions

[C] Control the downgrading economy of the sultanate

[D] Check lavish expenses

Answer: [B] A preventive measure for rebellions

Three successive rebellions- those of Akat Khan of Malik Umar and Mangu Khan, and of Haji or Sidi Maula- within a brief period convinced the Sultan to take strong measures for the prevention of such disturbances in the future. He took radical preventive measures. The first blow was aimed at accumulation of wealth by nobles and officials. All religious endowments and grants of lands (waqf and inam) by the state were revoked. Secondly, an elaborate system of espionage was organized. Thirdly, the sale and use of liquor and intoxicants was completely prohibited in Delhi. Fourth restrictions and strong checks were put on social gatherings, including parties; marriages between the families of the nobles, etc. could not take place without the Sultan's permission. He placed numerous curbs on their social mobility and interrelationships.

7. The correct meaning of the Doctrine of Fana of the Sufi mystiques is __:

[A] Inflaming the fire of love to achieve ecstasy

[B] Communication with God

[C] Transcendental meditation to achieve God

[D] Annihilation of human attributes through Union with God

Answer: [D] Annihilation of human attributes through Union with God

8. Which among the following is / are cardinal doctrines of the Sufism?

1. Complete surrender to the will of God

2. Annihilation of the self

3. Becoming a perfect person

4. Rationalist Philosophy

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:



- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2, 3 & 4
- [C] Only 1, 2 & 3
- [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [C] Only 1, 2 & 3

Fourth Choice in the above question is to be opted out. Rationalist Philosophy was a feature of the society against which Sufis reacted by isolated themselves from society

9. With reference to the “Chisti Order”, which among the following statements is / are correct?
1. Chishti Order originated in a place which is currently located in modern Afghanistan
 2. Chishti Order was founded by Moinuddin Chishti
 3. Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki was a saint of Chisti order

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] 1, 2 & 3 are correct
- [B] Only 1 & 2 are correct
- [C] Only 2 & 3 are correct
- [D] Only 1 & 3 are correct

Answer: [D] Only 1 & 3 are correct

The Chishti Order is a Sufi order which arose from Chisht, a small town near Herat, in western Afghanistan. It was founded by Abu Ishaq Shami in about 930 CE (Christian Era). Before returning to western Asia he trained and deputed the son of local emir, Abu Ahmad Abdal, under whose leadership the Chishtiya flourished as a regional mystical order. Moinuddin Chishti is credited with laying its foundations in India. Other famous saints of the Chishti Order are Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, Fariduddin Ganjshakar, Nizamuddin Auliya and Alauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir Kalyari.

10. Various tenets of Din-i Ilahi were borrowed from___:
1. Sufism / Islamic Mysticism
 2. Hinduism
 3. Jainism
 4. Zoroastrianism
 5. Roman Catholicism

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 1, 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1, 2, 3 & 4



[D] 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

The Din-i Ilahi was essentially an ethical system, prohibiting such sins as lust, sensuality, slander, and pride and enjoining the virtues of piety, prudence, abstinence, and kindness. The soul was encouraged to purify itself through its yearning for God (a tenet of Sufism, Islamic mysticism), celibacy was condoned (as in Roman Catholicism), and the slaughter of animals was forbidden (as in Jainism). There were no sacred scriptures or a priestly hierarchy in the Din-i Ilahi. In its ritual, it borrowed heavily from Zoroastrianism, making light (sun and fire) an object of divine worship and reciting, as in Hinduism, the 1,000 Sanskrit names of the sun.

11. Consider the following Bhakti saints from medieval period:

1. Surdas
2. Kabir
3. Tulsidas
4. Raidas

Which of the above was/were monotheist Bhakti saints?

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[A] 1 and 4 Only

[B] 2 and 3 Only

[C] 1 and 3 Only

[D] 2 and 4 Only

Answer: [D] 2 and 4 Only

Tulsidas and Surdas were Vaishnava Bhakti saints. Monotheist Bhakti was nirgun Bhakti whereas Vaishnava Bhakti was sagun Bhakti in nature. Other monotheist saint include Guru Nanak

12. Pushti marg:

1. was founded by Shankaracharya
2. gave a great base to Krishna Bhakti

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

[A] 1 Only

[B] 2 Only

[C] Both 1 and 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2



Answer: [B] 2 Only

First statement is wrong because Pushti marg was founded by Vallabhacharya

13. During the medieval India, the trade and commerce was improved by Shershah Suri by ____:
1. Renovating the grand trunk road
 2. Building up sarais for the travellers and merchants to stay at
 3. Making the provincial governors and other officials responsible for the protection of merchants going through their territory

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

14. Which among the following worked as determinants of castes in early medieval society of India?

1. Varna

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2. Occupation

3. Place of residence

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3