

Chapter: 11

New Kings and kingdoms

PART - I

Many new dynasties emerged after the seventh century. Map 1 shows the major ruling dynasties in different parts of the subcontinent between the seventh and twelfth centuries.

Map 1: Major kingdoms during seventh-twelfth centuries



- Locate the Gurjara-Pratiharas, Rashtrakutas, Palas, Cholas and Chahamanas (Chauhans).
- Can you identify the present day states over which they exercised control?

The Emergence of New Dynasties

By the seventh century, there were big landlords or warrior chiefs in different regions of the subcontinent. Existing kings often acknowledged them as their subordinates or *samanthas*. They were expected to bring gifts for their kings or overlords, be present at their courts and provide them with military support. As *samanthas* gained power and wealth, they declared themselves to be *maha-samantha*, *maha mandaleshvvara* (the great lord of a “circle” or region) and so on. Sometimes they asserted their independence from their overlords.

One such instance was that of the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan. Initially they were subordinate to the Chalukyas



Fig 11.1 Wall relief from Cave 15, Ellora, showing Vishnu as Narasimha, the man-lion. It is a work of the Rashtrakuta period

of Karnataka. In the mid-eighth century, Dantidurga, a Rashtrakuta chief, overthrew his Chalukya overlord and performed a ritual called *hiranya-garbha* (literally, the golden womb). When this ritual was performed with the help of brahmins, it was thought to lead to the “rebirth” of the sacrificer as a Kshatriya, even if he was not one by birth.

- Do you think being born as a *Kshatriya* was important in order to become a ruler during this period?

In other cases, men from enterprising families used their military skills to carve out kingdoms. For instance, the Kadamba Mayurasharman and the Gurjara-Pratihara Harichandra were brahmins who gave up their traditional professions and took to arms, successfully establishing

kingdoms in Karnataka and Rajasthan respectively.

Prashastis and Land Grants

The invocation part of an inscription is *Prashasti*. *Prashastis* contain details about the ruling family such as their predecessors and the period to which they belonged. They also contain exaggerated accounts of rulers and their achievements. But they tell us how rulers wanted to depict themselves as, for example valiant, victorious warriors. These were composed by learned brahmins, who occasionally helped in the administration.

The “achievements” of Nagabhata

Many rulers described their achievements in *prashastis*.

One *prashasti*, written in Sanskrit and found in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, describes the exploits of Nagabhata, a Pratihara king, as follows:

The kings of Andhra, Saindhava (Sind), Vidarbha (part of Maharashtra) and Kalinga (part of Odisha) fell before him Even as a prince ... he won a war over Chakrayudha (the ruler of Kanauj) ...

He defeated the king of Vanga (part of Bengal), Anarta (part of Gujarat), Malva (part of Madhya Pradesh), Kirata (forest peoples), Turushka (Turks), Vatsa, Matsya (both kingdoms in north India)

Find these areas in Map 1.



Fig 11.2 This is a set of copper plates recording a grant of land made by a ruler in the ninth century, written partly in Sanskrit and partly in Tamil. The ring holding the plates together is secured with the royal seal, to indicate that this is an authentic document

Kings often rewarded brahmins by grants of land. These were recorded on copper plates, which were given to those who received the land.

In the twelfth century a long Sanskrit poem containing the history of kings who ruled over Kashmir, was composed by an author named Kalhana. He used a variety of sources, including inscriptions, documents, eyewitness accounts and earlier histories, to write his account. Unlike the writers of *prashastis*, he was often critical about rulers and their policies.

What was given with the land?

This is a part of the Tamil section of a land grant given by the Cholas:

We have demarcated the boundaries of the land by making earthen embankments, as well as by planting thorny bushes.

This is what the land contains: fruit-bearing trees, water, land, gardens and orchards, trees, wells, open spaces, pasture-land, a village, anthills, platforms, canals, ditches, rivers, silt-laden land, tanks, granaries, fish ponds, bee hives, and deep lakes.

He who receives the land can collect taxes from it. He can collect the taxes imposed by judicial officers as fines, and the tax on betel- leaves, woven cloth, vehicles, etc.

He can build large rooms, with upper storeys made of baked bricks, he can get large and small wells dug, he can plant trees and thorny bushes, if necessary, he can get canals constructed for irrigation. He should ensure that water is not wasted, and that embankments are built.

- List all the possible sources of irrigation mentioned in the inscription, and discuss how they might have been used.

Administration in the Kingdoms

Many of these new kings adopted high-sounding titles such as *maharaja-adhiraja* (great king, overlord of kings), *tribhuvana-chakravarti* (lord of the three worlds) and so on. However, in spite of such claims, they often shared power with their *samanthas* as well as with associations of peasants, traders and brahmins.

In each of these kingdoms, resources were obtained from the producers – that is, peasants, cattle-keepers, artisans – who were often persuaded or compelled to surrender a part of what they produced. Sometimes these were claimed as “rent” due to a lord who asserted that he owned the land. Revenue was also collected from traders.

These resources were used to finance the king’s establishment, as well as for the construction of temples and forts. They were also used to fight wars, which were in turn expected to lead to the acquisition of wealth in the form of plunder, and access to land as well as trade routes.

The functionaries for collecting revenue were generally recruited from influential families, and positions were often hereditary. This was true about the army as well. In many cases, close relatives of the king held these positions.

- In what ways was this form of administration different from the present day system?

Warfare for Wealth

You may have noticed that each of these ruling dynasties was based in a specific region. At the same time, they tried to control other areas. One particularly prized area was the city of Kanauj in the Ganga valley. For centuries, rulers belonging to the Gurjara-Pratihara, Rashtrakuta and Pala dynasties fought for control over Kanauj. As there were three “parties” in this long-drawn conflict, historians often describe it as the “tripartite struggle”.

Look at Map 1 and suggest reasons why the rulers wanted to control Kanauj and the Ganga valley.

Mahmud Ghazni :

One of the rulers, *Sultan* Mahmud of Ghazni, Afghanistan, ruled from 997 AD to 1030 AD, and extended control over parts of Central Asia, Iran and the north-western part of the subcontinent. He raided the subcontinent almost every year – his targets were wealthy temples, including that of Somnath, Gujarat. Much of the wealth Mahmud carried away was used to create a splendid capital city at Ghazni.

Sultan Mahmud was also interested in finding out more about the people he conquered, and entrusted a scholar named al-Biruni to write an

account of the subcontinent. This Arabic work, known as the *Kitab al-Hind*, is an important source for historians. Al-Biruni consulted Sanskrit scholars to prepare this account.

Chahamanas

Chahamanas, later known as the Chauhans, ruled over the region around Delhi and Ajmer. They attempted to expand their control to the west and the east, where they were opposed by the Chalukyas of Gujarat and the Gahadavalas of western Uttar Pradesh. The best-known Chahamanana ruler was Prithviraja III (1168 AD-1192 AD), who defeated an Afghan ruler named Sultan Muhammad Ghori in 1191 AD, but lost to him the very next year, in 1192 AD.

Look at Map 1 again and discuss why the Chahamanas may have wanted to expand their territories.

PART - II

The Cholas

Let us have a look at South India now.

Chola rule is one of the well documented history in the South. Let us see how they became successful rulers.

Map 2: The Chola kingdom and its neighbours



From Uraiyur to Thanjavur

How did the Cholas rise to power? A minor chiefly-family known as the Muttaraiyar held power in the Kaveri delta. They were subordinates to the Pallava kings of Kanchipuram. Vijayalaya, who belonged to the ancient chiefly-family of the Cholas from Uraiyur, captured the delta from the Muttaraiyar in the middle of the ninth century. He built the town of Thanjavur and a temple for goddess Nishumbhasudini there.

The successors of Vijayalaya conquered neighbouring regions and the kingdom grew in size and power. The Pandyan and the Pallava territories to the south and north were made part of this kingdom. Rajaraja I, considered the most powerful Chola ruler,



Fig 11.3 The temple at Gangaikonda- Cholapuram. Notice the way in which the roof tapers. Also, look at the elaborate stone sculptures used to decorate the outer walls

became the king in 985 AD and expanded his control over most of these areas. He also reorganised the administration of the empire. Rajaraja's son Rajendra I continued his policies and even raided the Ganga valley, Sri Lanka and countries of Southeast Asia, developing a navy for these expeditions.

Splendid Temples and Bronze Sculpture

The big temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikonda-Cholapuram, built by Rajaraja and Rajendra, are architectural and sculptural marvels. Chola temples often became the nuclei of settlements which grew around them. These were centres of craft production. Temples were also

endowed with land by rulers as well as by others. The produce of this land went into maintaining all the specialists who worked at the temple and very often lived near it – priests, garland makers, cooks, sweepers, musicians, dancers, etc. In other words, temples were not only places of worship, but also the hub of economic, social and cultural life as well.



Fig 11.4 A Chola bronze sculpture.
Notice how carefully it is decorated

Amongst the crafts associated with temples, the making of bronze images was the most distinctive. Chola bronze images are considered to be the finest in the world. While most images were of deities, some images of devotees were made as well.

Agriculture and Irrigation

Many of the achievements of the Cholas were made possible through new developments in agriculture. Look at Map 2 again. Notice that the river Kaveri branches off into several small streams before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. These streams overflow frequently, depositing fertile soil on their banks. Water from the streams also provides the necessary moisture for agriculture, particularly the cultivation of rice.



Fig 11.5 A ninth century sluice gate in Tamil Nadu. It regulated the outflow of water from a tank into the channels that irrigated the fields

Although agriculture had developed earlier in other parts of Tamil Nadu, it was only from the fifth or sixth century that this area was opened up for large-scale cultivation. Forests had to be cleared in some regions; land had to be levelled in other areas. In the delta region embankments had to be built to prevent flooding and canals had to be constructed to carry water to the fields. In many areas, two crops were grown in a year.

In many cases, it was necessary to water crops artificially. A variety of methods were used for irrigation. In some areas wells were dug. In other places, huge tanks were constructed to collect rainwater. Remember that irrigation works require planning – organising labour and resources, maintaining these works and deciding on how water is to be shared. Most of the new rulers, as well as people living in villages, took an active interest in these activities.

The Administration of the Empire

How was the administration organised? The king had a council of ministers to help him. He had a strong army and navy. The empire was divided into *mandalams* or provinces, further sub-divided into *valanadus* and *nadus*.

Settlements of peasants, known as *ur*, became prosperous with the spread of irrigated agriculture. Groups of such villages formed larger units called *nadu*. The village council and the *nadu* performed several administrative functions including dispensing justice and collecting taxes.

Rich peasants of the Vellala caste exercised considerable control over the affairs of the *nadu* under the supervision of the central Chola government. The Chola kings gave some rich landowners titles like *muvendavelan* (a *velan* or peasant serving three kings), *araiyar* (chief), etc. as markers of respect, and entrusted them with important offices of the state at the centre.

Types of land

Chola inscriptions mention several categories of land:

vellanvagai

land of non-brahmin proprietors

brahmadeya

land gifted to brahmins

shalabhoga

land for the maintenance of a school

devadana, tirunamattukkani

land gifted to temples

pallichchhandam

land donated to Jaina institutions

We have seen that brahmins often received land grants or *brahmadeya*. As a result, a large number of Brahmana settlements emerged in the Kaveri valley as in other parts of south India.

Each *brahmadeya* was looked after by an assembly or *sabha* of prominent Brahmana landholders. These assemblies worked very efficiently. Their decisions were recorded in detail in inscriptions, often on the stone walls of temples. Associations of traders known as *nagarams* also occasionally performed administrative functions in towns.

Inscriptions from Uttaramerur in Chingelput district, Tamil Nadu, provide details of the way in which the *sabha* was organised. The *sabha* had separate committees to look after irrigation works, gardens, temples, etc. Names of those eligible to be members of these committees were written on small tickets of palm leaf; these tickets were put into an earthenware pot, from which a young boy was asked to take out the tickets, one by one for each committee.

Inscriptions and texts

Who could be a member of a *sabha*? The Uttaramerur inscription lays down:

All those who wish to become members of the *sabha* should be owners of land from which land revenue is collected.

They should have their own homes.

They should be between 35 and 70 years of age.

They should have the knowledge of the Vedas.

They should be well-versed in administrative matters and be honest.

If anyone has been a member of any committee in the last three years, he cannot become a member of another committee.

Anyone who has not submitted his accounts, including his relatives, cannot contest the elections.

◦ Do you think women participated in these assemblies? In your view, are lotteries useful for choosing members of committees?

While inscriptions tell us about kings and powerful men, here is an excerpt from the *Periyapuranam*, a twelfth-century Tamil work, which informs us about the lives of ordinary men and women.

On the outskirts of Adanur was a small hamlet of *Pulaiyas*, studded with small huts under old thatches and inhabited by agrarian labourers engaged in menial occupations. In the thresholds of the huts covered with strips of leather, little chickens moved about in groups; dark children who wore bracelets of black iron were prancing about, carrying little puppies ... In the shade of the *marudu* (arjuna) trees, a female labourer put her baby to sleep on a sheet of leather; there were mango trees from whose branches drums were hanging; and under the coconut palms, in little hollows on the ground, tiny-headed female dogs lay after whelping. The red-crested cocks crowed before dawn calling the brawny *Pulaiyar* (plural) to their day's work; and by day, under the shade of the *kanji* tree spread the voice of the wavy-haired *Pulaiya* women singing as they were husking paddy ...

≡ Describe all the activities that were taking place in the village.

Key words :

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. <i>Samantha</i> | 2. Temple | 3. Nadu |
| 4. Sabha | 5. Kingdom | 6. Sultan |

Project:

1. Look at Map 1 and find out whether there were any kingdoms in Andhra Pradesh.
2. Compare the temple shown in this chapter with any present-day temple in your neighbourhood
3. Find out more about taxes that are collected at present. Are these in cash, kind, or labour services?

IMPROVE YOUR LEARNING

1. Who were the parties involved in the "tripartite struggle"? AS₁
2. What were the qualifications to be a member of a committee of the *sabha* in the Chola empire? AS₁
3. What were the two major cities under the control of the Chahamanas? AS₁
4. How did the Rashtrakutas become powerful? AS₁
5. What did the new dynasties do to gain acceptance? AS₁
6. What kind of irrigation works were developed in the Tamil region? AS₁
7. What were the activities associated with Chola temples? AS₁
8. Contrast the "elections" in Uttaramerur with the present-day panchayat elections. AS₄
9. Collect the pictures of ancient temples and make an album. AS₃
10. Read the first two paragraphs under the title 'Agriculture and Irrigation' from pages 104 and 105 and comment on them. AS₂

Chapter: 12

The Kakatiyas - Emergence of a Regional Kingdom

You may have listened to many ballads and stories about the bravery and martial skill of Brahma Naidu and Balachandrudu. You may have also participated in *Jataras* dedicated to Sammakka and Sarakka - they fought against armies of kings to protect the rights of the tribal people. You might have enjoyed the popular story of Katama Raju who fought with the Kings of Nellore in defence of the right of animal herders.

- Find out from your parents and elders the stories of the Palnati Virulu, Sammakka-Sarakka and Katama Raju. Relate these stories in the class.

All these stories relate to the period from 1000 to 1350 AD. This was a very important period in our history. In the previous chapter, we read about the new ruling families that emerged all over India. These rulers sought to establish small kingdoms over agricultural villages and to enable their herder-followers to settle down as agriculturalists. These ambitious warriors and kings fought against each other constantly. Amidst this situation arose the Kakatiya kingdom in Warangal.

This was also the time when the first books in Telugu were written. According to tradition, Srimad-Andhra Mahabharatam is the first poetic work in Telugu which was composed by *Kavitrayamu*, the Trinity of Poets - Nannaya, Tikkana and Erra Pragada between 1000 and 1400 AD.

We have a large number of inscriptions which tell us about the activities of the kings, queens, chiefs, farmers, herders and traders. We also have a number of books written about them in Sanskrit and Telugu. Vidyanatha wrote *Prathaparudra Yashobhushanam* during the Kakatiya rule. Some works were also written after the end of their rule (Vinukonda Vallabharaya's *Kridabhiramamu*, Ekamranatha's *Prataparudra Charitramu*).



Fig 12.1 Kirti Torana entrance of Swayambhu Siva Temple - built by Kakatiya kings in Warangal.

- Having read the above passage, can you tell which are the two important sources of information about the Kakatiya kings?

According to inscriptions and literature, the Kakatiyas traced their lineage to certain Durjaya. They also adopted Telugu as the favoured language of the court. Most of their inscriptions are in Telugu and they called themselves as 'Andhra Rajas'. They also sought to bring together the three regions in which Telugu was spoken - the coastal regions, Telangana region and Rayalaseema region. In this manner the Kakatiya kings tried to build a Telugu regional consciousness. To some extent, they were also successful as even to this day they are remembered fondly in this region.

Important Kakatiya Rulers

Prola II (1116 - 1157AD)

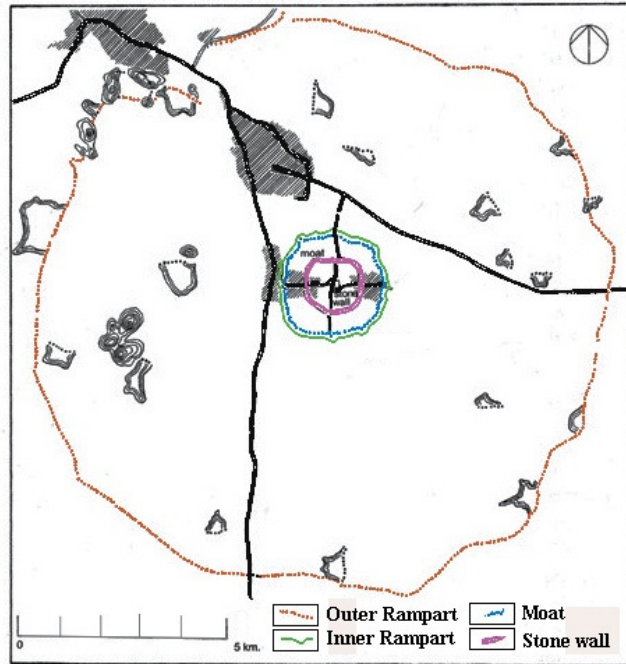
Rudradeva (1158 - 1195AD)

Ganapati Deva (1199 - 1262AD)

Rudramadevi (1262 - 1289AD)

Prataparudra (1289 - 1323AD)

The early members of the dynasty began their career as warriors and *samanthas* of Rashtrakuta and Chalukya kings who were ruling in Karnataka. They were holding the posts of village heads called *Rattadi* and through their military skills became army chiefs, *samanthas* etc. and gained control over Anmakonda in Telangana. The Kakatiyas emerged as independent rulers after the fall of Western Chalukyas.



Map 1: Warangal Fort

During Rudradeva's rule (1158-1195 AD), the capital was shifted from Anmakonda to Orugallu (Warangal). The new city was laid out with a plan to accommodate the growing city population and to address the needs of an imperial capital. Rudradeva built a big fort, a tank and a temple called Thousand Pillared Temple in Anmakonda.

Look at the map of Warangal Fort. You can see an outer fort wall with four gates. This protected agricultural lands and several water tanks within it. In this area were huts of many artisans like basket weavers. After crossing these, we come to the centre where there was another moat and a fort wall made of mud.

Further towards the centre was another moat and fort wall made of stone. The city buildings and palaces were within this stone wall. It had four gates opening out into east, west, north and south. From each gate, a main road went to the centre of the city, where there was a temple of Svayambhu Siva. This temple too had four gates in the four directions.

The city itself was divided into several quarters or *vadas*. People of a profession lived in their own distinct *vadas*.

- o Can you draw a rough map of your village or town and compare it with the map of Orugallu?
- o What are the main differences between modern towns and the cities of the past, like Orugallu?
- o Use the scale shown on the map to find out the breadth of the outer wall from East to West.
- o Also, find out the breadth of the city within the inner stone wall from north to south.
- o If you have ever been to Warangal, describe it to your classmates.
- o Svayambhu Siva was the family god of the Kakatiyas. Why do you think they built the temple and not a palace or a market place in the middle of the city?

As Kakatiya kings became powerful, they were able to persuade many chiefs to accept them as their Kings. The Kakatiyas protected their *samantha* subordinates from other warriors and chiefs. Also, they took the *samanthas* with them when they went to conquer other kingdoms. Many of the *samantha* chiefs attempted to become independent but the Kakatiya kings sent armies to subdue them.

Rudrama Devi

Have you heard of a brave woman ruler by the name of Rudramadevi? She was a powerful and successful ruler who impressed one and all with her abilities. Rudramadevi ruled from Orugallu (modern Warangal) and belonged to the famous Kakatiya family. She ruled from 1262 AD to 1289 AD for nearly 27 years. In our country, there have been very few women rulers. In distant Delhi too, there was a woman ruler called Raziya Sultana some years before. But her nobles did not like to be ruled by a woman and had killed her. A famous traveller from Italy, called Marco Polo visited Rudramadevi's kingdom and he says that she was fearless, dressed herself like a man and rode horses with ease.



Fig 12.2 Rudramadevi - Riding the Horse.

In fact, in her inscriptions Rudramadevi calls herself as Rudradeva Maharaja. Like Raziya Sultana, she too faced the opposition of many important chiefs who had been under her father, but Rudramadevi succeeded in subduing them. Rudrama and her grandson Prataparudra faced many revolts and took several steps to control these chiefs.



Fig 12.3 A segment of the inner earthen wall with its (dry) moat at right



Fig 12.4 Aerial view of the eastern gateway in the city's inner stone wall, showing the 'bent entrance' (Vankadari) and open courtyard (anganam). The doorway at right is the 'great city gate' leading to the royal avenue (raja margambu)

Nayankara System

Rudramadevi and Prataparudra encouraged several skilled warriors who were not from any powerful family but were very loyal to the queen and the king. They gave them high positions and the title of Nayaka. They were given several villages from where they could collect taxes. These villages were called their Nayankara. Each nayaka had to maintain a stipulated amount of army, from the income they get from the nayankara, for the service of the king. But they did not keep these villages permanently as they could be transferred at the will of the king to a new place. These Nayakas depended upon the queen or the king and remained loyal to them. They were also probably used to subdue the rebellious chiefs. This arrangement was called Nayankara system.

Read here a portion of an inscription by a nayaka of Rudramadevi :

"In the year (1270 AD) on the occasion of Sankranti, Bollinayaka the guardian of the gate for Kakatiya Rudradeva Maharaja, gave ten measures of land to the temple servants of God Kalyana Keshava of Kranja village in his own nayankaramu for the merit of his master Rudradeva Maharaja."

- o Why do you think Bollinayaka was calling Rudramadevi as Rudradeva Maharaja?

Encouragement to Agriculture and Temples

The Kakatiyas brought large tracts of land under cultivation by building tanks and digging wells. Apart from members of the royal family

and other feudal families the rich sections of the society like merchants and artisans participated in expanding



Fig 12.5 The remains of the great temple dedicated to Siva

agriculture through construction of tanks. This enabled the extension of cultivation in the difficult terrains of Telangana and Rayalaseema.

The Kakatiyas also extensively patronised temples by donating to them. Women members of royal family like Muppamamba, and Mailamma made land grants. Women of other rich sections also made gifts of land, tanks, cash, cattle, jewellery, etc., to temples and brahmins. By promoting agriculture, they derived income in the form of taxes and agriculture produce.

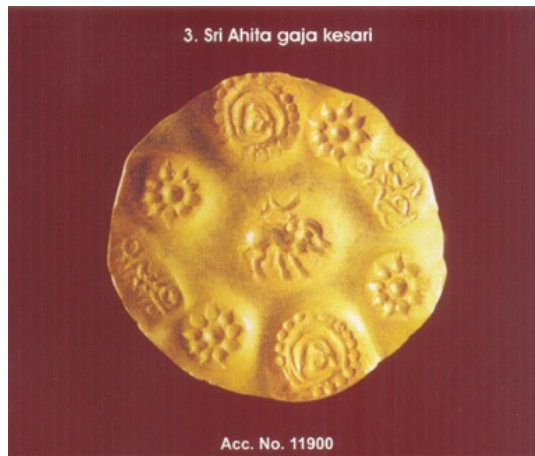


Fig 12.6 Gold coin issued by Kakatiyas

Trade

Warriors, chiefs and Kings derived much of their income by taxing traders, especially those who engaged in overseas trade from the ports. Read a portion of an inscription issued by Kakatiya king Ganapatideva in a place called Motupalli:



12.7 Motupalli Pillar Inscription

“This Abhaya Shasana has been granted by Ganapatideva to sea traders going back and forth to all continents, countries and towns. In the past, kings forcibly seized all the cargo such as gold, elephants, horses, jewels, etc. when sea going vessels were caught in storms, wrecked and cast on shore. But We for the sake of our reputation and punya and out of pity for those who have incurred the grave risk of a sea voyage, give up all but the customary tax.”

The inscription goes on to mention the tax he would collect from the traders on different articles of trade.

- o How did the kings treat the traders earlier?
- o What was the guarantee Ganapatideva was giving them?
- o Why do you think he was giving this protection to the traders?

Marco Polo, who visited one of these ports says, that the exports were diamonds and the best and the most delicate cloth, which looked like the tissue of a spider’s web. He further says, “There is neither a king nor a queen in the world who would not be glad to wear them”.

The End of the Kakatiyas

Sometime around 1190 AD a new kingdom was established in Delhi. The new kings were called Sultans and they originally came from Turkistan. They had a powerful army and were able to defeat most of the kings of north India and the Deccan before long. Sultan Mohammad bin Tugluq was able to defeat Kakatiya Prataparudra in 1323 AD. Thus ended the Kakatiya dynasty.

Some years later, two new kingdoms were founded in Karnataka called Bahamani and Vijayanagar Kingdoms about which we will study in the next chapter.

Palnati Vira – Heroes who cut across Caste barriers

Palanati Virula Katha written by Srinatha around 1350s helps us to understand how collectives of warriors must have been formed. The leading character, Balachandrudu, has a small war band of devoted companions from diverse backgrounds. One is a brahmin while the others – a blacksmith, a goldsmith, a washerman, a potter and a barber – are drawn from the service and artisan communities. Balachandrudu and his cohorts are so committed to each other that they are called *sodarulu* (brothers). Just before they set out for battle, Balachandrudu’s mother prepares a meal for all the “brothers” with her own hands. But she serves this food to each one on a different kind of plate (earthen, bronze, leaf, etc.) and is rebuked for making such distinction by her son, who says that caste must be set aside when one goes to war. And so the “brothers” all eat from each other’s plates, in defiance of the convention but in recognition of their joint fate.

Key words :

1. Warriors
2. Nayankara System
3. *Samantha*

4. Artisans
5. Turksthan
6. Abhaya Sasana
7. Marcopolo

Project:

1. Prepare a short presentation of any of the three stories in the form of a play.
2. Collect popular accounts of the origin of your village or town, prepare a chart, and present the same.
3. Visit an old temple of your area, find out who built the temple, when etc., and look for any inscriptions in it.

Improve your learning

1. Compare the warriors of those times with what you know about the armies of modern times. What differences do you see between them? AS₁
2. Kings and chiefs built irrigation tanks to improve agriculture in the Kakatiya times. What would they do now? AS₁
3. How do you think the Kakatiyas were able to gain control over the chiefs? AS₁
4. Why do you think the Kakatiyas did not appoint powerful chiefs as Nayakas? AS₁
5. Why was it difficult for women to rule in those days? Is it different today? How? AS₄
6. In those days, powerful men had their own land and were able to tax other farmers, traders and artisans. Can powerful people do this now? Give reasons. AS₄
7. Read the para under the title ‘Nayankara System’ of page 112 and comment on it. AS₂
8. ‘Women too manage the administrative affairs effectively’ – How do you support it? AS₂

Chapter: 13

The Kings of Vijayanagara

In the previous lesson, we read about warriors and chiefs who had established control over villages and how the Kakatiyas tried to bring them under their control and built a kingdom. The efforts of the Kakatiyas ended when the Delhi Sultans conquered Warangal. But soon another kingdom was built by a family of warriors who laid the foundations of a large empire called Vijayanagara or Karnataka

Vijayanagara means the ‘City of Victory’. It was located on the banks of Tungabhadra River in Karnataka. According to tradition, it was founded by two brothers named Harihara Raya and Bukka Raya around 1336 AD with the blessings of a sage named Vidyananya. The kings of Vijayanagara worshipped Sri Virupaksha (Shiva) and greatly enlarged the temple. The Vijayanagara empire lasted for about 250 years though it was not ruled by kings of the same family. After the family of Harihara Raya and Bukka Raya of Sangama dynasty, Saluva, Tuluva and Araviti families ruled the empire one after the other.

On the North of the Tungabhadra river too arose some new kingdoms called the Bahamani kingdoms. Initially it was one large kingdom with its capital in Gulbarga, later on, between 1489 and 1520 AD, it broke up into five smaller kingdoms. Of these five kingdoms, Bijapur and Golconda ruled over large parts of the present day Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. These kingdoms were ruled by Sultans and warriors many of whom came from Iran and Arabia. All these kingdoms were constantly at war with each other trying to enlarge their own kingdoms. They also tried to recruit the local warriors and chiefs about whom we read in the last chapter. With their help, they tried to establish control over the villages and towns and collect revenue from the farmers and traders.

Some Important Kings of Vijayanagara

- Harihararaya (1336-1357AD)
- Bukkaraya I (1357-1377AD)
- Harihararaya II (1377-1404AD)
- Devaraya II (1426-1446AD)
- Saluva Narasimharaya (1486-1491AD)
- Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529AD)
- Achyutaraya (1529-1542AD)
- Aliya Rama Raya (1543-1565AD)
- Venkatapati Raya (1585-1614AD)

How do we know?

We know much about Vijayanagara Empire from inscriptions, books and buildings of that period. We get insights into the daily life, the administration and the social organization of the kingdom. Of particular value are the detailed accounts left by travellers from several countries – Nicolo Conti from Italy who visited Vijayanagara in 1420 AD, Abdul Razzak the Persian trader who visited in 1443 AD, the Portuguese travellers Paes, who visited it in 1520 AD and Nuniz who wrote in 1537 AD.

The City of Vijayanagara

The city was built on the banks of the river Tungabhadra next to the ancient temples of Pampadevi and Sri Virupaksha. Abdul Razzak says that the city had seven rings of fortifications. Some of these have been found by archaeologists.

Read the description of the city by Portugese traveller, Paes:

“The king has made a very strong city, fortified with walls and towers... These walls are not made like those of other cities, but are made of strong masonry... and inside very beautiful rows of buildings with flat roofs...

You have a broad and beautiful street full of fine houses... and these houses belong to merchants, and there you find all sorts of rubies and diamonds, and emeralds and pearls... and cloths of every sort on the earth... In the evening you have a fair where they sell horses, vegetables, fruits, wood, etc.”

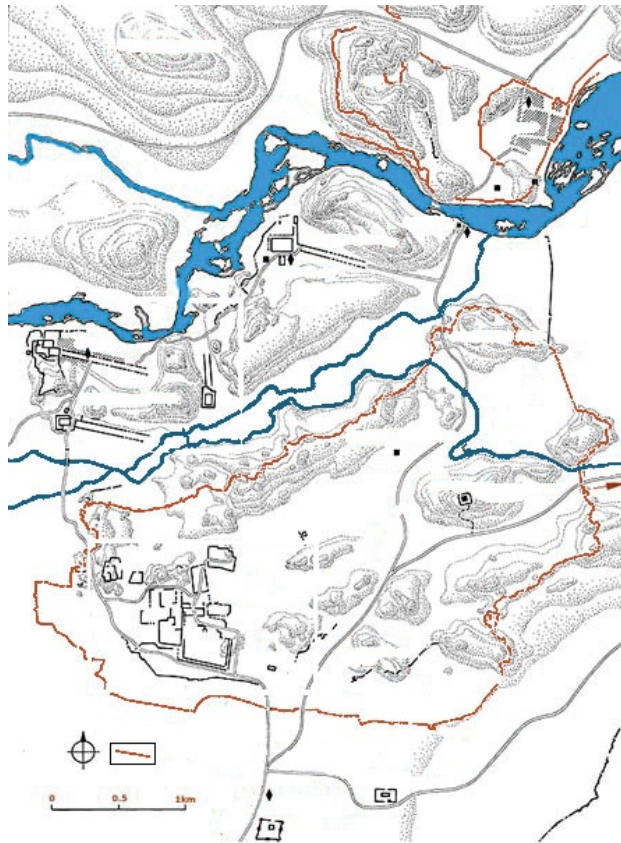


Fig 13.1 Bronze images of Krishnadeva Raya and his two wives installed in Tirumala Temple.

- Why were vegetables, fruits and horses sold in the evenings?

Archaeologists are of the opinion that the city had four separate divisions – the first one devoted to temples, situated on rocky hills; the second one on the valley where crops were raised using water from irrigation channels; the third a royal centre in which royal palaces and residences of important nayakas were located and the fourth one allocated for the residences of ordinary townsfolk. Each area was separated from the others as shown in the map.

- Compare Vijayanagara with Warangal to point out the similarities and differences between them.



Map 1: Vijayanagara City

- Why do you think modern cities do not build fort walls of this kind?

Armies and Military Leaders

You would have heard and read about great wars being fought today and also about the powerful armies.

- What makes the armies of countries powerful?
- What kinds of arms and weapons do modern armies use?

Let us find out how it was in Vijayanagara times.

Vijayanagara rulers invested a lot of money in building their military power. They imported a large number of horses from Arabia and Iran, which came in ships to their ports on the west coast. They recruited a large army and built many strong forts. One of the important rulers, Devaraya-II of Vijayanagara started recruiting Muslim fighters to serve him and to train his soldiers in the new modes of warfare. He also permitted the construction of mosques in the capital city where the muslim soldiers were garrisoned. In those days, guns and cannons had been newly introduced. The Vijayanagara kings adopted guns and cannons in their forces. The combination of firearms and cavalry (horse-riders) made them one of the most powerful armies in India.

- Horses in those days were important for fast movement of troops. What do you think have taken their place today?
- Elephants were slow moving but powerful in attack. What do you think has replaced them today?

‘Captains of the Troops’ - the *Amaranayakas*

The entire kingdom was actually controlled and administered by the commanders of these armies. Who they were and what they did, let us find out. Read the following account left by Domingo Paes, a Portuguese traveller who visited Vijayanagara during Krishnadeva Raya’s period:

“This king has a million fighting troops, in which are included 35,000 cavalry (horse riders) ready to be dispatched to any quarter whenever necessary... He is the most feared king in these parts...”

The captains of these troops are the nobles of his kingdom and they hold the city, the towns and the villages of the kingdom. There are captains among them who have a revenue of About a million gold coins, others two hundred, three hundred or five hundred thousand coins. The king fixes for each, according to his revenue the number of troops which he must maintain, on foot, on horse, and elephants. These troops are always ready for duty whenever and wherever they may have to go. Besides maintaining these troops, each captain has to make his annual payment to the king.

Besides the troops supplied by the captains, the king has his own troops whom he pays.”

Answer the following questions after reading the above passages carefully:

- Why was Krishnadevaraya the most feared king?
- Who controlled the towns and villages of Vijayanagara Empire?
- Did all of them get equal income?
- What did the captains do with the villages and towns under their control?
- What did the captains have to do for the king in return for these villages?
- Did the king depend only on the troops sent by the captains?



Fig 13.2 Stone Chariot at Hazara Rama Temple

The ‘captains’ mentioned here were the nayakas. These nayakas held *amara* revenue assignments – that is they were given some villages and cities whose revenue they could collect and use. They had an obligation to maintain a certain number of troops for keeping the revenue of such assignments. They also administered the areas under their control. They had judicial powers too.(the power to judge criminals and give punishments) This was quite similar to the system of the Delhi Sultanate, whose nobles or *amirs* were given similar revenue assignments called *Iqtas*.

Most of the *amaranayakas* were Telugu warriors. They recruited their soldiers, usually from among their own villagers or kinsmen, and trained them. These armies were loyal to the Nayakas rather than to the king. Many powerful nayakas like Saluva Narasimha or Narasa Nayaka controlled vast areas and at times could even challenge the Vijayanagara Kings. In fact, some of them were so powerful that when a king died they took power in their own hands and themselves became kings.

Let us compare

You read about how the villages were administered in Chola kingdom by councils of landholding villagers and how the king collected revenue from villages with the help of these councils. Things had begun to change in Vijayanagara Empire as the power of the armies and nayakas increased. You saw that the control over the villages and town was given over to these nayakas.

- What impact do you think it would have had on the villagers? Discuss in your class.
- In a previous lesson, you read about how villages and towns are administered in our country today. Can you compare this with the Vijayanagara system and point out the differences?



Fig 13.3 Relief on Hazara Rama Temple. Can you write a story based on this image?

Amaranayakas and Agriculture

Most of the Nayakas were Telugus and they led armies which were mostly composed of Telugu speaking farmers. As the Nayakas established control over different regions of south India, these peasant soldiers also settled down and brought land under cultivation. They built irrigation tanks and canals. Thus, they settled down in various parts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, especially in regions with black soils.

All over the empire, tanks / reservoirs for capturing rain water and other drainage water were constructed by the kings, chiefs, nayakas and traders. Even temples invested their endowments in irrigation and were sharing the enhanced production with those who worked on their lands. Look at portions of an inscription from Tirumala temple of 1494 AD:

“The authorities of Tirumala Temple executed this inscription in favour of Timmana Dandanayaka of Chandragiri as follows: whereas you

have paid three hundred gold coins to the Temple treasury, this sum shall be invested for excavation of tank fed channels in the villages belonging to the temple and with the harvest reaped thereby certain offerings will be made to the deity.”

All these efforts resulted in the expansion of agriculture into new areas and tremendous increase in agricultural production. This in turn provided impetus to trade.

- In what way would the nayakas have benefitted from increase in agricultural production?

Trade and Cavalry

Trade in agricultural produce as well as craft produce like cloth increased manifold in Vijayanagara period. We find change in trade activity during this period. Trade centres were established on India’s extensive coasts and they were under the administration of the local merchants and others representing trader communities from other places: Arabs, Jews, Armenians and others. States were attracted to these ports for the revenue as well as for access to strategic commodities like horses. Knowledge of the breeding of horses appropriate for heavy cavalry tactics was lacking in India at that time. Through the ports, war horses from Arabia could be imported by chiefs and kings in the Indian peninsula. Guns were another strategic goods that were obtained through the ports. While these goods were imports, Indian exports remained the same as in the earlier periods – textiles, spices and other craft items.

In addition to ports and market towns, there were towns strategically sited for defence and administrative purposes. Some towns attained considerable size and permanence as pilgrim centres.

Krishnadeva Raya - The Ruler

Krishnadeva Raya ruled from 1509 AD to 1529 AD. He was a great general who led the Vijayanagara armies successfully against the Bahmani sultans and also against the Gajapatis of Odisha. He also subdued several chiefs who had revolted in Karnataka, Andhra and Tamil regions. This gave him control over the entire region south of river Krishna and especially control over the ports of the eastern coast.

During this period, the Portugese had established their power over some ports of the western coast, like Goa. Krishnadevaraya established friendly relations with them in order to get exclusive supply of horses and firearms from them. He also employed Portugese troops in his wars.

Every year on the Vijaydashami day, the King organised elaborate festivities and worship, which concluded with a massive parade of his armies. On this day, all the chiefs and *amaranayakas* of the empire brought their tributes to the King.

Krishnadevaraya paid special attention to the temples of his kingdom and personally visited many of them like Tirupati, Srisailem and Ahobilam. He also donated to a large number of temples.

Krishnadeva Raya’s inscriptions state that he had distributed the great treasure gained in his successful wars to all the major temples of southern India. Towering temple gateways called ‘Raya gopuram’ were built in many of these temples in his honour. This generosity assured that his name would be remembered for long among the people of south India. He also built some beautiful temples in Vijayanagara city.

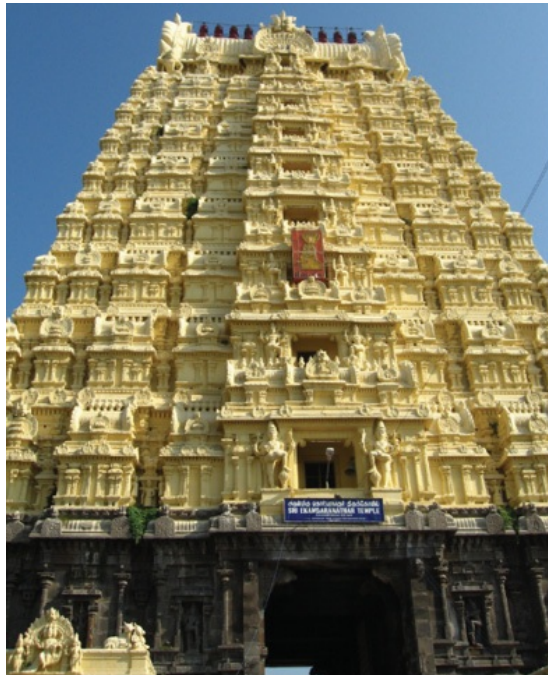


Fig 13.4 Gopuram of Ekamreshwar Temple in Kanchipuram.

Krishnadevaraya was also a patron of Telugu literature and he himself composed the poetic work *Amuktamalyada* on the life of Andal the Tamil Bhakta poetess. His court was adorned with eight poets known popularly as “*Ashtadiggajas*”. They are Allasani Peddana, Mukku Thimmana, Dhurjati, Ramaraja Bhushana, Tenali Ramakrishna, Pingali Surana, Ayyalaraju Ramabadrudu and Madayagari Mallana.

The power of the Vijayanagara kings grew further during the time of Krishnadevaraya’s successors Achyutadeva Raya and Aliya Rama Raya. As the Bahamani rulers were unable to fight the Vijayanagara individually, by 1565 AD, all the five Bahmani kingdoms joined together and defeated Rama Raya in Rakkasi tangadi war also known as Tallikota war, looted, and destroyed the city of Vijayanagara. The emperors who succeeded him shifted their capital to Chandragiri near Tirupati, but never regained the glory of earlier times. While part of the empire came under the control of the Sultans, the chiefs and Nayakas became independent in other parts.

Key words :

1. *Amaranayaka*
2. Iqta
3. Archaeologists
4. Amirs
5. Raya gopuram
6. Bahamani Kingdoms
7. Portugese
8. *Ashtadiggajas*

Improve your learning

1. Why were the Portuguese travellers interested in the forts and armies of Vijayanagara kings? AS₁
2. Why did the kings of Vijayanagara live in a separate quarter and not in the middle of the city as in Orugallu? AS₁
3. Historians feel that Vijayanagara state was highly militarised – in what way do you think it would have affected the common people? AS₁
4. Why were the *amaranayakas* very powerful? AS₁
5. Compare the *amaranayakas* with the old chiefs of Kakatiyas. Were they different or similar – in what way? AS₁
6. Why was the Vijayanagara army dependent on imports from the western coast? AS₁
7. Krishnadeva Raya fought against several enemies in order to consolidate his kingdom. Make a list of all of them. AS₃
8. What services were rendered to Telugu literature by the Vijayanagara Kings? AS₆
9. Locate the following in the in the India map. AS₃
a) Hampi b) Bijapur c) Tirupati d) Srisailam e) Kanchi f) River Tungabhadra
10. Discuss the support of various kingdoms to telugu literature? AS₁

CHAPTER: 14

Mughal Empire

A new age began with the unification of India under the Mughals. The Mughals created an empire between 1550 and 1700 AD and expanded it from around Delhi to all over the entire subcontinent. Their administrative arrangements, ideas of governance and architecture continued to influence rulers long after their decline. Every year, the Prime Minister of India addresses the nation on Independence Day from the ramparts of the Red Fort in Delhi, the residence of the Mughal emperors.



Coin showing Jahangir

Who were the Mughals?

The Mughals were from ruling families of Central Asian countries like Uzbekistan and Mongolia. Babur, the first Mughal emperor (1526 - 1530 AD), was forced to leave his ancestral throne due to the invasion of another ruler. After years of wandering, he seized Kabul in 1504 AD. In 1526 AD, he defeated the Sultan of Delhi, Ibrahim Lodi and captured Delhi and Agra.

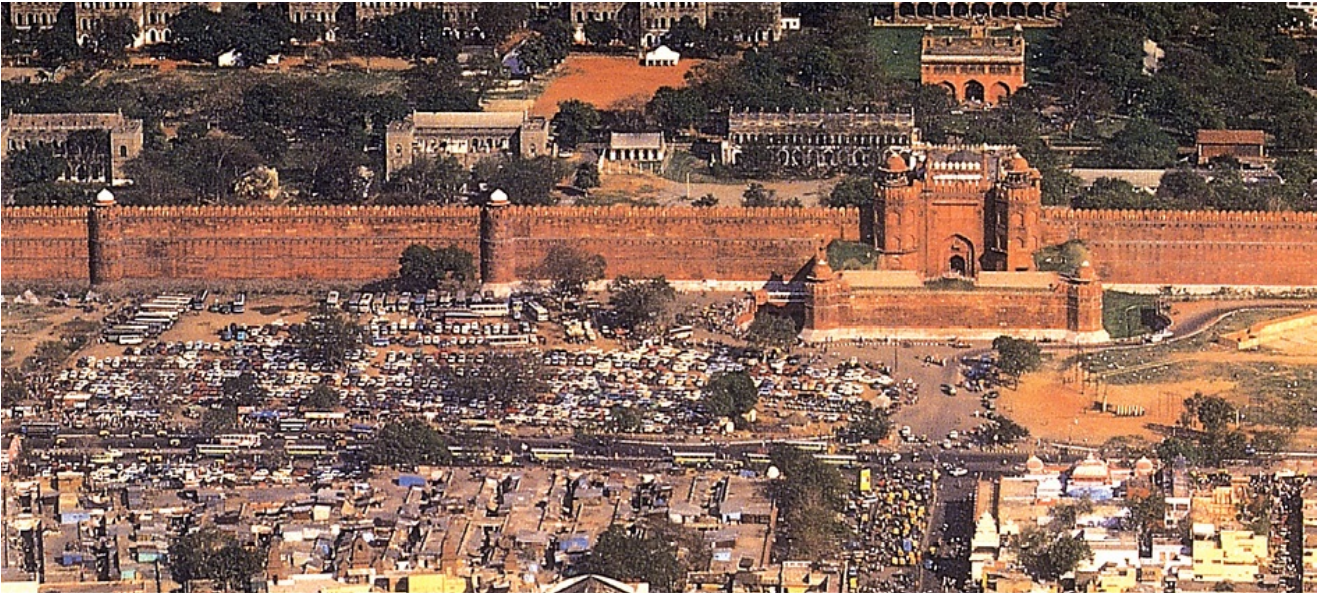


Fig 14.1 Red Fort

**Important Mughal emperors -
Major campaigns and events**



Babur 1526-1530 AD

1526 AD – defeated Ibrahim Lodi and established control over Agra and Delhi.

He introduced cannons and guns in Indian warfare.

Humayun 1530-1556 AD

Sher Khan defeated Humayun, forcing him to flee to Iran. In Iran, Humayun received help from the Safavid Shah. He recaptured Delhi in 1555 AD but died in an accident the following year.

Akbar 1556-1605 AD

Akbar was 13 years old when he became the emperor.

He rapidly conquered Bengal, Central India, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Thereafter, he also conquered Afghanistan, Kashmir and portions of the Deccan.

Look at his empire in Map 1.

Jahangir 1605-1627 AD

Military campaigns started by Akbar continued. No major conquests.



Shah Jahan 1627-1658 AD

Mughal campaigns continued in the Deccan. He faced many revolts by nobles and chiefs of his empire. In 1657-1658 AD, there was a conflict over succession amongst Shah Jahan's sons. Aurangzeb was victorious and his three brothers were killed. Shah Jahan was imprisoned for the rest of his life in Agra.

Aurangzeb 1658-1707 AD

Conquered Assam but faced a large number of revolts all over his kingdom from Afghanistan, Assam, Rajasthan, Punjab, Deccan, etc. Guru Tegh Bahadur, Govind Singh, Shivaji and his own son Akbar revolted against him. Shivaji succeeded in establishing an independent Maratha kingdom. Aurangzeb conquered Bijapur in 1685 AD and Golconda in 1687 AD. His death was followed by a succession conflict amongst his sons.

Mughal Relations with other Rulers

In India of those times, there were several kings and chiefs in all parts of the country. The Mughals sought to bring them under their control.

They allowed the older rulers and chiefs to continue to rule over large parts of their old kingdoms and collect revenues from them. But they could not wage wars against each other and had to keep an army ready for the use of the Emperor.

Mughal rulers campaigned constantly against rulers who refused to accept their authority. But as the Mughals became powerful, many other rulers also joined them voluntarily. The Rajputs are a good example of this. Many of them married their daughters into Mughal families and received high positions. But many resisted as well. The Sisodiya Rajputs of Chittor refused to accept Mughal authority for a long time. Once defeated, however, they were given their lands back as assignments. The careful balance between defeating but not removing their opponents enabled the Mughals to extend their influence over many kings and chieftains. The Mughals married princesses of many of the local rulers as a mark of friendship. The mother of Jahangir was the daughter of the Rajput ruler of Amber (modern Jaipur). The mother of Shah Jahan was a daughter of the Rajput ruler of Jodhpur.

Mansabdars and Jagirdars

As the empire expanded to encompass different regions, the Mughals recruited diverse kinds of people. From a small nucleus of Turkish nobles, they expanded to include Iranians, Indian Muslims, Afghans, Rajputs, Marathas and other groups. Those who joined Mughal service were enrolled as *mansabdars* (or rank holder). They were directly under the control of the emperor, who could allocate any work for them to do – like guarding his palace, governing a province, conquering a new kingdom or suppressing a rebellion.



Fig 14.2 A mansabdar on march with his sawars.

The Mughals developed a political system in which the *mansabdars* would not act independently but follow the orders of the emperor. You may remember that the Nayakas in Vijayanagara empire could become independent and powerful enough to declare themselves the kings. The Mughals prevented this by constantly transferring the *mansabdars* from one place to another every two or three years. Thus, a *mansabdar* could not become settled and powerful in any one place.

The *mansabdar's* military responsibilities required him to maintain a specified number of horse riders or cavalrymen. The *mansabdar* brought his cavalymen for review, got them registered, their horses branded and then received money to pay them as salary.

A *mansabdar's* son could not become a *mansabdar* automatically. That is, it was not hereditary. The emperor decided whether to appoint the son as a *mansabdar*. In fact, he even took over all the property of the *mansabdar* on his death.

Mansabdars received their salaries as revenue assignments called *jagirs*, which were somewhat like Vijayangara Nayankaras. But unlike the *Nayakas*, most *mansabdars* did not actually reside in or administer their *jagirs*. They could only collect the revenue due from their *jagir* villages and send to the emperor. This was collected for them by their servants while the *mansabdars* themselves served in some other part of the country. The *jagir* was administered by other officials directly under the emperor. These officials tried to ensure that the *jagirdars'* agents did not collect more from the farmers than permitted. The *jagirs* too were constantly transferred every two or three years.

In Akbar's reign, these *jagirs* were carefully assessed so that their revenues were roughly equal to the salary of the *mansabdar*. By Aurangzeb's reign there was a huge increase in the number of *mansabdars*, which meant a long wait before they received a *jagir*. These and other factors created a shortage in the number of *jagirs*. As a result, many *jagirdars* tried to extract as much revenue as possible while they had a *jagir*. Aurangzeb was unable to control these developments in the last years of his reign and the farmers therefore suffered tremendously.

Zabt and Zamindars

The main source of income available to Mughal rulers was tax on the produce of the peasantry. Akbar's revenue minister, Todar Mal, carried out a careful survey of crop yields, prices and areas cultivated for a ten-year period, 1570-1580 AD. On the basis of this data, tax was fixed in cash for each crop. Each province was divided into revenue circles with its own schedule of revenue rates for individual crops. This revenue system was known as *zabt*. It was prevalent in those areas where Mughal administrators could survey the land and keep very careful accounts. This was not possible in provinces such as Gujarat and Bengal.

In most places, peasants paid taxes through the rural elites, i.e., the headman or the local chieftain. The Mughals used one term – *zamindars* – to describe all intermediaries, whether they were local



headmen of villages or powerful chieftains. The *zamindars* were not appointed by the Mughal Emperors but existed on hereditary basis, that is, sons succeeded when the fathers died. They too had contingents of armed followers. They received from the *jagirdars* a share of the revenue collected from the area and also some dues from the farmers and others. They often acted as representatives of the local people in dealing with the Mughal officials.

In some areas, the *zamindars* exercised a great deal of power. The exploitation by Mughal administrators could drive them to rebellion. Sometimes *zamindars* and peasants allied in rebelling against Mughal authority. These *zamindar*-peasant revolts challenged the stability of the Mughal Empire from the end of the seventeenth century.

- What was the difference between a *mansabdar* and a *zamindar*?
- Who was under the greater control of the emperor?
- Compare the position of a *Nayaka* and a *mansabdar*.

A Closer Look at Akbar's Policies

The broad features of administration were laid down by Akbar and were elaborately discussed by his friend and member of his court, Abul Fazl in his book the *Akbar Nama*.

While Akbar was at Fatehpur Sikri (near Agra) during the 1570s, he started discussions on religion with the Muslim scholars, Brahmins, Jesuit priests who were Roman Catholics, and Zoroastrians. He was interested in the religion and social customs of different people. Akbar wanted to bring together people of diverse faiths. This eventually led Akbar to the idea of *sulh-i kul* or "universal peace". This idea of tolerance did not discriminate among people of different religions in his kingdom. Instead, it focused on a system of ethics – honesty, justice, peace – that was universally applicable. Abul Fazl helped Akbar in framing a vision of governance around this idea of *sulh-i kul*. The Emperor would work for the welfare of all subjects irrespective of their religion or social status. This principle of governance was followed by Jahangir and Shah Jahan as well. Aurangzeb deviated from this policy and tried to project himself as favouring only *Sunni* Muslims. People of other religions felt anguished by this policy of Aurangzeb.

Sulh-i kul

Jahangir, Akbar's son, described his father's policy of *sulh-i kul* in the following words:

"As in the wide expanse of the divine compassion there is room for all classes and the followers of all creeds, so ... in his Imperial dominions, which on all sides were limited only by the sea, there was room for the professors of opposite religions, and for beliefs, good and bad, and the road to intolerance was closed. Sunnis and Shias met in one mosque and Christians and Jews in one church to pray. He consistently followed the principle of 'universal peace' (*sulh-i kul*)."



Fig 14.4 Akbar holding discussions with learned individuals of different faiths in his ibadat

khana

The Mughal Empire in the 17th Century and after

The administrative and military efficiency of the Mughal Empire led to economic and commercial prosperity. International travellers described it as the fabled land of wealth. But the same visitors were also appalled at the state of poverty that existed in contrast to the greatest wealth. The inequalities were glaring. Documents from the twentieth year of Shah Jahan's reign inform us that the highest ranking *mansabdars* were only 445 in number out of a total of 8,000. This small number – a mere 5.6 per cent of the total number of *mansabdars* – received 61.5 per cent of the total estimated revenue of the empire as salaries for themselves and their troopers.

The Mughal emperors and their *mansabdars* spent a great deal of their income on salaries and goods. The scale of revenue collection left very little for investment in the hands of the primary producers – the peasant and the artisans. The poorest amongst them had hand to mouth existence and could hardly invest in tools and supplies to increase productivity.

The wealthier peasantry and artisanal groups, the merchants and bankers profited in this period.

The enormous wealth and resources commanded by the Mughal nobility (elite) made them an extremely powerful group of people in the late seventeenth century. As the authority of the Mughal emperor slowly declined, his servants emerged as powerful centres of power in the regions. They constituted new dynasties and held command of provinces like Hyderabad and Awadh. Although they continued to recognise the Mughal emperor in Delhi as their master, by the eighteenth century the provinces of the empire had consolidated their independent political identities.

Key words :

1. *Mansabdar* 2. *Jagirdar* 3. *Jagir* 4. *Zabt* 5. Elite

Improve your learning

1. Match the following AS₁

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| i) Mansab | () | a) Marwar |
| ii) Zamindar | () | b) Revenue assignment |
| iii) Sisodiya Rajput | () | c) Hereditary chiefs |
| iv) Rathor Rajput | () | d) sulh-i kul |
| v) Akbar | () | e) Mewar |
| vi) Jagirdar | () | f) rank |

2. What was the relationship between the *mansabdar* and his *jagir*? AS₁

3. What was the role of the *zamindar* in Mughal administration? AS₁
4. How were the debates with religious scholars important in the formation of Akbar's ideas on governance? AS₁
5. "The decision of Emperor is final" - Is this procedure formulated by Mughals? What do you think? AS₂
6. Why did the Mughals allow the earlier rulers to continue in their old kingdoms as before? AS₁
7. Why was the policy of *sulh-i kul* important for the Mughals to control their vast empire? AS₁
8. Read the first para under the title 'Zabt and Zamindars' of page 126 and comment on it. AS₂
9. Collect and fill in the table with the particulars of Moghal emperors. AS₃

S.No.	Name of the emperor	Ruling period	Important features
1			
2			
3			
4			

Chapter:15

Establishment of the British Empire in India

Aurangzeb was the last of the powerful Mughal rulers. He established control over a very large part of the territory that is now known as India. After his death in 1707 AD, many Mughal governors (*subedars*) and big *zamindars* began asserting their authority and establishing regional kingdoms. Consequently, Delhi could no longer function as an effective centre.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, however, a new power was emerging on the political horizon – the British. Did you know that the British originally came as a small trading company? How then did they become the masters of a vast empire?

East India Company Comes to East

In 1600 AD, the East India Company acquired a charter from the ruler of England, Queen Elizabeth I, granting it the sole right to trade with the East. This meant that no other trading group in England could compete with the East India Company. With this charter, the Company could venture across the oceans, looking for new lands from which it could buy goods at a cheap price, and carry them back to Europe to sell at higher prices.

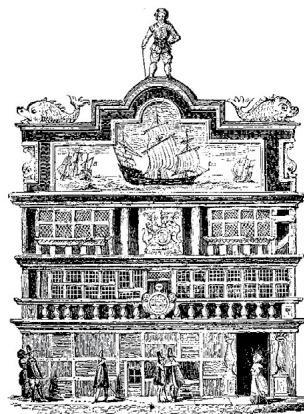


Fig 15.1 The headquarters of East India Company in London

Mercantilism

Mercantile is a business enterprise that makes profit primarily through trade. Trading companies in those days made profit primarily by excluding competition, so that they could buy cheap and sell dear.



Fig 15.2 VascodaGama

The royal charter, however, could not prevent other European powers from entering the Eastern markets. By the time the first English ships sailed down the west coast of Africa, round the Cape of Good Hope, and crossed the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese had already established their presence in the western coast of India, and had their base in Goa. It was Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese explorer, who had discovered this sea route to India in 1498. By the early seventeenth century, the Dutch (Holland) too were exploring the possibilities of trade in the Indian Ocean. Soon the French traders arrived on the scene.



Fig 15.3 A drawing of Machilipatnam from 1676

The problem was that all the companies were interested in buying the same things. The fine qualities of cotton and silk produced in India had a big market in Europe. Spices like pepper, cloves, cardamom and cinnamon too were in great demand. Competition amongst the European companies inevitably pushed up the prices at which the goods were purchased. Trade was carried on with arms and trading posts were protected through fortification. This effort to fortify settlements and carry on profitable trade led to intense conflict with the local rulers.

Armed Traders

European traders formed their own companies to trade in India. The English traders formed the English East India Company while traders from France formed the French East India Company. Both companies fought against each other for many years to capture the trade in India. Each made efforts to drive the other away. They brought armies from England and France to help them in their fight. The kings of England and France also backed their respective companies and helped them in many ways. The companies acquired land in India and built their own forts to wage battles against each other.

The wealth that was accumulated in this way was one of the most important factors that enabled England to develop industries and establish their dominance in the world.

This was the time when England as well as some other European countries like Spain, Portugal, France, Holland and Germany were acquiring colonies in North and South America, Africa, and Asia. The colonies contributed to the power and wealth of these European countries.

The Mughal emperors as well as many rajas and nawabs began to realise how dangerous it was to let such traders maintain armies, build forts, fight battles and use military force to establish their economic power in their kingdoms.

As long as the Mughal empire was strong, it had not been possible for the European companies to establish their own military power in India. In fact, Emperors Shahjahan and Aurangzeb had fought and defeated the European companies on a number of occasions. Some years after the death of Aurangzeb, the different provinces of the empire became almost independent and were ruled by their respective governors. Thus Bengal, Awadh (Lucknow) and Hyderabad became independent kingdoms which only nominally acknowledged the Mughal Emperor as their supreme.

Once the Mughal empire broke up into these small kingdoms, the companies found their chance to assert their power. Though the rajas and nawabs wanted more trade they tried to check the growing military strength of the companies.

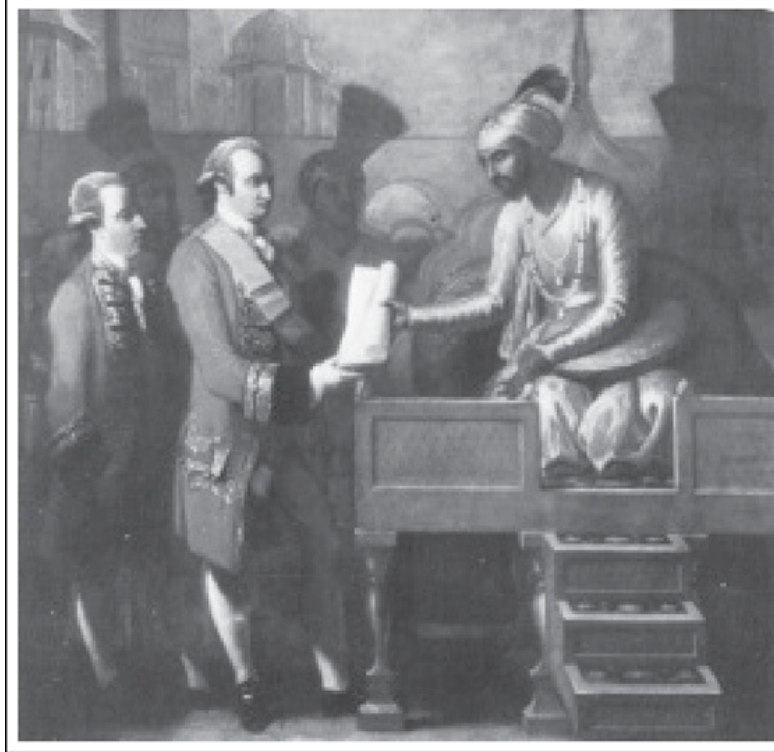


Fig 15.4 Mughal Emperor Shah Alam granted Robert Clive the right to rule Bengal

For example, in 1764 AD, Nawab Anwaruddin Khan of Arcot (in northern Tamil Nadu) sent his army to fight against the French company. However, to the astonishment of all, the small French army managed to defeat the large army of the Nawab. The European traders became bolder after this victory and felt they could do whatever they wanted in India because of the strength of their armies.

How were the European armies different from the armies of Indian rulers in the 1700's? The soldiers of European armies were better trained and received higher and more regular salaries. They also had better cannons and guns. The European armies held parades and drills every day. With such regular exercise, Indian soldiers enrolled in these armies also became quite skilled in battle.

Growing European Interference in the Kingdoms of India

The companies used their military advantage to increase their profits from trade. On many occasions when they saw two Indian rulers fighting among themselves, they would take sides and get involved in the fight. They would lend their army to one side to help them defeat their rivals. But, in return, the companies would demand and extract many trade concessions from the rulers. The rulers also 'gifted' the companies large amounts of money in return for their military help. This money helped the companies increase their trade even more.

For example, Dupleix, a governor of the French East India Company, helped Muzaffar Jang to become the Nizam of Deccan. In return, Muzaffar Jang gave the French some territories near Pondicherry and the town of Machilipatnam. He also gave Rs. 50,000 to the Company, Rs. 50,000 to the French troops, and Rs. 20,00,000 and a *Jagir* worth Rs. 1,00,000 per year to Dupleix.



Fig 15.5 Local boats bring goods from ships in Madras, painted by William Simpson, 1867

The companies also began to acquire small parts of kingdoms as ‘gifts’ from the local rulers. They would collect land tax from the villages and towns in these areas and use the money for their trading activities. They also used this money for maintaining and improving their army.

Slowly, the English Company began emerging victorious over the French Company in the struggle for dominance in India.

Misuse of the Company’s Power

The Indian rulers soon found that the burden of giving ‘gifts’ to the English East India Company and bearing the expenses of its army was becoming very heavy. They were also troubled by many other things the company was doing.

Some Indian rulers exempted the company from paying taxes on many of the goods it purchased from their kingdoms. However, people began taking advantage of these concessions. For example, employees of the company would do their own private trading. But they would show their own goods as belonging to the company to escape paying taxes. In this way, while the company got richer, its employees and officers also made a lot of money in India and returned home wealthy. Many Indian traders and *seths* helped the company in its trade. They, too, showed their goods as belonging to the Company to escape paying taxes.

Thus, there was much looting and swindling taking place in the kingdoms under the Company. So proud was the Company of its military strength that it began working with great impudence. It forced craftsmen to sell their goods at low prices. In the areas it had acquired, the company tried to squeeze revenue from the peasants beyond reasonable limits. When the rulers protested against such practices, the English fought against them. They even went to the extent of dethroning kings and anointing successors who would be only too willing to remove any obstacles in the way of their trade.

- Traders need money to buy the goods they sell to others. List three sources of money that helped the English to buy goods in India.
- What advantages did the Indian rulers get from the English?

The English Impose their Rule

The English gradually began to feel that they could make fuller and freer use of India for trade if they themselves ruled the country. So they began removing the nawabs and rajas and started ruling themselves.

In 1757 AD, the English defeated Sirajuddaula, the Nawab of Bengal, at a place called Plassey and established their rule over Bengal. The Battle of Plassey is an important event in Indian history. After that, the English started conquering many of the kingdoms of India, big and small.

The English East India Company also forced the Nizam of Hyderabad to hand over the coastal Andhra Pradesh districts (Krishna, East Godavari, West Godavari, Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram, Prakasam, Visakhapatnam and Guntur,) between the years 1765-1768. These were known as the ‘Northern Sarkars’ of the Madras province of the company. In return, the English agreed to maintain an army contingent for the use of the Nizam. In fact this army was used more to control the Nizam rather than to help him.

Many rajas and nawabs understood the British plot and fought hard against them. They included Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan of Mysore, the Maratha sardar Mahadji Scindia, Nana Phadnawis and others. But their kingdoms were small. One by one, they lost them to the English.

Among those who played an important role in the British success on the battlefield were generals Robert Clive, Warren Hastings and Lord Wellesley. Slowly, large areas of India came under the direct rule of the English. In many places, the rajas and nawabs continued to rule, but they were under the sovereignty of the English. An English official (known as the ‘resident’) would be assigned to stay in the court of these kings or nawabs so that the British government could keep an eye on how they ran their kingdoms.

- While carrying on trade with India, why did the English East India Company start thinking of establishing its rule over the country?

Maps showing expansion of the British territorial power in India

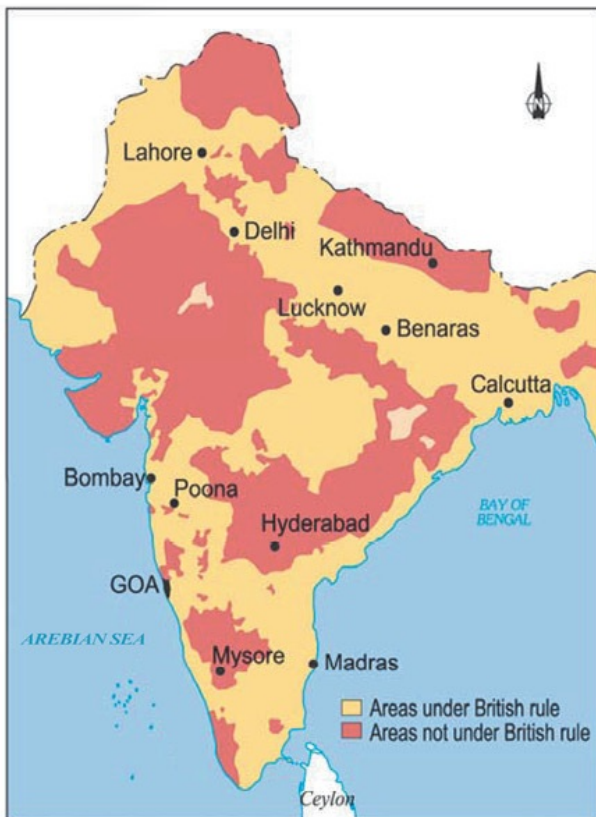
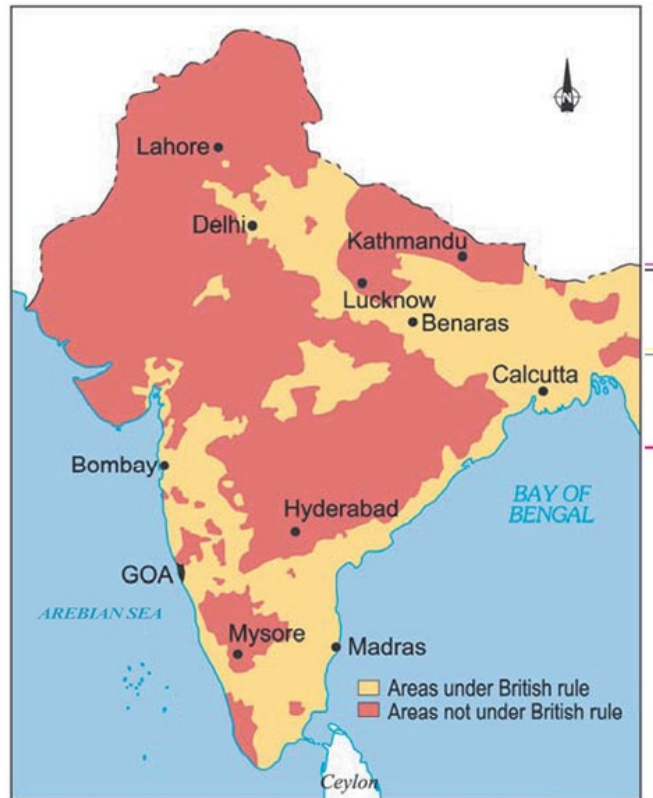
INDIA

Map 1

About 1770 AD

INDIA
Map 3
About 1857 AD

INDIA
Map 2
About 1830 AD



- *Look at these maps along with a present day political map of India. In each of these maps, try and identify the different parts of India that were not under the British rule.
- *How far did English rule spread by 1857? Make a list of those areas where Indian kings still ruled in 1857.

Discontent with English Rule

The English had to fight with many kings and nawabs to establish their rule. You will learn more about their policies and administration in later years. They constantly faced resistance from the people of India.

The royal families resisted them because the English would anoint or remove rulers as and when it suited their purposes.

Farmers and landowners resisted them because the English imposed very high taxes on them and collected the taxes very strictly. So they lived in constant fear of failing to pay the taxes and losing their lands as a result.

Tribal people also offered resistance, because of the new rules and laws that the English began implementing in their areas. As a result, many tribal people lost their rights over jungles and land. You will read more about this in the later years.

Many Hindus and Muslims feared that the English would destroy their religions and convert them to Christianity.

The English faced their toughest battle in 1857 when, for few months, their rule was uprooted over almost the entire northern Indian region. This revolt was started by Indian *sipahis* or soldiers, who were soon joined by royal families, landowners, farmers, tribal people and craftsmen. The royal families who joined the revolt include Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the peshwa, Tantia Tope, his general, the Begum of Awadh, and Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. Hindus and Muslims fought together against their common enemy.

The Revolt of 1857

Place: The military cantonment at Meerut, where the British army had camped

Date: Sunday, May 10, 1857

The sun was about to set when the Indian soldiers began firing their guns on their English officers. These were the same soldiers who had helped the English to conquer the kingdoms of India. They were now fed up with the behaviour of the English. They were not getting their salaries on time and they were not treated with respect in the British army. On top of this, the *sipahis* suspected that the cartridges for their new guns (rifles) were being coated with cow and pig fat to keep them dry. They felt that their religious faith was being violated. Based on this suspicion, a similar uprising had occurred at Barrackpur, near Kolkata in March 1857. The sense of discontent at Meerut was widespread and on this day the soldiers opened fire on their English officers. The rebellious soldiers marched towards Delhi that very night.

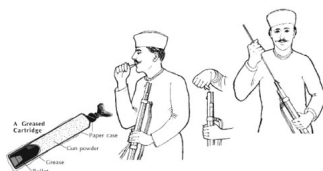


Fig 15.6 A - Loading a gun

- 1) The soldier was supposed to tear open the paper case with his teeth.
- 2) He would pour the gun powder into the rifle.
- 3) He would then ram the bullet wrapped in paper into the rifle.

Place: Meerut town Date: Sunday

night - Monday, May 10-11, 1857

News of the sipahi revolt spread like wildfire in Meerut. The whole town was in ferment. A wave of people came from the bazaar and began attacking the bungalows of the English. Policemen joined the mobs and, before long, the bungalows and offices of the English were set a fire. Many English people were killed.

Fig 15.7 A view of Sipahi revolt at Meerut in 1857

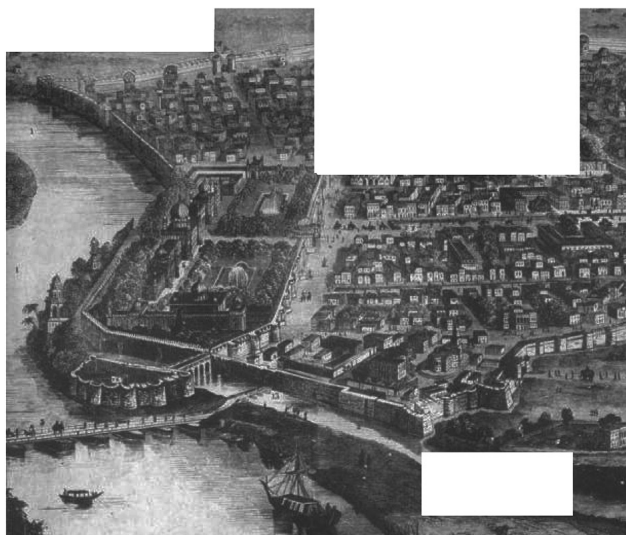


Fig 15.8 A view of Delhi in 1857 showing the pontoon bridge the soldiers used to cross the Yamuna.

Place: Delhi, the Lal Quila

Date: Monday, May 11, 1857

By daybreak, the sipahis of Meerut had crossed the Yamuna and reached Delhi. They entered the Lal Quila where Badshah Bahadur Shah Zafar of the Mughal dynasty was imprisoned by the English. They declared him their badshah and persuaded him to reject the sovereignty of the British. 'Drive out the English and bring back Mughal rule' was the clarion call of the rebels.

The Revolt Spreads

No sooner did this call go out, revolts against the English erupted in many places. *Sipahis* went on the rampage in the cantonments at Aligarh, Mainpuri, Bulandshahar, Attock and Mathura. The English were badly shaken. Their situation was, indeed, very delicate.



Fig 15.9 An illustration of Rani Lakshmi Bai.

There were a mere 45,000 English officers and soldiers in India. Against this, the number of Indian soldiers in their army was two lakh and thirty two thousand! It was these very *sipahis* who revolted. So who would now protect the lives and property of the English residents in the towns? The Indian sections of their army could not be relied on. Consequently, many English soldiers were kept back to protect the English families.



Fig 15.10 Nana Saheb

As a result, the revolt could not be suppressed immediately and it spread from place to place.

Many royal families, whose kingdoms had been taken away by the English, joined the revolt. Among them were the former Nawab of Awadh and the Maratha peshwa Nana Sahib. Armies of rebel *sipahis* and rulers from different corners of the country marched towards Delhi. Hope was in the air that the English would be driven away and Mughal rule and the earlier political order would be restored.

- Discuss why the idea of the Mughal empire brought the rebelling Indian people together.
- When you oppose something, you need an alternative in its place. Think of an example from your experience that brings out this need of an alternative.

Every Village in Revolt

The flames of revolt spread from *kasba* to *kasba* and village to village in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The peasants and *zamindars* took up arms together and had the English and their officers on the run. They stopped paying taxes to the British government. They tore up railway lines, burnt down police stations, courts, post & telegraph offices and uprooted the telegraph wires. These were the new things the English had introduced in India. As defeat stared the English in their faces, the Indian people became more and more courageous in their fight against the British rule.

The rebels looted the houses and burnt the documents of many moneylenders. These moneylenders had become very powerful in the villages with the help of English laws.

The Revolt is Suppressed

Despite the widespread success of the revolt, the English slowly gained control over the situation.

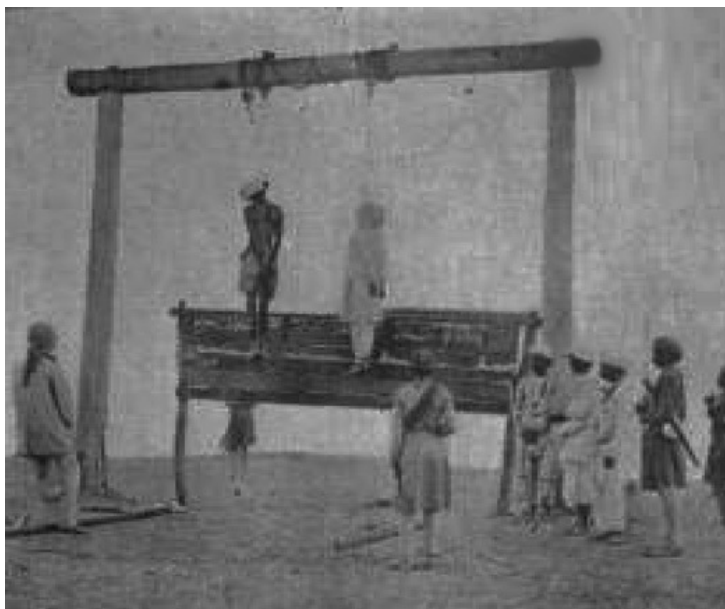


Fig 15.11 Hanging the rebels.

The rebels fought bravely. But there were two major weaknesses among them. In every town or region, different groups of rebels fought separately against the English. They did not fight together. There was no combined and well-planned effort. So the English were able to tackle the rebels one by one in each area.

The rebels also faced a shortage of modern arms. The guns and cannons, cartridges and gunpowder they required were brought from outside India. Consequently, the rebels had to fight with old guns, arrows, spears and swords. How long could such weapons last in a contest against the more modern arms?

Even then, the speed with which the revolt spread frightened the English. So they behaved with great cruelty whenever they suppressed a rebel group. They killed the rebels in a most inhumane way and hanged their bodies from trees in the villages so that the village folk would 'understand' the consequences of revolt.

They tied some rebels to the mouths of cannons and blew them to bits. Many rebels went into hiding, moving from place to place to avoid being caught by the English. Many of them even went to places like Nepal to hide.

The English deported Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar to far away Rangoon and it was there that the last Mughal emperor died. The revolt of 1857 was the biggest revolt to challenge the might of the English. After suppressing it, their hold over India became stronger and they ruled the country for the next 90 years.

o Choose the correct alternative:

a) The rebels of 1857 AD wanted to (restore/remove)_____ Mughal rule.

b) The weakness of the English army was that most of its soldiers were (Europeans/Indians)_____.

o What were the weaknesses of the rebel Indian armies?

After the Revolt

It took the English more than a year to suppress the revolt of 1857. During this period, they changed many of their policies and adopted new ones. In 1858, Queen Victoria of England made an important declaration. She said Indian kings should rule their own kingdoms without anxiety because the English would not try to dethrone them.

In this way, they established a close collaboration with the royal families of India. Similarly, the *zamindars*, too, were given many concessions and were assured that their property would be protected.

The *pundits* and *maulvis* were assured that the British government would not interfere in matters relating to Indian religions and would let the old traditions continue. There was also a promise that Indians would be included in the government. The truth is that the English had seen their Indian empire being snatched away in 1857. Now they directed their efforts towards giving all kinds of concessions to some of the elite powerful Indians, to conciliate them and ensure that they continued to support the English.



Fig 15.12 Bahadur Shah Zafar and his sons being arrested by Captain Hodson. After Aurangzeb there was no powerful Mughal ruler, but Mughal emperors continued to be symbolically important. When rebellion against British rule broke out in 1857, Bahadur Shah Zafar, the Mughal emperor at the time, was seen as the natural leader. Once the revolt was put down by the company, he was forced to leave the kingdom, and his sons were shot in cold blood.

Key words :

1. Royal Charter
2. Subedar
3. Sole right
4. Demand
5. Jagir
6. Cantonment
7. Colonies
8. Maulvies

Improve your learning

1. Why did the European trading companies maintain armies in India? What role did these armies play in the business of the companies? AS₁
2. How could the European armies defeat the Indian armies in the 1700's and 1800's? AS₁
3. Collect the information of 1857 revolt and fill in the table with the particulars. AS₃

S.No.	People participated in the revolt	People stayed away from the revolt
-------	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

4. In 1857, which soldiers felt their religious faith was being violated, and why? AS₁
5. In what ways did people revolt against the British in 1857? AS₁
6. What did the people who revolted in 1857 want to achieve? AS₁
7. What complaints of the rebels did Queen Victoria try to address in her 1858 declaration. try to address? AS₁
8. What are the similarities and differences between the ways the Mughals and the English came to power in India? AS₁
9. Locate the sea route of Vascodagama from Portugal to India in the map. AS₃
10. Write a short note on the need of Unity to avert foreign invasion. AS₆
11. Express your dissatisfaction towards the rule of Britishers. AS₁

o Perform monoactions of Indian freedom fighters in your school functions.

Project :

Prepare an album with pictures and information of Indian freedom fighters.