



# Rai Technology University

ENGINEERING MINDS

## India from 8th Century to Mid 15th Century



**SYLLABUS**

**Early Medieval Economy: 8th to 13th Century**

Trading Communities and Organizations, Trade and Commerce, Urban Settlements, Agrarian Economy

**Society and Culture: 8th to 13th Century**

Development of Regional Cultural Traditions, Ideology, Social Organization

**Indian Polity in its Regional Variation: 8th to 13th Century**

South India, The Deccan, Western and Central India, Northern and Eastern India, Nature of Regional Politics

**Establishment of Delhi Sultanate**

Territorial Expansion, Establishment and Consolidation, Rise of Turks and Mongols in Central Asia

**Indian Polity: The Sultanate**

Problem, Crisis and Decline, Formation of the Sultanate Ruling Class, Administration of the Sultanate

**Economy of Delhi Sultanate**

Technology and Crafts, Rise of Urban Economy Trade and Commerce, Agrarian Structure, State and Economy

**The Regional Powers: 13th to 15th Century**

The Bahmanis, The Vijaynagar Empire, Regional Powers in South India and Deccan State, Administration and Economy in North India, Northern and Western India, Central and Eastern India

**Society And Culture: 13th to 15th Century**

Lifestyle and Popular Cultures, Language and Literature Art and Architecture of Regional States

Art and Architecture of Delhi Sultanate, Socio-Religious Movement: Sufi Movement, Socio-Religious Movement: Bhakti Movement

**Suggested Readings**

1. John F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, Cambridge University Press
2. Thomas R. Trautmann, India: Brief History of a Civilization, Oxford University Press
3. Upinder Singh, A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India : From the Stone Age to the 12th Century, Pearson Education

## **CHAPTER 1.**

### **Early Medieval Economy: 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Century**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Agrarian economy
- Urban settlements
- Trade and commerce
- Trading communities and organisation
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- Factors responsible for the expansion of agriculture in the Indian subcontinent.
- Chronological pattern of land grant organization.
- Ideology behind land grants.
- Character and role of several kinds of agrarian settlements.
- Growth and nature of land rights.
- Technological improvements in the sphere of agriculture.
- Interdependence amongst dissimilar groups related to land.
- Role of agriculturists in trade.
- Characterization of early medieval agrarian economy.
- Factors responsible for the rise of urban centers.
- Several phases in the history of urbanism.
- Criteria for identifying settlements as urban.
- Local variations in urban settlements.
- The importance of trade and commerce in the overall economic history of India throughout the six centuries flanked by c.a.d. 700 and c.a.d. 1300.

- The connection flanked by trade and commerce with i) metallic-currency, ii) village economy and iii) cities.
- The role of crafts and industry in the trade operations.
- Explain the relative location of traders and merchants in the society throughout the two major phases of early medieval India, viz. C.a.d.700-900 and c.a.d.900-1300.
- Explain the local features of trading communities.
- Explain the major behaviors of traders.
- Explain the kinds of traders and merchants.

## **AGRARIAN ECONOMY**

### **Agrarian Expansion**

The agrarian expansion, which began with the establishment of brahmadeya and agrahara settlements through land grants to Brahmanas from the fourth century onwards, acquired a uniform and universal form in subsequent centuries.

The centuries flanked by the eighth and twelfth witnessed the processes of this expansion and the culmination of an agrarian organisation based on land grants to religious and secular beneficiaries, i.e. Brahmanas, temples, and officers of the King's government. Though, there are significant local variations in this development, both due to geographical as well as ecological factors.

### ***Geographical and Chronological Patterns***

Farming was extended not only to the hitherto virgin lands but even through clearing forest regions. This was a continuous procedure and a major characteristic of early medieval agricultural economy.

There is a view prevalent in the middle of some scholars that land grants started in outlying, backward, and tribal regions first and later slowly extended to the Ganga valley, which was the hub of the brahmanical culture. In the backward and aboriginal tracts the Brahmanas could spread new methods of farming through regulating agricultural processes through specialized knowledge of the seasons (astronomy), plough, irrigation, etc., as well as

through protecting the cattle wealth. Though, this is not true of all regions in India, for, land grants were also made in regions of settled agriculture as well as in other ecological zones, especially for purposes of integrating them into a new economic order.

The chronological appearance of the land grant organization shows the following pattern:

- Fourth-fifth centuries: spread in excess of a good part of central India, northern Deccan and Andhra,
- Fifth-seventh centuries: eastern India (Bengal and Orissa), beginnings in Western
- India (Gujarat and Rajasthan),
- Seventh and eighth centuries: Tamil Nadu and Karnataka,
- Ninth century: Kerala, and
- End of the twelfth century: approximately the whole sub-continent with the possible exception of Punjab.

### ***Ideological Background***

Ideas relating to the gift of land emphasize the importance of Dana or gift. The thought of Dana or gift to Brahmanas was urbanized through Brahmanical texts as the surest means of acquiring merit (punya) and destroying sin (pataka). It appears to be a conscious and systematic effort to give means of survival to the Brahmanas.

Grants of cultivable land to them and registration of gifts of land on copper plates are recommended through all the Smritis and Puranas of the post-Gupta centuries.

There were dissimilar things of gifts:

- Food, granules, paddy, etc.
- Movable assets like gold, money, etc. And
- The immovable assets i.e. cultivable land garden and residential plot.

In the middle of the gifts are also incorporated the plough, cows, oxen and ploughshare. Though, the gift of land was measured to be the best of all kinds of gifts made to the learned Brahmana. Imprecations against the destruction of

such gifts and the resumption of land donated to a Brahmana ensured their perpetuity. Therefore land grants began to follow a set legal formula systematized through law books (Dharmastras).

While the early land grants were made mainly to Vedic priests (Shrotriya fire priests), from the fifth to thirteenth centuries, grants were also made to temple priests. The temple, as an institution, assumed a more central role in agrarian expansion and organisation from the eighth century A.D. Grants to the temple, either plots of land or whole villages were recognized as devadana in the south Indian context. It needs to be stressed that what began as a mere trickle, became a mighty current. The procedure of acquiring landed property was not confined to brahmanical temples.

### **Agrarian Organisation**

The agrarian organisation and economy were highly intricate. This can be understood on the foundation of rigorous studies of the local patterns of land grants and the character and role of the brahmadeya and non-brahmadeya and temple settlements. The growth and nature of land rights, interdependence in the middle of the dissimilar groups related to land and the manufacture and sharing processes also help in a better understanding of the situation.

### ***Character and Role of Several Kinds of Agrarian Settlements***

#### ***Brahmadeya***

A brahmadeya symbolizes a grant of land either in individual plots or whole villages given absent to Brahmanas creation them landowners or land controllers. It was meant either to bring virgin land under farming or to integrate existing agricultural (or peasant) settlements into the new economic order dominated through a Brahmana proprietor. These Brahmana donees played a major role in integrating several socio-economic groups into the new order, through service tenures and caste under the Varna organization. For instance, the rising peasantisation of shudras was sought to be rationalized in the existing brahmanical social order.

The practice of land grants as brahmadeyas was initiated through the ruling dynasties and subsequently followed through chiefs, feudatories, etc.

Brahmadeyas facilitated agrarian expansion because they were:

- Exempted from several taxes or dues either entirely or at least in the initial stages of resolution (e.g. For 12 years);
- Also endowed with ever rising privileges (pariharas). The ruling families derived economic advantage in the form of the extension of the resource base; moreover, through creating brahmadeyas they also gained ideological support for their political power.

Lands were given as brahmadeya either to a single Brahmana or to many Brahmana families which ranged from a few to many hundreds or even more than a thousand. Brahmadeyas were invariably situated close to major irrigation works such as tanks or lakes. Often new irrigation sources were constructed when brahmadeyas were created, especially in regions dependent on rains and in arid and semi-arid regions. When situated in regions of rigorous agriculture in the river valleys, they served to integrate other settlements of a survival stage manufacture. Sometimes, two or more settlements were clubbed jointly to form a brahmadeya or an agrahara. The taxes from such villages were assigned to the Brahmana donees, which were also given the right to get the donated land cultivated. Boundaries of the donated land or village were very often cautiously demarcated. The several kinds of land, wet, arid, and garden land within the village were specified. Sometimes even specific crops and trees are mentioned. The land donations implied more than the transfer of land rights. For instance, in several cases, beside with the revenues and economic possessions of the village, human possessions such as peasants (cultivators), artisans and others were also transferred to donees. There is also rising proof of the encroachment of the rights of villagers in excess of society lands such as lakes and ponds. Therefore, the Brahmanas became managers of agricultural and artisanal manufacture in these settlements for which they organized themselves into assemblies.

### *Secular Grants*

From the seventh century onwards, officers of the state were also being remunerated through land grants. This is of special significance because it

created another class of landlords who were not Brahmanas.

The gift of land on officials in charge of administrative divisions is mentioned as early as c. A.D. 200 (the time of Manu) but the practice picks up momentum in the post-Gupta era. Literary works dealing with central India, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Bihar and Bengal flanked by the tenth and twelfth centuries create frequent references to several types of grants to ministers, kinsmen, and those who rendered military services. The *rajas*, *rajaputras*, *ranakas*, *mahasamantas*, etc. mentioned in Pala land charters were mostly vassals linked with land. The incidence of grants to state officials varies from one region to another. To illustrate, while we hear of in relation to the half a dozen Paramar official ranks, only a few of them are recognized to have received land grants. But very big territories were granted to vassals and high officers under the Chalukyas of Gujarat. The accessible proofs suggest that Orissa had more service grants than Assam, Bengal, and Bihar taken jointly. Further, the right of several officials to enjoy specific and exclusive levies—irrespective of the tenure of these levies—was bound to make intermediaries with interests in the lands of the tenants.

#### *Devadanas*

Big level gifts to the religious establishments, both brahmanical and non-brahmanical, discover distinctive spaces in inscriptional proofs. These centers worked as nuclei of agricultural settlements and helped in integrating several peasant and tribal settlements through a procedure of acculturation. They also integrated several socio-economic groups through service tenures or remuneration through temple lands. Temple lands were leased out to tenants, who paid a higher share of the produce to the temple. Such lands were also supervised either through the *sabha* of the *brahmadeya* or *mahajanas* of the *agrahara* settlements. In non-Brahmana settlements also temples became the central institution. Here temple lands came to be administered through the temple executive committees composed of land owning non- Brahmanas. e.g. the *Velalas* of Tamil Nadu the *Okkalu Kampulu* etc of Karnataka dissimilar groups were assigned a caste and ritual status. It is in this procedure that people following “impure” and “low occupations” were assigned the status of untouchables, kept out of the temple and given quarters at the fringes of the



resolution.

The supervision of temple lands was in the hands of Brahmana and non-Brahmana landed elite. The control of irrigation sources was also a major function of the local bodies dominated through landed elite groups. Therefore the Brahmana, the temple and higher strata of non-Brahmanas as landlords, employers, and holders of superior rights in land became the central characteristic of early medieval agrarian organisation.

The new landed elite also consisted of local peasant clan chiefs or heads of kinship groups and heads of families, who had kani rights i.e. rights of possession and supervision. In other words, many strata of intermediaries appeared flanked by the King and the actual producer.

### ***Rights in Land***

A significant aspect relating to land grants is the nature of rights granted to the assignees. Rights conferred upon the grantees incorporated fiscal and administrative rights. The taxes, of which land tax was the major source of revenue, theoretically payable to the King or government, came to be assigned to the donees. The reference to pariharas or exemptions in the copper plate and stone inscriptions registering such grants indicate that what was theoretically payable to the King was not being totally exempted from payment but the rights were now transferred to the grantees. This was apparently based on the sanction of the dharmashastras, which sought to set up the royal ownership of land and hence justify such grants, creating intermediary rights in land.

Although there is some proof of a communal foundation of land rights in early settlements, the development of private ownership or rights is indicated through the information that the grantees often enjoyed rights of alienation of land. They also enjoyed other hereditary benefits in the settlements. Land gifts were often made after purchase from private individuals. Hereditary ownership appears to have urbanized out of such grants, both religious and secular.

### **Technological Improvements**

Throughout the early medieval era there was an augment in irrigation sources such as canals, lakes, tanks (tataka, eri) and wells (kupa and kinaru).

That the accessibility to water possessions was a significant consideration in the spread of rural settlements is shown through local studies. Keres or tanks in south Karnataka, nadi (river), pushkarini (tank), srota (water channel) etc. in Bengal and araghatta-wells in western Rajasthan used to be natural points of reference whenever sharing and transfer of village lands had to be undertaken. Naturally, the concern for water possessions contributed to the extension of farming and intensification of agricultural behaviors. Water-lifts of dissimilar types operated through man and animal power were also recognized. Epigraphic sources record the construction and maintenance of such irrigation works flanked by eighth and thirteenth centuries. Several of the lakes/ tanks of this era have survived well into the contemporary times. Some of them were repaired, revived, and elaborated under the British management. The step wells (vapis) in Rajasthan and Gujarat became very popular in the eleventh-thirteenth centuries. They were meant for irrigating the meadows as well as for supplying drinking water.

The augment in the number of irrigation works was due to an advance in irrigation technology. There is proof of the use of more scientific and permanent methods of flood manage, damming of river waters, sluice construction (with piston valve and cisterns) both at the heads of canals and of lakes and tanks. Flood manage was achieved slowly through breaching of rivers for canals and mud embankments which ensured the regulated use of water possessions.

Lakes or reservoirs were more commonly used in semi arid' and rain fed regions, as well as river basins where the rivers up in summer construction of water reservoirs was initiated through ruling families and maintained through local organizations such as the sabha (Brahmana assembly) and ur (non-Brahmana village assembly) in Tamil Nadu. Maintenance of lakes/tanks etc. i.e. desilting, bund and sluice repair was looked after through a special committee of local assemblies and cesses were levied for the purpose.

Royal permission was accorded for digging tanks or wells, when gifts were made to Brahmanas and temples. Land was demarcated for construction and maintenance of canals and tanks, etc. Digging of tanks was measured a part of

the privileges enjoyed through the grantees and an act of religious merit. Hence, resourceful private individuals also constructed tanks.

No less important were the improvements in agricultural implements. For instance, a tenth century inscription from Ajmer refers to “big” plough. Likewise, separate implements are mentioned for weeding parasitic plants. Vrikshayarveda mentions steps to cure diseases of trees. Water lifting devices such as araghatta and ghatyantra are mentioned in inscriptions and literary works. The former was specially used in the wells of Rajasthan in the ninth-tenth centuries. The Krishisukti of Kashyapa prescribed that the ghatyantra operated through oxen is the best that through men was the worst while the one driven through elephants was of the middling excellence.

Advanced knowledge in relation to the weather circumstances and their use in agricultural operations is noticeable in such texts as the Gurusamhita and Krishinarashwara.

More than one hundred kinds of cereals including wheat, barley, lentils, etc. are mentioned in modern writings on agriculture. According to the Shunyapurana more than fifty types of paddy were cultivated in Bengal. The knowledge of fertilizers improved immensely and the use of the compost was recognized. Cash crops such as areca nuts, betel leaves, cotton, sugarcane, etc. discover frequent mention. Rajashekhara (early tenth century) tells us in relation to the excellent sugarcane of north Bengal which yielded juice even without the use of pressing instrument. Commodity manufacture of coconut and oranges assumed special importance in peninsular India throughout this era.

Marco-Polo hints at increased manufacture of spices when he says that the municipality of Kinsay in China alone consumed ten thousand pounds of pepper everyday which came from India. He also mentions the great demand for Indian ginger in European markets. Harvesting of three crops and rotation of crops were recognized widely. Therefore, advanced agricultural technology was being systematized and diffused in several parts of the country causing substantial boom in agricultural manufacture.

## **Rural Tension**

Notwithstanding agrarian expansion, the rural landscape was distant from being a homogeneous scene. There is, to begin with, heterogeneous and stratified peasantry. Unlike the age old and pre-Gupta gahapatis we now have graded personnel associated with land: Kshetrik, karshaka, halin and ardhik. Regrettably, there is hardly any indication of landownership in these conditions, which appear to be referring to several categories of cultivators. The conversion of the brahmadeyas into non- brahmadeyas and that of the latter into agraharas were potential sources of tension in rural regions. The damara revolts in Kashmir, rebellion of the Kaivarthas in the reign of Ramapal in Bengal, acts of self immolation in situations of encroachments on land in Tamil Nadu, appropriation of donated land through shudras in the Pandya territory, are indices of distrust against the new landed intermediaries. The information that donors often looked for land where farming was not disputed also shows the seeds of turmoil. The possibility of the hero-stones in and approximately agraharas also has the potential of throwing light on rumblings beneath the surface in agrarian settlements. Why does the concept of brahmahatya (killing of a Brahmana) become very pronounced in early medieval times? Answers to this question raise doubts in relation to the validity of “brahmana-peasant alliance” and “peasant state and society”. This is, though, not to deny other possible regions of tension within rural society flanked by Brahmanas and temples and within ranks of secular land holders.

### **Agriculture and the Swap Network**

It is sometimes maintained that in the early medieval economic organisation, which was a predominantly agrarian and self-enough village economy, manufacture was mainly survival oriented and was not in response to the laws of the market.

Hence there was little scope for economic growth. Craftsmen and artisans were attached either to villages or estates or religious establishments. Hence there was no important role for traders and middlemen, who only procured and supplied iron apparatus, oil, spices, cloth, etc. to rural folk. In other words the functioning of the market organization was very limited.

The aforesaid picture is certainly true for the era 300-800 A.D. Though,

the subsequent 500 years witnessed a rapid augment in the number of agrarian settlements and the growth of local markets initially for local swap. Subsequently, the need for regular swap within a region and with other regions led to organized commerce. This in turn led to the emergence of merchant organisations, itinerant trade, and partial monetization from the ninth century.

Though the relative importance of these characteristics varied from one region to another the rising role of agriculture in this new economy is easily seen. Agricultural products came to be exchanged with things of extensive aloofness trade accepted on through itinerant traders. This development also led to a change in the pattern of land ownership towards the secure of the early medieval era. Merchants and economically influential craftsmen, like weavers, invested in land i.e. purchased land described the Jagati-kottali (society of weavers) and the society of Telligas (oil pressers) was active participants in agriculture. The former are repeatedly mentioned as excavating tanks and laying out gardens.

### **The Characterization of Early Medieval Agrarian Economy**

Dissimilar views have been put forward concerning the nature of the overall set up of early medieval agrarian economy. On the one hand, it is seen as a manifestation of feudal economy, while on the other it is dubbed as a peasant state and society.

The salient characteristics of 'Indian Feudalism' are:

- Emergence of hierarchical landed intermediaries. Vassals and officers of state and other secular assignee had military obligations and feudal titles. Sub-infeudation (varying in dissimilar regions) through these donees to get their land cultivated led to the growth of dissimilar strata of intermediaries. It was a hierarchy of landed aristocrats, tenants, share croppers, and cultivators. This hierarchy was also reflected in the power/administrative structure, where a sort of lord-vassal connection appeared. In other words, Indian feudalism consisted in the gross unequal sharing of land and its produce.
- Another significant characteristic was the prevalence of forced labour. The right of extracting forced labour (vishti) is whispered to have been

exercised through the Brahmana and other grantees of land. Forced labour was originally a prerogative of the King or the state. It was transferred to the grantees, petty officials, village authorities and others. In the Chola inscriptions alone, there are more than one hundred references to forced labour. Even the peasants and artisans come within the jurisdiction of vishti. As a result, a type of serfdom appeared, in which agricultural laborers were reduced to the location of semi-serfs.

- Due to the rising claims of greater rights in excess of land through rulers and intermediaries, peasants also suffered a curtailment of their land rights. Several were reduced to the location of tenants facing ever rising threat of eviction. A number of peasants were only ardhikas (share croppers). The strain on the peasantry was also caused through the burden of taxation, coercion, and augment in their indebtedness.
- Surplus was extracted through several methods. Extra economic coercion was a conspicuous method. With the rise of new property dealings, new mechanisms of economic subordination also evolved. The rising burden is apparent in the mentioning of more than fifty levies in the inscription of Rajaraja Chola.
- It was relatively a closed village economy. The transfer of human possessions beside with land to the beneficiaries shows that in such villages the peasants, craftsmen and artisans were attached to the villages and hence were mutually dependent. Their attachment to land and to service grants ensured manages in excess of them through the beneficiaries.

In brief, a subject and immobile peasantry, functioning in relatively self-enough villages buttressed through varna restrictions, was the marked characteristic of the agrarian economy throughout the five centuries under survey.

The theory of the subsistence of autonomous peasant communities is put forward in opposition to the theory of Indian feudalism. It is based mainly on the proof from South Indian sources.

According to this theory, autonomous peasant regions described the nadus evolved in South India through early medieval times. They were organized on the foundation of clan and kinship ties. Agricultural manufacture in the nadus was organized and controlled through the nattar, i.e., people of the nadu, organizing themselves into assemblies, i.e., nadu. Members of this assembly were velalas or non-Brahmana peasants. Their autonomy is indicated through the information that when land grants were made through the kings and lesser chiefs, orders were issued with the consent of the nattar. Orders were first addressed to them. They demarcated the gift land and supervised the execution of the grant because they were the organizers of manufacture. The Brahmanas and dominant peasants became allies in the manufacture procedure. Apparently, the exponents of this hypothesis share the notion of rural self sufficiency, which is a significant component of Indian feudalism. The theories of Indian feudalism and autonomous peasant communities have their adherents and claim to be based on empirical proof. Though, early medieval agrarian economy was a highly intricate one.

## **URBAN SETTLEMENTS**

### **Form and Substance of Urban Centres**

Revised of urban centers is a significant aspect of socio-economic history. Urban centers in early medieval India have usually been studied in two ways:

- As a part of economic history i.e. history of trade, commerce and craft manufacture, etc., and
- As a part of administrative or political history, i.e. as capitals, administrative centers, centers of major and minor ruling families and fort cities.

Hence the focus of urban studies has so distant been mainly on kinds of urban centers. Accordingly cities or municipalities have been listed under several categories such as market, trade or commercial centers, ports, political and administrative centers, religious centers, etc. Though, there has been not enough effort to explain the causes behind the emergence of cities. In other words the form of an urban centre is studied but not its meaning or substance.

## **Phases and Definition**

How do we describe an urban centre and what are its essential traits; are some of the questions that we take up here. Prior to the coming of the Turks, the Indian sub-continent experienced at least three phases of urban growth:

- Throughout the bronze age Harappan culture (fourth-second millennium B.C.),
- Early historic urban centers of the iron age (c. sixth century B.C. to the end of the third century A.D.),
- Early medieval cities and municipalities (c. eighth/ninth to twelfth centuries A.D.).

Amongst the earliest attempts to describe an urban centre one can easily mention Gordon Childe's notion of "Urban Revolution". He listed monumental structures, big settlements with thick population, subsistence of such people who were not occupied in food manufacture (rulers, artisans and merchants) and farming of art, science and writing as prominent characteristics to identify an urban centre.

Childe laid great stress on the attendance of craft specialists and the role of agricultural surplus which supported non-food producer's livelihood in municipalities. Not all these traits, which were spelt out in the context of bronze age municipalities, are to be seen in the cities of iron age. There has been no dearth of urban centers with sparse population and mud houses.

Though agrarian surplus composed from rural regions is approximately indispensable for the subsistence of a city, merely a resolution of non-agriculturists cannot be regarded as an urban centre. Early medieval literary texts refer to cities inhabited through people of all classes bounded through a wall and moat and marked through the prevalence of the laws and customs of the guilds of artisans and merchants. A recent revise based on exhumed data from 140 sites spread in excess of the whole Indian sub-continent focuses on:

- Excellence of material life and the nature of occupations, and
- Need to revise urban centers not as parasites thriving on agricultural surplus but as centers integrally connected with rural hinterland.

Accordingly, some prominent traits of urban centers which can be applied



to early medieval settlements as well are recognized as:

- Size of a resolution in conditions of region and population.
- Proximity to water possessions—river banks, tanks, ring wells, etc.
- Attendance or absence of artifacts on behalf of behaviors of artisans, e.g. axes, chisels, plough-shares, sickles, hoes, crucibles, ovens, furnaces, dyeing vats, moulds for drops, sticks, sealings, jewellery, terracotta, etc.
- Proof of coin moulds signifying mint cities. The detection of metallic
- money, when listed with the attendance of artisans and merchants, certainly lends a clear urban character to such sites.
- Attendance or otherwise of luxury goods such as valuable and semi-valuable stones, glassware, ivory objects, fine pottery etc. The possibility is not ruled out that luxuries of ancient cities might become necessities for superior rural classes of early medieval times.
- Considering the moist, rainy climate of several alluvial plains such as the middle Ganga plain, baked brick (not presently burnt bricks) structures on a good level assume special importance. Though in Central Asia cities consisting of mud structures are also not strange.
- Streets, shops, drains, and fortifications also provide a good thought of the nature of the urban resolution. At many spaces in the Deccan and elsewhere silos and granaries happen at historical sites, like at Dhulikatt in Andhra Pradesh. Apparently such structures were meant to store surplus food grains for feeding.

### **The Common Pattern**

The post-Gupta centuries witnessed a new socio-economic formation based on the organization of land grants. The gradual expansion of farming and agrarian economy through land grants had an impact on the growth of cities and municipalities flanked by the eighth and twelfth centuries. Though the overall picture of the Indian sub-continent is that of revival, of urban centers, there are some local variations as well. Such variations are seen in the nature, category, and hierarchy of such centers due to operative economic forces, ecological and cultural differences and the nature of political

organisation. Local studies of urban centers are so, essential for providing the correct perspectives. Such studies are accessible only for a few regions like Rajasthan, Central India, and South India.

### **Local Variations and Kinds**

In a vast country like India there are a lot of local variations in the pattern of emergence and growth of urban centers.

### ***Rural Centers Transformed into Urban Centers***

The brahmadeyas and devadanas which are seen as significant sources of agrarian expansion of the early medieval era also provided the nuclei of urban growth. The Brahmana and temple settlements clustered jointly in sure key regions of agricultural manufacture. Examples of such centers of urban growth are datable from the eighth and ninth centuries and are more commonly establish in South India. The Cola municipality of Kumbakonam (Kudamukku-Palaiyarai) urbanized out of agrarian groups and became a multi-temple urban centre flanked by the ninth and twelfth centuries. Kanchipuram is a second major instance of such an urban intricate. While Kumbakonam's political importance as a residential capital of the Colas was an additional factor in its growth, Kanchipuram too had the additional importance of being the main craft centre (textile manufacturing) in South India.

### ***Market Centers, Trade-Network, and Itinerant Trade***

Early medieval centuries also witnessed the emergence of urban centers of relatively modest dimensions, as market centers, trade centers (fairs, etc.) which were primarily points of the swap network. The range of interaction of such centers varied from small agrarian hinterlands to local commercial hinterlands. Some also functioned beyond their local frontiers. Though, through and big, the early medieval urban centers were rooted in their local contexts. This is best illustrated through the nagaram of South India, substantial proof of which comes from Tamil Nadu and also to a limited extent through the subsistence of nakhara and nagaramu in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh respectively. The nagaram served as the market for the nadu or

kurram, an agrarian or peasant region. Some of them appeared due to the swap needs of the nadu. A fairly big number of such centers were founded through ruling families or were recognized through royal sanction and were named after the rulers, a characteristic general to all regions in South India. Such centers had the suffix pura or pattana.

Nagarams situated on significant trade routes and at the points of intersection urbanized into more significant trade and commercial centers of the region. They were ultimately brought into a network of intra-local and inter-local trade as well as overseas trade through the itinerant merchant organisations and the royal ports. Such a development occurred consistently throughout peninsular India flanked by the tenth and twelfth centuries. Throughout these centuries South India was drawn into the wider trade network in which all the countries of South Asia, South-east Asia and China and the Arab countries came to be involved. The nagarams connected the ports with political and administrative centers and craft centers in the interior.

In Karnataka nagarams appeared more as points of swap in trading network than as regular markets for agrarian regions. Though, the uniform characteristics in all such nagarams are that they acquired a vital agricultural hinterland for the non-producing urban group's livelihood in such centers. Markets in these centers were controlled through the nagaram assembly headed through a chief merchant described pattanasvami.

A similar development of trade and market centers can be seen in Rajasthan and western parts of Madhya Pradesh. Here, the swap centers were situated in the context of the bases of agrarian manufacture i.e. where groups of rural settlements happen. In Rajasthan these centers were points of intersection for traffic of varying origins, giving rise to a sure measure of hierarchy. The network was further elaborated with the growth of generations of well-recognized merchant families in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They are named after their spaces of origin such as Osawala (Osia), Shrimalis (Bhinmal), Pallivalas and Khandelvalas, etc. The resource bases, the main routes for the flow of possessions and the centers of swap were integrated through the expansion of these merchant families. Rajasthan provided the main commercial links flanked by Gujarat, Central India and the Ganga

valley. Such links were maintained through cities like Pali, which linked the sea coast cities like Dvaraka and Bhrigukachcha (Broach) with Central and North India. Gujarat, with its dominant Jain merchants, sustained to be the major trading region of Western India where early historic ports or emporium like Bhrigukachcha (Broach) sustained to flourish as entrepots of trade in early medieval times. Bayana, another notable city in Rajasthan was the junction of dissimilar routes from dissimilar directions. The range of merchandise started almost certainly with agricultural produce (including dairy products) but extended to such high-value things as horses, elephants, horned animals and jewels.

In the trade with the West i.e. Arabia, Persian Gulf and beyond, the West Coast of Peninsular India played a uniformly dominant role from the early historic era. Many ports such as Thana, Goa, Bhatkal, Karwar, Honavar, and Mangalore urbanized throughout the revival of extensive aloofness trade, flanked by the tenth and twelfth centuries, with proof of coastal shipping and ocean navigation. Surprisingly, this commercial action was taking lay only through limited monetization. Incidentally, the Konkan coast (under the Shilaharas) does not even illustrate any signs of rise of markets and their network.

Wider trade networks also lived flanked by Karnataka, Andhra and Tamil Nadu, for the attendance of Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu merchants is well attested in many cities such as Belgaun (Karnataka), Peruru in Nalgonda district (Andhra Pradesh), and coastal cities of Visakhapatnam and Ghantasala. The Andhra coast turned to the south eastern trade with Motupalli, Visakhapatnam, and Ghantasala acting as the major outlets. Market centers of inter-local importance are represented through spaces like Nellore, Draksharama, Tripurantakam, and Anumakonda in Andhra Pradesh. On the northern and southern banks of Kaveri in its middle reaches arose a number of swap points flanked by Karnataka and Tamil Nadu such as Talakkad and Mudikondan.

Kerala urbanized contracts with the West and foreign traders such as the Jews, Christians, and Arabs who were given trading cities under special royal charters. Coastal cities such as Kolikkodu, Kollam etc., became entrepots of

South Asian trade. The site of such trading groups as the Anjuvannan and Arab horse dealers enhanced the importance of coastal cities in Karnataka and Kerala.

Major craft centers which urbanized in response to inter-local trade were weaving, centers in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. Some of the craft and commercial centers of the early historic urban stage survived till the early medieval era and were brought into the processes of re-urbanization which connected them with the new socio-economic organizations like the temple. Kashi (Varanasi) in the north and Kanchipuram (close to Madras) in the south are two very prominent examples of such processes.

### **Sacred/Pilgrimage Centers**

The thought of pilgrimage to religious centers urbanized in the early medieval era due to the spread of the cult of Bhakti. Its expansion in dissimilar regions through a procedure of acculturation and interaction flanked by the Brahmanical or Sanskrit shapes of worship and folk or popular cults cut crossways narrow sectarian interests. As a result, some local cult centers of great antiquity as well as those with early associations with brahmanical and non-brahmanical religions became pilgrimage centres. The pilgrimage network was sometimes confined to the specific cultural region within which a cult centre assumed a sacred character. Though, those cult centres, which became sacred tirthas attracted worshippers from several regions. Both kinds of pilgrimage centres urbanized urban characteristics due to a mobile pilgrim population, trade, and royal patronage. The role of emerging market in the growth of tirthas is now being recognized through historians in a big method.

Pushkara close to Ajmer in Rajasthan was a sacred tirtha of local importance with a dominant Vaishnava association. Kasi (Banaras) acquired a pan-Indian character due to its greater antiquity and importance as a brahmanical sacred centre. In South India, Srirangam (Vaishnava), Chidambaram (Shaiva), and Madurai (Shaiva) etc. urbanized as local pilgrimage centres, while Kanchipuram became a part of an all India pilgrimage network. While Melkote was a local sacred centre in Karnataka, Alampur, Draksharama and Simhachalam illustrate a similar development in

Andhra Pradesh. Tirupati was initially a significant sacred centre for the Tamil Vaishnavas but acquired a pan-Indian character later in the Vijayanagara era.

Jain centres of pilgrimage appeared in Gujarat and Rajasthan where merchant and royal patronage led to the proliferation of Jain temples in groups in centres such as Osia, Mount Abu, Palitana, etc.

In South India the elaboration of temple structures in sacred centres illustrate two kinds of urban growth:

- First, it was organized approximately a single big temple as in Srirangam, Madurai, Tiruvannamalai (Tamil Nadu), Melkote (Karnataka), Draksharama and Simhachalam (Andhra Pradesh).
- The second kind involves the growth approximately many temples of dissimilar religions such as Shivaism, Vishnuism and Saktism.

The early medieval urbanisation is sometimes characterized as “temple urbanisation” particularly in the context of south India. Sacred centres also provided significant links in the commerce of a region as temples and the mathas attached to them were the major consumers of luxury articles and value goods.

### **Royal Centres or Capitals**

Royal centres of the seats of power of the ruling families were a major category of urban centres in early medieval India. Some of them had been the seats of royal power even in the early historic era, for instance, in the Janapadas of North India or in the traditional polities of South India. Royal families also urbanized their own ports, which were the main ports of entry into their respective territories and which also connected them with international commerce. Therefore, the commercial needs of royal centres created new trade and communication links and built up much closer relationships flanked by the royal centre and their agricultural hinterlands or resource bases. In all the regions south of the Vindhyas, where brahmanical kingdoms came to be recognized through the eighth century A.D. there is substantial proof of the growth of such royal centres. Some representative examples are:

- Vatapi and Vengi of the Chalukyas in the northern Karnataka and Andhra.
- Kanchipuram of the Pallavas with their royal port at Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram).
- Madurai of the Pandyas with Korkai as their port.
- Tanjavur of the Colas with Nagappattinam as their port.
- Kalyana of the Western Chalukyas, Dvarasamudra of the Hoysalas, and
- Warangal of the Kakatiyas with Motupalli at their port.
- Warangal was an unusual instance of a fortified royal municipality in South India. Examples of royal centres in North India are:
- The Gurjara Pratihara capital at Kanyakubja (Kanauj).
- Khajuraho of the Candellas.
- Ohara of the Paramaras, and
- Valabhi of the Solankis.

A fairly big number of municipalities appeared under the powerful Gurjara-Pratiharas, Chahamanas and Paramaras in Rajasthan. Mainly of them were fortified centres, hill forts (garhkila and drags). Examples of fort-municipalities in Rajasthan are:

- Nagara and Nagda under the Guhilas.
- Bayana, Hanumangarh and Chitor under the Gurjara-Pratiharas, and
- Mandor, Ranathambor, Sakambhari and Ajmer under the Chauhans and so on.

On the foundation of several sources, a list of 131 spaces has been compiled for the Chauhan dominions, mainly of which appear to have been cities. Almost two dozen cities are recognized in Malwa under the Paramaras. Gujarat under the Chalukyas was studded with port cities. The number of cities, though, does not appear to be big in Eastern India although all the nine victory camps (jayaskandavars) of the Palas (Pataliputra, Mudgagiri, Ramavati, Vata Parvataka, Vilaspura, Kapilavasaka, Sahasgand, Kanchanapura and Kanau) may have been cities. Sometimes, significant trade

and market centres were also conferred on feudatory families. Examples of such minor political centres are numerous in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

## **TRADE AND COMMERCE**

### **Trade: Definition and Phases**

The collection, sharing and swap of goods are described trade. It is a procedure which depends on a number of factors such as the nature and quantity of manufacture, facilities of transport, safety and security of traders, the pattern of swap, etc. It also involves dissimilar parts of society including traders, merchants, peasants and artisans. In a somewhat indirect manner, even political authorities have a stake in it as taxes on the articles of commerce imposed through them constitute a significant source of revenue of the state.

The historical characteristics of trade throughout the early medieval times can be best understood if we divide this era into two broad phases:

- c.700-900 A.D., and
- c 900-1300 A.D.

Briefly, the two phases are marked through:

- Relative decline of trade, metallic currency, urban centres and a somewhat closed village economy in the first stage, and
- Reversal of mainly of the aforesaid tendencies in the second stage. So, one notices trade picking up momentum not only within the country but in relation to other countries as well. Metal coins were no longer as scarce as they were in the first stage. Of course, it was not a stage of deeply penetrated monetary economy as was the case in the five centuries following the end of the Mauryas (c.200 B.C.-A.D.300). Nor did the pattern of urban growth remain unaffected through the revival of trade and expansion of agriculture.

### **The First Stage (C.A.D.700-900)**

The era from A.D. 750—1000 witnessed wide-spread practice of granting land not only to priests and temples but also to warrior chiefs and state



officials. As already seen it lead to the emergence of a hierarchy of landlords.

Even graded state officials such as:

- Maha-mandaleshvara,
- Mandalika,
- Samanta,
- Mahasamanta,
- Thakkura, etc. urbanized interests in land.

Though, they were dissimilar from the actual tillers of the soil and existed on the surplus extracted from the peasants who were hardly left with anything to trade. It resulted in the growth of rural economy where local needs were being satisfied in the vicinity through the imposition of numerous restrictions on the mobility of actual producers. The relative dearth of medium of swap, viz., metal coins only strengthened this trend.

### ***Media of Swap***

India was ruled through several significant dynasties flanked by A.D. 750 and 1000. These contain the Gujjara Pratiharas in Western India, the Palas in Eastern India and the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan. All had the distinction of having been served through some of the mainly powerful kings of the day, several of whom had very extensive lasting reigns. It is astonishing that their accessible coins are very few and in no method compare either in quantity or excellence with the coins of earlier centuries. Since money plays a significant role in the sale and purchase of goods, the paucity of actual coins and the absence of coin-moulds in archaeological discovers lead us to consider in the shrinkage of trade throughout the era under survey.

Though first suggested through D.D. Kosambi, it was the publication of Professor R.S. Sharma's Indian Feudalism in 1965 that brought to focus the paucity of coinage in the post-Gupta times, its link with trade and commerce and consequent emergence of feudal social formation. The subject has been keenly debated in the last twenty five years. There have been four major kinds of responses:

- A case revise of Orissa substantiates complete absence of coins flanked by c.A.D. 600 and 1200 but argues for trade with Southeast Asia and emphasizes the role of barter in foreign trade.
- Kashmir, on the other hand, shows emergence of copper coinage from in relation to the eighth century A.D. Very poor excellence of this coinage has been explained in conditions of the decline of trade based economy and rise of agricultural pursuits in the valley.
- Finally, a point of view questions not only the thought of paucity of coins but also the decline in trade. This is based on the proof from what is described as the mid-Eastern India comprising Bihar, West Bengal and the present Bangladesh throughout A.D. 750-1200. While it is conceded that there was no coined money and that the Palas and Senas themselves did not strike coins, it is also argued that there was no dearth of media of swap. To illustrate, it is accentuated that there was not only an extensive series of Harikela silver coinage but also cowries and more importantly churni (money in the form of gold/silver dust) also functioned as media of swap.

Well, there may have been some local exceptions but the all-India perspective fits in the common hypothesis of Professor Sharma. Even with regard to the local exceptions, the following questions require some attention:

- What was the nature and extent of such commercial behaviors ?
- Were such behaviors capable of giving rise to stable commercialized class?
- Who took absent the profits of this trade?
- Did this so described flourishing trade give any incentive to the toiling, subject and immobile peasantry?

It is important to note in this context that:

- The relevant sources cited in the context of the mid-Eastern India, are silent in relation to the participation of indigenous people in the maritime trade of the region.
- Even the limited trading behaviors were confined to the ruling elite.

- The miserable circumstances of the general man are reflected in the meaning of the word vangali (literally, a resident of Bengal) which denoted somebody “very poor and miserable”.

Likewise, those who talk in relation to the India’s trade with Southeast Asia may also do well to stay in view the location of metal money in that region. For instance, shows that throughout the two centuries of post-Gupta times (A.D. 600-800) Southeast Asia failed to evolve any organization of coinage and barter (mainly based on paddy and only marginally on cloth) provided essentials of the Khmer economy. Even when such early medieval coin kinds as the Indo-Sassanian, Shri Vighraha, Shri Adivaraha, Bull and Horseman, Gadhैया, etc. appeared in Western and North western India and to some extent in the Ganga valley, they could not create much dent in the overall economy. Separately from the doubts in relation to the era of emergence of these coins, their very poor excellence and purchasing power also indicate the shrinkage of their actual role. Further, in relation to the rising population and expanding region of resolution, the overall volume of money circulation was negligible. Hence, we can say that the case for the relative decline of metallic money throughout the first stage is based on convincing empirical proof. This was bound to have an impact on India’s trading behaviors.

### ***Relative Decline of Trade***

Internally, the fragmentation of political power and the dispersal of power to local chiefs, religious grantees, etc. appear to have had an adverse effect, at least in the initial centuries of the land grant economy. Several of the intermediary landlords, particularly of less productive regions, resorted to loot and plunder or excessive taxes on goods passing through their territories. This necessity has dampened the enthusiasm of traders and merchants. No less discouraging were the frequent wars amongst potential ruling chiefs.

Samaraicchakaha of Haribhadra Suri and the Kuvalayamala of Uddyotana Suri, refer to brisk trade and busy cities, it is rightly argued that these texts heavily draw their material from the sources of earlier centuries and, so, do not necessarily reflect the true economic condition of the eight century.

As regards the decline of foreign trade with the West, it is pointed out that it had greatly diminished after the fall of the great Roman Empire in the fourth century. It was also affected adversely in the middle of the sixth century when the people of Byzantine (Eastern Roman Empire) learnt the art of creation silk. India therefore, lost a significant market which had fetched her considerable amount of gold in the early centuries of the Christian era.

The decline of foreign trade was also caused through the expansion of Arabs on the North-west frontiers of India in the seventh and eighth centuries. Their attendance in the region made overland routes unsafe for Indian merchants. A story in the Kathasaritsagara tells us that a group of merchants going from Ujjain to Peshawar were captured through an Arab and sold. Later, when they somehow got free, they decided to leave the North-western region forever and returned to South for trade. The fights amongst the Tibetans and Chinese throughout these centuries also affected the flow of goods beside the routes in central Asia. Even the Western coast of India suffered dislocation and disruption of sea trade as the Arabs raided Broach and Thana in the seventh century and destroyed Valabhi, and significant port on the Saurashtra coast, in the eighth century. Though as we have pointed out, later, the Arabs played a significant part in the growth of Indian maritime trade after the tenth century; initially their sea raids had an adverse effect on the Indian commercial action. There are some references in the modern literature to India's get in touch with South-east Asia, but it is doubtful whether it could create up for the loss suffered on explanation of the decline of trade the West.

### ***Urban Settlements: Decay***

The first stage was also marked through the decay and desertion of several cities. It is a significant symptom of commercial decline because the cities are primarily the settlements of people occupied in crafts and commerce. As trade declined and the demand for craft-goods slumped, the traders and craftsmen livelihood in cities had to disperse to rural regions for alternative means of livelihood. Therefore cities decayed and townsfolk became a part of village economy. Beside the accounts of Hiuen Tsang, the Pauranic records too, while referring to Kali age indicate depopulation of significant municipalities. This appears to have been the continuation of the trend already indicated through

Varahamihira (5th century). The decay of significant cities such as Vaishali, Pataliputra, Varanasi, etc. is apparent from the archaeological excavations which reveal poverty of structure and antiquities. The pan-Indian scene is marked through desertion of urban centres or their state of decay' in the era flanked by the third and eighth centuries. Even those settlements which sustained upto the eighth century, were deserted thereafter. One can mention Ropar (in Punjab), Atranjikhera and Bhita (in Uttar Pradesh), Eran (in Madhya Pradesh), Prabhas Patan (in Gujarat), Maheswar and Paunar (in Maharashtra), and Kudavelli (in Andhra Pradesh) in this category of urban settlements.

The commercial action throughout the first stage of early medieval era had declined but did not disappear totally. In information, trade in costly and luxury goods meant for the use of kings, feudal chiefs and heads of temples and monasteries sustained to exist. The articles such as valuable and semi-valuable stones, ivory, horses, etc. shaped a significant part of the extensive aloofness trade, but the proof for transactions in the goods of daily use is quite meager in the sources belonging to this era. The only significant article mentioned in the inscriptions are salt and oil which could not be produced through every village, and therefore had to be brought from outside. If the economy had not been self-enough, the references to trade in granules, sugar, textile, handicrafts, etc. would have been more numerous. In short the nature of commercial action throughout A.D. 750-1000 was such which catered more to the landed intermediaries and feudal lords rather than the masses. Though there were some pockets of trade and commerce such as Pehoa (close to Karnal in Haryana) and Ahar (close to Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh) where merchants from distant and wide met to transact business, they could not create any important dent in the closed economy of the country as a whole.

### **The Second Stage (C.A.D.900 - 1300)**

This stage is marked through the revival of trade and commerce. It was also the era of agrarian expansion, increased use of money and the re-emergence of market economy in which goods were produced for swap rather than for local consumption. These centuries also witnessed a substantial growth of urban settlements in dissimilar parts of the sub-continent.

As already explained, the widespread practice of land grants had been an important factor in agrarian expansion. Though it is recognized that it is not easy to quantify this development, one can also not overlook the noticeable local variations and disparities. Though, the era from the beginning of the tenth century to the end of the thirteenth was the age of greater manufacture of both cereals and pulses as well as of commercial crops. Naturally, it created a favorable climate for widening the scope of both internal and external trade.

### ***Crafts and Industry***

The growth of agricultural manufacture was complemented through increased craft manufacture. In the first stage of early medieval era the decline of internal and external trade meant the narrowing down of markets for industrial products. The manufacture remained mainly confined to local and local needs. In the second stage, though, we notice a trend towards increased craft manufacture which stimulated the procedure of both local and inter-local swap.

Textile Industry, which had been well recognized since ancient times, urbanized as a major economic action. Coarse as well as fine cotton goods were now being produced. Marco Polo (A.D. 1293) and Arab writers praise the excellent excellence of cotton fabrics from Bengal and Gujarat. The availability of madder in Bengal and indigo in Gujarat might have acted as significant aides to the growth of textile industry in these regions. Manasollasa, a text of the twelfth century, also mentions Paithan, Negapatinam, Kalinga and Multan as significant centres of textile industry. The silk weavers of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu also constituted a very significant and influential part of the society.

The oil industry acquired great importance throughout this era. From the tenth century onwards, we get more references to the farming of oilseeds as well as to ghanaka or oil mills. An inscription from Karnataka refers to dissimilar kinds of oil mills operated both through men and bullocks. We also notice the affluence of oilmen public works. This designates that the oil industry offered profits to its members. Likewise, references to sugarcane farming and cane crushers in this era also indicate big level manufacture of jaggery and other shapes of sugar. Besides the agro- based industry, the

craftsmanship in metal and leather goods too reached a high stage of excellence. The literary sources refer to craftsmen linked with dissimilar kinds of metals such as copper, brass, iron, gold, silver, etc. A number of big beams at Puri and Konarka temples in Orissa indicate the proficiency of the iron smiths of India in the twelfth century. Iron was also used to manufacture swords, spearheads and other arms and weapons of high excellence. Magadha, Benaras, Kalinga and Saurashtra were recognized for the manufacture of good excellence swords. Gujarat was recognized for gold and silver embroidery. The Ginza records of the Jewish merchants belonging to the twelfth century reveal that Indian brass industry was so well recognized that the customers in Aden sent broken vessels and utensils to India to refashion them according to their own specifications. The existing specimens of Cola bronzes and those from Nalanda, Nepal and Kashmir display the excellence of the Indian metal workers.

In the field of leather industry Gujarat occupied an enviable location. Marco Polo mentions that the people of Gujarat made beautiful leather mats in red and blue which were skilfully embroidered with figures of birds and animals. These were in great demand in the Arab World.

### ***Coins and Other Media of Swap***

The revival of trade received considerable help from the re-emergence of metal money throughout the centuries under discussion. There is, though, substantial discussion in relation to the degree and stage of monetization. Very often the contenders of the penetration of money in the market invoke literary and inscriptional references to numerous conditions purporting to describe several kinds of coins of early medieval India. Therefore texts such as Prabandhachintamanf, Lilavati, Dravyapariksha, Lekhapaddhati, etc. mention bhagaka, rupaka, vimshatika, karshapana, dinar, dramma, nishka, gadhaiya-mudra, gadyanaka, tanka, and several other coins with their multiples. No less prolific are inscriptional references. For instance the Siyadoni inscription alone refers to diversities of drammas in the mid-tenth century. The Paramara Chalukya, Chahmana, Pratihara, Pala, Candella and Cola inscriptions corroborate mainly of the conditions establish in modern literature. There has also been considerable speculation in relation to the value of these coins, their

metal content and their connection with one another. Nothing could be more simplistic than to suggest the penetration of money in the market basically on the foundation of listing of numismatic gleanings from a mixed bag of inscriptions and literature. We need to scrutinize the contexts of such references. Characteristics requiring detailed exploration are:

- Whether references to coins are in the context of exchanges in the rural region or in the urban setting?
- The kinds of swap centres and the nature of “market” where such transactions take lay;
- The personnel involved in these transactions; and
- How distant are the inscriptional references to coins only notional? etc.

As distant as the actual specimens of coins are concerned, one can say that the practice of minting gold coins was revived through Gangeyadera (A.D. 1019-1040); the Kalacuri King of Tripuri (in Madhya Pradesh) after a gap of more than four centuries. Govindachandra, the Gahadavala King close to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, the Chandella rulers Kirtivarman and Madanavarman in Central India, King Harsha of Kashmir and some Cola Kings in Tamil Nadu also issued gold coins. Reference has already been made to sure early medieval coin kinds in Western and Northwestern India. In relation to the nine mints were founded in dissimilar parts of Karnataka throughout the twelfth and thirteenth century. A significant mint functioned at Shrimol (close to Jodhpur) in Rajasthan.

Despite the plethora of references to coins, the proof of overall volume of money in circulation is approximately negligible. Nor can one overlook the poor purchasing power of early medieval coins, irrespective of the metal used. All coins of the era were highly debased and reduced in weight. Also, in conditions of the rising population and expanding region of resolution, the use of money appears to have been highly restricted. The case revise of early medieval Rajasthan shows that the revival of trade, multiplication of swap centres and markets and prosperity of merchant families took lay only with the help of “partial monetization”. Likewise, the cash nexus on the Western coast (Konkan region) under the Shilaharas (c. (A.D. 850-1250) was also marked



through limited use of money. The kinds and denominations of coins remained not only very localized but could not penetrate deep into the economic ethos. Masses were distant absent from handling of coins. The currency organization of South India throughout A.D. 950-1300 also shows that transactions at all stages of the society were not equally affected through coined money. For instance, the fabulous expenses accounted to have been incurred through the Pandyas as regular buyers of imported horses cannot be thought in conditions of what we know as very poor Pandyan currency. Barter was still a significant means of swap in local inter-local and perhaps even in inter-national commerce. There are references which indicate that caravans of merchants exchanged their commodities with those of other regions. Horses imported from abroad were paid for not in cash but in Indian goods which may have been silk, spices or ivory. These Indian goods enjoyed constant demand in the markets all in excess of the world.

Though the revival of even “partial monetization” was contributing to economic growth, yet no less important was the parallel development of credit instrument through which debits and credits could be transferred without the handling of cash money. In the texts of the era we discover references to a device described *hundika* or the bill of swap which might have been used through merchants for commercial transactions. Through this device credit could be extended through one merchant to another and, therefore, the obstacle to commerce due to shortage of coined money could be overcome. The *Lakshapaddhati*, a text which throws light on the life of Gujarat in the twelfth- thirteenth centuries, refers to several means of raising loan for consumption as well as commercial ventures through the mortgage of land, homes and cattle.

### **Characteristics of Trade**

The increased agricultural manufacture and the momentum picked through industrial and craft manufacture was responsible for giving rise to a hierarchy of swap centres.

### ***Inland Trade***

A big diversity of commodities was accepted for trading through a

network of trade routes in the country. Let us first talk about the commodities of trade.

### *Commodities of Trade and their Consumers*

There are numerous inscriptions which refer to merchants carrying food grains, oil, butter, salt, coconuts, areca nuts, betel leaves, madder, indigo, candid sugar, jaggery, thread cotton fabrics, blankets, metals, spices, etc. from one lay to another, and paying taxes and tolls on them. Benjamin Tudela, a Jesuit priest from Spain (twelfth century) noticed wheat, barley and pulses, besides linsed fiber and cotton cloth brought through the traders to the island of Kish in the Persian Gulf on their method home from India. Al Idrisi also refers to the transshipment of rice from the country of Malabar to Sri Lanka in the twelfth century. The export of palm sugar and coir for ropes is noted through Friar Jordanus who wrote in relation to the A.D. 1330. Marco Polo refers to the export of indigo from Quilon (on the Malabar Coast) and Gujarat. Besides, cotton fabrics, carpets, leather mats, swords and spears also appear in several sources as significant articles of swap. High value things such as horses, elephants, jewellery, etc. also came to several swap centres.

The chief customers of Indian goods were of course the rich inhabitants of China, Arabia and Egypt. Several of the Indian goods might have established their method to Europe as well as via Mediterranean. While the characteristics of foreign trade will be discussed at length later, it needs to be highlighted that the domestic demand was not insignificant. A new class of consumers appeared as a result of big level land grants from the eighth century onwards. The priests who earlier subsisted on meager fees offered at domestic and other rites were now entitled to hereditary enjoyment of vast landed estates, benefices and rights. This new landowning class, beside with the ruling chiefs and rising mercantile class, became a significant buyer of luxuries and necessities because of their better purchasing power.

The brahmanical and non-brahmanical religious establishments, which commanded vast possessions in the form of landed estates and local levies, urbanized as significant consumers of approximately all marketable goods. They required not only such articles as coconuts, betel leaves and areca nuts, which had acquired great ritual sanctity, but also increased quantity of food for

presentation to gods or for sharing as prasadau. The personnel of religious establishments, which numbered up to several hundreds in case of big and significant temples, constituted a significant consuming group to be fed and clothed through peasants, artisans and merchants. Therefore big temples with their vast possessions and varied necessities also helped in generating commercial action. This phenomenon was more marked in South India where several temple sites became significant commercial centres.

### *Trade Routes and Means of Communication*

A vast network of roads linked dissimilar ports, markets and cities with one another and served as the channel of trade and commerce. The overland connections amongst dissimilar regions is indicated through the itinerary of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang who came to India in the seventh century from crossways the Hindukush and visited several cities and capitals from Kashmir in North to Kanchi in South and from Assam in East to Sindh in West. An inscription of A.D. 953 refers to merchants from Karnataka, Madhyadesha, South Gujarat and Sindh coming to Ahada in Rajasthan for mercantile behaviors. Bilhana, an eleventh century poet from Kashmir tells us in relation to the bus travels from Kashmir to Mathura, and how he reached Banaras after passing through Kannauj and Prayaga. From Banaras he proceeded to Somanatha (on the Saurashtra coast) via Dhar (close to Ujjain) and Anahilavada (in North Gujarat). From Somanatha, he sailed to Honavar (close to Goa), and then went overland to Rameshwaram on the Eastern coast. Albiruni (A.D. 1030) mentions fifteen routes which started from Kannauj, Mathura, Bayana, etc. The route from Kannauj passed through Prayaga and went eastward up to the port of Tamralipti (Tamluk in the Midnapur district of West Bengal), from where it went beside the Eastern coast to Kanchi in South. Towards the North-east, this route led to Assam. Nepal and Tibet, from where one could go overland to China. Kannauj and Mathura were also on the route to Balkh in the North-west. This also joined Peshawar and Kabul and ultimately the Grand Silk route connecting China with Europe. This North-western route was the chief channel of commercial intercourse flanked by India and Central Asia in the pre-Gupta centuries. But in the early medieval era, it was mainly under the control of Arab and Turkish traders who used it

primarily to bring horses from Persia, Balkh and other regions. The route starting from Bayana in Rajasthan passed through the desert of Marwar, and reached the contemporary port of Karachi in Sindh. A branch of this route passed through Abu in the Western foot of the Aravali Hills, and linked ports and cities of Gujarat with Bayana, Mathura and other spaces in North and North-western India. Another route from Mathura and Prayaga proceeded to the port of Broach on the Western coast via Ujjain. These routes played a significant role in opening the interior of India to the international sea trade which acquired a new dimension in the post-tenth centuries. Besides roads, the rivers in the plains of Northern India, and the sea route beside the Eastern and Western coasts in South India also served as significant means of inter-local contacts.

The pleasures and pains of travel in ancient times depended on the geographical circumstances of the trade routes. The routes through desert and hilly regions were certainly more arduous and hard. In the plains, bullock-carts were the chief means of conveyance, but where they could not ply animals, human carriers were employed to transport goods from one lay to another. In the modern literature, there are references to dissimilar kinds of boats which necessity have been used in river traffic whereas big ships plied on the high seas.

An important development in the post-tenth centuries was the keen interest shown through rulers to stay the highways in their kingdoms safe. They took events to punish thieves and robbers and provided military as well as monetary help to villagers to protect the traders and travelers passing through their region. The Chalukya kings of Gujarat had a separate department described the Jiala-patha-karana to look after highways. They also built new roads to connect significant ports and markets in their state and exhumed tanks and wells for the benefit of travelers. Trade being a significant source of revenue, political authorities had to be concerned in relation to the safety and well being of traders and merchants. Marco Polo's reference to Cambay as a lay free from pirates designates that Indian kings also took steps to safeguard their ports against piracy which was a major threat all beside the sea route from South China to the Persian Gulf.

## *Maritime Trade*

Throughout this era big level trading behaviors were accepted through sea. Here we will talk about the main countries occupied in sea trade, the commodities of trade, main ports and security of the sea routes. Let us first start with the main participants in maritime trade.

### *The Chief Participants*

The era under survey was marked through great expansion of sea trade flanked by the two extremities of Asia viz. the Persian Gulf and South China. India which lay midway flanked by the two extremities greatly benefited from this trade. The hazards of extensive sea voyages were sought to be curtailed through anchoring on the Indian coasts.

The Asian trade throughout these centuries was mainly dominated through the Arabs. After having destroyed the significant port and market of Valabhi on the Saurashtra coast in the eighth century, they made themselves the chief main time force in the Arabian Ocean. Though, it did not affect the location of Arabs who sustained to uphold their supreme hold on the Asian trade.

Fragmentary information in indigenous sources and notices in foreign accounts suggest that despite the forceful competition of the Arabs, Indians were going to the lands beyond the seas for trade from the tenth century onwards.

Abu Zaid, an Arab author of the tenth century refers to Indian merchants visiting Siraf in the Persian Gulf, while Ibn Battuta (14th century) tells us of a colony of Indian merchants at Aden in the Red Sea. A Gujarati text of the 14th century refers to a merchant Jagadu of Kutch who traded with Persia with the help of Indian mediators stationed at Hormuz. In South India, the Colas, took keen interest in maritime trade. The Tamil inscriptions establish in Malaya and Sumatra indicates the commercial behaviors of Tamil mercantile society in these regions. The Colas also sent a number of embassies to China to improve economic dealings with her. They even sent naval expedition against the Srivijaya empire in the eleventh century to stay the sea route to China safe for their trade. Though, through and big the references to the physical participation of Indian merchants are quite limited. This did not affect the

demand for Indian products which reached the outside world through the Arabs and the Chinese.

### *Commodities Exchanged*

As regards the articles involved in the Asian trade, the Chinese texts indicate that the Malabar coast received silk, porcelain-ware, camphor, cloves, wax, sandalwood, cardamom, etc. from China and South-east Asia. Mainly of these may have been the things of re-export to the Arabian world, but some were meant for India, particularly the silk which was always in great demand in local markets. Marco Polo informs us that the ships coming from the East to the ports of Cambay in Gujarat brought, in the middle of other things, gold, silver and copper. Tin was another metal which came to India from South-east Asia. -

In return for eastern products, India sent its aromatics and spices, particularly pepper. According to Marco Polo pepper was consumed at the rate of 10,000 pounds daily in the municipality of Kinsay (Hang-Chau) alone. Chau Ju Kua, a Chinese port official of the thirteenth century, tells us that Gujarat, Malwa, Malabar and Coromandel sent cotton cloth to China. It is pointed out through Ibn Battuta (A.D. 1333) that fine cotton fabrics were rarer and more highly priced than silk in the municipalities of China. India also exported ivory, rhinoceros horns, and some valuable and semiprecious stones to China.

A number of Arabic inscriptions establish at Cambay, Samaratha and Junagadh reveal that merchants and shippers from the Persian Gulf visited Western India in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The ships coming to the Gujarat coast from Hormuz in the Persian Gulf are also mentioned in the Lekhapaddhati.

As regards the articles of trade with the Arab and the Western World, the Jewish merchants accepted several goods from the West coast of India to the Egyptian markets. These incorporated spices, aromatics, dyes, medicinal herbs, bronze and brass vessels, textiles, pearls, drops, coconuts, etc. India also exported teakwood which was required for ship-structure and homes construction in the approximately treeless regions of Persian Gulf and South Arabia. Some surplus food-granules, mainly rice, were also sent out from the

Indian ports to the communities in other coastal regions which did not produce enough foodstuffs to meet their needs. The fine and embroidered leather mats of Gujarat were according to Marco Polo highly priced in the Arab world.

India was also recognized for its iron and steel products, particularly the swords and spears, which enjoyed a wide market in Western countries.

As distant as imports from the West are concerned, the mainly important thing was the horse. As the number of feudal lords and chiefs increased in the early medieval era, the demand for horses also increased manifold. Horses were brought both through land and sea. Ibn Battuta tells us that horse-dealers coming through the Northwestern land routes earned big profits. According to an Arab author, Wassaf (A.D. 1328) more than 10,000 horses were brought annually to the Coromandel coast, Cambay and other ports of India in the thirteenth century. Horses were brought from such spaces as Bahrein, Muscat, Aden, Persia, etc. Besides horses, dates, ivory, coral, emeralds, etc. were also brought to India from the West.

### *Ports*

Ports There were a number of ports on the Indian coasts, which not only served the inland trade network but also acted as a link flanked by the eastern and western trade. In information, approximately every creek that could give facility for a safe anchorage of ships, urbanized into a port of some national or international significance.

On the mouth of the Indus, Debal was a significant port which according to Al Idrisi (twelfth century), was visited through vessels from Arabia as well as from China and other Indian ports. Chief ports on the Gujarat coast were Somanatha, Broach and Cambay.

Somanatha had links with China in the East and Zanzibar (in Africa) in the West, Broach or ancient Bhrigukachha has had a very extensive history. Cambay is recognized as Khambayat in Arabic sources, and Stambhatirtha in Sanskrit sources. Its earliest reference goes back to the ninth century A.D. Sopara and Thana were other significant ports on the Western coast of India.

On the Malabar coast, Quilon had appeared as the mainly significant port. The Arab Writers tell us that ships coming from the West described at the port of Quilon for collecting fresh water before sailing for Kedah in South-east

Asia. Likewise, the Chinese sources of the thirteenth century also state that Chinese traders going to the country of the Arabs had to change their ships at Quilon.

Throughout the three centuries flanked by the tenth and thirteenth, the Coromandel coast urbanized into a virtual clearing homes for the ships coming from the East and West. The Arab author, Wassaf, tells us that the wealth of the isles of the Persian Gulf and the beauty of other countries as distant as Europe is derived from the Coromandel coast. The mainly significant port in this region was Nagapattinam. Puri and Kalingapattam were significant ports on the Orissa coast. In Bengal the fortunes of Tamralipti were reviving though according to some scholars, it was being superseded through another port of Saptagrama.

### ***Revival of Cities***

The second stage of early medieval India (c.900-1300 A.D.) was a departure from the preceding two centuries in as distant as it is marked through a very distinctive revival of urban centres. This revival became an approximately all India phenomenon. It is often described as the third urbanisation” of the Indian sub-continent.

## **TRADING COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATION**

### **Trader as a Link**

The traders form a significant link flanked by producers and consumers. They collect agricultural surplus and products of artisans and craftsmen from dissimilar regions and distribute them in excess of a wide region. Throughout the early medieval centuries, the procedure of collection and sharing of goods involved a big number of merchants, big as well as small, local as well as inter-local. There were hawkers, retailers and other petty traders on the one hand and big merchants and caravan traders on the other. While their role was adversely affected throughout the first stage (A.D. 700-900) on explanation of limited commercial swap, the revival of trade in the second stage (A.D. 900-1300) led to considerable augment in the status, effectiveness and power of merchant communities. The ancient Indian texts specify trade beside with



agriculture and cattle rearing as the lawful means of livelihood for vaishyas. In the seventh century, the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang distinctly mentions vaishyas as traders and shudras as cultivators. Though, the procedure of the two coming closer had already started and shudras were undertaking trade in such articles as wine, honey, salt malt, etc. The barriers of brahmanical varna order were crumbling in the post-Gupta centuries and people were adopting professions cutting crossways varna divisions. Trade was followed through the people of all varnas and castes. Some were compelled to take it up while others establish it more lucrative than other economic behaviors.

### **Location of Merchants throughout the First Stage (c. A.D. 700-900)**

In view of the relative decline of trade throughout these centuries, the role of merchants in the society was considerably eroded. As trade slumped and markets disappeared, the merchants had to seek patronage and shelter with the temples and other emerging landed magnates. It robbed them of their self-governing commercial action, and forced them to cater to the needs and necessities of their patrons. Some inscriptions from Orissa and Central India reveal that traders, artisans and merchants were amongst those who were transferred to donees. This necessity has meant a serious reduction in their free trading behaviors. Nor is there any important proof of administrative role being assigned to merchants flanked by the eighth and tenth centuries. This is in obvious contrast to their role in management apparent from sticks and sealings from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar throughout the Gupta era. Though, trade did not disappear totally, some merchants were still active, particularly beside the coast. But they were small in number and their behaviors were mainly confined to the luxury articles required through kings, chiefs and temples. In South India too, trade was not a very significant action throughout the centuries under survey. This is indicated through the relative absence of the mention of merchants as a separate class in the records of the era. In other words, it can be said that the first stage of early medieval India was marked through the thinning absent, if not disappearance, of the wealthy and free merchant class.

### **Location of Merchants Throughout the Second Stage (C.A.D.900-1300)**

The second stage of early medieval India brought the mercantile society back into prominence, and we notice big number of merchants carrying luxury and essential goods from one lay to another. They accumulated fabulous wealth through commercial exchanges and acquired fame in society through creation gifts to temples and priests. Several of them took active part at several stages of management, and even occupied the ministerial positions in royal courts.

The literature and inscriptions of the era refer to the big number of merchants who were recognized through the specialized trade they followed. Therefore, we come crossways dealers in gold, perfumes, wine, granules, horses, textiles, curds, betels, etc. Some of the merchants employed retailers or assistants to help them in trading behaviors. As inter-local trade urbanized a group of merchants specialized in examining and changing coins for traders. Money lending also became one of the major behaviors of merchants. Though people deposited money in temple treasury for the religious purpose of endowing flowers, oil, lamps, there are very few references to guilds accepting deposits and paying interest thereon. There appeared a separate group of merchants, described nikshepa-vanika in western India, who specialized in banking or money lending. The Lakhapaddhati, a text from Gujarat, refers to a merchant's son who claimed his share in the ancestral property to start the business of money lending. Medhatithi, a legal commentator, speaks of the association or corporation of moneylenders. The modern literature, though, presents a bad picture of moneylenders and describes them as greedy and untrustworthy who cheat general man through misappropriating deposits.

This era also witnessed the emergence of several local merchant groups, i.e. the merchants who were recognized after the region they belonged to. They were mostly from Western India. As this region had a wide network of significant land routes connecting coastal ports with the cities and markets of northern India, the merchants of sure specific spaces in this region establish it more profitable to specialize in inter-local trade. Therefore, the merchant groups described Oswal derive their name from a lay described Osia, Palivalas from Patlli, Shrimali from Shrimala, Modha from Modhera and so on. Mainly

of them are now a days collectively recognized as Marwaris, i.e. the merchants from Marwar. Separately from their functional and local names, merchants were also recognized through several common conditions, the two mainly general being—shreshthi and sarthavaha. Both these conditions were recognized from very early times.

Sresthi was a rich wholesale dealer who existed in a city and accepted on his business with the help of retailers and mediators. At times he lent out goods or money to small merchants, and therefore acted as a banker too, though, as we have already pointed out, money lending was becoming a separate and specialized action.

The sarthavaha was the caravan leader under whose guidance the merchants went to distant spaces to sell and purchase their goods. He was supposed to be a highly capable person knowing not only the routes but also the languages as well as the rules of swap in dissimilar regions. The expansion of agriculture and the availability of surplus from the 8th/9th century onwards led to augment in commercial exchanges in South India too. It resulted in the emergence of a full time trading society looking after the local swap.

This society also participated in wider inter-local and inter-oceanic trade. As in the North, South Indian merchants too specialized in the trade of specific commodities such as textiles, oil or ghee, betel leaves, horses, etc. At the local stage, local markets described nagaram were the centres of swap. They were situated in a cluster of agrarian settlements, and they integrated not only collection from hinterland but also commercial traffic from other regions.

The numbers of these nagarams increased considerably throughout the Cola era in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the term nagarattar, i.e. member of the nagaram assembly, became a generic term for all Tamil merchants.

### **Social Role of Traders**

As growth of trade brought economic prosperity to merchants, they sought to gain social prestige through participating in the maintenance of temples, priests and religious functions. Numerous inscriptions refer to the grant of

cash or goods through merchants for these purposes. Some merchants became very influential and joined the ranks of state officials and ministers. A tenth century inscription refers to a merchant of Modha caste who was the chief of Sanjan (close to Thane) in Maharashtra. In Gujarat, the merchant family of Vimala played a significant role in the political and cultural life of the region. He and his descendants Vastupala and Tajapala occupied significant ministerial positions at the court and are recognized for structure the well-known marble temples dedicated to Jaina gods at Mount Abu. A thirteenth century inscription from central Gujarat reveals that several significant merchants, traders and artisans were a part of the local administrative bodies.

### ***Character and Conduct of Traders***

The foreign authors and travelers such as Al-Idrisi (twelfth century) and Marco Polo (thirteenth century) praise Indian traders for their truthfulness and honesty in business dealings. But in the modern Indian literature we come across several instances of greedy and dishonest merchants. The Kashmiri author Kshemendra refers to a typically selfish merchant who used to feel overjoyed at the approach of a famine or some other calamity because he could expect good money on his hoarded food granules. A text of the eleventh century from Western India, divides merchants in two main classes—on the foundation of their location and character—high and low. It points out that rich merchants who indulged in big level sea or land trade enjoyed great reputation while small merchants such as hawkers, retailers, etc. who cheated people through using false weights and events were looked down upon in society. It also comprises artisans in the list of dishonest people. It may, though, be noted that some of these views reflect the modern feudal tendency in which persons working with their own hands and possessions were measured low in society.

### **Organisation of Traders**

The merchants derived their power and prestige not only from wealth but also from the guilds or associations shaped through them to protect their interests. In the first stage the decline of trade weakened the corporate action of merchants, and several of the guilds were reduced to mere local or

occupational sub-castes. But as trade revived in the second stage, merchant guilds reappeared as a significant characteristic of the modern economic life.

### ***Guilds: Definition and Functions***

What was a merchant guild? How did it function? What were the benefits which accrued to its members? These are significant questions to be answered. Well the guilds were voluntary associations of merchants dealing in the similar kind of commodity such as granules, textiles, betel leaves, horses, perfumes, etc. They were shaped through both local as well as itinerant merchants. The association of local merchants having permanent residence in city was more permanent in nature than the association of itinerant merchants which was shaped only for a specific journey and was terminated at the end of each venture.

The guilds framed their own rules and regulations concerning the membership and the code of conduct. They fixed the prices of their goods and could even decide that specific commodity was not to be sold on a scrupulous day through its members. They could refuse to trade on a scrupulous day through its members. They could refuse to trade in a scrupulous region if they establish the local authorities hostile or uncooperative. The guild merchants also acted as the custodians of religious interests. The inscriptions refer to numerous instances when they collectively agreed to pay an additional tax on the sale and purchase of their goods for the maintenance of temples or temple functions.

The guild normally worked under the leadership of a chief who was elected through its members. He performed the functions of a magistrate in deciding the economic affairs of the guild. He could punish, condemn or even expel those members who violated the guild rules. One of his main duties was to deal directly with the King, and settle the market tolls and taxes on behalf of his fellow merchants. The growth of corporate action enabled guild-chiefs to consolidate their power and location in society, and several of them acted as the representative of their members on the local administrative councils.

A member of the guild worked under a strict code of discipline and was also robbed of some initiative or action but still he enjoyed numerous benefits. He received full backing of the guild in all his economic behaviors and was,

therefore, saved from the harassment of local officials. Unlike a hawker or vendor, he had greater credibility in the market on explanation of his membership of the guild. Therefore, inspired by the information that guild-chiefs tended to be rude and authoritative at times, the merchants established guilds as a significant means of seeking physical and economic protections.

The digests and commentaries of the era refer to the corporate body of merchants through several conditions, such as naigama, shreni, samuha, sartha, samgha, etc. The naigama is described as an association of caravan merchants of dissimilar castes who travel jointly for the purpose of carrying on trade with other countries. Shreni, according to Medhatithi, was a group of people following the similar profession such as that of traders, moneylenders, artisans, etc. though some authors measured it to be a group of artisans alone. The Lekhapaddhati designates that a special department described the Shreni-karana was constituted through the kings of western India to look after the behaviors of the guilds of merchants and artisans in their region. Another text Manasollasa reveals that several merchant guilds maintained their own troops (shrenibala) for personal safety. Inscriptions too refer to the corporate action of merchants. An inscription from western India refers to vanika-mandala which was almost certainly a guild of local merchants.

### ***Organisation of Trading Guilds in South India***

The expansion of agriculture and the growth of trade from the tenth century led to the emergence of several merchant guilds or organisations in South India too. The inscriptions refer to these organisations often as samaya, i.e. an organisation born out of an agreement or contract in the middle of its members to follow a set of rules and regulations.

The two mainly significant merchant guilds of South India were recognized as the Ayyavole and the Manigraman. Geographically, the region of their operation corresponded to the present day state of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and South Andhra Pradesh. The Cola kings from the tenth century onwards made a concerted effort to trade and commerce through trade missions, maritime expeditions, abolition of tolls, etc. It greatly increased the behaviors of these guilds which were involved in not only inter-local but also inter-oceanic trade crossways the Bay of Bengal.

The merchant guild described Ayyavole was also recognized as the guild of “the 500 Swami of Aihole” nanadeshi. While some have argued that such organisations were primarily traders in several kinds of merchandise and not a single unified corporation of merchants.

The organisation might have had an initial membership of 500. But there is no denying the information that with the growth of trade and commerce, the Vira Bananjas (on behalf of the trading guild of Ayyavole) operated on a trans-local plane and had urbanized deep socio-economic interests flanked by the ninth and fifteenth centuries. They spread from Bhalvani (in Sangli district in Maharashtra) in the north to Kayalpattinam (in Tamil Nadu) in the South. The number “five hundred” also became conventional as the guild became a much superior body and drew its members from several regions, religions and castes. It is in this context that the term nanadeshi came to be used for this organisation.

In course of outward expansion, the members of the Ayyavole guild interacted with the local markets described nagaram, and promoted commercial action through collecting agricultural goods from the hinterland and distributing the goods brought from elsewhere. The commercial power of Ayyavole spread even beyond South India. It is indicated through the inscriptions establish at Burma, Java, Sumatra and Sri Lanka. As the mercantile behaviors of Ayyavole increased, some of its members became quite rich and powerful, and acquired the title of samaya chakravarti. i.e. the emperor of the trading organisation.

Another significant merchant guild of South India was the Manigraman. It first appeared beside the Kerala coast in the ninth century A.D. Though, as it slowly came into secure get in touch with, with the Ayyavole, it greatly improved upon its inter-local behaviors and sheltered a big part of the peninsula. A ninth century Tamil inscription establish at Takua pa on the West coast of Malaya designates that it was occupied in the extensive aloofness sea trade from the very beginning.

Anjuvannam was another body of merchants in South India, which almost certainly represented an association of foreign merchants, and not a group of five communities or castes as some scholars consider. Like the Manigramam,

it also began its commercial action beside the Kerala coast in the eighth or ninth century, and slowly spread out to other coastal regions of South India through the eleventh century. It interacted both with local merchants as well as the Ayyavole and Manigramam organisations.

The importance acquired through trading guilds is apparent in the conscious effort to trace exalted genealogies of traders of several corporations. The Vira Bananjas of the Ayyavole, for instance, are said to have been born in the race of Vasudeva and their qualities are compared with those of several epic heroes. A typical prashasti (panegyric) of the Vira Bananjas may be seen in the following account established in the Kolhapur stone inscription of the Shilahar King Gandarditya dated in A.D. 130:

- “Hail! They who are adorned through a multitude of numerous virtues obtained through following the religion of the Five hundred Heroic Men renowned in the whole world; who are virtuous through cause of the maintenance of the code of the heroic Bananjas consisting of truthfulness, pure conduct, agreeable behaviour, political wisdom, courtesy and mercantile knowledge who are exalted with their unfailing adventurous spirit....who are born in the race of Vasudeva, Khandali and Mulabhadra...who are invincible when they fight; who are like Brahma in respect of proficiency of the sixty-four arts; like Narayana in the possession of Chakra (talk about ); like Rudra, who is the fire of the world destruction in slaying their opponents through their gaze....who are like Rama in perseverance; like Arjuna in valour; like Bhishma in purity of conduct; like Bhima in adventurous spirit; like Yudhishtira in righteousness like Kama in charity and like the sun in brilliance ”

In short, the vast trading network in South India was controlled through a number of merchant organisations which worked in secure cooperation and harmony with one another. The guild-chiefs, on explanation of their manage on trade and trading organisations, recognized secure links with the royal houses and enjoyed great name and fame in the society.



## **Connection Flanked by Merchants and Craftsmen**

The exact nature of connection flanked by the merchants and craftsmen, the two interdependent parts of commercial world, is not recorded in the modern sources. It is, so, not recognized whether craftsmen such as weavers, metalworkers, etc. acted independently or worked under the command of merchants who supplied them money or raw material or both. There is, though, some proof to suggest that as merchants came to exert greater manage on the mobilization of raw material and finished products, their power on the behaviors of artisans increased considerably. Albiruni, who came to India in the eleventh century as well as Lakshmidhara, a jurist of the 12th century, tell us that artisans existed in the midst of merchants. It may suggest that merchants supplied capital and raw material to artisans who were to produce goods as per the demand and specifications provided through merchants. There are references to some oilmen and weavers who sold their goods themselves and became rich enough to create endowments to temples and priests. In common, the artisans and craftsmen throughout the early medieval era were economically dependent on big merchants.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- How did brahmadeyas helped in agrarian expansion?
- What was the nature of rights enjoyed through land grantees?
- Describe briefly the main methods of irrigation.
- What was the pattern of commerce in early medieval era? Did it effect the pattern of land ownership?
- What are the significant characteristics of a city spelt through Gordon Childe?
- What led to the transformation of some rural centres in to urban?
- How did the trading behaviors help in the growth of cities ?
- Did religious centres play a role in the procedure of urbanization?
- How did the Arabs power the Indian trade flanked by 8th-12th centuries A.D.?
- Briefly comment on the diversity and excellence of textiles produced in India flanked by 9th-13th centuries.
- Describe-briefly the main land routes used for trading purposes.
- Describe the Guilds of merchants. List their main functions.

## **CHAPTER 2.**

### **Society and Culture: 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Century**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Social organisation
- Ideology
- Development of regional cultural traditions
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this chapter you will be able to familiarize yourself with the:

- Myth of an unchanging and the so-described static Indian society.
- Copious and varied literary and epigraphic sources useful for reconstructing the nature of social change.
- Varying perspectives on the social set-up ranging from a call for creation of a more rigid and an all-out cry to question its fundamental bases.
- Role of the changing material base in social transformation.
- Complexities of defining ideology.
- Nuances of ideology and the ways of looking at these.
- Major stages in the writings on ideology from several standpoints.
- Recent growths in the analysis of ideology.
- Emergence of regional cultural units.
- Development of architectural styles and foundation of classifying several temples.
- Connection between the ecological setting and temple constructions.

#### **SOCIAL ORGANISATION**

##### **Sources for the Reconstruction of Society**

There is a very wide ranging source material for the reconstruction of

social organisation throughout half a millennium (circa eighth to the thirteenth centuries). These sources comprise both literary and epigraphic notices. Practically all major powers of India are recognized to us through copious inscriptional data. Though no quantification has been attempted at an all India stage, the number of the post-Gupta inscriptions necessarily run in thousands even on a rough impressionistic assessment. These inscriptions are accessible in a diversity of languages and scripts. These records help us in identifying regional and regional peculiarities without sacrificing a macro view of the sub-continental scene.

The literary sources are also very varied. It is not merely the writings on dharmashastras in the form of commentaries and other dharma-nibandhas which tell us in relation to the ups and downs in the social organization. Even works belonging to the realms of kavyas (poetic works), drama, technological and scientific works as well as treatises and architecture throw enormous light on the post-Gupta growths in the sphere of society. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, Naishadhiyacharita of Shriharsha, Prabandha Chintamani of Merutunga, Soddhala's *Udaya-Sundari-Katha*, Adipurana of Jinasena, the dohas of the Siddhas, Medhatithi's and Vigyaneshwar's commentaries on the Manusmriti and Yajnavalkyasmriti respectively, and works such as *Manasollasa*, *Mayamata* and *Aparajitapriccha* are useful aids for reconstructing the social fabric of India throughout the era under survey.

### **Brahmanical Perspective: Rising Rigidity**

Coming of mlecchas such as the Hunas, Arabs, Turks, etc. had created a fear psychosis and resulted in a tendency, where the emphasis was on the need to preserve the age-old social order. Shankaracharya, the well-known religio-philosophic leader stated that the varna and ashramadharmas were in a disturbed state. Dhanapala, a writer of the eleventh century, also talks in relation to the chaos in the conduct of varna order. Several rulers flanked by the sixth and thirteenth centuries create rather pompous claims in relation to the preserving the social order. These are reflected in their inscriptions. Varnashrama-dharma-sthapana, i.e. the establishment of the organization of varna and ashrama becomes a regularly used expression in modern

inscriptions. A twelfth-century work described Manasollasa even mentions varnadhikarin—an officer responsible for the maintenance of varnas. It needs to be underlined that this trend of closing social ranks, creation social organization rigid and denouncing all efforts to change the organization was mainly the concern of Brahmanical law givers and political advisers who had urbanized vested interests in maintaining a status quo. Though, it was through no means a universal phenomenon.

### **Voices of Dissent**

The fundamental bases of the caste organization were being questioned, especially through non-brahmanical followers. Centuries ago the Buddha had raised doubts in relation to the rationale of castes based on birth. His anger was particularly heaped upon brahmanas. Though these voices could not achieve important breakthrough in the extensive run, they did not cease either. Simmering discontent against the brahmanical social order raised its head at regular intervals. No wonder, in Dharmapariksha (eleventh century) Jaina Amitagati determined caste on the foundation of personal conduct. The caste superiority of the brahmanas was challenged through the Jainas in such works as the Kathakoshprakarana. A satirical work described Latakamelaka mentions a Buddhist monk who denies importance of caste, regards it as baseless and denounces pollution and caste-based segregation. Kshendra, the literary genius of Kashmir refers to Kula-Jati-darpa (vanity of caste and clan) as a disease of the society for which he himself was a physician. The Padmapurana reveals a disagreement of two ideologies—the orthodox one enjoining on the shudra a life of penury, and the heterodox one urging upon him the importance of wealth.

- An eleventh century work focuses on social ranks and divisions based not on birth but on occupations. While the priests of dissimilar religions are described hypocrites, the second broad social classification of householders takes note of the following six categories:
  - The highest incorporated chakravartins,
  - The high ones comprised the feudal elite,

- The middle ones incorporated traders, moneylenders, possessors of cows, buffaloes, camels, horses, etc.
- Small businessmen and petty cultivators,
- The degraded ones such as the members of guilds of artisans and craftsmen, and
- The highly degraded incorporated chandalas and others following ignoble occupations such as killing of birds and animals.

It is obvious that this social categorization takes note of economic factors in the determination of social status. Even if such attempts were not aiming at a more egalitarian society than the one espoused and buttressed through the brahmanical interest; even if such categorizations illustrate their biases and prejudices, it needs to be highlighted that such reconstructions were evidently more rational.

### **Changing Material Base and the New Social Order**

The aforesaid review of broad but conflicting trends shows that the social organisation was in a flux and distant from being harmonious. Indeed, it could not have been so, particularly in view of the momentous changes taking place in the economic structure of the sub-continent. The mechanics of the social organization is hard to comprehend if the improving economic circumstances of a sizeable number of lower classes are ignored. One single factor which appears to have set the tone of the post-Gupta society, especially from the eighth-century, was the ever rising phenomenon of land grants. Its impact on the agrarian expansion changed the whole social outlook. This was coupled with:

- A fillip to tendencies of regionalization,
- Its bearing on fluctuations in the urban setting,
- Its nexus with the monetary organization,
- Its role in rising social and economic immobility and subjection of peasantry
- And non-agricultural toiling workers, and
- The resultant hierarchy of ruling landed aristocracy.

A new social ethos was in the creation. It was shown that the new trends in Indian economy were conducive to feudal formation. In the realm of political organization too, a great majority of power centres were marked through feudal tendencies based on graded land rights. No wonder, the social landscape could not escape the domineering impact of the fast pace of economic changes. The resultant social changes demolish the myth of an unchanging and static social organization of India which was propagated through colonialist and imperialist historians. Regrettably, even nationalist historians too did not question such assumptions. More recent writings, especially of the last three decades, have rightly focused on the dynamism and vibrancy of the Indian social fabric through highlighting its interlinks with changing economic patterns.

### **The New Social Ethos**

The post-eighth century social organisation which appears to have prevailed till at least the establishment of the Turkish political power in the thirteenth century, was marked through:

- Modifications in the varna organization such as the transformation of shudras into cultivators thereby bringing them closer to the vaishyas,
- Newly founded brahmanical order in bengal and south india wherein the intermediary varnas were absent, and finally, rise of the new literate class struggling for a lay in the varna order,
- Phenomenal augment in the rise of new mixed castes,
- Unequal sharing of land and military power, which in turn, accounts for the emergence of feudal ranks cutting crossways varna distinctions, and
- Rising proof of social tensions.

### ***Emergence of Shudras as Cultivators***

The expansion of the rural legroom and agricultural behaviors had been responsible for changes in notions in relation to the persons entitled to

undertake these. The law books of the post-Gupta centuries contain agriculture in the samanya-dharma (general job) of all the varnas. The smriti of Parashar further emphasizes that in addition to their traditional sixfold duties (learning, teaching, sacrificing, officiating as sacrifice to help others, acceptance of gifts from a worthy person of three higher varnas as and creation of gifts), the brahmanas could also be associated with agricultural behaviors, preferably through labour of shudras. It was also enjoined upon brahmanas that in order to avoid any type of sin, they should illustrate proper treatment to oxen and offer sure fixed quantities of com to King, Gods and fellow brahmanas.

Surely, such formalities indicate that very important dent was being made in the brahmanical social order and the varna norms were being sought to be redefined. A major indicator of this effort was the bridging of the gap flanked by the vaishyas and the shudras. While this trend creates its beginnings in the early centuries of the Christian era, it is important that in the post-Gupta centuries the vaishyas practically lose their identity as a peasant caste. The well-known Chinese traveller of the early seventh century, Hsuan-Tsang, mentions shudras as agriculturists. Al-biruni, who came to India beside Mahmud Ghaznavi in the first quarter of the eleventh century, also notes the absence of any variation flanked by the vaishyas and shudras. The Skanda Purana talks in relation to the pitiable circumstances of the vaishyas. Through the eleventh century they came to be treated with the shudras, both ritually and legally. Al-biruni, for instance, says that both vaishyas and shudras were punished with amputation of the tongue for reciting the Vedic texts. There were sure shudras who were described bhojyanna, i.e. food prepared through whom could be taken even through brahmanas. Several Tantric and Siddha teachers were shudras performing works of fishermen, leather workers, washermen, blacksmiths, etc. A text of the eighth century states that thousands of mixed castes were produced as a result of marriages flanked by vaishya women and men of lower castes. There is also a mention of anashrita shudras (shudras who were not dependent) who were well-to-do and sometimes became members of the regional administrative committees and even made their method into the ruling aristocracy.

Such achievements of shudras were, of course, rather rare. Dependent

peasants, ploughmen and artisans were greatly needed to strengthen the early medieval economic and political set-up characterized through a relatively self-sufficing regional economy and the emergence of a dominant class of rural aristocracy. Such a need was being fulfilled through the approximation of the vaishyas and shudras. This happened despite persistence of brahmana orthodoxy reflected in the attitude of Parashar who threatened the shudras abandoning their duty of serving the dvijas with the dire consequence of hell. Even some orthodox parts of the jainas had urbanized the notion that the shudras were not eligible for religious initiation.

### ***Absence of Intermediary Varnas in Bengal and South India***

The aforesaid tendency of removing distinctions flanked by the vaishyas and shudras resulted in the emergence of a social order typified through an absence of intermediary varnas in Bengal and South India. The new brahmanical order in these regions provided mainly for brahmins and shudras. This may have been partly due to the power of non-brahmanical religions in these regions. Though, the nature of the progress of brahmanism also contributed to this development. It was not a case of mass migration of violent Sanskrit speaking people. There was considerable intermixing and acculturation. Tribal and non-brahmanical population in the peripheral regions were admitted to the brahmanical organization as shudras. Several early medieval texts give extensive lists of aboriginal forest tribes who had been instrumental in the rise of political powers. From the ninth to the thirteenth centuries approximately all powers fought Abhiras. The Brahmavaivarta Purana, which is attributed to Bengal of the thirteenth century, refers to such tribal people as like Agaris, Ambashthas, Bhillas, Chandalas, Kaunchas etc, who were accommodated as shudras in the brahmanical order. The King raised the location of the Kaivarthas, potters, blacksmiths, garlandmakers while the goldsmiths and trader-brahmanas were degraded. In the region of another Sena King (Lakshmana Sena), a writer says in connection with the unfurling ceremony of traders' banner described Shakraadvaja: "O where are the traders who once held you aloft. You are now being used as plough or animal post." Vallalaseana's degrading of trading brahmanas can also be favourably compared with allusions to nishad brahmanas (aboriginal priests creation their



method into the brahmana fold) who got recognized as brahmanas but were assigned low status in the society. In South India, a Shaiva brahmana teacher described Basava preached religious equality of men and women. The tendency to eliminate, intermediary varnas is also noticeable in the status of scribes. The Kayasthas, Karanas, Lekhakas and lipikaras are classed as shudras. Similar was true of gavundas (contemporary day Gowdas in Karnataka) in medieval Deccan.

### ***Rise of a New Literate Class***

Though the first kayastha is mentioned in Gupta inscriptions from Bengal, the post-Gupta inscriptions are full of references to a great diversity of people involved in record keeping behaviors. Separately from kayasthas, these incorporated karanas, karanikas, pustapala, lekhaka, divira, aksharachanchu, dharmalekhin, akshapatalika, etc. Though these scribes were being recruited from dissimilar varnas, later they got crystallized into separate castes with attendant marriage restrictions. From the ninth century we hear of a big number of kayastha families such as Valabha, Ganda, Mathur, Kataria, Shrivastavya, Negam, etc. The use of Kula and Vamsha with kayastha from the eleventh century and conditions such as jati and gyati with kayastha from 12th—13th century illustrate that the emergence of the kayastha caste was apparent. Individual kayasthas began to play leading role in learning and literature. Tathagatarakshita of Orissa who belonged to a family of physicians through profession and kayastha through caste, was a reputed professor of Tantras in the Vikramashilla University (in Bihar) in the twelfth century.

### ***Phenomenal Augment in the Rise of New Mixed Castes***

This is one of the mainly distinctive characteristics of social changes throughout the centuries under reference. The Brahmavaivarta Purana dictum deshaheda (variation based on regions/territories) leads to differences in castes. A village named Brihat-Chhattivanna (inhabited through 36 varnas) is mentioned in a tenth century inscription from Bengal. No varna seemed to have remained homogeneous and got fragmented on explanation of territorial affiliations, purity of gotras and pursuance of specific crafts, professions and vocations:

- **Amongst Brahmanas:** The multiplication of castes as a phenomenon appears to be mainly pronounced in the middle of brahmanas. They were no longer confined to their traditional sixfold duties. Separately from occupying high governmental positions such as those of ministers, purohitas, judges, etc. they had also started performing military functions. For instance, the senapati of Prithviraj Chauhan was a brahmana named Skanda and another brahmana named Rak was leading the army of a ruler of Sapadalalaksha (in Rajasthan). Inscriptions from Pehoa and Siyadoni and dated in ninth-tenth century mention brahmanas as horse dealers and betel sellers. The eleventh century Kashmiri writer Kshemendra mentions brahmanas performing functions of artisans, dancers and indulging in the sale of wine, buttermilk, salt, etc. Functional distinction of brahmanas is reflected in such titles as: Shrotriya, pandita, maharaja-pandita, dikshit, yajnik, pathaka, upadhyaya, thakkura, agnihotri, etc

Mitakshara, the well-known commentary on the Smriti of Yagyavalkya speaks of the ten-fold gradation of brahmanas ranging from Deva (who is a professor, and devoted to religion and shastras) and Chandala, who does not perform sandhya three times a day. In between were the shudrabrahmanas who existed through profession of arms and temple priests.

Divisions within the brahmana varna were also caused through territorial affiliations. In North India we hear of Sarasvat, Kanyakubja, Maithi, Ganda and Utkal brahmanas. In Gujarat and Rajasthan they were recognized in conditions of their mula (original lay of environment) and divided into Modha, Udichya, Nagara, etc. Through the late medieval times, the brahmanas were split into in relation to the 180 mulas. There were also the feelings of superiority. While there was a phenomenal migration of brahmanas, some regions were measured to be papadeshas (impious regions). These incorporated Saurashtra, Sindh and Dakshinapath.

- **Amongst Kshatriyas:** The ranks of kshatriyas also swelled in the post-eighth century. Numerous works provide varying lists of 36 clans of Rajputs in northern India alone. They arose out of dissimilar strata of

population—kshatriyas, brahmanas, some other tribes including even the original ones and also out of the ranks of foreign invaders who settled here and got assimilated into the Indian social organization. While the traditional notion invested the kshatriya varna as a whole with functions of rulership, the ideologues were never opposed to recognising in several cases the non-kshatriya rulers as kshatriyas. It is said that from in the middle of the captured “respectable men were enrolled in the middle of the Shekhavnt and the Wadhela tribes of Rajputs whilst the lower types were allotted to castes of Kolis, Khantas and Mers”. Some of the new kshatriyas were described Samskara-Varjita, i.e. they were deprived of ritualistic rites. This may be taken as a cover-up for their admission to the brahmanical social order through inferior rites.

- **Amongst Vaishyas and Shudras:** The procedure of caste proliferation did not leave the vaishyas and shudras untouched. While these two broad varnas, there is an equally unmistakable proof of jatis (castes). Like the brahmanas, the vaishyas too were being recognized with regional affiliations. Therefore, we explanation for vaishyas described Shrimal's, Palliwals, Nagar, Disawats, etc. No less striking is the heterogeneity of the Shudras who had been performing multifarious functions. They were agricultural laborers, petty peasants, artisans, craftsman, servants and attendants. The Brahma Vaivarta Purana lists as several as one hundred castes of shudras. In their case too, these sub-divisions were based on regional and territorial affiliations. In addition, shudra castes were also emerging which were related to a specific procedure of industrial working, e.g. Padukakrit, Charmakara (makers of shoes, leather workers), etc. Crystallization of crafts into castes was a complementary phenomenon. It appears that napita, modaka, tambulika, suvarnakara, sutrakara, malakara, etc. appeared as castes out of several crafts. These castes increased with the growth of ruling aristocracy and their dependence is reflected in their characterization as ashrita. Their subjection and immobility is indicated in the transfer of trading guilds (described shrenis or

prakritis) to brahmana donees. An inscription of 1000 A.D, belonging to Yadava mahasamanta Bhillama-II defines the donated village as comprising eighteen guilds. Incidentally, these guilds also functioned as castes.

### **Land Sharing, Feudal Ranks and Varna Distinctions**

The studies of the post-Gupta economic and political structures have taken due note of newly appeared graded land rights. The hierarchy of officials and vassals also shows the impact of unequal sharing of land. The multifarious functions of vassals and officials, illustrate in the middle of other characteristics a strong predilection of military obligations. The nature of power dispersal and its links with the structure of land sharing were bound to power the social set-up as well. One very important dimension of this impact was the emergence of feudal ranks cutting crossways varna distinctions. Constituting the ruling aristocracy was no longer the monopoly of kshatriyas. That the feudal ranks were open to all varnas is clear in the Mansara (a text on architecture) when it lays down that everybody irrespective of his varna could get the two lower military ranks in the feudal hierarchy: praharka and astragrahin. Although lowest in rank, the astragrahin was entitled to have 500 horses, 5000 elephants, 50,000 soldiers, 5000 women attendants and one queen. We do not have to take these figures literally but surely, the text is a significant indicator of varna distinctions getting a rude shock through new sharing of land and power. The titles such as thakur, raut, nayaka, etc. were not confined to kshatriyas or Rajputs. These were also conferred on kayasthas and other castes who were granted land and who served in army. Kulluka's commentary on the Smriti of Manu mentions the tendency of better merchants joining the ranks of the ruling landed aristocracy. In Kashmir, rajanaka, a little of high honour literally meaning "almost a king", got closely associated with the brahmanas and later; on it became a family name in the form of razdan.

Feudal titles were also bestowed upon artisans. For instance, the Deo para inscription of Vijayasena tells us; that Shulapani; who was the head of artisans of Varendra (in West Bengal), held the title ranaka. The symbols and insignia of social identity amongst feudal rank holders were also related, to landed

possessions. Badges of honour, fly whisk, umbrella, horses, elephants, palanquins, acquisition of pancha-mahashabda, etc. depended on the specific lay in the feudal hierarchy. To illustrate, chakravartis and mahasamantas were permitted to erect the chief gate (sinhadvar) which could not be done through lesser vassals. The provision of varying sizes of houses for dissimilar grades of vassals and officials was also the product of the impact of unequal holdings.

### **Rising Social Tensions**

Though several modifications were taking lay and growths were happening which cut crossways varna distinctions, nevertheless, the pace of social changes in the post-eighth centuries was distant from being an agent of harmonious and egalitarian set-up. The manifestations of social tensions were too several.

A society which was based on an unequal sharing of bases of economic power was bound to be iniquitous. Though the shudras were rising in their status but untouchability was very much part of the social fabric. A fairly big number of shudras appear to have been the actual workers, whether on land or in industry, working for their feudal overlords, notwithstanding the few and unusual examples of anashrita shudras. Pursuit of the so-described impure occupations, being guilty of prohibited acts, adherence to heretical acts and physical impurities were major factors for the growth of untouchability. The Brihad Naradiya Purana reveals the beginnings of the exclusion of the shudras from spaces of workship. The chandalas and dombas were to carry sticks through striking which they made themselves recognized so that people could avoid touching them. When Vastupala was the governor of Cambay, he constructed platforms and therefore stopped the promiscuous mingling of all castes in shops where curd was sold. Though the brahmanical lawgivers were showing their concern for the proprietary rights of women, especially on stridhan, it was also an age when the barbarous practice of sati appears to have made a real beginning. King Harsha's mother performing it even before the death of her husband Prabhakaranarandhane, is a classic instance. It is mentioned in the Harshacharita of Banabhatta. The Rajatarangini comprising chronicle of Kashmir also refers to the performance of sati in royal families.

The archaeological proof is to be seen in the numerous sati-satta plaques establish in both North and South India. Sectarian rivalries necessity has caused enough tensions in the society. A brahmana who whispered in Jainism was measured to be an outcaste. In the Latakamelaka, two brahmanas indulge in the swap of hot words and charge each other with abrahmanya without any rhyme or cause. The parallel flanked by the multiplication of religious sects and that of castes in medieval times is very secure. Differences in rituals, food, dress, etc. caused religious splits. For instance Buddhism split into 18 sects: The Jainas in Karanataka had as several as seven sects: Karnataka was also the scene of tussle flanked by the Lingayats and Virashaivas. Very often, the religious sects tended to crystallize into castes. Isn't it an historical irony that the religions whose avowed aim was to abolish caste distinctions and cleavages based on birth were themselves swallowed through the caste organization? It is also true that quite often these sectarian tensions were products of the land grant economy. There appears to have been an inevitable competition amongst numerous religious sects—both brahmanical and non-brahmanical, to grab as much land as possible. Indeed, a great majority of religious establishments tended to become landed magnates. For instance, some rulers of the post-eighth centuries, such as Avantivarman of the Mattamayara region (perhaps a Chalukya prince of central India, close to Gwalior) and a Cedi King of Dahala are said to have dedicated their kingdoms to be religious heads of the Shaiva Siddharta school and then apparently ruled as vassals. The movement of a scrupulous sect of the Jainas appeared in the eleventh century in Gujarat and Rajasthan, which was described vidhi-chaitya. It was a sort of protestant movement aiming at denunciation of greedy and acquisitive Jaina ascetics who were trying to grab land.

The rise of kayasthas, the new literati class, had its own implications as distant as social tensions were concerned. This class had clearly appeared as a challenge to the location of brahmanas. Kshemendra of Kashmir clearly writes that the rise of kayasthas led to loss of economic privileges because kayastha officials hesitated in resuming land grants to brahmanas. In Kashmir the members of the temple-purohita corporation used to organize prayopavesha (hunger strikes) as a weapon for getting their grievances redressed. As if with

a vengeance, the brahmanas in order to reiterate their superiority, often despised kayasthas as shudras.

No less important were the manifestations of rural tensions. The damara revolts in Kashmir, rebellion of the kaivarattas in the region of Ramapala in Bengal, acts of self-immolation in situations of encroachments on land in Tamil Nadu, appropriation of donated land through shudras in the Pandya territory are indices of distrust against the new landed intermediaries.

## **IDEOLOGY**

### **Ideology: Varied Standpoints**

The concept of ideology has been one of the mainly controversial concepts in the history of socio-political thought as well as in the history of ideas. An understanding of multifarious components of ideology depends on the standpoint from which it is viewed. The standpoints are several:

- It can be viewed as a organization of knowledge.
- Scholars have accentuated its sociological components.
- There have also been writings which emphasize the need to revise it through psychological and culture approaches.

Before undertaking an analysis of ideology as a concept of social thought it is necessary to distinguish flanked by ideology as a concept and ideology as a political doctrine. The analysis of ideology in conditions of its nature and functions is quite afar from its analysis as a body of political beliefs, such as conservatism, liberalism, socialistic.

### ***Ideology As a Organization of Knowledge***

Amongst the earliest conceptions, the expression „Ideology' designated a philosophical discipline concerned to look at the methodological foundations of all sciences and to guarantee their impartial application. Its vital conception goes back to the days of well-known English thinker Francis Bacon (1561—1626 A.D.). He maintained that progress in science can be guaranteed only if scientific thought can be secured against fallacious ideas. With his doctrine of “idols” (phantoms of misconceptions) Bacon hoped to elucidate why human

cause is inhibited from perceiving actuality.

Bacon spoke of four kinds of idols which affect humans very strongly. The idols of the tribe symbolize the incapacity to reflect reality adequately. This vital cognitive barrier—general to all humans—is further compounded through the idols of cave: human being appears as an inaccessible cave-dweller who tends to judge the outside world only from his personal viewpoint. The idols of the market lay are misunderstandings in communication which originate in the imprecision of language. Finally, the idols of the theatre consist of obstacles conditioned through power, custom, convention and irrational doctrines. Therefore, Bacon's doctrine of idols—the earliest form of a theory of ideology—points to feeling, will, communication and transmitted prejudice as factors disturbing pure cognition. Only through disciplining cause can unprejudiced knowledge, and thereby truth, be attained.

This hypothesis of Bacon was the foundation for the French ideologues of the latter part of the eighteenth century (Condillac, Cabanis and de Tracy in scrupulous) who sought to do for philosophy what the English thinker had done for science. The vital assumption of the ideologues was that all ideas, all knowledge and all faculties of human understanding (perception, memory, judgment) rest on sensory data. The revise of the origin and development of ideas in conditions of sensations is the only guarantee against errors in cognition and judgment.

Fallacious ideas can lay claim to a sure power in society; indeed they may even be championed through those in power. Consequently, the “ideologists” necessity not hesitates to apply their scientific methods to the critique of religion and official political ideas. Ideology is, in this sense, a genuine scientific endeavour in potential opposition to every sort of power. Though, the post-revolutionary France measured criticism of religious and political ideas as a threat to social stability. „Ideology’ became a term of abuse, and ideological thought was rejected as destructive. For instance, Napoleon saw “ideologists” as “ideologues” in a pejorative sense), i.e. in accessible worshippers of cause, lacking in general sense—as people who operate on ideas and not facts.



## *Sociological Approaches*

C.W. Frohlich in Germany was first to state in 1792 A.D. that human thought depends on social dealings. He goes on to demand that the critique of religion and metaphysics be accepted to its logical conclusion through a change in property dealings. According to Frohlich only a property-free society can create right thinking and moral action possible. This suggests an aspect of the ideology problem which is systematically urbanized through Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

The works of Marx and Friedrich Engels symbolize a watershed in the revise of the concept of ideology. They viewed ideology as a organization of false ideas, a statement of class location, and a justification for class rule. Ideologies are secondary and unreal, since they are part of the “superstructure” and as such reflection of the more fundamental material economic “base”.

Marx and Engels attached a derogatory connotation to ideology, since they viewed all ideological thought as the dishonest use of reasoning; as the conscious or unconscious distortion of facts in order to justify the location of the ruling class. “The class, which is the ruling material force of society, is at the similar time its ruling intellectual force”. Ideology symbolizes, in Engels’ memorable phrase, “false consciousness”.

In presenting such a notion of ideology, Marx and his associate were profiting from Feuerbach’s ( a German Philosopher) insight into the projective character of the religious conceptual world. He perceives in religion the necessarily false form of consciousness deriving from social dealings and conditioned through contradiction flanked by human needs and the means accessible for satisfying them (Max Weber in Germany had seen the rationale of religion in this contradiction. For Marx critique of ideology implies more than mere negation of religion, since the latter constitutes privation for man—it is the reflection of feature human traits which have appeared under specific socio-historical circumstances. Religion is understood as an “expression” of the social order and as a “protest” against it. Therefore, religion is exposed merely in its role of justifying the political status quo: it is also perceived in its negative, anticipatory function and is incorporated in the critique of social circumstances which require ideological clarification. For instance, the

enlightened man opposes any further enlightenment in order to protect his own interests. Criticism of religion in a society where it has a power-political function is criticism of the political status quo.

Engels, through basing ideas on the socio-economic organization, raised an issue that, at the hands of Karl Mannheim came to be recognized as the “Sociology of knowledge”, i.e. the revise of social bases, circumstances, diversities and distortions of ideas. Though, unlike Marx and influenced through Weber, Mannheim gave up primarily class approach and based ideology on the total social structure, particularly political parties.

Conclusions strikingly similar to those of Marx were reached via an entirely dissimilar route through two early European sociologists—Mosca and Pareto. Both whispered in a scientific approach to social analysis.

According to Mosca, as the mainly decisive characteristic of any society is its ruling class. A society’s art, culture, politics, religion, etc. are all determined through the dominant social stratum. As such, social analysis necessity begins and ends with the ruling class. The leaders uphold, perpetuate, rationalize, and justify their own rule through the skilful manipulation of “political formulae” or ideologies.

Pareto divides all human conduct into two categories logical and non-logical—in conditions of whether it employs appropriate means in pursuit of attainable objectives. He stresses the prevalence of the irrational in human conduct. He insists that important portions of human behaviour are motivated and sustained through non-logical drives lying well below the stage of consciousness. All societies, he points out, are filled with taboos, magic and myths. In the political realm, codes, constitutions, platforms, and programme fail to meet the criteria of logical action. This is because, in the middle of other things, they are stated in the vaguest, mainly rhetorical, and mainly meaningless conditions.

Therefore, in the analyses of society through Mosca and Pareto, ideology is a major variable. Used synonymously with “myth”, “political formula”, or “derivation”, ideology is viewed as the guiding force in human society and the principal means for attaining social solidarity.

In the middle of modern sociologists, Parsons defines ideology as “an

empirical belief organization held in general through the members of any collectivity". It binds the society jointly, and it legitimizes its value orientations. More significantly, ideology involves an element of distortion. Daniel Bell is an exponent of the "functional" approach to ideology. It implies:

- Action orientation,
- Skill to promote or undermine legitimacy,
- Potential for attaining social solidarity, and
- Value integration.

The "functional" nature of ideology has also been in the sense of those shapes of social consciousness that are so molded as to uphold exploitative dealings of manufacture in any class society. The common function of ideology is to uphold social cohesion through mystified social dealings and class power. In this method ideology in common is a mystified form of consciousness. Being part of social consciousness, ideology in common appeals to every person in the social formation. Though, ideology does not spring automatically out of consciousness. In other words, consciousness does not develop (in an evolutionary sense) into ideology. Ideology has a material origin in the first lay. The analysis of its function is pursued within the social formation as a totality with the social relation of manufacture as the substance of that analysis. Inevitably, the investigator is led to consider, in dealing with class-dealings, in whose benefit ideology is. It is the specific social formation of which a specific ideology is an element, and the class thrashes about appropriate to it, which determines the character of that specific ideology.

In sum, the sociological approaches are centrally concerned with ideology as a organization of socially determined ideas, without necessary truth-value but with great potential for social solidarity as well as for social manage, mobilization, and manipulation. In addition, ideologies may serve to justify (or reject) a scrupulous set of goals and values and to legitimize (or denounce) political power. Some writers derogatory connotation to ideology, whereas others see it in a neutral light.

### *Psycho-cultural Approaches*

The psychological theories see ideology primarily as a means on managing personal strain and anxiety, whether socially or psychologically induced. In the middle of the mainly significant exponents of this approach are Sigmund Freud and Francis Sutton. Suggesting that religion and ideology have much in general, Freud creates the following statement: “Religious doctrines are all illusions, they do not admit of proof and no one can be compelled to consider them as true or to consider in them...”. The strength of religious, ideas lies in the information that it:

- Performs the function of wish fulfillment,
- Affords protection and security to the individual,
- Controls instinctual behaviour and relieves humans of their sense of guilt, and
- Counteracts human’s alienation from society.

The case for substituting “ideology” wherever Freud uses “religion”, is strengthened through his following statement:

- Having recognized religious doctrines to be illusions, we are at once confronted with the further question: may not all cultural possessions, which we esteem highly and through which we let our life be ruled, be of a similar nature? Should not the assumptions that regulate our political organizations likewise be described illusions?

Sutton and his colleagues offer a conception of ideology as a response to strain generated through social roles. Individuals daily confront conflicting demands and anxiety situations in the course of performing their roles. Ideology is a organization of ideas that enables humans to cope with strain.

Such psychological approaches also remind us of Max Weber’s emphasis on the “religious anchorage” of economic, political, social and cultural organizations primarily because “religion” was human’s savior in situations of scarcity, anxiety and deprivation. Weber thought that specific religious characteristics are not only partially self-governing of the relevant social and economic circumstances but the religious determination of life conduct and

“economic ethic” was also a major consideration. Weber’s was therefore an anti-Marxist location.

Although there is some connection flanked by ideology and strain, the actual linkages are through no means clear or easy. This is because the individual may react to strain in a diversity of ways. Hence ideology is merely one method of responding to stress.

In the middle of the psycho-cultural approaches to ideology Leon Dion refers to ideology as a more or less integrated cultural and mental structure”. Through this he means a pattern of norms and values that is both objective (cultural) and subjective (mental). Clifford Geertz defines it in conditions of symbols and symbolic action. For him ideology is more than a mere psychological response to strain; it embodies social and cultural element as well. Broadly speaking, ideology is a cultural symbol-organization that aims to guide the humans in their political life: “Whatever else ideologies may be.... They are, mainly distinctively, maps of problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of communal conscience.”

We have recognized and examined at some length many approaches to the concept of ideology. Each approach throws light on a dissimilar dimension of the concept; jointly they reveal its extraordinarily rich heritage. Ideology is an emotion-laden, myth-saturated, action-related organization of beliefs and values in relation to the humans and society, legitimacy and power. The myths and values of ideology are communicated through symbols in simplified and economical manner. Ideologies have a high potential for mass mobilization, manipulation, and manage; in that sense, they are mobilized belief systems.

### **Religion, Ideology and Society**

Without identifying religion and ideology, it may be safely asserted that writings in the last decades—particularly those of Marxists in varied disciplines—have considerably enriched the revise of both as cultural shapes and processes.

Amongst the classic statements in relation to the dealings flanked by religion and society one can mention scattered and unsystematic references to religion in the works of Marx and Engels. As early as 1844, Marx wrote:

- “The foundation of irreligious criticism is “man creates religion, religion does not create man. Religion is the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet establishes him or has already lost him again”.

For Man “man is no abstract being encamped outside the world.” The only method for man to rid himself of this illusion is to destroy the social world that produces it. As Man proposes:

- Religious distress is at the similar time the expression of real distress and also the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature.

So the thrash about against religion is necessarily a thrash about against that world whose “halo is religion” and “of which religion is the spiritual aroma”. It is in this context that religion becomes the “opium of people”. Here Marx anticipates one of the crucial elements of his concept of ideology, namely, that religion compensates in the mind for a deficient reality; it reconstitutes in the imagination a coherent solution which goes beyond the real world in an effort to resolve the contradictions of the real world. So Marx confirms his conviction that the ideological inversion responds to and derives from a real inversion. As he suggests:

- Man is the world of man, the state, society. This state, this society, produces religion, an inverted world consciousness because they are an inverted world. It was mainly the earliest exponent of sociology of religion, Durkheim to begin with, who contributed to the discussion on religion as an ideology, Like Marx, Durkheim made clear that religion and ideology have a social foundation, particularly in patterns of social dealings and organisation, but they also have a degree of autonomy, following sure rules peculiar to culture.

Max Weber, a junior modern of Durkheim and a product of Bismarckian Germany, is recognized for his numerous writings not only on religions of specific countries such as India and China but also on specific religions as

well as sociology of religion. From the perspective of sociology of religion, he highlighted the following three shapes of connection flanked by social organisation and religious ideas:

- Social groups with scrupulous economic interests often illustrate themselves to be more receptive to some religious ideas than to others. Where they were chivalrous warrior heroes, political officials, economically acquisitive classes or finally, where an organized hierarchy dominated religion, the results were dissimilar than from where genteel intellectuals were decisive. The social stratum including artisans, traders, entrepreneurs occupied in industry are attracted through all sorts of individual pursuits of salvation. Everywhere the hierarchy has sought to monopolies the management of religious values. The individuals quest for salvation or the quest of free societies through means of contemplation, orgies or asceticism has been measured highly suspect and has had to be regulated ritually and controlled hierarchically. From the standpoint of the interests of the priesthood in power, this was measured natural.
- Religious ideas lead to the formation of sure groups, such as monastic orders, guilds of magicians, or a clergy and these groups may develop quite extensive economic behaviors.
- The gap flanked by the elite and the masses poses a problem with which each of the great religions of the world has had to cope with. With specific references to religion in China, particularly Confucianism and Taoism, Weber shows how the former remained confined to the Emperor and the bureaucratic order but broadly excluded the masses. In contrast, the brahmanas in India, who were royal chaplains, spiritual advisers, theologians and authorities on questions of ritual propriety, achieved a “systematic rationalization of magic” and effected a compromise flanked by their own elite interests in a dignified method of life and their need to give for the release of the masses from the misfortunes that were their lot.

Surely with such an analysis, Weber had produced one of the mainly

sensitive and intricate accounts of “elective affinities” flanked by social groups and sets of beliefs or ideologies. Though, Weber’s notion of the “religious anchorage” and his emphasis of channeling effects of “ideas” rather than “material interests” in determining people’s action create him an anti-Marxist. Recent growths in the analysis of ideology have been concerned with improving explanations of how and why ideology takes a scrupulous form and how it works. Two significant growths are noticeable.

- First, more attention has been given to what Geertz has described “autonomous procedure of symbolic formulation,” entails examining ideologies as systems of motivating symbols and the ways in which they give plausible interpretations of problematic social reality. This has helped us in appreciating intricate and intricate nature of symbolic processes, which cannot be differentiated basically in conditions of false consciousness versus true consciousness.
- Second, there is now an awareness in the field of ideology in relation to classes and groups as being one of contestation and a ‘,existed connection’, not a mechanical procedure.

### **Ideology: The Early Indian Setting**

There are sure crucial questions which need to be raised before the specificities of early Indian religions are taken up for discussion. If ideology is measured to be subservient to the interests of ruling/dominant classes, do we simultaneously assume the subsistence of an ideology of the dominated classes? What is the *raison d’etre* of dominant ideas? Are they dominant because they are supposed to be widely shared through the dominated classes themselves? Under what circumstances do the dominated groups come to share interpretations of the world that legitimize the existing social order not only in the eyes of the dominant group, but also in their own eyes? Do we say that the ideas of the dominated do not constitute an ideology since they do not legitimize the existing social order?

We review below sure phases of Indian religions to illustrate the theoretical location. The Indian scene may not enable us to answer several questions raised, nevertheless it would be worth determining the parameters of



religion functioning as ideology in early India.

Amongst one of the earliest phases, the question of religion being an “intensifying factor” of “catalyst” of the urban growth under the Harappans has been highlighted in recent specialized writings. That this role has been attributed to religion on negative proof is rather apparent to be overlooked. Equally exaggerated is the enthusiasm with which it is treated like an ideology. While it is possible to infer sure social divisions, it is not easy to share D.D. Kosambi’s dogmatic assertion of the prototype of brahmana priesthood recognizable in the Harappan metropolis.

Even if parallels from other modern centres of bronze age civilizations are invoked, one would do well to recall V. Gordon Childe’s perceptive observation on priest kings of Sumer, viz., it was the economic organization “that made the God (through his representative) a great capitalist and landlord his temple into a municipality bank.” It necessity have been the potential of the people to generate agricultural surplus necessitating vast granaries at Mohenjodaro, Harappa and perhaps at Kalibangan too. This is coupled with extensive mechanism and network of internal as well as extensive-alloofness overland and maritime trade symbolized in the Lothal “warehouse”. This necessity has been instrumental in giving form to such shapes of religious manifestations as we are; able to even speculate about.

The subsistence of primary producers and managers of manufacture in the later Vedic era is usually recognized through scholars. We argue that there was not only an antagonism flanked by the two but amongst the non-producing classes too (brahmanas and kshatriyas) and that the latter thrash about can be rationalized in conditions of fight for agricultural surplus. But do the exalted sacrificial cult of the Brahmanas and the atma-vidya of the Upanishads constitute ideologies of brahmanas and kshatriyas respectively? It may be tempting to call both as ideologies of the ruling class. Though, such characterization is not only simplistic but also ignores the dialectics of the development of these religio-philosophic systems. That none of them is a monolithic uniform thought should be apparent from the minutiae of several sacrifices. Presently one of the numerous ceremonies of only one sacrifice, viz., the ratnavimshi ceremony of the rajasuya shows how the tribal and

matriarchal elements were being submerged through class, territorial and how priestly power was being replaced through that of the Kshatriyas. That sacrifices aimed at the creation of big societies through transcending kinship thoughts ought not be overlooked in the present context. Elaborate rituals were prescribed for the admission of the Vratya chief of Magadha to Vedic society and the chief of the nishadas described Sthapati discovers a lay in Vedic rituals meant for higher orders. Again it is usually accepted that as opposed to brahmanical Sanskrit works, the Pali texts of the Buddhists provided a dissimilar rationale of the origin of kingship, and the new monarchs of the Ganga Valley in the sixth-fifth centuries of the pre-Christian era were favourably disposed towards non-brahmanical religions. But it would again be an in excess of-simplification to say that the Buddha's was an ideology of the kshatriyas. This is being suggested not only because all the concerned monarchies were certainly not in the hands of the kshatriyas but also because it would unjustifiedly restrict the social base of early Buddhism. Separately from the material sustenance received through the Buddha from peasants and traders who were certainly out of reckoning of upper class dominance, a fairly extensive popularity of the master amongst brahmanas too is not strange.

Ashok's Dhamma, which was anything but religion in the literal sense of the term, and is perhaps closer to ideology, offers yet another manifestation. If the imperatives of Dhamma are to be understood, one will have to go beyond the zeal of the so-described "philosopher-king" and the "revolutionary" impact of the great event—the Kalinga War. Recent studies on the concepts of state and empire, striking a severe blow to the notions of "centralised" Mauryan empire, enable us to highlight the compulsions of the economic logic of the set-up and comprehend the driving forces behind Ashok's Dhamma.

### **Ideology: Its Role and Nature in the Post-Gupta Centuries**

Since we are concerned with ideology within the broad framework of society and culture flanked by the eighth and thirteenth centuries, it would be worth working out its role and nature. We have been emphasizing the dominance of land-grant economy in the post-Gupta centuries. Could this phenomenon of approximately pan-Indian dimensions be seen as an

ideological force? Why land-grants at all?

### ***Land Grants: Their Philosophy***

Epigraphic records, which constitute our principal sources, are marked through a contradiction. On the one hand, they are quite eloquent in relation to the descriptions of cruelty, violence and lust for territorial power on the part of kings, while on the other, similar powers illustrate magnanimity to brahmana donees. Perhaps these grants were means to satisfy or the manifestation of Kings, vanity. The pompous genealogies, full of grandiloquent titles for donor and his precursors were typical examples of political psychophancy. Apparently, there was sure amount of selfishness on the part of donor kings. The ostensible purpose for these big munificent gifts was to earn puny a not only for donors but for their precursors as well.

It is argued that landgrants served the purpose of financial support to selfless' brahmanas who were occupied in imparting learning and education. The brahmanas used to lead a plain and easy life. Such an argument is an oversimplification for we have already seen that the vocations of brahmanas were getting diversified. There was a separate transformation of brahmanas from priesthood to landlords—they were emerging as a property seeking and property owning class.

A important dimension Of the epigraphic proof under discussion is the secure correspondence flanked by dharmashastric prescriptions and terminology of gift creation in inscriptions. The whole concept of dana (gift creation ) was undergoing perceptible change. The dharmashastras underline prayashchitta (expiation, repentance) for sins committed in this world. Imagine, which King would have been free from sins and transgressions? After all, they had all been guilty of loot, arson, killing—particularly in wars. The lawmakers, who were invariably brahmanas, instilled a feeling of fear through a graded organization of sins and punishments and through evolving such notions as that of mahapatakas.

The sense of guilt in kings coupled with principle of its prayashchitta was exploited through brahmanas. Vast gifts of cows, bulls, land and gold were strongly recommended through them if the kings did not want themselves or their ancestors to lead a miserable plight of an insect or lower animal in the

after that world. Of all the things of gift, land got the pre-eminent location. Vyasa, who is quoted very often in epigraphic records, is recognized to have laid down that giver of land lives in heaven for 16000 years. Several puranas, likewise, stipulate that the donor of land would have the good fortune of being in the charming company of apsaras (celestial nymphs). In the hands of brahmana lawgivers, the sacred texts did not remain abstract theories and prescriptive works only. Instead, they appear to have acquired the character of some sort of policy statements.

Were the kings who made big gifts of land, only victims of avarice of brahmanas? Evidently not. The quest for legitimacy was a major consideration for political authorities. In the present context it would be enough to underline the mutuality of interests of the donor as well as the donee. The prashastikaras (eulogy singers), the dharmashastrakaras (lawmakers) and purohitas (brahmana in the court) were all collaborators in the new landed order.

How did this new order manifest itself in the cultural ethos of the post-Gupta centuries? It appears that at the stage of ideas the post-Gupta scene in the whole sub-continent is marked through two distinctive strains, viz. growth of bhakti and an all-pervasive power of tantric practices. It is possible to explain their widespread dispersal in conditions of the growth of the feudal mode of manufacture epitomized in the phenomenon of land grants.

### ***Bhakti and Pilgrimage***

For in relation to the half a millennium from the mid-sixth century, Shaiva and Vaishnava saints (Nayanmars and Alvars respectively) and their followers practiced and propagated bhakti in the countryside and went to pilgrim centres singing and dancing. The overall pattern is that of consolidation of classical brahmanical society in early medieval India. Originating in sixth century Kanchipuram, region under the Pallavas, it had traversed the full length of Tamilaham through the end of the ninth century and engulfed all the major kingdoms of the Cholas, Pandyan and the Cheras. If we are to consider in a recent analysis, the spread of the Bhakti movement in the north, epitomized in such a popular work as the Bhagavata Purana, was also the result of the impetus given through the Tamil saints. The spread of the movement is intimately associated with the temple base, which, in turn, derived its raison

d'être and economic sustenance through land grants received from not only kings and men at the helm of political affairs but even from influential members of the society.

Some recent writings on the Pallavas, the Cholas and the Alvars as well as Nayanmars have been able to illustrate the gradual importance of the paddy farming in the Kaveri Valley and the resultant pattern of brahmanical settlements, which, in turn, contributed to the growth of the Chola power. To illustrate, the specific spread of the temple movement in the Kaveri Valley may be looked at. The three well-known Nayanmars, viz., Appar, Sambandhar and Sundarar sang 307,384 and 100 hymns respectively. Out of these 442 temples, as several as 315 belong to the Chola era and all of which are concentrated in the Kaveri Valley (126 being situated north of this river while 189 were to its south). That this temple Bhakti movement was an significant tool of the Consolidation of political power through feudal chiefs and kings is apparent from the similarities in the vocabulary and symbols used to designate temple and its officers on the one hand and the King and his retinue on the other.

For instance: Koyil stands for both palace and temple; crowned deities were comparable with crowned kings; rituals of worship is conceived on the similar pattern as the rituals of service to the King—bathing, anointing, decorating, dressing of deity, were replicas of similar practices in the court. Taxes and tributes were paid to temples, as they were expected from kings as well. Like the palace, temple is also constructed with mandapas, prakaras, dvarapalas, etc. (pavilions, walled enclosures, doorkeepers respectively), the chief deity of the temple, like the King, was accompanied through his consort and relatives and served through a whole army of musicians, dancing girls, actors, garland makers, etc. To compare the feudal pyramid consisting of plurality and co-subsistence of the lords—each commanding loyalty from his immediate vassal—we see in the Bhakti movement a clear recognition of the plurality and co-subsistence of dissimilar deities—each deity occupying the location of the lord for his devotee. The devotee habitually addresses the deity as udaiyar or tambiran standing for “lord” and “master” and describes himself as adiyar, i.e. slave. What became the hallmark of greatness in the age of

rising brahmanical power was the surrender of pride in the self and voluntary acceptance of the location of “the servant of the Lord” as Kulashckhara Alvar had proclaimed. To all this necessity be added the concerted drive on the part of men of religion of evolve a mechanism of regular pilgrimage ostensibly to earn merit (Punya). It is well recognized that the brahmanical literature alone mentions more than 400 tirthas in early medieval times and that the Mahabharata and the Puranas alone contain at least 40,000 verses on tirthas, sub-tirthas and legends linked with them. And this is not all—one can add not only numerous sthalapuranas but specific digests on tirthas dealing with brahmanical and non-brahmanical centres of pilgrimage.

### ***Tantricism***

Tantricism, like bhakti, permeates all religions in the post-Gupta centuries, not excluding even the so-described puritanical non-brahmanical religious systems. R.S. Sharma has reationalised it in conditions of the preponderance of the cult of the Mother Goddess consequent upon the spread of agriculture as a result of land grants. A fascinating dimension of this analysis is the procedure of cultural interaction of priestly Sanskritik and tribal elements. A recent revise, based entirely on literary data, argues that the Devi Mahatmya of the Markandeya Purana (c. sixth century A.D.) is the first comprehensive explanation of the Goddess to appear in Sanskrit—the explanation is sought in conditions of Sanskritisation. It is underlined that the vital impulse behind the worship of Goddess is of non-Aryan and non-Sanskritic origin. A survey of Shakti sculptures in Madhya Pradesh alone refers to as several as 400 images. A great majority of their names such as Charchika, Umarimata, Bijasanidevi, Behamata, Birasanidevi, etc. link them with popular tribal deities.

### ***Hero-Stones***

In recent years there have been some very refreshing and stimulating writings on the notions of Death-in conditions of rituals, religious beliefs and practices, art shapes in association with socio-economic growths. These have resulted in a special genre of literature on an obscure field of religious and art history of the sub-continent. These studies centre round the hero-stones, which are littered in excess of mainly parts of the Indian sub-continent. There has

been an extensive and approximately continuous history of these leftovers for more than 1500 years and extends to both brahmanical and non-brahmanical religions. They are in the vicinity described as viragals, natugals, paliyas, govardhana stambhas, kirti-stambhas, chhaya-stambhas, or merely as chhatris, stambhas, devalis, etc. These tablets or pillars fall into many groups originating in ritual or cult practices as well as religious or social customs of their patrons:

- The chhaya-stambha is in the middle of the earliest archaeological proof, and it appears to be rooted in the social practices of the Buddhists.
- The nisidhi symbolizes the ritual death practices exclusively through the Jains.
- The viragals or at least the currencies of this term-cross religious demarcations, if not the conventional geographical limits of southern India.
- The kirti-stamba, paliya, chatra, devali and stambha share the country flanked by the Himalayas and the Vindhyas—mostly in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- The change in approach of hero-stones appears to reflect a change in the status of the hero being memorialized. Several of the earlier stones from Tamil Nadu come from the North Arcot district which is recognized to have been at that time a region of livestock breeding, where cattle-raiding would be one method of rising wealth. Later, elaborate stones commemorated heroes who claimed to belong to the upper caste groups, often claiming kshatriya status. The indication of the hero's religious sect may have been due to the power of the bhakti sects.

Hero-stones are relatively infrequent in the big agricultural tracts of the Indus and the Ganga valleys and in the agriculturally rich delta regions of the peninsula. Boundary zones were often maintained as buffer regions where political security was transient and where royal armies did not necessarily guarantee protection to regional inhabitants. They would, so, inevitably have recourse to their own arrangements for protection, in which the village hero or

the regional chief played a major role. This would suggest a differentiation of military functions in a decentralized political organization. Further, since these leftovers proliferated in the post-sixth century era, it would be worth finding out the correlation and correspondence, if any, flanked by the sharing of land grants on the one hand and that of the memorial stones on the other. This is particularly desirable in view of many assumptions:

- The phenomenon of the land grants is associated with the expansion of agriculture, both memorial stones and land grants are measured to be useful mechanisms of cultic integration— the cult of Vithoba in Pandharpur (Maharashtra) is in itself a case of the hero-stone being transformed into a deity, and both the phenomena have also been instrumental in the processes of state formation.

### ***Religion as Ideology—For Whom?***

Such prominent manifestations of the religion-philosophic outlook of people of the Indian sub-continent of the post-Gupta centuries as the rise of bhakti, tantricism, pilgrimage, etc. are indeed products of the land grant economy. Though the brahmanas were the major beneficiaries of the mechanism and may have also worked consciously in league with modern rulers to prepare a philosophic background, it would again be hard to rationalise these growths only in conditions of dominating brahmana ideology. Surely, it is impossible to eliminate the symbiotic connection flanked by the brahmanas on the one hand and the tribals on the other. The traffic of ideas was certainly a two-method one. And this receives support from an unexpected quarter. For instance iconographic studies have so distant remained confined to identification, account and interpretation of divine images and their attributes. Mainly forming a part of art history, these works have rarely been looked as an index to socio-religious changes at macro and micro stages. Treating iconography as an integral part of the history of religions a recent work on Vaishnava Iconography in the Tamil Country tries to trace the development of the concerned subject through folk movements and integration of tribal cults of pre-Pallavan centuries. Likewise, another work undertakes a micro revise of the procedure of cultural coalescence and



agencies of acculturation in the growth of Murugan. The growth of this important deity of the Shaiva pantheon is presented as a convergence of two cultural streams—'Sanskrit' and 'Tamil', without taking any of them as 'monolithic or unidimensional'. An analysis of sacrifice and divine marriage in the South Indian Shaiva custom has also been done in the light of the several traditions that have contributed to their formation, including vedic, epic, puranic, classical Tamil and southern folk traditions.

What in relation to the Buddhists and the Jainas? They were also affected through the nuances of the land grant economy. Though the sphere of the power of the Buddhists was shrinking, it was not the case with the Jainas. In Karnataka, Gujarat and Rajasthan specially, they had carved out a lay for themselves in the mind of people. But ideas such as bhakti, tantric practices and pilgrimage were essential components of their creed too. The so-described 'Brahmana-Peasant Alliance' in the post-Gupta southern India is based on very skimpy and shaky proof. Even the hypothesis of the rural base of the temple movement under the patronage of brahmana-king collaboration leaves several gaps if the role of bhakti as an ideology is to be fully appreciated. To illustrate, the Tamilaham, where this rural-based model has been applied, also witnessed an extensive internal trade network as well as an ambitious programme of maritime trade action. What was the role of traders and merchants in the growth of the temple movement? Perhaps because of the violent attitude of the Alvars and the Nayanmars, at least in the initial few centuries, non-brahmanical religions which used to get the support of these societies, had approximately vanished from Tamilham. Did traders and merchants switch their allegiance to the new temple movement? Or they did not need any ideological prop? Proof is mounting to illustrate that even merchants and their assemblies (nagarams) exercised manage in excess of land and had interest in its agricultural output. Further, did not temples also tend to erect barriers of both language and rituals flanked by peasant laity and the priesthood? If then, ideology is to be understood in conditions of a mechanism of class interests in common and ruling class interests in scrupulous how does one explain the role of bhakti? This dilemma would apply to other major post-quota religious manifestations as well. The role of religion in society,

particularly as an ideology ought to be seen in its potentialities to sway masses and not classes.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL CULTURAL TRADITIONS**

### **Temple Architecture**

Indian temples have symbolised the very ethos of life-approach of people through the millennia. The panorama of Indian temple architecture may be seen crossways at very wide chronological and geographical horizon. From the easy beginnings at Sanchi in the fifth century of the Christian era to the great edifices at Kanchi, Jhanjavur and Madurai is a story of more than a millennium.

The prominent Shilpashastras that deal with the subject of temple architecture are:

- Mayamata, manasara, shilparatna, kamikagama, kashyapashilpa and ishanagurudevapaddhati
- In the majority of these works the subject is dealt with under the three heads of:
  - The geographical sharing
  - Their differentiation from the point of view of shapes, and
  - Their presiding deities and castes.

### ***Major Styles***

The ancient texts on Indian temple architecture broadly classify them into three orders. The conditions Nagara, Dravida and Vesara indicate a tendency to highlight typological characteristics of temples and their geographical sharing. These conditions describe respectively temples that primarily employ square, octagonal and apsidal ground plans which also regulate the vertical profile of the structure. Nagara and Dravida temples are usually recognized with the northern and southern temple styles respectively. All of northern India, from the foothills of the Himalayas to the central plateau of the Deccan is furnished with temples in the northern approach.

There are, of course, sure regional variations in the great expanse of this

region. A work entitled *Aparajitapriccha* confines the Nagari (Nagara) approach to the Madhyadesha (roughly the Ganga-Yamuna plains) and further mentions Lati and Vairati (Gujarat and Rajasthan respectively) as separate styles. The regional manuscripts of Orissa recognise four main kinds of Orissa approach temples, viz., the Rehka, Bhadra, Kharkhara and Gaudiya.

The Dravida or southern approach, comparatively speaking, followed a more constant development track and was confined to the mainly southernly, portions of the sub-continent, specially flanked by the Krishna river and Kanyakumari. The term Vesara is not free from vagueness. Some of the texts ascribe the Vesara approach to the country flanked by the Vindhyas and the river Krishna but there are texts placing it flanked by the Vindhyas and the Agastya, the site of which is uncertain. Since the temples of the Nagara kind are establish as distant south as Dharwad (in Karnataka) and those of the Dravidian kind as distant north as Ellora (in Maharashtra), a narrow and compartmentalized geographical classification is misleading. At sure periods there occurred striking overlapping of major styles as powers from dissimilar regions confronted each other, e.g., the temples of the early Chalukyas whose kingdom was strategically positioned in the middle of the peninsula in the seventh and eighth centuries. The Kandariya Mahadeva temple in Khajuraho is another striking instance where the several architectural elements combined into an integrated whole. Likewise, the Kerala temples display diversity in their plan kinds. Square, circular or apsidal-ended structures are utilized. The earliest examples in Kerala go back to the twelfth century.

### ***Presiding Deities***

Temples were dedicated not only to two great gods of the Brahmanical pantheon, viz., Shiva and Vishnu but to the Great Mother Goddess as well. In information, consecration and depiction of divinities big and small, benevolent and malevolent, celestial and terrestrial, atmospheric and heavenly, devas and asuras and countless folk deities such as vakshas, vakshis, apsaras and kinnaras symbolize a world of their own. It is indeed fascinating to see that even animal or bird „vehicles’ (vahanas) of these divinities shed their muteness and become eloquent carriers of meaningful symbolism. Therefore, Nandi, the agricultural bull of Shiva is fully expressive of the god's sexuality

tiger, the mount of Durga embodies her fierce strength and aggressiveness. The river goddesses, Ganga and Yamuna are recognized through their vahanas, viz., crocodile and tortoise respectively. Lakshmi's association with elephants, lotus flowers and water not only symbolise her popularity as the goddess of fortune but more importantly as a divinity conveying the magical power of agricultural fertility — an aspect that goes back to the days of the Rigveda. Swan carrying Saraswati typified not only her grace and elegance but classic Kshira-nira viveka — the tremendous intellectual discerning capability which is an integral element of this goddess of learning. The Kashyapashilpa has a chapter on the deities to be enshrined in the principal styles. Therefore, the Shantamurtis (peaceful, calm and serene deities) are to be installed in Nagara; couples or moving deities in vesara shrines; and heroic, dancing or enjoying deities in the Dravida structures. Though, these injunctions in relation to the presiding deities, like the vital styles, ought not to be taken in a compartmentalized sense. Likewise, textual prescriptions in relation to the Nagara, Dravida and Vesara styles being associated with brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya varnas respectively cannot be taken literally.

### ***Shapes, Plans and Language of Temples***

Each temple approach has its own distinctive technological language, though some conditions are general but applied to dissimilar parts of the structure in each approach. The sanctuary, which is the main part is described the vimana where the garbhagriha or the inner sanctum containing the main presiding deity is situated. The part surmounting the vimana is recognized as the shikhara. The other elements of ground plan are: mandapa or pavilion for the assembly of devotees; antarala, which is a vestibule connecting the vimana and mandapa and the pradakshinapath, i.e. circumambulatory passage nearby these. The natmandir or dance hall and bhogamandapa were evolved subsequently in the Orissan temples such as the well-known Sun temple at Konarka, to add to the dignity and magnificence of the deities who were honored in them. The exterior of the Nagara kind is characterized through horizontal tiers, as in the jagamohan or porch in front of the sanctum of the Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneswar, and the vimana is usually circular in plan. Fundamentally, there is no structural parallel flanked by the Brahmanical and

the Jain temples in the North except that the need for housing the several Tirthankaras dominates the disposition of legroom in the latter.

The Dravida approach has a polygonal, often octagonal shikhara and a pyramidal vimana, which is rectangular in plan. A temple of the Dravida kind is also notable for the towering gopurams or gatetowers of the additional mandapas. From the days of Ganesh ratha of the Pallava times (seventh century) at Mahabalipuram (close to Madras) to the gigantic Brihadishvara temple (c.985-1012 A.D.) of the Cholas at Thanjavur, the Dravida approach took several strides.

### ***Ecological Setting, Raw Materials and Regionalization***

The stylistic development of temples was also rooted in ecological setting which gave them specific regional identity. In the relatively heavy rainfall regions of the western coast of India and Bengal, temples have sloping tiled roofs, giving rise to timber gables. To overcome the hazards of snow and hail, wooden sloped roofs are also employed in the temples of the Himalayan belt. In common, the hotter and drier the climate, the flatter the roof; open porches give shaded seating, and pierced stone screens are utilized to filter the light. Some such characteristics which are noticeable in the well-known Ladkhan temple of the Chalukyas at Aihole (north Karnataka) are direct adaptations of thatch and timber village and society halls. The sharing of legroom in Jain shrines was affected through their placements on high hills. These structures are characterized through an air of seclusion and aloofness. Some such typical examples can be seen at the Shatrunjaya and Palitana hills in Gujarat or the Dilwara temples at Mount Abu in southern Rajasthan.

Separately from the ecological powers, the availability of raw materials also affected styles of craftsmanship. While the transition from wood to stone attributed to the Mauryas of the third century B.C. was in itself a great step forward, regional raw materials played a dominant role in techniques of construction and carving. No wonder, the Pallava King Mahendravarman (early seventh century) is described vichitra-chitta (curious minded) because he discarded conventional perishable materials such as brick, timber and mortar and used the hardest rock surface (granite) for his cave temples at Mahabalipuram. Hard and crystalline rocks prevented detailed carving,

whereas soft and sedimentary stone permitted great precision. Friable and schistlike stones, such as those through the Hoyshal architects and craftsmen at Belur and Halebid (Karnataka) in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries promoted the carving of moldings created through sharp and angled incisions. Brick structure traditions sustained to survive Where there was an absence of good stone and techniques of molding and carving bricks doubtless influenced the approach of temples in these regions, e.g. the temples at Bishnupur in Bengal. The power of timber and bamboo techniques of construction symbolizes a unique architectural development in north eastern state of Assam. Approximately no stone temples are establish in the Himalayan valleys of Kulu, Kangra and Chamba. It is obvious that timber and brick structure traditions control temple shapes in these regions. The sloping and gabled roofs which are preserved only in stone in the temples of Kashmir can be seen in these regions in pure wooden context. In the ninth century or so, a extra ordinary multi-towered temple was exhumed into a natural escarpment at Masrur in Kangra.

### ***Role of Decorative Elements***

The development of several styles in conditions of decorations, ornamentations and other embellishments is a natural phenomenon. Though, it needs to be stressed that these elements did not affect the vital structure of temples. Amongst conspicuous decorative elements one can mention growth of pillars from easy oblong shafts in early Pallava structures to very finely chiselled (approximately giving the impression of lathe work) columns in Hoyshala temples. Later still, the temples of Madurai and Rameshvaram provide extraordinary lay to extensive corridors studded with animals based caryatids. The niches, pavilions and horse shoe-shaped windows (kudu), in the middle of others, are also significant decorative motifs which help in the delineation of stages of development. In common, the tendency is to create constant augment in embellishments. To illustrate, the kudu which at the Mahabalipuram monuments has a plain shovel-headed ferial, develops a lion head in the Chola monuments. The procedure of excessive ornamentation is noticeable in North India too. Shikharas, ceilings and other walls receive great attention of artisans and craftsmen. Very exquisite carvings in marble in the

ceilings at Dilwara Jain temples at Mt. Abu do not serve any structural purpose and are purely decorative.

Sometimes it is argued that multiplication of roofs constitutes a distinctive characteristic of temples of Malabar, Bengal and the eastern and western Himalayas. In a west coast or Malabar temple the walls resemble a wooden railing in structure and were made of wood, though stone copies from in relation to the fourteenth century also exist. Such temples (for instance, the Vadakkunath temple at Trichur — 15th-16th century) may have either a easy pitched roof of overlapping slabs, or they may have a series of pitched roofs one above another, which bear an obvious resemblance to the multiple pitched roofs of Chinese and Nepalese temples.

In the Kashmir Valley of the western Himalayas, temples bear two or three roofs which were also copied from the usual wooden roofs. In the wooden examples the interval flanked by the two roofs appears to have been left open for light and air; in the stone structures it is closed with ornaments. Besides this, all these roofs are relieved through kinds of windows comparable to those establish in medieval structures in Europe. Instance of such roofs in Kashmir may be seen in Shiva temple at Pandrethan and Sun temple at Martand. In Bengal, temples have been recognized which have been borrowed from leaf-huts that are very general in the region. In this form of temple with curved caves we also discover the similar tendency to a multiplication of roofs one above another. The temples at Bishnuvir such as the well-known Keshta Raya (17th century) are built with a diversity of roofs shapes on square and rectangular plans. Even modern Mughal architecture creates use of this so-described “Bengal roof” in sandstone or marble.

### **Organisation of Structure Programme**

In the erection of the structural temple an organized structure programme was followed. Bricks were baked either on or close to the location and stone was mostly quarried in the vicinity. From relief’s carved on temples and from a palm-leaf manuscript that has been exposed in relation to the structure operations accepted out at the world well-known thirteenth century Sun temple at Konarka, it is learnt that stone from quarries was sometimes transported to

the structure location on wooden rollers drawn through elephants or floated on barges beside rivers and canals. At the location the masons roughly shaped the stone blocks which were then hoisted into location through rope pulleys on scaffolding. Ramps were also constructed of timber and sand to facilitate the placing of very heavy stone pieces in lay. A classic instance of this is the stone constituting the vast shikhara of the Brihadishvar temple at Thanjavur. This shikhara weighing in relation to the 80 tonnes is popularly whispered to have been raised to its present height of in relation to the 200 feet through being dragged on an inclined plane, which had its base in relation to the seven kilometers, absent at Sarapallan (literally, meaning 'elevation from depression'). Occasionally, as in Konarka, iron beams were used in the sanctuary and hall. The architects, artisans and workmen occupied in the several behaviors associated with the structure of a temple was organized into groups which functioned as guilds. The Konarka temple manuscript lists the workmen, their salaries and rules of conduct and gives an explanation in excess of many years of the several structure operations. Quite often, these get reflected in stone as well, e.g., an eleventh century panel from Khajuraho shows cuttings, chiseling and transporting stone for temples.

## **Chronological and Geographical Spread of Indian Temples**

### ***The Northern Approach***

- **Northern, Central and Western India (Fifth—seventh centuries):** The Parvati temple at Nachna (South-east of Khajuraho, M.P.); the Dashavatara temple at Deogarh-(Jhansi District, U.P.); the brick temple at Bhitragen (Kanpur District, U.P.); "the Vishnu temple at Gop (Gujarat); Mundeshwari temple (an unusual instance of octagonal plan) at Ramgarh (Bihar) and temples at Sanchi and Jigawa (both in Madhya Pradesh).
- **The Deccan and Central India (Sixth—eighth centuries):** Cave temples at Ellora, Elephanta (close to Bombay) and Badami (north Karnataka; Early Chalukyan temples) in north Karnataka at Badami, Aihole (Ladkhan temples), and Pattadakal (Papanatha and Galganatha temples).



- **Western and Central India (Eighth — thirteenth centuries):** Harihara and other temples at Osian (North of Jodhpur, Rajasthan); Jelika Mandir (Gwalior); Chandella temples at Khajuraho (specially, Lakshman, Kandariya Mahadev and Vishvanatha); temples at Roda (North of Modhera in Gujarat); Sun temple at Modhera (Gujarat) and Marble temples of the Jains at Mt. Abu (Rajasthan).
- **Eastern India (Eighth — thirteenth centuries):** Parashurameshvar Vaital Deul, Mukteshvar, Lingaraj and Rajarani temples (all at Bhubaneswar); Sun temple at Konarka (Orissa) and the jagannatha temple at Puri (Orissa).
- **The Himalayan belt (Eighth century onwards):** Sun temple at Martand; Shiva temple at Pandrethan and Vishnu temple at Aventesvamin (all in Kashmir); temple at Masrur (Kangara, Himachal Pradesh) and brahmanical temples in Nepal (Kathmandu, Patan and Bhadgaon).

### ***The Southern Approach***

- **The Deccan and Tamil Nadu (Sixth—tenth centuries):** Cave temples, the Rathas and the „Shore’ temple of the Pallavas at Mahabalipuram (close to Madras); the Vaikunthaperumal and Kailasanatha temples at Kanchipuram (also close to Madras); Chalukyan structures at Aihole (Meguti temple), Badami (Malegitti Shiva temple) and Pattadakal (Virupaksha temple) and the Kailas temple at Ellora carved out under the patronage of the Rashtrakutas,
- **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala (Tenth—seventeenth centuries):** Brihadishvar temples of the Cholas at Jhanjavur; Hoyshal temples at Belur, Halebid and Somnathpur (all in Karnataka); later Chalukya temples in Karnataka (at Lakkundi and Gadag); the Pampati temple of the Pandyas at Vijaynagar; the Shrirangam (close to Trichinopoly, Tamil Nadu) and Minakshi temples; the Kattilmadam (at Chalpuram, District Palghat, Kerala) temple and Parashuram temple at Tiruvallam (close to Trivandrum).

### ***The Vesara Approach***

The Buddhist Chaitya halls of the early centuries of the Christian era and situated in the western ghats in the modern state of Maharashtra may be said to be prototypes of this approach. Its mainly conspicuous characteristic is the apsidal ground plan. There is some vagueness in relation to its essential components and geographical sharing. Amongst the early examples (seventh—tenth centuries) can be cited the structures at Chezarla (Andhra Pradesh), Aihole (Durga temple), Mahabalipuram (Sahdeva and Draupadi rathas) and Kerala (Shiva temples at Trikkandiyur and Tiruvannur). The classic post-tenth century examples contain the Nataraja shrine at Chidambaram (Tamil Nadu) and the Varnana temple at Kizhavellur (District Kottayam, Kerala).

### **Temples and Indian Cultural Ethos**

Indian temples symbolised the very mundane urges of humans and were for varied behaviors of the society as a whole. To begin with, common education within the temple was of great importance. Several endowments to temples were specifically made for establishment of colleges which were incorporated into temple complexes. Teaching of such subjects as grammar and astrology as well as recital and teaching of texts such as the Vedas, the Epics Ramayana and the Mahabharata and the Puranas were encouraged. Music and dance usually shaped part of the daily ritual of the temples and throughout special celebrations and annual festivals these played a particularly dominant role. Big temples would uphold their own musicians — both vocal and instrumental, jointly with dancers, actors and teachers of performing arts. The life-size delineations of such musicians in a tenth-century temple at Khajuraho as well as in the Sun temple at Konarka and nata mandir (dancing hall) forming an absolutely integral element in the Orissan and other temples also give eloquent testimonies to that effect. And, of course, who can forget the performance of the great cosmic-dance of the Mahadeva Shiva himself at the Chidambaram temple. No less significant was the institution of devadasis. These temple maidens played an important role in dancing as well as in singing

of devotional hymns through which the temple god was entertained. The information that the Chola emperor Rajaraja I (985-1012) constructed two extensive streets for the accommodation of four hundred dancing women attached to the Brihadishvar temple (Thanjavur), provides us and thought of the lavish level

### ***Main Brahmanical Temple Sites***

Several temples had regular festivals which provided opportunities for mingling of mythology and folklore, as for instance, the annual rathayatra of the Jagannatha temple at Puri. The undertaking of pilgrimage (tirthayatra) is yet another mechanism through which the participation of the society in temple behaviors was facilitated. As temples provided work and the means of livelihood for a big number of persons, they were able to exert great power upon the economic life of people. Even small temples needed the services of priests, garland-makers and suppliers of clarified butter, milk and oil. One of the mainly detailed accounts that have been preserved of the number of people who were supported through a temple and the wages they received is that given in an inscription on the Thanjavur temple, and dated 1011 A.D. The list comprises cooks, gardeners, dance-masters, garland-makers, musicians, wood-carvers, painters, choir-groups for singing hymns in Sanskrit and Tamil, accountants, watchmen and a host of other officials and servants of temples, totaling more than six hundred persons

### **Sculptures: Stone and Metal Images**

The regional spirit asserting itself is seen in sculptural arts as well. Stylistically, schools of artistic depictions of the human form urbanized in eastern, western, central and northern India. Distinctive contribution also appeared in the Himalayan regions, the Deccan and the distant South. A great majority of these regions produced works of art that were characterized through what has been described as the “medieval factor” through the great art historian and critic Nihar Ranjan Rai. This “medieval factor” was marked through a sure amount of slenderness and an accent on sharp angles and rows. The roundness of bodily form acquires flatness. The curves lose their convexity and turn into the concave. Western and Central Indian sculptures,

Eastern Indian and Himalayan metal images, Gujarati and Rajasthani book and textile illustrations, Bengal terracottas and wood carvings and sure Deccan and Orissa miniatures registered this new conception of form through the post-tenth centuries.

The pivot of the early medieval sculpture is the human figure, both male and female, in the form of gods and goddesses and their attendants. Since these cult images rest on the assured foundations of a regulated structure of form, it maintains a more or less uniform average of excellence in all art-regions of India. Curiously, the creative climax of each art-region is not reached at one and the similar time all in excess of India. In Bihar and Bengal it is reached in the ninth and tenth centuries; in Orissa in the twelfth and thirteenth; in Central India in the tenth and eleventh; in Rajasthan in the tenth; in Gujarat in the eleventh; and in the distant south in the tenth-eleventh centuries. It is in the Deccan alone that the story is of rising torpor and petrification — indeed, Deccan ceases to be a sculptural province after the eighth century.

It is not only the cult images but non-ironic figure sculptures too which conform to more or less standardised kinds within each art-province and hardly reveal any personal attitude or experience of the artist. The multitude of figures related themselves to a big diversity of motifs and subjects. These contain: narrative reliefs, historical or semi-historical scenes; music and dance scenes, mithuna couples in a diversity of poses and attitudes, arrays of warriors and animals and shalabhanjikas (women and the tree).

Metal images cast in brass and oct-alloy (asthta-dhata), copper and bronze emerge in profusion in eastern India (Bihar, Bengal and Assam), Himalayan kingdoms (especially Nepal and Kashmir) and more particularly in the south. The North Indian images mainly portray brahmanic and Buddhist deities permeated with tantrik powers. The main kinds represented in the extraordinary galaxy of South Indian metal images are the several shapes of Shiva, especially the Nataraja, Parvati; the Shaiva saints such as Appar, Sambaudar and Saudarar; VaishnaV saints described Alvars and figures of royal donors.

All in excess of the country, the post-Gupta iconography prominently displays a divine hierarchy which reflects the pyramidal ranks in feudal

society. Vishnu, Shiva and Durga appear as supreme deities lording in excess of several other divinities of unequal sizes and placed in lower positions as retainers and attendants. The supreme Mother Goddess is clearly recognized as an self-governing divinity in iconography from this time and is represented in a dominating posture in relation to many minor deities. Even hitherto a puritanical religion like Jainism could not resist the pressure of incorporating the Mother Goddess in its fold, which is fully reflected in the well-known Dilwara temples at Mt. Abu in Rajasthan. The pantheons do not so much reflect syncretism as forcible. In the rock-cut sculptures of Ellora one can feel the fighting mood of the divinities occupied in violent struggles against their enemies. The reality of unequal ranks appears in the Shaivite, Jain and Buddhists monastic organisations. The ceremonies recommended for the consecration of the acharya, the highest in rank, are practically the similar as those for the coronation of the prince.

### ***Paintings, Terracottas and the “Medieval Factor”***

The medieval custom in paintings has the following traits:

- Sharp, jerky and pointed angles, e.g., at the elbow and the shoulders,
- Sensuous facial characteristics — sharp and peaked nose, extensive wide swollen eyes projected sharply and crescent lips,
- Richness of variegated patterns, motifs etc. Gathered and adapted to the grip of sharp curves, and
- An intense preference for geometric and abstract patterns of decoration.

The manifestations of these traits can be seen in the paintings on the walls of the Kailas temple (eighth century) of Ellora; the Jain shrine at Sittanavasal (ninth century) and the Brihadishvar temple at Thanjavur (eleventh century), both in Tamil Nadu. Though, these traits are still more pronounced in the well-recognized manuscript-illustrations of Bihar and Bengal, Nepal and Tibet in the post-tenth centuries. Textiles surfaces also offered a very rich field for the development of this custom. At least from the thirteenth century onwards West Indian textile designs, and later, those of the Deccan, South, Orissa and Bengal also register their impact in unmistakable conditions.

The feudal ethos of the post-Gupta economy, society and polity is also noticeable in the terracotta art. The change is noticeable in the patrons and content of depictions. Art action, as a whole, was being feudalised. The pre-Gupta art at Bharhut, Sanchi, Karle, Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, etc. was patronised mainly through the mercantile and commercial class, artisans and craft-guilds as well as royal families. Art in the Gupta era (fourth—sixth centuries), when feudal tendencies had presently begun to appear, reflects that vitality and zest of renewed brahmanism — for the first time brahmanical temples were constructed in permanent material, i.e. stone. The art of the post-

Gupta centuries (650-1300 A.D.) was supported mainly through kings of dissimilar principalities, feudatories, military chiefs, etc. who alone could patronize big-level art behaviors. The terracotta art, which had once symbolised the creative urges of general man, ceased to be so and instead, became a tool in the hands of resourceful patrons. The output of miniature portable terracottas made for the urban market dwindled in the post-Gupta era. Though some of the old urban centres such as Varanasi, Ahichchatra and Kanauj survived and some new ones like Tattanandapur (close to Bulandshahr in U.P.) appeared in the early medieval era, very few of them have yielded terracottas. Instead of producing for the market, the clay modeler (pustakarak) become subservient to the architect and now produced for big landlords, brahmanical temples and non-brahmanical monasteries. Terracotta acquired the character of an elite art and was preserved in feudal headquarters and religious centres such as Paharpur, Rajbadidanga (Bengal), Vikramashila (Bihar), Akhnur and Ushkar (Kashmir). Terracottas in the post-Gupta centuries were used through landed aristocrats and kings to decorate religious structures and their own spaces on auspicious occasions such as marriages as recorded through Bana in the Harshacharita.

### **Education and Learning**

Presently as the Church was the principal organizer of education in Europe in the Medieval times, likewise the post-Gupta centuries saw the concentration of the centres of education in religious establishments, such as the Viharas, mathas and temples. Colleges also lived in some royal capitals such as Dhara, Ajmer, Anahillapura, etc. The fame of Mithila in North Bihar and Nadia in Bengal as centres of brahmanical learning increased in these centuries. Kashi (Varanasi) with its Shaiva monasteries was also a flourishing seat of brahmanical learning. Kashmendra tells us that students from such distant regions as Gauda (Bengal) travelled to Kashmir for revise in the mathas. The proof of Hemachandra reveals the subsistence of Vidya-mathas in Gujarat in

the twelfth century. Numerous agraharas in the south were developing as educational centres. Amongst notable universities, one can mention Nalanda, Vikramashila and Odantapuri (all in Bihar), Valabhi (Gujarat), Jagadalla and Somapuri (in Bengal) and Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu.

The concept of temple libraries was evolved from the eighth century. The real ginnings in this sphere were laid through the Jainas. The extensive lists of their achers/preceptors — bhattacharakas and shripujyas, and the lay of honour given to em is symptomatic of this development. Their espousal of the cause of Shastradana gift of religious texts/manuscripts) explains the great bhandaras (store houses) such is patan, Khambhat, Jainsalmer, etc., which became integral parts of Jain establishments in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Karnataka in scrupulous. The trend was picked up through brahmanical mathas as well and we get a phenomenal proliferation of the manuscript custom approximately all in excess of India.

That tantra and mantra became a favourite subject of revise may be inferred from the information that a full-fledged department of Tantra was run in the University of Vikramashila. The Tibetan traveller Taranatha, who came to India in the 17th century is very eloquent in relation to the tantrik curricula at Nalanda, Odantapuri and other prominent universities of Bihar and Bengal. The growth and popularity of occult sciences also constitute a important characteristic of the post-eighth centuries. The list of subjects pursued through people in the thirteenth century has been given in Rajashekhara's Prabandhakosha. It comprises several occult sciences in the extensive list of more than 70 subjects. Amongst the mainly notable phenomena in the sphere of learning may be recounted:

- Regionalization of languages,
- Emergence of regional scripts, and
- Rising verbosity in literature.

The post-Gupta centuries are epoch-creation in the history of language and



literature Although the big-level dispersal of Sanskrit knowing brahmanas was resulting in the spread of that language in distant regions due to the land-grant phenomenon. The scope of Sanskrit was slowly getting confined. It was being used through the ruling class at the higher administrative stages. In the Naishadhiyacharita we discover the dignitaries present in the svayamvara of Damyanti having the fear of not being understood and, as such, taking recourse to Sanskrit.

According to Al-Biruni, vernacular literature which was used through the general people was neglected through the upper and educated class. Though, a development of undeniable significance is the differentiation of Apabhramsha into proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, proto-Rajasthani, proto-Gujrati, proto-Marathi, proto-Maithili, etc. The Apabhramsha, which shaped a link in our era flanked by the Old-classical languages such as Sanskrit and Prakrit on the one hand and modern vernaculars on the other, originated much before our era. The Kuvalayamala, an eighth century work enumerates as several as 18 Apabhramshas spoken in several regions of India, which turned into modern Indian languages later. In the list of Rajashekhara, Prakrit, Paishachika, Apabhramsha and Deshabhasha are mentioned beside with Sanskrit as subjects to be studied through a prince. Vernaculars such as Avahatha, Magadhi, Shakari, Abhiri, Chandali, Savali, Draviti, etc. shaped part of curriculum mentioned in the Varna Ratnakara. The pace of linguistic variations quickened in the country in the post-Gupta centuries mainly on explanation of lack of inter-regional communication and mobility. The migrating brahmanas enriched the vocabulary of regional languages. They also helped to develop and systematize regional dialects into languages through the introduction of writing. The emergence of regional scripts runs parallel to the growth of regional languages.

As there are numerous languages, so also there are quite a big number of scripts used to express these languages. From Maurya to Gupta times the writing changed mainly as a result of the passage of time and anyone knowing

the Brahmi writing of the Gupta era could read inscriptions from any part of the country. This was not possible after the seventh century. From this era the regional variations become so pronounced that one has to be well-versed in many scripts to be able to read. Obviously, the regional writing was produced through regional insulation and the availability of the in the vicinity educated scripts to meet the needs of regional education and management. Manuscripts, inscriptions and other written material use Devanagari, Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Sharada (in Kashmir) scripts. That the proliferation of scripts went beyond linguistic confines, is clear from the case of Tamil. A revise of several inscriptions leads one to an inescapable conclusion that though the Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas adopted Tamil as their language, each appears to have adopted a dissimilar writing, perhaps to indicate their regional identity. The Cheras used a cursive diversity of Tamil Brahmi described VATTELUTTU (rounded writing ). The Pandyas appear to have popularized the KOLELUTTU (writing of straight rows) and the Cholas combined the two. This is not all. For philosophic and religious discourses, in the three kingdoms put jointly, the scholars gave rise to the Tamil Grantha writing. Hundreds of manuscripts in this writing are said to have reached as distant north as Tibet, where Buddhist monasteries became great repositories.

While editing a medieval Sanskrit text described Subhashita-Ratnakosha, D.D.Kosambi brought to light several neglected poets but characterized it as a decadent poetry or writing of a decadent age. Sometimes we understand such phenomena in absolute or total sense. It is not necessary that economic, political, social and cultural decline run simultaneously. Also, the yardstick of “decadence” cannot be worked out in absolute conditions. The erotic sculptures of Khajuraho, Bhubaneshwar, Konarka and Belur may appear to some to be products of a perverted mind but the similar art pieces are taken through others to be manifestation of vital cultural ethos of people.

The post-eighth centuries saw prolific literary output in realms of philosophy, logic, legal texts, devotional poetry of the Alvars and the Shaiva

Agamas, Kavyas, narratives, lyrics, historical biographies, scientific writings, shilpashastras, etc. Nonetheless, in keeping with the rising paraphernalia and personal vanity of the new landed classes, the language of mainly of these literary compositions became very verbose and ornate. This ornate approach marked through pompous adjectives, adverbs and similies became the hallmark of literature as well as inscriptions. Although the prose approach of Bana, which is recognized for highly intricate and elaborate sentence' constructions, was not exactly initiated, it did continue to serve as a model for the post-seventh century writings.

In the realm of poetry too, dvayashraya or Shlesha Kavyas were being produced consciously. These works contain verses conveying two dissimilar senses when read in dissimilar directions. The Ramacharita of Sandhyakara Nandi presents both the story of Rama and the life of King Ramapala of Bengal. The marriages of Shiva and Parvati and Krishna and Rukmani are described in a twelfth century work (Parvati Rukminiya) produced in the Chaulukya court. Hemachandra is credited with the composition of Saptasanbhana having seven alternative interpretations. The tendency of working out the intricate pattern of double, triple or even more meanings reflects the artificiality of life.

### **Regional Chronicles and Eras**

Hsiuan-tsang, the Chinese pilgrim of the seventh century writes that he learnt thoroughly the dialects in all the districts through which he journeyed. Further, writing common observations on languages, books, etc. he says:

- “With respect to the records of events each province has its own official for preserving them in writing. The record of these events in their full character is described Nilapita (blue deposit). In these records are mentioned good and evil events, with calamities and fortunate occurrences.”

The subsistence of historical chronicles in Kashmir (Rajatarangini), Gujarat (Rasmala. Prabandha, Chintamani, Vasanta Vilasa, etc.), Sind (Chadmama) and Nepal (Vamshavalis) supports the presumption that the archives of dissimilar states, as a rule, contained such royal chronicles as stated through Hsiuan-tsang. These chronicles are further confirmation of the tendency of regionalization noticeable in the overall cultural pattern and traditions.

An analogous development which further strengthened this tendency is visible in the rise of regionalized eras. In addition to the older Saka and Vikrama eras which had a vast and expansive usage upto the Gupta epoch and, to some extent even later; the post-Gupta centuries are marked through regional systems of time reckoning. Harsha himself founded an era in the early seventh century. His modern in Assam, i.e. Bhaskaravarman started Bhaskarabda, which is used in some manuscripts from that region. An era in Bengal also came into being. The Jains started using the Mahavira samvat. The great Vaishnava saint and teacher of Assam, viz., Shankaradeva is credited with the starting of Shankarabda — a reckoning after him.

### **The New Religious Trends**

The religious rituals and practices underwent significant changes throughout the centuries under discussion. In accordance with the rising practice of land grants beside with the surrender of other property and service to the Lord and then getting fiscal rights and protection as *prasad* or favor, there grew the puja organization. The puja was interlinked with the doctrine of *bhakti* or complete self-surrender of the individual to his god.

Both puja and *bhakti* became integral ingredients of tantricism, which arose outside the Madhyadesha in the aboriginal, peripheral regions on explanation of the acculturation of the tribal people throughout big-level religious land grants. Brahmanical land rights in the new territories could be maintained through adopting tribal rituals and deities, especially the Mother

Goddess, which eventually produced the tantras. Tantricism permeated all religions in the post-seventh centuries—Jainism, Buddhism, Shaivism and Vaishnavism. If a thematic compilation of thousands of manuscripts is undertaken, it would be noticed that literature on pujas, vidhis, tantra and occult sciences is phenomenal. Even the jainas, who had been allergic to such practices gave birth to countless such manuscripts. The jaina Bhandaras is full of such manuscripts as Dharmachakiapuja, Dashalakshanapuja, etc. This is so, notwithstanding the original meaning of puja in the Jaina Anga literature, especially in the context of monks. In that context it is said to have symbolised “respect” shown to him and not the “worship” of limbs. It is unmistakable, though, that puja of idols of tirthankaras had the connotation with which we are concerned. According to R.C. Hazra, new topics in the Puranas, from the sixth century onwards, mainly relate to dana to the brahmanas and their worship, tirtha (pilgrimage), sacrifices to the planets and their pacification (installation of the images of naragraha, becomes quite conspicuous in temple architecture), vrata (religions vows), puja etc. Puratadharma which involved the structure of temples, tanks and works of public utility, was accentuated as the highest mode of religion in the Puranas. Puratadharma was the dominant ideology behind the big-level structure of temples in this era.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- What led to the augment in the rise of new mixed castes?
- How "Ideology" was conceived through Marx and Engels.
- What are the categories of human actions defined through Pareto?
- Talk about the connection flanked by Religion, Ideology and Society.
- What role did ideology play in the post-Gupta centuries.
- How do we come to know in relation to the regional cultural units?
- What are the main parts in a temple plan?
- How did the ecological setting and raw material decide the form of the roof of the temples?
- What are the peculiar characteristics of sculptures described through art historians as "medieval factor"?

## **CHAPTER 3.**

### **Indian Polity in its Regional Variations: 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Century**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Nature of regional politics
- Northern and eastern India
- Western and central India
- The Deccan
- South India
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this, chapter you should be able to explain the:

- Contents of polity.
- Major political growths in dissimilar regions of the Indian sub-continent such as northern and eastern India, western and central India, the Deccan and southern India,
- Links flanked by the growths in western and central Asia on the one hand and those of the Indian sub-continent on the other.
- Principal reconstructions of Indian polity flanked by eighth and thirteenth centuries.
- Regions incorporated in northern and eastern India.
- Real nature of kingship,
- Sharing of administrative and fiscal power,
- Role of vassals and state officials,
- Changes in the bureaucratic set up, in the light of land, sharing,
- Power hierarchy of samantas and functions of samantas,

- Power of clan on landholdings,
- Inter-vassal connection, and
- Ideological base of political power.
- Understand the nature of the sharing of political power as well as the structure of polity,
- Be able to analyze the patterns of the formation of political powers and their consolidation.
- Understand the geographical spread of the Deccan
- Grasp the political processes of the formation of regional powers and their integration into the power structure beyond regional bounds
- Determine the parameters of south india in conditions of regional polity.
- Sketch the broad spectrum of political powers,
- Identify significant ways of learning polity of the concerned region,

## **NATURE OF REGIONAL POLITICS**

### **Major Political Growths**

Broadly, significant regions requiring detailed investigation can be recognized as northern, eastern, central, western and southern India. In addition, the Deccan also constituted as a substantial political power base.

### ***Northern and Eastern India***

#### ***Kashmir***

Kashmir was mainly occupied with the internal political growths but on some occasions it was also involved in the politics of Northern India. It was ruled through the Karkota, Utopala and two Lohar dynasties. Muktapida, also recognized as Latitaditya, conquered a part of Kanauj and annexed some parts of Tibet. Several irrigation works were undertaken through some rulers of the

Karkota family. Embankments and dams were built on the main rivers which brought a big region of the valley under farming. Though, the tenth century saw the emergence of a new development in Kashmir politics. Military ambitions of rulers and emergence of mercenary warriors made the general man miserable and political circumstances unstable. There were at least twenty kings flanked by c. 1000 and 1300 A.D. Very often they became apparatus in the hands of powerful priests and no less powerful landlords such as the damaras. There were conflicts amongst priests and damaras too. Queen Didda, and kings such as Samgramaraj, Kalash, Harsha, Jayasimha and Sinhadeva were involved in the politics of these centuries in Kashmir.

#### *Ganga Valley, Kanauj*

In the Ganga Valley, Kanauj became the centre of gravity due to its strategic and geographical potentiality. It was situated in the middle of the doab which was easily fortifiable. The manage in excess of Kanauj implied manage in excess of the eastern and western parts of the Ganga doab which was very fertile. It was also interconnected with the land and water routes. It was, so, not surprising that the three leading modern powers such as the Palas, the Pratiharas and the Rashtrakutas clashed in excess of the possession of Kanauj. The Palas were primarily centered in the Eastern India, the Pratiharas in the Western India and the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan. But all the three powers tried to manage the Ganga plains, especially Kanauj. The political boundaries of the three empires kept shifting from time to time.

#### *Bihar and Bengal*

The political foundation of the Palas was the fertile land of Bihar and Bengal and external trade dealings, especially with the South-east Asia. The founder of the dynasty, Gopal, had been responsible for taking Bengal out of chaos in the early eighth century. Before him matsyanyaya, i.e. law of fishes prevailed in Bengal and political instability was very marked. Dharmapala led



a successful campaign against Kanauj but could not manage it for an extensive time. The failure to uphold manage in excess of Kanauj forced the Pala rulers to extend their power towards the further east. Devapala brought Pragjyotishpur (Assam) under the power of Palas, and Nepal also accepted the dominance of the Palas. After Devapala, the Pala power was not very effective in the North Indian politics, though the dynasty sustained till the early thirteenth century. The polity of the Palas was within the framework of the monarchical set-up and in this private and the state interests urbanized simultaneously. The empire consisted of regions administered directly and regions administered through the vassal chiefs. Ramapala, the last significant sovereign of the Pala dynasty who ruled from c. 1080 to 1122 A.D., is recognized to have organized a manage of uparika and districts (visaya) described samantha-chakra (circle of vassal chiefs). His reign is also marked through a peasant rebellion of Kaivarttas.

### *Assam*

Towards the further east, Assam was in the procedure of transition towards the state polity throughout the centuries under survey. Assam consists of two river valleys, viz., those of the Brahmaputra and Surama. Through seventh century the Varmans had recognized their ascendancy and brought in relation to the territorial and political integration of the Brahmaputra valley into Kamarupa. The Varmans made land grants to the brahmanas who in turn extended the scope of cultivable land and brought the tribal people in the network of state organization. The Varman rulers constructed several embankments thereby giving incentive to wet rice farming. Shalastambha kings in Pragjyotishi sustained the practice of the Varmans in the eight and ninth centuries and made several land grants to brahmanas and religious organizations. Later, Palas also sustained this trend. The medieval Assam inscriptions refer to conditions like raja, rajni, rajaputra, rajanyaka and ranaka who appear to have been landed intermediaries.

### *Orissa*

In Orissa a number of small kingdoms and principalities appeared beside the coast of Bay of Bengal and in the hilly hinterland. Kalinga, Kongoda, Dakshina Tosali and Uttara Tosali were situated at the Bay of Bengal and Dakshina Kosala in the upper Mahanadi valley. The borders of the dissimilar kingdoms varied from time to time but the topography of their centres and their spatial sharing remained approximately unchanged from the sixth to twelfth centuries. The kings donated lands to brahmanas who performed several administrative and ritualistic functions. Land grants were also made to religious organizations. The rice farming in the fertile riverine nuclear regions and trade links, both internal and external, gave incentive to the state organization of dissimilar kingdoms. Chiefs belonging to the Samavamsha ruled initially in western Orissa and slowly extended their sway in excess of a big part of Orissa. After the fall of the Sulkis, the Bhaumakaras appear to have divided Kodalaka-mandal (Dhenkanal district) under the rule of two feudatory families, viz., the Tungas and Nandas. The Bhanjas are recognized to us from in relation to the fifty inscriptions. The dynasty had several branches. Mayurbhanja, Keonjhar, Bandh, Sonapur and Gumsur regions of Orissa comprised the territories of dissimilar Bhanja families. The Gangas in the twelfth century constructed several temples including the well-known Sun temple at Konarka, to consolidate their hold in excess of tribal regions.

### ***Western and Central India***

Western India, especially Gujarat and Malwa, was under the power of the Gurjara Pratiharas. Malwa was very fertile and Gujarat was a part of internal and external trade network. The Pratiharas resisted incursions of the Arabs and were also drawn into North Indian politics. The lure of Kanauj was too great. Bhoja, the greatest Pratihara ruler controlled Kanauj and it was a part of his empire for sometime. Later, Gujarat was lost to Rashtrakutas thereby adversely affecting the economic base of the Pratihara empire. Though,

Bhoja's successor Mahendrapal not only maintained intact the vast empire inherited through him, but also furthers the east. No less than seven of his records have been establish in south Bihar and north Bengal.

The post tenth century scene in Central and Western India saw the rise of numerous powers, who claimed to be Rajputs and several of whom were feudatories of the Gujara Pratiharas. The emergence of these Rajput families is connected up with augment in land grants and consequent new land relationships. They were also the foreign and regional elements, and some segmentation of a few newly emergent powers in Central and Western India one can contain the Chandellas in Khajuraho, the Chauhans in Ajmer, the Paramaras in Malwa, the Kalachuris in Tripuri (close to Jabalpur), the Chaulukyas in Gujarat, the Guhilas in Mewar and the Tomaras with their headquarters in contemporary Delhi. The dissimilar Rajput clans constructed their fortresses on a big-level which represented the numerous foci of power. Sure amount of inter-clan marriages amongst some of these Rajput families led to wider regions of social and political action.

The political growths in North, Western and Central India were considerably influenced through the changes taking spaces in the modern West and Central Asia. The coming of the Arabs (seventh-eighth centuries), first as traders and later as invaders, had already made substantial impact in India. The Gurjara Pratiharas, Palas and the Rashtrakutas had to deal with this challenge in economic and political spheres.

The Samanids ruled in excess of Trans-Oxiana, Khurasan and parts of Iran in the ninth century. In the middle of the Samanid governors was a Turkish slave, Alaptigin, who later recognized an self-governing kingdom with its capital at Ghazni. After sometime Mahmud (998-1030 A.|d.) ascended the throne at Ghazni and brought Punjab and Multan under his manage. Mahmud undertook several raids and plundered several temples in India recognized for their wealth, mainly to consolidate his own location in Central Asia. Another homes that penetrated India was that Bhur in North-west Afghanistan.

Shahabuddin Muhammed (1173-1206 A.D.) of this homes conquered Multan, Uchch, Lahore; created a base in Punjab and finally defeated the Chauhan ruler Prithviraj in the second battle of Tarain in 1192. He also defeated Jaichandra of the Gahadaval dynasty (Kanauj based) in the battle of Chandwar in 1194. Such attempts of Central Asian chiefs finally led to the establishment of the Turkish empire in North India in the early thirteenth century under the Mamluk Sultans such as Qutbuddin Aibak and Iltutmish.

### ***The Deccan***

The Deccan also recognized as the bridge flanked by North and South India was under the manage of the Rashtrakutas from the early eighth century. They contended with the Gurjara Pratiharas in excess of the manage of Gujarat and Malwa and tried their fortunes in the Ganga Valley. Nor did they let powers in the eastern Deccan and southern India live in peace. The eastern Chalukyas at Vengi (in contemporary Andhra Pradesh), Pandyas in Kanchi and Madurai respectively (in Tamil Nadu) also had to hear their wrath.

Dhruva (c. 780-93 A.D.), Amoghavarsha — and Krishna II (c. 814-914 A.D.) were significant scions of the Rashtrakutas. Some other powers of the Deccan were the Chalukyas of Kalyana, the Yadavas (Seunas) of Devagiri and the Kakatiyas of Warangal.

### ***Southern India***

The southern India broadly covers the portion of the peninsula which lies south of 13° Northern latitude and flanked by the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. It also comprised contemporary states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, southern Karnataka and southern Andhra Pradesh. The Coromandal (from cholamandalam) plain extending from the tip of the peninsula to the northern edge of the broad delta of the Godavari and Krishna rivers was the major core region of the South India. Tamil plain's northern mainly part was Tondiaimandalam and Pandimandalam was the southernmost portion of the peninsula. The malabar coast was important due to the potentialities of sea-

trade. The Coromandel coast too had a number of entrepots such as Kaveripattanam, Pondicherry, Masulipattanam etc. These geographical configurations greatly influenced the political structure of the South India.

Through mid eighth century the erstwhile powerful kingdoms of the Pallavas and Chalukyas were spent forces. Though, their legacies were inherited through their political successors, viz., the Cholas and the Rashtrakutas respectively. Also, the political law of a tussle flanked by the power based in the Kaveri Valley and that of Karnataka became a concrete course for several centuries. This was the case of not only the dealings flanked by the Rashtrakutas and the Pallavas in the late eighth and early ninth centuries but also of the strained ties flanked by the Rashtrakutas and the

Cholas, when the later succeeded the Pallavas. Western Chalukyas, the political successors of the Rashtrakutas, sustained the trend and were often at loggerheads with the Cholas from the early eleventh century. Very often the small chiefdoms of the Deccan such as those of the Nolambas, Vaidumbas, Banas, etc. became victims of these big power rivalries. Vengi (coastal Andhra Pradesh) was also an significant bone of contention amongst these powers.

The post tenth century scene in the south is also marked through three significant phenomena:

- Internecine wars amongst the Cholas, Pandyas and the Cheras, -
- Involvement of Sri Lanka, and
- Expansion of Indian power beyond the seas—particularly in the South-east Asia. This climaxed in the naval expedition in the times of the Chola King Rajendra-I (first half of the eleventh century).

The Cholas under Rajendra-1 had also reached up to the Ganga Valley—a venture immortalized in the great temple at Gangaikondacholapuram (north east of Thanjavur).

### **Reconstructions of Indian Polity Flanked by 8th and 13th Centuries**

The writings on this subject since the early 1960s have broadly followed three approaches, viz., emphasizing feudal, segmentary and integrative character of polity

### ***Feudal Polity***

R.S. Sharma expounded this view in his book Indian Feudalism published in 1963. It is based on the pan-Indian character of land grants. It focuses on:

- Administrative structure based on the manage and possession of land,
- Fragmentation of political power,
- Hierarchy of landed intermediaries,
- Dependence of peasants on landlords,
- Oppression and immobility of peasants, and
- Restricted use of metal money

The degree of the dependence of the peasants on landlords might differ from region to region. Though, the development of agriculture, handicrafts, commodity manufacture, trade and commerce and of urbanisation could make circumstances for differentiation in the ranks of the peasantry. Hierarchical manage in excess of land was created through sub-infeudation in sure regions. which gave rise to graded kinds of landlords?

Recently the validity of the feudal formation in the context of medieval India has been questioned. It has been suggested that the medieval society was characterized through self-dependent or free peasant manufacture. The peasants had manage in excess of the means and the processes of manufacture. It is added that there was relative stability in social and economic structure and there was not much change at the stage of techniques of agricultural manufacture. The conflicts were in excess of the sharing and redistribution of the surplus than in excess of a redistribution of means of manufacture. The appropriation of agrarian surplus to the state shaped the chief instrument of use. The high fertility of land and the low survival stage of the peasant

facilitated the state appropriation of the surplus in circumstances of relative stability. This row of approach does not take note of superior rights and inferior rights of one party or another in excess of land. In information in early medieval times in the similar piece of land the peasant held inferior rights and the landlords held superior rights. The land grants clearly made the location of landlords stronger in excess of the land as compared to that of peasants. The critique of feudal polity unluckily does not take note of huge proof in support of the subjection and immobility of peasantry, which is an indispensable element in feudal organization. Also, this critique is a disguised effort to reinforce the colonialist view of stagnating and unchanging Indian society.

### ***Segmentary State***

An effort has been made to view the medieval polity, particularly that of the medieval South India, in conditions of segmentary state. The segmentary state is understood as one in which the spheres of ritual suzerainty and political sovereignty, do not coincide. The ritual suzerainty extends widely towards a flexible, changing margin and the political sovereignty is confined to the central core region. In segmentary state there exist many stages of subordinate foci, organized pyramidally beyond a royal centre. From the primary centre of the ruling dynasty kings unified their subordinate centres ideologically. In the state segments actual political manage was exercised through regional elite. It is also assumed that there lived secure co-operation flanked by brahmanas and dominant peasants. Though, the segmentary state formulation has some limitations. Ritual suzerainty is confused with cultural suzerainty. It also relegates the dissimilar foci of power to the margin and does not see them as components of the state power. Moreover, the heterogeneous character of South Indian peasantry is not adequately understood. In as distant as the notion of segmentary state subordinates political and economic dimensions of the State structure to its ritual dimensions, it does not inspire much confidence. The notion has been applied to the Rajput polity as well.

Aidan Southall and Burton Stein are major exponents of this view.

### ***Integrative Polity***

This formation has been worked out through B. D. Chattopadhyaya. The revise of political procedure calls for consideration of the attendance of recognized norms and nuclei of state organization, horizontal spread of state organization implying transformation of pre-state polities into state polities and integration of regional polities into a structure that went beyond the bounds of regional polities. The proliferation of ruling lineages (ruling families) is seen as social mobility procedure in early medieval India. The diffused foci of power are represented through what is broadly described as the samanta organization. The samanta were integrated into the structure of polity in which the overlord-subordinate relation came to be dominant in excess of other stages of relation in the structure. The transformation of the samanta into a vital component of the political structure is itself and proof of ranking and in turn clarifies the political foundation of integration. Rank as the foundation of political organisation implies differential access to the centre as also shifts within the organization of ranking. It is also assumed that the rank as the foundation of political organisation generated crisis flanked by the rank holders and also flanked by them and the overlord. This emphasis on ranking brings the integrative polity formulation closer to the notion of segmentary state.

The integrative polity, like the feudal polity, sees political processes in conditions of parallels with modern economic, social and religious growths, such as:

- Horizontal spread of rural agrarian settlements,
- Horizontal spread of the dominant ideology of social order based on varna division, and
- Integration of regional cults, rituals and sacred centres into a superior structure.



Though, this formulation suffers from definitional vagueness. The conditions “lineage domain” and “state society” are not clarified. The samantas even in their trans-political sense remained a landed aristocracy. More importantly, neither the segmentary state nor the integrative polity models give alternative material bases which could be contrasted with that of the feudal polity. Both integration and segmentation can be explained in conditions of land grants which shaped the crucial element in the feudal structure. In as much as regional landlords or chieftains derived their fiscal and administrative powers from the King (the overlord), paid tributes and performed military and administrative obligations towards him, they worked for integration. On the other hand, when they ruled in excess of the regional peasants in an autonomous manner it amounted to the segmentation of power. “Lineage geography” which is crucial for the reconstruction in conditions of integrative polity, is not accessible on pan-India level. Except in the case of the Chauhans and Paramaras, „lineage’ did not play a significant part in the organisation of polity. Even ranks were shaped on the foundation of unequal sharing of land and its revenue possessions. Likewise, the distinction flanked by political and ritual suzerainty coupled with their association with the core and the margin respectively, which is measured the corner stone of the concept of the segmentary state suffers from the absence of empirical data from several significant regions of the Indian sub-continent. On the contrary, the reconstruction of medieval Indian polity in conditions of feudalism relies on such elements which can be applied to practically the whole of India.

## **NORTHERN AND EASTERN INDIA**

### **The Region Defined**

Writings since the early 1950s have opened up great several issues bearing on the political structure of Northern and Eastern India. It was a product of a

set of changes at all stages and in all spheres. The pace of these changes was determined through the mechanism of land grants. Broadly, the understanding of centuries and the regions under discussion in conditions of feudalism have been the mainly dominating strain of recent historical writings on the political set up.

How does one describe Northern and Eastern India? Usually, territories north of the Vindhyas and up to the Himalayan tarai are incorporated. Though, contemporary states comprising Gujarat, Rajasthan and mainly of Madhya Pradesh are being excluded from this discussion, for, they have been taken as constituting Western and Central India. Therefore, Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh create up Northern India while the Eastern India comprises Bihar, Bengal (including present day Bangladesh), Orissa and Assam as well as other states of the Brahmaputra Valley.

### **Dispersal of Powers: The New Royalty**

Early medieval Indian kings are recognized to have used very high sounding and pompous titles, such as paramabhataraka, maharajadhiraja, parameshvara, etc. This has very often shaped the foundation of seeing these kings as very powerful centralised monarchs. Though, this is not true. The proof relating to the territorial divisions and sharing of administrative and fiscal powers shows the real wielders of power. The rising bardic sycophancy had begun to make an aura approximately kings, treating them as rulers of rulers and ascribing divinity to them. As a result of this image structure the King was increasingly becoming more of a private person than the real head of the state. It was not a centralised power structure but a multi-centered organization of power.

### ***Growth of Administrative Units***

The overall political structure is marked through dispersal of political and economic powers. The epigraphic proofs refer to bhuktis, mandalas, vishayas,

etc. The Palas had, for instance, under them Pundravardhana-bhukti, Vardhamana-bhukti, Danda- bhukti, Tira-bhukti, etc. Mandalas were widespread in Bengal but not so frequent in Bihar. Pala inscriptions also refer to nayas or vithis and khandala as some sort of administrative units.

A twelfth century copper plate grant of Vaidyadeva from Assam mentions bhukti, mandala and vishya. In Orissa too vishayas and mandalas assigned as fiefs to royal scions are mentioned in records of the twelfth century. Pattalas and pathakas were administrative units under the Gahadavalas.

The literary sources of the era are also eloquent in relation to the many of the aforesaid administrative units. Harishena's Kathakosha, a work of the tenth century, refers to a vishaya in the sense of the principality of a King who has a samanta under him. Rajatarangini, the chronicle of Kashmir, distinguishes flanked by Svamandal and mandalantar, which suggests that kings in Kashmir exercised direct administrative manage mostly in excess of their own mandalas while other mandalas were governed through samantas with an obligation to pay tribute and a commitment of allegiance. At the lowest stage perhaps villages also may have acquired a lord either through land grants placing villages under samanta chiefs or through forceful job or through the submission of individuals. There is a reference to qulma as consisting of three to five villages. Allusions to gramapati, gramadhipati, dashagfamapati, vimshatimsha- gramapati, sahasragramapati indicate a hierarchy of villages. The mode and quantum of payment to Village heads are also specified. Dashasha (head of ten villages) got as much land as he could cultivate with one plough. Vimshatisha (head of twenty villages) got land cultivable through four ploughs. Shatesha (head of one hundred villages) was to master one full village as his remuneration.

### ***Transfer of Administrative and Fiscal Rights***

It was not merely the multiplication of administrative units at dissimilar stages. Giving absent fiscal and administrative rights, including those of

policing and management of criminal law and justice, to donees of land grants created a landed aristocracy flanked by the King and the cultivators. The intensity of the procedure varied from one region to another.

Dispersal of administrative power which is an significant trait of feudal polity, is also indicated through constant shift of the seats of power. Typical examples of this tendency are to be seen in allusions to in relation to the nine skandhavaras (victory/military camps) in the Pala records. As several as twenty-one skandhavaras figure in the Chandella records. Though, in this respect the Pratiharas enjoyed relative stability, for only Ujjayini and Mahodaya (Kannauj) are recognized to have been their capitals. Like the shifting capitals, fortresses also assumed the functions of power centres. It is important that the Palas built as several as twenty fortresses in their empire.

### ***Vassals as King Makers***

The gradual accumulation of power in the hands of ministers is another indicator of the nature of royalty in early medieval centuries. Kshemendra's candid references to the greed of ministers and Kalhana's vivid picture of the machinations and tyranny of the damaras create it obvious that the ministers were self-seeking persons with hardly any concern for the public good. Manasollasa, a text of the twelfth century advises the King to protect his subjects not only from robbers but also from ministers as well as officers of finance and revenue. The records of Somavamshins of Orissa illustrate that vassals could even depose and install kings, although such cases were neither too several nor had any legal sanction.

### **Transformed Bureaucracy**

Parallel to the dispersal of administrative powers as manifested in the regionalized units was the transformation in the bureaucratic tools in the administrative organization. Payment to officials and vassals through land grants, the hierarchy of samantas, feudalization of titles of kings and officials

and sharing of land to members of the clan are some of the characteristics of this new bureaucracy.

### ***Officials, Vassals and Land***

The Brahma-khanda of the Skanda Purana, which is usually regarded as throwing light on the history and culture of India from in relation to the eighth-ninth to the thirteenth centuries, provides a extensive account of a legendary grant of a number of villages beside with 36,000 vaishyas as well as shudras four times that number, made in ancient times through King Rama to 18,000 brahmanas after the performance of sure religious rites. The donees were to be served through these vaishyas and shudras. Rama enjoined the people, so transferred, to obey the commands of the donees, who had later divided the villages amongst themselves. That such allusions are not merely mythical but had definite roots in historical proof is borne out through literary and epigraphic records which are widely dispersed—both chronologically and geographically.

The bestowal of land on the officials in charge of the administrative divisions of 1,10, 20,100 and 1000 villages is mentioned as early as Manu (c. 200 A.D.). The practice of service tenure picks up momentum in the post-Gupta centuries.

The Partabgarh inscription of Mahendrapala-II records the grant of a village which was in possession of talavargika Harishena. There is mounting proof of purely military grants. Literary works dealing with Bihar and Bengal flanked by tenth and twelfth centuries create frequent references to several types of grants such as *deshya*, *karaja*, *gramaja* and *pratipattaka* to ministers, kinsmen and those who rendered military services. The Kamauli plate of 1133 A.D. refers to grant of a tract of land to a chief on *rajapatti* (royal fillet or tiara) through one of the ancestors of Govindacandra Gahadavala. The *rajas*, *rajaputras*, *ranakas*, *rajarajanakas*, *mahasamantas* etc. mentioned in Pala land charters were mostly vassals linked with land. Sometimes even vassals made

further grants with or without the permission of their overlords. This is described sub-infeudation and was particularly marked under the Gurjara Pratiharas. Since the original grantee was given the right to cultivate his benefice or get it cultivated, to enjoy it or get it enjoyed, to do it or get it done, the field was wide open to sub-infeudation and eviction. The medieval land grants of Orissa also refer to bhogi, mahabhogi, brihadbhogi, samanta, mahasamata, ranaka, rajavallabha, All these appear to be landed intermediaries who also performed military and administrative functions.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries key officials were also being paid through regular and exclusive taxes. Officers linked with revenue collection, criminal management including policing, accounts and members of the palace staff enjoyed levies specifically raised for them. Therefore, the akshapatalikas, pratiharas and vishatiathus (perhaps a revenue official of a group of twenty eight villages) under the Gahadavalas received such sustenance.

Early twelfth century inscriptions of the Gahadavalas mention akshapata - prastha, akshapatala-adaya, pratihara-prastha and vishatiathuprastha. It is not clear whether these levies accounted for the total remuneration of the concerned officials or presently shaped an additional emolument. Yet, it is apparent that such state officials had become as powerful as to claim grants of perquisites for themselves. In sum, the right of several state officials to enjoy specific levies—irrespective of the tenure of these levies—was bound to make intermediaries with some interests in the lands of the tenants.

### ***The Power Hierarchy of Samantas***

Through the twelfth century a hierarchical organization of samantas had become considerably elaborate. A text of the twelfth century classifies several vassals in the descending order on the foundation of the number of villages held through them: “Mahamandaleshvara (1,00,000 villages), madalika (50,000 villages)”, mahasamanta (20,000 villages), “samanta, laghu-samanta and caturamshika (10,000; 5,000 and 1,000 villages respectively)”.

Sandhyakara Nandi who wrote in relation to the Bengal under Ramapala, refers to mandaladhipati, samanta-cakra-chudamani, bhupala and raja.

The hierarchy of samantas is corroborated through epigraphic proof too. Rajanakas and rajaputras figure in inscriptions of the former Chamba state. Samanta, mahasamanta, mahasiyantadhipati and thakkura figure in some eleventh century inscriptions of Garhwal. The Tezpur rock inscription of 830 A.D. refers to Shri Harjaravarman of the Shalastambha dynasty (of Assam) as maharajadhiraja- parameshvara—paramabhattaraka under whom came the mahasamanta Shrisuchitta. Shilakuttakavaleya is mentioned as a samanta in this inscription. We come across raja, rajanya, ranaka and rajaputras in the Shaktipur copper plate of Lakshmanasena of Bengal.

### ***Feudalisation of Bureaucracy***

Numerous officials are listed in inscriptions belonging to approximately all North Indian states. The Pala land charters, for instance, mention almost four dozen officials and vassals—some of them even being hereditary. More than two dozen officials are listed in the Gahadavala inscriptions. The situation was no dissimilar in the territories of the Cahamanas, Chandellas and the Kalachuris. Even feudatories kept an extensive retinue of the officers; More than two dozen of them functioned under Samgrama Gupta, a mahamandalika of the Karnatas of Mithila. The feudalisation of the titles and designations of these officials, becomes a conspicuous phenomenon of the times. An indicator of this development is the use of the prefix maha. While the early Pala kings such as Dharmapala and Devapala had less than half a dozen maha-prefixed officials, the number went up to nine under Navayanapala. The number of such officials under Samgrama Gupta was as high as eighteen. One can even discern a pattern in this newly appeared set up—the lower the power of the lord the superior the number of the dignitaries bearing the title maha in his kingdom. Likewise, the later the kingdom, the greater the number of maha prefixed functionaries. The rising feudalisation of officials is also established in

the practice of using the similar terminology to express the connection flanked by the officials and the King as was used flanked by the vassals and the King. The expressions such as padapadmopajiyin, rajapadopajivin, padaprasadopajivin, paramesvara-padopajivin, etc. applied to both vassals and officials. They indicate that officers subsisted on the favor of their masters and therefore illustrate that they were being feudalised. Officials were placed in several feudal categories according to their status and importance. Even kayastha scribes were invested with such titles as ranaka and thakkura to indicate their feudal and social rank rather than their functions.

### ***Landholding and Clan Thoughts***

The exercise of significant governmental functions was slowly being connected up with landholding. There are numerous instances of assignments not only to chiefs and state officials but also to members of the clan and the relatives. Therefore, we discover references to estates held through a chief of the Chinda family ruling in the region of the contemporary Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh. As illustrations of clan thoughts, it is possible to cite numerous instances of apportionment of villages in units of twelve. The (Una) plates of the time of Mahendrapala of Kannauj (c. 893 A.D.) mention the holding of 84 villages through mahasamanta Balavarman. References to queen's grasa and bhukti, junior princes as bhoktsies (possessors) of villages, seja (allotment) of a rajaputra and rajakiya-bhoga (King's estate) are not strange. The holders of 84 villages had shaped a part of chiefs recognized as caturashikas through the end of the twelfth century. Relatively speaking, the practice of distributing land on clan thoughts had a greater frequency in the Western and Central India than in the Northern and Eastern India. This practice of distributing land to the members of clan is reminiscent of tribal organization of apportioning spoils of war amongst members of the tribe.

### **Functions of Samantas**



Through the end of the era under survey, the multifarious functions of the samantas had come to be recognized. Some of these incorporated regular payment of tributes, compliance with imperial orders and attendance at the imperial court on ceremonial occasions, administering justice, military obligations, etc. The *Rajaniti Ratnakara* written through Chandeshwar of Mithila (north Bihar) in the thirteenth century classifies samantas into sakara and akara depending on their obligations in respect of the payment of tributes.

The Chandellas of Jejakabhukti (Bundelkhand) made frequent land grants to military officials. Ajayapala, the brahmana senapati of Paramardin was a recipient of pada of land in 1166 A.D. Grants for military service was made to kayasthas as well. Members of the Vastavya Kayastha family functioned as warriors. This family enjoyed importance in Chandella management for almost three hundred years from Ganda to Bhojavarma.

Though there are several instances of land grants to rautas and ranakas through Gahadavala kings, military services and acts of bravery are not specified as response for these grants. But it is equally true that they were vassals, separate from regular officials under the direct manage of the state because ranakas and rautas are not mentioned in the list of officials given in Gahadavala inscriptions. It is important that the Latakamelaka, a satirical work composed in the twelfth century under the patronage of the Gahadavalas, refers to a rauttaraja described Samgramavisara. Enjoying a gramapatta apparently for military service, this rauttaraja appears as a prominent social figure.

### **Inter-Vassal Connection**

The nature of the bond flanked by the superior and inferior vassals and flanked by the vassal and lord is rather uncertain. While there is some proof in relation to a written contract embodying only the obligations of the vassal, the Rajatarangini also shows signs of mutual oral understanding flanked by a tenth century King, Chakravarman and a leading damara chief described Samgrama. We do not discover several such instances. On the one hand we hear of vassals' autonomy in their respective spheres, there is also accessible on the other hand the proof of the Pala King (Ramapala) seeking help of his vassals to suppress the revolt of the kaivarttas in the late eleventh century. It is, though, motivating to note that the sentiments of loyalty and allegiance to a general overlord went beyond caste thoughts. Therefore, the shabara chief and a vaishya caravan leader, who have a general overlord, regard themselves as

sambandhins.

Some insights into the lord-vassal connection are also provided through the usage of panchamahashabda, which appears to have urbanized as a samanta institution in the post-Gupta centuries. Several inscriptions illustrate that a measure of the high feudal rank enjoyed through some vassals was their investiture with the panchamahashabda through their overlords.

A copper plate inscription of 893 A.D. records a grant of land through the mahasamanta Bakavarman, whose father had obtained the panchamahashabda through the grace of Mahendrayudhadeva (Mahendrapala of Kannauj). Surprisingly, the term was not recognized in the Pala kingdom, although it is recognized in Assam and Orissa. There is little doubt that the acquisition of the panchamahashabda was the highest distinction that could be attained through a vassal—indeed, even the Yuvaraja (crown prince) enjoyed no higher feudal privilege than this. The samantas sustained to bear this epithet even after adopting such grandiloquent titles as paramabhataraka- maharajadhiraja-parameshvara.

The privilege of panchamahashabda - signified the use of five musical instruments. These are referred to as shringa (horn), tammata (tabor), shankha (conch), bheri (drum) and jayaghanta (bell of victory). In some parts of North India, the term panchamahashabda indicated five official designations with the prefix maha. If the word shabda is linked with the root shap, it acquires an additional meaning of oath or vow. If so, it would have an significant bearing on the rendering of panchamahashabda in conditions of state officials' and lord-vassal connection.

The lord-vassal bond and the samanta hierarchy do not illustrate any distinctive sign of decay even in the changed economic scenario of the post-tenth century. Trade and cash nexus are recognized as factors which weaken feudal formation. There are clear signs of the revival of internal as well as external trade and currency flanked by tenth and twelfth centuries. Indian feudalism as a political organization, distant from getting dissipated, shows

extra ordinary fluidity and adaptability. A phenomenon of a somewhat similar type has been noticed in the 17th century Russia where serf economy began to adapt itself to the developing markets. It is, though, necessary to add that feudalism as an economic organization does illustrate signs of cracking up. This is especially true of Western India where the self-enough feudal economy had come under special strain due to revival of trade, money and urban growth. The situation, though, is not without its contrasts—the east, viz. Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, illustrate a considerable resilience. Further, land service grants to vassals and officials are more general in the west than in the east, with the exception of Orissa.

### **Land Grants and Legitimization of Political Power**

As distant as the political organisation is concerned, the pan-Indian character of land grants served an significant function. This was to provide social and legal sanction to the political power, viz., the King or the vassal. In Bengal and Bihar under the Palas, brahmanas, Buddhist monasteries and Shaiva temples appeared as landed intermediaries due to land grants. Elsewhere in North and East India, brahmanas were principle donees. These predominantly religious donees were mediators of providing legitimacy to political authorities. An significant method to achieve this objective was to work out glorious genealogies of chiefs and kings. Their descent was sought to be traced from mythical epic heroes such as Rama and Krishna. The beneficiaries of land donations also tried to give ideological support to the ruling authorities through undertaking cultural interaction—especially in tribal regions. For instance, an significant indicator is the method in which symbols of tribal solidarity and coherence were being absorbed within the fold of brahmanism. In Orissa the political power was consolidated through the effective instrument of the royal patronage of tribal deities. The absorption of the cults of Gokarnasvami and Stambheshvari and the procedure of the emergence of the cult of Jagannath are pointers of the new ideological force.

Incidentally, these functions of the post-Gupta land grants, viz., imparting legitimacy to ruling powers and providing ideological support were not confined to Northern and Eastern India.

## **WESTERN AND CENTRAL INDIA**

### **The Rise of Rajput Dynasties**

The Arabs invaded Sind and Multan in 712-13 A.D. Within the after that 25 years they overran Marwar, Malwa and Broach and threatened other parts of India. These raids contributed to extra ordinary changes in the political map of Western India and the Deccan. Powers like Rashtrakutas and clans now recognized to us as Rajputs came to the fore in this era. These clans, not heard of in earlier times, began to play a significant part from in relation to the eighth century. With obscure origins the lineages like the Paramaras and the Chahamanas, after passing through several vicissitudes, came to the fore in the context of the inter-state conflicts of the major powers such as the Gurjara Pratiharas and Rashtrakutas.

The rise of the Rajputs to political prominence appears to be accidental. But an understanding of the early political growths shows that their appearance on the political scene was not sudden. The emergence of these clans took lay within the existing hierarchical political structure. Their emergence, so, should be understood as a total procedure.

### **Origin Legends: Their Political Implications**

The problem of the origin of Rajput dynasties is highly intricate and controversial. Their gotrochhara creates them kshatriyas of the Lunar family (Somavamshi) while on the foundation of old kavyas some uphold that they were of the Solar race. The myths of Solar origin regard them as kshatriya created in kaliyuga to wipe-out the mlecchas (foreigners). Rajasthani bards and chroniclers regard them as fire-born (Agnikula).

According to the Agnikula myth recorded through a court poet, the founder of the homes of the Paramaras originated from the firepit of sage Vasishtha on Mount Abu. The man who therefore sprang out of the fire forcibly wrested the wish-granting cow of sage Vasishtha from sage Vishwamitra and restored it to the former. Sage Vasishtha gave him the fitting name of paramara—slayer of the enemy. From him sprang a race which obtained high esteem through virtuous kings. The Paramara inscriptions also declare the origin of the Paramaras from the firepit of sage Vasishtha on the Mount Abu.

The Rajasthani bards went a step further and ascribed the fire origin not only to the Paramaras but also to the Pratiharas, the Chaulukyas of Gujarat and the Chahamanas. Speaking of the fire origin of the Chahamanas the bardic tales said that Agastya and other sages began a great sacrifice on the Mount Abu. Demons rendered it impure through showering down filthy things. Vasishtha created from the firepit three warriors Pratihara, Chaulukya, and Paramara, but none succeeded in keeping the demons absent. Vasishtha dug a new pit from where issued forth a four armed figure. The sages named him Chahuvana. This warrior defeated the demons.

This Agnikula myth was nothing more than poetic imagination of bards. In their hunt for a fine pedigree for their patrons they had woven the story of the fire-origin of the Paramaras. The problem of the origin, when viewed in its totality instead of viewing it from the angle of any scrupulous dynasty, would help us understand its political significance. The practice of new social groups claiming kshatriya status became widespread in the early medieval era. Kshatriya status was one of the several symbols that the emergent social groups sought for the legitimating of their newly acquired power.

The early medieval and medieval Rajput clans, on behalf of a mixed caste and constituting a fairly big part of petty chiefs holding estates, achieved political eminence slowly. There was corresponding connection flanked by the attainment of political eminence through Pratiharas, Guhilas, Chahamanas and

other clans and their movement towards a respectable social status, viz. acquiring a kshatriya lineage. In this context it is significant to note that these dynasties claimed descent from ancient kshatriyas extensive after their accession to power. Let us note the instance of the Gurjara Pratiharas, chronologically the earliest and historically the mainly significant of the Rajput dynasties. In an inscription of the late ninth century issued through King Bhoja-I they claim Solar descent for the dynasty and say that Lakshmana, the brother of the epic hero Rama was the ancestor of their family. Their inscriptions are silent on the question of origin till the glorious days of Bhoja. This epigraphic custom of the Solar descent is linked chronologically with the era throughout which the Gurjara Pratiharas were the dominant political power. The custom, therefore, symbolizes a stage of imperial prominence with the temptation to set up a link with the heroic age of the epics. The custom of the legendary kshatriya origin of powers such as the Paramaras and Chahamanas too had not originated at the initial stage of the rise of these powers. In short, the entry to the Rajput fold was possible through the acquisition of political power. And the newly acquired power was to be legitimized through claiming linkages with the kshatriya rows of the mythical past.

### **Sharing of Political Power**

In India the sharing of political power did not follow a uniform pattern. A revise of the procedure of emergence of the political powers in medieval Western India shows that the sharing of political power could be organized through a network of lineages (kula, vamsha) within the framework of the monarchical form of polity. The political annals of the Rajput dynasties such as the Chahamanas of Rajasthan and the Paramaras of southern Rajasthan, Gujarat and Malwa give examples of the clan based sharing of political power.

### ***Proliferation of Rajput Clans***

The bardic chronicles of Marwar state that Dharanivaraha of the Paramara dynasty of Abu made himself master of the Navkot Marwar which he afterwards divided in the middle of his nine brothers: Mandovar to one brother, Ajmer to the second and so on. Therefore, separately from the Paramaras of Malwa there were at least four rows of the Paramaras ruling in:

- Abu,
- Bhinmai,
- Jalor, and
- Vagada.

Likewise, separately from the Chahamanas of Broach there was another row of the Chahamanas in Pratabgarh region. It was headed through a mahasamanta of the Pratihara overlord. The ancestor of this mahasamanta was a member of the well-known Chahamana row of Shakambhari. The Chahamanas of Shakambhari with their cradle land in the tract extending from Pushkar to Harsa (central and eastern Rajasthan) had themselves branched off into Chahamanas of:

Nadol,  
Jalor,  
Satyapura, and  
Abu.

Throughout in relation to the five centuries of their rule they exercised manage in excess of a vast region in western Rajasthan and Gujarat. The Chapas were another Rajput clan of the early medieval era. They ruled in excess of principalities like:

- Bhillamala,
- Vadhiar in Kathiawad, and
- Anahilapataka in Gujarat.



Likewise the Guhilas ruled in excess of the regions of Udaipur and Mewar. Separately from the sub-divisions of major clans, the emergence of several minor clans was another significant aspect of the proliferation of the Rajputs in early medieval era. The continuing procedure of the formation of Rajput clans was through the acquisition of political power. The new clans and sub-divisions of earlier clans were drawn into Rajput political network in a diversity of ways.

### ***Formation of Lineage Power***

The formation and consolidation of lineage power did not develop in a uniform method. One of the indicators of the procedure of lineage power formation was the colonization of new regions, as is apparent in the expansion of the number of settlements. The colonization of new regions could result from the annexation of the new territories through means of organized military strength. The Chauhan kingdom of Nadol recognized as Saptashata is said to have been made into Saptasahasrikadesha through a Chauhan chief who killed chiefs of the boundaries of his kingdom and annexed their villages. Territorial expansion of the Western Indian powers was accomplished, on some regions, at the expense of tribal settlements. For instance, Mandor Pratihar Kakkuka is said to have resettled a lay which was terrible because of being inhabited through the Abhiras. Likewise, there are examples of the suppression of tribal population like Shabaras, Bhillas and Pulindas in Western and Central India.

Similar movements are establish in the case Of the Guhilas and the Chahamanas as well. For instance, though the Guhila settlements were to be establish in several parts of Rajasthan as early as the seventh century, slightly later traditions recorded in the inscriptions of the Nagada-Ahar Guhilas trace their movement from' Gujarat. The bardic custom also suggests that the Guhila kingdoms in south Rajasthan succeeded the earlier tribal chiefdoms of the Bhils.

The movement of the Chauhanas was from AhiChhatrapura to Jangaldesha (Shakambhari) which, as the name designates, was an unfriendly region. Their movement led to its colonization. A tenth century record says that Lakshmana, the son of Vakpati-I of the Shakambhari Chahamanas lineage started with few followers and fought against the Medas who had been terrorizing the people approximately Naddula with their free-booting raids. It so pleased the brahmana masters of the region that they appointed him the guard of the cities. Slowly Lakshmana built up a small band of troopers and suppressed the Medas in their, own territory. The Medas agreed to stay off from villages paying tribute to Lakshmana. He became a master of 2000 horses and extended his dominions at ease and built a great palace in Nadol.

Political power of a lineage could even be brought in relation to the basically replacing one lineage through another as apparent in the case of the Chahamanas of Jalor, a splinter row of the Nadol Chahamanas branch. Kirtipala, a son of Nadol Chahamanas Alhana was dissatisfied with the share of land assigned to him. A man of ambition, he established that the situation in Mewar offered an advantage for an invader. Having failed there, he made his method into the region which was ruled through the Paramaras. He attacked Jalor, their capital, and made it the capital of his new kingdom. Likewise Chahamanas row of Broach was brought into being when a Chahamanas chief Bharatavaddha-II founded a principality in excess of the tract of the Gurjaras of Broach. He was helped through Pratihara Nagabhata-1 in ousting the Gurjaras from Broach in the chaotic situation created through the coming of the Arabs. He then assumed the title of mahasamantadhipati in 756 A.D. Therefore the formation of lineage power evolved through multiple channels and processes which were not compartmentalised and interacted with one another.

### ***Procedure of Rising in Social Status***

The political history of Western India shows that a big ethnic group of an

region could successfully compete for political power. It could also lay the foundations of big state structures lasting for centuries. Starting from a regional agrarian base a lineage could in course of time, emerge as a big regional power through integrating other regional lineages. For instance, a tract of land variously described as Gujaratra, Ghujarabhumi, Guijjarashtra, etc. all referring perhaps to the similar region (territories contiguous with southern Rajasthan) was the base from where several lineages appeared.

In the procedure of stratification that urbanized within the Gurjara stock, some families attained political dominance and became ruling lineages. From seventh century onwards several lineages that had branched off the Gurjara stock through the channel of political power became widely distributed in Western India. Gurjara- Pratihara power symbolizes a classic instance of the rise in the social ladder. It would suggest that potential and dominant power structures could emerge from within regional agrarian bases through following a path of upward mobility in favorable political circumstances.

### **Consolidation of Lineage Power**

The emergence of the political powers in Western and Central India was associated with sure characteristics. At the stage of economy the patterns of land sharing are noteworthy. From in relation to the late tenth century there are proofs for the sharing of land in the middle of the members of Chahamanas ruling lineages. King Simharaja, his brothers Vatsaraja and Vigrharaja and his two brothers Chandaraja, and Govindaraja had their own personal estates. In the regions held through the Chahamanas of Nadol assignments described as *grasa*, *grasabhumi* or *bhukti* were held through the King, the crown prince, other sons of the King, queens and so on. The incidence of these assignments was higher in Rajasthan than in other parts. This characteristic apparently represented a procedure which slowly urbanized and was associated with the spread of a clan. Another pattern was the holding of units consisting of villages which were part of administrative divisions as *mandala* or *bhukti*.

These units appear to have become centres of some type of regional manage. The units of 84 villages (chaurasia) which were held in Saurashtra through the Gurjara Pratiharas slowly spread to Rajasthan. This extension facilitated the land sharing and political manage in the middle of the ruling elites. Flanked by the tenth and twelfth centuries the kings and princes of Chahamanas and Paramaras held such big holdings. The procedure coincided with the construction of fortresses on a big level in dissimilar locations. Separately from serving defense purposes the fortresses also worked as foci of manage for their rural surroundings and helped the procedure of the consolidation of ruling families.

The marriage network in the middle of the ruling clans is another pointer to the procedure of the consolidation of clan power at the social stage. Marriage network brought in relation to the inter-clan connection which had important political implications because the families were mostly the ruling Rajput clans. Separately from Paramara-Rashtrakuta and Chahamanas-Paramaras matrimonial dealings, the Guhila marriage network was varied and widespread. Though the Guhilas extended their marriage dealings with Chaulukyas, Rashtrakutas, Chedis and Hunas in addition to those with Rajput clans like Chahamanas and the Paramaras, the marriage network mostly constituted the Rajput clan category.

### **Nature and Structure of Polity**

The political geography of early medieval Western India and the proof of the formation of political power in disparate zones through ever proliferating lineages in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Malwa illustrate that there was not always a necessary corresponding relation flanked by a ruling lineage and a fixed territory. The movement of lineages outside their early centres of power led to the establishment of new ruling families. Guhilas of Mewar may be cited as one in the middle of such lineages.

### ***Political Instability***

Mobilization of military strength could not only displace a ruling lineage but also make new locus and network of power. The case of the Vagada branch of the main row of the Paramaras gives an instance for this. The Vagada branch was in subsistence from as early as the first decade of the ninth century. Following the death of Upendra Paramara, his son was ruling in Banswara and Dungarpur region as a feudatory of the homes of Malwa. This Vagada branch sustained to be a loyal feudatory row for centuries till Chamundaraja; one of Us rulers defied the Paramaris of Malwa and became self-governing in the second half of the eleventh century. The Vagada was lost to the kingdom of Malwa in the beginning of the twelfth century. After the successor of Chamundaraja nothing is heard of the Vagada branch. Three decades later we discover one Maharaja Shurapala ruling in excess of the region of the erstwhile Vagada branch. This shows that through 1155 the Paramara were dethroned through the members of a family who as their geneology shows, were not linked with the Paramara dynasty of Vagada. Within after that 25 years this row was also uprooted and a Guhila King was ruling in excess of Vagada through 1179. He in turn appears to have been dispossessed of his newly recognized kingdom through a ruler who styled himself maharajadhiraja. He appears to have recognized himself there with the help of his Chalukya overlord.

### ***Bureaucratic Structure***

It is hardly likely that the early medieval powers such as the Chaulukyas, Paramaras and Chahamanas could provide stable government to the country without a powerful bureaucracy in the structure of their polities. We come crossways the names of a number of officers who evidently assisted in the transaction of the affairs of the state. Lekhapaddhati furnishes the names of karanas (departments) of the government. It is supposed to be applicable to the Chaulukya government as the main number of its documents is datable to the

Chaulukya era in the history of Gujarat. A few karanas mentioned in the work also figure in the Chaulukya records. Sri-Karana (Chief secretariat), for instance, is a well-known term in their inscriptions. Also recognized from their records is Vyaya Karana or the accounts department, Vyapara-Karana or the department in charge of common supervision of trade and the collection of import and export duties and mandapika-karna or the secretariat in charge of the collection of taxes. Such karanas were headed through ministers recognized through the term mahamatyas. Little except the names of these ministers is accessible in the records and the actual nature and functions of bureaucracy are hard to determine. Besides the mahamatyas, there were other officers described mahamantrins, mantrins and sachivas. The information in relation to their status is also very meager as they are only casually mentioned in only a few inscriptions. Of the more regularly mentioned... officers in early medieval Western India was mahasandhivigrahika who was a minister of peace and war and whose duties also incorporated that of a conveyor of a grant. A mahamatya mahasandhivigrahika of the Chaulukyas was also in charge of the Sri-Karana and the Mudra (the department that issued passports and composed import duties). Another officer mentioned was mahakshapatalika or the head of accounts or record office. He kept a full explanation of the income of the state and also of the expenditure. He also registered land grants under the Paramara management.

Mahamantrin or mahapradhana, literally meaning a chief minister, was an official of great importance. He held charge of the royal seal and exercised common supervision in excess of all departments. Dandanayaka or senapati was also an significant official, who was primarily a military officer. The Chahamanas records illustrate that the cavalry commanders and baladhipas or officers in charge of the military stationed in outposts and cities were placed under him. The whole management was controlled through a department, the Baladhikarana, stationed at the capital. The so described central officialdom also incorporated, in the middle of others, the dutaka who conveyed the rulers

sanction of a grant to regional officials who then had the charter drawn up and delivered. Mahapratihara (the Lord chamberlain) and bhandagarika (in charge of provisions) also figure as governmental officers.

### ***Lineage State and Feudal Polity***

From the Gupta era onwards there was a marked interrelatedness of polities, which was the result of the horizontal spread of state society. The differentiated polities, including clan based ruling lineages, had sure vital components that cut crossways all major political structures of the early medieval era. The region of Western and Central India was no exception.

To begin with, let us be well-known with the material base of lineage based state. It was not presently consolidation of the lineage power in conditions of political power. Much more than that was the factor of landholding. One gets the impression of some sort of land grabbing on the part of the members of ruling families. The exercise of significant governmental functions was slowly being connected up with landholding. Therefore, under the rule of the Gurjara Pratiharas we discover references to estates held through chiefs of the Chahamanas, Guhilas and Chalukya clans. Mathanadeva, another chief of the Gurjara Pratihara lineage also claimed to have obtained his allotment as svabhogavapta (own share). The Nadol plates of Rajaputra Kirtipala dated in 1161 refer to a group of twelve villages which a junior prince had received from the reigning prince. The Kalvan plates of Yashovarman (of the time of the Paramara King Bhojadeva) mention a chief who had acquired a royal charter of 84 villages, obviously from his overlord.

Unlike the Chahamanas and Gurjara Pratiharas, there appears to be somewhat lesser frequency of land grants based on clan consideration amongst the Paramaras. But the Paramara records refer to more groups of villages than is the case with the Chahamanas records. Groups of villages in units of twelve or its multiples (12, 24, 36 etc.) and even in units of sixteen or its multiples have been mentioned in at least seven cases. A Paramara inscription of 1017

refers to a stray instance of district comprising 52 villages, which does not fit in either in the pattern of the multiples of twelve or in that of sixteen. But, it cannot be ascertained fully, whether the clan organization of management sheltered the major part of the Paramara kingdom.

Irrespective of the incidence or frequency of clan powers, the more substantive component of the so-described lineage state is the nature of landholding. As already indicated, so distant the lineage state or integrative polity has not offered any alternative material base of political structures. No wonder, so, even in these states of Western and Central India the phenomenon of dissimilar foci or stages of power cuts crossways all major political structures which reiterates the validity of the hypothesis of feudal polity.

What is broadly labelled as samanta organization was not, though, a uniform category. It incorporated a wide range of status all of which corresponded to the landed aristocracy of the era.

The Kingdoms of all the major powers of Western and Central India incorporated the territories which were under the manage of the feudatories who were recognized under the generic title of mandalika, but sometimes styled themselves as maharajadhiraja mahamandalesvara, mahamandalikas, mahasamantas and samantas. The mainly significant of the feudatory princes of the Chaulukyas were the Paramaras of Abu and the Chahamanas of Jalor; others of minor importance being the Mer King Jagamalla and Paramara Somesvara. Likewise, a considerable portion of the Chahamana state, especially in Nadol and Jalor, was held through landed intermediaries variously recognized as thakkuras, ranakas, and bhoktas, on the condition that they supplied sure quotas of soldiers when required through the overlord.

The categories of feudatory chiefs under the Paramaras consisted of those officers and princes

- Who were rewarded through the King with land in consideration of their valuable services;



- Who had built up their own principalities throughout the era of aggrandisement and acknowledged the supremacy of the premier row. (To this category belonged the Paramaras of Vajgada, and the Paramaras of Kiradu),
- Who had carved out their principalities through the force of their own arms in defiance of the central power throughout the hard days of the Paramaras. (In this category came the Paramara Mahakumaras who used subordinate titles but were for all practical purposes self-governing), and
- Who were defeated and forced to accept the suzerainty of the Paramaras and were given the status of a vassal.

Big feudatory chiefs such as the Paramaras of Arnbudamandala and the Paramara Mahakumaras enjoyed big amount of internal autonomy. They could make their own sub-feudatories and appoint their own officers. It was possible for feudatory chiefs also to distribute their lands in the middle of their dependents. The thakkuras served the feudatory chiefs in approximately all the feudatory states under the Paramaras. The feudatories could also assign taxes, alienate villages and exempt sure people from taxation. This practice of granting land and its associated fiscal and administrative rights is described subinfeudation. There is surprisingly enough proof for this, particularly under the Pratiharas. It was practiced both in the regions of direct Pratihara manage as well as those under their vassals. Examples of subinfeudation caused through service grants in Gujarat under Chaulukyas are also recognized. A subordinate functionary, almost certainly a bania under Bhimadeva-II, constructed an irrigation well and a watering trough attached to it, and for their upkeep he granted sure plots of land to a man of Pragvata clan, almost certainly a merchant. The proof for the prevalence of subinfeudation in the Paramara kingdom does not appear to be clear. Therefore, in course of time the samanta organization encompassed a proliferating range of designations

and assumed the features of a hierarchical political formation represented through the ranks such as ranaka, rauta, thakkura, samanta, mahasamanta, etc.

The incidence of grants to state officials varies from one region to another. To illustrate, while we hear in relation to the half a dozen Paramara official ranks, only a few of them are recognized to have received land grants — none at least in the eleventh century. But very big territories were granted to vassals and high officers under the Chaulukyas of Gujarat. Chaulukya copperplates of 12th-13th centuries and their comparison with the data of the Lekhapaddhati help us in stressing that vassals and high officers slowly merged into one another. In the 11th to 12th centuries key officials were also being paid through regular and exclusive taxes. Therefore, the pattakilas and dushtasadhyas of the Kalacuri kingdom and baladhipas of the Chahamanas received such sustenance. Indeed some Chandella inscriptions of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century specifically enjoin the feudatories, royal officials, forest officials, constables, etc. to provide up their perquisites in the villages transferred as gifts. There are also references to resumption of such rights.

The feudatories owed fiscal and military obligations to the overlord. Usually the power of the feudatories was derivative, dependent on the fulfilment of sure circumstances of which supplying the overlord with sure quotas of soldiers in time of need was one. The Paramaras of Vagada fought in the cause of the imperial Paramaras of Malwa for more than once. The Paramaras of Abu, Kiradu and Jalor being the feudatory chiefs of the Chaulukyas of Gujarat, laid down their lives in the cause of their masters several a times. Though, the feudatory chiefs were eager to free themselves whenever there was an opportunity. In this case the relation flanked by the suzerain and vassal rested absolutely on, the force one could use. For instance, the Guhilas of Mewar accepted the Paramara over lordship when they were defeated Through Vakapati-II but tried to re-set up their lost location throughout the era of confusion which followed the death of Bhoja-I.

Likewise, Chahamana Katudeva tried to assert his independence throughout the last years of his overlord Chaulukya Siddharaja so that Chaulukya Kumarapala deprived him of his principality and brought Naddula under direct management placing a dandanayaka in charge of the region. Kumarapala also removed from Abu its rebellious prince Vikramasimha and installed the latter's nephew Yasodhavala, on the throne. Yasodhavala's son and successor Dharavarsha rendered distinguished service to three generations of Chaulukya overlords. But even he turned against Bhima-II and was either won in excess of or forced to submission to the Chaulukya overlordship.

The mainly significant duty of a feudatory prince was to help his suzerain against the enemy. Sometimes the feudatories conquered new territories for the suzerain or brought another prince under the latter's vassalage. An inscription appears to imply that at the accession of a new King the feudatories swore loyalty to their new overlord who confirmed them in their possession. Feudatories are also said to have paid tribute to their overlord both in cash and type. Though, there was no hard and fast rule concerning the obligations of the feudatory chiefs of dissimilar categories. The common dealings flanked by the overlord and the feudatory depended upon the circumstances and relative strength of the feudatory vis-à-vis his suzerain. The feudatories under Chaulukyas of Gujarat such as the Paramaras of Abu or the Chahamanas of Nadol ruled in excess of quite extensive territories and had their own systems of management.

Instability of the political circumstances was partly the result of the samanta-feudatory organization. Often the strength of the feudatory bonds depended upon the personality of the overlord. Overlords who went on expeditions to distant lands had to entrust some of their capable generals with the management of sure territories as feudatory chiefs. The personal dealings flanked by the King and the subordinate, which might have been strong enough to stay the territories jointly for a generation or two, faded out in the course of time and the feudatory chiefs tended to assert their independence.

Often samantas had no permanent bonds and were prepared to transfer their allegiance to a powerful invader in return for greater privileges.

## **THE DECCAN**

### **Identification of the Region**

The name Deccan apparently derives from the Sanskrit term „Dakshina’ meaning the South. As to the exact limits of the region described the Deccan, the historical proofs provide divergent pieces of information. Sometimes its correspondence is recognized with the whole of peninsular India and sometimes it is restricted to a part thereof. In its narrowest delimitation the Deccan is recognized with Marathi speaking region and lands immediately adjoining it. But the term Deccan may be extended so as to cover the whole of India south of the Narmada. Usually, it is understood as designating a more limited territory in which Malabar and the Tamil regions of the extreme south are not incorporated. Southern India as distinguished from the plateau of the Deccan (from which it is separated through the Krishna-Tungabhadra rivers) has a character of its own. Therefore limited, the term Deccan signifies the whole region occupied through the Telugu speaking populations as well as Maharashtra with sure parts of northern Karnataka (Kannada speaking).

### **Formation of Political Power: The Historical Background**

The Deccan was in the middle of those nuclear regions which were sheltered through the state society through as early as the Mauryan era (third century B.C.). The territorial expansion of the Mauryas had resulted in a horizontal extension of power. The Mauryan manage in the Deccan which was supervisory in nature was exercised through the viceroys and a part of the bureaucracy stationed in provincial headquarters. The establishment of provincial headquarters and the association of the regional chieftains in a subordinate location saw the emergence of a ruling elite after the retreat of the

Mauryan power from the Deccan. These regional elite groups consolidated themselves, ascended to power and recognized ruling houses after the disintegration of the Mauryan power. The procedure was particularly marked throughout the Satavahanas. They evolved a organization of government in which vice-royal functions were assigned to the regional chieftains conquered through them and assimilated into their power structure. The Satavahana administrative units which were placed under the supervision of the functionaries drawn from the clans of regional chiefs appeared later as seats of political power throughout the post-Satavahana era.

The total political mechanism came to be built up on a kinship base. It was characterized through a organization of alliances controlling subordinate semi-tribal families dominant in dissimilar regional bases. A permanent ruling class came to be recognized when the titles became hereditary with further intensification of the procedure of assimilation and consolidation of the ruling elite. Incidentally, the Satavahanas have left for us the earliest inscriptional proof of land grants in India. This phenomenon, as already seen was to affect not only social and economic processes but also the political structure. In course of time, these growths culminated in the real crystallization of state in the Deccan.

### **Emergence and Expansion of Ruling Families**

The crystallization of the state had taken lay in excess of a major portion of the Deccan much before the eighth century. Though, it does not mean that there were no shifts in the centres of power and changes in the pattern of the emergence of ruling lineages. The emergence of new ruling lineages was a continuous procedure. As elsewhere in India the inscriptions of the Deccan from the seventh century start producing elaborate genealogies of the ruling lineages. The inscriptions issued flanked by the eighth and the thirteenth centuries speak of the emergence of many major and minor ruling powers such as the Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas, Silaharas, Kakatiyas, Sevunas (Yadavas),

Hoysalas, etc.

The era in the Deccan was characterized not only through the emergence of the new ruling lineages but also the branching off of the existing ones. Therefore, separately from the main Chalukyan homes ruling from Badami, there were collateral Chalukya rows ruling in several spaces such as Lata, Vengi as also a row bearing the Chalukya name in vemulavada. Individual members claiming to belong to the Chalukya kula or vamsha in dissimilar rationalities in Karnataka are also recognized. Likewise, separately from the main Sevuna lineage ruling from Devagiri, we hear of a minor Sevuna family ruling in excess of a territorial division described Masavadi. We also hear of dissimilar branches ruling in dissimilar rationalities bearing the name of a scrupulous row, as for instance, the Haihayas of Morata and Aralu, the Kadambas of Karadikal, Nurumbada, Goa, Hanagal, Banavase and Bandalike. The Gangas and the Nolambas had thrown off several junior branches. The branches of a ruling row sustained to be operative for centuries even after the main row disappeared from the arena. As an instance can be cited the Vengi row of the Chalukyas, which was brought into being through Pulakesin-II of the Badami Chalukyas. The minor branches of the Gangas, the Kadambas and others also outlived the main rows of their respective families.

### ***The Lineage and its Territory***

The status, power and territorial extent of the lineages were not uniform. Sometimes the connection flanked by the lineage and its territory was expressed in the form of the name of the region in which the lineage was dominant as for instance the Gangavadi, Nolambavadi etc. The nucleus of the power of a lineage could be a small territory. The Sevunas of Masavadi 140, and the Haihayas of Aralu 300 were powerful in excess of the regions comprising the number of villages indicated in the suffixes to their names.

The changing sharing patterns of ruling lineages did not necessarily correspond to static territorial units. For instance, the Kalachuris who appear

in the sixth century A.D. as the rulers of a vast region comprising Malwa, Gujarat, Konkan, Maharashtra and Vidarbha also recognized many nuclei of power as in Tripuri (close to Jabalpur) and Ratanpur in the upper Narmada basin. One of their branches ventured into a remote region of Eastern India which came to be recognized as Sarayupar. A segment of the Kalachuri row migrated to Karnataka. Kalachuris of Karnataka claim to be the descendants of the Kalachuris of central India.

### ***The Patterns of the Emergence of Ruling Lineages***

The formation and mobilization of lineage power urbanized beside a diversity of ways. A lineage power could be brought into being through basically replacing another. The Vengi row of the Chalukyas was brought into subsistence through eliminating the erstwhile power holders of the Telugu speaking country when Pulakesin-II of the Badami Chalukya row conquered it. Second, it could involve resolution of new regions through an immigrant row and change of the economic pattern of the region. For instance, Kalanjara having been conquered through the Pratiharas and subsequently through the Rashtrakutas, some members of the Kalachuri row livelihood there migrated southward to seek new pastures. A segment of it migrated towards the forested tract of Kuntala and settled at Mangaliveda now in the Sholapur district of Maharashtra.

Usually the emergence of a ruling lineage as a potentially dominant political force was from a regional, often agrarian, base. The interpretation that the term Chaluki resembles the name of an agricultural implement would create one think that the Chalukyas were originally tillers of the soil that took to arms and founded a kingdom subsequently. Though, the emergence of the Hoysalas who were the hill chiefs of the forests was characterized not through their association with an agrarian base but through their skill to command other hill forces and to use the political situation in the plains to their advantage. -

Again, although it is usually true that the big state structures of India of the early medieval era thrived in potentially rich resource bases or nuclear regions in Ganges basin, Kaveri basin and Krishna-Godavari doab, the resource potential was sought to be expanded. In this context it is notable that Orugallu (Warangal), absent from the Krishna-Godavari doab, remained a base on which the big state structure of the Kakatiyas was built. Before the time of the Kakatiyas the tanks were small, the irrigation facilities inadequate and the region of farming limited in extent. The Kakatiya kings like Beta-11, Rudra, Ganapathi, Prataprudra got many tanks built in dissimilar parts of their kingdom. Prataprudra tried to augment the extent of cultivable land through cutting down forests and bringing big tracts under farming, e.g. in the Rayalaseema region. A similar movement of the expansion of arable lands also characterised the early stage of the emergence of the Hoysalas in the Southern Karnataka.

### ***Fabrication of Genealogies***

Several of the ruling families, which headed big power structures in the Deccan like the Chalukyas of Kalyan, the Sevunas of Devagiri and the Kakatiyas of Warangal, began their political career as humble feudatories under the Rashtrakuta sovereignty. Rashtrakutas themselves were ruling in the feudatory capability in central India prior to the rise of Dantidurga in the first half of the eighth century. The exploits of Rashtrakuta Dantidurga and his successors who grew into a regional power from a small patrimony somewhere in Berar can be cited as instances as to how a small family could not only create a bid for political power but also set up the foundations of big state structures.

A notable characteristic of the procedure of the emergence of ruling lineages in early medieval Deccan is their effort to align their regional roots with a mythical custom or trace their descent from mythical-heroic lineages. The Rashtrakutas and the Sevunas profess to be descended from Yadu, a



puranic hero. The Hoysalas claimed descent from the lunar race through that eponymous hero Yadu and said they were the Yadavas and Lords of the excellent municipality of Dvaravati, the legendary capital of the Yadava Prince Krishna. Likewise, while the spiritual guru of the Kakatiya king Ganapatideva provided them with the Suryavamsi Kshatriya identity, an inscription of the king himself traces the geneology from a mythical and legendary explanation of Manu, Ikshvaku, Bhagiratha, Raghu, Dasharatha and Rama.

Such claims are often dismissed on the ground that they were later inventions. It is true that such claims, freely drawing their inspiration from mythology and puranic legends, lack historical accuracy as they refer to times for which no records exist. But from the point of view of political processes the attempts to claim descent in solar or lunar rows assume importance because these claims sought to conceal rather than reveal the original ancestry. Hoysalas for instance were the hill chiefs who slowly recognized their command in excess of the rest of the hill chiefs, migrated to the plains and recognized a nucleus of power. The Kakatiyas were the shudras. Their political power and “low origin” had to be reconciled through assuming a higher status for themselves. In other words the attainment of political dominance was sought to be correlated with a corresponding social status. The Chalukyas of Kalyan, for instance, sought this status through claiming that their progenitor was born out of a handful (Chuluka) of water taken through the Sage Bharadvaja i. e: Drona, or the water of Ganga poured out from the cavity of his hands through Ashvatthama, the son of Drona. The Kshatriya status was a symbol of legitimating. The new and upcoming non- kshatriya groups sought to validate their political power through this. Hence the Yadu vamsha came in very handy and mainly lineages traced their descent from Yadu.

### **The Power Brokers**

The procedure of legitimating of royal power cannot be viewed basically in conditions of a newly appeared regional polity seeking validation through connections with a respectable ancestry. The validation of power was sought not only in regions where a transition to state society was taking lay but also in recognized states of the Deccan. It means that the need for validation was constant. Theoretically the temporal power was required to guarantee protection. According to a phrase (Dushta nigraha-Shishta pratipalana) which occurs constantly in the inscriptions of the Hoysalas in southern Deccan, a King's duty was two-fold: to restrain the evil and to protect the good. The phrase summarizes all the commands addressed to the king through the dharmashastra. Though, the protection did not basically mean physical protection of subjects. It also meant the protection of the social order. In information, the danda or force was planned through the priestly class not so much as a political expedient; it was planned more for the preservation of the social order.

Though, the state society was to cut crossways the barrier of disparate dharmas or norms if it were to spread horizontally. The territorial spread of the brahmanas, heads of religious sects, organizations such as temples and the mathas which represented some type of a central focus to disparate norms was so supported through the early medieval states. There is an obvious emphasis on the mutuality of interests of the ruling chiefs and the men organizations of religion. In information, the latter were not only at the getting end but also contributed to the sanctioning of the power of rulers. Formation of the ruling elite is quite apparent. That accounts for the territorial mobility of the religious beneficiaries and huge support in the form of munificent gifts of gold and land made through the royalty and the nobility to them. There are several examples of the brahmanas of one province moving freely to settle in another. While the immigrant brahmanas who received grants from the Rashtrakuta kings incorporated those from Vengi (Andhra), Pataliputra (Bihar), Pundrawardhana (in Bengal) and Kavi (Gujarat), those in the Sevuna kingdom incorporated

brahmanas from central India and Uttar Pradesh. The kings identifying themselves with a scrupulous religious sect or cult, calling themselves as the parama- maheshvaras, or paramabhagavatas, and even attributing their political rise to the grace of the divinities was not strange in the Deccan. For instance Taila-II, the overthrower of the Rashtrakutas whispered that it was the favor of Jagadguru Ishvara Ghalisasa, the head of a brahmadeya village that had secured him the throne. Madhavavarman, the founder of the Kakatiya family, is said to have acquired an army comprising thousands of elephants and lakhs of horses and foot soldiers through the grace of the goddess Padmakshi. The benefactions of some kings of the Deccan, for instance Kakatiya Prola-I and Beta-II appear to have been confined to the followers of the Shaiva doctrine. There were also a few persecutions here and there.

### **Inter-Lineage Network**

An essential characteristic of the early medieval polity in the Deccan was a marked interrelatedness of the polities. No political element or entity operated in separation. Military behaviors of the mighty rivals for the hegemony in excess of the fertile-strategic lands would render neutral subsistence of the small powers impossible. While owning real or nominal allegiance to the overlord power, the smaller polities would conserve and consolidate their strength and possessions. In a polity of this nature, the more powerful in the middle of the subordinate powers such as the mahamandaleshvaras were always to be feared. Their tendency to form alliances against the overlord or to grow at the cost of the other subordinates of the overlord needed to be checked. It is well-recognized how the Chalukyas of Kalyan, who were the feudatories of the Rashtrakutas, entertained political ambitions and declared independence realizing the weakness of the Rashtrakuta power structure throughout the era of the successors of Krishna-III. In the mid-twelfth century the Sevunas, the Hoysalas and the Kakatiyas utilized the Chalukya—Kalachuri thrash about for their own good and asserted their independence.

Despite these possibilities the inter-lineage dealings could not be disregarded as they proved very helpful in situations of the military exploits requiring mobilization of greater force. As examples can be cited the Hoysalas of Southern Karnataka rushing to the aid of their overlord Chalukya Someshvara-II. Likewise, the Gangas helped their Rashtrakuta overlords in capturing the fortified city Chakrakuta in Bastar in central India.

### **Land and Integration of Dispersed Foci and Stages of Power**

A significant point that needs to be noted with reference to the structure polities is the phenomenon of the dispersed sharing of power which was not specific to the Deccan alone but was present in all major political structures of the early medieval era.

These diverse or diffused foci and stages of power in the Deccan were represented through what is described the Samanta-feudatory organization. Two kinds of feudatory powers were noticeable in the Deccan:

- Those petty lineages which were integrated through an expanding polity into its power structure through either reducing them to submission through military maneuvers or through peaceful means.
- Those which came to be created through the political powers through means of the grant of landed estates as a reward for their help in some military use. Though, these latter were originally appointed only as governors of an region with feudatory privileges such as the panchamahashabdas. But the principle of hereditary transmissions of office tended to convert them in course of time into full fledged feudatories. Mainly of the feudatory powers of the superior polities were such pre-existing lineages incorporated into their power structured. For instance, when the Rashtrakutas started expanding their power, they had to deal with the representatives of the well-known ruling lineages of the Deccan. In the middle of their feudatories were the Chalukyas of Vengi, Chalukyas of Vemulavada and several

individual petty chiefs. The feudatories of the Hoysalas, Sevunas and Kakatiyas bore the names of the erstwhile lineages like the Nolambas, Gangas, Chalukyas, Kadambas, Abhiras, Haihayas and so on.

Inter-marriages into the families of the suzerain and subordinate served as the social bases while the recognition of the enjoyment of the landed estates through the regional powers served as the economic bases of the interlinked political procedure. In strict political conditions the use of force was not strange especially when the regional powers stood in the method of the expansion of a lineage's power. The territories of the Nishad Boyas, a race of hardy warriors who inhabited the region approximately Nellore were sought to be integrated through means of involving their chief men into the bureaucratic structure. But when the Boyas sustained to offer resistance to the advance of the Chalukya arms in the south, the King dispatched an army under Pandaranga with instructions to demolish the strong-holds of the Boyas and to subjugate their country. Likewise, Kakatiya Rudra reduced to submission the Kota chiefs.

Another significant political mechanism of the integration of diffused foci of power was the organization of ranking i.e. the conferring of titles and ranks associated with roles and services. Kakatiya Ganapatideva conferred upon Recherla Rudra, a Reddy through caste, the rank of mandalika beside with royal insignia like throne, a pair of chauris, etc., in recognition of the help that Rudra rendered to him in a situation of crisis. Ranks in the families of chiefs varied from one generation to the after that. The Kayastha chiefs under the Kakatiyas who were a class of warriors and whose rank was sahini (men in charge of cavalry) were elevated to the location of mahamandaleshvaras through the king Ganapatideva. These chiefs from the time of Gangaya sahini onwards became the governors of a big region extending from Panugallu in Nalagonda to Valluru in Cudappah district. This elevation in their location was in recognition of the participation of Gangaya sahini in many battles on behalf

of Ganapatideva. Therefore in a situation in which the foundation of territorial political manage was not static, the ranks which had a correlation with such structure could not remain static either.

Integration of dispersed foci of power was not confined to the award of feudal ranks such as nayaka, samanta, samanta-dhipati or mahasamanta, mandalika, mahamandaleshvara, etc., but also extended to bureaucratic positions. Irrespective of multiple shapes of integration, it necessity be realized that the mechanics of integration always did not work only in the direction of integration. Second, whether it was integration or disintegration, land rights served a general characteristic. Regional landlords or chieftains performed the role of integrators when they derived their administrative and financial powers from their overlords, paid tributes and performed several other obligations to them. Though, the similar landlords became real breakers and wreckers when they lorded in excess of peasants and artisans unmindful of overlords' concern. They acted as an autonomous power within their territory, even though the degree of autonomy varied from region to region. If the central government became weak the feudatories used to be practically self-governing; in such a situation they could exact their own conditions for supporting the fortunes of their titular overlord. Their location became still stronger if there was a war of succession. They could then take sides and attempt to put their nominee on the imperial throne therefore playing the role of the king makers. On such occasions they could settle their old scores through dethroning their overlord and imposing their own conditions on the new successor. Rashtrakuta Dhruva, Amoghavarsha-I and Amoghavarsha-II owned their thrones to a considerable degree to the support of their feudatories.

### **The Bureaucratic Structure**

The political processes of the early medieval Deccan came to be characterised through the dominance of the overlord subordinate relation in

excess of other dealings and the role of the bureaucracy in the in excess of all structure of polity was varied and sometimes limited. In the Rashtrakuta grant charters only the royal sign-manual and the names of the composer of the grant and the person who conveyed it to the grantees are establish. Ministers and secretaries are conspicuous through their absence. The assumption of a very big secretariat at their capital is not supported through any information in relation to the manner in which the daily business of management was accepted on at the capital. Although a body of high ranking officers and ministers recognized as amatyas or mantris lived in the capital to assist the King the questions concerning the size, constitution and location of a regular council of ministers, if any, have not been satisfactorily answered. In the capital and in provincial headquarters in the Rashtrakuta management the revenue records, records bearing upon land ownership and original drafts of copperplate grants were cautiously preserved.

In the regions directly administered through the officers of the state, the provincial governors (Rashtrapatis) enjoyed considerable power in excess of their subordinates in the provinces. Some of the provincial governors were royal princes. The provinces which are said to have been administered through the princes and queens in the later Chalukya management appear to have been those bestowed upon them as their personal fief. Some others were appointed as governors in recognition of their distinguished military services. Petty offices like those of the supervision in excess of small units consisting of 10 or 12 villages very often went to relatives of the provincial governors.

Provincial governors and district stage governors in the Rashtrakuta management were assisted through a body of assistants described the Rashtramahattaras and Vishayamahattaras respectively. But very little is recognized in relation to the powers, manners of election, meetings etc. Their powers necessity has been considerably less than those of the village councils which were made up of the rural elite.

The nature of the office of the village headmen and divisional headmen,

the revenue officers who helped the state officers of the sub-divisions shows that these officials were often remunerated for their services in the form of hereditary rent free meadows. The integration of dispersed foci of power also expressed itself in the absorption of the members of regional lineages into the bureaucratic structure. In the Rashtrakuta structure, the district and provincial governors and lower officers like Vishayapatis enjoyed feudatory status and were allowed to use feudatory titles. Apparently they were the descendants of the regional kings who were once self-governing but were subsequently conquered through the imperial powers. In such cases they appear to have sustained as the government's officers.

### **Resource Base of the State**

The main source of the state income was agricultural taxation. Private individuals holding arable lands paid to the state the land tax which shaped the backbone of its revenue. The cultivators were also subject to some additional imposts described the Upgkriti. Upakriti and Kanika appear to refer to a type of customary tax levied through the government on villagers and townsmen in return for some service performed for their benefit through the kings or their officers. Land taxes were assessed both in type and cash. In the Kakatiya kingdom the taxes in type were usually paid in two installments in the months of Kartika and Vaishakha, the two main crop seasons. Under the Rashtrakutas they could be paid in three installments in Bhadrapada, Kartika and Magha, the king's officers went round the villages to collect his share of the grain from them. The State's share of a householder's income was also composed in type.

Land was divided into arid, wet and garden lands for purposes of assessment in accordance with the nature and fertility of the soil. Part of the state income came from the pastures and forests, the ownership of which was claimed through the state. It also claimed ownership in mines, hidden treasures, waste lands, orchards on State lands, lakes and public wells. Other



significant source of state income incorporated customs, excise duties and charges levied on trade and industry. Sunkamu or Sunka, a term used in this context was of broad import and denoted duties on exports and imports excise duties and customs duties composed on articles of merchandise brought to and taken from market cities. In the Kakatiya organization the tolls composed on articles of trade were farmed out to merchant associations comprising members of the trading society on payment of a fixed sum to the government.

Regular offerings and tributes through the feudatory chiefs comprised another source of the income of the state. A Rashtrakuta inscription refers to an occasion when King Govinda-III toured in relation to the southern parts of the empire to collect the tributes due from his feudatories. Special presents were exacted from the feudatory chiefs on the occasions of festivities in the imperial household. The picture of the State expenditure is not clear. There is no mention of a department in charge of public works or of officers directly appointed with the duty of carrying out irrigation and other welfare projects. Apparently the state undertook no direct responsibility for the construction and maintenance of irrigation works though some Hoysala and Kakatiya kings were recognized for evincing keen personal interest in creating a series of irrigation works. Influenced through the belief that the construction of tanks was an act of merit, the kings, chiefs, nobles, officials, religious leaders' merchants and wealthy men sponsored the construction of tanks. State doesn't appear to have spent enormous cash possessions on the salaries of the men in its service as the practice of remunerating through grant of landed jagirs to officials was on an augment throughout this era in the Deccan. In military organisation too the state forces consisted partly of the standing army directly recruited through the government and partly of the levies contributed through the provincial viceroys and feudatories.

### **Political Instability in the Deccan Polity**

Instability was built into the nature of early medieval polity. Frequent

changes in the composition of territorial limits of the political powers itself is an indication of this. State society even in nuclear regions did not necessarily have a stable locus. Mobilization of military strength could displace existing power holders and make new locus and networks of political dealings. We have already noted the decentralized character of the state with dissimilar foci of power. The shifting allegiances of the diffused foci of power, e.g. those represented through the subordinate chiefs or samanta feudatories, would add to political instability. Rising land assignments to several classes of functionaries, including those rendering military service, rent-free grants of villages to several categories of beneficiaries and an augment in the incidence of land grants through the diversification of the ruling elite would weaken the manage of the state in excess of revenue possessions of the constituent territorial units. A tilt in the balance of loyalty of the landholders and the samanta landed aristocracy would weaken it's manage on its polity as well. These weaknesses surfaced in the face of external threats and brought in relation to the disintegration of even extensive existent power structures. The dramatic fall of the mighty Rashtrakuta empire can be noted as an instance. In 967 A.D. Rashtrakutas under Krishna III were the masters of practically all the territories to the South of the Narmada. Only six years later, with the overthrow of his nephew Karkka through their Chalukya feudatory Taila in 973 the empire of the Rashtrakutas fell and remained only in memory.

## **SOUTH INDIA**

### **The Region**

Here South India refers to the region described Tamil Nadu, not in its present form as a linguistic state, but as a macro-region, which evolved from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries and at times extended into parts of South Karnataka, southern Andhra and South Kerala. This region may be divided into several zones, which had a extensive historical development, viz., the core and subsidiary zones in the plains, on the foundation of its river systems and a

secondary zone situated in its north-western parts marked through the up thrusting eastern ghats and the edges of the plateau leading to Karnataka and Kerala. These zones represented dissimilar politico-cultural regions, which were recognized as mandalams from the Chola era onwards. The geography of the whole region determined to a big extent the nuclei of the regional polities which appeared throughout the centuries under discussion.

### **Emergence of Political Powers**

The post-Gupta history of India is dominated through the development of a number of regional polities. Some of them appeared as regional states (Orissa and Tamil Nadu) coinciding with regional cultures. Others were smaller polities situated as buffers flanked by superior ones. This is well illustrated through the superior polities of South India such as those of the Pallavas of Kanchipuram and the Pandyas of Madurai in Tamil Nadu (sixth to ninth centuries A. D). Dispersed flanked by these superior ones were many smaller powers such as the Western Gangas, Kadambas, Banas and a host of others, owing allegiance alternatively to the superior lineages of the Deccan and Tamil plains or occasionally establishing their independence. The mainly powerful of these regional polities was, though, that of the Cholas (ninth to thirteenth centuries), who with the Kaveri Valley as the nucleus of their power, succeeded in establishing their territorial sovereignty covering the whole of the Tamil macro-region. The Cholas were able to set up a regional state with its distinctive politico-cultural characteristics.

### **Perspectives on the South Indian Polity**

There are three dissimilar perspectives on the Tamil regional polity. The pioneering works on South Indian polity in common and Tamil polity in scrupulous showed a direct concern with administrative organizations and their history and were devoted to the revise of organizations like kingship, brahmadeya with its sabha and the temple, their organisation and functions.

They neither adopted a viable framework of analysis nor an integrated approach to revise the political processes and their linkages with the socio-economic organisation. In short, they treated polity in separation from society and economy. They were also influenced through imperialistic notions of the state and empire, centralised monarchies and powerful bureaucracies. Their assumptions were that all the recognized characteristics of a contemporary state were prevalent in the earlier periods.

New perspectives on polity have been provided through more recent works, which emphasize the need for understanding the inter-connections flanked by social formation, economic organisation and political structures. They focus on the processes of development and change, leading to the emergence of regional polities and the role of organizations such as the brahmadeya and the temple in the formation of political structure. As a result, the theory of the centralised state followed through the conventional studies has been seriously questioned. As an alternative, the concept of the segmentary state has been used to characterize the medieval South Indian state. The main variation flanked by these two perspectives is based on the nature of regional organisations, the degree of their autonomy and the extent of central manage or direct political manage exercised through the ruling dynasties in excess of the dissimilar zones of the Tamil region. The first view assigns greater and more effective manage to the central power in excess of all regions, despite the subsistence of regional initiative and autonomy (what they described “regional self government”) while the second view rejects it as contradictory and assigns a high degree of autonomy to the regional Organisations and a mere ritual sovereignty to the ruling dynasty except in the core region.

As against both these extreme views, the studies of the Chola state, based on careful statistical analyses of the rich inscriptional data, give a third perspective suggesting the need for modifications of both the views. They illustrate the development of a centralised polity from an earlier stage of self-

governing peasant regions controlled through peasant assemblies. These peasant regions were integrated through several organizations and through the introduction of innovative administrative events through a political power. The zenith of the Chola power was reached in the eleventh century, which also marked the crystallization of a centralised polity.

### **Sub-Regional Polities**

Under the Pallavas of Kanchipuram and the Pandyas of Madurai (sixth to ninth centuries), two sub-regions of the superior Tamil region became the territorial bases of two monarchies, in the Palar-Cheyyar Valley and the Vaigai-Tafnraparni Valley respectively. The Pallavas were influenced through the political climate of the Deccan and Andhra regions, where they originated as the subordinates of the Satavahanas. The Pallavas later appeared to power in the post-Satavahana era, which was marked through a transition to the brahmanical socio-political order and a land grant economy. Hence, the Pallava polity introduced into the northern part of the Tamil country the sanskritic elements of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods as they urbanized in the Deccan and Andhra regions. Though, this polity of northern Tamil Nadu (recognized as Tondai nadu) was slightly dissimilar from the North Indian brahmanical diversity due to the specific agrarian context. The nature of agrarian society in the region was dominated through peasant organisations, which had evolved from the early historic era, popularly recognized as the “Sangam” age (first to the third centuries). Though Pallava statecraft was inspired through the Dharmashastra model, the northern regal shapes were adapted to suit the Tamil regional context and the Pallavas succeeded in establishing a brahmanical monarchy, a territorial base approximately Kanchipuram and new shapes of integration through the brahmadeya and the temple. This is illustrated in their copperplate records, which are bilingual (Sanskrit and Tamil) and in the Puranic religion and temples which they sponsored. The Pallavas acquired legitimating through impressive

genealogical claims of descent from Vishnu and epic heroes, their vital ideology being derived from Puranic cosmological, world view. The Pandyas of Madurai also recognized a monarchical state of the similar kind, although they claimed descent from Shiva and Chandravamsa (lunar lineage), with the sage Agastya as their preceptor.

The Pallava and Pandya dynasties aspired for manage in excess of the Kaveri Valley, the mainly fertile and well irrigated agricultural core of the Tamil region. They also set in motion a procedure of agrarian expansion and integration through the brahmadeya and the temple, which helped to integrate the agrarian or peasant units described the nadus (also kurrams).

### **The Agrarian Order and Polity**

For a proper understanding of the agrarian order and polity we will revise a number of characteristics. Let us start with the nadu.

#### ***The Nadu***

It dates from pre-Pallava times and is marked through general agrarian characteristics and a kinship based social organisation. The manufacture processes in the nadu were controlled through the nattier assembly (the Nadu) composed of the heads of peasant families of velalas (agriculturists). The nadu consisted of survival stage settlements coming jointly for general economic and social behaviors. The integration of the nadus into a superior and systematic agrarian organisation through land grants to brahmanas (brahmadeya) and the temple through the ruling families (Pallavas, Pandyas and Chola) led to the emergence of the first regional Tamil polities. Special emphasis was laid on the construction of irrigation works, advanced irrigation technology and their management through the brahmana assembly described the Sabha. Therefore, the earlier survival stage manufacture of the nadu was transformed into a surplus oriented one which resulted in a restructuring of the economy. The brahmadeya and temple not only helped in agrarian integration

but also played political roles through acting as instruments of mobilization and redistribution of possessions.

With its expansion and integration through the brahmadeya and the temple, and due to new irrigation works, the internal structure of the nadu also changed. Land rights and tenures became more intricate, land dealings became stratified, and the composition of the netter also underwent changes. The kinship foundation of social organisation was eroded and gave lay to a brahmanical caste and ritual ranking, i.e. caste hierarchy.

The nadu, although it evolved as a kinship based agrarian element, shows the prevalence of a diversity of communal controls in excess of manufacture. This is seen in the kani rights or hereditary rights in land which were transferable through sale or donation. Several categories of rights in land lived and were determined and enjoyed within the norms accepted through the modern organisations of the brahmadeya, non- brahmadeya(ur) settlements and the family.

In the earlier conventional approach, the nadu received only marginal attention and its significance was lost in such studies. In view of the segmentary state, a high degree of autonomy is assigned to the nadu as a segment and hence the medieval South Indian state is characterised as a segmentary and peasant state. Though, the nadu cannot be studied independently of the other organizations. In reality, the nadu brahmadeya and the temple jointly spot the. phased opening of the Tamil plains. With the recognition of the nadu as the vital element of agrarian organisation, the older theory of the unchanging village societies has lost its validity. The debate now centres on the degree of nadu autonomy and the stability of the natters organisation and hence also on the validity of the segmentary state concept.

### ***The Brahmadeya***

Land grants to brahmanas are recognized from early historic times. Though, it is only through the end of the sixth century that it assumed an

institutional character in the Tamil region. Brahmadeyas were invariably created through ruling families in hitherto uncultivated land or in the middle of existing settlements (within a nadu or kottam) through clubbing jointly two or more settlements. They introduced advance farming methods—irrigation, management of means of manufacture and possessions. The Pallava and Pandya reservoir systems were supervised through the brahmana assembly viz. the Sabha. The brahmadeyas were separated from the jurisdiction of the nadu. The major brahmadeyas also became self-governing units (tan-kuru) from the tenth century especially under the Cholas, adding to their economic and administrative political significances. They are often regarded as pace makers of royal power, enlarging the sphere of political action.

The Sabha or the assembly of the brahmana landowners grew into a more prominent institution vis-à-vis the Ur, the assembly of a non-brahmadeya resolution. The rising maturity of the Sabha is illustrated through the well-known Uttaramerur (Chingleput district), a major brahmadeya and tan-kuru of the eighth to thirteenth centuries as well as through Manur (Tirunelveli district), an significant brahmadeya of the eighth and ninth centuries. The tan-kuru had a central function also and often had under its purview many other centres of agricultural and craft manufacture. The brahmanical temple, which was invariably the nucleus of several of these settlements, was also under the supervision or direct manages of the Sabha, which functioned through several committees described varyiyams.

### ***Valanadu***

Revenue surveys and assessment of land revenue were systematically undertaken under the Cholas in the eleventh century. In the procedure, new and superior revenue units were shaped through grouping some nadus jointly and even through partitioning some under dissimilar valanadus. This was determined through their irrigational needs and hence valanadus had consciously chosen boundaries such as water courses. The valanadu was an



artificial element and a politico-economic division created through the will of a political power. The valanadu-s was named after the kings who created them.

Their organisation was also connected with the establishment of a hierarchy of officers and a department of revenue collection, which kept detailed records of revenues. This department (the puravu-vari-tinaikkalam) was the mainly impressive of the administrative machinery evolved through the Cholas for mobilization of possessions.

### ***The Temple***

The temple was looked upon and functioned as a “super ordinate” instrument of the political tools from the ninth century. Under the Cholas its role progressively increased and diversified, thereby forging institutional links for territorial sovereignty. This is well illustrated through the imperial temples such as those at Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram. Its economic outreach became phenomenal with a widening orbit through vast temple endowments land and money grants, gold deposits, merchant interaction through gifts and the luxury trade of superior merchant corporations. Its social function was the integration of several ethnic and professional groups through ritual ranking within the brahmana varna order. Temple management was in the hands of the Sabha, ur and the Nagaram. In the redistribution of possessions the temple assumed a more direct role than even the brahmadeya. It is through the temple that the Cholas achieved a greater degree of centralization in the eleventh century, for it broke regional ties through virtue of its economy and management of possessions crossways nadu limits. It provided a foothold for the King to intervene in regional affairs through royal officers “auditing” or enquiring into temple endowments, level of expenses and creation reallocations. The temple was, in short, the symbol of royal power.

### ***Nagaram: The Market Centre***

Nagaram was another major tier of management. It appeared through the ninth century as a market centre with a merchant body (nagarattar) administering it. With the rising needs of an expanding agrarian society, such market centres came up in mainly nadus, to serve their swap necessities as well as those of the brahmadeya and other settlements. The nadu and nagaram were mutually supportive. The nagaram members were themselves agriculturists who could channel their surplus produce into trade. They became a full fledged trading society described the nagarattar. At the similar time the nagaram, like the brahmadeya enjoyed a special status, with considerable autonomy vis-à-vis the nadu. The nagaram, often created or sponsored through the ruling family, had direct revenue arrangements with the King's government and participated in temple management. The brahmadeya and nagaram brought the nadus jointly in a organization of unified political organisation and economic swap, thereby assisting in the procedure of a state synthesis.

A network of nagarams appeared flanked by the ninth and twelfth centuries. The royal and political centres as well as superior commercial centres such as Kanchipuram and Thanjavur were designated as managarams or great nagarams. This network was further brought into a wider inter-regional swap due to the revival of South Asian trade through the tenth century involving South India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia and China. The Cholas promoted this trade through undertaking maritime expeditions to Sri Lanka and Sri Vijaya (Sumatra) and sending trade missions to China. They extended their patronage to their merchant organisations through issuing royal charters for establishing mercantile cities protected through mercenaries. Warehouses and sharing centres recognized as erivirappattana interacted with the nagaram as well as other smaller regionalized merchant organisations like the manigramam and foreign merchant organisations like the Anjuvannam. They traded in luxury goods, exotic things from other countries and in South

Indian textiles. They also obtained in swap agricultural products from the Chittiramel Periyanaidu. The Chittiramel was an organisation of agriculturists belonging to all the "four castes" (caturvarnya). It originated in the Tamil region, and extended their behaviors into South Karnataka and southern Andhra regions in the twelfth century.

### **Taxation**

The subsistence of a regular taxation organization, which the segmentary state concept denies, is indicated through a statistical analysis of tax conditions in Chola inscriptions. The major land tax described kadammai was uniform as also several other smaller ones related to land. There was a organization of storage and transfer of revenue from the regionality to the government at the valanadu, nadu and ur stages. Taxes, both central and regional, have been recognized. Augment in non-agricultural taxes in excess of time has also been recognized. Regional official involvement in tax collection also increased. Regional shapes of collection and re-investment in regional economy avoided troubles of central collection and redistribution. The state's active interest in trade and commercial ventures provided a second resource base. Royal ports were consciously urbanized and tolls were levied through royal mediators. Exemption from tolls also shaped part of the policy of encouragement of trade ventures.

### **Bureaucracy**

The Chola, state was viewed as a highly bureaucratized one through the pioneering scholars. This is denied through the followers of the segmentary state theory. Statistical data from inscriptions, though, have been used to illustrate the subsistence of officers at both central and regional stages. The term *adhikari* prefixed to names of significant personages with the *Muvenda velan* title designates the attendance of a bureaucracy especially in the hierarchically structured revenue department. Ranking in the middle of

officers is also shown through the conditions perundaram (higher grade) and sirutram (lower grade), both in the „civil’ and „military’ establishments. Officers at the royal court (udan kuttam) and officers touring the country (vidaiyil adhikari) are also recognized. The King’s government was present in the rationalities through a hierarchy of officers — the mandalamudali, nadu vagai and madhyastha acting as significant links flanked by the King and the regionality.

### **Military Organisation**

There is no conclusive proof in Chola records of the subsistence of a regular army, recruited through clearly defined criteria. Hence there are alternative interpretations of the meager proof. According to the conventional view, there was a royal military force. But this is denied through the proponents of the segmentary state concept, who look at the military forces as an assemblage of “segments”, peasant militia and/or caste and guild armies. Though, there are references in inscriptions to grants for army chiefs and to army camps at strategic points indicating the subsistence of a royal force. The higher and lower grades were also prevalent in the middle of the Right Hand units of the army corps recognized as the Velaikkarar. There was also a Left Hand element mentioned in royal records. Armies of regional chiefs complemented royal military expeditions.

### **Structures of Manage**

Given the nature of politico-cultural zones which evolved from the early historic era, the Cholas evolved dissimilar structures of manage through adopting the concept of the mandalam to designate such zones. Each mandalam was named after the King. It was one of the innovations of Rajaraja-I (985-1014 A.D.), who also initiated revenue surveys and the valanadu organization. For instance, earlier structures such as the Kottam (a rustic-cum-agricultural region) were left undisturbed in the Tondaimandalam

(also described Jayankondacholamandalam), but the tan-kuru was introduced. The valanadu replaced earlier chieftaincies in the Cholamandalam and the adjoining Naduvil nadu or mandalam in the north. Likewise, army units came to be stationed at strategic points in transit zones and routes of trade leading to the adjoining Karnataka region to set up rows of communication. Chola princes and mandala mudalis were appointed to rule in excess of such sub-regions.

Lesser chieftains, described as feudatories, symbolize another separate stage of intermediate strata in the Chola polity. Arrangements were made through the King with the powerful chiefs, under dissimilar conditions, either through conceding a sure amount of regional autonomy in return for military support or in return for trading interests in zones of transit. Some chieftaincies were conquered but re-instated and others were newly created lineages supporting the king in return for regional manage. They were also ranked at dissimilar stages as chiefs or even as Chola officials with „civil’ and „military’ service tenures and policing rights.

### **Ideological Bases of South Indian Polity**

In the Pallava and Pandya polities genealogies claiming descent from divinities epic heroes, and lunar lineage shaped an significant ideological force. Kshatriya status and the gift (dana) provided additional concepts in support of sovereignty. Puranic religions and world view were other significant characteristics of the ideological base.

The Chola genealogies are more intricate in their ideological claims. Separately from the solar lineage, the Cholas directly connected themselves with the “Sangam” Cholas, the Kaveri region and the temple structure behaviors of their ancestors for legitimating their claims to sovereignty. They adopted and promoted in a important South' India method the bhakti ideology of the Tamil Vaishnava and Saiva saints through popularizing it through temple structure, temple rituals and iconography. The symbolism of the

temple, equated with territory cosmos considerably enhanced royal power. The ritual and political domains coincided which shows further limitations of the thought of segmentary state.

### **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Talk about the political history of Western and Central India.
- What do you understand through the term Segmentary State?
- What do you understand through transfer of administrative and fiscal rights? Write in brief.
- Write few rows on the hierarchy of samantas.
- Write the main functions of samantas.
- Why did the bards make the Agnikula myth?
- Describe three linguistic regions that constitute the Deccan.
- What are the three main perspectives of learning South Indian polity?
- Why and how the internal structure of the Nadu changed?
- How the temple came to inhabit significance in polity?

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Establishment of Delhi Sultanate**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Rise of Turks and Mongols in Central Asia
- Establishment and consolidation
- Territorial expansion
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this chapter, you will know:

- Know who the Turks and Mongols were and what precisely their role was in an exciting era of history.
- Acquaint yourself with the geography and some of the features of central Asia as a region of considerable historical significance.
- The political and socio-economic condition of India throughout the centuries preceding the Turkish conquest,
- The stages in which northern India was conquered
- The territorial expansion of the Delhi sultanate in the 14th century in the north, north-west and north-east.
- Sultanate expansion in the south

#### **RISE OF TURKS AND MONGOLS IN CENTRAL ASIA**

##### **Central Asia**

Before we talk about the rise of Turks and Mongols, it is necessary to form a mental picture of the regions comprising Central Asia and to acquaint ourselves with some of their outstanding characteristics. Central Asia is a loose geographical term that refers to the vast and varied territory bounded in the South through an immense chain of mountains of which the Himalayas

form a part. Its northern limits may be roughly placed approximately the Ural mountains; the western beside the Aral and Caspian Seas; and the eastern somewhere flanked by the lakes Balkash and Baikal, perhaps approximately the river Irtysh.

As the name of a region Central Asia has at least one other competitor, namely, Turkestan, though not identical in geographical spread, Turkestan does cover a very big portion of the territories one comprises in Central Asia. Perhaps it also offers a more apt account of a region whose population is predominantly Turkic in composition. But, when using the term in an historical context, one has to keep in mind that „Turkestan’ is an ethnonym: it signifies an ethnic territory as well as a human society. And, in both compliments, changes down the centuries have been profound. Both the physical and human boundaries of Turkestan have shifted, contracted and expanded through turns—until perhaps our own times when modern states acquired relatively stable boundaries and populations. In conditions of modern political frontiers, it comprises the Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kirghizia and „Chinese Turkestan’.

### ***Central Asia: A More Detailed View***

As we secure in on Central Asia, focusing attention on its distinctive natural characteristics, an area of considerable complexity comes into view. It looks like an extraordinary mosaic of mountains, deserts, oases, steppes and river valleys. The foothills and the valleys contain oases, i.e. fertile islands of farming bounded through desert. And beyond the deserts are the Eurasian steppes—those limitless expanses of arid and patchy vegetation. Towards the north and east the Steppes once again disappear into the great Siberian desert. The steppes have been crucial in determining the course of history of Central Asia and indeed of the world. For, at least, a few thousand years the steppe environment could support only one type of life—the itinerant as opposed to sedentary.



The oases, through contrast, were the rallying points of settled subsistence. The history of civilized societies in Central Asia goes back to a few thousand years at least. Periods of peace, intermittently ruptured through barbarians churning on the margin, led to the extension of irrigation works and agriculture. With the growth of trade and handicrafts, cities sprouted. Jointly these enabled garden kingdoms and states to flourish. The oases were therefore real counterpoints to the preponderance of deserts and steppes. Owing to them Central Asia could emerge as the centre piece in a commercial highway connecting the distant-flung civilizations of India, China, Mesopotamia, and Europe. We will talk more in relation to the a little later.

### ***Central Asia: An Ensemble of Micro Regions***

At another stage, Central Asia could be seen as composed of separate micro regions, or, in other words, territorial units that owe their identity to a peculiar mix of geography and history—Khwarizm, Khurasan, Transoxiana, Soghdiana, Semirecr Farghana—these are some of the names you will regularly come crossways in any historical literature dealing with the region.

Transoxiana (i.e. Land crossways the Oxus) is the region carved out through the rivers Oxus and Jaxartes (also recognized as, the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya respectively). Both flow into the inland Aral Sea and are the two mainly significant rivers of Central Asia. The Arabs, who conquered Transoxiana in the eighth century (A.D.), described it Mawaraunnahr, literally meaning “that which is beyond the river”. Beside the middle of the Oxus-Jaxartes basin flows the Zarafshan river, after whose ancient name joghd, the region came to be described Soghdiana. The two mainly well-known cities of Central Asia, Samarqand and Bukhara, are situated within this tract.

To the south of the Aral Sea, approximately the fertile delta of the Oxus, is the region recognized as Khwarizm (contemporary Khiva). Here, as early as the seventh or sixth century (B.C.), a big centralized state came into subsistence which lasted a few centuries. At the end of the first century A.D.,

Khwarizm became part of the vast Kushan empire which straddled the Hindukush and incorporated the whole of North India within its fold. Cultural contacts flanked by India and Central Asia were greatly strengthened as a consequence.

To the west of Transoxiana begins the region of Khurasan. As a land-locked region, Khurasan has no access to the sea. Its rivers peter out into lakes and swamps. But approximately its oases excellent pastures abound. These have recurrently attracted nomads to descend into its valleys from crossways the steep mountains that jut out into Central Asia from the Eurasian steppes. "Because of such movements of people Khurasan inevitably became a cockpit...." The Arabs used it as a springboard to conquer Central Asia.

To the east of the Jaxartes, beside its middle reaches is the Farghana valley—the ancestral home of Babur, the first Mughal ruler of India. As early as B.C. 102. the Chinese subdued Farghana and, henceforth, Chinese power in excess of Central Asia remained an abiding factor.

### **Rustic Nomadism**

The Turks and Mongols were the product of deserts and steppes that encircle Central Asia in a huge region, extending north and east of Transoxiana. More specifically, they descended from the mass of nomads who roamed in the region of the Altai mountains, south of Lake Baikal—regions that are now part of outer Mongolia. They had a primitive mobile culture based on tribal organization and ownership of herds of cattle, sheep and horses. In addition, the tribes often possessed camels, mules and asses. The animals supplied mainly of the essential needs of the nomad in the method of food, clothing and shelter. Milk and flesh gave him nourishment. The hide of animals was used as clothing, and also to create tents, yurts, in which he existed.

Rustic nomadism was governed through one great drive—the search for grazing lands. This kept the nomads constantly on the move, from lay to lay,

with their flocks and herds. In the absence of agriculture and fixed environment, the nomads' attachment to land was minimal, lasting only as long as it yielded fodder for the animals. When the tribes camped, each tent or household was allotted a piece of land for its exclusive use. Once exhausted, the tribes migrated in search of new pastures.

Mobility, therefore, was central to itinerant society, and the horse its mainly outstanding asset. One account of rustic nomads aptly characterizes them as a people whose country was the back of a horse. In consequence, in the middle of the Mongols, for instance, no offence was greater than stealing a horse. It invited execution. Horsemanship combined with ability in archery made the nomads a formidable fighting force. The Mongols brought the art to perfection in the thirteenth century. Galloping at full speed, they could rain arrows in every direction—forward, rear, and sideways—with deadly accuracy.

Opportunities for testing and amplifying these skills were provided in plenty through the steppe environment where disagreement in excess of grazing lands was normal occurrences. Periodically, these magnified into big-level bloody battles. It would, though, be too simplistic to see all itinerant irruptions into settled regions as merely a spill in excess of conflicts within the steppes. The inadequacies of a rustic economy have as much to explain. Although it met mainly of the vital needs of the nomads, especially when complemented with hunting or fishing, pastoralism had one serious drawback: Unlike agriculture, it produced no durable reserves. Its products were rapidly consumed. So, itinerant urge was not only to acquire more and better foraging lands but also products of agrarian societies. Pastoralism through its very nature veered to a „mixed economy’—secured through trade and alliance or through aggression.

### **Culture and Turkish Nomads: Early Contacts**

It was the Oxus that clearly demarcated culture from barbarism. The

classic expression of this view was the one given through Firdausi, the well-known tenth century poet at Mahmud Ghazni's court. In his *Shahnama*, Firdausi poses a stark antithesis flanked by the two worlds of Iran and Turan: "Two elements fire and water which rage against each other in the depths of the heart." For Firdausi, Iran was the realm of the Turks, of barbarism. A natural antipathy, born of opposed ways of life, set separately the two racial groups.

Though a closer look at the Oxus regions reveals that the two worlds had been in tenth century. Although the Oxus had been the historic bastion against itinerant incursions, it was relentlessly breached through the nomads, no less in times of peace than throughout violent collisions. Distant from being stark and clear, through the tenth century the boundary had become greatly blurred.

### ***The Tiukiu Empire***

The first get in touch with flanked by culture arid Turkish nomads dates back to the mid-sixth century when a vast nomad empire, extending all the method from the borders of China to Byzantium; came into subsistence. The empire, recognized as the Tiukiu empire, was really a confederacy of twenty-two tribes of a people then described the Toghuz-Oghuz. It lasted for secure to two hundred years. Throughout the after that three centuries, the Tiukiu dominions in Central Asia came to be partitioned and repartitioned flanked by its constituent tribes and other newly arrived Turkic nomads (the Qipchaqs, the Qarluqs and the Oghuz described Ghur). Stray elements of the Oghuz had already establish their method into the upper Oxus lands a couple of centuries earlier. The en bloc migration of the Oghuz crossways Siberia throughout the eighth century brought them "into the field of Muslim Writers." The appellation of „Turks' or „Turkeman', which came, into use in the late tenth century, was initially applied through these writers to Oghuz tribesmen. Its gradual extension to Turkic nomads in common appears to have proceeded

alongside a progressive weakening of the Oghuz ethnic identity as tribes either broke apart from the superior confederacy or new ones were incorporated into it after being defeated.

### ***Two Shapes of Get in touch with***

The get in touch with flanked by the Turks and settled people took two major shapes:

- Military disagreement, and
- Commercial transactions.

In either event the result was mutual assimilation and acculturation. Let us first talk about the military disagreement. The natural instinct of the nomads was to conduct raids into settled regions south of the Oxus. To ward off these attacks, states in western Asia evolved an active defense policy centered on Transoxiana—the principal waiting zone for invasions from the east. Throughout the sixth century the Sassanids, who ruled Iraq and Persia, were the bearers of this mission. In the eighth century it was the Arabs. After penetrating Transoxiana and displacing a considerable Turkish population east of the Jaxartes, the Arabs laid out fortified walls and rabats (frontier-posts) beside the boundary, manned through a military guard organization. On either face, Muslim and Turkish, the boundary bristled with colonies of guards. On the Muslim face, they were described ghazis, i.e. men whose business it was to defend the faith against infidel hordes. Though belonging to hostile camps, both groups nonetheless “came to live the similar type of borderline subsistence, adopting each other’s weapons, tactics and ways of life and slowly forming a general military boundary society, more similar to each other than to the societies from which they came and which they defended.”

The distinction flanked by Turk and non-Turk had been worn thin through the time of the Arab takeover in the eighth century. Internal disturbances had often prompted Transoxianean leaders to enlist Turkish mercenaries as a

counterbalancing force. At least one explanation has it that the earliest settlers of the Bukhara oasis came from „Turkestan’.

The second form of get in touch with was recognized through trade and commerce. The centre of a nomad empire has always attracted merchants because of the ready market it provided for products of the settlements. In the case of the Tiukiu empire, the attraction was more pronounced because it lay crossways the great Silk Road, the premier channel of international commerce. The bulk of these materials were of every day use, like leather, hides, tallow, wax, and honey. It also incorporated luxuries like furs. Then there was the regular traffic in slaves—also procured from the steppes. From these northerly regions the foods arrived in Khurasanian cities lying on caravan routes and eventually reached Iraq and Baghdad, the supreme centers of consumption in West Asia, via the transit trade.

### **Turkish Irruptions**

Not only were the Turks recognized, settled, or commercially active in the civilized parts of Central Asia, they often rose to positions of considerable power in the prevailing military administrative tools. The dominant social cases of pre-Islamic Transoxiana, the dihqans (small landed proprietors) and merchants had made rising use of Turkish mercenaries as the coercive arm for guarding and extending their patrimony.

The Arabs, who conquered Transoxiana (in the early eighth) century, pushed the Turks beyond the Jaxartes, converting Mawaraunnahr into a bulwark against barbarian inroads. Though, in the extensive run, the thought of employing Turks as soldiers was not lost upon the Arabs either. The hardy steppe background made the Turk a natural warrior. With training and discipline he could be made into a first rate fighting machine. Moreover, he could be bought like any other commodity: markets in and approximately Transoxiana abounded in slaves captured from Central Asian steppes and the plains north of Mawaraunnahr.

Under the Omayyads (A.D. 661-750) recruitment to the military was approximately totally confined to the Arabs. The replacement of the Omayyads through the Abbasids in A.D. 750 as undermined the Arab monopoly of the army especially in the decades after the Caliphate of Harun al Rashid (d. 809 A.D.). The civil wars in the middle of the sons and successor of this last great Caliph shook the foundations of the Abbasid empire. In these circumstances, recruiting mercenaries of foreign origin, not involved in the internal affairs of the empire, seemed to be the answer.

The Caliph Mu'tassim (A.D. 833-842) was the first to surround him with a big body of Turkish slaves and create it the base of his troops. In order to impart them a separate and separate identity, the Turkish soldiery was kept well absent from the indigenous population and could only marry women of the similar origin: "Therefore he created a sort of military class, whose role—was to protect the Caliph and the regime without taking part in the palace struggles or in the political or religious internal quarrels. But the reverse happened, and the interference of this class in the conduct of the state took on proportions which became more and more disastrous as the officers of the guard, divided into rival clans....supporting dissimilar claimants...and did not hesitate in so doing to trigger off palace revolutions."

With the weakening of the power of Abbasid Caliphs their control in excess of Islamic world became nominal and limited presently to issue Farmans to confirm their power. It gave method to the emergency of a number of small self-governing kingdoms throughout the 10th century the Jahirids, the Saffavids, the Buwaihids, Qara-Khanids and the Samanids.

Alaptgin, the Samanid governor and slave of the Turkish origin, recognized a self-governing kingdom at Ghazna. The Ghaznavid kingdom became prominent under Mahmud Ghaznavi (A.D. 998-1030). Under him, the Iranian power reached its peak. Mahmud claimed to have traced his descent from Iranian mythical hero Afrasiyab. This procedure Islamised and Persianised the Turks totally. Mahmud also made regular inroads in India. As

a result, Punjab became part of the Ghaznavid Empire.

Mahmud's death was followed through the emergence of the mighty Seljuqs. They soon overran Iran, Syria and Transoxiana. These growths gave a great jolt to the power of the Ghaznavids which became confined to Ghazna and parts of Punjab only. Throughout the twelfth century, the Seljuq power was destroyed through a group of Turkish tribes. The vacuum created through the Seljuqs led to the rise of the Khwarizmian in Iran and the Ghorid power in north-west Afghanistan. To begin with, the Ghorids were vassals of Ghazna. On the other hand, the Khwarizmian ruler's started in a big method engulfing Ghazni and approximately whole of Central Asia and Iran. Under such circumstances it was not possible for the Ghorids to expand at the cost of the Khwarizmian power. The possible direction left was India. This procedure of expansion started towards the end of 12th century.

### **The Mongols**

In the early decades of the thirteenth century Asia and Europe experienced a new wave of nomad conquerors from the east, an invasion more formidable and devastating than any other recognized to history before. These new invaders were the Mongols, who are best recognized for the great empire which they shaped under Chengiz Khan. Through the secure of the thirteenth century, the Mongol empire sheltered a vast portion of the recognized world: China, Manchuria, Korea, North Vietnam, Tibet, Turkestan, Afghanistan, Iran, Mesopotamia, Southern Russia and Siberia.

Before rising to world dominion, the Mongols were dwellers of the steppe region, north of China and east of Lake Baikal. To their east existed a kindred people, the Tatars, presumably Mongolised Turks, who lent the name of „Tartars' to the Mongols in European literature in conjunction with Tartarus, the Greek word for Hell. To the west of the Mongols existed the Keraites and Naimans, once again people of Turkish origin and speech. All these people



were in dissimilar stages of development, combining herding with hunting and fishing in varying degrees.

The sudden rise of Mongols to power appears to fall in row with an old pattern feature of the steppes. Extensive periods of internecine disagreement flanked by bands of nomads would throw up a leader of outstanding skill who after ironing out differences flanked by the warring hordes welded them into a powerful coalition. Through choice or compulsion, the smaller, fragmented itinerant groups were absorbed into the coalition. The after that stage saw the nomads aggressively directed at the nearby sedentary societies.

### ***Chengiz Khan and The Steppe Aristocracy***

Chengiz Khan built the Mongols into a stupefying striking force. Three decades of a bitter straggle within the steppes paved the method for Temuchin, who eventually appeared as the pre-eminent leader of the Mongols. Throughout this time he urbanized his ability both as a warrior and a canny tactician who excelled in dividing and circumventing, his enemies.

The nucleus of Chengiz Khan's army, and his imperial government, came from a corps of cautiously selected guards (bahadur). Units of the Mongol army were put under command of generals drawn from it. Military mobilization reached its peak under Chengiz Khan. Using a well-recognized itinerant custom, he enrolled all adult males into mingghan, literally "units of ten thousand". The mingghan in turn were divided into smaller units of ten and hundred. Ten mingghans constituted a tuman and these were deployed for big-level operations. Each of these units was placed under the command of a common whose worth had been personally tested through Chengiz Khan. The power of the commander extended in excess of the soldiers and their families. Therefore, administrative manage and military mobilization were parts of a single mechanism.

### ***Conquests and Expansion***

The first military efforts of Chengiz Khan were devoted to bringing the

rustic tribes of the eastern steppes under his sway. Temuchin now ruled in excess of an immense confederacy of Mongol, Turkic and Manchurian tribes. He was the head of all their kubitci (tents) and his family held the conquered/hordes in patrimony.

At a kurultai (assembly of nomad chiefs) held in 1206, Temuchin was declared “Qaghan of all Mongolia” and received the title of Chengiz Khan. Internally consolidated, the Mongols burst out of the confines of Mongolia. At the end of a series of annual campaigns beginning in A.D. 1211, they breached the Great Wall of China and laid hold of Peking. Soon after, their attention was drawn to Transoxiana and Khurasan which shaped the dominions of the Khwarizm Shah. The defense of the Khwarizm Empire crumbled before Mongol siege-craft which used battering rams, flame-emitting machines (using naphtha), mangonels, or catapults (manjaniq), etc. Bukhara and Samarqand fell in 1220 in the midst of fearful carnage. A witness reporting on the state of Bukhara said: “They came, they sapped, they burnt, they slew, they plundered, they departed.” It had taken the Mongols presently in relation to the three years, 1219-22, to complete the annexation of Transoxiana and Khurasan. Two years after, returning to Mongolia in 1225, Chengiz Khan died. Through then the whole of northern China had been annexed. The empire was divided in the middle of his sons. Ogedei, his third son, was declared the Great Khan in 1229. They as yet unconquered Eurasian steppes went to Jochi. The second son, Chaghtai, received Turkestan, and Tolui, the youngest, got the Mongolian homeland. Hulagu, one of the successors of Chengiz Khan, attacked Baghdad in A.D. 1258.

The municipality was the capital of the Abbasids. It perished in blood and flame. According to a conservative estimate some 800,000 were savagely murdered. The Abbasid Caliphate himself met a violent end. Finally, four great empires crystallized out of the Mongol conquests: The Golden Horde ruled the Volga steppe land and southern Russia; the Ikhans who manage Afghanistan and Iran; the Chaghtai empire which incorporated mainly of

Central Asia, and the of Kublai Khan which ruled in excess of China and neighboring territories These empires lasted well into the 15th century.

## **ESTABLISHMENT AND CONSOLIDATION**

### **India from 7th To 12th Century: An Overview**

#### ***Politico-economic Order, A.D. 700-1200***

The five centuries or so preceding the Turkish invasions have been described through Indian historians as „feudal'. Though the use of this concept in characterizing the era has been subjected to some criticism, the political and socio-economic realities of India throughout this time answer to several of the common, and some of the specific, characteristics of feudalism.

The central essential characteristic of feudalism in India (as in other parts of the world where it came into vogue) was the grant of land through the king in the middle of his officers and sure parts of society. In return, the grantees (or feudatories, vassals) were under obligation to serve the king and supply him with men and materials whenever he described for them. A portion of the revenue composed through the feudatory went to the king through method of annual tribute. The remainder was used through them to uphold armed levies which were put at the disposal of the king in times of war.

The more-powerful feudatories were permitted to grant land, in turn, therefore creating their own sub-feudatories and in the procedure giving birth to a hierarchy of commands and obligations.. In India, the feudatories came to adopt several titles. The more significant ones described themselves mahasamantas, mahamandaleshvara, etc. The lesser ones took the titles of raja, ranaka, samanta, thakura, bhoghika, etc. The origins of this organization—the alienation of rights in excess of land through the king—have been traced back to the land grants made to Brahmans from the 2nd century onwards. These Brahmans, who were the beneficiaries of these grants not only composed the land tax, but also looked to the maintenance of law and order. From the 7th

century onwards, the practice was extended to other parts of society also. In scrupulous, the officers of the king were granted land in lieu of cash salaries, With time there was a tendency for these grants to become hereditary, leading to the disappearance of the distinction flanked by royal officials and „feudatories’, hereditary feudatories being appointed to royal offices, and officials being granted the titles and, presumably, the privileges of feudatories.

From 7th century the ruling class was inevitably realized. The tendency reinforced an environment in which urban life had steadily declined (since the Mauryas) beside with commerce as witnessed through the extreme paucity of coins for the era under consideration. In such circumstances, the officials and aristocracies „existed off the land’. Dislocation of centralized political power, the appearance of landed magnates and crystallization of warrior castes, notably the Rajputs, were the natural fallout of this environment.

### **Initial conquests up to circa 1190 A.D.**

The era flanked by the 9th and 11th century saw the emergence of „warrior castes’—military ruling clans which ultimately coalesced into a single caste, that of the Rajputs, the term being derived from the Sanskrit word rajaputra. The four Rajput clans that claimed a special status throughout his time were the Pratiharas, the Chalukyas, the Chauhans (also described Chahamanas), and the Solankis.

### ***Mahmud of Ghazni***

In political and military conditions, the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni were the actual precursors of the Delhi Sultanate. Beginning in A.D. 1000, when the Shahiya king, Jaypala was routed, the incursions became approximately an annual characteristic of Mahmud and came to an end only with his death in A.D. 1030. After taking Multan, he occupied Punjab. Later, Mahmud made incursions into the Ganga-Yamuna doab. The major interest of Mahmud in India was its fabulous wealth, vast quantities of which (in the form

of cash, jewellery, and golden images) had been deposited in temples. From 1010 to 1026, the invasions were therefore directed to the temple-cities of Thaneswar, Mathura, Kannauj and finally Somnath. The ultimate result was the breakdown of Indian resistance, paving the method for Turkish conquests in the future. More importantly, the aftermath of the campaigns had exposed the inadequacy of Indian politics to offer a united defense against external threats.

Within a short time of Mahmud's death, his empire met the fate of other empires. Newly emerging centers of powers, shaped approximately rising groups of Turkish soldier-adventurers, replaced the older ones. The Ghaznavid possessions in Khurasan and Transoxiana were therefore annexed, first through the Seljuqs, and later through the Khwarizm Shah. In their own homeland, Afghanistan, their hegemony was brought to an end through the principality of Ghor under the Shansabani dynasty. Though, in the midst of these buffetings, the Ghaznavid rule survived in Punjab and Sind till in relation to the A.D. 1175.

The extent of the Ghaznavid territory in the north-west India is hard to ascertain. Towards the north, it incorporated Sialkot and almost certainly, Peshawar. The southern limits were steadily pushed back through the Chauhan Rajputs who re-recognized manage in excess of portions of Punjab.

In the initial stage of invasions, Muhammad Ghori's military objective was to gain manage in excess of Punjab and Sind. Unlike earlier invaders, he decided to enter the Indus plains through the Gornal pass and not through the more general Khyber pass further north. Through 1179, Peshawar, Uchh and Multan were seized. Later, Lahore was attacked. Muhammad Ghori now pressed his conquests further into India. Within a short time, military operations came to be directed against the Rajput kingdoms controlling the Gangetic plains. The Chauhans faced the mainly acute pressure as they ruled the territory from Ajmer to Delhi—the gateway to Hindustan. Bhatinda was besieged in 1191. The garrison quickly surrendered, but the Chauhans, under

Prithviraj, speedily retrieved it after inflicting a humiliating defeat on the Ghorians. In the following year, Muhammad Ghori returned with a superior force. At the well-known battle of Tarain, fought in 1192, he conclusively defeated the Chauhans. All spaces of military importance—Hansi, Kuhram, Sarsuti—were immediately occupied and garrisoned. Muhammad Ghori returned to his projects in Central Asia, leaving behind „an job army at Indraprasth (close to Delhi) under the command of Qutbuddin Aibak’. The latter was given wide powers to extend and consolidate the conquests.

### **The Ghorian Invasions: 1192-1206**

The Rajput power entered the stage of irreversible decay. For some time to come, the Ghorians did not think it convenient to immediately take in excess of the management of all the conquered territories. Wherever it seemed feasible, they allowed the Rajputs to continue, provided Turkish suzerainty was acknowledged. Therefore Ajmer, for instance, was allowed to be retained through Prithviraj’s son as a vassal ruler. This uneasy balance, though, was often disturbed through the recurrent conflicts flanked by the imperial designs of the Ghorians and local rulers. Under Aibak’s leadership, the Turks sustained to create territorial advance in all directions. After having refortified Hansi towards the end of 1192, Aibak crossed the Yamuna to set up a military base in the upper Doab, Meerut and Bar an (modern Bulandshahr) capitulated in 1192. In 1193 Delhi was occupied. Its site and historical custom made it mainly appropriate as a capital for Turkish power in India. It was both secure to the Ghorid stronghold in Punjab as well as conveniently placed for sending expeditions towards the east. In 1194 Aibak crossed the Yamuna for the second time and captured Kol (Aligarh).

The military successes encouraged Muhammad Ghori to confront king Jayachandra of the Gahadavala dynasty in the vicinity of Chandwar (flanked by Etah and Kanpur). Jayachandra, eventually lost. Afterwards, Turkish military stations were placed at Banaras, Asni and other significant cities.

Though, the capital municipality of Kannauj could not be occupied until 1198-99. The other significant regions in excess of which the Ghorians were able to extend their sway were Bayana, Gwalior and Anhilwara in 1195-96, and Badaun in 1197-98. The opening of the 13th century saw action against the „last surviving imperial Rajputs’—the Chandellas of Bundelkhand. Approximately 1202, Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho were occupied and grouped into a military division.

From 1203 onwards, the Turks made forays into the eastern provinces of the Indian subcontinent with varying degrees of success. Magadha was conquered for the „Sultanate’ through Bakhtiyar Khalji and his tribesmen. Under him, the Turkish intrusions could also penetrate Bengal (ruled through the Lakshmanas). In common, throughout this stage, the Ghorians were able to extend their hegemony in excess of a very considerable part of Northern India. But, as yet, they stood on shaky ground. Regions once conquered tended to slip out of manage. It took many decades before their manage establish firm ground.

### **Why the Turks Succeeded?**

Several reasons have been assigned for the success of the Turkish conquests of North India. Several of the modern chroniclers do not go beyond the average explanation of attributing this major event to the „Will of God’. Some British historians, who initiated the revise of Indian history in greater depth, accounted for the success of the Turks as follows: The Ghorian armies were drawn from the warlike tribes inhabiting the hard region lying flanked by the Indus and the Oxus. They had gathered military powers and expertise fighting the Seljuq armies and other fierce tribes of Central Asia. On the other hand, the Indians were pacifist and not given to war. Moreover, they were divided into small states which hampered expansionist ambitions.

The explanation is inadequate and unbalanced insofar as it leaves out of consideration well-recognized facts of Indian history as well as the history of

countries from where the invaders came. It should be remembered that the big-level conquest and destruction of the so-described warlike Islamic regions through the Mongols in 1218-19 was accepted out without any real resistance. On the other hand, the Rajputs, whom the Turks conquered, were not lacking in bravery and martial spirit. The era from the 8th to the 12th century is one extensive story of warfare and violent internal struggles. It is, so, hardly worthwhile to emphasize the peaceful or docile temperament of the Indian populations as the cause of the Turkish success.

Some Indian historians have traced the Turkish success to the peculiar social structure created through Islam. Jadunath Sarkar, for instance, lays stress on three unique features which Islam imparted to the Arabs, Berbers, Pathans, and Turks: first complete equality and social solidarity as regards legal and religious status. Unlike India, the Turks were not divided into castes that were exclusive of each other. Secondly, an absolute faith in God and his will which gave them drive and a sense of mission. Finally, Islam secured the Turkish conquerors from drunkenness which, according to Sarkar, was the ruin of the Rajputs, Marathas, and other Indian rulers. Whatever partial truth it might contain, this explanation, too, appears insufficiently grounded in history.

A more comprehensive view of the Indian debacle necessity perhaps takes into explanation at least two major factors: the prevailing socio-political organization in India and her military preparedness. After the fall of the Gurjara-Pratihara empire, no single state took its lay. Instead, there arose small self-governing powers like Gahadavalas in Kannauj, Parmaras in Malwa, Chalukyas in Gujarat, Chauhans in Ajmer, Tomars in Delhi, Chandellas in Bundelkhand, etc. Distant from being united, they tended to operate within the confines of small territories and were in a state of perpetual internal conflicts. Lack of centralized power was an significant factor in emasculating the strength and efficiency of the armed forces. Fakhr Mudabbir in his *Adab-ul Harb wa al-Shuja't* mentions that Indian forces consisted of „feudal levies”.



Each military contingent was under the command of its immediate overlord/chief and not that of the king. Therefore, the army lacked „Unity of Command’. Besides, since only few castes and clans took military profession, the bulk of the population was excluded from military training. This made the common population of the country totally detached from the defense of the country; when the Turks came, we discover the Indian masses hardly came to the rescue of their kings. The concept of physical pollution (Chhut) also hampered military efficiency since it made the division of labour impossible; the soldiers had to do all their work on their own, from fighting to the fetching of water.

Another significant cause for the success of the Turks was their superior military technology and art of war. These nomads from the steppes could be credited with introducing the age of the horse’. The Turks used iron stirrup and horse-shoes that reinforced their striking power and the stamina of the cavalry, while horse-shoes provided greater mobility to the horse; stirrup gave the soldiers a separate advantage.

The popular notion that the Indians were defeated on explanation of the use of elephants does not appear plausible now; we do not discover any proof in the Tabaqat-i Nasiri or other sources in support of this view. Jayapala’s case is an exception where his elephants took to flight. Such examples are hard to come through. In information, Mahmud of Ghazni is accounted to have maintained big number of elephants that he took to his Kingdom from India and employed them with success.

### **Disagreement and Consolidation, 1206-1290**

The era from 1206 to 1290 constitutes the formative and the mainly demanding era in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. It was marked through a prolonged, multi-cornered disagreement within the Ghorian ruling class as well as against the renewed Rajput resurgence.

Muhammad Ghorī’s sudden death in 1206 resulted in a tussle for

supremacy in the middle of his three significant generals, Tajuddin Yalduz, Nasiruddin Qubacha, and Qutbuddin Aibak. Yalduz held Karman and Sankuran on the route flanked by Afghanistan and upper Sind. Qubacha held the significant charge of Uchh, while Aibak had already been deputed as the „viceroy’ of Muhammad Ghori and the in excess of all commander of the army in India. Though, technically still a slave, the title of sultan was conferred upon him soon after the death of his master. The formal establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, as an entity in its own rights, is traced back to this event. Subsequent growths made this a reality.

Early in his brief reign of four years, Aibak (d. 1210) moved his capital to Lahore in order to frustrate Yalduz’s ambition of annexing Punjab. With the Khwarizm Shah steadily advancing on Ghor, there was partly a compulsion in Yalduz’s effort to set up himself in India.

Aibak was succeeded on the throne through his son-in-law Iltutmish who brought back the capital to Delhi. Big portions of the territories conquered through the Turks had slipped out of manage and subjugated Rajput chieftain had „withheld tribute and repudiated allegiance’. Iltutmish’s quarter century reign (1210-1236) was distinguished through a concerted drive to re-set up the Sultanate’s power on regions that had been lost. In 1215, Yalduz was defeated at Tarain and in 1217 Iltutmish wrested the province of Lahore from Qubacha and placed it under his own governor.

Within three years of this event, the Mongols, under Chengiz Khan’s leadership appeared on the banks of the Indus in pursuit of Jalaluddin Mangbami (the son of the Khwarizmian ruler) who had taken refuge in Punjab. Henceforth, the Mongols remained a constant factor in the middle of the concerns of Delhi Sultans. We will talk about Mongol intrusions throughout the 13-14th century in the subsequent part. Though the Mongol attendance had upset Iltutmish’s plan of consolidation on the north-west, it also created circumstances for the destruction of Qubacha who held Uchh and faced the brunt of Mangbami’s invasion. As a consequence, Iltutmish was able

to seize Bhadnda, Kuhram, and Sarsuti. In relation to the 1228, he launched a two-pronged attack on Multan and Uchh. Defeated, Qubacha drowned himself in the Indus. Unified manage in excess of the north-west now became possible for the Delhi Sultanate. In Rajputana, the Turks were able to reclaim Ranthambhor, Mandor, Jalor, Bayana, and Thangir. After 1225, Iltutmish could turn towards the east. Separately from sporadic military successes, though, Lakhnauti (in Bengal) and Bihar sustained to evade the power of the Sultanate. A contemporary historian assesses the Sultan's attainment as follows:

- “To him the Sultanate owed the first outline of its administrative organization. He laid the foundations of an absolutist monarchy that was to serve later as the instrument of a military imperialism under the Khaljis. Aibak outlined the Delhi Sultanate and its sovereign status; Iltutmish was unquestionably its first king.”

Iltutmish's death saw more sharpened factionalism and intrigue in the middle of the Turks. In an era of some thirty years, four rulers, (descendants of Iltutmish) occupied the throne. The mainly prominent group to decide the course of high politics throughout these years is recognized as the tarkaa-i chihilgani bandagan Shamsi (the „forty’ Turkish slave “officers” of Iltutmish). The fourteenth century historian, Ziauddin Barani, has left behind concise and insightful explanation of these critical years:

- “Throughout the reign of Shamsuddin — (Iltutmish),.... owing to the attendance of peerless maliks, wazirs....educated, wise and capable, the court of the Sultan (Shamsuddin) had become stable....But after the death of the Sultan....his „forty’ Turkish slaves got the upper hand....So owing to the supremacy of the Turkish slave officers, all these men of noble birth....were destroyed under several pretexts throughout the reigns of the successors of Shamsuddin....”.

In the main, Barani's explanation is borne out through modern growths. In these circumstances, the very survival of the Sultanate was under question. Political instability was exacerbated through the recalcitrance of smaller Rajput chiefs and local leaders. Moreover, the Mongols were constantly active in and approximately Punjab. The accession of Balban in 1265 provided the Sultanate with an iron-willed ruler. Balban addressed himself to two major objectives:

- To raise the prestige of the crown through elaborate court ceremonies, and inculcation of Sassanian traditions that distanced the ruler from ordinary folks, converting him into a symbol of awe;
- Consolidating Turkish power: rebellions were put down with determination and administrative procedures were streamlined.

After the death of Balban, thrash about for the throne started. Balban had nominated Kai Khusrau, son of Muhammad (Balban's eldest son) but the nobles helped Kaiqubad, son of Bughra Khan, to ascend the throne. Intrigues sustained for more than two years. Finally, Jalaluddin Khalji, who was a prominent noble throughout this era, supervised to capture the throne which was strongly resented because it was thought that the Khaljis were not Turks but belonged to a dissimilar race. Barani does not specify the race to which the Khaljis belonged. The Khaljis had been occupying significant positions throughout the era 1206-1290. For instance, Bakhtiyar Khalji was the mufti of Bengal. Even Jalaluddin Khalji was the mufti of Sunam in Western Punjab.

Jalaluddin Khalji started consolidating his kingdom but was killed in 1296 through his nephew Alauddin Khalji who captured the throne. For approximately 20 years, the Sultanate under Alauddin Khalji followed a policy of conquests.

### **The Mongol Problem**

Here our emphasis would be on the Mongol threat on the north-west border of India and its repercussions. For the Delhi Sultans, manage in excess of Kabul-Ghazni-Qandahar row flanked through the Hindukush, was significant not only for stabilizing the ‚scientific boundary’ but also for the information that it linked India with the major silk-route passing from China through Central Asia and Persia. But the development in Central and West-Asia did not permit the newly founded Turkish state to do the job. The situation on explanation of the Mongol onslaught compelled the Delhi Sultans to take comfort beside the Chenab, while the cis-Sutlej region became the cock-pit of confrontations. Therefore, the “Indus remained only the cultural boundary of India,” and for all practical purposes the row of manage was confined to the west of the Indus only.

Professor K. A. Nizami has categorized the response of the Sultanate towards, the Mongol challenge into three separate phases:

- Aloofness,
- Appeasement, and
- Resistance.

Itutmish followed the policy of ‚aloofness’. The Delhi Sultans had to face the Mongol threat as early as A.D. 1221 when, after destroying the Khwarizmi Empire, Chengiz Khan reached the Indian frontiers in pursuit of the crown-prince Jalaluddin Mangbami. The latter seeing no alternative, crossed the Indus and entered the cis-Indus region.

Itutmish had to take note of the Mongols who were knocking at the Indian boundary, but equally prime was the attendance of Mangbami in the cis-Indus region. The Sultan feared a possible alliance of Qubacha and the Khokhars with Mangbami. But, Qubacha and Mangbami locked their horns for political ascendancy, and meanwhile bonds of friendship urbanized flanked by Mangbami and the Khokhars through a matrimonial alliance. This strengthened the location of Mangbami in the north-west. Ata Malik Juwaini

in his *Tarikh-i Jahan Gosha* decisively opines that Iltutmish smelt danger from Mangbami who might “gain ascendancy in excess of him and involve him in ruin.” Besides, Iltutmish was also aware of the weaknesses of the Sultanate. These factors compelled Iltutmish to follow the policy of ‘aloofness’.

Chengiz Khan is accounted to have sent his envoy to Iltutmish’s court. It is hard to say anything in relation to the Sultan’s response, but as extensive as Chengiz Khan was alive (d. A.D. 1227); Iltutmish did not adopt an expansionist policy in the north-west region. An understanding of non-aggression against each other might have perhaps been arrived at. Iltutmish shrewdly avoided any political alliance with the Khwarizm Prince. The latter sent his envoy Ain-ul Mulk to Iltutmish’s court requesting for asylum which Iltutmish denied through saying that the climate was not congenial for his stay. On the other hand, he put the envoy to death. Minhaj Siraj mentions that Iltutmish led an expedition against Mangbami but the latter avoided any confrontation and finally left the Indian soil in A.D. 1224. Iltutmish’s policy of ‘aloofness’ to ‘appeasement’ was the result of the extension of the Sultanate boundary up to Lahore and Multan which exposed the Sultanate directly to the Mongol incursions with no buffer state left flanked by them. Raziya’s discounting response to anti-Mongol alliance, proposed through Hasan Qarlugh of Bamyan is the indicator of her appeasement policy. We necessarily bear in mind that this policy of non-aggression was due primarily to the partitioning of the Chengiz’s empire in the middle of his sons which weakened their power; and also on explanation of the Mongol pre-occupations in West-Asia.

At any rate, flanked by 1240-66, the Mongols for the first time embarked upon the policy of annexation of India and the golden stage of mutual non-aggression pact’ with Delhi ended. Throughout this stage, the Sultanate remained under serious Mongol threat. The main cause was the change in the situation in Central Asia. The Mongol Khan of Transoxiana establishes it hard to face the might of the Persian Khanate and, therefore, was left with no

alternative except to attempt his luck in India.

In 1241, Tair Bahadur invaded Lahore and totally destroyed the municipality. It was followed through two successive invasions in A.D. 1245-46. In 1241-66 stood at Beas. And, yet, the appeasement policy sustained for sometime. In A.D. 1260 Halagu's envoy to Delhi was well received and this diplomatic gesture was reciprocated through Halagu also.

A separate change in Delhi Sultan's policy can be seen from Balban's reign onwards. On the whole, it was the stage of 'resistance'. Through and big, Balban remained in Delhi and his energies concentrated mainly in keeping absent the Mongols, at least from the Beas. Barani mentions, when the two nobles Tamir Khan and Adil Khan suggested the conquest of Malwa and Gujarat and advised him to pursue an expansionist policy Balban replied:

- "When the Mongols have occupied all lands of Islam, devastated Lahore and made it a point to invade our country once in every year...If I move out of the capital the Mongols are sure to avail themselves of the opportunity through sacking Delhi and ravaging the Doab. Creation peace and consolidating our power in our own kingdom is distant better than invading foreign territories while our own kingdom is insecure."

Balban used both 'force and diplomacy' against the Mongols. He took some events to strengthen his row of defense. Forts at Bhatinda, Sunam and Samana were reinforced to check any Mongol advance beyond Beas. Balban succeeded in occupying Multan and Uchh but his forces remained under heavy Mongol pressure in Punjab. Every year Prince Muhammad, Balban's son, led expeditions against the Mongols. The Prince died in AD. 1285 while defending Multan. Actually, till A.D. 1295, the Mongols did not illustrate much enthusiasm to inhabit Delhi.

Throughout Alauddin Khalji's reign, the Mongol incursions extended further and they attempted to ravage Delhi for the first time in A.D. 1299

under Qutlugh Khwaja. Since then, Delhi became a regular target of the Mongols. For the second time, Qutlugh Khwaja in A.D. 1303 attacked Delhi when Alauddin Khalji was busy in his Chittor campaign. The attack was so severe that the Mongols inflicted big-level destruction and so extensive as the Mongols besieged Delhi, Alauddin could not enter the municipality.

Constant Mongol attacks pressed Alauddin to think of a permanent solution. He recruited a vast standing army and strengthened the boundary forts. As a result, the Mongols were repulsed in 1306 and 1308. Another cause for the Mongol reversal was the death of Dawa Khan in 1306, followed through civil war in the Mongol Khanate.

It weakened the Mongols greatly, and they ceased to remain a power to reckon with. This situation helped the Delhi Sultans to extend their boundary as far as the Salt Range. The last important Mongol invasion was under the leadership of Tarmashirin sharing the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq.

Therefore, the Delhi Sultans succeeded in tackling the Mongol problem and succeeded in keeping their kingdom intact. It shows the strength of the Sultanate. Besides, the Mongol destruction of Central and West-Asia resulted in big-level migration of scholars, mystics, artisans and others to Delhi, which transformed it into a great city of Islamic culture-region.

### **Political Consequences of the Turkish Conquest of India**

The Turkish conquest of India brought in relation to the some distant reaching changes in the political economic and social circumstances of India. Its first major consequence was to replace the „feudal’, multi-centered, polity of the Country through a centralized state, in which the king enjoyed practically unlimited powers.

The chief institution which made the Sultanate possible was that of the iqta: transferable revenue assignments, an institution which the Seljuqs establish in operation in the Abbasid ruled regions and which they updated in the light of their own necessities. Here we will basically touch upon its



principal characteristics to illustrate how it provided the foundation of a dissimilar polity. Under this organization, the officers of the king were assigned territories to realize revenue and uphold troops and cavalry contingents. The holders of such assignments were recognized as muqti. Unlike the pre-Turkish organization wherein the land grantees had acquired permanent rights of ownership, the iqta-holders were regularly transferred and their tenure in scrupulous spaces or localities were normally for 3 to 4 years.

Taking the Delhi Sultanate as a whole, such an organization made the assignee dependent on the central power to a distant greater extent than it was possible under the earlier Indian politics. While the rais, ranas and thakuras failed to unite the country, the Turks succeeded in establishing an “all-India management through bringing the chief municipalities and the great routes under the control of the government of Delhi.”

Much as the iqta organization provided the base for a despotic state, it was also a means of extracting the agricultural surplus. The Turks had brought with them the custom of livelihood in the municipalities and, as a result, the big surplus produce of the countryside establish its method into the municipalities in the form of land tax. This led to a considerable growth of urban economy. Turks also brought with them the Persian wheel and the spinning wheel. The former helped greatly in raising the agricultural manufacture.

## **TERRITORIAL EXPANSION**

### **Expansion under the Khaljis**

The first of the Khalji Sultans; Jalaluddin, did neither have will nor possessions to undertake any big-level expansionist programme. His six years, reign was gripped through the internal contradiction of having to reconcile flanked by the policies of the Sultan and the interests of his supporters. The resolution of this problem came in the unfortunate assassination of the Sultan. Alauddin Khalji, his assassin and successor, had a dissimilar imperial design.

He was to herald an age of territorial annexation and expansion of the Sultanate which saw the frontiers of the Sultanate reaching secure to the tip of the Southern peninsula through the middle of the fourteenth century.

### ***West and Central India***

Alauddin Khalji, after consolidating his location and firmly establishing himself at Delhi, undertook the first expedition in the region of Gujarat in 1299. This also happened to be the first project of territorial expansion under him. Perhaps Alauddin was attracted through the wealth of Gujarat whose flourishing trade had always lured invaders.

The imperial army was jointly commanded through Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan, two of Alauddin's best army generals. Gujarat was an easy prey—the province was plundered and the capital Anhilwara was sacked. The administrative manage of Gujarat was entrusted to Alp Khan as governor.

In the control and westward expansion of the empire, the after that kingdom to fall was that of Malwa in 1305. It was an extensive region and was governed from the capital Mandu through Rai Mahalak Dev with the assistance of a powerful minister Koka Pradhan. The imperial army was outnumbered through the forces of Rai but did eventually succeed and the fort of Mandu was captured. The province of Malwa, after its fall, was given for management to Ainul Mulk who was recognized to have soon brought Ujjain, Dhar and Chanderi, too, under his manage. Malwa was followed through Siwana, a city situated some eighty kilometres to the south-west of Jodhpur. Alauddin's army had been besieging Siwana for five or six years beginning 1304-05 without much success. The fort was finally captured in 1309. The ruler of Siwana, Rai Sital Dev, was killed in action and the fort and the territory was put under the charge of Kamaluddin Gurg. In the similar year (1309), Jalor was attacked and its ruler Kanhar Dev was killed in the battle and the fort annexed to the Sultanate under the control of Kamaluddin Gurg.

### ***North-West and North India***

Soon after his accession, Alauddin was faced with the problem of suppressing the prospects of revolt through the surviving member of Jalaluddin's family who had fled to Multan. Ulugh Khan and Zafar Khan were entrusted with the job of eliminating Arkali Khan at Multan. Arkali Khan was made prisoner and escorted to Delhi. Multan once again came under the control of Delhi. Strictly speaking, Multan expedition was not an act of territorial expansion but shaped part of the policy of consolidation.

In 1300, Alauddin sent Ulugh Khan to march against Ranthambhor ruled through Rai Hamir. Nusrat Khan, then posted at Awadh, joined Ulugh Khan. The Imperial army captured Jhain on the method and then laid a siege. Alauddin had to personally take the command of the campaign. The siege lasted for in excess of six months. Ultimately, the women inside the fort performed jauhar and one night the gates of the fort were opened through Hamir Dev who died fighting.

In pursuance of the similar policy, Alauddin attacked the kingdom of Chittor in 1303. After many assaults, the ruler of Chittor suddenly sent an offer of surrender to the Sultan on his own. The heir apparent Khizr Khan was assigned the governorship of the territory. But soon the fort was bestowed upon Maldeo, a son of the sister of the earlier ruler of Chittor, who remained loyal to Delhi till the end of Alauddin's reign. Through the end of the first decade of Alauddin's rule the frontiers of the Delhi Sultanate had expanded to cover approximately the whole of north, west and central India. From Multan in the north-west to the Vindhya in central India, and approximately the whole

### ***Deccan and Southward Expansion***

Devagiri in the Deccan had already tasted Alauddin's plunder in A.D. 1296 throughout his tenure as the governor of Kara. The after that military campaign in the Deccan was again planned through Alauddin against Rai Ram

Chandra Dev of Devagiri in 1306-7. An immediate cause for this was an unduly extensive delay in sending the annual tribute to Delhi in 1296.

The command of the Deccan campaign was given to Malik Kafur, and directions were sent to Ainul Mulk Multani and Alp Khan for providing assistance. Only a feeble resistance was provided through Ram Chandra Dev as he surrendered to the imperial army under the assurance of personal safety. Ram Chandra Dev was accorded great honor through the Sultan and restored to the throne of Devagiri in return for the assurance of regular and prompt payment of an annual tribute to the Sultan. The Rai also gave his daughter in marriage to the Sultan. It appears that Alauddin's policy was not to annex Devagiri but retain it as a protectorate and amass as much wealth as possible from the kingdom.

Malik Kafur's careful handling of the affair of Devagiri enhanced Sultan's confidence in his abilities as a military commander and he decided to entrust him with the responsibility to create forays in the peninsular region in the South. Acquisition of wealth from southern kingdoms and not actual territorial annexation appears to have been the prime motive in sending these expeditions. Accordingly, in October 1309 the imperial army began its southward march under the command of Malik Kafur. Amir Khusrau has given details of these campaigns in his *Khazain-ul Futuh*. Enroute a surprise assault was made through Malik Kafur on the fort at Sirpur (in Adilabad District). The nobles of Sirpur fled to Rai Rudra Dev of Warangal and the fort was captured through the Imperial army.

Through the middle of January 1310, the marching army had reached the suburbs of Warangal. On 14 February 1310, Kafur attacked the fort. The war came to an end because Rai Rudra Dev decided to surrender. He agreed to part with his treasures and pay an annual tribute as token of submission. Warangal was a spectacular success for the Sultanate army: the booty comprised of 20,000 horses, 100 elephants, and an enormous stock of gold and valuable stones laden on thousand camels. The province was not territorially annexed

but accorded the status of a protectorate. The imperial army came back to Delhi at the beginning of June 1310. Sultan's avarice now knew no bounds. Since the Sultanate was through this time made secure of Mongol menace and approximately the whole country to the north of the Vindhya had come under the sway of Alauddin, he planned another military campaign in the distant south.

The sight of the Sultan was now set on Dwarasamudra, further south of Warangal. Malik Kafur was once again commanding imperial army and was instructed to capture almost 500 elephants besides the treasures of gold and valuable stones. The fort was besieged in February 1311 and the very next day a message seeking peace came from Ballala Dev, the ruler of Dwarasamudra. Like earlier cases the conditions incorporated parting of much wealth and a promise for annual tribute.

Encouraged through his success in Dwarasamudra, Malik Kafur decided to move further south. Accordingly, he marched towards Ma'bar in a little less than a month's time reached Madura, the capital of the Pandyas. Sundar Pandya, the ruler, had already fled. The elephants and treasure were captured through Malik Kafur. There were 512 elephants, 5000 horses and 500 mans of valuable stones.

Alauddin's Deccan and southward campaigns were aimed at achieving two vital objectives:

- A formal recognition of the power of Delhi Sultan in excess of these legions, and
- The amassing of maximum wealth at the minimal loss of life.

His policy of not annexing the conquered territories but accepting the acknowledgement of the Sultan's suzerainty speaks of Alauddin's political sagacity.

Within a year, though, of Malik Kafur's return from Ma'bar, growths in the Deccan described for a review of the policy of non-annexation. Ram Dev,

the ruler of Devagiri, died sometime in the latter half of 1312 and was succeeded through his son Bhillama. Bhillama refused to accept the suzerain status of the Sultan of Delhi and declared his independence. Alauddin sent Malik Kafur to suppress the rebellion and instructed him to take temporary charge of the province. But Malik Kafur was soon described back and asked to handover charge of the province of Ainul Mulk. In January 1316, after Alauddin's death, even Ainul Mulk was described back to Delhi, leaving the affairs of Devagiri unsettled. Therefore, Mubarak Khalji, the successor of Alauddin, wanted to march to Devagiri soon after his accession, but was advised through his nobles to take some more time so as to consolidate his location in Delhi. In the second year of his reign in April 1317, Mubarak started for the campaign. The march was uneventful. Devagiri offered no resistance, and the Maratha chiefs submitted before the Sultan. The province was annexed to the Sultanate.

### **Expansion under the Tughluqs**

The Tughluqs came to power in Delhi when Ghiyasuddin Tughluq ascended the throne in 1320. The Sultanate was suffering from unsettled political circumstances and demanded immediate attention of the new ruler. The outlying provinces had proclaimed independence as the effective manage of the Sultanate had shrunk only to the heartland. The administrative machinery was totally out of gear and the treasury had been totally depleted. Ghiyasuddin naturally addressed himself first to the task of restoring the exchequer and the management. But soon after that came the question of restoring prestige and power in the outlying parts of the empire.

### ***The South***

The political condition in the Deccan was not assuring in any method. The acceptance of Alauddin's suzerainty and the promise of loyalty through the rulers of the South were only nominal. Fresh military expeditions were

certainly needed for the reinforcement of imperial power in Devagiri and Telingana. Devagiri, as you have already read, had been annexed to the Sultanate through Mubarak Khalji. But the southern states beyond Devagiri had totally overthrown whatever little semblance of imperial power remained there. The Telingana, so, claimed Ghiyasuddin's immediate attention.

In 1321, Ulugh Khan (later Muhammad Tughluq) started for the south with a big army. Without much resistance in the method he reached Warangal. After two sieges, each lasting four or five months, the ruler Rai Rudra Dev finally decided to surrender. But this time there was no forgiving the recalcitrant: the fort was occupied, plundered and some demolitions effected. The Rai was made a prisoner and escorted to Delhi. Warangal was annexed to the Sultanate under direct imperial management.

In continuation of the similar policy Ulugh Khan also brought Ma'bar to submission and set up direct imperial management there. The region of Telingana was therefore made a part of the Delhi Sultanate and divided into many administrative units. The local talent was abundantly employed in the management and acts of vandalism against the vanquished were forbidden.

### ***East India***

The expedition in the eastern parts of India came as a consequence of the wars in the South. Bhanudeva II, the ruler of Jajnagar in Orissa, had given support to Rai Rudra Dev of Warangal at the time of imperial offensive against the latter. Ulugh Khan, so, after leaving Warangal sometime in the middle of 1324, marched against Jajnagar. A fierce battle took place in which victory sided with Ulugh Khan. He plundered the enemy camp and composed big booty. Jajnagar was annexed and made a part of the Sultanate.

Bengal was another kingdom in the east which had always been a hotbed of sedition. Its governors would not miss any opportunity of asserting independence. In 1323-24 a fratricidal quarrel broke out in Lakhnauti after the death of Feroz Shah, the ruler of this self-governing principality. Some nobles

from Lakhnauti came to Ghiyasuddin for help who responded and decided to march to Bengal in person. After reaching Tirhut the Sultan himself made a halt and deputed Bahram Khan with a host of other officers to march to Lakhnauti. The rival forces confronted each other close to Lakhnauti. In the battle that ensued the forces of Delhi easily pushed back Bengal army and pursued them for some aloofness. One of the warring groups led through Nasiruddin was conferred a tributary status at Lakhnauti.

### ***North-West and North***

Since Alauddin's expedition to Multan the north-western boundary of the Sultanate had remained fixed. Subsequent Sultans were mostly occupied with the affairs of the South and Gujarat. It was after Muhammad Tughluq acceded to the throne that attention was paid to the north-west boundary. Soon after his accession, Muhammad Tughluq led campaigns to Kalanaur and Peshawar. Almost certainly it was a sequel to the invasion of the Mongols under Tarmashirin Khan in 1326-27 and was aimed at securing north-western boundary of the Sultanate against future Mongol attacks. On his method to Kalanaur, the Sultan stayed at Lahore but ordered his army to march and conquer Kalanaur and Peshawar. The task appears to have been accomplished without much difficulty. The Sultan settled the administrative arrangement of the newly 40 conquered regions and marched back to Delhi.

Sometime in 1332, Sultan Muhammad Tughluq planned the conquest of the Qarachil region recognized as the modern Kulu in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. It shaped part of the plan to fortify north and north-west boundary. For this purpose, he enlisted a big army under the command of Khusrau Malik. The army succeeded in occupying Jidya, a significant lay in Qarachil region, and was then instructed to return. But in his enthusiasm, Khusrau Malik exceeded the instruction and marched ahead towards Tibet. Soon the rains set in and the army was overtaken through disease and panic. The disaster was such that only three soldiers returned to tell the tale of the



catastrophe. Qarachil expedition led to tremendous waste of possessions and erosion in the power of Muhammad Tughluq.

A little before Qarachil expedition, Muhammad Tughluq had launched an ambitious project of bringing Khurasan under submission. A big army of soldiers numbering in relation to the 370,000 was recruited for this purpose and the soldiers were paid a year's salary in advance. Big sum was also invested in the purchase of costly equipments for the army. Ultimately when the project was abandoned as an unrealistic scheme and the army disbanded, it led to a tremendous financial loss. The power of the Sultan also suffered a serious setback and a series of rebellions followed that hollowed the mainly extensive of the empire of Delhi Sultanate.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Write in brief the main characteristics of itinerant life of people in Central Asia.
- Talk about the main things of trade flanked by Turks and settled people. Which trade route was followed through them?
- What were Mahmud Ghazni's main objectives for invading India?
- Briefly mention the initial conquests of Muhammad Ghori in India.
- Explain Alauddin's policy with regard to the kingdoms in the Deccan and south.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Indian Polity: The Sultanate**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Administration of the sultanate
- Formation of the sultanate ruling class
- Problem, crisis and decline
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- The contacts that were maintained with the Caliphate.
- The nature of the state.
- The dissimilar departments at the central and provincial stage.
- The main officials who were involved in the administration.
- The manner in which the control was exercised.
- Understand the role as an appropriator of surplus.
- the composition of the ruling class,
- Understand the changes in the ruling class.
- The interests that bound it jointly.
- Explain the several political and administrative troubles of Sultans of Delhi.

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE SULTANATE**

##### **The Caliphate and the Delhi Sultanate**

The institution of the Caliphate came into subsistence after the death of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) when Abu Bakr became the new head (Khalifa) of the Muslim society (Umma or Ummat). Originally, there lived some elements of elective principle in the matter of succession, a practice not much dissimilar

from the previous tribal traditions.

In the Islamic world, the Caliph was regarded as the guardian of religion and the era of the first four “pious Caliphs” (Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali) dynastic rule became the norm when the Umayyads took in excess of the Caliphate in 661 A.D. from their base at Damascus in Syria. After the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate the Abbasids came to power in the mid-eighth century as Caliphs at Baghdad. Though, with the decline of central power, the centralized institution of Caliphate (Khilafat) broke into three centers of power based in Spain (under the rule of a branch of the Umayyad Caliphs), Egypt (under the Fatimids) and the older one at Baghdad — each claiming the exclusive loyalty of the Muslims. Nearer home, towards the north-west, several minor dynasties carved out small states, one of which was based at Ghazna (Ghazni). The important point to keep in mind is that, theoretically, no Muslim could have set up a “self-governing” state, big or small, without procuring the permission from the Caliph; else its legitimacy could become suspect amongst the Muslims. And, yet, all this was nothing more than a formality which could be dispensed with impunity.

The recognition of a Caliph through the Delhi Sultans seen in the granting of robes of honor, letter of investiture, bestowing of titles, having the name of the Caliph inscribed on coins and reading of khutba in Friday prayer in his name symbolized an acceptance and a link with the Islamic world, though in reality it only meant an acceptance of a situation whereby a ruler, had already placed himself in power, The Sultans of Delhi maintained the fiction of the acceptance of the location of the Caliph. Under the Saiyyids (1414-1451) and the Lodis (1451-1526 A.D.), the legends on the coins sustained in the sense of a custom being maintained but it was purely a nominal allegiance. In actual effect, the Caliphate, weakened and distant removed as it was, had little direct role to play in the Delhi Sultanate.

### **The Nature of the Delhi Sultanate**

The early Muslim Turkish State recognized itself in north India through virtue of conquests. Since the Turks were distant fewer in number than the indigenous population in excess of whom they sought to govern and since they also lacked possessions, they, of necessity, had to control the possessions of the country. This had a significant bearing on the nature of the Turkish State.

In a theoretical and formal sense, the Delhi Sultans recognized the supremacy of the Islamic law (shariah) and tried to prevent its open violation. But they had to supplement it through framing secular regulations (zawabit), too. A point of view is that the Turkish State was a theocracy; in practice, though, it was the product of expediency and necessity wherein the needs of the young state assumed paramount importance. The modern historian Ziauddin Barani distinguished flanked by jahandari ("secular") and dindari ("religious") and accepted the inevitability of some secular characteristics, because of the contingent situations coming up. Therefore, the needs of the emergent State shaped several policies and practices not always constant with Islamic fundamentalism. For instance, throughout the reign of Sultan Iltutmish (1211- 1236), a sectarian group (shafai) of Muslim divines approached the Sultan and asked him to enforce the Islamic law strictly, that is, giving the Hindus the option of Islam or Death. On behalf of the Sultan, the wazir, "Junaidi, replied that this could not be done for the moment as the Muslims were like salt in a dish of food. Barani records a conversation that Sultan Alauddin Khalji had with one of his leading theologians, Qazi Mughisuddin, in excess of the question of appropriation of booty. While the Qazi pointed out the legalistic location which prevented the Sultan from taking the major share of the booty, the Sultan is said to have accentuated that he acted according to the needs of the State which were paramount. These instances illustrate that, in practice, the Turkish State was not theocratic but evolved according to its special needs and circumstances despite the information that the main ruling class professed Islam.

## **Central Administration**

The central administrative machinery of the Sultanate consisted of the nobles controlling several offices with the Sultan at the helm of affairs.

### ***The Sultan***

In the early Islamic world, there was no sanction for the location of the Sultan. With the disintegration of the Caliphate, the Sultan began to appear in the sense of a powerful ruler—a self-governing sovereign of a sure territory. The Delhi Sultans could create civil and political regulations for public welfare. Khutba and sikka were recognized as significant attributes of sovereignty. The khutba was the formal sermon following the congregational prayer on Fridays wherein the name of the Sultan was mentioned as the head of the society. Coinage was the ruler's prerogative: his name was inscribed on the coins (sikka).

The Sultanate witnessed a rapid rise and fall of dynasties. The Sultan, or a contender to the throne, could only stay himself in power with the support of the nobles who were themselves divided into numerous groups. Barani says that Balban stressed the special location of the Sultan as „shadow of God’ (zill al Allah) on earth. Balban accentuated courtly splendor decorum and etiquette. He also whispered in severe exemplary punishments even to the nobles. All this bore relevance to a situation where the throne was never safe from the ambitions of the nobles, several of whom felt that they had an equal right to rule.

There were several officials to look after the royal household. The wakil-i-dar looked after the whole household and disbursed salaries to the Sultan's personal staff. The amir-i-hajib functioned as the master of ceremonies at the court. All petitions to the Sultan were submitted through the latter. There were other minor officials also.

### ***The Wizarat (Finance)***

The wazir, as the head of the diwan-i wizarat, was the mainly significant

figure in the central administration. Though he was one of the four significant departmental heads, he exercised a common supervisory power in excess of others. The wizarat organized the collection of revenue, exercised control in excess of expenditure, kept accounts, disbursed salaries and allotted revenue assignments (iqta) at Sultan's order. There were many officials who helped the wizarat such as the mushrif-i mumalik or the accountant-common and the mustaufi-i mumalik or the auditor-common. Throughout the reign of Alauddin Khalji, the diwan-i mustakhraj was made responsible for the collection of arrears of revenue.

### ***The Diwan-i Arz***

The diwan-i arz or military department was headed through the ariz-i mumalik. He was responsible for the administration of military affairs. He inspected the troops maintained through the iqta-holders. He also supervised the commissariat duties (supply and transport) of the Sultan's army. Throughout the reign of Alauddin Khalji, some events were introduced to uphold a check on recruitment and excellence. He ordered a descriptive roll (huliya) of every soldier to be kept and also ordered the branding (dagh) of horses to be done so that horses of poor excellence were not brought through the amirs or iqta-holders to the muster. It appears that the branding of horses was strictly maintained till the reign of Muhammad Tughluq.

The army consisted of troops maintained through nobles as well as the standing army (hashm-i-qalb) of the Sultan. In the thirteenth century, the royal cavalry, in lieu of cash salary, was assigned the revenue of small villages in the vicinity of Delhi which Moreland calls "small iqta". Under Iltutmish, the number of such cavalry was in relation to the three thousand. Balban tried to do absent with these assignments which led to much dissatisfaction. Alauddin Khalji was successful in doing so, and he started paying his soldiers in cash—a trooper was paid 238 tanka while one who brought an additional horse used to get 78 tanka more.

Feroz Tughluq gave up the practice of paying his royal soldiers in cash: instead, he gave them a paper described itlaq - a sort of draft on whose strength they could claim their salary from the Sultan's revenue officers of the khalisa ("Crown" or "reserve" land).

### ***Other Departments***

The diwan-i insha' looked after State correspondence. It was headed through dahir-i mumalik. This department dealt with all correspondence flanked by the Sultan and other rulers, and flanked by the Sultan and provincial governments. It issued Farmans and received letters from subordinate officials.

The barid-i mumalik was the head of the State news-agency. He had to stay informed of all that was happening in the Sultanate. The administrative subdivisions had local barids who sent regular news — letters to the central office. The barids accounted matters of state — wars, rebellions, local affairs, finances, the state of agriculture etc. Separately from the barids, another set of reporters lived who were recognized as munhiyan.

The diwan-i risalat was headed through the sadr-us sudur. He was the highest religious officer. He took care of the ecclesiastical affairs and appointed qazis. He approved several grants like waqf for religious and educational organizations, wazifa and idrar to the learned and the poor.

The Sultan headed the judiciary and was the final court of appeal in both civil and criminal matters. After that to him was the qazi-ul mumalik (or qazi-ul quzzat), the chief judge of the Sultanate. Often, the offices of the sadr-us sudur and qazi-ul mumalik were held through the same person. The chief qazi headed the legal organization and heard appeals from the lower courts. The muhatsibs (public censors) assisted the judicial department. Their task was to see that there was no public infringement of the tenets of Islam.

### ***Slaves and Karkhanas***

Slaves were an important characteristic of the royal household. Alauddin

Khalji owned slaves, while Feroz Tughluq is reputed to have had 1, 80,000 slaves. Throughout his reign, a separate department of slaves (diwan-i bandagan) was set up. The slaves were used for personal service and acted as body-guards (the latter numbering' 40,000). Afif also records that a big number of Feroz's slaves (12,000) worked as artisans (kasibs). Barani describes a big slave market at Delhi, but through the first quarter of the 16th century there is no mention of slave markets.

The needs of the royal household were met through karkhanas which were broadly (kitabikhana) was measured as karkhana. Under Feroz Tughluq, there were 36 karkhanas. Each karkhana was supervised through a noble who had the rank of a malik or khan, and a mutasarrif who was responsible for the accounts and acted as the immediate supervisor. A separate diwan or accounts office lived for the karkhanas.

The karkhanas manufactured articles for Imperial household as well as for military purposes. It is said that Muhammad Tughluq had employed in relation to the five hundred workers in gold brocade and four thousand weavers to manufacture cloth required through the court and for creation robes of honor to be given in gift to the favored ones. It necessity be remembered, though, that articles produced in the royal karkhanas were not commodities, i.e. not for sale in the market. Nobles, too, maintained their own karkhanas.

### **Revenue Administration**

What was the revenue organization throughout the 13th century? We do not get a clear picture; even the exact magnitude of the revenue-demand under the Ilbarite rule is uncertain. Perhaps the old agrarian organization sustained to function with the variation that the composition of the supreme appropriates of the surplus produce at the centre had changed, that is, the Turkish ruling group had replaced the previous receivers of the land revenue. Though, some reconstruction can be made through projecting back the explanation of Barani in relation to the situation prevailing in this respect under Sultan Alauddin



Khalji's early rule. Briefly, we are told of three groups of rural istocracy—khot, muqaddam, and chaudhuri who composed land revenue (kharaj) from the peasants on behalf of the state, and deposited the similar with the officials of the diwan-i wizarat. For this service, they were allowed perquisites (haqq-i khoti) as remuneration through the state which consisted of being exempted from the revenue of a portion of land held through them. Also, they took something from the peasants as their share of the produce which Barani calls qismat-i khoti. W.H. Moreland, though, uses the term intermediaries for all the three groups; and we shall be doing the similar henceforth.

What motivated Alauddin Khalji in introducing stern events is explained through Barani in detail. In short, the intermediaries had become intractable—always in readiness for rebellion. The Sultan leveled the following main charges against them:

- They did not pay the revenue themselves on that portion of their land which was not exempted from assessment; rather they shifted their „burden' onto the peasantry that is, they realized additional levy from the peasants besides the fixed demand of the state in order to pay their own dues.
- They did not pay the grazing tax.
- The ill-gotten „excess of wealth' had made them so arrogant that they flouted the orders of the revenue officials through not going to the revenue office even when summoned to render accounts.

As a result, the Sultan had to strike at their possessions for economic and political reasons. The events taken through him were as follows:

- The magnitude of the state demand was set at half the produce of the land. The land was to be measured (masahat), and the land revenue fixed on the yield of each element of the region. The term used was wafa-i biswa (wafa = yield; biswa = 1 /20th of a bigha). Mainly almost

certainly, it was levied separately on the holding of each individual cultivator.

- The intermediaries and the peasants alike were to pay the similar average of the demand (50%) without any distinction, be they intermediaries or ‚ordinary peasant’ (balahar).
- The perquisites of intermediaries were disallowed.
- The grazing and the homes tax were to be taken from the intermediaries also.

It can be seen, then, that one objective was to free the peasants from the illegal exactions of the intermediaries. That is exactly what Barani means when he says that the Sultan’s policy was that the ‚burden’ (bar) of the ‚strong’ (aqwiya) should not fall on the ‚weak’ (zuafa). We know that this 50% demand was the highest in the agrarian history of India. On the other hand, though the peasants were protected now from the economic oppression of the intermediaries, the former had to pay a higher rate of taxation than they did earlier. Since the rate was uniform in a sense it was a regressive taxation. Therefore the state gained at the cost of the intermediaries, leaving the peasants in the lurch.

Whole regions were devastated. Farming was totally abandoned. The peasants of distant regions, hearing of the ruin and destruction of the peasantry of the Doab, fearful that the similar orders might be issued for them as for the latter, turned absent from obedience and fled to the jungles. The two years that the Sultan was in Delhi (c. 1332—4), the country of the Doab, owing to the rigors of revenue-demand and the multiplicity of abwab (additional cesses), was devastated. The Hindus set fire to the grain heaps and burnt them, and drove absent cattle from their homes. The Sultan ordered the shiqqdars and faujdars (revenue collectors and commanders) to lay waste and plunder the country. They killed several khots and muqaddams, and several they blinded. Those who escaped gathered bands and fled into jungles; and the country

became ruined. The Sultan in those times went to the district of Baran (contemporary Bulandshahr), on a hunting expedition; he ordered that the whole district of Baran be plundered and laid waste. The Sultan himself plundered and laid waste from Kanauj to Dalmau. Whoever was captured was killed. Mainly (peasants) ran absent and fled into the jungles. They (the Sultan's troops) bounded the jungles and killed every one whom they establish within the jungles.

It is true that the intermediaries were eliminated from direct revenue collection, but they were still expected to uphold law and order in the countryside and help the revenue officials without any remuneration or perquisites. The state's direct dealings with the peasants resulted in an expansion of revenue officials described variously 'ummal, mutasarrif, mushrif, muhassilan, navisindagan, etc. Soon, big level corruption and embezzlements surfaced in the middle of the revenue officials for whom they were ruthlessly punished through the naib wazir, Sharaf Qaini: in relation to the 8 to 10 thousand officials were imprisoned. The procedure for discovering the deceit was easy: the bahi or the ledger of the village patwari was meticulously scrutinized through the auditors. The bahi contained every payment, legal or illegal, made to the revenue collectors, and these payments were then compared with the receipts. Corruption occurred in spite of the information that Alauddin Khalji had raised the salary of the revenue collectors.

Barani provides an indication of the extent of the region where these events were operative: it was quite a big region, covering the heart of his empire. But Bihar, Awadh, Gujarat, and parts of Malwa and Rajputana are not mentioned. At any rate, it necessity be borne in mind that these events were mainly meant for the khalisa ("crown" or "reserve" land).

As for the mode of payment, Moreland thinks that ordinarily payment in cash was the common practice throughout the 13th century, and it had become

quite widely prevalent through the 14th century. Though, Alauddin himself preferred collection in grain. He decreed that the whole revenue due from the khalisa in the Doab should be realized in type, and only half the revenue due from Delhi (and its suburbs) in cash. The cause for his preference for collection in grain was not only to have a big reserve of grain stored at Delhi and other regions for contingencies (such as scarcity owing to drought or other factors), but also to utilize the storage as a lever for his price-fixation events in the grain market. Two significant changes were introduced through Ghiyasuddin Tughluq:

- The intermediaries got back their haqq-i khoti (but not qismat-i khoti). They were also exempted from the homes and cattle tax.
- The procedure of measurement (masahat) was to continue beside with observation or “actual yield” (bar hukm hasil).

As for Muhammad Tughluq, there is a confusion that he enhanced the rate of land tax beyond 50%. It is also thought that after the death of Alauddin Khalji, the rate was reduced through the Khalji rulers which were later raised to the previous stage through Muhammad Tughluq. Both these views are incorrect: the rate fixed through Alauddin was never sought to be tampered. What Muhammad Tughluq actually did was to impose new cesses (abwab) as well as revive the older ones (for instance, charai and ghari on the intermediaries). Separately from this, it appears that measurement alone was retained for assessment purpose. The matter aggravated when assessment in type (grain) was accepted out not on the principle of the “actual yield” but on the officially decreed yields (wafa-i farmani) for each element of the measured region. Again, for payment in cash, commutation was not done according to the market prices but on the foundation of the rates as “ordered through the Sultan” (nirakh-i Jarmani). And, then, as Barani says, all these taxes and cesses were to be realized rigorously. The region sheltered under these regulations

was the khalisa land in the Doab. The result was obvious: an unprecedented rebellion of the peasants, led through the intermediaries, occurred which led to bloody confrontations. Feroz Shah claims to have abolished twenty three cesses including charai and ghari.

Another development that took lay, especially under the Tughluqs, was the practice of revenue-farming, that is, the task of collecting the revenue of some regions was sometimes given to contractors who perhaps gave a lump sum in advance for the right of revenue collection for a sure era. Under Feroz Shah, „water tax’ (haqq-sharb) was taken from those cultivators who irrigated their land from the water supplied from the canals constructed through the state. It necessity be pointed out that in case of bad harvest, the state tried to adjust the land tax, and also gave agricultural loans to the peasants described sondhar in Muhammad Tughluq,s reign.

What was the total estimated revenue throughout any era of the Delhi Sultanate? No such effort appears to have been made before the reign of Sultan Feroz Shah Tughluq. „Afif tells us that at the order of this Sultan, Khwaja Hisamuddin Junaid determined the jama (estimated revenue) of the kingdom according to the “rule of inspection” (bar hukm mushahada). It took six years to do this job, and the figure arrived at was six krar and seventy-five lakhs tankas which sustained to be valid for the whole reign of the Sultan.

### **Iqta Organization and Provincial Administration**

The territorial expansion and consolidation of the Sultanate was a procedure which sustained throughout the 13th and 14th centuries. It involved varying types of control in conditions of territories: those brought under direct administration and those which paid tribute and remained semi-autonomous. The expansion of the Sultanate and the difficulties involved in administering regions that were distant absent from the centre shaped dissimilar types of control.

### ***Iqta Organization***

The initial Turkish conquests in the early 13th century displaced several local chiefs (whom the modern sources refer to as rai and rana). In order to consolidate, the Turkish rulers' made revenue assignments (iqta), in lieu of cash, to their nobles (umara). The assignees (recognized as muqti and wali) composed revenue from these regions, defrayed their own expenses, paid the troops maintained through them and sent the surplus (fawazil) to the centre. Iqta is an Arabic word and the institution had been in force in the early Islamic world as a form of reward for services to the State. It was used in the Caliphate administration as a method of financing operations and paying civil and military officers. The grant of iqta did not imply a right to the land nor was it hereditary though the holders of iqta tended to acquire hereditary rights in Feroz Tughluq's reign. These revenue assignments were transferable, the iqta-holder being transferred from one region to another every three or four years. So, iqta should not be equated with the fief of medieval feudal Europe, which were hereditary and non transferable. The assignments could be big (a whole province or a part). Assignments given to nobles accepted administrative, military and revenue collecting responsibilities. Therefore, provincial administration was headed through the muqti or wali. He had to uphold an army composed of horsemen and foot soldiers.

“They (the muqtis) should know that their right in excess of the subjects is only to take the rightful amount of money or perquisite (mal-i haqq) in a peaceful manner... the life, property and the family of the subject should be immune from any harm, the muqtis have no right in excess of them; if the subject desires to create a direct appeal to the Sultan, the muqti should not prevent him. Every muqti who violates these laws should be dismissed and punished... the muqtis and waits are so several superintendents in excess of them as the king is superintendent in excess of other muqtis... After three or four years, the amils and the muqtis should be transferred so that they may not

be too strong".

### ***Provincial and Local Administration***

As the State became more settled and efforts were made for greater centralization, provincial administration also underwent a change. A separation flanked by fiscal and military responsibilities started evolving. Throughout the reign of Muhammad Tughluq, fiscal responsibilities were partially withdrawn from the muqtis or walis and placed under central officers. According to Ibn Battuta, the iqta of Amroha was placed under two officers, one described amir (perhaps in charge of the army and administration) and the other as wali-ul kharaj (in charge of revenue collection). Muhammad Tughluq also ordered that the salary of the soldiers maintained through iqta- holders be paid through the diwan-i wizarat to prevent fraud through the officers.

Greater control also came to be exercised in excess of fiscal matters. The diwan's office, at the centre, received and examined detailed statements concerning income and expenditure in the provinces. It supervised the work of the revenue officials in the provinces. The provinces had a sahib-i diwan whose office kept books of explanation and submitted information to the centre. It was assisted through officials like mutasarrifs. The whole lower revenue staff was described karkun.

Through the end of the thirteenth century, modern sources refer to an administrative division, recognized as shiqq. We do not have adequate information in relation to the exact nature of shiqq. Though, through the time of Sher Shah (1540-1545 A.D.) shiqq had appeared as a well-defined administrative element, recognized as sarkar. Administrative officials, mentioned with respect to shiqq, were shiqqdar and faujdar. The demarcation of their duties is not very clear.

According to Ibn Battuta, chauthuri was the head of hundred villages. This was the nucleus of the administrative element later described pargana. The village was the negligible element of administration. The functioning and administration of the village remained basically the same as it had lived in pre-Turkish times. The main village functionaries were khot, muqaddam (headman) and patwari. The judicial administration of the sub-division was patterned on that of the centre. Courts of the qazi and sadr functioned in the provinces. The kotwal maintained law and order. At the village stage, the panchayat heard civil cases.

## **FORMATION OF THE SULTANATE RULING CLASS**

### **The Ruling Class at the Time of the Ghorian Invasion**

At the time of the Ghorian invasions, north India was divided into a number of principalities ruled through rais and ranas (local chiefs). At the village stage, khots and muqaddams (village headman) stood on the borderline of the rural aristocracy. In place of the chauthuri came the khot as the head of hundred villages.

At any rate, we can accept a broad definition of the location of the pre-Ghori ruling class as one which appropriated the surplus produce of the peasants, through exercising superior rights in excess of land. In analyzing the formation of the ruling class in the Sultanate, some pertinent questions arise: How did the new ruling class supplant this older ruling class? What events did it adopt for appropriating the surplus revenue? How was it dissimilar from the class that it supplanted?

### **Composition of the Ruling Class**

Throughout the thirteenth century, the Turkish armies furthered the political and military control in excess of North India. Through the mid-fourteenth century, it spread to the Deccan. A big alien territory had to be



pacified and governed and the ruling class had to be maintained and sustained. The early Turkish ruling class was very much in the nature of a co-sharer of political and financial powers with the Sultans. In the beginning, the nobles (amiran) were practically self-governing in distant regions of the conquered territories where they were sent through the Centre as governors. The latter were designated muqti or wali and their territories were recognized as iqtas. Slowly, the practice began of transferring muqtis from one iqta to another. The pre-Ghorian political structure appears to have sustained, with tribute being realized from the rais and ranas, who were expected to collect taxes as they had done before.

From our modern historians, like Minhaj Siraj and Barani, we learn that the mainly significant nobles, and even the Sultans, in the early stages of the base of the Sultanate, were from the families of the Turkish slave officers. Several of the early Turkish nobles and Sultans (such as Aibak and Iltutmish) had started their early career as slaves but they received letters of manumission (khat-i azadi) before becoming Sultans. One such was Qutbuddin Aibak. On his death in A.D. 1210, Iltutmish, one of his favored slaves, seized Delhi, and set himself up as Sultan. He created his own corps of Turkish slaves—the Shamsi maliks, described through Barani turkan-i chihilgani (“The Forty”). Iltutmish’s nobility also incorporated a number of Tajik or free-born officers. That this element of free-born immigrants sustained to form a part of the ruling class is noted through Minhaj at the time of Nasiruddin Mahmud’s accession (1246 A.D.). The problem of succession after the death of Iltutmish brought into light the division within the nobles.

In spite of the internal quarrels within the ruling class, there was a vital solidarity which manifested itself in its hostility to outsiders. For instance, Raziya’s (1236-1240 A.D.) elevation of an Abyssinian, Jamaluddin Yaqut, to the post of amir-i akhur (“master of the royal horses”) caused great

resentment. Similar was the case of Raihan, a Hindu covert to Islam. Therefore, the nobility was seen as the preserver of the sure groups, sometimes under the principle of ‚high birth‘, as reflected in the policies ascribed to Balban through Barani.

Now you can understand how an identity of interests bound the dominant groups. Actually, the ruling class was not a monolithic organization. There were numerous factions and cliques, each trying to guard their exclusive positions jealously. The Turkish military leaders who accompanied and participated in the Ghorian invasion shaped the core of the early Turkish ruling class: they acquired mainly of the key-posts at the centre and provinces.

### ***The Ilbarites***

Qutbuddin Aibak who succeeded to the Indian territories of Muhammad Ghori, had no greater right than the other nobles like Yalduz and Qubacha who asserted their independence and autonomy at Ghazna and Sind respectively. This was to be a characteristic of the early history of the Sultanate. The Sultans needed the support of the nobility to set up and uphold them in power. For instance, Iltutmish came to the throne with the support of the nobles of Delhi. The Turkish nobles played an significant part in elevating Sultans to the throne and supporting contenders to the throne. According to Barani, the older Turkish nobility used to tell each other: “What are thou that I am not, and what will thou be, that I shall not be.”

The early Turkish nobility sought to emphasize their exclusiveness and their monopoly to rule. Efforts through other social groups to challenge their monopoly were resented and resisted. The nobles of Iltutmish described turkan-i-chihilgani (“The Forty”) wielded considerable power after his death. They were an significant group, and efforts through the Sultans to incorporate

other groups were met with much resistance. Raziya Sultan had to face stiff opposition from the Turkish amirs, when she elevated an Abyssinian, Jamaluddin Yaqut, to the office of amir-i akhur. Efforts of Nasiruddin Mahmud (1246-1266 A.D.) to break the vested power of this group through dismissing Balban (who was one of the „Forty’) from the court and replacing him through an Indian convert, Imaduddin Raihan, did not meet with much success. Minhaj voiced the anger of the “Turks of pure lineage” who "could not tolerate Imaduddin Raihan of the tribes of Hind to rule in excess of them.” The opposition of the Turkish ruling class forced the Sultan to remove Raihan and reinstate Balban.

On his accession to the throne, Balban (1266-1286 A.D.) took events to break the power of the turkan-i chihilgani through several events. He himself was the creation of a group of nobles loyal to him. Barani states that Balban had many of the older Turkish nobles killed. This was an effort to intimidate the nobility, who could and did pose, a challenge to the Crown. Balban himself, according to Barani, kept Sultan Nasiruddin as a “puppet” (namuna); so, he was vary of the leading old nobles.

### ***The Khaljis***

In A.D. 1290, the Ilbari dynasty was overthrown through the Khaljis. The coming to power of the Khaljis is seen as something new through modern historians. Barani mentions that the Khaljis were a dissimilar “race” from the Turks. Contemporary scholars like C.E. Bosworth speak of them as Turks, but in the thirteenth century no one measured them as Turks, and therefore it appears that the accession to power was regarded as something novel because earlier they did not form a important part of the ruling class. Alauddin Khalji further eroded the power of the older Turkish nobility through bringing in new groups such as the Mongols (the „New Muslims’), Indians and Abyssinians

(for the latter, the instance of Malik Kafur is well-recognized). This trend towards a broadening of the composition of the ruling class sustained throughout the rule of the Tughluqs.

It may be incidentally mentioned here that there was a very small group described kotwalian (pl. of kotwal) at Delhi throughout the reign of Balban and Alauddin Khalji. Infact, this was a family group, headed through Fakhruddin who was the kotwal of Delhi. This group appears to have played some political role throughout and after Balban's death.

### ***The Tughluqs***

Under Muhammad Tughluq, separately from the Indians and the Afghans, the ruling class, became unprecedentedly more heterogeneous with the entry of superior numbers of foreign elements, especially the Khurasani, whom the Sultan described aizza (dear ones). Several of them were appointed as amir sadah ("commander of hundred"). Concerning the non-Muslim as well as the converted Indians, Barani laments that the Sultan raised the "low-born" (jawahir-i lutrah) to high status. He mentions musicians, barbers, cooks, etc. who got high positions. He provides the instance of Peera Mali (gardener) who was given the diwan-i wizarat. Converts like Aziz-ud Din khammar (distiller) and Qawamul Mulk Maqbul, Afghans like Malik Makh and Malik Shahu Lodi Afghan, Hindus like Sai Raj Dhara and Bhiran Rai were given iqta and positions.

The reign of Feroz Tughluq does not provide us any clear pattern in relation to the social origins of the nobles. The situation was fluid with a false veneer of peace flanked by the Sultan and the amirs. Sure designations were used with reference to the nobles — khan, malik and amir. Khan was often used with reference to Afghan nobles, amir came to mean a commander,

malik—a chief, ruler, or king. Beside with their titles of honor, the nobles were given some symbols of dignity designated as maratib which signified privileges—khilat (robe of honour), sword and dagger presented through the Sultan, horses and elephants that they were entitled to use in their processions, canopy of State and the grant of parasol (chhatri) and insignia and kettle-drums.

It is important to note that every Sultan sought to form and organize a group of nobles which would be personally loyal to him. This obviated the necessity of depending upon previous groups whose loyalty was suspect. That's why we discover the modern historians employing conditions like Qutbi, Shamsi, Balbani and Alai amirs, but one thing was quite sure every group tried to capture the attention of the Sultan—whether weak or strong—because all privileges and power issued forth from the sovereign. This, in turn, went to a great extent in strengthening slowly the location of the Sultan himself if he was a man of strong will.

The Afghans were regularly recruited into the feudal bureaucracy of the Delhi Sultanate. With the coming of the Lodis (1451-1526), the Afghan predominance got enlarged.

### **Iqta and the Dispersal of Possessions in the Middle of the Ruling Class**

The income of the Sultanate was primarily and mainly derived from the land revenue. Khalisa was the term for the land whose revenue was exclusively meant for the Sultan himself, whiles the revenue from the land, described iqta, and was assigned through the state to the nobles. The muqtis or iqta-holders were required to furnish military assistance to the Sultan in times of need, separately from maintaining law and order in and collecting the revenue from their iqta.

These revenue assignments were usually non-hereditary and transferable. In information, it was through the institution of iqta that the Sultan was able to control the nobles. The muqti composed land revenue from the peasants of his territory and defrayed there from his own salary as well as that of his soldiers. The demand to send the excess amounts (fawazil) to the diwan-i wizarat was symbolic of the trend towards centralization. The muqti had to submit accounts of their realization and expenditure to the treasury. Auditing was severe to prevent fraud.

Alauddin Khalji also took other events for controlling his nobility. Regular reports from the bands (intelligence officers) kept him posted with the actions of the nobles. A check was kept on their socializing, and marriages flanked by them could not take lay without the permission of the Sultan. These events have to be seen against the background of recurrent incidents of rebellions in which the muqtis utilized and appropriated the possessions of their regions, to rebel or to create a bid for the throne. This explains the principle of transfer also. Under Muhammad Tughluq (1325-1351 A.D.), the nobles were given iqta in lieu of cash salary but their troops were paid in cash through the treasury in contrast to the earlier era. These new fiscal arrangements and the greater control in excess of assignments perhaps contributed to the disagreement flanked by the Sultan and the nobles since they were deprived of the gains of the iqta administration. Though, throughout the reign of Feroz Tughluq there was a common retreat from the practice of increased central power in excess of iqta. In practice, Feroz started granting iqta to the sons and heirs of iqta-holders. The extensive reign of Feroz Tughluq comparatively witnessed few rebellions but it also saw the beginning of the disintegration and decentralization. Through the time of the Lodis (1451-1526 A.D.), the iqtadars (now described wajhdars) do not appear to have been subject to constant transfers.

## **Ulema**

The ulema, the theological class," had an significant location in the Sultanate. It was from them that significant legal and judicial appointments were made—the sadr-us sudur, shaikh-ul Islam, qazi, mufti, muhtasib, imam and khatib. The ulema can be seen as an adjunct of the ruling class, maintained through revenue grants from the Sultan, and often through members of the ruling class. The ideological significance of the ulema was great as they provided legitimacy to the ruling class. They exercised an power which was not only religious but sometimes political, too.

## **PROBLEM, CRISIS AND DECLINE**

### **Nature of Kingship**

No clear and well-defined law of succession urbanized in the Sultanate. Hereditary principle was accepted but not adhered to invariably. There was no rule that only the eldest son would succeed (primogeniture). In one case, even a daughter was nominated (for instance, Raziya Sultan). At any rate, a slave, unless he was manumitted, that is, freed, could not claim sovereignty. In information, as it operated in the Sultanate, „the longest the sword, the greater the claim'.

Therefore, in the absence of any succession rule in the very beginning intrigues surfaced to usurp power. After Aibak's death, it was not his son Aram Shah but his slave and son-in-law Iltutmish who captured the throne. Iltutmish's death (1236 A.D.) was followed through a extensive era of thrash about and strife when finally Balban, Iltutmish's slave of the “Forty” fame, assumed power in 1266 A.D. You have already seen how Balban attempted to provide a new form to the concept of kingship to salvage the prestige of the office of the Sultan, but the thrash about for power that started soon after Balban's death confirms again that the „sword' remained the main deciding factor. Kaiqubad was installed at the throne against the claims of Balban's

nominee, Kaikhusrau. Later, even he was slain through the Khalji Malikis (1290 A.D.) who laid the base of the Khalji rule. In 1296 A.D. Alauddin Khalji, killed his uncle, Jalaluddin Khalji and occupied the throne. Alauddin Khalji's death signaled civil war and scramble for power. Muhammad Tughluq's reign weakened due to the rebellions of amirs. Rivalries that followed after Feroz Tughluq ultimately led to the rise of the Saiyyids (1414-51 A.D.).

With the accession of the Lodis (1451-1526 A.D.) a new element—the Afghans was added. The Afghans had a sure peculiar concept of sovereignty. They were prepared to accept the location of a Sultan in excess of them, but they sought to partition the empire in the middle of their clans. After the death of Sultan Sikandar Lodi (1517 A.D.), the empire was divided flanked by Ibrahim and Jalal. Even the royal privileges and prerogatives were equally shared through the clan members. For instance, keeping of elephants was the royal privilege but Azam Humayun Sarwani is accounted to have possessed seven hundred elephants. Besides, the Afghans entertained the concept of maintaining tribal militia which in the extensive run greatly hampered the military efficiency of the Central Government. It is true that Sikandar Lodi tried to stay the ambitious Afghan nobles in check, but it appears that the concept of Afghan polity was more tilted towards decentralization that created fissures in the end.

### **Disagreement Flanked by the Nobility and the Sultans**

The political history of the Sultanate era testifies that consolidation and decline of the Sultanate were mainly the result of constructive and destructive behaviors of the nobles (umara). The nobles always tried to maximize their demands in conditions of the economic and political gains.

Under the Ilbarite rule (1206-90 A.D.), the conflicts usually revolved



approximately three issues: succession, organization of the nobility and division of economic and political power flanked by them and the Sultans. When Qutbuddin Aibak became the Sultan, his power was not accepted through the influential nobles such as Qubacha (governor of Multan and Uchh), Yilduz (governor of Ghazni), and Ali Mardan (governor of Bengal). This scrupulous problem was inherited through Iltutmish who finally overcame it through diplomacy as well as through force. Later, Iltutmish organized the nobles in a „corporate body, recognized as turkan-i chihilgani (“The Forty”) which was personally loyal to him. Naturally, other groups of nobles envied the status and privileges of the members of the “Forty”, but this does not mean that' the latter were free from their internal bickerings. At the mainly they united in one principle: to plug the entry of non-Turkish persons in the charmed circle as distant as possible. On the other hand, the “Forty” tried to retain its political power in excess of the Sultan who would not like to alienate this group, but at the similar time would not surrender his royal privilege of appointing persons of other groups as officers. Therefore, a delicate balance was achieved through Iltutmish which broke down after his death. For instance, Iltutmish had declared his daughter, Raziya, as his successor throughout his life, but some nobles did not approve her succession after his death, because she tried to organize non-Turkish groups (Abyssinians and Indians) as counterweight to the “Forty”. That was one main cause why a number of nobles of this group supported her brother, Ruknuddin whom they thought to be incompetent and weak, thereby giving them an opportunity to uphold their location. This spectacle sustained throughout the reign of Nasiruddin Mahmud (1246-66 A.D.) also, as exemplified through the rise and fall of Immaduddin Raihan, an Indian convert. This episode coincided with the banishment of Balban who was the naib (deputy) of Sultan Mahmud (and also belonged to the “Forty”) and his subsequent recall.

Throughout Balban's reign (1266-87 A.D.), the power of the turkan-i

chihilgani was minimized. Since he himself was a member of the "Forty" before his accession, he was fully aware of the nobles' rebellious behaviors. So, he eased out the "tallest poppies" amongst them through assassin's dagger or poisoning, even including his cousin. On the other hand, he shaped a group of loyal and trusted nobles described "Balbani". The removal of several members of the "Forty" deprived the state of the services of veterans and the void could not be fulfilled through the new and not so experienced "Balbani" nobles. This situation inevitably led to the fall of the Ilbarite rule, paving the method for the Khaljis.

The reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316 A.D.) saw a broadening in the composition of nobles. He did not admit of monopolization of the state through any one single group of nobles. State offices were open to talent and loyalty, to the exclusion of race and creed. Besides, he controlled them through several events.

Moreover, the enhancement of land revenue up to 50 per cent of the surplus produce necessity has pacified the nobles because an augment in the revenue of their respective iqta would have raised their salary, too. Territorial expansion also provided enough possessions towards recruiting persons with talent. The case of Malik Kafur, an Abyssinian Slave, is well-recognized. But this situation was short-lived: the death of Alauddin Khalji brought out once again the dissensions and conspiracies of the nobles, leading to the elimination of the Khaljis as rulers.

As for the Tughluqs, you know how Muhammad Tughluq made attempts to organize nobles again and again, with turns and twists. But all his efforts failed to put them under check. Even the Khurasanis, whom he used to call "Aizzah" (the dear ones), betrayed him. The troubles created through the nobles can be gauged from the information that twenty-two rebellions took

lay throughout his reign with the loss of at least one territory, later recognized as Bahmani kingdom.

The crisis set in motion after Muhammad Tughluq's death appears to have gone out of hands. Under these circumstances, Feroz Tughluq could not be expected to be stern with the nobles. They were given several concessions. They succeeded in creation their iqtas hereditary. The appeasement policy of Sultan pleased the nobles, but in the extensive run, it proved disastrous. The army became inefficient because the practice of branding (dagh) of the horses introduced through Alauddin Khalji was approximately given up. It was not possible, henceforth, for his descendants or later rulers to roll back the tide of decline of the Delhi Sultanate.

Under the Sayyids (1414-51 A.D.) and the Lodis (1451-1526 A.D.), the situation did not appear to be comfortable: the former were not at all fit for the role of saviours. Sikandar Lodi made the last effort to prevent the looming catastrophe. But dissensions in the middle of the Afghans and their unlimited individual ambitions hastened the final demise, actually its murder, with Babur as the executioner.

### **Crisis in Revenue Administration**

Iluttmish had introduced a sound organization of revenue assignments (iqta) through which the vast bureaucracy was maintained. Feroz Tughluq's reign, though, saw deterioration in its working. Throughout his reign, revenue assignments tended to be hereditary and permanent. This applied even to the (royal) soldiers (yaran-i hashm). "If a person died," says Afif, "his office would go permanently to his son; if he had no son, then to his son-in-law; if he had no son-in-law, then to his slave; if he had no slave then to his women." Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517 A.D.) stopped to reclaim the balance (fawazil). The tendency of the principal assignees to sub-assign their territories also increased

greatly throughout his reign.

All this had deep implications. It meant not only loss of vast revenue possessions to the state exchequer but through creation the assignments permanent the Sultan allowed the assignees to develop strong local roots which led to wide-level corruption and turbulence.

### **Rise of Local States**

You have already studied that the clashes flanked by the nobles and the Delhi Sultans marred the Sultanate from the beginning of its base. But, so extensive as the centre was powerful to retaliate, the rebellions were successfully crushed. Signs of physical disintegration were witnessed for the first time throughout Muhammad Tughluq's reign in 1347 A.D. with the establishment of the Bahamani kingdom. But the Sultanate remained intact at least almost for fifty years when finally the Timurid invasion (1398 A.D.) exposed its weakness. It provided ample opportunity for the nobles to set up their own regions of power, self-governing of the Sultan. Governors like Khwaja Jahan (Jaunpur) in 1394, Khwaja in 1394, Dilawar Khan (Malwa) in 1401, Zafar Khan (Gujarat) in 1407, and some regions in Rajasthan also declared their independence throughout the 15th century. Bengal was already a semi-self-governing kingdom since the days of Bughra Khan. The Sultanate practically shrank to the radius of 200 miles approximately Delhi. It had deep implications.

Loss of the fertile provinces of Bengal, Malwa, Jaunpur and Gujarat curtailed greatly the vast revenue possessions of the state. That, in turn disabled the centre to wage extensive wars and organize campaigns against the refractory elements. The situation became so critical under the Sayyids and the Lodis that even for regular revenue exactions the Sultans had to send yearly campaigns. For instance, forces were sent repeatedly to suppress the

Katehr and Mewati chiefs with frequent intervals from 1414 to 1432 A.D. Likewise, the chiefs of Bayana and Gwalior also showed their reluctance to pay revenue and, as a result, repeated campaigns followed from 1416 to 1506 A.D. All this shows that the control of the Sultans throughout the 15th century remained nominal and only minimum efforts would have sufficed to overthrow the Sultanate.

### **The Mongols**

To what extent the Mongol invasions could be held responsible for the decline of the Delhi Sultanate? Their invasions sustained up to the era of Muhammad Tughluq with intervals. Balban, Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughluq were very much conscious of the Mongol assaults and resisted them successfully. True, much money and time had to be spent and thousands of soldiers were sacrificed, but it does not appear that these invasions enfeebled the Sultanate in any substantial manner. Occasional shocks were awesome but without any visible damage to the economy or the state tools.

### **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- What was the location of the Caliph?
- What were the symbols of allegiance maintained through the Delhi Sultans with respect to the Caliphate?
- Look at the nature of Turkish state under Delhi Sultans.
- What events did Alauddin Khalji take to eliminate the intermediaries?
- What changes were brought in relation to the composition of the nobility under the Khaljis and the Tughluqs?
- What events were undertaken through Alauddin Khalji to control his nobility?
- Critically look at the role of nobility in the disintegration of the Sultanate.
- Talk about the chief feature characteristics of the Afghan theory of kingship.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **Economy of Delhi Sultanate**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- State and economy
- Agrarian structure
- Rise of urban economy trade & commerce
- Technology and crafts
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- The nature of land revenue organization and its extraction,
- The mechanism of sharing of revenue possessions
- Understand the considerable augment in the size and perhaps in the number of cities
- Understand the marked rise in craft manufacture
- Agricultural technology,
- Structure construction
- Military technology

#### **STATE AND ECONOMY**

##### **Sharing of Revenue Possessions**

Throughout the 13th century, big territories rapidly passed into the hands of the Sultans. The regions that refused to pay land-tax or kharaj were recognized as mawas and were plundered or forced to pay through military raids. Slowly a mechanism of simultaneous revenue collection and sharing had to be introduced.

### *Iqta and Khalisa*

The new rulers brought With them the iqta organization that combined the two functions of revenue collection and sharing without immediately endangering the unity of political structure. The iqta was a territorial assignment and its holder was described the muqti or the wali. The classical definition of the iqta organization has been given through Nizam-ul Mulk Tusi, a Seljuq statesman of the 11th century. According to Tusi's definition, the iqta was a revenue assignment that the muqti held at the pleasure of Sultan. The muqti was entitled to collect in proper manner the land tax and other taxes due to the Sultan; he had no further claims on the person, women and children, land or other possessions of the cultivators. The muqti had sure obligations to the Sultan the chief being the maintenance of troops and furnishing them at call to the Sultan. The iqta was a transferable charge and the transfers of iqta s were frequent.

### *Khalisa*

The territory whose revenues were directly composed for the Sultan's own treasury was designated khalisa. Its size appears to have expanded quite considerably under Alauddin Khalji. But the khalisa did not appear to consist of shifting territories scattered throughout the country. In all probability, Delhi beside with its nearby district, including parts of Doab remained in khialisa. In Iltutmish's time, Tabarhinda (Bhatinda) too was in khalisa. Under Alauddin Khalji, the khalisa sheltered the whole of middle Doab and parts of Rohilkhand. But throughout the days of Feroz Tughluq, the khalisa perhaps had reduced considerably in size.

Iltutmish (1210-36) is accounted to have assigned in lieu of salaries "small iqtas" in the Doab to the soldiers of the Sultan's army (hashm qalb). Balban (1266-86) made a half-hearted effort at their resumption without success. It

was Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316) who recognized firmly the practice of payment of salaries in cash to the soldiers. These assignments were described *wajh* and the holders *wajhdars*. These assignments tended to be not only permanent but hereditary.

### ***The Iqta Organization in Operation***

Here, we are adding a few more characteristics. In the early years of the base of the Sultanate, neither the revenue income of these assignments was recognized nor was the size of the contingent of the assignee fixed. Though, sure modifications and mild attempts at introducing central manage to some extent were made through Balban (1266-86) when he appointed a *khwaja* (accountant) with each *muqti*: this may imply that the Sultanate now was trying to discover out the actual income of the *iqta* and *muqti*'s expenditure.

The real intervention in the *iqta* management came under Alauddin Khalji. The central fiancé department (*diwan-i wizarat*) perhaps prepared some sort of an estimated revenue income from each *iqta*. The audit was stringent, punishments severe, transfers frequent and enhancements (*taufir*) were often made in the estimated revenue income of the *iqta* on several pretexts.

Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1320-25) introduced some moderation. The enhancements in the estimated revenue income through the central finance ministry were not to be more than 1/10 or 1/11th annually. The *muqtis* were allowed to stay 1/10th to 1/20th in excess of their sanctioned salaries.

The effort at central intervention reached its climax throughout the time of Muhammad Tughluq (1325-51). In many cases, a *wali* and an *amir* was appointed to the similar territory. The wall was to collect revenue and, after deducting his pay, to send the rest to the treasury. The *amir* or commander had



nothing to do with revenue realization and received his own salary and the salary of his troops in presumably from the reign the troops of the iqta holders were paid in cash through the state's treasury. This possibility infuriated the commanders and created political troubles for Muhammad Tughluq. He enhanced the cash salaries of the nobles and got new estimates of revenue (mahsul) prepared which was designated jama.

There was no effort to restore central manage through the successors of Feroz. Under the Lodis (1451-1526) the administrative charges and revenue assignments were combined jointly and these were no more described iqta but were basically described sarkars and parganas. An organization of sub-assignments came in vogue particularly under Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517). The main assignees used to sub-assign portions of their assignment to their subordinates who in turn made sub-assignments to their soldiers.

### ***Land Grants***

As you know already, the religious persons and organizations such as dargahs, mosques, madrasas, and other dependents of the ruling class were maintained through creation grants of revenue income. These revenue grants were described milk, idrar, and in am. These grants were not usually resumed or transferred. But the Sultan had the right to cancel them. Alauddin Khalji is reputed to have cancelled approximately all grants. Ghiyasuddin Tughluq too cancelled big number of grants. Though, Feroz Tughluq made a departure and not only returned all the previously resumed grants but also made new grants as well. In spite of this generosity of the Sultan, according to the figures recorded through Afif, the total grants through the Sultan accounted only for in relation to the one-twentieth of the total jama (estimated revenue income). Nobles, too, made revenue grants out of their own iqtas. Noticeably, the Sultans made grants not only in the khalisa but also in the iqtas. These grants

sheltered cultivated as well as cultivable regions not yet brought under plough.

### **Land Revenue and its Extraction**

The Islamic land tax with which the new rulers of India were well-known was kharaj. The kharaj was essentially a share in the produce of the land and not a rent on the land. Throughout the 13th century, the kharaj took through and big the form of tribute. This tribute was paid, in lump sum, either through the potentates some arrangement. Alternatively, from the recalcitrant regions (mawas) where such arrangements were not possible, the tribute was extorted through plundering raids. It was therefore almost certainly mostly in the form of cattle and slaves.

The sources of Delhi Sultanate do not suggest that before the reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316) any serious effort was made to systematize the assessment and realization of kharaj.

### ***Agrarian Events of Alauddin Khalji***

Alauddin Khalji effort was to augment the revenue collection through enhancing the demand, introducing direct collection, and cutting down the leakages to the intermediaries.

As you know, the demand was therefore fixed in type but realization appears to be mostly in cash. Barani informs us that the revenue collectors were ordered to demand the revenue with such rigor that the peasants should be forced to sell their produce immediately at the face of the meadows. At another lay, Barani says that Alauddin Khalji brought the Doab into khalisa and the tax (mahsul) from there was spent on paying the cash salaries to the soldiers.

Yet there is a rather contradictory statement through the similar author that the Sultan ordered that the peasant should pay tax in type and not in cash. According to Irfan Habib, it appears to have reference to only some parts of the khalisa in the Doab. From there the Sultan wanted to obtain supplies for his granaries. Otherwise the realization was normally in cash.

The organization of taxation introduced through Alauddin appears to have lasted for extensive though Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1320-25) customized it to some extent and exempted the khots and muqaddams from paying tax on their farming and cattle. But he did not permit them to impose any cesses on the peasants.

### ***Agrarian Events of Muhammad Tughluq***

Muhammad Tughluq first extended Alauddin Khalji's organization of revenue collection based on measurement to Gujarat, Malwa, Deccan, South India, and Bengal. At a later stage, the level of agrarian taxation was enhanced considerably. Barani's statement that the augment amounted to 20 or 10 times is undoubtedly rhetoric but it certainly provides the impression of an enormous increase. Barani suggests that additional new imposts (abwab) were levied. Of the other taxes, kharaj, charai, and ghari were more rigorously composed. According to Yahya, cattle were branded and cottages counted to avoid any concealment. But more significant than these events was the information that for assessment of kharaj, wafa-i-farmani (officially decreed yields) and nrirkh-i-farmani (officially decreed prices) were used. The statement very clearly implies that the yields and prices used for calculating revenue were not actual.

One could very well expect that the decreed yields and prices were certainly inflated. Use of inflated yields instead of actual and prices much-

higher than what were prevailing had the obvious result of overstating the value of produce and therefore the share of the state. This tremendous augment in revenue demand resulted in contraction of region under plough, flight of peasantry. This caused failure of grain supplies to Delhi and a famine that lasted for in relation to the seven years, from 1334-5 to 1342.

Faced with these troubles, Muhammad Tughluq became the first Sultan to effort to formulate an agricultural policy for promoting agriculture. He introduced the practice of giving agricultural loans named *sondhar* for raising the region under plough and for digging wells for irrigation. Barani says that 70 lakhs tankas (according to Afif 2 kroris tankas) were given till 1346-7 in *sondhar* but perhaps hardly any

A new ministry designated *diwan-i amir-i kohi* was recognized to promote agriculture. Its two main functions were to extend the region under farming and to reclaim the land that went out of farming and improving the cropping pattern. It was recommended that wheat should be replaced through sugarcane and sugarcane through grapes and dates.

The Sultan was so determined to introduce his project of agricultural improvement that when a theologian said that giving loan in cash and getting the interest in grain was sin, he executed him. Barani, though, says that all these events were approximately a complete failure. Feroz Tughluq (1351-88) abandoned these projects but abolished agrarian cesses, forbade levying of *ghari* and *charai*. But he is accounted to have imposed a separate tax - *jiziya* - separate from *khany* (land-tax) on the peasants. He also introduced an irrigation tax in Haryana where he dug canals.

There is little information forthcoming for the intervening era but in all probability the land tax sustained to be composed in cash through whomsoever

is the rulers, till the time of Ibrahim Lodi (1517-26). Owing to the scarcity of currency and cheapening of the granules, he is accounted to have ordered collection of land revenue in type or in grain.

### **Alauddin Khalji's Market Manage**

Alauddin Khalji's events did not remain confined to rural economy but extended to urban market as well. He is credited for issuing a set of seven regulations which came to be recognized as market-manage events.

The Sultan fixed the prices of all commodities from grain to cloth, slaves, cattle, etc. (Regulation 1). These prices were really to be enforced since the Sultan cautiously made all arrangements for creation the measure a success. A controller of market (shahna-i mandl), barids (intelligence officers) and munhiyan (secret spies) were appointed. The grain merchants were placed under the shahna-i mandi and sureties were taken from them. The Sultan himself was to receive daily reports separately from these three sources. Repeating (Ihtikar) was prohibited.

Obviously, the grain merchants could bring supplies to the market only if they could get the granules and that, too, at sufficiently low prices. It was apparently for this cause that the Sultan decreed such a rigor in realization of land revenue in the Doab that the peasants should be forced to sell the grain to the karvanian (the grain merchants) at the face of the field.

The Sultan recognized granaries in Delhi and in Chhain in Rajasthan. The land tax from the khalisa in the Doab was realized in type. The grain went to the state granaries. The Multanis who were cloth merchants were given 20 lakhs of tankas as advance loan to purchase and bring cloth to the market.

The Sultan succeeded in maintaining low prices and ample supplies in the market as accounted through all our authorities. But there are varying reasons

mentioned for why the Sultan introduced the market managed and in what region it was enforced. The poet courtier Amir Khusnau considers the measure to be of immense generosity taken for the welfare and comfort of all, the elite as well as the public at big. The Chishti di- vine Nasiruddin Mahmud (Chiragh Delhi) attributes it to the Sultan's effort to do good to all the people. But the historian Barani's view was totally dissimilar. He did not credit it to Sultan's benevolent intentions but provides a hard financial cause. The Sultan was anxious to have a big army and to take other precautions such as structure of forts at strategic spaces, fortification wall approximately Delhi, etc. against the Mongol invasions. If numerous additional cavalrymen and troops were to be employed at the prevailing salaries, the drain from the state treasury was to exhaust it totally. The salaries could be reduced only if the prices were kept at a sufficiently low stage.

Barani's reasoning appears of course more valid. Since the main lashkargah (army encampment) was in Delhi and mainly of the royal troops were to be stationed in or approximately Delhi, the main region of price manage was Delhi itself. Though, since the supplies of cheap grain were to be made accessible to the grain merchants in the nearby districts of the Doab, the low prices ought to be prevalent there as well.'

The market manage did not survive its enforcer and we do not hear in relation to it after Alauddin Khajji's time. A very efficient and alert management was imperative for the success of price manage. So, one possible cause for its not surviving could be the lack of sufficiently competent management. Irfan Habib, though, offers a dissimilar cause for the abandonment of price manages through the successors of Aladdin Khalji. Since the prevalence of low prices implies lower revenues from the low-price zone, the price manage was viable as extensive as the zone of low prices was restricted and mainly of the expenditure was concentrated there. With the

Mongols no more remaining a threat, the army and the expenditure was to be dispersed more widely and not to be concentrated at and approximately Delhi alone.

### **Currency Organization**

The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate was marked through a considerable growth of money economy which accelerated particularly in the first half of the 14th century. Since the growth of money economy in easy words means superior use of currency in transactions (monetization is another term for this phenomenon), a big level minting of gold, silver and copper coins that followed the base of the Delhi Sultanate was an attendant procedure of the monetization of Indian economy.

The era prior to the base of the Delhi Sultanate was marked through the scarcity of coinage particularly of pure silver. The early Ghorid conquerors establish mints uttering coins of copper with very small silver contents. Except an augment in the number of coins stamped, no changes were introduced in the beginning. The coins sustained to bear the image of goddess Lakshmi or bull-and-horseman, etc. Only the name of the new ruler in a corrupt form got inscribed in excess of it in Nagri writing. These coins were described Dehliwal.

Iltutmish (1210-36) is credited for standardizing the coinage of the Delhi Sultanate. The currency organization recognized through him in its essentials survived the Delhi Sultanate He introduced gold and silver tankas and a copper jital that was reckoned at 1/48th of a tanka in North India and 1/50th in the Deccan after the conquest of Devagiri.

A firm ratio of 1:10 flanked by gold and silver appears to have been recognized. For learning the currency organization we not only have the

testimony of the chronicles but also the physical proof accessible in the form of surviving coins (this is described numismatic proof).

The Sultanate mints usually uttered coins in three metals: gold, silver, and billon (copper mixed with very small quantity of silver). The main coins were tanka and jital but some smaller currencies were also in circulation. Barani mentions dangs and dirams in use at the capital Delhi. The equation flanked by these currencies in the north has been worked out as:

- 1 silver tanka = 48 jital = 192 dangs = 480 dirams

The gold and silver remitted from Bengal was the main source of coinage throughout the 13th century. The seizure of treasure hoards in northern India and later in the Deccan was the other major source of silver and gold for coinage.

The Sultanate mints should not only have coined government money but also stamped bullion and foreign coins brought through the private merchants. The silver currency remained dominant till the reign of Alauddin Khalji. From Ghiyasuddin Tughluq's reign, a decline in silver coinage in relation to gold and billon set in. Under Muhammad Tughluq gold coinage overshadowed the silver, and silver coinage practically disappeared under Feroz Tughluq. In the 15th century, billon coinage dominated (the Lodis (1451-1526) uttered no other coins).

### ***Token Currency of Muhammad Tughluq***

The only major innovation in the currency organization recognized through Iltutmish was made through Muhammad Tughluq. The Sultan introduced a coin of copper and brass alloy and reckoned it at the value of a



silver tanka. This coin for the first time accepted an inscription in Persian. This new currency whose face value was much higher than its intrinsic value (that is, value of the metal it was made of) is termed as token currency. The introduction of token currency was already attempted in sister Asian empires. In China, Qublai Khan (1260-94) had introduced a token currency of paper and the experiment was successful. In Persia, Kaikhatu Khan (1293), too, tried to introduce a token currency but the effort failed.

Muhammad Tughluq's experiment, too, met total failure perhaps owing to the information that the new currency could easily be forged. Barani says rhetorically that every „Hindu' household became a mint. Though, the Sultan accepted the failure with grace and exchanged all the token currency brought to the treasury with pure currency.

### **Slavery and Slave Trade**

The Ghorians establish slavery in subsistence in India where it had an ancient history. They certainly had no ethical qualms in relation to it. Slavery was permitted in Islam and it was prevalent in the Islamic world. According to Irfan Habib, the Ghaznavid and the Ghorid invasions of Northern India, like Julius Caesar's invasions of Britain, were partly for acquiring slaves. The success of a campaign was to be measured through the number of captives acquired beside with gold, silver, cattle, and horses. Qutbuddin Aibak captured 20 thousand slaves in his Gujarat campaign of 1195 and 50 thousand slaves in raid on Kalinjar in 1202. Even after the establishment of the Sultanate, the enslavement sustained through campaigns in yet to be conquered regions. One of the main objects of Balban's raid of Ranthambor and Malik Kafur's campaigns in the Deccan was to get slaves.

Another source of getting captives was the plunder raids of rebellious

villages (mawas) in the Sultanate that refused to pay the kharaj or tribute. The number of slaves received from these sources was enormous. There were 50,000 slaves in Alauddin Khalji's (1296-1316) establishment. The number increased to 1, 80,000 under Feroz Tughluq (1351-88). Besides the Sultans, nobles had their private big retinues of slaves including big number of concubines. Even the respectable poor kept slaves.

The slaves were of great use to the new ruling class that needed things fashioned to their taste. At the beginning, it might have been somewhat hard for the traditional Indian craftsmen and artisans to adjust themselves to the demands of the new aristocracy and to new manufacture technology such as spinning wheel, carding bow, etc. The previously unskilled slaves could be trained in any craft. Feroz Tughluq's slaves incorporated 12,000 artisans.

## **AGRARIAN STRUCTURE**

### **Agricultural Manufacture**

Throughout the 13th-14th centuries, the land-man ration was very favorable. The population of India approximately A.D. 1200 was obviously much less than what it were approximately 1800; though how much less we do not know. There is no statistical information but the accounts of the contemporaries clearly suggest that inhabited region in the 13th- 14th centuries was much smaller (than at the secure of the 16th century, big tracts even in such fertile regions as the Ganga-Yamuna Doab were sheltered through forests and grass lands. The sufi Nizamuddin Auliya in the 13th century establishes wayfarers traveling flanked by Delhi and Badaon harassed through tigers. In the 14th century the forest in the region, according to Barani, was thick enough to give refuge to vast number of peasants against the Sultan's armies. Even in Babur's time (1526-30), crossing from Central Indian forest, elephants used to roam in Kalpi and Yamuna ravines south of Kanpur. But before the secure of Akbar's reign (1605) the middle Doab was accounted

to be fully cultivated. This clearly suggests that throughout the Delhi Sultanate, there was abundance of cultivable land that was yet to be brought under plough.

The control in excess of bits of land was, so, not as significant as on persons cultivating them. We will talk about the implications of this for agrarian dealings at the proper lay. However, the land-man ratio is also crucial for understanding the nature of agriculture. A favorable ratio of land to man naturally implies agriculture to be extensive, in easy conditions; extensive agriculture is that where the augment in manufacture is attempted through bringing more regions under crop. On the other hand, agriculture is described as intensive if the manufacture is sought to be increased on the similar tract through using higher agricultural inputs: for instance, more labour, better ploughing, and irrigation. Owing to abundance of cultivable land in the Delhi Sultanate, agriculture was extensive in nature. The big region of cultivable waste and fallows naturally provided good pasturage facility for cattle. The author of the *Masalik al Absar* records that in India cattle were innumerable and their prices were low. Afif reports that no village in Doab was without a cattle-pen which was described as *kharaks*. Bullocks were so plentiful that the pack-animals and not the bullock-carts were the main means of carrying granules and other goods,

### ***Crops and other Agricultural Produce***

One of the mainly extra ordinary characteristic of the agriculture of the time was the big number of crops grown through the peasants of the Delhi Sultanate. This has perhaps no parallel in other parts of the world except perhaps in South China. Ibn Battuta was struck through the multiplicity of crops grown and described in enough detail the several crops grown in the two cropping seasons. He also suggests that in the region approximately Delhi

double cropping was also practiced, that is, on the similar soil both the kharif and the rabi crops were raised. Thakkur Pheru, the mint-master at Delhi under Alauddin Khalji, writing in c. 1290 lists some twenty-five crops grown under two harvests and provides also their yields. While the yields cannot be comprehended owing to the uncertainty of the units used, one gets a fairly good thought of the crops raised. In the middle of food crops, he mentions, wheat, barley, paddy, millets —juar, moth etc. and pulses (mash, mung lentils, etc.). For cash crops, sugarcane, cotton, oil-seeds, sesamum, linseed, etc. are referred to.

One may perhaps legitimately assume that improved facilities of Irrigation would have helped extend the region under rabi (winter) crops such as wheat, sugarcane etc. Thakkur Pheru surprisingly omits the dye-crop (indigo) though its manufacture is testified to through the information that indigo was already a significant thing of export to Persia. It is recorded that the II Khanids tried to encourage indigo plantation in Persia to avoid dependence upon India for its supply.

The probable use of lime-mortar in the indigo-vats through providing an improved surface should have helped the manufacture of dye. From Ibn Battuta's explanation, we get information on fruit rising in the Delhi Sultanate. It appears that technique of 'grafting' was not recognized through peasants. Earlier grapes were grown only in the few spaces besides Delhi but Muhammad Tughluq's urging to peasants to improve cropping through shifting from wheat to sugarcane to grapes and Feroz Tughluq's laying down of 1200 orchards in the vicinity of Delhi to grow seven diversities of grapes appears to have made them so abundant that, according to Afif, the prices of grapes fell.

Though, the Indian peasants did not practice sericulture (rearing of silk-

worm) at that time and no true silk was produced. Only wild and semi-wild silks, namely, tasar, eri, and muga were recognized. Ma Huan, the Chinese navigator in 1432, creates the first reference to sericulture in Bengal.

### ***Canal Irrigation and Its Impact***

Agriculture was usually dependent upon natural irrigation, that is, rains and floods. Since farming was mainly based on natural irrigation, the tendency was to grow mostly single, rain-watered kharif (autumn) crop and coarse granules more.

Canal irrigation is described in our sources. The Delhi Sultans themselves got the canals cut for irrigation. Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1320-25) is accounted to be the first Sultan to dig canals. But the cutting of canals in a much better method was undertaken through Feroz Tughluq (1351-88). Feroz Tughluq cut two canals from the river Yamuna carrying them to Hissar, one from the Kali river in the Doab joining the Yamuna close to Delhi; one each from the Sutlej and the Ghaggar. Certainly, it was the major canal network in India till the 19th century.

Canal irrigation helped greatly in the extension of farming in the eastern Punjab. Now there was an emphasis on the farming of cash crops like sugarcane, etc. that required more water than other crops. Afif says that an extensive stretch of land of in relation to the 80 krohs (200 miles) vast irrigated through the canal Rajabwah and Ulughkhani. According to Afif, as a result of abundance water accessible, peasants in the eastern Punjab raised two harvests (kharif and rabi) where only one was possible earlier. This led to new agricultural settlements beside the banks of the canals. In the regions irrigated through the canals 52 such colonies sprang up. Afif comments enthusiastically, "neither one village remained desolate nor one cubit of land uncultivated."

## **Agrarian Dealings**

Crucial to any discussion of agrarian economy is, indeed, the nature and extent of change that resulted in the agrarian dealings since the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. This involves, first of all, an assessment of the pre-1200 agrarian structure. Without entering into the debate whether the prevailing socio-economic order deserves the appellation ‚feudal’ or not, we can perhaps say with some certainty, that on the eve of the Ghorid conquest, the ruling class was heavily ruralized like modern feudal aristocracy of Western Europe.

Minhaj Siraj designates the chiefs opposing the Ghorians and the early Delhi Sultans as rai and rana and their cavalry commanders as rawat. From the epigraphic proof from dissimilar parts of Northern India, the earlier feudal hierarchy of raja (rai), ranaka (rana) and rauta (rawat) is fairly well recognized.

In the early stage, the Sultans tended to enter into resolution with this defeated and Subjugated rural aristocracy. As discussed earlier, kharaj was mainly the tribute imposed upon them. It appears that even after the replacement of this tribute through vigorously assessed tax imposed on the peasants under Alauddin Khalji, the older rural aristocracy had some role to play in revenue collection. This can be inferred from an incident of Alauddin Khalji’s reign. The incident suggests that though the members of subjugated aristocracy, wherever present, were at least till the early years of the 14th century, held responsible for collecting and paying the land revenue. The management too exercised the right to collect it directly through village headmen and chaudhuris.

### *Peasants*

Farming was based on individual peasant farming. But this peasant economy was not at all egalitarian. The size of land cultivated through them greatly varied in size. From Barani's explanation it appears that at one extreme were the khots and muqaddams having big holdings and enjoying superior rights on ordinary peasants; and at the other was the balahar, the village mental holding a petty plot of land. Below the peasant there necessarily have been a mass of landless laborers but their attendance could only be discerned from the later sources, since we did not discover any mention in modern accounts.

In spite of the abundance of cultivable land, there was no proprietary right of the peasant in excess of the land he tilled. On the contrary, even on his produce there were claims of the superior classes. The peasant though recognized a „free born’ at times was deprived of the freedom to leave the land at will or to change the domicile.

According to Afif, a village had 2(H) to 300 male members and Barani says that each village had a patwari to stay accounts. His bahi (explanation register) was scrutinized to discover every payment, legal or illegal, made through the peasants to the revenue officials. The patwari was not a government official but a village official. He was certainly not a creation of the Delhi Sultanate. The attendance of a village clerk for maintaining accounts may suggest that the village was an administrative element outside the administrative Organization of the Sultanate. It appears that the village was collectively a tax paying element otherwise why a clerk to stay village accounts was needed. The attendance of patwari and the nature of his duties therefore indicate subsistence of village society. It appears that in spite of Alauddin Khalji's efforts to assess the tax on individual peasant, in practice the village sustained to remain the element of

land revenue payment. Barani's complaints in relation to the burden of the rich falling on the poor' further designates that the village society was not an ideal institution but itself a machinery of use.

### ***Rural Intermediaries***

They belonged to the highest stratum of the peasantry. From Barani's explanation it appears that before Alauddin Khalji's agrarian events they held revenue free lands. As a class, the village headmen were wealthy. Barani with malicious pleasure records that Alauddin Khalji imposed full land revenue upon them and withdrew the exemption from homes and grazing tax. He prohibited them from levying any cesses of their own and therefore he leveled them to the ordinary peasants.

Though, since these rural intermediaries were necessary for the organization of land revenue realization, these stern events against them were not to last longer. Ghiyasuddin Tughluq introduced moderation. The exemption from grazing as well as tax on their own farming was granted again. But they were not allowed to impose any cess upon the peasantry. They received further concessions under Feroz Tughluq and, interestingly enough, these concessions and a resulting affluence are very approvingly described through Barani.

In the middle of these rural intermediaries, the chaudhuri appears to have appeared throughout the 14th century. He is not mentioned through Minhaj or any other source of the 13th century, it is throughout the middle of the 14th century that he creates his appearance in Barani's explanation. Ibn Battuta defines him as the 'chief of a group of 100 villages' he calls. Though, the usual term from the middle of the 14th century for a group of villages is par gana. Irfan Habib suggests that the chaudhuri was in information a successor, though much reduced in power, of the head of the chaurasi (group of eighty four villages) of Gujara-Pratiharas and Chalukyas.



## **RISE OF URBAN ECONOMY TRADE & COMMERCE**

### **Growth of Cities**

Before discussing the proof of augment in number and size of cities, we necessity first understand what we mean through city. There are two easy definitions of a city:

- The usual contemporary definition of a resolution of 5000 or above, and
- A resolution where an overwhelming majority of population (say above 70%) is occupied in occupations other than agriculture.

The two definitions are not mutually exclusive but while the archaeological proof accessible for earlier era is not forthcoming from the 13th-14th centuries owing to the much less attention paid to medieval archaeology, the literary proofs testify growth of urban centers. Some major cities mentioned in the modern sources are Delhi (the capital), Multan, Anhilwara (Patan), Cambay, Kara, Lakhnauti and Daulatabad (Deogiri). Lahore was a big city but decayed after the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. Though, in the 14th century it flourished again. While not even a guesstimate of the population of any city is accessible in our sources there are reliable indications to assume that at least some of these were municipalities big enough through modern standards. Ibn Battuta, who visited Delhi in 1330, describes it as of enormous extent and population, the main municipality in the Islamic East in spite of the information that Muhammad Tughluq had shifted much of its population to Daulatabad. He describes the latter too, as big enough to rival Delhi in size. Some new cities were recognized throughout the era, such as Jhain (Chhain) in Eastern Rajasthan that was named „Shahr Nau’ throughout Alauddin Khalji’s reign (1296-1316).

### ***Factors for Urban Expansion***

"The strength of the invader, of course, lay in combination and not in dispersal in an unfamiliar land and, therefore, in initial stages, it was but natural for the members of the ruling class to prefer to stay at their iqta headquarters beside with their cavalry. These iqta headquarters having the concentration of cavalry, its hangers - on and the retinue and household of the muqti therefore appeared in the early stage as camp municipalities. Mainly of the 13th century cities are in fact defined as iqta headquarters in our sources; for instance, Hansi, Kara, Anhilwara, etc. These cities were to be fed and provided for. In the beginning, the troops had to go for realizing kharaj/mal through plundering the nearby villages; but slowly through the 14th century, as pointed out through Moreland, cash nexus urbanized. The revenue was realized in cash from the peasants who were therefore forced to sell their produce at the face of the field. The merchants catered to the needs of cities giving rise to what we will talk about below as induced trade'.

The ruling class coming from a dissimilar cultural milieu had needs of leisure and comforts of a dissimilar kind; they wanted songs in Persian and dances of a dissimilar approach, books, silk to wear and actuate light architecture (not the stone edifices). Out of the possessions that were indeed enormous through modern standards at its command, the new rulers naturally wanted to get luxuries and comforts of their taste which encouraged immigration from Islamic culture region. These immigrants were not only soldiers, but craftsman, artisans, singers, musicians, dancers, poets, physicians, astrologers, and servicemen as described through Isamil. The immigrant master-craftsman mainly almost certainly introduced new techniques and articles of technology. In due course, Indian artisans necessity has learnt the new crafts.

### **Urban Manufactures**

It appears that the urban craft manufacture received a twofold impetus with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. First, the Sultanate ruling class remained city-centered and spent the enormous possessions it appropriated in the form of land revenue mainly in cities, either on buying services or procuring manufacturers. Even the money spent on the service sector partly went to help the urban craft sector through multiplier effect. While the nobility created demand for high-priced ability-rigorous luxury things, its hangers-on in all likelihood created a mass market for ordinary artisanal product.

The second factor that contributed to urban manufacturers was the introduction of a number of technological devices that reached India with the invaders. In the luxury sector, silk weaving expanded and carpet-weaving came from Persia. The other notable urban manufacture was paper creation. Perhaps a major sector of urban employment was structure industry. Barani says that Alauddin Khalji employed 70,000 craftsmen for his structures. One may well be justified in saying that there was considerably more masonry per acre of occupied legroom in the cities of 1400 than in those of 1200.

### ***Organization of Manufacture***

It is indeed significant to know how manufacture was organized. Whether the city artisans accepted out manufacture under the „domestic organization’, that is, they owned their apparatus, raw material and the end product and also sold their product themselves; in other words, whether they were self employed or while apparatus were their own and they worked at their homes, raw material was provided to them through the merchants, that is whether they worked under the „putting-out organization’. The modern sources shed little light on these characteristics. One can, though, legitimately assume that since the apparatus of manufacture even after the introduction of new devices were still easy and mainly of wood and little of iron should have remained cheap. The artisan was therefore master of his own apparatus, though varied shapes

of labour organization appear to be prevalent. Sure artisans hawked or hired out their services such as cotton carder who with a bow- string on his shoulder, went door to door selling his services as is apparent from the explanation given in *Khair-ul Majalis*. Spinning was done usually through women waiting at their homes. The weavers too usually worked at their own looms at home weaving cloth for sale, out of the yam bought or spun through themselves. They also worked on wages to weave yarn supplied to them through customers. But if the raw material was expensive such as silk or gold or silver thread, etc. and the products were luxury things, the craftsmen were to work in *karkhanas* under supervision. We have definite information in relation to the Sultans and high nobles maintaining these *karkhanas* where the manufacture was to cater to their own needs and contrary to D.D.Kosambi's assumption was not for market. Shahabuddin al Umari records in his *Masalik-ul Absar* that in Muhammad Tughluq's *karkhanas* at Delhi, four thousand silk workers worked as embroiderers. According to Afif, Feroz Tughluq's *karkhanas* produced cloth and carpets in a big method. While there is no suggestion in our sources, we may only conjecture that perhaps merchants also maintained *karkhanas* where manufacture was for sale.

### **Trade and Commerce**

We have seen that there appeared some considerably big flourishing cities as well as numerous townships throughout the 13-14th centuries. These cities naturally needed to be fed and supplied raw material for craft manufacture. At the similar time, there was rising practice of land revenue realization in cash. Through the time of Alauddin Khalji, the cash-nexus came to be well urbanized and the ruling class tended to claim approximately the whole peasant surplus through attempting to reduce the share of rural intermediaries.

Both these factors were conducive to the development of inland trade. To pay the land revenue in cash, the peasantry was forced to sell its surplus

produce while merchants had a market in newly appeared cities for agricultural products. This trade resulting from the compulsions of land revenue organization is termed as 'induced trade'

### ***Inland Trade***

The inland trade urbanized at two stages:

- The short distance village-city trade in commodities of bulk, and
- Extensive distance inter-city trade in high value goods.

The village-city trade, as already explained, was a natural consequence of the emergence of cities and realization of land revenue in cash. The urban centers were dependent for supply of food grains and raw material for manufactures from the nearby villages whereas the villages had to sell the agricultural products to receive cash for meeting the land revenue demand. The peculiar nature of this trade was the one-way flow of commodities. While the cities received grains and raw material from the villages in the vicinity, they had no need to send their products in swap to the villages which were through and big self-sufficient. This one-way trade was owing to the land revenue demand imposed upon villages which naturally led to a continuous drain on rural sector and made the cities dependent on villages. The turnover of this trade was high in conditions of volume but was low in conditions of value. The commodities were food grains, that is wheat, rice, gram, sugarcane, etc. and raw material like cotton for urban manufactures.

The inter-city trade was mainly in luxury articles and was therefore a high value trade. The manufactures of one city were taken to another: for instance Barani reports that Delhi, the capital itself, received distilled wines from Kol (Aligarh) and Meerut, muslin (fine cloth) from Devagiri and striped cloth from Lakhnauti (Bengal) while, according to Ibn Battuta, ordinary cloth came from Awadh and betel-leaf from Malwa (twenty-four days journey from Delhi).

Candy sugar was supplied to Multan from Delhi and Lahore and ghi from Sirsa (in Haryana).

The extensive aloofness inter-city trade also accepted goods coming from other countries exit-points. Multan was perhaps the great entrepot for overland foreign trade and served as a centre of re-export, while Gujarat port cities such as Broach and Cambay were swap centers for overseas trade

### ***Foreign Trade: Seaborne and Overland***

Throughout the Sultanate era, overland and overseas trade was in a flourishing state.

#### *Seaborne Trade*

The Khalji annexation of Gujarat necessity has enlarged trade dealings flanked by the Delhi Sultanate and the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea Gujarat was linked with the Persian Gulf as well as the Red Sea. Hormuz and Basra were the chief ports for the ships passing through the Persian Gulf, while the ports of Aden, Mocha and jedda beside the Red Sea were significant for Gujarat. Through these ports, commodities moved on to Damascus and Aleppo, on the one hand, and Alexandria on the other. Aleppo and Alexandria opened upto the Mediterranean Sea with linkages to Europe. Merchandise of Gujarat were also accepted towards the East - the port of Malacca situated at the Malacca straits and Bantam and Achin in the Indonesian archipelago.

A European traveller Tome Pires, who came to India in the first decade of the 16th century, comments on the trade of Cambay as follows:

- “Cambay chiefly stretches out two arms: with her right arm she reaches out towards Aden with the other towards Malacca...

Pires further says:

- “Malacca cannot live without Cambay, nor Cambay without Malacca, if they are to be very rich and very wealthy. If Cambay were cut-off from trading with Malacca, it could not live, for it would have no outlet for its merchandise.”

The main export from Gujarat to Malacca was the colored cloths manufactured in Cambay and other Gujarat cities. These cloths were in demand in these spaces. In swap, the Gujarati merchants came back with spices grown there. This pattern of “spices for colored cloths” sustained even after the Portuguese advent in the Asian waters.

Varthema, an Italian traveller, who came to India throughout the first decade of the 16th century, says that in relation to the 300 ships (annually?) of dissimilar countries come and go from Cambay. He adds that in relation to the 400 “Turkish” merchants resided at Diu.

The II Khanid court historian Wassaf reports that 10,000 horses were annually exported to Malabar and Cambay from Persia. The Broach coin-hoards containing the coins of the Delhi Sultans beside with the gold and silver coins of Egypt, Syria, Yeman, Persia, Genoa, Armenia and Venice further testifies to large-scale overseas trade.

The ports of Bengal had trading dealings with China, Malacca, and Distant East. Textiles, sugar, and silk fabrics were the mainly significant commodities exported from Bengal. Varthema noted that in relation to the fifty ships accepted these commodities annually to several spaces, including Persia. Bengal imported salt from Hormuz and sea-shells from the Maldive islands. The latter were used as coins in Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar.

Sindh was yet another region from where seaborne trade was accepted on. Its mainly well-recognized port was Daibul. This region had urbanized secure commercial dealings with the Persian Gulf ports more than the Red Sea zone. Sindh exported special cloths and dairy products. Smoked-fish, too, was its specialty.

### *Coastal Trade*

It was natural for the coastal trade to flourish right from Sindh to Bengal, touching Gujarat, Malabar and Coromandel coasts in flanked by. This provided an opportunity for swap of local products beside the coastal row separate from inland inter-local trade.

### *Imports and Exports*

The two principal things of import were:

- Horses - that were always in demand for cavalry since superior horses were not bred in India and Indian climate was not well- suited to Arabian and Central Asian horses. They were primarily imported from Zofar (Yemen), Kis, Hormuz, Aden and Persia;
- Valuable metals viz. gold and - silver, especially silver that was not at all mined in India but for which there was a high demand not only for metallic currency but also for fashioning luxury things.

Brocade and silk stuffs were imported from Alexandria, Iraq and China. Gujarat was the major centre from where the luxury articles from Europe used to enter.

The Sultanate India mainly exported grain and textiles. Some of the Persian Gulf regions totally depended on India for their food supply. Besides, slaves were exported to Central Asia and indigo to Persia beside with numerous other commodities. Valuable stones like agates were exported from Cambay.

### *The Portuguese Advent*

In spite of brisk trading behaviors, Indian merchants' share in the overseas



trade was negligible. Only a small part of Gujarati Banias, Chettis of the South and domicile. Indian Muslims used to take part in this big trading action. Trade was mainly in the hands of the Arab Merchants.

On explanation of better ships armed with cannons, the Portuguese soon imposed their commercial hegemony in excess of the trading world of Asia, including the Indian seas, especially in Western part. This curtailed the Arabs' share of the Indian trade, though they survived in the Eastern part, especially at Malacca beside with the Indian merchants.

The Portuguese took Goa in 1510 which became their headquarters; Malacca fell in their hands in 1511. Goa, under their patronage, soon urbanized as a major centre for import and export. The Portuguese well understood the strategic importance of Goa, which in their opinion, was essential to the maintenance of their location in India. But the Portuguese possession of Goa was unfavorable to other Western Indian ports.

Tome Pires had rightly observed that the Muslim rulers of the Deccan and Gujarat had "a bad neighbor in Goa". Several ports on the west coast fell into decay throughout the hundred years of the Portuguese power in the Indian waters. This happened as a result of the aggressive policies of the Portuguese:

- They controlled the sea routes,
- Controlled the kind and volume of cargo accepted through other merchants, and
- They introduced the organization of issuing cartaz (from Persian qirta = paper sheet) which was a type of permit to ply ships in the Asian waters without which the ships were liable to be confiscated and the cargo plundered. A fee was charged for issuing a cartaz. No wonder, then, all these policies adversely affected the seaborne carrying trade of the Indians as well as of the Arabs.

### ***Commercial Classes***

Two kinds of merchants are mentioned in the sources of the Delhi Sultanate: the karwanis or nayaks and Multanis. The merchants specialising in carrying granules were designated through Barani as karwanis (a Persian word meaning those who moved jointly in big numbers). The modern mystic, Nasiruddin (Chiragh Delhi) calls them nayaks and describes them as those “who bring food granules from dissimilar parts to the municipality (Delhi) — some with ten thousand laden bullocks, some with twenty thousand”

It can be said with a degree of certainty that these karwanis were the banjaras of succeeding centuries. As is clear from the Mughal sources, these were organized in groups and their headman described nayak. The other significant group of merchants mentioned in our sources was that of the Multanis. Barani says that the extensive aloofness trade was in the hands of these merchants. They were occupied in usury and commerce (sud o sauda). It appears that the sahas and Multanis were rich enough to provide loans even to nobles, who, according to Barani, were usually in need of cash. The sahas and Multanis were usually Hindu, but at least some Muslims also were in the middle of the Multani merchants: merchant). Besides these well defined merchant groups, others who had so chosen could take to trade: therefore a sufi (mystic) from Bihar became a slave-merchant trading flanked by Delhi and Ghazni, and a number of pious men from Central Asia came to Delhi and became merchants.

Another significant commercial class that appeared throughout the Sultanate era was that of the dallals (brokers). They worked as a link flanked by the buyer and the seller and took commission from both the parties. Barani says that they were the „masters of market’ (hakinum bazar): they were instrumental in raising prices in the market. Alauddin Khalji used to consult them in relation to the cost of manufacture of every article in the market in order to fix prices. The reference to „Chief brokers (mihtran-i dallalan)

through Barani also suggest a somewhat well recognized guild of brokers, though the details are lacking. Though, throughout Alauddin Khalji's reign these Chief brokers were severely dealt with. But through Feroz Tughluq's reign, they appear to have regained their location. Feroz Tughluq had abolished dalalat-i bazar (a tax on broker's license; a cess on brokers). Besides, even if a deal flanked by the buyer and the seller failed to materialize, the brokers were not supposed to return the commission money. This also shows that throughout the Tughluqs „brokerage' became a fairly well-recognized institution.

Sarrafs were yet another mercantile group whose economic role was no less significant than the brokers. As money changers, they were mainly sought after through the merchants, especially the foreign ones who came to India with their native coins. The sarrafs tested the metallic purity of the coins (indigenous and foreign) and recognized the swap-ratio. They also issued bills of swap or letters of credit, thereby acting as “bankers”. The introduction of paper through the Turks into India accelerated the institution of bill of swap. For all these troubles, the sarraf naturally charged his commission.

Therefore, both the brokers and the sarrafs occupied pivotal location in the commercial world of their era; they were the custodians of many vital economic organizations. Indeed, no merchant could have dispensed with their services.

### ***Transport***

It appears that the goods were transported both through pack animals and on bullock-carts. Perhaps the share of the pack animals was more than the latter. Ibn Battuta mentions mans of granules being transported on the backs of 3,000 bullocks from Amroha to Delhi. Bullock-carts were also used, according to Afif, for carrying passengers on payment. The pack-oxen were of course a

cheap mode of transport traveling slowly, grazing as they went, and moving in big herds, therefore reducing the cost of transport specially beside the desert routes. Ibn Battuta describes that highways ran through the empire marked through minarets spaced at set distances. On the testimony of Shahabuddin al Umari, the author of the Masalik ul Absar, we may infer that efforts were made to make circumstances conducive to trade. Inns were built at each stage (manzil). In Bengal, Iwaz Khalji built extensive embankments to safeguard from floods. Boats were employed for riverine routes to carry bulk goods, while big ships used for seaborne trade.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND CRAFTS**

### **Agricultural Technology**

#### ***Plough***

The use of hoe or hoeing was replaced through plough centuries back. Archaeological proof from Kalibangan (Rajasthan) - an Indus valley culture location - for the use of 'ironless' plough is well-recognized, although the doubt remains whether it drawn through men or oxen. Plough-farming employing oxen throughout the Vedic Age are, though, recognized information. The Iron Age, recognized with the Aryan resolution in the Gangetic plain, contributed to the development of the plough in the sense that while the whole frame earlier was of timber, the ploughshare/courter now was of iron. This metallic piece immensely helped in the tillage of comparatively harder soil. An illustration in the Miftah-ul Fuzala - a Persian lexicon compiled in relation to the A.D. 1460 in Malwa - clearly shows the plough with an iron share drawn through two yoked oxen. Unlike Europe, India could not develop horse-drawn wheeled-plough for the cause that our plough was light in weight suited for the soft soil.

### ***Sowing***

For sowing, the method of broadcasting was recognized. The practice was to scatter seeds manually through taking them out from a cloth-bag slung in excess of shoulders. The time-level of seed-drill in India is controversial: some would trace it back to the Vedic Age. At any rate, the only positive proof for its use beside the western coast of India comes from one Portuguese - Barbosa (c. 1510) - in connection with the wet-farming of rice.

### ***Harvesting, Threshing and Winnowing***

Harvesting was performed with a sickle, and threshing through using oxen that walked round and round in excess of the ears put on the threshing floor. "Wind power" was exploited in winnowing in order to separate the chaff from the grain.

### ***Irrigational Devices***

There were several sources of water for the purpose of irrigating meadows. Rain water was the natural source. Ponds and tanks received this water which was used for irrigation. Water channels shaped through inundation, too, served the similar purpose. But the mainly significant controlled source was the water of the wells, especially in North India.

Approximately all the irrigational devices were oriented towards drawing water from wells. The latter were more often than not masonry ones with raised walls and enclosures<sup>1</sup> platforms. Kuchcha wells also lived, but these could not have been durable or strong enough for extensive water-lifting. Broadly, there were five devices or techniques to raise water from wells:

- The mainly easy technique was to draw water with rope and bucket through using hands without any mechanical aid. Obviously, then, the bucket was small in size and, therefore, this operation would not have

adequately served to water big meadows. But we cannot deny the use of rope-bucket technique for irrigating small meadows for crops, mainly almost certainly vegetables that did not require much water.

- The second method was the employment of pulleys (charkhi) combined to the rope-bucket contraption which was, once again, activated manually. Undoubtedly, the pulleys needed lesser amount of human power and, so, comparatively superior bags or buckets could have been attached to the rope. It was also used for domestic purpose, especially through women.
- An improved method of the rope-bucket-pulley contraption was the employment of a pair of oxen to replace human-power. At this stage, it had become a dedicated device for drawing water planned specifically for irrigation. In some regions of North India it 'is still in operation recognized as charasa. The latter is a vast bag that provides a thought of the immense quantity of water raised from the well in one single haul-up. Moreover, the bullock track was like a ramp or sloping path the length of the path corresponding to the depth of the well. The water of the \* well (mounted with this device) could not have been used for drinking, cleansing utensils or for washing cloths. Of all the five methods, charasa was not a multi-purpose one; it was solely devised for irrigation - information which has not been realized till now.

## **Structure Construction**

### ***Lime Mortar***

The traditional vital units of construction in Ancient India consisted of clay, stones, wood, and occasionally bricks. The simplest cementing material or mortar was plain earth mixed with water. An improved type was straw (bhus) added to a mixture of clay and water which was used for plastering also. But lime mortar was definitely brought through the immigrant Muslims

throughout the Delhi Sultanate.

The vital ingredients in lime-mortar were lime (chuna) and surkhi (pounded bricks). Lime was of several types, according to the material from which it was extracted. The two major sources of lime were gypsum and gravel (kankar). The latter were first burnt in kilns yielding quicklime. This quicklime was then treated with water to turn it into slake lime. Surkhi was added to this mix. Afterwards, a number of gelatinous, glutinous, and resinous cementing mediators like gum, pulses, jaggery, etc. were added to create the mortar more sticky. Arch and Dome/Vaulted roofing One result of lime mortar was the extensive use of bricks as it made the brick structures more durable. Another significant consequence was that lime mortar paved the method for the construction of true arch (mihrab). Actually, the very arrangement of bricks or stones in creation a true arch demands a strong cementing material to hold the voussoirs jointly. Lime mortar fulfilled this need. This explains the approximately total absence of true arch in Indian structures prior to the Turkish advent. The only exception, though, was the Kushana era: excavations at Kausambi (close to Allahabad) have revealed the subsistence of some arches - in excess of small windows (not gates). As you know, the Kushanas had come from Central Asia and, so they knew arch creation. Afterwards, there is not a single proof of true, arches in India till the coming of the Muslims. Another form of arch was the corbelled one; in information, it was a variant of trabeate construction that is the pillar-and-beam technique which was the mainly distinguishing characteristic of pre-Muslim Indian architecture.

From mihrab to gumbad (vaulted roofing or dome) was a natural development since vaulting or dome was not possible without knowledge of how to create a true arch. That is why it is observed that a dome is a true arch turned 360 degrees.

Throughout the Delhi Sultanate, paper was used for several purposes, especially for books, farmans and numerous commercial and administrative

documents. Paper was accessible on a big level so much so that sweetmeat-sellers of Delhi delivered sweets to the buyers in paper packets described purya which is still the practice in India. But it appears that papermaking centers were few and distant flanked by. We know from the 14th century Chinese navigator, Ma Huan, that Bengal produced paper. Though, the bulk of paper needed was imported from Islamic countries, specially Samarqand and Syria. The practice of writing books on paper was accompanied through the craft of bookbinding which was an innovation in India, because the technique was dissimilar from that followed in India, for putting sheets of writing material jointly (palm-leaves and birch-bark).

### **Military Technology**

We will deal with three things only:

- Stirrup,
- Horseshoe, and
- Gunpowder.
- Stirrup

It is now recognized information that iron-stirrup (rikab) was strange in India. For that matter, there is no Sanskrit word for stirrup. Perhaps 'big toe stirrup' and suspension hooks' were used in India, but stirrup proper was the contribution of the Muslims. This stirrup was first used in China approximately 6th century A.D., and later it diffused into Persia and other Islamic countries throughout the after that century.

### ***Gunpowder and Fire-Arms***

Several decades ago, some scholars, both European and Indian, were keen to prove that gunpowder and fire-arms were used in Ancient India. In the middle of the Sanskrit sources, the Sukraniti became the focal point from which support was drawn. Though, sobriety and maturity prevailed when other



scholars dismissed their inferences, especially after careful examination of the Sukraniti. Again, untenable attempts were also made to illustrate that the Muslims who came to India following the invasions of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna used fire-arms.

Gunpowder consists of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal, and it was first invented in China. Later, it spread to the Islamic society. The immigrant Turks brought gunpowder to India perhaps in late 13th or early 14th century. But it necessity be pointed out that even through the reign of Sultan Feroz Shah Tughluq its only use was for pyrotechny or fireworks (atashbazi), not for fire-arms or for propelling cannon-balls. Fire-arms were used for the first time throughout the second half of the 15th century in some regions of India like Gujarat, Malwa, and the Deccan. At any rate, the use of fire-arms on a regular foundation was introduced through the Portuguese when they came to Calicut in A.D. 1498 and through Babur in North India in the early 16th century.

### **Tin Coating**

Domestic utensils of copper (and brass) are prone to acid poisoning from sour food kept in them. A coating of tin is given to them regularly, specially inside, to protect them from the chemical action of acid food. This craft came to India beside with the Turks. There is no reference to this technique in Ancient India. Separately from literary sources, the archaeological proof comes from an excavation location in the South (close to Kolhapur) where a copper container with tin coating both on its interior and exterior was exposed. Since, this vessel was establish in association with the coins of the Bahmani dynasty (A.D. 1347-1538), it necessity belong to that era.

The craftsman who does tin coating is described qala,igar (qalai=tin). Tin (ranga) is a highly malleable and ductile metal, and its coating in excess of metallic vessels protects the latter from corrosion and chemical poisoning. The craftsman first cleanses the utensils to remove dirt, etc. After this, the vessels

are mildly heated in excess of a small furnace with charcoal. Small bellows are used to uphold the required degree of heat. The after that procedure is to apply a mixture of pure tin and salammoniac (nosadar) with a cotton pad. The salammoniac vaporizes leaving a metallically clean surface. Meanwhile the tin melts and through constant rubbing of the pad it is evenly distributed in excess of the whole vessel — outside and inside.

Abul Fazl refers to tin coating in the *Ain-i Akbari*. He says that copper utensils of the royal kitchen are tinned twice a month, but those of the princes, etc. once.

### **Glass Manufacture**

The earliest use of glass in India has been set somewhere throughout the first millennium B.C. But the attendance of a substance in a society may reveal its possible use but does not necessarily imply knowledge of technology also. Though, glass was not scarce in India: perhaps extensive familiarity with imported glassware necessity have led to indigenous manufacture. But Indian glass objects “did not range or go beyond the manufacture of tit-bits like drops and bangles”. With the Muslim advent, pharmaceutical phials, jars, and vessels started coming to India from the Islamic countries. It is not possible to determine whether the above glassware actually fabricated throughout the Delhi Sultanate in imitation of these importations. Though, throughout the era of revise, we draw blank when we look for the manufacture of articles of glass like glass lenses for 'spectacles or looking=glasses (mirrors were made of copper or bronze with polished surface).

### **Some Fourteenth-Century Passages**

Some of the mainly significant passages bearing on the agrarian organization of the fourteenth century are hard to follow, and extant translations, where any exist, are not always exact. The renderings of these

passages offered below are meant to be strictly literal, any departure from the original being indicated through brackets; the technological expressions are discussed in the notes which follow the translations. The clauses are set out, punctuated, and numbered for convenience of reference; the texts are continuous, and as a rule are not punctuated.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- How will you describe iqta?
- What changes were introduced in the iqta organization through Muhammad Tughluq?
- Discuss the land revenue organization introduced through Alauddin Khalji
- Discuss the events taken through Alauddin Khalji to introduce 'price manages'.
- Write a note on canal irrigation.
- Enumerate the factors responsible for rise of cities throughout the 13th-14th centuries.
- Discuss the factors that contributed to the expansion of urban manufactures throughout the 13th-14th centuries
- Discuss the contribution of the Turks in the field of structure construction technology.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **The Regional Powers: 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Century**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Central and eastern India
- Northern and western India
- State, administration and economy in north India
- Regional powers in south India and Deccan
- The Vijaynagar empire
- The Bahmanis
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After reading this chapter, you would learn about:

- The emergence of regional states in Central and Eastern India,
- Territorial expansion of these regional kingdoms,
- The regional powers that appeared in Northern and Western India.
- Talk about the state, administration, and economy in the Northern States.
- The polity of South India from the 13th century to mid-14<sup>th</sup> century.
- The emergence of the Vijaynagar kingdom.
- The expansion of Vijaynagar power throughout 14-16th century.
- Vijaynagar's dealings with the Bahmani rulers and deep south.
- The emergence of the Bahmani kingdom.
- The disagreement flanked by the old Dakhni nobility and the newcomers (the Afaqis) and how it ultimately led to the decline of the Bahmani Sultanate
- The administrative structure, society, economy and other cultural characteristics.

## **CENTRAL AND EASTERN INDIA**

### **Introduction**

You have already read that regional kingdoms posed severe threat to the already weakened Delhi Sultanate and with their emergence began the procedure of the physical disintegration of the Sultanate. In this Element, our focus would be on the emergence of regional states in Central and Eastern India viz., Malwa, Jaunpur, Bengal, Assam, and Orissa. We will revise the polity—establishment, expansion and disintegration—of the above kingdoms. You would know how they appeared and succeeded in establishing their hegemony. Throughout the 13th-15th centuries in Central and Eastern India, there appeared two kinds of kingdoms: those whose rise and development was self-governing of the Sultanate (for instance: the kingdoms of Assam and Orissa) and b) Bengal, Malwa and Jaunpur who owed their subsistence to the Sultanate. All these kingdoms were constantly at war with each other. The nobles, crafts or rajas and regional aristocracy played crucial roles in these confrontations.

### **Malwa**

The decline of the Sultanate paved the method for the emergence of the self-governing kingdom of Malwa. Dilawar Khan Ghorī, (d. A.D. 1406), the Tughluq governor of Malwa, assumed independence in the year A.D. 1401-2 and declared himself the king of Malwa. He extended the boundaries of his kingdom through occupying Nimar, Sauyar, Damoh, and Chanderi. Dilawar Khan married his daughter to Ali Sher Khalji, the son of Malik Raja Faruqi of Khandesh, and took his (Faruqi ruler's) daughter for his son Alp Khan. These matrimonial alliances helped him in safeguarding his south- eastern boundary. Through maintaining friendly dealings with Muzaffar S Shah of Gujarat, he successfully saved Malwa from attacks- But soon after his death in A.D. 1407, Malwa fell a prey to the imperialistic designs of Muzaffar Gujarati. But in

1408, Hoshang Shah (1406-35) succeeded in regaining control in excess of the Malwa throne. Very soon he occupied Kherla, and Gagraun. He also had his eyes in excess of Gwalior, but realizing the might of Mubarak Shah, he finally withdrew in 1423 after causing some damage in the countryside. Hoshang Shah had entered into matrimonial alliance with the Muslim ruler of Kalpi to use the latter as buffer flanked by Jaunpur-Malwa and Delhi-Malwa.

Hoshang Shah's successor Muhammad Shah proved incompetent. Throughout his brief reign Of one year, the court of Malwa became a hotbed of intrigues leading to disastrous results. The chaos, culminated in his murder (1436) through his noble Mahmud Khalji. Therefore came the end of the Ghorid rule itself.

At the outset, the location of Mahmud Khalji was threatened through the old Ghorid nobility. In the beginning, Mahmud followed the policy of appeasement and distributed iqta and high posts to them but he failed to elicit their support. He had to face a series of revolts of high ranking nobles. Ultimately, Mahmud Khalji succeeded in tackling the recalcitrant nobles. After consolidating his internal location, Mahmud Khalji now had the time to look for further extension.

Mewar was the foremost state to draw his attention. This posed a direct threat to the kingdom of Malwa. Mahmud Khalji had to face the mighty Rana as early as 1437. Rana Kumbha promised Umar Khan, son of Hoshang Shah, to install him in lay of Mahmud Khalji. In the battle of Sarangpur (1437), Mahmud Khalji was defeated and taken prisoner. Later, Mahmud Khalji took advantage of the confusion that appeared in Mewar after Ranmal's death: he attacked Mewar in 1442. He destroyed the temple of Banmata, but he had to retreat without much gains. Since then, Mahmud Khalji undertook approximately yearly campaigns against Rana Kumbha. Though Mahmud had

occupied Gagraun (1444) and Mandalgarh (1457), Rana Kumbha was able to stay his territory intact and well-defended. This rivalry sustained unabated. Kalpi was the bone of contention flanked by Malwa and Jaunpur. Hoshang Shah earlier had helped his nephew Jalal Khan in installing him on the throne of Kalpi. But after Jalal Khan's death (1442), Nasir Khan Jahan succeeded in getting hold in excess of Kalpi. Though, he was soon expelled through Mahmud Sharqi. This increased the hold of Jaunpur in excess of Kalpi which was not to the liking of Mahmud Khalji. It resulted in a conflict flanked by the two (1444). Finally, a treaty was signed. Mahmud Sharqi agreed to hand in excess of Kalpi to Khan Jahan which resulted in cordial connection flanked by the two.

Another significant power which Malwa rulers had to tackle with was Gujarat. After Ahmad Shah's death (1442), Mahmud Khalji got an opportunity to inhabit Sultanpur and Nandurbar (1451) on explanation of the weak location of Muhammad Shah Gujarati. While Mahmud Khalji was still campaigning against Muhammad Gujarati, the latter died. His successor Sultan Qutbuddin entered into an alliance with Mahmud Khalji. Both parties agreed to respect each other's territorial boundaries. An understanding was also reached flanked by the two to have a free hand in Mewar. Though, similar understanding could not be maintained for other regions. Mahmud Khalji's intervention in Bahmani politics was always severely dealt with through Mahmud Begarha.

Ghiyas Shah (1469-1500), the son and successor of Mahmud Khalji, paid more attention to consolidation rather than conquest. As a result, with the exception of a brief tussle with the Rana of Mewar (1473), the era was of an extensive peace.

## **Jaunpur**

Afif informs us that the municipality of Jaunpur on the banks of river Gomti' was founded through Feroz Shah Tughluq throughout his second Bengal campaign (1359-60). This municipality became a strong power-base, and it soon evolved as a rival to Delhi for some time.

Malik Sarwar, a noble of Feroz Shah Tughluq, took full advantage of the succession tussle in the middle of the sons of Feroz and rose to the high location of wazir under Sultan „Muhammad Shah (1390-94). Malik Sarwar got the charge of the eastern districts beside with the title of Sultan-us Sharq. The invasion of Timur, which virtually shattered the kingdom of Delhi, gave Malik Sarwar an opportunity to declare his independence in Jaunpur. He extended his hold in excess of Kol (Aligarh), Sambhal and Rapri (in Mainpuri district). Malik Sarwar's ambitions led to furious armed clashes with Delhi, Bengal, Orissa, and Malwa. Though he did not succeed against them, he brought the rulers of Jajnagar and Gwalior under his sway. Mubarak Shah Sharqi (1399-1401), his son and successor, could hardly get time to consolidate the gains. Though, his younger brother and successor, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi (1401-40), efficiently expanded the territories of the kingdom. He took Kanauj in 1406 (which was under Sultan Mahmud Shah Tughluq). This enhanced his prestige greatly and paved the method for further achievements. In 1407, Ibrahim aspired to inhabit Delhi, but in spite of initial success, the effort finally failed. Though he was able to lay his hands on Kalpi (1414), its ruler Qadir Khan sustained to make troubles for him. Ibrahim also subdued Ganesh, the ruler of Bengal, in 1414. Throughout the closing years of his reign (1437), he again turned his attention towards Delhi and captured some of its neighboring parganas. The Delhi Sultan Muhammad Shah ultimately had to sue for peace. He agreed to marry his daughter; Bibi Haji, to Ibrahim's son Mahmud Khan, ibrdhim's energetic zeal, and his successes increased the prestige of the kingdom of Jaunpur. The latter earned the title Shiraz-i Hind.



Throughout his successions' reigns, Mahmud Sharqi (1140-54), Muhammad Sharqi (1457-58) and Husain Sharqi (1458-1505), clashes with the Delhi Sultans were frequent. Finally, Bahlol Lodi annexed Jaunpur in 1483-84 and placed it under the charge of Mubarak Nohani. Husain Shah did effort desperately to recover Jaunpur but failed. Bahlol finally placed his son Barbak Shah on the throne of Jaunpur, therefore ending the era of the Sharqi rulers.

### **Bengal**

The geopolitical circumstances of Bengal, especially the extensive aloofness from Delhi, met constraints on its control through the Sultans of Delhi. The governors took full advantage of aloofness. As the central power weakened or rulers got involved elsewhere, the nobles used to act approximately de facto rulers in the region. Earlier, Iltutmish had to march in person to assert his power (1225) and it too. approximately three years for Balban in crushing the rebellion of Tughril Beg, the governor of Bengal. To assert Delhi's hold in excess of Bengal, Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan as governor (1281). But after Balban's death, Bughra Khan decided to stay in Bengal rather than contest' the Delhi throne (1287). Later, we see Ghiyasuddin Tughluq marching towards Lakhnauti. Though, it was throughout Muhammad Tughluq's reign that more effective policy was adopted. The latter appointed his trusted nobles at Lakhnauti, Sonargaon, and Satgaon to set up a balance in the middle of several powerful factions. It greatly helped in reducing the power of the regional magnates and increased the hold of Delhi. Though, Delhi was challenged at several intervals.

Ilyas Shah (1342-57), who appeared as a powerful ruler in Bengal, occupied Lakhnauti, and Sonargaon, and marched as distant as Banaras. Sultan Feroz Tughluq. Again in 1359, Feroz Tughluq marched against Sikandar Shah (1357-89) to break his power. After Feroz Tughluq's death

(1388), the Sultanate became too weak to subdue the recalcitrant rulers of Bengal. Sikandar Shah's son Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1389-1409) was a popular ruler. He faced the combined attack of the Rajas of Kamata and Ahom and had to surrender the territory beyond Karatoya river. He recognized diplomatic ties with the Chinese rulers when one of their envoys came in 1406.

After Ghiyasuddin's murder (1409), Bengal had to pass through two critical phases of internal chaos and conflicts (1409-1418; 1435-42). But the matters were set right with the accession of Nasiruddin Abul Muzaffar Mahmud, a descendant of Ilyas Shah. His son Ruknuddin Barbek (1459-74) embarked upon an expansionist policy. As a result, his boundary extended to Barner, north of the Ganges and Jessore-Khulna in the south. The militia of the Abyssinian slaves played a crucial role in the expansion, but Barbek's policy of patronising them later on proved fatal. In 1487, the Abyssinian commander Saifuddin Feroz succeeded in occupying the Bengal throne. But he failed to consolidate his location and, in 1493, Alauddin Hussain Shah (1493-1519) got power. He not only succeeded in subduing Abyssinian slaves but also adopted a rigorous expansionist policy. Under him, the Bengal frontiers reached to Saran and Bihar in the north-west, Sylhet and Chittagong in the southeast, Hajo on the north-east and Mandaran on the south-west. In 1495, Hussain Shah had to face Sultan Sikandar Lodi's wrath as he had given shelter to the Sultan of Jaunpur, Hussain Shah. Later, a non-aggression treaty was signed, and Hussain Shah promised not to provide shelter to such fugitives.

### **Assam**

Geographically, medieval Assam covers the whole Brahmaputra valley as distant as river Karatoya in the west, while Mishmi Hills and Patkai Bum shaped the north-eastern boundary. The boundary of the state of Burma ran

parallel to its east. Throughout the 13th-15th centuries in Assam, a number of tribal polities—the Chutiya, the Tai- Ahoms (or Ahoms), the Koch, the Dimasa, the Tripuri, the Manipuri, the Khasi and the Jaintia—lived. Finally, the Chutiya and the Ahom appeared mainly powerful. Besides, there also lived the kingdom of Kamata (Kamrup).

### ***Kamata-Kamrup***

The medieval Kamata kingdom incorporated Brahmaputra valley (excluding Rangpur), Bhutan, Cooch Bihar, Mymensingh, and the Garo hills. Kamrup (Contemporary North Guwahati) was the capital of the Kamata kingdom prior to Rai Sandhya's reign (1250-70). But Kachari expansion forced Rai Sandhya to shift from Kamrup to Kamatappur (in contemporary Cooch Bihar district): hence the kingdom is described Kamrup- Kamata.

We have already read how in 1206 Bakhtiyar Khalji, one of the commanders of Muhammad Ghori, invaded Kamrup. But the campaign proved disastrous as his army was totally destroyed: Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz also attempted to inhabit Kamrup (1227) but met the similar fate at the hands of Rai Prithu. Later, though, Iltutmish's son Nasruddin Mahmud succeeded in crushing Rai Prithu's power. In 1255, Malik Yuzbek attacked Kamrup and succeeded in occupying Kamrup, but later he had to face the similar fate as that of Bakhtiyar Khalji. Soon his forces were overpowered; Malik Yuzbek received a severe wound and died soon after (1257). Though, throughout Sirtghdhvaj's reign (1300-1305), Sultan Shamsuddin Feroz Shah (1301-22), the Sultan of Bengal, occupied Mymensingh and Sylhet crossways

The Kamrup kingdom always fell a prey to Ahom imperialistic designs. The Buranji literature records the success of the Ahom King Sukapha (1228-1268) against Kamata ruler Sindhu Rai (1260-1285). The latter is accounted to have accepted the suzerainty of Sukapha, but his successor Pratapdhvaj (1300-1305) ceased to pay tribute to the Ahom kings: as a result Sukhangpha (1293-1332) again invaded the Kamata kingdom. After an extensive-drawn battle and heavy loss, Pratapdhvaj sued for peace and gave his daughter Rajani in marriage to Sukhangpha.

A significant characteristic of the 14th century Karnata kingdom was the great uprising of the Bhuyan chiefs who took advantage of the unstable circumstances. A war of succession followed flanked by the two cousins—Dharma Narain and Durlabh Narain.

In the beginning, Bhuyan chiefs failed in their designs as Durlabh Narain (1330-50) and Arimatta (1365-85) were more than a match to their power. Though, after Arimatta's death (1385), his successors were too weak to face the Bhuyan onslaught and approximately mid-15th century Rai Prithu's row was supplanted through a new Bhuyan dynasty (Khyan) with Niladhvaj (1440-1460) as its founder. Nilambar (1480-1498) was the mainly powerful king of the Khyan dynasty who succeeded in extending his boundary from Karatoya to Barnadi. He also took advantage of the political turmoil created in Bengal (Gaur) through the Abyssinians and succeeded in occupying north-eastern part of Bengal. Though, later, Alauddin Hussain Shah (1493-1519) was able to crush the power of Nilambar. With this came the end of the Khyan dynasty.

### ***The Ahoms***

The Ahoms belonged to the Mao-Shari sub-tribe of the Tais of South-east Asia. In A.D. 1228, they migrated from Mogaung, a principality in upper

Burma and Yunan to upper Assam where they finally settled in A.D. 1253 in the Dikhou valley (the contemporary Sibsagar division) with its capital at Charaideo (it was later changed to Charga in 1397). Sukapha of Mao-Shan tribe was the first Ahom King (1228-68) who subjugated the Chutias, Morans, Borahis, Nagas, Kacharis, and the Kamata kingdom (Kamrup). His son Suteupha (1268-1281) further extended his domain towards the southern banks of Brahmaputra up to Kalang (contemporary north-Cachar sub-division) through defeating the Kacharis. Under Sukhangpha (1293-1332), the Ahoms became a paramount power in the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley. Though, Sukhangpha's death created a void that resulted in the establishment of three interregnums—1364-69, 1376-80 and 1389-97. At any rate, at Sudangpha's accession (1397-1407), the situation stabilized. The latter clashed with the Nara and the Kamata rulers. As a result, the Ahom frontiers reached to Patkai in the north and river Karatoya in the north-east. The boundary extended throughout Sudangpha's reign sustained to form the row of manages throughout the 15th century. Later, Suhenpha (1488-93) faced the rebellion of the Nagas and the Kacharis. But the revolts were suppressed. Through the secure of the 15th century, Supimpha's (1493-97) nobles like Buragohain Khenpung rebelled. Though the rebellion was crushed, it reflected the internal feuds in the middle of the nobles that had started since the secure of the 15th century.

## **Orissa**

On the eve of the Turkish invasion, Orissa was under the control of the Eastern Gangas. The *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* records that Bakhtiyar Khalji had sent two brothers, Muhammad and Ahmad, to invade Jajnagar (contemporary Orissa) immediately before his death (1205). At that time, Rajaraja III (1197-1211) was the ruler. The after that invasion took lay under Ghiyasuddin Iwaz soon after Anangbhima III's accession (1211-38). Though the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*

applauds the success of Iwaz, the Chatesvara inscription, though, mentions the success of Anangbhima III in the conflict. It appears that perhaps Iwaz's invasion was repulsed.

Narasimha I (1238-64) also had to face Ikhtiyaruddin Yuzbek who got success in his first two attacks, but his later attacks were foiled through Narasimha I. The latter also succeeded in extending his boundary to Midnapur, Howrah, and Hooghly. Though, through the secure of the 13th century (1296), Satgaon fell into the hands of the Delhi Sultans.

From Bhanudeva III's (1352-78 A.D.) reign onwards, the power of the Ganga kings started declining. Taking advantage of the situation, the neighboring states invaded Orissa. In 1353, Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah of Bengal succeeded in penetrating as distant as Chilka lake and took absent vast booty, including elephants. Later, the rulers of Delhi, Vijaynagar, Jaunpur, and also the Bahmani rulers occasionally plundered Orissa.

Under such disorder and confusion, Kapilendra, the minister of Bhanudeva IV (1414-1435), usurped the throne in 1435 and laid the base of the Gajapati rule in Orissa. Through 1464-65, the extent of his domain reached the south-Arcot district and eastern part of the Deccan plateau. Kapilendra also inflicted humiliating defeat upon Humayun Shah Bahmani when the former attacked Devarkonda and Kapilendra came to the rescue of Devarkonda chief (1459). After that, the Bahmani rulers never thought of attacking Telingana so extensive as Kapilendra remained alive. In 1450, Kapilendra also succeeded in defeating Nasiruddin of Bengal (1442-59) and assumed the title of Gaudesvara. In 1453, Rajahmundry also became part of his empire. Therefore, through 1462, his boundary extended from Hooghly to Kaveri in the south. Though, throughout the closing years of his reign, the Vijaynagar ruler Saluva Narasimha expelled the Oriyas from the Kaveri basin. Soon after

Purushottama's accession (1467 A.D), the latter tried to regain the Tamil territory but his exploits remained confined to Kanchi only. Purushottama had to surrender Kondavidu (Kondnir) and Rajahmundry to the Bahmani ruler Muhammad Shah III (1463-1482). Saluva Narasimha (later the Vijaynagar ruler) took advantage of the situation and occupied Udayagiri (1476). So extensive as Muhammad Shah III was alive, Purushottama did not effort to reoccupy these territories. But soon after his death (1482 A.D.), Purushottama took Rajahmundry, Kondnir through 1484, and Udayagiri from Saluva Narasimha (sometime flanked by 1486-91). Therefore, he succeeded in extending the frontiers of his empire from Bhagirathi in the north to river Pennar in the south. His son Pratapa Rudra (1497-1540 A.D.), too, like his father, embarked upon an expansionist policy. Mainly of his military exploits are of early 16th century which fall outside the scope of our revise Moreover, throughout his reign, he had to face continuous clashes with the Vijaynagar ruler Krishnadeva Raya and the Bengal ruler Hussain Shah. After his death (1540), his successors could hardly hold the empire intact, and the end of Suryavamsi (Gajapati) dynasty came soon after (1542).

## **NORTHERN AND WESTERN INDIA**

### **Kashmir**

Geographically, Kashmir valley is bounded through Pir Panjal ranges in the south and south-west, Kishtwar valley in the south-east and the north, and north-east and north-west region is sheltered through the mighty central and north-western Himalayan ranges. The Kashmir valley mainly consists of, on the one hand, alluvial plains of Jhelum and its tributaries and, on the other, of plateaus. While the alluvial plains are fertile and extensively cultivated, elevated plateaus are less fertile and either laid waste, or if cultivated yield poor crop. Since the Kashmir valley is bounded through mountain terrain, passes (Zojila, Banihal, Budil, Pir Panjal, and Toshamaidan) inhabit great importance and they had great impact on the development of political and

socio-economic processes. Though, the southern passes remain inaccessible till the time of the Lodis; the northern and western passes (Baramulla, Pakhli, and Swat) were always accessible.

The 13th-century Kashmir saw a self-governing but weak Hindu kingdom of Jagadeva (1198-1212). Throughout his reign, the Damras, a turbulent feudal society, rebelled but were successfully suppressed. But his successors Rajadeva (1212-35), Samgramdeva (1235-52), and Ramdeva (1252-56) could not assert their power. After the latter's death, the Damra lord, Simhadeva (1286-1301), got the opportunity to usurp the throne. But his dynasty, too, could not continue for extensive. Interestingly, in spite of the Muslim inroads in India, Kashmir remained for extensive outside the Muslim sway for in relation to the two centuries. Mahmud Ghaznavi made two attempts in 1015 and 1021, but the mighty Himalaya and Hindukush wasted his designs. The myth of the invincibility of Kashmir could only be shattered in 1320 when the commander Dulacha succeeded in ransacking Kashmir and amassed vast booty. But a severe snow storm dug his grave at Banihal pass itself.

The invasion had its extensive lasting impact. It paved the method for the establishment of Muslim rule in Kashmir. The method Raja Sahadeva tackled the Mongol problem, and the big-level destruction and devastation struck through the Mongols, created great dissatisfaction in the middle of his subjects. This was exploited well through Rinchan, a Bhautta Prince of Laddakh, to usurp the throne in 1320. Soon after he accepted Islam and assumed the title of Sultan Sadruddin. His subsequent murder was followed through an extensive era of internal strifes. Later, Shahabuddin (1356-74) tried to put the state on strong footing. When Timur (Timurlane) invaded India in 1398, he sent his envoy Faulad Bahadur and Zainuddin to Sultan Sikandar of Kashmir and asked for a vast sum. This resulted in big-level anarchy till Zainul Abedin ascended the throne in 1420. He ruled the country with utmost



vigor for 50 years (d. 1470). He extended his frontiers up to Western Tibet and occupied Ladakh and Shel. But his deeds were soon undone through his successors. His death created internal feuds. Finally, the Saiyyids succeeded in assuming power in the beginning of the 16th century.

No clashes appear to have occurred flanked by the Delhi Sultans and Kashmir rulers till the Saiyyid rule. But strained dealings flanked by the two appeared throughout the reign of Bahlol Lodi. The *Tabaqat-i Akbari* reports that throughout the war of succession that followed after Haider Shah's death (1470-72), Tatar Khan, the governor of Punjab, at the instruction of Bahlol Lodi, sided with Bahram Khan, the uncle of Sultan Hasan. Sultan Hasan succeeded in killing Bahram. Tatar Khan's act to help Bahram antagonized Sultan Hasan. He sent Malik Tazi Bhatt to invade Punjab. Tazi Bhatt not only succeeded in defeating Tatar Khan, but he also occupied Sialkot. Following Sultan Hasan's death (1484) at the call of Saiyyid Muhammad, the son of Saiyyid Hasan, Tatar Khan again mobilized forces against Kashmir. This time again Tatar Khan had to face defeat at the hands of the united force of the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir.

### **North-West: Rajputana**

The present North-West region of India comprises Rajasthan and a part of Gujarat and Punjab. From the geographical point of view, this region consists of a vast Thar desert in which Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Barmer lie. In the South-west region are the Kutch plains in which Nagar Parkar state flourished. The states of Mewar, Dungarpur, Banswara, Chittor, and Ranthambhor flourished at the foot-hills of the Aravalli ranges.

Before the rise of tribal monarchies of the Rajputs, there were regional tribes, namely, Bhils, Meenas, Mers, and Jats. These tribes spread in excess of dissimilar regions. For instance, the Bhils were dominant in Mewar,

Dungarpur and Banswara states while Meenas, Mers, and Jats were dominant in Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Bikaner respectively. These regional tribes, though, could not succeed in establishing monarchies as subsequently founded through other Rajput tribes who came from the north-west part of India.

The Bhatias of Jaisalmer came from the vicinity of the Sutlej river in Punjab and the Sisodias from the Narmada in South India. The Kachhawahas moved from Central India (Narwar), and the Rathors of Jodhpur and Bikaner had their links with Kannauj region. The immigration of the Rajputs designates some motivating points. Initially, they settled approximately the banks of rivers where they had access to water and rich soil for agricultural purposes. When the population grew and disputes in excess of succession or on other matters took lay, the weaker part moved to the regions which were sparsely populated and had no political power to resist the resolution of newcomers in their regions. The newcomers were advanced in warfare technology and political organisation compared to the aboriginal tribes. Since the newcomers were few in numbers, they adopted two-pronged events to control the regional tribe; one was the use of force, and the other was socio-religious events.

In the coercive method, first they strengthened their location through erecting forts to illustrate their military prowess. The second one is important from socio-religious point of view. The migrant clans recognized a practice of putting tika on the forehead of every succeeding chief through a regional tribal. For instance, the Bhils of Mewar, the Godara Jats of Bikaner and the Meenas of Jaipur used to put tika on the forehead of the succeeding chiefs of these regions. Without performing this ritual, the succeeding chief was not measured as legal head of the region and its people. Even after the acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty through the Rajput clans in the 16th-17th century, this social function of marking tika through a regional tribal sustained.

Though, at the political stage, the Mughal emperor exercised this privilege of bestowing succession rights on one of the family members of the ruling clan. But at the regional stage, the social ritual of putting tika through a regional tribal was accepted out. It was symbolic in the sense that while the real power rested with the aboriginal tribe, they had delegated this power to a chief whose duty was to protect the region and its people from external aggression and also to look after the welfare of the people. In the beginning, this social custom was followed to assuage the feelings of the regional tribes, but with the passage of time it basically became a ritual. Slowly, the Rajputs became *de facto* and *de jure* chiefs of the regions and the regional tribes basically became peasants. Further, the chiefs in order to uphold soldiers and also themselves extracted surplus from the peasants. A religious color was given to this act: the surplus was taken as bhog. The word bhog signified religious sanctity: the offering made to a deity was also described „bhog’. Moreover, the king was measured a representative of God. So, it was the religious duty of the peasants to create offerings (bhog) to the chief and his officials. It further strengthened the power of the chieftains and the chances of revolt of the regional people were minimized. It became obligatory for a chief to protect his political power from outside aggression. Therefore, the suzerain power enjoyed through a chief within a sure territory gave birth to the tribal cum territorial monarchies.

### ***The Guhilas and the Sisodias***

The mainly powerful state which appeared in the north-west was the state of Mewar. Throughout the 13th century, Jaitra Singh (1213-61) consolidated the Guhila power but failed to face the Turkish menace. Alauddin Khalji succeeded in defeating Rana Ratan Singh and occupied Mewar in A.D. 1303. Throughout the 14th century, internal feuds flared up in Mewar that resulted in the victory of Raja Hamir of Sisodia clan. Therefore was laid the base of the Sisodia rule in Mewar. Hamir’s successors extended the domain which

incorporated Ajmer, Jahazpur, Mandalgarh, Chhapen, Bundi, Nagor, Jalor, and Sambhar. But it was under Rana Kumbha (1433-68) that the Sisodia power reached its peak. A motivating development throughout the early years of Rana Kumbha's reign was the rising power of the Rathor clan in excess of the Sisodias. At any rate, the Rana was able to smother the Rathor's hold.

Rana Kumbha expanded his territories distant and wide. Approximately the whole of Rajasthan was brought under his sway. He occupied Kota, Bundi, Amber, Narwar, Durgapur, Sambhar, Nagor, Ranthambhor, and Ajmer. Several times he repulsed the invasions of the Sultans of Malwa and Gujarat. Rana Kumbha was assassinated through his son Uda who occupied the throne in 1468. Throughout the reign of Uda (1468-73) and his successor Raimal (1473-1508), thrash about for power sustained unabated till Rana Sanga ascended the throne in 1508.

### ***The Guhilots of Vagad***

The Guhilots of Mewar did not confine themselves to Mewar only. Throughout the first half of the 12th century, Samant Singh of Mewar went to Vagad (contemporary Dungarpur and Banswara) to set up his own principality. But he could not control the region for an extensive time because of the intervention of Gujarat. When Gujarat's control in excess of Vagad weakened, Jagat Singh, a descendant of Samant, re-recognized his suzerainty in the region in the beginning of the 13th century. The Guhila hold was consolidated in Vagad throughout 14th-15th century. They used to have frequent clashes with the Sultans of Gujarat. The rulers of Malwa were also their traditional enemies.

Another branch of the Guhilots led through Rana Mokal's second son, Khem Singh, and his descendant Suraj Mal (1473-1528), shifted to Pratapgarh

where an independent state arose towards the end of the 15th century.

### ***The Rathors of Marwar***

The Rathors of Marwar migrated from the region of Kannauj to Pali throughout the mid-thirteenth century. Siha, the Rathor chief, helped the Brahmins of Pali in freeing the region from the incursions of the Mers and the Meenas. Therefore, he recognized his suzerainty in excess of that region approximately 1243. Asthan and the subsequent Rathor chiefs succeeded in extending their sway in excess of Idar, Mallani, Mandor, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Umarnot, and Bhinmal. But the Rathor power reached its climax throughout the reign of Rao Chunda (1384-1423) and Rao Jodha (1438-89).

Rao Chunda received Mandor (Mandor) in dowry (1395). Later, he extended his sway in excess of Khatu, Didwana, Sambhar, Nagaur, and Ajmer which were under Delhi Sultan's hegemony. To challenge the rising power of Chunda, a coalition was shaped through the Bhatias, the Sankhalas and the governor of Multan. They invaded Nagaur and succeeded in killing Chunda in 1423. Under Rao Jodha, the Rathors appeared as a formidable power. He further extended his domain through occupying Merta, Phalodi, Pokharan, Bhadrachun, Sojat, Jaitaran, Siwana, parts of Godwad and Nagaur. Later, throughout Rao Suja's reign (1492-1515), the Rathor power started showing signs of disintegration. Biran Deo was the first to declare independence. Soon after, the chiefs of Pokharana and Bahadmer also severed their ties with the Rathors.

The Rathor power did not remain confined to the Marwar region only: it extended further towards Jangla (contemporary Bikaner) under the leadership of Bika, the son of Rao Jodha (1438-89). Bika migrated to Jangla sometime approximately 1465. He strengthened his location through establishing

matrimonial tie with Rao Shekha of Pungal who gave him his daughter in marriage. The Jats of that region also surrendered to him. In 1488, he founded the municipality, of Bikaner which, since then, became a centre of power. Bika, after his father's death, strived unsuccessfully to inhabit the ancestral gaddi of Jodhpur, although he was able to conquer a part of Punjab. At the time of his death in 1504, a big territory was under his control.

### ***Minor Rajput Principalities***

Besides the Rajput principalities, there arose a number of small „chiefdoms' in Raj putana throughout the 13-15th century. Foremost were the Bhatias of Jaisalmer who migrated from Punjab to the Thar desert in the beginning of the 11th century. Throughout the 14-15th century, Jaisalmer rulers had frequent clashes with the rulers of Mewar, Multan, Umarkot, and Bikaner.

After that came the Kachhwahas who migrated to Dhundhar from central India. They were the feudatories of the Gurjara-Pratihara rulers. Throughout the 11th century, the Kachhwaha chief Dulah Rai migrated from Marwar to Eastern Rajasthan where he subdued the Bargujars and laid the base of the Dhundhar state (Amber, contemporary Jaipur). The Kachhwahas controlled Amber, Med, Bairat, and Shaikhawati region throughout the 15th century. Though, they rose to prominence throughout the Mughal era.

But after Prithviraj's defeat at the hands of the Turks (1192: second battle of Tarain) the Chauhan power declined. There appeared a number of petty power-centres at Jalor, Ranthambhor, Nadol, Sirohi, and Haroti which at one point of time shaped part of the Sultanate or were too weak to face the onslaught of Mewar and Marwar.

Sometime approximately mid 13th century, the Hadas succeeded in establishing a principality in the Bundi-Kota region. They were the feudatories of the Rana of Mewar. Samar Singh had defended his territory from the incursion of Balban in 1253-54, but he could not face the might of Alauddin Khalji. He died fighting. His son, Napuj, also faced the similar fate at the hands of Alauddin in 1304. A.D. Throughout the 15th century, the Hadas were regularly confronted through Mewar, Gujarat and Malwa. In information, throughout 13-15th century the Bundi state lived in name only.

The Yadavas of Karawi and Sodhas of Umarkot and Barmer also rose to prominence throughout the 13-15th century. Though, they could not play a prominent role in the 13-15th century regional power formations.

## **Gujarat**

You have already read in relation to the emergence of the Chalukya state in Gujarat throughout 8-12th century. The Chalukya hold sustained in excess of Gujarat throughout the 13th century in spite of the establishment of the Sultanate. You have also seen how in 1299 Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan, Alauddin Khalji's generals, succeeded in overthrowing Raja Kama Baghella, the Chalukya ruler and therefore laid the base of the Sultanate rule in Gujarat. The Delhi Sultans enjoyed supremacy in excess of Gujarat throughout the 14th century. Though, symptoms of decline became apparent from Feroz Shah's reign onwards who entrusted the governorship of Gujarat to Shamsuddin Damghani. Timur's invasion (1398) provided the much sought for opportunity to the governors to break absent with the centre. Soon after, in 1407, Zafar Khan (who later assumed the title of Muzaffar Shah), the then Governor of Gujarat, recognized a self-governing kingdom in Gujarat. The Kingdom of Gujarat since its inception had been constantly clashing with its neighboring territories—Malwa, Rajputana, Khandesh and the Bahmani kingdoms.

### ***Dealings with Malwa***

The Malwa rulers were their traditional enemies. In 1408, Muzaffar Shah attacked Malwa and made its ruler Hoshang Shah captive. Though Hoshang Shah had to accept the suzerainty of Muzaffar Shah, he was jealous of the rising power of Gujarat. To undermine its power, the rulers of Malwa used to join hands with the enemies of Gujarat. But Ahmad Shah of Gujarat succeeded in crushing Hoshang Shah's power. Later throughout Qutbuddin Ahmad Shah II's reign (1451-59), Mahmud Khalji of Malwa attacked Gujarat but he was repulsed. Later, Mahmud Khalji allied with Qutbuddin Ahmad Shah II to confront Rana Kumbha of Mewar. But this move was purely a diplomatic one as Mahmud Khalji never left any opportunity to undermine the prestige of the rulers of Gujarat.



### ***Dealings with Rajputana***

Another formidable power with which the rulers of Gujarat had been constantly at war was Rajputana. The first Rajput kingdom to form part of Gujarat was Idar (1426). Soon, Ahmad Shah overran Dungarpur (1433). Later, Qutbuddin (1451-59) and Mahmud Begarha (1459-1511) had to face Rana Kumbha, the ruler of Mewar. Rana Kumbha, as we have already seen, had occupied Sirohi, Abu and Nagaur, the latter being ruled through Ahmad Shah's uncle, Feroz Khan. As a result, Rana Kumbha had to cope with the combined attack of Gujarat, Sirohi, and Nagaur. The final outcome was that the Rana had to sue for peace through paying vast indemnity. But Rana Kumbha retained his capital, Kumbhalgarh in spite of its being besieged two times.

The Rajput state of Champaner also constantly clashed with Gujarat. But finally it was annexed to the Gujarat kingdom through Mahmud Begarha in 1483-84 who renamed it Muhammadabad and made it his second capital. Through Mahmud Begarha's reign other small Rajput kingdoms of Junagarh, Sorath, Kutch, and Dwarka were also subjugated and the boundary of the Muzaffar Shahi domain reached the remotest corners of the Kathiawar peninsula.

### ***Dealings with Bahmani and Khandesh***

The Bahmani ruler Feroz Shah maintained cordial dealings with the Gujarati rulers. But after his death (1397-1422), radical change came in relation to the accession of Ahmad Bahmani (1422-1436) who shaped matrimonial alliance with the ruler of Khandesh. When Rai Kanha of Jhalawar fled (1429), Khandesh and Bahmani rulers gave asylum to him. This infuriated Ahmad Shah Gujarati and he had to use force against them. He subjected them

to a crushing defeat and occupied Mahim. Though, throughout Mahmud Begarha's reign cordialities revived. When Mahmud Khalji of Malwa attacked the Bahmani kingdom, Mahmud Begarha came twice to its rescue.

Mahmud Begarha also maintained friendly dealings with the Khandesh rulers, but Adil Khan II ceased to pay tribute and joined hands with Ahmadnagar and Berar. As a result, Mahmud Begarha attacked Khandesh and finally Adil Khan was compelled to accept suzerainty of Mahmud Begarha. But the latter did not annex either Khandesh or Daulatabad; instead, he confirmed their rulers on payment of tribute. Mahmud Begarha also had secure ties with the Jam Nizamuddin of Sind. Since he was Mahmud's maternal grandfather, Begarha rushed to support him when the tribal pirates of Sind rebelled against the Jam.

Mahmud Begarha also succeeded in suppressing the rising Portuguese power in Indian waters. He received help from the rulers of Egypt and the Ottoman who sent their generals Amir Hussain and Sulaiman Rais. The combined forces at first succeeded in defeating the Portuguese flotilla at Chaul in 1508 but, later in 1509, Albuquerque totally crushed them. As a result, in 1510 Mahmud Begarhs entered into an alliance with the Portuguese and extracted assurance for the safety of the Gujarati ships in the Arabian sea.

In 1508, the Delhi Sultan Sikandar Lodi sent an embassy to Gujarat. The embassies of Sikandar Lodi and that of Ismail Safavi of Iran greatly increased the prestige of the Gujarati ruler. It also suggests the significant lay Mahmud Begarha occupied in the modern national and international scene.

## **Sind**

Sind was another self-governing state on the western border of India. The history of the base of Muslim power in Sind goes back to A.D. 71-2, when

Muhammad bin Qasim attacked Sind. The Sumirahs appear to have recognized their power sometime in the 10th century in Sind. We do not have much information concerning their rule and their relation with the neighboring states. But stray references suggest that their power extended as distant as Debal and Makran Coast. They also had parts of Kutch under their control. According to the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha*, the Khwarizmian ruler Jalauddin Mangbarni defeated Chanesar, the Sumirah prince, in 1224 and occupied Debal and Damrilah. Throughout Iltutmish's region, Nizam-ul Mulk Junaidi, the wazir of Iltutmish, occupied it in 1228 and its ruler Chanesar was sent to the court of Iltutmish. Later, Muhammad Tughluq attacked Thatta in 1350-51 in pursuit of Taghi, the rebel noble.

Later, the Sammahs succeeded in overthrowing the Sumirah in 1351. They ruled for 175 years. The *Chachnama* mentions Sammahs as residents of Sind even before the conquest of Muhammad bin Qasim. They originally belonged to the Yadava branch of Rajputs and were later converted to Islam. They were mainly agriculturists and held land under the Sumirahs. When Feroz Shah Tughluq in 1360-61, and again in 1362, attacked Jam Jauna and Banbaniya of Thatta, the Jam had to surrender. But soon, after the death of Feroz Shah Tughluq (1388), the Sammahs threw off the Sultanate yoke and became self-governing under Jam Tughluq. The Jam rulers of Sind maintained cordial dealings with the rulers of Gujarat. Jam Nizamuddin had married his two daughters to the Gujarat ruler, and Mahmud Begarha was the son of his second daughter, Bibi Mughli. We have already seen how Mahmud Begarha came all out in 1472; to the help of Jam Nizamuddin when the tribal pirates threatened the latter's power. Jam Nizamuddin (1460-1508), the greatest of the Jams of Sind, also had secure ties with Sultan Husain of Multan. Throughout the closing years of his reign (1493), the Arghuns who were the descendants of the Khans of Persia, threatened Jam's power. But so extensive as Jam Nizamuddin was alive, the Arghuns' attacks were not successful. After his

death (1508), the Arghuns succeeded in to establishing their power in Sind in the 16th century.

## **STATE, ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMY IN NORTH INDIA**

### **Feature Characteristics of the Regional States in North India**

It is usually held that the ‚antipathy’ that lived throughout the Sultanate era flanked by the Hindu and the Muslim states heightened the conflicts and clashes throughout the 13-15th century. But, as Schwartzberg has rightly pointed out, we discover more frequent and fierce thrash about flanked by the Muslim-Muslim and Hindu-Hindu rulers rather than flanked by Hindu-Muslim rulers. For instance, Gujarat’s traditional enemies were Muslim rulers of Malwa and Jaunpur; there was continuous warfare flanked by Kamata and Ahom rulers; Orissa rulers continuously faced the might of the Vijaynagar rulers and in Rajputana quarrels took inter-clan character. They never showed unity even in dire needs. In information, in framing political alliances, the need of the time and circumstances played more crucial role rather than religion. Mahmud Khalji I of Malwa sided with Ganga Das, the ruler of Champaner, against Mahmud Shah Gujarati in 1450-51; later, Mahmud Khalji joined hands with the Gujarati ruler Qutbuddin against Rana Kumbha of Mewar realizing the latter’s strength.

The foremost characteristic of the 13-15th century polity, was ‚vertical’ penetration rather than the ‚horizontal’ one, i.e. horizontally the region under their control was smaller compared to the Sultanate but within their region of power they ‚vertically’ penetrated deep into the rural regions.

Under regional rulers, the maximum region lay outside their effective control; even where they exercised a good measure of control, there, too, they often faced some difficulty. On this foundation, we can divide their domain

into three types:

- Where land revenue was extracted from the peasants directly through revenue officials, the state's power and control was of a high order,
- Regions where revenue was composed through regional chiefs, the state's control was still good enough.
- The states that were satisfied with the tribute only, the degree of control was minimal. This connection had direct bearing on regional rulers' dealings with the nobles, tributary chiefs or rajas and regional aristocracy (the so-described zamindars, muqaddams, etc.).

### **North Indian Kingdoms as Successor States**

Usually, the regional kingdoms are measured as „successor' states of the Sultanate. An argument has been presented that the founders of the regional kingdoms at one point of time were either governors of the Sultanate or had served under them in „some' capability. You would read in the after that Units that this was true in some cases but cannot be applied invariably. For instance, Zafar Khan, Dilawar Khan and Malik Sarwar, the founders of the regional kingdoms of Gujarat, Malwa and Jaunpur respectively, served as governors under the Tughluq Sultans. Besides, Bengal rulers also had direct and continuous links with the Sultanate. But the Rajputana states, though always a prey to the Sultanate onslaught, never accepted the complete hegemony of the Sultans. As and when the opportunity arose, they threw off the Sultanate yoke and succeeded in maintaining their clannish character. Similar was the case with Sind. Under the Sultanate pressure, the Sind rulers accepted the suzerainty of Iltutmish, Muhammad Tughluq and Feroz Tughluq, but for all practical purposes Sumirah and Sammah rulers ruled independently. As concerned. their development was entirely self-governing of the Sultanate.

Since some regional powers appeared on the ruins of the Sultanate, it is usually thought, that structurally their polity bore striking resemblance to the

Sultanate. Let us discover out to what extent this view is correct.

### **Succession Issue**

We have seen that Islam has not provided any rules for succession. As a result, principles of election, nomination and hereditary succession co-lived. In information, „force’ was the main arbiter. Therefore, ample opportunity for maneuvering was accessible. Like the Sultanate, in the regional states as well, whether ruled through a Hindu or a Muslim, there were no set rules of succession. Hence, there were always conspiracies and intrigues in the middle of several groups in which sometimes women also played an important role. In Malwa, the principle of nomination took precedence in excess of law of primogeniture. In Jaunpur, „force’ was the deciding factor. Husain Shah Sharqi usurped the throne in 1458 after killing his elder brother Muhammad Shah Sharqi. Likewise, in Gujarat, accession of Ahmad Shah was contested through his uncle Maudud Sultan (Feroz Khan). In Bengal, the role of nobles was more significant and they acted as kingmakers. Shamsuddin Ahmad Shah was killed through his slaves Shadi Khan and Nasir Khan (1435). They, in turn, were killed through their rivals (1442). Through 1487, the power of Abyssinian nobles reached its peak when, Malik Andil, an Abyssinian noble killed Jalaluddin Fath Shah, and usurped the throne.

In Rajputana, too, the law of primogeniture was not strictly adhered to. In the case of the Guhilas and Sisodias, we discover that after Rana Lakha’s death, instead of Chunda (the eldest sort of the Rana); the throne passed into the hands of his minor son Rana Mokal. Likewise, Uda usurped the throne through killing his father Rana Kumbha. Raimal’s accession was also nor smooth. He was challenged through Uda’s sons Sahasmal and Surajmal.

In Kashmir, too, no succession rules could develop. As early as 1323, Shah Mir, usurped power following his master’s death. His eldest son Jamshed’s

accession (1342), too, was followed through an extensive-drawn war of succession. Zainul Abedin himself, assumed power after killing his elder brother Ali Shah in 1420.

In Ahom, the council of great nobles—Bar Gohaih and Burah Gohain played a significant role in appointing and nominating kings. In information, no one could become the king without their approval. It was only in the kingdom of Orissa where succession rules were respected under the Ganga rulers. But, later, when the power was transferred from the Ganga rulers to the Gajapati rulers, there appears to have appeared some lapses: we discover that after Kapilendra's death, his younger son Purushottama usurped the throne through setting aside the claims of his elder brother Hamir.

### **Legitimization**

The King was at the helm of affairs, and he was the final power in all matters. But, as you have already read, in the Islamic world there was no legal sanction for the Sultan's power and it was the Caliph who was the political head of the Muslims. The Delhi Sultans used to recite khutba in Caliph's name and inscribe his name on their coins to get legal sanction for their power. For the regional states, the need for legitimization, not only in the eyes of the masses but also their competitors, became more significant, for every accession was usually preceded through clashes and wars. For those regional states which were situated too distant absent to get the legal sanction from the Caliph at Baghdad, the ulema and the sufis were more potential legitimizers.

To pacify the orthodox Muslim opinion, the rulers of Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal and Jaunpur always showed their eagerness to get the support of the ulema and sufi through offering them lucrative offices and revenue-free land grants (madad-i-maash). They also used to pay frequent visits to the khanqahs of the Muslim saints. The legal power of the Caliph was explicitly recognized

through the Bengal rulers Iwaz Khalji, Mughisuddin, Ruknuddin Kaikaus, Shamsuddin Feroz, etc. who all engraved the Abbasid Caliph's name on their coins. Under Ibrahim Sharqi's patronage flourished well-known Muslim mystics Makhdum Asaduddin Aftab-i Hind, Makhudum Sadruddin Chirgh-i Hind, Saiyyid Alaul Haqq of Pandua, etc. The Malwa ruler Hoshang Shah made special efforts to encourage the ulema and mashaikhs to come and settle in Malwa. Hoshang Shah had profound respect for Makhdum Qazi Burhanuddin and he became his disciple (murid). Mahmud Khalji received khilat from the Abbasid Caliph at Egypt. It helped greatly in enhancing the prestige of the Malwa ruler. The well-known sufi Saiyyid Usman, the disciple of Burhanuddin, was greatly respected through the Gujarati ruler Mahmud Begarha. He built a mosque and rauza (tomb) in his memory at Ahmedabad immediately after his death in 1459. Burhanuddin's son Shah Alam also enjoyed great prestige and patronage of the Gujarati rulers, Qutbuddin and Mahmud Begarha. In Kashmir, too, the sufis enjoyed great honour and favor of the Kashmiri rulers. In Rajputana, the rulers lavishly distributed revenue-free land to the Brahmans to win their favor to justify their several political acts.

In Orissa, Lord Jagannath was whispered to be the real ruler. So, the Brahmans gained great political power. They legitimized the usurpation of the Ganga throne through Kapilendra Deva (1435 A.D.), and the accession of Purusottama Deva to the exclusion of Hamir.

### **Administrative Structure**

Since mainly of the regional states appeared as a result of the disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate, they copied the administrative model of their parent state. Though the states of Kashmir urbanized independently, there, too, the working was through and big beside the Sultanate administrative set-up. In Rajputana and Orissa, though, we discover sure



changes in nomenclature. The Ahom kingdom also went through an entirely dissimilar set-up, primarily because of its tribal nature.

In Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal, Jaunpur and Kashmir, the central machinery was headed through wazir followed through ariz-i mumalik, shaikh-ul Islam and qazi. Besides, there were hajib, dabir (department of correspondence), amir-i dar (master of ceremonies), amir- i-akhur (chief of royal stable; in Kashmir he was recognized as mahasvasala), etc. For the maintenance of royal household (haram), there was separate administrative machinery. Kingdoms were divided into a number of provinces. In Bengal, provinces were described iqlim, arsa and diyar. The provincial governors were described sar-i lashkar wa wazir (i.e. in them combined the military and financial powers); while in Kashmir and other regional states they were recognized as hakim. In Kashmir, these hikims were usually recruited from the royal family.

Provinces were further sub-divided into shiqs (in Bengal), and paraganas with villages forming the negligible element. Like the centre, in the provinces also qazis dispensed justice, muhtasibs looked after morals, kotwal was for the maintenance of law and order in the cities, while shiqdar was the overall in charge of the province. At the village stage, there were village headmen (muqaddams) and accountant (patwari). As for their army organisation, the rulers maintained standing army but they mainly depended for the supply of armed personnel on their provincial governors and „chiefs’. Infantry and cavalry was the main fighting force, but elephants, too, had their own role. There were constant efforts on the part of the rulers of Malwa and Jaunpur to uphold regular supply of elephants. In Bengal and Gujarat, navy also shaped a significant wing of the army.

In Orissa, at the centre there were rajaguru (royal priest), mahapradhani (prime minister), mahasandhmgrahi (secretary for peace and war),

mahasenapati (commander-in-chief), mulabhandaramuna mudrahasta (chancellor of the privy purse), mahadandapasi (inspector-common of police), mahamandalika (governor- common) and mahapatra, etc. The kingdom was divided into mahamandalas, which were sub-divided into mandalas and mandalas into nadus or visayas or bhogas. The lowest element was the village. These divisions were headed through maharanaka, ranaka, visayapati and gramika respectively. To assist the gramika, there were karana (accountant), purohita, dandapasi (policeman), urikavali (village watchman) and gramabhata (village Servant). Cities were headed through puravari. He was assisted through dandanayaka (magistrate) and dandapasi (police inspector). To administer the affairs of the capital, there was a separate official described kalinganagaraadhyaksha.

As for the Oriya military organisation, the members of all castes and societies were asked to render military service at the time of emergency, though the Brahmans appear to have been exempted from compulsory military service. But there were some exceptions, too. The Chatesvara inscription mentions Vishnu, the Brahman minister of Anangabhima III (1211-38), who led an expedition against the Kalachuris. The majority of the soldiers were cultivators who used to cultivate their land throughout peace time.

The Ahom polity was quasi-feudal with a tribal base. The king was the tribal chief who shared power with his two-member council (patra-mantri). Both were supposed, to stay check in excess of each other. The counsellors elected the king and, he, in turn, used to nominate the counsellors. Usually, hereditary rule prevailed in civil appointments, though other persons of knowledge and repute could also be appointed. The male adults of each family had to perform periodic service to the king (state). Though, it was hard for the king to use his subjects.

The Ahoms had urbanized a unique organization of militia organisation. The militia was recognized as paiks. The whole male population flanked by the 15-60 age groups was organized in got (units). Each got consisted of four adult males. The members of each got used to statement on duty through rotation. They were supposed to perform at least one man-year of service. A significant aspect worth mentioning here are that their, services was not confined to military only. For instance, one of their significant functions was to build and uphold the infrastructure for the wet rice economy. Besides, they also helped in reclaiming cultivable lands from forests and swamps.

### **Revenue Administration**

Land-revenue was the major source of income of the state. In Kashmir, Malwa, Gujarat, Jaunpur and Bengal, land-tax was recognized as kharaj. We do not know the exact magnitude of state demand under the regional kingdoms. Throughout contingency, relaxation in taxation was granted. When throughout Zainul Abedin's reign, famine struck the kingdom; the revenue demand was reduced to 1 /4th, and in some cases to 1/7th. The fixation of revenue demand was done taking into consideration the excellence of the soil. In Kashmir, collection was in type: the grain was first stored in the state granaries and then sold at fixed prices. This helped greatly in reducing the prices of grain. Besides, in times of scarcity regular supply could also be ensured.'

Ibn Battuta (14th c.) informs us that land-tax in Bengal was 1/2 of the produce. But the Chinese traveller Wang-ta Yuan, writing in relation to the similar time, mentions that the state demand was 1/5th. Usually, in Bengal, crop-estimation was followed and measurement was not insisted upon. Peasants used to pay directly to the state in (installments) eight months. In Bengal, there was also a class of majmuadars (revenue-farmers) who used to pay fixed amount of land-revenue to the state after collecting it from the

peasants. Tributary chiefs used to pay lump sum to the state. They appointed their own machinery to extract the land-revenue. All the religious endowments were free from the payment of land-revenue and other taxes.

In Orissa, the revenue-demand was 1/6th of the produce. The whole territory was divided into numerous circles recognized as *bisi* and *khanda*. Each division was placed under *bisi* and *khanda-adhipati*. The latter, besides revenue collection and keeping the accounts, also possessed police powers. They were assisted through *khandait* and *boimul*, the latter being the accountant. Besides these officers, there were high-ranking military officers (*mahanayak*, *bhupati*, *bhuyan*, etc.) who were hereditary chiefs. There were also civil and religious officers like *purohit*, *rajaguru*, etc. who were granted extensive unassisted lands as their emoluments. A motivating characteristic in Orissa and Gujarat was the hereditary religious grants recognized as *bhumichhidrapidhanyaya*. The whole village beside with craftsmen, workers, etc. was given to the donees. Therefore, the artisans and peasants had become semi-serfs. The *purohit* class usually enjoyed privileges of free lands; only in contingency a tax (*tanki*) used to be imposed on them. In Orissa, the ownership of land vested in the state: Besides land-tax there was other tax s as well.

The ownership of land, under the Ahoms, vested with the state/clan. The land used to be divided into plots (based on the size of the family) and was distributed amongst individual householders (*paiks*) in lieu of their services. It was subject to redistribution after their death.

## **Nobles and Landed Aristocracy**

### ***Nobles***

The nobels played a very crucial role in the 13-15th century regional

politics. They hailed from heterogeneous elements, including both the Hindus as well as the Muslims. They used to receive high sounding titles like khan-i-azam, form of iqta (revenue assignment in lieu of salary); in turn, they maintained law and order, helped in revenue extraction and in times of need supplied armed personnel to the king. Theoretically, their location was not hereditary and they owed their power and location to the king's favor, but slowly their assignments assumed hereditary character. Though, Rajputana was an exception where they owed their location primarily to their being the member of the clan: the king's favor was only secondary. You have already seen that these nobles had the tendency to rebel and they used to face with one group or other throughout the war of succession. On explanation of their military strength, the king had to depend on them. The power of some of the nobles was such that they became kingmakers, and the kings became apparatus in their hands.

### ***Landed Aristocracy***

In regional kingdoms also there lived such a class. Geopolitically, we can divide them into two categories: (i) landed aristocracy situated in the peripheral (boundary) region. In this category come the 'chiefs' or 'rajas'—the so-described intermediary zamindars; (ii) landed class who existed within the mainland—the so-described primary zamindars.

The first category was composed of the mainly refractory elements. They kept on switching in excess of their allegiance from one state to another. Landed aristocracy that existed in the mainland was usually under greater pressure and more closer scrutiny. The feature characteristic of the regional state was that mostly the rulers were measured as aliens; they did not have regional base. Their prime need was to make a loyal class of rural aristocracy to counterbalance the existing class. Their success in this task would have

been the real attainment of the regional powers. Muslim invasions and clan rivalries within the Rajputana kingdoms resulted in big-level migration of the Rajputs towards Malwa and Gujarat. Through 13th century, we discover that mainly of the landed magnates in these states were Rajputs. The rulers of Malwa and Gujarat therefore had to face stiff resistance in this procedure. In Gujarat, drastic changes were brought in relation to the by Sultan Ahmad Shah I through introducing the want an organization.

In Bengal, Bakhtiyar Khalji at the outset had distributed all the land in the middle of his military commanders and made them muqti. The sufis and ulema were also encouraged to settle down in rural regions to set up Muslim hold for which lavish grants (madad-i-matsh) were made to them.

#### **Economy: Common Remarks**

Agriculture was the backbone of the regional states. Bengal, Assam, Kashmir and Orissa were predominantly rice producing regions while wheat shaped the staple crop in Rajputana, Malwa, Gujarat and Jaunpur. Malwa, with rich and fertile soil, produced good excellence wheat, paddy, gram, peas, pulses, cotton, excellent betel-leaves, mangoes, etc. These products were supplied to the Delhi Sultanate.

In the medieval economy of Kashmir, Bengal, Assam, Gujarat and Orissa, trade played a very crucial! role. The Kashmiri merchants maintained their trade dealings with Patna, Banaras, Lhasa, Kathmandu and Peking. Kashmir's trade with Punjab was through the Pir Panjal ranges. Kashmir was linked with Leh through Zoji-la pass. Salt (from Punjab) and shawl (from Ladakh and Yarqand) were the major imports. Kashmir exported shawls, musk, crystals, silks, saffron and arid fruits.

Zainul Abedin took special efforts to encourage silk industry in Kashmir

through introducing better techniques and designs. Silk-worms were reared on mulberry leaves. The credit for introducing paper industry in Kashmir also goes to Zainul Abedin. Trade in Bengal was mannered through, both the land and the sea routes, the latter being more important. There were two significant sea routes: south- easterly route connecting East Indies and China, and south-westerly route connecting Orissa, Coromandel, and Malabar to Arabia and Abyssinia. Textiles, rice, wheat, silk, sugar, etc. were the chief things of export, Ibn Battuta mentions that eunuch and slave trade was also mannered in 14th century Bengal. Throughout the Sena rule, trade was in a state of decline. Minhaj Siraj noticed the circulation of sea-shells (kauri) and the absence of metallic currency in the 13th century Bengal. With the establishment of the Sultanate rule, significant ports like Satgson, Sonargaon and Chittagong began to come into subsistence. Besides, there appeared a number of mint cities like Lakhnauti, Sonargaon, Fathabad, Muhammadabad etc. Therefore the Muslim rule created circumstances of urbanization in Bengal. The Arab and Persian merchants had complete control in excess of the eastern seas, and the Bengali merchants played a secondary role, mostly as middlemen. Gujarat with a fine sea-coast enjoyed flourishing trade with the Arabian and Persian countries via Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Cambay (Khambayat), Patan, Somnath and Broach were the mainly significant ports. We hear of as much as 84 ports beside the Gujarat Coast in the modern accounts. Barbosa provides the names of 12 significant sea ports of Gujarat. Varthema, who visited Gujarat in 1506, tells us that in relation to the 300 ships of several nations used to come annually to Bengal and supplied Persia, Turkey, Syria and Barbary with silk and cotton stuffs. In Gujarat, both the Hindu and Muslim merchants played significant role. Trade shaped the chief source of revenue in Gujarat economy. Barter was the main form of swap in the Ahom economy. Even the bureaucracy received land with a quota of paiks to serve. The villages were self-enough but they had to depend for sure things on other regions, e.g. salt. Rice was the staple crop. The Tai-Ahoms had

urbanized excellent technique of wet-rice farming which made them distinctly superior to their regional counterparts.

## **REGIONAL POWERS IN SOUTH INDIA AND DECCAN**

### **The Four Kingdoms**

The decline of the Chola and the Chalukya empires gave rise to a number of smaller kingdoms and principalities in the South. The four significant ones were:

- The Yadavas
- The Kakatiyas
- The Pandyas
- The Hoysalas

### ***The Yadavas and the Kakatiyas***

Throughout the 14th century, the Yadavas and the Kakatiyas succeeded in establishing their hegemony in excess of a region approximately equal to the contemporary Andhra Pradesh and the Deccan.

### ***The Yadavas***

The history of the Yadava dynasty may be traced to the 9th century. For approximately 300 years, they ruled as the feudatories of the Rashtrakutas and the Chalukyas. With the decline of the latter, they appeared as self-governing rulers with a big territory under their control.

Bhillama V, the feudatory of the Chalukya ruler, Somesvara IV, acquired self-governing status in A.D. 1187 and laid the base of the Yadava rule. Throughout Simhana's reign (1210-46), the Yadava boundaries extended to southern Gujarat; Western Madhya Pradesh and Berar; parts of Maharashtra,



Karnataka, the Western half of Hyderabad State and the northern districts of Mysore, Krishna (1246-60 A.D.) and Ram Chandra (1271-1311 A.D.) were other significant rulers of the Yadava dynasty. With the latter's death came the end of the Yadava power itself (1311-12 A.D.).

### *The Kakatiyas*

The Kakatiyas were the feudatories of the Chalukyas of Kalyani. Kakati Rudradeva (Prataprudra I), the founder of the Kakatiya state, succeeded in overpowering the Chalukya ruler, Tailapai III, throughout the second half of the 12th century (c. 1162 A.D.). He also succeeded in capturing Kurnool district from the Velananti chiefs sometime, approximately 1185. Ganapati (1199-1262), Rudrambe (1262-96) and Prataprudra II (1295-1326) were other significant rulers of the dynasty. Their rule extended in excess of mainly of the Andhra region up to Godavari, Kanchi, Kurnool and Cudappah districts. Ulugh Khan (later Muhammad Tughluq) overran the whole of Telingana in 1322 and therefore sealed the fate of the Kakatiya rule.

### *The Pandyas and the Hoysalas*

These two kingdoms controlled the region beyond the Deccan and approximately the whole of Southern peninsula.

### *The Hoysalas*

The Hoysalas ruled in excess of parts of the present Karnataka and mainly of the Tamil region. The first self-governing ruler of the kingdom was Ballala II (A.D. 1173-1220). The kingdom achieved self-governing status through the secure of the 12th century but its end came at the beginning of the 14th century. The Hoysala rulers Narasimha II, (1234-63), Narasimha III (1263-91) and Ballala III (1291-1342), had to defend themselves against the

aggressive designs of Pandya and Yadava rulers.

### *The Pandyas*

The Pandya kingdom incorporated parts of contemporary Tamil Nadu and approximately the whole of the present Kerala. The kingdom enjoyed the self-governing status approximately the first quarter of the 13th century and came to an end through the first quarter of the (4th century. The first self-governing king was Maravaraman Sundara Pandya (1216-1238). Other significant rulers of the dynasty were Maravaraman Sundara Pandya II (1238-51), Jatavaraman Sundara Pandya I (1251-68), Maravaraman Kulsekhar Pandya (1268-1310) and Jatavram Sundara Pandya II and Jatavaraman Vir Pandya II.

### ***Conflicts flanked by the Four Kingdoms***

Throughout this era, all the four kingdoms were at war with one or the other. Here we would mention in brief the nature of these struggles.

- The main disagreement was flanked by the Kakatiyas, Hoysalas and the Pandyas for supremacy in excess of the Chola territories.
- The Yadavas were constantly at war with the Kakatiyas. In these struggles none could totally overwhelm the other. Similar was the case with the Yadavas and the Hoysalas, and also with the Kakatiyas and the Pandyas. -
- Separately from the conflicts flanked by these kingdoms, there were other wars also. The mainly prominent expeditions crossways the south were undertaken through the Yadavas and the Pandyas. The founder of the Yadava dynasty, Bhillama V, led expeditions to Malwa and Gujarat. The Yadava king Simhana and Ram Chandra also waged wars against Malwa (A.D. 1215), and Gujarat without any decisive victories.

- The Pandya king Maravaraman Kulasekhara sent expeditions to Ceylon (1283-1302). King Parakramabaha III (A.D. 1302-1310) of Ceylon submitted to the Pandya king and the dealings flanked by the two remained peaceful thereafter.

### **Southern Kingdoms and Delhi Sultanate**

After consolidating their hold in excess of North India through the end of the thirteenth century, the Delhi Sultans turned their attention towards the South from the first half of the 14th century.

Here our emphasis will be on the main characteristics of the expansionist policy of the Delhi Sultans and its impact on the Deccan polity. We will talk about the dealings of southern kingdoms with the Sultanate in two phases:

- Throughout Alauddin Khalji's reign, and
- After Alauddin's death to the end of Muhammad Tughluq's reign.

#### ***First Stage: Alauddin Khalji's Invasion of South***

Throughout the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji (1290-96), his nephew Alauddin undertook the first Muslim expedition to Deogir (Devagiri) the capital of the Yadava kingdom. The Yadava ruler was defeated and big booty was composed through Alauddin. The Yadava king, Ram Chandra, promised to pay an annual tribute also. Thereafter, for approximately a decade, no invasion took place. After the accession of Aladdin Khalji, a definite policy to subjugate South was planned. From 1306 to 1312, in a series of campaigns, all the four kingdoms of south were subjugated.

#### ***Devagiri***

Alauddin deputed his trusted commander Malik Kafir to invade South in

1306-07 since the Yadava king had ceased to pay tribute. Malik Kafur defeated Raja Ram Chandra. After collecting a big booty, he returned to Delhi with the Raja as captive. The Raja was later reinstated as king on the promise of paying regular tribute to the Sultan.

### *Warangal*

In 1309, Malik Kafur invaded the Kakatiya kingdom. The purpose of the campaign was presently to subjugate the king as is clear from Alauddin's instructions to Kafur as described through Barani:

- "You are going to a distant off land; do not remain there extensive. You necessity put in all your efforts to capture Warangal and overthrow Rai Rudradeva. If the Rai provides tip his treasures, elephants and horses, and promises a tribute for the future, accept this ' arrangement."

The ruler sent his treasures to the Delhi and promised a regular tribute.

### *Dwarsamudra*

The after that target of attack was Dwarsamudra, the Hoysala kingdom (1310-11). The ruler Ballaia Deva submitted without much resistance and arrangement was made on the rows of the two other southern kingdoms.

### *Madura*

A disagreement flanked by two brothers—Vir Pandya and Sundar Pandya—who were - claimants to the Pandya kingdom provided an opportunity to Malik Kafur to invade it. Vir Pandya after capturing the throne had expelled Sunder Pandya. The latter sought the help of Alauddin Khalji. After devastating the Hoysala kingdom, Malik Kafur marched to Madura and

inflicted a defeat on Vir Pandya and composed-heavy booty.

In 1312, Malik Kafur attacked the Yadava kingdom. Once again, since Ram Deva's death, his son Sankara Deva ceased to pay tribute. Sankara Deva was defeated and approximately the whole of the territory flanked by the Krishna and the Tungabhadra was captured through Kafur. When Alauddin described Kafur back to Delhi, he handed in excess of the charge to Annul Bulk. Let us look at the feature characteristics of Alauddin's Deccan policy:

- Approximately the whole of south was conquered without much resistance.
- Aladdin was not in favor of annexing the Southern kingdoms because it was hard to administer it from distant Delhi. After their defeat, the Southern kingdoms were asked to accept the suzerainty of the Delhi Sultan and to pay regular tribute. The ruling dynasties were not displaced.
- Financially, the Delhi Sultanate gained immensely from the southern campaigns.

### ***Second Stage***

After the death of Alauddin Khalji, the southern kingdoms refused to accept the subordinate location and stopped paying tribute. This gave rise to fresh attacks from Delhi Sultanate and a definite shift in policy towards the South appeared.

Aladdin throughout his last years had given the charge of the Dr can kingdoms to Malik Kafur. Alauddin's successor Mubarak Shah Khali (1316-20) took an expedition to Devagiri and annexed major portions. The Sultan appointed his officers there and gave small territories (iqta) to them. These officers were described sadah amirs or „commanders of 100’. These amirs

were asked to collect land revenue and uphold law and order in their territories. Besides, he also ordered them to invade Warangal. After the defeat of the Raja Prataprudra Deva, some portions of his kingdom were annexed.

After the death of Mubarak Khalji, the tribute from Warangal was again stopped. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughluq sent a big army under the command of his son Ulugh Khan (Muhammad Tughluq) to conquer the region of Telingana. After some setbacks, Ulugh Khan defeated the king of Yaranga, Prataprudra Deva. Now the whole of Telingana was Annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. Ulugh Khan divided the region into many administrative units and placed them under Sadah amirs who were under the direct control of the Sultanate. Ma'bar was also conquered in 1323, and Sharif Jalaluddin Ahsan was appointed its governor with Madura as the headquarters. When Muhammad Tughluq became Sultan, he realized that the southern portions of his kingdom were not being supervised efficiently. He, so, decided to develop Devagiri as second administrative centre of the Sultanate on the rows of Delhi (1327-28). Devagiri was named Daulatabad and big number of nobles, merchants, learned men and other parts of the population were encouraged to settle there.

The Deccan policy of Muhammad Tughluq was separate from Alauddin Khalji. He annexed big portions of the Deccan and set-up the Sultanate land revenue and administrative organization.

### **Administration and Economy**

Mainly of the administrative organizations and economic behaviors of the earlier era sustained. Major changes urbanized after the establishment of the Bahmani and the Vijaynagar empire.

### ***Administration***

Monarchy was the usual political institution of these kingdoms. Beside with this, the practice of feudatories, too, was a general characteristic. In the Deccan region (the Yadavas and the Kakatiyas), the provincial heads were selected from the successful military chiefs described nayakas. They usually controlled the feudal chiefs of lower status, composed land revenue and maintained law and order. According to one source, the king assigned only small villages to the samantas or the nayakas. The big ones were kept aside to uphold the army. The Kakatiyas were always apprehensive in relation to the rising powers of the nayakas. They, so, did not allow the nayakas to remain at one lay for extensive and strike regional roots. It appears that the nayankara organization, which became very prominent under Vijaynagar, had come into subsistence throughout this time.

There were a number of ministers to look after the several departments of the kingdom. The negligible element of administration was village which was run through the village panchayat under a headman. Groups of villages were also organized into administrative divisions (described sthala under the Kakatiyas, and groups of sthala were described nadu). All these administrative units and administrative heads were described through dissimilar names in dissimilar kingdoms. The brahmadeya organization still sustained and the temples also played some role in administration and economy.

### ***Economy***

The tax on agricultural produce sustained to be the main source of state income. Efforts were made through the state to bring more land under farming. Tanks (described samudrams in the Khakasiya kingdom) and dams were constructed for irrigation. There is no definite information accessible on the magnitude of land revenue demand. With the establishment of the Sultanate's

control in excess of Daulatabad, a number of new practices were introduced in the land revenue organization. The state also claimed ownership of pastures, forests and mines and taxes were composed, from them. Customs and taxes on merchandise were other sources of state income (described sunkams under the Kakatiyas). Under the Kakatiyas, taxes were imposed on possession of sure goods such as carriages (bandi), slaves (banisa) and horses. The Pandya kingdom 'was; well-known for its pearl-fisheries which are testified through Marco Polo. Pearl divers had to pay 10 per cent of the finds as royalty to the king. With the coming of the Arab merchants and later the Europeans, trading action in several parts of south India was accelerated. The income from these trading behaviors contributed to the richness of the southern kingdoms in a big method. The merchant guilds played a significant role: they helped the state in deciding the policies on taxation and related matters. The Chettis were the mainly significant group of merchants in the whole of southern region.

## **THE VIJAYNAGAR EMPIRE**

### **Establishment and Consolidation**

The focus of thrash about in the middle of the regional powers was the Krishna Godavari delta, Kaveri basin, the Tungabhadra doab and the Konkan region, the latter recognized for its fertility anti access to high seas. Throughout the 8- 13th century, the thrash about was flanked by the Rashtrakutas and the Pallavas while the following centuries saw Vijaynagar and Bahmani kingdoms locking horns. The Bahmanis compelled the Vijaynagar rulers to expand laterally westward and eastward crossways the peninsula from the main centre of their power on the Tungabhadra. The Vijaynagar rulers also establish it hard to crush the Bahmani power in Raichur and Tungabhadra doab because of latter's alliance with the Velamas of Rajakonda in Warangal. These circumstances prevented Vijaynagar from advancing towards the north and forced it to expand laterally eastward and westward crossways the peninsula and southwards into the Tamil country.



Later though this alliance broke up which enabled Vijaynagar to expand at the cost of Bahmanis.

### ***Early Stage, 1336-1509***

Rivalries in this era ensued in the middle of Vijaynagar, Bahmanis, the Reddis of Kondavidu (in the reaches of upper Krishna-Godavari delta), the Velamas of Rajakonda (in the lower reaches of Krishna-Godavari delta), the Telugu-Chodas (flanked by Krishna-Godavari region) and the Gajapatis of Orissa in excess of the control of the Krishna-Godavari delta, Tungabhadra doab and Marathwada (specially Konkan).

On explanation of constant clashes, the Vijaynagar boundaries kept on changing. Flanked by 1336-1422, major conflicts took lay flanked by Vijaynagar and the Bahmanis with Telugu-Choda chiefs siding with the latter while the Velamas of Rajakonda and the Reddis of Rajahmundry joined hands with Vijaynagar. This tilted the balance mainly in favor of the latter.

Throughout 1422-46, conflict in excess of the annexation of Raichur doab started flanked by the Vijaynagar and the Bahmani rulers which resulted in Vijaynagar defeat. This greatly exposed the weaknesses of the Vijaynagar arms. It forced its rulers to reorganize the army through enlisting Muslim archers and engaging better excellence horses. The Muslim archers were given revenue assignments. Throughout this era the whole Kondavidu region was annexed to the Vijaynagar empire.

Flanked by 1465-1509 again, the Raichur doab became the cockpit of clashes. In the beginning, Vijaynagar had to surrender the western ports, i.e. Goa, Chaul and Dabhol to the Bahmanis. But, approximately 1490, internal disintegration' of the Bahmani kingdom began with the establishment of

Bijapur under Yusuf Adil Khan. Taking advantage of the situation, Vijaynagar succeeded in occupying Tungabhadra region (Adoni and Kurnool). Earlier, the loss of western ports had totally dislocated horse trade with the Arabs on which Vijaynagar army depended for its cavalry. Though, job of Honavar, Bhatkal, Bakanur and Mangalore ports led to the revival of horse trade. This ensured the regular supply which sustained the efficiency of the Vijaynagar army.

The Gajapatis of Orissa were a significant power in the eastern region. They had in their possession regions like Kondavidu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam. The Vijaynagar rulers succeeded in expelling the Gajapatis as distant as Godavari and occupied Kondavidu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam. But soon, in 1481, Masulipatam was lost to the Bahmanis. Vijaynagar had also to contend with the constant rebellions of the chieftains of Udayagiri, Ummatur (close to Mysore) and Seringapatam.

### ***Krishnadeva Raya, 1509-29***

This stage is marked through the achievements of Vijaynagar's greatest ruler Krishnadeva Raya (1509-29). Throughout this era, the power of the Bahmanis declined, leading to the emergence of five kingdoms: the Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar; the Adil Shahis of Bijapur; the Imad Shahis of Berar, the Qutb Shahis of Golconda and the Barid Shahis of Bidar on the ruins of the Bahmani empire. This helped Krishnadeva Raya greatly in capturing Kovilkonda and Raichur from the Adil Shahis of Bijapur and Gulbarga and Bidar from the Bahmanis. Krishnadeva Raya also recovered Udayagiri, Kondavidu (south of river Krishna), Nalgonda (in Andhra Pradesh) Telingana and Warangal were taken from the Gajapatis.

Through 1510, the Portuguese also appeared as a strong power to reckon with in Indian waters. Job of Goa and sack of Danda Rajouri and Dabhol

provided them monopoly in horse trade since Goa had been the entrepot of the Deccan states for horse trade. Grishaveva Raya maintained friendly dealings with the Portuguese. On Albuquerque's request, Krishnadeva Raya permitted the construction of a fort at Bhatkal. Likewise, the Portuguese soldiers played a reasonable role in Krishnadeva Raya's success against Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur.

### ***Era of Instability: 1529-42***

Krishnadeva Raya's death generated internal strifes and attracted external invasions. Taking advantage of the internal situation, Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur seized Raichur and Mudgal. The Gajapati and Golconda kings also, though unsuccessfully, attempted to inhabit Kondavidu. Throughout this turbulence, Krishnadeva Raya's brother Achyut Raya (1529-42) succeeded in usurping the Vijaynagar throne. But the latter's death once again led to the war of succession flanked by Achyut Raya's son and Sadasiva, the nephew of Achyut Raya. Finally, Sadasiva ascended the throne (1542), but the real power remained in the hands of Rama Raya, the son-in-law of Krishnadeva Raya. He followed the policy of admitting Muslims in the army and conferred significant offices on them which greatly enhanced the efficiency of the army.

### ***The Portuguese***

Rama Raya's dealings with the Portuguese were not very cordial. Martin Alfonso de Souza, who became the governor of Goa in 1542, plundered Bhatkal. Later, Rama Raya succeeded in concluding a treaty with Alfonso de Souza's successor, Joao de Castro, in 1547, through which Rama Raya secured a monopoly of the horse trade. Rama Raya tried to curb Portuguese power in San Thome on the Coromandel.

### ***Vijaynagar's Dealings with the Deep South***

Through 1512, Vijaynagar rulers succeeded in bringing approximately the whole southern peninsula under their control. The small Hindu chiefdom of Rajagambirarajyan (Tondai Mandala); the Zamorin of Calicut and the ruler of Quilon (Kerala) accepted suzerainty of Vijaynagar. Through 1496, approximately the whole deep south up to the Cape Camorin including regional Chola and Chera rulers, Tanjore and Pudukottai and Manabhusa of Madura were subjugated. Though, the Pandya ruler (chief of Tuticorin and Kayattar) was allowed to rule as a tributary.

A motivating characteristic of the job of the Tamil country was that after the conquests the Telugu soldiers settled down permanently in remote and sparsely populated regions. These migrants exploited the black soil which later led to the emergence of the Reddis as a significant cultivating group. Besides, the emergence of the nayakas as intermediaries in the Tamil country was also the result of expansion into that region.

The Vijaynagar state was a huge political organization which incorporated within its domain diverse people, i.e. the Tamils, Kannadas and the Telugu-speaking society. The Vijaynagar rulers exercised direct territorial sovereignty in excess of the Tungabhadra region. In other parts, the Vijaynagar rulers exercised ritual sovereignty (overlordship) through the Telugu warriors (nayakas) and the regional chiefs who had metamorphosed into nayakas and also through the sectarian groups, i.e. the Vaishnavas.

### ***The Deccan Muslim States***

You have already read that through 1538 the Bahmani kingdom split up into five states— Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Bidar and Berar. Bijapur and Ahmadnagar came to a mutual understanding in 1542-43 which gave

Bijapur a free hand against Vijaynagar, whereas Ahmadnagar was to expand at the cost of Bidar. With this understanding, Ibrahim Adil Shah attacked Vijaynagar which was repulsed. But the understanding did not remain for extensive. Ahmadnagar received Rama Raya's help to capture the fort of Kalyani from Bidar. Rama Raya's dealings with the Deccan states were quite intricate: he helped Ahmadnagar against Bidar but, when Ahmadnagar attacked Gulbarga (Bijapuri territory); Rama Raya came to the help of the Bijapur ruler. Moreover, Rama Raya succeeded in bringing in relation to the communal security plan flanked by the Vijaynagar and the Deccani Muslim states. It was agreed that aggression through any one of them would bring forth armed intervention through the rest of the parties against the aggressor.

In utter violation of the agreement, Ahmadnagar invaded Bijapur in 1560. Rama Raya secured Golconda's help against Ahmadnagar but this alliance, too, proved short lived. Ahmadnagar was defeated and Kalian had to be surrendered to Bijapur. Around this time, Rama Raya also violated the security agreement through attacking Bidar. The ruler of Golconda joined hands with Ahmadnagar and attacked Kalyani. Rama Raya sent his forces against Golconda for recapturing the fortress of Kalyani. On the other hand, Vijaynagar and Bijapur joined hands (which were again a transitory alliance) against the aggression of Ahmadnagar and Golconda. Finally, Ahmadnagar had to surrender the forts of Kovilkonda, Ganpura and Pangal. Throughout this stage, Rama Raya's policy was of playing off one Muslim state against the other to secure a balance of power in favor of Vijaynagar. Later, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Bidar and Bijapur rallied jointly against Vijaynagar. The final showdown was at Talikota (1565), a city situated close to Krishna river. It spelled utter doom for Vijaynagar which was sacked. Rama Raya was killed. Though the Vijaynagar kingdom sustained to exist for approximately hundred more years, its size decreased and the Rayas no longer remained significant in

the politics of South India.

### **Religion and Politics**

Religion and religious classes played a significant role in the political, social and economic life of the Vijaynagar empire. '

### ***Ritual Kingship***

It is usually emphasized that the principle of strict adherence to dharma was the chief constituent and distinguishing characteristic of the Vijaynagar state. But very often it was the Hindu rulers against whom the Vijaynagar rulers had to fight, e.g. the ' Gajapatis of Orissa. The mainly strategically placed contingents of the Vijaynagar army Were under the charge of Muslim commanders. The Muslim archers were employed through King Deva Raya II. These Muslim contingents played a significant role in the victory of Vijaynagar against its Hindu rivals.

The successful military deeds of the Vijaynagar rulers led them to assume the title of digvijayans. Vijaynagar kingship was symbolic in the sense that the Vijaynagar rulers exercised their control through their overlords in excess of a region beyond the prime centre of their power. This symbolism was manifested through the instrument of religion which was used to ensure loyalty from the people. For instance, ritual kingship is best exemplified in the mahanavami festival. This was an annual royal ceremony lasting for nine days flanked by 15 September and 15 October. It culminated in the dusserah festival on the tenth day. Significant personages (e.g., military commanders) from the peripheral parts participated in the festival. Through this festival, recognition of the sovereignty of Vijaynagar rulers through peripheral parts of the empire was strengthened. Though the Brahmans participated in the festival, their role was not predominant. The ritual rites of the festival were

mainly performed through the king himself.

### ***Political Role of the Brahmans***

A separate characteristic of the Vijaynagar state was the importance of the Brahmans as political and secular personnel rather than ritual leaders. Mainly of the durga dannaiks (in charge of forts) were Brahmans. Literary sources substantiate the theory that fortresses were important throughout this era and were placed under the control of the Brahmans, especially of Telugu origins.

Throughout this era, the majority of educated Brahmans desired to become government servants as officers and accountants which offered them good career prospects. The Imperial Secretariat was totally manned through the Brahmans. These Brahmans were dissimilar from the other Brahmans: they belonged to a subcaste described the Telugu niyogis. They were not very orthodox in performing religious rites. They also worked as potential legitimizers. The Brahman Vidyaranya and his kinsmen were the ministers of the Sangama brothers: they provided legitimacy to their rule through accepting them back into the Hindu fold.

The Brahmans also played a significant role as military commanders in the - Vijaynagar army. For instance, under Krishnaideva Raya Brahman Timma received economic support as he was an integral part of the political organization. Therefore Brahmans constructed and commanded fortresses in dissimilar parts of the empire for which they were assigned revenue of some crown villages, bhandaravada. Differentiation was made flanked by crown villages and amaram villages (whose income was under the charge of the regional military chiefs).

### ***Connection flanked by Kings, Sects and Temples***

To set up effective control in excess of the distant Tamil region, the Vijaynagar ruler. sought the help of the Vaishnava sectarian leaders who hailed from the Tamil Country. For legitimizing their power in this region, it was necessary for the rulers, who were aliens in the Tamil region, to set up contacts with the vital Tamil religious organisation—the temples.

The connection flanked by kings, sects and temples can be explained in conditions of four assertions:

- Temples were vital for sustaining kingship, j 2) Sectarian leaders were the connecting links flanked by kings and temples.
- Though the routine supervision of the temples was done through regional sectarian groups, the task of solving disputes concerning temples was in the hands of the king.
- The intervention of the king in the above matter was administrative, not legislative.

Throughout 1350-1650, numerous temples sprang up in south India. Through grants or gifts to the temples in the form of material possessions (a part of the agricultural produce of specified villages), a scrupulous kind of agrarian economy evolved under the Vijaynagar rule.

The rulers of the early Sangama dynasty were Saivas who made additions to the Sri Virupaksha (Pampapati) temple of Vijaynagar. The Saluvas were basically Vaishnavas who gave patronage to both the Siva and Vishnu temples. Krishnadeva Raya (the Tuluva ruler) constructed the Krishnaswami temple (Vaishnava shrine) and also gave grants to Siva temples. The Aravidu kings also gave gifts to Vaishnava temples.

### **Regional Administration**

The powers of the territorial assembly (NADU) as well as the village



assemblies (sabha and ur) were weakened throughout the time of the later Cholas. Throughout the Vijaynagar era, these organizations did not totally disappear when the nayaka and ayagar systems came into prominence.

### ***The Nayankara Organization***

The nayankara organization was a significant feature of the Vijaynagar political organisation. The military chiefs or warriors held the title of nayaka or amaranayaka. It is hard to classify these warriors on the foundation of definite office, ethnic identity, set of duties or rights and privileges.

The institution of nayaka was studied in detail through two Portuguese—Femao Nuniz and Domingo Paes, who visited India throughout the reigns of Krishnadeva Raya and Achyut Raya of Tuluva dynasty throughout the sixteenth century. They regard the nayakas basically as mediators of Rayas (central government). The proof of Nuniz for the payments made through the nayakas to the Rayas brings up the question of feudal obligations. The Vijaynagar inscriptions and the later Mackenzie manuscripts refer to the nayakas as territorial magnates with political aspirations which at times conflicted with the aims of the rulers. U.K. Safari (in 1946) drew a distinction flanked by the kanakas before 1565 and those after 1565. The former were totally dependent upon the rulers while the latter were semi-self-governing. Though, later he customized his views through pointing out that the nayakas before 1565 were military leaders holding military fiefs. In a more recent work (Sources of Indian History), he views the Vijaynagar empire as a military confederacy of several chieftains cooperating under the leadership of the major in the middle of them. He accentuated that the rising threat from Islam led the Vijaynagar rulers to adopt a military and religious stance. Krishnaswami considers the nayaka organization as feudal. But Venkataramanayya feels that significant characteristics of European feudalism

such as fealty, homage and subinfeudation were absent in the nayaka organization. D.C. Sircar similarly refutes the feudal theory; instead he explains it as a type of landlordism, a variant of feudalism in which land was allocated to the amaranayakas for military services rendered through them to the king.

Therefore, B.C. Sircar, and T. V. Mahalingam consider the kanakas of Vijaynagar as warriors holding an office (kara) bestowed on them through the central government on condition of rendering military service. Amaranayakara was a designation conferred on a military officer or chief (nayaka) who had under his control a specified number of troops. These kanakas possessed revenue rights in excess of land or territory described Amara (amaramakara or amaramahali). In the Tamil country and also in the Vijaynagar empire, the region of land therefore alienated under this tenure was in relation to the 3/4th. The obligations and behaviors of the nayakas were in the middle of others, giving gifts to temples, repair and structure of tanks, reclamation of wasteland and collection of dues from temples. The Tamil inscriptions, though, do not refer to dues given to the king or his officials through the nayakas.

Krishnaswami, on the foundation of Mackenzie manuscripts, opines that the commanders of Vijaynagar army (formerly under Krishnadeva Raya) later recognized self-governing nayaka kingdoms. To guard against such dangers, the Vijaynagar kings tried to set up greater control in excess of coastal markets dealing in horse trade. They attempted to monopolise the purchase of horses of good excellence through paying a high price for them. They also built strong garrisons fortified with trustworthy soldiers. Therefore, on the one hand, the Telugu nayaks were a source of strength for the Vijaynagar empire and, on the other, they became its rivals.

### ***The Ayagar Organization***

It has already been pointed out that throughout the Vijaynagar era, autonomous regional organizations, especially in the Tamil country, suffered a set-back. In pre-Vijaynagar days in Karnataka and Andhra regional organizations possessed lesser autonomy as compared to Tamil country. Throughout Vijaynagar era in Karnataka too regional territorial divisions underwent a change but the ayagar organization sustained and became widely prevalent throughout the macro-region. It spread in the Tamil country throughout 15-16th century as a result of the declining power of nadu and nattar. The ayagars were village servants or functionaries and constituted of groups of families. These were headmen (reddi or gauda, maniyam), accountant (karnam senabhova) and watchmen (talaiyari). They were given a portion of or plot in a village. Sometimes they had to pay a fixed rent, but usually these plots were manya or tax-free as no regular customary tax was imposed on their agricultural income. In exceptional cases, direct payments in type were made for services performed through village functionaries. Other village servants who performed essential services and skills for the village society were also paid through assigning plots of land (like washerman and priest). The village servants who provided ordinary goods and services were leather workers whose products incorporated leather bag used in lift-irrigation devices (kiapila or mohte), potter, blacksmith, carpenter, waterman (niranikkar: who looked after the maintenance of irrigation channels and supervised bankers and money-lenders). The distinguishing characteristic of the ayagar organization is that special allocation of income from land and specific cash payments were for the first time provided to village servants holding a scrupulous office.

### **Economy**

We will talk about the several land and income rights and the economic role of temples. We Will also take into explanation characteristics related to

foreign and internal trade and urban life.

### ***Land and Income Rights***

Rice was the staple crop. Both black and white" diversity of rice was produced from Coromandel to Pulicat. Besides, cereals like gram and pulses were also cultivated. Spices (specially black pepper) coconut and betel-nuts were other significant things of manufacture. Land-revenue was the major source of state's income. Rate of revenue demand varied in dissimilar parts of the empire and in the similar locality itself according to the fertility and regional site of the land. It was usually 1 /6th of the produce, but in some cases it was even more ranging up to 1/ 4th. But on Brahmans and temples it was 1 / 20th to 1/ 30th respectively. It was payable both in cash and type. We discover references to three major categories of land tenure: amara, bhandaravada and manya. These indicate the method in which the village income was distributed. The bhandarvada was a crown village comprising the negligible category.

A part of its income was utilised to uphold the Vijaynagar. forts. Income from the manya (tax-free) villages was used to uphold the Brahmans, temples, and mathas. The main category was of the amara villages given through the Vijaynagar rulers to the amaranayakas. Their holders did not possess proprietary rights in land but enjoyed privileges in excess of its income only. The amara tenure was primarily residual in the sense that its income was distributed after deductions had been made for support of the Brahmans and forts. Three-quarters of all the villages came under this category. The term amaramakni is Measured through mainly historians as referring to an 'estate' or a 'fief,' but it literally means one-sixteenth share (makani). Therefore, it points to the information that the amaranayakas could claim only a limited share of village income. The several rights underwent a transformation

throughout this era. Land tenures sustained to be given through the state to individual (ekabhogan) Brahmans and groups of Brahmans as well as to mathas including the non- Brahman Saiva Siddharta and Vaishnava gurus. But there was a great augment in devadana grants (conferred on temples) made through the state as compared to other grants.

Besides land-tax, several professional taxes also were imposed. These were on shopkeepers, farm-servants, shepherds, washermen, potters, shoemakers, musicians etc. There was also tax on property. Grazing and homes taxes were also imposed. Villagers were also supposed to pay for the maintenance of the village officers. Besides, sthala dayam, margadayam and manula dayam were three major transit dues.

Another category of land right through which income was derived was a result of investment in irrigation. It was described dasavanda in Tamil country; and Kattu- Kodage in Andhra and Karnataka. This type of agrarian action concerning irrigation was undertaken in semi-arid regions where hydrographic and topographic characteristics were conducive for carrying out developmental projects. The dasavanda or Kattu-Kodage was a share in the increased productivity of the land earned through the person who undertook such developmental work (e.g. construction of a tank or channel). This right to income was personal and transferable. A portion of income accruing from the increased productivity also went to the cultivators of the village where the developmental work was undertaken.'

### ***Economic Role of Temples***

Throughout the Vijaynagar era, temples appeared as significant landholders. Villages were granted to the deities who were worshipped in the big temple. Temple officers supervised the devadana villages to ensure that the grant was utilised properly. The income from devadana villages provided

sustenance to the ritual functionaries, It was also utilised to give food offerings or to purchase goods (mostly aromatic substances and cloth) essential for carrying out the ritual rites.

Cash endowments were also made through the state to the temples for providing ritual service. Temples took up irrigational work also. Big temples holding devadana lands had under them irrigation department for properly channelizing money grants made to the temples. Those who gave cash grants to temples also received a share of the food offering (prasadam) derived from the increased productivity.

In information, temples in South India were significant centres of economic action. They were not only great landholders but they also accepted on banking behaviors. They employed a number of persons. Mahalingam refers to an inscription which mentions a temple which employed 370 servants. Temples purchased regional goods for performance of ritual services. They gave loans to individuals and village assemblies for economic purposes. The loans were given against lands whose income went to the temples. Cash endowments made through the state to the Tirupati temple were ploughed back in irrigation. The income therefore attained was used to carry out and uphold ritual services. At Srirangam Temple, cash grants were used to advance commercial loans to business firms in Trichnopoly. Temples had their trusts which utilised its funds for several purposes. Therefore, the temples functioned approximately as a self-governing economic organization encompassing persons and organizations that were bound jointly through economic links.

### ***Foreign Trade***

We get information in relation to the foreign trade from the

Amuktamaiyada of Krishnadeva Raya, Domingo Paes and Nuniz. They provide vivid account of horse trade. The role of the Indians in the overseas carrying trade was minimal. Barbosa mentions that Indian overseas trade was totally controlled through Muslim merchants. They used to get special treatment from the rulers. He says that on returning from the Red Sea the king assigned them a nayar bodyguard, a Chetti accountant and a broker for help in regional transactions. Such was their status that, at Kayal, even royal monopoly of pearl-fisheries was given to a Muslim merchant. The Arabs and later the Portuguese controlled horse trade. Horses were brought from Arabia, Syria and Turkey to the west-coast ports. Goa supplied horses to Vijaynagar as well as the Deccani Sultanates. Importation of horses was of great military importance for the southern states as good horses were not bred in India. Besides, Vijaynagar's disagreement with the northern Deccan Muslim states restricted the supply of horses from north India that were imported from Central Asia. Besides horses, ivory, pearls, spices, valuable stones, coconuts, palm-sugar, salt, etc. were also, imported. Pearls were brought from the Persian Gulf and Ceylon and valuable stones from Pegu. Velvet was imported from Mecca and satin, silk, damask and brocade from China. White rice, Sugarcane (other than palm-sugarcane) and iron were the major exports. Diamonds were exported from Vijaynagar. Nuniz states that its diamond mines were the richest in the world. The principal mines were on the banks of the Krishna river and in Kurnool and Anantapur. This led to the development of a great industry for cutting and polishing valuable stones like diamonds, sapphires and rubies in Vijaynagar and Malabar.

### ***Internal Trade and Urban Life***

The modern foreign accounts illustrate that regional and extensive aloofness trade increased under the Vijaynagar rulers. Roads and roadside facilities for travelers flanked by cities were excellent. Carts were used for the

transport of granules in excess of short distances. Riverine shipping especially the back water-organization on the west-coast has also been referred to. Pack-animals were used for extensive aloofness transport. In some spaces armed guards for extensive aloofness transport were employed. Regional magnates realized the importance of trade and gave encouragement to city based trade and auxiliary trade in regular and periodic fairs. Regular and periodic fairs took lay beside the main roads leading to big temples throughout festival times. These fairs were mannered through trade associations of a nearby city and under the- supervision of the leader of trade association described pattanaswami. Fairs which gave impetus to urban trade were also held at the orders of the regional magnates, e.g. gauda or chief of a nadu. The literary and inscriptional proofs of the 14th to 16th centuries reveal the subsistence of 80 major trade centres. Some cities were religious; others were commercial and administrative centres. Inside these cities were several bazars where business was accepted on through merchants. They paid rents to the cities. There were separate markets for scrupulous commodities. Markets for agricultural and nonagricultural products were separate in accordance with the left and right hand caste affiliations. Trade in consecrated food for pilgrims and the sale of the right of ritual functions and offices were significant characteristics of temple-related urban commerce.

The merchants and artisan organisations in Andhra got recognized with sure municipalities, e.g. the Telugu oil-pressers and merchants were associated with the municipality of Berwada (in Krishna district). In these cities, the transit duties, shop and homes-rents provided income to the cities. The temple-records refer to the prosperity and prestige of merchants and artisans. The Vijaynagar state possessed an urban excellence which is not witnessed in any other South Indian state of the time. The capital municipality integrated within its precincts markets, palaces, temples, mosques, etc. This urban excellence was, though, totally destroyed through the middle-16th century.



## **Society**

The social structure of the South Indian macro-region (Vijaynagar empire) is a unique variant of the Indian society. The uniqueness of the social structure was three-fold:

- Secular functions of the South Indian Brahmans
- Dual division of lower social groups
- Territorial segmentation of the society.

The Brahmans existed in localities where they controlled land, and their prestige and power was also derived from their control in excess of those dependent on land. They also enjoyed prestige due to their sacral functions as a priestly class. The emergence of a big number of Vedic temples endowed with villages (devadanas) gave the Brahmans as temple functionaries the power to exercise ritual control in excess of all other castes and religious organizations. As managers of these religious centres, the Brahmans enjoyed great secular power.

Territorial segmentation of society implies that social groups in the Tamil country were divided on the foundation of natural sub-region and occupational patterns associated with them. Social groups in South India had less interaction with groups at some aloofness from their locality. They gave preference to cross-cousin and maternal uncle-niece marriages.

Another feature of the social structure was the dual division of lower castes referred to through the right and left-hand designations (Vaishnavas corresponding to the right hand division and the Saivites corresponding to the left hand castes). In mainly cases, the right-hand castes were involved primarily in Agricultural manufacture and regional trade in agricultural commodities whereas left-hand castes were occupied in mobile artisan

manufacture and extensive trade in non-agricultural products.

Throughout the Vijaynagar era, the peasant was the foundation of the social order on which all other parts of the society depended. The satkams, the Tamil poetic genre, regard the leading peasantry as pure sat-sudras. They claimed ritual purity and respectable secular rank for them.

Temples played a significant role in delineating or determining social legroom of groupings who were the participants in the worship of a scrupulous deity. A significant feature of lineage in the South Indian kingship is marked through the general devotion to the lineage tutelary. The non-Brahman priests of the peasants' tutelary shrines (e.g. amman) also participated in the administration of great shrines of Siva and Vishnu where the Brahman priests predominated. The matha the seat of sectarian organisation situated at great shrines, consisted of persons of both the Brahman and non-Brahman orders. Therefore, the social organisation of this era comprised of the Brahmans, the left and right-hand castes which incorporated respectable agricultural castes, namely vellals and lower castes like the weavers.

## **THE BAHMANIS**

### **Rise of the Bahmani Power**

In this set-up, the mainly! powerful person was the „viceroy' of the Deccan who was virtually the master of k big region with as several as 23 provinces. Another significant functionary with wide powers was Amiran Sadah i.e. the chief of 100 villages.

In spite of this elaborate administrative set-up, the real control of the Sultan was weak mainly because of:

- The aloofness from Delhi

- Hard geographical terrain
- Wide powers enjoyed through the „viceroy’ and other officers.

In this situation, any dissatisfaction of the officers (posted in the Deccan) with the centre could lead to the snapping of ties with Delhi.

### ***Beginning of Trouble***

The role of the amirami sadah in creation the Deccan self-governing of the Tughluq rule is relevant. These officers of noble lineage performed the twin functions as military officers and revenue collectors. They had direct connection with the people of their territory. Where a series of rebellions broke out in the South, Muhammad Tughluq attributed them to the huge power exercised through these amirs; as a result, he embarked upon a policy of suppressing them which in turn sounded the death- knell of the Tughluq rule in the Deccan. We will briefly take note of the several rebellions which broke out throughout this era and how they contributed to the rise of a new kingdom and a new dynasty.

The earliest Deccan rebellion against the centre took lay in 1327 at Sugar in Gulnara. It was headed through Bahauddin Gurkhas and supported through regional chiefs and amirs. The revolt was crushed but it paved the method for the need to set up the capital at a lay more centrally situated than Delhi from where the southern provinces could also be kept in check. Muhammad Tughluq, therefore, made Deogir the second capital of the empire in 1328. But the scheme failed as the very nobles who were sent to stabilise the Tughluq rule in the Deccan weakened the control of Delhi.

The first major successful rebellion occurred in Ma'bar. The governor of Ma'bar: alliance with sure nobles of Daulatabad raised the banner of revolt. In

1336-37, the governor of Bidar also rebelled but was suppressed.

Muhammad Tughluq felt that the danger to the Tughluq rule in the Deccan was from the scions of the Old nobility whom he had sent to the South from Delhi. He, so, adopted the policy of replacing them with a new breed of nobles who would be loyal to him. But this was not of much help due to the recalcitrant behaviour of the amiran-i sadah who ultimately carved out a self-governing kingdom in the Deccan.

Approximately 1344, the amount of revenue due from the Deccan had fallen sharply. Muhammad Tughluq divided the Deccan into 4 shiqs and placed them under the charge of neo-Muslims whom Barani calls „upstarts“. This was not liked through the amiran-i sadah. In 1345, the nobles posted in Gujarat conspired and rebelled against Delhi. Muhammad Tughluq suspected the complicity of the amiran-i sadah in the Gujarat insurrection. The viceroy of the Deccan was ordered through Muhammad Tughluq to summon the amirs of Raichur, Gulbarga, Bijapur, etc. to Broach. The amiran-i sadah, fearing drastic punishment at the hands of Muhammad Tughluq, decided to strike a blow at the Tughluq rule in the Deccan and declared themselves self-governing at Daulatabad through electing Nasiruddin Ismail Shah, the senior amir of Deogir" as their Sultani Gulbarga was the first region to be taken after the establishment of their rule in Daulatabad. Those opposing the Delhi Sultanate consisted of the Rajputs, Deccanis, Mongols, Gujarati amirs and the troops sent through the Raja of Tanjore. They appeared victorious in the end. But Ismail Shah abdicated in favor of Hasan Kangu (Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah) and, therefore, was laid the base of the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan in 1347. The new kingdom comprised the whole region of the Deccan. For the after that 150 years, this kingdom dominated the political! behaviors in the South.

## **Conquests and Consolidation**

The political growths of the Bahmani kingdom can be divided into two phases: In the first stage (1347-1422), the centre of behaviors was Gulbarga while in the second stage (1422-1538) the capital shifted to Bidar which was more centrally situated and fertile. Throughout this stage, we discover conflicts flanked by the Afaqis and the Dakhnis touching its peak.

### ***First Stage, 1347-1422***

In the era flanked by 1347-1422, major conquests were effected. Kotgir in Andhra Pradesh, Qandahar in Maharashtra, Kalyani in Karnataka, Bhongir in Telingana, Sagar, Khembhavi, Malkher and Seram in Gulbarga (Karnataka), Manram, Akkalkot and Mahendri in Maharashtra and Maridu in Malwa (Madhya Pradesh) were subjugated. The Bahmani rule sheltered Mandu in the north to Raichur in the south and from Bhongir in the east to Dabhol and Goa in the west.

The Raya of Telingana and Raya of Vijaynagar were the main rivals of the Bahmanis in this era. In one engagement with the Raya of Telingana Golconda was handed in excess of to the Bahmanis. Though, war with Vijaynagar did not prove to be decisive and the Tungabhadra Doab sustained to be shared flanked by the two powers.

Very soon the Bahmanis lost Goa to Vijaynagar in the late 14th century. In one campaign launched through the Bahmanis against the Raja of Kherla (Maharashtra), who was being encouraged through the rulers of Vijaynagar, Malwa and Khandesh to rebel against Bahmanis, he was forced to submit. In Telingana, two rivals—Vema (of Rajahmundry) and Velama (of Telingana) (Andhra factions) —were supported through Vijaynagar and Bahmanis respectively. The Bahmanis tried to intrude into Telingana but were repulsed

through the Velamas. The Bahmanis sustained to face with one Andhra faction against the other for territorial gains. Significant information for the Bahmani losses in the campaign against Vijaynagar in the early 15th century was the information that the Velamas who had earlier supported the Bahmanis had shifted their allegiance to Vijaynagar.

### ***Second Stage, 1422-1538***

The era flanked by 1422-1538 was marked through the shift of capital from Gulbarga to Bidar. It was centrally and strategically situated. The three linguistic regions (Marathi, Kannad and Telugu) converged on this point. The thrash about for supremacy flanked by the Vijaynagar and the Bahmanis sustained in this era as well. Warangal was annexed to the Bahmani kingdom in this era. The self-governing kingdoms of Malwa and Gujarat also had to bear the brunt of the Bahmani power. While Malwa proved to be weak, the Sultanate of Gujarat, in spite of two major campaigns, did not provide method to the Bahmanis. A significant consequence of the latter confrontation was the formation of alliance flanked by the Sultanate of Khandesh and Bahmanis to counter the threat from Gujarat.

Flanked by 1436-1444, two clashes occurred flanked by the Vijaynagar and the Bahmanis. In the first one, the Bahmanis had to face defeat. Though, the second one, according to Ferishta, ultimately proved to be advantageous for the Bahmanis. The Rajas of Sangameshwar and Khandesh were subjugated. In the Gujarat campaign, the major cause of the defeat of the Bahmans was the internal strife flanked by the two factions of the nobles, the Deccanis and the Afaqis. The Deccanis had betrayed the Bahmani cause. So, in the campaign against Khandesh, the Deccanis were excluded which brought serious repercussions. In 1446, to suppress the Raja of Kherla and Sangameshwar (Konkan), the Deccanis and the Afaqis were sent. The

expedition ended in disaster for the Bahmanis. The Deccanis blamed the Afaqis who were consequently punished. Later the Afaqis pleaded their case and regained ascendancy in the court. These strifes proved harmful for the empire. This was the era when Mahmud Gawan came into prominence as the Bahmani minister. The ruler of Orissa in alliance with the king of Telingana attacked the Bahmanis but they were repulsed through Mahmud Gawan. The ruler of Malwa also made a bid to conquer the Bahmani territories (e.g., Bidar). Though, he had to retreat when Gujarat came to the rescue of the Bahmanis. Another effort of Malwa also failed. Mahmud Gawan conquered Hubli, Belgaum and Bagalkot. The Bombay-Kafnatak zone came under the Bahmani sway. Under Gawa's able guidance, the empire extended from Orissa to Goa (Konkan). Finally, Mahmud Gawan, an Afaqi, became a victim of group rivalry and was murdered at the hands Of the Deccani party. After this, the kingdom rolled down the path of disintegration. Wars undertaken against Vijaynagar ended in disaster and ultimately, through 1538 the Bahmani dynasty came to an end and the kingdom broke up into 5 states—Berar, Bidar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda.

### **Disagreement Flanked by the Afaqis and the Dakhnis and their Dealings with the King**

Every Sultan's interest was to win the loyalty of his nobles. The similar custom sustained in the Bahmani kingdom as well. As early as Alauddin Bahman Shah's reign we see as several as three factions: one which helped Alauddin Bahman Shah in establishing a self-governing kingdom in the Deccan; the other was the Tughluq faction and the third faction comprised of regional chiefs and vassals who had personal interests.

From Alauddin Mujahid's reign (1375-78) onwards, a new factor was introduced in the composition of the nobility, i.e. the Afaqis. This word means „universal'—persons who were uprooted and hence did not belong to any

region. They were also described gharibud diyar, that is, „strangers’. These Afaqis had migrated from Iran, Transoxiana and Iraq. But it was throughout Ghiyasuddin Tahamtan’s reign, in 1397, that the real conflict flanked by the Dakhnis and the Afaqis began when the Sultan appointed several Afaqis to higher posts: for instance, Salabat Khan was appointed the governor of Berar, Muhammad Khan sar-i naubat and Ahmad Beg Qazwini as peshwa. Appointment of the Afaqis to such high posts which were earlier held through the Dakhnis greatly raised dissatisfaction in the middle of the old nobility and the Turkish faction under the leadership of Taghalchin. Taghalchifi succeeded in reducing their power as early as 1397 when he successfully conspired the murder of Ghiyasuddin and placed Shamsuddin Dawudll (1397) as a puppet king and assured for himself the post of Malik Naib and Mir Jumla. It was Ahmad I (1422-36) who for the first time appointed Khalaf Hasan Basri, an Afaqi (with whose help he got the throne), to the highest office of wakil-i Sultanat and conferred on him the highest title of malik-ut tujjar (prince of merchants). This phenomenal rise was the result of the continuous expression of loyalty shown through the Afaqis compared to the Dakhnis. It was the Afaqi Syed Hussain Badakhohi and others who helped Ahmad I in his escape throughout his Vijaynagar campaign in the early years of his reign. As a result, Ahmad I recruited a special force of the Afaqi archers. Similar other favours were also showered on them. This policy created great resentment in the middle of the Dakhnis. Clashes flanked by these two groups can be seen throughout Ahmad’s Gujarat campaign when, on explanation of the non-cooperation of the Dakhnis, the Bahmani arms had to face defeat under the leadership of Malik-ut-tujjar. This gulf widened further throughout Ahmad II’s reign. At the time of the attacks of Khandesh army on explanation of the non-cooperation of the Dakhnis, only the Afaqis could be dispatched under Khalaf Hasan Basri. Humayun Shah (1458-1461) tried to uphold equilibrium flanked by the two factions. Throughout Ahmad III’s reign (1461-65 A.D.), the Dakhnis felt that much power was concentrated into the hands of the Afaqis



with Khwaja-i Jahan Turk, Malik-ut tujjar and Mahmud Gawan at the helm of affairs. On the other hand, the Afaqis were dissatisfied because the power which they enjoyed under Ahmad II's reign was greatly reduced under the latter's successor. Mahmud Gawan, the chief minister of Muhammad III (1463-1482), also tried to uphold the equilibrium flanked by the two. As a result, he appointed Malik Hasan as sar-i lashkar of Telingana and Fathullah as sar-i lashkar of Berar. But Mahmud Gawan himself fell prey to the conspiracy of Zarif-ul Mulk Dakhni and Miftah Habshi. Once the equilibrium was disturbed, the successive weak kings became puppets in the hands of one group or the other.

Throughout Shihabuddiil Mahmud's reign (1482-1518), the conflict reached its climax. While the king showed his separate inclination for the Afaqis, the Dakhnis joined hands with the Habshi (Abyssinian) faction. The latter, in 1487, in a desperate bid attempted to kill the king but failed. It resulted in a big-level massacre of the Dakhnis which sustained for three days. All these factional fights weakened the centre. Shihabuddinte reign itself was marred through continuous rebellions and intrigues of Qasim Barid, Malik Ahmad Nizamul Mulk, Bahadur Gilani, etc. Shihabuddin's death (1518) provided these nobles approximately a free hand in their provinces. Finally, Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur was the first to claim his independence in 1537. Therefore began the physical disintegration of the Bahmani Sultanate.

### **Central and Provincial Administration**

The Bahmanis appear to have copied the administrative structure of the Delhi Sultans. The king was at the helm of affairs, followed through wakil, wazir, bakhshi and qazi. Besides, there were dabir (secretary), mufti (interpreter of law), kotwal, muhtasib (censor of public morals). Munihians (spy) were appointed not only in every corner of their kingdom, but we are told that throughout Muhammad's reign, munihians were posted at Delhi, too

Throughout Muhammad I's reign, the Bahmani kingdom was divided into four parts or provinces, i.e. Daulatabad, Berar, Bidar and Gulbarga each ruled through a tarafdar. Since Gulbarga was the mainly significant province, only the mainly trusted nobles were appointed who were described mir naib (viceroys)—separate from the governors (tarafdars) of other provinces. Later on, as the boundaries of the kingdom expanded, Mahmud Gawan divided the empire into eight provinces. Some parts of the empire were put under the direct control of the Sultan (khassa-i Sultani).

### **Army Organization**

The amir-ul umara was the commander of the army. The army mainly consisted of soldiers and cavalry. Elephants were also employed. The rulers maintained a big number of bodyguards recognized as khassakhel. Muhammad I is stated to have had four thousand bodyguards. Besides, there were silahdars who were in charge of the personal armory of the king. In times of need, barbardars were asked to rally troops. Another feature characteristic of the Bahmani army was the use of gunpowder that gave them military advantage.

Niccolo Conti, an Italian traveller, who visited India in the 15th century, writes that their army used javelins, swords, arm-pieces, round-shields, bows and arrows. He adds that they used ballistae and bombarding machines as well as siege-pieces'. Duarte Barbosa who visited India throughout 1500-17 also made similar remarks that they used maces, battle-axes, bows and arrows. He adds: "they [Moorish] ride on high-pummeled saddle.... fight tied to their saddles..... The genitors.... the superior part of them fight on foot, but some on horseback..." Mahmud Gawan streamlined the military administration as well. Earlier, the tarafdars had absolute power to appoint the qiladars of the forts. Gawan placed one fort under one tarafdar's jurisdiction, the rest of the forts within a province were placed under the central command. To check

corruption, he made a rule that every officer should be paid at a fixed rate for every 500 troopers maintained through him. When he was given revenue assignments in lieu of cash, the amount incurred through the officer in the collection of revenue was to be paid to him separately. If he failed to uphold the stipulated soldiers, he had to refund the proportionate amount to the exchequer.

### **Economy**

Mahmud Gawan ordered for systematic measurement of land fixing the boundaries of the villages and cities. Therefore, in this regard he was the forerunner of Raja Todar Mal. All this greatly helped the exchequer. First, the income of the empire was ensured and became recognized in advance; secondly, it also curbed the corruption of the nobles to the minimum, thereby rising the state's income.

In the Bahmani kingdom, trade and commerce was in a flourishing state. Nikitin, a Russian traveller, who was in the Deccan throughout 1469-74, gives ample information concerning the commercial behaviors of Bidar. He says that horses, cloth, silk, and pepper were the chief merchandise. He adds that at Shikhaludin Peratyr and at Aladinarid bazar people assembled in big numbers where trade sustained for ten days. He also mentions the Bahmani seaport Mustafabad-Dabul as a centre of commercial action. Dabul was well-linked not only with the Indian but also with the African ports. Horses were imported from Arabia, Khurasan and Turkestan. Trade and commerce was mostly in the hands of the Hindu merchants. Musk and fur were imported from China.

### **Society and Culture**

The social structure of the Bahmanis was cosmopolitan in character. There were Muslims, Hindus, Iranians, Transoxonians, Iraqis and Abyssinians

(Habshis). The Portuguese came throughout the early 16th century. This heterogeneous character becomes more prominent if we look at its linguistic pattern: Persian, Marathi, Dakhni (proto-Urdu), Kannada and Telugu languages were widely spoken in several parts of the kingdom.

Broadly, two classes lived in the society. According to Nikitin, there were poor, and the nobles who were “very opulent”. He says that “the nobles were accepted on their Silver beds, preceded through twenty horses caparisoned in gold and followed through three hundred men on horseback and five hundred on foot beside with ten torchbearers” Nikitin also provides a graphic explanation of the grandeur of the Bahmani wazir, Mahmud Gawan. He mentions that everyday beside with him 500 men used to dine. For the safety of his homes alone, everyday 100 armed personnel kept vigilance. In contrast, the common population was poor. Though Nikitin mentions only two classes, there was yet another class—the merchants (the so-described middle class).

The sufis were greatly venerated through the Bahmani rulers. Initially, they migrated to the Deccan as religious auxiliaries of the Khaljis and the Tughluqs. The infant Bahmani kingdom required the support of the sufis for popular legitimization of their power. The sufis who migrated to the Bahmani kingdom were chiefly of the Chishti, Qadiri and Shattari orders. Bidar appeared as one of the mainly significant centres of the Qadiri order. Shaikh Sirajuddin Junaidi was the first sufi to receive the royal favor. The Chishti saints enjoyed the greatest honour. Syed Muhammad Gesu Daraz, the well-known Chishti saint of Delhi, migrated to Gulbarga in 1402-3. Sultan Feroz granted a number of villages as inam for the upkeep of his khanqah. But throughout the later era of his reign dissensions flanked by the two urbanized on explanation of the sufi’s support for the Sultan’s brother Ahmad as his successor. It finally led to the expulsion of Gesu Daraz from Gulbarga.

With the big influx of the Afaqis in the Bahmani kingdom, the Shias also establish their lay under Fazlullah's power. Ahmad I's act of sending 30,000 silver tankas for sharing in the middle of the Saiyyids of Karbala in Iraq shows his inclination for the Shia doctrine. The mainly influential wazir of Ahmad III was also a Shia.

Hindu traditions and Culture also influenced the Bahmani court. Sultan Feroz's (1397-1422) marriage with a daughter of the royal family of Vijaynagar helped greatly in the Hindu-Muslims cultural harmony. There is a legend that Feroz even once went to Vijaynagar in the guise of a Hindu faqir. Even in the mainly significant ceremony like the celebration of urs, Hindu powers are to be seen. Throughout the urs celebrations, the Jangam (the head of the Lingayats of Madhyal in Gulbarga district) would perform the ceremony in typical Hindu fashion—conch-blowing, flower offerings, etc. What is motivating is that the Jangam wore Muslim apparel with the usual cap that the Muslim darwesh (hermit) used.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- How distant did the geopolitical circumstances of Bengal help in maintaining its self-governing character?
- What was the role of Abyssinian nobles in the politics of late 15th century Bengal?
- Look at the dealings of Bengal rulers with the kingdom of Kamrup.
- Examine the role of geography in the emergence of Kashmir as a self-governing Kingdom.
- Who was Zainul Abedin?
- How did the Rajput tribes succeed in establishing their monarchies in north-west India?
- Critically look at dealings of Gujarat with Malwa rulers.

- What do you understand through 'horizontal' and 'vertical' penetration under the regional states?
- Can the regional states may truly be described the successor states of the Sultanate? Comment.
- Do you think that the administrative structure of regional states was similar to that of the Delhi Sultanate?
- Write a note on the nature and structure of the ruling classes under the regional states.
- Name the kingdoms and their regions that appeared on the debris of the Chola and the Chalukya empires.
- Talk about the role of the nayakas in the southern kingdoms.
- What were the main feature characteristics of the economy of the southern kingdoms?
- Talk about the disagreement flanked by the Vijaynagar and Bahmani kingdoms for the control in excess of Krishna-Godavari delta, Tungabhadra, doab and Konkan.
- Describe the development of trade and commerce under the Vijaynagar rulers with special reference to foreign trade.
- How can we say (that disagreement flanked by the Afaqis and the Dakhnis ultimately sealed the fate of the Bahmani kingdom?
- Write a note on Made and commerce under the Bahmani rule.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **Society and Culture: 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Century**

#### **STRUCTURE**

- Learning objectives
- Socio-religious movement: Bhakti movement
- Socio-religious, movement: Sufi movement
- Art and architecture of Delhi sultanate
- Art and architecture of regional states
- Language and literature
- Lifestyle and popular cultures
- Review questions

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

After-going through this chapter you will be able to learn about:

- The nature of land revenue organization and its extraction.
- The mechanism of sharing of revenue possessions.
- Price control events of Alauddin Khalji.
- The extent of farming, the crops grown through the peasant, canal irrigation and its impact.
- A considerable augment in the size and perhaps in the number of cities.
- A marked rise in craft manufacture.
- A corresponding expansion in commerce.
- Distinguish flanked by the pre-Islamic and indo-Islamic styles of structure.
- Identify major architectural styles of the era.
- Emphasize the character and development of architectural styles in the structures in the regional states,

- Highlight the traditions and shapes of painting, mainly of manuscript illumination, outside of the realm of the Delhi sultanate
- The introduction and growth of Persian language and literature in India,
- The origin and growth of Urdu language.
- The lifestyles of the royal household, Ulema, aristocracy, merchants, landed aristocracy, peasant and slaves

## **SOCIO-RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT: BHAKTI MOVEMENT**

### **Background: Bhakti Movement in South India**

The saiva Nayanar saints and vaishnava. Alvar saints of South India spread the doctrine of bhakti in the middle of dissimilar parts of the society irrespective of caste and sex throughout the era flanked by the seventh and the tenth century. Some of these saints came from the “lower” castes and some were women. The saint-poets preached bhakti in an intense emotional manner and promoted religious egalitarianism. They dispensed with rituals and traversed the region many times singing, dancing and advocating bhakti. The Alvar and Nayanar saints used the Tamil language and not Sanskrit for preaching and composing devotional songs. All these characteristics gave the movement a popular character. For the first time bhakti acquired a popular base. The South Indian bhakti saints were critical of Buddhists and Jains who enjoyed a privileged status at the courts of South Indian kings at that time. They won in excess of several adherents of Buddhism and Jainism both of which through now had become rigid and formal religions. At the similar time, though, these poet-saints resisted the power of the orthodox Brahmins through creation bhakti accessible to all without any caste and sex discrimination. But the South Indian bhakti movement had its limitations as well. It never consciously opposed Brahmanism or the varna and caste systems at the social stage. It was integrated with the caste organization and the “lower” castes sustained to suffer from several social disabilities. There was no elimination of



Brahmanical rituals such as worship of idols, recitation of the Vedic mantras and pilgrimages to sacred spaces in spite of the overriding emphasis on bhakti as the superior mode of worship. The Buddhists and Jains were its main targets, not the Brahmans. This perhaps was also the cause why the Brahman dominated temples played a significant role in the growth of South Indian bhakti movement. Since the ideological and social foundations of caste organization were not questioned through the South Indian saint-poets, the bhakti movement of the South in the extensive run strengthened it rather than weakening it. Ultimately, after the movement reached its climax in the tenth century, it was slowly assimilated into the conventional Brahmanical religion. But despite these limitations, the South Indian bhakti movement in its heyday succeeded in championing the cause of religious equality and, consequently, the Brahmans had to accept the right of the “low-caste” to preach, to have access to bhakti as a mode of worship and to have access even to the Vedas.

### ***Bhakti and the South Indian Acharyas***

When the popularity of the bhakti movement in South India was on the wane, the doctrine of bhakti was defended at the philosophical stage through a series of brilliant vaishnava Brahman scholars (acharyas). Ramanuja (11th century) was first in the middle of them. He gave philosophical justification for bhakti. He tried to set up a careful balance flanked by orthodox Brahmanism and popular bhakti which was open to all. Though he did not support the thought of the “lower” castes having access to the Vedas, he advocated bhakti as a mode of worship accessible to all including the Sudras and even the outcastes. While propagating bhakti, He did not observe caste distinctions and even tried to eradicate untouchability. Nimbarka, a Telugu Brahman, is whispered to have been a younger modern of Ramanuja. He spent mainly of his time in Vrindavan close to Mathura in North India. He whispered in total devotion to Krishna and Radna. Another South Indian

vaishnavite bhakti philosopher was Madhava who belonged to the thirteenth century. Like Ramanuja, he did not dispute orthodox Brahmanical restriction of the Vedic revise through the Sudras. He whispered that bhakti provided alternate avenue of worship to the Sudras. His philosophical organization was based on the Bhagvat Purana. He is also whispered to have toured North India. The last two prominent vaishnava acharyas were Ramananda (late 14th and early 15th century) and Vallabha (late 15th and early 16th century). Since both of them existed mostly in North India throughout the Sultanate era and gave new orientation to the vaishnava bhakti, they will be discussed in the part dealing with North India.

### **Bhakti Movement in North India**

There arose throughout the Sultanate era (13th-15th century) several popular socio-religious movements in North and East India, and Maharashtra. Emphasis on bhakti and religious equality were two general characteristics of these movements. As has been pointed out, these two were also the characteristics of the South Indian bhakti movements. Approximately all the bhakti movements of the Sultanate era have been related to one South Indian vaishnava acharya or the other. For these reasons, several scholars consider that the bhakti movements of the Sultanate era were a continuation or resurgence of the older bhakti movement. They argue that there lived philosophical and ideological links flanked by the two either due to get in touch with or diffusion. Therefore, Kabir and other leaders of non-conformist monotheistic movements in North India are whispered to have been the disciples of Ramananda who, in turn, is whispered to have been linked with Ramanuja's philosophical order. Similar claims have been made that Chaitanya, the mainly important figure of the vaishnava movement in Bengal, belonged to the philosophical school of Madhava. This movement is also whispered to have been linked with Nimbarka's school because of its emphasis on „Krishna' bhakti.

There are undoubtedly striking similarities flanked by the older bhakti custom of South India and several bhakti movements that flourished in the Sultanate and Mughal periods. If we exclude the popular monotheistic movements of Kabir, Nanak and other „low” caste saints, the two sets of movements can be shown to have possessed several more general characteristics. For instance, like the South Indian bhakti movement, the vaishnava bhakti movements of North and Eastern India and Maharashtra, though egalitarian in the religious sphere, never denounced the caste organization, the power of Brahmanical scriptures and the Brahmanical privileges as such.

Consequently, like the South Indian bhakti, mainly of the vaishnava movements of the later era were ultimately assimilated into the Brahmanical religion, though in the procedure of interaction, the latter itself underwent several changes. Though, the similarities end here. Bhakti movement was never a single movement except in the broad doctrinal sense of a movement which laid emphasis on bhakti and religious equality. The bhakti movements of medieval India differed in several important compliments not only from the older South Indian bhakti custom but also in the middle of themselves. Each one of them had its own regional identity and socio-historical and cultural contexts. Therefore, the non-conformist movements based on popular monotheistic bhakti contained characteristics that were essentially dissimilar from several vaishnava bhakti movements. Kabir’s notion of bhakti was not the similar as that of the medieval vaishnava saints such as Chaitanya or Mirabai. Within the vaishnava movement, the historical context of Maharashtra bhakti was dissimilar from that of the Bengal vaishnavism or North Indian bhakti movement of Ramanand, Vallabha, Surdas and Tulsidas. Throughout the later era, when the vaishnava bhakti movement crystallized into sects, there arose frequent disputes flanked by them which sometimes

even turned violent. In the middle of all the bhakti movements of the era flanked by the 14th and 17th century, the popular monotheistic movements of Kabir, Nanak, Raidas and other "lower" caste saints stand out fundamentally dissimilar.

### ***Popular Monotheistic Movement and Vaishnava Bhakti Movement***

Both these movements arose in Northern India at the similar time, that is, in the centuries following the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate and advent of Islam in that part of the country. For this cause, the rise of both the movements is quite often attributed to sure general causes such as the power of Islam on Hinduism. Though, the causes and sources of the two movements and the factors exerting power on them were quite diverse. It will become clear from the following discussion that a cause which explains one movement may not do so in the case of the other. This is so because the popular monotheistic movements arose and reached their peak in the Sultanate era, while the vaishnava movements began in the Sultanate era but reached their climax throughout the Mughal era.

### **Emergence of the Bhakti Movement**

The bhakti movement which influenced big number of people throughout 14th-17th centuries in North India appeared due to a number of political, socio-economic and religious factors.

### ***Political Factors for the Rise of the Bhakti Movement***

It has been pointed out that as the popular bhakti movement could not take root in Northern India before the Turkish conquest because the socio-religious milieu was dominated through the Rajput-Brahman alliance which was hostile to any heterodox movement. The Turkish conquests brought the supremacy of this alliance to an end. The advent of Islam with the Turkish conquest also

caused a setback to the power and prestige commanded through the Brahmins: Therefore, the method was paved for the growth of non-conformist movements, with anti-caste and anti-Brahmanical ideology. The Brahmins had always made the people consider that the images and idols in the temples were not presently the symbols of God but were gods themselves who possessed divine power and who could be influenced through them (i.e. the Brahmins). The Turks deprived the Brahmins of their temple wealth and state patronage. Therefore the Brahmins suffered both materially and ideologically. The non-conformist sect of the Nathpanthis was perhaps the first to gain from the declining power of the Rajput-Brahmin alliance. This sect appears to have reached its peak in the beginning of the Sultanate era. The loss of power and power through the-Brahmins and the new political situation ultimately created circumstances for the rise of the popular monotheistic movements and other bhakti movements in Northern India.

### ***Socio-Economic Factors***

It has been argued that the bhakti movements of medieval India represented sentiments of the general people against feudal oppression. According to this viewpoint, elements of revolutionary opposition to feudalism can be established in the poetry of the bhakti saints ranging from Kabir and Nanak to Chaitanya and Tulsidas. It is in this sense that sometimes the medieval bhakti movements are often as Indian counterpart of the Protestant Reformation in Europe. Though, there is nothing in the poetry of the bhakti, saints to suggest that they represented the class interests of the peasantry against the surplus-extracting feudal state. The Vaishnava bhakti saints broke away from orthodox Brahmanical order only to the extent that they whispered in bhakti and religious equality. Normally, they sustained to subscribe to several vital principles of orthodox Brahmanism. The more radical monotheistic saints rejected orthodox Brahmanical religion altogether

but even they did not call for the overthrow of the state and the ruling class. For this cause, the bhakti movements cannot be regarded as Indian variant of European Protestant Reformation which was a distant greater social upheaval connected to the decline of feudalism and the rise of capitalism.

This, though, does not mean that the bhakti saints were indifferent to the livelihood circumstances of the people. They used images of daily life and always tried to identify themselves in one method or another with the sufferings of the general people.

### ***Economic and Social Changes***

The widespread popularity of the monotheistic movement of Kabir, Nanak, Dhanna, Pipa etc. can be explained fully only in the context of some important socio-economic changes in the era following the Turkish conquest of Northern India. The Turkish ruling class, unlike the Rajputs, existed in cities. The extraction of big agricultural surplus led to enormous concentration of possessions in the hands of the ruling class. The demands of this resource-wielding class for manufactured goods, luxuries and other necessities led to the introduction of several new techniques and crafts on a big level. This, in turn, led to the expansion of the class of urban artisans in the 13th and 14th centuries.

The rising classes of urban artisans were attracted towards the monotheistic movement because of its egalitarian ideas as they were now not satisfied with the low status accorded to them in traditional Brahmanical hierarchy. It has been pointed out that some groups of traders like the Khatri in the Punjab, who benefited directly from the growth of cities, urban crafts manufacture and expansion of markets, were also drawn into the movement for the similar cause. The popularity of the monotheistic movement was the result of the support it obtained from one or more of these dissimilar classes of

the society. It is one or more of these parts which constituted the social base of the movement in dissimilar parts of Northern India. In Punjab, the popularity of the movement did not remain confined to urban classes: it acquired a broader base through the incorporation of the Jat peasants in its ranks. The support extended through the Jats of the Punjab to Guru Nanak's movement ultimately contributed to the development of Sikhism as a mass religion. '

### **Main Popular Movements and their Features**

We will talk about some of the main monotheistic and vaishnava movements in North India, including Maharashtra and Bengal throughout the era under review.

#### ***Monotheistic Movements of North India***

Kabir (c. 1440-1518) was the earliest and undoubtedly the mainly powerful figure of the monotheistic movements that began in the fifteenth century. He belonged to a family of weavers (Julaha who were indigenous converts to Islam. He spent greater part of his life in Banaras (Kashi). The monotheistic saints who succeeded him either claimed to be his disciples or respectfully mention him. His verses were incorporated in the Sikh scripture, the Adi Granth in big numbers than those of other monotheists. All this indicate his pre-eminent location in the middle of the monotheists. Raidas (or Ravidas) mainly almost certainly belonged to the generation after that to Kabir's. He was a tanner through caste. He also existed in Banaras and was influenced through Kabir's ideas. Dhanna was a fifteenth century Jat peasant from Rajasthan. Other prominent saints of the similar era were Sen (a barber) and Pipa.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) preached his ideas much in the similar method as Kabir and other monotheists, but due to several growths later his teachings led

to the emergence of a mass religion, Sikhism. The vital parallel of his teachings with those of Kabir and other saints and the vital ideological agreement flanked by them creates him an integral part of the monotheistic movement. He belonged to a caste of traders described Khatri and was born in a village in Punjab now recognized as Nankana Sahib. In his later life he travelled widely to preach his ideas. Eventually he settled in a lay in Punjab now recognized as Dera Baba Nanak. There he attracted big number of disciples. The hymns composed through him were incorporated in the Adi Granth through the fifth Sikh Guru Arjan in 1604.

### ***General Feature Characteristics***

The teachings of all the saints who are associated with the monotheistic movement have sure general characteristics which provide the movement its vital unity:

- Mainly of the monotheists belonged to the “low” castes and were aware that there lived a unity of ideas in the middle of themselves. Mainly of them were aware of each other’s teaching and powers. In their verses they mention each other and their precursors in such a method as to suggest a harmonious ideological affinity in the middle of them. Therefore, Kabir speaks of Raidas as “saint in the middle of saints”. Raidas, in his turn, respectfully mentions the names of Kabir, Namdev, Trilochan, Dhanna, Sen and Pipa. Dhanna takes pride in speaking of the fame and popularity of Namdev, Kabir, Raidas and Sen and admits that he devoted himself to bhakti after hearing their fame. Kabir’s power on Nanak also is beyond dispute It is, so, not surprising that the later traditions link Kabir, Raidas, Dhanna, Pipa, Sen, etc. jointly as disciples of Ramananda. The ideological affinity in the middle of the monotheists is also clear from the inclusion of the hymns



off Kabir, Raidas, etc. beside with those of Nanak through the fifth Sikh Guru Arjan in the Adi Granth.

- All the monotheists were influenced in one method or another and in varying degrees through the vaishnava concept of bhakti, the nathpanthi movement and the Sufism. The monotheistic movement symbolizes the synthesis of elements from these three traditions. But more often than not they did not accept the element of these traditions in their original form and made several innovations and adaptations which gave new meanings to old concepts.
- For the monotheists, there was only one method of establishing communion with God: it was the method of personally experienced bhakti. This was also the method of the vaishnava bhakti saints, but there was one fundamental variation of perceptions: 'they all have been described monotheists because they uncompromisingly whispered in only one God. Then, God of Nanak, was non-incarnate and formless (nirankar), eternal (akal) and ineffable (alakh). The monotheistic bhakti, so, was nirguna bhakti and not saguna — which was the case with the vaishnavites who whispered in several human incarnations' of God. The monotheists adopted the notion of bhakti from the vaishnava bhakti custom but gave it a nirguna orientation. Quite often Kabir described God through the name, Ram. For this cause he has been described Ram-bhakta. „But Kabir himself made it clear in his utterances that the Ram he was devoted to was not the one who was born as an incarnation in the homes of king Dashratha of Ayodhya or who had killed Ravana, but a formless, non-incarnate God. In addition to the oneness of God and nirguna bhakti, the monotheists also emphasised the crucial importance of repetition of divine name, spiritual guru, society singing of devotional songs (kirtan) and companionship of saints (satsang).

- The monotheists followed a path which was self-governing of both dominant time—Hinduism and Islam. They denied their allegiance to and criticized the superstitions and orthodox elements of both . They launched a vigorous ideological assault On caste organization and rejected the power of the Brahmans and their religious scriptures. Kabir, in his harsh and abrasive approach, uses ridicule as a powerful method for denouncing orthodox Brahmanism.
- The monotheists composed their poems in popular languages. Some of them used a language which was a mixture of dissimilar dialects spoken in several parts of North India. The monotheistic saints preferred this general language to their own native dialects because they measured it fit for the propagation of their non-conformist ideas in the middle of the masses in several regions. The use of general language is a striking characteristic of the movement considering that the saints belonged to dissimilar parts of North India and spoke dissimilar dialects. The monotheists also made use of popular symbols and images to propagate their teachings. Their utterances are expressed in short verses which could be easily remembered. Therefore, for instance, Kabir’s poetry is unpolished and has a rustic, colloquial excellence but it is essentially poetry of the people.
- Mainly of the monotheistic saints were not ascetics. They led worldly life and were married. They existed and preached in the middle of the people. They had aversion to and disdain for professional ascetics. They regularly refer to professional caste groups in their verses which would suggest that they sustained to pursue their family professions. They were also not like the medieval European Christian saints who were recognized as “holy” through the Church. The expression which has been used for them and through which they themselves referred to each other is sant or bhagat. In the adi Granth, Kabir, Raidas, Dhanna, Pipa, Namdev, etc. have been listed as bhagat.

- The monotheistic saints travelled widely to propagate their beliefs. Namdev, a 14th-century saint from Maharashtra travelled as distant as Punjab where his teachings became so popular that they were later absorbed in the Adi-Granth. Kabir, Raidas and other saints are also whispered to have travelled widely.
- The ideas of Kabir and other monotheists spread to several regions and became popular in the middle of the “lower” classes. The popularity of the monotheists broke territorial barriers. This is clear from the high location accorded to Kabir in the Sikh custom and in the Dadu panthi custom of Rajasthan. Their continuing popularity even approximately two hundred years after their time and in a distant region is clear from the method a mid-17th century Maharashtrian saint Tukaram looks upon himself as an admirer and follower of Kabir, Raidas, Sen, Gora, etc. A 17th century Persian work on relative religion Dabistan-i Mazahib testifies to the continuing popularity of Kabir in the middle of the people of North India.
- Despite the widespread popularity that the teachings of monotheists enjoyed in the middle of the masses, the followers of each one of the major figures in the monotheistic movement like Kabir, Raidas and Nanak slowly organized themselves into exclusive sectarian orders described panths such as Kabir panth, Raidasi panth, Nanak panth, etc. Of all these panths, the Nanak panth alone eventually crystallised into a mass religion while mainly of the others continue to survive till today but with a vastly reduced following and a narrow sectarian base.

### **Vaishnava Bhakti Movement in North India**

Ramananda was the mainly prominent scholar saint of the vaishnava bhakti in Northern India throughout this era. He belonged to the late 14th and early 15th century. He existed in South India in the early part of his life but later settled in Banaras. He is measured to be the link flanked by the South

Indian bhakti custom and North Indian vaishndva, bhakti. Though, he deviated from the ideology and practice of the earlier South Indian acharyas in three significant compliments:

- He looks upon Ram and not Vishnu as substance of bhakti. To him, Ram was the supreme God who is to be adored with Sita. In this sense he came to be regarded as the founder of the Ram cult in North India within the framework of vaishnava bhakti custom.
- He preached in the language of the general people, and not in Sanskrit, to propagate the Ram cult.
- The mainly important contribution to vaishnava bhakti, was that he made bhakti accessible to all irrespective of caste. He greatly relaxed the caste rules in respect of religious and social matters. Though himself a Brahman, he took food with his “low” caste vaishnava followers.

It is perhaps for the last mentioned point that some later vaishnava traditions link Kabir and some other monotheists to him as his disciples. The innovations were almost certainly due to the power of Islamic ideas, It has also been suggested that he made these innovations in order to counter the rising popularity of the heterodox nathpanthis, the “lower” classes of the society. His followers are described Ramanandis A hymn attributed to him was incorporated in the Adi Granth.

Another prominent Vaishnava preacher in the Sultanate era was Vallabhacharya, a Telugu brahman of the late 15th and early 16th century. He, too, was born in Banaras. He was the founder of Pushtimarga (method of grace). It also came to be recognized as Vallabha sampradava (Vallabha Sect). He advocated Krishna bhakti. Well-known Krishna bhakti saint-poet, Surdas (1483-1563) and seven other Krishna bhakti poets belonging to the ashtachap were whispered to have been the disciples of Vallabha. The sect later became popular in Gujarat.

In North India, though, the vaishnava bhakti cult acquired a more popular base, only in the Mughal era. Tulsidas (1532-1623) championed the cause of Rama bhakti while Surdas (1483-1563), Mira Bai (1503-73) and several others popularized. Krishna bhakti.

### ***Vaishnava Bhakti Movement in Bengal***

In several important ways the vaishnava bhakti in Bengal was dissimilar from its North Indian and the older South Indian bhakti. The sources which influenced it can be traced to two dissimilar traditions—the vaishnava bhakti custom of the Bhagavata Purana, with its glorification of Krishnalila on the one hand, and Sahajiya Buddhist and nathpanthi traditions on the other. The vaishnava power was transmitted through several bhakti poets beginning with Jayadeva in the 12th century. Jayadeva's Gita. Govinda was composed in Sanskrit. He also wrote songs in Maithili dialect which were later absorbed in the Bengali Vaishnava bhakti custom. He highlighted the erotic-mystical dimension of the love with reference to Krishna and Radha. Several non-vaishnava cults such as those of Sahajiya Buddhists and nathpanthis that 12 survived in Bengal and Bihar influenced the growth of bhakti movement in Bengal.

These cults preached an easy and natural religion focusing on esoteric and emotional elements. Vaishnava bhakti poets such as Chandidas (14th century) and Vidyapati (14th to 15th centuries) came under the power of these non-vaishnava Cults, though the Bhagavata custom was always the major source of power. The songs of Chandidas who was the first Bengali bhakti poet and those of Vidyapati who wrote in Maithili, highlighted the Krishna-Radha connection. These songs ' became part of the rising vaishnava movement in Bengal. Chaitanya himself did not come under the direct power of Sahajiya

doctrine. It is, though, possible that elements of esoteric cults entered into his movement through the power of Chandidas and Vidyapati. But the mainly significant source of inspiration was the Bhagavata Purana.

Chaitanya (1486-1533) was the mainly prominent vaishnava saint of Bengal. He popularized Krishna-bhakti in several parts of Eastern India. His popularity as a religious personality was so great that he was looked upon as an avatara (incarnation) of Krishna even in his life. The advent of Chaitanya spots the shifting of the focus of the Bengal vaishnava bhakti from devotional literary compositions to a full-fledged reform movement with a broad social base.

Chaitanya disregarded all distinctions of caste, creed and sex to provide a popular base to Krishna-bhakti. His followers belonged to all castes and societies. One of his mainly favorite disciples was Haridas who was a Muslim. He popularized the practice of sankirtan or group devotional singing accompanied through ecstatic dancing.

Though, Chaitanya did not provide up traditional Brahmanical values altogether. He did not question the power of the Brahmans and scriptures. He upheld the caste prejudices of his Brahman disciples against the “lower” caste disciples. Six Sanskrit-knowing Brahman Goswamins who were sent through him to Vrindavan close to Mathura recognized a religious order which recognized caste restrictions in its devotional practices and rituals. These Goswamins slowly distanced themselves from Chaitanya’s teachings and from the popular movement that had grown approximately him in Bengal.

But Chaitanya’s movement had a great impact on Bengali society. His disregard for caste distinctions in the sphere of devotional singing promoted a sense of equality in Bengali life. In Bengal and in Puri in Orissa, his

movement remained popular. In these spaces, his followers were not always scholarly Brahmans but incorporated general people. They wrote in Bengali, propagated his bhakti and looked upon Chaitanya as the livelihood Krishna or as Radha and Krishna in one body.

### ***Bhakti Movement in Maharashtra***

Like other vaishnava bhakti movements, the Maharashtra bhakti custom drew its vital inspiration from that of the Bhagavata Purana. In addition, though, it was also influenced through the saiva nathpanthis who were quite popular in the “lower” classes of the Maharashtrian society throughout the 11th and 12th centuries and who composed their verses in Marathi. Jnaneswar (1275-1296) was the pioneer bhakti saint of Maharashtra. He wrote an extensive commentary on the Bhagavad Gita ' popularly described Jnanesvari. This was one of the earliest works of Marathi literature and served as the base of bhakti ideology in Maharashtra. He was the author of several hymns described abhangs. He taught that the only method to attain God was bhakti and in bhakti there was no lay for caste distinctions.

Namdev (1270-1350) belonged to tailor caste. He is measured to be the link flanked by the Maharashtrian bhakti movement and North Indian monotheistic movement. He existed in Pandharpur but travelled to North India including the Punjab. His bhakti songs have also been incorporated in the Adi Granth. In Maharashtra, Namdev is measured to be a part of the varkari custom (vaishnava devotional custom), but in the North Indian monotheistic custom he is remembered as a nirguna saint. Other prominent bhakti saints of Maharashtra were Eknath (1533-99) and Tukaram (1598-1650).

### ***Bhakti Movements in Other Regions***

Saiva bhakti flourished in Kashmir in the 14th century. Mainly prominent

of the saiva bhakti saints was a woman, Lal Ded. In Gujarat, bhakti was preached through the vallabha sect of Vallabhacharya and another significant saint, Narsimha Mehta (1414-1481, or 1500-1580). He knew of Jayadeva and Kabir and was followed through a number of poet-saints. The Vallabha sect became popular in the middle of merchants and landowners of Gujarat. In Karnataka, the saiva bhakti cult of the Kannad speaking virasaivas urbanized throughout the 12th and 13th centuries. They preached a strongly radical and heterodox concept of bhakti through incorporating social criticism in their religious outlook.

In Assam, Sankaradeva (1449-1568) introduced bhakti both in the Brahmaputra valley as well as in Cooch-Bihar. He was born in the family of non-Brahman Bhuyan chiefs. He became an ascetic throughout the later part of his life and is whispered to have visited several spaces of pilgrimage in North and South India. He preached absolute devotion to Vishnu or his incarnation, Krishna. He had to face persecution at the hands of orthodox Brahmanical priesthood of the Ahom kingdom and took shelter in the territories of the neighboring Cooch-Bihar where its king gave him the freedom to preach bhakti. Monotheistic ideas influenced his concept of bhakti which came to be recognized as the eka-sarana-dharma (‘religion of seeking refuge in one’). He denounced the caste organization and preached his ideas to the people in their language (an Assamese form of Brajaboll). He made some important innovations in the devotional practice such as inclusion of dance-drama-music form in the preaching of bhakti. He also founded the institution of satra which means a sitting throughout which people of all classes assembled for religious as well as social purposes. Later the satras grew into full-fledged monasteries. His sect is described mahapurashiya dharma.

### **Power of other Traditions and Movements**

It is clear that the bhakti movement of the Sultanate era cannot be



connected in anyway with the older South Indian bhakti. But they were influenced in one method or another through sure existing traditions and movements whose history goes back to the "pre-Sultanate era. These incorporated the bhakti custom of the Bhagavat Purana, religious ideas and behaviors of scholar-saints such as Ramananda, and such heterodox movements as that of the nathpanthis.

The doctrine of bhakti is fully urbanized in the mainly well-known of the Puranas—the Bhagavat Purana, a Vaishnavite work composed approximately the 9th century. Its mainly significant characteristic is its emphasis on the bhakti of Vishnu in his several incarnations, especially in the form of Krishna. The Bhagavata accepts the orthodox Brahmanical theory of the origin of the varna organization but does not accept the superiority of the Brahmans basically on the foundation of their status or birth. For it, bhakti is the main criteria. It has been pointed out that Bhagavata Purana is the link flanked by several vaishnava bhakti movements of the medieval era. Though, the power of the Bhagavata custom on monotheistic saints such as Kabir and Nanak was not exerted in a direct manner. Mainly of these saints were illiterate and did not have any direct access to the Bhagavata and other scriptures. Kabir's concept of bhakti is characteristically dissimilar from that of the Bhagavata. Kabir and other non-conformist saints did not consider in incarnations either and rejected the Brahmanical and scriptural power altogether.

### ***Popular Monotheistic Saints and Ramananda***

Ramananda's teachings are measured to be the source of popular monotheistic movement of Kabir, Raidas and others. As we shall talk about later, Ramananda was strongly opposed to caste restrictions and opened the path of bhakti to all. He also preached his ideas in popular dialect. But, on the whole, his ideas and his concept of bhakti were essentially a part of the

vaishnava bhakti. On the other hand, Kabir and other monotheists went several steps further than even the mainly liberal vaishnava bhaktas like Ramanand and denounced the Brahmanical religion in its entirety. In information, none of the monotheists, who are claimed to have been Ramanand's disciples, create any mention of him or any other human guru in their utterances.,

### ***Power of the Nathpanthi Movement on Monotheistic Saints***

Some of the ideas of Kabir and other monotheists can be traced to the power of heterodox movements like that of the nathpanthis. A big number of nathpanthi preachers described siddhas belonged to the "lower" castes—doma, chamara, (tanners), washerman, oilman, tailor, fisherman, wood-cutter, cobbler etc. With the establishment of Turkish rule in northern India, the popularity of the nathpanthi movement reached its peak throughout the 13th and 14th centuries. Anybody could be initiated into the sect of the nathpanthi yogis irrespective of caste.

Nathpanthi power on Kabir is clearly seen in his non-conformist attitudes, in his self-governing thinking, in the harsh approach of his utterances, in his "upside-down" language (described ulatbasi containing paradoxes and enigmas) and partly in his mystical symbolism. Though, Kabir and other monotheists, in their characteristically critical and innovative manner adopted the nathpanthi ideas on a selective foundation only and even when they did so, they adapted these ideas to their own purpose. Kabir rejected their asceticism and esoteric practices and also their physical methods such as breath control. Therefore, the power of the nathpanthis on the monotheistic saints of medieval era can be seen more in their heterodox' attitudes towards the recognized Brahmanical religion than in their practices.

### ***Power of Islamic Ideas and the Role of Sufism***

Several scholars have argued that all the variants of the bhakti movement and the doctrine of bhakti itself came into being as a result of Islamic power both before and after the 12th century. This claim has been made on the foundation of several similarities flanked by Islam and the bhakti cults. On the other hand, it is pointed out that bhakti and bhakti movements had indigenous origins. It has been noted that bhakti as a religious concept had urbanized in the religious traditions of ancient India. The older South Indian bhakti movement also cannot be explained in conditions in South India. Conceptually, a movement based on the thought of devotion or grace is not peculiar to any scrupulous religion but could grow independently in dissimilar religions at dissimilar times depending on the concrete historical circumstances. It would be more appropriate to understand the bhakti movements of medieval India in their immediate historical context rather than searching for distant-fetched sources of inspiration in any scrupulous religion. Though, Islam did power the bhakti cults and, in scrupulous, the popular monotheistic movements in other ways. Non-conformist saints such as Kabir and Nanak picked up some of their ideas from Islam. These incorporated their non-compromising faith in one God, their rejection of incarnation, their conception of nirguna bhakti and their attack on idolatry and the caste organization. But they did not uncritically borrow from Islam and rejected several elements of orthodox Islam. The vaishnava bhakti movements, on the other hand, cannot be interpreted in conditions of such a power of Islam as they neither denounced idolatry (and the caste organization nor the theory of incarnation. They whispered in saguna bhakti. The connection flanked by monotheistic bhakti movement and Islam appears to have been one of mutual power and Sufism provided the general meeting ground. Sufi concepts of pir and mystic union with the “beloved” (God) coincided in several compliments with the non-conformist saints’ concepts of guru and devotional surrender to God. Kabir is even whispered to have had affiliations with Chishti sufi saints,

though concrete historical proof is lacking. Guru Nanak's encounters with sufis are described in the janam-sakhis. Though the Sufism and the monotheistic movement were historically self-governing of each other, there was extra ordinary parallel in several of their vital ideas, including their general rejection of Hindu and Muslim orthodoxies. The interaction flanked by them, though indirect, necessity has given impetus to both of them.

### ***Theory of Islamic Challenge to Hinduism***

One contemporary viewpoint, associated with communal interpretation of Indian history, tends to attribute the rise of the medieval bhakti movements to alleged persecution of the Hindus under „Muslim' rule and to the challenge that Islam is supposed to have posed to Hinduism through its doctrines of “Unity of God”, equality and brotherhood. According to this theory, the bhakti movements were a two-pronged suspicious mechanism to save the Hindu religion through purging it of such evils as caste organization and idolatry and at the similar time defending its vital tenets through popularizing it. The former task is whispered to have been undertaken through Kabir, Nanak, etc., and the latter project was accomplished through Tulsidas in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Such a notion of the medieval bhakti movement is not borne out through proof.

- This theory of imagined Islamic threat to Hinduism is in essence a projection of contemporary communal prejudices into the past. Through the time Islam reached India, the Islamic doctrine of “brotherhood” had lost much of its appeal and social, economic and racial inequalities had crept into the Muslim society. The Turkish ruling class possessed a strong sense of racial superiority and looked upon “low caste” Indian converts to Islam as low-born and not fit for high offices. i

- The Hindu population sustained to observe their religious practices and to celebrate their religious festivals. In information, the overwhelming majority of population remained Hindu even in the vicinity of Delhi, the capital of the Sultanate.
- The monotheistic saints denounced the characteristics of both orthodox Brahmanism and orthodox Islam and their ritualistic practices.
- To assume that all monotheistic and vaishnava bhakti saints were reacting on behalf of the Hindus to Islamic threat is not convincing because Kabir and other “low. caste” saints hardly saw any unity of purpose with the saints belonging to the vaishnava bhakti cults.
- Lastly, the poetry and the teachings of the vaishnava’ bhakti saints of all the regions are either not concerned with Islamic power or at best illustrate indifference in this regard. In information, it has been pointed out that Hindus and Muslims both stood face through face in the middle of Chaitanya’s disciples, as they had done under Ramanand Kabir Nanak or Dadu Daval.

## **SOCIO-RELIGIOUS, MOVEMENT: SUFI MOVEMENT**

### **Salient Characteristics of Sufism**

There urbanized a number of sufi orders or silsilah in and outside India. All these orders had their specific features. Though, there were a number of characteristics which are general to all sufi orders. Here we will talk about such characteristics.

- Sufism as it urbanized in the Islamic world came to stress the importance of traversing the sufi path (tariqa) as a method of establishing direct communion with divine reality (haqiqat).
- According to the sufi beliefs, the novice has to pass through a succession of “stations” or “stages” (maqamat) and changing psychological circumstances or “states” (hal) to experience God.

- The sufi path could be traversed only under the strict supervision of a spiritual director (shaikh, pir or murshid) who had himself successfully traversed it and consequently recognized direct communion with God.
- The disciple (murid) progressed through the “stages” and “states” through practicing such spiritual exercises as self mortification, recollection of God’s name to attain concentration (zikr) and contemplation.
- The sufis organized impassioned musical recital (sama). The practice of sama’ was planned to induce a mystical state of ecstasy. Though, some sufi orders did not approve of such shapes of sama’ and the ulema were particularly hostile to
- this practice.
- Yet another characteristic of Sufism is the organisation of the sufis into several orders (silsilah). Each of these silsilah e.g. suhrawardi, Qadiri, Chishti, etc. were founded through a leading figure who lent his name to it. A silsilah consisted of persons who had become disciples of a scrupulous sufi.
- The hospice (khanqah) was the centre of the behaviors of a sufi order. It was the lay where the imparted spiritual training to his disciples. The popularity of the khanqah and its capability to draw disciples depended on the reputation of the pir. The khanqahs were supported through endowment and charity.

### **Growth of Sufi Movement in Islamic World**

Through the time the several sufi orders began their behaviors in India from the beginning of the 13th century, Sufism had already grown into a full-fledged movement in dissimilar parts of the Islamic world. Sufism acquired separate features in the Indian environment but its growth in India, particularly in the initial stage, was connected in several ways with the growths that occurred in sufi beliefs and practice in the Islamic World throughout the era

flanked by 7th and 13th centuries. The growth of Sufism in the central lands of Islam throughout this era can be divided into three broad phases.

### ***The Formative Stage (Upto 10th Century)***

Early sufis applied an esoteric meaning to verses in the Quran which stressed on such virtues as repentance (tauba), abstinence, renunciation, poverty, trust in God Tawakkul) etc. Meccia, Medina, Basra and Kufa were the earliest centres of Sufism. The sufis, mainly of whom belonged to the 8th century, have been described „Quietists’ because they were more concerned with experiencing than with popularizing their ideas through mass get in touch with. They whispered more in guiding than in teaching. Sufism at Basra reached its height throughout the time of the woman mystic Rabia (d. 801).

Other regions of the Islamic world where Sufism spread early were Iran, Khurasan, Transoxiana, Egypt, Syria and Baghdad. As Sufism spread to Iranian regions, it tended to express greater individualism, divergent tendencies, and heterodox doctrines and practiced under Persian power. The mainly well-known of the early sufis in the Iranian regions was Bayazid Bistami (d. 874) from Khurasan. He gave a new turn to Sufism through introducing in it the elements of ecstasy and mystic doctrine of “all is in God”. He was also the first sufi to employ the concept of “fana” (annihilation of the self) which exercised power on later sufis.

In Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid caliphate, Al Junaid was the mainly well Socio-Religious Movement: Sufi Movement orthodoxy and represented controlled and disciplined face of Sufism and, so, those sufis who followed his row are regarded as sober. Both Junaid and Bistami exercised profound Power on their modern and later sufis. Two contrasting tendencies initiated through them came to be distinguished as Junaidi and Bistami, or Iraqi and Khurasani.

Another prominent early sufi from Baghdad was Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922) that started his career as a pupil of Al Junaid but later urbanized the method of Bayazid Bistami. His mystical formula “I am God” played a significant role in the development of sufi ideas in Iran and then in India. The Ulema measured him a blasphemer and denounced him for claiming mystical union with God. He was condemned, imprisoned and finally hanged. His ideas provided the foundation for the development of the doctrine of ‘insan-i-kamil’ (the perfect Man).

Early sufi groups were loose and mobile associations, quite unlike the later sufi orders. Members of a group travelled widely in search of master. In Arab regions, the wandering sufis were attached to boundary-posts or hostels described ribat while in the Iranian regions they were associated with hospices (khanqah). There were separate convents for women sufis.

### ***Growth of Organized Sufi Movement (10th-12th Century)***

Sufism began to acquire the form of an organized movement with the establishment of the Turkish rule under the Ghaznawis and then under the Seljuqs in several parts of Central Asia and Iran in the later 10th and 11th centuries. The era spots the development of two parallel organizations in the Islamic world — (a) the madrasa organization (seminary, higher religious school) in its new form as an official institution of orthodox Islamic learning and (b) the khanqah organization as an organized, endowed and permanent centre of sufi behaviors.

Khanqah was no longer a loose organization of individual sufis but a more effective and institutionalized centre of sufi teaching. Though, the bond flanked by the master and his disciples was still purely personal and had not



yet acquired a ritualistic and esoteric character. Moreover, sufi orders had not yet begun to take concrete form.

But khanqahs had now urbanized from mere hostels for sufis into popular and well-recognized centres of organized sufi teaching and practice with their own spiritual masters and circles of disciples. The ulema sustained to illustrate their suspicion of Sufism in common and were particularly hostile to such non-conformist practices as sama' to induce ecstasy.

Though, sure sufis, with their background of orthodox Islamic learning, tried to effect a compromise flanked by the ulema and the sufis. Mainly prominent of such sufi scholars was Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali (A.D. 1058-1111). He was an Alim (theologian) but later led the life of a sufi. He stressed on the observance of external and formal characteristics of Islamic law in sufi practice. Though, orthodox and sufi tendencies in Islam sustained to follow separate and divergent paths.

This stage is also characterized through the appearance of sufi literary texts which argued and codified the sufi ideas and doctrines. Al-Ghazzali was the mainly outstanding sufi author. One of the mainly authentic and celebrated manual of Sufism was Kashful Mahjub written through al-Hujwiri (d. c. 1088).

Another salient characteristic of Sufism throughout this era was the emergence of sufi poetry in Persian. While Arabic literature on mysticism is in prose, Persian literature is in poetry. Sufi poetry in Persian in the form of narrative poems (masnavis) reached its peak throughout the 12th and 13th centuries. Two of its greatest exponents were Fariduddin-Attar (d. 1220) and Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 1273).

### ***Formation of Sufi Orders or Silsilah (Late 12th and 13th Centuries)***

- A few decades before Sufism began to exercise power on Indian society and religious life, organized sufi movement reached its peak in the Islamic world in the form of several tariqa (paths) or sufi orders. These orders began to crystallize when from the end of the 12th century each one of the sufi centers began to perpetuate the name of one scrupulous master and his spiritual ancestry and focused on its own tariqa consisting of peculiar practices and rituals. A sufi order (silsilah) urbanized as a lineage organization or continuous chain through which successive spiritual heirs (Khalifa) traced their spiritual inheritance to the founder of the order.
- The connection flanked by the spiritual head of a silsilah and his disciples acquired an esoteric character because the disciples were now connected to the silsilah through several initiatory rituals and vow of allegiance. Each one of them formulated its own institutional rules to regulate the day-to-day life of the disciples in the khanqah. The spiritual director (murshid) now came to be regarded as protégé of God (wall). The murid (disciple) was obliged to surrender himself totally to the murshid. The murshid, in turn, bestowed the tariqa, its secret word (a phrase of patterned devotion), formulae, and symbols on his murid.
- Hi) The founders of several silsilahs accepted the Islamic law and ritual practices of Islam. The link flanked by orthodox Islam and silsilah founders is also clear from the information that several of the latter were professional jurists. Though, they gave an esoteric orientation to orthodox Islamic rituals and introduced several innovations, particularly in their religious practices, which were not always in consonance with the orthodox outlook. Though the silsilah founders laid emphasis on strict adherence to Islamic law, several silsilahs later did develop several heterodox beliefs and practices.

- The silsilahs which became popular in Iran, Central Asia and Baghdad and played important role in the growth of sufism in several parts of the Islamic world incorporated! the Suhrawardi founded through Shaikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi (d. 1234); the Qadiri shaped through Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (d. 1166); the Chishti of Muinuddin Chishti (d. 1236) and the Naqshbandi first recognized as Khawajagan, but later came to be associated with the name of Bahauddin Naqshbandi (d, 1398). The sufis who had received their training in these silsilahs began to set up their branches in their countries or in new countries such as India. Slowly these branches became self-governing sufi schools with their own features and tendencies.
- As sufism grew through these three broad stages in dissimilar parts of the Islamic world, Iran, Khurasan, Transoxiana and India, etc. it came under the power of several mystic tendencies in other religions and philosophies such as Christianity, Neoplatonism, Buddhism and Hinduism. These powers were assimilated within the Islamic framework of the movement.

### **Growth of Sufism in India**

Al Hujwiri (A.D. 1088) was the earliest sufi of eminence to have settled in India.

His tomb is in Lahore. He was the author of Kashf-ul Mahjub, a well-known Persian treatise on sufism- Though, several sufi orders were introduced in India only after the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the beginning of the 13th century. India not only provided a dew pasture ground for the propagation of sufi ideas but also became the new home of the sufis who beside with several other refugees fled from those parts of the Islamic world which had been conquered through the Mongols in the thirteenth century. Throughout the 13th and 14th centuries, khanqahs sprang up in several parts of India. The sufis introduced several orders in India from the Islamic world,

built up their own organizations and recognized themselves in their respective regions of power. Through the middle of the 14th century, the whole country from Multan to Bengal and from Punjab to Deogiri had come under the sphere of their action. According to the observation of an early 14th century traveller, there were two thousand sufi hospices and khanqahs in Delhi and its neighborhood.

Sufism in India originally stemmed from the sufi thought and practice as it urbanized in several parts of the Islamic world, especially in Iran and Central Asia. Though, its subsequent development was influenced more through Indian environment than through non-Indian variants of sufism. Once the sufi orders took root in dissimilar parts of India, they followed their own phases of growth, stagnation and revival.

These were determined mainly through indigenous circumstances, though the power of growths in sufism outside India cannot altogether be discounted.

### **Sufi Orders in India throughout the Sultanate Era**

A number of sufi silsilah became popular in India throughout the Sultanate era. Here we will talk about the significant ones.

#### ***The Suhrawardi Silsilah***

The Suhrawardi silsilah was a major order of the Sultanate era. Its founder in India was Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya (1182-1262). He was a Khurasami and was a disciple of Shaikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi who had initiated the silsilah in Baghdad and was directed through the latter to proceed to India. He made Multan and Sind the centres of his action. Therefore, one of the oldest khanqahs in India was recognized through him at Multan. Iltutmish was the Sultan of Delhi at that time, but Multan was under the control of his rival,

Qubacha. Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya as critical of Qubacha's management and openly sided with Iltutmish in his disagreement against the Multan ruler's overthrow. Bahauddin Zakariya received from Iltutmish the title of Shalkh-ul Islam (Leader of Islam) and endowment. Contrary to the Chishti'saints of his time, he followed a worldly policy and built up a big fortune. He accepted state patronage and maintained links with the ruling classes. Though, throughout the later era several self-governing sufi rows stemmed from him and some of them came to be recognized as „beshara' (illegitimate orders).

In addition to Shaikh Bahuddin Zakariya, several other Khalifas were designated through Shaikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi to spread the Suhrawardi silsilah in India. One of them was Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrizi. After his initial stay in Delhi, where he failed to set up his supremacy, he went to Bengal. He recognized his khanqah there and made several disciples. He attached a langar (centre for the sharing of free meals) to his khanqah. He is said to have played a significant role in the procedure of Islamization in Bengal.

Throughout the Sultanate era, Punjab, Sind and Bengal became three significant ' centres of the Suhrawardi action. Scholars are usually of the opinion that the Suhrawardi sufis converted Hindus to Islam and in this task they were helped through their affluence and connections with the ruling class. In this connection, a sharp contrast is drawn flanked by their attitude and that of the Chishti sufis whose teachings did not aim at conversion.

### ***The Chishti Silsilah***

The growth of the Chishti order in India throughout the Sultanate era took lay in two phases. The first stage ended with the death of Shaikh Nasiruddin (Chiragh-i- Delhi) in 1356. The second stage is marked through its initial decline throughout the later part of the 14th century followed through revival

and expansion in several parts of the country throughout the 15th and 16th centuries.

### *First Stage*

The Chishti order which later became the mainly influential and popular sufi order in India, originated in Herat and was introduced in India through Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti (d. 1236) who was born in Sijistan in c. 1141. He came to India at the time of the Ghori conquest. He finally settled in Ajmer in relation to the 1206 and won the respect of both Muslims and non-Muslims. No authentic record of his behaviors is accessible. Throughout the later era, several legends projected him as an ardent evangelist. Though, he was not actively involved in conversions and his attitude towards non-Muslims was one of tolerance. His tomb in Ajmer became a well-known centre of pilgrimage in later centuries.

The successor of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti in Delhi was Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki (d. 1235). Shaikh Hamiduddin Nagauri (d. 1274), another Khalifa of Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti, made Nagaur in Rajasthan centre of his action. Shaikh' Hamiduddin Nagauri recognized the silsilah in Nagaur where he existed like an ordinary Rajasthani peasant and dissociated himself from those in power. He was a strict vegetarian. He and his successors translated several Persian sufi verses in the regional language described Hindavi: these are earliest examples of translations of this, type.

Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki was succeeded in Delhi through his Khalifa, Khwaja Fariduddin Masud (1175-1265) recognized as Ganjshakar and more popularly as Baba Farid. Baba Farid left Delhi for Ajodhan in Punjab and existed in his khanqah there He despised association with the ruling class and rich persons. Nathpanthi yogis also visited his khanqah and discussed with him the nature of mysticism. His popularity in Punjab is clear

from the information that more than three hundred years after his death, verses ascribed to him were incorporated in the Adi Granth compiled through the fifth Sikh Guru, Arjun, in 1604. His tomb at Pakpattan soon urbanized into a centre of pilgrimage.

The mainly celebrated disciple of Baba Farid and the greatest sufi saint of the 14th century was Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (1236-1325). He made Delhi the mainly well-known centre of the Chishti order. Two historians Ziauddin Barani and Amir Khusrau, who were his Contemporaries, testify to his eminent location in the social and religious life of Northern India throughout the late 13th and early 14th centuries. Later, his successors spread the Chishti order in several parts of the country. His teachings and conversations (mal-fuzat) are recorded in Fawaid-ul Fuwad written through Amir Hasan Sijzi. This work serves more as a guide to practical characteristics of Sufism than as a treatise on its metaphysical and theosophical characteristics.

Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya saw the reigns of seven successive Sultans of Delhi. But he always avoided the company of the kings and nobles and never visited the court. The langar (an alms-homes for the sharing of free food) of his khanqah was open to Hindus and Muslims alike. In his khanqah, he had several conversations with the Nathpanthi yogi visitors. He adopted several yoga breathing exercises and was described a sidh (perfect) through the yogis. Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) was a devoted disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya.

Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya had several spiritual successors or Khalifas. One of them was Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib (d. 1340) who was one of those sufis who were forced through Sultan Muhammed Tughluq to migrate to the Deccan. He made Daulatabad centre of his behaviors and introduced the Chishti order there.

The mainly well-known of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya's Khalifas and his successor in Delhi was Shaikh Nasiruddin Mahmud (d. 1356) who came to be recognized as Chiragh-i Delhi (Lamp of Delhi). He and some of his disciples discontinued some of those practices of early Chishtis which could conflict with Islamic orthodoxy and, in turn, persuaded the ulema to soften their attitude towards the Chishti- practice of sama.

*Decline of the Chishti Order in Delhi Throughout the Later Tughluq and Saiyyid Periods*

Some scholars hold the view that the decline of Delhi as a centre of the Chishti order was due to the attitudes and policies of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq. Though, it necessity be pointed out that the Sultan was not opposed to the sufis per se. Some sufis, including Shaikh Nasiruddin Chirag-i Delhi, remained in Delhi though they were compelled through the Sultan to accept state service. Moreover, sufi behaviors in several khanqahs were restored after the death of Muhammad Tughluq when his successor Feroz Shah Tughluq showered gifts on them. Though, Delhi was left with no commanding Chishti figure after the death of Shaikh Nasiruddin in 1356. He died without appointing a spiritual successor. One of his chief disciples, Gesudaraz left Delhi for a safer lay in the Deccan at the time of Timur's invasion (A.D. 1398). As the Delhi Sultanate began to decline and disintegrates, the sufis dispersed to the more stable provincial kingdoms and recognized their khanqahs there. This dispersal of the Chishti order in dissimilar parts of the country throughout the later 14th and 15th centuries was accompanied through important changes in the attitudes and practices of the Chishti sufis.

*Second Stage*

The second stage in the history of the Chishti silsilah throughout the Sultanate era began with its decline in Delhi following the death of Shaikh



Nasiruddin and its subsequent dispersal in several regional kingdoms. Though the sufis had begun to arrive in the Deccan from the late 13th century, it was Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib who introduced the Chishti order there throughout the reign of Muhammad Tughluq. Later, many Chishti sufis migrated to Gulbarga, the capital of the Bahmani kingdom (1347-1538). In Gulbarga, these sufis urbanized secure dealings with the court and accepted state patronage, therefore causing a change in the attitude of the Chishti order towards the state. The Bahmani kings, on their part, purchased the political loyalty of these sufis and gave land grants to them. The mainly prominent of these Chishtis was Muhammad Banda Nawaz, Gesudaraz (c. 1321-1422). He left for the Deccan and received land grant of four villages from Bahmani Sultan, Feroz Shah Bahmani (1397-1422). He was an orthodox sufi and declared the supremacy of Islamic law (Shariat) in excess of all sufi stages. Gisudaraz discontinued several practices of early Chishtis which clashed with the attitudes of orthodox ulema. Unlike the early Chishti masters, he was a voluminous writer on tasawwuf. After his death, the Bahmani Sultans sustained the land grants in favor of his family descendants. His tomb or dargah in Gulbarga later urbanized into a popular lay of pilgrimage in the Deccan. But the transformation of his descendants into a landed elite and their indifference towards Chishti teachings led to the decline of livelihood Chishti custom in Gulbarga. The change of Bahmani capital from Gulbarga to Bidar in 1422 also contributed to the decline of the Chishti order in Gulbarga. It has been pointed out that the Bahmani Court at Bidar, owing to its pro-foreigner and anti-Deccani bias, encouraged the immigration of foreign sufis and did not patronize the Chishtis who were measured “too Indian”. Though, the Chishti custom began to thrive again in the Deccan from the end of the 15th century and it sustained to grow throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. Its new centre was a lay popularly recognized as Shahpur Hillock, presently outside the municipality of Bijapur—the capital municipality of the Adil Shahi Sultans.

The Chishti custom of Shahpur Hillock was dissimilar from mainly of the later Chishti traditions such as that of Gulbarga in that it maintained aloofness from the court and the ulema and drew its inspiration from regional powers. The Chishti saints of Shahpur Hillock were therefore much closer in their attitudes to the early Chishti sufis of Delhi, though it necessity be pointed out that the Shahpur Hillock Chishti custom urbanized self-governing of both the Delhi and Gulbarga traditions'.

In Northern India, the resurgence of the Chishti order took lay throughout the later 15th and early 16th century. The Chishti sufis belonged to three dissimilar branches of the Chishti order— Nagauriya (after the name of Shaikh Hamiduddin Nagauri), Sabiriya (after the name of Shaikh Alauddin Kaliyari) and Nizamiya (after the name of Shaikh Nizammuddin Auliya). Another significant Chishti centre in Northern India throughout the later half of the 15th century and in the beginning of the 16th century was Jaunpur, the capital of the Sharqi Sultans. From the beginning of the 15th century, a Chishti centre flourished in Rudauli close to Lucknow. Later, Bahraich (in contemporary Uttar Pradesh) appeared as another centre throughout the Lodi era.

Gangoh in Saharanpiir district of Uttar Pradesh became a significant centre of the silsilah under Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi (1456-1537). He wrote several books on sufi thought and practice and also on metaphysical subjects. He also translated Chandayan, a romantic poem in Hindawi written through Maulana Daud in Persian. Throughout the second stage, the Chishti centred also flourished in Malwa and Bengal. Several Chishti saints of the second stage wrote commentaries on Arabic and Persian classics and also translated Sanskrit works on mysticism into Persian. Like the early, sufis of Delhi, the later Chishti sufis made followers from all classes of society but, unlike their spiritual precursors, mainly of them accepted state patronage.

### ***Other Sufi Orders***

In addition to the Chishti and the Suhrawardi orders, there were others such as the Firdausi, the Qadiri, the Shattari, Qalandari etc. which were introduced in India throughout this era. The Firdausi order was a branch of the Suhrawardi which recognized itself at Rajgir in Bihar towards the end of the 14th century. The mainly, prominent sufi belonging to this silsilah in India was Shaikh Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri (d. 1380).

The Qadiri was the significant sufi order in the Central Islamic countries and was founded in Baghdad through Abdul Qadir Jilani (d. 1166). It was introduced in India in the late 14th century and recognized itself in the Punjab, Sind and the Deccan. The Qadiri had an orthodox orientation and its doctrinal positions were similar to those of the orthodox ulema. The Qadiri sufis had secure dealings with the ruling classes of several provincial Sultanates, and accepted state charity. The order was urban-based and attempted to reform the religious life of Indian Muslims of What it measured un-Islamic powers.

The Shattari order which was introduced in India in the 15th century through Shaikh Abdullah Shattari, was also an orthodox order. The Shattari centres were recognized in Bengal, Jaunpur and the Deccan. Like the Qadiris, the Shattari sufis had secure ties with the court and accepted state patronage.

The Qalandari order sheltered a wide range of wandering dervishes who violated normal social behavior. They were measured reprehensible and above the Islamic law. They had no recognized spiritual master and organization. Several qalandars regularly visited the chishti khanqahs and became absorbed into the Chishti order. The qalandars had contacts with the Nathpanthi yogis, and adopted several of their customs and practices such as

ear piercing.

The Rishi order of sufism flourished in Kashmir throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. Before the emergence of this order, a religious preacher from Hamadan, Mir Saiyyid Ali Hamadani (1314-1385) had entered Kashmir with a group of followers to spread Islam. The missionary zeal of Hamadani, his sons and disciples made little impact on the people of Kashmir. The Rishi order, on the other hand, was an indigenous one recognized through Shaikh Nuruddin Wali (d. 1430). It prospered in the rural environment of Kashmir and influenced the religious life of the people throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. The popularity of the Rishi order was due to the information and it drew inspiration from the popular Shaivite bhakti custom of Kashmir and was rooted in the socio-cultural milieu of the region.

### **The Causes of Chishti Popularity**

All the sufi orders of the Sultanate era whispered in achieving the vital sufi goal of establishing direct communion with God through traversing the sufi path under the supervision of a spiritual guide. Though, dissimilar sufi orders observed separate rituals and customs of their own and differed in their attitudes to state and society.

Of all the orders of this era, the Chishti appeared as the mainly popular, and it was also widespread. The Chishti rituals, attitudes and practices made it an essentially Indian silsilah. The Causes of its popularity are as follows

- Several practices of early Chishtis bore secure resemblance to the attributes of some of the already existing non-conformist religious orders in India such as asceticism, bowing before the master, shaving the head of a new entrant into the order and organizing spiritual musical recital. In this sense, the Chishtis came to be regarded as part of a recognized custom in India.

- The Chishtis adopted an attitude of religious tolerance towards the non-Muslim population of India and adjusted themselves to the needs of a predominantly non-Muslim environment. They made use of popular imagery and popular idiom to convey their ideas to their Indian followers and adopted several of their customs and rituals. Several of the Chishti saints made Hindawi the vehicle of spreading their teachings.
- The egalitarian atmosphere of the Chishti khanqahs attracted big number of people from lower parts of Indian society. The Chishti attitude towards religion was characterized through sympathy towards the deprived parts of the society. Caste distinctions of the Brahmanical social order were meaningless in the Chishti khanqahs. Merchants, artisans, peasants and even sweepers became the followers of the Chishti order. Nor did they accept the two-fold racial division of the people through the Turkish ruling class into noble-born and low-born.
- The inspired leadership of the early Chishti masters, their aloofness from the court and their unwillingness to accept state patronage, their rejection of the orthodox arid externalist attitudes of the ulema, and, finally, the combining of the easy precepts of Islam with the sufi teachings contributed to the popularity of the Chishti order.
- The popularity of the early Chishtis rose after their life time as the cult of saints, began to develop in the later centuries approximately their shrines (dargahs). Later, legend-makers and writers of hagiographic literature sometimes attributed the popularity of the early Chishti sufis to their skill to perform miracles. In the subsequent centuries, traditions were invented to symbolize the early Chishtis as being actively involved in the conversion of the non-Muslims who were whispered to have been drawn to them due to their alleged miracle-performing powers. Though, the early Chishti sufis disapproved of the display of miraculous powers, though they did consider in the possibility of miracles. They did not consider the miracles of primary importance in sufi teaching and

practice. Nevertheless, the miracle stories in relation to the early Chishtis played a significant role in enhancing the popularity of the Chishti shrines and the posthumous popularity of the sufis themselves.

### **Social Role of the Sufis**

Sufis played a significant role in society and at times in polity. Here we will talk about their role in dissimilar spheres.

#### ***The Sufis and the State***

It has already been mentioned above that with the exception of the early Chishti sufis and the Chishtis of the Shahpur Hillock in the Bijapur Kingdom, the sufis be ongoing to mainly of the other silsilah, including the later Chishtis, were involved in the affairs of the state and accepted state endowments. There are instances of expression of disagreement through Chishti sufis in excess of the policies pursued through individual Sultans as throughout the reign of Muhammad Tughluq. While the sufis belonging to other sufi groups served the state machinery through becoming an integral part of it, the early Chishtis helped the state through creating a milieu in which people belonging to dissimilar classes and religious societies could live in harmony.

The sufis, including the great Chishti masters of the early era, never questioned the existing political organization and the class structure. At the mainly, they advised the state officials to illustrate leniency in collecting land revenue from the peasants. On the other hand, they did not forbid their ordinary followers from seeking state favours and involvement in the affairs of the court. It was perhaps due to these limitations of the otherwise radical sufi order that the later transition within the Chishti silsilah to the acceptance of state patronage and involvement in court politics was a smooth.

### ***Sufis and the Ulema***

We have already noted that the ulema sustained to illustrate their disapproval of the sufis despite several attempts made through al-Ghazzali to effect a reconciliation flanked by the two. The attitude of mutual distrust flanked by the two sustained throughout the Sultanate era, though orthodox sufi orders such as the Suhrawardi, the Qadiri, etc. pandered to the ulema. The ulema were in scrupulous hostile to the early Chishti sufis and their practices. They pronounced against the Chishti practice of sama and objected to the Chishti quest for religious synthesis. Though, Chishti sufis such as Shaikh Nasiruddin (Chiragh-i Delhi) and Gesudaraz gave an orthodox orientation to the Chishti order to mitigate the hostility of the ulema towards the Chishti practices. It appears that as the Chishtis began to involve themselves in court politics and accept state endowments, they adopted doctrinal attitudes similar to those of the ulema.

### ***Sufis and Conversions***

The sufis of the Sultanate era have been usually measured as propagators of Islam in India. Many traditions and legends of the later medieval era also represented the sufis as active missionaries. The later hagiographic accounts of the life of Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti showed him as being actively involved in the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam. Likewise, the first sufis who entered the Deccan in the late 13th century and early 14th century have been portrayed in the later legends as militant champions of Islam who waged a jihad (war against non-Muslims). There were sure active evangelists in the middle of the Suhrawardr sufis.

Mir Saiyyid Ali Hamadani and his followers who entered Kashmir in the 14th century were also imbued with proselytizing zeal though they did not achieve much success in their mission. Though, it necessity be pointed out that conversion of non-Muslims to Islam was not a part of the behaviors of all the sufis. Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti was not an evangelist and was not actively

involved in conversions. His attitude and that of his spiritual successors towards non-Muslims was one of tolerance. Shaikh Nizamuddin Aulia on one occasion observed that several Hindus measured Islam a true religion but did not accept it. He was also of the view that every religious society had its own path and faith and its own method of worship. Also, there is little historical proof to illustrate that the early sufis in the Deccan were warriors fighting for the expansion of Islam.

Though, big number of non-Muslims, especially from the low castes, was attracted to the sufis and later to their dargahs where they belonged to the wider circle of devotees. There they slowly came under the power of Islamic precepts which eventually led to their Islamization. Later, the descendants of several groups which were Islamized claimed that their ancestors were converted to Islam through one or another medieval sufi. Such a claim appears to have been motivated through their desire to set up their extensive association with the dargah of the sufi and their extensive standing in Islam.

### ***Material Life in Sufi Khanqahs***

We have seen that there are instances of wealthy khanqahs supported through state endowments, of sufis forging links with the state and finally of the transformation of some sufis into landed elites. Ideally, though, the sufis such as the early Chishtis existed in khanqahs which remained in physical separation from the court and social hierarchy, and where life was based on egalitarian principles. We have pointed out that the early Chishtis accepted the logic of the existing class structure at the broader social and political stage and did not see any alternative to it. Nevertheless, life in their own khanqahs was characterized through a lack of hierarchy and structure. The khanqah was a lay where both its inhabitants and the pilgrims experienced equality. For their necessary expenses such khanqahs depended not on state patronage but on



futuh (unsolicited charity).

The Chishti khanqahs were open to all parts of the society and to all societies. The qalandars and jogis made frequent visits to the khanqahs where they were provided accommodation. The khanqahs also contributed to economic life in several ways. Some of them undertook the farming of waste lands. Others were involved in the construction of structures both of religious character and public utility and planted gardens. The institution of the Khanqah played a significant role in the procedure of urbanization. The annual urs (the festival commemorating the death of a spiritual master) gave impetus to trade, commerce and manufacture of regional handicrafts.

### **The Impact of Modern Mystic " Ideas of Islamic Countries on Indian Sufism**

Although the growth and expansion of the sufi movement in India was primarily determined through the Indian environment, it sustained to be influenced through several growths in sufism in the Islamic world. The sufi thought of great masters such as al-Ghazzali sustained to power successive generations of Indian sufis belonging to several Silsilahs. The ideas and poetic imagery of the Persian sufis like Faiduddin Attar (d. 1220) and Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 1273) also inspired Indian sufi of the Sultanate era. The Chishtis of this era are usually whispered to have been influenced through the work of the Spanish-born mystic, Ibn Arabi (d. 1240) who propounded the doctrine of wahdat-al wujud (unity of the phenomenal and noumenal world) which was opposed through the ulema and orthodox sufis. Though, it should be noted that mainly of the sufis, including the Chishtis, did not consider doctrines such as wahdat-al wujud of primary importance in the sufi method of life. For them, sufism was not so much a doctrine but a practical action of traversing the sufi path.

The ideas of Alauddaula Simnani (1261-1336), an Iranian who opposed Ibn Arabi's doctrine', also influenced some Indian sufis. Gesudaraz came under the power of Simnani's orthodox ideas and denounced the views of Ibn Arabi and Jalaluddin Rumi.

### **The Sufi and the Bhakti Movements and Cultural Synthesis**

The interaction flanked by the two is clear from the extra ordinary similarities flanked by the two. These similarities incorporated emphasis on monotheism, on the role of the spiritual guide (pir or guru), and on mystical union with God. Moreover, both the bhakti saints and several sufi orders were critical of the orthodox elements in Hinduism; and Islam respectively. One prominent instance of the power of the bhakti movement on sufism is offered through the Rishi order of the sufis in Kashmir. Here, the non-conformist ideas of the well-known 14th century women bhakti preacher, Lal Ded, exercised profound power on the founder of the order Shaikh Nuruddin Wali.

The interaction flanked by the Chishti sufis and the nathpanthi yogis throughout the Sultanate era is well recognized information. The movement of the nathpanthis had attained considerable popularity in Northern India, in scrupulous in the middle of the lower parts of the society, throughout the 13th and 14th centuries. The nathpanthi yogis regularly visited the khanqahs of the leading Chishti Shaikhs and had discussions with them on the nature of mysticism. The translation of the yoga treatise Amrit-kund into Persian from Sanskrit even before the advent of sufism in India led to the adoption of several meditative practices through the sufis. The early Chishtis' approved some of the ethical values of the nathpanthi yogis and their corporate method, of life. Like the Chishtis, the nathpanthis had opened their doors to all parts of society, irrespective of caste distinctions. The general outlook of the two popular movements provided a foundation for mutual understanding flanked by Muslims and non-Muslims.

The adaptability of the Chishtis in the non-Muslim environment of India released syncretism forces and led to cultural synthesis. Several early Chishtis spoke in Hindawi and composed verses in it. Several khanqahs inspired the composition of mystical poetry in regional languages. Some early Hindi works such as Chandayan through Mulla Daud (second half of the 14th century) combined mysticism with Hindu mythology and philosophy. The sufi folk literature of the later times was a mix of the simplest precepts of Islam and sufi terminology and the existing popular imagery and idiom and, therefore, contributed to the growth of eclectic religious life, particularly in the rural regions. The Chishti practice of *santa* provided the foundation for a syncretic musical custom such as the repertoire of religious songs described *qawwali* which is said to have begun with Amir Khusrau.

## **ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF DELHI SULTANATE**

### **Architecture**

The mainly significant source for the revise of architecture is the surviving remnants of structures themselves. Though these enable us to grasp architectural techniques and styles peculiar to our era, it offers little help in understanding other related characteristics of architecture such as the role of the architects and the drawings and estimates and accounts of the structures.

### ***New Structural Shapes***

Arch and Dome: On a careful reading of the reports prepared through Common Alexander Cunningham of archaeological sites and remnants in Northern India, we observe that the incidence of masonry structures—including civilian housing in cities—increases significantly after the 13th century. The structure of true arch required stones or bricks to be laid as visors in the form of a curve and bound jointly firmly through a good binding

material. This binding material was lime-mortar.

The result of the introduction of the new technique was that the pre-Turkish shapes; lintel and beam and corbelling, were replaced through true arches and vaults and the spired roofs (shikhaf) through domes. Arches are made in a diversity of shapes, but in India the pointed form of the Islamic world was directly inherited. And sometime in second quarter of the 14th century, another variant of the pointed form, the four-centered arch, was introduced through the Tughluqs in their structures. It remained in vogue till the end of the Sultanate.

The pointed arch was adopted in the Islamic world quite early due to its durability and ease of construction. The usual method of raising a pointed arch was to erect a light centering and lay one layer of bricks in excess of it. This layer supported another thin layer of flat bricks in excess of which radiating visors of the arch were fixed in mortar. These two bottom layers of brick-work would, if needed, act as permanent shuttering for the arch. It may be noted here that the employment of bricks instead of an all-wood centering was a characteristic typical of regions deficient in reserves of wood such as West Asia and even India.

But the construction of dome demanded especial techniques. The problem was to discover an appropriate method for converting the square or rectangular top of the walls of the room into a circular base for raising a spherical dome. The best method to overcome this problem was to convert the square plan into a polygon through the use of squinches crossways the corners. Later, in the fifteenth century, stalactite pendentives came to be used for the similar purpose.

### *Structure Material*

It is curious information that there are very few instances of early Turkish structures in India where newly quarried material has been employed through the architects. The fashion was to use richly carved capitals, columns, shafts and lintels from pre-Turkish structures. In India, towards the beginning of the 14th century when the supply of such material had exhausted, structures were raised through using originally quarried or manufactured material.

In the masonry work, stone has been used abundantly. The foundations are mostly of rough and small rubble or, wherever it is accessible, of river boulders, while the superstructure is of dressed stone or roughly shaped coursed stonework. Though, in either case, the structures were plastered all in excess of. Percy Brown (*Indian Architecture: Islamic Era*, Bombay, 1968) has noted that in the structures of the Khalji era a new method of stone masonry was used. This consisted of laying stones in two dissimilar courses that is headers and stretchers. This organization was retained in subsequent structures and became a feature of the structure technique of the Mughals.

The material commonly used for plastering structures was gypsum. Apparently lime-plaster was reserved for spaces that needed to be secured against the leakage of water, such as roofs, indigo-vats, canals, drains, etc. In the later era, i.e. approximately 15th century, when highly finished stucco work became general, gypsum mortar was preferred for plaster work on the walls and the ceiling.

It was through their manipulation that a rich and sumptuous effect was obtained in the Sultanate structures. But characteristically enough no one kind of decoration was reserved for a scrupulous kind of structure; on the contrary, these pan-Islamic decorative principles were used for all types of structures in the Delhi Sultanate. Calligraphy is a significant element of the decorative art

in the structures of this era. The Quranic sayings are inscribed on structures in an angular, sober and monumental writing, recognized as kufi. They may be established in any part of the structure-frames of the doors, ceilings, wall panels, niches etc., and in diversity of materials—stone, stucco and painting.

Geometric shapes in abstract form are used in these structures in a bewildering diversity of combinations. The motifs indicate incorporation of visual principles: repetition, symmetry, and generation of continuous patterns. It has been suggested through Dalu Jones (*Architecture of the Islamic World*, ed. George Michell, London, 1978) that the generating source of these geometric designs is the circle, which could be urbanized into a square, a triangle or a polygon. These shapes are then elaborated through multiplication and subdivision, through rotation and through symmetrical arrangements.

Of the foliations, the dominant form of decoration employed in Sultanate structures, is the arabesque. It is characterized through a continuous stem which splits regularly, producing a series of leafy secondary stems which can in turn split again or reintegrate into the main stem. The repetition of this pattern produces a beautifully balanced design with a three dimensional effect.

### ***Stylistic Development***

The purpose of the discussion here is to give you with a common outline of the development of the Indo highlight the characteristics that characterize its more prominent phases.

#### *The Early Form*

The history of Indo-Islamic architecture proper commences with the job of Delhi through the Turks in A.D. 1192. The Tomar citadel of Lal Kot with its Chauhan extension, described Qila Rai Pithora, was captured through

Qutbuddin Aibak. Here he began the construction of a Jami Masjid which was completed in 1198. According to mosque it was recognized as Quwwatul Islam and was built from -seven Hindu and Jain temples demolished through the conquerors. Again, in 1199, an expansive screen with lofty arches was raised crossways the whole front of the Sanctuary of the mosque. In both these constructions, the hand of the regional architect is quite apparent. The lintels, carved-columns and slabs, have been used liberally through only turning their carved sides inwards or using them upside down. The arches of the screen have been built through employing the method of corbelling. And the ornamentation of the screen, is emphatically Hindu in conception.

Though, the borrowed elements of Hindu architecture were soon discarded and relatively little was retained through the maturing Indo-Islamic approach. In later structures of this stage, such as Qutab Minar (built 1199-1235), Arhai Din Ka Jhoupra (built c. 1200) and Iltutmish's tomb (completed 1233-4). In this connection, the principles employed in the construction of the domical roof of Iltutmish tomb (built 1233-4, not extant now) are also of great interest.

The culmination of the architectural approach designated through us as the Early Form was the mausoleum of Balban built approximately 1287-88. It is in ruins now but occupies a significant lay in the development of Indo-Islamic architecture, as it is here that we notice the earliest true arch.

The Khaljis with their architecture, as revealed in Alai Darwaza (built 1305) at the Qutub intricate, and the Jamat Khana Masjid (built 1325) at Nizamuddin, a marked change approach appears. In the development of Indo-Islamic architecture, this stage occupies a key location as it exhibits a separate power of the Seljuq architectural traditions (a Turkish tribe ruling in excess of Central Asia and Asia Minor in 11-13 century) as also sure salient characteristics of composition which were adopted in the succeeding styles.

The feature characteristics of this stage may be listed below:

- Employment of true arch, pointed horse-shoe in form.
- Emergence of true dome with recessed arches under the squinch.
- Use of red sandstone and decorative marble relief's as new structure materials
- Appearance of „lotus-bud' fringe on the underside of the arch — a Seljuq characteristic
- Emergence of new masonry-facing, consisting of a narrow course of headers alternating with a much wider course of stretchers—again a Seljuq characteristic.

In addition, the decorative characteristics characterized through calligraphy, geometry and arabesque now became much bolder and profuse.

### **The Tughluqs**

A new architectural approach came into vogue in the structures of this era. Judging from the remnants, only the first three rulers of these homes appear to have been interested in the art of structure. Though, the architecture of this era can be divided into two main groups. To the first group belong the constructions of Ghiyasuddin and Muhammad Tughluq, and the other to those of Feroz Tughluq.

The common characteristics of the Tughluq approach of architecture are listed below:

- Stone rubble is the principal structure material and the walls are in mainly cases plastered.
- The walls and bastions are invariably battered, the effect being mainly marked at
- A hesitant and perhaps experimental use of a new form of arch— the four centered arch—necessitating its reinforcement with a supporting beam. This arch-beam combination is a hall-spot of the Tughluq



approach. The pointed horse-shoe arch of the preceding approach was abandoned because of its narrow compass and so the inability to span wider spaces.

- Emergence of a pointed dome with clearly visible neck in contrast with rather stifled dome of the preceding approach.
- Introduction of encaustic tiles as an element of decoration in the panels of the structures.
- Emergence, in the tombs of this era, an octagonal plan which came to be copied and perfected through the Mughals in the 16th-17th century.

An additional characteristic was the element of reduced ornament, confined mostly to inscribed borders and medallions in spandrels executed in plaster or stucco.

### **The Final Stage**

Within a decade of the death of Feroz Shah Tughluq (1388), the Sultanate became politically unstable, and in 1398 was sacked and plundered through Timur. Though, some semblance of central power remained with the two succeeding dynasties of the Saiyyids and Lodis, although they ruled in excess of a greatly shrunken Sultanate of Delhi flanked by 1414 and 1526. A big number of tombs were built in and approximately Delhi so much so that in excess of a era of time the region approximately Delhi looked like a sprawling qabristan (graveyard).

Yet some of these structures are significant from architectural point of view and can be measured as heralding a separate approach. The more significant of these tomb-structures took two separate shapes, the distinguishing characteristics of which are given below:

- Mausoleums intended on an octagonal plan incorporating the following elements:
  - Main tomb-chamber bounded through an arched verandah.
  - One storey high.
  - Verandah with projecting eaves supported on brackets
- The other kind was built on square plan. These were characterized through the following elements:
  - Absence of verandah approximately the main tomb-chamber.
  - Exterior comprised of two, and sometimes three storeys.
  - Absence of eaves and supporting brackets

There is an original treatment of colored tile decoration in these structures. It is set sparingly in friezes. In addition, there are intricately incised surfaces of plaster.

The end of the Delhi Sultanate came in 1526 with the defeat of last of the Lodi Sultans at the hands of the Mughal invader, Babur. This also signaled an end of the Sultanate approach of architecture, which had begun showing signs of stagnation in the 15th century.

### ***Public Structures and Public Works***

Contrary to the popular opinion that the number of structures other than royal we in information notice that such structures distant outnumber royal of these structures comprised sarai, bridges, irrigation-tanks, wells and baoli, dams, Kachehri (administrative structures), prison-houses, kotwali (police-stations), dak-chauki (post-stations), hammam (public baths), and katra (market spaces), etc. Since approximately all these kinds were planned for public and civic purposes, we group them collectively under public structures and public works. They were accessible to the common public regardless of their religious affiliations.

Sarai is perhaps the mainly conspicuous of these public structures. It was introduced in India through the Turks in the 13th century. The earliest mention of the subsistence of sarai is from Balban's time (1266). In the middle of late rulers both Muhammad Tughluq and Feroz Tughluq are recognized to have built a big number of sarais in Delhi as also „beside the major land-routes of the Sultanate. The main characteristics of these sarais may be listed therefore:

- Square or rectangular disposition, enclosed on all four sides through masonry walls, with entry through one or sometimes two gateways.
- Series of rooms fronted through small vaulted spaces beside all the four sides inside the enclosure. Warehouses in the corners of the enclosure.
- Subsistence of a small mosque and one or more wells in the open courtyard within the enclosure.

Bridges were another significant category of public structures. Though, only small and medium sized rivers were provided with masonry bridges. Major rivers such as the Ganga and the Yamuna were provided with bridges made of boats. We are fortunate in having at least two masonry bridges made of boats. We are fortunate in having at least two masonry bridges of this era surviving even today. One is Art and Architecture situated at Chittorgarh in excess of the Gambheri river. The other was built in excess of Sahibi, a tributary of Yamuna, at Wazirabad Delhi.

Sarais and bridges are only the two mainly general specimens from a rather rich and miscellaneous order of public structures of the Sultanate era. Weirs and step-wells, too, are a part of the Delhi Sultanate architecture. For instance, gandhak ki baoli built through Iltutmish at Mehrauli (Dehli) is one of the step-wells.

## **Painting**

The history of painting in the Sultanate era is obscure compared with its architecture. This is due primarily to the non-availability of any surviving specimens for at least the first hundred years of the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate.

Equally surprising is the absence of illuminated books, an art accepted to supreme height in the Islamic world through 1200. Though, the researches throughout the last 20-25 years have unearthed new and some crucial proof, forcing the scholars to change their opinion radically. We now know that not only book illumination but murals too were executed throughout the Sultanate era. The art of painting may therefore be divided into the following three categories each of which will be discussed separately.

### ***Literary Proof for Murals***

The closest view that one may have of the murals as a flourishing art form throughout the rule of the Delhi Sultans is through a big number of literary references occurring in the chronicles of this era. These have been compiled and analyzed through Simon Digby („The Literary Proof for Painting in the Delhi Sultanate’, *Bulletin of the American Academy of Benares*, Vol. 1, 1967, 47-58).

The earliest reference to murals in the Sultanate era is in a qasida (Tabaqat-i Nasiri) in praise of Iltutmish, on the occasion of the gift of Khila,† from the Caliph in 1228. The verses in this composition create it clear that human or animal figures were depicted upon the spandrels of the main arch raised to welcome the envoy of the Caliph.

The mainly significant single reference to painting in the Delhi Sultanate

occurs in the context of un-Islamic observances of earlier rulers inviting a ban through Feroz Tughluq (Tarikh-i Ferozshahi through Afif). It designates the subsistence of a continuous custom of figural painting on the walls of the palaces of Delhi, which was sought to be banned through Feroz Tughluq.

This custom of painting was not confined to the murals alone. In a reference relating to the entertainment parties thrown through Qutbuddin Mubarak Khalji (1316-20), mention is made of a profusely painted open-sided tent: The decorations would so appear to be on painted cloth (Nuh Siph through Amir Khusrau).

In contrast, there did survive a custom of wall painting in the houses of the general people, especially the non-Muslims. It is testified through:

- A stanza from a 14th century Hindi poem Chandayan written through Maulana Daud in 1379-80, which describes the painted decoration of the upper rooms of the homes where Chanda, the leading lady of this poem, sleeps with her female companions.
- An actual painting from one of the illustrated manuscripts of this poem belonging to the 15th century and showing the bedchamber of Chanda, on the walls of which are painted scenes from the Ramayana.

### ***The Quranic Calligraphy***

Calligraphy was the mainly revered art in the Islamic world and was used as a decorative characteristic both on stone and on paper. In the hierarchy of craftsmen, a calligrapher was placed above the illuminator and painter. Though, the calligraphy of the Quran became one of the foremost shapes of book art, where copies of Quran' were produced on a majestic and expansive level.

The earliest recognized copy of the Quran is dated 1399. It was

calligraphed at Gwalior, and has a diversity of ornamental motifs, derived both from Iranian and Indian sources. The geometrical frontispiece of this manuscript appears to be in the Sultanate approach and suggests the following as prominent characteristics of the Delhi ateliers in the 14th century:

- The work produced here is in row with the Iranian custom.
- The writing used in the headings and inscriptional panels of the Quran is invariably 'kufi'.
- The illumination of geometrical frontispieces was the specialty of this school.

The state of book-art in the 15th century, under the Saiyyid and Lodi dynasties, remained a sad shadow of its former self as it became incapable of supporting artistic endeavour on a big level. The initiative appears to have been wrested through provincial dynasties.

### **Manuscript Illustration**

Manuscript illustration in the Sultanate era is a hotly debated and disputed subject. There is very little concurrence in the middle of scholars on terminology and provenance. Therefore, deciding the traits of Sultanate manuscript illustrations is a cumbersome job. On the contrary, though a good number of illustrated manuscripts in Persian and Awadhi from the era flanked by 1400 and the advent of the Mughals, are now recognized, some of these manuscripts appear to have been produced at provincial courts. Though, there is a separate, although small, group of manuscripts which was almost certainly not linked with any court. They appear to have been produced for patrons; presumably self-governing but situated somewhere in the Sultanate. They have sometimes been termed as on behalf of a 'bourgeois' group and are attributable to the era 1450-1500. Given below are brief notes on two of these manuscripts forming the 'bourgeois' group.

- Hamzanama (Berlin): This manuscript is dated to in relation to the 1450 and depicts the legendary exploits of Amir Hamza, one of the companions of the prophet.
- Chandayan (Berlin): It is datable to 1450-70 and illustrates the romance of two lovers Laur and Chanda. It was composed in the Awadhi dialect of Hindi through Maulana Daud of Dalmau close to Rai Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh in 1389.

## **ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF REGIONAL STATES**

### **Architecture**

The regional styles of architecture came into vogue usually after these states had thrown off the allegiance to Delhi and proceeded to develop a form suiting their individual necessities. They were separate from the Indo-Islamic approach practiced at Delhi and often displayed definitely original qualities. In the regions which had a strong indigenous custom of workmanship in masonry, regional styles of Islamic architecture produced the mainly elegant structures. On the other hand where these traditions were not so pronounced, the structures constructed for the regional states were less distinctive. In some cases totally novel tendencies, self-governing of both the indigenous and the imperial Sultanate traditions, are also visible.

### ***Eastern India***

It is motivating that the development of the earliest regional approach in architecture should have taken lay at the other end of the subcontinent, in eastern India. In information there did emerge two major strands of architectural approach in this region viz., in Bengal and in Jaunpur, both of which witnessed the rise of regional states.

## *Bengal*

The establishment of a self-governing Muslim power in Bengal took lay within a gap of five years since the capture of Delhi through the Turks. But a self-governing structure approach, separate from the one prevalent at Delhi, urbanized at the beginning of the fourteenth century and lasted for an era of almost 250 years.

Bengal approach spread in all parts of the region, but mainly of the prominent structures were situated within the boundary of the Malda district which had been the strategic centre of the region due to the confluence of the two rivers, the Ganga and the Mahananda. Here lie the remnants of the two principal municipalities — Gaur and Pandua which, in turn, enjoyed the status of the capital seat of the regional ruling power. In our effort to understand the distinctive characteristics of the architectural approach of this region we have to depend mostly on the structures extant in these two municipalities and a few significant examples elsewhere.

The structure art of Bengal is usually divided into the following three phases of which the first two are measured preliminary stages and the third its ultimate development into a specific approach.

- The first stage is from A.D. 1200-1340 (Throughout mainly of this time Gaur was the capital seat. Only in later years it was shifted to Pandua).
- The second extended from A.D. 1340 to 1430, and
- The third stage from A.D. 1442 to 1576 when the Mughals captured the province. Throughout this stage the capital was shifted back to Gaur.

The data in the form of extant structures for the first stage is scanty. Even where two or three structures survive they are in a badly ruined state. It is,



nonetheless, apparent that the structures raised throughout this era were wholesale conversions of the existing Hindu structures.

Likewise, the second stage is also deficient in data as it is represented through a solitary instance. But this structure — Adina Masjid at Pandua (built 1364) — surpasses all other Islamic structures in Bengal in size. It introduces two new characteristics in the architectural approach.

- The “drop” arch, having a span greater than its radii, and centres at the impost stage, and
- The method of raising the roof in an organization of arched-bays where small domes supported through brick-pendentives in excess of-sailing courses were raised in excess of each bay. The bricks in these pendentives were set diagonally in each alternate course in such a manner that their corners project and help in the transition from a square to a circular base (figures 1 & 2 illustrate Adina Masjid).

The third stage is the mainly extra ordinary as it depicts the emergence of a semi-indigenous approach in tune with the peculiar environment and regional condition in Bengal. The result was to translate the native bamboo structures into brick. In the course of time this special form of curved roof became a fixed convention. In mainly of these structures, moreover, an indigenous form of decoration i.e. terracotta tiles, was adopted.

It therefore becomes clear that nowhere in India did climate and regional circumstances as well as indigenous structure styles affect the development of architecture as profoundly as in Bengal. Its merit lies in its dynamic skill to change itself through adoption and version.

### *Jaunpur*

The Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur was founded through Malik Sarwar, a noble of Feroz Shah Tughluq, in 1394. In the wake of Timur's invasion and sack of Delhi, Jaunpur took in excess of from the capital as a centre for scholars and writers. The surviving architecture of Jaunpur consists exclusively of mosques. Moreover, all the surviving structures produced under the Sharqis are situated in the capital municipality Jaunpur.

The Sharqi architecture of Jaunpur carries a separate impact of the Tughluq approach, the battering effect of its bastions and minarets and the use of arch-and-beam combination in the openings being the two mainly prominent characteristics. Though, the mainly striking characteristic of the Jaunpur approach is the design of the facade of the mosques. It is composed of lofty propylons with sloping sides raised in the centre of the sanctuary screen. The propylons consist of a vast recessed arch framed through tapering square minars, of exceptional bulk and solidity, divided into registers. The best examples can be seen in the Atala Masjid (built in 1408) and the Jami Masjid.

### *Western India*

The regional approach of architecture that came into being in Western India towards the beginning of the 14th century is approximately exclusively confined to Gujarat. Gujarat: This regional approach flourished for an era of some two hundred and fifty years beginning early In the 14th century. The founders of Gujarat approach of Indo-Islamic architecture were in information the governors of the Khalji Sultans of Delhi.

There were three dissimilar phases of the Gujarat approach:

- The first stage lasting for the first half of the 14th century marked through the demolition of the Hindu temples and their recon version into Muslim structures.
- The second stage prevailing mostly throughout the first half of the 15th century and showing signs of hesitant maturity of a distinctive approach.
- Finally, the stage beginning in the latter half of the 15th century "when Gujarat approach emerges in its own magnificent form. Mainly of the typical examples relate to this era of Gujarat approach.

Here it is significant to keep in mind that the Gujarat approach of architecture is the mainly indigenous in character. In some of the finer examples of this approach considerable portions of the structures are in information adaptations from either Hindu or Jain temples. The essence of Gujarat approach will be easily understood if you envisage a scheme of construction where the structure of a temple is fitted into the sanctuary of the mosque in the form of a central compartment. Approximately all the mosques from the second and third stage are composed in this manner.

### ***Central India***

In Central India, the development of Indo-Islamic architecture remained confined within the Malwa region which became a self-governing kingdom at the turn of the 15th century. But, unlike other regions, the Muslim rulers of Malwa did not inherit any strong custom of visual art. The result was that, to carry out their structure projects skilled and experienced artisans were summoned from as distant a lay as Delhi who incorporated several styles prevalent at Delhi. It was only in the later era that original elements of architecture were urbanized and decorative motifs of their own were adopted in the structures of the Malwa rulers which gave them a distinctive

appearance.

### *Malwa-Dhar and Mandu*

The regional manifestations of Indo-Islamic architecture in Malwa are situated essentially within the confines of two municipalities, Dhar and Mandu, though some structures may also be seen at Chanderi. The Sultans of Dhar and Mandu have left a rich architectural legacy, the main structures being mosques, tombs and palaces. The structures at Dhar and Mandu derive several characteristics from the Tughluq architecture such as the battered walls, fringed arch and the arch-beam combination. But soon we also notice the emergence of distinctive characteristics which provide Malwa approach of architecture a character of its own. Some of the more prominent characteristics are described below:

- Perhaps the mainly significant is an innovative technique through which the two separate structural systems of the arch and the lintel have been combined in Malwa architecture. In no other early kind of architecture has this problem of using arch and beam as structural elements been more artistically solved.
- Another notable characteristic of the Malwa structures is the construction of stately flights of steps of considerable length leading to their entrances. This became necessary due to the use of unusually high plinths on which mainly of the significant structures are raised.
- The mainly striking impressions conveyed through Malwa approach are not structural but the result of decorative properties. In these structures, the element of color assumes an important role. We notice the use of two separate methods for obtaining this color effect. The first is the use of several colored stones and marble, and the second is through means of encaustic tiles.

This architectural impulse died in 1531 with the defeat of the last Malwa

ruler Mahmud II at the hands of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Malwa was temporarily brought under the Mughals through Humayun in 1535 and was finally conquered through Akbar in 1564.

### *Deccan*

The Indo-Islamic architecture that urbanized in the Deccan from 14th century onwards under the Bahmanis acquired a definitely regional character quite early in its growth. But this architecture followed a dissimilar pattern in development than other regional styles. As opposed to the growth of regional styles in Northern India, architecture in the Deccan appears to have ignored to a very big extent the pre-Islamic art traditions of the region. In practice, the Deccan approach of architecture consisted basically of the fusion of:

- The architectural organization in vogue at Delhi under the Sultans, particularly the Tughluq form, and
- An entirely extraneous source that is, the architecture of Persia.

The architectural growths in the Deccan may be divided broadly into three phases corresponding on each occasion to a change in the seat of the government. The first stage begins in 1347 at the capital municipality of Gulbarga. Second stage begins in 1425 when the seat of power is transferred to the municipality of Bidar. And finally, with the change of capital again in 1512 to the municipality of Golconda, begins the third stage lasting till 1687, the year of Mughal conquest.

### *Gulbarga*

Gulbarga became the seat of a self-governing kingdom in 1347 under Alauddin Bahman. With this began the first stage of architectural development in the Deccan. The early structures, though, did not as yet symbolize a distinctive approach of the Deccan Islamic architecture. For the mainly part

they followed the modern Tughluq architecture of the North. The Jami Masjid (1367) inside the Gulbarga fort was, though, dissimilar and unique. This structure was conceived and intended through an ingenious 14th century architect named Rafi. He was a native of Qazvin in Northern Persia and had taken to service under the Bahmani ruler of Gulbarga. The central designing thought lay in reversing all the architectural principles of mosques with a courtyard. Therefore, in the Jami Masjid of Gulbarga the conventional design of the courtyard was filled with small cupolas supported through arches placed secure jointly. But this design was never repeated. Perhaps the unorthodox plan of this mosque did not discover favor with the traditionalists.

### *Bidar*

The Bahmani capital was transferred to Bidar, a fortress city, in 1425 through ruler Ahmad Shah (1422-36). Soon the new capital saw a flurry of structure action as within its walls sprang up palaces with big audience halls and hammams, mosques, a madrasa, and royal tombs. Moreover, this change of capital mainly eliminated the architectural power of Delhi. The new structures illustrate a strong modern Iranian power. The substantive approach of architecture was now composed of shapes very mainly borrowed from Iran, but customized and adopted to suit regional circumstances. They did not, of course, abandon the Indo-Islamic traditions altogether. Some significant characteristics of Bidar approach may therefore be listed below:

- Since color was the feature characteristic of Iranian architecture, palaces at Bidar illustrate a brilliant scheme of the use of colored tiles and the mural painting. The glazed tiles which sheltered the exteriors were imported through sea from Iran.
- There is a distinctive change in the form of some of the domes in the structures at Bidar. They are slightly constricted in the lower contour and therefore become the fore-runners of the well-known bulbous

domes of the Mughals. The drums of these domes are made tall so as to project the domes in full view.

Sultanate towards the beginning of the 16th century brought Deccan approach to a secure. Soon, though, under the Adil Shahi new stage of architectural action was to take in excess of from where the Bahmanis had left. But this approach urbanized contemporaneously with the Mughal approach and therefore shapes the subject of revise in a separate course.

### *Vijaynagar*

Vijaynagar has an extraordinary history. It was born out of the incursions into the Deccan and even further south of the Delhi Sultanate. The capital, the well-known Vijaynagar, was founded in relation to the 1336 on the banks of the river Tungabhadra. Vijaynagar, now deserted, is one of the mainly significant historical and architectural sites as it is the only Hindu municipality from the pre-contemporary era of which extensive remnants still exist above ground. The Vijaynagar approach of architecture was distributed throughout South India, but the finest and mainly feature group of structures is to be seen in the municipality of Vijaynagar itself. This municipality, in information, had a great advantage as a location for big level structure action in that it abounds in granite and a dark green chlorite stone, both used extensively as structure material. The use of monolithic multiple piers in the temple at Vijaynagar testify this information.

The expanse of the municipality Vijaynagar at the height of its glory measured some 26 sq. km., and it was enclosed with a stone wall. Besides palaces and temples, the municipality had extensive waterworks and several secular structures such as elephant stables and the Lotus Mahal. The vital elements of Vijaynagar approach are listed therefore:

- The use of pillars for architectural as well as decorative purpose is on an unprecedented level.
- Numerous compositions are used in raising the pillars, but the mainly striking and also the mainly frequent is one in which the shaft becomes a central core with which is attached an upraised animal of a supernatural type resembling a horse or a hippogryph.
- Another distinguishing characteristic is the use of vast reverse-curve eaves at the cornice. This characteristic has been borrowed into the approach from the Deccan and provides the pavilions a dignified appearance.
- Pillars form an integral part of Vijaynagar architecture, approximately all of which have ornamental brackets as their capitals. Usually this bracket is a pendant recognized as bodegai in regional parlance. This pendant, in Vijaynagar approach, is elaborated into the volute terminating in an inverted lotus band. The occurrence of this pendant is an index reliable of the structure in the Vijaynagar group.

The glory of the Vijaynagar empire ended in A.D. 1565 at the battle of Talikota when the combined army of the Sultans of the Deccan inflicted a crushing defeat on the Vijaynagar ruler Ram Raya.

### **Painting**

The age-old custom of painting in India sustained in the regional states in the medieval era despite having suffered a setback in its growth in the Delhi Sultanate. Superior documentary material in the form of paintings survives for the regional states. Though, these paintings defy geographical classification; they are best understood in conditions of the stylistic development they follow.



## ***Western Indian Approach***

### *Jain Painting*

The Western Indian approach is usually measured to have originated in the 12th century since the earliest surviving illustrated manuscripts in this approach date from the early era of this century. They were exposed in Jain bhandars (libraries) principally in Gujarat and Rajasthan. It is, though, significant to note that through no means all the texts is Jain, or even religious in nature, nor is this approach in accessible and regional in character. It has come to be designated Western Indian approach as mainly of the manuscripts are exposed in Gujarat and parts of Rajasthan and Malwa. The Jains, though, were not confined to Western India; we also get some splendid illustrated manuscripts from as distant a lay as Jaunpur and Idar.

The early specimens of the Western Indian approach are palm-leaf manuscripts. They follow the pithy format with two or three columns of text depending on the width of the leaf and the number of necessary string holes to hold the leaves jointly. In the 13th century, the material was slowly changed from palm-leaf to paper. This opened up great possibilities of illumination in the margins. The format of the new paper manuscripts was at first kept to the proportions of the palm-leaf, before slowly rising the height of the folio. No effort was made, though, to abandon the pothi format.

The Western Indian styles Was fully shaped through the end of the 14th century. Paper manuscripts begin to appear regularly from the middle of the 14th century, though palm-leaf as writing material was not abandoned altogether. Some commonly identifiable traits of this approach are given below

- Painting in these manuscripts is in a single plane, contained within a sometimes brilliant but always brittle row. The figures have been drawn on a red or ultramarine background.
- Paper is seen as a surface to be decorated with colors in patterns, yielding in the best examples a brilliant jewel-like surface. The number of pigments used has increased—costly pigments such as ultramarine, crimson, gold and silver are used in rising quantities.;
- Architectural elements are reduced to essentials. The hieratic little figures, and sometimes animals as well as household furniture, are little more than pictograms occupying boxes in a geometrical composition.
- Mannerisms contain the extension of the further eye, the swelling torso, and a particularly tortuous arrangement of legs in seated figures. Men and women are often practically indistinguishable.

A careful revise of the illustrated manuscripts in the Western Indian approach creates it apparent that they were apparently mass produced at the great Jain centres of Pattan and Ahmadabad and are only superficially rich. Much rarer and distant more beautiful are manuscripts individually created through professional artists for discerning patrons.

There are very few of these manuscripts which provide us information in relation to the artists. In mainly cases, there are indications that the scribe and the artists were separate identities. There are notes through the scribes in the manuscripts to instruct the illustrator in relation to the subject to be painted in the blank legroom.

### *Hindu Painting*

The approach of a typically Jain manuscript with its projecting eye, bodily distortions, and flat color planes is also that used for sure Hindu manuscripts

dating from the 15th century, and also in two instances for Buddhist manuscripts. Clearly, then, this sectarian nomenclature is inaccurate. In the absence, though, of an alternative we retain this erroneous name, keeping in mind that Jain painting was quite regularly the work of the Hindus.

We do not discover any illustrated Hindu manuscripts on palm-leaf from the early centuries of Muslim rule in excess of Northern India. But the subsistence of such manuscripts in Nepal argues that they necessarily have been produced in India also.

### ***Caurapancasika Approach***

The Caurapancasika is a manuscript written through a Kashmiri poet Bilhana who, awaiting execution for having been the lover of the king's daughter, sings of his unrepentant passion in lyrical stanzas. Paintings designated as Caurapancasika are only occasionally directly related to the text.

The emergence of Caurapancasika approach is not quite sure though it is measured to have appeared in a group of 15th and 16th century paintings in a less purely decorative and anecdotic vein. The manuscripts illustrated in this approach are not usually Jain, and where and when they were painted is a matter of debate. It appears Caurapancasika group of manuscripts can only have urbanized stylistically after it had been established possible to turn the human head approximately into strict profile and drop the further projecting eye. The distinctive characteristics of Caurapancasika approach may be described as below:

- Approximately all the paintings in this approach are in an oblong format with the text written on the reverse. They are, in information, successors to the pothi format of the Western Indian approach.

- The protruding further eye of the Western Indian approach provides method to an uncompromising face view and a single very big eye.
- The paintings are still in a single plane, with backgrounds in brilliant primary colors.

The Caurapancasika approach is recognized for its beauty of expressions and its dramatic use of color and the richness of the painters' fancy. On occasion a human being is caught in action, an attainment unusual in Indian paintings. Few Indian paintings can rival the vitality of the best of them.

### ***Provincial Development***

#### *Calligraphy*

##### *Jaunpur*

The Jaunpur School of Calligraphy flourished in the latter part of the 15th and first part of the 16th century. The manuscripts of the Quran calligraphed under this school use:

- A writing recognized' as Bihari,
- Crimson color in the frames for the text rather heavily.
- Much bolder designs of arabesque and creeper, with more inventive medallions in their illuminative content.

##### *Ahmedabad*

The Ahmedabad School owes its origin to Sultan Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat; it lasted for in relation to the half a century (c. 1425-75). The writing used for writing the Quran in this school is recognized as suluth. It was a serpentine, static writing, used mostly in the Middle East for writing chapter-headings and inscriptions. When it came to be adopted in India in the early 15th century, it assumed the form of tall slanting uprights and onward-sweeping sub-linear curves and flourishes.

### *Manuscript Illumination*

The illumination of manuscripts practiced as an art of painting flourished in Iran in the 13th-15th centuries under royal patronage.

The mainly significant group of these manuscripts of suggested Indian provenance with Irani power is dated throughout the era 1420-50. The mainly likely lay of their origin appears to be Bengal since Delhi may be ruled out as a provenance and there is no proof of the provincial Sultans patronizing artists until later in the century. The picture, though, becomes much clearer through 1500. A group of manuscripts dated c. 1490-1510 is recognized from Mandu in which the direct power of the Irani approach is visible. The Khalji Sultans of Malwa would appear to have imported artists and perhaps manuscripts from Iran, and had the approach copied through their own attests. The vital characteristics of illuminated manuscripts with miniatures suggest:

- A horizontal format crossways the page, or sometimes squares in form,
- Text columns on either face, towards the bottom of the page, and
- A lifting of the normal viewpoint, therefore affording to the painter a new world or landscape and new possibilities of spatial relationships flanked by figures.

### *The Deccani Painting*

A separate approach of painting in the Deccan emerges in the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. It certainly predated the Mughal painting and is, in information, recognized to have influenced its beginnings. The use of daring colors—purple and yellow, pink and green, brown and blue — the sophistication and artistry of their compositions, and the traditional Deccani costume argue through themselves a pre-subsistence for the approach. The Deccani approach drew on several

sources including the Irani custom. This is clearly reflected when we identify their distinguishing characteristics:

- The faces in this approach are commonly painted in three-quarters.
- The grounds are shown as sprigged, i.e. sprayed with flowers or similar motifs.
- Another Deccani characteristic is the reduction of structures to totally flat screen-like panels.
- A typically Irani power in some paintings is the golden sky.
- And suggestive of the Chinese power in some paintings are pink and green flowering plants, lotus and chrysanthemum.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

### **Sanskrit Literature**

It is usually whispered that the loss of official patronage caused the decline of Sanskrit literature throughout the Sultanate era. While it is true that Persian replaced Sanskrit as the official language, there was no quantitative decline in the manufacture of Sanskrit literary works as such. The era is extra ordinary for the immense manufacture of literary works in dissimilar branches of Sanskrit literature - kavya (poetical narrative), religion and philosophy, grammar, drama, stories, medicine, astronomy, commentaries and digests on the Law Books (Dharamashastras) and other classical Sanskrit works. Nor was the loss of official patronage to Sanskrit absent for there were still several kings who patronized Sanskrit poets—especially in South India and Rajasthan. But\* while Sanskrit works sustained to be produced in big number, there appears to be a marked decline in the excellence of these works. This decline had set in before the establishment of the Sultanate and became more pronounced throughout the Sultanate era. There was not much originality in mainly of the Sanskrit works that appeared throughout this era. Much of the Sanskrit writing was wearisomely repetitive, artificial and forced. Sanskrit works on religious themes were often characterized through metaphysical

speculations. Biographical works were mainly in the form of heroic ballads which contained hagiographical details and stories of romance. Sanskrit lost the patronage of the new Persian speaking ruling class but the Sultanate did not interfere with the self-governing manufacture of Sanskrit literary works. In information, the introduction of paper throughout the Sultanate era gave an impetus to the literary action of reproduction and dissemination of already existing Sanskrit texts such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

South India, Bengal, Mithila and Western India played the leading role in the manufacture of Sanskrit literary works. The Vijaynagar kings patronized Sanskrit poets. The Jain scholars in Western India also contributed to the growth of Sanskrit literature. The mainly well-known Jain scholars of Sanskrit literature in Western India were Hemachandra Suri who belonged to the 12th century. Mithila in northern Bihar urbanized into yet another centre of Sanskrit. Later, towards the end of the Sultanate era and throughout the Mughal era, the Chaitanya movement in Bengal and Orissa contributed to the manufacture of Sanskrit works in many meadows — drama, champu (a mixed form of verse and prose), grammar, etc.

Several Rajput rulers patronized Sanskrit poets. These poets wrote the family histories of their patrons in the classical form of a Sanskrit eulogy. The writings of these family histories followed a set formula and became a recognized trend throughout this era. Some of these Sanskrit works such as Prithvirajavtyaya and Hammirmahakavya are well recognized. A number of historical poems are on Muslim rulers, e.g., Rajavinoda — a biography of Sultan Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat written through his court poet, Udayaraja. Kalhan's Rajatarangini (12th century), which presents the history of Kashmir kings, was followed in the Sultanate era through a second Rajatarangini through Jonaraja who wrote the history of Kashmir kings from Jayasimha to Sultan Zainul Abedin (1420-1470). A third Rajatarangini was written through

Srivara who took the history of Kashmir down to A.D. 1486. All these works present eulogistic accounts of their patrons but they contain useful historical material, too. In addition to these historical kavyas, a big number of semi-historical texts described prabandhas were also written. The prabandhas are replete with legendary and hagiographical material but, some of them, such as Merutunga's Orabandnakasha Chintamani and Rajashekhar's Prabandhakosha contain material of historical significance. On the whole, though, it necessity be pointed out that despite voluminous manufacture, the Sanskrit literature of the Sultanate era had lost much of its original vitality and creativity, and the bulk of this literature remained unaffected through the intellectual growths of the age.

### **Arabic Literature**

Arabic was the dominant language of the Islamic World in the first few centuries after the rise of Islam. It was the language of the Prophet as well as that of the Islamic religion and theology. Although attention was paid to the farming of the Arabic language in India after the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, the Turkish rulers were more influenced through the Persian language which had urbanized as the dominant language in the Islamic kingdoms of Central Asia from the 10th century onwards. As a consequence, the manufacture of literary works in Arabic was restricted to a small circle of Islamic scholars and philosophers. Throughout the reign of Iltutmish many Arabic scholars sought refuge at Delhi after the sack of Bukhara through Changez Khan. Sultan Feroz Shah Tughluq (1351-1388) patronised several Arabic scholars and it was under his patronage that the great Arabic dictionary — the Qamus — through Majduddin Ferozabadi was produced. After the disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate, the rulers of several provincial kingdoms also patronised Arabic learning and several spaces came into prominence as centres of Arabic learning throughout this era.



## **Persian Literature**

Here we will talk about the early stage of the development of Persian language and literature as well as the contribution of Amir Khusrau and other poets in the field of Persian literature.

### ***Early Stage***

A new language — Persian — was introduced in India throughout the era of Ghaznavi rule in the Punjab. There was extraordinary growth in Persian literature in Iran and Central Asia from the tenth century onwards. Some of the great poets of Persian language such as Firdausi and Saʿadi, composed their works throughout this stage of growth of Persian literature in Iran and Central Asia. Lahore — which was the centre of Turkish political power in India before the beginning of the 13th century — attracted several Persian poets from the Islamic countries of Iran and Central Asia. The works of only a few of the early writers of Persian literature in India have survived. One of them was a poet Masud Sad Salman d. c. A.D. 1131) whose compositions reflect a sense of attachment for Lahore. Though, through and big, the Persian literature written in India before the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate was derivative in character and adopted literary shapes and imagery which were prevalent in Iran.

It was after the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate that Indian power began to exert itself on Persian works written in India as is apparent from the literary compositions of Amir Khusrau.

### ***Contribution of Amir Khusrau***

The reign of the Khaljis was a glorious era from the viewpoint of growth of Persian literature in India. According to Ziauddin Barani, the well-known modern historian, “there existed at Delhi scholars of such eminence and

Caliber as were not to be established in Bukhara, Samarqand, Tabriz and Isfahan, and in their intellectual accomplishments they equaled Razi and Ghazali. Under every stone lay hidden a valuable gem of literary excellence". The mainly outstanding of the Persian scholars and poets of the era was Abul Hasan, usually recognized through this pseudonym of Amir Khusrau. Later, in the Mughal era, the historian Badauni, and modern of Akbar praised Amir Khusrau's contribution to Persian literature. He wrote "after the appearance of the cavalcade of the king of poets, the poetry of his precursors became bedimmed like stars at the rise of the sun". Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) was one of those few Indian writers of Persian poetry whose works have been read and admired beyond their own country. His works symbolize the beginning of a new trend in Indian-based Persian literature — the trend of the rising familiarity with Indian literature and power of Indian literature on Persian writings in India; Amir Khusrau was the Indian born son of a Turkish immigrant. He began his career as a courtier and poet throughout the reign of Sultan Balban. He became a disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, the well-known sufi saint of the Chisti order. He was the court-poet throughout the reigns of Jalaluddin Khalji and Alauddin Khalji. Later, Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughluq also patronised him. He existed through the reigns of six Sultans of Delhi and was linked with their courts.

Amir Khusrau was a prolific and versatile writer and is said to have composed half a million verses and ninety-nine works on dissimilar themes. His poetry consisted of a great diversity of shapes — lyric, ode, epic, and elegy. His poetry was essentially Indian in sentiment though he followed Persian models in technique. Therefore he created a new approach of Persian which came to be recognized as *sabaq-i Hindi* or the Indian approach. Some of the works composed through Amir Khusrau have been lost. Five literary masterpieces composed through him are *Mutla-ul Anwar*, *Shirin Khusrau*, *Laila Majnun*, *Ayina-i Sikandari* and *Hasht Bihisht*. He dedicated all of them

to Alauddin Khalji. His five diwans (collection of compositions described ghazals) contain Tuhfat-us Sighar, Wast-ul Hayat, Ghurrat-ul Kamal, Baqiya Naqiya and Nihayat-ul Kamal. These compositions illustrate the great lyrical talent of his poetry. Amir Khusrau also wrote historical masnavis (narrative poems) which have great literary and historical value. He was not a historian in the actual sense of the term but since he enjoyed the patronage of successive Sultans of Delhi and since he selected historical themes for his masnavis, the historical content of his writings is of great interest to the students of the history of his times. In Qiran-us Sa,dain, Amir Khusrau describes the quarrel and reconciliation flanked by Sultan Kaiqubad and his father Bughra Khan. Miftah-ul Futuh deals with the military successes of Sultan Jalauddin Khalji. „Ashiqa’ is the story of romantic love flanked by Khizr Khan, the eldest son of Sultan Alauddin Khalji and Deval Rani, daughter of Rai Karan, the Raja of Gujarat. In Nuh Siphir (The Nine Sides) he provides a poetical account of Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Khalji’s reign. This work also Contains references to modern social and religious circumstances. The Tuglaq Nama describes Ghiyasuddin Tughluq’s rise to power. Another historical work written through Amir Khusrau is Khazain-ul Futuh in which he provides an explanation of Alauddin Khalji’s conquests in the South. Though, it necessity be noted that Amir Khusrau, being a court-poet, looked at events mainly through official eyes.

One extra ordinary aspect of Amir Khusrau’s Persian poetry was his love for his country. He says, “I have praised India for two reasons. First, because India is the land of my birth and our country. Love of the country is a significant obligation....Hindustan is like heaven. Its climate is better than that of Khurasan.....it is green and full of flowers all the year round. The Brahmans here are as learned as Aristotle and there are several scholars in Several meadows.....Amir Khusrau composed verses in hindavi (a form of Hindi or Urdu) also and showed the method for the future development of the

Urdu language.

### ***Other Persian Poets***

Shaikh Najmuddin Hasan (d. A.D. 1327), popularly recognized as Hasan Dehlawi was another well-known Persian poet throughout the Sultanate era. He was a friend of Amir Khusrau. He was one of the court poets of Sultan Alauddin Khalji. The excellence of his ghazals earned him the title of Sadi of Hindustan. Poetical writings in Persian sustained throughout the reigns of the Tughluq and Lodi Sultans. The expansion of the Delhi Sultanate led to the extension of the Persian literature to several parts of India. The emergence of provincial kingdoms following the disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate also contributed to this procedure. With the base of the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan, several Persian poets and scholars migrated to Gulbarga where they were patronised through the Bahmani Sultans.

### ***Historical Works in Persian***

One of the significant contributions of Persian literatures throughout the Sultanate era (and later throughout the Mughal era) was in the sphere of history writing. Several historians wrote the history of the era in Persian language. For the history of the Sultanate, we have to depend mainly on the accounts provided through the court chroniclers of this era. There are several methodological and chronological flaws in the historical writings of these chroniclers and mainly of them are not free from personal and ideological prejudices. Nevertheless, they are of indispensable value for the revision of the history of the Sultanate era. The mainly significant of these historians were Minaj us Siraj (author of the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*), Isami (author of the *Futuh-us Salatin*), Shams Siraj Afif (author of the *Tarikh-i Feroz Shahi*). In the middle of the Sultans, Feroz Shah Tughluq wrote the *Futuh-i Ferozshahi*. But the greatest historian of this era was Ziauddin Barani. His *Tarikh-i Ferozshahi* is

the mainly valuable work of history written throughout the era. Barani completed this work in 1357 when he was seventy-four years old. The book is named after Feroz Shah Tughlue. Barani began to write this work at an age when his memory had started fading and consequently he made several chronological errors. Moreover, his personal, ideological, social and sectarian prejudices often color his interpretation, of several historical events. These shortcomings of his work notwithstanding, Barani's contribution to the writing of history was unparalleled throughout the era.

He broke new grounds in history writing and did not confine himself to rulers, courts and campaigns. He described and analyzed administrative matters and economic phenomena. He gives an analytical review of conflicts flanked by several social groups throughout his era. Barani wrote another book, *Fatwa-i Jahandari* which deals with political theory.

### ***Sufi Literature in Persian***

Throughout the era under review, big amount of religious and philosophical literature was produced in Persian. The sufi literature written in Persian is of great value both from religious and literary points of view. A distinctive genre of Persian literature appeared in the form of *mal-fuzat* (conversations or discourses of the leading sufi masters of the era). The *mal-fuzat* also contained didactic poetry and anecdotes. Amir Hasan Sijzi wrote the *mal-fuzat* of the well-known Chishti sufi master, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya. The work is recognized as *Fawa'id-ul Fu'ad*. Many abridged *mal-fuzat* were also produced as a result of the rising popular demand for the details concerning the life, teachings and miracles of the several sufis. Mir Khwurd's *Siyaru-ul Auliya* is the earliest recognized biographical dictionary of sufis written in India. The *Khair-ul Miajah's* is the *mal-fuzat* of Shaikh Nasiruddin Mahmud (Chiragh Delhi). These works often reflect social and economic

realities of the times, separately from spiritual matters.

### ***Sanskrit Translations in Persian***

The pioneering experiments of Amir Khusrau laid the base of literary and cultural synthesis in the modern Indian society. There was a rising interchange flanked by Persian and Sanskrit. Several Sanskrit works began to be translated into Arabic and Persian. The first scholar to translate Sanskrit stories into Persian was Zia Nakhshabid (d. 1350). His Tuti Nama is based on a Sanskrit work. Several Sanskrit works were translated into Persian throughout the reigns of Feroz Shah Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi, Zain-ul Abedin, the well-known ruler of Kashmir throughout the 15th century, got the Mahabharata and Kalahan's Rajatarangini translated into Persian from Sanskrit. Therefore it appears that through the end of the Sultanate era such literary exercises necessity have given rise to a set of people who were well-known with both Sanskrit and Persian and who had the knowledge of the religious ideas of Hinduism and Islam. Though, little effort was made through the Sanskrit knowing non-Muslim scholars to translate works of Persian and Arabic literature into Sanskrit. Such an absence of reciprocity on the part of the Brahmanical elite indicated its insular outlook which was earlier highlighted through Alberuni in the 11th century. The lack of receptivity to ideas from other cultures and languages may partly explain the decadence of the Sanskrit literature throughout this era.

It is therefore clear that Persian occupied a significant lay in the middle of the languages of the era. It became the official language and the language of the Sultanate ruling elite. It brought with it several new and refreshing social and religious ideas. Its introduction in India led to the widening of the intellectual horizon of the Indian poets, thinkers and social reformers. It introduced new literary shapes and styles.

## **Literature in Regional Languages**

One of the significant characteristics of the literary history of this era is the development of literature in regional languages in several parts of India. Regional languages which grew rapidly throughout this era in northern India incorporated Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati.

Each one of these languages originated from a corresponding Indo-Aryan Prakrit in its apabhramsa stage. This origin can be traced back to the seventh-eighth centuries. The three South Indian languages — Tamil, Kannada and Telugu — have a longer literary history than that of the North Indian regional languages. The literary history of the Tamil language goes back to the beginning of the Christian era. Kannada and Telugu also have older literary traditions than the North Indian regional languages. Malayalam is the youngest in the middle of the South Indian languages and it was not before the fourteenth century that it urbanized as a self-governing literary form.

## **Literature in the Regional Languages of North India**

### ***The Development of Hindi Literature***

What is today recognized as Hindi urbanized in several shapes in the medieval era. The dialects of Hindi incorporated Brajbhasha, Awadhi, Rajasthani, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Malwi, etc. In our era the literature of Hindi language urbanized in these dialects. In addition to these dialects, a mixed form of Hindi, recognized as Khari Boli (originally meaning a rough, crude and raw speech) was also developing.

### ***First Stage***

Scholars have placed the origin of the Hindi language flanked by 7th and

10th centuries — it was in this era that Hindi was evolving out of Apabhramsa. The era flanked by 7th-8th centuries and 14th century (before the rise of the bhakti poetry) is characterized as „Veergatha Kala’ (age of Heroic Poetry) through scholars. Another name used for describing this era is Adi Kala (early era). Much poetry of this era was composed through bards who were patronised through several Rajput rulers. The bards glorified such virtues of their patrons as chivalry and bravery.

They also highlighted the element of romance in their poetical narratives. In its essence, this literature symbolizes the values and attitudes of the Rajput ruling classes. The bards who composed this literature were not concerned with the aspirations of the general people. Mainly of the bardic poetical narratives were composed in the Rajasthani dialect of Hindi. The mainly well-known of them is the Prithviraja Raso which is attributed to Chand Bardai, the court ministerial of Prithviraja, the last Rajput king of Delhi. Other heroic poetical narratives incorporated Visaldeva Raso, Hammir Raso, Khumana Raso, etc. The authenticity of mainly of these raso narratives in their existing shapes is open to grave doubts and it appears that their contents were expanded throughout the later centuries. Therefore for instance, it is only the nucleus of the Prithviraja Raso which was written throughout this era (12th century), and interpolations were made later in the original draft.

Not all the Hindi literature of the era flanked by 7th-8th centuries and 14th century belonged to the genre of bardic poetry. The Buddhist siddhas and later the nathpanthi yogis composed religious poetry in an archaic form of Hindi. In Western India, the Jain scholars also composed religious poetry in Rajasthani highlighting several characteristics of religious and social life of the people. But he also composed poems in mixed form of Hindi which ultimately urbanized into Khari Boli or Hindustani. He described this language hindavi. Some of his Hindi verses are establish in his Khaliq Bari which is often



ascribed to him but which in all likelihood was written much later.

### *The Age of the Bhakti Poetry*

The second stage in the growth of Hindi literature began in the 14th-15th centuries. Several streams of the bhakti movement exercised profound power on the Hindi literature of this phasic. This stage of Hindi literature has been characterized as Bhakti Kala (Age of devotion) and it sustained till the Mughal era. This stage which began with Kabir marked the richest flowering of Hindi literature. The bhakti poets of the era were two-fold: the saguna poets (who whispered in god with human form and attributes) and nirguna poets (who whispered in non-incarnate Absolute God). Kabir was the leader of the nirguna bhakti poets mainly of whom belonged to lower castes of the society and were poor and illiterate. Kabir's own mother-tongue was Bhojpuri but he composed in a mixed dialect which could be understood through people in several parts of North India. Kabir's language is characterized through what has been termed 'rough rhetoric'. What is significant from literary point of view is kabir's use of a language which combines bluntness of approach with potency and eloquence. He used his strong and rough verses to present a powerful denunciation of several rituals. Another significant feature of Kabir's short poetical utterances is the use of ulatbasi or 'upside-down language' which consisted of a series of paradoxes and enigmas. It has been pointed out that Kabir inherited the ulatbasi custom from the nathpanthis and adapted it for an effective rhetorical and teaching device. Kabir and other "low-caste" monotheistic poets (Sen, Pipa, Dhanna, Raidas, etc.) expressed themselves in oral approach. The poetry they composed shapes a part of oral literature. Their verses were compiled much later — earliest instance of their written compositions are from the Adi Granth in 1604.

Being illiterate, they had no direct access to the Sanskrit literature. They

expressed themselves in the regional languages of the people; The literary genre in which they composed mainly of their short but effective utterances was doha (a short rhymed poem). In short, the poetry of Kabir and other nirguna saints of the 15th century played the mainly significant role in transforming the Hindi vernaculars into a „literary’ language.

The poets belonging to the conventional vaishnava bhakti movement in North India were mostly Brahmans and were well-known with Brahmanical scriptures and Sanskrit texts. The vaishnava poets whispered in the concept of devotion to a personal God and, accordingly, came to be divided as devotees Of Rama and Krishna. The Rama bhakti poetry in Hindi flourished mainly throughout the Mughal era. Its greatest exponent and perhaps the greatest poet of Hindi literature was Tulsidas (A.D. 1532-1623) who wrote the well-known Ram Charit Manas In the Awadhi dialect of Hindi. In the middle of the Krishna bhakti poets, Vidyapati composed verses in relation to the love of Radha and Krishna in Maithili Hindi. The power of his lyrical poetry was felt in Bengal and some Bengali poets imitated his songs. Vrindavan close to Mathura appeared as a centre of Vaishnava bhakti poetry through the end of the Sultanate era. These poets were devotees of Krishna and composed "their verses in Braj bhasha.

The greatest of these poets was Surdas (c. 1483-1563). Another great name in the Vaishnava bhakti poetry was that of Mira Bai (c. 1498-1543). She was a Krishna devotee and composed her songs in Rajasthani but several of these songs were later incorporated in other Hindi dialects and also in Gujarati.

### *Sufi Contribution to Hindi Literature*

Sufi saints and other scholars of this era contributed considerably to the growth of Hindi literature. The Chishti sufis made use of Hindi devotional

songs in sama (ecstatic singing and dancing) sessions. Sufi mystical and allegorical meanings were given to several Hindi conditions such as “Gopis”, “Raslila”, etc. The sufi poets combined Islamic mysticism with imaginative use of Indian love tales, popular legends and stories. Mulla Daud’s Chandayan (written in c. 1379) is the earliest of such poetical works. Kutuban’s Mrigavati (written in 1501) is another instance of mystical romantic poetry composed in Hindi. Malik Muhammad Jayasi’s Padmavat written in 1540' in Awadhi Hindi is the best instance of allegorical narrative. The literary compositions of the sufi poets also contributed to the incorporation of several Arabic and Persian words into Hindi literature and therefore played a significant role in cultural and literary synthesis.

### ***The Origin and Growth of Urdu Language***

Scholars have advanced several theories to explain the origin of the Urdu language in the era following the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. Several opinions have been expressed on the identity of the dialect of Hindi on which the Persian' element was grafted resulting in the growth of a new language. The dialects that have been mentioned are Braj bhasha, Haryanvi and other dialects spoken in the neighborhood of Delhi, and the Punjabi language. All these dialects have influenced the Urdu language in its formative stage and it is hard to pinpoint the exact dialect which combined with Persian to provide rise to Urdu. Though, it is recognized information that through the end of the 14th century, Urdu was emerging as a self-governing language. Like Hindi, the vital structure of Urdu consisted of Khari Boli — a mixture of several dialects spoken in Delhi and nearby regions. Delhi, throughout this era, was ideally situated for the growth of a synthetic language since, on the one hand it was bounded through people speaking dissimilar dialects and, on the other hand, it had Persian speaking ruling elite. Therefore, Urdu adopted Persian writing and Persian literary custom but through incorporating the vital

structure of Hindi dialects evolved an individuality of its own.

The word Urdu is of Turkish origin and means an army or camp. In its initial form, Urdu appears to have been devised as an improvised speech to enable the Persian speaking Turkish ruling class and soldiers to communicate with the regional people including Muslim converts. Though, it had not yet acquired a literary form. This new general language took a century to acquire a concrete form and came to be described “Hindavi” through Amir Khusrau. Hindavi therefore shapes the foundation of both Hindi and Urdu. Amir Khusrau composed verses in Hindavi (using Persian writing ) and therefore laid the base of Urdu literature. Though, it was in the Deccan that Urdu first acquired a standardized literary form and came to be recognized as Dakhini throughout the 15th century. It urbanized first under the Bahmani rule and flourished in the Bijapur and Golkunda kingdoms. Gesu Daraz’s Miraj-ul Ashiqin is the earliest work in Dakhini Urdu. Till the 18th century, Urdu was described through several names such as “Hindavi”, “Dakhini”, “Hindustani” or “Rekhta” (which means mingling many things to produce something new). In its urbanized form, Dakhini Urdu travelled back to the north and soon became popular throughout the Mughal era. It was throughout the era of the disintegration of the Mughal empire in the 18th century that the Urdu literature reached great heights.

### ***Punjabi Literature***

Two separate trends urbanized in the history of the Punjabi literature throughout the era flanked by the beginning of the 13th century and beginning of the sixteenth century. On the one hand, this era was marked through the growth of sufi and bhakti poetry and, on the other, through heroic ballads and folk literature. Sufi poetical compositions attributed to the well-known Chisti sufi master Baba Farid (Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar (c. 1173-1265) are

regarded as pioneering contribution to poetry in the Punjabi language. The hymns composed through Guru Nanak in the sixteenth century imparted a proper literary form to the language. The second Sikh Guru Angad gave the Punjabi language a separate writing described Gurumukhi. The hymns composed through Guru Nanak were later incorporated in the Adi Grahth through the fifth Sikh Guru Arjun in 1604. His poetry is characterized through chastity of sentiment and through diversity in his approach and poetic diction.

### ***Bengali Literature***

Folk songs described Charyapads — composed flanked by the 10th and 12th century are the earliest specimens of Bengali language'. The Turkish conquest of Bengal through the middle of 13th century contributed to the decline of Sanskrit and the importance of folk themes and shapes as media of literary expression began to increase. Through the fifteenth century, three main trends urbanized in the Bengali literature:

- Vaishnav bhakti poetry;
- Translations and free adaptations of the epics, and
- Mangala kavya.

The first great vaishnava bhakti poet in Bengal was Chandidas (1512-32) patronised Bengali literature. Two Bengali poets Kavindra and Srikanahdi translated the Mahabharata into Bengali verse throughout their reigns. In the early years of the fifteenth century, Kritivasa Ojha produced a Bengali poetical modern of Chandidas, Vidyapathi composed his devotional songs in Maithili dialect but several of his songs were later absorbed, into Bengali under the power of the vaishnava movement. Chaitanya and his movement gave further impetus to the growth of the vaishnava literature in Bengali. Several vaishnava poets were inspired through Chaitanya in his own time and after his death. In the middle of the vaishnava poets, some were Muslims. The second major

trend in the history of Bengali literature which began from the early fifteenth century drew inspiration from the epics and other Sanskrit scriptures. Sultan Husain Shah (1493-1519) and his successor Nusrat Shah (1514-32) patronised Bengali literature. Two Bengali poets Kavindra and Srikaranandi rendered the Mahabharata into Bengali verse throughout their reigns. In the early years of the fifteenth century, Kritivasa Ojha produced a Bengali poetical version of Valmiki's Sanskrit Ramayana. Maladhar Basu adapted vaishnava Sanskrit work the Bhagavata Purana into Bengali throughout the later 15th century and it came to be recognized as Srikrishnavijaya. Another, and the mainly popular Bengali rendering of the Mahabharata, was produced through Kasirama. These Bengali translations and adaptations played a significant role in influencing the cultural and religious life of the people in medieval Bengal. The third trend in the Bengali literature consisted of the emergence of Mangala kavya. These are sectarian poetical narratives and focus on the conflicts and rivalries in the middle of gods and goddesses. But they do contain humanistic elements, too, since they highlight popular aspirations and sufferings. Manika Datta and Mukundrama were two notable poets of Mangala kavya throughout the later 15th and 16th centuries.

### *Assamese Literature*

Hema Sarasvati was the first poet of Assamese language. She composed Prahladacharita and Hara-Gauri Samvada throughout the later part of the 13th century. Her modern poet was Harihara Vipra who chose episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata for his poetry. From the 14th century, Kamata and Cachar became centres for the development of Assamese literature. Madhava Kundali, who popularized the Ramayana story in Assam through rendering it into the language and idiom of the general people, was the mainly significant Assamese poet of the 14th century. His language was less Sanskritized than that of Hema Sarasvati and Harihara Vipra and was closer to

the language of the general people. The growth of vaishnava bhakti movement under Sankaradeva in the second part of the- fifteenth century made considerable contribution to the Assamese literature. Kirtana ghosa is regarded as the mainly significant vaishnava religious text written in Assamese language. It is an anthology of devotional songs, mainly of which were composed through Sankaradeva but other poets also made their contributions.

Sankaradeva also wrote several dramas (Ankiya Nat) which were based on the Purana episodes. He also composed a new kind of devotional poetry described Bargit (Bragita). Sankaradeva's disciple Madhavadeva (A.D. 1489-1596) also composed several literary works and further enriched the Bargit form of poetry.

### ***Oriya Literature***

It was throughout the 13th-14th centuries that the Oriya language assumed literary character. Saraladasa (14th century) was the first great poet of Orissa. He composed the Oriya Mahabharata which is regarded as a great epic through the people of Orissa. Oriya literature began to enter into a new stage from the beginning of the 16th century when the Vaishnava bhakti movement grew there under Chaitanya's power. Several of Chaitanya's disciples translated or adapted Sanskrit works on bhakti into the Oriya language. One of the secure associates of Chaitanya was Jagannath Das who became the greatest Oriya literary figure of his time. His Oriya translation of the Bhagavata Purana became popular in the middle of the people.

### ***Marathi Literature***

Literature in verse form began to emerge in the Marathi language from the later part of the 13th century. Early Marathi literature was dominated through saiva nathpanthis. Two easiest Marathi texts — Viveka darpana and the

Gorakhgita - belonged to the nathpanthi custom. The mainly significant poet of this stage was Mukundaraj who belonged to the nathpanthi custom and who wrote his Vivek Sindhu in chaste popular language. Another dominant power on the Marathi literature throughout its formative stage was exercised through the poets belonging to the Mahanubhava cult which appeared in the 13th century.

The Mahanubhava saint-poets were in the middle of the architects of the early Marathi devotional literature and made significant contribution to Marathi lexicography, commentaries, rhetoric, grammar, prosody, etc. The Varkari bhakti saint-poets of Maharashtra further urbanized the bhakti literature in the Marathi language. First in the middle of them was Jnanadeva (13th century). He wrote a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. It was named Bhavartha dipika and popularly came to be recognized as Jnanasvari. It is the fundamental text of the Maharashtra vaishnava bhakti saints belonging to the varkari custom. Another saint-poet belonging to the varkari custom was Namdev (1270-1350). He composed big number of Abhangas (short lyrical poems) in Marathi. He travelled to the north and later his verses were incorporated in the Sikh scripture, the Adi Granth.

Two other great saint-poets of medieval Maharashtra, Eknath (1548-1600) and Tukaram (1598-1649) belong to the Mughal era: they also made substantial contribution to the growth of the Marathi literature.

### ***Gujarati Literature***

Both Rajasthani and Gujarati languages appeared from old Western Rajasthani. The first stage in the development of the Gujarati literature lasted till the middle of the fifteenth century. Throughout this stage, two main literary shapes urbanized in the Gujarati literature — the prabhanda or the



narrative poem and the muktaka or the short poem. The first category incorporated heroic romances, poetic romances and rasas or extensive poems. The subject-matter of these poems consisted of historical themes interspersed with fiction, popular legends and Jain mythology. The second category of muktaka or short poem adopted several shapes such as phagu, baramasi and the chapo. Phagu means a short lyrical poem stressing on the element of viraha or separation. The second stage in the history of the Gujarati literature began in the late fifteenth century with the spread of the Vaishnava bhakti poetry. Narasimha Mehta (1414-1480) was a great Gujarati bhakti poet. He made use of his poetry to popularize Vaishnava bhakti in Gujarat.

## **Literature in the Languages of South India**

### ***Tamil Literature***

The great age of the Tamil literature came to an end with the decline of the Chola Empire. Writers and poets, though, sustained to create contribution to the Tamil literature. Villiputturar who almost certainly existed in the thirteenth century was a significant literary figure of the era. He rendered the Tamil version of the Mahabharata which is described Bharatam and which became popular in the middle of the Tamil-speaking people. He introduced the custom of using Sanskrit words and literary expressions in Tamil poetry. Another great poet and a modern of Villiputturar was Arunagirinathahe composed Tiruppagal — a lyrical and devotional work in praise of god Murugan. The era is also recognized for elaborate commentaries written through vaishnava scholars. Commentaries were also written on such literary works of the Sangam age as the Tolkappiyam and the Kural. These commentaries are a model of medieval Tamil prose and are recognized for their clarity and brevity. Another great author, Kachiappa Sivachariar composed Kanda-puranam in praise of god Subramanya.

### ***Telugu Literature***

Literature in the Telugu language made great progress from 13th century onwards. The mainly significant Telugu poet in the first half of the 14th century was Errapragada. He popularized the Champu genre of literary writing (mixed form of verse and prose). He composed the Ramayana in this genre. He translated a part of the Mahabharata and another Vaishnava Sanskrit work, Harivamsa into Telugu. Srinatha (1365-1440) was another great Telugu writer. He translated Sriharsha's Naishadha Kavya into Telugu. He also composed verses on the theme Of historical romance and this laid the base for the age of classical prabandhas in the Telugu literature. His modern, Potana, was a great poet who translated the Bhagavata Purana into Telugu. The Telugu literature achieved its highest location in the sixteenth century throughout the reign of the Vijaynagar king, Krishnadeva Raya, who himself was a poet in both Sanskrit and Telugu and who wrote Amukta Malyada in Telugu. He patronised several Telugu poets, mainly well-known of whom was Peddana. Peddana wrote Manu Charita in Telugu. One significant feature of the Telugu literature of this era was the rising power of Sanskrit on the Telugu; language.

## **LIFESTYLE AND POPULAR CULTURES**

### **Life Prior to 1200**

Throughout this era, landholding had become the chief foundation of social and political status. The agricultural surplus taken from the peasantry was utilised to uphold military vassals and religious grant holders whose conditions usually survived change of overlords. Through the 10th century, the consolidation of the power of smaller kingdoms and chieftains led to the intensification of the social procedure termed samanta organization (or "Indian feudalism").

The princes and members of the court existed in great splendour. The wealth of the great religious establishments was visible throughout the

festivals and elaborates performance of daily rituals. Considerable amount of artisan and peasant labour was consumed in the construction and maintenance of the palaces and temples. Therefore, the lifestyle of the pre-Islamic ruling classes in India differed from their successors only in matters of detail. The caste structure which sustained to stratify Hindu-society was protected through the Muslim rulers from outside. The new ruling class (though foreigners) soon realized that, in the dominant economic form of petty manufacture, caste organization was of great value. Moreover, the dominant ideology that maintained the caste structure heavily laid down the norm of serving the rulers whether they belonged to the caste structure or not.

### **The New Ruling Classes**

A separate stage in India's economic development began with the end of an extensive era of political fragmentation and the successful creation of a centralized power which was sustained through the regular extraction of possessions from an extensive territory.

### ***Ideological Composition of the New Ruling Classes***

The head of the new ruling class was the Sultan. He was measured to be synonymous with the State. From the very beginning of their rule in India, the Turkish Sultans measured themselves to be politically self-governing but culturally a part of the Islamic world.

The lifestyle of the new ruling class was comparable to the highest average of luxurious livelihood in the whole Islamic world. This was consciously adopted mainly to uphold aloofness flanked by themselves and the general people whose surplus they appropriated.

### ***Royal Pattern of Consumption***

The Sultans of Delhi wanted to own vast palaces. Approximately every ruler built a new palace for himself. Later rulers, like Feroz Shah Tughluq, were recognized to have increased the number of palaces they measured necessary. A typical account of the lavish display that took place in the Sultan's palace has been given through the traveller Ibn Battuta throughout the reign of Muhammad Tughluq. Ibn Battuta wrote that if a person wanted to visit the Sultan, he had to pass through three lofty gates which were heavily guarded. He then entered the 'Court of thousand pillars' which was a vast hall supported through polished wooden pillars and was decorated with all types of costly materials and furnishing. This was the place where the Sultan held his public court.

The royal umbrella and the scepter recognized as 'chhatra' and 'danda' respectively were used through the Hindu rulers and were sustained through the Muslims. Muhammad Tughluq is recognized to have used a black umbrella following the Abbasids. No one other than the rulers was allowed to use this umbrella and the scepter. Even if given royal permission, the umbrellas of the nobles were of dissimilar colors and its use was strictly confined to the members of the royal family. The Hindu rulers added the chowri (fly-whisk) to these symbols signifying royal power.

Throughout processions and other social functions, the Sultan was accompanied through an eunuch bearer to be followed through a band of musicians. The Hindu kings had a custom of having instrumentalists who played trumpet and flutes. This musical band played in the palace everyday. Except for the rulers, no one was allowed to be either accompanied through these musicians nor were they allowed to play in any other part of the municipality except the royal palace.

The darbar (i.e. the court) was the actual legroom where the power of the king was manifest through a number of rituals. Special assemblies were held there to receive foreign envoys, or on special occasions like coronation, victory in war and religious festivals. In royal functions like marriages of the Sultan's sons and daughters there was a great display of wealth. In annual celebrations of the coronation day, the nobles donned new clothes and placed nazr (presents) before the Sultan and took fresh oaths of allegiance.

### *The Harem*

Approximately every Sultan had a 'harem', a special legroom where women had their quarters. The Sultan's mother, his queens and all female servants and slaves existed here. Separate accommodations were provided for the women according to their ranks. The household karkhanas catered to their needs.

The vast households, beside with the common expenditure that went to uphold it was a part of the ostentatious lifestyle of the Sultans. But this conspicuous consumption patterned indirectly helped domestic manufactures and generated employment within the country. Members of the aristocracy who jointly with the Highest economic and social benefits shaped the core of the ruling class. In the Sultanate era, they were grouped in two sectors — the secular 'omrah' and the religious 'ulema'.

### **The Religious Aristocracy**

The Sultanate management accorded a special lay to the ulema. Those in the middle of them who were associated with the management of justice and religious law were recognized as 'dastarbaftdan' since they were distinguished through a special cap.

The ulema helped the rulers in theological matters. They had to undertake a special training and follow a definite course of study which consisted of Islamic theory, law, logic, Arabic and religious texts such as tafsir, Hadis, Qura'n, etc.

These men, besides with a few others, shaped the intellectual elite group recognized as ahl qalam. Their social roles were determined through the needs of the centralized state and an autocratic emperor. These men provided moral support to the imperial rule.

### **The Political Aristocracy**

The highest dignity reserved for men who were granted the title of „Khan’. Below them were taimaliks and the third in rank were amirs. Since mainly of these titles signified a military rank, the sipahsalar and sarkhel shaped the lowest rank in the middle of the nobility. The word amir meaning a noble was, though, applied to both civil and military persons.

Separately from the outward manifestations of splendour, the Sultanate nobility emulated the lifestyle of the Sultans. Approximately every nobleman had vast palaces, harems, slaves and household karkhanas to cater to their needs. They also had enough money for the maintenance of their household.

Separately from attending the darbar and going to war, the nobles hunted, attended and hosted feasts, and spent their time in being entertained through musician and dancing girls. Quite often, they also maintained big libraries. The relation of the Sultanate ruling class with the Sultans depended upon their narrow perception of self-interest which resulted in each noble trying to reach the imperial throne. Balban and Alauddin Khalji sternly repressed the nobles, but their splendid mode of life revived under his successors. In the reign of Muhammad Tughluq, his wazir enjoyed an income as big as that derived from

the province of Iraq. The other ministers yearly received 20,000 to 40,000 tankas with the chief sadr getting the fabulous sum of ^50,000 tankas as his sole income for a year. Throughout the Tughluq era, a number of nobles left big fortunes for their sons. Therefore, Bashir, who was ariz-i muroalik under Feroz Tughluq, left 13 crores at his death, which Feroz confiscated on the ground that Bashir was his slave. But this was an exception and mostly the nobles were allowed to leave their property barring the iqta to their sons.

### ***Life of the Aristocrats***

Nobels live in big houses (havelis). Each haveli had many rooms, baths, courtyard, watertaiik, library and harem. Inside was decorated with expensive curtains and paintings. Houses were finely white-washed. Their houses and rich furniture. Beds were decorated with silk, gold and silver. They used silk

### **Lifestyle of the Masses**

#### ***Domestic Life***

Family shaped the „core’ of the Indian village society: The family norms in the „Hindu’ society were dissimilar from what the Muslims had brought, but still sharing some characteristics in general. Both the societies accepted male dominance — preference of son in excess of a daughter.

#### ***Rituals and Ceremonies***

In both the Hindu and the Muslim families, ceremonies started from the birth of the child itself, the more respectable the family, the more elaborate was the ritual. In the middle of the Hindus upanayana samskara spots the entrance of child into the fold of education. In the middle of the Muslims after the completion of 4 years 4 months and 4 days Bismillah Khani (sending the child to the maktab) ceremony was performed. In the middle of the Muslims

circumcision ceremony (usually in the 7th year) was celebrated with great pomp and illustrate while in the middle of the Hindus upanayana (dvija ceremony) was held.

The after that significant ceremony was marriage. Both, the Muslims as well as Hindus, preferred not only great pomp and illustrate but observed several rituals. The girl used to bring vast dowry with her. In the middle of the Hindus, marriage within the sub-caste was allowed but intermarriage with other varna was forbidden. As for the Muslims, there was complete freedom in choosing wife or a husband. But importance was given to the ‚status‘ (kafu) of the respective social groups.

Death ceremony was accompanied through several superstitious rites. In the middle of the Hindus, ceremonies sustained for one year terminating finally through performing sraddha. In the middle of the Muslims, siyum (the ceremony of the third day) was held. Caste was still the dominant category in marking social differences. The smriti texts sustained to emphasize that punishing the wicked and upholding the chatarvarna (four-fold caste) social order through the force of arms was the duty of the Kshatriya. In actuality, the members of the earlier ruling class, the sons of the ranas, ranakas, etc. now constituted the rural aristocracy and administrative. A type of tacit sharing of power flanked by the Hindu aristocracy and the municipality-based administrator was therefore a factor of crucial importance for the Delhi Sultanate.

The duty of the Shudra was still one of service to the higher castes. The ban on the Shudras reciting the Vedas still held good, though they were now allowed to listen to the recitation of the Puranas. Smriti writers sustained to ban the Shudras from sharing their food and participating in the ritual feasts of the upper castes and severest restrictions were placed on mingling with the



Chandalas and other outcastes.

The usual 'religious practices of daily worship and ceremonies were followed. The old shapes of marriage sustained. Inter-caste marriage in the middle of the upper castes was forbidden in the Kali age. This made the caste division more rigid. Though, as the smriti writers talk about at length the social location of children born of inter-caste marriages such marriages necessity has sustained. It appears that the rich and powerful could choose their wives from all castes and parts with only some restrictions in spite of the prevailing norms of marriage within one's own caste.

### **Slaves and Servants**

The master-slave relation shaped a category through which the power in the Sultanate society expressed itself. Mainly noblemen referred to themselves as the slave of the Sultan.

The slaves in India can be graded into two groups:

- Those who were bought in an open slave market.
- Those who were first prisoners of war and then made slaves.

The location of these dissimilar kinds of slaves has also been discussed in the Hindu shastras. Both the Indians and the Turks had an extensive custom of maintaining slaves. Open slave-markets for men and women lived in West Asia as well as India.

Slaves were usually bought for domestic service or for their special skills. Feroz Shah Tughluq who had a special penchant for slaves composed in relation to the 180,000 of them. Several of them were employed in handicrafts. The rest shaped the personal bodyguards of the Sultan. A special kind of male slaves who were castrated in childhood were trained to be the guards of the harem. These were recognized as khwajasara (eunuchs). In the 13th century,

Bengal was a flourishing centre for the buying and selling of eunuchs in scrupulous. Women slaves were usually graded into two groups: (i) for domestic service and (ii) for entertainment and pleasure. The first were usually ordinary women while the second group was composed of beautiful women who could sing, dance and carry on conversation.

Not only nobles, but any wealthy householder establishes it impossible to run homes without slaves. Therefore, keeping slaves became a special spot of prosperity, and nobles vied with each other in excess of the possession of a comely boy or a girl slave.

It is now accepted information that slaves in the Sultanate India were treated better than servants: the master through taking on the obligation of owning a slave usually looked after their material comfort.

### **Urban Life**

Throughout the 13th-14th centuries, a number of cities and ports flourished in North India. Broach, Cambay, Lakhnauti, Sonargaon and Multan flourished as trading centres. Ibn Battuta provides a detailed account of Delhi. It was one of the main municipalities in the Islamic world with a mixed population of merchants from India as well as Iran, Afghanistan, etc. It is said that overland trade with West Asia was in the hands of Multanis, who were mostly Hindus. The Gujarati and Marwari merchants, were very wealthy and some of them, particularly the Jains, spent big sums in the construction of temples. They also had big residential structures. Their houses were bounded through orchards and fruit gardens which had several tanks.

Cambay was a fine port-municipality where there was an agglomeration of wealthy merchants. Not only they live in fine houses, they consumed good food and wore fine clothes. Men dressed themselves in cotton and silk

garments, anointed themselves with sandal wood paste and wore rings, gold-earrings studded with valuable stones and golden girdles. Women wore extensive flowing cloth (sari) and Silken blouses. Women's jewellery was made of gold and silver metals. They wore earrings, anklets and plenty of rings on fingers and toes.

The Muslim merchants who usually came from Central Asia dressed themselves in embroidered garments sheltered with gold and silver works. They also wore thick boots coming up to their knees.

Several of these cities (were also centres of craft manufacture. The cities of Bengal and Gujarat were well-known for the manufacture of fine clothes. Cambay was also well-known for gold and silver works. There were several other luxury crafts such as leather works, metal work, carpet weaving, etc. Several of these were exported to the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and South East Asian Countries.

As for money-lenders, Ziauddin Barani mentions the Multanis and Sahas of Delhi, who had acquired a great deal of wealth from the possessions of maliks and amirs who repaid their loans with assignment or draft in excess of their iqta.'

Another mercantile group was that of the brokers (dallals) who first create their appearance in the commercial history of the Delhi Sultanate. They operated flanked by merchants and customers raising prices when they could. Alauddin Khalji was specially harsh on them but since they were needed in any big market, they could never be dispensed with entirety. Sarrafs or money changers constituted yet another mercantile group who were quite wealthy.

Separately from these separate groups, there were a big number of smaller

artisans, shopkeepers and vendors who existed in the municipalities. Except for the regional songs and folk tales, very little historical details can be gleaned in relation to the daily lives.

### **Rural Life**

The cities needed to be fed and supplied with finished and raw materials from the countryside. The high stage of taxation and the cash-nexus in combination ensured: that the peasants would have to sell much of their produce in order to pay land revenue. Barani informs us how the high pitch of demand under Alauddin Khalji forced the peasants of the Doab to sell grain through the face of the meadows to the karwanis who took it to Delhi for sale.

The cities, on the other hand, had little to send back to their villages since the taxation organization assumed all the time a heavy balance of payments in favor of the cities, which were the headquarters of the Sultan and members of the ruling classes.

### ***Peasants***

A vast majority existed in villages. Farming was based on individual peasant, farming and the size of land cultivated through them varied greatly from the big holding of the ,khots' or headmen to the small plots of ,balahars' or village menials. Below the peasantry there necessarily has lived a group of landless menial castes but little is recognized in relation to them in this era.

Peasants usually owned a pair of oxen and the plough. Land was abundant. Wells were almost certainly the major source of artificial irrigation. Muhammad Tughluq advanced loans to peasants for improving agriculture. The peasants raised water through several means from the wells. Since peasants owned implements needed for farming and sold their crop for

payment of revenue in cash, there necessity has been differentiation in the middle of the peasantry. Barani designates men of the highest stratum in the middle of the peasants as khots and muqaddams. Before Alauddin Khalji adopted the events, the khots are alleged to have been exempted from three major taxes. Furthermore, they levied a cess of their own on the villagers (qismat-i khoti). When Alauddin prohibited them from levying the cess, they became quite poor and their wives worked as maidservants in the houses of Muslims. The khots and muqaddams were peasants, but peasants who stood on the borderland of the rural aristocracy. When wealthy, they imitated the ways of higher chiefs, i.e., rode horses, wore fine clothes and chewed betel-leaves. In the reign of Feroz Shah Tughluq, a chronicler describes the common prosperity of the khots. Everyone had big amount of gold and silver and countless goods; and none of the women of the peasantry remained without ornaments. In every peasant's homes there were clean bed-sheets, excellent bed-cots and several other articles.

### ***The Dwelling of the Peasants***

The ordinary peasants existed in mud huts supported through bamboos or tree trunks with thatched roof. The floor was plastered with cow dung. Only the meanest necessities for shelter from winter, monsoon or the heat of summer were met in their dwellings. Very little furniture was used: men, women and children existed in small rooms huddle jointly. They usually slept on the floor on mats or cotton quilts. Only the wealthy peasants used metal vessels; the ordinary people used earthen pots. There was no separate lay for bathing except the wells or ponds. No sense of privacy lived.

The houses of the more wealthy peasants had more land approximately the main structure. They usually had more than one room with verandah, a courtyard and chabutara (platform) and even sometimes second story and the

walls were plastered with cowdung and decorated with drawings. Often there was a small vegetable garden approximately their dwellings.

In conditions of food, the ordinary peasant ate bread made out of rice; they also use lintel, onion and chillies and as luxury they had some little ghee. They used to take meal twice a day. Usually, the Hindu peasants went bareheaded and barefooted. They usually wore a single dhoti/cloth. In Gujarat and Rajasthan, they wore a red handkerchief approximately their head. Women usually wore two types of dresses: a sheet of cloth to cover themselves and a blouse. The second dress consisted of a lehanga or extensive skirt a blouse and dupatta or a big scarf.

### **Games and Amusements**

Wrestling was very popular even in the middle of villagers. Separately from these, fencing, spear throwing, horse racing were popular in the middle of the aristocracy. Polo (chaugan) was an aristocratic game. Religious festivals and fairs offered an opportunity to the ordinary people to enjoy themselves. These, beside with visiting holy spaces for pilgrimage, were the major diversions in the otherwise drab life of the general people.

Separately from these, each region had its own popular songs and dances. Folk theatre and jugglery through traveling entertainers recognized' as nats can be seen even today. Oral recitation of religious texts like Panchalis in Bengal or Alhakhand stories in the Doab drew big crowds. In Rajasthan, bards went approximately reciting heroic tales which were very popular.

The bhakti movement and the works of popular preachers like Kabir, Dadu and others inspired popular poets and their songs acted as cementing bond flanked by people of dissimilar religious sects. These folklores and songs also spontaneously reflected the experience of the people whose lives have in

common remained unmentioned in the official accounts and ruling class discourse.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- How will you describe Iqta?
- What changes were introduced in the Iqta organization through Muhammad Tughluq?
- Talk about the land revenue organization introduced through Alauddin Khalji
- Dismantling of price control under the successors of Alauddin Khalji.
- What were the implications of the prevailing Favorable land to man ratio throughout the Delhi sultanate?
- Write a note on canal irrigation.
- What was the main cause for an important augment in masonry structures after the 13th century?
- What were the main elements of decoration in the sultanate architecture?
- Describe a public structure and list some of the significant public structures of the Delhi sultanate.
- How several major architectural styles urbanized after the decline of the Delhi sultanate?
- In which region foreign architectural power is apparent on the structures, and what was this power?
- Talk about the contribution of Amir Khusrau to the growth of Persian literature in India.
- Explain the origin and growth of Urdu language.
- Talk about the lifestyle of the sultanate nobility.
- Talk about the role played through the slave household in the sultanate socio-economic order





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