History of India From 650-1200 AD

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LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY

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Unit 01: Interpreting the Period

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Objectives

- Understand the concept of Feudalism
- Identify the conditions of polity, economy and society in early medieval India.

Introduction

Early medieval period spanning from 600 to 1200 A.D.could be situated between the early historical and medieval. For the period concerned, earlier historians have described it as a dark phase in Indian history, characterized by political disintegration and cultural decline. New studies have offered fresh perspectives. Historians are unanimous that this phase in Indian history has a distinct identity and it differs from the preceding early historical and succeeding medieval. Thus, it brings both the elements of continuity and change in Indian history. Thus, it is a phase of transition to medieval India. On the other hand, historians have challenged the perception of a unilinear and uniform pattern of historical development during this period.

We have toanalyse the historiography for understanding the periodisation of Indian History into ancient, medieval and modern. According to the conventional interpretation ancient period began with the settlement of humans (especially Aryans) near river valley and the medieval period with the Muslim invasion and modern with the arrival of Britishers in India. However, in recent studies historians inclined to use the term 'early historical' rather than ancient for the period starting from the middle of first millennium B.C. For defining the 'early historical' phase, scholars like R.S. Sharma have given following features, i.e.-

• The territories headed by Rajanyas or Kshatriyas developed into extremely centralized officialdom. The chief authority here did not rised from landholding as the remuneration of officials was in cash. The economic life, on the other hand, was marked by several new developments such as urbanisation, overseas trade, urban crafts etc. In villages, there was the prevalence of communal landholding among the village communities.

• New developments took place in society too. Varna system was consolidated in which Kshatriyas and the Brahmanas gained control over produce and Vaishayas paid taxes and the Shudras rendered slave labour. Slavery existed but has no similarity with serfdom.

The features mentioned above were matured form in the 3rd – 4th centuries A.D.

1.1 Changing Pattern of Polity, Economy, and Society

Historiography and Debates

The existing historiography of the 'Early medieval period' has been classified into two sets of propositions as 'Change' and 'Changeless'. The 'Changes' in historiographyidentified not only in dynastic upheavals but also in socio-economic, political and cultural conditions. While the other proposition (changeless) explainsthat traditional polity is essentially changeless. The historians relying on this hypothesis of 'changeless' described the polity of the period as 'traditional' or as 'oriental despotic.' Karl Marx characterized the Indian state in terms of 'Asiatic Mode of Production' having absolute power of oriental despotic rulers. In his description, he excluded pre modern Asia including India from the orthodox mode of production of slaves and feudal societies.The concept of Marx was later challenged by the Indian Marxist historians like R.S.Sharma and Irfan Habib. Hermann Kulke argued that Marx model of 'Oriental Despotism' was an outcome of 'occidental prejudice' against an alleged 'oriental despotism'. Thus, the 'Changeless' model views early medieval India as static. However, it was more a period of dynamism or change in both society and economy.

The transformation from 'early historical' to 'medieval' explained in the context of Indian feudalism by the noted historiographical schools of ancient India by scholars such as D.D. Kosambi., R.S. Sharma and B.N.S. Yadava.

One of the richest historical debates around 'early medieval India' revolves around the 'feudalism' debate. This period is demarcated as 'much maligned period of Indian history' byB.D.Chattopadhyaya. Thus in Marxist historiography, the period is viewed as a breakdown of the civilizational matrix of early historic India. The breakdown is envisaged in terms of social crises. Another issue that invites disagreements among the historians is related to the nature of the polity in the period. Historians of different genres agree that there was a shift in the nature of politytoo, but the causative factors responsible for this changing scenario are not unanimously identified. Marxist scholars like R.S.Sharma, B. N. S Yadav have viewed the polity of early medieval India as one of decentralization and disintegration in comparison to 'centralised' structure in earlier period.According to this historiography,'decentralization and disintegration'positioned against the backdrop of the emergence and crystallization of Indian feudalism. Few scholars like B.D.Chattopadhyayadoes not perceive early medieval phase in terms of feudal formation but he identifies three major processes which were operative throughout Indian history, i.e. the expansion of state society through the process of local state formation;peasantization of tribe and caste formation and cult appropriation and integration. He thus declines the view that see the making of early medieval India in termsof the crisis of a pre-existent, pan Indian social order.

1.2 Features of Early Medieval India

The early period of medievalism according to the established historiography is located in the pre-Sultanate phase and it has to be analysed in the context of Indian feudalism. The important features of this postulate are given hereunder:

i) Fragmentation of polity: This process was antithetical to the centralised polity of the Mauryan period. It got consolidated in the post-Gupta period. The essential characteristics of the state were vertical gradation, division of sovereignty, emergence of a category of semi-independent rulers viz. Samantas, Mahasamantas etc.

ii) The rise of landed groups: This is attributed to the prevalence of land grants bestowed mainly upon Brahmanas or religious institutions in the initial period (starting from the early centuries of Christian era and later). In the post-Gupta phase land grants were made to individuals and for other secular purposes. There is reference to fief holding Samantas in this period.

iii) An important constituent of this model was the decay of market economy, trade and urbanism. Services were paid through land assignments. With the growth of agrarian economy social relations in the rural areas underwent transformation due to the movement of groups into rural areas and the consolidation of the Jajmani (patron-client) system.

iv) Exploitation of the peasants: They were subjected to high taxation, compulsory labour and were deprived of the right of freedom to move from one place to another.

v) The multiplicity of castes: A unique characteristic of the post-Gupta period was the stratification within society. This was brought about due to the prevalence of the concept of Varnasankara (intermixture of castes which originated in the pre-Gupta period) but the process of emergence of castes got strengthened in the post-Gupta period. Due to this phenomenon many new categories came into existence such as Kayasthas and untouchables.

vi) The basis of the ideology and culture of this period was Bhakti which was analogous to the feudal construct since both relied upon attributes like fealty and faithfulness. The deterioration in the sphere of religious practices (development of Tantricism etc.) and court culture and the emergence of the category of landed intermediaries led to the crystallisation of feudal ideology or precepts.

Thus the feudal proposition of scholars in explaining early medieval polity is in contrast to the attributes which shaped the 'early historical' period. 'Early Medieval' as a category in the historical time span can be explained by juxtaposing it with the 'Early India'. The historians have tried to define the features of 'Early India' and contrast it with 'Early Medieval'. This exercise has enabled the historians to demolish the myth of the changelessness of Indian polity, economy and society.

1.3 Feudalism

Much debated issuewith regard to early medieval Indian historiography revolves around feudalism debate. Even though the concept of feudalism borrowed from European historiography. Combined with the notion of social formation, the empirical works of scholars such as Henri Pirenne and Marc Blochserved as models for those who initiated charting out empirical validation of feudalism as a social formation in Indian history.

The first assimilation of "feudalism" in the Indian context implemented by Col. James Todd in his celebrated work 'Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan'. For European historians and Todd as well, thelord-vassal relationship constituted the core of feudalism in Europe. In medieval Europe, the 'Lord' looked after the security and subsistence of his vassals and they in turn rendered military and other services to the former. This sense of loyality of vassals to lords in Rajasthan, considered by Todd, as similar to Europe.

Another noted Marxist historian, D. D.Koshambi gave feudalism a significant place in the socio-economic history of early medieval India and thus conceptualised the growth of feudalism in Indian history. He has described the growth of feudalism as a two-way process, i.e., from above and from below. According to him, 'From Above'- the feudal structure was created by the state granting land and rights to officials and Brahmins; while'From below' many individuals and small groups rose from the village levels of power to become landlords and vassals of the kings.

The hierarchical structure of society and social crisis argument forwarded by R.S.Sharma. This deep-seated social crisisreflected in the ability of rulers to exercise their coercive authority and to collect resources by revenue measures. The political authority took recourse to issue land grants to religious donees (mainly brahmanas). The religious donees or brahmanas not only endowed with landed wealth but also with administrative and judicial rights. Thus, they emerged as landed intermediaries between the ruler and the actual peasantry. These landed intermediariesgrew as local power base.According to Sharma, subsequent to emergence of religious donees, secular doneestoo emerged, as dearth of metallic currency. Secular doneesforced the ruler to assign lands to state officials in lieu of cash. Further, he visualised the decline of India's longdistance trade after the fall of the Guptas;consequently urbanisation also suffered, resulted in the ruralisation of Indian economy.State also gave number of rights over the cultivating peasants to the new class of "intermediaries". The increased subjection of the peasants to the intermediaries reduced them to the level of serfs (unlike their counterparts in medieval Europe). This process continued till the eleventh century when the revival of trade reopened the process of urbanisation. The process of revival of trade, urbanization and industrialization led to decline of feudalism, which R S Sharma has not taken up in detail.

Another aspect missing in this picture was the Indian counterpart of the Arab invasion of Europe. However, B. N. S. Yadavadrew attention to the Hun invasions of India which almost coincided with the rise of feudalism. The oppressive feudal system in Europe resulted in massive rebellions of the peasantry in Europe; in India R S Sharma had traced such evidence of peasant protest in the Kaivartya rebellion in Bengal. However, both B. N. S Yadava and D N Jha withstood by the feudalism thesis.

The feudal formulation was based on the basis of land grants alone and any such formulation is open to question. It has been effectively questioned whether the transfer of revenue to the donee would at all amount to the corrosion of the rulers‟ economic prerogatives". D.C.Sircar criticized the Marxist historians for their inability to distinguish landlordism and tenancy in India from feudalism.

HarbansMukhia, questioned the Indian feudalism thesis at the theoretical plane, through his question "Was There Feudalism in Indian History?", then at the empirical level by comparing the medieval Indian scenario with medieval Europe.The empirical basis of the questioning of Indian feudalism with the histories of medieval Western Europe and medieval Indiapursued at three levels: the ecological conditions, the availability of technology as well as the social organisation of forms of labour use in agriculture in the two regions. Thus, with this intervention, the debate was no longer confined to feudalism or trade dichotomy.

While the debate critically examined the theoretical proposition of the universality of the concept of feudalism and historians have taken an independent positions. The arguments of R. S. Sharmawere under chief attack, later reconsidered some of his earlier positions and greatly refined his thesis of Indian feudalism. Of his paper entitled "How Feudal was Indian Feudalism?", he wascriticised for lookingthe rise of feudalism in India entirely as a result of state action in transferring land to the intermediaries. He modified it and expanded its scope to look at feudalism as an economic formation which evolved out of economic and social crises in society, rather than entirely as the consequence of state action. This enriched his argument considerably. R. S. Sharma drawn his attention to the ideological and cultural aspects of the feudal societyand he has included new themes such as "The Feudal Mind", where he explores such problems as the reflection of feudal hierarchies in art and architecture, the ideas of gratitude and loyalty as ideological props of feudal society, etc.

Another scholar of Feudalism debate, D.N.Jha, explored the cultural and ideological dimensions of "the feudal order". One of the major dimensions he explored is that of religion, especially popular religion or Bhakti in India and the growth of India's regional cultures and languages. Even as most scholars have seen the rise of the Bhakti cults as a popular protest against the domination of Brahmanical orthodoxy, the proponents of feudalism see these as buttresses of Brahmanical domination by virtue of the ideology of total surrenderand loyalty to a deity. This subjection, surrender as well as loyalty which could easily transferred to the feudal lord and master.

Historians criticized the notion of the decline of trade and urban centres. For instance, D N Jha criticized R S Sharma for over relying on the factor of absence of long distance external trade as the cause of the rise of feudalism in India. B D Chattopadhyay through his work thrown light on the evidence to show urban development and not decay in early medieval India. RanabirChakravartiforwarded ample evidence of flourishing trade, different categories of merchants and market centres. The monetary anaemia thesis, fundamental to the formulation of Indian feudalism, has also been put under severe strain by recent researches of B. D. Chattopadhyay and B N Mukherjeeand John S Deyell who seriously undermined the assumption of the scarcity of money.

1.4 Indian Polity during Early Medieval India

With regard to early medieval India, historians have given the basic premise of the Indian feudal polity as:

i. The disintegration of the unitary administrative system of the Mauryan state based on money or cash economy led to the creation of various loci of authority.
ii. Religious and secular land grants embodied the administrative rights which led to fragmentation of authority and sovereignty.

In most of the conventional writings of the period, within the medieval political system the states are considered as monarchies with the kings wielding power and authority through the officialdom. However, the feudal attributes lead to fragmentation and decentralisation of authority and weakening of the central control within the Hindu political system. A. S. Altekar's views reflect the prevalent notion of early medieval India among the historians, "…ideal of federal-feudal empire with full liberty to each constituent state to strive for imperial status but without permission to forge a unitary empire after the conquest, thus produced a state of continuous instability in ancient India". This transformation was regarded as a crisis since the centralised state was replaced by fragmented polity.

Apart from the above mentionedgeneralizations, the other generalizations regarding the polity of pre-modern India relate to the presuppositions such as 'traditional polity' and 'oriental despotism'. The basic proposition of scholars subscribing to this viewpoint is the 'changeless' nature of the polity, economy and society. Prominent historians such as N. R. Ray divided the medieval period into three phases: 7th century –12th century A.D.; 12th century – 16th century A.D.; and 16th century – 18th century A.D. He further gives some of the following characteristics of medievalism, i.e.-

i) Kingdoms become regional and they are regarded as analogous to nation states of Europe.
ii) The nature of economy gets transformed from one based on monetary transactions to predominantly agrarian.
iii) In the sphere of the development of language, literature, script etc. the regional features get consolidated.
iv) The distinctive feature of religion in this period was the mushrooming of a number of sects and sub-sects.
v) Art was categorised into specific regional schools such as Eastern, Orissan, Central Indian, West Indian and Central Deccanese.

The early medieval period perceived as of decentralisation of polity. This view is deduced from the belief that the disintegration of Mauryan empire led to the fragmentation of polity. Historians relying on an important literary source i.e. the Arthasastra, analysed the Mauryan empire as a 'centralised bureaucratic state'. However, this approach is being reviewed and Mauryan empire is regarded not as a monolithic entity but a variegated structure comprising of different cultural strands within its large spatial and political dimensions. It consisted of the core located in the Madhyadesa and the local peripheral cultural areas. Thus the political formation even in the Mauryan times was not homogenous.

A major indicator of the political transformation in early medieval India could be seen in the nature of royal titles. Contrary to the practice in ancient India, when kings usually use simple title of raja or 'the king', there was a tendency for the royal titles to become increasingly more magnificent and high-sounding in early medieval times, even the petty rulers were known as maharaja, 'the great king', and maharajadhiraja, 'the supreme king of great kings. The trend actually started with the early Gupta emperors. Although they were usually called maharajadhiraja in most of the inscriptions, from the time of Chandragupta II some were also called paramabhattarakamaharajadhiraja, 'the most excellent great lord, the supreme king of great kings', and bhattarakamaharajadhiraja, 'the great lord, the great king, the supreme king of kings.

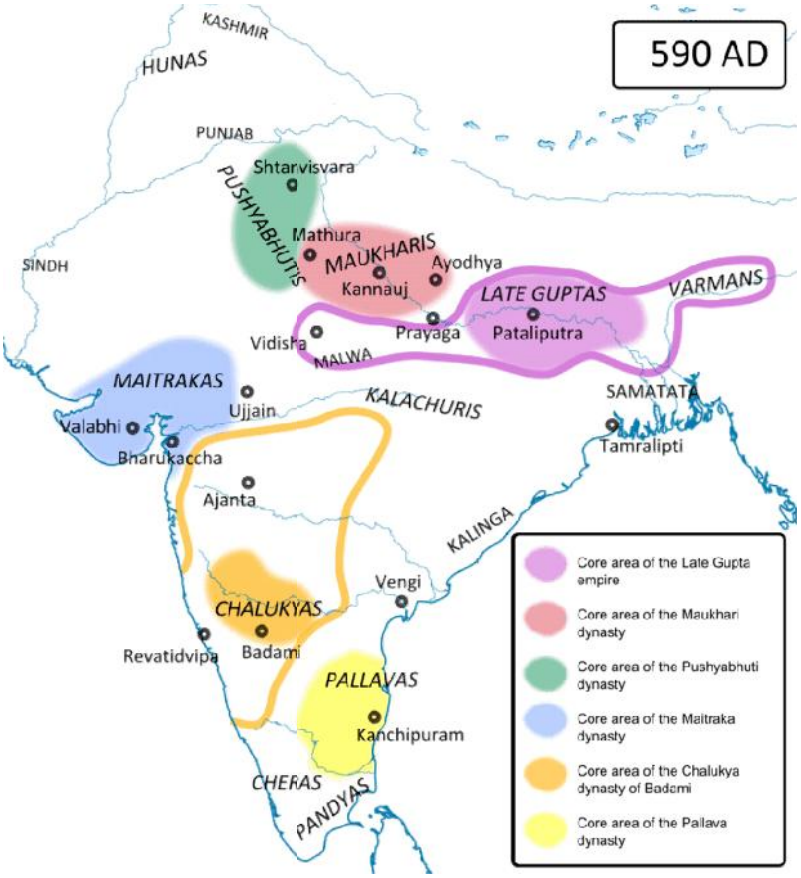
Recently historians have tried to analyse state formation from a perspective which is at variance with the feudal and decentralisation model. According to this view the following factors contributed to state formation in the early medieval period: i) The development of state society (represented by ruling lineage formation) resulted in state formation at the regional and local level (nuclear and peripheral regions). ii) Transformation of tribes into peasants. Historians suggest that in the early medieval period with diminishing trade and commerce the Vaishyas (engaged in commerce, agriculture, pastrolism) suffered a setback. Shudras had served as slave labourers in the early historical period but in the early medieval period, aboriginal tribes and foreign ethnic identities permeated the Shudra Varna. The cultivating categories were now the tribes who got metamorphosed into Shudra peasants who paid revenue.

iii) On the ideological plane the consolidation of regional cults by the amalgamation of varied doctrines, rituals and customs (brahmanical, tribal etc.). The rise of Bhakti and regional cults was thus an important feature of the ideology of this period viz. the Jagannath cult in Orissa was a mechanism to legitimize the king's power. Scholars feel that historical changes should be studied against the backdrop of regions and localities. Local state formation brought about the convergence of local and regional customs, traditions etc. into the existing patterns of monarchy, Dharmshastric social and Puranic Hindu religious traditions. These features did not exist in isolation. They were interrelated and contributed to the emergence of regional patterns in polity and culture. Thus recently historians have tried to analyse early medieval not as a period of crisis but a phase when historical changes led to the emergence of regions embodying distinctive political, social, economic and cultural attiributes.

The emergence of Rajput lineages such as Guhilas, Chalukyas and Hunas (foreign and native) was a unique feature of early medieval polity. These lineages were spread over Gujarat, Rajasthan, Central India and Uttar Pradesh. In the 12th and 13th century the medieval state of Mewar became prominent under the Guhila clan belonging to the Nagda-Ahar branch. The expansion of agrarian economy (development of irrigation techniques, etc.) and land grants indicate the proliferation of agricultural settlements. Gurjaras are referred to as agriculturists in the inscriptions. Many ruling families in Western India were offshoots of the Gurjaras. In Orissa in the period between 4th and 12th century A.D. state formation was characterised by the proliferation of lineages. The most important among these were the Coda-Gangas who emerged powerful in the 11th Century A.D. The emergence of the ruling familes took place in the regions which provided the scope for resource mobilisation as is evident from the land grants of the period.

The viewpoint that disintegration of a centralised state structure led to a crisis or the emergence of feudal polity has been contradicted by some scholars who feel that early medieval period was characterised by the establishment of local and regional states which arose due to the proliferation of local ruling clans and their transformation into local state and regional structures. The period from 3rd to 6th centuries A.D. especially the period after the 6th century A.D. witnessed the emergence of regional and local states. This phenomenon was the characteristic trait of early medieval India. An underlying feature of local state formation was the rise of ruling lineages in different regions. However, the political system was monarchical. Thus, Brahmanical ethos validated the monarchical system as essential for maintenance of political order and it also regarded Varna system indispensable for preservation of socio-political order. The Varnasamkara concept accentuated the process of stratification (vertical and horizontal) and social mobility also took place through dissent or fissioning off within groups and communities etc. The ascription of Kshatriya status by social categories was a means to get sanction for political authority. The three important attributes of state formation in this period were: 1) Ideology for endorsement of monarchy 2) Appropriation of agricultural surplus 3) The emergence of a hierarchical system based on hegemony and subjugation.

The rise of state system had several implications for the localities and social groups. It brought about the disintegration of the social system comprising of non-stratified communities and created distinctive category of ruling groups. Thus the formation of state in a regional and social context was made possible due to the divisions within social groups and regions and the development of a system marked by hierarchical relations based on the elements of authority and subjection.



Debate on Nature of Polity

Even though there was difference of opinion regarding the nature of polity, the multiplicity of regional powers distinguished the polity of early medieval India from the situation prevailing in pre 600 A.D. The causative factors responsible for this changing scenario are not unanimously identified. At present there exist at least three different structural models for the early medieval Indian kingdoms. The First model is a conventional model of a rather unitary, centrally organized kingdom with a strong central bureaucracy. The Second model is of Indian Feudalism model of decentralized feudal states. Lastly, the model of a segmentary state.

Theabove-mentionedmodels depict the Indian kingdom in early medievaltime period either as a strong and centralized state or of decentralized and disintegrated or as a state which has not yet reached the position of a strong and centralized state though it did have some of its characteristics in its core around the capital. State formation after the decline of Guptas had a decidedly negative character, since the many local kingdoms and principalities had developed at the cost of the former larger political entities. The processes which worked towards administrative decentralizationderived from, firstly the practice of making land grants along with administrative privileges and secondly, the break down of the state's monopoly over the army. The understanding of the feudal political set up is also linked with the changing socio-economic and cultural situations. The puranic narration of the weakening of the political authority, non-observation of the varnashrama dharma and other things represented a deep-seated social crisis. This political fall out of the crisis visible in the inability of the rulers to exercise their coercive authority and to collect resources by revenue measures.

The hall mark of the early medieval polity is placed in the samanta system. The term samanta originally denoted a neighbouring king. But gradually it assumed the sense of a vassal. No less than seven grades of samantas are represented in the Harshacharita. The sharp changes which the term samanta went through over time reflects fundamental changes in Indian polity, reinforcing the image of a hierarchical political structure. The evidence of the growing number and influence of the samantas in early medieval polity is seen as both the cause and effect of the centralized political power. Within feudal polity evidences the absence of a paramount power and along with political fragmentation. The emergence of feudal politysuggests that it is primarily based on data pertaining to north India. However, the proponents of Indian Feudalismconsiders this to be an all India phenomenon with regional variations.

A major disadvantage of the theory of Indian feudalism is the preponderance of its conceptual framework of decentralization and political fragmentation. The period which followed the disappearance of the Gupta empire in the 6th century CE can be interpreted as a period of political fragmentation in North India and parts of Central India. But this fragmentation certainly was not caused through land donations either to secular or religious donees. A structural interpretation of the early medieval period reveals that this period of North Indian decentralization coincided with a very intensive process of state formation on the local sub regional and regional level in some part of northern India, many parts of central India and in most parts of southern India. It was during this time that a process of indigenous state formation took place in many parts of India.

A major trait of the individuality of the early medieval south Indian polity can be seen in the vital local self bodies of the Pallava and the Chola regime. The local self bodies made their presence strongly felt in the political life within a monarchical set up. The general tendency in a monarchical set up is to undermine the vitality of local self-bodies and to wipe out their existence. N.K. Sastri opined that the Chola monarchy was an intelligent juxtaposition of an extremely powerful monarchy at the apex level and the overwhelming presence of local self bodies at the villages.

This proposition has been negated by an alternative explanation of the phenomenal presence of local self bodies in south Indian polity. The theoretical model known as the Segmentary State theory, also questions the inadequacy of the feudal model as a tool to explain the prevailing polity in south India. Inspired by the studies of East Africal Alur society by A. Southhall, Burton Stein located the segmentary polity from Pallava times. The Segmentary theory view the king as having enjoyed only limited territorial sovereignty. The element of centrality existed only in the core area even where the presence of quasi-autonomous foci of administration was tolerated by the Cholas. The real foci of power are suggested to have been the locality level centers or nadus. Stein distinguishes sharply between actual political control on one side and ritual sovereignty on the other. All the centers of the segmentary state do exercise actual political control over their own part or segment, but only one center the primary center of the ruling dynasty has the primacy of extending ritual sovereignty beyond its own borders. The absence of an organized bureaucracy forced the Chola monarch to fall back instead on ritual sovereignty in which the position of the ruler required to be legitimized and validated by the brahmana priest. Stein confines ritual sovereignty mainly to the state cult exemplified in the royal Siva cult of Rajaraja"sRajarajesvara temple at Tanjore. The construction of massive temples is interpreted not as a mark of the stupendous power of the Chola rule, but as a symptom of political uncertainties, the king being the principal ritualist. Moreover the inscriptions are also looked at by Stein as a clear evidence of ritual sovereignty. Hermann Kulke has questioned Stein"s concept of ritual sovereignty. According to him in a traditional society, particularly in India, ritual sovereignty seems to be an integral part and sometimes even a pace maker of political power. These inscriptions were documents of a systematic ritual policy which was as much a part of the general „power policy" as, for instance, economic or military policies.

A key element of the segmentary state theory was also the so-called Brahmana-peasant alliance at the nadu. This does not have any parallel in Indian history. On the contrary, the peasant is always known to have been exploited by the Brahmana and Kshatriya combination. The creation of valanadu-larger than the nadu but smaller than a mandalam, by Rajaraja and Kulottunga I is an indicator of the administrative innovations and hence directs intervention by Chola Central authority.

The feudal polity and the segmentary state theory highlight the traits of disintegration and fragmentation as opposed to a centralized state structure. According to B.D. Chattopadhyaya, the segmentary state model or the concept of ritual sovereignty cannot in fact resolve the problem of the political basis of integration since a rigid use of the segmentary state concept relegates the different foci of power to the periphery and does not really see them as components of state structure. The phenomenon of different foci of power was not peculiarly south Indian but cut across all major political structures of the early medieval period.

These models have been challenged by a group of scholars clubbed together as "non aligned historians" by Hermann Kulke. This non-aligned group is reluctant to accept any models. On the other hand their focus is on structural developments and changes within a given state system. According to them the multiplicity of local and regional power is the result of the extension of monarchical state society into areas and communities tribal, non-monarchical polity. In their opinion early medieval polity is perceived as an "integrative polity". The integration of the tribes in the jati system was further given a momentum by the simultaneous absorption of tribal/folk cults into the sectarian Brahmanical Bhakti cults. Bhakti, from the stand point of the state could be an instrument of integration, much more effectively than Dharmasastra oriented norms. Thus, modes of integration formed an important aspect of state formation in early medieval India

1.5 Economy

The economic aspects of the transition to early medieval India reconstructed mainly on the basis of the evidence of land-grant inscriptions, coins, and settlement archaeology and also literary sources of the period. Some significant themes that helps one to better understand the economic change is thecontinuous and unprecedented agrarian expansion; growth of a new class of landlords in the countryside along with corresponding changes in the status of peasantry; and decline in craft production, trade, and urbanisation.

Agrarian regions had emerged by the first half of the 7thcentury CE, while the economies of not all areas were equally or uniformly developed. People who practised pastoralism inhabited a long stretch along the lower Indus. Many regions remained heavily forested and there had been a setback to past prosperity and land remained desolated. Furthermore, there was considerable potential for further agricultural development. It is argued that a major way in which the early medieval states tapped this potential was by issuing land grants to brahmins and temples. The increasing number of land grants considered as spearheading the process of agrarian expansion during early medieval India. However, a recent reappraisal of the evidences caution against the simplistic generalisation, and takes the position that only a handful of the grants were exclusively about agrarian expansion, while most being grants of revenue of previously settled areas. Typically, a land grant was the end product rather than ainitial point of agrarian expansion. However, growing numbers of peasants continued to bring more and more land under the plough, and they received all possible encouragement from the state. For instance, in 8th century King Lalitaditya distributed water wheels for facilitating cultivation in Kashmir.

Extension of agriculture was a widespread phenomenon, which led to the rise of kingdoms in new areas and integration of new communities. Unfortunately, the details for early medieval period and after that periodsare not uniformly available yet recent researches throws light on new progress. For instance, we are well informed about the construction and upkeep of irrigation system in the Pallava kingdom. The Pallavas reputed for building a number of tanks around Kanchipuram in the Palar valleydraws the admiration of the experts even today also. The evidence for irrigation in the Pandya kingdom, small epigraphs on granite sluices, however, remained neglected for some time. Their investigation has revealed several impressive irrigation projects that were successfully completed in the Pandya kingdom during the 7-8th centuries.

A major new feature of the agrarian economy was the creation of a class of landlords by means of land grants to religious men and institutions. The preliminary instance of land grants date back to the early medieval period, but before they are few and it is only from the Gupta period that they began to be issued on a steadily larger scale.

The grantees were given revenues of a village for life long and people were to remain regular to pay their dues on stipulated time.They were authorised to collect judicial fines from people for different types of crimes. In other words, the grantees represented the state in the granted area and state officials were prevented from interfering with their authority. However, there is a controversy over the implications of these grants for the peasantry. According to one view, by subjecting them to the authority of these landlords, the land grants led to an allround depression of the status of peasants, who suffered from several constraints and were reduced to a state of servility. Another opinion throws light on the way there is exaggeration as the peasants now simply began to pay the grantees, what they had been paying so far to the state officials. That's why, they remained 'free' as ever. According to some historians, this progress of the rural economy was not in same league,by a similar progress of the non-rural one, i.e. of non-rural craft production, trade and urbanisation. Villages came to be 'closed' or 'self-sufficient' economies, meeting most of their needs through mutual, non-market agreements on exchanges in kind; e.g. the potter would provide pots to peasants in return of which he would be given a piece of land and/or a share in their harvest. As villages multiplied, this kind of arrangement led to a progressive reduction of trade and commerce, and with it to the decline of urban economy.

Another aspect of early medieval India shows a trend that started with the decline of external trade,occasioned by the downfall of the Western Roman Empire and came to a halt, when people in the eastern Roman Empire stopped importing silk from China through Indian traders by the close of the sixth century. Further, trade with China and S-E Asia was inadequate to check this economic regression visible in the urban and currency scenario by the end of 10th century CE. The chief features of the economic condition of early medieval India was low level of trade, minimum availability of coins, decline in prosperous cities. Some urban centres were eventually deserted as urban professionals moved out in search of livelihood.

There are several criticisms on the picture of urban decline. One argument is that during both the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods the foreign trade was in fact 'in an exceptionally flourishing state'. Another critique throws light on a phase of urban and currency decline, but in the same light it is also argued that the decline occurred for a more limited period and on a lesser scale, and that it could not have been due to the decline of long-distance trade. Unfortunately, no explanation is made to explain what else was or could have been responsible for the decline. The third viewpoint seeks to delimit further both the spatial and the temporal extent of the decline of urbanism. It is showed that the urban decline was only for the Ganges valley, however, studies also show urban decay for the whole of the subcontinent. Further, some scholars point out the problems with the concept of closed or self-sufficient economy, and while others do not consider that there was any reduction in the number of coins in circulation in early medieval India, there are yet others who concede the paucity of coins but do not think that this necessarily amounts to shrinkage of trade.Above all the inner contradictions in the decline theses have also been brought out. We only need to add the variations and contradictions in the critics' views to see how bad the overall situation is for arriving at a general, controversy-free understanding of the non-agrarian history of the early medieval period. Thus, it is better to conclude the transition of the defined period in the non-agrarian sector was not static, and that there are mass of evidence underlines a dynamism the precise nature of which awaits further research.

Now we shall survey the socio-cultural changes that marked the transition to early medieval India.Our sources for locating these changes remain to some extent the same as thosefor discovering political and economic ones, but for the better part they are different. Even when they remain the same, they have to be analysedwith a different way. At times the links between the two sets of changes are not difficult to discern, as for instance, changes in economic, political and social status.Although the paucity or problems of historical data may make it difficult to establish the relationship. However, the connection is as often not so easily apparent or seems tenuous at best.

1.6 Society

A number of important social changes have been identified in the transition to early medieval period. Thechanges are best studied through the composition, character and scope of the caste system and the status of women in early medieval India. Jati is the basic unit in the caste system. People are grouped in endogamous jatis, i.e. members of a jati marry can only marry within their Jati.

Often a number ofJatis in an area which are similar to each other in status and occupation make up a group orJati cluster. These jatis and jati clusters formfour varnas, i.e.Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Below this caste hierarchy (Jati-based varna hierarchy) were the 'untouchables'. Untouchables were placed outside the fourfold varna order and at an inferior position in society. Their status in early medieval Indian society was very poor in the sense that they were socially excluded. It is very necessary to identify the sources which enables us to understand the nature of caste society and the direction of social changes during early medieval period.

The terms jati and varna are not always used there in the sense of these categories, and their exact import has to be ascertained each time. A text by itself may give the impression of a static society, and it is only through a critical collation of all pieces of relevant information that one is able to see the processes of change. A comparison of the evidence across early medieval period shows that state society which was by and large caste society, as distinct from the nonstate, casteless societies of hunter-gatherers and tribes, was expanding significantly during this period. First, a considerable number of immigrants from outside the subcontinent, such as the Hunas, the Gurjaras,etc. were settling down. The Gurjaras, the ancestors of the present Gujar community, seem to have been particularly widespread in western and northwestern India. In some regions a gradual transformation of the original structure of Gurjara society was well under the process, during our period of study, as one see not only the emergence of a small section of them as rulers (i.e. the Gurjara-Pratiharas) but also the rest as humble peasantry. The recognition of the Hunas as one under the traditional thirty-six Kshatriya clans took a longer time and there were other such sections present too. For instance, the Kalachurisare supposed to be an immigrantsand even the term 'Kalachuri' is interpreted as a derivative of the Turkish title 'kulchur'.

Large parts of India continued to remain covered with forests in which small scattered groups of hunter-gatherers and tribal people practised pastoralism or primitive agriculture. For instance, the account of Hien Tsang throws light on the sparsely populated jungle territory in Andhra Pradesh region was dominated by indigenous population, who did not lead a settled life and for them plunder was a legitimate source of livelihood.

Similarly, in North-west region, Hieun Tsang had reported the area occupied by pastoralists and had 'no masters, and, whether men or women, neither rich nor poor'. Only a few of the indigenous groups were in touch with the members of caste society, and vivid descriptions of their lives are available in contemporary literature, such as the Dashakumaracharita of Dandin and the Kadambari of Banabhatta. A number of these indigenous peoples were assimilated in the caste society. For instance,the name 'Shabara' continued to stand for a tribe or a number of tribes till well after the early medieval period.The reference to a Shabara king with a Sanskritic name, Udayana, in the sources suggests the integration of a section of Shabara people into caste society. In other words, the majority of the members of a tribe were converted into a Jati belonged to the Shudra varna, while,a tribal chief could claim a Kshatriya status for himself and his close kinsmen if he was sufficiently resourceful. The caste societytransformed from within in response to political, economic, and cultural-ideological changes. The most significant example is the crystallisation of the professionals called kayastha as a jati. Kayasthas viewed as a significant official from the Gupta period onwards, and in early medieval India were seen as a caste. The available sources suggests that they arose from a number of communities, including tribes (especially Karanas) as well as brahmins. For instance, considerable number of brahmins in Bengal during the Gupta and post-Gupta inscriptions end with suffixes such as Vasu, Ghosha, Datta, Dama, etc., which today are the surnamesnot only of Bengali brahmins but of Bengali Kayasthas too. Lack of such surnames among brahmins of the region suggests that, it was not the same case with people of lower varnas who adopted the surnames of their superiors in a bid for upward mobility.But one of the formation of a caste through fission of brahmin and non-brahmin kayastha families from their parent bodies and fusion into a caste of Kayastha. In other words, the Kayastha caste began to form as the families belonging to this profession started marrying among themselves and stopped marrying within their own original Jatis or tribes.

As well-known, each Varna was associated with some specific functions; for instance, priestly functions were considered the preserve of brahmins. Historians have noted a remarkable change in this matter during the transition, which is registered both in the brahmanical treatises as well as attested by foreign observers. Another development that took place during the period was that as agriculture, which was generally considered the work of the Vaishyas, now exclusively seen as the occupation of the Shudras. This could be understood in at least three different ways. Firstly, this has been interpreted as amounting to a marked improvement in the status of the Shudras. The transition of Shudras is evident from being slaves, servants, and agricultural labourersto become a part of landholding peasants like the Vaishyas. Secondly, it may represent the decline in the status of peasantry as a result of extensive land grants. However, it also represented the decline in status of the Vaishya peasants, i.e., they were not considered different from the Shudras. Thirdly, this referred to the phenomenon of the absorption of tribal people in caste society as Shudra peasantry. It is of course hypothetically possible that the different statements in the sources may collectively represent insome,hithertounexplained, way the sum total of all these inferences. However, the point is that the problem of the exact correlation of this shift in Varna theory with the historical reality, especially the mutually contradictory nature of the first two inferences, has so far not been realized by historians, and needs to be sorted out.

From about the third to the post-Gupta centuries, new developments took place in the history of untouchability. Although the practice existed earlier, the term 'untouchable' orasprishya for them was used for the first time now. With a passage of time, the number of untouchable castes increased through the absorption of aboriginal groups in the caste society. Their position, however, was most conspicuous among the lower castes, who lead miserable life and their condition even shocked foreign observers also. In Gupta period, Fa Hien noted the practice and Hiuen-Tsang observed, "Butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners, and scavengers have their habitation marked by a distinguishing sign. They are forced to live outside the city and sneak along on the left when going about in the hamlets."

Another social evil i.e., slavery continued without any remarkable change. It can be inferred from the treatment of the subject in the legal digests called shastras: the topic is treated in more or less the same manner in a Gupta-period. A twelfth-century work, for instance, Mitakshara, whichotherwise very particular about recording change. Mostly, slaves were used as domestic labours.

Unlike the other social groups, the position of women remained unchanged during the transition to the early medieval period. The changes that are noticed mainly pertain to the womenfolk of the upper classes of society; ofcourse these changes did not occur uniformly everywhere. The brahmanical attitudes betray certain unmistakable tendencies of further depreciation of women's status, one of the most intolerable things being a woman's attempt to have independence (svatantrya). There was an increasing tendency to club them together with either property or Shudras, just the Chandalas were coming to be bracketed with dogs and donkeys. Post-puberty marriages were deprecated, with one authority prescribing the age of the bride as one-third of the bridegroom. Wives considerably outlived husbands in such cases, and accordingly detailed provisions were made for regulating the lives of widows. The provision of sati for the widows made the life of women more miserable and most of them preferred accepting sati than to live their life. The prominent example of the situation could be glanced from the incident when Harsha tried to stop his mother and later his sister from committing sati. Even though till late Gupta period, the practice of sati had not gained strong ground. But during, in early medieval times, the practice of sati steadily became a part of practice in society. However, the practice was not universally accepted or approved in Brahmanism. Even the leading literary figures of early medieval India, like Banbhatta and Shudraka,criticisedthe practice strongly, and the strongest protest was beginning to develop in tantrism, which was to declare it a most sinful act.A general indication of the depreciation in the social standing of upper caste women is the deliberate erasure of their pre-marital identity after marriage. Till the Gupta period evidences throws light that a woman did not need to lose her gotra identity and affiliation after marriage, however, such marriages gradually disappeared, at least among the ordinary people.

Improvement in the status of women in early medieval times is perceived in the fact that they were allowed, like the Shudras, to listen to certain religious texts and worship deities. However, this was done to make them religious-minded, in order to strengthen the brahmanical religion and enhance the income of the officiating priests rather than to improve the quality of women's lives. Not much can be said with regard to the increase in the scope of stridhana, i.e. the wealth that a women could receive as a gift. As this did meagre to empower them in relation to men, however, their dependence and helplessness remained unaffected. While some authorities attempted to get inheritance rights for the widow or daughter of a man dying sonless, actual historical instances make it clear that their prescriptions were routinely disregarded in favour of the contrary opinion by the early medieval kings, whoconfiscated the property of such persons except for some privileged few; this provision, however, like those against widow remarriage and advocating sati, not applicable to the women of shudravarna.In fact, as in the previous and following periods, women of the labouring masses, simply for the reason that they had to work in the fields, pastures, etc. along with men in order to keep body and soul together, could not be subjected to the same kind of subordination and helplessness as was the fate of women of the privileged classes.

Summary

The development of political institutions in north and south India must be viewed and understood somewhat differently. While in North India regions, local rulers emerged as regional kings and were able to integrate local and tribal forces; the south Indian kingdoms emerged as typical early states. But these imperial kingdoms, both in the north and in the south, were not in a position to install a centralized administration beyond the confines of the extended core area. However, within this area, they sometimes achieved a high degree of direct central control as recent research on the Cholas in the eleventh century has shown.

Keywords

Feudalism- A Socio-economic and political system where relationship between a superior (lord) and his subordinate (vassal) is based on land grant or assignment (fief) and where the lord is obliged to protect his vassal and the vassal is obliged to render military service to his lord in times of need.

Samantas- A feudatory chief

Self Assessment

Q.1. Which of the following sources not throw light on the social reconstruction between 8-12th centuries India?

A. Dharmashastra
B. Prabandhachintamani
C. Rajatarangini
D. Malvikagnmitram

Q.2. Which of the following were the features of first phase of economy in early medieval India?

A. Widespread land grants
B. Emergence of hierarchy of landlords
C. Growth of rural economy
D. All of above

Q.3. Which of the following was the significant center of Textile industry?

A. Ujjain

B. Kannauj
C. Nagapattinum
D. Karnataka

Q.4. Which among the following rulers started minting gold coins during early medieval India?

A. Gangadeya
B. Vinayaditya
C. Khottiga
D. Dhruva

Q.5. What was 'Hundi'?

A. Trade commodity
B. Bills of Exchange
C. Tax free land
D. Trading community

Q.6. What is Brahmadeya grant?

A. Secular grants
B. Grants to Feudal lords
C. Grants to Vaishyas
D. Grants to Brahmans

Q.7. Which of the following texts throws light on the practice of Sati in early medieval India?

A. Harshacharita
B. Gita Govinda
C. Vikramankdevacharita
D. Prabandhachintamani

Q.8. Which of the following scholars proposed the early medieval India as a period marked by rise of 'Feudalism'?

A. B. D. Chattopadhyaya
B. HarbansMukhia
C. Irfan Habib
D. R. S. Sharma

Q.9. Which of the following was not one of the type of grants made by rulers during early medieval India?

A. Deshya
B. Grama
C. Ur
D. Vish

Q.10. Who among the following was the head of 'Bhukti'?

A. Vishayapati
B. Uparika
C. Sachiva
D. Mahamatya

Q.11. Who was Mahasandhivigrahika?

A. Minister dealing with Industries
B. Minister managing trade affairs
C. Minister performing administrative work
D. Minister framing peace treaty

Q.12. Which scholar first assimilated the 'Feudalism' in Indian context?

A. R.S. Sharma
B. HarbansMukhia
C. Col. James Todd
D. B. D. Chattopadhyaya

Q. 13. What was 'Samadhigata-pancha-mahasabda'?

A. Privilege of hearing the sound of five musical instruments.
B. Privilege of playing the five musical instruments
C. Privilege of keeping the five musical instruments
D. Privilege of appointing officers managing the five musical instruments

Q.14 Which of the following rulers were the participants of tripartite struggle?

A. Rashtrakuta and Pala
B. GujaraPratihara and Chalukyas
C. GujaraPratihara, Rashtrakuta and Pala
D. Rashtrakuta and Chalukya

Q.15. What do you understand by the term 'Ur'?

A. Unit of adminsitartion
B. Assembly in villages
C. non-brahmanical settlement
D. Assembly in towns

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	D	2.	D	3.	C	4.	A	5.	B
6.	D	7.	A	8.	D	9.	A	10.	B
11.	D	12.	C	13.	A	14.	C	15.	C

Review Questions

Q.1. Write a short note on the debate of nature of polity in early medieval India.

Q.2. Explain the validity of Feudalism debate in context of early medieval India.

Q.3. Describe the transition in Indian society during early medieval India.

Q.4. What are the chief features of early medieval India?

Q.5. Discuss the chief historiographical debates about the early medieval India?

Further Readings

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Unit 02 : Historical Sources

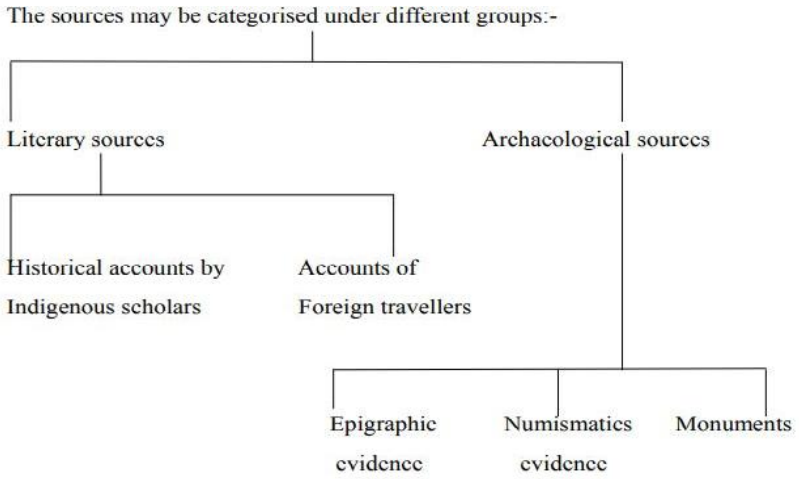
CONTENTS

Objectives

- Learn about various literary sources which throws light on the socio-economic and cultural history of early medieval India.
- Identify significant regional literature of the period 600-1200 AD.
- Understand the archeological sources and reconstruct the past events.

Introduction

The term 'Early Medieval' denotes an intermediate phase between the ancient and the medieval. The time frame allotted to the early medieval period in India starts with decline of Gupta age, i.e. 600-1200 CE. The paucity of sources has always been an obstacle in re-constructing early medieval history. The advent of the Muslim rulers though brought about the culture of writing history as it prevailed in central and west Asia. The court histories are partisan history but the information's are useful. Moreover, during this time travellers and chroniclers from near and far came to India and left their account that again is a valuable source of history. Thus, the main source of history of the early medieval period should be the historians and the foreign travellers of this period. Apart from this the information provided by archaeological (monuments, epigraphy, and numismatics) and literature is very important as traditional source of history for the early medieval period.



2.1 Sanskritic

Between the 4th and 6th centuries, Sanskrit emerged as the premier language of royal inscriptions all over India. Thereafter, it attained the status of a language associated with high culture, religious authority, and political power not only in the subcontinent but also in certain other areas such as South-East Asia. However, in the post-Gupta period, there was also an important parallel trend towards the evolution of regional languages and scripts. Even Sanskrit inscriptions show the influence of local dialects in spellings and words of non-Sanskrit origin. The famous poets of the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., such as Bharavi and Magha, presented a queer combination of real poetic merit with pedantry or artificiality. Of the two sides thus displayed the latter was not only the easier to imitate but was also the more attractive owing to the external show that it could present. The lesser poets that followed these masters, therefore, naturally fell a prey to the temptation and produced works which are noted more for their artificiality than for any intrinsic merit. This love of pedantry was increased to no small extent by the fact that Sanskrit literature was mainly composed not only by the Panditas but also for them. It is, therefore, no wonder if we find pedantry and artificiality to be the general characteristic of the great bulk of literature produced during this and the following ages. It would, however, be wrong to suppose that this age had nothing real value to contribute to Sanskrit literature. It saw the rise of a special form of prose composition – the Champu. It is this age, again that us our earliest anthology, a class of works of no mean importance to the Sanskrit

Historical Accounts by Indigenous Scholars

From c.700 CE onwards a particular type of literary text called the "Charita" (Eulogies on the life of a particular political ruler) started to emerge. The tradition started with the composition of Harshacharita by Banabhatta, which throws light onthe deeds of Harshavardhana. Even though, it was not free from limitations, due to the use of hyperbolic statements. Such 'charitas' need to be constantly checked and verified with other contemporary sources, before accepting the statements made by an author.SimilarlySandhyakaranandi'sRamacharitamshows the gradual waning of thePala power, or of the last flicker of its existence during the time of Ramapala, who tried to recapture the lost territory of Varendri. The recovery of Varendri constitutes the major focus of the Ramacharitam. The work revolves around the career of Ramapala, and describes several interesting political aspects during the last phase of the Pala rule in northern Bengal. The Vikramankadevacharita of Bilhana, a poet of the eleventh century, describes the career and achievements of his patron, a powerful south Indian ruler VikramadityaVI, in a similar fashion.

A fascinating textual account of a particular region was Kalhana'sRajatarangini (River of Kings), which possibly outclassed the other historical chronicles written in ancient times. This text gives a connected account of the history of Kashmir from very remote times (according to some it goes back to the nineteenth century BCE). Kalhana's account covering the time period of pre-seventh century CE based on hearsay, legends and tales, but from the seventh century CE onwards, it was purely based on evidence available to him, which were reliable and fruitful for writing objective history. Kalhana, a Kashmiri Brahmin, says in his account that he checked, read, and studied earlier evidence in the form of coins, accounts, and dynastic chronicles, in order to compose his work. Interestingly, his approach to these sourcessurprises us, as he went about his work with remarkable balance and critical judgment. Romila Thapar sees the culmination of the itihasapurana type of textual narrative in Kalhana'saccount.Kalhana's work was fundamentally different from the "Charitas", as the latter were composed in a spirit of hero worship, or patron pleasing. Thus, hisRajatarangini was the outcome of a detached and impartial mind, viewing the past and the present with great historical insight.

Ancient dramas on historical themes are of special interest to historians, although it is necessary to remember that they were plays and not historical accounts. Vishakhadatta'sMudrarakshasa (7th/8th century) revolves around the manoeuvres of Chanakya to win over Rakshasa, a minister of the Nandas, to Chandragupta's side. His 'Devichandraguptam'centres on an incident set in the reign of the Gupta king Ramagupta. Narrative literature such as the Panchatantra (5th–6th centuries) and the Kathasaritsagara (Ocean of Streams of Stories, 11th century) are collections of popular folk tales that ordinary people may have known, listened to, and enjoyed.

Summaries of ancient literary sources tend to miss out on unusual texts that do not fall within any of the main categories. These include a remarkable Sanskrit work of 6-11th centuries on agriculture called the Krishi-Parashara, composed in Bengal. The early medieval literature of this region also includes the Dakar Bachan and the KhanarBachan in old Bengali. These contain aphorisms and wise sayings, mostly concerning agriculture, but also other issues such as family life, illness, and astrology.

The courts of early medieval kings attracted writers and poets, some of whom wrote biographical compositions in praise of their royal patrons. The famous Sanskrit biographies include Banabhatta'sHarshacharita (7th century) about king Harshavardhana. Vakpati wrote the Prakrit Gaudavaho (8th century) about Yashovarman of Kanauj. Bilhana'sVikramankadevacharita (12th century) is woven around the Chalukya kings, especially Vikramaditya VI.

Royal biographies in Tamil include the anonymous Nandikkalambakkam (9th century), a long poem about the events of the reign of the Pallava king Nandivarman III. An 11th century work, the Kalinkattupparani by Cheyankontar, is based on the war between the Chola king Kulottunga and AnantavarmanChodaganga, the ruler of Kalinga. The poet describes and praises the heroism of the Chola king and his army commander, presenting the war as a divine conflict between the principles of good and evil.

The Prithvirajaraso by Chand Bardai is an epic poem in the early braj-bhasha dialect, woven around the Rajput king Prithviraja Chauhan. Sandhyakara Nandi's Ramacharita is a Sanskrit work with double meaning, simultaneously narrating the story of the Ramayana and of Ramapala, an 11th/12th century king of Bengal. The 12th century Kumarapalacharita by Hemachandra is a long poem in Sanskrit and Prakrit, which tells the story of the Chaulkya kings of Gujarat and simultaneously illustrates the rules of Sanskrit and Prakrit grammar. The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the 11th century gave rise to a series of Persian chronicles narrating the history of various dynasties. The aim of ancient and early medieval biographers and chroniclers was as much to display their literary skills as to produce a work that would flatter their royal patrons. This has to be kept in mind when using their works as sources of history.

Literary sources offers both direct as well as indirect information about their time. An example of a text that gives direct, useful historical information is the anonymous Lekkapaddhati composed in Gujrat in about the 13th century which contains models of various legal documents. Notwithstanding their eulogistic nature, royal biographies too reflect a historical tradition.

Puranas

The word 'Purana' means 'old'. Traditionally, the Puranas were composed by Vyasa, but the way in which they have come down to us, they were not the work of one person nor of one age. There are 18 Mahapuranas (great Puranas), as well as manyUpapuranas (secondary Puranas). The standard list of the 18 Mahapuranas includes the Vishnu, Narada, Bhagavata, Garuda, Padma, Varaha, Matsya, Kurma, Linga, Shiva, Skanda, Agni, Brahmanda, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya, Bhavishya, Vamana, and Brahma. The origins of the Puranas overlap to some extent with the Vedas, but their composition stretched to the 4th–5th centuries CE, sometimes even later too.

The Puranas are supposed to have five characteristics (pancha-lakshanas), i.e., they are supposed to discuss five topics—the creation of the world (sarga); re-creation (pratisarga); the periods of the various Manus (manvantaras); the genealogies of gods and rishis (vamsha); and an account of royal dynasties (vamshanucharita), including the Suryavamshi and Chandravamshi kings, whose origin is traced to the sun and the moon. Actually, not all Puranas deal with all these five topics, and most of them deal with much more.

The Bhavishya Purana is mentioned in some Puranas as the original authority for the genealogies, but the present versions of this text have incomplete material on the subject.Although their details do not always match, the Puranas—especially the Vayu, Brahmanda, Brahma, Harivamsha, Matsya, and Vishnu—do provide useful information on ancient political history. They refer to historical dynasties such as the Haryankas, Shaishunagas, Nandas, Mauryas, Shungas, Kanvas, and Andhras (Satavahanas). The dynastic lists end with the Guptas (4th–6th centuries), indicating that most of the Puranas were compiled at about this time. However,laterPurnas like the Bhagavata Purana belongs to the 10th and the Skanda Purana to the 14th century, with additions made up to the 16th century.

The Puranas are useful for the study of historical geography. They also throw light on the emergence of religious cults in India such as Vaishnavism, Shaiva, and Shaktism. This devotion expressed through the worship of images of deities in temples, pilgrimage, and vows. Some of the Puranic myths such as the stories of encounters and interactions between demons (rakshasas, asuras), gods, and sages interpreted by historians as allegorical representations of interactions among people belonging to different cultures. The Puranas had a very significant function in the Brahmanical tradition as vehicles of Brahmanical social and religious values. At the same time, they also reflect the interaction of Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical cultural traditions and the emergence and development of Hindu religious practices.

The king-lists in the Puranas and epics represent more substantial evidence of an ancient Indian historical tradition. Bards known as sutas and magadhasalso played a significant role in maintaining these historical traditions. The poets and bards seen as creators and transmitters of a historical tradition, eulogized their royal patrons in ancient Tamil tradition. The Buddhist Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa, represent a historical tradition as well. Here, we can mention about the sacred biographies in the Buddhist, Jaina, and Hindu traditions.

Dharmashastras

The Sanskrit word dharma (from the root dhri, meaning 'to maintain, support, or sustain') is very rich in meaning and difficult to translate. Dharma refers to the proper, ideal conduct of a person living in society, a course of action which leads to the fulfilment of the goals of human life. These goals, known as purusharthas, are dharma (righteous conduct), artha (material well-being), kama (sensual pleasure), and moksha (deliverance from the cycle of rebirth). In this scheme of things, material gain and sensual pleasure are considered desirable goals, if pursued in accordance with dharma. The concept of dharma is closely tied up with the idea of samsara—the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. The fruits of dharma includes the acquisition of spiritual merit, the impact of which could be felt in both present and future lives. Thus, the obligations of dharma were applicable to and binding on everybody. Thus, dharma also means duty.

A special group of Sanskrit texts dealing specifically with dharma are collectively known as the Dharmashastra. These texts further subdivided into three groups- the first two are the Dharmasutras (composed during c. 600–300 BCE) and the Smritis (c. 200 BCE–900 CE). The third one comprise of brief and elaborate commentaries (Tikas and Bhashyas, respectively), collections with comments and conclusions (Nibandhas), and compendia of views from different texts (Sangrahas), all composed between the 9th and the 19th centuries. As there is little variation in language or style within a particular group of Dharmashastra texts, it is difficult to assign absolute dates to individual works.The Dharmasutras are part of both the Vedanga literature and the Dharmashastra corpus.

Dharmashastra also deals with a number of other issues including personal, civil, and criminal law. However, the 'laws' of thesebooks were not like the provisions of the Indian civil or penal codes. Unfortunately, we do not know to what extent their recommendations were actually used or applied in early times. The texts are normative and prescriptive, that means, they discuss about the way things should be, from the viewpoint of a section of Brahmana males who were the "dharma experts" and also the implied subject for many of the rules.

Although the Dharmashastra texts do not directly describe the society of their time, certain references about the social practices can be made on their basis. Contradictions within or across texts may indicate different opinions among experts, differences in customary practices in different areas, or changes in social norms over time. The Brahmanical tradition had some amount of in-built elasticity in order to come to terms with social reality.

2.2 Tamil and other Literatures

Medieval Tamil literature forms specifically of devotional poetry of the Vaishnava saints (Alvars) and Shaiva saints (Nayanars) and their hagiographies. Vaishnava poetry increased with the compositions of Peyalvar, Puttalvar, and Poikaialvar. Another Alwar saint, Nathamuni in the 10th century, collected the hymns into the canon known as the *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*. Together with this, there are sacred biography of the Vaishnava saints, popularly known as Alvarvaipavam. Unlike, Vaishnava devotional literature, Shaiva saints also composed many works, such as the compositions of Tirumular and Karaikal Ammaiyar. The hymns of Nayanmar saints were compiled in the 10th century by Nambi Andar Nambi. This compilation by him formed the core of the Shaiva canon, the Tirumurai. Another composition of Nambiwas the TiruttondarTiruvantati about the Shaiva saints. Another 12th century work, provides the accounts of the Shaiva saints were collected in a text called the Periyapuranam. All these texts provide thus throws valuable insights into the religious and social history of early medieval India, especially in Southern India.

Within the Tamil literature, new genres of poetry emerged in Tamil language, most of which praised the kings and gods in early medieval times. One such poetic composition were the Kalampakams, in which the last line, word, foot, or syllable of the preceding poem formed the beginning of the succeeding one. Kovai were poems in which the verses are arranged in a thematic sequence. Mention can be made of Pantikkovai (6th-7th century) work which was written in honour of the Pandya king Netumaran. Another devotional kovai poem was Manikkavachakar'sTirukkovaiyar (9th century) which praisedlord Shiva. In 13th century, poem TanchaivananKovai was written by PoyyamolipPulavar. In this kovai poem, there is a mention of Tanchaivanan, a minister and general of a Pandya king.

Other categories of literature emerged which were purely devotional. Within this falls the 'Ula' literature comprised songs in praise of gods, were usually sung when the image of the deity was taken out in procession. On the other hand, 'Tutu' poetry comprised of the poems in which a message delivered to god, lover, or anyone. Similarly, the moral aphorisms and words of Avvaiyarduring 9th/10th century CE are another such examples.The second of three poetesses by this namestill popular among Tamil speaking people today.

Jain Texts

The Jaina Puranas (the Shvetambaras call them Charitas) are hagiographies of the Jaina saints known as tirthankaras (literally 'ford makers'), but they contain other material as well. The Adi Purana of 9th century CE narrates the life of the first tirthankara Rishabha (Adinatha). The 8th century Harivamsha Purana gives a Jaina version of the stories of the Kauravas, Pandavas, Krishna, Balarama, and others. The TrishashtilakshanaMahapurana by Jinasena and Gunabhadra (9th century) has life stories of various Jaina saints, kings, and heroes. It also has sections on topics such as life-cycle rituals, the interpretation of dreams, town planning, the duties of a warrior, and how a king should rule.

The Parishishtaparvan (12th century) by Hemachandra gives a history of the earliest Jaina teachers and also mentions certain details of political history. A number of Prabandhas (12th century onwards) from Gujarat offer semi-historical accounts of saints and historical characters. Jaina texts also include hymn literature and lyrical poetry.

The vast Jaina didactic story (katha) literature in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Apabhramshathrows immense light on the everyday life of their time. The Jaina texts in the Kannada language also reflect on the life of monks and nuns in the sangha. These texts are useful for information on the aspects of the cultural history of their times. However, Jaina texts have not been studied or used as extensively by historians unlike the Buddhist sources.

Kannada and Telugu Literature

The earliest Kannada inscriptions date back to 5th-6th century. However, the oldest surviving piece of literature in this language is a 9th century work,Kavirajamarga (The Royal Road of the Poets), on poetics. A well-developed tradition of prose and poetry must have existed for some time, as this work mentions many earlier writers and their works which have not survived.

Karnataka as well-known was the stronghold of Jainism. Thus, a significant part of early medieval Kannada literature dominated by theJaina themes. The renowned poets of the 10th century Kannada literature were by Pampa, Ponna, and Ranna.All of these wrote Jaina Puranas.

Pampa wrote an account of the life of the first tirthankara Rishabha or Adinatha, popularly known as the Adi Purana. He also authoredthe Vikramarjunavijaya, which was based on the Mahabharata story. Ponna wrote both in Sanskrit and in Kannada language and due to his mastership over both the languages was given the title of Ubhaya-kavi-chakravarti. Another author, Chavunda Raya, who was the general and minister of the Ganga kingswrote the TrishashtilakshanaMahapurana, which was an account of the 24 Jaina saints. Later, in the 12thcentury, another version of Rama story was came down to us by Nagachandra or Abhinava Pampa, who had written the Ramachandracharitra Purana (one of many Jaina versions of the Rama story). Another interesting Kannada works of the 12th century include Neminatha'sLilavati, written in mixed verse and prose, which narrates the love story of a Kadamba prince and a beautiful princess.

As far as Telugu language is concerned, in inscriptions from the 2nd century CE suggest the antiquity of Telugu to the 2nd century CE. On the other, epigraphs of the 5th–6th centuries CE reflects the shaping of the classical form of the language. Early medieval inscriptions used verse form and are marked by a literary flavour and style.

It is possible that there would have been earlier works, yet the the earliest surviving work of Telugu literature can be said to have been by Nannaya (11th century) work, rendering Mahabharata in mixed verse as well as prose. The work was composed on the royal order, i.e. at the request of the eastern Chalukya king Rajarajanarendra. It can be thus said that Nannaya laid the foundations of Telugu poetic style. He is also credited with the epithet Vaganushasanundu (maker of speech) in Telugu tradition. His prominent style is marked by the use of a various Sanskrit and regional metres and also a combination of lengthy Sanskrit compounds with Telugu words.

Another work comes from royal court by the minister of the court of Manumasiddhi (Nellore area), who added 15 Parvas to Nannaya's Mahabharata and set new trends in narrative style. He is aloso credited with another work called the Uttararamayanamu. Another writer who seems to have lived in about this period was NanneChoda—author of the Kumarasambha-vamu—who describes himself as a ruler of a small principality called Orayuru. Telugu literature reached a level of maturity in the 14th century during the Kakatiya period and its highest point of achievement during the reign of the Vijayanagara king Krishnadevaraya (1509–29 CE).

Accounts of Foreign Travelers

Apart from the indigenous texts, Chinese and Arab accounts are useful sources of information for early medieval India. The Chinese travellers who made the arduous journey from China comprised of monks and diplomats. During the period of our concern, two monks, i.e.,Xuanzang or Hieun Tsang (c.600-64CE) and Yijing (635-713CE) visited India. Apart from Chinese travellors, the important Arab works include the 9th -10th century writings of travellers and geographers such as Sulaiman, Al-Masudi, Ibn Haukal. Later Arab writers and few others give useful information on trade through their accounts.Besides indigenous texts, foreign accounts of these travellors are another significant sources for early medieval India.

Yijing or Itsing visited India in 7th century CE and his account reflect the socio-religious condition of India. One of his works provide detailed account of Buddhist doctrines and practices in India. Similarly, the important Arab works of the period(9th –10th century) include the writings of travellers and geographers such as Sulaiman, Al-Masudi, Abu Zaid, Al-Biduri, and Ibn Haukal, Al-Biruni, Al-Idrisi, Muhammad Ufi, and Ibn Batuta. Their accounts are especially useful for understanding the status of trade and commerce in early medieval India. For instance, AI-Biruni, Arab scholar and contemporary of Mahmud of Ghazni, throws immense light on Indian people and their daily life.Al-Biruni's desire for knowledge motivated him to study Sanskrit and this enabled him to acquire knowledge of Indian society and culture through literature. His observations are based on his personal knowledge about Indian society and culture, but his accounts lack any political information of his times. In the similar way, the works of Al Masudi (early tenth century), Al Idrisi (twelfth century) etc., are helpful for understanding overseas trade both in the west and east of India.

Many Chinese monks made long and arduous overland journeys to India, crossing mountains, plateaux, and deserts, in order to collect authentic manuscripts of Buddhist texts, meet Indian monks, and visit places of Buddhist learning and pilgrimage. The best known among those who wrote accounts of their Indian travels are Faxian (Fa Hien) and Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang). Faxian's travels were confined only to northern India from 399 to 414 CE. Xuanzang, on the other hand, left his home in 629 CE and spent over 10 years travelled entire length and breadth of the country. Yijing, another 7th century Chinese traveller, lived for 10 years in the great monastery of Nalanda. The accounts written by these pilgrims throw light on the history of Buddhism and various other aspects of their time.

The rapid political expansion of the Arabs, the unity given to them by Islam, the spread of urban centres, and the patronage of the Caliphs had important and far-reaching impact on intellectual ideas and technology in Asia and Europe. AlMamun, the 9th century Abbasid Caliph, established an academy called the Beyt-al-Hikma (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad. Scholars of this academy busied themselves with an ambitious project of translating Greek, Persian, and Sanskrit texts on philosophy and science into Arabic. The flexibility of Arabic lent itself to the creation of a very precise scientific and technical vocabulary. Moreover, since this was a spoken language, the knowledge of ancient texts became theoretically available to anybody in the swiftly expanding Arab-speaking world. Within the span of a few centuries, the learning and accomplishments of different cultures spread far beyond their original geographical frontiers. There was also a dissemination of elements of popular culture. For instance, the Arabic Kalila-wa-Dimma collected fables from various places, including India.

Arab scholars initially relied heavily on Greek works, but men such as Jaihani, Gardizi, and Al-Biruni developed their own independent critical points of view. Abu Ri-han or Al-Biruni, a native of Khwarizm or Khiva (in modern Turkmenistan), was one of the greatest intellectuals of early medieval times. Only 40 of the 180 books he wrote have survived. Al-Biruni travelled to India to satisfy his curiosity about the land and its people, and to study their ancient texts in their original language. His '*Tahqiq-i-Hind*'takes into account various topics related to Indian history such as Indian scripts, sciences, geography, astronomy, astrology, philosophy, literature, beliefs, customs, religions, festivals, rituals, social organization, and laws. Apart from the historical value of his descriptions of 11th century India, Al-Biruni helped modern historians identify the initial year of the Gupta era. The Tahqiq-i-Hind states that the Gupta era began 241 years after the beginning of the Shaka era. Since the Shaka era began in 78 CE, this places the beginning of the Gupta era in 319–20 CE.

Several Arabic geographical and travel accounts were written in the early medieval period. Some of these, such as the account of the travellerSulaiman, refer to India. This is not surprising considering that both Arabs and Indians were actively involved in Indian Ocean trade. Such works throw light on trade and aspects of Indian political history.

Persian was the language of royal courts and high culture in central and West Asia in early medieval times, and a number of Persian texts refer to India. The anonymous Chachnama describes how a Brahmana named Chach usurped the throne of Sindh in the mid-7th century and narrates the Arab conquest of that region by Muhammad bin Qasim. The Shahnama of Firdausi, a classic of Persian poetry, and the Gulistan by the famous poet Saadi, refer incidentally to aspects of Indian trade.

2.3 Archeology

Material evidence is a key to understanding human behaviour and experience. It is not enough to describe a stone tool or pot; the challenge is to get the stone tool or pot to tell their stories about the people who made and used them. As the products of craft traditions and part of the lifestyles of people, artefacts are rooted in specific cultural contexts. So, the narrow technical meaning of 'culture' in archaeology can be stretched to correspond to the wider meaning mentioned earlier. The rhythms and patterns of time based on material culture are generally slower and longer than those of historical events, and archaeological cultures do not coincide with the rise and fall of dynasties or kingdoms.

The study of architecture and sculpture helps in forming an impression of the cultural life of early medieval India. The emergence of structural temples usually monumental in size during early medieval India is marked by the expression of robust regionalism in Indian culture. This aspect also reflected in the beginnings of regional vernaculars. Three distinct temple styles emerged in three distinct zones of the sub-continent. The north Indian temple styles with its tapering shikhara, in which the super structure of the main temple is labelled the nagara style of temple. In contrast to this was the Dravida type of temples in south India where we observe a very tall super structure constructed in a pyramidal shape over the main shrine. In the areas of present day Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh there emerged another distinct style called Vesara which in a way represented an admixture or meeting point of the north Indian and the far south Indian styles. The sculpture of this period also displays distinct regional features in both stone as well as metal sculptures. The excellence of metal sculpting comes from the Chola areas in south India, celebrated for the fascinating images of Nataraja Shiva.

The wonderful images of Buddha belonging to the period of Pala rule, over present day Bangladesh, West Bengal, and partly Bihar deserve special mention. In spite of the fact that the iconography in the subcontinent was derived from the common source of Puranic stories, myths and legends pertaining to different divinities, the styles employed were distinctly regional and had their own regional appeal, thus nurturing the growth and development of multifaceted sculptural traditions.

Epigraphy

Inscriptions and coins come under the general umbrella of archaeology and archaeological sources, but they are subjects of specialized study in their own right. The study of inscriptions is known as epigraphy. An inscription is any writing that is engraved on something—stone, wood, metal, ivory plaques, bronze statues, bricks, clay, shells, pottery, etc. Epigraphy includes deciphering the text of inscriptions and analysing the information they contain. It also includes palaeography, the study of ancient writing.

Mention can also be made of royal inscriptions, many of which have a prashasti (panegyric) containing the king's genealogy and references to his exploits, usually with a view to shower praise on him. The Arthashastra and the Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang mentions the existence of royal archives preserving official records in every Indian city, while Al-Biruni's 11th century Tahqiq-i-Hind refers to the archives of the Shahi kings of Kabul. Unfortunately, no such ancient archives survive.

Fig: 1: Coins of Chola Kings (Southern India)

Certain other example of the inscriptions that forms the major source of historical information for the early medieval period are varied. Likewise, the Aihole inscription of Pulakeshin II, the Chalukyan king which was composed by his court poet Ravi Kirti. It throws lighton the history of the Chalukyadynasty. Further, it also contains an account of the early kings of the Chalukya line. Some inscriptions sheds some light on the personal life of the ruler. For instance, Banskhera and the Madhuban inscription of the king Harshavardhana of the Pushyabhuti dynasty. The Banskhera inscription provides us with the signature of Harshavardhana. Religious grant made by the rulers can be ascertained from the inscriptions such asKalimpur copper plate of Dharmapala-records a land grant made by the king for construction of temple.

The earliest inscriptions in the Tamil language (with some Prakrit elements) are engraved in rock shelters and caves, mostly in Tamil Nadu, especially in the area near Madurai. They are in a script known as Tamil–Brahmi, an adaptation of Brahmi for writing the Tamil language. Iravatham Mahadevan (2003) has identified two phases in the evolution of the Tamil–Brahmi script—early TamilBrahmi (c. 2nd century BCE–1st century CE) and late Tamil–Brahmi (2nd–4th centuries CE).

Three southern scripts emerged in the early medieval period—Grantha, Tamil, and Vatteluttu. The first of these was used for writing Sanskrit, the second and third for writing Tamil. These three scripts may have emerged out of southern varieties of Brahmi; or they may have emerged from some other earlier southern scripts. The Tamil script first appeared in the Pallava territory in the 7th century CE. Something similar to the modern Telugu and Kannada scripts took shape in the 14th–15th centuries, while the Malayalam script developed out of Grantha at about the same time.

Ancient Indian inscriptions include a few bi-script documents, in which the text is given in the same language written in two different scripts. Most of the instances come from the north-west and consist of short bi-script Brahmi– Kharoshthi inscriptions. The longer records include an 8th century Pattadakal pillar inscription of the Chalukya king Kirtivarman II. The language is Sanskrit; the text is written both in the north Indian Siddhamatrika script and in the local southern proto-Telugu–Kannada script.

Tamil copper-plate inscriptions comprise of grants to villages consisting of plots of cultivable lands or other privileges to private individuals or public institutions by the members of the various South Indian royal dynasties. The study of these inscriptions, has been especially important in reconstructing the history of Tamil Nadu. These records givesa impression that there was an essential component of a highly-structured system of taxation that ensured all tax obligations along with keeping the royal treasuries full. Most of these grantsdates from the tenth century CE. to the mid nineteenth century CE. A large number of them belong to the Chalukyas, the Cholas and the Vijayanagar kings.

The epigraphic significance of these plates relies in the fact that they provide an insight into the social conditions of medieval South India and also allows to fill the chronological gaps in the connected history of the ruling dynasties. Unlike in neighboring Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, early inscriptions were in Sanskrit while the early inscriptions in Tamil Nadu used Tamil exclusively. Tamil has the oldest extant literature amongst the Dravidian languages, but dating the language and the literature precisely is difficult. Literary works in India were preserved either in palm leaf manuscripts (implying repeated copying and recopying) or through oral transmission, making direct dating impossible. External chronological records and internal linguistic evidence, however, indicate that the oldest extant works were probably compiled sometime between the second century BCE and the tenth century CE.

Epigraphic attestation of Tamil begins with rock inscriptions from the second century BCE, written in Tamil-Brahmi, an adapted form of the Brahmi script.In the sixth century, we find stone and copper-plate inscriptions in Sanskrit and some bilingual too. Till date, fortunately, Indian archaeologists discovered hundreds of inscriptions during the last 120 years. With regard to South Indian inscriptions, Professor E. Hultzsch started collecting inscriptions from the latter part of 1886 on being appointed as Epigraphist to the Government of Madras. Historically, the earliest copperplate inscriptions date from the tenth century CE. Among these, the Leyden plates, the Tiruvalangadu grant of Rajendra Chola-I, the Anbil plates of Sundara Chola and the Kanyakumari inscription of Virarajendra Chola are the only epigraphical records discovered and published till date that provide the genealogical lists of Chola kings. The Thiruvalangadu copperplates (1905 CE) is one of the largest recovered inscription so far and consists of 31 copper sheets. These copper plates are written in both Sanskrit and Tamil. Further, these plates record a grant made to the shrine of the goddess at Tiruvalangadu by Rajendra Chola-I. The preamble to the Sanskrit portion of these plates comprise the list of the legendary Chola kings. A typical Chola copperplate inscription currently displayed at the Government Museum, Chennai, India, is dated c. tenth century C.E. Five copper plates are strung in a copper ring, the ends of which are secured with a Chola seal bearing, in relief, a seated tiger facing the right, with two fish to its right. These three figures have a bow below them, a parasol and two fly-whisks (Chamaras) above them, and a lamp on each side. Around the margin is engraved in Grantha characters, "This is the matchless edict of King Parakesarivarman, who teaches justice to the kings of his realm". A portion of this inscription is in Sanskrit and the rest is in Tamil. The plates contain an edict issued at Kachhippedu (Kanchipuram) by the Chola king Ko-ParaKesarivarman (Uththama Chola, an uncle and predecessor of Rajaraja Chola-I), at the request of his minister, to confirm the contents of a number of stone inscriptions, which referred to certain dues to be paid to the temple of Vishnu at Kachhippedu. Arrangements made for several services in the temple are also described. Uththama Chola was an uncle and predecessor of Rajaraja Chola-I.

In South India, inscriptions in the old Tamil language (and the Tamil–Brahmi script) appeared in the 2nd century BCE and the early centuries CE. Tamil became an important language of South Indian inscriptions under the Pallava dynasty. There are examples of bilingual Tamil–Sanskrit Pallava inscriptions from the 7th century onwards. In these, the invocation, genealogical portion, and concluding verses are often in Sanskrit and the details of the grants in Tamil. Kings of the Chola and Pandya dynasties also issued Tamil and bilingual Sanskrit–Tamil inscriptions. Hundreds of donative Tamil inscriptions were inscribed on temple walls in various parts of South India in early medieval times.

The earliest Kannada inscriptions belong to the late 6th/early 7th century CE. From this period onwards, there were many private donative records in Kannada, and this language was also used in some royal grants. There are some bilingual Sanskrit– Kannada inscriptions and a 12th century inscription found at Kurgod (in Bellary district, Karnataka) is in three languages—Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Kannada. The late 6th century epigraphs of the early Telugu Chola kings mark the beginnings of Telugu as a language of inscriptions. Thereafter, there are many private donative records in this language. Malayalam inscriptions appeared in about the 15th century. There are also a few late inscriptions in Tulu, a Dravidian language which is similar in some ways to Kannada and is spoken in parts of Karnataka.

As for inscriptions in the modern north Indian (New Indo-Aryan) languages, Marathi and Oriya inscriptions can be identified from the 11th century. Inscriptions in dialects similar to what is referred to today as Hindi appear in Madhya Pradesh from the 13th century onwards, and Gujarati can be identified in epigraphs from the 15th century

Royal land grants are an important category of donative records. There are thousands of such inscriptions, some on stone, but mostly inscribed on one or more copper plates. Most of them record grants made by kings to Brahmanas and religious establishments. The earliest stone inscriptions recording land grants with tax exemptions are Satavahana and Kshatrapa epigraphs found at Nashik. The mid-4th century Pallava and Shalankayana grants are the earliest surviving copper plate grants. One of the oldest copper plate grants from north India is the late 4th century CE Kalachala grant of king Ishvararata. Copper plate grants increased in number and frequency in the early medieval period

There are cases where inscriptions of different dynasties make conflicting claims. For instance, a Gurjara-Pratihara inscription states that king Vatsaraja conquered all of Karnataka. However, the contemporary Rashtrakuta king claims in his inscriptions to have defeated Vatsaraja and to have ruled over the Karnataka area. Wherever possible, details of political events given in inscriptions have to be cross-checked.

Inscriptions, especially those of the early medieval period, have been used as a major source of information on political structures and administrative and revenue systems. They can also shed light on the history of settlement patterns, agrarian relations, forms of labour, and class and caste structures. Analysing epigraphic evidence involves unravelling the technical vocabulary of inscriptions —for instance, the designations of officials, fiscal terms, and land measures— the meanings of which are not always clear.

There are very few ancient records of secular land transactions and records of land disputes, but these take us straight to the heart of social and economic issues. For instance, an inscription of the time of the Chola king Rajaraja III (1231 CE) states that farmers of a certain village found the burden of arbitrary levies in money and paddy and the demand of compulsory labour made on various pretexts by several agencies so unbearable that they could no longer carry on cultivation. A meeting of the Brahmana assembly and the leading men of the locality was held in the village temple. Decisions were taken, fixing the dues that farmers were to give to the Brahmanas and royal tax collectors, and the labour services that they were expected to perform.

Inscriptions reflect the history of languages and literature and a few refer to the performing arts. For instance, the 7th century Kudumiyamalai inscription gives the musical notes used in seven classical ragas. Inscriptions from Tamil Nadu refer to the performance of various kinds of dances. In the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram, the pillars of the eastern and western gateways have label inscriptions that depicts the dance poses of 108 sculpted figures carved on them and also comprise of quoting verses from the Natyashastra of Bharata.

Inscriptions are material remains and have to be understood in relation to the larger contexts in which they are found. They are also texts, connected with prevailing structures of power, authority, and social status. Whether fragmentary or complete, whether consisting of one word or hundreds of lines, an inscription has to be read and analysed carefully. Its contents can then be compared with those of other inscriptions and with information from other kinds of sources.

Numismatics

The numismatic history of the early medieval period is a subject of continuing debate. Historians who describe this period as marked by a feudal order talk of a decline in coinage along with a decline in trade and urban centres, followed by a revival in the 11th century. This hypothesis can be questioned. During the early medieval India, we evidence a decline in the aesthetic quality of coins, in the number of coin types and also in their desired messages. Several coins, even devoid of names or titles, and are therefore difficult to associate with a particular king.

However, scholars like John S. Deyell, shows that there was no decline in the volume of coins in circulation.A number of base metal alloy coin series were issued by dynasties in early medieval times. In the Ganga valley, billon coins circulated in the Gurjara-Pratihara kingdom, while other coin types circulated in Rajputana and Gujarat. Copper coins were minted by the Arab governors of Sindh between the mid-8th to mid-9th centuries. In Kashmir, copper coins were supplemented by bills of exchange (hundikas) denominated in terms of coins or grain, and the use of cowries. During the 6th–7th centuries, kings of Bengal such as Shashanka issued gold coins. No coin issues of the Pala and Sena dynasties have so far been identified. It has been suggested that the references to currency units in their inscriptions do not represent actual coins but theoretical units of value made up by a fixed number of objects such as cowries. However, a number of silver coins known as Harikela coins were circulating in Bengal between the 7th and 13th centuries and these had corresponding local eastern series, issued in the name of various localities.

In the western Deccan, some early medieval coin types have been tentatively identified with the Chalukyas of Badami. Although gold and silver coins found in the Andhra region have been attributed to the early eastern Chalukyas, there seems to be a subsequent gap of about three centuries till the end of the 10th century, when there was a revival of gold and copper coinage under the later kings of this dynasty. The attribution of certain gold and silver coins to the Chalukyas of Kalyana (8th–12th centuries) and to the KalachuriRajputs remains uncertain. Coins issued by the Kadambas of Goa (11th–12th centuries) have been identified, and a few gold coins have been attributed to the Shilaharas of the western Deccan (11th century).

In the far south, coins with lion and bull motifs, some inscribed with titles, have been associated with the Pallavas. The tiger crest is the emblem on Chola coins. The seals of several Chola copper plate inscriptions show the tiger, fish (the Pandya emblem), and bow (the Chera emblem), indicating that the Cholas had achieved political supremacy over these two dynasties. The appearance of these three emblems on many gold, silver, and copper coins suggests that these were Chola issues. Gold coins found at Kavilayadavalli in the Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh have the motifs of the tiger, bow, and some indistinct marks. The obverse has the Tamil legend sung which seems to be a short form of sungandavirttarulina (abolisher of tolls), one of the titles of the Chola king Kulottunga I. The legends on the reverse—either Kanchi or Ne (maybe short for Nellur)—may indicate the names of mint towns. The last phase of Chola rule is only represented by copper coins. Coins—mostly copper ones—of the early medieval Pandyas have been found largely in Sri Lanka. A few bear names like Vira Pandya or Sundara Pandya; the problem is one of figuring out which of the several kings of these names they refer to.

In many parts of early medieval India, cowries continued to be used as money along with coins. At Sohepur in Orissa, 25,000 cowries were found along with 27 Kalachuri coins. At Bhaundri village in Lucknow, 54 Pratihara coins were found along with 9,834 cowries. Cowries were probably used by people either for small-scale transactions or where coins of small denominational value were in short supply. The market value of cowries fluctuated, depending on demand and supply

At first glance, coins may appear to carry little historical information, but they provide clues to several important historical processes. They are linked to monetary history, which includes an analysis of the production and circulation of coinage, the monetary values attached to coins, and the frequency and volume of issues. Monetary history is in turn an important aspect of the history of exchange and trade. At another level, legends on coins give information on the history of languages and scripts.

Though numerous coins have been found on the surface, many have been found while digging the mounds. Coins are a good source of administrative as well as constitutional history. Coins portray kings and gods, and contain religious symbols and legends, by which one can get an idea of the art and religion of the time. From 530 to 1202 CE, there are availability of a category of Indian coins, in the "Indo-Sassanian style" (also known as Gadhaiya paisa). This category of coin is found among the Gurjaras, Pratiharas, Chalukya, Paramara and Palasrulers coinage in a geometric fashion. Typically, the bust of the king on the obverse side of the coin is found to be highly simplified and geometric, and the design of the fire altar, with or without the two attendants, appears as a geometrical motif on the reverse of this type of coinage.

The coins of the Chola Empire bear similarities with other South Indian dynasties coins. Chola coins invariable display a tiger crest. As we know that the fish and bow is associated with the Pandyas and Cheras, and the appearance of the same on Chola coins reflects successful political conquest of these powers as well as co-option of existing coin issuing practices.The coins of various Rajput rulers, on the other hand, were comprise of gold, copper or billon, but very rarely in silver. Thecoins had familiarity with the Vaishnavism as some coins depicts Laxmi, Hindu goddess of wealth, on the obverse. In these coins, the Goddess was shown with four arms than the usual two arms of the Gupta coins; the reverse carried the Nagari legend. The seated bull and horseman were almost invariable devices on Rajput copper and bullion coins.

Summary

By now it has become clear that these literary and archaeological sources are important enough to provide welcome light to the economic activities of the early Indians. It has also become clear that any single source cannot explain all aspects of the economic history of the early Indians. Different sources together can help us to explain the economic history of a people of a particular region during a particular period. The historian writes it by using the sources relevant to the enquiry. But the use of sources depends on what question the historian raises. Accordingly, one finds out new sources, if necessary, or evaluates the known sources in order to find out the answer to his or her question. Thus, the historian makes sources work for solving the problem one deals with.Inscriptions are a valuable source of information on political history. The geographical spread of a king's inscriptions is often taken as indicating the area under his political control.

We also evidence the lack of chronological dating impacts the study of sources. The period evidences a charitam tradition, but such kind of eulogy by historical sources less dependable.Regional literature, on the other hand, presents a wide picture of society and polity in early medieval India.A meticulous and skilful analysis of the sources is the foundation of history. The various literary and archaeological sources for ancient and early medieval India have their own specific potential as well as limitations, which have to be taken into account by the historian. Interpretation is integral to analysing the evidence from ancient texts, archaeological sites, inscriptions, and coins. Wherever several sources are available, their evidence has to be co-related. The co-relation of evidence from texts and archaeology is especially important for a more comprehensive and inclusive history of ancient and early medieval India. However—as will become evident in later chapters—given the inherent differences in the nature of literary and archaeological data, it is not always easy to integrate them into a smooth and seamless narrative.

Keywords

Shikhara-spire of a free-standing temple like mountain.

Nagar- Temple architecture of Northern India.

Vesaar- Temple architecture of Deccan India.

Dravida- Temple architecture of South India.

Numismatics- study of coins

Epigraphy- study of inscriptions

Archeology- study of past of humans

Self Assessment

Q.1. Who authored 'Gita Govinda'?

A. Bana
B. Bhoja
C. Bilhana
D. Jayadeva

Q.2. Which medieval text deals specifically with agricultural activities?

A. Krishi-parashara
B. Gurusamhita
C. Krishinarashwara
D. Krishisukti

Q.3. Which of the following work was composed by Banabhatta?

A. Harshacharita
B. Gita Govinda
C. Vikramankdevacharita
D. R. S. Sharma

Q.4. Which of the following texts is a first historical account throwing light on the history of Kashmir?

A. Rajtarangini
B. Prabandhachintamani
C. Nyayakandali

D. Navasahasankacharita

Q.5. In which of the following texts, the accounts of Shaiva saints are compiled?

A. TiruttondaraTiruvantali
B. Periyapuranam
C. Nandikkalambakam
D. Trishastilakshana

Q.6. To which ruler, Ravikirti has described in detail in the Aihole Inscription?

A. Pulakeshin I
B. Pulakeshin II
C. Kirtivarman I
D. Vikramaditya I

Q.7. Which scholar is considered to be the first author of Marathi literature?

A. Nagachandra
B. Pampa
C. Dyanneshwara
D. Nannaya

Q.8. Which language frequently appears in the inscriptions of early medieval India?

A. Prakrit
B. Brahmi
C. Apabrahmsa
D. Sanskrit

Q. 9. Read the following statements, and choose the statement which is not the feature of Town planning in early medieval India?

A. Cities were well-planned
B. Elaborate drainage system
C. Large buildings were constructed both residential and public
D. less religious structures were constructed

Q.10. Which of the following mentioned type of pottery is excavated from the archeological sites of early medieval India?

A. Red and Black ware
B. Ochre coloured ware
C. Red ware
D. Painted Grey ware

Q.11. Among the following, which inscription provides evidence of signature of King Harshavardhana?

A. Banskhera inscription
B. Madhuban inscription
C. Khoh inscription
D. Kalimpur inscription

Q.12. Which style of architecture was followed by the Rajput rulers during early medieval India?

A. Nagar
B. Dravida
C. Buddhist
D. Vesara

Q.13. Choose the correct option-

Land Grants as an inscriptional source is significant because-

1. It provides information about the King and his dynasty, and extent of his empire.
2. It provides information about the purpose of the grant
3. It provides information about the privileges to the grantees, punishments for trespassers or violators of the grants.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1 only
C. 1, 2 and 3
D. 2 and 3

Q.14. What is 'Prabandha' literature?

A. Semi-historical account of Jain saints
B. Buddhist Historical characters
C. Accounts of Brahmanas
D. Historical account of religious saints

Q.15. What are the characteristics of Sanskrit literary writing of early medieval period?

1. The literature is pedantry, full of ornateness and artificiality.
2. Rise of a special form of prose composition, i.e.Champu style of writing
3. Most contribution was made in the field of poetry
4. Rise of large number of philosophical commentaries and religious texts.

A. 1, 2,3 and 4
B. 1 and 4
C. 2,3 and 4
D. 1 and 4

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	D	2.	A	3.	A	4.	A	5.	B
6.	B	7.	C	8.	D	9.	D	10.	C

11. A 12. A 13. C 14. A 15. A

Review Questions

Q.1. Write a note on indigenous literary sources of early mediaeval India.

Q.2. Discuss different inscriptional sources of early mediaeval India.

Q.3. Discuss the various kinds of numismatic sources for the study of the period 600-1200 CE.

Q.4. Explain the significance of land grants in constructing the early medieval Indian history.

Q.5. Describe the importance of archeological sources in developing an understanding of the period in Indian history from 600-1200 CE.

Further Readings

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Unit 03: Political Structure and Regional Variations I

CONTENTS

Objectives

1. Identify diverse political developments in post-Gupta age.
2. Learn about the emergenceand decline of various dynasties in Northern India during early medieval period

Introduction

Early medieval Indian kings are recognized to have used very high sounding and pompous titles, such as paramabhattaraka, 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.

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.

The literary sources of the era are also eloquent in relation to the many of the aforesaid administrative units. Harishena"sKathakosha, 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.

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 principledonees. 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.

3.1 Political Structure and Forms of Legitimation

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 hot 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.

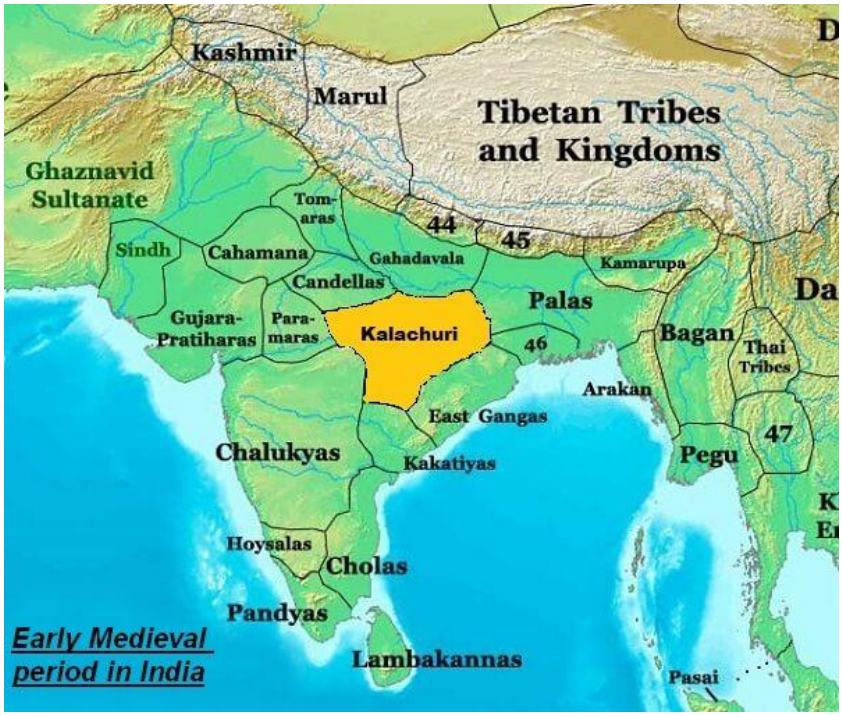
Though, this formulation suffers from definitional vagueness. The conditions "lineage domain" and "state society" are not clarified. The samantas even in their trans-political sense remained a landed aristocracy. More importantly, neither the segmentary state nor the integrative polity models give alternative 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 of 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 an 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.

3.2 Regional Variations

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.

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.



Dispersal of Powers: The New Royalty

Early medieval Indian kings are recognized to have used very high sounding and pompous titles, such as paramabhattaraka, 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.

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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¨sKathakosha, 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 postGupta centuries.

The Partabgarh inscription of Mahendrapala-II records the grant of a village which was in possession of talavargikaHarishena. 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 GovindacandraGahadavala. 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 GurjaraPratiharas. 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, mahasiamantadhipati 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 mahasamantaShrisuchitta. Shilakuttakavaleya is mentioned as a samanta in this inscription. We come crossways raja, rajanya, ranaka and rajaputras in the Shaktipur copper plate of Lakshamanasena 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 a 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 then 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 establish 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 mahasamantaBalavarman. References to queen‟sgrasa 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 RajanitiRatnakara 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 VastavyaKayastha 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 mahasamantaBakavarman, 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 paramabhattaraka- maharajadhirajaparameshvara.

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 posttenth 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 then 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 principledonees. 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.

3.3 Northern and Western India

Yashodharmans

During the reign of Kumaragupta-I his feudatory Bandhuvarman ruled over Mandasor as it i was a major Centre of western Malwa. He belonged to the Aulikara family which perhaps ruled there up to the beginning of the sixth century A.D. Two stone pillar inscriptions from I Mandasor in Madhya Pradesh, one of which is dated in 532 A.D., refer to a powerful king Yasodharman. One of these inscriptions reports the victories of Yasodharman. The I inscription describes him as the victor of all those lands which had not been subdued even by the Guptas. But the names of the defeated powers have not been mentioned except that of Mihirkula. It appears that Yasodharman rose to power in about 528 A.D. and continued to rule till 532 A.D., (the date of Mandasor inscription) but by 543 A.D. his power must have been eclipsed.

Pushyabhutis

A variety of sources inform us about the rise of the family of Pushyabhutis which first ruled from Thaneshwar in Haryana and later from Kanauj in Uttar Pradesh. These sources include the text Harshacharita of Banabhatta, accounts of Hiuen-tsang and some inscriptions and coins etc.

Banabhatta informs us that the founder king of this dynasty at Thaneshwar was Pushyabhuti and that the family was known as Pushyabhutivamsa. However, the inscriptions of Harsha make no reference to him. The Banskhera and Madhuvan plates and royal seals mention five earlier rulers among whom the first three are given the title of Maharaja. This may indicate that they were not sovereign monarchs. The fourth king Prabhakarvardhana has been described as a Maharajadhirajawhich makes us infer that he was an independent monarch and had established matrimonial relations with the Maukharis by marrying his daughter Rajyasri with Grahavarman.

Thaneshwar, during this time (about 604 A.D.) was threatened by the Hunas from the western side. Banabhatta has described Prabhakarvardhana as "a lion to the Huna deer". According to him an army under Rajyavardhana was sent to defeat the Hunas but due to the sudden illness of his father he had to come back. With Prabhakarvardhana's death the family had to face troubled times for a while. The Malava king killed Gra!avarman and took , Rajyasri prisoner. It appears that the Malava and the Gauda kings entered into alliance and even Thaneshwar was threatened. Rajyavardhana defeated the Malavas but was killed through treachery by Sasanka, the Gauda king. Now it was Harsha's responsibility to seek revenge and in due course he was able to establish a strong empire.

Harsha ascended the throne of Thaneshwar around 606 A.D. and immediately marched against the Gaudas. He also entered into an alliance with Bhaskarvarman-the king of Pragjyaotisha (Assam) as both had a common enemy in Sasanka, the king of Gauda (Bengal). We have no information whether Harsha entered into battle with Sasanka but he was able to save his sister Rajyasri and the kingdoms of Thaneshwar and Kanauj were combined with Harsha now ruling from Kanauj. In factHiuen-tsang's account mentions him and his predecessors as rulers of Kanauj. Both Bana and Hiuen-tsang refer to Harsha's vow of defeating other kings. Subsequently, he fought the rulers of Valabhi and Gurjaras in the west; Chalukyas in the Deccan; and Magadha and Gauda in the east.

An eulogy or prasasti of PulakasinII, placed on a temple wall at Aihole, also mentions Pulakesin's military success against Harshavardhana. Hiuen-tsang's account mentions that inspite of his victories over many kingdoms he was not able to defeat Pulakasin II, the Chalukya ruler of Badami in Karnataka. We have no details of the battle and where it was fought but this is clear that Harsha could not achieve success against PulakesinII.

For example, the Madhuban copper plate mentions the names of various officials like uparika (provincial governor), Senapati (Army chief), Dutaka (informer), etc. However, his inscriptions, Bana's Harshacharita and Hiuen-tsang's account leave no doubt that the stabiLity of the administration and of the empire had come to depend much on the support of allies and feudatories (samantas and mahasamantas). The officials, it appears, were not paid salaries in cash. Instead, they were given land as payment for their services. The law and order situation seems to have slackened during this period as Hiuen-tsang himself had to face plunder by dacoits.

The Banskhera, Nalanda and Sonepat Inscriptions of Harsha describe him as a worshipper of Siva. However, later on he became a Buddhist and convened a conference at Kanauj. Here the docmnes of Mahayana were propagated with utmost precision. This assembly, according to Hiuen-tsang, was attended by eithteen kings and three thousand monks and continued for eighteen days. Another such event during Harsha's reign was the Quinquennial distribution ceremony at Prayaga. Harsha performed five such ceremonies in his last thirty years. He used to distribute all the treasures accumulated during the last five years in these ceremonies.

Learning and education got royal patronage during this period. Nalanda university had more than ten thousand students. Harsha had given hundred villages in donation to this University.

After about 75 years of Harsha's death Yasovarman rose to power in Kanauj. He defeated the Gaudas and also won Magadha. Yasovarman, besides being a great wamor, was a great patron of scholars. His court was graced by Vakapati and Bhavabhuti. Vakapati wrote Gaudavaho in Prakrit, while Bhavabhuti wrote Malatimadhava, Mahaviracharita and Uttara-Ramacharita in Sanskrit.

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 Samgramaray, Kalash, Harsha, Jayasimha and Sinhadeva were involved in the politics of these centuries in Kashmir.

Kingdom of Kashmir was the major kingdom among these. The ruler of Kashmir had to fight a war with Indian Empire and Kannauj. Shankarvarman was a famous emperor of Kashmir. Under his boundaries the kingdom was spread in many directions. It is said that he died while fighting with the people of modern Hazara district and ancient Urasa. Yashkara took his place after some struggle. After that Parvgupt and Kshemgupt became emperors. Dida, wife of Kshemgupt was real director ofkingdom. Shortly, after she replaced Kshemgupt and took charge of the throne herself. Dida's empire ended in 1003 A.D. The foundation of new dynasty was established by emperor Sangramraja of Lohara dynasty. The rule of Kashmir was under a lady, when Muslims attacked Punjab.

Kannauj

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.

Pratihar dynasty was ruling in Kannauj from the middle of ninth century. They believed that brother of Shri Ram, Laxman was the founder of their dynasty. Many scholars believed that they were the children of Gurjar people. Their king was awarded with the degree of emperor. His successor was king Nagbhatt II. Dhrampal, the emperor of Bengal had to accept the defeat from the Nagabhatt, but he lost himself from Rashtrkuton. Kannauj had fought regularly from its neighbouring states. Indra Third (the emperor of Rastrakut) very badly repulsed the Pratihar king Mahipal of Kannauj. In war the Pratihar kingdom was finished and the boundaries were limited. Northern bank of Ganga, some parts of Rajasthan and Malwa were left under them. Their subordinate kingdoms, Chandel of Bundelkhand, Chakulya of Gujarat and Parmar of Malwa all became independent. Mahmood Ghaznavi attacked Kannauj in 1018 A.D. in reign of Rajyapal was the last emperor of Pratihar Dynasty. After that Gahadwal became the new emperor of Kannauj whose founder was Chandradev. He defended religious places like Kashi, Kannauj, Ayodhya and Indrasthana. It is also possible that he imposed the tax named Urushdand and made an army to defend the boundary by using that money. Grandson of Chandradev, Govind Chandra fought continuously with his neighbouring kingdom and spread his eastern boundary to the Mungher. It is also estimated that he got less success to face the Muslims. Place of Govind Chandra was taken by Vijay Chandra. War started again with the Muslims. His place was again taken by Jaichandra. In the east Jai Chandra had to struggle with Sen Dynasty and in the west he had to struggle with Chouhan Dynasty of Ajmer and Sambher. He abolished the tax named as Urashdand. Mutual enmity of Jai Chandra and Prithviraj was the reason of their decline.

Multan and Sindh

In 612 A.D., Arabs conquered both states of Sindh and Multan. If both the Hindu kingdoms were united and fought against the foreign conquerors, they would have succeeded. Due to mutual enmity these kingdoms were under the power of Muslims. In 871 A.D., these kingdoms ended the rule of caliph and became independent. These kingdoms expressed followership due to their special position from time-to-time. Many dynasties came and went. In early eleventh century, Fateh Daud of Karmithiyan caste ruled in Multan. He was famous for his ability. Muslims of Arab ruled in Sindh.

Hindushahi Empire

The boundaries of this kingdom were from river Chenab to Mountain of Hind Kush. Kabul was within this kingdom. Arab Emperors were unable to conquer this kingdom even after trying hard for 200 years. At last they left Afghanistan along with Kabul. Udbhandpur or OkbganWaihand became the new capital. Jaipal was the emperor of this place at the end of tenth century. He was famous for his bravery and ability, but failed to face foreign winners.

Hindushahi kingdom was the first great kingdom situated in NorthWest in India which was spread from Kashmir to Multan and Sirhind to Lamdhan. Some time Kabul was also a part of this kingdom but its field was very narrow because of being in the possession of foreigners till 300 years. The capital of this kingdom was Bahind. When Mahmud Ghaznavi attacked on India that time Jaipal was the king of this kingdom. He lost two times against Sabuktagin of Ghazni and he was the first Indian who became a victim of the attack of Mahmud Ghaznavi.

Chandels

Kingdom of Chandel was in the south of Kannauj in Khajuraho. There emperor Vidyadhar faced Mahmood. Thereafter, the kingdom faced many difficulties. Along with facing the enemies Madan Varman (1129–1163) also expanded his empire. His grandson Parmardin ruled from 1165 to 1201 A.D. Prithviraj Chouhan defeated him near about 1182 A.D. Parmardin was not courageous. He had a grudge with Chouhan, perhaps seeked friendship from Gahadwal.

Tomars of Delhi

At the entrance of Ganga valley, The Tomar dynasty of Delhi had many a time successfully obtained the right to defend. MahipalTomarconquested the forts of Hansi, Thaneshwar, Nagarkot etc., but he was unable to win Lahore. His neighbouring enemy Rajputs did not let him sit peacefully. Forced by circumstances, to defend himself Tomar compromised with Muslims against the Rajputs.

Chouhan

Chouhan was the enemy of Tomar Dynasty. They increased their power in 11th and 12th century. King Durlabh III was immortal during war against the Muslims in 1079 A.D. Prithviraj first continued his work. The credit to defeat the Muslims of Ghazni goes to Ajayraj. Arunoraja, son of Ajayraj not only defeated the Muslims near Ajmer but also attacked on their Kingdoms. Invasion of Muslims was stopped under his sons Vishal and Vigrhraj fourth and along with that he also included Hansi and Delhi in his kingdom. Tomar dynasty accepted the possessions of the Chouhan dynasty. Vigrahraj was considered a cautious ruler, because he defended his kingdom from foreign enemies. Aim of Vigrahraj's life was to make Aryavrat the dwelling place of Aryans and to protect the temples of Hindus from Muslims. We found this evidence from Shivalik Stambh—Prashti and from drama of Lalit-Vigrah Raj. The story remains incomplete without description of hostility of Chakuls and Chouhans. Vigrahraj II defeated the Chakulya king Mulraj. King of Gujarat JaisinghSiddhaartha tried to change his enmity to friendship by marrying his daughter to Arunoraja. Dundubhi of war rang once again in the state of Kunwar Chakulya. By defeating Arunoraja near Ajmer he bound him to obey his degrading condition. Vigrahraj IV took the revenge of the insult of his ancestors to trample down the kingdom and won Chittor. It is unfortunate that, after too much to bear, both dynasties could not get organized to face the Muslim attackers. For grabbing the supreme political power in North India, Chouhan dynasty attacked the kingdoms of Chandels of Mahoba-Khajuraho, Bhadanaka dynasty of Bayana, Parmars of Malwa and Abu and Gahadwals of Kannauj. He also had enmity with Parmar dynasty of Malwa. Chalukya and Chouhans kept hostilities for their dominance. JaichadraGahadahwal and Prithiviraj III were the descendant enemy of Chouhans. Prithiviraj kidnapped the daughter of Jaichandra. Because of it the enmity between the two took a furious form.

Chauhan Kingdom of Delhi and Ajmer: Chauhan Kingdom of Delhi and Ajmer was a very important and strong kingdom among all the strong and important states. This was under Prithviraj Chauhan who was famous among the people by the name of Rai Pithaura. He was a fighter and knight and he got more successes in his knight work. He became a terror for neigh bouring kingdoms and his rule prevailed in Delhi, modern Ruhelkhand, Kalpi, Mahoiba etc. He attacked many times on Ghaznavi ruler of Punjab and had captured Bhatinda. But due to bad luck his relation was not good with neighbouring kingdoms especially with Kannauj.

Kalchuri

Two branches of Kalchuri used to rule in Gorakhpur. One branch was in Tripuri. Kokal, the king of Tripuri looted the kingdom of Turushkas. GangeydevVikramaditya, the king of Varanasi fought a great war with the Muslims at the time when Naylatgeen attacked in 1034 A.D. After that he fought for the sovereignty against the Kulchari dynasty, Chandel and Parmar dynasty. In the 11th century he took over the throne of Kulchuri. He drove away the attack of Khusro Malik, the ruler of Ghaznavi. Jaisingh ruled from 1177 A.D. to 1180 A.D. His successor Vijaysingh ruled till 1195 A.D. He fought with his neighbouring kingdoms according to the policy of his ancestor.

Pal Dynasty of Bengal

Devpal, king of Pal Dynasty ruled for a long time. His kingdom declined because his successors were weak. The king of Pal Dynasty had to fight with Pratihars of Kannauj and subjects of his dynasty were badly treated. Mahipal I ruled over Bengal in the starting of 11th century, he was contemporary of Mahmood. He could lift the name of his dynasty very high. It appears that, some portions of Bengal had been independent and his kings were dependent for the sake of name only. When Mahmood Ghaznavi attacked India, at the same time Rajendra Chola attacked Bengal. Due to this people of Bengal suffered a lot of loss.

Chandela Kingdom of Bundelkhand

Some time Bundelkhand was a part of Kannauj but now it became a free kingdom under Chandels. In the last fourth of twelfth century Parmandidev was its ruler. Prithviraj Chauhan defeated him and forced him to give up some of his kingdom. In Chandelal Kingdom, Malwa, Kalinjar, Ajaygarh and Jhanshi were included

Summary

Early medieval India has been described by historians, largely as a dark phase of Indian history characterised only by political fragmentation and cultural decline. Such a characterisation being assigned to it, this period remained by and large a neglected one in terms of historical research. We owe it completely to new researches in the recent decades to have brought to light the many important and interesting aspects of this period. Fresh studies have contributed to the removal of the notion of 'dark age' attached to this period by offering fresh perspectives. Indeed the very absence of political unity that was considered a negative attribute by earlier scholars is now seen as the factor that had made possible the emergence of rich regional cultures of the medieval period.

In recent years, new historical works on the formation of polity in early medieval India have taken our understanding of the problem from a macro to a micro-level. The common issue in most of these studies is a focus on structural developments and changes within a micro-level state system. These studies constitute a departure from the existing historiography because unlike the nationalist historians' model and the feudalism model, which have viewed political change largely in terms of fragmentation or the breakdown of political authority, the new group of historians have perceived political changes through integration and interrelationship between socio-economic and political processes. The process of change, according to these historians, has been a result of the emergence and gradual development of "state society" (formation of ruling lineages). This involved a metamorphosis of 'pre-state polities' into state polities and thus the assimilation of local polities into larger state structures.

Keywords

Samantas-semi-independent rulers

Jajmani- patron-client relationship

Nadu: the locality, consisting of several settlements, in early medieval south India

Agrahara: land or village gifted by king in Deccan and Karnataka region to brahmanas.

Brahmadeya: land gifted to brahmanas, generally by kings

Self Assessment

Q.1. Who authored 'Gaudvaho'?

A. Vakpati
B. Vidyadhara
C. Ravikirti
D. Banabhatta

Q.2. Which of the following plays was not written by Harshavardhana?

A. Ratnavali
B. Priyadarshika
C. Naganada
D. Maltimadhava

Q.3. Who ruled over Sind on the eve of Arab invasion in 8th century A.D.?

A. Lalliya
B. Dahir
C. Qasim
D. Jallok

Q.4. Read the paragraph and answer the question.

About which King, Arab travellor Suleiman had made the following statement-

"This king maintains numerous forces and no other Indian prince has so fine a cavalry. He is unfriendly to the Arabs still he acknowledges that the king of the Arabs is the greatest of Kings. Among the princes of India, there is no greater foe of the Muhammedan faith than he. His territories from a tongue of land. He has got riches, and his camels and horses are numerous. Exchanges are carried on in his state with silver (and gold) in dust, and there are said to be mines (of these metals) in the country. There is no country in India more safe from robbers."

A. Mihir Bhoja
B. Mahipala
C. Nagabhatta I
D. Nagabhatta II

Q.5. Which of the following statements are not true with regard to impact of Arab invasion in India?

A. Buddhists and Hindus were given the status of zimmis.
B. There was remarkable impact on the political condition of India.
C. Propagation of Islam
D. Jaziya was levied on the people

Q.6. Which of the following called the religious assembly or Moksha parishad?

A. Yashovarman
B. Mahipala
C. Harshavardhana

D. Nagabhatta I

Q.7. Which of the following statements is true with regard to the origin of Rajputs?

A. Rajasthani bards and chronicles gives the theory of Agnikula origin.
B. Rajputs never claimed the Kshatriya status.
C. Gotrocharra had not made the Kshatriya belong either to Solar or Lunar family
D. Old literature did not mention about the Kshatriya of solar race.

Q.8. Which scholar firstly forwarded the Kshatriya theory of origin of Rajputs?

A. Ishwari Prasad
B. V. A. Smith
C. D. R. Bhandarkar
D. Gauri Shankar Ojha

Q.9. Who authored Prithviraj Raso?

A. Banabhatta
B. Chand Bardai
C. Harshavardhana
D. Ramchandra

Q.10. In which year, **Second** Battle of Terrain was fought?

A. 1191
B. 1192
C. 1193
D. 1194

Q.11. On the eve of Mahmud Ghori invasion to India, who was the ruler of Gahadavala dynasty?

A. Jaichand
B. Govindchandra
C. Vijayachandra
D. Mahipala

Q.12. Which of the following King of the Paramara dynasty was known for his contribution in cultural sphere whose title was 'Parameshwar- Parambhattaraka?

A. Upendra
B. Bhoja
C. Munja
D. Sindhuraja

Q.13. Which significant Queen of Hindushahi dynasty known for her administrative abilities?

A. Laxmi

B. Akkadevi
C. Mahalsa
D. Didda

Q.14. Which of the following scholar supports the foreign origin theory of Rajputs?

A. Chand Bardai
B. C.V. Vaidya
C. Gauri Shankar Ojha
D. Col. James Todd

Q.15. Who among the following was the most notable ruler of Tomara dynasty?

A. Mahendrapal
B. Prithvipal
C. Anagpal
D. Chahadpala

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	A	2.	D	3.	B	4.	A	5.	B
6.	C	7.	A	8.	D	9.	B	10.	B
11.	A	12.	B	13.	D	14.	D	15.	C

Review Questions

1. What do you understand by Segmentary and Integrative state?
2. Discuss the political developments in Kannuaj during early medieval India?
3. How land grant legitimized the political power in Northern India?
4. Throw light on the inter-vassal connection during early medieval India?
5. Describe the reign of Harshvardhan in Northern India.

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Unit 04: Political Structure and Regional Variations II

CONTENTS

Objectives

1. Understand the regional Rajput states in the later 12th century.
2. Learn about the causes and factors responsible for rise and fall of kingdoms in early medieval India

Introduction

In the post-Gupta period many kingdoms came into existence. These kingdoms were not as large as the Gupta kingdom. The political fortunes of the dynasties which ruled these kingdoms fluctuated with time. Some of the powerful kings like Harsha managed to bring almost the whole of northern India under their control, but their kingdoms were short-lived. However, simultaneously we find that in many regions new political powers emerged which lasted for many centuries. The beginnings of many regional states can be traced to this period. Although the rule of many of these royal families lasted only for a short period, we should remember that in many regions'of the India subcontinent, this period saw the beginnings of stable state structures. These were not all-India empires, but they represented the beginnings of regional political structures. We have already referred to the Kashmir valley where, inspite of many dynastic changes, we find for the first time the functioning of a local state system. In Bengal, the emergence of Pala power from the middle of the eighth century and its duration for several centuries marked a new phase in the political history of the region. Similarly, in Western India, covering both Rajasthan and Gujarat, emerged many new ruling families like the Gurjara-Pratiharas, Guhilas, the Chaharnanas and others who came to be considered as different class of the Rajputs who dominated the political scene of Western India for centuries. Thus, the decline of Gupp power and the collapse of Harsha's empire did not mean beginnings of political anarchy. After the end of these empires, the regional powers consolidated themselves and played important roles in the history of subsequent periods.

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the collapse of Harsha's empire did not mean beginnings of political anarchy. After the end of these empires, the regional powers consolidated themselves and played important roles in the history of subsequent periods.

4.1 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 an 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 GurjaraPratiharas 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 GurjaraPratiharas, 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 GurjaraPratiharas 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 NavkotMarwar 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 subdivisions 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, MandorPratiharKakkuka 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-AharGuhilas 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 ShakambhariChahamana 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 NadolChahamana branch. Kirtipala, a son of NadolChahamanaAlhana was dissatisfied with the share of land assigned to him. A man of ambition, he establish 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. LikewiseChahamana row of Broach was brought into being when a Chahamana chief Bharatravaddha-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 Chahamana ruling lineages. King Simharaja, his brothers Vatsasraja 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, grasabhumil 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 Saurastra through the GurjaraPratiharas 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 Chahamana and Paramara clans 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 ChahamanaParamara 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 Chahamana and the Paramara, 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 the 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 mahamatyamahasandhivigrahika 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 Chahamana records illustrate that the cavalary 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 horizantal 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 GurjaraPratiharas we discover references to estates held through chiefs of the Chahamana, Guhila and Chalukya clans. Mathanadeva, another chief of the GurjaraPratihara lineage also claimed to have obtained his allotment as svabhogavapta (own share). The Nadol plates of RajaputraKirtipala 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 Chahamana and GurjaraPratiharas, 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 Chahamana 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 maharajadhirajamahamandalesvara, 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 ParamaraSomesvara. 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.

Big feudatory chiefs such as the Paramaras of Arnbudamandala and the ParamaraMahakumaras 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-l3th 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, ChahamanaKatudeva tried to assert his independence throughout the last years of his overlord ChaulukyaSiddharaja so that ChaulukyaKumarapala 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 over lordship.

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 later"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.

4.2 Deccan

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 semitribal 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, Vengias 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 RashtrakutaDantidurga 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 Bharadvajai. 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 Yaduvamsha 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 (Dushtanigraha-Shishtapratipalana) 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 ail the commands addressed to the king through the dharmashastru. 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 instanceTaila-II, the overthrower of the Rashtrakutas whispered that it was the favor of Jagadguru IshvaraGhalisasa, 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-Ill. 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 ChalukyaSomeshvara-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:

a. 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.
b. 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 Gangayasahini 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 Gangayasahini 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 selfgoverning; 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 governments 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 organisationtoo 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.

4.3 South India

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 socioeconomic 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 Tondainadu) 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) let 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 nadubrahmadeya 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 wellknownUttaramerur (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 tankuru 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 variyams.

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.

Temples

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 channels 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 interregional 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 ChittirameliPeriyanadu. The Chittirameli 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 Muvendavelan 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 sirutmram (lower grade), both in the „civil" and „military" establishments. Officers at the royal court (udankuttam) and officers touring the country (vidaiyiladhikari) are also recognized. The King"s government was present in the rationalities through a hierarchy of officers — the mandalamudali, naduvagai 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 Naduvilnadu 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 subregions.

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.

Summary

The period after the 7th century A.D. was characterized by the growth of ruling clans especially in Rajasthan and these have been categorized as Rajput. The rise of Rajputs has so far been analysed in the context of tracing their ancestry through a study of the genealogies found in the inscriptions and constructing a dynastic and political history. Several theories have been propounded by scholars regarding the origin of the Rajputs. Some consider them to be of foreign stock while others regard them as belonging to the Kshatriya Varna. Bardic traditions refer to them as having originated from agnikunda on Mt. Abu. The increase in agricultural settlements with the growth of agricultural economy is borne out by the epigraphic and archaeological testimony. The inscriptional evidence from Western and Central India refers to the subjugation of Sabaras, Bhillas and Pulindas by the Rajput clans.

The land assignments were an important feature of the polity under the rulers of early ,medieval India and their feudatories. Land was bestowed upon the Brahmins and temples by the kings. These grants were virtually held in perpetuity. However, these grants do not clarify the exact nature of economic and administrative privileges. These administrative measures (issuance of land grants) led to the emergence of landed intermediaries between the ruling group and the peasants. Religious endowments were commonly prevalent in the territories of feudatories of rulers.

Keywords

Sabha - assembly of Brahmins

Ur - assembly of non-brahmans

Nadus - comprising of the Urs were the building blocks of south Indian polity

Nagarams - corporate body of traders

Brahmadeyas - brahmanical villages

Self Assessment

Q.1. Who said "High courage patriotism, loyalty, honour, hospitality and simplicity are qualities which must at once be conceded to them"?

A. Col. James Todd
B. V. A. Smith
C. William Brooke
D. D. R. Bhandarkar

Q.2. Which of the following statements are true related with Rajput government?

1. Rajputs government was of feudal character.

2. The chief source of income of state was revenue from the lands.

3. The strength and security of the state depended on the Jagirdars.

4. There was a regular bureaucracy under Rajputs.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1, 2 and 3
C. 1, 2, 3, and 4
D. 2 and 4

Q.3. For which Chalukyan King, Muslim historian Tabari mentioned that King of Persia received an ambassador from and the same fact is corroborated by the paintings in Ajanta?

A. Pulakeshin I

B. Pulakeshin II

C. Vikramaditya I

D. Vinayaditya

Q.4. Which of the theories are true with regard to the origin of Chalukyas?

1. Chalukyas were connected with the 'Chapa' or foreign Gurjara tribe.

2. Chalukyas claimed to be Hariipuras and belong to Manavya gotra.

3. Chalukyas were not indigenous people but were the foreign race.

4. Chalukyas belong to the Kshatriya clan and trace their lineage to solar or lunar race.

A. 1 and 4
B. 1, 2, and 4
C. 2 and 3
D. 2, 3 and 4

Q.5. Under whose court, the great author Bilhana and Vijnaneswara lived?

A. Someshwara I

B. Someshwara II

C. Tailap

D. Vikramaditya VI

Q.6 Read the statement and pick the correct option associated with Chalukya rulers?

1. The founder of the late Western Chalukyas was Tailap.

2. Inscriptional erecords throw light on the fact that there was constant struggle between Western Chalukyas and Cholas.

3. By the end of the 10th century, Eastern Chalukyas were completely crushed by the Cholas

4. KullotungaCholadeva took over Chola throne and left the empire under Vijayaditya VII.

A. 1 and 4
B. 1, 2, 3, and 4
C. 2 and 3
D. 2, 3 and 4

Q.7. Which Pallava ruler was known as the 'Vichitrachitta'?

A. SimhavishnuAvanisimha

B. Nandivarman II

C. Narshimhavarman I

D. Mahendravarman I

Q.8. Of which Pallava ruler, Hieun Tsang had given vivid description in his account?

A. Dantivarman
B. Narshimhavarman I
C. Nandivarman II
D. Vishnugopa

Q.9. Which Pallava ruler took the title 'Vatapikonda'?

A. Dantivarman
B. Mahendravarman I
C. Vishnugopa
D. Narashimhavarman I

Q.10. Read the statement and pick the correct option associated with Chalukya rulers
A. Bharavi
B. Dandin
C. Kamban
D. Bhavbhuti

Q.11. Which of the following Pandya ruler took the title 'Pallavabhanjan'?

A. ArikersaryMarvarman
B. Varguna I
C. PrantakaViranayana
D. MarvarmanRajsimha I

Q.12. Which of the following ancient sources does not contain any information related to Pandyas?
A. Ashoka Inscriptions
B. Rajtarangini
C. Kharvela Inscriptions
D. Indian epics

Q.13. Who laid the foundation of Gangaikondacholapuram?
A. Kullotunga I
B. Rajendra I
C. Rajendra II
D. Adhirajendra

Q.14. Pick the option, with correct order of administration under Cholas?

A. Kingdom>Kottams> Nadu>Mandalams
B. Kingdom> Nadu>Mandalams>Kottams
C. Kingdom>Mandalams> Nadu>Kottams
D. Kingdom>Mandalams>Kottams> Nadu

Q.15. Choose the correct option related with the village administration in Southern India?

In order to be selected as a member of Village assembly, the candidates qualifications were-

1. possess minimum of ½ acre of taxable land.

2. reside in his own house owned by him.

3. candidates should be more than 35 years old and less than 70 years.

4. Good character

5. Should have knowledge of Vedas, Brahmanakas, and commerce.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1, 2, 3 and 5
C. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
D. 4 and 5

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	A	2.	C	3.	B	4.	B	5.	D
6.	B	7.	D	8.	B	9.	D	10.	B
11.	D	12.	B	13.	B	14.	D	15.	C

Review Questions

1. Discuss the political history of Western and Central India.
2. What do you understand through the term Segmentary State?
3. What do you understand through transfer of administrative and fiscal rights? Write in brief.
4. What are the three main perspectives of learning South Indian polity?
5. How the temple came to inhabit significance in polity?
6. Write the main functions of samantas
7. Discuss the various theories of origin of Rajputs.

Further Readings

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Unit 05: Agrarian Economy

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Understand the impact of increased land grant on medieval Indian society and economy.
- Explain the factors responsible for the expansion of agriculture.
- Understand the character and role of various types of agrarian settlements.
- Understand the technological improvements in the sphere of agriculture.

Introduction

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:

1. Emergence of hierarchical landed intermediaries- Vassals and officers of state and other secular assignee had military obligations and feudal titles. Through sub-infeudation these dons 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. It is thus reflected in the power as well as the administrative structure, where a sort of lord-vassal connection appeared. Indian feudalism thus consisted in the gross unequal sharing of land and its produce.
2. Forced labour- The right of extracting forced labour (vishti)exercised through the Brahmana and other grantees of land. It 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. Consequently, a type of serfdom appeared, in which agricultural laborers were reduced to the location of semi-serfs.

3. Land Rights- Increasing claims of greater rights in excess of land through rulers and intermediaries, peasants suffered curtailment of their land rights. Several of them were reduced to the location of tenants facing ever rising threat of eviction and there were number of peasants who were only ardhikas (share croppers). The strain on the peasantry caused through the burden of taxation, coercion, and augment in their indebtedness.
4. 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 evidenced from the records of more than fifty levies in the inscription of RajaRaja Chola.
5. Closed village economy- 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 (people of the nadu) organized themselves into assemblies. Members of this assembly were velalas or non-Brahmana peasants and their autonomy 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.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.

New developments took place such as now farming was extended not only to the virgin lands but also through clearing forest regions. This was a continuous process and a major characteristic of early medieval agricultural economy.

According to some scholars that land grants started in outlying, backward, and tribal regionsand extended to the Ganga valley, which was the hub of the brahmanical culture. In the backward, untouched territories 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 was not a pan- India characteristic, yet 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.

5.1 Land Grants

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

a. Fourth-fifth centuries: spread in excess of a good part of central India, northern Deccan and Andhra
b. Fifth-seventh centuries: eastern India (Bengal and Orissa), beginnings in Western India (Gujarat and Rajasthan)
c. Seventh and eighth centuries: Tamil Nadu and Karnataka
d. Ninth century: Kerala

e. End of the twelfth century: approximately the whole sub-continent with the possible exception of Punjab.

Ideas relating to the gift of land emphasize the importance of Dana or gift. Dana or gift to Brahmanasurbanized through Brahmanical texts as the means of acquiring merit and destroying sin from one's life. It was also a systematic effort to give means of survival to the Brahmanas. Even the texts like Smritis and Puranasrecommended grants of cultivable land to them and registration of gifts of land on copper plates. There were dissimilar things of gifts:

- Food, granules, paddy, etc.
- Movable assets like gold, money, etc.
- 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 (Dharmashastras).

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. Temples assumed a more central role in agrarian expansion and became a central organisation from the 8thcentury A.D. Grants to the temple, either plots of land or whole villages were recognized as devadana in the south India. The procedure of acquiring landed property was not confined to brahmanical temples.

B. D. Chattopadhyaya argued persuasively that the major historical processes operative throughout Indian history, including the early medieval period, were the expansion of state society through the process of local state formation, the transformation of tribes into peasants and caste formation, and cult appropriation and interaction.

Land grants strengthened the position of a section of the Brahmanas in rural areas. They backed the Brahmana's traditionally high social status by political support and economic power, and gave him wide-ranging control over land, resources, and people. Brahmanas emerged as a dominant caste in brahmadeya villages. In areas where brahmadeya villages were situated close to tribal communities, the latter were introduced to plough agriculture. Some tribal groups were absorbed into the fold of caste society; others were given the status of outcastes or untouchables. The phenomenon of land grants was connected to the proliferation of castes in other ways as well. For instance, the need to record large numbers of land transactions was an important factor in the transformation of the kayasthas (scribes) from an occupational group into a caste.

The increase in the number and scale of land grants had an important impact on the Brahmanas themselves. Reference was made earlier to the emergence of regional classifications and hierarchies of status among Brahmanas. As they were drawn into new networks of activities and social relations, Brahmanas came to be divided into a number of sub-castes. Migrant Brahmanas tended to crystalize into sub-castes. In the Tamil Nadu and Karnataka areas, the engagement with temple religion led to the emergence of the Shiva Brahmanas —a Brahmana sub-caste associated with Shiva temples.

Integration into local society could also lead to the modification of marriage practices. In Kerala, while most Brahmanas maintained their partilineal system, the Brahmanas of Payyanur took to matriliny. The Nambudri Brahmanas had a custom (it is not clear when exactly it began) of the eldest son marrying a Brahmana woman, while the other sons had sambandam relations with Nayar women. This practice must have been geared towards keeping the property of the Brahmana family intact and consolidated. However, it could only have emerged within the context of the Nayar matrilineal society.

The early medieval period saw the increasing popularity of temple-based sectarian religion, and from about the 10th century onwards, inscriptions indicate an increase in royal patronage of temples. Was there any connection between the brahmadeyas and these developments? Some Brahmanas moulded their activities to the temple milieu by becoming temple managers, others took on the less prestigious vocation of temple priests. Inscriptions of South India testify to the direct participation of Brahmanas and Brahmana sabhas in temple management. Brahmana settlements in Kerala seem to have been temple centred right from the time of the earliest inscriptions. We can therefore assume that the Brahmanas of the brahmadeyas must have played an important role in the spread of temple-oriented religion, in spite of the fact that the inscriptions persist in emphasizing their Vedic, rather than their sectarian, affiliations.

Where established in or near tribal areas, brahmadeyas functioned as nodes of reciprocal interaction between Brahmanical and tribal religions, and different sorts of religious syntheses resulted. Tribal communities were exposed to Brahmanism and Brahmanism too was transformed in the course of its interaction with regional, local, and tribal traditions. In times of migration, marriages between Brahmanas and local women may have been an additional factor that furthered the interaction between the Brahmanical and tribal worlds. These interactions were reciprocal, but not equal or evenly balanced, as the Brahmanical elements eventually emerged as dominant. The cult of Jagannatha in Orissa is a good example of the Brahmanization of a tribal deity, and has been analysed in detail by many scholars. R. S. Sharma suggested that the interaction between Brahmanical and tribal cultures via land grants played an important role in the emergence and development of Tantra.

The fact that the early medieval period with its proliferation of land grants to Brahmanas also saw such an enormous output in the sphere of Sanskrit literature does not seem to be a coincidence. We have seen how these centuries saw the opening out of avenues of employment for literate, learned Brahmanas in the administrative structures of proliferating royal courts. Brahmana scholars, poets, and dramatists were also feted and patronized in these courts. Patronage through land grants may also have played an important role in promoting and sustaining Brahmana scholarship. Wealth based on the control of land, and the emergence of clusters of settlements inhabited by Brahmana specialists in various branches of Sanskrit learning may have provided a section of the Brahmana intelligentsia with the security and wealth necessary for sustained intellectual activity.

5.2 Agricultural Expansion

The period of early medieval in India reflects agrarian growth and expansion on an unprecedented scale in India as proved by epigraphic and literary evidence. The generation of land ownerships in tribal, wild, virgin, barren, coastal, and borderlands through land-grants were the main reason behind the development of agriculture in new areas and step-wise agrarian integration of the region. South India shows gradual spread of agriculture from wet to the dry zone, in Kaveri delta, and the upper reaches of the Tamraparni. To meet the increased need of resources, kings, princes, chiefs, and government officials of Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Assam, Andhra, Telengana, Bengal, Karnataka, and Rajasthan extended patronage to agriculture and brought improvement in irrigational facilities, which strengthened this process. KesavanVeluthat shows a different development in Kerala, where temple emerged as the nucleus of large agrarian corporations. The non-governmental individual and group initiatives in launching and maintaining irrigation projects outnumbered the royal as well as the government efforts. Such meritorious acts of public welfare became a symbol of the enhanced social status of individuals or groups.

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 early medieval India (8th – 12th century) witnessed the processes of expansion as well as 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.

The attention paid to agriculture by rulers and landed beneficiaries can be seen in the detailed description of the plough, the land, the crops, and the improvement in irrigation facilities in inscriptions and literature. The decreased dependence on rain for irrigation became a crucial factor for easy conversion of virgin lands into cultivable, settled areas with increased production, and population growth. Inscriptions mention udghataghat and ghatiyantra in Uttar Pradesh, araghattas (irrigational wells), dhinkus (wells), tadaga in Rajasthan, tanks and canals in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Deccan, rivers, rivulets, ditch (khata), wells (kupa) in Bengal and Kerala,vapi in Gujarat, and channels in the context of rural settlements and accessible irrigation facilities suitable to ecological differences of the subcontinent. Also, we can point out local level diversities in the preference for irrigation devices as per its geographical features after the study of Chola inscriptions. The use of conduit was limited in comparison to the use of tanks and canal irrigation. Several early medieval Indian rulers constructed large reservoirs named after them called: sagara, samudra, varidhi etc.

South Indian rulers of the Pallava-Chola periods, the Rashtrakuta, and the Kakatiya dynasties were famous for the construction of large tanks and used the sluice-weir device in it to boost crop production. There were elected committees in the villages to look after the installation and maintenance of tanks, canals, and reservoirs. Overall, these initiatives led to not only agrarian expansion but also flourished agriculture, diversification of crops, and increased production and population attested by visiting the Arabian geographers. Early medieval India produced at least 50 types of paddy in Bengal and most exceptional qualities of spices, especially pepper from Malabar.

5.3 Agrarian Organization

The agrarian organisation and economy were highly intricate. To understand this, its significant to rely on 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.

Nature, Characterand Role of Agrarian Settlements

Brahmadeya

A brahmadeyais 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:

a. Exempted from several taxes or dues either entirely or at least in the initial stages of resolution,
b. 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 or many Brahmanas. Interestingly, brahmadeyasgrants 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.

Brahmadeyas (land gifted to Brahmanas) had a political dimension. These settlements were created by royal order, and the rights of the Brahmana donees were declared and confirmed by royal decree. The feudalism hypothesis interprets brahmadeyas as a cause as well as a symptom of political fragmentation. This interpretation is difficult to accept for various reasons. Why should kings have voluntarily eroded their own power? Furthermore, was this really a period of political fragmentation? The political narrative in the preceding sections in fact clearly indicates that the early medieval period was marked by an unprecedented level of the proliferation of state polities at the regional, subregional, and trans-regional levels, within a broader economic context of agrarian expansion. Far from being symptoms of the disintegration of polities or royal disempowerment, land grants to Brahmanas were one of several integrative and legitimizing policies adopted by kings.

From the point of view of fledgling kingdoms struggling to establish their power and legitimacy, the patronage of Brahmanas, a social group that had traditionally enjoyed a privileged socio-religious status, did not amount to an inordinate loss of revenue or control. In fact, kings who 'granted' a piece of land may not have been in a position to realize revenue from that land in the first place. From the point of view of the large, established kingdoms, the making of a few land grants did not significantly deplete state resources. The maximum number of grants and the most lavish grants—both to Brahmanas and to religious establishments—were generally made by the most powerful dynasties and kings. In fact, the increase in royal land grants indicates higher levels of control over productive resources by kings compared to earlier periods. Strategies of control, alliances, and collaboration with prestigious social groups were an important facet of the politics of the time. The increase in the wealth and power of a section of Brahmanas and institutions such as temples did not take place at the expense of royal power

Leaving aside the Delhi Sultans, inscriptions of other early medieval dynasties bear testimony to the Brahmanization of royal courts all over the subcontinent. Brahmanas emerged as ideologues and legitimizers of political power by crafting royal genealogies and performing prestigious sacrifices and rituals. As pointed out earlier, many royal genealogies linked lineages with the epic–Puranic tradition and assigned kings a respectable varna status. Origin myths often indirectly reflected actual relationships between social groups and institutions. For instance, myths enshrined in later literary sources of Kerala assigned an important place to Brahmanas and temples in their explanation of the origins of kingship, reflecting the close relationship that existed between kings, Brahmanas, and temples. The direct political role of Brahmanas in the Chera period is evident in the fact that Brahmanas of the leading Brahmana settlements formed part of the NaluTali (the king's council) at Mahodayapura.

While royal grants to Brahmanas remained a feature throughout the early medieval period, from about the 10th century, there was a shift towards donations to temples. There were also some 'secular grants'. For instance, Karnataka gives evidence of kings making grants of land in return for military service. In Orissa too, the imperial Gangas made grants to nayakas or military chiefs. However, at the subcontinental level, the number of instances of 'service' or military grants were very few compared to those made to Brahmanas and religious establishments.

Brahmana Beneficiaries

Although Brahmana landowners existed in earlier centuries, there was a significant acceleration, intensification, and expansion of Brahmana control over land in the early medieval period. In the previous chapter, reference was made to a few instances of land grants made to Brahmanas by private individuals, some grants made to Brahmanas at their own request, and others made by kings at the request of certain people. The complexities revealed by these earlier inscriptions are less apparent in inscriptions of later times. However, there are still some clues which suggest that certain other people had a hand in grants ostensibly made by kings. An example is the 13th century Calcutta Sahitya Parishat copper plate inscription of Vishvarupasena, which records the king's gift to a Brahmana named Halayudha. Five of the eleven plots of land 'gifted' to this Brahmana are described as having been previously purchased by Halayudha himself, and the inscription actually seems to reflect a royal ratification of these purchases. Among the inscriptions of Orissa, some Bhauma-Kara and Ganga grants refer to feudatories or members of their families as the vijnapti (the person at whose request the grant was made). Such evidence corroborates D. C. Sircarsuggested that land grant charters often camouflaged the identity of people involved in making the grant and sometimes even the very nature of the transaction.

Common sense might suggest that Brahmanas who were given grants of land were associated with the royal court. Some early medieval inscriptions of Bengal do, in fact, describe the donees as shantivarikas or shantyagarikas—men in charge of the performance of religious rites for the king. Other inscriptions from the same region describe land as having been gifted as dakshina for the performance of certain rites. In Orissa, some Brahmana donees were connected with the royal court as priests, astrologers, and administrators. Similar instances can be cited from other parts of the country. However, the vast majority of inscriptions do not reveal a court connection for the Brahmana donees.

Brahmana recipients of royal grants are identified in inscriptions by their ancestry, gotra, pravara, charana, shakha, and native place. Gotra refers to the exogamous clan system of the Brahmanas. The gotras are divided into ganas, each of which has its own pravara. The pravara consists of a series of names of supposed ancestral rishis. Charana refers to a school of Vedic learning, and shakha to a particular recension of a Veda. Inscriptions tend to use charana and shakha interchangeably. They highlight the Vedic learning of Brahmana donees, for instance by mentioning their titles such as acharya, upadhyaya, and pandita.

The references to native place indicate that some Brahmana donees were recent migrants into the area, and that there was a significant degree of spatial mobility among a section of the Brahmanas. Several phases of Brahmana migrations can be identified in early Indian history. The details of the earliest migrations, which may have begun as early as in c. 800 BCE, are shrouded in a mythological haze. The initial eastward movement is reflected in the gradual, though grudging, acknowledgement of the eastern regions in early Brahmanical literature, and the eastward extension of the term Aryavarta.

The Brahmana migrations of later times are better documented. The 16th century Keralolpatti records a tradition of 32 villages as the original Brahmana settlements in Kerala, which seems to reflect developments that occurred in the early medieval period. The late medieval Kulaji texts of Bengal trace the ancestry of the Kulin Brahmanas of Bengal to five Brahmanas from Kanyakubja, who were requisitioned by king Adisura to coach the Bengal Brahmanas in the correct performance of Vedic rites. Although the characters and details of this story cannot be treated as historical, they do suggest a few important things that are corroborated by other sources—namely, that the prestige of the Brahmana in early medieval India was still grounded in his Vedic learning, and that learned Brahmanas were migrating from Madhya-desha (the middle Ganga valley) into eastern lands.

Apart from such literary references, from the 5th century onwards, land grant inscriptions document the influx of Brahmana immigrants from the heartland of Madhya-desha into the areas of Maharashtra, Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa. Some migrants came from renowned centres of Brahmanical learning such as Takari, Shravasti, Kolancha, and Hastipada. The phenomenon of migration intensified in the 8th century. The fanning out of Brahmanas into different parts of the subcontinent explains the need to fix the relative ranking of groups belonging to different regions. A broad division that had emerged by the 10th century was that of the Pancha-Gaudas (the northern group) and the Pancha-Dravidas (groups living south of the Vindhyas). The former included the Sarasvata, Gauda, Kanyakubja, Maithila, and Utkala Brahmanas. The PanchaDravida group included the Gurjjaras, Maharashtriyas, Karnatakas, Trailingas, and Dravidas.

The migrations of the early medieval period coincided with the proliferation of kingdoms in various parts of the subcontinent, and may have had to do with new incentives rather than pressures. The emerging political elites required legitimation and an administrative infrastructure, and this opened up new opportunities and avenues of employment for learned, literate Brahmanas. By this time, the religious practices of ordinary people had become increasingly oriented towards theistic devotion and had little to do with the Vedas or shrauta rituals. Yet, it is interesting to note that during the centuries that saw the virtual eclipse of Vedic religious practice at the popular level, Brahmanas were consistently advertised in inscriptions as Vedic scholars, or at least in terms of their Vedic affiliations, and kings were advertising their patronage of such Brahmanas. The big gulf that existed between the Sanskritic–Vedic tradition on the one hand and the lives of ordinary people on the other may have been the very factor that made this tradition a useful legitimizing basis for elite groups who were keen to highlight their loftiness and aloofness from the masses. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that two major phases of Brahmana migration coincided with major phases of state formation.

Certain inscriptions mention Brahmanas with unusual non-Sanskritic names, and some of them may represent Brahmanized tribal priests. For instance, some Eastern Chalukya inscriptions record grants made to Boya Brahmanas—these were originally priests of the Boya tribe, who got Brahmanized at some point of time. Inscriptions sometimes also mention Brahmanas with unheard-of gotras, or whose gotras and pravaras do not match. These may represent groups which had invented a Brahmana identity for themselves in order to improve their social and economic prospects.

Nature of Brahmadeya Settlements

Although some general features and trends hold good for most of the subcontinent, brahmadeyas of different regions, sub-regions, and periods often had their own specificities. Not all Brahmana settlements were the result of royal land grants. And although we will never have precise statistics, it is important to remember that brahmadeya villages must have formed a small proportion of settlements in most areas.

As already mentioned, from the point of view of the state, the creation of brahmadeyas generally involved a renunciation of actual or potential sources of revenue. Land grant inscriptions sometimes state that the land was granted along with treasure trove and hidden deposits, forests, and heirless property. Going by textual evidence, the king theoretically had rights over these, and the transfer of such rights to the donees would have affected the state's prerogatives. Inscriptions also indicate that brahmadeyas were not to be interfered with by the state, its officers, or its soldiers. In the Chola empire, certain important brahmadeyas had taniyur status within the nadu (locality), i.e., they were independent of the jurisdiction of the nadu. All this indicates that for all practical purposes, the brahmadeyas were autonomous islands in the rural landscape, where the Brahmana donees were free to do as they pleased, and where the writ of the state did not apply. The apparent independence of the brahmadeyas was, however, tempered by their close relationship with the king.

In some cases, land grants involved the establishment of Brahmana settlements outside the margins of settled agricultural tracts, thereby leading to an extension of the margin of cultivation. But the vast majority of grants were made in areas that were already settled and where land was already being tilled. This is quite clear from the description of where the gifted villages were located, as well as from other details. For instance, post-12th century grants of Bengal often mention the annual income of the gifted land and state that the land was granted along with habitat land (vastu-bhumi). Evidently, what the grants usually did was to insert Brahmana donees into an already existing social, economic, and cultural web.

Brahmadeya land could vary from a small plot, a single village, or several villages. The number of donees, likewise, varied from a single Brahmana to several hundreds. There are instances of donees receiving multiple gifts. One of several examples of a vast area being granted to a large number of Brahmanas is recorded in the 10th century Pashchimbhag plate of Srichandra (from Bengal). This records a grant to 6,000 Brahmanas, along with several people associated with a matha (monastery) of the god Brahma, and a temple of Vishnu. Three vishayas (districts) in Shrihatta mandala in Pundravardhanabhukti were granted and were transformed into a brahmapura that was named Shrichandrapura after the king. The boundary details indicate that brahmadeyas were sometimes contiguous to each other, reflecting a trend towards an increase in the number and density of Brahmana settlements in certain areas.

The technical vocabulary of the land grant inscriptions is not always easy to unravel. It is clear, however, that the majority of the grants gave the Brahmana settlements a permanent tax-free status. This meant that the land in question was considered tax free from the point of view of the state. The dues which the state may have actually or potentially been entitled to levy on the villagers were now to be paid to the donee. Brahmadeyas, thus, had a special revenue status, and the right to collect and retain revenue was vested in the donees.

The permanent nature of the grant was expressed in statements to the effect that the gift was to last as long as the sun, moon, and stars, i.e., forever. This implied (this point was also sometimes stated explicitly) that after the death of the donee, his rights would be inherited by his successors. A few inscriptions indicate the re-gifting of villages to new donees. This shows that there was sometimes a gap between what was prescribed and what actually happened, but it is likely that the vast majority of gifts were at least initially inherited by the heirs of the original beneficiaries.

Royal land grants generally gave the donees fairly comprehensive rights over the resources of the land. However, beyond the general stipulations about the permanent, hereditary, and tax-free nature of the grants, there were significant differences in the terms of the grants across and within regions. The grants of the Palas, who ruled over parts of Bengal and Bihar between the 8th and 12th centuries usually state that the land was granted up to its boundaries, grass, and pastures (sva-sima-trinayuti-gochara-pary-anta), along with its ground (sa-tala), with the space above the surface of the ground (s-oddesha), with mango and madhuka trees (s-amra-madhuka), with water and dry land (sa-jala-sthala), and along with pits and barren spots (sa-gartt-oshara). It was exempt from all dues (a-kinchit-pragrahya) and was granted along with all the dues such as the bhaga, bhoga, kara, and hiranya (samasta-bhaga-bhoga-kara-hirany-adi-pratyayasameta). Pala inscriptions also have the term a-chata-bhata-praveshya, which means that the land was not to be entered by the king's irregular or regular troops, i.e., soldiers of any kind.

The answer to the question of whether or not the Brahmana donees were granted judicial rights hinges on the interpretation of terms such as sa-dashaparadha and sa-chauroddharana. These terms or their variants are found in inscriptions of some dynasties, including the Palas. Sa-dash-aparadha has been interpreted in three ways. According to one interpretation, it indicates that the donees were given the right to the proceeds of fines imposed on people who had been found guilty of certain criminal offences. A second interpretation is that it referred to immunity from punishment granted to the donees in case they themselves committed such crimes. The third interpretation is that it refers to the right to try people who were accused of certain offences. The term sachauroddha-rana can be interpreted either as indicating the right to punish those found guilty of theft or as the right to realize fines from those found guilty of this crime.

Inscriptions from various parts of the country indicate the wide scope of authority vested with the donees. For example, certain inscriptions of Orissa describe the land as having been granted along with the habitat land and forest (sa-padr-aranya). This is similar to post-12th century inscriptions of Bengal which transfer rights over the habitat land (vastu-bhumi) to the donees. From the 9th century onwards, some inscriptions of Orissa (those of Udayavaraha and the Bhauma-Kara, Shulki, and Tunga dynasties) state that the land was granted along with control over the outposts in the village, landing or bathing places, and ferries (sa-kheta-ghatta-nadi-tara-sthan-adi-gulmaka). This can be understood as referring to rights over dues collected at these spots or as rights over military outposts at these places. Another significant stipulation occurs in inscriptions of the Bhauma-Karas, Adi-Bhanjas, Shulkis, and Tungas, where land is said to have been granted 'along with weavers, cowherds, brewers, and other subjects' (sa-tantravaya-gokuta-shaundik-adi-prakritika). Mention can also be made of certain land grants of Karnataka which indicate the transfer of sharecroppers (addhikas) along with the land.

At the same time, many donees did not have one important right—the right to alienate land, i.e., to transfer, sell, or dispose of it in any way. The inalienability of gifted land is indicated by the stipulation that it had been granted according to the nivi-dharma, akshaya-nivi-dharma, or aprada-dharma. Similarly, several Orissa inscriptions contain the term alekhani-praveshataya. This meant that the land could not be made the subject of another document, i.e., it could not be sold. In such cases, the rights of Brahmana donees over the land gifted to them were more than those of a landlord, but less than those of a landowner.

Impact

Royal patronage strengthened the economic power of a section of the Brahmana community and led to the further growth of a Brahmana landed elite. Members of this elite cannot be described as 'Brahmana feudatories', as this confuses them with other groups such as samantas or subordinate rulers who had to provide military service to their overlords. Even the term 'Brahmana intermediaries' is inappropriate, because the Brahmanas were not passing taxes or material resources on to the kings.

Most historians view the early medieval period as one of agrarian expansion, in which land grants played an important role. But there are major differences of opinion regarding the nature of agrarian relations during this time. How exactly did the establishment of brahmadeyas affect the rights of various sections of the rural community—large or small peasant proprietors, tenants, sharecroppers, and landless labourers? Do the long lists of pariharas (exemptions) that we find in many of the land grant charters indicate an increasing oppression of the peasantry? Varied answers have been given to such questions. The feudalism school argues that land grants led to an increasing subordination and oppression of rural groups by Brahmana donees. Burton Stein (1980: 63–84) speaks of a Brahmana–peasant alliance in early medieval South India. The proponents of the 'integration' or 'processual' model have not directly addressed the issue of the nature of agrarian relations in any detail.

The insertion of Brahmana donees into the village community introduced a new element into agrarian relations, eroding the older ones. As mentioned earlier, in the context of Brahmana settlements in South India, RajanGurukkal has argued that such settlements involved the employment of non-family labour and hence eroded the kinship basis of production relations. The fact that most of the land grants carried with them a tax-free status meant that villagers were supposed to hand over various dues to the donees. Sometimes, inscriptions refer to taxes in a very general way. At other times, they specify a long list of tax exemptions —i.e., taxes that the villagers had to pay to the donees instead of to the state. The fact that the donees were also often given rights over water resources, trees, forests, and habitation area would have affected the rights enjoyed by the village community. Most village-level disputes must have been settled by a section of the village community and, therefore, where inscriptions suggest the possibility of the transfer of judicial rights or the right to collect fines for criminal offences, it is the rights of this section that would have been affected.

There seems little doubt that the terms of the brahmadeya grants, varied as they were, created a class of Brahmana donees who enjoyed superior rights and control over the resources and inhabitants of the village. In economic terms, the relationship between Brahmana donees and other rural groups was marked by dominance and exploitation. The substitution of state exploitation and control by the more close-at-hand Brahmana exploitation would no doubt have meant higher levels of subjection of the average farmer. This is not, however, the equivalent of the institution of serfdom in the European manorial system.

Although the general trend was towards increasing levels of social and economic stratification in rural society, the degree and specificities of this stratification varied in different areas. The level of economic dominance achieved by the donees was affected by a number of variables such as ecology, the availability of arable land, the level of organization among the Brahmanas, and the presence or absence of competing social and corporate groups. In Assam, where cultivable land was not in short supply and where large numbers of non-Brahmanas also held land, the extent of social and economic stratification was not as rigid as in other areas. In South India, corporate organizations of Brahmanas known as sabhas furthered the power of the donees. In Kerala, the power and influence of the sabha was enhanced by the absence of corporate organizations of other social groups. Increasing rural stratification sharpened socio-economic conflicts, although direct references to such conflicts are few and far between.

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 nonbrahmanical, 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 OkkaluKampuluetc 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 nonBrahmana 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

Land grants holds asignificant aspect, i.e.the nature of rights granted to the assignees. These land rights incorporated both fiscal and administrative rights to the grantees. Land tax, as well known was the major source of revenue of the government, was be assigned to the donees. The copper plate and stone inscriptions provides reference to pariharasor exemptions, i.e. the taxes payable to the King was not being totally exempted from payment but the rights were now transferred to the grantees. This was sanctionedby the dharmashastras which accorded the royal ownership of land and thus justify such grants, thereby creating intermediary rights in land.

During the early medieval India, some records proves the existence of a communal foundation of land rights in early settlements. This led to the development of private ownership or rights indicated through the information that the grantees often enjoyed rights of alienation of land. Further, they 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.

5.4 Irrigation and Technology

The increasing concern with agriculture can be seen in the detailed instructions regarding agriculture in the Brihat Samhita, Agni Purana, Vishnudharmottara Purana and Krishiparasara. The importance of manure for crop cultivation is clearly laid down in the Harshacharita. It is mentioned that cowdung and refuge were used for manuring the fields. The Harshacharita also speaks about different types of cultivation - plough cultivation, spade cultivation and slash and burn cultivation. The attention paid to agriculture by rulers and landed beneficiaries can also be seen in the detailed descriptions of the plough and the improvement in irrigation techniques. The popularity and wide prevalence of the land measure called hala during this period underlines the significance of the plough. Another text written during 8-9th century, Kashyapiyakrisisuktidealt with all aspects of agriculture at length. Later texts suggested different methods for the treatment of plant and animal diseases.Harvesting of three crops and crop rotationwere recognized widely. Therefore, advanced agricultural technology was being systematized and diffused in several parts of the country causing substantial boom in agricultural manufacture.

The spread of agrarian settlements could have hardly been possible without adequate irrigation facilities. The pattern of geographical distribution of settlements was related to water resources, both natural and human-made, and the agrarian potentiality of the landscape. Few scholars opines that there seems to have been a correspondence between the increase in irrigational works and the rise in the number of nadus between 7th and 10th centuries in Tamil Nadu. In contrast to the smaller nadus in river valleys, the less fertile tracts were characterised by larger nadus with a lesser density of settlements. Scholars contends that the donation of few plots in a settled village would have made no substantial difference to its organisation except for extending the network of the village.

The Harshacharita speaks of some irrigation facilities in the region around western Uttar Pradesh. It mentions such devices for irrigation as the Udghataghati and the ghatiyantra. Several inscriptions mentions (from Bengal) rivers, rivulets and channels in the context of rural settlements and their boundaries. Evidences also throw light ondevamatrika (watered by rain) suggesting the dependence of agriculture on rains and rivers. In South India tanks and reservoirs were built to irrigate the fields. Thus, they were the major landmarks in the countryside. During the rule of the Pallavas in South India there were elected committees (eri-variyams) in the villages to look after the construction and maintenance of tanks and reservoirs and that's whyPallavascredited with the construction of such irrigational facilities. By the 10th century araghattas or irrigational wells were prominently used in rural south easternMarwar in Rajasthan. It may be assumed that they had come into use at an earlier date.Irrigation played an important role in the expansion of agriculture in early medieval Rajasthan. Tanks and wells were the main sources of artificial irrigation, and there are many references to these in 12th–13th century inscriptions, especially in west Rajasthan, where water was most scarce. These mention different types of wells (dhimada/dhivada, vapi, araghatta/araghata/arahata), tanks, and reservoirs (tadaga, tatakini, pushkarini, etc.). Several references tells us that some tanks seem to have been named after people who built them.

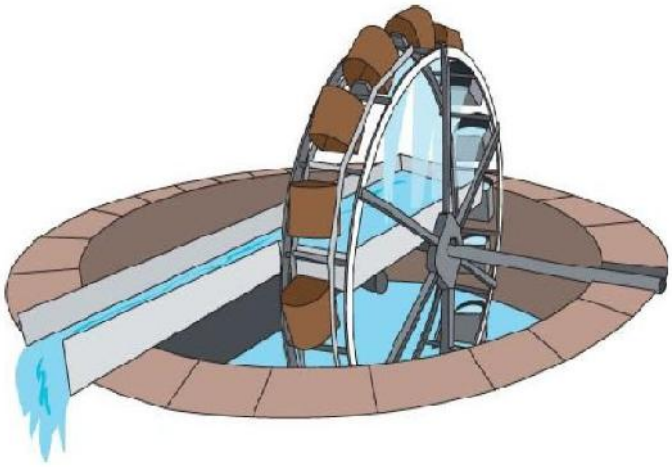
Throughout the early medieval era there was an augment in irrigation sources such as canals, lakes, tanks (tataka, eri) and wells (kupa and kinaru). There was accessibility to water possessions was asignificant consideration in the spread of rural settlements. Keres or tanks in south Karnataka, nadi (river), pushkarini (tank), srota (water channel) etc. in Bengal and araghatta-wells in western Rajasthan were prominent channels of availability of water. Epigraphic sources record the construction and maintenance of irrigation works during early medieval India. Many of them survived even today while some of them were repairedand elaborated under the British management. The step wells (vapis) in Rajasthan and Gujarat became very popular in the 11th – 13thcentury meant for irrigating the meadows and for supplying drinking water.

The inscriptions of Orissa mention various land measure terms such as timpira, muraja, nala, hala, and mala. The descriptions of the boundaries of land often contain a mixture of Sanskrit, Oriya, and Telugu words. Village boundaries were indicated by features such as trees, rocks, anthills, trenches, rivers, hills, embankments, tanks, wells, and the boundaries and junctions of adjoining villages. As for water resources, rivers and tanks are mentioned most frequently, while wells occur in fewer inscriptions. The Achyutapuram plates of Indravarman state that no one should cause hindrance to the donee if he opened the sluice of the tank. The reference seems to be to a royal tank (raja-tataka), mentioned among the boundaries of the gifted land.

Therewas an expansion of irrigation works in the low rainfall areas of north Gujarat, Saurashtra, Kutch, and south Rajasthan. The Aparaji-taprichchha of Bhuvanadeva, an architectural work composed in western India in about the 12th century, mentions rivers, lakes, wells, tanks, and arahattas as sources of water for irrigating fields. Inscriptional references to irrigation increased from the 7th–8th centuries to the 11th–13th centuries. Large numbers of tanks, wells, and step wells (vapis) were constructed in the 12th– 13th centuries by rulers, nobles, and merchants. The Chalukyas of Anahilavada took initiatives in building irrigation works and seem to have had an irrigation department. The expansion of irrigation must have facilitated double cropping. Inscriptions of western India mention irrigated fields of barley, millet, rice, wheat, and pulses. Irrigation played a significant role in the increasing cultivation of cash crops such as sugarcane, oilseeds, cotton, and hemp, which were important items of trade between the 11th and 13th centuries.

Anincrease in the number of irrigation works was due to an advancement in irrigation technology. Sources of the period proves the use of more scientific and permanent methods of flood manage, damming of river waters, sluice construction both at the heads of canals and of lakes and tanks. Flood was tackled slowly through breaching of rivers for canals and mud embankments which thus ensured the regulated use of water possessions.

Whether the Persian wheel was in use in early medieval Rajasthan is debated, and hinges on the interpretation of the term araghatta. The key issue is whether the reference is to the Persian wheel or to the noria, and whether the former was being used in India before the 13th–14th centuries. The noria is a wheel which has pots or buckets attached to its rim without a chain for carrying the pots, or a gear mechanism to ensure a continuous flow of water. It could only be used to draw water from close to the surface or from a river. The Persian wheel, on the other hand, had gears and a chain to carry the pots and was associated with a well. The araghatta seems to have been different from an ordinary well (dhimada) or a step well (vapi), and the general consensus among many historians is that it does refer to something similar to the Persian wheel, if not exactly identical to it.



A PERSIAN WHEEL

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.

For digging tanks or wells, gifts to Brahmanas and temples, royal permission was mandatory. Royal permission was also seeked for construction and maintenance of canals and tanks, etc. Resourceful private individuals constructed tanks and digging of tanks was measured a part of the privileges enjoyed through the grantees and also an act of religious merit. There were equally improvements in agricultural implements. For example, a 10th century inscription from Ajmer refers to "big" plough. Likewise, separate implements are mentioned for weeding parasitic plants. Some texts, for instance, Vrikshayarveda mentions steps to cure diseases of trees. Water lifting devices such as araghatta andghatiyantra mentioned in inscriptions and literary works (especially in Rajasthan in the 19th centuries). Kashypa through his Krishisuktiprescribed that the ghatiyantra

operated through oxen was the best that through men was the worst, on the other hand, while the one driven through elephants was of the middling excellence. On the hand, texts such as the Gurusamhita and Krishinarashwara, throws light on the advanced knowledge in relation to the weather circumstances and their use in agricultural operations.

Crops mentioned in the inscriptions of Rajasthan include rice, wheat, barley, jowar, millet, and moong. Oilseeds such as sesame and sugarcane were cash crops. There are references to crops growing in fields that were irrigated by tanks or wells, and the Dabok inscription of 644 CE suggests the practice of growing two crops a year. The people who controlled irrigation resources included kings, royal officials, corporate bodies such as goshthis, and individual cultivators.

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. Evidences also proves that the new developments as well as knowledge of fertilizers improved immensely and the use of the compost was later recognized during early medieval India. These texts also frequently mentions the production of cash crops such as areca nuts, betel leaves, cotton, sugarcane, etc. Through Rajashekhara's work we come to know excellent sugarcane from northern Bengal which yielded juice, interestingly, even without the use of pressing instrument. Further, throughout this era special significance was attached to commodity manufacture of coconut and orangesin peninsular India.

Another text written during the Gupta period, i.e.Amarakosha mentions varieties of cereals, including rice, wheat and lentil; legumes, vegetables and fruits.Brihat Samhita throws light on the knowledge of fruit grafting. Even Chinese travellors accounts are helpful in this aspect, for instance, Hieun Tsang mentions varieties of rice, mustard, ginger, numerous vegetables and fruits. Similarly, Harshacharita provides a good account of crops and plants. Thus these literary accounts tells us about different types of rice, sugarcane, mustard, sesame, cotton, wheat, barley and pulses; various kinds ofspices such as turmeric, clove, black pepper and ginger grown during early medieval India. Marco-Polo' s account sheds light on increased manufacture of spices. He mentions that in the municipality of Kinsayin China, people consumed ten thousand pounds of pepper everydaywhich came from India and a great demand for Indian ginger in European markets.

Vegetables such as gourd, pumpkin, cucumber, beans, garlic etc. were produced. Among fruits one may mention coconut, arecanut, jackfruit, oranges, mahua and mango. Betel leaf was also grown. Some of these plants and fruits are also recorded in the inscriptions of the period. Bana's Harshacharita had a wide geographical canvass and in addition to the Upper and Middle Gangetic plains it included descriptive details about Assam, Bengal and Central India. Therefore, we come across references to bamboos, cotton plants, loads of flax and hemp bundles in Central India, and cane, bamboo and silk in the context of eastern India. In the Pallava and Chalukyadtoriescultivatedrice, millets, gingelly and sugarcane. The fruits that were grown included plantain, jackfruit, mango and coconut. The presence of brahmanas and artisans in rural settlements, land reclamation, certain changes in technology and the expansion of irrigational facilities stimulated the proliferation of crops and plants. The consequence of all these developments was unprecedented growth of rural economy.

Summary

During early medieval India, revolutionary changes occurred in the land, revenue system, and agricultural relations, which were the significant part of feudalism. This brought broad changes in early medieval Indian socio-economic and political conditions. Thus, one can question the popular notion of early medieval India of the changelessness of Indian society. The land became crucial and a valuable resource in the era, both politically and economically. Land-grants led to the emergence of new religious and secular landed intermediaries and feudatories. Peasants during the early medieval India became labour or tiller of land instead of owner of their areas. Cultivators were levied with numerous legal and extra-legal taxes to landlords and king, and the state shared its revenue resources with feudal lords.

Land-grants led to the availability of new lands hitherto unutilized. It became beneficial for both the state and peasants. The state started generating more revenue through access to new areas and local resource base. The state also carried forward its authority to each corner of the kingdom. The ruler became more powerful politically and economically by creating a loyal group of recipients of royal favour with additional facilities such as irrigation sources. The peasants also got new lands to work since the feudal lords, temples, and Brahmins did not work themselves. New agrarian settlements (brahmadeya, agrahara, manglam, devadanas and secular grants) provided opportunities to farmers to acquire land and work, leading to the expansion of agriculture all over

India. The peasants thus remained the sole producer and commanded the directions of the early medieval agrarian economy.

Keywords

Agraharas : Land grants made to Brahmins.

Brahmadeyas: land gifted to Brahmanas

Vishti- Forced Labour

Sabha - Brahmana assembly

Ur - non-Brahmana village assembly

Self Assessment

Q.1.Land grants are significant sources of history because it provides information about-

1. general pattern and regional specifities.
2. gotra of the Brahmanas.
3. Higher level of control of the King over his kingdom's resources.
4. decreased the status of brahmans in society.

A. 1, 2, 3 and 4
B. 2, 3 and 4
C. 2 and 3
D. 1, 2 and 3

Q.2. In early medieval India, apart from Brahmans, the land grants were provided to _____.

A. Temples
B. Soldiers
C. Tribals
D. Both a and b

Q.3. Which among the following had the authority to ratify the land grants in early medieval India?

A. Temples
B. King
C. Brahmana
D. Aboriginal people

Q.4. Which of the following statements is incorrect with regard to Brahmadeya lands?

A. It could be small or comprise of many villages.
B. It could be given to a single or a group of Brahmanas.
C. It gave permanent tax free status to the donee.
D. It was granted to Brahmanas but his family did not enjoy the benefits of the land.

Q.5. Sachauroddha provided a brahmana power to-

A. collect the taxes
B. gain control over the resources of land
C. right to punish

D. sell the land

Q.6. Which institution acquired central role in agrarian expansion and organization?

A. Gurukula
B. Kings and Courts
C. Village assembly
D. Temples

Q.7. 'Devadana' was a grant provided to _____

A. Tribals
B. Brahmans
C. Temples
D. Monks

Q.8. Which of the following was not the sources of revenue in early medieval India?

A. Bhag
B. Bali
C. Hiranya
D. Agrahara

Q.9. Agrahara was a _____.

A. Primarily a rent- free village in the possession of Brahmanas.
B. Rent free land gifted to Brahmanical temples deities.
C. cultivator who tills land of others and gets half the crop as his share.
D. Exemptions from taxes and obligations

Q. 10. Choose the correct option related with Agrarian expansion during early medieval India.

1. Expansion of cultivation to the forest areas too.
2. Introduction of new methods of cultivation.
3. Brahmanas spread new methods of cultivation by regulating agricultural processes.
4. Gift to Brahmanas was developed by Brahmanical texts as the surest means of acquiring merit and destroying sin.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1, 2 and 3
C. 1, 2, 3 and 4
D. 2 and 4

Q.11. Which inscription provides information about the practice of growing two crops a year?

A. Karandeya inscription
B. Achyutpuranam plate inscription
C. Tanjore inscription
D. Dabok inscription

Q.12. Which of the following rulers had built irrigation department in early medieval India?

A. Rashtrakutas
B. Chalukyas of Anhilwada
C. Cholas

D. Gurjara-Pratihara

Q.13. Agrahatta was a type of-

A. Craft
B. Wheel
C. Crop
D. Water-lifting device

Q. 14. Which of the following texts provides information on the advanced knowledge of early medieval India's with reference to weather conditions and their role in agricultural operations?

A. Krishnarashwara
B. Shunyapurana
C. Krishisukti
D. Krishi-Parashara

Q.15. Which of the following kings built the Cholaganga tank?

A. Rajendra I Chola
B. Kullotunga I
C. Rajaraja Chola
D. Prantaka

Answers for SelfAssessment

1.	D	2.	D	3.	B	4.	D	5.	C
6.	D	7.	C	8.	D	9.	A	10.	C
11.	D	12.	B	13.	D	14.	A	15.	A

Review Questions

Q.1. What are the differences between brahmadeya, devadana, and secular land-grants?

Q.2. Discuss the technological advancement in agriculture during early medieval India?

Q.3. Analyse the brahmana as the beneficiaries of the land grants during early medieval India?

Q.4. Write a note on land grants.

Q.5.Explain the process of agricultural expansion during early medieval India?

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Unit 06: Urban Economy

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Explain the different phases of rise and fall in trade and commerce during early medieval India.
- Understand the various aspects of economic life of early medieval India.
- Explain the way people of early medieval India carried out trade and commerce through exchange and money economy.
- Explain the trading guilds and their functioning during early medieval India.
- Learn about regional variations in urban settlements and types of towns.
- Explain the large-scale maritime trading activities during early medieval India.

Introduction

Early medieval Indian economy experienced the rise and growth of a number of rival settlements which were not linked to exchange networks and long-distance trade. Local needs came to be met locally. The movement of soldiers for wars, pilgrims to religious centers and brahmanas for the acquisition and enjoyment of land grants were possibly the only forms of spatial mobility. The Dhamashastras restricted the movement of the brahmanas and sea voyages were prohibited. Similarly, manages in neighboring areas were preferred. All this fostered strong local identities. The growing sense of localism and the self-sufficiency of the villages is reflected in expressions such as gramadharama, gramachara, and sthanachara all referring to village or local practices in contemporary Puranic literature.

6.1 Trade

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

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

b. c 900-1300 A.D.

The First phase can be defined as of relative decline of trade, metallic currency, urban centres as well as closed village economy. The second phase is marked by many changes that occurred which saw the growth in economy as well as in trade and commerce. Thus, 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 widespread practice of granting land not only to priests and temples but also to warrior chiefs and state officials. This led toemergence of a hierarchy of landlords. Even some state officials like, Mahamandaleshvara, Mandalika, Samanta, Mahasamanta, Thakkura, etc. also 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. Thus this phase led to growth of rural economy where local needs were being satisfied through the imposition of numerous restrictions on the mobility of actual producers. The period also saw a dearth of metal economy in the subcontinent.

India was ruled through several significant dynasties flanked by A.D. 750 and 1000. These contain the GurjaraPratiharas 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. The paucity of actual coins and the absence of coin-moulds in archaeological discovery gives an impression on the 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's account throw light on the brisk trade and busy cities in early medieval India. As these works rely heavily from the earlier sources, they do not necessarily reflect the true economic condition of the 8th century India.With regards the decline of India's foreign trade with the West, it is pointed out by the scholars 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.

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.

Apart from the accounts of foreign travellors (Hiuen Tsang), some other Indian texts such as Purana throws light on the depopulation of significant municipalities. This indicates the continued trend through Varahamihira (5th century). This is visible in the decline of significant cities such as Vaishali, Pataliputra, Varanasi, etc. 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. For instance, Ropar, Atranjikhera and Bhita, Prabhas Patan, Maheswar and Paunarand Kudavelli are in category of urban settlements. In the first phase, commercial action had declined but did not disappear totally.

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 in Pehoa (Haryana) and Ahar (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 (900 – 1300 A.D.)

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 reemergence 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.

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.

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 centers 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. Some accounts gives an interesting detail from Ginza records of 12th century that reveals that the customers in Aden sent broken vessels and utensils to India to refashion them according to their own specifications. Also the excellence of the Indian metal workers could be seen from the specimens of Chola bronzesfrom Nalanda, Nepal and Kashmir.

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 skillfully embroidered with figures of birds and animals. These were in great demand in the Arab World. 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.

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 Lakhapaddhati, 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.

6.2 Trade-Routes

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 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. Another 11th century author, Bilhana, describes the bus travels from Kashmir to Mathura, and his visit to Banaras after passing through Kannauj and Prayaga. From Banaras, Bilhana proceeded to Somanatha via Dhar (close to Ujjain) and Anahilavada (Gujarat). From Somanath, he sailed to Honavar (close to Goa), and then went overland to Rameshwaram on the Eastern coast. Alberuni 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 (West Bengal), from where it went beside the Eastern coast to Kanchi in South. Towards the North-east, this route led to Assam. 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. 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 to look after the highways known as the Jiala-patha-karana. They took immense interest in building new roads to connect the ports and markets under their jurisdiction and they 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.

6.3 Inter-Regional Trade

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 Lakhapaddhati, 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.

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 linseed 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.

6.4 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 era under survey was marked through great expansion of sea trade flanked by the two extremeties of Asia viz. the Persian Gulf and South China. India which lay midway flanked by the two extremeties 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.

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.

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.

6.5 Urban Settlements

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

a. As a part of economic history i.e. history of trade, commerce and craft manufacture, etc., and
b. 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 no 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.

How do we describe an urban centre and what are its essential traints; 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:

a. Throughout the bronze age Harappan culture (fourth-second millennium B.C.),
b. Early historic urban centers of the iron age (c. sixth century B.C. to the end of the third century A.D.)
c. 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.

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.

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.

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 groups 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.

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 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.

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 fortmunicipalities 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, VataParvataka, Vilaspura, Kapilavasaka, Sahasgand, Kanchanapura and Kanaui) 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.

6.6 Trade and Craft Guilds

The merchants derived their power and prestige not only from wealth but also fromthe guilds or associations formed by them to protect their interests. In the first phasethe decline of trade weakened the corporate activity of merchants, and many of theguilds were reduced to mere regional or occupational subcastes. But as trade revivedin the second phase, merchant guilds reappeared as an important feature of theeconomic life during early medieval India.

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, inspire of the information that guildchiefs tended to be rude and authoritative at times, the merchants establish guilds 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 Shrenikarana 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.

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 interlocal 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 Manigramamorganisations.

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. 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.

6.7 Forms of Exchange

India was ruled by many important dynasties between .A.D. 750 and 1000. Theseinclude the GujaraPrathiharas in Western India, the Palas in Eastern India andthe Rashtrakutas in the Decan. All had the distinction of having been served bysome of the most powerful kings of the day, many of whom had very long lastingreigns.

It is astonishing that their available coins are very few and in no waycompare either in quantity or quality with the coins of earlier centuries. Since moneyplays an important role in the sale and purchase of goods, the paucity of actual coinsand the absence of coin-moulds in archaeological finds lead us to believe in theshrinkage of trade during the period under survey.

Though first suggested by D.D. Kostimbi, it was the publication of ProfessorR.S. Sharma's India's Feudalism in 1965 that brought to focus the paucity of coinage inthe post-Gupta times, its link with trade and commerce and consequent emergence offeudal social formation. The subject has been keenly debated in the last twenty fiveyears.

Finally, a point of view questions not only the idea of paucity of coins but alsothe decline in trade. This is based on the evidence from what is described as themid-Eastern India comprising Bihar, West Bengal and the present Bangladeshduring A.D. 750-1200. While it is conceded that there was no coined moneyand that the Palas and Senas themselves did not strike coins, it is also arguedthat there was no dearth of media of exchange. To illustrate, it is emphasizedthat there was not only a long series of Harikela silver coinage but also cowriesand more importantly churni (money in the form of gold/silver dust) alsofunctioned as media of exchange.

Similarly, those who talk about India's trade with Southeast Asia may also do wellto keep in view the position of metal money in that region. Detailed study ofCambodia, for example, shows that during the two centuries of post-Gupta times(A.D. 600-800) Southeast Asia failed to evolve any system of coinage and barter(largely based on paddy and only marginally on cloth) provided essentials of theKhmer economy. Even when such early medieval coin types as the Indo-Sassanian.Shri Vigraha, Shri Adivaraha, Bull and Horseman, Gadhaiya, etc. emerged inWestern and North western India and to some extent in the Ganga valley, they couldnot make much dent in the overall economy. Apart from the doubts about theperiod of emergence of these coins, their extremely poor quality and purchasingpower also indicate the shrinkage of their actual role, Further, in relation to therising population and expanding area of settlement, the overall volume of moneycirculation was negligible.

The revival of trade received considerable help from the reemergence of metalmoney during thecenturies under discussion. There is, however, substantialdiscussion about the degree and level of monetization. Very often the contenders ofthe penetration of money in the market invoke literary and inscriptional references tonumerous terms purporting to describe various types of coins of early medievalIndia. Thus texts such as Prabandhachintnrnanl, Lilavatf, Drivyapariksha,etc. mention bhagaka, rupaka, virnshatika, karshapana, dinar,dramnm, niahla, gadhaiya-rnudrn, pdyanaka, tanka, and many other coins withtheir multiples. No less prolific are inscriptional references. For example theSiyadoni inscription alone refers to varieties of dramm in the mid-tenth century.

The inscriptions of early medieval rulers, i.e.ParamaraChalukya, Chahmana, Pratihara, Pala, Candella and Cholacorroborates most of the terms found in contemporary literature. Therehas also been considerable speculation about the valueof these coins, their metalcontent and their relationship with one another.

Inthe texts of the period we find references to a device called hundika or the bill ofexchange which might have been used by merchants for commercial transactions.Through this device credit could be extended by one merchant to another and, thusthe obstacle to commerce due to shortage of coined money could be overcome. TheLekhapaddhati, a text which throws light on the life of Gujarat in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries, refers to various means of raising loan for consumption as wellas commercial ventures through the mortgage of land, house and cattle.

6.8 Coinage and Currency

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No less prolific are inscriptional references. For instance the Siyadoni inscription alone refers to diversities of drammas in the mid-tenth century. The ParamaraChalukya, 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.

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 Chola 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.

According to one estimate, about nine mints were founded in differentparts of Karnataka during the twelfth and thirteenth century. An important mintfunctioned at Shrimol (near Jodhpur) in Rajasthan.Despite the plethora of references to coins, the evidence of overall volume of moneyin circulation is almost negligible. Nor can one overlook the poor purchasing powerof early medieval coins, irrespective of the metal used. All coins of the period werehighly debased and reduced in weight. Also, in terms of the rising population andexpanding area of settlement, the use of money seems to have been highly restricted.

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. 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.
b. 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.
c. 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.

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 Vigraha, Shri Adivaraha, Bull and Horseman, Gadhaiya, 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.

Masses were far away from handling of coins. The currency system of South Indiaduring A.D. 950-1300 also shows that transactions at all levels of the society werenot equally affected by coined money. For example, the fabulous expenses reportedto have been incurred by the Pandyas as regular buyers of imported horses cannotbe thought in terms of what we know as very poor Pandyan currency. Barter wasstill an important means of exchange in local inter-regional and perhaps even ininter-national commerce.

There are references which indicate that carvanas ofmerchants exchanged their commodities with those of other regions. According toone account, horses imported from abroad were paid for not in cash but in Indiangoods which may have been silk, spices or ivory. These Indian goods enjoyedconstant demand in the markets all over the world.

Though the revival of even "partial monetization" was contributing to economicgrowth, yet no less significant was the parallel development of credit instrument bywhich debits and credits could be transferred without the handling of cash money. Inthe texts of the period we find references to a device called hundika or the bill ofexchange which might have been used by merchants for commercial transactions.Through this device credit could be extended by one merchant to another and, thus.the obstacle to commerce due to shortage of coined money could be overcome. TheLekhapaddhati, a text which throws light on the life of Gujarat in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries, refers to various means of raising loan for consumption as wellas commercial ventures through the mortgage of land, house and cattle.

With regard to monetary history, John S. Deyell has convincingly shown that money was not scarce in early medieval India, nor were states of the time suffering from a financial crisis. There was a reduction of coin types and a decline in the aesthetic quality of coins, but not in the volume of coins in circulation. The main focus of Deyell's work is on the post-1000 CE period, but the roots of the currency systems of that period lay in the preceding centuries. He also points out that the debasement of coinage was not necessarily a signal of financial crisis of the state nor of a general economic crisis. In fact, it could reflect an increasing demand for coins in a situation where the supply of precious metals was restricted. Such shortages occurred for a variety of reasons, from time to time, in different parts of the world.Deyell argues that north India experienced a sustained shortage of silver in 1000 CE (and in some places as early as 750 CE), and that this made it necessary for rulers to dilute the silver content of their coins.

6.9 Interest and Wages

References to rate of interest are found from the fifth-fourth century B.C. onwards. Baudhayandharmasutra, the earliest work prescribes 10 per cent annual interest. Gautama in his work stated the legal rate of interest as 5 masakas per month for 20 panas. According to Manu, 16 masakas are equal to 1 pana and thus according to this ratio the rate comes to 18.75 per cent yearly. The interest rate at 15 per annum find mention not only in the smirtis of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Narada and Vashsitha, but also in the Arthashastra of Kautilya.

Taking more than 15 per cent yearly interest has been regarded as a sinful act in the early dharmashastra works.However, Manu at one place takes a lenient view of it by allowing the creditors to take 24 per cent yearly interest, keeping in view the duties of righteous person.Expressing a similar view Narada prescribes the same rate of interest. Yajnavalkya who was posterior to Manu and anterior to Narada lays down no rule in this regard. 7 he significance of the verse of the Naradasmrti, which lays down the interest at the rate of 24 per cent per annum, may be clearly judged from the comments of Asahaya, who flourished in the first half of the eighth century A.D. He tells us that from an honest man the interest may be realized at the rate of 24 per cent per annum irrespective of their Varnas. Thus, in the light of. the verse of the Manusmritienjoining the same rate of interest seems to have been an interpolation which may have been made sometime after the date of the composition of the Naradasmiriti. Even if we take it as genuine, we can safely say that it was neither the legal rate of interest nor the generally accepted. However, Manu has allowed it. Thus, it may be inferred that the rate fluctuated from 15 per cent per annum to 24 per cent in the time of Manu and onwards. Vyasa law book is regarded as a post-Gupta text, states for the first time that the monthly rate of interest was one-eightieth of the principal, i.e. 1 per cent per annum when a pledge was made against a loan . In the case of surety and in securing loans, according to him one sixtieth (20% yearly) and 2 per cent per month (24% per year) respectively were charged.

On the whole during the first phase of early medieval period, i.e. between A.D. 600 and 1000, the rates ofinterest were increased. The legal texts of this period show that the normative rate of interest is shifted from 15 per cent per annum to 24 percent. This trend may be noticed for first time in the commentory of Visvarupa on the Yajnavalkyasmiriti composed in the early 9th century in the Malwaregin. According to him, 15 per centyearly interest was the commonly accepted normal rate, however it was to be realized only from the brahmanas. The other three varnas were required to pay a quarter of the one eightieth per month more i.e 20 per cent per annum. The way in which he generalizes the rule tends io indicate that the fact of raising annual interest rate from 15 per cent per annum to 20 per cent per annum had become fairly noticeable by the time of Visvarupa, Harita, who may be assigned between A.D. 600 and 900 lays down that in case 25 Puranas fetch an interest of 8 panas which comes to 24 per cent per annum, it should be deemed as legal rate of interest

The 24 percent per annum was the normal rate of interest during the first phase of the early medieval period, is further confirmed by Alberuni, who visited India in the first half of the eleventh century and whose work reveals some earlier traditions also. He states "Usury or taking percentage is for- bidden his profit is not more than one-fiftieth of the more than two per cent).” In this regard R. S that the picture drawn by Al beruni seems but also projects Islamic ideas. He further adds that in view of sanction given to the Vaisyas to take interest, by almost all law books of ancient and medieval period. It appears untenable that only the sudras were allowed to take the percentage.Thus, according to the rules laid down by the law givers, it can be said that 2 per cent per mensem or 24 per cent per annum as stated in Alberuni’s account, denotes possibly the normal rate prevalent in his time. We again witness a change during the eleventh and twelfth centuries which may be taken to represent the second phase of early medieval period. The law givers of the period prescribe 15 per cent per annum as the normal rate of interest Haradatta, and Laxshmidhara, mentioned above, favoured 15 per cent per annum as the normal rate of interest. In no case was it to exceed 60 per cent per annum. However, at another place Medhatithi considers the term 'Kusidapathamahustam’ (taking up the usurious way of lending).

The secular texts of the early medieval period also have some significant bearing on the increased and decreased rates of interest. The Ganitasarasañgraha of Mahaviracarya, a treatise on mathematics, composed in A. D. 850 in Karnataka region, throws some significant light on the actual practice regarding the rates of interest in respect of secular loans. This work supplies us with the interest rates varying from 3/4 per cent to 1/3 percent per month (or from 21 per cent to 160 per cent per annum).5Those between 36 per cent and 60 percent per annum are comparatively more in number and they appear to have been commonly accepted rates of interest. It may be noted that only one mathematical problem in the book refers to the interest rate of 2 percent per month or 24 percent per annum, which was the normal rate of interest sanctioned in the Haritasmirti and the commentaries of Medhatithi and Asahaya on Manu and Narada respectively. The interest rates around six percent per month has been mentioned as many as ten times in this work. This may indicate that the normal rate of interest was not usually followed in practice

The rates of interest were, generally, reduced to a considerable extent in the second phase of the early medieval period on account of redeveloping money economy and urban life.Needless to say that the act of reissuing of gold coins after a gap of five centnries101 following the fall of the Gupta empire as well as other bullion currencies and circulation of hoarded money on account of Mahmud Ghazanavi's invasionthe comparative security and the comparative prosperity on account of redeveloping traffic and industries104 might have lessened the scarcity of the monev. Insecurity, risk and the poverty may also have been reduced to a considerable extent. Thus, this phenomenon may have brought down rate of interest during this phase and may have partly been connected with the revival of trade and commerce.

6.10 Traders, Merchants and Craftsmen

Traders

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 travellerHiuen 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.

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. For instance, the inscriptional record of 10th century refers to a merchant of Modha caste who was the chief of Sanjan (Maharashtra). Similarly, a merchant family of Vimala in Gujarat 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 Jain 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

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 crossways several instances of greedy and dishonest merchants. One such instance is mentioned by Kshemendra (Kashmiri author), where a selfish merchant became overjoyed at the approach of a famine or any calamity because that could provide him an opportunity of 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.

Merchants

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.

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 sources of the early medieval India refer to the large number of merchants who were recognized through the specialized trade. Thus, we come to know about the dealers in gold, perfumes, wine, granules, horses, textiles, curds, betels, etc. Some merchants even 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.

Sresthi was a rich wholesale dealer incity and carried out 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. They participated in both inter-local and inter-oceanic trade. Thus the merchants in southern India 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.Nagarams increased under Cholas and thus a generic term emerged for all Tamil merchants, i.e.nagarattar.

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.

Summary

The different dimensions of change in economy occurred during early medieval India. These changes were extremely significant in so far as they brought the ancient period to an end and marked the beginning of a new stage in Indian history. Agrarian economy expanded on an unprecedented scale, new crops were grown, irrigation facilities expanded, and there were other improvements related to agriculture. From the 9th to 10th century CE, there is evidence of urban revival in many parts of the subcontinent. New towns emerged and long-distance and maritime trade flourished. There are increasing references to hattas, penthas, local fairs and nodes which were becoming part of urbanization in the early medieval period.

Keywords

Ghannka- Oil mill.

Jalapathakarana- Department/ Officer for looking after highways

Tellika- Oilman

Velakula-Karana - Department Officer for harbours

Devadana - Rent free land gifted to brahmanical temples deities. Its Jain and Buddhist counterpart is pallichanda.

Brahmadeya-Tax free land or village given as gift to Brahmanas.

Agrahara - Primarily a rent free village in the possession of Brahmanas.

Nagaram - a sort of merchant assembly located in market towns with wide ranging commercial interests.

Skandhavar - military camps-functioning as mobile capitals.

Tirth - sacred/ pilgrimage centre.

Shreni- general term for guild of traders, artisans and craftsmen.

Self Assessment

Q.1. The rulers of which dynasty had established a separate department Jiala-path- Karana?

A. Chalukyas
B. Gujara -Pratiharas
C. Chandellas
D. Gahadvalas

Q.2. Choose the correct option with regard to related to Trade during the first phase of early medieval India.

A. Growth of agricultural and craft production
B. Reemergence of market economy
C. Relative decline in trade
D. Growth of Urban settlements

Q.3. Among the following statements choose the incorrect option related with trading activities during early medieval India?

A. India had a vast ship building industry.
B. Asian trade during these centuries was largely dominated by the Arabs.
C. India sent its aromatics and spices particularly pepper.
D. Most important port was Nagapattinam, Puri, Debal, Kalingapatta and Tamralipti.

Q.4. Which of the following foreign traveler tells us of a colony of Indian merchants at Aden in the Red Sea?

A. Abu Zaid
B. Suleiman
C. Amir
D. Ibn Batuta

Q.5. The most significant import of India from the West was-

A. Teakwood
B. Horse
C. Silk
D. Ivory

Q.6. Nagaram was-

A. a merchant assembly located in market towns with wide ranging commercial interests.
B. a trade center
C. a district or a subdivision or also as local assembly
D. the military camps-functioning as mobile capitals.

Q.7. With regard to characterising an urban center, which scholar has given the notion of 'Urban Revolution'?

A. V. A. Smith
B. Michael Foucault
C. David Arnold

D. Gordon Childe

Q.8. Read the following statements choose the correct option with regard to guilds during early medieval India?

1. The guilds framed their own rules and regulations regarding the membership and the code of conduct.

2. They fixed the prices of their goods and could even decide that

specific commodity was not to be sold on a particular day by its members.

3. They could refuse to trade in a particular area if they found the local authorities hostile or uncooperative.

4. The guild merchants also acted as the custodian of religious interests.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1,2 and 3
C. 1, 2, 3, 4
D. 3 and 4

Q.9. Puga was an organization that

A. carried inter-regional trading activities
B. represented an association of foreign merchants.
C. organized vast trading network in South India.
D. took care of local problems of trading community.

Q.10. Which of the following is not one of the coins minted during early medieval India?

A. Rupaka
B. Dramma
C. Tanka
D. Ghanaka

Q.11. Read the following statements and choose the correct option-

1. Kusida was the interest levied on money lended

2. Interest paid in kind, included labour too.

3. Caste considerations were applied in levying the interest

4. Interest rate for Shudra was 2 per cent.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1,2, 3
C. 2 and 4
D. 1,2,3,4

Q.12. Among the following statements choose the incorrect option related with trading activities during early medieval India?

A. Merchants carried out huge atrocities on the artisans and craftsmen.
B. Traders and merchants were interdependent on each other.
C. Merchants came to exert greater control on the mobilization of rawmaterial and finished products,
D. Artisans and Craftsmen were free to sell their products in markets.

Q.13. Nikshepavanika was a group of merchants which -

A. planned the administration of guilds.

B. organized the group of artisans and craftsmen

C. worked for managing the industries

D. specialized in banking and moneylending

Q.14. What efforts were made by the kings and rulers in early medieval India to ensure the increase in trading activities?

1. Chalukyas of Gujarat established separate department of harbours under royal control.
2. The Cola Kings managed their ports through royal officials with the- help of local merchant organisations.
3. Arab writers unanimously praised the Rashtrakuta kings for their policy of peace and toleration towards the Arabs.
4. The Chalukyas of Gujarat also granted religious and economic freedom to the Muslim merchants in their state.

Choose the correct option, out of all the above statements-

A. 1 and 2
B. 2 and 4
C. 1, 2, 3, and 4
D. 1, 2 and 3

Q.15. Choose the incorrect options-

1. According to R.S. Sharma then was decline of coinage during the post-Gupta period.
2. There was abundance of coins in Orissa between 600-1200 A.D.
3. The poor quality of copper coins of Kashmir (around 8th century) can beascribed to the decline in trade.
4. Apart from minted money there were no media of exchange during 8th-12 th century A.D.

A. 1 and 2
B. 2 and 4
C. 1, 2, 3, and 4
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answers for SelfAssessment

1.	A	2.	C	3.	A	4.	D	5.	B
6.	A	7.	D	8.	C	9.	D	10.	D
11.	B	12.	A	13.	D	14.	C	15.	B

Review Questions

Q.1. What was the pattern of commerce in early medieval period? Did it effect the pattern of land ownership?

Q.2. Write a note on the role of maritime trade in early medieval period.

Q.3. Elaborate the relationship between merchants and trades in the second phase of early medieval India.

Q.4. What was the nature of rights enjoyed by land grantees?

Q.5. Differentiate between brahmadeya, secular, and devadana grants?

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Unit 07: Society I

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Understand the socio-cultural changes that marked the transition to early medieval India.
- Learn about the factors that led to the sub-division of Indian society.
- Learn about the condition of women from 8th-12th century CE.
- Understand the conditions of transfer of lands and properties in early medieval India.

Introduction

A number of important social changes have been identified in the transition to the early medieval period. The social changes in India from the 8th-12th century CE could be better understoodthrough the character and scope of the caste system and the status of women. Jati is the basic unit in the caste system. People are grouped in endogamous Jatis, i.e. one cannot marry outside their Jati.

7.1 Social Stratification

The resources that were drawn off the rural world by the state to non-rural areas made the countryside so much the poorer; in themselves, they would not have affected the nature of stratification in agrarian society. The taxation, if considered to be existed, was regressive. Thus, regressive taxation meant that the burden of state demands was shared unequally, more by the less privileged majority than by the well-to-do strata.

There were certain people and institutions who were exempted from taxation or taxed at a concessional rate. Various set of record throws light on the fact that the land belonging to temples were given special privilege, i.e. exempted from taxation (deva-brahmana-bhuktivarjjam). Further, there was a category of land grant called kara-shasana where tax obligations existed from earlier times and continued later also. Elite brahmanas were called brahmanottara, and epigraphic evidence suggests that they enjoyed tax exemptions. Two categories of tax-free land were called brahmottara and devottara respectively (brahmottara being a contraction of brahmanottara.)

As distinct from the removal of a part of the state shares from the village was the consumption of the remaining parts in the countryside itself. A combination of circumstances favored it. There was the dispersal of the armed forces and other state personnel over the realm, and it was only logical that they be paid out of the state proceeds of the locality. Then there were a large number of village

resources, e.g., vegetables, milk, fish, etc., for each of which the state demanded its pound of flesh, for which there was hardly a market generally to commute them into cash payments, and most of which, being perishable and/or cumbersome, presented almost insurmountable problems of long-term storage and long-distance carriage. Finally, the appurtenances of war and government called for regular mobilization of human labor for non-productive purposes, for which the people had to find time without leaving their station.

As the omnipresent phrase, achata-bhata-praveshya, i.e., not to be entered by chatas and bhatas – in the records of the period, meaning a great privilege, shows, their entry meant a major burden for the villagers. Chatas and bhatas were two categories of state functionaries, and it is usually supposed that the phase referred to only these two types. However, as the combined testimony of two copper-plate inscriptions of Somavamshi kings from Sonpur in Orissa makes it clear, the combination chatabhata stood for officialdom in general. These two records have an identical format, in one of which state functionaries are called by the familiar term raja-pad-opajivins but in the other of chata-bhata Jati. In the same vein is the reference to the entry of the chatas being forbidden (nishiddha-chat-dipravesha) in Chandella charters, as a consequence of which the king, rajapurushas, chatas and others were to forego their perquisites or dues (abhavya) from the area in question.The significant presence of the state personnel in the villages is seen in many other ways. There is that pointed expression in the Maitraka and Rashtrakuta charters – rajakiyanam ahasta-prakshepaniya (not a finger to be lifted at by the royal officers).

A crucial feature of stratification in the agrarian society was thus a cleavage between what may be called the state class and the rural populace. It also seems reasonably clear that the presence of this state class bore heavily but unequally on the agrarian classes. It was the common peasantry that bore the brunt of the demands of the officials in the neighborhood. For instance, only those brahmanas were considered for doing forced labor who were considered no different from the shudras in status. In hilly regions like Kashmir and Nepal, it is true, that in principle no one, not even brahmanas, were exempted. It was only in lieu of huge wealth and in face of hunger strike that the Kashmir king could exempt a few priests from it. However, as references to fines for not doing work in both the regions show, the obligation to perform vishti or rudhabharodhi could always be bought off by those who had the wherewithal. The presence of the state class thus served to accentuate the already existing divisions in the agrarian society.

A very small number of references to royal land in the inscriptions throw light on the fact that the government at times owned land and got it cultivated as private landowners did. This was qualitatively different from extracting revenue from the people. This role of the state is also seen in a 9thcentury text from Bengalthe 'Devi Purana' which recommended that, "the ruler should resort to direct cultivation in the adjacent lower regions of the fort and, for this purpose, he should make the residents of the neighboring villages (khetakas) render service (sevane karyah) to him." In Kashmir where the state is known to have held a monopoly of the high-value crop saffron, such a role of the state would have been conspicuous.

A certain interpretation of a category of land-grant inscriptions, put forward by scholars such as V.V. Mirashi and Lallanji Gopal, would paint a far more extensive picture of royal farms in 8th century India. A huge number of plots of land held by individuals are known to have been donated by the king. In the same fashion the king is seen to be giving away irrigation resources in quite a few of other instances. How could the king give away what he did not own and possess? On this reasoning, all this is taken to constitute evidence for state-managed agriculture, with the individuals interpreted as temporary tenants having no rights over the land. This interpretation, however, is based on the assumption of either royal or individual ownership of land in exclusive terms. There are rival interpretations of the same evidence based on the same assumption; D.C. Sircar, for instance, thinks that the king purchased the land from the individual holding it before making a pious gift of it. Infact, there is no internal evidence at all for the act of purchase, nor for the individuals being temporary tenants.

The issue has been clouded by the assumption of either royal or individual ownership of land, which we have already found to be rather unhelpful. Once this assumption is discarded and other relevant pieces of evidence brought in, it becomes clear, that in that these were generally instances of co-extensive rights in land. The land that was given by the king as bhumida (the giver of land) was actually as state claims over the land owned by the peasants, however, there were few exceptions such as in the Jesar Plate inscription of Maitraka king Shiladitya I, when a piece of land was of a missing (utsanna) peasant and so was exclusively state property at the time of the grant.It is important to note that the way state altered the character of agrarian society in early medieval India through alienations of revenue and other land rights and person of the agrarian classes.

Several land grant inscriptions from North India gives impression that the vast majority of them relate to transfer of state claims to religious personnel and institutions.

The details of the transfer in these hundreds of records are of course not recounted in a uniform manner all over throughout. The same kind of obligations could be expressed differently, and not all state claims appear in all the records. For instance, bhaga was a principal land-tax, but*dani* and *udranga* (found in the Madhuban inscription of Harshavardhana) were its important variants.Further, step-wells (vapis) and water-wheels (araghattas) do not occur among the taxable resources of Eastern India. There are various number of terms that are the names of taxes or taxable resourcesbut their precise import eludes us, so specific they were to their time and place. For instance, one term was mayuta (in the tenth century Rajor inscription from Alwar). It is also possible to discern variations over time and space in the mode of making demands, as well as in the overall burden of taxation. In some early records from Orissa and from Western India, the principal taxes were demanded in cash and a certain trend in this direction may also be seen in Bengal in the later centuries of our period. This remained of course a limited phenomenon. There is a certain impression among historians that the number of imposts increased in a marked way through the early medieval centuries, making for heavier taxation. This impression of the increasing number of taxes, however, is based on arbitrary selection of a very small number of records. It needs to be thoroughly verified first and then compared with that formidable benchmark of taxation in the earlier period, i.e., the Arthashastra of Kautilya. However, the point is that even establishing an increase in the number of imposts may not be decisive on the case for higher taxation. After all, at the end of the day as it were, the Delhi Sultanate, with its much shorter list, was levying no less. It would not do to compare numbers alone over different states; within any given kingdom, it would of course do.

We may consider a different set of indicators in the sources, which, taken together, point to the ever-increasing incidence of taxation through our period. The aforementioned Rajor inscription mentions customary (uchita) and non-customary (anuchita) taxes; the division implies the addition of new taxes to earlier ones. A general tendency for taxes to increase may also be detected in a special praise for the founder king, Mularaja, of the Chaulukyas, who dislodged the Chapas of Gujarat. In a poetic pun on the word bali, he was credited with having 'fettered' bali, that is taxes, and so was like the god Vishnu who, in his Vamana incarnation, had restrained the demon king Bali. Yet the Chaulukyas themselves carried out later a fresh assessment (nava-nidhana), unfettering the bali. Finally, we have the testimony of Kalhana, who recounts in detail how king Harsha of Kashmir enhanced taxes to an unspeakably harsh extent.

There are, thus, fair grounds for supposing a tendency to increasing burden of state claims. But it does not seem that this was generally affected via land grants, by authorizing the donee through grant of arbitrary powers to fleece the people as he wished. The state made over its own rights to the donees, who were authorized to exercise precisely those – no more, no less. This is positively shown (as distinct from being inferred from negative evidence) by phrases such as yathadiyamana: people were enjoined to pay as they had been paying so far. The state claims being transferred included of course the possibility of additional income in future, such as by getting fallow land cultivated. To quote the Rajor inscription again, it refers to nibaddha income as well as one that was not so (anibaddha). Nibaddha means registered, and so seems to stand for surveyed and assessed sources of income; the remaining ones would be anibaddha. Such additions were clearly not the same thing as the donee being empowered to increase the rate of taxation.

In accordance with the above, there is hardly any indication in the charters that the communal agrarian rights of the people were dented for the first time by the royal grants. The people were when asked to pay to the donees what they paid to state earlier and later, pastures, ponds, forests, fisheries, etc. came under the taxable resources, it can be considered that these resources were already subject to taxation in the particular state.It is generally contradicted that the resources were not communally controlled and state had laid no claims itself but in order to transfer them, the state made them subject in future to levies by the donees.

Further, we find evidence of forced labor or 'vishti' in the records of the Paramaras, the Chaulukyas and the Chahamanas. However, the record of Gahadavala and Chandella donot mention about vishti. In some charters, along with the land that was transferred, the residents are also mentioned. Thus residents lacked the freedom of mobility. Few epigraphic records from Bengal do not refer to the transfer of peasants to the donees down to the end of the twelfth century. But later the practice spread to this part of the country as well. It has been argued that the inclusion of the residents among the resources being transferred along with the land donot place them under an obligation or restraint than payment of taxes to the donees.

There are a handful of records from Western India, where a few peasants themselves – as a category of their own – figure as items of grant. There is no controversy regarding the dependent status of these peasants, to persons of similar status references being found in the literary sources too. It can be considered that the three major components of the demands, i.e. the taxes, fines, and generalizedlabor service. Thus, one can take into account the totality of the evidence of the entire structure of any given record, not just of some terms in it, and of all the available records, not only few corroborates with the argument made earlier. The same three types of state demands were being transferred everywhere (allowing for variations within each type). People were liable to perform labor service and were subject to the commands of the donees, even where the particular terms in question are not found. The same implications were present in different ways when vishti does not occur, and similarly, even where the residents were not enumerated among the resources that went with the land, other considerations show that they did not become exempt from the authority of the donees.The Chandella charters shows the absence of any reference to vishti as well as for the inclusion of the residents –artisans, peasants, merchants' (karu-karshaka-vanij), among the resources being transferred along with the land.An elaborate list of resources from villages and its products made over the donees are clearly indicated in Chandella records.However, we find that although all the land-grant records of the Chandellas have the same pattern, i.e., only two records refer to the transfer of the residents (one of these two has karukapamkavanij, which is sometimes interpreted as karu-kapamka-vanij). In one record, there is only one phrase on the village resources (simatrna-kashthako-paryanta). In some, people are asked to pay the already allotted taves i.e. bhaga, bhoga, etc. There is no clear indication that the Chandella kings donated income from fines too. Certain records like dandadaya,refer to the twofold division of the imposts as customary (uchita) and non-customary (anuchita). Thus it can be concluded that, firstly, the residents in the donated villages were free to stay or move as they liked, and secondly, the donees generally did not have the right to levy fines from the people, including even those in the two villages where they were transferred along with the land, that the imposition of non-customary taxation was an exception rather than the rule, and so on.

Thus, when nihshesh-adaya (sum-total of all state claims) was gifted it doesnot matter if the resources were listed in full or part. If people were asked to be attentive to (shravana) and comply with (vidheya) the command (ajna) of the donee things did not change materially due to the non-mention of the residents in the description of the grant. People transferred with the land or placed at the donee's command could not possibly have refused him service. The reference to grants made by previous kings indicates that the first item refers to grants made by the reigning king. The second category may be understood in terms of the distinction between bhuj (possession/enjoyment) and agama (title); it refers to the early Smriti view that three generations of enjoyment give the title to the land (the period was to be hugely extended in later legal literature). The third category regarding the proper maintenance and good people.

The importance of this adage lies in showing the emergence of religious land grants as a recognized form of agrarian property, on at par with the other, older forms. Grant with libation of water represents this form here, but in the inscriptions, it is underlined in more than one way. In the records of the Kalachuris of Tripuri, the libation of water, in fact, usually replaced by shasanatvena, by 'shasanatva', translated as 'by means of a grant'. More generally, aside from the reference to the libation, the property rights were described in terms of rights to enjoy the land, cultivate it, get it cultivated, and assign it. The donee was to exercise these rights in the same ways as the state had done so far, which also entails that the donee was to respect the extant agrarian rights of the people as the state had done so far. The clearest statement on the granted land as property occurs in the Chandella charters, where the donees rights are stated to be a gift, mortgage and sale (dan-adhana-vikraya), apart from those of enjoyment, cultivation and the like.

Through the creation of this distinct form of agrarian property was called into existence a distinct class of landlords in early medieval North India. They claimed a share of all kinds of produce in their area, and enjoying extra-economic authority over the people, became their lords.

Several units of such landlord ship are seen. At the lowest a small tract of cultivated land, was assigned to a brahmana. In other cases, dozens of them were collectively granted as a village or villages. The more general practice seems to have been the grant of one village to one person, at least at a time. But there was also the University of Nalanda in Bihar having two hundred villages and the temple of Somanatha in Gujarat, reportedly the owner of two thousand villages. It is impossible to say with precision at what scale the grants were made during our period. There are several indications, however, that a fairly substantial number of landlords were thus created.

By and large the kings of early medieval North India refrained from making such grants to their officials. The state functionaries were no doubt granted land revenue for their services, but it was highly unusual for them to be granted state claims over land on a hereditary basis; an example of such an unusual instance may be seen in a Chandella inscription, when a person was granted land in this fashion on the death of his father in war. The officials, with their service perks and grants, were of course present as members of the state class in the agrarian society. In times of weakening state control, they usurped power at local levels and became hereditary lords. But, to repeat, it does not seem to have been regular state policy to make hereditary landlords of its officials, in sharp contrast to regular state policy towards religious personnel and institutions.

Yet there seems to have existed, on a fairly widespread scale, secular counterparts of the religious grantee landlords armed with state claims over land and people. They were self-created potentates rather than beneficiaries of state grants. A number of terms in the inscriptions and literature indicate their presence in a very complex composition, but precise details await clarification through research. In literary sources, we have reference of a general category of bhoginsseizing villages, and another likens them to kings. Some regional instances of such bhogins could be damaras of Kashmir. Such references are available in Rajatarangini also, which suggests that the damaras arose out of the ranks of prosperous peasantry to dominate the countryside individually (they could own forts) and pose a threat to royal power collectively. These damaraswere the creations of the state and competed for a share in state power with the central power (royalty), which followed a conscious policy of preventing the rise of such groups.

7.2 Proliferation of Castes

The social organization was in a flux and far from being harmonious. lndeed, 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 system is difficult to comprehend if the improving economic conditions of a sizeable number of lower classes are ignored. One single factor which seems to have set the tone of the post-Gupta society was the ever-growing phenomenon of land grants. Its impact on the agrarian expansion changed the entire social outlook.

A comparison of the evidence across early medieval period shows that state society – the society of kingdoms and empires, which was by and large caste society, as distinct from the non-state, casteless societies of hunter-gatherers and tribes – was expanding significantly during this period. First, a considerable number of immigrants from outside the subcontinent, such as the Hunas, the Gurjaras etc. were settling down. The Gurjaras, the ancestors of the present Gujar community, seem to have been particularly widespread in western and northwestern India. In some regions a gradual transformation of the original structure of Gurjara society was well under way during our period as at the end of it we see not only the emergence of a small section of them as rulers (the Gurjara-Pratiharas) but also the rest as humble peasantry. The recognition of the Hunas as one of the traditional thirty-six Kshatriya clans took a longer time. There were probably other peoples too. For instance, the Kalachuris who figure as an important political entity and had even founded an era called Kalachuri-Chedi Era are supposed to have been such immigrants, and the term 'Kalachuri' is interpreted as a derivative of the Turkish title 'kulchur'.

New Mixed Caste

Large parts of India continued to remain covered with forests, in which small, scattered groups of hunter-gatherers and tribal people practicing pastoralism and/or primitive agriculture lived. For instance, in calling southern Andhra Pradesh a sparsely populated jungle territory infested by highwaymen, Xuan Zang (Hiuen-Tsang) referred to one such area dominated by indigenous population, who did not lead a settled life and for whom plunder was a legitimate source of livelihood. Similarly, for an extensive country in the northwest, he reports the presence of people who are stated to live solely by pastoralism, be very war like, and 'have no masters, and, whether men or women, have neither rich nor poor'. Quite a few of the indigenous groups were in regular touch with the members of caste society, and vivid descriptions of their lives are recorded, though not without bias, in contemporary works of literature, such as the Dashakumaracharita of Dandin and the Kadambari of Banabhatta.

Large number of indigenous population was also being assimilated in the caste society, some wholly, some in part. For instance, while the name 'Shabara' continued to stand for a tribe or a number of tribes till well after the early medieval period, the reference to a Shabara king with a Sanskritic name, Udayana, in the sources suggests the integration of a section of Shabara people

into caste society. In general, the majority of the members of a tribe was converted into a Jati belonging to the Shudra Varna (some into an Untouchable caste), whiles a tribal chief, if he was sufficiently resourceful, could claim a Kshatriya status for himself and his close kinsmen.

This is one of the most distinctive features of social changes during the centuries under reference. The Brahmavaivarta Purana dictum deshabhda (difference based on regions/territories) leads to differences in castes. A village named Brihat-Chhattivama (inhabited by 36 varnas) is mentioned in a tenth century inscription from Benkal. No varna seemed to have remained homogeneous and gotfragmented on account of territorial affiliations, purity of gotras and pursuance of specific crafts, professions and vocations.

The multiplication of castes as a phenomenon appears to be most pronounced among brahmanas. As already mentioned, they were no longer confined to their traditional six fold duties. Apart from occupying high governmental positions such as those ktf ministers, purohitas, judges, etc. they had also started performing military functions. For example, 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, butter-milk, salt, etc. Functional distinction of brahmanas is reflected in titles, like Shrotriya, pandit, maharaja-pandita, dikshit, yajnik, pathaka, upadhyaya, thakkura, agnihotri, etc.

Mitakshara, the famous commentary on the Smrili of Yagyavalkya speaks of the ten-fold gradation of brahmanas ranging between Deva (who is a professor, and devoted to religion and shastras) and Chandal, who does not perform sandhya three times a day. In between were the shudrabrahmanas who lived by profession of arms and temple priests.

Divisions within the brahmana varna were also caused by territorial affiliations. In North India we hear of Sarasvat, Kanyakubja, Maithi, Ganda and Utkal brahmanas. In Gujarat and Rajasthan they were identified in terms of their mula (original place of habitation) and divided into Modha, Udichya, Nagara, etc. By the late medieval times, the brahmanas were split into about 180 mulas. There were also the feelings of superiority. While there was a phenomenal migration of brahmanas, certain regions were considered to be papadeshas (inpious regions). These included Saurashtra, Sindh and Dakshinapath.

The ranks of kshatriyas also swelled in the post-eighth century. Numerous works give varying lists of 36 clans of Rajputs in northern India alone. They arose out of different 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 system. While the traditional notion invested the kshatriya varna as a whole with functions of rulership, the ideologues were never opposed to recognizing in many cases the non-Kshatriya rulers as kshtriyas. It is said that among captured "respectable men were enrolled among the Shekhwat and the Wadhela tribes of Rajputs whilst the lower kinds were allotted to castes of Kolis, Khantas and Mers". That there was a conscious attempt to give exalted genealogies to rulers in many parts of India. Some of the new kshatriyas were called Samskara-Varjita, i.e. they were deprived of ritualistic rites. This may be takenas a coverup for their admission to the brahmanical social order through inferior rites.

The caste society was also being transformed from within in response to political, economic, and cultural-ideological changes. An interesting example is the crystallization of the professionals called kayastha as a Jati. Kayasthas come into view as important officials from the Gupta period onwards, and just after our period are seen as a caste. Our sources suggest that they came from a number of communities, including tribes (especially Karanas) as well as Brahmanas. The names of a considerable number of Brahmanas in Bengal in the Gupta and post-Gupta inscriptions end with suffixes such as Vasu, Ghosha, Datta, Dama, etc., which are today the surnames not of Bengali Brahmanas but of Bengali Kayasthas. The absence of these surnames among the Brahmanas of the region suggests that it was the case not of people of lower Varnas adopting the surnames of their superiors in a bid for upward mobility, but one of the formation of a caste through fission of Brahmana and non-Brahmana kayastha families from their parent bodies and fusion into a caste of Kayastha. In other words, the Kayastha caste began to form as the families belonging to this profession started marrying among themselves and stopped marrying within their own original Jatis or tribes.

The process of caste proliferation did not leave the vaishyas and shudras untouched. While these two broad varnas were clearly coming closer to each other, there is an equally unmistakable evidence of jatis (castes). Like the brahmanas, the vaishyas too were being identified with regional affiliations. Thus, we account for vaishyas called Shrimal's, Palliwals, Nagar, Disawats, etc. No less striking is the heterogeneity of the Shudras who had been performing multifarious functions. They were agricultural labourers, petty peasants, artisans, craftsman, servants and attendants. The Brahma Vaivarta Purana lists as many 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 process of industrial working, e.g. Padukakrit, Charmakara (makers of shoes, leather workers), etc. Crystallization of crafted into castes was a complementary phenomenon. It seems that napita, modaka, tambdika, suvanrakara, sutrakara, malakara, etc. emerged as castes out of various 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 (called 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.

New Status of Shudras

As you know, each Varna was associated with some specific functions; for instance, priestly functions were considered the preserve of Brahmanas. Historians have noted a remarkable change in this matter during the transition, which is registered both in the brahmanical treatises as well as attested by foreign observers. The expansion of the rural space and agricultural activities had been responsible for changes in notion about persons entitled to undertake these. The law books from 8th century onwards included agriculture in the samanya-dharma (common occupation) of all the varnas. The smriti of Parashar further emphasis that inaddition to their traditional six-fold duties (studying, teaching, sacrificing, officiating assacrifice to help others, acceptance of gifts from a worthy person of three highervarnas and making of gift),the brahmans could also be associated with agriculturalactivities, preferably through labor of shudras.It was also enjoined on the brahmanas that in order to avoid any kind of sin, they should show proper treatmentto oxen and offer certain fixed quantities of corn to King, Gods and fellow brahmanas.

Surely, such formalities indicate that significant changes were 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 between the vaishyas and the shudras. It is significant that in the post-Gupta centuries the vaishyas practically lose their identity as a peasant caste. The famous Chinese traveler of the early 7th century mentions Hiuen-Tsang mentions shudras as agriculturists. Al Beruni also notes the absence of any difference between the vaishyas and shudras.

The Skanda Purana talks about the pitiable conditions of the vaishyas. By the 11th century they came to be treated with the shudras, both ritually and legally. Al-biruni writes that both vaishyas and shudns were punished with amputation of the tongue for reciting the Vedic texts. There were certain shudras who were called bhojyanna, i.e. food prepared by whom could be taken even by brahmanas. Many Tantric and Siddha teachers were shudras performing works of fishermen, leather workers, washer men, blacksmiths, etc. A text of the eighth century states that thousands of mixed castes were produced as a result of marriages between 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 sometimesbecame members of the local administrative committees and even made their way into the ruling aristocracy.

Agriculture, which was considered earlier generally the work of the Vaishyas, now comes increasingly to be seen as the occupation of the Shudras. However, the meaning of this is not easy to understand, or rather is capable of being understood in at least three different ways. First, this has been interpreted as amounting to a marked improvement in the status of the Shudras. From being slaves, servants, and agricultural laborers they now become landholding peasants like the Vaishyas. Second, this may represent the decline in the status of peasantry as a result of extensive land grants. There was, it is said, such a downgrading of the Vaishya peasants that they were considered no different from the Shudras. Third, this could refer to the phenomenon of the absorption of tribal people in caste society as Shudra peasantry. It is of course hypothetically possible that the different statements in the sources may collectively represent in some, hitherto unexplained, way the sum total of all these inferences.

Such achievements of shudras were rather rare. Dependent peasants,ploughmen and artisans were greatly needed to strengthen the early medieval economic and political set-up characterized by a

relatively self-sufficing localeconomy and the emergence of a dominant class of rural aristocracy. Such a need was being fulfilled by the approximation of the vaishyas and shudras. This happeneddespite 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 sections of the jainas had developed the notion that the shudras were not eligible for religious initiation.

However, the point is that the problem of the exact correlation of this shift in Varna theory with the historical reality, especially the mutually contradictory nature of the first two inferences, has so far not been realized by historians, and needs to be sorted out.

7.3 Untouchability

From about the third to the post-Gupta centuries, a number of developments take place in the history of untouchability. Although the practice had been known earlier, the term 'untouchable (asprishya) for them is used for the first time in early medieval India. Sometimes untouchables were also called the fifth varna. Certain groups were placed at the bottom of social hierarchy, henceforth; they faced severe sociocultural segregation and discrimination by varna-jati order. The notion is as old as later Vedic period. They were first noticed in 600 BCE in the forms of Chandala, Magadha and Paulkasa. It cannot be said with certainty whether it was practiced during that time or not. But it is evident that they were treated differently. Around 200 CE the notion took a definite shape in the early Dharmasutras, Arthashastra and Manusmriti. Chandala became a synonym for untouchable and treated such by the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina texts. Along with Chandala, Shvapaka and antayavasayin became permanent source of pollution and various disabilities were imposed on them. They were also assigned lowly or impure occupations such as those of cremators, refuse-cleaners and executioners.

The practice of untouchability intensified in the early medieval period Brahmanical law books like vishnusmriti and katyayanasmriti used the word 'asprishya' for first time. More groups were added to the list but Chandala and Shvapaka continued to be treated as untouchables and they were saddled with more taboos. They were also distinguished from Shudras. Chinese traveler Fahsien also attests to complete social, occupational and physical segregation of Chandalas. Same treatment was also given by Buddhist and Jaina texts. In 12th century untouchability reached its peak. Expansion of Brahmanical society to new areas led to the inclusion of varied occupational groups and tribes into the untouchable fold. Notion of ritual purity and impurity sharpened more and that became a transmittable even through sight, shadow, touch, water and food. The Chandalas were the worst hit. Some existing groups with taboos were also designated untouchables which included Charmakara, Rajaka, Buruda, Nata, Chakri, Dhvaji, Shaundika, hunters, fishermen, butchers, executioners and scavengers. Beef-eaters or gavasanah were for the first time made untouchable. Several aboriginal tribes such as Bhillas, Kaivartas, Medas and Kolikas were also made untouchables because of their refusal of Brahmanical order. But they are not met with the same treatment like the mainstream untouchables such as Chandala and Shvapaka. Kaivarta and Nishada were not registered as untouchables in all the Brahmanical texts. Some agricultural castes were also labeled as untouchables due to their opposition to the Brahmanical system. Attempts were also made to create hierarchy among untouchables on the basis of degree of untouchability associated with different groups. Sometimes Shudras were also identified as untouchables particularly asat-Shudras. In nutshell, the untouchability was used as a weapon of exclusion at one hand; on the other hand, it was used to suppress the voice of dissent. But all untouchables were not excluded from society. Some early medieval Brahmanical texts provide exceptional references. The Smrityarthasara permits the untouchables to enter temples. Atrismriti and Devanna Bhatta's smritichandrika allow mixing with untouchables on several occasions such as in festivals, battles and religious processions; during calamities and invasions of the country. Rajatarangini also provides opposite pictures where Dombas and Chandalas appear to be playing a prominent role in court politics; Kalhana however also reveals the horror of untouchability increasing in his age.

The number of untouchable castes increases through the period, largely through the absorption of aboriginal (local) groups in the caste society. However, the Chandalas and the Shvapachas (literally, 'dog-cookers') remained the most conspicuous of them. The miserable life of these people seldom failed to attract the attention of shocked foreign observers. Early in the Gupta period, Fa Xian noticed it, and in the seventh century Xuan Zang (Hiuen Tsang) observed, "Butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners, and scavengers have their habitation marked by a distinguishing sign. They are forced to live outside the city and sneak along on the left when going about in the

hamlets." Twelve categories of untouchables are mentioned in early medieval law books, but the actual number might be much more. Detailed rules in the law books of Parasara suggest the increase in the number of chandlas and svapakas.

Most untouchable caste was backward tribes whose induction into the Hindu system was accomplished through brahmanisation and through the spread of Hinduized Buddhism. This can be inferred from brahmanical texts as well as from Buddhist Caryapadas. The latter refer to the domas, nishadas and their women folk and to the kapalikas, all of whom generally lived on mounds outside the villages and were untouchables for brahmanas. Apparently, certain tribal people could not fully absorbed into the Hindu society because of their being very backward and hence had to be pushed to the position of untouchables or those who offered stiff resistance to the process of conquest and Hinduisation were disposed of their land in the villages and forced to settle outside. Perhaps this happened to the Kaivartas who were finally and forced to settle outside.

Though the shudras were rising in their status but untouchability was very much part of the social fabric. A fairly large 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 rare examples of anashrita shudras. Pursuit of the so-called 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 places of workshop. The chandalas and doms were to carry sticks by striking which they made themselves known so that people could avoid touching them. When Vastupala was the governor of Cambay, he constructed platforms and thus stopped the promiscuous mingling of all castes in shops where curd was sold.

7.4 Status of Women: Matrilineal Society, Marriage, Property Rights, Inheritance

As with the other social groups, the status of women did not remain unchanged during the transition to the early medieval period. The changes that are noticed mainly pertain to the womenfolk of the upper classes of society. These changes did not occur uniformly everywhere. The brahmanical attitudes betray certain unmistakable tendencies of further depreciation of women's status, one of the most intolerable things being a woman's attempt to have independence (svatantrya). There was an increasing tendency to club them together with either property or Shudras, just the Chandalas were coming to be bracketed with dogs and donkeys.

Marriage

Marriage is the root of the family from where gender relations generate. In the earlier period anuloma marriage was encouraged and pratiloma marriage was strongly disfavored. Both these marriages resulted in inter-mixing of varnas and jatis. In the same fashion, in the early medieval period marriage of dvija or dvijati men with other girls was disqualified. Some texts allowed the union but only for sexual gratification. In certain exceptional circumstances such union was allowed. Smriticandrika allowed such unions and framed rules of inheritance for the offspring. In such cases, offspring were not granted same social status as of their parents but lower than them (anuloma marriage). In case of pratiloma marriage, irrespective of their varna-jati status, offspring were given Shudra status or less than that. But marriage rules were not fixed. It was more fluid than it was projected

Early medieval texts increasingly lowered the marriageable age of girls while prescribing no rules for men. Pre-puberty marriage was made common. Alberuni observed the same thing among Hindus and the normal age for a Brahmana bride was 12 years. Early marriage made girls more vulnerable to patriarchal domination. But the practice of pre-puberty marriage was not universally followed across all classes and strata of population. In south India as well, the prepuberty marriage and bride price (dowry) became the norms of society. A girl's birth was not welcomed in the family. The discrimination against the girl child was sharper in upper classes than in lower classes. In corollary to simple form of marriages, re-marriage was made next to impossible or only in exceptional circumstances. Post-puberty marriages were deprecated, with one authority prescribing the age of the bride as one-third of the bridegroom's. Wives would considerably outlive husbands in such cases, and detailed provisions were accordingly made for regulating the lives of widows.

Brahma Purana allows remarriage of a child widow or one forcibly abandoned or abducted. While Medhatithi, commentary on Manusmriti, and others disapproves widow remarriage. The same

practice was not observed among lower castes. Lekhapaddhati reveals that divorce was very common among the lower section of society while rules for divorce were not enshrined in the Brahmanical texts. Thus, upper-caste men exercised strong control over their women through the institution of marriage and prohibition of divorce.

The Brahmanical literature also disfavored the earlier practice of niyoga and the views remained divided on the issue of paternity of the child born out of niyoga. Some ascribed paternity to the biological father and some to the husbands or to both. The practice became deeply problematic during the early medieval period and it seems that women increasingly lost their control over their reproductive capacity. Further, niyoga, especially of a woman with her younger brother-in-law, challenged the gender hierarchy on the one hand, the kinship hierarchy on the other. Under such circumstances, along with the complex inheritance laws, the practice of niyoga was increasingly discarded in the early medieval period.

About the re-marriage of widows we find in Yuan Chwang work that widow remarriage was unpopular in India, but not absolutely forbidden. This kind of marriage was not allowed in higher varnas, but in the lower varnas this system existed.25 we have many references of the provision of re-marriage in circumstances, while Vatsyayana pointed out that a marriage for the second time for womenneither liked nor disapproved. Amarkosha gives the synonymous opinion not only for the Punarbhu (remarried widow) and her husband but also for twice born man, having a Punarbhu as his principal wife. Katyayana refers to the case of a widow be taking herself to another man regardless of her adult or minor son, and deals under his low and partition and inheritance, with the share belonging to the son of a women, who has left her impotent husband.

The plight of women worsened in the early medieval period. More restrictions were added on the widowhood in the early medieval texts. They prescribed the tonsure of head of widows along with austere, ascetic, and celibate life. They also put restriction on diet, attire and self-adornment. In South India, under Brahmanical influence situation worsened after 7th century CE. The tonsure of head was an early Tamil practice, later adopted by north India.

The practice of widow-burning or sati became a more pronounced practice in the early medieval India. Textual and inscriptional records show it but it was mainly confined to upper strata more particularly to ruling and military elite. The practice was a product of patriarchal and patrilocal society where women and her sexuality were considered a danger or threat to the society. Physical death through immolation was considered easy than the prolonged or permanent widowhood leading to torture of body and soul both. The practice was also valorized as an act of courage and expression of fidelity. In northern India, practice of sati was more popular in the North-West, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The Brahmanical texts had divergent opinions on the issue. Medhatithi disapproves the practice. But sati got practiced. Non-canonical texts and epigraphic data also attest to it. Rajatarangini also records several instances of sati practice in the royal families of Kashmir. Here, not only royal women but also near relatives concubines, minister, servants and nurses burnt themselves on the funeral pyre of the masters. The practice of widow-burning or sati became a more pronounced practice in the early medieval India. Textual and inscriptional records show it but it was mainly confined to upper strata more particularly to ruling and military elite. The practice was a product of patriarchal and patrilocal society where women and her sexuality were considered a danger or threat to the society. Physical death through immolation was considered easy than the prolonged or permanent widowhood leading to torture of body and soul both. The practice was also valorized as an act of courage and expression of fidelity. In northern India, practice of sati was more popular in the North-West, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The Brahmanical texts had divergent opinions on the issue. Medhatithi disapproves the practice. But sati got practiced. Non-canonical texts and epigraphic data also attest to it. Rajatarangini also records several instances of sati practice in the royal families of Kashmir. Here, not only royal women but also near relatives concubines, minister, servants and nurses burnt themselves on the funeral pyre of the masters. Although not unknown in the earlier periods, the practice of sati gained ground steadily in early medieval times as instances of it begin to multiply. However, this did not win universal approval even in Brahmanism. Banbhatta and Shudraka, the leading literary figures of the times, criticized it strongly, and the strongest protest was beginning to develop in tantrism, which was to declare it a most sinful act. Bana mention about the sati of Harsha's mother queen 'Yasomati'. He wrote that she gave away her ornaments, took a sacred bath, put on all the marks of a lady with her husband living (avidhavamaranachitrnamuduahanti) and entered the funeral pyre. There is a description about the sati and queen Yasomati as "she was wearing a red scarf which was a sign of sati women (Maranaprasadhana), and she wear a necklace of red thread round her neck, she applied lots of red saffron on her body, one corner of scarf, the red flowers tied to worship fire, she wear garland and holded a painting of her husband". We also find the information that after

the treacherous assassination of Grahavarmana, Rajyasri his wife, was prepared to entire the pyre but saved by her brother Harsha.41 Among the Rajputs this custom became very popular between 9th to 12th century A.D. The average Rajput Princess welcomed the opportunity to become a sati and would not allow her husband to be cremated alone. We find about the sati of the mother of the Chahmana king chandramahasena, she became a sati in 842 A.D. The next case is that of Somapalladevi, who became a sati at Ghaliyala in Rajputana in 890 A.D. An inscription from Haveli (Jodhpur) refers to two cases of Sati of Rajaputa queens.

Bana tells us that queen Yasomati wanted to die unwidowed in order to avoid the disgrace of widowhood and loss of the venerable position, she held in the royal household. According to Harshacharita widows abstained from all sorts of personal embellishments; they did not apply collyrium to their eyes, nor did their faces glisten with the yellow pigment. They tied their hair simple. They were obliged to wear white garments only. In his work Bana mentions about the peculiar Veni, i.e. braid of hair of widows.

A general indication of the depreciation in the social standing of upper caste women is the deliberate erasure of their pre-marital identity after marriage. Till the Gupta period there is evidence that a woman did not need to lose her gotra identity and affiliation after marriage; thereafter, however, such marriages seem to have gone 'gradually gone out of use, at least among the ordinary people'.

Education

Sometimes a certain 'improvement' in the status of women in early medieval times is perceived in the fact that they were allowed, like the Shudras, to listen to certain religious texts and worship deities. However, this seems to have served, by making them religious-minded, mainly to strengthen the brahmanical religions and enhance the income of the officiating priests rather than to improve the quality of women's lives.

Women were not considered fit for formal education. Mitakshara explains that women are like Shudra, having no right to upanayana ritual which debars women from entering into educational life. Asahaha, 8th century commentator on Naradasmriti, justify the woman's dependency on the ground that they lacked proper education and well developed understanding. Elite women had some access to education and military training. Lower caste women had traditional training of their caste based professions, crafts and folk knowledge. There are some stray references of Sanskrit poetesses. Eminent poet of 9th century, Rajashekhara refers to some poetesses, such as Shilabhattarika, Vijjika, Prabhudevi, Vikatanitamba and Subhadra. He says that 'like men, women can also be poets'. The poet Dhanadeva also mentions some poetesses such as Morika and Marula who are adept in writing poetry, achieved education, won debates and attained proficiency in speaking about everything. However, we could not get a single kavya written by any poetess; even the verses attributed to them are limited in number (about 140 verses ascribed to 33 poetesses). The authorship of these verses could not be determined easily, since they are not part of any specific kavya. Women's position in society could be understood by the study of natya literature. In the natya literature, even the high-class women are denied speech in Sanskrit which was generally meant for high born males. In Mrichchhakatika, in exceptional case the ganika Vasantasena speaks in Sanskrit, while other high-class women speak in other dialects than Sanskrit. In Shringaramanjarikatha, Bhasa describes ganika Shringaramanjari as the epitome of learning and culture. The gendered Sanskrit literature of early medieval period shows a very marginal position of literate women

Vatsyayana gives a list of sixty four subsidiary branches of knowledge (angavidya) which should be learnt by a Ganika. These include not only music, dancing and singing solving riddles of words, chanting recitations from books, completing unfinished verses, knowledge of lexicons and metres, archery, gardening, logic, making artificial flower, teaching parrots, languages, flower arrangement, preparation of perfumes and cosmetics, gymnastics, carpentry, writing in cipher etc. Kavyamimansa describes higher education for the women of royal officials rich families and the class of dancing girls

Girls of ruling families used to receive some administrative training. We learn from legends of the medieval coinage, the names of the queens – "Didda and Sugandha" of Kashmir and "Somaladevi" of Rajputana, who took part in the administration of the states. Women in this period were also gaining education in religious and literary fields. In Kadambari Bana mentions about Mahasveta, as performing the Sandhya daily and muttering the Agnamarasana Mantra. Yet we have examples of highly accomplished women in the period, both from fiction and real life. In Dandapala's romance, "Tilakamanjari" (10th c) "Malaya Sundari" is a well educated girl and the heroine Tilakmanjari

practically knows everything that a girl of her social background is expected to know. Besides this Rajashekhara compares her to goddess Saraswati herself.

Rajashekhara's wife, a kshatriya by caste was a good literary critic and poetess. A drama, whose central theme is an important political revolution at Patliputra, has proceeded from the pen of a lady courtier. Marula, Morika, and Subhadra are the other poetesses referred in Sanskrit anthologies. Bana mentions that Harsha's sister Rajsri was expert in most of the arts like painting (alekhya) dancing (nartana), singing (Gita), Grammar (Vyakarana), writing (lekhana), reading books (Pustaka pathana) and playing the veena etc. She was well versed in debates on different subjects and she attended the general council of Harsha and debated on the questions of philosophy. Yuan Chwang, a Chinese traveler tells about the intelligence of Rajyasri. Except Rajyasri we find the name of several lady scholars, those have attended the Buddhist council in the period of Harsha. We find the name of some poetesses like Shilabhattarika, Vikatanitamba, Vijayanta, Prabhadevi, Subhadra etc.

Property Rights and Inheritance

Brahmanical law books recognized woman's right to inherit property in the absence male heirs. Women's right to property family indicates hold over property and reduced the possibilities of its seizure by state. Jimutavahana's Dayabhaga (12th century CE) and Vijnaneshvara's Mitakshara (11th century CE) also recognized the widow's right to inherit. But this was not practiced across the Indian sub-continent. Inscription of king Kumarapala of Gujarat dated to 1150 CE prescribes widow's right to inherit her husband's landed property. Another from Achchalpuram, Tamil Nadu, of Rajaditya Chola II talks about sabha or assembly's decision of a brahmadeya village to permit a widow to inherit the lands and other properties of her husband.

The earlier rights of women in the form of stridhana expanded in the early medieval period. Early medieval commentaries and digests amplify the scope of sridhana. Mitakshara interprets it as property of any kind belonging to the women. But the definition is not uniform in all texts. Some texts like Dayabhaga and Smritichandrika recognized the very limited scope of stridhana. Initially stridhana was largely limited to movable wealth. But women did not have absolute ownership rights to dispose the property through sale, mortgage or gift. Women were given only the right to possess. Family had superior rights over immovable property.

Much cannot also be made of the increase in the scope of stridhana, i.e. the wealth that a women could receive as a gift, for this did little to empower them in relation to men; their dependence and helplessness remained unaffected. While some authorities tried to get inheritance rights for the widow or daughter of a man dying sonless, actual historical instances make it clear that their prescriptions were routinely disregarded in favour of the contrary opinion by the early medieval kings, who would confiscate the property of such persons except for some privileged few; this provision, however, like those against widow remarriage and advocating sati, did not apply to the women of Shudra Varna.In fact, as in the previous and following periods, women of the labouring masses, simply for the reason that they had to work in the fields, pastures, etc. along with men in order to keep body and soul together, could not be subjected to the same kind of subordination and helplessness as was the fate of women of the privileged classes.

Early medieval inscriptions also indicate that a few of queens and wives of feudatories became fief-holder in the lifetime of their partners. Some of them donated their fiefs to temples and Brahmanas to gain religions merit. Some of them contributed towards religious architecture, repair and renovation of temple and tanks. This shows that upper class women had considerable rights and resources at their disposal. The practice was very common among Chola queens and princesses, indicating that they might have enjoyed personal allowance or personal property. Temple dancing girls or tevaratiyal were also assigned shares in temple land, revenue and taxes. They had landholding rights in the temple land. Women's landholding rights varied according to their social status. Rajatarangini also mentions many women donors and builders in Kashmir including female rulers (Sugandha, Didda and Suryamati); queens (Ratnadevi) and some non-royal woman (e.g., Sussala, Chinta, Valga, and Sambavati).

While women had limited control over resources, males had undisputed right over land and other resources and controlled it through family, fief and state system. Brahmanical normative laws also serve the cause of male domination over women's rights. The concept of gender equality was almost invisible. The Kashmir story is exceptional in this case where both men and women defied the traditionally recognized roles and undertook same projects of donation, buildings construction.

Summary

A number of important social changes have been identified in the transition to early medieval period. These changes are best approached through the composition, character and scope of the caste system, and the status of women within it. Jati is the basic unit in the caste system. People are grouped in endogamous Jatis, i.e. members of a Jati marry within and not outside their Jati. Often a number of Jatis in an area that are similar to each other in status and occupation make up a Jati cluster; and these Jatis and Jati clusters form part of one of the four varnas – Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. At the bottom of this caste hierarchy, i.e. Jati-based varna hierarchy, were the Untouchables, who were placed outside and in an inferior relation to the fourfold varna order. The terms jati and varna are not always used there in the sense of these categories, and their exact import has to be ascertained each time.

A comparison of the evidence across early medieval period shows that state society – the society of kingdoms and empires, which was by and large caste society, as distinct from the non-state, casteless societies of hunter-gatherers and tribes – was expanding significantly during this period. The caste society was also being transformed from within in response to political, economic, and cultural-ideological changes. From about the third to the post-Gupta centuries, a number of developments take place in the history of untouchability. Although the practice had been known earlier, the term 'untouchable'.

As with the other social groups, the status of women did not remain unchanged during the transition to the early medieval period. The changes that are noticed mainly pertain to the womenfolk of the upper classes of society.

Keywords

1. prakritis : trading guilds.
2. samskara-varjita : those who were deprived of the rights to perform rituals.
3. varnadhikarin : officer responsible for the maintenance of vanus.
4. Mula : place of origin of a family caste.
5. Anashrita:independent shudras.
6. Ashrita : dependent shudras.
7. bhojyanna : those shudras, whose food preparations could be taken by brahmanas.
8. Gavundas : scribes in Karnataka with landed interests.
9. Kula-jati darpa : vanity of caste and clan.

Self Assessment

Q.1. According to which foreign travellor, Shudras were 'Vaishya' in early medieval India?

A. Ywang Chang
B. Itsing
C. Hieun Tsang
D. Fa Hien

Q.2. Varnadhikarin was _____.

A. Officer appointed for the maintenance of varnas.
B. Officer appointed for the administrating social order.
C. Officer appointed for the managing the social tensions.
D. Officer appointed for the maintaining religious order.

Q.3. Choose the correct option-

1. Modifications in the varna system such as the transformation of shudras intocultivators thereby brought them closer to the vaishyas.

2. Newly founded brahmanical order in Bengal and South India wherein theintermediary varna were absent.

3. Phenomenal increase in the rise of new mixed castes.

4. Unequal distribution of land and military power led to the emergence of feudal ranks cutting across varna distinctions and increasing evidence of social tensions.

A. 1 and 2
B. 1, 2 , 3 and 4
C. 3 and 4
D. 2 and 3

Q.4. Who said, "Butchers, fisherman, public performance, executioners and scavengers, have their habitation marked by a distinguishing sign. They are forced to live outside the city and sneak along on the left when going about in their hamlets."?

A. Ywang Chang
B. Hieun Tsang
C. Fa Hien
D. both b and c

Q.5. Which ancient text throws light on the fact that mixed caste increased in early medieval India die to connection with Vaishya women?

A. Bhagwat Purana
B. Matsya Purana
C. Brahmavaivarta Purana
D. Vishnudharmottra Purana

Q.6. Which among the following was not in the anuloma marriage?

A. Brahma
B. Gandharava
C. Daiva
D. Arsa

Q.7. Read the following statements related to marriage in early medieval India and choose the correct option.

1. Marriage occurred on reaching the age of 15.

2. Brahmins married their daughters at early age.

3. Women were allowed to choose their husband.

4. Smirti texts allowed the female remarriage in exceptional cases.

A. 3 and 4
B. 2, 3 and 4
C. 1, 2 and 4
D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Q.8. Which historian stated, "Hindus marry their daughters at a very young age and were not allowed to marry a women above 12 years of age"?

A. Al beruni
B. V. A. Smith
C. William Crooke
D. Col. James Todd

Q.9. Choose which option is rightly matched related to number of marriages a caste is allowed in early medieval India?

A. Brahmana - 5
B. Kshtriya - 3
C. Vaishya - 2
D. Shudra - 1

Q.10. Which text shed light on the condition of women in early medieval India?

A. Kapurmanjari
B. Bhrihatkathakosha
C. Shunyapurana
D. Rajtarangini

Q.11. Read the following statements related to marriage in early medieval India and choose the correct option.

1. Property as land was a later feature after Guptas.
2. Every caste could acquire the property by various means allowed by Dharmashastra.
3. No indication of private property in land in earliest law books.
4. Property comprised of wealth, utensils, etc.

A. 3 and 4
B. 2, 3 and 4
C. 1, 2 and 4
D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Q.12. Which of the following scholars have not presented their views on property law?

A. Yajnavalkya
B. Katyayana
C. Gautama
D. Banabhatta

Q.13. In which period, Land was included into a property?

A. Gupta
B. Post-Gupta
C. Pushyabhutis

D. Both a and b

Q.14. What is the view of Mitakshara school with regard to 'inheritance'?

A. Partitioning of property in the lifetime of head of family.
B. No division in family could happen till father was alive.
C. Division of property in family was not allowed.
D. Only the eldest son of the family could inherit the property of the father.

Q.15. Which of the following property could not be divided by the done?

A. Vidyadana
B. Sauryadana
C. Dhanadana
D. Prithvidhana

Answers forSelf Assessment

1.	C	2.	A	3.	B	4.	D	5.	C
6.	B	7.	D	8.	A	9.	A	10.	B
11.	D	12.	D	13.	D	14.	A	15.	A

Review Questions

1. Discuss the changing status of sudras in early medieval period.
2. Explain the process of proliferation of castes from 6th to 12th century A.D.
3. Examine the changes in the condition of women from ancient to early medieval India/
4. Write a note on 'Untouchability' in early medieval period.
5. Elaborate the increasing social tensions in the post 8th century India.

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Unit 08: Society II

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Learn about the educational activities during the early medieval India.
- Learn about the life and times of people in early medieval India.
- Understand the distinguished educational institutions of the time period 600-1200 A.D.

Introduction

In this unit, we shall survey the socio-cultural changes that marked the transition to early medieval India. Our sources for locating these changes remain to some extent the same as those for discovering political and economic ones, but for the better part they are different. Even when they remain the same, they have to be analyzed differently. At times the links between the two sets of changes are not difficult to discern, as for example between changes in economic or political and social statuses, although the paucity or problems of historical data may make it difficult to establish the relationship. However, the connection is as often not so easily apparent or seems tenuous at best.

As in earlier unit, you have seen that a number of important social changes have been identified in the transition to early medieval period. These changes are best approached through the composition, character and scope of the caste system, and the status of women within it. Large parts of India continued to remain covered with forests, in which small, scattered groups of hunter-gatherers and tribal people practicing pastoralism and/or primitive agriculture lived. For instance, in calling southern Andhra Pradesh a sparsely populated jungle territory infested by highwaymen, Xuan Zang referred to one such area dominated by aboriginal population, who did not lead a settled life and for whom plunder was a legitimate source of livelihood. Similarly, for an extensive country in the northwest, he reports the presence of people who are stated to live solely by pastoralism, be very warlike, and 'have no masters, and, whether men or women, have neither rich nor poor'. Thus, its important to study what kind of changes occurred in society of dearly medieval India

8.1 Educational Ideas and Institutions

Since ancient times, India had been a centre of learning. Education was predominantly religious by nature. In the early medieval south India, agraharas, brahmapuris, ghatikas became the main

centers of brahmanical learning. Land grants gave an impetus to brahmanical learning. Such grants made either to a single brahmana or to a number of brahmana families were called brahmadeyas. Ghatikaswere the institutions of higher education and also centers of intellectual discourses and disputations. The agrahara was an allotment of a village or town or a number of villages by the king or noble family to brahmanas for their sustenance. Temples too were emerging as provider of several facilities including education. Mathaswere often attached to temples. Shankaracharya set up many mathas. In such educational centers, Mahajanas (brahmana teachers) were responsible for delivering shatkarmas or six fold duties. The curricula were planned as per the needs of the students and the orientation of the institutions.

Buddhists and Jainas had monastic institutions and the medium of imparting education was Sanskrit. The exchange of ideas, discussions and dialogue between different schools was facilitated by monastic institutions. Vedanta philosophy came to the forefront. In the Tamil region, Jaina monasteries were called palli which means to lie-down. The Jaina monks as they grew old and approached the twilight of their life, retired to caves where they spent their time till their death in imparting education to people. Some inscriptions show that in the Kazhugumalaipalli there were about fifteen female teachers and nuns teaching between the 8th and 12th century CE. Probably, the concept of school and education came to this region from early Tamil Jainas. At Cuddalore there was the Pataliputra monastery of Jainas. The MattavilasaPrahasana, a Sanskrit play written by the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I (571-630 CE), talks of the Buddhist friars and nuns and of a rich Budhhist monastery near Kanchi. When in 642 CE Huien Tsang visited Kanchipuram, he observed that there were about 100 sangaharamas or Buddhist monasteries and 10,000 Buddhist priests who were involved in the study of Mahayana Buddhism. Dharmapala (530-561 CE) was a Buddhist scholar of Kanchipuram who later became the head of the Nalanda University.

We also have some major universities which became prominent centers of intellectual activities during this time. Both religious and secular learning was encouraged. Vallabhi University was founded around 600 CE in modern Gujarat by the Maitraka dynasty. Nalanda Mahavihara, established by Kumaragupta I (415- 455 CE), housed a great library called Dharmaganja. Some eminent personalities associated with it were Aryabhata, Huien Tsang, I-tsing, Santarakhsita (founder of Yogachara Madhyamika philosophy), Nagarjuna (founded Madhyamika school of Mahayana Buddhism), Atisa Dipankar, etc. At Nalanda University, a wide range of subjects such as the Vedas, yogashastra, the art of war, fine arts, politics, astronomy, mathematics and medicine were taught. It was one of the oldest universities in the world. Odantapurimahavihara was built by Gopala I (750-770 CE), the founder of the Pala dynasty of Bengal. Another Pala ruler named Dharmapala (783-820 CE) established Vikramashilamahavihara. The most important subject taught here was Vajrayana Buddhism. It maintained contacts with Tibet and scholars from Tibet came to study here. In the 12th century, it is believed that there were about 3,000 scholars studying here. Many manuscripts were written in Sanskrit and also translated into Tibetan. Atisha Dipankar (980-1054), a Buddhist in the Pala kingdom was an adhyaksha (head of the university) here. He also founded SomapurMahavihara in modern Bangladesh. Taranath, a Tibetan Buddhist scholar Dharmapala built 50 religious institutions. Later in the late 12th century the mahaviharas of Nalanda, Odantapuri and Vikramshila were destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji, a military commander of QutubuddinAibak.

To spread their teachings, scholars visited modern Nepal, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia and China through trade routes. Vajrabodhi (671-741 CE) before visiting China, stayed at Srivijaya for a period of five months while AtishaDipankara as per Tibetan sources stayed there for 12 years. He returned in 1025 CE and then in 1040 CE he went to Tibet via Nepal where he converted Padmaprabha, the son of the ruler of Nepal, Anantakirti, into Buddhism. Padmasambhav (Rimpoche) who taught at Nalanda went to Tibet in 747 CE on the invitation of its king, Thi-srong-detsan where he introduced Tantric Buddhism.

Kashmir too became an important centre of learning during the early medieval period. An eminent scholar during the reign of Avantivarman (855-883 CE) who founded the Utpala dynasty was Anandavardhana who wrote Dhyanalok in Sanskrit. He is credited to have revived Sanskrit learning in Kashmir. The works of Kshemendra (990-1070), a Sanskrit poet include didactic texts, devotional works, poetics and satires (e.g. The Courtesan's Keeper). He introduced the concept of auchitya in poetry i.e. the use of guna, rasa, alankara, pada, in a poem in their rightful place. He mentions 27 different types of auchitya.

Apart from religious learning, encouragement was given to secular leaning as well. Mathematics and astronomy were the regular disciplines which were taught at the elementary and higher levels. However, this was also the time when practical knowledge of an artisan, a metallurgist or

pharmacist was not taught in the classrooms. But theoretical knowledge was imparted. Some important mathematician-astronomers of the time were Mahaviracharya, Shridhara, Aryabhata II, Shripati and Bhaskaracharya (Bhaskara II). Mahaviracharya (c. 800-870) was a Jain mathematician during the reign of the Rashtrakuta king, AmoghavarshaNrupatunga (814-878). In Jainism, mathematics and physics formed a part of the four anuyogas. Their aim was to explain Jaina Metaphysics and to provide an aid to attaining liberation of the soul. Mahaviracharya further developed the concepts propounded by Aryabhata and Brahmagupta. Earlier astrology and mathematics were treated as the same subject. Mahaviracharya identified the two as different branches of study. He wrote the GanitasaraSangraha. Bhaskaracharya II (1114-1185 CE) or Bhaskara II was one of the most significant mathematicians of the early medieval period. His major work, Siddhanta Shiromani consists of four volumes viz. Lilavati (dealing with arithmetic and measurement), Bijaganitadhyaya (algebra), Ganitadhyaya (astronomy) and Goladhyaya (astronomy). In his work Surya Sidhhanta he puts forward the concept of akrsta shakti (law of gravity) i.e. the earth's gravitational force. Much earlier Aryabhatta was the first one to expound the concept of zero and the heliocentric theory in the Aryabhatiyam. He rejected the popular belief that the earth is achala (immovable). He maintained that the earth is spherical in shape and rotates on its axis and orbits the sun. He calculated the circumference of the earth, the distance between the earth and the moon and gave the scientific explanation for solar and lunar eclipses. His findings were further developed by other Indian mathematicians such as Brahmagupta, Bhaskara I, Maharviracharya, etc. and also by the Arabs.

Govindasvamin (CE 800-850) wrote a commentary on the Mahabhaskanya. He mastered the Aryabhatian system. He was at the court of King Ravivarman of Kerala. He also wrote Govindakrti which was an original work on astronomy and mathematics. His disciple Sankaranarayana's (825-900 CE) commentary on the Laghubhaskariya is also noteworthy. He was appointed as the chief astronomer at the court of Ravivarman of the Chera dynasty of Kerala. Aryabhata II (CE 950) wrote a work called Mahasiddhanta. It is a compendious work based largely on orthodox views, showing some originality in the treatment of indeterminate equations. Similarly, Sripati (CE 999) wrote works which included (i) Dhikoti, a Karana work on the Aryabhatiya, (ii) a fuller astronomical work entitled SiddhantaUkhara, and (iii) a mathematical treatise, Ganitatilaka. He is credited with the discovery of the moon's second inequality. Satananda (eleventh century CE) hailed from Puri in Odisha and wrote a Karana work called Bhasvati, more or less in the style of the Surya-siddhanta. This work enjoyed great popularity among the astronomers and almanac-makers of the eastern region.

Brahmagupta defined zero as a number integer. Integer arithmetic was adopted by the Arabs in the 9th century. Al Khwarizmi, father of algebra wrote kitab al-hisab al-hindi ('Book of Indian computation') and kitab al-jam'wa'l-tafriq al-hisabalhindi ('Addition and subtraction in Indian arithmetic') . He introduced HinduArabic numerals to the West with the decimal system which in time replaced the Roman numerals. The Arabs made their own contributions to the knowledge they received. The Arab mathematicians such as al-Khwarizmi and al-Uqlidisi (920-980 CE) unlike Indian mathematicians did not consider zero as a number but an empty place-holder. Through the Arab world Indian and Arabic knowledge was transmitted to North Africa and Europe. In North Africa, Leonardo Pisano (Fibonacci) of Pisa (1170-1250 CE) obtained a mastery over them and documented the mathematical traditions of India in his book, Liber Abaci. Thus, this was also the period when significant developments were made in the fields of mathematics, astrology, etc. The observations and findings in these fields based on earlier findings and their diffusion led to further developments in these fields.

The indigenous learning traditions slowly eclipsed and its place was taken by the Maktabs and Madrasas. However, texts continued to be composed indigenously. Texts in mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and medical sciences enlivened the learning atmosphere. Many Indian texts were translated into Arabic. In the Arab countries, the pattern of education was characterized by Maktabs and Madrasas. These institutions came to be established in India as well and royal patronage was extended to them. While locals who were specialists in various branches of learning were made to head these institutions, learned men from Arabia, Persia and Central Asia were also invited to take charge of the Madrasas. Muslim rulers reformed the curriculum of primary schools. Subjects like Arithmetic, Mensuration, Geometry, Astronomy, Accountability, Public Administration and Agriculture were taught as part of primary education. A new kind of learning emerged which was a synthesis between the traditional Indian scientific culture and the prevalent medieval approach to science. Large workshops called karkhanas were maintained to supply provision, stores and equipment to the royal households and government departments. The karkhanas were functioning not only as manufacturing agencies, but also as centres for technical

and vocational training to people. Many artisans and craftsmen were trained by the karkhanas in different branches and later these people set up their own independent karkhanas.

The Arabs were not only interested in Greek learning but also looked up to Hindu sciences for meeting their growing interest in knowledge acquisition. Caliph al-Mansur (753-774 CE) initiated the translation of Brahma-siddantha into Arabic. He wanted the scientists to prepare a work based on this text which would serve as a foundation for computing the motions of the planets. This was done by Ibrahim al-Fazari and Yaqub Ibn Tariq in cooperation with Hindu pundits in 750 CE and the book was called Al-Zij ala Sini al- Arab, or Sindhand al-Kabir. Through such translations Indian numerals were transmitted from India to Baghdad. Al-Fazari with the help of Hindu pandits translated Brahmagupta's Khandakhadyaka and called it by the Arabic name Arkand. Both of these works exercised profound influence on the development of astronomy in the Islamic world. The Arabs learned astronomy from Brahmagupta (7th century CE) earlier than Alexandrian scientist Ptolemy. In mathematics too, Arabs learnt from Hindu systems. Arabic word for numbers is Hindsah, which means 'from India'. In fact what we call today Arabic numerals, were in fact Indian numbers. Arab scientists in Iraq, Mahummad Musa alKhawrizmi (CE 9th century) used the new numbers to develop algebra. The English word algorithm is derived from his name. Some of the noteworthy translated works were: works on logic and magic were translated by Ibn Nadim in the tenth century as Kitab al Fihrist; Ibn al-Muqaffa translated Pancatantra into Arabic as Kalila waDimna; parts of Mahabharata were rendered into Arabic by Ali Jabali, in CE 1026; a large number of Sanskrit medical, pharmacological and toxicological texts were translated into Arabic under the patronage of Khalid Barmaki, the vizier of Caliph al- Mansur. Indian medical text Susrata Samhita was translated under Caliph Harun al-Rashid (786-809 CE).

Important Centers of Education in Early Medieval India

A. Taxila

Takshshila was the most important educational centre of Ancient India, with widespread reputation in India and in foreign countries. It attracted hundreds of scholars from various countries of the world. Takshshila was also not an organized university. It may be called an educational centre of different special subjects where special and higher studies were carried onStudents, were admitted according to the decision of the teacher. The students were taught the subjects of their own choice. They completed their education according to their sweet will. There was no examination system prevalent. No degree or diploma was awarded to the students who completed their education.

Only higher studies were conducted in Takshshila and so the students of more than sixteen years of age were admitted in the University. Perhaps the fees were also realized in the beginning. This fee was about 1,000 coins current at that time. Those students, who were not able to pay fees, had to pay it in the form of manual labor. Sometimes, the students were allowed to pay the fees even after finishing their education. Those students, who were unable to pay fees in any form, were educated out of charity. Some meritorious students without proper resources were awarded the government scholarships. In Takshshila poor and the rich all kinds of students were given opportunity to study.

As Takshshila was the centre of higher education so its education system may be divided into two categories – Literary or General and Scientific or Industrial education. In Literary or Arts departments, all the religious literatures were included. Besides Atharva Veda other three Vedas, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda and Sam Veda were the foundation-stone of the education. Learning of Vedas, Vyakaran, Philosophy, Literature, Jyotish etc., the Brahmanical literature, the Buddhist literature were also taught in this centre. In regard to Scientific or Industrial education, 18 handicrafts and technical subjects like Greek architecture and arts were taught. The 18 arts were – Ayurveda, surgery, archery, warfare, Jyotish, prophesy, book-keeping, trade and commerce, agriculture, chariot-driving, mesmerism, snake-charming, hidden treasure investigation, music, dancing and painting. Practical experiments were also conducted in scientific and industrial education. The students had to prove their practical ability and efficiency. Some evidences are found to prove that some of the students, as university scholars (graduates) gave public demonstration of their skill going from one place to the other.

B. Kashi

In the 7th century B.C. Kashi became the most famous centre of learning in Northern India. The students began to flock here too, for higher studies of various branches of knowledge like Takshshila. Here too all the 18 crafts were taught. This was besides the Vedic studies. Together with learning, Kashi became the centre of Hindu religion also.

C. Nalanda

In the state of Bihar at a distance of 7 miles in the north of Rajgarh and in south-east of Patna at a distance of 43 miles, is situated Nalanda, where ruins are still displaying its ancient glory.

Fahian visited the place in 410 A.D. but Dr. Mukerji says that he had seen some other village named Nal, which in ‗SudarsanJatak' is named as Nalak or Nal village, and thus he could not visit the actual centre of Nalanda. Some scholars think at that time it might have been the centre of Brahmanical learning instead of Buddhist. Whatsoever case might be, but the gory of this centre was beyond doubts in and after 5th century A.D. At the time of the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang (629-645), it was the most important seat of learning.

D. Valabhi

Valabhi situated on the eastern side of Kathiawar. This centre also flourished about the same period when Nalanda was in its glory. Valabhi was a parallel centre of the Hinayana School of Buddhism as Nalanda was the centre of Mahayana School. It was a capital of an important kingdom and side by side a part of an international importance.

In the middle of 7th century, Sthirmati and Gunmati, the eminent scholars of Buddhism, were in this centre. This centre was famous not only as a centre of Buddhist culture and learning but also for the religious tolerance and mental freedom. The graduates of Valabhi were appointed in high government services.

E. Vikramshila

This place was situated in Magadha on the banks of the Gangas not very far away Nalanda. It is said to have included a hundred and seven temples and six colleges. It was founded by king Dhammapal at the close of the eight century and continued until it was destroyed about the same time as Nalanda. A learned and pious sage was always appointed as head of the monastery. The subjects taught were similar to those taught at Nalanda, including grammar, metaphysics and logic and ritualistic books.

Pundits who where eminent in learning were rewarded by having their images painted on walls of the university, and the title of PANDIT was conferred on distinguished scholars by king himself. Six of the most learned of the sages of this foundation were appointed to guard the gates, gatekeepers to examine the fitness of applicants seeking admission to the university.

F. Odantpuri and Jagaddala

These universities were other Buddhist centers of learning in India, but little is known about them and their sites have not been identified with certainty. The former was founded by a certain king Gopala, who was king of Bebgal and extended his power westwards over Magadha or South Bihar. It dates from about the middle of the eighth century A.D. HiuenTsiang mentions several other Buddhist centers (monasteries), where he stayed during his travels in India, in which teaching was given and in some of which he himself spent much time in study.

G. Kanchi

Kanchi University was famous in south India, and its main activity was to spread Buddhist and Jainism in the southern parts of India. The commercial community was of a great help for spreading Buddhism and Jainism. Among the subjects taught in the university engineering, sculpture and architecture were prominent subjects. The proof of this could be found in the huge splendid temple carved in big stones.

8.2 Everyday Life

Food andDrinks

References in the smrtis and general literature of the period under review do not indicate any noticeable change in regard to food and drinks. The lankavatra sutra gives in a list of approved foods, the names of sali (rice), wheat and barley, pulses of three kinds, clarified butter, oil, molasses as well as raw and coarse sugar. The food preparation was relishing due to the mixture of ghee and other tasteful spices. In Nalanda record we find a description of Anna (rice) beingmix up with curd and ghee. Mahabrihi was one of the best known variety of rice mentioned by Charaka in the list of principle kind of rice. Even Rajataranginipraises the Sali rice grown in Kashmir and the variety survived for a thousand years.

Generally, wheat and rice were separately prepared in ghee as the principle article of diet, to be presented before the diety i.e. for offering. This kind of preparation is mentioned in an inscription from Rajaputana where measured quantity of wheat and rice were cooked with fixed quantity of ghee.The record says that two sei of wheat flour required eight kalasa of ghee for preparing Navivedya . From the topography of the royal records it appears that wheat, rice and barley were cultivated in the Ganges Valley, Malva and Central India. Sugar cane has been mentioned in several inscriptions along with other cereals consumed by the people. Thus it is clear that sugar also formed a part of diet in that age. Cow's milk and curd are not frequently mentioned in the list of food stuffs; so it may be suggested that probably these formed a portion of meal of upper class of the society. Milk, sugar and rice also constituted Havis for the manes . Similar was the case of ghee which was not the substance of food for low class people. The SmrtikaraAngiran has proposed milk, curd and ghee for higher section while considering the comparative nature of theirdigestion. Apasthamba and Vedavyas and others have discussed this problem of food in society, where the discussion centres round the meal of Brahmanas and kshatriyas. Other castes have no restriction over diet, i.e. Sudras and Antyaja could take whatever they liked.

The inscriptions of early medieval period supply further information about the various spices that were used in the diet. A 10th century A.D. record mentions merchants trading in salt, pepper, ginger and vegetables which were collectively called Kirana. Thus, it is clear that spices were mixed up to make the food more tasteful and they were used along with ghee and oil for the preparation of the vegetables, fish and meat. The study of the dynastic epigraphs shows that oil formed a staple article for food. The oil pressing business is often mentioned in the records, which contain the gift of one palika of oil from oil mill or two palik on every kumbhaka (leather oil vessel) of oil sold. The references to oil industries show that this article was in great demand in the society.

The general survey of land grants reveals a kind of secret in the dietary of the higher section of the people mostly Brahmanas. In case of Agrahara villages while specifying the details of gifts the word samatsyakara is mentioned in many of the records of Gahadavala dynasty^ and the same word is mentioned even in a Buddhist record of Govind Chandra Deva. Similar reference is alsofound in a Pala document of Devapala but the word is Samatyasah.

It appears that this word is not without significance and may be explained in the way that the donee was authorized to use the fish in the ponds situated in the area gifted to Brahmanas. The presence of fisheries in the Agrahara villages may suggest that the Brahmnas (donee) use the fish in their diet/ though rarely or on some occasions. In the case of meat it was a discarded object of food for Brahmnas as stated in Smritis. In one of the epigraphs from Rajaputanawe come to know that chahamana ruler Alahanadeva prohibited the animal slaughter on specific days. Alberuni stated that people hasdesire for meat but law applied to Brahmanas only because they were the guardians of religion. The animal allowed for killing were sheep, goat, hare, fish, buffalo, water and land birds while cow, horse, mule, camel, elephant, parrots, etc. were forbidden. The above account points out that the practice of meat eating was common in the people except Brahmanas in early medieval society. But Alberuni's statement cannot be taken too literally.

Wine was a common drink in the age from 650-1205 A.D. and the inscriptions of this period contain sufficient references to this effect. The three kind of drinks were in the form of wine (Madhupana), liquor (Somarasa) and Tody (Rasarati). As regards the first drink Brahmana refrained from drinking wine which was a principal drink for the other castes. The Jodhpur inscription tells us in an indirect manner that during 9th century A.D. in Rajaputana the kshatriyas were accustomed to drink wine. We know that the Pratihara king Harischandra married two wives - one Brahmana girl and second kshatriya girl named Bhadra. The sons born to this kshatriya lady have been described as wine drinkers.

It is doubtful whether the juice derived from Madhuka flowers was called somarasa which we know in the present day being distilled for use as wine. The whole discussion brings to a conclusion that either the Brahamanadonee used some kind of liquor though not in the form of wine or sold Madhuka for distillation. Kalachuri record ofJaya Singh mentions the drinking of toddy by the people in general. The word Rasvati has been used for the Palm-juice in that epigraph which is a favorite drink to this day in lower society.

The use of liquor by the people does not indicate that there was no check on the use of the drink and it was welcomed in the society. The Smriti writers absolutely discard the use of intoxicating drink by the Brahmanas.

Dress andOrnaments

As in ancient times, in our period (650-1206 A.D.), also the Indians wore lengths of cloth (dhotis) draped around the body and over the shoulders, and fastened with a belt and pins. The lower garment was called paridhana and the upper, uttariya, which was draped shawl wise over the shoulders. The females by nature are lovers of beauty, so they try to dress themselves nicely and used cosmetics to increase the beauty of the body. Though the inscriptions are silent on this point but sculptures, images and paintings of this age have much to say about this subject. The detailed study of early medieval images shows that clothing represent the costumes of the people in general. The clothes required to be given to sun god points out that male used to havedhoti and a scarf attached to upper portion of the body . The Arab traveler Sulaiman (9th Century A.D.) testifies to the fact that people used to fasten a cloth to the waist and put on an upper garment* 2 3 4 5 . In the case of the god Manjusri, the artist have shown lower garment falling below the knee and upper garment like a 3 scarfencircling the breast with two ends flowing.

The evidences available from the artistic specimens show that normally woman also required two garments during this period. The dhoti, in which the sculpture clothed the dieties, was probably shorter than the present day standard dhoti of 5 yards length. In Bagh frescoes (7th to 8th century A.D)we find a realistic view of life (as the paintings are more human depicting the life of the time) and there the figure of the male has been short dhoti like lungi). In pre-Muslim period the standard appears to be nearer yards and this short dhoti of male may be seen in all figures of the gods. In the case of female perhaps it was about one or two inch above the ankle. In the case of female dress the sculptural evidences are not quite clear and partly seems to be conflicting whether upper part of sari covered the breast of the ladies as we find in the present day. In most of the cases generally the sari is seen covering the lower portion only. This fact becomes clearer when we carefully examine the manner of wearing the sari by the ladies. The sari in those days was not like the modern sari (i.e.going round the waist like petticoat and some part covers the upper portion) but that appears to have been of a different nature. In Bagh frescoes the females have green upper garment and striped under garment. The sari was not like a petticoat and the standing figure gives the most satisfactory result of the style of dress. Sari does not cover the front like flat piece but goes round the legs and exhibits their contours. Both the ends are tucked up and fastened behind like a kachha.

The sari having thus been finished at the waist, it remains to be seen how; the upper part of body was covered. Cunningham thought that nudity conveyed no sense of indecency in India prior to the advent of Muslims.So women in sculptures, images and paintings appear to be very scantily dressed. It cannot be argued that the upper portion of women is bare because the sculptures were not skillful enough to show the same sari covering both the upper and lower parts of the body. Though bodices were not inconceivable in higher society but examples are rare in the female figures during early medieval period. The Bagh frescoes only depict 4 female wearing short sleeved white bodice. In short it may be stated that wearing of clothes below the navel was universal among male and female. The uttariya was used by members of both sexes now and then. Sometime it is in the shape of narrow long piece of clothcovering fully the left breast and leaving the right partially uncovered.

As regards the nature of cloth it may be suggested that people knew the coloring of sari and designs of clothing. On the authority of Hiuen Tsang it is gathered that in 7th century A.D. king and wealthy people used rich dresses and this clothing of the people was made of silk, linen and fine wool. A reference in the Rajatarangini also proves to this fact that fluttering silk was used in early medieval Kashmir. In the area of Takka (area between Sind and Beas) people wore glossy white clothing madethe silk and 4 those of kanyakubja were dressed in glossy silk. Some other writers also mention similar clothes which were exported from India to the western countries of Asia. Thus, we find that cotton and silken clothing were generally used in this period.

The view that art of sewing was unknown to Hindus before the advent of Muslim does not hold good in the period under review. In spite of earlier references of the process of sewing in the Rigveda and later literatures, we find that blouses or jackets were in vogue in the plain of Northern India. Itsing informs that shirts 6 and trousers were common in Kashmir and Punjab during 7th century A.D. In Bagh Cave paintings ladies have been represented with colorful sari and jackets, but such examples are not many. Hence it appears that in our period, the fashion of wearing blouse was not popular or sculpturists knowingly deprived the female figures with this feature.

The fashions of dressing the hair were many and graceful. A detailed study of the paintings and sculptures of our period will be an eye opener to the ladies of the present generation and it will be clear that those fashions still survive in the society. The idea of the arrangement of hair and decoration can be better seen in the original than described. The best fashion of hair dressing in those days can be seen in Orissan sculptures (now in National Museum, New Delhi) and in all cases

the hair arefastened in a knot on the back behind. It becomes more graceful and varied by adding some pedding and ornaments. Some ladies used to arrange the hair in gradually receding tiers or in two artistic bundles hanging on either side of the head. The PehvaPrasasti of Mahendrapala describes that the feudatory Purnaraja was the cause of the curly hairs of the wives of the enemies becoming strait. The sculptures also help us to know about the arrangement of hair by males.Generally curly hairs are seen falling lower down. Besides this male had beared and moustache as seen by Sulaiman in his journey to India during 9th century A.D. The both were shaved on the death of a relation but it is not clear whether there was a fashion to grow the beard and moustache ornot. The ladies of early medieval period were very fond of lipstick (Red coloring of lips).The Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang observed that Indian ladies staining their teeth with redor black objects. The custom of reddening and darkening were prevalent in Assam and it was taken as the process of beautification of faces. It may be suggested that reddening was probably done by the betel which was used by the women in the society.

One of the symbols of Saubhagya was the use of bangles in the part of the wrist. This portion of the body usually have bangles and ornaments both at one and the same time, but one of the medieval sculptures shows that ladies were fond of large number of bangles occupying the wrist and lower part of their hands.

The women of early medieval period had a very simple taste of dress but she had a very fabulous taste of ornaments. The females were fond of wearing brilliant and artistic ornaments which may be regarded as the natural consequence of the prosperous condition of the society. The ornaments of varied types and most of them are still surviving in the present day society.

Rings (Mudra) were used on figures and bracelets (Kankana)were used along with bangles. Ear lobes (Kundala) pierced and hanging down were universally worn by both males and females and the designs were very graceful.Necklaces (Hara) worn by themale and female form an interesting study and they were prepared of gold and precious stones reaching down to the chest. The bracelets and waist bands are still common in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal. In modern days the nose ring is important for female, which a bride used to get at the time of marriage, but it is conspicuous by its absence in the sculpturesand paintings of our period.

Means and Recreation and Amusements

The life of the villagers during the early mediaeval period was full of hard work and all sorts of natural calamities such as draughts, floods, epidemics etc. but despite of all these problems,the villagers had their ways of celebrating certain things and those celebrations must have afforded some diversion to the villagers from their day-to-day life. Music and dance accompanied marriage and even ordinary occasions. Drums were sounded while the 2 marriage parties proceeded to the house of the bride. Sometimes the village ladies amused themselves with songsat the time of pounding rice. A sort of drama called buddhantaka, which was full of dances and songs, was current among the people. Presence of pumpkin lute proves to some extent that it was associated with the village folk. The women of the doma caste performed dancing feats. Thus, music and dance afforded much recreation to the people besides feasts, festivals and certain rituals.

Hunting also provided a good diversion to the dwellers ofthe hilly and forest villages. Appearance of hares in village areas sometimes attracted the notice of the people, and they ran after them making loud noise and hurling clads, sticks, axes, sickles, spades, poles, etc. The Aryasaptasti has several references to angling which may have been a sort of recreation. The Harshacarita refers to the Suka (parrot) and the Sarika (maina) relieving the brahmana teachers by reciting the lessons to the 4 students at Prtikuta, the native village of Bana. This shows that these two birds were pets in the village households. The people living in forest villages domesticated wild cats, mongoose, salijata, jataka etc. All these birds and animals must have provided some amusement to the villagers. According to a verse of yogesvara, bull-fight was also a source of amusement to the villagers. Moreover, people themselves with mutual conversation, news about royal court, memories of the past games of childhood, and narration of stories about persons of old. An inscription that 8 story-telling was popular in the eastern countries.

Recitation of the Puranas, especially in the villages of the brahmanas, was a good past time. A out doorgame called vikarsana, which means pulling one another by force, and niyuddha, wrestling or fighting with arms. The one who lost had to carry the winner on his back. All these games are still played by the village boys in North India. According to krishiparsara, raising of banks or mounds with dust on the paths by boys, which again is a favorite game of the village children.

Dice-playing, chessplaying and gambling were some of the known indoor games but it is difficult to ascertain whether these were played in villages. These days we find that dice-playing is a part of

marriage rituals in several villages and it enjoys the sanctity of tradition and custom. This may point to its practice in the villages in our periodtoo.

Custom and Manners

The fragmentation of social life which is the outstanding characteristic of Hindu organization has had one result, the consequence of which it is impossible to exaggerate. It negatived the principle of social obedience except within the limited sphere of the joint family and the subcaste and thereby prevented the growth of a feeling of social solidarity. The principle of authority on which national and social organization is erected has, therefore, been absent all the time in the past. Hindu life consequently developed as a wild and unregulated growth. Every type of custom however, poisonous, came to be tolerated and 3 received sanction under the cover of religion. The use of human flesh in worship, Sati (Burning widow), marriage before pubertyand dedication of women to the temples and other equally obnoxious customs which were prevalent in different parts of North India during the early medieval period (650-1205 A.D.).

In fact orthodox Hindu attitude to such practices never widely prevalent and limited always to certain areas and communities was that if people considered such practices as sanctioned by religion, it was not anyone's duty to interfere 1 with them. The Kapalikaworship and the more extravagant forms of the tantrism were considered by conservative opinion as being as orthodox as the performance of Sandhya (daily prayer, or worship at a temple).

The negligence of state and religious authority may have been the cause behind the customs took the place of religion and arrogated to itself through pseudo-sacred writings the character of divine ordinances. Till the East India Company, through the agitation of Ram Mohan Roy, took up the question of Sati, there was no instance of exercise of state authority for the purpose of prohibiting anti-social customs. The case of Sati is particularly interesting. The epigraphic records of early medieval period do not throw much on the practice of Sati but Smriti laws of Post Gupta period urge the widow to sacrifice herself on her husband' s pyre. Such as Sankha, Anglras and Harita are definite on this point it was not, as European critics fondly believe, a very widely prevalent practice. It was not practiced anywhere in south India. In north India also it seems to have been confined to royal and noble families and in their case also the practice was rarely followed except the self-immolation by a Brahman widow, still the Smritis of Gupta age prescribedalife of vows and strict celibacy for widow and allowher to inherit her husband's property.

Divorce was known in earlier ages. But in later times when the elasticity of society vanished and orthodoxy gained ground this practice fell into abeyance by the 11th century. Remarriage of widows too, which was prevalent in earlier ages, became out of date by our period. The testimony of Ksemendra shows that the prohibition of remarriage began to be extended to the child widows also. Devanna Bhatta (12th C) stated that the textssanctioning remarriage in such cases had no applicability in his age. It, no doubt, reflects the extent of narrow mindedness in this respect. In the Kathsaritsagra there is a reference to woman marrying eleven times since every time her husband died soon after the marriage. Though we find a reference to the remarriage of a widow but her children could not have the same status as the children of the vaisya from her first wife and probably this also proved a check on widow-remarriage. The children of a Punarbhu (The remarried widow) were not looked upon equal in rank with those of a non- widow. Though a widow could get a husband, her children could not get a father. She could be a mother to her step-children but her second husband could not be legal father to her children from the first husband.

During the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. we find that a widow was not to remarry. She was either to become a Sati or if she had infants or was an expecting mother, then she was to look after her born or unborn children and remain a life-long widow. In the Kathasaritsagra the child of a widow describes his birth and the torture which his mother had to suffer after his father's death. Another important custom that existed during our period was the marriage before puberty.

8.3 Migration and Settlement of Aryan Group in Different Regions of India

The process of land grants opened a new phase in rural expansion and state formation in the areas which were either virgin or sparsely inhabited. Impoverished chiefs and princes in the Brahmanical social order seem to have sprung up. This may have been the consequence of interaction between the internal dynamics of the tribe on the one hand and external stimuli on the other. Such an interpretation can be put on the statement that rakshasas in the form of brahmanas would appear

as kings and enjoy the field of the country. This statement may apply to tribal chiefs who were brahmanised and validated as rulers. It is also known that the people who protect themselves commit thefts and robberies for their own sake; their behavior is conditioned by the age in which they live, and they emerge separately as rulers in different territories by establishing the fiscal and administrative units called mandala.

The problem of rural expansion as a result of migration in the period. This could be studied from the sources of livelihood given in the Harivamsa. When this text speaks of migration of the people to Anga, Vanga, Kalinga, Rsika, Mekala, mountain valleys and Kashmir and mentions the refugees staying with the mlecchas in the forests, it also mentions sources of their subsistence. It also mentions that people subsists on deer, fish, birds, dogs, and all kinds of insects. They were acquainted with new technology in agriculture, due to which they produced, later, cereals. However, in these colonies they did not get water easily. They are therefore depicted as living on river banks and described as holding up the flow of streams in order to obtain water. All that has been said about the places of migration and the sources for the sustenance of the refugees suggests two inferences. First new areas on the periphery of the main Ganga heartland were brought under settlement because of insecurity and oppressive taxes in the long settled core areas. Second, though the refugees or colonists had to gather food for their sustenance initially, they gradually introduced cultivation. With the knowledge they possessed, they could easily improve methods of cultivation/agriculture. Whether the mechanism of land grants to the brahmanas or purely local efforts contributed to this improvement is not indicated in the descriptions of the Kali. But land grants made by the local chiefs were certainly an effective method of attracting the brahmanas to those areas.

Large scale migration was an important phenomena during the age. This is said of people in general and brahmanas in particular. Though the Jatakas also refer to people fleeting on account of royal oppression around the second to first centuries B.C., migration became common in the third and early fourth centuries B.C. migration became common in the third and early fourth centuries AD to which this age references belong. In later years, however, we also hear of massive migrations of the peasants causing the dissolution of villages in the 17th century in north India.

Summary

In this unit you have learnt, how the lives of people in early medieval India were being transformed in several significant ways over the two hundred odd years. Our concern was with identifying the dynamics of change. Even though, not much significant changes were visible in society or daily life of people. However, that the changes occurred in a uniform fashion all over the subcontinent. New institutions, for instance, makhtabs and madarsas became the center of learning was introduced by the foreign rulers. Still the indigenous educational centers continued to disseminate the knowledge. Some centers, as you have seen, lost in dust like Nalanda. The transition to the medieval era occurred at different points of time in different spheres and regions, and the pace at which change occurred also varied. Moreover, historical change seldom occurs in a sweeping, wholesale fashion. Remnants of the past, including the remotest past, somehow manage to cling to us; the scientist D. D. Kosambi in fact would always urge historians to detect clues to the past in the present. All the same, the patterns of change that we have outlined above made early Indian society recognizably different about mid-eighth century from what it was about midsixth century.

Keywords

- Madrasa: A college for Islamic instruction.
- Maktab: an Islamic elementary school.

Self Assessment

Q.1. Which of the following foreign scholars not mention about education in early medieval India?

A. Al Idrisi

B. I Tsing

C. Yuwang Chang

D. Hieun Tsang

Q.2. Which grammar work was taught to students in schools of early medieval India?

A. Arthashastra
B. Astadhyayi
C. Kasikavritti
D. Vritti

Q.3. Choose the option which was not a part of 'Four Vidyas' taught in educational institutions of early medieval India?

A. Varta
B. Dandniti
C. Shilpashastra
D. Astadhyayi

Q.4. Who authored Buddhacharita?

A. Panini
B. Ashavagosha
C. Banabhatta
D. Gautama

Q.5. In early medieval India, each caste was taught a specific subject to help them in attaining distinction in their area. Which of the following is not correctly matched?

A. Brahmans – Dandaniti
B. Kshatriya – Art of War
C. Vaish – Trade and Agriculture
D. Shudra – Agriculture and donation.

Q.6. Read the following statements and choose the correct option related to state of education in early medieval India.

1. There were no seats of Hindu learning existed.

2. Buddhist educational centers filled the gap created by the Hindu learning centers.

3. Nalanda, Vikramshila and Vallabhi were the significant seats of learning in early medieval India.

4. There was decline in education area too during early medieval India.

A. 1 and 2
B. 2 and 3
C. 2, 3 and 4
D. 1, 2 and 3

Q.7. Nalanda University was established by _____.

A. Samudragupta

B. Kumargupta
C. Chandragupta
D. Ramagupta.

Q.8. Samavartan ceremony was-
A. admission of student in gurukula
B. exam or completion of education
C. passing a subject
D. Promotion in a degree course.

Q.9. Which of the following statements are correct with regard to the Indian dressing during early medieval India?

1. Indian dress evidenced for wages due to foreign immigrants.
2. Ksuma, dukula, anisuka were the variety of clothing.
3. According to Itsing, Kauseya was not to be used by the monks.
4. Indian dress used wide variety of colours.

A. 1, 2 3, and 4
B. 1 and 4
C. 2, 3 and 4
D. 3 and 4

Q.10. Who said, "The Pala Kingdom produced such a fine and delicate material that a dress made of it could be passed through a signet- ring"?
A. Al Idirisi
B. Suleiman
C. Ibn Batutta
D. Marco Polo

Q.11. Read the following statements with regard to eating habits of Indians in early medieval India?

1. The staple food of Indians was wheat and rice.
2. Meat eating was not preferred by Indians.
3. Parasara prohibited drinking of milk of sheep and or she- cattle.
4. Soldiers were provided with non-vegetarian food.
5. Jains were allowed to consume non-vegetarian food in specific conditions.

A. 1,2 and 5
B. 2, 3 and 5
C. 2, 3 and 4
D. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Q.12. Which foreign traveler has appreciated the character of Indian people?
A. Yuwang Chang

B. Hieun Tsang
C. Suleiman
D. Itsing

Q.13. For Buddhist food and clothing, who said, "if the use of food and clothing be against proper rules, every step will involve some crime"?
A. Suleiman
B. Hieun Tsang
C. Itsing
D. Yuwang Chang

Q.14. Which of the following medieval historian gives evidence of serving meal in military camp?
A. Banabhatt
B. Kalhana
C. Hemachandra
D. Bilhana

Q.15. Which of the following was considered the purest drink in early medieval India?
A. Ganga water
B. Syrup of fruit juices
C. Sura
D. Rain water

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	A	2.	B	3.	D	4.	B	5.	A
6.	D	7.	B	8.	B	9.	B	10.	D
11.	D	12.	A	13.	C	14.	A	15.	D

Review Questions

1. What was the impact of foreign invasion during the early medieval period in the growth of educational institutions and literary works?
2. Write a note on prominent educational centers existed during early medieval India.
3. Discuss the factors that led to migration of population in early medieval India.
4. Elucidate the state of life and conditions of people in villages in the early 6^{th} -8^{th} century A.D.
5. Explain the cultural life of the population in early medieval India.

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Unit 09: Religion

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Develop an understanding towards the rise of religions and different sects during early medieval India.
- Learn about various personalities and their role in expansion of various religions in India and outer world.

Introduction

Religious developments in early medieval India show continuities with the preceding centuries and can be reconstructed on the basis of religious texts, inscriptions, architecture, and sculptural remains. At the level of popular worship, the focus was on devotional worship in temples and on pilgrimage. The Hindu cults, especially those associated with the worship of Vishnu, Shiva, and Shakti, became increasingly popular. The Tantric tradition became more visible and exerted its influence over Hindu, Buddhist and, to a lesser extent, Jaina traditions. While the Hindu cults were fairly widespread throughout the subcontinent, Buddhism and Jainism had a more restricted provenance. Jainism held sway in western India and Karnataka, while the strongholds of Buddhism were located in eastern India and Kashmir. The age-old naga cults still held their ground, as evident in the importance of the worship of Nilamata naga in Kashmir.

The relationship between different cults and sects was partly marked by interaction and a certain level of syncretism. For instance, the Jaina tirthankara Rishabha was turned into an avatara of Vishnu in the Bhagavata Purana. As already mentioned, certain Puranas include the Buddha among the incarnations of Vishnu. A verse in Jayadeva's Gita Govinda refers to the Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Keshava (Vishnu). The Brihadishvara temple at Tanjore has a large image of a seated Buddha to the right of the main gateway, and the Buddha under a bodhi tree is depicted in some relief carvings around the temple. At the same time, the relationship between religious

traditions and sects could also be marked by tensions and rivalry, an example of which is the hostility between Shaivas and Jainas in South India. Such antagonism was sometimes expressed in graphic iconic form, for instance in sculptures of deities trampling on their rivals.

Many early medieval sites show a juxtaposition of shrines belonging to different religious traditions. One of the most spectacular instances of this is at Ellora, in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. From the 6th century CE onwards, artisans began chiselling a series of Buddhist caves at the southern end of the basalt lava outcrop, as well as several Hindu caves and shrines at the northern end. One of the most spectacular of the Ellora shrines is the Kailashanatha temple, built in the 8th–9th centuries. Jaina caves were added to the northern end at about this time. Similarly, at Badami (Bagalkot district, Karnataka), Vaishnava, Shaiva, and Jaina caves stand next to each other.

The early medieval period saw the advent of Islam on the subcontinent. Reference has been made to Arab merchants settled in various parts of western India. Epigraphic and textual evidence indicates that by the 13th century, the Muslim population in these ports and towns included not only Arab ship-owners and traders, but also local oilmen and masons. Several inscriptions record the building of mosques by wealthy traders. The centuries after the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate saw a growth in the number of Muslims in the subcontinent.

Religious shrines derived patronage from various sections of society. The political patronage of certain temples, especially after the 10th century, led to the emergence of royal temples. Religious cults were an important aspect of emergent regional cultures. Religious identities also became more clearly defined during these and the subsequent centuries. For instance, David Lorenzen has argued that a self-conscious Hindu identity emerged in the medieval period, during the period of interaction with Islam. As it is not possible to detail all the developments in the religious history of various parts of the subcontinent, a few of these developments are summarized below, followed by a closer look at Vaishnava and Shaiva bhakti in South India

9.1 Shavism

Rise and Development

The religion, related to Shiva is called 'Shaiv' in which there are regulations for worshipping Shiva, taking him to be the presiding-deity. The worshippers of Shiva are called 'Shaiv'. The antiquity of Shiva and the religion related to him, goes to the pre-historic period. During the excavations of Indus valley civilization, picture of a 'yogi' has been discovered from Mohenjo-Daro, who is sitting in the 'Padamasan' posture. He has a trident like ornament on his head and his three mouths. Sir John Marshal has identified his god with Shiva of the historic period. At several sites, Shivlings have also been found. From this it is known that this is India's oldest religion.

In Rigveda, Shiva has been called 'Rudra' who is famous for his violent form. When furious, he annihilates human and animal race and spreads epidemics. Therefore, during this Rigvedic period, 'Rudra' was worshipped from escaping from his wrath. Actually, both the qualities of destruction and blissfulness were embodied in him. It is believed that he destroys those people by his arrows that have no faith in him. But he is very beneficent towards his devotees. That is why he is called 'Shiva'. He can be easily pleased by devotion. He is the protector of human beings and Lord of the world. He had thousands of medicines which helped in getting rid of diseases. 'Rudras' place was not of special significance among the gods of Rigveda but in the later collection of hymns and 'Brahman' books. We find his increasing importance in this 'Shatrudiya Mantra' of 'Vajsanayee Sanhita', Rudra' has been told as the Lord of this whole universe. Along with being the lord of food-grains, fi elds and forests, he is also said to be the lord of thieves, dacoits, 'thugs' (cheats) etc, deter table creatures. In 'Atharvaveda', he has been called 'Bhav', 'Sharv', 'Pasupati', 'Bhutpati' etc. He is also said to be the lord of non-Aryans. He has been identified with fi re and sun. In Brahman grantha, Rudra is reckoned as the most prominent gods from whose powers even the gods felt afraid. He has been called 'Sahasraksh' (ie, Vishnu, Indra). His eight names have been told, 'Rudra', Sarv, 'Ugra', 'Ashni', 'Bhav', 'Pasupati', Mahadev and Ishan. In them, the 1st four are illustrative of his violent form and last four of blissful form. It has been told in 'Aitreay Brahman' that 'Prajapati' had sexual intercourse with his daughter which made the gods very furious and they decided to punish him. They created 'Bhutpati' with their violent forms, who killed 'Prajapati' and due to this action he was adorned with the title of 'Pashupati'. This shows that during the Brahman period Shaiv religion was gaining solid foundations.

In the Upanishad period, we find great enhancement in the reputation of 'Rudra'. In 'Shwetashvatar' and 'Atharvshiras', we get proof of Rudra's glory. 'Shwetashvatar' upanishid,

while equalizing 'Rudra' with supreme God, says 'one who rules over this world with his power, which is always present before everything at the time of 'deluge' who creates all things at the time of origin, he is Rudra. He himself is eternal or unborn. We get the same views form 'Atharvashiras'

By the coming of the Epic period, Shaiv religion got an extensive public support. We come to know from the 'Ramayana' that Shiva had not only become a god of the northern but of southern India also. He was worshipped as far as Ceylon. He has been given titles of human such as 'Mahadev', 'Shambhu', 'Tryambak', 'Bhootnath' etc. But the 'Ramayana is basically a Vaishnav Book.' Therefore, here Vishnu has been shown as greater god than Shiva. We get a detailed description of the glory of Shiva in the Mahabharta. In its initial parts, Shiva does not appear to be an important god but into the later portions, we get his description in the form of the highest god. He has been shown as equal and at some places better than Vasudev Krishna. It appears from 'Drona Parva' that Krishna and Arjun go to this HimalayanMountain to worship him (i.e., Shiva) for procuring Shiva's Trident. They call him 'Soul of the world'. Being pleased with his devotion, Shiva gives his Trident to Arjun. In 'Mahabharta', Shiva has been given the names of universal god, omnipresent, omnipotent etc. at different places and it has been said that from god 'Brahma' to the devils (spirits)—all worship him. It has been said in 'Anushasan Parv' that Krishna himself went to the Himalayas to worship Shiva for getting a son and being pleased had granted him the boon of getting his desired object. From this it is evident that he was respected as the paramount god. At one place, Krishna says to Yudhishthir that Shiva is the creator of all movable and immovable objects and there is none other to excel him.

The worship of Shiva is proved from various literary and archaeological sources. The oldest-coins which date back to the 6th- 5th, century BC, have symbols of Shiva worship such as 'Brishabh', 'Nandipad' etc. The Greek ambassador, Megasthanese mentions Shiv worship by the name of 'Diynosus' which was mostly prevalent in the Mediterranean regions. We came to know from 'Arthshastra' also that Shiv worship was prevalent during the Mauryan period. Kautilya suggests for the establishment of Shiva place of worship in the middle of the town. We come to know from Patanjali's 'Mahabhashya' that during 2nd century BC, Shiva was worshipped by making his idol. In Mahabharta, we find mention of the different names of Shiva—'Rudra', 'Girish', 'Mahadev', 'Tryambak', 'Bhav', 'Sarv' etc. The worshippers of Shiva have been called 'Shaiv'. Figures of 'Shiv,' 'Vrishabh', 'Trishul' (Trident) are found on the coins of shaka, pallav, kushan etc rulers. From this it is clear that even in foreign land Shiv worship was prevalent.

During the reign of Gupta kings, Shaiv religion progressed very much along with Vaishnavism. Temples and idol were established for the worship of Shiva. We came to know from the Udaygiri cave inscription that virsen, this Prime minister of Chandragupta II, was a Shaiv and he had got constructed a Shaiv cave on the 'Udaygiri' mountain. (Bhaktaya bhagvatasshmbhoh guhamekamakarayat). During the reign of Kumargupta I, 'Shiva Lings' were established in Karamdanda and Khoh (cave). During the Gupta period temples of Shiva and Parvati were got constructed at Bhoomra and Nachna Kuthar respectively. In Gupta composition, references to Shiva worship are found at several places. Kalidas was an ardent devotee of Shiva. In 'Kumar Sambhav', he has praised the glory of Shiva. The Puranas of this period also ascertain the greatness of Shiva. He has been called 'supreme Mahadev' among the gods. In puranas, we get mention of 'Ling worship' also. It appears from all these descriptions that Shaiv religion had got an extensive foot hold in the 5th century society and Shiva was worshipped by different names and forms. Probably, it was during the Gupta period that Shiva worship in 'Linga' form progressed.

Shaiv religion went in progressing even after the Gupta period. During the Vardhan period, it had got influence in society. Both Banbhatt and Hiuen Tsang mention it. It has been said in 'Harsh Charita' that in every house of Thaneswar town, Lord Shiva was worshipped. Hiuen Tsang writes that Vanarasi was the chief centre of Shaiv religion where he had over hundred temples. There lived ten thousand Shiva devotees. The 'Mahakal' temple of Ujjain was famous all over the country. Shashank and Bhaskar Verma, the contemporary rulers of Harsha, were also followers of Shaivism. Shashank was an ardent Shaiv.

Shaiv religion was also very popular in society even during the Rajput period (700-1200 AD). Several Rajput rulers were ardent worshippers of Shiva and they had got constructed palatial and grand temples. During the Chandel period, the famous 'Kandariya' Mahadev temple of Khajuraho was constructed. Shiva temples and idol were built everywhere in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Central India, Bengal, Assam etc. The Somnath temple of Kathiawad in Gujarat was the most famous and prosperous in pre-medieval period which was demolished by Mahmud. Alberuni gives its description. Besides the temple, many idols of Shiva and Parvati were built. 'Shiv Lings' were also established.Side-by-side with northern India Shiv worship also got great publicity and progress in

southern India also. During the reign of the dynasties rulers of the south—Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Pallavas, Cholas, etc—Shaiv religion progressed and many temples and idols of Shiva were got constructed. During this time of Rashtrakutas, the famous Kailash temple of Ellora was constructed. During the Pallava period, the propagation and development of Shaiva religion was made by 'Nainars'. The number of Nainar saints is said to be 63, out of which the names of Appar, Tirugyan, Sambandar, Sundermurti, Manikkwachgar etc. are worth mentioning. Their devotional songs have been compiled in 'Devaram'. Appar, who was also known by this second name of Tirunabukkarshu, was a contemporary of the Pallava ruler, Mahendra Varman I. He was born in the Bellal family of Nirugmur. It is said that at first he spent the life of a 'Bhikshu' in a Jain monastery. Later on, by the blessings of Shiva, he was cured of an incurable disease as a result of which he deserted Jainism and became a confi rmed Shaiv. Appar worshipped Shiva as a slave and preached it among the common people. Tirugyan Sambandar was born in a Brahman family of Shiyali (Distt-Tanjore). It has been said about him in a story that by the blessing of Parvati he had attained Divine knowledge at the age of three. His father took him around all the religious places. It is said that after travelling through the Pandya territory, he had initiated its king and people into Shaiva religion from Jainism. Sambandar had discussion with Buddhist teachers also and he defeated all of them in the debate. He sung many devotional songs and thus he was recognized as the most pious saint. Even today, he is worshipped in most of the Shaiva temples of Tamil region. Sundermurti was born in a poor Brahman family of Navlur. He was bright up by Narsingh Muvaidarayan, commander of army. Though his life-span spread over 18 years only, yet he became one of the unique Vaishnav devotees of his times. He wrote about 1,000 devotional songs. Sundermurti was addressed with the title of "Ishwar Mishra" similarly; Manikkvachgar was born near a village near Madurai in a Brahman family. He gained prominence by defeating the Buddhists of Ceylon in discussion in Chidambram. He also wrote many devotional songs, which have been compiled in "Tiruvashgam."

All the Shaiva saints made a vigorous propagation of Shiv-Bhakti,in Tamil society through the meditation of recitation of devotional songs, discussions and instructions. He said that the only way to obtain God is through devotion. The Naynars were against-casteism and he went to all sections of society to preach advocate his principles. During the reign of the Cholas, there was a great rise of Shaivism to the far south. The Chola ruler, Raj Raj I, was a great worshipper of Shiva who had got constructed the famous (Rajrajeshwar) Shaiv temple in Tanjore. Several idols of Shiva were also established. Rajendra Chola, the son and successor of Rajraj I, was a devotee of Shiva who had got constructed this temple of "Brihadeshwar" in his capital. During his time, Shaiva religion became the most popular religion of southern India. The reign of Chola king, Koluttung I, (1070-1120 A.D.) is worth mentioning for the progress of Shaiv religion. He was a staunch Shaiv, about whom it has been said that due to his unbounded veneration of Shiva that he uprooted Vishnu's statue erected in Chidambram Temple and got it thrown into the sea. Being perplexed by this incident, the Vaishnav teacher, Ramanuja had to leave the chola kingdom for some time. It has also been told that he had tortured Ramanuja and his disciples. It is clear from these narratives that Shaiv religion was predominant in the Tamil society of the chola period. Most of the kings of this dynasty showed deep interest in the construction of huge and magnificent Shaiv Temples, "Shiv-lings" and statues.

Thus, we see that the worship of Shiva, beginning in India from the pre-historic period, went on progressing up to the end of the ancient period and Shiva got a very prominent place in Hindu Religion. He was counted among the three "Devas" (gods)—Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Even today, Shaiva religion is one of the prominent religions of the India Hindu people. The faithful Hindus think themselves to be very fortunate by visiting the 12 'Jyotirlingas', situated in different parts of the country. For instance, Somnath, Kedarnath, Vishwanath (Kashi), Baidyanath, Mallikarjun (Andhra), Nageshwar (near Dwarka), Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain), Rameshvaram, Onkareshwar (Amleswar—M.P.), Bhimeshwar (Nasik), Tryambakeshwar (Nasik) and Ghuhmeshwar (Aurangabad--Maharashtra). In Shiva's personality, we see the co-ordination of the Aryan and post Aryan elements. Along with Vishnu and Shiva, the third prominent god of the Hindus is "Brahma" but no Sect came into prevalence after his name. The solitary temple of Brahma is situated in the "Pushkar Tirth" near Ajmer. Over its entrance gate is engraved a figure of his vehicle i.e. Swan.

Sects of Shavism

Many sects of the Shiva-worshippers came into existence which had different basis and rules. The introduction of some sects is as following-

Pasupat Sect

This is the oldest sect of the Shaiva which originated in the 2nd century B.C. According to Puranas, this sect was founded by a celibate, named Lakulish or Lakuli. The followers of this sect regard Lukulish as an incarnation of Shiva. They carried a stick on staff in their hand which was considered as the symbol of Shiva. Its oldest mark is found in one of the coins of Kushan ruler Huvishk (2nd century). There were the followers of this sect even during the Gupta period. From the Mathura inscription of Chandragupta II we find mention of one Uditacharya, who was a follower of the Pashupat sect who had got the establishment of two "Lingas". Banbhatt has mentioned this sect in "Kadambari" and has written that its follower applied ashes on their forehead and carried "Rudraksh rosary in their hand. Hiuen Tsang calls the people of Sindh and Ahi-Chhatra as followers of Pashupat. During the Rajput period, this sect was widespread and several rulers were its supporters. There is mention of Pashupat sect in an inscription of Chahman Vigrahpal. The rulers of Kalchuri—Chedi dynasty were followers of this sect. At some places has been told as synonymous to each other. The use of the word "Pashupati Acharya" for Shaiv saints is found mentioned. We know about the principles of "Pashupat sect from Maheshwars" compilation "Pashupat sutra" and "Vayu-Purana". Under the Pashupat sect the authority of 5 things has been accepted—

1. Karya-It is one which has no dependent power. Under it, comes all the powers of the 'living' and the 'senseless'.

2. Karan-It is one which creates and destroys all things. This is an independent element which has endless knowledge and power. This is 'Parmeshwara' (Shiva).

3. Yoga-It helps in establishing contact between the 'living-being' and God through intellect. It has two kinds: "Active" (Recitation of God's name and penance) and "Inactive" (to attain Divine knowledge after being free from worldly actions).

4. Vidhi-The medium which helps the 'living-being' in the attainment of God is called 'Vidhi. It has two divisions – Main (performance) and Secondary. To apply ashes on the body, Mantra, Jap (Repetition of God's Name, (circumambulation are said to be its main organ).

5. Dukhant-It means to get deliverance from sufferings. It is said to have two division – Anatmak (Soul-less) i.e. simply getting rid of suffering and Satmak (together with the soul) i.e. to achieve transcendental power through the power of knowledge and action.

Even today, the Pashupat sect is prevalent in some parts of India and other parts of the world. The Pashupati Temple of Kathmandu in Nepal is even today the prominent center of the followers of this sect.

Kapalika

This is the second sect of the Shaiv Religion whose follower worship Bhairav; taking him to be an incarnation of Shiva. The followers of this sect enjoy wine and women, keep matted hair, eat meat, smear their bodies with the burial-place ashes and carry a severed human head in their hand. Its ceremonies are dreadful. The worshippers of this cult are of a very cruel-nature. We come to know form Bhavbhuti's drama, "Maltimadhav" that a place, named "Shreeshail" was the chief center of the "Kapaliks". They always wore rosary of the severed human heads. To please Bhairav, they even gave human- sacrifice.

Lingayat Sect

Lingayat or Veer Shaivas, was one of the sects of Shaiva religion which spread widely in the 12thcentury in southern India (especially Karnataka and Telugu region). This sect began a public-movement for bringing a real revolution in the socio-religious life of the South.

The founder of the "Lingayat Sect", Basab, was the minister of the Kalachuri King, Vijjal (Vijayaditya, 1145-1167 A.D.) of kalyani. According to Shaiv tradition, the founder of this Sect were five "Rishis"— Renukacharya Darukacarya, Ekoramacharya, Panditaradhya, and Shivaradhya. He was born out of the five prominent Shiv-Lingas. According to some writers its principles were taken from Rigveda and the upanishads. But there is no solid proof for such a contention. The fact is that we get reliable information about the lingayat sect on the basis of Basab and his disciple, Channvasav. Basav was born in village Vagewadi of Bijapur district. He was the son of Madiraj and Madlambika who were religious-minded Brahmans. According to tradition, he took birth for the upliftment of Shaiva sect which was on decline at that time. He gained sufficient knowledge about the Shaiv religion at the age of eight. He said himself to be the great devotee of Shiva and declared that he has come to the world to eradicate casteism from the world. The Kalyani king, Vijjal, appointed him as his chief-minister, chief-army commander and treasurer. While holding these

posts, he made a vigorous propagation of his religion. In this work, he got the support of his able nephew, Channbasav. In this process, he perpetrated atrocities on Jain and some other religious sects. By and by, his followers began to increase and his sect assumed the form of a movement. The name of one of his fanatic followers was Ekantad Ramyya, who played a significant role in the propagation of this sect. Fleet is of the opinion that he was the real founder of the Lingayat movement and Basav gave it political support after a very long time. This is fully supported by Basav Purana.

The preaches of Lingayat sect, wrote all then literature in Kannad prose. This is called "Vachan". "Vachan" are separate paragraphs from one another. At the end of each, comes one of the name of Shiva by which he is worshipped. These were about 200 "Veer Shaiv" writers, which included some ladies. Pride of wealth, emancipation from religious ceremonies and bookish-knowledge, uncertainty of life, spiritual prerogatives of Shiva-devotees etc., and its subjects. People have been instructed to relinquish the resources of worldly wealth and comforts, to spend a detached worldly life and going under the protection of Shiva. The instruction of "Vachan" is very instructive, full of devotions and all-meaningful. Basav broke his "Janeyu" (religious thread). Denouncing "Varna Ashram" religion, renouncement of the world, penance etc., granted the right of attaining salvation to all the castes.

The followers of "Lingayat Sect" always kept a small "Shiv-Linga" with them. Generally, it remained in a silver box which they hang round the neck, tying it with a thread. They worshipped "Ling and Nandi" Basav has been said to be an incarnation of "Nandi". They are anti-Brahman don't believe in idol-worship and rebirth. They don't believe in the reliability of the Vedas and they oppose the sacrifice, given at the time of 'yagnas.' In it, child-marriage was looked upon with hatred and widow remarriage was given recognition.

Monasteries have an important place in the organization of "Lingayats". Complete social and religious equality can be seen among all the members of this sect. It was possible due to this influence of Islam and Jainism. Basav opposed pilgrimage and 'yagya'-sacrifice, etc. He was also against burning of the dead and advocated for the internment of this dead. Even to-day, some of his followers are interned underground. Due to the most liberal social views of the 'Lingayts,' they got the support of the lower castes and their religion took the form of a public religion.

The Lingayats believe in selfless service. Shiva has been recognized as the chief element that is completely self-conceited and independent. The creation of the universe is from Shiva and one gets his identity with Shiva due to Bhakti (devotion). Ling-worship has got a special place in this sect.

Thus the 'Lingayat' Sect began as a socio-religious movement in the 12th century which strongly attacked the bad customs of contemporary society and religion. Inspite, of this, the "varna ashram" religion remained in prevalence in the South and the caste-superiority of the Brahmans remained intact. The "Lingayats" have even got their hold in some parts of Hyderabad and Mysore.

Kashmiri Shaiv Sect

A new Sect of Shaiv religion developed in Kashmir which was different in principles and rules of conduct from other sects. This sect is purely philosophical and Gyanmargi in which the deter table ceremonies of the kapaliks—use of wine and women, to put ashes of the burial-ground on the body, to eat in the grave-yard, to sacrifice humans and animals etc. were criticized in harsh words. Knowledge was considered as the only way to reach god.

In Kashmir Shaiv sect, Shiva has been accepted as "Advait" (monotheistic) power. This is omnipresent and the world is his image. He creates universe with the help of "Shakti". Mind exuberance, knowledge, action, desire-have been considered to be his powers --"Jeev" (creature) in his real shape is Shiva but due to ignorance, he fails to understand reality. As the cover of ignorance is removed, he attains Shiva. This is 'moksha' (deliverance). The significance of 'Bhakti' (devotion) has also been accepted in this Sect.

Along with these aforesaid prominent shaiv-sects, there also came into prevalence some other sects. By the end of the 10th century, Matsyendra Nath started a sect, called 'Nath pant'. In it accepting Shiva as the prime god, the nine 'Naths' were given recognition as super natural beings. Their rituals and rules of conduct resemble with the 'vajrayani' Buddhists. The woman have a prominent place in the devotional system of the 'Naths'—Baba Gorakhnath greatly preached and propagated this sect in this 10th-11th centuries.

9.2 Vaishnavism

Rise and Development

The Vaishanav religion developed from the "Bhagvat religion". According to tradition, its founder was Krishna of the Vrishni (Satvat) lineage, who being the son of Vasudev, is called Vasu-Dev Krishna. He was originally a resident of Mathura. He has been called "Devaki-Putra" (son of Devaki in "Chaandogya Upanishad") and has been told as a disciple of Ghor Angiras. The followers of Krishna called him 'Bhagvat' (venerated). Due to this reason, the religion founded by them was given the name of Bhagvat. In Mahabharat, Vasudev Krishna was identified with Vishnu and Bhagvat religion became Vaishnav Religion. Vishnu is a Rigvedic god and like other gods, is the god of Nature. He represents the active form of the Sun. The greatest importance of Vishnu is due to this reason that he measured the entire Earth in three steps. He has been told as 'Urugaya' (great dynamic) and 'Urukaram' (projector of expansive feet). It has been said in his eulogy, that place is dearer to Vishnu where people inclined towards gods feel happy. That is the source of nectar. In the later compilations (hymns of a single Veda) and 'Brahman granth', we find increase in this influence of Vishnu. In 'Shatpath Brahman', he has been accepted as the counter part of religious sacrifice (yagna) and it has been told that in the war between the gods, he was proved as the most powerful and was declared as the most famous one. In 'Aitreya Brahman' also Vishnu has been described as the pre-eminent god. In 'Mahabharat', we find Vishnu being established as the paramount god. Actually, the whole of Mahabharat is full of Vishnu. In it, we find mention of different incarnations of Vishnu, one of whom incarnation was Krishna Vasudev. From this time, the Bhagavat religion becomes Vaishnav religion and Vishnu becomes a presiding deity. Patanjali has also described Vasudev as a form of Vishnu. In Vishnu Purana, "while describing Vasudev as one of the names of Vishnu, it has been said that 'Vishnu' is omnipresent, all reside in him, and hence he is Vasudev." Thus, we see that this ancient Bhagawat religion was later on transformed into Vaishnav religion. Similarly, when the identity of Krishna-Vishnu with "Narayana" was established then Vaishnav religion was called 'Panchratra religion' because the devotees of Narayan are called "Panchratra". As far as 'Narayan' is concerned, we find his first mention in Brahman Books. In "Shatpath Brahman", he has been described as 'Supreme Being', in whom the whole universe, Vedas, gods reside. It has been told further that to surpass all he performed 'Panchratna yagya' (sacrifi ce) and became supreme and omnipresent. In the 'Shanti Parva' of Mahabharta, while identifying Narayan with Vasudev Krishna. He has been described as omnipresent and creator of all.

The antiquity of Vasudev or Bhagvat religion goes up to 5th century B.C. Great Saint Panini has mentioned Bhagvat religion and worship of Vasudev. He has called the devotes of Vasudev as 'Vasudevak'. In the beginning, this religion was prevalent in Mathura and its adjacent regions. The Greek ambassador Megasthanese tells that people of 'Sursen' (Mathura) were devotes of 'Heraclese' which means Vasudev Krishna. The contemporary Greek writers of Alexander tell us that the army of Porus fought while keeping an idol of Hereclese before it. In Bhagvat religion, Krishna was recognized as the supreme god and rules were presented for attaining salvation by his devotion like Mahaveer and Buddha, Vasudev Krishna has been now acknowledged as a historical person. He was the chief of this 'Vrishni' clan. Before the beginning of A.D era, his worship as a god had already begun. In the "Gita", Krishna has called himself Vasudev, among this 'Vrisninam Vasudevoshmi'.

From Mathura, the Bhagvat religion began to spread slowly and slowly in other parts of India. It appears that it first became prevalent in the North-West and South and this religion came to Eastern India very late. There is no mention of this religion in the Ashoka inscriptions. After the Mauryan period, this religion became very popular in central India. This religion developed during the 'Shunga' period and even foreigners began to embrace it. The Greeks played a special role in making it popular. Archaeological evidences also inform us about the popularity of this religion. The 1st stone memorial, related to Bhagvat religion is the 'Garur Pillar' of Vidisha (Besnagar). We came to know from it that Helioderus, the Greek envoy of Taxshila, had accepted Bhagvat religion and worshipped this pillar after getting it erected. In its inscription, Helioderus has been mentioned as Bhagvat and Vasudev as 'Devdevas', i.e., "god of gods". The first region of Bhagvat religion are available on the coins of Apolodotes. From North-West to 'madhya desh', wherever the Greeks went, the religion also spread. By the 2nd century B.C. Vasudev began to be worshipped in society as the paramount deity.

The Bhagvat or Vaishnav religion reached its apogee during the reign of the Gupta kings (319-550 AD). The Gupta Emperors were followers of Vaishnavism and they had made it a state religion. Most of the rulers adopted the title of 'Param Bhagvat' (Great Bhagvat) 'Garur' (Eagle), the vehicle

of Vishnu, was the Royal symbol of the Guptas. We are informed by prayag inscription that the Gupta Govt. Papers contained the seal of 'Garur' (Garutmandak shasan). Many temples were got erected for the worship of Vishnu. [It appears from the Mehrauli inscription that Chandragupta II had got erected 'Visnu Dhwaj on the Vishnupad Mountain (pransurvisnupade giro bagvato visnordvaja sthapitah)']. From the Bhitri (Gazipur) inscription of the Skandgupta period, we get mention of the erection of vishnus' statue. It is also known from this Junagadh inscription that Chakrapalit had got erected a statue of Vishnu on the bank of Sudershan Lake; Remains of the temples and statues, built during the period have been found at Tigwan (Jabalpur, M.P.), Devgarh (Jhansi), Mathura, etc. In the Devgarh statue, Vishnu has been shown as resting on the bed, provided by sheshnag serpent. In the Puranas, written then during the Gupta period, detailed description is available of the incarnations of Vishnu. Amar Singh, the Lexicographer of this period, while mentioning 39 names of Vishnu in his book, has described him as son of Vasudev.

Even after Gupta period, the Vaishnav religion went on gaining ground. Even during the Harsha period, it was chief religion. In "Harshcharita" we find mention of 'Panchratra and Bhagvat sects'. During the Rajput period the Vaishnav religion had the greatest rise. In various inscriptions, due obeisance has been shown to Vishnu by saying '*Om namo bagwate vasudevay*' Various rulers had got temples and statutes constructed in honour of Vishnu. The Chandela Kings had got several temples of Vishnu constructed in Khajuraho. During the reigns of the Chedi, Parmar, pal and Sen kings many temples and statues were made. This period are quadrilateral and they have conch-shell, wheel, mace, and lotus in their hands. Side by side, statues of Lakshmi and Garur also got constructed. There was an exhaustive prevalence of the story of the ten incarnations of Vishnu and statues of each of them were constructed. There also came into prevalence in society different fasts and religious ceremonies associated with Vaishnav religion.

Like Northern India, Vaishnavism also progressed in the South. It is known from Sangam literature that during first century AD, this was an important religion in Tamil country. Many temples and statues of Vishnu are available in south India. The Eastern Chalukya ruler of Vengi were followers of Vaishnav and like the Guptas, the royal symbol was also 'Garur'. In their inscriptions, worship of boar is found. During the Rahtrakuta period also, Vaishnav religion progressed in 'Dakshinapath' (South), though the Rashtrakuta kings were supporters of Jainism. Dantidurga had got constructed the famous temple of 'Ten Incarnation' (Dashaavatar) in Ellora, in which the story of the ten incarnation of Vishnu is inscribed in the statues.

In Tamil country, the publicity and expansion of Vaishnav religion was made by the Alwar Saints. The word 'Alwar' means a person having vast knowledge. The member of Alwar saints has been told as 12 out of which names like Tirumangai, Periyar, Alwar, Andal Nammalwar etc. named special mention. They manifested themselves between the 7th and 9th centuries AD. The names of Poygai, Poodam and Paya are available as initial Alwar Saints, who were residents of Kanchi, Mallai and Malyapuram respectively. They preached bhakti in a straight and simple manner. Their views were devoid of narrower and communal terrorism. After them, we come across the name of Tirumalishai who probably flourished during the reign of Pallava king, Mahendra Varman-I. Tirumangai was a very famous Alwar saint. Through his Bhakti songs, while attacking Jainism and Buddhism, he made a vigorous propagation of Vaishnavism. It is said that he stole a golden idol from the Buddhist vihara of Nagapattam for the repair of the Srirangam monastery. Comparatively, his views about Shaivas were liberal. Among the Alwars, the name of only one lady-saint, Andal is available in whose Bhakti songs, Krishna story are mainly available. Andal was also mad in Krishna love like the Krishna Bhakt of poetess Meera Bai of the medieval period. In the last chain of Alwar saints, names of Nammalwar and his dear disciple, poet Madhur, are worth mentioning. Nammalwar was born in a Vellal family of Tineveli. He Wrote Bhakti songs in huge quantity. Serious philosophical thinking is visible in his songs. Taking Vishnu as eternal and omnipresent, he told that his realization is possible only by Bhakti.

The Alwar Saints, by their fervent devotion completely surrendered themselves to him. They were of the view that the whole world is God's body and real happiness is in serving him and coordinate work with devotion and knowledge sought to establish. Alwar has been compared to that lady who is separated from her lover and loses her life due to separation-pains of her lover. Thus, Alwar was a true devotee of Vishnu. He propagated Vaishnavism through recitation, accompanied by singing in loud music in praise of God, utterance of God's name and having a view of the idols etc. There was no philosophical intricacy in his preaching. He told only to propitiate Vishnu who incarnates from time to time for the welfare of human beings. According to him, it was not knowledge but devotion of Vishnu which was important for attainment of salvation. Even a person who does not know the Vedas, if repeats the name of Vishnu, can attain salvation. Being influenced by this Alwar saints and teachers, many Pallava rulers embraced Vaishnavism and made it a state-religion and

got constructed temples and statues in honour of Vishnu. Singh Vishnu had got contructed the temple of Adivarah in Mamallpuram. During the time of Narsingh Verma II, the Vaikunth Perumal temple of Kanchi was got constructed. Dantivarma was a great worshipper of Vishnu. In this inscription, he has been described as an incarnation of Vishnu. The Chalukya kings of Badami were also supporters of Vaishnavism and some of them had adopted the title of 'Param Bhagawat' (Great-Bhagawat). Several temples of Vishnu were built in Aihole.

During the time of Chola kings, Vaishnavism also progressed along with Shaivism. During this period, the propagation of Vaishnavism was done by the religious preceptors in place of the Alwars. They provided a philosophical base to the personal Bhakti of the Alwars. The religious perceptions were scholars of Tamil and Sanskrit, both the languages. Therefore, they preached Vaishnav principles in both the languages. The first name mentioned in this religious preceptor's tradition is of Nathmuni. He is said to be the disciple of the last Alwar poet Madhur. He arranged the Bhakti—songs of the Alwars. He is credited with the composition of 'Nyaya Tatva'. Besides this, he demonstrated this philosophical aptness of 'Prem Marg'. According to the tradition, Nath Mumi penetrated into the idol of Srirangam temple and was immersed in God. The second great perception was Alvandar whose another name was Yamunacharya, is also available. While demonstrating the importance of this science of Tantras, he told them being equal to the Vedas. Through his songs, he presented before his pupil in a beautiful manner the principles of devotion.

Ramanujacharya

In the perception-tradition the name of Ramanuja is most fit for being written. Their period is generally accepted as 1016-1137. He was born in a place known as Sriperumbadur near Kanchi. He got education in Vedanta for Yadav Prakash in Kanchi. After sometime, he had differences with Yadav Prakash on the explanation of some upanishadik formulas and he accepted the disciplship of Vaishnav perception, Yamunacharya. After the death of Yamunuacharya, Ramanuja became the religions preceptor of his sect. He wrote a commentary on 'Brahma Sutra' which is called 'Sri Bhashya'. His faith became famous as 'Vishistadvait'.

Ramanuja believed in god who was possessed of attributes. While living in the Sriramgam monastery (Trichanapalli) he did splendid works for the propagation and extension of Vaishnavism. Due to his efforts this religion became prevalent in society on a large scale. It is possible that it may have affected the dynastic religion (i.e. Shaivism) of King Cholas and being enraged by this, a fanatic Shaiv Chola ruler may have tortured him. But the identification of this Chola king is not definite. Generally, the Chola period was a period of good feelings and conciliation between the shaivas and their Vaishnavas and the story of Ramanuja was an exception. During this period like Shiva, temples were built in honour of Vishnu also and monasteries were built. The temples and monasteries were central points of the religious life of the Chola period. The saint-poet had written 'mantra' (hymns) in Tamil language for the worship of Vishnu.

Principles of Vaishnavism

In Vaishnavism, emphasis has been laid on attaining salvation through devotion. God is pleased with devotion and he takes his devotee under his protection. The Vaishnav principles find a detailed description in 'Gita'. In it, we get a demonstration of attaining salvation through 'Bhakti' by the coordination of knowledge, action and devotion. Lord Krishna himself says, "Leaving all religions come only under my protection, I will free you from all sins".

In Vaishnavism, idol worship and temples etc. have a significant place. Idol is considered as the direct form of God. Devotees go to the temple for worshipping him. Festivals like Dussehra, Janmashtami etc. are symbols of showing due reverence to Vasudev-Vishnu. The Vaishnav devotes recite God's name, accompanied by number. They gather at sacred placed meditate on him. Among the chief teachers of Vaishnavism, the names of Ramanuja, Madhav, Vallabh, Chaitanya etc., are worth mentioning, who propagated the religion more and more. Later on, Vishnu incarnation as Ram became most widespread and popular. During the medieval period, there was great development of Ram's story. Goswami Tulsidas, by writing 'Ram Charitmanas,' established the significance of the Ram, devotion in society. Even today, crores of Hindus worship Rama, who is possessed of attributes.

9.3 Tantricism

In its present widely accepted sense, Tantra means a literature which spreads knowledge and particularly knowledge of profound things with the help of mystic diagrams (yantra) and words

possessing esoteric meanings (matras) and helps the attainment of salvation. The Tantra as a special religious or philosophical concept gradually came into use from about 5-6th century C.E.

The religious practices which originated in the most primitive fertility rites of the non-Aryan tribal circles later came to be known as Tantrism. It not only infiltrated into the other 'civilized' cults (Jainism, Buddhism, Saivism, Vaishnavism etc.) but also emerged as a challenge and reaction to these cults as all of them had developed vested interests and had become parts of the establishment by the early medieval period. The established forms of religion modified tantrism and attempted to sublimate it through mystical interpretations and symbols. So, to the modern educated people, the core of Tantrism means essentially orgiastic rites involving the use of five makaras : matsya, mamsa, madya, maithuna and mudra.

Some Main Features of Tantrism

There always existed a marginal population to whom sorcery, fertility rites and secret tribal cults seemed essential. People who felt dissatisfied with official 'civilized' religion continued to learn and adapt these secret rites through the ages. In the Tantric practices of the early medieval period, we can see three important features, all of them interconnected. They are: a higher status given to women, sexual rituals, and the presence of many female deities. The causes for all these have to be traced to the tribal fertility rites. Women clearly enjoyed a higher status in all the tribal belts. Since in the Sanskrit texts they were bracketed with the sudras, it became necessary for them to raise their traditional ritual status by means of Tantric initiations. Similarly, among the primitive people in India and outside, sexual rites formed an important part of their religious rites. It was believed by the tribal that such rites promoted the fertility of the earth.

The reason for the importance of female deities in Tantrism is that in all the tribal belts the cult of the mother goddesses was widely prevalent. These aboriginal goddesses entered into Brahmanism as Shakti, Buddhism as Tara and Jainism as many Yakshinis. The Gaudavaho, a Prakrit test of the early medieval period associates Kali and Parvati with such tribals as the Kols and the Sabaras, Shakti is known as Matangi (a goddess of Matanga triks and Candali a goddess of the Chandalas). At the end of the Gupta period many tribal goddesses were absorbed into the higher cults, together with many magical rites, religious sexuality and a new form of animal sacrifice. All these increased in importance throughout the early medieval period. Tantrism emerged as a religious factor in the 6th century A.D. and became a strong force by the 9th century.

Despite the fact that Tantrism lost much of its original character by the early medieval period and that it received patronage from kings, officials and higher classes who sanskritised it. Tantrism continued to be a challenge to organized and officially patronized major religions like Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. The priests of Tantrism challenged the exclusive initatory rites of the brahmanas. If brahmanas claimed superiority due to their Vedic rituals, the tribal priests claimed magical powers through their esoteric rituals and sexo-yogic practices. Thus, Tantrism served an important social purpose by generally providing for the initiation of lower castes and women, who were held to be of inferior status by the brahmanical system.

The Tantric priests claimed mastry over a number of rituals, occult practices and herbal remedies not only to cure snake bites, insect bites and so on, but also to ward off the evil effects caused by ghosts and planets. Thus. the early medieval Tantric priest acted as a priest, physician, astrologer and shaman.

Tantrism and the Heterodox Religions

It was noted that the most primitive fertility rites reappeared sublimated in form, as Tantrism and penetrated Buddhism: Jainism and the Brahmana theology. Early Buddhism and Jainism tried their best to check the infiltration of these Tantric practices into their cults. In the earliest phase of their history, Buddhism and Jainism launched a systematic campaign against the cult of image worship, rituals and sacrifices as destructive of all morals. They stressed on the purification of soul for the attainment of nirvana or salvation.

Mahayanism, a major development of Buddhism adopted image worship during the Kushana period. Mahayanism is said to have developed into Mantrayanism or Vajrayanism in the Andhra region by adopting Tantric practices. Many Tantric texts emerged since the 3rd century A.D. from Andhra and Kalinga and spread to Vanga and Magadha where Nalanda developed as a centre of Tantric study in the reign of the Palas. Sri Guhyasamaja Tantra was written probably in the 3rd century A.D. The Vajrayana Tantric literature is so vast that only a nominal catalogue of its works found in Tibetan language comprises three high volumes.

Idol worship and rituals appeared in Jainism in the early centuries of the C.E. Samantabhadra (3rd century A.D.) in his Paumachariya glorified temple worship and rituals. Jaina, Puranas and other literature emphasized that the devotees of Adinatha could get victory over enemies and ward off diseases and evil spirits.

In the early medieval age, Tantrism infiltrated into Jainism on a significant scale as it did into other religions. As a result, Jainism developed a pantheon of Yakshas and Yakshis (the attendant demi-gods and goddesses of the Tirthankaras) together with a number of mantras (magical formulae) to propitiate them. Many Jaina Tantric texts, which incorporated elements of magic and miracle, glorified the cult of Yakshis like Padmavati Arnbika, Siddhayika and Jvalamalini. These Yakshis were believed to bestow superhuman powers on their devotees. The Yapaniya sect of the Jainas was the foremost in propagating Tantric mode of worship in early medieval Karnataka

9.4 Jainism

Jainism was popular in parts of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Karnataka. Xuanzang's account suggests that the Digambara sect was more widespread than the Shvetambara sect. Jaina establishments received royal patronage from the Chapas of Gujarat and the Paramara kings. In peninsular India, some of the Gangas, Rashtrakutas, Eastern and Western Chalukyas, and Kadambas were patrons of Jaina scholars and establishments.

A large number of Jaina works were written in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha, Kannada, and Tamil during this period. The great Jaina philosophers of the time included Akalanka, Haribhadra, and Vidyananda. Akalanka, author of the Tattvartharajavarttika, was a skilled logician, and seems to have lived in the 8th century. Haribhadra was also a logician, and his works include a commentary on Dinnaga's Nyayapravesha. His Anekantajayapataka contains a refutation of Buddhist and Brahmanical doctrines. Vidyananda lived in the 9th century and belonged to Pataliputra. His works include the Aptamimam-salamkrita, which contains a detailed discussion of the principles of logic. The Adi Purana (8th century) of Jinasena and Gunabhadra listed and outlined a set of samskaras (life-cycle rituals) which were Brahmanical in form, but were endowed with distinct Jaina meaning. Echoing the prejudices of Brahmanical texts, the Adi Purana states that Shudras were not to be included in certain higher religious practices, including monkhood.

Jaina shrines of the early medieval period were located at various places in modern Uttar Pradesh including Deogarh and Mathura. The Digambaras were active in Samatata and Pundravardhana in Bengal. Several places of Jaina pilgrimage were located in Rajasthan, including at Chittor. The Dilwara temples of Mount Abu are among the most spectacular Jaina temples of this period. The Jaina centres in Gujarat included Bhrigukachchha, Girnar, and Valabhi, which was famous for its temple of Chandraprabha and a temple dedicated to Mahavira. In central India, Jaina establishments existed at Sonagiri and Khajuraho. In western India, there were well-established Jaina centres at Nasik and Pratishthana. There are Jaina caves at Ellora. In Orissa, the Jaina establishments at Udayagiri and Khandagiri continued to flourish in the early medieval period.

Jainism had a strong presence in the Karnataka area. The Aihole inscription of Pulakeshin II begins with an invocation to Jinendra (lord of the jinas) and tells us that the poet Ravikirti was responsible for the building of the temple in whose wall the inscription is embedded. Jaina temples are located at Shravana Belagola, Koppana, and Halebid. Jaina inscriptions have also been found in various parts of Andhra Pradesh. Donative inscriptions belonging to the reigns of Pallava, Chola, and Pandya kings have been found in various parts of Tamil Nadu, and they contain the names of various Jaina saints. One who is mentioned frequently is Ajjanandi, who seems to have lived in Madurai in the 9th century. Other saints, who were probably his contemporaries or near contemporaries, include Indusena and Mallisena. Jaina inscriptions at places such as Shravanabelagola give long lists of pontifical succession stretching over many centuries. By the end of the early medieval period, Jainism retained a significant presence in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Karnataka.

9.5 Buddhism

Xuanzang noted many large, flourishing monasteries in the Magadha area, such as those of Nalanda, Tilodaka, and Bodh Gaya, but also mentioned many deserted or ruined monasteries elsewhere. The Chinese pilgrim spent over five years studying the Yogachara doctrine at Nalanda. Yijing visited Bodh Gaya and the monastery of Tilodaka, which he described as housing some 1,000

monks. Xuanzang offers a general description of the monasteries of the time. He mentions their skilful construction and refers to their having a three-storeyed tower at each side, profusely painted doors and windows, and low walls. The monks' cells were plain outside and ornamented inside. There were large, high assembly halls in the middle of the building, storeyed chambers, and turrets of varying height, with doors facing eastwards. Textual sources and inscriptions indicate the location of monasteries of early medieval times, and archaeological remains of many of these have been identified.

The Buddhist monasteries at Sanchi and Amaravati continued to flourish till the 12th–13th centuries. The Chachnama refers to Buddhism flourishing in Sindh in the north-west. In Kashmir, the Jayendra monastery at Shrinagara and the Raja monastery at Parihasapura declined by the 11th century, but the Ratnagupta monastery and Ratnarashmi monastery at Anupamapura flourished in the 11th and 12th centuries. The Palas of Bengal and Bihar were patrons of Buddhism. Various monasteries such as Nalanda, Odantapuri (near Nalanda), Vikramashila (identified with Antichak in Bhagalpur district, Bihar), and Somapuri (located at Paharpur) flourished in their kingdom. There was active interaction between Tibetan monks and these centres. In Orissa, remains of early medieval Buddhist stupas, monasteries, and sculptures have been found at Lalitagiri and Ratnagiri. Several Buddhist viharas were built during this period in Nepal, as well as in Ladakh, Lahul, and Spiti. It was the Tantric form of Buddhism that flourished at most of the major monastic centres.

Buddhist images of the early medieval period show great variety in iconographic forms and testify to the popularity of devotional worship. The Bodhicharyavatara of Shantideva (8th century CE) describes the Mahayana rites of worship. These included bathing the image with scented water, offering food, flowers, and clothes, swinging censors, and burning incense, and the performance of vocal and instrumental music. Donatives inscriptions of the Maitrakas of Valabhi refer to provisions made to cover the cost of incense, lamps, oil, and flowers (dhupa-dipa-taila-pushpa).

The early medieval period saw the ascendency of Tantric Buddhism, which combined ritual, magic, and meditation. The earliest texts of this tradition are the Manjushrimulakalpa and the Guhyasamaja (5th–6th centuries). Tantric Buddhism was known as Vajrayana (literally, the Thunderbolt or Diamond vehicle). The thunderbolt and diamond both symbolized power and strength, characteristics of a person who had attained siddhi (enlightenment). The vajrasceptre and bell were important elements in the ritual paraphernalia of Vajrayana. Another name for Tantric Buddhism was Mantrayana—vehicle of the mantras. Mantras were considered an important means to attain spiritual perfection. One of the most important ones was the six-syllable mantra described in the tradition as the hridaya (heart) of Avalokiteshvara: Om mani padme hum. 'Om' and 'hum' were sacred sounds. Mani padme literally means 'jewel in the lotus' or it may refer to a bodhisattva named Manipadma. Buddhist Tantra has complex symbolic interpretations of this mantra, which was believed to have great potency. Female deities had an important place in the Vajrayana pantheon. The most popular of these was Tara. The exponents of Tantric or esoteric Buddhism were known as Siddhas or Tantra-gurus. The 16th century Tibetan traveller gives an account of famous Siddhas.

The Hevajra Tantra advocates the attainment of liberation by using and sublimating sexual energy. The Sahajiyas rejected obtuse philosophy and devotional worship, and attached prime importance to intuition in the attainment of salvation. This sect was especially influential in Bengal.

Buddhism did not completely disappear from the subcontinent, but it did decline and was relegated to the geographical, political, and cultural margins. Various factors have been suggested for this—the failure of Buddhism to maintain a distinct identity in relation to the Hindu cults, the 'degeneration' brought in by increasing Tantric influences, and a strident Hinduism represented by thinkers such as Shankara. The Turkish invasions led to the destruction of several major monastic centres, which formed easily identifiable targets. However, there is much about the history of Buddhism in early medieval India, especially the reasons for dwindling lay support and patronage, that remains obscure. It should also be noted that some of the monasteries that were established in Tibet and in the western Himalayas during these centuries have a continuous history right down to the present.

Some scholars have analysed the social aspects of Tantric or esoteric Buddhism. Miranda Shaw's (1994) study of women in Tantric Buddhism, suggests that women and men are integral to the Tantric way, and that they are both seen as capable of creating non-exploitative, non-coercive, and mutually enlightening relationships, and as capable of attaining liberation together. This can be seen, for instance, in the image of the union of a male and female Buddha as a symbol of enlightenment, as well as in the powerful iconography of yoginis in Tantric iconography. Shaw argues that women played an important role in the creation of Tantric Buddhism and that they

participated actively and fully in it as teachers, students, practitioners, and innovators. This seems a somewhat idealized view.

Ronald M. Davidson (2002) has tried to relate Tantric Buddhism to the broader patterns of political, social, and economic change in the early medieval period. Although his analysis is limited insofar as it takes the feudal paradigm and all its corollaries as a given, it does raise important issues about the social dimensions of esoteric Buddhism. Davidson suggests a 'samantization' of the gods, in which deities, like kings, came to be organized into a hierarchy of supremacy and subordination. He also sees a political resonance in the fact that Tantric Buddhism had as its defining metaphor the individual achieving kingship and exercising dominion. The newer forms of Buddhism had to grapple with the collapse of old sources of support and patronage and had to forge new social links. The siddhas evolved networks of political patronage and engaged with tribal and outcaste groups. Some monasteries grew into mahaviharas and became owners of large landed estates. Women's participation—both at the monastic and lay level—declined sharply, something very apparent from the inscriptional silence from all over the subcontinent.

9.6 Judaism

Judaism in the strict sense designates religious beliefs and practices of the Jews and broadly speaking it is the oldest monotheistic religion in the world. It has a written history of over 4000 years. It began as the faith of the ancient Hebrews in the Middle East and its sacred scripture is the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament). Yet, Judaism does not fit easily into conventional Western categories such as religion, ethnicity, or culture. Judaism, like Hinduism, does not have a founder and it is unable to pin point a time in history as the starting point. But, many believe that the root of Judaism is patriarch Abraham.

Moses

The covenant with Abraham takes nationalistic overtones and historical transformation with the exodus from Egypt. After impressing the Egyptian Pharaoh with magic tricks, Moses acquired liberty for the Jews in Egypt. Now it was Moses' task to lead the Jews out of Egypt to the holy land of Israel. He took the responsibility of making wise laws to maintain proper relations among the antagonistic tribes. With this aim he gave the "Ten Commandments."

1) I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me and you shall not make unto you any graven image. 2) You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

3) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy

4) Honor your father and your mother.

5) You shall not kill.

6) You shall not commit adultery.

7) You shall not steal.

8) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

9) You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

10) You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

While deities of Egypt, Babylonia, Phoenicia demanded that the devotees should erect temples in their honor and bring a multitude of sacrifices, the deity of Judaism demanded high moral behavior and ethical conduct. God asked them to be humane and civilized.

Debates abound on the question whether monotheism or monolatry existed during Mosaic time. Monotheism denies the existence of other gods whereas monolatry presupposes existence of other gods, but advocated worship of one god. Majority of scholars believe Moses tried his level best to introduce monotheism. This is further corroborated by the fact that the Phoenicians, Aramaeans, Babylonians and Egyptians spontaneously increased the number of deities and grouped them into male and female whereas in Hebrew tradition not even a word for goddess is extant. Though in some quarters, goddess Ashera was considered to be wife of Yahweh, her altars were destroyed as idolatrous. Yahweh was without peers.

Evolution of Judaism

Moses died before reaching the people to Canaan. Joshua took over the leadership. The Book of Joshua affirms that the land of Canaan was conquered militarily by Israelites. But, the Book of Judges testifies that it was a gradual settlement and not a sudden conquest. Archaeology conducted in Jericho too favors the latter. A possible reconstruction of history could be done by taking a compromise position. When the fugitives from Egypt (Moses' group) entered the high lands of Canaan, they met there people migrated from the coastal lands due to frequent wars between different city states. Slavery, famine and wars prompted them to seek safer places for habitation. Hill areas were safer because of two reasons: the main weapon of war in those days was chariots and these cannot climb steep cliffs and those on the top of the hill had the advantage. Therefore, there was relative peace in the high lands and this is symbolized by the phrase "land flowing with milk." Secondly, Mountainous areas provided food in the form of wild honey, fruits and animals. This relative prosperity is symbolized by the phrase "land flowing with honey." Thus, the high lands attracted two groups of people namely the coastal tribal people (Canaanites) and Moses' group. They shared their experiences and discovered that they had the same god liberated them from oppressive powers. They decided to form a Tribal Confederation agreeing basically on three things: One God, One People and One Land.

Political glory, intellectual contribution and religious fervor reached zenith in the time of David and Solomon. David was successful in blending spiritual powers with political, which found its expression in the divine election of David to be the royal line and it was confirmed by the prophetical testament. This was immediately followed by the selection of Mount Zion as the dwelling-place of Yahweh and David transferred the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem making it the capital of the theocratic state of Israel. Eventually, Jerusalem became the religious and political capital of Judaism. Solomon converted Jerusalem as the Temple city and this paved the way for the gradual disappearance of shrines in other parts of the country. The earth was considered to be consisting of three continents namely Asia, Africa and Europe descending from the three sons of Noah namely Sem, Ham and Japheth. Asians (Semitic) descend from Sem, Africans from Ham and Europeans from Japheth. The centre of the earth is Jerusalem and the worship of Yahweh was centered on the temple of Jerusalem.

In BC 921, with the death of Solomon, the kingdom was divided into two: Israel the Northern Kingdom (comprising ten tribes namely Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Gad, Asher, Dan, Naphtali, as well as Ephraim and Manasseh, today known as "ten lost tribes") and Judah the Southern Kingdom (made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin). Jerusalem was the capital of Judah and Rehoboam ruled over it. Division was both politically and religiously disastrous. The centralizing tendencies of Saul, David and Solomon were thwarted. To prevent his subjects going to Jerusalem, Jeroboam, the king of Israel erected many shrines in the north and allowed heathen practices to creep in and this paved way for religious syncretism. Though the images of heifers (calves) were originally intended to represent Covenant-God Yahweh, the worship turned out to be inferior compared to the worship in Jerusalem, which did not have any images. The dynasty of Omri in Israel established a new capital in Samaria and openly favoured introduction of Phoenician idolatry. Queen Jezebel, wife of Ahab, even succeeded in erecting in the new capital a magnificent temple in honor of her god Baal. But, the prophets of Israel denounced idolatrous practices and the kings could not turn a blind ear to their agitations.

The eighth century prophets like Amos, Hosea and Isaiah of Jerusalem highlighted the interior meaning of the Mosaic covenant in terms of fulfillment of the duties and love toward fellow beings and denounced empty cultus. This shift of focus from opus operatum of rituals (mechanical performance of religious rites) to sound ethical life is without any parallel in the Semitic religions. There were some attempts of reformation of pure religion (Yahweh-cultus at Jerusalem) during the pious kings such as Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah.

The Assyrians conquered Israel and Samaria fell in BC 721. The Assyrians brought native people and made them settle in Samaria and forced them to into mixed marriages. This strategic move gave rise to a mixed generation, later known as Samaritans. They believed that real worship should be conducted in Mount Gerizim.

The Babylonians defeated the Assyrians in 605, and attacked Judah in 597 and 587. Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and subsequent exile of the Jews led to hopes of a future national restoration under the leadership of a Messiah, a religious-political-military leader. He was thought to be a personal Messiah, a descendant from the house of David.

The deportation of the wealthier and better educated Jews to the heathen and of Babylonia and their sojourn there for over a period of 50 years brought drastic changes in Judaism. It was a time of spiritual purification. Cut off from their homeland, Jeremiah and Ezekiel emphasized the value of

the religion of individual even without a temple and external sacrificial system. They began to collect diligently their literature such as the Torah, prophetical and historical books, and parts of Psalter. The exilic prophets spoke of a "remnant" of the people, who would receive fulfillment of God's promises in the better times (messianic times).

Cyrus, the Persian ruler conquered Babylonians in BC 535 and allowed the Jews to return to their homeland of Palestine in 537. Some remained in Persia whereas many returned to Jerusalem. Jews began to reflect on the life of gentiles too. The worshippers of Yahweh felt themselves more akin to Persians than to the Babylonians since the former served God without images. If the creation stories of the Bible are heavily influenced by Babylonian mythology, the concept of Satan, resurrection of the dead, angelology and magic art etcetera crept into Judaism by the impact of Parsism and continued to exert their weight in Christian era too.

Those who returned to their homeland decided to re-establish theocracy. But, this is a period that was characterized by strict religious legalism. People were exceedingly zealous in observing the old ordinances. Though prophets like Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi insisted on healthy ethical life, external matters of religion were emphasized. The leaders like Zerubabel, Ezra and Nehemiah nourished antagonistic attitude towards neighboring gentiles who did not live under the Law of Moses. Their intolerance of Samaritans can be understood from the principle of the self-preservation of the people of Yahweh.

Jewish exclusiveness found a dangerous enemy from the days of Alexander the Great, who invaded Palestine in BC 332 and imposed Greek language. Hellenistic philosophy, language, culture, customs, and the world-view overwhelmed Palestine. Though the pious Jews (Hasidim) took measures to shield themselves from Hellenism, the secular minded Jews were attracted to this new philosophy. Antiochus IV Epiphanies tried to suppress Judaism but was strongly opposed by the Hasmoneans. The Book of Maccabees in the Bible bears testimony to this holy war. But, when Jonathan Maccabeus attempted usurpation of the high priesthood, the ultraorthodox Jews made a retreat to the caves in Qumran and dedicated themselves in the study, research and copying of the sacred scriptures. This group (formerly the Hasidim) was called the Essences of Qumran. Some of the Essences remained celibate. They held a philosophy of dualism such as the war between sons of light and children of darkness (this is not a jihad, but a spiritual dualism).

Eventually, there arose two other groups within the people of Israel itself, one was strict and the other lax with regard to the observance of the Mosaic Law. The strict group was known as "Pharisees," which means "Separatists" and the lax group was Sadducees, mostly the priestly class, who were ready to compromise with demands of the times. The Sadducees accept the written Torah as normative whereas Pharisees assert the authority of Oral Torah too.

Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian of the first century AD, mentions in his book Antiquities of the Jews another group namely the Zealots, who followed the so called Fourth Philosophy (an armed war against foreign domination).

It is to be noted that there were friendly exchange between Hellenism and Judaism. For example, in Alexandria a translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek was conducted in the second century BC, and this translation is known as Septuagint. Yet, the Wisdom literature especially Wisdom of Solomon defends wisdom of revelation contained in the Torah as superior to the Epicurean worldly-wisdom of Hellenism attained through reason. But, Wisdom of Solomon borrowed many ideas from Platonism and Stoicism, two branches of Hellenism. Net result was that the hokma (wisdom of the Hebrew civilization) was Hellenized. Philo, the Alexandrian Jew adapted Judaism to Greek civilization and to humanism. Thus, national Hebraism was adapted to Hellenistic universalism through allegorical interpretation of the sacred texts, which was contrary to orthodox rabbinical interpretation which clung tenaciously to the letter of the sacred scriptures.

The Roman general Pompey invaded Palestine in BC 63 and from then on till the New Testament period it was under Roman domination. The Temple was ultimately destroyed and burned in 70 AD and the Jews were dispersed all over the world (the Diaspora).

Beliefs and Practices of Judaism

Judaism underwent evolution during the course of its 4000 years of turbulent history. Yet, Judaism professes to this day the belief in one, asexual, eternal creator God, who is a righteous and compassionate king, judge and father. The basis of Judaism is the faith in one God, and believes in the unity and oneness of the universal Creator. In all Sabbath, festivals and daily prayers, the Jews recite the Shema prayer:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Its uniqueness consists, perhaps, in its understanding of God as a living personal God, holy and merciful, and his relation to the world in a dynamic manner. Judaism purified and spiritualized itself because of its own inner strength. It also suffered a lot of relapses, but maintained its uniqueness."

Jews are often called the People of the Book. They lay great stress on sacred scriptures, their study and interpretation. The Hebrew Bible is the foundation of Judaism. In Jewish circles, it is known as Tanakh, the acronym for Torah (first five books of the Bible), Nebiim (the Prophets) and Khetubim (other writings). The process of fixing the official list of inspired books started in 90 A.D. by the Jamnia Rabbis and therefore, the number of the books in Khetubim was not fixed in New Testament period.

A Jewish boy is circumcised on the eight day of his birth- this is the rite of Brit-milah. The naming of a Jewish girl on the eighth day is known as zeved habat. When the boy attains seven years of age, he is taken to a rabbi to study the scriptures. This continues up to the age of 12, when he takes a temporary vow to be a student of the Torah. At the age of 13, he becomes barmitzwah (literally "son of the commandment"), that is, a full member of the Jewish community. He chants a portion from the Bible at a special ceremony in the synagogue (when the temple existed, it was done there. In the modern times, Conservative and Reform Jews have a similar ceremony for girls called bas-mitzwah (daughter of the commandment).

An Orthodox Jew's wedding begins with a ketubah, that is, a marriage contract signed by two witnesses, prepared for bride and groom. The document states groom's obligations toward his bride. The marriage takes place under a huppa or canopy, which symbolizes the union of bride and groom and their future home. They sip wine from a single cup to show the common life they share. At the end of the ceremony, the groom breaks a glass as a reminder, in the midst of his happiness, of the destruction of the Temple.

Jews observe certain rituals in connection with mourning. The members of the immediate family sit Shiva after funeral services (shiva in Hebrew means "seven"). They stay in their homes for seven days, but do not mourn on the Sabbath. Mourners recite the Kaddish prayer written in Aramaic. Orthodox Jews observe mourning for parents for one year, and repeat the Kaddish daily. They observe the yahrzeit or anniversary of the death and recite memorial prayers called yizkor on holy days.

Judaism celebrates creation, revelation and redemption in the form of festivals. Major pilgrim festivals are Passover (Pesach), Pentecost (Shavuot) and Tabernacles (Sukkoth). Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), Day of Remembrance (Yom Hashanah, New Year Day) are high holidays. Other feasts are Hanukkah, Divali of the Jews (festival of lights) and Purim (Lots). Weekly holiday is the Sabbath.

In the synagogue, they kept an Ark where the scroll of the Torah is placed, a bimah (platform) where the Torah is read, and ner tamid (eternal light) where a lamp is kept burning always. There was also an amud (pulipit) facing the Ark, where the hazzan (prayer leader) stands while praying. A Yeshiva is a Jewish school of learning and mikvah is the ritual bath.

Rabbinic Judaism emerged in the New Testament period to replace the temple cult at Jerusalem. With the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, their religion was no longer centered in Jerusalem; Jews were prohibited from setting foot there. Judaism became decentralized and stopped seeking converts. The local synagogue became the new center of Jewish life. Animal sacrifice was abandoned. Authority shifted from the centralized priesthood to local scholars and teachers, giving rise to Rabbinic Judaism.

Judaism in Early Medieval times

The synagogue is the Jewish place of worship and the centre of Jewish education and communal affairs. A cantor leads the services. Selected portions from the Hebrew Bible are read on the Sabbath, on holy days (Yom Tov), and on Mondays and Thursdays. The Sabbath begins at sunset Friday and lasts until sunset Saturday. The rabbi, chosen by each congregation, serves as spiritual leader, teacher and interpreter of the Jewish law and scriptures. Judaism has no single head dictating religious dogma and no international body with authority over religious practice.

The Orthodox Jews (Modern Orthodox Judaism and Haredi Judaism, in USA and Canada alone there are 3 million spread over 3000 congregations) believe that every word of the Torah came from God on Mount Sinai. They also rely on the laws stated in the Shulhan Aruk (a Halakhic literature), the book of codes and decisions of recognized and learned rabbis. Out of the Thirteen Principles of

Faith proposed by Maimonides in 13th century, two –Ani Ma'amin and Yidgal- are held by many Orthodox Jews. Men wear skull caps or hats (kippah) at all times as sign of respect to God. Some orthodox men wear beards and sideburns. They keep Sabbath as a complete day of rest, study, prayer and devotion. They do not work, travel or carry money on the Sabbath. They place a small mezuzah as a reminder of God's presence at the upper section of the right doorpost of home. The mezuzah is wooden metal or glass case of three inches which contains parchment inscribed with 15 verses from the Bible.

An Orthodox Jew wears tefillin (phylacteries) during his weekday morning prayers. These are small boxes containing parchments with four passages from the Bible. A leather strap connects one box to the head. Another strap attaches the second box to the left arm near the heart. A Jew, when he prays, wears a prayer shawl called tallit with tzitzit (tassels) on four corners. There are 613 precepts in the Torah to regulate the daily life of every Jew and this number is symbolized in the threads of the prayer shawls. A prayer leader wears a special garment called kittel. Communal prayer requires a quorum of ten adult Jews, called a minyan.

An Orthodox Jew follows all dietary regulations strictly. They do not eat pork or pork products. They eat meat of those animals that chew their cuds and have cleft hooves, such as cattle and sheep. They do not eat shellfish, such as oysters, but only those fish that have scales and fins. They eat beef not strangled, but slaughtered in a special way. They free meat of blood before eating it. They keep milk and milk products separately and do not serve them at the same meal. Food prepared in accordance with the Jewish dietary laws is called kosher, meaning "proper for use" (The laws of kashrut -keeping kosher- are the Jewish dietary laws). Men and women sit separately in the synagogues.

In the middle ages, when Europe and Western Asia were divided into Christian and Islamic countries, the Jewish people also found themselves divided into two main groups. They are known as Sephardi and Ashkenazi. Sephardi Jews were centered in Spain and Portugal (under Muslim rule) and culturally linked to Babylonian Jews. When they were expelled in 1492, they settled in North Africa, the east Mediterranean, the Far East and Northern Europe.

9.7 Christianity

Christianity originated in Israel and was at first a group within Judaism. It developed primarily in the West, has become the largest and youngest of the world religions, with the exception of Islam. In general, all Christians share a common belief in the uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth as a truly divine and truly human incarnate Son of God who is the saviour of humanity. Scholars believe that Jesus was born between 4 and 7 B. C. at Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth of Galilee. His contemporaries regarded him only as the son of Joseph, a carpenter, and Mary. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke report that Jesus was born of a virgin.

Since Jesus' parents were common people, it is assumed he attended the local synagogue school and was trained as a carpenter. In the Bible only once is Jesus mentioned debating with the temple priests in Jerusalem, when he has twelve years old. The next eighteen years of Jesus are often called the silent years. When Jesus was about thirty he began his ministry at Galilee, with his baptism by John the Baptist, his cousin, in the river Jordan. Then Jesus spent forty days praying in the Judean wilderness. There he was tempted by the devil, which he overcame. When he returned, Jesus selected twelve apostles and spent three years teaching mainly in Galilee and Judea. His taught of a loving God, who wants us to love each other. He healed many of their sicknesses. "He went about doing good." Both the form and content of Jesus' teachings are recognized and respected as outstanding among the great religious pioneers and innovators of the world. Jesus believed he was sent by God and accepted Peter's description of him as "the Christ" (Messiah). The basic teaching of Jesus was the love of God and the love of all humans. Jesus taught the Kingdom of God, which is the fellowship of the sons and daughters of God with each other and with their Heavenly Father.

Jesus saw the Kingdom of God as a progressive growth of the individual and society, like a mustard seed growing. Jesus emphasized the worth of each human personality. Evil was to be opposed with vigour but persons must be loved unconditionally. Ethically, Jesus taught general principles rather than specific rules. He held that the spirit, the motivation, or intention is the heart of human behaviour and human beings will be judged by their intention. He regarded the body, mind, and spirit as a one. He saw them as essentially good and capable of growth and improvement, striving toward the perfection of the Heavenly Father. Much of Jesus' teachings were delivered in parables or short stories, which were shocking to the audience and which could be

easily understood by his disciples. The leaders of Judaism increasingly threatened by his appeal to the common people and by his radical teaching and behaviour conspired to condemn him. This was supported by the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. So, he was humiliated and brutally crucified. The third day following his death the Gospels report Jesus' resurrection from the dead. He appeared to many of his close disciples, who changed their way of life at seeing Jesus alive. For this faith or experience, they gave up their lives boldly and even joyfully. Forty days after the resurrection, he ascended into heaven.

At Pentecost (fifty days after the Passover) his followers in Jerusalem experienced being filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began speaking in different languages and preaching the gospel of their risen Lord with great enthusiasm and dedication. That is regarded as the beginning of the Church or the community of Christians. Peter and James assumed leadership of the Jerusalem Church until its destruction by the Romans in 70 CE. The early Christian Church was not a highly organized body with an established creed; therefore, it was exposed to a variety of beliefs, including some heresies (or false doctrines). For example, the Gnostics believed the spirit was good and that flesh was evil. Consequently, they denied that Christ could have been truly human. Jesus was not really born of the flesh and there was no resurrection of the flesh. Marcionism was another heresy started by Marcion, who declared that the God of the Old Testament was a cruelly legalistic and merciless deity and that Christians should discard the Old Testament and follow asceticism and celibacy, and scorn the world.

Still another heresy, Montanism, taught that the Holy Spirit was not to be stifled by dogma but should be free to move in the hearts of Christians, causing them to speak in tongues and engage in other charismatic activities and said that the world will come to an end soon. To counter these and other heretical groups, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, wrote "Against the Heresies" around 185 CE. Further, the Apostles Creed was adopted (325 CE) and the New Testament was codified and canonized, partially for political and partly for religious reasons. Besides these internal problems, early Christians were persecuted in the Roman Empire. Accused of being atheists who committed sexual atrocities and engaged in cannibalism, they were the scapegoats for all troubles of the Roman Empire. Thousands of them were killed, particular by the Roman ruler Nero. The conversion of the Emperor Constantine, whose wife and mother were Christians, brought persecution to an end. In 325 he called the Church Council of Nicea to stop the warring within Christianity over the nature of Christ.

The writings of St. Augustine (354-430), formulating the doctrines of original sin, had a tremendous impact on Christianity. Theological differences and deteriorating relationships between the East and West Roman empires resulted in a complete split in Christianity. In 1054 the Pope excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople which led to the formation of the Eastern Orthodox Church. During the medieval times, the Church and papacy developed power and gathered wealth, and became corrupt. The moral leadership of the papacy was at its lowest between 1309 and 1377. Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274), a Dominican monk, who lived in this medieval historical period, was one of the greatest thinkers the church ever produced. In his Summa Theologies he applied Aristotelian philosophy to the renewal of Christian theology in an attempt to bring faith and reason together. This led to scholastic philosophy which the Church holds dear till today.

The Renaissance, the rise of European nationalism, and the decline of the papacy set the stage for the Protestant Reformation. Religious leaders like John Wyclif in England, John Huss in Bohemia, and Girolamo Savonarola in Italy helped prepare Europe for the Reformation initiated by Martin Luther when he nailed ninety-five theses on the door of the Wittenberg Church in 1517. Further, Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin in Switzerland and John Knox in Scotland founded the Reformed-Presbyterian churches. The marital problems of Henry VIII were instrumental in founding the Church of England, establishing the heritage of the Episcopal Church, and later the Methodist Church under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley.

The most radical of the Protestant groups were the Anabaptists in Switzerland and the Netherlands, who vowed to discard everything that was not expressly found in the New Testament. These radicals gave rise to various groups like Mennonites, Amish, Quakers, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Unitarians. Later among the Protestants, social concerns resulted in the advent of the Salvation Army, the Young Men's Christian Association, etc. The Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation was led by the Jesuits, led by St. Ignatius of Loyola. At the Council of Trent in 1545 the Fathers of the Church declared that the Catholic tradition was co-equal with scripture as a source of truth. They reaffirmed the seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Marriage, and Ordination. (The Protestant churches

recognize only Baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments.) Later the Catholic Church established the doctrine of the bodily assumption of Mary (1950). The Vatican Council of 1869 declared the dogma of papal infallibility, according to which the Pope cannot make mistakes in matters of faith and morals when he speaks authoritatively and solemnly. The Second Vatican Council called by John XXIII in 1958 and meetings between 1962 and 1965 effected the most sweeping changes ever made in the Roman Catholic Church. It recognized Non-Catholics as true Christians; allowed the vernacular in the Eucharist and encouraged congregational participation in worship. There steps were taken toward reconciliation with the Orthodox and Protestant groups.

With the rise of modern science and the ecumenical movement, the mainline churches of Christianity became less doctrinaire and used scientific knowledge in their religious views. Many Christians accepted, for instance, evolution as the methodology which God used in creation and had no trouble with the possibility that there may be millions of inhabited planets in the universe. There was a sharp reaction to this "modernism" by conservative churchmen who became known as fundamentalists. They denounced evolution, and "worldliness" and accepted infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible, virgin birth of Christ, the physical or bodily resurrection of Christ and the bodily second coming of Christ. They call themselves as "evangelicals". On the other extreme, liberal Christianity believes that Christianity is a dynamic and growing religion; that revelation is progressive and continuous; that God is personal and each person's religious experience in unique; that emphasis should be placed on man's inherent worth, dignity, and potentials as a child of God; and that the struggle against evil is both personal and social. They stressed that Christianity must be deeply experienced, reflected upon and lived in all of life.

Doctrine of the Trinity

According to traditional Christian theology, God is triune. That is, God is a unity of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, but there are not three Gods, only one. According to the Athanasian Creed – a profession of Christian faith dating from either the fourth or the fifth century – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are co-eternal and co-equal: none is before or after the other, and none is less or greater than the other. Thus, a clear distinctiveness of Trinitarian doctrine is the notion that a man, Jesus, is included in the identity of God. Such an idea is alien to Judaism and Islam. It leads directly to the second primordial doctrine of Christian faith, which concerns the identity and significance of Jesus Christ. John Hick summarizes conventional Christian assertions about Jesus in a lapidary fashion: The Traditional Christian understanding of Jesus of Nazareth is that he was God incarnate, who became a man to die for the sins of the world and who founded the church to proclaim this. If he was indeed God incarnate, Christianity is the only religion founded by God in person, and must as such be uniquely superior to all other religions.

The doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere to be found explicitly in the Bible. There are multiple references to Father, Son or Logos (Word), and Spirit in the Bible. Early Christians struggled over hundreds of years in attempting to elaborate the relation of the man Jesus to the God who created the world. The classical doctrine of the Trinity emerged clearly in the latter half of the fourth century, principally among three Greek-speaking eastern theologians, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, the younger brother of Basil, and Gregory Nazianzus. In 325 CE Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, presided over a council of bishops in Alexandria who spoke of God as one ousia (substance) and three hypostases (persons). Their formula has remained a yardstick of Christian orthodoxy ever since. In other words, the Christian God has one substance and three persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

The Holy Bible

The Bible, made up of the Old Testament and the New Testament, is the scripture of Christianity. The New Testament began in the early Christian Church as a series of papers and letters written by numerous people. Over the years there was much discussion about which books should be officially recognized. In 367 Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, in an Easter letter discusses the books he considered canonical (i.e., accepted authoritatively by the community). This is the first list which includes all of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament as we now have it. Various church councils in the years that followed adopted this list. So, Christians believe that the Bible is the "Word of God in the words of human beings." Therefore, they interpret this Word of God to seek its meaning and relevance for contemporary situations.

Evangelization and Baptism

Christ's mandate to his disciples to spread his message of love and forgiveness throughout the world is considered to be an obligation on the part of all Christians to do likewise. The act of spreading the gospel of Christ is termed evangelization. However, the decision of accepting the message or of becoming a convert to Christianity should be left to the persons who receive the message, which is regarded as the work of the Holy Spirit.

The acceptance of the Christian faith by renouncing their old religious beliefs and practices meant for the converts a rupture from their old communities as well. So, the new Christians formed themselves into communities or churches of their own. The churches drew people from different religious and ethnic groups, who were welded into a new Christian identity. The new recruits to the faith were admitted with a simple ceremony called Baptism.

Universal Brotherhood

The fundamental principle of the ideal society according to Jesus is the idea of universal brotherhood. But just as the justification and motive for the ideal conduct stem from the desire to please and fulfill the will of God, the basis of universal brotherhood is also the love of God. The idea that the love of man flows from the love of God was made clear by Jesus when he was answering a question by a Jewish jurist.

The term neighbor used in this context, as Jesus explained transcends the traditional connotation of spatial proximity, but embraces the broader meaning of fellowmen/women irrespective of the spatial or social connections. The love of fellowmen is not ordinarily ingrained in social structures which always made a 'distinction between 'we' and 'they'. It is the love of God which makes the Christian ideal of loving one's fellowmen and women, attainable.

Church

The church plays a key role in the Christian society. It determines largely the Christian world view. It is of great sociological significance to see how the church encounters itself with the wider society and the world. The church is the actualization of the ideal society according to the teachings of Jesus. At the same time, it has to function within the wider society whose values and patterns of social relations are inconsistent with the Christian social order. Right from the beginning, the Christians were painfully aware of this contradiction and had to suffer on account of it. While regarding the ideal Christian society as the heavenly kingdom, they referred to the existing social order as the worldly society or the 'world'.

Sects and Sub-divisions

The complex form in which the Christian church finds itself at present with its many subdivisions can be attributed to the rise of pressure groups when the parent bodies deviate too much from the biblical path. Such dissident pressure groups which are called sects are either-

(1) Integrated into the parent body or,

(2) They secede or are expelled from the main church, when the dissident groups establish churches of their own.

i. The first type of phenomenon is represented by the monastic movements of the 4th, 5th and the 6th centuries, which were attempts on the part of some of the members to live in line with the teachings of Jesus when the parent bodies (the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches) were more inclined to the worldly life. The monastic movements were ultimately integrated into the parent bodies which underwent a renewal as a result.

ii. The second type of phenomenon can be illustrated with the 16th century Reformation movement in Europe, when several dissident groups left the Roman Catholic Church and underwent a renewal as a result of that challenge. The Protestant churches recognize the authority of the Bible alone, whereas the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches also recognized their church traditions as authoritative, besides the Bible.

9.8 Islam

Islam was born in the desert of Arabia, where Bedouin tribes lived. These were tribes of the desert, true sons of the soil. The desert had its stamp on the character of the people. The climate was

extreme and water was scarce; burning hot sun, hot sands and storms were the realities they had to live with. In such hostile ground, the tribesmen tended their animals for livelihood. They depended on the camel for transport, and the sun and the moon for time and guidance. Under such circumstances, where they had little to give, hospitality was a virtue; they were in physical danger all the time; bravery was a virtue. Where fear could easily overtake a man, manliness was a virtue. In such land, as if to answer the needs of men, Prophet Muhammad was born. The tribes, which were many in number, fought amongst them, followed polytheism, animism, and had strange rituals. They had to be unified, and made into nation. Hence was the advent of Islam.

Spread of Islam

The spread of Islam in the West Asian countries was more due to socio-economic causes prevailing at that time. It gave a relief from quarrels and strife, and various practices like polytheism, and animistic worship. The end product was a new faith and a new state, which suited the local population. In areas outside West Asia, various factors like discriminatory taxes against non-Muslims, desire of the leaders of society to become part of the body politic, the desire of the bureaucracy to preserve its privileges, the desire of the land–owning class not to pay the tax, and the desire to become a part of the upcoming empire, and various kinds of threats and privileges led to the spread of Islam. In the centuries following its birth, Islam spread by conquest and occupation, religious activism and peaceful missionary work. Gradually, it spread to North Africa, Europe, Arabian Peninsula, Central Asia, and up to Indus River in the east. In South East Asia, in countries like Malaya, and Sumatra, it was due to traders, who established themselves in these countries.

Holy Book

The Holy Scripture, Qur'an, considered to be the direct and true word of God, was transmitted by angel Gabriel to Muhammad, when the prophet was in a state of divine inspiration akin to trance. In this state, the prophet was ordered to recite (Iqra) the word of God, and hence Qur'an, a "recitation"

After the death of the Prophet, the holy book could not provide specific answers to the questions posed by the growing community in search of extra guidance, the faithful turned to the life, habits and practices of the Prophet, and thus arose the practice of compiling, recording, and classifying the tradition. This is known as Hadith. Out of this compilation, grew the subsequent material, a completed product. 'Sunnah,' gave the customary way of doing things, which expresses the ideal behavior for the pious, orthodox Muslims, who call themselves the followers of the custom (ahl al sunnah) from which the term, Sunni was born.

Qur'an contains 114 chapters, which are arranged in decreasing order of length. There is a Mecca portion, and Madina portion, and they reveal a prophetic genius. Its essential theme is the Unity of God. The believer is exhorted to accept the envoys of God, from Adam, continuing with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad. Throughout the Holy Scripture, two veins run. One is that of impersonal, remote, and all powerful God, who can punish the guilty and sinful, and the other, compassionate and merciful, who gives the purest form of divine benevolence and love.

The great achievement of Prophet Muhammad was to disentangle the earlier beliefs, without cutting them abruptly, and retaining some elements of them, without causing a cultural and emotional shock. This involved cutting out totally some earlier practices and retaining some, after reinterpreting them in the monotheistic way. They were reinterpreted to accommodate them into the broader, monotheistic values of Qur'an. Even though some of the elements of earlier faith were retained, they were put into a new structure, which was capable of handling them in the concept of strong monotheism, described in Arabic as 'Tauhid'.

Life and Teachings of Prophet Mohammad Sahib

Prophet Mohammad has been universally recognized as a noble and highly revered person. Prophet Mohammad Sahib was born in 570 A.D. in a hostile region of Arab called Mecca. At that time Mecca was a highly materialistic trade centre where greed and money lending were prevalent, people used to spend their leisure time on gambling, women and wine, where might was right and widows, orphans and old were considered a curse on society. Prophet Mohammad was born after the death of his father and lost his mother when he was only six years old. He was brought up by his paternal uncle Abu Jalib. His childhood was full of adversities and hardships. He did not go through schooling and was an unlettered person. At the age of 25, Mohammad Sahib came in contact with great businesswoman, Khadija, who was 40 at that time. He became a helping hand in her trade activities. She was deeply impressed by his personality and proposed herself for marriage

with Prophet Mohammad. His married life with Khadija proved to be very pleasant and peaceful but it could not stop him from his quest for religion.

From childhood, he had a religious bent of mind. He used to climb in a cave in mount Hira and stayed there meditating for hours in search of true religion. When he reached the age of 40, an important event took place in his life. A messenger of God brought to him a message from Allah that he was born for a great mission and religion. That unfolded the mystery of life and removed the veil of ignorance and love for worldly things. Thus, he became the messenger and prophet of God. Like other religious prophets, Mohammad Sahib too showed great religious zeal and behavioral intelligence. At the end, he became the messenger of a new religion.

There were three main components of Arabic religion— meaningless rituals, worship of heavenly bodies and idol worship. They could not distinguish between good and bad. Human killing was not considered as a crime and they did not have sacred value for marriages. There were no rights for women. Nobody cared for faithfulness, loyalty or good character and it was an era of sensuality. Prophet Mohammad preached to believe in Allah, speak the truth and make one's life pious. He also criticized idol worship and superstitiousness but unluckily people of his own tribe were priests of 'Kaaba', where 360 idols were kept and they made their livelihood from religious offerings or gifts. They started opposing Prophet Mohammad and used abusive language against him. He was stoned and people tried to assassinate him. Disheartened by the opposition and atrocities done by his own people, he decided to leave his birthplace and migrate to a nearby region or town.

In the year 622 A.D., Prophet Mohammad, along with some of his followers, migrated to Yathrib which was called 'Medinatal Nabi' meaning 'City of the Prophet'. This incident has been popularly known as Hijrat and it is taken as a first year of Islamic calendar started on July 622 A.D. that year. It was the people of Medina who welcomed the message of Prophet Mohammad and became his followers. It is here that he compiled the message of God in the form of Quran. He devoted the rest of his life in spreading the message of Islam. He got immense success. Within a short span of time, he became an executive emperor and the popular messenger of God in Arab world. He visited Mecca and this time he influenced people amazingly. Prophet Mohammad passed away in 632A.D. in Medina. The story of his passing away is like this: after doing his regular prayer (Namaz) the soul of Prophet Mohammad Sahib left for another world which he called meeting 'Rafiq at Aala'. All of his admirers refused to believe that their prophet has died. At that critical moment, one of his lieutenants Abu Bakr got up and told his colleagues that prophet was essentially a human being and after accomplishing his mission, he has died.

Teachings of Prophet Muhammad

Prophet Mohammad did not preach any deep philosophy.

1. **Belief in Allah**: Main principle taught by Prophet was that there is only one God 'Allah', this means that idol worship is strictly prohibited. Allah is the supreme and creator of the universe. They should fear the consequences earned due to disobedience and should earnestly understand that they cannot survive without his kindness and mercy and completely depend on him for their survival.
2. **Belief in theory of karma and heaven and hell**: Like Krishna and Mahatma Buddha, Prophet Mohammad also believed in the theory of karma (deeds). He believed in the importance of work. According to him, there will be a doom's day when every living and non-living things will be destroyed and it will be the day of judgement when every human being will be rewarded or punished as per their deeds. The followers who did good deeds will be sent to heaven and who disobeyed and did bad deeds will be sent to hell.
3. **Belief in prayers**: Like Mahatma Buddha and Bhagwan Mahavir, Prophet Mohammad believed in the power of prayer. He asked his followers to pray five times a day—early morning, mid-day, afternoon, evening and night as it is the only way through which our sins can be condoned.
4. **Belief in universal brotherhood**: One of the most important messages conveyed by Prophet Mohammad was universal brotherhood and equality among all human beings as they are children of parents, Adam and Eve and are all brothers. This theory proved Muslims to become a strong community and united them against the followers of the other religions.
5. **Belief in morality**: Like other great saints, Prophet Mohammad Sahib also preached people to have high moral thinking and truthfulness in life. According to him, telling a lie and to steal is sinful. A person should be honest and truthful and should donate 1/4th part of his earnings in donation (zakaat).

6. **Belief in fast, pilgrimage etc**: According to the Prophet there are some basic rules that a Muslim has to follow. It is the duty of a Muslim to fast in the holy month of Ramadan and secondly, they should visit Mecca for a pilgrimage at least once in a lifetime.
7. **Faith in the contents of Quran**: Prophet Mohammad compiled all the messages of God in the form of 'Quran' and directed his followers to live life according to Quran's guidance. Quran is considered as the supreme and last word on all the subjects—personal, religious, social or political issues and every Muslim has to consider it as a guiding light no matter, whether he is rich or poor, beggar or emperor.
8. **Disbelief in idol worship**: One of the greatest rule in prophet Mohammad's teaching was the staunch criticism of idol worship. Earlier idol worship was a popular custom in the Arabian countries but it reduced greatly after the message given by prophet.
9. **Disbelief in Asceticism**: Contrary to Hinduism and Jain religion, there is no place for asceticism? Islam does not permit to abstain from bodily requirements for spiritual salvation of the human beings. He believed that a person should marry and have family life. Quran permits a Muslim man to marry upto four women subject to a very difficult condition that he must do justice among them, or marry just one.
10. **Disbelief in non-violence**: Islam does not believe in type of Ahimsa or non-violence as is preached in Buddhism or Jainism. Islam does not prohibit eating meat. This does not mean Islam favoured violence or destruction of properties but this means that Islam was not against the war fought for justice as in the case of Hinduism.

Progress and Expansion of Islam

Islam started spreading to different countries after the death of Prophet Mohammad in 632 A.D. Caliphs (Kalifas) took the responsibility of spreading the message of Islam on their shoulders. The Omayyads were the chief khalifas from 632 A.D. to 749 A. D. but the Abbasids (Abbasis) took over as caliph from 749 A.D. to 1256 A.D.

The Omayyad

Abu Bakr (632–34 A.D.)- People of Arab chose Abu Bakr as their caliph after the death of their beloved prophet. He was one of the important members of the family. Prophet's Son-in–law, Ali was not given this right. In this way, it was established that caliph would be elected democratically through popular majority. Abu Bakr was a very pious person who lived a simple and pure life. He devoted his life for the promotion and propagation of the message of Islam. In the short span of two years of his khilafat, Islam spread in Iraq and Syria. He died in 634 A.D.

Omar (634–44 A.D.)-After the death of Abu Bakr, Khilafat came into the hands of brother-in-law of Prophet Mohammad Omar, who was the eldest member of his family. It was under him that designation of khilafat got importance. He did many efforts to increase the empire of Islam. Emperor of Islam was defeated under his command. He sent his army to North Africa and Tripoli. Before his death in 644 A.D., he had conquered Iraq, Babylon, Syria and parts of Africa where the flag of Islam had been established.

Osman (644–656 A.D.) - After Omar's death, Osman became the caliph in 644 A.D. Under his command, army captured Kabul, Ghazni, Balk and Hairat and Turkey was made an Islamic state. But in 656 A.D., some people conspired against him and assassinated him.

Ali (656–661 A.D.)- After the assassination of Hazrat Osman, Hazrat Ali was made caliph who was the son-in–law and cousin of Prophet Mohammad. But some of the detractors opposed his selection as the fourth caliph. They regarded it as invalid and started conspiring against him. The Governor of Syria, Muawiya, refused to recognize him as the caliph and raised a battle against Hazrat Ali. He raised an army and invaded Medina. Hazrat Ali was killed in the battle and Muawiya became the caliph.

Muawiya

There was a big change in the system with becoming of Muawiya as a caliph. He declared himself as the emperor and first chief of armed forces of the followers of Islam. Khilafat was not done by election but the law of patriarchy was established. Damishk was made the centre of khilafat instead of Medina. Under the ruling of Muawiya, Tunis, Morocco etc, were captured and became the Muslim states and Islam was promoted in these states. A part of France and whole of Spain were captured by him. According to Historian Gibban, "By the end of the century after Hijrat, caliphs

were the most powerful and unrestrained emperors of the world." It seemed as if Islamic empire was replacing Christian empire.

Omayyadwas basically of Arabic point of view. The Army Chief and Governor belonged to Arab tribe and they used Arabic language and Arabic currency. They built a big Islamic empire. They were fond of lavish living and were very cautious about their reputation.

In the second quarter of the eighth century, the power of the Omayyad's started reducing. The reason behind this was that they treated the non-Arab people badly. Last emperors of Omayyad' family were not truthful, zealous and did not have strong willpower. Muslims defeated the last Omayyad caliph and established Abbasi Empire. In 749 A.D. the Abbasids replaced the Omayyad's.

The Abbasids

The Abbasids ruled from 749 A.D. to 1256 A.D. They made Baghdad their capital in place of Damishk. Arabic people were weakened with the establishment of Abbasids. Now Iranians became important. Now customs and rituals of Iranian were followed in the court of caliph. Abbasids were Shiyas whereas Omayyad were Sunnis. Haroon al-Rashid was the most famous Abbasid caliph under whose reign Baghdad became the centre of art and education. Turks got services in the army. Literally caliphs became puppets in the hands of the Turks. In 1256, grandson of Changez Khan, Halaku invaded Baghdad and killed last caliph Al-Mustsim. This way the Khilafat movement came to an end. However, relatives of Al-Mustsim claimed the Islamic state of Syria as their own.

9.9 Other Popular Religious Movements

The Devi-Mahatmya, which was inserted into the Markandeya Purana by about the 7th century. This contains verses in praise of the Devi (goddess) and speaks of her many exploits, including how she vanquished the demon Mahishasura. The stories narrated in the Devi-Mahatmya are accompanied by verses in which the gods praise her in various ways. The Narayani-stuti speaks of her Vaishnavi-shakti sustaining the entire universe. It refers to her nine Matrika forms, and to her other manifestations as Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Narayani, Katyayani, Durga, Bhadrakali, and Ambika. In the last 14 verses of the Devi-Mahatmya, the goddess declares her future manifestations in different ages—as Yogamaya (daughter of Nanda and Yashoda), Raktadantika, Shatakshi, Shakambhari, Durga, Bhima, and Bhramari. In the last canto, in a promise reminiscent of the Bhagavad Gita, she announces that she will appear from time to time in the world, in order to destroy demons and evil.

Architectural and sculptural remains from various parts of the subcontinent reflect the widespread worship of Durga, as well as the allied cults of the Matrikas (usually mentioned as seven or eight in number) and the Yoginis. The Yoginis, eventually reckoned as 64 in number, are described in texts as attendants or manifestations of Durga in her battle against the demons Shumbha and Nishumbha. The principal Yoginis were identified with the Matrikas. Multiarmed Durga images of this period occur in large numbers, especially in eastern India. They also occur in the Tamil Nadu area, where an iconographic peculiarity is the association of the goddess with a stag. Representations of the goddess as Nishumbhamardini (slayer of the demon Nishumbha) occur among the reliefs at many temples belonging to the Chola period. The worship of the Sapta-Matrikas and Yoginis was also popular in eastern India. In Orissa, several Matrika images have been found in and near Jajpur (among other areas), and hypaethral (roofless) temples of the Yoginis occur at Ranipur Jharial and Hirapur.

The inscriptions of early medieval India refer to many local goddesses. For instance, those of Orissa mention Viraja and Stambheshvari, and those of Assam mention Kamakhya. The Puranic tradition wove the many goddess cults together by developing the idea that the various local goddesses were manifestations of one great goddess, the great Devi. Kunal Chakrabarti has demonstrated how in Bengal, the encounter between Brahmanism and a strong tradition of the worship of autonomous goddesses resulted in a regional cultural synthesis which gave primacy to goddess worship. The Matsya Purana gives a list of 108 names of the great goddess, while the Kurma Purana invokes her with 1,000 names.

The Kalika Purana is an important Shakta text belonging to the early medieval period. Composed in the area of Assam or in some adjoining part of Bengal, it reflects the diverse forms of the worship of Devi. The goddess is described as having both a benign and a terrifying form. In her shanta (calm) form, she has a strongly erotic character. In her raudra (fierce) manifestation, she is best worshipped in a cremation ground. The Kalika Purana describes the dakshina-bhava (the right

method) and the vama-bhava (the left method) of worship. Although both have a Tantric imprint, it is stronger in the latter. The 'right method' consists of various regular rites and rituals which include animal and human sacrifice. The 'left method' includes rituals involving the use of alcohol, meat, and sexual rites. The Purana also contains details of the performance of the popular festival of Durga Puja.

The Puranas mention various sacred places associated with the different manifestations of Devi. The Devi Bhagvata refers to such places as pithas. The Kalika Purana mentions seven pithas, associated with places where the dismembered pieces of Sati's body are supposed to have fallen. These were located at Purnagiri, Devikuta, Uddiyana, Kamagiri, the eastern point of Kamarupa, the western point of Kamarupa, and Jalandhar. The number of pithas increased subsequently and this reflects a dramatic expansion in the sacred geography associated with the goddess. The Kularnava Tantra mentions 18 pithas, while the Kubjika Tantra mentions 42 pilgrimages to Shakta pithas were well established in the early medieval period.

Summary

The rise of various religions during early medieval India (6th- 12th century A.D.) shows the social tensions and desire for reform. The bhakti movement during the time frame had questioned the orthodox rituals and practices and had shown a new path to achieve salvation, i.e. 'Bhakti'. The religions taught humanity and service to the poor. The religious movement, were thus, social reform movement as well as spiritual movement too.

Keywords

1. **Alvars** - the Vaishnava bhakti saints of early medieval Tamil Country (6th-9th century).
2. **Bhagavata** - a devotee of Vasudeva-Krishna.
3. **Brahmanism** - a syncretising religion under the brahmin leadership. Always holding the supremacy of the Vedic rituals in theory, it adapted bhakti, many tribal gods and tribal rituals in practices.
4. **Heterodox Cults**- Jainism, Buddhism and Ajivikism which first challenged Vedic rituals and then all Brahmanism.
5. **Muruga**- a tribal god of the early Tamils, syncretised around 3rd-4th centuries A.D. by Brahmanism with Skanda-Kartikaya.
6. **Nayanmar**- the Saiva bhakti saints of early medieval Tamil country, sixty-three in number. A few of the them were great hymnal poets.
7. **Nirvana** - liberation of the soul as conceived by the heterodox cults.
8. **Pasupatas** - the devotees of Siva or Pasupati. Their cult originated in the North and developed special features.
9. **Shaivism** - a general term to denote any cult which conceived Siva as the greatest God. Saivism has many local varieties.
10. **Tantrism** - a religion originating in the primitive fertility rites of the I non-Aryan mbal circles. Later adapted and mystified by the civilized cult
11. **Vaishnavism** - a general term to denote any cult with Vishnu as the greatest God. It has many local varieties.

Self Assessment

Q. 1. Lingayats were also known as_____.

A. Vira Shaivas

B. Kapalikas

C. Pasupats
D. Kalamukha

Q. 2. Which of the following was not one of the teachings of Pashupats?
A. Idol worship
B. Strong faith in God
C. Truth
D. Pure life

Q. 3. Which of the Shavism sect lived in cemeteries?
A. Pasupats
B. Kalamukha
C. Kapalikas
D. Lingayats

Q. 4. What was the philosophy of Vaishnavism?
A. Advait
B. Dvaitadvait
C. Sagun
D. None of these

Q. 5. How was a relationship between a devotee and deity in Vaishnavism?
A. Lover and Beloved
B. Father and Son
C. Master and Slave
D. Almighty and worshipper

Q. 6. Which of the following was not one of the reasons of decline of Buddhism?
A. Lack of Patronage
B. General population could not differentiate between the teachings of Mahayana and Hinayana
C. Hindu religious cults reformation posed a threat to Buddhism
D. Ethical teachings of Buddha disappeared and monks and nuns started living lavish life.

Q. 7. Who was the chief deity of Tantricism?
A. Shiva
B. Vishnu
C. Devi
D. Surya

Q. 8. Choose the notable Jaina writer of early medieval India?
A. Haribhadra Suri
B. Vimalchandra Suri
C. Pradyumn Suri

D. Abhaydeva

Q. 9. Under which dynasty, Islamic invasions started in India?

A. Abbasayids
B. Ommayads
C. Sufiyan
D. Caliphs

Q. 10. Who among the following was not among the 'four pious Caliph'?

A. Abu Bakr
B. Usman
C. Muhammad
D. Ali

Q. 11. 'Tanakh' was-

A. Sacred text of Judaism
B. First Five Books
C. New Testament
D. Ten Commandments.

Q. 12. Who was the 'liberator of Israelites'?

A. Moses
B. Yahuwah
C. Abraham
D. Pharaoh

Q. 13. Under which Roman King, Christianity was adopted by the Roman people?

A. Constantine
B. Augustus
C. Octavian
D. Otto

Q. 14. By which ritual, a person is admitted to membership of the Church?

A. Eucharist
B. Reconcilation
C. Baptism
D. Confirmation

Q. 15. Which Chalukya King was the worshipper of 'Devi' or believed in Shakt Cult?

A. Vikramditya VI
B. Pulkeshin I
C. Kumarpala
D. Tailap

Answers for SelfAssessment

1.	A	2.	A	3.	C	4.	B	5.	A
6.	A	7.	C	8.	A	9.	A	10.	C
11.	A	12.	A	13.	A	14.	C	15.	C

Review Questions

1. Comment on the statement "Shaiv religion went on progressing even after the Gupta period".
2. Explain the role of Ramanujacharya in disseminating the ideas of Vaishnavism.
3. Describe the progress and expansion of Islam.
4. Write a note on origin and progress of Judaism.
5. Explain the struggle and expansion of Christianity during early medieval India.

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Unit 10: Philosophy

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Learn about the Vedanta school of Indian philosophy.
- Learn about the Mimansa school of Indian philosophy

Introduction

The term "Indian philosophy" refers to any of the several traditions of philosophical thought that originated in the Indian subcontinent: Hindu philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, Jain philosophy, and Tribal and Dalit Philosophy. Having the same or rather intertwined origins, all of these philosophies have a common underlying theme of world vision, and similarly attempt to explain the attainment of truth and liberation. The characteristic of these philosophies is that they may belong to one "school" and disagree with each other, or be in agreement while professing allegiance to different banners. An example of the latter is the non-Vedic Jain and the Vedic Samkhya schools, both of which have similar ideas on pluralism; an example of the former would be the Dvaita and the Advaita schools, both of whom are Vedic. The Vedic thinkers or seers centered philosophy on an assumption that there is a unitary underlying order, which is all pervasive and omniscient. The efforts by various schools were concentrated on explaining this order. All major phenomena like those observed in nature, fate, occurrences, etc., were results of this order. The earliest mention of this appears in the Indian Scriptures, especially in the Rig Veda, which speaks of the Brahman, or the universally transcendent building block of the whole world. It is described as dimensionless, timeless and beyond reach of the known frontiers of happiness and knowledge.

10.1 Vedanta

The literal meaning of the term Vedanta is "the end of the Vedas, the concluding parts of the Vedas, the culmination of the Vedic teaching and wisdom". Thus, the term is originally referred to the Upanishads, the last literary products of the Vedic period. The views of the Upanishads also constitute the final aim of the Veda, or the essence of the Vedas. However, Vedanta has subsequently come to include the various elaborations and interpretations of the Upanishads. They are the concluding parts of the Vedas and are the culmination of the Vedic knowledge and wisdom. The Upanishads are not philosophical treatises, though their style is direct, forceful, often didactic and dialogic. The Upanishads are not philosophical systems but are only narratives of experiences of sages and their insights into reality. Consequently, it would be fruitless to look in the Upanishads for a systematic, coherent, logical development of ideas. One should be prepared to encounter apparent inconsistencies, undue emphasis on one idea here and another there, and sometimes even wholly unconnected digressions in the articulation of a given idea or theme.

Further, the Upanishads are sometimes repetitious. The same idea may be dealt with in several places in more or less the same fashion. How do we account for this peculiar character of the style and texture of the Upanishads? One answer is that they are not the work of a single author, but the accumulation of the insights of different men over a long period of time. Another explanation for the non-systematic character of the Upanishads is that their authors were concerned not so much with minutiae as with providing a comprehensive picture of their vision and insights. In short, their attention was not upon parts but on the whole. Thus, the Upanishads abound in terse and aphoristic statements replete with inspiring meanings. Scintillating significance and dynamic intuition are packed into such short and powerful utterances. Precisely for these reasons the Upanishads give rise to diverse interpretations. In course of time, there emerged different schools of Vedanta, the prominent ones being Advaita (non-dualism) of Sankara, Visistadvaita (Qualified Non-dualism) of Ramanuja and Dvaita (Dualism) of Madhva.

Vedanta Sutras

The Vedanta Sutras is perhaps the most available and significant source for the study of Vedanta. It is an exposition of the doctrine of Brahman and therefore it is also called Brahma Sutra. It also deals with the embodiment of the unconditioned self; hence it has also the name Sariraka Sutra. The authorship of this text is attributed to Badarayana who is, according to Indian tradition, identified with Vyasa. Indian scholars are of the opinion that the Sutra was composed in the period from 500 to 200 B.C. The work, however, was not composed in isolation. We find references to Jaimini'sMimamsa, orthodox systems of Samkhya, Yoga, and Vaiseshika, several schools of Buddhism, the Lokayata and Bhagavata doctrines. The author of the Sutra is considerably influenced by the theism of the Bhagavadgita and the Bhagavatas.

The Vedanta Sutra has four chapters. The first chapter deals with the theory of Brahman as the central reality. Its purpose is reconciliation (samanvaya) of the different Vedic statements on this subject. It is an account of the nature of Brahman, its relation to the world and the individual soul. The second chapter meets objections brought against this view and criticizes rival theories. It also gives an account of the nature of the dependence of the world on God and the gradual evolution from and re-absorption into him. It also contains interesting psychological discussions about the nature of the soul, its attributes, its relation to God, body and its own deeds. The third chapter discusses ways and means (sadhana) of attaining brahma-vidya. It also presents an account of rebirth along with other psychological and theological discussions. The final chapter deals with the fruits (phala) of Brahma-vidya. It also describes in some detail the theory of the departure of the soul after death along the two paths of the gods and the fathers and the nature of the release from which there is no return.

Teachings of the Vedanta Sutras

According to Badarayana the Veda is eternal and the sastra is the great authority. No amount of reflection logical argumentation can lead to the discovery of metaphysical truth. Sutra admits two sources of knowledge: pratyaksham (perception) and anumanam (inference). The revealed shruti is self-evident and is called pratyaksham. By Shruti, Badarayana means the Upanishads, and by smriti he means the Bhagavadgita, the Mahabharata and the Code of Manu. In any theory of knowledge, inference is based on perception; so also smriti is based on Shruti. Badarayana makes a distinction between two spheres of existence: the thinkable and the unthinkable. The thinkable consists of the region of prakriti with the elements, the mind, intellect, and egoity, whereas the unthinkable is Brahman. With regard to the knowledge of the latter the only means is the sastras. Any reasoning which is not in conformity with the Veda is useless for Badarayana. Reasoning proceeds from characteristic marks. But of Brahman we cannot say that it is characterized by this or that to the exclusion of other attributes. Reasoning therefore is subordinate to intuitional knowledge, which can be obtained by devotion and meditation.

It is worth noting here that from a historical standpoint one speaks of the PurvaMimamsa (the earlier schools) and the Uttara Mimamsa (the later schools), subsequently referred to simply as Mimamsa and Vedanta respectively. Mimamsa is generally understood as being concerned with the ritualistic side (karmakanda) of the Vedic teachings, and Vedanta with the philosophical, speculative (janakanda) aspects. In the light of this distinction, the three schools of Vedanta listed above and other theistic Vedantic schools (such as Suddhadvaita, SvabhavikaBhedabheda, AcintyaBhedabheda) come under Uttara Mimamsa. However, one must proceed with caution in making this distinction. Though the prime concern of PurvaMimamsa is with ritualism, it also contains speculative aspects: the very term 'mimamsa' means "solution of problems by reflection and critical examination. Accordingly, the Mimamsa looked upon its task as twofold: to provide a method by which the complex and seemingly conflicting ritualistic injunctions of the Vedas may be

harmoniously interpreted and practiced; and to provide a philosophical justification of Vedic ritualism. The realization of this twofold objective necessarily involved Mimamsa in serious philosophical questions, both methodological and substantive. The philosophical investigations of the Mimamsa schools are considerable, and their results important. Particularly noteworthy is their treatment of knowledge, truth and error. The Vedanta schools are indebted to the Mimamsa schools in that they not only recognize the pramanas (means of valid knowledge) as formulated by the Mimamsa but incorporate and employ them in their own systems.

Background of Vedantic Thought

The Vedas and the Upanishads form the background of the Vedanta. They are called the Shruti. The Hindus implicitly believe in their authority. They are believed to be revelations of truths to the seers (rishis). They embody their intuitions. The Vedic religion traverses the whole gamut of polytheism, organized polytheism, henotheism, monotheism and monism.

The different gods for the Vedic man were the personifications of the different powers of nature. He was not a worshipper of nature. He worshipped supernatural and superhuman deities pervading the whole or considerable part of nature and beyond and endowed with some qualities of the supreme god-head. Among the multitude of nature-gods any one is treated as the supreme god for the time being when he worshipped. All gods were inspired by the same power. Their great divinity is one. There is unity and order in the phenomena of nature. Thus all the diverse phenomena of nature are the works of gods who are endowed with the same divine power. The order in nature paved the way for monotheism.

The idea permeating the Rig Veda is that nature in all its diversity and multiplicity is not a chaos but is governed by a basic cosmic law (Rita). To this law are subject not only all natural phenomena, such as the movement of the planets and the generation, decay and death of organisms, but also truth and justice. The conception of rita further harmonized the gods with one another, and paved way for monotheism. Rita is the physical order. Everything in the world has its own sphere. The gods follow the laws of rita. They acquired divinity and immortality by serving rita rightly. This rita is an impersonal order which upholds the gods and the world. The conception of rita paved the way for monotheism.

Hiranyagarbha arose in the beginning. He alone was the lord of all that is. He established the earth and the heaven. He gives breath and strength; his commands are followed by other gods. His shadow is death and immortality. He alone is God above all gods. He came to be identified as prajapati, the lord of all creatures, and claimed the rank of Supreme God. Further the Vedic reflection proceeded to posit Visvakarma as the creator of the entire universe. He is the seer of all. His eyes are everywhere, his face is everywhere, and he is of all hands and all feet. He is the world-architect.

Then we have the concept of a Cosmic person (parama purusha), whose body is the whole universe. He, with his thousand hands, thousand feet, thousand eyes, pervades the whole terrestrial space and transcends it. The inner nature of the Parama Purusha is transcendental, though he is imminent in the whole universe. He is the immanent and transcendent. However, this kind of a theistic thinking of God and universe gave way to a new concept of monism, according to which Reality is conceived as one but manifested in diverse ways. That 'One' (tad Ekam) is not personal; it is neither male nor female; it is neuter. It is an impersonal principle which breathed by itself without breath. The celebrated Upanishad hymn known as Purushukta clearly brings out the pure monism of the Rig-Veda.

The theme of this hymn is the unity of all existence, inorganic and organic. Such unity is expressed by the Vedic seers, in their grand visual imagery, in the form of what they call 'the purusha'. According to this hymn, the purusha is not to be equated with the universe, for not only does he pervade the universe but he is also beyond it. In philosophical terms, the supreme reality is immanent and transcendent – immanent because it pervades all existence, thereby rendering it a unity; transcendent, because it is not exhausted by existence but goes beyond it. In theological terms, God, while pervading the universe, is also more than the universe. In other words, the Vedic conception of God is not pantheistic, but panentheistic which may be expressed by saying that the totality of existence is in God but not equal to God.

The Rigveda refers to the supreme reality underlying and unifying all existence by the term 'the purusha'. However, the Upanishads firmly rules out that this kind of conception is in any way anthropomorphic. The famous Vedic hymn of creation, Nasadiyas[1]kta, unequivocally declares that ultimate reality (the purusha) is not only impersonal but beyond all names and forms, and hence is inexpressible and indescribable.

Spiritualistic Monism of the Upanishads: Brahman

The Rigveda spoke of One Reality (ekam sat) which is spoken of in various ways by the sages. It spoke of That One (tad ekam) that created the world. The Upanishads called it Brahman. Brahman is Atman. It is the Reality of the reality. It is the cause of all created things, and it is their ultimate ground and essence. It is one devoid of plurality and is beyond many. This Supreme Principle is called Brahman because it is the ubiquitous cosmic principle. It is called Atman because it is one eternal homogenous consciousness. All gods and the rita itself subsist in Brahman. Thus, the Upanishads explicitly advocated spiritualistic monism or absolute Idealism. This is the bedrock of Hindu religion and philosophy.

Aims and characteristics of Vedanta

The philosophy of Vedanta, like all other systems of thought, is an attempt to clearly understand and offer an explanation of the world as it appears to us in our knowledge. It is an attempt to determine the nature of the Ultimate Reality and to understand how it presents before us a world of manifoldness, in order to make out clearly the place and destiny of man in the world system. Vedanta philosophy considers two very important questions: the theoretical determination of the nature of substance or reality underlying experience and of the origin of knowledge, and the ethical problem of duty and the ultimate ideal of human life. Both these questions are thoroughly discussed and solutions are offered in the system.

Vedanta philosophy is based both upon revelation or Shruti as well as thinking, argument and logical justification. There is in the system a full form of philosophy developed upon a dialectic and logical basis. The first problem which the Vedantin seeks to solve is the ontological problem of Reality, the second, the problem of Cosmology, the third, the problem of Psychology and fourth is the problem of striving after the ideal and its attainment – the final liberation.

Brahman

The Upanishads speak of higher (para) Brahman and lower (apara) Brahman. The former is formless, unmanifest, immortal, abiding and transcendental, while the latter is formed, manifest, mortal, fleeting, and empirical. The para-Brahman is devoid of all attributes and determinations; it is unqualified, indeterminate, and unconditioned. It is the Absolute. The apara Brahman is qualified, determinate, conditioned; it is personal God. However, the Upanishads declare that they are not two Brahmans. One Brahman viewed from the transcendental standpoint is indeterminate, and viewed from the empirical standpoint is determinate. The indeterminate Brahman is sometimes conceived to be real, and the determinate Brahman is conceived to be unreal.

Brahman conceived as qualified (Saguna) is God (Isvara). The Absolute in relation to the empirical world is God. The cosmic Brahman is the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the world. All creatures spring out of Brahman. They live in Brahman and are re-absorbed in Brahman. He is the support of all and is the refuge of all and can be realized by His grace.

The Atman

While Brahman is the cosmic principle, atman is the psychic principle. It is the inner self in man. Brahman is atman. Therefore, the cosmic principle is the psychic principle. The universal spirit is the self in man. It is the immanent spirit in him. It is the inner guide (antaryamin). Brahman is the soul of all. It is the knower, but is not known. It is the foundational consciousness which is the ground of the universe. It is the ground of our empirical consciousness. The eternal, universal light of consciousness resides in our heart and illumines all objects of our knowledge. There are texts in the Upanishads which identify this atman with the Brahman. The identity of the individual soul with the universal soul is emphasized by Sankara, whereas Ramanuja recognized the individual soul to a real mode of the universal soul.

Bondage and Liberation

Higher knowledge of Brahman as pure identity devoid of difference is intuition (vidya). Lower intellectual knowledge of the empirical world of plurality of individual objects and selves is ignorance. Intuition brings about release, while intellect ties the individual self to the empirical life of birth and death. Vidya is moksha and avidya is samsara. Vidya is knowledge of pure identity. Duality of subject and object is apparent. Atman is the ontological reality. The individual soul's individuality is due to avidya. Avidya is the cause of individuality. It produces the body, the sense-organs, manas, buddhi and ahamkara which constitute its individuality. However, the embodied life is no bar to its realization. When the unconditioned universal self - reveals itself to the individual self, all plurality is overcome, and the mortal becomes immortal. It realizes its

Brahmanhood even in its embodied life. When all knots of the heart are broken, the mortal embodied self becomes immortal. It does not transmigrate to any other sphere of life.

Cosmology

Regarding Cosmology, the Vedanta Philosophy seems to have taken the different theories as propounded by the Upanishads. We shall have a look at one of such theories. The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad says: "As a spider ejects its thread from its body, and as fire emits sparks, so all lives. All beings, all creatures spring from this Atman. This is the doctrine of emanation. The 7 world emanates from the fullness of the imperishable Brahman, again returns to it. It implies that creation is self-expression and self-communication of God to the creatures. Creation is a moral act of willing and self-sacrifice. Further in the same Upanishad we read: "The universe was not unfolded in the beginning; it was unfolded in name and form (namarupa). Atman entered into it up to the finger-tips, as a knife is hidden in a sheath." This text suggests that creation is a passage from an undifferentiated condition to a differentiated condition. If differentiation is real, the process is evolution. If it is not real, creation is a mere appearance. Creation is enfoldment. Dissolution is enfoldment. It is either evolution (parinama) or appearance (vivarta).

Ethics

Vedanta accepts the distinction made by the Kathopanishad between happiness (preyas) and the highest good (sreyas). He who seeks happiness is deprived of the highest Good, whereas he who seeks the highest Good attains his real well-being. The highest Good is the realization of the eternal universal self in man. Vidya or supra-intellectual intuition leads to self-realization. Intuition of the self depends on moral purity and self-renunciation. Atman can be realized by one who does practice self-control, desirelessness, and concentration of mind. Moral purity is the indispensable pre-requisite of knowledge of atman. Karma is not excluded from moral life. Prescribed actions should be performed without any desire or motive. Nishkama karma purifies the mind; however, it is only a preliminary step to self-knowledge.

Propounders of Verdant Philosophy

Shankaracharya

Sankara (788-820 A.D.) is one of the greatest philosophers among the Indian thinkers in intellectual eminence. Through his works (such as commentaries on the principal Upanishads, the Brhma-Sutras, and the Bhagavadgita) he exposed his own system of Absolute idealism (Advaita-vada). He emphasized the monistic tendency on the Upanishads and developed it into a systematic Advaitavada. He emphasized the reality of the unconditioned and unqualified (nirguna) Brahman and regarded God (Isvara), the individual souls and the world (jagat) as appearances due to and indefinable principle called maya. This maya is neither real nor unreal, nor both, nor neither. Maya conditions Brahman and then it is Isvara. Maya is his power or energy (sakti). It is the source of the names and forms which are modified into the phenomena of the world. The world appears to be born owing to maya. It is an imaginary construction of maya. Maya is not an independent principle; it is dependent on Isvara.

Ramanujacharya

In the line of Alvars (the Tamil saints) Ramanuja is the greatest acharya. He was, according to the tradition, born in 1017 at Sriperumbudur, some 30 miles south west of Chennai of today's Tamil Nadu. In his celebrated commentary on the Vedanta-Sutras, which is today known Sribhashya, he has expounded the Visistadvaita philosophy. In propounding a new philosophy his aim was to champion the need for a personal theism, in harmony with Vedic and Upanishadic teaching. He wanted to systematize the Vaishnava tenets with a rational basis. Thereby he offered to the people a simple religion based on faith, easy means for God-realization through bhakti. Ramanuja was the chief propounder of the doctrine of qualified non-dualism (visistadvaita). He criticized Sankara's absolutism or non-dualism (advaita) and established the ontological reality of God, the individual souls and the world. He regarded the souls and world as attributes or modes of God. The germs of theistic Vedanta are found in the theistic Upanishads, the Narayaniya section of the Mahabharata, the Bhagavadgita, and the Pancharatra Agamas.

Madhvacharya

Madhva has called his system Dvaita because the concept of difference is foundational to it. The basic doctrine of Dvaita is that there is plurality of reals. Difference is of the very nature of things.

There is difference between God and soul, between God and matter, between soul and soul, between soul and matter, and between one material thing and another. These five-fold differences permit all kinds of extrinsic relationships between the diverse beings; but leave no room for a really intrinsic continuity in beings (as we affirm between creator and creatures). Therefore, God is not the creator of souls and the world: souls are eternal, world arises out of prakrti.

God is Isvara, completely independent being, absolutely perfect. In his deepest essence, 'He' is pure consciousness. Prakrti exists eternally. Therefore, does not owe its existence to God, but its nature is to be a mere instrument totally docile to his pleasure. The soul is by essence spiritual consciousness, i.e., partless. In its divisible identity it possesses knowledge, activity and bliss. Therefore, it is essentially similar to God, yet dependent on him. The Lord is the perfect model of which the soul is an image (abhasa), a reflection (pratibhasa). The ultimate cause of bondage from the soul strives to escape is Brahman, who causes jiva to be ignorant of its true relation to God. Therefore, God alone can give release. That aspect of God that causes release is called prasada (grace). Union with God (sayujya) is the highest form of liberation.

Vallabhacharya

Vallabha thinks that Sankara'sadvaita is impure, as the latter thought that the world was illusory. But for Vallabha world is real, ultimately world and God are same and real. According to him, it is the same reality of God that assumes the forms of world and the individual souls. To explain this, Vallabha adopts the avikrtaparinama-vada (theory of change without modification). He makes a distinction between essence and power to cause: these are not the same. If they were same, all things would be causing all the time. In God both of them are there: the latter (power to cause) changes while the former (the essence) remains the same. Vallabha recommends three means of liberation: karma-marga, jnana-marga, and bhakti marga – depending on the spiritual disposition and nature of the individual souls.

Nimbarakacharya

In his Vedanta philosophy, Nimbarka holds that there is natural difference and non-difference between God and souls, between God and the material universe. There is the natural difference between God and the individual souls: God is the cause and is the ruler. The soul is not omnipotent. Soul is the effect and it attains the Brahman. Between God and the material universe, God is spiritual while the material universe is material. Here the difference is more explicit. On the other hand, there is the natural non-difference: Brahman pervades the universe (the effect) like clay in the jar. The souls and universe are dependent on God; they emanate from God (like snake and its coils). Such difference and non-difference are natural (svabhavika) and they are not added. Thus, both difference and non-difference are comprehensible.

10.2 Mimansa

Kumarila regards cognition as a means of valid knowledge because of its apprehension (anubhuti), and he regards cognizedness produced by a cognitive act as its result. Prabhakara, on the other hand, vividly expresses that we cognize an object by means of valid knowledge as it is an apprehension, but it is not to the means of 'recollection' as it is found in case of memory. He identifies pramana with prama or valid knowledge and regards cognition as manifesting itself but not inferable form cognizedness of its object. Thus, for him, pramana is same as prama. On his views, all cognitions are valid and their invalidity is due to the disagreement with the real nature of objects. Thus, wrongness does not belong to the cognition but to the object cognized.

With these analyses, the Mimansa philosophy discusses two theories;svatahpramanyavada, and paratahpramanyavada. The former is translated as intrinsic validity and the latter is translated as extrinsic validity of knowledge. To explain svatahpramanyavada, knowledge of an object is valid by itself. Validity of knowledge arises from the essential nature of the causes of knowledge and it is not due to any extraneous conditions. To elucidate paratahpramanyavada, knowledge is not self-evident but it is validated by extraneous conditions.

By doing integration (reshuffling) of these two theories, we are resulted in four theories. These areas-

i. Svatahpramanyavada (intrinsic validity)
ii. Svatahapramanyavada (intrinsic invalidity)
iii. Paratahpramanyavada (extrinsic validity)

iv. Paratahapramanyavada (extrinsic invalidity)

The Mimansa (kumarila) upholds svatahpramanyavada and paratahapramanyavada. For him, the validity of knowledge arises from the essential nature of its causes untainted by defects, and is known by the knowledge itself. Intrinsic validity of knowledge consists in its being generated by the complement of causal conditions of the knowledge itself, and not by extraneous conditions besides them. The knowledge of validity is also generated by the aggregation of causal conditions, which make the knowledge known. But the invalidity of knowledge arises from defects in the causal conditions of the knowledge. It is known from the knowledge of the object itself.

Analyzing the four theories, the Samkhya philosophy upholds svatahpramanyavada and svatahapramanyavada. On their view, both valid and invalid knowledge are intrinsic whereas, Buddhists argue in favor of svatahapramanyavada and paratahpramanyavada. They regard that validity of knowledge is extrinsic and invalidity of knowledge is intrinsic. For them knowledge is invalid in itself but it is validated by extraneous conditions. As soon as knowledge of an object is generated, it can't apprehend the real nature of the object. It is uncertain at the time and liable to contradiction, and so should be regarded as invalid. Its validity is subsequently known by the knowledge of the excellence of its causes; or the knowledge of its harmony with the real nature of its object, or the knowledge of a fruitful action and sets aside its intrinsic invalidity.

The Nyaya-Vaisesika regards the validity of knowledge as due to the excellence (gunna) of its causes. These schools regard both validity and invalidity of knowledge as extrinsic.

Sources of Valid Knowledge (Pramanas)

Prabhakara rejects non-apprehension (anupalabdhi) as a source of valid knowledge. He states that negation can't be an independent pramana. The reason he gives, it is a disagreement with positive facts or phenomena which are found in other pramanas. Thus, he accepts five pramanas.Kumarila Bhatta recognizes six pramanas. These ares-

i. Perception
ii. Inference
iii. Comparison
iv. Verbal testimony
v. Postulation (Arthapati)
vi. Non- apprehension (Anupalabdhi)

Perception

Perception is a form of knowledge which results from the contact between the object and the sense-organs. Generally, we believe whatever is perceived by our senses must be true because in perception, the objects are directly known through our sense-organs. Thus, perception is an immediate knowledge. Example; by seeing and touching a table one can acquire the knowledge of that table. Perceptual knowledge is valid only when an object is perceived as it is.

Like Nyayikas, the Mimamsa School has classified perception in various kinds from different perspectives. Firstly, perception is classified in two types; ordinary (laukika) and extra ordinary (alaukika). When sense organs come into the contact with the object in the usual way we have ordinary perception. Savikalpaka (determinate) and nirvikalpaka (indeterminate) are two forms of ordinary perception. In the case of extraordinary perception, the objects are not presented to the senses in the usual way but they are conveyed to the sense through unusual medium. On perception, the basic difference between the Nyaya and the Mimansa philosophy is, the Naiyayikas regard the auditory organ as proceeding form ether (akasa) while the Mimansikas regard it is proceeding from space(dik).

Inference (Anumana)

The second kind of pramana is called anumana. Inference is a kind of knowledge, which is based on previous cognition. In perception we have direct knowledge of an object because there is a direct presentation of an object before our sense organs. Therefore, perceptual knowledge is immediate or prataksa.

In anumana, there is no such direct presentation of the object and therefore it is called paroksa jnana or mediate knowledge. In anumana, an object is inferred to be present in a particular case because it has been invariably perceived to be present in all such similar cases. Thus, in anumana,

the cognition of an object is based on our prior knowledge of it. For example, we see smoke in a distant hill. From the presence of smoke, we at-once infer that these must be fire in the distant hill.

Comparison (Upamana)

Upamana is a pramana recognized by the Mimansikas as similar toNyayikas' views. In upamana, knowledge of an object is determined by comparing it form other similar kinds of objects. Thus, roughly it is treated as analogy. For example, assume a situation where a man has not seen a gavaya or a wild cow and doesn't know what it is. A forester told him that a wild cow is an animal like a country cow but she is more furious and has big horn in her forehead. In a later period, he comes across a wild cow in a forest and recognizes it as the wild cow by compairing the descriptions made by the forester. This knowledge is possible due to the upamana or comparison. Thus, upamana is the knowledge of the relation between a name and the object it denotes by that name.

Verbal Testimony (sabda)

According to the Mimansa philosophy, testimony is a reliable statement uttered by a trust worthy person similar to Nyaya Philosophy. It is stated that a sentence consists of a group of words, and a word is considered as an entity which has the power to express some meaning. Testimony is a valid knowledge, which is derived from word or sentence. But all words or sentences can't be treated as testimony because all verbal expressions are not necessarily regarded as valid knowledge. So, on the account of Mimansikas, sabda must be based on the verbal assertion of a trust worthy person who knows the truth and desires to speak the truth for the guidance of others.

Verbal testimony is used as meaningful words or sentences. The mere combination of letters or the words don't provide a valid knowledge. Therefore, words and sentences must be used in a specific sense whose meaning will be clear, as a result, it would be treated as a valid pramana.

Postulation (Arthapati)

This is a unique source of valid knowledge upholds by the Mimansikas. In other words, the Mimansikas expressed arthapati as a valid method of cognition. The expression "arthapati" is a combination of two words namely 'artha' and 'apatti'. The term artha means fact and apatti means 'kalpana' which is understood as 'supposition' in English. Thus, etymologically speaking, arthapati is that knowledge which resolves the conflict between two facts. It entails a presupposition which solves the problem that occurred between two facts.

Arthapati is the assumption of an unperceived fact in order to reconcile two apparently inconsistent perceived facts. When a known fact can't be accounted without another fact, we have to postulate the existence of third fact. The valid and justified knowledge of the third fact is known as arthapati.

This is an independent source of valid knowledge subscribed by the Mimansa Philosophy. Non-apprehension is the immediate knowledge of the non-existence of an object. An object doesn't exist in a particular place and a particular time. But it exists elsewhere. To perceive the nonexistent of that particular object in a given situation/place is known as anupalabdhi.

For example, 'there is no book on the table". Here, an individual does not perceive the book directly through his/her sense organs. But the knowledge of the absence or non-existence of the book on the table arises because of the non-perception of the perceivable object. The absence of an object from the situation in which it should be available is said to be its non-existence. And, to possess the knowledge of non-existence of objects in an existence form is called as anupalabdhi.

Theories of Error (Khyativada)

The theory of error is called as 'khyativada'. It is opposed to the theory 'pramanyavada' (validity of knowledge). The term 'khyativada' is associated with invalid or erroneous knowledge. Before, entering into the discussion of theories of error which is expressed differently by different schools you should know 'what is error?'

Error (viparyaya)

Error or bharma is reverse of valid knowledge (prama). In the case of valid knowledge, the presentation of object is found what it really is, but in case of error, it is found in inverse mode. In case of error, we cognize object what it is not. In error, an object is cognized as having certain characteristics that really fall outside of its being. Thus, it is a wrong apprehension in which the object is taken for what it is not. All error is subjective in their nature. For example, we cognize a

snake instead of a rope. This happens because the characteristics of a snake are found in the rope. In the similar way we cognize shell erroneously as silver.

With these backgrounds now let us discuss theories of error which are relevant in your present study out of many. Prabhakara school of Mimansa and AdvaitaVedantins propounded 'akhyativada' and 'anirvacaniyakhyativada' respectively. Kumarila Bhatta advocates the theory of error known as 'viparitakhyativada'.

Akhyativada

This theory of error is advocated by Prabhakara school of Mimansa. It is also called as 'vivekakhyati'. According to Prabhaka School of Mimansa, there is no invalid cognition. A particular cognition may be less than true but it can never be untrue. They recognize two-fold classification of cognition. These areas-

i. Valid cognition
ii. Memory

But they did not acknowledge delusive cognition as a third class. This is so because delusive cognition generates out of the above two cognitions.

Anirvacaniya

Khyativada,this theory of error is proposed by AdvaitaVedantins. It states that something is presented to our senses because of avidya or ignorance. Due to avidya the cognizer cognizes an object something different from what it is.

Further, they said that nothing is found real in this world because knowledge of an object is altered in the next moment. Due to 'I-ness' we cognize objects in the world. But the fact is that, there is only one reality that is eternal and unchanging is known as Brahman. Hence, whatever we cognize is not real. Therefore, the nature of creation is indescribable. This implies cognition of shell as well as silver is not real. Hence, the theory of error is indescribable.

ViparitaKhyativada

In regard to the theory of error, Bhatta School of Mimansa proposed a new theory known as 'viparitakhyativada'. On their view, error lies because of the wrong relation between the object and sense organs, but it is not due to the objects which are real. For example, people belong to different parts of the world seeing one and the same moon but wrongly claim that they are seeing different moon. This theory of error is reversal of right behavior towards an object.

Metaphysics

The Mimansa Philosophy believes in the existence of eternal world and the innumerable individual souls within it. They also admit the existence (presence) of other eternal and infinite substances in the earth. They viewed that the world is constituted of three types of elements. These are; body, sense organs and eternal things. The self in the body enjoys the fruit of its actions. Sense organs used as the means to experience pleasure and pain. External things are meant for enjoyment. Apart from all these realities they also believe in many other realities like, the existence of heaven, hell, etc. although these are not perceivable. Thus, Mimansikas are treated as pluralistic realist.

The Mimansikas agreed upon the view that the creation and destruction of the world is based on our karmas. Hence, they ruled out the existence of God behind the creation of the world. For them, God is an unseen power who guides/ instructs us to do certain karmas in certain time/period.

Regarding categories, Prabhakara School of Mimansa recognizes seven categories. These are; substance (Dravya), quality (guna), action (karma), generality (samanya), inherence (paratantrata), force (shakti), and similarity (sadrshya). Differing from prabhakara, kumarila admits only four positive categories out of seven. These are; substance, quality, generality and action. Further, Kumarila adds two more categories in his list- 'sound' and 'darkness'. But these two categories are not accepted by Prabhakara.

Theory of Causation

According to the Mimansa philosophy, theory of causation is explained through 'theory of energy'. They explained that there are potent energies found in the cause. As a result, a particular cause produces a particular effect and that has been observed or known by us (human beings). Thus each phenomenon can be explained only by the theory of potent energy in the cause. If the potent energy is absent, no effect would be observed. An example can clarify this notion. If we fry a seed and

sown in the soil, it won't sprout out. The reason is the potent energy of the seed is consumed in the process of burning it.

Nature of Self

About the self, Mimansikas admit that there are innumerable selves exist in the world. For them, souls are of two sorts. One is liberated soul and other is living soul (individuals of the earth). This implies every living being possesses a distinct self or soul. For Mimansikas, the self is eternal and imperishable substance. When a living animal dies, it won't die with it. It continues to live to reap the fruits of its deeds. According to Mimansikas, 'consciousness' is not the essential attribute of the self. Rather, it is considered as an adventitious quality that emerges in particular situations. For example, while in deep sleep consciousness is not found in the self. This is so because in this stage there will be no contact between sense organs with objects.

Kumarila says that there is no knowledge of self as we have the knowledge of external objects like, tree, grass, bird, etc. Thus, for him, self is the object of self-consciousness. Further, he states that when we concentrate on self we realize 'I exist'. Refuting this view PrabhakaraMimansa expresses that the self can't be the subject and object of the same knowledge. This is so because one thing can't be both the 'doer' and the 'deed' at the same time, and in addition to that the function of the doer and the deed are opposite/contrast to each other. Thus, on the account of prabhakara, an objective knowledge constitutes of three constituents; the knower, the known, and the knowledge. All these three constituents are known simultaneously for acquiring the knowledge of an object. For example, "I know this table". Here, the knower is "I", the known is 'table' and the knowledge that acquires is about the object 'table'.

God and Liberation

The Mimansa Philosophy has given much importance to the Veda than the God. The Vedas prescribe eternal principles to do one's own duties and possess a good and healthy life in the cosmic world. God becomes only the name to offer flower while performing the rituals. They consider 'yajna' is the highest sacrifice to achieve summum bonum in one's life. Yajna is not for the worship to Gods or propitiation of Gods but purification of one's own soul.

There are two sorts of actions performed by living soul in this earth. One is that actions are performed to achieve certain worldly pleasures. Second, comprises of actions are to be performed because the Gita prescribes it. In short, the former action is known as duty for duty sake and later is known as duty for deity. Since, there are actions, there are attachment with worldly objects, hence arouses sufferings and pains. To detract from (get rid of) all sorts of sufferings, one needs to get liberation. In this regard, Mimansikas state that the self moves in the cycle of birth and death because of its action and attachment towards worldly pleasures. The state of liberation can be attained only when the self gets emancipation from the bondages of mind, body, sense organs and objects of the world. This helps the self to remain free form the cycle of birth and death. In the state of liberation, the self cannot enjoy the experience of pleasure and pain because it is devoid of consciousness. Thus, for Mimansikas, liberation is not a state of bliss. It is a state where the self achieves its real nature and dissociated from worldly pleasure and pain.

Summary

The literal meaning of the term Vedanta is "the end of the Vedas, the concluding parts of the Vedas, the culmination of the Vedic teaching and wisdom". Thus, the term is originally referred to the Upanishads, the last literary products of the Vedic period. The views of the Upanishads also constitute the final aim of the Veda, or the essence of the Vedas.

The Mimansa philosophy is pluralistic realist because they suggest there are innumerable objects existing in the world. There are infinite and eternal souls also exist in the world. Souls are of two sorts. One is liberated soul and another is, living soul. This implies as many body those many souls. Further, they said that there are non-perceivable entities exist in the world, like, hell, heaven, etc. According to the Mimansa philosophy, the Vedas prescribe eternal principles for living beings, accordingly, a self does his/her duties in the cosmic world. Since everyone does his/her duties, the notion of action and attachment towards worldly objects can't be denied. To free from all sorts of attachment, pain, and pleasure, one needs to attain liberation. In the state of liberation, the self is emancipated from all sorts of worldly bondage and sufferings.

Keywords

Brahman-the Upanishads speak of higher (para) Brahman and lower (apara) Brahman. The former is formless, unmanifest, immortal, abiding and transcendental, while the latter is formed, manifest, mortal, fleeting, and empirical. The para Brahman is devoid of all attributes and determinations; it is unqualified, indeterminate, and unconditioned. It is the Absolute

Visistadvaita- the non-duality or oneness of Brahman, which is qualified by the animate and inanimate beings. They are inseparable associated with Brahman.

Self Assessment

Q.1. Mimansa philosophy was propounded by-

A. Vatsyana

B. Kumarila Bhatt

C. Jamini

D. Vyas

Q.2. How many Sutras are there in Mimansa?

A. 2500

B. 2200

C. 2300

D. 2100

Q.3. Mimansa believes in-

A. Action

B. Mediation

C. Rituals and Karma

D. Advait

Q.4. Mimansa also known as-

A. Karma Mimansa

B. YogMimansa

C. Uttar Mimansa

D. PurvaMimansa

Q.5. Kumarila Bhatta added _____ school.

A. Anupalabhdhi

B. Nyaya

C. Vaisheshik

D. Shankya

Q.6. Mimansa philosophy on God emphasizes on-

A. Aesthetic

B. both aesthic and theistic doctrines

C. Theistic

D. None of these

Q.7. Vedantcomprise of-

A. Epics

B. Puranas

C. Upanishads

D. Aranyakas

Q.8. Prasthanatrayi comprised of_____.

A. Upanishads

B. Bhagwad Gita

C. Brahmasutras

D. All of the above

Q.9. Which of the following was the philosophy propounded by Ramanujacharya?

A. Dvait

B. Vishist- advait

C. Dvaita- dvait

D. Tattavada

Q.10. Who gave Dvait philosophy?

A. Madhvacharya

B. Ramanujacharya

C. Vallabhacharya

D. Shankracharya

Q.11. Which of the following saint was related with VedantSchool?

A. Kapila

B. Vashistha

C. Kashyap

D. Badrayana

Q.12. Brahmasutra was written by-

A. Kashyap

B. Patanjali

C. Badrayana

D. Vashistha

Q.13. Uttar Mimansa was also known as _____.

A. Brahma sutra

B. Yoga sutra

C. Kalpa sutra

D. Samkhya sutra

Q.14. Upanishads are-

A. Last phase of Vedic revelation
B. religious and philosophical treatises
C. contain difficult discussions of ultimate philosophical problems
D. All of the above.

Q.15. Advait philosophy was propounded by-

A. Vallabhacharya
B. Ramanujacharya
C. Shankaracharya
D. Madhavacharya

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	C	2.	A	3.	C	4.	D	5.	A
6.	B	7.	C	8.	D	9.	B	10.	A
11.	D	12.	C	13.	A	14.	D	15.	C

Review Questions

1. What is the source for the study of Vedanta?
2. How does Rig Veda contribute to the growth of the Vedanta system?
3. Describe in brief Sudhaadvaita of Vallabha.
4. Write a note on Kumarila Bhatta's contribution in Mimansa philosophy.
5. Examine the role of Ramanujacharya in Vedanta school of Indian philosophy.

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Unit 11: Literature

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Explain the state of ancient languages in early medieval India.
- Evaluate the factors that led to decline of Sanskrit language and literature in early medieval India.
- Examine the role of rulers in patronizing the prominent languages from 6th-12th century CE.

Introduction

From the point of view of literature, the early medieval India i.e., period between 750-1206 CEconsidered as one of the most productive and creative periods of Indian history. Several literary works were composed under the patronage of royal courts. Like the earlier period, Sanskrit continued to be important in literature. It was the preferred language of court poets. At the same time, the practice of composing texts in vernacular languages gained momentum. While texts in Tamil language are known since 300 BCE, for the first time, literary compositions in regional languages of Kannada and Telugu appeared. Thus, various scholars have considered this to be a transformative phase, a time when Sanskrit's dominant literary position was challenged by vernacular languages.

The rise of various regional languages and factors impacting the rise of vernacular languages will be studied in next unit. In this unit, we are focusing the ancient Indian languages and their literature. Wide literature available during early medieval India enables us to look into the conditions of polity, society and economy of the period.

11.1 Sanskrit

The Early Medieval period marks the spread of Sanskrit throughout the subcontinent along with the emergence of a number of regional vernaculars. Sanskrit was indeed the language of the court and elites and its currency was confined to a handful of learned people. This was the preferred language for writing matters related to Brahmanical philosophy, religion, especially the Vedanta and the Mimamsa texts (digests), and the normative texts and their commentaries. Significantly enough, Buddhist and Jainacentres of learning extensively used Sanskrit.

Historians argue that there were two great moments of transformation in culture and power in pre-modern India. The first happened around the beginning of the Common Era, when Sanskrit, which

had a long history as a sacred language restricted to religious practice, was 're-invented' as a language for literary and political expression, eventually spilling out far beyond the frontiers of the subcontinent. The second moment of transformation was located in the beginning of the second millennium CE, when vernacular speech forms became literary languages and began to challenge the position of Sanskrit, eventually replacing it.

The Sanskrit literature of the early medieval period has usually been described as characterized by pedantry, ornateness, and artificiality. The literature includes philosophical commentaries and religious texts, bhanas (monologue plays), stotras (hymn compositions), story literature, and anthologies of poetry. Historical and epic–Puranic themes were popular in kavya. The technical literature includes works on meter, grammar, lexicography, poetics, music, architecture, medicine, and mathematics.

Biographies or Charitas

The growth of regional polities was accompanied by the composition of royal biographies by court poets. Banabhatta'sHarshacharita is one of the well-known works of this genre. Sandhyakaranandin'sRamacharita is written in shlesha (with double meaning) and simultaneously tells the story of the epic hero Rama and the Pala king Ramapala. The few works of poetry woven around quasi-historical themes or characters included Padmagupta'sNavasahasankacharita, which tells the tale of king SindhurajaNavasahasanka of Malwa, and his winning of the hand of a princess named Shashiprabha. Bilhana wrote the Vikramankadevacharita, a eulogistic work about Vikramaditya VI, the Chalukya king of Kalyani. Hemachandra'sKumarapalacharita (in Sanskrit and Prakrit) tells the story of Kumarapala, king of Anahilawada, while illustrating the rules of grammar. There is uncertainty about the authorship of the incomplete Prithvirajavijaya, which gives an account of the victory of Prithviraja Chauhan over Muhammad of Ghor. Chand Bardai'sPrithvirajaraso is an epic woven around the exploits of the same Chauhan king. Kalhana'sRajatarangini is a historical chronicle of the rulers of Kashmir from the earliest times up to the 12th century CE.

The historical context in which biographies, official inscriptions and dynastic chronicles, or chronicles of regions were composed was different from the middle of the first millennium CE. A large number of polities were emerging on the political scene. The new courts needed worthy court poets who could compose their biographies which would legitimize the dynasty and publicize the activities of the kings. The courtly culture was also different from the pre-Gupta times. Historians believe that compared to the less formal, more openness of language and style of earlier courts the post seventh century courts were more hegemonic in nature. The centrality of the individual in the charita literature may have been due to the growth of bhakti sects where individual actions were the focus in the assessment of his/her life.

The biographical tradition became more common towards the end of the first millennium CE. The earlier biographies were treated as precedents. Biographies are important because they reflect the changes in historical situation. This was the time when the Puranas were increasingly concerned with sectarian worship. The Puranas post mid-first millennium CE do not carry information on dynastic lists. The charitas and inscriptions fill this gap.

An important biography was Ramacharita which was written by Sandhyakaranandin in the early 12th century CE. It focusses on the reign of Palas of eastern India particularly king Ramapala. It gives us information about the political events leading to the recovery of the region of Varendri, the heartland of Pala power from the Kaivartas by Ramapala. This text gives us an insight into what has been interpreted as the first peasant revolt in Indian history. The Kaivartas were the feudatories who revolted against the Palas. The text was composed in the reign of Madanapala, Ramapala's successor. It records not only the revolt but also the life history of Ramapala till his voluntary death. This charita is not about contemporary events but records something that happened during the days of Madanapala's predecessor Ramapala's reign. It recounts how Mahipala, the elder brother of Ramapala, suspecting his younger brothers of conspiracy against himself, imprisons them. His territory of Varendri is occupied by the Kaivartas who rise in revolt against him under the leadership of Divya and later Bhima. The defeated king flees and the throne is occupied by his younger brother Ramapala. This event challenges the law of primogeniture hence the need for a charita to justify his accession. This also fulfils the function of a biography where authority and legitimacy had to be emphasized and endorse royal ambition. In this case this is accomplished by showing the unworthiness of the elder brother. Though there is uncertainty regarding the revolt having been engineered by the lesser feudatories or the peasants, it nevertheless was an event which affords us a rare insight into the complicated process of the organization of the suppression of the revolt which is otherwise not forthcoming. The Palas manage to successfully capture

Varendri and this text legitimizes their hold over it. It also provides us information about Ramapala's various campaigns against Gahadvalas of Varanasi, the eastern Gangas in Odisha, the Karnatas from the Deccan and the Colas of south India. Dharmapala is also eulogized as the king of Kannauj (which was the focus of struggle between the Palas, the Rashtrakutas and the Pratiharas in the late first millennium CE). Further stated is the fact that Dharmapala was accepted by Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhara, Kira and Pancala. These were the peoples of the past so the list is evoking earlier histories.

Charitas like Ramacharita become crucial from a historical point of view as they encapsulate the changes in the king's relationship with his subordinates especially where the politics of opposition is made apparent. The kings who in the vamsanucharita section of the Puranas were treated in a perfunctory fashion found space in the caritas.

A quasi-historical work is Padmagupta'sNavasahasankacharita which tells the story of king SindhurajaNavasahasanka of Malwa and his winning of the hand of a princess named Sashiprabha. Bilhana's work called Vikramankadevacharita is a eulogistic work about Vikramaditya VI, the Chalukya king of Kalyani. Hemchandra'sKumarapalacharita (in Sanskrit and Prakrit) tells the story of Kumarapala, king of Anahilawada, while illustrating the rules of grammar.

Purana

Purana literally was "that which is ancient". These texts are an important source for the reconstruction of history of the early medieval period. They provide genealogical information about the various dynasties that were ruling in this period. They were composed in the first millennium CE. Each Purana revolved around a deity. Each consisted of the pancha-laksana or "the five facets". These were the descriptions of the sarga (primary creation), prati-sarga (secondary creation), manvantara (the time cycles), vamsa (succession, in this instance, largely of deities and sages), and the vamsanucharita. There are eighteen Mahapuranas and many Upa Puranas which are subsidiary texts, often focusing on lesser deities. Associated with these were texts on sacred topography and places of pilgrimage, such as the Sthala-Puranas and the Mahatmyas. Still later, the caste Puranas — as for example those of the Mallas, the Srimalas, and the Dharmaranyas are historically important. Of the non-brahmanical sects, the Jainas produced their own Puranas, presenting a different perspective from the brahmanical. The Upa Puranas in particular provide information on popular beliefs, customs and festivals. They are useful to trace the interaction between the Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical ideas, values and practices which resulted in the emergence of distinct regional configurations.

The early medieval Puranas reflect the increasing popularity of theistic elements within the Hindu cults. They include the Bhagavata Purana (c. 10th century), the Brahmavaivarta Purana (composed sometime between the 10th and 16th centuries), and the Kalika Purana (10th-11th century). Sections on tirthas (pilgrimage), vratas (vows), penances, gifts, and the dharma of women were added to the older Puranas during this period. The Upapuranas, many of which were composed in eastern India, are even more valuable for the information they provide on popular beliefs, customs, and festivals. They can be used to trace the dialogue between Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical ideas, values, and practices, which resulted in the emergence of distinct regional cultural configurations.

Dharmashastras

D. Mathur has recently argued that in the early medieval period, Hindu law (vyavahara) emerged from the shadow of dharma and established its independent identity. This was accompanied by an increasing formalization of law and legal procedures, and there was a tendency to empower the state to regulate and arbitrate in the social life of subjects, including with regard to marriage issues. A large number of important and influential Dharmashastra compilations, digests, and commentaries were written during this period. The compilations include the Chaturvimshatimata, which put together the teachings of 24 law-givers. Jimutavahana wrote a work on procedural law called the Vyavaharamatrika and a digest of laws on inheritance called the Dayabhaga, which became extremely influential in Bengal. Major commentaries include those of Medatithi (9th century), Govindaraja (11th/12th century), and Kulluka (12th century) on the Manu Smriti. Vijnaneshvara (11th–12th centuries) and Apararka (12th century) wrote commentaries on the Yajnavalkya Smriti. Vijnaneshvara's commentary, titled the Mitakshara, became an authority on various aspects of Hindu law. Other important Dharmashastra works include Lakshmidhara'sKrityaKalpataru (12th century) and Devanabhatta'sSmritichandrika (11th-12th centuries).

Drama

Ancient dramas on historical themes are of special interest to historians, although it is necessary to remember that they were plays and not historical accounts. Vishakhadatta'sMudrarakshasa (7th-8th centuries) revolves around the man oeuvres of Chanakya to win over Rakshasa, a minister of the Nandas, to Chandragupta's side. His Devichandragupta centers on an incident set in the reign of the Gupta king Ramagupta. Narrative literature such as the Panchatantra (5th–6th centuries) and the Kathasaritsagara (Ocean of Streams of Stories, 11th century) are collections of popular folk tales that ordinary people may have known, listened to, and enjoyed.

The well-known king Harsha or Harshavardhana or Śri Harsha, the hero of Bāṇa'sHarshacharita, was a man of letter. The drama named Ratnāvalī, Priyadarśikā and Nāgānanda are ascribed to Harsha. He was the reputed patron of Bāṇabhatta, Mayūra and Divākara. The Ratnāvalī, which is Harsha's masterpiece, is a naikā (drama) in four acts, which deals with the story of union of king Udayana and Ratnāvalī, the daughter of the king Ceylon. The Priyadarśikā is also a drama in four acts, have a common hero of the Ratnāvalī. Nāgānanda, a nātaka in five acts, depicts the story of Jimutavāhana. Bāṇa in the metrical introduction to his Harshacharita refers to Harsha as Adhyarājaand his achievements literary and political field.The Ratnāvalī, which is Harsha's masterpiece, is a naikā (drama) in four acts, which deals with the story of union of king Udayana and Ratnāvalī, the daughter of the king Ceylon. The Priyadarśikā is also a drama in four acts, have a common hero of the Ratnāvalī. Nāgānanda, a nātaka in five acts, depicts the story of Jimutavāhana.

The dramatist Bhavabhūti is the next name after Kālīdāsa. He wrote three rupaka or drama i.e.Mālatī-mādhava, Mahāvīracharita and Uttararāmacharita. The Mahāvira-charita or the Biography of the Great Hero, is the first play of Bhavabhūti. The drama is written in seven acts. Subject matter is related to the Rāmāyaṇa, depicting the heroic achievements of Rama's early life. In this play, Mālyāvān minister of Rāvaṇa played a very important role in it. Bhavabhūti wrote his drama under the affluence of the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya. The best known and the most popular of Bhavabhūti drama is the Mālatī-mādhava, is a prakaraṇa. The drama of Mālati and Mādhava is in ten acts. Klein has designated the Mālatī-Mādhava as "the Romeo and Juliet drama of India. The Uttararāma-charita, the second part of the Biography of Rāma, written in seven acts, covers the later life of Rāma. Bhavabhūti narrates the story of Sītā, discarded by Rāma. This play is related to Uttarakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa.

Rājaśekhara, a great master of words, composed four dramas, i.e.,Bālarāmayaṇa, Karpūrmañjarī, Viddhaśāla-bhañjika and Bālabhārati. The Bālarāmāyaṇa is a play in ten acts, narrates the whole story of Rāmāyaṇa the Karpūrmañjarī was a play in four acts written in Prākrit. The Karpūrmañjarī is the considered as one of the best comedies in Indian literature and it is more remarkable for its style and language.

Kshmīśvara was a contemporary of Rājaśekhara in the court of Mahipāla of Kanauj whose accession on the throne took place in CE 914. He wrote two dramas, i.e.,Naishadhananda and Chaṇḍakauśika. The Naishadhananda describes the story of Nala and Damayanti. The Chaṇḍakauśika is a drama in five acts depicting the famous story of king Hariśachandra and sage Viśvamitra.

The Veṇisanihāra, written by Bhadranārāyaṇa, is a drama in six acts, based on story of the character of the Mahābhārata, Bhīma who killed Duśśāsana and tied the hairs of Draupadi with his blood. The Chief sentiments of this nātaka are Vira (heroic). Bhadranārāyaṇa probably flourished before eighth century CE because Vāmana and Ānandavardhana quote him.

Murāri, the author of Anargharaghāva belonged to the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century CE. The play is written in seven acts, depicting the story of Rāmāyaṇa. Śaktibhadra, who was the disciple of Śankarāchārya 34 (788-820), wrote Āścharya-chūdāmaṇī or Chūdāmaṇī, in the beginning of ninth century CE.

The poet Bilhaṇa wrote Karaṇasundarī (nātikā) in the eleventh century CE. The hero of drama was the Chālukya prince Aṇhilavāḍ Karna. The drama was performed in the temple of Śāntinātha on the festival of JinaRishabha.Krishṇamiśra wrote Prabodha-chandrodaya or "Rise of the Moon of Knowledge" was approximately belongs to the later half of the eleventh century CE.

Poetry

Bhartrihāri was an eminent author of three śatakas viz., the Śringāraśataka, the Nītiśataka and the Vairāgyaśataka. He flourished in the first half of seventh century CE. He was grammarian, philosopher and poet. Some scholar doubted his single authorship of these three poems but Indian tradition accepts that Bhartrihāri writes these three poems. Poet Mayūra probably father-in-law of Bāṇa of the Seventh century CE, was under the patronage of Harsha. The Sūryaśataka written by

Mayūra is a religious lyric in the honor of the Sun. Later on poet like Rājaśekhara praised the Mayūra's work.

Bāṇa under patronage of Harshavardhana, was a great poet and writer. He wrote Chaṇḍiśataka in 102 stanzas in honor of the Goddess Pārvatī. This work of Bāṇa is not as attractive as the others. Many demerits appear clearly in many stanzas.

Ānandavardhana (about 850 CE), a great thinker on poetry quotes his name. Amaruśataka is a living picture of love and sexual joy, through its extremely refined. This book has found the widest recognition in the hands of Sanskrit rhetoricians. Amaru points the relation of lovers, and takes no thought of other aspect of life. He had a great place in the Indian Sanskrit lyrical poetry. According to a teacher of poetics single stanza of the poet Amaru equals a hundred great poems. Kuttanīmata of Dāmodaragupta, a minister of king Jayāpida of Kashmir (CE 772-813) is a highly interesting small poem. It is a representation of Harsha's Ratnāvalī.

The Chaurapañchasika or Fifty stanzas of the Thief of Bilhaṇa, is a lyric poem, describing in a simple style a variety of love scenes. The Kashmiri poet Bilhaṇa belongs to the later half of the eleventh century. Govardhana, who was a contemporary of the famous author Jayadeva, writes Āryāsaptaśati, seven hundred Āryā verses. In this poem, we find seven hundred erotic stanzas. His work is lacking in popularity. But this work of Govardhana was the model for poet BihārīLāla who composed Satsai in Hindi language. Dhoyi, a contemporary of Jayadeva, under the patronage of king Lakshmaṇasena of Bengal (12th century CE) wrote the poem Pawandūta in imitation of the Meghadūta.

Metrics

The science of Metrics is called Chhandasi.e. the metrical form of poetry. A metrical composition is distinguished from prose by means of some kinds of music or rhythm, which it is associated. Most Hindus are passionately fond of their verses, and always desirous of reciting them, even if they do not understand the meaning of words. They do not want prose compositions although it is much easier to understand them Chhandas, are also entitled among the six Vedāṁgas. The most important work of Vedāngas is Pingala's Chhandasūtra. Pingala, the earliest known author on prosody, who gave a sure foundation to this science, Metrics. He is supposed to be the father of Sanskrit Metrics. We find discussions on metrical matters in the Brāhmaṇas. Natyashatra of Bharata also contains two chapters on meters.

Utpala, (900-950 CE) son and pupil of Somānandanātha, is the only important writer on Sanskrit Meters in the tenth century CE. He wrote a commentary on Varāhamihira'sBrihatSaṁhita and he gave us about sixty definitions of the Sanskrit Akshara GaṇaVṛittas. But about forty definitions have taken from Jayadeva work. Utpala also quotes two illustrations from Prākrit. Bhattotpāla (CE 10th) in his commentary, by way of explanation, has referred to a metrical text in which he mentions the author simply as teacher (Āchārya). Here each meter is defined by means of a stanza composed in the same meter. The Agni-purāṇa describes prosody in eight chapters under the title chhandasāra. The Purāṇa devotes eight chapters to the various topics concerning Metrics.

Hemachandra (born 1088 CE) the famous JainaĀchārya, versatile writer of Gujarat, composed his Chhandonu-śāsana about 1150 CE. This is a compilation and to an original work. But this is a very exhaustive and important work, on Sanskrit, Prākrit and Apabhraṁśametres.

Mathematics

Brahmagupta was very strong as a mathematician. He is famous for his Brāhmasphutasiddhānta where in the twelfth and eighteen chapters may be found important mathematical developments. His work named Khanḍakhādyaka, concerning cyclic quadrilateral, is of high merit. Brahmagupta's work covers very briefly the ordinary arithmetical operations, square and cube roots, rule of three, interest, progressions, geometry, including treatment of the rational right-angled triangle and the elements of the circle, elementary mensuration of solids, shadow problems, negative and positive quantities, cipher, surds, simple algebraic identities, indeterminate equations of the first and second degrees in considerable detail and simple equations of the first and second degrees which are briefly treated. Special attention is given to cyclic quadrilaterals.

Mahāvīrāchārya, a Jaina who wrote Gaṇita-sāra-sarṁgraha, flourished during the period of reign of the Rāshtrakuta ruler Amoghavarsha (814-878 CE). This work was on geometry having examples of indeterminate. Śrīdhara, born 991 CE, wrote the Triśatī, deals with quadratic equation of Algebra. The most important work on mathematics are the two chapters of the Siddhānta-śiromaṇī of Bhāskarāchāryai.e. entitled the Līlāvati and the Bījagaṇita, made some lasting contribution of Indian Mathematics in the twelfth century CE. Brahmagupta (7th century), Mahāvīra (9th century)

and Bhāskara (12th century), great Mathematician of India, discovered so many things in the field of Mathematics but Europe was unknown about them till renaissance.

Medicine

Vāgbhatta is the great medical writer of this period who ranks only next to Charaka and Suśruta. But we find two writers of this name. Work of both are important in this field, both were Buddhist; both claim the same parentage in their works-the Ashtaṁga-saṁgraha and the Ashtaṁgahridaya-saṁhita. The first in mixture of prose and verses is associated with VriddhaVāgbhatta and second is written only in verses and is cited as the work of the later Vāgbhatta 215. The elder Vāgbhatta or VriddhaVāgbhatta was son of Siṁhagupta and grandson of Vāgbhatta and disciple of the Buddhist Avalokita. I-tsing's reference is important to fix the date of vriddhaVāgbhatta, therefore may be placed about the beginning of the seventh century CE. It is not certain whether the younger Vāgbhatta was in any way related to the elder one. Apparently Vāgbhatta, lived in the beginning of the eightcentury CE.

Nāgārjuna of Daihaka near Somanātha wrote a great comprehensive work named the Rasaratnākara. He lived in the seventh or eighth century CE according to PC Ray, but according to statement of Alberūni and Winternitz placed Nāgārjuna in the tenth century CE.

The earliest and most authoritative treatise on Pathology is Mādhavakara'sRugviniśchaya, is called Mādhavanidāna or briefly Nidāna. Mādhavakara, son of Indukara, belongs to the eighth or the ninth century CE. The fame of this work is proved by many commentaries, which are written on this work. The Siddhiyoga (also called Vrindamādhava) is another curious work belonging to the same period. The author of the work, Vrinda, himself admits that he follows in its order of decease that of the Rugviniśchaya, and provides prescriptions for curing a large number of ailments from fever to poisoning. According to some scholar, Vrinda is only a second name of Mādhavakara, but unproved.

In the eighth or ninth century, Dridhabala son of Kapilabala, was a Kashmirian, who revised the present text of Charaka. It is certain that we have no text of the Charakasaṁhita in its original form. Dridhabala completed about one-third of the work and he revised the text of the whole saṁhita and prepared an appendix.

Chakrapāṇidatta, son of Nārāyana, of Bengal, known as a commentator of Suśruta, was a successful medicinal author in the eleventh century CE. He wrote commentaries named Āyurveda-dīpika and Bhānumati respectively on Charaka and Suśruta. He wrote one Chikitsāsāra-Saṁgraha a great work on Therapeutics about 1060 CE. This is an authoritative work on the subject. Niśchalakara and Śivadāsa wrote commentaries on this work. Vangasena (11th or 12th century CE), son of Gadādhara, probably an inhabitant of Bengal wrote a voluminous work under the same title the Chikitsāsārasaṁgraha. He relied on the works of Suśruta and Mādhavakara to write his Chikitsāsārasaṁgraha.

Bhoja wrote a Sālihotra in 138 verses in the eleventh century CE. It is an interesting work, giving information about the horses, their disease and remedies. There are some medical dictionaries or called Medico-botanical glossaries. Some of these are Nighaṇtuby Indukara father of Mādhvakara; Dhanvantri-nighaṇtu ascribed to Dhanvantri (the extant work that cannot be older than about the eighth century CE). Sureśvara or Surapāla, the courtphysician of king Bhīmapāla of Bengal wrote the Śabda-pradīpa, a dictionary of medical Botany in 1075 CE.

Decline of Sanskrit

During the Sultanate period, it is generally believed that the loss of official patronage caused the decline of Sanskrit during Sultanate period.Sanskrit as the official language, there was no quantitative decline in the production of Sanskrit literary work as such. The period is remarkable for the immense production of literary work in different branches of Sanskrit literature - kavya (poetical narrative), region and philosophy, grammar, drama, stories, medicine, astronomy, commentaries and digests on the Law Rooks (Dharamashastras) and other classical Sanskrit Forks. Nor was the loss of official patronage to Sanskrit absent for there were many kings who patronized Sanskrit poets--especially in South India and Rajasthan. Butwhile Sanskrit works continued to be produced in large number, there seems to be a marked decline in the quality of these works. This decline had set in before the establishment of the Sultanate and became more pronounced during the sultanate period. There was not much originality in most of the Sanskrit works that appeared during this period. Much of the Sanskrit writing was wearisomely repetitive, artificial and forced. Sanskrit works on religious themes were often characterized by 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 independent production of Sanskrit literary works. In fact, the introduction of paper during the Sultanate period gave an impetus to the literary activity of reproduction and dissemination of already existing Sanskrit texts such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

11.2 Prakrit

Sanskrit and Prakrits have a symbiotic relationship, Prakrits constituting the foundation of Sanskrit and Sanskrit serving the social function of constitution of knowledge and creativity. Hence, it is necessary to look upon the contribution of Prakrits in the evolution and development of Sanskrit. Indo-Aryan languages have an extensive history of diffusion in the form of literary works. They can be divided into three major stages:

A. Old Indo-Aryan (before 500BCE) - represented by extremely affluent literature stretching over millennia, together with Vedic texts and later literary works of different genres. Knowledge of the details and brilliant set of rules describing the Indo-Aryan language prevalent in different areas and era could be extracted from the Pratisakhya works and Panini's Astadhyayi;

B. Middle Indo-Aryan (500 BCE- 1000CE)- Inscriptional languages that give us good though rough idea of dialectical features of Middle Indo-Aryan in the mid-third century BCE; and

C. New Indo-Aryan (1000CE onwards)- that supplies a rich legacy of literature in different genres from Buddhist texts in Pali to grammars of Pali composed in this language. The Middle Indo-Aryan period is also known as period of Prakrit. This Middle Indo-Aryan period can be divided into three sub-categories according to their development.

i. First Prakrit or Old Prakrit (500 BCE-1 CE) includes the Pali language used by Hinayana, the language of the oldest Jain Sutras and the fragments of early plays of Ashvaghosha.

ii. Second Prakrit or Middle Prakrit (1 CE- 500 CE) included languages like Maharastri, Sauraseni and Magadhi.

iii. Third Prakrit or Late Prakrit (500 CE- 1000CE) or Apabhramsha is the stage marked by casual speech when Prakrits were already obsolete and refined.

Most of the Prakrit works of this period are Jaina texts in the Maharashtri dialect. Their language is marked by artificiality and ornamentation. The few available Pali texts show a strong Sanskrit influence. Apabhramsha represents the last stage of the Prakrit languages, out of which the various modern north Indian languages emerged. Apabhramsha works of this time include several texts on Jaina doctrines and saints, epic poems, short stories, and dohas (couplets).

Literary sources offer both direct as well as indirect information about their time. An example of a text that gives direct, useful historical information is the anonymous Lekhapaddhati, a work in Sanskrit and Prakrit composed in Gujarat in about the 13th century, which contains models of various types of legal documents. Another example is the Krishi-Parashara, an early medieval text of Bengal, dealing with agriculture. Historical information can also be prized out of texts that appear on the surface to be of little historical value. For instance, Jain folk tales (dharma-kathas) of western India often have merchants as protagonists, and are a useful source of information on trade and traders. Mathematical texts such as the 9th century Ganitasarasangraha of Mahaviracharya and the 12th century Lilavati of Bhaskaracharya offer incidental information about prices, weights and measures, wages, and coins.

According to Shvetambara tradition, the Angas were compiled at a council held at Pataliputra. The compilation of the entire canon is supposed to have taken place in the 5th or 6th century at a council held in Valabhi in Gujarat, presided over by DevarddhiKshamashramana. Some of the material in the canon may go back to the 5th or 4th century BCE, but changes and additions continued to be made till the 5th–6th centuries CE. In order to use such texts as historical sources, a clearer identification of their internal chronology is required.

The Jaina Puranas (the Shvetambaras call them Charitas) are hagiographies of the Jaina saints known as tirthankaras (literally 'ford makers'), but they contain other material as well. The Adi Purana (9th century) narrates the life of the first tirthankara Rishabha, also known as Adinatha. The

8th century Harivamsha Purana gives a Jaina version of the stories of the Kauravas, Pandavas, Krishna, Balarama, and others. The TrishashtilakshanaMahapurana by Jinasena and Gunabhadra (9th century) has life stories of various Jaina saints, kings, and heroes. It also has sections on topics such as life-cycle rituals, the interpretation of dreams, town planning, the duties of a warrior, and how a king should rule. The Parishishtaparvan (12th century) by Hemachandra gives a history of the earliest Jaina teachers and also mentions certain details of political history. A number of Prabandhas (12th century onwards) from Gujarat offer semi-historical accounts of saints and historical characters. Jaina texts also include hymn literature and lyrical poetry. The vast Jaina didactic story (katha) literature in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Apabhramsha can offer historians clues on the everyday life of their time.

11.3 Tamil

The earliest literature of South India is represented by a group of texts in old Tamil, often collectively referred to as Sangam literature. A tradition recorded in post-7th century texts speaks of three Sangams or literary gatherings in ancient times. The first is supposed to have been held in Madurai for 4,440 years, the second at Kapatapuram for 3,700 years, and the third in Madurai for 1,850 years. Although the details of this legend obviously cannot be considered historical, the similarity of language and style within the Sangam corpus suggests the possibility that they were the product of some sort of literary gathering. The case for the historicity of at least the third Sangam is that some of the kings and poets associated with it are historical figures. On the other hand, there is a possibility that the legend of the Sangams may have been based on a very different event— the establishment of the Jaina sangha in Madurai in about the 5th century. In view of the controversy surrounding the tradition of the three Sangams, some scholars prefer to use the term 'early classical Tamil literature' rather than 'Sangam literature'.

A number of Tamil didactic works were written in the post-5th century period. The most famous of these is Tiruvalluvar'sTirukkural, a work on ethics, polity, and love (5th– 6th centuries). Of the several Tamil epics, two of the best known are the Silappadikaram and Manimekalai. The former is a little earlier that the latter, but both were composed in about the 5th–6th centuries CE.

Early medieval Tamil literature includes the inspired and intense devotional poetry of the Vaishnava saints (Alvars) and Shaiva saints (Nayanars or Nayanmars) and their hagiographies. Vaishnava poetry took off with the compositions of Peyalvar, Puttalvar, and Poikaialvar. In the 10th century, Nathamuni collected the Alvar hymns into the canon known as the NalayiraDivyaPrabandham. The Alvarvaipavam is a sacred biography of the Vaishnava saints. Shaiva devotional literature began with the compositions of Tirumular and Karaikal Ammaiyar. The hymns of the Nayanmar saints were compiled in the 10th century by Nambi Andar Nambi and this compilation formed the core of the Shaiva canon, the Tirumurai. Nambi also wrote a work called the TiruttondarTiruvantati about the saints. In the 12th century, the accounts of the Shaiva saints were collected in a text called the Periyapuranam. All these texts provide valuable insights into the religious and social history of early medieval South India.

New genres of Tamil poetry emerged in early medieval times, many in praise of kings and gods. The Kalampakams were poetic compositions in which the last line, word, foot, or syllable of the preceding poem formed the beginning of the succeeding one. Kovai were poems in which the verses are arranged in a thematic sequence. Compositions in this genre included: the Pantikkovai, a 6th/7th century work written in honor of the Pandya king Netumaran; Manikkavachakar'sTirukkovaiyar (9th century) in praise of the god Shiva; and PoyyamolipPulavar'sTanchaivananKovai (13th century) about Tanchaivanan, a minister and general of a Pandya king. Ula literature comprised songs in praise of gods, sung when the image of the deity was taken out in procession. Tutu poetry consisted of poems in which a message is delivered to a god, lover, or someone else. The moral aphorisms and sayings of Avvaiyar (9th-10th century), the second of three poetesses by this name, are still popular among Tamilspeaking people today.

Of the many Tamil renderings of the Rama legend, the most famous is Kamban'sIramavataram. Tamil versions of the Mahabharata story were also written, of which some fragments survive. Several Tamil lexicons and grammatical works belong to the early medieval period.

Royal biographies in Tamil include the anonymous Nandikkalambakkam (9th century), a long poem about the events of the reign of the Pallava king Nandivarman III. An 11th century work, the Kalinkattupparani by Cheyankontar, is based on the war between the Chola king Kulottunga and AnantavarmanChodaganga, the ruler of Kalinga. The poet describes and praises the heroism of the

Chola king and his army commander, presenting the war as a divine conflict between the principles of good and evil.

11.4 Apbhramsha

Modern Indian languages can be considered as the Apabhramsha of Prakrit languages. To denote all deviations from Paninean Sanskrit, the term 'Apabhramsha' was used disrespectfully. However, according to Prakrit grammarians, Apabhramsha is another type of the Prakrit language. During the centuries of Islamic invasion, Apabhramsha became another Classical language of India. It helped to link the space between typical Prakrit and modern languages.

Modern vernaculars were derived from the various local Apabhramshas, for instance western Hindi, Rajasthani and Gujrati came from SaurasenaApabhramsha; Marathi came from MaharastraApabhramsha, Bengali, Bihari, Assamese and Oriya from Magadha; eastern Hindi from Ardhamagadhi, etc. Apabhramsha is the collective term used to represent literary languages. We find literary evidences of Apabhramsha in the works of Guhasena, Rudrata, Dandin, Anandavardhana etc. In Apabhramsha, effort was made to simplify Prakrit by adopting the base of the vernacular grammar while keeping in the Prakrit vocabulary.

Apabhramsha became a dialect of Northern India before the rise of modern Northern Indian languages and are a non-standard language. If we want to look into the historical evidence in Apabrahmsa literature, which could be found in Kalidas work 'Vikramvarshiya'. Apabhramsa became a pan-Indian link language and replaced regional Prakrit by 900 CE till the Turkish invasion.

The literature of the period could be found within the Jaina collections. The well-known authors of the period were Sarahapad of Kamrupa, Devasena of Dhar (9th century CE), Puspadanta of Manikhet (9th century CE), Dhanapal, Muni Ramsimha, Hemachandra of Patan, Raighu of Gwalior (15th century CE).

Summary

Literary activities, the base of early medieval India to construct the history which impact the political, social, economic and religious condition of India at large scale, are very important. Literary activities in early medieval India are great sources of Indian culture. These writings enrich our society, culture and heritage. These writings are not only a storehouse of creativity but also theirs topics of discussion, are the great source of history. Literature has also helped preserve for man the different school of thought. It is usually defined as a means of communications generation to generation, with society breaking barriers which usually divide man on the base of caste, color, gender; status, time, religion etc. This is a fact that behind every book is a man; behind the man is the race; and behind the race is the natural and social environments whose impact is unconsciously reflected. As we know, a great writing is born of the brain and heart of its author who put himself into its pages, shows the age in the real sense and put an example for coming generation.

During early medieval India, Sanskrit lost its position as the medium of expression among all the classes of society and was restricted to only the highly educated. In the last Apabhraṁśa is the third and final stage of Middle Indo-Āryan. It stands midway between the Prākrit and Modern-Indo Āryan languages. In the next unit, we will look into the rise of various regional language and literature in early medieval India.

Keywords

1. **Prosody**: Rhythm stress, intonation of a language.
2. **Allegorical**: Style of writing in which the characters and events extoll virtues.
3. **Hagiographic**: A biographical account which is full of praise for the subject it deals with.

SelfAssessment

Q.1. Who authored Maltimadhava?

A. Bhavbhuti
B. Vakpatiraj
C. Suprabhadeva
D. Bhatti

Q.2. Which of the following is the literary work of famous author Bhatti?
A. Shishupalavadh
B. Mahabharat
C. Ravanvadha
D. Ram Katha

Q.3. Which Foreign traveler mentions that Harsha's plays were staged during early medieval India?
A. Hieun Tsang
B. Fa Hien
C. Yuwang Chang
D. Itsing

Q.4. Which of the following is the oldest medico- botanical dictionary?
A. Charak Samhita
B. Shustruta Samhita
C. Nighantu
D. Kashyap Samhita

Q.5. Which among the following is the notable philosophical writer of early medieval India?
A. Bhavabhuti
B. Vakapatiraja
C. Vachaspati Mishra
D. Bhatti

Q.6. Which of the following is the Jaina version of Mahabharata?
A. Bhavishya Purana
B. Brahmavaivarta Purana
C. Harivamsha Purana
D. Brahmanda Purana

Q.7. Who authored 'Gaudvaho'?
A. Bhavbhuti
B. Vakpatiraj
C. Suprabhadeva
D. Bhatti

Q.8. Which of the following statements are true related with Prakrit language?

1. Early medieval Indian literature on Prakrit language provides commentaries and philosophical treatises.

2. Royal patronage played significant role in expansion of literature.

3. Jaina authors devoted their energies in writing commentaries on old canonical literature.

A. 1 and 2
B. 2 only
C. 1, 2 and 3
D. 1 and 3

Q.9. 'Kuvlaymala' was written by _____.
A. Naribhadra
B. Dharmadasagani
C. Uddoytana Suri
D. Haribhadra Suri

Q.10. Which author has given in his 'Parishistparvana', the history of earliest Jaina teachers?
A. Uddoytana Suri
B. Vakapatiraja
C. Hemachandra Suri
D. Haribhadra Suri

Q.11. Tamil literature had dominations of these elements?
A. Philosophy
B. Religious
C. Medical
D. Lexicography

Q.12. Thiruvalluvar wrote which of the following works?
A. Narptu
B. Pathinenkilkanakku
C. Thirukullar
D. Nalatayivar

Q.13. Ula literature was-
A. Poem in which message to God was send
B. Song in praise of God
C. Songs and poems sung during procession
D. Poetries written in eulogy

Q.14. Kamban authored _____.
A. Kuvalaymala
B. Narpatu
C. Mahabharatam

D. Iramavataram

Q.15. 'Pauma- Chariu', a famous Apabhrahmsha literature was written by _____.

A. Hemachandra
B. Puspadanta
C. Shambhudeva
D. Kamban

Answers for SelfAssessment

1.	A	2.	C	3.	D	4.	C	5.	C
6.	C	7.	B	8.	C	9.	C	10.	C
11.	B	12.	C	13.	B	14.	D	15.	C

Review Questions

1. What is Charita literature? What is its significance in the reconstruction of the history of early medieval period? Illustrate with the help of examples.
2. Examine the factors that led to decline of Sanskrit in early 12th century CE.
3. Discuss the new range of literatures developed under the Tamil language during early medieval India.
4. Elucidate the state of ancient languages and literature from 7th -12th century C.E.
5. Write a note on development of Apabramsha language and literature in early medieval India.

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Unit 12: Rise of Regional Language and Literature

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Examine the factors that played significant role in rise of regional languages and literature during early medieval India.
- Understand the social background of the rise of regional languages in early medieval India.
- Understand the role of Bhakti saints in providing a distinct identity to the Marathi language and literature.

Introduction

One of the significant developments in the literary history of early medieval India is the development of literature in regional languages in various parts of India. Regional languages which grew rapidly during this period in northern India included Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati.

Each one of these languages originated from a corresponding Indo-Aryan Prakrit in it's a Apabhramsa stage. This origin can be traced back tothe seventh-eighth centuries. The three South Indian languages, i.e. 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 among the South Indian languages and it was not before the fourteenth century that it developed as an independent literary form.

Factors Contributed to the Development of Regional Languages

During the post-Gupta period, the growth of 'feudal' society, economy and polity led to the emergence of regional entities and cultures roughly from the seventh-eighth centuries. One consequence of the growth of regionalism was the emergence of the earliest forms of the regional languages from the Apabhramsa.

The decline in the quality of Sanskrit literature had set in much before the establishment of the Delhi sultanate. Much of the Sanskrit literature which appeared from the 10th-11th centuries lacked spontaneity and did not appeal to the masses. Its appeal was confined to a very small Brahminic circle. The replacement of Sanskrit by Persian as the official language during the Sultanate period further intensified the process of the decline of the Prakrit literature. Once it lost the official

patronage it had enjoyed at the center, many kingdoms during the Sultanate period promoted the use of regional languages since Persian was an unfamiliar language in many parts of the country. Regional languages were used, in addition to Sanskrit, for administrative purpose in many kingdoms even during the pre-Turkish period. In the territories under the rule of the Sultans of Delhi, there are references to Hindi knowing revenue officials at the local level.

The Turkish conquest of Northern India during the 13th century led to the end of the Rajput-Brahmin alliance and consequently the influence of the Brahmans diminished in the society. Once the upper caste domination diminished, the supremacy of Sanskrit received a setback, and regional languages which were spoken at the popular level, came to the fore.

The growth of non-Brahmanical and non-conformist nathpanthi movement and later that of various bhakti movements - both conformist and radical monotheistic - played an important role in the rapid growth of regional literature. Before the rise of the nathpanthi, much of the literature of their predecessors - the Buddhist siddhas - was written in regional languages including Hindi. The nathpanthi movement, which was the first beneficiary of the diminished influence of Brahmanism and which reached its culmination during the 13th and 14th centuries, promoted the cause of regional popular languages. The growth of the bhakti movements in North India from 15th century onwards played themost crucial role in the development of the regional languages and contributed to the rapid development of a great corpus of literature in these languages. The bhakti saints composed their verses in the languages understood by the people who were attracted towards them. They made use of popular idioms, popular legends and folk tales. The bhakti movements contributed to the growth of popular regional languages in yet another way. The bhakti saints, in particular those who belonged to the conventional stream of the bhakti movement translated or adapted epics, puranas and the Bhagavad Gita from Sanskrit into regional languages in order to make their contents accessible to the people. In this way, the bhakti poets popularized bhakti episodes drawn from various Sanskrit texts. The contents of these texts were not only translated in the languages in which people could understand them but they were also presented in simple terms before the people.

12.1 Marathi

As to the origin of the Marathi language it seems to have sprung from the old Maharashtri dialect, which is one of the Prakrit or corrupt forms of Sanskrit. Linguists are of opinion that Maharashtri must have been a spoken language during the fifth century A. D.,i.e. a century or so before the time of Kalidas who wrote the Setubandha in that dialect, and also put the speeches of certain characters of his famous Sanskrit plays, in that dialect.

Mukundraj who was the tutor to Jayantpal of the Yadav dynasty at Devgiri, wrote Paramamrita and Viveksindhu in Marathi, is the earliest Marathi author. He lived in the latter part of the 12th century, and thus the date of literary recognition of Marathi; and if we suppose that the Marathi language had undergone a course of cultivation for about four centuries before this date, as is probably the case, we may fix the date of the origin of Marathi at somewhere in the ninth century C.E.

Periods of Marathi Literature

The history of Marathi literature covers a periodof about seven centuries from the days of the old Yadav dynasty down to the present times. It may be divided into four main periods which strikingly coincide with that epoch of the rise and decline of the Maratha power itthe Deccan.

1. First Period

Maharashtra was ruled by the Yadav dynasty of Devgiri from the last quarter of the twelfth to the beginning of the fourteenth century. During the time of the Yadav Kings, Marathi was the-language of the court and thus received a long and continuous course of development. Bhillhama founded the dynasty at Devgiri in 1187 A. D., and his descendants ruled over Maharashtra till the country was annexed by the rulers of Delhiin 1318. During the rule of Maharashtra by Yadav Kings, two noted poets patronised.Mukundraj lived in the reign of Jayantpal (1191 to 1210 A. D.), and Dnyaneshwar, in the reign of Ramdev (1271 to 1309 A. D.). Both of them wrote poems on theological philosophy, in which they expounded, that the supreme spirit pervaded the whole universe. They preached that true religion consisted in worshipping; God by means of sincere love and true faith and not in mechanically going through several rites and ceremonies laid down by the scriptures. The people in those days enjoyed material prosperity and the national mind naturally

craved after spiritual felicity. The treasures of spiritual learning were, however, couched in the Sanskrit language which was unintelligible to the large majority of the masses, and so these magnanimous saints came to their help. The Brahmins, as a class, discouraged exposition of Sanskrit learning to others to such a degree that they actually persecuted those among them who translated the Sanskrit works for the. masses; but inspite of the opposition of their kinsmen, Mukundraj and Dnyaneshwar stood firm, and boldly carried on the task of educating the nation. Dnyaneshwar's brothers Nivrittinath and Sopandev and sister Muktabai helped him in the task and also composed some poems.

Namdev is the third poet of note that flourished some years after this period. He was a tailor by caste and profession. Poetic genius was, however, quite ready, at his service and he wrote a great many abhangs (stanzas of that name) on devotion to God. This can bedesignated as the first or early period of Marathi literature extending from 1200 to 1350.

This period is marked by works on spiritual philosophy and devotional love. The style of the early medieval period is what we may call archaic Marathi. Namdev being a poet of later date than the other two, his style is somewhat more modern and wo find purity of diction permeating all his poems. The influence of the literary activity of the time was so great that the spirit was taken up by Namdev's whole family, even by his maidservant Janabai.

Namdev died in the middle of the fourteenth century and thus we have no writings of significance. After Namdev, we don't find any significant authors for about two hundred years. Namdev was the last independent Yadav king. While he was reigning at Devgiri, Ala-ud-din Khilji suddenly appeared in the Deccan and reduced him to subjection. Shanker and Harpal struggled for independence, but Maharashtra was annexed to the empire of Delhi soon after, and remained so till the establishment of the Brahmanikingdom in 1347 A. D. This kingdom lasted till the beginning of the sixteenth century when it broke into five separate kingdoms viz. Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmednagar, Berar and Bedar. During this long period of Delhi sultanate, the nation of Maharashtra was completely over-ridden and found little scope for its activity. Marathi gave place to Persian as court language. In political sphere it degenerated and so it did in literary sphere also. The period from the establishment of the Bahmani Kingdom to its disruption was almost a blank in the history of Marathi literature.

2. Second Period

The Bahmani Kingdoms were involved in struggle and hopes of the Marhratta nation lay in these mutual quarrels of these kings. The latter had to seek the help of Mahratta horsemen for the achievement of their own purposes and old Mahratta families of note, who had so long been buried in obscurity, came forward and began to take prominent part in the courts of their respective masters. In course of time, they grew in power. The families of Jadhav, Nimbalkar, Ghatge Bhonsle, Morey and others established their military reputation and held high positions. About this time, the seeds of literary genius germinated again. Eknath was born in 1548 A. D. He resumed the task commenced by Dnyaneshwar more than two centuries ago and prosecuted it further by denouncing the rigid traditions of the caste system and preaching the spirit of mutual toleration. Other poets such asDasopant, Bangnath, Raghunath Pandit and Anand Tanaya were also born about this time. This period may be called the Second Period viz. from 1550 to 1600.

The poets of the early medieval period wrote on religious and social emancipation and rendered into Marathi the more important portions of the national epic lore. The style of this period is naturally less old fashioned and we find in it a sprinkling of Persian words and phrases owing to the advent ofkings in the Deccan during this time. The situation of Maharashtra was such that everybody was deeply engrossed in the struggle for existence and there was neither much time nor much energy to devote to literature.

3. Third Phase

The third is the most brilliant period in the history of Marathi literature. It extends from Third period. From the beginning of the seventeenth century to the close of Peshwa rule. i.e. over two hundred years. Three poets of great fame, via Ramdas, Tukaram and Mukteshwar were born in course of only a year or so about 1603 A. D. Tukaram preached asceticism, toleration and devotion to God. Ramdas was a saint of keen insight and ardent preacher to the masses. He was shrewd enough to see that the ground of the Maratha nation was well prepared, and that the time had arrived when the seed of union could be sown to advantage. Dasbodh and his other writings, besides containing sermons on abstract as well as practical topics, exhorted all communities of the Mahratta nation to forget their old dissensions and caste prejudices. Mukteshwar too, by his translation of the Mahabharat stirred up the nation still quicker. Many a Mahratta soldier gathered

together and listened with deep interest and rapt attention to the public narration of thrilling episodes in the Mahabharat.

The literature of this period is characterised by a variety of features. It was not only rich in devotional poems but the poetic genius found other themes also. Prose writings were not neglected though they were marked by antiquity of style and tinged with hybridism of court language. The highly didactic tone of Ramdas, the spontaneous flow of the writings of Tukaram, the descriptive talent of Mukteshwar, the delightful melody of Vaman Pandit, the narrative genius of Shridhar, theunsurpassed metrical dexterity and inexhaustible vocabulary of Moropant are literary excellences, of which any nation may justly be proud; and all of them are the products of this, the brightest era in the history of Maharashtra.

Prominent Authors of Marathi Language

This period of two centuries produced poets of and very high order, chief among whom were authors in the besides those mentioned above, were Vaman Pandit, Shridhar, Moropant and Mahipati. The Shahirs or petty bards also added their quota and immortalized important historical incidents by their less scientific, yet more popular and more inspiring songs called Powadas. A little before the subversion of the Peshwa rule, however, the poetic faculty seems to have indulged in lighter literature, and poetry of a low order was composed and sung for pleasure alone. Bajirao II and his gay companions revelled a luxury and some of the poets of this time composed lavnis (songs of that name) in order to plea the voluptuous Peshwa and his sycophants. This period (1620- 1820 A.D.) of Marathi literature is coincident with the period of Mahratta power in the political history of the Deccan, and Mahratta poetry is remarkably contemporaneous with Mahratta power in its rise, growth and fall. Tukaram followed in the foot-steps of Namdeva with particular regard to devotional love; Ramdas preached union and taught practical wisdombeside the abstract philosophy of Brahma; Mukteshwar and Shridhar adopted the national Sanskrit epics in sweet, simple, elegant Marathi; Vaman Pandit explained the Gita and brought forth a series of fine poems of charming sentiments; Mahipati produced valuable biographies of saints; Sohiroba taught asceticism and saintliness of life; and last, but not the least, Moropant translated or rather adapted the Sanskrit epics into several poems with masterly skill and learning; Bakhars or chronicles recording important events in the history of Maharashtra were composed by able men like Chitnis and Sohoni in fact the light of literature was well kindled just before the rise of Shivaji, and, with the exception of a generation or two after the death of Shivaji, it burnt brightest under favourable circumstances for two centuries, till the close of reign of Madhavrao II. Just after the demise, the court of Poona began to loose its manliness and wisdom, luxury and folly was the order of the day. The poetry of latter interval of an effeminate kind and mostly consisted of lavnis. The Maratha confederacy was dismembered and Maratha literature too suffered a fall.

Mukundraj

Mukundraj is generally recognised to be the first Marathi poet. He lived during the reign of Jatyantpala. The language of the works of Mukundraj via *Viveksindhu* and *Paramamrit* appears to be more modern than that of Dnyaneshvari, the celebrated exposition of the Bhagavad-Gita in Marathi composed by Dnyaneshvar later on; and scholars doubt if Mukundraj really wrote them. Some are, however, of opinion that he wrote them in the archaic Marathi of his time and that somebody must have afterwards rendered them into later Marathi and hence the comparatively modern appearance.

Viveksindhu (Sea of Reflection) and Paramamrit (Extreme Nectar) are, as mentioned above, the only two works of Mukundraj that we know. The former is thelarger of the two and consists of about 1500 couplets orstanzas in the Owi metre. Mukundraj was the first to compose verses in the Owi metre. Viveksindhuis written in two parts, the first consisting of seven and the second, of eleven chapters. It was composed for the instruction of prince Jayantpal.

Mukundraj was a follower of the school ofSankaracharya and a profound scholar of Vedant (Philosophy of the Soul). He preached one-ness of the Supreme Soul with the Individual Soul, and exhorted the people to free the soul from the bonds of worldly existence and, by realizing one-ness, to attain true knowledge, so as to work their own salvation. Both the parts of the Vivek-Sindhu are devoted to the disquisition o£ this abstract theory of Vedanta. The whole work may be said to be a short summary of the Upanishads, the well-known Sanskrit essays on Vedanta.

Paramaamrit is also a Vedantic lecture consisting of fourteen chapters. The whole poem contains about three hundred stanzas in Owi metre. Like the Viveksindhu, it is also a discourse on '*Parabrahma*'

He opened the doors of knowledge of Vedanta. Vedanta was so long believed to have been intended for those only that knew Sanskrit, most of them, Brahmins. Mukundraj boldly pushed aside the cover under which the secret treasures of the Upanishads lay and the general public of the succeeding generations could profit themselves by perusing them, without any distinction of caste. A deep seated foundation was laid for the gradual evolution of Maharashtra from social iniquities, and the structure continued being erected though by fits and starts, by the succeeding saints.

Dnayaneshwar

Dnayaneshwar was born in the year 1271. He led an ascetic life from his childhood and wandered from place to place in holy pilgrimage. He was later married to Rakhmabai.

Dnyaneshvar's works are all devoted to the exposition of metaphysical topics. His principal work '*Bhavarthadipika*' (Light of substance) commonly called '*Gyaneshwari'*the name of the author, and is a commentary on the celebrated *Bhagwatgita*. It consists of eighteen chapters as many as the original Sanskrit work does; but its volume is much greater and covers over 9000 couplets in Owi metre, while the original Gita consists of about 700 stanzas only. The '*Bhagwatgita*' which is the pith of Sanskrit works on Vedant and had so long been read and understood only by a few Brahmins that studied. Sanskrit was now thrown open by Gyandeva to the masses of Maharashtra. It is written in simple style with many similes and metaphors so devised as to elucidate the abstract topics; and though its language is archaic and some of the words used are now obsolete and sound quaint to the ears after six centuries, it is largely read by persons taking an interest in Vedantic lore. His'Amritanubhava', 'Swatmanubhava'andPanchikarana are also disquisitions on abstract subjects. Of these 'Amritanubhava' was a work consisting of nearly 1000 stanzas and is a substance of the Upanishads in brief. Besides these works, Gyandeva had composed many abhangas on moral as well as metaphysical topics. All of his works are intellectual productions of a very high order.

Namdeva

Namdevawas born in 1270 A.D.He was a disciple of VisobaKhechar, a pupil of Dyanneshwar. Namdev was a contemporary of Dnyaneshvar and they both together went in a pilgrimage to the holy places in the north and the south of India, in company with many other saints of the time. It is remarkable in this incident that Gyandeva, a Brahmin, mixed freely with these pious men, though of low castes, in spite of the superstitious prejudices of the Brahmin community. In a few days after Namdev returned from his holy travels, he departed from this world in the year1272 at the advanced age- of eighty. He has written a hundred crores of *abhangas.*

12.2 Kannada

The Kannada words made an entry through Halmidi inscription of 450 AD. The Halmidi inscription provides invaluable information regarding history and culture of Karnataka. Old Kannada inscription dated AD 578 (Badami Chalukya Dynasty) at Badmi cave temple, inscription discovered at Talakad 326 AD, from the rule of King Shivamara-I, Sripurusha (Western Ganga Dynasty) and inscription discovered at Durga Devi Temple, Hampi, Karnataka 9th Century are some of inscriptions discovered written in Kannada language. Over 30,000 inscriptions written in the Kannada language have been discovered so far. The earlier copper plates inscribed in old Kannada script and language, dated to the early 8th Century AD, are related to King AlupaAluvarasa II from Belmannu (Dakshina Kannada District), and display the double crested fish, his royal emblem.The oldest palm leaf manuscript in old Kannada "Dhavala" dates back to around 9th century which is preserved in the Jain Bhandar, Mudibidri, Dakshina Kannada district. A Kadamba coin was traced belonging to 5th Century AD at Banavasi the favourite place of Pampa a notable first poet of Kannada literature in Karnataka

Kannada literary origin goes back to sixth century in Varahamihira'sBrihatsamhita and its mention in Somdeva'sKathasaritasagara, probably due to its being mentioned in his source, i.e. the PaisachiBrihatkatha of Gunadhya carries it further back to the earliest centuries of the Christian era. It also occurs in the form Karunadar in the Tamil poem named Silappadikaram which is supposed to go back to the 2nd century C.E. and in the form Karunadagan in the Velvikudi plates (770 CE) of the Pandya king Sadaiyanparantaka. The Sanskrit poet Rajashekhara refers in his Kavyamimansa to the mannerisms of the Karnatas in reading their books.

Language

According to Jaina tradition, Brahmi, the daughter of Rishabhadeva, the first tirthankara invented eighteen alphabets including among others, Kannaad. Recently a curious inscription of about the

ninth century was found in a Jaina temple in the Deoghar. The fort containing specimens of different alphabets mostly Dravidian. Among the papyri belonging to the second century A.D., discovered at Oxyrhyncus in Lower Egypt, there is one which contains a Greek play or farce, based upon the story of a Greek girl carried off to the cost of India and rescued by her brother, in which there occur some Indian words which, according to Dr.Hultzsch are Kannaada.

Kannaada is closely related to Tamil. They alone have a regular feminine gender. The various suffixes of the plural of rational and irrational nouns are essentially the same in both and they are more consistently distinguished than in most other connected forms of speech. Both languages agree in the principles for the formation of the oblique base.

Literature

The Kannada Literature is usually divided into three linguistic phases. Old (450-1200 CE), Middle (1200-1700 CE) and Modern (1700 - present). The oldest record of Kannada poetry in tripadi is the KappeArabhatta record of AD 700. Starting with Kavirajamarga (850 AD) until the middle of 12th century literature in Kannada was almost exclusively composed by Jains. Kavirajamarga is a writing a literature in Kannada was almost exclusively composed by Jains. Kavirajamarga is a writing on literary criticism and poetics meant to standarise various written Kannada dialects used in literature in previous centuries. Since Kavirajamarga is one on grammar and a guide of sorts to unity existing variants of Kannada grammar and literacy different styles, it can be well assumed that literature in Kannada must have started several centuries earlier. AmoghavarshaNripathunga'sKavirajamarga deals notably with figures of speech like 'rasa' and 'dhwani' but also gives descriptions about the geographical boundaries of Karnataka, as well as its dynamic life and culture. Sangam literature one can find the word 'Erumainat' whose Kannada version is '*Eruminad*'. This *Eruminad* comprises Kodagu, Dakshina Kannada, Mysuru and some portions of Northern Kerala. The oldest Karnataka tribal royal dignitaries were supposed to be 'punnata' recognised in the 2nd century by Ptolemy, who also refers to punnataalongwithbanouse (Banavasi), Patrigal (Pattadakal) and maise (MahishaMardana). The people were adept in royal folk varieties prior to Kavirajamarga.

Chudamani (Crest Jewel - AD 650) by Srivardhadeva is a milestone in the literature of Kannada language. Gajastaka, a work on elephant management by King Shivamara-II belonged to 7th century and the Chandraprabha Purana by Sri Vijaya, a court poet of Amoghavarsha-I is said to be the early 9th century. Though Chudamani is a philosophical work, much earlier to Kavirajamarga the earliest Kannada prose work is Sivakotyacharya's 'Vaddaradhane' which even to this day is considered as masterpiece. It is a collection of 19 Jain stories, seems to have been based on an earlier Pakrit commentary called Bagavathi Aradhana of Acharya Shivaraya.

Thumbalacharya is credited with having written 'Chudamani', a philosophical work, much earlier. But the earliest Kannada prose work is Sivakotiacharya's 'Vaddaradhane' which even to this day is considered a masterpiece. It is a collection of 16 Jaina stories; seem to have been based on an earlier Prakrit commentary called 'Bhagavathi Aradhana'.

Pampa's 'Vikramarjuna Vijaya' based on 'Mahabharatha' and written in Champu style, which is a mixture of prose and poetry, unique to Kannada, is the earliest epic work in Kannada. Pampa's influence on Kannada literature is so deep that T.N.Srikantaiah speaks of him as the Kalidasa of Kannada. Being a Jaina poet, he also wrote 'Adipurana' based on Jinasena's 'Mahapurana'.

Ponna's 'Shanthipurana', and Ranna's 'Gadayuddha' have earned them immortality as poets. They were Jainas and lived in the 10th Century. Nagavarma II who belongs to the next century was also a Jaina poet and wrote 'Kavyavalokana', a book on poetics, and 'Karnataka Bhashabhushana' a Kannada grammar in Sanskrit. His 'Vardhamanapurana' was discovered only recently. Janna, a Jain poet again, wrote 'YashodharaCharithe', a romantic story. Durgasimha, in 11th century, wrote 'Panchatantra' based on Vasubhaga's Sanskrit work, and it is a classic example of the ancient art of storytelling. Rudrabhatta wrote 'Jagannatha Vijaya' based on 'Vishnu Purana',the last two were Brahmin poets.

The 12th century saw a sea of change in Kannada literature both in content and style. What caused this is the growth of Veerashaivism which was essentially revolutionary in approach. It derecognised untouchability and saw women as equals. It liberated Kannada from the clutches of Sanskrit. The moving spirit behind this movement was Basaveshwara, who was a minister in the court of Prince Bijjala. His '*Vachanas*' which can be called prose-poems, have their origin in folk-literature and folk-culture, and yearn to liberate man from the bondage of untruth and ignorance. They seek to provide happiness here and elsewhere. Allamaprabhu, Akkamahadevi, Channabasavanna, Siddarama, MadivalaMachayya, DoharaKakkayya, etc., were other

vachanakaras of the period. Vachana sahitya tradition of 12th century is purely native and unique in the global literature and the aggregate of contributions by all sections of society.

After Basavanna, the greatest influence on Kannada literature was Harihara, who used an innovative form called 'Ragale'. His 'BasavarajadevaraRagale' and 'NambiyannanaRagale' are the examples of this genre. His nephew Raghavanka introduced yet another form of poetry called 'Shatpadi' and apart from 'SomanathaCharithe' and 'SiddaramaCharithe' his 'Harischandra Kavya' is considered to be a masterpiece.

12.3 Telugu and Other Languages

Dravidian is virtually an independent group of languages with a distinctive character. Earlier Tamil literature had adopted Sanskrit words. This was mainly due to the growing influence of 'Aryan' culture. Telugu and Canarese, which were spoken further north, were naturally even more strongly influenced by Sanskrit. Canarese first appears in inscriptions at the end of the 6th century, and its earliest surviving literature goes back to the 9th century. Telegu did not become a literary language until the 12th century and only became really important under the Vijayanagara empire, and was the court language. Malayalam though closely related to Tamil, was a separate language by the 11th century.

Telugu Language

Telugu is numbered among the Dravidian languages, of which four are of significance in South India, namely, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese. Dr. Caldwell in his comparative grammar has given currency to the theory that they are unrelated to Sanskrit. Sharply opposed to this theory is the view maintained by all Telugu grammarians and Sanskrit philologists, that Telugu is Vikriti, i.e., a language formed by the modification of Sanskrit and Prakrit. There are groups of words in the language, which are common to Telugu and other Dravidian languages, indicating their descent from a common parent in the remote past. It would appear that very early the Andhra adopted a form of Prakrit which, in the course of development became the immediate ancestor of Telugu and Kanarese, aptly termed Kanarese- Telugu by Dr. Caldwell.

The Telugu language does not seem to be as ancient as Tamil, though it is more ancient than Malayalam, and at least of equal antiquity with Kanarese. It is not possible to say with any certainty when the language now known as Telugu came into vogue. There is no available literature before the eleventh century A. D. All the inscriptions before this period are either in Prakrit or Sanskrit. The Andhra ruled practically the whole of middle India in the beginning of the Christian era. But the information at our disposal does not enable us to say whether they used Telugu in any form. It is probable that they spoke a form of Prakrit, from which Telugu has descended.

The lack of antiquity in the Telugu language is felt as a reproach by some writers, who believe that the greatness of a language depends on its age. This has given rise to later legends, one of which, tracing the origin of Telugu to the fourth quarter of Krita Yuga (the Golden Age)is as follows:Agnimitra lost his eyes owing to excessive heat . He prayed to the sun- god, who, pleased with his devotion, taught him a language so potent that it restored him his eyesight. This language was called Andhra Baasla, as it dispelled darkness. We are also told that each yuga had its particular form of Telugu and that in Kali Yuga (the Present Age). Kalinga Andhra and Raudra Andhra were established by Nandivardhana and his disciple, Devala Raya, in the reign of Satakarni.

The history of the Telugu language is a history of survival and self-enrichment through negotiation with the other and often dominant languages, as we shall see below. It is possible to identify four broad stages in the history of the Telugu language:

1. 200 B.C.E–500 C.E.
2. 500–1100 C.E.
3. 1100–1400 C.E.
4. 1400–1900 C.E.

During the first phase (200 B.C.E.–500 C.E.) we only come across Telugu place names and personal names in Prakrit and Sanskrit inscriptions found in the Telugu country. Telugu was exposed to the influence of Prakrit as early as the third century B.C.E. The language of the people was Telugu, but the language of the rulers was Prakrit. Battles between the Guptas of North India and the Pallavas

of South India during 400–500 C.E., however, quite effectively killed the royal language. For the next 500 years, Telugu was influenced by Sanskrit, and it is from Sanskrit that Telugu absorbed the tatsamas (Sanskrit equivalents).

For the next nearly four and a half centuries during the Satavahana rule (230 B.C.E–207/210 C.E.), Prakrit was the royal language in Andhra. Tadbhavas (Sanskrit derivatives) from Prakrit infiltrated the Telugu language, but Telugu did not die. It incorporated the words it needed from Prakrit and discarded the rest.

In the second phase (500–1100 C.E.) the literary languages were confined to poetic works, flourishing in the courts of kings and among scholars. Phonetic changes that occurred in the popular language are reflected in the literary language, although the two streams remained apart in grammar and vocabulary. Telugu came under the direct influence of Sanskrit about this period. It appears that literature also existed in Telugu during this time, because we find literary style in the inscriptions some three centuries before what is regarded as the first literary work in Telugu—NannayaBhattu'sMahabharatam. However, it was during 1000–1100 C.E.— with Nannaya'sMahabharatam, and with Telugu being used extensively in inscriptions and poetry—that Telugu re-established its roots and dominated over the royal language, Sanskrit. During the time of Nannaya, the popular language diverged considerably from the literary language.

During the third phase (1100–1400 C.E.) the literary language became stylized and rigid, closing itself off from the influence of contemporary spoken language. During the fourth period (1400–1900) many changes took place, culminating in today's form of Telugu. The prose language of the nineteenth century shows educated speech as the basis, with occasional influences from the literary language. Also evident is the influence of the Urdu language on Telugu before the spread of English education.

What emerges from the foregoing overview of the history of the Telugu language is the fact that what is regarded today as canonical Telugu—the modern, standard Telugu—had its beginnings in the desi, spoken dialect, and the language was formed and progressively enriched through its continuous transactions on the one hand with other languages of its family—tribal languages such as Gondi, Konda, Kui, Kuvi, Pengo, and Manda —and on the other with languages which, for political and historical reasons, were the dominant languages—Sanskrit, Prakrit, Urdu, and English. No wonder that many Telugu words are 'synthetic'—formed through a combination of units from different languages (Dravidian words with non-Dravidian prefixes and suffixes, for example). Telugu vocabulary is therefore classified by linguists into four groups: tatsamamulu (Sanskrit equivalents), tadbhavamulu (Sanskrit derivatives), desiyamulu (indigenous words), and anyamulu (others or foreign words).

The composite nature of Telugu has led some critics to conclude that, perhaps, the language lacks an independent identity: "Telugu contains very few original words of its own" (Chenchiah and Bhujanga Rao). Others, however, are not surprised that a large number of words from Prakrit and Sanskrit, and to a lesser extent from Urdu and English, should find their way into the colloquial and literary forms of Telugu. They point out that Telugu has had centuries-long relationships with Prakrit and Sanskrit in the ancient past, while Urdu and English were the languages of the rulers in more recent times. Yet, they argue, "borrowing words from another language and making them our own does not make ours the daughter of that language. … Therefore, we can proudly claim that Telugu too is an independent language". Nearly two centuries ago, A. D. Campbell (1798–1857), whom C. P. Brown recognized as the "first [who] rendered Telugu literature accessible to the English reader", had expressed a similar view. In his introduction to Grammar of the Teloogoo Language, Campbell contended that extensive borrowing from Sanskrit and writing Telugu grammars following Sanskrit tradition "cannot be used in proof of any radical connection between Teloogoo and Sanskrit". On the contrary, Campbell held that the very classification of the words in Telugu as tatsamamulu (Sanskrit equivalents), tadbhavamulu (Sanskrit derivatives), and desiyamulu (indigenous words) by native grammarians clearly indicates that the language of the land had a source different from Sanskrit.

Telugu Literature

Telugu literature is generally divided into five periods:

1. Early Beginnings: the pre-Nannaya period (up to 1020 C.E.)
2. The Age of the Puranas or the Age of Translation (1020–1509)
3. The Age of the Prabandhas (1509–1618)

4. The Period of Stagnation (1630–1850)
5. The Modern Period (after 1850).

Telugu language has been in existence at least from the time of the Satavahana rule (230 B.C.E–207/210 C.E.), and in the early stages songs and folk ballads were composed in Telugu using indigenous meter. These songs have remained unrecorded, however, and the first instance of written Telugu is to be found in an inscription dating from 575 C.E. Since this inscription was written in verse form using desi meter, it can be surmised that by the sixth century Telugu had reached a stage of development at which it could evolve its own metrical forms. Significantly, the first treatise on poetics in Telugu, Kavi Janasrayam, was written around 940 C.E. by MalliyaRechana—a non-Brahmin poet and patron, and a staunch follower of Jainism. It is not unreasonable to assume that a theoretical text on prosody such as that by Rechana would not have been possible without a substantial body of literature in verse already in circulation. Besides, recent research into Telugu literature of the pre-Nannaya period indicates the existence of a Jain text in Telugu, Adi Purana, attributed to a tenth-century poet Ponnamayya (also known as Sarva Deva).

However, since no literary texts in Telugu pre-dating 1020 C.E. have so far actually been discovered, the existence of any pre-Nannaya literature remains a matter of speculation and debate. In the absence of more concrete and complete evidence, Nannaya'sMahabharatam continues to be the 'adikavyam' or the first literary text of Telugu literature, even if Nannaya himself may or may not be recognised as the 'adikavi' or the first poet. What can, therefore, be safely said about the literature of the pre-Nannaya period is that there was originally a desi (of the desa or province/country/ nation) literature, indigenous and with closer affinity with Dravidian rather than Aryan literature, authored mostly by Buddhist and Jain writers who perhaps used Prakrit, one form of which is considered to be the immediate literary ancestor of Telugu. This literature was either completely destroyed during the Hindu religious revivalism of the succeeding period, or it was found inadequate, and too desi, for the requirements of the revivalist movement of the eleventh century.

Nannaya

Nannaya was one of the earliest representatives, if not the founder, of margi (of the marga or mainstream) Telugu-Sanskrit literature, which dates from the eleventh century. His translation of the Sanskrit Mahabharatam into Telugu in 1020 C.E. is the first piece of Telugu literature as yet discovered. This initial stage in the development of Telugu literature—a period covering five centuries—was marked by the introduction and extension of Sanskrit culture, mainly through translations. The impulse for translation had its origins in the revival of Brahminism and the zeal to spread Vedic culture contained in the Sanskrit texts. This religious revivalist movement, known as the Vaidiki movement, was a Brahminical reaction to Jainism, and its first effort was to guard against the possibility of future internecine quarrels between the followers of Siva and Vishnu by creating a composite deity, Hariharanatha.

The other feature of the Vaidiki movement was its flooding of the country with Aryan culture, and it was in pursuance of this object that extensive translations from Sanskrit into Telugu were undertaken. C. R. Reddy argues that "the real motive underlying the translation of the Mahābhārata into Telugu, with all its proBrahminical interpolations, was propaganda through the vernaculars, as a counterblast to the Buddhist and Jain propaganda, which all through was carried through Māgadhī and other vernaculars of India"

The significant achievement of the second period of Telugu literature was the translation of all the epics (Ramayana and Mahabharata) into Telugu. The colossal undertaking of translating the Mahabharata into Telugu was begun by Nannaya in the eleventh century, continued by Tikkana in the thirteenth, and completed by Errapragada (Errana, 1280–1350) in the fourteenth century. Nannaya composed the Adi and the Sabha parvas (cantos) and a part of the Aranya parva. Tikkana (1220–1300) did not begin from where Nannaya had left off; instead, he began with the Virata parva and finished the remaining fifteen parvas. It was the third poet of the Kavitraya (poet-trio), Errana, who completed the Aranya parva nearly two and a half centuries after Nannaya had left it unfinished.

In the prologue to his Mahabharata, Nannaya relates how he began the translation at the request of his royal patron, who desired to perpetuate in the language of his own kingdom this epic that celebrates the heroism of the Pandavas, of whom the king claimed to be a descendant. Nannaya's translation, however, served two other unstated purposes: by making Vedic culture accessible to common people it served a religious purpose, and as the translation of a canonical text into Telugu,

it served a linguistic purpose. In other words, as a Hindu text in Telugu, it challenged the Jain-Prakrit and Buddhist-Magadhi texts.

The Telugu Mahabharatam had to wait for nearly two centuries before it was resumed by Tikkana. Besides opposition from a section of obscurantists who regarded the translation of the 'fifth Veda' as sinful, as well as the superstition surrounding the Aranya parva, it was the difficulty of finding a worthy successor to Nannaya that delayed the translation. There is an interesting, though historically and chronologically untenable, story about how Tikkana came to be chosen. With a view to discovering a poet to match Nannaya's eminence, Raja Raja Narendra circulated a stanza, considered to be Nannaya's best, throughout his realm, inviting other poets to compose a similar stanza embodying the same idea. After many attempts were rejected as unworthy, the council of pundits received a submission from a poet who simply copied the original stanza and colouredit red. The council interpreted this act as an announcement by the poet that he could not only compose like Nannaya, but even excel him by adding lustre to his composition. That self-confident poet was Tikkana. Tikkana showed marked originality not only in his prologue—in which he condemned his incompetent contemporaries who sought recognition without paying attention to technique and composition—but also in his method of translation. It is said that he undertook to dictate his verses in open court, without referring to the Sanskrit original, and that he made a vow that if ever he hesitated for a word he would cut off his tongue. Tikkana composed so quickly that pundits found it difficult to take down what he delivered, till at last they found, at the poet's own suggestion, an amanuensis who could match Tikkana's speed.

Fifty years after Tikkana, Errana relates how Tikkana appeared to him in a dream and encouraged him to finish the Mahabharatam. He completed the portion of Aranya parva left unfinished by Nannaya, but so potent was the belief that the poet who attempted the parva would come to grief that Errana made it appear that it was Nannaya who completed it, by dedicating it to Raja Raja Narendra, the royal patron of Nannaya. Errana's skill as a poet is manifest in the fact that he begins his translation in the style of Nannaya and, imperceptibly, passes into that of Tikkana. He was able to simulate them so well that the reader does not, till s/he is told, realize that between Nannaya and Tikkana a third poet had intervened.

The poet who occupies a position equal to that of the Kavitraya is Srinatha (1365–1440), who is regarded by many critics as the supreme poet of Telugu literature. He introduced several new forms into Telugu literature and initiated the evolution of the 'Prabandha' form that was to dominate Telugu literary writing for the next five centuries. Srinatha's translation into Telugu of Sriharsha'sNaishadaVidvatAushada, considered to be one of the most difficult kavyas in Sanskrit (it was called 'the medicine for the pundit' on account of its difficult style), marks the next phase of translations. Srinatha's primary objective was to tell a gripping tale (this later became the major criterion of the Prabandha form), and he freely moved between translation and transliteration to achieve this objective. In the 'Preface' he described his translation thus: "observing the nuances of the sound patterns of the original, securing the views expressed in the source text, reproducing the connotations of the original meaning, recreating the rasa (or emotion) of the original, retaining the figures of speech, preserving the auchitya [propriety], shedding the anauchitya [impropriety], this Telugu Naishadam is attempted in accordance with the original". As is apparent, Srinatha kept close to the original and took care not to lose any idea, emotion, or cadence of the original.

Telugu literature up to 1500 may be characterized as belonging to the Age of Translation, during which the poet borrowed his theme both in substance and detail from the Sanskrit original, but the reign of Krishnadeva Raya marked the beginning of a new era of independent writing. Paradoxically, however, the Age of Translation in Telugu literature was really an age of freedom, and the so-called age of freedom (the kavya yuga) ushered in a period of bondage. When the poet borrowed the substance from Sanskrit, he retained freedom of art and expression, but when he borrowed the art from Sanskrit, he lost freedom of thought.

12.4 Other Languages

The Origin and Growth of Urdu language

Scholars have advanced various theories to explain the origin of the Urdu language in the period following the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. Various 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, Haryanviand other dialects spoken in the neighborhood of Delhi, and the Punjabi language. All these dialects have

influencedthe Urdu language in its formative stage and it is difficult to pinpoint the I exact dialect which combined with Persian to give rise to Urdu. However, it is an established fact that by the end of the 14th century, Urdu was emerging as an independent language. Like Hindi, the basic structure of Urdu consisted of Khari Boli - a mixture of various dialects spoken in Delhi and surrounding regions. Delhi, during this period, was ideally situated for the growth of a synthetic language since, on the one hand it was surrounded. by people speaking different dialects, on the other hand, it had a Persian speaking ruling elite. Thus, Urdu adopted Persian script and Persian literary tradition but by incorporating the basic 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 local people including Muslim converts. However, it had not yet acquired a literary form. This new common language took a century to acquire a concrete shape and came to be called "Hindavi" by Amir Khusrau. Hindavi thus forms thebasis of both Hindi and Urdu. Amir Khusrau composed verses in Hindavi (using Persian script) and thus laid the foundation of Urdu literature. However, it was in the Deccan that Urdu first acquired a standardized literary form and came to be known as Dakhini during the 15th century. It developed first under the Bahmani rule and flourished in the Bijapur and Golkunda kingdoms. GesuDaraz'sMeraj-ul-ashiqi is the earliest work in Dakhini Urdu. Till the 18th century, Urdu was called by various names such as "Hindavi", "Dakhini", "Hindustani" or "Rekhta" (which means mingling several things to produce something new). In its developed form, Dakhini Urdu travelledback to the north and soon became popular during the Mughal period. It was bring the period of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire in the 18th century that the Urdu literature reached great heights.

Malayalam

Malayalam originated as a dialect of Tamil in the Odeyar region. By the fourteenth century, it acquired an independent status. A certain tradition of poets (coming from Niam in Travancore) from the 15th century onwards contributed greatly in developing Malayalam style of poetry. Rama Panikkar was one of the important of this tradition. Some of his prominent works are Bharata Gatha, Savitri Mahatmyam, Brahmandepuranam and Bhagavatam.

Malayalam is the youngest of the South Indian languages and designated as a dialect of Tamil in the Malabar region. Gradually, it separated itself from Tamil and acquired an independent status in the fourteenth century. Political isolation of the' Malabar region from Tamil Nadu and the introduction of new linguistic forms by foreigners contributed to the development of Malayalam as an independentlanguage. The earliest literature was in oral form consisting of songs and ballads. The earliest literary position was the Rama Charitam, produced in the 14th century. From sixteenth century onwards, Malayalam began to come under the dominant influence of Sanskrit and borrowed a great deal from the latter.

Summary

The most remarkable linguistic development of the Early Medieval period was the gradual emergence of several regional languages. In the Indo-Aryan speaking belt, this development was through the intermediate stage of Apabhramsa. Traces of Apabhramsa has been found in very early literary works but considered to be a dialect till the period of Bharata's Natyashastra, it developed a literary standard only in a later period.

Among the north Indian desibhasas that originated in the Early Medieval period may be listed-Marathi, Bengali and Gujrati. A similar linguistic burst is visible in south India too, where Kanarese and Telegu now really came into their own. The development of these languages was closely connected with regional socio-political structures and particularly, the religious movements of these areas made important contribution to their growth. Between 1000-1300 CE the Indo-Aryan languages of north, central and east India attained a specific regional identity. Among them Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Assamese and Oriya particularly attracted attention.

Keywords

1. **Allegorical**: style of writing in which the characters and events extoll virtues

2. **Hagiographical**: a biographical account which is full of praise for the subject with which it deals
3. **Imagery**: use of figurative language as a literary form
4. **Prosody**: science of verse and poetical form

Self Assessment

Q.1. Marathi was the court language of _____ Kings.

A. Yadavas

B. Vijayanagar Kings

C. Chalukyas

D. Rashtrakutas

Q.2. Which of the following was not one of the contributors of Marathi literature?

A. Eknath

B. Nannaya

C. Tukaram

D. Jnandeva

Q.3. 'Dhyaneshwar' wrote _____.

A. Bhavarthadipika

B. Viveksindhu

C. Amrutanabhava

D. Both A and C

Q.4. Which of the following was the first Marathi poet?

A. Mukundaraja

B. Vakapatiraja

C. Jnandeva

D. Tukaram

Q.5. Viveksindhu was composed by _____.

A. Mukundaraja

B. Jayantapal

C. Dyaneshwara

D. Tukaram

Q.6. Who made earliest contribution in Kannada literature?

A. Jainas

B. Buddhists

C. Shaivas

D. Vaishnavas

Q.7. Which of the following gives an evidence of oldest record of Kannada literature in Tripadi metric?

A. Jabalpur inscription
B. Hummacha- Soraba inscription
C. KappeArabhatta inscription
D. Shravanbelgola inscription

Q.8. 'Veeragallu' and 'Maastigallu' was _____.

A. Lyric poetry
B. Epic poetry
C. Elegaic poetry
D. Slam poetry

Q.9. Which of the following was the earliest work on medicine in Marathi language?

A. Karnataka- Kalyanakara
B. Jagganatha- Vijaya
C. Lilavati
D. Anantanathapurana

Q.10. Which among the following king composed 'Kavirajamarga'?

A. Sripurusha
B. Alupa
C. Amoghvarsha
D. Krishna

Q.11. Who among the following was the first grammarian in Telugu language and literature?

A. Kanva
B. Badrayana
C. Vashistha
D. Kapila

Q.12. Who among the following was known as 'Adi Kavi' and was given the title 'Vaganushasanundu'?

A. Nannaya
B. Pampa
C. Ponna
D. Sarvadeva

Q.13. 'Amuktamalyada' was written by _____.

A. Devaraya II
B. Devaraya I
C. Krishnadevraya
D. Narsimha

Q.14. Who translated Bhagwat Purana into Telugu language?

A. Potana

B. Tikkana

C. NanneChoda

D. Kapila

Q.15. Read the statement and choose the correct option.

1. Regional languages increased in early medieval India as a result of Bhakti movement.

2. Prakrit language was broken into large number of regional languages.

3. Growth of regional languages coincided with the growth of regional sentiments and emergence of regional polities.

4. The early medieval India demarcates the decline of Sanskrit and rise of foreign languages such as Persian and Arabic.

A. 1, 2 3, and 4

B. 2, 3 and 4

C. 1 and 4

D. 2 and 3

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	A	2.	B	3.	D	4.	A	5.	A
6.	A	7.	C	8.	C	9.	A	10.	C
11.	A	12.	A	13.	C	14.	A	15.	A

Review Questions

1. Explain the reasons for the growth of regional language and literature during early medieval India?
2. Describe the impact of foreign invasions during early 12th century on development of languages in India.
3. Examine the state of South Indian languages during early medieval India.
4. Elucidate the role of Bhakti saints in development of regional languages and literature.
5. Write a note on prominent authors of Marathi language in early medieval India.

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Unit 13: Art and Architecture I

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Understand the differences in basic form of Hindu temples in India.
- Explain the different styles of temple construction in India.

Introduction

Most of the art and architectural remains that survive from Ancient and Medieval India are religious in nature. However, here it means that homes built by the people usually comprised of the materials like wood and clay which have perished; that does not mean that people did not built their houses. In this section we are going to look into the architectural styles developed in early medieval India. One thing that is to be remembered is that the religious buildings were also made for many local cults in villages and forest areas.

The standard type of Hindu temple, which has persisted from the 6th century to the present day, was not fundamentally different from that of the ancient Greeks. The heart of the temple was a small dark shrine-room (garbhagriha), containing the chief icon. This opened into a hall for the worshippers (mandapa), originally a separate building, but usually joined to the shrine- room by a vestibule. The hall was approached by a porch. The shrine room was generally surmounted by a tower while smaller towers rose from other parts of the building. The whole was set in a rectangular courtyard (which might contain lesser shrines) and was often placed on a raised platform.

13.1 Temple Architecture

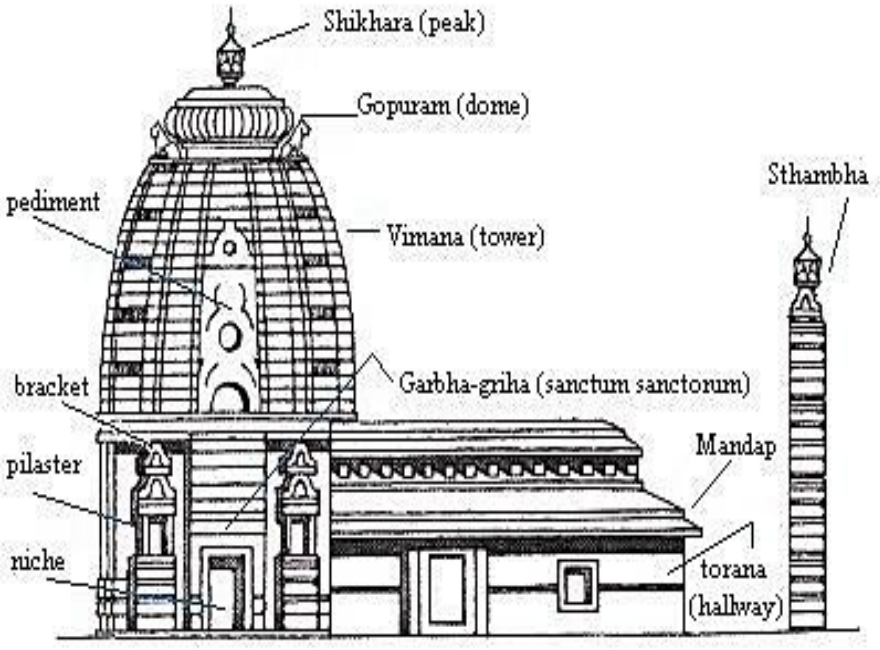
While construction of stupas continued, Brahmanical temples and images of gods also started getting constructed. Many times temples were decorated with the images of gods. Myths mentioned in the Puranas became part of narrative representation of the Brahmanical religion. Each temple had a principal image of a god. The shrines of the temples were of three kinds—(i) sandhara type (without pradikshinapatha), (ii) nirandhara type (with pradakshinapatha), and (iii) sarvatobhadra (which can be accessed from all sides). The significant temple of early medieval period was for instance, Deogarh in Uttar Pradesh, Eran Nachna-Kuthara and Udaygiri near Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh. The temples of this period had simple structures consisting of a veranda, a hall and a shrine at the rear.

The basic form of the Hindu temple comprises the following:

i. Sanctum (garbhagriha literally 'womb-house'), which was a small cubicle with a single entrance and grew into a larger chamber in time. The garbhagriha is made to house the main icon which is itself the focus of much ritual attention;
ii. the entrance to the temple which may be a portico or colonnaded hall that incorporates space for a large number of worshippers and is known as a mandapa;
iii. freestanding temples tend to have a mountain-like spire, which can take the shape of a curving shikhar in North India and a pyramidal tower, called a vimana, in South India;
iv. Vahan- was the vehicle of the temple's main deity comprised with a standard pillar or dhvaj, placed axially before the sanctum.

Two broad types of temples in India during early medieval India can be divided into-

a. Nagara (North India)
b. Dravida (South India)
c. Vesar (Mixture of Northern and Southern style)



Sculpture, Iconography And Ornamentation

Iconography is a study of deities falls within a branch of art history. It consists of identification of images based on certain symbols and mythologies associated with them. It can be possible that the fundamental myth and meaning of the deity may remain the same for centuries; its specific usage at a spot can be a response to its local or immediate social, political or geographical context.

During early medieval India, in iconography, the regions of India produced their distinctive style of images with its regional variations. One finds elaborate sculpture and ornamentation within the temples. Various parts of the country during early medieval India developed a distinct style of images in iconography. The temples of the period are full of extensive sculpture and ornament that form a fundamental part of its conception.The placement of an image in a temple is carefully planned: for instance, river goddesses (Ganga and Yamuna) are usually found at the entrance of a garbhagriha in a Nagara temple, *dvarapalas* (doorkeepers) are usually found on the gateways or gopurams of Dravida temples. The other images such as *navagrahas* and *yakshas* are also placed at entrances of the temples. Various forms or aspects of the main divinity found on the ouer walls of the sanctum. The deities of directions, i.e., the ashtadikpalas face the eight key directions on the outer walls of the sanctum and/or on the outer walls of a temple. Subsidiary shrines around the main temple are dedicated to the family or incarnations of the main deity. Finally, various elements

of ornamentation such as gavaksha, vyala/yali, kalpa-lata, amalaka, kalasha, etc. are used in distinct ways and places in a temple.

13.2 Nagaraor North Indian Temple Style

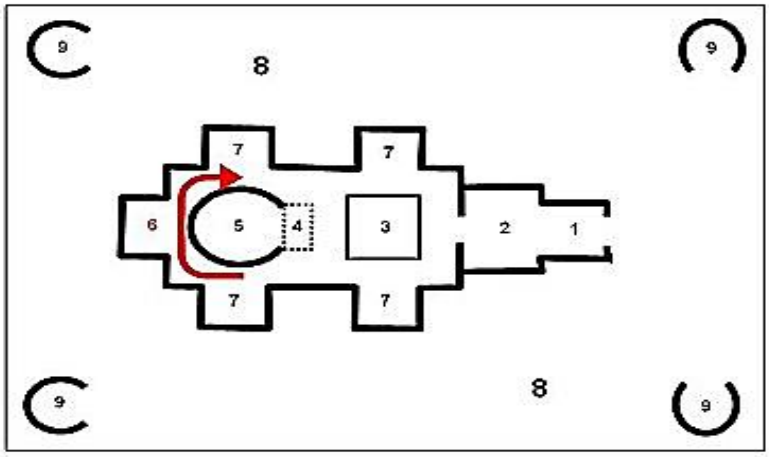
The style of temple architecture that became popular in northern India is known as nagara. In North India, the temple was built on a stone platform with steps leading up to it. However, there was absence of elaborate boundary walls or gateways, as was a feature of Southern temple architecture. The earliest temple had only one shikhara, while the later period temples had multiple shikharas. The garbhagriha was always located directly under the tallest tower.

There were several sub-divisions of the Nagara temples based on the shape of the shikhara-

a) **Rekha-prasadaor Latina type of shikhara**- most common name for the simple shikhara which is square at the base and whose walls curve or slope inward to a point on top
b) **Phamsana**- within this the buildings tend to be broader, however, they were shorter than latina ones. The roof of the temple building composed of several slabs that rised to a single point over the centre of the building, unlike the latina ones which look like sharply rising tall towers. The roofs of Phamansa do not curve inward, theyactually slope upwards on a straight incline. Here, the Phamansa design was used for the mandapas, the main garbhagriha housed in a latina building. Later, the Latina buildings became complex. The temples now were supported by several small towers and they clustered together giving impression like rising mountain-peaks. The tallest tower was in the centre, above the garbhagriha.
c) **Valabhi type**- the temples in valabhi type were rectangular buildings with a roof that rises into a vaulted chamber.The edge of the chamberis rounded and were called wagon vaulted buildings'. They were designated this name because edge of this vaulted chamber is rounded, like the bamboo or wooden wagons that would have been drawn by bullocks in ancient times. This form of the temple is influenced by ancient building existing even before the fifth century CE.

Ancient temples in Northern India especially in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have common traits like they were made of sandstone. Similarly, the oldest structural temples, which we see today, are from the Gupta Period found in Madhya Pradesh. These are actually amodest-looking shrines. They have four pillars that support a small mandapa which looks like a simple square porch-like extension before an equally small room that served as the garbhagriha. The significant examples of these temples are Udaigiri (Vidisha) and Sanchi. The group of Udaigiri temples is a part of cave shrines, having large Hindu complex. At Sanchi, the temple is a pioneer example of having a flat roof. That shows that both Buddhist and Hindu architecture started incorporating the architectural features.

Another remarkable example is Deogarh (in Lalitpur District, Uttar Pradesh)is in the panchayatana style of architecture. Here the main shrine is built on a rectangular plinth with four smaller subsidiary shrines at the four corners, i.e. the total five shrines were named as panchayatana. The temple also had curving latina or rekha-prasada type of shikhara. Thus, it is a classic example of nagara style of temple. This west-facing temple has a grand doorway with standing sculptures of female figures representing the Ganga on the left side and the Yamuna on the right side. The temple depicts Vishnu in various forms, due to which it was assumed that the four subsidiary shrines must also have housed Vishnu's avatars and the temple was mistaken for a dasavatara temple. The temple had three main reliefs of Vishnu on the temple walls, i.e.Sheshashayana on the south, Nara-Narayan on the east and Gajendramoksha on the west. Another notable thing is that the temple is west-facing, which is less common, as most temples are east- or north-facing. We thus find numerous temples that are made of smaller dimensions over a period of time.



1. Ardha mandapa
2. Mandapa
3. Maha mandapa
4. Antarala
5. Garba griha
6. Pradakshina
7. Transepts
8. Jagati
9. Subsidiary shrines

Plan of Kandariya Mahadeva Temple

However, the study of the temples of Khajuraho made by the Chandela Kings in the 10th century we find evidence that how dramatically the shape and style of the nagara temple architecture had developed.

For instance, the Lakshmana temple of Khajuraho, dedicated to Vishnu, was built in 954 by the Chandela king, Dhanga. A nagara temple, it is placed on a high platform accessed by stairs. There are four smaller temples in the corners, and all the towers or shikharas rise high, upward in a curved pyramidal fashion, emphasizing the temple's vertical thrust ending in a horizontal fluted disc called an amalak topped with a kalash or vase. During the period, amalak and kalash were found on all nagara temples. The temple also comprised of balconies and verandahs.

Similarly, the Kandariya Mahadeo temple at Khajuraho is the epitome of temple architecture in Central India. In the architecture and the sculptures of this temple, which is a massive structure, we see all features of central Indian temples of the medieval period for which they are known and appreciated all over.Khajuraho's sculptures are highly stylized with typical features: they are in almost full relief, cut away from the surrounding stone, with sharp noses, prominent chins, long slanting eyes and eyebrows.There are many temples at Khajuraho, most of them devoted to Hindu gods. There are some Jain temples as well as a Chausanth Yogini temple, which is of interest. Predating the tenth century, this is a temple of small, square shrines of roughly-hewn granite blocks, each dedicated to devis or goddesses associated with the rise of Tantric worship after the seventh century. Several temples constructed between the seventh and tenth centuries, were dedicated to the cult of the yoginis across Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and in Tamil Nadu too.

Various temples in the N-W parts of India including Gujarat, Rajasthan, and even stylistically extendableto western Madhya Pradesh is numerous. The material used for building was sandstone. During 10th-12th century, grey to black basalt was used in temple sculptures along with different ranges in color and type.The most exuberant and famed is the manipulatable soft white marble could be seen in Jain temples in Mount Abu (10-12th century) and Ranakpur (15th century).

The Sun temple at Modhera(11th century) was built by Raja Bhimdev I of the Solanki Dynasty in 1026. In front of it, there is a massive rectangular stepped tank called the suryakund. Proximity of sacred architecture to a water body such as a tank evidenced from earlier times, however, by early 11th century, they become a part of many temples in India. The hundred-square-meter rectangular pond at the temple of Modherais perhaps the grandest temple tank in India. A hundred and eight miniature shrines are carved in between the steps inside the tank. A huge ornamental arch-torana leads one to the sabha mandapa (the assembly hall) which is open on all sides, as was the fashion of the times in western and central Indian temples. In Gujrat, there is evidence of lavish carving and sculpture work influenced by the woodcarving tradition. The walls of the central small shrine, however, are devoid of carving and are thus plain. Interestingly, the temple faces the east and thusevery year whenequinoxes occur, the sun shines directly into this central shrine.

Eastern Indian temples include those found in the North-East, Bengal and Odisha. Each of these three areas produced distinct types of temples. The history of architecture in the region is difficult to study as several buildings have been renovated. Thus one see the brick or concrete temples at those sites. It appears that terracotta was the main medium of construction, and also for moulding plaques which depicted Buddhist and Hindu deities in Bengal until the seventh century. A large number of sculptures have been found in Assam and Bengal which shows the development of important regional schools in those regions.

During 9-11th century in Bengal and Bihar, the style of the sculptures that developed was called Pala style, named after the ruling dynasty. Later from mid-eleventh to mid-thirteenth centuries, the new architectural style was named after the ruling dynasty called Sena dynasty. As the Pala rulers patronized the Buddhism and built many monasteries, the temple constructed here expressed the local Vanga style.

An early example of Pala style could be traced from the ninth century temple in Burdwan District of Bengal, i.e.,Siddheshvara Mahadeva temple have a tall curving shikhara crowned by a large amalaka. The style had much similarity with the contemporary temples of Odisha. With the passage of time, the basic form of temple became loftier. Similarly, the temples at Telkupi in Purulia District (9-12 th century CE) were significant examples of architectural styles in this region having features of all the known nagara sub-types prevalent in Northern India. Even several of them exists in Purulia district, many of them were submerged when dams were built in the region. The black to grey basalt and chlorite stone pillars and arched niches of these temples heavily influenced the earliest Bengal sultanate buildings at Gaur and Pandua. Many local vernacular building traditions of Bengal also influenced the style of temples in that region. Most prominent of these was the shape of the curving or sloping side of the bamboo roof of a Bengali hut. This feature was eventually even adopted in Mughal buildings and is known across North India as the Bangla roof. Even during Mughal period and later also, the terracotta brick temples of Bengal had a unique style that comprised of the elements of local building techniques seen in bamboo huts combining the older forms reminiscent of the Pala period along with the forms of arches and domes that were borrowed from Islamic architecture. Examples of such are mostly found during 17th century, in Vishnupur, Bankura, Burdwan and Birbhum regions of Bengal.

The main architectural features of Odisha temples are classified in three orders, i.e., rekhapida, pidhadeul and khakra. Most of the main temple sites are located in ancient Kalinga—modern Puri District, including Bhubaneswar or ancient Tribhuvanesvara, Puri and Konark. The temples of Odisha constitute a distinct sub-style within the nagara order. In Odisha, shikhara was called 'deul'. Deul is almost vertical until the top portion and here when it suddenly curves sharply inwards. Deulsprecededby mandapas and Odisha they were called as jagamohana.The ground plan of the main temple was square and in the upper reaches of its superstructure becomes circular in the crowning mastaka. This makes the spire nearly cylindrical in appearance in its length, however, the compartments and niches are generally square.The exterior of the temples were carved lavishly, while their interiors generally quite bare. Further, the temples in Odisha usually have boundary walls.

The famous Sun temple at Konark built in 1240 CE is a classic example of Nagar style of temple building. The shikhara of the temple was a colossal creation reaching 70m. The vast complex of the temple had a quadrilateral precinct. Now only the jagamohana or the dance-pavillion (mandapa) has survived. The temple is set on a high base, its walls covered in extensive, detailed ornamental carving, including twelve pairs of enormous wheels sculpted with spokes and hubs, giving an impression of chariot wheels of the Sun god. The whole temple thus comes to resemble a colossal processional chariot. On the southern wall is a massive sculpture of surya carved out of green stone. It is said that there were three such images, each carved out of a different stone placed on the three temple walls, each facing different directions. The fourth wall had the doorway into the temple from where the actual rays of the sun would enter the garbhagriha.

A unique form of architecture developed in the hills of Kumaon, Garhwal, Himachal and Kashmir. Kashmir's proximity to prominent Gandhara sites (such as Taxila, Peshawar and the northwest frontier) lent the region a strong Gandhara influence by the fifth century CE. This began to mix with the Gupta and post-Gupta traditions that were brought to it from Sarnath, Mathura and even centers in Gujarat and Bengal. Brahmin pundits and Buddhist monks frequently travelled between Kashmir, Garhwal, Kumaon and religious centers in the plains like Banaras, Nalanda and even as far south as Kanchipuram. As a result both Buddhist and Hindu traditions began to intermingle and spread in the hills. The hills also had their own tradition of wooden buildings with pitched roofs. At several places in the hills,the main garbhagriha and shikhara are made in a rekha-prasada

or latina style,while the mandapa is of an older form of wooden architecture. Thus, sometimesthe temple itself takes a pagoda shape.

The Karkota period of Kashmir is the most significant in terms of architecture. One of the most important temples is Pandrethan, built during the eighth and ninth centuries. In keeping with the tradition of a water tank attached to the shrine, this temple is built on a plinth built in the middle of a tank. Although there are evidences of both Hindu and Buddhist followings in Kashmir, this temple is a Hindu one, possibly dedicated to Shiva. The architecture of this temple is in keeping with the age-old Kashmiri tradition of wooden buildings. Due to the snowy conditions in Kashmir, the roof is peaked and slants slowly outward. The temple is moderately ornamented, moving away from the post-Gupta aesthetics of heavy carving. A row of elephants at the base and a decorated doorway are the only embellishments on the shrine.

13.3 Vesara Indian Temple Style

Many different styles of temple architecture influenced by both North and South Indian temples were used in regions like Karnataka. Scholars consider the buildings of this region after the mid-seventh century a mixture of nagara or dravida style of temple architecture, popularly known as the '*Vesara*'.

By the late 7-8thcentury CE, the grand projects started at Ellora. When in around 750 CE, the early western Chalukyatook control of the Deccan by the Rashtrakutas, the impact is very much evident on the architecture too. Their greatest achievement in architecture is the Kailashnath temple at Ellora, a culmination of at least a millennium-long tradition in rock-cut architecture in India. It is a complete dravida building with a Nandi shrine—since the temple is dedicated to Shiva—a gopuram-like gateway, surrounding cloisters, subsidiary shrines, staircases and an imposing tower or vimana rising to thirty meters. Importantly, all of this is carved out of living rock. One portion of the monolithic hill was carved patiently to build the Kailashnath temple. At Ellora, the sculptures under the Rashtrakuta phase were remarkable and dynamic. The sculptural figures were larger than life and were also infused with unparalleled grandeur and the most overwhelming energy.

The exquisite hybrid styles of vesara architecture are to be found in the southern part of the Deccan. The early western Chalukyas ruled most of the Deccan till the mid- 8th century when they were superseded by the Rashtrakutas. Early Chalukyan activity also takes the form of rock-cut caves while later activity is of structural temples. The earliest is probably the RavanaPhadi cave at Aihole which is known for its distinctive sculptural style. One of the most important sculptures at the site is of Nataraja, surrounded by larger -than-life-size depictions of the saptamatrikas: three to Shiva's left and four to his right. The sculptural figures here are characterizedas comprising of graceful, slim bodies, long, oval faces topped with extremely tall cylindrical crowns and shown to wear short dhotis marked by fine incised striations indicating pleating. They are distinctly different from contemporary western Deccan or Vakataka styles seen at places such as Paunar and Ramtek in Maharashtra.

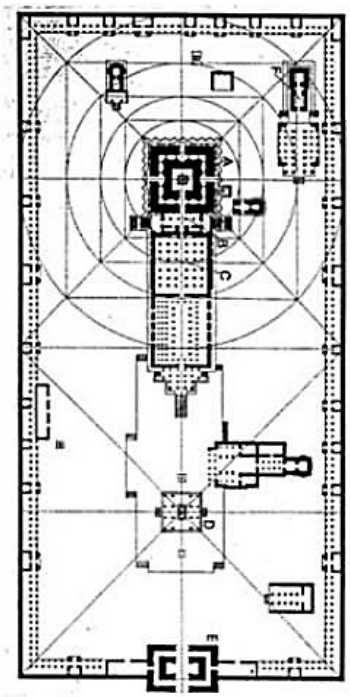
The hybridization and incorporation of several styles was the hallmark of Chalukyan buildings. An exquisite example of Chalukyan temples is the Virupakshatemple atPattadakal, build in the reign of Vikramaditya II (733-44) by his chief queen Loka Mahadevi. Similarly,one of the best early examples of the Dravidastyle of architecture, is the Papnath temple at Ellora which is again dedicated to Lord Shiva. Another significant example is eastern Chalukyan Temples, like the Mahakutaand the Swarga Brahma temple at Alampur, which shows a greater assimilation of northern styles from Odisha and Rajasthan.

At the same time the Durga temple at Aihole is unique having an even earlier style of an apsidal shrine which is reminiscent of Buddhist chaitya halls and is surrounded by a veranda of a later kind, with a shikhara that is stylistically like a nagara one. Finally, mention must be made of the Lad Khan temple at Aihole in Karnataka. This seems to be inspired by the wooden-roofed temples of the hills, except that it is constructed out of stone

13.4 TheDravidaor South Indian Temple Style

The Dravidian temples were enclosed within a compound wall and the front wall of the temple had an entrance gateway in its centre, which is known as a 'gopuram'. The shape of the main temple tower known as vimana in Tamil Nadu is like a stepped pyramid that rises up geometrically rather

than the curving shikhara of North India. In the South Indian temple, the word 'shikhara' is used only for the crowning element at the top of the temple which is usually shaped like a small stupika or an octagonal cupola— this is equivalent to the amlak and kalasha of North Indian temples.



A. Garbha briha

B Ardha mandapa

C Maha mandapa

D Nandi mandapa

E Gopura

F Upa devata (Subramanya)

Plan

- The Garbagriha is a mere 5m square surrounded by a thick wall with a narrow corridor
- Axial planning
- The main cella is preceded by 2 hypostyle halls and a narrow vestibule
- Entered through a pillared portico on the west

Unlike the entrance to the North Indian temple's garbhagriha, the temples in South India too have images such as the sculptures of fierce dvarapalas or the door-keepers guarding the temple. Another distinctive feature of Dravidian architecture was the construction of a large water reservoir, or a temple tank, enclosed within the complex. Subsidiary shrines were either incorporated within the main temple tower, or located as distinct, separate small shrines beside the main temple.

The temples of South India did not had the concept of entrance to the North Indian temple's garbhagriha unlike North India. The main templein South Indiain which the garbhagriha was situated was one of the smallest towers, because that was the oldest part of the temple. With the passage of time, the population and size of the town associated with that temple would have increased, and it would have become necessary to make a new boundary wall around the temple. This would have been taller that the last one, and its gopurams would have been even loftier. So, for instance, the Srirangam temple in Tiruchirapally has as many as seven 'concentric' rectangular enclosure walls, each with gopurams. The outermost is the newest, while the tower right in the centre housing the garbhagriha is the oldest.

Temples thus started becoming the focus of urban architecture. Kanchipuram, Thanjavur or Tanjore, Madurai and Kumbakonam are the most famous temple towns of Tamil Nadu, where, during the eighth to twelfth centuries, the role of the temple was not limited to religious matters alone. Temples became rich administrative centers, controlling vast areas of land.

Just as there are many subdivisions of the main types of nagara temples, there are subdivisions also of dravida temples. These are basically of five different shapes: square, usually called kuta, and alsocaturasra; rectangular or shala or ayatasra; elliptical, called gaja-prishta or elephant backed, or also called vrittayata, deriving from wagonvaulted shapes of apsidal chaityas with a horse-shoe shaped entrance facade usually called a nasi; circular or vritta; and octagonal or ashtasra. Generally speaking, the plan of the temple and the shape of the vimana were conditioned by the iconographic nature of the consecrated deity, so it was appropriate to build specific types of temples for specific types of icons. It must, however, be remembered that this is a simplistic differentiation of the subdivisions. Several different shapes may be combined in specific periods and places to create their own unique style.

The Pallavas were one of the ancient South Indian dynasties that were active in the Andhra region from the second century CE onwards and moved south to settle in Tamil Nadu. Their history is better documented from the sixth to the eighth century, when they left many inscriptions in stone

and several monuments. Their powerful kings spread their empire to various parts of the subcontinent, at times reaching the borders of Odisha, and their links with South–East Asia were also strong. Although they were mostly Shaivite, several Vaishnava shrines also survived from their reign, and there is no doubt that they were influenced by the long Buddhist history of the Deccan.

Their early buildings, it is generally assumed, were rock cut, while the later ones were structural. However, there is reason to believe that structural buildings were well known even when rock-cut ones were being excavated. The early buildings are generally attributed to the reign of Mahendravarman I, a contemporary of the Chalukyan king, Pulakesin II of Karnataka. Narasimhavarman I, also known as Mamalla, who acceded the Pallava throne around 640 CE, is celebrated for the expansion of the empire, avenging the defeat his father had suffered at the hands of Pulakesin II, and inaugurating most of the building works at Mahabalipuram which is known after him as Mamallapuram.

The shore temple at Mahabalipuram was built later, probably in the reign of Narasimhavarman II, also known as Rajasimha who reigned from 700 to 728 CE. Now it is oriented to the east facing the ocean, but if you study it closely, you will find that it actually houses three shrines, two to Shiva, one facing east and the other west, and a middle one to Vishnu who is shown as Anantashayana. This is unusual, because temples generally have a single main shrine and not three areas of worship. This shows that it was probably not originally conceived like this and different shrines may have been added at different times, modified perhaps with the change of patrons. In the compound there is evidence of a water tank, an early example of a gopuram, and several other images. Sculptures of the bull, Nandi, Shiva's mount, line the temple walls, and these, along with the carvings on the temple's lower walls have suffered severe disfiguration due to erosion by salt-water laden air over the centuries.

The magnificent Shiva temple of Thanjavur, called the Rajarajeswara or Brahadeeshwarar temple, was completed around 1009 by Rajaraja Chola, and is the largest and tallest of all Indian temples. Temple building was prolific at this time, and over a hundred important temples of the Chola period are in a good state of preservation, and many more are still active shrines. Bigger in scale than anything built by their predecessors, the Pallavas, Chalukyas or Pandyas, this Chola temple's pyramidal multi-storied vimana rises a massive, 70 meter (230 ft. approx) structure topped by a monolithic shikhara which is an octagonal dome-shaped stupika. It is in this temple that one notices for the first time two large gopuras (gateway towers) with an elaborate sculptural programme which was conceived along with the temple. Huge Nandi-figures dot the corners of the shikhara, and the kalasha on top by itself is about three meters and eight centimeters in height. Hundreds of stucco figures decorate the vimana, although it is possible that some of these may have been added on during the Maratha Period and did not always belong to the Chola Period. The main deity of the temple is Shiva, who is shown as a huge lingam set in a two-storied sanctum. The walls surrounding the sanctum have extended mythological narratives which are depicted through painted murals and sculptures.

With the waning of Chola and Pandya power, the Hoysalas of Karnataka grew to prominence in South India and became the most important patrons centered at Mysore. The remains of around hundred temples have been found in southern Deccan, though it is only three of them that are most frequently discussed: the temples at Belur, Halebid and Somnathpuram. Perhaps the most characteristic feature of these temples is that they grow extremely complex with so many projecting angles emerging from the previously straightforward square temple, that the plan of these temples starts looking like a star, and is thus known as a stellate-plan. Since they are made out of soapstone which is a relatively soft stone, the artists were able to carve their sculptures intricately. This can be seen particularly in the jewellery of the gods that adorn their temple walls.

The Hoysaleshvara temple (Lord of the Hoysalas) at Halebid in Karnataka was built in dark schist stone by the Hoysala king in 1150. Hoysala temples are sometimes called hybrid or vesara as their unique style seems neither completely dravida nor nagara, but somewhere in between. They are easily distinguishable from other medieval temples by their highly original star -like ground-plans and a profusion of decorative carvings.

Dedicated to Shiva as Nataraja, the Halebid temple is a double building with a large hall for the mandapa to facilitate music and dance. A Nandi pavilion precedes each building. The tower of the temple here and at nearby Belur fell long ago, and an idea of the temples' appearance can now only be gleaned from their detailed miniature versions flanking the entrances. From the central square plan cut-out angular projections create the star effect decorated with the most profuse carvings of animals and deities. So intricate is the carving that it is said, for instance, in the bottom-most frieze

featuring a continuous procession of hundreds of elephants with their mahouts, no two elephants are in the same pose.

Founded in 1336, Vijayanagara, literally 'city of victory', attracted a number of international travellers such as the Italian, Niccolo di Conti, the Portuguese Domingo Paes, FernaoNuniz and Duarte Barbosa and the Afghan Abd al-Razzaq, who have left vivid accounts of the city. In addition, various Sanskrit and Telugu works document the vibrant literary tradition of this kingdom. Architecturally, Vijayanagarasynthesises the centuries-old dravida temple architecture with Islamic styles demonstrated by the neighboring sultanates. Their sculpture too, although fundamentally derived from, and consciously seeking to recreate Chola ideals, occasionally shows the presence of foreigners. Their eclectic ruins from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries preserve a fascinating time in history, an age of wealth, exploration and cultural fusion.

Summary

Temples became a space for many other art forms such as music and dance. Temples also became large landowners as kings and feudal lords gave them land for their maintenance once and upkeep and performed an administrative role as well. The different styles that emerged during the early medieval India reflected the advancing regionalization in art and culture.

Keywords

1. Nagar- North Indian style of temple architecture
2. Vesara- South Indian style of temple architecture
3. Dravida- Mixture of North and South Indian style of temple architecture
4. Duel- Shikhara in Odisha
5. Panchayatana- five shrines
6. Garbha-griha- shrine room of deity
7. Mandapa- hall for worshippers
8. Gopuram- Entrance gateway

Self Assessment

Q.1. Which of the following is the feature of early temples constructed in India?

1. Stupa construction continued

2. Different styles emerged.

3. Religious in nature

4. Each temple had a principal image of the deity.

A. 1 and 2

B. 3 and 4

C. 1, 2 and 3

D. 1, 2, 3, and 4

Q.2. The shrines of Sandhara type of temple were

A. without pradakshinapatha

B. with pradakshinapatha

C. to be accessed from all sides

D. None of the above

Q.3. Garbhagriha was made -

A. for worshippers

B. place amlakas

C. Keep the image of deity

D. to attach the mandapas

Q.4. 'Shikhara' in North Indian architecture was called '_____' in Southern style of temple building.

A. Vimana

B. Stambha

C. Gopuram

D. Shikhara

Q.5. Which of the following is not the feature of Nagar style of temples?

A. Entrance gateway

B. Multiple shikharas

C. Raised platform

D. Two apartments were part of structural plan.

Q.6. 'Deuls' were also called _____.

A. Garbha-griha

B. Ardha-Mandapa

C. Mandapa

D. Shikhara

Q.7. "Third chamber" was added in North style of temple under-

A. Chandellas

B. Chalukyas

C. Gahadavalas

D. Pratiharas.

Q.8. Panchayatan style used in temple construction had-

A. four dwarapalas

B. four pillars in front of temples

C. four shrines at four corners of temple

D. four images of diety in a temple

Q.9. Kandariya Mahadev Temple is an example of

A. Nagar style

B. Vesara style

C. Dravida style

D. None of these

Q.10. Dravida temple style architecture doesnot have-

A. Gopuram

B. Vimana

C. Multiple Shikhara

D. Garbhagriha

Q.11. Large water body and boundary wall is attached with _____.

A. Nagar style

B. Vesara style

C. Dravida style

D. None of these

Q.12. The rulers of which dynasty were pioneer of Dravida temple building in early medieval India?

A. Pallava

B. Chola

C. Pandya

D. Vijayanagar

Q.13. Rajrajeshwar temple is an example of-

A. Nagar style

B. Vesara style

C. Dravida style

D. None of these

Q.14. Which of the following are the features of Vesara style of Temple architecture?

1. Hybrid form of Indian temple architecture.

2. Vertical shaped tower

3. Increased ornamentation.

4. Dravida influence is mainly visible in Vimana

5. Modification in towers

A. 1, 2 and 3

B. 1, 2, 3 ,4 and 5

C. 1, 4 and 5

D. 2, 4 and 5

Q.15. The rulers of which dynasty have not contributed in expansion of Vesara style of Temple architecture?

A. Gujara-Pratiharas

B. Rashtrakutas

C. Chalukyas

D. Hoysalas

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	D	2.	A	3.	C	4.	A	5.	A
6.	D	7.	A	8.	C	9.	A	10.	C
11.	C	12.	A	13.	C	14.	B	15.	A

Review Questions

1. Explain the features of Nagar style of temple architecture.
2. Examine the various types of temple architecture in North Indian temples.
3. Discuss the distinguishing features of Dravida style of architecture.
4. Write a note on the Vesara temple architecture.
5. Describe the developments in architectural style in early medieval India with help of examples.

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Unit 14: Art and Architecture II

CONTENTS

Objectives

- Explain the rich art and architectural heritage of ancient and medieval India.
- Appreciate the tangible cultural heritage of India
- Explain the richness in cave architecture.
- Understand the significant features of Pallava architecture.
- Learn about the Chola art and architecture which enhanced the prestige of Indian culture.

Introduction

The centuries between the eighth and the thirteenth stand out rather prominently from the point of view of the making of cultural traditions in India. The most arresting feature of these traditions is regionalism, which gets reflected in every sphere, whether it be the formation of political power or the development of arts or the transformations in languages and literature or even religious manifestations. In very general terms, the emergence of regional cultural units such as Andhra, Assam, Bengal, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, etc. was the outcome of significant material changes. The pace of agrarian changes and the developments in the non-agrarian sector were setting the tone of feudal socio-economic formation. The political structure was deeply affected by these developments. It should, not, therefore, surprise us if the cultural ethos too got permeated by similar strains.

The Mudrakshasa, a play written in Sanskrit by Vishakhadatta and generally ascribed to the fifth century, speaks of different regions whose inhabitants differ in customs, clothing and language. The identity of some kind of sub-national groups is recognized by the Chinese pilgrim Huien-Tsang who visited India in the first half of the seventh century and mentions several nationalities. The Kuvalayamala, a Jain text of the eighth century and largely concerned with western India, notes the existence of 18 major nationalities and describes the anthropological character of sixteen peoples, pointing out their psychological features and citing the examples of their language. The Brahmavaivarta Purana, ascribed to the thirteenth century Bengal explicates deshabheda — differences based on regions/territories. This feature is reflected in art and architecture as well.

Indian temples have symbolized the very ethos of life-style of people through the millennia. The panorama of Indian temple architecture may be seen across at extremely wide chronological and geographical horizon. From the simple beginnings at Sanchi in the fifth century of the Common Era to the great edifices at Kanchi, Jhanjawur and Madurai, is a story of more than a millennium.

The prominent Shilpasastras that deal with the subject of temple architecture are: Mayamata, Manasara, Shilparatna, Kamikagama, Kashyapasilpa and Ishanagurudevapaddhati. In the majority of these works the subject is dealt with under the three heads:

a. The geographical distribution
b. Their differentiation from the point of view of shapes, and
c. Their presiding deities and castes.

All these topics, however, are not mentioned in all these works. Some later texts as the Kamikagama and Kashyapasilpa show that the nature of ornamentation, number of storey, the size of prasadas etc. also constituted bases of differentiation.

14.1 Ajanta

The most prominent examples of the rock-cut architecture of this period are found at Ajanta and Bagh. The spectacular Buddhist site of Ajanta consists of several caves nestled in a curving section of the Sahyadri hills, overlooking the WaghoraRiver. There are 28 caves at Ajanta. There were two phases of activity at this site—five caves were excavated in the Satavahana period, while 23 belong to the Vakataka period (inscriptional evidence establishes this). Of these, two (Caves 19 and 26) were chaityas, the rest viharas. The scale and magnificence of the Ajanta caves suggest that they must have housed a prominent monastic community which attracted lavish patronage from the elites of the Vakataka kingdom. Spink describes Cave 1 as 'the most sumptuous rock-cut vihara ever made in India' and attributes its patronage to Harishena.

The two chaityas at Ajanta—Caves 19 and 26—belong to the late 5th and early 6th centuries. They stand apart from cave shrines of the earlier period on account of their richer sculptural ornamentation, both inside and outside, and the profusion of figures from the Mahayana pantheon. Cave 19 consists of a rectangular hall rounded into an apse at the rear. The hall is divided into a central section and two side aisles by a number of richly carved pillars that go down the entire length of the hall and around the central image of worship—a stupa with a high, almost spherical dome within which a standing Buddha is carved in high relief. The roof is vaulted and ribbed, a translation of the old wooden ceilings, now rendered in stone. The cave has an elaborately carved façade, with Buddha figures, attendants, and various ornamental devices. The upper part of the interior has sculpted panels representing Buddhas. The cave must have been originally painted in many different colors.

Cave 26, which belongs to a slightly later period, has more elaborate and detailed sculptural decoration. It enshrines a huge stupa with a seated Buddha carved in high relief, adorned with richer ornamentation than its counterpart in Cave 19. The main Buddha figure on this stupa sits with legs hanging down from his seat. The inner walls of the cave have many carvings, including a 7 m long Buddha in a reclining pose on the left wall, representing the parinibbana, surrounded by figures in mourning.

Like the chaityas, the Ajanta viharas too display a profusion of sculptural ornamentation. They consist of a colonnaded porch and three entrance doors leading into a hall. The hall, with pillars arranged in a square, leads into an antechamber with a pillared portico, which in turn opens into a shrine room. The introduction of a shrine room into the vihara is an innovation of this period. Monastic cells are arranged around the central hall, and in some cases, also in the front. The columns and doorways of the viharas show great variety. Some are rather plain, others richly decorated with sculptures. Fluted columns make their appearance for the first time.

The exquisite sculptures at Ajanta are complemented by beautiful murals on the walls, ceilings, doorframes, and pillars. Originally, most of the caves had paintings. Today paintings survive in only six—Caves 1, 2, 9, 10, 16, and 17. Out of these, Caves 9 and 10 seem to belong to the 2nd/1st century BCE. The second phase of painting corresponds to the Vakataka period. The technique of painting is known as fresco secco. A thick layer of mud, mixed with vegetable material, was applied on the rock surface. A thin coat of plaster was applied on top of this. Paintings were made on this prepared surface, using pigments mixed in a glue or gum medium. This type of fresco is different from true fresco (fresco buon), in which powdered pigments are mixed with water and applied on wet lime-plastered walls, and in which the colors dry and set along with the plaster. The artists must have used brushes made of animal hair. They used and blended six colors—white made from lime, kaolin, and gypsum; red and yellow from ochre; black from soot; green from a glauconitic (a mineral); and blue from lapis lazuli. All these materials, except for lapis lazuli, were available in the vicinity of Ajanta.

Apart from narrative scenes connected with the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Jatakas, the Ajanta frescoes depict yakshas, gandharvas, and apsaras. In addition to the 'religious scenes', there are many scenes of everyday life in cities and villages. The artists' deep and sympathetic understanding of nature is evident in the representations of trees, flowers, and animals such as elephants, monkeys, deer, and hares. There is also a great variety of decorative patterns. In the narrative paintings, episodes flow from and into each other in different directions, without any clear demarcations. Kramrisch observes that the Ajanta paintings are not conceived in terms of depth; rather, they come forward towards the viewer. The artists knew the technique of foreshortening and their paintings are marked by 'multiple perspective'—objects are painted as if seen simultaneously at eye level, from above, as well as from below. The paintings are marked by a fine balance between the material and the spiritual.

The human figures are slender, well-proportioned, and elegant. Women have narrow waists and full breasts, their faces are marked by highly arched eyebrows and elongated, loti form eyes. There is an intricate range of sophisticated costumes, jewellery, and hairstyles. The artists used shading and highlighting to great effect, giving parts of their compositions a luminous glow. The paintings display some stylistic differences, reflecting the different hands that made them. It can be noted that the Vishnudharmottara, a supplement to the Vishnu Purana, was composed in about the 7th century CE, the very time when artists were painting the last paintings at Ajanta. This text gives a detailed account of the theory and practice of painting and refers to earlier works on the subject. The beautiful Ajanta murals themselves point to a long tradition of mural painting in India.

At Ajanta, several Buddhist caves were excavated in the 5th–6th centuries. Their sculptural decoration includes Buddha and bodhisattva figures. Huntington suggests that the prominence of female imagery, especially the female attendants who frequently flank the bodhisattvas, may reflect Tantric or Vajrayana influence. One of the most beautiful relief sculptures in these caves is found to the left of the central door in Cave 7. This shows Tara flanked by two female figures (perhaps aspects of herself) accompanied by dwarfs. On the left wall of the same cave shrine is a fine relief of a woman dancer, flanked by six female musicians.

14.2 Ellora

The name Ellora itself inspires everyone as it represents one of the largest rock-hewn monastic-temple complexes in the entire world. Ellora is also world famous for the largest single monolithic excavation in the world, the great Kailasa (Cave 16). The visit to these caves is enjoyed maximum during monsoon, when every stream is filled with rainwater, and the entire environ is lush green. The monsoon is not only a season of rains in this part, the local visitors are attracted to visit these ideal locations to have a glimpse of the mother nature in full bloom.

The caves are hewn out of the volcanic basaltic formation of Maharashtra, known as 'Deccan Trap', the term trap being of Scandinavian origin representing the step like formation of the volcanic deposits. The rock formation, on weathering has given rise to the appearance of terraces with flat summits. At Ellora, one can also have a glimpse of the channels (near Cave 32) through which the volcanic lava once flowed. These channels, due to overheating, have a characteristic brownish red color. Similar rock was used in the construction of the Grishneshwar Temple nearby and also utilized for the flooring of the pathways at Bibi-ka-Maqbara.

The hills in which the caves are hewn, forms part of the Sahyadri ranges of the Deccan and dated to the Cretaceous era of the Geological time scale (about 65 million years ago). The hills rise abruptly from the surrounding plains on the south and west, the western surface being extensively utilized for hewing the cave complexes. The hill also supports several streams, the prominent among them being the Elaganga, which drains into the Shiv, a stream of the Godavari river system. The Elaganga is in its full vigour during the monsoon, when the overflowing waters of a barrage in the upstream near Mahismati allows the gushing waters to land at "Sita-ki-nahani" near Cave 29 as a crashing waterfall.

The volcanic lava flowed during different periods, gave rise to extensive horizontal flows alternating with vesicular trap beds. The vesicular traps formed the upper portion of each of the massive trap beds. The different lava flows also gave rise to vertical as well as horizontal joints in the rock formation. Depending upon the nature and mineralogical content of the lava flow, the rock formations also varied in character and texture, giving rise to various qualities like coarse grained, fine grained formations. The ancient builders at Ellora, like other places, particularly chose the fine grained formations of the Deccan trap, ideal for sculpting and rock hewing. In addition to this, the ancient builders also traced the horizontal and vertical joints in the rock formation to minimize the labor and time during excavation and rock splitting. The basaltic rock is also ideal for rock hewing, as they are soft during the initial excavation and hardens on exposure to environment.

The basaltic formation of the Deccan is ideal for rock hewing, the technique widely understood during ancient times. This induced the religious followers of various creeds to establish their settlements in them. By a rough estimate, there are nearly 1200 caves of varying sizes in the entire Maharashtra, out of which nearly 900 alone belong to Buddhism.

The importance of Ellora during the early centuries of the Christian era is also understood by the findings of coins of Satavahanas, the ruling dynasty during the period. The Satavahanas had their capital at Pratishtana (modern Paithan) and ruled the entire area between the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal and bordered by the Narmada River on the north. Ellora being located on the ancient trade route connecting the western ports on the Arabian sea like Sopara (Surparaka, the Supara of Greek; Subara of Arab writers; the ancient capital of northern Konkan), Kalyan a thriving port; Chemula, the Samylla of Greek geographers, Chemula of Silaharas, on the island of Trombay and the inland cities like Paithan (Pratishtana), Ter (Tagara), Bhokardan (Bhogavardhana) etc. The fact that Satavahanas traversed this region is attested by their inscriptions at Nasik caves and donor inscriptions of their times at PitalKhora caves, located at a distance of 40 km west of Ellora. Ellora is located directly on the ancient trade route which traversed from Pratishtana via Aurangabad, Ellora, PitalKhora, Patne, Nasika (modern Nasik). Nasik is at the crossroads of an ancient trade route connecting centers on the west to east and those on the north to south.

The location on the ancient trade route did not induce any activities at Ellora during the Satavahana rule. Brisk activities were already on at nearby PitalKhora, Nasik, Ajanta, etc., and this could have been a diversion of the ancient builders to support any activity here. However, as the multiplication of the religious establishments took place in every nook and corner of Maharashtra, the ideal location of Ellora was unavoidable.

Thus grew one of the largest cave excavations at Ellora, that too of three different religious creeds, i.e., Buddhism, Brahmanism and Jainism. The caves are datable from circa 6th – 7th century A.D. to 11th – 12th century A.D. In total, there are nearly 100 caves in the hill range out of which 34 caves are famous and visited by many tourists, out of which Caves 1 to 12 are Buddhist; Caves 13 to 29 are Brahmanical and Caves 30 to 34 are Jaina. Two more groups of caves are noticed on the Elaganga and on an upper terrace, namely, the Ganesh Leni and Jogeshwari Leni.

The caves at Ellora (7th–8th centuries) represent the last phase of Buddhist cave architecture in western India. Their architecture and sculpture shows some continuities with earlier centuries (e.g., with Ajanta, Bagh, and Kanheri), but there are also some changes. These include an increase in the size of the side shrines and a double row of stone benches (in Cave 5). Other distinctive features are the larger scale and the richness of sculpture, reflected, for instance, in Cave 12, known as Tin Thal. This consists of three storeys, and represents the climax and the end of the cave excavations at Ellora. The sculptural programme of the Buddhist caves at Ellora includes arrays of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. A group of eight bodhisattvas are sometimes arranged together in a mandala formation (for instance, in Cave 12).

Apart from its magnificent Buddhist and Jaina caves, Ellora is also known for the spectacular Kailashanatha temple. This Shiva temple was excavated out of the rocky hillside in the late 8th century under the patronage of the Rashtrakutas. The temple is actually a complex, comprising a main shrine consisting of a lower and an upper storey, a Nandi pavilion, subsidiary shrines, wall, gateway, and cloisters. The superstructure of the temple corresponds to the Dravida style. Practically all the surfaces of the temple complex are richly ornamented with bold, dramatic, and exceptionally fine sculptures. Most of them are Shaiva, but there are also representations of Vishnu. In fact, the sculptures to the left of the entrance are mostly Shaiva, while those to the right are mostly Vaishnava. A similar logic of sculptural arrangement is found along the back wall of the gallery surrounding the temple. The sculptures include representations of Shiva, Shiva and Parvati, Ravana shaking Mount Kailasha, Durga, the Sapta-Matrikas, Ganesha, and the goddesses Ganga, Yamuna, and Sarasvati. The Kailashanatha temple marks the highest point of rock-cut temple architecture in the subcontinent.

These religious establishments could have received royal patronage from various dynasties, even though inscriptional evidences are lacking for most of them. The only definite inscriptional evidence is that of RashtrakutaDantidurga (c. 753-57 A.D.) on the back wall of the front mandapa of Cave 15. The Great Kailasa (Cave 16) is attributed to Krishna I (c. 757-83 A.D.), the successor and uncle of Dantidurga. A copper plate grant from Baroda of the period of Karka II (c. 812-13 A.D.) speaks about the greatness of this edifice. The inscription tells us that this great edifice was built on a hill by Krishnaraja at Elapura (Ellora) and even the celestial beings moving in the sky were struck by its magnificence, as though it was self-existent, not created by mortals, and, even the architect who caused it was wonder struck that he could build it. Apart from the above two inscriptions, the entire cave complexes lack inscriptions of the nature found at other cave sites like that of Ajanta, Nasik, Karle, Kanheri, etc.

In the absence of concrete inscriptional evidence, we can deduce the royal dynasties that could have extended their patronage to the religious establishments. The initiation of religious establishments at Ellora coincides with the departure of the tradition at Ajanta. It is well known that the excavations started here before the Rashtrakutas arrived on the scene and the Caves 1 to 10 and Cave 21 (Ramesvara) were definitely constructed before them. These excavations are generally attributed to the Kalachuris of Mahishmati, appeared to have gained control of the region around Nasik and parts of ancient Asmaka (region around Aurangabad) including Bhogavardana (modern Bhokardan) and the Chalukyas of Badami who held their sway in this region for a brief period before their feudatories, the Rashtrakutas took over.

The majority of the Brahmanical establishments and the remaining Buddhist ones can be attributed to the Rashtrakuta times which indicate the religious tolerance of the contemporary period. The Jaina caves definitely post-date the Rashtrakutas as indicated by the style of execution and fragmentary inscriptions. This region was under the control of Kalyani Chalukyas and Yadavas of Deogiri (Daulatabad) during this period. The patronage towards Jainism under the Yadavas is also known by the findings of several sculptures of Jaina faith from Daulatabad. Thus, we have the greatest religious conglomeration at a single place, signifying the religious tolerance and solidarity of different faiths.

The Ellora caves, unlike Ajanta, have a distinction that they were never lost to oblivion, due to their close proximity to the trade route. There have been numerous written records to indicate that these caves were visited regularly by enthused travelers and royal personages as well. The earliest is that of an Arab geographer Al-Mas'udi of the 10th century A.D. In 1352 A.D. the approach roads to the caves were repaired on the ensuing visit of Sultan Hasan Gangu Bahmani, who also camped at the site and visited the caves. The other important accounts of these caves are by Firishta, Thevenot (1633-67), NiccolaoManucci (1653-1708), Charles Warre Malet (1794), Seely (1824). During the 19th century A.D. these caves were owned by the Holkars of Indore who auctioned for the right of worship and leasing them for religious as well as a form of entrance fee.

14.3 Bagh

The Gupta emperors were great patrons of art and literature. The aesthetic qualities of Samudra Gupta are very well known. This phase of art is amply illustrated in the caves, close to the village Bagh near Gwalior, which are excavated on the slopes of the Vindhya Hills at a height of 150 feet above the river Bagh in the vicinity. There are nine caves in all but the most important are eaves 2,4 and 5.

Bagh is located about 150 miles north-west of Ajanta. Nine caves at this site belong to c. 500–600 CE. Broadly similar in plan and arrangement to those at Ajanta, the Bagh caves are more simple and plain. The end of the hall usually has a chaitya instead of a Buddha image. The purpose of a large room attached to one of the larger viharas is not certain. Some caves have additional columns in the interior of the central hall to support the roof. The Bagh caves also had paintings, which have practically disappeared.

The paintings in the Bagh caves are mostly lost, but the best preserved of the remains are found on the outer wall of the continuous, verandah of caves 4 and 5. The subject illustrated is clearly a jataka or avadana. The first scene shows a princess and her companion, one in great grief and the other consoling her; the second, two divine and two princely figure seated in conversation. Composed of cavalry and foot soldiers with bows and arrows in the hands and with the umbrella held over at least two stately figures, with princes on tuskers and high-ranking women on cow-elephants close to the royal gateway, probably in the vicinity of the palace, it suggests an important event in this royal household and the procession associated with that. It is one of the most magnificent representations of a royal procession in all its glory. On other walls and on the ceiling in this cave, there are floral decorations most pleasing to the eye, the long wandering length of the lotus-stalk with a wealth of flowers, half-blown and in full bloom, and pairs of birds in flight particularly geese.

14.4 Kanheri

The Kanheri caves one of the major monastic cave sites in western India. The site with its architectural grace, epigraphical glory, and sculptural masterpieces sheds light on the history of the Buddhism.The history of Kanheri begins in the first century B.C.E. and is divided into three different phases based on the dynastic control there, as drawn from the epigraphical data from the site.

Phase I: First century B.C.E. to fourth century C.E.

Phase II: Fifth century to sixth century.

Phase III: Seventh century to ninth century.

The main chaitya (stupa), i.e., Cave 3 at Kanheri, is located nearthe entrance of the site and is one of the most important caves in the whole complex. Architecturally, this cave represents a continuation ofthe tradition found at Karie and dates from the middle ofthe second century C.E. Second century CE can be ascertained from an inscription by the donors, the two brothers Gajasena and Gajamitra, who donated the cave to the spiritual teachers ofthe BhadrayaniyaSchool. The inscription is one ofthe most important inscriptions that refer to a later Satavahana king, YajnasriSatakarni. Additionally, on a pillar in the courtyard outside this cave, there are two unique examples ofBuddha figures in the Mathura style from the Kushana dynasty, which are thought to be the earliest depictions in southern India ofthe Buddha in anthropomorphic form. The study of the rise of Mahayana as reflected in the art and architecture ofwestern Indian Buddhist caves has been undertaken by various art historians. Scholars have pointed out several changes in the cave architecture ofthis period. The latter has labeled this architectural phase as "late Hinayana," although it is difficult to relate it to a particular school or ideological revolution. The culture ofthe Deccan region is a synthesis of southern and northern Indian cultural streams, and this has added to the confusion as to where Mahayana originated. Traditionally, it is believed that the Mahasanghikas promoted Mahayana concepts. However, the term Mahasanghika was used in the inscriptions in western Indian Buddhist caves to denote a particular group of schools, and thus there are no inscriptions that give us clues to the existence or location of an individual Mahasanghika school. It is believed that there were two schools, each with its own system of logic, that brought drastic changes to Buddhist thought— the Sarvastivadin and the Ekavyavaharika. There are no specific references to these two schools in any of the inscriptions in western Indian Buddhist caves in the early year'softhe Common Era, and therefore we are unable to understand the exact process of transition from Sthaviravadin to Mahayana. However, Kanheri, being one of the major cave complexes in India, preserves some data that can shed light on this issue

Cave 3 at Kanheri, which is the main chaitya at the site, was under Bhadrayanlya influence. On the tops of the pillars in the main hall, the Buddha is depicted in the form of footprints, a stupa, and a seat. The cave itself contains a large stupa, as it is a chaitya cave. This cave also contains one ofthe earliest images in western India ofthe Buddha in the Mathura style ofthe Kushana dynasty.These two images are on a pillar in the outside courtyard. One other figure once stood on a pillar in the main hall of the chaitya, as there are two broken attendant figures there similar to those in the courtyard. Owing to the weathering ofthe rock, the figure inside no longer exists. The figures in the courtyard are placed on the column ofthe pillar, which is divided into two horizontal parts by an abacus-like base ofthe upper figure. The lower figure is in a standing posture (sthanaka), while the upper one is in a seated posture {asana). The factthat a similar placement ofpillars was found in the courtyard ofthe chaitya cave at Karie suggests that this was an important feature in chaitya architecture.

The pillars in the courtyard at Kanheri are inferior copies ofthe Karie pillars. Here, the pillars have capitals depicting lions and dwarves. Although nothing remains on the tops of these pillars, we can speculate that Dharma wheels—possibly made ofwood—were placed on the capitals. All these elements suggest the significant position ofthe pillars in the plan ofthe chaitya cave at Kanheri.

Most caves at Kanheri were viharas meant for living, studying and meditating. The larger caves (chaityas) were for congregational worship lined with intricately carved Buddhist sculptures, reliefs, pillars and rock-cut stupas. The figure of Avalokiteshwara is the unique one. Large number of viharas demonstrates a well-organized establishment of Buddhist monks. This establishment is connected with many trade centers such as Sopara, Kalyan, Nashik, Paithan and Ujjain. In the late 10th century, the Buddhist teacher Atisha (980–1054) came to the *Krishnagiri Vihara* to study Buddhist meditation under Rahulgupta.

Kanheri is a largest rock cut cave site in India comprise of more than one hundred rock-cut caves. The architectural style of Kanhericaves(such as Cave no. 90) was rather plain, yet the interiors were lavishly carved. Cave 90 represents Buddha seated on the Padmasanasitted on Lotus throne, supported by two figures. Further, Cave 90has a unique representation of Avalokiteshvara (depicted as protector of the faithful) as well as a beautiful Buddha mandala. The caves at Kanheri had artistic merit. The creators of these iconographic programmes tried to assist the Buddhist followers to understand the underlying philosophical concepts. Similarly, Cave 3 represent the first phase of Kanheri during Satvahan rule has one of the earliest sculptures of Buddha in Southern India. Further, in Cave 3, the two massive Buddhas standing on either side of the entrance passage (late 5^{th} and early 6^{th} centuries). Cave 11 have a Great Chaitya cave named as Maharaja or Darbar cave. The cave also depicts two pairs of couples, possibly donors, carved on either side of the entrance.Their size, posture and ornaments speak volumes of their importance. Together with this, Cave 89 depicts the Mango tree clearly visible above the Buddha's head, with leaves, mangoes, birds and a monkey carved into it. The Buddha is seated on a lotus, flanked by the Bodhisattvas Padmapani and Vajrapani, as Chauri bearers, also standing on lotuses. The cave shows a stalk of the central lotus held by the Nagas Nanda and Upananda, attended by two Nagis. The Trinity panelsdepicts the Buddha flanked by two Bodhisattvas and all these panels are believed to have been carved during the second and third phases of Kanheri, when cave excavations had come to a halt, and rich patrons arranged to have these panels carved for gaining religious merit. On cave 67, we find on one side is the story of Sumedha and the DipankaraBuddha.This depiction is seen more often in Gandhara Art, and later in Mathura art, and its presence here clearly speaks of the varied influences that came to Kanheri via the trade routes. The cave number 34 has unfinished paintings of Buddha on the ceiling of the cave. In cave 41, the hall door is surrounded by mouldings, and on the back wall are the remains of painting, consisting of Buddhas.

14.5 The PallavaArchitecture

The Pallava dynasty was an Indian dynasty that existed from 275 CE to 897 CE, ruling a portion of southern India. They gained prominence after the eclipse of the Satavahana dynasty, in which the Pallavas served as feudatories. Pallavas became a major power during the reign of Mahendravarman I (571 – 630 CE) and Narasimhavarman I (630 – 668 CE) and dominated the Telugu and northern parts of the Tamil region for about 600 years until the end of the 9th century. Pallavas are most noted for their patronage of architecture, the finest example being the Shore Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Mahabalipuram. The Pallavas, who left behind magnificent sculptures and temples, established the foundations of medieval South Indian architecture.

Pallava art and architecture represent an early stage of Dravidian art and architecture which blossomed to its fullest extent under the Chola Dynasty. The first stone and mortar temples of South India were constructed during Pallava rule and were based on earlier brick and timber prototypes. Starting with rock cut temples, built between 695 and 722, and archaeological excavations dated to the 6th century and earlier. Pallava sculptors later graduated to free-standing structural shrines which inspired Chola temples of a later age. Some of the best examples of Pallava art and architecture are the Kailasanatha Temple at Kanchipuram, the Shore Temple and the PanchaRathasof Mahabalipuram. Akshara was the greatest sculptor of their time.

The construction of temple is an art, a science and a complicated creative study with a blend of mathematics, logic, geography, geology, science, ecology, art, sculpting, music, light and sound, religion, social sciences and astrology. The historical information about construction of temples which is available today is mostly inscribed on the stones slabs, metal plates, palm leaves and manuscripts. The knowledge and skills of the construction techniques were passed on verbally from generation to generation among the temple architects. One of the most important surviving records about the construction of temple is in the palm leaf manuscript which explains the details of the building operation of Pallavas.

Pallava architecture can be sub-divided into two phases - the rock cut phase and the structural phase.

A. Rock – cut phase

The rock cut phase lasted from the 610 to 668 AD and consisted of two groups of monuments - the Mahendra group and the Mamalla group. The Mahendra group is the name given to monuments constructed during the reign of Mahendravarman I (610 - 630 AD). The monuments of this group are invariably pillared halls hewn out of mountain faces. These pillared halls or mandapas follow the prototype of Jain temples of the period. The best examples of Mahendra group of monuments are the cave temples at Mandagapattu, Pallavaram and Mamandur.

The second group of rock cut monuments belongs to the Mamalla group in 630 to 668 AD. During this period free-standing monolithic shrines called rathas were constructed alongside pillared halls. Some of the best examples of this style are the PanchaRathas and Arjuna's Penance at Mahabalipuram.

B. The Structural Phase

The structural phase was when free-standing shrines were constructed with stone and mortar brought in for the purpose. Monuments of this phase are of two groups - the Rajasimha group (690 to 800 AD) and the Nandivarman group (800 to 900 AD). The Rajasimha group encompasses the early structural temples of the Pallavas when a lot of experimentation was carried out. The best examples of this period are the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram and the KanchiKailasanathar Temple at Kanchipuram both constructed by Narasimhavarman II who was known as Rajasimha. The best example of the Nandivarman group of monuments is the Vaikunta Perumal Temple at Kanchipuram. During this period, Pallava architecture attained full maturity and provided the models upon which the massive Brihadeshwar Temple of the Cholas at Thanjavur and GangaikondaCholapuram and various other architectural works of note were constructed.

Pallava Sculpture and Architecture Style

The Pallavas sculptors had a lot of passion and the slender skills of the artists in the carving of the sculptures can be seen. Pallava dynasty was a famous dynasty in South India. The Pallava kings played a patron role to flourish art and architecture in their kingdom. The present Pallava art and sculptures are dated back to the 610 AD to 690 AD. Probably the rock cut caves also came into existence during the period of Pallavas. The kings of Pallavas encouraged the artists to construct the temples and replaced the old temples with innovative rock sculptures and architecture.

During the rule of Pallavas, the artists improved their skills of excavating temples from the rocks. There were special institutions to teach the techniques of carving the architecture. They brought the Dravidian style of art and introduced in the temple construction. The development of temple and architecture changed from one king to another. They brought the cave based constructing temples to structural temples. The Pallavas constructed many monuments around the temples. According to the historians, the temple construction styles changed in four stages.

The great Mahendravarma I encouraged the rock cut temples, we can see them at Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Dalavanm, Vallan and some other places in Tamil Nadu. We can see the second stage of Pallava style of temples at Mamallapuram. Here the temple's architecture constructed by Monolithic rathas and Mandapas. Narasimhavarman constructed the temples with magnificent architectural monuments. The mandapas in the temples had the decorations with stunning sculptures, which were narrating the stories of Hindu epics.

Importance of Pallava Architecture

Mahendravarman I inherited the Pallavathrown from his father Simhavishnu and with it a large and settled empire extending from the Krishna River in the north to the Kaveri in the south. He was an exceptional and unorthodox king, whom Dubreuil referred to as one of the greatest figures in the history of Tamil civilization. A many sided and gifted personality, musician, poet, builder and statesman, it was he who called forth the immense flowering of culture and art which would spread all over South India and overflow to other countries of Asia, and finally even survive the decline of his own dynasty and empire. Pallava conquest and expansion of power came to a standstill in his time. His fame in history was not achieved on the battlefield but by the fact that he was the first under whom cave temples were carved into the granite rocks of the South—cave temples of a specific and unmistakable style named after him. Into those temples he recorded his expressive inscriptions in fine Sanskrit and in the beautiful letters of his time.

The fascination of carving whole temples into the living rock which spread over India during the first millennium AD had not yet seized the South by the end of the 6th century. Even as a building material, stone was not or rarely used here, possibly because of its strong association with funerary customs (viz. the erection of stones to venerate the dead). The materials in use were brick, mortar and thatch perishable substances of which nothing has remained. No architectural structure of a period earlier than Mahindra's reign has survived in the Dravidian country.

Characteristics of Pallava Architecture

The Pallava dynasty maintained its varying forms of architecture for some three centuries, from A.D. 600 to 900, and its productions are classified themselves into two phases, the first of these occupying the seventh century, and the second the eighth and ninth centuries. In the former the examples were entirely rock cut, in the latter they,were entirely structural. There were four principal rulers during the period of their power, and the works of each phase had been divided into two groups, comprising four groups in all, each of which is named after the king who was ruling at the time.

1. First Phase: Mahendra Group, A.D. 610 to 640, and Mamalla Group, A.D. 640 to 690.
2. 2nd Phase: Rajasimha Group, A.D. 690 to 800, and Nandivarman Group, c. A.D. 800 to c. 900.

Mahendra's Rock Architecture, A.D. 610 to 640

Rock temples have but one external facade; in those of Mahendra it consists of a row of pillars which are comparatively short and massive and without the clear demarcation of the various parts of a pillar which the shastras prescribe. Their plain archaic shape with straight outlines has a certain similarity to Buddhist pillars or railing post which may have served as a model. It is in strange contrast to other contemporary pillars, for example, those of the Chalukyas at Badami or the Vakatakas of Ellora which are not only elaborately shaped, but also, have a rich ornamental and figural decor. Mahendra's pillars have two large, almost cubical parts at the base and the top, with an intervening part which is leveled off at the corners and has thus, an octagonal shape. The cubical parts on top and bottom are called sadurams, while the octagonal section in between is the kattu. In later times, lotus medallions are found on top and bottom sadurams which resemble the typical Buddhist lotus motif. The corbel sits on the upper saduram and has curved, rarely angular arms, proportionate in size to the massiveness of the pillar. In later cave temples they are decorated with roll mouldings called taranga.

The shrine cells are either cut behind the mandapa, facing the facade of the temple or else into one of its side walls. They are excavated on a higher level than that of the hall and entered by one or several rock cut steps. In Mandagapattu, Mahendra's first excavation, the level difference is just a small step of about three inches; in later cave temples it would grow higher until it would provide the space for a mouldedadisthana (base) running along the front wall of the shrines, interrupted only by the rock steps at their entrance. The shrine chambers are plain and bare of any ornamentation; they contain neither a relief sculpture of the deity nor a rock cut linga. Non-monolithic lingas of black polished stone and uncertain age are often found inserted into a socket hole which was cut into the floor at a later time.

Another noteworthy feature is the absence of any water outlet (pranala) from the sanctuary. The abhisheka (ceremonial bath) consisting of liquids like coconut water, milk, honey, ghee etc., was obviously received in a vessel inside the sanctum itself. A rock-cut pedestal or platform is often found at the rear wall of the shrine, suggesting that an image of the deity was placed upon it. Such images were formed of painted stucco or wood or brick with stucco. The tradition of shaping the deity of the shrine in these materials has been preserved to the present day where wooden or stucco mulasthanasare found in South Indian temples. Remnants of paint on the rear wall of some shrines may indicate that the figure of the god was painted there over a thin coat of plaster. This is confirmed by references in the Sangam literature where temples are described as having their deity painted on the hind wall of the shrine.

Outstanding features of Mahindra cave temples, which are otherwise bare of any sculptures, are the doorkeepers or dvarapalas. They represent the guardian figures of the threshold, a very ancient symbol frequently met with in legend and occult literature. There, they have a frightful, sometimes nonhuman appearance, to test the intrepidity of the seeker before they let him pass and continue his quest. Indian temples too, whether monolithic or structural, early or late, have a guardian of the threshold, and very often, they are the most expressive figures in a temple. They are regarded as semi divine beings, sometimes emanations of the god inside the shrine.

In the centuries following the time of King Mahindra, his successors continued to carvecave temples in specific style. By continuing his particular style they were honoring him as the first who had carved his temples into the granite of the South. In fact, not only his successors, but also the Pandyas, Muttaraiyars and other South Indian dynasties followed in their rock architecture the style which had been initiated by him. At the same time, they created their own refined and developed style of rock and structural architecture which differed much from that of Mahindra.

Structural Temple

After the period of Mahindra and Mamalla, King Rajasimha introduced and made some alteration of construction which is called 'Structural temple'. Structural temple technique made a new revolution in Pallava Architecture. This technique was also accepted and applied by Chola and Pandyas. In structural temple method stones are carved independently in squire and rectangle shape and arranged one by one to make walls and ceilings. Through this method they constructed 'Muga Mandapa', 'Artha Mandapa' and above the walls 'Vimana' was also constructed. Surround the walls and pillars, sculptures were carved low or high. This type of temples are followed by Rajasimha and followed by Nandivarman.

The monolithic rathas and sculptural mandapas constitute the Mamalla style of architecture. The Pallava king, Narasimhavarman I was known as Mamalla. He had converted the port of Mamallapuram as a beautiful city of art and architecture. The Monolithic rathas at Mamallapuram are now called as PanchaPandavaRathas. Each ratha or chariot was carved out of single rock and hence the name monolithic. These rathas depict the five different forms of temple architecture.

The mandapas or halls at Mamallapuram had also belonged to the Mamallan period. Each mandapa was carved out of single rock. On the side- walls of these mandapas, beautiful sculptures depicting Puranic stories had been carved. The scene depicting the Goddess Durga's attack on Mahishasura is seen in the MahishasuraMardhini Mandapa. Such beautiful sculptures have also been carved in Thirumoorthi and Varaha mandapas. The most important among the Mamalla style of architecture is the Open Art Gallery. Several miniature sculptures have been carved beautifully on the wall of a big rock. The fall of the RiverGange from the head of God Siva and the Arjuna's penance are notable among them. The images of deer, monkey, cat, mouse and other animals are beautifully carved on this huge rock

Thus, it is clear that Pallava architectural features are unique and they are great works of cultural contribution. Undoubtedly, Pallavas were the great maters of the art and were pioneers in this artistic tradition. Their cultural edifices remain as examples of superior craftsmanship and exemplary art.

Pallava Art

The Pallava kings had patronized fine arts. The Kudumianmalai and Thirumayam music inscriptions show their interest in music. Yaazhi, Mridhangam and Murasu were some of the musical instruments of the Pallava period. Both Mahendravarman I and Narasimhavarman I had remained experts in music. The temple sculptures of the Pallava period reveal that the art of dance was popular in those days. The paintings at Chittannavasal illustrate the nature of Pallava painting Mahendravarman I was known as Chittirakkarapuli. He had composed the book, ThatchinaChitram. He was also the author of the satirical drama MaththavilasamPrakasanam, Thus, music, dance, paintings and drama were popular during the Pallava rule. In this way, the Pallavas had contributed to the growth of culture.

Conjeevaram, the ancient Pallava capital, is situated 45 miles west-south-west of Madras on the South Indian Railway. It is rich in temples and shrines. Of them the most important are the Kailasanatha and the Vaikunthaperumal temples, which contain ancient wall paintings. In the Kailasanatha temple, which was built during the time of the Pallava king, Narasimhavarman n alias Rajasimha (680-722 A.D.), there are paintings of the 7th-8th centuries A.D. on the inner walls of the narrow cells lining the outer walls of the courtyard. They depict scenes from Hindu mythology. But most of the paintings have faded or disappeared through the vicissitudes of time and elements. The few that have survived were covered with lime wash during recent times. But Prof. JouveauDubreuil, the French archeologist of Pondicherry, removed the layer of white wash here and there and brought the paintings to light. Nandivarman II alias Pallavamalla (725-790 A.D.) 2 constructed the Vaikunthaperumal temple. The paintings in this temple, probably dating from the 8th-9th centuries A.D., have almost disappeared but for a miniature head under one of the eaves of the central tower or the Vimana. But there are traces of paint everywhere under the eaves and in the niches of the central tower. These Pallava paintings are on the classical or Ajanta style, and represent some of the best specimens of Hindu mural art.

In order to reconstruct the methods and materials used in these paintings, one has to study and experiment on the carrier, the ground, the pigments and the binding medium. Investigations were carried out on some damaged fragments of the painted stuccoes which were collected from the two temples.The painted stuccoes consisted of rough plaster of lime, which had been applied to the wall, with two successive coats of fine plaster and of paint applied one over the other. Some of the stuccoes in the Kailasanatha temple were very thin. They had no rough plaster, being made up of a layer of lime wash or fine plaster supporting the layer of paint. The methods of production of the paintings in the two temples are so similar, that a common discussion of their experimental results will suffice.

The inner walls of the cells in the courtyard of the Kailasanatha temple, and the eaves and the walls of the niches of the Vimana of the Vaikunthaperumal temple serve as the mechanical foundation of the paintings directly supporting the ground. They are of sandstone, which are mechanically firm and durable. Their rough surface holds the plaster fast. Their material, being hard and compact, eliminates any possibility of efflorescence occurring on the surface of the paintings. In the Vaikunthaperumal temple, the ground and the paint have fallen down in several places. The carrier has thus become exposed to the elements resulting in further damage to the paintings.

The following pigments were identified in the Kailasanatha and Vaikunthaperumal temples, i.e., yellow ochre, red ochre,terreverte, carbon, lime. Thus only a limited number of pigments have been employed by the Pallava artists. This might be due to two causes. Firstly, in the fresco process such as is adopted here--and this will be proved presently--pigments which are sensitive to alkalies should not be used with lime. Secondly, the artists might have employed the locally available pigments, which were probably few in number.

Though the sculptures of the Rajasimha are fairly well preserved, its paintings have almost vanished. It is said that the walls of the pradakshina-patha of the Kailasanatha temple were once covered with paintings of brilliant colours. But most of that has turned into faint traces. None of the surviving paintings at Kailasanatha is complete; only fragments have remained.

The problem of aging was exacerbated by the coat of white wash applied by the temple authorities on the ancient murals. The conservation work, to rescue the underlying paintings, was taken up during 1936-40 by Shri S.Paramasivan, an archaeological chemist, who was a curator at the Madras museum. He encountered a number of serious problems in restoring the paintings in the cells of the Kailasanatha temple. He remarked said, "Since mechanical removal is the only possible means of removing the whitewash, it had to be done with great patience, not just skill". Thanks to the efforts of Shri Paramasivan a few fragments of paintings at Chittannavasal, Thanjavur and Kailasanatha, Kanchipuram, have survived.

The fragments at Kailasanatha along with the remnants at Talagishwara temple at Panamalai are however quite significant, because, these are the only two surviving examples of the Pallava mural paintings. Further, they represent an important stage in the history of development of South Indian paintings. Benoy K. Behl, the scholar and art historian remarked, "The fragments at Kailasanatha reveal the tenderness and grace that come from the tradition of Ajanta; as well as the glory of great kings. The theme of the family of Siva is also, at another plane, a representation of the royal family. There is an impressive quality in the crowns and in the painted figures, which are not seen in the earlier gentle beings of Ajanta. The idiom, which begins to develop here, is seen to blossom later into a grand imperial style of painting under the Cholas. The ancient Indian murals were also the foundation of the later manuscript paintings and Indian miniatures. Here we see the high quality of painting of the classical Indian style, with a beautiful rendering of form and volume."

With reference to the technique of Pallava murals, the painting surface consists two layers of plaster. The first layer was a rough layer of lime and sand. Over this a thin lime plaster was applied and this stuck on to the first layer firmly. Then the plaster ground was given a gentle polish with a trowel or stone. The Pallava plaster – fresco –technique was superior. The plaster from Kanchipuram was 2 to 3 mm in thickness and the two layers of plasters adhered to each other firmly. Because of the high degree of purity in the lime used, gypsum content was negligible and there was no efflorescence on the surface of the painting.

Pallava Sculptures

Pallava sculptures came into being from the 4th to 9th centuries. It was during the Pallava reign that the rock cut architecture flourished. The earliest specimens of Pallava art and architecture dated back to the 610 to 690 AD. The other temples, on the other hand, were constructed from 690 to 900 AD. In fact, the rock cut caves also came into trend during the Pallava Empire. For the first time the, a predominant feature of the South Indian temples, were fast replaced by the innovative rock architecture and sculptures.

Sangam Period's traditional Manimekalai, features the beginning of the first Pallava King from a connection between the daughter of Naga king of Manipallava, named Pilli Valai with a Chola king Killivalavan. One more description states that "Pallava" was born from the union of the Brahmin Ashvatthama with a Naga Princess also supposedly supported in the sixth verse of the Bahur plates. The Pallavas themselves claimed to move down from Brahma and Ashvatthama. Although to the Manimekalai posits, IlamTiriyan as a Chola, not a Pallava, the Velurpalaiyam plates dated to 852, do not bring up the Cholas.

The Pallavas initiated the skill of excavating temples from the rock. In fact, the Dravidian style of temple architecture began with the Pallava rule. It was a regular development starting from the cave temples to monumental rathas and concluded in structural temples. The growth of temple architecture under the Pallavas can be seen in 4 stages. Mahendravarman I introduced the rock-cut temples. This style of Pallava temples are seen at places like Mandagappattu, Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Dalavanur, Tiruchirappalli, Vallam, Siyamangalam and Tirukalukkunrampallava art. The second stage of Pallava architecture is represented by the monolithic rathas and Mandapas found at Mamallapuram. Narasimhavarman I took the recognition for these magnificent architectural monuments. The five rathas, generally called as the Panchapanadavarathas signifies five diverse styles of temple architecture. The mandapas enclose stunning sculptures on its walls.

The last stage of the Pallava art is also represented by structural temples built by the later Pallavas. The Vaikundaperumal temple, Muktheeswara temple and Matagenswara temples at Kanchipurambelong to this stage of structural design. The Pallavas were involved in the evolution from rock-cut architecture to stone temples. The earliest examples of Pallava constructions are rock-cut temples dating from 610 to 690 and structural temples between 690 to 900. A number of rock-cut cave temples bear the message of the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I and his descendants. The Kailasanatha temple in Kanchipuram and the Shore Temple built by Narasimhavarman II, rock cut temple in Mahendravadi by Mahendravarman are fine examples of the Pallava style temples.

14.6 Chola Architecture

While Pallava temples are mostly located in and around Kanchipuram, Chola temples are concentrated further south, around Tanjore. They do not show a simple or straightforward evolution from the earlier Pallava temples and in fact reflect certain new features. Inscriptions indicate that many brick temples of Pallava times were rebuilt in stone during this period. The temple architecture of the Chola period can be divided into at least two phases on the basis of dynastic markers—the early phase (mid-9th to the early 11th centuries) and the late phase (early 11th to the 13th centuries). Some art historians suggest a division into three phases—early (850–985), middle (985–1070), and late (1070–1270)—and divide these into further sub-phases.

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The next phase is represented by temples built during the reigns of Aditya I (871– 907 CE) and Parantaka I (907–55 CE), for instance the Brahmapureshvara temple at Pullamangai, the Nageshvarasvami temple at Kumbakonam, and the Koranganatha temple at Srinivasanallur. The Brahmapureshvara temple consists of an ardhamandapa joined to the vimana. A mukhamandapa (porch) was added subsequently. The temple was built in a shallow stone-lined pit that was once probably filled with water. These ties in with the fact that inverted lotuses are carved along the lower part of the outer walls. The frieze of lions along the base of the temple is a typical feature of Chola temples. Pilasters divide the outer walls into niches known as devakoshthas, which contain images of various deities including Ganesha, Durga Mahishasuramardini, and Brahma. The figures are natural and slender, with high headdresses. Representations of deities and mythological scenes, including those from the Ramayana, appear on the outer walls.

The original structure of the Nageshvarasvami temple consists of a joined ardhamandapa and vimana. Deeply carved representations of deities appear in the pilastered niches. The Koranganatha temple is similar in basic structure, except for the addition of an antarala (vestibule or antechamber) between the vimana and ardhamandapa. The frieze along the outer base consists of rows of inverted lotuses, and there are also rows of lions and elephants. The sculpted figures are more heavily ornamented than in other temples of this period.

The third phase of Chola temple architecture is associated with Shembiyan Mahadevi, a queen who was a major patron of temple building during the reigns of her husband Gandaraditya (949–57 CE), her son Uttama I (969–85 CE), and in the early part of Rajaraja I's reign. A large number of older brick temples were rebuilt in stone during this period. A major change is noticeable in the nature of sculpted figures, which appear rather stiff and lifeless. An example of a temple built at the instance of Shembiyan Mahadevi is the Agastyeshvara temple at Anangapur.

The culmination of Chola temple architecture is represented by the Brihadishvara (also known as the Rajarajeshvara) temple at Tanjavur. With an approximately 60 m tall vimana and a towering, pyramidal shikhara, this Shiva temple was one of the largest and most grand structures of its age, displaying certain new architectural features compared to earlier temples. The main shrine consists of a pillared porch, a pillared mukhamandapa and ardhamandapa, an antarala, and the sanctum. The ornamentation of the outer walls is much more profuse than in earlier shrines. The niches are deep and projecting, and the figures they frame are carved in the round. The lower niches mostly contain representations of Shiva in his various manifestations, including Nataraja. One of the upper levels has 30 representations of Shiva as Tripurantaka, destroyer of three cities. Three huge Shiva sculptures and many paintings are located in the circumambulatory passage around the sanctum. In front of the temple is an almost 6 m long Nandi bull carved out of a single stone, later enclosed in a pavilion. The temple stands within a huge rectangular enclosure. On the east are two imposing temple gateways (gopuras), the lower part of which is made of stone, the upper storey of brick. The figures carved on the gopuras are more heavy and ornamented than in earlier temples.

Rajendra I (Rajaraja's son) built a temple called Brihadishvara in his new capital Gangaikondacholapuram. It was not completed and lies in a ruinous state, but enough survives to show the uneven quality of its workmanship and the fact that it did not compare well with its namesake in Tanjore. The Gangaikondacholapuram temple has a lower vimana, its shikhara is curved inwards, and its walls are more heavily embellished with sculptures.

The last phase of Chola temple architecture belongs to the 12th–13th centuries. During this period, the gopura became more dominant than the vimana. This is evident in the Shiva temple at Chidambaram, which was mostly built during the reigns of Kulottunga I (1070–1122 CE) and his successors. Wheels and horses were added to the outer walls of the temple, to give it the appearance of a chariot.

The Chola period is well known for the aesthetic and technical finesse of its metal sculpture. Tanjavur was a major centre of the production of such images. The metal images of north India tend to be hollow, while those of South India were solid. Both were, however, made through the lost wax method. Traditionally, the northern images are supposed to be made out of an alloy of eight metals (gold, silver, tin, lead, iron, mercury, zinc and copper), while the southern ones are supposed to be made of an alloy of five metals (copper, silver, gold, tin, and lead). The analysis of actual images indicates that these formulae were not always followed. The iconography and style of metal images were similar to those of their stone counterparts. The images were clothed and ornamented and formed part of temple rituals and ceremonials. Many of the southern images were carried about in processions. The images of Shiva as Nataraja, i.e., Lord of the Dance, appear frequently among Chola metal sculpture. Other themes include Krishna and the Alvar and Nayanmar saints. There are a few Buddhist images as well.

Many Shiva temples of South India have a separate natana-sabha, where the image of Nataraja is placed. This can be seen, for instance, in the temple at Chidambaram. The dancing Shiva was of two types—angry and pacific. Shiva's cosmic dance symbolizes the cyclical creation and destruction of the universe, and its elements have been interpreted in various ways. In his 'dance of bliss' (anandatandava), Shiva usually has four arms. He wears a snake as an ornament. His front left arm is in a pose referred to as danda-hasta (staff hand) or gaja-hasta (elephant hand). In his rear left hand, he holds a flame, in his rear right hand a drum; his front right hand is in the release-granting abhaya pose. The drum symbolizes creation, the fire symbolizes destruction. The hand of the gaja-hasta points to his lifted foot, which is the refuge of the world. Shiva's left leg is thrust out across his body. He usually dances on a dwarf, Muyalaka, who signifies ignorance or evil. The god's locks of hair, which cradle the goddess Ganga, radiate out into the surrounding rim of flames. The attributes of the Natarajas of South India are different from the equally impressive images of the dancing Shiva found in other parts of the subcontinent such as at Ellora or Badami. There are differences in the expression, ornamentation, the number of arms, and in the attendant figures.

Summary

Thus we explore here the notion of regionalism as the hallmark of the making of Indian cultural traditions with special reference to art and architecture between the 8th – 13th centuries. Architectural styles like the Nagara, Dravida and Vesara developed with broad regional specificities. The basis of classifying the temple styles in terms of geographical distribution, differentiation in ground plans and presiding deities was prominent feature. In this period distinctive technical language developed for describing architectural features.

Reference should also be made of the Pallava architecture and sculptures as these two constitute the most brilliant chapter in the history of South Indian art. The Pallava architecture was undoubtedly greatly inspired by the religious revival movement If the age. We have found several styles in Pallava architecture. There was the Mahendra style, the Mamalla style, the Rajsimha style, the Aparajita style, though the Aparajita style followed the Chola architectural style. There was economic prosperity in the country. The Mamallapuram (also Mahabalipuram) town became an important sea port during the days of the Pallavas. The Cholas later took the architecture of southern India to its zenith.

Keywords

1. Viharas- monasteries
2. Chaitya- Prayer halls

3. Schist: A type or quality of stone formed through layers.
4. Stucco: A type of pilaster used for making surface even.
5. Vaulted. In a cylindrical shape of 'dholak'.
6. Antarala : vestibule, ante-room
7. Deul : general name for a temple as a whole
8. Finial : finishing portion of a pinnacle
9. Shikhara : spire, tower
10. Mandapa : large open hall

Kudu: foliated arch on Dravidian temple = ornamental motif derived from the Buddhist caitya arch

Garbha-griha : sanctum sanctorum, the most sacred part of the temple

Gopuram: monumental gateway

Jagamohana: hall in front of the sanctum

Self Assessment

Q.1. Chaitya Halls are _____.

A. Library
B. Habitation site
C. Prayer hall
D. Record keeping

Q.2. Which of the following caves have oldest surviving murals in India?

A. Ajanta
B. Ellora
C. Bagh
D. Kanheri

Q.3. Read the following statements and choose the correct option-

1. The main theme of the Ajanta paintings was that it was deeply religious, revolving around the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
2. Murals in cave no. 9 and 10 belong to the Sunga period, while the rest belong to the Gupta period.
3. The emotions are expressed through hand gestures.
4. The common themes of these paintings range from Jataka stories to life of Buddha to elaborate decorative patterns of flora and fauna.
5. The technique of giving three dimensional effects to the painting was first introduced in India in the cave paintings of Ajanta in 3-4 century A.D

A. 1 and 2
B. 2, 3 and 5
C. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
D. 3, 4 and 5

Q.4. The paintings in Ellora caves have images of _____.

A. Hindus

B. Jains
C. Buddhists
D. All of the above.

Q.5. The paintings in Bagh caves are _____.
A. Materialistic
B. Spiritualistic
C. Non-religious
D. Unattractive

Q.6. Where do we get evidence of largest rock-cut cave site in India?
A. Ajanta
B. Bagh
C. Kanheri
D. Ellora

Q.7. Which of the following cave painting have "figures tightly modeled, stronger outline and are more earthly and human"?
A. Bagh
B. Ajanta
C. Ellora
D. Kanheri

Q.8. Which rulers of Southern India laid the foundation stone of Dravidian architecture?
A. Pallavas
B. Rashtrakutas
C. Chalukya
D. Chola

Q.9. The 'Seven Rathas' temples are located at-
A. Badami
B. Kanchi
C. Mahabalipuram
D. Aihole

Q.10. Rock-cut architecture under Pallavas belong to _____.
A. Mahendra group
B. Mamalla group
C. Rajsimha group
D. A and B

Q.11. Which of the following was one of the most expressive and fierce sculpture in Pallava architecture?

A. Vishnu
B. Dwarpalas
C. Shiva
D. Goddess

Q.12. Which rulers of Southern India laid the foundation stone of Dravidian architecture?
A. Chalukyas
B. Pallavas
C. Cholas
D. Rashtrakutas

Q.13. Read the statement and choose the temple which is mentioned in the paragraph below-

"Dedicated to Shiva the temple was originally surrounded by two prakara walls, the inner prakara is 800 feet long (east-west) and 400 feet broad (north-south) and has gopuram on the east entrance and three small torana on the other three sides. The outer prakara is now completely lost, but the gopuram attached to it still stands on the east. Both the gopurams are same in design though the outer gopuram is taller and has five tiers and inner gopuram has three tiers. In front of the temple rests an enormous stone image of Nandi, which is sixteen feet long and thirteen feet high. The main temple itself is constructed out of granite and is one hundred and eighty feet in length and consists of a mukhamandapa, ardhmandapa, an antarala, a garbhagriha and a pradakshinapath. The niches on outer walls of the temple contain images of various forms of Shiva. The Vimana of the temple is two hundred and sixteen feet high and consists of sixteen stories."

A. Gangaikondacholapuram Temple
B. Brihadeshwara Temple
C. Airavateshwar Temple
D. Agastyeshvara Temple

Q.14. Which religious sect is the dominant theme in the Cholas paintings?
A. Buddhism
B. Shaivism
C. Vaishnavism
D. Jainism

Q.15. What is Koothu?
A. Dance
B. Drama
C. Sculpture
D. Music

Answers for Self Assessment

1.	C	2.	A	3.	C	4.	D	5.	A
6.	C	7.	A	8.	A	9.	C	10.	D

11. B 12. C 13. B 14. B 15. B

Review Questions

1. Elucidate the statement "The Kailashanatha temple marks the highest point of rock-cut temple architecture in the subcontinent".
2. Explain the contribution of Pallavas in evolution of Dravidian architecture.
3. Comment 'The caves at Ellora (7th–8th centuries) represent the last phase of Buddhist cave architecture in western India.'
4. Write a note on paintings of Bagh and Kanheri.
5. Discuss the architectural development at Ajanta during early medieval India.

Further Readings

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