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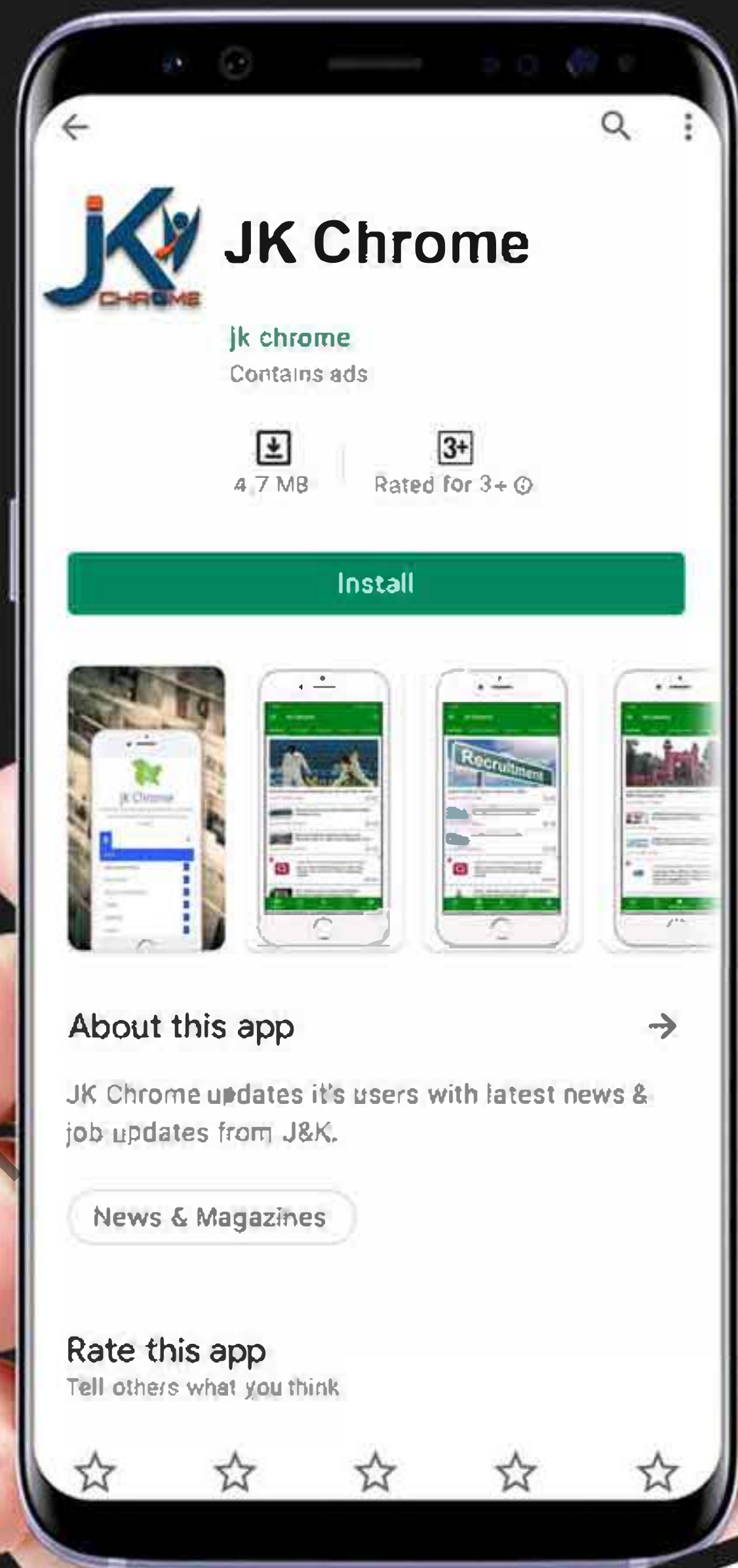
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# NCERT Class 12 History Gist-Themes in Indian History Chapter (1 – 7)

## This PDF is part 1 of Class 12 History gist-Themes in Indian History – Chapter (1-7)

### Chapter 1- Bricks, Beads and Bones The Harappan Civilisation

- Harappan Civilisation is also known as Indus Valley Civilisation. It is the oldest Civilisation of India.
- There is no consensus about the chronology of the Harappan Civilisation.
- Various scholars have given different dates about this period.
- According to Sir John Marshall, “this civilisation flourished between 3250 and 2750 BCE”.
- It was Daya Ram Sahni, who first discovered the sites of Harappan in 1921.
- The main centres of this civilisation are in Pakistan. The same famous sites of this civilisation (now in Pakistan) are Mohenjodaro and Chanhudaro.
- The main centre where this Civilisation flourished in India are Kalibangan, Sangol, Pengplor, Lothal, Dholavira and Banawali.
- The urban planning of this civilisation was very magnificent. The houses were built in a systematic manner. Roads were wide and cut each other at right angle.
- The people of Indus Valley Civilisation had also made best planning for the drainage of rainwater and dirty water.
- The caste system was not present in the society. All the people lived together with mutual love and understanding. The women held a high position or rank in the society.
- They were fond of fashion. The economic life the people was very prosperous.
- The main occupations of the people were the agriculture and domestication of animals.

- Trade was well developed. Both maternal and external trade was carried out.
- The people worshipped many gods and goddesses. They worshipped mother goddesses, Lord Shiva, animal, birds, trees and the Sun.
- They knew arts and crafts. They knew the art of making beautiful sculptures, toys, pottery, ornaments, etc. They were skilled in the production of seals.
- The languages used by them on the seals is still to be deciphered. If one is able to decipher their script inscribed on the seals, it will throw a flood of the light on the various aspects of the Harappan Civilisation.
- The main sources of our information of Harappan Civilisation is archaeological materials. The excavation carried out at Indus sites tries to reconstruct the history of this civilisation.
- During the excavation of Indus sites, many tools, pottery, seals, household objects, etc. have excavated.
- All these excavated materials are deeply examined by the archaeologists.
- Many historians like Cunningham, R.E.M. Wheeler, John Marshall and G.F.
- Dates have played a valuable role in reconstructing the history of the ancient past including the Indus Valley Civilisation sites.
- Many Indian archaeologists like Daya Ram Sahni, S.R. Rao, R.S. Bisht and B.K. Thapar have played a great role in excavations of the Indus sites.
- Indus Valley Civilisation is also known as Bronze Age Civilisation, because people used bronze extensively for making their pottery, figure lines and ornaments.
- Almost 1900 BCE, these were explicit signs about the decline of this civilisation.
- By this time the two most important cities of Indus Valley-Mohenjodaro and Harappa had been completely declined.
- Around 1200 BCE, this civilisation had completely vanished. Epidemic, Aryan Invasion, change in the course of the river Indus, excessive floods, earthquake, etc. may be the main reasons for the decline of this civilisation.

- 1862 Alexander Cunningham appointed as the first Director General of Archaeological Survey of India
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- 1992 R.D. Banerjee discovered Mohenjodaro
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Archaeological Evidences of The Harappan Civilisation:

- The Harappan Civilisation is also known as Indus Valley Civilisation. This civilisation is dated between BCE 2600 and 1990 BCE. It is the oldest civilisation of India. We know about the civilisation from archaeological evidences like houses, pots, ornaments, tools and seals used by the people of that period.
- There were also earlier and later cultures, known as Early Harappan and Late Harappan Civilisation.
- Cunningham was the first Director General of Archaeological Survey of India who began archaeological excavations in the Harappan sites.
- Cunningham was unable to find the significance of Harappan Civilisation and thought that Indian history began with the first cities in the Ganga valley.
- Daya Ram Sahni, Rakhal Das Banerji, John Marshall were some of the important archaeologists associated with the discovery of Harappan Civilisation. The frontiers of the Harappan civilisation have no connection with present day national boundaries. The major sites are now in Pakistani territory.
- In India, a number of Harappan settlements were found in Punjab and Haryana. The main centres where this civilisation flourished in India are Kalibangan, Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhi Garhi and Banawali.
- Archaeologist tried to classify artefacts in terms of material and in terms of function by comparing these with present-day things. The problems of archaeological interpretation are most evident in attempts to reconstruct religious practices of the Harappan.
- Unusual objects like terracotta figurines of women, stone statuary of men, motif of unicorn and figure in yogic posture on seals and structures like the great bath and fire altars may have had a religious significance. Several reconstructions regarding the Harappan civilisation remain speculative at present and there is a vast scope for future work.

#### Seals, Script, Weights of Harappan Civilisation:

- Seals and sealings were used to facilitate long distance communication. If the bag of goods reached with its sealing intact, it meant that it had not been tampered with. Seals also conveyed the identity of the sender.
- The Harappan script remains undeciphered to date. The script was not alphabetical and had many signs between 375 and 400.

- Exchange were regulated by a precise system of weights, usually made of a stone called chert with no marking. The lower denominations of weights were binary<sup>7</sup> and the higher denominations followed the decimal system.

#### Food Habits of Harappan People:

- The people of Harappan Civilisation ate a wide range of plant and animal products including fish and meat, wheat, maize, millet, pulses, rice and another eatables. For this, cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo and pig were domesticated by the Harappans.

#### Agricultural Techniques Using by Harappan People:

- Archaeological evidences suggested that oxen were used for ploughing and two different crops were grown together. As most of the Harappan sites are located in Semi-arid lands, it is evident that water from canals and wells was used for irrigation.

#### Social and Economic Differences among Harappan People:

- Archaeologists use certain strategies to find out social and economic differences among people. These include studying burials and artefacts which can be divided into utilitarian and luxuries.
- Valuable materials are generally concentrated in large settlements, but rarely found in smaller settlements.

#### Craft Production of Harappan People:

- Harappans knew the art of making beautiful sculptures, toys, pottery, ornaments, etc. Chanhudaro was a tiny settlement exclusively devoted to craft production, including bead-making, shell-cutting, metal-working, seal-making and weight-making.
- Grinding, polishing and drilling were done for making beads. Nageshwar and Balakot were specialised centres for making shell objects as both these settlements are near the coast. Apart from smaller settlements, larger cities like Mohenjodaro and Harappa were also the specialised centres for craft production.

#### Acquiring Materials for Craft:

- The Harappans procured materials for craft production in various ways. Sometimes they established settlements where raw materials were available. Another strategy for procuring raw materials may have been to send expeditions to areas where these were available e.g. Khetri region for copper (Rajasthan) and South India for gold.
- The Harappan made contact with distant lands like Oman for procuring copper. The Harappan seals, weights, dice and beads were found in other countries, Oman, Bahrain and Mesopotamia.

#### Economic Life and Trade during Harappan Civilisation:

- Economic life of the people was very prosperous. The main occupations of the people were agriculture and domestication of animals.
- Trade was well developed. Both internal and external trade were carried out. Pictures of ships, boats have also been found on seals which throw light on Harappan contacts with far off places.

#### Religious Belief of Harappan People:

- People of this civilisation worshipped many Gods and Goddesses. They worshipped Lord Shiva, mother Goddesses, animals, birds, trees and the sun.

#### Caste System in Harappan Civilisation:

- The caste system was not present in the society. All people live together with mutual love and understanding. Women held a high position or rank in the society.

#### A Planned Town of Harappan Civilisation Mohenjodaro:

- Mohenjodaro was the most well-known urban site of the Harappan Civilisation. Although Harappa was the first site to be discovered, it was badly destroyed by brick robbers.
- The settlement in Harappan civilisation was divided into two sections, one smaller in terms of land but higher in terms of power known as the Citadel, the other much larger in terms of area but lower in terms of power was known as Lower Town.
- All the Harappan cities had carefully planned drainage system. The residential buildings at Mohenjodaro were centred on a courtyard, had its own bathrooms, the drains of which were connected to the street drains.

- In Mohenjodaro, many houses had well and their estimated number was about 700. Structures like warehouse and the Great Bath' were used for public purposes.

#### The End of Harappan Civilisation:

- By 1800 BCE, most of the mature Harappan sites were abandoned. Around 1200 BCE, this civilisation had completely vanished. After 1900 BCE, a rural way of life what was known as 'Late Harappan' or 'successor cultures' emerged.
- The reasons for the end of the civilisation range from climatic change, deforestation, excessive floods, the shifting and drying up of rivers and to overuse of the landscape. All these factors may have weakened the civilisation, but its ultimate extinction is more likely to have been completed by deliberate and large-scale destruction or by an invasion.

#### Important Terms:

- Seal: It generally contained animal motifs and signs from a script.
- Hoards: Generally metal objects and jewellery kept by people inside containers.
- Stratigraphy: The study of historical layers.
- Motif: Name of animal, used by the Harappans on seals to mark some sort of trademark.
- Proto-Shiva: A seal that shows a figure seated in a yogic posture surrounded by animals has been designated as Proto-Shiva, an early form of one of the deities of Hinduism.
- Lingas: The polished stones were often worshipped as symbols of the God Shiva.
- Shamans: These were the groups of men and women who claimed to have magical and healing powers and ability to communicate with the other world.
- Art: It referred to painting, sculpture, pottery and seal making.
- Culture: Term used for a group of objects, distinct in style, found specifically within a geographical area and period of time.



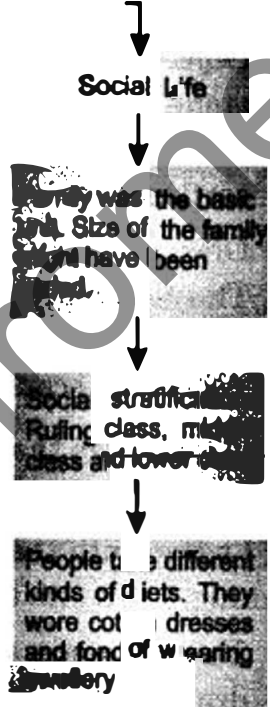
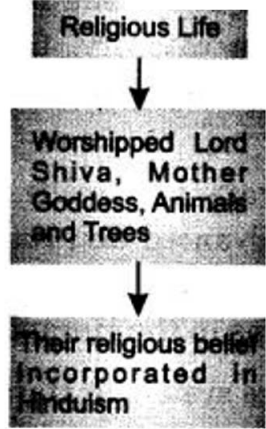
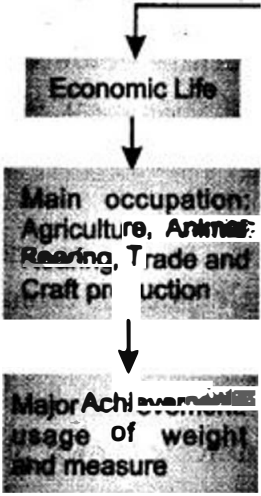
- Pictographs: Picture-like signs to represent letters or words.
- The Great Bath: Best known building in Mohenjodaro for bath.
- Granaries: Buildings where grains were stored.

**Time Line:**

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Indus Valley Civilisation:  
life of people



## Chapter 2 Kings, Farmers and Towns Early States and Economies

- After the decline of Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC), many significant changes took place in the Indian subcontinent.
- Vedas (Rigveda, Samveda, Yajurveda and Atharveda) and other religious and literary works are an invaluable source to know the history of that period.
- In first century BCE, many changes took place regarding the last rites of the dead in the central and south India. In this period dead bodies were buried in graves and these graves were surrounded by big stone called as the megaliths.
- In the 6th century BCE sixteen big kingdoms known as Mahajanapadas came into existence.
- Among these sixteen Mahajanapadas were-Magadha, Koshala, Vatsa and Avant which were the most powerful. .
- In the 5th century BCE, the powerful Mahajanapadas turned into powerful empires.
- Magadha was very powerful Mahajanapada. There were several causes responsible for it.
- Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of Mauryan Empire. He founded Mauryan Empire by defeating the last ruler of Nanda Dynasty, Mahajanapadas.
- Megasthenes's Indica and Kautilya's Arthashastra provided valuable information about the Mauryan Empire.
- After the death of Chandragupta Maurya's his son, Bindusara became the next ruler who ruled from 298 to 272 BCE.
- After Bindusara, Ashoka occupied the throne in 272 and ruled till 231 BCE.
- After the Kalinga War, Ashoka gave up policy of war and expansion.

- Inscriptions of Ashoka are the most relevant sources to know about Mauryan period. These inscriptions are written in the Brahmi (Prakrit) script.
- After the downfall of the Gupta Dynasty many new dynasties came up and ruled in many parts of India. Some of the dynasties were the Satvahanas, the Shakas, the Pandyas, the Cholas, Cheras and Kushanas.
- With the emergence of the Gupta, a new age started in the ancient Indian History.
- The founder of the Gupta Dynasty was Srigupta. He founded this dynasty in 275 CE and ruled till 300. After his death his son Ghatotkacha ruled from 300 CE to 320 CE.
- Ghatotkacha's successor Chandragupta I sat on the throne in 320 and assumed the title of Maharajadhiraja. He ruled till 335 CE.
- Sumudragupta is one of the greatest rulers of India and was the son of Chandragupta. He ruled from 335 to 375 CE. After his death Chandragupta-II ruled till 415.
- The Gupta ruler established a glorious empire with their untiring efforts. Their rule is called the Golden Age in Indian History. This vast Empire began to disintegrate at the end of the 5th century CE.

#### Development after the Harappan Civilization:

- After the decline of the Harappan Civilization, several developments, including the composition of Rigveda took place in Indian sub-continent. Evidences of emergence of agricultural settlements, pastoral communities and new modes of disposal of dead were found.
- The most important development was from 6th century BCE onwards when various empires and kingdoms emerged. In 1830, James Prinsep deciphered Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts used in earliest inscriptions and coins.
- Most of the inscriptions referred a king as Piyadassi, meant 'pleasant to behold' and a few inscriptions mentioned the king as Asoka, one of the most famous rulers known from Buddhist texts. It gave a new direction to investigate into early Indian political history, economic and social developments.

#### The Mahajanapadas:



- The earliest states emerged in the 6th century BCE which were mentioned in the early Buddhist and Jaina texts. The earliest 16 states were known as mahajanapadas. In which Vajji, Magadha, Koshala, Kuru, Panchala, Gandliara and Avanti were most important. The mahajanapadas had a capital city, which was often fortified.
- Brahmanas began composing Dharmasutras from the 6th century BCE onwards. Magadha became the most powerful Mahajanapada. Bimbisara, Ajatashatru and Mahapadma Nanda were the most ambitious kings of Magadha. Magadha had its capital in Rajagaha (Rajgir) which was fortified and later the capital shifted to Pataliputra (Patna).

#### Mauryan Empire:

- Development of Magadha resulted in the emergence of the Mauryan empire founded by Chandragupta Maurya in 321 BCE. Besides sculptures, historians have used a variety of sources like written texts of Megasthenes, Kautilya (Arthashastra), Buddhist Jaina and Puranic literature, inscriptions of Asoka to reconstruct the history of Mauryan empire.
- Pataliputra, Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali, Suvarnagiri were the five major political centres of Mauryan empire.
- The vast empire was not controlled by a uniform administrative system. Asoka tried to hold his vast empire together by propagating dharma. He appointed special officers, known as the Dhamma Mahamatta, to spread the message of Dhamma.

#### Asokan Inscription:

- In deciphering Brahmi, the European scholars and Indian scholars compared Devanagari and Bengali scripts with Brahmi script. After painstaking work, James Prinsep was able to decipher Asokan Brahmi in 1838.
- Kharosthi was deciphered by studying coins which had both Greek and Kharosthi scripts. Asoka was mentioned in the inscriptions as 'Devanampiya' meant 'beloved of the God' and 'Piyadassi' meant 'pleasant to behold'.
- From the Asokan inscription, we know the anguish of the ruler and the change in his attitude towards warfare. These inscriptions have been found in Odisha.

#### The Limitations of Inscriptions:

- There are technical limitations, like faintly engraved, damaged or missing letters in inscriptional evidence. Sometimes what we consider politically and economically significant was not recorded in the inscriptions.
- The content of inscriptions invariably projects the perspective of the person who commissioned these.
- The inscriptions are unable to reflect about the life of different social groups including the marginalised groups. Thus, new strategies of analysis should be adopted.

#### Emergence of Concept Kingship:

- Different rulers in the various parts of India established their empire. This gave rise to new kingdoms, new communities and towns.

#### Emergence of New Kingdoms:

- New kingdoms emerged in the Deccan and further South, including the Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas. Satavahanas and Shakas derived revenues from long-distance trade. Kushanas ruled over a vast kingdom and considered themselves as God, adopting the title Devaputra (Son of God).
- Histories of the Gupta rulers were reconstructed from literature, coins and inscriptions, including Prashastis. The Prayaga Prashasti (also called Allahabad pillar inscription) by Harisena is the most important source to know about the Gupta rulers.

#### Emergence of New Communities:

- Historians examined stories of Jatakas and Panchatantra to know about the view of common people regarding the rulers. Strategies for increasing agricultural production were developed, including use of iron-tipped plough and the use of irrigation through wells and tanks.
- Advancement of agriculture led to emergence of different communities of people, viz, large landholders, small peasants and landless agricultural labourers. From early Tamil literature and Pali texts, categories of people like Gahapati (master of a household), Vellar (large land owners), Uzhavar (plough men) and Adimai (slaves) are known.
- Inscription gave details about the land grants to Brahmanas and Peasants. Prabhavati Gupta, daughter of Chandragupta II had access to land, which she later granted, but common women had no access to lands. Some historians think that land grant is a strategy to extend agriculture to new areas; others thought it as the indication of weakening of political power.

### Emergence of Towns and Trade:

- Several urban centres emerged in the sub-continent from the 6th century' BCE. People living in these areas traded artefacts like fine pottery known as Northern black polished ware, ornaments, tools, weapons, vessels, figurines made of gold, silver, copper, bronze, ivory, glass, shell and teracotta.
- Guilds or Shrenis procured raw materials, regulated production and marketed the finished product. The trade extended beyond the sub-continent, Central Asia, East and North Africa, South-East Asia and China.
- Successful merchants, designated as Masattuvan in Tamil, Set this and Satavahanas in Prakrit' became very' rich. Exchanges were facilitated by the introduction of silver, copper and gold coins.
- The first coins to bear the names and images of rulers were issued by the Indo-Greeks, who established control over the North-Western part of the sub-continent in 2nd century BCE.
- The first gold coins were issued in 1st century' CE by the Some of the most spectacular gold coins were issued by the Gupta rulers. From the 6th century CE onwards, the use of gold coins w'as reduced.

### Important Terms:

- Janapada: The land where the people belonging to a clan or tribe had settled.
- Dhammo Mahanatta: Officer appointed by Ashoka to spread the message of his Dharma.
- Matriliney: This term is used when descent is traced through mother.
- Tamilakam: The name of the ancient Tamil country which included the parts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.
- Megaliths: Stone structures which were built by some communities of South India over the grave of the dead.
- Vellators: The big zamindars.
- Agrahara: The land which Brahmanas got as land grants.

## Chapter 3 - Kinship, Caste and Class Early Societies

- A number of important changes occurred in the economic and political life of India during the period from 600 BCE to 600 CE.
- The changes occurred during this period had left a deep mark on the contemporary society.
- A new change began to occur with the expansion of agriculture.
- Emergence of different crafts and distinct social groups also witnessed during this period.
- Social disparities began to increase as a result of unequal distribution of wealth.
- Historian made use of textual tradition for many reasons.
- According to the text written in ancient the most popular and famous is Mahabharata, which was composed between 500 BCE and 500 CE.
- Historians believed that it was written by Ved Vyasa, but most of the Historians think that it is the creation of many authors.
- In the beginning, Mahabharata was known by the name of Jail and held only 8800 verses. Later on the number of verses increased to one lakh.
- An important work began in 1919 under the leadership of V.S. Sukthankar, a famous Sanskrit scholar who took up cudgels to prepare a critical edition of Mahabharata.
- Many types of social institutions existed in this period these were as follows;
  - Monogamous family
  - Polyandrous family
  - Polygons family



- Consanguineous family
  - Patrilineal family
  - Matrilineal family
  - Neolocal family
  - Rural family
  - Urban family
  - Joint family
  - Nuclear family
- Kinship is a system of relation between such relatives which determine our relationship on the basis of lineage. These relations were based on lineage or vansha are developed by a family.
  - Patrilineal means that the descent which is traced from father to son, then grandson and great grandson.
  - Patrilineal was prevalent even before the Mahabharata, yet Mahabharata strengthen it.

Historians often use textual traditions to understand the socio-economic changes of the society. In this case, it is very necessary to keep in mind who composed what and for whom. The language and the ways in which the text is circulated are also important.

**Kinship, Marriage Rules and Different Practices:**

- Families usually form parts of larger network of people defined as relative or 'Kinfolks' while familial ties are often regarded as 'natural' and based on blood they are defined in many different ways.
- It is more difficult to reconstruct the familial relationships of ordinary people than elite families.

- Mahabharata reinforced the ideal of patriliney as valuable. Under patriliney, sons could claim the throne or other resources of their fathers when the latter died.
- The idea of patriliney is also accepted in the Rigveda.
- Daughters had no claims to the resources of the household. Also marrying them into families outside the kin was desirable. Kanyadan or the gift of a daughter in marriage was an important religious duty of the father.
- From 500 BCE, codes of social behaviour were compiled in Dharmasutras and Dharmashastras written in Sanskrit. The most important Dharmashastra was Manusmriti compiled between 200 BCE and 200 CE.
- Codes of social behaviour were given by the Brahmanas. There were eight forms of marriage, of which the first four were considered as good, while the remaining were condemned.
- People were classified according to their gotras. Two important rules about gotras were:
- Women were expected to give up their father's gotra and adopt their husband's gotra.
- Members of the same gotra could not marry
- In case of Satavahana rulers, it was evident that many of the wives of Satavahana rulers retained the names of their father's gotra as against Brahmanical rule.
- Endogamy or marriage within the kingroup was prevalent among several communities in South India.

#### Social Differences:

- The Dharmashastras and Dharmasutras contained rules about the ideal 'occupations' of the four categories or varnas.
- Brahmanas were supposed to study and teach the Vedas, perform sacrifices and get sacrifices performed; Kshatriyas were to engage in warfare, protect people and administer justice; Vaishyas were engaged in agriculture, pastoralism and trade; and Shudras were assigned to serve the three 'higher' varnas.

- According to the Shastras, only Kshatriyas could be the kings. But in reality political power was effectively open to anyone w/ho could muster (assemble) support and resources and rarely depended on birth.
- Gotami-puta Siri-Satakani was a Brahmana who destroyed the pride of Kshatriyas. He ordered that there was no inter-marriage amongst members of the four varnas.
- Jatis which shared a common occupation or profession were sometimes organised into shrenis or guilds. There were other categories like Nishada (people living in forest) beyond the four varnas in society. Ekalavya is supposed to have belonged to this class.
- Sometimes those who spoke non-Sanskrit languages were labelled as Mlechchhas and looked down upon.
- Brahmanical scriptures developed a sharper social divide by classifying certain social categories as 'untouchable'.
- Those who performed 'polluting' activities like, handling corpses and dead animals were designated as 'Chandalas'.
- The Manusmriti laid down the duties of Chandalas, these were—they had to live outside the village, use discarded utensils and wear clothes of the dead and ornaments of iron.
- Historians got hints of different social realities about the Chandalas from the non-Brahmanical texts.

#### Social Status and Right to Property:

- According to the Manusmriti, the paternal estate was to be divided equally amongst sons after the death of the parents, with a special share for the eldest.
- Women had no claim in her paternal estate, but were allowed to retain the gifts they received on the occasion of their marriage as stridhana.
- According to Brahmanical text, apart from gender, criterion for regulating access to wealth was varna. The only 'occupation' prescribed for Shudras was servitude (slavery), while a variety of occupations were listed for men of first three varnas.
- The Buddhists recognised the differences in society, but did not regard these as natural or inflexible. They rejected the idea of claims to status on the basis of birth.

- There were other possibilities as well; situations where men who were generous were respected, while those who were miserly were criticised.
- The Buddhists developed an alternative understanding of social inequalities and the institutions required to regulate social conflict.
- The institution of kingship was based on human choice, with taxes as a form of payment for services rendered by the king.

The Mahabharata:

The Great Indian Epic

- VS Sukthankar, a noted Indian Sanskritist, with his team initiated the task of preparing a critical edition of the Mahabharata. It involved collecting Sanskrit manuscripts of the texts written in a variety of scripts, from different parts of the country.
- First historians accepted the texts written in Sanskrit as the main source, but later they also relied on works in Pali, Prakrit and Tamil to reconstruct social histories.

The Singificance of Mahabharata:

- Historians examine whether texts were written in Prakrit, Pali or Sanskrit languages. They try to find out about the authors whose perspectives and ideas shaped the text.
- The Sanskrit used in the Mahabharata is far simpler than that of the Vedas.
- Historians classify the contents of the text under two broad heads, , narrative containing stories and didactic containing prescription and social norms.
- Mahabharata has been written in many phases. It is not the work of a single author. However, it is traditionally attributed to a sage named Vyasa.
- Mahabharata contains vivid descriptions of battles, forests, palaces and settlements.
- One of the most challenging episodes in the Mahabharata is Draupadi's marriage with five Pandavas.
- It suggests polyandry ( the practice of a woman having several husbands) among ruling elites.



- Some historians think that polyandry is undesirable from the Brahmanical point of view, but it was prevalent in the Himalayan region due to a shortage of women during war times.

#### Different Versions of Mahabharata:

- The versions of the Mahabharata were written in a variety of languages.
- Several stories from specific regions were added in the epic. The story of the epic was often retold in different ways.
- Writers like Mahashweta Devi interprets the stories of the Mahabharata differently.

#### Important terms:

- Kinship: The person belonging the same family.
- Polity: The form or process or system of government.
- Kinfolk: Persons of blood relation.
- Patriliney: System of tracing descent from father to son, grandson and so on.
- Matriliney: System of tracing descent from mother side.
- Adi Parvan: Adi Parvan is the first section of the Sanskrit version of the Mahabharata.
- Indra: A god of warfare, rains and valour, one of the principal deities in the Rigveda.
- Dharmasutras: These are the texts composed in Sanskrit by Brahmanas.
- Mlechchhas: Shakas were regarded as Mlechchhas. They were the Central Asian people who had migrated and settled in the northwestern part of the Subcontinent.
- Majjhima Nikaya: It is a Buddhist text. It forms a part of a dialogue between a king named Avantiputta and a disciple of Buddha, named Kachchana.

- Gotras: People of the same kind and same vama.
- Shrenis: Unions of craftsmen and traders in Ancient India. It was also called guilds.
- Chandals: Untouchables of the ancient India who did menial works.
- Mahasammata: It means the great elect. A person chosen by the whole people.
- Nishad: A hunting community.
- Epic: A long poem about the deeds of great men and women or about a nation's past history.
- Dwij: During Later Vedic period, people who adopted sacred thread system was called Dwij.
- Endogamy: It refers to the system of marriage within the unit such as caste.
- Polygamy: Practice of having more than one wife.
- Polyandry: Practice of having more than one husband.
- Vamasha: Sanskrit word meaning lineage of a person.

## **Chapter 4 Thinkers, Beliefs and Buildings Cultural Developments**

- In the reconstruction of the history of India from 600 BCE to 600 CE, the historians took the invaluable information from Buddhist, Jain and Brahmanical texts.
- Besides these texts, temples, stupas, monuments, etc also provide authentic information.
- The rulers of Bhopal, Shahjahan Begum and her successor played a significant role in the preservation of the Sanchi Stupa.

- Annans the new sect, that emerged in India in 6th century BCE. Buddhism and Jainism were most popular.
- Lord Mahavira is regarded as the real founder of Jainism.
- The founder of Buddhism was Lord Buddha.
- Jainism remained continued to India, but Buddha spread to the other countries.
- Ashoka and Kanishka of Buddhism in distant land.
- Both Jainism and Buddhism gave a rich legacy in different fields of Indian Society.
- During this period, i.e., 600 BCE to 600 CE, two Brahmanical sects. Vaishnavism and Shaivism made considerable progress.

In the reconstruction of the history of India from 600 BCE to 600 CE, the historians had taken information from Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical texts. Besides this a large number of monuments and inscriptions provided significant information.

The Background of Different Religions:

- Tire mid-first millennium BCE is often regarded as a turning point in world history since it saw the emergence of thinkers like Zarathustra in Iran, Kong Zi in China, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle in Greece and Mahavira and Gautama Buddha in India.
- They tried to understand the mysteries of existence and the relationship between human beings and the cosmic (connected with the whole universe) order.
- There were several pre-existing traditions of thoughts, religious beliefs and practices. All these we know from Rigveda which compiled between 1500 and 100 BCE.
- Sacrifices were performed by the heads of the households for the well-being of the domestic unit.
- More elaborate sacrifices like Rajasuya and Ashvamedha were performed by chiefs and kings with the help of Brahmana priests.

- Ideas contained in the Upanishads generated a variety of questions about life especially meaning of life and possibility of life after death and rebirth.
- Lively discussions and debates took place in Kutagarashala, a hut where travelling mendicants took shelter.
- Thinkers like Mahavira and Buddha questioned the authority of the Vedas.

#### The Message of Mahavira:

- According to Jainism, entire world is animated, i.e even stones, rocks and water have life.
- Non-injury to living beings is central to Jaina philosophy. According to Jainism, the cycle of birth and rebirth is shaped through Karma.
- To free oneself from the cycle of Karma, asceticism and penance are required. Jaina monks and nuns took five vows. These are:
  - to abstain (to decide not to do something) from killing
  - to abstain from stealing
  - to abstain from lying
  - to observe celibacy (not married and not naring sex)
  - to abstain from possessing property.
- Jainism spread to many parts of India. Jaina scholars produced a wealth of literature in Prakrit, Sanskrit and Tamil languages.

#### The Buddha: The Enlightened Soul

- Gautama Buddha was one of the most influential teachers of that time whose message spread across the sub-continent, Central Asia to China, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia.
- Siddhartha was the son of a chief of the Sakya clan. He was deeply shocked when he saw an old man, a sick man and a corpse. He left the palace and set out in search of his own truth.

- After attaining enlightenment, he came to be known as the Buddha or the enlightened one.
- For the rest of his life, he taught dhamma or the path of righteous living.

#### The Teachings of Buddha:

- According to Buddhism, the world is transient (anicca) and constantly changing and it is also soulless (anatta). Within this transient world, sorrow (dukkha) is intrinsic to human existence.
- Buddha emphasised individual agency and righteous action as the means to escape from the cycle of rebirth and attain self-realisation and nibbana.

#### Followers of the Buddha:

- Buddha founded a 'Sangha', an organisation of monks who became teachers of 'dhamma'. As they lived on alms, they were known as 'bhikkhus'.
- Later women also entered the 'Sangha' and were known as bhikkhuni. Buddha's foster mother, Mahapajapati Gotami was the first woman to become 'bhikkhuni'. Buddha's followers included kings, wealthy men, gahapatis and also ordinary people like workers, slaves and craft people.
- Buddhism appealed to many people dissatisfied with existing religious practices and confused by the rapid social changes taking place around them.

#### Sculpture of Buddha Period:

- The enlightenment of Buddha was shown by different symbols by many early sculptors. For e.g. the Bodhi trees (symbolises an event in the life of Buddha), the empty seat (indicates the meditation of the Buddha), the stupa (represents the mahaparinibbana), the wheel of dharma (shows first sermon of the Buddha at Sarnath).
- Shalabhanjika was another feature of sculptural art which was regarded as an auspicious symbol and integrated into the decoration of the stupa.
- Some of the finest depictions of animals like elephants, horses, monkeys and cattle are also found in the stupas.
- Gajalakshmi, the Goddess of good fortune, and the serpent are also found.

- Buddha was regarded as a human being who attained enlightenment and nibbana through his own efforts. Later the concept of Bodhisatta was developed.
- Buddhism was divided into Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism. This period also saw the emergence of Shaivism and Vaishnavism.
- In such worship, the bond between the devotee and the God was visualised as one of love and devotion or bhakti. The temples to house images of Gods and Goddesses were being built with a tall-structure known as the Shikhara over the central shrine.
- One of the unique features of early temples was that some of these were hollowed out of huge rocks, as artificial caves.

#### Explanation of Religions:

- 19th century European scholars were more familiar with the statues of Buddha and Bodhisattas which were evidently based on Greek models. But they were sometimes could not understand the sculptures of gods and goddesses with multiple arms and heads or with combinations of human and animal forms.
- Art historians have tried to explain the meaning of sculptures with the help of textual references (e.g. Puranas), but it was not an easy task.
- Many rituals, religious beliefs and practices were not even recorded in a permanent visible form, these were only practised by the respective communities.

#### Stupas:

- Buddhist literature mentions several Chaityas which are places associated with the Buddha's life.
- Stupa contained relics (bodily remains of Buddha or objects used by him) regarded as sacred, the entire stupa came to be venerated as an emblem of both the Buddha and Buddhism.
- According to a Buddhist text 'Ashokavadana', Asoka distributed portions of the Buddha's relics to every important town and ordered the construction of stupas over them.
- By the second century BCE, a number of stupas in Bharhut, Sanchi and Sarnath were built.

- Stupas were built from the donations made by- king, guilds, common people 'bhikkhus' and 'bhikkhunis'.
- The structure of stupas comprised several parts, Anda (semi circular mound of Earth), Harmika (balcony-like structure), Yasthi (like mast) and Chhatri or umbrella.
- The early Stupas at Sanchi and Bharhut were plain but the gateways were richly carved and installed at the four cardinal points.

#### The Great Sanchi Stupa:

- The Great Stupa at Sanchi in the state of Madhya Pradesh is one of the most wonderful ancient buildings. 19th century Europeans were very interested in the Stupa at Sanchi.
- The rulers of Bhopal, Shahjehan Begum and Sultan Jehan Begum provided money to preserve the site of Sanchi Stupa.
- John Marshall wrote important volumes on Sanchi.
- The discovery of Sanchi has transformed our understanding of early Buddhism. It stands as an example of the successful restoration and preservation of ancient site by the Archaeological Survey of India.

#### Amaravati Stupas:

- In 1854, Walter Elliot visited Amaravati and collected several sculpture panels and discovered the remains of Western gateway.
- He came to the conclusion that the structure at Amaravati was one of the most significant Buddhist stupas.
- Unfortunately, Amaravati did not survive as sculptures from this site were removed from the site instead of preserving things where they were found.

#### Important Terms:

- Vedic Sanskrit: A special kind of Sanskrit in which hymns and verses were composed.



- Rajsuya Yajna: A special kind of yajna in which sacrifices are performed by chiefs and kings who depended on the Brahman to conduct these rituals.
- Tripitaka: Three books of Buddhist sacred text.
- Sanghe: Monastic order.
- Tirthankar: A great teacher in Jainism.
- Stupa: A Sanskrit word which means a heap. Stupa originated as a simple semi-circular mound of earth, later called ane.

#### Time Line:

- 468 B.C. Mahavira passed away and attained Nirwan at the age of 72.
- First century B.C.E. Jainism enjoyed the patronage of the Kalinga king Kharavela.
- Fourth century B.C.E. Jainism spread to Kalinga in Orissa (Odisha).
- 563 B.C.E. Gautama Buddha was bom in a Shakya Kshatriya family in Kapilavastu.
- 487 B.C.E. The First Buddhist Council.
- 387 B.C.E. The Second Buddhist Council.
- 251 B.C. The Third Buddhist Council.

#### Class 12 History Notes Chapter 5 Through the Eyes of Travellers Perceptions of Society

- Many foreign travellers visited India during medieval period. They came to India for several motives.

- Most of the travellers who came to India wrote their accounts.

- The accounts of these travellers dealt with various aspects. Some travellers accounts deal with the affairs of the court whereas few accounts are focussed on religious issues.
- Some travellers create about the contemporary style of architecture and monuments, whereas other depicts the social and economic life.
- The travellers who visited India presented the true picture of Indian civilisation in their accounts.
- Al-Biruni, a great scholar of central Asia, came to India in the 11th century. He arrived India during the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni.
- Al-Biruni was bom on 4 Sept. 973 at Khwarizm in Uzbekistan.
- Al-Biruni was well-versed in many languages. Languages such as Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit were known to him.
- Al-Biruni's most outstanding work 'Kitab-ul-Hind' was written in Ghazni and was concerned India. It was also known as Tarikh-ul-Hind and Tahqiq-ma-lil-Hind.
- Al-Biruni has thrown a light on caste system prevailing in the Hindu society.
- According to Al-Biruni's description India's economic condition was very good.
- Al-Biruni's real name was Abu-Abdullah Muhammad. He was fond of travelling and wanted to increase his knowledge by establishing his contact with the people of different countries.
- He travelled thirty years of his life.
- The great traveller of Morocco died in 1377, but the account written by him 'Rihla' is of immense wealth.
- After returning to Morocco in 1354 he (Ibn Battuta) was ceremoniously welcomed by 'Sultan', Abu Iram.
- Sultan Abu Iram appointed Ibijuzayy to help Battuta to compile his account 'Rihla'.
- Rihla was written in Arabic. In it describe whatever he saw in India.
- Undoubtedly Tlihla' is considered as an invaluable source of Indian History in the 14th century.

- Francois Bernier was a French traveller who came to India in 17th century.
- Francois Bernier was a great French doctor, philosopher and an historian who remained in India from 1656 to 1688 and wrote his famous book entitled. "Travels in the Mughal court".
- Francois has given great detail about Indian Kharkhenas. Town, land ownership system and social evil, i.e. sati system.
- Abdur Razzaq the great Iranian scholar came to India in 15th century. He was born in 1413 and was appointed the Qazi of Samarqand under Shah Rokh Khan.
- Abdur Razzaq stayed in the court of Vijayanagara empire Deva Raya II from 1442-1443 and gave a vivid description about the Vijayanagara kingdom.
- Duarte Barbosa was a Portuguese official in south India, who travelled Vijayanagara Empire during the reign of Krishna Deva Raya in 1518.
- Among the other important travellers who came to India in medieval period were Antonio Monserrate, Peter Mundy, Jean Baptiste Tavernier, Francisco Pelesart and Nikolo Muncci.

Our knowledge of the past can be enriched through the descriptions of social life provided by travellers who visited the sub-continent. Generally, they recorded everyday activities and practices of common men along with the descriptions of the kings. Al-Biruni, Ibn Battuta and Francois Bernier were three famous travelers who visited the sub-continent from 11th century to 17th century.

#### Al-Biruni and the Kitab-ul-Hind:

- Al-Biruni was born in 973 at Khwarizm in present day Uzbekistan.
- He was well-versed in different languages like Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit.
- In 1017 with the invasion of Khwarizm, he arrived in Ghazni as a hostage. But gradually developed a liking for the city and interest for India.
- When the Punjab became a part of the Ghaznavid empire, he travelled widely in the Punjab and other parts of Northern India.
- He spent years in the company of Brahmana priests and scholars by learning Sanskrit and studying religions and philosophical texts.

- Al-Biruni wrote 'Kitab-ul-Hind' in Arabic, in a simple and lucid manner.
- It is a voluminous text including 80 chapters covering subjects like religion, philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology.
- Al-Biruni was familiar with translations and adaptations of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit texts into Arabic. However, he was also critical about the ways in which these texts were written, and clearly wanted to improve on them.

#### Al-Biruni's View About Indian Society:

- According to Al-Biruni, Sanskrit was so different from Arabic and Persian that ideas and concepts could not be translated easily from one language to another.
- Al-Biruni tried to explain the caste system by comparing it with other societies. He tried to suggest that social divisions were not unique to India.
- Al-Biruni depended on the Vedas, the Puranas, the Bhagavad Gita, the works of Patanjali, the Manusmriti, etc.
- Sanskrit texts laid down the rules of caste system from the point of view of Brahmanas, but in real life the system was not quite so rigid.

#### Ibn Battuta and his Book Rihla:

- Ibn Battuta wrote the book 'Rihla' in Arabic. This book provides extremely rich and interesting detail about the social and cultural life in the sub-continent in the 14th century.
- Ibn Battuta went to far-off places, exploring new worlds and peoples.
- Before coming to India, he travelled extensively to Syria, Iraq, Persia, Yemen, Oman, Mecca and a few trading ports on the coast of East Africa.
- When he came to Delhi, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was the Sultan of Delhi. The Sultan was impressed by his scholarship and appointed him the 'qazi' or judge of Delhi.
- He visited Bengal, Assam, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Sumatra and China.

- He meticulously recorded his observations about new cultures, peoples, beliefs, values, etc.
- Travelling was not secure at that time. During his travel, Ibn Battuta was attacked by bands of robbers several times and was severely wounded.
- Ibn Battuta spent several years travelling through North Africa, West Asia, parts of Central Asia, the Indian sub-continent and China and recorded extensively his experiences.

#### Battuta's Description of Indian Society:

- In the 14th century, Indian sub-continent had its contact from China in the East to North West Africa and Europe in the West. Ibn Battuta travelled through these lands and arrived at Delhi in the 14th century after visiting sacred shrines, meeting with rulers, learned men and people who spoke Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other languages. He shared ideas, information and anecdotes.
- While describing Indian society, Ibn Battuta explained the unfamiliar things like coconut and paan in a unique way.
- Ibn Battuta found the cities of India densely populated and prosperous. According to him, Delhi was the largest city in India. He also had the same view for Daulatabad (in Maharashtra).
- The bazaars (markets) were the places of economic transactions and also the hub of social and cultural activities. There were masjids and temples to offer prayers and also some bazaars marked with spaces for public performances by dancers, musicians and singers.
- Ibn Battuta found Indian agriculture very productive because of the fertility of the soil where farmers tend to cultivate two crops a year.
- Indian manufacturing flourished due to inter-Asian network of trade and commerce. These were in great demand in both West Asia and South-East Asia where artisans and merchants were fetching huge profits.
- Indian textiles, specially cotton cloth, fine muslins, silks, brocade and satin were also in great demand.
- Ibn Battuta was amazed by the efficiency of the postal system which was of two kinds, the horse-post called 'uluq' and the foot-post called 'dawa'.

#### Francois Bernier: A French Traveller

- A number of Portuguese, Dutch, English and French travellers came to India in the 16th and 17th century. Of them, Jesuit Roberto Nobili, Duarte Barbosa, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier and Manucci wrote different aspects of Indian society.
- French doctor, political philosopher and historian Francois Bernier spent twelve years (1656 to 1668) in India and was closely associated with the Mughal court.
- Bernier travelled to several parts of India and wrote detailed accounts by comparing the situation in India with Europe.
- His works were published in France in 1670-71, and translated into English, Dutch, German and Italian. His writings became extremely popular.

#### Bernier and His View About Contemporary Society:

- As compared to Ibn Battuta, Bernier believed in a different intellectual tradition where he was more critical. He compared and contrasted what he saw in India with the situation in Europe in general and France in particular.
- Bernier's book 'Travels in the Mughal Empire' is marked by detailed observations, critical insights and reflection. He constantly compared Mughal India with contemporary Europe, generally emphasising the superiority of the latter.
- According to him, the Mughal emperor owned all the lands and distributed it among his nobles and it led to disastrous consequences for economy and society. This perception was supported by most of the travellers of that period.
- As having no legal right over land, landholders could not pass on their land to their children. Thus, they avoid any kind of long-term investment in the sustenance and expansion of production.
- This crown ownership system of land ruined the agriculture as well as the living standard of all sections of society, except the ruling aristocracy which oppressed the peasant class.
- He explained that because of crown ownership of land, Indian society has no social group or class between the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich. He further said, "There is no middle state in India".
- Bernier described Mughal king as the king of "beggars and barbarians". But Abul Fazl gave a different account by describing revenue as a claim made by the ruler on his subjects for the protection he provides, rather than as rent on land that he owned.

- Bernier's descriptions influenced Western theorists from the 18th century onwards. For instance, French philosopher Montesquieu used this account to develop the idea of oriental despotism and in the 19th century, Karl Marx used this account to develop the Asiatic mode of production.
- He also explained that India had a more complex social reality where artisans had no incentive to improve the quality of their products as profits were appropriated by the state. But at the same time, he added that the country used to exchange its manufacturing goods with the precious metals
- gold and silver, from outside the sub-continent. Whereas he also noticed existence of a prosperous merchant community as well.
- There were all kinds of towns i.e. manufacturing towns, trading towns, port-towns, sacred centres, pilgrimage towns, etc.
- The different urban groups included mahajans, sheth, nagarsheth, hakim or vaid, pundit or mulla, wakii, painters, architects, musicians, calligraphers, etc.

#### Views of Travellers about Women:

- Slaves were openly sold in markets with horses, camels and other commodities.
- I bn Battuta mentioned that there was considerable differentiation among slaves.
- Slaves were generally used for domestic labour and female slaves were used for the service of Sultan and to keep a watch on the nobles.
- Bernier wrote about the practice of 'Sati'. He noted that while some women seemed to embrace death cheerfully, others were forced to die.
- Women's labour was crucial in both agricultural and non-agricultural production.
- Women from merchant families participated in commercial activities.
- Travellers' accounts provide us important information of that period but many aspects of social life were unnoticed by them.



- **Hindu:** The term "Hindu" was derived from an old Persian word which was used in 6th century BCE. It referred to the region towards the east of the river Sindhu, i.e. Indus.
- **Antyaja:** Those people who were included in the major four castes prevalent in the Indian society.
- **Tarababad:** It means the music market in Daultabad.
- **Ulaq:** Horse postal system.
- **Daw:** Foot postal system.
- **Camp Towns:** Those towns which owed their existence and survival to the imperial camp.

#### Time Line:

- 973 – Al-Biruni was born in Uzbekistan
- 1031 – Kitub-ul-Hind in Arabic by Al-Biruni was published
- 1048 – Death of Al-Biruni
- 1304 – Ibn Battuta born at Tangier
- 1333 – Ibn Battuta's reached Sindh
- 1354 – Ibn Battuta's return to Morocco
- 1377 – Rihla was published
- 1620 – Francisco-Pelsart a Dutch traveller reached India
- 1628 – Petermundy of England visited India

## Chapter 6 - Bhakti-Sufi Traditions Changes in Religious Beliefs and Devotional Texts

- From 8th-18th century Bhakti Movement, Islam and Sufi movement played an important role in the history of medieval India.
- The Alvars and the Nayanars were considered as the founder of Bhakti movement in southern India.
- The Alvars were the devotees of Lord Vishnu, while the Nayanars followed Shaivism.
- Both Alvars and Nayanar strongly criticised the social and religious malpractices prevalent in the society.
- Two women saints-Andal of Alvars and Karaikkal of Ammaiyaar of Nayanars played a valuable role in giving a new direction to the society.
- The Cholas, Pallavas, and Chalukya patronised both Alvar and Nayanar cult.
- Basavanna founded Virashaivas or Lingayats in Karnataka and played a valuable role in the development of his cult.
- Islam was founded by prophet Muhammad in 7th century in Arabia.
- The pillars of Islam are;
  - Reutors Raima
  - Namaz
  - Ranja
  - Zakat
  - Hajj
- The holy book of Islam is Quran Shariff. It has been written in Arabic and has 114 chapters.

- According to Muslim tradition Quran is the compilation of those message which god (Allah) had sent to prophet Muhammad between 610-632 at Mecca and Madina through his envoy Archangel Jibris.
- During Medieval period in India Sufism emerged as a powerful movement. Sufis were so called because of the purity (safa) of their hearts. They are in the first queue before god. Some others are of
- the views that Sufi's were called so because of their habit of wearing wool (suf).
- Unity in God, complete self-surrender, charity, Ibadat, love for mankind, etc. are the main teaching of Sufism.
- Sufi silsilas begin to emerge in Islamic world.
- The important silsilas of Islam are;
  - The Chishti Silsila
  - The Suhrawardi Silsila
  - The Qadiri Silsila
  - The Naqshbandi Silsila
- Data Gunj Bakhsh, Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti, Shaikh Qutbuddin. Bakhtiyar Kaki, Fariduddin Gunj-i Shakar, and Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya are some of the prominent Sufi Shaikhs in India.
- Ziyarat meant pilgrimage to the tombs of sufi saints. Its main objective was to seek the spiritual grace from the Sufi.
- Music and dance are an important part of Ziyarat.
- The Sufis believed that music and dance evoke divine ecstasy in human heart.
- The religious gathering of Sufism is known as Sama.
- The **Qawwal** is an Arabic word which meant 'saying'. It was sung at opening or closing of the qawwals.

- The devotional worship of god with the ultimate objective of attaining moksha is called Bhakti. The word Bhakti was derived from the root 'Bhaj' meaning to adore.
- The Bhaktis who were against the worship of avatars and idol worship are known as saints. Kabir, Guru Nanak Dev ji and successor of Guru Nanak Dev ji are the prominent Bhakti Saints.
- The impact of the Bhakti movement on the Indian Society was significant and far-reaching.

A variety of religious structures like stupas, monastries, temples are found in the sub-continent by the mid-first millennium CE. Textual resources like the Puranas, music in different regional languages, hagiographies of saints were also found. These sources provide us with insight into a dynamic and diverse scenario.

#### Various Religious Beliefs and Practices:

- A wide range of Gods and Goddesses were found in sculpture as well as in texts. Puranic texts were composed and compiled in simple Sanskrit language which could be accessible to women and Shudras, who were generally deprived of vedic learning. Many beliefs and practices were shaped through continuous mingling of Puranic traditions with local traditions. Jagannatha cult of Odisha was the local deity made of wood by local tribal specialists and recognised as a form of Vishnu.
- The local deities were often incorporated within the Puranic framework, by providing them with an identity as wife of the principal deities. For e.g. they were equated with Lakshmi, wife of Vishnu, or Parvati, wife of Shiva. Tantric practices were widespread in several parts of sub-continent. It influenced Shaivism as well as Buddhism.
- The principal deities of the Vedic pantheon Agni, Indra and Soma were rarely visible in textual or visual representations. All other religious beliefs, e.g. Buddhism, Jainism, Tantric Practices ignored the authority of the vedas. The singing and chanting of devotional composition became a mode of worship particularly true for the Vaishnava and Shaiva sects.

#### Early Traditions of Bhakti:

- Historians classified bhakti traditions into two broad categories i.e. Nirguna (without attributes) and Saguna (with attributes).

- In the sixth century, Bhakti movements were led by Alvars (devotees of Vishnu) and Nayanars (devotees of Shiva). They travelled place to place singing Tamil devotional songs. During their travels, the Alvars and Nayanars identified certain shrines and later large temples were built at these places.
- Historians suggested that the Alvars and Nayanars initiated a movement of protest against the caste system. Nalayira Divyaprabandham composed by the Alvars was described as the Tamil Veda.
- Women devotees like Andal, Karaikkal Ammariyar composed devotional music which posed a challenge to patriarchal norms. Under the patronage of the Chola rulers, large and magnificent temples were constructed at Chidambaram, Thanjavur and Gangai Kondacholapuram.
- Tamil Shaiva hymns were sung in the temples under royal patronage.

#### The Virashaiva Tradition in Karnataka:

- A new movement emerged in Karnataka led by a Brahmana named Basavanna in the 12th century'.
- His followers were known as Virashaivas (heroes of Shiva) or Lingayats (Wearers of Lingas). Lingayats continue to be an important community in the region to date.
- The Lingayats challenged the idea of caste, pollution, theory of rebirth etc and encouraged post-puberty marriage and the remarriage of widows.
- Our understanding of the Virashaiva tradition is derived from Vachanas (literally sayings) composed in Kannada by women and men who joined the movement.

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#### Emergence of Islamic Traditions:

- In the 13th century, Turk and Afghans invaded India and established the Delhi Sultanate.
- Theoretically, Muslim rulers were to be guided by the Ulama and followed the rules of Shari'a.
- Non-Muslims had to pay a tax called Jizya and gained the right to be protected by Muslim rulers.
- Several Mughal rulers including Akbar and Aurangzeb gave land endowments and granted tax exemptions to Hindu, Jaina, Zoroastrian, Christian and Jewish religious institutions.
- All those who adopted Islam accepted the five pillars of the faith that are:
  - There is one God, Allah, and prophet Muhammad is his messenger.
  - offering prayers five times a day (namaz/salat).
  - Giving alms (Zakat).
  - Fasting during the month of Ramzan (Sawm).
  - Performing the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj).
- People were occasionally identified in terms of the region from which they came. Migrant communities often termed as Mlechchha meant that they did not observe the norms of caste, society and spoke languages that were not derived from Sanskrit.

#### The Growth of Sufism:

- In the early centuries of Islam, a group of religious minded people called Sufis turned to asceticism and mysticism in protest against the growing materialism of the caliphate.

- Sufis were critical of the dogmatic definitions and scholastic methods of interpreting the Quran and sought an interpretation of it on the basis of their personal experience.
- By the 11th century, Sufism evolved into a well developed movement.
- The suits began to organise communities around the hospice or Khanqah (Persian) controlled by a teaching master known as Shaikh, Pir or Murshid. He enrolled disciples (murids) and appointed a successor (Khalifa).
- Sufi Silsila means a chain, signifying a continuous link between master and disciple, stretching as an unbroken spiritual genealogy to the Prophet Muhammad.
- When Shaikh died, his tomb-shrine (dargah) became the centre of devotion for his followers and practice of pilgrimage or ziyarat to his grave, particularly on death anniversary or urs (or marriage, signifying the union of his soul with God) started. The cult of Shaikh transformed into wali.

#### The Chishtis in the Sub-continent:

- The Chishtis were the most important group of Sufis who migrated to India.
- The Khanqah was the centre of social life.
- Shaikh Nizamuddin's hospice on the banks of river Yamuna in Ghyaspur in the fourteenth century was very famous. The Shaikh lived here and met visitors in the morning and evening.
- There was an open Kitchen (langar) and people from all walks of life came here from morning till late night.
- Visitors who came here included Amir Hasan Sijzi, Amir Khusrau and Ziauddin Barani.
- Pilgrimage (Ziyarat) to tombs of Sufi saints was common. It was a practice for seeking the Sufis spiritual grace (Barakat).
- The most revered shrine was 'Gharib Nawaz', the shrine of Khwaja Muinuddin at Ajmer.
- This shrine was funded by Sultan Ghiyasuddin Khalji of Malwa. Emperor Akbar visited several times and constructed a mosque within the compound of dargah.



- Specially trained musicians or qawwals performed music and dance to evoke divine ecstasy.
- Baba Farid's compositions in the local language were incorporated in the Guru Granth Sahib.
- In Karnataka, the Sufis were inspired by the pre-existing bhakti traditions and composed Dakhani, Lurinama (lullabies) and Shadinama (wedding songs).
- Sultans of Delhi always preferred the Sufis although there were instances of conflict between them.

#### New Devotional Paths in Northern India:

- Kabir was a poet-saint of 14th-15th centuries.
- Kabir's verses were compiled in three distinct traditions
  - The Kabir Bijak is preserved by the Kabirpanth in Uttar Pradesh.
  - The Kabir Granthavali is associated with the Dadupanth in Rajasthan.
  - Many of his verses were included in the Adi Granth Sahib.
- Kabir described the ultimate reality as Allah, Khuda, Hazarat and Pir. He also used terms from vedantic traditions, like alakh, nirakar, brahmin, atman, etc.
- Kabir accepted all types of philosophy i.e. Vedantic traditions, Yogic traditions and Islamic ideas.
- Kabir's ideas probably crystallised through dialogue and debate.
- The message of Guru Nanak is spelt out in his hymns and teachings, where he advocated a form of Nirguna bhakti.
- According to Guru Nanak, the absolute or 'rab' had no gender or form. His ideas expressed through hymns called 'Shabad' in Punjabi.
- Guru Arjan compiled Guru Nanak's hymns along with the hymns of Baba Farid, Ravidas and Kabir in the Adi Granth Sahib. Later, Guru Gobind Singh included the compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur and this scripture was known as the 'Guru Granth Sahib.'

- Mirabai was a famous woman-poet of Bhakti tradition. She composed many songs that were characterised by intense expression of emotions.
- Mirabai's song inspired poor and low caste people in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- Shankaradeva in the late fifteenth century was a leading proponent of Vaishnavism in Assam.
- He emphasised the need for 'Naam Kirtan' and encouraged the establishment of 'Satra' or monasteries and 'naam ghar' or prayer halls. His major compositions include the 'Kirtana-ghosha'.

#### Religious Traditions of Northern India:

- Religious traditions included a wide variety, written in several different languages and styles. These ranged from the direct language of the Vachanas of Basavanna to the Persian farman of the Mughal Emperors.
- Historians have to understand that religious traditions like other traditions, are dynamic and change over time.

#### Important terms:

- Great Tradition: The cultural practices of dominant social categories were called the Great Tradition.
- Little Tradition: These were that tradition which do not correspond with the Great Tradition.
- Integration of cult: Modes of worship.
- Jagannatha: The lord of the world.
- Tantricism: Worship of the golden.
- Alvar: Devotees of Vishnu in South India.
- Nayanars: Devotees of Shiva in South India.
- Saguna Bhakti: Bhakti focused on the worship of Shiva, Vishnu and Devi.

- Nirguna Bhakti: Worshipping a shapeless or an abstract form of God.
- Tavaram: Collection of Poems in Tamil.
- mama: Religious scholars of Islamic studies.
- Sharia: Law of governing the Muslim community.
- Maktubat: Letters written by Sufi-saints.
- Tazkiras: Biographical account of saints.
- Sangat: Religious society under which the followers assembled both in mornings and evening to listen Guru's sermons.

#### Timeline:

- 1206 – Delhi Sultanate was set up
- 1236 – Death of Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti
- 1469 – Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
- 1604 – Compilation of Guru Granth Sahib
- 1699 – Foundation of Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh Ji Some Major Religious Teachers in the Subcontinent. This Timeline indicates the period of the major saints and reforms era
- 500-800 – CE Appar, Sambandar, Sundaramurti in Tamil Nadu
- 800-900 – Nammalvar, Manikkavachakar, Andal, Tondaradippodi in Tamil Nadu The teaching of these saints influence entire the people of India.
- 1000-1100 – Al Hujwiri, Data Ganj Bakhsh in the Punjab, Ramanujacharya in Tamil Nadu

- 1200-1300 – Jnanadeva, Muktabai in Maharashtra; Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti in Rajasthan; Bahauddin Zakariyya and Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar in the Punjab; Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki in Delhi.
- 1300-1400 -Lai Ded in Kashmir, Lai Shahbaz Qalandar in Sind; Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi; Ramananda in Uttar Pradesh; Chokhamela in Maharashtra; Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri in Bihar
- 1400-1500 – Kabir, Raidas, Surdas in Uttar Pradesh; Baba Guru Nanak in the Punjab; Vallabhacharya in Gujarat; Mir Sayyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz in Gulbarga, Shankaradeve in Assam; Tukaram in Maharashtra.
- 1500-1600 – Sri Chaitanya in Bengal; Mirabai in Rajasthan; Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, Malik Muhammad Jaisi, Tulsidas in Uttar Pradesh.
- 1600-1700 – Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi in Haryana; Miyan Mir in the Punjab.

## **Chapter 7 - An Imperial Capital: Vijayanagara**

- The Vijayanagara Empire was the most dignified and glorious empire of South India. Its Capital was Hampi.
- Hampi was discovered by Colin Mackenzie, the first Surveyor General of India in 1815.
- His (Colin Mackenzie's) arduous work, gave a new direction to all the future researcher.
- Alexander Greenlaw took the first detailed photography of Hampi in 1856, which proved quite useful for the scholar.
- J.F. Fleet in 1876, began compilation and documentation of the inscription from the walls of the walls of temples in Hampi.
- John Marshall began the conservation of Hampi in 1902.
- In 1976, Hampi was declared as a site of national importance and in 1986 it was declared as world Heritage centre.
- Vijayanagara Empire was founded by the two brothers, Harihara and Bukka in 14th century.

- The ruler of Vijayanagara empire were called Rayas.
- The most powerful ruler of Vijayanagara empire was Krishnadeva Raya. During his tenure, the empire touched its glory.
- Administration of the Vijayanagara Empire was very good and its people were very happy.
- The Vijayanagara Empire began to decline by 16th century and this might empire ended in 17th century.
- Four dynasties ruled over Vijayanagara:
  - The Sangama Dynasty
  - The Saluvas Dynasty
  - The Tuluva Dynasty
  - The Aravidu Dynasty
- The Sangama Dynasty founded the empire, Saluva expanded it, Saluva took it to the pinnacle of its glory, but it begun declined under Aravidu.
- Various causes such as weak central government, weak successors of Krishnadeva Raya, different dynasties struggles against the Bahamani Empire, weak empire, etc. contributed in the downfall of the empire.
- The most striking feature of the empire was its water requirement were met from natural barn formed by the Tungabhadra river.
- The ruler of Vijayanagara also had made vast fortification. The archaeologist made an elaborated study of roads within the city and the roads which led one out of the city.
- The Royal centres were located in the south-western part of the settlement, which included over sixty times.
- The sacred centre was situated on the rocky northern end on the bank of the river Tungabhadra. According to tradition rocky hill served as a shelter to the monkey Kingdom of Bali and Sugriva which were mentioned in the Ramayana.

Vijayanagara or 'City of Victory' was the home of both a city and an empire. It stretched from the river Krishna in the North to the extreme South of the Peninsula. People remembered it as Hampi, a name derived from that of the local mother Goddess, 'Pampadevi'.

#### Rise of Vijayanagara:

- Two brothers Harihara and Bukka founded the Vijayanagara empire in 1336. The rulers of Vijayanagara called themselves as 'Rayas'.
- Vijayanagara was famous for its markets dealing in spices, textiles and precious stones. The trade of import of horses from Arabia and Central Asia was controlled by Arab and Portuguese traders and also by local merchants (Kudirai Chettis).
- Trade was often regarded as a status symbol for this city. The revenue derived from trade in turn contributed significantly to the prosperity of the state.

#### Dynasties and Rulers of Vijayanagara:

- Vijayanagara was ruled by different dynasties like Sangama, Salavas and Tuluvas. Krishnadeva Raya belonged to Tuluva dynasty, whose rule was characterised by expansion and consolidation of Vijayanagara.
- During the rule of Krishnadeva Raya, Vijayanagara flourished under the conditions of unparalleled peace and prosperity. Krishnadeva Raya established some fine temples and gopurams and sub-urban township named Nagalapuram. After his death in 1529, his successors were troubled by rebellious 'Nayakas' or military chiefs.
- By 1542, control at the centre had shifted to another ruling lineage, that of the Aravidu, which remained in power till the end of the 17th century. Military chiefs or Nayakas often moved from one area to another accompanied by peasants broking for fertile land on which to settle. The Amara-nayaka system, similar to Iqta system of the Delhi sultanate, was a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara empire.
- These were military commanders who were given territories to govern the 'raya'. The Amara-nayakas sent tribute to the king annually and personally appeared in the royal court with gifts to express their loyalty.

#### Geographical Structure and Architecture of Vijayanagara:

- Vijayanagara was characterised by a distinctive physical layout and building style.

- Vijayanagara was located on the natural basin of the river Tungabhadra which flows in a North-Easterly direction.
- As this is one of the most arid zones of the Peninsula, many arrangements were made to store rain water for the city. For e.g. water from Kamalapuram tank and Hiriya canal was used for irrigation and communication.
- Abdur Razzaq, an ambassador of Persia, was greatly impressed by the fortification of the city and mentioned seven lines of forts. These encircled city as well as its agricultural hinterland and forests.
- The arch on the gateway leading into the fortified settlement and the dome over the gate were the architectures introduced by the Turkish Sultans and this was known as Indo-Islamic style.
- There was little archaeological evidence of the houses of ordinary people. We find description of the houses of ordinary people from the writings of Portuguese traveller Barbosa.

#### Hampi: The Historical City:

- The ruins at Hampi were brought to light in 1800 by Colonel Colin Mackenzie. To reconstruct the history of the city, sources like the memories of priests of the Virupaksha temple and the shrine of Pampadevi, several inscriptions and temples, accounts of foreign travellers and other literature written in Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Sanskrit played a very important role in discovering of Hampi.

#### The Royal Centre of Hampi:

- The royal centre was located in the South-Western part of the settlement which had more than 60 temples. Thirty building complexes were identified as palaces. The king's palace was the largest of the enclosures and had two platforms viz. the 'audience hall' and the 'Mahanavami dibba'.
- Located on one of the highest points in the city, the 'Mahanavami dibba' is a massive platform rising from a base of about 11,000 sq ft to a height of 40 ft. Different ceremonies like worship of the image, worship of the state horse and the sacrifice of buffaloes and other animals were performed in Vijayanagara. Some beautiful buildings in the royal centre are Lotus Mahal, Hazara Rama temple, etc.

#### Temples of Hampi:

- Temple building in this region had a long history. Pallavas, Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Cholas, all the rulers encouraged temple building. Temples were developed as religious, social, cultural, economic and learning centres. Shrines of Virupaksha and Pampadevi were very significant sacred centres.



- The Vijayanagara kings claimed to rule on behalf of the God Virupaksha. They also indicated their close links by using the title 'Hindu Suratrana' (Sanskritisation of the Arabic term Sultan) meaning 'Hindu Sultan'. In terms of temple architecture, 'Rayas' gopurams or royal gateways and mandapas or pavilions were developed by the rulers of Vijayanagara.
- Krishnadeva Raya built the hall in front of the main shrine in Virupaksha temple and he also constructed the Eastern gopuram. The halls in the temple were used for special programmes of music, dance, drama and marriages of deities.
- The rulers of Vijayanagara established Vitthala temple. Vitthala, a form of Vishnu, was generally worshipped in Maharashtra. Some of the most spectacular gopurams were built by the local Nayakas.

**Hampi: As a site of National Importance:**

- In 1976, Hampi was recognised as a site of national importance. Over nearly twenty years, dozens of scholars from all over the world worked to reconstruct the history of Vijayanagara.
- In the early 1980s detailed survey, using a variety of recording techniques was done by the Archaeological Survey of India which led to the recovery of traces of roads, paths, bazaars, etc.
- John M Fritz, George Nichell and MS Nagaraja Rao worked for years and gave important observation of the site.
- The descriptions left by travellers allow us to reconstruct some aspects of the vibrant life of that times.

**Continuing Research About Vijayanagara:**

- Buildings that survive convey ideas about the materials and techniques, the builders or patrons and cultural context of Vijayanagara empire. Thus, we can understand by combining information from literature, inscriptions and popular traditions.
- But the investigation of architectural features do not tell us about the places where ordinary' people live, what kind of wages did the masons, stonemasons, sculptors get, how was the building material transported and so many other questions.
- Continuing research using other sources that available architectural examples might provide some further clues about Vijayanagara.

- Karnataka Samrajyamu: Historians used the term Vijayanagara Empire, contemporaries described it as the
- Karnataka Samrajyamu.
- Gajapati: Literally means the lord of elephants. This was the name of a ruling lineage that was very powerful in Odisha in the fifteenth century.
- Ashvapati: In the popular traditions of Vijayanagara the Deccan Sultans are termed as ashavapati of the lord of horses.
- Narapati: In Vijayanagara Empire, the Rayas are called narapati or the lord of men.
- Yavana: It is a Sanskrit word for the Greeks and other peoples entered the subcontinent from the north-west.
- Shikara: The top or very high roof of the temples is called Shikhar. Generally, it can be seen from a reasonable distance by the visitors of the temples. Under Shikhar we find the idol of main God or Goddess.
- Garbhgrah: This is a central point of the main room located at a central position of the temple. Generally, every devotee goes near the gate of this room to pay respect and feelings of devotion to his main duty.

#### Time line:

- 1336 -Foundation of Vijayanagara Empire by Harihara Raya and Bukka Raya.
- 1483 – Emergence of Saluva Dynasty.
- 1509-1529 Tenure of Krishnadeva Raya.
- 1512 – Krishnadev Raya occupied Raicher Doals.
- 1565 – Battle of Talikata.
- 1570 – Foundation of Aravidu Dynasty.
- 1815 – Col Mackenzie appointed as 1st Surveyor General of India.

- 1856 – Alexander Greenlaw takes the first detailed photographs of archaeological remains at Hampi.
- 1876 – J.F. Fleet begins documenting the inscription on the temple walls at the site.
- 1902 – Conservation begins under John Marshall.
- 1986 – Hampi declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

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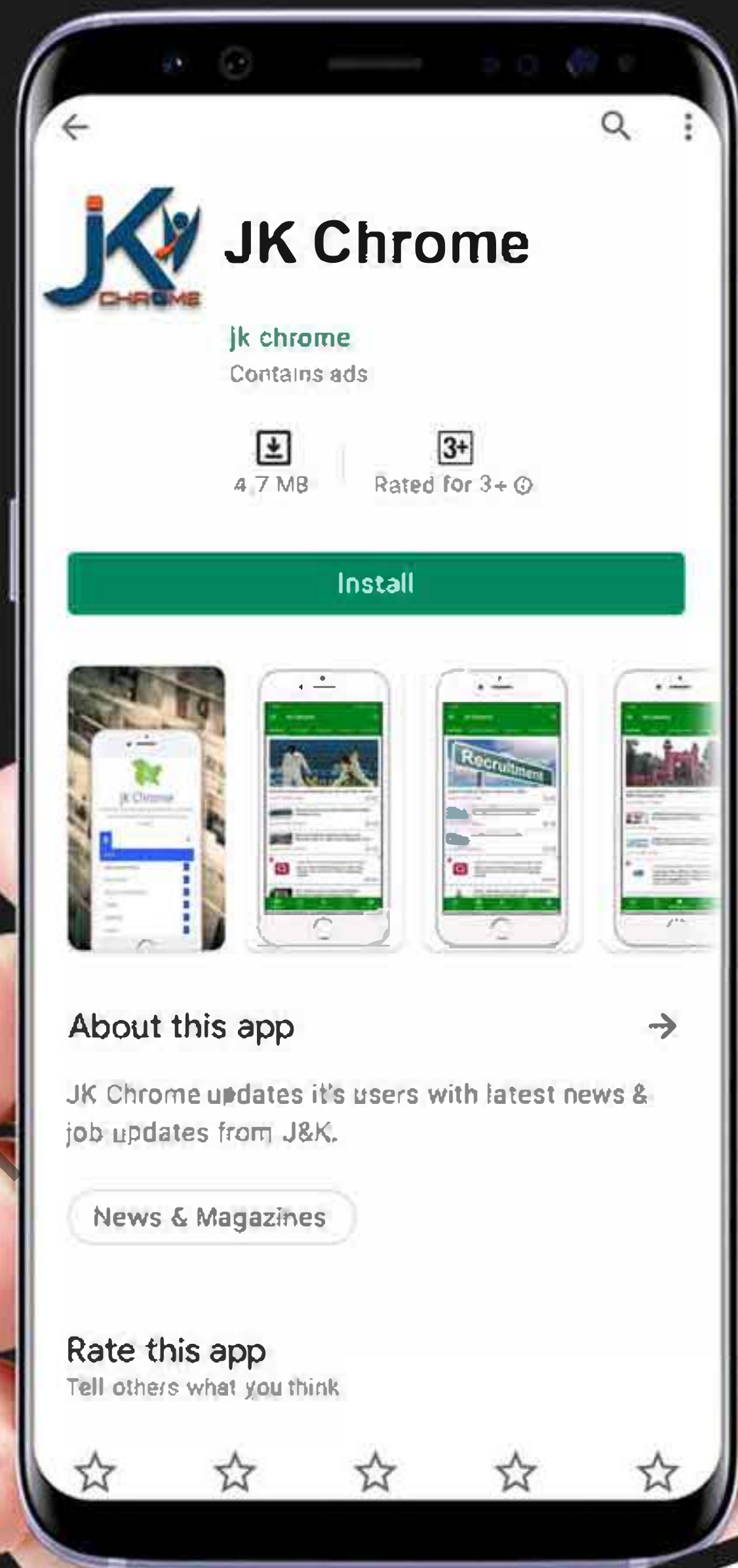
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