



PLUS TWO HISTORY

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Notes based on Focus Area

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1. Bricks, Beads and Bones

Subsistence strategies

The Harappans ate wide range of plant and animal products. Archaeo-botanists are specialists in ancient plant remains. Grains found in Harappan sites include Wheat, barley, lentil, chickpea and sesame. Millets are found from sites in Gujarat. Finds of rice are relatively rare.

Animal bones found at Harappan sites include those of cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo and pig. Archaeo-zoologists who studied these animal bones suggested that these animals were domesticated. Bones of boar, deer and gharial are also found. The bones of wild species suggest the Harappans hunted these animals themselves or obtained meat from other hunting communities. Bones of fish and fowl are also found.

Agricultural technologies

- The prevalence of agriculture is indicated by finds of grain.
- Representations on seals and terracotta sculpture indicate that bull was known.
- Archaeologists assume from this that oxen were used for ploughing.
- Terracotta models of the plough have been found at Cholistan and Banawali.
- Evidence of a ploughed field at Kalibangan has also been found.
- Traces of canals have been found at Shortughai in Afghanistan.
- Traces of water reservoirs found in Dholavira in Gujarat

Mohenjodaro: A Planned Urban Centre

The most unique feature of the Harappan Civilization was the development of urban centres. Mohenjodaro is the most well known site. The city is divided into two sections. The Citadel (smaller but higher and the Lower Town (larger but lower)

The Citadel

- These were constructed on mud brick platforms and were walled. It was physically separated from the lower town.
- These include the warehouse-a massive structure of which the lower brick portions remain. The upper portions, probably of wood, decayed.
- The Great Bath was a large rectangular tank in a courtyard surrounded by a corridor on all sides. There were two flights of steps on the north and south leading into the tank. The tank was made watertight by setting bricks on edge and using a mortar of gypsum. There were rooms on three sides and a large well. Water from the tank flowed in to a huge drain. The tank was meant for some kind of special ritual bath.

The lower Town (Domestic architecture)

The Lower Town provides examples of residential buildings. Many were centred on a courtyard, with rooms on all sides. The courtyard was the centre of activities such as cooking and

weaving. They were concerned about their privacy. There are no windows in the walls along the ground level. The main entrance does not give direct view of the interior.

Every house had its own bathroom with drains connected to the street drains. Some houses have remains of staircases to reach second storey or the roof. Many houses had wells that could be reached from outside. It is estimated that the total number of wells in Mohenjodaro was about 700.

The Drainage system

One of the most distinctive features of Harappan cities was the carefully planned drainage system. The roads and streets were laid out along grid pattern, intersecting at right angles. It seems that streets with drains were laid out first and then houses built along them. Every house was connected to the street drains. Drains were made of bricks set in mortar and covered with loose bricks for cleaning.

Tracking Social differences

Archaeologists generally use certain strategies to find out social and economic differences among Harappan people.

- **Burials:** One strategy to identify social difference is to study burials. At burials in Harappan sites, the dead were laid in pits. Sometimes, there were differences in the way the burial pit was made. The hollowed-out spaces were lined with bricks. Some graves contain pottery and ornaments indicate belief in life after death-Jewellery has been found in burials of both men and women .They did not believe in burying precious things with the dead.
- **Artefacts:** Another strategy to identify social differences is to study artefacts. Archaeologists classify artifacts as utilitarian and luxuries. Utilitarian objects are of daily use made of ordinary materials such as stone or clay .These includes querns, pottery, needles, flesh-rubbers etc. Luxuries are rare objects made from costly, non-local materials with complicated technologies. Little pots of faience used as perfume bottles were considered as precious and found in large settlements.

Finding out about craft Production

Chanhudaro is a tiny settlement exclusively devoted to craft production .Craft production includes bead-making, shell cutting, metal working, seal making and weight making.

- **Materials:** The variety of materials used to make beads is remarkable.
 - i.Stones : carnelian, jasper, crystal, quartz and steatite,
 - ii.Metals: Copper, bronze and gold, and
 - iii.Shell, faience and terracotta or burnt clay.
- **Shapes:** The shapes of beads were numerous-disc-shaped, cylindrical, spherical, barrel-shaped, and segmented.

- Techniques: Techniques differed according to material. Some beads were made with steatite powder. The red colour of carnelian was obtained by firing the yellowish material and beads at various stages of production. Nodules were chipped into rough shapes and, then finely flaked into the final form. Grinding, polishing and drilling completed the process.
- Specialized drills have been found at Chanhudaro, Lothal and more recently at Dholavira.
- Nageshwar and Balakot were specialized centres for making shell objects including bangles, ladles and inlay.

Identifying centres of production

Archaeologists look for the following to identify centres.

- Raw materials such as stone nodules, whole shells, copper ore
- Tools
- Unfinished objects
- Rejects and wastes
- Waste is one of the best indicators of craft work. Sometimes, larger waste pieces were used up to make smaller objects.

Strategies for procuring materials

Harappans procured materials for craft production in various ways.

- 1. They established settlements in Nageshwar and Balakot where shell was available. Other sites were Shortughai in Afghanistan (Lapis lazuli) and Lothal which was near sources of carnelian (from Baruch in Gujarat) steatite (from South Rajasthan and north Gujarat) and metal (from Rajasthan)
- 2. Another strategy may have been to send expeditions to Khetri region of Rajasthan (copper) and South India (gold). These expeditions established communication with local communities.

Contact with distant lands

Archaeological finds suggest that copper was probably brought from Oman. Chemical analyses have shown that both the Omani copper and Harappan artifacts have traces of nickel. A distinctive Harappan jar, coated with layer of black clay found at Omani sites. Mesopotamian texts datable to the third millennium BCE refer to copper coming from a region called Magan, perhaps a name for Oman.

Other archaeological finds include Harappan seals, weights, dice and beads. Mesopotamian texts also mention contact with region named Dilmun, probably the island of Bahrain. Mesopotamian texts refer to a place Meluhha, possibly the Harappan region, where from they got products like carnelian, lapis lazuli, copper, gold.

- It is likely that communication with Oman, Bahrain or Mesopotamia was by sea. Mesopotamian texts refer to Meluhha as a land of seafarers. Besides; we find depictions of ships and boats on seals.

Seals and Sealings

Seals and sealing; used to facilitate long distance communication. Imagine a bag of goods being sent from one place to another. Its mouth was tied a rope. On the knot was affixed some wet clay. Then one or more seals were pressed, leaving an impression. If the bag reached with its sealing intact, it meant that it had not been tampered. The sealing conveyed the identity of the sender.

An enigmatic script

Harappan seals usually have a line of writing. It conveyed the name and title of the owner. Most inscriptions are short, the longest inscription containing about 26 signs. Script remains undeciphered and it was not alphabetical. It has signs around 375 and 400. The script was written from right to left.

Weights

Exchanges were regulated by a precise system of weights. Weights were made of a stone called chert, cubical with no markings. The lower denominations were binary (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 etc.) Higher denominations followed the decimal system. -Metal scale pans have also been found.

The End of the Civilization

There is evidence that by c.1800 BCE most of the mature Harappan sites had been abandoned. There was an expansion of population into new settlements in Gujarat, Haryana, and western U.P. There was a transformation of Material culture. Distinctive artefacts of the civilization such as weights, seals, beads disappeared. Writing, long distance trade and craft specialization also disappeared. House construction techniques deteriorated. Artefacts and settlements indicate a rural way of life called Late Harappan or successor cultures.

Decline: Several explanations for the decline of Harappan civilization are

- Climatic change
- Deforestation
- Excessive floods
- Shifting or drying up of rivers
- Overuse of the landscape
- Foreign invasion

2. Kings, Farmers and Towns

The earliest states

The sixth century BCE is often regarded as a major turning point in early Indian history. It is an era associated with early states, cities; the growing use of iron, the development of coinage etc. It also witnessed the growth of diverse systems of thought, including Buddhism and Jainism.

The Sixteen mahajanapadas

- Early Buddhist and Jaina texts mention 16 states known as Mahajanapadas
- Mahajanapadas were ruled by kings or sanghas(ganas)
- Each mahajanapada had a fortified capital city
- Dharmasutras laid down norms for rulers.
- Some Mahajanapadas maintained armies and bureaucracies

First amongst the sixteen: Magadha

Between the sixth and the fourth centuries BCE, Magadha became the most powerful mahajanapada.

- Magadha was a region where agriculture was productive.
- It was also rich in natural resources and iron mines were accessible and provided resources for tools and weapons.
- Elephants, an important part of the army, were found in forest in the region.
- Ganga and its tributaries provided a means of cheap and convenient communication.
- Magadha had ambitious kings like Bimbisara, Ajatasattu, and Mahapamananda
- Rajagriha was the capital of Magadha initially. Rajagriha was a fortified settlement, located among hills.
- In the fourth century BCE, the capital was shifted to Pataliputra, present day Patna. It provides routes of communication along the Ganga.

Mauryan Empire

The growth of Magadha culminated in the emergence of the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta Maurya founded the empire (321 BCE) and extended control as far northwest as Afghanistan and Baluchistan. His grandson, Asoka was the most famous ruler of early India who conquered Kalinga.

Sources to reconstruct the history of the Mauryan Empire

- Account of Megasthenes
- Arthashastra of Kautilya or Chanakya
- Buddhist, Jaina and Puranic literature
- Sanskrit literary works
- Inscriptions of Asoka

Asokan Inscription and Dhamma

- Asoka inscribed his messages on rocks and pillars.
- He used the inscriptions to proclaim his policy of dhamma
- Dhamma principles included
- Respect towards elders
- Generosity towards Brahmanas
- Treating slaves and servants kindly
- Respect religions and traditions

Mauryan Administration

- Asokan Inscriptions mention all the main features of Mauryan administration.
- The capital of the Mauryan Empire was Pataliputra.
- There were four other centres of political power:
- Taxila
- Ujjaini
- Suvarnagiri
- Tosali

Sub committees and activities

- Megasthenes has mentioned that there were one committee and six subcommittees.
- The six sub committees and their areas of activities are,
- 1. The first committee looked after the navy
- 2. The second managed transport
- 3. The third was responsible for foot soldiers
- 4. The fourth committee was for horses
- 5. The fifth was for chariots
- 6. The sixth was responsible for elephants
- Special officers called dhamma mahamatras were appointed to propagate Dhamma

New notions of Kingship

By the second century BCE new chiefdoms and kingdoms emerged in several parts of the subcontinent. The new kingdoms in the Deccan and south including the chiefdoms of the Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas in Tamilakam proved to be stable and prosperous. Many chiefs and kings including the Satavahanas who ruled over parts of western and central India and the Shakas, who established kingdoms in the north-western and western parts of the subcontinent, derived revenues from long distance trade.

Divine Kings

One means of claiming high status was to identify with a variety of deities. The Kushanas (c.1st century BCE –first century CE) installed colossal statues in shrines at Mathura and in Afghanistan. The Kushans considered themselves godlike. They adopted the title devaputra or 'son of god'.

By the fourth century there is evidence of larger states, including the Gupta Empire. These states depended on samantas, men who maintained themselves through local resources including control over land. They offered homage and provided military support to rulers.

Histories of the Gupta rulers have been reconstructed from literature, coins and inscriptions including prashastis, composed in praise of kings by poets. The prayaga prashasti (The Allahabad pillar inscription) composed by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta is a good example of prashasti.

Towns and Trade

By the sixth century BCE, urban centres emerged in several parts of the subcontinent. Many of these were capitals of mahajanapadas. Major towns were located along routes of communication some such as Pataliputra were on riverine routes. Some were near the coast, from where sea routes began. Many cities like Mathura were centres of commercial, cultural and political activity.

Urban populations

By the second century BCE, we find short votive inscriptions in a number of cities. Votive inscriptions record gifts made to religious institutions. These mention the name of donor, his/her occupation. They tell us about people who lived in towns: washing folk, weavers, scribes, carpenters, potters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, officials, religious teachers, merchants and kings.

Sometimes, guilds or Shrenis, organizations of craft producers and merchants are also mentioned as well. These guilds procured raw materials, regulated production, and marketed the finished product.

Trade in the subcontinent and beyond

From the 6th century BCE, land and river routes criss crossed the subcontinent and extended in various directions. Rulers often attempted to control the routes, possibly by offering protection for a price. Those who traversed these routes included Peddlers and merchants. Peddlars travelled on foot while merchants travelled with caravans of bullock carts and pack-animals. There were Seafarers whose travels were risky but highly profitable. Merchants designated as masattuvan (in Tamil) and setthis and satthavahas (in prakrit) were enormously rich.

A wide range of goods were carried from one place to another. Goods include salt, grain, cloth, metal ores and finished products, stone, timber, medicinal plants, pepper etc. Spices especially pepper, were in high demand in the Roman Empire. All these were transported across the Arabian Sea to the Mediterranean.

Coins and kings

Exchanges were facilitated by the introduction of coinage. Punch marked coins made of silver and copper were among the earliest to be minted and used. Attempts were made to

identify the symbols on punch marked coins with specific ruling dynasties. The first coins to bear the names and images of rulers were issued by the Indo-Greeks. The first gold coins were issued by the Kushanas. The widespread use of gold coins indicates the enormous value of the transactions that were taking place. Hoards of Roman coins have been found from south India. This indicates that trade was extended beyond political boundaries. Coins were also issued by tribal republics such as that of the Yaudheyas of Punjab and Haryana. Some of the most spectacular gold coins were issued by the Gupta rulers. Roman coins were remarkable for their purity.

Limitations of Inscriptional Evidence

1. Sometimes letters are faintly engraved and thus reconstructions are uncertain.
2. Sometimes Inscriptions may be damaged or letter missing. It is not easy to be sure about the exact meaning of the words used in the inscriptions. So, Scholars are constantly debating on alternative ways to read inscriptions.
- 3 Thousands of inscriptions have been discovered, but not all have been deciphered, published and translated. Many inscriptions were destroyed and what we have today is only a fraction of it.
4. Not everything that is politically or economically significant was recorded in the inscriptions. E.g. routine agricultural practices, joys and sorrows of daily life were not mentioned in the inscriptions.
5. The content of inscriptions projects the perspective of the person (s) who commissioned them. We must critically analyze the inscriptions to arrive at better understanding of the past.

3. Kingship, Caste and Class

The Critical Edition of Mahabharata

One of the most ambitious projects of scholarship began in 1919, under the leadership of a noted Indian Sanskrit scholar; V.S Sukthanker. A team comprising dozens of scholars initiated the task of preparing a critical edition of the Mahabharata. The critical edition meant collecting Sanskrit manuscripts of the text, written in a variety of scripts, from different parts of the country. The team worked out a method of comparing verses from each manuscript. The project took 47 years to complete. Finally, they selected the verses that appeared common to most versions. They published these verses in several volumes in 13,000 pages. There were several common elements in the Sanskrit versions of the story. Also there were enormous regional variations in the ways in which the text had been transmitted over the centuries. These variations were documented in footnotes and appendices to the main text. These variations reflect complex process that shaped early (and later) social histories.

Handling Texts

Historians and the Mahabharata

Historians consider several elements when they analyze texts.

1. Language of the text-whether it was ordinary people's language or the language of the priests and elites
2. Kind of text-whether it was a mantra or story.
3. Author's perspective in writing the text
4. The audience to whom it was written
5. Date of the composition or compilation of the text.
6. The place of composition.

We have been considering the Sanskrit language Mahabharata. The Sanskrit used in the Mahabharata is simpler than that of the Vedas or of the prashastis. So it was probably better to be understood. The text presented is classified into two sections: One that contains stories, designated as the 'narrative'. Other section, containing prescriptions about social norms, known as 'didactic'. This section includes stories and narratives containing social messages

The original story was composed by chariot-bards known as sutas. They accompanied the Kshatriya warriors to the battlefield and composed poems celebrating their victories and other achievements. These compositions were circulated orally. By c.fifth century BCE; the Brahmanas began committing this to writing. This was the time of the Kuru and Panchala kingdoms. It is also possible that the upheaval occurring in social values being replaced by new norms at this time, were reflected in Mahabharata.

Another phase is c.200BCE and 200BCE when worship of Vishnu was growing and Krishna was being identified with Vishnu. Between c.200 and 400CE didactic sections resembling the Manusmriti were added. All these additions made the text, which started with less than 10,000 verses to 100,000 verses. This work is traditionally attributed to sage Veda Vyasa.

A Dynamic Text

The growth of the Mahabharata did not stop with the Sanskrit version. Over the centuries, versions of the epic were written in a variety of languages. Those people who wrote versions of the epic added stories originated or circulated in their localities. The central story of the epic was often retold in many ways. Episodes were depicted in sculpture and painting. They also provided themes for a wide range of performing arts-plays, dance and other kinds of narrations.

4. Thinkers, Beliefs and Buildings

The Background

Sacrifices and Debates

- Mid-first millennium BCE is often regarded as a turning point in world history.
- It saw the emergence of thinkers such as Zarathustra in Iran, Kong Zi in china, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in Greece, Mahavira and Gautama Buddha in India

- They tried to understand the mysteries of existence and relationship between the humans and cosmic order.
- This was also the time when new kingdoms and cities were developing and social and economic life was changing in a variety of ways in Ganga valley.
- These thinkers of India attempted to understand these developments as well.

The Sacrificial Tradition

The early vedic traditions, religious beliefs and practices were known from the Rigveda. The Rig Veda was compiled between c.1500 and 100 BCE and consists of hymns in praise of a variety of deities, especially Agni, Indra and Soma. These hymns were chanted when the sacrifices were performed and people prayed for cattle, sons, good health, long life and other things.

At first, Sacrifices were performed collectively. Later (c.100BCE-500 BCE onwards) some were performed by the heads of households for well being of the domestic unit. More elaborate sacrifices, such as the rajasuya and asvamedha were performed by chiefs and kings who depended on Brahmana priests to conduct the rituals.

New questions

Many ideas found in the Upanishads show that people were curious about the meaning of life, the possibilities of life after death and rebirth. These issues were hotly debated. Thinkers were concerned with understanding and expressing the nature of the ultimate reality. People outside the Vedic tradition began speculating on the significance of the sacrificial tradition.

Debates and discussions

Buddhist texts mention as many as 64 sects or schools of thought. Discussions and debates were took place between the teachers and these schools of thought. Debates took place in the Kutagarashala- literally means hut with a pointed roof or in groves where travelling mendicants halted. Teachers tried to convince one another and laypersons about the validity of their philosophy. Mahavira and Buddha questioned the authority of the Vedas. They emphasized on individual agency. They suggested men and women could strive to attain liberation from trials and tribulations of worldly existence. This differed from the Brahmanical position as they believed that individual's existence was determined by his or her birth in specific caste or gender.

The message of Mahavira

The philosophy of the Jainas already existed before the birth of Mahavira in the sixth century BCE. Vardhamana Mahavira was preceded by 23 thirthankaras. The thirthankaras are teachers who guide men and women across the river of existence. The main teachings of Mahavira are:

- The entire world is animated: even stones, rocks and water have life.
- No-injury to living beings, especially to humans, animals, plants and insects.
- The cycle of birth and rebirth is shaped through karma.
- Asceticism and penance are required to free oneself from the cycle of karma.

- This can be attained only by renouncing the world; therefore, monastic existence is a necessary condition of salvation.

Jaina monks and nuns must take five vows.

- To abstain from killing
- To abstain from stealing
- To abstain from lying
- To observe celibacy
- To abstain from possessing property.

The spread of Jainism

Jainism spread to many parts of India. Jaina scholars produced a wealth of literature in a variety of languages such as Prakrit, Sanskrit and Tamil. Manuscripts of these texts were carefully preserved in libraries attached to temples. Many stone sculptures connected with the Jain traditions have been recovered from several sites.

The Buddha and the Quest for enlightenment

Buddha was one of the most influential teachers of his time. His message spread across the subcontinent and beyond through central Asia to China, Korea and Japan, and through Sri Lanka, across the seas to Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia.

According to Buddhist traditions, Siddhartha, as the Buddha was named at birth, was the son of a chief of the Sakya clan. He had a sheltered upbringing within the palace detached from the harsh realities of life. He was deeply anguished when he saw an old man, a sick man and a corpse. It was at the moment that he realized that decay of human body was inevitable. He also saw a mendicant who had come to terms with old age and disease and death and found peace. He decided that he too would adopt the same path. He then left the palace in search of truth. He explored many paths including bodily mortification. He abandoned the extreme path. He meditated for several days and finally attained enlightenment. After this he came to be known as Buddha or the enlightened one. For the rest of his life he taught dhamma or the path of righteous living.

Main teachings of Buddhism

The Buddha's teachings have been reconstructed from stories, found mainly in the Sutta Pitaka. Some stories describe his miraculous powers and others suggest that Buddha tried to convince people through reasons and persuasion rather than through displays of supernatural power.

- The world is transient (anicca) and constantly changing.
- It is also soulless (anatta) as there is nothing permanent or eternal in it.
- Within this transient world, sorrow (dukkha) is intrinsic to human existence.
- It is by following the middle path between severe penance and self-indulgence that human beings can rise above these worldly troubles.
- In the early forms of Buddhism whether or not God existed was irrelevant.

- Buddha regarded the social world as a creation of humans rather than divine origin. So he advised kings and gahapatis to be humane and ethical.
- The Buddha emphasized individual agency and righteous action as the means to escape from the cycle of rebirth and attains self realization and nirvana.
- Buddhism emphasizes the extinguishing of the ego and desires and thus ends the suffering of those who renounced the world.
- Buddha's last words to his followers were: "Be lamps unto yourselves as all of you must work out your own liberation."

Followers of the Buddha

As the number of disciples of the Buddha increased, he founded a sangha. The sangha was an organization of monks who too became teachers of dhamma. These monks lead a simple life possessing only the essential requisites for survival, such as a bowl to receive food once a day from the laity. As they lived on alms, they were known as bhikkus. Initially, only men were allowed into the sangha, but later women also came to be admitted. The Buddha's foster mother, Mahaprajapati Gotami was the first woman to be included as bhikkuni. The Buddha's followers came from many social groups. They included kings, wealthy men and gahapatis, and also humbler folk; workers, slaves and crafts people. Once within the sangha, all were regarded as equal, having shed their earlier social identities on becoming bhikkus and bhikkunis. The Buddhist sangha functioned on the lines of ganas and sanghas where consensus was arrived at based on discussions. If discussions failed to bring about harmony then decisions were taken by a vote on that subject.



Spread of Buddhism

Buddhism grew rapidly both during the lifetime of the Buddha and after his death. People were dissatisfied with the prevailing religions and were confused by the social changes that were occurring. Buddhism emphasized on the importance of conduct and values rather than claims of superiority based on birth. The emphasis was laid on metta (fellow feeling) and karuna (compassion) especially for those who were young and weaker than oneself. These were ideas that drew men and women to Buddhism.

Stupas

Certain places were regarded as sacred by the people in the early times. Sites with special trees or unique rocks, or sites of awe inspiring natural beauty with small shrine attached to them were known as Chaityas. Buddhist literature mentions several chaityas. It also describes places connected with the life of Buddha. These places are,

- Lumbini- where he was born
- Bodh Gaya -where he attained enlightenment ,
- Saranath -where he gave his first sermon and
- Kushinagara-. Where he attained nibbana

These four places were considered as sacred.

Why were stupas built?

Mounds where relics of the Buddha such as his bodily remains or objects used by him were buried were known as stupas. According to a Buddhist text known as Asokavadana, Asoka distributed portions of the Buddha's relics to every important town and ordered the construction of stupas over them. The stupas at Barhut, Sanchi and Saranath were built by the second century BCE.

How were stupas built?

Inscriptions found on the railings and pillars of the stupas give idea about the donations given by the kings, guilds, bhikkus, bhikkunis and ordinary men and women for building and decorating these monuments.

Structure of Stupa

- Stupa is a Sanskrit word meaning a heap. The structure of stupa originated as a simple circular mound of earth called anda. Gradually, it developed into a more complex structure.
- Above the anda was the harmika, a balcony like structure that represented the abode of the gods. Arising from the harmika was the mast called the yashti surrounded by a chhatra or an umbrella.
- Around the mound was a railing, separating the sacred space from the secular world.

The early Stupas at Sanchi and Barhut were plain except for the stone railings which resembled a bamboo or wooden fence and the gateways. Later, the mound of the stupas came to be elaborately carved with niches and sculptures as at Amravati and Shah-jhi-Dheri in Peshawar.

The development of Mahayana Buddhism

By the first century CE, there were changes in Buddhist ideas and practices. Early Buddhist teachings had given great importance to self-effort in achieving nibbana. Buddha was regarded as a human being who attained enlightenment and nirvana. Gradually, the idea of Buddha as a saviour emerged. It was believed that he is the one who could ensure salvation. Simultaneously, the concept of the Bodhisatta also developed. Bodhisattas were perceived as deeply compassionate beings that could help others to attain nibbana. The worship of the images of the Buddha and Bodhisattas became an important part of this tradition. This new way of thinking was called Mahayana-literally; the "greater vehicle". The followers of Mahayana Buddhism described the older tradition as Hinayana or the "lesser vehicle".

5. Through the Eyes of Travellers

Al-Biruni

Al-Biruni was born in 973, in Khwarizm (present day Uzbekistan). He was a learned man and well versed in several languages such as Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit. In 1017,

when sultan Mahmud invaded Khwarizm, he took several scholars and poets back to his capital, Ghazni. Al-beruni was one of them. It was in Ghazni that Alberuni developed an interest in India.

The Kitab-ul-Hind

Al-beruni's Kitab ul Hind was written in Arabic. It is simple, lucid and voluminous text, divided in to 80 chapters. It dealt with subjects such as religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology.

Al-Beruni has adopted a mathematical approach. He begins each chapter with a question followed up with a description and comparison of cultures.

Overcoming barriers to understanding

Al-Beruni discussed several barriers that obstructed the understanding of Indian society.

- The first barrier was the language .To him. Sanskrit was so different from Arabic and Persian and the ideas and concepts could not be easily translated from one language to another.
- The second barrier was that Al-Beruni identified was the difference in religious beliefs and practices.
- The third barrier was the self observation and consequent insularity of the local population.

He depended mainly on the works of Brahmanas and often quoted from the Vedas, the Puranas, the Bhagavad Gita, the works of Patanjali, and the Manusmriti.

Al-Beruni's description of the caste system

Al-Beruni tried to explain the caste system by comparing it with other societies. He said that in ancient Persia, there were four social categories: Knights and princes, monks, fire-priests and lawyers, physicians, astronomers and other scientists. He tried to understand that social divisions were not unique to India. He pointed out that within Islam all men were considered equal and difference was based on only the observance of piety. He accepted the Brahmanical description of the caste system but disapproved of the notion of pollution. He said that everything which falls into a state of impurity strives and succeeds in regaining its original condition of purity. The sun cleanses the air, and the salt in the sea prevents the water from becoming polluted. According to him, the notion of pollution which was intrinsic to caste system was against the laws of nature. Al-Beruni's description of the caste system was deeply influenced by his familiarity with normative Sanskrit texts.

Ibn Battuta (An early globe-trotter)

Ibn Battuta was an African traveller who came from Morocco. He was born in Tangier. He learnt literature and other scholarly works at his young age. He considered that knowledge gained through travels is more important source than books. He loved travelling, and went far off places, exploring new worlds and peoples. Before his visit to India ,he had made pilgrimage to Mecca and travelled extensively in Syria, Iraq, Persia, Yemen, Oman and a few trading ports on the coast of East Africa. He set off his travel to India in 1332-33 and reached

Sind in 1333. He was able to get the reputation of the sultan of Delhi; Muhammed bin Tughlaq. The sultan was impressed by the scholarship of Ibn Battuta and appointed him as the qazi or judge of Delhi. He remained judge for many years. The sultan appointed him as his ambassador to China. During his journey to China, he also visited Malabar Coast, Maldives, Bengal, Assam and Sumatra.

Rihla

Ibn Battuta's book of travels called Rihla was written in Arabic provides the social and cultural life in the subcontinent in the 14th century. He carefully recorded his observations about new cultures, peoples, beliefs, values etc.

The coconut and the paan

Ibn Battuta's strategies of representation are evident in the ways in which he described the coconut and the paan. These two kinds of plants were unfamiliar to his audience. He compared coconut with that of date-palm. They look exactly the same except the one produced dates and bears the nuts as its fruits. The nut of a coconut resembles a man's head. He describes paan as a tree which is cultivated in the same manner as the grape-vine. The betel has no fruit and grown only for the sake of its leaves.

Ibn Battuta and Indian cities

Ibn Battuta found cities in the subcontinent full of exciting opportunities for those who are able and have resources and skills. The cities were densely populated and prosperous. Most cities had crowded streets and bright and colourful markets with wide variety of goods. He described Delhi as a vast city, with a great population, the largest in India. Daulatabad was equal in size of Delhi. The Bazaars were not only places of economic transaction but also the hub of social and cultural activities. Most bazaars had mosque and temple with spaces for public performances by dancers and singers. He found Indian agriculture was very productive because of the fertility of the soil. He says that there was a great demand for Indian textiles like cotton cloth, fine muslins, silks, brocade and satin. He further says that certain varieties of fine muslin were so expensive that could be worn only by the nobles and the very rich.

A unique system of communication

The state evidently took special measures to encourage merchants. Almost all trade routes were well supplied with inns and guest houses. He was amazed by the efficiency of the postal system. The Postal system was of two kinds. One was called uluq(horse post) and the other was dawa(foot post). This system enabled merchants to send information, remit credit across long distances and to dispatch goods required at short notice.

Francois Bernier (A doctor with a difference)

Francois Bernier was Frenchman, a doctor and a historian. He came to the Mughal court in search of opportunities. He lived in India for twelve years from 1656 to 1668. He was closely associated to the Mughal court as a physician to Prince Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of Emperor Shah Jahan.

Comparing East and West

Bernier travelled to different parts of the country and wrote accounts based on his own observations and compared the social conditions in India with the situations in Europe. He dedicated his works to Louis XIV, the king of France. His works were published in France in 1670-71 and translated into English, Dutch, German and Italian. Bernier's Travels in the Mughal Empire provides a detailed observations and critical insights. He constantly compared Mughal India with contemporary Europe. He emphasized the superiority of the European society.

The question of landownership

According to Bernier, one of the fundamental differences between Mughal India and Europe was the lack of private property in the Indian society. He had a firm belief in the virtues of private property. Crown ownership of land was harmful for both state and its people. He thought that the Mughal Emperor owned all land and distributed it among the nobles. He argued that lands under the crown ownership could not be passed on to their children. So they were averse to any long-term investment in the sustenance and expansion of production. The absence of private property prevented the emergence of the class of 'improving' landlords as it was in Western Europe to maintain and improve the land. It had ruined the agriculture and oppressed the peasants and the living standards of all sections in the society declined except the ruling aristocracy.

Bernier described Indian society as consisting of undifferentiated masses of a very rich and powerful ruling class. There was a wide gap between the poorest of poor and richest of the rich. He says "There is no middle state in India."

Bernier described the Mughal Empire as the king of "beggars and barbarians". Its cities and towns were ruined and contaminated with "ill air" and its fields "overspread with bushes "and full of "pestilential marishes". He attributed all these problems to the crown ownership of land. He says that there was the practice of crown ownership of land and no private ownership of land or private property. But none of the Mughal official documents show that the state was the sole owner of land. According to the official chronicler of Akbar's reign Abul Fazl, the Mughal Emperor collected only the remunerations from the people for the protection given by the state and no rent was collected. Bernier regarded the remuneration as land revenue since it was very high sometimes.

The idea of Oriental despotism

Bernier's descriptions of landownership influenced western theorists from the 18th century onwards. For instance, the French philosopher Montesquieu used Bernier's account and developed the idea of Oriental despotism. According to this idea in Asia (the Orient or the East) the kings enjoyed absolute authority over his subjects and owned all lands. There was no private property. All people except King and nobles struggled for survival.

The Concept of Asiatic mode of production

Karl Marx further developed the idea of Oriental despotism as Asiatic mode of production. Marx observes that before colonialism, surplus production was appropriated by the state. This led to the emergence of a society that was composed of a large number of

autonomous and egalitarian village communities. The imperial court respected these villages as long as the flow of surplus was continued. Marx regarded this as a stagnant system.

A more complex social reality

He felt that artisans had no incentive to improve the quality of their manufactures. The profit was appropriated by the state. Manufactures were consequently everywhere in decline. At the same time he agreed that vast quantities of the world's precious metals flowed into India, as manufactures were exported in exchange for gold and silver. He also mentioned that there existed a prosperous merchant community engaging in long distance trade.

During the 17th century about 15 percent of the population lived in towns. Bernier described Mughal cities as “camp towns”, which were dependent upon imperial patronage. There were all kinds of towns: manufacturing towns, trading towns, port-towns, sacred centres, pilgrimage towns etc. The existence of towns indicates the prosperity of merchant communities and professional classes. Merchants had a strong community or kin ties and were organized into their own caste –cum- occupational groups.

Urban groups included professional groups such as physicians(hakin or vaid),teachers(pundit or mulla),lawyers(wakil),painters,architects,musicians,calligraphers,etc. Some depended on imperial patronage; many made their living by serving other patrons while still others served ordinary people

6. Bhakti –Sufi Traditions

The Virashaiva Tradition in Karnataka



During the twelfth century, the Virashaiva movement was started by a Brahmana named Basavanna (1106-68). He was a Jain and a minister in the court of a Chalukya king. His followers were known as Virashaivas(heroes of Shiva) or Lingayats(wearers of the linga)

Lingayats are an important community in the region even today. They worship Shiva in the form of linga. They wear a small linga in a silver case over the left shoulder. Jangama or wandering monks are revered. Lingayats believe that after death, the devotee will be united with Shiva and will not return to this world. Therefore, they do not practice funerary rites such as cremation as prescribed in the Dharmashastras. Instead; they ceremonially bury their dead body.

The Lingayats challenged the idea of caste and the “pollution” attributed to some groups by Brahmanas. They also questioned the theory of rebirth. The Lingayats also encouraged certain practices disapproved in the Dharmashastras such as post puberty marriage and the remarriage of widows. These won them followers among those who were marginalized within the Brahmanical social order. Our knowledge about the Virashaiva tradition is came from vachanas (literally, sayings) composed in kannada.

The Growth of Sufism

Sufis were a group of religious minded people in Islam. The sufis turned to asceticism and mysticism in protest against the growing materialism of the Caliphate. They were critical of

the dogmatic definitions and scholastic methods of interpreting the Quran and Sunna(traditions of the prophet)adopted by theologians. They laid emphasis on seeking salvation through intense devotion and love for God. They sought an interpretation of the Quran on the basis of their personal experience.

Khanqahs and silsilas

By the eleventh century Sufism evolved into a well developed movement with a body of literature on Quranic studies and Sufi practices. The sufis began to organize communities around the hospice or Kanqah controlled by a teaching master known as shaikh, pir or murshid.He enrolled disciples and appointed a successor. He established rules for spiritual conduct and interaction between inmates as well as between laypersons and the master.

The word Silsila literally means a chain, signifying a continuous link between master and disciple, stretching as an unbroken spiritual genealogy to the Prophet Muhammed.Sufi silsilas began to appear in different parts of the Islamic world around the twelfth century.

Dargah is a Persian term. Its meaning is tomb-shrine. When the sheikh died, his tomb shrine became the centre of devotion for his followers. This encouraged the practice of pilgrimage or ziyarat to his grave, particularly on his death anniversary. It was believed that, after death the soul of sheikh get united with the soul of Allah. People sought their blessings to attain material and spiritual benefits. Thus evolved the cult of the sheikh revered as wali.

Some mystics took to radical interpretation of sufi ideals. Many scorned the khanqah and took to mendicancy and observed celibacy. They ignore rituals and observed extreme forms of asceticism. They were known by different names-Qlandars,Madaris,Malang,Haidaris etc. Because of the deliberate defiance of the sharia they were often referred to as be –sharia ,in contrast to the ba-sharia sufis who complied with it.

New devotional paths: Dialogue and Dissent in North India

Many poet saints engaged in explicit and implicit dialogue with these new social situations, ideas and institutions.

Kabir

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Kabir was one of the most outstanding examples of a poet-saint. Verses ascribed to Kabir have been compiled in three distinct traditions.

The Kabir Bijak is preserved by the Kabirpanth (the path or sect of Kabir) in Varanasi and in Uttar Pradesh. The Kabir Granthavali is associated with the Dadupanth in Rajasthan and many of his compositions are found in the Adi Granth Sahib. All these compilations were made after the death of Kabir.

Kabir's poems have survived in several languages and dialects and sometimes with special language of nirguna poets (the sant bhasha) and others known as ulatbansi(upside-down sayings)

Kabir tried to describe the Ultimate Reality including Islam. According to him the Ultimate Reality was Allah, Khuda, Hazrat and Pir. He also used certain Vedic terms such as Brahman and Atman. He also used some yogic traditional terms such as shabda(sound) or shunya(emptyness).

Some poems of Kabir expressed conflicting and diverse ideas. Some poems attacked Hindu polytheism and idol worship and others use sufi concept of zikr and ishq(love) to express the Hindu practice of nam-simaran(remembrance of God's name).

Historians have tried to analyse the language, style and content of these poems. Debates about whether Kabir was a Hindu or a Muslim by birth are well reflected in hagiographies. Hagiographies within the Vaishnava tradition suggest that he was born a Hindu, Kabirdas but brought up by a poor Muslim community of weavers. They also suggest that he was initiated into bhakti by a guru, Ramananda. The poems of Kabir used words guru and satguru but do not mention the name of any specific guru. Historians pointed out that it is very difficult to establish that Ramananda and Kabir were contemporaries.

Baba Guru Nanak

Baba Guru Nanak was born in a village called Nankana Sahib near Ravi in Punjab in 1469. He trained to be an accountant and studied Persian. He was married at a young age but he spent most of his time among sufis and bhaktas. He also travelled widely.

His teachings are well reflected in his hymns. These hymns suggest that he advocated a form of nirguna bhakti. He rejected sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship and the scriptures of Hindus and Muslims.

According to him, the Absolute or 'rab' had no gender or form. He proposed a simple way to connect to the Divine by remembering the Divine Name. He expressed his ideas through hymns called "shabad" in Punjabi, the language of the region and sang with different ragas. He organized his followers into a community. He set up rules for congregational worship (sangat). He appointed one of his disciples, Angad, to succeed him as the preceptor (guru).

Guru Nanak did not want to establish a new religion. After his death, his followers consolidated their own practices to form a distinct community. The fifth guru, Guru Arjun compiled Guru Nanak's hymns along with those of his four successors and other religious poets like Baba Farid, Ravidas and Kabir in the Adi Granth Sahib. These hymns called "gurbani" are composed in various languages.

The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, included the compositions of the ninth guru; Guru Tegh Bahadur. This scripture was called the Guru Grantha Sahib. Guru Gobind Singh also laid the foundation of the Khalsa Panth (army of the pure). He also defined its five symbols: Uncut hair, a dagger, a pair of shorts, a comb and a steel bangle. It was under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh that the community became a socio-religious and military force.

Mirabai

Mirabai is the best known woman poet within the bhakti tradition. She was a Rajput princess from Merta in Marwar. She was married to a prince of the Sisodia clan of Mewar against her wishes. She defied her husband and not submit to the traditional role of wife and mother. She recognized Krishna, the avatar of Vishnu as her lover. Her in-laws tried to poison her, but she escaped and lived as wandering singer composing songs with intense expressions of emotion. Her most famous preceptor was Raidas; a leather worker. It shows her defiance of the norms of caste society. She had donned the white robes of a widow or the saffron robe of the renouncer. Although she did not attract a sect or group of followers, she has been recognized as a source of inspiration for centuries. We get information about her from the bhajans attributed to her.

7. An Imperial Capital Vijayanagara

The capital and its Environs

Vijayanagara, was characterized by a distinctive physical layout and building style.

Water resources

Vijayanagara was located in the natural basin formed by the river Tungabhadra which flows in the north-easterly direction. Large granite hills formed a girdle around the city. A number of streams flow down to the river from the granite hills. Embankments were built along these streams to create reservoirs of different sizes. Since Vijayanagara was one of the most arid zones of the peninsula, elaborate arrangements were made to store rainwater to be used in the city.

Kamalapuram tank is the most important tank built in the early years of the 15th century. The Hiriya canal was one of the most prominent waterworks. This canal was built by kings of the sangama dynasty.

Fortification and roads

Abdul Razzak was an ambassador sent by the ruler of Persia to Calicut in the 15th century. He was greatly impressed by the fortifications and mentioned seven lines of the forts. The forts were encircled not only the city but also its agricultural hinterland and forests. The outermost wall linked the hills surrounding the city. The masonry construction was slightly tapered. No mortar or cementing agent was employed anywhere in the construction. The stone blocks were wedge shaped, which held them in place. The inner portion of the walls was of earth packed with rubble. Square or rectangular bastions projected outer wards.

The most important feature of the Vijayanagara fortification was its incorporation of the agricultural tracts, because the rulers were well prepared to face the sieges and its consequences.

Abdur Razzaq noted that “between the first, second and the third walls there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses” During the medieval period, the major objective of the sieges was to starve the defenders into submission. These sieges could continue for months and

sometimes even years. Rulers were ready to face it with proper arrangements by building large granaries within fortified areas. The rulers of Vijayanagara adopted a more expensive and elaborate method of protecting the agricultural belt itself by incorporating agricultural tracts in the fort.

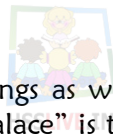
A second line of fortification went around the inner core of the urban complex. A third line surrounded the royal centre, within which each set of major buildings was surrounded by its own high walls.

The fort was entered through well-guarded gates leading to the major roads. Gateways were with defined architectural features. The arch on the gateway leading into the fortified settlement as well as the dome over the gate is regarded as typical features of the architecture introduced by the Turkish Sultans.

The Royal Centre

The royal centre was located in the south-western part of the settlement. It included 60 temples. The patronage of temples was important for rulers, because they were trying to establish their authority through association with the divinities housed in the shrines. About thirty buildings have been identified as palaces. The difference between temples and secular buildings was that temples were constructed entirely of masonry whereas materials used in the secular buildings were perishable.

The mahanavami dibba



Based on the form of the buildings as well as their functions some of structures have been assigned some names. The “king’s palace” is the largest of the enclosures but was not used as royal residence. It has two platforms:

1. The “audience hall”
2. The mahanavami dibba

The audience hall is a high platform with slots for wooden pillars at close and regular intervals. It had a staircase going up to the second floor, which rested on these pillars. The mahanavami dibba is a massive platform raising from a base of about 11,000sq ft. to a height of 40 ft. There is evidence that it supported a wooden structure. The base of the platform is covered with relief carvings.

The mahanavami festival was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Vijayanagar Empire. Literally, mahanavami means the great ninth day. Mahanavami is a ten day Hindu festival (during September and October) known variously as Dussehra (northern India), Durga Puja (in Bengal) and Navaratri or Mahanavami (in Peninsular India). The Vijayanagara kings displayed their prestige, power and suzerainty on this occasion. The ceremonies performed on the occasion included worship of the image, worship of the state horse and the sacrifice of buffaloes and other animals. Dances, wrestling matches, and processions of caparisoned horses, elephants and chariots and soldiers, as well as ritual presentations before the king and his guests by the chief nayakas and subordinate kings marked the occasion. These ceremonies were imbued with deep symbolic meanings. On the last day of the festival the king inspected his army and the armies of the nayakas in a grand ceremony in an open field. On this occasion the nayakas brought rich gifts for the king as well as the stipulated tribute.

Other buildings in the royal centre

One of the beautiful buildings in the royal centre is the **Lotus Mahal**. According to Mackenzie; it may have been a council chamber, a place where the king met his advisers. One of the most spectacular buildings found in the royal centre is the **Hazara Rama temple**. This was probably meant to be used only by the king and his family.

The sacred centre

Choosing a capital

The hills of northern region sheltered the monkey kingdom of Vali and Sugriva mentioned in the Ramayana. Other traditions suggest that Pampadevi, the local mother goddess, did penance in these hills in order to marry Virupaksha, the guardian deity of the kingdom, also recognized as a form of Shiva.

The Vijayanagara kings encouraged temple building as it conveyed a divine association between the deity and the king. The Vijayanagara kings claimed to rule on behalf of the god Virupaksha. All royal orders were signed “Shri Virupaksha”, usually in the Kannada script. Rulers also indicated their close links with the gods by using the title “Hindu Suratrana”. This was a Sanskritisation of the Arabic term Sultan, meaning king, so literally meant Hindu Sultan.

The Vijayanagara kings made grants to temples. Temples developed as centres of social and cultural activities. The king's visits to the temples were important occasions and he was accompanied by nayakas.



Gopurams and mandapas

During this period, certain new features were evident in the temple architecture. These included structures of enormous size that must have been built to mark the imperial authority. One of the best examples is rayas gopurams or royal gateways that often dwarfed the towers on the central shrines. These gopurams signaled the presence of the temple from a great distance. These towering gateways also reminded about the power of the king who could command the resources techniques and skills that was required to construct them. Another distinctive feature of the temple architecture was **mandapas** or pavilion and long, pillared corridors that often ran around the shrines within the temple complex. One of the best examples is the Virupaksha temple. The Virupaksha temple was built over centuries. Inscriptions suggest that this shrine date to the ninth-tenth centuries. On the occasion of his coronation, Krishnadeva Raya built the elaborate hall in front of the main shrine. The hall was adorned with delicately carved pillars. Eastern gopuram was also built by him.

The halls in the temple were used for a variety of purposes. In some spaces, images of gods were placed to witness special programmes of music, dance, drama, etc. Others were used to celebrate the marriages of the deities, and yet, others were meant for the deities to swing in. On such occasions, small images other than those kept in the central shrine were used. In the Vitthala temple, the principal deity was Vitthala, a form of Vishnu generally worshipped in Maharashtra. This temple has several halls and a unique shrine designed as a chariot. A characteristic feature of the temple complex is the chariot streets that extended from the temple

gopuram in a straight line. These streets were paved with stone slabs and lined with pillared pavilions where merchants set up their shops.

8. Peasants, Zamindars and the State

Peasants and agricultural Production

The basic unit of agricultural society was the village, inhabited by peasants who performed the manifold seasonal tasks. Several kinds of areas such as large tracts of dry land or hilly regions were not cultivable. In addition, forest areas made up a substantial proportion of territory.

The major source for the agrarian history of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries are chronicles and documents from the Mughal court. Ain I Akbari meticulously recorded the arrangements made by the state. Other sources are detailed revenue records from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Besides, extensive records of the East India Company provide us with useful descriptions of agrarian relations in eastern India. All these sources record instances of conflicts between Peasants, Zamindars and the state. In the process they give us an insight into peasants' perception of and their expectations of fairness from the state.

Peasants and their lands

The terms most frequently used to denote a peasant were raiyat or muzarian, kisan or asami. There is reference of two kinds of peasants in the seventeenth century- khud-kashta and pahi-kashta.

- The khud-kashta were residents of the village in which they held their lands.
- The pahi-kashta were non-resident cultivators who belonged to some other village, but cultivated lands elsewhere on a contractual basis.

An average peasant of north India did not possess more than a pair of bullock carts and two ploughs, most of them possessed even less. In Gujarat peasants possessing about six acres of land were considered to be affluent. In Bengal, five acres was the upper limit of an average peasant farm. Cultivation was based on the principle of individual ownership. Peasants bought and sold their lands like other property owners.

Women in Agrarian Society

Women worked shoulder to shoulder with men in fields. Men tilled and ploughed, while women sowed, weeded, threshed and winnowed the harvest. Biases related to women's biological functions did continue. Menstruating women, for instance, were not allowed to touch the plough or the potter's wheel in western India, or enter the groves where betel-leaves were grown. Artisanal tasks such as spinning yarn, sifting and kneading clay for pottery, and embroidery were among the many aspects of production dependent on female labour.

Women were considered an important resource in agrarian society also because they were child bearers in a society which depends on labour. At the same time, high mortality rates among women – owing to malnutrition, frequent pregnancies and death during childbirth – often meant a shortage of wives. Marriages in many rural communities required the payment of bride-price rather than dowry to the bride's family. Remarriage was considered legitimate both among divorced and widowed women.

According to established social norms, the household was headed by a male. Thus women were kept under strict control by the male members of the family and the community. Women sent petitions to the village panchayat, seeking redress and justice. Wives protested against the infidelity of their husbands or the neglect of the wife and children by the male head of the household.

Amongst the landed gentry, women had the right to inherit property. Instances from the Punjab show that women, including widows, actively participated in the rural land market as sellers of property inherited by them. Hindu and Muslim women inherited zamindaris which they were free to sell or mortgage. Women zamindars were known in eighteenth-century Bengal.

9. Kings and Chronicles

Akbar Nama



Abul Fazl was the author of Akbar Nama. He was well versed with Arabic, Persian, Greek philosophy and Sufism. He was a forceful debater and independent thinker who consistently opposed the views of the conservative ulama. These qualities impressed Akbar, who found Abul Fazl ideally suited as an adviser and spokesperson for his policies.

Emperor's objective was to free the state from the control of religious orthodoxy. In his role as court historian, Abul Fazl both shaped and articulated the ideas associated with the reign of Akbar. Abul Fazl was murdered by Bir Singh Bundela an accomplice of Prince Salim (Jahangir) who conspired the killing.

The Akbar Nama is one of the important illustrated official histories. The manuscript has an average of 150 full or double page paintings of battles, sieges, hunts, building construction and court scenes. In 1589, Abul Fazl worked on the Akbar Nama for thirteen years, repeatedly revising the draft. The chronicle is based on a range of sources, including actual records of events (waqai), official documents and oral testimonies of knowledgeable persons. The Akbar Nama is divided into three books.

- The first two are chronicles and the third is Ain-i-Akbari. The first volume starts from the history of mankind from Adam to one celestial cycle of Akbar's life (30 years).
- The second volume closes in the forty sixth regnal year (1601) of Akbar. The Akbar Nama was written to provide detailed information of the political events of Akbar's reign.
- The third volume is the Ain-i-Akbari.

The Akbar Nama was written to provide a detailed description of Akbar's reign in the traditional sense of recording politically significant events across time, as well as in the more novel sense of giving a synchronic picture of all aspects of Akbar's empire-geographic, social, administrative and cultural-without reference to chronology. In the Ain-i-Akbari the Mughal

Empire is presented as having a diverse population consisting of Hindus, Jainas, Buddhists and Muslims and a composite culture. Abul Fazl wrote in a language that was ornate and which attached importance to diction and rhythm, as texts were often read aloud. The Indo-Persian style was patronized at court, and there were a large number of writers who wanted to write like Abul Fazl.

The Badshah Nama

A pupil of Abul Fazl, Abdul Hamid Lahori is known as the author of the Badshah Nama. Emperor Shah Jahan, hearing of his talents, commissioned him to write a history of his reign modelled on the Akbar Nama.

The Badshah Nama is the official history in three volumes (daftars) of ten lunar years each. Lahori wrote the first and second daftars comprising the first two decades of the emperor's rule (1627-47). Sadullah Khan, Shah Jahan's wazir, later revised these volumes. The historian Waris chronicles the third decade. British administrators began to study Indian history and to create an archive of knowledge about the subcontinent to help them better understand the people and the cultures of the empire they sought to rule.

Capitals and the courts

Capital cities

The heart of the Mughal Empire was its capital city. The capital cities of the Mughals were frequently shifted during the 16th and 17th centuries. Babur took over the Lodi capital of Agra. During the 1560s Akbar had the fort of Agra constructed with red sandstone.

In the 1570s, he built a new capital Fatehpur Sikri. It was located on the direct road to Ajmer where the dargah of Shaikh Muinuddin Chishti had become an important pilgrimage centre. The Mughal Emperors shared a close relationship with the sufis of the Chishti silsila. Akbar constructed a white marble tomb for Shaikh Salim Chishti near Friday mosque at Sikri. The enormous arched gateway (Buland Darwaza) was meant to remind visitors of the Mughal victory in Gujarat.

The capital was shifted to Lahore in 1585 in order to strengthen the control over north-west. Akbar monitored it closely for thirteen years.

In 1648, the capital was shifted to Shahjahanabad. It was a new addition to the old residential city of Delhi with Red Fort, the Jami Masjid, a tree-lined esplanade with bazaars (Chandni Chowk) and spacious homes for the nobility. Shahjahan's new city was appropriate to a more formal vision of a grand monarchy.

10. Colonialism and the Countryside

The Hoe and the Plough

In the hills of Ramahal

Francis Buchanan was a physician and an employee of the English East India Company. He travelled the Rajmahal hills in the early 19th century. According to his description, the hills

were very thick and impenetrable. It was an area that signified danger. Wherever he went, people were hostile and were apprehensive of officials.

Buchanan's journal gives us information about the Paharias of the Rajmahal hills. His journal was written as a diary of places he visited. The Paharias were the hill folk and lived around the Rajmahal hills at the late eighteenth century. Their main activities were to collect forest produce and practice shifting cultivation. They cleared patches of forest by cutting bushes and burning the undergrowth. These patches were enriched by the potash from the ash. They grew variety of pulses and millets for their own consumption. They scratched the ground slightly with hoes and cultivated the cleared land for years. Then left it fallow to get its fertility and moved to new areas. Their main forest produces were mahua(a flower) for food ,silk cocoons and resin for sale and wood for charcoal production. They were hunters, shifting cultivators, food gatherers, charcoal producers, silkworm rearers and strongly connected to the forest.

The Paharias frequently raided the plains of the settled agriculturists. These raids were important for them at the time of scarcity. Their raids were a way of asserting means of negotiating political relations with outsiders. The zamindars on the plain areas had to pay regular tribute to the hill chief of the Paharias.Traders gave a small amount to the Paharias for permission to use the passes controlled by them. For this small tribute the Paharia chiefs protected the traders and ensured that their goods were not looted by anyone. In the last decades of the 18th century when the British, jotedars and zamindars started occupying the lands of the Paharias.

During the 1770s the British a policy of extermination of the Paharias.But in 1780s when Augustus Cleveland became collector of Bhagalpur, he proposed for pacification with the Paharias. The Paharia chiefs were given an annual allowance and made responsible for the proper conduct of his people. They were also assigned the responsibility of maintaining the law and order in their areas.

The Santhals: Pioneer settlers

The Santhals had come to the **Rajmahal hills** in 1780s.The British officials invited them to settle in the Jangal Mahals.The British gave land to the Sanathals and persuaded them to settle in the foothills of Rajmahal. By 1832 a large area was demarcated as **Damin-i-Koh** and was declared as the land of the Santhals who lived within it. After the demarcation, the settlement areas of the Santhals expanded rapidly from 40 Santhal villages in 1838 to 1,473 villages by 1851. Their population increased from a mere 3,000 to over 82,000.Santhal myths and songs of the 19th century refer frequently to a long history of travel. They represent the Santhal past as one of continuous mobility, a tireless search for a place to settle.

The Santhals soon realized that the land they bought under cultivation was slipping out of their hands. The British started levying taxes on those lands and the money lenders were charging them with high rate of interest and took over their land in case of defaulters. By 1850s they realized that the time had come to rebel against zamindars, moneylenders and the colonial state in order to create an ideal world that would be ruled by the Santhals themselves. It was after the Santhal Revolt (1855-56) that the Santhal Pargana was created. The pargana was carved out of 5,500 square miles from the districts of Bhagalpur and Birbhum.

11. Rebels and the Raj

Leaders and followers

The rebels needed leadership and organization to fight against the British. They appealed to the old Mughal emperor to accept the leadership of the revolt. He agreed to be the nominal leader of the rebellion. In Kanpur, Nana Sahib, the successor of Peshwa Baji Rao II became the leader of the revolt. In Jhansi, Rani Lakshmi Bai was forced to assume the leadership of the uprising. In Arrah in Bihar, Kunwar Singh, a local zamindar became leader under popular pressure. In Awadh, the displacement of the popular nawab Wajid Ali Shah and the annexation of the state were still very fresh in the mind of the people. In Lucknow; people celebrated the fall of British rule by declaring Birjis Qadr, the young Nawab as their leader.

Local leaders were also emerged in several areas and urged the peasants, zamindars and tribals to revolt. Shah Mal organized the villagers of pargana Barout in Uttar Pradesh. Gonoo, a tribal cultivator of Singhbhum in Chotanagapur, emerged as a rebel leader of the Kol tribals of the region.

Rumours and prophecies

Rumours and prophecies played an important part in moving people in to action during the Revolt of 1857.

- The sepoys had the fear about bullets coated with the fats of cows and pigs, and biting those bullets would corrupt their caste and religion. This rumour about the greased cartridges spread like wild fire across the sepoy lines of North India.
- There was the rumour that the British government had hatched a gigantic conspiracy to destroy the caste and religion of the Hindus and Muslims. The rumour said that the British had mixed the bone dust of cows and pigs into flour that was sold in the market. The sepoys and the common people refused to touch the atta.
- There was fear and suspicion that the British wanted to convert Indians to Christianity.
- The prophecy that the British rule coming to an end on the centenary of the Battle of Plassey also reinforced the call for a revolt against the masters (23 June 1857).

Images of the Revolt

We know about the activities of the rebels primarily through accounts written by the British. Official accounts of colonial administration and military men include diaries, autobiography and official histories. The changing attitudes of the British were evident through the memos, notes, and assessments of situations. These tell us about the fears and anxieties of officials and their perception of the rebels. The stories of the revolt that were published in British newspapers and magazines narrated in gory detail the violence of mutineers. These stories narrated the violence of the mutineers, inflamed public feelings and provoked demands of retribution and revenge. Pictorial images were produced by both British and Indians- Paintings, pencil drawings, cartoons, bazaar prints.

Celebrating the saviours

British pictures offer a variety of images that were meant to provoke a range of different emotions and reactions. Some of the British pictures commemorate the British heroes who saved the English and repressed the rebels. Relief of Lucknow was painted by Thomas Jones Barker in 1859. It represents the siege of Lucknow by mutineers. James Outram, Henry Havelock and Colin Campbell rescued the besieged British garrison in Lucknow.

English women and the honour of Britain

The British government was asked to protect the honour of innocent women and safety of helpless children. Artists expressed as well as shaped these sentiments through their visual representations of trauma and suffering. In memoriam was painted by Joseph Noel Paton. Helpless English women and children huddled in a circle waiting for the inevitable dishonour, violence and death. It represents the rebels as violent. In the background the British rescue forces arriving as saviours. In another painting, Miss Wheeler is shown as defending herself against the attack of rebels. It has a deeper connotation. It is a battle to save the honour of Christianity

Vengeance and retribution

The visual representation, Justice is an allegorical female figure with a sword in one hand and a shield in the other. Her aggressive posture demand desire for revenge.

The performance of terror



The urge for vengeance and retribution was expressed in the brutal way in which the rebels were executed. They were blown from guns or hung from the gallows. Images of these executions were widely circulated through popular journals. The image of British Lions Vengeance on the Bengal Tiger and Execution of mutineers in Peshawar proves that the British adopted a policy of repression to create terror among people.

No time for clemency

When Governor General Canning declared that a gesture of leniency and show of mercy would help in winning back the loyalty of the sepoys, he was mocked in the British press. The clemency of Canning is a cartoon published in the Punch Magazine. This shows that there was no time for leniency against the sepoys

Nationalist imageries

The nationalist movement drew its inspiration from the events of 1857. A whole world of nationalist imagination was woven around the revolt. It was celebrated as the first war of Independence. All sections of the people of India came together to fight against imperial rule. Art and literature had helped in keeping alive the memories of 1857.

Rani Lakshmi bai and other leaders of the revolt were presented as heroic figures. She is portrayed in battle armour, with sword in hand and a riding horse. She is represented as a symbol of the determination to resist injustice and alien rule. Heroic poems were written about Rani Subhadra kumara Chauhan wrote Khoob lari mardani who to Jhansi wali rani thi (Like a man she fought, she was the Rani of Jhansi).

12. Mahatma Gandhi and The Nationalist Movement

A Leader Announces Himself

Mahatma Gandhi was the most influential and revered of all the leaders who participated in the freedom struggle of India. Mahatma Gandhi returned to India in 1915, after spending two decades in South Africa. Historian Chandran Devanesan has rightly remarked that “South Africa was the making of the Mahatma”. It was in South Africa that Mahatma Gandhi adopted his technique of non violent protest known as Satyagraha and promoted harmony between religions.

The India that Mahatma Gandhi came back to in 1915 was different from the one that he had left in 1893. Although still a colony of the British; it was far more active in the political sense. The Indian National Congress now had branches in most major cities and towns. Through the Swadeshi movement of 1905-07 it had greatly broadened its appeal among the middle classes. That movement had thrown up some towering leaders -among them Bal Gangadhar Tilak of Maharashtra, Bipin Chandra Pal of Bengal, and Lala Lajpat Rai of Punjab known as “Lal, Bal and Pal”. While these leaders advocated militant opposition to colonial rule, there was a group of “moderates” who Preferred a more gradual and persuasive approach. Among these moderates was Goplala Krishna Gokhale as well as Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Gandhi's first major public appearance was at the opening of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) In February 1916. Here in his speech, Gandhiji charged the Indian elite with a lack of concern for the laboring poor. Gandhi's speech was a statement of intent to make Indian nationalism more properly representative of the Indian people as a whole.

The Making and Unmaking of Non-cooperation

In 1917, Mahatma Gandhi organized a Satyagraha in Champaran (Bihar) seeking the security of tenure as well as the freedom to grow crops as per their wish. Gandhiji was involved in two campaigns in his home state of Gujarat. Firstly, he participated in the Ahmadabad textile mill strike of February-March 1918, demanding better working conditions for the textile mill workers. Secondly, he joined the peasants in Kheda Satyagraha who demanded remission of taxes from the state following the failure of their harvest. It was in Kheda that Mahatma Gandhi initiated the first Satyagraha revolution.

During the Great War of 1914-18, the British had instituted censorship of the press. The Rowlatt Act was passed by the British government in India in March 1919. This act authorized the government to imprison, without trial any person suspected of terrorism. Gandhiji called for a country wide agitation against the Rowlatt Act. On April 6th a hartal was declared by Gandhiji. The protests against the Rowlatt Act were intense in the Punjab. Gandhiji was detained while proceeding to Punjab. Prominent local congressmen were arrested. The situation grew progressively more tense, reaching a climax in Amritsar in April 1919, when a British Brigadier ordered his troops to open fire on a nationalist meeting. More than 400 people were killed in what is known as the Jalliwala Bagh massacre. It was the Rowlatt Act that made Gandhiji a truly

national leader. Encouraged by its success, Gandhiji called for a campaign of Non-cooperation with the British rule.

Knitting a popular movement

Gandhi decided to couple the khilafat issue with the Non-Cooperation .He wanted to bring Hindus and Muslims collectively to end colonial rule. During non cooperation movement:

- Students stopped going to schools and colleges run by the British government.
- Lawyers refused to attend court.
- Working class went on strike in many towns and cities.
- Hill tribes in Northern Andhra violated the forest laws.
- Farmers in Awadh refused to pay taxes.

Protest movements were sometimes carried out in defiance of the local nationalist leadership Gandhiji taught the people self discipline, renunciation, self-denial, Ahimsa, Satyagraha. The aim of the movement was self rule. The Movement shook the foundation of the British rule in India. Many Indians including Gandhiji were put in jail. In February 1922, a group of peasants attacked and fired a police station at Chauri Chaura in U.P. Several policemen were killed. This act of violence prompted Gandhi to call off the movement.



A people's leader

By 1922, Gandhiji had transformed the nationalism. It was no longer a movement of professionals and intellectuals. Now hundreds of thousands of peasants, workers, and artisans also participated in it. Many of them venerated Gandhiji, referring to him as their “Mahatma”. The people appreciated the fact that he dressed like them, lived like them, and spoke their language. He identified himself with common man. This was strikingly reflected in his dress. While other nationalist leaders dressed formally, wearing a western suit or an Indian bandgala, Gandhiji went among the people in a simple dhoti or loin cloth. Meanwhile, he spent part of each day working on the charkha (spinning wheel) and encouraged other nationalists to do likewise. The act of spinning allowed Gandhiji to break the boundaries that prevailed within the traditional caste system, between mental labour and manual labour.

There were some rumours of Gandhiji's miraculous powers. In some places it was said that he had been sent by the king to redress the grievances of the farmers and that he had the power to overrule all local officials. Gandhiji's appeal among the poor and peasants, in particular, was enhanced by his ascetic life style. It was also claimed that Gandhi's power was superior to that of the English Monarch and with his arrival colonial rulers would flee the district. Stories spread of dire consequences for those who opposed him. Those who criticized Gandhi found their houses mysteriously falling apart or their crops failing. Gandhiji appeared to the Indian peasant as a saviour, who could rescue them from high taxes and oppressive officials and restore dignity and autonomy to their lives.

The base of Indian National Movement broadened under Gandhiji. He brought changes in the congress organization. New branches of the congress were set up in various parts of India. Prajamandals were established to promote nationalism in the princely states. The provincial

committees of the congress were based on linguistic divisions rather than the artificial boundaries set up by the British administration. Gandhiji advocated the spreading of the nationalist message in the mother tongue, rather than English –language of the British-and thus, nationalist message was carried to parts of India and to social groups previously untouched by it. Prosperous businessmen and industrialists were quick to recognize that in free India the favours enjoyed by their British competitors would come to an end. So they wasted no time and joined the congress as the Indian entrepreneurs. For example, G.D Birla supported the national movement openly. Highly talented Indians attached themselves to Gandhiji.

Mahatma Gandhi was released from prison in February 1924. He devoted himself in constructive work like the promotion of home-spun cloth khadi, the abolition of untouchability, Hindu- Muslim unity etc. Gandhiji was as much a social reformer as he was a politician. He took steps to remove social evils such as child marriage and untouchability. He gave emphasis on Hindu Muslim harmony. Meanwhile on the economic front Indians had to learn to become self-reliant –hence he stressed on the significance of wearing khadi rather than mill-made cloth imported from overseas.

The Salt Satyagraha- A case study

In 1928, Gandhiji began to think of re –entering politics. In 1927 the Simon Commission was appointed to enquire into conditions in the colony. In 1928, there was an all India campaign in opposition to the all white commission sent to India. Gandhiji did not himself participate in this movement since he was engaged in a peasant satyagraha in Bardoli. In the end of December 1929, the congress held its annual session in the city of Lahore. The meeting was significant for two reasons: the election of Jawaharlal Nehru as president, signifying the passing of the leadership of congress to younger generation, and the proclamation of commitment to “poorna swaraj” or complete independence. On 26 January 1930, “Independence Day” was observed, with the national flag being hoisted at different venues.

Dandi

Soon after the observance of this Independence Day, Gandhi announced the Salt March. The state monopoly over salt was deeply unpopular. Gandhiji hoped to mobilize a wider level of discontent against British rule. Salt was an indispensable item in every Indian house. People were forbidden from making salt even for domestic use. British compelled them to buy salt from shops at a higher price.

On 12 March 1930, Gandhi began his march from his Sabarmati Ashram. He reached Dandi three weeks later and made a handful of salt and thereby breaking the law. Parallel salt marches and protests were also conducted in other parts of the country.

- Peasants breached colonial forest laws.
- Factory workers went on strike
- Lawyers boycotted British courts
- Students refused to attend government run educational institutions.

Gandhiji’s call had encouraged Indians of all classes. The police spies reported that all men and women and all castes attended the meetings of Gandhi. The Salt March of Gandhiji was reported in the American news magazine, Time. Its report was deeply sceptical of the salt march

reaching its destination. But shortly it changed its view and saluted Gandhi as a saint and statesman.

Dialogues

The Salt March was notable for at least three reasons.

1. It brought Mahatma Gandhi to world attention. The March was widely covered by the European and American press.
2. It was the first nationalist activity in which women participated in large numbers. The socialist activists Kamaladevi Chatterjee had persuaded Gandhi not to restrict the protests to men alone. She herself courted arrest by breaking salt and liquor laws.
3. It made the British realize that their rule was not to last forever, and they would have to share some power with the Indians. To discuss the same the British tried to hold Round Table Conference in London.

In January 1931, Mahatma Gandhi was released from jail. After that many meetings were held with the Viceroy and it culminated in the Gandhi-Irwin pact. It was declared to call off Civil Disobedience Movement; all prisoners who were put in jail without trial to be released and to allow salt manufacturing along the coasts. Gandhiji represented the congress at Second Round Table Conference at London.

The first Round Table Conference was held in London in November 1930 but it ended without any fruitful decision due to the absence of major Indian nationalist leaders. A Second Round Table Conference was held in London in the latter part of 1931. Gandhiji represented the congress and claimed that his party represented all of India three parties, the Muslim League, the Princes, and the lawyer thinker B.R. Ambedkar opposed that claim. The conference in London was inconclusive, so Gandhi returned to India and resumed civil disobedience movement.

In 1935, the Government of India Act was passed which promised some form of representative government. In 1937, for the first time, elections were held on restricted franchise and congress party held a majority in the legislature. It won the election in 8 out of 11 provinces. In 1939, World War II broke out and the Indian leaders agreed to support the British as long as they promised to grant Indian Independence after the war. The offer was refused and in October 1939, congress ministries resigned. In protest a series of Satyagraha were organized by the congress to pressurize the British to promise the freedom once the war ended. In March 1940, Muslim League passed a resolution demanding and planning to create a separate nation for Muslims. In 1942, worried on the continuous spread of nationalist movement prime minister of England Winston Churchill sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India to try to reach to a compromise with Gandhi and the congress. The Cripps Mission failed as no agreement to grant Independence to India could be made.

Quit India

After the failure of the Cripps Mission, Quit India Movement was launched in August 1942 by Mahatma Gandhi. It was the third major movement against the British rule. Gandhiji and other important leaders were arrested and jailed. The movement went into the hands of younger leaders. They organized strikes and acts of sabotage all over the country. Particularly

active in the underground resistance were socialist members of the congress such as Jayaprakash Narayan. Independent governments were proclaimed in several districts, such as Satara in the west and Midnapur in the east. Quit India was genuinely a mass movement, bringing in to its ambit hundreds of thousands of ordinary Indians. It especially energized the youth who left their colleges to go to jail. In 1943, some of the younger leaders in the Satara district of Maharashtra set up parallel government (pratisarkar), with volunteer corps (sebadals) and village units (tufan dals). They ran peoples courts and organized constructive work.

13. Understanding Partition

Gendering Partition

“Recovering” women

Women were raped, abducted, sold, forced to settle down to a new life with strangers in unknown circumstances. They had undergone to develop new family bonds in their changed circumstances. However, the Indian and Pakistani govts were insensitive to human relationships, and they now tore them away from their new relatives, and sent them back to their earlier families or locations. They did not consult the concerned women, undermining their right to take decisions regarding their own lives.

Preserving “honour”

Ideas of preserving community honour came in to play in this period of extreme physical and psychological danger. For preserving community honour, men killed “their” women -wives, sisters, daughters. They also forced “their” women to commit suicide to save them from falling into the hands of enemies. Urvashi Bhutalia in her book, *The Other Side of Silence*, narrates one incident in the village of Thoa Khalsa, Rawalpindi district. Ninety women are said to have voluntarily jumped into a well rather than fall into enemy hands. For the community of survivors, the remembrance ritual helps keep the memory alive.

Oral Testimonies and History

Historians used official documents and oral histories for the reconstruction of the history of partition.

Strengths of oral history

- Oral history helps us in understanding the trials and tribulations of common masses
- Oral histories help to capture memories in detail
- It helps us grasp experiences and memories in detail.
- It helps to write richly textured vivid accounts.
- It is impossible to extract this kind of information from government documents
- Oral histories describe the day - to - day experiences of the people
- Government documents would only tell us the negotiations between the British and the political parties. Oral histories would, on the other hand, tell us about the experiences of the people.

- Oral histories help historians to broaden the horizons of their discipline. They allow historians to do this by rescuing from oblivion the lived experiences of the poor and the powerless.

Limitations of oral history

- Oral history may lack concreteness and the chronology may be imprecise.
- As each experience is unique, it becomes difficult to generalize. A large picture cannot be built from micro evidence.
- Historians believe that oral accounts are only concerned with tangential issues. Individual experiences in oral histories are irrelevant to the unfolding of larger processes of history.
- At times it becomes difficult to locate the people and thus it is hard to reconstruct the past on the basis of few testimonies.
- Difficult to retrieve complete information

14. Pre modern Kerala

Iron Age (300 BCE to 500 CE)

Megalithic phase

The earliest known phase of Kerala is the Megalithic phase or Iron Age and the early historic period. The main archaeological evidence of this period is the burial monuments like rock cut chambers, kudakkals, toppikkals, dolmens, cists, burial urns, sarcophagus, menhirs etc. Burial goods from these monuments include potteries, iron objects, stone beads and bone fragments. Generally all types of burial monuments are mentioned as the Megaliths. Megalith means big stone. Burial monuments are known as Megaliths. All burial monuments are not megaliths. For example urn and sarcophagus made of clay. Scholars differ regarding the chronology of the megaliths of Kerala. The period of megaliths is in between 300 BCE and 500 CE. This period is generally considered as the Iron Age and Early historic period in Kerala. During this period, Kerala was a part of Tamizhakam extended from Venkatam in the north to Kanyakumari in the south.

Forms of subsistence

The people during this period practiced multiple subsistence form such as hunting, food gathering, cattle rearing, plunder, slash and burn cultivation, wetland cultivation, pottery making, metal smelting, fishing, salt making.

Tinaiis

The anthologies of ancient Tamil poetry popularly referred to as Sangam literature mentions five Tinaiis or eco zones. According to it, Tamizhakam was divided into five zones.

Tinai	Eco zone	Occupation	Inhabitants
Kurinchi	Hilly forest region	Hunting and food gathering	Kuravar,Kanavar,Vetar
Mullai	Pastoral region	Cattle rearing	Idayar,Ayar
Palai	Dry land	Plunder	Maravar,Kalavar
Marutham	Wet plains	Agriculture	Uzhavar,Thozhuvar
Neital	Coastal area	Fishing and salt making	Paratar,Meenavar

15. Kerala Towards Modernity

Early resistance against colonialism

The Pazhassi Revolt

Kerala varma pazhassi Raja was the leader of the Pazhassi revolt. The pazhassi revolt had two phases.



The first phase (1793-1797)

The British revenue policy was the cause of the first revolt Pazhassi supported the British against Tipu sultan. After the treaty of srirangapattanam, the British gave Veera Varma of Kurumbranad, the right of revenue collection. This infuriated Pazhassi and with the help of Mappilas, Nairs and the tribals, he gave a stiff resistance against the British forces. Finally the British forces withdrew from wayanad and compromised with Pazhassi.

The second phase (1800 -1805)

The Kurichiyas and Kurumbas of wayanad had formed the militia of the Raja. Thomas Harvey Baber, the sub collector of Thalasseri led a native force of Kolkars against the Raja at Pulpalli. Thomas Harvey Baber, the sub collector of Thalasseri led a native force of Kolkars against the Raja at Pulpalli. On the 30th November 1805 Pazhassi was killed at Mavilathodu in Wayanad

Velu Thampi and Paliath Achan

In 1800, Col.Macaulay was appointed as the British Resident for Travancore and Kochi. In 1805 the British signed a treaty with the ruler of Travancore. By this treaty Travancore lost its political independence. The Resident began to interfere in the internal affairs of Travancore. The

Resident demanded the payment of tribute. Resident cancelled the order of the Dalawa attaching the property of Mathu Tharakan who was a defaulter. This forced Dalawa to organize an armed revolt against the company. He entered into a secret deal with Paliath Achan, the chief minister of Kochi. He also sought French help from Mauritius. The native armies attacked the camp of Macaulay at Kochi in December 1808. Macaulay escaped from Kochi. Velu Thampi came to Kundara and issued the famous Kundara Proclamation in January 1809. It made a call to the people to get their support. The British attacked Kochi and Paliath Achan was defeated. Ummuni Thampi, the new Dalawa ordered to capture Velu Thampi. Velu Thampi took asylum in a house at Mannadi. He was surrounded by the forces of enemy. He committed suicide to avoid the disgrace of being captured alive.

Kurichya Revolt (1812)

The Kurichyas and the Kurumbas were the tribals of wayanad. They were forced to pay the revenue in cash rather than in kind. Rama Namby was the leader of the rebels. The British captured him and suppressed the Kurichya revolt.

Mappila Revolts

There were a series of violent disturbances occurred in south Malabar throughout the nineteenth century. These disturbances are known as Mappila outbreaks. William Logan was appointed to enquire into the agrarian problems of Malabar. He reported that these outbreaks were results of the agrarian discontent and poverty caused by the revenue policy of the British. Mappila outbreaks culminated in the Malabar Rebellion of 1921.

Social Reform

The 19th century Kerala society witnessed many religious superstitions and social inequality. Abuses and superstitions were existed in all castes. Social reform movements arose in order to eliminate such evils.

Reformer	Movement	Publication	Reform
Vaikunda Swamikal	Samatva Samajam	Akhila Thiruttu, Arulnul	Mirror consecration, path of the father (Aiyavazhi)
Sree Narayana Guru	SNDP	Atmopadesa satakam, Daivadesatakam, Darshanamala, Sivasatakam, Navamanjari	Abolition of superstitions and caste system, western education, one caste one religion one god for man, aruvippuram consecration in 1888
Chattampi Swamikal		Prachina Malayalam, Adibhasha, Vedadhikara Nirupanam	Opposed caste system, irrational practices, challenged Brahmin monopoly in Vedic scriptures.
Ayyankali	Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham		Stood for opening public roads, civic rights, education for lower castes, Organised Kallumala agitation

Vakkom Abdul Khader Maulavi	Travancore Muslim Mahjana Sabha	Swadeshabhimani, Al-Islam	Discard un-Islamic practices, advised western education
Vaghbhatananda	Atmavidya sangham	Abhinava Keralam, Atmavidya Kahalam	Favored temple entry right of the lower castes, took interest in the economic progress of weaker sections, promoted rationalism, critical thinking
Mar Kuriakos Elias Chavara		Atmanutapam, Idayanadakangal, Dhyanasallapangal, Naalagamangal	Established schools, orphanages, Sanskrit school at Mannanam, Kottayam.
V.T Bhattathirippad		Adukkalayil ninnum Arangathekku	Ridiculed the ill-treatment felt by the Nambudiri women, opposed dowry system, practice of young girls married off to old men

Struggle for a Democratic Society

Shanar Agitation

The Shanar Agitation was held in southern Travancore for the right of their woman to wear dress like that of the higher caste women. The converted shanar women to Christianity were permitted to cover their bodies with jackets. They began to appear in public, wearing jacket and scarf. A Royal proclamation was issued on July 26, 1859 Abolished all restrictions in the matter of dress.

Vaikom satyagraha 1924-25

The vaikom Satyagraha was the first major struggle for the eradication of untouchability. The main leaders were T.K Madhavan, Mannath Padmanabhan, C.V Kunhiraman and K Kelappan. The satyagraha demanded for granting of right of the untouchables to walk on the approach roads of Vaikom temple. The Savarna Jatha organized under Mannath Padmanabhan was one of the highlights of Vaikom Satya. The jatha came to the capital and submitted a memorandum demanding temple entry rights to the Avarnas. At last the Satyagraha ended in success by the intervention of Gandhi. The Govt. declared open all the roads to the temple.

Guruvayur satyagraha 1931-1932

Guruvayur Satyagraha was a milestone in the history of social reform movement in Kerala. The satyagraha aimed at opening the Guruvayur temple to all Hindus. The Satyagraha began on 1st November 1931. The prominent leaders were K. Kelappan, Mannath Padmnabhan, A.K Gopalan, P. Krishna Pillai etc. K. Kelappan began an indefinite fast unto death in front of the temple. On Gandhiji's advice, the satyagraha was ended. A limited referendum was held in the Ponnani Taluk to ascertain public opinion on the issue of temple entry for the Avarnas. The majority of the people approved the proposal for temple entry. The Guruvayur Satyagraha failed

to achieve its immediate objective, namely temple entry for the Avarnas.

Temple entry proclamation

The Temple Entry Proclamation issued by the ruler of Travancore on 12th November 1936 was the crowning achievement of the movement for temple entry to the Avarnas. It opened all the temples of the state to all Hindus irrespective of caste. The Proclamation is important as the first of its kind in India. Gandhiji hailed it as a 'miracle of modern times'. It brought about a silent and bloodless revolution in Hindu society.

Paliyam satyagraha

The Paliyam Satyagraha took place in 1947 to March 1948. The satyagraha was organized to open Paliyam road to all the Hindus. Cochin State Prajamandal, the Communist Party and SNDP Yogam joined together to organize a satyagraha. The satyagraha was launched by C. Kesavan. The temples of Kochi were thrown open to all the Hindus in 1948. The Avarnas got freedom to walk along the Paliyam road.

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