

MODULE 2

MEDIEVAL INDIA

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| LESSON 9 | ESTABLISHMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE DELHI SULTANATE |
| LESSON 10 | ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUGHAL RULE |
| LESSON 11 | EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STATES IN INDIA: TWELFTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURY |
| LESSON 12 | ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONS |
| LESSON 13 | ECONOMY |
| LESSON 14 | CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN MEDIEVAL INDIA |
| LESSON 15 | UNDERSTANDING EIGHTEENTH CENTURY INDIA |



9

ESTABLISHMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

The rulers who ruled substantial parts of the North India between AD1200 to AD1526 were termed as Sultans and the period of their rule as the Delhi Sultanate. These rulers were of Turkish and Afghan origin. They established their rule in India after defeating the Indian ruling dynasties which were mainly Rajputs in northern India. The main ruler who was overthrown by the invading Turk Muhammad Ghori from Delhi was Prithvi Raj Chauhan. These Sultans ruled for more than 300 years (from around AD 1200 to AD 1526). The last of the Delhi Sultan, Ibrahim Lodi was defeated by the Mughals under the leadership of Babur in AD1526 who established the Mughal Empire in India.

During this period of around three hundred years five different dynasties ruled Delhi. These were the Mamluks (AD 1206–AD 1290) (popularly known as slave dynasty), the Khaljis (AD 1290–AD 1320), the Tughlaqs (AD 1320–AD 1412), the Sayyids (AD 1412–AD 1451) and the Lodis (AD 1451– AD 1526). All these dynasties are collectively referred as the Delhi Sultanate.

In this lesson we will give you a detailed account of the process of conquest, expansion and consolidation of Delhi Sultanate in India.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- describe the early invasion on India from the North-West region by the Arabs
- discuss the nature of attacks by Mahmud Ghazni
- describe the nature of Muhammad Ghori's invasion
- identify the factors that helped the establishment of Turkish rule in North India by Muhammad Ghori
- provide an account of the expansion of Delhi Sultanate under the Mamluk sultans
- describe the expansion of the Sultanate by Khaljis and Tughlaqs
- outline the challenges faced by the Sultans in consolidating their rule
- list the causes of the decline of the Sultanate.



Notes

9.1 ARAB INVASION OF INDIA

In the early 8th century Arabs invaded India from the North-West region. This Arab invasion in AD 712 was led by Muhammad Bin Qasim a general of the Umayyad caliphate. Invasion on India was part of the policy of Arab expansion during this period.

The rise of Islam in Arabia (see box) gave rise to a new political system. The process of expansion which had started after the capture of Mecca by the prophet Muhammad continued after his death.

Rise And Spread Of Islam

In the 7th Century AD, a new religion named “ISLAM” was born in Arabia and in a very short span it carved out an empire extending from North Africa to Iberian Peninsula to Iran and India. Islam was founded and preached by Prophet Muhammad (AD 570–632). This religion transformed the religious, political and social life of not only the people of Arabia but also of many parts of the world. Islam laid emphasis upon belief in one God and its holy book as the “QURAN”. Muslims believe that the Quran is revealed by God to Prophet Muhammad. Quran is respected as the supreme source of authority in Islam. Every Muslim was asked to pray five times a day, to fast during the month of Ramzan, to distribute alms and to make a pilgrimage, if possible, to Mecca. After the death of Prophet (AD 632) the task of providing religious and political leadership to the Muslims passed on to the Caliphs. (Caliph is derived from the Arabic word ‘Khalifa’ which means ‘deputy’. This is a title given to the rulers who succeeded Prophet Muhammad). Between AD 632–661 there were four pious Caliphs, all close companions of the Prophet. The Umayyad Caliphate (AD 661–750) succeeded the pious Caliphs. Umayyad dynasty gave stability and prosperity to the Caliphate. Umayyad dynasty was followed by the Abbasid Caliphate (AD 750–1258). During the time of later Abbasids, the Caliphs began to loose political control and independent Muslim Rulers (Sultans) emerged in several regions.

The Arab expansion was notable for the speed with which it was accomplished. Between AD 633–637, Arab conquered West Asia, Jordan Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Persia. They also conquered parts of North Africa and Southern Europe. Between AD 639–647, Egypt was also conquered. By AD 712, the Arabs had entered Spain and were soon making inroads into Southern France. By the 8th Century AD, the Arabs had acquired a core position from Spain to India, connecting the trade of Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

During the early years of the 8th Century, the Umayyads reached the height of their power. They had created the largest ever-Muslim state that existed. Arabs were also attracted by the wealth of India. Arab merchants and sailors had brought back stories of great wealth of India. However, the reason for the invasion of Sindh was to avenge the plunder of Arab Ships by pirates of Debol. King Dahir refused to punish the pirates. Hajjaj the governor of Iraq despatched an army under Muhammad Bin Qasim. He arrived in Sind in AD 712, and besieged Debol which was situated on the sea coast. After crossing the Indus he marched forward. At Rawar, Muhammad Bin Qasim attacked Dahir who was defeated. Arabs killed a large number of fleeing soldiers. Dahir was also caught and killed. Muhammad Bin Qasim now proceeded forward and within a short span he conquered various important places in Sind including Brahmanabad.

**Notes**

The economic life of Sind got disturbed as a result of campaigns of Qasim. A large number of people and merchants had fled from Sind. He had conquered the major portion of Sind up to the lower Punjab. His rule lasted only for two years. However many Arabs settled down in Sind and established relations with the local population. The Arab influence continued for a long period with pockets of Muslim influence established in various parts of Sind.

9.2 MAHMUD GHAZNI

In all Mahmud Ghazni invaded India 17 times during AD 1000–1026. Mahmud Ghazni was Son of Sabuktigin, the founder of Ghazni dynasty & Turkish slave commander.

Mahmud Ghazni first encountered the Hindushai ruler, Jaipal in AD 1001. In the years AD 1004–06 Mahmud Ghazni attacked the rulers of Multan. Soon Punjab also passed into the hands of the Ghaznavids. Between AD 1014–1019, Mahmud enriched his treasury by looting the temples of Nagarkot, Thanesar, Mathura and Kanauj. The attack against Nagarkot in AD 1008 has been described as his first great triumph. In AD 1025, Mahmud embarked on the most ambitious Indian campaign, the attack on the Somnath temple in Saurashtra. Mahmud captured the city after grim struggle in which more than 50,000 defenders lost their lives. Mahmud left Somnath after a fortnight when he came to know that the Gujarat king Bhima-I had completed preparations to confront him. His attacks on India were an attempt to fulfil his ambition to make Ghazni the formidable power in the politics of Central Asia. Mahmud's raids into India were only to acquire the famous wealth of India. This wealth would help him to consolidate his vast rule in Central Asia. He did not wish to establish an empire in India. The Ghaznavids had their control on parts of Punjab and Sind which continued till AD 1135. However his invasions exposed the weak defence of Indian kingdoms. They also opened possibility of attacks in future by the Turks.

9.3 MUHAMMAD GHORI (SHAHABUDDIN MUHAMMAD)

In AD 1173 Shahabuddin Muhammad (AD 1173–1206) also called Muhammad of Ghor ascended the throne of Ghazni. The Ghoris were not strong enough to meet the growing power and strength of the Khwarizmi Empire; they realised that they could gain nothing in Central Asia. This forced Ghori to turn towards India to fulfil his expansionist ambitions.

Muhammad Ghori was very much interested in establishing permanent empire in India and not merely looting its wealth. His campaigns were well organised and whenever he conquered any territory, he left a general behind to govern it in his absence. His invasions resulted in the permanent establishment of the Turkish Sultanate in the region lying north of the Vindhya Mountains.

Conquest of Punjab and Sind

Muhammad Ghori led his first expedition in AD 1175. He marched against Multan and freed it from its ruler. In the same campaign he captured Uchch from the Bhatti Rajputs. Three years later in AD 1178 he again marched to conquer Gujarat but the Chalukya ruler of Gujarat, Ghima II defeated him at the battle of Anhilwara. But this defeat did not discourage Muhammad Ghori. He realised the necessity of creating a suitable base in Punjab before venturing on the further conquest of India.

He launched a campaign against the Ghaznavid possessions in Punjab. As a result Peshawar was conquered in AD 1179–80 and Lahore in AD 1186. The fort of Sialkot and Debol were captured next. Thus by AD 1190 having secured Multan, Sind and Punjab, Muhammad Ghori had paved the way for a further thrust into the Gangetic Doab.



Notes

The First Battle of Tarain (AD 1191)

Muhammad Ghori's possession of Punjab and his attempt to advance into the Gangetic Doab brought him into direct conflict with the Rajput ruler Prithivaraja Chauhan. He had overrun many small states in Rajputana, captured Delhi and wanted to extend his control over Punjab and Ganga valley. The conflict started with claims of Bhatinda. In the first battle fought at Tarain in AD 1191, Ghori's army was routed and he narrowly escaped death. Prithviraj conquered Bhatinda but he made no efforts to garrison it effectively. This gave Ghori an opportunity to re-assemble his forces and make preparations for another advance into India.

The Second Battle of Tarain (AD 1192)

This battle is regarded as one of the turning points in Indian History. Muhammad Ghori made very careful preparations for this conquest. The Turkish and Rajput forces again came face to face at Tarain. The Indian forces were more in number but Turkish forces were well organised with swift moving cavalry. The bulky Indian forces were no match against the superior organisation, skill and speed of the Turkish cavalry. The Turkish cavalry was using two superior techniques. The first was the horse shoe which gave their horses a long life and protected their hooves. The second was, the use of iron stirrup which gave a good hold to the horse rider and a better striking power in the battle. A large number of Indian soldiers were killed. Prithviraj tried to escape but was captured near Sarsuti. The Turkish army captured the fortresses of Hansi, Sarsuti and Samana. Then they moved forward running over Delhi and Ajmer.

After Tarain, Ghori returned to Ghazni, leaving the affairs of India in the hand of his trusted slave general Qutbuddin Aibak. In AD 1194 Muhammad Ghori again returned to India. He crossed Yamuna with 50,000 cavalry and moved towards Kanauj. He gave a crushing defeat to Jai Chand at Chandwar near Kanauj. Thus the battle of Tarain and Chandwar laid the foundations of Turkish rule in Northern India.

The political achievements of Muhammad Ghori in India were long lasting than those of Mahmud of Ghazni. While Mahmud Ghazni was mainly interested in plundering Muhammad Ghori wanted to establish his political control. His death in AD 1206 did not mean the withdrawal of the Turkish interests in India. He left behind his slave General Qutbuddin Aibak who became first Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.1**

- Fill in the blanks:
 - Sultan Muhammad Ghori was the ruler of _____.
 - The First battle of Tarain was fought between _____ and _____.
 - Muhammad Ghori entrusted his Indian possession to _____.
- When was the Second battle of Tarain fought?

- What was the one major difference between the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor?



Notes

9.4 THE MAMLUK SULTANS

With Qutbuddin Aibak, begins the period of Mamluk Sultans or the slave dynasty. Mamluk is an Arabic word meaning “owned”. It was used to distinguish the imported Turkish slaves meant for military service from the lower slaves used as domestic labour or artisan. The Mamluk Sultans ruled from AD 1206 to 1290.

Qutbuddin Aibak (AD 1206–1210)

Qutbuddin Aibak was a Turkish slave who had risen to high rank in Muhammad Ghori’s army. After Muhammad Ghori’s death in AD 1206, the control of his Indian possessions was passed on to Qutbuddin Aibak. Aibak was the first independent Muslim ruler of Northern India, the founder of Delhi Sultanate.

Aibak had to face many revolts from Rajputs and other Indian chiefs. Tajuddin Yalduz, the ruler of Ghazni, claimed his rule over Delhi. Nasiruddin Qabacha, the governor of Multan and Uchch aspired for independence. Aibak was able to win over his enemies by conciliatory measures as well as a display of power. He defeated Yalduz and occupied Ghazni. The successor of Jaichand, Harishchandra had driven out the Turks from Badayun and Farukhabad. Aibak re-conquered both Badayun and Farukhabad.

Qutbuddin Aibak was brave, faithful and generous. Due to his generosity he was known as “Lakh Baksh”. Most of the scholars consider Aibak as the real founder of Muslim rule in India.

Iltutmish (AD 1210–1236)

In AD 1210, Aibak died of injuries received in a fall from his horse while playing chaugan (Polo). After his death a few amirs raised his son Aram Shah to the throne in Lahore. But Aram Shah was incapable ruler and the Turkish amirs opposed him. The Turkish chiefs of Delhi invited the governor of Badayun (son-in-law of Qutbuddin Aibak) “Iltutmish” to come to Delhi. Aram Shah proceeded against him at the head of the army from Lahore to Delhi but Iltutmish defeated him and became the Sultan with the name of Shamsuddin. The credit of consolidating the Delhi Sultanate lies largely with him.

When Iltutmish ascended the throne, he found himself surrounded with many problems. Other commanders of Muhammad Ghori like Yalduz, Qubacha and Ali Mardan rose in defiance again. The chief of Jalor and Ranthambore joined Gwalior and Kalinjar in declaring their independence. Apart from this, the rising power of Mongols under Chenghiz Khan threatened the North West Frontier of the Sultanate.

Iltutmish took up the task of consolidating his position. He defeated Yalduz in AD 1215 in the battle of Tarain. In AD 1217 he drove away Qabacha from Punjab. In AD 1220, when Chenghiz Khan destroyed the Khwarizm empire, Iltutmish realised the political necessity of avoiding a confrontation with the Mongols. Thus when Jalaluddin Mangbarani, the son of the Shah of Khwarizm, while escaping from the Mongols, sought shelter at Iltutmish’s court, Iltutmish turned him away. He thus saved the Sultanate from destruction by the Mongols.

From AD 1225 onwards, Iltutmish engaged his armies in suppressing the disturbances in the East. In AD 1226–27 Iltutmish sent a large army under his son Nasiruddin Mahmud which defeated Iwaz Khan and brought Bengal and Bihar back into the Delhi Sultanate. Similarly a campaign was also launched against the Rajput chiefs. Ranthambore was captured in AD 1226 and by AD 1231 Iltutmish had established his authority over Mandor, Jalore, Bayana and Gwalior.



Notes

Establishment and Expansion of the Delhi sultanate

There is no doubt that Iltutmish completed the unfinished work of Aibak. The Delhi Sultanate now covered a sizeable territory. Besides this, he also organised his trusted nobles or officers into a group of “Forty” (*Turkan-i-Chahalgani*). He was a farsighted ruler and he consolidated and organised the newly formed Turkish Sultanate in Delhi.

Iltutmish established ‘Group of Forty’ (*Turkan-i-Chahalgani*). These were Turkish amirs (nobles) who advised and helped the Sultan in administering the Sultanate. After the death of Iltutmish, this group assumed great power in its hands. For a few years they decided on the selection of Sultans one after the other. The group was finally eliminated by Balban.

Iltutmish effectively suppressed the defiant amirs of Delhi. He separated the Delhi Sultanate from Ghazni, Ghor and Central Asian politics. Iltutmish also obtained a ‘Letter of Investiture’ in AD 1229 from the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad to gain legitimacy.

Iltutmish made a significant contribution in giving shape to administrative institution such as *iqtas*, *army* and *currency* system. He gave the Sultanate two of its basic coins— the silver ‘*Tanka*’ and the copper ‘*Jittal*’. To affect greater control over the conquered areas Iltutmish granted *iqtas* (land assignments in lieu of cash salaries) to his Turkish officers on a large scale. The recipients of “*iqtas*” called the “*iqtadars*” collected the land revenue from the territories under them. Out of this they maintained an armed contingent for the service of the state, enforced law and order and met their own expenses. Iltutmish realized the economic potentiality of the Doab and the *iqtas* were distributed mainly in this region. This secured for Iltutmish the financial and administrative control over one of the most prestigious regions of North India. (You will read details of administration in lesson 12)

Raziya (AD 1236–40)

The problem of successor troubled Iltutmish during his last days. Iltutmish did not consider any of his sons worthy of the throne. His own choice was his daughter Raziya hence he nominated her as his successor. But after his death his son Ruknuddin Firoz ascended the throne with the help of army leaders. However with the support of the people of Delhi and some military leaders, Raziya soon ascended the throne.

Despite her obvious qualities, Raziya did not fare significantly better primarily because of her attempts to create a counter nobility of non-Turks and invited the wrath of the Turkish amirs. They were particularly incensed over her decision to appoint the Abyssinian, Malik Jamaluddin Yaqut, as the *amir-i-akhur* (master of the horses); the recruitment of a few other non-Turks to important posts further inflamed matters.

The nobility realized that, though a woman, Raziya was not willing to be a puppet in their hands, therefore the nobles started revolting against her in the provinces. They accused her of violating feminine modesty and being too friendly to an Abyssinian noble, Yaqut. She got killed after she was defeated by the nobles. Thus her reign was a brief one and came to end in AD 1240.

Nasiruddin Mahmud (1246–66 AD)

The struggle for power between Sultan and the Turkish Chiefs “*Chahalgani*” which began during the reign of Raziya continued. After Raziya’s death, the power of *Chahalgani* increased and they became largely responsible for making and unmaking of kings. Behram Shah (AD 1240–42) and Masud Shah (AD 1242–46) were made Sultans and removed in succession. After them, in AD 1246, Ulugh Khan (later



Notes

known as Balban) placed the inexperienced and young Nasiruddin (grandson of Iltutmish) on throne and himself assumed the position of Naib (deputy). To further strengthen his position, he married his daughter to Nasiruddin. Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud died in AD 1265. According to Ibn Battuta and Isami, Balban poisoned his master Nasiruddin and ascended the throne.

Balban (AD 1266–87)

The struggle between the sultan and the Turkish nobles continued, till one of the Turkish chiefs, Ulugh Khan, known in history by the name of Balban, gradually arrogated all power to himself and finally ascended the throne in AD 1266. When Balban became the Sultan, his position was not secure. Many Turkish chiefs were hostile to him; the Mongols were looking forward for an opportunity for attacking the Sultanate, the governors of the distant provinces were also trying to become independent rulers, the Indian rulers were also ready to revolt at the smallest opportunity.

The law and order situation in the area around Delhi and in the Doab region had deteriorated. In the Ganga-Yamuna doab and Awadh, the roads were infested with the robbers and dacoits, because of which the communication with the eastern areas had become difficult. Some of the Rajput zamindars had set up forts in the area, and defied the government. The Mewatis had become so bold as to plunder people up to the outskirts of Delhi. To deal with these elements, Balban adopted a stern policy. In the Mewat many were killed. In the area around Badayun, Rajput strongholds were destroyed.

Balban ruled in an autocratic manner and worked hard to elevate the position of the Sultan. He did not allow any noble to assume great power. He even formulated the theory of kingship. The historian Barani, who was himself a great champion of the Turkish nobles, says that Balban remarked ‘whenever I see a base born ignoble man, my eyes burn and I reach in anger for my sword (to kill him).’ We do not know if Balban actually said these words but his attitude towards the non-Turks was that of contempt. Balban was not prepared to share power with anyone, not even with his own family.

Balban was determined to break the power of the Chahalgani. To keep himself well informed, Balban appointed spies in every department. He also organised a strong centralized army, both to deal with internal disturbances, and to repel the Mongols who had entrenched themselves in the Punjab and posed a serious threat to the Delhi Sultanate. Balban re-organised the military department (*diwan-i-arz*) and deployed army in different parts of the country to put down rebellion. The disturbances in Mewat, Doab, Awadh and Katihar were ruthlessly suppressed. Balban also secured control over Ajmer and Nagaur in eastern Rajputana but his attempts to capture Ranthambore and Gwalior failed. In AD 1279, encouraged by the Mongol threats and the old age of Sultan the governor of Bengal, Tughril Beg, revolted, assumed the title of Sultan and had the *khutba* read in his name. Balban sent his forces to Bengal and had Tughril killed. Subsequently he appointed his own son Bughra Khan as the governor of Bengal.

By all these harsh methods, Balban controlled the situation. In order to impress the people with the strength and awe of his government, Balban maintained a magnificent court. He refused to laugh and joke in the court, and even gave up drinking wine so that no one may see him in a non-serious mood. He also insisted on the ceremony of *sijada* (prostration) and *paibos* (kissing of the monarch’s feet) in the court.

Balban was undoubtedly one of the main architects of the Sultanate of Delhi, particularly of its form of government and institutions. By asserting the power of the monarchy, Balban strengthened the Delhi Sultanate. But even he could not fully defend northern



Notes

Establishment and Expansion of the Delhi sultanate

India against the attacks of the Mongols. Moreover, by excluding non-Turkish from positions of power and authority and by trusting only a very narrow racial group he made many people dissatisfied. This led to fresh disturbances and troubles after his death.

Balban adopted a policy of consolidation rather than expansion. He introduced a new theory of kingship and redefined the relations between the Sultan and nobility. Through these measures Balban strengthened the Delhi Sultanate.

Balban died in AD 1287. After his death the nobles raised his grandson Kaiquabad to the throne. He was soon replaced by his son, Kaimurs, who remained on the throne for a little over three months. During Balban's reign, Firoz had been the warden of the marches in north-west and had fought many successful battles against the Mongols. He was called to Delhi as *Ariz-i-Mumalik* (Minister of War). In AD 1290 Firoz took a bold step by murdering Kaimurs and seized the throne. A group of Khalji nobles led by him established the Khalji dynasty. Some scholars call this event as the 'dynastic revolution' of AD 1290. It brought to an end the so called slave dynasty and Firoz ascended the throne under the title of Jalaluddin Khalji.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.2

1. What problems did Iltutmish face on ascending the throne? Mention any two.

2. Why was 'Group of Forty' (*Turkan-i-Chahalgani*) formed by Iltutmish?

3. Whom do you consider the first Sultan of Delhi Sultanate?

4. What measures did Balban take to emphasize that the Sultan had absolute powers?

9.5 THE KHALJIS (AD 1290–1320)

Jalaluddin Khalji (AD 1290–1296)

Jalaluddin Khalji laid the foundation of the Khalji dynasty. He ascended the throne at the age of 70 years. Although Jalaluddin retained the earlier nobility in his administration, but the rise of Khaljis to power ended the monopoly of nobility of slaves to high offices. Jalaluddin ruled only for a short span of six years. He tried to mitigate some of the harsh aspects of Balban's rule. He was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate to clearly put forward the view that the state should be based on the willing support of the governed, and that since the large majority of the people in India were Hindus, the state in India could not be a truly Islamic state.

Jalaluddin tried to win the goodwill of the nobility by a policy of tolerance. He avoided harsh punishments, even to those who revolted against him. He not only forgave them but at times even rewarded them to win their support. However many people including his supporters, considered him to be a weak sultan.

Jalaluddin's policy was reversed by Alauddin Khalji who awarded drastic punishments to all those who dared to oppose him.



Notes

Alauddin Khalji (AD 1296–1316)

Alauddin Khalji was Jalaluddin's ambitious nephew and son-in-law. He had helped his uncle in his struggle for power and was appointed as *Amir-i-Tuzuk* (Master of Ceremonies). Alauddin had two victorious expeditions during the reign of Jalaluddin. After the first expedition of Bhilsa (Vidisa) in AD 1292, he was given the *iqta* of Awadh, in addition to that of Kara. He was also appointed *Arizi-i-Mumalik* (Minister of War). In AD 1294, he led the first Turkish expedition to southern India and plundered Devagiri. The successful expedition proved that Alauddin was an able military commander and efficient organiser. In July AD 1296, he murdered his uncle and father-in-law Jalaluddin Khalji and crowned himself as the Sultan.

Alauddin decided to revive Balban's policies of ruthless governance. He decided to curb the powers of the nobles and interference of Ulema in the matters of the state. He also faced, a few rebellions in succession during the early years of his rule. According to Barani, the author of *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, Alauddin felt that there were four reasons for these rebellions: 1) The inefficiency of the spy system, 2) the general practice of the use of wine, 3) Social intercourse among the nobles and inter marriage between them and 4) the excess of wealth in the possession of certain nobles.

In order to prevent the reoccurrence of these rebellions, Alauddin formulated certain regulations and implemented them. (1) Families that had been enjoying free land to support themselves should pay land tax for their holdings. This curbed the excess of wealth owned by some people. (2) The Sultan reorganized the spy system and took measure to make it more effective. (3) The use of liquor and intoxicants was prohibited. (4) The nobles were ordered not to have social gatherings or inter-marriages without his permission.

Alauddin established a huge permanent, standing army to satisfy his ambition of conquest and to protect the country from Mongol invasion.

Market Regulations of Alauddin Khalji

Alauddin's measures to control the markets were one of the most important policy initiative. Since Alauddin wanted to maintain a large army, he therefore, lowered and fixed the price of the commodities of daily use. To control the prices, Alauddin set up three different markets for different commodities in Delhi. These markets were the grain market (*Mandi*), cloth market (*Sarai Adl*) and the market for horses, slaves, cattles, etc. To ensure implementation, Alauddin appointed a superintendent (*Shahna-i-Mandi*) who was assisted by an intelligence officer. Apart from Shahna-i-Mandi, Alauddin received daily reports of the market from two other independent sources, *barid* (intelligence officer) and *munhiyans* (secret spies). Any violation of Sultan's orders resulted in harsh punishment, including expulsion from the capital, imposition of fine, imprisonment and mutilation.

Control of prices of horses was very important for the Sultan because without the supply of good horses at reasonable price to army, the efficiency of the army could not be ensured. Low price in the horse market were ensured by putting a stop to the purchase of horses by horse dealers and brokers (*dalals*) in Delhi market.

Expansion of Delhi Sultanate

Under Alauddin Khalji the territorial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate, beyond North India, was the most important achievement.



Notes

Alauddin first began his territorial conquest with a campaign against Gujarat. Alauddin was motivated by his desire to establish a vast empire and obtain the wealth of Gujarat. The riches of Gujarat were to pay for his future conquests and her sea port was to ensure a regular supply of Arab horses for his army. In AD 1299, an army under two of Alauddin's noted generals Ulugh Khan and Nusarat Khan marched against Gujarat. Rai Karan the ruler of Gujarat fled, the temple of Somnath was captured. An enormous booty was collected. Even the wealthy Muslim merchants were not spared. Many slaves were captured. Malik Kafur was one among them who later became the trusted commander of the Khalji forces and led the invasions to South India. Gujarat now passed under the control of Delhi.

After the annexation of Gujarat, Alauddin turned his attention towards Rajasthan. Ranthambore was the first target. Ranthambore was reputed to be the strongest fort of Rajasthan and had earlier defied Jalaluddin Khalji. The capture of Ranthambore was necessary to break the power and morale of the Rajputs. The immediate cause of attack was that the ruler of Ranthambore Hamirdeva gave shelter to two rebellious Mongol soldiers and refused to hand over them to the Khalji ruler. Hence an offensive was launched against Ranthambore. To begin with the Khalji forces suffered losses. Nusrat Khan even lost his life. Finally Alauddin himself had to come on the battle field. In AD 1301, the fort fell to Alauddin.

In AD 1303, Alauddin besieged Chittor, another powerful state of Rajputana. According to some scholars, Alauddin attacked Chittor because he coveted Padmini, the beautiful queen of Raja Ratan Singh. However many scholars do not agree with this legend as this is first mentioned by Jaisi in his Padmavat more than two hundred years later. According to Amir Khusrau, the Sultan ordered a general massacre of the civil population. Chittor was renamed Khizrabad after the name of Sultan's son Khizr Khan. Alauddin however returned back quickly to Delhi as Mongol army was advancing towards Delhi.

In AD 1305, Khalji army under Ain-ul-Mulk captured Malwa. Other states such as Ujjain, Mandu, Dhar and Chanderi were also captured. After the conquest of Malwa, Alauddin sent Malik Kafur to the South and himself attacked Siwana. The ruler of Siwana Raja Shital Deva defended the fort bravely but was ultimately defeated. In AD 1311, another Rajput kingdom Jalor was also captured. Thus by AD 1311, Alauddin had completed the conquest of large parts of Rajputana and became the master of North India.

Deccan and South India

The imperialist ambitions of Alauddin were not satisfied with the conquest of the north. He was determined to conquer south as well. The wealth of the southern kingdoms attracted him. The expeditions to the south were sent under Malik Kafur, a trusted commander of Alauddin who held the office of the Naib.

In AD 1306–07, Alauddin planned fresh campaign in Deccan. His first target was Rai Karan (the earlier ruler of Gujarat), who had now occupied Baglana, and defeated him. The second expedition was against Rai Ramachandra, the ruler of Deogir who had earlier promised to pay tribute to Sultan but did not pay. Ramachandra surrendered after little resistance to Malik Kafur and was treated honourably. He was kept a guest at Alauddin's court and was given a gift of one lakh tankas and the title of Rai Rayan. He was also given a district of Gujarat and one of his daughters was married to Alauddin. Alauddin showed generosity towards Ramachandra because he wanted to have Ramachandra as an ally for campaigns in the South.

After AD 1309 Malik Kafur was despatched to launch campaign in South India. The first expedition was against Pratab Rudradeva of Warangal in the Telengana area. This siege lasted for many months and came to an end when Rai agreed to part with his treasures and pay tribute to Sultan.

**Notes**

The second campaign was against Dwar Samudra and Ma'bar (modern Karnataka and Tamil Nadu). The ruler of Dwar Samudra, Vir Ballala III realized that defeating Malik Kafur would not be an easy task, hence he agreed to pay tribute to Sultan without any resistance. In the case of Ma'bar (Pandya Kingdom) a direct decisive battle could not take place. However, Kafur plundered as much as he could including a number of wealthy temples such as that of Chidambaram. According to Amir Khusrau, Kafur returned with 512 elephants, 7000 horses, and 500 *mans* of precious stone. The Sultan honoured Malik Kafur by appointing him Naib Malik of the empire. Alauddin's forces under Malik Kafur continued to maintain a control over the Deccan kingdoms.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.3**

1. Why was the capture of Ranthambore necessary?



Notes

Establishment and Expansion of the Delhi sultanate

2. Who led the expeditions in the South during Alauddin Khalji's rule?
3. Mention two places where expeditions were undertaken during Jalaluddin's reign.
4. List the four regulations issued by Alauddin to curb rebellions.

Following the death of Alauddin in AD 1316, the Delhi Sultanate was plunged into confusion. Malik Kafur sat on the throne for a few days, only to be deposed by Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah. During this period, rebellions broke out in Deogir but were harshly suppressed. Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah was soon murdered and Khusrau ascended the throne. However he too did not last long as some dissatisfied officers, led by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, defeated and killed him in a battle. Thus only four years after the death of Alauddin, the Khalji dynasty came to end and power passed into the hands of the Tughlaqs.

9.6 THE TUGHLAQS (AD 1320–1412)

The founder of the Tughlaq dynasty was Ghazi Malik who ascended the throne as Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq in AD 1320 and this dynasty ruled till AD 1412. Ghiyasuddin rose to an important position in the reign of Alauddin Khalji. After a brief rule Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq died in AD 1325 and his son Muhammad Tughlaq ascended the throne. Under the Tughlaqs the Delhi Sultanate was further consolidated. Many outlying territories were brought under the direct control of the Sultanate.

The Deccan and South

The regions of the Deccan which were conquered by the Khaljis had stopped paying tribute and were proclaiming independent status. Muhammad Tughlaq while a prince (called Juna Khan) led the early expeditions against Rai Rudra Dev who was defeated after a prolonged conflict and Warangal was now annexed under direct control of the Sultanate. Ma'bar was also defeated. Now the whole region of Telangana was divided into administrative units and made part of the Sultanate. In contrast to Alauddin Khalji's policy the Tughlaqs annexed the Deccan region. Muhammad Tughlaq even decided to transfer his capital from Delhi to Deogir and renamed it as Daultabad. In fact he wanted to control the northern region from this place. Substantial number of nobles, religious men and craftsmen shifted to the new capital. It seems that the idea was to treat it as the second capital and not abandon Delhi. Later the whole scheme was given up. However, the plan improved ties between the north and south. Apart from territorial expansion the social, cultural and economic interactions also grew.

East India

Bhanudeva II, the ruler of Jajnagar in Orissa had helped Rai Rudra Dev of Warangal in his battle against Delhi Sultans. Ulug Khan led an army against him in AD 1324 Bhanudeva II was defeated and his territory annexed. In Bengal there was discontent of nobles against their Sultan. The dissatisfied nobles invited the Tughlaq prince to invade their ruler. The army of Bengal was defeated and a noble Nasiruddin was installed on the throne.

North West

The Mongol invasions from the North-West region were rocking the Sultanate on regular intervals. In AD 1326–27 a big Mongol assault under Tarmashirin Khan took place.



Notes

Transfer of Capital

One of the controversial measures of Muhammad bin Tughlaq was that he transferred his capital from Delhi to Deogir (Daultabad). According to Dr. Mahdi Hussain, the Sultan wanted to maintain both Delhi and Daultabad as his capitals. As per Barani, in AD 1326–27, Sultan decided to shift his capital from Delhi to Deogir (Daultabad) in the Deccan because it was more centrally located. According to Ibn Batuta, the people of Delhi used to write letters containing abuses to the Sultan, therefore, in order to punish them Sultan decided to shift the capital. Isami says that it was a place at a safer distance from the North West frontier and thus safe from the Mongols. In view of different versions it is difficult to assign one definite reason for this shift.

The entire population was not asked to leave only the upper classes consisting of *shaikhs*, *nobles*, *ulema* were shifted to Daultabad. No attempt was made to shift the rest of the population. Though Muhammad bin Tughlaq built a road from Delhi to Deogir and set up rest houses but the journey was extremely harsh for the people. Large number of people died because of rigorous travelling and the heat. Due to growing discontent and the fact that north could not be controlled from south, Muhammad decided to abandon Daultabad.

Muhammad Tughlaq decided to secure the frontier. The region from Lahore to Kalanur including Peshawar was conquered and new administrative control was established. Besides, the Sultan also planned invasions of Qarachil region (In present day Himachal) and Qandhar but did not succeed. In fact these schemes resulted in heavy loss.

Muhammad Tughlaq was very innovative in adopting new policies. He started a new department for the development of Agriculture. It was called *Diwan-i Kohi*. Peasants were given financial support to help in arranging seeds for cultivation. This loan was also given in case of crop failures. Another important measure was to introduce token currency to tide over the shortage of Silver. However, this scheme failed causing great financial loss to the sultanate.

Token Currency

Another controversial project undertaken by Muhammad bin Tughlaq was the introduction of “Token Currency”. According to Barani, the Sultan introduced token currency because the treasury was empty due to the Sultan’s schemes of conquest as well as his boundless generosity. Some historians are of the opinion that there was a shortage of silver world wide at that time and India too faced the crisis therefore, the Sultan was forced to issue copper coins in place of silver.

Muhammad introduced a copper coin (*Jittal*) in place of silver coin (*tanka*) and ordered that it should be accepted as equivalent to the *tanka*. However, the idea of token currency was new in India and it was difficult for traders and common people to accept it. The State also did not take proper precautions to check the imitation of coins issued by the mints. Government could not prevent people from forging the new coins and soon the new coins flooded the markets. According to Barani the people began to mint token currency in their houses. However the common man failed to distinguish between copper coin issued by the royal treasury and those which were locally made. Thus the Sultan was forced to withdraw the token currency.

Muhammad Tughlaq was succeeded by his cousin Firuz Tughlaq. Under him no new territories could be added to the Sultanate. He managed to keep large areas intact



Notes

Establishment and Expansion of the Delhi sultanate

with great efforts. However, the political control of Delhi gradually weakened during the rule of Firuz's successors. The invasion of Timur in AD 1398 left the sultanate desolate. By the end of Tughlaq rule (AD 1412) the Sultanate was confined to a small territory in north India. A number of regions proclaimed independent status. In the east Bengal and Orissa enjoyed complete autonomy. In eastern UP and large parts of Bihar a new independent kingdom of Sharqis emerged. In the Deccan and South Vijaynagar empire and Bahmani kingdom became political powers. Large parts of Punjab were occupied by independent nobles. Gujarat and Malwa became fully independent. Rajput states in Rajasthan no longer treated Delhi Sultans as their overlords.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.4

1. Under which title did Ghazi Malik ascend the throne in 1320 AD?

2. Whom did Ghiyasuddin send to conquer the South?

3. What was the political motive of Muhammad's transfer of capital?

4. What was the concept of Token currency?

9.7 SAYYID DYNASTY (1414–1450 AD)

After defeating the army of Delhi in 1398 Timur appointed Khizr Khan as the ruler of Multan. Khizr Khan defeated Sultan Daulat Khan and occupied Delhi and founded Sayyid dynasty. He did not assume the title of Sultan but was comfortable with Rayat-i-Ala. The author of the Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, Yahya Sirhindi claims that the founder of the Sayyid dynasty was a descendant of the prophet.

Khizr Khan was the most competent Sayyid ruler of the dynasty. After Khizr Khan's death Mubarak Shah (AD 1412–34) and Muhammad Shah (AD 1434–45) ascended the throne one after another. All of these rulers tried to control rebellious regions like Katehar, Badaun, Etawah, Patiali, Gwalior, Kampil, Nagaur and Mewat but they failed due to the conspiracy of the nobles.

In 1445 AD, Alam Shah ascended the throne and became the Sultan. He proved a totally incompetent Sultan. Alam Shah's Wazir Hamid Khan invited Bahlol Lodi to take charge of the army and after realizing that it would be difficult to continue as Sultan, Alam Shah left for Badaun.

9.8 RECONSOLIDATION UNDER LODI DYNASTY (1451–1526)

With the help of a few nobles Bahlol Lodi (AD 1451–1489) took charge of the army, and became the Sultan. Thus he laid the foundation of Lodi dynasty whose rulers were Afghans. The Lodis were the last ruling family of the Sultanate period and the first to be headed by the Afghans.

Sultan Bahlol Lodi was a capable general. He was aware of the fact that to establish his control over Sultanate he would require help and support of Afghan nobles. The Afghan nobles wanted Sultan to treat them as an equal partner rather than an abso-

**Notes**

lute monarch. To placate them Bahlol publicly declared that he considered himself one of the Afghan peers and not the king. He did not sit on the throne nor did he insist on his nobles standing in his court. This policy worked well throughout his long reign and he did not face any trouble from his powerful Afghan nobles.

Bahlol Lodi successfully suppressed the revolts in Mewat and Doab. In AD 1476 he defeated the Sultan of Jaunpur and annexed it to Delhi Sultanate. He also brought the ruler of Kalpi and Dholpur under the Suzerainty of Delhi. However, he failed to re-occupy Bengal, Gujarat and the Deccan.

After the death of Bahlol Lodi, Sikandar Lodi (AD 1489–1517) ascended the throne. Sikandar Lodi showed little tolerance towards the non-muslims. He re-imposed *jaziya* on non-muslims.

Sikandar Lodi believed in the superior position of the Sultan vis-a-vis the nobles. He compelled nobles and *amirs* to show formal respect to the Sultan in *darbar* and outside and treated them harshly. He re-annexed Bihar, Dholpur, Narwar and some parts of the kingdom of Gwalior and Nagor to the Delhi Sultanate.

After the death of Sikandar Lodi in AD 1517 his nobles helped Ibrahim Lodi to become Sultan. His reign proved a period of revolts. Firstly his own brother Jalal Khan rebelled. Sultan Ibrahim Lodi got him murdered. Bihar declared its independence. Daulat Khan the governor of Punjab also rebelled. Sultan's behaviour caused much dissatisfaction. The rebellions Daulat Khan sent an invitation to Babur at Kabul to invade India. Babur defeated Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in AD 1526 in the battle at Panipat.

Summing up the end of the Sultanate, a scholar states "The Sultanate of Delhi, which had its birth on the battlefield of Tarain in AD 1192, breathed its last in AD 1526 a few miles away on the battlefield of Panipat".

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.5**

1. What policy did Bahlol Lodi adopt to seek the co-operation of Afghan nobles?

2. Who founded the Sayyid dynasty?

3. Who is the author of *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*?

4. What measure did Sikandar take to improve the dignity and *status* of Sultan?

9.9 CHALLENGES FACED BY THE SULTANATE

With the establishment of the Mughal Empire the rule of Delhi sultanate came to an end. During more than 300 years of its rule the Delhi sultanate went through various ups and downs but survived as a political force. Here we would like to discuss the major challenges the sultanate faced.

Attacks by Mongols and others

Since its inception the major threat to the sultanate came in the form of Mongol invasions. Mongols were nomadic groups who inhabited the steppes north of China and east of Lake Baikal. They formed a huge nomadic empire under Chengiz Khan



Notes

in the 12th century. From 13th century onwards they repeatedly attacked the Delhi Sultanate. The Sultans as a policy appeased them and also at times confronted. Balban and Allauddin Khalji confronted them with full military might. During Khalji's time Mongols under Qutlug Khwaja even besieged Delhi and caused a lot of damage. The last significant attack of Mongols was by Tarmashirin during the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq. A lot of energy and resources of the Sultans were spent in facing these invasions but they could not destroy the sultanate.

Another important attack which shook the foundation of the sultanate was by Timur in 1398. The weakness of the Delhi Sultanate was made even worse by Timur's invasion of Delhi (1398). Timur was a son of the Chief of Chagtai branch of Turks. When he invaded India he was the master of almost whole of Central Asia. Timur's raid into India was a plundering raid and his motive was to seize the wealth accumulated by the Sultans of Delhi over the last 200 years. Sultan Nasiruddin and his Wazir Mallu Iqbal faced Timur but were defeated. Timur entered Delhi and stayed for 15 days. He ordered general massacre and large number of Hindu and Muslim including women and children were murdered. Before leaving India Timur's invasion indicated the downfall of Delhi Sultanate. Delhi Sultanate lost control over Punjab. Timur appointed Khizr Khan, the ruler for Multan who controlled Punjab also. After the fall of Tughlaq dynasty he occupied Delhi and became the ruler of Delhi Sultanate. He laid the foundation of Saiyyid Dynasty.

Inner Conflict of Nobility

Three hundred years of Delhi Sultanate witnessed five dynasties ruling over it. The main reason for change of dynasties and deposing of rulers was a constant struggle between the Sultan and the nobility (Umar). Soon after the death of Aibak they started fighting over the question of succession. Finally Iltutmish emerged victorious. Iltutmish created a group of loyal nobles called Turkan-i-Chihilgani ('The Forty'). After the death of Iltutmish various factions of the group of forty got involved in making their favourite son/daughter as the sultan. In ten years five sultans were changed. After that the Sultan who occupied the throne (Nasiruddin Mahmud) for 20 years hardly ruled and one of the powerful noble Balban was defacto sultan. The same Balban succeeded Nasiruddin after his death. Almost similar events happened after the death of each powerful sultan (Balban, Alauddin Khalji, Firoz Tughlaq and others.) Since there was no well defined law of succession each noble tried to either crown himself or support some favourite heir of the dead sultan. Finally Afghans replaced the Turks as sultan with the accession of Bahlol Lodi.

Provincial Kingdoms

Another consequence of this conflict was declaration of independence by various provincial heads in the regions. As a result a number of independent Afghan and Turkish kingdoms emerged. Important ones of such states were Bengal (Lakhnauti), Jaunpur, Malwa, Gujarat, the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan etc. Quite often these states were at war with the Sultanate. The whole process weakened the sultanate.

Resistance by Indian Chiefs

The sultans had to face the resistance from Indian chiefs at regular intervals. The Rajput chiefs in Rajputana (Mewar, Ranthambhor, Chittor etc.), Warangal, Deogiri & Ma'bar in Deccan and South, the king of Dhar, Malwa in Central India, Jajnagar in Orissa and a host of smaller chieftains were constantly at war even after successive defeats. All these struggles weakened the sultanate.

**Notes**

The Delhi sultanate was considerably weakened after the Khalji and Tughlaq reign. Finally the invasion of Babur in AD 1526 brought it to an end. Now a much more centralised and strong empire under the Mughals established itself in India and ruled for a further period of more than two hundred years. We will discuss it in our next lesson on the Mughal Rule. But before moving to the Mughals we provide you a brief account of the provincial kingdoms.

Rise of The Provincial Kingdoms

You have read that the process of disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate had started during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq. However, Firuz Shah Tughlaq tried to control the situation but failed. During this period, some of the provincial rulers declared their independence from the rule of the Sultanate.

Jaunpur

Jaunpur was a prosperous province in the eastern part of Delhi Sultanate. Malik Sarwar was the Governor of Jaunpur. Soon he became the ruler of Kanauj, Kara, Awadh, Sandeela, Dalmau, Bahraich, Bihar and Tirhut. Though Malik Sarwar did not assume the title of Sultan, but he laid down the foundation of Sharqi Dynasty.

After the death of Malik Sarwar in AD 1399, his adopted son Malik Karanphul succeeded the throne. He assumed the title of Mubarak Shah and thus was the first ruler of Sharqi dynasty. When Mubarak Shah was the ruler of Jaunpur dynasty, during that time Mahmud Tughlaq, the Sultan of Delhi was the puppet in the hands of Mallu Iqbal. Mallu Iqbal undertook an expedition to recover Jaunpur but failed. On Mubarak Shah's death in AD 1402 his younger brother Ibrahim ascended the throne. He ruled for 34 years.

During Ibrahim's reign the relations between Delhi and Jaunpur became worse. Ibrahim was the greatest ruler of Sharqi dynasty under whom Jaunpur became an important centre of learning. Under him Jaunpur evolved a distinct architecture which is known as Sharqi style of architecture. The most famous of their buildings was the Atala Masjid at Jaunpur.

Ibrahim's successor Mahmud conquered the fort of Chunar. He also tried to conquer Kalpi but failed. He invaded Delhi but was defeated by Bahlol Lodi. After Mahmud, Jaunpur saw the rule of Muhammad Shah and Husain Shah. Husain Shah died in AD 1500 and with him ended the Sharqi dynasty.

Kashmir

Shamshuddin Shah (AD 1339) was the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir. In AD 1389 Sikandar ascended the throne. He was a powerful and despotic ruler. Sikandar died in AD 1416 and his son Ali Shah ascended the throne. After some years his brother Shah Khan ascended the throne under the title of Zainul Abidin.

Zainul Abidin was a liberal and enlightened ruler. To secure the support of all the groups, he called back all such groups who had been banished by Sikandar. He abolished '*jaziya*' and prohibited cow slaughter. Zainul Abidin paid great attention towards the economic growth of Kashmir. He himself was a great scholar of Persian, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Kashmiri language. He ordered the translation of Mahabharata and Rajatarangini (history of Kashmir) into Persian.

Zainul Abidin's successor proved a weak ruler. Taking advantage of his weaknesses Mirza Haider, a relative of Babur conquered Kashmir. In AD 1586 Kashmir was annexed by Akbar and became part of the Mughal Empire.



Notes

Malwa

Malwa was the south-western province of Delhi Sultanate. It was conquered by Sultan Alauddin in AD 1310 and remained the part of Delhi Sultanate till the death of Firuz Tughlaq. Dilawar Khan threw off his allegiance to Delhi in AD 1401 after the invasion of Timur. He did not take the royal title of Sultan. After the death of Dilawar Khan in AD 1405, his son Ala Khan ascended the throne and acquired the title of Hoshang Shah. He made Mandu his capital. The Hindi Mahal, Jama Masjid, Jahaz Mahal are examples of Mandu architecture.

Hoshang Shah was succeeded by Ghazi Khan who was deposed by his minister Mahmud Khan Khalji in AD 1436. Mahmud assumed the title of Shah and laid the foundation of Khalji dynasty of Malwa. Under Mahmud Khalji, Malwa became strong and prosperous kingdom. He was a generous king. According to Ferishta he was polite, brave and learned person. Mahmud Khalji was followed by Ghiyasuddin and Nasiruddin. Mahmud II ascended the throne of Malwa in AD 1510. He called Medini Rai, a powerful Rajput to crush his disloyal nobles and appointed him his prime minister. The predominance of Rajputs at the court created jealousy among the Muslims nobles. The Sultan of Gujarat defeated Malwa and annexed Malwa to Gujarat.

Gujarat

Gujarat has always attracted the invaders due to its geographical location, prosperity and fertility. Sultan Alauddin Khalji was the first Sultan who annexed Gujarat to the Delhi Sultanate. Since then it remained under the Turkish governors. At the time of Timur's invasion, Zafar Khan was the governor of this province. He threw off the allegiance to Delhi Sultanate. In AD 1410, he became the independent ruler of Gujarat. The most famous of the Gujarat rulers was Ahmad Shah (AD 1411 to 1441). To extend his kingdom, he restrained the Rajput States. Ahmad Shah founded the city of Ahmedabad. After the death of Ahmed Shah in AD 1441 his eldest son Muhammad Shah ascended the throne. He was known as *Zar-Baksh*. He was killed by conspirators in AD 1451. Muhammad Shah was followed by two weak rulers. Nobles raised Fateh Khan, a grandson of Ahmad Shah to the throne. He ruled as Mahmud. Mahmud was the ablest ruler of his dynasty. He ruled for 52 years. Mahmud died in AD 1511. He was followed by a number of rulers who had brief reigns. In AD 1572 Akbar conquered Gujarat and annexed it to the Mughal Empire.

Bengal

Bengal was the easternmost province of Delhi Sultanate. Lack of proper means of transportation and communication created difficulty in controlling this province. Though Bengal was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate, a number of times it gained its independence. During the last decade of the 12th century AD Muhammad Bin Bakhitiyar annexed Bengal to the conquered territories of Muhammad Ghorī. But after his death, his successors declared their independence with the support of the local people. Balban forced Bengal to accept the sovereignty of Delhi and appointed his son Bughra Khan as its governor. But after Balban's death he declared his own independence. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq tried to solve this problem by partitioning Bengal into three independent administrative divisions namely Lakhnauti, Satgaon and Sonargaon. Muhammad bin Tughlaq tried to declare the supremacy of Delhi Sultanate but when he was busy in suppressing rebellion in other parts of Sultanate Bengal cut off its connection with Delhi.

Haji Iliyas, a noble united Bengal and became its ruler under the title of Shamsh-ud-din Iliyas Shah. To counter increasing influence of Haji Iliyas Firuz Shah Tughlaq invaded Bengal but did not meet with success. He had to sign a treaty with Iliyas.

**Notes**

According to the treaty, river Kosi was accepted as the boundary line between two kingdoms. Haji Ilyas died in AD 1357 and his son Sikandar succeeded the throne. During his reign Firuz Shah Tughlaq again tried to annex Bengal but failed. After the death of Sikandar, Ghiyasuddin Azam ascended the throne. He maintained friendly relations with the king of China which led to the rich foreign trade. This time, Nasiruddin, a grandson of Haji Ilyas was the ruler of Bengal. He peacefully ruled for 17 years.

During the reign of Alauddin Husain Shah, Bengal became rich and prosperous. On his death in AD 1518 his son Nasir Khan ascended the throne under the title of Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah.

In AD 1538 Sher Shah Suri defeated Ghiyasuddin Mahmud Shah and made Bengal a part of his empire.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.6**

1. Why were Mongols attacking the Delhi Sultanate?

2. What was the main conflict among nobles?

3. What name was given to the rulers of Jaunpur dynasty?

4. What steps did Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq take to resolve the problem of Bughra Khan declaring his own independence?

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

Islam rose in Arabia and spread quickly in different parts of the world under the caliphs. The Arabian armies captured the large parts of central Asia and even attacked India in 712 AD. The next important invasion into India was when Mahmud Ghazni attacked India. His main intention was to carry the wealth of India to Ghazni.

In the 12th century India was divided into small kingdoms mostly ruled by Rajput chiefs. During this time the political condition of central Asia was not good because of which Muhammad Ghorī was to look towards India for expansion. In AD 1191 (First battle of Tarain) Muhammad Ghorī was defeated by Prithviraj Chauhan. In 1192 (second battle of Tarain) Muhammad Ghorī returned and this time Rajput forces were defeated. Thus Delhi passed into the hands of Turks. Muhammad Ghorī left his Indian possessions in the hands of his trusted slave – general Qutbuddin Aibak which led to the establishment of Delhi Sultanate. Iltutmish further consolidated the Sultanate by putting down internal rebellions and conciliating the nobility by forming of ‘Group of Forty’. The last powerful Sultan of slave dynasty was Balban who became the Sultan in AD 1266. He ruled in an autocratic manner and worked hard to elevate the position of sultan. After the death of Balban in AD 1287, the Khaljis came to the power in AD 1290.

The coming of Khaljis marked a break in the monopoly of Turkish rule. Jalaluddin Khalji laid the foundation of Khalji dynasty. In AD 1296, Alauddin Khalji murdered his uncle and father-in-law Jalaluddin Khalji and crowned himself as Sultan. He restored the prestige of the crown. He suppressed the nobility and ruled as an autocrat. His able general Alp Khan, Nusrat Khan, Zafar Khan, Ulugh Khan, Malik Kafur won him many victories. Another important measure taken by Alauddin was the establishment



Notes

Establishment and Expansion of the Delhi sultanate

of markets where goods were sold at fixed prices and did not allow any trader to earn more profit. He set up different markets for different commodities in Delhi.

The Khalji dynasty was followed by the Tughlaqs. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq ascended the throne in AD 1320. He was succeeded by Muhammad Tughlaq in AD 1325. Muhammad Tughlaq is famous for his innovative projects. These projects included the transfer of his capital from Delhi to Daultabad, and introduction of token currency. Following the death of Muhammad Tughlaq, the amirs and ulemas placed Firuz Tughlaq on the throne. During his reign the forces of disintegration were active. In AD 1398 Timur invaded the Delhi Sultanate in order to plunder it. The invasion of Timur gave an opportunity to the provincial Kingdoms to declare their independence from the Sultanate.

Malik sarwar began to rule as a defacto ruler of Jaunpur. Another province Malwa also threw its allegiance to Delhi Sultanate and its ruler Mahmud Khalji expanded the boundaries of Malwa. Gujarat broke away from the Sultanate when its governor Zafar Khan began ruling as an independent ruler. The most famous ruler of Gujarat was Ahmad Shah who founded Ahmedabad. The most remarkable ruler of the provincial Kingdoms was Zainal Abidin the ruler of Kashmir. Under him Kashmir became a strong and prosperous state. Bengal the Eastern most province of the Sultanate was annexed many times to Delhi Sultanate but repeatedly gained its independence. Haji Ilyas united Bengal which was divided into three administrative divisions by Delhi Sultanate.

Timur appointed Khizr Khan as the ruler of Multan, who laid the foundation of Sayyid dynasty. This dynasty was replaced by Afghans as the Lodi dynasty founded by Bahlol Lodi in AD 1451. Bahlol Lodi was a capable ruler who was able to win the support of his nobles. He was followed by Sikander Lodi. The last of the Lodis, Ibrahim Lodi was defeated by Babur in AD 1526 in the battle of Panipat. The Delhi Sultanate which had its birth in AD 1192 breathed its last in AD 1526 thus giving way to the establishment of the Mughal Empire.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Who was Mahmud Ghazni? Why did he invade India?
2. Who were Mamluk Sultans? How did Iltutmish consolidate his position?
3. What measures did Balban take to develop a highly centralized system of governance in Delhi sultanate?
4. Describe briefly the measures undertaken by Alauddin Khalji to control the markets?
5. Describe the transfer of capital and the introduction of token currency by Muhammad Tughlaq?
6. What was the impact of Timur's Invasions on Delhi Sultanate?
7. For what reasons did Bengal remain a problem for the Delhi Sultanate?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

9.1

1. a) Ghazni
b) Prithviraj Chauhan & Muhammad Ghori
c) Qutbuddin Aibak

**Notes**

2. AD 1192
3. Mahmud Ghazni was interested in plundering the wealth of India whereas Muhammad Ghori wanted to establish Turkish Rule in India

9.2

1. (i) Discontents and revolts of amirs and nobles.
(ii) Unorganized administration
(iii) Undefined boundaries of the sultanate (any two)
2. To support Monarchy
3. Qutbuddin Aibak
4. (i) Magnificent court with strict rules
(ii) Formulated the theory of 'Kingship' and redefined the relationship between the sultanate and nobles
(iii) Introduction of *sijda* (prostration) and *paibos* (kissing of monarch's feet)
(iv) Did not allow any nobles to assume great powers.

9.3

1. The capture of Ranthambore was necessary to break the power and morale of Rajputs.
2. Malik Kafur
3. Devagiri and Bhilsa
4. (i) Families that had been enjoying free land to support themselves were now required to pay land tax for their holdings.
(ii) The Sultan reorganised the spy system and took measures to make it more effective.
(iii) The use of wine and intoxicants was banned.
(iv) The nobles were ordered not to have social gatherings or inter marriages without his permission.

9.4

1. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq
2. His son Juna Khan
3. (a) To maintain control over Deccan
(b) To establish centrally located capital
4. The copper coin (Jittal) introduced by the Sultan was to serve as an equivalent to silver coin (tanka) to tide over shortage of silver.

9.5

1. Equality with nobles
2. Khizr Khan
3. Yahya Sirhindi
4. Compelled nobles to stand in the durbar, respect and pay obedience to Sultan.

9.6

1. Changes in central Asian Politics and to plunder the riches



Notes

2. Main conflict among nobles was the question of succession
3. Sharqi Dynasty
4. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq tried to solve this problem by partitioning Bengal into three independent administrative divisions namely Lakhnauti, Satgaon and Sonargaon

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer Section 9.2 Para 1&2
2. See subtitle Mamluk Sultans and Refer section 9.4 on Iltutmish
3. Refer Balban in section 9.4
4. Refer 9.5
5. Refer First para of first box and first & second para of second box of section 9.6
6. Refer section 9.9 under para 3
7. Refer section 9.9 under subtitle Bengal para 1

GLOSSARY

Amir	–	Commander, the third highest official grade of the Delhi sultanate
Ariz-i-mamulik	–	Minister Incharge of the army of the whole country
Amir-i-akhur	–	Master of the horses
Amir-i-Tuzuk	–	Master of Ceremonies
Barid	–	Intelligence officer
Chaugan	–	Game quite similar to Polo
Dalal	–	Broker
Darbar	–	Royal court
Doab	–	Land between Jamuna & Ganges
Diwan-i-arz	–	Military Department during Balban's period
Iqta	–	A territory of land assigned in lieu of cash salaries
Iqtadars	–	recipient of iqtas
Jaziya	–	Personal and yearly tax on non-muslims
Jittal	–	Copper coin of the Delhi Sultanate
Khutba	–	Sermon
Khwaja	–	Lord, merchant
Malik	–	In Delhi Sultanate it meant the second highest grade of the officers
Mamluks	–	Slave officers
Mandi	–	Grain Market
Munhiyans	–	Secret spies
Naib	–	Deputy Assistants
Paibos	–	Kissing of feet
Rai Rayans	–	The title given by Alauddin Khalji to Rama Deva of Devagir.
Sarai Adl	–	Cloth Market
Tanka	–	Silver coin of Delhi Sultanate
Ulema	–	Muslims of Religious learning
Umara	–	Plural of amirs, amir means nobles or ruling group in Delhi Sultanate.



10

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUGHAL RULE

In the previous chapter you studied about the establishment and consolidation of Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526). During this period the rulers were Turks and Afghans. You must have noticed that throughout the Sultanate period there was constant struggle between the various Turkish groups and Afghans. The disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate led to the emergence of various regional powers. Therefore, when Babur invaded India in 1526 the central power of the Sultanate had substantially weakened and there were a number of independent kingdoms. The Delhi and adjoining regions were under Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. Other Important kingdoms were Gujarat, Malwa, Bengal, Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmednagar, Berar, Mewar and Vijaynagar empire in the South. Besides, a large number of smaller autonomous chiefs were also ruling in different parts of the country.

In this lesson you will study about the conquest of India by a new ruling dynasty-the Mughals. The Mughals were led by an able military commander and administrator from Central Asia named Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur. His successors were successful in establishing an all India empire gradually. We will study the details of this process of conquests and consolidation in this lesson. Let us begin with the advent of Babur in India.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you would be able to:

- know the circumstances under which Babur invaded India;
- describe the reasons for the success of the Mughals against Indian rulers;
- list the challenges faced by Humayun after Babur's death;
- analyse the circumstances that led to the defeat of Humayun and revival of Afghan power;
- describe the events leading to recapture of India by Humayun;
- give an account of the expansion and consolidation of the Mughal empire under Akbar;
- describe the territorial expansion upto the reign of Aurangzeb and
- analyse the challenges faced by the Mughal empire in India.

10.1 ADVENT OF BABUR (1526–30)

Babur ascended the throne at Farghana, a small principality in Transoxiana, in 1494 at the age of twelve after the death of his father. The situation in Central Asia was not



Notes

stable and Babur had to face a lot of resistance from the nobility itself. Although he was able to capture Samarkand but very soon he had to retreat because of desertion of some of his nobles. He also lost Farghana to the Uzbeks.

Thus, the early years of Babur's rule in central Asia were tough. During this whole period he had plans of moving towards Hindustan. And finally from 1517 onwards he made decisive moves towards India. A few developments in India at that time also helped him to act on plans of invading India.

Timurids

Babur traced his lineage from Timur the great conqueror of Central Asia and to Chengiz Khan the distinguished conqueror. From mother's side he was a descendant of Mongols and from father's side the great commander Timur. Because of the lineage of Timur the Mughals are also referred as Timurids.

The unstable political situation in India after Sikandar Lodi's death convinced him of political discontentment and disorder in the Lodi Empire. Meanwhile there was conflict between some Afghan chiefs with Ibrahim Lodi. Prominent among them was Daulat Khan Lodi, the Governor of a large part of Punjab. The Rajput king of Mewar Rana Sanga was also asserting his authority against Ibrahim Lodi and was trying to increase his area of influence in north India. Both of them sent word to Babur to invade India. Invitations from Rana Sanga and Daulat Khan Lodi might have encouraged Babur's ambitions.

Babur was successful in capturing Bhira (1519–1520), Sialkot (1520) and Lahore (1524) in Punjab. Finally, Ibrahim Lodi and Babur's forces met at Panipat in 1526. Babur's Soldiers were less in number but the organization of his army was superior. Ibrahim Lodi was defeated in the battle of Panipat. Success at the Battle of Panipat was a great achievement of Babur's military tactics. Babur had an active army of only 12000 soldiers while Ibrahim's army had an estimated strength of 100,000 soldiers. When face to face in the battle field Babur's tactics were unique. He effectively applied the Rumi (Ottoman) method of warfare. He encircled Ibrahim's army from two flanks. In the centre his cavalry mounted attack with arrows and gun fires by expert ottoman gunners. The trenches and barricades provided adequate defence against march of the enemy. The Afghan army of Ibrahim Lodi suffered heavy casualties. Ibrahim Lodi died in the battle field. Babur was thus able to take control of Delhi and Agra and got the rich treasure of Lodis. This money was distributed among Babur's commanders and soldiers.

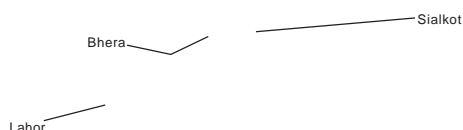
Victory at Panipat provided Babur a firm ground to consolidate his conquests. But now he was faced with a few problems:

- i. His nobles and commanders were eager to return to Central Asia because they did not like the climate of India. Culturally also, they felt very alienated.
- ii. Rajputs were rallying around under the leadership of Rana Sanga the king of Mewar and wanted to expel the Mughal forces
- iii. The Afghans, though defeated at Panipat, were still a formidable force in eastern parts of UP, Bihar and Bengal. They were re-grouping to reclaim their lost powers.

To begin with Babur convinced his companions and nobles to stay back and help in consolidating the conquered territories. After succeeding in this difficult task, he sent his son Humayun to face the eastern Afghans. Rana Sanga of Mewar succeeded to

**Notes**

muster support of a large number of Rajput chiefs. Prominent among these were Jalor, Sirohi, Dungarpur, Amber, Merta etc. Medini Rai of Chanderi, Hasan Khan of Mewat and Mahmud Lodi younger son of Sikander Lodi also joined Rana with their forces. Possibly, Rana Sanga expected Babur to return to Kabul. Babur's decision to stay back must have given a big jolt to Rana Sanga's ambitions. Babur was also fully aware of the fact that it would be impossible for him to consolidate his position in India unless he shattered Rana's power. The forces of Babur and Rana Sanga met at Khanwa, a place near Fatehpur Sikri. Rana Sanga was defeated in 1527 and once again the superior military tactics of Babur succeeded. With the defeat of Rana the biggest challenge in north India was shattered.



Map 10.1 Early conquests of the Mughals

Though the Mewar Rajputs received great shock at Khanwa, Medini Rai at Malwa was still threatening to challenge the authority of Babur. In spite of great valour with which the Rajputs fought in Chanderi (1528), Babur faced little difficulty in overcoming Medini Rai. With his defeat, resistance across Rajputana was completely shattered. But Babur had to tackle the Afghans. The Afghans had surrendered Delhi, but



Notes

they were still powerful in the east (Bihar and parts of Jaunpur). The success against the Afghans and Rajputs at Panipat and Khanwa was very significant but the resistance was still present. However, these victories were a step forward in the direction of the establishment of Mughal empire. Babur died in 1530. Still the rulers of Gujarat, Malwa and Bengal enjoyed substantial military power and were not suppressed. It was left to Humayun to face these regional powers.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.1

1. Why did Babur invade India?

2. What was Babur's strategy at the Battle of Panipat?

3. What problems did Babur face after the Battle of Panipat?

4. Who were the two rulers from Rajputana defeated by Babur?

2.2 HUMAYUN'S RETREAT AND AFGHAN REVIVAL (1530–1540)

After the death of Babur in 1530, his son Humayun succeeded him. The situation under Humayun was quite desperate. The main problems faced by Humayun were:

- i. The newly conquered territories and administration was not consolidated.
- ii. Unlike Babur, Humayun did not command the respect and esteem of Mughal nobility.
- iii. The Chaghatai nobles were not favourably inclined towards him and the Indian nobles, who had joined Babur's service, deserted the Mughals at Humayun's accession.
- iv. He also confronted the hostility of the Afghans mainly Sher Khan in Bihar on the one hand and Bahadurshah, the ruler of Gujarat, on the other.
- v. As per the Timurid tradition Humayun had to share power with his brothers. The newly established Mughal empire had two centres of power – Humayun was in control of Delhi, Agra and Central India, while his brother Kamran had Afghanistan and Punjab under him.

Humayun felt that the Afghans were a bigger threat. He wanted to avoid a combined opposition of Afghans from east and the west. At that time Bahadur Shah had occupied Bhilsa, Raisen, Ujjain and Gagraon and was consolidating his power. While Humayun was besieging Chunar in the east, Bahadur Shah had started expanding towards Malwa and Rajputana. In such a situation Humayun was forced to rush back to Agra (1532–33). Continuing his expansionist policy, Bahadur Shah attacked Chittor in 1534. Chittor had strategic advantage as it could provide a strong base. It would have helped his expansion in Rajasthan particularly towards Ajmer, Nagor and Ranthambhor. Humayun captured Mandu and camped there because he thought that from here he can block Bahadur Shah's return to Gujarat. Humayun's long absence from Agra resulted in rebellions in Doab and Agra and he had to rush back. Mandu was now left under the charge of Mirza Askari, the brother of Humayun. During the period when Humayun was busy in Gujarat to check Bahadurshah, Sher Shah started consolidating himself in Bihar and Bengal.

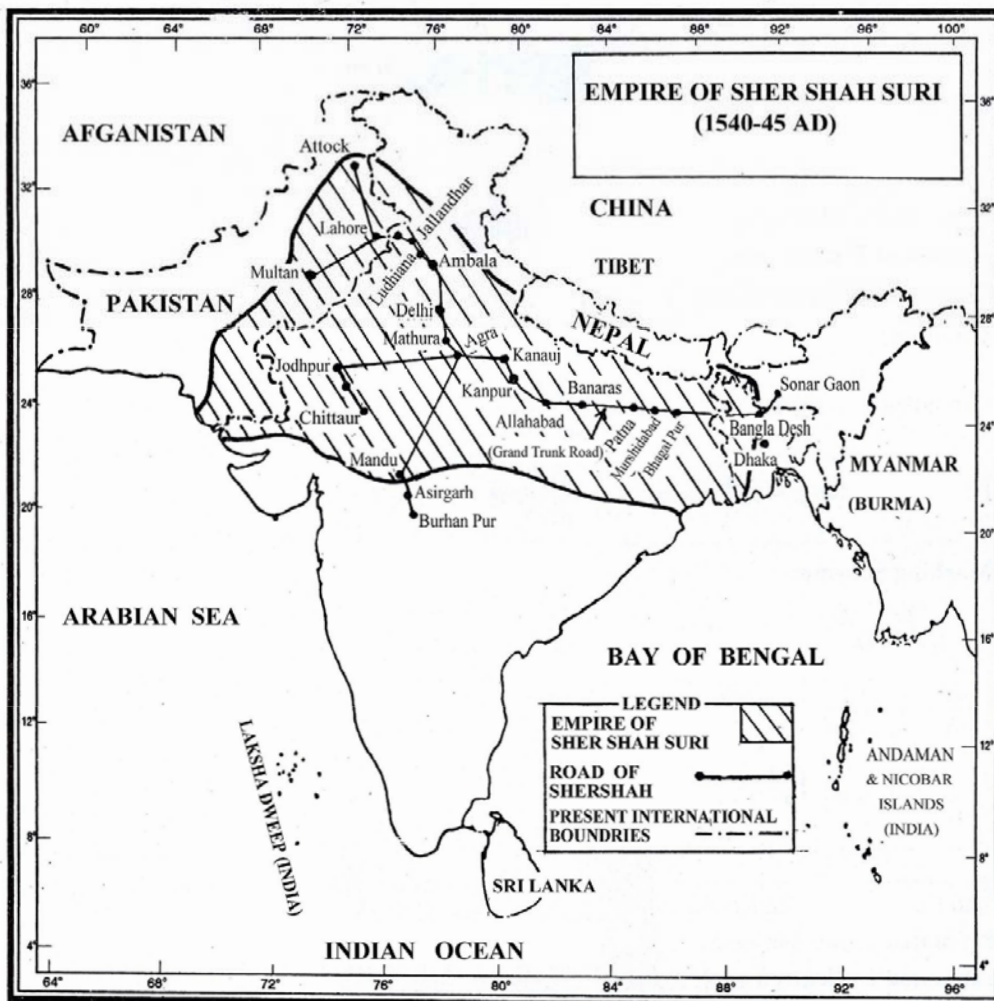


Notes

Rise of Sher Shah Suri

Farid, who later came to be called Sher Khan and subsequently Sher Shah, was son of a *Jagirdar* under the kingdom of Jaunpur. His father Hasan Khan Sur held the jagir of Sasaram in Bihar during the rule of Lodis. Sher Shah helped his father in the administration of his jagir. Later he developed differences with his father and left him. He served under Afghan nobles. After the death of his father in 1524 he was given his father's *jagir* by Ibrahim Lodi. He had to enter into conflict with his family to take possession of the *jagir*. He very effectively managed the *Jagir* of his father. He also acquired great military and administrative skills. His capabilities made him the leader of Afghans. He gradually increased his influence and defeated Sultan Mahmud Shah of Bengal. He emerged as the most powerful military commander in the eastern provinces. Sher Shah continued consolidating his position in Bihar. He had to enter into a number of conflicts with prominent Afghan nobles in Bihar and ruler of Bengal. He finally succeeded in establishing himself as the most powerful Afghan chief in Eastern India.

Sher Shah wished to establish himself as the undisputed Afghan leader. He invaded the Bengal army and defeated them in the battle of Surajgarh. Sher Shah could



The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

Map 10.2: Empire of Sher Shah



Notes

extract quite a wealth from Bengal which helped him to raise a bigger army. Now he started attacking Mughal territories of Banaras and beyond. Humayun was quite suspicious of Sher Shah's ambitions but failed to estimate his capabilities. He asked his governor of Jaunpur, Hindu Beg to check the movements of Sher Shah. Meanwhile Sher Shah captured Gaur (1538) the capital of Bengal. While Humayun was moving towards Bengal Sher Shah took control of route to Agra making communication difficult for Humayun. On the other hand, Hindal Mirza, brother of Humayun, who was supposed to provide supplies for his army, declared his independence. Now, Humayun decided to return to Chunar. When he reached Chausa (1539), he encamped on the western side of the river Karmnasa. Sher Shah attacked Humayun at the bank of the river and defeated him. Sher Shah declared himself as an independent king. Humayun could escape but most of his army was destroyed. With difficulty he could reach Agra. His brother Kamran moved out of Agra towards Lahore leaving Humayun with small force. Sher Shah now moved towards Agra. Humayun also came forward with his army and the armies of the two clashed at Kannauj. Humayun was defeated badly in the battle of Kannauj (1540).

10.3 SECOND AFGHAN EMPIRE (1540–1555)

Sher Shah

As already discussed the first Afghan kingdom under the Lodis was replaced by the Mughals under Babur in 1526. After a gap of 14 years Sher Shah succeeded in establishing the Afghan rule again in India in 1540. Sher Shah and his successors ruled for 15 years. This period is known as the period of second Afghan Empire.

The founder of this Afghan rule Sher Khan was a great tactician and able military commander. We have already discussed his conflict with Humayun. After defeating Humayun he became sovereign ruler in the year 1540 and assumed the title of Sher Shah.

Sher Shah followed Humayun on his flight till Sindh in the North West. After expelling Humayun he started consolidating his position in Northern and Eastern India. He defeated and conquered Malwa in 1542 which was followed by Chanderi. In Rajasthan he led campaigns against Marwar, Ranthambhore, Nagor, Ajmer, Merta Jodhpur and Bikaner. He defeated rebellious Afghans in Bengal. By 1545 he had established himself as the supreme ruler from Sindh and Punjab to whole of Rajputana in the West and Bengal in the East. Now he turned towards BundelKhand. Here while besieging the fort of Kalinjar he died in 1545 in an accidental blast of gun powder.

During his brief rule Sher Shah introduced very important changes in administration and revenue system. The most important ones were:

- i. X judicial system.

Sher Shah was succeeded by his son Islam Shah. Islam Shah had to face a number of conflicts with his brother Adil Khan and many Afghan nobles. He died in 1553. The Afghan empire was substantially weakened. Humayun saw an opportunity and moved towards India. He again captured his lost kingdom by 1555 and ended the second Afghan Empire.

In 1555 Humayun conquered Agra and Delhi and established himself as the emperor of India. Before he could consolidate his position he died after falling from the stairs of the library at Sher Mandal (in Delhi) in 1556.



Notes

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.2**

1. Why did Humayun fail to defeat Sher Shah?

2. How did Sher Khan emerge as the leader of Afghans?

3. List the territories which were brought by Sher Shah under his rule.

4. List two important achievements of Sher Shah.

10.4 THE MUGHAL EMPIRE FROM AKBAR TO AURANGZEB**Akbar**

Akbar was only thirteen years old at the time of Humayun's death. When his father died, Akbar was at Kalanaur in Punjab and therefore his coronation took place in Kalanaur itself in 1556. It was his tutor and Humayun's favourite and confidant Bairam Khan, who served as the regent of the Mughal emperor from 1556 to 1560. He became the *wakil* of the kingdom with the title of *Khan-i-Khanan*. One of the major achievements of his regency period was the defeat of Hemu and the Afghan forces in the second battle of Panipat in 1556, who were posing a serious threat to the Mughal Empire.

Regency of Bairam Khan 1556–1560

Bairam Khan remained at the helm of affairs of the Mughal Empire for almost four years, which is popularly known as Period of Bairam Khan's Regency. During this phase he appointed his favourite nobles on important positions. Bairam Khan emerged as the most powerful noble. He became very arrogant. A group of nobles were opposed to him. They managed to influence Akbar also. By this time Akbar also wanted to assume full control. He removed Bairam Khan. Bairam Khan revolted and was defeated. Akbar pardoned him and asked him to retire. He decided to go to Mecca for pilgrimage. He was killed by an Afghan near Ahmedabad. His son later on became an influential noble under Akbar and is famous as Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana.

Akbar started a policy of expansion after overcoming initial problems and consolidating his hold on the throne. The major political powers spread in different parts of the country were:

- i) the Rajputs who were spread throughout the country as independent chiefs and kings, and were concentrated mainly in Rajasthan.
- ii) The Afghans held political control mainly in Gujarat, Bihar and Bengal.
- iii) Khandesh, Ahmednagar, Bijapur, Golkonda and few other kingdoms in South India and Deccan were quite powerful.
- iv) Kabul and Qandhar, though ruled by Mughal factions, were hostile towards Akbar.

Akbar through a systematic policy started the task of expanding his Empire. The first step that Akbar took after the dismissal of Bairam Khan was to put an end to the conflict within the nobility. He demonstrated great diplomatic skills and organizational



Notes

capabilities in handling it. Akbar started his policy of expansion with central India. In 1559–60 the first expedition was sent to capture Gwalior before moving towards Malwa. Malwa in central India was ruled by Baz Bahadur. Akbar deputed Adham Khan to lead the expedition against it. Baz Bahadur was defeated and fled towards Burhanpur. Gondwana, an independent state in Central India ruled by Rani Durgawati, widow of Dalpat Shah, was conquered and annexed to the Mughal empire in 1564.

Rajasthan

It seems that Akbar was fully aware of the importance of Rajput kingdoms and wanted them as allies in his ambition of establishing a large empire. He tried to win over the Rajputs wherever possible and inducted them into Mughal service. He also entered into matrimonial alliances with the Rajput rulers like Bharmal. Raja Bharmal of Amber was the first to enter into alliance with Akbar. The Rajput kingdoms like Merta and Jodhpur were also occupied without much resistance. However, Maharana Pratap, the ruler of Mewar posed most serious challenge to the Mughal emperor and did not submit before Akbar. After a prolonged struggle and siege of the fort of Chittor, Akbar succeeded in defeating the Mewar forces. A large number of Rajput soldiers got killed in the war. However, it could not be fully subdued and some resistance from Mewar side continued for a long time. After the fall of Chittor Ranthambhor and Kalinjar were captured. Marwar, Bikaner and Jaisalmer also submitted to Akbar. By 1570 Akbar had captured almost the whole of Rajasthan. The most important achievement of Akbar was that in spite of the subjugation of the whole of Rajasthan there was no hostility between the Rajputs and the Mughals. We will discuss reasons for it in a separate section in this lesson.

Afghans (Gujarat, Bihar and Bengal)

Akbar's campaign against Afghans started with Gujarat in 1572. One of the princes, Itimad Khan, had invited Akbar to come and conquer it. Akbar himself marched to Ahmedabad. The town was captured without any serious resistance. Surat with a strong fortress offered some resistance but was also captured. In a short time most of the principalities of Gujarat were brought under his control. Akbar organized Gujarat into a province and placed it under Mirza Aziz Koka and returned to capital. Within six months various rebellious groups came together and revolted against the Mughal rule and the Mughal governor had to cede a number of territories. The leaders of rebellion were Ikhtiyar ul Mulk and Mohammad Hussain Mirza. Akbar got the news of rebellion in Agra and he set out for Ahmedabad. Akbar marched at a rapid pace and managed to reach Ahmedabad in ten days. The emperor quickly suppressed the rebellion.

Bengal and Bihar which were under the control of the Afghans, were paid attention after the Gujarat expedition. In 1574, Akbar along with Munim Khan Khan-i-Khanan marched towards Bihar. In a short time, Hajipur and Patna were captured and Gaur (Bengal) was also taken away. With this the independent rule of Bengal was ended in 1576. By 1592, the Mughal *mansabdar* Raja Man Singh also brought the whole of Orissa under the Mughal rule.

A series of conflicts arose in some regions of the Mughal empire in 1581. Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat and the north-west were main centres of unrest. The Afghans were at the root of these problems since they were overthrown everywhere by the Mughals. Apart from this, Akbar's policy of strict administration of *jagirs* was also responsible for this. A new policy was adopted, according to which the *jagirdars* were asked to submit the accounts of the *jagirs*. This created dissatisfaction and jagirdars rose in revolt. Masum Khan Kabuli, Roshan Beg, Mirza Sharfuddin and Arab Bahadur were the main leader of rebels. Imperial officers posted there tried to crush the rebellion

**Notes**

but failed. Akbar immediately sent a large force under Raja Todar Mal and Shaikh Farid Bakshi. A little later, Aziz Koka and Shahbaz Khan were also sent to help Todar Mal. The rebels declared Akbar's brother Hakim Mirza, who was in Kabul, as their king. But soon the Mughal forces were able to successfully crush the rebellion in Bihar, Bengal and adjoining regions.

Punjab and North West

In the Punjab, Mirza Hakim was creating problems for Akbar and he attacked Lahore. Hakim Mirza was expecting a number of Mughal officers to join him but no large group joined him. Akbar decided to march towards Lahore himself. Hakim Mirza immediately retreated and Akbar controlled the whole region. He gave first priority to organize the protection of North-West frontiers. After this he marched towards Kabul and conquered the territory. Akbar gave the charge of Kabul to his sister Bakhtunnisa Begum. Later on Raja Man Singh was appointed governor of Kabul and it was given to him in *jagir*.

Another important development in the North-West region was the rebellion of Roshanai who captured the road between Kabul and Hindustan. Roshanai was a sect established by a soldier who was called Pir Roshanai in the region. His son Jalala was heading the sect who had large following. Akbar appointed Zain Khan as commander of a strong force to suppress the Roshanais and establish Mughal control in the region. Sayid Khan Gakhar and Raja Birbal were also sent with separate forces to help Zain Khan. In one of the operations Birbal was killed with most of his forces. Akbar was greatly disturbed with the death of his trusted friend Birbal. He deputed Raja Todar Mal and Raja Man Singh to suppress the rebellion and they were successful in defeating the Roshanais. Akbar for a long time had his eyes set on conquering Kashmir. It was annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1586.

Some pockets in Sindh in the North-West were still independent. In 1590 Akbar appointed Khan-i-Khanna as governor of Multan and asked him to subdue Bilochis, a tribe in the region and conquer the whole territory. First, Thatta was annexed and placed as a *sarkar* in the *suba* of Multan. The conflict with Bilochis in the adjoining regions continued. Finally, by the year 1595, the complete supremacy of Mughals over North-West region was established.

Deccan

After 1590, Akbar gave shape to a Deccan policy to bring these states under Mughal control. During this period the Deccan states were facing internal tensions and regular conflicts. In 1591, Akbar sent offers to the Deccan states asking them to accept Mughal sovereignty, but there was not much success. Now Akbar decided on a policy of aggression. The first expedition was dispatched to Ahmednagar under the command of Prince Murad and Abdul Rahim Khan Khanan. In 1595, the Mughal forces invaded Ahmednagar. Its ruler Chand Bibi decided to face the Mughals. She approached Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur and Qutub Shah of Golkonda for help but with no success. A fierce conflict followed. After heavy losses on both sides, a treaty was worked out and Chand Bibi ceded Berar to Mughals. After some time Chand Bibi attacked Berar to take it back. At this point Nizamshahi, Qutabshahi and Adilshahi troops decided to present a joint front. The Mughals suffered heavy losses but could retain their position. Meanwhile, serious differences between Murad and Khan Khana weakened Mughal position. Akbar, therefore, recalled Khan Khanan and deputed Abul Fazl to Deccan. After Prince Murad's death in 1598, Prince Daniyal and Khan Khanan were sent to Deccan. Ahmednagar was captured. Soon the Mughals also conquered Asirgarh and adjoining regions. Adil Shah of Bijapur also expressed allegiance and

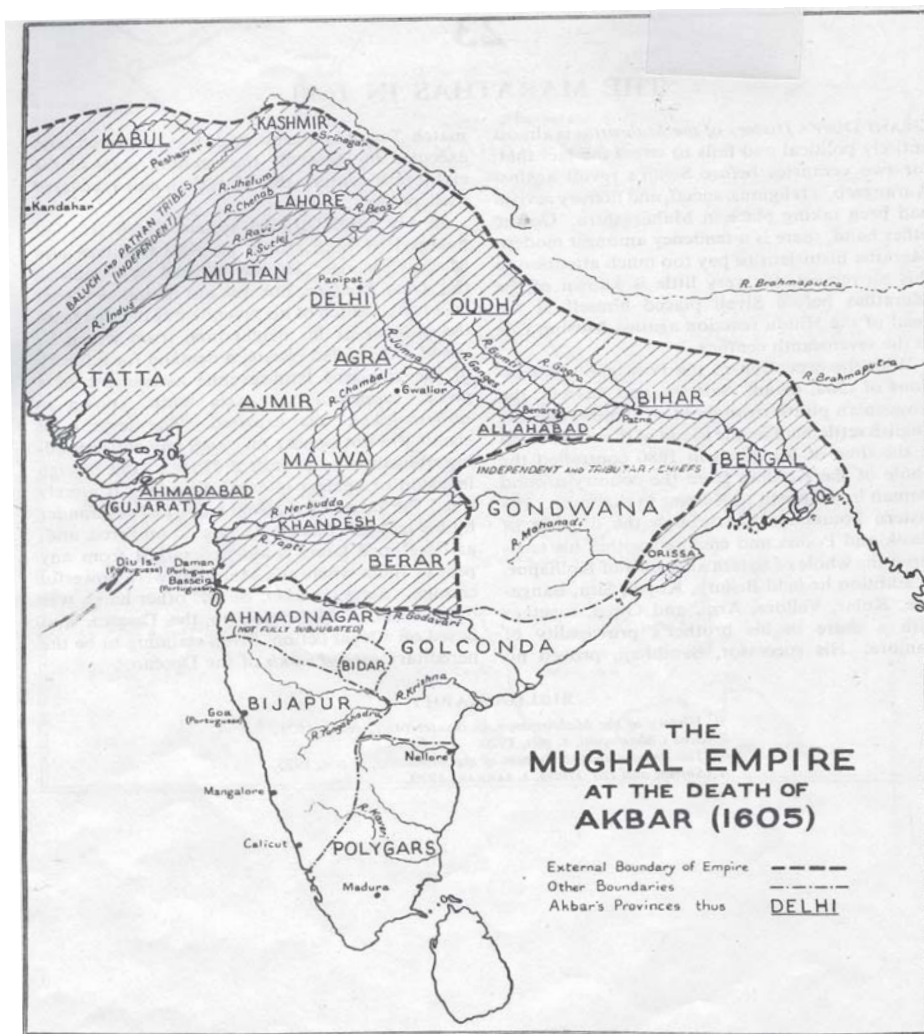


Notes

offered his daughter in marriage to Prince Daniyal. Meanwhile Chand Bibi also died. Now Mughal territories in Deccan included Asirgarh, Burhanpur, Ahmednagar and Berar.

Along with the expansion of territory Akbar initiated the policy of absorbing the chieftains into Mughal nobility. His policy paid rich dividends to the empire. The Mughal emperor succeeded in getting the support of chieftains and their armies for new conquests. As part of Mughal nobility, their help was also available for administering a large empire. In addition, a friendly relationship with them ensured peace for the empire. The chieftains also benefited from this policy. Now they could retain their territories and administer them as they wished. In addition, they received *jagir* and *mansab*. (You would learn about these administrative measures in lesson 12 of Module 2). Often they got territories in *jagir* bigger than their kingdoms. It also provided them security from enemies and rebellions. Many Rajput *mansabdars* were assigned their own territories as *Watan Jagir*, which was hereditary and non-transferable.

The territorial expansion under Akbar gave a definite shape to the Mughal Empire. In terms of territorial expansion very little was added to the empire after Akbar. Some territories were added during the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb in the Deccan and North East of India.



Map 10.3 Extent of Mughal Empire under Akbar



Notes

**INTEXT QUESTION 10.3**

1. Why Akbar removed Bairam Khan?

2. Which were the main political powers in India at the time of Akbar's accession?

3. Which of the Rajput rulers posed challenge to Akbar and did not submit?

4. Name the lady ruler who fought with the Mughals? Which was the territory ruled by her?

Jahangir and Shahjahan

Jahangir decided to follow Akbar's expansionist policy in the Deccan. But Jahangir could achieve little success in it due to certain problems. He could not devote much attention in the crucial phase due to Khurram's revolt. The Mughal nobles were also involved in a number of intrigues and conflicts to gain some advantages from Deccan.

During the first three years, the Deccan regained half of Balaghat and many districts of Ahmednagar. Malik Ambar was the main ruler who managed to defeat Mughal forces and captured Berar, Balaghat and parts of Ahmednagar. The Mughals could not regain control of the lost territories. Meanwhile Shah Jahan revolted against his father and became friends with Malik Ambar.

Malik Ambar made an attempt to capture Ahmednagar; but failing there, he took away Sholapur from Adil Shah and in alliance with Shah Jahan tried to capture Burhanpur but failed. Once peace was established between Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Malik Ambar was also pacified. Malik Ambar died in 1627 and was succeeded by his son Fath Khan as *Wakil* and *Peshwa* of the kingdom. Fath Khan was arrogant and during his time the conflict between the *Dakhnis* and other nobles grew.

During the reign of Jahangir there was no addition to the Mughal territory in Deccan. In fact the Deccani rulers weakened the Mughal authority in their states. Over ambition of Malik Ambar was an obstacle in the way of a joint front of the Deccan states.

During the period between the death of Jahangir and the accession of Shah Jahan, the Mughal governor of the Deccan, Khan Jahan Lodi, with the intention of securing help in times of necessity, gave away Balaghat to the Nizam Shah. After ascending the throne, Shah Jahan ordered Khan Jahan Lodi to recover it but as the latter failed, Shah Jahan recalled him to court. Khan Jahan turned hostile and rebelled. He took shelter with Nizam Shah. This infuriated Shah Jahan and he decided to follow aggressive policy towards the Deccan states. Shah Jahan's main concern was to recover the lost territories of the Deccan. He believed that independence of Ahmednagar was in the way of Mughal control in the Deccan. He decided to isolate Ahmednagar and win over Bijapur and Marathas. He was successful. Fath Khan son of Malik Ambar also made peace with Mughals. Now Mahabat Khan was appointed governor of Deccan. But the conflict with Deccan states continued. Finally in 1636 treaties were signed with Bijapur and Golconda. The main points of agreement with Bijapur were:



Notes

- i. Adil Shah accepted the Mughal suzerainty
- ii. He was to pay 20 lakh rupees as indemnity
- iii. He was not to interfere in the affairs of Golconda
- iv. Mughal emperor was to arbitrate in case of any dispute between Bijapur and Golconda
- v. Adil Shah to help Mughals in conflict against Shahji Bhonsle

Golconda also made a separate treaty. According to this treaty:

- i. Golconda took oath of loyalty towards Mughal emperor. He agreed to include the name of the Mughal emperor in Khutba and exclude the name of Shah of Iran.
- ii. Golconda agreed to pay two lakh huns per year to the Mughals.

The treaties ended the conflicts in the Deccan. The Mughals could expand their area of dominance to large parts of Southern India. A distinct change in Mughal policy came towards 1656–57 when the treaties were ignored. Now, Shah Jahan asked Aurangzeb to conquer and annex the territories of Deccan kingdoms. It is argued by some historians that this change of policy was to exploit resources of the Deccan states for Mughals. However, this change did not benefit the Mughal empire in any substantial way and created more problems for future.

Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb believed in an aggressive policy towards Deccan. Prof. Satish Chandra identifies three distinct phases in his policy towards Deccan states.

- i. From 1658 to 1668 the focus was to get hold of the territories of Kalyani, Bidar and Parenda from Bijapur. During this phase attempts were made to secure the help of Deccan states against Marathas. The efforts were also made by Jai Singh, the governor of Deccan, to conquer Bijapur but the efforts failed.
- ii. From around 1668 to 1684 there was a shift in the policy. The death of Adil Shah of Bijapur, growing power of Shivaji and increasing influence of Akhanna and Madanna two brothers in Golconda administration affected the Mughal policy. Golconda tried to forge an alliance with Shivaji and Bijapur. Aurangzeb's efforts to contain Marathas were not very successful. The alliance with minor shifts and frequent tensions continued in some form or the other. Aurangzeb was not inclined to annex the Deccan states.
- iii. In the third phase (1684–87) Aurangzeb followed the policy of outright annexation of the Deccan states. Aurangzeb personally supervised the siege of Bijapur. By 1687 both Bijapur and Golconda along with the territory of Karnataka were annexed in the Mughal empire. The conflict with Marathas continued from 1687 to 1707 Aurangzeb spent most of his time in Deccan and could manage to keep the region under Mughal control. But after his death in 1707 (at Aurangabad in Deccan) they reasserted independence and succeeded in a short period.

Apart from Deccan Aurangzeb could expand Mughal power in Assam in the north-east region. The major success of the Mughals in this region was annexation of Ahom kingdom (Assam) under Mir Jumla, the governor of Bengal. Another notable achievement in north-east was capture of Chatgaon in 1664 under Shaista Khan the new governor of Bengal. The Ahom kingdom could not be directly controlled for long. The Mughal *faujdars* posted there had to face resistance and there were regular conflicts. By 1680 Ahoms succeeded in capturing Kamrup and Mughal control ended.



Notes

**INTEXT QUESTION 10.4**

1. Who was the ruler from Deccan who defeated the Mughal forces under Jahangir?
2. The Mughals signed treaty with which of the two states of Deccan in 1636?
3. Which Mughal commander brought the Ahom kingdom under Mughal Control?
4. With which of the Deccan powers Aurangzeb remained engaged for a long time?

10.5 CHALLENGES TO MUGHAL RULE: CONFLICTS AND NEGOTIATIONS

Under Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire reached its greatest territorial limits and it covered almost the whole of present day India. But his reign was marred by popular revolts of the Jats, Satnamis, Afghans, Sikhs and the Marathas. The Rajputs emerged as an important support base of the Mughals under Akbar, and later on under Jahangir and Shah Jahan. However under Aurangzeb they started feeling alienated and gradually lost their position in administrative set up. The Marathas posed a major challenge to the sovereignty of the Mughals under Aurangzeb. Deccan states put up a stiff resistance against Mughal expansion plans. The North-West frontier region was also trouble spot and Mughals had to suppress disturbances. Thus we notice that in the process of the establishment and expansion of Mughal empire the Mughals faced resistance and had to negotiate their way through diverse means and strategies. Here we will provide a brief discussion on all these issues.

Rajputs

Mewar was the only region in Rajputana that had not come under the Mughals during Akbar's time. Jahangir followed a persistent policy to capture it. After a series of conflicts, Rana Amar Singh finally agreed to accept Mughal Suzerainty. All the territories taken from Mewar including the fort of Chittor were returned to Rana Amar Singh and a substantial *jagir* was granted to his son Karan Singh. During the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the Rajputs generally continued to be friendly with the Mughals and held very high *mansabs*. Shah Jahan relied upon Rajput soldiers for his campaigns in Deccan and the North West. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Mughal relations with Rajputs suffered, particularly over the issue of the successor to the throne of Marwar. Aurangzeb's interference in the succession dispute and his support to the rival candidate antagonised the Rajputs. His occupation of Jodhpur further put a dent on the Mughal-Rajput relation and the Rajputs gradually got alienated from Mughal rule. In fact, the absence of a powerful Rajput section in the nobility ultimately proved detrimental to the Mughal control of the peripheral areas, specially when it came to negotiating with the Marathas.

Deccan

During the last years of Akbar and early years of Jahangir, Ahmednagar under Malik Ambar started challenging Mughal power. Malik Ambar succeeded in getting support of Bijapur also. A number of expeditions were sent by Jahangir but failed to achieve any success. During Shahjahan's reign, Mughal conflict with the Deccan kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda was revived. Aghmednagar was first to be



Notes

defeated and most of its territories were annexed into Mughal empire. By 1636, Bijapur and Golkonda were also defeated but these kingdom were not annexed to the Mughal Empire. After a treaty the defeated rulers were to pay annual tributes and recognise Mughal authority. For almost ten years Shahjahan deputed his son Aurangzeb in the region. During Aurangzeb's reign the struggle with Deccan state and Marathas became more intensive. In fact, Aurangzeb spent the last twenty years of his reign in Deccan fighting against them. By 1687, the Deccani kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda were annexed to the Mughal Empire. However, the time and money spent in the Deccan by Aurangzeb proved a great drain on the Mughal empire.

The Marathas

The Marathas emerged in the Deccan as a vital force under Shivaji in the middle of the 17th century and began to challenge the Mughal authority. Shivaji started his offensive operations in 1656 and captured the principality of Javli. After some time, Shivaji raided the Bijapur territory, and, in 1659, the Sultan of Bijapur sent his general, Afzal Khan, to capture Shivaji. But Shivaji was too clever for him (Afzal Khan) and killed him. Ultimately, in 1662, the Sultan of Bijapur entered into a peace settlement with Shivaji and acknowledged him as an independent ruler of his conquered territories. Shivaji now began to devastate the Mughal territories. Aurangzeb sent Shaista Khan, the viceroy of the Deccan, with a big army against Shivaji and the Treaty of Purandhar (1665) was signed between the two. Out of the 35 forts held by Shivaji, he agreed to surrender 23 forts to the Mughals. The remaining 12 forts (with annual income of one lakh of huns) were to be left with Shivaji. Shivaji was asked to pay a visit to the Mughal court at Agra. But, when Shivaji went there, he was ill-treated and was taken a prisoner. He managed to escape, reaching Raigarh in 1666. From then onwards, he waged a relentless struggle against the Mughals. Soon he conquered all the forts which he had surrendered to the Mughals. In 1670, he plundered Surat for the second time.

In 1674, Shivaji made Raigarh his Capital and celebrated his coronation, and assumed the title of Chatrapati. Shortly, after this, he made a great expedition into southern India and conquered Jinji Vellore and many forts in Karnataka. He died at Raigarh in 1680 after ruling for only six years. In this short time he founded the Maratha kingdom, which dominated western India for a century and a half.

Shivaji's successor was his son Sambhaji. Many Maratha chiefs did not support Sambhaji and extended help to Rajaram the other son of Shivaji. The internal conflict weakened Maratha power. Finally Sambhaji was captured and put to death in 1689 by Aurangzeb. Sambhaji was succeeded by Rajaram as his son Sahu was still young. Rajaram died in 1700. He was succeeded by his minor son Shivaji III under the regency of Tara Bai, his mother. The failure of Aurangzeb against the Marathas was largely due to Tara Bai's energy and administrative genius. The Mughals, however, succeeded in dividing the Marathas into two rival camps-one under Tara Bai and the other under Sambhaji's son, Sahu. Sahu, who for long was in the Mughal court, was released. He succeeded in deposing Tara Bai with the help of a Chitpavan Brahman named Balaji Vishwanath.

North West

Akbar had always considered the Kabul-Ghazni-Qandhar line as the strategic frontier and therefore, captured Qandhar in 1595.

During the 17th century the North-west frontier was the main area of activity of the Mughals. Here, the Roshanais were decisively defeated by 1625-26, but Qandhar became a region of conflict between the Persians and Mughals. After Akbar's death, the Persians, tried to capture Qandhar but failed under Shah Abbas I, the Safavi ruler.



Notes

Map 10.4 The Maratha Kingdom under Shivaji

Following this, Shah Abbas I in 1620 requested Jahangir to hand over Qandhar to him but the latter declined to do so. In 1622, after another attack, Qandhar was captured by the Persians. Under Shah Jahan, Qandhar once again came into the Mughal hands, but was recaptured by the Persians in 1649. The struggle to capture Qandahar continued till Aurangzeb's reign but Mughals got little success. Shah Jahan's Balkh campaign to keep the Uzbeks (tribe) under control failed miserably and the Mughals lost huge amount of money and men in the conflict. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Qandhar issue was dropped and diplomatic relations with Persia were revived.

It is quite evident that the territorial expansion of Mughal empire achieved under Akbar continued to be the core of the empire. Its further expansion during Aurangzeb's reign was in Deccan and in small measure in North-East region. During his period the



Notes

Mughal empire had the largest area. However, the beginning of the decline of the Mughal empire also could be traced to the rule of Aurangzeb. The breaking up of the association with the potent regional forces like the Rajputs and failing relationships with the Deccani states and Marathas shook the unity and stability of the Mughal empire. Under his successors the empire kept disintegrating.

**INTEXT QUESTION 10.5**

1. On what terms Shahjahan established peace with Bijapur and Golconda?

2. What was Aurangzeb's policy towards Deccan?

3. Where was Shivaji Coronated? What was the title that he took?

4. Which of the Mughal rulers lost huge amount of money in north-west frontier conflicts?

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

After the disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate Babur was able to establish the Mughal empire in India in 1526. It was both the circumstances in Central Asia and in India which played a major role in the foundation of the Mughal empire. Before Babur could lay the foundation of the Mughal empire, he had to fight many wars with local ruling kingdoms. He defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526. Then he defeated one of the biggest forces in north India, Rana Sanga in 1527. After Babur's death in 1530 his son Humayun succeeded him. When Humayun was busy in Gujarat, Sher Shah started consolidating himself in Bihar and Bengal and moved towards Agra. Humayun was defeated in the battle of Kannauj in 1540 and Sher Shah was able to establish the second Afghan empire which continued from 1540 to 1555. However, in 1555 Humayun was again successful in capturing Agra, Delhi and other lost territories from the Afghans and re-established the Mughal rule. After Humayun's sudden death Akbar became the emperor at a tender age of 13 and Bairam Khan was made the regent. Akbar followed a policy of expansion after consolidating his hold on throne. He won over the Rajput kingdoms to his side either through matrimonial alliances or by invading the territories. He brought Gujarat, Bihar, Bengal, Punjab and the whole of north-west under the Mughal control. He also annexed Ahmednagar, Berar, Burhanpur, Asisgarh etc. in the Deccan. Jahangir also followed the expansionist policy in the Deccan. But he could not get much success here and lost few of the territories. Shahjahan was able to take control of Bijapur and Golconda in 1636. Aurangzeb also followed an aggressive policy in the Deccan and remained involved in conflict with the Marathas for most of his rule. Under Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire reached its greatest territorial limits. Ironically, the decline of the Mughal empire also began under Aurangzeb. There was a break up of the association with regional forces like the Rajputs and the Marathas.

**Notes****TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. Trace the establishment of the Mughal rule in India under Babur.
2. Who was Akbar's regent? Who were the major political powers in India in the initial years of Akbar's rule?
3. How did Akbar establish Mughal supremacy in the Deccan?
4. How was Aurangzeb's policy towards Rajputs different from Akbar?
5. How did Aurangzeb face the Marathas?

**ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****10.1**

1. Babur invaded India because he was facing tough situations in Central Asia. The unstable political situation in India also played a role.
2. Babur effectively applied the Rumi (Ottoman) method of warfare.
3. Problems faced by Babur:
 - (a) His nobles and commanders were eager to return to central Asia.
 - (b) The Rajputs were rallying around under the leadership of Rana Sanga.
1. Rana Sanga and Medini Rai

10.2

1. Humayun failed to defeat Sher Shah because his brother Hindal Mirza, who was supposed to provide supplies for his army, declared his independence.
2. Sher Khan was a great tactician and able military commander. After defeating Humayun he emerged as the leader of the Afghans.
3.
 - (a) Malwa;
 - (b) Rajputana
 - (c) Sindh
 - (d) Punjab
 - (e) Bengal
4.
 - (a) He streamlined local administration at Sarkar and Pargana level.
 - (b) He built Grand Trunk Road.

10.3

1. Akbar removed Bairam Khan because he had assumed full control and was behaving independently.
2. Rajputs, Afghans, Ahmednagar, Kabul and Qandhar
3. Maharana Pratap of Mewar
4. Chand Bibi; Ahmednagar

**Notes****10.4**

1. Malik Ambar
2. Bijapur and Goleconda
3. Mir Jumla
4. The Marathas

10.5

1. Bijapur and Golconda accepted Mughal Suzerinty and agreed to Pay annual trib-utes
2. Aurangzeb followed on aggressive policy & remained involved in conflict
3. Raigarh; Chatrapati
4. Shahjahan

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer to section 10.1 para 4 & 5
2. Bairam Khan;
Refer to section 10.4 under Akbar
3. Refer to Section 10.4 (Deccan)
4. Refer to section 10.5 (Rajputs)
5. Refer to section 10.5 (Marathas)



11

EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL STATES IN INDIA: TWELFTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

There are twenty-eight states in India today. Each of these states has a specific language, geography, food and culture that make the culture of India rich and full of varieties. Have you wondered how these different states and the regional cultures in them developed? Were they like this from time immemorial? When we go back to history, we realise that these states existed in different forms undergoing a constant process of change in different periods of time.

In this lesson, you will study the history of various regional states that existed from twelfth to eighteenth century. Some of the regional states of this period are today a part of one single state. For example, Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur that existed as independent regional states in the medieval period are all today districts of the state of Rajasthan. Some of the regional states are now a part of more than one state. For example, the Vijayanagar Empire (1336–1565AD) is now a part of the modern states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. There are some regional states that had the same names as those of the modern states today, but were different in terms of areas they covered. For example, the modern states of Gujarat, Bengal, Kashmir and Orissa existed from twelfth and eighteenth century under same names, but their respective geography today is different from what it was in the period between twelfth and eighteenth century.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- give brief account of different regional states from twelfth to eighteenth century.
- Understand the meaning of the term regional states?
- Understand the nature of relations between the regional states and the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire.
- appreciate the relations between various regional states themselves
- Describe the political ideas and organisations of these regional states.
- Explain the Economic and cultural conditions in the regional states.
- List Some of the primary sources or documents of that time that give us Information about the regional states.
- It is very difficult to provide account of all the regional states in one small lesson only a few of them have been selected here for the study. They are as follows:



Notes

1. From north India, we will look at the history of two regional states one Jaunpur, which is today in Uttar Pradesh and another Kashmir.
2. From south India, we will study the history of the Vijayanagara and Bahamani kingdom. As stated earlier, the Vijayanagar Empire can be found in current states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and the Bahamani kingdom can be found in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra.
3. From west India we will study Gujarat, and the Marathas. Gujarat exists with the same name today, and the Marathas had control over today's Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and some other parts of India.
4. Finally, from eastern India we will study the history of Bengal.

11.1 THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE TERM REGIONAL STATE AND REGIONALISM:

In the history of India, there has been a constant evolution and development of regionalism and regional states. How does one explain the rise of regional states? From the seventh century AD onwards which is the early medieval period till the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, agriculture and agricultural activities played a very significant role in the development of regional states. Wherever, good agricultural activity took place, it not only fed the population but generated a large surplus that could be sold and wealth could be generated. Trade and trading activities, overland as well as maritime, also provided an important source of revenue. One finds the rise of powerful sections in the society that controlled the agricultural surplus. Sometimes, some members of this powerful section asserted themselves and acquired political power and became kings and established ruling dynasties. This led to laying the foundation of the states. Sometimes, some groups came from outside and conquered the land, controlled the administration and became powerful.

It is true that a large number of regional states after thirteenth century arose due to internal weakness of the Delhi Sultanate. Similarly, with the decline of Mughal Empire, there emerged important states in the eighteenth century. But all these states had a regional history that pre-dated both the Sultanate and the Mughal state. For example, Bengal was an important regional kingdom in the eighth and the ninth centuries under the Palas and subsequently in the twelfth century under the Senas. It was an important independent state in the thirteenth and fifteenth century and became a powerful provincial kingdom in the eighteenth century too. We all know that Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire ruled over numerous and different cultural zones. Even the regional state of Vijayanagar ruled over different cultural zones. Therefore, it should be remembered that regionalism never disappeared though the regional dynasties gained and lost power and the regions changed their geographical boundaries.

What is this regionalism? Apart from political features, like regional ruling dynasties, there are some important characteristics of regionalism which developed, evolved and changed over a period of time in these regional states. Some of the characteristics of regionalism are as follows:

1. One of the important aspects is language. For example, Oriya, Gujarati, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Marathi and so on Indian languages spoken in various regions of India are referred as regional languages. These languages developed in the early medieval and medieval period and were associated with the specific regions. Though the languages existed in some form or the other, even prior to this but it was primarily from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that the



Notes

- regional languages came to be used in the official documents. Literary works and local literature came to be written in these languages. In the medieval period, simultaneous with the use of the regional languages, Sanskrit also came to be used in scholastic texts. However a large number of official documents of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire and some regional states were written in Persian.
2. Another characteristic is the presence of the local regional cults and religious affiliations. For instance, the cult of Jagannath in Orissa was regional to Orissa. It became the cult of the state, whereby the rulers adopted it, built a huge temple for it and celebrated festivals around it every year. Historians say that Jagannath was a tribal god, whose popularity made the rulers adopt this as the state cult. In the next section, we will further elaborate about the relationship between the states and religion. A large number of sects and the *bhakti* religion developed in the regions. For example, Namdev, Raidas, Tukaram, Guru Nanak were located in the regional states. Religions also have their own myths, legends and interpretations and religious practices. Did you know that in north India, Kartikeya, the son of Shiva and Parvati, is a bachelor and in the Tamil region he has two wives, Devyani and Valli? Each region had different gods and goddesses, different temple and mosque architectures. Interestingly, despite these regional differences, where each tradition was specific to a region, there were similarities in the regional traditions too. The saints and priests migrated from one region to another. For instance, Gesu Daraz, (1321–1422), the Sufi saint, belonged to the Chisti *Silsilah* that was established in Delhi. He migrated from Delhi to Daultabad in the Deccan region as a child in 1328. Seven years later, in 1335 AD, he came back to Delhi and stayed there for sixty three years. Towards the end of fourteenth century, in 1398, when Timur, a Turkish invader from Central Asia attacked Delhi, Gesu Daraz, migrated back to Deccan.
 3. The regional states were not closed isolated areas. Apart from religious interaction between the states, there were networks of interaction through trade and commerce and migration of artisans from one region to another. For example, in the fifteenth century, the silk weavers, *Pattanulkars* migrated from the Gujarat region to the Vijayanagar state. Also one finds migration of the Africans and Iranians to the Vijayanagar and Bahamani kingdoms.
 4. Another characteristic is the development of local and regional art schools like that Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Central India, and Rajasthan and so on. Regional identities were formed as a result of process and there have been changes and they did not exist since time immemorial. The various regional dynasties extended their patronage to art, culture, literature and architecture.

Thus, the presence of numerous regional states did not imply chaos and confusion. These states did wage wars amongst themselves, but provided stability over their respective regions. As discussed above, they had a vibrant culture of their own. The regional states influenced each other in the area of architecture and political culture. For instance, the early Vijayanagar rulers called themselves as *Hindu Suratrana*, meaning Hindu Sultan, where the term Sultan was borrowed from the Delhi sultanate. Similarly, the *iqtdari system* of the Delhi Sultanate influenced the administrative systems of the Vijayanagar and Bahamani kingdoms.

What is the difference between the regional states and Empire like Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire? Apart from the characteristics mentioned above of language and culture that were specific to one area, the political and military visions of these states were limited by the regional boundaries.



Notes



INTEXT QUESTION 11.1

1. List any four characteristics of Regionalism in India.

2. Name the regional art Schools that developed in India during Medieval period.

3. Which bhakti religions developed in the regions of India during Medieval times.

4. List any four characteristics of Regionalism in India.

5. Name the regional art Schools that developed in India during Medieval period.

6. Which bhakti religions developed in the regions of India during Medieval times.

11.2 RISE OF REGIONAL STATES: A GENERAL HISTORY

In the lessons you have studied about the regional states from the seventh to the thirteenth century. What happened to these states? Did they disappear completely from medieval Indian politics? A large number of these regional states continued to exist after the thirteenth century but there were changes in the ruling dynasties and geography of these states. In this section, you will get a general overview of the regional states from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century.

The Delhi Sultanate expanded as a result of the annexation of the states like Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Malwa, various Rajput states of Rajasthan, like Ranthambor, Jalore, Nagore, Ajmer, the Deccan states of Warangal, Telengana, Yadavas of Deogir, and the southern states of the Hoysalas of Dwarsamudra, Pandyas of Madurai, and so on. We have already studied about the various campaigns of Alauddin Khalji and the shift of capital from Delhi to Daultabad in the Deccan, during Mohammad bin Tughlaq's period. Those states that were annexed to the Sultanate formed various provinces and were placed under the administration of the provincial governors. From the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century till its downfall in the fifteenth century, there was a constant interaction between the provinces that were once upon a time independent states and the centre, that is, Delhi. However, rebellions from these areas never ceased. We all know that as a prince, Muhammad bin Tughlaq spent his entire career in crushing the rebellions in the Deccan, Orissa and Bengal.

Though these regions were now a part of the Delhi Sultanate, the regional characteristics of language, art, literature and religion remained. In fact, when Islam reached here, it acquired a regional flavour. These states already had settlements of Muslim merchants and Muslims employed in the army. Though there was hardly any regional ruling dynasty, the provincial governors of the Sultanate allied with the local *rajās* and *zamindars* and asserted their independence. Most of the regional states that came up after the fourteenth century when the Delhi Sultanate was declining were a result of the rebellions of the governors. The establishment of Vijayanagar and the Bahamani were a result of the assertion of power by the provincial officers, like Harihara and Bukka and Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah respectively. During the same period, Ben-



Notes

gal in the east and Multan and Sind in the west became independent. Feroz Shah Tughlaq tried to regain the lost territories but could not do so. He tried unsuccessfully to take over Bengal. He attacked and plundered Jajnagar (Orissa) but did not annex it. He plundered Kangra and suppressed revolts in Gujarat and Thatta.

With the death of Feroz Shah Tughlaq in 1338, the decline of the Sultanate began. As we have just mentioned, a large number of local governors became powerful and asserted their independence in the provinces. The relationship between the Sultan and the nobles worsened. The conflict with the local rulers and *zamindars* as well as regional and geographical tensions weakened the Sultanate further. The declining Sultanate received the final blow with the invasions of Timur in 1398 AD. Timur was a Turk who had come from Central Asia to plunder the wealth of India. Timur entered Delhi and mercilessly killed both the Hindus and Muslims and massacred women and children as well.

Fifteen years after the Timur's raids in Delhi, the Delhi Sultanate declined. The Sultanates in Gujarat, Malwa and Jaunpur near Varanasi emerged as powerful regional kingdom. Gujarat and Jaunpur were constantly engaged in tension with the Lodhis of the Delhi Sultanate (1451 to 1526 AD). New regional states independent of the Delhi sultanate arose in Central and South India too, out of which the prominent ones were the Gajapatis of Orissa, the Bahamanis and the Vijayanagara Empire. The Lodhi Sultans like Bahlol Lodhi (1451–1485) and Sikander Lodhi (1489–1526) tried to keep these regional kingdoms under control. Finally, during the rule of Ibrahim Lodhi (1517–1526), Bihar declared its independence. Daulat Khan, the governor of Punjab rebelled and invited Babur to invade India in 1526.

With the establishment of the Mughal Empire in 1526 AD, and its expansion in the later period, the ruling dynasties in the regional states gradually lost their power and these states over a period of time became the part of the Mughal Empire. But the regional features of language, art, literature and religion continued with changes. With the decline of the Mughals in the eighteenth century, there were rebellions of the provincial governors and a few annexed states declared their independence. As a result new regional kingdoms arose, for instance, Punjab, Bengal, Awadh, Hyderabad, Mysore and the Marathas.

**INTEXT QUESTION 11.2**

1. When did decline of Delhi Sultanate began?

2. During the rule of Ibrahim Lodhi, which two states declared their independence?

HISTORY OF THE REGIONAL STATES: A FEW CASE STUDIES**11.3 JAUNPUR:**

Jaunpur is now in Varanasi division in eastern Uttar Pradesh on the banks of river Gomati. It was a prosperous province in the eastern part of the Delhi Sultanate. The governor of Jaunpur was Malik Sarwar, who was a prominent noble during Feroz Shah Tughlaq's period. In 1394, Sultan Nasiruddin Mohammad Shah Tughlaq made him a minister and gave him the title of *Sultanu-Sharq* which means the master of the east. Thereafter, he was known as Malik Sarwar Sultanus Sharq. After Timur's invasion and the weakening of the Delhi Sultanate, Malik Sarwar took advantage of a weak political situation and declared himself independent. Malik Sarwar was



Notes

succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah Sharqi. The Sultan struck coins in his name. During his period, the ruler of the Delhi sultanate was Mahmud Shah Tughlaq, who tried to annex Jaunpur, but failed. Thereafter, there were constant tensions between the various rulers of Jaunpur and Delhi Sultanate. The Sharqi Sultans made several attempts to conquer Delhi, but they could never be successful. In 1402, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi, Mubarak Shah's brother became the Sultan and ruled Jaunpur for thirty four years. Ibrahim was also a scholar, well versed with Islamic theology and law, music and fine arts. He was a great patron of architecture. A distinct style of architecture evolved called the Sharqi style that had some Hindu influence. At its height, the Sharqi Sultanate extended from Aligarh in western Uttar Pradesh to Darbhanga in north Bihar in the east and from Nepal in the north to Bundelkhand in the south. It was during the reign of Hussain Shah Sharqi (1458–1505) that a prolonged war with Bahlol Lodhi started. Bahlol Lodhi attacked Jaunpur in 1484 and Hussain Shah had to flee. Finally, Sikandar Lodhi who succeeded Bahlol Lodhi annexed Jaunpur. Hussain Shah died and the Sharqi dynasty came to an end.

11.4 KASHMIR

Kashmir is in the northern part of India. In the eleventh century, the rulers were followers of Saivism, and Saivism became the central religion in Kashmir. It was a closed kingdom. Albiruni, the Arab traveller who visited India during this period remarked in his work, *Al-Hind* that no one, not even Hindus from outside was allowed access to Kashmir. In 1320s, the ruling dynasty of Kashmir could not check the devastating Mongol invasions. It therefore, lost all public support. In 1339, Shamsuddin Shah deposed the Saiva ruler and became the ruler of Kashmir. From this period onwards, Islam influenced the Kashmiri society. A group of Sufi saints known as the Rishis propagated a religion that combined features of Hinduism and Islam. Sufi saints and refugees migrated from Central Asia to Kashmir and further influenced the society and religion. Gradually, the poorer section of the population started converting to Islam. The state encouragement to Islam took place when the Kashmiri Sultan, Sikandar Shah (1389–1413), issued an order that all Hindus especially, the *brahmanas* living in his kingdom should embrace Islam or leave his kingdom. It is said that these orders were issued at the instance of the king's minister, Suha Bhatt who was a Hindu and had recently converted to Islam.

Perhaps, one of the greatest rulers of Kashmir was Zainul Abidin (1420–1470). He was an enlightened ruler and called back those Hindus who had left the state due to the persecution of Sikandar Shah. He abolished *jaziya* and prohibited cow slaughter and gave the Hindus important state posts. A large number of temples were repaired and new ones constructed. Abul Fazl, the court historian of the Mughal Emperor Akbar noted that Kashmir had one hundred and fifty big temples. Sultan Zainul Abidin married the daughters of the Hindu raja of Jammu. Some scholars call Zainul Abidin as the Akbar of Kashmir. Under him, Kashmir became prosperous and he was called the *Bud Shah* or the great king of Kashmiris.

The Sultan contributed to the agricultural development of Kashmir by constructing dams and canals. Agricultural records were maintained. During the period of famine and other natural calamities, relief in terms of loans and grains and fodder was provided to the peasants. Sultan also introduced reforms in the currency. He introduced market control and fixed prices of the commodities. Traders and merchants were asked to sell the commodities at fixed prices. Sultan also subsidized the import of the commodities which were scarce in the state. To make up for the shortage of salt, he imported salt from Ladakh and helped the traders in every possible way. Sultan also paid attention to the development of handicrafts. He sent some people to



Notes

Samarqand for training of paper making and book binding. Sultan also encouraged stone cutting and polishing and many other crafts. He introduced carpet and shawl making, which make Kashmir famous till day. Sultan also founded the towns of Zaingir, Zainket and Zainpur and laid out the islands on the Dal Lake that can be seen till today. His chief engineering achievement was the Zaina Lanka, an artificial island in the Woolur Lake on which he built his palace and mosque.

He was a great scholar of Persian, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Arab languages and patronised the Sanskrit and Persian scholars. Under his patronage, the *Mahabharat* and Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* were translated into Persian and many Persian and Arabic works were translated into Hindi. He himself was a poet and wrote poetry under the pen name 'Qutb'.

After him weak rulers ascended the throne of Kashmir and there was confusion. Taking advantage of this, Mirza Haider, Babur's relative occupied Kashmir. In 1586, Akbar conquered Kashmir and made it a part of the Mughal Empire.

11.5 BENGAL

Bengal was an important regional kingdom under the Palas in the eighth century and the Senas in the twelfth century. Bengal was the easternmost province of the Delhi Sultanate. The long distance, uncomfortable climate and poor means of transport and communications made it difficult for the Delhi Sultanate to control this province. Therefore, it was easy for Bengal to assert its independence. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq tried to solve the problem by partitioning Bengal into three independent administrative divisions: Lakhnauti, Satgaon and Sonargaon. However, the problems remained and finally Bengal emerged as an independent regional state in the fourteenth century.

In 1342, one of the nobles, Haji Ilyas Khan united Bengal and became its ruler under the title of Shams-ud-din Ilyas Shah and laid the foundation of the Ilyas Shah dynasty. He tried to annex Bengal and raided Orissa and Tirhut and forced them to pay tribute. Such expansions alarmed the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, who tried to occupy Bengal several times but were not successful. One of the important rulers of the Ilyas Shah dynasty was Ghiyasuddin Azam. He was a learned man and promoted Persian literature. He was well known for dispensing free and fair justice to people. It is said that once he killed a son of a widow by accident. The widow filed a complaint with Qazi who summoned the ruler to the court. When the case was decided, Azam told the Qazi that had he not discharged his duties honestly he would have killed him. Azam had cordial relations with China. There was a prosperous trading relationship between Bengal and China. The port of Chittagaong was an important centre for exchange of goods. On demand from the king of China, Azam also sent Buddhist monks from Bengal. Pandua and Gaur were the capitals of Bengal.

In 1538, Bengal was annexed by Sher Shah Suri. In 1586, Akbar conquered Bengal, and made it into a *suba*. While Persian was the language of administration, Bengali developed as a regional language. The establishment of Mughal control over Bengal coincided with the rise of agrarian settlements in the forested and marshy areas of south-eastern Bengal. Soon after, with the spread of rice cultivation, this area became heavily populated with the local communities of fisher folks and peasants. The Mughals established their capital in the heart of the eastern delta at Dhaka. Officials and functionaries received land grants and settled there. Alauddin Hussain Shah (1439 to 1519) was another important ruler of Bengal. He was very efficient, and gave high administrative posts to the Hindus and is said to have paid respect to Chaitanya of the Vaisnava sect. He came into conflict with Sikandar Lodhi and had to make peace with him.



Notes

11.6 GUJARAT

This was a fertile and prosperous province. It had flourishing seaports and was famous for its handicrafts. Alauddin Khalji was the first Sultan to annex it to Delhi Sultanate and since then it remained under the Turkish governors of the Sultanate. After Timur's invasion, in 1407, Zafar Khan who was then the governor became the independent ruler and after sometime assumed the title of Muzaffar Shah. Zafar Khan's father was a Rajput who had given his sister in marriage to Feroz Shah Tughlaq.

Ahmad Shah (1411–1441), was one of the important rulers of Gujarat. He founded the city of Ahmadabad and made it his capital in 1413. He built beautiful buildings, like Jama Masjid and Teen Darwaza and beautified the city with gardens, palaces and *bazaars*. Ahmad Shah was influenced by the Jaina architectural traditions of Gujarat. He was an efficient administrator and consolidated the regional state of Gujarat. He subdued the Rajput states, Jhalawar, Bundi and Durgapur. He was supposed to be an orthodox Muslim who imposed *jaziya* on the Hindus and destroyed several temples. However, the picture was complex. At the same time, he appointed Hindus to important administrative positions. Ahmad Shah fought equally fiercely against the Hindu as well as the Muslim rulers. His main enemy were the Muslim rulers of Malwa. The rivalry between Gujarat and Malwa was bitter and prevented both the regional states from concentrating on larger political gains in north Indian politics. He was famous for imparting justice. He publicly executed his son-in-law who had murdered an innocent. The author of *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* has rightly said that the impact of this justice lasted till his reign.

Perhaps the most important ruler of Gujarat was Mahmud Begarha. He was called Mahmud Begarha as he had captured two powerful forts or *garh*, Girnar (Junagarh) in Saurashtra and the fort of Champaner from the Rajputs in south Gujarat. Both these forts were of strategic importance. The fort of Girnar was in the prosperous Saurashtra region and also provided a base for operations against Sindh. The Sultan founded a new town called Mustafabad at the foot of the hill. This town with many beautiful monuments became the second capital of Gujarat. Similarly, the fort of Champaner was crucial to control Malwa and Khandesh. Mahmud constructed a new town called Muhammadabad near Champaner.

According to another version, he was called Begarha as his moustaches resembled the horns of a cow (*begarha*). Mahmud is supposed to have had a flowing beard which reached up to his waist. His moustache was supposed to be so long that he tied it over his head. According to a foreign traveller, Duarte Barbosa, right from his childhood, Mahmud was given some poison as his food which made him so poisonous that if a fly settled on his head, it would meet instant death. Mahmud was also famous for huge appetite. It is said that for breakfast he ate a cup of honey, a cup of butter and one hundred to hundred and fifty bananas. In total, he consumed ten to fifteen kilos of food everyday. Mahmud Begarha ruled for 52 years. He was also a great patron of art and literature. Many works were translated from Arabic to Persian in his court. His court poet was Udayaraja, who composed poetry in Sanskrit.

In 1507, Mahmud led an expedition against the Portuguese who had settled on the western coast and monopolised the trade there, causing immense harm to the Muslim traders. To break the Portuguese trade monopoly he sought the help of the Sultan of Turkey but could not get much headway and finally had to give the Portuguese a site for a factory in Diu. He died in 1511. During the rule of his successors Akbar conquered and annexed Gujarat in 1572 AD.



Notes

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.3**

1. To which areas was Sharqi Sultanate extended?

2. Who is referred as Akbar of Kashmir?

3. Who laid the foundation of the Ilyas Shah dynasty?

4. Ahmed Shah founded which city?

11.7 THE BAHAMANI SULTANATE

In the fourteenth century two powerful kingdoms arose in South India. One was the Bahamani Sultanate and the second kingdom was the Vijayanagar Empire that ruled for 300 years. In this section we will discuss the history of Bahamani Sultanate and its administrative features.

The Deccan region was a part of the provincial administration of the Delhi Sultanate. In order to establish a stable administration in the Deccan, Mohammad bin Tughlaq appointed *amiran-i-sada/ Sada Amir*, who were the administrative heads of hundred villages. From 1337 the conflict between the officers in Deccan and Delhi sultanate accelerated. This led to the establishment of an independent state in the Deccan in 1347 with the capital at Gulbarga in Andhra Pradesh. Its founders Haran Kangu assumed the title Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah as he traced his descent from the mythical hero of Iran, Bahman Shah and the kingdom was named after him, the Bahamani Sultanate. After Mohammad bin Tughlaq there were no attempts by the Delhi Sultanate to control the Deccan region. Therefore, the Bahamani Sultans without any checks annexed the kingdom. One of the important acquisitions was the control over Dabhol, an important port on the west coast.

Under Bahman Shah and his son Muhammad Shah, the administrative system was well organised. The kingdom was divided into four administrative units called '*taraf*' or provinces. These provinces were Daultabad, Bidar, Berar and Gulbarga. Muhammad I defeated the Vijayanagar kingdom and consequently Golconda was annexed to Bahamani kingdom. Every province was under a *tarafdar* who was also called a *subedar*. Some land was converted into *Khalisa* land from the jurisdiction of the *tarafdar*. Khalisa land was that piece of land which was used to run expenses of the king and the royal household. Further the services and the salary of every noble was fixed. Those nobles who kept 500 horses were given 1000,000 *huns* annually. If short of the stipulated troops, the *tarafdar* would have to reimburse the amount to the central government. Nobles used to get their salary either in cash or in form of grant of land or '*jagir*' Bahamani ruler depended for military support on his *amirs*. There were two groups in the ranks of *amirs*: One was the Deccanis who were immigrant Muslims and had been staying for a long time in the Deccan region. The other group was Afaquis or *Pardesis* who had recently come from Central Asia, Iran and Iraq and had settled in the



Notes

Deccan region recently. Between both these groups there was always tension to appropriate better administrative positions. Because of their feuds, the stability of the Bahamani Sultanate was affected. For the first time in India both these kingdoms used gunpowder in the warfare. The Bahamanis were already familiar with the use of firearms. They employed Turkish and Portuguese experts to train the soldiers in the latest weaponry of warfare.

One of the most important personalities in the Bahamani kingdom was Mahmud Gawan. Mahmud Gawan's early life is obscure. He was an Iranian by birth and first reached Deccan as a trader. He was granted the title of 'Chief of the Merchants' or *Malik-ut-Tujjar* by the Bahamani ruler, Humayun Shah. The sudden death of Humayun led to the coronation of his minor son Ahmad III. A regency council was set for the administration and Mahmud Gawan was its important member. He was made *wazir* or the prime minister and was given the title of 'Khwaju-i-Jahan.' The history of Bahmani kingdom after this period is actually the record of the achievements of Mahmud Gawan. Despite of being an Afaqui he was liberal and wanted a compromise between the Afaquis and the Deccanis. He controlled the kingdom in an efficient manner and provided it stability. Gawan conquered the Vijayanagar territories up to Kanchi. On the western coast, Goa and Dabhol were conquered. Losing these important ports was a great loss for Vijayanagar. Bahamani strengthened its trading relations with Iran and Iraq after gaining control over Goa and Dabhol.

Gawan carried out many internal reforms and attempted to put an end to the strife in the nobility. In order to curb the military power of the *tarafdar*, Gawan ordered that only one fort of each province was to be under the direct control of the provincial *tarafdar*. The remaining forts of the province were placed under a *Qiladar* or commander of the forts. The Qiladar was appointed by the central Government. However, soon after his death, the governors declared their independence and the Bahamani kingdom broke up. In the fifteenth and the sixteenth century, some *amirs* in Bidar, Ahmadnagar, Golconda and Bijapur and Berar established independent sultanates of their own and formed new states. These were the Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar, the Adil Shahis of Bijapur, the Qutb Shahis of Golconda, and the Imad Shahis of Berar and the Barid Shahis of Bidar. They formed a league of states and strengthened them by matrimonial alliances. They maintained the traditional rivalry with the Vijayanagar rulers. Golconda and Bijapur entered into matrimonial alliances and led the Battle of Talikota against Vijayanagar. They finally succumbed to the Mughal armies.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.4

1. Who appointed Sada Amir and for which region?

2. Who was Mahmud Gawan?

11.8 THE VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

A Political History

In 1336, Vijayanagar kingdom was established by Harihara and Bukka, who were two brothers and served in the army of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. They broke away from the Delhi Sultanate and established an independent state in Karnataka and established the



Notes

capital city Vijayanagar on the banks of river Tungabhadra in 1336. Their dynasty was called the Sangama dynasty. There are several theories with regard to the origin of this dynasty. According to some scholars, they had been the feudatories of the Kakatiyas of Warangal and after their fall they served the Kampili state. Another view says that they were the feudatories of the Hoysalas and belonged to Karnataka. Harihara and Bukka were helped and inspired by contemporary scholar and a saint Vidyanarya for the establishment of their kingdom. It is believed that to commemorate the memory of their *guru*, the brothers established the city of Vidyanagar or Vijayanagara on the banks of river Tungabhadra. The empire included people from different cultural regions, the Tamil, Telegu and Karnataka region who all spoke different languages and belonged to different cultures.

Between 1336 and 1565, Vijayanagar was ruled by three different dynasties- Sangama, who remained in power till 1485; the Saluva who remained in power till 1503 and the Tuluvas. The last dynasty was the Aravidu dynasty that ruled till seventeenth century. Foreign travellers like Nicolo Conti, Fernao Nuniz, Domingo Paes, Duarte Barbosa and Abdur Razzaq wrote about the magnificence of Vijayanagar.

One of the most important rulers of the Vijayanagar states was Krishnadevaraya, the founder of the Tuluva dynasty. He was a great commander and an efficient administrator. He fought a series of war with the independent kingdoms that came on the ruins of the Bahamani kingdom, maintained law and order and dealt with the Portuguese influence in the Deccan. He completely shattered the Adil Shahi forces of Bijapur first and attacked Gulbarga and set free three Bahamani princes who were imprisoned there. He helped them in recovering the throne of Gulbarga and Krishna Deva himself took the title of *Yavanarajya sthapanacharya*.

Krishnadevaraya built some fine stone temples and added impressive *gopurams* or gateways to many important South Indian temples. He also founded a suburban township near Vijayanagara called Nagalapuram after his mother. Some of the most detailed descriptions of Vijayanagar come from his period. The famous temple of Tirupati developed during his period greatly as the deity there was his titular deity. After Krishna Deva Raya, his brother Achyuta Deva Raya ascended the throne in 1530 AD, who was also an important ruler. During his reign the rival groups began to make his appearance. The struggle for power was mainly between Saluva Vira Narasimha and Aravidu Rama Raya, in which the later emerged victorious. Although Rama Raya did not assume the throne, yet he placed Sadasiva Raya on the throne and ruled as the defacto ruler. He removed the old nobility and replaced it with those loyal to him. Rama Raya tried to balance the Deccan powers by playing one against the other, such a policy could not continue for a long period. The Deccan states formed a confederacy and inflicted a crushing blow on the Vijayanagar armies in the battle of Talikota. Rama Raya was killed. The Deccani armies entered Vijayanagar and reduced it into ruins. Now the focus shifted to the east where the Aravidu dynasty ruled from Penukonda and later from Chandragiri (near Tirupati).

Army and Military Organisation Of The Vijayanagar Empire

In order to wage continuous warfare there was a need to keep a large army. Artillery was important and well bred horses were maintained. The Vijayanagar rulers imported high quality horses from across the Arabian Sea from Arabia and other Gulf countries. The port of Malabar was the centre of this trade and trade in other luxury commodities. The Vijayanagar rulers always attempted to control the port of Malabar.

Like the Bahamanis, the Vijayanagar state also was familiar with the use of firearms and employed Turkish and Portuguese experts to train the soldiers in the latest weaponry of warfare. One of the *rayas*, Deva Raya II enrolled Muslims in his armed



Notes

services, allotted them *jagirs* and erected a mosque for their use in the city. Such new techniques in warfare now revolutionised the warfare. The walls of the forts to counter the firearms were now made thick and special kinds of door with fortified walls front were constructed. On the walls of the forts, special kinds of big holes were made to rest the guns. Special kinds of parapets were constructed on the forts to put the canons on it. Firearms were used. Some firearms were small and comprised of rifles and pistols. Some like canons were heavy and had to be put on a bullock cart or on an elephant and pushed into the battlefield.

One of the important characteristics of the Vijayanagar administration was the *amara-nayaka* system. In this system, the commander of the Vijayanagar army was called the *nayaka*. Each *nayaka* was given an area for administration. The *nayaka* was responsible for expanding agricultural activities in his area. He collected taxes in his area and with this income maintained his army, horses, elephants and weapons of warfare that he had to supply to the *raya* or the Vijayanagar ruler. The *nayaka* was also the commander of the forts. Some of the revenue was also used for the maintenance of temples and irrigation works. The *amara-nayakas* sent tribute to the king annually and personally appeared in the royal court with gifts to express their loyalty. In the seventeenth century, several of these *nayakas* became independent and established separate states. The feudal *Nayankaras* used to maintain their own soldiers, forces and elephants. They were a powerful section that challenged the Vijayanagar authority, weakened its internal structures and contributed to the defeat of the Vijayanagar in the battle of Talikota.

11.8.2 CONFLICT BETWEEN THE VIJAYANAGAR AND THE BAHAMANIS

There were constant conflicts between the Vijayanagar and the Bahamani kingdoms over the control of Raichur *doab* which was the land between rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. This area was fertile and rich in mineral resources. The famous diamond mines of Golconda were located in the eastern part of the *doab* region. The geography of both the kingdoms was such that expansion was possible only across Tungabhadra in the Deccan. It appears that the battles between the two were not conclusive and the *status quo* was maintained. Sometimes, Bahamani had an advantage and sometimes, Vijayanagar had an advantage. For instance, in 1504, the Bahamani managed to reconquer the Raichur *doab*. However, with the ascent of Krishna Deva Raya, the Bahamanis lost Raichur, Mudkal, Nalgonda and other inland towns. An important result of these wars was that both the powers were so involved amongst themselves that they never realised the increasing power of the Portuguese on the coast of South India. Besides, continuous warfare exhausted the resources of both the states and weakened them.

The other areas of conflict were the Marathwada region and the deltaic region of Krishna-Godavari. Both regions had fertile areas and important ports that controlled trade to the foreign countries. For instance, the fertile area in the Marathwada region was the Konkan belt that also had the port of Goa which was an important region for trade and export and import especially import of horses from Iraq and Iran.

Often, the battles between the Vijayanagar and the Bahamani states are perceived as Hindu-Muslim conflicts. The above reasons show that the struggle was not due to any religious differences. Territorial and economic motives were the main causes for the war. Despite hostilities between the two states, there were times when they also co-operated with each other. Krishnadevaraya, for example, supported some claim-



Notes

ants to power in the Sultanates and took pride in the title “establisher of the Yavana kingdom”. Similarly, the Sultan of Bijapur intervened to resolve succession disputes in Vijayanagra following the death of Krishnadevaraya. There were also sharing and exchange of ideas, especially in the field of art, literature and architecture.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.5

1. Give names of any four foreign travellers who wrote about magnificence of Vijay nagar empire?

2. Temple of Tirupati was developed during the reign of which king?

3. Where was Amir Nayaka System prevalent?

4. What were the areas of conflict between the Vijaynagar & the Bahamanis?

11.8 REGIONAL STATES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

You must have studied about the crisis in the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century that finally led to the collapse of the Mughal Empire. As the Mughal authority weakened, the governors of the provinces, *subedars*, and the big *zamindars* became powerful and asserted their independence.

The regional states of this period can be divided into three categories:

1. There were some states whose founders were important Mughal nobles and held high *mansabs*. Though they became independent, they never broke fromal ties with the Mughal state. Some of the important states in this category are Awadh, Bengal and Hyderabad. The founder of the Awadh state was Sa’adat Khan. The founder of Bengal was Mushid Quli Khan and the founder of Hyderabad state was Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah. All three were powerful members of the Mughal nobility and were the governors of these provinces. As the Mughal Empire weakened, there was a large-scale migration of soldiers and administrators from Delhi to these new states that promised numerous opportunities.

In these states the position of the previous *zamindars* changed. For example, Sa’adat Khan seized a number of Rajput *zamindaris* and the agriculturally fertile lands of the Afghans at Rohilkhand. Similarly, in an effort to reduce Mughal influence in Bengal, Mushid Quli Khan transferred all Mughal *jagirdars* to Orissa and ordered a major reassessment of the revenues of Bengal. Revenue was collected in cash with great strictness from all *zamindars*. As a result, many *zamindars* had to borrow money from bankers and moneylenders. Those unable to pay were forced to sell their lands to larger *zamindars*.

Another change in these states was the rise of the bankers and moneylenders or *mahajans*. The state and the landed class depended on them for loans. These bankers in turn became powerful and influenced the administration. The state auctioned its right to collect taxes to the highest bidders, who were usually bankers and *mahajans*. In turn, the bankers promised to



Notes

pay a fixed sum of money to the state. Thus, the state was assured of a fixed income. This system was called the *ijaradari* system and those who bought the right to collect taxes were known as *ijaredars*. The Mughal state had always discouraged this system. There were chances that those who collected the tax would collect much more than fixed, exploiting the peasants and would give less to the state thereby causing a loss to the state revenue.

2. The second category of regional states in the eighteenth century was those states that had already enjoyed a lot of independence during the Mughal rule as *watan jagirs*. The Rajput states belonged to this category.
3. The third category of regional states was those that had emerged after rebelling against the Mughal authority. The Sikhs, the Marathas and the Jats belonged to this group. For example, the Sikh rebellion against the Mughals led to state-building in the Punjab.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.6

1. Regional States in 18th century have been divided into which categories?



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

The rise of regional states from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century is due to internal weakness of Delhi Sultanate and decline of Mughal Empire. An understanding of the nature of these regional powers will help you see the Delhi sultanate and Mughal Empire in a clear perspective. It will be useful if the regional states of this period are seen in continuation with the regional states from sixth to the twelfth century also. To understand the regional states, one has to first understand the concept of regionalism, which has political features, language, religious affiliations, Art & Culture as developed and evolved over a period of time as discussed in this lesson. There were a large number of such states but we have taken only a few as case studies. Jaunpur, Kashmir, Gujarat, Bengal, Vijayanagr and Bahamani were discussed. It should be remembered that though these states fought with each other, but they also borrowed ideas in the field of art, architecture and religion from each other. Their relationship with the central authority as well as among themselves kept changing from time to time.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Trace the development of regional States from 13th Century to 18th Century in India.
2. How were regional States different from Central Empire?
3. How Bengal was able to assert its independence so easily!?
4. What was unique about Mahmud Begarha and why he is considered an important ruler of Gujarat?
5. Describe Amara – nayaka System of administration?
6. The Vijay Nagar & the Bahamanis were neighbours but were not at peace, why it was so, Discuss?

**ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****11.1**

1. Language, religions affiliations, Interaction through trade & Commerce, Regional Art Schools
2. Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Central India & Rajasthan
3. Namdev, Raidas, Tukaram, Guru Nanak

11.2

1. In 1338 after the death of Feroz Shah Tuglaq
2. Bihar & Punjab

11.3

1. Aligarh in West, Darbhanga in East, Nepal in North & Bundel Khand in South
2. Zaimil Abidin
3. Haji Ilyas Khan
4. Ahmedabad

11.4

1. Mohamed bin Tughlaq, Deccan
2. Reached Deccan as a trader, granted Malik-ut-Tujjar made Wazir later on

11.5

1. Nicolo Conti, Fernao Nuniz, Domingo Paes, Duareto Barbosa & Abdur Razzaq.
2. Krishna Deva Raya
3. Vijay Nagar administration.
4. Control of Raichur doab; Marathwada region deltaic region of Krishna-Godavari

11.6

1. Founded by Mughal nobles; Watan Jagirs; Rebelled from Mughal authority.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer 11.2
2. Refer 11.1 last two paras
3. Refer 11.5
4. Refer 11.6
5. Refer 11.8.1
6. Refer 11.8.2

**Notes**



Notes

GLOSSARY

Silsilah	–	Different orders of Sufis
Zamindars	–	Owner of private land having hereditary rights
Sultanu – Sharq	–	Master of the East
Jaziya	–	A kind of tax, other than land tax on non-muslims for not rendering Military service
Khalisa	–	Land controlled directly by the king & not assigned to any Zamindar or officer
Tarafdar	–	Head of a province
Jagir	–	A piece of land assigned to a government officer by the State
Amir	–	Commander, the third highest official grade in Delhi Sultanate

1



12

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONS

With the establishment of the Delhi sultanate a new ruling class emerged in India. This new class introduced a new administrative system. Some new institutions were also introduced. After the coming of the Mughals some of these underwent changes and a few new ones got introduced. A few of the administrative institution had their roots in Arab and Central Asia from where the new ruling group came. While some others were of Indian origin. A significant feature of these was that many of these got transformed and in due course of time developed as suitable to Indian context.

The new administrative system and institutions contributed in the consolidation of the Sultanate and Mughal empire. It would not be possible for us to discuss all aspects of administration over a period of 500 years in a small lesson. However we will try to provide the basic features, continuity and changes in the administrative structure and some important institutions.

The ruling class kept changing during this period. These institutions were used by various rulers for other purposes also. The rulers from time to time included people from various social classes in the administrative apparatus in order to have social harmony. It was natural on the part of these social classes to stake a claim in the system of governance and various rulers readily accommodated them in this system. In this sense these institutions also emerged as a tool to contain any kind of social conflict in the society, though there were various other measures also that were used by the rulers for this purpose.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- know about the nature and composition of Sultanate and Mughal ruling class;
- understand the administrative structure of the Delhi Sultanate;
- recall the main administrative departments of the Sultanate period;
- describe the provincial and local administration under the Sultans;
- discuss the main features of the iqta system;
- analyse the market control policy of Alauddin Khalji;
- know about the central and provincial administration of the Mughals;
- discuss main features of jagir system;
- trace the evolution of Mansabdari system and
- understand administrative structure under the Marathas.



Notes

12.1 EVOLUTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE UNDER DELHI SULTANATE

When Qutubuddin Aibak established himself as an independent Sultan at Lahore, the available administrative apparatus was continued in the initial phase. The prevailing structure was not altered or disturbed and as long, as the local rulers recognised the supremacy of the Sultan in Delhi, they were allowed to collect taxes and send it to the central treasury as tribute. The central officials in these areas were mainly to help the local rulers in their administrative tasks. With the expansion and consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate, new administrative institutions also started emerging. The administrative structures and institutions introduced in India were influenced by the Mongols, Seljukids etc, brought by the new rulers. The existing administrative institutions in different parts of the country also contributed in giving shape to the new system.

The Sultans were aware of the fact that they had to rule over a subject population that was largely non-Islamic. Thus the Sultans of Delhi had to introduce particular measures to suit the prevailing conditions in the Sultanate. From the administrative point of view, the local level administration, it seems, was left mainly in the hands of village headmen etc. The large extent of the Sultanate necessitated the evolution of administrative structure separately for the centre and provinces. Thus, during the Sultanate period, administrative institutions emerged at different levels - central, provincial and local.

Let us now examine various components of the administrative system in detail.

12.2 ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

During the Sultanate period the administrative apparatus was headed by the Sultan who was helped by various nobles. There were various other offices along with the office of the Sultan. Theoretically, there was a council of Ministers *Majlis-i-Khalwat* to assist the Sultan.

(i) The Sultan

The Sultan was the central figure in the administrative set up. He was the head of the civil administration and Supreme Commander of the army. He made all the appointments and promotions. He also had the right to remove anybody from the service. He had absolute power in his hand. He was also the head of the Judiciary. He used to confer titles and honours upon people. Theoretically the Sultan had an exalted position but in actual practice different Sultans enjoyed varying power. The position of the Sultan was always under pressure from the powerful group of nobility and Ulema. Sultans of Delhi, particularly the powerful Sultans, adopted various strategies to keep these groups under control. Balban kept the nobles firmly under his control. Thus the personality of the Sultan played a significant role in the administrative structure of the Sultanate. Under the capable and strong Sultans, the administration and the administrative structure functioned well but under the inefficient and weak ruler the same was under pressure.

(ii) Nobility

The nobles were the most important functionaries of the state and enjoyed high social status. In the initial stage they were those commanders who came with the victorious army. Over a period of time their descendants formed the main strength and some Indian groups also emerged. The position and power of the nobility varied from time to time as has been mentioned above. Nobles, particularly those who were based at Delhi, emerged as a very powerful group and at times even played a role in the selection of the sultan.



Notes

The nobility was not a homogeneous class. There were different groups within the nobility and often there were inter group clashes and rivalries. The clash between Turkish and Tajik nobles started during the time of Iltutmish and became intense after his death. The group of *chahalgan* (group of 40 nobles), which was created by Iltutmish, also emerged very powerful.

Balban was the first Sultan to bring the nobility firmly under his control (interestingly, he had been a part of *chahalgan* earlier). Qutubuddin Aibak and Iltutmish had considered the nobles at par with themselves. Balban maintained distance from the nobility and enforced strict code of conduct for himself and for the nobility. No loose talk or laughter was allowed in the court. He also emphasized on high blood and made it a criteria for occupying high positions and offices.

With the expansion of the Delhi Sultanate there were also attempts on the part of different sections of the society to join the nobility. Initially it was the preserve of the Turks only. During the rule of the Khalji and Tughlaks the doors of the nobility were opened to people of diverse backgrounds. The low caste people, both Hindus and Muslims, joined the nobility and could rise to high positions especially under Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. During the Lodi period the Afghan concept of equality became important when the Sultan was considered “first among equals”. Thus the nobles enjoyed equal status with the Sultan. Some of the Lodi Sultans like Sikandar Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi found this uncomfortable and tried to bring the nobles under their control. The nobles resisted this which resulted in the trouble for both the Sultans.

(iii) Ulema

The religious intellectual group of Muslims was collectively referred as Ulema. People of this group managed religious matters and interpreted religious regulations for Sultan. They were also incharge of judicial matters and worked as Qazis at various levels. It was quite influential group and commanded respect of Sultan and nobility. They also had influence among Muslim masses. This group used to pressurize the sultan to run the Sultanate as per the religious laws of Islam. The Sultan and nobles generally tried to run the administrative affairs as per the need of state rather than religious laws. Sultan like Alauddin Khalji could ignore the opinions of Ulema on a number of issues but some followed their line.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.1**

1. What was *Chahalgan* and who created it .

2. Who was the first Sultan to bring the nobility firmly under the control of the Sultan for the first time?

3. What was the position of the Sultan vis-à-vis the nobility according to the Afghan concept of sovereignty?

4. Who were Ulema ?



Notes

12.3 CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

As already mentioned the administrative system was headed by the Sultan. There were a number of departments which were assigned different responsibilities. These departments were managed by influential nobles. We will provide a brief account of a few departments.

(i) Wizarat

After Sultan, the most important office was the *Diwan-i-Wizarat*, headed by the wazir. It was a key position in the royal court and his role was of a general supervisor over all departments, though he was one of the four important departmental heads. He was the chief advisor to the Sultan. The main functions of the wazir were to look after the financial organization of the State, give advice to the Sultan, and on occasions to lead military expeditions at Sultan's behest. He also supervised the payment to the army. The wizarat or the office of wazir also kept a check on land revenue collections, maintained a record of all the income and expenditure incurred by the state and thus controlled or recorded the salaries of all royal servants, handled the charitable donations such as Waqfs, Inams etc. Further, the Mints, the intelligence departments, the royal buildings and other bodies affiliated to the royal court were supervised by the *wizarat*. The wazir had direct access to the Sultan and it was on his wisdom, sincerity and loyalty that the position of the Sultan depended greatly.

There were several other departments which worked under the *wizarat*. They were entrusted with specific functions. These included *Mustaufi-i-Mumalik* (Auditor General), *Mushrif-i-Mumalik* (Accountant General), *Majmuadar* (Keeper of loans and balances from treasury). Later some other offices were brought under the supervision of the Wizarat like *Diwan-i-Waqoof* (to supervise expenditure), *Diwan-i-Mustakharaj* (to look into the arrears of revenue payments), *Diwan-i-Amir Kohi* (to bring uncultivated land into cultivation through state support).

(ii) Diwan-i-Arz

This department was set up to look after the military organization of the empire. It was headed by *Ariz-i-Mumalik*. He was responsible for the administration of military affairs. He maintained royal contingent, recruited the soldiers, ensured the discipline and fitness of the army, inspected the troops maintained by the Iqta-holders, examined the horses and branded them with the royal insignia. During times of war, the ariz arranged military provisions, transportation and administered the army at war, provided constant supplies and was the custodian of the war booty. Alauddin Khalji introduced the system of *Dagh* (branding) and *huliya* (description) and cash payment to the soldiers in order to strengthen his control over the army. The contingent stationed at Delhi was called *hasham-i-qalb* and Provincial contingents were called *hasham-i-atraf*.

(iii) Diwan-i-Insha

This department looked after the state correspondence. It was headed by *Dabir-i-Khas*. He drafted and despatched royal orders and received reports from various officers. The Dabir was the formal channel of communication between the centre and other regions of the empire. He was also a sort of private secretary of the Sultan and was responsible for writing the farmans.

The *Barid-i-Mumalik* was the head of the state news gathering and dealt with intelligence. He had to keep information of all that was happening in the Sultanate. At local level there were *barids* who used to send regular news concerning the matters



Notes

of the state to the central office. Apart from barids, another set of reporters also existed who were known as *Munihyan*.

(iv) Diwan-i-Rasalat

This department dealt with the administration of Justice. It was headed by *Sadr-us-Sadr* who was also the *qazi-i-mumalik*. He was the highest religious officer and took care of ecclesiastical affairs. He also appointed the *qazis* (judges) and approved various charitable grants like *waqf*, *wazifa*, *Idrar*, etc.

The Sultan was the highest court of appeal in both civil and criminal matters. Next to him was *Qazi-i-mumalik*. The *Muhtasibs* (Public Censors) assisted the judicial department. Their main task was to see that there was no public infringement of the tenets of Islam. He was also to supervise and enforce the public morals and conduct.

(v) Other Departments

Apart from these, there were a number of smaller departments at the centre which helped in the everyday administration of the empire. *Wakil-i-dar* looked after the royal household and managed the personal services of the Sultan. *Amir-i-Hajib* looked after the royal ceremonies. He used to act as an intermediary between the Sultan and subordinate officials and between Sultan and the public. *Sar-i-Jandar* looked after the royal body guards. *Amir-i-Akhur* looked after the establishment of horses and *Shahnah-i-fil* looked after the establishment of elephants. *Amir-i-Majlis* looked after the arrangement of meetings and special ceremonies. The Royal workshops (Karkhanas) played an important role in the administrative system of the Sultanate. The needs of the royal household were met through Karkhanas. The Karkhanas were of two types - (i) Manufactories (ii) Store House. Under Feroz Tughlaq, there were as many as 36 Karkhanas. Each Karkhana was supervised by a noble who had the rank of a Malik or a Khan. The *Mutasarrif* was responsible for the accounts and acted as immediate supervisors in various departments.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.2**

1. Mention two departments that worked under the Wizarat.
2. What practices did Alauddin Khalji introduce in the army?
3. Which department dealt with the administration of Justice and who headed it?

12.4 PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND IQTA SYSTEM

The administration in the areas that were outside the core political area was carried out in a number of ways. It depended on the degree of political control which was exercised over the areas. The territorial expansion and consolidation of the sultanate was a process which continued throughout the 13th and 14th centuries. Some of the newly conquered areas were brought directly under the control of the Sultanate and some other areas remained semi autonomous. Thus different Control mechanisms were adopted by the Sultan for these areas. In the areas that were loosely affiliated to the Sultanate, a few officials were appointed by the Centre as a symbol of imperial presence but everyday administration remained in local hands. The interest of the centre in these areas was mostly economic, i.e. the collection of the revenue.



Notes

The provinces were placed under the charge of the Governors who were responsible for the overall administration of the area. This involved ensuring the collection of revenue, maintaining law and order and keeping rebellious elements under control. He was a deputy of the Sultan in his area. Since the officials were frequently transferred and not familiar with the areas, they were generally dependent on local officials to perform their duties. The collection of the revenue was not possible without the help of the local officials. Thus the governor and the local power blocs worked in close association with each other. At times the combination created problems for the Sultan as the governors used to become powerful with the help provided by the local rulers and rise in rebellion against the Sultan. During the 14th century the provinces were partitioned into *Shiqs* for administrative convenience. The *shiqs* were administered by the *Shiqdar*. Subsequently the *Shiqs* got transformed into *Sarkar* during the Afghan period. *Faujdar* was another officer along with *Shiqdar* at the provincial level. Their duties are not clearly articulated, and often the role of the two seem to overlap. The *Shiqdar* assisted the governor in the maintenance of law and order and provided military assistance. He also supervised the functioning of the smaller administrative units. The duties of the *Faujdar* were similar to the *Shiqdar*. The *Kotwals* were placed under the *Faujdar*.

The other important officers at the provincial level were *Barids* (intelligence officer and reporter) and *Sahib-i-Diwan* (who maintained the financial accounts of the provincial income and expenditure).

12.5 IQTA SYSTEM

The institution of the *Iqta* had been in force in early Islamic world as a form of reward for services to the state. In the caliphate administration it was used to pay civil and military officers. After the establishment of the Sultanate *iqta* system was introduced by the Sultans. To begin with the army commanders and nobles were given territories to administer and collect the revenue. The territories thus assigned were called *iqta* and their holders as *iqtdar* or *muqti*.

In essence this was a system of payment to the officers and maintenance of army by them. Gradually rules and regulations were laid down to organize the whole system. Through the years it became the main instrument of administering the Sultanate. Further the sultans could get a large share of the surplus production from different parts of the vast territories through this system.

From the 14th century we hear of *Walis* or *muqtis* who are commanders of military and administrative tracts called *Iqta*. Their exact powers varied according to circumstances. In due course the *muqti* was given complete charge of the administration of the *iqta* which included the task of maintaining an army. The *muqti* was to help the sultan with his army in case of need. He was expected to maintain the army and meet his own expenses with the revenue collected. From the time of Balban the *muqti* was expected to send the balance (*fawazil*) of the income to the centre after meeting his and the army's expenses. This means that the central revenue department had made an assessment of the expected income of the *Iqta*, the cost of the maintenance of the army and the *muqti*'s own expenses. This process became even more strict during the time of Alauddhin Khalji. As the central control grew, the control over *muqti*'s administration also increased. The *Khwaja* (probably same as *Sahib-i-Diwan*) was appointed to keep a record of the income of the *Iqtas*. It was on the basis of this record that the Sultan used to make his revenue demands. A *barid*



Notes

or intelligence officer was also appointed to keep the Sultan informed. During the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq a number of governors were appointed on revenue sharing terms where they were to give a fixed sum to the state. During the time of Feroze Shah Tughlaq the control of state over iqtas was diluted when iqtas became hereditary.

12.6 LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The village was the smallest unit of administration. The functioning and administration of the village remained more or less the same as it had existed in pre Turkish times. The main village functionaries were *khut*, *Muqaddam* and *Patwari*. They worked in close coordination with the muqti in the collection of revenue and in maintaining law and order etc. A number of villages formed the Pargana. The important Pargana officials were *Chaudhary*, *Amil* (revenue collector) and *Karkun* (accountant). Village and pargana were independent units of administration, and yet there were inter related areas. In certain cases the province had a local ruler (*Rai*, *Rana*, *Rawat*, *Raja*) who helped the governor in his duties. In such cases the local rulers were recognised as subordinates of the Sultan.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.3

1. Name three officials at the level of pargana.

2. Mention some of the administrative units of the Sultanate period.

3. Mention a few important village functionaries.

4. What was *Fawazil*?

12.7 MARKET REFORMS OF ALAUDDIN KHALJI

The market reforms of Alauddin Khalji were oriented towards administrative and military necessities. Medieval rulers believed that necessities of life, especially food grains, should be available to the city folk at reasonable prices. But few rulers had been able to control the prices for any length of time. Alauddin Khalji was more or less the first ruler who looked at the problem of price control, in a systematic manner and was able to maintain stable prices for a considerable period. It has been pointed out that Alauddin Khalji instituted the market control because after the mongol siege of Delhi, he wanted to recruit a large army. All his treasures would have soon exhausted if he was to spend huge resources on army. With low prices the sultan could recruit a large army with low expenses. Whatever may be the reason for the market reforms, elaborate administrative arrangements were made to ensure that the market control was followed strictly.

Alauddin fixed the prices of all commodities from grain to cloth, slaves, cattle etc. He also set up three markets at Delhi, the first for food grains, the second for cloth of all kinds and for expensive items such as sugar, ghee, oil, dry fruits etc. and the third for the horses, slaves and cattle. For controlling the food prices, Alauddin tried to control not only the supply of food grains from the villages, and its transportation to the city by the grain merchants, but also its proper distribution to the citizens. A number of measures were taken to see that prices laid



Notes

down by the Sultan were strictly observed. An officer (*Shehna*) was in charge of the market to see that no one violates the royal orders. Barids (intelligence officers) and *munhiyan* (secret spies) were also appointed. Alauddin also tried to ensure that there were sufficient stocks of food-grains with the government so that the traders did not hike up prices by creating an artificial scarcity, or indulge in profiteering. Granaries were set up in Delhi and Chhain (Rajasthan). The *Banjaras* or *Karwaniyan* who transported the food grains from the country side to the city were asked to form themselves in a body. They were to settle on the banks of Yamuna with their families. An official (*Shehna*) was appointed to oversee them. To ensure the regular supply of food grains to the Banjaras, a number of regulations were made. All the food grains were to be brought to the market (mandis) and sold only at official prices.

The second market for cloth, dry fruits, ghee etc. was called *Sarai-i- adl*. All the clothes brought from different parts of the country and also from outside were to be stored and sold only in this market at government rates. To ensure an adequate supply of all the commodities, all the merchants were registered and a deed taken from them that they would bring the specified quantities of commodities to the *Sarai-i-adl* every year. The Merchants who, brought commodities from long distances including foreign countries were given advance money on the condition that they would not sell to any intermediaries. In cases of costly commodities an officer was to issue permits to amirs, maliks etc. for the purchase of these expensive commodities in accordance with their income. This was done to prevent any black marketing of these expensive products.

The third market dealt with horses, cattle and slaves. The supply of horses of good quality at fair prices was important for the army. Alauddin did away with the middleman or *dallal* who had become very powerful. It was decided that the government fixed the Quality and prices of the horses. Similarly, the prices of slave boys and girls and of cattle were also fixed. But these reforms didn't last long and after the death of Alauddin these reforms got lost.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.4

1. Who were the officials to look after market regulation ?

2. Name the places at which the granaries were set up by Alauddin Khalji.

3. Who were Banjaras?

12.8 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE UNDER THE MUGHALS

The Mughals retained many features of the administrative system of the Sultanate and Shershah. Under Shershah the administrative units of Pargana (a group of villages), sarkar (a group of parganas) and groups of sarkars (some what like subas or province) were placed under specific offices. The Mughals formalized a new territorial unit called suba. Institutions of Jagir and Mansab system were also introduced by the Mughals. Thus change and continuity both marked the Mughal administrative structure which brought about a high degree of centralisation in the system.



Notes

12.8.1 CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

(i) *The Emperor*

The Emperor was the supreme head of the administration and controlled all military and judicial powers. All officers in Mughal administration owed their power and position to the Emperor. The Emperor had authority to appoint, promote, and remove officials at his pleasure. There was no pressure institutional or otherwise on the Emperor. For smooth functioning of the empire a few departments were created.

(ii) *Wakil and Wazir*

The institution of *Wizarat* (or *Wikalat* since both were used interchangeably) was present in some form during the Delhi Sultanate also. The position of Wazir had lost its pre-eminent position during the period of Afghan rulers in the Delhi Sultanate. The position of the wazir was revived under the Mughals. Babur's and Humayun's wazir enjoyed great powers. The period during which Bairam Khan (1556–60) was regent of Akbar, saw the rise of wakil-wazir with unlimited powers. Akbar in his determination to curb the powers of wazir later on took away the financial powers from him. This was a big jolt to wazir's power.

(iii) *Diwan-i-Kul*

Diwan-i Kul was the chief diwan. He was responsible for revenue and finances. Akbar had strengthened the office of diwan by entrusting the revenue powers to the diwan. The diwan used to inspect all transaction and payments in all departments and supervised the provincial diwans. The entire revenue collection and expenditure of the empire was under his charge. The diwans were to report about state finance to the Emperor on daily basis.

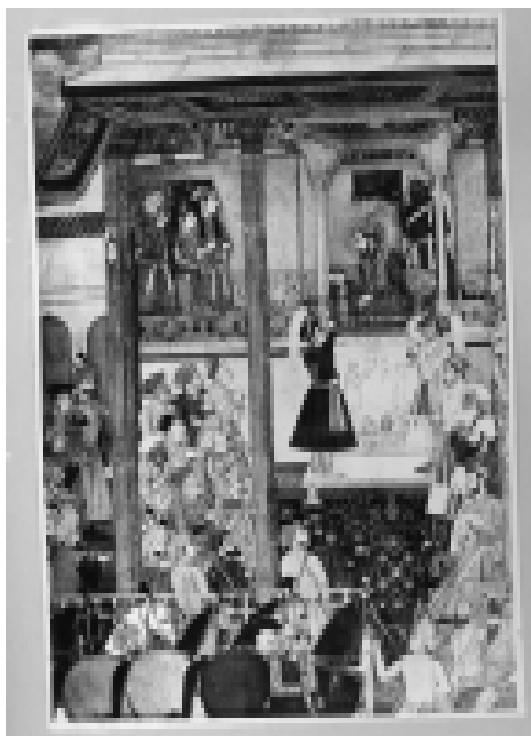


Fig 12.1 Royal Court



Notes

(iv) Mir Bakshi

Mir Bakshi looked after all matters pertaining to the military administration. The orders of appointment of mansabdars and their salary papers were endorsed and passed by him. He kept a strict watch over proper maintenance of the sanctioned size of armed contingents and war equipage by the mansabdars. The new entrants seeking service were presented to the Emperor by the *Mir Bakshi*.

(v) Sadr-us Sudur

The *Sadr-us Sudur* was the head of the ecclesiastical department. His chief duty was to protect the laws of the *Shariat*. The office of the *Sadr* used to distribute allowances and stipends to the eligible persons and religious institutions. It made this office very lucrative during the first twenty-five years of Akbar's reign. The promulgation of *Mahzar* in 1580 restricted his authority. According to *Mahzar* Akbar's view was to prevail in case of conflicting views among religious scholars. This officer also regulated the matters of revenue free grants given for religious and charitable purposes. Later several restrictions were placed on the authority of the *Sadr* for award of revenue free grants also.

Muhtasibs (censors of public morals) were appointed to ensure the general observance of the rules of morality. He also used to examine weights and measures and enforce fair prices etc.

(vi) Mir Saman

The *Mir Saman* was the officer in-charge of the royal *Karkhanas*. He was responsible for all kinds of purchases and their storage for the royal household. He was also to supervise the manufacturing of different articles for the use of royal household.

12.8.2 PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Mughal empire was divided into twelve provinces or subas by Akbar. These were Allhabad, Agra, Awadh, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Bihar, Bengal, Delhi, Kabul, Lahore, Malwa and Multan. Later on Ahmednagar, Bearar and Khandesh were added. With the expansion of Mughal empire the number of provinces increased to twenty.

Each suba was placed under a *Subedar* or provincial governor who was directly appointed by the Emperor. The *subedar* was head of the province and responsible for maintenance of general law and order. He was to encourage agriculture, trade and commerce and take steps to enhance the revenue of the state. He was also to suppress rebellions and provide army for expeditions.

The head of the revenue department in the suba was the *Diwan*. He was appointed by the Emperor and was an independent officer. He was to supervise the revenue collection in the suba and maintain accounts of all expenditures. He was also expected to increase the area under cultivation. In many cases advance loans (*taqavi*) were given to peasants through his office.

The *Bakshi* in the province performed the same functions as were performed by *Mir Bakshi* at the centre. He was appointed by the imperial court at the recommendations of the *Mir Bakshi*. He was responsible for checking and inspecting the horses and soldiers maintained by the mansabdars in the suba. He issued the paybills of both the mansabdars and the soldiers. Often his office was combined with *Waqainiqar*. In this capacity his duty was to inform the centre about the happenings in his province.

The representative of the central *Sadr* (*Sadr-us sudur*) at the provincial level was called *Sadr*. He was responsible for the welfare of those who were engaged in religious activities and learning. He also looked after the judicial department and in that capacity supervised the works of the *Qazis*.



Notes

There were some other officers also who were appointed at the provincial level. *Darogai-i-Dak* was responsible for maintaining the communication channel. He used to pass on letters to the court through the postal runners (*Merwars*). *Waqainavis* and *waqainigars* were appointed to provide reports directly to the Emperor.

12.8.3 LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The provinces or subas were divided into Sarkars. The Sarkars were divided into Parganas. The village was the smallest unit of administration.

At the level of Sarkar, there were two important functionaries, the *faujdar* and the *Amalguzar*. The Faujdar was appointed by the imperial order. Sometimes within a Sarkar a number of Faujdars existed. At times, their jurisdiction spread over two Sarkars even if these belonged to two different subas. *Faujdari* was an administrative division whereas *Sarkar* was a territorial and revenue division. The primary duty of the faujdar was to safeguard the life and property of the residents of the areas under his Jurisdiction. He was to take care of law and order problem in his areas and assist in the timely collection of revenue whenever force was required.

The *amalguzar* or *amil* was the revenue collector. His duty was to assess and supervise the revenue collection. He was expected to increase the land under cultivation and induce the peasants to pay revenue willingly. He used to maintain all accounts and send the daily receipt and expenditure report to the provincial Diwan.

At the level of Pragma, the *Shiqdar* was the executive officer. He assisted the *amils* in the task of revenue collection. The *amils* looked after the revenue collection at the Pargana level. The *quanungo* kept all the records of land in the pargana. The *Kotwals* were appointed mainly in towns by the imperial government and were incharge of law and order. He was to maintain a register for keeping records of people coming and going out of the towns. The *Muqaddam* was the village head man and the *Patwari* looked after the village revenue records. The services of the Zamindars were utilized for the maintenance of law and order in their areas as well as in the collection of revenue. The forts were placed under an officer called *Qiladar*. He was incharge of the general administration of the fort and the areas assigned in Jagir to him.

The port administration was independent of the provincial authority. The governor of the port was called *Mutasaddi* who was directly appointed by the Emperor. The *Mutasaddi* collected taxes on merchandise and maintained a custom-house. He also supervised the mint house at the port.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.5

1. Why did Akbar curtail the power of wazir?

2. Who was *Mir Saman* ? What were his duties?

3. Who was *Mutasaddi* ? What were his duties ?

4. Who were the two important functionaries at the level of Sarkar?



Notes

12.11 MUGHAL ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS

(i) Mansab System

The mansab and Jagir system under the Mughals in India evolved through the time. Mansabdari was a unique system devised by the Mughals in India. The mansabdari system, evolved by Akbar with certain changes and modifications, was the basis of civil and military administrations under the Mughals. The word mansab means a place or position. The mansab awarded to an individual fixed both his status in the official hierarchy and also his salary. It also fixed the number of armed retainers the holders of mansab was to maintain. The system was formulated to streamline rank of the nobles, fix their salary and specify the number of cavalry to be maintained by them.

Under the mansab system ranks were expressed in numerical terms. Abul Fazl states that Akbar had established 66 grades of Mansabdars ranging from commanders of 10 horsemen to 10,000 horsemen, although only 33 grades have been mentioned by him. Initially a single number represented the rank, personal pay and the size of the contingent of the mansabdar. Later the rank of mansabdar came to be denoted by two numbers - *Zat and-Sawar*. The *Zat* denoted personal rank of an official and the *Sawar* indicated the size of contingents maintained by the mansabdars. Depending on the strength of contingent Mansabdars were placed in three categories. Let us take the example of a mansabdar who had a rank of 7000 *zat* and 7000 *sawar* (7000/7000). In the first *Zat* and *Sawar* ranks were equal (7000/7000). In the second, *Sawar* rank was lower than the *Zat* but stopped at half, or fifty percent, of the *Zat* rank (7000/4000). In the third, *Sawar* rank was lower than fifty percent of the *Zat* rank (7000/3000). Thus the *Sawar* rank was either equal or less than the *Zat*. Even if the *Sawar* rank was higher, the mansabdar's position in the official hierarchy would not be affected. It will be decided by the *Zat* rank. For example, a mansabdar with 4000 *Zat* and 2000 *Sawar* was higher in rank than a Mansabdar of 3000 *Zat* and 3000 *Sawar*.

But there were exceptions to this rule particularly when the mansabdar was serving in a difficult terrain amidst the rebels. In such cases the state often increased the *Sawar* rank without altering the *Zat* rank. Some times *Sawar* rank was also increased for a temporary period to meet emergency situations.

Jahangir introduced a new provision in the *Sawar* rank. According to it a part of *Sawar* rank was termed *du-aspa sih-aspa* in case of select mansabdars. For this part additional payment at the same rate 8,000 dams per *Sawar* was sanctioned. Thus if the *Sawar* rank was 4000 out of which 1000 was *du-aspa sih-aspa*, salary for this *Sawar* was calculated as $3,000 \times 8,000 + (1,000 \times 8,000 \times 2) = 40,000,000$ dams. Without *du-aspa sih-aspa*, salary for the 4,000 *Sawar* would have stood at $(4,000 \times 8,000) = 32,000,000$ dams. Thus the mansabdar was to maintain double number of *Sawars* for the *du-aspa sih-aspa* category and was paid for it. Jahangir probably introduced this provision to promote nobles of his confidence and strengthen them militarily. By this provision he could increase the military strength of his nobles without effecting any change in their *Zat* rank. Any increase in their *Zat* rank would not only have led to jealousy among other nobles but also an additional burden on the treasury.

Shahjahan introduced the month-scale in the, mansabdari system to compensate the gap between *Jama* (estimated income) and *hasil* (actual realisation). The mansabaars were generally paid through revenue assignments Jagirs. The biggest problem was that calculation was made on the basis of the expected income (*Jama*) from the Jagir during one year. It was noticed that the actual revenue collection (*hasil*) always fell



Notes

short of the estimated income. In such a situation, the mansabdar's salary were fixed by a method called month-scale. Thus, if a Jagir yielded only half of the Jama, it was called *Shashmaha* (six monthly), if it yielded only one fourth, it was called *Sihmaha* (three monthly). The month scale was applied to cash salaries also. There were deductions from the sanctioned pay also. During the reign of Shahjahan the mansabdars were allowed to maintain 1/5 to 1/3 of the sanctioned strength of the Sawar rank without any accompanying reduction in their claim on the maintenance amount for the Sawar rank.

Aurangzeb continued with all these changes and created an additional rank called *Mashrut* (conditional). This was an attempt to increase the sawar rank of the mansabdar temporarily. Aurangzeb added one another deduction called *Khurak-i-dawwab*, towards meeting the cost for feed of animals in the imperial stables.

(ii) Jagir System

The system of assignment of revenue of a particular territory to the nobles for their services to the state continued under the Mughals also. Under the Mughals, the areas assigned were generally called *Jagir* and its holders *Jagirdars*. The Jagirdari system was an integral part of the mansabdari system which developed under Akbar and underwent certain changes during the reign of his successors. During Akbar's period all the territory was broadly divided into two: *Khalisa* and *Jagir*. The revenue from the first went to imperial treasury, and that from Jagir was assigned to Jagirdars in lieu of their cash salary. Salary entitlements of mansabdars were calculated on the basis of their *Zat* and *Sawar* ranks. The salary was paid either in cash (in that case they were called *Naqdi*) or through the assignment of a *Jagir*, the latter being the preferable mode. In case the payment was made through the assignment of a Jagir, the office of the central Diwan would identify parganas the sum total of whose *Jama* was equal to the salary claim of the mansabdars. In case the recorded *Jama* was in excess of salary claim the assignee was required to deposit the balance with the central treasury. On the other hand, if it was less than the salary claim the short fall was paid from the treasury.

However, none of the assignments was permanent or hereditary. The Emperor could shift part or the entire *Jagir* from one part of the imperial territory to another at any time. The ratio between *Jagir* and *Khalisa* kept fluctuating during the Mughal rule. During Akbar's period *Khalisa* was only 5% of total revenue, under Jahangir it was 10%, under Shahjahan it fluctuated between 9 to 15%. In the latter part of Aurangzeb's reign there was a great pressure on the *Khalisa* as the number of claimants for *Jagir* increased with the increase in the number of mansabdars. The jagirdars were also transferred from one *Jagir* to another (but in certain cases they were allowed to keep their Jagir in one locality for longer period of time). The system of transfer checked the *Jagirdars* from developing local roots. At the same time, its disadvantage was that it discouraged the *Jagirdars* from taking long term measures for the development of their areas.

There were various types of *Jagirs*. *Tankha Jagirs* were given in lieu of salaries, *Mashrut Jagirs* were given on certain conditions, *Watan Jagirs* were assigned to Zamindar or rajas in their local dominions. *Altamgha Jagirs* were given to Muslim nobles in their family towns or place of birth. *Tankha Jagirs* were transferable every three to four years. *Watan Jagirs* were hereditary and non transferable. When a Zamindar was made a mansabdar, he was given *Tankha Jagir* apart from his *watan Jagir* at another place, if the salary of his rank was more than the income from his *watan Jagir*.

The *Jagirdars* were allowed to collect only authorized revenue in accordance with the imperial regulations. The jagirdars employed their own officials like *amil* etc. The imperial office kept watch on the *Jagirdars*. The Diwan of the *suba* was supposed



Notes



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.6

1. Who introduced the Mansabdari system? Why was this system formulated ?

2. What is *Zat* and *Sawar*?

3. What changes did Aurangzeb make in the Mansabdari system ?

4. What is the *Jagir* system?

12.10 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE UNDER THE MARATHAS

The rise of the Maratha power was a significant phenomenon in the history of the Deccan. The administrative system of the Marathas was very much influenced by the administrative system of the Mughals and the Deccani states.

(i) Central Administration

The king was at the helm of the affairs. The administration was divided into eight departments headed by ministers who are some times called *Ashta pradhan*. The eight ministers were (1) *Peshwa* who looked after the finances and general administration. (2) *Sar-i-Naubat* who was the Senapati. (3) *Majumdar* looked after the accounts. (4) *Waqai navis* looked after the intelligence, post and household affairs (5) *Surnavis* or *Chitnis* looked after official correspondence (6) *Dabir* looked after foreign affairs (7) *Nyayadhish* looked after justice and (8) *Pandit Rao* looked after ecclesiastical affairs.

The *ashtapradhan* was not a creation of Shivaji. Many of these officers like *Peshwa*, *Majumdar*, *Waqai navis*, *Dabir* and *Surnavis* had existed under the Deccani rulers also. All the members of the *ashta pradhan* except *Pandit Rao* and *Nyayadhish* were asked to lead military campaigns. Under Shivaji these offices were neither hereditary nor permanent. They held the office at the pleasure of the king. They were also frequently transferred. Each of the *ashta pradhan* was assisted by eight assistants *diwan*, *Majumdar*, *Fadnis*, *Sabnis*; *Karkhanis*, *Chitnis*, *Jamadar* and *Potnis*.

Chitnis dealt with all diplomatic correspondences and wrote all royal letters. The *Fadnis* used to respond to the letters of commanders of the forts. The *potnis* looked after the income and expenditure of the royal treasury.

(ii) Provincial and Local Administration

The provincial administration was also organized on the Deccani and Mughal system. All the provincial units were already existing under the Deccani rulers. Shivaji reorganized and in certain cases renamed them. The provinces were known as *Prants*. The *Prants* were under the charge of *subedar*. Over a number of *Subedar* there were *Sarsubedar* to control and supervise the work of *subedar*. Smaller than *prant* were *Tarfs* which were headed by a *havaladar*. Then there were *Mauzas* or villages which were the lowest unit of administration. At the level of village, *Kulkarni* used to keep



Notes

accounts and maintained records while *Patil* had legal and policing power. At the level of Pargana, *Deshpande* used to keep account and maintain records while *Deshmukh* had legal and policing powers. The Police officer in rural area was called *Faujdar* and in urban area was called *Kotwal*. The Maratha polity did not have unified civilian-cum-military rank. Under the Marathas performance based Brahmin elites manned the central bureaucracy and the local administration. In this capacity they were called *Kamvishdar* who enjoyed wide powers of tax assessment and collection. They adjudicated cases, provided information about local conditions and kept records. Later on, the British District collector was modelled on this Maratha officer only.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 12.7

1. List the titles of *ashta pradhan*?
2. Who influenced the administrative system of the Marathas?
3. Which was the lowest unit of administration under the Maratha administration?



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

You have seen that with the establishment of Delhi Sultanate, new ruling class and some new administrative institutions emerged. The administrative institutions were of mix origin i.e., Arab and Central Asian origin and Indian origin. During the Mughal period some of the institution of the Sultanate period underwent some changes and some new were created. The administration system and institutions contributed in the consolidation of the Sultanate and Mughal empire. The administrative system was also utilized by the rulers to create social harmony in the society. This was done by including more and more sections of the society in the administrative apparatus. Due to the large extent of the empire the administrative system emerged at three levels i.e. central, provincial and local. The local level administration was left mainly in the hands of village headmen etc. At provincial level, the administration was carried out through the institution of *Iqta* during the sultanate period and through the institution of *mansab* and *jagir* during the Mughal period. At the central level the sultan or the emperor had his own system of administration and there were many officers to assist him. There were also various departments to look after certain functions. The rulers at times were challenged by the nobility and the Ulema who tried to exert pressure on them. The administrative system and institutions functioned well under strong and capable ruler but the same were under pressure under weak rulers. The Maratha administrative system developed along the lines of the Mughal and Deccani states.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. How did the administrative structure evolve during the Delhi Sultanate ?
2. Discuss the composition of the nobility during the Delhi Sultanate.
3. Mention the functioning of *wizarat* during the period of Delhi Sultanate.



Notes

4. Trace the evolution of the *Iqta* system under the sultanate.
5. Discuss the functioning of the local administration under the sultanate.
6. Discuss the market reforms of Alauddin Khalji. What measures did he take to implement it?
7. Mention duties of *Diwan-i-kul* and *Mir-Bakshi* during the Mughal period.
8. Discuss the functioning of the local administration under the Mughals.
9. Trace the evolution of the mansabdari system from Akbar to Aurangzeb.
10. Describe the main features of the Jagirdari system.
11. Discuss the main features of the Maratha administration.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

12.1

1. Chahalgan was group of 40 nobles. It was created by Iltutmish
2. Balban
3. The Sultan's position was "first among equals".
4. Ulema were religious intellectual group of Muslims who managed religious matters and interpreted religious regulations.

12.2

1. *Mustaufi* –i–*Mumalik*, *Mushrif-i-Mumalik*
2. *Dagh* and *Huliya*
3. *Diwan-i-Rasalat*, *Sadr-us-Sadr*.

12.3

1. *Shiqdar*, *Faujdar*, *Kotwal* etc.
2. *Pargana*, *Shiq*, *Sarkar* etc.
3. *Khut*, *Muquaddam*, *Patwari*,
4. *Fawazil* was the balance of the revenue income which the *muqti* was to send to the Sultan after meeting his and his army's expenses.

12.4

1. *Shehna*, *Badris*, *Munihiyan* etc.
2. Delhi and Chhain (Rajasthan)
3. The Banjaras used to transport food grains from the countryside to the city. During time of Alauddin Khalji they formed themselves in a body and settled on the banks of Yamuna

12.5

1. Akbar wanted to curb the powers of *wazir* as his *wazir* Bairam Khan had become very powerful. Akbar took away the financial powers from the *wazir*.



Notes

2. *Mir Saman* was the officer-in charge of the royal Karkhana. He was responsible for all kinds of purchases and their storage for the royal house hold. He also supervised manufacture of different articles.
3. The *Mutasaddi* was the governor of the port. He collected taxes on merchandise and maintained a custom house. He also supervised the mint house at the port.
4. *Faujdar* and *Amalguzar*.

12.6

1. Akbar introduced the Mansabdari system. It was formulated to streamline the rank of the nobles and to fix their salary and specify the number of cavalry to be maintained by them.
2. The *Zat* denoted personal rank of an official and the *Sawar* indicated the size of contingents maintained by the mansabdar.
3. Aurangzeb created an additional rank in the Mansab system called *Mashrut* (conditional). He added one another deduction called *Khurak-i-dawwab*, towards meeting the cost for feed of animals in the imperial stables.
4. See section 12.9 (ii)

12.7

1. See under central administration of Marathas.
2. The administrative system of the Marathas was influenced by the Mughal and the Deccani states.
3. Mauzas or villages were the lowest unit of administration under the Maratha administration.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer to Para 1 and 2 of 12.1
2. Refer to Para ,12.2 (ii)
3. Refer to 12.3(i)
4. Refer to 12.5
5. Refer to 12.6
6. Refer to 12.7
7. Refer to 12.8 (iii) and (iv)
8. Refer to 12.8.3
9. Refer to 12.9(i)
10. Refer to 12.9 (ii)
11. Refer to 12.10

GLOSSARY

<i>Ulema</i>	–	Muslim intellectuals who specialized in religious learning, plural of Alim.
<i>Chahalgan</i>	–	A group of 40 nobles created by Iltutmish


Notes

<i>Diwan-i-wizarat</i>	–	The most important office of the Sultanate period, headed by a <i>wazir</i> .
<i>Diwan-i- Arj</i>	–	The department which looked after the military organization, headed by <i>Ariz-i-Mumalik</i> .
<i>Dagh</i>	–	System of branding of horses and animals.
<i>Huliya</i>	–	Descriptive roll of the soldiers.
<i>Diwan-i-Insha</i>	–	The department which looked after the state correspondence, headed by <i>Dabir-i-Khas</i> .
<i>Diwan-i-Rasalat</i>	–	The department which dealt with the administration of Justice, headed by <i>Sadr-us-Sudur</i> .
<i>Muhtasibs</i>	–	An officer appointed to maintain regulations.
<i>Karkhanas</i>	–	Royal factories or enterprises for producing or collecting commodities required by the state.
<i>Iqta</i>	–	Grant of revenues of a territory or village.
<i>Muqaddam</i>	–	Village headman, literally the first or senior man.
<i>Rai</i>	–	A Hindu Chief, usually having his own territory and army.
<i>Mansab</i>	–	Military rank conferred by the Mughal government which fixed the status and the Salary of an individual.
<i>Jagir</i>	–	A piece of land assigned to a government officer by the state.
<i>Banjara</i>	–	Grain and Cattle merchant; name of an itinerant tribe.
<i>Dallal</i>	–	Broker
<i>Amil, Amalguzar</i>	–	Revenue Collector
<i>Khalisa land</i>	–	Land held and managed directly by the state.
<i>Mahzar</i>	–	A declaration signed by ulema by which Akbar's view was to prevail in case of conflicting views among religious scholars.
<i>Fawazil</i>	–	Surplus amount
<i>Idrar</i>	–	Revenue free land grant
<i>Muqti or wali</i>	–	Iqta holder or governor
<i>Mushrif</i>	–	Revenue officer
<i>Mutasarriff</i>	–	Auditor
<i>Waqf</i>	–	Grant assigned for the maintenance of religious institutions.
<i>Wazifa</i>	–	Stipend



13

ECONOMY

The people in medieval India pursued diverse range of economic activities to earn their basic livelihood. The sphere of their works varied from agricultural to artisanal production, trade and commerce and associated commercial and financial services. These activities underwent various changes through out the course of this period. The state mobilized its resources through collection of different types of taxes for its survival and expansion.

In this lesson, you will learn about various ways and means of production, mobilization of resources by the state and the trade and commercial activities. In the section on agricultural production, we will discuss extent of cultivation, crop pattern and means and methods of irrigation. Under the taxation system land revenue administration, role of landed intermediaries in the revenue administration and burden on peasantry will be analysed. In the section on non-agricultural production, you will learn about a wide variety of medieval Indian crafts, technologies of production involved therein and organisation of production. You will also learn various aspects of the medieval Indian trade and commerce like commercial classes such as the sarrafs, merchants, brokers etc. and commercial practices, such as, bills of exchange (*hundi*), brokerage, insurance etc.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- know the extent of cultivation; main crops grown; means and methods of irrigation in India;
- analyze revenue system of Medieval India;
- know the role of landed intermediaries in the revenue collection;
- discuss the production of various articles of craft;
- appreciate how non-agricultural production was organized;
- describe inland and foreign trade;
- know the main commercial practices and personnel of trade and
- describe the currency system of this period.

13.1 AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Agricultural production constituted the bulk of production during medieval period. The income from agriculture was the main source of state revenue.



Notes

(i) Extent of Cultivation

Extent of cultivation may be understood in terms of actual area under the plough in relation to the total available cultivable land. It is to be noted that there was a favourable ratio of land to man i.e., availability of land in surplus than the actual land cultivated by peasants. In such a situation an increase in production was sought through expansion of agriculture i.e., bringing newer areas under cultivation.

We are informed, for instance, by the contemporary sources that large tracts of land in even such fertile regions as the Ganga-Yamuna Doab were covered by forests and grasslands during the Sultanate period. Land continued to exist in a favourable ratio to man during the Mughal period as well.

The rulers of this era, therefore, harped on the policy of expansion of agriculture to such areas which were hitherto not under cultivation. Agriculture was introduced to tribal, backward, and outlying areas. Forests were cleared and agricultural wastelands were converted into cultivable lands. Extent of agriculture expanded in good proportions from the Sultanate to Mughal period. By the Mughal period, agriculture was practiced in almost all parts of the empire, yet land still existed in huge surplus than the actual requirement of the Mughal agricultural population. The extent of cultivation significantly increased during the reign of Aurangzeb in comparison to the Akbar's reign. The expansion of cultivation in Bihar, Awadh and parts of Bengal is ascribed to clearance of forest, whereas in Punjab and Sind, to the spread of canal network.

(ii) Crop Pattern

The medieval Indian peasants produced a variety of food crops, cash crops, vegetables and spices. They were familiar with various advanced techniques of crop cultivation of their times viz., double cropping, three crops harvesting, crop rotation, use of manures and range of devices for irrigation etc.

- a. **Food crops:** The principal food crops produced were rice, wheat, barley, mil-let (jowar, 'bajra) and a variety of pulses such as gram, arhar, moong, moth, urd, khisari etc.
- b. **Cash crops:** Sugarcane, cotton, indigo (used to extract blue dye), opium, silk etc. were some of the prominent cash crops of medieval India. Making of wine from sugarcane became widespread by the fourteenth century. During the Mughal period, sugarcane was the most widely grown cash crop with Bengal producing the finest quality.

During the Mughal period, Bayana (near Agra) and Sarkhej (near Ahmedabad) produced the best quality Indigo. Sericulture (rearing of silk worms on mulberry plant), which was practised on a modest scale till the Sultanate period, became widespread during the Mughal period. Bengal emerged as the main region of silk production. The Mughal provinces of Bihar and Malwa produced the finest quality of opium. Tobacco cultivation was introduced in India by the Portuguese during the sixteenth century and it became widespread in the subsequent period. Surat and Bihar emerged as major tobacco producing centres. Similarly, from the seventeenth century, cultivation of coffee began on a large scale.

- c. **Fruits and Vegetables:** Fruit crop cultivation developed rapidly during the medieval period. Some of the Delhi sultans actively promoted growing of fruit crops. Firuz Shah Tughlaq, for instance, laid down 1200 orchards in the



Notes

vicinity of Delhi. Mughal emperors and their nobles also planted lavish orchards.

During the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a number of fruits were introduced in India through outside agencies. The Portuguese for instance, introduced pineapple, papaya and cashew nut; etc. Cherry was brought from Kabul. Leechi and guava were also introduced during this period. A wide range of vegetables were also produced by the medieval Indian peasants. Abul Fazl, in his *Ain-i-Akbari*, gives a list of vegetables which were, in use at that time. Potato, Chilies and tomato were introduced during the late medieval period.

- d. **Spices:** Pepper, clove, cardamom, turmeric, saffron, betel-leaf, etc. were some of the important spices produced by the medieval Indian peasants. By the Mughal period, the southern coast of India began exporting in large quantities different kinds of spices to various regions in Asia and Europe.

(iii) Means and Methods of Irrigation

The Indian agriculture has always depended on various sources of water both natural and artificial, for its irrigational requirements, viz - rain, wells, river, tanks, canals, lakes, etc.

Dams, lakes and water reservoirs were some of the important means of irrigation. In south India, the state, local chiefs and temple managements constructed a number of dams over rivers for this purpose. The Madag lake, for instance, was built by the Vijaynagar rulers on the Tungbhadra river to meet the irrigational need of the adjoining territories. Lakes and water reservoirs such as the Dhebar, Udaisagar, Rajasamand and Jaisamand (all in Mewar); *Balsan* (Marwar) and *Mansagar* (Amber) etc. served as important sources of irrigation in medieval Rajasthan.

Wells, as a common source of irrigation, were uniformly spread in different parts of the country. A number of artificial devices were used to lift water from wells. Pulleys were employed over wells for this purpose. Another device worked on the lever principle. In this method, fork of an upright beam was kept in a swinging position with its one end tied with a long rope and the other carried a weight heavier than the filled bucket. The *Persian wheel* which began to be used in India from the Sultanate period, however, was the most advanced water lifting device of this period. In this method, a garland of pots was attached to the rim of a wheel, a gear mechanism was also attached to it, and with the help of animal power this wheel was made to rotate.

The Delhi Sultans, in particular, promoted canal irrigation. Ghiyassuddin Tughlaq (A.D 1320–1325) built a number of canals for this purpose. However, Firuz Shah Tughlaq laid the largest network of canals. Four such canals are frequently mentioned in contemporary sources. These were - (i) from Sutlej to Ghaggar, (ii) Opening from the Nandavi and Simur hills to Arasani, (iii) from Ghaggar, reaching upto the village to Hiransi Khera, and (iv) excavated from Yamuna and extended upto Firuzabad. The tradition of Delhi Sultans to construct canals was continued by the Mughal emperors as well. The *Nahr Faiz*, for instance, built during Shahjahan's reign carried water from Yamuna and irrigated a large area.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.1

1. What was the availability of land for agriculture?



Notes

2. List four food crops and four cash crops of medieval India.

3. List four crops which were introduced in India during the medieval period.

4. What was a Persian Wheel?

13.2 LAND REVENUE ASSESSMENT AND MAGNITUDE OF THE LAND REVENUE DEMAND

The medieval state derived the largest share of its income from land revenue. An elaborate mechanism of land revenue administration gradually developed due to efforts of medieval rulers like Alauddin Khalji, Sher Shah Suri and Akbar. In its developed form, the land revenue administration involved well formulated policies. These were: (i) actual measurement of cultivable land for the purpose of assessment of land revenue (ii) classification of land on the basis of the fertility of soil (iii) fixation of rate of the land revenue demand (iv) establishment of elaborate mechanism for its collection, and (v) working out modalities for assessment and collection of land revenue in cash.

During the medieval period different methods of revenue assessment and collection were used. The most simple and basic method was crop sharing or *batai*. The state fixed a certain ratio of produce as state's share. In this method out of the total produce the state share was collected by designated official. Here the measurement of land had no bearing on revenue collection. The actual produce was the main focus of attention.

Crop Sharing

Three types of crop sharing was in practice. These were - first, division of crop at threshing floor after the grain was obtained; second, *Khet-batai*, i.e. division of field when the crop was standing; and third, the *Langbatai* in which the crop was cut and stacked in heaps without separating grain. The share of the state was decided in this form.

In the second method known as *Kankut* the measurement was important. In this method land was first measured. After measurement the productivity of land was estimated to fix the revenue demand per unit of measured area. Sher Shah improved the method of assessment. For estimating the productivity sample cutting from three types of land i.e. good, middling and bad lands was taken and an average yield was obtained. The State demand was fixed at $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of the average yield.

Revenue demand per bigha for every crop was declared and was known as *rai* of Sher Shah. During initial years of Akbar these rates were adopted for the whole empire. Here the state demand was expressed in kind but could be collected/paid in cash after applying prevalent prices on them.

This Third method was called *Zabt* since the assessment was done on the basis of measurement. Based on yields the share of the state was decided. Under Akbar the method was further refined. All the territories were divided into the revenue circles or *dasturs*. For each *dastur* circle per bigha revenue rates for different crops in cash based on productivity and prices was worked out.



Notes

The problem of compiling fresh rates every year for different localities was overcome through adoption of *Ain-i-Dahsala* or ten years revenue rates. According to this, the average of the rates of last ten years was taken as cash revenue rate for a particular crop. However, these were changed at irregular intervals and not updated every year. In the beginning, it was implemented in the provinces of Agra, Allahabad, Awadh, Delhi, Lahore and Malwa. Later, it was extended to some other regions. However, at no point of time, all the land in a particular region was measured. That would suggest that even in measured territories, some territories remained unmeasured. In such a situation, even in the *zabti* regions, other methods of assessment and collection were followed in almost all parts of the country.

Classification of land

After the measurement, the cultivable land was classified, on the basis of the fertility of land, into three categories—good, middling and bad. Land was further classified into four categories viz. *-polaj*, *parati*, *chachar* and *banjar*, on the basis of continuity of cultivation. The *Polaj* land was one in which two crops were raised every year; *Parati* land, however, had to be left fallow (uncultivated) for some time, after raising two crops to recover its fertility; the *Chachar* was an unfertile tract of land which was brought under cultivation once in every three or four years; and the *Banjar* land which was unfit for cultivation and therefore rarely brought under plough.

The land revenue constituted the bulk of the state's income. The state, therefore, constantly tried to expand the territory under cultivation to maximize its revenue returns. All efforts of the State were also focussed in ensuring maximum realization of revenue from the cultivators.

The Mughal land revenue administration was organised at the *pargana* level. The task of surveying of land and collection of revenue was entrusted to different officials. *Amin* was the head of the surveying party, whereas the *amil* was in charge of revenue collections. The *amin* was assisted by the *qanungo* who was repository of all revenue records. The *chaudhari* assisted the *amil* in this work of revenue collection. At the village level, the records were maintained by the *patwari* and collections were made by the *muqaddam* or village headman. There were other officials such as *potadar* or treasurer and *karkun* or clerk. The records were maintained both in Persian and languages of the region.

Patta and Qabuliat

Each cultivator was given a document by the state called *patta* (title deed) which gave all the details of the various categories of land held by the cultivator and rate of land revenue payable by him on different crops. A deed agreement called *Qabuliat*, according to which the cultivator made a promise to pay a particular amount of land revenue to the state, was taken from the cultivator. In addition to the land revenue, the cultivators were also required to pay certain additional cesses, in order to meet the cost of assessment and collection of revenues.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.2**

1. What was the difference between *Khet batai* and the *Lang batai*?



Notes

2. Name three medieval Indian rulers whose land revenue policies contributed to the development of elaborate mechanism of land revenue administration.

3. What were *Polaj Parati* and *Chachar* lands?

4. What is *Patta* and *Qabuliyat*?

13.3 ROLE OF LANDED INTERMEDIARIES IN REVENUE COLLECTION

Apart from state officials various categories of intermediaries existed between the peasants and the state. These intermediaries played a crucial role in land revenue realization. They claimed revenue exemptions on their lands or a share in land revenue in return for the services rendered by them.

Prior to the establishment of the Delhi sultanate our sources refer to terms like *raja*, *rajaputra*, *ranaka*, *mahasamanta* etc. These were hereditary right holders connected with land. They collected land revenue from peasants of their respective areas, sent a part of it to the state and kept a part with themselves for their sustenance. Besides, as we have seen, the state granted tax-exempt land to Brahmins and temples. Land revenue from such areas were collected by these grantees.

During the Sultanate period, landed intermediaries continued to play an important role in revenue collection. *Khuts* (small landlords), *Muqaddams* (village headmen) and a group of intermediaries, such as, *rai*, *rana*, *rawats* etc., enjoyed superior rights over land as compared to an average peasant. Alauddin Khalji tried to curtail the powers and shares of these groups. Later Delhi Sultans like Ghiyassuddin and Firuz Shah Tughlaq gave certain concessions to them.

During the Mughal period *rais*, *ranas*, *rawats* and other such intermediaries are referred as *zamindar*. They were the people who had hereditary rights over the produce of the land.

The *zamindars* claimed a direct share in the peasants produce. Their share varied from 10% to 25% in different parts of the country. These claims co-existed in a subordinate capacity with the land revenue demand of the state. *Zamindars* also assisted the state and jagirdar in the collection of land revenue. *Iqta* of the Sultanate period in a modified form became Jagir under the Mughals. Its holders (jagirdars) were paid through revenue assignments. We have already discussed them in chapter 12. The *muqaddams* (in north India) and *patels* (in Deccan) acted as village headmen who were responsible for collection of revenue and maintenance of law and order in the village. For their services, they were granted revenue free village land. The *patwari* (in north India) and *kulkarni* (in Deccan), who served as village accountants, were also paid similarly.

13.4 BURDEN ON PEASANTRY

Peasants formed the overwhelming majority of the population in medieval India. It was, however, not a homogenous group. One end of the spectrum was represented



Notes

by rich peasants (*khuts* & *muqaddams* during Delhi Sultanate and *khudkasht* during the Mughal period), having large holdings and cultivating their lands with the help of hired labour. The other end was represented by small peasants and village menials (known in various parts of India as *balahars*, *reza ria'ya*, *paltis*, *kunbis*, *pahika'asht*, *upari* etc.). Bulk of the peasantry was known by the generic term *raiyyat*.

Overall, the peasants had to pay large parts of their produce as land revenue. Besides, a large number of landed intermediaries appropriated a share in the surplus of produce. Apart from it, the medieval Indian peasants also had to deal with frequent natural calamities like flood, famine, epidemics etc. An average peasant always found himself subsisting on margins owing to the regressive nature of land tax, the extensive burden of interaction on loans taken, frequent famine, disease and epidemic.

The peasant hardships and resentments, occasionally, culminated in protests and revolts. During the Sultanate period, Muhammad bin Tughlaq's effort to enhance the revenue rates in the doab region led to a very serious agrarian uprising in the region. Large scale uprisings of the *Jats*, *Sikh*, *Marathas*, and *Satanamis*, took place during the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb. Agrarian discontentment was one of the factors behind these rebellious acts.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.3

1. Who were *Rajaputra*, *Ranaka* and *Mahasamanta*?
2. Who were *Muqaddams* and *Patels*?
3. List some of the important peasant uprisings of the Mughal period.

13.5 ARTISANAL (NON-AGRICULTURAL) PRODUCTION

Though agriculture formed the occupation of the bulk of the people, a variety of crafts also existed on a significant scale in rural as well as urban areas of the country. These crafts included textile, pottery making, dyeing, sugar making, metal works, paper making, wood work, arms and armour manufacturing, ship-building, chemical works etc.

Prominent Crafts

The textile production was one of the most widely practised crafts of medieval India. The Indian weavers produced four major types of fabric - cotton, silk, woollen, and mixed coarse cotton. Bengal, Lahore, Agra, Awadh, Patna, Fatehpur Sikri and Gujarat etc. were prominent cotton textile production regions. Kashmir, Lahore and Agra were major shawl and carpet making centres. Apart from manufacturing, Bengal and Gujarat were renowned for the export of textile goods.

The art of dyeing or bleaching developed as a separate and specialised craft during this period. Bharuch, Ahmadabad, Surat, Patna, Sonargaon, Dacca, Masulipattam etc. were major dyeing or bleaching centres.

Sugar was manufactured all over the country. Sugar in its variants - Gur; powder, fine grained sugar etc. were produced in Bengal, Orissa, Ahmedabad, Lahore, Multan and many other places.



Notes

Mineral extraction was another major industry. Salt, saltpetre, alum, mica etc. were produced on a large scale. The Sambhar lake in Rajasthan, the Punjab rock salt mines and sea water were some major sources of salt production. Sea salt was mainly manufactured in Bengal, Sind, Malabar, Mysore and the Rann of Kutch. Saltpetre, primarily used as an ingredient for manufacturing gun powder, was one of the most important mineral products. Initially, it was extracted at Ahmadabad, Baroda, Patna etc.. However, by the second half of the seventeenth century, Patna became one of the most important centres for processing this mineral.

Among metals, India was deficient in gold and silver mines. These metals, therefore, were mostly imported. Diamond mining was carried out most notably at Golconda. Some other centres of diamond production were Biragarh (Berar), Panna (Madhya Pradesh), Khokhra (Chotanagpur) etc.. Khetri (Rajasthan) was the main centre for copper production. Iron was the most commonly found metal. Bengal, Allahabad, Agra, Bihar, Gujarat, Delhi, Kashmir, Chotanagpur and adjoining regions of Orissa were major iron producing centres of the medieval period.

Paper making, as a craft, was introduced in India during the Sultanate period. It was first manufactured in China around the first century A.D. The craft grew at a fast pace. The manufacture of paper was prevalent during the Mughal period in almost every region.

The medieval period witnessed advent of a number of new technological devices and their application in diverse sectors.

In the textile sector, introduction of the spinning wheel (*charkha*), during the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, was the most important technological innovation. It speeded up yarn production by six times in comparison to the spindle based yarn production. Similarly, pit loom was introduced in India during the fifteenth century, which speeded up the process of weaving. Drawloom was another important weaving device which was used for simultaneous patterned weave of different colours. Similarly, block-printing is also attributed by some scholars to the medieval Indian period.

In the sector of metallurgy and metal works, many new technologies were introduced in the process of manufacturing. Some of such technologies were -employment of vertical bore pits, deep mines with oval shafts, use of pulley etc. Production of high quality steel and bidri alloy of copper and zinc were new metal works of this period.

In the arms and armour manufacturing sector, use of gunpowder, canon, firearm etc, were some of the most important medieval innovations. The modern artillery was mainly brought to India, on the one hand, by Babur (who had received it from Persia), on the other hand, by the Portuguese. Besides, Fatullah Shirazi, an outstanding scholar and engineer of Akbar's regime, made some invaluable innovations in this sector.

Paper-making, as we have noted above, entered India during this period. Along with it also developed the craft of book binding.

Although, glass making technology was known to the Indians during the ancient period, its use was restricted to manufacturing beads and bangles. During the medieval period, various other glass products such as, pharmaceutical phials, vessels etc. also began to be manufactured. The practice of tin coating also entered India along with the advent of the Turks. This technology involved coating of tin inside the copper and brass utensils to prevent the food from acid poisoning.

Organisation of Production

Craft production was organised in villages as well as *qasbas*. There also existed imperial *Karkhanas*. In rural areas, artisans produced articles of daily use. These



Notes

artisans were part of the village social network called the *jajmani* system. This system was more organised in Deccan and Maharashtra. The village artisans and servants in these regions were called *balutedars*.

Town based individual artisans formed the nucleus of such commodities which were produced for markets. Almost every craft had specialised artisans who produced articles for the market. At this level of the organisation of craft production, the individual artisan himself procured necessary raw materials and tools, manufactured commodities, and sold those in the market.

This mode of artisanal production, however, suffered from a major weakness. Since the production was organised on individual basis, an artisan lacked big resources to invest in the production process. Naturally, the size of final production remained small. A revised form of production called the *dadni* system gradually developed to address this problem. In this system, an artisan was provided with necessary raw materials and advance money by such merchants who traded in those commodities. After the expiry of stipulated time, the merchants collected finished goods and sold them in the market.

Royal workshop (*karkhana*) was another unit of craft production. These *karkhanas* were part of the royal establishment. These units produced commodities for the consumption of the royal household and the court. Generally, expensive and luxury items were produced here. The *Karkhanas* employed skilled workers who worked under one roof and were supervised by state officials. Apparently two distinct types of *Karkhanas* existed. First, the traditional type of *Karkhanas*, which produced luxury goods in small quantity, but of high, artistic value; second, mints or arms manufacturing units, wherein standard oriented and technologically advanced large scale production took place.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.4

1. Name five important crafts of medieval India.

2. Name three important centres of saltpetre production.

3. Name four important centres of diamond production.

4. Name three important technological devices used in the textile production.

13.6 TRADE AND COMMERCE

India had a fairly developed external and internal trade during the medieval period. The internal trade developed along local, regional and inter-regional levels. Trade relations with regions like China, Arabia, Egypt, Central Asia, Afghanistan were maintained on land routes. It carried its overseas trade with the Persian Gulf, the South China sea, the Mediterranean and the Red sea. The advent of European trading companies - the Portuguese, British, Dutch and French intensified trading activities in



Notes

the Indian subcontinent. The Asian maritime trade also increased during this period. This period also witnessed proliferation of a variety of new commercial activities such as, money lending, brokerage, insurance etc. We notice a large number of merchants, sarrafs, brokers etc. playing active role in commercial activities.

(i) Inland Trade

By the Mughal period, inland trade had developed considerably. Every locality had regular markets in nearby towns where people from the surrounding areas could sell and purchase things. Besides, trade at the local level was also conducted through periodic markets known as *Hats* or *Penth*s, which were held on fixed days in a week. In these local markets, commodities like food grain, salt, wooden and iron equipments, coarse cotton textile etc. were available.

These local markets were linked to bigger commercial centres in that particular region. These centres served as markets for products not only from their specific region but also from other regions. Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Multan, Bijapur, Hyderabad, Calicut, Cochin, Patna etc. were some of such trading regions during the Mughal period.

A brisk inter-regional trade was conducted in luxury commodities. Ziauddin Barani in his *Ta'arikh-i-Firuzshahi* shows that Delhi during the Sultanate period received distilled wine from Kol (Aligarh), muslin from Devagiri, striped cloth from Lakhnauati and ordinary cloth from Awadh. During the Mughal period, Bengal with its important trading centres - Hugli, Dacca, Murshidabad, Satagaon, Patna had well developed inter-regional trade with all parts of India. Similarly, Surat and Ahmadabad in Western India and Agra in North India were some of the important centres with fairly developed inter-regional trade.

(ii) Foreign Trade

India had traditionally been maintaining trade relations with other countries. During the early medieval period (i.e. from the tenth century onward), India carried trade with contemporary China, Arabia and Egypt. India also had high stake in the sea trade between the Persian Gulf and the South China sea. India imported silk, porcelain ware, camphor, cloves, wax, sandalwood etc from China and South Asia and horses from places such as Bahrin, Muscat, Aden, Persia etc. The Indian exports included aromatics and spices, cotton cloth, ivory and precious and semi-precious stones etc.

During the Sultanate period, India had trade relations with Central Asia, Afghanistan, the Persian gulf and the Red sea. India mainly exported food grains, textile, slaves, indigo, precious stones etc. whereas it imported precious metals like gold and silver, horses, brocade and silk stuff etc.

India, during the Mughal period, witnessed further intensification of her foreign trade owing to the advent of the European trading companies and their direct participation in the Euro-Asian and Intra-Asian trade. India had trade relations with central Asia, Persia and Europe. Her major export included textiles, saltpetre, sugar, opium and spices. In comparison to her export, her imports were limited to a few select commodities like silver, silk, porcelain, good quality wine, carpets, perfume, glass, watches, silver utensils, horses etc.

(iii) The Mercantile Community

Throughout the course of the medieval period in India, the mercantile community played an important role in the contemporary economy and society.



Notes

During the Sultanate period, *Karwanis* or *Nayakas* were merchants, who specialised in carrying grains from the rural areas. The Persian term *Karwanis* meant those who moved together in large number. These people came to be called *banjaras* in the later centuries. We also get references of Multani merchant who specialised in long distance trade. They were mostly Hindu merchants.

We hear of a number of mercantile classes during the Mughal period. Banjaras have innumerable references in the contemporary literature as a trading group who carried on trade between villages and between village and towns. They generally moved with their families and households in groups. The Multani merchants continued to thrive during this period as well in places such as Delhi, parts of Punjab and *Sind*. *Baniya* was another important mercantile community in north India and Deccan. Their counterparts were *Khatris* in Punjab and *Komatis* in Golconda. Apart from their involvement in trade, they also acted as moneylenders. The *Bohras* were another prominent mercantile community during the Mughal period. It had a very strong presence in Gujarat, Ujjain and Burhanpur. Some of the other prominent mercantile groups were *Chettis* (South India), *Kling* (along Coromandel coast upto Orissa), *Komatis* (Telugu speaking merchant group) etc.

(a) **Sarrafs:** It was a yet another community engaged in monetary transactions. References to this community began to appear from the Sultanate period. However, by the Mughal period, it developed three distinct functions.

- i. Money changers - in this role, a sarraf was considered an expert in judging the metallic purity of coins as well as their weight. He also determined the current exchange rate of specific coins.
- ii. as bankers, they received deposits and gave loans on interest.
- iii. as traders, they dealt in gold, silver and jewellery. Besides, they also issued *hundis* or bills of exchange.

(b) **Brokers:** Known as *dadal*, it was another important commercial class. It emerged during the Sultanate period. However, brokerage became a widespread commercial practice during the Mughal period. They worked as middlemen in various commercial activities and transactions. The foreign merchants, who were unacquainted with the centres of production, pattern of marketing and languages, mainly depended upon brokers for their trading. These brokers worked in various capacities. Some of them were employed by merchants or companies. Some worked as independent broker serving many clients at a time. A few of them worked as state appointed brokers at commercial centres to register sale and purchase of articles. Brokers fee was not strictly fixed. It depended on the commodity and the efforts of the broker to strike the deal.

(iv) Commercial Practices

Along with the development of trade and commercial classes, some new commercial practices also developed during the medieval period.

- a. *Hundi:* *Hundi* or bills of exchange was a medieval commercial practice. A *hundi* was essentially a paper document promising payment of money after a fixed period of time at a certain place. This practice started because of the problems involved in carrying large amounts of cash from one place to another. The *sarrafs*, who played the key role in *hundi* transaction, generally



Notes

had number of establishments across various towns and cities. They issued *hundis* to merchants after accepting the cash to be transferred. The *hundis* indicated the amount, period and place of encashment. The persons carried *hundis* to their destinations, presented it to the agents of issuing *sarrafs* and encashed the value indicated. Apart from merchants state officials and other nobles also used it for transferring money. The *hundi* system established a safe and convenient method of transferring money. The *sarrafs* charged a commission for every *hundi* they issued.

- b. Insurance: This practice became widespread, especially during the Mughal period. Certain insurance firms (mostly dominated by *sarrafs*) developed which took upon themselves the responsibility of safe passage and delivery of commercial goods. In case, any damage to the goods in transit happened, these firms were liable to pay compensations. A commission was charged as insurance cover of such goods. The rate of commission varied according to different regions and goods. The rate for overseas transportation of goods was higher than goods going overland.

13.7 THE CURRENCY SYSTEM

The silver and copper coins were mainly in circulation for cash transactions. Under Sultanate the pure silver *tanka* with fluctuating proportion of silver was the main coinage. The *jital* and *dang* were copper coins. The value of coinage fluctuated with the change in the prices of metals.



Fig 13.1 Coins



Notes

Under Sher Shah for the first time the purity of metals in coinage of gold, silver and copper was established. The *rupaya* of silver came to be used as the basic coin for transactions. It was of 178 grains. The same continued under Akbar with minor fluctuation under his successors. The copper *dam* of the Mughals was 323 grains. The value of silver rupee to copper dam fluctuated as per the availability or scarcity of silver. During Akbar's period 1 silver rupee was equal to 40 copper dams. The gold or ashrafi had a weight of 169 grains.

The coins were minted at the royal mints spread in all parts of the kingdom. During Akbar's period Gold coins were issued from 4 mints, silver coins from 14 and copper coins from 42 mints. The number of rupee mints increased to 40 by Aurangzeb's time.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 13.5

1. Name five countries with which India maintained overland trade relations during the medieval period.

2. What was a *Hat*?

3. Name some of the important trade centres of medieval Bengal.

4. Briefly explain the following terms:
Karwanis, Khattris, Komatis, Bohras, Chettis.



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

Let's briefly recapitulate the main points of this lesson.

Agriculture formed the occupation of the bulk of the people. An increase in agricultural production was sought through expansion of agriculture in newer areas as part of state policy. The peasants produced a large variety of food crops, cash crops, fruits, vegetables and spices. They practised advanced agricultural techniques such as crop rotation, double cropping, three crop harvesting, fruit grafting etc. Various types of artificial water lifting devices were also used for this purpose. The state derived the largest part of its income from land revenue. The land revenue administration was streamlined and elaborately developed as a result of some of the pioneering efforts made in this field by rulers like Alauddin Khalji, Sher Shah Suri and Akbar.

A powerful group of revenue intermediaries existed in between the state and the peasantry. They enjoyed some hereditary or state granted rights (either as religious grants or grants in lieu of their services) over appropriation of land revenue from the designated areas. These intermediaries assisted the state in the process of land revenue collection. The medieval Indian peasantry was a hard pressed lot. The repressive nature of land tax, demand of share in revenue by intermediaries, frequent natural calamities rendered the life of an average peasant dismal and deplorable. Peasant revolts, therefore, were not altogether unknown during this period.



Notes

Textile, mining and metallurgy, ship-building, construction works, arms and armour manufacturing, were some of the prominent crafts practised during this period. Craft production was organised at various levels of village, towns and the state, wherein state owned artisanal workshops (royal *Karkhanas*) produced commodities for the consumption of the ruling elite.

In the field of commerce India had trade links with contemporary central Asia, China, South-east Asia and Europe etc. The European trading companies viz., the Portuguese, English, Dutch and French, and their participation in the Indian, Intra-Asian, and Euro-Asian trade influenced Indian commerce.

Expansion of trade & commerce alongwith new commercial practices like brokerage, *hundi* (bills of exchange) and *bima* (insurance) helped commercial activities.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What was the extent of cultivation in Medieval India?
2. What do you understand by Persian wheel? How did it function?
3. Name some of the canals constructed by Firuz Shah Tuglaq for Irrigation.
4. Identify various stages of land revenue assessment in its most elaborate form.
5. What was Ain-i Dahsala? How did it function?
6. Name some of the important land revenue officials with their specific functions at the paragona and village levels.
7. What was a *Karkhana*? How did it function?
8. Name five leading mercantile communities of medieval India.
9. Who was a Sarraf? What role did he play?
10. What do you understand by the term *Hundi*? How did it facilitate trade and commerce?
11. Briefly comment on the role of landed intermediaries in revenue collection.
12. Comment briefly on the means of Irrigation during the medieval India.
13. Briefly comment on organization of artisanal production during the medieval period.
14. Discuss in brief, local, regional and inter-regional trade of medieval India.
15. Comment on the currency system of medieval India.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

13.1

1. Throughout the course of the medieval Indian history land existed in surplus than the actual land cultivated by peasants. Increase in agricultural production was sought through bringing newer areas under cultivation.
2. Food crops – rice, wheat, barley, and jowar, gram, moong; Cash crops – sugarcane, opium, indigo, silk.



Notes

3. Tobacco, Pineapple, Cherry, Papaya.
4. The Persian wheel was the most advanced water lifting device of this period. A garland of pots was attached to the rim of a wheel along with a gear mechanism. With the help of animal power, this wheel was made to rotate thereby lifting water through pots tied in succession.

13.2

1. As crop sharing methods, *khet batai* involved division of field between peasants and the state with standing crop; *lang batai* involved cutting and stacking of crop in heaps without separating grain.
2. Alauddin Khalji, Sher Shah Suri, and Akbar.
3. Polaj : land from which two crops were raised every year.
Parati : land to be left uncultivated for sometime.
Chochar unfertile land brought to cultivation once in 3 to 4 years.
4. These were two documents related to land revenue. *Patta* was a document given to an individual cultivator containing all the details relating to categories of land held by him and rate of land revenue on different crops. *Qabuliyat* was a deed of agreement whereby the Peasants promised to pay the land revenue due upon him to the state.

13.3

1. These were terms applied to the category of hereditary land right holders prior to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate. These people helped the state in the process of appropriation of land revenue collection.
2. The *Muqaddams* and *Patels* were village headmen in north and south India respectively who were responsible for collection of land revenue and maintenance of law and order in their respective villages.
3. Such uprisings were those of the Jats, Sikhs, Marathas and Satanamis.

13.4

1. Five important crafts of medieval India were – textile, dyeing & bleaching, sugar manufacturing, mineral extraction and metallurgy (work in metals).
2. Ahmedabad, Baroda and Patna.
3. Golconda, Bairagarh, Panna and Khokhra.
4. Spinning wheel (Charkha), Pitloom and Drawloom.

13.5

1. India maintained overland trade with countries like China, Arabia, Egypt, Persia and Afghanistan
2. *Hat* was a periodic local market, held on fixed days in a week. In these markets local people purchased their articles of daily use.
3. Some of the important trade centres of Bengal were Hugli, Dacca, Murshidabad, Satgaon and Patna.



Notes

4. *Karwanis*, a Persian term, was applied to merchants who moved in groups, transporting grain from one place to another.

Khattris— Khattris were a leading grain merchant community of Punjab.

Komatis— Komatis were a leading (Telugu speaking) merchant group of Golconda.

Bohras— Bohras were a prominent mercantile community who had a strong presence in Gujarat, Ujjain the Burhanpur.

Chettis— Chettis were the leading mercantile group of South India.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Ref. – Section 13.1, (i)
2. Ref. – Section 13.1, iii – Paragraph 3
3. Ref. – Section 13.1, iii, Paragraph 4
4. Ref. – Section 13.2, Paragraph 1 to 4
5. Ref. – Section 13.2, Paragraph 5
6. Ref. – 13.3
7. Ref. – 13.5, under organization of production
8. Ref. – 13.6, point (iii)
9. Ref. – Section 13.6, point iii (a)
10. Ref. – Section 13.6, point iv (a)
11. Ref. – 13.3
12. Ref. -Section 13.1, point iii
13. Ref. -13.5, under organization of production
14. Ref. -Section 13.6, point i
15. Ref. Section 13.7

GLOSSARY

<i>Amil</i>	–	revenue officials, in charge of revenue collection at the <i>Paragana</i> level
<i>Amin</i>	–	land surveyor; surveyed land for the purpose of revenue assessment.
<i>Banjar</i>	–	infertile land, unfit for cultivation.
<i>Bohra</i>	–	a leading mercantile community of Gujarat
<i>Chachar</i>	–	Land with little fertility, cultivated once in three to four years.
<i>Chetti</i>	–	a leading mercantile group of South India.
<i>Dadni</i>	–	a form of artisanal production wherein an artisan was provided with necessary raw material and advance money by such merchants who traded in these commodities. After the stipulated time, the merchants collected finished goods and sold them in the market.
<i>Dam</i>	–	Copper coins during the Mughal period.



Notes

<i>Dastur</i>	—	revenue circles; division of territory into revenue circles for the purpose of land revenue assessment. Each such circle was called a Dastur.
<i>Jagirdar</i>	—	holders of revenue assignments (Jagirs) in lieu of their services to the Mughal state.
<i>Jital</i>	—	Copper currency (coins) of Delhi Sultanate. 48 Jitals were equivalent to one tanka
<i>Hundis</i>	—	Bills of exchange
<i>Kankut</i>	—	one of the methods of revenue assessment. Land was first measured, productivity of land then fixed and revenue demand per unit of measured area made.
<i>Karkun</i>	—	village clerk.
<i>Karkhana</i>	—	royal workshop, produced commodities for the use of the royal families and cultivated it with the help of hired labour.
<i>Khudkasht</i>	—	rich/prosperous peasants who owned tracts of land and tools of agriculture.
<i>Kulkarni</i>	—	village accountant in Deccan.
<i>Khut</i>	—	rich peasants of Sultanate era.
<i>Karwanis</i>	—	merchants who moved together in large number and specialized in transportation of grain from rural areas.
<i>Khet-batai</i>	—	one of the methods of crop sharing wherein fields were divided between the peasant and the state revenue agents with crop standing on the field.
<i>Lang-batai</i>	—	another method of crop sharing; crop was first cut and stacked in heaps without separating grain and then the states share was decided.
<i>Muqaddam</i>	—	village headman.
<i>Polaj</i>	—	A category of land, best suited to cultivation which produced two crops annually.
<i>Parati</i>	—	another category of land which required to be left fallow after raising two crops to enable it to recover its fertility.
<i>Patta</i>	—	title deed, a document given by the state to each cultivator, containing details of land held by cultivators and rates of revenue applicable on it.
<i>Patwari</i>	—	village accountant in North India.
<i>Qabuliyat</i>	—	a deed agreement taken from peasants which made him to promise to pay land revenue to the state as per the patta specifications.
<i>Qanungo</i>	—	a subordinate revenue official at the Pargana level.
<i>Rai'yat</i>	—	ordinary peasant
<i>Rai</i>	—	central schedule of crop prices.
<i>Sarrafi</i>	—	a community primarily concerned with monetary transactions; acted as money changers, bankers and issued hundis.
<i>Tanka</i>	—	Standard silver coin of Delhi Sultanate.
<i>Zamindar</i>	—	A class of landed intermediaries of the Mughal era who enjoyed hereditary land rights.



CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

The Medieval period is considered as an age of great cultural synthesis in India. During this period a new phase of cultural development was initiated. The Turks and Mughals introduced fresh ideas and helped in giving rise to new features in the areas of religion, philosophy and ideas, Language and Literature, Styles of architecture and use of building material, Painting and Fine arts, Music and performing arts.

India already had a very rich cultural tradition in all spheres. The synthesis between different cultures gave birth to new philosophical and religious traditions, ideas, forms and styles in almost all spheres of culture. In this lesson you would be introduced to these new cultural developments in some important spheres. We will mainly focus on:

- new religious movements like Sufism and Bhakti,
- rise of Sikhism as a new religion,
- growth of Urdu and Persian language and literature,
- growth of literature in various Indian languages,
- the architecture of the Sultanate and Mughals with regional variations,
- new forms of music,
- the Mughal painting and other new styles that emerged in India.

We hope that the study of this lesson will enhance your understanding about culture during this period.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- know the philosophy and practices of various orders of Sufis in India;
- discuss the philosophy, and practices of various orders of Bhakti saints in India;
- trace the rise of Sikhism, its practices, institution of Gurus and Khalsa panth;
- describe various styles and forms of painting in medieval India;
- discuss the rise of new languages and the growth of literature in medieval India;
- discuss various schools of music and dance styles in medieval India and
- describe main styles, materials used and techniques adopted in medieval architecture.



Notes

14.1 SUFISM

'Sufism' is a term used to refer to mystical religious ideas in Islam. It had evolved into a well developed movement by the 11th century. Sufis, stress on the importance of traversing the path of the Sufi *pir* enabling one to establish a direct communion with the divine. Sufism or mysticism emerged in the 8th century and among the early known Sufis were Rabia al-Adawiya, Al-Junaid and Bayazid Bastami. Fundamental to sufism is God, Man and the relation between them that is Love. They believe that from man emerged the theories of *ruh* (soul), *qurbat* (divine proximity) and *hulul* (infusion of the divine spirit) and that from relation between God and Man ideas such as *Ishq* (divine love) and *Fana* (self annihilation) come into being. The Sufis were regarded as people who kept their heart pure; they sought to communicate with God through their ascetic practices and doctrine of divine love and union with God. The *murid* (disciple) passes through *maqamat* (various stages) in this process of experiencing communication with the divine.

The *khanqah* (the hospice) was the center of activities of the various sufis orders. The *khanqah* was led by *shaikh*, *pir* or *murshid* (teacher) who lived with his *murids* (disciples). In time the *Khanqahs* emerged as important centres of learning and preaching. By the twelfth century the sufis were organized in *silsilahs* (orders). The word *silsila* meant chain and it represented signifying an unbreakable chain between the *pir* and the *murid*. With the death of the *pir* his tomb or shrine the *dargah* became a centre for his disciples and followers.

In the 10th century Sufism spread across important regions of the Islamic empire. Iran, Khurasan, Transoxiana, Egypt, Syria and Baghdad were important Sufi centers. Al-Ghazali, (1059–1111 A.D.) is among the most venerated of Sufis. He reconciled Islamic mysticism with Islamic orthodoxy, providing Sufi mysticism a secure place in Islam. He stressed on the need for the disciple to follow the guidance of the spiritual master. He also emphasised on the supreme authority of the holy Prophet and the need to obey laws in both letter and spirit.

The Sufi movement in India commenced in the 11th century A.D. Al Hujwiri, who established himself in north India was buried in Lahore and regarded as the oldest Sufi in the sub Continent. Among the important Sufi Orders in the history of Medieval India were those of the Chishtiya, Suhrawardiya, Qadiriya and Naqshbandiya.

Chisti and the Suhrawardi *silsilahs* were popular during the Sultanate period. The Suhrawardis were active in Punjab and Sindh while the Chishti's were active in Delhi, Rajasthan and parts of the western gangetic plains. By the end of the sultanate period they had spread to the eastern regions of the gangetic plain (Bihar and Bengal) and into the Deccan. During the medieval period the Sufis played an important role in interpreting and elaborating on Islamic theological concepts like *Wahdat ul Wujud* (unity of being) and also encouraged the development of practices like *Ziyarat* (the practice of visiting tombs).

The Sufi movement as it emerged in India had the following features:

- The Sufis were organized in a number of different *silsilahs* (orders)
- Most of these orders were led by some prominent sufi saint or *pir*. It was named after them and was followed by his disciples.
- The Sufis believed that for union with God one needs a spiritual guru or *Pir*.
- The sufi *pirs* lived in Khanqahs with their disciples



Notes

- The Khanqah (the hospice) was the centre of sufi activities
- The Khanqahs emerged as important centres of learning which were different from madrasas the centres of theology
- Many sufis enjoyed the musical congregation or *sama* in their Khanqahs. A musical form called the qawwali developed during this period.
- The *ziyarat* or pilgrimage to the tombs of the sufi saints soon emerged as an important form of ritual pilgrimage.
- Most of the Sufis believed in the performance of miracles. Almost all *pirs* were associated with the miracles performed by them.
- The different sufi orders had diverse approaches about the matters of polity and state.

The Chishti Silsilah

The Chisti Order was established in India by Muinuddin Chishti. He seems to have moved into India after the invasion of Muizzuddin Muhammad Ghori and subsequently to Ajmer in 1206. The fame of Khwaja Muinuddin grew after his death in 1235, his grave was visited by Muhammad Tughlaq after which the mosque and dome were erected by Mahmud Khalji of Malwa in the fifteenth century. The patronage of this dargah peaked after the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar.

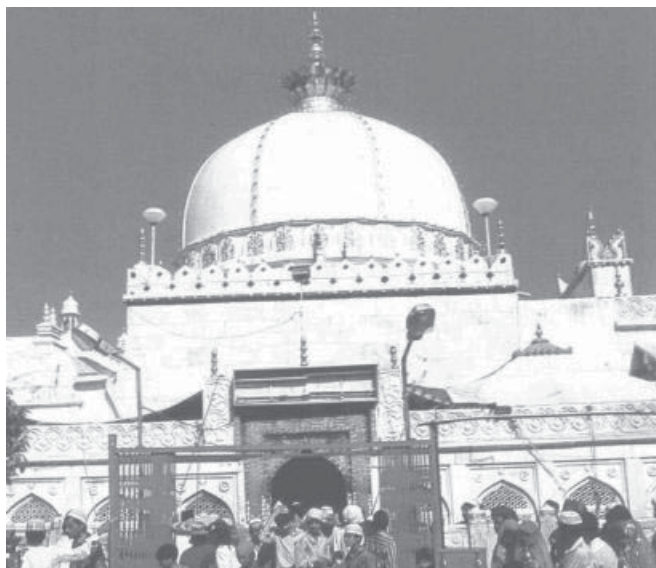


Fig. 14.1 Ajmer Durgah

The Chishtis believed in:

- love as the bond between God and individual soul,
- the tolerance between people of different faiths,
- acceptance of disciples irrespective of their religious beliefs,
- attitude of benevolence to all,
- association with Hindu and Jain yogi's, and
- use of simple language



Notes

The Chishti presence in Delhi was established by Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki who settled in Delhi from his homeland in Transoxiana in 1221. This was at the time of the Mongol invasions when there was a steady flow of people from central Asia fleeing from the Mongols. His presence in Delhi was a threat to the Suhrawardis who sought to force him to leave by levelling charges against him. The Sultan of Delhi, Itutmish, dismissed these attempts eventually forcing the Suhrawardis to relent. The Chishti *pirs* laid great emphasis on the simplicity of life, poverty, humility and selfless devotion to God. The renunciation of worldly possessions was regarded by them as necessary for the control of the senses that was necessary to maintain a spiritual life. Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti argued that highest form of devotion to God was to redress the misery of those in distress, fulfilling the need of the helpless and to feed the hungry. They refused to accept any grant for their maintenance from the Sultans.

The other important Chishti Baba Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar, established himself at Hansi (in Haryana) on the route between Multan and Lahore. Nizamuddin Auliya, was the best known Chishti saint of the Sultanate period. He lived in the fourteenth century, during a period of political change and turmoil. During his lifetime he was witness to the establishment of the Khalji rule after the death of Balban and subsequently the establishment of the Tughlaq's. There are numerous stories surrounding the life of Nizamuddin Auliya, famous among them were stories of his confrontations with the Sultans of Delhi. The Khwaja is said to have maintained a strict policy of not involving himself with the various groups and factions of the Sultan's court in Delhi earning him the respect of many. Nasiruddin Chiragh Delhi was another of the Chishti saints of Delhi. He played an active role in the political affairs of the period.

All these enabled Sufis to maintain a loyal and dedicated following.

In the 13th century the Chishti Order was established in the Deccan by Shaikh Burhanuddin Gharib. Between the 14th and 16th centuries many Chishti Sufis migrated to Gulbarga. This was accompanied with a change where some of the Chishtis began accepting grants and patronage from the ruling establishment. Muhammad Banda Nawaz is among the famous *pirs* in the region. The Deccan city of Bijapur emerged as an important centre for Sufi activity.

The Suhrawardi Silsilah

This Silsilah was founded by Shihabuddin Suhrawardi in Baghdad. It was established in India by Bahauddin Zakariya. He founded the Suhrawardi Order, based in Mutan, which was under the control of Qubacha. He was critical of Qubacha and openly favored Itutmish over his rival. His ways were different from that of the Chishtis. The Suhrawardis, unlike the Chishtis, accepted, maintenance grants from the Sultans. They believed that a Sufi should possess the three attributes of property, knowledge and *hal* or mystical enlightenment. Suhrawardi saints argued that this was necessary to ensure that they served the poor better. He stressed on the observance or external forms of religious belief and advocated a combination of *ilm* (scholarship) with mysticism. Practices like bowing before the sheikh, presenting water to visitors and tonsuring the head at the time of initiation into the Order that the Chishtis had adopted were rejected. After his death the *silsilah* continued to play an important role in Punjab and Sindh.

Naqshbandi Silsilah

In India this order was established by Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi. From the beginning the mystics of this Order stressed on the observance of the shariat and



Notes

denounced all innovations or *biddat*. Sheikh Baqi Billah the successor to Khawaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi settled near Delhi, and his successor Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi attempted to purge Islam from all liberal and what he believed were 'un-Islamic' practices. He opposed the listening of *sama* (religious music) and the practice of pilgrimage to the tombs of saints. He opposed interaction with Hindus and Shias. He criticised the new status accorded by Akbar to many non-Muslims, the withdrawal of the *Jizyah* and the ban on cow slaughter. He believed that he was the *mujaddid* (renewer) of the first millennium of Islam. He maintained that the relationship between man and God was that between the slave and the master and not the relation of a lover and beloved. He emphasised the individual's unique relation of faith and responsibility to God as creator. He tried to harmonise the doctrines of mysticism and the teachings of orthodox Islam.

The Qadri Silsilah

The Quadiriyya *silsilah* was popular in Punjab. Sheikh Abdul Qadir and his sons were supporters of the Mughals under Akbar. The *pirs* of this Order supported the concept of *Wahdat al Wajud*. Among the famous Sufis of this order was Miyan Mir who had enrolled the Mughal princess Jahanara and her brother Dara as disciples. The influence of the sheikh's teachings is evident in the works of the prince. Shah Badakhshani another *pir* of this *silsilah* while dismissing orthodox elements, declared that, the infidel who had perceived reality and recognised it was a believer and that a believer who did not recognise reality was an infidel.

During medieval period there was constant tension between the liberal and orthodox views in Islam. The *sufis* featured on both sides, while there were those like the Chishtis who held a liberal view and argued in favour of assimilation of local traditions there were others like sheikh Abdul Haqq of the Qadiriyya *silsilah* who held the view that the purity of Islam was being diluted. This Orthodox view was represented by the *ulema* that argued from the perspective of being upholders of the *shariat*. The liberal opinion found its voice among many *sufis* who argued against the narrow definition of Islamic laws by the *ulema*.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.1

1. Who is a Pir?

2. Who was Al-Ghazali?

3. What do you understand by the term "Sama"?

4. Which famous chishti sufi saint lived during the time of the Khalji's and Tughlaq's?

5. Who was Shaikh Abdul Qadir?

14.2 THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

The Bhakti movement in Indian history represents a movement that popularized devotional surrender to a personally conceived supreme God. Its origins are traced to

**Notes**

the Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions of ancient India. It was in south India that it grew from a religious tradition into a popular movement based on religious equality and broad based social participation. The movement led by popular saints reached its climax in the 10th century A.D. In its attempt to embrace the concept of bhakti the movement in different regions drew from diverse traditions and assumed different forms in different parts of the sub continent.

The bhakti movement attempted to break away from orthodox Brahmanism. The movement gathered momentum in the early medieval period. Historians have attempted to associate the origins of the bhakti movement in India with the advent of Islam and the spread of Sufism. They argue that the Turkish conquest paved the way for a reaction against the conformist Rajput-Brahman domination. The rise of bhakti movement is considered by some scholars as a reaction against feudal oppression. The anti feudal tone in the poetry of bhakti saints like Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya and Tulsidas are seen as illustrations of this point. There is no single opinion about the origins of the bhakti movement that can be sustained. It is clear from the poetry and the philosophy of the bhakti saints that they broke away from orthodox Brahmanism. They believed in religious equality and identified themselves with the sufferings of the common people.

Some scholars feel that the socio economic changes in the early medieval period provide the necessary backdrop to understand the emergence of the Bhakti movement. During the 13th and 14th centuries the demand for manufactured goods, luxuries and other artisanal goods increased leading to a movement of artisans into the cities. The artisans were attracted to bhakti because of its ideas of equality. These groups were dissatisfied with the low status accorded to them by Brahmanical system. The movement gained support from these classes of society. There were also a few variations in places like Punjab where not only Khatri but Jat peasants as were also attracted to this movement.

The bhakti movement in the early medieval period represents an important movement of reform and change. After the rise of heterodox movements of the 6th century BC the bhakti movement represents another phase of Indian history in which new ideas and practices emerged influencing the country as a whole initiating reform movements.

The Bhakti movement in north India

The bhakti movement in the north included socio religious movements that were linked to one of the acharyas from the south and is sometimes seen as a continuation of the movement that originated in the south. Though there were similarities in the traditions of the two regions, the notion of bhakti varied in the teachings of each of the saints. The Nirguna Bhaktas like Kabir rejected the varnaashrama and all conventions based on caste distinction and championed new values, helping the emergence of new groups and new unorthodox/protestant sects. The Saguna Bhaktas like Tulsidas on the other hand upheld the caste system and the supremacy of the Brahmins. They preached religion of surrender and simple faith in a personal god and had a strong commitment to idol worship.

Monotheistic Bhakti

Kabir (c.1440–1518 A.D.) was the earliest and most influential Bhakti saint in north India. He was a weaver. He spent a large part of his life in Banaras. His poems were included in the Sikh scripture, the Adi Granth. Among those who were influenced by Kabir were Raidas, who was a tanner by caste from Banaras, Guru Nanak who was a Khatri from Punjab and Dhanna who was a Jat peasant from Rajasthan.



Notes

There are similarities in the teachings of the various monotheistic Bhakti saints in North India.

- Most of the monotheists belonged to the low castes and were aware that there existed a unity in their ideas. They were also aware of each other's teachings and influence. In their verses they mention each other and their predecessors in a manner suggesting ideological affinity among them.
- All of them were influenced by the Vaishnava concept of Bhakti, the Nathpanthi movement and Sufism. Their ideas seem to be a synthesis of the three traditions.
- The importance given to the personal experience of Bhakti saint with God was another common feature among the monotheistic bhakti saints. Nirguna bhakti and not saguna bhakti was what they believed in. They had adopted the notion of bhakti from vaishnavism but they gave it a nirguna orientation. Though they called God using different names and titles their God was non-incarnate, formless, eternal and ineffable.
- The Bhakti saints refused any formal association with the organized dominant religions of the time (Hinduism and Islam) and criticized what they regarded to be the negative aspects of these religions. They rejected the authority of the Brahmins and attacked the caste system and practice of idolatry.
- They composed their poems in popular languages and dialects spoken across north India. This enabled them to transmit their ideas among the masses. It helped their ideas to spread rapidly among the various lower classes.

Vaishnava Bhakti

In the 14th and early 15th centuries Ramananda emerged as a popular vaishnava bhakti saint in north India. Though he was from the south he lived in Banaras because he considered it to be the link between the South Indian bhakti and North Indian vaishnava bhakti traditions. He looked upon Ram and not Vishnu as the object of bhakti. He worshiped Ram and Sita and came to be identified as the founder of the Ram cult in north India. He like the monotheist bhakti saints also rejected caste hierarchies and preached in the local languages in his attempt to popularize the cult. His followers are called Ramanandis. Tulsidas also championed the bhakti cause. In the early 16 century Vallabacharya, a popular bhakti saint popularized the Krishna bhakti. Among those who followed in his footsteps were Surdas (1483–1563) and Mira Bai (1503–1573).

The vaishnava bhakti movement in Bengal was very different from its counterparts in north India and the south. It was influenced by the vaishnava bhakti tradition of the Bhagavata purana and the Sahajiya Buddhist and Nathpanthi traditions. These traditions focused on esoteric and emotional aspects of devotion. In the 12th century, Jayadeva was an important bhakti saint in this tradition. He highlighted the mystical dimension of love with reference to Krishna and Radha. Chaitanya was a popular bhakti saint from the region; he was looked upon as an avatara of Krishna. Though, he did not question the authority of the Brahmins and the scriptures. He also popularized the sankirtan (group devotional songs accompanied with ecstatic dancing). With him the bhakti movement in Bengal began to develop into a reform movement with the notions of caste divisions that came to be questioned.

In Maharashtra the bhakti movement drew its inspiration from the Bhagavata purana and the Siva Nathpanthis. Jnaneswar was a pioneer bhakti saint of Maharashtra. His commentary on the Bhagavad Gita called Jnanesvari served as a foundation of the



Notes

bhakti ideology in Maharashtra. Arguing against caste distinctions he believed that the only way to attain God was through Bhakti. Vithoba was the God of this sect and its followers performed a pilgrimage to the temple twice a year. The Vithoba of Pandarpur became the mainstay of the movement in Maharashtra. Namdev (1270–1350) was another important bhakti saint from Maharashtra. While he is remembered in the north Indian monotheistic tradition as a nirguna saint, in Maharashtra he is considered to be part of the varkari tradition (the vaishnava devotional tradition). Some of the other important bhakti saints of Maharashtra were the saints Choka, Sonara, Tukaram and Eknath. Tukaram's teachings are in the form of the Avangas (dohas), which constitute the Gatha, while Eknath's teachings that were in Marathi attempted to shift the emphasis of Marathi literature from spiritual to narrative compositions.

**INTEXT QUESTION 14.2**

1. The Bhakti movement attempted to break away from which system?

2. Name any three important Bhakti Saints?

3. Who was Chaitanya?

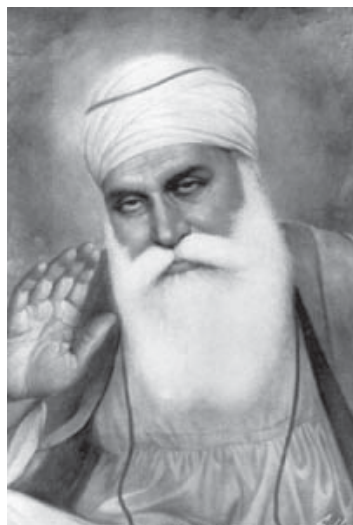
14.3 SIKHISM

Fig 14.2 Guru Nanak

The teachings and philosophy of Guru Nanak form an important part of Indian philosophical thought. His philosophy consists of three basic elements: a leading charismatic personality (the Guru), ideology (Shabad) and Organization (Sangat). Nanak evaluated and criticized the prevailing religious beliefs and attempted to establish a true religion, which could lead to salvation. He repudiated idol worship and did not favour pilgrimage nor accept the theory of incarnation. He condemned formalism and ritualism. He laid emphasis on having a true Guru for revelation. He advised people to follow the principles of conduct and worship: *sach* (truth), *halal* (lawful earning), *khair* (wishing well of others), *niyat* (right intention) and service to the lord. He



Notes

denounced the caste system and the inequality it caused. He argued that the caste and honour should be judged by the acts or the deeds of individuals. He laid stress on concepts of justice, righteousness and liberty. His verses mainly consist of two basic concepts, *Sach* (truth) and *Nam* (name). The bases of the divine expression for him were formed by, the *Sabad* (the word), *Guru* (the divine precept) and *Hukam* (the divine order). He introduced the concept of *Langar* (a community kitchen). *Guru Nanak* identifies himself with the people or the ruled. Though the Sikh guru's stressed on equality the social differentiation among the followers continued. It was only towards the end of the 17th century that *Guru Gobind Singh* reasserted the idea of equality. In 1699 *Guru Gobind Singh* attempted to resolve the differences among the various Sikh groups and created the *Khalsa*. This institution removed the *masands* as intermediaries. Thereafter every Sikh was to have a direct link with the *Guru*. To create a sense of unity among the Sikhs the *Guru* started some practices which were to be followed by Sikhs. These were initiation through the baptism of the double edged sword, wearing uncut hair, carrying arms, adopting the epithet *Singh* as part of the name.

The idea of *Guru Panth* was another institutional idea that emerged during this period. It sanctified the collective authority of the *Khalsa Panth*, which equated the *Panth* with the *Guru*. *Guru Nanak* in his last days had nominated a successor and paid homage to him, this gave rise to the idea that the *Guru* and the Sikh were interchangeable. This created a problem for the institution of the *Sangat* (that was a collective body of the Sikhs) in which God was said to be present. When *Guru Gobind Singh* created the *Khalsa* he chose the *panj piyare* (the five beloved) and requested them to administer the *pahul* (amrit chakhha) to him. With this the difference between the *Guru* and the *Khalsa* was symbolically removed. *Guru Gobind Singh* is believed to have said that the *Khalsa* is his own *roop* (form).

Guru Nanak was from the *Khatri* mercantile caste whereas his followers were mostly rural *Jats*. It was *Guru Gobind Singh* who inaugurated the *Khalsa* among the Sikhs. *Guru Arjan* compiled the *Guru Granth Sahib*. After the death of *Guru Gobind Singh* the tenth *Guru* the tradition of *guru* ended. It was believed that the spirit of the *guru* did not pass onto any successor but instead remained within "Shri *Gurugranth Sahib*".



INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.3

1. What do you understand from the term *Khalsa*?

2. Who were *Khatri*s?

14.4 LITERATURE AND LANGUAGES

Sanskrit literature

The medieval period witnessed the growth of a rich corpus of literature that accompanied the development of new languages. The conventional view among historians was that the patronage of the Sanskrit language had declined because the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate led to the patronage of Persian. But this period witnessed the growth of a rich corpus of Sanskrit literature. This period is marked with composition of poetical works called the *Kavya* (poetical narrative) and the texts that codified laws called the *Dhramashastras*.



Notes

During the first half of the medieval period Sanskrit received patronage from the numerous smaller political establishments in central and south India. In western India Hemachandra Suri was an important Jain scholar who composed works in Sanskrit, as was Chaitanya. There were also many dramas written during this period. A new style of writing called the *champu* also emerged during this period. It was a form that mixed both prose and poetry. Among the Sanskrit works that were written with the patronage of the Rajput kings were their family histories like the *Prithvirajavijaya* and the *Hammirmahakavya*. Among the historical poems of the period was the *Rajavinoda* that was a biography of Sultan Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat written by his court poet, Udayaraja. Another important work was Kalhan's *Rajtarangini*, which presented a history of the kings of Kashmir. It was written in the 12th century A.D. The second *Rajtaranginni* was written by Jonaraja who wrote the history of the kings of Kashmir from Jayasimha to Sultan Zainul Abidin and the third was written by Srivara who wrote the history of the region till 1486. Apart from these there were the *prabandhas* which were semi historical texts written during the period.

After the 15th century the patronage of the Sanskrit language was maintained in the southern courts of the rulers of Vijayanagar, Nayakas of Tanjor and the chiefs of Travancore and Cochin. The various genres of Sanskrit literature like Mahakavyas, Slesh Kavyas, Champu Kavyas, Natakas and the historical Kavyas continued. Among the important writers of this period were Govinda Dikshita (*Sahitya Sudha* and *Sangitsudhanidhi* being among his important works); Appaya Dikshita (in the court of the Nayaka ruler of Vellore); Nilanatha Dikshit (who was a minister in the court of the Nayaka of Madurai); Chakrakavi (who was patronized by the rulers of Kozhikode).

The historical Kavyas gave a glimpse not just of the exploits of the various rulers but also a glimpse of the social perception of the writers. Some of the Mughals like Dara Shukoh also came to be mentioned in these Kavyas. The Mughal prince is also credited with the composition of a *prasasti* in honour of Nrisimha Sarasvati of Benaras. There were also a few works composed in the courts of the rulers of Bijapur and Golconda, but Sanskrit literature during this period began to decline.

Persian literature

With the establishment of the Delhi sultanate a new language and literary style was introduced into the sub continent.

The development of Persian literature in the sub continent entered a new era in the writings of Amir Khusrau. He was a poet born in a family of Turkish immigrants and began as a poet in the reign of Sultan Balban. He was a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya and was patronized in the courts of Jalaluddin Khalji, Alauddin Khalji and Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. He is said to have composed ninety-nine works on different themes and numerous verses of poetry. His poetry was written in the different forms of lyric, ode, epic and elegy. His writing style represents the first instance of Persian styles being composed in the Indian context. This came to be known as the *Sabaq-i-Hindi* (the Indian style). Among the important works composed by him are, *Mutla-ul-Anwar*, *Shirin Khusrau*, *Laila Majnun* and *Ayina-I-Sikandari*, these works were dedicated to Alauddin Khalji. Among his five Diwans (Ghazals) are *Tuhfat-us-Sighar*, *Baqiya Naqiya* and *Nihayat-ul-Kamal*. He also wrote masnavis (narrative poems), which have been of great historical and literary value. Among these are the *Qiran-us Sa'dain*, *Miftah-ul Futuh* (dealing with the military success of Jalauddin Khalji), *Tughluq Nama* (describing Ghiyasuddin Tughluq's rise to power) and the



Notes

Khazain-ul Futuh (giving an account of Alauddin Khalji's conquest of the South). Among the other important Persian poets was Shaikh Najmuddin Hasan who was also one of the poets in the court of Alauddin Khalji. His ghazals earned him the title, S'aid of Hindustan.

The court chronicles were an important feature of the literature during the period of the Delhi Sultanate. Some important of these were, the *Tabaqat-I-Nasiri* by Minaj-us Siraj, *Futuh-us Salatin* by Isami and the *Futuhat-I Firozshahi* by Feroz Shah Tughluq. Ziauddin Barani made the most important contribution to Persian literature during this period. The *Tarikh-I Firozshahi* and the *Fatwa-I Jahandari* are his important works. The Sufi literature of the period developed a new form called the malfuzat that was in the form of a dialogue of the Sufi saints. The most famous of these was the *Fawaid-ul Fu'ad* written by Amir Hassan Sijzi containing the anecdotes of the Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and *Khair-ul-Majalis* containing the anecdotes of Sheik Nasiruddin Mahmud. During this period there were many works that were translated into Persian. The *Tuti Nama* (book of the parrot) by Zia Nakshabi was the first Persian translation of Sanskrit stories. The *Mahabharatha* and the *Rajtarangini* were also translated into Persian during this period. The number of translations of Sanskrit works into Persian grew during the reigns of Feroz Tughluq and Sikandar Lodi.

Like that of the sultanate, Persian also continued as the official language of the Mughal court. The Mughal rulers and princes also maintained a tradition of writing. The first Mughal emperor Babur, himself a literary figure, wrote his memoirs in Turkish which was subsequently translated into Persian by Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan. Humayun composed a Persian diwan. Prince Dara Shukoh wrote a biographical account of the Sufi saint Miya Mir and his disciples in the *Sakinatul Auliya*. He also wrote the *Majm'aul Bahrain* (Mingling of two Oceans). There was a new genre of Persian literature known as the *Sabaq-i-Hindi* (the Indian style) created during this period by the Persian poets visiting and living in the sub continent. Writers like Faizi, Urfi, Talib, Ghani Kashmiri and Bedil were among those who benefited from the patronage they received from the Mughals.

Among the important works of Faizi was *Tabashir al Sabh*. He also authored many translations of Hindu religious books. Abdur Rahim Khan Khana a talented scholar and poet lived during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir. Akbar patronized great scholar historian Abul Fazl. He is said to have maintained a library of more than four thousand books. He is known for the patronage he extended to many writers of the period. The poets Ali Quli Salem and Abu Talib Kalim were important poets during the reign of Shah Jahan. The latter is said to have authored the *Padshahnama*. Persian literature in the south received patronage from the Adil Shahi rulers of Bijapur, here Malik Qummi and Mulla Zuhuri were regarded as important Persian poets. The Qutab Shahis of Golconda patronized poets like Muhammad Hussain Tabrezi. The development of Persian literature in the Mughal court played an important role and influenced the development and growth of regional literature. Languages like Punjabi, Pushtu, Sindhi and Kashmiri were strongly influenced by Persian.

Growth and Development of Regional Languages

The growth of regional languages like Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati during the medieval period was an important development. These languages can be traced to the 7th and 8th centuries when they seem to have broken away from their Prakrit base. In the south Malayalam emerged as an independent language in the 14th century. The growth of these regional languages coincided with a growing regional sentiment and the emergence of regional polities. This resulted in the decline of Sanskrit that was being replaced by Persian and some of these regional languages as a medium through which the



Notes

administrative machinery functioned. The rise of the Bhakti movement and its propagation using these languages also enabled the growth and development of these languages.

Hindi and Urdu

Regional dialects like *Brāj bhasa*, Haryanvi and other dialects spoken in regions around Delhi and Punjab influenced the development of Urdu during its formative stage. The basic structure of the language consisted of Khari Boli (a mixture of various dialects spoken in the region mentioned above). The language adopted the Persian script and literary tradition. The word Urdu is of Turkish origin referring to an army or camp. It seems to have been a language that emerged from the dialect spoken in the Turkish camp between officials and the soldiers. Hindivi is said to be the language out of which Urdu and Hindi eventually developed. The works of Amir Khusrau are regarded to have laid the foundations of this language. The use of this language in the Deccan from the 14th century onwards led to a literary speech called the Dakhni. The major centres of this language were Gujarat, Bijapur, Golconda, Bidar and Aurangabad. The oldest writer of this tradition was Sayyid Banda Nawaz Gesudaraz who was an important Sufi in the Bahmani kingdom. The sultan of Bijapur, Ibrahim Adil Shah II himself was a great patron and author of a book on music in the Dakhni language.

Hindi evolved during the Apabhramsa stage between the 7th – 8th centuries and the 14th century. It was characterized as Veergatha Kala (age of heroic poetry) or the Adi Kala (early Period). The various Rajput rulers patronized these poems written in the rajasthani dialect of Hindi and that glorified chivalry and bravery. Among the famous works are the *Prithviraja Raso* of Chand Bardai, and other poems like the *Visaldeva Raso* and *Hammir Raso*. The authenticity of many of these works is doubted because of the various interpolations made to the original draft. There are other works of Buddhists and Jains that can be ascribed to this period.

The development of the Hindi language underwent another transformation during the 14th and the 15 centuries with the increasing use of the language in expressing Bhakti traditions and ideas. Kabir adopted a style called the *ultabasi*, which consisted of paradoxes and enigmas. While bhakti saints like Tulsidas used the Awadhi dialect of Hindi others like Mira Bai used the Marwari dialect of Rajasthan and Surdas used *Brāj bhasa*. The Sufi saints also used the development of the new dialects as a medium to reach out to a larger audience. While the Chishti saints used Hindi while composing and singing their devotional music.

Bengali

The folksongs called Charyapads composed between the 10 and 12th centuries are the earliest specimen of the Bengali language. The works of Kavindra and Srikaranandi are regarded to be among the important early works in Bengali. The growth of the Bhakti movement and the composition of various hymns associated with Chaitanya further provided a stimulus to the development of this language. Brindabandas's *Chaitanya Bhagavata* or *Chaitanya Mangal* was one such contribution to Bengali literature that not only gave a valuable account of the saint's death a decade later but is also regarded as being reflective of the social condition prevailing at that time. The *Chaitanya-Charitamrita* by Krishnadas Kaviraj was another important account. Lochandas is associated with the introduction of a new style of folk songs called Dhamali. Narrative poems called the Mangal Kavyas also grew popular during this period. They propagated the importance of local deities like Chandi and transformed Puranic gods like Siva and Vishnu into household deities. The narrative form of the Mangal Kavyas was derived from the Puranas.



Notes

Asamese and Oriya

The 13th century works of Hema Sarasvati Prahladacharita and Hara Gauri Samyada are regarded as the first works in Assamese. The literature in Assam also developed in response to the bhakti movement. Shankaradeva who introduced Vaisnavism in Assam also helped stimulate the growth of Assamese poetry. His disciple, Madhavadas wrote the *Bhakti-ratnvali* dealing with aspects of bhakti and the *Baragitas* that depicted the life of Krishna in Vrindavan. There were also translations of the Puranas into Assamese. In Orissa the works of Saraladasa are regarded as the first works of Oriya literature. There were numerous kavyas composed on Puranic themes by Madhusudana, Bhima and Sasasiva. The *Rasa Kallol* written during this period also deals on the theme of the love between Radha and Krishna. Other important works are the *Ushabhilasa* of Sisu Sankara Dasa and the *Rukminibibha* of Kartik Dasa. The works of Upendra Bhanja (1670–1720) were important as they ushered a new era of Oriya literature in the succeeding period.

Literature in South India

In the south Villiputturar was an important literary figure of the period. The tradition of using Sanskrit words and literary expressions is ascribed to him. Other important works in Tamil are commentaries written by Vaishnava scholars and also commentaries on works of the sangam age like the *Tolkappiyam* and the *Kural*. There were also a number of philosophical works and commentaries that were written on the Puranas. Many of the works in Tamil literature were related to Shaivism and Vaishnavism. Among the important works of the medieval period was the *Irusamaya-vilakkam* written by Haridasa, the *Sivadarumottaram* and the *Saiva Samayaneri* both written by Marainanarbandar. In the realm of philosophy the notable works were the *Cidambarapuram* (1508) by Purana Tirumalainathan and the *Palanittalapuranam* by Balasubramanya Kavirayar.

During this period the most famous Telugu poet was Errapragada who popularized the Champu genre of literary writing (mixed form of verse and prose). He also translated the *Bhagavata Purana* into Telugu. The Vijayanagar ruler Krishnadeva Raya wrote the *Amuktamalyada* in Telugu. The most celebrated poet in his court was Allarrani Peddana and Nandi Timmaha who wrote the *Parijatapaharana*. Bhattumurti or Rama Raja Bhushan is known for the *Vasucaritra* and the *Hariscandra Nalopakhyanam* (that narrates the story of Nala and Raja Harishchandra). In the Kannada speaking regions Jain writers dominated the literary compositions of the period. The works of Basava and his followers who popularized the Virasaiva movement in the region also form an important aspect of Kannada literature. The patronage of the Hoysala rulers further helped the development of the language. The *Vadi Vidyanda* of Geroppa is an anthology of Kannada poets. The Jain scholar Salva wrote works like the *Trilokarara* (on cosmology), *Aparajiyasataka* (on Philosophy) and the *Bharataesvaracarita* (the story of the famous king Bharata). Malayalam emerged as an independent language during this period. The language was in oral form and the earliest work composed in the 14th century was the *Rama Charitam*. The works of Rama Panikkar who wrote *Bharata Gatha*, *Savitri Mahatmyam* and the *Bhagavatam* are considered important in Malayalam.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.4**

1. Name any two important texts written in Sanskrit?

**Notes**

2. What is a 'Kavya'?
3. Who was Amir Khusrau?
4. Name the two important works of Ziauddin Barani?
5. What do you understand by the term *Sabaq-i- Hindi*?
6. Name any four regional languages that developed during the Medieval Period?

14.5 MUSIC

Information on music of the sultanate period is limited. The important phase in the development of music during this period belongs to the time of Amir Khusrau. It is during this period that the *qawwali* style is said to have developed. He is also credited for the development of many modern ragas like *aiman*, *gora* and *sanam*. He is credited with the creation of a new musical instrument, the sitar that was a combination of the Indian *vina* and the Iranian *tambura*. The Turks are credited with bringing musical instruments like *rabab* and *sarangi* into South Asia. In Vrindavan Swami Haridas promoted music and is considered to have taught Tansen who was at the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar. Tansen is regarded as an important exponent of the Hindustani classical music and is credited with introducing ragas as the Miyan ki Malhar, Miyan ki Todi and Darbari. Raja Mansingh is said to have played an important role in the perfection of the Dhrupad style of North Indian Music. In the south a system of ragas known as the Janaka and Janya ragas existed during this period. The *Swaramela Kalanidhi* by Ramamatya of Kondavidu written in 1550 describes 20 Janan and 64 Janya ragas. By the 18th century several new forms of music like Tarana, Dadra and Ghazal had come into existence.

14.6 PAINTINGS

The developments in painting during the sultanate period have not been studied because of the limited samples. The closest view that one has of murals in the sultanate is to the numerous literary references. The earliest reference to murals is in a *qasida* in praise of Iltutmish, which describes the figures depicted upon the squandrels of the main arch that was raised to welcome the envoy of the Caliph. In another reference in the *Tarikh-i Ferozshai* there is a reference to the Sultan seeking to ban the tradition of figural paintings on the walls of the palaces of Delhi. Quranic calligraphy also became popular across South Asia during this period. The earliest copy of the Quran (dated 1399) was written in Gwalior. The manuscript was decorated with a variety of ornamental motifs. By the 15th century the kingdoms of Gujarat, Malwa and Jaunpur emerged as important centres of art.

Paintings in medieval India entered a new phase under the Mughals. They altered the character of painting across north India. The Mughal paintings are defined by the styles and subjects popular at the imperial court. The early origins of the Mughal School of painting can be traced to Kabul. During the reign of Humayun two Persian artists, Mir Syed Ali and Abdus Samad were patronized.



Notes

Akbar deputed them to illustrate manuscript of *Hamzanama*. This manuscript of 1,400 pages was compiled by artists drawn from Gwalior, Gujarat, Lahore and Kashmir. It is during this period that many features of Mughal painting developed. Many paintings of this period are collaborative efforts with two or even four painters working on one painting. Among the important features of the paintings of this period are restricted movement of the figures, fineness of lines of drawings and flat depiction of architectural columns. The Mughal paintings are also marked with a naturalism and rhythm, the clothing of the objects assumed Indian forms and the use of subsidiary scenes in the background. The two most common themes in Mughal paintings of this period are specific events in the court and the portraits of leading personalities.



Fig. 14.3 Mughal Painting

During the reign of Jahangir there were other changes in the style of Mughal paintings. The paintings of the Jahangir period accentuate a formalist style and have broad margins which are well decorated with the depiction of flora and faces of human figures, the naturalistic representations matured during the reign of Jahangir. The use of trees, birds, streams and rivers in the backdrop of the paintings became very popular.



Notes

There are interesting scenes of love and portraits of women members attached to the royal court in Mughal paintings of the Shah Jahan period, while the paintings of the Aurangzeb period provide glimpses of the Mughal emperor during his campaigns. As in architecture the Mughal paintings also gave way to the growth and development of regional styles that tried to replicate the same features and characteristic decorative designs.

Rajput paintings that are also of the same period consist of various different court styles, corresponding to the various Rajput kingdoms. The Rajput paintings during the 16th and 17th centuries used many representations of mythology and of court scenes.



Fig. 14.4 Rajput Painting

The Rajput paintings are spread over a larger geographical region, with each region forming a separate sub topic in the artistic scheme. The other styles that were popular were the regional styles of the Deccan and the regions of Bengal, Gujarat and Orissa. The Rajput paintings further flourished in the eighteenth century when many of the artists shifted to the courts of their new patrons. This also coincided with the emergence of many smaller regional styles of paintings. These paintings are known for the intensity of the colours that they use and depict hunting scenes, portraits of individuals and of musical sessions. The main styles of this painting were the Mewar, Bundi and the Kishangarh schools.



Notes



INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.5

1. Name the Musical instrument created by Amir Khusrau?

2. Who played an important role in the development of the dhrupad style?

3. What were the stylistic changes in Mughal Paintings seen during the reign of Jahangir?

4. Mention a few popular themes in Mughal Miniatures?

14.7 ARCHITECTURE

Architecture of the Delhi Sultanate

New architectural forms and styles were introduced in India during the medieval period. The arch and dome were new architectural additions of the period. The use of lime-mortar in the construction of buildings and houses altered the building techniques. The development of the true arch was important feature of the architectural style of the period. The true arch required stones and bricks to be laid as voussoirs in the shape of a curve and bound together firmly by a good binding material. The arches were made in different shapes but the dominant one was the pointed form. In the 14th century a variant of the arch, called the four-centred arch was introduced by the Tughluqs in their buildings.

There are only a few instances of early Turkish buildings in the sub continent where newly quarried material has been employed. In most of the buildings of the period the richly carved capitals, columns and shafts of older buildings are reused. Stone has been used abundantly in the masonry work of this period. The material commonly used for plastering buildings was gypsum. Apparently lime-plaster was reserved for places that needed to be secured against water leakage as in roofs, canals and drains. In the later period gypsum mortar became popular in buildings.

Here we will provide you a brief account of medieval architecture during the Sultanate Mughal and the regional styles which developed in India during medieval period.



Fig 14.5 Qutab Minar & Alai Darwaja

**Notes****The Sultanate Period**

Monuments like the Quwwatul Islam mosque (1198), Qutab Minar (1199–1235), Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra (1200) and Iltutmish's tomb represent the early forms of Indo-Islamic architecture. The early buildings show signs of being worked upon by local craftsmen while the later buildings show the development or the maturing of the Indo-Islamic style. In these monuments one can see the gradual development of dome and the true arch. The best examples of this are the tombs of Iltutmish (1233–34) and Balban (1287–88). The Alai Darwaza in the Qutub complex (1305) and the Jamat Khana Masjid at Nizamuddin (1325) are examples of Khalji period. Here one notices changes marked by the distinct influence of the Seljuq architectural tradition. The employment of the true arch shaped like a pointed horse shoe; the emergence of true dome; use of red sand stone and decorative marble reliefs; the emergence of the lotus bud fringe on the underside of the arch and the new masonry were the important features of this new style. The new architectural style of the Tughluq period is represented with the use of stone rubble as the principle building material, the battering of walls and bastions, a new type of arch called the four centred arch, the emergence of the pointed dome and the introduction of an octagonal plan of tomb building. Another important feature of Tughlaq architecture was the "batter" or sloping walls. This gave the structures an effect of strength. During the subsequent period numerous tombs were built using the octagonal plan while others were built using the square plan. The Architectural monuments of the Sur's can be divided into two periods, the first with buildings at Sasaram (1530–40) like the tombs of Sher Shah's father and Sher Shah himself. The second phase from (1540–45) is represented by buildings like the Purana Qila in Delhi and the Qilai Kuhna Masjid inside the Qila. The slight flatness in the curve towards the crown is indicative of the last stage before the development of the four-centred arch developed during the Mughal phase.

Regional Variations

During this period there was a development of various regional architectural forms. In eastern India there was the development of two distinctive schools in Bengal and in Jaunpur. The most prominent buildings of the Bengal school belong to the Malda district in the remains of the two cities, Gaur and Pandua. Here there is an introduction of two important features. The first was the 'drop arch', which had a span greater than its radius and centres at the import level. The second was the method of raising the roof in a system of arched bays where small domes supported by diagonally arranged brick pendentives that helped transition from a square to a circular base. Another development in this period was the transition from constructing bamboo houses to brick structures, during which a special form of a curved roof developed. The best illustrations of the architecture styles from Jaunpur are the mosques. The styles here bear close resemblance to the Tughlaq style. The use of the arch and beam are notable features of this style.

In western India the development of regional architectural forms is notable in 14th century Gujarat. Here there is a distinctive change in the art form from the 14th into the 15th century. In the former there was a large scale use of building material from demolished temples and in the latter there is a development of a new style in which the layout of the mosques copied the architectural imprint of temples. In central India the development of new art forms is noticeable in the Malwa region; the cities of Dhar and Mandu are illustrations of this style.

Another important region that developed its distinctive style was the Deccan where the Bahmani kingdom created a very different architectural style as compared to the northern architectural forms. The Deccan style developed with the fusion of the Tughlaq style from the north and the Iranian style. The development of the



Notes

architectural style here coincides with the shifting of the kingdom's capital from Gulbarga (1347) to Bidar (1425) and eventually to Golconda (1512). In the first phase in Gulbarga the architectural style is representative of a distinctive Islamic architecture that followed the Tughlaq style. In the second phase there is an adaptation of Iranian architectural styles, this is accompanied with the use of coloured tiles, mural paintings and a change in the shape of the domes.

Another important regional development in the Deccan was Vijayanagara art. The distinctive style is best illustrated using the architectural forms in the city of Hampi. Besides palaces and temples the city also had an extensive network of waterworks and public buildings such as the elephant stables and the Lotus Mahal. The unique features of this style were the use of pillars for architectural and decorative purposes. The climax of temple architecture at Vijayanagara occurred under the *Tuluva* rulers. The architectural tradition was accompanied by a vibrant sculptural tradition that used many mythological figures and narratives. The shrines on Hemakuta hill, Virupaksha temple and the Hazara Rama temple are examples of Vijayanagara temple architecture.

The Architecture of the Mughal Empire

This period witnessed large scale architectural activities that represented the peak of Islamic art in India. It was also a period where there was a great exchange of ideas and styles that led to the creation of a style that was very different from the Sultanate period and that had many features of local or regional styles. The Mughal Emperor Akbar initiated the grand projects that symbolize this period.

Among the early structures of this period are the two mosques built by Babur at Sambhal and Panipat in 1526. Babur is also credited with the laying out of gardens at Dholpur and at Ram Bagh and Zahra Bagh at Agra. Two mosques one at Agra and the other at Hissar belong to the reign of the second Mughal emperor Humayun. The grandness of Mughal architecture began with the construction of Humayun's tomb and its design by Mirak Mirza Ghiyas from Persia. He brought with him Persian craftsmen to work on the tomb. This tomb is the earliest specimen of a garden enclosure and is raised on an arcaded sandstone platform. The tomb is octagonal and



14.6 Humayun's Tomb



Notes

crowned by a high dome. The dome is a double dome, which is built in two layers one which provides the ceiling to the interior of the building and the other, which provides the outer layer that crowns, the building.

During the reign of Akbar many indigenous styles were encouraged leading to the common use of sandstone, the use of arches (mainly in a decorative form) and the decoration that comprised mainly of boldly carved or inlaid patterns complemented by brightly coloured patterns on the interiors. Among the important monumental projects undertaken was the building of Agra fort, within the fort were many structures that were built in the Gujarat and Bengal styles, which were subsequently demolished by Shah Jahan who remodelled the fort and its interiors. The Janangir Mahal conceived as a robust building in red sandstone, is a fusion of Hindu and Islamic building designs. The combination of beam and bracket form the principal structural system, the same styles are seen in the palace fortresses of Lahore and Allahabad. Mughal architecture under Akbar entered a new phase with the construction of Fatehpur Sikri. This city-palace was built entirely of red sandstone between 1571–1585. The buildings could be studied under two categories, religious and secular. Among the religious buildings are, the Jami Masjid, the Buland Darwaza and the tombs of Shaikh Salim Chishti. The secular structures are the palaces, administrative buildings and other structures. The Jama Masjid uses a typical plan of a mosque with a central courtyard, arcades on three sides and a domed skyline. In its courtyard lies the tomb of Salim Chishti. Among the palaces are buildings known as the Jodh Bai palace, the Panch Mahal (the size of this five storey structure that diminishes as one goes higher), the *Diwan-i-Khas* (is in the form of a rectangle and is two stories from outside) and the *Diwan-i-Am*. Among the other buildings here are the Hathi Pol and the Karkhana buildings.

The important buildings of the reigns of Jahangir include the Tomb of Akbar at Sikandara, and the tomb of Itmad ud Daula. The tomb at Sikandara is designed as a tomb

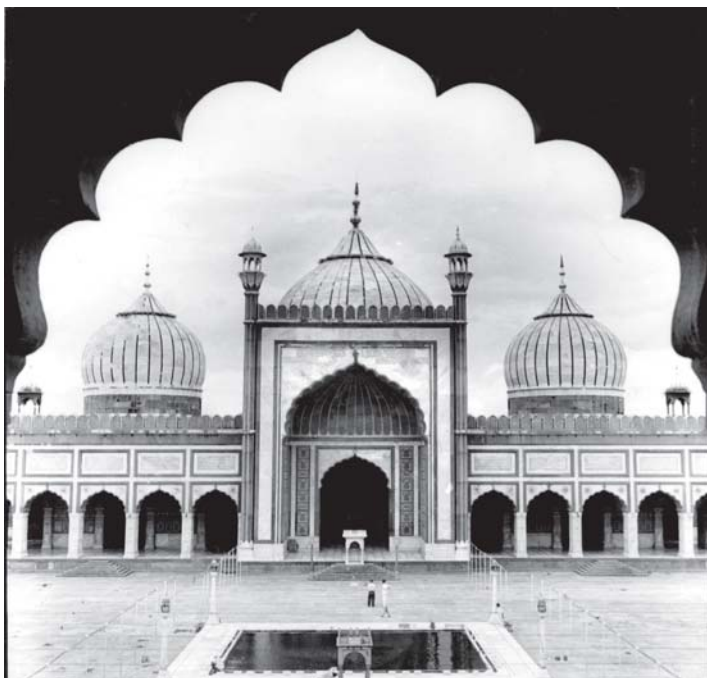


Fig. 14.7 Jama Masjid Delhi



Notes

enclosure enclosed by a garden, the tomb itself is three stories high the first being an arcaded platform making the basement the middle portion is in three tiers of red sandstone while the highest one is made of white marble which is open on top with a screen surrounding it. The tomb of Itmad ud Daula built in 1622–28 marks a change in architectural style from the Akbari period. This enclosed tomb with a dome roof is enclosed with a beautiful marble tracery. Jahangir is also known to have laid the famous Mughal gardens in Kashmir.

Among the important monuments of the reign of Shah Jahan are the Lal Qila (in Delhi), the Moti Masjid (at Agra), the Jami Masjid in Delhi and the Taj Mahal. The Lal Qila is designed as a rectangle along the banks of the river Yamuna. There are two gates, the Delhi and Lahore gates. There is a moat that runs all along the fort except on the riverside. The important buildings inside the fort are the Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas and the Rang Mahal. The Moti Masjid in Agra was an experiment with an alternative scheme of an open prayer hall that had also dispensed with the minarets and replaced them with *chhatris* on the four corners of the prayer hall. The Jammi Masjid is a larger version of the Jammi Masjid in Fatehpur Sikri. It is built on a large platform; within the mosque there are colonnades on three sides with the sanctuary along the fourth. There are three marble domes rising above the sanctuary. The Taj Mahal represents the grandest project of Shahjahan. The construction of the Taj began in 1632 and was completed by 1643. The plan of the complex is rectangle with a high enclosure wall and a lofty gateway in the middle. The main building of the Taj stands on a high marble platform at the northern end of the enclosure. There is a huge dome that covers the top of this structure, with an inverted lotus finial. The decorative features of the building consist mainly of calligraphy and inlay work in the exterior and pietra dura in the interior.

The Moti Masjid at Lal Qila in Delhi, the Badshahi Masjid in Lahore and the mausoleum built for his wife Rabia ud Dauran at Aurangabad are the main examples of Mughal architecture under Aurangzeb. The mausoleum at Aurangabad was modeled on the Taj Mahal. Of architectural monuments after Aurangzeb the tomb of Safdar Jang in Delhi is representative of the continuation of the tradition of the Mughals by the regional governors.

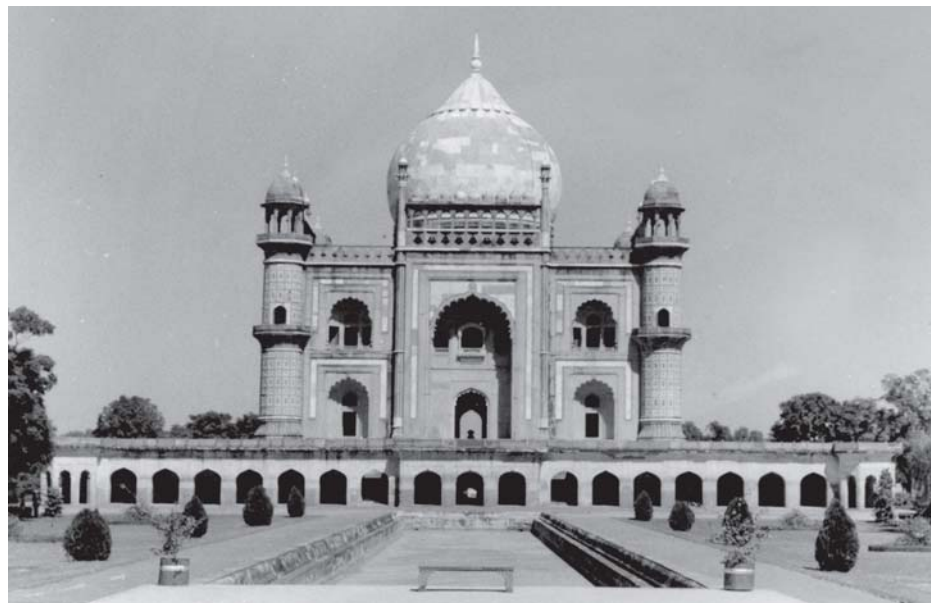


Fig. 14.8 Safdarjung Tomb

**Notes****Decorative Styles**

Another feature of the art of this period was the decorative art in Islamic buildings that was introduced in the sub continent for the first time. These decorative styles were usually in the form of calligraphy, geometrical figures and foliation. In calligraphy quranic sayings were inscribed on buildings in an angular, sober and monumental script called kufi. The calligraphy was found on different parts of the buildings as on doorframes, ceilings, wall panels, etc. The geometric shapes on the other hand were used in different variety of combinations. The generating source of these designs was the circle, which was then developed into a square, triangle or polygon. These forms were then elaborated by, multiplication and sub division, by rotating and by symmetrical arrangements. Of the foliations, the dominant form of decoration employed in the sultanate buildings was the arabesque. It was characterized by a continuous stem that split regularly, producing a series of leafy secondary stems which split again to reintegrate into the main stem.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.6**

1. Name two important changes in architectural forms made during the Medieval period?

2. What is a true arch?

3. Name a few monuments associated with early forms of Indo Islamic architecture?

4. Which type of stone was used in the construction of Fatehpur Sikri?

5. Name some of the decorative styles used in medieval architecture?

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

The medieval Indian culture represents the synthesis of Indian and Persian philosophy, literature art and architecture. In religious sphere Sufism and Bhakti tradition influenced each other. They provided an opportunity for understanding religious traditions of Hindus and Muslims at people's level.

The emergence of Urdu as a new language is a best example of interaction and synthesis. The same is visible in the area of Music and Painting. In the field of architecture, the form, style and decoration take a lot from each other.

The medieval period thus represents an important era of dramatic change in the world of religion and art in South Asia. The growing popularity of Sufism played an important role in the popular acceptability of Islam and in the course establishing unique Islamic tradition in the sub continent. The Bhakti movement played a similar role in the development of Hinduism. On one hand it challenged existing religious and



Notes

social hierarchies and on the other it revived concepts like monotheism in mainstream Hindu tradition. Both the Sufi and Bhakti movements questioned the authority of the established clergy and the relevance of established religious rituals. Importantly while both emerged questioning established religious traditions they eventually found themselves being integrated into established religious systems.

Another important development during the medieval period was the growth in vernacular literature. Growing regional identities helped create new literary and art forms. The growth in regional languages like Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and Telugu was a very significant development. The popularity of translations further widened readership and helped in the exchange of ideas. The exchange of ideas also ushered new development in music. The use of the Sitar and new styles of music further enriched the medieval period.

In the realm of art one witnesses the development of new styles of painting associated with the patronage of the Mughal and the Rajput style. There was a change in the character and stylistic representation seen in earlier periods. The synthesis of the medieval period is best seen in the development of new architectural styles. The large number of forts, palaces, temples and Mosques that can be dated to this period are examples of the new styles. The use of decorative motifs and the adaptation of the dome are examples of the architectural traditions of this period.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Discuss some of the important aspects of Sufi teachings?
2. Name the Sufi Order founded by Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi – What were the important teachings of their Silsilah?
3. What were the similarities in the teachings of various Bhakti Saints?
4. What were the important developments in the Bhakti Movement in Bengal/Maharashtra?
5. Highlight the important aspects of the teachings of Guru Nanak?
6. Highlight the development of new trends in Sanskrit literature during the medieval Period?
7. Who was Amir Khusrau? Highlight his contribution to the development of Persian literature?
8. What were the important features in the new painting styles that emerged under the Mughals?
9. Examine the important Architectural features and style of the Sultanate period?
10. Discuss the emergence of new styles in Mughal architecture during the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

14.1

1. A pir is a Sufi teacher.
2. An important Sufi who reconciled Islamic Mysticism with Islamic orthodoxy.

**Notes**

3. It is a term used to refer to devotional Music.
4. Nizammudin Auliya.
5. He was the leader of Quadiriyya Silsilah in Punjab and a supporter of Akbar.

14.2

1. Orthodox Brahmanism
2. Kabir, Tukaram, Chaitanya
3. He was an Important Bhakti Saint from Bengal.

14.3

1. A Sikh having a direct link with the Guru.
2. An important mercantile caste in Punjab.

14.4

1. *Rajtaranginni, Prithvirajavijaya.*
2. It is a poetical narrative.
3. He was a Persian poet patronized during the Sultanate period disciple of Nizamuddin Anlyla
4. *Fatwa – i- Jahandari / Tarikh -i- firozshahi.*
5. A new form of Persian literature in India.
6. Marathi, Bengali, Gujarati Oriya.

14.5

1. Sitar.
2. Raja Mansingh
3. The emergence of a formalist style and use of naturalistic representations.
4. Specific events in the court and portraits of leading personalities.

14.6

1. The arch and the dome.
2. A style of arch making that emerged in the medieval period. The centre stone was important in this.
3. Quwwat ul Islam Mosque, Qutab Minar, Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra
4. Red Sand Stone
5. Calligraphy/Geometric Shapes.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer Section 14.1 paragraph 1,3,6
2. Refer 14.1 Naqshbandi Silsilah
3. Refer 14.2 Para 1 to 4

**Notes**

4. Refer 14.2 under Vaishnava Bhakti
5. Refer Section 14.3 paragraph 1 & 2.
6. Refer Section 14.4 paragraph under Sanskrit Literature
7. Refer 14.4 under Persian Literature
8. Refer 14.6
9. Refer 14.7 under Delhi Sultanate
10. Refer 14.7 under Mughal Empire

GLOSSARY

Khanqah	–	Centre of activities of Sufi orders
Silsilas	–	Orders of Sufi
Mono Theist	–	Those who believe in One God
Peitra Dura	–	Iranian decorative style in which colourful stone is embedded on white/another colour stone/marble in such a way it looks one piece.
Ruh	–	Soul, spirit
Hulul	–	Infusion of the divine spirit
Ziyarat	–	Practice of visiting tombs, kind of pilgrimage
Sama	–	Musical congregation of Sufis



15

UNDERSTANDING EIGHTEENTH CENTURY INDIA

The eighteenth century in India was characterized by two critical transitions which altered the structure of power and initiated important social and economic changes. The first was the transition in the first half of the century from the Mughal Empire to the regional political orders. The second was the transition in the polity, society and economy. In the 18th century English East India Company steered its way to position of political dominance. The decline of the Mughal authority gave rise to the emergence of a number of independent kingdoms. In this chapter we will study the emergence of these independent kingdoms in different parts of the country. The aggressive British policies affected the economic situation. The agricultural and non agricultural production was altered. The commercial activities also underwent changes. These will also be discussed in the chapter. The social and cultural scenario of 18th century will also be analysed.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain causes of the fall of the Mughal Empire and rise of the regional polities;
- give an account of major political powers that emerged during this period;
- distinguish the regional variations within the Indian economy of the period;
- identify the features of society and culture in the 18th century and
- list the issues involved in understanding the eighteenth century.

15.1 DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

The Background

The unity and stability of the Mughal Empire was shaken during the long and strong reign of Emperor Aurangzeb. However, in spite of setbacks and adverse circumstances the Mughal administration was still quite efficient and the Mughal army strong at the time of his death in 1707. This year is generally considered to separate the era of the great Mughals from that of the lesser Mughals. After the death of Aurangzeb the Mughal authority weakened, it was not in a position to militarily enforce its regulations in all parts of the empire. As a result many provincial governors started to assert their authority. In due course of time they gained independent status. At the same time many kingdoms which were subjugated by the Mughals also claimed their independence. Some new regional groups also consolidated and emerged as political



Notes

power with all these developments, the period between 1707 and 1761 (third battle of Panipat, where Ahmed Shah Abdali defeated the Maratha chiefs) witnessed resurgence of regional identity that buttressed both political and economic decentralization. At the same time, intraregional as well as interregional trade in local raw materials, artifacts, and grains created strong ties of economic interdependence, irrespective of political and military relations.

Passing of the Mughal Empire

In 1707, when Aurangzeb died, serious threats from the peripheries had begun to accentuate the problems at the core of the empire. The new emperor, Bahadur Shah I (or Shah Alam; ruled 1707–12), followed a policy of compromise, pardoning all nobles who had supported his rivals. He granted them appropriate territories and postings. He never abolished *jizya*, but the effort to collect the tax were not effective. In the beginning he tried to gain greater control over the Rajput states of the rajas of Amber (later Jaipur) and Jodhpur. When his attempt met with firm resistance he realized the necessity of a settlement with them. However, the settlement did not restore them to fully committed warriors for the Mughal cause. The emperor's policy toward the Marathas was also that of half-hearted conciliation. They continued to fight among themselves as well as against the Mughals in the Deccan. Bahadur Shah was, however, successful in conciliating Chatrasal, the Bundela chief, and Churaman, the Jat chief; the latter also joined him in the campaign against the Sikhs.

Jahandar Shah (ruled 1712–13) was a weak and ineffective ruler. His wazir Zulfiqar Khan assumed the executive direction of the empire with unprecedented powers. Zulfiqar believed that it was necessary to establish friendly relations with the Rajputs and the Marathas and to conciliate the Hindu chieftains in general in order to save the empire. He reversed the policies of Aurangzeb. The hated *jizya* was abolished. He continued the old policy of suppression against the Sikhs. His goal was to reconcile all those who were willing to share power within the Mughal institutional framework. Zulfiqar Khan made several attempts at reforming the economic system.

He failed in his efforts to enhance the revenue collection of the state. When Farrukh Siyar, son of the slain prince Azimush-Shan, challenged Jahandar Shah and Zulfiqar Khan with a large army and funds from Bihar and Bengal, the rulers found their coffers depleted. In desperation, they looted their own palaces, even ripping gold and silver from the walls and ceilings, in order to finance an adequate army. Farrukh Siyar (ruled 1713–19) owed his victory and accession to the Sayyid brothers, Abdullah Khan and Husain Ali Khan Baraha. The Sayyids thus earned the offices of *wazir* and chief *bakhshi* and acquired control over the affairs of state. They promoted the policies initiated earlier by Zulfiqar Khan. *Jizya* and other similar taxes were immediately abolished. The brothers finally suppressed the Sikh revolt and tried to conciliate the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Jats. However, this policy was hampered by divisiveness between the *wazir* and the emperor, as the groups tended to ally themselves with one or the other. The Jats once again started plundering the royal highway between Agra and Delhi. Farrukh Siyar deputed Raja Jai Singh to lead a punitive campaign against them but *wazir* negotiated a settlement over the raja's head. As a result, throughout northern India *zamindars* either revolted violently or simply refused to pay assessed revenues. On the other hand, Farrukh Siyar compounded difficulties in the Deccan by sending letters to some Maratha chiefs urging them to oppose the forces of the Deccan governor, who happened to be the deputy and an associate of Sayyid Husain Ali Khan. Finally, in 1719, the Sayyid brothers brought Ajit Singh of Jodhpur and a Maratha force to Delhi to depose the emperor.



Notes

The murder of Farrukh Siyar created a wave of revulsion against the Sayyids among the various factions of nobility, who were also jealous of their growing power. Many of these, in particular the old nobles of Aurangzeb's time, resented the *wazir's* encouragement of revenue farming, which in their view was mere shop keeping and violated the age-old Mughal notion of statecraft. In Farrukh Siyar's place the brothers raised to the throne three young princes in quick succession within eight months in 1719. Two of these, Rafi-ud-Darajat and Rafi-ud-Dawlah (Shah Jahan II), died of consumption. The third, who assumed the title of Muhammad Shah, exhibited sufficient vigour to set about freeing himself from the brothers' control.

A powerful group under the leadership of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, Chin Qilich Khan, and his father's cousin Muhammad Amin Khan, the two eminent nobles emerged finally to dislodge the Sayyid brothers (1720). By the time Muhammad Shah (ruled 1719–48) came to power, the nature of the relationship between the emperor and the nobility had almost completely changed. Individual interests of the nobles had come to guide the course of politics and state activities. In 1720 Muhammad Amin Khan replaced Sayyid Abdullah Khan as *wazir*; after Amin Khan's death (January 1720), the office was occupied by the Nizam-ul-Mulk for a brief period until Amin Khan's son Qamar-ud-Din Khan assumed the title in July 1724 by a claim of hereditary right. The nobles themselves virtually dictated these appointments. By this time the nobles had assumed lot of powers. They used to get *farmans* issued in the name of emperor in their favours. The position of emperor was preserved as a symbol only without real powers. The real powers seated with important groups of nobles. The nobles in control of the central offices maintained an all-empire outlook, even if they were more concerned with the stability of the regions where they had their *jagirs*. *Farmans* (mandates granting certain rights or special privileges) to governors, *faujdar*, and other local officials were sent, in conformity with tradition, in the name of the emperor. Individual failings of Aurangzeb's successors also contributed to the decline of royal authority. Jahandar Shah lacked dignity and decency; Farrukh Siyar was fickle-minded; Muhammad Shah was frivolous and fond of ease and luxury. Opinions of the emperor's favourites weighed in the appointments, promotions, and dismissals even in the provinces.

15.2 THE RISE OF REGIONAL POLITIES AND STATES

The states that arose in India during the phase of Mughal decline and the following century (roughly 1700 to 1850) varied greatly in terms of resources, longevity, and essential character. Some of them- such as Hyderabad in the south, was located in an area that had harboured regional state in the immediate pre-Mughal period and thus had an older local or regional tradition of state formation. Others were states that had a more original character and derived from very specific processes that had taken place in the course of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In particular, many of the post-Mughal states were based on ethnic or sectarian groupings- the Marathas, the Jats, and the Sikhs. In due course, the enrichment of the regions emboldened local land and power-holders to take up arms against external authority. However, mutual rivalry and conflicts prevented these rebels from consolidating their interests into an effective challenge to the empire. They relied on support from kinsfolk, peasants, and smaller *zamindars* of their own castes. Each local group wanted to maximize its share of the prosperity at the expense of the others. The necessity of emphasizing imperial symbols was inherent in the kind of power politics that emerged. Each of the contenders in the regions, in proportion to his strength, looked for and seized opportunities to establish his dominance over the others in the neighbourhood. They all needed



Notes

a kind of legitimacy, which was so conveniently available in the long-accepted authority of the Mughal emperor. They had no fear in collectively accepting the symbolic hegemony of the Mughal centre, which had come to co-exist with their ambitions. The gradual weakening of the central authority set in motion new types of provincial kingdoms. Nobles with ability and strength sought to build a regional base for themselves. The *wazir* Chin Qilich Khan himself, showed the path. Having failed to reform the administration, he relinquished his office in 1723 and in October 1724 marched south to establish the state of Hyderabad in the Deccan. The Mughal court's chief concern at this stage was to ensure the flow of the necessary revenue from the provinces and the maintenance of at least the semblance of imperial unity. Seizing upon the disintegration of the empire, the Marathas now began their northward expansion and overran Malwa, Gujarat, and Bundelkhand. Then, in 1738–39, Nadir Shah, who had established himself as the ruler of Iran, invaded India.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.1

1. Who succeeded Aurangzeb in 1707? What kind of policy did he follow?

2. Who were popularly known as 'Sayyed brothers'? Mention a few of their achievements.

3. By whom was the state of Hyderabad founded? What position did he hold under the Mughals?

4. Give two reasons for the rise of the powers of nobles after the death of Aurangzeb.

5. The ruler of which country invaded India in 1738?

15.3 THE MARATHA POWER

There is no doubt that the single most important power that emerged in the long twilight of the Mughal dynasty was the Marathas. The most important Maratha warrior clan was of the Bhonsles, Sivaji Bhonsle, emerged as the most powerful figure in the southern politics.

The good fortune of Sivaji did not fall to his sons and successors, Sambhaji, and his younger brother, Rajaran. For a time it appeared that Maratha power was on the decline. But a recovery was effected in the early eighteenth century, in somewhat changed circumstances. A particularly important phase in this respect is the reign of Sahu, who succeeded Rajaram in 1708. Sahu's reign, lasted for four decades upto 1749. It was marked by the ascendancy of a lineage of Chitpavan Brahman ministers, who virtually came to control central authority in the Maratha state. The Bhonsles were reduced to figureheads. Holding the title of peshwa (chief minister), the first truly prominent figure of this line is Balaji Visvanath, who had helped Sahu in his rise to power. Visvanath and his successor, Bajji Rao I (peshwa between 1720 and 1740), managed to bureaucratised the Maratha state to a far greater extent than had been the case under the early Bhonsles. They systematized the practice of tribute gathering from Mughal territories, under the heads of *sardeshmukhi*



Notes

and *chauth* (the two terms corresponding to the proportion of tribute collected). They seem to have consolidated methods of assessment and collection of land revenue and other taxes, on the lines of the Mughals. Much of the revenue terminology used in the documents of the peshwa and his subordinates derives from Persian. This suggests a greater continuity between Mughal and Maratha revenue practices.

The Maratha Confederacy

By the close of Sahu's reign, a few powerful Maratha Kingdoms were in complete control of their territories. This period saw the development of sophisticated networks of trade, banking, and finance in the territories under their control. The banking houses based at Pune, had their branches in Gujarat, Ganges Valley, and the south. Attention was also paid to the Maritime affairs. Bala ji Visvanath took some care to cultivate the Angria clan, which controlled a fleet of vessels based in Kolaba and other centres of the west coast. These ships posed a threat not only to the new English settlement

Map 15.1 The Maratha Confederacy



Notes

of Bombay, but to the Portuguese at Goa, Bassein, and Daman. On the other hand, there also emerged a far larger domain of activity away from the original heartland of the Marathas. Of these chiefs, the most important were the Gaikwads (Gaekwars), the Sindhias, and the Holkars. Also, there were branches of the Bhonsle family that relocated to Kolhapur and Nagpur, while the main line remained in the Deccan heartland, at Satara. Let us examine their areas of influence.

The Bhonsles of Nagpur

Unlike the Kolhapur Bhonsles and the descendants of Vyamkoji at Thanjavur, both of whom claimed a status equal to that of the Satara raja, the line at Nagpur was clearly subordinate to the Satara rulers. A crucial figure from this line is Raghujii Bhonsle (ruled 1727–55), who was responsible for the Maratha incursions on Bengal and Bihar in the 1740s and early 1750s. The relations of his successors, Janoji, Sabaji, and Mudhoji, with the peshwas and the Satara line were varying, and it is in this sense that these domains can be regarded as only loosely confederated, rather than tightly bound together. Other subordinate rulers who emerged under the overarching umbrella provided by the Satara ruler and his peshwa were equally somewhat opportunistic in their use of politics.

The Gaikwads of Baroda

The Gaikwads, gathered prominence in the 1720. Initially they were subordinate not only to the Bhonsles but also to the powerful Dabhade family. However, it was only after the death of Sahu, when the power of the peshwas was further enhanced, that the position of the Gaikwads truly improved. By the early 1750s, their rights on large portion of the revenues of Gujarat were recognized by the peshwa. The expulsion of the Mughal governor of the Gujarat province from his capital of Ahmadabad in 1752 set the seal on the process. The Gaikwads preferred, however, to establish their capital in Baroda, causing realignment in the network of trade and consumption in the area. The rule at Baroda of Damaji (d. 1768) was followed by a period of some turmoil. The Gaikwads still remained partly dependent on Pune and the peshwa, especially to intervene in moments of succession crisis. The eventual successor of Damaji, Fateh Singh (ruled 1771–89), did not remain allied to the peshwa for long in the late 1770s and early 1780s, he chose to negotiate a settlement with the English East India Company, which eventually led to increased British interference in his affairs. By 1800, the British rather than the peshwa were the final arbiters in determining succession among the Gaikwads, who became subordinate rulers under them in the nineteenth century.

The Holkars of Indore

In the case of the Holkars the rise in status and wealth was particularly rapid and marked. Initially they had very little political power. However by 1730s their chief Malhar Rao Holkar consolidated his position. He was granted a large share of the *chauth* collection in Malwa, eastern Gujarat, and Khandesh. Within a few years, Malhar Rao consolidated his own principality at Indore, from which his successors controlled important trade routes as well as the crucial trading centre of Burhanpur. After him, control of the dynastic fortunes fell largely to his son's widow, Ahalya Bai, who ruled from 1765 to 1794 and brought Holkar power to great glory. Nevertheless, their success could not equal that of the next great chieftain family, the Sindhias.

The Sindhias of Gwalior

The Sindhias carved a prominent place for themselves in North Indian politics in the decades following the third battle of Panipat (1761). Again, like the Holkars, the Sindhias were based largely in central India, first at Ujjain, and later (from the last quarter of



Notes

the 18th century) in Gwalior. During the long reign of Mahadaji Sindhia (1761–94) family's fortunes were truly consolidated.

Mahadaji, proved an effective and innovative military commander. He employed a large number of European soldiers in his force. His power grew rapidly after 1770. During this period he managed to make substantial inroads into North India that had been weakened by Afghan attacks. He intervened with some effect in the Mughal court during the reign of Shah Alam II. The Mughal king made him the “deputy regent” of his affairs in the mid-1780s. His shadow fell not only across the provinces of Delhi and Agra but also on Rajasthan and Gujarat, making him the most formidable Maratha leader of the era. The officials of the East India Company were very cautious in dealing with him.

His relations with the acting peshwa, Nana Fadnavis at Pune were fraught with tension. Eventually, the momentum generated by Mahadaji could not be maintained by his successor Daulat Rao Sindhia (ruled 1794–1827), who was defeated by the British and forced by treaty in 1803 to surrender his territories both to the north and to the west.

The careers of some of these potentates, especially Mahadaji Sindhia, illustrate the potency of Mughal symbols even in the phase of Mughal decline. For instance, after recapturing Gwalior from the British, Mahadaji took care to have his control of the town sanctioned by the Mughal emperor. Equally, he zealously guarded the privileges and titles granted to him by Shah Alam, such as *amir al-umara* (“head of the *amirs*”) and *na'ib wakii-i mutlaq* (“deputy regent”). In this he was not alone. Instances in the 18th century of states that wholly threw off all pretense of allegiance to the Mughals are rare. Rather, the Mughal system of honours and titles, as well as Mughal- derived administrative terminology and fiscal practices, continued despite the decline of imperial power.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.2

1. Name the single most important power that emerged during the declining phase of Mughal dynasty.

2. Who was referred as Peshwa during the Maratha rule? Name the Peshwa who held power between 1720–1740.

3. In the context of the Marathas what did the following terms indicate?
(a) Chauth (b) Sardeshmukhi.

4. Name the important Portuguese trade centres in the Western coast of India.

5. Name the various ruling dynasties of the Marathas confederacy. In which region did they rule?

6. Who was Ahalya Bai? What was her main achievement?



Notes

15.4 THE NAWABS OF BENGAL

Murshid Quli Khan who started his career as Diwan of Bengal under Aurangzeb became virtually independent with the growing weakening of the central authority. However, he regularly sent tribute to the Mughal emperor. Ali Vardi Khan deposed the family of Murshid Quli Khan and made himself the Nawab in 1739. These Nawabs brought stability and peace and promoted agriculture, trade and industry. Equal opportunities were given to both Hindus and Muslims. But the Nawabs could not visualise the long term implications of the presence of the European trading companies and neglected military preparedness. In 1756–1757, the successor of Ali Vardi Khan, Siraj-ud-Daulah had to fight the English East India Company over the trading rights. His defeat in the battle of Plassey in June 1757 paved the way for subjugation of Bengal as well as India.

15.5 THE NAWABS OF AWADH

With the weakening central control the Mughal *suba* of Awadh also saw emerging ambitions of a provincial governor- Saadat Khan Burhan ul Mulk. Saadat Khan disciplined the local zamindars and gave shape to a well paid, well armed and well trained army. Before his death in 1739, Saadat Khan made the provincial head a hereditary position. His successors Safdar Jung and Asaf ud Daulah not only played very decisive role in the politics of northern India but also gave a long term administrative stability to the nawabi of Awadh. Under the Nawabs firstly Faizabad and then Lucknow became the cultural rival of Delhi in the spheres of arts, literature and crafts. Regional architecture reflected itself in the form of *Imambarah* and other buildings. The evolution of dance form *Kathak* was the outcome of cultural synthesis.

15.6 THE SIKHS OF PUNJAB

The Mughal force suppressed the Sikhs under Banda Bahadur. But this did not put an end to Sikh resistance to Mughal authority. In the 1720s and 1730s, Amritsar emerged as a centre of Sikh activity, mainly because of its preeminence as a pilgrimage centre. Kapur Singh, the most important of the Sikh leaders of the time, operated from its vicinity. He gradually set about consolidating a revenue-cum military system. Some Sikh groups also started consolidating themselves as political force. These activities discouraged the attempts by the Mughal governors of Lahore Suba to set up an independent power base for themselves in the region. First Abdus Samad Khan and then his son Zakariya Khan attempted to control sovereign power. After the latter's demise in 1745, the balance shifted still further in favour of the Sikh warrior-leaders, such as Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. He later on founded the kingdom of Kapurthala. The mushrooming of pockets under the authority of Sikh leaders was thus a feature of the two decades preceding Ahmed Shah Abdali's invasion of the Punjab. This process was evident in the eastern Punjab and Bari Doab. Though the principal opposition faced by Abdali in his campaigns of the 1750s and 1760s in the Punjab came from the Sikhs, Marathas also played a role of significance on this occasion. Eventually, by the mid-1760s, Sikh authority over Lahore was established, and the Afghans were not able to consolidate their early gains. Under Ahmad Shah's successor, Timur Shah (ruled 1772–93), some of the territories and towns that had been taken by the Sikhs (such as Multan) were recovered, and the descendants of Ahmad Shah continued to harbour ambitions in this direction until the end of the century. But by the 1770s, they were dealing with a confederation of about 60 Sikh chieftains, some of these were to emerge as princely states under the British- such as Nabha and Patiala.



Notes

The Sikh chiefdoms continued many of the administrative practices initiated by the Mughals. The main subordinates of the chiefs were given *jagir* assignments. The Persianized culture of the Mughal bureaucracy continued to hold sway. It was one such chief, Ranjit Singh, grandson of Charhat Singh Sukerchakia, who eventually welded these principalities for a brief time into a larger entity. Ranjit Singh's effective rule lasted four decades, from 1799 to 1839. The power of the English East India Company was growing in all parts of the country during this period. Within ten years of his death, the British had annexed Punjab. His rise to power was based on superior military force, partly serviced by European mercenaries and by the strategic location of the territories that he had inherited from his father. Ranjit Singh's kingdom represented the culmination of nearly a century of Sikh rebellions against Mughal rule. It was based on the intelligent application of principles of statecraft. He used as his capital the great trading city of Lahore, which he captured in 1799. Having gained control of the trade routes, he imposed monopolies on the trade in salt, grain, and textiles from Kashmir to enhance his revenues. Using these earnings, he built up an army of 40,000 cavalry and infantry. By the year 1809 he was undisputed master of the most of Punjab.

15.7 JAIPUR AND OTHER RAJPUTANA STATES

Jaipur (earlier Amber) in eastern Rajasthan, was a Rajput principality controlled by the *Kachwaha* clan. In the early eighteenth century, the ruler Jai Singh Sawai took steps to increase his power manifold. This was done by: (i) arranging to have his *jagir* assignment in the vicinity of his home territories and (ii) by taking on rights on land revenue through farming (for collection of land tax rights on a parcel of land that are rented by the state to an individual), which was gradually made permanent. By the time of his death in 1743, Jai Singh (after whom Jaipur came to be named) had emerged as the single most important ruler in the region. Most of the larger Rajput states were constantly involved in petty quarrels and civil wars. Ajit Singh of Marwar was killed by his own son.

In the 1750s Suraj Mal the Jat ruler of Bharatpur, like Jai Singh- adopted a modified form of Mughal revenue administration in his territories. However, by this time, the fortunes of the Jaipur kingdom were seriously in question. Under threat from the Marathas, recourse had to be taken to adopt short- term fiscal exactions. At the same time a series of crop failures in the 1750s and 60s adversely affected fragile agriculture. The second half of the eighteenth century was thus marked by an economic depression, accompanied by a decline in the political power of Jaipur. During this period Jaipur became a vulnerable target for the ambitions of the Marathas, and of Mahadaji Sindhia in particular.

The states discussed so far, with the exception of Maratha, were all landlocked. This did not mean that trade was not an important element in their makeup, for the kingdom of Ranjit Singh was crucially linked to trade. However, lack of access to the sea greatly increased the vulnerability of a state, particularly in an era when the major power was the English East India Company, itself initially a maritime enterprise.

15.8 POLITICS IN SOUTH INDIA

In the south, unlike the areas discussed so far, several states did make a determined bid in this period to consolidate their power by the use of access to sea and ports. Principal among these were Travancore in Kerala under Martanda Varma and Rama Varma, and Mysore under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan.

These states rose to prominence only in the latter half of the eighteenth century, or at least after 1740. Before that, the southern Indian scene had been dominated by a group of Muslim notables who had accompanied the Mughal expansion into the



Notes

region in the 1680s and 1690s, or else had come in a second wave that followed immediately after 1700. Many of these notables set themselves up as tribute-paying chiefs under Mughal authority. Some of them were relatively petty *nawabs* (deputies) of the Balaghat, or northern Karnataka (such as Abdul Rasul Khan of Sira). A few of them were political heavy weights like the Nizam-ul-Mulk himself and Sadullah Khan at Arcot. The Nizam-ul-Mulk had consolidated his position in Hyderabad by the 1740s, whereas the Arcot principality had emerged some three decades earlier. Neither of these rulers, while establishing dynastic succession, claimed full sovereignty. Thus they continued to cast themselves as representatives of Mughal authority. Southern Indian politics in the 1720s emerged, therefore, as a game with many petty players and three formidable ones: the Marathas (both at Thanjavur and elsewhere), the Nizam, and the Arcot (or Karnatak) Nawab.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the power of all three of these centres declined. The succession struggle at Arcot in the 1740s and early 1750s left its rulers open to financial manipulation by private British merchants, to whom they were increasingly in debt for war expenses. In the 1750s the power of Hyderabad also declined (after the death of its founder, the Nizam-ul-Mulk). The control of the coastal districts was soon lost, leaving the kingdom landlocked and relatively sparsely populated. In this context, the only option for states was to build an elaborate and well-organized war machine while keeping external supply lines open. The control of trade was also seen as crucial in the statecraft of the period.

The State of Travancore

These principles were put into practice in the southern Kerala state of Venad (Travancore) by Martanda Varma (ruled 1729–58). The king initiated a few measures to strengthen his authority. These were (i) he built a substantial standing army of about 50,000 (ii) reduced the power of the Nayar aristocracy on which rulers of the area had earlier been dependent militarily, and (iii) fortified the northern limits of his kingdom at the so-called “Travancore line.” It was also the policy of this ruler to extend patronage to the Syrian Christians, a large trading community within his domains, as a means of limiting European involvement in trade. The key commodity was pepper, but other goods also came to be defined as royal monopoly items, requiring a license for trade. These policies were continued in large measure by Martanda’s successor, Rama Varma (ruled 1758–98), who was able to defend his kingdom successfully against a dangerous new rival power—Mysore.

The Rise of Mysore

Under rulers of the Vadiyar dynasty, such as Kanthirava Narasaraja and Chikka Deva Raja Mysore emerged as an important state. However, Mysore was a landlocked kingdom and dependent therefore on trade and military supplies brought through the ports of the Indian east coast. As these ports came increasingly under European control, Mysore’s vulnerability increased. From the 1760s, steps were taken to change this situation. A cavalry commander of migrant origin, Haidar Ali, assumed effective power in the kingdom in 1761, reducing the Vadiyars to figureheads and displacing the powerful Kalale family of ministers. First Haidar and then, after 1782, his son, Tipu Sultan, made attempts to consolidate Mysore and make it a kingdom with access to not one but both coasts of peninsular India. Against the Kodavas, the inhabitants of the upland kingdom of Kodagu (Coorg), they were relatively successful. Coastal Karnataka and northern Kerala came under their sway, enabling Tipu to open diplomatic and commercial relations on his own account with the Middle East. Tipu’s ambitions apparently greatly exceeded those of his father, and he strove actively to



Notes

escape the all- pervasive shadow of Mughal suzerainty, as discussed above. However, the problem with the Mysore of Haidar and Tipu was their inability to build an internal consensus. Their dependence on migrants and mercenaries, for both military and fiscal expertise, was considerable, and they were always resisted by local chiefs, the so called *Poligars*. More crucial was the fact that by the 1770s Mysore faced a formidable military adversary in the form of the English East India Company, which did not allow it any breathing room. It was the English who denied Mysore access to the relatively rich agricultural lands and ports of the Coromandel coastal plain in eastern India. Tipu was also finally killed in 1799 by the English forces.



INTEXT QUESTION 15.3

1. In which region and under whose patronage did the dance form- kathak evolve?
2. Why was the battle of Plassey, 1757 significant?
3. Name the sultan of Mysore who faced the challenge of the British East India company. What difficulties did he face during his rule?

15.9 THE ECONOMY IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY INDIA

The eighteenth century can hardly be said to exhibit any substantial economic continuity between its earlier and later parts. It was a period of considerable political turmoil in India, one in which states were formed and dissolved in quick succession. That there was a great deal of fluidity in the system. It is of course true that raids by military forces would have caused dislocation. The destruction of irrigation tanks, the forcible expropriation of cattle wealth, and even the forced march of masses of people were not unknown in the wars of the 1770s and thereafter. All these must have had a harmful effect on economic stability and curtailed the impulse toward growth.

When viewed from Delhi, the 18th century is certainly a gloomy period. The attacks of Nadir Shah, then of Ahmad Shah Abdali, and finally the attacks by the Rohillas (who controlled Delhi in 1761–71) put the city in a state of regular destruction. This perspective can hardly have been shared by the inhabitants of other centres in India, whether Trivandrum, Pune, Patna, or Jaipur. There was a process of economic reorientation that accompanied the political decentralization of the era, and it is on account of this that the experience of Delhi and Agra cannot be generalized. However, the conditions of different regions were not uniform. In some, the first half of the eighteenth century witnessed continued expansion- Bengal, Jaipur, and Hyderabad, for example. While some others were late bloomers, as in the case of Travancore, Mysore, or the Punjab. No single chronology of economic prosperity and decline is likely therefore to fit all the regions of India in the epoch. Despite some key weaknesses and contradictions the economy of the eighteenth century performed well in the spheres of agriculture, inland trade and urbanization. There were some areas which saw agricultural decline- often because of inter state warfare as in the Punjab and parts of north India. Lack of new agricultural methods and techniques was overcome with the experience and management of land and labour. Data of *Taqsim* papers used and compared vis a vis *Ain-i-Akbari* proves that it was not the lack of cultivable land but



Notes

lack of labour and peace which resulted into declining agricultural production and fluctuating agricultural prices as well. At the same time the price rise benefited the peasants but unequally according to vertically divided sections of peasantry. States exacted tribute from systems of agricultural commodity production that tied villages to expansive networks of commercial mobility and exchange.

It is noteworthy that, except for a major subsistence crisis in south India between 1702 and 1704, the first seven decades of eighteenth century in India were remarkably free of famine. The great Bengal famine of 1770, in which an estimated one-third of the population perished, occurred soon after the colonial conquest. This was followed by another disastrous famine in north India in 1783. Overall a favourable land-labour ratio had enabled highly mobile peasant and tribal labour to negotiate reasonable terms with controllers of land. But the excessive revenue demands made the peasants' desertion a regular phenomenon particularly in north India. While some village notables managed to transform revenue farms into hereditary estates, others felt the squeeze from powerful regional states as Tipu's Mysore. Population, production, prices and wages tended, generally speaking, to be on a gentle upward incline during the eighteenth century. Fragmented polities did not hamper the development of a thriving inland trade in grain, cloth and cattle. Corporate merchant institutions transcended political boundaries in overseeing the transportation of goods and the provision of credit and insurance services. Pre-colonial era artisanal labour, especially weavers, had ample scope for successfully resisting extravagant demands by intermediate social groups and the state. Even an intrusive state like late-eighteenth century Mysore appeared to attack intermediaries rather than labour. Evidence from Bengal and Madras suggests that urban labour was worse off in relation to the state and the market in the early colonial than in the immediate precolonial period. While inland trade did well, the Indian shippers and merchants involved in export trade declined in the face of European advances. The great Gujarati port city of Surat lost its importance around 1720. There was a resurgence of demand for Indian goods in both West and South East Asia in the late eighteenth century in addition to European demand, but by now British merchants and shippers had achieved dominance at the expense of Indians and took the bulk of the profits.

As the old commercial centres of Surat, Masulipatnam and Dhaka degenerated, colonial port-cities like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta took their pride of place. But the decline of the Mughal capitals of Delhi and Agra was offset by the rise of regional capitals, including Lucknow, Hyderabad, the various Maratha cities, and Seringapatam. The level of urbanization was clearly higher in 1800 than a century before. What had changed in the urban centres was the relative balance of power between rulers and merchants. In some instances, commercial and financial magnets were arrogating to themselves the powers of the state.

It would also appear for a variety of reasons, that the mid-eighteenth century marks a significant change in economic sphere. For example, once the English East India Company got hold on the revenues of Bengal *subah* the flow of money was adversely affected. While earlier Bengal received gold and silver in exchange for its exports, this pattern no longer held. In later part of eighteenth century the peasants were forced to cultivate certain cash crops like indigo and opium. This had adverse impact on food crop production. But another reason why the latter half of the eighteenth century differs from the period before about 1750 is the changing character of war. In the post-1750 period, warfare became more disruptive of civil life and economic production than before, and at the same time the new technologies in use made it a far more expensive proposition. The use of firearms on a large scale, the employment of mercenaries, the maintenance of standing armies, all of these had harmful affects.



Notes

15.10 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

The social life in eighteenth century India was continuation of the past legacy. Despite some universal features of socio-cultural unity through out India over the centuries, there was no uniformity in the social patterns. The society was divided into multi layered identities on the basis of religion, region, tribe, language, class and caste. Hindus were divided on the basis of hundreds of castes. The caste was decided by birth, fixing the permanent place of the people in social hierarchy. Inter-caste marriages and inter caste-dining was forbidden. Traditionally, caste was the basis of the profession but by the eighteenth century to some extent social and professional mobility was being followed. For example Brahmans started adopting various progenies and pursuing trading activities. The caste continued to be a major divisive force.

Muslims were also influenced by the considerations of race, caste, tribe and status. The Shias and Sunnis had major religious differences while the Irani, Afghani, Turani and Hindustani Muslims had lot of differences to stand apart from each other. People converted to Islam carried their caste into the religion. The basic social unit was the family based on patriarchal patterns except Kerala where matrilineal system was prevalent. Women's were expected to live as the role models of ideal daughters, wives and mothers. Women of the upper classes, in north India, had to follow *purdah*. Child marriages was prevalent and marriage was a social obligation between the two families. Among the upper classes polygamy and dowry was prevalent but the greatest evil of eighteenth century India were the custom of *sati* and the condition of widows among the Hindus.

The education system could not change according to the requirements of the time. The curriculum was confined to literature, languages, law, religion, philosophy and logic and excluded the study of physical and natural sciences, technology and geography. There was lack of progressive ideas as theoretical framework dominated. Elementary education was widespread. Mediums of higher education were Sanskrit and Persian only. Moreover, this education excluded females and low caste people.

15.11 THE CULTURAL MILIEU

It is generally maintained that the eighteenth century witnessed a general decline in material life, the cultural life of the period also has often been denigrated. However, there appears to be little justification for such a portrayal of the 18th century. Even Delhi, whose economic condition unequivocally declined, had a number of major poets, philosophers, and thinkers in this epoch, from Shah Waliullah to Mir Taqi Mir. Further, as regional courts grew in importance, they tended to take on the function of the principal patrons of high culture, whether in music, the visual arts, or literature. It is thus also in relatively dispersed centres, ranging from Awadh to Bikaner and Lahore to Thanjavur, that one finds the courtly traditions of culture persisting. Thanjavur under the Marathas is a particularly fine example of cultural efflorescence, in which literary production of a high quality in Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit, and Marathi continued, with some of the Maratha rulers themselves playing a significant direct role. Similarly, it is in the eighteenth century Thanjavur that the main compositions of what is today known as the Karnatak tradition of Indian classical music came to be written, by such men as Tyagaraja, Muttuswami Diksitar, and Syama Sastri. Finally, the period brought the development of a distinct style of painting in Thanjavur, fusing elements imported from the north with older local traditions of textile painting.

This vitality was not restricted purely to elite culture. To begin with, many of the theatre and musical traditions, as well as formal literary genres of the period, picked



Notes

up and ‘reincorporated folk influences. At the same time, the interaction of popular Hinduism and Islam gave a particular flavour to cultural activities associated with pilgrimages and festivals. More than in earlier centuries, the tradition of long-distance pilgrimages to major centres from Varanasi to Rameswaram increased and scan be seen to fit in with a general trend of increasing mobility. It was common for post-Mughal states to employ mercenary soldiers and imported scribes and clerks. In eighteenth century Hyderabad, for example, Kayasthas from the north were employed in large numbers in the bureaucracy. In Mysore, Maharashtrian Brahmans were given fiscal offices as early as the 1720s. It is apparent that the mobility of musicians, men of letters, and artists was widely prevalent. When a major new political centre emerged, it rapidly attracted talent, as evidenced in Ranjit Singh’s Lahore. Here, Persian literature of high quality was produced, but not at the cost of literary output in Punjabi. At the same time, new developments were visible in the fields of architecture and painting. Farther to the north, the principality of Kangra fostered an important new school of painting, devoted largely to Vaishnava themes. The cultural assimilation was outcome of mutual influence and respect. Among the major religions the Marathas supported the shrine of Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti in Ajmer and the Raja of Tanjore financed the shrine of Shaikh Shahul Hamid of Nagaur. Tipu Sultan of Mysore supported Shringeri temple and Muslims joyfully participated in the Hindu festivals just as the Hindus were part of Muharram processions. Indeed, a surprisingly large proportion of what is understood today to be part of India’s ‘traditional’ culture is attributable to this period and also to the preceding century.

15.12 DEBATE AND PROBLEMS IN UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The debate on the nature of eighteenth century has engaged historians of Mughal India as well those interested in colonial studies. Early Mughal studies view the over all changes in the shadow of Mughal political collapse and project the period as “Dark Ages”, thus Mughal political crisis is seen to be accompanied by economic and social breakdown as well. However, later studies scrutinize eighteenth century economy and society in regional perspectives preceding the beginning of the colonial rule that characterized the second half of the eighteenth century. Thus the two positions argue around “continuity versus change” paradigm. Generally, Indian historians perceive the colonial conquest which began from the mid eighteenth century as a point of departure for Indian history. So the basic issues pertaining to eighteenth century are two- whether the fall of Mughal Empire initiated the fall of socio- economic structure as well and secondly, whether the arrival of colonialism was a fundamental break or not?

Was the eighteenth century a Dark Age or was it a period of economic boom? Did it mark a sharp break or was it a period of continuity and change? How British power in India expanded during the eighteenth century? These and other questions concerning the nature of politics, society, economy, religion and culture made the study of history of eighteenth century highly debatable. Historians have traditionally viewed India’s eighteenth century as a dark era of warfare, political chaos, and economic decline sandwiched between stable and prosperous Mughal and British hegemonies. This view has been vigorously challenged by the most recent generation of Indian historians, who have emphasized the continuities between the earlier Mughal and later British states and the constellation of small successor states that emerged with the ebbing of Mughal power. The political turmoil which affected the whole century, forces one to ask whether the fall of the Mughal empire led to a break of the central

**Notes**

political authority triggering the phase of anarchy, firstly leading to the rise of regional kingdoms then paving the way for dominance of British colonialism. Here it is important to understand whether just the decline of the Mughal state should be seen as a failure of Indian society as well as the vacuum created by the fall of the central authority filled up by the regional powers namely, Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal and Nizam of Hyderabad in the first half of the century. Moreover, whether the emergence of British East India Company as a political power was a break for the Indian society, economy and polity? or marked the beginning of next two hundred years of British colonialism in India?

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 15.4**

1. Give two reasons for the economic instability after 1770.

2. Why did Indian export trade decline in the face of European advances?

3. Name major colonial port cities, that replaced earlier commercial centres.

4. Give two main features of eighteenth century Social system.

5. List the major social evils prevalent in 18th Century India.

6. What were the mediums of higher education till 18th Century?

7. What was the main centre for the emergence of Karnatak tradition of Indian classical music? Who were the main exponents of this tradition?

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

The lesson deals with the history of the 18th century. It provides a brief account of the later Mughal rulers - their weaknesses and difficulties. It also traces the gradual rise of the Mughal nobility and eventual disintegration of the Mughal empire.

The lesson marks the breaking up of the central authority leading to the emergence of regional kingdoms such as Hyderabad, Awadh and Bengal. The contribution of the regional rulers as well as their internal conflicts are also highlighted.

Emergence of the Maratha confederacy and finally the breakup of Marathas into five Maratha Kingdoms of Bhonsle, Gaikwad, Holkar, Sindhia and Satara was is another important phase. The power of the Peshwas and some of the important administrative features are also mentioned.

Consolidation of Sikhs under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, rise of the Rajput States and the contribution of these Kingdoms towards Indian administration, polity and culture has been explained in brief.

The later half of 18th century saw important developments. Rise of Mysore state under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan is worth mentioning. Coming of the East India


Notes

Company and the conflict between Mysore and the company marks the beginning of a new phase of Indian political scene.

Along with political developments, the lesson also deals with the new features of Indian economy, discusses the reason for decline of Indian agriculture and export trade paving the way for colonial economy.

While in many ways the social conditions remain stagnant, the 18th Century India also witnessed various new trends in economic and cultural fields.

Because of the complex nature of the 18th century Indian polity and economy there are divergent views among historians about the nature of these developments.


TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. After the death of Aurangzeb why did the Mughal authority decline so fast?
2. Examine the process of the rise of regional polities and states. Why did these powers feel the need for imperial symbol for legitimacy?
3. How did the Marathas recover their lost importance in early 18th century?
4. Who was Mahadaji Sindhia? List his contributions?
5. Examine the efforts of nawabs of Bengal to consolidate their position in Bengal.
6. When and by whom was the Sikh authority established over Lahore? Explain role of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in this context.
7. Explain the steps taken by Sawai Raja Jai Singh to increase his power in Rajputana.
8. “When viewed from Delhi, the 18th century is certainly a gloomy period.” Justify this statement by giving suitable arguments.
9. Examine the causes of decline of Indian agriculture in 18th century.
10. Describe the significant changes in the economic sphere in 18th Century India.
11. Why is there a debate on the nature of 18th century?
12. On what ground do the historian refer the 18th century as “dark ages”?
13. What are the major problems in understanding the history of 18th century?


ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS
15.1

1. Bahadur Shah I or Shah Alam. He followed a policy of compromise.
2. Abdullah Khan and Hussain Ali Khan were popularly known as ‘Sayyed Brothers’.

Achievements:

- i. They held the position of ‘Vazir’ and ‘Bakshi’ respectively.
- ii. They suppressed the sikh revolts and tried to conciliate the Rajputs.



Notes

iii. They abolished repressive tax like 'Jazia.'

3. The state of Hyderabad was founded by Chin Kilich Khan, the Nizam-ul-mulk. He held the position of the 'Vazir' under the Mughals.
4. i. The later Mughal rulers were weak and ineffective.
ii. Many of them were fickle minded and spent them in wasteful luxury and expenditure.
5. During the period of A.D. 1738–1739 Nadir Shah invaded India, he was the ruler of Iran.

15.2

1. The Marathas
2. During the region of Shahu, the Maratha ruler, the Chief Minister was referred as Peshwa. Baji Rao I was a very powerful Peshwa who ruled during the period of 1720–1740.
3. Both Chauth and Sardeshmukhi refers to the tributes collected by the Marathas. These corresponded to the proportion of tribute. Chauth was 1/4th of the Mughal taxes, Sardeshmukhi was 1/10th of the same.
4. Goa, Bassin, Daman
5. Bhonsles of Nagpur, Gaikwards of Baroda, Holkars of Indore, Sindhias of Gwalior and Shivaji's successors ruled in the region of Satara
6. Ahalya Bai was the widowed daughter in law of the Holkar ruler Malhar Rao. She ruled Indore from 1765 to 1794. Her main achievement was that she consolidated the power of the Holkars and brought it to great glory.

15.3

1. Kathak, the new dance form evolved in the region of Lucknow in Awadh under the patronage of the nawabs of Awadh.
2. In this battle the independent nawab of Bengal, Sirajuddaulah was defeated and killed by the British forces. It paved the way for subjugation of Bengal and eventually India by a foreign power.
3. Tipu Sultan. Besides falling to the hostility of the British, Tipu always had to face the resistance of local chiefs called 'Poligars'.

15.4

1. Political turmoil and raids of military forces were two main reasons for economic instability.
2. The great Gujarati port city of Surat lost its importance though there was still a great demand of Indian goods. The British merchant and shippers controlled the export trade by replacing Indian.
3. Colonial cities like Bombay, Madras, Calcutta replaced earlier commercial centers.
4. In many ways the eighteenth century social life was a continuation of past legacy without much change. The society was divided on the multilayered identities on the basis of religion, tribe, cast, language, class etc.



Notes

5. Women of the upper classes had to follow Pardah. Child marriage, polygamy and dowry were other social evils in society. But the most cruel and greatest social evil was the custom of Sati.
6. The mediums of higher education in 18th century were Sanskrit and Persian only.
7. Karnatak tradition of Indian classical music developed in the region of Thanjavur. The main exponent of this tradition were Tyagaraja, Muttuswami Diksitar and Syma Sastri.

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer to section 15.1
2. Refer to section 15.2.
3. Refer to section 15.3
4. Refer to section 15.2.(The Sindhias of Gwalior)
5. Refer to section 15.4
6. Refer to section 15.6
7. Refer to section 15.7
8. Refer to section 15.9
9. Refer to section 15.9
10. Refer to section 15.9.
11. Refer to section 15.12
12. Refer to section 15.12
13. Refer to section 15.12