

# **HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA**

**B.A. HISTORY**

**(V SEMESTER)**

***CORE COURSE***

*(2014 Admission onwards -CUCBCSS)*



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**Calicut university P.O, Malappuram Kerala, India 673 635.**

**768**

# **UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

## **STUDY MATERIAL**

## **HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA**

**Core Course**

**B.A. HISTORY**

**V Semester**

*Prepared by*

**Sri. SUNILKUMAR.G  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
N.S.S. COLLEGE, MANJERI**

*Scrutinised by*

**Sri.Ashraf koyilothan Kandiyil  
Chairman, BOS- History (UG)**

*Layout:*

*Computer Section, SDE*

©

Reserved

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE No</b>
<b>Module - I</b>	<b>05-28</b>
<b>Module - II</b>	<b>29-55</b>
<b>Module - III</b>	<b>56-76</b>
<b>Module - IV</b>	<b>77-93</b>

## SYLLABUS

### HIS5BO8 HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

Module I: Delhi Sultanate Ghori invasion – Battle of Tarain – Prithviraj Chauhan Delhi as the centre of power – Iltutmish- Balban- Alauddhin Khalji – Mohammed bin Tuglaq – Feroz Shah Tuglaq Nature of State – administration Economic reforms - Iqta – Muqti – revenue reforms – market regulations

Module II: The Mughals Establishment of Mughal rule in India – Babur – Shershah – Cultural Synthesis under Akbar- Shahjahan – Aurangzeb Administration – Features – Rajput policy Mansabdari system – Jagirdari system Marathas – Sivaji – Ashtapradhan

Module III: Cultural Synthesis Sufism and Bhakti movement Kabir – Merabai – Surdas – Guru Nanak Art and Architecture Indo-Saracenic art – Qutb Minar Indo-Persian art – Taj Mahal – Agra fort Sharqui architecture Literature – Amir Khusrau – Dara shikoh – Tuzuk i Babari

Module IV: Medieval South India Pallavas – Cholas – Pandyas Chola administration – Uttaramerur inscription – Kudavolai system Vijayanagar and Bahmani kingdoms – Raichur doab Architectural developments Pallavas – Mahabalipuram Cholas – Tanjore – Gangaikondacholapuram Vijayanagar – Hampi ruins Bahmini-- Gol Gumbuz.

#### Maps

1. Important Centres of Delhi Sultanate
2. Mughal Empire under Akbar
3. Mughal Empire under Aurangzeb
4. Major Chola sites- Tanjore, Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Darasuram, Nagapattinam, Kanchipuram, Vengai, Uttaramerur, Chidambaram

#### BOOKS FOR STUDY

1. S. A. A. Rizvi, The Wonder That was India Part II
2. Tapan Raychaudhuri et.al., The Cambridge Economic History of India
3. K. A. Nizami, State and Culture in Medieval India
4. Mohammad Habib and K. A. Nizami (eds.), A Comprehensive History of India: The Delhi Sultanate (AD 1206- 1526)
5. Satish Chandra, Medieval India: From Sultanate to the Mughals (1206- 1526)
- 6.. Irfan Habib, The Agrarian System of Mughal India: 1556- 1707
7. Harbans Mukhia, The Mughals of India
8. K A N Sastri, A History of South India
9. Satish Chandra, Medieval India: From Sultanate to the Mughals (1526- 1748)
10. Burton Stein, Peasant State and Society in Early Medieval South India
11. Kesavan Veluthat, Political Structure of Early Medieval South India

## Module I:

# Delhi Sultanate

The term Delhi Sultanate refers to five distinct dynasties that ruled from Delhi over a period of three centuries from 1206 to 1526 CE. It was founded after the 2<sup>nd</sup> battle of Tarain (1192) in which Muhammad Ghori defeated the combined army of Rajput chiefs under Prithviraj Chauhan. After death of Ghori, in 1206, Qutb ud-Din Aibak, his trusted slave General became himself sultan of Delhi and created the Slave dynasty; it came to an end in 1290 AD. The sultanate of Delhi was in regular change as five dynasties rose and fell: Slave dynasty (1206 AD to 1290AD), Khalji dynasty (1290 AD to 1320 AD), Tughluq dynasty (1320 AD to 1413AD), Sayyid dynasty (1414 AD to 1451 AD) and Lodi dynasty (1451 AD to 1526AD). Under the Khalji dynasty, the reign of Ala Ud-din Khalji brought Sultanate power to its supreme position. Muhammad Bin Tughluq of the Tughluq dynasty was also a great ruler of Medieval Indian history. After Muhammad bin Thughlaq the power and prestige of the Delhi Sultanate started disintegrating and the Sayyids and Lodhis were actually far behind their predecessors in terms of Power and glory. Finally, in 1526 at Panipat, the Mughals under Babar decisively defeated Ibrahim Lodhi, the last of the Delhi Sultans.

### Ghorid invasion

In political and military terms, the invasions of Mahmud of Ghasni were the actual precursors of the Delhi Sultanate. Beginning in A.D. 1000, when the Shahiya king, Jaypala was routed, the incursions became almost an annual feature of Mahmud and came to an end only with his death in A.D. 1030. After taking Multan, he occupied Punjab. Later, Mahmud made incursions into the Ganga-Yamunadoab. The major interest of Mahmud in India was its fabulous wealth, vast quantities of which (in the form of cash, jewelry, and golden images) had been deposited in temples. From 1010 to 1026, the invasions were thus directed to the temple-towns of Mathura, Kanauji and, finally Somnath. The ultimate result was the breakdown of Indian rulers, paved the way for Turkish conquests in the future. More importantly, the aftermath of the campaigns had exposed the inadequacy of Indian politics to offer a defense against external threats. Within a short time of Mahmud's death, his empire met the fate of other empires. Newly emerging center of powers, formed around growing clusters of Turkish adventurers replaced the older ones. The Ghasnavid possessions in Khurasan and Transoxiana were thus annexed, first by the Seljuqs, and later by the Khwarismis. In their own homeland, Afghanistan, their hegemony was brought to an end by the principality of Ghur under the Shansabani dynasty. However, in the midst of these buffeting, the Ghaznavid rule survived in Punjab and Sind till about A.D. 1175.

The extent of the Ghaznavid territory in the north-west India is difficult to ascertain. Towards the north, it included Sialkot and probably, Peshawar. The southern

limits were steadily pushed back by the Chauhan Rajputs who re-established control over portions of Punjab. In the initial phase of invasions, Muhammad Ghori's military objective was to gain control over Punjab and Sind. Unlike earlier invaders, he decided to enter the Indus plains through the Gomal pass and not through the more common Khyber Pass. By 1111, Peshawar, Kuchh and Multan were seized. Later, Lahore was attacked. Muhammad Ghori now pressed his conquests further into India. Within a short time, military operations came to be directed against the Rajput kingdoms controlling the Gangetic plains. The Chauhans faced the most acute pressure as they ruled the territory from Ajmer to Delhi—the gateway to Hindustan. Bhatinda was besieged in 1191. The garrison quickly surrendered, but the Chauhans, under Prithviraj, speedily retrieved it after inflicting a humiliating defeat on the Ghorians. In the following year, Muhammad Ghori returned with a larger force. At the famous battle of Tarain, fought in 1192, he conclusively defeated the Chauhans. All places of military importance—Hansi, Kuhram, Sarsuti—were immediately occupied and garrisoned. Muhammad Ghori returned to his projects in Central Asia, leaving behind an occupation army at Indraprasth (near Delhi) under the command of Qutbuddin Aibak'. The latter was given wide powers to extend and consolidate the conquests.

### **Prithviraj Chauhan**

Prithviraj Chauhan was a Rajput king of the Chauhan dynasty, who ruled the kingdoms of Ajmer and Delhi in northern India during the latter half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Prithviraj Chauhan succeeded to the throne in 1178 CE at the age of 13, and ruled from the twin capitals of Ajmer and Delhi which he received from his maternal grandfather, Arkpal or Anangpal III of the Tomara dynasty in Delhi. He controlled much of present-day Rajasthan and Haryana, and unified the Hindu rulers against Turkish invasions. His elopement in 1175 with Samyukta (Sanyogita), the daughter of Jaichand, the king of Kanauji, is a popular romantic tale in India, and is one of the subjects of the Prithviraj Raso, an epic poem composed by Chauhan's court poet and friend, Chand Bardai.

### **First Battle of Tarain**

In 1191, Shahabuddin Muhammad Ghori captured the fortress of Bhatinda in East Punjab, leaving a garrison of 1200 men, which was located on the frontier of Prithviraj Chauhan's domains. Prithviraj marched to Bhatinda and met his enemy at Tarain (also called Taraori), near the ancient town of Thanesar. The Ghurid army initiated battle by attacking with cavalry who launched arrows at the Rajput centre. The forces of Prithviraj counter-attacked from three sides and dominated the battle, pressuring the Ghurid army into a withdrawal. Meanwhile, Mu'izz al-Din was wounded in personal combat with Prithviraj's brother, Govind Tai. Prithviraj succeeded in stopping the Ghurid advance towards Hindustan in the first battle of Tarain but did not pursue Ghori's army, not wanting to invade hostile territory or misjudge Ghori's ambition. Instead, he retook the fortress of Bhatinda.

### **The Second Battle of Tarain (1192).**

In 1192, Ghori reassembled an army of 120,000 men and returned to challenge Chauhan at the Second Battle of Tarain. According to the Persian historian [Firishta](#), Prithviraj's army consisted of 3,000 elephants, 300,000 horsemen, and considerable infantry. This is most likely a gross exaggeration to emphasize the scale of the victory. Ghori divided his troops into five parts and attacked in the early morning hours, sending waves of mounted archers. They retreated as the Chauhan elephant phalanx advanced. Ghori deployed four parts to attack the Rajputs on four sides, keeping a fifth part of his army in reserve. General Khande Rao of the Chauhan forces was killed. At dusk, Ghori himself led a force of 12,000 heavily armored horsemen to the centre of the Rajput line, which collapsed into confusion. Chauhan attempted to escape but was captured. The Rajput army broke ranks and fled, thereby conceding victory to Ghori. Chauhan was put to death.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> battle of Tarain proved to be a watershed in the history of India. It paved way for the ascendancy of the Turks. From this date onwards, the Rajput power reentered the phase of irreversible decay. For some time to come, the Ghorians did not think it convenient to immediately take over the administration of all the conquered territories. Wherever it seemed feasible, they allowed the Rajputs to continue, provided the Turkish suzerainty was acknowledged. Thus Ajmer, for instance, was allowed to be retained by Prithviraj's son as a vassal ruler. This uneasy balance of power was often disturbed by the recurrent conflicts between the imperial designs of the Ghorians and local rulers. Under Aibak's leadership, the Turks continued to make territorial advance in all regions. After having refortified Hansi towards the end of 1192, Aibak crossed the Yamuna to establish a military base in the upper Doab, Meerut and Baran (modern Bulandshahr) captured in 1192. In 1193, Delhi was occupied. Its location and historical tradition made it most suitable as a capital for Turkish power in India. It was both close to the Ghorid stronghold in Punjab as well as conveniently placed for sending expeditions towards the east. In 1194 Aibak conquered Yamuna for the second time and captured Kol (Aligarh). The above military successes encouraged Muhammad Ghori to confront king Jayachandra of the Gahadavala dynasty in the vicinity of Chandwar (between Etahand Kanpur). Jayachandra eventually lost. Afterwards, Turkish military stations were placed at Bares, Agni and other important towns. However, the capital city of Kannauj could not be occupied until 1198-99. The other important areas over which the Ghorians were able to extend their sway were Bayana, Gwalior and Anhilwara in 1195-96, and Badaun in 1197-98. The opening of the 13<sup>th</sup> century saw action against the 'last surviving imperial Rajputs'-the Chandellas of Bundekhand. Around 1202, Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho were occupied and grouped into a military division. From 1203 onwards, the Turks made forays into the eastern provinces of the Indian subcontinent with varying degrees of success. Magadha was

conquered for the 'Sultanate' by Bakhtiar Khalji and his tribesmen. Under him, the Turkish intrusions could also penetrate Bengal (ruled by the Lakshmanas). In general, during this phase; the Ghorians were able to extend their hegemony over a very considerable part of Northern India. But, as yet, they stood on shaky ground. Areas once conquered tended to slip out of control. It took several decades before their control found firm ground.

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

The explanation is inadequate and unbalanced insofar as it leaves out of consideration, well-known facts of Indian history as well as the history of countries from where the invaders came. It should be remembered that the large-scale conquest and destruction of the so-called warlike Islamic regions by the Mongols in 1218-19 was carried out without any real resistance. On the other hand, the Rajputs, whom the Turks conquered, were not lacking in bravery and martial spirit. The period from the 8th to the 12th century is one long story of warfare and violent internal struggles. It is, therefore, hardly worthwhile to emphasize the peaceful or docile temperament of the Indian populations as the cause of the Turkish success. Some Indian historians have traced the Turkish success to the peculiar social structure created by Islam. Jadunath Sarkar, for instance, lays stress on three unique characteristics which Islam imparted to the Arabs, Berbers, Pathans, and Turks: first complete equality and social solidarity as regards legal and religious status. Unlike India, the Turks were not divided into castes that were exclusive of each other. Secondly, an absolute faith in God and his will which gave them drive and a sense of mission. Finally, Islam secured the Turkish conquerors from drunkenness which, according to Sarkar, was the ruin of the Rajputs, Marathas, and other Indian rulers. Whatever partial truth it might contain, this explanation, too, seems insufficiently grounded in history. A more comprehensive view of the Indian debacle must perhaps take into account at least two major factors: the prevailing socio-political system in India and her military preparedness. After the fall of the Gurjara-Pratihara empire, no single state took its place. Instead, there arose small independent powers like Gahadavalas in Kanauj, Parmaras in Malwa, Chalukyas in Gujarat, Chauhans in Ajmer, Tomars in Delhi, Chandellas in Bundelkhand, etc. Far from being united, they tended to operate within the confines of small territories and were in a state of perpetual internal conflicts. Lack of centralized power was an important factor in



emasculating the strength and efficiency of the armed forces. Fakhir Mudabbir in his *Adab-ul Harb wa al-shuja'* mentions that Indian forces consisted of 'feudal levies'. Each military contingent was under the command of its immediate overlord/chief and not that of the king. Thus, the army lacked 'Unity of Command'. Besides, since only few castes and clans took military profession, the bulk of the population was excluded from military training. This made the general population of the country totally detached from the defense of the country; when the Turks came, we find the Indian masses hardly came to the rescue of their kings. The concept of physical pollution (Chhut) also hampered military efficiency since it made the division of labour impossible; the soldiers had to do all their work on their own, from fighting to the fetching of water. Another important reason for the success of the Turks was their superior military technology and art of war. These nomads from the steppes could be credited with introducing the age of the horse'. The Turks used iron stirrup and horse-shoes that reinforced their striking power and the stamina of the cavalry, while horse-shoes provided greater mobility to the horse; stirrup gave the soldiers a distinct advantage. The popular notion that the Indians were defeated on account of the use of elephants does not seem plausible now; we do not find any evidence in the *Tabaqat-i Nasir* or other sources in support of this view. Jayapala's case is an exception where his elephants took to flight: Such examples are hard to come by. In fact, Mahmud of Ghazni is reported to have maintained large number of elephants that he took to his Kingdom from India and employed them with success.

### **Delhi as the centre of power**

Delhi was from time immemorial, the capital of many ruling dynasties right from the time of epics. For centuries, Delhi was the capital from of Rajputs, Sulthans, Mughals and the British. The significance of Delhi owes primarily to its strategically vital geographical position. From Delhi, it was very much easier to conquer and control the west, north, south and eastern parts of India. Perhaps, it was due to this reason, the Turks decided to establish their capital at Delhi. With the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, Delhi gradually began to attract nobles, professionals and scholars from different parts of Islamic world. Ibn Batuta declared that Delhi was the largest city not only in India, but in the entire Islamic East.

### **Slave Dynasty**

The rulers who ruled over North India from 1206 to 1526 are popularly known as the rulers of Delhi Sultanate. Delhi was the center of power and authority during this period. Dynastic monarchy was a structure with which Indians had long been familiar. From 1210, when the Delhi Sultanate was formally founded under Iltutmish, the sultans steadily gathered more and more powers; it can fairly be stated that a sultan was generally a more powerful ruler than a Hindu ruler of earlier centuries. The process reached its climax under

Ala-u d-din Khalji, who effectively controlled the empire and ran it as if it were a village. Muhammadbin Tughluq, however, went too far and suffered a set-back.

Qutab-ud-din Aibak (1206-1210) was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate and the founder of the slave dynasty. He was succeeded by the Iltutmish. He ascended the throne in 1210 and ruled Delhi Sultanate up to 1236. He was the greatest ruler of slave dynasty. He provided the country with a capital, an independent state, a monarchical form of the state and governing class. Iltutmish was succeeded by Sultana Raziya (1236-1240). She was only female ruler of the Sultanate. She was endowed with all the qualities befitting a king, but she was not born of the right sex and so on in the estimation of orthodox nobles all these virtues were worthless. After the death of Raziya the Turkish nobles placed Bahram (1240-1242) and Masud Shah (1242-46) on the throne. The factional struggle among the nobles led to the rise of Giasuddin Balban to the power. Balban successfully conspired and captured the throne of the Delhi Sultanate. Balban is considered as one of the greatest slave king. He was a great warrior, ruler and statesman who saved the infant Sultanate from extinction at a critical time. He checked power of nobles and threat of the Mongol invasion. Balban was the first ruler of Delhi Sultanate to expound clear views about kingship. He raised the prestige of the crown through elaborate court ceremonies. He was the fountain of all authority and enforced his commands and decrees with greatest rigor. He introduced a new administrative system.

### **Iltutmish**

Aibak was succeeded on the throne by his son-in-law Iltutmish who brought back the capital to Delhi. Large portions of the territories conquered by the Turks had slipped out of control and subjugated Rajput chieftain had 'withheld tribute and repudiated allegiance'. Iltutmish's quarter century reign (1210-1236) was distinguished by a concerted drive to re-establish the Sultanate's authority on areas that had been lost. When Mongols under the leadership of Chengiz Khan appeared on the banks of the Indus, Iltutmish tried to strengthen the northwestern frontier to protect the empire from their attack. However, the Mongols remained a constant factor among the concerns of Delhi Sultans.

Though the Mongol presence had upset Iltutmish and the consolidation on the north-west, it also created conditions for the destruction of Qubacha who held Uchhand faced the brunt of Mangbami's invasion. As a consequence, Iltutmish was able to seize Bhatinda, Kuhram, and Sarsuti. About 1228, he launched a two-pronged attack on Multan and Uchh. Defeated; Qubacha drowned himself in the Indus. Unified control over the north-west now became possible for the Delhi Sultanate. In Rajputana, the Turks were able to reclaim Ranthambhor, Mandor, Jalor, Bayana and Thangir. After 1225, Iltutmish could turn towards the east. Apart from sporadic military successes, however, Lakhnauti (in Bengal) and Bihar continued to evade the authority of the Sultanate. The foundations of an absolute monarchy that was to serve later as the instrument of a military imperialism under the Khaljis were

thus well laid by Iltutmish. Aibak outlined the Delhi Sultanate and its sovereign status; Iltutmish was unquestionably its first king. Iltutmish's death saw more sharpened factionalism and intrigue among the Turks. In a period of some thirty years, four rulers, (descendants of Iltutmish) occupied the throne. The fourteenth century historian, Ziauddin Barani, has left behind a concise and insightful account of these critical years: "During the reign of Shamsuddin - (Iltutmish), owing to the presence of peers, wazirs....educated, wise and capable, the court of the Sultan (Shamsuddin) had become stable. ... But, after Sultan's death, his 'forty' Turkish slaves got the upper hand .... So owing to the supremacy of the Turkish slave officers, all these men of noble birth .... were destroyed under various pretexts during the reigns of the successors of Shamsud din....".

In the main, Barani's account is borne out by contemporary developments. Between 1235-1265, political developments revolved round a conflict between the crown and a military aristocracy, determined to retain its privileged position with the balance often increasingly tilting in favor of the latter. In these circumstances, the very survival of the Sultanate was under question. Political instability was exacerbated by the recalcitrance of smaller Rajput chiefs and local leaders. Moreover, the Mongols were constantly active in and around Punjab.

### **Balban**

Ghiyas ud din Balban was the ninth [sultan](#) of the [Mamluk dynasty of Delhi](#). Ghiyas ud Din was the [vizier](#) and heir of the last Shamsi sultan, Nasir ud-din. He reduced the power of the treacherous nobility and heightened the stature of the sultan. In spite of having only few military achievements, he was the most powerful ruler of the sultanate between Shamsuddin [Iltutmish](#) and [Alauddin Khilji](#). A born Turk, Balban quickly rose to power under Shams ud din and his successors, being one of the forty nobles and eventually the Sultan's vizier. After the Sultan Nasir ud din's death (possibly of Balban's design), he himself ascended the throne of Delhi. He elevated the position of the sultan in the Sassanid fashion and crushed the power of the forty nobles so that it could not usurp his rule.

Ghiyas made several conquests, some as vizier. He routed the Mewats that harassed Delhi and re-conquered Bengal, all while successfully facing the Mongol threat, a struggle that spent his son and heir's life. So it came to pass that upon his death in 1287 his grandson Qaiqubad was nominated sultan, undermining the achievements of his grandfather. In spite of having only a few military achievements, Ghiyas ud-din made civil and military reforms that earned him the position of the strongest ruler between Shams ud-din Iltutmish and the later Alauddin Khilji, whose military achievements rest on the order established within the sultanate by Ghiyas ud din Balban.

Balban's reign, according to [Ziauddin Barani](#), was to instill "Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government." Furthermore, he "maintained that the Sultan was the 'shadow of God' and introduced rigorous court discipline." He depended

upon Turkish nobility but formed an army of 2 [lakh](#) made up of all [castes](#). A portion of this army was made up of [commandos](#).

When the governor of Bengal, [Tughral Tughan Khan](#), revoked the authority of Delhi in 1275, Balban first sent the governor of Awadh and then a second army, both of which met with failure. Balban then accompanied a third army which conquered the country, killing Tughril and his followers. His son, [Nasiruddin Bughra Khan](#), assisted him in this mission. Balban then placed his second son, [Bughra Khan](#), as governor. However, Bughra declared independence after Balban's death, which he maintained for 40 years. One of the famous military campaigns of Balban was against [Meo](#), or Mayo, the people of [Mewat](#) who used to plunder the people of Delhi even in the day light. The distress caused by the Meo is well described in Barani's words: He has killed many Mayo's in his military campaign.

### **Balban's Theory of Kingship:**

The stern, harsh and violent policy adopted by Balban to suppress the internal revolts and also the challenges posed by the invading Mongols is known as the policy of blood and iron. The theory of kingship propounded by Balban led to the adoption of the policy of blood and iron. Balban was convinced that the only way to face the internal and external dangers was to increase the power and prestige of the Sultan. Sword was the chief weapon of Balban to achieve his objectives. He used this weapon with a great vengeance against his rivals, rebels, robbers, thieves and the invaders. By following this policy, he wanted to create terror in the minds of the people that whosoever dared to challenge the authority of the Sultan, he would not be spared. On account of this policy he was able to remain at the helm of affairs for about 40 years i.e. 20 years as the Naib/Prime Minister of Nasir-ud-din Mohmud and then after as the Sultan of Delhi. He executed his policy of blood and iron very successfully and raised the prestige and power of the Sultan in the eyes of the nobles and his subjects.

### **Main principles of Balban's theory of Kingship**

**1. Divine right of Kings:-**Balban said that the king was the representative of God on the earth and Kingship was a divine institution. He declared this to make the nobles believe that he got the crown or the Kingship not through their mercy but by the mercy of God.

**2. Royal descent:-**Balban realized that people at that time believed that it was only the prerogative of the ancient royal families to rule and exercise power, he therefore declared that he was the descendant of the legendary Turkish warrior Afrasiyab and that circumstances only had made him a slave.

**3. King as a despot:-**He said to his son Bughra Khan that "Kingship is the embodiment of despotism". He believed that it is the "King's superhuman awe and status which can ensure people's obedience.

**4. Word of difference between descendants of noble lineage and commoners:-**Historian Zia-ud-Din Barni has gone to the extent of remarking that whenever Balban saw a man of low birth, his eyes started burning with rage and anger and his hands reached his sword to murder him. This view seems to be on the extreme side. However this much is believable that because of this outlook of Balban, he dismissed all officials not born of noble families, from all important posts.

**5. Recognition of tripartite relationship:-**Balban emphasized the relationship between God and the Sultan, Sultan and the people and the God and the people. He considered himself the representative of God on the earth to look after the welfare of the people created by God. Accordingly, he emphasized that treasury should be used for the benefit of his subjects. Likewise the king should be impartial in dispensing justice.

**Practical measures to translate the theory of Kingship into operation:**

1. Decorum and grandeur of the court:

Balban enforced strict discipline in the court. No one was allowed to indulge in humour or loose talk. He maintained considerable distance from the courtiers. He prescribed the court dress.

2. Adoption of several ceremonies:

Balban introduced the practice of 'Sijada' in which the people were required to kneel and touch the ground with their forehead in salutation to the king.

3. Appointment of guards:

Balban appointed fearsome and tall guards who were to stand round the king's person with naked swords in their hands. Whenever he used to go outside the palace, his bodyguards marched with him with naked swords and shouting 'Bismillah-Bismillah.'

4. Following Persian traditions:

Balban was convinced that the glory of Kingship was possible only by following the Persian traditions and he very carefully followed these traditions in his personal and public life. He named his grandsons on the pattern of Persian kings. He introduced several Persian etiquettes in his court.

5. Always reserved:

Balban never expressed unusual joy or sorrow in public. It is said that even when the news of the death of his eldest son, Mohammad was conveyed to him, he remained unmoved and carried on the administrative work though in his private apartment, he wept bitterly.

6. Strong army:

There is no doubt that a strong army is needed for the sustenance of a powerful monarch. Balban, therefore, strengthened his army.

7. Policy of blood and iron:

A strong and absolute monarch is expected to follow a strict policy in dealing with his enemies. Balban accordingly adopted this policy.

8. Protection from foreign invaders:

The strength of a despotic ruler is also measured by his ability to protect his subjects from external danger. Balban in this regard took effective steps.

**Achievements of Balban:**

Balban's theory of Kingship coupled with his policy of blood and iron paid him good dividends. He enhanced the prestige of the Sultan. He crushed the powers of his opponents. He brought about peace and order. He saved the country from the invasions of the Mongols.

**Khaljis**

Balban was succeeded in 1287 by his grandson Kayqubad, who took the title of Muizzuddin. This young, handsome, pleasure-loving and inexperienced sultan paid little attention to the administration and soon lost all control of the affairs of state. The rising Khalji clan soon replaced the house of Balban, and Jalalu-din Firoz Khalji, an old officer of Sultan Balban, ascended the throne of Delhi. This change in the social base of power was described as 'Khalji revolution'.

**Alauddhin Khalji**

The second phase of the Delhi Sultanate began with the establishment of the Khalji dynasty in 1290. The Khalji revolution was fraught with far reaching consequence. It not only heralded the advent of a new dynasty. It ushered in an era of ceaseless conquest of a unique experiment in statecraft. Alauddin Khalji, one of the best Sultans, a man of imperial designs, started territorial expansion of the Sultanate. He was the first ruler who tried to end corruption in administration which was the common feature of the times. Alauddin also enjoys the distinction of being the first sultan to have sent expedition to the south and amassed much wealth. He ruled over a vast empire.

Ala al-din Khalji continued expanding Delhi Sultanate into South India, with the help of generals such as Malik Kafur and Khusraw Khan, collecting large war booty (Anwatan) from those they defeated. His commanders collected war spoils from Hindu kingdoms, paid [khums](#) (one fifth) on Ghanima (booty collected during war) to Sultan's treasury, which helped strengthen the Khalji rule.



Alauddin Khilji reigned for 20 years. He attacked and seized states of Ranthambhor (1301 AD), [Chittorgarh](#) (1303), M ndu (1305) and plundered the wealthy state of [Devagiri](#), also withstood two Mongol raids. Ala u-din is also known for his cruelty against attacked kingdoms after wars. Historians note him as a tyrant and that anyone Ala al-din Khilji suspected of being a threat to this power was killed along with the women and children of that family. In 1298, between 15,000 and 30,000 people near Delhi, who had recently converted to Islam, were slaughtered in a single day, due to fears of an uprising. He also killed his own family members and nephews, in 1299-1300, after he suspected them of rebellion, by first gouging out their eyes and then beheading them.

In 1308, Alauddin's lieutenant, [Malik Kafur](#) captured [Warangal](#), overthrew the [Hoysala Empire](#) south of the [Krishna River](#) and raided [Madura](#) in Tamil Nadu. He then looted the treasury in capitals and from the temples of south India. Among these loots was the Warangal loot that included one of the largest known diamond in human history, the [Koh-i-noor](#). Malik Kafur returned to Delhi in 1311, laden with loot and war booty from Deccan peninsula which he submitted to Aladdin Khilji. This made Malik Kafur, born in a Hindu family and who had converted to Islam before becoming Delhi Sultanate's army commander, a favorite of Alauddin Khilji.

### **The Tughluqs (1320–1412)**

With the murder of Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah in 1320, the line of the Khalji sultans of Delhi came to an end, and his assassin, Khusraw Khan Barwari, a Hindu convert slave ascended the throne as Sultan Nasir-uddin. But his reign was cut short by the rebellion of Ghazi Malik Tughluq, governor of Dipalpur in Panjab, who had risen to prominence under the Khaljis, utilizing resentment against the ascendancy of the Hindus in the state under Khusraw Khan. In 1320 Nasiruddin was defeated and killed by Ghazi Malik, who ascended the throne as Ghiyasu-din (1320–5). The line of sultans which he inaugurated is conveniently referred to as the Tughluqs, although Tughluq was almost certainly a personal name of Ghazi Malik rather than a Turkish ethnic or tribal name. Though, Ghiyas uddin Tughlaque laid the foundation the Tughlaque dynasty. Muhammad bin Tughlaque (1325-1391) was the most famous ruler of the dynasty. He protected the frontiers of the Sultanates from the Mongol invasion. He was succeeded by Firoz Shah Tughlaque.

### **Mohammed bin Tuglaq**

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was a learned scholar of Arabic and Persian. He was very tolerant in religious matters. He gave preference to the common man and raised them to high positions which were not liked by nobles and in return they did not cooperate with him. He introduced many ambitious schemes and new experiments but unfortunately all his new schemes and experiments failed. He was the eldest son of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. He was born in Kotla Tolay Khan in Multan. His wife was the daughter of the raja of

Dipalpur. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq sent the young Muhammad to the Deccan to campaign against king Prataparudra of the Kakatiya dynasty whose capital was at Warangal in 1321 and 1323. Muhammad succeeded to the Delhi throne upon his father's death in 1325. Muhammad Tughlaq was a scholar of logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, physical sciences and calligraphy. He was also interested in medicine and was skilled in several languages — Persian, Arabic, Turkish and Sanskrit. Ibn Battuta, the famous traveller from Morocco, was a guest at his court. From his accession to the throne in 1325 until his death in 1351, Muhammad contended with 22 rebellions, pursuing his policies consistently and ruthlessly. It is said that he deliberately killed his father Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq to ascend the throne of Delhi, although historians do not support this theory. From the chronicles of Barani, we came to know that, on his return from a campaign, Ghiyasuddin was watching the parade of the elephants he got as war booty and then the stage along with the Sultan himself, collapsed. It is noteworthy that the salary of the wazir of Muhammed-Bin-Tughlaq was equal to the income of the then Iraq under the Persian Shah. After the death of his father Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, Muhammad bin Tughluq ascended the throne of Tughluq dynasty of Delhi in 1324. Unlike the Khaljis who did not annex stable kingdoms, Tughluq would annex kingdoms around his sultanate. In his reign, he conquered Warangal (in present day Telengana) Madurai, (Tamil Nadu), and areas up to the modern day southern tip of the Indian state of Karnataka. In the conquered territories, Tughluq appointed a new set of revenue officials to assess the financial aspects of the area. Their accounts helped the audit in the office of the wazir.

### **Experiments of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq**

1. **Shift of capital:** Muhammad Bin Tughlaq decided to shift his capital From Delhi to Devagiri in the Deccan and renamed it Daulatabad thinking that it would be a safe and protected place from the Mongol attacks .He ordered the entire population to shift which caused lot of inconvenience and also it became impossible to control North India from Devagiri. Hence the Northwestern frontiers could not be prevented from Mongol attacks. Within 5 months the capital was shifted back to Delhi. This caused heavy financial loss and great hardship to the people. The sultan also lost control over the Deccan after shifting back to Delhi.

2. **Increase of taxes in the Ganga Yamuna Doab:** Muhammad Bin Tughlaq increased land tax in the Ganga Yamuna Doab to meet the expenses of the army. Many farmers revolted against the king as they were not able to pay the increased revenue due to the famine. The king had to cancel the order.

3. **Introduction of token currency:** Muhammad Bin Tughlaq introduced bronze token coins of the same value as silver coins to overcome a shortage of silver in India. However Muhammad did not keep a check or reserve the right to issue new coins for the state, as a



result large scale circulation of forged coins came into use. The value of currency fell sharply and lots of bronze coins were discarded on the streets of capital. Trade suffered, the sultan had to withdraw the token currency and pay all token coins with silver ones which caused tremendous loss to the royal treasury.

The failure of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's experiment lowered his prestige. He also lost the support of the nobles resulting in revolts in many parts of his empire and breaking up of the provinces. His health became worse and he died in 1351. He was succeeded by Feroz Shah Tughlaq.

### **Feroz Shah Tughlaq**

Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq was a [Turkish](#) ruler of the [Tughlaq Dynasty](#), who reigned over the [Sultanate of Delhi](#) from 1351 to 1388. He was the son of a [Rajput Hindu](#) princess of [Dipalpur](#). His father's name was Rajab (the younger brother of [Ghazi Malik](#)) He succeeded his cousin [Muhammad bin Tughlaq](#) following the latter's death at Thatta in Sindh where Muhammad bin Tughlaq had gone in pursuit of Taghi the ruler of Gujarat. For the first time in the History of Delhi Sultanate a situation was confronted wherein nobody was ready to accept the reign of power. With much difficulty the camp followers convinced Firuz to accept the responsibility. In fact Khwaja Jahan, the Wazir of Muhammad bin Tughlaq had placed a small boy on throne claiming him to be the son of Muhammad bin Tughlaq who meekly surrendered afterwards. Due to widespread unrest his realm was much smaller than Muhammad's. Tughlaq was forced by rebellions to concede virtual independence to [Bengal](#) and other provinces.

The military failure of Firuz Shah was in striking contrast with his success as an administrator. His character was well suited to the achievement of victories of peace. Though it could be an exaggeration to compare him with Akbar, he did much good to his people and his reign was a welcome calm after the storm of the previous regime. Though he had great regard for his famous cousin, he abandoned the latter's policies. A large share of the credit for the sultan's mild and beneficent administration should be given to his prime minister, Malik-i-Maqbul

Firuz Shah was a true friend of the peasants. Their debts, resulting from the exactions of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq were cancelled. Land revenue was fixed after a proper assessment. The land revenue was lowered. He abolished more than twenty frivolous, unlawful and unjust taxes, which were collected by his predecessors. He considered them to be not in accordance with the shariat. He made changes in the existing practices and customs in order to bring them into conformity with the sacred law. For this reason he strictly realized jizya from the non-Muslims. Being a devout Muslim, Firuz Shah charged six taxes. These were kharaj or land-tax from non-Muslims. Its rate varied from one-fifth to one-half of the produce; ushr, one-tenth of the produce charged from Muslim

cultivators; khams, one-fifth of the booty captured in war; tarkat, heirless property; zakat, a two per cent tax on property realized from the Muslims to be spent for specific religious purpose only and jizya, a poll tax payable by the non-Muslims. Later, with the approval of the ulema the sultan imposed the irrigation tax on those cultivators who made use of the water supplied by the state canals, the rate being one-tenth of the produce of the irrigated area.

If goodness was greatness, Firuz Shah was certainly great. The contemporary historians, Barani and Afif are full of praise for the sultan and describe him as a just, merciful and benevolent ruler. His administration was largely beneficent and conducive to the happiness of his subjects. But his excessive mildness and generosity weakened royal authority. He was ruling during an age in which the most prudent approach for a monarch should have been to assert martial qualities to maintain the strength of his office and the stability of the state. The active interest and interference of the ulema in the affairs of the state, the connivance and the inefficiency of public servants, misplaced leniency in dealing with civil and military officials, and undue favour shown to the nobility weakened the entire administrative foundation of the sultanate. His aversion to war against the Muslims, even when it was imperative, his unwillingness or inability to carry the fight to the finish undermined the stability of the empire. The slave system, which developed into something like a praetorian guard proved to be a great distracting factor in the state. In spite of comparative peace, prosperity and contentment that prevailed during the long reign of Firuz Shah, the fact remains that his policy and administrative measures contributed to a great extent to the weakness and downfall of the Delhi Sultanate.

After the death of Firoz Tughlaque, Tughlaque dynasty came to an end and the Sayyids and Lodhis ruled the Sultanate. In 1526 Lodi dynasty was overthrown by Babar, and Mughal Empire was established.

### **Nature of State**

Theoretically, no Muslim could have set up an "independent" state, big or small, without procuring the permission from the Caliph, else its legitimacy could become suspect amongst the Muslims. However, all this was nothing more than a formality which could be dispensed with impunity. The recognition of a Caliph by the Delhi Sultans seen in the granting of robes of honour, letter of investiture, bestowing of titles, having the name of the caliph inscribed on coins and reading of khutba in Friday prayer in his name symbolized an acceptance and a link with the Islamic world, though in reality it only meant an acceptance of a situation whereby a ruler, had already placed himself in power. The Sultans of Delhi maintained the fiction of the acceptance of the position of the Caliph. In effect, the Caliphate, weakened and far removed as it was, had little direct role to play in the Delhi Sultanate.

The early Muslim Turkish State established itself in north India by virtue of conquests. Since the Turks were far fewer in number than the indigenous population over whom they sought to govern and since they also lacked resources, they, of necessity, had to control the resources of the country. This had an important bearing on the nature of the Turkish State.

In a theoretical and formal sense, the Delhi Sultans recognized the supremacy of Islamic law (shariah) and tried to prevent its open violation. But they had to supplement it by framing secular regulations too. A point of view is that the Turkish State was a theocracy; in practice, however, it was the product of expediency and necessity wherein the needs of the young state assumed paramount importance. The contemporary historian Ziauddin Barani distinguished-between jahandari("secular") and dindari (religious)and accepted the inevitability of some secular features, because of the contingent situations coming up. Thus, the needs of the emergent State shaped many policies and practices not always consistent with Islamic fundamentalism. For example, during the reign of Sultan Iltutmish, a sectarian group of Muslim divines approached the Sultan and asked him to enforce the Islamic law strictly, on behalf of the Sultan, the wazir, replied that this could not be done for the moment as the Muslims were like salt in a dish of food. Barani records that Sultan Alauddin Khalji had also compromised on the true Islamic principles on the ground that he was acting according to the needs of the state which were paramount. These instances show that, in practice, the Turkish State was not theocratic but evolved according to its special needs and circumstances despite the fact that the main ruling class professed Islam.

With the establishment of the Delhi sultanate a new ruling class emerged in India. 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.

To study the state under the Delhi Sultanate we need to bear in mind the means of acquiring and maintaining power at that time. While it is true that power could be wrested by a group of people, usually with superior military skills, it is not as if this was enough for the rulers to rule. Rulers felt the need to legitimize their authority through various other means. Legitimization included not just patronage of important groups of people like the nobles or religious classes [in the Delhi Sultanate, the ulema, i.e, theologians, architectural constructions, etc. but also by instituting various other systems of administration and control which would allow the ruling classes to demand and extract levies [in the forms of various taxes, for instance] which in turn would allow them to maintain their position of dominance. These administrative structures allowed the rulers to make their presence felt in areas that were far away from the central/political capital of the kingdom. To put it simply, these acts of legitimization give the state a dominant position in society.

Thus, the state constituted, in real terms, of the central political authority as represented by the king/sultan, his court and courtiers and all his officials who were posted in various parts of the kingdom as a visible appearance of the central ruling power; his architectural constructions; his currency system, and the entire administrative apparatus which created a basic framework of control through which order and discipline was maintained upon the subjects of the kingdom. It was not a unitary object which may be identified with a single person or institution; rather, it was a category of interlinked and variegated political institutions through which political rule was sought to stabilize.

Modern scholars have used contemporary texts and various other sources of evidence to opine about the nature of the 'state' under the Delhi Sultanate. It has been the focus of a lot of debate especially because it is generally believed that the Delhi Sultanate laid the groundwork upon which the Mughal Empire was later able to build its might and splendor. In his *Economy and Society*, Max Weber remarked in passing that the Delhi Sultanate was a 'patrimonial state'. In explaining this concept, Jacob Rose says that such a state is one in which the rulers are dependent upon a small number of trained and loyal state officers to exert control over the kingdom, and are involved in specialized administrative functions such as collection of taxes, control over trade and commercial activities, law and order, etc. In most other matters, it vests power in the hands of local power-groups and intermediaries at various provincial and regional levels. This idea, however, requires much investigation for which sufficient evidence may not be available at present and has therefore not been very popular in later characterizations of the Delhi Sultanate although it has been applied more successfully to the Mughal Empire. Historians like Stanley Lane-Poole, Ishwari Prasad, A.B.M. Habibullah, Muhammad Habib, K.A. Nizami, etc. and, more recently, Peter Jackson have characterized the Delhi Sultanate as a 'centralized state'. This needs to be explained. The Delhi Sultanate was established after the second battle at Tarain in 1192 A.D. One of the important reasons why the Turks were able to establish a base in

the subcontinent — first in Lahore, and after 1206 A.D. in Delhi which served as the capital of their kingdom thereafter with a brief interregnum between 1324-27 A.D. — was, according to Simon Digby (*War-horse and Elephant in the Delhi Sultanate: A Problem of Military Supplies*) because of their superior military strength and organizational capabilities. On the other side, as Romila Thapar has argued (*Early India: From the Origins to A.D.1300*) that disunity and in-fighting among the local [especially Rajput] power blocs along with inferior military tactics led to the defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan in 1192 A.D. The kingdom that emerged thereafter was one which showed relative stability and was able to expand and consolidate its political base in course of time. This was in large measure because they were able to harness various resources available to them — a plan that would not have been possible without a centralized, authoritarian state which controlled the various organs of the state to control its resources for its benefit.

To paraphrase Hermann Kulke, these models place the state under the Delhi Sultanate at the end of a continuum of pre-modern state formations. They depict the post-1200 medieval ('Muslim') state as a polity headed by a strong ruler, equipped with an efficient and hierarchically organized central administration based on a religiously legitimated monopoly of coercion in a (more or less) clearly defined territory. However, more recent research has shown that while it is true that political rule of the Turks survived and consolidated itself consistently, it was not a smooth process which was unchallenged. The degree to which the state was 'centralized', i.e., how far the central, political power-group of rulers and court nobles could exert actual power and control in the wider kingdom has been much debated and there is as yet no consensus about it. Such studies suggest that the state at this time was only slightly bureaucratized, and there is no agreement about the degree of political fragmentation or segmentation on the one hand, and temporally and spatially fluctuating unitary tendencies within these states on the other. Central political power was constantly being challenged by various local power groups, and the sultan at the Centre spent precious time and resources trying to subjugate such forces. Opposition also came from other nobles who were posted in different parts of the empire [as 'iqtdars; officers assigned territories in lieu of salary, the revenue returns of which were enjoyed by the officer with surplus going to the state] and wanted to carve out their own independent principalities. It may however be said with some surety that there was a certain degree of centralized authority at work in the empire, and even where local powers were dominant they were expected to acknowledge the court and the sultan as their superiors. This is obvious from the fact that often the sultan would need to wage wars against 'rebellious' groups, be they state officials who had turned against the center, or other local powers. Also, the center was present in various parts of the kingdom through activities viz. tax collection, building roads, architecture, mosques, giving charity to religious foundations and individuals, and so on. An important feature of the presence of the state was the constant

movement of the army from one part of the sultanate to another as it expanded its domains or tried to suppress uprisings. Often, local areas had to extend hospitality — in the form of providing food and shelter — to the central armies as they passed by. It should be mentioned here that in many cases [in the Delhi Sultanate] the local areas were governed by local chiefs, and even everyday administration continued according to local custom. The central presence in local areas did not necessarily upturn all existing structures at work, and they often worked in unison. A uniform administration across the empire would occur only with the maturation of political and administrative rule under the Mughals, which would be more than 200 years later.

There have been some other writings which have tried to characterize the state from other perspectives: Stephan Conermann, for instance, has suggested a more economic nature of the Delhi Sultanate on the basis of his study of the *Rihla* of the 14<sup>th</sup> century traveller Ibn Battuta, while also emphasizing the features of 'patrimonialism'.

Other scholars have focused on other power groups, such as the Sufis, to argue that the effectiveness of the state was often hindered because of the power of the Sufi spiritual masters [pir] who had a strong influence over the people of the surrounding areas. Importantly, in this case the religion of the local population did not come in the way of the influence of the Sufis. Usually the Sufis settled in areas that were a little away from the urban areas, but perhaps the most dramatic situation arose in the reign of Sultan Ala Uddin Khalji [r. 1295-1316], when the Sufi pir Shaikh Nizam ud-din Auliya set up his hospice in the capital city itself, thereby posing a very important challenge to the effectiveness of the sultan's political rule. It is on such occasions that it becomes clear that for the effective execution of the policies of the 'state', it was necessary for rulers to keep politics separate from religion and religious activities and individuals. Such examples, as also the nature of language in the various textual sources available to us [which uses a religiously coloured vocabulary] may sometimes suggest that the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate were engaged primarily in the glorification of Islam and the subjugation of other religious groups in their territories. Such an impression is abetted by the superior and authoritative position that the theologians were said to occupy in the court and other important offices that they may have held; but a careful examination will show that offices of the greatest consequence, especially of military command, went to able and loyal warriors who never practiced religious dogmatism. The theologians were in reality one [of many] group who remained in the official bureaucracy and served the purpose of legitimizing kingly rule [through their knowledge, which was always couched in religion], of dispensing justice and education in madrasas. But the suggestion that religion was the touchstone of medieval politics in the subcontinent — that the Delhi Sultanate



## Administration

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.

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION:-** The central administrative machinery of the Sultanate consisted of the Sultan at the helm of affairs and the nobles controlling various offices.

**The Sultan:-** In the early Islamic world, there was no sanction for the position of the Sultan. With the disintegration of the Caliphate, the Sultan began to appear in the sense of a powerful ruler—an independent sovereign of a certain territory. The Delhi Sultans could make civil and political regulations for public welfare. The Sultanate witnessed a rapid rise and fall of dynasties. The Sultan, or a contender to the throne, could only keep himself in power with the support of the nobles who were themselves divided into numerous groups. Barani says that Balban stressed the special position of the Sultan as 'shadow of God' (zill al Allah) on earth.

The 4 important departments of the Sultanate administration were

Diwan-i wizarat, (finance department) ,

Diwan-i arz (military department)

Diwan-i insha (department of State correspondence) and

Diwan-i risalat (department of ecclesiastical affairs)

There were many officials to look after the royal household. The **wakil** looked after the entire household and disbursed salaries to the Sultan's personal staff. The **amir-i-hajib** functioned as the master of ceremonies at the court. All petitions to the Sultan were submitted through the latter. There were other minor officials also in the palace.

The **wazir**, as the head of the **diwan-i wizarat**, (finance department) was the most important figure in the central administration. Though he was one of the four important departmental heads, he exercised a general supervisory authority over others. The wizarat

organised the collection of revenue, exercised control over expenditure, kept accounts, disbursed salaries and allotted revenue assignments (iqta) at Sultan's order.

There were several officials who helped the wizarat such as the **mushrif-i mumalik** or the accountant-general and the **mustauji-i mumalik** or the auditor-general. During the reign of Alauddin Khalji, the diwan-i mustakhraj was made responsible for the collection of arrears of revenue.

### **The Diwan-i Arz**

The diwan-i arz or military department was headed by the **ariz-i mumalik**. He was responsible for the administration of military affairs. He inspected the troops maintained by the iqta holders. He also supervised the supply and transport of the Sultan's army. During the reign of Alauddin Khalji, some measures were introduced to maintain a check on recruitment and quality. The army consisted of troops maintained by nobles as well as the standing army (**hashm-i-qalb**) of the Sultan. In the thirteenth century, the royal cavalry, in lieu of cash salary, was assigned the revenue of small villages in the vicinity of Delhi which Moreland calls "small iqta". Feroz Tughluq gave up the practice of paying his royal soldiers in cash: instead, he gave them a paper called itlaq - a sort of draft on whose strength they could claim their salary from the Sultan's revenue officers of the **khalisa** ("Crown" or "reserve" land).

The **diwan-i insha'** looked after State correspondence. It was headed by **dabir**. This department dealt with all correspondence between the Sultan and other rulers, and between the Sultan and provincial governments. It issued farman and received letters from subordinate officials.

The **barid-i mumalik** was the head of the State news-agency. He had to keep information of all that was happening in the Sultanate. The administrative subdivisions had local barids who sent regular news — letters to the central office. The barids reported matters of state — wars, rebellions, local affairs, finances, the state of agriculture etc. Apart from the barids, another set of reporters existed who were known as **munhiyans**(spies) .

The **diwan-i risalat** was headed by the **sadr-us sudur**. He was the highest religious officer. He took care of the ecclesiastical affairs and appointed qazis. He approved various grants like waqf for religious and educational institutions, and assistance to the learned and the poor.

The Sultan headed the judiciary and was the final court of appeal in both civil and criminal matters. Next to him was the **qazi-ul mumalik (or qazi-ul quzzat)**, the chief judge of the Sultanate. Often, the offices of the sadr-us sudur and qazi-ul mumalik were held by the same person. The chief qazi headed the legal system and heard appeals from the lower



courts. The **muhatsibs** (public censors) assisted the judicial department. Their task was to set that there was no public infringement of the tenets of Islam.

## **IQTA SYSTEM AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

The territorial expansion and consolidation of the Sultanate was a process which continued throughout the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. It involved varying kinds of control in terms of territories: those brought under direct administration and those which paid tribute and remained semi-autonomous. The expansion of the Sultanate and the difficulties involved in administering areas that were far away from the centre shaped different kinds of control mechanism.

The initial Turkish conquests in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century displaced many local chiefs (whom the contemporary sources refer to as *rai* and *rand*). In order to consolidate, the Turkish rulers made revenue assignments (*iqta*), in lieu of cash, to their nobles (*umara*). The assignees (known as *muqti* and *wali*) collected revenue from these areas, defrayed their own expenses, paid the troops maintained by them and sent the surplus (*fawazil*) to the centre. *Iqta* is an Arabic word and the institution had been in force in the early Islamic world as a form of reward for services to the State. It was used in the Caliphate administration as a way of financing operations and paying civil and military officers. The grant of *iqta* did not imply a right to the land nor was it hereditary though the holders of *iqta* tended to acquire hereditary rights in Feroz Tughluq's reign. These revenue assignments were transferable, the holder being transferred from one region to another in every three or four years. Therefore, *iqta* should not be equated with the fief of medieval feudal Europe, which were hereditary and non-transferable. The assignments could be large (a whole province or a part). Assignments given to nobles carried administrative, military and revenue collecting responsibilities. Thus, provincial administration was headed by the *muqti* or *wali*. He had to maintain an army composed of horsemen and foot soldiers. The *muqtis* or *Iqta*-holders were required to furnish military assistance to the Sultan in times of need, apart from maintaining law and order and collecting the revenue from their *iqta*. If the subjects desire to make a direct appeal to the Sultan, the *muqti* should not prevent him. Every *muqti* who violates these laws should be dismissed and punished. The *muqtis* will have so many superintendents over them. After three or four years, the *muqtis* should be transferred so that they may not be too strong.

By the end of the thirteenth century, contemporary sources refer to an administrative division, known as *shiqq*. We do not have adequate information about the exact nature of *shiqq*. According to Ibn Battuta, *chaudhuri* was the head of hundred villages. This was the nucleus of the administrative unit later called *pargana*.

The village was the smallest unit of administration. The functioning and administration of the village remained basically the same as it had existed in pre-Turkish

times. The main village functionaries were khotwal, muqaddam (headman) and patwari. The judicial administration of the sub-division was patterned on that of the centre. Courts of the qazi and sadr functioned in the provinces. The kotwal maintained law and order. At the village level, the panchayat heard civil cases.

### Revenue reforms

Islamic land tax with which the new rulers of India were familiar was kharaj. The kharaj was essentially a share in the produce of the land and not a rent on the land. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the kharaj took by and large the form of tribute. This tribute was paid, in lump sum, either by the ruler or through some other arrangement. From certain other areas, the tribute was extorted through plundering raids. It was thus probably mostly in the form of cattle and slaves. The sources do not suggest that before the reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316) any serious attempt was made to systematize the assessment and realization of kharaj. The system of taxation introduced by Alauddin seems to have lasted for long, though Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1320-25) modified it to some extent and exempted the khotwals and muqaddams from paying tax on their cultivation and cattle. But he did not permit them to impose any cesses on the peasants.

Muhammed bin Tughluq, first extended Alauddin Khalji's system of revenue collection based on measurement to Gujarat, Malwa, Deccan, South India and Bengal. At a later stage, the scale of agrarian taxation was enhanced considerably. Barani's statement that the increase amounted to 20 or 10 times is undoubtedly rhetoric but it certainly gives the impression of an enormous increase. Barani suggests that additional new imposts (abwab) were levied. Of the other taxes, kharaj, chard and ghari were more rigorously collected. According to Yahya, cattle were branded and cottages counted to avoid any concealment.

One could very well expect that the decreed yields and prices were certainly inflated. Use of inflated yields instead of actual and prices much higher than what were prevailing had the obvious result of overstating the value of produce and thus the share of the state. This tremendous increase in revenue demand resulted in contraction of area under plough, flight of peasantry, and, revolt in the Doab and around Delhi. This caused failure of grain supplies to Delhi and a famine that lasted for about seven years, from 1334-5 to 1342. Faced with these problems, Muhammad Tughluq became the first Sultan to attempt to formulate an agricultural policy for promoting agriculture. He introduced the practice of giving agricultural loans named *sondhar* for increasing the area under plough and for digging wells for irrigation. Barani says that 70 lakhs tankas (according to Afif 2 kroris tankas were given till 1346-7 in *sondhar*).

A new ministry designated *diwan-i amir-i kohi* was established to promote agriculture. Its two main functions were to extend the area under cultivation and to reclaim the land that went out of cultivation and improving the cropping pattern. It was

recommended that wheat should be replaced by sugarcane and sugarcane by grapes and dates. The Sultan was so determined to introduce his project of agricultural improvement that when a theologian said that giving loan in cash and receiving the interest in grain was sin, he executed him. Barani, however, says that all these measures were almost a complete failure. Feroz Tughluq (1351-88) abandoned these projects but abolished agrarian cesses, forbade levying of ghari and chard. He also introduced an irrigation tax in Haryana where he dug canals. There is little information forthcoming for the intervening period but in all probability the land tax continued to be collected in cash by whomsoever be the rulers, till the time of Ibrahim Lodi (1517-26). Owing to the scarcity of currency and cheapening of the grains, he is reported to have ordered collection of land revenue in kind or in grain.

### Market regulations

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 large army with low expenses.

Alauddin Khalji's measures did not remain confined to rural economy but extended to urban market as well. He is credited for issuing a set of seven regulations which came to be known as market-control measures. Barani, who is our main source on this aspect, is the only authority who gives these regulations in detail.

The Sultan fixed the prices of all commodities from grain to cloth, slaves, cattle, etc. (Regulation 1). These prices were really to be enforced since the Sultan carefully made all arrangements for making the measure a success. A controller of market (**shahna-imandl**), **barids** (intelligence officers) and **munhiyan** (secret spies) were appointed (Reg. 2). The grain merchants were placed under the **shahna-imandi** and sureties were taken from them (Reg. 4). The Sultan himself was to receive daily reports separately from these three sources (Reg. 7). Re-grating (**ihitkar**) was prohibited (Reg. 5). While ensuring strict control in the market, the Sultan did not overlook the more essential requirement, namely the regular supply of grains.

Obviously, the grain merchants could bring supplies to the market only if they could get the grains and that, too, at sufficiently low prices. It was apparently for this reason that the Sultan decreed such a rigour in realization of land revenue in the Doab that the peasants

should be forced to sell the grain to the **karvanian**(the grain merchants) at the side of the field (Reg. 6).

The Sultan established granaries in Delhi and in Chhain in Rajasthan. The land tax from the **khalisain**.the doab was realised in kind. The grain went to the state granaries (Reg. 3). The Multanis who were cloth merchants were given 20 **lakh**sof **tankas** advance to purchase and bring cloth to the market.

The Sultan succeeded in maintaining low prices and ample supplies in the market as reported by all our authorities. But there are varying reasons mentioned for why the Sultan introduced the market control and in what region it was enforced. The poet courtier Amir Khusrau considers the measure to be of immense generosity taken for the welfare and comfort of all, the elite as well as the public at large. The Chishti divine Nasiruddin Mahmud (Chiragh Delhi) attributes it to the Sultan's effort to do good to all the people. But the historian Barani's view was totally different. He did not credit it to Sultan's benevolent intentions but gives a hard financial reason. The Sultan was anxious to have a large army and to take other precautions such as building of forts at strategic places, fortification wall around Delhi, etc. against the Mongol invasions. If numerous additional cavalymen and troops were to be employed at the prevailing salaries, the drain from the state treasury was to exhaust it totally. The salaries could be reduced only if the prices were kept at a sufficiently low level.

Barani's reasoning appears of course more valid. Since the main army encampment was in Delhi and most of the royal troops were to be stationed in or around Delhi, the main area of price control was Delhi itself. However, since the supplies of cheap grain were to be made available to the grain merchants in the surrounding districts of the doabthe low prices ought to be prevalent there as well.

## Module II:

### The Mughals

Babur (reign - 1526 to 1530 AD), the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, was the descendant of a Chagiz Khan. Ousted by his cousins, he came to India and defeated Ibrahim Lodi, the last Lodi Sultan in 1526 at the First Battle of Panipat. There was a brief interruption to Mughal rule when Babur's son Humayun (reign - 1530 to 1540 AD) was ousted from Delhi, by Sher Shah, an Afghan chieftain. It was Babur's grandson Akbar (reign - 1556 to 1605), who consolidated political power and extended his empire over practically the whole of north India and parts of the south. Jahangir (reign - 1605 to 1627 AD) who succeeded Akbar was a pleasure loving man of refined taste. Shah Jahan (reign 1628 to 1658 AD) his son, ascended the throne next. Shah Jahan's fame rests on the majestic buildings he has left behind - the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort and the Jama Masjid. Aurangzeb (reign - 1658 to 1707 AD) was the last Great Mughal ruler.

The Mughal Empire ruled the South Asian region including current northern India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As the name of the empire, Mughal, which means Mongol in Persian language indicates, the empire was built by a foreign tribe of Mongol origin. Babur, the progenitor of the Mughal Empire, is a direct descendant of Timur who descended from Genghis Khan. The Mughal Empire was founded in 1526 when Babur defeated and superseded Delhi Sultanate. However, his son and successor Humayun was beaten by Sher Shah of Suri dynasty of Afghan origin and fled for Persia in 1540. In 1555, he retook Delhi and revived Mughal dynasty. The next period from the following emperor Akbar to Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and Aurangzeb is considered as a golden age of the Mughal Empire. Akbar fired a flare of the golden age by achieving several great achievements. He largely expanded his empire by conquering Malwa Plateau (central part of India), Gujarat (western part of India), Bengal, Kashmir, Kandahar (southern part of Afghanistan), etc. Under his rule, the Mughal Empire established its centralization by organizing bureaucracy and administration. Moreover, with religiously tolerant policies such as giving government positions to Hindus, Akbar sought for solid integration within Mughal society. He announced Din-i-Ilahi, a syncretic religion which derives primarily from Islam and Hinduism, as the court religion. But, this new sect could only get few adherents (including Abul Fazl) and disappeared after the demise of Akbar. The Mughal Empire continued to flourish both economically and culturally under the next two successors Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Prosperity passed its peak and started to decline under Aurangzeb. He achieved the largest territory throughout the history of India by conquering southern India. However, different from Akbar, he was intolerant of other religions, bringing a poll tax for other religions back. His uncompromising religious policies and expansionist policies enlarged resistance among his subjects and consumed a great amount of expense, threatening the cornerstone of the empire. After the death of Aurangzeb,

the Mughal Empire continued to collapse. From the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, The Mughal Empire lost its effective control over India to the British. As the British East India Company took power of the Mughal Empire in 1805, Mughal emperors existed only as nominal rulers. In 1857, Sepoy Mutiny rose up and Indian soldiers crowned Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II as an emperor, but the mutiny was repressed in two years and the Mughal Empire went out of existence.

Economically, commerce and fabric industry developed and monetary economy was vitalized under the Mughals. The establishment of a system of a law and communication network contributed to the exuberance of the empire. Trade with foreign countries such as those in West Asia and Europe developed, developing domestic industry and introducing its goods in European market. However, economy gradually declined from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century because of the decreased agricultural productivity by acidification of land, corruption of administration, and expansionist policy. The Mughal Empire also saw a cultural prosperity with its mixed culture. Although Islam was a dominating religion of the authority in the empire, tolerant policy in the early period led to Islamic culture fused with Hinduism. Sikhism, a syncretistic religion integrating elements of Hinduism and Islam had emerged in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and gained followership under Mughal rule, especially in the Punjab. Art, Literature, Architecture, etc, showing a blend of Hindu, Turkic and Persian culture, thrived. Mughal emperors such as Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan showed a great interest in culture and supported it. For example, the Taj Mahal, built by Shah Jahan, has a lotus pattern derived from Hindu art and a mosque and arabesque from Muslim art. The dominant and official language of the empire was Farsi (Persian), but Hindi and Urdu, a language of the elite derived from Persian and heavily influenced by Arabic and Turkic, were also widely used. Science including astronomy and technology such as gunpowder continuously developed.

### **Establishment of Mughal rule in India**

The beginning of the empire is conventionally dated to the founder [Babur](#)'s victory over [Ibrahim Lodi](#), the last ruler of the [Delhi Sultanate](#) in the [First Battle of Panipat](#) (1526). The [Mughal emperors](#) were [Central Asian](#) Turco-Mongols belonging to the [Timurid dynasty](#), who claimed direct descent from both [Genghis Khan](#) (founder of the [Mongol Empire](#), through his son [Chagatai Khan](#)) and [Timur](#) (Turco-Mongol conqueror who founded the [Timurid Empire](#)). During the reign of [Humayun](#), the successor of Babur, the empire was briefly interrupted by the [Sur Empire](#). The "classic period" of the Mughal Empire started in 1556 with the accession of [Akbar the Great](#) to the throne. Under the rule of Akbar and his son [Jahangir](#), the region enjoyed economic progress as well as religious harmony, and the monarchs were interested in local religious and cultural traditions. Akbar was a successful warrior. He also forged alliances with several Hindu [Rajput](#) kingdoms. Some [Rajput](#) kingdoms continued to pose a significant threat to the Mughal dominance of



northwestern India, but most of them were subdued by Akbar. All [Mughal emperors](#) were [Muslims](#); while Akbar was Muslim most of this life, he followed a new religion in the latter part of his life called [Deen-i-Ilahi](#), as recorded in historical books like [Ain-e-Akbari](#).

## **Babur**

Babur was the founder of the Mughal Dynasty, which ruled the north and central Indian subcontinent from 1526 until its colonisation by the British, after which the Mughal Emperors ruled in name alone. Descended on his father's side from the Turkish conqueror Timur, Babur also claimed Cenghis Khan as a maternal ancestor.

His first exercise of military and political power came with his claiming the throne of Samarkand, in modern-day Uzbekistan, and taking control of the region around the fertile Fergana Valley. It was at this time that Babur began his memoirs *Tuzuk-I Baburi*, the first among the autobiographies in Islamic literature. In June 1494 AD, he wrote the opening lines, "In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the Compassionate. In the month of Ramadan of the year 899 and in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of my age, I became ruler in the land of Fergana." Seven years later Babur was driven out of Samarkand, but he had more far-reaching ambitions. From his new powerbase at Kabul in modern-day Afghanistan, he set out to conquer the Sultanate of Delhi. In 1526 he defeated Sultan Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat and founded the Mughal dynasty. Babur first established his capital at Agra, which became the cultural and intellectual focus of one of the greatest empires of the late-medieval world.

Though a hardened warrior, Babur was far from a barbarous, ignorant soldier. He was a cultured and pious man who wrote fine poetry and schooled himself in the culture, natural history and geography of Central Asia and India. His inquiring and observant mind and literary skill add a higher dimension to the battles and body counts of his memoirs.

Much before the final showdown at the battle of Panipat (1526), Babur had invaded India four times. These skirmishes were trials of strength of Mughal arms and Lodi forces. The first to fall was Bhira (1519-1520), the gateway of Hindustan, followed by Sialkot (1520) and Lahore (1524). Finally, Ibrahim Lodi and Babur's forces met at the historic battlefield of Panipat. The battle lasted for just few hours in favour of Babur. The battle shows Babur's skill in the art of warfare. His soldiers were less in number but the organisation was superior. Ibrahim's forces, though many times greater in number (approximately 1, 00,000 soldiers and 1000-500 elephants as compared to Babur's 12,000 horseman) fared badly. Babur successfully applied the Rumi (Ottoman) method of warfare. As the Afghans advanced to attack the right flank; Babur ordered his reserve forces under Abdul Aziz to move. The Afghans, greater in number, were unable to move forward nor backward. They were attacked from both sides. This created total confusion among the Afghan forces, Babur took full advantage of the situation and his right and left wings soon

attacked the Afghan forces from the rear side. This was followed with the opening up of fireshots. This completely paralysed the Afghan army. Afghan casualties reported by Babur were approximately 20,000 including the Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. In the battle it was not Babur's artillery but his 'superb tactics' and the 'mounted archers' played the decisive role, a fact which Babur himself acknowledged. The battle of Panipat, though, formally established the Mughal rule in India; it was first among the series of battles in the years to come. For example, to secure this triumph, it was equally important to overcome Rana Sanga of Mewar and the chieftains in and around Delhi and Agra. Another important opponent in the eastern India was the Afghans. To add to this, problems were mounting within his own nobility.

Rana Sanga of Mewar was a power to reckon with. Babur, in his *Memoh*, has blamed Rana Sanga for breaking his promise by not siding with him in the battle of Panipat against Ibrahim Lodi. Leaving apart the controversy whether it was Rana or Babur who asked for help, the fact remains that there was some understanding on both sides to join hands against Ibrahim Lodi in which the Rana faltered. Rana expected Babur to return to Kabul and leave him free to establish his hegemony, if not over whole of Hindustan, at least over Rajputana. Babur's decision to stay back must have given a big jolt to Rana'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 the Rana's power. Rana Sanga this time succeeded in establishing the confederace against Babur with the help of Afghan nobles.

The *Baburnama* does not say anything about such a proposal, but this shows the general feeling of "despair and frustration". However, Babur prevailed over the situation with his fiery speech touching the religious sentiments of his men. Babur fortified his position near Sikri at the village Khanwa. Here also he planned and organisea his army on the 'Ottoman' lines. This time he took the support of a tank on his left, front side again was defended by carts but ropes were replaced by iron chains. However, this time he used the strong wooden tripods connected with each other by ropes. They offered not only protection and rest to the guns but also they could move them forward and backward on the wheels. It took around 20-25 days to complete the strategy under Ustad Mustafa and Ustad Ali. In the battle (17<sup>th</sup> March, 1527) Babur made use of his artillery well. Rana Sanga got severely wounded and was carried to Baswa near Amber. Among his other associates, Mahmud Khan Lodi escaped but Hasan Khan Mewati was killed. The Rajputs suffered a big loss. In fact, there was hardly any contingent whose commander was not killed. In fact, it was irrational for Rana to remain inactive for over three weeks. This provided an opportunity to Babur to strengthen himself and prepare for war. Babur's disciplined army, mobile cavalry and his artillery played most decisive role in the battle. Though the Mewar Rajputs received a great shock at Khanwa, Medini Rai at Malwa was still a power to reckon with. We have already discussed how in 1520 Rana Sanga bestowed Malwa on Medini Rai, the chief noble



of Mahmud II of Malwa. In spite of great valour with which the Rajputs fought at 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. Mahmud Khan Lodi who had already escaped towards the east could create problems if left unchecked.

The Afghans had surrendered Delhi, but they were still powerful in the east (Bihar and parts of Jaunpur) where the Nuhani Afghans were dominant led by Sultan Muhammad Nuhani. The Afghans of Chunar, Jaunpur and Awadh were not feady to cooperate with the Nuhanis in a bid to give a united opposition against the Mughals. Instead, they surrendered meekly to Humayun (1527). In the meantime Sultan Muhammad Nuhani died (1528) and left the Nuhanis disjointed as his son Jalal Khan was still a minor. But the vacuum was soon filled by the appearance of Prince Mahmud Lodi, son of Sikandar Lodi and brother of Ibrahim. The Afghans, including the non-Nuhanis, who were a little hesitant earlier to side with the Nuhanis, now readily accepted Mahmud's leadership. Besides, even the Nuhani Afghans like Babban, Bayazid and Fath Khan Sarwani, etc. who felt leaderless with the desertion of Jalal to Bengal, welcomed Mahmud, Nusrat Shah of Bengal also, though apparently advocated friendship with Bahur, secretly adopted hostile measures against him. He considered the existence of the Nuhani kingdom in Bihar as buffer between the Mughals and his own possessions in parts of Bihar. Babur could hardly afford to ignore these developments. He mobilized his forces at Ghagra and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Nusrat Shah's army (1529). Thus ended the Afghan-Nusrat coalition and Nusrat Shah had to surrender large number of Afghan rebels who had taken asylum in his territory. The Afghans were now totally demoralized. Though Babban and Bayazid did attempt to resist at Awadh, but when pressurized (1529) they fled to Mahmud. Thus, within four years Babur succeeded in crushing the hostile powers and now could think of consolidating himself at Delhi. But he could hardly get the opportunity to rule as he died soon after (29 December, 1530). The establishment of the Mughal Empire under the aegis of Babur was significant. Though the Afghans and Rajputs could not be crushed completely, a task left to his successors, his two major blows at Panipat and Khanwa were certainly decisive and destroyed the balance of power in the region.

### **Shershah's Administration**

Sher Shah seems to have been inspired by the history of Sultan Alauddin Khalji's(1296-1316) reign. He adopted most of the rules and regulations introduced by the Khalji Sultan. However, like Khalji he was not harsh in their implementation. In the doab region, the sarkar (the successor of shiqq under the Khaljis) was the administrative-cum-fiscal unit; while wilayat, comprising a number of sarkars in the outlying regions, such as Bengal, Malwa, Rajputana and Sind and Multan were retained for the convenience of

defence. The sarkar comprised a number of parganas, each pargana consisting of a number of villages. The village was the primary fiscal unit.

The noble posted as in charge of sarkar or wilayat was not given unlimited powers. He was regularly directed through royal ferman to implement new rules and regulations. The spies informed the king about the conduct of the officers. Any one who was found failing in his work was punished, Khizr Turk, the governor of Bengal, was dismissed and 'thrown into prison because he married the daughter of the ex-Sultan of Bengal without Sher Shah's permission and acted independently. Similarly, Sher Shah's policy with regard to the planting of Afghan colonies in the territories known for recalcitrant inhabitants also demonstrates the nature of kingship under him, for example, Gwalior was one of the places colonised by the Afghans during Sher Shah's reign. In short, Sher Shah was an absolute monarch for all practical purposes. In organizing his nobility, Sher Shah took people belonging to different ethnic groups in such a way that his dynastic interest could be safeguarded. No group was strong enough to assume the shape of a pressure group. We find the non-Afghan nobles, Khawwas Khan, Haji Khan and Habib Khan Sultani holding the charge of important provinces with large iqta. This shows that the establishment of pure Afghan nobility was never a consideration with Sher Shah.

### **Cultural Synthesis under Akbar**

The Mughal rulers except Aurangzeb adopted a tolerant religious policy. Practically all-religious communities existed in India during the Mughal period. The Hindus, the Muslim, the Christians, the Buddhist, Sikhs, the Parsis and the Jains were the prominent religious communities among them. The Hindu constituted majority among the population while the ruling class belonged to the Muslims. Sher Shah, the forerunner of Akbar adopted a policy to religious toleration. Akbar was, however, the finest among the monarchs of medieval India who raised the policy of religious toleration to the Pinnacle of secularism. The socio political condition of the country was such that Akbar thought it advisable to adopt independent voices in religious matters. The non Muslim constituted the majority of his Indian subjects. Without winning their confidence and active support Akbar could not hope to establish and consolidate the Mughal Empire in India. Akbar did not discriminate between his subjects on the basis of religion. He abolished pilgrim tax throughout his dominions close upon its heels Akbar took the most revolutionary step in 1564, in granting religious freedom to the Hindus. It was the abolition of Jaziya, a poll tax charged from the Hindus in their capacity as Dimmis (Non-Muslim subjects of an Islamic state). Being a youth of courage and conviction he wiped out the traditional religious disability from which the Hindu subjects of the Muslim rulers been suffering since long. Sheik Mubarak a liberal minded Islamic scholar and his sons Abul Faizi and Abul Fazl had influenced Akbar's religious policy greatly. Under their influence Akbar became all the more liberal and to grant towards people of diverse religious faith. He removed all

restrictions on the construction and maintenance of Hindu temples, Churches and other places of worship.

In order to please the Hindu subjects Akbar adopted their social customs and practices, mixed freely with them and appreciated their cultural values. Akbar wanted to create a spirit of love and harmony among his people by eliminating all racial, religious and cultural barriers. In order to achieve this objective he ordered in 1575, the construction of Ibadat Khana – the house of worship at Fatchpursikri to adorn the spiritual kingdom. He initiated the practice of holding religious discourses there with the learned men and the saints of the age. To begin with Akbar used to invite only the Muslim theologians and saints, including the ulama, sheikhs, sayyids etc to take part in these deliberations. But they failed to arrive at agreed opinion on many Islamic beliefs and practices and in the midst of deliberations on very sober and thought-provoking aspects of divinity, displayed spirit of intolerance towards each other. The rival group of theologians drew their swords to settle the religious issues at stake. Akbar was shocked to witness the irresponsible behaviour of those self-conceited greedy and intolerant Mullahs. In disgust he threw open the gates of the Ibadat Khana to the priest and scholars of other religious faiths including Hinduism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity. As a result of the religious discourses held at the Ibadat Khana, Akbar's belief in the orthodox Sunni Islam was shaken. In 1579 a proclamation called the Mahzar, was issued. It recognized Akbar in his capacity as the just monarch and *amir ul mominin* to be the Imam-i-Adil viz., the supreme interpreter or arbitrator of the Islamic law in all controversial issues pertaining to ecclesiastical or civil matters. After the issue of Mahzar, religious discourse continued to be held at the Ibadat Khana. Akbar mixed freely with Muslim devines, Sufi saints, Hindu mystics and Jain scholars. As a result of this Akbar came to the conclusion that if some true knowledge was thus everywhere to be found, why truth should be confined to one religion or creed like Islam. Akbar gradually turned away from Islam and set up a new religion which was compounded by many existing religions – Hinduism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism etc.

However modern historians are not inclined to accept this view. The word used by AbulFazl for the so called new path was Tauhid-i-Ilahi which literally means Divine Monotheism. The word din or Faith was not applied to it till 8 years later. The Tauhid-i-Ilahi was really an order of the sufistic type. Those who were willing to join and those whom the emperor approved were allowed to become members. Sunday was fixed as the day for initialism.

Din Ilahi was not a new religion Akbar's real objects was to unite the people of his empire into an integrated national community by providing a common religious cum spiritual platform. Din Ilahi was a socio-religious association of like-minded intellectuals and saints. Akbar becomes the spiritual guide of the nation. The members of the Din Ilahi abstained from eating meat as far as possible and do not dine with or use the utensils of the

butchers, fishermen, did not marry old women or minor girls. The members were to greet each other with the words Allah-u- Akbar or God is great. The number of persons who actually joined the order was small, many of them consisting of personal favourites of Akbar. Thus the order was not expected to play an important political role. The Din Ilahi virtually died with him. Principles of Tawahid-i-Ilahi or Din-i-Ilahi aimed at achieving a synthesis of all religions. Akbar's Din-i-Ilahi's major principles include:

- (i). God is great (Allah-o-Akbar)
- (ii) Initiations would be performed on Sunday.
- (iii) The novice would place his head at the emperor's feet. The emperor would raise him up and give him the formula (Shast).
- (iv) The initiates would abstain from meat as far as possible and give a sumptuous feast and alms on their birthday.
- (v) There would be no sacred scriptures, place of worship or rituals (except initiation).
- (vi) Every adherent should take oath of doing well to everybody.
- (vii) Followers should show respect to all religions.

Akbar's efforts at social reform are also noteworthy. He raised the age of marriage. He even tried to make education broad-based and secular. Jahangir and Shah Jahan pursued the same tolerant policy though at times there were aberrations. Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni and he reversed the policy of Akbar. This partly led to the decline of Mughal power after his death.

### **Jahangir**

Nur -ud-din Mohammed Salim known by his imperial name Jahangir. He was fourth Moghul Emperor who ruled from 1605 until his death in 1627. Jahangir built on his father's foundation an excellent administration. His reign was marked by political stability, a strong economy and impressive cultural achievements. It was credit of Jahangir that while, he possessed characteristics that he deserved much condemnation, he possessed sufficient charisma of his own that ranked him among the most fascinating and controversial monarch of Indian history.

Jahangir possessed thirty Six year of enriching experience of his father's diverse policies to guide him. His liberal education, (his mother Jodha Bai, was a Rajput Princess), natural shrewdness and a strong common sense, well experienced him to be the rightful successor to Akbar's vast empire.

Notwithstanding the above, Jahangir neither possessed the strength of Akbar's character nor his ability to make decisions. On the other hand, throughout his life Jahangir

succumbed to the influence of his companions. As prince Salim goaded by his friends, he rebelled against Akbar, and got rid of Abul Fazl, Akbar's closest friend in 1602 A.D. As the Sultan, Jahangir allowed himself to drift gradually under the influence of Nurjahan till his failing health during last five years, resulted in Nurjahan reigning supreme. Whilst her policies did not fundamentally deviate from Jahangir, principle of administrative the intensity of her ambition provoked party factions of a magnitude that irreparably damaged the Mughal state. To that extent, Jahangir unconsciously helped to weaken the Mughal solidarity and initiated the decline of Mughals.

### **Shahjahan**

Jahangir had four sons- Khusrau, Parvez, Khurram, and Shahryar. Prince Khurram later styled as Shah Jahan was born of a Rajput princess Jagat Gosain on January 5, 1592 at Lahore. While young he was a favourite of his Grandfather Akbar. The prince was given best education and military training. He was very intelligent and smart. He possessed a strong will and character. He enjoyed a reputation for being a total abstainer from alcohol. Early during his father's reign prince Khurram was marked out for the throne. In 1607 he was appointed a mansabdar of 8,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. In 1608 the jagir of hissar Firoza was conferred on him. In 1612 he was married to Arjuman Banu Begum better known as Mumtaz Mahal who was the daughter of Asif Khan brother of Nur Jahan. It was at this time that Nur Jahan was fast raising into prominence. As mentioned in the last lesson Prince Khurram became a prominent member of the Nur Jahan Junta. He was looked upon as the future ruler of the country and his Mansab was raised to 30,000 zat and 20,000 sawar. He took part in a number of important expeditions during his Father's reign. His success against Mewar and the way he had succeeded in dictating terms to Malik Amber in the Deccan convinced Jahan Gir that the prince had an aptitude for military generalship. He bestowed upon him the title of Shan Jahan to mark his pleasure. But there was a sudden fall in the fortune of prince Khurram after the marriage of prince Shahryar with Ladli Begum daughter of Nur Jahan in 1620. Nur Jahan now backed the claims of Shahryar which forced Shah Jahan to revolt in 1623. Eventually he submitted to his father in 1626. Prince Khusrau who had revolted against Jahangir in 1606 was put to death by prince Khurram in 1622. Parvez died in 1626 therefore when Jahangir died in 1628 NurJahan made a final bid at that time was in the Deccan. Fortunately for him his father-in-Law Asaf Khan won over nobles to his side and proclaimed Dawar Bakash son of Khusrau as king so that the throne was not left vacant. Shah Jahan hurried to Delhi from the Deccan. Shahryar proclaimed himself emperor at Lahore. The rival forces of Shahryar and Asif Khan met near Lahore. Shahryar was defeated, blinded and imprisoned. Shah Jahan marched to Agra and ascended the throne in February 1628. All his possible rivals including Dawar Baksh and Shahryar were killed. Truly Shah Jahan waded the throne through the blood of his own kinsmen which is an indelible stain on his memory. Nur Jahan was pensioned off to live in retirement in Lahore

where she built her husband's mausoleum, carried on the works of charity and died in 1645. There were two great rebellions at the commencement of Shah Jahan's reign.

### **Aurangzeb**

Shah Jahan had four sons Dara the governor of the Punjab, Murad of Gujarat, Aurangzeb of the Deccan and Shuja of Bengal. Shah Jahan had given clear indications that he wished to leave the crown to Dara. When Shah Jahan fell sick in September 1657 the struggle for throne began. In November 1657 Shuja crowned himself in Bengal and began to advance towards Agra at the head of an army but he was defeated by an army to Dara and was forced to retire to Bengal. In December 1657 Murad crowned himself in Gujarat and then formed an alliance with Aurangzeb. They entered into an agreement to partition the empire. The combined troops of Aurangzeb and Murad marched towards the North and fought two battles against the imperial armies of Dara. The battle of Dharmat (April 1658) and battle of Samugarh (May, 1658) in which they were victorious. The fort of Agra was occupied by them and Shah Jahan was made a prisoner. One by one Aurangzeb managed to dispose of all his brothers including Murad and ascended the throne in July, 1658.

Aurangzeb, son of Shah Jahan was the last great Mughal emperor of India. He ruled for 50 years. His reign can be divided into two parts of about 25 years each. During the first 25 years, i.e. from 1658 to 1681 he lived in the North and his attention was concentrated in the affairs of Northern India while South figured as negligible and far off factor. While during the second half, i.e. from 1681 to 1707, he lived in south India concentrating all his energies in the affairs of the Deccan thereby neglecting the administration of the North and consequently plunging the whole of it into disorder, and anarchy.

After winning the war of succession to which a reference has been made in last lesson, Aurangzeb ascended the throne in July 1658 immediately after occupying Agra but his formal accession took place in June, 1659. The coronation was celebrated with pomp and magnificence. He assumed the title of Alamgir. The Nobility and the army at the capital and in the provinces accepted his authority without protest, Aurangzeb fought two frontier Wars – in the North East and in the North West.

Aurangzeb was convinced that his ancestors on the throne of Delhi had committed grave error in disregarding the Quranic law and in attempting to conduct the administration on secular lines. He restored Islam to its former position as the state religion. The chief aim of his life was to put down polytheism and to transform India into the realm of Islam. The religious policy of Aurangzeb unfolded itself gradually. His initial step was to abolish some of the un-Islamic practices at the Mughal court. He abolished the celebration of the Persian New Year's Day discontinued the practice of Jharokha Darshan (a practice by which emperor appeared every morning at a balcony on the wall of the place to receive the salute of the people assembled on the ground in front). Forbade music at the court and



dismissed the old musicians and singers. The old practice of stamping the Kalima (Muslim confession of faith) on the coins was abolished lest the holy words be defiled by the touch of unbelievers. The ceremony of weighing the emperor against gold and silver was given up and royal astrologers were dismissed. The cultivation and sale of bhang was prohibited. All public women and dancing girls were ordered to get married or leave the realm. He appointed Censors of public Morals to regulate the lives of the peoples in strict accordance with the Holy Law. The emperor, however, was not satisfied with these regulations only. He issued Farmans which marked the inauguration of a new policy in regard to the important sections of the people. In April, 1679 he re-imposed Jizya Which Akbar had abolished in 1564. He even re-imposed pilgrims' tax on Hindus. The Hindus, except for the Rajputs were prohibited from wearing arms, fine dresses and riding horses. His zeal made him oblivious of the fact that the country over which destiny had placed him to rule was not inhabited by a homogeneous population but included various elements rich in their religious traditions and ideals, which needed tactful and sympathetic understanding His religious policy lost him active loyalty of his hindu subject. His policy generated feeling of discontent among certain sections of people which by distracting his energies during the remainder of his reign proved to be one of the most potent causes for the decline and fall of the Mughal empire.

### **Mughal Administration – Features**

Administration of Mughal Dynasty was carried out by incorporating certain elementary changes in the central administration structure in India. [Babur](#), the founder of the Mughal Empire assumed the title of 'Badshaah' which was continued by his successors. [Akbar](#) enhanced further the power and prestige of the emperor. He declared himself the authority in case of disparity of opinions regarding Islamic laws. However, Mughal rule was not theocratic. Except [Aurangzeb](#) no other Mughal emperor attempted to carry his administration on the principles of [Islam](#). A major change that they brought about in matters of administration was the principle of religious tolerance. These new innovations in polity set aside Mughal administration. It was Akbar who raised the structure of Mughal administration. It persisted till the reign of Aurangzeb with minor changes. The weak successors of Aurangzeb, however, could not maintain it.

### **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.

(i) 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 preeminent 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 transactions 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 a daily basis.

(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.



## **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 an account 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. 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.

## **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 Pargana, 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 in charge 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 in charge 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 customhouse. He also supervised the mint house at the port.

### **Rajput policy**

With the decline of Jaunpur and the weakening of Malwa towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, a new situation developed in North India. There was the contest -between Rana Sanga of Mewar and the Lodis for domination over eastern Rajasthan and Malwa. Sanga feared the strengthening of Lodi power and therefore opened negotiations with Babur against the Lodis. As Babur progressed in accordance with the agreement, Sanga retraced his steps. He had not envisaged Babur's arrival in the Gangetic valley. His plan was to detain Babur in the Punjab while he confronted the Lodis in the Gangetic valley. The ascendancy of Babur in the Gangetic valley took Sanga by surprise. These developments led to the formation of an alliance between the Afghans, Rana Sanga and a host of other Rajput princes. The aim was to hold back the advance of Babur towards Delhi and the surrounding areas. So far no Rajput ruler had been successful in mustering support as such disparate groups as Rajputs and Afghans. The conflict between Sanga's coalition and Babur at Khanwahas not a contest between Hindus and Muslims. This is amply borne out by the very nature of the composition of Sanga's coalition. Babur condemned the Afghani chieftains who collaborated with Sanga as Kafirs (infidels) and also proclaimed the contest against Sanga as jihad. These actions do not suggest religious zeal but reflect the attempt to meet the challenge by appealing to the religious sentiments of his soldiers. Later on, Babur concentrated more on countering the Afghan danger than fighting the Rajputs. He tried to secure his control over the region adjoining Delhi-Agra zone. Outposts such as Bayana, Dholpur, and Gwalior were firmly brought under control. Mewar and Chanderi in Malwa were taken. The death of Rana Sanga settled the problem as far as Rajasthan was concerned. Babur wished to follow a forward policy in Mewar and Malwa but his

practical understanding prevented him from taking up this policy till the Afghan problem in the east had been solved.

When Humayun ascended the throne, the political scene in Malwa and Rajasthan had changed considerably. Bahadur Shah, the ruler of Gujarat, had captured Malwa after defeating its ruler Mahmud Khalji. Rana Ratan Singh of Mewar had sided with Bahadur Shah against Malwa for which he was generously rewarded. This was an act of political expediency. However, a rupture between Rana Vikramjit of Mewar and Bahadur Shah led to the siege of Chittor by the latter. Though Humayun was aware of the threat posed by the augmentation of the power of Bahadur Shah, he was hesitant to get involved in the conflict with Bahadur Shah till the Afghan threat had been sorted out. Humayun's stance as regards Rajasthan was essentially defence oriented: an offensive policy was postponed for a later date. He also realised that due to internecine warfare in Mewar its power was waning. Therefore, for Humayun, its military importance as an ally was inadequate. Humayun who joined the struggle on Chittor's side had not anticipated the power of Gurjar artillery and had overestimated the military strength of Chittor in the wake of the siege. Bahadur Shah, on the other hand, had not expected Humayun to counter him in a contest against a Hindu ruler. Chittor was devastated but Bahadur Shah's success was short-lived. Babur and Humayun's relations with Rajputs could be viewed in the context of the Afghan problem which deterred them from making friendly overtures to the Rajput rulers.

### **The three phases in the shaping of Akbar's Rajput policy.**

During the first phase, which ended in 1569-70, Akbar continued with the policy followed by the Delhi Sultans; in the second phase, Akbar tried to develop and extend the alliance with Rajputs but certain components of the earlier policy were retained; the third and last phase is marked by Akbar's break with Muslim orthodoxy.

There has been a lot of debate on Akbar's relations with the Rajputs. Some argue that his policy initiated a system in which there would be no discrimination on the basis of religion in public appointments. Others hold that it was a deliberate attempt to exploit the martial attributes of the Rajputs for the expansion of the Empire and also to play them against each other thereby ensuring that they would not unitedly pose a threat to the Empire. It is also stated that Akbar's Rajput policy was a part of a broad policy of wooing the zamindars and martial classes which included the Rajputs and Afghans. Majority of the zamindars were Hindus and specially Rajputs.

It is pointed out that the policy was aimed at using the Rajputs to counter the power of the Uzbeks and other disaffected nobles. Faithfulness of Rajputs was legendary. They could serve as important buttresses both within the court and outside. Rajputs had made an impression on Akbar's mind way back in 1557 when a Rajput contingent under Bhara Mal,

the ruler of Amber, had demonstrated its loyalty to Akbar. This led to a matrimonial alliance between Bhara Mal's daughter and Akbar in 1562. But this matrimonial alliance was not unique and such alliances were a common feature before Akbar's time also. These marriages were in the nature of political compromise and did not imply conversion to Islam and break with Hindu traditions. Bhara Mal had submitted to Akbar by personally paying homage to him in 1562. Matrimonial alliances did not lead to any kind of special bond between Rajputs and Mughals. Nor were these alliances with Rajputs intended to be aimed at countering recalcitrant elements or using the Rajputs for military gains. The fact that Rajputs did participate in Mughal wars against their compatriots was not unprecedented. The liberal measures such as 'abolition of jiziya, remission of pilgrim taxes, etc. which Akbar introduced between 1562-64, strengthened people's faith in Akbar as a liberal ruler. But these measures did not create an atmosphere of total peace between the Mughals and Rajputs. The war with Chittor is an apt example. The Rajputs offered firm resistance, despite the presence of Bhagwant Singh with Akbar. Akbar on the other hand proclaimed the conflict as jihad and martyrs as ghazis giving the whole affair a religious colour. He ascribed his victory to God's will, thereby emphasising the religious dimension of the conflict. In the first phase, Akbar's attitude towards Rajputs softened and Rao Dalpat Rai, the governor of Ranthambhor, was accepted in the imperial service and given jagir. Akbar married Bhagwant Singh's (Kachhawaha prince) sister. That Bhara Mal became a close confidant of Akbar is evident from the fact that when Akbar proceeded on the Gujarat campaign was placed under his charge a gesture shown for the first time to a Hindu Prince. However, Akbar's religious views, his public policies and attitude towards Rajputs developed along separate lines and coincided only at a later stage.

Towards the end of 1570, the relations with Rajputs were further established. Rao Kalyan Mal of Bikanar submitted to Akbar by paying homage personally along with his son. Rawal Har Rai of Jaisalmer and Kalyan Mal's daughters were married to Akbar. Both were firmly entrenched in their principalities and enrolled in the Imperial service. The Gujarat expedition of Akbar was an important landmark in the evolution of Mughal-Rajput relations. The Rajputs were enlisted as soldiers systematically and their salaries were fixed for the first time. Thus, the Rajputs were deployed outside Rajasthan for the first time and were given significant assignments and posts. During the Gujarat insurrection of the Mirzas, Akbar depended largely on Rajput Kachawahas, Man Singh and Bhagwant Singh. Akbar also had to deal with the Mewar problem. The Rana of Mewar did not agree to personal submission and wanted to regain Chittor. Akbar remained firm on the principle of personal homage. In the meantime Mewar was subdued by Akbar. The battle of Haldigatti fought between the Rana of Mewar and Akbar was not a struggle between Hindus and Muslims. As important groups from among the Rajputs sided with the Mughals, his struggle cannot be termed as a struggle for independence from foreign rule. It can to some extent be

characterized as the pronouncement of the ideal of regional independence. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century India, the feelings of local and regional loyalty were very powerful which could be further strengthened by emphasis on conventions and traditions. However, this catchword could not be very helpful in the long run since there was no supreme regional power amongst the Rajput states. They were vulnerable to internecine warfare and its disastrous consequences. The states located along the borders of Mewar submitted to Akbar and entered into matrimonial alliances. These states had close relations with Mewar but had always pursued a practical policy of allying with whosoever was the dominant power in the area. The ruler of Bundi and Mewar, who were in league with the Rana, were subdued. Thus, the Rana's power suffered a severe jolt and Rajputs were transformed from mere collaborators into allies of the Mughals. Till the end of the second phase, Akbar's Rajput policy had acquired a shape which would be disapproved by the Muslim orthodox religious elements or which would be a threat to the Muslim character of the state.

The reimposition of jiziya by Akbar in 1575, which was a step in preparation for war with Mewar, shows that Akbar had to rely on religion for serving political ends. The fall from power of the chief *sadr* Abdun Nabi and the proclamation of the *mahzar* are important events which constitute the starting point of Akbar's break with orthodoxy. Akbar rewarded by making Bhagwant Das the governor of Lahore and Man Singh the commander of the Indus region. An important consequence of Mirza Hakim's invasion was that from now onwards the Rajputs became the sword-arm of the Empire and became actively involved in Mughal administration. A group among the nobility displayed fear over the ascendancy of Rajputs. However, Akbar was strong enough to brush aside such feelings and continued to rely on the Rajputs.

Akbar tried to forge close relations with the Rajput ruling houses. The Kachhawaha family occupied a special position in the gamut of Mughal-Rajput relations. In 1580, Mani Bai, the daughter of Bhagwant Das, was married to Prince Salim. In 1583, Jodhpur which was a part of *khalisa* was bestowed upon Mota Raja Udai Singh (Marwar) and his daughter was married to Salim. Rai Kalyan Singh's (Bikaner) daughter and Rawal Bhim's (Jaisalmer) daughters were also married to Salim. Prince Daniyal was married to a daughter of Raimal of Jodhpur. These marriages reveal Akbar's desire to compel his successor to the throne to carry on the policy of maintaining close relationship with the Rajputs. In 1583-84, Akbar initiated a new policy of selecting loyal Muslim and Hindu nobles for performing administrative tasks. Thus, the son of Bhara Mal and Rai Lonkaran Shekhawat were to look after armour and roads; household management was placed under Raisal Darbari (Kachhawaha); Raja Askaran Kachhawaha of Narwan was assigned the task of supervising the property of minors; Jagmal Panwar, associated with Raja Bhagwant Das and Man Singh, was in charge of the department of jewels and other minerals; Rai Durga Sisodia of Rampura and Raja Todar Mal were assigned administrative tasks in the



revenue department and Rai Su Jan Hada wits to bring matters relating to religion and faith to Prince Daniyal. Raja Birbal was a close associate of Akbar and was responsible for justice. It cannot be said with certainty to what extent this policy of deploying Rajputs for carrying out administrative tasks was successful. Abul Fazl gives the impression that it was not properly implemented.

The year 1585-86 marks an important landmark in the administrative sphere when the subas were given an administrative shape. Each suba was to have two amirs or sipahsalaras as well as a diwan and a bakhshi. The Kachhawahas got the largest share of appointments among Rajputs. Lahore was given to Raja Bhagwant Das and Rai Singh of Bikaner, Kabul to Man Singh, Agra to Raja Askaran Shekhawat, and Ajmer to Jagannath (son of Bhara Mal). The Rathors and Sisodias were also employed in the administrative set up but not on a very large scale.

By 1585-86, Akbar's Rajput policy had become fully developed. The alliance with Rajputs had become steady and stable. The Rajputs were now not only allies but were partners in the Empire. Conflict with the Rana of Mewar did not lead to bitterness in relations with other Rajput states of Rajasthan. Finally, the dispute with the Rana was settled and he spent the rest of his life in Chawand in South Mewar (his capital). For analysing the relations with Rajputs in Akbar's reign, the year 1585-86 can be taken as a convenient point. Among the Rajputs enlisted in the Imperial Service, the Kachhawahas reigned supreme. In the mansabdari (ranking system) which was developed by Akbar the Kachhawahas held a dominant position. In the list of mansabdars, as given in the Ain-i Akbari of the 24 Rajputs 13 were Kachhawahas. Among Kachhawahas only members of Bhara Mal's family held ranks of 1500 or above. The only non-Kachhawaha Rajput who held a high rank and important post was Rai Singh of Bikaner. A study of the state structure of the Rajputs is important for understanding their relations with the Mughals. On the eve of the Mughal conquests, the administrative structure was based on what is called the baibant system. It was a sort of a loose confederation in which a region was held by a clan or by one or more families which had close kinship ties with the clan. A member of the leading family was called rao/rai-rana. There was no definite law of succession both primogeniture and the will of the ruler prevailed. But the deciding factors were the support of Rajput sardars (chieftains) and military might. A clan held a region relying on the support of Rajput warriors. The leading family of a clan held only a few parganas or mabab under direct control in a region and the rest were assigned in patta to individual members of the family who erected their own fortresses or places of residence called basi or kotm. Holders of these fortresses were called dhani or takur. These holdings were hereditary. In these circumstances the Rana tried to extend the holding at the expense of the bikanedars (clan brothers) whereas the clan attempted to gain at the cost of neighbouring clans. When a Rajput raja was enrolled in the Imperial service, he was given jagir against this manhb which consisted of mahals or tsppas



where the clan members lived. Themabals were a part of one or more parganas with a fort or garhi where the rajaresided with his family. This region was the real watao of the raja though, occassionally, the term was extended to mean the entire tract held by dajaand hisclansmen. Jahangir refers to this as riyasat. The term watan jagir came into vogueonly at the end of Akbar's-reign. Jagirs in close proximity to watan were considereda part of the watan and were not transferrable except in case of rebellion, etc. Thesewatan jagirs were granted for life within Rajasthan. Outside Rajasthan, jaglrs weretransferrable. The term watan jagir is not referred to by Abul Fazl and othercontemporary historians. The first reference to this is contained in a farman ofAkbar to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner. The Rajput chronicles, for example, Nainsi hasa word utan which could be a corruption of watan.

The change in the state structure of Rajasthan and the evolution of the concept ofwdan jagir which replaced bhaibant is an interesting phenomenon. By Jahangir's timethe concept of watan jagir was firmly entrenched. Areas held by clan memben andother clans were brought under the control of the raja. Watan jagirs allowed therajas to consolidate their position vis-a-vis the pattayats which was a step towardsthe evolution of a stable and centralised state structure. Watam and riyasat at timesoverlapped. When a raja died all the parganas controlled by him as watan jagir were inherited by his successor. His successor was given a few parganasaccording to his mansab which was lower than that of his predecessor. Thus, jagirrights in a pargana were partitioned. This was a means of exercising control over theRajput rajas. Dispute among the Rajputs for control of certain territories was a problem in whichAkbar also got entangled. For example, Pokharan was claimed by the Bhatias ofJaisalmer rulers of Bikaner and Jodhpur. Akbar had assigned it to Mota Raja later to Suraj Singh, but the Bhatias continued to resist and dispute could not besettled in Akbar's time. The Mughals did not try to create dissensions among the Rajputs but they wereaware of dissensions among the Rajputs on the basis of clan and personal holdingsand took advantage of these differences for their own ends. For example, theytransferred disputed parganas from one to another. The Mughal control over anaunonomous raja was determined by the Mughal concept of paramountcy. The Mughal policy of conferring honour onanyone was a part of the process of weakening the aristocracy by instigating themiddle and lower strata to assert their independence from eristocracy. Therefore, theMughals enlisted in the Imperial service many mincr feudatories of the Rajput rajasthemselves.

The issue of succession had invariably caused fratricidal civil wars in Rajput states. The concept of Mughal Paramountcy implied controlling succession to the throne inthtse states. This was not an easy task: it depended on the strength of the Mughalruler. Akbar had pronounced that the grant of tika was the prerogative of theMughal Emperor and could not be claimed as a matter of right. The fact that theMughal Emperor could give tika to sons of the deceased raja or his brother orbrother's son could lead to conflicts. But, at least, the issue could be settled withouta civil war due to Mughal intervention. As the

mansab system developed, Akbar tried to encourage nobles to maintain mixed contingents consisting of ethnic groups like the Mughals, Rajputs etc. However this was not acceptable to many and exclusive contingents of Rajputs and Mughals were still maintained. The Rajput soldier was paid a salary lower than his Mughal counterpart but how far this encouraged nobles to employ Rajputs is not known. Akbar tried to promote heterogeneous contingents to cut across the ethnic-religious distinctions. But we find that under Akbar and his successors ethnic-religious ties could not be weakened. Many nobles disliked the importance given to the Rajputs in the Imperial service. The Rajputs, too, found it difficult at first to adjust to the discipline in the Mughal service.

Akbar's alliance with the Rajputs began as a political coalition but later, it developed into an instrument of closer relations between Hindus and Muslims which formed the basis for a broad liberal tolerant policy towards all, irrespective of faith. Around this time, the concept of justice also became extensive. It was stressed that justice should be dispensed to all irrespective of religion, faith, caste and race. Thus Mughal-Rajput relations were seen as the beginning of a secular, non-sectarian state in which all sections of people would have some interest in its continuation. But this was not in accordance with the social and political reality. The Rajputs were generally orthodox in their social and religious outlook. They refused to enroll themselves in Akbar's tauhid ilahi and also did not support Akbar in opposing sati. Like the Rajputs, the Mughal elite was also generally orthodox. The Mughal elite and ulema feared that a broad liberal policy would be detrimental to their dominant position. Their opposition could be put down only by furthering the Mughal-Rajput alliance supported by powerful non-sectarian movements stressing common points between followers of the two religions. These movements were limited in their influence and the Mughal-Rajput alliance became strained and collapsed.

### **Mansabdari system**

The Mughal emperors maintained a large and efficient army till the reign of Aurangzeb. The credit of organising the Mughal nobility and army systematically goes to Akbar. The steel-frame of Akbar's military policy was the mansabdari system. Through it he set up a bureaucracy which was half-civil and half-military in character. 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. AbulFazl 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 mansabdars 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 short of the estimated income. In such a situation, the mansabdar's salary was 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 *Khurakidawwab*, towards meeting the cost for feed of animals in the imperial stables.

### **Jagirdari 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. 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, and *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 to prevent the oppression of the peasants by the *Jagirdars*.

Amin was posted in each suba to see that Jagirdars were following imperial regulations. Faujdar used to help the Jagirdas if they faced any difficulty in the collection of revenue.

### **Marathas**

The emergence and growth of the Maratha state during the 17th century was an important episode in the history of India. The Territory which include modern state of Bombay Konkan, Kandesh, Berar, part of Madhya Pradesh, and part of Hyderabad state was Maratha state. The history of the rise of the Marathas is the history of the rise of an organized group of people inhabiting the territory of Maharashtra. Different factors contributed in the rise of Maratha nationalism and political power of the Marathas. The geographical condition of Maharashtra helped in the rise of the Marathas. Larger part of Maharashtra is plateau where man has to struggle hard for his existence. This made Marathas courageous and sturdy. The plateau provided every facility for defence including the construction of forts at every hill top-while it was difficult for Aurangzeb foreign invader to get supplies besides the difficulty of movement with larger armies in an unknown land. The plateau also provided good facility for guerilla-warfare to the Marathas. The rise of the Marathas was the result of the efforts of entire Maratha people who on the basis of unity of their languages, literature, community and homeland gave birth to Maratha nationalism and desired to create an independent state of their own. The Marathas developed the spirit of nationalism which made them the most powerful group of people in India. The saints of Bhakti Movement in Maharashtra had spread the idea of equality which helped for the growth of unity among in people. The Marathas had important positions in the administrative and military system of Deccan states. Although a number of influential Maratha families exercised local authority in some area, the Maratha did not have any large well established state as Rajaputs had. The credit for setting up such a large state goes to Shahji Bhonsali and his son Shivaji.

### **Sivaji**

Shivaji was born in 1627. He was the son of Shahji Bhonsle and Jija Bai. Shahji Bhonsle acted as the king maker in Ahammednagar. After its extinction, transferred his service to Bijapur. Shivaji spent his childhood under the protection of a Brahmin official called Dadaji Kondadev. While Jija bai built up the character of Shivaji, Kond Dev trained him in the art of fighting and administration. Shivaji aimed to create an independent kingdom of his own right from the beginning of his career. His primary aim was to carve out an independent kingdom for himself in Maharashtra. M.G. Ranade has cleared the aim of Shivaji by dividing events of his life into four parts. During the first six years of his political career, Shivaji simply desired to organize the neighbouring Maratha chiefs under him. He had to fight against Bijapur to achieve this purpose. During the course of next ten years he encouraged Marathanationalism and attempted to extend the territory under his rule. He



fought against the ablest nobles of Bijapur during this period and succeeded. He came in to conflict with the growing power of the Mughals towards the Deccan. He succeeded against the Mughals as well. Between the period 1674-80 he legalized his kingdom, held his coronation and assumed the title of Chatrapathi. Even during the period of Tutelage of Kunda Dev, Shivaji started capturing hill forts near Poona against his wishes. At the age of 20 years he started his adventures on a wider scale. Many courageous Maratha leaders gathered round him. In 1643 Shivaji captured the fort of the Singhgarh from Bijapur and then gradually the forts of Chaken, Purandar, Varanati, Torna, Supa, Tikona, Lohgarch, Rairi were taken over. Shivaji had won over many of his officers of Bijapur to his side by bringing them. The conquest of Javli made him indisputed master.

Shivaji came into conflict with the Mughals first in 1657. Aurangzeb had attacked Bijapur, which sought his help. Shivaji could realize that it was in his interest also to check the power of the Mughals from penetrating in the Deccan. Therefore he helped Bijapur and attacked south west territory of the Mughals. He looted Junar and troubled the Mughals at several places. But when Bijapur made peace with the Mughals, he also stopped raids on Mughals territory. With Aurangzeb away in the north, Shivaji resumed his career of conquest at the expense of Bijapur. He captured Konkan. Bijapur now decided to take stern action. Afzalkhan who was a reputed commander of Bijapur was deputed for his task in 1659. With a large army, he tried to terrify Shivaji by wholesale destruction of temples, agriculture and populace within his territories. Afzalkhan assured Shivaji that if he would come to meet him in person and agreed to accept the suzerainty of Bijapur he would so give the additional territory as Jagir. Shivaji got scant of Afzalkhan and decided to pay him in some coins. He agreed to meet Afzalkhan after a solemn promise of his personal safety. Convinced that this was a trap, Shivaji went prepared and murdered Khan in a cunning but daring manner. Shivaji put his leaderless army to rout, captured all goods and equipment including his artillery. Flushed with victory, the Maratha troops overran the powerful fort of Panhala and poured in to south Konkan and Kolhapur districts making extensive conquest.

Shivaji's exploits made him a legendary figure. His name passed from house to house and was credited with magical powers. People flocked to him from the Maratha areas to join his army. Meanwhile, Aurangzeb was anxiously watching the rise of a Maratha power so near the Mughal frontier. Aurangzeb instructed the new Mughal governor of Deccan, Shaista Khan to invade Shivaji's dominion. At first the war went badly for Shivaji. Shaista Khan occupied Poona and made it his headquarter. He sent army to capture Konkan from Shivaji. The Mughal secured their contest on north Konkan. Driven into a corner Shivaji made bold stroke. He infiltrated in to the camp of Shaista Khan at Poona and at night attacked Khan, killing his son, and one of his captains and wounding Khan. This daring attack put the Khan in to disgrace. In anger Aurangzeb transferred Shaista Khan to Bengal.



Meanwhile Shivaji made another bold move. He attacked Surat and looted it to his heart's content, returning home laden with treasure. After the failure of Shaista Khan Aurangzeb deputed Raja Jai Singh of Amber to deal with Shivaji. Full military and administrative authority was conferred on Jai Singh so that he was not in any way dependent on the Mughal victory in the Deccan, unlike his predecessors, Jai Singh did not underestimate the Marathas. He made careful diplomatic and military preparation. He appealed to all the rivals and opponents of Shivaji in order to isolate Shivaji. Marching to Poona, Jai Singh decided to strike at the heart of Shivaji territories fort Purandar where Shivaji had lodged his family and his treasure. Jai Singh closely besieged Purandar (1665) by acting off all the Maratha attempts to relieve it. With the fall of the fort at sight, Shivaji opened negotiation with Jai Singh. In 1665 the treaty of Purandar was signed between two. The following terms were agreed upon.

1. Shivaji surrendered 23 of his forts, and territory which yielded annual revenue of 4 lakhs of rupees.
2. Shivaji was left with only 12 forts and territory which yielded annual revenue of one lakh rupees.
3. Shivaji accepted the suzerainty of the Mughals.
4. Shivaji agreed to support the Mughals against Bijapur.

5. Shivaji agreed to pay forty lakhs of rupees to the Mughals in 13 years. This term of the treaty embittered the relation of Bijapur with Shivaji. In 1666 Shivaji went to Agra to meet emperor Aurangzeb, Jai Singh tempted Shivaji that there was every possibility of getting governorship of Mughals territory in the Deccan if he would go to meet the emperor in person. He assured Shivaji of his personal safety. Shivaji visited Agra along with his son Shambhaji. He was presented before the emperor by Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh. The emperor neglected his presence and offered him a place to stand among the officers of the rank of 5,000 mansab. Shivaji felt humiliated and left the court immediately. Ram Singh kept Shivaji in the Jaipur Bhavan but virtually he was a prisoner there, since Shivaji had come to Agra on Jai Singh's assurance, Aurangzeb wrote to Jai Singh for advice. Jai Singh strongly argued for a lenient treatment for Shivaji. But before any decision could be taken, Shivaji escaped from detention. There is no doubt that Shivaji's visit to Agra proved to be a turning point in Mughal relations with the Marathas. Aurangzeb attached little value to the alliance with Shivaji. For him Shivaji was just a petty bhumiya (land holder). In 1670 AD Shivaji again started fighting against the Mughals and succeeded in capturing many forts from among those which he had surrounded by the treaty of Purandar. He conquered forts like Singhgarh, Purandar, Kalyan Mahuli etc. and successfully raided the territories of the Mughals in Deccan. He also plundered Surat in 1670 for the second time. Thus within a few years; Shivaji captured many forts and territories from the Mughals and Bijapur. In 1674 Shivaji held his coronation, assumed the title Chatrapathi and made Raigarh his capital. In 1677-78 AD Shivaji attacked east Karnatak on the pretext of getting share of his father's jagir.

from his brother. He then conquered the forts of Jinji and Vellore and the territory between rivers Tungabhadra and Kaveri in Karnataka. The Karnataka expedition was the last major expedition of Shivaji. Shivaji died in 1680 shortly after his return from the Karnataka expedition.

### **Ashtapradhan**

Shivaji had laid the foundation of a sound system of administration. His administrative system was largely borrowed from the administrative practices of the Deccan state. Like all other medieval rulers, Shivaji was a despot with all powers concentrated in his hands. He possessed all executive and legislative power. 'Shivaji' was a great organizer and constructive civilian administrator. One of the novelties of Shivaji's administration was the introduction of Marathi language as the state language.

The king was at the helm of the affairs. The administration was divided into eight departments headed by ministers who are some times called Ashtapradhan. The eight ministers were:

- (1) Peshwa who looked after the finances and general administration.
- (2) Sari-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 ashtapradhan 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

### **(i) Provincial and Local Administration**

The provincial administration was also organized on the Deccani and Mughal system. All the provincial units already existed 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 havaldar. Then there were Mauzas or villages which were the lowest unit of administration. At the level of village, Kulkarni used to keep 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. Army. Cavalry and infantry constituted the primary part of the army of Shivaji. The cavalrymen were called the bargirs. They were provided horses by the state while the silahdars purchased their armies and horses themselves. The pagacavalry was well organized. Twenty five horsemen formed a unit which was placed under a havildar. Shivaji preferred to give cash salaries to the regular soldiers, though some time the chief received revenue grants strict disciplines was maintained in the army. The plunder taken by each soldier during campaign was strictly accounted for, forts and security occupied an important place in the army organization of Shivaji. Shivaji maintained a navy as well. Shivaji had 400 ships of different kind. The navy was divided into two parts and each part was commanded by Darive Nayak and Mai Nayak respectively.

### **Finance and Revenue.**

The revenue system seems to have been patterned on the system of Malik Ambar land revenue; Trade Tax etc. were the primary source of the fixed income of Shivaji. But income from these sources was not sufficient to meet the expenditure of the state. Therefore Shivaji collected the chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the territory which was either under his enemies or under his own influence. The chauth was 1/4 part of the income of the particular territory while the Sardeshmukhi was 1/10. Shivaji collected these taxes simply by force of his army. These taxes constituted primary source of the income of Shivaji and afterwards helped in the extension of the power and territory of the Marathas. The revenue system of Shivaji was Rytowari in which the state kept direct contact with peasants. Shivaji mostly avoided the system of assigning Jagir to his officers and whenever he assigned Jagir to them, the right of collecting the revenue was kept with state officials.

## Module III: Cultural Synthesis

### Sufism and Bhakti movement

Sufism or *tasawwuf* is the name of mystical tendencies and movements in Islam. It aims at establishing direct communion between God and man through personal experience. Every religion gives rise to mystical tendencies in its fold at a particular stage of its evolution. In this sense, sufism was a natural development within Islam based on the spirit of Quranic simplicity. The sufis while accepting the Shariat, did not confine to its religious practices of formal adherence and stressed cultivation of religious experience aimed at direct perception of God. It would be more appropriate to understand the bhakti movements of medieval India in their immediate historical context rather than searching for far-fetched sources of inspiration in any particular religion. However, Islam did influence the bhakti cults and, in particular, the popular monotheistic movements in other ways. Non-conformist saints such as Kabir and Nanak picked up some of their ideas from Islam. These include their uncompromising faith in one God, their rejection of incarnation, their conception of nirguna bhakti and their attack on idolatry and the caste system. But they did not uncritically borrow from Islam and rejected many elements of orthodox Islam. The Vaishnava bhakti movements, on the other hand, cannot be interpreted in terms of an influence of Islam as they neither denounced idolatry and the caste system nor the theory of incarnation. They believed in saguna bhakti. The relationship between monotheistic bhakti movement and Islam seems to have been one of mutual influence and Sufism provided the common meeting ground. Sufi concepts of *pir* and mystic union with the "beloved" (God) coincided in many respects with the non-conformist saints' concepts of guru and devotional surrender to God. Kabir is even believed to have had affiliations with Chishti Sufi saints, though concrete historical evidence is lacking. Guru Nanak's encounters with sufis are described in the *janam-sakhis*. Though the sufism and the monotheistic movement were historically independent of each other, there are many similarities including their common rejection of Hindu and Muslim orthodoxies. The interaction between them, however indirect, must have given impetus to both of them.

One modern view is associated with communal interpretation of Indian history, tends to attribute the rise of the medieval bhakti movements to alleged persecution of the Hindus and 'Muslim' rule and to the challenge that Islam is supposed to have posed to Hinduism through its doctrines of "Unity of God", equality and brotherhood. The bhakti movements were a two-pronged defensive mechanism to save the Hindu religion by purging it of such evils as caste system and idolatry and at the same time defending its basic tenets by popularizing it. The former task is believed to have been undertaken by Kabir, Nanak, etc.,

and the latter project was accomplished by Tulsidas in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Such action of the medieval bhakti movement is not borne out by evidence.

i) This theory of imagined Islamic threat to Hinduism is in essence a projection of modern communal prejudices into the past. By the time Islam reached India; the Islamic doctrine of "brotherhood" had lost much of its appeal and social, economic and racial inequalities had crept into the Muslim society. The Turkish class possessed a strong sense of racial superiority and looked upon "low caste" Indian converts to Islam as low-born and not fit for high offices.

ii) The Hindu population continued to observe their religious practices and to celebrate the religious festivals. In fact, the overwhelming majority of population were Hindu even in the vicinity of Delhi, the capital of the Sultanate.

iii) The monotheistic saints denounced the aspects of both orthodox Islam and their ritualistic practices.

iv) To assume that all monotheistic and vaishnava bhakti saints were reacting on behalf of the Hindus to Islamic threat is not convincing because kabir and other "low caste" saints hardly saw any unity of purpose with the saints belonging to the vaishnava bhakti cults.

There arose during the Sultanate period (13th-15th century) many popular socio-religious movements in North and East India, and Maharashtra. Emphasis on bhakti and religious equality were two common features of these movements: Almost all the bhakti movements of the Sultanate period have been related to one South Indian Vaishnava acharya or the other. For these reasons, many scholars believe that the bhakti movements of the Sultanate period were a continuation or resurgence of the older bhakti movement. They argue that there existed philosophical and ideological links between the two either due to contact or diffusion. Thus, Kabir and other leaders of non-conformist monotheistic movements in North India are believed to have been the disciples of Ramananda who, in turn, is believed to have been connected with Ramanuja's philosophical order. Similar claims have been made that Chaitanya, the most significant figure of the Vaishnava movement in Bengal, belonged to the philosophical school of Madhava. This movement is also believed to have been connected with Nimbarka's school because of its emphasis on 'Krishna' bhakti. There are undoubtedly striking similarities between the older bhakti tradition of South India and various bhakti-movements that flourished in the Sultanate and Mughal periods. If we exclude the popular monotheistic movements of Kabir, Nanak and other "low" caste saints, the two sets of movements can be shown to have possessed many more common features. For example, like the South Indian bhakti movement, the Vaishnava bhakti movements of North and Eastern India and Maharashtra, though

egalitarian in the religious sphere, never denounced the caste system, the authority of Brahmanical scriptures and the Brahmanical privileges as such.

Consequently, like the South Indian bhakti, most of the vaishnava movements of the later period were ultimately assimilated into the Brahmanical religion, though in the process of interaction, the latter itself underwent many changes. However, the similarities end here. Bhakti movement was never a single movement except in the broad doctrinal sense of a movement which laid emphasis on bhakti and religious equality. The bhakti movements of medieval India differed in many significant respects not only from the older South Indian bhakti tradition but also among themselves. Each one of them had its own regional identity and socio-historical and cultural contexts. Thus, the non-conformist movements based on popular monotheistic bhakti contained features that were essentially different from various vaishnava bhakti movements, Kabir's notion of bhakti was not the same as that of the medieval vaishnava saints such as Chaitanya or Mirabai. Within the movement, the historical context of Maharashtra bhakti was different from that of the Bengal vaishnavism or North Indian bhakti movement of Ramanand, Vallabha, Surdas and Tulsidas. During the later period, when vaishnava bhakti movement crystallised into sects, there arose frequent disputes between them which sometimes even turned violent. Among all the bhakti movements of the period between the 14th and 17th century, the popular monotheistic movements of Kabir, Nanak, Surdas and other "lower" caste saints stand out fundamentally different. Popular Monotheistic Movement and Vaishnava Bhakti movement both these movements arose in Northern India at the same time, that is, in the centuries following the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate and advent of Islam in that part of the country. For this reason, the rise of both the movements is quite often attributed to certain common causes such as the influence of Islam on Hinduism. However, the causes and sources of the two movements and the factors exerting influence on them were quite diverse. It will be clear from the following discussion that a cause which explains one movement may not do so in the case of the other. This is so because the popular monotheistic movements arose and reached their peak in the Sultanate period, while the Vaishnava movements began in the Sultanate period but reached their climax during the Mughal period.

### **Kabir**

Kabir (c.1440-1518) was the earliest and undoubtedly the most powerful figure of the monotheistic movements that began in the fifteenth century. He belonged to a family of weavers (Julaha) who were indigenous converts to Islam. He spent greater part of his life in Banaras (Kashi). The monotheistic saints who succeeded him either claimed to be his disciples or respectfully mention him. His verses were included in the Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth* in large numbers than those of other monotheists. All this indicates his pre-eminent position among the monotheists. Raidas (or Ravidas) most probably belonged to the generation next to Kabir's. He was a tanner by caste. He also lived in Banaras and was



influenced by Kabir's ideas. Dhanna was a fifteenth century Jat peasant from Rajasthan. Other prominent saints of the same period were Sen (a barber) and Pipa.

### **Merabai**

Mira Bai, was a 16th century [Hindu mystic](#) poet and devotee of [Krishna](#). She is celebrated as a poet and has been claimed by the North Indian Hindu tradition of [Bhakti](#) saints.

Meera was born into a [Rathore](#) royal family of [Kudki](#) district of Pali, [Rajasthan](#), India. She is mentioned in [Bhaktamal](#), confirming that she was widely known and a cherished figure in the Indian bhakti movement culture by about 1600 CE. Most legends about Meera mention her fearless disregard for social and family conventions, her devotion to god Krishna, her treating Krishna as her husband, and she being persecuted by her [in-laws](#) for her religious devotion. She has been the subject of numerous folk tales and [biographic](#) legends, which are inconsistent or widely different in details.

Thousands of devotional poems in passionate praise of Lord [Krishna](#) are attributed to Meera in the Indian tradition, but just a few hundred are believed to be authentic by scholars, and the earliest written records suggest that except for two poems, most were written down only in the 18th century. Many poems attributed to Meera were likely composed later by others who admired Meera. These poems are commonly known as [bhajans](#), and are popular across India. Hindu temples, such as in Chittorgarh fort, are dedicated to Mira Bai's memory. Legends about Meera's life, of contested authenticity, have been the subject of movies, comic strips and other popular literature in modern times.

Authentic records about Meera are not available, and scholars have attempted to establish Meera's biography from secondary literature that mention her, and wherein dates and other details are available. These records suggest Meera was a [Rajput](#) princess born in about 1500 (likely 1498) in [Merta](#), Rajasthan in northwest India.

After the death of her father-in-law, Vikram Singh became the ruler of Mewar. According to a popular legend, her in-laws tried many times to execute her, such as sending Meera a glass of poison and telling her it was nectar or sending her a basket with a snake instead of flowers. According to the hagiographic legends, she was not harmed in either case, with the snake miraculously becoming a Krishna idol (or a garland of flowers depending on the version). In another version of these legends, she is asked by Vikram Singh to go drown herself, which she tries but she finds herself floating on water. Yet another legend states that the Mughal emperor [Akbar](#) came with [Tansen](#) to visit Meera and presented a pearl necklace, but scholars doubt this ever happened because Tansen joined Akbar's court in 1562, 15 years after she died.

Similarly, some stories state that [Raidas](#) was her guru (teacher), but there is no corroborating historical evidence for this and the difference of over 100 years in the birth years for Raidas and Meera suggest this to be unlikely.

Meera's poems are lyrical padas (metric verses). While thousands of verses are attributed to her, scholars state that only a small fraction of those are authentic. There are no surviving manuscripts of her poetry from her century, and the earliest records with two poems credited to her are from early 18th-century, more than 150 years after she died. The largest collection of poems credited to her are in 19th-century manuscripts. Scholars have attempted to establish authenticity based on both the poem and Meera being mentioned in other manuscripts as well as from style, linguistics and form.

### **Surdas**

Surdas was the foremost poet of the Krishna cult. He was a disciple of Vallabhacharya. He sang the glories of Krishna's childhood and youth in his famous Sursagar. Surdas, is a visually impaired beggar from a so-called 'untouchable' caste. The very act of choosing such a person as the 'hero' of a novel is significant. It makes the lives of the most oppressed section of society as worthy of literary reflection. We see Surdas struggling against the forcible takeover of his land for establishing a tobacco factory. As we read the story we wonder about industrialisation and its impact on society and people. Who does it serve? Must other ways of living be sacrificed for it? The story of Surdas was inspired by Gandhi's personality and ideas.

There is some disagreement regarding the exact birth date of Surdas, some scholars believing it to be 1478 AD, with others claiming it to be 1479 AD. It is the same in the case of the year of his death; it is considered to be either 1581 AD or 1584 AD. According to the limited authentic life history of Surdas, it is said that he was born in 1478/79 in the village of Runakta, Mathura although some say it was Runkta near Agra. He was born in a [Saraswat Brahmin](#) family. His father's name was Pandit Ramdas Sarswat. He started praising Lord Krishna when he was young. Surdas was born blind and because of this, he was neglected by his family. As a result, he left his home at the age of six. He started living on the banks of [Yamuna](#) river (Gaughat). Once, on a pilgrimage to [Vrindavan](#), he met [Shri Vallabhacharya](#) & became his disciple. He died in 1583/1584 near Parsouli village in [Mathura](#).

Surdas attained fame for his purity of devotion towards Lord Krishna. In one incident, Surdas falls into a well and is rescued by Lord Krishna when he calls him for help. [Radha](#) asks Krishna why he helped Surdas, to which Krishna replies it is for Surdas' devotion. Krishna also warns Radha not to go near him. She, however, does go near him, but Surdas, recognizing the divine sounds, pulls her anklets off. Radha tells him who she is but Surdas refuses to return her anklets stating that he cannot believe her as he is blind.

Krishna gives Surdas vision and allows him to ask for a boon. Surdas returns the anklets saying he has already got what he wanted (the blessings of Krishna) and asks Krishna to make him blind again as he does not want to see anything else in the world after seeing Krishna. Radha is moved by his devotion and Krishna grants his wish by making him blind again thus giving him everlasting fame.

Surdas was called the sun in the sky of Hindi literature. He is best known for his composition 'Sursagar'. This famous collection is said to have originally contained 100,000 songs; however, only 8,000 remain today. These songs present a vivid description of the childhood of Krishna.

Although Surdas is known for his greatest work — the Sur Sagar — he also composed Sur-Saravali (which is based on the theory of genesis and the festival of Holi), and Sahitya-Lahiri, devotional lyrics dedicated to the Supreme Absolute. It is as if Surdas attained a mystical union with Lord Krishna, which enabled him to compose the verse about Krishna's romance with Radha almost like an eyewitness. Surdas's verse is also credited with lifting the literary value of the Hindi language, transforming it from a crude to a pleasing tongue.

### **Guru Nanak**

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) preached his ideas much in the same way as Kabir and other monotheists, but due to various developments later his teachings led to the emergence of a new religion, Sikhism. The basic similarity of his teachings with those of Kabir and other saints and the basic ideological agreement between them makes him an integral part of the monotheistic movement. He belonged to a caste of traders called Khatri and was born in a village in Punjab now known as Nankana Sahib. In his later life he travelled widely to preach his ideas. Eventually he settled in a place in Punjab now known as Dera Baba Nanak. There he attracted large number of disciples. The hymns composed by him were incorporated in the Adigranth by the fifth Sikh Guru Arjun in 1604.

The teachings of all the saints who are associated with the monotheistic movement have certain common features which give the movement its basic unity:

- 1) Most of the monotheists belonged to the "low" castes and were aware that there existed a similarity of ideas among themselves. Most of them were aware of each other's teachings and influences. In their verses they mention each other and their predecessors in such a way as to suggest a harmonious ideological affinity among them. Thus, Kabir speaks of Raidas as "saint among saints". Raidas, in his poems, respectfully mentions the names of Kabir, Namdev, and Pipa. Kabir's influence on Nanak also is beyond dispute. It is, therefore, not surprising that the later traditions link Kabir, Dhanna, Pipa, Sen, etc. together as disciples of Ramananda. The ideological affinity among the monotheists is also clear from the inclusion of the

hymns of Kabir, Raidas etc. along with those of Nanak by, the fifth Sikh Guru Arjun in the Adi Granth.

ii) For the monotheists, there was only one way of establishing communion with God. This was also the way of the vaishnava bhakti saints, but there was one fundamental difference of perceptions: they all have been called monotheists because the uncompromising belief in one God. The monotheistic bhakti, therefore, was nirguna bhakti and not saguna which was the case with the vaishnavites who believed in various human incarnations of God. The monotheists adopted the notion of bhakti from the vaishnava- bhakti tradition but gave it a nirguna orientation. Quite often Kabir called God 'by the name, Ram. For this reason he has been called Ram-bhakta.' But Kabir himself made it clear in his utterances that the Ram he was devoted to was not the one who was born as an incarnation in the house of king Dashratha of Ayodhya or who had killed Ravana, but a formless, non-incarnate God. In addition to the loneliness of God and nirguna bhakti, the monotheists also emphasised the crucial importance of repetition of divine name, spiritual guru, community singing of devotional songs (kirtan) and companionship of saints.

iii) The monotheists followed a path which was independent domain of both Hinduism and Islam. They denied their allegiance to either of them and criticised the superstitions and orthodox elements of both the religions. They launched a vigorous ideological assault on caste system and idolatry. They rejected the authority of the Brahmans and their religious scriptures. Kabir, in his harsh and abrasive style uses ridicule as a powerful method for denouncing orthodox Brahmanism.

iv) The monotheists composed their poems in popular languages. Some of them used a language which was a mixture of different dialects spoken in various parts of North India. The monotheistic saints preferred this common language to their own native dialects because they considered it fit for the propagation of their non-conformist ideas among the masses in various regions. The use of common language is a striking feature of the movement. The monotheists also made use of popular symbols and images to propagate their teachings. Their utterances are expressed in short verses which could be remembered. Thus, for instance, Kabir's poetry is unpolished and has colloquial quality but it is essentially a poetry of the people.

v) Most of the monotheistic saints were not ascetics. They led worldly life and were married. They lived and preached among the people. They had aversion to and disdain for professional ascetics. They frequently refer to professional caste groups in their verses which would suggest that they continued to pursue their family professions. They were also not like the medieval European Christian saints who were recognised as "holy" by the Church. The expression which has been used for them and by which they themselves referred to each other is sant or

bhagat. In the adi Granth, Raidas, Dhanna, Pipa, Namdev, etc. have been listed as bhagat.

- vi) The monotheistic saints travelled widely to propagate their beliefs. Namdev, a 14th-century saint from Maharashtra travelled as far as Punjab where his teachings became so popular that they were later absorbed in the Adi-Granth. Kabir, Raidas and other saints are also believed to have travelled widely.
- vii) The ideas of Kabir and other monotheists spread to various regions and became popular among the "lower" classes. The popularity of the monotheists broke territorial barriers. This is clear from the high position accorded to Kabir in the Sikh tradition and in the Dadu panthi tradition of Rajasthan. Their continuing popularity even almost two hundred years after their time and in a distant region is clear from the way a mid-17th century Maharashtrian saint Tukaram looks upon himself as an admirer and follower of Kabir, Raidas, Sen, Gora, etc. A 17th century Persian work on comparative religion *Dabitan-i Mazahib* testifies to the continuing popularity of Kabir among the people of North India.
- viii) Despite the widespread popularity that the teachings of monotheists enjoyed among the masses, the followers of each one of the major figures in the monotheistic movement like Kabir, Raidas and Nanak gradually organized themselves into exclusive sectarian orders called panths such as Kabir panth, Raidasi panth, Nanak panth, etc. Of all these panths, the Nanak panth alone eventually crystallised into a mass religion while most of the others continue to survive till today but with a vastly reduced following and a narrow sectarian base.

### **Art and Architecture**

The Mughal emperors were great builders and they constructed many noble edifices and monuments. The Indo-Muslim style of architecture gained remarkable progress. Babar himself was a patron of art, even though he had a poor opinion of Indian artists and craftsmen. Agra was rebuilt and beautified and gardens were laid out. Humayun had little time to engage himself in artistic activities; but a mosque of his is still seen in Punjab decorated in Persian style. In the reign of Akbar, Mughal architecture reached a high level of perfection. The emperor took keen interest in buildings. In the words of AbulFazl, "He planned splendid edifices and dressed the works of his mind and heart in garments of stone and clay". He favoured both the Hindu and Persian styles of architecture. At the same time, he borrowed artistic ideas from a variety of sources and applied them in the construction of his edifices and monuments. It may also be noted that, unlike Shah Jahan who had an attraction for white marble for the construction of his buildings, Akbar preferred red sandstone. The tomb of Humayun at Delhi is one of the earliest of Akbar's buildings. It was

designed after Timur's tomb at Samarkhand and represented a striking departure from the traditional Indian style. It was surrounded by a large geometrical garden and enclosed by a high wall. The Red Fort at Agra which contained as many as 500 buildings of red sandstone was another outstanding achievement of Akbar in the field of architecture. The *Jahangiri Mahal* and *Akbari Mahal* located within the Agra Fort were designed and built by Indian craftsmen who were experts in the construction of Hindu temples and Buddhist *Viharas*.

The greatest achievement of Akbar as a builder was the city of Fatehpur Sikri. Smith has observed that "nothing like Fatehpur Sikri ever was created or can be created again". He calls it a "romance in stone", while Fergusson finds in it "the reflex of the mind of a great man". The city of Fatehpur Sikri is a cluster of religious edifices and residential mansions built mainly of red sandstone. The *Jam-i-Masjid* built after the model of the mosque at Mecca is considered to be the glory of Fatehpur Sikri and is one of the largest mosques in India. The *Buland Darwaza* which is 176 ft. high is a landmark of the city. It is the highest gateway in India and one of the biggest of its kind in the world. The tomb of the Sufi saint Shaik Salim Chisti specially built of white marble is another star attraction at Fatehpur Sikri. It contains carvings noted for "the richness and delicacy of details". The house of Birbal, a double-storeyed building which has been lavishly decorated, combines within itself the best features of the Hindu and Muslim style of architecture. The *Diwan-i-Khas* which accommodated Akbar's household has an architectural beauty of its own. Its ornamental work is exceedingly delicate. The *Diwan-i-Am* is also a richly carved edifice. Akbar used to sit in its balcony whenever he held his *Durbar*. In addition to the buildings mentioned above, there are other important buildings also at Fatehpur Sikri, viz., the *Panch Mahal*, the house of Mariam, Turkey Sultan's building, Hathi Pole (the Elephant Gate), Hiran Minar, etc. Jahangir who was more interested in fine arts and gardening did not take much interest in buildings. Still his reign is noted for two remarkable edifices, viz., Akbar's tomb at Sikandra and the tomb of Itimad-ud-daulah, the father of Nurjahan, at Agra. The former building shows a combination of Hindu and Muslim styles while the latter is the first full edifice built entirely of white marble in the Mughal period.

The reign of Shah Jahan was the Golden Age of Mughal architecture. It may be noted at the outset that his architecture is different from that of Akbar in some of its features. He preferred white marble to red sandstone which was favoured by Akbar. Percy Brown even calls Shah Jahan's reign "a reign of marble". His buildings have some of the finest inlay work in the world. The carvings are richer and more delicate. Though both Hindu and Muslim styles continued to influence the artist there is much less evidence of mixture of the two styles in the architectural works of Shah Jahan than in those of Akbar or Jahangir. One of the earliest architectural works of Shah Jahan was the Red Fort which he built in the new city of Shajahanabad near Delhi. It was modeled after the Agra Fort and contained 50 palaces, the most notable among them being the *Moti Mahal*, *Sheesh Mahal* and *Rang*



*Mahal*. The *Juma Masjid* at Delhi and the *Moti Masjid* at Agra are massive structures noted for the architectural grandeur. The former was built by Shah Jahan for the ceremonial attendance of himself and the members of his court. The *Moti Masjid* was built by the emperor in honour of his daughter Jahanara and is one of the most beautiful mosques in the world. Shah Jahan also built at Lahore certain buildings like the tombs of Jahangir, Nur Jahan, and Ali Mardan Khan and they are also typical examples of Mughal architecture. The most outstanding of Shah Jahan's edifices is the world famous Taj Mahal built by him at Agra as a mausoleum for his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Built of pure white marble it has won praise from all quarters. It has been variously described by art critics as a "dream in marble designed by Titans and finished by jewelers", "a white gleaming tear drop on the brow of time" and "India's noble tribute to the grace of Indian womanhood". The Taj is supposed to have been built at enormous cost spread over a period of 22 years. A unique feature of the building is that its colour changes in the course of the day and in moonlight. An admirer of the Taj even said of it that "it is Mumtaz Mahal herself, radiant in her youthful beauty, who lingers on the banks of the Jamuna in the early morn, in the glowing mid-day sun or in the silver moonlight". The Taj has survived to this day as the king of all buildings in India and the most splendid monument of conjugal love and fidelity in the world. With the accession of Aurengzeb the Mughal style of architecture declined. The emperor, being economy-minded, built very little. The best of his buildings was the Badshahi mosque at Lahore which was completed in 1764. Though not of much architectural value, it is noted for its great size and sound construction. Aurengzeb also built a mosque with lofty minarets on the site of the Viswanatha temple at Benares and another one at Mathura at the site of the Kesava Deva temple. His own tomb which he built at Aurangabad is also a notable specimen of Mughal architecture. The Mughals were lovers of the art of painting. Humayun is said to have patronised two master painters, Abdus Samad and Mir Sayyid Ali. They were ordered to paint the famous *Dastan-i-Amir Hamzah*. Akbar during his reign brought about the synthesis of Indian and Persian styles. Indian themes and landscapes, and colours gained importance. European style was introduced by Portuguese priests in Akbar's court. The most famous of painters were Basawan, Daswanath and Haribans, Abdus Samad and Farruk Beg. Jahangir was an admirer of art and a keen collector of historical paintings. Under his influence, Persian influence was eliminated and a new style developed which was purely Indian. Jahangir had a trained eye for the niceties of the art and he claimed that he could identify the hands of several artists in a composite picture. Portrait painting reached a climax in his period. In his time the most famous painters were Aga Raja, Muhammad Nadir and Muhammad Murad, Bishan Das, Manohar and Govardhan. After his death the art of painting started declining. However, with the artists dispersing to various provincial capitals, development of various other schools of painting took place—the Rajasthani, the Pahari, etc. Besides the Mughal style there grew up in this age a distinct school of painting in Rajputana. The Rajput paintings were excellent masterpieces from Hindu mythology,

village life and pastimes of the common people. Their pictures are remarkable for their brilliance and decorative effect as well as for their spiritual and emotional impact. Mughal painting had its themes like court scenes, battle scenes and hunting besides other portraits.

### **Indo-Saracenic art**

Indo- Saracenic art or Indo- Muslim art had its beginning with the establishment of Delhi Sultanate. Confluence of different architectural styles had been attempted during the [Delhi Sultanate](#) and [Mughal](#) periods. Turkish and Mughal conquest in the Indian subcontinent, introduced new concepts in the already rich architecture of India. The prevailing style of architecture was [trabeate](#), employing pillars, [beams](#) and [lintels](#). The Turkic invaders brought in the arcuate style of construction, with its [arches](#) and beams, which flourished under [Mughal](#) patronage and by incorporating elements of Indian architecture, especially [Rajasthani Temple architecture](#)

### **Qutb Minar**

Qutb Minar, at 72 meters, is the tallest brick minaret in the world. Qutb Minar, along with the ancient and medieval monuments surrounding it, form the [Qutb Complex](#), which is a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#). The tower is located in the [Mehrauli](#) area of [Delhi, India](#). The [Minaret of Jam](#) a UNESCO World Heritage Site in western Afghanistan is thought to have been a direct inspiration for the Qutb Minar in Delhi, which was also built by the Ghori Dynasty. Made of red sandstone and marble, Qutb Minar is a 73-meter (240 feet) tall tapering tower with a diameter measuring 14.32 meters (47 feet) at the base and 2.75 meters (9 feet) at the peak. Inside the tower, a circular staircase with 379 steps leads to the top. [Qutb Minar station](#) is the closest [station](#) on the [Delhi Metro](#).

In 1200 AD, [Qutb al-Din Aibak](#), the founder of the [Delhi Sultanate](#) started construction of the Qutb Minar. In 1220, Aibak's successor and son-in-law [Iltutmish](#) added three storeys to the tower. In 1369, lightning struck the top storey, destroying it completely. So, [Firoz Shah Tughlaq](#) carried out restoration work replacing the damaged storey with two new storeys every year, made of red sandstone and white marble.

Qutb Minar is surrounded by several historically significant monuments, which are historically connected with the tower and are part of the [Qutb Complex](#). These include the [Iron Pillar of Delhi](#), Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, Alai Darwaza, the Tomb of Iltutmish, Alai Minar, Ala-ud-din's Madrasa and Tomb, and the Tomb of Imam Zamin. Other minor monuments include Major Smith's Cupola and Sanderson's Sundial

The Minar is made of bricks covered with Iron intricate carvings and verses from the [Qur'an](#). The Minar comprises several superposed flanged and [cylindrical](#) shafts, separated by [balconies](#) carrying [Muqarnas corbels](#). The first three storeys are made of red sandstone; the fourth and fifth and sixth storeys are of marble and sandstone. At the foot of

the tower is the Quwwat ul Islam [Mosque](#). The minar tilts just over 65 cm from the vertical, which is considered to be within safe limits, although experts have stated that monitoring is needed in case rainwater seepage further weakens the foundation. The nearby 7 meters high [Iron Pillar](#) from [Gupta empire](#) is a metallurgical curiosity. The pillar standing in the [Qutb complex](#) has Brahmic inscriptions on it and predates the Islamic minar

### **Indo-Persian art**

Indo-Persian art and to varying degrees also Turkic culture flourished side-by-side during the period of the Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526). The invasion of Babur in 1526, the end of the Delhi Sultanate, and the establishment of what would become the [Mughal Empire](#) would usher the golden age of Indo-Persian culture with particular reference to the art and architecture of the Mughal era.

The Mughal Era to the [British Raj](#): [Persian](#) persisted as the language of the Mughal regime up to and including the year 1707 which marked the death of the Emperor Aurangzeb, generally considered the last of the "Great Mughals". Thereafter, with the decline of the Mughal empire, the 1739 invasion of Delhi by [Nader Shah](#) and the gradual growth initially of the [Hindu Marathas](#)<sup>[3]</sup> and later the [European](#) power within the South Asia, Persian or Persian culture commenced a period of decline although it nevertheless enjoyed patronage and may even have flourished within the many regional "empires" or kingdoms of South Asia including that of the Sikh "Maharaja" [Ranjit Singh](#)(r. 1799–1837).

Persian as a language of governance and education was abolished in 1839 by the [British](#) and the last Mughal emperor [Bahadur Shah Zafar](#), even if his rule was purely symbolic or ceremonial, was overthrown in 1857 by the British.

### **Taj Mahal**

The [Taj Mahal](#) represents the finest and most sophisticated example of [Mughal architecture](#). Its origins lie in the moving circumstances of its commission and the culture and history of an Islamic [Mughal empire](#)'s rule of large parts of India. The distraught [Mughal Emperor](#) commissioned the [mausoleum](#) upon the death of his favorite wife [Mumtaz Mahal](#).

Today it is one of the most famous and recognisable buildings in the world and while the [domed marble mausoleum](#) is the most familiar part of the monument, the Taj Mahal is an extensive complex of buildings and gardens that extends over 22.44 hectares (55.5 acres)

The Taj Mahal incorporates and expands on design traditions of [Persian](#) and earlier [Mughal architecture](#). Specific inspiration came from successful [Timurid](#) and Mughal buildings including; the [Gur-e Amir](#) (the tomb of Timur, progenitor of the Mughal dynasty, in [Samarkand](#)), [Humayun's Tomb](#), [Itmad-Ud-Daulah's Tomb](#) (sometimes called the *Baby Taj*), and Shah Jahan's own [Jama Masjid](#) in [Delhi](#). While earlier Mughal buildings were

primarily constructed of red [sandstone](#), Shah Jahan promoted the use of white marble inlaid with [semi-precious stones](#). Buildings under his patronage reached new levels of refinement. The tomb is the central focus of the entire complex of the Taj Mahal. It is a large, white marble structure standing on a square [plinth](#) and consists of a symmetrical building with an [iwān](#) (an arch-shaped doorway) topped by a large dome and [finial](#). Like most Mughal tombs, the basic elements are Persian in origin.<sup>[11]</sup>

The base structure is a large multi-chambered cube with [chamfered](#) corners forming an unequal eight-sided structure that is approximately 55 metres (180 ft) on each of the four long sides. Each side of the iwān is framed with a huge [pishtaq](#) or vaulted archway with two similarly shaped arched balconies stacked on either side. This motif of stacked *pishtaqs* is replicated on the chamfered corner areas, making the design completely symmetrical on all sides of the building. Four minarets frame the tomb, one at each corner of the plinth facing the chamfered corners. The main chamber houses the false [sarcophagi](#) of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan; the actual graves are at a lower level. The most spectacular feature is the marble dome that surmounts the tomb. The dome is nearly 35 metres (115 ft) high which is close in measurement to the length of the base, and accentuated by the cylindrical "drum" it sits on which is approximately 7 metres (23 ft) high. Because of its shape, the dome is often called an [onion dome](#) or *amrud* (guava dome). The top is decorated with a [lotus](#) design which also serves to accentuate its height. The shape of the dome is emphasized by four smaller domed [chattris](#) (kiosks) placed at its corners, which replicate the onion shape of the main dome. The dome is slightly asymmetrical. Their columned bases open through the roof of the tomb and provide light to the interior. Tall decorative spires (*guldastas*) extend from edges of base walls, and provide visual emphasis to the height of the dome. The [lotus](#) motif is repeated on both the *chattris* and *guldastas*. The dome and *chattris* are topped by a gilded [finial](#) which mixes traditional Persian and Hindustani decorative elements.

The main finial was originally made of gold but was replaced by a copy made of gilded [bronze](#) in the early 19th century. This feature provides a clear example of integration of traditional Persian and Hindu decorative elements. The finial is topped by a [moon](#), a typical [Islamic motif](#) whose horns point [heavenward](#). The minarets, which are each more than 40 metres (130 ft) tall, display the designer's penchant for symmetry. They were designed as working minarets—a traditional element of mosques, used by the [muezzin](#) to call the Islamic faithful to prayer. Each minaret is effectively divided into three equal parts by two working balconies that ring the tower. At the top of the tower is a final balcony surmounted by a [chattri](#) that mirrors the design of those on the tomb. The *chattris* all share the same decorative elements of a lotus design topped by a gilded finial. The minarets were constructed slightly outside of the plinth so that in the event of collapse, a typical occurrence with many tall constructions of the period, the material from the towers would

tend to fall away from the tomb. The exterior decorations of the Taj Mahal are among the finest in Mughal architecture. As the surface area changes, the decorations are refined proportionally. The decorative elements were created by applying paint, [stucco](#), stone inlays or carvings. In line with the Islamic prohibition against the use of anthropomorphic forms, the decorative elements can be grouped into either [calligraphy](#), abstract forms or vegetative motifs. Throughout the complex are [passages](#) from the [Qur'an](#) that comprise some of the decorative elements. Recent scholarship suggests that the passages were chosen by Amanat Khan.

The calligraphy on the Great Gate reads *"O Soul, thou art at rest. Return to the Lord at peace with Him, and He at peace with you."* The calligraphy was created in 1609 by a calligrapher named [Abdul Haq](#). Shah Jahan conferred the title of "Amanat Khan" upon him as a reward for his "dazzling virtuosity". Near the lines from the Qur'an at the base of the interior dome is the inscription, "Written by the insignificant being, Amanat Khan Shirazi." Much of the calligraphy is composed of florid [thuluth](#) script made of [jasper](#) or black marble inlaid in white marble panels. Higher panels are written in slightly larger script to reduce the skewing effect when viewed from below. The calligraphy found on the marble [cenotaphs](#) in the tomb is particularly detailed and delicate.

Abstract forms are used throughout, especially in the plinth, minarets, gateway, mosque, jawab and, to a lesser extent, on the surfaces of the tomb. The domes and vaults of the sandstone buildings are worked with [tracery](#) of [incised painting](#) to create elaborate geometric forms. [Herringbone](#) inlays define the space between many of the adjoining elements. White inlays are used in sandstone buildings, and dark or black inlays on the white marbles. Mortared areas of the marble buildings have been stained or painted in a contrasting color which creates a complex array of geometric patterns. Floors and walkways use contrasting [tiles](#) or blocks in [tessellation](#) patterns.

On the lower walls of the tomb are white marble [dados](#) sculpted with realistic [bas relief](#) depictions of flowers and vines. The marble has been polished to emphasise the exquisite detailing of the carvings. The dado frames and archway [spandrels](#) have been decorated with [pietra dura](#) inlays of highly stylised, almost geometric vines, flowers and fruits. The inlay stones are of yellow marble, jasper and jade, polished and levelled to the surface of the walls.

The interior chamber of the Taj Mahal reaches far beyond traditional decorative elements. The inlay work is not [pietra dura](#), but a [lapidary](#) of precious and semiprecious [gemstones](#). The inner chamber is an octagon with the design allowing for entry from each face, although only the door facing the garden to the south is used. The interior walls are about 25 metres (82 ft) high and are topped by a "false" interior dome decorated with a sun motif. Eight pishtaq arches define the space at ground level and, as with the



exterior, each lower pishtaq is crowned by a second pishtaq about midway up the wall. The four central upper arches form balconies or viewing areas, and each balcony's exterior window has an intricate screen or [jali](#) cut from marble. In addition to the light from the balcony screens, light enters through roof openings covered by chattris at the corners. The octagonal marble screen or [jali](#) bordering the cenotaphs is made from eight marble panels carved through with intricate pierce work. The remaining surfaces are inlaid in delicate detail with semi-precious stones forming twining vines, fruits and flowers. Each chamber wall is highly decorated with dado bas-relief, intricate lapidary inlay and refined calligraphy panels which reflect, in miniature detail, the design elements seen throughout the exterior of the complex. Muslim tradition forbids elaborate decoration of graves. Hence, the bodies of Mumtaz and Shah Jahan were put in a relatively plain crypt beneath the inner chamber with their faces turned right, towards [Mecca](#). Mumtaz Mahal's [cenotaph](#) is placed at the precise centre of the inner chamber on a rectangular marble base of 1.5 by 2.5 metres (4 ft 11 in by 8 ft 2 in). Both the base and [casket](#) are elaborately inlaid with precious and semiprecious gems. Calligraphic inscriptions on the casket identify and praise Mumtaz. On the lid of the casket is a raised rectangular lozenge meant to suggest a writing tablet. Shah Jahan's cenotaph is beside Mumtaz's to the western side, and is the only visible asymmetric element in the entire complex. His cenotaph is bigger than his wife's, but reflects the same elements: a larger casket on a slightly taller base precisely decorated with lapidary and calligraphy that identifies him. On the lid of the casket is a traditional sculpture of a small pen box. The pen box and writing tablet are traditional Mughal [funerary](#) icons decorating the caskets of men and women respectively. [The Ninety Nine Names of God](#) are calligraphic inscriptions on the sides of the actual tomb of Mumtaz Mahal. Other inscriptions inside the crypt include, "O Noble, O Magnificent, O Majestic, O Unique, O Eternal, O Glorious... ". The tomb of Shah Jahan bears a calligraphic inscription that reads; "He travelled from this world to the banquet-hall of Eternity on the night of the twenty-sixth of the month of [Rajab](#), in the year 1076 [Hijri](#)."

### **Agra fort**

Agra Fort is the former imperial residence of the [Mughal Dynasty](#) located in [Agra, India](#). Built by Akbar to commemorate his Gujarath expedition, It is also a [UNESCO World Heritage site](#) and is about 2.5 km northwest of its more famous sister monument, the [Taj Mahal](#). The fort can be more accurately described as a walled city.

The 380,000 m<sup>2</sup> (94-acre) fort has a semicircular plan, its chord lies parallel to the river and its walls are seventy feet high. Double ramparts have massive circular bastions at intervals, with [battlements](#), [embrasures](#), [machicolations](#) and string courses. Four gates were provided on its four sides, one Khizri gate opening on to the river.



Two of the fort's gates are notable: the "Delhi Gate" and the "Lahore Gate." The Lahore Gate is also popularly also known as the "Amar Singh Gate," for [Amar Singh Rathore](#).

The monumental [Delhi Gate](#), which faces the city on the western side of the fort, is considered the grandest of the four gates and a masterpiece of [Akbar's](#) time. It was built circa 1568 both to enhance security and as the king's formal gate, and includes features related to both. It is embellished with inlay work in [white marble](#). A wooden [drawbridge](#) was used to cross the moat and reach the gate from the mainland; inside, an inner gateway called [Hathi Pol](#) ("Elephant Gate") – guarded by two life-sized stone [elephants](#) with their riders – added another layer of security. The drawbridge, slight ascent, and 90-degree turn between the outer and inner gates make the entrance impregnable. During a siege, attackers would employ elephants to crush a fort's gates. Without a level, straight run-up to gather speed, however, something prevented by this layout, elephants are ineffective.

[Abul Fazal](#) recorded that five hundred buildings in the beautiful designs of [Bengal](#) and [Gujarat](#) were built in the fort. Some of them were demolished by [Shahjahan](#) to make way for his white marble palaces. Most of the others were destroyed by the British between 1803 and 1862 for raising barracks. Hardly thirty Mughal buildings have survived on the south-eastern side, facing the river. Of these, the Delhi Gate and [Akbar Gate](#) and one palace – "Bengali Mahal" – are representative [Akbari buildings](#). Akbar Darwazza (Akbar Gate) was renamed Amar Singh Gate by the British. The gate is similar in design to the Delhi Gate. Both are built of red sandstone. The [Bengali Mahal](#) is built of red sandstone and is now split into [Akbari Mahal](#) and [Jahangiri mahal](#).

### **Sharqi architecture**

The Sharqi rulers of Jaunpur were known for their patronage of learning and architecture. Jaunpur was known as the [Shiraz](#) of India during this period. Most notable examples of Sharqi style of architecture in Jaunpur are the [Atala Masjid](#), the Lal Darwaja Masjid and the Jama Masjid. Though, the foundation of the Atala Masjid was laid by Firuz Shah Tughluq in 1376, it was completed only during the rule of Ibrahim Shah in 1408. Another mosque, the Jhanjhiri Masjid was also built by Ibrahim Shah in 1430. The Lal Darwaja Masjid (1450) was built during the reign of the next ruler Mahmud Shah. The Jama Masjid was built in 1470, during the rule of the last ruler Hussain Shah.

The [Sharqi kingdom](#) of [Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh](#) was founded by Malik Sarwar, a noble of [Feroz Shah Tughlaq](#), in 1394. In the wake of [Timur's](#) invasion and [sack of Delhi](#), Jaunpur took over from the capital as centre for scholars and writers. Under Sharqi rule, architecture developed under a provincial influence that resulted in an Indo-Islamic style noted for its characteristic arched pylons in the center of the facades, two storey arcades, monumental gateways and the unifying use of the depressed four-centered arch with a fringe of

ornament. Jaunpur fell to Sikander Lodi of Delhi in 1479 and many of the buildings, except the mosques, were destroyed.

The surviving architecture of Jaunpur consists exclusively of mosques. Moreover, all the surviving buildings produced under the Sharqis are located in the capital city of Jaunpur.

The Sharqi architecture of Jaunpur carries a distinct impact of [Tughlaq](#) style, the battering effect of its [bastions](#) and [minarets](#) and the use of [arch-and-beam](#) combination in the openings being the two most prominent features. However, the most striking feature of the Jaunpur style is the design of the [facade](#) of [mosques](#). It is composed of lofty propylons with sloping sides raised in the centre of the sanctuary screen. The propylons consist of huge recessed arch framed by tapeing square [minars](#), of exceptional bulk and solidity, divided into registers. The best examples can be seen in [Atala Masjid](#) (built in 1408) and [Jama Masjid](#). Evidently, the propylon was the key note of this style and occurs in no other manifestaion of Indo-Islamic architecture

### **Literature**

The Mughal period produced a vast literature. This was possible because the Mughal emperors were great patrons of literature. Apart from Persian and Hindi literature, Bengali and Punjabi literature also made strides. Some of the important source books in history were written. Babur whose mother-tongue was Turkish wrote his 'Tuzak-i-Baburi' (Memories of Babur) in Turki. During the reign of Akbar, it was translated into Persian. He patronized several scholars. During his time, his sister Gulabandan Begum wrote 'Humayunnama'. Humayun also constructed a big library. In fact his death took place on account of a fall from the staircase of his library the period saw the production of a lot of literature of a very high standard. Most of his 'Navratans' (Nine Jewels) were great literary figures. Abul Fazal was a great historian, philosopher and scholar of the period. He is famous for two important works 'Akbarnama' and 'Ain-i-Akbari'. Badauni, a historian of fame wrote, 'Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh'. Another noted historian Nizam-ud-Din wrote 'Tabaqat-i-Akbari'. Sur Das, a blind poet Agra wrote 'Sursagar' in Brij Bhasha. Sant Tulsi Das produced the immortal 'Ramcharitmanas' in Awadhi, the eastern Hindi dialect. The period saw the production of a dictionary of Persian-Sanskrit, named 'Parsi Parkash'. 'Guru Granth Sahib', the most sacred book of the Sikhs was compiled during this period. Malik Muhammad Jayasi wrote the famous 'Padmavat'. Jahangir himself wrote his autobiography 'Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri'. Other important literary and historical works were 'Iqbalnam-i-Jahangir' and 'Masir-i-Jahangir'. Shah Jahan's courtier Abul Hamid Lahori wrote 'Padshanama'. Prince Dara Shikoh was a great scholar of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. On account of his patronage, the 'Upanishads', the 'Bhagavad-Gita', the 'Yoga Vashista' and the 'Ramayana' were translated in Persian. The most important work during the period was

‘Fatwa-i-Alamgiri’—a digest of Muslim law. Other works were ‘Muntakhab-ul ‘-a famous history by Khafi Khan and ‘Nuskho-i- Dilkusha’ by Bhimsen.

### Amir Khusrau

Amir Khusraw was a [Sufi](#) musician, poet and scholar. He was an iconic figure in the cultural history of the [Indian subcontinent](#). He was a [mystic](#) and a spiritual disciple of [Nizamuddin Auliya](#) of [Delhi](#). Amir Khusrau is reputed to have invented certain musical instruments like the [sitar](#) and [tabla](#). He wrote poetry primarily in [Persian](#), but also in [Hindavi](#). A vocabulary in verse, the *h liq B r*, containing Arabic, Persian, and [Hindavi](#) terms is often attributed to him. He is regarded as the "*father of [Qawwali](#)*" (a devotional music form of the Sufis in the [Indian subcontinent](#)), and introduced the [ghazal](#) style of song into India, both of which still exist widely in India and Pakistan. He is also credited with introducing Persian, Arabic and Turkish elements into [Indian classical music](#) and was the originator of the [khayal](#) and [tarana](#) styles of music.

Khusrau was an expert in many styles of Persian poetry which were developed in [medieval Persia](#), from [Kh q n 's qasidas](#) to [Nizami's khamsa](#). He used 11 metrical schemes with 35 distinct divisions. He has written in many verse forms including ghazal, masnavi, qata, rubai, do-baiti and tarkib-band. His contribution to the development of the [ghazal](#), is significant.

Amir Khusrou was born in [Patiyali](#) in [Etah](#), Uttar Pradesh. His father, Amir Saif-ud-Din Mahm d, was a [Turkic](#) officer and a member of the Lachin tribe of [Transoxania](#), Central Asia, themselves belonging to the [Kara-Khitais](#). At the invasion of [Genghis Khan](#), Saifuddin migrated from his hometown Kesh, near Samarkand, to Balkh. Saifuddin was then the chieftain of the Hazara. Shamsuddin Iltutmish, the Sultan of Delhi, welcomed them to Delhi. He provided shelter to the exiled princes, artisans, scholars and rich nobles. In 1230, he was granted a fief in the district of Patiyali.

Amir Saifuddin married Bibi Daulatnaz, who was the daughter of Rawat Arz, the famous war minister of [Balban](#), and belonged to the [Rajput tribes](#) of [Uttar Pradesh](#). They had four children, three sons and a daughter. Amir Khusro was one among them born in the year 1252-53 CE in Patiyali. His father Saifuddin died in 1260 CE.

Khusrau was an intelligent child. He started learning and writing poetry at the age of eight. After the death of his father, he came to Delhi to his maternal grandfather Imadul Mulk's house. In 1271 CE, when Khusrau was 20 years old, his grandfather who was 113 years old died. His mother brought him up after his death. Amir Khusrau is called the "Parrot of India"

Khusro was a Royal poet under Sultan Aalauddin. Aalauddin due to his righteous nature and for the moral wellness his empire banned all the intoxicants from his kingdom. Khusro

contributed in Sultans chastisement movement. He took the responsibility of discipleship. Under his watch he accepted all kinds of people who were rich or poor, high in social status or low, nobles or beggars, educated or uneducated, fortunate or unfortunate, city people or rustics, soldiers or priests, murids, etc. Khusro helped people, equally, to live a clean life and abstain themselves from morally harmful habits. When people did commit any sin, then they could approach Khusro and confess. Khusro helped them to get back on the right track and renewed their discipleship. He started the new regime for daily prayers and everybody started following it. Whether it was a man or woman or young child, everyone started gathering together to offer daily prayers. This even included the late morning prayers. Even the high end of the society people with money and status started attending these prayers. This lot included royal secretaries, clerks, sepoys, slaves, etc. Because of Khusros praying sessions or barakah, people started concentrating on the pious things and got involved in tasawwuf or mysticism of life. Some of them even turned to renunciation or tark and got involved in devoutness. Even towards the end of Sultan Alauddin's sovereignty nobody in his kingdom gave into the practice of drinking liquor or gambling or taking to any indecent ways of living. Everybody lived in complete harmony and followed the goodness taught by the religion. The effects of teachings of Khusro was so strong and widespread that it is said that even the shop keeper stopped lying, cheating and under-weighting to make more profits. He even entertained the scholars from all walks of life and discussed mysticism with them. These discussions were mainly based on books on mysticism from those times like: *Fawaid-ul-Fuwad*, *Qut-ul-Uloom*, *Kashif-ul-Mahjub*, *Awarif* and *Malfuzat* of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya. People started to self-educate themselves after being in the company of Khusro, on topics like self-control and renunciation. Most of the people took to spiritual style of life and followed the rules and regulation of that life very strictly.

He also catered to the cause of peaceful co-existence of Hindu-Muslim in the society. He helped the cause by writing in Hindvi language, which appealed the most to young children and elderly people. He was proud of the fact that he belonged to a Hindustani nation as in one of his books called *Ghurra-ul-Kamal* he said that he had written some of his books in Hindvi language because he is a Hindustani Turk and it is a tribute to his connection with Hindustan. He was also proud of his fluency in Hindvi language.

### **Dara shikoh**

Dara Shikoh was the eldest son and the [heir-apparent](#) of the fifth Mughal Emperor [Shah Jahan](#). His name in Persian means "as magnificent as [Dara](#)". He was favoured as a successor by his father, Shah Jahan, and his elder sister, Princess [Jahanara Begum](#), but was defeated and later killed by his younger brother, Prince Muhiuddin (later, the Emperor [Aurangzeb](#)), in a bitter struggle for the imperial throne.

The course of the history of the [Indian subcontinent](#), had Dara Shikoh prevailed over Aurangzeb, has been a matter of some conjecture among historians. Dara Shikoh was born Taragarh fort [Ajmer](#) on 28 October 1615, the eldest son of Prince Shahab ud-din Muhammad Khurram ([Shah Jahan](#)) and his second wife, [Mumtaz Mahal](#). When he was 12, his grandfather, Emperor [Jahangir](#), died, and his father succeeded as emperor. Dara's siblings included his elder sister [Jahanara Begum](#) and their younger siblings [Shah Shuja](#), [Roshanara Begum](#), [Aurangzeb](#), [Murad Bakhsh](#), and [Gauhara Begum](#). [Aurangzeb](#) became the sixth Mughal Emperor. Dara was close to his elder sister and Aurangzeb.

Dara Shikoh is widely renowned as an enlightened paragon of the harmonious coexistence of heterodox traditions on the Indian subcontinent. He was an erudite champion of mystical religious speculation and a poetic diviner of syncretic cultural interaction among people of all faiths. This made him a heretic in the eyes of his orthodox brother and a suspect eccentric in the view of many of the worldly power brokers swarming around the Mughal throne. Dara Shikoh was a follower of the [Persian "perennialist"](#) mystic [Sarmad Kashani](#), as well as [Lahore's](#) famous [Qadiri Sufi](#) saint [Hazrat Mian Mir](#), whom he was introduced to by [Mullah Shah Badakhshi](#) (Mian Mir's spiritual disciple and successor). Mian Mir was so widely respected among all communities that he was invited to lay the foundation stone of the Golden Temple in Amritsar by the Sikhs.

Dara Shikoh subsequently developed a friendship with the seventh Sikh Guru, [Guru Har Rai](#). Dara Shikoh devoted much effort towards finding a common mystical language between Islam and [Hinduism](#). Towards this goal he completed the translation of fifty [Upanishads](#) from their original [Sanskrit](#) into [Persian](#) in 1657 so that they could be studied by Muslim scholars. His translation is often called *Sirr-e-Akbar* ("The Greatest Mystery"), where he states boldly, in the introduction, his speculative hypothesis that the work referred to in the [Qur'an](#) as the "*Kitab al-maknun*" or the *hidden book*, is none other than the [Upanishads](#).<sup>[18]</sup> His most famous work, [Majma-ul-Bahrain](#) ("The Confluence of the Two Seas"), was also devoted to a revelation of the mystical and pluralistic affinities between [Sufic](#) and [Vedantic](#) speculation.

The library established by Dara Shikoh still exists on the grounds of [Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University](#), [Kashmiri Gate](#), [Delhi](#), and is now run as a museum by [Archaeological Survey of India](#) after being renovated.

He was also a patron of fine arts, music and dancing, a trait frowned upon by his sibling Aurangzeb. The 'Dara Shikoh' has a collection of paintings and calligraphy assembled from the 1630s until his death. It was presented to his wife [Nadira Banu](#) in 1641–42 and remained with her until her death after which the album was taken into the royal library and

the inscriptions connecting it with Dara Shikoh were deliberately erased; however not everything was vandalised and many [calligraphy](#) scripts and paintings still bear his mark.

Dara Shikoh is also credited with the commissioning of several exquisite, still extant, examples of Mughal architecture – among them the tomb of his wife [Nadira Banu](#) in Lahore, the tomb of [Hazrat Mian Mir](#) also in Lahore, the *Dara Shikoh Library* in Delhi, the *Akhun Mullah Shah Mosque* in Srinagar in Kashmir and the *Pari Mahal* garden palace (also in Srinagar in Kashmir).

### **Tuzuk i Babari**

*B burn ma* is the name given to the memoirs of [ah r-ud-D n Mu ammad B bur](#) (1483–1530), founder of the [Mughal Empire](#) and a great-great-great-grandson of [Timur](#). It is an autobiographical work, written in the [Chagatai language](#), known to Babur as "[Turki](#)" (meaning *Turkic*), the spoken language of the [Andijan-Timurids](#). According to historian Stephen Frederic Dale, Babur's prose is highly [Persianized](#) in its sentence structure, morphology, and vocabulary, and also contains many phrases and smaller poems in [Persian](#). During [Emperor Akbar's](#) reign, the work was completely translated to [Persian](#) by a Mughal courtier, [Abdul Rah m](#).

B bur was an educated [Timurid](#) and his observations and comments in his memoirs reflect an interest in nature, society, politics and economics. His vivid account of events covers not just his life, but the [history](#) and [geography](#) of the areas he lived in and their [flora](#) and [fauna](#), as well as the people with whom he came into contact. B bur describes his fluctuating fortunes as a minor ruler in Central Asia – in which he took and lost [Samarkand](#) twice – and his move to [Kabul](#) in 1504.

There is a break in the manuscript between 1508 and 1519. By the latter date B bur is established in Kabul and from there launches an invasion into northwestern [India](#). The final section of the *B burn ma* covers the years 1525 to 1529 and the establishment of the [Mughal empire](#) in [India](#), which B bur's descendants would rule for three centuries.

The *B burn ma* is widely translated and is part of text books in no less than 25 countries mostly in Central, Western, and Southern Asia. It was first translated into English by [John Leyden](#) and [William Erskine](#) as *Memoirs of Zehir-Ed-Din Muhammed Baber: Emperor of Hindustan*<sup>[4]</sup> and later by the [British orientalist](#) scholar [Annette Susannah Beveridge](#)



## Module IV:

### Medieval South India

#### Pallavas

The Pallavas of the Kanchi were the most notable among the dynasties of the South India. The Pallavas emerged in South India in the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. At first they established power in the area called 'Tondaimandalam' in course of time they extended their authority over an extensive area covering more than Tamil Nadu and Southern Andhrapradesh. Kanchi was their capital. The history of Pallavas till the period of Simhavishnu – is shrouded in obscurity. They seem to have ruled for a period of 200 years before Simhavishnu came to the scene. Towards the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, with the accession of Simhavishnu, Pallavas attained great political and cultural achievement. He claims to have conquered the Cholas and Pandyas. He had put an end to the Kalabrahmin incursion in the South India. Simhavishnu was succeeded by his son Mahendravarman. He was one of the greatest among the Pallava rulers.

The political history of the South India from the period of 6<sup>th</sup> century to 8<sup>th</sup> century is marked by the struggle for supremacy between the Pallavas of Kanchi and Chalukyas of Badami. The struggle was for the occupation of the fertile land lying between Krishna and Tungabhadra. The Pallavas had conquered the neighbouring kingdom and marched up to the boundary of the Chalukyas. The first important event in this conflict took place in the reign of Mahendravarman I in the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. He was defeated by the Chalukya ruler Pulikesi II and was given the territory of Vengi; Narasimhavarman the next Pallava ruler defeated Pulikesi II and captured Vatapi in capital of the Chalukyas. Pulikesi II was killed and Narasimhavarman took the title Vatapikondan. The conflict between the two kingdoms was resumed in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. The Chalukya king Vikramaditya II said to have over-run Kanchi, the capital of Pallava. The Pallavas were completely defeated by the Chalukyas.

#### Pandyas

The Pandyan dynasty was an ancient [Tamil dynasty](#), one of the three [Tamil dynasties](#), the other two being the [Chola](#) and the [Chera](#). The Pandya King, along with [Chera King](#) and [Chola King](#), were referred to as the [Three Crowned Kings](#) of [Tamilakam](#).

The dynasty ruled parts of South India from around 600 BCE ([Early Pandyan Kingdom](#)) to first half of 17<sup>th</sup> century CE. They initially ruled their country [Pandya Nadu](#) from [Korkai](#), a seaport on the southernmost tip of the Indian Peninsula, and in later times moved to [Madurai](#). Fish being [their flag](#), Pandyas were experts in water management, agriculture (mostly near river banks) and fisheries and they were eminent sailors and sea traders too. *Pandyan* was well known since ancient times, with contacts, even diplomatic, reaching

the [Roman Empire](#). The Pandyan empire was home to temples including [Meenakshi Amman Temple](#) in [Madurai](#), and [Nellaiappar Temple](#) built on the bank of the river [Thamirabarani](#) in [Tirunelveli](#). The Pandya kings were called either Jatavarman or Maravarman Pandyan. From being Jains in their early ages, they became Shaivaites after some centuries of rule. [Strabo](#) states that an Indian king called Pandion sent [Augustus](#) Caesar "presents and gifts of honour". The country of the Pandyas, Pandi Mandala, was described as *Pandyan Mediterranea* in the [Periplus](#) and *Modura Regia Pandyan* by Ptolemy.

The early Pandyan Dynasty of the Sangam Literature faded into obscurity upon the invasion of the [Kalabhras](#). The dynasty revived under [Kadungon](#) in the early 6th century, pushed the Kalabhras out of the Tamil country and ruled from Madurai. They again went into decline with the rise of the [Cholas](#) in the 9th century and were in constant conflict with them. The Pandyas allied themselves with the Sinhalese and the Cheras in harassing the [Chola](#) empire until they found an opportunity for reviving their fortunes during the late 13th century. The Later Pandyas (1216–1345) entered their golden age under Maravman Sundara Pandyan and [Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan](#) (c. 1251), who expanded the empire into Telugu country, conquered [Kalinga](#) (Orissa) and invaded and conquered [Sri Lanka](#). They also had extensive trade links with the Southeast Asian maritime empires of [Srivijaya](#) and their successors. The Pandyas excelled in both trade and literature. They controlled the [pearl](#) fisheries along the South Indian coast, between Sri Lanka and India, which produced some of the finest pearls in the known ancient world. Traditionally, the legendary [Sangams](#) were held in [Madurai](#) under their patronage, and some of the Pandya Kings were poets themselves. During their history, the Pandyas were repeatedly in conflict with the [Pallavas](#), [Cholas](#), [Hoysalas](#) and finally the Muslim invaders from the [Delhi Sultanate](#).

The Islamic invasion led to the end of Pandyan supremacy in South India. 1323, [Jaffna Kingdom](#) in Sri Lanka declared its independence from the crumbling Pandyan Empire. The Pandyans lost their capital city [Madurai](#) to [Madurai Sultanate](#) in 1335. However they shifted their capital to [Tenkasi](#) and continued to rule the Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Ramanad, Sivagangai regions. Meanwhile, Madurai sultanate was replaced by Nayak governors of [Vijayanagar](#) in 1378. In 1529 Nayak governors declared independence and established [Madurai Nayak dynasty](#).

Pandya kings find mention in a number of poems in the Sangam Literature. Among them Nedunjeliam, 'the victor of Talaiyalanganam', and Mudukudimi Peruvaludi 'of several sacrifices' deserve special mention. Beside several short poems found in the [Akananuru](#) and the [Purananuru](#) collections, there are two major works – [Mathuraikkanci](#) and the [Netunalvatai](#) (in the collection of [Pattupattu](#)) – which give a glimpse into the society and commercial activities in the Pandyan kingdom during the Sangam age.

It is difficult to estimate the exact dates of these Sangam age Pandyas. The period covered by the extant literature of the Sangam is unfortunately not easy to determine with any measure of certainty. Except the longer epics [\*Silapathikaram\*](#) and [\*Manimekalai\*](#), which by common consent belong to an age later than the Sangam age, the poems have reached us in the forms of systematic anthologies. Each individual poem has generally attached to it a colophon on the authorship and subject matter of the poem. The name of the king or chieftain to whom the poem relates and the occasion which called forth the eulogy are also found.

It is from these colophons, and rarely from the texts of the poems themselves, that we gather the names of many kings and chieftains and the poets patronised by them. The task of reducing these names to an ordered scheme in which the different generations of contemporaries can be marked off one another has not been easy. To add to the confusions, some historians have even denounced these colophons as later additions and untrustworthy as historical documents.

Any attempt at extracting a systematic chronology from these poems should take into consideration the casual nature of these poems and the wide differences between the purposes of the anthologist who collected these poems and the historian's attempts to arrive at a continuous history. Pandyas are also mentioned by Greek Megasthenes where he writes about southern kingdom being ruled by women. Hiuen Tsang also mentions about it citing his Buddhist friend at Kanchi and calls it Malakutta or Malakotta but the capital city is not mentioned.

## **Cholas**

The Cholas dynasty was one of the earliest dynasties that ruled in South India. During the Sangam period it maintained its power and prestige. But after that for several centuries it lost its positions. However the Cholas revived their glory in the middle of the 9th century and maintained its supremacy for about four centuries. There were 20 rulers of the dynasty. Vijayalaya (850-875) was the founder of the dynasty. The most important rulers of the Chola dynasty were Rajaraja Chola, Rajendra Chola and Rajadhiraja Chola. The period of the Cholas was not only remarkable for political integration of South India, but for the development in art, architecture, literature, trade and maritime activities. The Chola Empire included almost the whole of Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, parts of Karnataka, Coorg, and northern part of Ceylon etc

### **Chola administration**

The Chola Empire reached its zenith during the reigns of Rajaraja (985-1014) and his son, Rajendra I (1014-1041)

Rajaraja's major achievements were:-

1. Conquering Madurai and capturing the Pandyan ruler
2. Invading northern part of Sri Lanka and making it a Chola province
3. Conquering Maldivian islands
4. Emerging as a strong naval power by destroying the strongest naval power of the Chera kingdom.

Rajendra I's major achievements were:-

1. Conquering several trans-Ganga kingdoms and assuming the title of Gangai Kondachola
2. Founding a new capital called Gangai Kondacholapuram
3. Conquering the whole of Ceylon or Sri Lanka
4. Indianisation of several lands of the south-East Asia
5. Defeating the kings of Sumatra in a naval campaign and annexing a part of Sumatran kingdom to his kingdom

Kulottunga (1178-1210) was the last greatest Chola emperor. After him, the Chola Empire collapsed and its place was taken by the Pandyas and Hoysalas.

### **Chola administration**

The Cholas established a strong systematized administration. Monarchy was the form of government and succession to the throne was based on the hereditary principle. In spite of many wars, the Chola rulers never neglected the welfare and happiness of the people. The king was advised by a council of ministers which included among others the commander in chief of the army, the treasury officer etc. The kingdom was divided into Mandalam or provinces, Valandus as districts and Kottams and Kurams. The crown princes were appointed to these provinces as viceroys. There were two classes of officials in the nadu. Those appointed by the king and hereditary chief who were expected to provide soldiers to the imperial army.

### **Local self government.**

The most important feature of the Chola administration was the working of the local self government. Extensive arrangement of local self-government at different units of administration was made by the Cholas. The Chola records mention the existence of two types of villages. Ur (ordinary village) and Brahmadaya villages. Ur had its own local assembly. It consisted of all members of the village except of the untouchables. It concerned itself with all matters concerning their village. The assembly also dispensed justice. The Brahmadaya villages are those Agraharas that were granted by the kings to brahmanas. They had their own assembly called Mahasabha, which was completely

autonomous. The Uttaramerur inscriptions throw light on the constitution and working of the village assemblies. These records make it clear that members of the Sabha were elected by lot system in the 30 families or wards into which the Brahmin settlement was divided. Each of the wards was nominated for selection in persons with prescribed qualifications. Ownership of more than one-fourth veli (an acre and a half) of land, residence in a house built on one's own site, age between 35 and 70, and knowledge of one Veda and a bhashya, were qualifications for nomination. Among the disqualifications were the continuous membership of a committee (varian) for a period of three years and failure to submit accounts in time. Those who were found guilty of incest and other great sins and their relations were debarred from membership. Similarly, those who had stolen the property of others or associated themselves with low caste people, or eaten forbidden dishes were also disqualified, women were eligible for election to the committees. The Mahasabha was a democratic assembly which was completely autonomous. It possessed sole authority over the village land and was left free in the internal management of the villages. It was the assembly which collected land revenue and paid to the royal treasury. It attended to such matters as the reclamation of forest and waste lands, supervision of endowments, settlement of disputes, about land revenue, remission of taxes in case of emergency etc. The village officers detected criminals and the members of the judicial committee called Nyayattars settled disputes and pronounced judgment. The central government interfered only in case of conflict between two assemblies. The Mahasabha resolved itself into a number of small committees each of which was in charge of some particular items of work. The members of Mahasabha were called perumakkal and of the committee variya perumakkal. The Mahasabha usually met in the temple premises or under a tree on the bank of the tank. The members of the committee were chosen by lot from among the members of the Mahasabha.

### **Uttaramerur inscription**

Uthiramerur originally existed as a [Brahmin](#) settlement. The [Pallava](#) king [Nandivarman II](#) (720–796 CE) formally established it as a [brahamdeya village](#) around 750 CE. It is believed that he donated the village to Vedic Brahmins from Srivaishanva community. A tenth century inscription states the name of the village as "Uttaramerur Chaturvedi Mangalam". Around 25 inscriptions, spanning reigns of around four Pallava kings, have been found at Uthiramerur. In the later part of the 9th century, the [Cholas](#) captured the region. There are inscriptions from the period of [Parantaka Chola I](#) (907–950), [Rajaraja Chola I](#) (985–1014), [Rajendra Chola I](#) (1012–1044) and [Kulothunga Chola I](#) (1070–1120), indicating various gifts to the temples.

The region and the village came under the [Pandya](#) authority during the 13th century. Later, the [Telugu Chola](#) ruler [Vijaya Gandagopala](#) gained control of the territory, and renamed the village *Gandagopala Chaturvedhi Managalam*. During the later period, the village was part of the territories of [Sambuvarayas](#) and [Kumara Kampana](#).

The [Vijayanagara](#) emperor [Krishnadevaraya](#) (1502–29) made contributions to the [Sundaravarada Perumal Temple](#), Subhramanya temple and Kailasanatha temple. The village was the scene of war between Lingma and Yachama during the 17th century. The [Carnatic Wars](#) were fought in the nearby [Vandavasi](#) between the [British](#) and the [French](#) during the 18th century. From the period of 14th century, a steady decline is seen in agriculture on account of the political instability.

The temple inscriptions of Uthiramerur are notable for their historical descriptions of the [rural self-governance](#). They indicate that Uthiramerur had two village assemblies: *Sabha* and *Ur*. The *Sabha* an exclusively [Brahmin](#) (priestly class) assembly, while the *Ur* was made up of people belonging to all the classes.

The earliest surviving inscriptions from Uthiramerur date to the reign of the Pallava king [Dantivarman](#) (795-846 CE). These inscriptions indicate that the *Sabha* was already a well-established and mature institution by this time. It managed land sales and an endowment fund for [dredging](#) a tank. It also assigned some duties to the *Ur* for managing the land deserted by tenants who could not afford to pay the taxes. A later inscription, from the reign of Dantivarman's successor [Nandivarman III](#) (846-869), describes the qualifications and tenure of [archaka](#) (priest) in a local temple. According to these early inscriptions, the *Sabha* assembled in the hall of the local temple. The meetings were summoned through [beating of the drums](#). The inscriptions also contain several references to *variyaars*, the executive officers subordinate to the *Sabha*.

Two later inscriptions of the Chola king [Parantaka I](#) (907–955) indicate the evolution of the administrative system. Instead of *variyaars* (who were individuals), the executive powers were given to committees called *variyaams*. Each *variyaam* constituted 6 to 12 members, depending on the importance of its functions. The first inscription, dated to 919 CE, describes the rules for electing the committee members. The second inscription, dated to 921 CE, describes some amendments to these rules to make them more practical.

### **Kudavolai system**

Kudavolai is the local administration which is found in the Cholas and it is highlighted in the studies of K A N Sastri in his *The Cholas*. It is argued that it is a form of democracy found in India and which is unique. Uttaramerur inscriptions talk about Kudavolai system. This system was a very notable and unique feature of the village administration of the Cholas. There were 30 wards in each village. A representative for each ward was elected through Kudavolai system. Names of the contestants from whom one could be chosen were written on palm leaf tickets. These palm leaves were put into a pot and shuffled. A small boy picked up palm leaves one by one from the pot. Persons whose name tickets were picked up by the boy were declared elected. Like that 30 members for thirty wards were elected. This kind of peculiar election system was called kudavolai system. Out of the thirty



elected members, twelve members were appointed to the annual committee, twelve members were appointed as the members of the garden committee and six members to the tank committee.

Members of the standing committee and a Gold committee were also elected. Qualification of the members was given. A person who could be chosen through Kudavolai system must have age from 35 to 70. He should possess one veli land and of a house built in a taxable land on his own site. He should have knowledge about vedas and mantras. Persons who killed brahmins or women or cow or children were disqualified. Thieves, drunkards and people who had undergone punishments were also disqualified from contesting election from kudavolai system. The people of the Chola Empire were more benefited by the Chola administration. Historians like K.A. Neelakanda Sastri appreciate the administrative efficiency of the Chola kings. The best aspects of the Chola administration were followed by the rulers of the later period.

### **Vijayanagar and Bahmani kingdoms**

Vijayanagar empire was from 1336 to 1542 ruled south India prior to the European advent. They have close ties with neighbouring states as well as with Portuguese. Rivalries in this period ensued among Vijaynagar, Bahmanis, the Reddis of Kondavidu (in the reaches of upper Krishna-Godavari delta), the Velamas of Rajakonda (in the lower reaches of Krishna-Godavari delta), the Telugu-Chodas (between Krishna-Godavari region) and the Gajapatis of Orissa over the control of the Krishna-Godavari delta, Tungabhadra doab and Marathwada (On account of constant clashes, the Vijaynagar boundaries kept on changing. Between 1336-1422, major conflicts took place between Vijaynagar and the Bahmanis with Telugu-Chola chiefs siding with the latter while the Velamas of Rajakonda and the Reddis of Rajahmundry joined hands with Vijaynagar. This tilted the balance largely in favour of the latter. During 1422-46, clash over the annexation of Raichur doab started between the Vijaynagar and the Bahmani rulers which resulted in Vijaynagar defeat. This greatly exposed the weaknesses of the Vijaynagar arms. It forced its rulers to reorganise the army by enlisting Muslim archers and engaging better quality horses. The Muslim archers were given revenue assignments. During this period the entire Kondavidu region was annexed to the Vijaynagar empire. Between 1465-1509 again, the Raichur doab became the cockpit of clashes. In the beginning, Vijaynagar had to surrender the western ports, i.e. Goa, Chaul and Dabhol to the Bahmanis. But, around 1490, internal disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom began with the establishment of Bijapur under Yusuf Adil Khan. Taking advantage of the situation, Vijaynagar succeeded in occupying Tungabhadra region (Adoni and Kurnool). Earlier, the loss of western ports had completely dislocated horse trade with the Arabs on which Vijaynagar army depended for its cavalry. However, occupation of Honavar, Bhatkal, Bakanur and Mangalore ports led to the revival of horse trade. This ensured the regular supply which sustained the efficiency of the Vijaynagar army. The

Gajapatis of Orissa were an important power in the eastern region. They had in their possession areas like Kondavidu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam. The Vijaynagar rulers succeeded in expelling the Gajapatis as far as Godavari and occupied Kondavidu, Udayagiri and Masulipatam. But sooner in 1481, Masulipatam was lost to the Bahmanis. Vijaynagar had also to contend with the constant rebellions of the chieftains of Udsvaairi, Ummatur (near Mysore) and Scrimamtam

Krishnadeva Raya (1509-29). During this period, the power of the Bahmanis declined, leading to the emergence of five kingdoms: the Nizam-Shahis of Ahmadnagar; Adil Shahis of Bijapur; the Imad Shahis of Berar, the Qutb Shahis of Golconda and the Barid Shahis of Bidar on the ruins of the Bahmani empire. This helped Krishnadeva Raya greatly in capturing Kovilkonda and Raichu from the Adil Shahis of Bijapur and Gulbarga and Bidar from the Bahmanis. Krishnadeva Raya also recovered Udayagiri, Kondavidu (south of river Krishna), Nalgonda (in Andhra Pradesh) Telingana and Warangal were taken from the Gajapatis. By 1510, the Portuguese also emerged as a strong power to reckon with in Indian waters. Occupation of Goa and sack of Danda Rajouri and Dabhol provided the monopoly in horse trade since Goa had been the centre of the Deccan states for horse trade. Krishnadeva Raya maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese. On Albuquerque's request, Krishnadeva Raya permitted the construction of a fort at Bhatkal. Similarly, the Portuguese soldiers played a reasonable role in Krishnadeva

Raya's success over Ismail Adil Khan of Bijapur: By 1512, Vijaynagar rulers succeeded in bringing almost the whole southern peninsula under their control. The small Hindu chief of Rajagambirarajyan (Tondai mandala) the Zamorin of Calicut and the ruler of Quilon (Kerala) accepted suzerainty of Vijaynagar. By 1496, almost the whole deep south up to the Cape Comorin including local Chola and Chera rulers, Tanjore and Pudukottai and Manabhusa of Madura were subjugated. However, the Pandya ruler (chief of Tuticorin and Kayattar) was allowed to rule as a tributary. An interesting feature of the occupation of the Tamil country was that after the conquests the Telugu soldiers settled down permanently in remote and sparsely populated areas. These migrants exploited the black soil which later led to the emergence of the Reddis as an important cultivating group. Besides, the emergence of the nayakas as intermediaries in the Tamil country was also the result of expansion into that region. The Vijaynagar state was a massive political system which included within its domain diverse people, i.e. the Tamils, Kannadas and the Telugu-speaking community. The Vijaynagar rulers exercised direct territorial sovereignty over the Tungabhadra region. In other parts, the Vijaynagar rulers exercised ritual sovereignty (overlordship) through the Telugu warriors (nayakas) and the local chiefs who had metamorphosed into nayakas and also through the sectarian groups, i.e. the Vaishnavas

## **The Nayankara System**

The nayankara system was an important characteristic of the Vijaynagar political organisation. The military chiefs or warriors held the title of nayaka or amaranayaka. It is difficult to classify these warriors on the basis of definite office, ethnic identity, set of duties or rights and privileges. The institution of nayaka was studied in detail by two Portuguese-Fernao Nuniz and Domingo Paes, who visited India during the reigns of Krishnadeva Raya and Achyut Raya of Tuluva dynasty during the sixteenth century. They regarded the nayakas simply as agents of Rayas (central government). The evidence of Nuniz for the payments made by the nayakas to the Rayas brings up the question of feudal obligations. The Vijaynagar inscriptions and the later Mackenzie manuscripts refer to the nayakas as territorial magnates with political aspirations which at times conflicted with the aim of the rulers. N.K. Sastri (in 1946) drew a distinction between the nayakas before 1565 and those after 1565. The former were totally dependent upon the rulers while the latter were semi-independent. However, later he modified his views by pointing out that the nayakas before 1565 were military leaders holding military fiefs. In his recent work, he views the Vijaynagar empire as a military confederacy of many chieftains cooperating under the leadership of the biggest among them. He emphasized that the growing threat from Islam led the Vijaynagar rulers to adopt a military and religious stance. Krishnaswami considers the nayankara system as feudal. But Venkataramanayya feels that important features of European feudalism such as fealty, homage and subinfeudation were absent in the nayaka system. D.C. Sircar similarly refutes the feudal theory; instead he explains it as a kind of landlordism, a variant of feudalism in which land was allotted to the amaranayakas for military services rendered by them to the king. Thus, D.C. Sircar, and T.V. Mahalingam consider the nayakas of Vijaynagar as warriors holding an office (kara) bestowed on them by the central government on condition of rendering military service. Amaranayakan was a designation conferred on a military officer or chief (nayakal) who had under his control a specified number of troops. These nayakas possessed revenue rights over land or territory called amaram (amaramakara or amaramahali). In the Tamil country and also in the Vijaynagar empire, the area of land thus alienated under this tenure was about . The obligations and activities of the nayakas were among others, giving gifts to temples, repair and building of tanks, reclamation of wasteland and collection of dues from temples. The Tamil inscription, however, do not refer to dues given to the king or his officials by the nayakas. Krishnaswami, on the basis of Mackenzie manuscripts, opines that the commanders of Vijaynagar army (formerly under Krishnadeva Raya) later established independent nayaka kingdoms. To guard against such dangers, the Vijaynagar kings tried to establish greater control over coastal markets dealing in horse trade. They attempted to monopolise the purchase of horses of good quality by paying a high price for them. They also built strong garrisons fortified with trustworthy soldiers. Thus, on the one hand, the

Telugu nayaks were a source of strength for the Vijaynagar empire and, on the other, they became its rivals.

### **Raichur doab**

The Raichur Doab is a [Doab](#), in this case the triangular region of land in the southern Indian states of [Andhra Pradesh](#) and [Karnataka](#) lying between the [Krishna River](#) and its [tributary](#), the [Tungabhadra River](#). The doab is named for the town of [Raichur](#) in the [Raichur District](#). The Raichur Doab is considered to be very fertile because of the sediments carried by Krishna & Tungabhadra rivers.

### **Architectural developments**

Dravidian architecture was an architectural idiom that emerged in the Southern part of the Indian subcontinent. It consists primarily of temples with pyramid shaped towers and are constructed of sandstone, soapstone or granite. Mentioned as one of three styles of temple building in the ancient book [Vastu shastra](#), the majority of the existing structures are located in the [Southern Indian](#) states of [Andhra Pradesh](#), [Karnataka](#), [Kerala](#), [Tamil Nadu](#) and [Telangana](#). Various kingdoms and empires such as the [Cholas](#), the [Chera](#), the [Kakatiyas](#), the [Pandyas](#), the [Pallavas](#), the [Gangas](#), the [Rashtrakutas](#), the [Chalukyas](#), the [Hoysalas](#), and [Vijayanagara Empire](#) among others have made substantial contribution to the evolution of Dravidian architecture. This styled architecture can also be found in parts of North India ([Teli ka Mandir Gwalior](#), [Bhitargaon Baitala Deula](#), Bhubaneshwar), Northeastern and central [Sri Lanka](#), Maldives, and various parts of Southeast Asia. [Angkor Wat](#) in [Cambodia](#) and [Prambanan](#) in Indonesia were built based on *Dravida* architecture

### **Pallavas**

There are different views on the origin of the Pallavas. They were equated with the Parthians, the foreigners who ruled western India. Another view was that the Pallavas were a branch of the Brahmin royal dynasty of the Vakatakas of the Deccan. The third view relates the Pallavas with the descendants of the Chola prince and a Naga princess whose native was the island of Manipallavam. But these theories on the origin of the Pallavas were not supported by adequate evidences. Therefore, the view that the Pallavas were the natives of Tondaimandalam itself was widely accepted by scholars. They are also identical with the Pulindas mentioned in the inscriptions of Asoka. When Tondaimandalam was conquered by the Satavahanas, the Pallavas became their feudatories. After the fall of the Satavahanas in the third century A.D., they became independent. The Pallavas issued their earlier inscriptions in Prakrit and Sanskrit because of their Satavahana connections, and also patronized Brahmanism.

The early Pallava rulers from 250 A.D. to 350 A.D. issued their charters in Prakrit. Important among them were Sivaskandavarman and Vijayaskandavarman. The second line of Pallava rulers who ruled between 350 A.D. and 550 A.D. issued their charters in Sanskrit. The most important ruler of this line was Vishnugopa who was defeated by Samudragupta during his South Indian expedition. The rulers of the third line who ruled from 575 A.D. to their ultimate fall in the ninth century issued their charters both in Sanskrit and Tamil. Simhavishnu was the first ruler of this line. He destroyed the Kalabhras and firmly established the Pallava rule in Tondaimandalam. He also defeated the Cholas and extended the Pallava territory up to the river Kaveri. Other great Pallava rulers of this line were Mahendravarman I, Narasimhavarman I, and Narasimhavarman II.

### **Architecture during Pallavas**

It was a great age of architecture and sculpture. The Pallavas introduced the art of excavating temples from the rock. In fact, the Dravidian style of temple architecture began with the Pallava rule. It was a gradual evolution starting from the cave temples to monolithic *rathas* and culminated in structural temples. The development of temple architecture under the Pallavas can be seen in four stages. Mahendravarman I introduced the rock-cut temples. This style of Pallava temples are seen at places like Mandagappattu, Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Dalavanur, Tiruchirappalli, Vallam, Siyamangalam and Tirukalukunram. The second stage of Pallava architecture is represented by the monolithic *rathas* and Mandapas found at Mamallapuram. Narasimhavarman I took the credit for these wonderful architectural monuments. The five *rathas*, popularly called as the *Panchapanadava rathas*, signifies five different styles of temple architecture. The mandapas contain beautiful sculptures on its walls. The most popular of these mandapas are Mahishasuramardhini Mandapa, Tirumurthi Mandapam and Varaha Madapam. In the next stage, Rajasimha introduced the structural temples. These temples were built by using the soft sand rocks. The Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi and the Shore temple at Mamallapuram remain the finest examples of the early structural temples of the Pallavas. The Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi is the greatest architectural master piece of the Pallava art. The last stage of the Pallava art is also represented by structural temples built by the later Pallavas. The Vaikundaperumal temple, Muktheeswara temple and Matagenswara temples at Kanchipuram belong to this stage of architecture. The Pallavas had also contributed to the development of sculpture. Apart from the sculptures found in the temples, the 'Open Art Gallery' at Mamallapuram remains an important monument bearing the sculptural beauty of this period. The Descent of the Ganges or the Penance of Arjuna is called a fresco painting in stone. The minute details as well as the theme of these sculptures such as the figures of lice-picking monkey, elephants of huge size and the figure of the 'ascetic cat' standing erect remain the proof for the talent of the sculptor.

## **Mahabalipuram**

“Of all the great powers that together made the history of southern India” writes Percey Brown, “none had a more marked effect on the architecture of their region than the earliest of all, that of Pallavas, whose production provided the foundation of the Dravidian style”. The Pallavas style which influenced the aesthetics of south Indian architecture and sculpture saw its genesis under Mahendravarman. He laid the foundation stone of Mahabalipuram’s grandeur and reputation by initiating the techniques excavating stone temples out of solid rocks, thus making it as the birth place of south Indian architecture and sculpture. The Pallava kings constructed a number of stone temples in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. The most famous of them are the seven ratha temples (seven pagoda) in Mahabalipuram. These were built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Narasimhavarman who founded the city of Mahabalipuram as Mamallapuram. This city is also famous for the shore temples, which were structural construction, put up independently, and not hewn out of any rock. The structural temple architecture of the Pallavas was patronized and favoured by Narasimhavarman II who substituted bricks and temples for stone. There were six temples belonging to this period. The most famous are the Kailasanatha and Vaikuntaperumal temples at Kanchi and the shore temple at Mahabalipuram. The architecture of the shore temples confirms the Dharma Raja Ratha in principle. The Kailasanath temple or Rajasimhavarman temple is the largest among the Pallava temples. Its outstanding characteristic is the pyramidal tower, the flat roofed pillared hall, the Vestibule and the rampant lion pilaster. The Vaikuntaperumal temples are the most mature example of the Pallava temple complex.

## **Cholas**

The Chola Empire, which arose in the South in the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, was founded by Vijayalaya by capturing Tanjore. However, the greatest Chola rulers were Rajaraja Chola (985-1014 AD) and his son Rajendra Chola I. Rajendra carried forward the annexationist policy of his father by conquering the Pandya, the Cheras and even Sri Lanka. He assumed the title Gangaikondchola (The Chola Conqueror of the Ganga). The remarkable features of the Chola rule include a strong navy, village self-government and construction of beautiful temples to commemorate victories. Rajaraja I even sent a naval expedition against Malaya to overcome their interference in his trade with China. The Cholas also sent a number of embassies to China.

Temple architecture reached a climax in the South under the Cholas. The main feature of this style called the Dravida, was the building of storey upon storey above the chief deity room (garbhagriha). The entire structure was surrounded by high walls having lofty gates called gopurams. One of the finest examples of this style is the Brihadeshwara Temple at Tanjore built by Rajaraja I. This is also called the Rajaraja Temple. The art of sculpture attained a high standard during this phase. One befitting example is the Gomteshwara



Statue at Shravanbelgola in Karnataka, the highest statue in India. Another aspect was the image-making, which peaked a new high in the dancing figure of the Shiva, called the Natraja. A number of popular Bhakti saints called the nayanars and alvars, devotees of Shiva, flourished in this area between the 6th and the 9th centuries. The writings of these saints called Tirumurai, are considered sacred and are known as the Fifth Veda.

### **Tanjore & Gangaikondacholapuram**

The Cholas continued and developed the art-tradition of the Pallavas. But in comparison with the productions of the last days of the Pallavas, those of the early Chola phase display a certain freshness of spirit which appears to herald a new movement. In fact under the Cholas, the Dravida style of temple architecture enters a brilliant and distinctive phase. The early Chola rulers appear to be great patrons of temple architecture. Among the innumerable Chola temples may be mentioned the Vijayalaya Cholisvara at Melamalai, Balasubramanya at Kannanur, Sundaresvara at Tirukkattala, Muvar Kovil at Kodumbalur, Nagesvarasvami at Kumbhakonam, Brahmapapurisvara at Pullamangai, Kuranganatha at Srinivasanallur, the twin temples of Agasthisvara and Cholisvara at Kiliyanur and the Shiva temple at Tiruvalisvaram. The Vijayalaya Cholisvara temple at Melamalai, at a distance of ten miles from Pudukottai, is undoubtedly one of the finest examples of early Chola temples. Round the main temple in an open yard are seven small sub-shrines, all facing inwards and resembling the main temple in essential feature. By combining a superb sense of restraint and a discerning choice of embellishments noted in its superstructure, it clearly testifies to the aesthetic vision of its builders. In comparison with the Vijayalaya Cholisvara, the temples of Balasubramanya and Sundaresvara appear to be less refined. The most remarkable feature of Nagesvarasvami temple at Kumbakonam is the remarkable life-size figure sculptures, found on its outer walls. The early phase of Dravida temple is best illustrated in the Kuranganatha temple at Srinivasanallur (Trichinopoly district), built in the reign of Parantaka I. The entire temple is remarkable for proportionate distribution of parts and an overall restraint in embellishment. The twin temples of Agasthisvara and Cholisvara at Kiliyanur (south Arcot), the triple shrine of Muvar Kovil at Kodumbalur (Pudukottai district), are also remarkable for their individual treatment. The Shiva temple at Tiruvalisvaram (Tinnevely district) is almost unique for its fine workmanship and its wealth of iconographic sculpture. The two great temples of Tanjore and Gangaikonda-cholapuram built respectively during the reigns of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I, constitute a landmark in the history of Indian architecture. The superb Shiva temple of Tanjore, called Rajarajesvara or Brihadisvara, is a fitting memorial to the material achievements of the Cholas. "Vast in concept, design, and form, and remarkable in execution, this celebrated temple marks the greatest achievement of the Chola architects. Begun sometime in A.D. 1003, it was completed in A.D. 1010. In dimension alone the temple at Tanjore is one of the most daring conceptions of Dravida architecture. It stands in a vast enclosure 167 metres by 84

metre with a Gopuram (gateway) in front on the east. The main structure covers a total length of 60 metre long, while the massive pyramidal vimana rises to a height of 63 metre, excelling even the Lingaraj (54 metres) temple of Bhubanesvar. Rightly observes Percy Brown: "Unquestionably the finest single creation of the Dravidian craftsmen, the Tanjore Vimana is a touchstone of Indian architecture as a whole. The whole temple is a magnificent example of solidity combined with proportion and grace of form. The great temple at Gangaikonda-cholapuram, built in A.D. 1025 by Rajendra Chola is a replica of the Tanjore temple, but possessing a rich and voluptuous beauty of its own. This great temple has suffered much from modern predatory engineering. The temple itself forms a rectangle 114 metre long and 34 metre wide, composed of a mandapa measuring 58 metre by 32 metre, and the massive Vimana, 34 metre square, with a connecting vestibule. The pyramidal Vimana rises to a height of 54 metre, and has only eight tiers as against thirteen in Tanjore. 'This is perhaps the more beautiful edifice in its palatial architectural formation, and in its sculptural design, but it has not the magnitude of conceptualization found in his father's (Rajaraja) Temple'. Comparing the two architectural productions, Percy Brown observes: "Stately and formal as an epic may epitomize the Tanjore Vimana while the later example has all the sensuous passion of an eastern lyric, but it seems to govern even deeper than that. Each is the final and absolute vision of its creator made manifest through the medium of structural form, the one symbolizing conscious might, the other subconscious grace, both dictated by that 'divinity which has seized the soul'". During the period of the later Cholas, Dravida style loses much of its force and tends to become more and more ornate and florid. This is reflected in two temples, the Airavatesvara at Darasuram and Tribhuvaneshvara at Tribhuvanam, both in the Tanjore district. During this phase, emphasis is laid on the temple precincts than to the main temple and the gopuram comes to occupy a more prominent position in the temple scheme until with its soaring height it dwarfs the Vimana standing in the midst of the enclosure.

### **Sculpture**

The Chola period is also remarkable for its sculptures, many of which are masterpieces. The three main classes of Chola sculpture are portraits, icons and decorative sculpture. There is a singular paucity of portraits in Chola sculpture. There are three well-preserved and nearly life-size portraits – two women and a man on the walls of the Kuranganatha temple at Srinivasanallur and several others in the Nagesvara temple at Kumbhakonam. The Shiva temple at Tiruvalisvaram (Tinnevely district) is a veritable museum of superb early Chola iconography. Other interesting early Chola sculptures are the reliefs of an eightarmed Durga and a group of Vishnu and his two consorts from the ruined temple of Vishnu at Olagapurem, south Arcot. The walls of the Brihadisvara temples of Tanjore and Gangaikonda-cholapuram contain numerous icons of large size and forceful execution. The Chola sculptures started bronze-casting sometime about the middle of the tenth century A.D.

Of the numerous bronze images, the Nataraja image in its various forms holds the first place. The Nataraja image in the Nagesvara temple is one of the largest and finest images known. The conception of the Divine Dancer and its cosmic significance, and the excellence of the Chola sculptor's presentation of it have won unstinted praise from art critics including great modern sculptor Rodin. A group of three bronzes of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita from Tirukkadaiyur (Tanjore district) with Hanuman in an attitude of worship is one of the finest products of Chola bronze-casting of the age of Rajaraja I and Rajendra. Decorative sculpture takes many forms – architectural motifs, floral and vegetal patterns, friezes of animals, birds, dancing figures and legendary and Puranic stories.

### **Paintings**

Remnants of Chola wall-paintings are to be found on the walls of the Vijayalaya Cholisvara temple in the old Pudukottai state and of the Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore. Large-scale painted figures of Mahakala, Devi and Shiva Nataraja are still visible on the walls of the Vijayalaya Cholisvara temple. The subject matter of paintings in Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore is Saiva and the scenes representing Shiva in his abode of Kailasa as Nataraja and Tripurantaka, are laid on the walls in large and forceful compositions.

### **Vijayanagar**

In the South the Pandya and the Hoysala whereas in the north the Kakatiya and the Yadava kingdoms rose to prominence. The invasion of the Deccan and South India by the Delhi Sultans weakened the power of these kingdoms and made subservient to the Delhi Sultanate. This was followed by the emergence and expansion of the Bahmani and the Vijayanagar kingdoms in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Harihara and Bukka, the sons of Sangama (the last Yadava king), had been in the service of the Kakatiyas of Warangal. After the fall of Warangal at the hands of the Delhi Sultans, they shifted to Kampili. After the conquest of Kampili, the two brothers were taken to Delhi where they embraced Islam and became favourites of the Sultan. Soon the Hoysalas attacked Kampili with the support of the local people and defeated the governor of Delhi. The Sultan at this point sent Harihara and Bukka to govern that region. They started restoration of Sultan's power but came in contact with Vidyanaya who converted them back to the Hindu fold. They declared their independence and founded the state of Vijayanagar with Harihara as its king in 1336. Soon this state developed into a powerful Vijayanagar empire.

### **Hampi ruins**

The city of Vijayanagara, the capital of the empire was founded in about 1336 on the banks of the river Tungabhadra. It is one of the most important historical and architectural sites of the medieval period. The remains of the city show, the finest and most characteristic groups of buildings of the Vijayanagara architecture. It was an extensive city with

numerous large scale buildings built of granite and dark green chlorite stone. The city had palaces, temples, extensive water works, elephant stables etc.

Vijayanagara kings built numerous temples which are the best specimens of Hindu architecture. The temple of Vithala constructed by Krishnadevaraya, has been described as the finest buildings of its kinds in southern India. Another notable features of the architecture of Vijayanagara empire was that the art of constructing tall and massive gopuram. Some of the rulers also constructed Mandapas over the temples which had been regarded as a finest specimen of architecture.

Vijaynagar has an extra ordinary history. It was born out of the incursions into the Deccan and even further south of the Delhi Sultanate. The capital., the famous Vijaynagar, was founded in about 1336 on the banks of the river Tungabhadra is Vijaynagar, now desert, is one of the most important historical and architectural sites as it is the only Hindu city from the pre-modern period of which extensive remains still exist above ground. The Vijaynagar style of architecture was distributed throughout south India, but the finest and most characteristic group of buildings is to be seen in the city of Vijaynagar itself. This city, in fact, had a great advantage as a site for large scale building activity in that it abounds in granite and a dark green chlorite stony, both used extensively as building material. The use of monolithic multiple pierb~in the temple at Vijaynagar testify this fact. The expanse of the city of Vijaynagar at the height of its glory measured some 26 sq.km. and it was enclosed with a stone wall. Besides palaces and temples, the city had extensive waterworks and many secular buildings such as elephaht stables and the Lotus Mahal. The basic dements of Vijaynagar style are listed thus The use of pillars for larchitectural as well as decorative purpose is on an unprecedented scale. Numerous cornposits are used in raising the pillars, but the most striking and also the most frequent is one in which the shaft becomes a central core with which is attached an unpraised animal of a supernatural kind resembling a horse. Another distinguishing feature is the use of huge reverse-curve eaves at the cornice. This feature has been borrowed into the style from the Deccan and givethe pavillions a dignified appearance. As noted above, pillars form an integral part of Vijaynagar architecture, almostall of which have ornamental brackets as their capitals. Usually this bracket is apendant known as bodegai in local parlance. This pendant, in Vijaynagar style, is elaborated into the volute terminating in an inverted lotus band. The occurrence of this pendant is a index reliable of the building in the Vijaynagar group.

### **Bahmini**

The Bamini capital was transferred to Bidar, a fortress town, in 1425 by ruler Ahmad Shah (142;d-36). Soon the new capital saw a flurry of building activity as within its walls spranfl up palaces with large audience halls, mosques, a madrasa, and royal tombs. Moreover, this change of capital largely' eliminated the architecbral influence of Delhi. The new buildings

show a strong contemporary Iranian influence. The substantive style of architecture was now composed of forms very largely borrowed from Iran, but modified and adopted to suit local conditions. They did not, of course, abandon the Indo-Islamic traditions altogether. Some important features of Bidar style may thus be listed below. Since colour was the characteristic feature of Iranian architecture, palaces at Bidar show a brilliant scheme of the use of coloured tiles and the mural painting. The glazed tiles were imported by sea from Iran. There is a distinctive change in the shape of some of the domes in the buildings at Bidar. They are constricted in the lower contour and thus become the fore-runners of bulbous domes of the Mughals. The drums of these project the domes in full view. The fall of the Bahmani Sultanate towards the beginning of the 16th century brought the first phase of the Deccan style to a close. Soon, however, under the Adil Shahi kingdom of Bijapur, a new phase of architectural activity was to take over from where the Bahmanis had left. But this style developed contemporaneously with the Mughal style and thus forms the subject of study in a separate course.

### **Gol Gumbuz.**

Gol Gumbaz is the [mausoleum](#) of [Mohammed Adil Shah, Sultan of Bijapur](#). The tomb, located in [Bijapur, Karnataka](#) in [India](#), was completed in 1656 by the [architect](#) Yaqut of Dabul. The name finds its roots from Gola gummata deriving from Gol Gombadh meaning "circular dome". It is constructed as per the [Deccan](#) architecture. The structure is composed of a cube, 47.5 metres (156 ft) on each side, capped by a [dome](#) 44 m (144 ft) in external diameter. "Eight intersecting arches created by two rotated squares that create interlocking [pendentives](#)" support the dome. At each of the four corners of the cube, is a dome-capped octagonal tower seven stories high with a staircase inside. The upper floor of each opens on to a round gallery which surrounds the dome. Inside the mausoleum hall, is a square podium with steps on each side. In the middle of the podium, a [cenotaph](#) slab on the ground marks the actual grave below, "the only instance of this practice" in the architecture of the [Adil Shahi Dynasty](#). In the middle of the north side, "a large semi-octagonal bay" protrudes out. With an area of 1,700 m<sup>2</sup> (18,000 sq ft), the mausoleum has one of the biggest single chamber spaces in the world. Running around the inside of the dome is the "Whispering Gallery" where even the softest sound can be heard on the other side of the mausoleum due to the acoustics of the space.