

Indian Culture and Heritage - A Holistic Approach

Dear Aspirants,

The study of Indian culture should be of great interest, but the method of its study should be appropriate. A very common question asked by the candidates is, "Which book should be considered the foundation for the study of culture"? If we suggest one such book for the study of culture, then candidates have to face two types of problems. First, no such book available that accommodate the scope of culture which is suitable for the main examination as well as preliminary examination. Secondly, with the help of related book, candidates start collecting facts from an abundance of literature, architecture, sculpture, paintings etc. and will not be able to establish coherence between those facts. Therefore, the sooner those facts one can remember, more quickly they will forget. This intellectual struggling will continue for two weeks, then the book will adorn the part of the book-shelf.

To understand the seriousness of the preparation, we suggested candidates that they should analyze the questions papers of both prelims and mains examination from 2013 to 2023. So in light of this, the scope of the questions asked in examination will be known. The range of questions in the mains examination is much diverse. Scope of mains questions extended from 'Tandav dance' and 'Chola art' to 'Sangam literature' and up to 'Harappa urban architecture', 'Mesolithic Art' and 'Cultural Diversity of India'. The format of some questions is so complex and diverse where bookish knowledge remains insufficient, for example -

1. Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity.

2. Despite the specific geographical location, Taxila could not get university status while Nalanda was a university. Examine.
3. Mesolithic rock cut architecture of India not only reflects the cultural life of the times but also a fine aesthetic sense comparable to modern painting. Critically evaluate this comment.
4. Initial Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk themes and stories, magnificently illustrated Buddhist ideals. Explain.
5. What are the challenges to our cultural practices in the name of secularism?
6. Do we have cultural pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples.

To attempt the above questions, one should have a holistic approach. In the first question, explain the four factors of cultural diversity in ancient times and medieval times and elaborate that how it can inculcate the sense of unity in diversity. Similarly, answer writing for all subsequent questions it expected a holistic approach.

In the preliminary examination, the scope of questions is even significantly more specific. This fact can be understood through some following examples -

1. With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements:
 - (1) The concept of Bodhisattva is central to Hinayana sect of Buddhism.
 - (2) Bodhisattva is a compassionate one on his way to enlightenment.
 - (3) Bodhisattva delays achieving his own salvation to help all sentient beings on their path to it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 and 3
(c) 2 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
2. With reference to the cultural history of medieval India, consider the following statements
- (1) Siddhas (Sittars) to Tamil region were monotheistic and condemned idolatry.
- (2) Lingayats of Kannada region questioned the theory of rebirth and rejected the caste hierarchy.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 2 (d) neither 1 nor 2
3. Kalamkari painting refers to -
- (a) A hand-painted cotton textile in South India
(b) A handmade drawing on bamboo handicrafts in North-East India
(c) A block-printed woolen cloth in Western Himalayan region of India
(d) A hand-painted decorative silk cloth in North-Western India
4. The National Motto of India, 'Satyamev Jayate' inscribed below the Emblem of India is taken from
- (a) Katha Upanishad
(b) Chhandogya Upanishad
(c) Aitraya Upanishad
(d) Mundaka Upanishad

In addition to the above questions there are also questions related to the literature, ethnicity and tribal groups etc. Considering the diversity of the questions and comprehensiveness of the topic, mere knowledge is not enough, but 'culture' should be considered as a catalyst of intellectuality. It's not much difficult, but it required to apply a logical or pragmatic approach. In fact, this logical approach will also applicable to other

subjects in General Studies. In four papers of General Studies, the candidates have to study about 13 sub topics (including contemporary issues). Aspirants has to bear such a huge intellectual overload alone - that too in a situation when they did not get any intellectual training from the university education system. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt practical method of study. It is required to emphasize two things under this strategy. Firstly, each topic is interconnected with each other, so the study of each topic makes the study of the second topic easier, and this provides knowledge of the entire subject area. Secondly, during studies, try to establish the interlinking of topics from one subject to another. This will increase interest in the subject matter and it will also be easier to remember the facts. We will begin this method of study with the study of 'culture and heritage'. Candidates can also use this approach in the study of other subjects. To develop a holistic approach on culture and heritage, knowledge of the following aspects is necessary-

- 1. To explore the meaning of culture and heritage** - For this, it is necessary to understand the relationship between culture and civilization and culture and religion. Apart from this, also required to know which elements will be included in culture.
- 2. Methodology of study to develop a comprehensive understanding of culture and heritage** – Underline the changes in religion, literature and art from ancient period to modern period. So that we can understand how Indian culture set an example of unity in diversity.
- 3. Study of culture; knowing the importance of study of literature and art** - It is important to know, only then it will develop a real understanding of culture.

4. To understand the importance of interdisciplinary approach in the study of culture – Under this there is need to assess the impact of culture on foreign policy, economy, Constitution and on nation building.

■ **Meaning of Culture and Heritage:-**

To study the topic of 'Culture and Heritage', one should start with fundamental understanding of the topic. In general, the word culture is used in two senses. Firstly, in traditional sense, it means artistic creation and intellectual achievements. Under this, culture expressed in the form of the community's literature, architecture, classical music, classical dance and painting. In this way, both culture and heritage are closely assimilated to each other. Secondly, anthropologists use the word culture in another sense. Anthropological culture deals with the study of rituals and customs, perspective of the common people, their mentality and their tradition.

In fact, the focus of anthropologists does not on culture superiority, but they give emphasis on the study of the mentality of those people, who are marginal in the society. But, presently Anthropologists played a major role in popularizing the term culture. A study under the influence of anthropologists a separate branch 'Cultural Studies' has developed. The cultural study is the study of the mentality of the people who is on the margins of the society. Cultural Studies has impacted every branch of social science, such as History, Geography, Political Science, International Relations etc.

As far as the Civil Services Examination concerned, its curriculum covers both the periphery of the culture i.e., elite culture and culture related to the common people. 'Tandav dance', 'Nalanda and Taxila University', 'literary achievements of

Krishnadev Rai's period' - all these point belongs to the elite culture, on the other hand 'Mesolithic painting' is associated with the general culture. It should be known to the candidate that in the era of growing democracy, like other humanities subjects, culture was also democratized. Naturally, the importance of 'folk' instead of 'classical' is encouraged, such as folk music, folk dance, terracotta figures, etc.

■ **What is the relation between culture and civilization?**

Determine the relationship between civilization and culture is in itself a complex question because both of these has been defined in many ways. Firstly, in the context of an ancient society, culture refers to a certain way of living, but, when this way of life expanded across a large region and came to be accepted as the norm, it was referred to as "civilization." For example, several regional cultures existed prior to the Harappa civilization. When the persistence of one of them goes beyond its territory and an advanced lifestyle was created in a large area, this was known as civilization. In other words, civilization is considered to be the highest status of culture. Additionally, some scholars also tried to link the development of ancient civilization to the urbanization and the knowledge of art of writing. In this sense, civilization became the symbol of highest order of materialistic life, but Abid Hussain believes that the elements of culture reached in higher level of material life only when that material life is accompanied by material pleasures with the means to achieve high moral values. But, when such a life sacrifices some of the moral principles, then it turns against the culture.

Then in another sense, an attempt has been made to link civilization and culture with external shell and the intrinsic quality

respectively. In other words, if civilization is the outer shell, then culture is internal quality. We can understand this with the example of a flower. The petals of flower is considered as civilization and the fragrance of flower contemplate as culture. In comparison, intrinsic quality is more significant than extrinsic traits. Due to more emphasis on external quality, the internal quality is diverted from its virtue. Therefore, many scholars considered the development of both as contradictory to each other. In fact, a German scholar, Spengler, says that with the development of civilization follows a recognizable decline of culture.

- **At present, there is relatively less discussion about civilization, while culture is being discussed excessively. What is the reason behind this?**

As we know that when civilization spread, so in this process many other cultures get suppressed. In fact, when a culture reached its zenith, it takes the form of civilization, and within itself it assimilates many other cultures. Thus a type of elitism entered in civilization. Therefore, it connected with the dominant section of the society. While the Dalit and backward sections of the society can't reach to this level.

But as democratization progressed, the upliftment of Dalit and backward classes started. In this order, the scholars and intellectuals drew attention to those forgotten cultures, and then began to rediscover it. This is the reason that's why at present, emphasis on culture is more than civilization.

- **What is meant by classical art? In which scenario art gains classical standards?**

The art and literature reached at that stage of development when it starts to influence the art and literature in the upcoming ages. This means that they have

been established as a standard and this standard is called as classical. In Indian history, there were some period when art adopted classical standards. For example, the art evolved from Maurya period to the Gupta period. Therefore, in Gupta period art assumed the classical standard. Similarly, Pallava art till the Chola period accepted the classical advancement. Lastly, architecture of Sultanate period acquired the classical standard by the Mughal period.

- **What is the relation between culture and religion?**

There are many aspects of culture such as literature, art, life, perspective, food habits, lifestyle and religion. As we know, the religion is also one of the aspect of culture, but religion have two segments i.e., philosophy and rituals. However, the philosophy of all the religious sect is concerned with human welfare. In this way, through fundamental thinking, all religious sects enjoys proximity with each other, but with time, religious cults have developed such a system of rituals that conflict with basic human values and in this scenario, it increases the possibility of clashes between one religious sect to another religious sect. Then, in this situation, religion becomes an opponent of culture. In such a situation, religion drew the boundaries of India and Pakistan, working in opposition to the syncretic culture of India.

- **Can culture also have a regressive element which is need to transform?**

Over a period of time, two types of flaws start coming to the surface within the culture. Firstly, culture word is already complex in itself and gradually some such customs and traditions begin to incorporate in it, for example, some people acknowledged the social evils like child marriage and sati system in the name of religion and considered

religion as part of the culture. Later, in India, in the 19th century, various intellectuals and reformers, from Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Swami Vivekananda, stood against social evils and successfully removed these evils from culture and religion.

Secondly, value is relative to society. When human society develops, some human behavior and practices considered to be part of culture become irrelevant and then there is a need to bring changes in them.

■ Can culture also be misused?

Like history, misuse of culture is also possible. In the name of protecting the vested interests of society, religion and culture promoted socio-religious evils, for example, when Raja Ram Mohan Roy opposed the evil practice of Sati, then conservatives like Radhakant Dev considered it as an attack on religion and culture. In the same way, at present when the demand raise to end the practices like 'Triple Talaq' and 'Nikah-Halala', then, the Muslim orthodox elements tried to preserve these practices in the name of religion and Islamic culture. That's why there is a need to make proper cultural policy in India. For the development of the country the proper formulation of policies is required in the field of science, defence, foreign etc., similarly effective cultural policy is also necessary.

■ Why do we study art and literature?

While studying the art and literature of any community, it explicitly expressed the life-perspective, thoughts and aesthetics sense. For the past hundreds, thousands of years our ancestors thinking and aesthetic sense have been expressed. If we study this, then naturally we will get the opportunity to understand the gradual development of thinking and aesthetic sense of our forefathers. Then we can evaluate ourselves, where we are standing from the point of view of intellectual and moral development. While going through

history we will try to understand the gradual development of political, economic and social structure. In the same way, while studying the art and literature we will try to understand the development of life interest and aesthetic sense.

■ Why Indian culture is considered an example of Polyphonic Culture?

Indian culture developed in such a way that it became pluralistic. During ancient times we can observe the harmony between Aryan culture and non-Aryan culture. Similarly, a synthesis can be evident between the cultures of the North and South. In Aryan culture, there was primacy of *Yajana* while bhakti, incarnation and idol worship prevailed in non-Aryan culture. Later, Hindu religion or Hindu culture developed with the assimilation of elements of Aryan and non-Aryan cultures. Similarly, any religious cult Brahmins, Buddhists and Jains develop in North India, it must have moved towards the south. Advaita philosophy of Upanishads developed in the north was refined and developed by Shankaracharya in south. Under Ashoka, cave architecture developed and it attained perfection with the construction of Pallava cave temple.

Bhakti and Sufi movement of medieval period expressed as Gangi-Yamuni culture. Similarly, a synthesis of Islamic and Indian features can be seen in the realm of architecture throughout the Sultanate and Mughal periods, which gave rise to a new style. This harmony is also seen in the fields of painting and music etc. Due to these reasons, the form of Indian culture is polyphonic or pluralistic.

■ How can the understanding of culture and heritage be useful in the studies of other subjects?

While studying the culture the candidates should adopt an interdisciplinary approach. With this approach, comprehension

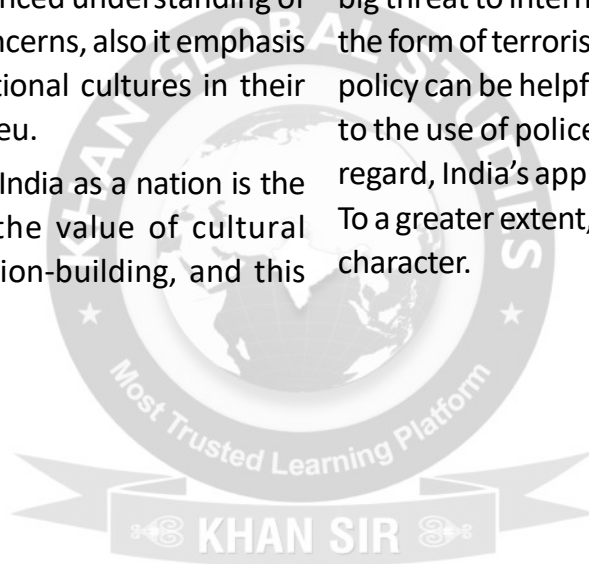
of other topics will also advance in addition to cultural understanding. Its interconnectivity with various social sciences can be understood through following ways -

Culture emerged as an important component in the conduct of foreign policy. Culture plays a vital role for the growth of soft power of any nation. At present "Cultural Diplomacy" became an important component of foreign policy. On this basis, India by expanding the neighboring region and eager to reach to the countries of South-East Asia. Similarly, Project 'Mausam' aims to re-connect and re-establish communications between countries of the Indian Ocean world, which would lead to an enhanced understanding of cultural values and concerns, also it emphasis on understanding national cultures in their regional maritime milieu.

The success of India as a nation is the best illustration of the value of cultural understanding in nation-building, and this

success can be attributed to our constitution makers that they understand India's diversity and on that basis they provide protection to linguistic and religious minorities. The difference becomes clear if we compare India with the failure of neighboring countries in South Asia, such as Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

In terms of economic success, even effective cultural policy can also play an important role. Raghuram Rajan long ago made it clear that religious conservatism and economic development cannot go hand in hand. Lastly, culture also proves to be an important factor for the internal security of the country. At present, Religious Bigotry is a big threat to internal security and it has taken the form of terrorism. An appropriate cultural policy can be helpful to regulate it in addition to the use of police and military force. In this regard, India's approach has been pragmatic. To a greater extent, India respected its diverse character.



Previous Year Questions from Art & Culture Section

1. The ancient civilization in Indian sub-continent differed from those of Egypt , Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without a breakdown to the present day. Comment.
(200 Word, 12.5 Marks) (2015)
2. Mesolithic rock cut architecture of India not only reflects the cultural life of the times, but also a fine aesthetic sense comparable to modern painting. Critically evaluate this comment.
(200 Word, 12.5 Marks) (2015)
3. Do we have cultural pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2019)
4. The rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important sources of our knowledge of early Indian art and history. Discuss.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2020)
5. Pala period is the most significant phase in the history of Buddhism in India. Enumerate.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2020)
6. Indian Philosophy and tradition played a significant role in conceiving and shaping the monuments and their art in India. Discuss.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2020)
7. Persian literary sources of medieval India reflect the spirit of the age. Comment.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2020)
8. Do you agree that regionalism in India appears to be a consequence of rising cultural assertiveness? Argue.
(150 words, 10 Marks) (2020)
9. Evaluate the nature of the Bhakti Literature and its contribution to Indian culture.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2021)
10. How will you explain that Medieval Indian temple sculptures represent the social life of those days?
(150 word, 10 marks) (2022)
11. Discuss the main contributions of Gupta period and Chola period to Indian heritage and culture.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2022)
12. Discuss the significance of the lion and bull figures in Indian mythology, art and architecture.
(150 word, 10 marks) (2022)

■ Pre-Historic Period and Proto-Historic Period

The pre-historic period is the era in which only archaeological sources are available for study and no literary sources are available. The period for which archaeological and literary sources are available for study but literary sources are not being used is called the proto-historic period. On this basis, Harappa civilization and Vedic civilization are categorized under the proto-historic period because one has a script that has not been deciphered yet, while the other has a language but no script.

But there is another basis of division as well. According to this, the era in which agriculture was not known is called pre-historic period. In other words, we will study the primitive man who used the tools made of stone and were dependent on hunting and food gathering. For example, Paleolithic and Mesolithic Age. On the other hand, the period in which agriculture started it was termed as the proto-historic period. Therefore, the study of those communities in the historical period those who had reached the stage of food production from the stage of food gathering. On this basis the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods are categorized under the Proto-Historic period.

- **Paleolithic Period (millions of years ago to 10,000 BCE)** - The evolution of early man in India can be seen by linking it to the Stone Age. In the Indian subcontinent, human activities were visible from the Paleolithic period. During this period, man was dependent on hunting and food gathering.
- **Mesolithic Period (10,000 BC- to 6000 BCE)** - The period between the Paleolithic and the Neolithic was envisaged, it is

known as the Mesolithic period. In this period also, men were hunters and food gatherers, but some sort of change was visible.

- **Neolithic Period (after 6000 BCE)** – Neolithic period was a phase of transition, in which men reached to the food producing stage and started a settled life. Further, the way for the changes has been prepared. Initially in India, Mehrgarh in Balochistan was considered to be the earliest Neolithic site, but through recent research Lahurdeva in Uttar Pradesh placed as earliest one.
- **Chalcolithic Period (after 3500 BCE)** – Copper was the first metal to be used by humans. With the introduction of copper tools, the agrarian economy was strengthened. The earliest Chalcolithic site found in North-West India.
- **Harappa Civilization (2600 BCE-1900 BCE)** - Due to growth in agricultural production and advancement in trade, a part of North-west India moved forward in the direction of urbanization.
- Understand the changes –
 - Climatic factor → Technological change → Change in livelihood → Change in social relations → Change in cultural outlook.
- **Climatic factors :**

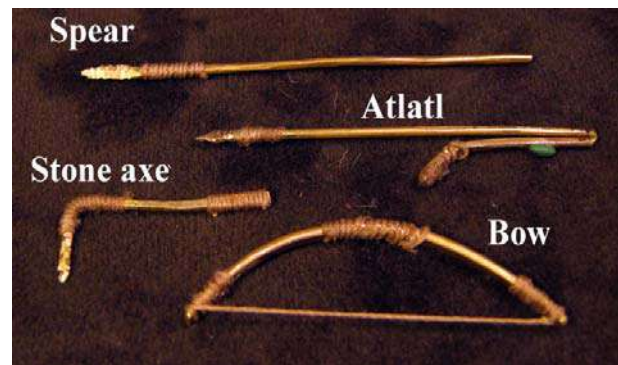
When we observe the climatic factor we get to know that the Paleolithic period occurred in geological epoch known as the Pleistocene. The Pleistocene was the ice age and which was not suitable for the vegetation. Later, the Holocene Era started from 10,000 BC in which global temperature rose and climate became moist and warm and this created a favorable conditions for the beginning of agriculture. Therefore,

agriculture began from the Neolithic Age and continued advancement in the future.

■ Technological Advancement :

In the Paleolithic period, people used tools made of stone and bones. During this period, there was a dominance of Core tools. Core tools are the tools made by breaking and shaping large stones. These include Hand axes, Chopper chopping and Cleavers. For example, evidence of chopper tools found from the Sohan river valley in Punjab, also the tools like hand axe evident from Madras in South. Apart from the core tools flake tools were also prevalent. Flake tools are tools made from smaller pieces of rock and these tools were sharp as well as light. For example scrappers, burins etc.

During Mesolithic period the development of Microlith can be seen. It ranges from 1 cm to 5 cm. They were too small to be used by themselves and would have been set into wooden or bone handles to make composite tools. As a result of this technological upgradation, bows and arrows came into use. Later in the Neolithic age polished stone tools came into use. In other words, earlier stone tools were made through breaking a stone through another stone but these tools were made through rubbing one stone against another. Thus, polished stone came into existence. Agrarian activities became relatively easy with the support of these tools.



■ Change in livelihood

During Paleolithic period, hunting and gathering were supposed to be the source of livelihood. Paleolithic people used to hunt mainly bigger animals and collect forest products.

Although people during Mesolithic period were still associated with hunting and gathering stage but definitely a change in hunting and gathering activities took place. Due to the use of bow and arrow, even smaller animals and birds could be hunted. Apart from that, hunting activities improved and fishing started, so there was better availability of food. For the first time from the sites Adamgarh in MP and Bagor in Rajasthan, we can trace evidence of domestication of animals. Furthermore, people started using wild variety of grains as well.

The Neolithic period is an important landmark in the history of mankind because now man was going to shift from the food gatherer to food producer in this period.

During this period, domestication of animals as well cultivation started on regular basis. Although, potteries came into use from Mesolithic age but regular use of potteries were started from Neolithic period. This age is known as the “Neolithic Revolution” because when agriculture started, it encouraged the significant change in the economy, social, and political fields.

Copper came to be emerged as the first metal to be used and this period came to be known as Chalcolithic Period. Copper tools also came into existence and these were definitely better than stone tools, thus, agrarian economy became stronger during Chalcolithic period.

■ Social Changes

Paleolithic society presented a model of band society. People did hunting and food gathering only for consumption. This society was an example of egalitarian society. As for male-female relations, we can say that as male members are supposed to be associated with hunting while female members with food-gathering and as food-gathering could feed the people in better manner, so it was more important. Thus, it is ordained that the condition of female was better during the Paleolithic period due to her important role in ensuring food.

The society of Mesolithic age was also an egalitarian society. This society was still at the level of band society, but the concept of family evolved as the old members of the family were left at home for looking after the kids. Apart from that, now burial of dead body started during that period.

During Neolithic and Chalcolithic period the level of production increased. Thus, the division in society also started. In fact, society is supposed to have moved from the stage of a band society to chiefdom. One can trace social differentiation in society on the basis of the construction of houses as well as granaries.

■ Cultural Changes :

Most of the early man's time was spent in maintaining a livelihood, but then gradually he started establishing companionship (exchange) with his environment. As a result, religion and art developed.

In fact, evidence of bone and stone idols in the form of art is found, but the main form of art is evident through the painting.

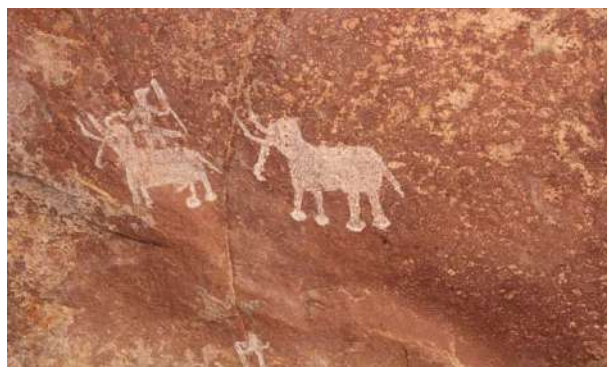
Development of Paintings – In the global context, the development of painting is believed to start from the Paleolithic period itself. We have got these pictures from continents like Europe, Australia and Africa. In the context of India, according to one view that some of the paintings at Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh are associated with the Upper Paleolithic period, but the general belief is that clear evidence of painting in India is found in the Mesolithic period.

■ How were paintings made in the Mesolithic period:

These paintings came into existence in two forms in the form of Petroglyph (engraving on wall or caves) and Painting. In painting, 16 different types of colours were used. These paintings were made either inside the caves or on the rocks outside the cave.

■ Themes of Mesolithic paintings:

- These paintings give a glimpse of community life. Hunting scenes, images of group dance and music, images of women collecting food, images of pregnant women, images of women nursing their babies, etc.





■ **Meaning of Mesolithic Paintings:**

- It is possible that in the absence of script, the Mesolithic people were trying to express their feelings through these pictures. In the absence of the script, it seems that paintings are trying to speak.
- Most probably, hunting paintings were drawn for a type of religious ritual so that they would remain successful in hunting activities and the hunter would have to bear less danger.

■ **Importance of Mesolithic Paintings:**

- In the absence of script, these prehistoric paintings help us to understand about early human beings and their lifestyle.
- It seems from the hunting scene that a sense of compassion was awakening in the hearts of the people. Often in hunting scenes, the hunters are depicted symbolically or in linear form instead realistic form. During the hunt, animals had to be injured and killed. These types of activities create a type of emotional tension. Therefore these scenes were presented in symbolic form. In this way, the paintings of the Mesolithic Period expressed the emotions of the primitive man. In the absence of the script, it seems that pictures are trying to speak. Hunting was a social act and the killing of animals was the result of a collective activity. Similarly, the absence of the single hunter painting also shows that the man did not want to directly associate himself with violence.

- These paintings depicted the pictures of community feasts and celebrations show that the spirit of collectivism was dominant in their lives and the spirit of the community was getting stronger.
- The scenes of dance and music in these paintings show that the search for 'rhythm' had begun in people's lives.

■ **Aesthetic sense of Mesolithic paintings:**

- Emerging sense of compassion in humans
 - Scene of mother cradling baby.
 - hunting scenes
- Finding the Rhythm

■ **How far the aesthetic sense of Mesolithic painting is comparable to modern painting?**

- The purpose of Mesolithic painting was to explore music. The purpose of the present painting was also to explore the music.
- There was symbolism in Mesolithic paintings and there is symbolism in the modern painting as well.
- Mesolithic painting depicts the simple expressions of primitive man whereas modern painting is the expression of complex human emotions of modern men.

Question: Rock paintings of the Mesolithic period in India represent not only the cultural life of that period but also the sophisticated aesthetic sense comparable to the modern painting. Critically evaluate this comment. (UPSC-2015)

Answer: The Mesolithic period represents the period when man was a hunter and food gatherer. He survived with the help of stone tools. But even in that period man expressed his understanding of the surrounding in the rare cave paintings.

Paintings of Mesolithic Period are found at different places which are associated with various periods like Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh, Suhagihat caves of Mirzapur,

Sundergarh & Sambhalpur in Orissa. These paintings have also been found in many places of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. These paintings include various scenes like hunting, group dances, music, tools, mother with her children, pregnant women, people taking dead animals etc. In this way, there is diversity in these paintings. An interesting fact is that these cave paintings depict men in linear form. For this reason, men were probably associated with hunting activities. During the hunt, animals had to be injured and killed. These types of activities create a type of emotional tension. Therefore these scenes were presented in symbolic form. In this way, the paintings of the Mesolithic Period expressed the emotions of the primitive man. In the absence of the script, it seems that pictures are trying to speak.

In the context of symbolism and diversity, this art painting seems to be somewhere close to the modern painting, although there is a difference in the form of the two. Mesolithic painting is an expression of simple human emotions. Primitive people were trying to understand their surroundings and they expressed this understanding in the form of a painting. On the other hand, modern life is much more complexity than life of Stone Age. The perception of modern humans is also multi-dimensional. Therefore, modern life with its full complexity is expressed in modern painting.

■ Why do we study Mesolithic art?

- These prehistoric paintings help us to understand about early human beings, their lifestyle, food habits, daily activities and, above all, they help us understand their thinking—the way they thought and help us to understand the aesthetic sense because they are the heritage of human civilization, that's why they are important even today.

India's first urban civilization: Harappa Civilization (2600 BC to 1900 BC)

■ Where is the origin of such an extraordinary civilization as the Harappa civilization?

Historians studying advanced civilization like Harappa civilization has always been a subject of interest and challenge. The main question is when different regions of Indian subcontinent were at the low level, a part of Indian subcontinent reached up to the level of urbanization. So, this phenomenon opened the gate of a plethora of controversies.

Earlier some British scholars tried to explain its origin in Mesopotamian context but this argument could not withstand scrutiny. There was wide difference in the nature of seals, script and town planning in both the civilizations. Therefore, because of these disparity it is not appropriate to consider the origin of Harappa civilization from the Mesopotamian civilization.

Through later researches its indigenous origin have been proved. The alluvial soil brought by floods in the Northwest river valley proved to be very fertile. This led to a large surplus agricultural production. Then agricultural surplus encouraged the development of crafts and industries. At the same time, a ruling class and a priestly class emerged. By taxing the surplus production and through religion were collected at a single center.

Then it is the same time when granaries were developed, bronze was developed from copper. It played an important role in production. Better land and water transportation facilities. In fact, this is the age when writing skill had also developed. The result of the above development was an advanced urban civilization around 2600 B.C. emerged.

■ Why is it considered as distinctive civilization?

Several factors have established it as a unique civilization and certainly the most important factor among these is the advanced town planning of Harappa civilization. The major factors can be explained as follows-

■ Advanced town-planning :

The distinctive town planning of Harappa civilization makes it unique from its contemporary urban civilizations. The cities were generally divided into two parts: the citadel and the lower town. Ruling class people resided in the citadel and some important buildings were built there. The lower town was a residential area for common people. The town was built in the shape of a chess board or grid manner. The width of the main road is about 10 meters and two roads intersected each other at right angles. Houses were built along the roads which had one floor to multi floors. There was a well in the courtyard and there were stairs to go to the upper floor.

An important element that attracts us in the town planning of the Harappa civilization is the developed water management system, which was rare in other contemporary civilizations. Drain pipes were then used to drain dirty water from the upper floors. There was better management of drainage in each house. The house drain was connected to the street drain and then the street drain was connected to the main road drain. Manholes were also built to clean the main drain.

The water conservation policy adopted by them is also unique. A vivid example of this is- Dholavira of Gujarat.

Harappan cities exhibit better governance because there are no instances of anywhere violating town planning regulations.



Harappan Fort

• Status of Common People :

If we compare the ruling class of the Harappa civilization with other contemporary civilizations, the difference becomes clear. The outlook of the people of the Harappan ruling class was relatively egalitarian. Where the ruling classes of Mesopotamia and Egypt spent enormous resources on building ziggurats (temples) and pyramids (monuments) respectively, while the common people lived in huts or mud-brick houses, whereas the ruling class of Harappa civilisation spent less on their own but tried to raise the living standard of their citizens. The common people lived in houses made of burnt bricks. Under the Harappa civilization, people enjoyed rare civic amenities.



Granary of Mohanjodaro



Lothal Dockyard



Dholavira Stadium

Question: To what extent, the town planning and culture of Indus Valley Civilization did give input to the present urbanization? Discuss. (UPSC-2014)

Answer: The Indus Valley Civilization, which represented the first urban revolution in the Indian subcontinent, also influenced the future urbanization of India. Its town planning and urban way of life were also being followed to some extent in the later period.

The Harappan people gave special importance to the town planning. Each important town was divided into two parts - the citadel and the lower town. Even in the present cities, the practice of keeping government institutions separate from residential areas is prevalent. Road, street and water management under Harappan civilization was exemplary. Special emphasis is laid on the construction of roads in the present cities also. Similarly, street and drainage system were also included in the ideal town planning. Harappan people used a large number of baked bricks. Even today, the importance of bricks remains in the construction work. Apart from this, like the Harappan cities, the present Indian cities also have a multi-cultural character.

But in some aspects, we have not been able to learn from the Harappan urbanization, for example, the governance of the Harappan people seems to be much better and its implementation side was also agile. Finally, while preparing the current town

planning, we need to be careful about why Harappan cities could not be sustainable despite all this unique characteristics.

■ **Harappan Culture (Religion and Art) :**

Religion has two aspects- metaphysics and ritualistic. On the basis of archaeological evidences, we get information about the ritualistic form of Harappan religion, but the metaphysics is still unknown to us. This is possible only after decipher of the Harappan script. After analysing the Harappan religion based on the available evidences, the following characteristics are visible -

- The people of this civilization used to worship the fertility cult, that is, the worship of Mother Goddess, the worship of the earth, the worship of fire or sacrifice, all these were related to the productive power.
- Its important feature is its pluralistic form. In other words, the worship of many goddesses and deities was prevalent at the same period. The emphasis of Harappan religion was on water worship, fire worship, tree worship, animal worship, fertility cult, mother goddess worship, snake worship, Pashupati Shiva worship etc.
- Idol worship was probably prevalent among the Harappans, as a large number of stone, copper and bronze idols have been found, but there is no evidence of a temple during that period. Then the relation of idol worship is linked with devotion.
- In the field of religion, the primacy of female element is seen.
- Amulets lying in children's neck indicate towards animism.

■ **Legacy of Harappa religion in Indian religious tradition:**

Although the Harappan cities declined, whereas, the elements of Harappa religion assimilated with the Indian religious tradition. The present Hindu religion is largely

indebted to the Harappan religion. Worship of the Mother Goddess, Pashupati Shiva's worship, tree worship, animal worship, fire worship, water worship, devotion and the otherworld were all part of the religious life of the Harappa civilization and these elements are seen in present Hindu religion.



Pashupati Seal and Mother Goddess Idol

■ Characteristics of Harappa Art :

The aesthetic sense of the Harappan people is expressed through their art. The Harappans produced a large number of artistic products – these artefacts are found in the form of seals, beads, bronze art, stone art and terracotta.

The seals of the Harappans were generally made of steatite. The seals were square and rectangular shape and the images of animal were engraved on them. They were used to identify the trade items. Similarly, other types of artefacts were beads. Most beads were made of steatite. However, Harappans used beads of semi-precious stone and beads of gold & silver have also been unearthed. The beads were used in jewel making.

The Harappan people were advanced in metal work. Evidence of copper and bronze statues of human and animals were found. A bronze statue of a nude dancing girl wearing a necklace has come to light at Chanhudaro. This is an excellent example of art. Lost wax technique is used in its manufacture.

From different sites, statues made of stone have come to light but it is quite interesting

that almost all the statues so far collected appear to be in dilapidated form. Among these statues, one statue of a bearded priest unearthed from Mohenjodaro is superb.



Statue of priest and dancer from Mohenjodaro

A large number of terracotta sculptures have been found under the Harappan civilization. Terracotta figurines of humans, animals and birds have been found. On terracotta figurines, women got more representation than men. These idols were made of baked clay. These were either used for worship, or were used as children's toys. But recently a belief has emerged that clay idols are often used to decorate homes in urban life.



Harappan seals and beads

■ Legacy of Harappa Civilization in Indian Civilization:

The Harappa civilization represents an advanced urban phase. Around 1900 B.C. this civilization declined. The decline of civilization was initially taken to mean the end of civilization, but this perception has changed in recent decades. Now the meaning of the decline of civilization is change in the form of civilization, that is, it has reached the rural level from the urban level, but has not ended.

If we probe deeply, we find that the legacy of civilization is still present in our culture. This can be explained as follows -

1. Harappa civilization played an important role in the development of agricultural economy. Harappan people have a special contribution in the field of agriculture such as cultivation of two crops, the use of plough, etc. Similarly, the Harappan people started cultivating several crops simultaneously.
2. In the field of crafts and workmanship, the method of smelting copper and bronze, as well as pottery making, has been going on till today since the Harappa civilization.
3. Influence of town planning of Harappa civilization also relevant in present scenario.
4. Harappan influence can be seen on people's food habits, lifestyle, cosmetics etc.
5. In the field of religion, Harappan religion is considered to be the predecessor of Hindu religion. It had all the characteristics of worship of Pashupat Shiva, worship of Mother Goddess etc.
6. The Harappan influence cannot be underestimated even in the field of art, for example, copper and bronze statues, stone statues and terracotta figurines all carry the Harappan tradition till date.

■ **Scientific ideas of Harappans people :**

- The people of Harappa had knowledge of numbers. They were aware of stars and planets. They were having the knowledge of metal-forging. They were familiar with pictographic alphabets, basic mathematical knowledge i.e. calculation through 16 and its multiples, decimals and binary system, feet and cubic in measurement etc.

Question: The ancient civilization in Indian sub-continent differed from those of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without a breakdown to the present day. Comment.

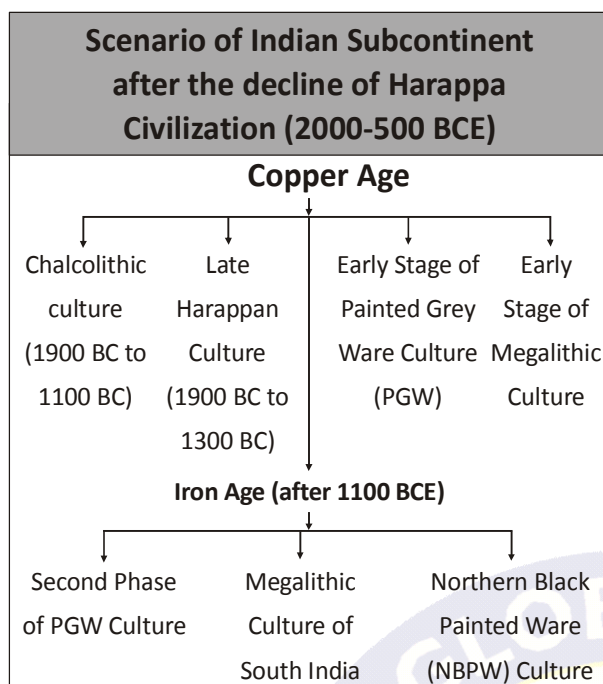
Answer : Indian civilization is unique from its contemporary civilization in various aspects. Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece civilizations have perished or have been replaced by other cultures. However Indian ancient culture has an enduring character. Despite major changes and upheavals significant threads of continuity can be traced throughout the course of Indian history right up to the present day.

The earliest civilizations of Asia had developed in Egypt and Mesopotamia, but Islam conquered those areas and rapidly Islamized them. Ancient civilizations got suppressed and people could get acquainted with those civilizations only after coming in modern times. Similarly, the classical civilization of Greece and Rome was suppressed with the spread of Christianity in Europe. Then, after the European Renaissance in the 16th century, people could understand the heritage of that classical civilization.

On the contrary, the ancient culture of India never expanded. In the beginning, whosoever foreign invaders came, they assimilated with Indian culture. Then after 1000 AD, Islam brought an aggressive religious policy, but it could not convert India on a large scale. That's why Muslims remained a minority in India and the ancient culture of India could not be Islamised. The temple co-existed with the mosque and 5000 years old Vedic mantras continued to be recited in the homes of Hindus. Thus, we find that the ancient culture of India remained unique and distinct.

Model Question:

1. *However Harappa civilization declined till about 1900 BC, but the legacy of the Harappa civilization was existed in the Indian culture. Examine this statement.*



After the decline of Harappa civilization, once again Indian subcontinent reverted from bronze phase to copper phase and different forms of copper-using cultures came into existence. Later, Iron Age came into existence. Therefore, various cultures can be divided into copper phase and iron phase.

■ **Copper Phase** – Under this, we can understand the following cultures and discuss them :

- **Chalcolithic cultures** – After the decline of the Harappa civilization, the Harappan artisans moved to different regions. This further helps to promote the awareness of copper. This was one of the main reasons that, after the decline of the Harappa civilization, more Chalcolithic settlements and cultures developed. For example, Kayatha and Malwa culture in central India, Ahar or Banas culture in south-eastern Rajasthan and Jorwe culture in Maharashtra.
- **Late Harappan Culture** - These cultures were also Chalcolithic in their form, but since they were developed in the region of Harappan civilization and they were carrying the legacy of Harappan

civilization, hence they were known as Late Harappan culture. These culture include, Cemtery-H culture in Punjab, Haryana and Bahawalpur, Jhukar culture in Chanhudaro, Lustrous Red Pottery culture in Gujarat.

- **Early Stage of Painted Grey Ware Culture (PGW)** - Painted Grey Ware Culture (PGW) are generally supposed to be associated with Vedic Aryans. This culture was associated with two phases- Copper Phase and Iron Phase. So far total 750 sites have come to light in Indian subcontinent. These sites are spread to the region Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana and Gangetic basin. Some important sites are- Nagar, Katpalan, Dadheri and Bhagwanpura. Therefore, these sites were considered to be the extension of Late Harappa Culture.

- **Early Stage of Megalithic Culture-** The people of megalithic culture were spread over the entire Indian subcontinent. Generally, Megalithic people were known for the construction of a unique type of graves. They used so construct various types of graves as memorial. Later, they were characterised as a separate culture. But Megalithic culture does not symbolise a single culture but a conglomeration of cultures. The initial phase of this culture is also associated with the copper phase. Before the Megalithic people, the Neolithic and Chalcolithic people continued the practice of burial inside the house, but the people belonging to the megalithic culture established their graves outside the residential area.

- Mostly Megalithic sites were discovered in South India but these sites were excavated from the other regions of the Indian subcontinent as well. For example, in Vindhya Range – Allahabad, Banda,

Mirzapur and Varanasi, in Northeast India – Manipur. Similarly, the evidence of megalithic sites also found from Devasa near Jaipur and Kheda near Fatehpur Sikri.

■ **Iron Age (after 1100 BCE)**

- **Second Phase of PGW Culture** - The first phase of this culture was associated with the copper phase and the second phase with the Iron Age. The earliest evidence of this culture is found from Ahichhatra. Farming tools like sickle and spade have been obtained from Jakhera. Paddy has been obtained from Hastinapur and barley and wheat from Atranjikhhera.
- **Megalithic culture of South India** – This culture was essentially associated with the Iron phase, for example, Maski,

Brahmagiri in Karnataka, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh, Junapani and Mahurjhari in Maharashtra.

- **Northern Black Painted Ware (NBPW)**

Culture - Northern Black Polished Ware represented the fine quality of pottery. Therefore, it is characterise as deluxe pottery. A culture named after it is known as NBPW culture. It is supposed to have started from 800 BCE onwards. It was having a larger geographical reach starting from Takshila in North-west to Tamluk in Bengal and Amravati in South India. From its early phase, it was associated with urbanization, burnt bricks and Punch marked coins. Therefore, it corresponded to Buddha Age.



Indian Culture and Heritage

Part-II

- Vedic Age (1500 BC-600 BC)
 - Buddha Age (600 BC-400 BC)
 - Mauryan Age (400 BC-200 BC)
 - Post-Mauryan Age (200 BC-300 AD)
 - Gupta Age (300 AD-600 AD)
 - Post-Gupta Age (600 AD-750 AD)
 - Early Medieval (750 AD-1200 AD)
- **Underline the changes -**
- **Political:** ★ 1. State, Empire, Dynasty and Ruler
2. Administrative structure
 - **Economic:** Craft and industry, trade, monetary transactions and urbanization.
 - **Social:** Varna and caste, condition of women, shudras and untouchables.
 - **Cultural:** Religion and Philosophy, Language and Literature, Art-Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music and Dance, Science and Technology.

■ **Vedic Age (1500 BCE to 600 BCE) – State, Empire, Dynasty And Ruler**



The term 'Arya' signifies a linguistic group rather than a racial group. The Vedic Aryans originated outside of India. It is believed that around 1500 BCE, the Vedic Aryans migrated from Central Asia, passing through West Asia, Iran, and Iraq before reaching India. The Mitanni or Boghazkoi inscriptions from 1400 BCE provide details about the arrival of the Aryans. This inscription mentions gods such as Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and Nasatya.

Initially, an attempt was made to explain the arrival of Aryans within the context of the Aryan invasion, but that concept has been largely rejected. Instead, the immigration theory has gained acceptance. In other words, the Vedic Aryans entered India through a gradual process of migration from outside the country. This suggests that the Vedic Aryans arrived in various phases, as multiple small groups. One such group, known as the 'Panchjana', comprised five tribes: Yadu, Druhu, Anu, Puru, and Turvasu. In addition to them, there was the 'Bharata' clan, which was the most significant and powerful, and this clan was closely associated with Agni.

The Rigvedic Aryans led a semi-nomadic lifestyle and their territory extended across

various regions, including Eastern Afghanistan, Punjab, Haryana, Kashmir, Rajasthan, and Western Uttar Pradesh. We gather information about the geographical expansion of the Rigvedic Aryans from the names of rivers mentioned in the Rigveda. The Mujuvant mountain, identified with the Himalayas, is mentioned in the Rigveda. It is likely that the Yamuna River served as the eastern border for the Rigvedic Aryans, as it is mentioned three times in the Rigveda compared to the Ganga, which is discussed only once. The region between the Sutlej River and the Yamuna River is referred to as 'Brahmavarta' in the Rigveda.

■ **Later Vedic Age (1000 BCE-600 BCE):**



During the later Vedic period, the Vedic Aryans expanded their presence into the upper Doab region, encompassing the Ganga and Yamuna rivers. In this region, the Kuru Janapada emerged, with rulers such as King Parikshit and Janmejaya leading the dynasty. Janmejaya notably performed two Sarpa Satra yajnas. Concurrently, the Panchal kingdom was established in the central part of the Upper Doab, under the rule of Pravahan Jaivali. As this period progressed, civilization expanded further into the middle of the Ganga valley. The Kaushal state was situated along the banks of the Saryu River, while Kashi flourished on the banks of the

Varanavati River. Subsequently, Videha Madhav founded the Videha kingdom along the banks of the Sadanira River (Gandak). The Satapatha Brahmana text provides information about these kingdoms.

■ **Buddha Age or Mahajanapada Age (600 BCE-500 BCE)**



- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| A | - | Avanti, Anga, Ashmaka |
| C | - | Chedi (near Yamuna river) |
| G | - | Gandhara |
| K | - | Kashi, Koshala, Kuru, Kamboja |
| M | - | Magadha, Malla, Matsya |
| P | - | Panchala |
| S | - | Sursena |
| V | - | Vajji, Vatsa |

Among these Mahajanapadas, Magadha, Avanti, Vatsa, and Koshala emerged as the most powerful. Geographically, Kamboja and Gandhara were located in the northwest, Anga in the east, and Ashmaka near the Godavari River in the south. However, Magadha Mahajanapada further assimilated 14 other Mahajanapadas during its expansion, leading to the establishment of the first empire in India, the Magadha Empire.

• **Extent of Magadha Empire -**

The Magadha Empire extended from the Beas River in the northwest to the Godavari River

in the south. The expansion of the Magadha Empire can be attributed to both material factors and the role of its rulers. Regarding material factors, the availability of iron reserves, a formidable military backed by elephants, and the economic prosperity of the Magadha region played significant roles. Simultaneously, the ambitious rulers played a crucial part in the empire's expansion, as outlined below:

- **Bimbisara**-The history of the dynasty becomes clear starting from the time of Bimbisara, who was associated with the Haryanka dynasty. Bimbisara emerged in the mid-6th century BCE and placed a strong emphasis on military expansion. He expanded the territory of Magadha by conquering the Anga Mahajanapada and receiving Kashi as dowry from the Kosala kingdom.
- **Ajatashatru** -Bimbisara's successor, Ajatashatru, continued the tradition of Magadha imperialism. Firstly, after 16 years of relentless efforts, he conquered the Vajji Sangha and assimilated it into the Magadha Empire. Furthermore, he achieved success against the Kosala Mahajanapada and merged Kosala with the Magadha Empire.
- **Udayana** - Ajatashatru 's successor, Udayana, laid the foundation of Patliputra city.
- **Shishunaga** - Under his reign, the Magadha Empire experienced significant expansion. Shishunag succeeded in his military campaign against Avanti, a powerful Mahajanapada, and annexed it to the Magadha Empire. This victory ended a struggle that had persisted for 100 years.
- **Mahapadmananda** - The establishment of the Nanda Dynasty marked a period of further progress for the Magadha Empire. Mahapadmananda emerged as a powerful ruler, leading the empire to expand towards the east and successfully conquering Kalinga.

The Magadha Mahajanapada emerged as the first kingdom in India to extend from the Beas River in the northwest to Bengal in the east, and from the Godavari River in the south.

■ Political upheavals in the northwest and invasions of Iranian and Greek:



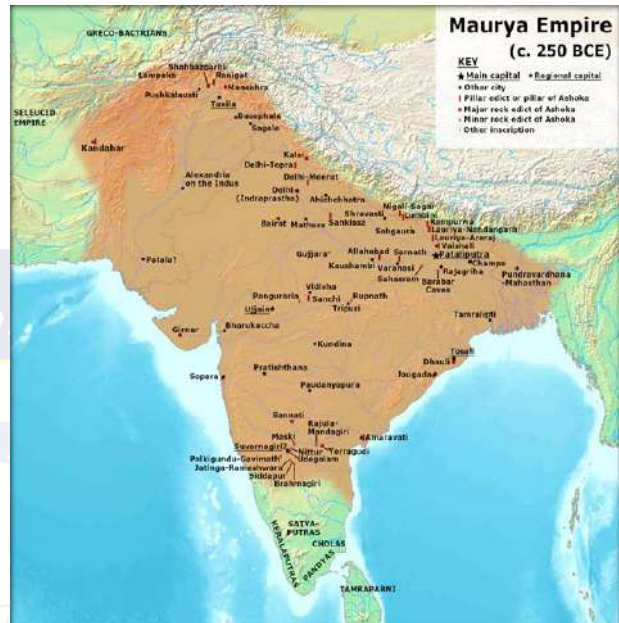
Around 516 BC, the Achaemenid emperor Darius I invaded North-West India, conquering the territory. Herodotus, a Greek scholar, informs us that he received 307 talents of gold annually as revenue from the Indian region.

After the fall of the Persian Empire, Alexander the Great emerged and launched an invasion of North-West India. He crossed the Indus River and encountered minimal resistance from Ambhi, the ruler of Taxila, surrendered without a fight. Continuing his campaign, Alexander defeated King Porus between the Jhelum and Chenab rivers. During this period, both monarchy and republic systems existed in the north-west, including entities such as Kath, Saubhuti, Ambashtha, Malava, and Kshudrak. Alexander's army successfully reached the banks of the Beas River. Beyond this river, the boundary of the mighty Magadha Empire began, which was under the rule of the Nanda dynasty at that time. It is believed that Alexander's troops refused to proceed further and requested his return. Before leaving India, he distributed the conquered territories among his associate rulers.

- As an illustration, he allocated the area between the Jhelum and Beas rivers to Porus, the central region encompassing the

Indus and Jhelum rivers to Ambhi, and the western region beyond the Indus River to Governor Philip. Greek soldiers were stationed in these cities to ensure control and security. Shortly after his return from India, Alexander passed away.

■ Maurya Age (400 BCE-200 BCE)



• Chandragupta Maurya (323 BCE – 298 BCE)–

Chandragupta Maurya is widely regarded as the founder of the Maurya dynasty, known for his remarkable establishment of a vast Maurya Empire. This remarkable achievement unfolded through several significant stages:

1. During the initial phase, Chandragupta Maurya, supported by his mentor Chanakya, seized the opportunity presented by Alexander's absence and effectively incorporated the region between the Indus and Beas rivers in the north-west into his empire. The work 'Mudrarakshasa' by Vishakadatta provides valuable information about this pivotal event.
2. In the second phase, around 321 BC, Chandragupta Maurya successfully deposed the Magadha ruler Dhananand and established his control over the Magadha Empire. This marked a significant expansion of the empire's territorial boundaries,

extending southward all the way to the Godavari River.

- During the third phase, around 305 BC, Chandragupta Maurya achieved a decisive victory over Seleucus Nicator on the banks of the Indus River. This triumph resulted in the acquisition of the vast territories of Ariana, encompassing regions such as Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and Balochistan. The Maurya Empire's north-western boundary was further expanded to include the Hindukush region. Additionally, Chandragupta Maurya established diplomatic relations with Seleucus, and the appointment of ambassador Megasthenes to the Pataliputra court symbolized the strengthening of the diplomatic ties.
- In this phase, Chandragupta Maurya consolidated the empire's influence in the south by annexing the region that extended from the Godavari River to Brahmagiri in Karnataka. This territorial expansion solidified the Mauryan Empire's control over the southern territories, further strengthening its dominion.

- **Bindusara (298 BCE-273 BCE)**

Bindusara, the successor of Chandragupta, maintained diplomatic relations with neighboring western kingdoms. It is believed that he made three specific demands from Antiochus I, the contemporary ruler of Syria: figs, wine, and philosophers. While Bindusara received two of these items, the Syrian ruler declined to send a philosopher, citing a conflict with his country's laws. Dymachus, a Syrian ambassador, served in Bindusara's court, highlighting the existing diplomatic ties between their kingdoms. Bindusara also established connections with Ptolemy, the ruler of Egypt, as evidenced by the presence of Dionysius, Ptolemy's ambassador, at his court.

The nature of Bindusara's interactions with southern neighbors remains unclear, and the extent of his involvement in the conquest of

peninsular India is a subject of scholarly debate. While some scholars attribute this achievement to Bindusara, there is ongoing discussion regarding the true extent of his role.

- **Ashoka (269 BCE-232 BCE)**

In the ninth year of his reign, Ashoka conquered Kalinga, acknowledging its crucial significance. After this victory, he altered his imperialistic approach, no longer focusing on territorial acquisition but emphasizing the management of the territories already under his control. Consequently, the Mauryan Empire expanded considerably, spanning from the Hindukush region in the northwest to Bengal in the east, and as far as Brahmagiri in the south. This vast empire became an exemplary model for future generations.

■ Post-Mauryan Age (200 BCE-300 AD)



During this period, a multi-state system emerged, replacing the centralized Mauryan Empire. These states can be categorized into three groups: the successor states of the Mauryas, the states formed as a result of foreign invasions, and formation of Independent states.

- **The successor states of post Mauryan -**

- Shunga Dynasty (185 BCE-75 BCE)** - Pushyamitra Shunga seized the throne in 185

B.C., after assassinating Brihadratha, the last Mauryan king. As the Brahmin commander of the Mauryas, Pushyamitra established a new era of power. According to the Puranas, he was succeeded by ten rulers from the Shunga dynasty, with Bhagbhadr and Agnimitra being the most prominent among them. Agnimitra was the main character in Kalidas's drama, 'Malavikagnimitram.'

During Bhagbhadr's rule, the Greek King Antialcidas sent his envoy, Herodotus, to the royal court. In tribute to God Vasudeva, Bhagbhadr commissioned the construction of a 'Garudadhvja', also known as a 'Garuda pillar'. The Shunga dynasty's final monarch, Devabhuti, met a tragic end at the hands of his Brahmin minister, Vasudev, who subsequently ascended to the throne.

2. **Kanva Dynasty** - Vasudev was the founder of the Kanva dynasty, which lasted for a span of 45 years until 30 BC. During this period, the dynasty saw four nominal rulers: Vasudev, Bhumimitra (also known as Bhumitra), Narayan, and Susharman. Eventually, the Satavahanas overthrew the Kanva dynasty.
- **States established by foreign invasions**— North-West and North India were frequently invaded by Central Asian tribes, leading to the establishment of new states by these invaders.
- **Indo-Greeks** - Two Indo-Greek dynasties, led by Demetrius and Eucratides, concurrently ruled over India. They established their capitals in Sakala and Takshashila, respectively. Our knowledge of these dynasties primarily comes from their coins, as they were the first to issue coins in the name of their rulers. One of the most renowned Indo-Greek rulers was Menander, whose dialogue with the Indian sage Nagasena is documented in the Buddhist text

called the 'Milindapanho'. Menander's empire is believed to have stretched from Jhelum to Mathura, with Sialkot serving as his capital.

- **Shakas** -The western branch of the Shakas ruling in India held great importance among the various branches. Rudradaman, a notable ruler associated with this branch, played a crucial role in its history. He took upon the task of restoring the Sudarshan Lake and erected the Junagarh inscription, which stands as the first Sanskrit inscription. In this inscription, Rudradaman is celebrated as the 'Bhrasht-Raj-Pratishthapak' or the restorer of a fallen kingdom. Similar to the Gupta emperor Samudragupta, Rudradaman also revitalized the kingdoms of defeated rulers, demonstrating his exceptional leadership abilities.
- **Parthian** -Gondophernes, the ruler of this dynasty in India, coincided with the visit of the first Christian saint, St. Thomas, to the country.
- **Kushana** - The Kushans were associated with the Yuchi tribe, and under the leadership of Kujula Kadphises (Kadphises I) and his successor, Vima Kadphises, the tribe was organized, laying the foundation for the Kushan Empire. Vima Kadphises achieved a significant victory over the Parthians, expanding his rule over the Indus Valley and the Mathura region. As a Shaivite, Vima Kadphises depicted images of Shiva, Trishul, and Nandi on his coins. However, the most renowned ruler of this dynasty was Kanishka. His coronation in 78 AD marked the beginning of the Saka Samavat calendar. Kanishka established two capitals, Purushpur (Peshawar) and Mathura. During his reign, the fourth Buddhist Council took place at Kundalvana in Kashmir, leading to the development of Mahayana Buddhism as a separate branch and its subsequent spread

to West and Central Asia under Kanishka's patronage. Kanishka's empire extended from Khurasan in Central Asia to Banaras in North India. He also held control over a portion of the famous Silk Route, actively participating in trade along this route that connected the Roman Empire and the Chinese Empire.

- **Formation of Independent States-**
- **Satavahana State** – This dynasty was founded by Simuka, but the most renowned ruler of this dynasty is considered to be Gautamiputra Satkarni, who reigned in the second century. Information about his rule is derived from the Nasik inscription of his mother, Gautami Balashri. The last significant ruler of this dynasty was Yagyashree Shatkarni. Initially established in the Maharashtra region, the dynasty later expanded its influence to Andhra and Karnataka. However, the dynasty experienced a decline in the third century. Following this decline, the Vakataka state emerged in the Maharashtra region, while the Ikshvaku state was established in the Andhra region. Vindhyashakti was the founder of the Vakataka state, and his son Pravarsen, a powerful ruler, assumed the title of 'Emperor' (Smrat). During this time, the Vakataka empire extended from the central province and Bundelkhand in the north to the northern Hyderabad in the south. After Pravarsen's rule, the empire was divided into two parts. One part was established at Nagpur under the leadership of his son Gautamiputra, while the other was situated at Vatsagulma in Berar under Sarvasen and his successors. Rudrasen II, a ruler from the Nagpur center, was married to Prabhavati Gupta, the daughter of the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II.
- **Kalinga State** – The Hatigumpha inscription, discovered in the hills of Udayagiri near Bhubaneswar in Puri district,

provides valuable information about Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga. Kharavela is regarded as a great ruler, and his military and cultural achievements are mentioned in this inscription. It serves as the primary source for understanding his reign. According to the inscription, the Chedi dynasty was founded by a person named Mahameghavahana, and Kharavela emerged as the greatest ruler of this dynasty. He ascended to the throne at the age of 24 in the year 24 BC.

- **Chola, Chera and Pandya kingdoms** -In the southernmost region, we find references to the Chola, Chera, and Pandya kingdoms during this era. Information about these kingdoms is derived from Ashoka's inscriptions, where he mentions the Cholas, Cheras, and Keralaputras. However, the process of state formation actually began in the first and second centuries. We gain insights into these kingdoms from early Tamil literature known as Sangam literature, that's why they are also referred to as the Sangam states.

■ Gupta Age (300 AD-600 AD)



- **Chandragupta I** - The Gupta dynasty was truly established by Chandragupta I, who

expanded the Gupta kingdom in North India from the Prayag region. In 319-20 AD, he initiated the Gupta Samvat to commemorate his victory. Chandragupta I strategically strengthened his diplomatic and political standing through matrimonial alliances. He married Princess Kumar Devi of the Lichchavi dynasty, gaining the support of this influential state in North India. The significance of this marital alliance is evident from the fact that Kumar Devi's name was inscribed on his coins, and later, Samudragupta also adopted the title of Lichchhavi Dauhitri.

- **Samudragupta (335 AD – 380 AD)** – Samudragupta was an exceptional conqueror who expanded his empire across India, reaching from the Himalayas in the north to the Vindhya Mountains in the south, and from the Bay of Bengal in the east to eastern Malwa in the west. The details of his conquests are chronicled in the Allahabad inscription (Prayag Prashasti), authored by his court writer Harishena. According to the inscription, Samudragupta's conquests can be divided into five distinct stages. In the first stage, he decisively defeated nine states in the Gangetic basin, including Vidisha, Ahichchhatra, and Champavati. Moving on to the second stage, he successfully conquered several republics in Punjab and the neighboring regions. Progressing to the third stage, he emerged victorious over the forest states known as 'Satvika.' In the fourth stage, he consolidated his power by incorporating twelve states in the Deccan region. Finally, in the fifth stage, he triumphed over foreign states in the North-West region, including the Shakas, Murundas, and Devaputra Shahanshahi. V.A. Smith aptly referred to him as the Napoleon of India.
- **Chandragupta II or Chandragupta Vikramaditya (380 AD-412 AD)** – Samudragupta achieved a significant victory

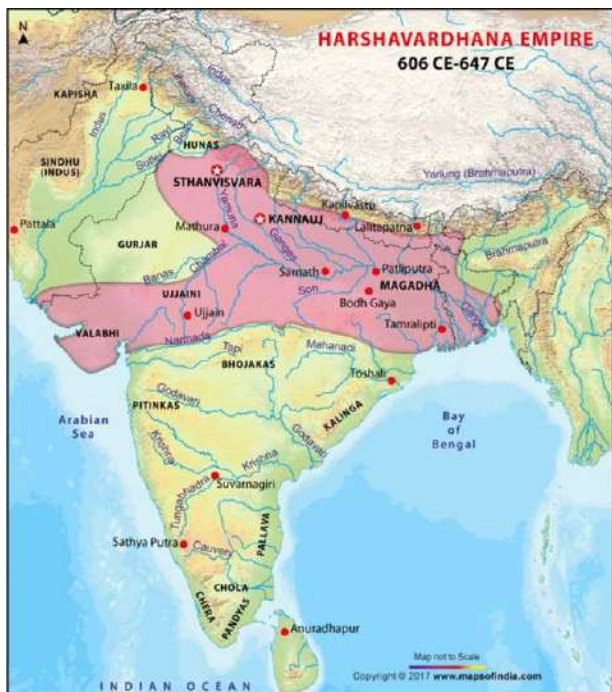
over Saka ruler Rudrasingha III, and on this occasion, he introduced silver coins to commemorate his triumph in Gujarat. The iron pillar at Mehrauli provides us with insights into the accomplishments of a ruler named 'Chandra,' who is commonly identified as Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Chandragupta Vikramaditya further strengthened his position through strategic matrimonial alliances. He married a princess from the Naga dynasty, and it is believed that Prabhavati Gupta was their offspring. Additionally, he arranged a marriage between his daughter and Rudrasen II, the ruler of the Vakataka dynasty. Following the demise of the Vakataka ruler, Prabhavati Gupta theoretically held power, but in practice, the Vakataka kingdom became absorbed into the Gupta empire.

- **Kumaragupta I (412 AD-454 AD)** – Kumaragupta I, the eldest son of Chandragupta and Dhruvadevi, is recognized for his reign during which he maintained the extensive Gupta empire without engaging in further conquests. His rule is noted for its efficient governance, as depicted in the Mandsaur records. Additionally, Kumaragupta I is credited as the founder of Nalanda University.
- **Skandagupta (454 AD- 467 AD)** – Skandagupta, a worthy successor to Kumaragupta, faced the first invasion of the Hunas during his reign. However, he emerged victorious in defeating the Hunas, and this triumph is well-documented in the Junagadh inscription. Like his predecessors, Skandagupta was a versatile emperor, demonstrating remarkable governance skills. To ensure the welfare of his subjects, he initiated the restoration of the Sudarshan Lake, originally constructed by the Mauryan emperor. This thoughtful endeavor effectively resolved the issue of water scarcity for the inhabitants of the Saurashtra province.

The Gupta Empire experienced its downfall

in the mid-6th century AD, leading to the emergence of several kingdoms in its aftermath. Notable among these were the Pushyabhuti dynasty in Thaneshwar, the Maukhari kingdom in Kannauj, the Maitraka dynasty in Vallabhi, and the Uttaragupta kingdom in Bihar. These kingdoms rose on the remnants of the Gupta Empire, shaping the course of regional history.

■ Post-Gupta Age (600 AD-750 AD)



During this era, a vast empire was established in North India under the rule of Harshavardhana, while in South India, the Chalukya and Pallava states emerged as significant powers.

- **North India** - Following the demise of his brother Rajyavardhan, Harshavardhana (606 AD-647 AD) ascended to the throne of the Pushyabhuti dynasty in North India. Additionally, upon the passing of his brother-in-law, he also assumed rulership over Kannauj. These acquisitions significantly enhanced his power and enabled him to establish a vast empire in North India. Initially, he faced conflicts with Shashanka, the ruler of the Gaur region in Bengal. It was only after Shashanka's demise that Harshavardhana was able to conquer the Gaur region. However, his ambitions to

expand further into South India were thwarted when he suffered defeat at the hands of Pulakesin II, the Chalukya ruler.

- **South India** – In South India, the Chalukya dynasty emerged as a formidable power in Maharashtra, while the Pallava dynasty flourished in southern Andhra Pradesh and northern Tamil Nadu. The founder of the Chalukya dynasty was Pulakeshin I, but it was Pulakeshin II who became the most renowned ruler of this dynasty. On the other hand, Simha Vishnu established the Pallava dynasty. Notable rulers of the Pallava dynasty include Mahendravarman, Narasimhavarman I, Narsimhavarman II, alias Rajasingh. Among them, Narsimhavarman I achieved a significant victory by defeating the Chalukya ruler Pulakeshin II and capturing their capital, Badami. In commemoration of his triumph, he assumed the title of 'Vatapikonda'.
- South India comprised both fertile and less fertile regions, leading to disputes between the two kingdoms over the highly fertile Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab region. In this series of events, Pulakeshin II triumphed over the Pallava ruler Mahendravarman, seizing control of the Vengi region. In response, Narasimhavarman I defeated Pulakeshin II, capturing his capital and assuming the title 'Mahamalla' to commemorate this victory. The illustrious city of Mahabalipuram was established in Narasimhavarman I's honor. Eventually, internal conflicts led to the downfall of both dynasties.

■ Early Medieval (750 AD- 1200 AD)



North India:-

- **Palas** - Following the demise of Harshavardhan, there was a period of unrest in northern India. Subsequently, the Palas emerged as a significant power in the eastern region, with Gopala establishing the Pala dynasty. Notable rulers of this dynasty include Dharmapala and Devpala. The Palas patronized Buddhism and played a crucial role in the development of important universities such as Odantapuri, Vikramshila, and Sompura under the reign of Dharmapala. Additionally, the Pala rulers actively participated in the Tripartite struggle, alongside the Pratiharas and the Rashtrakutas, in their efforts to gain control over Kannauj.
- **Pratiharas** - Nagabhata was the initial founder of the Pratihara kingdom, followed by significant rulers such as Vatsaraja, Nagabhata II, and Mihir Bhoja. The Pratiharas established themselves as a powerful dynasty, maintaining their control over Kannauj through relentless struggles with the Palas and the Rashtrakutas.
- **Rajput Kingdoms** - As a result of prolonged

conflicts, both the Pala and Pratihara kingdoms experienced a decline, paving the way for the emergence of smaller kingdoms on their remnants. These new states came to be known as Rajput states, marking the beginning of the Rajput period. The prominent Rajput states that emerged during this time were as follows:

- **Hindushahi Dynasty near Peshawar in the northwest** –The Rajput dynasty, led by significant rulers like Jaipal and Anandpal, engaged in a prolonged battle with Mahmud of Ghazni in order to safeguard the security of the north-western region. Bhima was the last ruler of this dynasty.
- **Tomar Dynasty of Delhi** - Anangpal Tomar, a ruler from the Tomar dynasty, was the founder of Delhi, also known as Dhillika. Afterward, the control of Delhi passed on to the Chauhan dynasty.
- **Chauhan dynasty** - The Chauhan dynasty, associated with Shakambhari, ruled over Ajmer and Delhi. During the reign of Vigraharaja II, an important ruler, Delhi came under the control of the Chauhans. Prithviraj Chauhan, a great ruler of this dynasty.
- **Solanki dynasty of Anhilwara, Gujarat** - Bhima II, a ruler of the Chauhan dynasty, achieved victory over Mohammad Ghori.
- **Chandel State** - The Chandel dynasty was established in Mahoba, Jhansi, and Kalinjar in central India. Prominent rulers of this dynasty included Gandadeva, Dhangadeva, and Vidyadhara. They led a coalition of Rajput states in opposition to Mahmud of Ghazni.
- **Gahadwal dynasty** - Following the decline of the Pratiharas, the Gahadwals established their rule in Kannauj. Notable rulers of the Gahadwal dynasty included Chandradev, Madanpal, and Jaichand. Govindchand was the founder of this dynasty.

- **Paramara Dynasty** –The Gahadwal dynasty was founded by King Upendra or Krishnaraj. Bhoj Parmar, a renowned ruler of this dynasty, was a great patron of art and literature.

South India

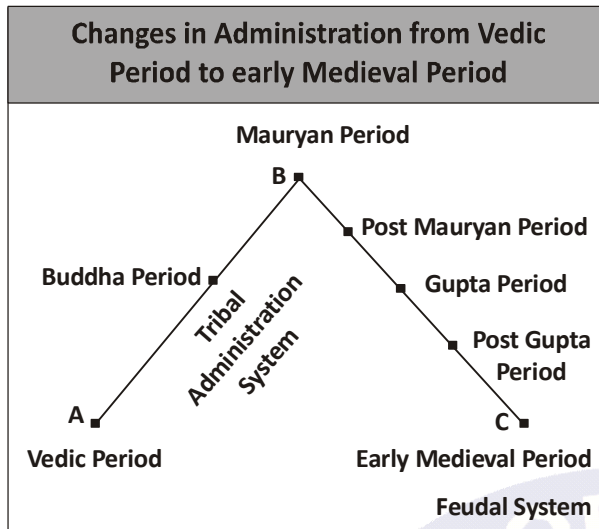
- **Maharashtra region** – The Rashtrakuta dynasty was established in the region during the mid-8th century. Its founder was Dantidurga, who gained power by overthrowing the last Chalukya ruler, Kirtivarman II. Dantidurga's uncle, Krishna I, succeeded him and constructed the famous Kailash temple at Ellora. The dynasty witnessed the reign of several influential rulers, including Dhruva, Govind II, Indra III, and Krishna III. These rulers expanded their territory in the south and engaged in a tripartite struggle with the Palas and Pratiharas for control over Kannauj in the north.
- The dynasty came to an end when Karak II, the last ruler, was overthrown by his commander, Tailap II, who established a new dynasty. Known as the Later Chalukyas, they traced their lineage back to the old Chalukyas. While the old Chalukya capital was Badami, the new capital became Kalyani. The noteworthy rulers of this dynasty included Someshwar, Satyashraya, and Vikramaditya-V.

Extreme South

- **Cholas** – The Chola dynasty was founded by Vijayalaya (850 AD - 875 AD). He was succeeded by Aditya I, who expanded the kingdom by removing the last Pallava ruler, Aparajit, from the throne. Parantaka I

succeeded Aditya I. Although he defeated the Pandya ruler, he suffered a defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakuta ruler Krishna III in the battle of Takkolam, resulting in the loss of half of the territory.

- The Chola dynasty experienced a revival under Rajaraja I (985 AD - 1014 AD). Rajaraja I achieved victories over his neighboring kingdoms and even conquered northern Sri Lanka. He renamed the northern part of Sri Lanka as Mummadicholpuram, after his own title, 'Mummadichol'. Rajendra I, the successor of Rajaraja I, continued the policy of expansion. He conquered all his neighboring regions and eventually conquered the entire island of Sri Lanka. In a northern campaign, he successfully captured Bengal and commemorated his victory by constructing a temple named Gangaikondacholapuram.
- Furthermore, the Cholas conducted a successful naval campaign against the powerful Southeast Asian kingdom of SriVijaya or Shailendra. Their naval forces established control from the Indian Ocean to the Bay of Bengal.
- By the middle of the 13th century, both the Later Chalukya Empire and the Chola Empire had disintegrated, giving rise to several new kingdoms that emerged in their wake. These kingdoms were established on the remnants of these once-powerful empires.
 1. Yadava Dynasty in Devagiri
 2. Kakatiya Dynasty in Warangal
 3. Hoysala Dynasty in Dwarasamudra
 4. Pandya Dynasty in Madurai



The above diagram shows that the process of administrative centralization in ancient India witnessed significant developments from the Vedic age to the Maurya age. This centralization was driven by various factors such as economic expansion, increased resources of the states, and the establishment of a taxation system. Consequently, it led to the organization of a strong army and an efficient bureaucracy.

However, with the introduction of land grants, the strength of administrative centralization weakened. There was a decline in the number of officials, reduction in the number of intermediaries, and a weakening of the king's army base from the Maurya age to the Early Medieval period. These changes marked the emergence of Indian feudalism, and they can be categorized into distinct periods.

■ Rig Vedic Age :

During the Rigvedic period, the concept of the state was based on the people (Jana) rather than territory (janapada), mainly because the Rigvedic Aryans led a nomadic lifestyle. In the Rigveda, the king is referred to as 'Jansya Gopa,' indicating that the king's identity was closely tied to his clan. During this period, a formal taxation system was not established. The primary source of state income came from the spoils of war, as loot acquired during battles.

Although references to a voluntary tax called Bali can be found, it was not a regular tax but rather a form of voluntary contribution. The Rigvedic period did not witness the development of an independent bureaucracy or a permanent army. While some officials are mentioned in the Rigveda, their numbers were relatively small compared to later periods. Examples of such officials include Yuvraj, Senani, Purohit, Gramini Vishwapati, and others.

The Rigveda mentions several institutions such as Sabha, Samiti, Vidatha, and Gana. These councils served as platforms for discussions on the interests of the people, military campaigns, and religious rituals. The Sabha consisted of elderly individuals and held some judicial powers. The Samiti was an important institution for common people. Vidatha, the oldest institution of the Aryans, was associated with military operations. The king sought the support of Sabha and Samiti, indicating their significance. Gana represented the institution of a republic.

In terms of administration, the smallest unit during this period was the Griha or Kula (family). Above the Kula was the village, followed by the Visha, and finally the Jana, which served as the highest unit of administration.

■ Later Vedic Age :

The introduction of agriculture during the later Vedic period brought about an increase in the state's resources, leading to an enhanced position for the king. The king's stature was elevated as specific formalities and religious rituals became associated with the role. This period also witnessed a relatively well-established tax system. The voluntary tax known as 'Bali' transformed into a mandatory tax. Additionally, the details of taxes such as bhag (representing the 16th part of land revenue) and shulka (referring to the tax on goods) were established.

However, despite these changes in the administrative system, a separate bureaucracy and standing army failed to develop. As a result, there was an increase in the number of officials. Later Vedic texts mention the existence of 12 'Ratnins' or high officials.

The janapada, or territorial unit, emerged as the largest administrative division during this time. The major tribal institutions faced setbacks, with Vidatha and Gana disappearing, while Sabha and Samiti already lost their power and significance.

■ **Buddha Age :**

During this period, the resources of the state experienced growth due to the expansion of the agricultural economy and the onset of the second urbanization. As a result, the tax system became fully established. Notably, an official known as Rajjughrahak is mentioned, indicating that land revenue was determined after land measurement.

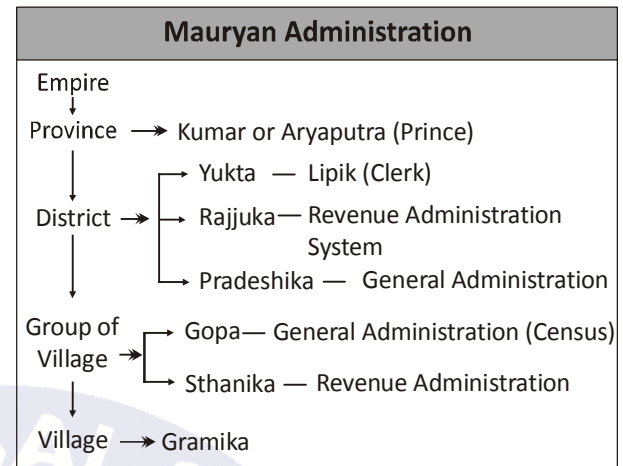
The power of the king was augmented by the existence of a standing army and a professional bureaucracy. For instance, Bimbisara was the first king to establish a standing army and was referred to as 'Shrenik Bimbisara'. This period also witnessed the development of writing, which can be discerned from royal documents. An official known as 'Akshapataladhikrita' was specifically associated with these royal documents. Additionally, the Village (Gram) was established as the smallest administrative unit during this period.

■ **Maurya Period :**

During this period, the ruler held supreme authority over the state. The Mauryan rulers adopted the title 'Devanampiya'. The Mauryan Empire was prosperous and abundant in resources, leading to an increase in the number of officials. A strong army was established, and administrative centralization was strengthened.

Kautilya's Arthashastra is considered a major source for studying the Mauryan period. However, other sources such as Megasthenes' Indica and

Ashokan inscriptions also provide valuable information. In Arthashastra, Kautilya outlines 18 Tirtha (departments) and 27 Adhyaksha (officials) in the central administration.



The Mauryan administration was characterized by a large-scale bureaucracy, and four provinces were reported during this period. The head of the province was called Kumar or Aryaputra, who likely belonged to the royal family. A Council of Ministers assisted and advised the ruler (Kumar), but this council possessed discretionary powers, including the ability to directly transmit important information to the ruler without informing Kumar.

District officials such as Yukta, Rajjuka, and Pradeshika are also mentioned. These officers were appointed by the central administration. Pradeshika held the highest position and was responsible for assessing district income and maintaining law and order. Rajjuka focused on the land revenue system and village welfare, and also had judicial authority. Yuktas served as secretaries and accountants.

At the lower level, a cluster of villages formed a unit of administration. Officials known as Gopa and Sthanika were appointed for this level. Gopa officials were involved in conducting the census, which demonstrated the state's centralization efforts in identifying taxpayers.

Megasthenes mentions certain officers in his text, such as Agronomoi, who were responsible for road construction, and Astronomoi, who served as city commissioners.

■ Post Mauryan Age :

Features :-

1. The Shaka, Kushan, and Satavahana rulers defeated Indian kingdoms but allowed them to remain as subordinate rulers, creating a situation of a state within a state. This led to certain consequences:

(i) One of the consequences was the adoption of different royal titles by the great rulers to distinguish themselves from the subordinate rulers. The impressive titles assumed by the Kushan rulers, such as Maheshvara, Sarvalokeshvara, and Shahanushahi, indicate the presence of numerous minor kings under their authority who provided military services to them.

(ii) This system resulted in the emergence of many autonomous units under the state, which later formed the basis of the feudal system.

(iii) This type of victory was termed Dharma Vijay in the Kautilyan Arthashastra.

2. To counter the decentralization tendencies during the post-Mauryan period, a tendency to incorporate divine elements into the monarchy emerged. The kings began to be compared to gods. For instance, the Satavahana rulers compared themselves to gods, while the Kushanas adopted the title Devaputra (son of god). Additionally, the Kushan rulers had their idols placed in temples, such as the one built at a location called Maat in Mathura.

3. The Satavahana rulers introduced land grants in the first century CE, but these grants were primarily religious grants bestowed upon Brahmins or Buddhist monks. The grants conferred only the right of revenue, not the right of administration. Several factors motivated the implementation of land grants during this period.

One motivation was the opportunity to promote agricultural expansion in remote areas through these grants. This was made possible because a portion of the granted land was

previously uninhabited. Additionally, the kings sought to enhance their power and influence through land grants. This allowed for the spread of Aryan culture into tribal regions as well.

■ Gupta Age

The Gupta administration serves as a transitional phase, bridging the gap between the Mauryan administration and the early medieval administration. During this period, the king's titles expanded, but his actual power diminished due to the presence of intermediaries and middlemen. The state sought to limit its responsibilities through land grants, and the participation of local elements in the Gupta administration increased.

Key Features:

1. The king held the highest position in the administration. The king assumed grand titles such as 'Parama Bhattaraka' and 'Maharajadhiraja,' which did not signify an increase in the king's power but rather indicated the presence of subordinate rulers and feudatories.

2. 'Divine kingship' gained prominence, with kings comparing themselves to gods. In the 'Prayag-Prashasti,' Samudragupta likened himself to important deities like Indra, Varuna, Antaka (Yama), and Dhanda (Kuber).

3. Several significant officials were mentioned in the central administration, including Kumaramatyā (highest officials), Sandhivigrahaka (foreign minister), Dandanayaka and MahaDandanayaka (judiciary), BalAdhikrit and MahabalAdhikrit (military), Vinayasthithapak (religious affairs), Pratihara and Mahapratihara (palace security), etc.

4. During this period, offices became hereditary, and an official could hold multiple positions simultaneously. For instance, Harishena held the posts of Mahadandanayaka, Sandhivigrahaka, and Kumaramatyā simultaneously.

5. The empire was divided into provinces known as Bhukti. An official called Uparika or Uparika Maharaja was appointed to govern the province. The term 'Maharaja' was associated with Uparika in inscriptions, suggesting that provincial authorities enjoyed more autonomy compared to earlier periods.
6. Provinces were further divided into districts or Vishaya. The district administration appointed an officer named Vishayapati or Kumaramatya. In most cases, the District Officer was chosen by the Uparika or Uparika Maharaja.
7. At the lower level, the administrative units consisted of a group of villages called Vithi or Petha. The officer in charge of these units was known as Vithi Mahatamya. The lowest unit of administration was the "Grama," which was under the control of the Mahattar.
8. An important characteristic of the Gupta administration was the involvement of regional elements in local governance. At the district level, there existed a district council known as the "Vishaya Adhikarana" or "Vishaya Parishad." At the Vithi level, there was the Vithi Parishad, and in the cities, there were Nagar Parishads or Adhishthana Adhikaranas. The following individuals were mentioned as members of these institutions: Nagar Shreshthi (chief financial officer), Sarthavaha (chief merchant), Pratham Kulika (chief craftsman), and Pratham Kayastha (chief clerk). Similarly, at the Vithi level, there were the Kutumbin (peasant) and Mahattar (village headman) mentioned.

■ **Post Gupta Age –**

Features :

1. The practice of elevating kingship to a divine status persisted in this era, with rulers

adopting grand and prestigious titles.

2. In this period, government officials started receiving their salaries in the form of land grants due to a scarcity of currency caused by declining trade. For instance, during Harsha's reign, ministers and officials were remunerated with land grants instead of cash.
3. A feudalization of the bureaucracy occurred during this time, as even feudal officers were appointed to important administrative positions.

■ **Early Medieval Period –**

Features :

1. The concept of divine kingship continued to prevail.
2. The kings continued to use impressive titles.
3. Certain feudal lords assumed the positions of officials, while officials themselves began adopting feudal titles.
4. Temples and Mathas received extensive land grants during this period.
5. The number of military grants also increased, with rulers like the Palas, Pratiharas, and Rajputs granting land to numerous feudatories who, in turn, provided military services. Thus, all the characteristics of Indian feudalism emerged in the early medieval period.
6. The Cholas introduced local self-government in South India during this era. This system involved the participation of local elements in the administration. This can be seen in the Uttaramerur inscription, where institutions such as Nattar were established at the Nadu level, while 'Ur' and 'Sabha' were formed at the village level.



■ **Vedic Age (1500 BCE - 1000 BCE)**

The Rigvedic Aryans primarily lived in rural areas and had an economy based on subsistence. Livestock rearing was their primary economic activity, while agriculture played a secondary role. Cows held great significance in their lives, as seen in the use of the word “gopa” for the king and “godhuli” to denote a specific time. Agriculture had limited importance in their economic system, resulting in a subordinate position for the agricultural sector. This limited the role of art and trade as well. They used copper or bronze, referred to as “ayas,” for crafting purposes. The discussions also mention a non-Aryan merchant named “Pani.” Currency circulation was not common during that time, and descriptions of currency appear as “nishka” and “shatamana.” Nishka likely served as decorative ornamentation, while shatamana represented a measure equivalent to the value of 100 cows. The Rigvedic economic system was primarily rural, as the term “nagar” (city) is not mentioned in the Rigveda.

■ **Later Vedic Period (1500 BCE – 600 BCE)**

During the Later Vedic period, agriculture took center stage as the primary occupation. In contrast to the earlier Vedic period, where only barley (yava) was mentioned as a crop, the Later Vedic period saw the introduction of other crops like wheat (godhuma) and rice (vrihi). The Yajurveda specifically highlights five rice varieties, with vrihi being the term used for rice. The Atharva Veda mentions two rice varieties, vrihi and tandula. However, trade and craftsmanship remained limited during this period, with the Vaishyas being primarily associated with trade. Texts from this time mention various guilds or shrenis of traders, led by a head merchant known as a shreshthin. The practice of lending money on interest, known as kusidin, was also present. Although regular

coin circulation had not yet begun, there is mention of a new coin called krishnala. Overall, there was a significant shift in the Later Vedic economy compared to the earlier period, as semi-animal husbandry and a semi-nomadic lifestyle gradually transformed into settled agriculture, becoming the primary means of sustenance for the people.

■ **Buddha Era (600 BCE – 400 BCE)**

During this period, agriculture underwent a remarkable transformation. The Central Doab region experienced extensive deforestation, leading to the expansion of agricultural practices. Rice cultivation gained prominence, surpassing wheat as the primary crop. Additionally, advancements in agricultural technology, particularly the use of iron tools, were observed. While iron was initially utilized for warfare during the later Vedic period, it found practical application in agricultural implements, resulting in increased productivity and surplus production.

Furthermore, these advancements in agriculture had a positive ripple effect on crafts, fostering the growth of commerce, trade, and the establishment of a money-based economy. Punched-marked coins were introduced as an early form of standardized currency, predominantly made of silver with occasional blends of silver and copper. Notably, the Indian subcontinent witnessed a significant phenomenon known as the Second Urbanization, where cities re-emerged following the collapse of the Indus Civilization around the 6th century BCE. It is worth mentioning that the Indus Valley set the foundation for the first urban civilization, while the middle Ganga plain played a pivotal role in the establishment of the second urbanization. Buddhist texts mention the existence of 60 cities in North India, including six major metropolises.

■ **Mauryan Period (400 BCE – 200 BCE)**

The archaeological and literary evidence indicate that the Mauryan period was one of an expanding economy in all sectors. The expansion of the economy was the result of interactions among various factors like development in rural agricultural productivity, the emergence of iron-based craft production by specialized laborers and artisans and trade.

- **Agriculture** - The state also had a share in agriculture. The crown land was called 'Sitaland' and the officer associated with it was called 'Sitadhyaksha'. He used to carry agrarian production with the help of slaves, karmakaras, workers, and Dandpratikarta (criminals). Various types of crops were grown i.e., wheat, barley, paddy, pulses, cotton and sugarcane. The state took steps to develop irrigation. Sudarshan lake was built to facilitate the water supply by Pushpagupta, an officer of Chandragupta Maurya.

likely to it, some art and artisan were under state monopoly. for example- Iron tools, ship building, mining etc. in this period textile was an important industry.

- **Trade** - During the Mauryan period, the state played a significant role in trade and commerce. The goods belonging to the state were referred to as "Raajapany." The supervision of trade activities was entrusted to a position known as "Panyadhyaksha." The state imposed customs and trade duties on goods.

In northern India, several important trade routes flourished during this era. The foremost among them was the "Uttarapath," which was even mentioned by Megasthenes. This route stretched from Mathura to Peshawar. Another route ran from Kaushambi to Ujjain and further to Bharuch. In the eastern region, the trade route extended from Pataliputra to Tamralipti, which served as a crucial port at that time. Additionally, the Arthashastra by Kautilya mentions the presence of "Dakshinapatha," the southern trade route.

- **Money economy and urbanization** - Punch-marked coins were widely used as a form of currency during this period, indicating the presence of a well-developed monetary economy. However, it is important to note that these coins were not issued by the state but by private corporations. Kautilya's Arthashastra mentions a type of coin called the 'Pan,' which was made of silver.

Furthermore, the period witnessed significant advancements in commerce, trade, and administrative activities, which further facilitated the process of urbanization. Ashoka's inscriptions mention the existence of seven cities besides Pataliputra, highlighting the growth and prominence of urban centers during this period.

■ **Post-Mauryan Period**

The post-Mauryan period witnessed significant economic development. On one hand, the agrarian economy experienced rapid expansion, while on the other hand, there was a surge in crafts, commerce, trade, and urbanization. This period marked the culmination of the second phase of urbanization.

- **Agriculture** : During this period, cultivation extended into the border regions of states through land grants, and individual efforts to expand agriculture were also encouraged. An example of such encouragement can be found in Manu's declaration that the person who cultivates the land first becomes its rightful owner. The state took on the responsibility of developing irrigation systems, as demonstrated by Rudradaman's efforts in repairing the Sudarshan Lake.

- **Craft and Industry**: During the post-Mauryan period, one can underline the multiplicity of crafts. A text belonging to the Post-Mauryan period, 'Milindapanha', gives a list of 75 types of occupations, out of them 60 were exclusively associated with crafts. During this period, different types of crafts and industries were organized around different regions. For

example, Ujjain was famous for bead-making. At Mathura, there was the production of some special type of cloth known as 'Shatka'. Magadha was noted for the production of iron implements. Nalgonda and Karimnagar in Andhra region were also known for the production of iron-works. Arikamedu and Uraiyur were famous for dyeing industries.

- **Trade:** During this period, both internal and external trade reached its zenith. The Silk Route played a pivotal role in facilitating trade between the Han Empire of China, the Kushan Empire of India, and the Roman Empire of Europe. India reaped substantial benefits from this trade.

India's exports to Rome encompassed a diverse range of goods, including main commodities such as spices, particularly black pepper (known as Yavanpriya), silk, iron tools, precious stones, and medicinal articles. In return, Rome imported valuable commodities like gold and silver, wine, gems, glass, lead, and exquisite Arretine pottery. The significant influx of bullion from Rome to India indicated a trade balance in India's favor, a phenomenon aptly described as the "drain of wealth" by the Roman writer Pliny.

Historical records shed light on numerous ports along the western and eastern coasts of India. In the northern region, Barbarikam situated at the mouth of the Indus River and Broach along the Gujarat coast stood out as important ports. Tamralipti held strategic significance as a major port in Bengal, while Tondi and Muziris played prominent roles on the Malabar Coast. Along the eastern coast, namely the Coromandel Coast, Kaveripattanam, Arikamedu, and Korkai emerged as vital trade ports.

- **Money Economy** - The Post-Mauryan period marked the pinnacle of the money economy. It witnessed the minting of coins made not only from gold and silver but also from copper, bronze, and even lead. Similar to the Roman Empire's Dinar currency, the Kushan Empire issued pure coins. The divisibility of coins became a notable

feature during this time, allowing for greater convenience in transactions. As an example, the Satavahana rulers issued lead coins.

- **Urbanization** – The Post-Mauryan period saw the rise of new urban centers. Banaras, Mathura, and Chirand thrived under the Kushanas, while Ujjain prospered under the Sakas. Port cities like Arikamedu, Muziris, Nagarjunakonda, and Kaveripattinam flourished. Similarly, Tagar, Paithan, Amarawati, and Bhargukachcha emerged as important urban hubs under the Satavahanas.

■ Gupta Period

The Gupta period is considered an era of economic prosperity.

- **Agriculture** - Due to land grants the agricultural economy expanded. The increasing pressure over land grants played a crucial role in expanding the agricultural economy, leading to the establishment of detailed land arrangements to manage the growing land pressure. Ancient texts like Amarakosha and BrihatSamhita provide valuable insights into innovative agricultural practices of that time, including the technique of grafting mentioned in BrihatSamhita. While farmers heavily relied on rainfall for irrigation, the state also took initiatives to provide artificial irrigation. Skandagupta's Junagadh inscription highlights his efforts to repair the Sudarshan lake for irrigation purposes.

During this period, a new irrigation technology called Arghatta likely emerged. The early mention of Arghatta can be found in the Satavahana scripture Gathasaptasati, and later Banabhatta referred to it as GhantiYantra.

- **Crafts and industries** - The Gupta period flourished in terms of craft production, with cotton, silk, and wool holding significant importance in the realm of textile manufacturing. Four prominent centers emerged as hubs of textile production: Mathura, Banaras, Daspura, and Kamrup. The paintings of Ajanta and the literary works of Kalidas provide us with glimpses

of the exceptional quality of clothing that was crafted during this period.

Furthermore, metallurgy reached an advanced state during this era. Notable examples include the Iron Pillar of Chandragupta Vikramaditya in Mehrauli, Delhi, and the Gupta gold coins. These coins, in particular, serve as a testament to the remarkable metallurgical skills of the Gupta period. Even Vatsyayana's Kamasutra acknowledges metallurgy as one of the 64 crafts.

- **Trade** - In the third century CE, it is believed that India's trade relations with the Western Roman Empire were disrupted, leading to a decline in certain cities in northern India and ports such as Arikamedu, Muji, and Kaveripattinam in South India. However, during the same period, northern India established trade connections with the Byzantine Empire in the Western world, which halted the decline of urban centers. The Gupta rulers played a significant role by issuing a large number of gold coins. Vatsyayana, the author of 'Kamasutra,' attested to the prosperity of city life during this period. Additionally, the foreign traveler Fa-Hien observed the growth of Madhya Desh and Pataliputra.

Nevertheless, towards the end of the Gupta period, India's trade relations with the Eastern Roman Empire deteriorated, resulting in adverse effects on trade.

■ Post-Gupta Age

This was a period of unprecedented development in terms of the expansion of the agricultural economy. The agricultural economy was further expanded through land grants. The development of irrigation was also promoted during this period, with wells, reservoirs, and ponds being utilized for this purpose. The production of horticultural crops was also encouraged.

However, on the other hand, this period witnessed a decline in urbanization, money economy, and trade.

■ Early Medieval Period

The agricultural economy continued to expand throughout this period, with the settlement of new lands, the introduction of new crops, and advancements in irrigation.

However, the situation regarding trade, money economy, and urbanization can be divided into two distinct phases:

- **First stage (750 AD-1000 AD)** - During this period, there was a decline in trade, money economy, and urbanization.
- **Second stage (1000 AD-1200 AD)** - In this period, both external and internal trade experienced a revival. The emergence of a large Arab empire in West Asia resulted in increased demand for Indian goods. As trade flourished, the money based economy and urbanization also rebounded, marking the onset of the third phase of urbanization.

■ Rig Vedic Period

The Rig Vedic age was characterized by a tribal structure and a strong emphasis on creating an egalitarian society. In the Rigveda, we find references to three varnas: priests (Purohit), warriors (Rajanya), and commoners. This division was based on occupation rather than birth (jana). If someone changed their occupation, their varna would also change accordingly.

The family served as the foundational unit of Rigvedic society, following a patriarchal social system. The father or elder brother held authority and control over other family members. Despite being a patriarchal society, the status of women was relatively better. The Rigveda expressed a desire for the birth of warrior sons but did not discourage the birth of girls. Child marriage was not practiced, and girls were typically married around the ages of 16-17. Daughters also participated in Upanayana rites and had the right to education. Women also enjoyed limited political rights, including participation in sabha and samiti proceedings, performing sacrifices alongside their husbands, and even wearing the sacred thread. Notable women scholars during this era included Ghosha, Apala, Lopamudra, and Vishavara. The Rigveda mentions examples of marriages based on blood relations and polyandry.

The diet of the Rigvedic Aryans included both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food, although the use of salt is not specifically mentioned. Additionally, they consumed a beverage called 'Soma', which had intoxicating properties.

Slavery was prevalent during this period, and female slaves were also present.

■ Later Vedic Society

The basis of society was kinship. During the later Vedic period, a four-fold division emerged for the first time. However, this division was first

mentioned in the 10th mandala of the Purusha Sukta in the Rigveda. The four-fold division corresponded to the four limbs of the human body. These varnas were Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. The upper three varnas were known as 'Dvija'. Shudras were separated from the upper varnas and their main occupation was to provide services to the upper varnas.

During this period, the position of the head of the family was strengthened over the family members. The head of the family retained decisive authority, and the position of women comparatively declined during this era. For the first time, in the Aitareya Brahmana, sons were considered the protectors of the family while daughters were seen as a source of sorrow. During this period, the participation of women was prohibited in sabha, but some of their rights were still protected, implying the entitlement to education.

• Why did the status of women decline?

During the Rigvedic period, women enjoyed relatively favorable conditions. However, as time passed, their position declined due to two main reasons:

1. **Decreased involvement in agriculture:** In the Rigvedic era, women actively participated in agricultural activities alongside their family members. However, with the expansion of agriculture during the Buddha period, more labor and slaves were required. Consequently, women's participation in production decreased, which had a negative impact on their social status.
2. **Rigidity of the Varna system:** Society was divided into different strata through the Varna and caste system, with those in higher varnas enjoying more resources and privileges. To maintain this system, the upper varna members sought to exert greater control over women. This led to a more

complex Varna system, ultimately resulting in a decline in the social standing of women.

- **Gotras** - . The term 'Gotra' originally referred to a 'Goshta,' which denoted the place where a family's entire herd of cows was kept together, like a cowshed. Over time, the meaning evolved to represent the concept of 'gotra' itself. Initially, Gotra was exclusively associated with Brahmins, but Brahmins also assigned it to Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. In the Vedic age, marrying outside one's gotra, known as exogamy, was not widely practiced. However, this practice gradually emerged during the Buddha age.

- **Ashram System** – During the later Vedic age, an innovative concept known as the ashram system emerged. The Ashrama system was divided into four ashramas: Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sanyasa. Initially, there were three ashramas in the Later Vedic Age, but the four-fold Ashram system was established during the Buddha Age. The Ashrama system had two primary objectives. Firstly, it aimed to fulfill the four Purusharthas: Dharma (duty), Kama (desire), Artha (wealth), and moksha (liberation). Secondly, it aimed to release individuals from the four types of debt, which were Deva rin (debt to the gods), Rishi rin (debt to the sages), Pitra rin (debt to the ancestors), and Manav rin (debt to humanity). However, the ultimate goal of the Ashrama system was to maintain a balance between individual freedom and social control.

- **Samskaras** –Gautama provided a list of 40 samskaras, but it is more commonly accepted that there are 16 samskaras. Samskara is a sacred ritual that holds significant importance in a Hindu's life, beginning from conception and continuing through various stages until the final funeral rites. The prevailing belief is that these samskaras contribute to the holistic development of an individual. Originally, they were primarily intended for Dvijas, the twice-born castes, but there were also some samskaras for Shudras, albeit performed without

mantras. Women also had specific samskaras, some of which involved mantras, like the 'Marriage Samskara.' The purpose of these samskaras is to bring spiritual and moral transformation, leading to a complete and fulfilled life.

- **Varna system and Castes** – Varna remained an ideal concept in Indian society, while caste became the reality. The development of caste in India has a long history that can be understood as follows:

Originally, the Varna division was based on one's profession. However, during the 'Sutra period' (seventh century BCE), birth became the primary factor for determining Varna. This shift in criteria led to the violation of the Varna system and the emergence of Varna-sankara groups, which can be thought of as hybrid or mixed Varna categories.

The Varna rules were commonly violated for two reasons. Firstly, when a man of lower Varna married a woman of higher Varna, it was referred to as a Pratiloma type of marriage. The children born from such unions were given the status of Varna sankara. Similarly, when individuals of lower Varna adopted the professions of those in higher Varna, the situation of Varna sankara occurred. Over time, these Varna sankara groups further evolved into distinct castes.

Apart from these factors, several others also played a significant role in the development of caste in India:

1. **Emergence of Professions:** Certain professions that did not fit within the established varna system developed into separate castes. These professions were considered distinct and were often associated with specific skills or occupations.
2. **Caste Consolidation:** Certain professions and craft categories, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, goldsmiths, and others, consolidated into specific castes. These castes became identifiable based on the

specialized skills and expertise of their members.

3. **Incorporation of Tribal Groups:** New castes were formed to incorporate tribal groups into the structured varna society. This integration allowed for the inclusion of tribal communities within the broader caste framework.
4. **Influence of Regionalism:** Regional influences also impacted the caste system, leading to the division of the same caste into various sub-caste types based on geographical regions. Regional variations contributed to further fragmentation within the caste system.

As a result of these factors, the number of castes grew significantly, far surpassing the original four varnas in the Indian tradition. Castes multiplied into thousands, resulting in a complex caste system that continues to exist in Indian society.

■ **Buddha Period**

During this period, the writing of commentaries on the Dharma Sutra laid the foundation for the Varna division, which subsequently led to the development of caste. Unfortunately, the social status of women declined during this time as they became subordinate to men. This period also marks the probable beginning of the dowry system, as exemplified by Bimbisara, the ruler of Magadha, receiving the Kashi region as a dowry.

While Buddhism and Jainism allowed women to join their sanghas, it did not bring about significant changes in the overall status of women. In fact, Buddha implemented strict rules regarding the conduct of women, considering them inferior to monks.

With the urban revolution and the significant progress in trade and commerce in the Ganga Valley, the Vaishya varna emerged as the most prosperous in society. On the other hand, the position of the Shudras in society was quite

pitiful. The development of various cities also led to the emergence of low occupational groups, often considered as 'low caste' or 'low profession' (Heen-sipp). Castes like Chandals, Pukkas, and Nishads fell into this category.

■ **Mauryan Period**

Kautilya, despite being a Brahmin, adopts a relatively lenient approach towards the caste system and women's rights in his works. While he does protect the privileges of the upper castes, he shows more leniency towards the Shudras, even referring to them as 'Arya.' According to Kautilya, a Shudra Arya cannot be treated as a slave, indicating a level of respect for them.

Similarly, Kautilya recognizes women leading independent lives and refers to them as 'Chhandavasini.' He also demonstrates a respectful attitude towards 'Ganikas' or prostitutes, acknowledging their role as a source of income for the state. In fact, the state even provides patronage to them.

Regarding marriage, the traditional Dharmasutra recognizes four types of marriages as 'Dharmeya': Brahma Vivah, Deva Vivah, Arsha Vivah, and Prajapatya Vivah. However, Kautilya takes a pragmatic approach and extends social acceptance to all eight types of marriages, including the four 'adharma' types: Gandharva Vivah, Paishacha Vivah, Rakshasa Vivah, and Asura Vivah.

■ **Post-Mauryan Period-**

During the period of the 'Manu Samhita,' a harsh approach was taken towards the varna system and social order. This was influenced by the assimilation of tribal elements through land grants and the influence of foreign cultures. A social crisis, indicated by the term 'Kaliyuga,' led to lower varnas rebelling against higher ones. Manu Smriti emphasized unity among higher varnas when dealing with lower varnas. Manu implemented strict measures:

1. Varna samskaras increased from 12 to 61, evolving into different castes.

2. Women faced restrictions, including the prohibition of widow remarriage, early marriage for girls, and limited property rights.
3. Shudras were treated with distance by the twice-born (Dvijas).

In summary, the Manu Samhita established a foundation of social rigidity, enforcing strict rules and limitations on varna, caste, women, and Shudras.

■ Gupta Age

During this period, Brahmanic influence resurged, leading to an emphasis on Brahmin privileges and a more complex Varna division. As a consequence, the social position of women underwent a relative decline.

Brahmins and Kshatriyas enjoyed elevated status, while Vaishyas experienced a decline and Shudras saw some improvement. Yajnavalkya's recognition of Shudras as cultivators exemplifies this shift.

Despite the idealized portrayal of women in Gupta literature, the reality was starkly different. Evidence of the Devadasi system, mentioned by Kalidasa in 'Meghaduta,' and the allusion to the emerging Purdah system in 'Abhigyan Shakuntalam' reflect the decline in women's social condition. Additionally, the Eran inscription of Bhanu gupta from around 510 CE provides the earliest epigraphic evidence of the Sati system, further highlighting the disparity between the elevated status of women in literature and their actual social position. In the 5th century CE, a notable development occurred

where the Gotra of women began changing based on their male counterparts. Furthermore, it was during this time that the 'Yajnavalkya Smriti' recognized the right of women to own property.

During this period, untouchable castes multiplied, and their social status declined. Certain castes, including those involved in leatherwork, became categorized as untouchables due to the decline in their occupations. The term 'Aparsh' was introduced in the Katyayan Smriti to refer to untouchables, and Fahien documented the distressing condition of the Chandalas.

■ In the Post-Gupta and Early Medieval Period:

1. Sub-castes emerged, making the caste system more intricate.
2. The social status of Vaishyas became almost equal to that of Shudras, as Alberuni observed. Both were denied access to the Vedas.
3. Rajput culture granted girls the right of Swayamvar, and women's property rights increased. The commentary 'Mitakshara' on 'Yajnavalkya Smriti' by Vigyaneshwar played a crucial role in expanding women's property rights, introducing the concept of stridhan. However, alongside these advancements, the harmful practices of Sati and Jauhar were introduced among the warrior class, seen as societal ills.

Culture is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses a broad spectrum of human behaviors, beliefs, and values. It encompasses everything from our dietary choices and clothing preferences to our religious practices and worldview.

India, a country known for its immense diversity, is home to a rich and vibrant culture shaped by its unique geography and historical influences. The different regions of India exhibit distinct cultural identities, as evidenced by their diverse culinary traditions, traditional attire, lifestyle choices, and vibrant festivals. The geographical and climatic variations across the country have given rise to notable disparities in dietary habits, ways of life, clothing styles, and festive customs among the people residing in these regions. The inhabitants of western India, the northeast, the foothills of Himachal, the plains, and the peninsular regions, all have their own distinct cultural practices.

It is important to recognize that geographical obstacles did not impede the movement of populations between different regions. The people of India were not only connected within the Indian subcontinent but also maintained connections with foreign lands. Despite the presence of the Vindhya mountain range, people from the Indian peninsula continued to migrate across regions, even during the post-Vedic period. This is exemplified in mythological tales such as the saga of the sage Agastya and his encounter with the Vindhya mountains, symbolizing the migration of people from the northern to the southern regions. In ancient times, there was a collective consciousness of the entire Indian subcontinent referred to as "Jambudweep," and the title of "Chakravarti" was reserved for rulers who governed the entirety of Jambudweep.

It is worth noting that the title of 'Chakravartin' held great appeal for rulers, and

even minor rulers aspired to assume this prestigious position. Similarly, the concept of a unified India also captured the attention of ancient scholars and intellectuals. Through Kalidasa's composition 'Meghaduta,' we gain insight into his profound understanding of India's geography. Thus, the geographical and climatic variations could not restrict the movement of merchants, traders, or the ambitions of rulers. As early as the fourth century BC, the Mauryas established an empire that stretched from the Hindu Kush mountains in the northwest to Bengal in the east and Brahmagiri in the south. This fostered continual interaction among the diverse regions of the Indian subcontinent, promoting the exchange of intellectual and cultural ideas. Consequently, the principle of unity in diversity prevailed despite the existence of cultural variations.

Furthermore, alongside geography, history played a crucial role in the development of culture. Various historical factors contributed to the formation and evolution of culture, which can be understood as follows:

- **Emergence of New Social groups :-** The northwestern region of India has witnessed a continuous influx of new elements that have seamlessly integrated into Indian society. Among these migrants, the Vedic Aryans played a significant role. Although they introduced Sanskrit as a new language, they did not possess their own script. Initially, they led a pastoral lifestyle, but through interactions with the North Harappans and other Chalcolithic communities in India, they acquired knowledge of agriculture. While they held their own religious beliefs, it is believed that they adopted the practice of Yajna after coming into contact with the post-Harappan people. Notably, the Aryans outside of India were unfamiliar with Yajna, while the Harappans were well-acquainted with it.

Following this, India saw the arrival of foreign elements such as the Indo-Greeks,

Shakas, and Kushanas, who swiftly assimilated into Indian society. These foreign rulers embraced various Indian religious sects, exemplifying their integration. For instance, the Indo-Greek rulers embraced Buddhism, and an intriguing conversation between the Indo-Greek ruler Menander and the Indian sage Nagasena highlights the historical significance of religion in ancient India. Additionally, the Kushana rulers actively supported the Mahayana Buddhist sect, with Kushan ruler Kanishka being credited with the spread of Buddhism in Central Asia and West Asia. The Hunas, another foreign group, readily adopted the Shaivite sect, as demonstrated by the close association of Huna rulers Toraman and Mihirkul with Shaivism. Thus, foreign elements seamlessly became part of Indian society through various religious paths.

- **Harmony between Aryan and non-Aryan elements :-** When the Vedic Aryans migrated to India, they willingly embraced non-Aryan elements into their culture. Their language, Sanskrit, contains a mixture of non-Aryan words like Munda and Dravidian. They also adopted the practice of Yajna, which likely originated from non-Aryan sources. Furthermore, non-Aryan influences played a role in the development of scripts.

In the domain of religion, a harmonious fusion of Aryan and non-Aryan elements emerged in the early centuries after Christ. Aryan rituals encompassed a wide range of beliefs, transitioning from polytheism to monotheism, as reflected in the Vedas and Upanishads. Subsequently, rival religious sects like Buddhism and Jainism emerged, yet they were founded on Aryan elements.

During the early Christian era, Aryan culture spread to tribal areas through land grants, fostering a peaceful coexistence of Aryan and non-Aryan elements. This harmony extended to the religious sphere as well. The concept of bhakti, meaning devotion, flourished among non-Aryan groups. For example, the worship of Vasudeva Krishna, a non-Aryan deity, thrived in

Mathura. Over time, Vasudeva Krishna became merged with Vishnu, an Aryan god, leading to the development of Vaishnavism. Bhakti became the core of Vaishnavism. Similarly, the non-Vedic deity Shiva merged with the Vedic god Rudra, giving rise to Shaivism. Buddhism also experienced the influence of bhakti during this period, resulting in the emergence of Mahayana as a distinct branch. Alongside bhakti, non-Aryan sects also embraced concepts like incarnation and idol worship, which significantly influenced Aryan traditions. The idea of incarnation facilitated the harmonious integration of Aryan and non-Aryan deities. For instance, ten avatars of Vishnu and twenty-eight avatars of Shiva were envisioned. Brahmin sects adopted idol worship, and the practice of stupas and idol worship became prevalent in Buddhism. The Tirthankaras of Jainism were also venerated. Subsequently, during the Gupta period, temples dedicated to Brahmin deities were constructed, laying the foundation for the future development of the Hindu religion.

- **Harmony between the elements of North and South India: -** As we can see, the Vindhya region failed to create a permanent dividing line between North and South India, allowing people from both regions to freely interact and exchange ideas. It is believed that the concept of bhakti, based on the Puranas, migrated from the north to the south and merged with the idea of love found in the Sangam texts. This fusion gave rise to the emotional phase of Bhakti. Under the Alvar saints, it took the form of Vishnu bhakti, while under the Nayanar saints, it became Shiva bhakti. Later, Brahmin teachers like Ramanujacharya provided it with a philosophical foundation called 'Qualified Non-Dualism' (Vishitatadvaita). Ramanand, who came from the south, further spread this devotion in the north. Over time, regional influences shaped the development of bhakti in different ways. In Maharashtra, it became Maharashtra Dharma, while in North India, it divided into two forms known as Saguna and Nirguna bhakti.

Nirguna bhakti was a synthesis of Nathpanth, Bhakti, Islamic monotheism, and the Sufi sect. Saguna bhakti, on the other hand, focused on Rama and Krishna as the main deities. Thus, the Bhakti movement exemplified unity in diversity, with various regional characteristics while retaining some common elements.

Apart from religion, there were also exchanges of art and literature between North and South India. Initially, cave architecture was promoted by Ashoka, and it later evolved into Chaityas and Viharas. These structures were primarily developed in the regions of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Furthermore, the rock-cut temples that emerged were influenced by the earlier cave architecture and were developed by the Pallavas.

As different architectural styles emerged, such as the Nagara style (between Kashmir and the Vindhya region), Dravida style (between the Krishna river and Kanyakumari), and Vesara style (between the Vindhya region and the Krishna river), they complemented and influenced each other. Temples in both the North and South regions showcased the construction of 'Mandap.' Additionally, the Jagmohan found in North Indian temples bore resemblance to the temples in South India. The Vesara style, in particular, combined features of both the Nagara and Dravidian styles. This exchange and influence can also be seen in other forms of art, sculpture, and painting. While India had a rich tradition of sculpture, with the earliest forms found in Harappan sculptures, another stream of sculpture emerged from the northwest, known as Gandhara art. Gandhara art was influenced by Greco-Roman art as well as Central Asian and Indian elements. It emphasized the depiction and ornamentation of idols. Furthermore, Gandhara art influenced Mathura art and Amaravati art, and vice versa.

Similarly, the paintings of Ajanta influenced the paintings of Ellora and the Chola dynasty. Ancient India had an openness to the outside

world, particularly in the fields of art and ideas. Indian numerology, for example, reached the West through Arab scholars, while Indians gained astronomical knowledge from the Greeks. Indian sculpture and painting spread from Central Asia to South Asia, and in return, ancient Greece and Rome contributed to Indian sculpture through the medium of Gandhara art. Notably, various regional versions of the Indian Ramayana developed in Southeast Asia, and the largest Buddhist temple, Borobudur, was built in Indonesia.

Achievements of Ancient Indian Culture –

1. Unity in Diversity – Hinduism, for the first time, showcases the expression of unity in diversity within the realm of religion. It is not a single religion but rather a composite of various religious sects, including Brahminism, Buddhism, Jainism, and others. Hinduism encompasses different dimensions such as monotheism and polytheism, knowledge and devotion, Yoga and idol worship, elements of non-violence, animal sacrifice, worship of shapeless gods, and tantrism. Pilgrimage plays a crucial role in promoting unity among these diverse sects. The term 'Hindu' originated from Arabian sources and gained recognition as a distinct religion during the British colonial era.

In the early centuries of Christianity, India also encountered religious traditions from the 'Abrahamic' tradition, including Judaism and Christianity. Some Jews, who were persecuted by the Roman Empire, migrated to India. St. Thomas, a renowned Christian saint, arrived in India and his tomb was built in Madras. Christianity also found its followers in Kerala. Furthermore, with the advent of Islam in Iran, a group of Zoroastrians sought refuge in India and settled in Gujarat. They became known as Parsis and excelled in business. Even before the establishment of Muslim rule, Arab traders had settled on the Malabar Coast. Throughout ancient times, there is no record of Indian rulers persecuting followers of different faiths. People were granted the freedom to practice their

religion, highlighting the expression of unity in diversity. This spirit of unity prevails across various fields such as art, language, and literature.

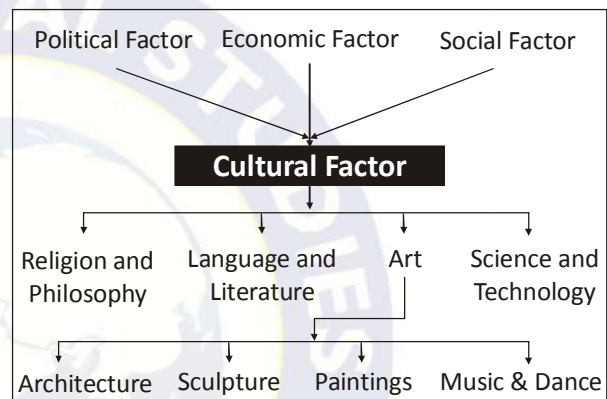
Sanskrit, considered the oldest language, laid the foundation for the development of Pali, Prakrit, and Apabhramsha languages. Subsequently, during the early medieval period, regional languages emerged, including Bengali, Oriya, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Hindi, and others. In the Dravidian language group, Tamil stood as the oldest language, followed by the emergence of Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam. Besides these primary languages, numerous sub-languages and dialects gained popularity.

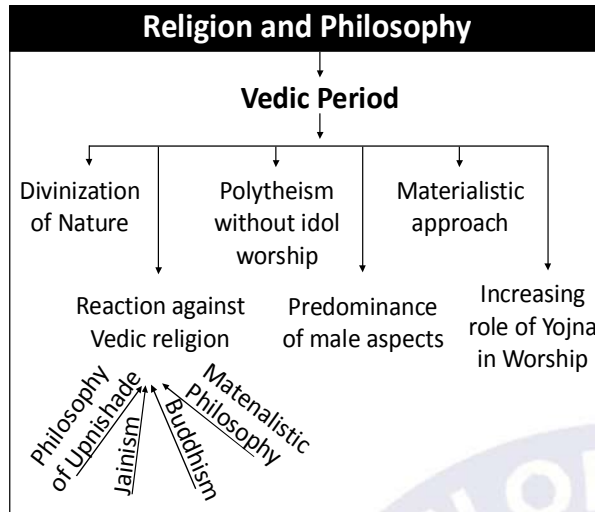
Overall, the religious, linguistic, and cultural landscape of ancient India vividly reflects the concept of unity in diversity.

2. Religious Harmony: - In other regions of the world, it is often observed that if a religious sect receives patronage from a dynasty, other religious sects tend to face discrimination or persecution. However, in India, the rulers of

various dynasties extended their patronage to multiple religious sects. For instance, Emperor Ashoka patronized not only Buddhists but also Brahmins and Ajivikas.

3. Freedom to express Religious views:- This fact has been articulated by Amartya Sen in his renowned book, "The Argumentative Indian." According to him, in ancient times, people belonging to various religious sects engaged in spirited debates and discussions with one another, fostering a culture of intellectual exchange and mutual understanding. This practice not only enriched Indian culture but also infused it with additional vitality and energy.





Vedic Religion

During the transition from the Rigvedic to the Later Vedic Age, a tribal society evolved into a Varna-based social structure, accompanied by the emergence of a more defined religious system. The Vedic religion exhibited distinct characteristics during this period:

1. Divinization of Nature: The Vedic people observed and studied natural elements like the Sun, Earth, Fire, and the Moon. They tried their best to understand them, but if they couldn't, they considered them as divine.

2. Polytheism without idol worship: An intriguing aspect of Rig Vedic religion was its polytheistic nature, where multiple gods were worshipped. However, unlike in ancient Greece, the practice of idol worship was not widespread during this era.

3. Predominance of Male Aspects: During the Rigvedic period, the selection of deities was influenced by economic and social needs. The supreme gods at that time were Indra, Agni, and Varuna. Indra held the roles of both the god of war (Purandar) and the god of rain (Purbhida). Agni, the second major deity, represented fire, which served purposes like cooking and clearing forests. Additionally, Agni played a crucial role as a mediator between gods and humans. Varuna, known as the 'Ritsya Gopa,' was

considered the guardian of natural laws. The concept of 'Rita' held great spiritual significance for the Rigvedic Aryans. To appease Varuna, it required not only prayer and sacrifice but also adherence to high moral standards.

In the later Vedic period, there was a shift in the hierarchy of deities. Prajapati, Vishnu, and Rudra emerged as the three supreme deities. The Vedic Aryans had transitioned to a more settled way of life during this period, leading to the development of infrastructure.

While the Rigvedic and later Vedic periods mentioned some goddesses like Usha, Nisha, Aranyani, and Ratri, their status remained subordinate to the deities.

4. Worldly or Materialistic Approach: The Vedic Aryans had a materialistic approach to their worship, focusing on seeking tangible benefits rather than spiritual salvation. They conducted yajnas, which were sacrificial rituals performed with the aim of achieving material prosperity. This included desires for good health, an abundance of food, and the continuation of their lineage through sons.

5. Increasing role of Yajna in worship: Both prayer and yajna were prevalent during the Rigvedic period, but the significance of yajna grew significantly in the later Vedic period. Animal sacrifices and the recitation of mantras became central elements of yajnas, making them pivotal rituals in Vedic ceremonies.

Religions of Buddhist Period

The Buddha Age witnessed rapid socio-economic changes that had an impact on religious beliefs and practices. These changes were driven by the development of agriculture and urban economies, which posed challenges to the existing Vedic religion. The Vedic Yajna, with its large-scale animal sacrifices, conflicted with the need to protect livestock, which was crucial for the agrarian economy. Additionally,

new religious sects emerged that supported trade and commerce.

Socially, there was a clash between the ambitions of the Kshatriya Varna (warrior class) and the Brahmins (priestly class). Interestingly, many religious reformers during this period came from the Kshatriya Varna, highlighting the growing tension between the two groups.

Key characteristics of the religious cults during this time can be outlined as follows:

1. Plurality of Religious sects: Buddhist texts mention the existence of 62 religious sects, while Jain texts go even further, mentioning 363 sects. This indicates a diverse religious landscape during that era.

2. Increasing emphasis on Renunciation: The period saw a growing encouragement of renunciation, whereby individuals voluntarily gave up worldly possessions and attachments. This cultural trend came to be known as 'Shraman tradition.'

3. Emphasis on concepts such as Karma, Rebirth, and Salvation: Most religious sects of the time stressed the importance of these concepts, underscoring the significance of one's actions, the cycle of birth and death, and the pursuit of spiritual liberation.

■ **Important Religious Sects:**

• **Upanishads** -The Upanishads portray the evolution of ideas within the Vedic religion itself. They rejected the practice of Yajna, which involved animal sacrifice, and instead placed great emphasis on the pursuit of knowledge as the pathway to liberation. This knowledge revolves around the profound understanding of the unity between Brahman (the ultimate reality) and Atman (the individual self). Recognizing the oneness of Brahma and Jiva, knowledge becomes essential for achieving salvation. The Upanishads represent the culmination of the Vedic religion, as they reveal that the Vedas prioritized prayer, the Brahmanas focused on sacrifice, the Aranyakas emphasized asceticism, and the Upanishads centered on the pursuit of

knowledge.

• **Buddhist Philosophy** - The following concepts were held by the Buddhists regarding the nature of this world. Firstly, they believed that this world is full of suffering (dukkha), and they sought to understand the cause, cessation, and path leading to the cessation of suffering. These are the Four Noble Truths according to Buddhism. Secondly, they believed that this world is impermanent, meaning that it undergoes constant change in every moment. Thirdly, they believed that this world is devoid of a self (anatman), denying the existence of a permanent soul, yet supporting the concept of rebirth. Hence, the question arises: If there is no self, what transmigrates from one birth to another? The Buddhist tradition attempted to explore this question through the concept of dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda). In other words, if birth is the cause of suffering, then the cycle of cause and effect, known as karma, perpetuates from one birth to another. Buddhist philosophy tried to elucidate this through the concept of causality, i.e., the cause and effect relationship. Just as one extinguished lamp can light another, the first lamp is the cause and the second is the effect.

• **Jaina Philosophy**- According to Jainism, the belief is that the world is eternal. In Jain philosophy, it is understood that God does not play a role in creating, preserving, or destroying the universe. Instead, the universe operates based on eternal laws. It is divided into endless cycles, with each cycle consisting of periods of progress (Utsarpini) and decline (Avasarpini). During the progress phase, it is believed that 12 Chakravartin kings and 24 Tirthankaras appear. These figures are counted among the 63 Shalaka Purushas.

Jain philosophy explains that the functioning of the universe involves the interaction between two key elements: 'Jiva' (soul) and 'Ajiva' (non-living entities). Jiva represents the soul, while Ajiva encompasses elements such as motion (Dharma), rest (Adharma), space (Akash), time

(Kal), and matter or karmic particles (Pudgala). The ultimate goal of Jainism is to attain 'Kaivalya,' which means liberation from karmic matter. Jainism aims to prevent the inflow of Ajiva into the Jiva and to eliminate the acquired Ajiva from the Jiva. The processes involved in achieving these goals are referred to as 'Samvara' (prevention) and 'Nirjara' (elimination).

In Jainism, Kaivalya is regarded as the highest form of knowledge. The doctrine of Jainism includes the recognition of five Anuvrat and Mahavrat. Another important philosophical concept in Jainism is 'Syadvad or Anekantavada,' which asserts that truth is both singular and multifaceted. It acknowledges the coexistence of multiple perspectives and the dynamic nature of truth.

- **Materialistic Philosophy** – Among the contemporary thinkers during the time of Buddha and Mahavira, there were several materialistic philosophers, including Ajit Keshkamblin, Pakudh Kachchapan, Purana Kassapa, Makkhali Goshala, and Sanjay Belitthiputta. Later, the Charvakas also joined this philosophical tradition. What distinguished these thinkers was their disbelief in concepts such as karma, rebirth, and salvation.

Ajit Keshkamblin argued that there are no consequences, positive or negative, for one's actions (karmas). According to him, all human endeavors are ultimately futile because the physical body eventually disintegrates into mere matter. He saw no connection between acts of compassion or acts of charity and a person's destiny. Chavarka, who also belonged to this philosophical school, believed that direct perception is the sole means of acquiring knowledge. On the other hand, Makkhali Goshala, the founder of the Ajivika sect, adhered to determinism, suggesting that our future is predestined.

The significance of materialistic philosophy lies in its emphasis on secularism. Had this

philosophy endured, it might have fostered the development of scientific ideas. However, these notions were suppressed by Brahmanical influences, and idealism gained prominence over materialism. Additionally, by rejecting the concepts of karma and reincarnation, which aligned more closely with immediate societal needs, materialistic philosophy failed to exert the anticipated influence on society.

- **Why is the period of 6th century BC considered as the period of intellectual revolution?**

The 6th century BCE marked an era of profound intellectual exploration known as the "Age of Enquiry." During this time, people delved into existential questions surrounding life, death, the afterlife, and the essence of the soul. This intellectual movement had been gradually evolving since the Aranyaka period but reached a pinnacle of revolutionary thinking with the emergence of diverse sects and ideas.

1. The 6th century BCE marked a significant shift in ideology, sparking deep contemplation and vibrant intellectual discourse. It became a time of active exploration and debate regarding the fundamental meaning of life.
2. This era witnessed the emergence of diverse religious sects. Buddhist texts mention the existence of 62 sects, while Jain texts refer to 363 sects that thrived during this period.
3. Thinkers of this epoch presented a wide array of philosophies, with some embracing the concept of karma and rebirth while others rejecting it. The Upanishads delved into the concept of a Supreme Soul, whereas the Buddhist sect questioned the very existence of the soul.
4. Additionally, this period holds global significance as an intellectual revolution, coinciding with influential thinkers like Pythagoras in Greece, Zoroaster in Iran, and Confucius and Lao Tzu in China.

- **Did the Buddhist sect encompass both religious and social reform movements?**

The Buddhist sect encompassed both religious and social reform movements, making it a transformative force in both aspects. This can be understood through several key points:

1. It rejected Yajna and Vedic rituals, distancing itself from ongoing religious controversies by challenging beliefs in the existence of the soul and divine entities.
2. Buddha proclaimed that the Varna system, which upheld Brahminical superiority and the caste system, was a human creation rather than a divine decree.
3. Buddhism broke new ground by welcoming women into the Buddhist Sangha, offering them equal opportunities for spiritual growth. The sect's regard for women is evident in literary works like the 'Therigatha,' a collection of poetry by female nuns.
4. Buddhism also provided an inclusive path to Nirvana for Shudras, undermining the rigid social hierarchy and allowing them to participate in the Sanghas.
5. The emphasis on non-violence in Buddhism fostered a supportive environment for the agricultural economy, earning the allegiance of householders.
6. Buddhism recognized the roles of moneylenders and traders, acknowledging their contributions to society and garnering their support.
7. In essence, the Buddhist sect's teachings and practices not only aimed to bring about religious transformation but also had a profound impact on social norms and structures, advocating for equality, inclusivity, and peaceful coexistence.

- **What were the limitations of the social reforms initiated by Mahatma Buddha??**

Limitations -

1. Despite Mahatma Buddha's criticism of the Brahmanical caste system, he was unable

to eradicate its influence completely. Some remnants of caste bias persisted within the Buddhist sect, resulting in a significant number of upper-caste individuals remaining part of the Buddhist Sangha.

2. The Buddhist sect faced challenges in fully liberating itself from the grip of Brahmanical patriarchy. While Buddha eventually allowed women to join the Buddhist Sangha in response to mounting pressure, disparities between genders persisted. Separate monasteries were established for nuns, but they were placed under the strict supervision of the monks.

- **What factors contributed to the global expansion of Buddhism, leading it to become a widely followed world religion?**

Mahatma Buddha's establishment of Buddhism as a world religion, like Christianity and Islam, can be attributed to the following factors:

1. Buddhism addressed immediate economic concerns, such as moneylending and ethical commerce, while promoting animal welfare.
2. The rejection of the Varna and caste systems tackled pressing social issues, advocating for a more egalitarian society.
3. Buddhism explored universal and timeless questions surrounding suffering, disease, aging, and death.
4. The active engagement of the Buddhist Sangha and dedicated monks facilitated the dissemination of Buddhism across borders.
5. Support from influential kings like Ashoka and Kanishka bolstered Buddhism's popularity and expansion.

These reasons contributed to the global spread of Buddhism as a significant world religion.

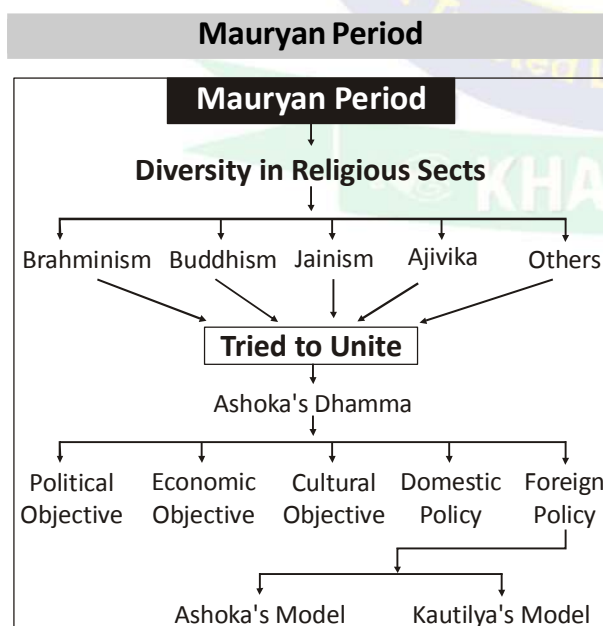
- **What is the relevance of Buddhism at present?**

Buddhism remains relevant in the present-day for the following reasons:

1. **Non-violence** : Buddhism offers a path to address the prevailing violence in the world, promoting peace and harmony.
2. **Ethical principles** : Buddhism's noble eightfold path, advocating balance and moderation, tackles contemporary issues such as extremism and its impact on areas like production, consumption, and the environment.
3. **Social impact** : The enduring relevance of Buddhism is exemplified by significant events like the mass conversion of 6 million Mahars to Buddhism led by Bhimrao Ambedkar in 1956. Buddhism's appeal to Dalit communities lies in its radical rejection of the caste system, addressing a crucial need in present-day India.

Model Questions :

1. What factors contributed to the widespread popularity of Buddhism?
2. Do you believe Mahatma Buddha initiated a social revolution? Present your perspective, providing arguments to support your opinion.
3. What were the key factors that enabled Buddhism to evolve into a global religion? Additionally, explore the contemporary relevance of Buddhism in today's world.



■ Dhamma of Ashoka

• Was Ashoka a devoted Buddhist?

Ashoka personally embraced Buddhism, as evident from his Bhabru inscription where he expressed his faith in the Triratna (Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha) of the Buddhist sect. However, his concept of Dhamma extended beyond Buddhism, encompassing broader social and moral ideals necessary for leading a righteous life. The Dhamma policy emphasized the following principles:

1. Reverence for parents and teachers.
2. Compassion towards servants, slaves, and animals.
3. Promotion of frugality and modesty in spending.
4. Eradication of anger and cruelty.

■ Ashoka's Dhamma policy was driven by several objectives:

1. **Political Objectives:** Ashoka utilized his Dhamma for political purposes, employing it as a means to foster unity and integrity within his vast empire.
2. **Economic Objectives:** On the economic front, Ashoka sought to safeguard the agricultural economy by discouraging the killing of animals. Recognizing that protecting livestock aligned with the needs of the agricultural sector, he emphasized the concept of non-violence, thereby promoting agricultural prosperity.
3. **Cultural Objectives:** In terms of cultural aspects, Ashoka aimed to establish a uniform code of conduct by fostering ideological harmony among various religious sects.

■ The impact of Ashoka's Dhamma policy on domestic governance -

1. **Reduced use of penal power:** Ashoka's Dhamma policy led to a decrease in the reliance on punitive measures in state governance.
2. **Emphasis on public welfare:** Ashoka significantly expanded the state's role by prioritizing the well-being of the public.

3. Improved administration and governance: Ashoka emphasized the importance of efficient administration and governance. Historical records suggest that his officers enjoyed unrestricted access to him, fostering a culture of diligence and accountability.
4. Acknowledgment of public indebtedness: Ashoka recognized his indebtedness to the public and expressed his commitment to fulfilling this obligation. To ensure effective implementation, he appointed a new class of officers called Dhamma Mahamatta.

The success of Ashoka's domestic policy is reflected in the adoption of the Ashoka Chakra, a national symbol, by the independent government of India.

■ Impact of Ashoka's Dhamma policy on foreign policy -

1. Ashoka introduced an alternative foreign policy approach, pioneering efforts to find alternatives to war.
2. In his 13th inscription, Ashoka proclaimed his adoption of the Dhamma Vijay policy, emphasizing reconciliation over military victory.
3. Ashoka sent delegations to neighboring countries to propagate the Dhamma doctrine, appointing Dhamma envoys in place of traditional ambassadors. Even today, cultural diplomacy remains fundamental to India's relations with Southeast Asia.
4. Unlike previous Mauryan rulers who focused primarily on western countries, Ashoka pursued both a "Look West Policy" and a "Look East Policy." He sent religious missions to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, forging connections in those regions.
5. While material progress has flourished over the past 2400 years, Ashoka and his Dhamma remain unparalleled in moral stature.

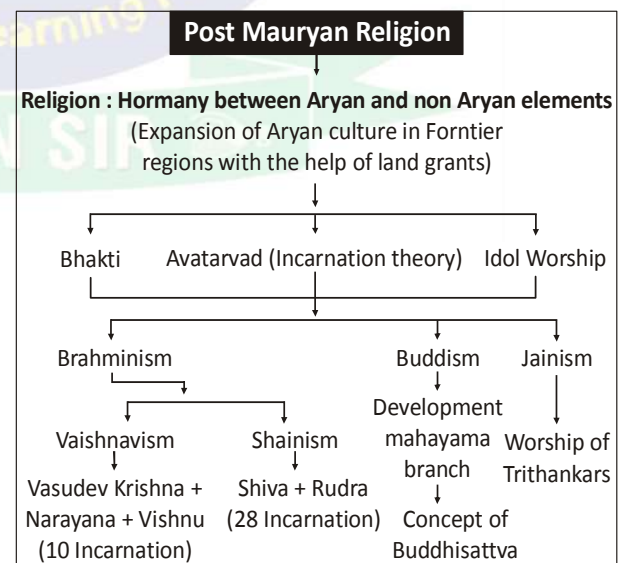
■ ^aWhat are the characteristics of Kautilya's foreign policy?

Kautilya's foreign policy is characterized by a pragmatic and realistic approach, in contrast to Ashoka's idealism. He prioritizes opportunism and adopts the "Raj Mandal system" to classify neighboring states as friends and enemies, shaping policies accordingly. According to Kautilya, one's immediate neighbor can be a potential enemy, while the enemy of one's enemy can be a potential ally. This system further distinguishes between categories such as friend of friend, friend of enemy, and enemy of enemy.

Shiv Shankar Menon, an esteemed scholar of International Relations, highlights that Kautilya's concept of the "Balance of Power" predates the Treaty of Westphalia by 2000 years.

In the context of Indian foreign policy, the legacies of both Ashoka and Kautilya are observed, each carrying its own significance. Kautilya's approach is relevant for a state aspiring to become an empire, focusing on strategic expansion and consolidation. On the other hand, Ashoka's foreign policy is more suitable for a large empire emphasizing internal organization and stability rather than aggressive expansion.

Post-Mauryan Period



During the Post-Mauryan Age, there was a harmony of Aryan and non-Aryan elements in

the field of religion. As a result, new forms of religion emerged, including:

1. Development of Bhaktism.
2. Emergence of the concept of incarnation.
3. Idol making and idol worship.

These factors have left their imprints in almost all religions.

■ **Brahmin Sect**

- **Vaishnavism** - The harmonious integration of Aryan and non-Aryan influences led to the emergence of the Vaishnavite cult. Among the non-Aryan deities, Vasudeva Krishna, associated with the 'Panch Vrishni Nayak' of Mathura, held great significance. These deities included Vasudeva (Krishna), Sankarshana (Balarama), Shamba, Pradyumna, and Anirudha. Descriptions of Vasudeva Krishna can be found in the 'Mora inscription' discovered in Mathura.

Another non-Aryan deity, Narayana, became closely linked with Vasudeva Krishna. Narayana's worship was established in the Himalayan region and had connections to animal husbandry. It is believed that the concepts of cow herding, Gopian (cowherd), and the importance of milk and butter possibly originated from the worship of Narayana. Eventually, Vishnu came to be regarded as the supreme deity among these non-Aryan gods, leading to the development of the Vaishnavite cult.

- **Shaivism** - The presence of Shiva, a non-Aryan deity, can be traced back to the period of the Harappan civilization. The description of the Vedic god Rudra first appears in the Rigveda. Over time, a synthesis occurred between these two deities, leading to the development of Shaivism.

Additionally, the concept of incarnation became intertwined with the concept of bhakti (devotion). Both Shaivism and Vaishnavism were influenced by the principles of bhakti. Vishnu's ten incarnations and Shiva's twenty-eight incarnations were visualized and revered.

■ **Buddhism**

A new branch of Buddhism called Mahayana

emerged, bringing about significant changes in the nature of the religion and drawing it closer to the Brahmin sect. The Mahayana sect differed from the earlier Hinayana sect in several ways: Unlike the Hinayana sect, which emphasized the historical existence of Buddha, Mahayana regarded Buddha as a deity rather than solely a preacher or mentor. This shift gave rise to the concept of Bodhisattva, which referred to individuals deserving of attaining nirvana but choosing to delay it. Bodhisattva embodied the idea of selfless service, as they dedicated themselves to the enlightenment and liberation of all beings in the world. Consequently, the Mahayana tradition adopted a more optimistic outlook, in contrast to Hinayana, by offering the opportunity for Nirvana to all people.

With the development of devotion towards Bodhisattva, the practice of idol worship became prominent. While the Hinayana Buddhist cult mainly focused on worshipping symbols associated with Gautama Buddha, the Mahayana tradition started creating idols of Bodhisattvas.

■ **Jainism**

The Jain religion was divided into two branches: Shvetambara and Digambara. The Shvetambara branch embraced the practice of idol worship. However, Jainism maintained its distinctive character as it remained largely faithful to the teachings of Mahavira.

During this period, the tradition of creating idols emerged, encompassing not only the idols of Tirthankaras (spiritual leaders) but also of Bodhisattvas and Brahmin deities.

Question: "In the early centuries of Christ, changes in the field of religion became an important landmark in Indian history."Examine the statement.

Answer: During the early centuries of the Christian era, significant transformations occurred in the realm of religion, leaving a profound impact on Indian history. The amalgamation of Aryan and non-Aryan elements gave rise to a new religious framework, later

identified as Hinduism.

Through the allocation of land grants, Brahmins, Buddhists, and Jains were settled in peripheral regions where they came into contact with tribal communities. This interaction fostered an exchange between Aryan and non-Aryan beliefs and practices. While the Brahmin religion emphasized Yajna (sacrificial rituals), the influence of tribal elements led to an increased emphasis on Bhakti (devotion). Consequently, Bhakti influenced various religious sects, with Vaishnavism and Shaivism evolving from the Brahmin sect and Mahayana emerging from Buddhism. The tribal influence also facilitated the development of idol worship, resulting in the creation of idols depicting Buddha, Bodhisattva, Jain Tirthankara, Vishnu, Shiva, and others.

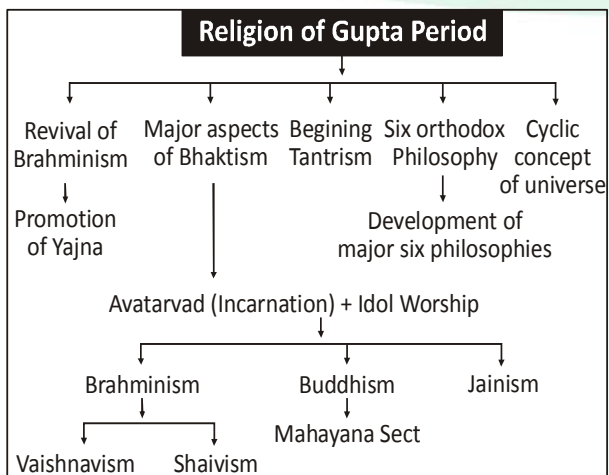
Furthermore, during this period, certain non-Aryan deities were assimilated into the Aryan sect. This integration gave rise to a distinct religious form known as Hinduism in subsequent periods. These deities included Shiva, Kumar Karthikeya, Mother Goddess, Ganesh, animals, trees, and more.

Thus, the social integration that took place in the early centuries of the Christian era brought about significant changes in the realm of religion, ultimately becoming a pivotal landmark in Indian history.

Religion of Gupta Period

Following aspects of Gupta Period

Religion :



■ Brahmanical Revivalism

The Gupta period marked a significant resurgence of religious and cultural activities in India. Among the notable events, Ashwamedha Yajna was performed by Gupta rulers like Samudragupta and Kumaragupta. However, it is worth mentioning that yajnas were not exclusive to the rulers. Common households also enthusiastically engaged in various yajnas, including Haviryajna, Somayajna, and Panch Mahayajna. This widespread participation reflected the vibrant religious practices and cultural traditions during the Gupta era.

■ Bhakti as the dominant trend

The concept of Bhakti emerged as a result of the harmonization between Brahmin and non-Brahmin elements. Along with Bhakti, the notions of incarnation and idol worship became intertwined. The concept of incarnation aimed to reconcile diverse and opposing elements. Bhakti had a profound influence on almost all contemporary religious traditions. Within the Brahmin religion, Vaishnava Bhakti and Shiva Bhakti flourished, leading to the establishment of idols in temples and the practice of idol worship.

During the Gupta period, the idea of the Tridev, comprising Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh (Shiva), gained prominence. The Gupta rulers themselves supported the Vaishnava cult. Moreover, the worship of deities in human form gained popularity during this period. Examples include the worship of mother goddesses, animals, and snakes.

■ Beginning of Tantrism

During this period, we can observe the subtle emergence of Tantrism. Tantrism can be described as the influence of Tantric practices on certain sects, possibly due to the integration of Aryan and tribal elements. Notably, a significant aspect of Gupta religion was the growing significance of female elements. It was believed that the involvement of women was essential to inspire and energize the actions of men. For instance, Lakshmi became associated with

Vishnu, and Parvati became associated with Shiva.

In the Harappan civilization, the mother goddess was not connected to male deities. However, in the Gupta period, mother goddesses were linked with male gods. This shift led to the encouragement of Tantrism as well.

■ **Development of Six Orthodox Philosophies:**

During the ancient period, there were various ideas, ideologies, and schools of thought. By the time of the Gupta period, these diverse perspectives were consolidated into six major orthodox schools of philosophy. These schools were known as Sankhya, Yoga, Vaisheshika, Nyaya, Mimamsa, and Uttar Mimamsa.

- **Samkhya** - Sankhya is the most ancient school of philosophy. Its founder is Kapila. The foundational scripture of this philosophy is Maharishi Kapila's "Sankhya Sutras". According to the ancient Sankhya philosophy, it is not necessary to acknowledge the existence of a divine entity for the creation of the universe, as the universe originates from nature and not from God. However, as the philosophy evolved, the concept of Purusha, which refers to the individual soul, became associated with nature. Jain philosophy shares close affinity with Sankhya philosophy.
- **Yoga** - Another significant philosophical system is the Yoga philosophy. Among the various philosophies in India, Yoga is widely recognized around the world. This philosophy places great emphasis on self-regulation and self-discipline. According to Yoga philosophy, the creator of the universe is not a divine being, but rather an elevated and energetic self known as the Atman, which remains in existence without being absorbed into any material substance. Patanjali, the proponent of Yoga, authored the Yoga Sutras.
- **Nyaya** This philosophical system was rooted

in rationality, emphasizing the significance of reason and empirical evidence in the quest for knowledge. The Nyaya philosophy, established by Akshapada Gautama in the 2nd century BCE, was particularly renowned for its logical approach. Gautama's influential work, the Nyaya Sutras, guided Indian scholars towards a greater appreciation for logical thinking and persuasive argumentation.

- **Vaisheshika** – The Vaisheshika School is a philosophical tradition that embraces a realistic and objective view of the universe. It firmly believes in the physical nature of the universe. The Vaisheshika philosophy was formulated by Kannada, who is widely recognized as the founder of this school. According to this philosophy, the universe is composed of five fundamental elements: fire, air, water, earth, and ether (sky). These elements combine to form everything that exists in the universe, including atoms, space, time, mind, and soul.

The Vaisheshika School introduced the atomic hypothesis, which posits that all material objects are comprised of atoms. They propose that atoms and molecules combine to give rise to matter, serving as the fundamental building blocks of everything that can be perceived or observed in the physical world. This hypothesis is put forth to explain the various phenomena that occur within our universe.
- **Mimamsa** – Mimamsa, meaning "exposition of the Vedas," aims to interpret and revive the importance of the Vedas. Its primary text is Jaimini's "Purva Mimamsa Sutras." Mimamsa philosophy is closely associated with the practical aspects of Vedic religion. It extensively examines sacred rituals and the rewards derived from their performance. An eminent scholar and philosopher associated with this school of thought was Savara Swamin.

- **Uttara Mimansa or Vedanta** –Vedanta philosophy, derived from the Upanishads, forms the basis of this philosophy. The primary text of this philosophy is Badarayana’s “Brahma Sutras,” compiled in the second century BCE. The essence of this philosophy can be found in the early Upanishads. According to Vedanta, Brahman is the ultimate reality, and everything else is considered illusory (maya). There is no distinction between the individual soul and Brahman. Therefore, those who realize their true selves also attain knowledge of Brahman and attain salvation. Both Brahman and the soul are eternal and indestructible. Shankaracharya later wrote commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and Bhagavad Gita, which came to be known as Shankar’s Vedanta

■ Cyclic concept of the Universe

During this period, the Brahmanical concept developed a cyclic understanding of creation. According to this concept, a Mahayuga is composed of four Yugas, and a Manvantara consists of 71 Mahayugas. A total of 14 Manvantaras were envisioned. After each Manvantara, there occurs a Pralaya, which signifies the destruction of the universe. Following each Pralaya, a new Manu emerges, who is considered the first human in the subsequent cycle of creation. It is believed that we are currently in the seventh Manvantara.

The influence of Tantrism grew significantly in the realm of religion in North India. Tantrism emphasized the practice of Vamachara and PanchaMakaras. Its influence extended to nearly all significant religious sects-

■ Brahminism

- **Vaishnavism:** Within Vaishnavism, the Sahajayana branch emerged as a result of the influence of Tantrism.
- **Shaivism:** Extremist sects such as Kapalika and Kalamukha developed within Shaivism. The followers of these sects consume their food from human skulls, paint their bodies with ashes from cremations, and engage in Panchamakara rituals.
- **Worship of Mother Goddess:** Tantrism had a profound impact on the worship of the mother goddess, granting her a prominent position in Tantric rituals.

■ Buddhism

Due to the influence of Tantrism, the Vajrayana sect emerged within Buddhism. Vajrayana places great emphasis on the transformative potential of Tantric practices for achieving spiritual liberation. Within the historical development of Vajrayana, feminine deities became integral to the sect’s beliefs and rituals. Among them, one notable deity was ‘Pragya Paramita,’ who was closely associated with Avalokiteshvara (Bodhisattva), while another revered deity was Tara, who held significance in connection with the Buddha.

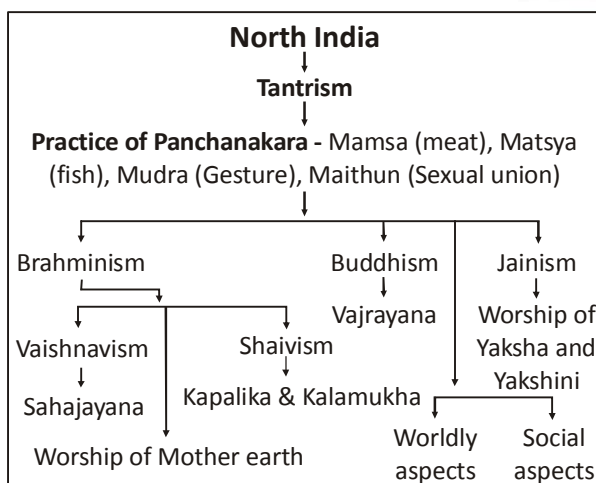
■ Jainism

The Jain tradition experienced minimal influence from Tantrism, although the devotion to Yaksha and Yakshini began to emerge within Jainism. Alongside the worship of Tirthankaras, the Jain religious system also incorporated the worship of Yaksha-Yakshinis.

■ Emphasis on Worldly Aspects

Tantrism places a significant emphasis on worldly aspects in stead of supernatural practices. Within this tradition, worldly matters

Post-Gupta Religion



hold great importance, as mantras are believed to possess the power to mitigate the effects of snake and scorpion bites.

■ Sociological Aspect

The Tantric religion exhibited greater egalitarianism compared to Brahmanical cults. It did not discriminate based on gender or caste, thus providing accessibility to women and individuals from lower castes. This inclusive approach contributed to the growing popularity of Tantric religion within these communities. Furthermore, women were also able to hold the esteemed position of guru in Tantric practice.

South India

The Bhakti movement in South India emerged from the influence of both the Puranas and the Sangam literature. This movement expressed devotion and love through emotional expressions of Bhakti.

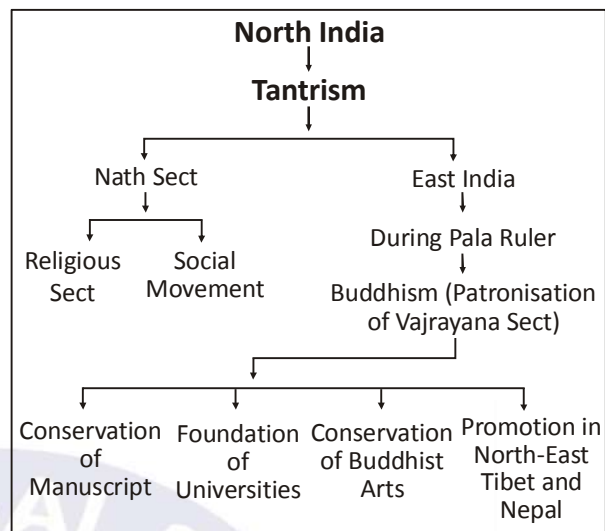
Two groups of saints, the Alvars and the Nayanars, played vital roles in inspiring the Bhakti movement. The Alvars were Vaishnavites, devoted to Vishnu, while the Nayanars were Shaivites, dedicated to Shiva. Among the Alvar saints were notable figures such as Kulasekara, a Pandya ruler, and Andal, a revered female saint. The Nayanar saints included influential individuals like Appar, Namsambandar, and Sundaramurthy.

The Alvar saints' hymns were compiled into the sacred text called Prabandham, which holds significant reverence in the southern region like Vedas. In the 12th century, the biographies of the Nayanar sages were compiled into the text known as Periyapuranam.

The Alvar and Nayanar saints hailed from diverse backgrounds, representing different castes. However, they shared a common belief in rejecting the caste system and promoting religious and social equality.

Early Medieval Religion

■ North India



The Nathpanth, a school of Tantrism, emerged in North India during the early medieval period. It was founded by Matsyendranath and later led by Gornath. The Nathpanthis placed great importance on ethical behavior and actively opposed caste divisions. They were both religious and social reformers, advocating for equality among all individuals. The Nathpanthis welcomed people from all classes, including lower castes and untouchables, promoting inclusivity and acceptance.

■ Eastern India

During this period, Buddhism experienced a significant decline in North India. Several factors contributed to this decline:

1. Buddhism became closely associated with the Brahmin sect after the emergence of the Mahayana sect.
2. The invasion of the Hunas resulted in the loss of many Buddhist monks' lives.
3. The revival of Hinduism led by Shankaracharya also played a role in the decline of Buddhism in India. Hiuen Tsang observed Buddhist Viharas in North India deteriorating during his time.

It is important to highlight that Buddhism not only declined in North India but also continued to flourish in Bengal, primarily due to the

patronage and support of the Pala rulers. The Pala rulers played an active role in promoting Buddhism and ensuring its growth by implementing various measures.

1. The Pala rulers had a deep understanding of the prevailing Vajrayana form of Buddhism and actively supported it, drawing parallels to the patronage of Ashoka in the past.
2. They generously patronized renowned Buddhist scholars such as Atisha Dipankara and sponsored the production and preservation of Buddhist manuscripts.
3. The Pala rulers extended their patronage to esteemed institutions like Nalanda University and established prominent centers of Buddhist education, namely Vikramshila, Odantapuri, and Sompura.
4. In their efforts to promote Buddhism, they played a crucial role in propagating the teachings of Buddhism in regions like the North-East, Nepal, and Tibet.

The Pala rulers played a pivotal role in safeguarding the existence of Buddhism in India.

Question-The Pala period is the most significant phase in the history of Buddhism in India. Enumerate. [UPSC 2020]

Answer- The Pala dynasty is renowned as the Golden Age in the history of Bengal due to its profound support for the advancement of Buddhism. During their reign, the Palas erected numerous monasteries and universities such as Odantapuri, Vikramshila, and Nalanda, which emerged as prominent centers for Buddhist education and secular learning.

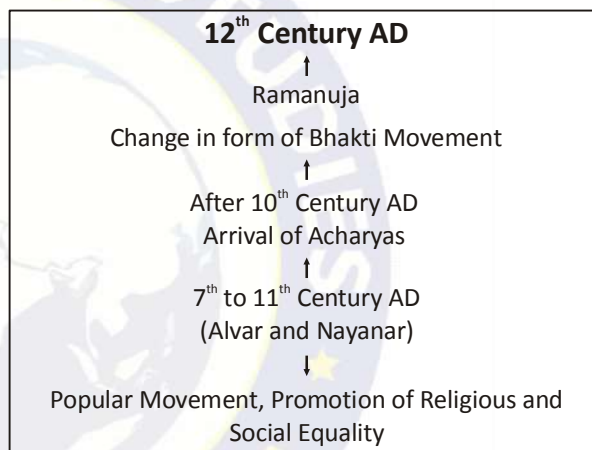
King Devapala, donated the income from five villages to ensure the sustenance of Nalanda University. Additionally, several other educational centers like Jagaddala, Somapura, and Iraikot were established during this era. Balaputradeva, the ruler of Suvarnadwipa, even constructed a monastery within the premises of Nalanda.

The period witnessed the creation of numerous manuscripts on various Buddhist subjects and intricate palm leaf carvings depicting Vajrayana deities, including the revered Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita text.

The patronage extended by the Pala rulers and the emergence of Vajrayana Buddhism marked a significant turning point for Buddhism. Its influence transcended the boundaries of Bengal, reaching regions as distant as Tibet, Mongolia, and Central Asia. Hence, the Pala dynasty played a momentous role in the growth and dissemination of Buddhism in India.

■ South India

• Bhakti Movement:



The Bhakti movement in South India was initiated by the Alvar and Nayanar saints. However, as the movement progressed, Brahmin Acharyas took up its cause and introduced certain modifications to its form.

The arrival of Acharya Ramanuja led to a change in the form of the Bhakti movement–

1. Acharya Ramanuja, a Hindu philosopher and theologian, played a crucial role in reconciling the Vedic tradition with the Prabandham tradition. His efforts aimed to establish harmony between the liberal religious practices of the Bhakti saints and the principles of Brahmanism.
2. Ramanuja advocated for the equality of all individuals within the realm of religion. However, he also maintained the belief in

the social division of Varna. As a result, Ramanuja's teachings encouraged social conservatism.

3. Ramanuja's philosophy, known as Vishishtadvaita (Qualified non-dualism), emphasized the significance of devotion to a personal God. This philosophy provided a solid philosophical framework for the Bhakti movement.

Ramanuja made some modifications to Adi Shankaracharya's non-dualism philosophy -

1. Shankaracharya and Ramanuja held contrasting views regarding the relationship between Brahman and Jiva. Shankaracharya believed in the concept of non-duality, asserting that Brahman and Jiva are essentially the same. On the other hand, Ramanuja believed in their distinct yet interconnected nature, where Brahman represents the quantity and Jiva represents its quality.
2. Shankaracharya emphasized that knowledge alone was sufficient for attaining liberation (moksha), whereas Ramanuja believed that both knowledge and God's grace were essential prerequisites.
3. Shankaracharya highlighted the significance of renunciation and meditation as means to realize the ultimate reality and achieve moksha. In contrast, Ramanuja emphasized the path of devotion (bhakti) as the means to unite with the divine.

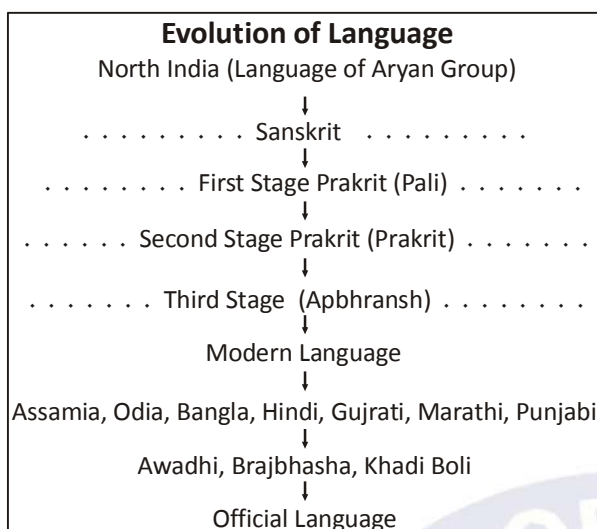
Historical role of Shankaracharya or why Shankaracharya is called Hindu religion reformer?

Adi Shankaracharya, a 9th century Hindu philosopher and reformer, was born on the coast of Kerala. He wrote commentaries on major Hindu scriptures and his teachings have had a profound influence on Hinduism, earning him the title of Hindu reformer. Shankaracharya implemented several measures for the revival of Hinduism:

1. He revitalized the philosophical foundation of Hinduism by emphasizing the concept of Non-dualism.
2. Shankaracharya recognized the significance of idol worship as a valid form of religious practice for the common people. He conceptualized the Hindu trinity, comprising Brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the preserver, and Shiva as the destroyer.
3. To foster religious unity among Hindus, Adi Shankaracharya established four Mathas (monastic centers) in different corners of India. These mathas were located in Badrinath (north), Sringeri (south), Puri (east), and Dwarka (west).
4. Shankaracharya established an organization of Brahmin ascetics to propagate the Hindu religion, taking inspiration from the Buddhist Sangha. He encouraged these ascetics to compose scriptures based on the teachings of Buddhist and Jain thinkers.

Overall, Shankaracharya's efforts played a crucial role in strengthening Hinduism, both philosophically and organizationally.





■ The Relation between Language and Literature

Language serves as the medium of expression, while literature becomes the embodiment of emotions. Emotions find their expression solely through language, making literature the conveyer of these emotions. In this analogy, if language acts as the vehicle, then literature assumes the role of the passenger.

■ The Relation between Language and Script

Language serves as a medium of expression, allowing us to convey our thoughts and emotions. In turn, literature embodies these emotions, giving them tangible form. Language can exist without a script, but a script cannot exist without language. When language is spoken, it finds its written counterpart in the form of a script.

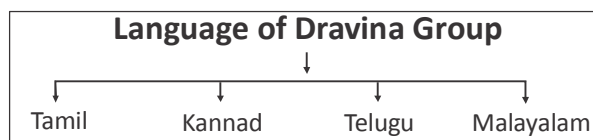
■ What was the status of the evolution of language?

The major languages of North India are known as Aryan languages, with Sanskrit being the oldest among them, in its earliest form called Vedic Sanskrit. Language development is believed to progress alongside societal development. Similarly, linguistic coordination occurs parallel to social coordination. Thus, when the Vedic Aryans came into contact with non-Aryans, the recitation of Sanskrit (Dhwani

Shastra) was also influenced, leading to the development of secular Sanskrit alongside Vedic Sanskrit. Around the 4th century BCE, the renowned scholar Panini wrote the grammar text 'Ashtadhyayi' with scientific rules for Sanskrit language, establishing it as a standard and prestigious language. Generally, when a language acquires a grammatical foundation, it tends to become standardized. However, this can also hinder further development as the general public may struggle to adhere to grammar rules.

As a result, Sanskrit became incomprehensible to the general public due to its complex structure. It had 8 declensions and 3 genders, resulting in 24 forms for each word. This complexity made Sanskrit difficult for common people, leading to the development of another language called Pali or Prakrit. Over time, Prakrit underwent three stages of development: first Prakrit, second Prakrit, and third Prakrit. The first Prakrit, known as 'Pali,' the second as 'Prakrit,' and the third as 'Apabhramsa.' Each stage simplified the language by reducing declensions and introducing prepositions. This simplification made Prakrit easier for common people to understand and speak. As Prakrit continued to evolve, it also diverged into regional dialects like Shauraseni and Ardhamagadhi. Despite these changes, grammar was developed for each stage. In the 8th century, the development of Apabhramsa began, and a scholar named Hemchandra provided grammar for this language. It was from this point that Hindi emerged and further evolved. Hindi became a modern Aryan language with various regional forms known as dialects, including Awadhi, Braj Bhasha, Khadi Boli, and Hindi itself.

■ Dravidian language



- **Tamil** – The development of the Dravidian group of languages is evident in South India, with Tamil being the oldest among them. Tamil emerged around 200 BCE and its earliest evidence is found in cave inscriptions. It subsequently flourished in the Sangam literature. Over the centuries, Tamil continued to evolve, encompassing the region of Tamil Nadu and South Andhra Pradesh.

- **Kannada** - Kannada, the second major Dravidian language after Tamil, originated in the region of Karnataka. Jain monks played a significant role in its early development, and the Rashtrakuta rulers made valuable contributions to its evolution.

- **Telugu** – This language was developed in the Andhra region. It made considerable progress as a literary language during the Vijayanagara period.

- **Malayalam** - Malayalam, the predominant language of Kerala, experienced significant literary development until the 14th century.

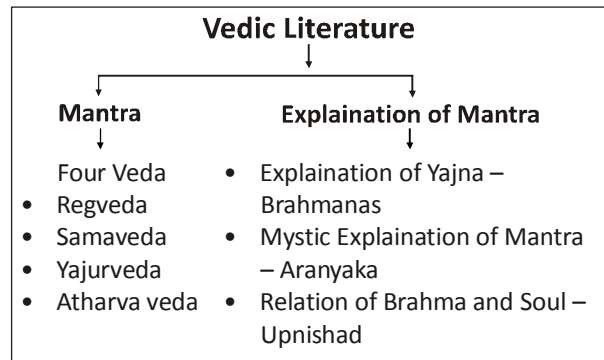
■ Development of the script

The Indus script, the oldest script in India, remains undeciphered. The Brahmi script, developed around the 6th century BCE, is evidenced in the inscriptions of Ashoka, a Mauryan emperor. Ashoka's inscriptions, written in Brahmi script, spanned from North India to South India. In the northwest, Aramaic, Kharosthi, and Greek scripts were also employed in Ashoka's inscriptions.

During the Gupta period, a script called 'Kutilakshar' emerged and underwent development. Later, in the 10th century and onwards, the Devanagari script was developed, which is now used for writing many Indian languages.

■ Development of literature

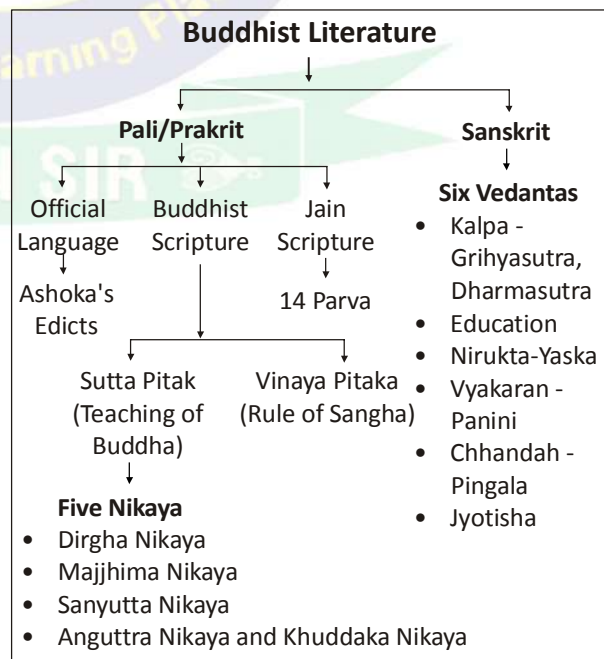
• Vedic Literature (1500-600 BCE):-



Vedic literature is divided into two categories: Mantra and Brahman. Mantras are compiled in the four Vedas: Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda. The Yajurveda emphasizes rituals, the Samaveda focuses on music, and the Atharvaveda contains medicinal knowledge.

Brahman refers to the explanation of mantras. Mantras are interpreted in three ways: Brahmanas, which provide ritualistic interpretations; Aranyaka, which offer mystical interpretations through asceticism in the forest; and Upanishads, which explore the unity of Brahman and Jiva, elucidating the relationship between the individual self and the universal self.

• Buddhist literature:-



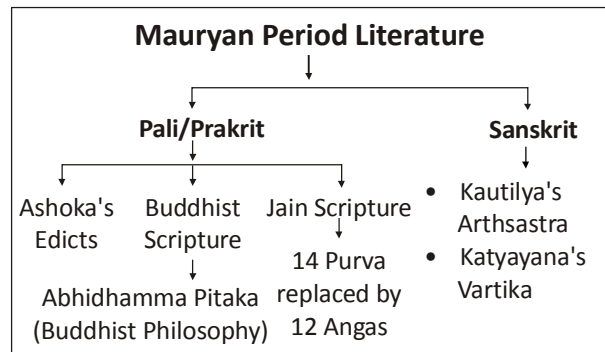
Sanskrit literature -During this period, Sanskrit texts continued to be composed. The Vedic literature written in Sanskrit is known as Shruti, believed to be divine knowledge heard by saints. Additionally, the literature produced during this time is called Smriti, based on human memory without direct divine revelation. Six Vedangas are associated with this period: Kalpa Sutra, Shiksha, Jyotis (Astrology), Chandas (Verse), Vyakaran (Grammar), and Nirukta. The Kalpa Sutras can be categorized into three types: Shrauta Sutras (ritual manuals), Grihya Sutras (domestic rituals), and Dharma Sutras (legal and ethical principles). The Sulva Sutra is also connected to the Shrauta Sutra.

Pali literature - Since Pali language was the language of the people, Mahatma Buddha used Pali for the propagation of Buddhism. Tripitaka, consisting of Sutta Pitaka, Vinaya Pitaka, and Abhidhamma Pitaka, was compiled during this period. The teachings of the Buddha were compiled in the Sutta Pitaka, while the Vinaya Pitaka contained the rules of the Sangha. The Abhidhamma Pitaka expressed Buddhist philosophy. The Sutta Pitaka was divided into five Nikayas:

1. Dirgha Nikaya
2. Majjhima Nikaya
3. Samyutta Nikaya
4. Anguttara Nikaya
5. Khuddaka Nikaya, which included the Dhammapada and Theragatha (poems of monks and nuns).

Prakrit Literature -Literature pertaining to Jainism was compiled in the Prakrit language.

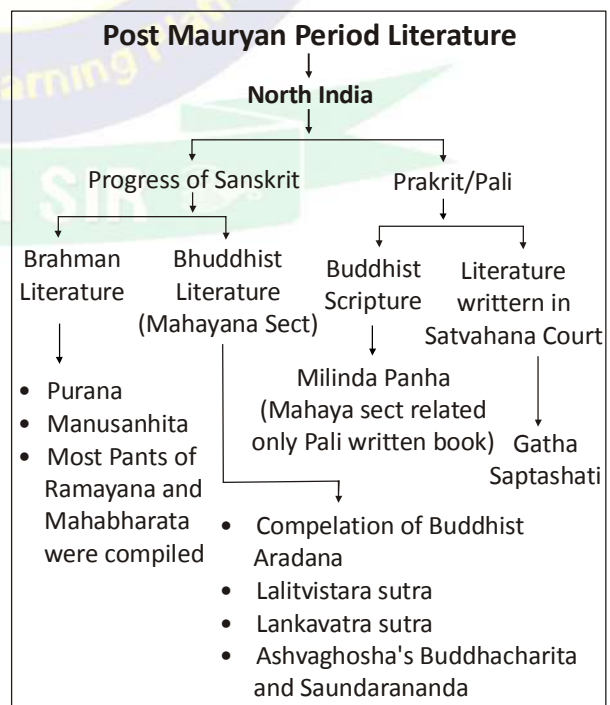
• Mauryan Period (400 BC-200 BCE):-



During the Maurya period, the significance of the Pali/Prakrit language increased, leading to its official recognition. Ashoka's inscriptions, as well as Buddhist and Jain literature, were written in Pali/Prakrit. The Abhidhamma Pitaka, the third section of the Tripitaka, was composed in Pali during this time. Additionally, the Mahavastu treatise was written in Pali, while Jain literature was composed in Prakrit. Early Jain literature was classified into 14 varnas, which later evolved into 12 Angas.

However, this does not mean that the compilation of Sanskrit texts came to a halt. Sanskrit literature continued to be compiled, with notable works like Kautilya's Arthashastra and Katyayan's Vartika also produced during this period.

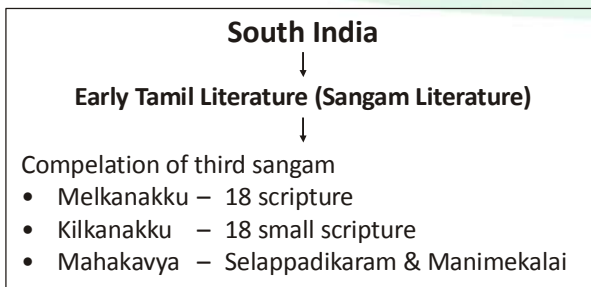
• Post-Mauryan period (200 BC—300 AD):-



Sanskrit- During this period, the significance of Sanskrit began to rise in royal courts. This process commenced with the Junagadh inscription of Rudradaman, which is considered the largest Sanskrit inscription in India. Notably, foreign dynasties like the Shakas and Kushans established their rule in India, alongside indigenous dynasties such as the Satavahanas. These dynasties sought legitimacy in Indian society, leading them to patronize the Brahmin cult and Sanskrit.

Simultaneously, Buddhism underwent a transformation, giving rise to the development of the Mahayana branch alongside the Hinayana branch. The Mahayana branch shifted from using Pali to adopting Sanskrit as its language. Consequently, while Hinayana literature was recorded in Pali, Mahayana literature was composed in Sanskrit. Thus, Jataka tales, which recount the Buddha's previous births, were written in Pali, whereas Avadanas, which narrate the life of the Buddha, emerged in Mahayana literature during this era. Sanskrit also witnessed the works of scholars like Ashvaghosha, who wrote important texts such as Buddhacharitra and Saundarananda.

Pali/Prakrit -Pali/Prakrit language continued to be widely used among the general public. The only text related to the Mahayana branch found in Pali is the Milindapanho. Similarly, Prakrit also received patronage in the Satavahana court, where the ruler Hala wrote a work in Prakrit called GathaSaptashati under a pseudonym.



Tamil Literature - The early form of Tamil literature is known as Sangam literature, which derives its name from the “Sangam,” meaning the conference of poets. According to Tamil

mythology, three conferences of poets took place in Madurai and its surrounding region. The first conference supposedly had only gods and sages participating, and many compositions were written. However, all these compositions were lost due to a sea storm. The gods and sages convened a second conference, during which numerous compositions were compiled, but these too suffered a similar fate. The only surviving composition from these conferences was Tolkappiyam, a Tamil grammar book.

Subsequently, the third Sangam was held, and during this period, the Ettuthokai, consisting of eight texts, was compiled. Additionally, a collection of ten rural songs was written, which is compiled in a book known as Pattupattu.

Upon analyzing the Sangam literature, we can observe various stages of development within it.

1. Melkanakku Literature (Narrative Literature) – The third Sangam compiled the Melkanku literature, which consisted of eight books and ten rural songs. This literature focused on expressing love and admiration for the king.

2. Kilkanakku Literature (Preaching Literature) – This group comprises 18 short texts, with Tirukurral and Nalidiyar being prominent among them. These texts have undergone a transformation from narrative to didactic, reflecting the influence of Jain philosophy. As a result, Kilkanakku shows more influence from the North compared to Melkanakku.

3. Epics- The epics Silappadikaram and Manimekalai had a significant impact on the North, as Tamil poets were more inclined towards composing shorter poems. When they ventured into writing epics, they were influenced by the Mahabharata and Ramayana from the North. Moreover, the influence of Buddhism on these epics is evident, as they reflect the concept of nirvana in their themes and perspectives.

According to recent research, it is now known that the Sangam texts were compiled in the first

millennium AD, contrary to the earlier Tamil myth. These texts hold great significance as they provide valuable insights into the political, economic, social, and religious life of South India. They shed light on the establishment of the South Chola, Chera, and Pandya dynasties, as well as the ongoing power struggles between them. In terms of economics, the texts offer information about trade with the Romans. On the social front, they reveal the influence of the northern society on the southern society, highlighting the prevalence of the varna system and the subordinate status of women, similar to the northern region. Additionally, the Sangam literature portrays a synthesis of northern and southern religious practices, showcasing the integration between the gods and goddesses of both regions. For instance, the southern deity Murugan is associated with the northern deity Kumar Kartikeya, while the goddess Korravai from the south is identified with Durga from the north.

Question: Though not very useful from the point of view of a connected political history of South India, the Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable vividness. Comment.

[200 words, UPSC-2013]

Answer: The Tamil tradition mentions three conferences of Tamil scholars known as Sangam, and the literature produced in these conferences is referred to as Sangam literature. However, in reality, this literature was composed in the early centuries of the Christian era. Due to the lack of other reliable study materials, Sangam literature serves as the primary source for understanding the history of the Far South. While it provides better insights into social and economic history, its contribution to political history is limited.

Sangam literature offers information about the Chola, Chera, and Pandya dynasties, providing genealogical details of these rulers. However, the authenticity of these genealogies is questionable, and some claims made by rulers appear exaggerated. For instance, a Chera

dynasty ruler boasted of conquering territories up to the Himalayan Mountains in the north. As a result, the reliability of Sangam literature as a source for studying political history is diminished.

On the other hand, Sangam literature offers valuable knowledge of social history. Early Sangam literature, specifically the Ettuttokai, reveals that southern society was organized based on the Kutti system, which bears similarity to the Chaturvarna system prevalent in the north. It indicates ongoing cultural exchange and suggests attempts to adopt the Chaturvarna system in South India, although without complete implementation. Additionally, Sangam literature highlights the subordinate status of women in the far South, reflecting the situation in North India during that period.

Sangam literature also provides significant insights into the economy. It categorizes the economy into five sectors (Tinai) and delineates various professions within each sector. Importantly, it offers extensive information on Roman trade, including detailed lists of imports and exports during the early centuries of the Common Era. Furthermore, Sangam literature indicates the level of urbanization achieved in the Sangam economy.

Overall, Sangam literature stands as a vital source for understanding the social and economic history of the Far South, making a notable contribution to our knowledge in these areas.

■ **Gupta Literature (300 AD - 600 AD):-**

The Gupta period is often referred to as the 'Golden Age' because of its remarkable art and literature. When the Gupta Empire was established, Sanskrit became the official language and saw significant advancement. The literature of that time can be divided into two main categories: (i) Religious literature (ii) Secular literature.

- **Religious Literature:** During the Gupta period, religious literature witnessed the

compilation of numerous Puranas. Additionally, this era marked the final compilation of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Furthermore, several important texts like the Gita, Yajnavalkya Smriti, Narada Smriti, and Brihaspati Smriti were composed during this period.

- **Secular Literature:** In addition to religious literature, the Gupta period also witnessed the composition of works that explored various aspects of human life. Notably, the writings of Kalidasa hold a prominent position in this category. Kalidasa is renowned for his creation of seven books: Raghuvansh, Kumar Sambhav, Meghdoot, RituSamhara,, Malavikagnimitram, Vikramorvasiyam, and Abhijnana Shakuntalam.

‘Raghuvansh’ is an epic consisting of 19 verses, which describes and praises the ancestors of Lord Rama, as well as their subsequent generations. Kumarasambhava consists of 17 verses, depicting nature and narrating the story of Kartikeya’s birth. ‘RituSamhara’ mentions six seasons, while ‘Meghdoot’ tells the story of a separated Yaksha restless for his beloved.

Malavikagnimitram is a five-stage play that narrates the love story of Malavika and Agnimitra. ‘Vikramorvasiyam’ narrates the love story of Urvashi and Pururva. Finally, ‘Abhijnanasakuntalam’ describes the story of love, separation, and reunion between King Dushyant of Hastinapur and Shakuntala.

Apart from Kalidasa, the works of other scholars also hold significance during this time. Some notable examples include Visakhadatta’s Mudrarakshasa and Devichandraguptam, Shudraka’s Mrichchakatikam, and Bharavi’s Kiratarjuniyam. Additionally, texts related to mathematics, medicine, and astrology were compiled during this period. Chandravyakaran, composed by Chandragomin, Vishnu Sharma’s Panchatantra (Moral stories), Kamandaka’s Neetisara, Aryabhatta’s Aryabhattyam (Mathematics), Varahmihir’s Panchasiddhantika (Astrology), Vagbhatta’s Ashtanghridaya and

Ashtangsamgraha (medicine), Palakpya’s Hasty Ayurveda (veterinary), and Amar Singh’s Amarkosh or Naam-Linganushasan (Dictionary) are some examples of such texts.

- **Pali/Prakrit:** While Sanskrit received patronage in the royal court, Prakrit continued to be widely spoken by the common people and retained its significance as a vernacular language. Interestingly, even in Gupta-era Sanskrit literature, Prakrit was used for the dialogue of women and Shudras.

- **Post Gupta literature**

North India: Following the decline of the Gupta Empire, a powerful kingdom emerged in North India under the rule of Harsha. During Harsha’s reign, there was considerable support and encouragement for the advancement of education and literature. Sanskrit continued to receive patronage in Harsha’s court. Harsha himself composed three Sanskrit plays: Ratnavali, Priyadarshika, and Nagananda. Additionally, Banabhatta, a court writer, is credited with writing the texts Harshacharita and Kadambari. Another scholar named Mayur wrote a collection of 100 verses known as ‘Mayur Shatak’.

Prakrit: In the post-Gupta period, literary works in addition to Sanskrit began to emerge in the vernacular Prakrit language. Notably, remarkable epics such as Swayambhukrit Paumchariu were written during this time. Unlike Sanskrit, which was a formal language, Prakrit, being the spoken language of the people, had numerous variations that were influenced by geographical and regional factors.

South India: During the same period, significant contributions were made in the field of literature by the Chalukyas and Pallavas in South India. According to Hiuen Tsang, the people of the Chalukya kingdom had a strong inclination towards learning. Sanskrit was extensively used in Chalukya texts, showcasing its highly developed form. The inscriptions of Mahakuta and Aihole exemplify the refinement of ornate

prose and poetry respectively. Pulakeshin-II Samant Gangraj Durvinita composed a grammar book called 'Shabd Avatar'. Similarly, Jainendra-Vyakaran and Somdevsuri recited famous texts named Yashastilakacampu and 'Nitivakyamrita'.

The reign of the Pallava kings witnessed significant literary advancements in both Sanskrit and Tamil languages. The Pallava ruler Mahendravarman himself was a renowned scholar and composed books such as 'Mattavilasa Prahasana' and Bhagwatajjukam. In the court of the Pallavas, Dandi composed 'dashakumaracharita' and kavyadarsha. Additionally, Tamil language and literature were encouraged by the Alvar and Nayanar saints during this period.

Pre-Medieval Literature

After the decline of Harsha's empire, the regional states emerged in North India, known as the 'Rajput period.' The Rajput rulers played a significant role in promoting Sanskrit literature. Additionally, encouragement was given to Apabhramsa and Hindi languages. During this time, some Rajput kings themselves were highly accomplished scholars. Notable among them were Parmarvanshi Mujja and Bhoj. Mujja was a distinguished poet who had eminent literary figures such as Padmagupta, the author of 'Nava-sahasanka-charita,' and Dhananjaya, the author of 'Dashrupal,' residing in his court. Bhoj was a profound scholar and his poetic talent was well-recognized. He authored treatises on various subjects including medicine, astrology, grammar, and architecture. Remarkable among his works are Shringar Prakash, Saraswati Kanthabharan, Kurmashatak, Samarangana Sutradhara, Yuktikalpataru, and Shabdanushasan.

In Sanskrit literature, significant works include Rajasekhara's Kavya-Mimamsa, Balaramayana, Viddhasalabhanjika, Shriharsha's Naishadha Charita, Jayadeva's Gita Govinda, Vilhana's Vikramankadevacharita, Somdev's Kathasaritsagara, and Kalhana's Rajatarangini.

These works hold special importance and are noteworthy contributions to Sanskrit literature.

- **Folk Language and Literature:**

In addition to Sanskrit, the rulers of this period also extended their patronage to Apabhramsha and Hindi literature. The era witnessed the composition of many 'Rasokavyas' or poetic narratives. Notable examples include Parmal Raso, Visaldev Raso, and Prithviraj Raso. Furthermore, early Hindi literature emerged from Apabhramsa and flourished during this time. In addition, it is worth mentioning significant works such as Someshwara's Manasollasa, composed by the Western Chalukya king, Lakshmidhar's Kriyakalpataru, Vijaneshwar's Mitakshara, and Jimutavahana's Dayabhaga among other notable contributions.

- **Dravidian Literature**

The Dravidian language group comprises Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam languages. In the early medieval period, significant contributions to the development of these languages were made by the Chola rulers, as well as the Nayanar and Alvar saints in South India. Tamil literature during the medieval aspect of Hindu India primarily consists of the Tevaram and Tiruvachakam by the Saiva Samaya Acharyas and the Naalayira Divya Prabandham by the Vaishnava Alvars. Kambar, Ottakuttan, and Pugalendi were revered as the greatest poets of their time and made significant contributions to Tamil literature. Among them, Kambar gained immense fame for his Tamil rendition of the Ramayana.

During this era, Kannada language literature also flourished in South India. The oldest known work in Kannada is believed to be the Vaddaradhane, composed by a Jain scholar named Shivakotiacharya, possibly before the 8th century CE. The renowned Rashtrakuta king Amoghavarsha composed the Kavirajamarga around 850 AD. The tenth century witnessed the notable contributions of three celebrated Kannada poets: Pampa, Ponna, and Ranna.

Pampa's Adipurana narrates the history of the first Tirthankara, while Pampa's Vikramarjuna Vijaya and Ranna's Sahasabhimā Vijayam are proverbial poems based on the Mahabharata.

In comparison, the literary traditions of Telugu and Malayalam are relatively more recent. The earliest surviving works by Telugu authors date back to the twelfth century, while the era of Malayalam literature begins with Thunchathu Ezhuthachchan in the seventeenth century.

Question- Religious harmony lies at the core of ancient Indian culture. examine.

Answer-Freedom of religion and belief has been a fundamental aspect of Indian culture, with ancient Indians enjoying a level of freedom that was rare in the contemporary world. Several characteristics of Indian religion and philosophy can be observed during ancient times:

1. **Diversity of religious sects:** People and thinkers had the freedom to choose their own religion, preventing the establishment of a monopoly by any single religious sect. Brahmins, Buddhists, Jains, Ajivakas, Tantrists, and proponents of Bhakti all coexisted and thrived.
2. **Emphasis on non-violence:** Most religious sects placed a strong emphasis on non-violence, promoting peace and compassion as core values.
3. **Concept of karma and reincarnation:** The belief in karma and reincarnation fostered patience and tolerance among the people, emphasizing the consequences of one's actions and the idea of rebirth.
4. **Sense of unity among different religious sects:** There was an exchange of ideas and beliefs between different religious sects. For example, Buddha was recognized as an incarnation of Vishnu, and the concept of 'Harihara' was used to connect Vishnu and Shiva, highlighting the unity between different deities and religious traditions.

5. **Freedom of religious thought:** In ancient India, religious proponents were not persecuted for their beliefs, unlike figures such as Socrates or Jesus Christ. This aspect has been acknowledged and praised, with Amartya Sen referring to ancient Indian intellectuals as 'Argumentative Indians.'

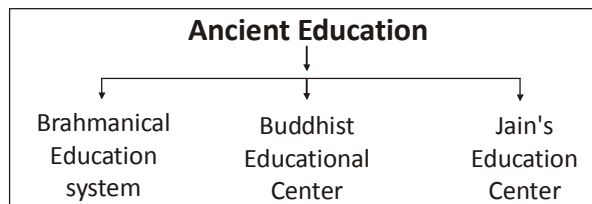
6. Various dynasties supported multiple religious sects, fostering an atmosphere of religious diversity and harmony. In contrast, contemporary Europe witnessed conflicts and bloodshed driven by differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

In conclusion, the spirit of religious harmony and unity is deeply ingrained in ancient Indian religion and philosophy.

Ancient Education

The Upanishads proclaim that knowledge is the key to liberation, serving as a source of enlightenment and empowerment. However, when we delve into the ancient education system, we are reminded of Michel Foucault's assertion that "knowledge is power." Ancient philosophers also emphasized the connection between intelligence and strength with the statement "Buddhīryasya Balamatasya."

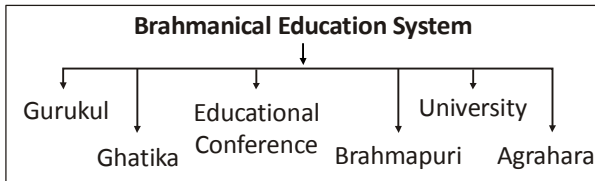
In ancient times, various religious sects played a significant role in the development of education. As a result, there were differences in the forms and methods of imparting knowledge, depending on the particular religious sects involved.



■ The Brahmanical Educational Institute

Special emphasis was placed on the study of texts and philosophy in Brahmin education. The primary focus of this education system was

on theoretical learning. Unfortunately, women and Shudras faced discrimination within the Brahmin education system. During this period, various types of educational institutions were prevalent.

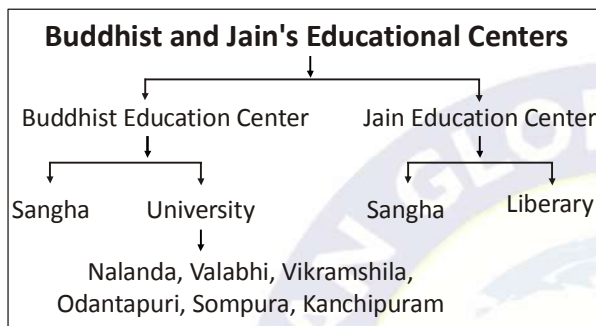


- **Gurukul-** Gurukuls were established by Brahmin Acharyas, and these institutions were often secluded, either located away from the general population or in forest settings. Gurukuls primarily catered to the elites and upper castes. The curriculum in Gurukuls focused on the study of Vedas, Upanishads, and philosophy, with a strong emphasis on the moral and intellectual development of the students.
- **Educational Seminar-** Kings and scholars would frequently organize academic gatherings and invite scholars from distant regions with the primary objective of promoting higher education. During one such seminar, a debate ensued between sage Yajnavalkya and Gargi. It is said that after emerging victorious in this debate, Videha Madhav generously donated 1000 cows to sage Yajnavalkya, adorning the horns of each cow with two golden feet.
- **Brahmin Educational Center** – Around 400 BCE, Taxila is believed to have flourished as a center of Brahmin education. Numerous Indian scholars received their education from this prestigious university. For instance, notable figures such as the eminent physician Jivaka, head acharya Chanakya, and renowned scholar and grammarian Katyayana were associated with Taxila University. Its influence even extended beyond India to foreign regions. However, in the modern context, Taxila did not achieve the status of a university like Nalanda, and it declined and fell after the Huns' invasion in the 5th century.
- When we examine the reasons for the differences between Takshashila and Nalanda University, one significant factor emerges – the former was established as a center of Brahmin education, while the latter was established as a center of Buddhist education. Buddhism being a widely practiced religion globally, Nalanda University had an easier path towards gaining university status. Additionally, there were other notable distinctions between the two institutions. Nalanda University implemented a disciplined and structured curriculum, whereas Takshashila College lacked a clear curriculum and fixed timeframe for completion. Teachers at Takshashila based their teaching methods on personal beliefs and experiences, and students were taught in different groups. In essence, the students were not considered a collective group but rather individuals under the guidance of specific teachers.
- **Ghatika (temple) as a center of education** – In the early medieval period, temples or “ghatikas” also emerged as centers of learning.
- **Agrahara and Brahmadeya (Brahmpuri) as centers of education** –Agrahara and Brahmadeya played significant roles in the development of education in ancient times. Under Agrahara, land grants were provided to groups of Brahmins who were responsible for managing free education for the people. Villages where the entire community consisted of Brahmins were known as Agraharas. Brahmadeyas, on the other hand, were villages where Brahmins settled in a specific part and also contributed to the spread of education.
- **The curriculum of Brahmanical Education-** Primarily focused on the study of Vedic literature, religion, philosophy, logic, mathematics, ethics, epics, grammar, astronomy, sculpture, medicine, and shipbuilding. This approach aimed to

establish a balance between religious and secular subjects. Graduates of this era were expected to have expertise in the Vedas and 18 crafts.

- **Limitations-** it is important to note the limitations of this education system. It was characterized by inequality and discrimination, as lower-caste individuals and women were denied access to this education.

■ The Buddhist and Jain Education Center



Buddhist and Jain education centers developed alongside Brahmin education centers with distinct characteristics. Firstly, Buddhist and Jain education was administered by Buddhist Sanghas, which were situated near settlements rather than in isolated areas like Brahmin centers. Additionally, the use of Pali and Prakrit, the vernacular languages, facilitated better communication with the common people.

Secondly, Buddhist and Jain education centers provided educational opportunities for Shudras and women, promoting inclusivity and accessibility. Unlike Brahmin education, which often excluded these groups, Buddhist and Jain institutions embraced their participation.

Thirdly, while Brahmin education primarily focused on theoretical knowledge, Buddhist and Jain educational institutions emphasized practical education and vocational skills. These institutions imparted knowledge of various crafts, including the teaching of 18 crafts and 64 arts.

Overall, the Buddhist and Jain education centers distinguished themselves through their

location, language, inclusivity, and emphasis on practical education, offering an alternative approach to learning compared to the Brahmin education system.

• Different types of educational institutions-

1. **Sangha as the Center of Education:** The Sangha played a central role in both Buddhist and Jain education, serving as the focal point for learning and dissemination of knowledge.
2. **Colleges and Universities:** The Jain education system did not emphasize the establishment of colleges and universities, whereas in Buddhist education, there was a special emphasis on their development. Due to Buddhism's status as a world religion, Buddhist centers had greater potential to evolve into universities.

• Important Buddhist Educational Institutions:

1. **Nalanda University:** This renowned university was established during the Gupta period, and Kumaragupta I, a Gupta ruler, made significant contributions to its development. It quickly evolved into a university and attracted scholars from China and Southeast Asia. According to the accounts of Chinese travelers, such as Huein tsang and Etsing, Nalanda University had a large student population, with estimates ranging from 10,000 to 3,000 students.
2. **Vallabhi:** Located in Gujarat, Vallabhi emerged as a prominent center of Buddhist education in the 7th century. The Maitrak rulers of Vallabhi played a key role in its development. It also gained recognition as a university, attracting scholars from outside India. However, its decline began with the Arab invasion in the 8th century, although it was later revived by the successors of the Maitraka rulers.
3. **Vikramshila:** Situated in the Bhagalpur region of Bihar, Vikramshila University became an important hub of Buddhist

learning. It was founded by Dharmapala, the founder of the Pala dynasty, in the 9th century and continued to flourish for the next four centuries. Vikramshila University also attained the status of a university.

4. **Kanchipuram:** Under the patronage of the Pallava rulers in South India, Kanchipuram developed as a center for Buddhist education. It also experienced the influence of the Brahmin education system. Scholars such as Huein tsang and Dighadhnag were associated with the Kanchipuram center of learning.
- **Construction of Libraries:** Jains prioritized the construction of libraries instead of establishing colleges or universities. The scriptures refer to educational donations as Mahadan, which encompassed activities such as self-reading, encouraging others to read, self-writing, and encouraging others to write.

Question- Taxila university was one of the oldest universities of the world with which were associated a number of renowned learned personalities of different disciplines. Its strategic location caused its fame to flourish, but unlike Nalanda, it is not considered a university in the modern sense. Discuss. [UPSC-2014]

Answer – Takshashila, the oldest educational center in India, held significant importance, but it was Nalanda that gained greater renown. One key factor contributing to this distinction was Nalanda's development as a prominent hub of Buddhist education. Being a globally recognized religion, Buddhism propelled Nalanda to become a renowned university.

In contrast, Takshashila, despite being a notable center of Brahmin learning, did not achieve true university status. It offered instruction in philosophy, grammar, medicine, and other subjects. Distinguished figures such as the renowned physician Jivaka, the author of important grammatical works Vartika, Katyayana, and the prominent diplomat Chanakya were associated with this institution. Furthermore, its location in a strategically significant area likely played a role in shaping public sentiment against Alexander the Great's invasion. However, Takshashila failed to attract scholars and researchers from outside India.

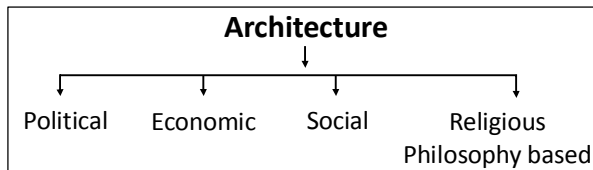
On the other hand, Nalanda drew a multitude of scholars and researchers from East Asia to South-East Asia due to its allure as a center of Buddhist education. The inclination towards Buddhism naturally led them to Nalanda. Another distinguishing feature between the two institutions was that Nalanda University adhered to a disciplined and well-defined curriculum, whereas Takshashila College lacked such clarity. Additionally, students at Takshashila were divided among different teachers.

Acknowledging the historical importance and cultural value of Nalanda University, the Indian government, in collaboration with various other nations, has made the decision to revive this prestigious institution. The objective behind this revival is to harness its potential as a tool for soft power projection. By revitalizing Nalanda University, the aim is to showcase India's rich intellectual heritage, promote cultural exchange, and strengthen diplomatic ties with other countries.



Art in ancient India boasts a rich and diverse history encompassing architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and dance.

When examining the realm of architecture, we discover a fascinating evolution influenced by numerous factors.



- **Political Factors:** Architectural construction has often been influenced by political factors, as described below:

1. On numerous occasions, kings or rulers sought to establish their presence in remote areas through architecture, with the boundaries of their states being determined by these structures.
2. The construction of temples served as a means for rulers to display their royal pride. For instance, the Brihadisvara temple built by the Chola ruler Rajaraja-I and the Gangaikondacholapuram temple commissioned by Rajendra-I symbolize their political victories.
3. Starting from the second century, various dynasties developed the concept of Kuladevata, with deities such as Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, and Durga holding significant importance. Temples were erected as a means of paying homage to these deities.

- **Economic Factors:** During periods of economic growth, there was a notable emphasis on artistic endeavors. For instance, in the post-Mauryan era, the expansion of Roman trade stimulated economic prosperity, resulting in the construction of numerous chaityas, stupas, and viharas. Similarly, the Gupta period witnessed continued economic growth, which led to the construction of a significant number of temples.

- **Social Factors:** Communities would often build temples as a means of establishing their identity. Additionally, temples were erected to pay homage to ancestors. Furthermore, temples were constructed as memorials to honor the passing of influential individuals.

- **Religion and Philosophy:** The construction of temples has always been closely intertwined with religion and philosophy. People from different religious sects would build temples to show reverence to their preferred deities.

In terms of philosophy, the Stupa or temple symbolically encompasses the entire world within itself. For example, the dome-like structure of the stupa represents Mount Meru, believed to be situated at the center of the world. The pillar erected atop it symbolizes the division between the heavens and the earthly realm.

Similarly, the sanctum-sanctorum of the temple is believed to symbolize Mount Meru, which is located at the center of the world. The circular path around the sanctum, known as the circumambulatory path, signifies the passage of time. Moreover, the towering sikhara (spire) of the temple represents the earthly realm, while the idols placed atop the sikhara (spire) serve as abodes for various celestial beings.

Mauryan Architecture

It has a profound connection with Ashoka the Great and possesses two main characteristics. Firstly, it was inspired by Buddhist concepts, and secondly, it flourished under state patronage. The various forms associated with it are as follows:

1. **Pillars of Ashoka:** The Pillars of Ashoka are crafted from Chunar (lime) stone and are monolithic, meaning each pillar is made from a single stone. These pillars consist of two parts: the Yashti (Pillar) and the Gavdum Lat (Capital or Head). At the top of the Yashti, there is an inverted lotus upon which a chowki (Base) is

constructed. In some instances, rows of swans are depicted on the base. The Ashoka Chakra is inscribed on the abacus at Sarnath. Animal figures were also carved on the pillar, typically representing elephants, horses, bulls, and lions. However, at Sarnath, four lions are depicted sitting back-to-back.



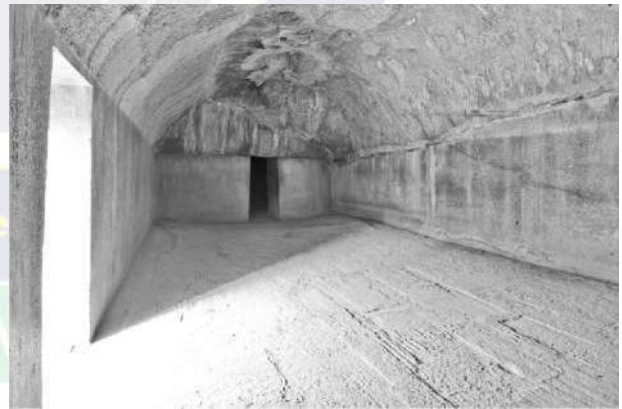
2. Stupa- An example of Ashoka's architectural legacy is the construction of stupas. One notable stupa from his era is the exquisite stupa at Sanchi, which exemplifies the early stage of stupa construction. Generally, a stupa was a semi-circular structure. Initially, the stupa was built using bricks, with its upper part being flat and featuring a chamber called the harmika. This chamber served as a burial place for the relics of Buddha or other revered saints. A wooden pillar used to be erected atop the harmika, although it has since deteriorated over time. Additionally, the stupa was enclosed by a small boundary wall.



3. Cave Architecture- The construction of caves began with the carving of mountains during Ashoka's time. The earliest caves were built in the Barabar Hills in Gaya and were generously donated to the Ajivikas. Similarly, Ashoka's grandson, Dasaratha, constructed

some caves in the Nagarjuna Hills, which were also bestowed upon the Ajivikas. Initially, these caves were of a simple and conventional design, but over time, they evolved into more intricate structures.

The construction of the early caves followed a straightforward approach. The cave facades were cut in rectangular shapes, creating living spaces within. The roofs of these dwellings and their rectangular entrances were coated with black paste. This architectural style introduced by Ashoka later progressed into Buddhist temples and eventually transformed into Hindu temples under the rule of the Pallava dynasty.



Post Mauryan Architecture

During this period, Buddhism remained the primary source of artistic inspiration. However, the social support for art expanded significantly. In contrast to the Mauryan era, where art thrived exclusively under state patronage, during this period, art gained support from not only the ruling class but also from nobles, merchants, monks, and Bhikshuni (female monks).

■ **Stupa-** Various forms of architecture emerged, with the Stupa experiencing notable artistic development in the post-Mauryan period. The Stupa displayed the following artistic features, as outlined -

1. It possessed a semicircular shape and was primarily constructed using bricks, while stones were used for the upper section.
2. The upper part of the Stupa was flat and contained a chamber called the Harmika, where the relics of revered individuals were enshrined.
3. Atop the Harmika, a stone pillar was erected, adorned with three umbrellas symbolizing compassion, tolerance, and generosity.
4. A Vedika, or railing, surrounded the Stupa, serving as a path for circumambulation.
5. The Stupa was enclosed by a four-sided wall, featuring magnificent entrances on each side, adorned with idols depicting humans and animals.



An intriguing aspect of the Stupa is its representation of popular Buddhist traditions. Folk stories and incidents related to everyday life were assimilated into Stupa art, transforming them into Buddhist ideals.

In essence, the concept of the Stupa draws from tribal elements. It originated from the practice of constructing mounds over the tombs of tribal leaders. The Buddhist sect adopted this practice, shaping it into the Stupa. The semi-circular architectural form of the Stupa, along with the placement of the remains of the deceased in its central chamber, symbolizes the significance of a mausoleum.

The animal and human idols found at the entrances of the Stupa also have connections to folk life and stories. For instance, the elephant, horse, tiger, monkey, and others are associated with folk tales. However, these forms were embraced by the Buddhist tradition, attributing them with idealized symbolism. The elephant became a symbol of the Buddha's entry into his mother's womb, the bull represented his youth, and the horse symbolized renunciation.

Given the prominence of Yaksha-Yakshini as folk deities during this period, their idols were also incorporated at the entrances of the Stupa, assimilated into Buddhist ideals. Similarly, serpents (Nag-Nagin) held significance as deities, and their idols were included as well. Notably, the 'Shalabhanjika' enjoyed popularity in folk stories, symbolizing prosperity and good fortune. It was believed that merely touching the leaves of the tree she stood beside would transform them into flowers. At the entrance of the Stupa in Sanchi, one can observe an idol of Shalabhanjika hanging from a tree branch.

Hence, it is evident that the Buddhist sect transformed popular stories into Buddhist ideals to uphold its popularity, incorporating them into Stupa art.

Question: "Early Buddhist Stupa-Art while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals."

Elucidate. [UPSC-2016]

Answer: A significant aspect of Buddhism is their connection with the common people and their widespread acceptance among them. On one hand, Buddhism adopted the folk language Pali, while on the other hand, it embraced popular cultural symbols.

Stupa art, the renowned architectural style of Buddhism, derived inspiration from folk life and evolved gradually. In tribal societies, it was customary to create small mounds after the cremation of a chief or chieftain. The Buddhist sect adopted this tradition, incorporating it into their practices. Additionally, non-Aryan sects had

a profound influence on the common people. One such example was the worship of Yaksha and Yakshini. Even during the Mauryan period, idols of Yaksha-Yakshini were created in the style of folk art. These elements were later incorporated into Stupa art by the Buddhist cult. Similarly, the worship of snakes, animals, and trees was prevalent among the common people, and these aspects gradually found their place in Stupa art.

During the Mauryan period, Stupa art thrived under state patronage. However, in the early centuries AD, its social base expanded widely. Ashoka, in his efforts to propagate Buddhism, discouraged certain folk festivals, social ceremonies, and other practices. However, after the decline of the Mauryan empire, the influence of these elements resurfaced and left their impact on both contemporary religion and art.

The Stupa itself was a semi-circular dome resembling the funeral mounds of tribal communities. The harmika, located at its center, housed the remains of the deceased. Surrounding the Stupa, a Vedika (altar) and entrance gates were constructed. Numerous sculptures depicting various animals, snakes, and aspects of folk life adorned the Vedika and entrances. Over time, the Buddhist sect assimilated these elements into their religious practices.

Thus, it is evident that the primary style of Buddhist architecture was intricately linked with folk life and gradually developed by incorporating popular elements.

■ **The Chaitya-** The Chaitya was a place of worship for Buddhists and was predominantly constructed by excavating mountains. These structures were evolved forms of Mauryan cave architecture. Typically, the Chaitya had a rectangular shape with a semicircular rear end. A stupa was placed at its center, serving as the focal point for worship. Additionally, a human statue was often included alongside the stupa. The roof of the stupa was designed in a horseshoe shape, allowing light to illuminate the stupa through an opening known as the Chaitya window (Chaitya khidki). This technological development held significant importance.

Under the Satavahanas, numerous stupas were constructed by cutting mountains in western India. Prominent examples include Nashik, Bhaja, Kanheri, Karle, and Pitalkhora.



■ **Vihara** – The Chaitya served as the place of worship for Buddhists, while the Vihara served as the dwelling place for monks. Whenever Chaityas were constructed, Viharas were also built as residential structures. Viharas were crafted by excavating stones and exhibited a higher level of sophistication compared to Mauryan cave architecture. In addition to the verandahs (Porch), these Viharas encompassed multiple rooms within their premises.



Gupta Architecture

During the Gupta period, art and literature established classical norms, earning the era the epithet of the 'Golden Age' due to its exceptional aesthetic sense. Gupta art drew inspiration primarily from the Brahmin cult, while also incorporating influences from other sects.

- **Religious Architecture:** During this period, religious architecture is visible in two forms: (a) Cave Temples (b) Independent Temples.
- **Cave Temples:** The cave architecture of this period is predominantly characterized as Buddhist architecture, with only a few exceptions. One such exception is a Brahmanical cave at Udayagiri, which bears

an inscription dating back to the reign of Chandragupta II. Notably, the Varaha statue of Vishnu in this cave stands as an exceptional creation, exemplifying the concept of Avatarism. In addition to Vishnu, there are also caves associated with Shaivism and Jainism. Udayagiri marks a transitional stage between cave temples and Independent temples. Furthermore, the caves of Ajanta and Bagh, renowned for their association with Buddhism, can be considered among the most famous examples from this period.

- **Independent Temple:** The Gupta period holds immense significance in Indian temple architecture. It marks a crucial phase of evolution, despite being in its early stages. The Sanchi temple number 17 stands as the earliest example from this period. Alongside, we find prominent temples like the Vishnu temple of Tigawa, the Shiva temples of Bhumra and Khoh, the Parvati temple of Nachna Kuthara, the Dah Parvatiya temple in Assam, and the Dashavatara temple of Deogarh. Notably, the Dashavatara temple of Deogarh is the oldest example of the Panchayatan style. These temples are primarily crafted from stone. Additionally, a significant number of brick temples were constructed during this era. Noteworthy examples include the temples in Bhitargaon (Kanpur), Paharpur (Bangladesh), and Sirpur (Chhattisgarh).



Ancient Temple of Sanchi



Dashavatara Temple of Deogarh

- **Stupas, Chaityas and Viharas** - Apart from temples, the Gupta period also witnessed the construction of stupas, chaityas, and viharas. These Buddhist structures were built in various places, with notable examples found in Jauliya, Charsadda, and Taxila of Gandhara. An elaboration of this period can be seen in the Dhamekh Stupa located in Sarnath, eastern India, which is in a drum-shaped form.

Early Medieval Architecture

The early medieval period witnessed significant developments in the fields of art and architecture. During this time, distinct regional styles of architecture and sculpture emerged in North India, including Kashmir, Rajasthan, and Odisha. Additionally, large-scale temple construction was undertaken in peninsular India under the Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas, Pallavas, and Cholas.

Until the early medieval period, India recognized three independent styles of temple architecture: Nagara, Dravida, and Vesara. The Nagara style spanned from Kashmir to the Vindhyas. The Dravidian style flourished in the region between the Krishna and Kaveri rivers. The Vesara style, on the other hand, encompassed the area between the Vindhya and Krishna rivers. Each style possessed unique characteristics as follows-

Nagara Style	Dravida Style	Vesara Style
1. The Nagara style of temple architecture is characterized by a foundational plan that is square in shape. These temples were constructed on elevated platforms.	1. The prominent feature of the Dravidian style temple is its pyramidal shikhara. The shikhara gradually ascends in the form of smaller stories.	1. The Vesara style is a hybrid style, with its literal meaning incorporates features from both the northern & southern architectural elements.
2. The elevation of the temple is marked by its convex shikhara.	2. A Stupika is placed on the top of the shikhara.	2. The temple features an open circumambulatory path.
3. Amlaka is placed on top of the shikhara.	3. A gopuram has been constructed in the middle of the outer wall that surrounds the temple.	3. The temple walls are adorned with carvings of Rathas (chariots).
4. In developed temples, secondary shikhara, known as Urushringa, were constructed alongside the main shikhara	4. Multiple mandapas (pavilions) were built within the temple premises.	4. The temples incorporated elements of both Nagara and Dravida styles for decorative purposes.



Lingraj Temple, Bhubneshwar

- **Rashtrakuta Period Architecture:** - The Rashtrakuta rulers were devout followers of Shaivism, which resulted in the construction of numerous Shiva temples and idols during their reign. Centers such as Ellora, Elephanta, Jageshwari, and Mandapeshwar gained fame for their remarkable architectural prowess. Among these centers, Ellora and Elephanta stand prominent.
- **Ellora:** The architecture of Ellora encompasses the three major religions of Brahmin, Jain, and Buddhist. It is renowned for its impressive Buddhist and Jain caves, as well as the magnificent Kailashnath temple. The Kailashnath temple at Ellora features intricate iconography, including depictions of Shiva, Shiva-Parvati, Ravana shaking Mount Kailasha, Durga, Vishnu, Saptamatrikas, Ganga, Ganesha, Yamuna, and Saraswati goddesses. This temple is

considered the pinnacle of cave architecture in the Indian subcontinent.



Kailash Temple, Ellora

- **Elephanta:** The most beautiful statue in Elephanta cave is of Mahesha (God Shiva).
- **Chalukya Architecture:** In the Deccan region, there are numerous examples of early medieval temple cave architecture and independent architecture, particularly in Karnataka. The towns of Badami and Aihole showcase the architectural style of the early period, spanning from the 6th to the early 8th century AD. The second phase of architectural development, which is more grand in nature, is evident in the temples constructed at Pattadakal during the 8th century. The Chalukya dynasty's temple architecture exhibits a blend of architectural characteristics from both the northern and southern regions. However, during this time, the Deccan region's architecture also established its own unique identity.

- **Aihole:** Aihole has two remarkable cave temples, one dedicated to Jainism and the other to Shaivism. Both caves feature intricately adorned inner walls.
- **Badami:** The caves of Badami are carved out of red sandstone. Among the three major caves, one is dedicated to Vaishnavism, another to Shaivism, and the third one for Jainism.
- **Pattadakal:** Pattadakal is home to ten temples, with the Virupaksha Temple being the most exquisite and captivating. Dedicated to Shiva, it was constructed by Lokmahadevi.
- **Hoysala Architecture:** The Hoysala dynasty, ruling from Dwarasamudra in southern Karnataka, witnessed the second significant phase of temple architecture. Prominent temples from this period can be found in Halebid, Belur, and Somnathpur. The Hoysaleswara Temple in Halebid, dating back to the 12th century, is the grandest, while the Kesava Temple in Belur consists of pavilions(Mandapa) within a spacious courtyard. The Keshava Temple in Somnathpur, constructed in the 13th century, is regarded as the pinnacle of Hoysala temple architecture and sculpture.
- **Pallava Architecture:-** Stone architecture in South India emerged during the 7th century with the rise of Bhakti. The Pallava architecture laid the foundation for the Dravidian style. It gave birth to three major components: pavilion (Mandapa), chariot (Rathas), and grand temple . Percy Brown, a renowned architect, divided the development of Pallava architecture into four styles.
- **Mahendravarman Style:** The Mahendravarman style predominantly features mandapas, pillared halls where music, dance, and rituals were performed.
- **Mamalla Style:** Developed during the reign of Narasimhavarman I 'Mahamalla', this style includes both mandapas and monolithic temples (raths). Mamallapuram is renowned for its monuments, including ten pavilions(Mandapa) on the main mountain, such as Adivaraha pavilion, Mahishamardini pavilion, and Ramanuja pavilion. The Mamalla style also incorporates monolithic temples designed to resemble wooden chariots, with Mahabalipuram having a total eight chariots, including the largest, the Yudhishtira chariot, and the smallest, the Draupadi chariot.
- **Rajasingh Style:** Mountain-carving techniques were employed during this period, exemplified by the Kailasanatha temple in Kanchipuram. The Shore Temple in Mahabalipuram is considered the first independent temple built in this style. It showcases several features of Dravidian architectural style, including pillar and pavilion(Mandapa) construction, segmented shikhara, and stupa elements.



Virupaksha and Papnath Temple, Pattadakal



**Shore Temple, Mahabalipuram and
Yudhishtira Ratha**

- **Nandivarman Style:** The Nandivarman style focuses on relatively smaller temples. Examples include the Mukteshwar and Matangeshwar temples in Kanchi and the Parasurameswara temple in Gudimallam. Dharmaraja temple appears to imitate the chariot style.
- **Chola Architecture:** During the reign of the Chola dynasty, the rulers displayed great enthusiasm for construction, leading to significant advancements in art and architecture. This era, known as the Chola period, is considered the golden age of South Indian art. The evolution of Chola architecture can be divided into three distinct phases: the early period (850-985 AD), the middle period (985-1070 AD), and the later period (1070-1270 AD).
- The earliest phase of Chola architecture is exemplified by the Shiva temple at Narattamalai. Another significant temple from this period is the Balasubramanya Temple in Kannur, built by Aditya I. Additionally, the Nageshwar temple in Kumbakonam is another notable temple belonging to this era.
- The second phase of Chola temple architecture can be attributed to the reign

of Aditya I and Parantaka I. The Koranganatha temple in Srinivasanallur, constructed during the rule of Parantaka I, stands as a prime example of this phase.

- The third phase of Chola temple architecture corresponds to the early period of Sembiyan Madevi and Rajaraja-I's reign. The Brihadisvara temple in Tanjore exemplifies the pinnacle of Chola architecture during this phase. With its 60-meter-long vimana and impressive Shikhara (pinnacles), this Shiva temple is considered the grandest of its time.
- In the later phase of Chola temple architecture, Gopurams (grand gateways) gained more prominence compared to the vimanas. This transition is evident in the Shiva temple at Chidambaram.



Brihadeshwara Temple, Tanjore

Question: Chola architecture represents a high watermark in the evolution of temple architecture. Discuss [UPSC-2013]

Answer: The foundation of Dravidian temple architecture was laid by the Pallava rulers, but its zenith was reached during the Chola period. Chola architecture witnessed the evolution of various architectural elements, including the mandapa, shikhara, vimana, and gopuram.

The mandapa, a pillared hall, served as a space for conducting rituals and ceremonies. The shikhara, a segmented tower, adorned the sanctum and gradually decreased in size as it ascended, culminating in a Stupika. These towering shikharas symbolized the magnificence of Chola kingship. The vertical structure

connecting the sanctum-sanctorum to the Stupika is known as the vimana.

During this era, temples underwent horizontal expansion, leading to the construction of magnificent entrances called gopurams. These majestic gateways added to the splendor of the temples. The Brihadeshwara temple, commissioned by Rajaraja I, and the temple at Gangaikondacholapuram, built by Rajendra I, epitomize the advanced stage of temple architecture during the Chola reign.

■ **The Vesara style** - The Vesara style of architecture developed during the Chalukya, Rashtrakuta, and Hoysala dynasties. It represents a fusion of the Nagara and Dravidian styles. The Vesara architecture primarily follows the Dravidian planning and layout, while incorporating decorative elements, symbolic representations, and structures influenced by the Nagara style.

The Vesara style showcases a blend of features, where the fundamental design principles are rooted in the Dravidian tradition, while the embellishments and artistic expressions bear the influence of the Nagara style.

- **The impact of Nagara Style-**

1. Construction of temples on elevated platforms.
2. Inclusion of an open-air circumambulation path.
3. Incorporation of chariot planning on the temple walls.

- **Impact of Dravidian style-** The Vesara style also draws inspiration from the Dravidian architectural tradition. The foundational structure of Vesara temples is based on the Dravidian style, including elements like the multiple Shikhara (tower) and Stupika (finial).

Question- Explain the role of political, economic, social and religious factors in motivating the development of architecture in ancient times.

Answer: In ancient times, architecture underwent multiple phases of development, eventually leading to its classification into three distinct styles based on geography: Nagara style, Dravidian style, and Vesara style. Temples were constructed abundantly in each of these styles.

Political factors

- Political factors played a significant role in motivating the development of ancient architecture. Many dynasties rose from lower segments of society, and to establish their dynasty's prestige, they would align themselves with Brahmins and support temple patronage. The religious beliefs of the ruling dynasty also influenced the construction of temples, as they sought to honor and worship their chosen deities.

Temples were often built to commemorate victorious events, symbolizing the power and influence of the ruling dynasty. For instance, Rajendra I constructed the Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple to celebrate his triumph. Rulers of the time sought to enhance their power and prestige by associating themselves closely with the deities worshiped in the temples. As a demonstration of their authority, Chola rulers even had their own images installed within the temple premises.

Economic Factors- Land grants gave rise to a class of landholders, alongside the establishment of regional dynasties. These dynasties, in turn, built temples. Similarly, a prosperous merchant class, fueled by commercial activities, constructed chaityas, viharas, and temples.

Social factor- In order to enhance their social standing, various emerging social classes took on the task of building temples. The Rajput dynasty, for example, embarked on ambitious temple construction projects on a grand scale.

Religious factor- Temples were built out of deep religious devotion, with the installation of deity idols aligned with specific beliefs. Notably, the

Chola rulers erected grand Shiva temples, while the Vijayanagara rulers focused on constructing magnificent Vaishnava temples.

Practice Questions:The rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important sources of our knowledge of early Indian art and history. Discuss [UPSC-2020, 150 words]



Sculpture in ancient India evolved in tandem with other fine arts, including architecture and painting, showcasing remarkable examples of their development. These interconnected arts are inseparable, as their collective beauty is unimaginable without each other. Sculpture in India flourished in various forms, such as metal and stone sculptures, which could either be incorporated into murals or stand independently. Examining the chronology of sculpture provides practical insights into its evolution in ancient India.

Prehistoric to Pre-Mauryan Age Sculpture

The Upper Palaeolithic period provides the earliest evidence of sculpture in India. A bone statue depicting a mother goddess was discovered in Lohandandale, located in the Belan valley. Following this discovery, numerous stone idols were also found. Notably, during the excavation of the Harappan civilization, MohenjoDaro and Harappa yielded a large number of stone sculptures. While these early sculptures were not fully developed, they serve as important examples of the art form of early stages. Particularly noteworthy are the stone statue of a yogi or priest from MohenjoDaro and the bronze dancing girl. The magnificent statues and sculptures of men found in Mohenjodaro and Harappa indicate possible influences from both Sumerian and Indian cultures on the Indus Valley Civilization.



The sculpture of the Indus Valley Civilization encompasses statues depicting both humans and

animals. The human figurines predominantly portray women and exude a greater sense of grace and impressiveness compared to the male idols. Notably, a greater abundance of animal sculptures has been unearthed, showcasing high artistic quality. Among these sculptures, humped bull idols are particularly prevalent. Additionally, statues of elephants, rhinoceroses, monkeys, pigs, bears, and other animals have also been crafted with artistic finesse.

Mauryan sculpture

The Mauryan period witnessed the finest expression of animal figures in sculpture. Particularly noteworthy are four animals that received prominent representation: lions, bulls, elephants, and horses. The bull of Rampurwa stands out as a remarkable and unique masterpiece, captured in a joyful posture. Observing the lifelike portrayal of these animals has sparked a debate regarding the possibility of imported art influencing the Mauryan era. The sudden emergence of such highly developed idols raises questions about their origins. Prior to this period, no well-formed idols have been discovered. However, it is now believed that Mauryan art reflects the gradual evolution of Harappan sculpture. Indeed, idols were likely crafted even during the Harappan era and the transition to the Mauryan period, but their perishable nature, likely made of materials like wood, led to their swift decay. Consequently, their remnants are not present in the present day.

In the Mauryan period, we can also observe examples of folk art. Numerous stone idols of Yaksha-Yakshini have been discovered during this era, standing beneath the open sky. Notable among these idols are the Yaksha of Parkham, the Chamaragrahini of Didarganj, and the Yakshini of Besnagar.



inspiration from the model of the Apollo god.

- **Influence of Roman style-** Furthermore, under Roman influence, the Gandhara style placed particular emphasis on the depiction of costumes, clothing, and ornaments. The idols were adorned in magnificent robes, crowns were intricately portrayed on their heads, and meticulous attention was given to the detailing of earrings and other body ornaments.



Post Mauryan Sculpture

During this period, three distinct styles of sculpture emerged: Gandhara art, Mathura art, and Amaravati art. Each style excelled in its own unique way and earned a prominent position in Indian craftsmanship.

■ The Gandhara Sculpture

Gandhara sculpture holds significant importance in the history of Indian sculpture as it introduced a new direction to the art form. The epicenter of Gandhara sculpture was Taxila and its surrounding region in the northwest. The development of this style is often divided into two phases: the first phase spanning until the second century, and the second phase from the second century to the 7th century. One intriguing aspect of Gandhara sculpture is its syncretic nature, showcasing a blend of various styles.

- **Influence of Greek style-** Gandhara art exhibits the influence of Greek style on the physical appearance of its idols. Notably, it portrays a realistic depiction of well-defined muscles. Greek art, renowned for its majestic portrayal of the face of the deity Apollo, also played a significant role. In Gandhara art, statues of Buddha and Bodhisattvas are crafted, drawing

- **Central-Asian Influence-** The Gandhara style experienced transformations influenced by the Sakas and Parthian rulers of Central Asia. While traditionally dark blue or black stone was the primary material used in sculpture-making, the introduction of lime plaster marked a significant shift. Furthermore, under the influence of Parthian rulers, triangular caps became a distinctive feature in the attire of the idols. Another notable addition was the representation of Agni Rekha (Fire Line) in the sculptures. These changes point to the evident influence of Iranian aesthetics on the Gandhara style.

- **Indian influence-** In terms of Indian influence, the face of the idol in Gandhara sculpture reflected a profound sense of spirituality. While the body of the sculptures may have displayed Greco-Roman characteristics, the underlying spirit remained distinctly Indian.

Question- Gandhara sculpture owed as much to the Romans as to the Greeks. Explain.

Answer – Gandhara sculpture holds a significant place in the history of Indian sculpture as it showcases a noteworthy sequence of development. It flourished in Taxila and its surrounding regions in the northwest, which

served as a crossroads for Indian and Greco-Roman cultures. The physical design of Gandhara sculpture was primarily influenced by Greek elements, while Roman influences were evident in its attire and ornamentation. However, at its core, Gandhara sculpture remained deeply rooted in its Indian spiritual essence.

In Greece, gods were depicted in human form, and this artistic tradition influenced the creation of idols of gods in the Greco-Roman art style. When this influence reached the land of India, it gave rise to what is known as “Gandhara Art.” This art form was primarily responsible for making statues of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Under Gandhara Art, a strong emphasis was placed on presenting the physical structure of the idols in a realistic manner. The Greek influence was evident in various aspects such as the musculature, hairstyle, and precise depiction of different body parts. In fact, Buddha was often depicted with similarities to the Greek god Apollo. However, the clothing and ornaments adorning Buddha’s body were influenced by the Roman style. This included the portrayal of transparent clothes, intricate folds, crowns atop the sculpture heads, and other body ornaments. Despite these foreign influences, the Indian touch was not lost as spirituality was also infused into the expressions on the faces of the sculpture, representing the enduring Indian influence on Gandhara Art.

Exercise Question: Highlight the Central Asian and Greco-Bactrian elements in Gandhara art. [UPSC 2019 150 words]

The difference between Mathura and Gandhara styles -

1. Gandhara art originated in Taxila and the surrounding north-west region, while Mathura art flourished in Mathura, Agra, and the neighboring areas.
2. Mathura art was associated with multiple sects including Brahmin, Buddhist, and Jain, whereas Gandhara art was predominantly connected to the Buddhist cult in the north-west.
3. Gandhara art employed dark blue or black stone as its primary material, while Mathura art utilized red stone.
4. Gandhara art leaned towards realism, highlighting intricate details such as the texture of the idol’s body and folds of clothing. In contrast, Mathura art leaned towards idealism. The focus was not on depicting body texture but rather on portraying transparent and closely-fitted garments. The emphasis in Mathura art was on showcasing spirituality primarily through the expressions on the face of the idols, often depicting them deeply absorbed in contemplation.



■ Amravati Style

This art style thrived in Amravati, Nagarjunakonda, and the surrounding regions under the rule of the Satavahanas and their successors, the Ikshvakus. Marble was utilized as the primary material in this style, resulting in the creation of magnificent and majestic idols.

The idols of the Mathura style prioritize spiritual aspects, while those of the Amravati style pay more attention to worldly elements. In the Amravati style, there is a special focus on sensory details, displaying a sense of richness and luxury in the idols. This shift in emphasis can be attributed to the influence of Roman trade on the society of South India during that time. With an increase in happiness and prosperity, there was a greater attraction towards indulging in sensory pleasures.



Gupta sculpture

During the Gupta period, sculpture reached a pinnacle of artistic excellence and adhered to classical norms. This era witnessed the remarkable maturity of sculpture, which not only influenced artistic expression within India but also left a lasting impact beyond the Indian subcontinent.

During this period, the Sarnath style emerged as a fusion of two renowned sculpture styles, namely Mathura art and Gandhara art. This style produced some of the finest idols of its time. It incorporated the emphasis on lifelike body textures influenced by the Gandhara style, while also portraying spirituality on the idol's face influenced by the Mathura style.

In Gupta sculptures, a remarkable advancement in portraying a divine aura is evident, along with a wide range of expressions skillfully depicted on the faces of the idols. Unlike the earlier Kushan period, where nudity was prevalent, Gupta period idols are adorned with appropriate clothing. Moreover, the Gupta period witnessed significant progress in the creation of metal idols. As an illustration, a massive bronze Buddha statue weighing one ton was unearthed from Sultanganj in Bihar.



Post Gupta Sculpture

■ The Pallava Art

The Pallavas constructed a significant number of rock-cut temples, showcasing splendid idols of deities. These temples stand as magnificent examples of exceptional sculpture. One notable temple, erected by Narasimhavarman I, houses a multitude of exquisite sculptures. Within Draupadi's chariot, one can find the idol of Durga, while Shiva's idol adorns Arjuna's chariot. Similarly, the idols of Narasimhavarman I himself are installed within Dharmaraja's chariot.

■ The Chola Sculpture

During the Chola period, it is widely believed that the art, including sculpture, embraced classical norms. Numerous temples were constructed during this era, serving as homes for intricately crafted idols. One noteworthy example is the Vijayalaya Cholesvara temple in Narttamalai, which proudly displays a magnificent stone idol. Since the Chola rulers were devout followers of Shaivism, the temples of this period predominantly feature idols of Lord Shiva. Additionally, sculptures of the kings themselves were also created. The Brihadeeswarar temple, commissioned by Rajaraja I, stands as a significant milestone in the evolution of sculptural art.

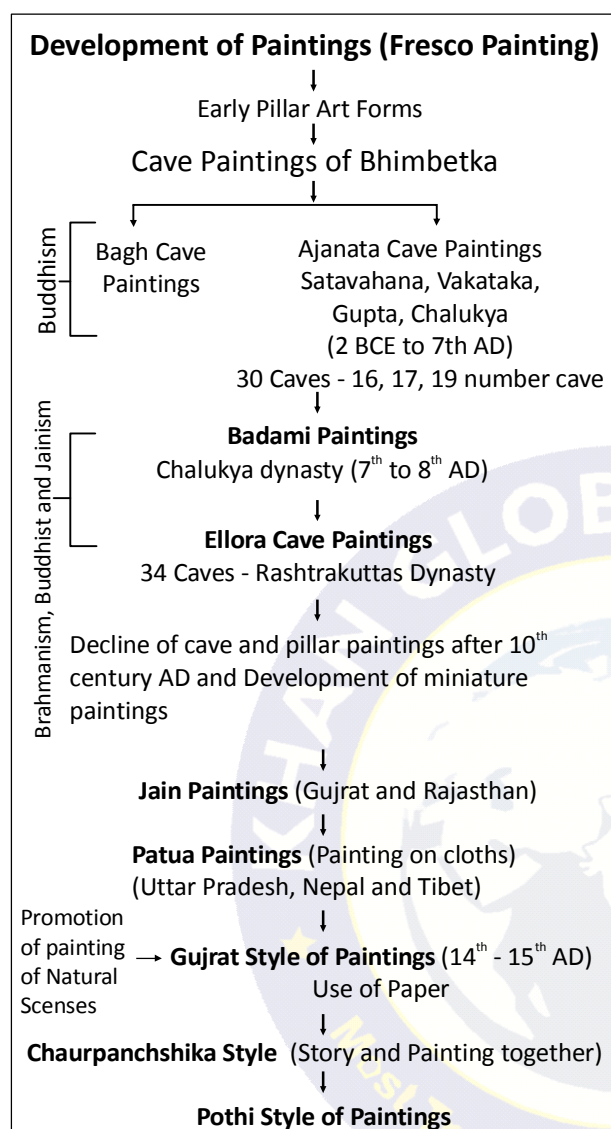
The sculpture of the Chola period is renowned for its exceptional craftsmanship in copper and bronze. Countless idols depicting gods, kings, and donors were created during this time. Of particular significance is the iconic idol of Shiva Nataraja, which exemplifies the mastery of bronze art. While stone idols were commonly placed within the temples, bronze idols were often found outside the temple premises.



■ Pala sculpture

The art of sculpture flourished in Bengal and eastern India under the patronage of the Pala rulers during the 8th and 9th centuries. The idols created during this period were crafted from black basalt stone. Two renowned artists, Dhiman and Vithpal, played a significant role in the development of this sculpture style and received the patronage of the Pala rulers.





Painting holds a significant place among the diverse forms of fine arts. Even in the early stages of human civilization, painting served as a means for self-expression. As humans developed a connection with their environment and emotions, they instinctively turned to paintings as a medium of communication. An excellent example of this can be seen in the cave paintings of Bhimbetka, where individuals from the Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods expressed their emotions through vivid paintings.

The Satavahana rulers played a significant role in the advancement of painting in ancient India. It is believed that the early cave paintings of Ajanta can be attributed to the patronage of the Satavahana rulers. Notably, caves number 9

and 10, which are part of the early caves, were developed under their reign. Additionally, the idols discovered from Bhaj and Amravati during the Satavahana era also found representation in the paintings of that period.

During this period, the Kushanas played a significant role in the advancement of painting. The painting style that emerged in the north-western region was heavily influenced by Greek, Roman, and Iranian styles, which were blended with elements of Chinese art. As a result, a distinctive and diverse painting style flourished under the Kushanas. Notable examples include a painting of Mahatma Buddha from the north-western region, adorned with the sacred symbol 'Srivatsa' on his chest. Additionally, a captivating Kushan painting portrays a woman emerging from a lake, cradling a child in her arms.

■ The Ajanta Cave Paintings

The cave paintings of Ajanta hold great significance as a precious heritage of ancient Indian art. These paintings have been shaped and enriched by the artistic contributions of various dynasties, namely the Satavahana, Vakataka, Gupta, and Chalukya dynasties. Among the 30 caves at Ajanta, 29 are fully built, while one remains partially unfinished. Notably, Caves 9 and 10 belong to the Satavahana period, while Caves 16, 17, and 19 showcase the artistic brilliance of the Gupta era.

Cave number 16 holds a significant painting featuring a dying princess. She is suffering from the pain of being away from her husband, and her relatives are by her side. The painting beautifully depicts human compassion. The cave number 17, it is known as 'Chitrashala' due to the presence of numerous exquisite paintings on its walls. Among them, there is a remarkable artwork portraying the relationship between Buddha and his wife, Yashodhara. Yashodhara is shown offering their son, Rahul, to Buddha. This painting captures the profound depths of human emotions and consciousness.



The paintings of Ajanta exhibit a profound influence of Buddhism, with depictions of Mahatma Buddha and Bodhisattvas. These artworks adhere to classical norms and have a lasting impact on Indian painting throughout the ages.

■ The Bagh cave Paintings-

The caves associated with Bagh paintings are located near Gwalior and have revealed numerous paintings from the Gupta period. Out of the 9 caves in Bagh, caves 2, 4, and 5 hold particular importance. When comparing the Bagh paintings to those of Ajanta, we observe a distinction in their themes. While Ajanta paintings primarily depict religious subjects, the Bagh paintings focus on earthly and human themes. Furthermore, while the Ajanta paintings were primarily intended for the aristocracy, the Bagh paintings appeal to people from all social classes.

■ The Badami Paintings

The art of Badami painting flourished under the patronage of the Chalukya rulers. King Mangalesha, a prominent Chalukya ruler, commissioned the construction of several caves that showcased not only sculptures but also exquisite paintings. Among these caves, Cave Number 4 stands out as a remarkable example, featuring captivating portrayals of various forms of Lord Vishnu.

■ The Ellora and Elephanta cave Paintings

Located in Maharashtra, Ellora showcases evidence of both paintings and sculpture. The Chalukya and Rashtrakuta rulers have made significant contributions to the development of

painting at Ellora. Notable paintings include Kailashnath, Indrasabha, and others. Elephanta, situated near Mumbai in Maharashtra, was originally known as 'Dharanagari' but was later named Elephanta by the Portuguese due to the presence of elephant-shaped rock formations. Elephanta is not only known for its sculptures but also for its paintings. One noteworthy example is the depiction of Shiva in the form of Ardhanarishvara, symbolizing the union of Purusha and Prakriti (Jiva and body).

■ The Pallavas Paintings

The Pallavas developed a distinctive style of painting that showcased influences from the renowned Ajanta paintings. This artistic tradition, known as Pallava painting, further evolved into Cholakala. Under the reign of Mahendravarman I, several caves were constructed, and he actively promoted the art of painting. This artistic legacy was carried on by Narasimhavarman II, also known as Rajasimha, who adorned the walls of the Kailashnath temple with magnificent paintings depicting various deities. These paintings serve as vibrant examples of Pallava Paintings.

■ The Chola Paintings

Pallava painting continued to develop during this period, and its exquisite paintings adorned the temple walls. Among the early temples, the Vijayalaya Choleswara Temple in Narthamalai holds significance. Its walls were adorned with beautiful paintings portraying various gods and goddesses. However, the most remarkable paintings can be found on the walls of the Brihadeeswarar Temple in Tanjore, which was built under the rule of Rajaraja I. These splendid paintings embellish the walls surrounding the inner sanctum, known as the parikrama (Circumambulatory Path). Unfortunately, these paintings were concealed over time by Nayaka period artworks. Luckily, an esteemed scholar named Govind Swami rediscovered these precious paintings. Notably, the depiction of Nataraja Shiva holds immense importance in these artworks. Additionally, a depiction of Shiva

as Tripurantaka, the destroyer of three forts, is intricately inscribed.

■ The second stage of the development of Paintings (Miniature Paintings)

The initial paintings were made on palm leaves, after that miniature paintings were made on paper and cloth. It is believed that after the Ellora cave painting, pillar painting declined and was replaced by miniature painting. Its initial development was seen on the talapatra. Jains have contributed in its development. Gujarat and Bengal were the main centers of this painting. Gujarat was the center of Jains. The development of Jain painting started from the 7th century.

■ Jaina Paintings

The Jaina style of paintings holds a significant position among the artistic styles that influenced the entire Indian subcontinent from the 9th to the 12th century. The earliest evidence of this style can be traced back to the exquisite five Jaina idols found in the Sittanavasal cave. Paintings on paper hold a special place in the realm of Indian art, and examples of this form can be seen on the covers and wooden book holders of Jaina texts. The Jain style also shows the influence of Mughal and Iranian painting styles.

■ The Patua Paintings

This style of painting originated in Bengal and gradually spread to other regions such as Uttar Pradesh, Nepal, and Tibet. Renowned artists like Nilmani Das, Gopaldas, and Balram Das were closely associated with this art form. In this style, narratives from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Puranas were depicted on cloth, giving rise to its name - Patua Paintings.

■ The Gujarati Paintings-

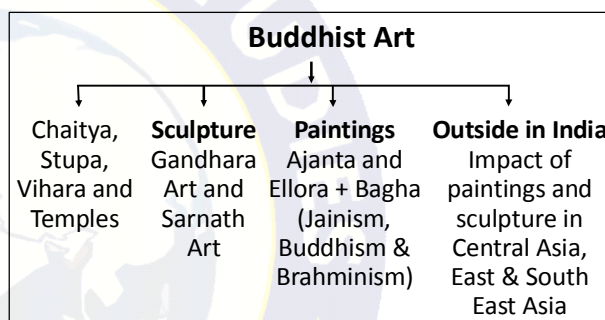
The uniqueness of this painting style lies in the use of talapatras (palm leaves) as the canvas instead of pillars. These talapatras were transformed into book-like forms, giving rise to the 'Pothe' style. Gujarati paintings emphasized the depiction of nature, including elements such as fire, water, clouds, and the sky, which were

intricately painted and engraved on the talapatra. The influence of this style can also be observed in Rajput paintings.

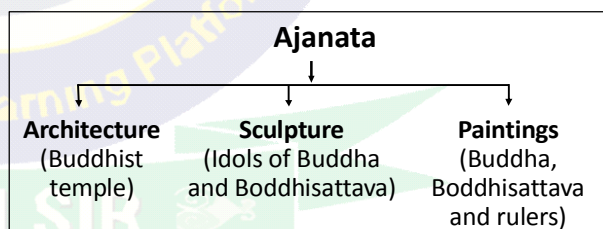
■ The Pala School:

The Pala School of paintings emerged during the reign of Dharmapala and Devapala, who were rulers of the Pala dynasty in Bengal from the 9th to the 12th century. This school of paintings was greatly influenced by Buddhism. Initially executed on palm leaves and later on paper, the Pala paintings depicted scenes related to Vajrayana Buddhism. The style of the Pala School is predominantly characterized by its illustrative approach.

Question- Describe the contribution of Buddha in the field of art.



Question- Ajanta is a great heritage of Indian culture. Comment on this statement.



Ajanta marks a significant turning point in the development of Indian art. By the time of Ajanta, various art styles in India had reached a level of maturity that not only influenced later Indian art but also had an impact on art styles beyond India.

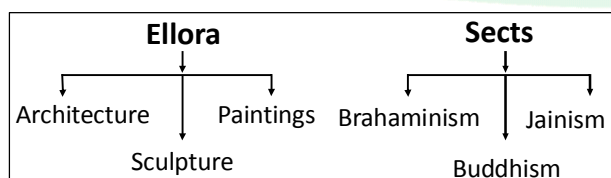
Ajanta is a remarkable artistic achievement in India, encompassing not only painting but also architecture and sculpture. It presents a history of nearly a thousand years, spanning from the 2nd century BCE to the 7th century CE. The site

contains the remains of 30 caves, including both Chaityas (Buddhist cave temples) and Viharas (monastic complexes). Ajanta is notable for being one of the earliest instances where Chaityas and Viharas were built together. The Gupta period cave temple at Ajanta stands as a prime example of a Chaitya cave temple.

Ajanta has also made significant contributions in the field of sculpture. Numerous statues of Buddha and Bodhisattvas discovered here indicate the strong influence of Buddhist culture on Ajanta's original artistic inspiration. Gupta sculpture shares similarities with the art of Sarnath.

Above all, Ajanta represents the pinnacle of development in the field of painting. Caves 16, 17, and 19, belonging to the Gupta period, exemplify classical standards in painting. Ajanta art received patronage from various dynasties such as the Shunga, Kushan, Satavahana, Gupta, and Chalukya dynasties. However, the art of Ajanta is not solely a reflection of the ruling elite. The general public also played a crucial role in its development, with sages, ascetics, and independent artists contributing to its diversity. As a result, the paintings of Ajanta encompass a wide range of subjects, depicting both rural and urban life. Its significance in the history of Indian art extends to its influence on East Asian art as well.

Question-Ellora is not only a great heritage of Indian culture, but also a unique example of religious harmony. Comment on this statement.



The history of Indian art would be incomplete without exploring the remarkable site of Ellora. Located around 50 km from Ajanta, Ellora boasts a collection of 34 caves that hold significant cultural and religious importance. What sets Ellora apart is its unique amalgamation of

Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism, representing a rare example of religious harmony in India. In fact, only a few centers in the country exhibit such remarkable unity across diverse beliefs, with Ellora being one of them, alongside Mathura.

One of the most captivating aspects of Ellora is its diverse artistic styles. Notably, the caves showcase impressive architectural advancements, representing a refined form of cave architecture that traces its roots back to the Ashoka period.

Furthermore, Ellora is renowned for its exquisite sculptures and paintings. The site houses a rich collection of idols depicting Brahmin deities, Buddha, and Tirthankaras. These sculptures bear the influence of the renowned Sarnath art tradition.

While Ellora's paintings bear traces of the influence of Ajanta, they possess a distinct character, lacking the same profound emotional depth found in Ajanta's masterpieces.

Upon studying the artifacts of Ellora, one can identify a shared expression found in the sculptures and paintings created by different religious sects. Despite their varying beliefs, the artists' vision remains united. Thus, Ellora stands as an exceptional example of "Unity in Diversity" in the realm of art and spirituality.

Dance Forms

The dance art of India has a history of around 2500 years, as evident from the Gandharva Veda. As per tradition, Nataraja Shiva is considered the first dancer of India. Two distinct styles of dance evolved from Shiva's influence. The first style is called Tandav, which portrays fierceness and destruction, reflecting Shiva's anger. In Tandav, Shiva holds a drum in his right hand and fire in his left hand, symbolizing the reduction of Kamadeva to ashes. Interestingly, the influence of Shiva's Tandav can be seen in the Kathak classical dance form that exists today.

However, Shiva's persona is not solely associated with fierceness; a gentle aspect is also depicted in certain idols where both the fierce and gentle forms coexist. This gentle form is represented through a dance called Lasya. Both Tandav and Lasya have influenced various styles of classical dance practiced in contemporary times.

When we categorize dance in India, we recognize two main types: classical dance and folk dance. Although there are numerous classical dance forms, they all share a common foundation based on Bharata's Natyashastra, an ancient treatise from the early centuries of Christ. These classical dances draw inspiration from shared narratives found in epics like the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Quran, Gita Govinda, and others. Consequently, despite the apparent diversity, Indian culture emphasizes the underlying unity.

Question- Discuss the Tandava dance as recorded in the early Indian inscriptions.

[UPSC 2013]

Answer-The 'Tandav' dance embodies the cosmic system of creation and destruction, symbolizing the rhythm of life and death. According to tradition, Nataraja Shiva is regarded as the first dancer of India. From him, two early

styles of dance emerged - Tandav and Lasya. The knowledge about Tandav dance is derived from mythology, as well as ancient inscriptions and temple idols.

Shiva's anger finds expression in the 'Tandava' dance. As a dance of fury and devastation, Shiva holds a drum in his right hand and fire in his left hand while performing this dance. His third eye also opens during the dance, signifying its intense energy. It is believed that in this state, Shiva reduced Kamadeva to ashes. In the present day, we can observe the influence of Shiva's Tandav in the Kathak classical dance form.

■ **Bharatanatyam**

Bharatanatyam, a dance drama originating from Tamil Nadu, has flourished in the districts of Tanjore and Tirunelveli for centuries. The expressive movements and graceful postures of this art form bear a striking resemblance to the bronze sculptures found in South India. Originally performed by Devadasis in temples, it came to be known as Devadasi Attam. It is a religious dance that draws inspiration from stories found in Krishna Leela, Ramayana, and other religious texts. As the name suggests, its classical style and sequences are derived from Bharat Muni's Natyashastra. Traditionally, the music accompaniment is conducted by the dancer's teacher, but nowadays, men also perform this dance. Over the past 40 years, Bharatanatyam has gained worldwide acclaim, with notable performers including Mrs. Balasaraswati, Rukmani Devi, Yamini Krishnamurthy, Ramgopal, Vyjayanthimala, and Sonal Mansingh.

■ **Kathakali**

Kathakali is a dance form that originated in the Malabar region of Kerala state. The term "Kathakali" literally translates to "story performance." Maharaja Veer Kerala Varma of Travancore played a significant role in shaping

Kathakali into its present form. During the 17th century, he wrote several works in the vernacular Malayalam, which serve as the foundation for this captivating dance-drama. The tradition of Kathakali dates back approximately 2000 years and draws inspiration from the epic stories of the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Shaiva literature.

Kathakali is performed outdoors and often continues throughout the night. The performance involves a narrator who tells the story, while the dancers convey the main actions solely through hand gestures known as mudras. In Kathakali, the dancer remains silent, as speaking or singing is prohibited. Traditionally, this dance form is exclusively performed by men and young individuals who skillfully portray female characters. Due to its complexity, participation in Kathakali is not mandatory for girls and women. A Kathakali dancer should master the Tandav and Lasya styles of movement. Additionally, the remarkable aspect of this dance lies in its elaborate costumes and intricate decorations. The face is adorned with vibrant colors such as red, green, black, or yellow, with white lines delicately drawn around the eyes. One of the most renowned and accomplished artists of Kathakali in the present era is Kunju Kurup.

■ Kathak

Kathak is the primary classical dance form of North India, which flourished under the influence of the Mughals on Indian culture. Its origins can be traced to the traditional pastimes of Krishna and Radha, performed in the temples of Mathura and Vrindavan. Additionally, Kathak developed within the court of the Nawab of Awadh.

The dance is widely known as 'Katha Kahe So Kathak Kehlae'. Kathak dance finds its roots in the stories of the Bhagavata Purana and is deeply intertwined with the love between Radha and Krishna. Consequently, it is often referred to as 'Natwari'. Kathak has gained popularity among both men and women due to its

incorporation of both Lasya and Tandava aspects. Its inclusive nature enables participation from both genders, establishing a close connection with the lives of the people.

The influence of the Mughals is evident in the elaborate costumes adorned in Kathak dance. Presently, Kathak is classified into three Gharanas: Lucknow Gharana, Jaipur Gharana, and Banaras Gharana. Eminent figures in the art form from the Lucknow Gharana include Acchanji Maharaj, Shambhu Maharaj, and Lachhu Maharaj. Among them, Birju Maharaj, who sadly passed away on January 17, 2022, is hailed as a maestro of Kathak dance.

■ Manipuri

Manipuri is a delicate dance form originating from the state of Manipur, located in the northeastern region of the country. It dates back approximately 2500 years and is based on the NatyaShastra of Bharata. The dance's narratives often revolve around the lives of Radha, Krishna, and the Gopis. Moreover, it showcases the influences of both Shaiva and Vaishnava ideologies. Manipuri dance embodies both Lasya and Tandav aspects. It features compositions by renowned poets like Jayadeva, Chaitanya, and Vidyapati. The essence of Manipuri lies in its Rasleela performances.

One remarkable characteristic of Manipuri dance is its versatility, as it can be performed solo, as a duet, or in a group. The costumes worn by Manipuri dancers are equally unique. They typically wear long, shiny ghagras (skirts) with expandable cardboard underneath. These skirts are adorned with round pieces of glass. The credit for popularizing this dance style goes to the great poet Rabindranath Tagore, while Shri Udayashankar played a significant role in promoting it worldwide. Among the present artists, Naina Zaveri and her sisters are considered exceptional performers of Manipuri dance.

■ Odissi

The Odissi dance is a 2000-year-old classical dance form from Odisha, based on the Natya

Shastra of Bharata. Initially, it developed within the temples and later found its way into the courts. It was popular in the temples of Bhubaneswar, Konark, and Puri, with depictions of this dance adorning their walls. Odissi dance shares roots with Bharatanatyam.

Renowned artists like Sanjukta Panigrahi, Sonal Mansingh, and Madhuri Mudgal have made significant contributions to this captivating dance form.

■ **Kuchipudi**

This dance-drama originates from the village of Kuchipudi in Andhra Pradesh. Its themes are drawn from epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. The art form was initiated by Siddhendra Yogi, who provided the initial training to young Brahmin boys from Kuchipudi. The performance of this dance begins with worship rituals.

■ **The other Classical Dance**

Among these, Bhagavath Mela, Mohiniyattam, and Katha Kuruvanki are famous. Bhagavata Mela is celebrated every year on the occasion of Narasimha Jayanti in the village of Melattur, Tamil Nadu state.

Mohiniyattam- is based on Hindu mythology, where Mohini portrays the role of a seductress to attract Shiva. It is a fusion of Bharatanatyam and Kathakali, accompanied by Carnatic music and Malayalam songs. Late Chinnamu Amma and Kalyani Kutty Amma have gained tremendous fame in this dance form.

Similarly, **Krishna Attam** is a beautiful dance form originating from the state of Kerala. The **Kuruvanki**, on the other hand, is a popular rhythmic dance drama from Tamil Nadu, involving the participation of 4 to 8 women. This dance form combines elements of both folk and classical styles of Indian dance.

■ **The Satriya Dance of Assam**

In the Assamese language, satras are called mathas or viharas. Traditionally, this dance was performed in monasteries and viharas. The great

Vaishnava saint Shankar Dev of Assam composed this dance in the 15th century. For approximately 500 years, Sattriya dance remained confined within the boundaries of monasteries and viharas. However, recently, Sattriya dance has been recognized as an Indian classical dance form, and it is now being performed on stage.

■ **The Yakshagana**

Yakshagana is a dance-drama deeply rooted in rural Karnataka, blending the elements of dance and drama. Its essence lies in 'Gaan,' which signifies music. For nearly 400 years, this captivating art form has delved into subjects derived from Hindu epics. Although the language used is Kannada, the costumes bear a striking resemblance to those seen in Kathakali. Within Yakshagana, Jesters and Sutradhar play significant roles, adding depth and charm to the performances.

Music Arts

■ **Since Ancient India**

The development of music in India has a rich and extensive history. Firstly, the mention of Gandharva Veda in the Vedic period sheds light on the description of music and dance. Prior to that, the Samaveda is also regarded as an important treatise on music. Furthermore, Natyashastra, written by Bharata in the early centuries of the Christian era, provides insights into the three arts of music, dance, and drama.

Among the ancient Indian rulers, Samudragupta is said to have had a special interest in music. This is evident from one of his coins depicting him playing the veena. Additionally, the Paramara ruler Bhoja extended generous patronage to music. Similarly, music received encouragement from various Rajput rulers during the early medieval period, contributing to the development of classical music in India. Indian music is believed to have originated from Brahma, and Mahadev bestowed stability upon it. Indian classical music

comprises six ragas(Melody) and thirty ragani. The six ragas are Bhairavi, Hindola, Megh, Shrirag, Deepak, and Malkosh.

The Indian musical tradition continued its gradual evolution, with three important scholars known as '**Sangeet Ratnakar**' contributing significant texts on music in India. These scholars were Bhoja Parmar, the Chalukya ruler Someshwar, and Sarangdev in the Yadav court.

In the southern region, the Alvars and Nayanars played a pivotal role in promoting music in their own unique ways. They expressed their emotional devotion to God through their songs. Based on the teachings of these saints, Carnatic music was formally established in the 15th century by an esteemed saint of South India.



It is unfair to assume that the people of ancient India only focused on the spiritual world and disregarded the material realm. We should not only consider religious figures like Buddha, Mahavira, and Shankaracharya, but also acknowledge the significant contributions of scientific thinkers like Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, and Charaka. By doing so, we can truly appreciate the wide-ranging accomplishments of the people of ancient India in various aspects of life and practical knowledge.

■ **Mathematics-** Ancient Indians made significant contributions to mathematics, including the development of three distinct achievements: the notation system, the decimal system, and the concept of zero.

- The Europeans acquired knowledge of numerical systems from India, as seen in Ashoka's inscriptions from the third century BC.
- The Indians invented "Zero" in the second century BC, a concept unknown to ancient Europeans.
- The Indians were the first to utilize the decimal system, with mathematician Aryabhata being well-versed in its use. The Chinese learned this system from Buddhist missionaries.
- The bricks of the Harappan civilization suggest that people in Northwest India had knowledge of measurement and geometry, which later influenced the Vedic people as evident in the Shulva Sutras from around the fifth century BCE.
- Indian mathematicians developed the systems of square roots and cube roots.
- Trigonometry was developed by Aryabhata.
- Both Indians and Greeks made contributions to algebra, with Western Europe receiving algebraic knowledge from Arabia, which itself obtained it from India.
- Mathematicians Brahmagupta and Bhaskaracharya played significant roles in

the development of mathematics, with Brahma Magupta introducing the use of negative numerals.

■ **Astronomy** - In ancient times, there was a close connection between religion and science, with the planets being revered as deities.

- Indians had a longstanding interest in observing the planets due to their religious significance.
- Studying the planets was important as they were associated with seasons, weather, and agricultural practices crucial for the developing economy.
- Aryabhata and Varahamihir were eminent scholars of ancient astronomy.
- Aryabhata made remarkable discoveries, such as the identification of lunar and solar eclipses. His estimation of the Earth's radius, with certain adjustments, remains widely accepted and accurate. In his book 'Aryabhatiyam,' he proposed the concept of a stationary Sun and a rotating Earth, establishing a principle that significantly influenced astronomical understanding.
- Varahamihira's renowned work, the Brihadsamhita, was written in the sixth century. He stated that the moon revolves around the Earth.
- Another notable astronomer was Brahmagupta, who authored the book 'BrahmaSiddhanta'.

■ **Physics-** Physics in ancient India was influenced by religious beliefs and doctrines, leading to diverse interpretations and definitions. Despite the variations, the common understanding across religions was that the earth was formed by the combination of five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and sky. Most religious sects held the belief that atoms corresponded to each element, and the combination of atoms formed molecules. In the Vaisheshika philosophy, these molecules were

considered Anishvara, while Buddhists saw them as transient manifestations of nature, appearing like a wheel and then disappearing. Thus, the atomic theory was a prominent aspect of Vaisheshika philosophy.

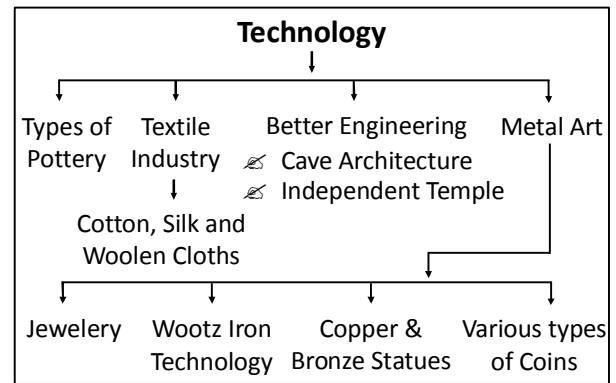
■ **Chemistry-** The people of ancient India were advanced in the field of chemistry.

- Vedic Aryans had the ability to produce various items using animal hides and skins.
- The Charak Samhita and Sushruta Samhita provided information on medicinal preparations using plant juices.
- Ancient Indians excelled in the creation of different types of colors.
- They possessed knowledge of producing vibrant blue colors and long-lasting hues.
- The remarkable paintings of Ajanta showcase the enduring luster of these colors.

■ **The science of Medicine**

- The Atharvaveda discusses diseases and their diagnosis, including diarrhea, fever, and ascites.
- Jivaka, physician to Magadha Emperor Bimbisara, made a significant contribution to medicine.
- Sushruta and Charaka, prominent physicians in the second century AD, authored the Sushruta Samhita and Charak Samhita respectively.
- Sushruta is credited with advancements in surgery, while Charaka Samhita is considered an Indian “Encyclopedia of Medical Science” covering various diseases and treatments.
- Physicians such as Dhanvantari and Bhagwat made important contributions to medicine during the Gupta period.
- The Gupta period also saw the composition of ‘Hastayurveda’ on animal science and ‘Navaneetakam’ on medicine.

■ **Technological Advancement**



• **Various types of Pottery-** The people of ancient India showcased remarkable technological advancements, especially in the realm of pottery. From the Neolithic period onwards, they had mastered the art of pottery production. This expertise further flourished during the Harappan and Chalcolithic cultures, where a diverse range of pottery styles emerged, including black and red pottery, painted gray pottery, Ochre painted pottery, and the polished Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW). The NBPW stood out as an exceptionally refined and superior form of pottery. Additionally, the Malwa culture gained prominence for its exceptional craftsmanship in pottery, leaving a lasting legacy in the field of ancient Indian technology.

• **Textile Industry-** In ancient times, people had a rich tradition of textile manufacturing, using materials like yarn, silk, and wool for clothing. The Rigveda mentions the production of beautiful woolen cloth in the Gandhara and Sindh regions. During the Maurya period, textile manufacturing was a thriving industry, with Arthashastra noting the use of cotton, wool, and silk for clothing. In the post-Mauryan era, Mathura became renowned for its special cloth called ‘Shatak.’ The remarkable paintings found in the Ajanta caves provide evidence of the use of high-quality fabrics during that period.

• **Advanced Engineering Technology-** Ancient India demonstrated remarkable advancements in engineering technology. The construction of magnificent chaityas, viharas, and temples stands as a testament to their expertise. Notably, the Kailash temple at Ellora showcases their mastery

of cave carving, with intricate details hewn from the mountains during the Maurya period. Equally impressive is the Brihadeeswarar temple of the Chola period, a remarkable example of independent temple construction that highlights their extraordinary engineering skills.

- **Jewelry making-** Jewelry has been adorned by people since ancient times. The necklace, crafted from animal horns found in the region of 'Mahadaha,' serves as evidence of early jewelry usage. During the Harappan period, high-quality beads were intricately fashioned into stunning jewelry pieces. In the Gupta period, jewelry and ornament-making became significant crafts. Even Vatsyayana's Kamasutra acknowledges jewelry making as one of the 64 arts.

- **Iron Technology-** The people of ancient India excelled in the iron and steel industry, producing renowned steel known as 'Wootz'. This superior steel gained worldwide recognition. During the Mauryan, post-Mauryan, and Gupta periods, metal art reached new heights, showcasing their exceptional craftsmanship. The iron pillar at Mehrauli (Delhi), built during the Gupta period, stands as a testament to their remarkable skill and aesthetic beauty. It is worth acknowledging that India's swords were unparalleled and unmatched globally.

- **Copper and Bronze Technology-** The advancement of copper and bronze smelting techniques highlights the remarkable technological progress of ancient India. The inhabitants of the Harappan civilization mastered the art of creating bronze by combining copper and tin. Of special mention is the bronze sculpture of a dancing girl discovered at MohenjoDaro, which was crafted using the lost-

wax casting technique. Additionally, a one-ton bronze statue of Buddha from Sultanganj in Bihar, dating back to the Gupta period, stands as a rare testament to the exceptional metallurgical skills of ancient times.

- **Minting of various types of Coins** –The advanced metal technology of ancient India is evident in the remarkable diversity of currency shapes. Coinage in ancient India began around the fifth century BCE with the introduction of Punch-Marked coins made of silver, copper, or a combination of both metals. These coins featured intricate engravings depicting a variety of designs. During the Gupta period, the artistry in coin production reached its pinnacle, reflecting the same level of excellence found in Gupta sculpture and paintings. For example, Chandragupta I's 'Emperor and Empress' coins portrayed a seated Durga on a lion, while Samudragupta issued notable coin types like Asvamedh, Vyaghra, and Veena-playing coins. Chandragupta II's coins depicted archers, and Kumaragupta I's coins showcased the image of Lakshmi seated on a lotus. These coins serve as outstanding examples of the exceptional artistic achievements of the time.

Practice Questions-

1. 'The achievements of the people of ancient India in the field of science have been incomparable.' Examine this statement.
2. Discuss the significant technological advancements made by the people of ancient India, highlighting their contributions in various fields of technology.
3. The caves built by Ashoka proved to be a milestone in the history of architecture. Comment



(Part-III)

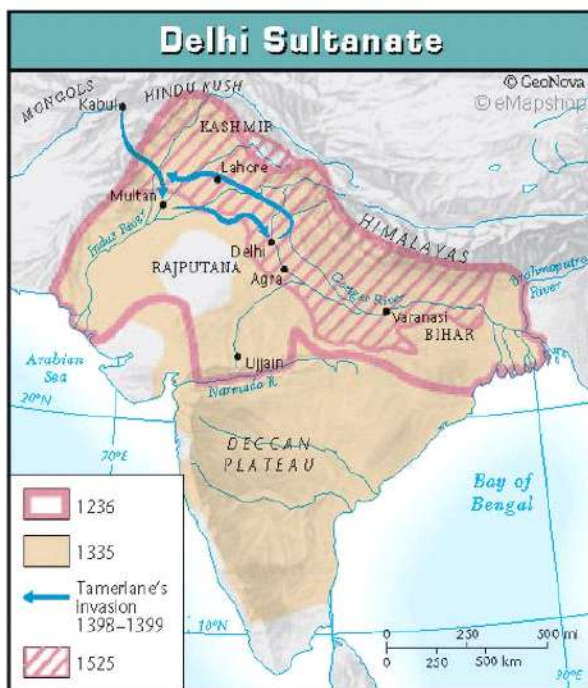
■ **Sultanate Period (1200 AD - 1526 AD)**

■ **Mughal Period (After 1526 AD)**

- **Political** : 1. Political expansion (State, Empire, Dynasty)
2. Administration
- **Economic** : Agriculture, Industry, Trade, Currencies and Urbanisation
- **Social** : Horizontal and Vertical division of society and status of women
- **Cultural** : Religion (Bhakti and Sufism), language and literature, Architecture, Paintings and Music

Sultanate Period

Since the establishment of Islam, there have been persistent efforts by the Islamic army to conquer India. However, it was only in 712 AD that the Arab invaders found an opportunity to conquer Sindh. Despite their aspirations to expand into North India, they faced limited success. In contrast, the Turks from Central Asia achieved relatively greater accomplishments. Mahmud of Ghazni, in the early 11th century, launched frequent attacks on northern India with Punjab as his base, but he did not directly establish control over the region. In a significant turn of events, Muhammad Ghori emerged victorious in the second battle of Tarain in 1192 AD, capturing Ajmer and Delhi. This marked the establishment of the Turkish state in North India.



Ilbari or Mamluk dynasty (1192 AD—1290 AD)

The founder of this dynasty was Muhammad Ghori (1192-1206). However, his primary interests lay in the regions of Ghazni and Gaur. It was his slave, Qutbuddin Aibak, who effectively administered the affairs in India. In the battle of Chandawar in 1194 AD, Muhammad Ghori defeated Jaichand and seized control of Kannauj. Muhammad Ghori passed away in 1206 AD.



■ **Qutbuddin Aibak (1206-1210 AD)** - Qutbuddin Aibak selected Lahore as his capital and pursued territorial expansion in the upper

doab of Ganga-Yamuna. Hasan Nizami, a renowned scholar, was part of his court and wrote the book 'Taj-ul-Maasir'. However, Qutbuddin Aibak's reign was tragically cut short by his sudden demise in 1210 AD.

- **Iltutmish (1211-1236 AD)** - It is considered the architect of the Delhi Sultanate as it not only reclaimed independent Indian states but also implemented significant administrative reforms. The establishment of the 'Turk-i-Chahalgani', a body consisting of 40 nobles, in key positions contributed to effective governance. Recognizing the economic significance of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab, it facilitated the settlement of Muslim communities in that region. It holds the distinction of being the first Sultan to receive ruling authority from the Khalifa, marking the beginning of the legitimate Sultanate period.

- **Razia (1236-1240 AD)** - Razia proved herself as a capable ruler, but her tenure was cut short due to the envy of the Amirs and the Ulemas. Unfortunately, after the battle of Kaithal in 1240 AD, Razia met a tragic end and was killed.

- **Bahram Shah (1240-1242 AD)** - During his reign, in 1241, the first Mongol invasion led by Tair Bahadur occurred.

- **Mas'ud Shah (1242-1246 AD)**

- **Nasiruddin Muhammad (1246-1266 AD)** - He was the youngest son of Iltutmish. During his reign, Balban, a member of the Turk-i-Chahalgani, held actual power. The court also patronized the renowned writer 'Minhaj-us-Siraj', who authored the Persian work 'Tabaqat-e-Nasiri'.

- **The Balban (1266-1286 AD)** - Balban is recognized as the real architect of the Delhi Sultanate. Despite being a member of Turk-i-Chahalgani, he dismantled their power to consolidate the Sultan's authority. He played a pivotal role in shaping the Mongol policy during the Sultanate era, establishing two defensive lines in the northwest to guard against Mongol invasions..

- **The Kaiqubad (1286–1290 AD):**

After Balban's demise, his grandson Kaiqubad ascended to the throne. However, he proved to

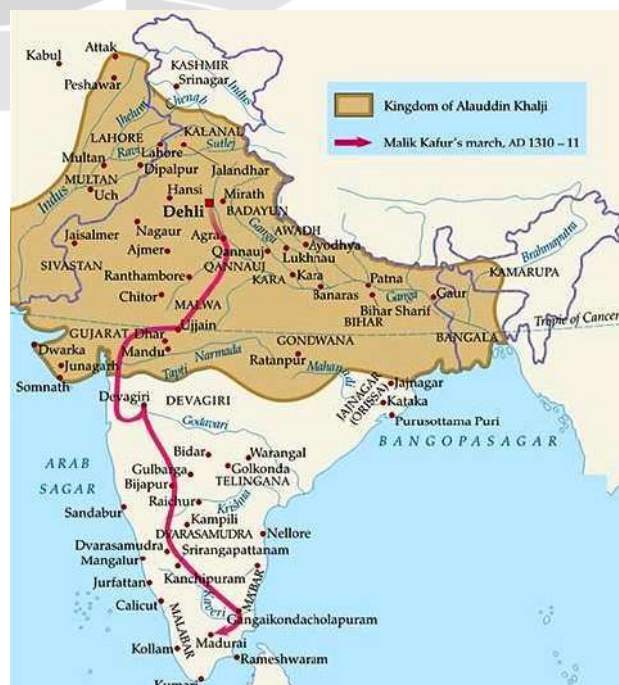
be a weak and ineffective ruler. His reign was marred by political instability, leading to a state of chaos. Exploiting this opportunity, Jalaluddin Khilji, Muqti of Samana, seized control of Delhi.

Khiliji Dynasty (1250E—1320E)

- **Jalaluddin Khilji (1290-1296 AD)** - Jalaluddin Khilji founded the Khilji dynasty and ruled from 1290 to 1296 AD. However, his rule was cut short when he was overthrown by his nephew and son-in-law, Alauddin Khilji.

- **Alauddin Khilji (1236-1314 AD)** - Alauddin Khilji ushered in an era of imperialism in India. His reign saw extensive territorial expansion, reaching its pinnacle during the rule of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.

Initially, Alauddin Khilji consolidated his power in North India by conquering regions such as Gujarat (1299 AD), Ranthambore (1301 AD), Chittor (1303 AD), and Malwa (1305 AD). He then launched military campaigns in South India under the leadership of his general Malik Kafur. These campaigns included the first military expedition against Devagiri and Warangal in 1306-07 AD, followed by a second expedition against Dwarasamudra and the Pandya kingdom. While Alauddin Khilji extracted revenue and received tributes from these southern states, he did not directly administer them.



■ **Mubarak Shah Khilji (1316-1320 AD)** - Mubarak Shah Khilji became the first Sultan to declare himself as Caliph and assumed the title of 'Al Wasiq Billah'. Departing from Alauddin Khilji's policy of limited expansion, Mubarak Shah successfully conquered Devagiri and incorporated it into the Delhi Sultanate.

■ **Khusrau Shah (1320 AD)** - After the demise of Mubarak Shah Khilji, his minister **Khusrau** proclaimed himself as the Sultan under the name 'Khusraushah'. However, in 1320 AD, Ghazi Malik, the governor of Dipalpur, launched an attack on Delhi, resulting in the death of Khusro and the establishment of the Tughlaq dynasty.

Tughlaq dynasty

(1320 E—1412 E)

■ **Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq (1320-1325 AD)** - After assuming the title of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, Ghazi Malik ascended to the throne. During his reign, his son Jauna Khan successfully conquered Warangal in 1324 AD, incorporating it into the Delhi Sultanate. Unfortunately, Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq met with an untimely demise in 1325 AD due to an accident while returning from a campaign in Bengal.

■ **Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq (1325-1351 AD)** - The reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq is often regarded as a highly controversial period in history. While he had progressive ideas, his policies were marked by repeated failures. These failures led to widespread rebellion and ultimately resulted in the disintegration of his empire.

He expanded his empire extensively, establishing the All Indian Empire. During his rule, he embarked on various experiments such as changing the capital, introducing token currency, implementing progressive taxation in the Doab region, launching military campaigns in Khurasan and Karachil. However, all of his experiments met with successive failures, leading to the gradual disintegration of his empire.

- **1335 AD:** Mabar (Madura) kingdom gained independence led by Ahsan Shah.

- **1336 AD:** Vijayanagara kingdom declared

independence under Harihara and Bukka.

- **1338 AD:** Bengal achieved independence under Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah.
- **1347 AD:** Bahmani kingdom became independent under Bahman Shah.



■ **Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388 AD)** - The emphasis of Firoz Shah Tughlaq was on the following policies -

1. He focused on religious fanaticism as a policy to appease dissident Ulemas.
2. He implemented public welfare programs within the state.
3. Emphasizing extensive construction projects, he commissioned the translation of Sanskrit texts on music into Persian.
4. He prioritized irrigation development, constructing canals from the Yamuna and Sutlej rivers.

■ After the Firoz Shah Tughlaq

After the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, a period of weak rulers ensued, with frequent changes in leadership. The final ruler of this dynasty was Nasiruddin Mahmud. During his rule, Timur invaded India in 1398 AD, further weakening the empire's prestige. Subsequently, the empire faced disintegration. By 1401 AD, Gujarat, led by Jafar Khan, Malwa, led by Dilawar Khan, and Jaunpur, led by Khwaja Jahan, declared

independence. Khwaja Jahan, titled 'Malik-us-Sharq,' established the Sharqi dynasty in Jaunpur. Nasiruddin Mahmud died in 1412 AD, and Khizr Khan, the governor of Punjab under Timur, captured Delhi.

Sayyid dynasty (1414 AD—1451 AD)

Khizr Khan, an officer of Timur, established the Lodi dynasty. Mubarak Shah was succeeded by Khizr Khan. In Khizr Khan's court, the writer Yahya bin Ahmad Sirhindi composed 'Tarikh-I-Mubarak Shahi.' The final ruler of this dynasty was Alam Khan, who later abdicated the throne in favor of his general, Bahlol Lodi. This marked the establishment of the Lodi dynasty.

Lodi dynasty (1451 AD—1526 AD)

The Lodi dynasty, the first Afghan dynasty in India, was founded by Bahlol Lodi. His capable successor, Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517 AD), proved to be a skilled Sultan. He successfully conquered Jaunpur and incorporated it into the Delhi Sultanate. In 1504 AD, he strategically founded Agra to exert control over eastern Rajasthan. Sikandar Lodi also made efforts to instill discipline among his noble (Amirs). Moreover, he gained recognition in the literary world for his poetic compositions under the pen name 'Gulrukhi.'

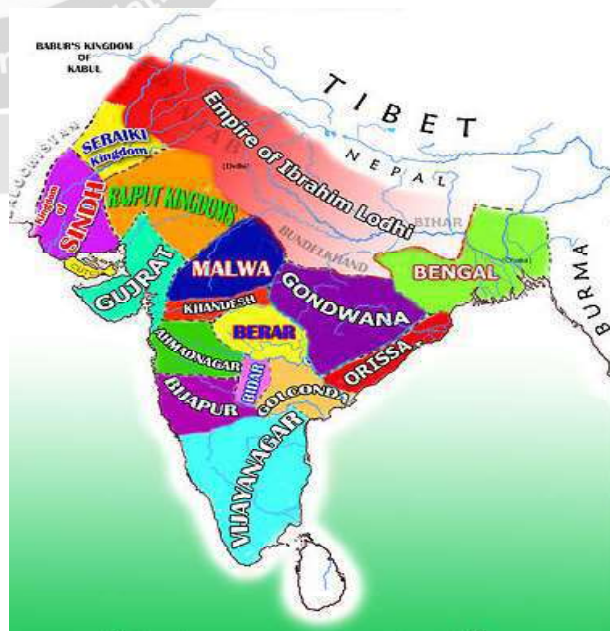
Ibrahim Lodi (1517-1526 AD) succeeded Sikandar Lodi. He attempted to impose discipline on the Afghan nobles (Amirs), which led to their rebellion. In 1518 AD, he launched an attack on Maharana Sanga, the ruler of Mewar, but suffered defeat in the battle of 'Khatoli. Meanwhile, as the Rajputs and Afghans were fighting for supremacy in North India, Babur was preparing to invade Hindustan. Ibrahim Lodi met his demise while fighting against Babur in the first battle of Panipat in 1526 AD.

Notably, the 16th century marked a period of political upheaval in North India. The political landscape of India during this time was

decentralised, which created a favourable environment for potential invaders. During this period, the Sultan of Delhi, Ibrahim Lodi, aimed to establish a centralised empire. However, challenges to his authority arose from various quarters. Daulat Khan Lodi, the Subedar of Punjab, and Ibrahim Lodi's uncle, Alam Khan Lodi, contested his rule. Additionally, Rana Sanga, a Rajput ruler, also challenged Ibrahim's supremacy.

In a bid to overthrow Ibrahim from the Delhi throne, Daulat Khan sent an envoy to Babur, led by his son Dilawar Khan. The purpose was to seek Babur's assistance in removing Ibrahim and installing Alam Khan Lodi as the ruler. Babur himself recounted this incident in his autobiography, detailing how he received the ambassadors of Alam Khan Lodi and Rana Sanga when he was in Kabul. This scenario underscores how the dynamics of mutual political struggles had an impact on Babur and consequently influenced the political landscape of the Sultanate. Eventually, Babur defeated Ibrahim and established the foundation of Mughal power in India.

Mughal Period (after 1526 AD)



Indian subcontinent on the eve of Babur's Invasion

■ **Babur (1526-1530 AD)** - After successfully capturing Kabul in 1504 AD, Babur turned his attention towards India. In 1518 AD, he achieved a significant victory in the fort of Bhira, marking the first use of cannons in his conquests. Subsequently, in 1525 AD, Babur conquered Punjab. The decisive first battle of Panipat took place in 1526 AD, where Babur emerged victorious against Ibrahim Lodi by skillfully combining cannons with the Tullgama system. In 1527 AD, he defeated Maharana Sanga in the battle of 'Khanwa'. Babur continued his expansion by capturing Alwar in 1528 AD and emerging victorious in the war of Ghaggar against the Afghans in 1529 AD. However, his journey to suppress the rebellion in Kabul was cut short when he passed away in Lahore in 1530 AD.

■ **Humayun (1530-1556 AD)**- Soon after ascending to the throne, Humayun encountered numerous challenges. The most formidable among these were the Western Afghan and Eastern Afghan conflicts. On one side, his ambitious brother Kamran seized control over Kabul, Kandahar, Lahore, Punjab, and Hisar-Firoza. On the other side, Humayun emerged victorious over the Eastern Afghan forces in the Battle of Daurah in 1532 AD. Subsequently, he faced a challenge from Bahadur Shah, the leader of the Western Afghans. However, by 1534 AD, Humayun conquered Malwa and Gujarat, although he eventually lost control over these territories. Nevertheless, Bahadur Shah's power was significantly weakened.

In the eastern region, Humayun's greatest adversary was Sher Shah. After suffering defeats in the Battles of Chausa in 1539 and Kannauj in 1540 against Sher Shah, Humayun was forced to flee to Iran.

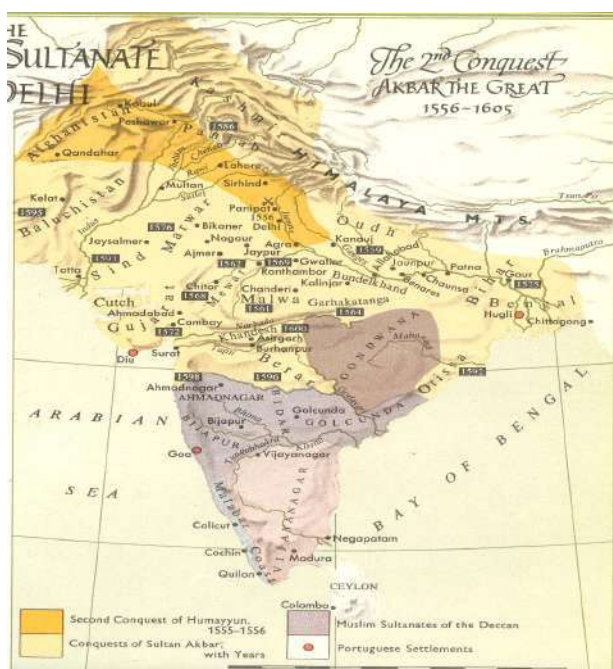
With the support of Iran, Humayun managed to regain his lost territories. He reclaimed Kandahar in 1545 AD and Kabul in 1553 AD from his brother Kamran. Following Sher Shah's demise and the subsequent fragmentation of the

Afghan Empire, Humayun seized Punjab in 1555 AD, as well as Delhi and Agra in the same year. He met his untimely demise in an accident in January 1556 AD.



■ **Akbar (1556-1605 AD)**- Akbar, one of the greatest rulers in Indian history, was renowned not only for his vast empire-building but also for his transformative state policies. Upon assuming the throne, his first notable achievement was the victory in the Second Battle of Panipat against Hemu, which he achieved with the assistance of Bairam. Subsequently, between 1556 AD and 1560 AD, Akbar successfully captured Ajmer, Gwalior, and Jaunpur.

After his triumph in the Battle of Merta in 1562, other Rajput states followed suit and surrendered to his authority. Akbar's expansion continued as he annexed Gujarat in 1573 AD, Bihar in 1575-76 AD, Kabul in 1585 AD, and Kashmir in 1586 AD. By 1601 AD, his empire spanned from Kashmir in the north to Berar, Balaghat, and Khandesh in the south, and from Kandahar in the west to Bengal in the east.



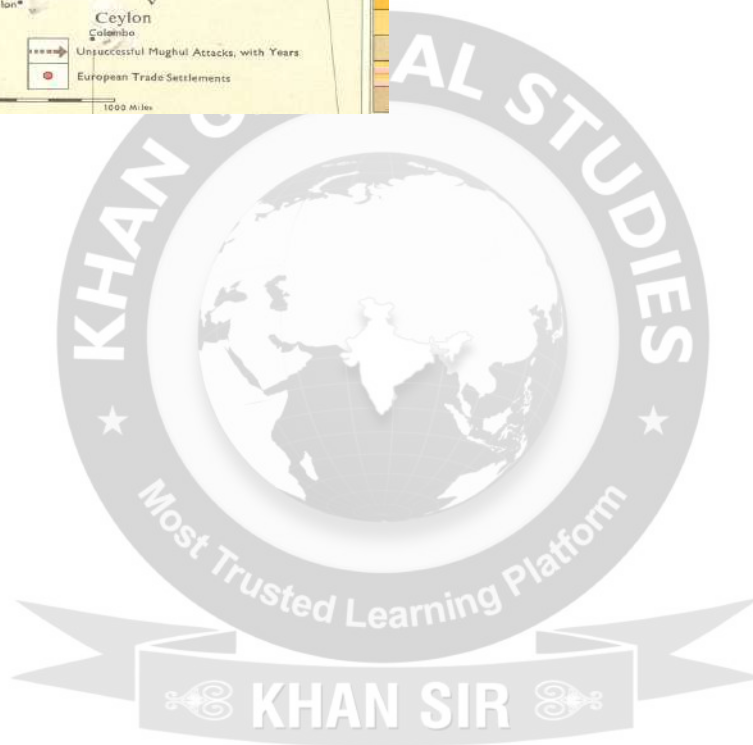
■ **Jahangir (1605-1627 AD):** During Jahangir's reign, there were no major territorial expansions. In the south, Shahzada Khurram achieved victories over the armies of Ahmednagar, Bijapur, and Golconda. Pleased with his accomplishments, Jahangir bestowed upon him the title of 'Shah Jahan'. Amar Singh, the ruler of the Sisodia dynasty and the successor of Maharana Pratap, surrendered for the first time during Jahangir's rule. However, in 1622 AD, the Iranians captured Kandahar.

■ **Shah Jahan (1628-1658 AD):** Shah Jahan faced several challenges during his reign. Bundela Sardar Jujhar Singh revolted, followed by the rebellion of Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, the Subedar of Deccan. Shah Jahan decided to conquer Ahmednagar and successfully achieved this goal in 1633 AD, integrating it into the Mughal Empire. Although he temporarily obtained Kandahar in 1638 AD, the Mughals ultimately lost it in 1648 AD.



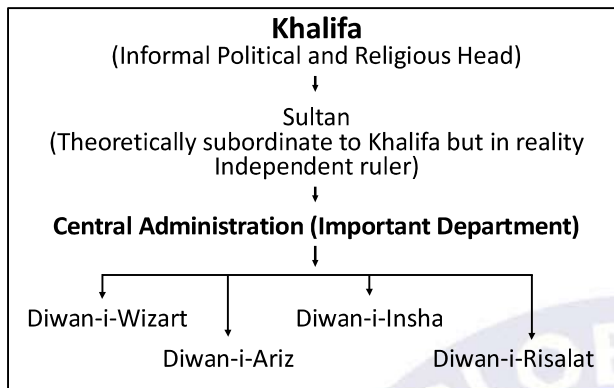
■ **Aurangzeb (1659-1707 AD):** In 1658 AD, Aurangzeb engaged in a war of succession with his brothers during Shah Jahan's illness. Eventually, he ascended the throne in 1659 AD. His reign was marked by various rebellions, including the Jat rebellion, the Satnami rebellion, the Afghan rebellion, the Rajput rebellion, the Sikh rebellion, and conflicts with the Marathas.

Aurangzeb faced a major challenge in the south with the Marathas. He made a second mistake by aggressively expanding his empire in the region, conquering Bijapur in 1686 AD and Golconda in 1687 AD. These territories were incorporated into the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb's policy of expanding southward from the Krishna River resulted in disastrous consequences, and he found himself embroiled in a long struggle in the south that lasted for 25 years. Eventually, in 1707 AD, Aurangzeb passed away while these conflicts were still ongoing.



Sultanate Administration

■ Central Administration



The main center of administration in the Delhi Sultanate was the Sultan, who held authority over civil, military, and judicial affairs, despite being theoretically subordinate to the Khalifa. Alongside the Sultan, Barani mentions four major departments in the central administration.

1. **Diwan-i-Wizarat-** The department under the officer known as the 'Wazir' held the responsibility of land revenue assessment, accounting for various types of revenue, and their recovery. Wazir formally held the position of prime minister.
2. **Diwan-i-Ariz-** The 'Diwan-i-Ariz' department, established by Balban, played a crucial role in the efficient military system, which formed the basis of the state's power. This department was responsible for the recruitment, maintenance, training, and allocation of salaries for soldiers. While the Sultan held the position of chief commander and led the army in times of war, the 'Ariz-i-Mumalik' served as the head of military affairs after the Sultan.
3. **Diwan-i-insha-** The state correspondence department, headed by the 'Dabir-i-Mumalik', was responsible for handling all matters related to state communication. Its primary role was in managing foreign correspondence. This department issued

state decree and ensured their delivery to provincial authorities.

4. **Diwan-i-Risalat-** The religious department, headed by Sadr us Sudur, provided assistance and grants to scholars. The department also handled cases related to religious practices. The judicial work was managed by the department of Qazi. However, the Sultan had the ultimate authority as the final appellate for justice. Often, the positions of Qazi and Sadr were held by the same person.

The various departments established from time to time by different sultans:

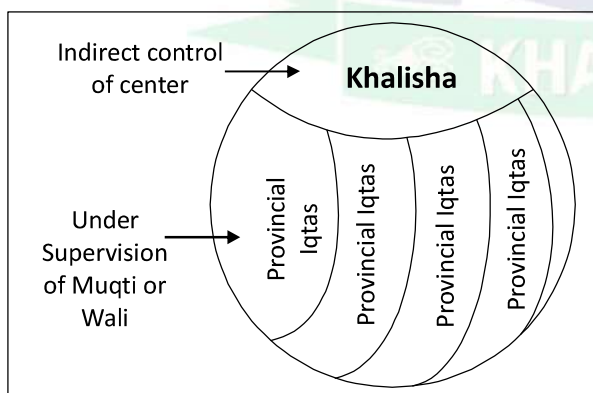
1. **Diwan-i-Waqoof-** Established by Jalaluddin Khilji, this department operated under Diwan-i-Wizarat and was responsible for estimating expenditures.
2. **Diwan-i-Mustakhraj-** Established by Alauddin Khilji, this department operated under the Diwan-i-Wizarat and was responsible for the recovery of arrears. Government officials were authorized by Alauddin Khilji to collect land revenue.
3. **Diwan-i-Riyasat:** Alauddin Khilji established this department to ensure the effective implementation of market control systems.
4. **Diwan-i-Kohi:** Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq established this department to promote progressive farming in the Ganga-Yamuna doab. It operated under the patronage of Diwan-i-Wizarat.
5. **Diwan-i-Khairat:** Firoz Shah Tughlaq established this department to provide grants to poor Muslims for their daughters' marriages.
6. **Diwan-i-Ishtiaq:** Firoz Shah Tughlaq established this pension department to support elderly individuals. It was directly supervised by him.

7. **Diwan-i-Bandagan:** Firoz Shah Tughlaq established this department to oversee the welfare and protection of slaves during night time. He also banned the export of slaves.

There were several officers under the Delhi Sultanate who held independent charges and were not attached to any specific department. These included:

1. **Naib-i-Mamlikat** - This position served as the Vice-Sultan under the Sultan, usually created during times when the Sultan's position was weak.
2. **Sar-i-Jandar** - This position was responsible for leading the personal bodyguard of the Sultan.
3. **Amir-i-Majlis** - This officer played a key role in organizing state festivals and ceremonies.
4. **Mir-i-Atish** - This officer held the position of Chief of Artillery.
5. **Barid-i-Mumalik** - This officer headed the Intelligence Department.
6. **Diwan-i-Bayutat** - This officer served as the head of the state (karkhana) office.
7. **Amir-e-Hajib** - This officer was responsible for maintaining court discipline and determining the hierarchy among the nobles.

■ Provincial Administration (Iqta Administration)



During the Sultanate period, there was no standardized provincial administration. Instead, the Iqta system was introduced to collect revenue from remote areas. Under this system, the state distributed land (called Iqta) to nobles. Iltutmish

improved this system by dividing the empire into large provincial iqtas, each headed by a Muqti or Wali. The Mukti's job was to collect revenue, manage administration and military affairs, and deposit the surplus to the central government. The position of Mukti was not hereditary and could be transferred.

On the other hand, Khalisa land was reserved for the Sultan's income. It had a separate administration led by an officer called Shahna, Amir, or Malik. These officers were responsible for governing the Khalisa areas.

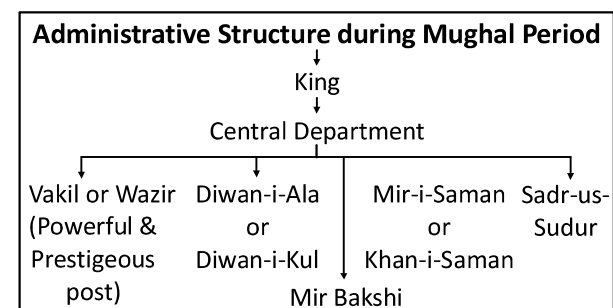
■ Local Administration



During the Sultanate period, local administration is not well-documented. However, it is believed that there were administrative units called Shiqs and parganas. The province was divided into Shiqs, each led by a Shiqdar. Shiqs were further divided into parganas, overseen by a Chaudhari. The village was the smallest administrative unit, where Muqaddams or mukhiyas were in charge of village affairs. Assisting them was the Patwari, a semi-official who handled land documents.

Mughal Administration

■ Central Administration



The administrative structure showed both continuity and change from the Sultanate period to the Mughal period. During the Sultanate

period, efforts were made to adapt Persian institutions to local conditions, and these institutions were further developed and reformed during the Mughal period. The Mughal administrative structure emphasized uniformity and checks and balances through various departments in the central administration.

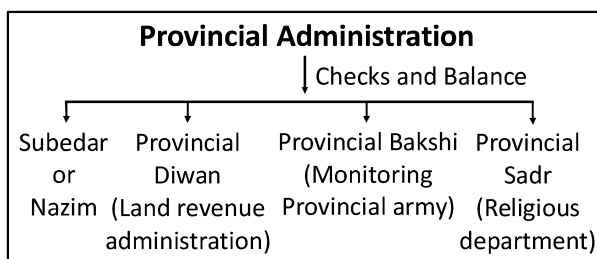
The king held the highest authority in the administration and exercised absolute power as the final decision-maker, administrator, judge, and military leader. Several departments operated during the Mughal period to support the administration.

1. **Vakil or Wazir** - In the Central Asian and Timurid tradition, the Vakil held significant power and prestige. This influential position involved overseeing different government branches, such as the revenue and military departments. When Bairam Khan assumed the role of Vakil, the position's authority grew even stronger. However, after Bairam Khan's rebellion, the significance of this post began to decline, and although it continued to exist formally, its power became limited.
2. **Diwan-i-Ala or Diwan-i-Kul**- This department was established by transferring financial powers from the Vakil (Wazir). It dealt with revenue assessment, revenue recovery, and maintaining records of income and expenditure. Its main responsibility was to inspect the state treasury and ensure accurate accounting. The Diwan personally oversaw all transactions and payments across departments. No appointment or promotion order could be issued without the Diwan's approval. To diminish the significance of the Diwan's position, multiple Diwans were appointed to establish effective checks and balances among them.
3. **Mir Bakshi**- The third important department in the Mughal Central Administration was the department of Mir Bakshi. This department had a counterpart called 'Diwan-i-Arz' during the Sultanate period. Mir Bakshi

held the highest position and received the highest salary in the empire. He was responsible for disbursing payments to all military and civil officials. He played a key role in recommending the appointment of Mansabdars and granting them Jagirs, while the actual granting of Jagirs was carried out by the Diwan-i-Ala with the emperor's approval. This system allowed both departments to maintain checks and balances on each other. Additionally, Mir Bakshi personally inspected the quality of horses and the appearance of soldiers. He informed all military-related matters directly to the emperor.

4. **Mir-i-Saman or Khan-i-Saman**- During the Sultanate period, there was no specific department dedicated to overseeing the royal family. However, in the Mughal period, a separate department was established and entrusted to Mir-i-Saman or Khan-i-Saman, who was the head of the royal harem. The Mir-i-Saman had additional responsibilities, including the supervision of royal factories(karkhana) and the procurement and storage of items for the royal palace. Moreover, he oversaw the production of various goods, ranging from weapons to luxury items. To ensure proper checks and balances, the accounts of this department were also examined by the Diwan's department.
5. **Sadr-us-Sudur** - An important department in the central administration was the Department of Sadr-us-Sudur, which was led by Sadr-us-Sudur himself. This department was responsible for religious affairs and served as the chief religious advisor to the emperor. Its primary role was to safeguard Sharia law and ensure its implementation. Additionally, the department was responsible for the distribution of religious endowments and handling cases related to religious matters.

■ Provincial Administration



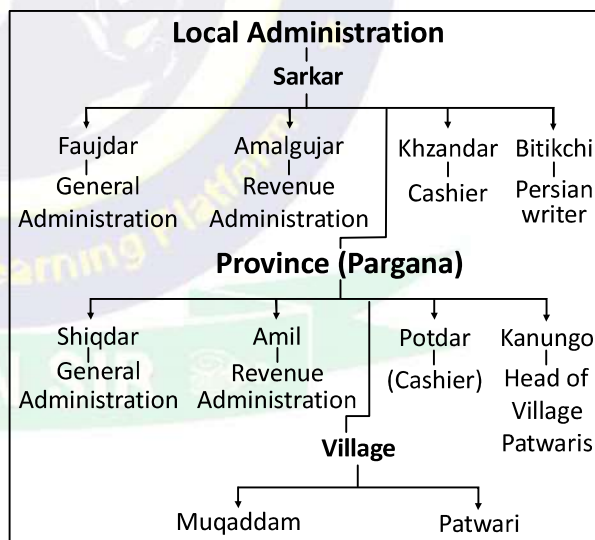
The Mughal period saw the introduction of a systematic provincial administration, with Akbar being credited for this development. Akbar divided his empire into twelve subas (Province), which later expanded to fifteen during his reign. Akbar's administrative policy was guided by two key principles: administrative uniformity and checks and balances.

1. **Subedar or Nazim** - The provincial administration mirrored the structure of the central administration. The Nazim, Subedar, or Sarsuba served as the head of the provincial administration. Their appointment, recommended by the Central Diwan and approved by the Emperor, lasted for three years. They held the position of commander of the provincial army and were responsible for upholding law and order, overseeing general administration, and ensuring the welfare of the subjects.
2. **Provincial Diwan** - The emperor appointed the provincial Diwan based on the recommendation of the Central Diwan. This independent officer directly reported to the central administration. The Provincial Diwan held the position of the head of the revenue department in the province. Their responsibilities included overseeing the collection of revenue from the province and maintaining comprehensive records of salaries, expenses, and other financial matters related to the officers and employees in the province. By separating the Diwan from the Subedar and assigning financial responsibilities to the Diwan, the Mughal rulers effectively curbed the power of the Subedars.

3. **Provincial Bakshi** - The appointment of the Provincial Bakshi was made based on the recommendation of the Central Bakshi. Similar to Mir Bakshi, who served at the center, the Provincial Bakshi was responsible for overseeing the army in the provinces. Their duties included inspecting the horses and soldiers maintained by the Mansabdars in the province. They issued pay slips to the Mansabdars and soldiers. Additionally, the Provincial Bakshi served as the head of the intelligence service, responsible for transmitting sensitive information regarding the empire's security directly to Mir Bakshi.

4. **Provincial Sadr** - Following the model of the Central Sadr, the position of a Sadr was also established in the provinces. The Sadr Alim in the province was responsible for recommending grants for Fazils (scholars) and served as the head of the Justice Department.

■ Local Administration



Sarkar – The unit below the province was called the Sarkar. The key officers at the government level were Faujdar, Amalgujar, Khazandar (treasurer), and Bitikchi.

- **Faujdar** - The Faujdar held a crucial position as the direct representative of the Mughal Empire in local administration. He served as the executive head of the government, primarily responsible for maintaining law and order. In

addition to this, the Faujdar provided assistance to the Amil or Amalguzar in revenue collection and oversaw the local forces. Depending on the situation, there could be multiple faujdars within a Sarkar, or sometimes one Faujdar would be appointed for two Sarkars.

- **Amalguzar-** After the Faujdar, another important official in the government was the Amalguzar, who served as the chief revenue collector. The primary duty of the Amalguzar was to assess and supervise revenue collection conducted by the officers under his jurisdiction. A competent Amalguzar aimed to promote agricultural growth in his area and encourage farmers to pay their revenue willingly, without resorting to force. He also held the responsibility of managing various types of accounts and regularly reported the details of daily collection and expenditure to the provincial Diwan. Additionally, there were two other officers working under the Amalguzar - the Vitikchi, which means 'writer' in Persian, and the Khazandar.

Pargana- The administrative unit below the Sarkar was the Pargana. The following officers were associated with the pargana-

- **Shiqdar-** The executive officer of the pargana was Shiqdar. He was the guardian of law and order and assisted the Amil in the collection of land revenue.
- **Amil** – It was associated with administration of the land revenue.
- **Potdar-** cashier
- **Kanungo** – The Kanungo held the position of the head of the village Patwaris and supervised the agricultural land. His role involved maintaining the land records for his area. According to Abul Fazl, the Kanungo served as the protector of farmers as he meticulously recorded information about crops and the local population.
- **Village Administration-** The village served as the smallest unit of administration, and it had two important officers: the Muqaddam and the

Patwari. Muqaddam held the position of village head, while Patwari was responsible for maintaining revenue accounts at the village level. Additionally, during the Mughal period, a system of village panchayats existed, which operated independently from the Mughal administrative system.

Mansabdari System

'Mansab' is a Persian word that translates to 'post.' Akbar introduced this system in the 19th year of his reign, i.e., 1575 AD. The Mansabdari system can be described as the strong foundation of the Mughal administration. It aimed to establish a connection between the wealthy class, civil officers, and military officers. Through the Mansabdari system, Akbar sought to integrate these different groups. Each officer's rank in the system was expressed using two factors: Zat (personal rank) and Sawar (number of cavalymen under their command). For example-

Zat Rank / Sawar Rank

5000/5000

4000/3000

3000/1000

The first number, Zat, determined the personal salary, status, and position of the Mansabdar within the hierarchy. The second number, Sawar, indicated the number of horses and horsemen that the Mansabdar was required to maintain, with a fixed amount allocated for their upkeep.

- According to Abul Fazl, there were originally 66 grades of Mansabdars ranging from 10 to 10,000, but in practice, only 33 grades were utilized.
- Generally, Mansabdari appointments did not exceed a Zat rank of 5,000. Exceptions were made for individuals having familial ties or high-ranking nobles. For instance, during Akbar's reign, Rajput Mansabdar Raja Mansingh, and during Aurangzeb's reign,

Sawai Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh were granted Mansabdari positions with a Zat and Sawar rank of 7,000.

- Typically, the Sawar rank could not surpass the Zat rank, although there were special circumstances where this was allowed.
- While some Mansabdars received cash payments and were referred to as cash (Nagadi) Mansabdars, bigger Mansabdars were paid through jagirs. These jagirs, known as “Jagir-e-Tankhwaha,” were not land allocations but rather revenue assignments.

■ Types of Jagir

1. **Jagir-e-Tankhwah:** This was the most popular type of jagir granted to Mansabdars. The annual salary of a Mansabdar was determined based on their Zat and Sawar ranks, and they were then assigned a jagir with the revenue equivalent to that salary.
2. **Watan Jagir:** This jagir was hereditary and specifically granted to Rajput Mansabdars. It constituted the territory over which the Rajput rulers held control, and the state recognized their authority over it.
3. **Mashrut Jagir:** This type of jagir was conditional and awarded to Mansabdars for a specific task or purpose. Once the designated work was completed, the jagir was withdrawn. It helped cover the expenses related to additional horsemen.
4. **Altamgha Jagir:** Muslim Mansabdars were granted this jagir following a similar pattern as the Watan Jagir.

- **Duh-Aspah Sih-Aspah system:** This system was introduced during the reign of Jahangir. It allowed the number of horsemen (sawars) under

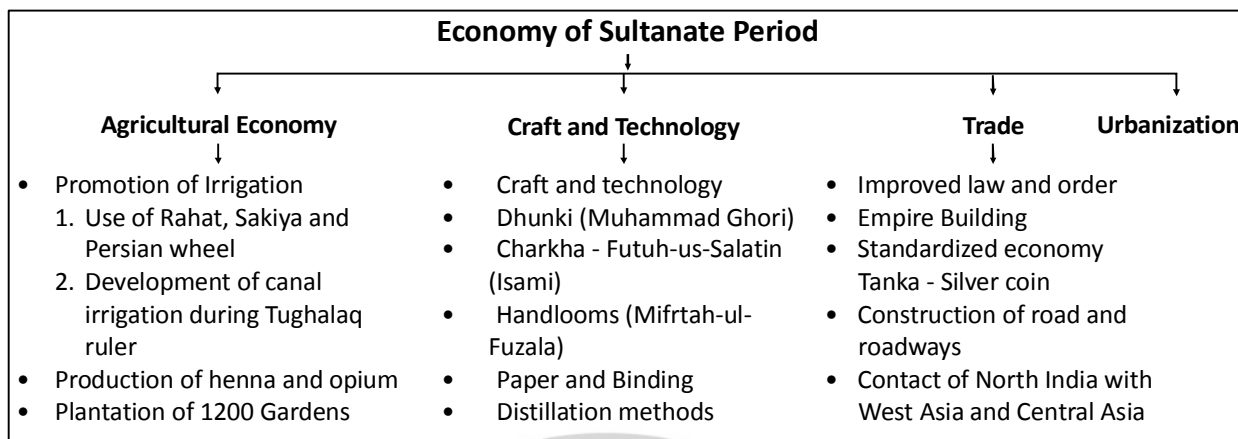
a mansabdar to be doubled (duh aspa) or tripled (sih-aspa) without increasing their Zat rank. The purpose was to utilize the services of important mansabdars without altering their Zat rank.

- **Difference between the Iqtadari system and the Jagirdari/Mansabdari system:** In the Iqtadari system, muqtis were initially granted Iqta (land grants), and then their responsibilities and salaries were determined accordingly. However, in the jagirdari system, the Mansabdars’ responsibilities were determined first, their salary was fixed accordingly, and they were then assigned a jagir. The jagirdari system did not allow for fawazil (additional benefits). Additionally, in the Iqta system, the muqti had administrative authority, whereas in the Jagirdari system, the administration was the state’s responsibility, and the jagirdar had the right to collect revenue solely from their jagir.

- **Difference between the Jagirdar and the Zamindar:** Mansabdars/Jagirdars were government officials appointed by the state and received their salary, usually in the form of a jagir. The jagir included the revenue from multiple villages. On the other hand, zamindars were hereditary landowners in rural areas who had existed prior to the Mughal Empire. They claimed a portion of the peasants’ produce as an ancestral right. The Mughal Empire aimed to regulate their activities and ensure discipline. The zamindars were also involved in land revenue collection and received a share of the produce (around 10%) as ‘Naankar’. The state, however, took precautions to prevent them from gaining excessive power and creating problems. Both the Faujdar and Jagirdar kept a close watch on the zamindars’ activities.



Sultanate Period Economy



The establishment of Turkish rule brought significant changes in the economy and promoted agriculture, handicrafts, commerce, trade, and urbanization.

Agricultural Economy

Agriculture thrived during this period as the fertile land of India supported its growth. Abundant livestock ensured a large supply of animal dung, which was extensively used as manure. Thakkar Pheru, an official in the time of Alauddin Khilji, documented 25 different types of crops cultivated during this era. The introduction of the Sakiya or Rahat system, based on a gear mechanism, revolutionized irrigation methods. Additionally, various techniques for well water extraction were prevalent. Firoz Shah Tughlaq played a pivotal role in promoting canal irrigation, leading to agricultural progress in the Delhi-Haryana region. Notably, Rabi crops were cultivated in addition to Kharif crops. Furthermore, new crops such as opium and henna were introduced alongside traditional crops. Horticulture received significant encouragement, exemplified by the plantation of 1200 gardens by Firoz Shah Tughlaq in Delhi and its vicinity.

Craft or Technology

The arrival of the Turks in India introduced new crafts that stimulated production. For

instance, the practice of 'Dhunki' emerged during the time of Muhammad Ghori, revolutionizing cotton cleaning. In the 14th century, the use of the 'spinning wheel' was documented in the text 'Futuh-us-Salatin', resulting in a sixfold increase in yarn spinning with the charkha. The utilization of looms for weaving clothes was also reported in the book 'Mifrtah-ul-Fuzala', further promoting the textile industry. Paper and binding materials were introduced, with Gujarat being the first region to embrace paper circulation. The Turks brought innovative construction techniques, employing arches and domes in their structures. The use of lime and gypsum as mortar to join stones became prevalent, facilitating construction activities. Distillation methods were also employed during this period, leading to the production of higher-quality wine. Additionally, the Sultanate period witnessed the commencement of mulberry silk production in Bengal.

Trade and Commerce

Several factors inspired commerce and trade during this period:

1. Northern India regained close associations with West Asia and Central Asia after a long time.
2. The Sultanate strengthened law and order,

establishing political stability.

3. Sultans like Alauddin khilji and Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq encouraged road construction.
4. Standard currency, such as the tanka and Jital, was introduced after a prolonged interval.
5. New technology facilitated the emergence of production centers.
6. The arrival of a new elite class heightened the demand for luxury goods.
7. Alauddin Khilji's market control system established grain markets and promoted trade.

■ **The internal and external trade-** During the Sultanate period, three distinct trade structures were observed:

1. **Trade between the village and the city:** Grains and raw materials were transported from the villages to the cities. However, the villages did not receive anything in return. These goods were exchanged in the city through land revenue transactions.
2. **Trade between cities:** Internal trade thrived between different cities. For instance, Multan received sugar from Delhi, while liquor was sourced from Meerut and Aligarh.
3. **Trade with foreign regions:** Foreign trade experienced a notable boost during this era.

India maintained trade relations with West Asia, Central Asia, and East Africa in the west, while establishing connections with China and Southeast Asian countries in the east.

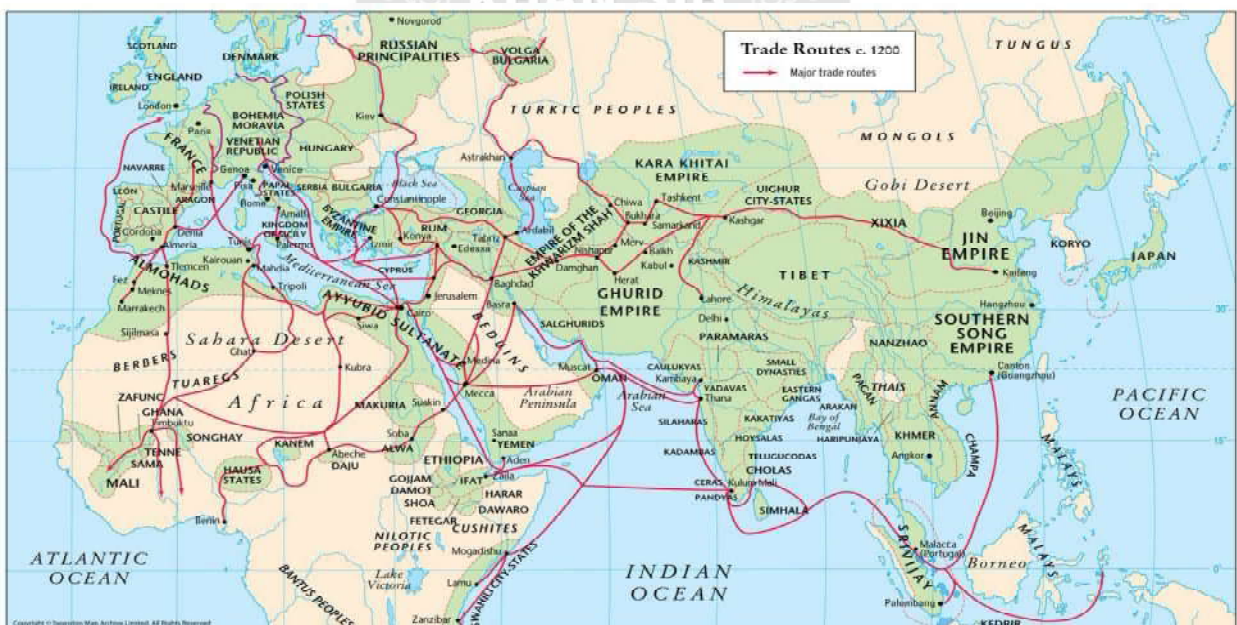
■ Currency System

Iltutmish played a significant role in standardizing currency during his reign. He introduced the tanka, a silver coin, and the Jital, a copper currency. Additionally, he introduced the Dam and Dirham as smaller copper denominations. Notably, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq introduced the use of token money for the first time in history. These currency reforms contributed to the stability and uniformity of monetary transactions in the Sultanate period.

Urbanization

Several major cities are mentioned in contemporary texts from the Sultanate period, including Delhi, Multan, Anhilwara (Patan), Khambhat, Kada, Lakhnauti, Daulatabad, and Lahore. According to Ibn Battuta, who visited India in 1333 AD, Delhi was the largest city in terms of size and population in the entire Eastern Islamic Empire. Political, administrative, and cultural factors played a pivotal role in promoting the growth of the urban economy during the Sultanate period.

As the Turkish ruling class was a minority in



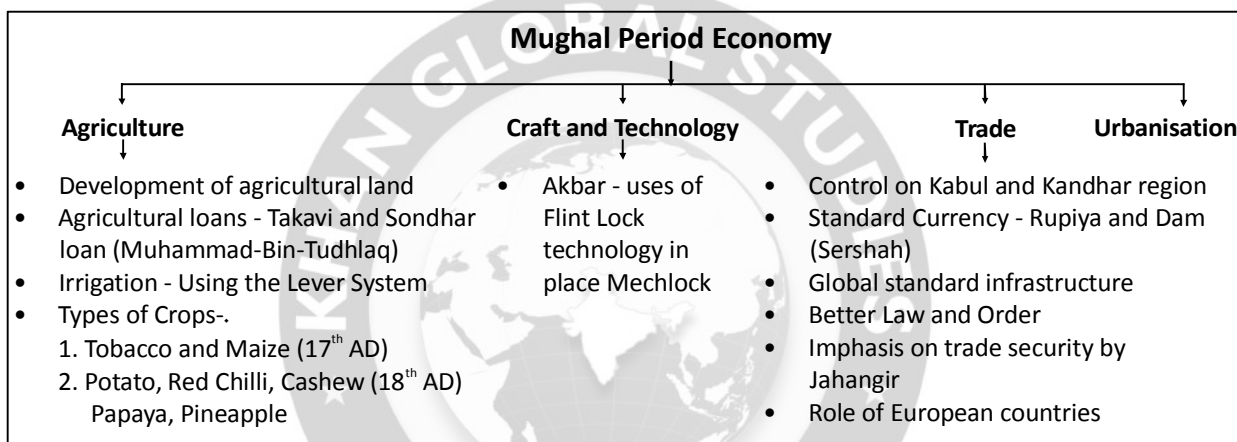
India, military camps were strategically established to maintain security. These camps were positioned around the ruling classes, and resources were allocated to remote areas based on their needs, eventually resulting in the growth of cities. Administrative centers, particularly at the headquarters of Iqta, where members of the ruling class resided, also began to evolve into cities.

Moreover, the influx of scholars and writers to India, driven by the Mongol invasions, contributed to the development of cities centered around cultural activities. The presence of

dargahs and shrines of Sufi saints attracted devotees, resulting in the growth of towns around these religious sites.

Additionally, some sultans demonstrated an interest in city-building. For instance, Alauddin Khilji founded the city of Chhan (Jhain/Jhayin) in eastern Rajasthan, which later came to be known as 'Shahr-e-Nau'. Similarly, Firoz Shah Tughlaq established numerous cities like Jaunpur, Firozpur, Hisar-Firoza, Firozabad, and Fatehabad. Consequently, urbanization expanded significantly under the Sultanate period.

Mughal Period Economy



Agricultural Economy

During the Mughal period, India held its place as one of the most populous regions in the world. The extensive geographical expanse of India resulted in diverse soil compositions and environmental conditions throughout different regions. In contrast to Europe, India possessed fertile soil, enabling the cultivation of two crops, and in certain areas, the possibility of harvesting a third crop during intermediary periods between regular seasons.

Agriculture played a pivotal role in the economy, serving as its backbone and requiring focused development to enhance state revenue. With a relatively smaller population and abundant agricultural land, the state held the authority to ensure farmers remained tied to the land. A farman issued by Aurangzeb, in the name of Rasikdas, underscored the state's commitment to settle vacant lands by providing

assistance to new farmers. The Amalgujars were directed to support the farmers, and the state facilitated their needs through agricultural loans. Government-sponsored initiatives prioritized irrigation, encompassing the construction of wells, ponds, reservoirs, and canals. Techniques like Dhekul, charas, and Sakiya/saqiya were employed to extract water from wells. Jagirdars and beneficiaries of 'Madad-i-maash' were expected to actively contribute to the advancement of agriculture.

Mughal literature, particularly Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, offers valuable insights into the wide array of crops cultivated during that era. The detailed list encompasses both rabi (winter) crops, ranging from 19 to 21 different types, and kharif (monsoon) crops, ranging from 17 to 21 different types. The cultivation of staple grains thrived, effectively meeting the dietary needs of the urban population. Additionally, cash crops

such as sugarcane, cotton, indigo, and opium, collectively known as 'Jins-i Kamil,' played a crucial role in the agricultural economy. The 17th century witnessed the introduction of tobacco and maize as cash crops from the New World, further diversifying agricultural practices. Coffee cultivation gained momentum in the latter half of the 17th century, while the cultivation of potatoes, red chillies, and tomatoes flourished in the 18th century. The advancement of grafting techniques facilitated the cultivation of new fruit varieties, contributing to the expansion of the agricultural economy.

Mughal kings and princes maintained private gardens, which provided them with financial benefits. The cultivation of cash crops facilitated the monetization of the agricultural economy, contributing to the overall prosperity of the period.

Craft and Technology

During the Mughal period, the thriving commerce and trade industry promoted the growth of craft production. Crafted goods were primarily consumed within the domestic market, but in the 17th century, Indian handicraft industries captured a substantial foreign market, largely due to the influence of European trading companies. These companies brought about a revolutionary change in business practices. While the Portuguese company focused on spice trade, British and Dutch companies greatly interested the textile industry in India. Cotton textiles, in particular, experienced a significant boost as they found a large market in the West. Gujarat and Bengal emerged as important centers for cotton textiles in North India, while Devagiri and Warangal were renowned in South India for their cotton textile production. The diversity of cotton textile products during this period can be traced from the mention of five cotton textile production centers, where 49 different types of cloth were manufactured.

Printing and dyeing of cloth also held prominence as important crafts. Moreover, silk and

woolen textiles were produced abundantly during this period. Kashmir was renowned as a center for silk production, and Banaras also thrived as a hub for silk cloth production. However, the most significant center for silk production was Bengal, where mulberry silk had been produced since the 15th century.

An important economic activity during the Mughal period was the development of carpet weaving technology. Inspired by the Iranian model, carpet weaving gained encouragement during Akbar's reign, with Lahore, Agra, and Fatehpur Sikri emerging as prominent centers in North India. Additionally, carpet weaving also commenced in Delhi, Mirzapur, Warangal, and Masulipatam.

Furthermore, the arrival of Babur introduced the use of firearms in India, including musket guns. Interaction with Europeans enabled Mughal technocrats to familiarize themselves with methods such as the 'Wheel Lock' and FlintLock,' although their usage might have been limited. Akbar, for instance, designed a bullock cart capable of transporting goods and grinding grains. He is also credited with inventing a gun that could fire 17 bullets simultaneously. Similarly, the influence of Europeans led to the adoption of anchors in shipbuilding and the practice of using iron anchors. Indians also began utilizing chained pumps, similar to Europeans, to remove water from ships. Therefore, it can be observed that scientific and technological advancements persisted during the Mughal period. Although not as extensive as in Europe, scientific progress flourished at the individual level.

Commerce and Trade

The Mughal rule in India fostered conditions that encouraged both internal and external trade. Internal trade was stimulated by various factors. Firstly, the establishment of a powerful Mughal Empire, which held control over important ports, played a significant role. Additionally, improvements in law and order during this period contributed to a favorable

environment for trade. The state placed special emphasis on collecting land revenue in cash, which promoted the monetization of the economy. Furthermore, Shershah Suri's introduction of the Rupiya and the Dam as standard currencies further strengthened commerce and trade.

Contrary to the traditional belief that the Mughals, originating from Central Asia, were indifferent to trade, recent research has debunked this notion. Central Asian kingdoms existed in vast treeless plains (steppe) with limited cultivable land. As a result, they recognized the significance of trade routes traversing through their territories from east to west and north to south. This understanding led the Mughal rulers to personally invest in the development of commerce and trade. For instance, Jahangir provided extra protection to traders. Additionally, the advancement of transport and communication systems facilitated business activities. A network of roads facilitated internal trade, with subsequent rulers after Sher Shah prioritizing the improvement of transportation facilities. In fact, transportation management in India during this period surpassed that of Europe. Inns were established along main roads at regular intervals of eight to ten miles.

Moreover, the development of a robust financial system facilitated the movement of goods, enabling easy transfer of money from one place to another. This was achieved through the use of hundis, which were letters of credit payable after a specified period, with a discount deducted. Hundis often included insurance provisions tailored to the value of goods, destination, mode of transport, and other relevant factors.

The period from the 16th to the 18th century was crucial for the development of foreign trade. Certain factors contributed to the growth of foreign trade during this time. The inclusion of Kabul and Kandahar in the Indian Empire under the Mughals was significant as both regions

were strategically located on important trade routes of West Asia and Central Asia, respectively. The royal family and prominent nobles showed keen interest in the development of commerce and trade. Notably, several nobles owned ships that made regular voyages to ports in the Red Sea and Southeast Asia. Personal ships belonging to Jahangir, Nur Jahan, and Shahzade Khurram operated between the ports of Surat and the Red Sea. The rise of powerful Asian states such as the Turkish, Safavid, and Mughal empires, as well as the Ming Empire in China, further facilitated trade by establishing law and order, promoting urbanization, and fostering monetization of their respective economies. Additionally, the arrival of European companies provided further impetus to foreign trade.

Urbanization

The establishment of the Mughal Empire brought forth numerous positive changes in the realm of economics. One notable change was the promotion of urbanization. This process, known as the 'Third Urbanization,' began in the 10th century and reached its pinnacle during the Mughal period. During this time, a significant number of villages transformed into towns, and some towns evolved into cities. Notably, Nizamuddin Ahmed, an important Persian writer of that era, mentions the existence of 120 major cities and 3,200 towns. Several factors contributed to the advancement of urbanization during this period.

1. As the focus shifted towards collecting land revenue in cash, the economy underwent a process of monetization. Consequently, grain markets began to emerge near villages, gradually evolving into towns.
2. The Mughal rulers offered significant assistance, known as madad-i-maash, which led to the development of numerous towns and cities with a substantial Muslim population.
3. The capital of the Mughal Empire and the provincial capitals underwent significant

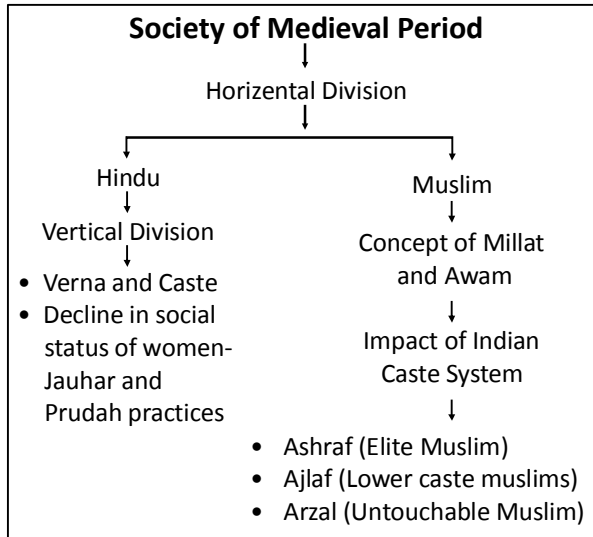
development, transforming into thriving cities. Examples of such cities include Delhi, Agra, Allahabad, and Lakhnauti.

4. The capitals of some regional rulers also developed into cities. For example, Daulatabad, Hyderabad, Burhanpur etc.
5. There were some cities which were also associated with production, but the religious factor played an important role in their

development these cities, such as Mathura, Banaras etc.

6. Some cities were also developed due to specific types of production. Like Bayana because of indigo production, Khairabad because of cotton cloth.
7. The development of some cities can also be the result of individual efforts. For example, two nobles(Amirs) of Shahjahan established a city named Shahjahanpur.





The establishment of Turkish rule in North India had a significant impact on society, leading to a notable horizontal division. Previously, Hindu society was vertically divided based on varna (social class) and caste, but with the advent of Turkish rule, a new horizontal division emerged between Hindus and Muslims.

Hindu Society

Initially, the term 'Hindu' referred to a geographical area. However, with the establishment of Turkish rule, non-Turkish individuals residing in India came to be known as Hindus.

During this period, Hindu society was divided into varna (social class) and caste. Theoretically, Hindu society was classified into four varnas - Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. However, the status of these varnas began to change. Due to the prevailing crisis, occupations that were previously considered unsuitable for Brahmins were now more widely accepted.

The condition of the Kshatriya varna remained relatively stable, although the power of the Rajputs was weakened by the Turkish invasions. However, the social standing of the Vaishyas experienced a slight decline. Alberuni later confirmed that, like the Shudras, Vaishyas were also excluded from the rights to study and listen to the Vedas.

While varna was an ideal concept, caste represented the reality of society. While there were only four varnas, the number of castes increased significantly, reaching thousands. This period witnessed the emergence of new castes as new professions arose.

■ How did the introduction of Islam influence India's caste system?

Islam arrived with the principles of equality and fraternity, which posed a challenge to the existing caste system in India. The Indian society comprised a significant number of Shudras and untouchables, leading to concerns that this marginalized group might be inclined to embrace Islam. As a result, Hindu society exhibited two distinct reactions in response to this situation-

- 1. Conservative reaction:** The conservative reaction involved attempts to further solidify the rigid caste system by writing commentaries on the old Smriti texts. However, this approach proved impractical and did not offer a viable solution to the challenges posed.
- 2. Constructive reaction:** On the other hand, the constructive reaction took the form of the Bhakti movement. Within this movement, two approaches emerged. Nirguna Bhakti rejected the very notion of caste divisions, while Saguna Bhakti sought to mitigate the harshness of the caste system.

Apart from it, the Turkish rule in India had additional impacts on the caste system:

- The adoption of the 'Persian Wheel' irrigation system brought transformation within the Jaat caste, as they shifted from their traditional occupation of pastoralism to agriculture. This transition not only enhanced their economic well-being but also motivated them to pursue upward social mobility. Subsequently, some factions of the Jaat community aligned themselves with the Sikh

sect, while others found spiritual guidance through Krishna Bhakti, particularly in Mathura.

- The Turks introduced new technologies to India; however, initially, Indian craftsmen were reluctant to adopt these advancements due to the deep association between caste and craft, as noted by Professor Irfan Habib. Therefore, the first step towards embracing these technologies was to weaken the bond between caste and craft, this role played by the proponents of Nirguna Bhakti, such as Kabir and Nanak. This cultural movement also encouraged the development of new crafts.

Initially, as confirmed by Professor Irfan Habib, lower-caste individuals displayed little interest in adopting the new crafts. Consequently, a significant number of slaves were employed to fill the labor demand created by these emerging crafts, thus promoting the institution of slavery.

■ Status of Women in the Hindu Society

During this period, the status of women in Hindu society experienced a decline compared to earlier times. Several factors contributed to this decline:

- The scholars of the time, in their attempt to reinforce the caste system to counter Islam, wrote commentaries on Smriti texts, further rigidifying the social structure. As a result, the social condition of women deteriorated. The Bhakti movement, although influential, failed to bring about significant changes in this regard.
- The purdah system gained prominence as a means to safeguard women and protect them from potential harm and ill intentions during times of invasions and warfare. Additionally, instances of Jauhar, a self-immolation practice, occurred in Rajput states. The earliest written account of Jauhar, witnessed by Amir Khusro, describes the incident at Ranthambore Fort.

Various social evils persisted during this period, including child marriage, plight of widows, and the practice of sati. Ibn Battuta mentions a sati incident in his descriptions. The

purdah system and Jauhar incidents also gained support during this time.

Muslim Society

Islam has been inspired by the ideal of social brotherhood since its inception. However, it is important to acknowledge that Muslim society was not immune to internal divisions. Similar to other societies, internal divisions existed within the Muslim community as well.

- **Division based on Ethnicity** – Khurasani, Turk, Tajik, Afghan etc.
- **Based on Nobility** - Nobles and slaves.
- **Based on Caste** -

Partition was witnessed in the land of India, and it is important to acknowledge that Islam, despite its slogan of equality, did not eradicate the prevailing caste system in India. In fact, Islam itself became influenced by the existing caste system, resulting in divisions within the Muslim community, albeit not in a theoretical sense but in practical terms.

It is noteworthy that Islam did not maintain a uniform form, and the Muslim society was not monolithic. Hindu society and Sufi sects played a significant role in shaping the Islamic and Muslim societies in India. As a result, Islam in South Asia developed distinct characteristics separate from those of the Arab region and Central Asia. In the current era, there is concern that the liberal form of Islam in India is gradually diminishing amidst the rise of religious fanaticism.

The above factors practically led to divisions within the Muslim society, resulting in groups such as Ashraf, Ajlaf, and Arzal.

- **Ashraf:** The Ashraf group consisted of elite Muslims, and within this group, there were further divisions into two subgroups known as Ahl-e-Saif and Ahl-e-Qalam.

Ahl-e-Saif primarily encompassed the elites involved in politics, administration, and the military. Even among them, there was a form of stratification, which can be categorized as follows: Khan, Malik, and Amir

The title of Amir was granted to relatively lower-ranking officials appointed to administrative positions and serving in the court. On the other hand, senior officials were bestowed with the title of Malik. The nobles mentioned by writers like Barani and Minhaj-us-Siraj were generally of the Malik level, indicating their higher status. Additionally, the influence of the Mongols gave rise to the highest level known as Khan. During the reign of Genghis Khan, a Khan referred to the leader of more than 10,000 soldiers. During the Sultanate period, the title underwent a transformation and became more of an honorary distinction associated with a particular role. It was granted to individuals who demonstrated exceptional service and contribution. A notable example is Balban, who was honored with the title of Ulug Khan as a mark of respect.

- **Ahl-e-Qalam:** In the early days of the Sultanate's establishment, the focus of the state was primarily on conflict, expansion, and warfare, resulting in the Ahl-e-Qalam (scholars, clerks, ulema, etc.) holding less significance compared to the Ahl-e-Saif (military and administrative elites). However, as stability gradually took hold and the state required intellectual support and legitimacy, the importance of intellectual pursuits and the role of Ulemas increased. Consequently, the Ahl-e-Qalam gained prominence. Nonetheless, the Ahl-e-Saif continued to maintain a dominant position over the Ahl-e-Qalam.

- **Ajlaf** – The Ajlaf group was composed of lower-caste Muslims, including artisans, craftsmen, farmers, and individuals from lower professional backgrounds. A significant portion of this group consisted of converts from Hinduism. Although Islam advocated equality at a theoretical level, in practice, a distinction arose between the Ashraf (elite) and the Ajlaf. Marital relationships were also not established between the two groups, further emphasizing the divide.

- **Arzal-** Untouchables who converted from Hindu society were later categorized into a

separate group known as the 'Arzal'. Despite their conversion to Islam, they continued to experience a sense of alienation within Muslim society.

■ Condition of Women under Islam

Although Prophet Mohammad advocated for equality between men and women, over time the social status of women deteriorated within the changing nature of Islam. The practice of polygamy among men was supported by Muslim Sharia, and the purdah system became prevalent, symbolizing nobility. This system was also observed in ancient Greece and Iran. According to Muslim Sharia, women were deprived of property rights and inheritance. An example of the challenges faced by women in Muslim society is Razia Sultan, who despite possessing all the qualities, struggled to gain legitimacy as the successor of Iltutmish. Similar to Hindu society, women in Muslim society also experienced a subordinate status.

Question: Slave and caste system in the Sultanate period.

Answer: The slave system and caste system during the Sultanate period can be examined in the context of the influence of technology on society. Slavery has been documented in India since ancient times, and its practice continued during the Sultanate period. With the arrival of the Turks, numerous new crafts were introduced, which became integral to the production process. These crafts required skilled laborers, but initially, Indian craftsmen were hesitant to embrace them. Consequently, a significant number of slaves were employed to operate these crafts. This explains why the collection of slaves was emphasized by almost all the Sultans, from Muhammad Ghori to Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Firoz Shah Tughlaq, for instance, had a staggering count of 180,000 slaves and even prohibited slave exports. Historical accounts by Barani mention the existence of a slave market in Delhi. While some slaves were employed in military service, others were involved in production.

In fact, the establishment of Turkish rule weakened the Indian aristocracy based on the Brahmanical system. On the other hand, the establishment of Turkish rule provided new economic opportunities in the cities and towns. To meet the needs of the ruling class, a large amount of production was needed and a class of artisans was also needed to run the production. Indian artisans belonging to the lower caste began to show interest in new crafts in the cities and towns, but as we know, there was a deep connection between caste and craft in the Indian social system.

Therefore, it was necessary to break the caste barrier to adopt the new craft. Therefore, the development of monotheistic movement or

Nirguna bhakti in cities and towns during the Sultanate period can also be seen in this context. Nirgun devotion weakened the caste bond and encouraged new crafts. Kabirdas and Nanak became the originators of this monotheistic movement. Both Kabirdas and Nanak rejected the caste system. Kabirdas gave a new assurance to the low caste artisans. On the other hand Under the influence of Guru Nanak's spiritual thoughts, the Khatri castes and Jaats in Punjab got organized as a separate community, which we know as Sikhs.

Thus the arrival of new crafts in the Sultanate period affected both the slave system and the caste system.

A new form of cultural diversity emerged during the medieval period, known as the Ganga–Jamuni Tehzeeb. This Tehzeeb was a product of the mutual exchange between Hindu and Islamic cultures. Several factors contributed to the promotion of cultural diversity during this period.

1. Migration of population from North-West

- New social groups from Central Asia and West Asia arrived during the medieval period, including Turks, Mongols, and Mughals. Both external and internal factors played crucial roles in the migration of these populations. The external factor was the unstable politics of Central Asia and West Asia. Initially, the Turks were a Central Asian tribe that embraced Islam and began serving under Islamic rulers, eventually becoming a political force that expanded towards India. The invasions of Ghazni and Ghori should be understood in this context. The arrival of Afghans and Mughals followed a similar pattern.

At the same time, an internal factor contributed to this migration, which was the attraction of India. India was a prosperous country, and under the rule of the Sultans and Mughals, talented individuals found better opportunities. This increased the attraction towards India. The Mongol invasion played a significant role in attracting talented individuals from Central Asia and West Asia to migrate in India. Amir Khusro was among those who made the journey. During this period, Sufi saints, scholars, artists, and artisans also migrated, contributing to the development of Indian culture. Additionally, a considerable number of Turks, Tajiks from West Asia, and Afghans joined the service of the state. Under the Mughals, Delhi and Agra became important centers of attraction in the Islamic world, attracting numerous scholars, artists, and entrepreneurs. Alongside the Iranian influences, significant elements of

Khurasani also became part of the Mughal aristocracy (Amirs).

The influx of new elements was not limited to North India alone. Even before the establishment of Arab power in Sindh, Arab traders had settled on the Malabar Coast in the Southwest. With the establishment of Turkish rule in North India, the Turkish state transformed into an empire extending southward until the 14th century. This expansion led to further movements towards the south. Alauddin Khilji launched campaigns in the south, and under Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, the Turkish Empire expanded to the farthest southern regions. In a bid to exert better control over South India, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq even shifted his capital to Devagiri. Consequently, a group of Muslim elites from the north migrated to the south, resulting in the spread of Islamic culture there. This trend continued during the Mughal period. Shah Jahan conquered Ahmednagar and assimilated it into the Mughal Empire, while Aurangzeb pursued a policy of expansion towards south beyond the Krishna River by conquering Bijapur and Golconda. As a result, new elements naturally migrated from the north to the south. The Muslim population distributed in regions such as Kashmir, Punjab, and Gujarat in North India to Bengal in the East, and eventually reached the far south. Alongside the conquerors, Sufi saints also ventured southward, aiming to illuminate the softer aspects of Islam to the people there. One such Sufi saint was Banda Nawaz Gesudaraz, who established his 'Khanqah' in Hyderabad.

2. The specific nature of Islam and Hinduism and their mutual exchange-

Hinduism, being an inclusive religion, assimilated various opposing sects and religious groups that emerged in India. Similarly, Islam was also a comprehensive religion that continued to expand its influence wherever it went, often

replacing existing faiths. Consequently, Muslims initially arrived as a minority in new regions but gradually became the majority.

However, Hinduism in India could not completely absorb Islam due to its distinct religious nature. Islam prioritized religion above society, while Hinduism had a deep-rooted and ancient heritage. These factors prevented Islam from displacing Hinduism entirely. As a result, Muslims in India maintained their minority status over time.

After coexisting for several centuries, Hinduism and Islam developed a syncretic culture, which found expression in various aspects of life. This integrated culture thrived in domains such as cuisine, lifestyle, religion, art, language, and literature during the rule of the Sultanate and Mughal dynasties for around five hundred years. This unique blend was commonly referred to as “Gangi-Yamuni Tehzeeb.”

In the realm of religion, this fusion was evident through the Bhakti and Sufi movements. Hindu and Muslim mystics shared such similar ideas that they worked towards fostering emotional unity. Nirguna saints like Kabir and Nanak, alongside Sufi saints such as Nizamuddin Auliya, made significant contributions to the composite culture of India. Both sets of saints expressed profound love and devotion towards the formless God. Kabir, in particular, cannot be easily classified within a specific Hindu or Muslim tradition. Similarly, Sufi saints often used the language of the Hindus, such as Awadhi and Punjabi, in their works and even described the households of Hindus in their writings.

Likewise, in the domains of art, architecture, painting, and music, Hinduism and Islam influenced and contributed to each other in significant ways.

Before the establishment of Muslim rule, India had a rich architectural tradition, commonly known as the Lintel style. However, with the advent of Islam, construction shifted towards the

use of the arch style. Arch and dome structures became prominent features, influenced by the Mehrabi (Arcuade) style. Islam drew inspiration for this architectural style from the Byzantine Empire or the Roman Empire. Despite this shift, the deeply ingrained influence of the prevailing Lintel style remained pervasive, making it impossible to escape its impact. As a result, a harmonious relationship between the two styles emerged in the construction works carried out until the Mughal period.

Similarly, during the Sultanate period, a distinct form of painting did not fully emerge. However, there was improved coordination between the Iranian and Indian styles under the patronage of the great Mughals. The Chaurapanchasika style, also known as the pothi style, exerted a strong influence on Mughal miniature paintings. In the field of music art, Hindustani style developed through the amalgamation of Iranian and Indian styles. Various forms of singing such as Dhrupad, Khayal, Ghazal, Tappa, and Thumri flourished under the Hindustani style. Dhrupad singing thrived during the reign of the great Mughals. It was during this period that Kathak dance also received patronage from the Mughals, despite its origins in temples.

The coordinated contributions of Hindus and Muslims in the realm of language and literature hold significant importance. During the Sultanate and Mughal periods, Persian served as the official language. Hindus played a crucial role in promoting Persian language and literature, exemplified by figures like Ishwardas Nagar and Bhimsen Burhanpuri during the Mughal era. Subsequently, Urdu emerged as a shared language for both Hindus and Muslims. Urdu was commonly referred to as Zuban-e-Delhi. Following the partition, Urdu became the official language of Pakistan, instead of Persian. Meanwhile, the Muslim rulers in India extended patronage to Indian languages. Sanskrit and Hindi literature received protection and support in the Mughal court. It is pleasantly surprising

to find that Raskhan, a Muslim, composes melodious poetry in Braj Bhasha.

3. Harmony of Islam with regional elements-

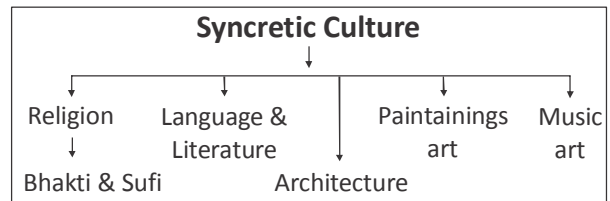
Whenever the central Muslim empire collapsed, regional power was established by Muslim officers, leading to a harmonization of Islamic principles with local cultures. Regional styles of art emerged, and Muslim rulers actively supported regional languages and literature. Consequently, Muslim communities were influenced by the local food habits and lifestyles. This pattern was observed in regions such as Gujarat, Bengal, Jaunpur, and the Deccan, where the rule of Muslim rulers was established. As a result, Islam in India underwent both Indianization and regionalization. There were notable differences in the ways of life between Muslims in Punjab and Bengal. Hence, it was not feasible for Pakistani rulers to unite all Indian Muslims under the banner of Pakistan solely based on religion.

4. 18th century India, a rainbow mix of cultures- The 18th century marked a significant era in India's history as a rich and diverse multicultural society took shape on the cusp of British rule. The interactions between Hindus

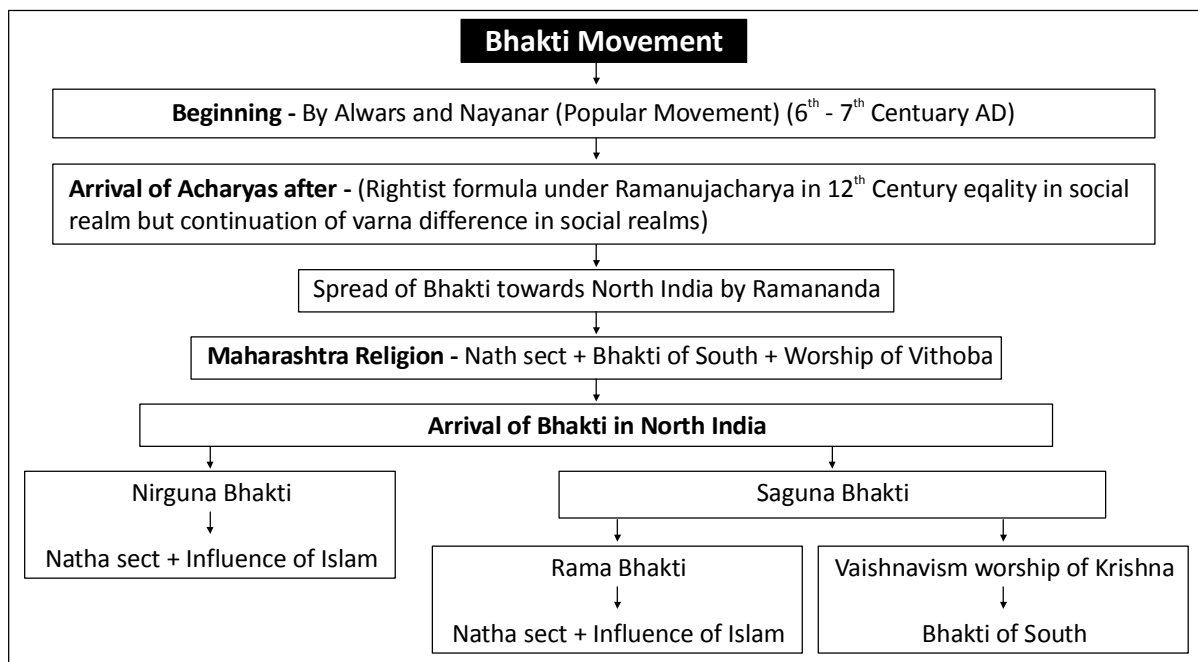
and Muslims greatly influenced their food habits, lifestyles, and overall ways of life. Hindawi emerged as a popular language, with Khadi Boli and Urdu serving as notable forms of expression.

Despite the decline of the Mughal Empire, the enchanting essence of Mughal culture continued to thrive and expand at the regional level. Local states wholeheartedly embraced and supported the grandeur of Mughal traditions, resulting in a lasting imprint. The far-reaching influence of Mughal culture was so captivating that even the British, during the 18th century, found themselves unable to resist its allure. This observation was eloquently conveyed by acclaimed British writer William Dalrymple in his renowned work, 'White Mughals.'

The blending of Hinduism and the Sufi order played a pivotal role in differentiating South Asia(India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) from the broader Islamic world.



Bhakti and Sufi Movement



The Bhakti movement originated in South India, taking shape through the teachings of the Alvar and Nayanar saints. The movement gained stability and structure under the guidance of the Acharyas. Gradually, Bhakti spread from the south to the north, while simultaneously evolving into a distinct form in Maharashtra known as 'Maharashtra Dharma'.

■ Explaining the nature of Maharashtra religion, explain its role in state building-

The Maharashtra religion held a unique form, centered around the worship of the regional deity 'Vithoba' with Pandharpur as its focal point. Prominent saints like Gyandev, Namdev, Eknath, Tukaram, and Ramdas Samarth played significant roles within this tradition. Influences from both the Vaishnava and Nath sects shaped the Maharashtra religion, leading to the rejection of caste divisions and the cultivation of a unified Marathi identity among the people of the region. The Maharashtra saints revitalized the Marathi language, which was the language of the common people, expressing their emotions through heartfelt compositions called 'Abhangas'. This religion embraced the masses, removing distinctions of high and low castes. It provided a platform for progressive leaders like Shivaji to rally and organize lower-caste

individuals within his army.

While Hinduism is generally known for its tolerance, the Maharashtra religion exhibited a fervent desire for victory, known as "Jayishnu". During conflicts with the Mughals, the Maharashtra religion played a crucial role in the establishment of the Maratha state, leveraging the aforementioned factors.

■ How did the arrival of Bhakti from South India influence and shape the religious practices in the northern regions of India?

The Bhakti movement in South India manifested with two prominent characteristics: first, the worship of deities in physical form, such as Vishnu and Shiva; and second, a compromise with the prevailing varna and caste divisions under the influence of the Acharyas.

As the Bhakti movement spread to the northern regions, it underwent a division into two streams: Saguna Bhakti Dhara and Nirguna Bhakti Dhara. The Saguna Bhakti school shared many similarities with the southern Bhakti, including the worship of deities in physical form and compromise with caste divisions. The only difference lay in the specific deities worshiped, with Rama and Krishna gaining prominence in the north instead of Vishnu and Shiva.

In contrast, the Nirguna Bhakti Dhara emerged as a distinct and unique stream in the north, establishing its own identity apart from the Bhakti movement in the south. It centered its worship on the formless God and expressed profound love for Him, incorporating elements of mysticism. Moreover, it rejected the caste divisions under the influence of the Natha sect. These factors contributed to the distinctiveness and significance of Nirguna Bhakti. Its development can be attributed to the combined influences of the Natha cult, Bhakti tradition, monotheism in Islam, and the Sufi sect.

■ **Throw light on the contribution of Nirguna Bhakti with special reference to Kabir and Nanak.**

Nirguna Bhakti, a religious movement led by saints like Kabir and Nanak, had a profound impact on contemporary society, religion, and culture.

1. Religious Reformers: The Nirguna saints served as religious reformers by emphasizing the worship of the formless God. Consequently, they questioned the significance of temples, idol worship, and priesthood. Kabir, in particular, did not adhere to traditional scriptures, relying instead on his personal experiences as proof. Similarly, Guru Nanak emphasized the importance of the concept of 'Ek Hi Omkar' (the belief in the existence of one supreme reality).

2. Social Reformers: Kabir strongly rejected the caste system and advocated for Hindu-Muslim unity. He questioned the division between the followers of God and Allah, as they were essentially the same. Through the pursuit of divine unity, he paved the way for human unity. Guru Nanak, too, rejected caste identities and emphasized the discipleship as the sole important identity, leading to the emergence of the term 'Sikh.'

3. Nirguna Bhaktas did not emphasize a monastic life but rather the life of householders. Kabir and Nanak both remained actively engaged in their respective occupations throughout their

lives. Kabir even referenced the importance of productive work in his couplets. As- 'Jhini Jhini Beeni Chadriya, Kahe Kai Tana Kahe Kai Bharni, Kaun Tar Se Beeni Chadriya'.

Similarly, the Sikh tradition places great importance on Kirat Karni, which refers to honest and productive labor. Thus, Nirguna Bhaktas encouraged craft production.

4. Cultural contribution: The Nirguna Bhaktas made significant contributions to literature and music. Kabir Das, for instance, gave importance to the Hindawi language alongside Sanskrit and enriched Hindawi literature through the use of Dohe(couplets), sakhis, and other poetic forms. Most notably, Kabir's Dohe and sakhis are lyrical and serve as excellent musical examples.

Similarly, Nanak's writings enriched Punjabi literature. The 'Sabads' penned by Nanak are remarkable musical compositions.

■ **Limitations of the Nirguna Bhakti**

1. Saints like Kabir and Nanak were primarily religious and spiritual figures rather than social reformers. Hence, despite their criticism of social ills, they were unable to offer concrete alternatives.

2. Kabir has been likened to Martin Luther of the 15th century, but the reality is that, like the Protestant movement, the devotion of Kabir and Nanak could not dismantle the stronghold of feudalism.

Question: What factors led to the establishment of the Sikh Panth as a Sikh state?

Answer: From its inception, Guru Nanak's devotion had a distinct focus on community. His followers, known as Shishyas or Sikhs, actively engaged with him and participated in communal activities, including singing devotional songs together. Guru Nanak emphasized the importance of the langar system, where communal meals were served, fostering a strong sense of brotherhood among his followers.

- In response to the Mughal Empire's oppressive measures against the peaceful Sikh

religion, the Sikh community transformed into a military force. The Khalsa, representing Sikh unity, emerged as a symbol of strength and resilience. Eventually, this movement inspired the establishment of a separate Sikh state.

- The Sikh sect, therefore, emerged as a result of Guru Nanak's teachings and the subsequent challenges faced by the Sikh community, leading to their transformation from a religious group to a military force and ultimately paving the way for the formation of a distinct Sikh state.

Sagun Shakti or Vaishnavism movement

In the realm of Saguna Bhakti in northern India, prominent deities such as Rama and Krishna are revered as incarnations of Vishnu. Saints like Tulsidas and Nabhadass have been associated with Ram Bhakti Dhara, whereas Krishna Bhakti Dhara has gained wider expansion and popularity. Notably, Vallabhacharya and the poets of 'Ashtachap' in North India have contributed significantly to this tradition. Surdas, who composed 'Sursagar,' is also counted among these notable figures.

In Gujarat, Krishna Bhakti Dhara found representation through Narsi Mehta, while Meerabai became an iconic figure for it in Rajasthan. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu played a significant role in spreading Krishna Bhakti in Bengal, and Shankardev did the same in Assam. The reason behind Krishna Bhakti's greater popularity can be attributed to its emphasis on Sankhya Bhav, a devotional sentiment based on deep affection and love. On the other hand, Ram Bhakti was characterized by a sense of devotion rooted in servitude, known as Dasya Bhav.

■ Contribution of The Saguna Bhakti

1. In the social realm, although Saguna Bhakti did not completely abolish or reject the caste system, it did help alleviate its bitterness to some extent. Tulsidas, through his Ram Katha, made an attempt to mitigate the impact of the caste system by illustrating the close relationships between Lord Rama and individuals from various castes such as Shabari,

Kevat, monkeys, and bears. Conversely, Krishna Bhakti does not appear to address the issue of caste dignity seriously.

The development of language and literature has witnessed a unique contribution from Saguna Bhakti, significantly enriching the linguistic and literary traditions of North India. This impact can be comprehended in the following manner:-

(i) Braj Language:

The credit goes to the Bhakti movement for bestowing literary status upon Braj Bhasha, an important dialect of the Hindi region. Surdas's masterpiece, 'Sursagar,' stands out as a unique literary work abundant in Vatsalya Rasa (parental love) and Shringar Rasa (romantic love).

(ii) Awadhi Language:

The significance of Awadhi, another dialect of the Hindi region, grew due to its association with Lord Rama's birthplace. Tulsidas's composition, 'RamcharitManas,' elevated typical Awadhi to the status of a literary language. As a result, 'RamcharitManas' gained immense popularity. Today, if the narrative of Lord Rama is alive, it resonates not through Valmiki's voice but through the verses of Tulsidas. Grierson referred to 'RamcharitManas' as the Bible in every Hindu home.

(iii) Gujarati Language:

Narsi Mehta, a poet devoted to Krishna Bhakti, enriched the Gujarati language. His devotional songs attracted the attention of Mahatma Gandhi.

(iv) Rajasthani Language:

Credit goes to Meera Bai for elevating the Rajasthani dialect to the realm of sophisticated literary language. Meera's hymns are not only a part of Indian literature but also a cherished heritage of Indian music. On his final birthday, Mahatma Gandhi expressed his desire to hear Meera's hymns.

(v) Bengali Language:

Various saints, from Chandidas to Chaitanya

Mahaprabhu, have made significant contributions to the development of the Bengali language. The works of Chaitanya and the writings of scholars on his life have enriched Bengali literature.

(vi) Assamese Language:

Bhakti saints like Shankardev played vital roles in the development of the Assamese language. Through their works, they elevated Assamese to the status of a literary language.

3. Contribution to the Arts:

(i) Architecture:

Saguna Bhakti greatly encouraged the development of architecture in North India. Even today, some of the important temples built in the Nagara style bear the influence of Bhakti and are associated with Rama and Krishna.

(ii) Sculpture:

Saguna Bhakti emphasized idol worship, thereby promoting the art of sculpture. Inspired by Saguna Bhakti, beautiful idols of Ram-Sita and Radha-Krishna were created and installed in temples.

(iii) Dance Art:

The evolution of Kathak dance in North India and the Sattriya dance in Assam is closely associated with Vaishnava philosophy.

(iv) Painting Art:

The stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata have played significant roles in Indian painting. Particularly, the idols of Radha-Krishna have been important inspirations for styles like the 'Kishangarh style' of Rajput paintings, Pahari style and Madhubani painting styles.

(v) Music Art:

Saguna Bhakti provided special encouragement to music. Swami Haridas made important contributions to 'Dhrupad Gayaki' (a style of classical vocal music). The bhajans (devotional songs) composed by Meera and Narsi Mehta exemplify excellent singing. Similarly, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the

Sankirtana system, a form of congregational chanting.

■ Contribution of women in the Bhakti movement-

1. In Saguna Bhakti, women saints emerged from time to time, exerting their influence on the Bhakti movement.

2. Based on devotional literature, it is estimated that there were approximately 80 female saints. The earliest information we have is about the Alvar saint Andal. In northern Kashmir, a female saint named Lal Ded held a special influence. She had interactions with Nuruddin, a saint belonging to the Rishi Sufi order. Similarly, Mahadevi Akka, a female saint from the Veerashaiva sect in Karnataka, defied societal norms by walking naked on the open road with her hair covering her body, challenging the honor expected of the royal family. Lastly, a discussion of women saints would be incomplete without mentioning Mirabai. Despite being a daughter-in-law of the Sisodia dynasty, Meera openly accepted Krishna as her husband, disregarding the expectations of the royal family. Her devotional songs, known as "Meera bhakti songs," have become a unique musical heritage.

Contribution: Women saints challenged the male-dominated feudal society by breaking social and familial norms. Their actions during the medieval period symbolized social rebellion.

Limitations: Their resistance against the male-dominated feudal society remained personal and individualistic. Rather than engaging in open struggle, they sought refuge in religion and spirituality.

Sufi Movement

The word "Sufi" is derived from "Safa," which has various meanings such as holy or coarse cloth made of wool. Sufism represents the development of the mystical aspect within Islam. It has been influenced by diverse ideas and philosophies, including Mahayana Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Neoplatonism, and Christianity. The influence of monistic thinking, as seen in

Nirguna Bhakti, is also evident in Sufi thought. Sufism emphasizes the unity of the individual soul (Jiva) with the Supreme Reality (Brahman). Initially, orthodox Sunni Muslims opposed this notion, but the credit for establishing it within the Muslim world goes to Al-Ghazali. Sufi thought flourished in the land of Iran. The arrival of Sufi thinkers in India began with the conquest of Sindh, and during the period of Ghazni and Ghor, a large number of Sufi saints migrated to India. In the 16th century, Abul Fazl mentioned 14 Sufi orders in India, with Chishti and Suhrawardi being prominent among them.

Socio-Cultural Contribution of Sufis

1. Sufi saints created the social basis of Muslim rule in India by presenting a humanistic form of Islam.
2. They served as an ideological bridge between Hindu and Muslim societies.
3. Kabir emphasized the unity of spiritual existence, while Jayasi achieved unity in real-life experiences. Sufi saints told stories in the languages of the Hindus, with Jayasi using Awadhi and Bulleh Shah and others using Punjabi.
4. They made significant contributions to the development of Urdu language and literature.
5. Sufi saints greatly influenced the development of Indian music, particularly Hindustani music. They organized Sama gatherings in their Khanqahs, leading to the emergence of Qawwali as a new style of music.

Question: Sufis and medieval saints failed to modify either religious ideas and practices or the outward structure of Hindu/Muslim societies to any appreciable extent. Comment
[UPSC-2014]

Answer: Sufi and Sant(Saint) Bhakti have been regarded as medieval socio-religious movements with the belief that they aimed to reform the social system through religious

transformations. However, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that their efforts to bring about social reform through religion and spirituality did not yield significant practical results.

Prominent saints such as Kabir, Nanak, and Sufi saint Jayasi endeavored to eliminate religious and social inequalities prevailing within Hindu and Muslim societies by emphasizing key religious and spiritual principles. They rejected various rituals and rituals-based practices. Kabir sought to establish the oneness of Allah and God, questioning the division between Hindus and Muslims. He also questioned the necessity of idol worship and rituals in attaining unity between the soul and Brahman. However, for effective transformation within medieval society, a well-organized and structured social movement was required. Mere promotion of religious and spiritual unity proved insufficient. Consequently, the Bhakti and Sufi saints achieved limited success in their objectives.

Question- The 'flute-playing Krishna' theme is very popular in Indian art. Discuss
[UPSC-2012]

Answer: Both Ram and Krishna have been popular subjects in the folk tales of India, but Krishna has enjoyed greater popularity. This is because Krishna's Bhakti, characterized by a sense of divine love, brings more joy and entertainment to the people compared to Ram's Bhakti.

Literature: The compositions of Rahim Kavi, which include hymns about Chaitanya and Meera, as well as the writings of Surdas and Vallabhacharya, revolve around the enchanting figure of Murli Manohar Krishna.

Architecture: The cities of Mathura and Vrindavan in the north, Bengal and Assam in the east, and Gujarat and Rajasthan in the west, along with numerous grand temples throughout India, showcase the divine beauty of Murli Manohar Krishna's idols.

Sculpture: Virtually every skilled sculptor in

India has created exquisite idols of Murli Manohar Krishna with their own hands.

Painting: Radha Krishna, being the epitome of divine love, has been central to various painting styles, ranging from Rajput and Mughal paintings to the Kishangarh and Madhubani styles.

Dance Art: The profound relationship of Radha and Krishna forms the foundation of Kathak and Satriya dances, but their influence can also be observed in other dance styles.

Music Art: Whether in the Hindustani or Carnatic style of music, numerous ragas have been developed based on the divine love and connection between Radha and Krishna.

Question:- Describe the contribution of Mirabai to the Indian Bhakti tradition.

1. Meerabai provided an alternative voice within the Bhakti movement, emphasizing women's identity. Devotion, temples, and saints were primarily associated with a male-dominated society. Meera's remarkable step of joining a group of male sanyasis challenged societal norms and was a revolutionary act. Despite coming from the royal Sisodia family, she voluntarily renounced worldly comforts and set a powerful example for women.

2. Meera's arrival signaled a rebellion by women against the male-dominated society, making her a symbol of social revolution. Consequently, her memory is not cherished in the eyes of the male-dominated society, as evidenced by the reluctance to name daughters Meera in Rajasthan even today.

3. The essence of Krishna Bhakti finds its most tender expression through Meera's devotion. Her bhajans have become a treasured heritage of Indian music. In fact, Mahatma Gandhi, on his

first birthday in independent India, celebrated by listening to Meera's bhajans.

4. Meera's works hold a unique place in Rajasthani literature, representing a rich literary heritage.

Question:- The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Discuss

[UPSC-2018]

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu introduced a deeply emotional element to Bhakti and fostered closer ties with the Sufi order. He started the sankirtan system, which transformed the Bhakti movement into a popular movement. Both Hindus and Muslims in Bengal were drawn towards the practice of Sankirtan.

Chaitanya's influence extended to Muslim-majority areas, where he not only prevented conversions to Islam but also witnessed many Muslims converting to Hinduism under his influence.

His impact was so significant that he came to be regarded as an incarnation of Krishna. He then sent his six Goswami saints to establish the foundation of Bhakti in Vrindavan.

Chaitanya firmly established Bengali culture in Bengal, which endured even after the partition of India. Pakistan could not escape the rich heritage of Bengali culture, leading to the eventual division of East Pakistan to form Bangladesh.

Chaitanya's Bhakti revolutionized Krishna Bhakti to such an extent that it became a captivating force not only for Indians across different regions but also for foreigners. The ISKCON temple stands as a vivid testament to this phenomenon.

Practice Question: Evaluate the nature Of the Bhakti literature and its contribution to Indian culture. [UPSC-2021 250 words]

Sultanate Literature (1200 AD—1526 AD)

■ **Persian Literature:** During the medieval period, Persian emerged as the official language, and its literature gained prominence. Initially, Persian literature flourished in Iran, with Mahmud Ghazni playing a crucial role in fostering a renaissance in Persian language literature. Notably, the renowned scholar Firdausi composed the Shahnama during this era.

Subsequently, the Turkish rulers in India adopted Persian as the official language. As scholars sought refuge from the Mongol invasion, they migrated to India and received patronage from central and provincial governments. Additionally, scholars from various regions of India also supported Persian language literature.

During this period, numerous texts were written in Persian, particularly historical works. Writing about the life of the Prophet and the Caliphs held religious significance in Islam. Furthermore, marking events related to the Sultan's life gained importance, leading to the composition of numerous historical books. In the court of Qutubuddin Aibak, Hasan Nizami wrote 'Taj-ul-Maasir,' which provides insights into the architecture of the Delhi Sultanate. Minhaj-us-Siraj's 'Tabaqat-i-Nasiri' and Barani's 'Tarikh-i-Firozshahi' continued this tradition. Afif further carried Barani legacy in his work as a sequel of 'Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi.' Yahya-bin Ahmad Sirhindi's 'Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi' also contributed to this genre.

■ **Amir Khusro** - a prominent scholar of his time, composed significant literary texts in Persian that shed light on contemporary history. His works such as 'Qiran-us-Sadain,' 'Miftah-ul-Futuh,' and 'Khazain-ul-Futuh' played a crucial role in this regard. Moreover, Amir Khusro's contributions extended to the development of

the vernacular language. He is credited with the development of 'Hindawi,' based on Khari Boli, which further evolved into two styles. The style written in Devanagari script came to be known as 'Hindi,' while the style written in Persian script was called 'Urdu' (Rekhta). Therefore, Amir Khusro is also acknowledged as the father of Urdu.

■ Native Language

- **Sanskrit literature:** While certain Hindu dynasties experienced a decline during this period, Sanskrit literature continued to receive patronage from regional Hindu rulers who recognized its religious significance.

- **Hindi and Urdu:** Hindi language literature gained prominence during this era, largely due to the contributions of Bhakti saints. Rama Bhakti poets promoted the use of Awadhi language, while Krishna Bhakti poets emphasized the Braj language. Additionally, Kabirdas played a pivotal role in strengthening the Hindi language.

Urdu emerged from the interaction between Persian and Indian languages. It is believed to have originated in Sufi Khanqahs or military camps. Initially, this language spread towards the south and became known as Deccani.

■ Regional Language and Literature

During the early medieval period, regional languages began to flourish due to increasing local influence. Languages such as Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati, Maithili, and Oriya underwent significant development during this time.

The development of Punjabi can be attributed to the speech of Guru Nanak and the contributions of other gurus who promoted its usage. Guru Arjun Dev compiled the Guru Granth Sahib in Punjabi, further establishing its significance. Similarly, the Gujarati language developed independently with notable contributions from Bhakti saint Narsi Mehta.

Maithili language literature saw significant growth under the influence of Vidyapati's contributions. Additionally, Bengali language developed independently, with influences from Maithili. The biography of Chaitanya, penned by the saint poet Vrindavandas, laid the foundation for the development of Bengali language literature.

During this period, Maratha literature also witnessed progress, with Marathi saints making noteworthy contributions. Saints like Namdev, Ekanath, and Tukaram played vital roles in the development of Marathi language literature.

Mughal Literature

The Mughal period was a remarkable era in terms of literary and artistic endeavors. The Mughals held influence over vast territories, enabling them to provide patronage to literature and art.

■ Factors Motivating Literary Activities

The Mughal rulers generously supported numerous scholars, ensuring a continuous presence of intellectual figures within the Mughal court from Babur to Aurangzeb's reigns. Even after the fragmentation of the Mughal Empire, rulers like Muhammad Shah continued to provide patronage to scholars. This resulted in the support and recognition of many esteemed scholars, such as Faizi Sirhindi and Abul Fazl during Akbar's reign. Likewise, notable scholars like Mutamid Khan, Khwaja Kamgar, Abdul Hamid Lahori, and Inayat Khan thrived under Shahjahan's patronage, while Mirza Muhammad Kazim, Ishwardas Nagar, Bhimsen Burhanpuri, and others received support during Aurangzeb's reign.

The Mughal rulers had a special interest in literary writing. For example, Babur himself wrote his autobiography, *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, which was written in Turkish. Similarly, Jahangir authored a work named *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, which serves as his autobiography. Additionally, the Mughal rulers demonstrated a keen interest in

the composition of historical texts and maintained renowned historians within their courts.

For instance, Gulbadan Begum, the sister of Humayun, authored a work known as the *Humayun Nama*. Faizi Sirhindi and Abul Fazl both composed the *Akbarnama* in the court of Emperor Akbar. Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* is a part of the *Akbarnama*. On the other hand, Badauni, a staunch critic of Akbar, penned a work titled "*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*," while Nizamuddin Ahmed wrote a book called *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*. During the reign of Jahangir, Mutamid Khan wrote the *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*, and Khwaja Kamgar composed the *Maasir-i-Jahangiri*. Similarly, in the era of Shah Jahan, Abdul Hameed Lahori and Muhammad Warish wrote the *Padshahnama*, while Inayat Khan authored the *Shahjahannama*. Furthermore, during Aurangzeb's rule, although the writing of history was prohibited, limiting the activities of historical writing, Khafi Khan secretly penned a work called the *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*. Mirza Muhammad Kazim also wrote the *Alamgirnama* during this period and presented it to Aurangzeb. The tradition of the Mughal rulers exemplified liberal rule, which fostered a composite culture. Consequently, alongside Persian literature, the Mughal court also patronized literature in various Indian languages. In Akbar's court, Mansingh and Birbal (Mahesh Das Thakur) made significant contributions to Hindi poetry writing. Similarly, Pandit Jagannath received patronage in the court of Shah Jahan.

During the later Mughal period, Urdu language literature received special treatment. Wali Deccani, a renowned Urdu scholar from the south, arrived at the Mughal court in the 18th century, leading to the establishment of Urdu literature alongside Persian. Poets such as Miratki Mir, Dard, and Sauda played a pivotal role in the development of Urdu literature.

Among the Mughal rulers, Akbar demonstrated a particular interest in translating

Indian texts into Persian. To facilitate this, a translation department was established, overseen by Faizi Sirhindi. As a result, major Indian texts such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Lilavati, Panchatantra, and others were translated into Persian.

During this period, the Bhakti movement received a significant impetus, leading to the continued encouragement of regional language literature beyond the Mughal court. Let's explore some examples:

- 1. Awadhi language:** In Awadhi language the Ram devotee poets made notable contributions. Tulsidas, during the reign of Akbar, composed the renowned Ramcharitmanas.
- 2. Braj Bhasha:** The Braj Bhasha witnessed the development of Krishna devotee poets. Surdas, during Akbar's rule, composed the Sur Sagar. Moreover, Vitthal Das composed the 84 talks of Vishnu during this period.
- 3. Punjabi language:** saw special contributions from the Sikh Gurus, not only in religious literature but also in the creation of non-religious literature. For instance, the famous work Heer-Ranjha was written during this period.
- 4. Bangla language literature:** scholars like Vrindavan Das, Krishnadas Kaviraj, and Lochandas played pivotal roles in its development.
- 5. Marathi language and literature:** were enriched by the contributions of Eknath, Tukaram, and Ramdas Samarth, who was the guru of Shivaji. Ramdas composed Dasbodh, an important literary work.

Development of education system in medieval period

In the medieval period, educational activities were limited to the elite class, and the information we have about this era is predominantly found in elite languages.

During this time, the Indian subcontinent started to be influenced by Islamic culture from the 7th century onwards. The Quran, which served as the foundation of Islamic culture, contained important teachings and revelations from Allah as conveyed by Prophet Muhammad. The study of Hadith, which refers to the traditions of Prophet Muhammad, was also an integral part of the Islamic education system. This system of education garnered the attention of sincere scholars, and the use of paper played a crucial role in its development.

During the Mongol invasions of Central Asia and West Asia, many scholars migrated and took refuge in Delhi, which served as a prominent center of the Muslim world. These scholars from Central Asia and West Asia played a significant role in the dissemination of Islamic culture. Their presence in Delhi and other cities facilitated the establishment of maktabas and madrasas, which were educational institutions focused on Islamic teachings. For instance, a 14th-century scholar named Al-Umari mentioned that around 1,000 madrasas were established in Delhi.

In addition to the aforementioned aspects, Sufi Khanqahs also played a significant role in the advancement of education. Various Sufi saints, from Nizamuddin Auliya to Naseeruddin, made valuable contributions to education. Notably, both the state and private individuals allocated funds for educational development. Consequently, the progress of education relied heavily on the interest and support of the ruling class. However, whenever there was a change in the rulers at the higher level, scholars often faced challenges in obtaining patronage. At times, even issues of sectarian differences such as Shia-Sunni conflicts affected the state's protection and support towards scholars.

It is a common belief that in the medieval period, the state did not support education based on Sanskrit, but instead focused on Persian and Arabic education. However, this belief is not entirely true. Persian texts provide evidence that an education system centered around Sanskrit also flourished during this period, and Hindu scholars received encouragement as well. Banaras emerged as a significant educational hub during this time. The Brahmins, who were proficient in Hindu sciences, expanded their knowledge beyond Sanskrit and also delved into Arabic and Persian studies.

The advancement in bookbinding techniques using paper played a significant role in fostering the growth of education during the medieval period. This led to the establishment of large libraries that became centers of knowledge. The

Mughal rulers, along with some prominent nobles, also took initiatives to create important libraries. Among the Mughal rulers, Akbar made noteworthy contributions to the development of education by emphasizing secular education. Shah Jahan, too, established a college in Delhi. The Mughal court was home to many esteemed scholars, including Sheikh Abdullah Shirazi, Abul Fazal, renowned astronomer Sawai Jai Singh, and celebrated poet Mirza Ghalib.

However, during colonial rule, the indigenous education system faced a decline in state support. Only a fraction of the indigenous education system managed to thrive under the state's patronage, while significant emphasis was placed on promoting the English education system.

■ ■ ■



Sultanate Architecture

Architecture is a reflection of the thoughts and perspectives of any given era. India showcased a rich architectural tradition, predominantly characterized by the Dharanik style, also known as the lintel Style. This style prominently featured pillars and beams. However, with the arrival of the Turks, a new architectural style known as the arch style was introduced. This style centered around the utilization of arches and domes. Moreover, the use of lime and gypsum began to influence architecture, making the construction of arches more convenient.

■ **Early Architecture**

When the Turks arrived in India, they initially lacked the time to develop entirely new architectural styles. Instead, they embraced and adapted the existing popular architectural styles found in India, resulting in the emergence of what is now known as Muslim architecture. Notable examples include the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque in Delhi and the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra in Ajmer, both constructed by Qutbuddin Aibak. Interestingly, Indian architecture and Muslim architecture shared common features that facilitated this fusion. Firstly, both styles embraced the concept of open courtyards. Secondly, ornamentation played a significant role in the decorative aspects of both architectural traditions. These shared elements enabled a seamless integration of Indian architectural elements into the Islamic architectural style.



During this period, the Qutub Minar, located in present-day Mehrauli in Delhi, held significant importance in the architecture of the Sultanate era as a commemoration of Turkish victory. The Qutub Minar exemplifies the Indo-Islamic architectural style, characterized by its solidity and beauty. The entire structure is crafted from red sandstone. Notably, the tower's balconies are a remarkable feature, showcasing skilled craftsmanship. The effective design of the minaret is further enhanced by the use of striated and angular projections on its walls, as well as panels and upper stages adorned with red and white sandstone.

■ **Ilbari Dynasty's Architecture**

Upon establishing their rule in India, the Turkish rulers enlisted the expertise of Indian architects to independently construct their magnificent architectural wonders. Consequently, it was only natural for Muslim architecture to be influenced by the indigenous Indian style. As different dynasties ascended to power, a gradual amalgamation of the arch style and the lintel Style emerged, giving rise to a distinctive Indian architectural tradition.

Under the Ilbari dynasty, Iltutmish played a pivotal role in architectural endeavors. He successfully completed the construction of the Qutub Minar, which was initially initiated by

Qutbuddin Aibak. Furthermore, he built the Sultan-i-Ghari as a poignant memorial for his son, Prince Muhammad. Notably, the tomb of Balban holds great significance as an architectural marvel, credited with introducing a scientific form of dome for the first time. However, recent research indicates that the Alai Darwaza, constructed by Alauddin Khilji, predates the tomb of Balban as the earliest example of a scientifically designed dome and arch.

■ Khilji Architecture

During the Khilji period, the arch style in architecture reached a greater level of maturity. It is believed that the Alai Darwaza, constructed by Alauddin Khilji, represents the first scientifically designed example of arches and domes. Additionally, this architectural masterpiece introduced the use of marble, making it the first Muslim structure in India to incorporate the use of marble.

It is said that Alauddin Khilji envisioned a tower twice the size of the Qutub Minar, but unfortunately, due to his untimely demise, he could not complete this ambitious project. However, he did oversee the construction of the Jamat-i-Khana mosque, situated near the dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya. This mosque stands as an early example of architecture built upon Islamic principles.

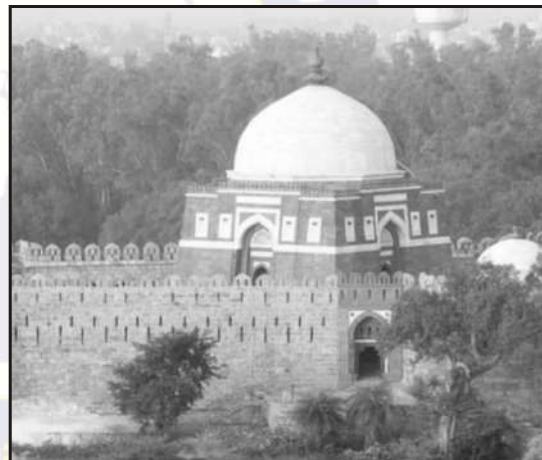


■ Tughlaq Architecture

The Tughlaq period holds special

significance in the development of architectural styles. Compared to earlier periods, Tughlaq architecture demonstrates a better integration between the arch style and the lintel style. The use of debris instead of high-quality construction materials during this era reflects the economic challenges faced by the state.

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq and Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq employed cast walls, known as Salami (Batter), in their architectural designs. The Tughlaq rulers constructed three notable medieval cities: Tughlaqabad by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, Jahanpanah by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, and Firoz Shah Kotla by Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Muhammad bin Tughlaq's architectural contributions include the construction of quadrangular arches, achieving a harmonious blend of arches and the lintel style. This architectural style was later adopted in the construction of Fatehpur Sikri during the reign of Akbar.



If we examine the architecture of Firozshah Tughlaq, we come to know that there is no use of cast walls or Batter in his architectural style. However, a notable feature of his architecture is the decorative use of lotus motifs.

■ Lodi Architecture

Lodi architecture showcases a remarkable harmony between the arch and the lintel style. During this period, the architectural structures were constructed amidst beautiful gardens. Notably, features like Chhajja (eaves) and Chhatris (domed pavilions) were incorporated

into the designs, which are influenced by Indian (Hindu) architecture.

The distinct characteristics of Lodi architecture are as follows:

1. The buildings were constructed in the center of gardens.
2. Octagonal shapes .
3. Double-layered domes were employed.
4. The architecture was built on elevated platforms.



Mughal Architecture

The Mughal period witnessed extensive exploitation of resources, providing ample means for architectural construction. Furthermore, several factors contributed to the promotion of architectural endeavors during this era. Firstly, the Mughal emperors themselves displayed a personal interest in architectural construction. Secondly, a noteworthy development was the introduction of architectural blueprints, which were prepared prior to commencing the actual construction process.

■ **Babur and Humayun**

Upon his arrival in India, Babur found little attraction in the existing architecture, deeming it lacking in proportion and balance. However, he was greatly impressed by the architectural marvels of Gwalior. Babur oversaw the construction of various mosques, including those in the old Lodi fort and a memorial mosque in Panipat. Furthermore, he introduced

innovative methods in garden design, example like Arambagh and others.

Similarly, Humayun, like his father Babur, had limited time for architectural pursuits. Nonetheless, he commissioned the construction of several mosques during his reign. It was following his demise that his wife, Hamida Banu Begum, took upon herself the remarkable task of building his tomb, which stands today as a unique masterpiece.



The mausoleum of Humayun presents a remarkable amalgamation of Islamic and Hindu architectural styles. It is designed in the Charbagh style, showcasing the influence of Hindu architecture. The placement of the mausoleum in the center of a garden and the use of umbrellas as architectural elements are indicative of Hindu architectural traits. Simultaneously, the presence of double-layered domes and minarets represents distinct Islamic architectural features.

Furthermore, Humayun's tomb serves as a testament to the grandeur of Mughal reign. It conveys the profound significance of the resting place for the revered soul, urging for eternal peace. The construction of the tomb amidst a serene garden setting creates an ambiance of tranquility and sanctity.



■ Akbar period Architecture

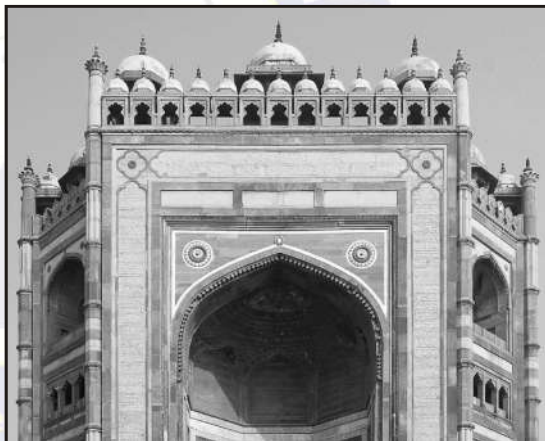
Akbar, a remarkable ruler, displayed exceptional skills as a builder, completing construction projects in two distinct phases. During the initial phase, he erected forts in Agra, Allahabad, and Lahore. In the subsequent phase, he undertook the construction work at Fatehpur Sikri.

Akbar's architectural masterpieces, crafted with splendid red stones, exude the grandeur and vitality of the mighty Mughal Empire. The architecture serves as a testament to the empire's power and energy, offering a glimpse into its remarkable evolution.

According to Abul Fazl, Akbar commissioned splendid structures in Agra. It is believed that over 500 buildings were constructed in the Gujarati and Bengali styles. Regrettably, Shah Jahan demolished these structures, replacing them with new edifices. Consequently, only the Jahangiri and Akbari Mahals in Agra remain as remnants from Akbar's reign.

The architecture of Akbar predominantly showcases the lintel style, with a special emphasis on its implementation. The arch style, on the other hand, was primarily employed for decorative purposes.

Following his victorious campaign in Gujarat, Akbar initiated the construction of Fatehpur Sikri. Subsequently, the magnificent Buland Darwaza was erected after his victorious campaign in the Deccan.



■ Jahangir period Architecture

During the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, a gradual development in architectural style can be observed. While Akbar's architecture radiated power and grandeur, the architecture of Jahangir and Shah Jahan embraced a more delicate and feminine beauty. Notably, three significant structures were constructed during Jahangir's era:

1. Akbar's Tomb in Agra
2. Tomb of Abdul Rahim Khan-Khana in Delhi

3. Tomb of Itmad Daulah in Agra

Jahangir emphasized specific methods of ornamentation and decoration-

1. Use of marble in jali work
2. Use of Pitradura technique

It was during this period that the construction of white marble buildings began, which were subsequently adorned with intricate designs of semi-precious stones in the form of flowers and leaves.



■ Shahjahan Period Architecture

During the reign of Shah Jahan, a profound interest in architecture was evident. He undertook the construction of various forts and buildings, notably demolishing Akbar's structures within Agra Fort and replacing them with new white marble edifices. Furthermore, he founded a new capital called Shahjahanabad in Delhi, where he built the magnificent Red Fort along with numerous other buildings. Shah Jahan's affinity for white marble persisted, and he adorned his structures with marble lattice and pitradura. In addition, he introduced a new method of decoration characterized by the use of multi-layered arches.

The most remarkable creation of Shah Jahan's era is the Taj Mahal. It embodies almost all the distinctive features of Mughal architecture, including

1. Charbagh style garden layout,
2. Use of double-layered dome
3. Use of decorative Chatris(umbrellas)

4. Use of pitradura for decoration

5. Use of a high platform for Buildings



■ Aurangzeb period Architecture

The period of Aurangzeb witnessed a decline in architectural endeavors, with only three notable structures that lacked significant impact. These structures are -

1. Moti Masjid in Delhi.
2. Badshahi Mosque in Lahore.
3. Tomb of Rabia Durrani in Aurangabad.



■ Shersah period Architecture-

Sher Shah is regarded as a precursor to Akbar, not only in the realms of administration and economy but also in the field of architecture. It is believed that Sher Shah, prior to Akbar's reign, achieved a better harmony between the arch and lintel styles in architectural construction. His tomb at Sasaram, constructed under Sher Shah's guidance, stands as a remarkable example of his architectural acumen. Situated amidst a pond, the tomb showcases a skillful implementation of the lintel style,

complemented by decorative umbrellas influenced by Hindu architecture. Notably, the structure stands on an elevated platform and features a single dome instead of a double-layered dome. Sher Shah's architecture emanates power and confidence.



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Medieval Paintings

India has a rich tradition of painting, with its earliest forms appearing as mural paintings in ancient times. These mural paintings originated from the cave paintings of Bhimbetka and continued to flourish in Ajanta, Bagh, Badami, and Ellora.

There is a common belief that Indian painting declined after Ellora, only to resurface during the Mughal period. However, recent research has challenged this notion. In reality, painting did not decline after Ellora. Instead, the significance of mural paintings diminished, giving way to the rise of miniature painting. The Jains played a pivotal role in the development of miniature painting, creating exquisite artworks on Tal Patras (palm leaf manuscripts) with diverse backgrounds. This Jain influence can also be observed in Pala paintings.

The impact of Jain painting extended to the Gujarati style as well. Early Jain paintings were predominantly created on Tala Patra (palm leaf manuscripts), but with the introduction of paper in India, paintings began to be done on paper. Gujarati paintings depicted various aspects of nature, such as clouds, sky, and sea. The influence of Gujarati paintings then permeated into Rajput art. Paintings of diverse themes, including the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Raag Mala, and Barahmasa, were executed in the Rajput era painting style. During this period, the Chaurapanchasika style emerged, inspired by Bilhan's book of the same name. It combined storytelling with pictorial illustrations and served as a notable influence on pothi style paintings, which refers to manuscript paintings. Moreover, the Chaurapanchasika style also left a lasting impact on Mughal paintings. The Mughal rulers commissioned large-scale manuscript paintings, featuring the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Panchatantra, the story

of Nal Damayanti, and more. Gujarat contributed significantly to Mughal paintings, with seven out of 17 painters in Akbar's court hailing from the region.

Sultanate Paintings

Initially, it was believed that the depiction of living beings in paintings was forbidden in Islam, leading to a lack of artistic development during the Sultanate period. However, recent research has dispelled this belief, proving that mural paintings did exist during this era and that books were also adorned with pictures.

For instance, historical evidence reveals that when Iltutmish welcomed the messenger of the Caliph, he constructed an entrance gate embellished with images of living beings. Similarly, it is said that Mubarakshah Khilji, the successor of Alauddin Khilji, erected tents adorned with various types of pictures. Additionally, there are accounts of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, who adhered to the principles of Islam, destroying some paintings. This indicates that mural painting was indeed prevalent during that period.

■ **Chaurapanchasika or Laur Chanda Paintings**

Over time, the continuous transformations witnessed in Jain and Islamic manuscripts culminated in the emergence of a distinct painting style known as Chaurapanchashika or Laur Chanda. This style is substantiated by a group of manuscripts that feature miniature paintings executed in a calm and refined manner, characterized by vivid and vibrant color schemes, as well as the inclusion of bells and ornaments.





The illustrations found in the Chaurapanchasika manuscripts display a notable degree of variation, with certain features present in some manuscripts but absent in others. For instance, the Laur Chanda manuscript, housed in the Prince of Wales Museum in London and the John Rylands Library in Manchester, exhibits a refined level of painting not seen in contemporary manuscripts. Similarly, within the same museum, the Laur Chanda collection and the Aranya Parva and Chaurapanchasika manuscripts of the Mahabharata from 1516 AD showcase stylistic similarities.

The Chaurapanchasika paintings known as Mahapurusha, made in the early days of the Mughal period in the Delhi region, are particularly intriguing. These miniatures embody a style that kept alive the Jain tradition of the latter half of the 15th century. However, the absence of chronological markers on such manuscripts makes it challenging to determine their exact dates. Some paintings within the Chaurapanchasika style depict a pentagonal emblem, which serves as a clue for establishing chronology. Given that the early Akbari era prominently featured the depiction of this emblem, it is believed that some of the Chaurapanchasika paintings may belong to that period.

Regarding the geographical origin of the Chaurapanchasika paintings group, scholars offer differing opinions. Some suggest that the entire group is associated with the North Indian region spanning from Delhi to Jaunpur, while others propose Mewar or Malwa as the heritage regions where favorable cultural, economic, religious, and political conditions fostered the development of this distinctive painting form.

In the miniature paintings of the Chaurapanchasika style, a predominant red background is generally depicted, with occasional use of blue, green, and yellow backgrounds. These paintings share a simplicity like to Jain paintings, featuring female figures with slender waists, sharp noses, large eyes, and square faces, expressing various emotional expressions. The artwork portrays scenes of vibrant life with abundant vegetation, leafy rocks, and a distinctive blue aura, distinguishing them from religious paintings of the late 15th century. As a result, it is believed that the Chaurapanchasika paintings deviated from traditional subject matter and established conventions. Furthermore, the inclusion of popular themes such as Krishna Gatha, Raga Mala, or Mrigavati in these miniatures opened new doors of artistic expression and greatly contributed to the origin and development of the Rajasthani painting style.

Practice Question: Discuss the Chaurapanchasika and Jain styles of paintings. Can the Chaurapanchasika style truly be called the precursor of pothi format? [UPSC-2012]

Mughal Paintings

The Mughal period witnessed various forms of paintings-

1. **Mural painting:** During Akbar's reign, Hindu and Muslim painters adorned the walls of Fatehpur Sikri with exquisite paintings.
2. **Manuscript painting:** This form involved creating illustrations for various texts, such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Nal-Damayanti's story, and Panchatantra.
3. **Image painting:** Influenced by the European Renaissance, image painting was introduced to India by the Portuguese during Akbar's time.

Another technical innovation influenced by Europe, this technique involved portraying near objects larger and distant objects smaller on the same surface. This technique was known as Technique of foreshortening.

■ Humayun Period Paintings

The history of Mughal painting finds its roots with Humayun, as Babur had limited time for painting pursuits. Upon his return from the court of the Iranian ruler Shah Tahmasp I, Humayun brought along two renowned painters - Mir Syed Ali and Khwaja Abdul Samad. These talented artists were disciples of Wahzad and played a crucial role in portraying the Khandan-e-Timuriyah.

■ Akbar Paintings

During Akbar's reign, painting flourished alongside the art of architecture, and he himself was a great patron of the arts. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar's picture gallery boasted 17 talented painters, with Daswant being the foremost among them. Painting in the Mughal period was a collective effort, with different painters contributing to different parts of the same painting. Akbar challenged the notion that painting was contrary to the essence of Islam, instead recognizing the painter's ability to appreciate God's creation. Although a painter could create lifelike images, they were aware of their limitations in giving life to their artwork. Akbar fostered a harmonious blend of Iranian and Indian painting styles, and during his reign, Indian elements exerted a stronger influence on Mughal paintings.

■ Points of Difference in Iranian and Indian Paintings

1. Iranian painting placed special emphasis on depicting subjects like hunting and war, whereas Indian painting focused primarily on religious themes.
2. The texture of Iranian paintings was created using broad brushes, while round brushes were preferred for Indian paintings. Additionally, Indian paintings made abundant use of deep blue and red colors.

■ Jahangir Paintings

Jahangir had a personal passion for painting and would often claim that he could identify the

work of different artists within a single picture. In his court, there were several notable painters, including Abul Hasan, Ustad Mansoor, and Vishan Das. Ustad Mansoor excelled in portraying animals and birds, while Vishan Das was sent by Jahangir to the court of Iran. There, Vishan Das obtained portraits of the Shah of Iran and his nobles, which he brought back to Jahangir's court.

Features of Jahangir's Paintings-

1. During Jahangir's reign, there was a decline in the importance of manuscript paintings while the significance of portrayal painting increased.
2. The focus of painting shifted towards the depiction of nature, animals, and birds under Jahangir's patronage.
3. Painting became a means to showcase the royalty, as the Mughal emperor was portrayed with an aura, symbolizing their divinity.
4. One notable technical development during Jahangir's era was the introduction of decorated margins in portrayal painting. These margins featured intricate pictures of flowers, leaves, and other decorative elements.
5. European art had a profound influence on Mughal painting during Jahangir's time. Elements such as paintings of Mary, Jesus, winged angels, and dramatic thunder clouds were incorporated, although oil painting was not prevalent in Mughal art.

■ Paintings During Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb

During Shah Jahan's reign, there was a noticeable decline in Mughal paintings. Rather than focusing on originality in the painting process, greater importance was given to ornamentation and decoration.

Aurangzeb, in his strict adherence to Islamic principles, went as far as banning painting, considering it to be contrary to Islamic

beliefs. Despite this decline and the restrictive measures, Mughal painting continued to exert its influence on various regional art styles.

■ Regional Styles of Paintings

- **Rajasthani Paintings:** Rajasthani paintings have a rich history that became more prominent during the 15th century. It placed a special emphasis on depicting nature, animals, birds, and other subjects. Major religious texts were also illustrated, including the famous ragamala paintings. The influence of Mughal Paintings can be observed in Rajasthani paintings as well. After the decline of the Mughal Empire, various regional styles of Rajasthani style flourished, such as the Mewar style, Amber-Jaipur style, Bundi-Kota style, and Bikaner style.

- **Kishangarh Style:** The Kishangarh style, developed in Rajasthan and its surrounding areas, was founded by Samant Singh, a notable scholar and aesthete. He held a deep interest in Krishna Bhakti (devotion to Lord Krishna). The Kishangarh style placed special emphasis on portraying heroines (Nayika), with a focus on presenting different expressions and gestures in the relationship between Krishna and Radha.

- **Mithila or Madhubani Style:** The Mithila or Madhubani style encompassed two main types of paintings: mural painting and Arian (floor paintings). Mural paintings involved decorating the walls of houses of Kohbar (nuptial chamber) with paintings. Religious themes were depicted in mural paintings, while non-religious paintings adorned the Kohbar (nuptial chamber). On the other hand, Arian (floor painting) involves drawing pictures using water or making designs with rice paste. These pictures were typically made in courtyards or in front of door frames.

- **Manjusha Style:** The Manjusha style depicted stories of Bihula-vivahari, which were popular in the folk tales of the Bhagalpur region. This unique style involved creating wooden temple-like structures called Manjusha, while the paintings related to the tales of Bihula-vivahari were made by the brush.

- **Deccan Style:** Bijapur served as the main center of the Deccan style, although it also extended to Golconda and Ahmednagar. This style featured special paintings of Ragamala. Prominent patrons of this style included Ali Shah of Bijapur and his successor Ibrahim Shah. Early paintings of this style showed a clear influence of Persian art, and the costumes were influenced by the North Indian (especially Malwa) style.

- **Gujarat Style:** The Gujarat style, also known as the Gurjar or Gujarat style of painting, depicts various elements such as mountains, rivers, oceans, earth, fire, clouds, horizon, and trees. Paintings in this style were found in regions like Marwar, Ahmedabad, Malwa, Jaunpur, Awadh, Punjab, Nepal, West-Bengal, Odisha, and Myanmar, indicating its widespread influence. Ragamala pictures were also created in this style, and it had an impact on the paintings of Mughal Emperor Akbar's time. Dr. Anand Kumar Swami is credited with bringing this art style to prominence.

- **Rajput Style:** During the decline of the Mughal period, several Rajput states emerged in different regions of India, including notable ones like Mewar, Bundi, and Malwa. Each state developed its distinctive style of painting, which shared some common features and came to be known as the Rajput style. Although this style appeared to have ancient roots, its true form emerged in the 15th century. The Rajput style was influenced by the royal courts, with significant contributions from Kannauj, Bundelkhand, and Chandel kings.

- **Mewar Style:** The Mewar style of paintings depicts Rajasthani life and religion. Historian Taraknath attributed its founding to the renowned painter Sharangdhar in the 7th century, although his contemporary paintings are not available. Paintings made for the Rajmala in the 16th century, during Maharana Pratap's reign in the capital Chabab, showcased the influence of folk art and the forms of the Mewar style. The museum in Delhi preserves the Ragmala Chitravali.

- **Jaipur Style:** The Jaipur style thrived from 1600 to 1900 AD. Many paintings in this style took the form of murals in Shekhawati during the 18th century. Additionally, Mural paintings in this style were found in places like Sikar, Nawalgarh, Ramgarh, Mukundgarh, and Jhunjhunu. The Jaipur style of paintings beautifully combined devotion and adornment. It depicted various subjects such as Krishna Leela, Raga-Ragini, Rasleela, and impressive scenes of elephant hunting and fighting.

- **Bikaner Style:** The Bikaner style, which is related to the Marwar style, reached its peak during the reign of Anoop Singh. Notable artists of the Rajput style, such as Rayalal, Ali Raza, and Hasan Raza, emerged from this region. The influence of the Punjabi style can also be observed in Bikaner paintings, as the Bikaner region is situated near Punjab in the north.

- **Malwa Style:** The Malwa school of paintings focused on architectural scenes with meticulous craftsmanship. It showcased flat but well-organized structures, excellent draftsmanship, and the creation of natural landscapes to enhance beauty. The deliberate use of color spots to accentuate forms was also evident in this style.

- **Bundi Style:** Kota, Bundi, and Malawar served as the main centers of the Bundi style, which emerged as an independent offshoot of the Mewar style in the early 17th century. The Bundi state was founded by Rao Dev in 1341, but the development of paintings started during the reign of Rao Surjan. Rao Ratan Singh created beautiful paintings depicting Deepak and Bhairavi ragas. Shatrushal Singh commissioned the construction of Chhatra Mahal, adorned with exquisite mural paintings in the 18th century.

- **Alwar School of Painting:** The Alwar School of Painting was established in 1775 AD by Raja Pratap Singh of Alwar. The paintings of this style exhibited fine craftsmanship reminiscent of the Mughal period, including details such as smoky shadows on curtains and bold lines that convey strength.

■ Pahari Paintings Style:

Pahari painting, influenced by the Rajput style, flourished in various regions situated in the foothills of the Himalayas. However, the impact of Mughal paintings is also evident in this style. The regions along the five rivers - Sutlej, Ravi, Beas, Jhelum, and Chenab - such as Punjab, Jammu-Kangra, and Garhwal, reflect the sentiments, music, and religious traditions of the hill residents in their unique interpretation in this painting style. Pahari style paintings particularly showcase a special depiction of love. Through the portrayal of Krishna and Radha's love, artists sought to intimately and effortlessly depict the love relationship between man and woman.

- **Basohli Style:** This style of paintings emerged from the fusion of Hindu, Mughal, and Pahari styles. The attire is reminiscent of the Mughal style, while the facial features are inspired by local folk art. Hindu religion and traditions greatly influenced this style, with a focus on the depiction of Vishnu and his Dashavatara (Ten Incarnation).

- **Guleri Style:** The Guleri style of paintings predominantly depicts events from the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The figures in this style are drawn with great strength and realism, capturing the naturalness of their body parts.

- **Garhwal Style:** This style originated in the Garhwal state during the medieval period. It was pioneered by two painters, Shamnath and Hardas, who served in the court of King Prithpal Shah of Garhwal.

- **Jammu Style:** Influenced by the Mughal style, this painting style developed in the Jammu region. Painters from the Delhi court sought refuge with the hill kings after fleeing from Nadir Shah's terror in Delhi, leading to the creation of a new style of paintings.

- **Kangra Style:** The Kangra style holds a significant place in the history of Indian painting within the Pahari style that developed during the medieval period. It evolved during the reign of King Sansar Chandra of the Katoch dynasty. This

style is characterized by its visual and romantic nature. It primarily features mythological narratives, depictions of heroic figures, and an emphasis on personal portrayals. Women figures are particularly striking in this style, embodying the idealized form according to Indian tradition.

■■■



Music holds a unique position in Islam, as it is neither considered inherently good nor bad. However, due to conservative elements and religious scholars (Ulema) looking down upon it, music faced some resistance. Nevertheless, music managed to flourish under the patronage of Turkish rulers.

■ Development of Music During Sultanate Period

During the Sultanate period, notable singers like Gopal Nayak received patronage in the court of Alauddin Khilji. Hailing from Devagiri, he showcased his musical talents and gained recognition. Another significant figure was Amir Khusro, a musician and singer who held a deep admiration for Indian music. He believed that Indian music had the power to intoxicate both humans and animals. Khusrau is often regarded as the father of the Hindustani style of music, as he blended Indian and Iranian tunes, contributing to its development.

Music also found protection under the patronage of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Despite Firoz Shah Tughlaq being an orthodox Muslim, he had several Sanskrit works on music translated into Persian, demonstrating his interest and support for the art form.

Moreover, music thrived under the rule of provincial rulers. In Gujarat, a book on music titled “Ghuniyat-ul-Munya” was composed, highlighting the significance of music in the region. Ibrahim Shah Sharqi, the ruler of Jaunpur, was a patron of music and fostered its growth. During his reign, the treatise “Sangeet-Shiromani” was composed, a great contribution to the music. His successor, Hussain Shah Sharqi, was an accomplished scholar of music and developed a new musical style called Khayal. Likewise, the ruler of Gwalior, Man Singh Tomar, was a music connoisseur himself and authored a book named “Maan Kautuhal.”

The development of music was not limited to the royal courts alone. Bhakti and Sufi saints played crucial roles in its evolution. Prominent figures such as Nanak, Swami Haridas (Guru of Tansen), Chaitanya, and Meera Bai made significant contributions within the Bhakti tradition. Similarly, the Sufi schools gave rise to distinctive musical styles like Ghazal and Qawwali.

■ Development of Music under the Mughals

- **Babur and Humayun:** Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, was primarily busy in military conquest, having little time for music. However, he had a personal interest in music and would indulge in it whenever he found a break amidst his military engagements. Similarly, his son Humayun had a keen interest in music. It is said that his court adorned 29 singers, and he would organize music concerts every week on Monday and Wednesday. Humayun himself would actively participate in these gatherings and invite important individuals to appreciate the musical performances.

- **Akbar:** Akbar, renowned as a great patron of the arts, extended his support and enthusiasm to various art forms, including architecture, painting, and music. His reign marked a significant period in the development of Mughal culture. According to Abul Fazal, there were 36 singers during Akbar’s time, with three prominent figures—Tansen, Baiju Babra, and Baz Bahadur, the former ruler of Malwa. Tansen, considered the greatest singer of his time, remains unmatched even after a thousand years. He received training in music from Sufi saint Muhammad Gaus of Gwalior and further honed his skills under the guidance of Bhakti saint Swami Haridas, learning the Dhrupad style of singing. Tansen is also credited with creating new ragas such as Miyan ki Malhar (Raag Malhar), Miyan ki Todi, and Raga Darbari.

- **Jahangir:** Jahangir, although primarily interested in painting, also patronized music. Notable singers in his court included Chhantar Khan, Khurram Dad, and Bilas Khan, Tansen's son.
- **Shahjahan:** Even during the reign of Shahjahan, music continued to thrive in the Mughal court. Lal Khan, son-in-law of Bilas Khan, received protection and support from Shah Jahan. The emperor himself had a special inclination towards singing.
- **Aurangzeb:** Aurangzeb, known for banning music, considering it non-Islamic, paradoxically witnessed the creation of numerous texts on music during his reign. Fariq Ullah, a scholar, translated the book "Raga Darpan" into Persian during this period. Interestingly, music still received patronage in the Mughal harem during Aurangzeb's rule.

During the reign of Muhammad Shah Rangila, another Mughal ruler, music enjoyed special patronage. Prominent singers like Sadarang and Adarang thrived in his court. This period saw the rise of the Khayal style of music, gradually replacing the dominance of Dhrupad.

■ Indian Music Styles:

There are two main styles of Indian music: Hindustani style and Carnatic style. The term "Carnatic" was first used by Vidyaranya, who served as the Prime Minister of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 15th century. While these two styles share similarities, they also exhibit notable differences. It is commonly believed that the Hindustani style developed in isolation from the Carnatic style under the musical influence of Amir Khusro. However, the reality is that the distinction between these two styles emerged not solely due to the influence of any specific musician, but rather as a result of regional factors. The Hindustani style evolved in North India, whereas the Carnatic style developed in the Dravidian linguistic region of South India. Although the ragas used in both Hindustani and Carnatic styles share similar names, their tonality, taal, and rhythm differ significantly.

Question: Amir Khusro embodied the essence of Indo-Islamic culture through his life and contributions.

Answer: The ideological clash between Hinduism and Islam gave rise to conservative Islamic thinkers like Barani, whereas constructive assimilation between Hinduism and Islam gave rise to liberal thinkers like Amir Khusro.

Amir Khusro, in particular, played a significant role in promoting the indigenization of the Muslim elite class. While the Turkish ruling class had previously regarded Ghazni and Ghor as their heritage, Khusro embraced Delhi as his native land. He composed numerous songs in praise of Delhi, referring to it as Hazrat-e-Dilli and considering it a home for refugees. This perspective resonated during the partition of India when Delhi was once again identified as a refuge for displaced individuals.

As a writer, Amir Khusro embodied the integrated culture of India. He not only promoted Persian literature but also contributed to Indian languages. He authored works chronicling the reigns of important Sultans in Persian, while simultaneously pioneering the Khadi Boli Hindi or Hindawi, which later evolved into Hindi and Urdu. Urdu, known as Zubaan-e-Delhi, and Khusro, referred to as Tuti-e-Hind, became integral to the fabric of Indian languages.

Amir Khusro's impact extended beyond literature. Indian music would have remained incomplete without his contributions. He is considered the father of Hindustani music, as he skillfully blended Indian and Iranian melodies to lay the foundation of the Hindustani style. Moreover, he played a crucial role in the development of Dhrupad singing, a pillar of Hindustani music, which was further enriched by the legendary musician Tansen.

In essence, Amir Khusro personified the integrated culture of India, while also actively fostering its growth. He emphasized the importance of Indian heritage and his influence

resonated through the ages, inspiring subsequent writers such as Mir Taqi Mir, Mirza Ghalib, and modern-day authors like Saadat Hasan Manto, who carried forward Khusro's legacy.

Question: Throw light on the contribution of Krishnadeva Raya in the field of art and literature.

Answer: Krishna Deva Raya is among the great rulers of India who not only established a strong administrative foundation but also made remarkable contributions in the fields of literature and art. His creative genius rivals that of Akbar, as he allowed his artistic pursuits to flourish even amidst constant conflicts with neighboring kingdoms. Under his rule, the Vijayanagara court became a renowned patron of scholars and artists.

The Vijayanagara rulers held a deep reverence for Sanskrit and had a rich tradition of scholarly works even prior to Krishna Deva Raya's reign. This tradition continued under his patronage. Krishnadeva Raya himself was a proficient scholar in both Telugu and Sanskrit. In Telugu, he composed a notable work called "Amuktamalyada," a treatise on politics and administration. It is through this text that we learn of his authorship of five Sanskrit works. Additionally, Tenaliram, a renowned scholar, resided in Krishnadeva Raya's court and authored "Panduranga Mahatyam."

While Sanskrit held significant importance, Krishnadeva Raya also fostered the development of Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada literature. However, it was Telugu literature that experienced the most progress during his reign, earning his era the distinction of being considered a Telugu language and literary renaissance. Eight eminent Telugu scholars, known as the "Ashtadiggajas," thrived in his court. Among them, Peddan emerged as a prominent figure, composing a major work called "Swarochit Sambhav." Another notable scholar was Nandi Thimmana, who authored

"Parijathapaharanam."

Krishnadeva Raya's reign witnessed not only advancements in literature but also significant developments in art. The Dravidian style of architecture reached new heights during his rule. The Hazara Temple and the Vitthal Swami Temple, constructed under his patronage, stand as magnificent examples of architectural excellence. This period also witnessed advancements in other aspects of the Dravidian style. While the construction of gopurams (temple gateways) was already underway, this era saw the creation of more elaborate and intricate gopurams. Ornate pillars and sculptures featuring supernatural animals carved on the single stone were unique features of this period. Furthermore, the construction of Kalyan Mandaps, where the ceremonial marriage of deities took place, also began during this time.

The Vijayanagara Empire also gave rise to a distinctive style of painting known as Lipakshi painting, which depicted subjects from the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics. Additionally, a unique style combining dance and music emerged, known as the "Yakshini style."

Thus, while the Vijayanagara Empire's political glory lasted only for 200 years, its cultural achievements have become an enduring legacy of Indian culture.

Question: Kashmir: Zain-ul-Abidin

Answer: There have been rulers in Indian history whose policies transcend their contemporary era and become significant for all ages and regions. One such ruler was Zain-ul-Abidin, who ruled Kashmir in the 15th century.

Zain-ul-Abidin succeeded his brother Sikandar Shah to the throne in the 15th century. He inherited a legacy of communal tension. Under the rule of Sikandar Shah, temples were demolished and Kashmiri Pandits were expelled due to his divisive policies. Zain-ul-Abidin embarked on a process of reconstruction amidst this destruction. He restored Hindu temples and resettled Kashmiri Pandits in the valley.

Respecting the religious sentiments of Hindus, he abolished the Jizya tax imposed on them. Additionally, he enacted a ban on cow slaughter. He did not let religion hinder the development of art and literature. Zain-ul-Abidin himself had knowledge of Sanskrit, Kashmiri, Tibetan, and Persian languages. He patronized the syncretic culture of Kashmir and commissioned the writing of the next part of the Rajatarangini, a significant work of Kashmir, by a Sanskrit scholar named 'Jonraj.' Furthermore, he encouraged the appointment of Hindus in the state services, despite not being of their faith. He also extended his patronage to music.

Due to these notable contributions, he has been referred to as the "Akbar of Kashmir." What is intriguing is that Zain-ul-Abidin demonstrated a rare example of Hindu-Muslim harmony in a remote region of India—a phenomenon that was scarce elsewhere. During this period, while bloodshed occurred in the name of religion in West Asia, Central Asia, and even in Europe, which claimed to be civilized, Zain-ul-Abidin stood as an exception.

In conclusion, Zain-ul-Abidin remains as relevant in the present and future as he was in the past. It is disheartening that although we have inherited communal tensions in Kashmir, we have failed to embrace Zain-ul-Abidin's legacy as a solution. Consequently, religious conservatism, conflict and bloodshed continue to be prevalent in Kashmir today, while the true solution in the form of Zain-ul-Abidin remains absent.

Question: Describe the cultural achievements of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1627 AD) of Bijapur.

Answer: Ibrahim Adil Shah II remains a unique ruler in the history of medieval India. He made significant contributions in the fields of art and culture and set an example of religious harmony in his policies.

- He commissioned the construction of remarkable architectural wonders adorned

with exquisite carvings, such as Anand Mahal, Mihtar Mahal, and a complex of structures named after him called Ibrahim Roza.

- Ibrahim Adil Shah II was a great lover and patron of music. He possessed remarkable expertise in this art form and even composed a rare treatise on music called 'Kitab-i-Nauras'.
- In terms of religious harmony, Ibrahim Adil Shah II adopted an inclusive approach. Despite being a follower of Islam, he personally worshiped Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of learning and knowledge, even though idol worship is prohibited in Islam. Furthermore, he appointed a significant number of Marathi Hindus in his administration, promoting diversity and inclusivity.
- The court of Ibrahim Adil Shah II not only reflected the syncretic culture of India but also embraced global influences. Numerous writers, artists, and scholars from the Muslim world were welcomed in his court and received patronage. Some scholars argue that the role played by Ibrahim Adil Shah II's court in medieval times in promoting global culture was like to the role UNESCO plays in the present era.

Question: Darashikoh

Answer: Dara Shikoh embodied the living essence of the Ganga-Jamuni culture that Hindus and Muslims had developed in India while coexisting for the past approximately 600 years. The foundation of religious harmony in India was laid by Bhakti and Sufi saints, as well as great emperors like Akbar. Dara Shikoh not only embraced this legacy but also sought to further enrich it.

Deeply influenced by the philosophy of the Sufi saint Muhammad Ghaus, Dara Shikoh embraced the principle of Bahr al-Hayat, which emphasized the unity of all religions. Based upon this principle, he put forth the theory of Majma-

ul-Bahrain, symbolizing the convergence of diverse beliefs. In an era marked by religious frenzy, Dara Shikoh's endeavor to find common ground among different religious sects was a remarkable achievement.

Dara Shikoh's quest for understanding Hinduism extended beyond mere meditation and contemplation. He delved into the study of Hindu scriptures and engaged with Hindu scholars. Notably, he translated Sanskrit texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Vasistha into Persian. Under his guidance, 52 Upanishads were also translated into Persian, resulting in the compilation known as Sirr-i-Akbar. In this way, Dara Shikoh sought to strengthen the formula of harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities, originally established by Akbar. His superior educational background facilitated this task.

Due to his liberal religious heritage, Dara Shikoh has been referred to as the "little-Akbar." It can be inferred that had Dara Shikoh ascended to the throne of India, he would have provided a more favorable direction for the continuation of Hindustan's syncretic cultural tradition. However, Aurangzeb's accession to power brought about a dramatic shift in the policy of the Mughal court.

Question: What are the reasons behind referring to the 16th century in India as the Indian Renaissance?

Answer: The term "renaissance" refers to a revival, which can occur in various fields such as politics, society, and culture. Based on these grounds, the 16th century in India can indeed be described as a period of renaissance. During this time, there was a significant emphasis on religious harmony and cultural integration.

The Bhakti and Sufi movements, along with emperors like Akbar, played pivotal roles in

promoting religious harmony and syncretic culture in 16th century India. In the 15th century, saints like Kabir and Nanak advocated for the unity of humanity by highlighting the concept of divine unity. Sufi saints like Jayasi furthered this message and expressed it through the language and customs of the Hindus. Emperor Akbar, in particular, set a new precedent by promoting the policy of Sulh-e-Kul (universal peace) and stressing religious harmony, even at a time when bloodshed in the name of religion was prevalent in other parts of the world.

The cultural sphere also witnessed a renaissance during this period, showcasing the blending of Hindu and Islamic influences in art and literature. Architecture, under Akbar's patronage, demonstrated coordination between Hindu and Islamic styles, resulting in extensive construction work. This coordination was also evident in the realms of painting and music, with notable painters like Dashwant and Mir Syed Ali, as well as renowned singers like Tansen and Baiju-Bawra, emerging during this time. The arts of Kathak dance and Dhrupad singing also received widespread patronage.

Additionally, the 16th century witnessed the rise of vernacular literature, with Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Oriya, Gujarati, Rajasthani, and Punjabi languages getting encouragement. The Bhakti movement played a crucial role in this development.

However, it is important to note that the Indian Renaissance of the 16th century was distinct from the European Renaissance. While the element of rationalism was not as prominent as in Europe, it possessed its own unique and original form. Rather than emphasizing religious tensions, the Indian Renaissance placed a strong emphasis on religious harmony. As a result, the India of the 16th century can be associated with the early modern period.



Art and Literature in Vijayanagara Empire

The art and architecture of South India flourished during the early Muslim period but faced considerable damage during Alauddin's invasion. When Bukka I came into power, he extended invitations to scholars and artists from various parts of India to Vijayanagara. This made the city a significant contributor to the development of Dravidian-style architecture. During this era, the construction of large and majestic Gopurams, which are monumental entrance towers, became a prominent feature.

Vijayanagara's contributions to the Dravidian style included:

1. The construction of Kalyan Mandapa, where ceremonial weddings of deities were conducted alongside traditional Mandapas.
2. Elaborate pillars were crafted with intricate designs, often showcasing a majestic horse sculpture standing on two raised feet. These pillars were widely employed in the construction of magnificent monuments and spacious gathering areas. They were decorated with large, gracefully curved leaves along their upper edges.

Vithhal Swami and Hazara temples are well-known examples of an architectural period known for its distinct features, including elevated platforms, expansive assembly halls, and intricately adorned pillars. Cities such as Kumbakonam, Kanchipuram, Srirangam, Chidambaram, Tirumala, and Vellore are filled with temples that showcase the style of the Vijayanagara era.

The architectural style of the Vijayanagara Empire, often referred to as Dravidian, possessed unique characteristics. It involved repairing and enlarging partially destroyed temples, reshaping them, and constructing new temples over the ruins of the old ones. These newly built temples were notably large and could accommodate a vast

number of devotees simultaneously. Interestingly, Indo-Islamic influences were observed in secular buildings through the use of domes and lotus motifs.

During the Vijayanagara period, architecture was richly adorned, reflecting the advancement of ancient Indian sculpture. They created thousand-pillared (Hazara Temple) Mandapams, which were remarkable for their pillars adorned with figurative carvings, showcasing the excellence of Vijayanagar temple architecture. Temples of this era featured walls that depicted a variety of mythological tales, and the entrances were marked by grand Gopurams adorned with intricate designs. These Gopurams, with their size and number, became increasingly imposing.



Hazara Ram Temple

The ruins of the grand Vijayanagara Empire continue to display aesthetic and artistic elements. Vitthal and Hazara Ram Temple serve as prime examples of this heritage, characterized by elevated platforms, spacious auditoriums, and decorative pillars.

Even after the empire's decline, the final phase of Vijayanagara architecture continued to flourish in the form of the **Madurai style**. This style is evident in various locations such as Madurai, Rameswaram, Srirangam, Thiruvallur, Chidambaram, Thinnaveli, and several places in the far South.

Vijayanagara was home to numerous highly skilled painters in its royal court, although the practice of painting gradually declined over time. Portuguese writers and Abdur Razzag have documented the presence of these talented painters in the service of the Vijayanagara emperor.

The period also witnessed the development of musical art and the emergence of **Lepakshi painting**, a distinctive style drawing themes from the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Additionally, a new style known as the **Yakshini style evolved**, combining elements of dance and music.

Literature

The rulers of Vijayanagara were renowned supporters of education and learning. They played a crucial role in a period of revival for Sanskrit literature and the emergence of a neoclassical era for Dravidian languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. Although these languages drew inspiration from Sanskrit, apart from Tamil, much of their content was rooted in original Sanskrit texts. This literary activity became a means of cultural exchange, especially during the Bhakti movement.

Similar to North India, Sanskrit remained an important language for imparting knowledge among certain groups in Vijayanagara society. The Vijayanagara court supported the creation of historical fiction and autobiographical works. Led by scholars like **Sayana**, many Sanskrit intellectuals produced religious literature and wrote commentaries on four Vedas, Brahmanas, and Aranyakas. **Hemadri** also made a significant contribution with his commentary on the Dharmashastra, a legal and ethical text. However, it's worth noting that these

contributions had limited influence on the development of social institutions.

Most Vijayanagara rulers were highly educated, and some made significant literary contributions. **Krishnadevaraya**, a scholar proficient in both Sanskrit and Telugu, patronized numerous scholars. He is said to have composed five texts in Sanskrit and a Telugu composition known as '**Amuktamalyada**'. One of his notable Sanskrit works is '**Jambavati Kalyanam**'.

The court of Krishnadevaraya was adorned with eight eminent Telugu poets known as '**Ashtadiggaja**'. The most celebrated among them was **Peddan**, who authored '**Manu Charit**' and '**Swarachit Sambhava**'. **Timmana** composed '**Parijatapaharanam**', while **Tenali Ramakrishna** contributed '**Pandurang Mahatmya**'. These poets ushered in a new era of Telugu poetry, with Peddan earning the title of the father of modern Telugu. Timman's love story remained a source of fascination for a long time, capturing people's imaginations.

During this time, the translation of Sanskrit literature and other secular works into the Telugu language witnessed significant growth, a development actively encouraged by Krishnadevaraya. The scholars of Vijayanagara made their greatest contribution by paving the way for a new form of Telugu poetry known as '**Prabandh**'. Some writers introduced '**Yakshagana**', a type of rural drama, and **Ruler Tirumal** wrote a commentary on Jayadev's '**Geet Govind**'.

The reign of the Vijayanagara Empire also witnessed the development of the Kannada and Malayalam languages. **Madhura**, a prominent Kannada scholar of this period, composed '**Dharmanathapuram**'. In Malayalam, the first authentic literary work, '**Unnuneeli Sandesam**', appeared, drawing inspiration from Kalidasa's '**Meghdoot**'. **Madhav Panikker** translated the Bhagavad Gita into the Malayalam language during this period.

In summary, the prosperity of the Vijayanagara Empire provided poets with the

opportunity to create new classical forms that seamlessly blended love, devotion, philosophy, and instruction. The aesthetic sense of contemporary poets took center stage, giving rise to new creations like '**Prabandha**' and '**Yakshagana**', among others.

Question: Discuss the contribution of Krishnadevaraya in the field of literature and art.

Answer: Krishnadevaraya stands as one of India's eminent rulers, not only laying a strong foundation for administration but also making monumental contributions to literature and art. In the realm of creative talent, Krishnadevaraya's stature rivals that of Akbar. Remarkably, he fostered an environment that nurtured his creative talents, even amid constant conflicts with neighboring states. His reign witnessed the Vijayanagara court blossoming into a great patron of scholars and artists.

The Vijayanagara rulers had long been enthusiastic patrons of Sanskrit. Even before Krishnadevaraya's reign, commentaries on the four Vedas were authored within the Vijayanagara court, and this tradition endured during his rule. Krishnadevaraya himself was a formidable scholar, well-versed in both Telugu and Sanskrit. In Telugu, he composed a treatise on politics and administration called "**Amuktamalyada**." His contributions extended to the realm of Sanskrit, where he authored five works. Additionally, a scholar named **Tenalirama**, who resided in Krishnadevaraya's court, composed "**Panduranga Mahatyam**."

Krishnadevaraya's patronage extended to languages like Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada, but it was Telugu literature that flourished most abundantly under his rule. His era is celebrated as the renaissance period of Telugu literature, having eight Telugu scholars, known as "**Ashtadiggajas**," in his court. Foremost among them was **Peddana**, who authored the noteworthy text "**Swarochita Sambhava**." Another luminary was **Nanditimman**, who penned "**Parijatapaharanam**."

Parallel to these literary advancements, Krishnadevaraya's reign witnessed significant developments in art. **The Dravidian style** of architecture experienced a revival under his patronage. The Hazara Temple and the Vitthal Swami Temple, constructed during his rule, stand as prime examples of excellent architecture. This period also marked the evolution of various elements within the Dravidian style. While Gopurams had already been under construction, Krishnadevaraya's reign saw the development of magnificent Gopurams. Pillars became highly decorative, featuring sculptures of supernatural animals carved from the monolithic stone. In addition to Mandapas, the construction of Kalyana Mandapams began, where divine marriage ceremonies took place.

A distinctive style of painting, known as **Lepakshi painting**, emerged during the Vijayanagara Empire. Themes were drawn from the **epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata**. Furthermore, a unique style combining dance and music, termed the '**Yakshini style**,' evolved during this era.

In essence, Vijayanagara's political glory may have lasted only two centuries, but its cultural legacy has firmly entrenched itself as an integral part of Indian heritage.

Question: Evaluate the contribution of Firuzshah Bahamani and Mahmud Gawan in the field of education.

Answer: Firuzshah Bahamani and Mahmud Gawan both stood out as capable administrators of the Bahmani kingdom. Their tenures saw substantial strengthening of the Bahmani state, both in terms of politics and administration. Furthermore, they made noteworthy contributions to the field of education.

Firuzshah Bahamani, a prominent ruler from the Bahmani dynasty, stood out as a highly respected scholar. His expertise spanned a wide range of subjects and languages. He possessed deep knowledge of religious matters, including Quranic interpretations and Islamic law, and showed a keen interest in fields like botany,

geometry, and logic. His linguistic skills extended to Persian, Arabic, Turkish, as well as local languages such as Telugu, Kannada, and Marathi. Additionally, he was an impromptu poet (Ashu Kavi).

Firuzshah Bahamani was personally committed to education and literature, and he actively promoted educational advancements in his state. To strengthen education, he encouraged the migration of renowned scholars from other regions to settle in South India. He also established an observatory in Daulatabad to promote the study of astronomy and founded Madrasas, educational institutions, to spread learning at the grassroots level.

Following in the footsteps of Firuzshah Bahamani, **Mahmud Gawan** carried forward this tradition, taking significant advancement in education. Similar to his predecessor, Mahmud Gawan was a man of literary and cultural inclinations. He extended patronage to numerous scholars in his court, and these scholars played a pivotal role in promoting educational activities within the state. Mahmud Gawan's initiatives encompassed the establishment of not only Madrasas for primary-level education but also a college in Bidar dedicated to higher education. Additionally, he commissioned the construction of a three-story building to accommodate teachers and students, facilitating accommodation for a thousand individuals. The state provided both educators and students with complimentary food and clothing. This collaboration between the state and education attracted distinguished scholars from Iran and Iraq during that period to teach in the Madrasas established by Mahmud Gawan.

Thus, commendable efforts exerted by Firuzshah Bahamani and Mahmud Gawan significantly propelled educational development within the Bahmani kingdom. However, subsequent rulers were unable to sustain this

tradition due to conflicts among the Amirs (Nobels) and a prioritization of unity within the state over cultural endeavors.

Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1580-1627 AD) :

Ibrahim II stands as a remarkable and unique ruler in history, leaving an enduring mark on culture and the religious sphere. He serves as a shining example of a policy rooted in religious harmony and unity.

1. Ibrahim II's legacy includes the construction of remarkable structures adorned with excellent carvings. Notable among these architectural marvels are **Anand Mahal, Mihtar Mahal,** and the group of buildings known as **Ibrahim Roza.**
2. His deep love for music and remarkable skill in composing music resulted in the creation of a unique literary work called '**Kitab-e-Nauras,**' which stands as a testament to his exceptional musical talent.
3. Ibrahim II was a leader who believed in religious harmony. He had a strong devotion to Saraswati, the goddess associated with knowledge and wisdom, even though this involved idol worship, which was not in line with Islamic teachings. He appointed a significant number of Marathi Hindus to key positions in his administration.
4. Ibrahim II's court didn't just celebrate Indian culture; it also welcomed influences from around the globe. People from far-flung corners of the Muslim world sought refuge, support, and protection in his court. These individuals included writers, artists, and scholars who were all drawn by the vibrant intellectual and cultural environment he fostered. Some scholars even draw parallels between his court's role in the medieval period and the modern-day UNESCO, underscoring its pivotal role in promoting global culture.



The British factor played an important role in influencing the nature of Indian culture in the modern period. There were many aspects of British rule that influenced the condition and direction of Indian culture. These aspects can be understood as follows:

■ **What was the impact of British rule on the demographic structure of India?**

During ancient and medieval times, population migration occurred due to economic and political factors. This trend continued under British rule, as migration was encouraged for various reasons. British rule negatively impacted indigenous industries and employment, compelling affected groups to seek opportunities elsewhere. Consequently, individuals migrated both out of the country as indentured labor and within the country. Tribal groups were sent to tea and coffee plantations as contract labor, while people from Uttar Pradesh migrated to cities like Bombay, Malegaon, and Bhiwandi due to the decline of cotton textile and handicraft industries.

Secondly, the introduction of a new transportation system played a significant role in driving population migration. Nomadic tribes from India, for example, migrated to Bombay and secured employment as dock workers. Thirdly, individuals relocated from one region to another in search of business opportunities and government services. The Parsis from Gujarat, for instance, settled in Bombay, while Gujarati businessmen moved to Calcutta. Marwaris from Rajasthan initially established themselves in Murshidabad in Bengal before ultimately relocating to Calcutta to take advantage of the cloth trade. Similarly, the Punjabi community dispersed to Delhi, Lucknow, and Allahabad in the eastern region.

This intermingling of diverse groups transformed each area into a microcosm of India,

highlighting the rich regional, ethnic, and communal diversity that emerged in the Indian subcontinent.

■ **What kind of impact did the British leave on Indian culture?**

The impact of British rule on Indian culture was profound and extended over a significant duration. It is crucial to acknowledge that Britain underwent internal transformations during this period, transitioning from a feudal system to a capitalist one. Unlike in other regions like Latin America and Africa, where Western powers often destroyed indigenous cultures, India's ancient culture had strong foundations that resisted complete eradication by the British. Rather than obliterating it, the British aimed to induce changes by intervening in Indian culture.

This intervention manifested in various ways. During the 18th century, British orientalist, such as William Jones and Colebrooke, extensively examined and investigated Indian culture, interpreting it through their own perspectives and interests. They emphasized the importance of religion as a fundamental aspect of Indian culture and presented ancient India as a land filled with revered saints and sages. In the 19th century, a new generation of British thinkers, influenced by liberal and utilitarian ideologies, emerged. They became vocal critics of Indian culture, advocating for reforms and transformations within the country.

During this time, the introduction of English education in India played a significant role. This educational system allowed a section of Indians to come into contact with Western ideologies and perspectives, influencing their thinking and outlook.

Western thought was heavily influenced by the European Enlightenment, which placed emphasis on several key aspects:

1. Rationalism
2. Humanism
3. Individualism
4. Secularism.

Indian intellectuals were exposed to these ideas and were greatly influenced by the intellectual achievements of Europe. They started scrutinizing the shortcomings within Indian culture and made efforts to address them. However, the persistent criticism of Indian culture by liberal and utilitarian thinkers deeply hurt the sentiments of Indian intellectuals, who perceived it as Western racist arrogance. This led to a reactionary response, prompting them to highlight the positive and superior aspects of their own culture. Consequently, in the 19th century, the process of cultural reform and modernization began in India.

Prominent figures such as Raja Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Dadabhai Naoroji, and others played significant roles in advocating for social and cultural changes during that era in India.

■ **Did the reforms in 19th century Indian society and culture stem from the influence of Western ideas or were they a reaction against them?**

The reforms in 19th century Indian society and culture emerged as a result of both influence and reaction. Figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Vivekananda demonstrated elements of both approaches. They recognized the value of Western ideas and aimed to incorporate them, while also seeking to find concepts like 'rationalism,' 'humanism,' 'individualism,' and 'secularism' within their own cultural framework. However, the degree of influence and reaction varied among different thinkers. Some embraced a stronger reactionary stance, leading to the emergence of revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj among Hindus and the Farazi and Wahabi movements among Muslims.

■ **What are the advantages and disadvantages of the influence of Western ideas?**

Contact with Western ideas had the advantage of bridging the ideological divide between the Western world and India. This interaction enabled Indians to familiarize themselves with the principles of the Western Enlightenment, encompassing concepts like 'humanism,' 'liberalism,' 'individualism,' and 'secularism.' These ideas advocated for democratic values and contributed to a climate of reform in India.

However, there was a downside to this influence, as an excessive inclination towards westernization emerged. The appeal of individualism and liberalism naturally resulted in a growing attraction to capitalism, which, in turn, fueled the rise of consumerism.

■ **What were the advantages and disadvantages of the influence of the traditionalist ideas?**

The advantage lay in the appreciation and acknowledgment of Indian culture and its achievements, which instilled a sense of self-assurance among Indians. Eminent figures like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Swami Vivekananda, Dayanand Saraswati, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Aurobindo Ghosh recognized the limitations of Western ideology as a tool of colonialism. They promoted Indian nationalism by highlighting the strengths of Indian culture.

However, Hindu and Muslim thinkers tended to emphasize their respective cultural and religious traditions. Hindu thinkers emphasized the Hindu aspects of the culture, while Muslim reformers focused on revitalizing the fundamental elements of Islam. This fragmented the idea of a unified culture and inadvertently promoted communalism.

■ **How did the British's narrow interpretation of Indian culture encourage separatism?**

Due to a limited understanding of Indian culture, British thinkers and anthropologists, to some extent, supported the 'divide and rule' policy.

They presented a narrow interpretation of Indian traditions and culture, often viewing religion as the primary foundation of Indian society and interpreting culture solely through a religious lens. This perspective was reflected in various measures implemented by the British.

For instance, in 1817, James Mill authored the first history of India, dividing it into Hindu, Muslim, and British periods, with religion serving as the basis for this division. Additionally, British administrators conducted a census, categorizing non-Muslims, non-Christians, and non-Parsis as Hindu sects, thereby creating distinct religious communities.

■ **What was the reaction of the Muslim community to British policy?**

The British acquisition of power from Muslims in India left some elite Muslims feeling powerless and marginalized. Muslim farmers also experienced economic oppression under British rule, intensifying their dissatisfaction. Consequently, they sought means of resistance against the British, but lacked the ideological framework for effective opposition. They turned to reviving the original form of Islamic ideology as a form of resistance, envisioning the restoration of the caliphate, a time when Muslims had established a global state. This mindset influenced movements like the Farazi movement, Wahabi movement, and Tariqa-e-Muhammadiya.

However, another strand of Muslim resistance emerged under the influence of Western ideas, represented by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh group. They aimed to modernize Muslim society and believed that cooperation with the British was necessary for the progress of the Muslim community. Recognizing their minority status in India, they feared potential marginalization in the democratic process due to the numerical dominance of Hindus. They believed that by gaining favor from the British, they could counterbalance Hindu influence.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan advocated for community-based equality instead of numerical equality to balance the power dynamics with Hindus. He viewed Hinduism and Islam as two distinct sects, deserving equal voting rights in decision-making processes. Despite their modern education, the Aligarh movement emphasized religion as the basis of community identity and demanded equality with Hindus on that basis. Consequently, religion became the foundation for resistance for both the Hindu revivalist group and the modern educated Muslim group. This development had a negative impact on the concept of an integrated culture that had been evolving in India for centuries.

■ **What is the relationship between religion and culture?**

Culture is a comprehensive and expansive concept that encompasses various aspects including food, lifestyle, ethics, religion, worldview, art, and literature. While religion is an important component of culture, it is regrettable that some individuals often equated religion with culture, leading to a limited understanding of the broader concept of culture itself.

■ **Why did nationalism and communalism both grow together and like step brothers in the middle of the Indian National Movement?**

The concept of European nationalism clashes with the Indian situation due to fundamental contradictions. European nationalism emerged in the 19th century, emphasizing specific geographical units, centralized governance, and cultural-linguistic uniformity. However, this model faced challenges in Eastern Europe and did not align with conditions in Asian and African countries, including India.

India, with its immense cultural diversity, possesses a unique identity based on unity amid diversity. However, the arrival of British colonial rule led to cracks in India's social structure. Two key factors contributed to this:

1. Flawed British understanding: The British had an inadequate understanding of Indian tradition and society, which harmed India's integrated culture. They promoted separatism by recognizing religion as the primary identity of India, dividing the country along religious lines. This fostered a sense of division among communities that historically coexisted and exchanged ideas, such as Brahmin, Buddhist, Jain, Aryans, and non-Aryan sects. Furthermore, the British incorrectly labeled all non-Muslim and non-Christian groups as Hindu, despite the diverse nature of Hinduism itself.

The British deepened communal divisions through initiatives like the census, which placed greater significance on communal identity. Despite Hindus and Muslims having a long history of coexistence and a harmonious "Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb" (composite culture), the census reinforced a sense of division between these communities. Paradoxically, while the census strengthened national consciousness, it also fueled communal divisions.

Additionally, James Mill's interpretation of Indian history further exacerbated communal divisions by dividing it into Hindu and Muslim periods, perpetuating the notion that religion is the foundation of Indian life.

2. The 19th century social and religious reform movements, known as the Indian Renaissance, paved the way for the emergence of modern nationalism in India. These movements aimed to weaken regional, caste, and gender divisions and foster a sense of unity among Indians. However, due to the emphasis on ancient Hindu or Islamic traditions by Hindu and Muslim reformers respectively, separatist tendencies were also encouraged.

3. Muslim reformers, in response to British rule, developed a consciousness of resistance. However, this resistance took a communal turn as they excessively emphasized religious identity to achieve equality with Hindus,

abandoning India's syncretic culture. This trend began with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and culminated in Muhammad Ali Jinnah's politics. While Jinnah had Western education and secular personal beliefs, political opportunism led him to publicly embrace communalism. He declared Hindus and Muslims as two separate nations in need of separate territories, identities, and national entities, further fueling separatism.

4. Hindu communalism emerged in response to Muslim communalism, disguising itself as Hindu nationalism. VD Savarkar, once a prominent freedom fighter, turned to Hindutva politics in the 1930s and rejected the idea of 'cultural nationalism.' According to him, the state is a political unit, while the nation is a cultural unit. Savarkar believed that a distinct 'identity' derived from 'Hinduism' was necessary for nation-building. He excluded Muslims and Christians from this concept since their holy sites were located outside India.

Both Jinnah and Savarkar disregarded the rich legacy of Indian history. Interestingly, the concept of cultural nationalism inadvertently strengthened the demands of Muslim communalists for a separate nation, benefiting their cause.

5. Until the mid-19th century, British policies inadvertently fostered separatism in India due to their limited understanding of Indian culture. However, they later strategically promoted Muslim separatism to undermine the Indian national movement. The introduction of separate electorates in 1909 exemplifies this policy, which persisted until 1945. Throughout this period, the British granted communal concessions to Muslims alongside constitutional concessions to India.

6. As nationalism gained traction among the general populace, communalism unfortunately grew alongside it. The Muslim League issued the 'Delhi Manifesto', while the Congress rallied behind the slogan 'Quit India' in 1942, and the League's slogan was 'Ladke Lenge Pakistan' (We

will take Pakistan by force). In 1937, when native governments were established, the League organized the Lahore Declaration in 1940, advocating for a separate province. In 1946, during the formation of the interim government through collaboration between various parties, the League incited riots in Calcutta. Eventually, the country achieved independence, but the tragic partition ensued.

7. In the 20th century, communal frenzy overshadowed India's integrated culture. Despite the professed commitment to secularism by political parties like the Congress, they were unable to curb this religious fervor. As a result, both nationalism and communalism coexisted in India, profoundly influencing its political landscape.

- **How did the Constituent Assembly redefine India's cultural policy in order to build a new nation state after Indian independence? Was there a choice before us to adopt the western model of nationalism?**

The Western model of nationalism, designed for culturally homogeneous states, presented challenges for diverse and vast India. British administrators like John Strachey, thinkers like Rudyard Kipling, and statesmen like Winston Churchill doubted India's potential to become a nation due to its regional differences. However, India, as the first Asian-African colony moving towards nationhood and democracy, attracted global attention.

Initially, India looked towards the Western model of nationalism, emphasizing a single language and unified nation during the national movement. However, after independence, non-Hindi speaking states opposed the imposition of Hindi as the sole official language. As a compromise, the Constituent Assembly approved Hindi alongside English as the official language for an indefinite period.

Challenges also arose in the formation of linguistic-based states. The Congress initially considered it but abandoned the idea due to

fears of separatism following the partition. However, the acceptance of linguistic-based states occurred later, prompted by movements like the Andhra Pradesh movement. The States Reorganization Commission recommended the formation of provinces based on language, leading to their establishment in 1956.

Certain matters, such as the Uniform Civil Code, were deferred by the Constituent Assembly for future consideration, incorporated into the Directive Principles of State Policy.

India's nation-building process embraced its pluralistic and multicultural nature, deviating from the Western model. This unique approach could serve as a precedent for non-European states, disproving the doubts raised by British officials and politicians regarding India's ability to exist as a nation.

Question: Has the formation of linguistic States strengthened the cause of Indian Unity? [UPSC 2016]

The separation of Telangana from Coastal Andhra Pradesh, despite being a linguistically united region, raised doubts about the effectiveness of linguistic provinces. Naturally, questions arose about whether the formation of linguistic provinces was a wise decision.

However, to fully understand the matter, we must consider the broader context. India, after gaining independence was in the process of building a nation with a vast territory and diverse cultural landscape. The partition had a significant impact, leading to a strong central government and a federal system. In such a scenario, the provinces became concerned about preserving their linguistic and cultural identities. Under British rule, these diverse groups had been suppressed, so independence also meant the recognition of their linguistic and cultural identity. If the central government had rejected these demands, it would have further deepened mutual mistrust and potentially led to tensions.

We can observe similar examples in the cases of Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Muhammad Ali

Jinnah's message to the people of East Pakistan, urging them to abandon Bengali and adopt Urdu, resulted in the emergence of independent Bangladesh in 1971. Similarly, in 1956, when India approved the formation of linguistic provinces, Sri Lanka was attempting to impose the Sinhala language on the Tamil people, which eventually led to a civil war.

On the other hand, the Government of India demonstrated practical wisdom by establishing linguistic provinces. This decision strengthened the trust between the central and state governments, disproving the fear that linguistic identities (sons of the soils) would overshadow the national identity. As a result, the vibrant regional cultures became integrated with the national culture, fostering a harmonious coexistence.

Question: In the context of the diversity of India, can it be said that the regions form cultural units rather than the States? Give reasons with examples for your viewpoint.

[UPSC-2017]

The significance of forming provinces based on linguistic considerations in India is underscored by its remarkable cultural diversity. While 22 languages are recognized as national languages, in reality numerous dialects and variations exist within them. Historical and geographical factors have led to mixed populations in almost all provinces. (*This is evident from a related question asked in the first paper of 2019: "Are there cultural regions of India everywhere in our state?"*)

Migration throughout Indian history has resulted in diverse communities residing in various regions. Telugu-speaking communities can be found in Bengal, Marathi-speaking communities in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and Odia communities in Gujarat. Gujaratis reside in Mumbai and southern states, while Hindi-speaking populations have settled in Maharashtra. Marathi communities have popularized the Ganesh festival across India, and

Bihari communities in Delhi are known for the Kanwariya pilgrimage during Shravan. The Bengali community in Delhi's Chittaranjan Park creates a mini-Calcutta during Dussehra.

This cultural diversity highlights the need to go beyond linguistic factors in forming provinces, as almost every province has a significant population belonging to other linguistic groups. Sensitivity towards diverse linguistic identities is crucial for both the central and state governments. For instance, Maithili and Bhojpuri speakers in Bihar and Nepali speakers in the Gorkhaland region of West Bengal deserve recognition. Therefore, while linguistic considerations play a significant role, the acceptance of diversity should encompass the sensitivity of regional cultures by both state and central governments.

Ques : Discuss the significance of the lion and bull figures in Indian mythology, art and architecture.

(UPSC-2022, 150 word)

Answer : Throughout ancient Indian art, the depiction of combined forms of gods, humans, and animals offers a glimpse of the society of that era. Specifically, the lion and bull hold significant importance and can be understood in the following ways:

Importance of the Lion:

- In ancient times, the lion became associated with Lord Mahavira, symbolising notions of victory and courage.
- During Ashoka's reign, the lion came to represent the king's authority, his courage and the vastness of his empire. The Sarnath pillar serves as a prime example of this symbolism.
- Additionally, the lion, serving as the divine vehicle of Durga, embodies strength, serenity, and stability. These characteristics are reflected in various sculptures and paintings.

- Acknowledging these qualities, a lion sculpture has been prominently placed in our newly constructed Parliament House.

Importance of the Bull:

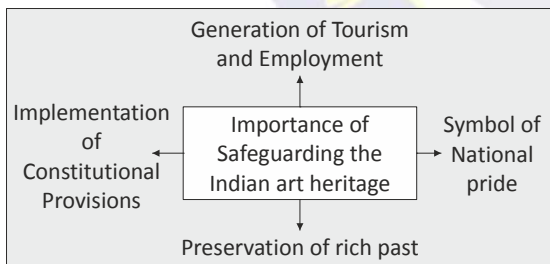
- In ancient times, the bull symbolises fertility and the power of reproduction.
- The depiction of the 'Humped bull' on Harappan seals signifies the advancement of agriculture during that period.
- The bull statue on the Ashokan Rampurva pillar is regarded as a representation of the youthful form of Buddha.
- In the context of bhakti, the bull assumes significance as Lord Shiva's vehicle, known as Nandi.

In conclusion, although these myths may hold varying meanings across different time periods, they provide valuable insights into the contemporary society of their respective eras.

Ques : Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss.

(UPSC-2018, 150 word)

Answer : Preserving our art heritage is a testament to our primitive human development. It is our duty, stated in the constitution, to protect and safeguard our heritage.



Preserving the rich Indian art and heritage holds immense significance for several reasons:

1. **Promotion of tourism industry:** By safeguarding our ancient cultural heritage, we can stimulate the growth of the tourism sector. These heritage sites serve as captivating attractions that allow visitors from across the globe to delve into our vibrant past. The infusion of heritage tourism generates substantial economic benefits, propelling the local communities forward

and fostering employment opportunities.

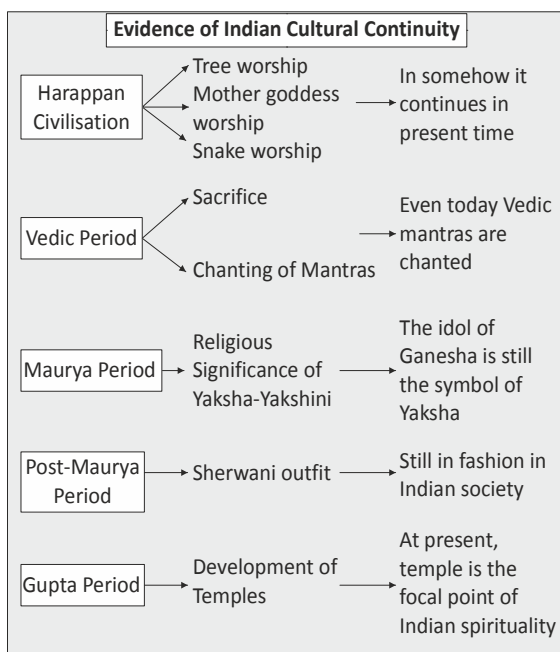
2. **Cultural and economic contributions:** Heritage sites are intrinsic to our cultural fabric, illuminating the essence of our collective identity. They provide valuable insights into our ancient customs, traditions, and way of life. Preserving these sites is not only crucial for safeguarding our cultural heritage but also for offering a deeper understanding and appreciation of our rich legacy to international audiences. Moreover, the conservation of our heritage sites bolsters national pride and reinforces our sense of belonging.

3. **Constitutional provisions:** Our constitution upholds the protection of our heritage through provisions such as Articles 29, 49, and 51(A). These provisions recognize the significance of safeguarding our cultural heritage, not only for fostering national integration but also for harnessing their immense economic potential.

Ques : The ancient civilization in Indian sub-continent differed from those of Egypt , Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without a breakdown to the present day. Comment.

(UPSC-2015, 200 Word)

Answer: This question has been based on A. L. Basham's book "The Wonder That Was India". This question is taken from the introductory section of the book. A. L. Basham was an important Indologist of the modern period and he provided a very insightful perspective on Indian culture.



Indian civilization is unique from its contemporary civilization in various aspects. Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece civilizations have perished or have been replaced by other cultures. However Indian ancient culture has an enduring character. Despite major changes and upheavals significant threads of continuity can be traced throughout the course of Indian history right up to the present day. The earliest civilizations of Asia had developed in Egypt and Mesopotamia, but Islam conquered those areas and rapidly Islamized them. Ancient civilizations got suppressed and people could get acquainted with those civilizations only after coming to modern times. Similarly, the classical civilization of Greece and Rome was suppressed with the spread of Christianity in Europe. Then, after the European Renaissance in the 16th century, people could understand the heritage of that classical civilization. On the contrary, the ancient culture of India never expanded. In the beginning, whosoever foreign invaders came, they assimilated with Indian culture. Then after 1000 AD, Islam brought an aggressive religious policy, but it could not convert India on a large scale. That's why Muslims remained a minority in India and the ancient culture of India could not be Islamised. The temple co-existed with the mosque and 5000 years old Vedic mantras continued to be recited in the homes of Hindus.

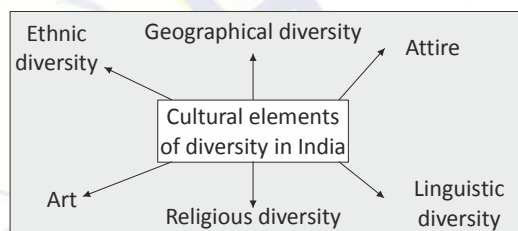
Thus, we find that the ancient culture of India remained unique and distinct.

Ques: Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity.

(UPSC-2015, 200 Word)

Meaning-Exploration of the question:- The question at hand has a vast scope, encompassing multiple dimensions as it seeks to trace the thread of unity throughout India's history, from ancient times to the present day. Additionally, it references a unique form of Indian nationalism known as 'unity in diversity'.

Answer: Culture not only plays a significant role in nation-building, but also shapes the character of a nation. Therefore, India's rich multiculturalism has bestowed a distinct character to the Indian nation.



Four major elements that showcase diversity in India are religion, philosophy, linguistic-literature, and art. Religious diversity has been a prominent aspect of Indian culture. Hinduism, for instance, emerged from a blend of Aryan and non-Aryan religious sects. Bhakti, Avatarism, and idol worship are all products of non-Aryan sects. An intriguing example of religious diversity is the worship of both Goddess Durga and Mahishasura in different parts of India. Kamban's Tamil Ramayana leans towards Ravana, further highlighting this diversity. The process of integration and harmony continued even during the medieval period, exemplified by the Bhakti and Sufi movements, which epitomize the syncretic culture of that time. Similar diversity exists in the field of philosophy as well. Ancient India has a long tradition of free debates, as emphasized by Amartya Sen in his book 'Argumentative Indian.' Various ancient thinkers

held different beliefs, with some embracing the concept of the soul and others rejecting it. Similarly, views on karma and reincarnation also varied among thinkers. Furthermore, India exhibits remarkable linguistic and literary diversity. Many languages have thrived in India, including Hindi, Bengali, Odia, Maithili, Marathi, Gujarati, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and more. The realm of art is no exception to diversity. Ancient India witnessed the development of two major architectural styles, Nagara and Dravida, which later merged into the Vesara style. The spirit of coordination continued during the medieval period, exemplified by the harmonious blend of arch and lintel under Muslim rule. Sculpture and

painting also reflected a fusion of elite and popular artistic expressions. What makes India's diversity even more intriguing is how, after independence, it was embraced as a strength rather than a weakness. Our constitution makers respected this diversity and included 14 languages in the eighth schedule of the constitution (currently 22 languages). Unlike Western nations that championed one language for one nation, India became a nation based on multiple national languages. This unique model of nationalism, known as 'unity in diversity,' has served as a paradigm for alternative nationalism in India.



■ Modern Architecture

During the era of British rule in India, modern architecture began to take shape. The British faced a significant challenge in replicating the majestic Mughal architecture, but they made efforts nonetheless. However, their attempts fell short when compared to the original Mughal structures. In the 19th century, buildings were constructed in the Victorian style, utilizing materials such as bricks, steel, and cement. Although they incorporated Mughal-inspired brick domes, these additions proved to be ineffective.



When Delhi was established as the new capital in 1911, architect Lutyens and his associate Baker devised a blueprint for the city's new buildings. Initially, they pursued a neo-Roman style of architecture but later shifted to incorporate influences from Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic traditions. Notable structures such as the Central Secretariat and the Viceroy's Palace were constructed under their guidance. However, these buildings fell short in capturing the essence of modern architecture or reviving the medieval style. They lacked the openness and practicality that are hallmarks of modernity. Despite the inclusion of Buddhist or Islamic domes, they failed to leave a lasting impact or impression.

■ Why is Laurie Baker considered the architect of the poor?

Laurie Baker, a renowned architect of the 20th century, prioritized utility over aesthetics in his architectural designs. His focus was not on creating extravagant structures for the wealthy but on providing affordable housing for the less privileged. His innovative approach brought about a revolution in building construction, particularly in Kerala.

One of Baker's notable contributions was the introduction of the filter slab method in construction. He emphasized the use of locally available materials, eliminating the need for costly transportation from distant places. Moreover, Baker ensured that the design and construction of houses blended harmoniously with the natural surroundings and the environment. These principles established Baker as the architect dedicated to serving the needs of the economically disadvantaged, a reputation that endures to this day.



Modern Paintings

Under British rule, a few Indians were exposed to European paintings, including the renowned painter Ravi Varma from Travancore. He aimed to merge Indian and European painting styles, drawing inspiration from the flourishing art scene in Paris, the capital of France. The neoclassical French painting movement left a lasting impact on Varma's work.



Raja Ravi Varma's paintings

During the national movement, there was a growing inclination towards Indian art as a response to British influence. In the midst of the Swadeshi movement, Abanindranath Tagore played a pivotal role in reviving Mughal painting and establishing the Bengal School of Painting. Notable artists such as Nagendra Nath Tagore, Ravindra Nath Tagore, Nandlal Bose, and Yamini Roy joined this artistic movement. However, Yamini Roy stood out with her unique perspective. While many artists focused on depicting various aspects of life, she dedicated her art to portraying the lives of ordinary people.



Pictures of Abanindranath Tagore



Pictures of Amrita Shergil

Amrita Sher-Gil, a notable modern painter, emerged as a significant figure in the art world. Born to a Hungarian mother and a Sikh father, she created her own artistic journey, distinct from the Bengal School. Her paintings not only reflected her diverse heritage but also showcased the influence of Hungarian fairy tales.

■ Some Local Styles of Modern India

- **Nathdwara style:** This style of painting emerged in Mewar when the idol of Shrinathji was brought from Braj by Nath in 1671. Brajvasi painters, in Mewar, developed a distinct and independent painting style, influenced by this event.

- **Sikh style:** This style of painting originated under Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule in Lahore State. It portrayed subjects from mythological epics, showcasing a distinct Indian aesthetic. This style primarily focused on ragamala pictures depicting Lord Krishna's divine pastimes (krishna lila). However, as time passed, the growing dominance of the Mughal style gradually diminished its influence.

- **Patna or Company School:** The Patna or Company School of painting gained prominence after the decline of the Mughal Empire. Painters associated with this school were active in and around Patna and their artworks were exported to Britain. Patna Kalam paintings, primarily done on paper and occasionally on ivory, belong to the miniature category. These paintings vividly portray everyday life, capturing scenes of carpenters chopping wood, women selling fish, blacksmiths and goldsmiths, palanquin bearers, farmers plowing fields, and wandering ascetics. Furthermore, this style also includes depictions of animals and birds.

- **Paintings of Kalighat:** Kalighat paintings, created on paper or gunny cloth near the renowned Kali temple in Calcutta, were widely recognized. These paintings fulfilled the local market's needs and encompassed religious narratives, portraying gods and goddesses,

along with social themes. This unique style of painting served as an inspiration for artworks in Midnapore, Hooghly, Chandannagar, Bardhaman, and Murshidabad.



- **Kalamkari painting:** A traditional handmade art form originating from Andhra Pradesh in South India, involves the printing of colored blocks on cotton cloth. Natural vegetable dyes are used to create religious imagery.
- Kalamkari flourished under the patronage of Vijayanagara rulers in the 15th century.
- It is predominantly practiced by women. It is prevalent not only in India but also in Iran.
- Two main forms of Kalamkari have evolved in India: Masulipatnam Kalamkari and Srikalahasti Kalamkari, both originating from Andhra Pradesh.
- The process begins by soaking the cloth overnight in a solution of cow dung. The next day, it is sun-dried and then immersed in a mixture of milk and cow dung. After thorough drying, the cloth is softened by beating it with a wooden staff. Various natural materials such as plants, leaves, tree bark, and stems are used for painting on the cloth.



- **Warli Painting:** A popular mural art form practiced by tribal communities in the Maharashtra-Gujarat border areas, showcases similarities to the Bhimbetka style. These paint-

ings depict natural scenes featuring the sun, moon, mountains, pointed trees, circles, triangles, and most notably, elements of everyday life such as hunting, fishing, feasting, festivals, and dances. The background is filled with white rice paste, while the foreground is adorned with other color. Renowned artists like Jivya Soma Mashe and his son Balu Mashe have contributed to this art form. Warli paintings use simple materials like rice paste and vegetable gum, and incorporate geometrical shapes like squares, triangles, and circles on various colored backgrounds.



- **Kohbar-Sohrai Painting Style:** This art Style, originating from Jharkhand's tribal region, celebrates the growth of progeny and crops. Intricate engravings depicting kings, queens, and nature adorn the walls of houses. Within the artwork, one can find engravings of fish, elephants, parrots, the sun, the moon, and other elements, all intricately woven together.
- **Phad Chitra:** Phad Chitra is a popular art form in Rajasthan, especially in the Bhilwara district. Created on a long, scarf-like cloth, these paintings depict heroic tales, the lives of painters or farmers, and showcase animals, birds, flowers, and plants. Vibrant and subtle colors are used to bring these pictures to life. The process involves sketching the outline with black ink and then filling it in with colors.



Education under British rule

Education is crucial for the progress of individuals and communities, and India's ancient civilization has a rich history of education. In ancient times, education embraced Brahmin, Buddhist, and Jain traditions. Nalanda University, established in the fifth century, flourished as a renowned center of Buddhist learning. In comparison, Europe's first university, the University of Bologna, emerged in the 12th century. Even during medieval India, rulers and landlords patronized education, in Hindi and Islamic education also coexisting. Higher education focused on subjects like religion, philosophy, and mathematics, while practical skills were taught at lower levels, adapting to local needs.

British rule brought modernity to India alongside colonialism and modernization. Colonial policies aimed to exploit the native economy for the benefit of the colonizing country, influencing the education policy implemented in India. British Orientalists, administrators in India, established educational institutions like the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781 under Warren Hastings and the Sanskrit college in Banaras in 1791 under Jonathan Duncan to promote Indian knowledge systems. They believed that British officials well-versed in Indian traditions would better serve British interests.

However, the rise of industrial capitalism in Britain led to the emergence of a liberal and utilitarian intellectual class known as Anglicists, who greatly influenced India's 19th-century education policy. The Anglicist-dominated Bengal Public Education Committee sparked the Orientalist-Anglicist debate on India's future education policy. The primary issue was the medium of instruction: Indian or English language? Lord Macaulay's appointment as the committee's President strengthened the Anglicists' cause, resulting in the declaration of the Macaulay Education System in February 1835, which settled the debate on India's education policy.

Macaulay's education system emphasized the following:-

- The teaching of modern knowledge and science in the English language to Indians followed the Downward Filtration Theory. This approach was adopted due to the colonial government's reluctance to invest extensively in the social sector, which required significant expenditure. The strategy involved imparting Western education and English proficiency to a selected group of Indians, who would then disseminate this knowledge to the general public in Indian vernacular languages.
- The implementation of this plan primarily served British colonial interests, resulting in benefits for Britain and a relatively limited negative impact on India. It is widely believed that the true intention of the Macaulay education system was to promote the British market and Christianity, while also ensuring the appointment of Indians to low-ranking positions at a lower cost. However, British liberal thinkers advocated for the objective of modernization in India.

Subsequently, when Lord Hardinge made English education compulsory for government service, Indian languages and the education system suffered long-term setbacks. The so-called modernity claimed after the introduction of the English education system turned out to be superficial. Several flaws in the system became evident:

- The education system failed to reach the masses, disproving the notion that a small group of intellectuals would bring education to the general public. Attempts were made to emphasize education in native languages, as proposed in the Thomasian education system (1853) and Wood's Despatch (1854). However, these efforts were not effectively implemented, leading to the decline of the public education system in India. To this day, India continues to grapple with the consequences of this setback. Adam's report also confirms that in the 1830s, there were approximately one lakh small schools operating in Bengal and Bihar alone. However, these schools faced destruction due to subsequent British policies.

- The education provided to Indians did not cater to their specific needs. English education did not encourage scientific pursuits or fundamental thinking within our country. Furthermore, it significantly hindered the development of our native languages. The present divide between “India” and “Bharat” can be attributed to the influence of English education.

Nationalist Reaction

Different periods and Indian nationalist-intellectuals exhibited diverse reactions towards British education. Raja Ram Mohan Roy initially supported English education for uplifting India, unaware of its flaws. In contrast, Gandhi viewed it as enslaving and fostering an inferiority complex, hindering native languages. Gandhi advocated a balanced education model combining theoretical and physical labor, reflected in the Wardha Education Scheme.

Tagore aimed for an alternative approach, blending Western and Indian methods at **Shanti Niketan**.

Some nationalists aimed to reform the education system. Baroda’s progressive state introduced compulsory primary education, and leaders like Gokhale urged its implementation in British India. Although the 1913 Education Policy acknowledged the need to eradicate illiteracy, compulsory education wasn’t adopted until the Sargent Plan in 1944, proposing comprehensive education for children aged 6-11.

These facts highlight the British government’s education initiatives’ adverse impact on India. At independence, the literacy rate was only 16%, with women at 8%. Sadly, the independent Indian government prioritized higher education, neglecting primary education despite the Bombay Plan’s (1944) emphasis. As a result, achieving 100% literacy remains a goal.

