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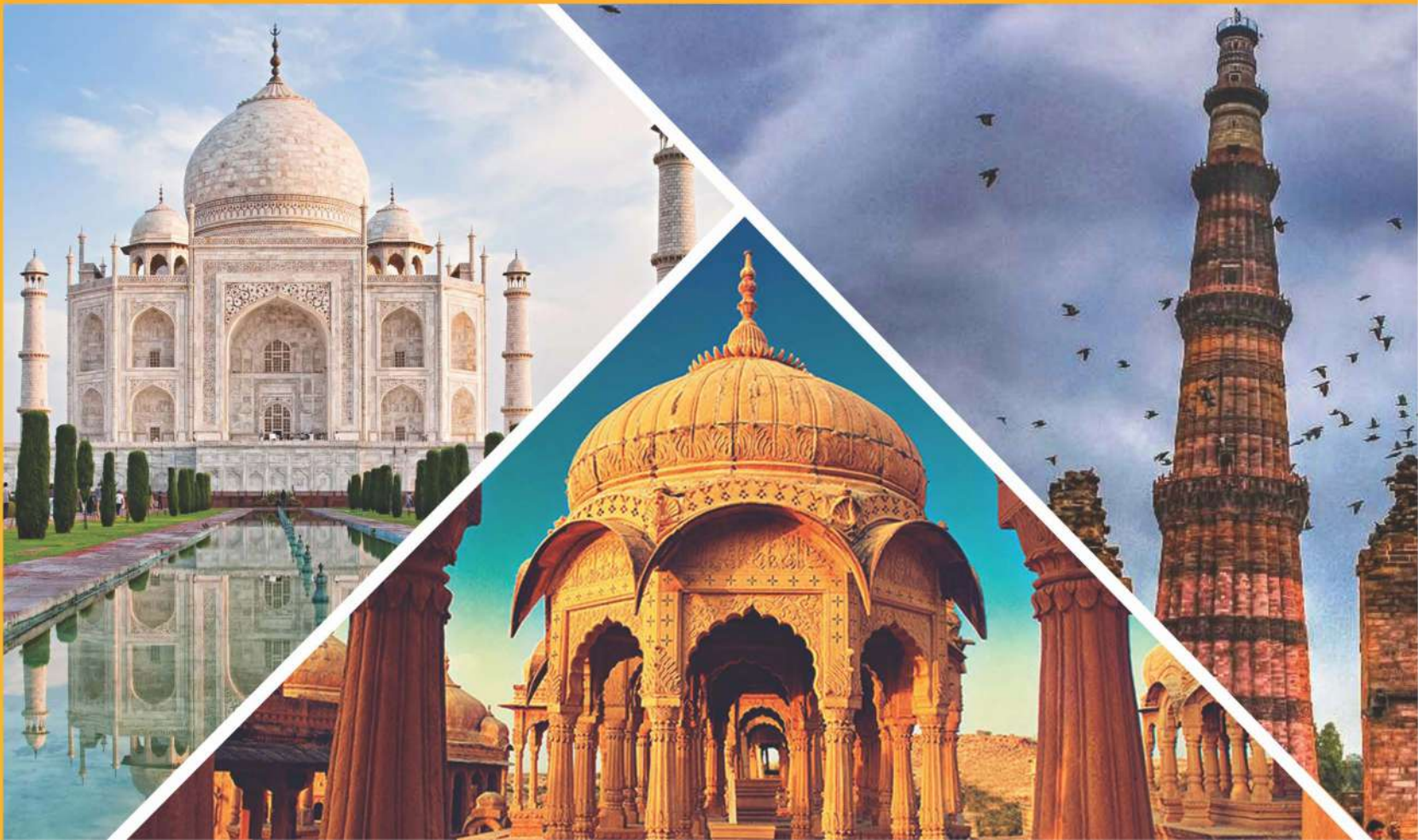
HISTORY
OF INDIA

- Chapter-wise Presentation of Topics based on Syllabus of General Studies with Comprehensive Coverage of General Knowledge.
- A Compilation of Old and New NCERT Books (Class 6 to 12) - NCERT Plus & Study Material of IGNOU & NIOS, and many other Standard Books from which Questions are often asked in Exams.

FOR ALL COMPETITIVE EXAMS

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Editor

N.N. Ojha

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Index

ANCIENT HISTORY OF INDIA

MEDIEVAL HISTORY OF INDIA

MODERN HISTORY OF INDIA

◆❖◆❖◆

ANCIENT HISTORY OF INDIA

01

CHAPTER

Sources of Ancient History

The Ancient History of India can be traced through fewer sources which confirm the occurrence of incidences. Archaeological Remains, Literary Sources, and Foreign Texts act as the most dependable sources in this context. This chapter deals with these sources and how they have proven their worth in due course of time.

India has a rich cultural heritage. The progress of man in the past is the subject matter of history. In order to understand the present India it is necessary to trace back its roots in Ancient India. There are several ways of finding out about the past.

The study of ancient history of India mainly depends upon three types of sources:

1. Archaeological Remains
2. Literary Sources
3. Accounts of Foreign Travellers and Writers

Sources of Ancient History

- **Literary Sources**
  - **Religious literature**
    - **Brahmana and Vedic Lit.**
      - Vedas • Brahmanas
      - Aranyakas • Vedangas
      - Upanishads • Sutras
      - Smritis • Puranas
      - Mahakavya (Epic)
    - **Buddhist Literature**
      - Tripitak
      - Jatak
      - Pali
      - Sanskrit lit. and others
    - **Jain Literature**
      - Angas
      - Upangas
      - Prakirna
      - Chhed Sutra and others
  - **Secular literature**
    - **No-Historical Literature**
      - Arthashastra
      - Astadhyayee
      - Mahabhashya and others
    - **Historical Literature**
      - Rajtarangini
      - Ramcharit
  - **Sangam literature**
- **Archaeological Sources**
  - → Painting & Idols
  - → Articles from excavations
  - → Coins
  - → Monuments
  - → Inscriptions
- **Accounts of foreign travellers and writers**
  - Greek Authors
  - Chinese travellers and writers
  - Mohammadan writers

Archaeological Remains

In archaeology the study comprises material remains like **mounds, terracotta statues, coins, inscriptions, seals, stone implements, metallic tools, monuments,** etc. The dates of these things are fixed according to the **Radio Carbon Method** based on the amount of **C14 presence in remains**. Under this method, the measurement is based on the fact that the half- life of C14 is 5730 ± 40 years.

Excavation

- The art of digging mounds is called excavation. The remains of old habitations are brought into limelight through this art.
- The credit for excavating the Pre-Aryan past goes to Sir William Jones of Asiatic Bengal Society (established on 1st Jan 1784).

- In **1861, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** was established under **Alexander Cunningham.** The ASI was reconstituted under Sir John Marshall in 1902.
- **Sir Mortimer Wheeler** introduced the stratigraphic method which helps in establishing chronology in archaeology.

Inscription

- The study of inscriptions is called **epigraphy** and the study of old writings used in inscriptions and other old records is called **paleography**.
- The earliest inscriptions were found on the **seals of Harappa** belonging to about 2500 B.C. but they have not been deciphered so far.
- The oldest deciphered inscriptions belong to Ashoka in the 3rd century B.C.

Stone Age

02 CHAPTER

The Stone Age is divided into three phases or ages - Paleolithic; Mesolithic period and Neolithic period. As the name suggests there is no written evidence found. But, sources such as Cave Art, Hand-made tools serve as source for the study of that period.

Pre-historic Period

The period before the development of script is called the pre-historic times.

- Generally, the period before the invention of script is broadly divided into Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. Hence, the names of materials that they used (for example, painted grey ware culture or Iron Age culture) or the geographical region (Indus) or the first site to be identified (for example, Acheulian or Harappan) are used to name the cultures.
- The credit for the rediscovery of Indian pre-history goes **to Dr. Primrose**, an Englishman, who was the first person to discover pre-historic implements (stone knives and arrow-heads) in 1842 at Lingsugur (Karnataka).

- **John Evans** was first to publish discovery of flints on the bed of the Narmada river near Jabalpur in 1853.
- **Robert Bruce Foote** discovered the first palaeolithic tool discovered in India — **the Pallavaram hand-axe.**
- Pre-historic study was boosted after the Yale – Cambridge Expedition of **Potwar plateau** in the Siwalik in 1935 led by De Terra and Patterson.
- The Pre - historic period is divided into three ages:
  1. Stone Age
  2. Bronze Age
  3. Iron Age
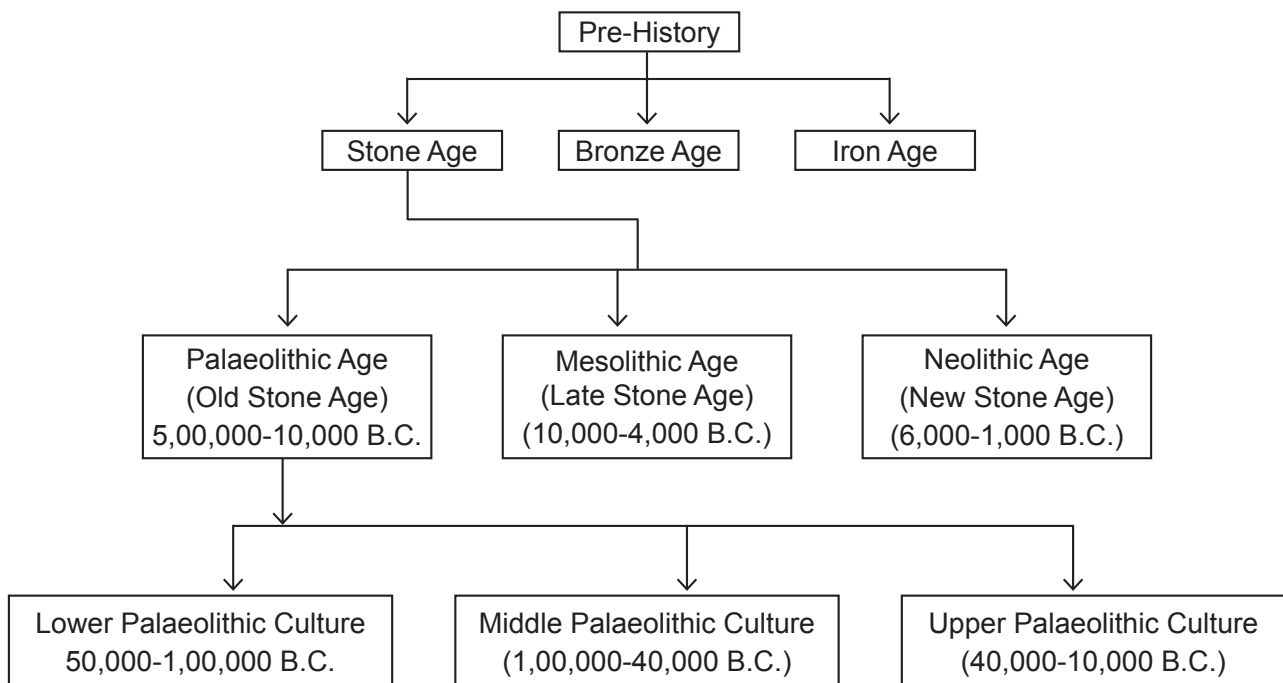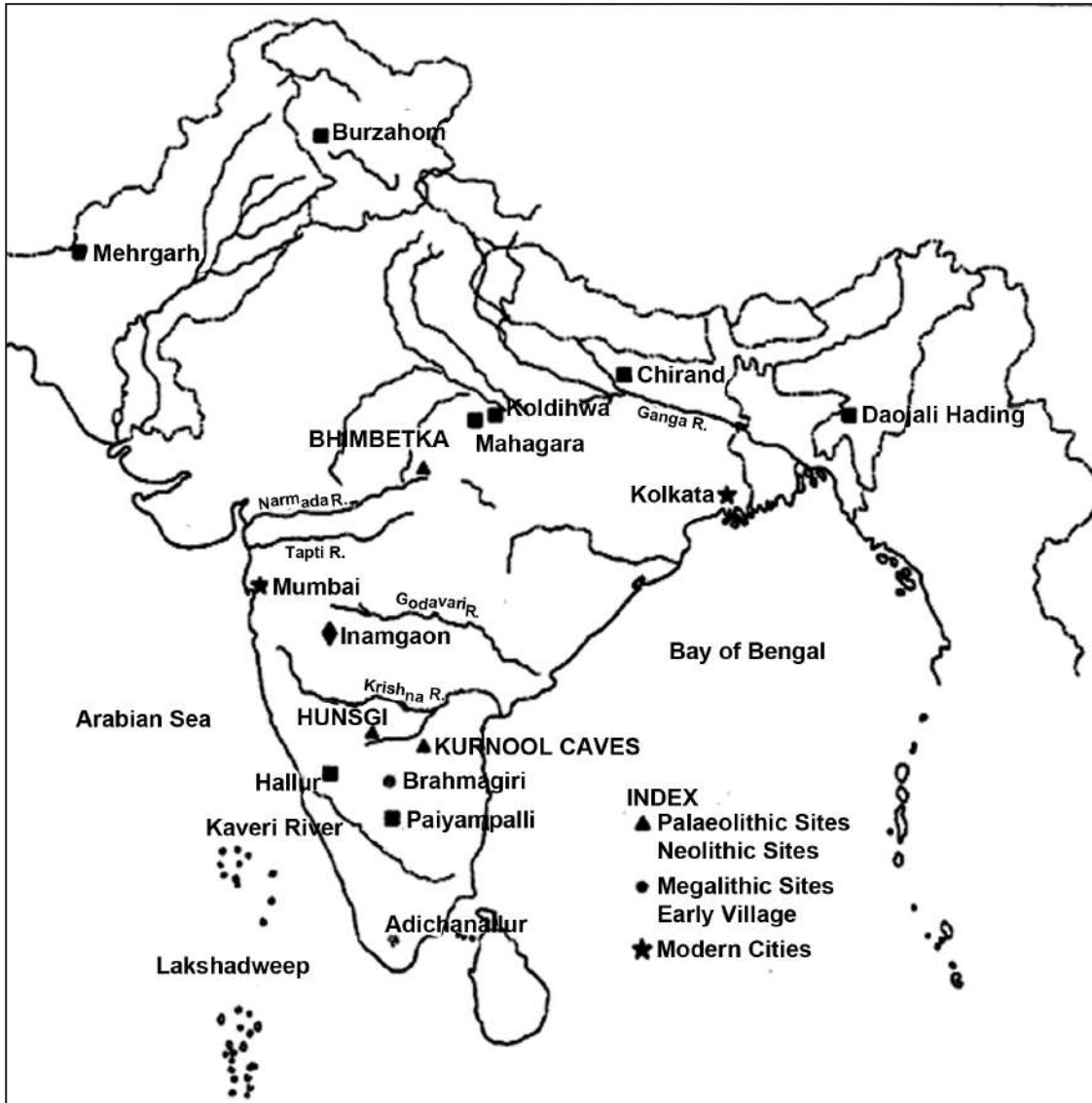
Palaeolithic Age (Hunters & Food Gatherers)

☐ The earliest age in history is called Old Stone Age or Palaeolithic.

☐ The Palaeolithic culture covers the entire period of Pleistocene, from 2,50,000 B.C. to 10,000 B.C.

☐ **Robert Bruce Foote** discovered the first Palaelithic stone tool in 1863 near **Chennai**.

☐ The Palaeolithic Age is divided into three phases according to the nature of stone tools used:

1. Early or Lower Palaeolithic
2. Middle Palaeolithic
3. Late or Upper Palaeolithic

☐ The Palaeolithic man of India are said to have belonged to the Negrito race and lived in caves and rock shelters.

☐ They had no knowledge of agriculture, house building, pottery, or any metal. It was only in later stages that they attained the knowledge of fire.

☐ Man, during this period, used tools of unpolished, undressed rough stones — mainly hand axes, cleavers, choppers, blades, burin, and scrapers.

☐ Since the stone tools were made of a hard rock called 'quartzite', Palaeolithic men are therefore also called **'Quartzite Men'** in India.

1. Lower Palaeolithic Age (5,00,000-1,00,000 B.C.)

☐ It began around two million years ago and continued upto 60,000 years ago

☐ It covers the greater part of the Ice Age. The people were wanderers. They did not know how to grow food.

☐ The people hunted animals and gathered roots, nuts and fruits.

Chalcolithic & Megalithic Cultures

The Chalcolithic Culture is noticeable by the use of copper as copper was the first metal used by the men in this time period. The livelihood was majorly based on subsistence agriculture, stock-raising, hunting and fishing. On the other hand Megalithic culture is characterized by graves encircled by big pieces of stone. This chapter sheds light on Chalcolithic and Megalithic cultures and its development.

Chalcolithic Culture

The Pre-Harappan cultures are the earliest Chalcolithic cultures of India, and they are found in the time before the beginning of the mature phase of the Harappan culture, and continued to exist in the later period.

❑ The other Chalcolithic cultures of India are more or less contemporary to this phase of Harappan culture and they continued even after its decline.

Chalcolithic Culture	Harappan Culture
Primarily Rural	Primarily Urban
Used Copper	Used Bronze
Lived near hilly lands or rivers	Attained urbanisation on the basis of produce from flood plains in Indus valley

Pre-Harappan Cultures

❑ The remains of Chalcolithic cultures have been identified in the adjoining areas of the same region where the Harappan Culture flourished later on.

❑ These are **chronologically antecedents, and partly contemporary** to the **Harappan Culture**. Traces of this culture are found from Baluchistan, Gomal Valley, Punjab, Sindh, Ghaggar Valley, Rajasthan and Haryana.

❑ **Mehargarh in Baluchistan** is the oldest site. It witnesses the pre-pottery Neolithic levels with mud-houses, stone pots, grinding stones and bones of domestic animals. It also indicated the knowledge of copper and painted ware.

❑ The **Zhob Culture** is distinguished by a red ware painted over in black pigment, now and then supplemented by red.

❑ **Rana Ghundai, Moghul Ghundai, Periano Ghundai, Surjungle, Dabarkot** and others are important sites. Female figurines are found with a grim goblin-like face.

❑ The Zhob sites also witness the practice of **cremation of the dead.**

❑ The **Quetta Culture** is marked by a buff ware painted over in black pigment. These are found mostly with geometric designs including 'stepped' motifs.

❑ **Kili Gul Muhammed, Damb Sadat, Pirak Domb** are the prominent sites of the **Queta Culture**.

❑ The **pinkish-buff ware culture** of South Baluchistan is known as the **Kulli Culture**.

❑ The **people of Kulli** used to cremate their dead.

❑ A mirror made of copper and two copper pins of Mehi indicate the use of copper.

❑ The polychrome element in the pottery of **Nal is a special feature**. The people of this culture had trade links with the Gulf of Persia.

❑ **Chalcolithic sites are found in the Gomal Valley of Pakistan.**

❑ The main excavated sites of **Gomal Culture are Rahman Dheri and Gumla.**

❑ The signs of well-planned pre-Harappan settlements surrounded with a fortification wall are visible in Gomal Valley.

❑ **In Punjab there are two sites:** Sarai Khola near Rawalpindi and Jalilpur on the confluence of Ravi and Chenab.

❑ In **Sindh, Amri culture** was famous for Chalcolithic elements**.**

❑ **Kot Diji** is an important site on the left bank of the Indus River. We have highly sophisticated wheel made pottery from this place along with tools and weapons of stone, copper and bronze.

❑ In the **Ghaggar Valley, Sothi and Kalibangan are two noteworthy centers**.

04 Harappan Civilization

CHAPTER

The Harappan Civilization represents the earliest manifestation of urban development in the plains of the Indus valley and its extension along the Arabian sea-coast. The origin and authorship of the Harappan Civilization are keenly debated historical questions. The Indus script has not yet been conclusively deciphered and hence the authorship is not certain. This chapter highlights the geographical sites, society, economy, polity, religion and art of the Civilization.

The Harappan civilisation was the first urban civilisation in South Asia, contemporaneous with the civilisations of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

❑ **It was earlier called Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) but the fact that Harappa was the first site to be discovered and that the civilization spread beyond the Indus region, it is now better known as Harappan Civilization.**

❑ **Harappan Culture forms part of the proto history of India and belongs to the Bronze Age.**

❑ It is called Bronze Age Civilization as communities used bronze as a material to make their major tools

❑ The Indus valley site of Harappa was first visited by Charles Mason in 1826, and Amri by Alexander Burnes in 1831.

Phases of Harappan Civilization

The Harappan Civilisation can be classified in three phases:

(i) Early/Pre-Harappan Phase (c. 3200−2600 BCE)
- The Early Harappan phase, known as the Regionalisation Era, was the formative, proto-urban phase of the Harappan civilisation.
- It is related to the Hakra phase of settlements, and the settlements in this period are marked by their fortification, a fairly high level of expertise in specialised crafts such as stone-working, bead-making, and metal crafting, the use of wheeled transport, and the existence of trade networks.
- **Sites:** Dholavira, Padri (Gujarat), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), Harappa (West Punjab, Pakistan), Kot Diji, Balakot, Amri (Pakistan), Bhirrana (Haryana).
- There are no early-Harappan sites in the active Indus plain.

(ii) Mature Harappan Phase (C.2600−1900 BCE)
- The Mature Harappan phase, or the Integration Era, was the urban phase of the Harappan civilisation, which shows the characteristics of a full-fledged civilisation.
- It is pertinent to note that the unqualified term, 'Harappan Culture' or 'Harappan Civilisation', primarily refers to this mature urban phase.

(iii) Late Harappan Phase (C.1900−1300 BCE)
- The Late Harappan phase or the Localisation Era was the post-urban phase defined by a decline in the cities. This is the final period in the Harappan civilisation and refers to the fragmentation of the culture of the Integration Era.
- The Late Harappan phase comprises five geographical zones each having distinct phases — the West Punjab Phase (Cemetery - H Culture), the East Punjab Phase, the Jhukar Phase, the Rangpur Phase, and the Ganga Yamuna Doab Phase.
- Late Harappan settlements were small compared to mature Harappan ones.
- **Site:** Important Jhukar sites are Jhukar, Chanhudaro, Amri and Rangpur.

Chronology of Harappan Archaeology	
1853 AD	A. Cunningham's find of a Harappan seal.
1921 AD	Daya Ram Sahani's excavation at Harappa.
1931 AD	Marshall excavated Mohenjodaro.
1938 AD	Mackay excavated the same site.
1940 AD	M. S. Vats excavated Harappa.
1946 AD	Mortimer Wheeler excavated Harappa.
Post-1947 period	Harappan and associated sites excavated by Suraj Bhan, M.K. Dhavalikar, J.P. Joshi, B.B. Lal, S.R. Rao, B.K. Thapar, R.S. Bisht, and others.

Geographical Area and the Settlements

The Indus Civilisation and the contemporary cultures covered nearly 1.5 million sq. km area in India and Pakistan.

05 CHAPTER · The Vedic Age

After the decline of the Indus Civilization around 1900 BC, a new culture came into existence. The newly migrated Aryans who moved into the Indian Subcontinent in 1500 B.C. established the Vedic Culture and Civilisation which can be divided into Early Vedic Age (1500-1000 BC) and Later Vedic Age (1000-600 BC).

- Earlier the Aryans were considered as a distinct Race, but recent studies have established that the word 'Aryan' refers to the speakers of Indo-Aryan languages.
- The Aryans came into India in several waves, the earliest of which was represented by the Rig Vedic people who came around 1500 BC.
- The domesticated horse, brought by the Aryans, played a very important role in establishing the Vedic Civilisation. The Aryans possessed chariots driven by Horses, and introduced them into India for the first time.
- The Aryans came into conflict with the indigenous inhabitants called the Dasas or Dasayus.
- The Dasas are considered as a branch of early Aryans.

Original Home of Aryans - Views
◆ Sapta Sindhu Region – A.C. Das
◆ Central Asia – Max Muller
◆ Arctic Region – B.G. Tilak
◆ Tibet – Dayanand Saraswati
◆ Bactria – Rhode
◆ Russian Steppes, North of Black Sea – Benfey
◆ Central and Western Germany – Geiger
◆ Austria, Hungary and Bohemia – P. Giles and Macdonald
◆ Foot of Himalayas – Pandit Laxmidhar Shastri
◆ German Plains – Prof. Penka

The Vedic Literature

- Most of the knowledge about the Aryans in India comes from the Vedic literature.
- The word 'Veda' is derived from the root 'Ved' (to know) signifying knowledge par excellence.
- The Vedic literature mainly consists of the four Vedas, The Rigveda, Samveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda, and the associated literature consisting of Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Vedangas, Sutras and Upavedas.
- The Rig Vedic Samhita is the oldest text in the Vedic Literature.
- The Vedas consist of information about the polity, society, religion and philosophy of Vedic period.
- Aranyakas consist of details about rituals and instructions whereas the Upanishads deal with philosophical enquiries.

Early Vedic Age

Sources

Vedic Texts

- The Rig Vedic Samhita is the earliest text related to the Early Vedic Age. It is the earliest text in Indo-European languages.
- It is closely related to Zend Avesta, the oldest text in Iranian Language. Both the texts use the same names for several Gods and social classes.
- It is believed that Aryans had migrated to India in several waves and on their way they first appeared in Central Asia and Iran.

Inscriptions

- The earliest specimen of Indo-European language is found in an inscription in Iraq, dating to 2200 BC.
- The name 'Aryan' appears in Kassite inscriptions of 1600 BC from Iraq.
- It also appears in Mitanni inscriptions of the 1400 BC.

Archaeological Evidence

- Although there are no clear archaeological evidence of the advent of Aryans, but Archaeological evidence of Horse and Horse sacrifice has been found in southern Tajikistan and Swat Valley of Pakistan.

06 CHAPTER

Jainism & Buddhism

Around 62 religious cults came into existence in the 6th century B.C. Jainism and Buddhism were the most important amongst them. This chapter sheds light on the philosophical doctrines of Buddhism, Jainism and few other sects which rose to prominence.

Period of Upheaval

- In India, numerous religious sects arose in the middle Gangetic plains in the 6th century B.C. We hear of as many as 62 religious sects. Jainism and Buddhism were the most important, and they emerged as the most potent religious reform movements.

Causes of the New Movements

- The Vedic philosophy had lost its original purity in 6th century B.C. It was reduced to a bundle of cumbrous rituals.
- The **caste system had become rigid and brutal. A person of low caste had a miserable life.**
- The Vedic religion had become **very complex** and degenerated into **superstitions, dogmas and rituals**.
- **The supremacy of the Brahmanas also created unrest.**
- All the **religious treatises were written in Sanskrit,** which was the language of elite and not the masses.
- Mahavira and Gautam Buddha were two such great teachers who put before the people two such sects that were devoid of complex religious rituals and could address grievances of people related to the existing religion.

Jainism

According to Jaina tradition, there were 24 Tirthankara, literally ford maker, across the stream of existence and the first being Rishbhdeva, who perhaps got mention in the Rig Veda. Each Tirthankara is recognized by a symbol.

- We have historical proof of only the last two viz., Parshvanath (23rd) and Mahavira (24th); former belonged to a royal family of Banaras and the Mahavira was the founder of Jainism.
- Yajur Veda mentions three of the Tirthankaras, viz., Risabha, Ajitanatha and Aristanemi.

S. No.	Tirthankara	Symbol
	24 Tirthankaras and their Symbols	
1	Rishabdeva	Bull
2	Ajithanath	Elephant
3	Sambhavanath	Horse
4	Abhinandana	Monkey
5	Sumathinatha	Goose
6	Padmaprabha	Lotus
7	Suparshwanatha	Swastika
8	Chandraprabha	Crescent Moon
9	Pushpadanatha or Suvidhi	Crocodile
10	Sheetalanatha	Kalpavriksha
11	Shreyanshnatha	Rhinoceros
12	Vasupujya	Buffalo
13	Vimalanatha	Boar
14	Ananthanatha	Porcupine
15	Dharmanatha	Vajra (Diamond)
16	Shanthinatha	Deer
17	Kunthunatha	Goat
18	Aranatha	Fish
19	Mallinatha	Kalasha (the holy pitcher)
20	Munisuvranatha	Tortoise
21	Naminatha	Blue Water Lily
22	Neminatha	Shankha
23	Parshvanatha	Snake
24	Mahavira	Lion

Vardhamana Mahavira

Mahavira was born in 540 B.C. in a **village Kundagrama** near Vaishali, which is identical with Basrah. His name was Vardhaman.

- His father Siddhartha was the chief of the **Jantrika tribe of Kshatriya** under Vajji of Vaishali and his mother was a Lichchavi princess named Trishala. His wife's name was Yasoda.

07 Rise of Mahajanapadas

CHAPTER

The rise of Mahajanapadas demarcates the emergence of the Post-Vedic Age. It refers to the place where the people settled. This phase is also demarcated by internal dispute between themselves with the rise in foreign invasions. In this chapter we are going to learn more about the first dynasty, its rise and fall and development of other dynasties side by side.

Emergence of Mahajanapadas

The mahajanapadas represented the emergence of territorial kingdoms that ruled over people (jana).

- The Later Vedic period (900–600 BCE) witnessed the transition from a tribal polity based on lineage to a territorial state.
- The janas who migrated eastwards began to settle down in various regions.
- The loyalty of the people shifted from jana (tribe or clan) to janapada (territory).
- Janapada literally meant 'the place where the tribe sets its foot upon'. The janapadas fought with one another for resources and political dominance. Some janapadas extended their territories and brought various janas within their jurisdiction. Such janapadas grew into Mahajanapadas.

❑ Territory, people, government and sovereignty are important elements of a state. All these elements were found in some of the Mahajanapadas.

❑ The king headed the government aided by a centralised administration. The king was also the sovereign ruler.

❑ The king levied taxes out of agricultural surplus and redistributed it and ensured maintenance of law and order in a hierarchical society by force and coercion.

❑ These features marked the formation of state in the Gangetic plains.

Sixteen Mahajanapadas

❑ There were sixteen states known as **'Mahajanapadas'** just before the rise of Buddhism in India. A list of these states is given in the Buddhist text (the Anguttara Nikaya).

❑ These **sixteen states** and their capitals are as follows-

S.No.	Mahajanapada	Capital
1	Anga	Champa
2	Magadha	Rajgir, Pataliputra
3	Kasi	Varanasi
4	Kosala	Sravasti
5	Vajji	Vaishali
6	Malla	Kushinagar, Pawa
7	Chedi	Suktimati (in Sanskrit) and Sotthivati-nagara (in Pali)
8	Vamsa or Vatsa	Kausambi
9	Kuru	Asandivant (Hastinapur)
10	Panchala	Ahicchatra (Uttar), Kampilya (Dakshina)
11	Matsya	Viratnagar (Bairat)
12	Surasena	Mathura
13	Assaka	Patana or Potali or Poudanva
14	Avanti	Mahismati, Ujjain
15	Gandhara	Taxila
16	Kamboja	Rajapura or Rajaori
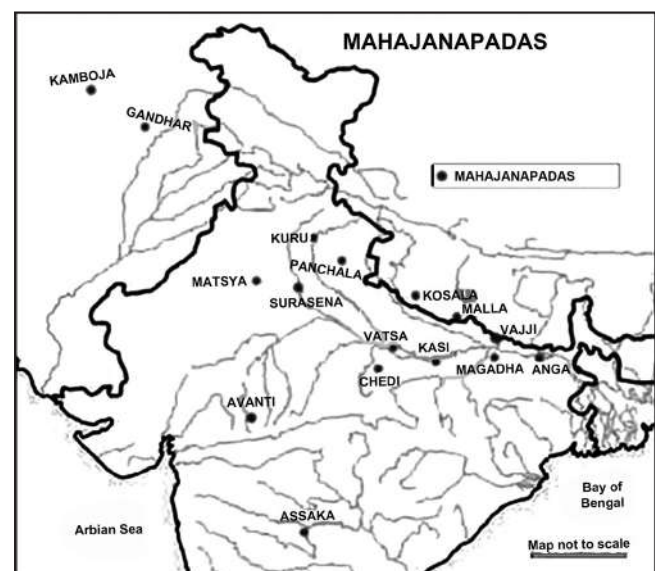
08 CHAPTER
The Mauryan Age

The Mauryan Age is characterized by the rise in the development of a strong Administrative system and developments in Art and Culture under the rule of mighty emperors such as Chandragupta, Ashoka, etc. In this chapter we are going to learn about the rise and fall of the Mauryan Empire and its significance in the Indian history.

Mauryan Empire

The growth of Magadha culminated in the emergence of the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the empire (c. 321 BCE), extended control as far northwest as Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and his grandson Asoka, arguably the most famous ruler of early India, conquered Kalinga (present-day coastal Odisha).
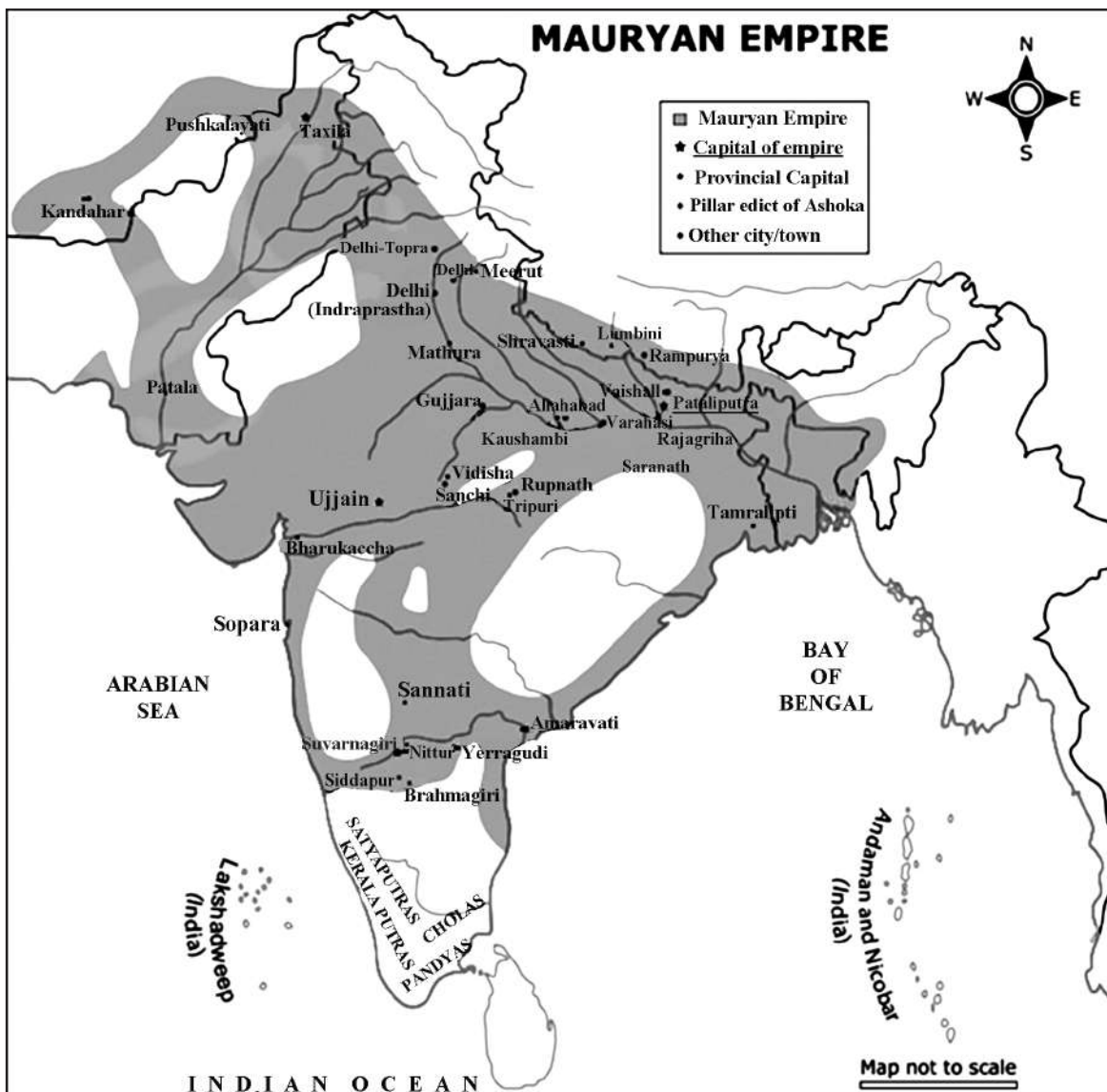
MAURYAN EMPIRE

Post-Mauryan Period

In this chapter we are going to learn about the phase which comes after the decline of Mauryan Empire where there was a rise in several smaller kingdoms in different parts such as in the Eastern India, Central India and the Deccan. The Mauryas were succeeded by the Sungas, the Kanvas and the Satavahanas. And, in north-western India the Mauryans were succeeded by a number of ruling dynasties from Central Asia.

The period which began in about 200 B.C did not witness any large empire like that of Mauryas. Instead it is characterized by rise of widespread contacts between Central Asia and India. In eastern India, central India and the Deccan, the Mauryas were succeeded by number of native rulers such as the Sungas, the Kanvas and the Satavahanas. In north-western India they were succeeded by a number of ruling dynasties from Central Asia- Indo-Greeks, Shakas, Parthians and Kushans.

Sunga Dynasty

After Ashoka, about five or six rulers of the Mauryan dynasty came to the throne of Patliputra, but they were all weaklings and so the Mauryan Empire gradually deteriorated under them. **According to Purana, Brihadratha, the last ruler of the Mauryan dynasty was assassinated by his own commander–in-chief Pushyamitra Sunga (185-148 B.C.).**

- The capital continued to be Pataliputra, and his authority extended to the south as far as the Narmada River, and embraced the territories in the Ganges basin, corresponding with the modern Bihar, Tirhut, and the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

- In about 155 B.C. **Menander**, the **Greek ruler** of Kabul and the Punjab occupied Mathura and Ayodhya but, according to Patanjali, they were pushed back with heavy losses by Pushyamitra Sunga. The ruler of Vidarbha, Yajnasena was defeated and obliged to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Sunga ruler.

- From the **Hathigumpha inscription of Kharvela,** it appears that Pushyamitra suffered a defeat at the hand of that illustrious ruler.

- He fought two wars and won them, conducted **two Asvamedha Yajnas.** The Yajnas marked the revival of Vedic rituals. Patanjali is said to have officiated as priest in the **Aswamedha sacrifices.**

- **According to Divya Vadana,** Pushyamitra was prosecutor of Buddhism and he put a price of **one hundred gold Dinaras** on the head of every Buddhist Monk. The ninth king **Bhagavata** was identical with the king Kasiputra Bhagabhadra mentioned in the **Besnagar pillar** inscription and to whose court, the Greek king Antialkidas of Taxila sent his **ambassador Helidorus, son of Dion Diya**. He created a Gurudhvaja in the honour of Vasudeva Krishna and called himself a Bhagvata.

- The last **Sunga king was Devabhuti or Devabhumi**, who was assassinated by Vasudeva Kanva in 72 B.C. The sway of the Sungas marked the revival of the Hindu culture and the Sanskrit language which had seen a great set-back under Ashoka. They, in fact, set the ground for the advancement of Hinduism under the Guptas.

- The Sungas were great patrons of art.
  - They constructed a large number of Stupas, Viharas, Gateways and Railings, etc.
  - The railings of Bharhut Stupa, one of the **Gateways of Sanchi Stupa** and the Chaitya Hall at Karle are some of the exquisite examples of art of the Sunga period. Bharut sculptures used green schist as the medium.

- Sungas were also great patrons of education and literature.
  - The great Sanskrit Grammarian, **Patanjali**, was patronized by them.
  - **The Ramayana and the Mahabharata were also given final touches during this period.**
  - The famous book on Hindu Law, **'Manusmriti'** was also compiled during this period.

Kanva Dynasty

The Kanva dynasty overthrew the Sunga dynasty in parts of eastern and central India, and ruled from 73 BCE to 28 BCE.

MEDIEVAL HISTORY OF INDIA

01 CHAPTER

Advent of Arabs & Turks

The advent of Muslim invasions began when Muhammad-bin-Qasim invaded Sindh. It was against this background, Mahmud of Ghazni plundered our country for wealth. But, the defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan against Ghori was the final nail in the coffin. This chapter sheds light on the regions conquered by Arabs and Turks which led to the emergence of a new era in the Indian history.

Spread of Islam

The period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries (1200-1550 CE) saw the arrival of Islamic institutions and Islamic culture in India.

Factors Responsible for Spread of Islam

Trade Contact

❑ The geographical location of Arabia facilitated trade contact between India and Arabia.

❑ As sea-faring traders of the pre-Islamic Arabs had maritime contacts with the western and eastern coasts of India.

❑ While there were South Indian settlements in the Persian Gulf, Arabs too settled in Malabar and the Coromandel Coast.

Matrimonial Alliances

❑ Arabs married Malabar women and settled down on the West Coast. These Arabs were called Mappillais (sons-in-law).

Military Expeditions and Invasions

❑ Arab military expedition in 712 and subsequent Ghaznavid and the Ghori military raids, intended to loot and use the resources seized to strengthen their power in Central Asia, created a relationship of the conqueror and the conquered.

❑ Thus, in the eleventh-twelfth centuries A.D., the Muslim under Mahmud Ghazni and Muhammad Ghori succeeded in establishing a permanent Muslim empire in this country.

❑ With the establishment of a permanent Muslim empire in India, the Muslim faith began to make a rapid progress and a large number of the Indian population began to embrace Islam.

Inherent Features of Islam

❑ The principle of equality and common brotherhood had a great attraction for the common people, especially to the Indians who were tired of the growing class – distinctions and caste – hatred among them.

❑ The worship of one and all powerful God also had a great charm for the people, especially for those who had become very tired of worshipping so many gods and goddesses and following so many complicated rituals and ceremonies.

❑ The arms of Islam also proved a potent factor in spreading Muslims won over a large number of followers because of their influence and royal pressure.

❑ Unlike the Hindu religion, Islam is a missionary religion and its preachers and followers spread their faith with great zeal.

❑ Islam makes no great intellectual demand upon the believer. It has no elaborate rituals, the practice of which is in the hands of a recognized class of priests.

❑ Sometimes the Muslim faith proved a great boon for the common people and it attracted them. It gave internal peace and order, and refined the habits and behavior of those people who came under its banner.

Arab Invasion

Reasons behind invasion of Sindh by Arabs

❑ The Arabs invaded Sindh in about 712 A.D. The causes behind the invasion are as follows:

❑ The religious zeal of the Arabs. After their conversion to the Muslim faith, the Arabs became zealous to spread their faith in distant lands.

❑ The temptation of wealth.

❑ To punish the pirates or sea robbers of Debal or modern Karachi who had plundered eight ships of valuable presents sent by the king of Ceylon to both for the Khalifa (Walid) and Hajjaj, the governor of Iraq.

02
CHAPTER

The Delhi Sultanate

Delhi first became the capital of a kingdom under the Tomara Rajputs, who were defeated in the middle of the twelfth century by the Chauhans (also referred to as Chahamanas) of Ajmer. Under the Tomaras and Chauhans, Delhi became an important commercial centre. The transformation of Delhi into a capital that controlled vast areas of the subcontinent started with the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate in the beginning of the thirteenth century. The chapter provides details of the five dynasties that together made the Delhi Sultanate.

The Delhi Sultanate was set up by Turkish Slaves working under rulers of Afghans. The early rulers had to protect North from several Mongol invasions. These early rulers developed their power from military, trade routes and the ability to control regional governors. Later, Delhi was made the capital of the Delhi Sultanate which later turned out to be important seat of power in the political history of India.

❑ There are five dynasties that ruled at Delhi from A.D. 1206 to 1526. They were as follows:

❑ **The Slave Dynasty:** 1206 – 1290 A.D.

❑ **The Khaljis:** 1290 – 1320 A.D. (Shortest)

❑ **The Tughlaqs:** 1320 – 1413 A.D. (Longest)

❑ **The Siyyids:** 1414 – 1451 A.D.

❑ **The Lodis:** 1451 – 1526 A.D.

Sources for the Study of Sultanate History

Although inscriptions, coins and architecture provide a lot of information, "histories", tarikh (singular)/tawarikh (plural) are especially valuable. They are written in Persian which was the language of administration under the Delhi Sultan.

Features of Authors of Tawarikhs

❑ The authors of tawarikh were learned men: secretaries, administrators, poets and courtiers, who both recounted events and advised rulers on governance, emphasising the importance of just rule.

❑ The authors of tawarikh lived in cities (mainly Delhi) and hardly ever in villages. They often wrote their histories for Sultans in the hope of rich rewards.

❑ These authors advised rulers on the need to preserve an "ideal" social order based on birth right and gender distinctions. Their ideas were not shared by everybody.

Important Historians and their Works

❑ The sources to study Delhi Sultanate are:

❑ **Chachnama:** It is the most authentic primary source, so far discovered. It contains history of ruling dynasty of Sindh on the eve of Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion in 712 A.D. Written by an **anonymous Arab,** the book was entitled 'Chachnama' after the name of the founder of ruling house. It gives a brief history of the Sudra dynasty of Sind. The book tells, on the death of last Sudra ruler, Rai Sahasi–II. The throne was usurped by his Brahman minister called Chach. **Chach's son Dahir faced Arab invasion in 712 A.D**. Chachnama was translated into Persian by Muhammad Ali Bin Abu Bakr Kufi in the time of Nasiruddin Qabacha.

❑ **Alberuni:** He was the first prominent **Muslim Indologist**. He was one of the greatest intellectuals of 11th century. He was a theologian, philosopher, logician, mathematician and physician. He was the political counsellor of the Khwarzim. He was famous as 'Munajjim-astrologer' cum astronomer. He was well versed in Greek and Indian astrology systems. **In 1018 – 19**, he accompanied the invading hordes of Mahmud Ghazni to Indo–Gangatic valley as a freelance observer. He was not in the service of Mahamud Ghazni. His book Kitab-ul-Hind was translated into English as 'Alberuni's India' by Edward C. Sachau. Tarik-ul-Hind is an account of the religion, philosophy, literature, geography, astronomy, wisdoms, laws and astrology of India about 1030 A.D. He died in Ghazni at the age of 72.

❑ **Al Utbi:** He was the celebrated author of **Tarikh-i-Yamini or Kitabul-i-Yamini.** He was attached to personal staff of Mahmud of Ghazni. His full name was Abu Nasr Muhammad bin Muhammad at Jabbar

MODERN HISTORY OF INDIA

01 CHAPTER British Conquest of India

In the later part of the eighteenth century, a new power was emerging on the political horizon – British East India Company. They came as a trading company but, how did they manage to become the masters of a vast empire? In this chapter you will see how this came about.

Anglo-French Struggle

For nearly **20 years from 1744 to 1763, the French and the English were to wage three wars** for control over the trade, wealth and territory in India. These Anglo-French conflicts in India are generally known as the Carnatic Wars in Indian history. The Carnatic was the name given by the Europeans to Coromandal Coast and its hinterland.

First Carnatic War (1740-48)

- It was the extension of Anglo-French War in Europe caused by Austrian War of Succession.
- The War in Europe spread to India.
- The second cause of the war between the French and the English was their rivalry in trade.
- Dupleix, the governor of the French East India Company was very ambitious to establish a French state in India.
- Lack of powerful central authority in India also encouraged the struggle between the French and the English in 1748.
- The immediate reason for a War was provided by seize of French Ships by English Navy officer Barnet.
- The French retaliated by seizing Madras in 1746 under Admiral La Bourdonnais.
- The War ended in 1748 under the **Treaty of Aix-La Chapelle**.
- Madras handed back to the English and French got their territories back in North America.

Battle of St. Thome (Madras)

- During the first Carnatic War, the Battle of St. Thome was fought between the French forces and the forces of Anwaruddin, the Nawab of Carnatic whose help was sought by the English.
- French Governor Dupleix played a diplomatic game by promising that he would hoist the flag of the Nawab in the Fort St. George for a week and after that he requested the Nawab to hand over the town to the French.

- The Nawab agreed to withdraw his proposed help to the British.
- Two attempts of the British under Admiral Boscowen to seize Pondicherry failed.
- French Army under Captain Paradise defeated the Indian army under Mahfuz Khan at St. Thome on the banks of the River Adyar.

The Battle of Ambur (1749)

- Muzaffar Jung, the contender for Nizami of Hyderabad, and Chanda Sahib, a claimant to the Nawabi of Carnatic, with the help of the disciplined French infantry inflicted huge casualties on the Nizam and Anwar-ud-din's forces.
- Anwar-ud-din was killed. Chanda Sahib entered Arcot as the Nawab.
- The establishment of Chanda Sahib, the ally of the French, on the throne of Carnatic was bound to have adverse effect on English trade since the hinterland of Madras would be in hands of their enemies.

Second Carnatic War (1749-54)

- The second Carnatic War was a result of rivalry between French and English and interference in local dynastic disputes.
- In the war of succession in Deccan (Hyderabad) and Carnatic, French supported Muzaffar Jung for the Subahdarship of the Deccan and Chanda Sahib for the Carnatic, whereas the English supported the opponents Nasir Jung for Deccan (Hyderabad) and Nawab Anwaruddin for Carnatic.
- Robert Clive, in the meanwhile made a surprise attack at Arcot, the capital of Carnatic in order to divert attention from Tiruchirappalli.
- Chanda Sahib rushed to save his capital. The English easily captured Arcot. This proved the success of the English and sealed the fate of Dupleix, who was recalled in 1754.

02 British Policies in India

CHAPTER

To establish British authority in India, several policies were made in administrative, social, cultural and economic domains. The primary objective of British East India Company was to make profit through trade. It coupled trading privileges with political hegemony in the final aim of subjugating India. Ultimately the British Policies led to exploitation of people and the transformation of India from a self-sufficient to a colonial economy. This chapter sheds light on the British policies in India which enabled them to subjugate India.

Administrative Policies

Civil Services

Development of Civil Services

- The East India Company had from the beginning carried on its trade in the East through servants who were paid low wages but who were permitted to trade privately.
- Later, when the Company became a territorial power, the same servants by oppressing local weavers and artisans, merchants and zamindars, by extorting bribes and 'gifts' from rajas and nawabs, by indulging in illegal private trade, amassed untold wealth with which they retired to England.
- Clive and Warren Hastings made attempts to put an end to their corruption, but were only partially successful.
- **Cornwallis:** Cornwallis, who came to India as Governor-General in 1786, was determined to purify the administration.
  - He enforced the rules against private trade and acceptance of presents and bribes by offcials with strictness.
  - At the same time, he raised the salaries of the Company's servants.
  - He laid the foundation of modern civil services in the form of the covenanted civil services of India (known as the ICS after 1861).
  - Cornwallis also laid down guidelines that, promotion in the Civil Service would be by seniority so that its members would remain independent of outside influence.
  - A special feature of the Indian Civil Service since the days of Cornwallis was the rigid and complete exclusion of Indians from it.

- It was laid down officially in 1793 that all higher posts in administration worth more than £500 a year in salary were to be held by Englishmen.
- **Lord Wellesley:** In 1800, Lord Wellesley established the College of Fort William at Calcutta for the education of young recruits to the Civil Service. The directors of the Company disapproved of his action and in 1806 replaced it by their own East Indian College at Haileybury in England.
- **Charter Act, 1853:** Till 1853, all appointments to the Civil Service were made by the directors of the East India Company who placated the members of the Board of Control by letting them make some of the nominations.
  - The directors fought hard to retain this lucrative and prized privilege and refused to surrender it even when their other economic and political privileges were taken away by Parliament. They lost it finally in 1853 when the Charter Act decreed that all recruits to the Civil Service were to be selected through a competitive examination.
- **Indian Civil Service Act, 1861:** This Act reserved certain offices for covenanted civil servants. The examination was held in England in English language, based on classical learning of Greek and Latin.
  - The maximum permissible age was gradually reduced from 23 (in 1859) to 22 (in 1860) to 21 (in 1866) and to 19 (1878).
  - In 1863, Satyendra Nath Tagore became the first Indian to qualify for the Indian Civil Service.
  - Surendranath Banerjee became the second Indian to succeed in Indian Civil Service Examination. He was dismissed from his job owing to racial discrimination.