

# APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

(Month of september)

Test - 2

9<sup>TH</sup> - HISTORY

## UNIT - 7 State and Society In Medieval India

### Introduction

- The 'medieval' period from the 7th century A.D.(CE) till the beginning of Mughal rule in the 16th century. The Mughal era, from the 16th to 18th century is referred to as the early modern period.
- The political scenario in all parts of India underwent momentous, definitive changes which transformed the social and economic fabric and development of the country.

### Major Political Changes

- ❖ The expansion of the Chola empire from the time of Rajaraja I which eclipsed the Pandyan and Pallava kingdoms, extending north till Orissa.
- ❖ From the twelfth century, the beginning of several centuries of Muslim rule in Delhi, extending throughout north India and the spread of Islam to different parts of the country.

- ❖ By the end of the 13th century the eclipse of the great empire of the Cholas and the consequent rise of many Religious kingdoms in south India. This ultimately culminated in the rise of the Vijayanagar empire which exercised authority over all of south India and came to be considered the bastion of Religious rule in the south.
- ❖ The consolidation of Muslim rule under the Mughals in the north, beginning in 1526 A.D. (C.E.) with the defeat of the Ibrahim Lodi by Babur. At its height, the Mughal empire stretched from Kabul to Gujarat to Bengal, from Kashmir to south India.
- ❖ The coming of the Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese who arrived on the west coast of India in 1498.

## Political Changes (1000–1700)

### (a) North India: The Advent of Islam

- Muslim rule was established in Delhi at the end of the 12th century by **Muhammad Ghori**, Arab Muslim merchants had been trading in the ports of the west coast, especially Kerala, as early as the 9th century. Similarly, Muslim invaders from west Asia had set up Sultanates in Gujarat and Sind since the 8th century.
- The impact of Muslim rule was felt during the reign of **Alauddin Khalji** (1296-1316 A.D. (C.E.)) who sent military campaigns to the south. The primary objective was to plunder the wealth, rather than to expand his territory.
- Devagiri (near Aurangabad) was captured by Alauddin Khalji. Renamed Daulatabad, it was the second stronghold of his growing kingdom. Alauddin Khalji's slave and commander, Malik Kafur, was sent on military expeditions further south in the first decade of the 1300s A.D. (C.E.).
- The Tughlaq kings who came after Alauddin also sent their armies to the south. As a result, the generally more isolated southern part of the

country came into the orbit of the rulers of the north. Governors were appointed in various provinces in the Deccan region, and a Sultanate was even established in Madurai.

- During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, there was a revolt in Daulatabad. Alauddin Bahman Shah set up the Bahmani sultanate in 1347 A.D. (C.E.), with his capital in Bidar. The Bahmani kingdom survived for nearly a century and a half, mainly due to the able administration of **Mahmud Gawan**, a great statesman and loyal minister. After his death, many viceroys declared their independence, and by the end of the fifteenth century, five sultanates came up in the Deccan: Bijapur, Golkonda, Ahmednagar, Berar, and Bidar. Bijapur and Golkonda were the largest of these sultanates and the region entered a phase of considerable economic growth and expansion of trade. The Deccan sultanates were conquered by Aurangzeb in the 1660s A.D. (C.E.), and the entire region, as far south as Madras (Chennai) became a part of the Mughal empire.

#### (b) The Chola Empire in the South

- The territorial expansion of the Chola empire began under **Rajaraja I**. The Pallava kingdom had already been assimilated into the Chola kingdom. The Pandya kingdom
- remained independent, but was subservient to the Cholas. The empire expanded further under **Rajendra I** who had successfully taken his armies as far to the northeast as the river Ganges. He had also sent naval expeditions against the Sailendra Kingdom of Sri Vijaya (in Indonesia), Kadaram (Kedah) and Ceylon. This earned him the title "the Chola who had conquered the Ganga and Kadaram" (*gangaiyum kadaramum konda cholan*). Ceylon remained a province of the Chola empire for a few decades. The empire was further consolidated through marriage with the eastern Chalukyas under Rajendra's grandson **Kulottunga I**, and extended up to the border of Orissa.
- Maritime trade with south-east Asia and China expanded greatly during the Chola period. The continued interaction with Tamil merchants resulted in the spread of the influence of Indic culture and

art into south-east Asia, as seen in the magnificent temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

### (c) Vijayanagar and South India after the Cholas

- The Chola Empire began to decline after the middle of the 13th century. The last known Chola emperor was Rajendra III. The empire died out in 1279 A.D. (C.E.). Several power centres came up after this in the region. Further to the south, the Pandya kings again sought to regain the glory they had lost under the Cholas.
- Many brilliant Pandya kings like Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan ruled at the end of the 13th century. Further to the north was the Hoysala kingdom, with its capital at Belur and later Halebidu. This kingdom extended through much of the present day state of Karnataka. The Kakatiyas ruled from Warangal (Telangana) while the Yadavas ruled in Devagiri until Devagiri fell to Alauddin Khalji's forces at the end of the 13th century. These states did not exist in peaceful cooperation, and the region was beset by many internal wars and conflicts.
- The establishment of the kingdom (subsequently empire) of Vijayanagar was the most momentous development in the history of south India in the medieval period. The kingdom was established by Harihara and Bukka, two brothers. They were the first rulers of the Sangama dynasty. They founded a new capital city on the southern banks of Tungabhadra which they named Vijayanagara (city of victory). Harihara was crowned in 1336 A.D. (C.E.). The Sangama dynasty ruled Vijayanagar for nearly one and a half centuries. This was followed by the Saluva dynasty which was in power only for a brief period. The Tuluva dynasty then succeeded as rulers. Krishnadeva Raya, the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar, belonged to this family.
- As the empire expanded, kingdoms to the south, such as the Hoysalas and the Tamil region, were also assimilated into Vijayanagar. The rulers of Vijayanagar were almost continuously at war with the Bahmani sultanate as well as with the Religious based kingdoms of Kondavidu and Orissa. Finally, the combined forces of the five Deccani Sultanates defeated Vijayanagar in 1565 A.D. (C.E.)

at the Battle of Talikota. The Vijayanagar emperors then shifted their capital further south to Penugonda, and eventually to Chandragiri near Tirupati. The empire (or what remained of it) finally withered away in the middle of the seventeenth century.

#### (d) The Mughals (1526–1707 A.D. (C.E.))

- The Mughal empire was founded by Babur in 1526 A.D. (C.E.) after he defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat. The first six Mughal emperors are referred to as the '**Great Mughals**'. Aurangzeb was the last of the great Mughals. Akbar consolidated the Mughal empire through conquests and through a policy of conciliation with the Religious based kingdoms of Rajasthan. The Mughal empire though began to disintegrate after Aurangzeb, continued to exist nominally till 1857 A.D. (C.E.) when the British finally ended the virtually non-existent empire.
- A new power centre rose in Maharashtra in the seventeenth century, and the Marathas under the leadership of **Shivaji** seriously undermined the authority of the Mughals in western India. At its height, the empire stretched over most of the Indian sub-continent. Only the south-western region of Kerala and southern Tamilnadu were not directly under Mughal rule.

#### (e) The Arrival of the Europeans

- During the fifteenth century the Europeans were pre-occupied with trying to find a direct sea route to India, bypassing the overland route through west Asia and the Mediterranean. The spice trade from India was controlled by Muslims up to Alexandria. By gaining direct access to India the Europeans could exercise more direct control over the spice trade and obtain the spices at more favourable prices. In 1498 A.D. (C.E.), Vasco da Gama landed on the Kerala coast having sailed around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. Barely five years later, the Portuguese built their first fort at Cochin in 1503 A.D. (C.E.). Goa was captured in 1510 A.D. (C.E.) and became the centre of the Portuguese state in India. Because of their naval superiority, the Portuguese were able to conquer many ports from east Africa up to Malacca, and could effectively control the maritime trade over the entire region.

- Other European nations soon followed the Portuguese, most notably the Dutch, English and French. The activities of the latter were carried on through the respective East India Companies. While these were all private trading enterprises, they all had a strong political agenda. During the seventeenth century, when Mughal authority was still powerful, the European companies were able to trade in the Mughal empire, but could not have their own territorial base within the boundaries of the empire. In South India, however, political authority was fragmented and much less cohesive, and they had their own enclaves over which they exercised complete authority. The Dutch were in Pulicat (and later Nagapatnam), the English in Madras, the French in Pondicherry and the Danes in Tarangampadi (Tranquebar).

### Impact on Polity

- In Indian history had far-reaching consequences on administrative institutions, society and the economy across the sub-continent.
- The CHOLA PERIOD was an enterprising period when trade and the economy expanded, accompanied by urbanization. The administrative machinery was re-organised during Chola rule. The basic unit of local administration was the village (*ur*), followed by the sub-region (*nadu*) and district (*kottam*). Tax-free villages granted to Brahmins were known as *brahmadeya*. Marketing centres and towns were known as *nagaram*. The *ur*, *nadu*, *brahmadeya* and *nagaram* each had its own assembly. They were responsible for the maintenance and management of the water resources and land; the local temples; resolving local issues and disputes; and for collecting the taxes due to the government.
- The Cholas notable feature was the great increase in the construction of temples. This had two dimensions: new temples were constructed, and existing temples became multi-functional social and economic institutions. The construction of great temples also was a reflection of the growing prosperity in the kingdom, since the activity involved great expenditure. The temple was no longer a mere place of worship, but became an important economic entity as an employer, consumer and land-owner.

- The establishment of Islamic Rule in Delhi made a big impact on Indian society. Initially, Islam did not cause any social tension. Arab merchants, for instance, when they came and settled on Kerala coast, married local women and led a peaceful life. The situation changed when Islam became a state power. For a medieval ruler one way of asserting imperial authority was to demolish the place of worship of the enemies. Otherwise Islam as a monotheistic religion had its positive impact in Indian society. It played a decisive role in the evolution of a composite culture.
- Muslim kingdoms in Delhi, as well in the Deccan, also attracted migrants from Persia and Arabia who moved to India and took up service in these states and many became important and well-known statesmen. This also opened up Indian society to steady interaction with west Asia resulting in the transfer of cultural and technical influences. Muslim merchants and craftsmen also migrated from the north of India to the south in the wake of the military expeditions. Society became more heterogeneous and hybrid in character. A new composite culture evolved. This could be seen most vividly in the Deccan sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda whose rulers were extremely broad-minded and secular in outlook.
- A notable development was the profusion of contemporary historical accounts of the Muslim Sultanates by Arab and Persian historians. Al beruni, Ibn Batuta, and Ferishta are among the best known of the Muslim historians. These historians provide valuable information about the rulers and events of the medieval period. They also provide an alternate historical point of view of Islamic rule in India as seen through the eyes of Muslim writers.
- The establishment of the VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE changed the administrative and social institutional structure of south India, especially in the Tamil country. Perhaps because the new kingdom was threatened from the beginning by the hostility of the Bahmani sultanate in the north, Vijayanagar evolved as a militaristic state. This empire needed two kinds of resources to feed its military establishment - revenue and men. This was achieved through re-organizing the administration of the conquered territories, especially

in the Tamil region. Military officers, known as '*nayakas*', were appointed as chiefs of various localities in Tamilnadu and received land grants from the emperor. There were also lesser military leaders known as *palayakkarar* who essentially supplied the manpower for the army. Many forts were also built which were under Brahman commanders.

- Three major nayaka kingdoms, owing allegiance to the Vijayanagar emperor, came up between 1500 A.D. (C.E.) and 1550 A.D. (C.E.) in Madurai, Tanjavur and Gingee (Senji). These nayakas had formal roles in court ceremonials at Vijayanagar. This became the new political order in Tamilnadu during the sixteenth century. The nayaka chieftains as well as the three nayaka kings were all strong supporters of Hindu temples. The three capitals became great cultural centres under the patronage of the nayaka rulers who promoted literature and the performing arts.
- Resources realized from the land were transferred to the empire by the nayakas not as tax revenue, but as tribute. Thus, the resources of the core regions, especially in the Tamil region, were utilized for military purposes. This administrative set-up effectively destroyed the decentralized, local institutions which managed local resources, temples and affairs which had come up during Chola rule. The appointment of Telugu nayakas also resulted in the migration of Telugu-speaking people from the north. These included soldiers, agriculturists, craftsmen and Brahmins.
- The MUGHAL EMPIRE transformed the economy and society of north India. The empire was consolidated under Akbar through his policy of co-opting the Hindu Rajput rulers under the umbrella of Mughal rule. At the height of its power the Mughal empire was one of the largest, richest and most powerful empires in the entire world.
- In part due to Aurangzeb's reversal to orthodox Islamic principles of governance which alienated the Rajput rulers and the Hindu subjects, the over-extended empire began to collapse under its own weight by the beginning of the eighteenth century.



- The ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS in India ultimately culminated in the establishment of colonial rule in India under the British, and this is what is considered foremost when discussing the impact of the European presence. There was an explosion in the demand for Indian textiles in the European markets, often referred to as the 'Indian craze'. This led to a significant expansion of textile production in India, which was accompanied by an expansion of the production of commercial crops like cotton and indigo and other dyes.

## Society

### (a) Caste

- Caste is the most distinctive aspect of Indian society. We first need to understand two dimensions of the term 'caste'. First, the four-fold division of society as specified in the religious texts, referred to as *varna*.
- Improving the status of their jati was a major pre-occupation for all caste groups. This is particularly evident after the fourteenth century when the traditional local assemblies which controlled the resources and social interactions began to weaken. In traditional society many castes were denied various social rights and privileges. Caste also created a mythical genealogy to establish its origins; this was used to justify the claim for the right to a higher status in the hierarchy. These genealogies are found in many of the manuscripts collected by Colin Mackenzie.

### (b) Religion

- Diverse institutions with different ideologies came up within the bhakti movement during the medieval period. Mathas or mutts were established under different gurus or religious leaders like Vidyaranya; Saivite movements came up like the Tamil *Saiva-siddhanta*, and the *Virasaivas* in Karnataka; in Maharashtra the *Varkarisampradaya* (tradition) of the devotees of Vithoba arose in the 14th century.
- Buddhism had faded out in India. Jainism also lost ground in most parts of India due to emergence of bhakti movement under Sankara and Ramanuja. However, it continued to thrive in parts of Gujarat

and Marwar, especially among the trading communities. With regard to Christianity, there were a small number of Christian groups in Kerala claiming their origins to the time of St Thomas, the disciple of Jesus. But Christianity took roots when the Portuguese arrived in Kerala and set themselves up in Goa. In Goa itself the local population was under great pressure to convert to Christianity, among the fishing communities on the Pandyan coast. The best known among the Jesuit missionaries was St Francis Xavier who was instrumental in making the fishing community to take to Christianity in the Tuticorin region. Another notable Jesuit was Roberto de Nobili, a scholar, who was based in Madurai.

- In the north a new religion, Sikhism, was founded by Guru Nanak, who lived during 15th and 16th century. Sikhism grew in strength in spite of severe repression by Aurangzeb. Foreign religions also came to India when Jews and Zoroastrians (Parsis) migrated to India. The Parsis, who fled Persia to escape persecution, settled in Gujarat, while the Jews lived in Kerala. Parsi merchants were among the richest and most prominent in the port of Surat, and subsequently, in Bombay under the British.

## **Culture**

### **Literature, Art and Architecture**

- The Chola period was an era of remarkable cultural activity. These were the centuries when major literary works were written. The best known classical poet, Kamban, wrote Ramayana in Tamil which was formally presented (Arangetram) in the temple at Srirangam. Sekkilar's *Periyapuranam*, similarly was presented at the temple in Chidambaram. Among the other great works of the period is *Kalingattup-parani* and *Muvarula*.
- The monumental architecture of the Cholas is visible in the great temple of Tanjavur, Gangai-konda-cholapuram and Darasuram, to name only a few. Stone images were sculpted on the temple walls and pillars. Bronze images of great beauty and artistry were made by the 'lost wax' process. The best known of them is the iconic representation of Siva as Nataraja, performing the cosmic dance.

- A distinct Islamic cultural tradition developed in India with the establishment of Muslim rule. The sultans built forts, tombs, mosques and other monuments in Delhi as well as in south India which came under their rule. The Mughal period particularly was a brilliant epoch in the cultural history of India.
- The Mughals were well-known for their aesthetic values, and were great patrons of the arts. They left behind numerous monuments, in addition to constructing entire cities like Shahjahanabad (Delhi) and Fatehpur Sikri, gardens, mosques and forts. Decorative arts – especially jewellery set with precious and semi-precious gems for items of personal use – flourished under the patronage of the royal household and urban elites. The art of painting also flourished in the Mughal period. Primarily known as Mughal miniatures, they were generally intended as book illustrations or were single works to be kept in albums. A large volume of literature was produced, especially in Persian, and also in Urdu, Hindi and other regional languages. In the performing arts, like Hindustani the name of Tansen is well-known indicating the patronage extended to classical music under Akbar.
- In south India, the Vijayanagar rulers and their military chiefs actively supported temple construction. Many new temples were built by them. Besides this, new structures like pavilions and halls with many pillars were added extensively to existing temples, with elaborately carved pillars. Art historians point to the distinctive style of the temple sculptures of the Vijayanagar period. The intricately carved lofty towers or *gopurams* at the entrance to temples were all added during the Vijayanagar period. The walls of the temples were embellished with paintings.
- A large volume of religious literature, especially in Sanskrit, was produced under the patronage of the nayakas and the Vijayanagar rulers. Telugu literature flourished under royal support. A new style of Tamil literature called Prabandham emerged during this period. The great commentaries of the epic Silappadikaram and Tirukkural were also written during this period. Venkatamakhi, son of Govindha Dikshidar who codifying the ragas of Carnatic music had lived in this period.

## Economy

### (a) Agriculture

- India was predominantly an agricultural country, and a very large proportion of the population lived in rural areas and depended on agriculture for their livelihood. Both in the north and the south, agriculture depended heavily on irrigation. Canals and wells added to the water sources in addition to rainfall and rivers. The biggest network of canals known in India was built in fourteenth century by Firuzshah Tughluq in the Delhi area. Construction of lakes, tanks and reservoirs with sluices to let out the water as well as the use of check dams all increased the availability of water for irrigation. Cultivators were also encouraged to dig wells. Lift irrigation was used to draw the water. In the north, the Persian wheel was used for lifting water from wells. In the Tamil region, the C connecting the tributaries of Kaveri. Lakes and tanks also added to the water sources.
- An important feature of Indian agriculture was the large number of crops that were cultivated. The peasant in India was more knowledgeable about many crops as compared to peasants in most of the world at the time. A variety of food grains like wheat, rice, and millets were grown apart from lentils and oilseeds. Many other commercial crops were also grown such as sugarcane, cotton and indigo. Other than the general food crops, south India had a regional specialization in pepper, cinnamon, spices and coconut.
- In general, two different crops were grown in the different seasons, which protected the productivity of the soil. Maize and tobacco were two new crops which were introduced after the arrival of the Europeans. Many new varieties of fruit or horticultural crops like papaya, pineapple, guava and cashew nut were also introduced which came from the west, especially America. Potatoes, chillies and tomatoes also became an integral part of Indian food.

### (b) Non Agricultural Production

- Up to the end of the seventeenth century, India was one of the largest manufacturing countries in the world though the economy was

primarily agricultural. Non-agricultural production refers to both processed agricultural products and craft production. Primarily the products can be grouped under: processed holas had created a network of canals for irrigation

- agricultural products like sugar, oil, textiles; metal work; precious gems and jewellery; ship building; ornamental wood and leather work; and many other minor products.
- The organization of production basically depended on the nature of the market for which it was produced. A large part of the production was intended for local use in the village, or at most a rural region. These goods were basic utilitarian goods like pots and pans, implements like ploughs, basic woodwork and coarse textiles. Generally the producer marketed the product himself, and exchange was probably conducted on barter.
- In economic terms, what was important was specialized production by skilled craftsmen for an external market, especially in demand among the high income rural and urban upper classes. Such craft production was generally located in cities, or in rural settlements close to the cities. Craftsmen generally worked on an individual or family basis from their homes or workshops though larger manufacturing units (*karkhanas*) employing many craftsmen were set up under the Mughal state.

### (c) Textiles

- Nearly all the cloth that was produced was of cotton, though silk weaving had developed in Bengal where silk was produced, and in Gujarat. Each region of India produced a range of highly specialized local varieties of cotton cloth ranging from the coarse to the superfine, but all were intended for an external market. Dyed and printed/patterned cloth involved the use of vegetable dyes. India had two natural advantages in cotton weaving. The first was that cotton grew in almost all parts of India, so that the basic raw material was easily available. Second, the technology of producing a permanent colour on cotton using vegetable dyes was known from very early times in India. Cotton does not absorb dyes without a preparatory

process using mordants, which was not known in the rest of the world. Indigo was the most important dye crop that was grown in India, but other dye crops (like the chay root for red colour) were also grown in India. Dye woods and resins like lac were imported. In addition, a range of colours were produced by using flowers and fruits, and products like turmeric in various combinations.

#### (d) Commerce

- The large manufacturing sector essentially produced goods for exchange, and not for self-use. Therefore, India had an extensive network of trade for marketing these goods. The village was the basic geographical unit of production, and was essentially a subsistence economy and barter was the medium of exchange.
- Big cities were usually major commercial centres, with bazaars and shops. They were also intermediate points in inter-regional trade since they were connected by a network of roads to other centres in other parts of the country. In addition to such overland trade, smaller ships and boats were used in coastal trade along both the western and eastern coasts of the country. Finally, the major ports (Surat, Masulipatnam, Calicut etc.) were the nodal points in international, maritime trade.
- Maritime trade across the Indian Ocean, extending from China in the east to Africa in the west, had flourished for many centuries. Thus ports like Malacca, Calicut etc. were 'entrepots' or intermediate points in this regionally segmented trade. In the seventeenth century, Surat in Gujarat, Masulipatnam in the Golkonda kingdom, Chittagong in Bengal, Pulicat (Pazhaverkadu) and Nagapatnam on the Coromandel Coast, and Calicut in Kerala were all major ports in Asiatic trade.
- India was also a major exporter of textiles, pepper, precious and semi-precious gems - especially diamonds which were then found only in India - and iron and steel which were greatly in demand in the entire Asian region. Textiles accounted for nearly 90 per cent of the total exports from India. The major imports from China and the east were silk, Chinese ceramics, gold, spices, aromatic woods and camphor.

Silk, drugs, dye woods and sugar were the main imports from Persia, while gold, ivory and slaves were brought in from east Africa.

## Urbanization

- Travellers coming to India in the medieval period noted that there were a number of urban centres of various sizes, from cities to small market towns throughout India, though the country was primarily rural. The urban population was probably quite small as a proportion of the total, but it had an economic and cultural significance which was much greater than its actual size.
- What were the factors which facilitated urbanization? It has been observed that cities and towns fulfilled diverse and overlapping roles in the economy. The large cities were centres of manufacturing and marketing, banking and financial services. They were usually located at the intersection of an extensive network of roads
- In South India, especially the Tamil region, urbanization went hand in hand with temples. Temples were large economic enterprises requiring a variety of goods and services to function. They needed and employed a large number of people to man the religious services, the kitchens and for other work. Devotees coming to worship at the temple needed many services and goods, so that temple towns also became marketing centres.

## Conclusion

- The medieval period covering more than seven hundred years of Indian history was a time when momentous changes took place in the political landscape which also transformed the social and economic fabric of the country.

## UNIT - 11 - Colonialism in Asia and Africa

### Introduction

- Colonialism is a process of domination, involving the subjugation of one people by another. Like colonialism, imperialism also involves political and economic control over a dependent territory. The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy differentiates the two as follows: The term colony comes from the Latin word *colonus*, meaning farmer. This root indicates that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin. Imperialism, on the other hand, (from the Latin term *imperium*, meaning to command) draws attention to the way one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control.
- In World history, no continent possessed so many colonies and justified their access to the world by means of a civilising mission as did modern Europe. Practically the whole non- Western world was under one European power or the other for about four centuries until decolonisation happened after World War II.
- In this lesson we discuss the colonisation of South East Asia, Africa and India by European powers.

### Colonisation of Asia (South East Asia)

#### South East Asia

- The term “South East Asia” has only been used since the Second World War. It denotes the area that originally covered Malaya, Dutch East Indies, Burma, Siam, French Indo-China and the Philippines. With the exception of Siam (Thailand), which remained independent, the area was divided between the Dutch, the British and the French.



## Malaya Peninsula

When European traders crossed the Indian Ocean at the close of the 15th century, they came for the spices of south-east Asia. When the Portuguese conquered the great international emporium of Malacca for the king of Portugal, the empires of SriVijaya and Majapahit had split into many small states. Albuquerque, the Portuguese soldier who conquered Goa and Malacca, and his successors were interested in the spice trade. Towards this end they built a chain of fortified trading stations linked by naval power. Initially they did not interfere with the native rulers. After the arrival of the Dutch and the English there was a challenge to the presence of Portuguese and the rivalry of these three European powers dominated the seventeenth century.

- The Dutch began their conquest of the Portuguese settlements by capturing Malacca in 1641. After establishing a base at Batavia (now Djakarta) in 1619, they interfered in succession disputes among the neighbouring sultans. Gradually they extended their control over Java, expelling the British from Bantam in 1682. They had already driven them out of the Spice islands after the Massacre of Amboina (1623) and by the seizure of Macassar (1667), thereby forcing the English East India Company to turn to the China trade. The Spanish established themselves, beginning from their conquest of Manila, which expanded into a larger territory of Spanish East Indies.

## Anglo-Dutch Rivalry

- Penang Island had been brought to the attention of the East India Company by Francis Light. In 1786, the settlement of George Town was founded at the north eastern tip of Penang Island; this marked the beginning of British expansion into the Malay Peninsula. In 1819, Stamford Raffles established Singapore as a key trading post for Britain in their rivalry with the Dutch. However, their rivalry cooled in 1824 when an Anglo-Dutch treaty demarcated their respective interests in Southeast Asia. By 1826 Singapore and Malacca had been linked with Penang to form the Strait Settlements.
- Between 1874 and 1895 there was a civil war between the remaining five Malay States. The British intervened and signed an agreement

with each of the sultans. British Residents were appointed to the courts of sultans, who had to act in accordance with the advice given by the Residents. In 1896 four of the states were formed into the Federated Malay States. In 1900 there were the Straits Settlements, the four Federated Malay States and Johore. The population was about a million, of whom, half were Malay and the remainder were Chinese. Most of the merchants, planters and workers in the ports and big plantations were Chinese. Economically Malaya was prosperous.

## **Indonesia**

- The Dutch had occupied Java and Sumatra (Indonesia) as early as 1640. But they conquered the other outer islands of East India only in the second half of the nineteenth century, excepting the British possession of North Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak. Initially the Dutch were not interested in politics but focused on exploiting Indonesia ruthlessly. But from the beginning of the twentieth century they adopted measures for the social and economic advance of the people they governed. Most Indonesians were fishermen and small peasants and worked on European sugar, tobacco, tea, coffee plantations. Heavy investments in these plantations and other concerns, and the discovery of oil in 1900 made Indonesia a valuable colony for the Dutch.

## **Burma**

- The British conquered Burma after fighting three wars. Burma remained part of India from 1886 to 1937. Burma was administered by a Lieutenant Governor with the assistance of a nominated Legislative Council. Burma teak was shipped overseas. In addition, Burma with its fertility of soil became a big exporter of rice and most of south India was dependent on Burmese rice. During World War II when Burma fell to the Japanese, south India experienced acute scarcity of rice leading to a famine.

## **Indo-China**

- The French conquered Indo-China after strong resistance from the people. Starting in 1858, they brought the Indo-Chinese Union under their control by 1887. Indo-China consisted of Annam, Tongking,

Cambodia and Cochin-China. Laos was added six years later. Of them only Cochin-China was directly under French control, i.e., as a French colony. The remaining four were protectorates. Under this system, the local rulers remained, but they governed under the instructions of French Residents. Hanoi was the capital of the French government. Rice, rubber and wheat were the main exports. Laos remained undeveloped.

## **The Philippines**

- Spain ruled the Philippines for over 300 years, imposing its language, culture and religion. Consequently the population became predominantly Roman Catholic. Nationalism developed among the Filipinos during the latter part of the nineteenth century. There were two serious revolts in 1872 and 1896, which were crushed by the Spanish colonial government. In 1898, however, Spain was defeated by the United States in a war over Cuba, and as a result Philippines became an American colony.

## **Siam (Thailand)**

- Thailand was spared the experience of foreign rule, though it too was greatly affected by the power politics of the Western powers. The administrative reforms of the late 19th century, continuing up till around 1910, imposed a Westernised form of government on the country's partially independent cities called '*Mueang*'. Western powers, however, continued to interfere in its internal and external affairs.

## **Colonisation of Africa**

- Until the last quarter of nineteenth century, Africa south of the Sahara (Sub-Saharan Africa) was almost unknown to the outside world. The interior of Africa was unexplored. After 1875, European penetration and colonisation began on a large scale. The Berlin Colonial Conference of 1884- 85 resolved to divide Africa into spheres of influence of the various European powers. European colonisation of Africa was thus accomplished smoothly, without any outbreak of war amongst major European powers. The invasion, occupation, colonisation and annexation of African territories by European

powers between 1881 and 1914, the era of Imperialism, is called the Scramble for Africa or the Partition of Africa.

## South Africa

- In South Africa the British possessed Natal, Cape Colony, while the Dutch (locally known as the Boers) held the states of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. In 1886 the discovery of gold in the Transvaal led to a large number of British miners settling in and around Johannesburg. The Boers feared and hated the miners whom they called *Uitlanders* (foreigners). In 1890, Cecil Rhodes, the Prime Minister of Cape Colony, encouraged British expansion to the north of the Transvaal. This worsened the relations between the Boers and the British. Denied of their political rights the British miners revolted. This led to the Boer War which lasted three years (1899-1902). In the end the Boer army was defeated and Pretoria was occupied. The British annexed the two Boer states but promised self government in due course. Boer states were given full responsible government in 1907. After discussions over the years the four states finally decided to form a union and South Africa was created as a state in 1909.
- The Zulu tribe was known for its strong fighting spirit, represented by renowned warriors like Shaka Zulu who played a prominent role in building the largest Zulu nation in south-eastern Africa. British troops invaded Zulu territory and divided it into thirteen chiefdoms. The Zulus never regained their independence and had to fight against deeply entrenched racism in South Africa for about a century.

## Rhodesia

- The British South African Company founded in 1889 conducted an expedition with 600 men- each of them were promised a 3,000 acre farm. The African king was tricked into believing that all that the Europeans wanted was gold. But they had come with a definite plan of colonising the Bechuanaland. During the next ten years African opposition was crushed. White immigrants were provided with farm lands and railways, and a telegraph system developed. The colony came to be called Rhodesia, after Cecil Rhodes.

## West Africa

- The coastal states of Gold Coast became a British colony in 1854. Nigeria was used for slave trading posts on the coast. In 1886 the Royal Niger Company was formed which was taken over by the British government in 1900.

**French West:** Senegal had been a French base in West Africa. Her later possessions of Guinea, Ivory Coast and Dahomey were linked up with the whole area of south of Sahara.

**Congo:** Leopold II, king of Belgium, showed interest in Congo and so the Berlin Conference agreed to the rule of Leopold in Congo Free State. This State was given a monopoly of the trade in ivory and rubber, the two most valuable products of the Congo. These products were collected with harshness. Africans were subjected to forced labour. Each village was given a quota, and if quotas were not fulfilled, they were flogged and mutilated. The public outcry over the economic exploitation of Africans persuaded the Belgian Government to intervene. Leopold was forced to relinquish his "sovereign right" and in 1908 sovereignty over the Congo passed from Leopold to Belgium.

## East Africa

**British:** In 1886 the possessions of the Sultan of Zanzibar were divided into British and German spheres of influence. For the first few years, the British area was administered by the British East India Company, but in 1895 the British government assumed authority and formed the East African Protectorate, which included Kenya, Uganda and Zanzibar. A large part of Uganda was made up of Buganda, a kingdom ruled by Kabaka.

**Germans:** The Germans established their rule in what became German East Africa. Like King Leopold in the Congo, the Africans here were economically exploited, leading to a number of rebellions. The most serious was the Maji-Maji rebellion (1905-1907).

## Portuguese Angola and Mozambique

- The Portuguese had used these two colonies on the west and east coasts of southern Africa, along with Portuguese Guinea since 16th century.

## African Rule in Liberia and Ethiopia

- Only two countries managed to evade European colonialism – Liberia and Ethiopia. Liberia was formed in the early 19th century as a home for African Blacks repatriated from America. Ethiopia, with its traditional polity, was ruled by the Emperor Menelik.

## Colonisation of India

- Towards the close of the 15th century, Portugal became the first European power to establish a trade link with India. Rounding the Cape of Good Hope Vasco da Gama arrived in Calicut in 1498. Soon other European powers joined Portugal in establishing their presence in India. The European powers in India since 16th century are given below:

Portuguese	1505-1961
Dutch East India Company (Netherlands)	1605-1825
Danish East India Company (Denmark)	1620-1869
French East India Company	1668-1954
British East India Company	1612-1757
British Company Rule	1757-1857
British Imperial Rule	1858-1947

- In the rivalry among four major European powers – Portuguese, Dutch, French and English – the English, after three Carnatic Wars, eliminated the French by the end of the eighteenth century. The British conquered all the regional powers, in particular the most potential challengers, the Mysore Sultans and the Marathas, by defeating them in three Anglo-Mysore and three Anglo-Maratha

Wars. The conquest of the Gurkhas (1816), the Sindhis (1843) and the Sikhs (1849) enabled them to emerge as a territorial power in India.

## **The Colonialisation of Indian Economy**

- We can divide the process of the colonialisation of India into three phases
  - a. Phase I Mercantilist Capitalism
  - b. Phase II Industrial Capitalism
  - c. Phase III Financial Capitalism

### **Colonialisation of Indian Economy: Mercantilist Phase (Outright Plunder; 18th Century).**

- At the beginning of the 18th century the East India Company was still a marginal force in India. It relied on concessions from Indian rulers for its trading posts along the coast. But soon it managed to establish strong ties with Indian merchants who sold their textiles and other goods from the interior. Before it gained dominion in India the East India Company carried on a very profitable business selling Indian-made cotton textiles and silks and printed cloth. According to the Indian nationalist economist R.C. Dutt, "weaving was the national industry of the people and spinning was the pursuit of millions of women". Indian textiles went to England and other parts of Europe, to China and Japan and Burma and Arabia and Persia and parts of Africa. It was during this period that the textile lobby in Lancashire and Birmingham succeeded in making the Parliament enact a law prohibiting the import of Indian textiles. Those who were found in possession of or dealing in Indian cotton goods were fined 200 pounds.
- In the 1750s and the early 1760s, Robert Clive gained control of the wealthiest part of the old Mughal Empire. The Company exacted concessions such as exemption of Company goods from transit duties, which even Indian merchants had to pay. After the Battle of Plassey (1757), the Company got 1.2 million pounds out of which Clive himself took 31,500 pounds besides a jagir which provided an annual income of 27,000 pounds. After the Battle of Buxar (1764), the Murshidabad treasury was looted. The Company acquired the

Diwani right in 1765 and became the revenue farmer of the Mughal Emperor.

### **Industrial Capitalist Phase: 1st half of the Nineteenth Century**

- By the beginning of nineteenth century the Company had emerged as a territorial power. During this period India was converted into a market for British textiles and a great source of raw materials. The Company government's expansionist policies led to wars against regional rulers. The cost of these internal conquests was imposed on India.

### **Financial Capitalist Phase: 2nd half of the Nineteenth Century**

- During this phase managing agency firms, export-import firms, and exchange banks began to prosper. In its bid to provide an outlet to the investible surplus capital in England, the Company government decided to make a massive investment in railroads, the postal system, irrigation, modern banking and education. The capital exported was predominantly for railway construction. The railways helped to move British troops quickly across the country. It also enabled the conquest of the Indian market to the maximum extent. Slavery was abolished in India (1843) and the system of indentured labour was introduced.

### **Economic Impact of British Rule Agrarian Conditions**

- Governor General Cornwallis, himself a big landlord in England, wanted to create landlords in India on the English model. There were already revenue farmers under the Mughals. Cornwallis came to a settlement with them, treating them as landlords. The outcome was that for the first time in India there was a class of zamindars or landlords with a right to own, bequeath and inherit land. The cultivators, on the other hand, were reduced to the position of mere tenants. The British dealt with the landlords or zamindars directly, and gave them total freedom to do what they liked with their tenants. This settlement made with the zamindars of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa is called the Permanent Settlement (1793).



- The Ryotwari System was a different revenue system introduced in south India.
- Under the system, the peasant was the proprietor and paid tax on the land. The government dealt with him directly, without the intervention of a middleman or a tax-farmer. He was entitled to remain in possession of land acquired by him so long as he paid the land revenue. In case of default, apart from eviction and attachment of livestock, even household property or personal belongings could be attached. The Ryotwari System introduced the concept of private property in land. The individual holders were registered and permitted to sell, lease out, mortgage or transfer their right over the land.

### Land Revenue and the Pauperisation of Peasantry

- The land tax which was the main source of revenue to the British was collected forcibly. Even in times of famines no remission was given to the peasants. They had to even mortgage or sell their property including their land to pay the landlord's rent and the land tax. As no credit facilities were provided by the state, they had to depend on moneylenders to borrow money. A system of money lending was followed by professional money-lenders who belonged to various communities such as *mahajans*, *sahukars*, and *bohras*. In the Tamil speaking areas there were Nattukottai Chettiyars.
- The colonial state pursued a policy of 'commercialization of agriculture'. Commercial crops like cotton, jute, groundnuts, oilseeds, sugarcane, tobacco, etc., depending on the market demands fetched better prices than food grains. So in his bid to clear his debt and to pay up the revenue dues to the state, instead of producing for home consumption, the peasant began to raise crops for the market. He had to depend on the price trend in international markets for selling his agricultural goods. Ignorant of market forces the peasants often came to distress, when the demand in the local market, which was now linked to the world market, crashed.

## Irrigation

- The British neglected irrigation in the first half of nineteenth century. Major irrigation canals were built only after millions of people died in a series of major famines that broke out periodically from the middle of 19th century. Even then the money earmarked for irrigation was meagre, but due to the initiative of some well meaning British officials and engineers like Arthur Cotton, and later Pennycuick guaranteed protected irrigation became possible in certain areas. Even where such efforts were taken, the British collected an extra cess adding to the misery of the peasants who were already groaning under the oppressive land revenue system.

## Famines

- The policy of free trade and the forcible collection of land revenue resulted in the outbreak of famines. The Odisha famine of 1866-67, was a severe and terrible event in the history of that region in which about a third of the population died. The famine of 1876- 78, also known as the Great Famine of 1876- 78 (called Thathu Varusha Panjam in Tamil), caused a large migration of agricultural labourers and artisans from southern India to British colonies, where they worked as indentured labourers on plantations. The death toll – about 10.3 million – was huge.
- In the Madras Presidency, the famine of 1876-78 was preceded by droughts. The situation was made worse because of the colonial government's policy of laissez faire in the trade of food-grains. For example, two of the worst famine-afflicted areas in the Madras Presidency, the districts of Ganjam and Vizagapatam, continued to export grains throughout the famine. These famines were typically followed by various infectious diseases such as bubonic plague (spread by dead rats) and influenza, which attacked and killed a population already weakened by starvation. The memory of this famine is still preserved in various folk songs and ballads.

## Indentured Labour

- The Indentured Labour System was a form of debt bondage, by which 3.5 million Indians were transported to various British colonies to provide labour for the plantations (mainly sugar). It started from 1843, the year of abolition of slavery in India and continued until 1920. This resulted in the development of a large Indian diaspora, which spread from the Indian Ocean (Reunion and Mauritius) to Pacific Ocean (Fiji), as well as contributing to the growth of Indo-Caribbean and Indo- African population.

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