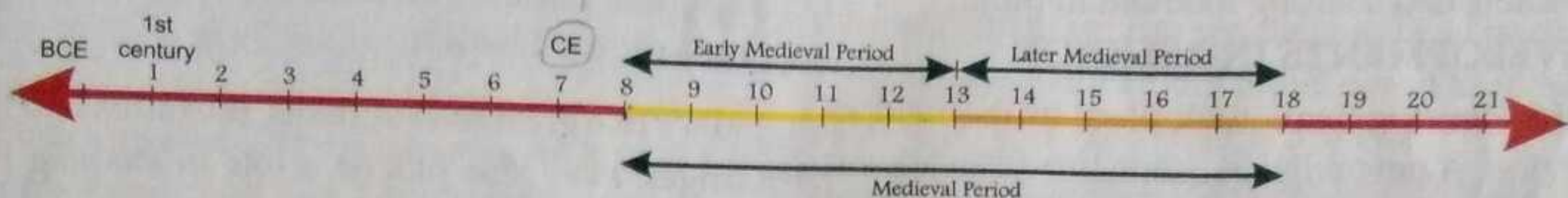


# 1

# HISTORY—WHEN, WHERE AND HOW

HISTORY



History is a study of the past. This is facilitated by dividing the past into blocks of time. This is called periodisation and helps in the study and analysis of history.

Indian History can be divided into three periods—ancient, medieval and modern. Our focus is on medieval history. Each period is characterised by numerous changes and developments.

F-1 [The medieval period of Indian history stretches from the 8th to the 18th century CE. This is further divided into early and later medieval periods. The early medieval period is from the 8th to the 13th century CE. This period saw the rise of Rajputs, followed by Muslim invasions into India. The 13th to 18th century CE is considered to be the later medieval period which saw the great Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire.]

James Mill, a British historian, has divided Indian history into three periods—Hindu Period, Muslim Period and Christian Period. This division has its flaws. This is based on the idea that religion determines history. However, a period of history cannot be characterized by the religion of the rulers. The lives, beliefs and practices of the common people have to be considered when history is recorded. Also, all rulers did not share the same religion.

Many changes took place in these thousand years of the medieval period. [The Indian sub continent reached a high level of prosperity which led to major developments.] F-2

## MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

F-2 [The medieval period was a period of change in every sphere—political, social, cultural, religious and economic.] F-2

- Many Rajput kingdoms came up. They were warriors and fought to increase their empires.
- India saw many invasions during this period. Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor plundered India. This marked the advent of Islam in India.
- The first Muslim empire in India was established by Muhammad of Ghor. Later, the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire were established.
- The invaders brought in new ideas, new religion and new ways of thinking.
- The economy of India flourished under the Mughals and they looked after the welfare of people.



## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- Name two cities which came up in the Northern Plains during this period.
- Why did India get the name Bharatvarsha?
- How did India get the name Hindustan?

## WEBLINKS

- <http://sanjaygarg.wikidot.com/geography>
- <http://www.mentorials.com/high-school-history-reconstructing-the-past-indian-literary-sources.htm>

**TOPIC:** Sources of the Medieval Period

**RESOURCES:** Blackboard/whiteboard, textbook, coins of different countries.

**TIME:** 35–40 minutes

## ACTIVITY

- Discuss the importance of sources of history.
- Differentiate between different sources.
- Divide the students into groups and give them coins of different kinds. Ask each group to see the coins and write down the information they can see on the coin.
- Have a class quiz and ask the students about the various authors and their works.

## WEBLINKS

- [www.importantindia.com/2880/sources-of-medieval-indian-history/](http://www.importantindia.com/2880/sources-of-medieval-indian-history/)
- [www.importantindia.com/.../literary-and-archaeological-sources-of-medi](http://www.importantindia.com/.../literary-and-archaeological-sources-of-medi)

## ANSWERS TO EXERCISES

**A. Choose the correct option to complete the sentence:**

- (b) Ibn Batuta
- (c) Humayunnama
- (a) 8th to 18th century
- (c) Muhammad of Ghor

**B. Fill in the blanks:**

- Tanjore paintings
- Minhaj-i-Siraj
- Epigraphy
- Jahangir
- Islam

**C. State True or False. Rewrite the false statements correctly:**

- True
- The name India was given by the British
- True
- True

**D. Match the columns:**

Ibn Batuta	Rehla
Thomas Roe	A Voyage to the East
Al Beruni	Ta'rikh al-hind
Kalhana	Rajatarangini

**E. Give one word answers:**

- Marco Polo
- Uttaramerur inscription
- Aryavarta
- Bhakti Movement



#### F. Short-answer questions:

1. The medieval period of Indian history stretches from the 8th to the 18th century C.E. This is further divided into early and later medieval periods. The early medieval period is from 8th to the 13th century CE. The 13th to 18th century CE is considered to be the later medieval period.
2. Some of the major changes that took place during this period are:
  - Many Rajput kingdoms came up.
  - India saw many invasions during this period.
  - The first Muslim empire in India was established by Muhammad of Ghor.
  - The invaders brought in new ideas, new religion and new ways of thinking.
  - The economy of India flourished
  - Many new technologies were introduced like the Persian wheel and the spinning wheel
  - Many forests were cleared for agriculture.
  - The Bhakti and Sufi movements spread in India.
  - The Europeans came to trade and gradually established a strong foothold in India.
3. India was also referred to as Hindustan. This is a Persian word meaning 'land of the Hindus'. River Indus was called Sindhu and the Persians pronounced it as Hindu. During the times of Persian invasion, the region came to be known as Hindustan and the inhabitants as Hindus. However, the term Hindustan was first used by Minhaj-i-Siraj, a Persian writer. According to him, Hindustan included northern India only. Today, the term is applied to India as a whole and sometimes to the Hindi speaking part of the country.
4. (a) The long coastline has been an advantage because it led to the rise of numerous ports which facilitated commerce.  
(b) Monuments are an important source of history because they tell us about the architectural skills of that time. The materials used give an idea about the craftsmanship and mining. Numerous temples and mosques exhibit the skills and religious beliefs of the people.

#### G. Long-answer questions:

1. Geography has a profound effect on the history of India. It is a peninsula and is bounded by the ocean on three sides. In the north are the great mountain systems which separate it from the rest of Asia. The high mountain passes allowed the Aryans to enter India and the Arab traders to visit India since 712 CE. But in 1001 CE, the Arab armies came to invade the Indian territory through the Khyber Pass. Later, the Huns, Turks and Mughals invaded India. Each invasion brought in foreigners who brought with them their customs and culture and had an impact on the Indian culture. Also, these passes allowed links with China and Tibet, and Buddhism spread to these two countries. India's two great river systems, the Indus and the Ganges, have also played a role in shaping the history. The Harappan Civilization came up near the river Indus. The navigability of these rivers helped trade and commerce. The Himalayas have helped the northern plains to become more fertile by bringing enough rainfall. Cities came up where there were geographical advantages. Great cities like Prayag and Kanauj came up in the northern plains. Many wars were fought between kings to acquire the fertile lands near rivers.



Towards the south of the northern plains lie the Vindhya Mountains. These prevented the invaders from getting access to the Deccan plateau which lies towards the south of these mountains.

The Deccan Plateau has non-perennial river systems. Scarcity of water led to the development of irrigation systems. The long coastline led to the rise of numerous ports which facilitated commerce.

2. Inscriptions are a very reliable source. Some inscriptions give detailed accounts about the political and religious activities of that time. Others are official, commemorative or historical. Many inscriptions have been found which tell us about the reign of the Cholas. The Uttaramerur inscription is an example.

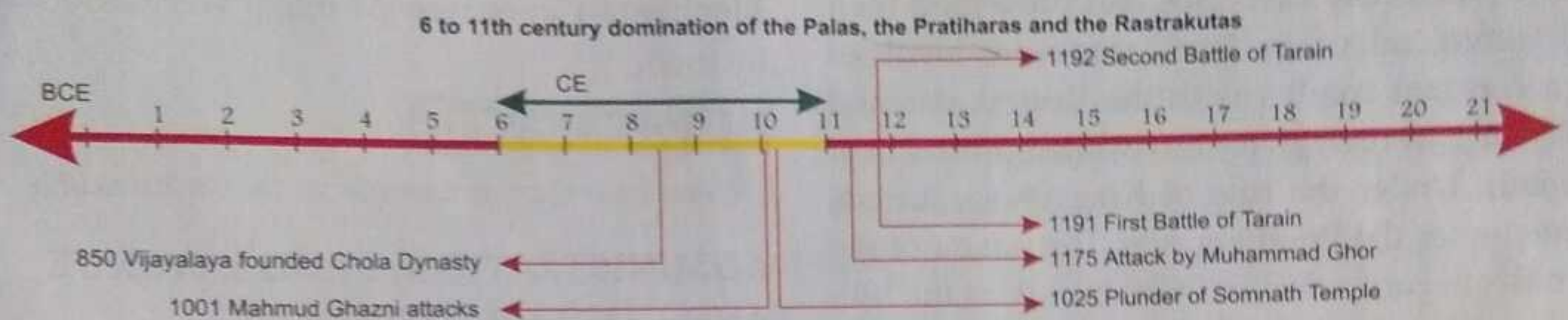
Coins give useful information about a kingdom. The material used tells us about the economic condition of the kingdom and information of dates during which the particular kings ruled. We also get information about rulers and their relations with other empires.

There is no dearth of literary sources as paper was first used in India during this period. Slowly the use of paper increased and it became easily available and was widely used by scribes and chroniclers who wrote by hand since printing had not been invented. These were called manuscripts and give us detailed information of the medieval period. These manuscripts were kept in temples, monasteries or with rulers. They formed the archives. These manuscripts provide detailed information but they are not without limitations also. Manuscripts were copied by hand and due to copying errors, the latest version was sometimes quite different from the original.



# 2

## NEW KINGS AND KINGDOMS IN INDIA



We have already read in the previous class that Harsha's vast empire broke up after his death. Many small kingdoms appeared in India after the downfall of Harsha's empire and before the Turkish invasions. There was a constant struggle for power between the ruling kings and the chieftains of these small kingdoms. They fought to increase the land and wealth of their kingdom.

### NEW KINGS AND KINGDOMS

The seventh century witnessed the emergence of big landlords or chieftains in various regions of the subcontinent. They were often considered as subordinates or samantas to the kings. They offered extravagant gifts to the kings. Also, they maintained small armies which were used by the kings in the times of war. Over the period, many chieftains or samantas became very powerful. Some of these chieftains became ambitious and asserted their independence and set up their own small kingdoms. The **Rashtrakuta**, **Gurjaras** and **Pratihara** dynasties are the instances. Their origin is discussed later in the chapter.

### THE RAJPUTS

D-1 Many Rajput dynasties ruled small kingdoms. They called themselves Rajput or Rajputra meaning 'son of a king'. There are many theories about the origin of the Rajputs. Some called themselves **Suryavanshi**, 'descendants of the Sun God', or **Chandravanshi**, 'descendants of the

Moon God'. Some were called **Agnikulas**. They are believed to have been born out of a fire pit. The following tale tells us about the origin of the Agnikula Rajputs.

*Once a warrior saint, Parshurama, got very angry and destroyed all Kshatriyas. As a result, there were no warriors left. Therefore, all the Brahmanas got together and decided to do something about it. They organized a large fire pit at Mount Abu. After many chants and prayers, four warriors emerged from the fire pit. It is believed that these were the ancestors of the Agnikulas.*

The Rajputs were courageous and valiant. However, they constantly fought amongst themselves to show off their strength. Therefore, they could not set up a unified empire. Several small dynasties belonging to the Rajputs gradually rose to power and established their supremacy. Some of these were the Pratiharas, the Rashtrakutas and the Palas.



Discuss the provincial administration and village autonomy.  
Example: Ask the students to get information on local self-government in the present times and compare.

### WEBLINKS

1. <http://www.mapsofindia.com/history/chola-dynasty.html>
2. <http://www.historydiscussion.net/empires/the-history-of-chola-empire-indian-history/718>

**TOPIC:** Foreign Invasions in India during this period

**RESOURCES:** Blackboard/whiteboard, textbook.

**TIME:** 35–40 minutes

### ACTIVITY

- Ask the students to read the topic.
- Explain and differentiate between the motives of Mahmud Ghazni and Muhammad Ghori.
- Discuss the importance of the Battles of Tarain as a turning point in the history of India.

### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- (a) Differentiate between the First and Second Battle of Tarain.
- (b) Differentiate between the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor.
- (c) Who first established a Muslim empire in India?

### WEBLINKS

1. <http://www.mapsofindia.com/history/battles/mahmud-ghazni-invasions-of-india.html>
2. <http://holisticthought.com/the-battle-of-tarain-muhammad-ghori-and-his-invasion-on-india/>

### ANSWERS TO EXERCISES

#### A. Choose the correct option and complete the sentence:

1. (a) Rashtrakutas
2. (d) Dharampala
3. (b) Ujjain
4. (b) Ur

#### B. Fill in the blanks:

1. Temples
2. Natraja
3. Rashtrakutas
4. Gurjara Pratiharas
5. Samantas

#### C. State True or False:

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. False

#### D. Short-answer questions:

1. There are many theories about the origin of the Rajputs. Some called themselves Suryavanshi, 'descendants of the Sun God', or Chandravanshi, 'descendants of the Moon God'. Some were called Agnikulas. They are believed to have been born out of a fire pit.
2. Kanauj was located in the fertile Gangetic plains and hence coveted by all the dynasties. It was believed that whoever had control over Kanauj would have access to rich agriculture, minerals and booming trade of the entire region. Thus, all the three dynasties were eager to conquer Kanauj. The constant struggle for Kanauj is known as the Tripartite Struggle. This went on for about three centuries and weakened all three dynasties.



3. Mahmud of Ghazni was extremely courageous and ambitious. He wanted to make Ghazni rich and powerful. He was attracted to the wealth of India and wanted to plunder it. He invaded India seventeen times and his targets were wealthy temples against which he carried out successful expeditions. Mahmud used the wealth to create a beautiful Ghazni. He built libraries, mosques, gardens, a university and a museum in Ghazni which also became a centre of fine arts and culture.
4. Mahmud's invasions had far reaching effects. Punjab became a Muslim territory for nearly 150 years. Also, temples and works of art were destroyed. The economy was devastated as large amounts of wealth were carried away to Ghazni. Most importantly, these invasions paved the way for further invasions that changed India's history.
5. The Second Battle of Tarain is believed to be the most significant battle in the history of India as it opened the path for other conquerors into India. Muhammad Ghor appointed Qutb-ud-din Aybak as his viceroy in India. Qutb-ud-din became the first Muslim Sultan of Delhi after the death of Muhammad of Ghor and established the Delhi Sultanate.
6. The First Battle of Tarain took place in 1191 whereas the Second Battle of Tarain took place in 1192. In the first Battle of Tarain, Muhammad Ghor was defeated whereas in the Second Battle of Tarain, Prithviraj Chauhan lost.
7. The king appointed officials, often from within the family, for revenue collection. The position was mostly hereditary.

**E. Long-answer questions:**

1. Temples were very important in the Chola Empire because they were not only the place of worship, but also the centres of social life and economic activities. They used to collect revenue and get free land grants. Festivals were celebrated in the temples with great pomp and splendour. People met here to discuss social problems and solve issues. They became centres of political power. Schools and even hospitals were attached to these temple complexes which were self-sufficient communities with priests, craftsmen, dancers, musicians, tailors, goldsmiths, accountants, cooks and many others.
2. The Cholas set up a three-tier administrative system. The king was the head of the administration. He was considered as God's representative and enjoyed enormous powers. He was assisted by ministers. His position was hereditary. The royal symbol was the tiger.

The empire was divided into provinces called *mandalams*. These were usually headed by a member of the royal family. Each *mandalam* was divided into a number of *valanadus* which were further subdivided into *nadus*. The *nadus* were divided into *urs* or villages. The village was the smallest unit of administration. The most outstanding feature of the Chola administration was the village autonomy. The *nadu* was an important unit of administration. It had representative assemblies. The *ur* was a common assembly while the *sabha* consisted of learned men. Their functions included maintenance of law and order, public services, revenue collection, temples and education. They also helped people in times of need.

3. The Second Battle of Tarain is regarded as a turning point in the history of India as it resulted in Muslim conquest of India. Muhammad Ghor appointed Qutb-ud-din Aybak as his viceroy of his territories in India. Qutb-ud-din established the Delhi Sultanate and became the first Muslim Sultan of Delhi after the death of Muhammad of Ghor.