1. List the items of food available to people in Harappan cities. Identify the groups who would have provided these.

**Ans.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Groups who provide these food items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Products taken from plants</td>
<td>Food gatherers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Flesh and fish</td>
<td>Hunter groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Wheat maize, millet, pulses, rice, and other eatable products</td>
<td>Agricultural groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How do archaeologists trace socio-economic differences in Harappan society? What are the differences that they notice? [Delhi, All India 2009, 2011]

**Ans.** Following examples can be cited to show the existence of social and economic variations in the Harappan society:

(i) Study of burials is one example. In the Harappan sites, the deads were usually laid in pits. There were differences in the Way burial pits were made. At some instances, the hollowed-out spaces were lined with bricks. But these may not be taken as an indication of social differences.

(ii) In some graves pottery and ornaments have been found. Jewellery has been found from the graves of men and women as well. These findings can point out social and economic differences.

(iii) The artefacts have been classified into two categories, Utilitarian and Luxurious. Objects of daily uses and objects made of ordinary materials made of clay or stone come under utilitarian category. Ordinary articles consisted of querns, pottery, flesh-
rubbers and needles. These have been found distributed throughout settlements.

(iv) Objects of luxuries were rare and made from precious, non-local materials. The technology used was advanced and complicated. Little pots of faience were considered precious. They were also not easy to make. These show the existence of social and economic variations in the Harappan society.

3. Would you agree that the drainage system in Harappan cities indicates town planning? Give reasons for your answer.

**Ans.** Yes, I agree with that the drainage system in Harappan cities which indicates the town planning. I can cite the following reasons in support of my answer.

• The drainage system needed a planning for its execution. It seems that first drainages were laid out and then houses were built along with the drains. Every house was supposed to have at least one wall along a street to allow the domestic waste water to flow out in the street drains. The plans of the lower town show that roads and streets were laid out along an approximate grid pattern, intersecting at right angles.
• It appears that human settlement was made by planning from the beginning. The city was restricted to a fixed area on the platforms.
• Bricks, sundried or baked, were of standard ratio. The length and breadth of bricks were of four times and twice the height respectively. These bricks were used at all the settlements of the Harappan Civilisation.

4. List the materials used to make beads in the Harappan Civilisation. Describe the process by which any one kind of bead was made.

**Ans.** Making beads was an important craft of the Harappan people. It was mainly prevalent in Chanhudaro.

Materials for making beads included beautiful red coloured stone-like camelian, jasper,
crystal, quartz and steatite. Besides these, use of copper, bronze, gold, shell, faience, terracotta or burnt clay was also used. Process of making beads Making of beads differed as per the materials used. Beads had variety of shapes. They did not make geometrical shapes like one made of harder stones.

Nodules were to be chipped for making rough shapes. They were finally flaked into the final form.

By firing the yellowish raw material, the red colour of camelian was obtained. Grinding, polishing and drilling constituted the last phase. Chanhudaro, Lothal and Dholavira were famous for specialized drilling.

5. Look at figure 1.30 (See NCERT page-26) and describe what you see. How is the body placed? What are the objects placed near it? Are there any artefacts on the body? Do these indicate the sex of the skeleton?

Ans. Following observations can be obtained after looking at the figure:

• Body has been kept in North-south direction in a pit.
• Many graves contain pottery and ornaments which include jar.
• Yes, jewellery like bangles are there on the body.
• Yes, this indicates towards the sex of the skeleton, i.e. it is the body of a woman.

It is concluded that there were great social or economic differences among the people living within the area of the Harappan Civilisation. But as a whole it appears that the Harappan did not believe in burying precious things with the dead.

6. Describe some of the distinctive features of Mohenjodaro. [Delhi 2013]

Ans. Planned City: Harappa as a planned urban centre. It had two parts. One part of the city was small. It was built on a higher place.
The second part was comparatively large. It was built on a lower place. The first part was designed as citadel and the second part was as lower town. The citadel owed its height to the fact that it was built on mud brick platforms. It had walls on all sides and these walls were separated from the lower town.

The **Lower Town**: It was also a walled town. Most of the buildings were built on platforms.

In fact, these platforms were considered as foundation stones. It required huge quantity of labour force to build these platforms. It is obvious that settlement was first planned and then implemented as per the building plan. Quality of sun-dried bricks or baked bricks also proves the concept of planning.

All the bricks were of standard ratio. The length and width was four times and twice the height of the bricks respectively. These bricks were used in the settlements of the Harappan Civilisation.

**Drainage System**: The drainage system was well planned. All the roads and streets were laid out on a grid pattern. They intersected one another at the right angles. It seems that streets featuring drains were laid out first and houses were built thereafter along with them. To make the flow of domestic water, every house had at least one wall along the street.

**The Citadel**: There were many buildings in the citadel. These buildings were used for many special public purposes. The Warehouse and the Great Bath were the two most
important constructions.

7. List the raw materials required for craft production in the Harappan Civilisation and discuss how these might have been obtained.

**Ans.** Following is the list of materials required for craft production in the Harappan Civilisation:

Stone, clay, copper, tin, bronze, gold, faience, shell, camelian, jasper, crystal, steatite, quartz, timber.

Some of the raw materials were locally available whereas some were purchased from the distant places. Soil and wood were locally available raw materials. Stones, fine quality wood, metals were procured from distant places.

Settlements of the Harappans were situated at such places where raw materials were easily available. Nageshwar and Balacot were famous for shell. Some places were famous for Lapis Lazuli like Shortughai in Afghanistan. Rajasthan and Gujarat were famous for copper. Lothal was famous for camelian.

Another way of obtaining raw material was sending expeditions to different places. Evidences show that expedition was sent to Khetri region of Rajasthan for copper and to South India for Gold. Through these expeditions local communities were contacted. Harappan evidences found at these places indicate contacts between each other.

Evidences found at Khetri region were given the name of Ganeshwar Jodhpura Culture.
by archaeologists. Huge reserves of copper products were found here. It is assumed that inhabitants of these area sent copper to Harappan people.

8. Discuss, how archaeologists reconstruct the past.

**Ans.** Archaeologists excavate the sites of the ancient past related to culture or civilization. They find out the art and craft such as seal, material, remains of houses, buildings, pots, ornaments, tools, coins, weights, measurements and toys, etc. Skulls, bones, jaws, teeth of the dead bodies and materials kept with these dead bodies are also helpful for archaeologists. With the help of the botanists, and zoologists, archaeologists study the plants and animal bones found at different places.

Archaeologists try to find out the tools used in the process of cultivation and harvesting. They also try to find out traces of wells, canals, tanks, etc. as they served means of irrigation.

Different layers of sites are observed to find out different things. These things give the picture of socio-economic condition such as religious life and the cultural life of the people.

Tools, unfinished products, waste materials, help in identifying the centres of craft production. Indirect evidences also help the archaeologists in reconstructing the past. Archaeologists develop frames of references. It can be better understood by this fact that the first Harappan seal that was found could not be understood till archaeologists had a context in which to place it-both in terms of cultural sequence in which it was found and in terms of a comparison with finds in Mesopotamia.

Examination of seals help in constructing the concept of religious belief of the period. Seals depict religious scenes. Some animals such as the one-homed animal, often called the unicorn depicted on the seals appear mythical, composite creatures. In some seals, a figure has been shown sitting crossed legs in a yogic posture. All these represent the religious concept of the period.

9. Discuss the functions that may have been performed by rulers in Harappan society.

**Ans.** There are different views on the Harappan society. One group of archaeologists suggest that the Harappan society had no rulers and so everybody enjoyed equal status. The other group of archaeologists are of the opinion that there was no single ruler but several ones. The third theory seems the most suitable. It suggests that it is unlikely that entire communities could have collectively made and implemented such complex decisions.

Evidences show that complex decisions were taken and implemented in the Harappan
society. Extra ordinary uniformity of Harappan artefacts as evident in pottery, seals, weights and bricks show the complex decisions.

Plans and layouts of the city were prepared under the guidance and supervisions of the rulers. Big buildings, palaces, forts, tanks, wells, canals and granaries were constructed. Cleanliness was the responsibility of the ruler. Roads, lanes and drains were also constructed.

The rulers also looked after the welfare of the economy. They used to inspire the farmers to increase agricultural production. They also motivated the craftsmen to promote different handicrafts. External and internal trade were both promoted by the ruler. The ruler used to issue common acceptable coins or seals, weights and measurements.

Rulers were expected to provide relief during natural calamity. During flood, earthquake, epidemics, the ruler provided grains and other eatables to the affected people. During foreign aggression, the rulers defended the city.

10. On the given map, use a pencil to circle the sites where evidence of agriculture has been recovered. Mark an X against sites where there is evidence of craft production and R against sites where raw materials were found.

**Ans.**

(i) **Sites of agriculture:** Harappa, Banawali, Kalibangan, Mohenjodaro, Dholavira (Gujarat).

(ii) **Sites of craft production:** Chanhu dadaro, Nageshwar, Balakot.
(iii) Sites of raw material: Nageshwar, Balakot, Khetri.
1. Discuss the evidence of craft production in Early Historic cities. In what ways is this different from the evidence from Harappan cities?

**Ans.** Widespread and deep excavations in the early historic towns have not been possible due to the fact that these towns are still inhabited. In Harappan Civilisation, we have been fortunate enough that excavations have taken place widespread. Despite this shortcoming, we have found many artefacts in the historic towns. These throw light on the craftsmanship of those days. There are other evidences too, that throw light on the craftsmanship of those days. The salient features of such evidences are as follows:

1. From the sights the fine pottery bowls and dishes have been found. They are glossy too and we call them Northern Black Polished Ware. It looks they were used by the rich people.
2. There have also been evidence of ornaments, tools, weapons, vessels and figurines. There are a wide range of items made of gold, silver, copper, bronze, ivory, glass, shell and terracotta.
3. The donor inscription tells who all lived in towns in terms of professionals and craftsmen. It included washer men, weaver, scribes, carpenters, goldsmith, ironsmith, etc. It is notable in Harappan towns there are no evidences of iron use.
4. The craftsmen and artisans built their guilds too. They collectively bought raw materials, produced and marketed their products.

2. Describe the salient features of Mahajanapadas.

**Ans.** Mahajanapadas were states that existed between 6th and 4th BC centuries. Buddhist and Jain texts mention sixteen Mahajanapadas. The name of all these are not uniform in all texts but some names are common and uniform which means they were the powerful ones. These Mahajanapadas are Vajji, Magadha, Kaushal, Kuru, Panchal, and Gandhar.

The important features of the Mahajanapadas are as follows.

1. Most of the Mahajanapadas were ruled by powerful kings. However, there were some Mahajanapadas where rule was in the hands of people, we call them republics. In some states the king and the subject had collective control on the economic resources of the state.
2. Every Mahajanapadas had its own capital. The capital normally would be surrounded by fort. The fortification of the capital was needed for protection and economic resources.

3. It was around 6th Century BC, Brahmins began to compile scripture called “Dharmshastra” which states rules of morality including that of monarch. Herein it was mentioned that the king should be Kshatriya.

4. The main job of the king was collection of taxes from farmers, traders, craftsmen. They also accepted donations.

5. It was considered fair to plunder neighboring countries for riches.

6. Gradually Mahajanapadas began to have full time army and officials. Soldiers were from the ranks of farmers.

3. **How do historians reconstruct the lives of ordinary people?**

   **Ans.** Ordinary people could not leave behind any historical evidence about their life. Hence, the historians use a variety of sources to reconstruct the lives of the common people during the ancient times. The important sources are:

   1. Remains of houses and pottery give an idea of the life of common men.
   2. Some inscriptions and scriptures talk about the relation between monarchs and the subject. It talks about taxes and happiness and unhappiness of the common men.
   3. Changing tools of craftsmen and farmers talk about the lifestyle of the people.
   4. Historians also depend upon folklores to reconstruct the lives of the people during the ancient times.

4. **Compare and contrast the list of things given to the Pandyan chief (Source 3) with those produced in the village of Danguna (source 8). Do you notice any similarities and differences?**

   **Ans.** The gifts given to Pandya chief included things like ivory, fragrant wood, honey, sandalwood, pepper, flowers, etc. in additions to many birds and animals were also given as gifts. On the contrary, items produced in the village of Danguda included grass, skin of animals, flower salt and other minerals, etc. In both the lists the only common item is flower.
5. List some of the problems faced by the epigraphists.

**Ans.** The specialists who study inscriptions are called Epigraphists. Some of the important problems they encounter when they try to decipher inscriptions are as follows:

1. Many of the inscriptions are not found in proper shape, they are partly damaged, hence deciphering them becomes a knotty problem.

2. The inscriptions are written from the point of view of those who have created it. Hence, in order to get an impartial understanding, we need to go beyond the written words, get into its interpretations.

3. Many of the inscriptions have descriptions in symbolic words. Hence deciphering them have become difficult.

4. Sometimes the inscriptions are engrafted in very light colors. Hence, deciphering them becomes difficult.

6. Discuss the main features of the Mauryan administration. Which of these elements are evident in the Asokan inscriptions that you have studied?

**Ans.** Asokan inscriptions mention all the main features of the administration of the Mauryan Empire. Thus, the features of the administration are evident in the inscriptions of the Asokan age. The important features of the same are as follow:

1. The capital of the Mauryan Empire was Pataliputra. Apart from the capital there were four other centres of political power in the empire. They were Taxila, Ujjaini, Tosali and Suvamagiri.

2. Committee and subcommittees were formed to run the administration and safety of boundaries. Megasthenes has mentioned that there were one committee and six subcommittees. The six subcommittees and their areas of activities are as follows:

   (i) The first sub committee looked after navy.
   (ii) The second sub committee looked after transport and communications.
   (iii) The third sub committee looked after infantry.
   (iv) The fourth sub committee had the responsibility of horses.
   (v) The fifth had the responsibility of chariots.
   (vi) The sixth had the responsibility of elephants.

3. Strong network of roads and communications were established. It is notable that no large empire can be maintained in the absence of the same.
4. Asoka made an attempt to keep the empire united by the philosophy of Dhamma. Dhamma are nothing but moral principles that actuated people towards good conduct. Special officers called Dhamma Mahamatras were appointed to propagate Dhamma. In fact, Romila Thapar has made it the most important element of the Asokan state’s governing principle.

7. This is a statement made by one of the best-known epigraphists of the twentieth century, D.C. Sircar: “There is no aspect of life, culture, activities of the Indians that is not reflected in inscriptions.” Discuss.

**Ans.** The statement of eminent epigraphist D.C. Sirkar has highlighted the importance of inscription as a single source of information that touches upon all areas of our life. Following are the main areas we get information about from the inscriptions:

1. **Determination of state’s boundaries:** The inscriptions were carved in the territories of the kings and even more important is not often close to the borders. This helps us find out boundaries of kingdoms and their expansions thereto.

2. **Names of Kings:** The names of the kings are mentioned in the inscriptions. The names and titles used by Asoka the Great got revealed through inscriptions only.

3. **Historic events:** The important historical events are mentioned in the inscriptions. The best example is how the event of the Kalinga war is mentioned in the inscription and how Asoka takes to Dhamma.

4. **Information about conduct of Kings:** Inscriptions describe the conduct and character of the kings quite well. It is through the inscriptions only that we know Asoka worked for the welfare of the masses.

5. **Information about administration:** Inscriptions gave information about administration. It is through the inscription. We know that Asoka appointed his son as a Viceroy.

6. **Land settlement and Taxes:** Inscriptions mention how land were granted or gifted. It also talks about various taxes imposed by the ruler. There is hardly any area of governance of our life that is not mentioned in the inscriptions. Hence, we are inclined to agree with D.C. Sirkar who says, “There is no aspect of life, culture, activities of Indians that is not reflected in the inscriptions.”

8. Discuss the notions of kingship that developed in the post-Mauryan period.

**Ans.** In the post-Mauryan age, the idea of kingship got associated with divine theory of state. Now, the monarchs began to talk about divine sanction to rule the people. Kushan
rulers propagated the idea of the same at the unprecedented scale. They ruled from central Asia to western India. We can discuss the kingship based on the dynasties.

1. **Kushan Kings**: Kushan Kings called themselves Devputra and hence, godly status. They built great statues of themselves in temples.

2. **Gupta Rulers**: Second development of kingship is found during Gupta dynasty. It was a period of large-sized states. Such states were dependent on Samantas who sometimes became powerful enough to usurp the power of kings too.

3. **Literature**, coins and inscriptions helped us in creating history of those days. Very often poets would describe the monarch often to praise them but giving insight into the history and kingship too. A good example is of Harisena who praised Samudragupta, the great Gupta ruler.

9. **To what extent were agricultural practices transformed in the period under consideration?**

**Ans.** The demand for taxes increased in the post 600 BC. In order to meet the demand of excessive taxes, without taking lesser produce, forced the farmers to increase productivity. This resulted in the use of new tools and practices of agriculture. The important ones are as follows:

1. **Use of plough**: Ploughs became commonplace. They were hardly heard of in the past. The use of ploughs began in the Ganga and Cauvery basins. In places where rain was abundant, the plough was used with iron tip. This increased the paddy production manifold.

2. **Use of spade**: Another tool that changed the system of agriculture is spade. Those farmers who lived in the areas of harsh land used spade.

3. **Artificial Irrigation**: Apart from rainfall, the farmers now began to look at artificial form of irrigation. This prompted farmers to build wells, ponds, and – canals often collectively. This increased the agricultural production. The production increased due to new technology and tools. This created a new strata in the society. In the Buddhist literature, there is a description of small and big farmers. They were called Grihpatis. Similar description is given in the Tamil literature too. The position of village head was often hereditary. In such a situation the ownership of land became very important.
Chapter 3 Kinship, Caste and Class

Early Societies

1. Explain why patriliny may have been particularly important among elite families.

Ans. Patriliny is the system through which descent from father to son and grandson is traced. The principle of patriliny would have been essential for the elite families for the following reasons:

Continuity of Dynasty: As per the Dharmashastras, it was an established belief that the son carried forward the dynasty. That was the main reason that the families wished for sons not for daughters. A couplet of Rigveda also substantiates this view. In this couplet, a father at the time of the marriage of his daughter wishes that she should have best sons with the grace of Lord Shiva.

Inheritance: In royal families, the acquisition of throne was included in the inheritance. After the death of a king, his eldest son was supposed to inherit the throne. After the death of the parents, the property was to be equally divided among all the sons. In fact, parents avoided disputes in the family after their death. Most of the royal families followed the patriliny since 600 B.C. But sometimes this system had exceptions also.

• The brother of the king ascended the throne in case the former had no son.
• Relatives also claimed inheritance of the throne.
• In some special cases, women also ascended the throne like Prabhavati Gupta.

2. Discuss whether kings in early states invariably were Kshatriyas.

Ans. As per the Dharmashastra, only Kshatriyas were supposed to be the kings. But it was also to be noted that many important ruling lineages perhaps had different origins. Mauryas were considered Kshatriyas by many people. Some Brahmanical texts described Mauryas as of low origin. The Shungas and Kanvas who were immediate successors of the Mauryas were Brahmanas. In fact those sections of the society controlled the political power which enjoyed support and resources. It did not depend on the question of being born as Kshatriya.

There were other rulers like Shakas who came from Central Asia. But the Brahmanas considered them as mlechchhas, barbarians and outsiders. Similarly, Gotami-putra Satkami, the best known ruler of the Satavahana dynasty, became a destroyer of the
pride of kshatriyas. This we see that the Satavahanas claimed to be Brahmanas whereas the Brahmanas were of the opinion that the king should be Kshatriyas.

3. Compare and contrast the dharma or norms mentioned in the stories of Drona, Hidimba and Matanga.

**Ans.** Drona: Drona was a Brahmanas. As per the Dharmashastras, it was the duty of the Brahmana to impart education. It was considered a pious deed of the Brahmanas. Drona was also following that system. He was imparting education. He taught archery to the princes of the Kuru Dynasty. In those days, people of low caste were not entitled to get education. Keeping this view in mind, Drona refused imparting education to Ekalavya. But in the course of time, Ekalavya learnt archery and acquired great skill. But Drona demanded right thumb of Ekalavya as his teaching fee. This was against religious norms. In fact, Drona did this just to ensure that no one could be better archer than Aijuna in the field of archery.

**Hidimba:** Hidimba was a lady demon, that is rakshasini. In fact, all the rakshasas were man-eaters. One day her brother asked her to catch Pandavas so that he may eat them. But Hidimba did not follow this. She fell in love with Bhima and married him. A rakshasa boy was born to him, named Ghatotkacha. In this way, Hidimba did not keep the norms of rakshasas.

**Matanga:** Matanga was Boddhisatta who was born in the family of a chandala. But he married Dittha Mangalika who was the daughter of a merchant. A son was born to him named Mandavya Kumara. In the course of time he learnt three Vedas. He used to offer food to sixteen hundred Brahmanas every day. But when his father appeared before him dressed in rags with a clay alms bowl in his hand, he refused to offer food to him. The reason was that, he considered his father as outcaste and his food was meant for Brahmanas only. Matanga advised his son not to be proud of his birth. After saying this, he disappeared into the air. When Dittha Mahgalika knew this incident, she went after Matanga and begged his forgiveness. This way acted like a true wife. She performed her duty religiously. A donor is considered generous. But Mandavya failed to follow the norms of religion and generosity.

4. In what ways was the Buddhist theory of a social contract different from the Brahmanical view of a society derived from the Purusha Sukta?(VBQ)

**Ans.** The Purusha Sukta of the Rig Veda says that the four Varnas emerged because of the sacrifice of Purusha, the primeval man. The four varnas were Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. These Varnas had different jobs. The Brahmanas had supreme position in the society. They were also considered as teachers. Kshatriyas
were considered warriors. They also ran the administration. The Vaishyas were the masters of trade. The Shudras were at the lowest strata. Their duty was to serve the above three varnas. Under this Brahmanical system, birth was the only criteria to judge the status and prestige in the society. But the Buddhist theory of a social contract was different. As per the Buddhist concept, there was inequality in society. But they also opined that this inequality was neither natural nor permanent. They did not favour the idea of birth being the criteria of social status.

5. The following is an excerpt from the Mahabharata in which Yudhisthira, the eldest Pandava, speaks to Sanjaya, a messenger: Try and identify the criteria used to make this list – in terms of age, gender, kinship ties. Are there any other criteria? For each category, explain why they are placed in a particular position in the list.

Ans. Not only age, gender and kinship ties but there were other factors too which were considered to prepare the list. The Brahmana, the Purohits and the Gums were bestowed the highest honours. They all were widely respected. Fraternal kins were also given respects who were considered like parents. People who were of equal age of younger were placed at the third rank. In the next order, the young Kuru warriors were respected. Women also received due place. Wives, mothers, daughters-in-law and daughters came in this order. Orphans and handicapped had also been taken care of. Yudhisthira also greets them.

6. This is what a famous historian of Indian literature, Maurice Wintemitz, wrote about the Mahabharata: “Just because the Mahabharata represents more of an entire literature…. and contains so many kinds of things…. (it) give(s) us an insight into the most profound depths of the soul of the Indian folk.” Discuss.

Ans. Plenty of literary sources are available to reconstruct the ancient Indian history. Mahabharata is one of them. It is an important literary and historical source. Its importance has been recognised even by the foreign writers. Its importance has also been recognised by Maurice Wintemitz because in his opinion the Mahabharata represents an entire literature. This great epic is full of various examples of different aspects of the Indians life. The reading of the Mahabharata gives a profound depth of the soul of the Indian folk. It has been written in simple Sanskrit and therefore widely understood. Generally, historians classify the contents of the Mahabharata under two sections. They are narrative and didactic. Narrative section contains stories and didactic sections contain prescriptions about social norms. But at some instances, there were intermingling also. Many historians believe that the Mahabharata was a dramatic, moving story and that
the didactic portions were a later interpolation.

We get several different views about the authorship of the Mahabharata. It was believed that the original stories were composed by Sutas. Sutas were charioteer bards. They accompanied Kshatriya warriors to the battle field and composed poems celebrating their victories other achievements. These compositions were circulated orally. From the fifth century BCE onwards, Brahmanas took over the story and started writing story. This great epic contains vivid descriptions of battles, forests, palaces and settlements.

It describes kinship, political life of the said period, social priority. Major features of the family life such as patriliny, different forms of marriage and rules related with marriage, position of women in the society, social differences of the Indian society can be traced back to the period of the Mahabharata. This great epic also describes social mobility.

7. Discuss whether the Mahabharata could have been the work of a single author.

Ans. There are so many views about the author of the Mahabharata. Following views have been put forward regarding the authorship of the Mahabharata.

• It is believed that the original story was written by the charioteer-bards known as sutas. They generally accompanied Kshatriya warriors to the battle field and composed poems celebrating their victories other achievements.
• It is also believed that in the beginning the text of the Mahabharata was orally circulated. Scholars and priests carried it from one generation to another. From the fifth century BCE, the Brahmanas took over the story and started writing. This was the time when Kurus and Panchals were gradually becoming kingdoms. The story of the Mahabharata also revolved round them. Some parts of the story reflect that old social values were replaced by the new ones.
• 200 BCE and 200 CE is another phase in the composition of the Mahabharata. During this period worship of Vishnu was gaining ground Krishna came to be identified as Vishnu. Large didactic sections resembling the Manusmriti were added during the period between C 200 and 400 CE. These interpolations made the Mahabharata an epic consisting of 100,000 verses. This enormous composition is traditionally attributed to a sage named Vyas.

8. How important were gender differences in early societies? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. It is seen that in early societies families were generally patriliny. Patriliny means tracing descent from father to son and to grandson and so on. Matriliny family was known generally not in use. But exception was also available. As exception, Satavahanas of Andhra can be mentioned. Historical sources mention the name of some rulers from inscriptions associated with the names of the mothers of the king. As Gotami-putra
means’ son of Gotami’. Gotami and Vasistha are the feminines of Gotama and Vasistha. Sons were considered important for the continuity of the family. Attitudes towards daughter were different. They had no claims towards the resources of the household. But marrying them into the families outside the kin was considered desirable. This system of marriage was called exogamy. According to this system, the lives of the young ‘girls and women belonged to those families which claimed that high status were often carefully regulated to ensure that they were married at the right time and to the right person. This gave rise to the tradition that in marriage Kanyadana was an important religious duty of the father.

After marriage women were supposed to give up their father’s gotra and adopt their husband’s. As per Manusmriti, the paternal state was to be divided equally amongst sons after the death of parents, with a special share for the eldest. Women were not given any share in this state.

But women were allowed to keep the gifts with themselves which they received at the time of their marriage. This was called stridhana. This could be inherited by their children and the husband had no claim over it. But at the same time Manusmriti also told women not to hoard family property or even their own valuables without the permission of their husband.

In fact, social differences were sharpened because of the differences in access of resources. Many texts suggest that while upper class women may have access to resources but land, cattle, money were generally controlled by the men. Vakataka queen Prabhavati Gupta was a rich woman.

9. Discuss the evidence that suggests that Brahmanical prescriptions about kinship and marriage were not universally followed.

Ans. Brahmanical prescription about kinship and marriage:

Prescription about kinship:
According to Sanskrit texts the term “kula” was used to designate families and jati for the larger network of kinfolk. The term ‘vamsha’ was used for lineage. Very often people belonging to the same family share food and other resources they live, work and perform rituals together. Families were considered as the part of larger networks of people defined as relatives a technical term used to defined them was kinfolk. While familial ties were considered “natural” and based on blood they can be defined in different ways.

For instance, some societies regard cousins as being blood relations, whereas others, do not regard as from Historians retrieve information about elite families fairly easily from it is very hard reconstruct the familial relationship of ordinary people. Historians also try to analyse their attitudes towards family and kinship. These are important, because they provide an insight into people’s thinking. It is also expected ideas would
have shaped their action because their actions may have led to changes in their attitudes.

Prescription about marriage:

For the continuity of the patrilineage the sons were considered important the daughters could not over the resources of their household. They were married into families outside the kin. This system was known as exogamy which means marrying outside one’s kin or gotra. The women of high status families were married to the right persons at right time. Kanayadana or the gift of a daughter in marriage was considered as an important religious duty of the father. With the emergence of new means of communication people came into contact with each other and they began to share their view. So the Brahman said down codes of their social behaviour. These codes regarding social behaviour were later on enshrined in Dharmashashtra. These texts recognised eight types of marriage. Among these types of marriage the four were considered as good while the rest four as condemnable. Satavahana ruler did not follow exogamy of Brahmans.
Chapter 4 Thinkers, Beliefs and Buildings

Cultural Developments

1. Were the ideas of the Upanishadic thinkers different from those of the fatalists and materialists? Give reasons for your answers.

**Ans.** The ideas of the Upanishadic thinkers is not much different from those of the fatalists and materialists. This is brought out by the following arguments.

(i) The essence of the philosophy of Jainism was already in existence in India, even before the birth of Lord Mahavir and Vardhaman.
(ii) Ahimsa or non-violence is the most important principle of Jainism. But this also form the basic thought of Hindu religion. Thus, there is a lot of similarity between the both the streams of the religion.
(iii) Upanishada believes and teaches Karma Theory. It means men and women should act and not worry about getting rewards. Fatalists also believed in the idea of work without thinking of the consequences. Thus there is a lot of similarity between the two.
(iv) Both fatalists and materialists believe that human beings are made, of four elements, earth, water, sky, air and fire.
Thus, we are inclined to agree that the idea of the Upanishad thinkers Eire not much different from that of the fatalists and materialists.

2. Summarise the central teachings of Jainism.

**Ans.** The main teachings of Jainism are as follows:

(i) The entire world is animated. Life exists even in rocks and stones normally considered non-living.

(ii) The principle of non-violence is practised in extreme form in Jainism. No harms should be caused to animals, plants and insects and any other living beings that may include rocks and stones too. This is notable that Jains are forbidden to eat late night lest they kill insects by mistake.

(iii) The cycle of birth and rebirth is shaped through Karma. If one is to escape this cycle of Karma, one must practise ascetism and penance. It is possible when one renounces the world. So one has to live in monastery to attain salvation.

(iv) Jain monks have to take vows to observe the following:
(a) Not to kill anyone
(b) Not to steal anything
(c) Not tell lies
(d) Not to possess property
(e) To observe celibacy.

3. Discuss the role of the begums of Bhopal in preserving the stupa at Sanchi.

Ans. Begums of Bhopal made a great contribution to the preservation of the Stupa of Sanchi. Following are the major contribution made by them.

(a) Shahejahan Begum and her successor Sultan Jahan Begum of Bhopal were the rulers of Bhopal, who made generous grants to the preservation of the Stupa of Sanchi.
(b) A museum was built near the stupa and it was built mainly on the financial support of Begum Sultan Jahan Begum.
(c) The support to preserve the stupa came from the Europeans also.
(d) French and British both took the plaster cast copies of the pillars of the stupas to be displayed in the museums at France and Britain. They also contributed financially to preserve the stupa.

4. Read this short inscription and answer:

In the year 33 of the maharaja Huvishka, (a Kushana ruler), in the first month of the hot season on the eighth day, a Bodhisatta was set up at Madhuvanaka by the bhikkhuni Dhanavati, the sister’s daughter of the bhikkhuni Buddhamita, who knows the Tipitaka, the female pupil of the bhikkhu Bala, who knows the Tipitaka, together with her father and mother.

(a) How did Dhanavati date her inscription?
(b) Why do you think she installed an image of the Bodhisatta?
(c) Who were the relatives she mentioned?
(d) What Buddhist text did she know?
(e) From whom did she learn this text?

Ans.
(a) Dhanavati dated her inscription that she placed the inscription at Madhuvanaka in the first month of the hot season on the eighth day in the year 33 of the Maharaja named Havishka.
(b) I think that she (the Bhikkhuni Dhanvati) installed an image of the Bodhisatta to show that Mahayana sect of Buddhism was becoming popular day by day and Bodhisattas were considered great personalities in Buddhism during the reign of the Kushana rulers.
(c) She has mentioned her own mother’s sister’s name Buddhamita. The lady was a Bhikkuni. She had also mentioned Bhikkuni Bala and her parents.
(d) She knew the Tipitaka.
(e) She learnt the text from the Bhikkhuni Buddhamita who was the female pupil of the Bala.
5. Why do you think women and men joined the sangha?

**Ans.** The important reasons why men and women joined sanghas could be as follows:

(a) Many of them wanted to renounce the worldly pleasures.
(b) They could study the Buddhist literature and philosophy by staying in the company of other monks.
(c) Many people entered sanghas to become priests and teachers of Buddhism.
(d) All were considered equal and the previous social identity was to be renounced.
(e) The environment of sanghas was democratic. The decision making within sanghas was based on voting. This attracted many and they took to the life of sanghas.

6. To what extent does knowledge of Buddhist literature help in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi?

**Ans.** Buddhist literature help us upto some extent in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi. It is important that the sculptures at Sanchi depict the teachings of Buddha only. The teachings of Buddha are captured in the literature.

It is notable that Buddha used to roam around among people, preaching them on his teachings. However, he did not claim supernatural power. He told us that the world is ever changing. It is full of sorrows. Sorrow flows out of desire. Buddha asked the followers to take the middle path, not too much of penance, nor too much of indulgence. The literature of Buddhism is useful for the interpretation of the sculpture at Sanchi. People are shown in different moods and in sorrow. Different stages of life are depicted and so on. Hence, it can be stated that Buddhist literature throws valuable light on the sculptures of the Sanchi.

7. Discuss the development in sculpture and architecture associated with the rise of Vaishnavism and Shaivism.

**Ans.** Vaishnavism and Shaivism are the two branches of Hinduism. In case of Vaishnavism, Lord Vishnu was regarded as the chief deity. In case of Shaivism Lord Shiva was regarded as the chief deity. Both traditions were part of the Bhakti movement. Bhakti movement emphasised on the love and devotion of the devotee to the God.
This tradition of Vaishnavism and Shaivism also impacted the tradition of architecture and sculpture. The temples developed the house deities. The initial temples were small and simple. It was a small room called Garbhagriha. Later it expanded, a tall structure was built on the garbhagriha. It was called Shikhara. The walls of the temple were decorated with suitors. Soon temples were built that had huge entrance and big halls for the comfort of visitors.

Many of these temples were carved out of rocks. These artificial caves were turned into temples. The tradition of article caves is old who had renounced the world. The most important were the Ajivikas, that developed as a sect during the reign of Asoka. Later a good example of the rock-cut temple is the Kailash Nath temple of the 8th Century. It was carved out of a single piece rock. There is a copper plate inscription at the temple of Ellora wherein the sculptor exclaims, “How did I make it!” Sculpture was yet another way of expression. Deities were given many shapes and forms in the sculpture. Shiva has been shown in the form of Linga. Many deities have shown in different forms, sometimes grotesque. There were also combination of man and animal forms.

8. Discuss how and why stupas were built. Describe the structure of stupa with example.

Ans. About 200 years after the time of Buddha King Asoka erected a pillar at Lumbini. This was to announce the visit of Buddha to this place. Stupas were the mounds put on the bodily remains of the body of Lord Buddha or of any object that was used by him. At the place of stupas such objects were buried. These were places of great respect under the tradition of Buddhism, as they had the relics of Buddha. As per the description of Asokavadana winch a famous Buddhist book, Emperor Asoka gave Buddha’s relic to all major cities. Later on such places stupas were put. The most important stupas are at Sanchi, Bharhut and Saranath.

The structure of a stupa was like a dome and hemisphere. On the top of it, there would be a balcony called harmik. This balcony represented the abode of God. The harmik was covered with an umbrella. There used to be railings around the balcony. The construction of the stupas was made possible by the contribution of many. On the forefront were the monarchs. The Satvahan Kings offered huge amount for the construction of the stupas. Apart from the monarchs, merchants, artisans and common men and women also contributed to the construction of the stupas.

9. Of the religious traditions discussed in this chapter, is there any that is practiced in your neighbourhood? What are the religious texts used today, an how are they preserved and transmitted? Are images used in worship? If so, are these similar to or different from those described in this chapter? Describe the buildings used for religious activities today, comparing them with early stupas and temples.
Ans. The chapter discuss the religious traditions of ancient India which included, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, so on. As I live in the walled city of Delhi have seen people practising all these traditions. The religious textbooks of all religions are preserved and kept with great respect. They have been translated in many languages including many regional languages of the country. Now they are also preserved in the form of CD and other modern devices. Images are also used by worshippers of these religions. The Hindus deities have almost same images as they had in the past. Jains and Buddhists also use images. Temples are used by hindus, buddhists and jains. Mosques are made by muslims and churches by the Christians. The structure of all these are different but with some similarities too.
Chapter 5: Through the Eyes of Travellers
Perceptions of Society

1. Write a note on the Kitab-ul-Hind.

Ans. Kitab-ul-Hind was written by Al-Biruni in 1031. It was considered with India and also known by the name of Tariikh-ul-Hind and Tahqiq-ma-ul-Hind. It was written in Arabic. It is divided into 80 Chapters. They have thrown a detailed light on Hindu religions and philosophy, festivals, customs and tradition, the social and economic as well as political life of the people. In each chapter he adopted a distinctive style and had a question in the beginning. It was followed by a description based on Sanskrit tradition, At last he compare the India culture with other culture. This geometric structure he followed is known for its precision and predictability. The main reason for this structure was Al-Biruni’s mathematical orientation.

2. Compare and contrast the perspectives from which Ibn Battuta and Bernier wrote their accounts of their travels in India.

Ans. Both have written them accounts in their different prospectives. While Ibn Battuta describe everything that impressed and excited him because of his novelty, Bernier had followed a different intellectual tradition. He wrote whatever he saw in India.

Bernier wanted to pin point the weakness of the Indian society and considered the Mughal India Inferior to European society. In his description Ibn Battuta recorded his observation about new culture, people, believes and values.

3. Discuss the picture of urban centres that emerges from Bernier’s accout.

Ans. During the 17th century nearly 15% of population was living in town. This was average proportion of urban population of western Europe. Bernier described Mughal towns as court towns. By it he meant those towns which depended upon the imperial court for their existence and survival. These towns came into existence with the imperial court and declined with the impanel court when they moved to other places. In his travel accounts, Bernier described many big towns and cities such as Delhi, Mathura, Kashmir, Surat, Masulipatnam and Golconda. These gained importance as manufacturing centres, trading towns, and sacred towns. The merchant communities had deep influence in these cities. They remained organised due to their own caste and occupational bodies. These trading groups were known as Mahajans in western India.
Their head was called Sheth. In Ahmedabad, the chief of Merchant community was known as nagarsheth. Besides the trading groups, musicians, architects, painters, lawyers, calligraphies, etc. lived in towns.

4. Analyse the evidence for slavery provided by Ibn Battuta.

**Ans.** Battuta has given a detailed description on the practice of slavery prevalent in India. Delhi Sultan-Muhammad bin Tughlaq had a large number of slaves. Most of these slaves were forcibly captured during the aggressions. Many people sold their children as a slave, because of acute poverty. Slaves were also offered as a gift during this time. Battuta when visited him, also brought many horses, camels and slaves for the Sultan to present him. Sultan Muhammad bin Tuglaq, himself had presented two hundred slaves to Nasiruddin a religious preacher.

Nobels are used to keep slave those days. Through these slaves, the Sultan used to get information about the activities of the noble and all other important events of the empire. The woman slaves served as servants in the house of the rich (nobles). These women informed the Sultan about the activities of their masters (i.e., nobles). Most of the slaves used to do domestic works and there was a lot of difference between the status of these slaves and the court slaves.

5. What were the elements of the practice of sati that drew the attention of Bernier?

**Ans.** The practice of sati according to Bernier showed the difference in the treatment of women in western and eastern society. He noticed how a child widow were forcefully burnt screaming on the funeral pyre while many of the older women were resigned their fate.

The following elements drew his attention.
(i) Under this cruel practices an alive widow was forcibly made to sit on the pyre of her husband.
(ii) People had no sympathy for her.
(iii) The widow was an unwilling victim of the sati-practice. She was forced to be a Sati.

6. Discuss Al-Biruni’s understanding of the caste system.

**Ans.** Al-Biruni’s description about caste system as he understood. Al-Biruni tried to explain the caste system by looking far parallels in other societies. He described that in ancient Persia, four social categories were recognised.
(i) knight and princes.
(ii) monks
(iii) fire-priests and lawyers; physicians, astronomers, other scientists;
(iv) Finally, peasants and artisans. He attempted to suggest that social divisions were not unique to India.

His description of the caste system in India was deeply influenced by his study of Sanskrit texts. According to these texts, the highest castes were the Brahmins as they were created from the head of the Brahmins.

The Kshatriyas were the next caste created from the shoulders and hands of the Brahmin. The Vaishyas and Shudras were created from the thighs and feet of the Brahmin respectively.

Thus, he sought to understand the Indian caste system by looking for parallels in other societies. Nothing that ancient Persian society was divided into four categories he realized that social division was not unique to India.

But despite accepting the caste system he was against the notion of pollution. He believed that according to the laws of nature anything which becomes impure ultimately becomes pure again, e.g. the sun clears the air. The concept of social pollution is the bedrock of the caste system. Thus, the caste system was according to him contrary to the laws of nature.

He failed to realize that the caste system was not as rigid as portrayed in the Sanskrit texts.

7. Do you think Ibn Battuta’s account is useful in arriving at an understanding of life in contemporary urban centres? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. Battuta’s observation about the cities of India.
(i) According to him, Indian cities had many exciting opportunities and are useful for those who had the necessary drive, skill and resources.
(ii) The Indian cities were prosperous and densely populated.
(iii) These cities had colourful market trading in different kinds of goods.
(iv) Delhi was the largest city of India and had a lot of population. Daultabad was another important city of India which challenged Delhi in size.
(v) The cities were not only the centre of economic transactions but also the centres of social and cultural activities.
(vii) Most of the bazars in the cities had temple and mosques.
(viii) Cities also had fixed places for public performances by dancer, musicians and singer. He found that many towns derived their wealth and prosperity through the appropriation of surplus from villages.
(ix) Indian goods were in great demand in west Asia and South-east Asia. So the artisans and merchants earned huge profit.
8. Discuss the extent to which Bernier’s accounts enables historians to reconstruct contemporary rural society.

**Ans.** Bernier’s assessment about Indian rural society was not correct. It was far away from the truth, but it is not acceptable. There are some truth in his description which are evident from the following facts.

(i) According to his account, Mughal empire was the owner of the land and distributed among its nobles. It had a disastrous impact on the society.
(ii) According to him the system of crown of ownership of land was good. It was because, the land holders could not pass on their land to their children. They did not make any long term investment on the land.
(iii) As there was no private property in land, there was not any improvement in the landlord class. This system ruined agriculture and led to oppression of peasants.

Bernier’s view regarding Indian society had the following features:
(i) The rich people Were in minority.
(ii) It had the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich, no middle class existed there.
(iii) All the cities and towns were reined and had contaminated air.

9. Read this excerpt from Bernier:

Numerous are the instances of handsome pieces of workmanship made by persons destitute of tools, and who can scarcely be said to have received instruction from a master. Sometimes they imitate so perfectly articles of European manufacture that the difference between the original and copy can hardly be discerned. Among other things, the Indians make excellent muskets, and fowling-pieces, and such beautiful gold ornaments that it may be doubted if the exquisite workmanship of those articles can be exceeded by any European goldsmith. I have often admired the beauty, softness and delicacy of their paintings.

List the crafts mentioned in the passage. Compare these with the descriptions of artisanal activity in the chapter.

**Ans.**

I. Names of the crafts mentioned in this passage.
In this passage the crafts such as making of muskets and following pieces and making beautiful gold ornaments are mentioned. These products were beautifully made. Bernier was amazed to see these products.

II. Comparison of crafts referred in the passage with the description of artisanal activity in the chapter.
(i) In the chapter boat manufacturing and terracotta sculpture and temple architecture
has been mentioned.
(ii) Art of painting has been referred.
(iii) Art of carpet manufacturing has been referred.
(iv) Art of dance, music and calligraphy have been referred in the chapter.
(v) Description about Rajal Khamos have also been mentioned.

10. On an outline map of the world, mark the countries visited by Ibn Battuta. What are the seas that he might have crossed?

Ans.
Countries visited by Ibn Battuta:
(i) Morocco (ii) Mecca
(iii) Syria (iv) Iraq
(v) Persia (vi) Yamen
(vii) Oman (viii) China
(ix) India (x) Maldives
(xi) Sri Lanka (xii) Sumatra (Indonesia)

Name of Seas:
(i) North Atlantic Ocean (ii) South Atlantic Ocean
(iii) Indian Ocean (iv) Red Sea
(v) Arabian Sea (vi) Bay of Bengal
(vii) South China Sea (viii) East China Sea.
Chapter 6 Bhakti-Sufi Traditions

Changes in Religious Beliefs and Devotional Texts

I. Explain with examples what historians mean by the integration of cults.

Ans. During the period of the 10th Century to the 17th Century, an important trend noticed in the religious life in India is the worship of God in many forms. Many God and Goddesses appear in the sculptures and texts but they are various forms of the original deities only. These original deities are Vishnu, Shiva, and Goddesses Durga, Lakshmi and Parvati. Historians have noticed the two marked trends in the socio-religious life of those days. The first was dissemination of the Brahminical ideas. The Brahminical texts were reproduced in simple Sanskrit. They were now made available to women and Shudras, who did not have access to Brahminical literature by and large. The second was the Brahmins who were working on the beliefs and practices. It was a process of evolution, wherein traditional classical traditions were getting new shapes continuously as they were being impacted by the traditions of common people throughout the land. Now let us look at the two of the following examples.

1. A very good example of the above description is the temple of Jagannatha at Puri in Orissa. The temple is of Lord Jagannatha who is another form of Vishnu only. The word Jagannatha means one who owns the world.
2. There were many local gods; their statues were often created by wood and stones by tribals. Even families began to have Kul Devata. The Goddesses were also created in wood and stone. They all were in various forms only often of Vishnu.

2. To what extent do you think the architecture of mosques in the subcontinent reflects a combination of universal ideals and local traditions?

Ans. With the arrival of Islam in the Medieval ages, the architecture of Islam also came to India. However, the Arab-cum-Islamic architecture got impacted by the local traditions and rites too. Hence, we see a fusion of the two. This can be further elaborated by the examples of architecture mainly the constructions of the mosques of those days.

Some features of the architecture of mosques are universal. All mosques have orientation towards Mecca. This is manifested in the placement of Mehrab and Minar within a mosque. But at the same time we have influences that can be described only as local influences. A 13th Century mosque in Kerala has a shikhar like roof unlike a normal mosque where it is dome. The Shah Hamdan Mosque in Kashmir is made of Kashmiri woods and its facade is like that of a temple. The Atia Mosque in Bangladesh
is made of bricks, though its roof is round. Thus, we can see that the architecture of Mosques is that of fusion.

3. What were the similarities and differences between the be-shari‘a and ba-shari‘a sufi traditions?

Ans. Shari‘a is the Islamic law that is applied in a truly Islamic country. The Shari‘a law owes its origin to the Holy book of Quran, Hadis (Law book of Islam) and teachings of Prophet Muhammad.

In the medieval ages the Islamic world witnessed a big social and religious movement called Sufi movement. Sufi movement was the people-centric and not God-centric. It believed serving people was the real form of worship. Sufi movement has had many branches too. One group of Sufi preachers took very radical path. They were mystics who renounced material world took to the life of asceticism. Further they also rejected the supremacy of the Shari‘a laws. Such Sufis were called be-shari‘a.

On the other hand, there were sufi saints who criticised the extravagant lifestyle of monarchs and Caliphat but did not reject Shari‘a laws. For them Shari‘a laws were sacrosanct. These Sufi saints have been called be-shari‘a.

4. Discuss the ways in which the Alvars, Nayanars and Virashaivas expressed critiques of the caste system.

Ans. The early Bhakti Movement was led by Alvars and Nayanars. It was the period of the 6th Century. Alvars are those who were disciples of Vishnu and Nayanars were those who claimed themselves the followers of Lord Shiva. They travelled place to place and would sing devotional songs in Tamil in the name of Shiva or Vishnu as the case may be. Apart from being a religious movement it was a social movement too. Many historians are of the view that Alvars and Nayanars gave a blow to the caste system and Brahmanism. This is corroborated by the fact that the movement was open to people from diverse background. The Bhaktas came from the castes of Brahmin to artisans to even those that were considered untouchables.

Virashaivas was a movement of the 12th Century that took place in Karnataka. The movement was led by a Brahmin named Basavanna (1106-68), who was a minister in the court of Chalukya king. The followers of Basavanna are called Virashaivas and they worshipped Shiv. They were also called and perhaps more often Lingayats, which literary means wearer of Lingas. They challenged the caste system and they challenged the idea of any caste being pollutant. This helped them grow support among marginalised sections of the society. Virashaivas also attacked some evil practices supposedly not approved by Shashtras, such as post puberty marriage and remarriage of widows. Further they also questioned the theory of rebirth.
5. Describe the major teachings of either Kabir or Guru Nanak and the way they have been transmitted. (or)
Explain the teachings of Guru Nanak. Did he want to establish a new religion?

Ans. Kabir is a great poet-cum-saint of Indian society. He has had appeal among Hindus and Muslims alike as it is believed that he was born as Hindu but was brought up by a Muslim couple. He wrote poems that exhorted both communities to take to social reforms.

The major teachings of Kabir were as follows:
1. Kabir described God as nirankar (having no shape). He used the terms drawn from Islamic tradition like Allah, Khuda, Hajrat and Peer but also used words of Vedic traditions like Alakh (the unseen) and nirakar (the formless). Thus, he freely took to both traditions viz. Islamic and Vedantic.
2. He repudiated idol worship and polytheism.
3. He emphasised on the oneness of God though there can be many names of His.
4. He criticised religious rituals of Hindus and Muslims alike.
5. He also preached against caste discrimination.
6. He combined the Sufi traditions of love of God with the Hindi tradition of remembrance of God.
7. He also emphasised the dignity of labour.
Thus, the essence of the teachings of Kabir was simple living based on love and respect all. He wrote in simple language to be understood by common man of the country.

Guru Nanak and his teachings

Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family in 1469 at Nankana Saheb on the bank of the river Ravi. His birth place is now in Pakistan. He learnt Persian, Arabic, Hindi and Mathematics. He spent time in the company of Sufi saints and Bhaktas of various socio-religious movements.

The major teachings of Guru Nanak are as follows:
1. He rejected the religious texts of both Hindus and Muslims.
2. He preached God is Nirakar viz. without any shape.
3. He criticised the religious practices like ceremonial bath, sacrifices, idol worship and emphasised simplicity.
4. He called upon his followers to connect to divine by remembering and repeating the divine name.
Guru Nanak expressed himself in Punjabi, the language of the local people in a lyrical form called Shabad. Shabad can be recited in various ragas.
6. Discuss the major beliefs and practices that characterized Sufism.

**Ans.** After the advent of Islam in the early, middle ages, it saw a new movement in later part. The movement has had great impact and reaches in the Indian subcontinent. It is called Sufi movement. The Sufi saints were mystics. Their preachings included:

1. Sufi saints did not subscribe to the theological and rigid interpretations of religious scriptures of Islam. They believed that the interpretation have to be based on individual experiences. This way the theological interpretations became flexible. Further the control of the orthodox religious leaders got weakened. This was a people centric move.
2. They rejected the high sounding rituals. They also emphasised on simplicity in religious traditions and rites.
3. Sufi saints prescribed devotion to Almighty as path to salvation. They even approved of singing and dancing as part of devotion. It is notable that classical Islam has forbidden singing, dancing and any music.
4. The most important theme of Sufi philosophy was that serving people is the true religion. With the objective of serving the poor people they also held Langar. Today also one can go to Ajmer and can partake in the Langar organised on the tomb of Nijammudin Auliya, the great Sufi saint.
5. Sufi saints also emphasised on the equality among people and oneness among all.

7. Examine how and why rulers tried to establish connections with the traditions of the Nayanars and the Sufis.

**Ans.** Nayanars were the worshippers of Lord Shiva. It gained a shape of powerful Bhakti movement in South India in 6th Century onwards. Apart from being popular with the people, the movement got support and patronage of the rulers of the time. This is manifested by the following facts:

1. A major part of South India was ruled by Chola Kings during the period 9th to 13th Century. They gave great patronage to the Bhakti movement saints including Nayanars. Thus, they did by making grants of land and constructing temples of Shiva and Vishnu for the saints of Bhakti movement.
2. The most beautiful temples of Shiva of South India, namely, at Chidambaram, Tanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram were constructed under the patronage of Chola rulers.
3. During the same period some of the most spectacular representation of Shiva in bronze sculpture were produced. All this was possible because the rulers patronised the Nayanars.
4. Nayanars had considerable following among farmers.

The rulers tried to establish connections with the Nayanars and this is explained by the aforesaid description. The reason why they did is not far to seek. One reason could be to bring sanctity to the their rule. By giving alms to the temple and the preachers of Nayanar sect the rulers also announced their wealth and might. Next such acts might have endeared the rulers to the masses.
Sufi Tradition and the rulers of Delhi Sultanate and Mughals:

In the 12th Century, Delhi and a considerable part of India fell to the rule of Muslim rulers. This rule is known as the period of Delhi Sultanate. The rulers of Delhi Sultanate claimed themselves under Khalifate of Kabul and tried to legitimize their rule. The next step could have been establishing the rule of Shari’a laws. However, the rulers realised for the very beginning that it was impractical. Under the Delhi Sultanate most of the people were not Muslim. Shari’a laws were not feasible also because lacked flexibility which a ruler needed to govern. The rulers of Delhi Sultanate wanted to take a practical path of governance without renouncing Islam. Sufi tradition gave them this opportunity. The same idea prevailed during the rule of the great Mughals too. Hence the rulers of Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal empire adopted the tradition of Sufism.

8. Analyses, illustrations, why Bhakti and Sufi thinkers adopted a variety of languages in which to express their opinions.

**Ans.** In medieval India, though Sanskrit and Persian may be the language of the educated people or at the court, the vast number of people living in villages conversed in the local languages. It was, therefore, needed that the Bhakti and Sufi saints preached in the languages of the common people. This was in fact essential in order to make these movements truly popular.

This is manifested in the following examples:
1. The traditional Bhakti saints composed the hymns in Sanskrit. Such hymns were sung on special occasions often within temples.
2. The Nayanars and the Alvars were wandering saints. They travelled far and wide, often walking on foot. They met people in different villages. These saints would sing the verses in praise of God all in the language of the local people only. The language was Tamil only. These travelling saints established temples where prayers took place in Tamil and the devotional songs were composed by the Bhakti Saints.
3. In North India the language was different. Here too the saints took to the language of the common people. Guru Nanak created Shabad all in Punjabi. Baba Farid and Swami Raidas (Ravidas) all composed in Punjabi and Hindustani.
4. Kabirdas who lived in Benaras, wrote in local language which was closer to Hindustani. He used words there part of local dialect.
5. The Sufi tradition of singing on tombs carried on in the language of the local people only. The shrines were the place of Sama sung in Hindustani or Hindavi. Another Sufi Saint Baba Farid composed in Punjabi too that even became part of Guru Granth Sahib.
6. Some other saints wrote in Kannada, Tamil and other languages too.

Thus, we are inclined to agree with the view that the Saints of Bhakti and Sufi Movement composed in many languages and the languages of the common people to connect with them.

9. Read any five of the sources included in this chapter and discuss the social and religious ideas that are expressed in them.
Ans. The period of the Bhakti Movement and Sufi Movement also has many sources that contribute to the history of those days. Some of the major social and religious ideas expressed in the various sources of history are as follows:

1. The first is the architecture. The different types of stupas, temple, monasteries all symbolise different types of religious belief system and practices. Some of them exist as it is and enable us to look into the annals of history of those days. Some of them are in the form of ruins but they also throw light on the, religion and society of those days alike.

2. The next important source of history is the composition of the saints both Bhakti and Sufi. In terms of content they are religious but they are not the divine textbooks of religion that are sacrosanct. The compilation throws light on the life of common men and village lifestyle. They also impact the music and art of those days.

3. Another very important source of the history of those days is the biographies of the Saints. The biographies include the description of the society and prevalent beliefs and practices. It is notable that such biographies may not be in the written form still they can give insight into the life of those days. It is the story prevalent that when Kabirdas died, both Hindus and Muslims fought for his dead body later on his body turned into flowers. Some were taken by Muslims and others by Hindus. This represents that there conflict and collaboration between both Hindus and Muslims of those days.

4. This was also the period of rise of religious leaders who were intermediaries between common men and God. Earlier it was only the Brahmans who got this role. Now many people from other background also joined in. To some extent it acted as the the force that idolised equality and fraternity.

5. The other source is the folklore. They are described in our art forms. It may be dance, paintings, and sculpture and so on. They all talk about the universal brotherhood of mankind and love for one and all.

10. On an outline map of India, plot three major Sufi shrines and three places associated with temples (one each of a form of Vishnu, Shiva and the goddess.)
11. Choose any two of the religious teachers/thinkers/saints mentioned in this chapter, and find out more about their lives and teachings. Prepare a report about the area and the times in which they lived, their major ideas, how do we know about them, and why you think they are important?

**Ans.** Following are the two saints of the Bhakti movement who are described as follows:

**Guru Nanak:**
Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Gurus of the Sikhs, was born in the village of Talwandi on 15th April, 1469. The village now is known as Nankana Sahib. He belonged to a Khatri caste. Before Guru Nanak departed for his heavenly abode on 22nd Sept., 1539, his name had travelled not only throughout India's north, south, east and west, but also far beyond into Arabia, Mesopotamia (Iraq), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Afghanistan, Turkey, Burma and Tibet.

His teachings included:

**Equality of humans:** Guru Nanak preached against discrimination and prejudices due to race, caste, status, etc. He said: “See the brotherhood of all mankind as the highest order of Yogis; conquer your own mind, and conquer the world.”
Universal message for all people: Normally preachers confined their preachings to the men of their own religion. But Nanak reached out. He spoke to Hindus and Muslims both and said to all “To take what rightfully belongs to another is like a Muslim eating pork, or a Hindu eating beef.”

Equality of women: Nanak promoted women’s rights and equality—a first for the 15th century! He asked: “From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So should why we call her bad?

Namdeo

Saint Namdeo was born in the year 1270 in the village of Narasi-Bamani, now located in the Hingoli District in Maharashtra. He is a great Saint Poet of Maharashtra. He was one of the earliest writers who wrote in the Marathi language. He is the foremost proponent of the Bhagwad-Dharma who reached beyond Maharashtra, right into Punjab. He also wrote some hymns in Hindi and Punjabi, Namdev travelled through many parts of India, reciting his religious poems. In difficult times, he played the difficult role of uniting the pendle of Maharashtra spiritually, He is said to have lived for more than twenty years in the village of Ghuman in the Gurdaspur district of Punjab. The Sikh brethren in Punjab consider him one.
Chapter 7: An Imperial Capital: Vijayanagara

1. What have been the methods used to study the ruins of Hampi over the last two centuries? In what way do you think they would have complemented the information provided by the priests of the Virupaksha temple?

Ans. The engineer and antiquarian Colonel Colin Mackenzie brought the ruins of Hampi to light in 1800. He worked for many years in East India Company and prepared the first Survey maps of this site. His earlier information were based on the memories of priest of the Virupaksha temple and shrine of Pampadevi. From 1856 onwards, photographers started to record the pictures of monuments. The picture of the sites helped the scholars to study them. Dozens of inscription were collected from Virupaksha temples and other temples situated around temples.

Historians collected information from these sources other sources such as accounts of foreign travellers and literature composed in Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and Sanskrit languages used by the historians so that the History of the city could be reconstructed. These functions complemented the information given priests of Virupaksha temple.

2. How were the water requirements of Vijayanagara met? (or) Explain how the people of Vijayanagara obtained water for their needs.

Ans. The requirement of water in Vijayanagara was fulfilled from the natural basin formed by the river Tungabhadra. This flowed in the north-eastern direction and was surrounded by stunning granite hills. It flowed down to the river Tungabhadra.
So the rulers of the Vijayanagara got built large embankments to store water. They also constructed reservoirs of varying sizes. They also make arrangements to store the rainwater as this was the most arid zone of the peninsula. A very large tank was found built in the fifteenth century to store water. The water tank presently known as Kamalapuram tank. The water of this tank was used for several Royal centre purposes.

(i) The water from the tank was used to irrigate the nearby fields.
(ii) The water of tank fulfilled the needs of the Royal centre.
(iii) The Hiriya canal drew water from a dam across the Tungabhadra river which was used for irrigation.

3. What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of enclosing agricultural land within the fortified area of the city?

Ans. Advantages of enclosing agriculture land within fortified area:
(i) It had an elaborate canal system which drew water from the Tungabhadra to provide irrigation facilities.
(ii) It enclosed agricultural tracts, cultivated fields, gardens and forests.
(iii) This enclosure saved crops from being eaten by wild animals.
(iv) In the medieval period, sieges were laid to starve the defending armies into submission. These sieges lasted for many months or many years. So the rulers of Vijayanagara adopted and elaborated a strategy to protect the agricultural belt and built large granaries.

Disadvantages
(i) This system was very expensive.
(ii) During adverse, circumstances this system proved inconvenient to the farmers.
(iii) The farmers had to seek the permission of gate-keeper to reach their field.
(iv) If enemy encircled the field the farmer could not look after their field.

4. What do you think was the significance of the rituals associated with the Mahanavami Dibba?

Ans. The Mahanavami Dibba was the King's palace in Vijayanagara though there is no definite evidence. From the available source we can guess that it had very beautiful wooden structure with base of the platform was covered with relief carvings. The Mahanavami Dibba had a very impressive platform known as “the audience hall”. It was surrounded by high double walls a street running between them.

Many rituals were associated with the Mahanavami dibba. Here the Hindu Festival Mahanavami or Navaratri were celebrated with a great pomp and show in the months of September-October. This festival continued for 9 days. The rulers of Vijayanagara Empire displayed their power, prestige and suzerainty. On this occasion several ceremonies were performed this included:
(i) Worship of the different gods and goddesses
(ii) Worship of the state horse.
(iii) The sacrifice of buffaloes and other animals.
(iv) The main attraction of this occasion were:
   (a) Dances
   (b) Wrestling matches
   (c) Processions of horses, elephants, chariots and soldiers.

All these ceremonies presented before the king and his guests. On the last day of the festival, the king inspected his army as well as the nayakas of the army. He also accepted gift from the nayakas.
5. Fig. 7.33 is an illustration of another pillar from the Virupaksha temple. Do you notice any floral motifs? What are the animals shown? Why do you think they are depicted? Describe the human figures shown.

**Ans.** Given illustration of the pillar from the Virupaksha temple has pictures of plants bearing flowers and different animals-birds. Animals, birds include peacock, horse, duck, etc. These pictures were probably carved out on gateways to attract people. These pictures also express devotion, religiousness and love for art of patronage ruler. Except this various kinds of animals and birds were associated with different gods and goddesses. That was why they were also worshipped. Human pictures include both deities and their worshippers respectively. A god is shown wearing malas and crown. He also has gadha in his hands. Probably he was the destroyer of Rakshashas. In another picture devotee is shown near the ‘Shivlinga’ His method of worship is also strange which is not applicable in any form.
6. Discuss whether the term “royal centre” is an appropriate description for the part of the city for which it is used.

**Ans.** The term “royal centre” is an appropriate description for the part of the city for which it is used because the Royal center had more than 60 temples. Most of these temples were constructed by the ruler of Vijayanagara Empire to express their supremacy. The royal centre had 30 palaces. These were made of perishable material. A brief description of the building of Royal centre are as given below:

(i) One of the most beautiful buildings in the royal centre is the Lotus Mahal. It was named by British travellers in the nineteenth century. While the name is certainly romantic, historians are not quite sure what the building was used for. One suggestion, found in a map drawn by Mackenzie, is that it may have been a council chamber, a place where the king met his advisers.

(ii) Most temples were located in the sacred centre. One of the most spectacular of these is the Hazara Rama Temple. This was probably meant to be used only by the king and his family.

7. What does the architecture of buildings like the Lotus Mahal and elephant stables tell us about the rulers who commissioned them?

**Ans.** The architecture of buildings like the Lotus Mahal and elephant stables tell us that the rulers had adopted Indian traditional symbols, signs and totems. They were Hindu by faith but they were liberal by nature.

**Lotus Mahal:** Lotus Mahal was so named by the British travellers in the 19th century. Historians have different opinions regarding the use of this building. According to a few this building was used as a council of chamber where the king met his advisers.
In this regard, they gave the evidence of a map drawn by Colonel Colin Mackenzie. This building is constructed in Indo-Islamic style of architecture. The pillars and arch were built in Muslim style while the wall and roof were constructed in Indian style wood and stone figures were engraved on the walls and roof to give them a decorative appearance with the passage of time to the most part of this building got destroyed, hence it is difficult to guess its grandeur.

**Elephant stables:** The Rayas (rulers) of the Vijayanagara maintained a very large army and troops. There were a large number of elephants in the army. To keep these elephants, Elephant stable was constructed near the Lotus Mahal in which a number of rooms were lined.

8. **What are the architectural traditions that inspired the architects of Vijayanagara? How did they transform these traditions?**

**Ans.** The rulers of Vijayanagara were known for their many innovations in the sphere of architectural traditions. They built many new temples which presented their architectural skills. They also added many new features in the temple architecture. For example, they built gopurams and royal gateways. The towers of the central shrines signalled the presence of the temple from a great distance. But the royal gateways surpassed the kings. They showed that the kings had full command over the resources, techniques and skills.
Other distinctive features of architectural style include the constructions of mandapas or pavilions and pillared corridors that ran around the shrines. There were two main temples. The Virupaksha temple and the Vitthala Temple.

The Virupaksha temple was constructed in the 9th-10th centuries. But after the establishment of Vijayanagara Empire, it was substantially enlarged. Krishnadeva Raya built one of the most powerful ruler of the empire, built a hall in front of the main shrine to mark his accession to the throne. It was decorated with delicately carved pillars. Many temple complexes had chariot streets. These streets extended from the temple gopuram in a straight line. They were paved with slabs of stone and lied with pillared pavilions. In which merchants have set up their shops. In other words, the rulers of Vijayanagara built impressive buildings.

9. What impression of the lives of the ordinary people of Vijayanagara can you cull from the various descriptions in the chapter?

Ans. Ordinary people were those people who did not take part in power structure. They spoke different languages and follow different religious traditions. They consisted of small traders and local merchants. They use to live in cities, trade centres, port, towns and villages. Local communities of merchants known as kudrai chettis or horse merchants participated in exchanges.

People such as peasants, workers, slaves, etc. were also included in ordinary people. The workers were known as “Vipra viodin”. This group of ironsmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, sculpture-makers, etc. Who often quarreled mutually for their right. It seems that during that period, need was felt to frame laws for the society to execute social justice.

Kaikkol known as the weavers were in large numbers. They lived near temples. They
played significant role in running the administration of the temple. In Vijayanagara state there were Gadarias known as Kambalattar. They followed the customs of polyandry. The special characteristic was that the wife was elder to the husband. Their women had physical relations with the husband’s kinsmen like father, brothers were prevalent. There was an orthodox bigot section in Vijayanagara called as reddis who owned the land. They had enough influence in the Telugu region of Vijayanagara. In the society there were a few low class people, who were non-influential. They were Domber, Marva, Jogi, Paraiyan, Boi Kallaar, etc. Some low caste people converted into Christianity under the influences of Portuguese.

10. On an outline map of the world, mark approximately Italy, Portugal, Iran and Russia.

**Ans.** Followed by routes to reach Vijayanagara from Italy and Portugal:
The travellers crossed the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and then, they taken land route to reach South India.

Atlantic Ocean touching the Cape of Good Hope and then Indian Ocean to reach Malabar of India. From here they took land route to reach Vijayanagara. The Italian travellers crossed the Arabian Sea and then Indian Ocean and through Malabar coast they reached Vijayanagara. From Iran via Afghanistan and modern Pakistan they would have taken land route upto Karnataka, India. Russian came to India via Afghanistan. They crossed modern Punjab in Pakistan, central India crossing Vindhyaachal, Satpura to Karnataka.
Chapter 8: Peasants, Zamindars and the State

Agrarian Society and the Mughal Empire

1. What are the problems in using the Ain as a source for reconstructing agrarian history? How do historians deal with this situation?

Ans. (a) The Ain-i Akbari written by Abu’l Fazl in 1598 contains invaluable information for reconstructing the agrarian history of the Mughals. But it has its own limitations. (b) Numerous errors in totalling have been detected. These are, however, minors and do not detract from the overall quantitative accuracy of the manuals. (c) Another limitation is the skewed nature of the data. Data was not collected uniformly from all provinces. For example, Abu’l Fazl has not given any description regarding the caste composition of the zamindars of Bengal and Orissa (Odisha). (d) The fiscal data collected from various sources is in detail yet some important parameters such as, wages and prices have not been incorporated properly. (e) The detailed list of prices and wages found in the Ain-i Akbari have been acquired from data pertaining to the capital Agra and its surrounding regions. It is, therefore, of limited value for the rest of the empire. (f) Historians have dealt with the situation by supplementing the account of the Ain by information got from the provinces. These include detailed seventeenth-eighth centuries revenue records from Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. These have been also supplemented by records of the East India Company.

2. To what extent is it possible to characterize agricultural production in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries as subsistence agriculture? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. (a) During Mughal, India was basically an agricultural country. In the Mughal state of India a different varieties of crops were produced. In Bengal two varieties of rices were produced. But the focus on the cultivation of basic crops does not mean that only subsistence agriculture existed in medieval India. (b) The Mughal state encouraged peasants to cultivate varieties of crops which brought in revenue especially cotton and sugarcane. (c) Cotton was mainly grown in vast area which was spread over central India and the Deccan plateau, whereas in Bengal sugarcane was mainly produced. (d) Many varieties of cash crops such as oilseeds including mustard and lentils. (e) An average peasant of that time grew both commercial and subsistence crops.
3. Describe the role played by women in agricultural production.

Ans. (a) Women played an important role in agricultural production. They worked shoulder to shoulder with men in the fields. The men tilled and ploughed the lands while the women sowed, weeded and threshed the harvest. Agricultural production at the time was carried out with the labour and resources of the entire.
(b) The women performed important tasks such as spinning yarn, kneading clay for pottery and embroidery. Thus, the peasant women who were skilled artisans worked not only in the fields but even went to their employer's houses and even to the markets, if necessary.
(c) Among the landed gentry class women had the right to inherit property. Women, including widows participated in the rural land market. Selling property which they had inherited especially in Punjab.
(d) Both Hindu and Muslim women inherited Zamindaris. They were free to sell or mortgage their zamindari rights. In eighteenth century, Bengal had many women-Zamindars. In fact, the Rajshah zamindari which was one of the most famous of the time was headed by a woman.

4. Discuss, with examples, the significance of monetary transactions during the period under consideration.

Ans.
(i) The political stability provided by the Mughal helped in establishing hoarseening trade relation with Ming (China), Safavid (Iran) and Ottoman (Turkey) empires. It led to increase in outland trade from China to the Mediterranean Sea.
(ii) The Discovery of new lands and sea routes also gave an impetus to Asia's trade with Europe. As a result enormous amount of silver entered India as payment for goods bought from India.
(iii) Jovanni Karari, an Italian traveller, who passed through India in 1690 has written how the silver reached India from all parts of the world. From his description, we also came to know how there was an exchange of cash and goods in India in the 17th century.
(iv) This benefitted India as she did not have enough resources of silver. Therefore, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries there was sufficient reserves of silver in India and the silver rupya was available readily.
(v) The mutual exchange in villages took place. As villagers established their links in the urban markets, there was a considerable increase in monetary transactions. In this way, villages became an important part of the monetary market.
(vi) It was due to the monetary transactions, became easier to pay daily wages to the labourers in cash and not in kind. This resulted in an unprecedented expansion in the minting of coins and circulation of money allowing the Mughal state to extract taxes and revenues in cash.
5. Examine the evidence that suggests that land revenue was important for the Mughal fiscal system.

Ans.
(i) Agriculture was the mainstay of the economy. Land Revenue collected was used to pay salaries and to meet different kinds of administrative expenses. So it was considered important to establish an administrative apparatus to ensure control over agricultural production.
(ii) Thus, before fixing land revenue, Mughal state first acquired specific information about the extent of agricultural lands and their produce.
(iii) Land revenue collection arrangements was consisted of two stages of assessment. These were Jama and hasil. Cultivators were given the choice to pay land revenue either in cash or kind. The state preferred to collect land revenue as cash. Attempts were made to maximize profits from the land revenue collection.
(iv) Both cultivated and cultivable lands were measured in each province to fix land revenue. According to a decree of Akbar, it was the responsibility of malguzar to make cultivator pay land revenue in kind and it was also kept open. Thus, it is clear from the evidence that the monetary transactions were very important. To continue this policy efforts by subsequent emperors like Aurangzeb continued to measure land for collection of land revenue.

6. To what extent to do you think caste was a factor in influencing social and economic relations in agrarian society?

Ans.
(i) Cultivators were divided on the basis of their caste and other caste-like distinctions or caste-based distinctions. Thus, among the peasants were many who worked as agricultural labourers (majurs) or worked as manacles. Thus, they were not allowed to live in villages. They resided outside the village and were assigned to do menial tasks and lacked resources. Thus, they were poverty-stricken.
(ii) Caste distinctions had also begun to permeate other communities as well. In Muslim communities menials were like halkhoron (scavengers). A direct relation existed between caste poverty and social status.
(iii) In the seventeenth century Marwar Rajputs are described as peasants and equated with jats. They were given an inferior status in the caste hierarchy.
(iv) Castes like Ahirs, Gujjars and Malis reached and elevated status in the eastern regions.
(v) The pastoral and fishing castes like the Sadgops and Kaivatas acquired the status of peasants.

7. How were the lives of forest dwellers transformed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?(or)
Describe the lives of forest-dwellers in the 16-17th centuries.

Ans. Transformation in the lives of forest-dwellers (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries):
(i) Huge areas were covered with forests in the various parts of India in the 16th and 17th country. Forest-dwellers were called Jangli. The term ‘Jungli’ was used to describe those whose occupations included activities such as hunting, gathering of forest produce, and shifting cultivation. These activities were performed according to a specific reason in the various regions. Consider the example of the Bhils who fished in summer and collected forest produce in spring. Such activities enabled the forest tribes to be mobile which was a characteristic feature of their life.

(ii) As the state required elephants for the consolidation of mighty army, the peskesh levied on the forest people to supply of elephants.

(iii) The lives of the forest-dwellers led to the spread of commercial agriculture. Forest products like honey, beeswax, gum and lac were in huge demand. Gum and lac became major items of overseas exports in the seventeenth century, and earned valuable foreign exchange.

(iv) Elephants were also captured and sold.

(v) Tribes like the Punjab Lohinis engaged in overland trade with Afghanistan and internal trade in Punjab as well.

(vi) Social factors were also responsible for transforming the lives of the forest-dwellers.

(vii) Many tribal chiefs became zamindars, some even became kings. They recruit people from their own tribes in their army. For example in Assam, the Ahom Kings depended on people who rendered military services in exchange of land.

(viii) By the sixteenth century, the transition from a tribal to a monarchial system had taken place. In Ain-i Akbari description has been mentioned about the existence of tribal kingdoms in north-eastern India. Description is also made regarding the kings who fought and conquered a number of tribes. New cultural influences also entered in the forested areas. Probably sufi saints played a remarkable role in spreading Islam in these areas.

8. Examine the role played by Zamindars in Mughal India.

**Ans.** The Zamindars were the people who did not directly participate in the processes of agricultural production, but they enjoyed high status in the society.

(i) The Zamindars considered their land as their property (milkiyat). They had control to sell, give and mortgage their property.

(ii) They enjoyed many social and economic privileges because of their superior status in society.

(iii) The Zamindars belonged to the upper caste which added to their exalted status in society.

(iv) The zamindars rendered certain services (khidmat) for the state. As a result of their service they received and attained higher position in the state.

(v) The Zamindars had the right to collect revenue on behalf of the state and also received financial compensation for this work.

(vi) The Zamindars had kept strict control over the military resources of the state. They kept a fortress and a well knit armed unit comprising cavalry, artillery and infantry.

(vii) The zamindars also played significant role in developing the agricultural land. They helped in the settlements of farmers by lending them money and agricultural
instruments. It resulted in an increase in agricultural produce and the sale and purchase of land by the zamindars. There are also evidences that the zamindars held bazaars. The farmers came to these bazaars to sell their crops.

(viii) If we observe social relation of village of Mughal age as a pyramid then zamindars were at the top. They occupied the highest position in the society.

(ix) No doubt the zamindars exploited the people but their relations with the farmers depended on their mutual togetherness and hereditary part on age. So, they were able to get peasants in case of the revolt against the state.

9. Discuss the ways in which panchayat and village headmen regulated rural society. (or)
Explain the role of Panchayats in the Mughal rural Indian society during 16th-17th centuries.

Ans. Regulation of rural society by panchayats and headmen:

(i) Meaning of panchayat: The village panchayat consisted of an assembly of elders, they represent different castes and communities except the menial class. Usually important were people of the village with hereditary right over their property.

(ii) General composition and function: In the mixed caste village, the panchayat was usually a heterogeneous body. The panchayat represented different castes and communities in the village.

The village panchayat was headed by Muqaddam also known as mandal. He was elected with consensus of the village elders and remained in the office till he enjoyed the confidence of village elders. His function was to prepare village account with the help of patwari.

(i) The main function of panchayat was to ensure that caste boundaries among the various communities inhabiting the village were upheld.

(ii) It had also the authority to levy fines and taxes.

(iii) It can also give punishment like expulsion from the community.

(iv) Each Jati in the village had its own Jati panchayat. Jati Panchayat wielded considerable power in the society. In Rajasthan, the Jati panchayats arbitrated civil disputes between members of the different castes. It also mediated in disputes claims on land, decided whether marriages had been performed according to that castes norm, etc. In most cases, the state respected the decisions taken by the Jati Panchayat.

(v) The panchayats were also regarded as the court of appeal, that would ensure that the state carried out its moral responsibilities.

(vi) For justice petitions were often made to the panchayat collectively by a group of caste or a community protesting against what they considered to be morally illegitimate demands on the part of elites.

(vii) In cases of excessive revenue demands, the panchayat often suggested a compromise. If this failed, the peasants took recourse to more drastic forms of punishment such as deserting the village.
10. On an outline map of world, mark the areas which had economic links with the Mughal Empire, and trace out possible routes of communication.

Ans. I ran, Afghanistan, China, the countries of Central and Western Asia, Italy, Portugal, France, Britain, Holland, etc.

Possible Routes: Trade that linked to Mughal Empire in India.
(i) Sea route via Atlantic ocean to Cape of Good Hope (South Africa), Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean.
(ii) Red Sea, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal to China Sea.
(iii) Land Route from Central Asia to Afghanistan through modern Pakistan up to Kerala or Goa.
1. Describe the process of manuscript production in the Mughal court.

**Ans.** Process of manuscript production in the Mughal court included the following:
(a) Paper-maker's responsibility was to prepare the folios of the manuscript.
(b) Skill writer, i.e. scribes or calligrapher copied the texts.
(c) Guilders, illuminated the pages of the manuscript.
(d) Miniature painter illustrated the scene from the text.
(e) The book binders gathered the folio and gave it to the original shape of a book.

2. In what ways would the daily routine and special festivities associated with the Mughal court have conveyed a sense of the power of the emperor?

**Ans.** The daily routine and special festivities associated with the Mughal court observed the following:
(i) By representing the status of the court.
(ii) In form of salutation of emperor.
(iii) Jharokha Darshan.
(iv) Meeting held by sultan in Diwan-i-Am and Diwan-i-Khas.
(v) By honouring the mansabdar on special occasion with special gifts and jagir.

3. Assess the role played by women of the imperial household in the Mughal Empire

**Ans.**
(i) The term “haram” is used to describe the domestic world of the Mughals. This word is taken from the Persian word haram, which means a sacred place.
(ii) The Mughal household consisted of the emperor's wives and concubines, his near and distant relatives (mother, step- and foster-mothers, sisters, daughters, daughters-in-law, aunts, children, etc.), and female servants and slaves.
(iii) Polygamy was practised widely in the Indian subcontinent, especially among the ruling groups. Both for the Rajput clans as well as the Mughals marriage was a way of cementing political relationships and forging alliances.
(iv) The gift of territory was often accompanied by the gift of a daughter in marriage. This ensured a continuing hierarchical relationship between ruling groups. It was through the link of marriage and the relationships that developed as a result that the Mughals were able to form a vast kinship network that linked them to important groups and helped to hold a vast empire together.
(v) In the Mughal household a distinction was maintained between wives who came from royal families (begams), and other wives (aghas) who were not of noble birth.
(vi) The begams, married after receiving huge amounts of cash and valuables as dowry...
(maahr), naturally received a higher status and greater attention from their husbands than did aghas. The concubines (aghacha or the lesser agha) occupied the lowest position in the hierarchy of females intimately related to royalty. (vii) The agha and the aghacha could rise to the position of a begam depending on the husband’s will, and provided that he did not already have four wives. (viii) Love and motherhood played important roles in elevating such women to the status of legally wedded wives. Apart from wives, numerous male and female slaves populated the Mughal Household. The tasks they performed varied from the most mundane to those requiring skill, tact and intelligence. (xi) Slave eunuchs (khwajasara) moved between the external and internal life of the household as guards, servants, and also as agents for women dabbling in commerce.

4. **What were the concerns that shaped Mughal policies and attitudes towards regions outside the subcontinent?**

**Ans.**

(i) **The Safavids and Qandahar:** The political and diplomatic relations between, the Mughal kings and the neighbouring countries of Iran and Turan hinged on the control of the frontier defined by the Hindukush mountains that separated Afghanistan from the regions of Iran and Central Asia. A constant aim of Mughal policy was to ward off this potential danger by controlling strategic outposts – notably Kabul and Qandahar. The fortress-town Qandahar had initially been in the possession of Humayun, reconquered in 1595 by Akbar. The Safavid court retained diplomatic relations with the Mughals, it continued to stake claims to Qandahar. Jahangir sent a diplomatic envoy to the court of Shah Abbas in 1613 to plead the Mughal case for retaining Qandahar, but the mission failed to achieve its objectives. Persian army besieged Qandahar in 1622. The Mughal garrison was defeated and had to surrender the fortress and the city to the Safavids.

(ii) **The Ottomans: pilgrimage and trade:** The relationship between the Mughals and the Ottomans ensured free movement for merchants and pilgrims in the territories under Ottoman control. This was especially true for the Hijaz, that part of Ottoman Arabia where the important pilgrim centres of Mecca and Medina were located. The Mughal emperor combined religion and commerce by exporting essential goods to Aden and Mokha, and distributing the proceeds of the sales in charity to the keepers of shrines and religious men there.

(iii) **Jesuits at the Mughal court:** European received knowledge about India through the accounts of Jesuit missionaries, travellers, merchants and diplomats. After the discovery of sea route to India, the Portuguese merchants set up their trading network stations in coastal region. The Portuguese was also interested in the spread of Christianity with the help of the missionaries of the Society of Jesuits. The Christian missions who sent to India during the sixteenth century were part of this process of trade and empire building. The first Jesuit mission reached the Mughal court of Mughal emperor Akbar at Fatehpur oikri in 1580 and stayed here for about two years. The Jesuits spoke to Akbar about Christianity and debated its virtues with the ulema. Two more missions were sent to the Mughal court at Lahore, in 1591 and 1595. The Jesuit
accounts are based on personal observation and shed light on the character and mind of the emperor. At public assemblies the Jesuits were assigned places in close proximity to Akbar’s throne. The Jesuit accounts corroborate the information given in Persian chronicles about state officials and the general conditions of life in Mughal times.

5. Discuss the major features of Mughal provincial administration. How did the centre control the provinces?

Ans.
(i) The head of the provincial administration was the governor (subadar). He reported directly to the emperor.
(ii) Each suba was divided into sarkar,
(iii) The local administration was looked after at the level of the pargana (sub-district) by three semi-hereditary officers, the qanungo (keeper of revenue records), the chaudhur (in charge of revenue collection) and the qazi.
(iv) Each department of administration maintained a large support staff of clerks, accountants, auditors, messengers, and other functionaries who were technically qualified officials, functioning in accordance with standardised rules and procedures, and generating copious written orders and records.

6. Discuss, with examples, the distinctive features of Mughal chronicles.

Ans.
(i) Chronicles commissioned by the Mughal emperors are an important source for studying the empire and its court. They were written in order to project a vision of an enlightened kingdom to all those who came under its umbrella. The authors of Mughal chronicles focused on events related to life of the ruler, their family, the court and nobles, wars and administrative system.
(ii) These chronicles were written in Persian. This language flourished as a language of the court and of literary writings, alongside north Indian languages, especially Hindavi and its regional variants. As the Mughals were Chaghtai Turks by origin, Turkish was their mother tongue.
(iii) Chronicles narrating the events of a Mughal emperor’s reign contained, alongside the written text, images that described an event in visual form.
(iv) When scenes or themes in a book were to be given visual expression, the scribe left blank spaces on nearby pages; paintings, executed separately by artists, were inserted to accompany what was; described in words.

7. To what extent do you think the visual material presented in this chapter corresponds with Abu’l Fazl’s description of the taswir (Source 1)?

Ans.
(i) Drawing the likeness of anything is called taswir. His Majesty from his earliest youth,
has shown a great predilection for this art, and gives it every encouragement, as he looks upon it as a means both of study and amusement.

(ii) A very large number of painters set to work.

(iii) Each week, several supervisors and clerks of the imperial workshop submit before the emperor the work done by each artist, and his Majesty gives a reward.

(iv) Paintings served not only to enhance the beauty of a book, but were believed to possess special powers of communicating ideas about the kingdom and the power of kings in ways that the written medium could not.

(v) The historian Abu’l Fazl described painting as a ‘magical art’ in his view it had the power to make inanimate objects look as if they possessed life.

8. What were the distinctive features of the Mughal nobility? How was their relationship with the emperor shaped?

Ans. Recruitment, rank of the nobility and relationship with the emperor:

(i) Mughal chronicles, especially the Akbar Nama, have bequeathed a vision of empire in which agency rests almost solely with the emperor, while the rest of the kingdom has been portrayed as following his orders, if we look more closely at the available information the histories provide us about the apparatus of the Mughal state, we may be able to understand the ways in which the imperial organisation was dependent on several different institutions.

(ii) The most important pillar of the Mughal state was the nobility. The nobility was recruited from diverse ethnic and religious group which ensured that no faction was large enough to challenge the authority of the state.

(iii) The officer corps of the Mughals was described as a bouquet of flowers (guldasta) held together by loyalty to the emperor. In Akbar’s imperial service, Turani and Iranian nobles were present from the earliest phase of carving out a political dominion. Many had accompanied Humayun; others migrated later to the Mughal court.

(iv) The holders of government offices was given the ranks (mansabs) comprising two numerical designations: zat which was an indicator of position in the imperial hierarchy and the salary of the official (mansabdadar), and sawar which indicated the number of horsemen he was required to maintain in service.

(v) Akbar, who designed the mansab system, also established spiritual relationships with a select band of his nobility by treating them as his disciples (murid).

(vi) For members of the nobility, imperial service was a way of acquiring power, wealth and the highest possible reputation. A person wishing to join the service petitioned through a noble, who presented a tajwiz to the emperor.

(vii) If the applicant was found suitable, a mansab was granted to him. The mir bakhshi (paymaster general) stood in open court on the right of the emperor and presented all candidates for appointment or promotion, while his office prepared orders bearing his seal and signature as well as those of the emperor. There were two other important ministers at the centre: the diwan-i ai (finance minister) and sadr-us sudur (minister of grants or madad-i maash, and in charge of appointing local judges or qazis).

(viii) The three ministers occasionally came together as an advisory body, but were independent of each other.

(vi) Akbar with these and other advisers shaped the administrative, fiscal and monetary
institutions of the empire. Nobles stationed at the court (tainat-i rakab) were a reserve force to be deputed to a province or military campaign. Nobles were duty-bound to appear twice a day to express submission their to the emperor.

(x) They also had to share the responsibility for guarding the emperor and his household round the clock.

9. Identify the elements that went into the making of the Mughal ideal of kingship.

Ans.

(i) According to Akbar's court poet, Abu'l Fazl Mughal kingship as the highest station in the hierarchy of objects receiving light emanating from God (farr-i-izadi). According to this idea, there was a Hierarchy in which the Divine Light was transmitted to the king (Mughal Emperor) who then became the source of spiritual guidance for his subjects.

(ii) Mughal chronicles present the empire as comprising many different ethnic and religious communities – Hindus, Jainas, Zoroastrians and Muslims. As the source of all peace and stability, the emperor stood above all religious and ethnic groups, mediated among them, and ensured that justice and peace prevailed.

(iii) Abu'l Fazl describes the ideal of sulh-i kui (absolute peace) as the cornerstone of enlightened rule. In sulh-i kul all religions and schools of thought had freedom of expression but on condition that they did not undermine the authority of the state or fight among themselves. The ideal of sulh-i kul was implemented through state policies – the nobility under the Mughals was a composite one comprising Iranis, Turanis, Afghans, Rajputs, Deccanis – all of whom were given positions and awards purely on the basis of their service and loyalty to the king.

(iv) Akbar abolished the tax on pilgrimage in 1563 and jizya in 1564 as the two were based on religious discrimination. Instructions were sent to officers of the empire to follow the concept of sulh-i kul.

(v) All Mughal emperors gave grants to support the buildings and maintenance of places of worship. However, it was during the reign of Auranzeb, the jizya was re-imposed on non-Muslim subjects.

(vi) Abu'l Fazl defined sovereignty as a social contract. According to him the emperor protects the four essences of subjects, namely, life (jan), property (mal), honour (narnus) and faith (din), and in return demands obedience and a share of resources from the people. Only sovereigns were thought to be able to honour the contract with power and Divine guidance.
Chapter 10: Colonialism and the Countryside: Exploring Official Archives

1. Why was Jotedars a powerful figure in many areas of rural Bengal?

**Ans.** Jotedars were rich peasants in Bengal. They owned big plots of land sometimes running into thousand of acres of land. They controlled local trade and commerce including the money lending business. They had great influence on the local village population. They were regarded more powerful than the Zamindars even. Following are the main reasons for the high status of Jotedars.

1. The Jotedars controlled trade and commerce including money lending business at the local level.
2. In order to weaken the Zamindars, Jotedars would mobilise ryots not to pay or delay payment towards land revenue.
3. The Jotedars opposed the moves of Zamindars to increase the Jama of a village.
4. The Jotedars lived in villages only. Hence they were in a better position to interact with and influence the peasants.
5. Jotedars were rich and owned big areas of land under cultivation. Many a time they would buy estates of Zamindar. That would be auctioned due to failure to pay up land revenue.

2. How did Zamindars manage to retain control over their zamindaris?

**Ans.** When zamindars were in bad times, they often resorted to various tactics to maintain control over their zamindari. These were in fact their survival tactics. Following are the important ones.

1. Zamindars created fictitious sales during auction. Their own men would make highest bid and later refused to pay up. After repeating this exercise for couple of occasions, the government would be tired and sell it back to zamindar at lesser rate.
2. A part of Estate was often transferred to female members of the family, and that part of property could not be taken by the government any more.
3. Zamindars put hurdle in purchase and occupation of the estate by others by use of sheer muscle power.
4. Sometimes even peasants under the influence of zamindars opposed auction of estate.

3. How did the Paharias respond to the coming of outsiders?

**Ans.** Paharias live in the hills of Rajmahal. The British people began to interact with them and later Santhals began to settle down there. The response of the Paharias was as follows:
1. Paharias resisted the settlement of Santhals initially but had to accommodate them in course of time.
2. The Paharias shifted to deeper areas into the hills.
3. They were confined to more barren and rocky areas of the hills in course of time.
4. The Paharias did shifting cultivation. Now shifting cultivation was becoming more and more difficult as proper and stable settlements.
5. As forest began to be cleared, the paharis could not depend on it for livelihood. Thus, the lifestyle and living of Paharias underwent change due to coming of outsiders.

4. Why did the Santhals rebel against British rule?

Ans. By 1832 the Santhals had settled in Damin-i-Koh area. Their settlement expanded rapidly. Forests were cleared to accommodate them. The Company also benefitted as it got more and more land revenue. However, the Santhals too got dissatisfied. They rebelled against the British rule. Following are the main causes for their rebellion.
1. Santhals were not happy with the tax regime of the company. They thought that the land revenue rates were high and exploitative.
2. The Zamindars began to exercise greater control on the areas brought under cultivation by Santhals, apparently it was a part of the British Policy. But Santhals resented that.
3. Moneylenders in the rural areas were seen as villain and agent of Company rule by the Santhals. Moneylenders could auction the land of Santhals in case of defaulter. All this was not liked by the Santhals.
The British took steps to placate the Santhals later on. A separate district of Santhal Pargana was carved out and law was enacted to protect the santhals.

5. What explains the anger of Deccan ryots against the moneylenders?

Ans. The main reasons for the anger of Ryots against moneylenders are as follows:
1. In rural India it was traditional rule that the interest will always remain less than the principal amount. However, in many cases interest payable was more than the principal itself. In one case the interest was Rs 2000 against principal amount of Rs100.
2. No receipt was paid in case of payment of loan partly or fully. This opened the scope of manipulation by the moneylenders.
3. Ryots complained about forging of documents and other fraudulent activity by the moneylenders.
4. Ryots believed that moneylenders were insensitive to them and made an arrogant and exploitative lot.

6. Why were so many Zamindaris auctioned after the Permanent settlement?

Ans. Many Zamindaris were auctioned as the Zamindars failed to pay up the agreed land revenue on time. The reason for the same:
1. Many believed that the land revenue settlememt was on the higher side. Moreover soon after the permanent settlement the foodgrain prices declined. The ryots could not pay
up the land revenue and hence Zamindars also defaulted.
2. The revenue was to be deposited on time irrespective of harvesting cycle. This was another reason for default by the Zamindars.
3. The power of Zamindars was curbed by the Company. They were no longer law and order enforcing agency at local level. Their musclemen were also weakened. As a result of this Zamindars could not effectively collect taxes at times.
4. Many a time Jotedars and peasants deliberately delayed the land revenue payment. This resulted in default by Zamindars and the auction thereafter.

7. In what way was the livelihood of Paharias different from that of Santhals?

**Ans.** Paharias were living in the foothills of Rajmahal. They lived a life that was different from Santhals. Most of the information on their lives is based on the report of Buchanan, the physician of the East India Company who wandered into the terrain of Rajmahal Hills.
1. The paharias were nomads. They lived a wandering life. They, however, sometimes did shifting cultivation.
2. Their another important source of livelihood of forest resources and animals.
3. They extracted mahua and used it. Colonialism and the countryside: Exploring official archives
4. Paharias used to look at outsiders with suspicion and even were hostile with them.
5. The Santhals were different from them on many counts.
6. The Santhals took to agriculture fast and soon got into settled life.
7. They had better relation with the outsiders including the East India Company.

8. How did the American Civil War affect the lives of the ryots in India?

**Ans.** American Civil War that began in 1860 had a huge impact on the ryots of Deccan region in India. Following events explains how the impact took shape:
1. Britain was the country where large cotton mills were operational. These cotton mills depended on cotton imported from North America.
2. When the USA was reeling under civil war, it was naturally very difficult to import cotton from there.
3. The cotton mills were forced to look for alternative suppliers of cotton apart from US. India made a good option.
4. The farmers in Deccan were encouraged to grow cotton. One way was the easy access of credit. The moneylenders would give credit of Rs 100 for every acre of land under cotton cultivation.
5. The farmers benefitted out of this demand for cotton. But the real beneficiary were the big farmers and traders.
6. However, things changed as normalcy returned to US. Now the demand of cotton in India declined and so declined the easy availability of credit. The ryots fell back to old days of penury and rose in rebellion in many places.
9. What are the problems of using the official sources in writing about the history of peasants?

**Ans.** Official sources of the Company Raj are not regarded as reliable source of history when it came to the lot of Ryots. Following are the main problems associated with official source of history.

1. The official records reflect only the Company raj perspective. They did not look at events from different angles. For example when the Deccan Riot Commission was instituted, it was required to find out if the land revenue was just or not. Other issues of Ryots were not taken into account.

2. The British people looked down upon the local people, their culture and tradition as lowly. They ended up giving a lowly picture of peasants even if without intention of the same.

3. The record of the Company Raj was created by the officials in such a manner that it suits their masters. Thus, evidences were tempered with. For example the Deccan Ryot Commission concluded that Ryots were angered not by the high land revenue but by moneylenders.

4. Thus, official sources are to be read along with other sources and need to be weighed before we take them to our stride.

10. On an outline map of the subcontinent, mark out the areas described in this chapter. Find out whether there were other areas where the Permanent Settlement and the ryotwari system were prevalent and plot these on the map as well.

**Ans.** In the chapter the following areas have been mentioned of the subcontinent.

(a) Bengal. (Bangladesh along with certain area of Bihar, Orissa and hilly areas of Assam).
(b) Bombay Presidency and
(c) Madras Presidency,
(d) The Britishers introduced Mahalwari system of land revenue in eastern part of Punjab
(e) Surat
(f) Rajmahal hills (occupied by Paharias and Santhals).
Chapter 11: Rebels and the Raj

The Revolt of 1857 and its Representations

1. Why did the mutinous sepoys in many places turn to erstwhile rulers to provide leadership to the revolt?

Ans. Following are the major reasons to explain why the rebellious soldiers turned to native rulers for leadership:
1. East India company defeated native rulers to grab power in India. Many believed that the native Indian rulers had the legal and legitimate authority to regain power in the respective kingdoms. Therefore, it was natural that they became the leaders of the rebels and regain the lost status of rulers.
2. The erstwhile rulers had substantial resources at their command. They had wealth and private armies too. The rebels waited to get the support of resources from them, and by declaring them the leaders it was natural outcome.
3. Most of the erstwhile Indian rulers were popular at the local level. Their subjects often sympathised with them as they believed that the latter were unlawfully thrown out of power and even suffered humiliation. Choosing these native rulers was echoing the sentiments of the people and winning more support for the cause.

2. Discuss the evidence that indicates planning and coordination on the part of the rebels.

Ans. The rebellion was not abrupt and sporadic but to a great extent done with planning and care. This is brought out by the following points:
1. The rebels decided to strike when the large part of the British army was in Burma.
2. The time chosen for the rebellion was summer that is very hostile weather condition for the British. Summer was also the season when the entire countryside would be easy to navigate.
3. To spread the message of rebellion, the rebels used symbols bread and lotus from village to village.
4. Efforts were made to maintain Hindu-Moslem unity. Whenever an area would fail under rebel control, cow slaughter was banned.

3. Discuss the extent to which religious beliefs shaped the events of 1857.

Ans. People during the company rule felt that their religious sentiments are systemically hurt by the government. For them it was an attack on their religious freedom, and an insult. The religious causes for the Revolt are as follows:
1. Immediate cause: The soldiers were given cartridge greased with cow and pig fat. This angered Moslems and Hindus alike.
2. Reforms by Company: The Company introduced many religious and social reformers.
Many Indians began to believe that it was an attempt on the part the government to deviate them from their own religion. Important of such reforms were prevention of sati system, widow remarriage, etc.

3. Activities of Christian Missionaries: During company rule involved in spread of education. But local people looked upon them with suspicion. Thus, the people plunged in rebellion against the foreign rule.

4. What were the measures taken to ensure unity among the rebels?

**Ans.** A very important element of the revolt of 1857 was the unity shown by Hindus and Moslems in the struggle against the foreign rule. First the immediate cause of the rebellion was the use of cartridge greased with fat of cow and pig, angering Hindus and Moslems alike. After the rebels marched to Delhi, they declared the Mughal emperor Bahadurshah their all India leader. Thus, the Mughal emperor was the leader of Hindus and Muslems alike. Both Hindus and Muslims respected each others' religious sentiments. Whenever a new area fell into the control of rebels, cow slaughter was made illegal to respect Hindu sentiments. Thus, Hindu-Muslim unity was the hallmark of the mutiny.

5. What steps did the British take to quell the uprising?

**Ans.** In 1857 a sepoy mutiny broke out in East India that became a mass uprising in many parts of the country. The Company had faced rebellions in the past too, but not of this magnitude and extent. The British rulers realised that unless the rebellions is suppressed, their empire was destined to fizzle out.

They took swift measures to put down the flame of the rebellion, some were of military nature while others were of political nature.

The important measures taken by the British to suppress the rebellion are as follows:

1. Imposition of Marshal Law and large scale of execution: In north India where rebels were holding ground, Marshal Law was imposed. Apart from enforcing law, military officers also had the power to dispense justice and pronounce conviction and punishment. Thus, for all practical purposes, rebels and their sympathizers could be declared guilty without fair trial. The punishment was not just swift, cruel and partisan but in most cases execution. The execution was carried out in a manner that fear grips the masses. The people were blown up by canons, still others were hanged by trees. The objective was to terrorize the people and make them subservient to the might of the British empire.

2. Diplomacy: The British masters used diplomacy as tool to weaken and destroy the rebellions. They tried to win the support of native kingdoms who were not on the side of rebels, by promising them rewards and securing their kingdoms. The communities who were not involved in the mutiny, viz. Sikhs were recruited and sent to fight the rebels.
3. Use of technology: The British used technology to get an upper hand in the battle fields. Apart from having superior weapons, it was the superior communication system that routed the rebels. The company used telegram to instantly communicate with others, the rebels were totally clueless about such things.

To conclude the British strategy and technique to defeat the rebels was multi-pronged and superior to those employed by the rebels. It was natural that the rebels crumbled in course of time.

6. Why was the revolt particularly widespread in Awadh? What prompted peasants, taluqdars and zamindar to join the rebellion?

**Ans.** The Mutiny of 1857 which was rebellions of the sepoys of the Company, turned into mass uprising in certain areas of the country. The most prominent was the area that was erstwhile part of the kingdom of Oudh. One report of the government says that 75 percent of men in Oudh were involved in the rebellion. Following are the main reasons why it took a mass uprising in that area:

1. Unceremonious removal of the Nawab: The nawab of Oudh Wazid Ali Shah was removed by Dalhosies on the pretext of poor governance. The removal was looked upon by the people as high handed and insult to them. The local people sympathized with the nawab. Thus, the public sentiment was against the British government that got a vent out during the revolt.

2. The ruling elite of Oudh: The ruling elite of Oudh during the rule of Nawab was dislodged from the position of power and prestige. The ruling elite that was employed in the Court of nawab and other senior position was rendered unemployed. They began to feel hardships and it had a cascading impact, the people dependent on them also slipped in depravity. For all such people British rule was the culprit.

3. The agrarian unrest: There was strong anti-British sentiment in Oudh from the level of Talukdars to peasants. Talukdars were rich landlords collecting taxes and enforcing law and order. They enjoyed a lot of autonomy as long as they paid revenue to nawab. The talukdars faced the heavy hands of the British masters. Their autonomy ceased to exist. Their foot soldiers were disarmed and disbanded. The peasants were oppressed more as hardships engulfed the Talukdars. Peasants were over assessed and forced to pay higher taxes than in past.

4. Muslim Anger: The Muslims in North India looked upon British as snatcher of their empire. The Moslems thought themselves as natural rulers of India who were displaced from this position by the British. The Oudh which has the substantial Muslim population burst out against the Company’s rule when it got an opportunity viz. the mutiny of 1857. In fact the then government of East India Company described the mass uprising of Oudh as Moslem conspiracy.
7. What did the rebels want? To what extent did the vision of different social group differ?

Ans. The rebels wanted to uproot the British rule. It was to be replaced by the rule of Indian, but what would be the nature of that governance is something the rebels were not sure of. They were definitely not fighting to establish a democratic government. The salient points of the vision of the rebels were as follows:

1. Hindu-Muslim Unity: The rebels were not clear about the idea of Hindu-Muslim Unity. But they were definitely cherished the ideals of Hindu-Muslim unity. The religious sentiments of both the parties were respected so much so whenever a new territory fell to rebels, cow slaughter was banned.

2. Preserving Indian Culture: Many believed that the company was pushing European culture and Christianity on the Indians. The rebels wanted to reverse this process. Some of the measures by the company to reform our society were also seen with the same vein.

The vision of the different social groups:
Zamindars: Many of them did not like the provision of auction of their estate by the company to recover losses. They considered themselves as rulers who could not be dispossessed of their estate. Hence, many of them wanted to give governance that suited their interest.

Merchants: They were a mixed lot. They liked the rule of company as it maintained peace and law across vast areas of India. However, they also looked upon the company rule as partisan that promoted British trade interest at the cost of that of Indian’s, for the end of Company rule could translate into a favourable environment.

Artisans: Most artisans were struggling to survive as they suffered due to policies of Company that pumped manufactured goods of England.

8. What do visual representations tell us about the revolt of 1857? How do historians analyse these representations?

Ans.

(i) Pictorial images were produced by both British and Indians paintings, pencil drawings, posters, etc. They form an important record of the mutiny. British pictures in particular presented a variety of images that have provoked a range of different kinds of emotions and reactions.

(ii) Some of the British pictorial images commemorate the British heroes who served the English. They repressed the rebels hence represented as heroes for example, ‘Relief of Lucknow’ painted by Thomas Jones Barker, depicts the efforts of James Outrom, Henry Havelock and Colin Campbell in rescuing the besieged British garrison in Lucknow. This image was sketched in 1859.

(iii) Newspapers reported incidents of violence against women and children such kinds of news when broke out, they led to demands for revenge and retribution. The British government were asked to protect the women and children. Artists have tried to express these feelings through their visual representations of trauma and suffering.

(iv) Memories “In memoriam” painted by Joseph Noel Paton portrays helpless English women and children huddled in circle awaiting their fate at the hands of the rebels.
Through it he ties to represent the rebels as violent.

(v) Portrait of heroes of rebellion the dead and injured portrait in the picture indicate the sufferings which occurred during the siege. While the triumphant figures of heroes in the middle ground emphasised the fact that British rule had been reestablished. The rebellion has been surprised.

(vi) Invincibility of British threatened by the rebellion, the British felt the need to demonstrate their invincibility. They frid to represent it through pictorial images for example, in one such image a female figure of justice with a sword in one hand a shield in the other is shown. Her posture is aggressive, her facial expression express her anger and a desire for revenge she is presented in a heroic image.

(vii) In certain sketches and paintings women are depicted as heroic. They are represented as defending themselves against the rebels. Women’s struggle to save her honour and life is shown to have a deeper religious connotation. It is a battle to save the honour of Christianity and a book lying on the floor is said to symbolize the Bible.

(viii) Source of deals with the report of a British officer from Oudh. The reports of the uprising of the people.

9. Examine any two sources presented in the chapter, choosing one visual and one text, and discuss how these represent the point of view of the victor and vanquished.

Ans. Ordinary people join the mutiny of 1857. Lucknow was one of the main centres. The sepoys of Awadh were joined by peasants, zamindars, traders and talukdars.

Source Sisten and the tahsildar: In the context of the communication of the message of revolt and mutiny, the experience of Francois Sisten, a native Christian police inspector in Sitapur, is telling.

He had gone to Saharanpur to pay his respects to the magistrate. Sisten was dressed in Indian clothes and sitting cross-legged. A Muslim tahsildar from Bijnor entered the room; upon learning that Sisten was from Awadh, he enquired, “What news from
Awadh? How does the work progress, brother?” Playing safe, Sisten replied, “If we have work in Awadh, your highness will know it.” The tahsildar said, “Depend upon it, we will succeed this time. The direction of the business is in able hands.” The tahsildar was later identified as the principal rebel leader of Bijnor. This source indicate that the effect of the rebellions had spread even among those officers who had earlier supported the British. The English men worried about their lives, property, owner of women and children. The geographical extent of the revolt was much greater. The magistrate used to get news and daily development day to day through their governmental representatives but they were suspicious as later on magistrate of Sitapur came to know that the Sisten who came to him was a great sympathiser of the rebellions.
Chapter 12: Colonial Cities
Urbanisation, Planning and Architecture

1. To what extent are census data useful in reconstructing patterns of urbanisation in the colonial context? (or)
“A careful study of census reveals some fascinating trends of urbanisation in 19th century.” Support the statement with facts.

Ans. A careful study of the data collected through the census provides us a lot of information in understanding the trend of urbanisation. It can be examined as under:
(a) The process of urbanisation was sluggish in India after 1800.
(b) In the nineteenth century and in first two decades of the twentieth century the proportion of the urban population was very low and stagnant.
(c) Which recorded between 1900 and 1940, A 13% increase in the urban population whereas during the same period, these was a overall 10% increase in the population of the whole country.
(d) The data, thus, collected helps us in the enumeration of people according to their age, sex, caste, religion, occupation, etc.

2. What do the terms “White” and “Black” Town signify?

Ans. The British had white skin as they were often described ‘white’ and they considered themselves as superior to others. On the other hand, the blacks had brown or black skin. So they were known as the ‘black’. The White signified their superiority over the black due to the colour of their skin. The British symbolised the Black areas full of chaos and anarchy, filth and disease and on the other hand, the white areas stood for cleanliness and hygiene. In Black areas, epidemics like cholera and plague often broke out. So the British took stringent measures to ensure sanitation and public health to prevent diseases of the Black areas. They ensured underground piped water supply and introduced sewerage and drainage system in White areas. Thus, we can say, the White Towns were those parts of the colonial towns where the White people lived. These towns had wide roads, barracks, churches, parade ground, big bungalows and gardens, symbolised settled city life, whereas the Indian lived in Black Towns, were said to be unorganised and a source of filth and disease.

3. How did prominent Indian merchants establish themselves in the colonial city?

Ans. The prominent Indian merchants and traders settled in colonial cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. They served as agents or middlemen for the British and lived traditionally built courtyard houses in the Black Town. They centred over large tracts of land in these cities and heavily made investments for the future. They wanted to impress their British masters or colonial ruler or white people living in white towns by
giving lavish parties during festivals seasons and built temples to establish their supremacy and prestige in society.

4. Examine how concerns of defence and health gave shape to Calcutta.

**Ans.** Sirajudaula, the Nawab of Bengal in 1756, sacked the small fort from Britishers. In this fort the British traders had built to house their goods. Consequently, when Sirajudaula was defeated in the Battle of Plassey, the British built a new fort, Fort William which could not be easily attacked. Around this a vast open space was left. This open space was called the Maidan or garemath. This was done for security reasons, because there would be no obstructions to a straight time of fire from the Fort against an advancing enemy army. Soon the British began to move out of the Fort. They built residences along the periphery of the Maidan. This indicates that how the English Settlement in Calcutta began to take shape. The vast open space around the Fort William became the significant town planning measure in Calcutta (Now Kolkata). Lord Wellesley was more concerned about the conditions that existed in the cities. Cities were overcrowded, and had no sanitation facilities. He issued an administrative order in 1803 on the need for town planning and set up various committees for this purpose open places in the city would make the city healthier. As a result of this, many bazaars, ghats, burial ground and tanneries were cleared or removed. After Wellesley’s departure, the Lottery Committee carried on with the work of town planning in Calcutta.

5. What are the different colonial architectural styles which can be seen in Bombay city?

**Ans.** In the past, buildings were at odds with the traditional Indian buildings. Gradually, Indians too got used to European architecture and made it their own. The British in turn adapted some Indian styles to suit their needs. One example is the bungalow which was used by government officers in Bombay. The colonial bungalow was set on extensive grounds which ensured privacy. The traditional pitched roof and surrounding veranda kept the bungalow cool in summer months. These bungalows can still be seen in the city. Other than that traditional styles of decoration and building exist. The lack of space in the city and crowding led to a type of building unique to Bombay, the chawl.

6. How were urban centres transformed during the eighteenth century?

**Ans.**
(i) The disintegration of the mughal empire after the death of Aurangzab paved the way of emergence of powerful regional powers. The capital cities of these regional kingdom likes Lucknow, Poona, Nagpur and Barda now become important. Taking the advantage of this opportunity many nobles and officials created new urban settlements such as the qasbah and ganj.
(ii) The European companies too had set up their bases in different parts of India during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example the Portugues (in Panaji in 1570) and the British in Madras in 1639. With the expansion in commercial activity, towns
began to emerge as trading centres.
(iii) From the mid-eighteenth century trading. Centres like Surat and Dhakha which had grown in the seventeenth century now began to decline as trade shifted to other places. When the British acquired Bengal and the East Indian's Company’s trade hereafter expanded the colonial port cities like Madras and Calcutta. These new part cities began to emerge as the new economic capitals.
(iv) In these newly developed cities many new buildings were built and new occupations developed. People flocked to these cities in large numbers. By the nineteenth century these newly developed cities become the biggest cities in India.

7. What were the new kinds of public places that emerged in the colonial city? What functions did they serve?

Ans. The Indians found the new colonial cities as bewildering. They were surpassed the new transport facilities available here. The means of transport facilities which included horse-drawn carriages, trams and buses. Enabled the people to live at far away places from the city centre. Now they lived at some other places and served at some other places.

Emergence of new public places: The new colonial cities far away place witnessed new public places such as the theatres, cinema-halls, gardens, public parks, etc. Besides these were clubs and Garden Houses.

Functions: These newly created public places were very exciting. They were an important source of entertainment and helped increasing social interaction. The people were able to express their opinions on society and government. They could also question the practice of social customs.

8. What were the concerns that influenced town planning in the nineteenth century?

Ans.
(i) Two concerns which influenced the town planning in the nineteenth century were defence and health.
(ii) In many towns British built forts to protect their factories. Around the fort a vast open space was left open. This vast space was known as the Maidan.
(iii) It was done so that there would be no obstructions to a straight line of fire from the Fort against an advancing enemy.
(iv) Attempts were also made to improve the sanitation and cleanliness by creating open spaces in the city.
(v) For this purpose, in Calcutta many bazaars, ghats and burial grounds were cleared.

9. To what extent were social relations transformed in the new cities?

Ans.
(i) There was a big contrast between extreme wealth and poverty in the new cities. New means of transport facilities such as horse-drawn carriages, trams, buses, etc. made
travelling from home to work an interesting experience.

(ii) Creation of public places like theatres public parks and cinema halls provided new forms of entertainment and social interaction.

(iii) New social groups were formed people of all classes started to migrate to the cities. With an increased demand for lawyers and engineers the “middle class” increased.

Debate and discussion became popular and established social norms and practices were questioned.

(iv) Cities also offered new opportunities for women. They chose new professions in the city as factory workers, teachers, film actresses, etc. for a long time so women remained objects of social censure.

10. On an outline map of India, trace the major rivers and hill ranges. Plot ten cities mentioned in the chapter, including Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, and prepare a brief note on why the importance of any two cities that you have marked (one colonial and one pre-colonial) changed in the nineteenth century.

Ans. Rivers are Ravi, Satluj, Ganga, Yamuna, Beas, Kosi, Narmada, Godavari, Krishna, and Kaveri.

Major Hill ranges are the Himalayas, Aravali, Vindhyachal, Satpura, Karakoram.
Chapter 13: Mahatma Gandhi and the Nationalist Movement
Civil Disobedience and Beyond

1. How did Mahatma Gandhi seek to identify with the common people?

Ans. Mahatma Gandhi seeked to identify himself with the common people of India. For this action plan
(a) He began to live in a very simple life style. He wore simple clothes which a poor Indian would wear.
(b) He spoke the language of local people.
(c) Mahatma Gandhi opposed the caste system and attacked untouchability personally lived with the Harijan.
(d) Mahatma Gandhi attached dignity to labour and physical work. He worked on Charkha and cleaned toilets.
(e) He attacked the sentiment of the feeling of classifying people into low and high.

2. How was Mahatma Gandhi perceived by the peasants?

Ans. India is a country of villagers and vast number of Indians are engaged in farming. Mahatma Gandhi knew that during freedom struggle his focus was to address the issues of farmers. He dressed like farmers. His involvement in Indian politics began in Champaran when he successfully resolved the issues of farmers. He stood for farmers against excesses of the British government like high taxes and oppressive tax collections.
Apart from all the above, mystery also surrounded the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. Many believed he was endowed with supernatural powers. Stories spread that those who spoke ill of Mahatma Gandhi suffered natural calamities. Thus, farmers perceived Mahatma Gandhi as their saviour and still many believed he was bestowed with the power to perform miracles.

3. Why did the salt laws become an important issue of struggle?

Ans. Poorest of poor Indian consume food that has salt as one of its prime ingredient. British government brought tax on salt and making salt indigenously was forbidden. It was to become a big burden on the poor people of India. Some important points regarding salt law are as follows.
1. Salt law was to lead to monopoly of salt production and distribution. It was to fuel prices, and added to this was the tax levied by the government.
2. People were denied access to natural salt and tons of the same were destroyed.
3. Salt law was an attack on the local industry in the villages too. Hence salt law was extremely unpopular and it became an important issue of the struggle.

4. Why are newspapers an important source for the study of national movement?

**Ans.** Contemporary newspapers are an important source of the study of national movement. Following points lay bare their importance as source of history with reference to Indian Freedom Movement.
(a) Many contemporary newspapers were published by those who were involved in the freedom struggle. For example, National Herald was issued by Motilal Nehru, further Mr Jinnah issued Dawn. These newspapers were mouthpieces and represented important voices of the movement. Hence, they made important source of information regarding the freedom movement.
(b) Newspapers do daily reporting, hence, their reporting is more detailed than perhaps any other source can be. As they report on extremely recent events, the chances of misreporting is less. Reading different newspapers further makes our reading balanced and free from bias.
(c) Many newspapers were in local Indian languages, i.e. in vernacular languages and their circulation was limited. Hence, they published newspaper from local perspective which other sources of history may not have.
(d) They reflect the mood of the people too. These newspapers shaped what was published and the way events were reported. Accounts published in a London newspaper would be different from a report in an Indian nationalist paper.

5. Why was the charkha chosen as a symbol of nationalism?

**Ans.** Gandhiji used to work on charkha. He made it a symbol of our freedom movement. Following are the reasons for making it the symbol of our freedom struggle.
(a) Charkha symbolised manual labour.
(b) Gandhiji wanted to attach respect to manual labour. On charkha people worked with their own hand.
(c) Charkha was a low investment product hence anyone can afford it. It was a boost to the small scale industries.
(d) Charkha as it dignified manual labour. It also promoted the culture of doing one’s own work. It would also strike at the root of caste system.
(e) Charkha was used as tool to keep British imported clothes. Thus, Charkha became a symbol of Indian nationalism.

6. How was non-cooperation a form of protest?

**Ans.** Gandhiji believed that British empire in India could survive as long as the local people were cooperating with the foreign rule. Non-cooperating with the British government was to weaken it and also to protest against the same. Following points explain how it was a protest:
1. Non-cooperation movement came along with the Khilafat movement. The British has not seen Hindu Muslim unity of this level ever in history. The protest of the people was unified cutting across communities and at great scale. 

2. People boycotted the pillars and symbols of British rule, courts, colleges and government offices. Lawyers stopped going to courts and students stayed away from colleges. At many places alternate arrangements were done to solve litigations out of court. Further many education institutions were established by the leaders of freedom struggle where students can study. One of them is Jamia Millia University in Delhi which exits today as one of the most reputed seats of higher education in India.

3. People boycotted tax collection also and they refused to pay taxes. Thus, non-cooperation was a kind of protest too.

7. Why were the dialogues at the Round Table Conference inconclusive?

**Ans.** The British Government has had the policy to review the progress of self-rule in India and bring reforms after the gap of ten years. This began in 1910 with Morley Minto Reform and was followed in 1920 with Montague Chemsford Report. Ten years later British government invited Round Table Conference in London for the way forward. The First Round Table Conference took place in November, 1930. The Conference failed as the most important stake holder of Indian Freedom Movement, the Indian National Congress was absent in the conference. The leaders of the Congress were behind bars due to civil disobedience movement.

The Second Table Conference took pace in February 1931. One month earlier Mahatma Gandhi was released from the jail. Hence, he participated in the conference. Gandhi Irwin pact was signed and the British government agreed to withdraw salt law partly. But the agreement came under criticism as it did not talk about complete independence of India.

Third and the most important Round Table Conference took place in the later part of 1931. The new constitutional developments were not agreed upon. The main reason was that the other participants of the conference described Congress as representative of small group of Indians and not the entire population. The major voice of dissent were, the Moslem League that claimed itself the sole representative of the Moslems in India, Dr B.R. Ambedkar claimed himself the sole representative of the low castes in India and the native rulers also claimed they would deal with the British independently and Congress could not have any say in that.

To conclude divisive politics of Moslem League, Dr Ambedkar and the attitude of the princely states are the main reasons for the failure of the round table conferences.

8. In what way did Mahatma Gandhi transform the nature of the national movement?

**Ans.** Gandhiji came to India back from South Africa in 1915. In 1917 he went to Champaran in Bihar to fight for the cause of farmers who were forced to grow indigo by
the British government. The farmers movement proved successful as the British government accepted the demands of the farmers. Since that time to 1943 when he was assassinated, he occupied the central place in the politics of India. The fact is Mahatma Gandhi is the chief protagonist of the Indian Freedom Struggle.

Mahatma Gandhi changed the nature of freedom movement and this can be elaborated by the following points:
1. When Gandhiji joined Indian politics, the freedom movement was limited to the middle class. Everybody who participated in the political movements was educated and product of the English education. Gandhiji made it all pervasive, now people from villages, poor people, labours, workers, and students all became part of the freedom struggle. However, there are people who find fault with the act of Gandhiji. They point out that Mahatma Gandhi used religious symbols to popularise the freedom movement that in long term gave fillip to communal politics. It is notable that the Age of Gandhiji is also the age of the Rise of Moslem League in Indian politics. Eminent author Nirad C Choudhary has also criticised Mahatma Gandhi for making the freedom movement a mass movement by short cuts.
2. Mahatma Gandhi has to be credited with emancipation of women and their participation in the public life at a scale not known in Indian history. Women were very prominent in picketing activities against shops selling foreign goods. The freedom movement gave some prominent woman leaders viz. Sarojini Naidu, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and many more.
3. For Mahatma Gandhi freedom movement was also a platform for social reforms. He spoke in favour of place of dignity and respects for depressed classes. He made end to untouchability a fundamental objective of his political philosophy.

Thus Mahatma Gandhi made freedom movement a mass movement and a movement much beyond politics.

9. What do private letters and autobiographies tell us about an individual? How are these sources different from official accounts?

Ans. Private letters and autobiographies are important source of individual’s life and views. Many of our freedom struggle leaders wrote autobiographies and letters and today they are our great record about them and history too.

The autobiographies and letters tell us the following things about an individual.
1. Autobiographies and letters throw light on the interests of an individual. Let us take an example, Nehru wrote letters to his daughter Indira describing the events of world history, today it is known as the book, "Glimpses of the World History". These letters show that Nehru had great interest in history. These letters show also the views of the author. For example, Nehru talks highly of the socialist government of USSR in his autobiography.
2. These autobiographies and letters are a good source of information of the social life of those days in India. Dr Rajendra Prasad has given vivid description of the village life that he saw as a child in his village.
3. Above all these autobiographies and letters are great source of history too. Nehru in his autobiography has explained in details about the obstinate approach of Moslem League towards solving the minority problem in India.

These sources were different from the official accounts. This is manifested in the following points:

1. The official accounts are done by individuals but they work under the guidelines of the government. Thus, views that run against the government remain stifled. In addition, the author would not have the freedom of focused area. He would be required to write only on topics already defined. However, in autobiographies and letters one can choose anything of personal interest. Dr Rajendra Prasad gives a vivid description of his school and college days in his autobiography. This is not possible in any government account.

2. The autographic letters throw light on the personal life of individual leaders and show these events shaped the thought process of these leaders in future life. Mahatma Gandhi described how he was thrown out of the first class compartment of the train in South Africa because he was not a white man. He describes the struggle inside on how to protest and later how he took to non-violent means of protest.

10. Find out about the route of the Dandi March. On a map of Gujarat plot the line of the march and mark the major towns and villages that it passed along the route.

Ans. Dandi March was started from Sabarmati Ashram. This Ashram is in Ahmedabad (Gujarat). The route followed from Ahmedabad to Vadodara and from there to Surat. We have used triangle A, B and C to mark the Dandi expedition route.
Chapter 14  Understanding Partition
Politics, Memories, Experiences

1. What did the Muslim League demand through its resolution of 1940?

Ans. An important resolution was passed by the Muslim League on 23rd March, 1940. This resolution was drafted by Sikandar Hayat Khan, the leader of the Unionist Party and the Punjab Premier. Through this, the Muslim League demanded an autonomy for the Muslim-majority areas of the subcontinent. But in the resolution there was no mention either of the partition of the country or the creation of Pakistan. Sikandar Hayat Khan was opposed to the idea of the formation of Pakistan. He opined of a loose federation with a lot of autonomy for the states.

2. Why did some people think of Partition as a very sudden development?

Ans. Some people think that partition of India in 1947 was a sudden development. Many Muslim leaders were not serious in their demand for Pakistan as a separate nation. On many occasions, Jinnah used the idea of Pakistan to seek favours from the British and to block concessions into the Congress. Even the Muslims were confused about the idea of Pakistan. They could not think of their future in an independent country called Pakistan. Many people had migrated to the new country with the hope that they would soon come back to India as soon as the situation improved. In fact, the partition was so sudden that nobody could imagine it.

3. How did ordinary people view Partition?(or)
Describe the harrowing experiences of ordinary people during the period of partition of India.

Ans. For ordinary people, partition was full of challenges and brought sufferings. The division was not a territorial division for them. It was also not a party politics of Congress and the Muslim League for them. But for the ordinary people, partition was a challenge for them. It brought misery and troubles to them. It meant death of their loved one, loss of property and wealth. Partition also uprooted them from their paternal land. People were forced to live in refugee camps. They were also forced to start their life once again from a new platform. So for ordinary people, partition was not a pleasant experience, but it was painful and full of sufferings.

4. What were Mahatma Gandhi’s arguments against Partition?

Ans. Mahatma Gandhi was in favour of unity among various communities of the country. He was a firm supporter of religious harmony. He never supported the idea of
partition. He did not want the separation of the Muslims from the Hindus who had been living together for centuries.

In his view partition was wrong. He was ready to sacrifice his life for an undivided India. But he was not ready to accept the partition. In his view, Islam stood for unity and brotherhood of mankind and not for separation. So he said that the demand of Pakistan by the Muslim League was un-Islamic and sinful. In his view those who favoured the partition were enemies of both Islam and India. He opined the Hindu and the Muslims belonged to the same land. They were living in India together for centuries. They shared the same land, same food. They drank the same water. They speak the same language and they live in peace and harmony: So he appealed to the Muslim League not to demand for a separate nation.

5. Why is Partition viewed as an extremely significant marker in South Asian history?

Ans. The following reasons can be put forward for the given view:
• The partition of India had a unique nature. This partition was based on religions. The partition took place in the name of the communities. History has never witnessed such type of partition.
• The partition marked a severe violence. Innumerable people were killed. People began to kill each other irrespective of their earlier relation. Earlier they lived with each other in harmony and peace but now started to kill each other. Government machinery failed to check this.
• People faced a lot of problems. Their life became miserable. Their near and dear ones were killed. Many people were abducted.
• People moved across the border. Most of the Muslims of India crossed over to Pakistan and almost all Hindus and Sikhs came to India from Pakistan. They were forced to start their life afresh.
• People lost all their movable and immovable property all of a sudden. They became homeless and forced to live in refugee camps.

6. Why was British India partitioned?

Ans. Several factors can be attributed for the partition of British India. Some of them are discussed below:
Role of Communal Parties and Organisations: Several historians and scholars think that the main purpose of the foundation of the Muslim League was to serve the interests of the Muslims. In retaliation, the Hindu Mahasabha was founded. The Muslim League was demanding more and more political rights for the Muslims. In retaliation of this, some of the Hindus took steps and established the Hindu Mahasabha in the year 1915. The Hindu Mahasabha also demanded more political rights and representation of the Hindus in the different government organizations. Following in the footsteps, the Sikh League was founded. Akali Dal also put forward demand for their people. Directly or indirectly, these political parties helped separation. They created feeling of separation and isolation among different communities.
British Policy: In India, the British followed the policy of Divide and Rule. In India, before the arrival of the British, the Hindus and the Muslims lived happily. There was unity, mutual cooperation and brotherhood among them. But the British did not like this. They sowed the seeds of dissension and followed the policy of Divide and Rule. Most of the historians believe that this policy of Divide and Rule was the main reason of the partition.

The British historians, journalists and writers propagated through their writings that Muslim invaders made the Hindus enslaved and they had been exploited for centuries. Role of British Government: The British Government also encouraged partition. The British Government encouraged the Muslim League to demand for a separate state. They tried to disrupt the movement of independence by playing the game of imperialism.

Role of Leaders: Role of leaders was also responsible for the partition. Under the leadership of Jinnah, the Muslim League moved a resolution at Lahore demanding a measure of autonomy for the Muslim majority area and after that a new nation called Pakistan. The great poet Mohammad Iqbal also spoke about the need for a Muslim state in north west India as early as in 1930.

7. How did women experience Partition?

Ans. For women, partition was horrible. Women were raped, abducted and many times forced to live with strangers and start a new life. They were deeply traumatised and began to develop new family bonds in the changed circumstances. Women became victims on both the sides of the border. They were forced to live in a strange circumstances. But the government officials of both the countries did not take any serious step to consult those women. Women were left on their fate. They were even murdered by their own family members. When the men realized that the women of their family would fall into the hands of the enemy, they killed their women with their own hands. To escape from the hands of enemy, in a Sikh village, ninety women were said to have voluntarily jumped into a well.

8. How did the Congress come to change its view on Partition?

Ans. Initially the Indian National Congress was not in favour of the partition. But in March, 1947, the Congress high command agreed to Punjab into two parts. One part would consist of the Muslim-majority areas and the other part would consist of the areas having Hindu-Sikh majority. To most of the Sikh leaders and Congress leaders, partition of Punjab was a necessary evil. The Sikhs feared that their denial to the partition of Punjab may lead them to be overpowered by the Muslims. They would be under control of the Muslims. Situation was the same in Bengal. The Bhadralok Bengali Hindus of Bengal wanted to retain political power with them. They were also apprehensive of the Muslims. In Bengal, the Hindus were in minority. So they favoured the partition. They thought that partition would help them to retain political dominance. These reasons forced the Congress to change their view on Partition.
9. Examine the strengths and limitations of oral history. How have oral-history techniques furthered our understanding of Partition?

**Ans.** Oral history techniques help historians to write experiences of people during the time of partition. In fact, history of partition has been reconstructed with the help of oral narratives. It is not possible to extract such kind of information from government records. Government would not provide such information which paint them in bad colour. It will also not tell about the daily development of the events during the partition. Moreover, Government was involved in negotiation. Documents of government deal with policy matters and throw light on efforts of major political parties. But the oral history tells the day to day account. It is told by the people who have actually gone through the trauma and pains of the partition. But the oral data is not free from limitations. Oral data lacks concrete details. It does not have the chronological order. Oral accounts are concerned with tangential issues and that small individual experiences are irrelevant to the unfolding of the larger canvas of history. In oral history people may not talk their personal aspects. They can hide even their fault or fault of their community as a whole. Many people may not remember all events. People tend to forget also. Accuracy of narration can also be questioned.
Chapter 15: Framing the Constitution
The Beginning of a New Era

I. What were the ideals expressed in the Objectives Resolution?

**Ans.** Jawahar Lal Nehru presented the Objectives Resolution in the Constituent Assembly on 13 December, 1946. It gave a brief account of the ideals and objectives of the Constitution. These are following:

- India was declared an independent sovereign republic.
- Justice, equality and fraternity were assured to all the citizens of India.
- Adequate safeguards were provided to minorities. It also referred to the well-being of the backward and depressed classes.
- It was made an objective that India would combine the liberal ideas of democracy with the socialist idea of economic justice.
- India would adopt that form of government which would be acceptable to its people. No imposition from the British would be acceptable by the people of India.
- India would work for peace and human welfare.

II. How was the term minority defined by different groups?

**Ans.** N.G. Ranga, a socialist who had been a leader of the peasant movement, urged that the term minorities be interpreted in economic terms. The real minorities were the poor and the downtrodden. Some considered that the real minorities were the masses of our country who were so depressed and oppressed that they were not even able to take advantage of the ordinary civil rights. Singh spoke eloquently on the need to protect the tribes, and ensure conditions that could help them come up to the level of the general population.

III. What were the arguments in favour of greater power to the provinces?

**Ans.** K. Santhanam, a member from the Madras defended the rights of the states in the Constituent Assembly. He emphasised the need to strengthen the states. He was not in favour of vesting more powers with the Centre. He was of the opinion the Centre would not be able to perform its duties efficiently in case it is overburdened. The Centre will become automatically strong if all states are made stronger. He advocated that the Centre should be given less powers and states should be given more powers. Proposed allocation of powers between the Centre and States was also a matter of concern for K. Santhanam. He felt that such a distribution of power would cripple the states.

IV. Why did Mahatma Gandhi think Hindustani should be the national language?

**Ans.** In view of Mahatma Gandhi Hindustani was a language that the common people could easily understand. Hindustani was a blend of Hindi and Urdu. It was also popular among a large section of the people. Moreover, it was a composite language enriched...
by the interaction of diverse cultures. Words and terms from many different languages got incorporated into this language over the years. It made this language easily understandable by people from various regions.

As per Mahatma Gandhi Hindustani would be the ideal language of communication between the communities. It would help to unify Hindus and Muslims and the people from north and south. Language came to be associated with the politics of religious identities from the end of the 19th century. But Mahatma Gandhi retained his faith in the composite character of Hindustani.

5. What historical forces shaped the vision of the Constitution?

**Ans.** Following are some historical forces which shaped the vision of the Constitution. Certain basic values were accepted by all national leaders as a result of the Nehru Report and the Fundamental Rights Resolution passed the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress. Universal Adult Franchise, Right to Freedom and Equality and Protection of minority rights were these basic values. After the results of 1937 elections, the Congress and other political parties were able to form the governments in the provinces. This experience with legislative and political institutions helped in developing an agreement over institutional design. Many colonial laws were also the sources of the Indian Constitution. Government of India Act, 1935 was a major one. This way, the Indian Constitution adopted many institutional details and procedures from the colonial laws.

The French Revolution also inspired the makers of the Constitution. The working of the Parliamentary democracy in Britain and the Bill of Rights in the USA also inspired the framers of the Constitution.

6. Discuss the different arguments made in favour of protection of the oppressed groups.

**Ans.** It was felt that oppressed classes like tribals and untouchables required special attention and safeguards to enable them to raise their status and come to the level of the general population.

Tribals were regarded backward. They were not accepted well in society. They were almost rejected. For their upliftment they were required to be assimilated in the society. They were also required to be brought into the mainstream of the society. So special protection and care were offered to them.

In society untouchables were treated as labourers. Society used their services but did not give them respectable position. They were treated as outcast and kept isolated. Their sufferings were due to their systematic marginalization.

Lands of the tribals have been confiscated and had been deprived of their forests and pastures. Tribals and untouchables had no access to education. They did not take part in administration. So some legislations were required to improve their conditions.
7. What connection did some of the members of the Constituent Assembly make between the political situation of the time and the need for a strong Centre?

Ans. On 15 of August 1947, India became independent from the British rule. It was declared an independent country. But this independence was painful also. India was divided and Pakistan came into existence. This partition was marred with communal violence. So many leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Ambedkar favoured a strong Central Government for India. For their view they referred riots and violence that were ripping the nation apart.

It was also felt that a strong centre was the need of the hour. Most of the members of the constituent Assembly also supported this view. Any deviation from this might jeopardize the interests of the nation. Peace, prosperity and political stability was not possible in case of a weak centre. It would fail to coordinate vital matters of common concern.

So Gopalaswami Ayyangar appealed to all the members of the Constituent Assembly that” the Centre should be made as strong as possible.”

It was also felt that only a strong and united centre could plan for the well-being of the country. Balakrishna Sharma also stated the similar view. It was also felt that it would mobilize all the resources, ensure strong defence against any aggressor and establish a proper administration.

Almost all the members of the Constituent Assembly supported a strong central government. They felt that it was necessary to check chaos, communal violence and to usher economic development of the country.

8. How did the Constituent Assembly seek to resolve the language controversy?

Ans. India is very big country. It has many different regions. Different varieties of people live here and speak different languages. So for a new nation like India it was necessary to give proper attention to the intricacies of different languages.

Hindustani: Hindustani was a choice for the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi. Congress had already decided to adopt Hindustani as the national language of the country. Mahatma Gandhi was also in favour of adopting Hindustani as the national language and supported strongly for this view. He argued that everyone should speak in a language which is understood by most of the common people. Hindustani was not a new language. It was a blend of Hindi and Urdu. It was enriched by the interaction of diverse cultures and spoken by most of the people of the country.

Hindi: R.V. Dhulekar pleaded in favour of Hindi for adopting it as the national language. He came from the United Province and a Congressman. He wanted that Hindi should be used as language of constitution-making . He even said that those who did not know Hindustani were not worthy to be the members of the Constituent Assembly.

Report of the Language Committee: The language Committee of the Constituent Assembly suggested a compromise formula in its report. It suggested that Hindi in Devnagri script should be the official language of the country and tried to resolve the issue. It also suggested that transition from English to Hindi should be gradual.
also suggested that during first fifteen years since adoption of the Constitution, English would continue to serve as for official purposes. So it was clear that the Language Committee referred Hindi as the official language not the national language.

**Threat to South:** The members of the Constituent Assembly who belonged to the Southern India were apprehensive of the view. They felt that Hindi would be a threat to their provincial languages. Shankar Rao from Bombay, T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar and Mrs. G. Durgabai of Madras suggested that issue of language required utmost care and needed to be handled efficiently and dextrally. Hindi should not be thrust upon the people of South India.