

- Regional kingdoms posed severe threat to the already weakened Delhi Sultanate
- With their emergence began the process of the physical disintegration of the Sultanate.
- During the 13th-15th centuries two types of kingdoms emerged:
 - a) Those whose rise & development was independent of the Sultanate (kingdoms of Assam, Odisha, Kashmir);
 - & b) Bengal, Malwa, Jaunpur & Gujarat who owed their existence to the Sultanate.
- Sindh & Rajputana, remained vulnerable & even under frequent attacks of Sultanate. For some period of time it was occupied by Sultanate, still it succeeded in retaining their regional features.
- All these kingdoms were constantly at war with each other.
- The nobles, chiefs or rajas & local aristocracy played crucial roles in these confrontations.

THEORIES OF EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL POWER

- Joseph E. Schwartzberg highlighted certain geopolitical and ecological factors behind the increasing instability during the Sultanate period
- According to him, increasing degree of competition between major powers lead to, progressive decline in the average size & duration of major powers.
- Resultantly a rise in the frequency & intensity of wars between them can be noticed
- This situation might have resulted in increasing instability within the power system & inhibited the growth potential of all states within the system.
- By medieval period, fertile agricultural land came under increasing intensity of settlement & resultant growth of population & increasing pressure of population on the land.
- So land was under the contest of different kingdoms that lead to militarisation for invasion as well as protection of land.
- Thus, according to Schwartzberg, geographical features made the conflicts inevitable & contributed to the emergence of regional states.
- Richard G. Fox, Bernard Cohn & K.N. Singh interpreted the emergence of regional powers in socio-political-anthropological model where kinship, clan & lineages were the main organising factors.
- For Richard Fox, such groups, though served as the preserver of the political authority, were also prone to frequent rebellions
- These rebellion led to fragmentation & weakening of the central authority especially when the central control seems to be in doldrums.
- The Rajput clan-organisation is a glaring example.

- In Rajputana, these chiefs or rajas, organised on the basis of clan, used to control small principalities of the same lineages.
- The Rajput social organisation was closely knitted through clan, caste & lineages.
- Their area of influence could be through matrimony & migration of disgruntled sub-lineages.
- These 'unilineal kin-organisations' performed many political & military functions relating to revenue collection and maintenance of law and order.
- They used to get 'legitimization' by the state.
- The 'mandate' of the state was the 'mandate' of the kin allegiance
- Due to this 'internal cohesion' & 'external recognition', their position became strong at the local level that neither the state nor the clan members could throw them off.
- After Timur's invasion, the political vacuum created at the centre provided these chiefs or rajas opportunity to strike deep roots at the local level.
- Thus, started the warfare throughout the 13-15th century between power centres, trying to exploit the situation to their respective interests.

NO PAN-INDIA POWER

- According to Schwartzberg, there were certain geopolitical, structural & circumstantial factors behind this
- Foremost is their peripheral location: States of Kashmir, Gujarat, Rajputana, Sindh, Odisha, Assam and Bengal do not lie in the heartland of the empire to assume the central status.
- Kashmir's expansion was mainly obstructed by the inaccessible mountains
- The increasing aridity of the great Indian desert in the northwest obstructed the growth of Sindh & Rajputana kingdoms.
- Though Malwa & Jaunpur were situated in the core & were the most fertile plains, they had 'open-frontiers' surrounded by hostile states.
- Each state attempted to get control over each other's rich resources, so constant warfare was the main feature of the regional syndrome which hampered expansion.
- The paucity of revenue-resources which prevented them to maintain large armies to extend and consolidate their gains.
- They had very small area under their direct control whose revenue could directly reach to the state.
- They had to depend largely on 'intermediaries' or 'chiefs' for their income and supply of armed retainers.
- The revenue collectors (intermediaries) had Provincial Kingdoms with the tendency to evade

taxation. Tributary chiefs also exploited every opportunity to rebel.

- The tributary chiefs residing on the peripheral area between Malwa & Gujarat frequently changed sides in their political support .
- Increasing feuds of the Rajputs among their clan members was the main reason why the Rajput state could not assume the 'Pan-India' status.
- Except Gujarat & Bengal, other regions being landlocked , so had no access to overseas trade & commerce which curtailed their income

CENTRAL & EASTERN INDIA

MALWA KINGDOM

- The decline of the Sultanate paved the way for the emergence of the independent kingdom of Malwa.
- Dilawar Khan Ghorī, (d. 1406), the Tughlaq governor of Malwa, assumed independence in the year 1401-2.
- He extended the boundaries of his kingdom by occupying Nimar, Saugar, Damoh & Chanderi.
- Dilawar Khan married his daughter to Ali Sher Khalji, the son of Malik Raja Faruqi of Khandesh & took his (Faruqi ruler's) daughter for his son Alp Khan.
- These matrimonial alliances helped him in safeguarding his southeastern frontier.
- By maintaining friendly relations with Muzaffar Shah of Gujarat, he successfully saved Malwa from attacks
- But soon after his death in 1406, Malwa fell prey to the imperialistic designs of Muzaffar Shah.
- In 1408, Hoshang Shah (1406-35) succeeded in regaining control over the Malwa throne. He occupied Kherla(MP) & Gagraun(Raj)
- Hoshang Shah aspired for Gwalior, but due to the might of Mubarak Shah, he finally withdrew in 1423 after causing some damage in the countryside.
- Hoshang Shah entered into matrimonial alliance with the Muslim ruler of Kalpi(Jalaun Dist U.P.) to use the latter as buffer between Jaunpur-Malwa & Delhi-Malwa.
- Hoshang Shah's successor Muhammad Shah murdered (1436) by his noble Mahmud Khalji thus came the end of the Ghorid rule itself.
- The position of Mahmud Khalji was threatened by the old Ghorid nobility.
- In the beginning, Mahmud followed the policy of appeasement & distributed iqta and high posts to them but he failed to elicit their support.
- He had to face a series of revolts of high ranking nobles.
- But he succeeded in controlling the revolts.
- Now Mahmud Khalji planned for further extension to Mewar
- But Mewar under Rana Kumbha followed an aggressive policy , he assimilated bordering Rajput chiefs into Mewar.

- Mahmud Khalji had to face the mighty Rana as early as 1437.
- Rana Kumbha promised Umar Khan, son of Hoshang Shah, to install him in place of Mahmud Khalji.
- In the battle of Sarangpur (Guj)(1437), Mahmud Khalji was defeated & taken prisoner.
- Mahmud Khalji took advantage of the confusion that emerged in Mewar after Ranmal's death: he attacked Mewar in 1442
- He destroyed the temple of Banmata(Chittor), but he had to retreat without much gains.
- Mahmud Khalji undertook many campaigns against Rana Kumbha.
- He occupied Gagraun (1444) & Mandalgarh (1457), Rana Kumbha was able to keep his territory intact and well-defended
- Kalpi was the bone of contention between Malwa & Jaunpur Mahmud Sharqi of Jaunpur occupied the Kalpi in 1443.
- It resulted in a clash between the two (1444).
- A treaty was signed & Mahmud Sharqi agreed to hand over Kalpi to Khan Jahan
- Malwa rulers had to tackle with Gujarat rulers.
- After Ahmad Shah's death (1442), Mahmud Khalji got an opportunity to occupy Sultanpur(UP) & Nandurbar (1451) on account of the weak position of Muhammad Shah Gujarati.
- After death of Muhammad Shah Gujarati his successor Sultan Qutbuddin(Jalal Khan) entered into an alliance with Mahmud Khalji. Both parties agreed to respect each other's territorial boundaries.
- Mahmud Khalji's intervention in Bahmani politics was always severely dealt with by Mahmud Begarha.
- Ghiyas Shah (1469-1500), the son & successor of Mahmud Khalji, paid more attention towards consolidation rather than conquest.
- As a result, with the exception of a brief tussle with the Rana of Mewar (1473), the period was of a long peace.
- With Sultan Mahmud Khalji II's death in 1531 the Khalji dynasty comes to an end
- For the next three decades until the final occupation of Malwa by the Mughals in 1562 - Malwa became the hotbed of constant struggle among the Afghans

JAUNPUR KINGDOM

- Afif informs us that the city of Jaunpur on the banks of river Gomti was founded by Firuz Shah Tughlaq during his second Bengal campaign (1359-1360).
- This city became a strong power-base, & it soon evolved as a rival to Delhi for some time.
- Malik Sarwar, a noble of Firuz Shah Tughlaq, took full advantage of the succession tussle among the sons of Firuz and rose to the high position of wazir under Sultan Muhammad Shah (1390-94).

- Malik Sarwar got the charge of the eastern districts along with the title of Sultan-us Sharq.
- The invasion of Timur, shattered the kingdom of Delhi, gave Malik Sarwar an opportunity to declare his independence in Jaunpur.
- He extended his hold over Kol (Aligarh), Sambhal and Rapri (in Mainpuri district).
- Malik Sarwar's ambitions led to furious armed clashes with Delhi, Bengal, Odisha and Malwa.
- Though he did not succeed against them, he brought the rulers of Jajnagar and Gwalior under his sway
- Mubarak Shah Sharqi (1399-1401), his son and successor, could hardly get time to consolidate the gains.
- However, his younger brother & successor, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi (1401-1440), efficiently took Kanauj in 1406 . He won a lot of prestige.
- In 1407, Ibrahim aspired to occupy Delhi, but in spite of initial success, the attempt finally failed.
- He was able to lay his hands on Kalpi (1414), its ruler Qadir Khan continued to create problems for him.
- Ibrahim subdued Ganesh, the ruler of Bengal, in 1414.
- During the closing years of his reign (1437), he again turned his attention towards Delhi & captured some of its neighbouring parganas.
- The Delhi Sultan Muhammad Shah agreed to marry his daughter, Bibi Haji, to Ibrahim's son Mahmud Khan
- Ibrahim's energetic zeal & his successes increased the prestige of the kingdom of Jaunpur.
- Jaunpur earned the title Shiraz-i Hind.
- During his successor's reigns, Mahmud Sharqi (1440-54), Muhammad Sharqi (1457-58) and Husain Sharqi (1458-1505), clashes with the Delhi Sultans were frequent.
- Finally, Bahlol Lodi annexed Jaunpur in 1483-84 & placed it under the charge of Mubarak Nohani.
- Bahlol finally placed his son Barbak Shah on the throne of Jaunpur, thus ending the era of the Sharqi rule.

BENGAL

- It is located at a long distance from Delhi so Delhi sultanate could not keep control on it
- Whenever sultanate was busy with some other state or it got weak , the governor of Bengals acted like independent rulers
- Iltutmish , himself had to march on Bengal to assert his authority (1225) & it took almost three years for Balban in crushing the rebellion of Tughril Beg, the governor of Bengal.
- Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan as governor (1281).
- But after Balban's death, Bughra Khan decided to stay in Bengal rather than contest the Delhi throne (1287)

- Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq also marched on Lakhnauti
- But Muhammad Tughlaq adopted an effective policy - he appointed his trusted nobles at Lakhnauti, Sonargaon & Satgaon - means he decentralised powers among three instead of one
- Two dynasties ruled Bengal for long time - Ilyas Shahi (1342-1481) & Husain Shahis (1494-1538) - Raja Ganesh (1415-16-1432-33) & Abyssinians (1487-1493) usurped the power.
- Bengal controlled by Sher Shah Suri & Humayun (1536-1539).
- Then began the rule of the Afghan-Karrani.
- Finally Akbar occupied & incorporated it into his empire in 1576 by defeating Daud Khan Karrani, though complete peace could only be restored in 1599.
- The founder of the Ilyas Shahi dynasty, Ilyas Shah (1342-1357) was originally a noble of Muhammad Tughlaq & served him at Delhi.
- Ilyas Shah emerged as a powerful ruler & assumed the title of Sikandar-i sani (second Alexander).
- Soon he occupied Tirhut (1339-40), Lakhnauti (1342), & Sonargaon (1353), & marched as far as Banaras, occupied Gorakhpur & Bahraich.
- He also captured Kamrup in 1357 & sent an expedition to Nepal (1350-51) & Jajnagar (Odisha; 1353).
- Sultan Firuz Tughlaq had to march in person & it took almost one year (1353-54) to decide the issue.
- Again in 1359, Firuz Tughlaq marched against Sikandar Shah (1357-89) to suppress his power.
- After Firoz Tughlaq's death (1388), the Delhi Sultanate became too weak to subdue the recalcitrant rulers of Bengal.
- Sikandar Shah's son Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah (1389-90-1410) was a popular Provincial Kingdoms ruler.
- Chatgaon (Chittagong), bordering Arakan region was under his control so remained vulnerable of attacks from Burmese so he supported Arakanese
- He faced the combined attack of the Rajas of Kamata & Ahom & had to surrender the territory beyond Karatoya river.
- He established diplomatic ties with the Chinese rulers.
- From 1404 to 1410 he exchanged envoys with Ming dynasty
- The famous Chinese traveller, Ma-Huan accompanied the 1405 Chinese mission from Ming dynasty to the Azam Shah
- After Ghiyasuddin's murder (1410), Bengal had to pass through two critical phases of internal chaos (1410-1418; 1435-42)
- Nasiruddin Abul Muzaffar Mahmud (1434-1460), a descendant of Ilyas Shah was ascended to throne & short stability was established.
- He faced the invasion of Raja Kapilendra Deva of Jajnagar (Odisha; 1445).

- Nasiruddin again restored the capital to Gaur which was shifted by Alauddin Ali Shah to Firuzabad (Pandua)
- Nasiruddin's son, Ruknuddin Barbak Shah I (1460-74) expanded to Barner, north of the Ganges & Jessore-Khulna in the south with the help of Abyssinian slaves
- In 1487, the Abyssinian commander Saifuddin Firuz succeeded in occupying the Bengal throne.
- In 1493, Alauddin Hussain Shah (1493- 1519) overthrown the Saifuddin & laid the foundation of Hussain Shahi dynasty.
- Bengal frontiers reached upto Saran & Bihar in the northwest, Sylhet & Chittagong in the southeast, Hajo on the northeast & Mandaran on the south west.
- In 1495, Hussain Shah had to face Sultan Sikandar Lodi's wrath as he had given shelter to the Sultan of Jaunpur
- The glorious reign of Husain Shahi dynasty ended in 1538 with the fall of Gaur to Sher Shah Suri.

ASSAM

- Geographically, medieval Assam covers the entire Brahmaputra valley as far as river Karatoya in the west, while Mishmi Hills & Patkai Bum formed the northeastern boundary.
- During the 13th-15th centuries in Assam, a number of tribal polities – Chutiyas, Tai-Ahoms, Koch, Dimasa, Tripuri, Manipuri, Khasis & Jaintias existed.
- The Chutiyas & the Ahoms emerged most powerful
- kingdom of Kamata-Kamrup also emerged as a strong empire

KAMATA – KAMRUP

- Included Brahmaputra valley (excluding Rangpur), Bhutan, Cooch Bihar, Mymensingh, & the Garo Hills.
- Kamrup (North Guwahati) was the capital of the Kamata kingdom prior to Rai Sandhya's reign (1250-70).
- But Kachari expansion forced Rai Sandhya to shift from Kamrup to Kamatapur (Cooch Behar district); hence the kingdom is called Kamata-Kamrup.
- In 1206 Bakhtiyar Khalji, one of the commanders of Muhammad Ghor, invaded Kamrup.
- But the campaign proved disastrous as his army was totally destroyed.
- Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz(Khalji) also attempted to occupy Kamrup (1227) but met the same fate at the hands of Rai Prithu.
- Iltutmish's son Nasiruddin Mahmud succeeded in crushing Rai Prithu's power
- Later Sultan Shamsuddin Firuz Shah (1301-22), the Sultan of Bengal, occupied Mymensingh & Sylhet across Brahmaputra in 1303.
- The Kamrup kingdom always fell prey to Ahom imperialistic designs.
- The Buranji literature records the success of the Ahom king Sukapha (1228-1268) against Kamata ruler Sindhu Rai (1260-1285)

- Buranjis are a class of historical chronicles & manuscripts associated with the Ahom kingdom written initially in Ahom Language & later in Assamese language too
- The great uprising of the Bhuyan chiefs who took advantage of the unstable conditions of 14th century Kamata kingdom
- In the beginning, Bhuyan chiefs failed in their designs as Durlabh Narain (1330-50) & Arimatta (1365-85) were very strong
- After Arimatta's death (1385), around mid-15th century was supplanted by a new Bhuyan dynasty (Khyan) with Niladhvaj (1440-1460) as its founder.
- Nilambar (1480-1498) was the most powerful king of the Khyan dynasty who succeeded in extending his frontier from Karatoya to Barnadi.
- He also took advantage of the political turmoil created in Bengal (Gaur) by the Abyssinians and succeeded in occupying northeastern part of Bengal
- Alauddin Hussain Shah (1493-1519) was able to crush the power of Nilambar. With this came the end of the Khyan dynasty.

THE AHOMS

- The Ahoms belonged to the Mao-Shan sub-tribe of the Tais of southeast Asia.
- In 1228, they migrated from Mogaung, principality in upper Burma and Yunan to upper Assam where they finally settled in 1253 in the Dikhou valley (modern Sibsagar division) with its capital at Charaideo (later changed to Charga in 1397).
- Sukapha (1228-68) of Mao-Shan tribe was the first Ahom king who subjugated the Chutiyas, Morans, Borahis, Nagas, Kacharis and the Kamata kingdom (Kamrup).
- His son Suteupha (1268-1281) further extended to the southern banks of Brahmaputra up to Kalang (north-Cachar sub-division) by defeating the Kacharis.
- Under Sukhangpha (1293-1332), the Ahoms became a paramount power in the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley.
- Sukhangpha's death created a void that resulted in the establishment of three interregnums – 1364-69, 1376-80 and 1389-97.
- Later, at Sudangpha's accession (1397-1407), the situation got stabilized
- The Ahom frontiers reached to Patkai in the north and river Karatoya in the north-east.
- Suhenpha (1488-93) faced the rebellion of the Nagas & the Kacharis
- Though the revolts were suppressed, it reflected the internal feuds among the nobles that had started since the close of the 15th century.
- Another important feature of the Ahoms was their conflict with the Koches under Biswa Singha.
- However, by 1565 Ahoms emerged most powerful in the region and the division of the Koches in 1581

- Mughal expeditions to the Ahom country began in 1612 & continued throughout the period.
- In between, Mir Jumla succeeded in capturing the Ahom capital Gargaon (1662-63).
- But after Mir Jumla's death, in the battle of Saraighat (1671-72) Raja Ram Singh, sent by Aurangzeb, faced a crushing defeat at the hands of the Ahoms.
- However, the Mughal onslaught in the region continued till 1682 when finally Aurangzeb's attention shifted towards Deccan.

PATRA-MANTRI NOBLES

- In the Ahom polity, nobles played an important role.
- The original counsellors, who accompanied Sukapha were Buragohain & Borgohain.
- Later, Borpatra Gohain was added by Siu-hum-mong (1497-1539)
- Pratapa Singha (1603-1641) further added Barbarua & Barphukan thus constituted the council of five, the patra-mantri.
- The first three were hereditary & permanent and were continued to be chosen from the descendents of those who accompanied Sukapha.

PAIK SYSTEM

- There were also officials like Phukans, Rajkhowas & Baruas. Their position was neither hereditary nor permanent.
- Another important component of the Ahom administration was the paiks.
- Paik system was their socio-economic cum military organization.
- The adult males between 16-50 age-group of the entire Ahom community were arranged as Karni paiks (Lower Paiks)
- They could be employed as civil or military labourers or soldiers.
- There were higher grade paiks i.e. chamua/visayas
- They were organized into khel means a unit of paiks performing specific duties.
- Later khel were organized on the basis of paiks of a specific area or a group/clan headed by a phukan or a barua.
- Further they were grouped into a got which was a unit of four paiks & out of each got one person was to serve the state at one particular point of time.
- Thus paik system was the key to the centralization of the political authority & socio-political organization of the Ahoms.

ODISHA

- On the eve of the Turkish invasion, Orissa was under the control of the Eastern Gangas.
- The Tabaqat-i Nasiri records that Bakhtiyar Khalji had sent two brothers, Muhammad and Ahmad, to invade Jajnagar (modern Orissa) immediately before his death (1205).
- At that time, Rajaraja III (1197-1211) was the ruler.

- The next invasion took place under Ghiyasuddin Iwaz soon after Ananga Bhima III's accession (1211-1238).
- Though the Tabaqat-i Nasiri applauds the success of Iwaz, the Chatesvara inscription, however, mentions the success of Ananga Bhima III in the clash.
- It appears that perhaps Iwaz's invasion was repulsed
- Narasimha I (1238-1264) also had to face Ikhtiyaruddin Uzbek who got success in his first two attacks, but his later attacks were foiled by Narasimha I.
- By the close of the 13th century (1296), Satgaon fell into the hands of the Delhi Sultans.
- From Bhanudeva III's (1352-1378) reign onwards the power of the Ganga kings started declining.
- Taking advantage of the situation, the neighbouring states invaded Odisha.
- In 1353, Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah of Bengal succeeded in penetrating as far as Chilka Lake & took away huge booty, including elephants.
- Later, the rulers of Delhi, Vijaynagar, Jaunpur and also the Bahmani rulers occasionally plundered Odisha.
- Kapilendra, the minister of Bhanudeva IV (1414-1435), usurped the throne in 1435 and laid the foundation of the Gajapati rule in Odisha.
- By 1464-65, the extent of his domain reached the south Arcot district & eastern part of the Deccan plateau.
- Kapilendra also inflicted humiliating defeat upon Humayun Shah Bahmani when the former attacked Devarakonda & Kapilendra came to the rescue of Devarakonda chief (1459).
- After that, the Bahmani rulers never thought of attacking Telangana so long as Kapilendra remained alive.
- In 1450, Kapilendra also succeeded in defeating Sultan Nasiruddin of Bengal (1442-59) & assumed the title of Gaudesvara.
- In 1453, Rajahmundry (Andhra) also became part of his empire.
- Thus, by 1462, his frontier extended from Hooghly to Kaveri in the south.
- During the closing years of his reign, the Vijayanagara ruler Saluva Narasimha (1485-1491) expelled the Oriyas from the Kaveri basin.
- Soon after Purushottama's accession (1467), the latter tried to regain the Tamil territory but his exploits remained confined to Kanchi only.
- Purushottama had to surrender Kondaveedu (Kondner) & Rajahmundry to the Bahmani ruler Muhammad Shah III (1463-1482).
- So long as Muhammad Shah III was alive, Purushottama did not attempt to reoccupy these territories.

- But soon after his death (1482), Purushottama took Rajahmundry, Kondner by 1484, and Udayagiri from Saluva Narasimha
- Thus, he succeeded in extending the frontiers of his empire from Bhagirathi in the north to river Pennar in the south.
- His son Pratapa Rudra (1497-1540), too, like his father, embarked upon an expansionist policy.
- During his reign, he had to face continuous clashes with the Vijayanagara ruler Krishnadevaraya & the Bengal ruler Hussain Shah.
- Pratap Rudra invaded the Vijayanagara territory but he had to retreat, on account of Bengal Sultan Hussain Shah's invasion of Odisha in 1509
- Krishnadevaraya after his accession (1510) tried to capture back all the Vijayanagara forts from the Gajapati king Pratap Rudra Deva and by 1515 he succeeded in occupying Udayagiri, Kondaveedu and other forts.
- He captured Pratap Rudra's son Virabhadra who later committed suicide at the Vijayanagara capital which forced Pratapa Rudra to sue for peace in 1519 & thus river Krishna became the dividing line between the two.
- He also gave his daughter in marriage to Krishnadevaraya.
- After Pratapa Rudra's death (1540), Gajapati dynasty came to end till 1542

NORTHERN & WESTERN INDIA

KASHMIR

- Geographically, Kashmir is surrounded by Pir Panjal in the south & southwest, Kishtwar valley in the southeast and the north, & Himalayas on the northeast and northwest region
- The Kashmir valley mainly consists of, alluvial plains of Jhelum and its tributaries & plateaus.
- While the alluvial plains are fertile and extensively cultivated, elevated plateaus are less fertile
- Since the Kashmir valley is surrounded by mountain terrain, passes (Zojila, Banihal, Budil, Pir Panjal and Tosamaidan) occupy great importance as they had great impact on the development of political and socio-economic processes.
- Southern passes remain inaccessible till the time of the Lodis; the northern & western passes (Baramulla, Pakhli and Swat) were always accessible.
- The 13th century Kashmir saw an independent but weak kingdom of Jagadeva (1198-1212).
- During his reign, the Damras, a turbulent feudal community, rebelled but were successfully suppressed.
- But his successors Rajadeva (1212-35), Samgramdeva (1235-52) & Ramdeva (1252-56) could not assert their power.
- The Damra lord, Simhadeva (1286- 1301), got the opportunity to usurp the throne - but didn't last long
- Even after Turkish inroads in India, Kashmir remained outside the Turkish sway for about two centuries
- Mahmud of Ghazni made two attempts in 1015 & 1021, but the mighty Himalaya and Hindukush destroyed his plans.
- Kashmir was plundered in 1320 by Mongol commander Dulacha.
- But a severe snow storm dug his grave at Banihal pass itself.
- This attack made a long term impact on the polity of the Kashmir
- It paved the way for the establishment of Turkish rule in Kashmir.
- Raja Sahadeva failed to tackle the Mongol problem & the large-scale destruction & devastation struck by the Mongols, created great dissatisfaction among his subjects.
- This was exploited well by Rinchan, a Prince of Ladakh, to usurp the throne in 1320. Soon after he accepted Islam & assumed the title of Sultan Sadruddin.
- Subsequent murder of Rinchan was followed by a long term internal strifes led to the establishment of the Shah Mir dynasty in Kashmir in 1339 by Shamsuddin I.
- Later, Shah Mir ruler Shahabuddin (1354-1373) tried to put the state on strong footing.
- When Timur invaded India in 1398, he sent his envoy Faulad Bahadur & Zainuddin to Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413) of Kashmir and asked for a huge sum.
- This resulted in large-scale anarchy till Zainul Abidin ascended the throne in 1420
- He ruled the country with utmost vigour for 50 years (d. 1470).
- He extended his frontiers up to Western Tibet & occupied Ladakh.
- But his death created internal feuds & the Sayyids succeeded in assuming power in the 16th century.
- No clashes seem to have occurred between the Delhi Sultans & Kashmir rulers till the Saiyyid rule.
- But strained relations between the two appeared during the reign of Bahlol Lodi.
- A Turkish commander Tatar Khan attacked the Kashmir but he had to face (1486) united force of the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir & met defeat.
- During the closing years of Kashmiri ruler, Muhammad Shah's (Sayyid) reign (1517-1528) Mughals intervened in Kashmir affairs.
- Ibrahim Lodi intervened in the politics of Kashmir, he sent aid to save the throne for Muhammad Shah.
- Babur sent Mughal army under Kuchak Beg and Shaikh Ali Beg to help Sikandar to secure the throne.
- The most important role in the Kashmiri affairs was played by Mirza Haider Dughlat

- He entered into Kashmir in 1532 and then upto his death in 1551 he dominated the Kashmiri politics
- After Mirza's death Chaks again assumed power in the court of Nazuk Shah II (1540-1552).
- Chaks were the only Shia rulers in North India
- Finally, Ghazi Chak displaced Habib Shah of Shah Mir dynasty on the charges of incompetence & laid the foundation of the Chak dynasty in 1561 which lasted till 1586 when finally Akbar occupied Kashmir and absorbed it into his empire.

NORTHWEST: RAJPUTANA

- The present northwest region of India comprises of Rajasthan & a part of Gujarat and Punjab.
- This region consists of a vast Thar desert in which Bikaner, Jaisalmer & Barmer lie.
- In the southwest region are the Kutch plains in which Nagar Parkar state flourished.
- The states of Mewar, Dungarpur, Banswara, Chittoor & Ranthambore flourished at the foothills of the Aravalli ranges.
- Before the rise of tribal monarchies of the Rajputs, there were local tribes, namely, Bhils, Meenas, Mers and Jats. These tribes spread over different regions.
- According to Satish Chandra, "Modern historians are agreed that the Rajputs consisted of miscellaneous groups including Shudra & tribals. Some were Brahmans who took to warfare, and some were from Tribes- indigenous or foreign". Thus, the Rajput community formation was a result of political factors that influenced caste mobility
- Bhils were dominant in Mewar, Dungarpur and Banswara states while Meenas, Mers & Jats were dominant in Jaipur, Jodhpur & Bikaner respectively.
- These local tribes, could not establish the monarchies as founded by other Rajput tribes who came from the northwest of India.
- The Bhatias of Jaisalmer came from the vicinity of the Sutlej river in Punjab & the Sisodias from the Narmada in South India.
- The Kachhawahas moved from Central India (Narwar), & the Rathors of Jodhpur & Bikaner had their links with Kannauj region
- The Rajputs settled around the banks of rivers where they had access to water & rich soil for agricultural purposes.
- After growth in population & disputes over succession the weaker section moved to the sparsely populated regions and had no political authority to resist the settlement of newcomers in their regions.
- The newcomers were advanced in warfare technology & political organisation compared to the aboriginal tribes.
- Since the newcomers were few in numbers, they adopted two-pronged measures to control the local tribe; one was the use of force, & the other was socio-religious measures.

- In the coercive method, first they strengthened their position by erecting forts to show their military prowess.
- The migrant clans established a practice of putting tika on the forehead of every succeeding chief by a local tribal.
- The Bhils of Mewar, the Godara Jats of Bikaner & the Meenas of Jaipur used to put tika on the forehead of the succeeding chiefs of these regions.
- Without performing this ritual, the succeeding chief was not considered as legal head of the region & its people.
- Even after the acceptance of the Mughal suzerainty by the Rajput clans in the 16th-17th century, this social tradition of marking tika by a local tribal continued.
- At the political level, the Mughal emperor exercised this privilege of bestowing succession rights on one of the family members of the ruling clan.
- But at the local level, the social ritual of putting tika by a local tribal was carried out.
- It was symbolic in the sense that while the real power rested with the aboriginal tribe, they had delegated this power to a chief whose duty was to protect the region.
- In the beginning, this social custom was followed to assuage the feelings of the local tribes, but with the passage of time it simply became a ritual.
- Gradually, the Rajputs became the dominant power of the regions & the local tribes simply turned peasants.
- The chiefs in order to maintain soldiers & also for themselves extracted surplus from the peasants.
- A religious colour was given to this act: the surplus was taken as bhog.
- The word bhog signified religious sanctity: the offering made to a deity was also called 'bhog'.
- Moreover, the king was considered a representative of God.
- Therefore, it was the religious duty of the peasants to make offerings (bhog) to the chief
- It further strengthened the authority of the chiefs and the chances of revolt of the local people were minimised.
- It became obligatory for a chief to protect his political authority from outside aggression.
- Thus, the suzerain power enjoyed by a chief within a certain territory gave birth to the tribal-cum-territorial monarchies.

THE SISODIAS

- The most powerful state which emerged in the northwest was the state of Mewar.
- During the 13th century, Jaitra Singh (1213-61) consolidated the Guhila power but failed to face the Turkish menace.
- Alauddin Khalji succeeded in defeating Rana Ratan Singh and occupied Mewar in 1303.

- During the 14th century, internal feuds flared up in Mewar – resulted in the victory of Raja Hamir of Sisodia clan. Thus was laid the foundation of the Sisodia rule in Mewar.
- Hamir's successors extended the domain which included Ajmer, Jahazpur, Mandalgarh, Chhapen, Bundi, Nagor, Jalor and Sambhar
- But it was under Rana Kumbha (1433-68) that the Sisodia power reached its peak.
- During the early years of Rana Kumbha's reign the influence of the Rathore clan increased over the Sisodias.
- But Rana neutralised the Rathor's hold & expanded his territories beyond Rajasthan & reached out to Madhya Pradesh.
- Many times he repulsed the invasions of the Sultans of Malwa & Gujarat
- Rana Kumbha was assassinated by his son Uda who occupied the throne in 1468.
- During the reign of Uda (1468-73) and his successor Raimal (1473-1508), struggle for power continued unabated till Rana Sanga ascended the throne in 1508.
- There was a long drawn struggle between the Mughals and the state of Mewar that began with the battle of Khanwa (1527) between Rana Sanga & Babur & later between Akbar & Rana Pratap (1567, 1576).
- So long as Rana Pratap was alive he resisted the Mughal arms.
- But a treaty was signed between Jahangir & Rana Amar Singh in 1615 thus Mewar could finally be subjugated.

THE GUHILOTS OF VAGAD

- During the 12th century, Samant Singh of Mewar went to Vagad (modern Dungarpur & Banswara).
- But he could not control the region for a long time on account of the intervention of Gujarat.
- When Gujarat's control over Vagad weakened, Jagat Singh, a descendant of Samant, re-established his suzerainty in the 13th century.
- The Guhila hold was consolidated in Vagad during 14th-15th century.
- They had frequent clashes with the Sultans of Gujarat & rulers of Malwa
- Another branch of the Guhilots led by Rana Mokul's second son, Khem Singh, and his descendant Suraj Mal (1473-1528), shifted to Pratapgarh where an independent state arose towards the end of the 15th century.

THE RATHORES OF MARWAR

- The Rathors of Marwar migrated from the region of Kannauj to Pali during the mid-thirteenth century.
- Siha, the Rathor chief, helped the Brahmins of Pali in freeing the region from the incursions of the Mers and the Meenas.

- Subsequently Rathor chiefs succeeded in extending their sway over Idar, Mallani, Mandsaur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Umarkot and Bhinmal.
- But the Rathor power reached its climax during the reign of Rao Chunda (1384-1423) and Rao Jodha (1438-89)
- A coalition by the Bhatias, the Sankhalas & the governor of Multan was formed & killed Chunda in 1423
- Under Rao Jodha, the Rathors emerged as a formidable power.
- He further extended his domain by occupying Merta, Phalodi, Pokhran, Bhadrachal, Sojat, Jaitaran, Siwana, parts of Godwad and Nagaur.
- Later, during Rao Suja's reign (1492-1515) the Rathor power started showing signs of disintegration
- The Rathor power extended towards Jangla (modern Bikaner) under the leadership of Bika, the son of Rao Jodha (1438-89).
- He established matrimonial tie with Rao Shekha of Pugal who gave him his daughter in marriage.
- The Jats of that region also surrendered to him.
- In 1488, he founded the city of Bikaner which, since then, became a centre of power.
- Bika, after his father's death, strived unsuccessfully to occupy the ancestral gaddi of Jodhpur, although he was able to conquer a part of Punjab.
- At the time of his death in 1504, a large territory was under his control.

MINOR PRINCIPALITIES

- There arose a number of small 'chiefdoms' in Rajputana during the 13-15th century.
- Foremost were the Bhatias of Jaisalmer who migrated from Punjab to the Thar desert in the beginning of the 11th century.
- Throughout the 14-15th century, Jaisalmer rulers had frequent clashes with the rulers of Mewar, Multan, Umarkot and Bikaner.
- Next came the Kachhwahas who migrated to Dhundhar from central India.
- They were the feudatories of the Gurjara-Pratihara rulers.
- During the 11th century, the Kachhwaha chief Dulah Rai migrated from Narwar to Eastern Rajasthan where he subdued the Bargujars and laid the foundation of the Dhundhar state (Amber, modern Jaipur).
- The Kachhwahas controlled Amber, Med, Bairat and Shekhawati region during the 15th century.
- However, they rose to prominence during the Mughal period.
- There emerged a number of petty power-centres at Jalore, Ranthambore, Nadol, Sirohi Provincial Kingdoms and Haroti
- Sometime around mid-13th century, the Hadas succeeded in establishing a principality in the Bundi-Kota region.

- They were the feudatories of the Rana of Mewar.
- Samar Singh had defended his territory from the incursion of Balban in 1253-54, but he could not face the might of Alauddin Khilji.
- During the 15th century, the Hadas were frequently confronted by Mewar, Gujarat and Malwa.

REGIONAL STATES & AUTHORITY

- According to Schwartzberg there were frequent & fierce struggle between the Muslim-Muslim & Hindu-Hindu rulers rather than between Hindu-Muslim rulers.
- For example, Gujarat's traditional enemies were Muslim rulers of Malwa and Jaunpur; there was continuous warfare between Kamata & Ahom rulers; Orissa rulers continuously faced the might of the Vijaynagar rulers & in Rajputana quarrels took inter-clan character.
- They never showed unity even in dire needs.
- In fact, in framing political alliances, according to the need of the time and circumstances played more crucial role rather than religion.
- The foremost feature of the 13-15th century polity, was 'vertical' penetration rather than the 'horizontal' one, i.e. horizontally the area under their control was smaller compared to the Sultanate but within their area of influence they 'vertically' penetrated deep into the rural areas.
- Under regional rulers, the maximum area lay outside their effective control; even where they exercised a good measure of control, there, too, they often faced some difficulty.

THREE DOMAINS OF STATE CONTROL

- i) Where land revenue was extracted from the peasants directly through revenue officials, the state's influence and control was of a high order.
- ii) Areas where revenue was collected through local chiefs, and the state's control was still good enough.
- iii) Areas where the states were satisfied with the tribute only, here, the degree of control was minimal.
- This relationship had direct bearing on regional rulers' relations with the nobles, tributary chiefs or rajas and local aristocracy

NOBLES & ARISTOCRACY

- The nobles played a very crucial role in the 13-15th century regional politics.
- They hailed from heterogeneous elements, including both the Hindus as well as the Muslims.
- They used to receive high sounding titles like khan-i azam, khan-i muazzam, mahapatradhipatra, etc
- These nobles used to receive their salaries in the form of iqta (revenue assignment in lieu of salary); in turn, they maintained law and order, helped in revenue extraction & in times of need supplied armed personnel to the king.
- Their position was not hereditary & they owed their power and position to the king's favour, but

gradually their assignments assumed hereditary character

- Rajputana was an exception where they owed their position primarily to their being the member of the clan; the king's favour was only secondary.
- The power of some of the nobles was such that they became kingmakers, and the kings became tools in their hands

LANDED ARISTOCRACY

- In the regional kingdoms landed aristocracy played an important role in revenue collection and maintenance of law and order.
- Geopolitically, they can be divide them into two categories: (i) landed aristocracy located in the peripheral (frontier) area. In this category come the 'chiefs' or 'rajas'— the so-called intermediary zamindars; (ii) landed class who lived within the mainland – the so-called primary zamindars.
- The first category was composed of the most refractory elements. They kept on switching over their allegiance from one state to another.
- Landed aristocracy that lived in the mainland was generally under greater pressure and closer scrutiny.
- The characteristic feature of the regional state was that mostly the rulers were considered as aliens; they did not have local base.
- Their prime need was to create a loyal class of rural aristocracy to counterbalance the existing class.
- Turkish invasions & clan rivalries within the Rajputana kingdoms resulted in large-scale migration of the Rajputs towards Malwa & Gujarat.
- The rulers of Malwa & Gujarat thus had to face stiff resistance in this process, in Gujarat, drastic changes were brought about by Sultan Ahmad Shah I by introducing the wanta system.
- In Bengal, Bakhtiyar Khilji at the outset had distributed all the land among his military commanders & made them muqti.
- The sufis & ulama were encouraged to settle down in rural areas to establish muslim hold for which lavish grants (madad-i ma'ash) were made to them.

SUCCESSOR STATES IN THE NORTH

- A popular argument that , "the regional kingdoms are considered as 'successor' states of the Sultanate & their founders were assumed to be either governors or officials under sultanate"
- This was true in some cases but cannot be applied invariably.
- Zafar Khan, Dilawar Khan and Malik Sarwar, the founders of the regional kingdoms of Gujarat, Malwa and Jaunpur respectively, served as governors under the Tughlaq Sultans.
- Bengal rulers also had direct and continuous links with the Sultanate
- But the Rajputana states, though always a prey to the Sultanate onslaught, never accepted the complete hegemony of the Sultans.

- Whenever they got opportunity, they threw off the Sultanate Provincial Kingdoms
- Under the Sultanate pressure, the Sindh rulers accepted the suzerainty of Iltutmish, Muhammad Tughlaq and Firoz Tughlaq, but for all practical purposes Sumirah and Sammah rulers ruled independently.
- The development of Assam (Kamata and Ahom), Kashmir and Odisha kingdoms was also entirely independent of the Sultanate.

SUCCESSION ISSUES

- Islam has not provided any rules for succession. So, under the Delhi Sultanate principles of election, nomination and hereditary succession co-existed.
- In fact 'force' was the main arbiter. Thus, ample opportunity for maneuvering was available.
- Like the Sultanate, in the regional states, whether ruled by a Hindu or a Muslim, there were no set rules of succession.
- Hence, there were always conspiracies and intrigues among various groups in which sometimes women also played a significant role.
- In Malwa, the principle of nomination took precedence over law of primogeniture.
- In Jaunpur, 'force' was the deciding factor– Hussain Shah Sharqi usurped the throne in 1458 after killing his elder brother Muhammad Shah Sharqi.
- In Gujarat, accession of Ahmad Shah was contested by his uncle Maudud Sultan (Firuz Khan).
- In Bengal, the role of nobles was more important and they acted as kingmakers. Shamsuddin Ahmad Shah was killed by his slaves Shadi Khan and Nasir Khan (1435).
- By 1487, Malik Andil, an Abyssinian noble killed Jalaluddin Fath Shah, and usurped the throne.
- In Rajputana, too, the law of primogeniture was not strictly adhered to.
- In the case of the Guhilas and Sisodias, after Rana Lakha's death, instead of Chunda (the eldest son), the throne passed into the hands of his minor son Rana Mokal
- Similarly, Uda usurped the throne by killing his father Rana Kumbha.
- In Kashmir, too, no succession rules could develop. As early as 1323, Shah Mir, usurped power following his master's death.
- Zainul Abidin himself, assumed power after killing his elder brother Ali Shah in 1420.
- In Assam, among the Ahoms, the council of great nobles – Bar Gohain and Burah Gohain played an important role in appointing and nominating kings

- It was only in the kingdom of Odisha where succession rules were respected under the Ganga rulers
- But Gajapati rulers did not continue the succession policy of Gangas .
- After Kapilendra's death, his younger son Purushottama usurped the throne

LEGITIMIZATION

- But, in the Islamic tradition there was no legal sanction for the Sultan's authority & the Caliph was the political head of the Muslims.
- The Delhi Sultans used to recite khutba in Caliph's name and inscribe his name on their coins to get legal sanction for their authority.
- For the regional states, the legitimization was important for masses & for competitors, as for every accession was usually preceded by clashes and wars
- Legitimization of regional states, situated far away to get the legal sanction from the, the ulama and the sufis
- To pacify the orthodox Muslim opinion, the rulers of Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal & Jaunpur showed their eagerness to get the support of the ulama and sufis by offering them lucrative offices and revenue-free land grants
- They also used to pay frequent visits to the khanqahs (hospices) of the Muslim saints.
- The legal authority of the Caliph was explicitly recognized by the Bengal rulers Iwaz Khalji, Mughisuddin, Shamsuddin Firuz, etc. who all engraved the Abbasid Caliph's name on their coins.
- The Malwa ruler Hoshang Shah made special efforts to encourage the ulama and mashaikhs to come and settle in Malwa.
- Mahmud Khalji received khilat (robe of honour) from the Abbasid Caliph at Egypt.
- It helped greatly in enhancing the prestige of the Malwa ruler.
- In Kashmir, the sufis enjoyed great honour and favour of the Kashmiri rulers.
- In Rajputana, the rulers lavishly distributed revenue-free lands to the Brahmans to win over their favour to justify their various political acts.
- In Odisha, Lord Jagannath was believed to be the real ruler. Therefore, Brahmans gained great political influence.
- They legitimized the usurpation of the Ganga throne by Kapilendra Deva (1435) and the accession of Purusottama Deva to the exclusion of Hamir.