

CHAPTER-II

KINGS AND KINGDOMS

2MARKS QUESTIONS:

1: Which new dynasties emerged after the 7th century in subcontinent?

Answer:

Many new dynasties emerged after the 7th century like:

- Gujara-Pratiharas
- Rashtrakutas
- Palas
- Cholas
- Chahamanas or Chauhan

2: How did the Rashtrakutas gained power and independent?

Answer:

Rashtrakutas became powerful in the following manner:

- Rashtrakutas were subordinates to the Chalukyas of Karnataka.
- In the mid-eighth century Dantidurga, a Rashtrakuta chief, overthrew his Chalukyan overlord.

- He performed a ritual called Hiranya-garbha with the help of Brahmanas.
- This ritual was, then, considered to lead the rebirth of the sacrificer as Kshatriya, even if he was not Kshatriya by birth.

3: What titles did the new kings adopt?

Answer:

- Many of the new kings adopted high-sounding titles.
- These titles were Maharaja-adhiraja meaning great king, Overlord of kings, Tribhuvana-chakravartin meaning lord of the three worlds and so on.
- However, in spite of such claims, they often shared power with their samantas as well as with associations of peasants, traders and Brahmanas.

4: How were resources used in the period 7th to 12th centuries?

Answer:

The resources were used in the following ways:

- To finance the king's establishment.
- In the construction of temples and forts.
- To fight wars, which were in turn expected to lead to the acquisition of wealth in the form of plunder.
- To access to land as well as trade routes.

5: Who collected the revenue?

Answer:

- The functionaries for collecting revenue were generally recruited from influential families.
- Their positions were often hereditary.
- This was true about the army as well.
- In many cases, close relatives of the king held these positions.

6: What were prashastis?

Answer:

- Prashastis were the certificates which contained details that might not be literally true.
- They told how rulers wanted to depict themselves—as valiant, victorious warriors.
- These were composed by learned Brahmanas, who occasionally helped in the administration.

7: How were Brahmanas rewarded?

Answer:

Kings often rewarded Brahmanas with grants of land.

- These were recorded on copper plates.
- The plates were given to those who received the land.

8: What happened when Samantas gained power?

Answer:

- When Samantas gained power and wealth, they declared themselves to be maka-samanta, maha-mandaleshvara (the great lord of a 'circle' or region).
- Sometimes they asserted their independence from their overlords.
- Examples:
- In the mid-eighth century Dantidurga, a Rashtrakuta chief, overthrew his Chalukya overlord and performed a ritual called hiranya-garbha meaning the golden womb.

4MARKS QUESTIONS:

1: How did new rulers gain power?

Answer:

All the ruling dynasties were based in a specific region.

- At the same time, they tried to control other areas.
- One particularly prized area was the city of Kanauj in the Ganga valley.
- For centuries, rulers belonging to the Gujara-Pratihara, Rashtrakuta and Pala dynasties fought for control over Kanauj.
- As there were three 'parties' in this long drawn conflict, historians often describe it as the "tripartite struggle".
- Rulers also tried to demonstrate their power and resources by building large temples.
- When they attacked one another's kingdoms; they often chose to target temples, which were sometimes extremely rich.

2: Who was Mahmud Ghazni? How did he expand his kingdom?

Answer:

- One of the best known of such rulers is Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, Afghanistan.
- He ruled from 997 to 1030 A.D.
- He extended control over parts of Central Asia, Iran and the north-western part of the subcontinent.

- He Raided the subcontinent almost every year—his targets were wealthy temples including Somnath, Gujarat.
- He used most of the wealth to create a splendid capital city at Ghazni.
- He was interested in finding out more about the people he conquered.
- He entrusted a scholar named al-Biruni to write an account of the subcontinent.
- This Arabic work, known as the Kitab al-Hind, remains an important source for historians.
- He consulted Sanskrit scholars to prepare this account.

3: Describe the other kings who engaged themselves in warfare?

Answer:

- Other kings who engaged themselves in warfare were the Chahamanas.
- They were later known as the Chauhans.
- They ruled over the region around Delhi and Ajmer.
- They attempted to expand their control to the west and the east, where they were opposed by the Chalukyas of Gujarat and the Gahadavalas of western Uttar Pradesh.
- The best-known Chahamanas ruler was Prithviraja III (1168-1192).
- He defeated Afghan ruler named Sultan Muhammad Ghori in 1191.
- He lost to him in the very next year, in 1192.

7MARKS QUESTIONS:

1: Describe the splendid temples and the bronze sculptures of the Cholas.

Answer:

Splendid temples and bronze sculptures of the Cholas:

- Rajaraja and Rajendra built big temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram.
- They are architectural and sculptural marvels.
- Chola temples often became the centre of settlements around them.
- These were centres of craft production.
- Temples were also endowed with land by both rulers and others.
- The produce of this land went to maintain all the specialists who worked at the temple and very often lived near it.
- They included priests, garland makers, cooks, sweepers, musicians, dancers, etc.
- In other words, temples were not only places of worship; but also the hub of economic, social and cultural life.
- Amongst the crafts associated with temples, the making of bronze images was the most important.
- Chola bronze images are amongst the finest in the world.
- Most images were of deities, sometimes images were made of devotees also.

2: How did the Cholas rise to power?

Answer:

- A minor chiefly family known as the Muttaraiyar held power in the Kaveri delta.
- The family was subordinate to the Pallava kings of Kanchipuram.
- Vijayalaya belonged to the ancient chiefly family of the Cholas from Uraiyur.
- He captured the Kaveri delta from the Muttaraiyar in the middle of the ninth century.
- He built the town of Thanjavur and a temple for goddess Nishumbhasudini there.
- The successors of Vijayalaya conquered neighbouring regions.
- Thus the kingdom grew in size and power.
- They won the Pandyan and the Pallava territories to the south and north and made these areas part of this kingdom.
- Rajaraja I was considered the most powerful Chola ruler.
- He became king in 985 A.D. and expanded control over most of these areas.
- He also reorganised the administration of the empire.

3: How did the Cholas rise to power?

Answer:

A minor chiefly family known as the Muttaraiyar held power in the Kaveri delta. They were subordinate to the Pallava kings of Kanchipuram. Vijayalaya, who belonged to the ancient chiefly family of the Cholas from Uraiyur, captured the delta from the Muttaraiyar in the middle of the ninth century. He built the town of Thanjavur and a temple for goddess Nishumbhasudini there. The successors of Vijayalaya conquered neighbouring regions and the kingdom grew in size and power. The Pandyan and the Pallava territories to the south and north were made part of this kingdom. Rajaraja I, considered the most powerful Chola ruler, became king in 985 and expanded control over most of these areas. He also reorganised the administration of the empire. Rajaraja's son Rajendra I continued his policies and even raided the Ganga valley, Sri Lanka and countries of Southeast Asia, developing a navy for these expeditions.

4: Write a note on Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni ?

Answer:

Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni was a ruler of Afghanistan from 997 to 1030. He was an ambitious king and so made all efforts to extend his control over far off regions. He extended his control over parts of Central Asia, Iran and northwestern part of the subcontinent. Almost every year he raided the subcontinent targeting wealthy temples. The temple of Somnath in Gujarat was the worst victim of his raids. Much of the wealth he carried away was used to create a splendid capital city at Ghazni. Ghazni was fond of knowing more about the people he conquered. He entrusted a scholar named al-Biruni to write an account of the subcontinent. The al- Biruni's account, an Arabic work titled as Kitab al-Hind, is still an important source for historians.

5: How did the Cholas rise to power? Trace out the role of Rajaraja I in this rise?

Answer:

Cholas belonged to a minor chiefly family known as Muttaraiyar that held power in the Kaveri delta. They worked as subordinate to the Pallava kings of Kanchipuram. Vijayalaya, a member of the ancient chiefly family of the Cholas from Uraiyur, captured the delta from the

Muttaraiyar in the middle of the ninth century. 'Hie town of Thanjavur and the temple for goddess Nishmbhasudini are some of his great creations. Vijayalaya's successors conquered neighboring regions and the kingdom grew in size and power. The Pandyan and the Pallava territories to the south and north were made part of this kingdom. Rajaraja I was the most powerful Chola ruler. He became king in 985 and expanded control over most of these areas. He was well known for the reorganization of the administration of his empire. His son Rajendra I continued his policies and even raided the Ganga valley, Sri Lanka and countries of Southeast Asia, developing a navy for these expeditions. The big temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram built by them are architectural marvels.

MULTIPLE CHOICES ON KINGS AND KINGDOMS

1: Many new dynasties emerged after the _____century?

- a) 9th
- b) 10th
- c) 7th
- d) 5th

2: By the seventh century there were _____in different regions of the subcontinent.

- a) Big ruler
- b) Dacoits
- c) big landlords or warrior chiefs
- d) Priests

3: Maharaja-adhiraja stands for _____?

- a) Great king
- b) Lord of the three worlds
- c) The creator
- d) The protector

4: Tribhuvana-chakravartin stands for ____?

- a) Great king
- b) Lord of the three worlds
- c) The creator
- d) The protector

5: Prashastis were composed by _____ ?

- a) Administrators
- b) Historians
- c) Teachers
- d) Brahmanas

6: What was the other name of the great lord of a 'circle' or region?

- a) Samantas
- b) Subordinates
- c) Maha-mandaleshvara
- d) King

7: Which new dynasty developed in eastern part of the country?

- a) Cholas
- b) Palas
- c) Chahamanas
- d) Rashtrakutas

8: Who were expected to bring gifts for their kings in the 17th century?

- a) Samantas
- b) Overlords
- c) Maha-samantas
- d) Maha-mandaleshvara

9: From whom was the Revenue also collected?

- a) Traders
- b) Merchants
- c) Peasants
- d) Artisans

10: What is Vetti?

- a) Rent
- b) Tax
- c) Revenue
- d) None

MCQS Answers:

| <u>Q. No's</u> | <u>Answers</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Q1 | C |
| Q2 | C |
| Q3 | A |
| Q4 | B |
| Q5 | D |
| Q6 | C |
| Q7 | B |
| Q8 | A |
| Q9 | A |
| Q10 | B |

FILL IN THE BLANKS ON KINGS AND KINGDOMS

1: As samantas gained _____ and _____, they declared themselves to be _____.

Answer: Power and wealth, maha-samanta, mahamandaleshvara

2: The best-known Chahamanas ruler was Prithviraja III, who defeated an Afghan ruler named _____ in 1191.

Answer: Sultan Muhammad Ghori

3: Many of these new kings adopted high-sounding titles such as _____ and _____.

Answer: maharaja-adhiraja and tribhuvana-chakravartin

4: _____ were composed by learned Brahmanas.

Answer: Prashastis

CLASS-VII-HISTORY

5: Tang dynasty remained in power between the _____ and _____ century.

Answer: seventh and tenth

6: The evidence of the land grants were found to be recorded on _____plate

Answer: copper

SUMMARY ON KINGS AND KINGDOMS

There were a lot of new dynasties that existed right after the seventh century came to an end. By the time this century came by, there were more warrior chiefs and landlords who ruled the various regions which were a part of the subcontinent.

New Kings and Kingdoms include the subtopics New and Old Terminologies, Historians and their Sources, New Social and Political Groups, Region and Empire, Old and New Religions, and Thinking about Time and Historical Periods.