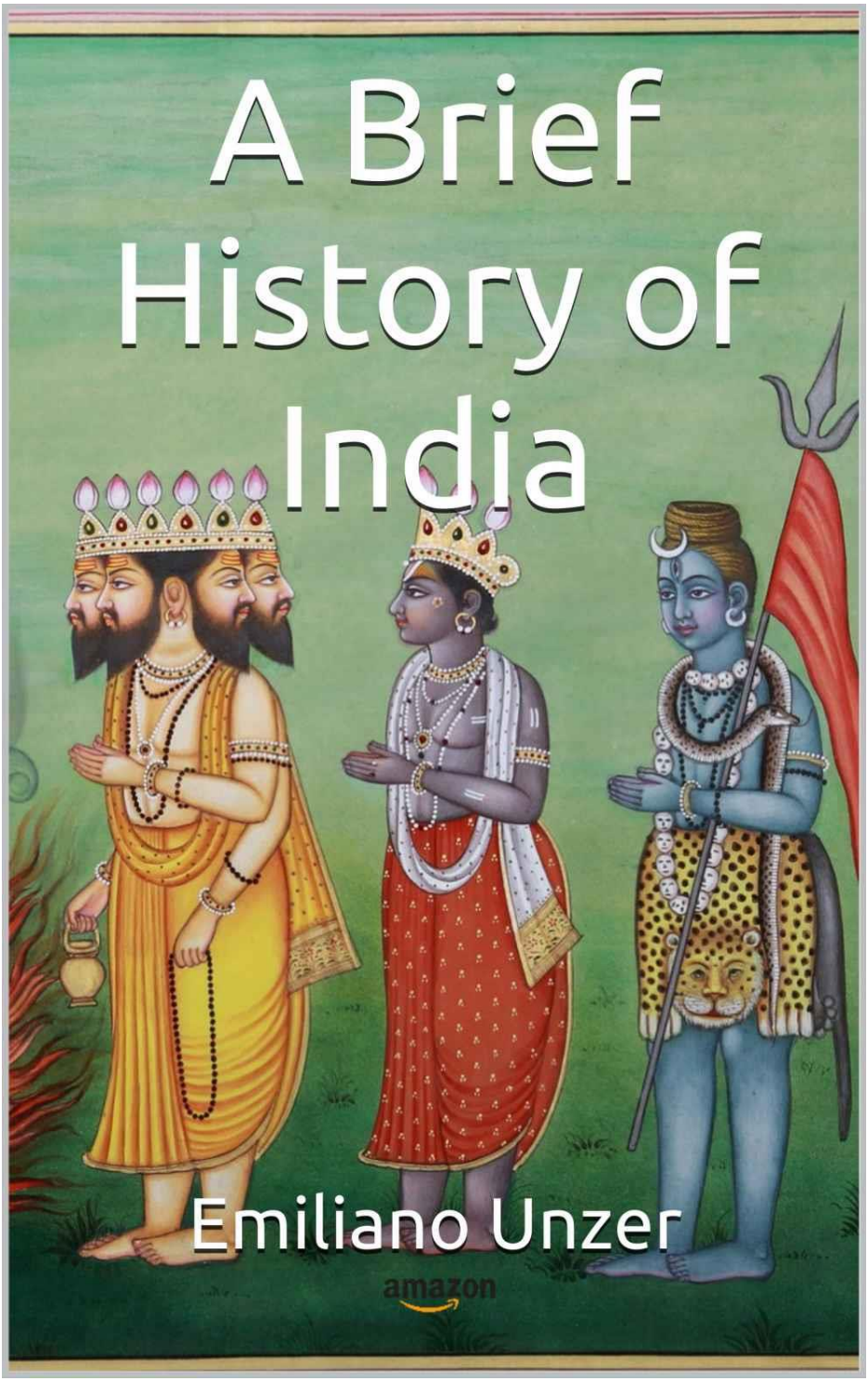
A Brief History of India



Emiliano Unzer

amazon

A Brief History of India

Emiliano Unzer

Emiliano Unzer

Amazon Publishing

Seattle New York Grand Haven London Luxembourg Paris Madrid Milan
Munich Columbia San Bernadino

Amazon Corporate Headquarters
410 Terry Ave N, Seattle, WA 98109, USA

Published in the United States of America by Amazon Publishing

www.amazon.com

First published in 2019

U141a Unzer, Emiliano, 1977 –
A Brief History of India / Columbia & San Bernadino, USA: Amazon, 2019.

269 p.: 23 cm
Includes bibliographical notes.
ISBN 9781082429996 (pbk)

1. India – History 2. South Asia – History 3. India - Civilization
I. Unzer, Emiliano. II. Title.

UDC: 954

ISBN 9781082429996 (pbk)

Cover illustration: *Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma adoring Kali Tantra*. India, Himachal Pradesh, Basohli, c. 1740.

To the Indian people.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

How do we define India? In historical terms, India originated in the Indus River Valley, today on Pakistani territory. In cultural and religious terms, India was home to Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism among others, and sheltered the Zoroastrians from the Persian lands to the west, as well as the place where Islam flourished since the 7th century through Gujarat and Sindh in northwest India. In geographical terms the country since 1947 is bordered to the north with Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and China. With ex-Burma, today Myanmar, to the east. Also the proximity to the island of Sri Lanka to the south. Or would India be its enormous diaspora community in the world estimated at more than 30 million? Is India simply Hindu that makes up almost 80% of its population? If so, would the Hindus be only the Brahmins, followers of Vaishnavism or Shaivism, or other popular currents? And the large Hindu communities in Nepal, Mauritius, Bali and other parts of the world? Are they India as well? And the approximately 14% of the Indian population claiming to be Muslims, around 180 million people, the second largest Muslim community in the world, are not they also Indians? And the Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains and Christian community in India? In linguistic terms, India has more than 20 official languages, more than 1,500 dialects and ethnic groups. Who would be more Indian than the others?

The concept of India, therefore, is much more complex than it seems to be at first glance. In order to understand this stunning and kaleidoscopic country, we must seek its history that may give us some insight into how India has formed, consolidated, influenced and assimilated its policies, identities, values and cultures. India is perhaps much more a civilizational concept than a mere expression defined only in geographical, religious and

ethnic terms.

In a sense, foreigners were always part of India's history. The most accessible land passage to India is located to the northwest by the westernmost portion of the Himalaya Range, the Hindu Kush in northern Afghanistan, through the so-called Khyber Pass where many nomads from the Asian steppes came and invaded the fertile plains of the valley of the Indus River, the Ganges and Yamuna. This is where Islam came predominantly to Indian lands from the Afghans and when eventually occurred the infamous plunder by Mahmud de Ghazni (971 - 1030) to the Shiva Hindu Temple of Somnath in Gujarat in 1024. And then they were succeeded by the invasions of Central Asians, such as the Timurids under Tamerlane (1336 - 1405), the Turks and Mughals, from the middle of the 16th century. The Mughals settled in northern India after the victory over the Turkish of the Lodis in Delhi (at the Battle of Panipat in 1526) and founded a unified empire under Muslim political and military command - and who built the magnificent Mausoleum of the Taj Mahal (1632 - 1653) and the Red Fort complex in Agra (1648) as unmistakable legacies - to the predominance of the British from the mid-18th century onwards.

The history of the Indian subcontinent met with some novelty with the arrival of Europeans from the late 15th century on the Malabar Coast. This innovative element, according to Pannikar[1], was the armed use of oceanic vessels. The Indian Ocean had always been the scene of intense international trade between Arabs, Malay Indonesians, Chinese, and Indian Gujaratis and Sindhi merchants. Their activities were generally carried out in a peaceful manner, aiming to ensure the continuity of commercial practice until the arrival of the Portuguese caravels, heavily armed vessels and with an unrestricted military attitude, threats of kidnapping and seizure of valuable cargo at sea, practices previously thought to be unfair to the ongoing of commerce. Subsequently, European predominance over India will become

apparent with the political and military performance of British agents of the British East India Company, despite the broad Indian resistance organized by leaders such as Baji Rao (1700 - 1740) and Tipu Sultan (1750 - 1799). In 1857, after massive Indian rebellions, the authorities of London and Calcutta decided to directly review and administer India as a colony of the British Crown. In these proposals for administrative reforms was created the Indian Civil Service, an effervescent cauldron of established Indian civil servants where ideas flourished that would later inspire the independence movement in the 20th century.

But let's go back in time to the Indus Valley four thousand years ago...

'How can the mind take hold of such a country?'

- E. M. Forster (1879 - 1970), *A Passage to India*.

3rd Millennium BCE – 1st Millennium CE

Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro

In northwest India and eastern Pakistan some four thousand years ago, there were plentiful and perennial rivers that provided regular access to potable water, vital for the sustenance of animals and humans. This land is called Punjab, "five rivers," for the rivers that flow to the Indus. And from that came, through the chroniclers and foreign travellers over the next centuries, the name to the region, "India".[2]

It was then in the Indus Valley that the first traces of planned and permanent settlements of human communities dating to around 2200 BCE were found. In places now referred to as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro an advanced system of urban and sanitary planning was to be found, with wide paved streets and places that seems like public baths and water tanks.

In these two places we can therefore identify the first evidence of a sedentary organized society with some centralized control and the first civilizational manifestations of South Asian past. There was a requirement, given the advanced planning of the sites, of a centralized command and a minimum of social specialization essential for the planning and execution of constructions that would have served the public good - such as water reserves for times of drought - or a rich and powerful member of society. But these are still conjectures, for everything

still remains a mystery.

There are other material vestiges that we can infer about these ancient societies. A stone sculpture, now in a museum in Karachi, Pakistan, shows us a person in elaborate robes and with a serene and imposing appearance that signs a prominent person, perhaps a priest. In another image, a person is portrayed in a peculiar position, perhaps meditative, indicating remote origins of the yogic schools. And for the surrounding wild symbols, he may even be a deity, a predecessor of Shiva, an Indian god characteristically close to the forest and Animalia, in one of his attributes as Pashupati, 'Lord of the Beasts' or Rudra, god of the wild and animals

There is evidence of continued settlement elsewhere. And they are more backward in time, as in Mehrgarh in Baluchistan, west Indian towards present-day Iranian. In this place dates go from the seventh millennium BCE, in the transition of nomadic life to sedentary one. In Amri, in Sind, also in western India, the dating is around 3600 BCE, and in this it seems to indicate that the development of its pottery, for example, took place in autochthonous terms without, therefore, being influenced by other people. Something extraordinary, as there is evidence of ceramics and other products originating from this region found even more to the west, in Mesopotamia, southern Iraq, and to the north, in the steppes of Central Asia.

From 2500 BCE onwards other places like Kalibangan, indicate that the pattern of construction converged in the same pattern and style of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, possibly indicating a united political confederation. And already at the end of the same millennium, in Harappa, there are clear signs of walls and forts for defensive measures.

On the hypotheses of Indus Valley culture decline, most archaeologists agree to situate a period between 1800 BCE to 1700 BCE. Some scholars[3] point to the increasing invasions of foreigners from the north, called Aryans[4], with use of bronze

weapons and horses sustaining their arguments in the findings of tools and utensils that were suddenly abandoned in excavated sites. Another factor considered was environmental changes. With the alteration, large floods in the Indus Valley permanently altered the course of the rivers, generating soil erosion and drought of the climate in the region.

The Aryans

Around the second millennium BCE a migratory wave of people from Central Asia began to rise in the regions of northwest India and the Punjab. With these arrived copper and bronze weapons and tools, horses and carriages. The origin of these Aryan people, *aryas* in Sanskrit[5], is still cause for lively controversy between historians and archaeologists. Some point to the vast steppe of the central Asian region, others in the southern Russian regions or even further west in Europe[6]. The great British scholar Sir William Jones, in his classic study[7] on Sanskrit writing, sought to establish the origin of this culture with the European languages. Thus arguing an alleged inherent domination of the Indo-European peoples over other Asian peoples, a way of legitimizing British domination over India in the late 18th century.

Relation of the Aryan peoples to what is recited by the oldest of the four sacred Vedic epics, the Rig Veda, is not known. In this, no urban form of social organization is described, something that was already remarkable in places like in Harappa. Place where, from 2000 BCE to 1400 BCE, the Arians gradually began to mingle with the local elements. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to consider an extended period of contact and miscegenation between the earlier pre-Aryan elements in the northwest of India with the arrival of Aryan peoples. Interpenetrations that will combine Harappan elements of worship to divinities and animals, as seen in the figure of proto-Shiva, with the Aryan worship of horse, fire and lightning (as in the Agni and Indra gods,

respectively). And then a relationship of domination and social differentiation was introduced, in hierarchical social castes (*varna*) with the dominant Aryan sectors, priests (Brahmin) and warriors (Kshatriya), to prevail over other (Shudra) of society[8]. In the coexistence of times, the Aryans were ordering the social hierarchy according to their position of domination.

The Vedas

The set of Vedic epics is the most important source of information for the Arians, and is the oldest basis of beliefs, practices, values and languages of India. In his consideration of the importance of the Vedas, Rabindranath Tagore[9] (1861-1941) thus described them:

> A poetic testament of a people's collective reaction to the admiration and respect of existence. A people of vigorous and simple imagination that was awakened early in civilization to a sense of the inexhaustible mystery that is implicit in life.[10]

These epics are composed of four categories of texts. The Mantras, which deal with sacred words, the Brahmanas who order the sacrificial rituals, the Upanishads (Vedanta) which treats with esotericism and philosophy, and the Sutras, ritualistic instructions. These categories, according to Kulke & Rothermund[11], express historical stages of the Aryans from seminomadic life on the Asian steppes to their gradual establishment and incorporation of sedentary urban elements in the Indus Valley and later in the plains east of the Ganges River[12].

The most sacred ensemble transmitted only among the priests (Brahmins), are composed of four groups: the Rig Veda (the oldest of them), the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda and the Atharva Veda. The Rig is the most complete and valuable historical source we have of Aryan society, since it is thought to have been composed

around 1300 to 1000 BC. The early Rig books deal with philosophical and sacred matters, as well as with social and family orders. The later books of the Rig epic have as subjects politics and war, when it addresses the clashes between the Aryans and towns of the Ganges River valley. In these, there are reports of non-Aryan peoples with dark skin, called *Dasas* or *Dasyus* that will be gradually incorporated, expelled or dominated. In the numerous war campaigns described, there are Vedic hymns of the Rig that glorify one of the most prominent Aryan deities, the god of fire, lightning and destroyer of forts (*purandara*), Indra:

> Armed with his thunderbolt and confident in his feat, he wandered breaking Dasas' forts.
> Throw your javelin, (...) O Thunder, on the Dasyus; increase the power and glory of the Aryans, O Indra.
>
> (Rig Veda, Book 1, Hymn CIV)[13]
>
> Indra, (...) the destroyer of the strong, dispersed the hosts of those who dwelt in the darkness (...).
> To him surrendered ... to Indra in the battle turmoil.
> When in his arms he extended the thunderbolt, he massacred the Dasyus and knocked down their iron forts.
>
> (Rig Veda, book 2, Hymn XX)[14]

The expansion of the Aryan people occurred in subsequent stages from the region of Central Asia to the northwest of India, and towards the east along the Ganges and Yamuna River plains, a site of exceptional fertility for the planting of crops such as rice and propitious for herds of domesticated animals such as cattle. Along with the rivers of the Punjab region, the importance of rivers, cultivation of agricultural crops and livestock seem to have gained prominence among these previously seminomadic peoples of the steppes. Just as revealed to us from the Rig Veda:

When two opposing armies enter into battle
for seeds and proles, waters, cows or corn of the earth.

(Rig Veda, book 6, Hymn 25)[15]

The sedentary life therefore began from the middle of the first millennium BC among the Aryans, with the establishment of towns and cities, and cultivated fields uncovered from the wild condition resulting from the use of iron tools (and weapons). Trade and handicraft gained prominence in Aryan society, a new caste emerged, the Vaishyas. And there was, at the same time, an increase in philosophical reflections and concerns about life, society and the universe.

In these settled societies, several Aryan political entities began to emerge in the region of the Ganges-Yamuna valley, among them the Bharatas and the Purus that united like the clan of the Kurus and prevailed over other towns of the land, from then on to be called Kurukshetra, 'Home of the Kurus'. Besides, it is the glories and features of the Kurus that are recited in the Mahabharata epic, as in the battle of Bharatas, supposedly occurred around 950 BCE, fought between two great Kuru descendant groups, the Kauravas and Pandavas.

The Aryans have blended over the centuries with other local ethnicities, resulting in an increasingly Indo-Aryan society. In times of peace as revealed to us in the Vedic texts, a social distinction is made clear between those free (Vish) and those noble warriors (Kshatriya) among whom a king (Rajan) was selected. Priests (Brahmins) are also mentioned as distinct group in the texts. Non-Aryan people subjected to manual labour were demeaned in an outcaste group (Shudra). All were systematized in castes, (Varna) and this established order appears in Vedic texts:

When the gods prepared the sacrifice of Purusha[16]
His oil was spring, the gift was autumn, summer was wood
When they divided Purusha, how many portions did they make?
What do they call his mouth, his arms? What they call his thighs and feet?
The Brahmin was his mouth, from both arms was the Raj made [Kshatriya]
His thighs became the Vaishyas, from his feet the Shudra was produced.
(Rig Veda, Book 10, Hymn 90)[17]

Social stratification was explicit in the late Vedic period, that is, around 1100 BCE to 500 BCE, with a requirement for social and political order to consolidate the gains and power over the submitted. In this sense, the power resided in the hand of a *Gramani*, of an Aryan warrior leader coming, therefore, from the caste of warriors, Kshatriya. Priests, Brahmins, along with the elite were also at the top of society, a sign that among the Aryans since seminomadic times prominence and influence was reserved to spiritual leaders in society. This is attested by the annual ceremony of a king, the *rajasuya*, who was to be guided and conducted according to sacrificial rituals and precepts kept by priests.

Below these came the artisans and workers, carpenters, potters and blacksmiths, usually coming from submitted societies. Compounds of people with darker complexion. They are mentioned in the Vedic texts for their importance in the maintenance of carriages and the manufacture of weapons and instruments. Many were disregarded by the elite, who viewed them as Shudras, the lowest social stratum, indicating their marginal position in Vedic society. With regard to commerce, the activity was not considered so impure, and Brahmins and Shamans could participate in this occupation considered crucial to the economy and prosperity of society.[18]

This brings us to the concept of Jati ("birth, origin") that

appears in the Vedic corpus in a late period. This social concept is a form of caste that coexisted with the Varna system and sought to organize the different communities, tribes, nations and religious and linguistic groups of India by assigning them certain occupations in society. Thus, thousands of categories that ranged from military occupations (Srivastava) to perfume sellers (Gandhi), were later incorporated as household names and clans. Each category was dynamic because it depended on the prestige and power of each Jati in a given society and the group could ascend or decay within the social order. The late appearance of this concept in the Vedas seems to indicate a posterior incorporation of an ancient social practice from other parts of India beyond the compass of the Varnas.[19]

The Mahabharata and the Upanishads

The greatest epic of Indian literature, the Mahabharata[20] tells us about wars and intrigues in the Kurukshetra - western region of the Ganges and Yamuna valleys - of two related late Aryan political entities, and the drama of the rulers on both sides. There are controversies of the authorship, but the compilation of its songs is traditionally attributed to the legendary sage Vyasa (literally "compiler") and to the god Ganesha[21], and the dating refers to about 800 BC to its final versions at around 400 BC.

The subject deals with the intrigues and disputes for the throne of the kurus, in the capital Hastinapura, disputed by the regents of the Kauravas and Pandavas. Both sides disagreed over the marriage of the Kuru princess Draupati. Political disputes over power culminated in the Kurukshetra War, in which the Pandavas were victorious. Quite apart from the battles, the major focus is around the human tragedy in search of power, wealth, glory accompanied by deaths, losses and misery. The loyalties of family and politics are intertwined and often result in dramatic conflicts revealed in the epic.

Among the countless stories that make up the Mahabharata, the most notorious is the Bhagavad Gita. At a dramatic moment on the battlefield, an avatar[22] of the god Vishnu, Krishna, appears to the anguished Pandava prince, Arjuna, to advise him on his duty (*dharma*) of a warrior (Kshatriya) before his fate. At one point, Arjuna begins to question Krishna's real divinity, and Krishna, after hesitating, decides to reveal all the divine splendour and universe, a form of theophany (*vishvarupa*):

> O Lord of all mystic powers, if you think I am strong enough to behold it, then kindly reveal that imperishable cosmic form to me.
> The Supreme Lord said: Behold, O Parth [Arjuna], my hundreds and thousands of wonderful forms of various shapes, sizes, and colours.
> Behold in me, O scion of the Bharatas, the (twelve) sons of Aditi, the (eight) Vasus, the (eleven) Rudras, the (twin) Ashwini Kumars, as well as the (forty-nine) Maruts[23] and many more marvels never revealed before.
> Behold now, Arjuna, the entire universe, with everything moving and non-moving, assembled together in my universal form. Whatever else you wish to see, observe it all within this universal form.
> But you cannot see my cosmic form with these physical eyes of yours. Therefore, I grant you divine vision. Behold my majestic opulence!
> (...) In that cosmic form, Arjun saw unlimited faces and eyes, decorated with many celestial ornaments and wielding many kinds of divine weapons. He wore many garlands on his body and was anointed with many sweet-smelling heavenly fragrances. He revealed himself as the wonderful and infinite Lord whose face is everywhere.
>
> (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 11, verses 4 to 11).[24]

Indian philosophy in the late Vedic period began to reflect a change of attitude toward destiny and the universe, unlike the

earlier attitude of the seminomadic Aryans of fatalism, magic, and transience. Since then, there is increasing emphasis on the vulnerability and brevity of the individual, and the importance of their conduct in life with others, arising concepts such as karma ('action' in Sanskrit), a righteous conduct to have effect in the future and over other forms of life. And samsara ('wandering'), in which our actions will be reflected in the subsequent reincarnations, consisting of an endless cycle of rebirths. These conceptions may have been incorporated by the Vedic Aryans in face of social and political changes as they established and ordered themselves in permanent and dynastic realms to reflecting the effects of war, death, and fragility of human life[25].

These philosophical and religious concepts were adopted by society, from the Brahmins to the Shudras and incorporated as final remarks to the Vedic texts, known as the Upanishads, at the end of the Vedic texts (hence known as *Vedanta*, 'end of the Vedas') between 750 and 500 BCE. The emphasis given in the final period of the Vedas and the Upanishads thus turns to the mystical path of the individual, to his soul (*Atman*) and his relation to the soul of the universe (*Brahman*), believing in a relation between these two universes in terms of conciliation and unity through transmigrations and rebirths[26].

The Mahajanapadas and the rise of the Magadha Empire

Around 700 BC there were Indo-Aryan settlements in the region of Ujjain, capital of the kingdom of Avanti, more than 800 km south of Kurukshetra. To the north and east, there were shifts to highland regions with milder and less forested areas compared to southern and eastern India. But it was the fertile lands eastward toward the Ganges and Yamuna valley, now in the Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, which proved to be irresistible to the Indo-Aryan peoples. From the region of Kurukshetra in the 6th century BCE, the largest migration took place in search of *kshetra*,

a term that means land suitable for cultivation and livestock.

East Indian lands also provided for the formation of unified states under military and priestly command, in categories called *janapadas*. Some of these units after annexations and enlargements resulted in *mahajanapadas*, or great kingdoms. Among them were some with greater projection: the kingdoms of Magdha, Kosala, Vatsa and Avanti which disputed among themselves the supremacy. In essence, this was the political history of sixth-century BCE in north India, with the gradual predominance of the kingdom of Magadha[27]. The greatest expansion of this kingdom took place in the Haryanka Dynasty (c. 600 to 413 BCE), specifically under the reign of Bimbisara (542 - 492 BCE). With this, the realm gained imperial outlines, encompassing the Indian regions of Bihar and Bengal to the east, further to Uttar Pradesh and Odisha along the south coast.

The structure of these Mahajanapadas states was, in essence, a fluid set of alliances and loyalties among political leaders. The direct central command was exercised only on territories around the capital and some adjacent tribal entities. The most distant and allied kingdoms had considerable autonomy, only being required loyalty in cases of war and attending to occasional royal ceremonies. Imperial boundaries were confined largely to natural boundaries, such as rivers, deserts, and mountains. This political system of alliances, conceptualized as *rajamandala* ('circle of states')[28] by Kautilya[29], was practiced in later times between Hindu rulers and the Indo-British imperial system from the 18th century.

Buddhism and Jainism

In the historical phase between the late 7th century to the late 5th century BCE, the development of Indian culture and nearby regions was decisive. It was a phase of intense urbanization and cultural effervescence[30]. It was under the Magdha empire that

Buddhism and Jainism were founded and flourished. In the Buddhist canons in Pali language[31], Bimbisara granted protection and worship to India's first outstanding historical personality, Prince Siddhartha Gautama (563 or 480 BCE - 483 or 400 BCE), the Buddha (Shakyamuni) in the area where he walked and attained Enlightenment through the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and in the sacred city of Bodh Gaya.

Buddha's teachings were a spiritual expression of reform. In the Buddhist chronicles which tells about the lives and incarnations of the Buddha, as in the Jataka[32], there is a lively portrait of Siddhartha growing up and preaching in restless and flourishing urban environments along the Ganges, questioning the domination of the warrior and priestly elite. Another great reformer of the time, perhaps a contemporary, was the founder of Jainism, Mahavira (599 - 527 BCE), an ascetic religion that became popular among Indian merchants, as it strongly condemns aggression and violence against all forms of life - from insects to mammals - something impeding for warriors, farmers and pastoralists.

Both religious movements of the 5th century BCE were characterized as a transition from a magical and mystical period of the Vedic texts and the Upanishads to a new kind of rationality. The Buddha centred his thought on the quest for individual salvation to break the cycle of reincarnations and sufferings (*samsaras*), to attain liberation (*moksha*).

After Buddha's death, a council of monks began to edit the ensemble of his teachings to be preserved in 404 BCE in the city of Rajgir in Bihar[33]. In subsequent councils, schisms occurred among those who espoused the ascetic ideals of the monk community (*sangha*), while others advocated a greater involvement of the monks with the lay population, extending the strict concept of sangha. This new, broader movement later gave rise to the so-called 'Great Vehicle', Mahayana, seeing the other Buddhist movements as restricted and orthodox, considering them as 'Little

Vehicle', Hinayana, a pejorative expression of reference to the Theravada ('School of the Elders') movement and others. This schism was of crucial importance for the later spread of Buddhism to regions beyond India.

The Mauryan Dynasty - the pinnacle of the Magadha Empire

Around 320 BCE, a local military commander in the field achieved an extraordinary feat at the time. He entered triumphantly through the gates of the capital of the Magdha, Pataliputra (present-day Patna), one of the largest and most fortified Indian cities. His name was Chandragupta. This event took place at a time that was not conducive to what remained of the Magdha past, for to the west occurred from the 6th century BCE the Achaemenid Persian invasions in the Sind and Punjab regions. To the north-west, successive Greek Macedonian incursions, the result of the spectacular advance of Alexander the Great (356 - 323 BCE) over the Persian Empire, had established a local dynasty, Greco-Bactrian (250 - 125 BCE) under the command of Macedonian governors (satraps). They were succeeded by an Indo-Greek kingdom (180 BCE - 10 CE), in the Bactria region[34], who synthesized the Indian and Greco-Macedonian inheritances as demonstrated in the reign of Menandro I (155 - 130 BCE), patron of Buddhism and protagonist in the sacred texts *Milinda Panha*[35].

Chandragupta Maurya (r. c. 321 – c. 297 BCE) ascended to power in troubled times of the Magadha order and withdrawal of the Macedonians in the north-northwest Indian in Punjab. From 325 BCE the Indian leader advanced further east, and defeated the Magadha forces in Pataliputra, and founded the Maurya Dynasty. He had as mentor and teacher the Brahmin Kautilya who advised him in the maintenance and expansion of power and effective political administration. According to Jain texts, the Parisistaparvan, Chandragupta was converted to Jainism at the

end of his life when he abdicated the throne in favour of his son, Bindusara (r. c. 297 – c. 273 BCE). He is reported to have held the Jain rite of fasting to death (sallekhana) in Belgola, near Mysore, now in the state of Karnataka[36].

Bindusara, known by the Greeks as Amitrochates (from Sanskrit, Amitraghata, the "destroyer of enemies"), undertook major military campaigns and expansion of political alliances in the southward direction, on the Deccan Plateau, to extend control to the Mysore region. According to historical accounts, his conquest reached the 'land between the two seas', presumably between the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. However, on the east coast of India, the kingdom of Kalinga (today Odisha) remained hostile and was only conquered after long battles in the reign of its son, Ashoka (r. c. 268 – c. 232 BCE), one of the most famous Indian emperors[37].

Bindusara's death in 272 BCE led to a four-year succession struggle between his sons. Eventually, in 268 ascended to the throne Ashoka. According to the *Ashokavadana* ('Narrative of Ashoka'), the emperor's mother, Subhadrangi, was a descendant of Brahmins from Champa. This gave him certain status and legitimacy, unlike the humble and obscure origins of Chandragupta Maurya. According to legend, Ashoka had been sent to end a revolt in the city of Taxila, notable centre of Buddhist studies, during the reign of his father. His mission was successful after peaceful negotiations. After the fact, his fame increased and gained control as viceroy of Ujjain, when he married Devi of Vedisa (Vedisa-Mahadevi Sakyakumari) in 286 BCE, in addition to two other consorts[38]. Furthermore, Ashoka provided generous religious and charitable donations throughout his kingdom.

After a life of worldly pleasures, when he was called Kamashoka, 'Ashoka's Hell', according to Taranatha[39], he lived a phase of extreme cruelty that earned him the name of Chandashoka. After his conversion to Buddhism, he became known as Dhammashoka, 'Ashoka the Pious'. The most important

event of Ashoka's reign after his change was the victory over the kingdom of Kalinga in 260 BCE, gaining control of the routes to South India, both by land and sea, expanding and prospering the Maurya Empire .

The horrors and miseries of the war against Kalinga caused deep remorse to Ashoka, as described in one of his stone edicts[40]: '150,000 people were deported, 100,000 were killed and many more perished later'. It is said that it was this experience that made him convert to Buddhism and avoid any form of violence. The conversion seems not to have been immediate, however, but after a period of self-reflection and seclusion of two years under the influence of a Buddhist monk, Upagupta, according to the Bhabra Edict of the Rajasthan region[41]. This also includes his acceptance of the Buddha's teachings and commitment to righteousness and spiritual path (dharma) and sense of community (sangha).

It was during his reign that the Third Buddhist Council took place in Pataliputra in 250 BCE, which lead to important advances in doctrinal definitions and proselytism of the Theravada[42] school to other regions such as South India, Sri Lanka, Burma (present-day Myanmar) and Southeast Asia, and sending Mahayana missionaries north to Tibet, Central Asia and China[43]. Important discussions of orthodox Theravada followers emerged from the council on the need to contain heresies and other heterodox versions of Buddhism.

On the foreign aspect, Ashoka exchanged intense diplomatic relations with the Hellenic world, via the Macedonian Greeks of the Seleucid Empire (312 - 63 BCE) in Bactria, northwest of India. As stated in his 13th Edict, part written in Sanskrit, part in Aramaic and Greek, the Indian emperor even sent Buddhist representatives to the Hellenic world in the Mediterranean[44]. All this demonstrates Ashoka's capacity for international projection and dialogue at the time. According to tradition, Kashmir in northern India was incorporated by the Mauryans and there was built the

city of Srinagar. Nepal had close relations as part of the empire, and it was said that one of the daughters of Ashoka, Charumati, had married a prince of the Nepalese, Devapala[45]. Legend also tells us that the great Buddhist stupa of Boudhanath, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, was enlarged by orders of the Indian princess.

To the east, Ashoka's influence extended to the Ganges River delta. Tamilipti (now Tamluk, West Bengal) was an important port on the coast of the Bay of Bengal from which ships sailed to Burma, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and southern parts of India. In its most western extension, the Maurya Empire controlled the Gandhari, Kamboja and Yona people - the latter generic term, a reference to many nations to the west, including the Macedonian Indo-Greeks - as their border allies. In Ceylon, to the south, relations were intense and close, and Ashoka sent his son Mahendra ('Conqueror of the World' in Sanskrit) and his daughter Sanghamitra to preach Buddhism on the island in the 3rd century BCE following the requests of the Sri Lankan king Devanampiya Tissa of Anuradhapura (r. 307 - 267 BCE)[46]. In the southern Indian region, there are references to friendly diplomatic contacts with various kingdoms, as stated in the 2nd Edict: Chola, Pandya, Stiyaputra and Keralaputra.

The disintegration of the dynasty initiated by Chandragupta Maurya was a slow and disintegrating process began after the death of Ashoka in 232 BCE. Sources such as the Puranas[47], in addition to the Buddhist and Jain literature, do not provide consistent data on the decay. The only consensus, as the Puranas reports, is that the dynasty lasted 137 years. Ashoka's death led to further divisions of the empire in the western and eastern parts. The eastern region, with its capital at Pataliputra, came to be ruled by Dasharatha Maurya (r. c. 232 - 224 BCE), probable grandson of Ashoka. According to the Puranas, Dasharatha reigned for eight years.

The provinces to the west and to the north, Gandhara and

Kashmir, were governed by one of his sons, Kunala (263 - 242 BCE) - who had been blinded in his childhood by his stepmother - and then by Samprati (r. 224 -215 BCE). The latter was, according to some sources[48] as in the chapter Theravali of the sacred book Kalpa Sutra[49], an important patron and devotee of Jainism. This region was later threatened by the Hellenists coming from Bactria to whom it was practically lost in 180 BCE.

Kunala probably must have died at about the time of Dasharatha; so that Sampriti came to rule both east, north and west and may have regained the imperial unity and throne at Pataliputra. This event occurred in 223 BCE. After a few decades, however, the disintegrating trend was once again evident. The last ruler of the Mauryan Dynasty, Brihadratha (r. c. 187 - 180 BCE), ruled over shrunken territories since the time of Ashoka. In 180 BCE, he was assassinated in a military parade by his commander-in-chief of his guard, General Pushyamitra Shunga, who then took the reins of power and founded a new dynasty, Shunga[50].

The causes of Mauryan Dynasty decline were manifold. Successive warfare depleted imperial resources, as in the exhausting conquest of Kalinga by Ashoka in 232 BCE. Other factors point to deterioration as a result of a succession of inept and weak rulers after Ashoka. The partition of the empire into western and eastern parts fragmented political unity and pulverized the network of imperial loyalties. Other motives may have been the restlessness of the Brahmins in the Buddhist conversion of Ashoka and the Jainism of Samprati. Or the later tendency of Ashoka's life and adopted by his successors to promote non-violence that resulted in discontent of the military castes and encouraging possible usurpers to power.

The Shunga and Kanva Dynasty - the decline of the Magadha Empire

With the fall of Maurya in 180 BC the history of India drifted

to a centrifugal tendency. Political events became more diffuse, involving a variety of kings, warriors and people. Northern India was caught up in a whirlwind of events from Central Asia, an ever-permanent issue in its history, as many nomadic invaders, mountain dwellers, targeted the riches of Indian valleys. The Aryans were the most remote.

According to the Puranas, the immediate successors of the Mauryan Dynasty and the neighbouring provinces were the Shunga (180 - 73 BCE) considered descendants of a Brahmin family belonging to the Bharadwaja clan[51]. The Shungas came from the Ujjain region of western India, where they were servants under the Mauryans. The founder of the Shunga Dynasty was Pushyamitra (c. 180 - 149 BCE) a general of the last Mauryan Dynasty king who managed to usurp the throne by killing his master. The new ruler did not take royal titles, and he was referred to by the simple title Senapati, or 'General'. He was a defender of orthodox Brahminical faith and revived the ancient Vedic sacrifices, including the sacrifice of horses.

Buddhist literature portrays him as a persecutor, destroyer of their monasteries and places of worship especially those that had been built by Ashoka. This was clearly an exaggeration, as archaeological evidence shows that several Buddhist monuments in the period were renovated[52]. Despite practicing the infamous regicide to rise to power, Pushyamitra had historical value in defending the Magadha Empire against the invasions of the Macedonian Greeks in the northwest of Bactria and restoring its power and prestige to a considerable extent in northern India.

When Pushyamitra died about 149 BCE, after a reign of 36 years, he was succeeded by his son, Prince Agnimitra (r. 149 - 141 BCE) who had ruled the southern provinces during his father's life. Agnimitra ruled for only eight years. And served as inspiration to Kalidasa[53] for the hero figure of his work Malavikagnimitram[54].

Agnimitra was succeeded by inept and weak successors. The

exception to be given to Bhagabhadra (r. c. 110 - 83 BCE), a ruler of some prominence, for it was for his court in 113 BCE that the Greek Heliodorus represented as ambassador the interests of the Bactrian king Antialcidas (r. c. 115 - 95 BCE) and spared no admiration and praise to the palatial and courtier. This not only shows that the Shungas maintained close relationship with the Bactrian Greek kings, but also demonstrates the vitality of Indian culture when Heliodorus converted to Hinduism, as is clear from the writings in the so-called Heliodorus pillar near the town of Bhophal[55]. Bhagabhadra proved to be an active patron of the Buddha's beliefs, as it was in his reign that the Sanchi stupa in Madhya Pradesh was enlarged. At the end of his life, he was succeeded by Devabuti (r. 83 - 75 BCE), who was overthrown by his Brahmin minister Vasudeva and founded the Kanva Dynasty in 75 BCE.

The Kanvas, according to the Puranas, ruled for only 45 years and had four successive kings. After assassinating the Shunga king, Devabuti, Vasudeva (r. c. 75 – c. 66 BCE) ruled for nine years to be succeeded by his son, Bhumimitra (r. c. 66 - 52 BCE) and then by Narayana (r. c. 52 – c. 40 BCE) and Susarma (r. c. 40 – c. 28 BCE). The Kanva Dynasty witnessed the absolute decline of the Magadha Empire, which disintegrated in several mahajanapadas. The political epicentre of India moved further northwest where several foreign dynasties, as among the Bactrian Greeks, fought for control of the region. In 28 BCE the last Kanva king, Susarma, was defeated by another regent of the Satavahana Dynasty in central India[56], formerly a vassal of the Magadha. This fact not only signalled the end of the Magadha Empire after five centuries of eminence, but also the rise of other Indian regions in the centre and south of the subcontinent.

The Kushan Empire

The five centuries between the decline of the Magadha and

the rise of the Gupta empire in 320 CE has often been considered as an obscure period and instability in Indian history, in which various dynasties were fought by short-lived ephemeral political controls in the northern region of India. With the exception of the Kushans (30 - 375 CE) under Kanishka (r. 120 - 144 CE)[57] that rivalled in extension with that of the Romans and Parthians to the west and the Han Dynasty of the Chinese, the period in the rest of India lacked in imperial grandeur and unity.

Nonetheless, this supposed disorder, especially in the first two centuries CE, was a period of intense contacts and trade and cultural exchanges, with India at the crossroads between parts of Asia with the Buddhist and Muslim world to the north and Europe to the west. To serve as an example, an environment of multiple religiosities, beliefs and syncretism, was attested in the reign of Kanishka in Gandhara[58].

Buddhism, which had been fostered by Indian rulers since Ashoka, gained notable international projections through the Greek Bactrian kingdom and then Kushan in the northwest region of India. And from there, through scholars, monks and missionaries, following the paths of the Silk Road, it expanded to Central Asia and to the Chinese lands. At the same time as there were reports of conversion of Greeks to Buddhism, as did the ruler Menander I (165/155 - 130 BCE), Hellenistic Bactrian cultural elements were incorporated into Mahayana Buddhism, such as the adaptation of the figure of Hercules as a Buddhist entity, a bodhisattva[59] (Vajrapani, *Jingang Shou* in China or *Kongorikishi* in Japan), protector and guardian of Buddha[60]. In southern India and Southeast Asia, links established through Buddhist expansion have proven to be fundamental to the future course of Asian history. In this area, the Theravada school was decisive[61].

But it was in India that crucial social and cultural experiences took their courses. Foreigners and low castes in India began to see Buddhism as a more egalitarian community far from the caste barriers of orthodox Hinduism. This did not mean a decline in

Hinduism. On the contrary, popular forms of Hindu cults such as the ascetic god Shiva or Krishna - who had been marginalized figures in the orthodox past dominated by the Aryans and Brahmins - gained prominence in the first five centuries of our era[62].

The rivalry between Buddhism officially adopted by some authorities since the time of Ashoka and the hermeticism of the Brahman castes in Hindu orthodoxy has led heterodox cults to gain ground among the majority of the population (peasants, workers in general, traders, women among others) and communities of foreigners. Of great importance for the renewal of Hinduism was the promotion carried out by the Kushan rulers and their legitimation by identifying themselves with deities of the Hindu pantheon. In addition, religious legitimation was of crucial importance for foreign rulers to be accepted by Indian society. So did Menander I when he converted around 100 BCE after discussions with the sage Nagasena, and his ashes were scattered following Buddhist rites[63]. Kanishka was identified with Mithras, a Zoroastrian deity, but also sometimes depicted in coins as related to Shiva.

With regard to the arts of the period, the achievements were nothing less than sublime. Buddhist sculptures and images of Indo-Greek-Bactrian heritage in Gandhara fashioned anthropomorphic parameters for later artistic representations in Mathura school, in addition to the sculptures in Bamiyan and elsewhere in China. Mathura will become the epicentre of all Indo-Shaivite Buddhist art enabling the rise of the Sarnath school which defined the artistic style of the Gupta period. Coming from the west, Persian influences were incorporated into the Shunga period and resulted in interesting results in sculptures as seen in the Sanchi stupa.

In the social area, the period witnessed significant codification of customs, values, and norms of the Hindu (*Dharmashastra*) laws in the Code of Manu (*Manusmriti*)[64] probably

written between the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. This work was result of the uncertainties of the time after the decline of the Maurya and Shunga, to seek traditional sources of social norms. All these elements, of popular renewal of cults, of new syncretism and artistic schools and codifications of norms formed the social and cultural basis of a new Indian era, that of the empire of the Gupta (320 CE – 550 CE).

Hindu mythology narratives and Indian cultural flourishing

Let us proceed to understand how the Indian narrative and mythological structure was created. It was from the Vedas period to the first centuries CE that works and narratives were made to order not only the society and its norms, like the Code of Manu (*Manusmriti*), but that of the gods and other entities of the Hindu pantheon. This expanse is largely explained by being a building of centuries, incorporating and ordering different deities of the Indian universe, practices and creeds. There are estimates that there are, nowadays, approximately 330 million entities and gods[65].

In this vast structure, the gods Brahma (representing the creative force in the universe), Vishnu (the maintenance and preservation of the order) and Shiva (destruction and renewal) are situated in the sacred trinity (*trimurti*). Brahma is considered to be distant from the yearnings of mankind and slightly worshiped, only in rare temples in India, as in the holy village of Pushkar in Rajasthan. Vishnu and Shiva share the hearts of most of the Hindus.

Vishnu (also called Narayana and Hari) is commonly depicted in pale blue skin and holding a shell in his four arms (representing the five elements of creation by breath, *Om*), lotus, energy disc (supreme weapon to control the demons) and a staff (physical and mental strength originating from the entire universe). According to the Puranas, he was incarnated in avatars

through ten characters (*dashavatara*) being the most known Rama, Krishna and, according to some interpretations, Buddha. Thus describes the Bhagavad Gita about the avatars of Vishnu:

> Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and a rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest myself.
> For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the firm establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.
>
> (Bhagavad Gita, chapter IV, verses 7 and 8)[66]

According to one of the Puranas, the ten avatars of Vishnu served to order human society and the cosmos, according to its principles. The avatars manifested in zoomorphic and anthropomorphic parts. The first was Matsya, partly fish-shaped, the one who rescued Manu from a flood, despite previous warnings. Thus Matsya rescued the compiler and organizer of human society from the great catastrophe.

Secondly, Vishnu came as Kurma, part in a tortoise shape. In which the figure of immortality (*amrita*) was saved, the deities with respect to the Asura ('demons') and the cosmic order in ensuring the churning of the milk ocean of the universe (*kshir sagar*), representing the Milky Way Galaxy. Then Vishnu came partly like a wild boar (Varaha) who fought and defeated the demon Hiranyaksha by diving into the waters and erecting the Earth from the depths. And then as the half-lion half-man Narasimha, who manifested himself to again defeat Hiranyaksha when he tested the faith of his son.

During this cycle of four avatars, called the Era of Satya Yuga ('Age of Truth'), evil and lies were unknown and good and truth prevailed. The subsequent era was that of men, in the Treta Yuga, where men's greed is greater and their virtues smaller, more materialistic and less prone to spirituality.

In that era, Vishnu first came as Vamana, a Brahmin dwarf,

who went to defeat the demon god, Bali, at the request of the god Indra, Vishnu's older brother. Vamana had an audience with Bali who decided to attend the Brahmin's request for a piece of land to live on. Noting his short stature, Bali granted his request to be defined in three steps. But Vishnu, as a dwarf, took the first step the size of the galaxy, the second spanning the Universe and the third over the head of Bali. According to the tradition of the time, Bali shrewdly forced this last act, because the sole over the head means the submission of the one who puts the foot in the form of authority, life and possessions[67].

Parashurama, a warrior Brahmin, was the next avatar, in which Vixnu came to avenge all those arrogant warriors (Kshatriya) who unjustly killed Brahmins. The next avatar was Rama, a great and perfect man whose feats was described in the Ramayana[68]. In this epic, a myriad of topics is addressed, including war, love, brotherhood, ideal conduct, filial love among others. It is essentially the story of an ideal ruler, son, father and man. One of the most dramatic stories of the epic portrays Rama faithfully obeying the wishes of his father, King Dasaratha, to live 14 years in the forest, along with his wife, Sita, and his brother, Lakshmana. During his stay in the woods, the demon Ravana kidnaps Sita. Rama goes promptly after her, and in this he seeks allies in the forest and befriends the monkey king, Sugriva and his devotee Hanuman. In the end, Rama wages a great war with Ravana, supposedly ruler of the island of Lanka (Sri Lanka) and rescues Sita to later rule for a thousand years. Sita, at the end of her life, needs to prove that her son is not from Ravana, and thus gave birth to twins and was rescued back into the womb of Earth by her mother, the goddess Bhumi, proving her supreme loyalty and purity[69].

At a later time, Vishnu is embodied as Krishna, as described in the Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata and the Puranas. Krishna was a complex avatar and not always of exemplary conduct, presenting himself with all the human contradictions. In one of

the most well-known episodes described in the Puranic texts (Bhagavata Purana) Krishna, which was affectionate to the worldly pleasures, encounters several single maidens (*gopis*) bathing naked on the Yamuna River. On the occasion, Krishna decides to steal their garments and announces his presence on a tree, as narrated:

> Early in the morning, the gopis used to go to the Yamuna River to bathe. They gathered together, holding each other's hands, and loudly sang hymns praising Krishna. It is an old custom between girls and women that when they bathe in the river they put their garments on the bank and plunge in the water completely naked. The part of the river where girls and women bathe was strictly forbidden to any male member, and this is still the costume.
> (...)
> When the gopis saw Krishna remaining strong and determined [on top of a nearby tree with their garments], they saw that they had no choice but to obey his command [to get out of the water and fetch the garments from him]. One after another, they came out of the water, but because they were completely naked, they tried to cover their nakedness by placing their left hand in the pubic region. They were all trembling. Their attitude was so pure that Lord Krishna became immediately satisfied.[70]

Buddha is considered to be an avatar of Vishnu only among some of the Vaishnava community because many are suspicious that this was a way to incorporate Buddhism into the Hindu religious system[71]. And finally, a last avatar of Vishnu is yet to come, Kalki, standing on a white horse and with a flaming sword to eliminate all evil and restore order (dharma) in the universe[72].

Shiva, the ascetic god, is the third deity of the supreme triad (trimurti). As all things and forms of life are subject to decay, a destroyer is necessary; and destruction is regarded as the peculiar role of Shiva. This seems little in harmony with the way in which he is normally represented. It should be remembered, however,

that, according to the teaching of Hinduism, death is not the end, in the sense of moving to non-existence, but simply a change to a new way of life. He who destroys, therefore, causes beings to take on new phases of existence. The Destroyer is really a re-Creator; hence the name Shiva, the auspicious one, which is given to him, which would not have been the case had he been regarded as merely as the destroyer in the ordinary sense of the term[73].

Shiva is usually depicted with a third eye on his forehead (*trinetra*) and naked with a hair bun. In his hair appears a crescent moon and a skull, to symbolize the fifth head of Brahma who was punished by desiring his daughter, Sandhya. A necklace of heads and snakes like bracelets attest to his ruthless character and connection to nature, known as Pashupati, 'Lord of the beasts'. Often Shiva is in a dance posture (*nataraja*) with a fire (*agni*, 'divine fire') in one hand and the other holding a drum (*damaru*, 'the sound of creation') representing the rhythm of the creative destruction of the universe. When appearing stepping on a dwarf (*Apasmara*), victory over ignorance is represented. The cycle that appears around him is the cycle of life and death of the universe. On the pedestal, below the dwarf, there is a reference to the lotus flower, meaning rebirth[74].

Shiva's wife, Parvati, is often depicted as the destructive and terrible side, as Kali and Durga. She is, in fact, a reincarnation of Sati (or Dakshayani), the daughter of the god Daksha. Daksha did not approve the marriage of Sati and Shiva and went further and performed a ceremony of special sacrifice to all the gods, except Shiva. Outraged by this undoing, Sati threw herself into the sacrificial fire. Shiva reacted to this tragedy by creating two demons, Virabhadra and Rudrakali, of his hair that caused havoc in the ceremony and beheaded Daksha. To the other gods, Shiva appealed to them to put an end to the violence and, fulfilling his promise, brought Daksha back to life, but with the head of a ram (or goat). Sati ended up being reincarnated as Parvati in her next life and again married Shiva[75].

We also read in the Puranas that Shiva had a son with Parvati, Ganesha. When a boy Ganesha was actually raised from earth and clay to keep company with Parvati and to protect her while Shiva continued his meditative wanderings. However, Shiva came back one day and found the boy guarding the room where Parvati went to take a shower. Not believing that the child was his son, but an impudent beggar, Shiva invoked the *bhutaganas* demons who fought against the boy and eventually managed to distract him with the appearance of the beautiful Maya ('illusion'). While he admired her dizzying but illusory beauty, Maya cut off his head. In the tumult, Parvati hurried out of her bath and shouted that his son had been killed. Realizing his mistake, Shiva then sent a desperate request to make the boy whole again, and the only head around was that of an elephant. And so Ganesha, the elephant-headed god, was born[76]. Other sons of Shiva are Skanda or Kartikeya, the god of war and Kuvera, the god of the treasures.

Among the deeds of Shiva that attest to his virtuous and exemplary character, there are episodes of self-sacrifice when Vasuki, the king of snakes, threatened to vomit serpent venom across the seas. Shiva, assuming the form of a giant tortoise, collected the poison in the palm of his hand and drank it. The poison burned his throat and left a permanent blue scar, hence one of his many titles, Nilakanta or 'Blue Neck'[77].

Shiva is closely associated with the lingam - a phallus or a symbol of fertility found in his temples. After Sati's death, and before his reincarnation, Shiva mourned and went to the Daru forest to live with the sages (*rishis*). However, the wives of the rishis soon became interested in Shiva. Moved by jealousy, the rishis sent a large antelope and then a huge tiger against the god that were quickly mastered and Shiva proceeded to wear the skin of the tiger. The sages then cursed the masculinity of Shiva whose organ, consequently, fell to the ground. When his phallus hit the ground, major earthquakes began and the rishis panicked and

cried out for his forgiveness. This was granted, but Shiva told them that the cult of the phallus as the symbolic lingam was to be observed for all eternity[78].

A multitude of other divinities and entities fill the tales of the epics and Puranas, which by the last centuries before our era were gaining their definitive versions. In addition to this literature, a lay literary branch, dealing with laws, customs, values and moral tales were written, classified as shastras. An important set of compendia and treatises which is subdivided into those dealing with the moral questions of folk tales, Neeti Shastra (or Niti Shastra), such as the collection of poems in the *Sumati Satakam* of Baddena Bhupaludu (1220 - 1280?) that inspired literature of this genre of other people such as the Persians.

Artha Shastra (or *Arthashastra*) of Kautilya deals essentially with politics and government[79]. Another genre, Dharma Shastra, deals with the duties, rights and responsibilities of the person, family and society. And another tradition that emphasizes pleasures, sensual and spiritual desires, grouped as Kama Shastra - from which derived a part related to sexual councils, as the *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana (2nd century CE)[80].

For the matters of body, hygiene, breathing, concentration and meditation there was the influential compilation of sutras (a collection of aphorisms) by Patanjali (c. 400 CE) for Yoga (from Sanskrit *yuj*, 'to add, to unite') based on ancient traditions and practices[81]. Among these yogic writings, Hatha yoga has gained popularity, especially in the West, which deals with physical postures. But there are a lot of other schools, Jnana, Raja, Karma, Laya, Tantra, Bakhti among others.

In sum, as in Japan during the Heian Period (794 - 1185) or as did the Venerable Bede (c. 673 - 735) during the decline of the Western Roman Empire, it was in the period of disunity and political turmoil that India witnessed social and cultural fervour. Ancient epics such as the Mahabharata, Ramayana, the set of the Puranas were all compiled in these troubled times. Like the

shastras of secular nature, or the yogic writings and the Manu Code. They served as guidance, teaching, example of life and conduct, ethics and philosophy for those who lived in a period of disorientation.

The Gupta

The Gupta Empire represented a unified zenith of India between 320 and 550 CE. During the period, remarkable achievements in the Indian arts, architecture, science, religion and philosophy were accomplished. In addition the cultural creations of the previous age were synthesized and amplified. It was in the reign of Chandragupta I (r. 320 - 335) that the Guptas consolidated their most extensive domination over much of India, something which had not existed since the fall of the Maurya. Furthermore, there was a sustained period of prosperity for two and a half centuries which later came to be considered in Indian history as a Golden Age.

The origins of the Gupta remain obscure. Writings of Buddhist monks is a valuable source about this, such as the travel diaries of the Chinese monks Faxian (337 - 422), Xuazang (602 - 664) and Yijing(635 - 713). The first ruler (*adiraja*) of the Gupta Dynasty refers to Sri Gupta (c. 240 - 280) who apparently ruled, like the Maurya, from Pataliputra and parts of the Bengal region further east. Sri-Gupta was succeeded on the throne by his son Ghatotkacha (c. 280 - 319)[82].

But it was in the rule of Chandragupta I (r. 305 - 335) that the Gupta domain gained extension. This was in part result of years of alliances and marriages with powerful families and clans securing greater authority in northern India. Light cavalry as well as disciplined infantry ensured successful campaigns on the battlefield. In politics, one of Chandragupta I's earliest political achievements was his marriage to Princess Kumadevi of the Licchiavi Kingdom[83] in the present state of Bihar and parts of

Nepal, where Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) lived. As a result, the Gupta statesman secured a large territorial base with abundant iron ore mines, supplies for metallurgy, weapons and valuable merchandise for trade.

The one who succeeded Chandragupta was his son, Samudragupta (r. c. 335 - c. 350 - 375), a military genius who expanded the frontiers of the Gupta Empire. In addition to consolidating domination in northern India, Samudragupta advanced and incorporated lands south of the Vindhya Range (Vindhyachal). Some estimate that the Gupta in this period stretched from the Himalayas to the north, to the rivers Krishna and Godavari to the south, from Balkh in Afghanistan to the west to the Brahmaputra River in the region of Assam in the east.

The most eloquent testament to the deeds of Samudragupta is the considerable quantity of gold coins found with his figure and an inscription present on a column formerly erected by Ashoka in Allahabad. In this, it is described the qualities of the regent (*prashasti*, kind of praise) that promoted the coexistence between the diverse beliefs in his empire[84]. As an example, he granted the King of Anuradhapura (Sri Lanka), Sri Meghavanna (r. 304 - 332)[85], permission to build the imposing Buddhist monastery in Bodh Gaya city of Bihar, allegedly where Buddha attained enlightenment.

On the political side, Samudragupta carefully followed the advice of Kautilya and secured alliances and loyalties with local rulers, as recommended the duties of a king (*rajdarma*) in the *Arthashastra*. As a philanthropist, the regent donated large amounts of money and promoted it according to his passion, the arts, education, poetry and music.

Chandragupta II (r. c. 380 – c. 413), after a brief power struggle, came to the throne after dislodging his older brother, Ramagupta. Thus we are told in found fragments of the lost work *Devichandragupta* of Visakhadatta (4th to 5th centuries CE)[86] and also in different versions as in the *Harshacharita* ('The Deeds of

Harsha') of Banabhatta (7th century CE). In this last one, the writer tells us that Ramagupta kept passionate interest in a queen, Dhruvadevi, who ended up giving up his hand to his political adversary and love contender, the king of Mathura[87]. Only after these dramatic events did Ramagupta's younger brother, Chandragupta II, with his closest allies, rush to meet the enemy, rescue Dhruvadevi and assassinate the rival regent. Eventually, Ramagupta was killed by his younger brother who married Dhruvadevi sometime later. But this version may have its doubts, because the evidences of Ramagupta do not appear in inscriptions nor in currencies of the period[88].

Following the imperial deeds of his father, Chandragupta II was a tolerant, capable ruler and skilled administrator. He even expanded his kingdom westward to the coast of the Arabian Sea. His courage and audacity earned him the title of *Vikramaditya* ('Brave as the Sun')[89]. To better command the expanded empire's vastness, Chandragupta II founded its second capital in Ujjain. He was also careful to strengthen his sea fleet. The ports of Tamralipta and Sopara consequently became busy trading centres[90]. He was a great patron of art and culture too. Some of the greatest scholars of the day, including the so-called *Navaratna* (Nine Gems) adorned his court[91]. Numerous charities, orphanages and hospitals have benefited from his generosity and resting places for travellers were set up along the roads.

In political and administrative terms, the Gupta Empire was divided into provinces, *pradesh*, name still used nowadays in India[92], and were named from the capital administrative heads for each province. In southern regions, by the great distance of the capital, there was prudence in delegating authority to the original regents after victorious campaigns, as did Samudragupta, requiring only a certain collection of taxes.

In the legal and criminal area, penalties were more lenient and torture banned[93]. People could move between districts and cities freely, law and order prevailed over thefts and robberies.

This is stated by one of the first Chinese Buddhist pilgrims to write about Indian costumes, Faxian (Fa-Hien or Fah-Hian) (337 - c 422). The social and economic conditions of the general population were described as satisfactory and safe and many opted for vegetarianism and avoided alcohol. Thus Faxian describes on the condition of the population at the time of Chandragupta II in the city of Mathura:

> People are prosperous and content, free from any tax or official restrictions. Only those who work in the land of the king pay a tax, and they are free to go or stay as they wish. Kings rule without resorting to capital punishment, but offenders are fined little or a lot according to the nature of their crime. Even those who plot high treason only have their right hand cut off. All the servants of the king receive emoluments and pensions. People in this country do not kill living things, do not drink wine and do not eat onions or garlic. The only exception to this is the *chandalas*, which are known as 'bad men' and are separated from the others. When they enter cities or markets, a piece of wood is shaken to announce their presence so that others may know that they are avoiding them[94].

The gold and silver coins were issued in large numbers at the time, a general indication of the vitality of the Gupta economy. Trade flourished both within the kingdom and outside. Cotton, spices, precious stones, pearls, precious metals were exported by sea. Trade relations with the Middle East, Africa and the Far East were remarkable. From Africa came ivory and turtle shells. Silk and medicinal plants from China and the Far East. In the domestic market, foods, grains, spices, salt, stones and gold bars were the most traded products[95].

The Gupta period was tolerant of religious diversity in the early centuries of our era. The dominant rulers and Brahmins were generally Vaishnava devotees. This did not stop them from being tolerant of other Hindu, Buddhist and Jain believers. Buddhist monasteries received generous donations, as found by

another Chinese Buddhist chronicler at the time, Yijing[96], as well as the construction and maintenance of nursing homes for Buddhist monks and pilgrims. Nalanda, in the present state of Bihar, was a prominent site of Buddhist study and education at the time. Jainism flourished in various Indian regions, as demonstrated by the caves at Udayagiri in Odisha, in the east coast, and the numerous statues of *tirthankaras*[97] in Bengal, Gorakhpur and Gujarat.

In the artistic field, Sanskrit achieved lingua franca status and established itself as the cultured norm of court and arts. It was in this language that Kalidasa wrote the epics *Abhijnanasakuntalam* (The Recognition of Shakuntala), *Meghaduta* (The Cloud Messenger), Raghuvamsha (The Achievements of Raghu) and *Kumarasambhava* (The Birth of Kumara). Harisena, another renowned poet, panegyric and flutist, composed on the pillar at Allahabad the great deeds of Samudragupta, at around 345. Shudraka wrote three seminal works for the Indian drama: *Vinavasavadatta*, the monologue *Padmaprabhritaka* and his most famous play, *Mrichchhakatika* (The Little Clay Cart). Vishnu Sarma wrote Indian fables, *Panchatantra* (The Five Principles), which influenced other literatures after being translated to Persian (in *Kelileh the Demneh*) and Arabic (in *Kalila wa dimna*)[98].

The literary and scientific works were published in Sanskrit, in Pali and also in ordinary form, Prakrit. Varahamihira (505 - 587) wrote the encyclopaedic *Brihat Samhita* which covered the fields of astrology, planetary orbits, eclipses, rains, clouds, architecture, plant growth, perfume manufacturing, marriage, domestic relations, precious stones, pearls and rituals. The mathematical genius and astronomer Aryabhata (476 - 550) wrote his magnum opus *Aryabhatiya*, covering aspects of geometry, trigonometry and cosmology, and suggesting the heliocentric model about a thousand before Copernicus[99]. In addition, there were innumerable publications of Ayurvedic medicine that have refined surgical practices and inoculation against contagious

diseases.

The best examples of Gupta painting, sculpture and architecture can be found in Ajanta, Ellora, Sarnate, Mathura in India, and Anuradhapura and Sigiriya in Sri Lanka. The use of vocal music, musical instruments such as the flute and mridangam (percussion instrument) and symbols of devotion flourished in the temples. In short, the artistic and philosophical achievements in the period were profound and fertile. Artists and literati were encouraged to meditate on the human capacity coupled with the divine in order to capture its essence in its creations. As suggested in one of the Puranas, the Agni Purana, 'O Lord of all the gods, teach me in dreams how to do all the work I have on my mind'[100].

Kumaragupta I (r. c. 415 - 455) succeeded the death of his father, Chandragupta II and ruled the Gupta Empire, maintained order and peace[101] and even warded off threats from a tribe called Pushyamitra - not to be confused with Pushyamitra Shunga. He was succeeded by his son, Skandagupta (r. c. 455 - c. 467), the last of the great Gupta rulers. This man was able to repel the invasions of the Hephthalite (or White Huns), was a scholar and carried out great works of construction and maintenance of dams as in the Sudarshan lake in Gujarat. But these were the last days of glory of the Gupta Empire.

After the death of Skandagupta the dynasty became involved with internal conflicts and the gradual decline of the Gupta Empire began. The rulers no longer had the capacity of statesmanship of the previous regents to maintain cohesion and internal political order. The Hephthalite and others advanced at the borders, putting in check the economic prosperity of the empire. In addition, later Gupta rulers became self-indulgent and avoided managing pressing political challenges. After the defeat and capture of the Hephthalite leader Mihirakula (502 - 530), during the Gupta regency of Vishnugupta Candraditya (r. c. 540 - 550), the White Huns again haunted the empire to blow a

fulminant strike around the year 550.

The following lines of Shudraka's *Mricchakatika* (The Little Clay Cart) appropriately sum up the rise and fall of the Gupta:

> Fate plays with us like buckets at the well,
> Where one is filled, and one an empty shell,
> Where one is rising, while another falls;
> And shows how life is change—now heaven, now hell[102].

Sangam Literature

In southern India, south of the Vindhya Range and across the Deccan Plateau, history took a different course. In the last two millennia before our era, Indian northern influences came across the north-eastern and the Western Ghats (Sahyadri) that produced over the generations distinctive Dravidian cultures and languages with unique characteristics[103].

Vedic culture reached Indian southern lands through a complex cultural dynamic. The Vedic and Puranic texts came to the south perhaps before the reign of Ashoka[104] as well as languages that later became popular in Pali and Prakrit scripts with the arrival of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Transmission from the north to the south was largely due to Brahmins who Hinduised and propagated ideology about value and society in many local regional communities to consider and embody them as pariahs or untouchables in the Hindu (*varna*) caste system. In this attempt, the Brahmins consolidated by aligning themselves with local warrior rulers and ordering society, following the epic Mahabharata that precepts to delegate tribes of forests, mangroves and deserts to perform undesirable functions like digging wells, providing water and food.

But this influence, the imposition of Vedic and Sanskrit culture on South India, was not one-sided[105]. There was in the south a literary effervescence, assembled and compiled in the so-

called Sangam literature[106], which gathered writings concerning history, religion, culture, society, as well as moral teachings, values and stories of adventure, love and death. The Sangam literature is essentially secular and was written in a Dravidian language, Tamil. Some of its authors, such as Thiruvalluvar (c. 3rd century BCE to 1st century CE), in his *Thirukkural* wrote extensively on ethics and matters of life such as wealth, virtues and love. The Tamil poet Mamulanar (c. 2nd or 3rd centuries CE), in turn, interpreted the historical and military events in India[107].

According to the conventions in the *Tholkappiyam*[108], the Sangam poetry divides human aspects into two categories: the interior (*akam*), and exterior (*puram*). The inner themes refer to aspects of love, passion, feelings and desires and are treated metaphorically and abstractly. Those exterior discuss human experiences such as heroism, courage, ethics, benevolence, philanthropy, social life and costumes[109]. This binary division is not rigid, but depends on interpretation in the context.

These emotions thus defined correspond in part to the landscapes (*thinai*) classified according to the Sangam literature[110]. The emotions associated with poetry, an interior character, correspond to the landscapes of mountainous regions (*kutinji*), forests (*mullai*), agricultural lands (*marutham*), coastal regions (*neithal*) and deserts (*paalai*). In addition to these bounded landscapes, there are troubled feelings without geographical matching (*perunthinai* and *kaikkilai*), cases of unrequited and inadequate love, respectively.

Here is an example of a *thinai* poem, composed in Tamil, with references to the lacerating feelings of agony, waiting and separation from the *akam* sphere, and the intimate relationship of these feelings of a lover with the landscape, colours, winter climate, mountain flora and fauna:

Bean-sprouts
are freshly pink,

like the tangled feet
of sparring game-quails,
but left on the stalk
beyond their time,
their overripe pods
are snatched away
by rampaging herds of deer!

It's early winter already;
this season's agony,
unbearable;
and there's but one cure for it:
to be enveloped
once more
in the strong arms
and the broad breast
of my man.[111]

Geographic conditions in southern India provided exceptional fertility along the river valleys, such as Godavari and Krishna, which flow from the plateau regions to the coast and determined the rise and power of local realms. By this, the propensity and openness to the seas were evident and predisposed those kingdoms to overseas contact and commerce. Inland, however, by land routes, the plateaus and forests have contributed to a greater isolation of political units from one another.

The valleys of the great rivers were those that provided conditions for large population contingents resulting from the systematic cultivation of rice by irrigation channels, dams and water wells, works to be coordinated by central authorities. These were the places of artisans and farmers, according to the Sangam literature. The mountain regions (*kurinji*) were habitat for pastoralists. Those of the forests (*mullai*), hunters and gatherers. In the deserts (*paalai*), place of thieves and robbers to be avoided by

travellers. Coastal regions (*neytal*), in turn, would be of fishermen and merchants, living off fishing, salt and trade.

Contacts with the international maritime environment brought Indian products and culture to the large urban centres and ports of the Indian Ocean. There are accounts, for example, of Solomon in the Bible (Kings 10:22)[112] of the riches of Indian lands: gold, silver, ivory, monkeys, and peacocks. The Greek Megasthenes reports in *Indica*[113] the prosperity of the Pandyas to trade pearls in the fourth century BCE. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya tells us about the vibrant commerce of shells, diamonds, pearls, precious stones and gold. This prosperity resulted in the growth of some southern coastal kingdoms over other smaller units in the region.

The kingdoms of Kalinga and Satavahana

By the second or first century before our era the kingdom of Kalinga, present Indian region of Odisha, was conquered by Kharavela (2nd and 1st centuries BCE) of the Mahamegavana Dynasty (c. 250 BCE – 5th century CE) after the fall of the Maurya. Kharavela left records of his deeds as it appears in Prakrit in the Hathigumpha ('Elephant Cave') inscription in Udayagiri, dated around 150 before our era, in his thirteenth year of government[114]. In the inscription he is called 'Supreme Lord of Kalinga' (Kalinga Adhipati), being a likely descendent of the Chedi Dynasty (c. 600 BCE - 300 BCE) that had migrated from eastern Madhya Pradesh to Kalinga in the southeast. He is also referred to as Maharaja ('great king'), title that indicates him as successor of the dynasties before reigning in the region, of the Nanda and Maurya[115].

Kharavela is believed to have been a Jainist and advocate of the principle of non-violence (*ahimsa*). But this did not stop him from leading successful campaigns in regions far north, beyond the Magadha kingdom[116] and even threatening the presence of Indo-Greco-Bactrians (called *yavanas*) in the northwest. To the

south, Kharavela defended a wide alliance in a confederation form of Dravidian regents (*tamiradeha sanghata*).

The prosperity of the Kharavela kingdom was so great that there was abolition of taxes for the great majority of its subjects, from its sixth year of government, between the inhabitants of the cities (*paura*) and the interior (*janapada*). Kharavela encouraged outdoor festivities, dance arts, music, and use of musical instruments (*tauryatrika*) which had been banned during the previous Maurya Dynasty. In that sense, Kharavela revitalized the sense of pride of Kalinga that had been devastated by the campaigns of Ashoka in 260 BCE[117].

The political unity of Kalinga seems to have disintegrated after the death of Kharavela. His son and successor, Kudepasiri, according to the inscription Mancapuri in a cave in Udayagiri, reports his reign as without importance. Although at the time Megasthenes, according to Pliny the Elder (23 – 79 CE) in *Naturalis Historia*[118], described in grandiose terms about the population of the capital of Kalinga, which he calls Parthalis.

Another dynasty, Satavahana, seems to have had more continuity than that of Kharavela. The Puranas report that Satavahana Dynasty did not last 460 years, but little is known of its origins. The little that is revealed in the Puranic texts and inscriptions on the Western Ghats Range in Nanaghat is that they descend from Simuka (c. 30 BCE - c. 7 BCE)[119] that belonged to a nation of the central Indian region, the Andhras. And that Simuka was later succeeded by his brother, Krishna (or Kanha), who was later succeeded by his son, Satakarni[120]. But this succession apparently goes against what appears in the inscriptions in the cave of Nanagath, which makes the initial lineage not free of controversies.

Satakarni I (1st century BCE) became the first great king of that dynasty, mentioned in the Hathigumpha inscriptions as related to Kharavela. It seems that that ruler fought and expanded eastward along the Godavari River and undertook campaigns

westward against Malwa, Anupa, and Vidarbha, taking advantage of the fragility caused in the region by Indo-Greco-Bactrian invasions from north India. He also advanced to the south of the Godavari and obeyed the Vedic rites of sacrifice, favoured and sponsored the Brahmins[121].

In the first century of our era, the Satavahana suffered a series of invasions of the Saka people, but the order was restored by Gautamiputra Satakarni (c. 2nd century CE). His kingdom not only restored the lost territories but extended domination to the north, to present-day Rajasthan, to the south in the valley of the Krishna River, to the Saurashtra in Gujarat to the west and the Kalinga to the east. He assumed the imperial titles of *Raja-Raja* ('King of the Kings'), Maharaja and Lord of Vindhya.

He was succeeded by his son, Vasishthiputra Pulumavi (or Sri Pulumavi) (2nd century CE) who was referred to by Ptolemy as Sri Ptolemaios. During this period, the Satavahanas sought prosperity and linked coastal regions linked to international maritime trade. Sri Yajna Satakarni was the last regent of the Satavahana dynastic line. According to Shailendra Sen[122], he reigned from 170 to 199. The coins of his government appear with images of ships, suggesting the prosperity derived from maritime commerce and naval power.

In the cultural field, it was during the Satavahana Dynasty that the *Gaha Sattasai* anthology was written in Maharashtri Prakrit - predecessor of the Marathi language - a work composed of refined poems that reflect on the complexity of love. Traditionally, Satavahana King Hala (r. c. 20 - 24) was credited as the author of the work. Some passages of the work show us its poetic strength, as when a husband lovingly compares his wife's face with the splendour of the moon and the lively colours of a crustacean:

> The husband rejoices at the face of the mistress of the house, while her hand, soot-soaked from the kitchen, goes to her face; this

> resembles the stained moon.
> (...)
> This moon is reflected in her gazelle eyes, and marked on her cheek are the marks of teeth still wet [*manilama*, a kind of kiss called a 'garland of jewels'] like a mussel with scarlet interior.[123]

From the third century of our era, the power of Satavahana began to decline. Local leaders once allied and submitted by the central power began to seek autonomy that resulted in imperial disintegration. To the north, the dominions came under the Vakataka Dynasty (c. 250 - c. 500)[124]. The easternmost region along the Krishna and Godavari valleys was occupied by the Ikshvaku Dynasty, which strengthened ties with local Brahmins and furthered Buddhist interests as they displayed extensive political and commercial ties to interior lands and international trade. The former feudatories of the Satavahana, the Pallava, from the fourth century CE began to dominate the flourishing region of deltas of Krishna and Godavari River[125].

From Pandya to Chalukya - 5th Century BCE - 10th Century CE

Until about 500 CE, the great empires in India were concentrated in the north of the country. After the imperial period of the Maurya and the Gupta, the historical fragments portray a picture of political disunion and cultural fragmentation. But it does not follow that Indian history is less fascinating. On the contrary. Regional powers that ascended through the country gave rise to rich linguistic and cultural expressions, with the Tamil artistic court of the 13th century academy in Madurai being one of its brightest expression[126].

The Tamilakam - The Pandya, Chola and Chera in South India

For a period of approximately 300 years from the 6th century CE, the history of southern India is almost one of conflicts between three realms overlapping each other, as Sasrti wrote[127]. These three southern Indian states are those of the Pandya, Chola and Chera - inserted in the Tamil region, Tamilakam[128] - and were mentioned in the Ashoka inscriptions of the Vaishali Pillar in the 3rd century BCE.

These nations were not incorporated into the territory of Ashoka directly, but were allied and amicably treated including on commercial terms such as the importation of medicinal products. Ashoka also took care of sending missionaries to the

south for the teaching of dharma and the essential teachings of Buddhism which indicates the interest and the cultural demand of these Indian nations at the time[129]. The famous Hathigumpha inscription, 'Elephant Cave', from Kharavela (2nd century BCE) mentions a confederation of Tamil states - *satyaputra*, possibly 'brotherhood of truth'[130] - which was 113 years old at the time and was a threat to the Kalinga kingdom. Thus demonstrating the ability of the Tamils to meet in common against an external realm[131]. The Tamil poet, Mamulanar (2nd or 3rd centuries CE) informed that there was a large and costly military expedition from the Moriar kingdom (i.e. from the Maurya during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusara) against Tamil forces further south[132].

Pandya

The Pandya kingdom was one of the three ancient kingdoms of Tamilakam and its origins goes back from prehistoric times to the end of the 15th century CE. Initially, its capital was in Korkai, in one of the southernmost ports of the Indian peninsula which, over time, moved to the 'Athens of the East', Madurai.

The Pandya lived their heyday in the 13th century CE, when they expanded the kingdom northwards to the Telugu region and invaded the island of Sri Lanka to the south conquering its northern part. Its trade ties were extensive and international, thrived on the sea routes with Southeast Asia and traded pearls in the Indian Ocean seas and markets. The Sangam literature, according to tradition, was largely sponsored by the Pandya and some of its greatest writers were also rulers.

The Sangam literature, as some Greek and Roman sources in this period are the most abundant sources respecting the Pandya. Sangam refers to the academies established in Madurai by rulers who sponsored writers and poets, occasioning great literary and cultural activity from 500 BCE to 500 CE. In this, Tamil grammar

was established in the classic work, *Tolkappiyam*, and the great Tamil epic, *Shilappatikaram*, was composed around the 5th and 6th centuries CE[133].

Among the foreign sources is the work *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (first century CE) which described the riches and thriving commercial activity of a united Pandya kingdom[134]. The Chinese chronicler Yu Huan in *Weilue* ('Brief History of Wei') (239 - 265) highlights from the kingdom of Panyue (Pandya):

> The kingdom of Panyue is also called Hanyuewang. It is located several thousand li [each unit, about 415 meters] southeast of Tianzhu (north of India), and is in contact with Yi circuit [in modern south of Yunnan, southwest Chinese state]. The inhabitants are small; of the same stature as the Chinese. Shu traders (in the western part of the Chinese state of Sichuan) travel so far to this kingdom. The southern route [undertaken by these merchants], after reaching its westernmost point, is directed to the southeast until it reaches its destination[135].

The Roman emperor Julian (361-363) received an emissary from the Pandya in the year 361 and a thriving Roman trading centre existed on the coast of Pandya at the mouth of the Vaigai River, southeast of Madurai. In addition to Rome, there were enduring trade contacts with Ptolemaic Egypt and with China in the third century CE. According to Strabo, a Pandya ambassador representing the king 'Pandion or Porus' was sent to Augustus Caesar, as mentioned by the Greek historian Nicolaus of Damascus[136].

In the Sangam chronicles, a number of Pandya rulers are mentioned, among them Nedunjeliyan ('The Victor of Talaiyalanganam'), another Nedunjeliyan ('The Conqueror of the Aryan Army') and Mudukudimi Peruvaludi ('Of Various Sacrifices'). It is only from these sources, in colophons[137], that we gather the names and succession of kings and chiefs, and the writers and poets in the Pandya courts.

On the genealogy of Pandya rulers, although there are many references to the kingdom in the old texts, there is no consensual way to determine the succession of their kings. The names of the first rulers can hardly be confirmed but historians have constructed a chronological history of the Pandya since the fall of the Kalabhras[138] kingdom until their decline when they were dominated and influenced by the Chola from the 10th century CE[139].

The Pandya empire, however, experienced an intense political and cultural revival after victorious battles against its rivals. The peak was under the rule of Sadayavarman Sundara Pandyan I (r. 1251 - 1268). This leader is remembered, in addition to the expressive economic and commercial growth of his kingdom, for the generous sponsorship of Dravidian arts and architecture with emphasis on the reform and decoration of *kovils*[140] in the Tamil region of India. The greatest splendour, in fact, was the construction of the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai where ceremonies and royal marriages took place. The sponsorship and support for studies and arts in the royal city attracted gifted artists and scholars of the time, still considered today as the cultural capital of Tamil Nadu.

With the death of Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan I (r. c. 1268 - c. 1308), conflicts arose from successive disputes among his sons. Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan III, younger son and rightful heir, and Jatavarman Veera Pandyan II, elder and illegitimate son favoured by the king, fought each other for the throne causing a long civil war from 1308 to 1323[141]. In this process, Madurai fell into the hands of new invading armies from the north, Muslims of Delhi from the looting done in 1311 by Malik Kafur[142]. From then on, the Pandya were no longer able to rebuild themselves in a sovereign way[143].

Chola

The origins of the Chola refer to the inscriptions of Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE. They were continually incorporating and linking adjacent kingdoms in southern India until its heyday in the 13th century, a period that dominated much of southern India along the eastern coast and influenced power in the islands of Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and consolidated the sea routes to the Srivijaya Empire, now Indonesia.

The Chola were traditionally tributaries of the Pallava and Pandya until the middle of the 9th century, when the war between these last two southern Indian kingdoms offered a chance of Chola autonomy. Thus the Chola king Vijayalaya (r. 850 - 870) renounced his feudal role under the Pallava and captured the city of Tanjavur (now Tanjore), making it his capital[144].

The son of Vijayalaya, Aditya I (r. c. 870 - 907) proceeded in his ambitions, defeating the kingdom of the Pandya in 885 and again the kingdom of the Pallava in 897. His successor, Parantaka I (r. c. 907 - 955), invaded the prestigious capital of the Pandya in 910, Madurai, assumed the title of Madurain-konda ('Conqueror of Madurai') and subdued the kingdom in Sri Lanka in 925. By about 985, the Chola reigned rulers over all the Tamil speaking regions in southern India.

Chola imperial prominence was further evidenced in Tamilakam during the reign of Parantaka Chola II (r. 957 - 970). And it was his son, Aditya Karikalan or Aditya II, who defeated the Pandya forces at the Battle of Chevur[145]. After which, the Pandya sought refuge among some Sinhalese allies in Sri Lanka, beginning their long exile. The Pandya regents were, from then on, replaced by a series of Chola viceroys, under the title of Chola Pandya, who ruled from the city of Madurai from c. 1020[146].

In the process, during the late 10th century, the Chola managed to expand their presence beyond the valley of the Kaveri

River, the ancestral nucleus of their kingdom. Under the rule of Rajaraja Chola I (c. 985 - c. 1014), the Pandya and Chera were subdued and the island of Sri Lanka invaded - with the sacking of the venerable capital of Anuradhapura - and their arrival in the Maldives. His son, Rajendra Chola I (r.C.1014 - c.1044), continued vigorously with the expansionist policy[147]. At the end of his reign, the northern borders reached the Ganges River, conquering the rulers of Bihar and Bengal, occupied the coast of Burma (present-day Myanmar), the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and controlled the largest ports of Southeast Asia in the archipelago of Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula[148]. It was the first true Indian maritime empire, receiving tributes from the kingdoms of Siam (now Thailand) and Cambodia.

After some time, however, the Chola imperial vigour died. The Chalukya, those of the western branch coming from the Deccan Plateau, initiated a series of offensives against the Chola. After decades of intermittent battles, the Western Chalukya realm was exhausted in 1190 but with this also came the weakening of the Chola. Faced with rivalries against the Pandya, the Chola between 1150 and 1279 were no longer able to sustain the campaigns, negotiating the independence with Pandya in their traditional domains around the city of Madurai. Finally, in 1279, under the rule of Rajendra III (r. 1246 - 1249), the Chola empire ceased to exist as a sovereign entity when subjected to the Pandya.

The Chola left a rich legacy in the Tamil region. As witness, it remains the majestic architectural works such as the temple in Thanjavur (former Tanjore)[149], works of painting and sculpture as in the temple of Nageshvara in Bengur and a Golden Age in literature and Tamil poetry. All these achievements have been designed and culturally influenced by the commercial routes to the islands in southern India and Southeast Asia, from Sri Lanka and Maldives to the island of Java.

Chera

The Chera are mentioned, along with the Pandya and Chola, in the epic Ramayana and also in the Mahabharata, and in the Aitareya Upanishad[150]. Likewise, in the Sangam literature, compiled between the 4th and 1st centuries BCE, the successive Chera regents and their deeds in the Tamil language were pointed out.

The form of government of the Chera was around a regent, an autocratic monarch surrounded by a council of ministers and scholars. Another institution of power was the *manram* or *sabha* that acted in each village and town. In this kind of council, the elders would gather under a landmark or banyan tree and resolve the major disputes and decisions of the place[151].

The military force of the Chera consisted of armies of cavalry, infantry, chariots and elephants and they had a significant navy. This denoted their strong presence on the seas, encouraging international trade. There are reports, in this sense, of lasting contacts and exchanges with Greeks, Romans, Egyptians and Arabs. From the first century CE there was trade in spices, ivory, wood, pearls and gems through important Chera ports in Kerala[152].

In the religious field, the Chera worshiped primarily the goddess of victory and war, Korravai, which was later assimilated to the Hindu pantheon as Devi or Kali[153]. The Brahmins may have entered the kingdom along with Jains and Buddhists around the 3rd century BCE.

The Chera decline came after successive invasions by the Kalabhras people in the 5th and 6th centuries CE. Moreover, the Chalukya of Badami conducted campaigns of conquest in the territory of Malabar, as attested by a letter from the Chalukya king Pulakeshin I (r. c. 540 – c. 657). And other Pallava rulers, as King Simhavishnu and Mahendravarman also claimed control of Chera

sovereignty[154].

There was, centuries later, a second Chera Dynasty that ascended, known as Kulasekhara, between the 9th and 12th centuries. Their power resided in an alliance between a Brahmin oligarchy and local chiefs. But their sovereignty seems not to have been uncontested, since they were subordinated like feudatories to the Chola by more than half century during 11th century[155]. The autonomy of this new Chera Dynasty was only evident with the weakening of their suzerains. After the 12th century, following the disappearance of the last of the Chera rulers, Rama Varma Kulashekhara (r. 1090 - 1102), the kingdom of the Chera gradually became governed by a body of Brahmins and allies designated by the Chola.

Harsha

Despite the absence of imperial unity in northern India, there were notable dynastic ascendants consolidated by great leaders. A major highlight would be what the Chinese Buddhist traveller Xuanzang (c. 602 - 664) and the great writer in Sanskrit, Bana (also known as Banabhatta) (7th century) tell us profusely in his work *Harshacharita*[156]. In this last one, the deeds (*charita*) of his patron, King Harsha (r. 606 - c. 664) are praised.

Harsha incarnated the imperial leader in northern India at a time when political unity in the region was fragmented. His political command came from his capital, Kannauj, strategically located between the Ganges and Yamuna rivers[157], where evidence of great works and structures remains, as attested by the dimensions of the fortifications of Harsha Ka Tila in the city of Thanesar in the present state of Haryana. Its empire, the largest in the region since the fall of the Gupta in 550, was a site of intense patronage of the arts and religions of Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism. As Xuazang wrote, who visited the kingdom in 636, Harsha had numerous Buddhist stupas built, organized various

events of philosophical and artistic debates. And he made numerous donations for the aggrandizement and protection of the largest Buddhist university at the time, in Nalanda. In addition, Harsha, according to Xuazang, sent emissaries to the Chinese lands in 641.

The ruler also authored some works of literature in Sanskrit, denoting his enthusiasm for the arts. The most notable of these, the *Nagananda*, ('The Joy of the Serpents')[158] consists of a play in five acts that at its most dramatic moment, the protagonist, Jimutavahana, is faced with a lot of serpent skeletons resulting from sacrifices made in honour of the half-bird god, Garuda. The hero, disturbed by the scene, then decided to take a similar attitude to the Buddha and offers himself to the sacrifice to save the other serpents, nagas. At the end of the act, the hero is restored to life and becomes a bodhisattva. In the play, with cunning and sensibility of a statesman, Harsha combined rare talent for religion, literature, and politics.

At the end of his reign, whose decline was evident after being defeated by a ruler of south India, Pulakeshin II in 635[159], the northern region of India went through a new and long period of disunity and fragmentation in several rival political units.

Gurjara-Pratihara

The capital Kunnauj survived the decline of Harsha and became the political and cultural centre of several subsequent dynasties in the northern region of India. Among these, the Gurjara[160], people from the west, former allies of Harsha, with possible origins of Central Asia region among the Hephthalite or the 'White Huns'[161]. Possibly they originate in common with the Rajput[162] who settled in the Ganges and Rajasthan valley from the 8th century onwards[163], and had an essential contribution in Indian history by warring and containing the initial Islamic expansion on the subcontinent from the west through the region of Sindh[164].

The Gurjara founded the Pratihara Empire in the middle of the 7th century which extended to 1036. The peak occurred in the reign of Nagabhata I (r. c. 730 - 760) in combating the Arab advance from the city of Mansura in Sindh in the battle of Rajasthan in 738, keeping the western front from the northern lands of Kashmir to the prosperous port of Bharuch in Gujarat[165]. Not least, the leader of the Gurjara managed to dominate the region of Malwa and the fort of Gwalior, strategic in the southern containment. It was in this sense that he transferred the capital to Avanti in Malwa.

Nagabhata was succeeded by two inexpressive rulers who, in turn, were succeeded by Vatsaraja (r. c. 780 - c. 800), who was once regarded as the 'best among the distinguished Kshatriya'[166]. The latter was successful in the conquest of the holy city of Kannauj after an intense dispute between rival dynasties by the Pala to the east and the Rashtrakuta to the south.

However, Vatsaraja was eventually defeated in battle around 800 by forces of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty. He was succeeded on the throne by Nagabhata II (r. c. 805 – c. 833) who was victorious over the Rashtrakuta ruler, Govinda III (r. 793 - 814), when he reconquered the Malwa region, the city of Kannauj, and expanded eastward into Bihar and contained new Arab advances to the west. It was with Nagabhata II that the great Shiva temple was rebuilt in Somnath, in Gujarat, which had been destroyed by the Arab Muslims.

After some succession time, the imperial heyday of Pratihara occurred with Mihira Bhoja or Bhoja I (r. c. 836- c. 885). Dominions were consolidated and expanded westward on the border with Islamic Sindh, east to Bengal, and the meridian to the Narmada River, bordered by the Rashtrakuta. His son and successor, Mahendrapala I (r. c. 885 - c. 910) increased even more the realm, reached the limits of the Himalayas to the north and parts of Bengal and Assam to the east.

The decline has already shown signs in the troubled reigns of

Bhoja II (r. 910 - 913) and Mahipala I (r. 912 - c. 944) who were disturbed by the renewed offensive of the Rashtrakuta to the south. Nevertheless, Arab accounts are still impressive about the power of Pratihara, as described by Al-Masudi:

> The regent has four divisions of army according to the four quarters of the seasons of the winds. Each of them counts between 700 thousand and 900 thousand men. He has vast armies in the garrisons in the north and in the south; in the east and in the west, for it is surrounded on all sides by bellicose rulers[167].

The most nefarious political effect of the Rashtrakuta invasions was the growing fragmentation of alliances with local dynasties and powers. Thus, several former vassal leaders claimed autonomy, notably in the strategic southern region of Malwa between the Rajput of Paramara dynasty, the Chandela of Bundelkhand and the Kalachuri of Mahakoshal. Further south, the Rashtrakuta emperor, Indra III (r. c. 914 - 929) sacked Kannauj in 916, evidencing the fragility of the Pratihara[168]. To make matters worse, on the western front, the latter empire was confronted with waves of attack from Turkic people of the Asian steppes. The fort of Gwalior was lost to the Chandela around 950 and renewed rebellions broke out in the east in Bengal by the Pala. By the end of the 10th century, the Gurjara of the Pratihara empire had only secured tiny dominions over their imperial past. The coup de grace came with sultan Mahmud de Ghazni (r. 998 - 1030) of the Islamized Turkic peoples coming from the north-western Afghan lands, who besieged and conquered the city of Kannauj in 1018.

In the field of the arts, the Gurjara were great supporters and sponsors. The panels painted on the walls of temples in Osian in Jodhpur, Abhaneri and Kotah are magnificent. And one of the most beautiful and graceful sculptures is the female figure named Surasundari ('Celestial Dancer'), today in the museum of Gwalior. To crown the artistic expressions of the time realized under the

Pratihara Empire, the dazzling complex of temples in Khajuraho[169], a banquet of expression and wealth of details.

Rashtrakuta

The Rashtrakuta Dynasty (752 - 985), which ruled southern India along the western coast, a region known as Karnataka, is illustrious for several reasons. They ruled the territory wider than that of any other dynasty in the period. Their contribution in the field of arts and architecture is generous. And the incentives that several Rashtrakuta kings provided to education and literature is unique and the religious tolerance exercised by them was exemplary.

The word *rashtra*, in Sanskrit indicates 'region' and *kuta*, 'chief'. It seems that the ancestors of the Rashtrakuta have already played leadership roles in the central Indian region before they founded a dynasty. Its branches expanded beyond, to the northwest, in Gujarat and Rajasthan. The Rajput of the Rathore clan claim to be descendants of them as well as those of the Ratta Dynasty (875 - 1250), feudatory of the Rashtrakuta[170].

Dantidurga (r. c. 735 – c. 756) was the first notable Rashtrakuta ruler, to war and defeat the forces of the Chalukya, crucial moment in which they became sovereigns in the region of Karnataka. From then on, it was almost two and a half centuries and fifteen consecrated kings. The power and influence of this dynasty extended from the Himalaya to Rameshwar on the southern coast of Maharashtra during the reigns of Govinda III (793 - 814), Indra III (914 - 929) and Krishna III (939 - 967).

Govinda III, according to an inscription[171], could give cold water from the Himalaya to his horses, and to his elephants, the sacred water of the Ganges. Krishna III made his fame in the campaigns to the south by defeating the Chola. And to the north, he conquered Malwa. A Kannada[172] inscription found near Jabalpur on the banks of the Narmada River, lists his political

achievements in lyrical language.

In territorial expansion, the Rashtrakuta made many allies and feudatories to protect the flanks of their empire. Its capital was erected at Malkhed in Gulbarga, also known as Manyakheta, where King Amoghavarsha I (r. c. 815 – c. 877) composed the first extensive literary work in Kannada around the year 850, the *Kavirajamarga*. The capital was also the confluence of artists and intellectuals such as the Jain genius of mathematics, Mahavira (c. 800 - c. 870), in his seminal work *Ganita Sara Samgraha*[173].

The literary works in the times of the Rashtrakuta go beyond the *Kavirajamarga*, composing a historical landmark in the Kannada language. Pampa (10th century) wrote his two epic works *Adipurana* and *Vikramarjuna Vijaya* making him the greatest Kannada poet, later considered as the Adivaki, the 'First Poet'. In prose, the *Vaddaradhane* ('Cult of the Elders') is one of the most important work of the 10th century. There are nineteen stories dealing with Jain principles about torments of the flesh and spirit. Didactic in nature, the stories interpret the theory of karma, rebirth and the desolate situation of the human condition. The work also sheds light on the social life of the period, such as education, commerce, magic, superstitions and the role of women[174].

In the field of arts and architecture, the two and a half century of the Rashtrakuta witnessed great deeds. Ellora (5th to 10th centuries), Elephanta (5th to 8th centuries) and several other caves are magnificent testaments of the time, highlighting the great monuments and monolithic sculptures. In Ellora, at Maharashtra, there are works in temples excavated in caves of all the flourishing religions in India at that time. Of the thirty-four caves, twelve are Buddhists, seventeen on the south side are Hindus and five caves on the north side are Jains. In Elephanta, perhaps has the stupendous synthesis of the religious art of the time, the sculpture of the Trimurti, representing Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva Maheshwara. A British observer in 1814, haunted by the work,

once expressed:

> Surely there is nothing in the world that exceeds the Indian monuments in the magnificence of the project and greatness of effect. The immense dome of St Peter's Basilica becomes insignificant in comparison[175].

The religious tolerance of the Rashtrakuta was legendary. Buddhism that was in decline was revitalized with royal patronage and scholarship. Dantidurga and Dhruva II made liberal donations for the construction of Buddhist monasteries, called vihara. Jain scholars and institutions received generous donations from King Amogavarsha I, himself a believer in the faith[176].

Arab Muslims on the west coast were protected. It was granted to their merchants the construction of mosques and Islamic magistrates were appointed. Suleyman, a Muslim merchant who visited India in the 9th century wrote about the generosity and tolerance of the Rashtrakuta kings and considered King Amogavarsha I as among the greatest emperors of the world at the time[177].

Pala

In East India, the most prominent kingdom in the period was that of the Pala (8th to 12th century). Its beginning took place after a time of disorder in the region of Bengal in Matsyanyana, and Gopala I (r. c. 750 - c. 770) was eventually chosen as king to put an end to the centrifugal rebellions, centralizing the power and initiating a new dynasty about 750 .

By the year 780, Gopala was succeeded by Dharmapala (r. 8th century) who proceeded in significantly expanding the Pala Empire. In this attempt, he even defeated the king of the city of Kannauj, and there leaving a pretender to the local throne,

Chakrayudha[178]. But his control in the city did not hold up over time, for he was defeated by the king of the Rashtrakuta, Dhruva (780 - 793), as narrated by Munger plates in Bihar. Despite this setback, there was inheritance disorder following Dhruva's death, which favoured Dharmapala's new offensive over the town, making him the undisputed lord of North Indian, or as he referred to in the title as *Uttarapathasvamin* ('Lord of the North')[179].

After the rule of Dharmapala, his son, Devapala (9th century) ascended the throne, appearing in history as the greatest king of the Pala, while incorporating to the empire the region of Assam to the north and Odisha on the eastern coast of India. It was the apex of the empire which, considering some setbacks, lasted for more than four centuries[180]. The Arab merchant Suleyman in his book written in 951, *Silsiltut-Tauarikh*, is a testament witness to this power, as he considers the Pala troops more numerous than the neighbouring adversaries of the Pratihara and Rashtrakuta, and tell us that the Pala king was accompanied in war campaigns by about 50,000 war elephants[181].

The prestige of the Pala in the Buddhist world was enormous, for they were the guardians of the most sacred regions of the religion. According to Tibetan chroniclers, the Pala regents were great patrons of the teaching and worship of the teachings of Buddha, and had great impact in the diffusion of the Mahayana Buddhism. Dharmapala founded the famous Buddhist monastery Somapura Mahavira in Paharpur, now Bangladesh, and Devapala, his son, favoured worshipers with a Buddha statue, construction of adjunct buildings and additional resources for Nalanda University in 860[182]. It was during this period that it gained international fame by attracting more than 10,000 Buddhist students and teachers from Central Asia, Southeast Asia, China and Sri Lanka[183].

The Pala regents promoted Hinduism as well. Narayanapala (9th and 10th centuries) gave orders for the construction of temples in honour of Shiva and granted generous incentives to Brahmins

to settle in his kingdom and run Hindu *gurukula* schools[184].

Pallava

In the ruins of the Satavahana Empire that existed in the Deccan Plateau, several independent kingdoms appeared in the southern region of India. Among the most notable kingdoms, that of the Pallava Dynasty stood out and occupied the south-eastern part of the Satavahana dominions and founded its capital at Kanchipuram, or Kanchi.

The Pallava Dynasty began when King Simhavishnu (r. c. 575 – c. 600) ascended the throne around 575. In that year, people called Kalabhra[185] invaded the southern region of India and caused great destruction. It was Simhavishnu who overcame confusion and re-established order, even extending his dominion from the Krishna River to the Kaveri over the Tamil people and Sri Lanka. Thus tells us the great poet of the time, Bharavi (c. 6th century) about his deeds in *Anvantisundari Katha*[186].

Simhavishnu's successor, Mahendravarman I (r. 600 - 630) was a versatile genius and proficient in the art of war and peace. It was in his reign that rivalries with the Chalukya began and lasted for almost a century having great impact on the history of southern India. Pulakeshin II (r. c. 610 – c. 642) of Chalukya took the north of the Vengi province although later the Pallava had recaptured the capital Kanchi. But the architectural activities of King Mahendravarman I were extraordinary. Many temples were dug into the rock at Trichinopoly, Chinglepet, North and South Arcot. It was also built the famous city of Mahendravati with a huge reservoir of water nearby. He was an accomplished poet and musician, and composed a classic Sanskrit play, *Mattavilasa Prahasana* ('A Farce of Drunken Sport')[187]. He also authored a series of treatises on music and a passionate admirer of paintings and turned to Shaivism at his last years despite being a Jain all his life.

But the greatest of all the Pallava kings was Narasimhavarman I (r. c. 630 - c. 668) who succeeded his father Mahendravarman I in 630. Under him the power of the Pallava Dynasty reached its apogee and therefore he assumed the title *Mamalla*, 'Great Warrior'. For he inflicted an overwhelming defeat on Pulakeshin II of Chalukya in 642 and captured the latter's capital, Vatapi, assuming the title *Vatapikonda* or 'Conqueror of Vatapi'[188]. Through this feat the Pallava established their supremacy over the Deccan Plateau. In addition, Narasimhavarman I also carried out a series of conquests against the Chola, Chera, Kalabhra, the southernmost Pandya, and even sent naval expeditions against Sri Lanka to enthrone a protégé of his, Manavarman. The Pallava regent went far beyond the arts of politics and war. He promoted the arts and had several monolithic temples called rathas built in the main port of the empire, Mahallapuram, as well as in Trichinapalli, now in the state of Tamil Nadu.

In the reign of his grandson, Parameswaravarnam I (c. 670 - 695), the struggles against the Chalukya were resumed and their rival, Vikramaditya I, at one time occupied the capital of the Pallava, Kanchi. Parameswaravarman I, however, in the battle of Peruvalanallur in 674, managed to resume the offensives before the Chalukya and retook the territories and the lost capital[189]. Parameswaravarnam I was a dedicated Shaivite and had several temples and buildings built in Mamallapuram.

The successor king, Narasimhavarman II (r. 700 - 728), reigned peacefully and during his rule the Kailashnath temple in Kanchi was built and even exchanged embassies with China in 720[190]. In the reign of Nandivarman II (r. c. 730 - 795) a new period of turbulence occurred, as his accession to the throne was not uncontested. In addition, he faced in the battle field the Pandya in the south, evidencing the fragility of the Pallava to the Chalukya who took the city of Kanchi. Nandivarman II was also defeated against the Rashtrakuta under the command of Dantidurga. The

only success of Nandivarman II was the annexation of some territories in Odisha, in the eastern coast, and submitted the Ganga of the region as feudatories. Therefore, as a military leader, his reign proved to be an unsatisfactory performance.

And so began the gradual decline of the Pallava. During his almost 50 year reign, Pallava king Dantivarman (r. c. 795 – c. 846) made a last attempt to defeat the Pandya in the south, but the Chola who were used in battle as allies took advantage of the fragility after the events and claimed greater autonomy. In addition, the king of the Rashtrakuta, Govinda III (r. 793-814), defeated Dantivarman and occupied the capital Kanchi in 803[191].

Chalukya

The Chalukya dynasty was a powerful Indian royal dynasty that ruled much of southern and central India between the 6th and 12th centuries. During this period they governed in three related but separate dynasties. The oldest dynasty, Chalukya Badami, ruled from its capital Vatapi (current Badami) from the middle of the 6th century. The Badami Chalukya began their autonomy with the decline of the Kadamba kingdom and quickly gained prominence during the reign of Pulakeshin II (r. c. 610 – c. 642).

The Chalukya Badami Dynasty entered a brief decline after the death of Pulakeshin II due to internal disputes. It was recovered during the reign of Vikramaditya I (655 - 680) who managed to expel the Pallava of Badami and restore order[192]. A few years later the empire reached its height during the rule of the illustrious Vikramaditya II (r. 733-746) who defeated the Pallava king Nandivarman II and captured the southern city of Kanchipuram. The decline came from the Rashtrakuta offensives from the west in the mid-8th century, which at the end of the 10th century formed another Chalukya dynasty, the so-called Western Chalukyas who ruled from the town of Kalyani (present Basavakalyan) until the end of 12th century.

Other Chalukya dynasties thrived after the advance of the Rashtrakuta. Further east from the Deccan Plateau, the Eastern Chalukya emancipated themselves into a kingdom and founded a new dynasty. These ruled from their capital Vengi until about 1130, when it merged with the Chola. The capital Vengi continued to be governed by members of the Chalukya under the supervision of the Chola until 1189, when the kingdom succumbed before the Hoysala[193].

The Chalukya dynasty constitute an important milestone in the history of southern India and a golden age in the history of Karnataka. The political atmosphere in South India has shifted from countless fragmented smaller kingdoms to great empires with the Chalukya Badami ancestry. For the first time, a southern Indian kingdom took over and consolidated the entire region between the Kaveri River and the Narmada. The rise of this empire saw the birth of an efficient administration, a pungent international commerce and the development of a new architectural style called the Chalukya Architecture. The Kannada literature, which had the royal support of Rashtrakuta in the 9th century, found patronage of the Western Chalukya in the Jain and Shaivite traditions. In addition, in the 11th century, the birth of Telugu literature flourished under the patronage of the Eastern Chalukya[194].

In religious terms, the Chalukya were followers of Hinduism, as evidenced by the numerous shrines dedicated to popular Hindu deities. Pattadakal holds a grandiose architecture, and the cult of Lajja Gauri, goddess of fertility was quite popular. Jainism was encouraged as shown by the cave temples in Badami and others in the Aihole Complex[195].

In art and architecture, the heritage of the Chalukya dynasties is immense. Over one hundred and fifty monuments were built at the time of Badami, between 450 and 700, in the Malaprabha valley in Karnataka. The excavated temples of Pattadakal commissioned by Vikramaditya II (740) are UNESCO World

Heritage Sites and Badami and Aihole are its most celebrated monuments. Two paintings from Ajanta's Cave 1, 'The Temptation of Buddha' and 'The Persian Embassy' are attributed to the Chalukya. In Aihole, Durga temple (6th century), Ladh Khan temple (450), Meguti temple (634), Hucchimalli and Huccappayya temples (5th century) and the excavated temples of Badami (600) are all rich examples of Chalukya art.

The flowering of Indian regional cultures

The emergence of several regional kingdoms had a significant impact on cultural and religious transformation in India in the first millennium BCE. A new religiosity, transforming Brahmanism orthodoxy and popular cults were the obvious expressions. In addition, there was an evolution of regional languages as a result of the support and sponsorship of regents and strengthening of Indian regional kingdoms.

In the philosophical and religious field, there were in the first millennium the emergence of questioning and renewing tendencies as reflections of the historical transformations in India. In the aftermath of the Gupta dissolution, political fragmentation brought with it a series of currents of thought that confronted traditional Hindu canons and reflected the spread of Buddhist and Jain beliefs, which carried a universal and egalitarian message. One of them, within Brahmanism, was a Brahmin 'counter-reformation' in order to reinvigorate it before other reformist currents. On the other hand, a popular movement that rejected orthodoxy sought the salvation of the believer through devotion to a more personal, intimate divinity. In the latter, the most notorious of schools was called Vedantism, from the Vedanta word (*anta*, 'end' of the Vedas)[196].

It was the great philosopher Shankara (788 - 820) who systematized Vedanta philosophy, emphasizing its monistic principles (*advaita*, 'absolute non-duality'). This principle was

inspired by the teachings of the Upanishads on the indissoluble unity between the soul (*atman*) and the holy spirit (*brahman*). The individual soul, embedded in a living form (*jiva*), is restricted only to a cycle of rebirth and death (*samsara*) because the individual believes that the world is real despite being mere (*maya*) illusion. This ignorance, teaches Shankara, is what prevents the soul from uniting and identifying with the holy spirit. Only correct knowledge (*jnana*) can lead to the perception of unity and salvation (*moksha*)[197]. Thus Shankara was able to synthesize the Buddhist principles of rebirth within the revitalized framework of Hinduism. In addition, he allowed the possibility of personal self-realization, regardless of the caste situation, to be discovered by anyone facing the illusions of the world and contact with the Divine Creator.

Another more emotive and popular movement, the Bakhti ('love, devotion'), further challenged Brahmanism orthodoxy. This movement emphasized in its teachings filial love and a path of absolute and unrestricted devotion to the divine (*bhakti-marga*). It was inspired by a Bhagavad Gita's passage in which Krishna says to Arjuna: 'He who loves me will not perish ... think of me, love me, sacrifice to me, honour me and you will be one with me'[198].

The movement had its beginning around the 6th century in Tamil Nadu, southern India. And then it spread to other parts of the country, giving a new aspect of Hinduism. Its protagonists were Shaivite (nayanars) and Vaishnavite (alvars)[199] that later were sanctified in the movement[200]. The scriptures of these saints were later gathered in the Sacred Scriptures (Tirumurai) of the Tamils, also called the Tamil Veda[201].

This movement also produced a series of sacred sites that would eventually become pilgrimage points in India. Moreover, Bhakti principles not only indicated places of worship and visitation, but also rejected the intricate sacrificial rituals that most popular classes could not afford to do so, contrary to the elitism of the Brahmanism precepts of liturgy and exclusivity.

The cult of Shiva and Vishnu, in this movement, allowed the people to have access to the sacred without social and educational barriers. Shiva, for example, was regarded as an open and accessible divinity to all, which manifested itself in places such as caves, caves and temples scattered throughout the Indian interior, through his images and representations such as the lingam, and Vishnu represented as a serpent. And the places of dwelling, birth, and episodes in the life of these gods were designated as sacred sites such as Mount Kailash of Shiva. Legends and stories of this type were compiled to enrich and sanctify places and access to devotees. Images and representations have become tangible forms of divine incarnations (*avatara*) to all devotees[202].

In this sense, several local popular deities, besides the supreme Shiva and Vishnu, were sacralised and incorporated into the Hindu pantheon. One of the most notorious examples was the incorporation of the goddess of Madurai, of the Pandya, Meenakshi, the fish-eyed goddess, who was later considered to be the incarnation of Shiva's wife, Parvati. Another popular example was the incorporation of the god Jagannath of Puri, on the east coast of India. The image of this god, worshiped as 'Lord of the World' and celebrated in large conglomerations around huge logs and colossal carriages of his transport vehicle, was later identified with Vishnu. And, lastly, Krishna himself who has roots of pastoral cults of the city of Mathura, which ended up being considered as an incarnation of Vishnu.

The fragmentation in numerous kingdoms in India provoked a greater literary and linguistic regionalization. The earlier hegemonic Brahmanism coming from North India expressed in literary Sanskrit has gained regional outlines in Marathi, Kannada, Bengali, Assamese and Oriya languages. In this sense, religious and philosophical writings were the result of adaptation of religious members to propagate their doctrines in regions with little or no knowledge of Sanskrit. Thus, great religious and philosophical works have been translated (and sometimes even

questioned) before the new regional languages. As was the translation of the Puranas, crucial to Vaishnavism, which served as the literary base of several Indian languages, as did the poet Sridhar (18th century) for the Marathi language[203]. Or as Tulsidas (1532 - 1632) when adapting the epic Ramayana to the Hindi language in the north of India. It was not only the sacred writings that served as a vehicle for translation and regional literary consolidation. Chronicles of temples and kings were also written and adapted in the vernacular to be read and understood by subjects, pilgrims and the wider public.

The transformations of Indian culture have had an impact beyond India. Along with commercial and religious routes, merchants, sailors, missionaries and Brahmins, Indian culture has decisively influenced Central Asian countries, China, Japan, Korea, and especially those in Southeast Asia. Witness of this are the magnificent complex of Hindu and Buddhist temples in Angkor (c. 889 - c. 1300) in Cambodia, in Pagan (1044-1287) in Myanmar and even on the island of Java in Prambanan (9th century) and Borobudur (9th century), this the largest set of Buddhist temples ever built.

But who led and what were the reasons for this formidable Indian cultural spread? There are several explanations for this cultural transmission. According to Kulke & Rothermund[204], there is the theory of the Kshatriya, a caste of warriors who expanded the Indian presence by war, an explanation rejected by most scholars. Another theory, more accepted, is that of the Vaishya, merchants and merchants who expanded the Indian influence by the trade routes. This does not explain the spread of the language and Sanskrit script that requires years of indoctrination and instruction. Which leads us to support the latter theory, that the dominant castes, the Brahmins, were responsible for the Indian cultural transmission.

Certainly there were Indian traders from the coast of Tamil Nadu and Malabar, under the control of the Chola and Pandya, to

the ports of Southeast Asia and islands in the Indian Ocean[205], as well as along land routes through Central Asia. But the cultural transmission of Sanskrit, which later served as basis for the flowering of other languages in Southeast Asia, was certainly the work of literate Brahmin missionaries and connoisseurs of Hindu liturgy and mythology. Or from studied Buddhist monks who went to Asian countries to the north and east.

These religious were the main transmitters of Indian culture that served as political and religious legitimization by the local rulers in Java, Angkor and Pagan[206]. And it was the Buddhist monks who came from the Nalanda and Taxila schools, present-day Islamabad in northern Pakistan which propagated their precepts along the land routes to Southeast Asia and Afghanistan, and further north of the Hindu Kush and Karakorum taking the scriptures to the Tibetan Plateau, Taklimakan Desert, Qaidam Basin to the Chinese lands and beyond.

From Mahmud of Ghazni to Vijayanagara - 11th Century - 16th Century

India from the 13th century has undergone a series of transformations from the people of Central Asia. But, unlike many other places in Asia that were conquered by the Mongols from the great union of nations in 1206 led by Temujin Khan (Genghis Khan, 1162 - 1227), India was not occupied. Instead, in its northern portion, it was submitted by a Turkic Mamluk military slave, Qutb al-Din Aibak (r. c. 1206 - 1210), initially serving as a sultan of Afghanistan[207], who later declared his independence and founded a new sultanate from the city of Delhi.

This act of authority will have an impact on the history of India, for thus the new rulers came to stay and rule. Indian culture will be enriched by this, will become even more complex and rich with these new lasting contacts with Central Asia Islam to the north and west.

But the sultanate of Delhi would not be the first Islamic presence and political entity in India. For in the south of the Sindh, in the 8th century, an Arab general in the service of the Umayyad Caliph had already established himself, Mohammad ibn Qasin (695 - 715)[208] [209]. Other Arab leaders will later succeed and expand the Islamic presence in the region, to the peninsula of Kathiawar in Gujarat and to the south of Rajasthan in 725. Nevertheless, their advance was later restrained by Chalukya and Rashtrakuta on the west coast, as well as by the Pratihara in the

rest of northern India.

Mahmud de Ghazni

By the year 1000, North India was fragile and divided between hegemonic forces of the Pratihara from Kannauj and the Western Chalukya along the western and central coast. The Chola were too far in the south to interfere in northern affairs. Faced with this scenario, ascended one of the most controversial and extraordinary characters in the Islamic history of India, Mahmud of Ghazni (971 - 1030). This leader came from the mountainous Afghan lands, succeeded his father, Sabuktigin (c. 942 - 997), a Turkic slave and military genius who conquered much of Persia and had the eastern boundary of the Indus. Thus established a new dynasty, the Ghaznavid, around the capital Ghazni, to the south of present Kabul.

Mahmud, after his father's death, took the throne and began leading campaigns against the Indian lands considered fabulously rich at the time. The Pratihara were the first Indians who began to feel the frequent offensive of Mahmud, as well as the Rajput and the Chandella. The Muslims of Multan also did not escape the attacks of the Ghaznavid, considered by Mahmud heretics, since its governor, Fateh Daud, was of the Ismaili branch of Shiism[210]. The Hindus, in turn, suffered systematic attacks and looting, such as that which occurred on the temple of Shiva in Somnath on the south coast of Gujarat in 1025. In this episode, in which Mahmud desired the riches and sustenance of his kingdom and capital in Ghazni, the chroniclers tell us that about 50,000 Hindus died, the lingam of Shiva was destroyed and the booty was estimated at more than six tons of gold [211]. Episode to the present day that feed passionate debate between Hindus and Muslims in India.

Ghazni, its capital, was enriched and embellished with the resources acquired, making it one of the most prestigious in Asia at the time. Mahmud's court was not far behind, since among

them lived the author of the epic *Shahnameh*, the 'Book of Kings'[212], Ferdowsi (c. 940 - c.1020), and the scholar Al-Biruni (973 - 1048), the greatest Muslim scholar from India [213]. It was this author who, besides the reasons pointed out, described the obstinacy and pride of the Indians before the world:

> The Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. They are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited, and stolid. They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste among their own people, still much more, of course, from any foreigner ... Their haughtiness is such that, if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khorasan [eastern region of Persia] and Persia, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar. If they travelled and mixed with other nations, they would soon change their mind, for their ancestors were not as narrow-minded as the present generation is.[214]

After Mahmud's death in 1030, India went through a calm period of almost a century before the invasion of new people to descend from Afghanistan. Period that could have consolidated its political and military unity before new invaders, but the effect in that interregnum was contrary. After the decline of the Pratihara, the Rajput established themselves in northern India in multiple alliances with each other but with little union. In addition, the merits of war were not reflected in the Rajput system of military hierarchy, that is, there were few leaders and officers of military valour in the cavalry occupied by persons of political and family liaisons with little discipline and merit. Added to this are the barriers of caste and society to the composition of battle forces and the extensive use of the dubious loyalty of mercenaries.

In contrast, the cavalrymen of Central Asia were veterans accustomed to years of campaigning and battles, led by experienced war leaders. Another factor was the Islamic ideology

that was more egalitarian than Hindu orthodoxy stratified into castes, which offered anyone the possibility of glory and fortune on the battlefield in the face of the legendary riches that India offered. It was in this sense of military superiority that, after a historical gap, India succumbed to new Muslim forces.

Sultanate of Delhi

In 1191 and 1192, on the outskirts of the city of Tarain, northwest of Delhi, a confederation of Rajput armies gathered together to battle against Muslim forces. In command and supervising the manoeuvres of the latter mounted on his horse, Muhammad of Ghor (r. 1173 - 1206), a leader who had already stood out among the Afghans and Persians to consolidate an realm in Central Asia. Going back some years, Muhammad of Ghur had submitted Multan in 1175 and in 1186 had dethroned the last successor of the Ghaznavid. So his eyes turned to the fertile Indian plains, something he was determined to conquer and not just plunder as Mahmud of Ghazni did more than a hundred years earlier.

The culminating moment was in Tarain, where apparently the forces of the Rajput led by Prithviraj Chauhan (r. 1178 - 1192), regent of Ajmer and Delhi, manage to contain the invading offensives. But after a few months, Muhammad returned with an impressive and disciplined force of archers and horses, agile on the battlefield against the heavy infantry forces and elephants of the Rajput. Thus, in addition to the victory, Muhammad extended after several campaigns almost all of northern India in a few years. In 1193, he captured Kannauj and Varanasi. Then the fort at Gwalior, Ajmer and Anilwara, the main city of Gujarat. In short, most of the strong and strategic positions of the Rajput were dominated and eliminated [215].

Many of these victories came under the command of one of his subordinates, a Mamluk of notable military talent of Turkic

origin, Qutb Ud Din Aibak (r. 1150 - 1210) (r. 1206 - 1210), who served as governor in Delhi after it was captured from the Rajput in 1193. Following the death of Muhammad of Ghor in 1206, Aibak decided to establish his presence in Delhi and founded a new dynasty, the so-called Mamluk Dynasty of Delhi (1206 - 1290) under the approval of the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad, and was given to him by the caliph the title of sultan, that is, governor with full sovereign powers [216]. This was the beginning of the Sultanate of Delhi, which extended after several dynasties until the conquest of the Mughals in 1526.

Farther east in Bengal, another military leader under the command of Muhammad of Ghor, Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji (who lived from the mid-12th century to 1206) made rapid advances and military conquests, capturing the region of Bihar and destroying, under allegations of heresy, the Buddhist university of Nalanda around the year 1200. In 1202, the greatest Bengali ruler, Lakshmana Sena (r. 1178 – 1206), fell from power. Bengal from then on will gravitate out of control of Delhi, to become a centre of its own tradition. After the death of Muhammad of Ghor in 1206, with the separation between Bengal and Delhi the Ghurid Dynasty began to fragment [217]. The Rajput began to claim autonomy and took back control of Gwalior and Ranthambor.

In Delhi, after Aikbar's death, Iltutmish (r. 1211 - 1236) became regent and sultan in 1211. His hard task was to consolidate the sultanate of Delhi over the Rajput uprisings in north and north-west India, as happened near the city of Udaipur and Agra in Rajasthan [218]. In 1239 he succeeded in subjecting Bakhtiyar Khilji's followers in Bengal and Bihar to the east, conferring extensive territorial extension under the control of Delhi. The impetuosity of Iltutmish's recaptures was celebrated in verses by a Persian poet [219]:

> [Iltutmish] has for the second time found the fort that resembles the

heavens;
(...) whose hand and sword
The Lion's Soul [another name attributed to Ali] of repeated attacks praised.

But his greatest feat may have been the containment of the Mongols, under the command of Genghis Khan who reached the Indus River in 1221, although the Mongol leader left some of his troops in the Punjab region throughout the 13th century.

The merit of Aibak and Iltutmish was the consolidation of an independent sultanate around the city of Delhi, initiating an imperial unit in the north Indian not seen since the Gupta and Harsha. Delhi, which had been a small fortress of the Rajput and erected as imperial capital, had great works in what is now known as Old Delhi, to the north of what the British will afterwards build to the south of it, in New Delhi in the 19th and 20th centuries. As the greatest symbol of these two regents, the Qutb Minar, symbolizes the rich combination of Indo-Islamic elements, as well as the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque and the Iltutmish tomb.

After Iltutmish's death, decades of ceaseless disputes between rulers and generals had taken control of the sultanate of Delhi. In this turbulent period, the brief but remarkable government of the daughter of Iltutmish, Razia al-Din (Sultana Raziya, r. 1236 - 1240), portrayed as wise ruler and competent leader, is to be noted: 'She has kept all the admirable qualities of a leader', as recorded in the Muslim chronicles, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* [220]. And in this work concluded: 'But what good is all these qualities if fate denied her the fate of having been born as a man?'. In 1240, after conspiracies of other outraged followers of Iltutmish, the sultana was dethroned and dead.

The offensive of the Mongol (Chagatais) from the northwest and Punjab based in the city of Lahore began to gain momentum again in the middle of the 13th century until they were restrained and defeated by the Mamluk sultan of Delhi, Ghiyas ud din

Balban (r. 1266 - 1287). Balban, known for his cruelty and impetuousness towards his enemies and opponents, proceeded to repress other revolts of his kingdom and defeated the contestants in Bengal, naming his descendants as governors in the region until 1338 [221]. After the death of Balban in 1286, Bengal again will have its brief autonomy as a sultanate away from Delhi (1290 - 1320) [222].

The expansion beyond the northern regions of India by the sultanate of Delhi gained momentum under Alauddin Khalji (r. 1296 - 1316). The sultan longed to be a great emperor, comparable to Alexander the Great, a 'Sikander', as shown by the currencies of his government. His history began with the conquest of the Devagiri fortress, defeating the local regent, the king of the Yadava. In 1298 Khalji dominated the Gujarat and between 1031 and 1022 he captured the Rajput's strongholds in Ranthabor and Chittor, a feat that was immortalized in Jayasi's epic *Padmavat* (1540) [223], and other strategic locations in Malwa in 1305. Two years later, Alauddin submitted the regent of Devagiri, in the Deccan Plateau and made him tributary to his command.

From 1309, Alauddin began to advance to the south of India. Its formidable prey would be the magnificent capital of the Kakatiya in Warangal, today in the state of Andhra Pradesh [224]. With this intent, he named one of his most talented generals, Malik Kafur (? - 1316), who returned to Delhi victorious with a vast spoil that took a thousand camels to load. And, according to legend, among these valuables, the famous Koh-i-Nur diamond [225]. Next year, Malik Kafur continued on and invaded the capital of the Hoysala, Dvarasamudra, and the imperial city of the Pandya, Madurai, submitting their rulers as subordinates.

Farther north and northwest, Khalji launched a series of campaigns against the Mongols. In 1299, the local leader of the Mongols, descended from Genghis Khan, Qutlugh Khwaja (? - 1313-4), invaded India with an army of 200,000 men, aiming to control Delhi. He was expelled in battle by Alauddin and again four years later when the sultan of Delhi was concentrating on

capturing Warangal. In these events, the Mongols managed to reach the capital Delhi, razing the streets, temples and buildings of the city [226].

But perhaps Alauddin's greatest legacy is his administrative reforms. While his predecessors based their powers and tributes on alliances with local leaders and rulers, Alauddin proceeded to centralize power in the capital and standardize taxation. Notably, he charged a smaller, standardized and regular tax for all. Among the poorest, composed mostly of Hindu peasants, he sought to curb abusive rates made by intermediaries and local chiefs [227].

Amid his courtiers and officers, who might be prone to revolt and conspiracy, the regent sought to confiscate all their property, and appointed them for tax collection and data collection in places set in a rotating manner, thus avoiding greater threats of disloyalty and corruption to his power. He gradually succeeded in centralizing political loyalties and secured the payment of taxes into the imperial treasury which was essential to defray his military campaigns. These measures were the most systematic centralized administrative reforms in India prior to the Mughal dynasty in the 16th century. Quite pragmatic despite being a Muslim devotee, Alauddin further followed the precepts of *Arthashastra*, to put the interest of the state above any norm, even the Koranic teachings, as he stated in a dialogue as narrated in the book of Barni, the *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* [228]:

> Despite being a Muslim of Islamic ascendency, in order to avoid rebellions in which thousands could perish, I order and conceive according to what is best for the state and for the benefit of the people.

In 1316, Alauddin passed away and was succeeded by his sons in a period of turbulent politics. Order only returned in 1320, when the courtiers placed the Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq (r. 1320 - 1325) as the new sultan. Son of a Turkic military slave who served

to Sultan Balban, the new ruler founded a new dynasty in Delhi.

Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq led new campaigns against rebellions in the town of Warangal and on Bengal. Upon his return to Delhi, he died in a suspected collapse of a reception hall celebrating his military victories [229]. His son, Muhammad bin Tughluq (1324 - 1351), would then govern without interruption the sultanate for 27 years. Ambitious by nature, scholarly and fluent in Arabic, Persian, Turkic and Sanskrit, Muhammad Tughluq aimed to further expand his kingdom, to annex all domains of South India. Soon after ascending to the throne, in 1326-7, he conquered the Hindu kingdoms of Madura and Kampili [230] where later the dominion of Vijayanagara would flourish. He also subdued Hoysala rebels and, in order to protect his empire on the central and southern flank, he decided to move the capital of Delhi to the north at Daulatabad, near Devagiri, which proved to be a disaster for his popularity and imperial finances. Witness to this ruinous project was the Moroccan traveller Ibn Battuta (1304 - 1369) who was in India at the time working as an Islamic Judge (*qadi*) [231].

His failure in the new capital caused him to return to Delhi, showing weakness and insecurity in the eyes of local people and leaders. In the south, it was a clear signal for new rebellions. In 1334, the governor of Madurai declared independence as Sultan of Mabar. Four years later, Bengal to the east followed in the same direction and in 1346 the Vijayanagara empire was founded having as capital a city near the ruinous Daulatabad. In Central India, a sultanate at Bamani was established in 1347. Indian regional centres again began to settle upon the imperial fragmentation of Delhi.

The final years of Muhammad Tughluq were narrated by Ibn Battuta in his Travel Book (*Rihla*) as a period of famine, terror, oppression and persecution over the Hindu and Muslim population, opponents and alleged conspirators [232]. And so the gradual decline of the Sultanate of Delhi began. Firoz Shah,

Tughluq's cousin, ascended the throne in 1351 and ruled for 37 years. Firoz had the merit of consolidating command in Delhi again and gave up any pretension to incorporate the central and southern kingdoms of India. He was unsuccessful in his attempts to repress rebellions in Bengal in the 1353-1354 and 1359 campaigns, despite having achieved some victories in Odisha, further south of Bengal along the eastern coast [233]. In 1362, his offensives on the Gujarat and Sindh resulted in his death in the desert.

Firoz government was notable, however, in building works, canals, forts and mosques. A citadel in Delhi, Feroz Shah Kotla, was completed and two Ashoka pillars brought up from distant provinces were erected. He attempted to introduce new administrative reforms by abolishing torture and extending taxes (*jizya*) to the Brahmins, a cause of great unpopularity among the caste [234]. Firoz died in 1388, when the power of Delhi began to crumble in terminal phase. His successors disputed the throne and it brought in confrontation in the capital. In this period of political fragility, the provinces became in fact autonomous. The sultanate of Delhi finally fell in 1398, when the most formidable leader at the time, coming from Samarkand, Timur (Tamerlane) (1366 - 1405), occupied and razed Delhi after conquering Persia in 1387 and Baghdad in 1393. For three whole days Timur's soldiers looted and pillaged the treasures and valuables of Delhi, raping and killing their Hindu population, sparing Muslims. Delhi, after the event, was left uninhabited and abandoned for years.

In 1414, Delhi was briefly centre of a new dynasty, under the Sayyid (1414-1451), but its influence on nearby regions in India was rather restricted, concentrating on the plains between the Ganges and Yamuna rivers. In 1451, an Afghan chief of the Lodi clan, Bahlul (r. 1451 - 1489), dethroned the previous rulers and created a new dynasty in Delhi, projected his power to some central Indian regions and consolidated an efficient administration, foundations that would later be used in the state

machinery of the Mughals. Aiming for better control over Gwalior and other regions of the Rajput, Lodi regent, Sikandar (r. 1489 - 1517), had a new capital built in Agra. But the greatest legacy of the Lodi lies in Delhi, in the Lodi Gardens, a pleasant ground home to many of their tombs.

Deccan Plateau and South India

In 1345, Zafar Khan, a Turkic military man in the service of Muhammad Tughlug, Sultan of Delhi, occupied the city of Daulatabad and, in the face of political crises in the north, gave birth to his ambitions and declared himself sultan of Bamani under the title of Bahman Shah. Two years later, fearing for the safety of his capital, he decided to move along with his court to the south, to Gulbarga. At about the same time, two new Hindu kingdoms that were unaware of any successful invasion of the Muslims were founded, that of Vijayanagara, southern part of Karnataka, and that of the Gajapati in Odisha on the east coast.

Sultanate of Bamani

From the beginning in 1347, the Muslim kingdom of Bamani sought to consolidate its power, settling against the expected incursions of Muhammad Tughluq from the north. In the face of these campaigns, the capital was again displaced, leaving the Gulbarga area, going north-west in Bidar at the end of the 15th century [235]. Thus described a Russian traveller, Afanasy Nikitin (? - 1472), who left us a vivid account of the new capital, situated at a higher altitude, around a thousand meters, emphasizing the splendour of its buildings and the life of the nobles against the misery of population [236].

The most striking personality, according to the Russian, was the Persian-born minister of Bamani, Muhammad Gawan (1463 - 1482), who reformed forms of taxation and centralized authority

against the disintegrating tendencies of the new sultanate. The minister ended up being killed in 1481 and thus a period of independence of governors took place in Bijapur, in 1489, Ahmadnagar and Berar in 1491, Bidar in 1492 and Golconda in 1512. The last sultan of Bamani, Mahmud Shah (1482 - 1518) no longer held any authority over the dissolution of his kingdom. Bijapur, in particular, was involved in years of fights against neighbouring rivals in the Deccan and even lost the port of Goa, on the west coast, to new rivals from the oceans in 1510, the Portuguese.

The segregated provinces of Bamani generally lived autonomously until they were incorporated by the expansion of the Mughals under Aurangzeb (r. 1685 - 1705) two centuries later. In the meantime, an Indo-Islamic culture flourished in the region, such as the emergence of the Urdu language. Thus, under the ruins of the Sultanate of Delhi, and before the invasions of the Mughals, Hindu and Muslim independent kingdoms flourished in the Deccan. On the mainstay, the Islamo-Persian and Hindu cultures blended, resulting in new styles and works and popularizing new languages and dialects. As an example, the rulers of Bijapur tolerated the Marathi as the current local language and everyday business transactions. In Bengal, further east, far from the domination of Delhi, the local sultan financed the translation into the Bengali language of the *Ramayana* by the poet Krittibas (1381 - 1461). Around 1500, the governor of Chittagong commissioned the translation of the *Mahabharata* to the court poet, Kavindra Parameshvara (1515 - 1519), to Bengali. In short, a new wave of Indian regional cultural flourishing gained momentum during the period.

In architecture, the Bamani undertook a series of constructions that mixed elements of Muslim and local styles. The result produced distinct elements, as demonstrated in the great domes of Gol Gumbaz in Bijapur and that of Charminar in Hyderabad. In the field of literature, the most notable contribution

that had Indo-Islamic influence was that of the Sufi [237] saint Hazrat Banda Nawaz (1321 - 1422).

Gajapati kingdom of Odisha

One of the most fearsome and organized rivals of the sultanate of Delhi was the Gajapati ('Lord of Elephants') kingdom in Odisha, on the east coast. These came to control from the mouth of the Ganges River to the north to the Godavari River to the south from the 13th century, sometimes reaching Tiruchirappalli south of Madras (present Chennai) in the 15th century. Together with the kingdom of Vijayanagara, they took the preservation of Hindu costumes and institutions in eastern and southern India, in contrast to the western and northern coasts that had larger Islamic influence in the 13th century.

The history of Odisha under the Gajapati began with the advances of a leader, King Anantavarman Chodaganga (r. c. 1077 - c. 1150), who conquered the fertile Mahanadi delta around 1112. Ten years later, he extended his after the death of a local ruler, king Ramapala (r. 1077 - 1133), and reached the mouth of the Godavari River to the south. At the end of his life, Chodaganga had the renowned temple built in honour of the god Jagganath in Puri [238].

His successors, in the early 13th century, again faced the Muslim Bengalis from the north. King Narasimhavarman (r. 1239 - 1264) came to counterattack the Muslims. In 1244, Odisha's forces achieved a remarkable victory against Bengal, when the grandson of Narasimhavarman reached the Ganges River and advanced so much in Muslim territory in Bengal that they did not attack them for more than a century. Only in 1361, under the sultan of Delhi, Firoz Shah (r. 1351 - 1388), the Gajapati underwent new offensives in their northern portion, according to what the *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* reports. The Gajapati ruler at the time, Bhanudeva III (r. 1352 - 1378), was defeated in battle at Cuttack and was spared on

condition of paying tributes to the sultan of Delhi. The *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* thus continues [239]:

> The victorious standards have now departed for the destruction of the temple of Jagannath. This was the shrine of the polytheists of that land and sanctuary of devotion to unbelievers in the Far East. It was the most famous of their temples.

Despite this, there were no major consequences for the autonomous status of the Gajapati of Odisha as a Hindu kingdom. The tax payments soon ceased. But the dynasty initiated by Anatavarman Chodaganga had already lost its pinnacle and declined in subsequent years. After the death of King Bhanudeva IV (r. 1424 - 1434), Kapilendra (r. 1434 - 1466) took the throne. After asserting himself in power and undergoing a series of tax reforms on salt, Kapilendra emerged as the greatest Hindu leader of his day, extending his dominions from Bengal in the north to Kaveri in the south [240].

After Kapilendra, there followed a long period of instabilities in the kingdom of Odisha. Some conquered territories disputed the imperial domination of the Gajapati, mainly of Muslims to the north, such as those led by Hussain Shah (r. 1493 - 1518) who founded a new dynasty in Bengal. To the south, there was in 1509the ascension of the greatest ruler of Vijayanagara, Krishnadeva Raya, removing any pretence of domination in southern lands. In 1568, in a fulminating and final way, a Muslim general of Bengal devastated Odisha just as Firoz Shah did almost two centuries before. In sequence, the temple of Jagganath in Puri and its images were desecrated, looted and burned [241]. But after a few decades the temple and worship of this god were restored, for the local ruler, Ramachandra, who managed to secure an alliance with the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556 - 1605), to serve as an ally to contain the rebels in the region and the rival sultan of Golconda.

In the cultural field, the Gajapati kingdom witnessed an effervescent period of regional culture and architecture. Cults and temples around Jagganath in Puri were state sponsored and served as elements of legitimacy to the rulers of Gajapati. Just as it was incorporated the cult to the god Surya ('Sun God') of its impressive temple in Kornark. In the literature, there was the transcription of classical Sanskrit works to the Oriya language, as done by Sarala Das (15th century) with the epic *Mahabharata* [242].

Vijayanagara

The emergence of the Vijayanagara Empire was founded by several brothers, among them the most prominent, Harihara and Bukka, who fought against the offensives of the sultanate of Delhi. Uncertainty remains about their origins, but apparently these brothers had influence of a Hindu monk, Vidyaranya (second half of the 14th century), that reconverted them to the Hinduism after they have been Islamized as prisoners. This traditional version, however, is being increasingly contested [243]. After that, they settled in Kampili and then in another location strategically near the Tungabhadra river, when they founded a dynasty to fight the Muslims of Delhi, the present city of Hampi. The controversies, however, do not obscure the legacy and importance of Vidyaranya's Hindu revivalist teachings, which sought to emphasize the principles of Shankara at the beginning of the Vijayanagara kingdom and its worship at the Sringeri monastery in the face of the advances of Muslim faith.

Bukka (r. 1356 - 1377) succeeded his brother Harihara (r. 1336 - 1356) in 1356 and coordinated the expansionist offensives of the nascent empire. He fought against the Sultan of Bamani, Muhammad Shah (r. 1358 - 1377), and signed with him a treaty of limits having as landmark the Krishna River in 1365. Five years later, Bukka was victorious in battle against the sultan of Madurai (Sultan of Mabar) putting an end to one of the most southern

sultanates of India [244].

In the succession governments of Harihara II (r. 1377 - 1404) and Devaraya I (r 1406 - 1424), the borders and political forces of the Vijayanagara empire were consolidated. Under Harihara II, the empire grew north-eastward against the regents of Kondadivu and the rulers of Warangal. This course led to the collision with the forces of the Gajapati of Odisha. The first clash occurred between the Gajapati King Bhanudeva IV (r. 1424 - 1434) and the king of Vijayanagara Devaraya I (r. 1406 - 1422) which was concluded with a peaceful coexistence agreement between the two entities. However, under Devaraya II (r. 1425 - 1446) the wars against Odisha were resumed and lasted for almost a century. What weakened both Hindu kingdoms against the Muslim repressions of the north. Vijayanagara's greatest retraction period was against the Gajapati leader, Kapilendra, and his son, Hamvira (r. 1472 - 1466), who served as governor on the eastern coast of Kondavidu and Rajahmundry, present coast of Andhra to the Kaveri River valley in 1463 [245].

It was in this period that the dynasty founded by the Harihara and Bukka brothers knew its decline. His last king, Virupaksha II (r. 1464 -1485), was unable to prevent competitors and usurpers from his throne. In this scenario, the prince of Saluva, Narasimha (r. 1486 - 1491), emerged as an undisputed figure of power and a possible saviour of the Vijayanagara empire. But his succession, after his death in 1491, did not present tranquillity. The dynasty fell apart and a new one settled, under the name of Tuluva (1491 - 1570), to command Vijayanagara. The empire went through internal instability but survived on its frontiers because its close rivals were occupied in conflict and fragmented in internal rebellions: Bamani's sultanate disintegrated and Gajapati's power waned.

The greatest glory of Vijayanagara occurred at the beginning of the 16th century, under the command of Krishnadeva Raya (r. 1509 - 1529), or simply Krishnadeva, ruler of the Tuluva Dynasty.

He has proven to be a political and military genius since the beginning of his career. He confronted Bamani's leader, Mahmood Shah II (r. 1482 - 1518) and emerged victorious in the Deccan, making him a vassal in the region controlling other regional powers and keeping the sultanate divided and incapable of cohesion [246]. Later, Krishnadeva gained control of the Andhra coast and captured the city of Cuttack, capital of Odisha. In recognition, the Gajapati offered the local regent's daughter in marriage to seal an alliance.

Krishnadeva also entered into posterity for his constructions and administration. Almost all the grand temples of southern India, as in Chidambara, were erected and restored at the time of his rule. He was a generous patron of the arts and literature in Telugu language [247]. Also, he was an adherent of Vedantism and had as his guru one of the greatest spiritual leaders at that time, the saint Vyasatirtha (1447 - 1548). After his death, internal conflicts to the throne were resumed. His successors, Achyutadeva Raya (r. 1529 - 1542) and Sadashiva (r. 1543 - 1545), were weak leaders who lived in the shadow of the ambitious brother-in-law of Krishnadeva, Aliya Rama Raya (1485? -1565), who acted as de facto regent to conduct the affairs of the empire.

It was during the reign of Sadashiva, from 1510, that the first clashes with the Portuguese took place [248], as they violated and destroyed the sanctity of Hindu temples near Goa and Madras. But soon a peace agreement was signed, ensuring the supply of war horses imported from the Persian Gulf by the Lusitanians.

The most crucial events for Vijayanagara were the clashes and rebellions against the sultans in the Deccan. Eventually, the empire's policy of 'divide to rule' among Muslim rulers ended with a broad alliance of sultans as the Muslim chronicler Ferishta tells us, caused by the destruction of mosques by some Vijayanagara soldiers [249]. The combined anti-Vijayanagara forces took the offensive against the Talikota fortress, on the banks of the Krishna River, in 1564 and 1565. At the end of the battles,

Vijayanagara's leader Aliya Rama Raya (r. 1543 - 1565) was captured as a prisoner and beheaded. After his brother, Tirumala (r. 1565 - 1572), in panic and fear, assembled a large contingent of men, elephants and treasure and fled, leaving the imperial capital unguarded against Muslim invaders. The end came with the looting and destruction of the capital of Vijayanagara in 1565.

The descendants of Tirumala still continued to rule the region for some time, under a new dynasty, that of Aravidu (1542 - 1646), the last of this great empire. But the capital of Vijayanagara, of the same name, never resumed its former splendour and sovereign glory. Only three years after the capital's devastation in 1568, the Gajapati also succumbed to new invaders, marking the end of the great Hindu kingdoms before disciplined Muslim armies from Central Asia, the Mughals, marked a new era in Indian history.

The Vijayanagara trade and economy played a major role in securing the necessary taxes for the construction and maintenance of temples, water reservoirs, palaces, forts, and the administrative, religious, and military corps. The Indian Ocean around the 16th century constituted a large space of commercial transactions for Arabs, Malaysians, Chinese and some Europeans that learned to use the foreseeable monsoon winds. With China, trade in the Indian coasts had already taken place since the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907). Islam, established in Central Asia and Persia, controlled the commercial land and sea flow of India in west direction and to Europe until it was contested with the presence of the Portuguese caravels in the late 15th century. Moreover, India has had great prosperity since the 10th century by its geographical situation between Southeast Asia and China with the Persian Gulf and the Muslim world. Its products had legendary fame and demand in the world: spices, textiles, precious stones, salt, rice, wood, incense, pearls, ivory, amber and ebony. The vibrant commerce attracted a large contingent of Arabs, Armenians, Chinese and Jewish merchants among others in the port towns of Mangalore, Honavar, Bhatkal, Barkur, Cochin, Cannanore, Machilipatnam

and Dharmadam, all controlled and taxed by the rulers of Vijayanagara [250].

In the field of culture, the ancient city and capital of Vijayanagara was the site of maximum expression of imperial designs. It was listed as one of the largest cities in the world in the 15th and 16th centuries and was splendid in its urban planning, with temples, forts and abundant gardens. This was largely the work of the reigns of Deva Raya I (r. 1406 - 1422) and Krishnadeva Raya (r. 1509 - 1529). These works have been described and witnessed by foreign travellers impressed by the magnificence of the city. The Persian Persian Abdur Razzak who was on site in the 15th century wrote [251]:

> The city of Vijayanagara is such that the pupil of the eye has never seen a place like this and the ears of intelligence have never been told about something like this in the world.

And the Portuguese Domingo Paes thus wrote [252]:

> The people in this city are numerous, so much so that I do not wish to count them fearing to look fabulous. What I saw seemed as big as Rome and very beautiful to look at; there are many groves of trees within it, many orchards and fruit-tree gardens and many water pipes that flow in the middle of it, and in other places there are several lakes.

In the times of Krishnadeva Raya court, there attended illustrious poets and writers who contributed for the birth of the literature in Telugu and Kannada. In Telugu, the eight scholars [253] sponsored by the king - set of them called *Ashta diggajas* - produced a series of classic works. King Krishnadeva himself, as lover and admirer of the arts, even composed an exceptional work, the book *Amuktamalyada* ('A Garland of Pearls') in the Telugu language between 1509-1530, in which he narrates the love and sufferings of marriage of the god Vishnu with Andal or Goda

Devi, a local Tamil holy woman (*alvar*). It is believed that the king had his inspiration to write the book after having dreamed of Vishnu [254].

From Babur to Baji Rao - Mid-16th Century – 18th Century

Babur

In 1525, a year before the march of Babur (r. 1526 - 1530), founder of the Mughal Dynasty, who crossed the Khyber Pass in Afghanistan the most important mountain pass from northern Persia and Afghanistan to India, the political reality in India was fragmented and unstable with many local rulers following the religion of Muhammad.

Born in Uzbekistan and king of Fergana since 1495, Babur felt invincible in his campaigns and understood that his glory and fortune were all in the countless riches that India could offer. But he never thought of becoming an Indian, he was an admirer and versed in Persian and its literature, and dreamed of conquering and re-establishing the Uzbek city of Samarkand[255], retaking the splendour of the time of one of his most illustrious predecessors, Timur, Timur- Lang or Tamerlane (1336 - 1405), and, on the part of his mother, of Temujin Khan (Genghis Khan) (1162-1227). To this end, evoking his remote relatives, he regarded himself and his successors as Timurids[256], but later became known to the Persians and Westerners as Mughals, i.e. partly descendants of Timur, partly of Genghis Khan.

Despite his dream about Samarkand, he did not succeed in conquering the city. And it went further south, past the Hindu Kush mountain range, which besieged the city of Kabul in 1504,

establishing a new kingdom in the region and remained its ruler until 1526[257]. Since then, Babur has initiated a series and raids of looting to the neighbouring regions, noting the poverty of resources in the Afghani region. At the last moment, he assembled a large contingent of men armed with muskets and cannons acquired by contacts with the Ottoman Turks and conquered the historic city of Kandahar further south-west in 1522, opening the unencumbered passage for him Hindustan, as India was called at the time by the Persians. He was just waiting for a suitable opportunity to attack the city of Delhi[258].

The moment came after years of political instability since the death of the Sultan of Delhi, Sikandar Lodi in 1517. His successor, Ibrahim Lodi (1517 - 1526), ruled the sultanate immersed in crises and disputes, and one of his allies sent an emissary to Kabul to put an end to the incompetent sultanate. Faced with this, in 1525, Babur crossed the Khyber Pass, determined to become the new sultan of Delhi.

The decisive battle that entered the annals of history occurred near the city of Panipat, about 80 km north of Delhi in 1526. Despite being numerically inferior to the troops assembled by Ibrahim Lodi, Babur was safe from his agile and veteran troops, and a surprise element on the battlefield before the heavy opponents' war elephants: the psychological effect of the cannons. His son, Humayun (1508 - 1556), the future Indian sultan, took the first initiatives in the field and managed to capture in his offensive hundreds of soldiers and a considerable amount of looting, causing great pride to his father and elevating the morale of his men.

In the ensuing battle, Babur became aware of his superior mobility and surprise, mobilized his cavalry by encircling Lodi's troops and forcing them through a narrow passage of land where he could concentrate his artillery firepower. Thus, Ibrahim Lodi was killed and defeated in battle, ending the Lodi Dynasty. Babur boasted before his victory: '[T] he grace of Almighty God, this

difficult task was easy for me and that mighty army in the space of half a day was ruined to the dust'[259]. After Panipat, the city of Delhi was occupied. In Agra, Humayun plundered magnificent treasures, among them the famous Koh-i-Moor diamond, one of the largest diamonds in the world and today the main jewel of the British Crown.

Babur still faced some non-conformist Rajput leaders that aspired to occupy the throne in Delhi. This resulted in the battle of Khanwa in 1527, when the Rajput Rana Sanga (1484 - 1527) was defeated in the brilliant tactical use of Babur cannons. Hence, after the events and with the death of Rana Sanga, the presence of the Mughal in India was established[260].

The causes of the fall of the sultanate of Delhi under the Lodi Dynasty were considered by historians. Among the most evident factors, according to Chaurasia[261], is the unpopularity of the rulers, considered despotic and intolerant by a good part of the Hindu population. At that time, of Ibrahim Lodi, the court was engaged in intrigues in the face of the sultan's lassitude in dealing with state affairs. Other factors considered were the inability of the Lodi army, numerous but not agile and suited to the warfare tactics of cavalry and artillery employed by Babur.

One last battle to secure and consolidate Babur's domination in the central north India was held in 1528 in Malwa. Despite the heroic resilience of the population and the Rajput in the fort, the Mughals under Babur witnessed an ancient rite of self-immolation in the name of the honour of the Rajput, the *jauhar*. When, in the face of impending defeat, Rajput children and women committed suicide and some men later faced death alone in battle, as Babur reported in his book of memory, *Baburnama*.[262]

In 1530, after securing himself on the throne, Babur fell ill and died at the age of 47. A period of mourning ensued between his allies and family, as her daughter, Gulbadan (c.1523 - 1603), expressed: 'Black became the day for the children, relatives and all'[263]. Humayun, his son, succeeded him in power at age 23 with

many rival suitors claiming his throne.

Humayun

On his accession to the throne, Humayun (r. c. 1530 - 1540, 1555-1556) fought for power among the suitors, Sher Shah Suri (r. 1540 - 1545), governor who served Babur in Bihar to the east, and Sultan Bahadur of Gujarat (1526-1535, 1536-1537), to the south and southwest. During Humayun's first five years in office, these two rivals succeeded in their territorial breakthroughs. Sher Shah Suri secured east even with Humayun's initial offensive. But the greater threat came from the south, for Bahadur closed a temporary truce in 1534 with the Portuguese, securing them some ports in Bassein, north of Mumbai, and Gujarat in Diu[264].

In 1535, Bahadur suffered a series of defeats, losing the Champaner and Mandu forts for Humayun, which assured him a strategic presence in the northern central region of India beyond Delhi and Agra. In 1537 Bahadur, weakened by the defeats, visited the Portuguese for negotiations on board of a ship under the command of Nuno da Cunha (1487 - 1539). At the event, Bahadur was killed and the Lusitanians secured themselves in the region of Gujarat. After the fact, the Mughals under Humayun, perceiving the change of the winds, negotiated with the Portuguese, giving them the port of Daman, thus gaining the Europeans control of the vast Indian west coast range, from Bombay to Diu, region denominated by them as Norther Provinces ('Províncias do Norte'), besides the control of Goa[265].

But when leaving the capital, Humayun left open the accesses and defences of Agra, Delhi and region. Despite securing the defence of the cities, Sher Shah Suri expanded and consolidated his power and sacked the main city to the east, Gaur in 1537, strategically located along the Ganges River in Bengal. Humayun, after the events, decided to withdraw from political life and plunged into 'a life of indulgence and lust'[266].

In the process, his younger brother, Hindal Mirza (1519 - 1551) took the lead in the state and army, but failed to prevent the taking of Bihar by Sher Shah Suri, including the holy city of Varanasi. It besieged the fort in Chunar and Jaunpur, controlling all the fluvial access of the average course of the river Ganges and Yamuna in the present state of Uttar Pradesh. To further aggravate the situation, Humayun's other brother, Kamran Mirza (1508 - 1557), left by his father to rule the provinces to the northeast in Punjab, realizing the seriousness of the situation, set out with his men from Lahore, current Pakistan. When he arrived in Delhi, he negotiated the future of the sultanate with Hindu Prince Mughal Mirza (1519 - 1551), the youngest son of Babur, and promised him loyalty after the deposition of Humayun.

To save his political future, Humayun then left for the East to negotiate with Sher Shah Suri in 1539, in the town of Chausa, on the banks of the Ganges River. The result, in short, was the control of parts of Bihar and Bengal by Sher Shah. In contrast, it was recognized that Humayun was the Mughal emperor. Humayun naively believed in these terms for, shortly after his withdrawal from the city, Sher Shah's troops massacred in the dead of night the entire Mughal encampment. By little Humayun himself did not come to die. Sher Shah then turned to Bengal and was proclaimed Sultan-ul Adil, 'The Righteous Sovereign'[267].

In 1540, the Mughals and Sher Shah troops met again in the town of Kannauj. Humayun suffered another defeat and fled with what remained to Agra and then to meet with his brother, Kamran Mirza, in Lahore aiming to recover and close alliances. There was no consensus at these meetings, leaving the situation of the Mughal Empire at the mercy of Sher Shah's forces. Humayun, defeated and frustrated, for the next fifteen years, set out for his exile. In 1544, seeking associates, he went to Herat in Afghanistan and then crossed the border into the Persian lands. There, at the Safavid dynasty court (1510 - 1736), Humayun accepted the Shiite faith[268], abandoning its Sunni creed, and obtained more troops

and support from the Persian Shah[269] Tahmasp I (r. 1524 - 1576) for new military offensives. Thus he proceeded to Kandahar, Kabul and then to Lahore, taking Kamran out of power, in 1553[270].

From then, Humayun retook the successful assaults of his father in northern India. In 1545, Sher Shah had died in battle against the Rajput at Kalinjar Fort, and his successor son, Islam Shah Suri (r. 1545 - 1554), did not have the same charisma and leadership as his progenitor. Moreover, Islam Shah had died in 1554, provoking a fragmented setting of political loyalties over his succession. Thus, taking advantage of the occasion, and strengthened by his alliance with the Persians, Humayun entered Delhi and proclaimed himself again as Mughal emperor in 1555. Next year, after hearing one of the calls for daily Muslim prayers (*adhan*), Humayun stumbled on the stairs, hit his head and died three days later. Its grand tomb still remains resplendent in Delhi, demonstrating the Indo-Persian-Islamic architectural and artistic elements that will dominate India under the Mughal dynasty.

Akbar

Born in Sindh, now southern Pakistan, and Humayun's eldest son, Akbar (1542 - 1605) had already held the responsibility of governor of Punjab at the time of the fatal accident that led to the death of his father. In order to secure his succession to the throne, his official and guardian, Bairam Khan (c. 1501 - 1561), obstructed and concealed the death of Humayun in order not to engender further intrigues and disputes and give Akbar time to take the throne in Delhi. Thus, in 1556, at the age of 13, Akbar was crowned Mughal emperor, proclaimed according to the Persian traditions with the title *Shahanshah* (King of the Kings). Bairam would continue being his prime minister (*vakil*) until he completed age of majority[271]. And it was Bairam who also secured relative stability beyond Delhi and Agra from the threats of suitors, as between Afghan leaders and against the Hindu King

Hemu in another battle defeated at Panipat in 1556. Then came the victories over rebels in Punjab, over Sikandar Shah, and in Ajmer, securing domination in Rajasthan in 1558[272]. Despite his loyalty, Bairam was seen more and more with distrusted eyes by Akbar. In 1560, he ordered Bairam to go in a pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca, who on the way decided to join the rebels and was defeated in battle in the Punjab[273].

Akbar proved to be a valuable military leader and continued the victorious campaigns in his reign. At the height of its extensions, the Mughal Empire extended from Afghanistan to the north, Sindh to the west, Bengal to the east to the mouth of the Godavari River to the south. His imperial success was the result of his ability to maintain the loyalties of his allies and the charisma before his subjects. He allied himself with defeated Rajput rulers, instead of demanding tributes, and granted them autonomy of government over local territory. Thus, it combined a centralized government with alliances made with local authorities.

The Mughal also forged a broad political alliance with matrimonial ties. As when married to Hindu princesses, such as Jodha Bai (Heer Kunwari) (1542 - 1623) in 1562, the eldest daughter of the regent of Jaipur, as well as the princesses of Bikaner and Jaisalmer. Thus he made the members of these royal Rajput families a full part of his family, ceasing to be regarded as a sign of degradation in the eyes of Hindu regents[274].

In terms of administration, Akbar in 1574 reformed the entire system of taxation. Each governor, *subah*, was responsible for maintaining order in their region, while an independent and appointed collectors and sent them to the capital. This created a system of balance and control in each region, since he who had the resources collected in taxes did not have command of troops and those who had troops at his disposal did not have the resources, all depending on the central government. And in order to seal central control over administration in the provinces, Akbar fixed wages of every civilian and military official from the imperial

treasury according to the position in the hierarchy[275].

In the religious field, Akbar stood out for his intense curiosity for diversity. He participated and sponsored festivals of other faiths. In 1575, in the city of Fatehpur Sikri where he built a temple (Ibadat Khana, 'House of Worship') following the Persian style and plan, he often hosted scholars of other religions - Hindus, Zoroastrians, Christians, Yogis and Muslims from other sects. In addition, it was common in his court the celebration of Hindu festivals like the Diwali and the Shivaratri[276]. And he authorized the construction of a church by the Jesuits in Agra and discouraged the slaughter of cattle by society to respect the Hindu precepts.

In 1579, a statement, *mahzar*, was declared granting authority to the emperor to interpret religious laws and customs, placing himself above the understanding of Islamic scholars, the mullahs. This became known as the Infallibility Decree that allowed Akbar the power to create a multicultural and interreligious state. In 1582, Akbar established a new cult, the Din-i-Ilahi ('Divine Faith'), combining elements of Islam, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism. The new faith centred Akbar as a prophet and spiritual leader, but did not survive his reign.

Unlike his father, Humayun, and his grandfather, Babur, Akbar had no vocation and extensive knowledge of letters and arts. Nevertheless, he had great admiration for culture and intellectual discussions. It was in his reign that the Mughal style of architecture gained new breath, combining Islamic, Persian and Hindu elements. He sponsored great scholars, poets, musicians, artists, philosophers and engineers at his court in Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri.

Among these courtiers are the so-called Navaratna group ('Nine Jewels'). Group that served to the emperor as advisers and artists, including Akbar's biographer, Abul Fazl ibn Mubarak (1551 - 1602), who composed the three-volume work of his life, the *Akbarnama*. In the group there was also a plethora of talents: the

poet laureate Abul Faizi (1547 - 1595), prominent musician and composer Mian Tansen (c. 1493 - 1585), the most sagacious of the advisers, Raja Birbal (1528 - 1586), Finance Minister Raja Todar Mal (? - 1589), General Raja Man Singh (1550 - 1614), talented writer and military man, Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana (1556 - 1627), and the visionary advisors Fagir Aziao -Din (1613 - ?) and Mullah Do-Piyaza (? - c. 1620), the latter still controversial object of historical verifiability[277].

His death came in 1605, apparently of dysentery[278]. Some scholars suspect that the misfortune stemmed from poisoning possibly linked to the intrigues of his son, Jahangir, who succeeded him.

Jahangir

Prince Salim (1569 - 1627), thus named before gaining the imperial name, Jahangir, was the eldest son of Akbar and his Rajput wife, Jodh Bai. His creation and education were painstaking, grew up in Fatehpur Sikri, surrounded by Persian, Turkic, Arab and Hindu tutors. His most influential teacher was Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana (1556 - 1627), a military genius, diplomat and writer who was a member of the council of sages of Akbar, Navaratna. It was under his teaching that the prince at that time began to appreciate the arts and verses.

He also received instructions on civilian and military administration. He gained experience when he successfully led a military expedition to Kabul in 1581. In 1585 he was promoted to the highest post of army officer, *mansadbar*, to command more than 10,000 men. But the prince also had his worldly predilections, was wine-loving and bon vivant. He was also impatient and ambitious. He longed for the throne even before his father's death, as when he practiced a coup in 1600. But fortune favoured him only five years later in 1605 when Akbar died and Jahangir took the throne with the support of several influential women of the

imperial harem and courtiers.

Once in power, Jahangir, at the age of 36, faced the ambitions of his eldest son, Prince Khusrau (1587 - 1622). He only gave up the throne after being defeated in battle near Jullunder in 1605. Jahangir later turned his attention to the Sikh leader, Guru Arjun (1563-1606), who had supported and financed the Khusrau revolts and punished him for offenses. But this did not denote the implacability of his sense of justice. Jahangir sought to be fair. One of his most famous acts, although immersed in legends, was to have extended a 'chain of justice' made of gold, outside the fort of Agra. Anyone who felt wronged and could catch the Emperor's attention by pulling the chain could have his case *res judicata*[279].

His territorial policy followed the expansionist tendency of his father, although he was not so triumphant. In 1605 he sent his second son to repress the revolts led by the Maharaja of Mewar, Rana Amar Singh (1559 - 1620). But the strategic fort of Chittor was not easily won and the impasse was solved only in the signing of a treaty in 1615, with Rana's recognition of suzerainty[280]. In contrast, the royal family of Mewar was recognized with absolute powers in the region and their family was incorporated to the ones of the house of Timurids. This understanding consisted of a milestone in the relations between one of the most powerful families of the Rajput and the throne in Delhi. At that, Jahangir had two marble statues of Rana and his son, Karan, erected in the gardens of his palace in Agra[281].

Elsewhere in India, Jahangir sent expeditions against rebels near the eastern borders in Assam and incorporated a number of territories near the Himalayas, from Kashmir to the north to Bengal to the east. In the Afghan lands, Jahangir challenged the hegemony of the Persian rulers of the Safavid dynasty, aiming to control Kabul, Peshawar and Kandahar, important and prosperous trading centres of Central Asia with northern India. In 1622, Jahangir sent his son, Prince Khurram (who will become Emperor Shah Jahan) to pacify the rebels southwards in the

independent sultanates of Ahmadnagar[282], Bijapur and Golconda. But Jahangir's greatest military success was the capture of Fort Kangra in Punjab in 1620[283], gaining a strategic presence in the northwest region of India.

Jahangir maintained, with his father, a varied and tolerant court with all ideas, talents and creeds. He was impressed by religious debates. Proof of this was the account of the first formal English ambassador in 1615, Sir Thomas Roe, about the warm reception the emperor promoted to Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Jews. The Hindu festivals too, as their father did, were allowed. The Jesuits were treated with respect and courtesy. Their presence began to be used more and more for political purposes in order to favour the interests of the Portuguese against the British Anglicans and other Protestant Christians. As when they foresaw the success of the English Captain William Hawkins's mission in 1608 to deliver a letter from King James I and to negotiate for the interests of the British East India Company[284]. The Portuguese were not left behind as they negotiated their interests around India's lucrative Indian export trade and cheetah fabrics. The Dutch, in turn, aiming to connect a trade route with the Spice Islands (present-day Moluccas, eastern region of Indonesia) landed in Paliacate, north of Madras (now Chennai, the main port in Southeast India at the time[285].

The reign of Jahangir was also characterized by notable architectural works. The Persian influence was materialized in the construction of the marble tomb in Agra to the emperor, completed in 1628. Unlike the grand Taj Mahal, built by his successor, the construction presents the sophisticated features on its walls of beautiful marble incrustations, characteristics that will become notable in architecture and Mughal art. Another highlight was the renovation that took place at the tomb of his father, Akbar in Sikandra, and the grand mosque erected in Lahore, Pakistan.

Jahangir's great interest in paintings and portraits resulted in astounding works in his reign. Growing up in Fatehpur Sikri,

surrounded by artists sponsored by his father, Akbar, Jahangir was an enthusiast on the subject. A new style Jahangir promoted in his court was the political portrait, as the one portraying him effusively embracing the Persian emperor, Shah Abbas (1588 - 1629).

Among his matrimonial ties, with several Rajput princesses and powerful allied families, the most important of his wives was Mehr Um Nisa - known as Nur Jahan (1577 - 1645) ('Light of the World'). Nur Jahan was a woman of extraordinary energy and talent. Of noble Persian origin, she brought the refined culture of her Safavid court of origin, as well as writers, architects, artists and musicians to Agra. And at the Mughal court, in addition to cultural influence, she had political pretensions.

She gave birth to the royal prince and eldest son of Jahangir, Khusrau (1587 - 1622). The latter, following his mother's advice, remained convinced that he should contest the imperial throne against his younger half-brother, Prince Khurram (1592 - 1666), who later became Emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628 - 1658). Thus, with the aggravation of Jahangir's illnesses in 1622, Nur Mahal convinced Jahangir that Prince Khurram should go on military campaign in the Deccan Plateau, away from the court business in Agra. Khurram followed, but took Prince Khusrau with him. Upon hearing rumours that Jahangir was near death, Khurram then decided to kill his half-brother and eliminate his opponents to the throne.

A year later, in 1623, Prince Khurram marched to Agra with his most loyal men. Nur Mahal, of course, sought to mobilize the imperial troops to contain this rebellion. Khurram managed to escape to the southern regions of India for more than three years before finally returning to his father's meeting in his final moments of life.

The Emperor Jahangir had become ill over the years before his death in 1627. In the final years of his reign, disillusioned with politics and power disputes, he sought refuge in his possessions to

the north with a milder climate in Kashmir. There he dealt with cultivated gardens and appraised animals. His passion for botany was such that he sought to build artificial gardens such as the Shalimar Bagh in Srinagar, Kashmir in 1619. The emperor's death came in 1627, in a small village in Kashmir. Event that catalysed the suitors and intrigues for the throne.

Shah Jahan

Shah Jahan (1592 - 1666) was born with the name of Prince Khurram in Lahore in 1592. The third son of the Jahangir emperor, his life was marked by intense disputes over power, to compete with his brothers and the influence of Empress Nur Jahan. He ascended the throne at Agra in 1628. As a prince, his military career was marked by several campaigns of internal and boundary consolidation, as at Mewar (1615) and Deccan (1617-1621), south Indian and in Kangra (1618), to the northwest.

Despite being the son of a Hindu mother, Princess of Marwar of Rajasthan, Jagat Gosaini, Prince Khurram did not follow the same policy of religious tolerance as his predecessors. In 1632, already as emperor Shah Jahan, he ordered that all the newly erected Hindu temples to be destroyed. Christian churches at Agra and Lahore were wrecked and the Portuguese settlement at Hugli near Calcutta in Bengal was attacked, as these Europeans were considered as spies and traitors to spread heretical doctrines to the empire[286].

Between 1630 and 1636, Shah Jahan reduced the sovereignty of the independent sultanates in Ahmadnagar in 1632, Golconda in 1635, and Bijaur in 1636. To the northwest, however, he was not so successful. In 1647 his attempt to annex Balkh and Badakshan, the ancestral lands of the founding emperor of the Mughals in India, failed. In the region of Afghan lands, Shah Jahan entered into long conflicts with the Persian troops of the Safavids in the so-called Mughal-Safavid War (1649 - 1653), when the Persians

took control of Bamyan and Kandahar[287].

He had three wives. His second wife, Mumtaz Mahal (1593 - 1631) ('The Jewel of the Palace'), whom he married in 1621, died after giving birth to 14 of his 16 children. She was his most faithful and beloved companion, and it was in her honour that Jahan had erected in 1648, in Agra, one of the most beautiful monuments of world architecture, the Taj Mahal. In this mausoleum are the delicate details in the incrustations in the marbles, the inscriptions of Koranic texts in the portals, besides the pleasant ordered garden inspired by the Persian concept, the *charbagh*[288]. It was used by the artists' hands, onyx, lapis lazuli, carnelian, malachite among others. A unique, symmetrical and splendid composition that expresses the serenity and lightness of a building that has already been described by Rabindranath Tagore as 'a tear in the face of eternity' and by Rudyard Kipling as 'the incarnation of all pure things'[289].

The Jama Masjid in Delhi, and the Pearl Mosque (Moti Masjid) in Agra are two other masterpieces of Mughal architecture. In the old part of Delhi, Shah Jahan had a new capital built in 1639, Shahjanabad, with its imposing Red Fort. And inside this fort, a Hall of Special Audiences (also known as Emperor's Palace, Shah Mahal) where the emperor sat on a throne studded with rubies, pearls and emeralds, and in the canopy two golden peacocks that gave fame and renown as the Peacock Throne[290].

In the field of the lyrics, literature in Hindi gained great encouragement and writers and poets were sponsored in that language as his chief of staff Sundar Das and the poet Chintamani, musicians and composers such as the great Jagannath, Sukh Sen and Lal Khan[291]. Other classical works were also written in the period in Persian, the language of the court, as those of the historian Amin Qazvini[292].

From 1657, Shah Jahan's health began to show signs of deterioration. This generated among his four sons, Dara Shikoh (1615 - 1659), Shuja (1616 - 1661), Murad Baksh (1624 - 1661) and

Aurangzeb (1618 - 1707), initiatives and intrigues aimed at succession[293]. Eventually, the differences between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb, who proved to be the most successful to the throne, were settled. Aiming to secure his power, upon entering the city of Agra in 1658, Aurangzeb captured his sick father and imprisoned him in the fort of Agra. Legend has it that his cell overlooked the Taj Mahal. Shah Jahan died at the age of 74, in 1666, under these conditions, assisted and cared for by his eldest daughter, Jahanara Beguim Sahib (1614 - 1681)[294].

Aurangzeb

The sixth Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1618-1707), imperially named Alamgir, ruled over much of the Indian subcontinent for almost 50 years, from 1658 until his death in 1707. In the meantime, the Mughal empire knew its maximum territorial extent, but the exhausting rebel campaigns in the Deccan generated a large deficit of the imperial treasury. After his death, the Mughal dynasty entered a period of long decline in the face of new invaders and insurgents.

His disputed accession to the throne before his four brothers demonstrated his implacability. He secured the arrest of his brother Murad Baksh, his greatest opponent for the throne, until his death in 1661. His other brother, Dara Shikoh, a former ally, now joined his other brother, Shuja. This latter Aurangzeb had promised the government of the prosperous region of Bengal, but his uncertainty in the face of the promises - and after being defeated in battle in 1660 - led him to escape into exile to the region further east today in Myanmar (formerly Burma), in the kingdom of Arakan[295].

Aurangzeb maintained very firm and orthodox beliefs about his religious beliefs. He was a convinced Muslim and believed that the Quranic sources on customs and laws, the Shari'a[296], were the basis for legal codifications. The costumes in the Mughal court

have also changed drastically. According to the new interpretation of the law, assembled in the compilation of established laws called *Fatawa-e-Alamgiri*[297], music, dancing and singing were forbidden. Representative arts, based on the new Islamic precepts interpreted, as figurative painting and portrait were banished. As a consequence, images and representations have been disfigured. Among non-Muslims, like most Hindus, traditional practices such as *darshan*[298] were curtailed and Hindu temples were desecrated and destroyed, such as the Vishvanath in Varanasi (former Benares) in 1669 and the temple to Krishna in Mathura, the Keshava Deva in 1661, erecting a mosque on the site, Katra Masjid[299].

Thus, Aurangzeb acted to contain questions of its political order against supposed heretics (*kafir*) that could threaten the stability of his government. In that sense, unlike his predecessors like Akbar, he did not demonstrate a tolerant policy to form long-lasting alliances with local Hindu rulers (*Rajas*) like the Rajputs.

Repression of the rebels was the primacy of their imperial policy, rather than sealing the internal alliances to the north. Turning to the south campaigns, Aurangzeb decided, as Muhammad Tughluq had done a few centuries before, to move the imperial capital of Delhi to a new one, Aurangabad, in the Deccan Plateau. In doing so, the emperor and his court left the northern Indian region exposed to regents and unsatisfied leaders. His attention turned to his most formidable political and military adversary, the Maratha kingdom.

In the northwest Punjab, a new religion that was founded at the end of the 15th century by Guru Nanak (1469 - 1539) that combined elements of Islam, Hinduism and other beliefs, resulted in a quietist sect that rejects any sense of hierarchy, privileges and leaders. It infused in its followers a sense of discipline and loyalty that resulted in cohesive communities against eventual Muslim oppressors. Under Aurangzeb, the Sikh leader Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621 - 1675) was executed in Delhi and the construction

of his temples (*gurdwara*) was forbidden. Relations with these followers went harsh.

Faced with this delicate situation, Aurangzeb decided to name his son, Bahadur Shah (1643 - 1712), future Mughal emperor, as governor of the provinces to the northwest, including the Punjab of the Sikhs. The new Sikh leader Guru Gobind Singh (1666 - 1708) decided to prepare for future eventualities and established a new Sikh order in 1699 of 'holy warriors', *khalsa*, disciplined and willing to die[300]. Conflicts against the Mughal and allied Rajput took place years later, at Chamkaur in 1704, with the death of the sons of Gobind Singh and the Sikh army. Further east, in Bengal, a distant and traditionally autonomous region of Delhi, the milder and more tolerant followers of Islam, the Sufis, displeased with the rigid orthodoxy of Aurangzeb, found shelter and power[301].

Mughal-Maratha Wars

It was in the Deccan that Aurangzeb faced his greatest difficulties. Still as a prince under the throne of his father, Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb had attacked the sultanates of Ahmadnagar and Golconda (1636) and Bijapur - which was only to be incorporated in 1686 - and placed them under his authority as allied regents (*nawab*).

In 1657 rebellions in the plateau under Aurangzeb began to intensify. Using guerrilla tactics, hoaxes and subterfuges, Shivaji Bhonsle (1630 - 1680) took control of some forts in Bijapur, taking over the Maratha leadership. Later, strengthened by the withdrawal of the Mughal, Shivaji's army succeeded in capturing and killing General Afzal Khan in 1659 at the Battle of Pratapgad, transforming the Maratha forces into a mighty military force on the southern flank of the Mughal empire[302]. A year later, Shivaji boldly attacked and regained control of Pune in Maharashtra, defeating one of Aurangzeb's most trusted generals, Shaista

Khan[303].

Finally, Aurangzeb then sent the Hindu General Jai Singh to take the offensive against the Maratha. Initially the general was successful, to the point of capturing some of the Maratha forts and reaching a temporary agreement with Shivaji in the Purandar Treaty of 1665. On the way to Agra, however, the Maratha leader and his son were placed under house arrest , from where they managed to escape. Returning to the Deccan, he expelled the Mughal forces and was crowned with the title of Chhatrapati, emperor of the Maratha Confederation in 1674[304]. Six years later, Shivaji died and passed the Maratha command to his son, Sambhaji (1680-1689).

Aurangzeb's son, Muhammad Akbar (1657 - 1706) then decided to initiate dialogues and close alliances with Sambhaji, aiming for a future union to the Mughal empire. But Aurangzeb had other plans, by moving the capital further south, to Aurangabad, and took personal control of the operations actions in the Deccan. After other battles, Muhammad Akbar decided to flee to exile in Persia. Sambhaji was eventually captured, tortured and killed in 1689. He was succeeded by Rajaram Bhosale (r. 1689 - 1700), but the Maratha Confederation entered a period of disunity and fragility[305]. Clashes with the Mughal continued for many years, under multiple local marauding commanders (*sardars*), costing Aurangzeb a large number of lives and resources.

In the end, the wars between Mughals and Marathas lasted for more than 25 years, from 1680 to 1707, until the death of Aurangzeb. Concerning the costs of the war and the end of the Mughal emperor, the Indologist Stanley Wolpert concluded[306]:

> The conquest of the Deccan, to which Aurangzeb devoted the last 26 years of his life, was in many ways a Pyrrhic victory, costing an estimated hundred thousand lives a year during its last decade of futile chess game warfare. The expense in gold and rupees can

> hardly be accurately estimated. (...) Aurangzeb's encampment was like a moving capital – a city of tents 30 miles in circumference, with some 250 bazaars, with a 1⁄2 million camp followers, 50,000 camels and 30,000 elephants, all of whom had to be fed, stripped the Deccan of any and all of its surplus grain and wealth ... Not only famine but bubonic plague arose ... Even Aurangzeb, had ceased to understand the purpose of it all by the time he was nearing 90 ... 'I came alone and I go as a stranger. I do not know who I am, nor what I have been doing', the dying old man confessed to his son, Azam, in February 1707.

Who succeeded Aurangzeb was his eldest son Muazzam, by the name of Bahadur Shah I (r. 1707 - 1712), who ruled for five years and was unable to contain the dissolution of the Mughal empire. Aspiring an order with the Maratha, he appointed as regent (*rajah*) of Satara the grandson of Shivaji, Shahuji Bhosle (1682 - 1749). And this one appointed as his main minister (*peshwa*), Balaji Vishwanath (1662 - 1720), who put in order the finances and the power of the Maratha. Balaji's son, Baji Rao (1700 - 1740), took the position of his father at the age of 19, maintaining his office from 1720 to 1740, during which he proved to be a brilliant administrator and strategist and ascended as the supreme military, political and de facto ruler over the Maratha[307].

Baji Rao led the Marathan advance to the city of Delhi, which was quickly captured in 1737 but unoccupied, as the Maratha leader knew he could not secure its control for a long time[308]. Instead, Baji Rao negotiated with the Peacock Throne and ratified the Marathan domains further south. But the fall of Delhi clearly demonstrated that the Mughal empire was in decline. It was further evidenced by the vulnerability of Delhi to the plunder that the city suffered by Persian troops who invaded it after the battle of Karnal in 1739, under the command of the Persian king Nader Shah (1698 - 1747)[309].

Regarding the state to which Delhi and the Mughal Empire were reduced after Nader Shah, the historian Abraham Eraly

epitomized[310]:

> In a few decades, the empire had completely disappeared and the emperor's authority confined itself to the city of Delhi only. Shortly afterwards, even this petty privilege was lost, making the emperor a pensioner, first of the Maratha, then the British. But he was still called the Mughal emperor; the others could occupy his territories, plunder his treasures, deprive him of power, but no one could take away his title or prestige (though empty) that he held. Thus occupied a Mughal the imperial throne in Delhi for a century and a half after Aurangzeb.

When we look at the 18th century, numerous local potentates consolidated with the collapse of the Mughal regime, just as happened with the end of the Gupta empire. In Bengal, the local ruler, the *nawab* (honorary title given by the Mughal emperor) ensured greater independence, as well as that of Awadh, in the present northern Uttar Pradesh region of northern India. A Mughal vizier, a kind of Grand Minister and adviser to the emperor, Mir Qamar-ud-din Khan Siddiqi, in 1724 decided to leave Delhi after the death of Aurangzeb and went to found a dynasty of his own, that of Asaf Jahi, further south at the Deccan in Hyderabad under the Muslim title of *nizam*, Nizam-ul-Mulk (1724-1748). The Maratha, in turn, pursued a policy of conquest in West India, and southern India was broken up into small units resulting from the dissolution of the Vijayanagara empire. To the north, finally, a region traditionally dominated by the Mughal, the invasions of Afghans led by Ahmad Shah Durrani (1722 - 1772) were to outstand in the 1750s[311].

From Dupleix to Cornwallis - 17th and 18th Centuries

Europeans and India

In Mughal perspective, the European presence in the 16th and 17th centuries was of lesser importance. The Portuguese who had settled in Gujarat were expelled with the recapture of the region in 1574 and Hooghly (Hugli) in Bengal in 1632. As maritime merchants, the Lusitanians were well received, granting them the same rights with which other traders were treated in Indian ports. But the appearance of other Europeans, such as the British and Dutch, was well regarded by Indian rulers as they offered the break of sea monopoly in the Indian Ocean to deal with countries further west.

The consequences of the European presence on Mughal political affairs were still small in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Portuguese concentrated, perhaps by strategy, perhaps by disability, in port cities with focus on the seas and world trade. In addition, they were at the mercy of the regime of the monsoon winds, which provided favourable winds for the Indian coast only for some months of the year. Thus, the Lusitanians were content with their Indian coastal presence, mainly on the coast of Malabar and the city of Goa.

At the same time as the Portuguese had secured some parts of the Indian coast, the Dutch throughout the 17th century had consolidated a strong and solid economy enough to finance their

trips to the East and India in search of lucrative goods. In 1602, the Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or VOC) was founded, aiming at capturing investments and minimizing the risks of this type of work. And they had in mind, first of all, to secure a safe route with the Indonesian islands, specifically the Moluccas (Maluku), from which they drew huge profits in European markets. In 1619, in order to assure this commerce, the Dutch founded in Java the city of Batavia, today Jakarta, capital of Indonesia[312].

In London in 1600, the British East India Company (henceforth BEIC) was founded, which began to operate in ways similar to the Dutch, but on a smaller scale at the time[313]. In 1612 Sir Thomas Roe had successfully negotiated a trading post in India in Surat on the Indian west coast. Booming its commercial ambitions in 1640, BEIC rented a plot to make a fort, from what was to be called Madras (Chennai) on the east coast.

The decline of the Portuguese in India began with the Dutch offensives that had declared war on the Spanish, when they were united to the Lusitanians in the Iberian Union (1580 - 1640). Taking advantage of the situation, the Dutch sought to capture and occupy the Portuguese bases in the American continent, Africa and Asia, during the Dutch-Portuguese War (1595 - 1663). As early as 1658, with the help of the Sri Lankan king of Kandy, Rajasimha II (r. 1629 or 1635 - 1687), the Dutch expelled the last Portuguese from the island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)[314] and then from Cochin (Kochi) in 1662, thus ensuring lucrative cinnamon trade in the region.

To end the wars, the Treaty of The Hague was signed in 1661, accepting the Portuguese losses in India and other places in Asia, as compensation for their control of the Northeast Brazil. In that same year, Bombay, which had seen the Portuguese presence since 1534, was ceded to the United Kingdom as dowry between Catherine of Braganza and King Charles II of England. From then on, until the end of the 17th century, Bombay would become one of

BEIC's main Indian bases.

By the middle of the 17th century, the Mughal Empire was still at its height under Shah Jahan and ignored the European presence in India. But some worrying signs, under the rule of Aurangzeb began to appear. From 1686 to 1690, in the so-called Child's War[315], the British undertook naval battles against the Mughal Navy and blocked trade in the Bengal region with Southeast Asia. As a result, Aurangzeb expelled BEIC from the town of Hugli in Bengal that, after requests for mercy from the company, the British moved to a small marshy village further south towards the Ganges River delta, Calcutta[316].

The French were the last Europeans of the 17th century who organized a trading company with India. Six decades after the English and Dutch, France founded in 1664, under the supervision of its finance minister, Jean Bapiste Colbert, *La Compagnie Française des Indes Orientales* (CFIO), following the example and organization of the Dutch company. Some French historians have attempted to explain such a delay. They point out as cause the disinterest and parochial vision of merchants and the French elite, inserted in the capital, Paris, away from the ports and French coast[317]. The first French presence in India occurred in 1667, under the Huguenot François Caron who had worked in the VOC and with the help of an Armenian from Isfahan, Martin Marcara Avanchins, who landed in Surat[318].

Two years later, the French tried unsuccessfully to obtain the British alliance of the Madras Fort against the Dutch bases in India during the Anglo-Dutch Wars (1652 - 1674). But it was only thanks to an adventurer, François Martin (1634 - 1706), that the French finally managed to secure an Indian base in Pondicherry (Puducherry) in 1674[319]. His plans and experience provided the guidelines for French political construction in India throughout the 18th century, during the rule of Dupleix (1697 - 1763).

After the sack of Delhi in 1739, the Mughal imperial dissolution seemed inevitable. Several regents and local governors

gained more autonomy with the Mughal fragmentation. One of the most talented of them was the leader and governor, the nawab of Bengal, Murshid Quli Khan (r. 1717-1727), who had made a comprehensive administrative and tax reform in the region, moved the capital of Dhaka to a new one, Murshidabad, in 1704[320] and extended its dominions in Bihar to the west, and in Odisha to the south. And he did away with a good part of his rebels. In this way, paradoxically, Murshid prepared Bengal for a period of stability and prosperity that was relevant to British merchants of BEIC from the mid-18th century[321]. But while Murshid was in charge, the British had to ally him and submit. In 1717, BEIC was granted some benefits without taxation, although controlled by Murshid finance minister of the Jagat Seth bankers family[322].

In the west, British business in Gujarat in Surat was increasingly problematic in the face of the city's growing insecurity against rebels, bandits and pirates, as a result of the dissolution of Mughal power and looting by the Maratha leader Shivaji in 1670. In order to secure their invested business, the British gradually moved their businesses, residences and warehouses to a port acquired further south in Bombay, making it the seat of BEIC in 1687[323]. Nevertheless, the political stability and economic prosperity further east in Bengal from the British settlements in Calcutta were increasingly tempting and promising[324].

The performance of British and French had been primarily to defend their commercial interests in India. However, from the striking political performance of a new and talented Frenchman, François Dupleix - in office from 1742 to 1754 - as governor of Pondicherry, the scene of European action in India began to gain new contours. An employee of a commercial warehouse of the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* in Bengal for twenty years, Dupleix, based on this experience, developed a keen sense of strategy and policy in India. He was able to use the few resources of the French company and took advantage of alliances with powerful Indian

leaders. In military terms, to serve its political plans, he regimented and organized disciplined units of infantry with Indian soldiers (*toofangchi*, commonly known as sepoy) in the use of modern firearms, something that had great impact in open field of battle against the charge of the cavalry traditionally valued by the Indian rulers.

In the aggravation of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740 - 1748), Dupleix, with the help of Admiral La Bourdonnais (1699 - 1753), governor of the island of Réunion in the Indian Ocean, took control of the British fort in Madras in 1746, initiating a series of conflicts between the two countries in the so-called Carnatic Wars[325]. Among the captured British who managed to escape from prison, a daring young man, Robert Clive (1725 - 1774), managed to arrive with the news in the British fort of Saint David, 80 km south of Madras[326]. Some years later, with the peace signed in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, Madras had been returned to the British, exposing the growing ambition and bellicosity of Europeans on Indian soil.

The settled peace did not mean the end of the political rivalries between British and French in India. In 1748, in the same year of the treaty, the *nizam* of Hyderabad, Nizam-ul-Mulk passed away, generating a series of successive disputes between his children[327]. Parallel to this, similar fights took place among the children of the nawab of Arcot in Tamil Nadu who had previously been vassal allies south of the Hyderabad dominions.

It was in these disputes that the British and the French positioned themselves in rival terms to secure local allies and trade privileges in the Deccan and the Indian coast. The French, with Dupleix's diplomatic brilliance, succeeded in Hyderabad, having a protégé in his command as a *nizam*, Muzzafar Jung (r. 1750 - 1751), as well as his successor, Salabat Jung (r. 1751 - 1762) in 1751 with the crucial help of the French General Joseph Patissier de Bussy (1718 - 1785). The British, for their part, have secured an important ally in the command of Arcot, the result of

the offensive led by Robert Clive in 1751, after the city was besieged by Chanda Sahib, the nawab of the Carnatic (r. 1749 - 1752) and ally of Dupleix[328].

The French future in India looked promising under Dupleix and with an strong ally in Hyderabad. But it was the political decisions in Paris that undermined Dupleix's dream. The directors of the *Compagnie*, after years of trade deficit and war debt, decided to cut funds and review French involvement in India. Thus Dupleix, who insisted in letters to Paris for greater financial aid[329], was dismissed from his position as governor of Pondicherry in 1754, and a definitive peace agreement was signed with the British in India at the Treaty of Paris of 1763. In 1769 , the *Compagnie*, unable to maintain its own resources, was abolished by Louis XVI, who took over the administration of French possessions in India[330].

Robert Clive

At age 29, Robert Clive had already gained fame and fortune in the British Isles and had hoped for a political career to secure his future. However, the election result did not favour him, after which he turned his attention back to India. He arrived in Madras in 1755 as lieutenant colonel of the British Army shortly before the time when BEIC's deposits in Calcutta were attacked. This event was the result of actions led by a young nawab from Bengal, Siraj ud-Daulah (r. 1756 - 1757), who considered British activities as threatening to his sovereignty.

Thus, Clive successfully led British troops to the rescue of BEIC's facilities and employees, as well as having reinstated the French warehouse near Calcutta in Chandannagore (Chandannagar). After the events, Clive decided to disobey his superiors and secretly negotiated with a pretender to power in Bengal, Mir Jafar (r. 1757 - 1760, 1763 -1765), commander of the troops of the nawab. Clive proceeded further north from Bengal

and entered into battle with Siraj ud-Daulah at Plassey in 1757, relying on the loyalty of Mir Jafar. The events, although risky, were favourable to the British who counted on a much smaller number of men in the field, compensated with the entrance of the men of Mir Jaffar. At the end of the assaults, the nawab was defeated and killed. Mir Jafar rose to power in Bengal and Clive was duly rewarded with a generous amount of money and control over some tributes in the region. In addition, he was elected governor of BEIC in Calcutta[331].

In Delhi, the Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar (r. 1713 - 1719) reacted positively to the events, as he did not have good relations with the previous nawab. He therefore decided to grant the BEIC chief revenue office (*dewan*) of Bengal to act as a counterweight to the authority of the new and ambitious Mir Jafar. Clive accepted such an offer of authority appreciating the conferred authority of tax collection throughout Bengal and then pondered, in a written letter to the Prime Minister in London, William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham (g. 1766 - 1768), of that this could be beneficial to the greater enhancement of the British Crown in India, going beyond BEIC's commercial pretensions[332]. Pitt, however, shrewdly predicted that this could give too many resources and power for the Crown, for King George III, to bypass parliamentary budget control thus threatening in future time the British parliamentary system itself.

A few years later, in 1760, Clive sailed from the Indian coast towards his homeland again. During the next three years Clive sought, with the use of his accumulated fortune, to have a high political office and title of nobility. In the meantime, the events in Bengal were troubled. Mir Jafar rebelled against the British authorities who decided to put his son-in-law, Mir Qasim (r. 1760 - 1763), in the local throne (*musnud*) instead. The administration of the new Islamic ruler and his collaboration with the British directors were disastrous. As a result, cases of looting and corruption thrived, resulting in large losses of revenue and BEIC

resources[333]. In the face of this crisis, Clive was called again to assume power of the British company in Calcutta in 1765.

In other areas of India, further west, the Mughal order was uncertain. In 1761, after the battle of Panipat, the victory did not match either the Maratha led by the Sadashiv Rao or the Afghans under Ahmad Shah Durrani for control of the northern Indian plains. This, to a degree, favoured the British. One of the leaders in northern India who benefited from the stalemate in 1761 was the Awadh nawab, Shuja ud-Daulah (r. 1753 - 1775), of the largest province of the Mughal empire, and the vizier and preceptor of the young Mughal emperor, Shah Alam II (r. 1759 - 1806). Thus, in the face of uncertain events in northern India, Shujad ud-Daulah emerged as the most powerful Indian ruler of the time. His decision to confront the British to the east, however, changed that[334].

While in power in Bengal, the nawab Mir Qasim requested aid to the vizier against the British after Clive's departure to the British islands. Thus, Mir Qasim joined forces with those of Shuja-ud-Daula and marched eastwards, confronting the British at Buxar, southwest of Bihar, in 1764. British commander Hector Munro (1726 - 1805) managed to secure victory in the field, Shuja ud-Daulah was chased away to the city of Lucknow and taken prisoner[335]. In this way, the battle of Buxar solved who was the supremacy in India.

Clive, meanwhile, returned to BEIC's command and took charge as *dewan* in Bengal. Shuja ud-Daulah was reinstated in Awadh under British supervision in Allahabad. In the early years of Clive's administration, from 1765 to 1767, he sought to reorganize BEIC in order to contain excessive corruption among its agents and to centralize decisions in Calcutta.

In other parts of India, a new leader was able to inspire and mobilize further rebellions against the Maratha in Mysore, South India: Hyder Ali (r. 1761 - 1782). He became a military man as a general in the service of the regent of Mysore, from which he

usurped power in 1761. Within a short time, Hyder Ali expanded and consolidated his domination throughout southern India as a result of his brilliant use of cavalry field and to successfully adapt European tactics and weapons. He employed several French officers, organized a disciplined infantry and avoided, whenever possible, direct military confrontations with the British infantry. In administrative terms, he reformed the military and civil hierarchy and ensured regular payments to the employees[336].

If this leader had joined the Maratha, the British could have been seriously challenged in India. But the struggles between them lasted, causing weariness and frailty. In 1767, the leader of the Maratha, Madhavrao I (r. 1761 - 1772), won a decisive battle against Hyder Ali. In the same year, the British allied with the *nizam* of Hyderabad, Asaf Jah II (r. 1762 - 1803) and confronted Hyder Ali during the so-called First Anglo-Mysore War (1767 - 1769) that threatened Madras' control[337].

By then, apparently, the British had finally been restrained in India by a formidable adversary. In addition, around 1770, BEIC's corruption and mismanagement cases in Madras, Calcutta and Bombay gained a foothold, making the company's profits and operations unviable. The British could thus be at the mercy of a strong opposing leader like Hyder Ali. But fate was favourable to the Britons. In 1772, the leader of the Maratha, the fourth *peshwa* Madhav Rao I (g. 1761 - 1772) died and one of the claimants to his succession in office, Raghunathrao (g. 1773 - 1774), closed alliance with the British under the Treaty of Surat of 1775[338], causing further divisions and putting an end to any major hegemonic claim to the Maratha in India. On that occasion, a new British leader came to organize and dominate Indian politics for over a decade, Warren Hastings.

Warren Hastings and the Anglo-Mysore Wars

Warren Hastings (1732 - 1818) was the chief architect of the

British empire in India. If Clive was a young and daring officer who dared to confront the traditional Indian authorities in search of glory and fortune, Hastings was the great visionary administrator of British India. Hastings also built his career serving at BEIC, since 1750 in Calcutta. In 1757 he had been imprisoned by the nawab of Bengal when he was director of the company's deposit in Kosimbazar. In 1769, after a season in the United Kingdom, Hastings returned to India as a member of the Council of the Governor of Madras. His knowledge of Indian languages, diplomatic sensibilities and commercial experience resulted in his nomination as governor of Bengal at age 39, in 1774, the most important British post in India[339].

The challenges with which Hastings had to deal in office were significant from the outset. A few years earlier, famine had plagued Bengal, leading to much questioning of the authority of the British *dewan* in the region. Hastings decided to centralize taxation in Calcutta and no longer entrust Bengali agents and intermediaries. But his greater attention went beyond internal reforms. Relations with Indian regents from other regions presented pressing problems for British authority in Bengal. The Awadh nawab in the west sometimes engaged in battles against Afghan rivals (Rohillas) and Marathas, as at the Panipat battle of 1761[340], asking occasional support from the British. On the other hand, after the death of the nawab Shuja ud-Daulah in 1775, the territory east of Awadh, in the region of the holy city of Benares (now Varanasi), was incorporated by British control[341]. In short, Hastings' political interference in India was striking, enhancing the power and control of BEIC in India.

Hastings's powers as governor were curtailed by decisions of the Supreme Council of Bengal dealing with colonial affairs. Despite these obstructions around the figure of a political rival, Sir Philip Francis (1740 - 1820), Hastings succeeded in realizing his political plans. His decisions began to affect far beyond Bengal, as well as on the west coast, in the Bombay region, after the British

governor had failed there in 1779. In that event, Hastings quickly intervened and sent troops against the Maratha leader Mahadaji Shinde, regent (maharaja) of Gwalior (1768 - 1794). Then, in 1781, a punitive expedition was sent to Gwalior, capturing Mahadaji's bases. In 1782, an alliance and peace was signed with the Maratha under the Treaty of Salbai, which consolidated the British position in West India[342].

Further south, however, the contestations of the British and Maratha came from Hyder Ali, who had denounced the peace terms signed after the First Anglo-Mysore War in 1769. Hyder, with his strategic sense, took advantage of the historical condition of conflicts between the British and the French in 1778, in addition to the Maratha fragility, and decided to mobilize his troops in South India in 1780[343], defeating the British forces sent under the command of Sir Hector Munro and Sir Eyre Coote. In addition, Hyder made use of tactical alliance with the French and negotiated with the admiral Pierre André de Suffren to contain the British naval squad. In 1782, Hyder Ali died[344] and was succeeded in the sultanate of Mysore by his gifted son, Tipu Sultan (r. 1782 - 1799), the 'Tiger of Mysore', who continued the conflicts and favourably imposed the Treaty of Mangalore signed in 1784 with the governor of Madras[345].

Hastings was furious with the terms. And he was barred from intervening on the subject, since he had to return to London in 1785 to defend himself in Parliament from charges of corruption and abuse of power in Bengal. Mahadaji, on the Maratha side, taking advantage of Hastings' absence, initiated new anti-British hostilities in western India and came to occupy Delhi in 1771 and secured an ally in the Peacock Throne, Emperor Shah Alam II (r. 1760 – 1806), under Maratha sovereignty[346]. In turn, Mahadaji was appointed as general administrator of the empire, authority with which he boldly went to demand from the British in Bengal the payments owed to the emperor.

Tipu Sultan in southern India continued to consolidate his

achievements. After confronting the Marathas and the *nizam* of Hyderabad in the Deccan, Tipu headed, from 1789, for the west coast - Coromandel Coast - controlled to a large extent by the British, and to the southwest, against the Dutch bases in Cochin and the surrounding area in Kerala of the local ruler, Dharma Raja of Travancore (r. 1758 - 1798), ally of the British[347]. He had French aid, but the overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy in France prevented more effective alliances. The counterpart to the new Tipu offensives in southern India came with the appointment of a new British governor, Lord Cornwallis, who succeeded Hastings.

Lord Cornwallis

Cornwallis as soon as he set foot in India tried to conclude extensive alliances with the *peshwa* of the Maratha and the *nizam* of Hyderabad, that had previously been defeated by Tipu. In 1790 and 1791, Tipu experienced his first defeats in the district of Coimbatore (Koval), in the French base of Pondicherry and in Bangalore (Bengaluru) against the British alliance. A year later, defeated, Tipu lost control of the holy city of Srirangapatna, the de facto capital in Mysore[348], and returned the dominions south of Madras on the west coast to the British, in addition to ensuring the return of the regency of Maratha and the *nizam*, now as allies submitted to the British. This has ensured British domination in South India.

Tipu Sultan, being an extraordinary historical figure, once again sought to instigate his forces against the Britons. After having rescued his sons from custody with the British, Tipu planned and carried out extensive reforms aimed at increasing the revenue and resources of what remained of the kingdom of Mysore in order to finance military campaigns. Such reforms, which contemplated redistribution and agricultural planning, eliminated intermediate tax collectors, allowing a centralized control. Something the British would later inherit by controlling

the administration in South India[349].

The French, under a revolutionary government since the events in 1789, were again contacted by Tipu emissaries. To raise his sympathies and support, he even founded Jacobin clubs whose members addressed themselves as *citoyens*. The British in India, under the government of Lord Wellesley (Richard Wellesley, g. 1798 - 1805), were alarmed at the possibility of Napoleon extending his ambitions in India after his presence in Egypt. Thus, the British organized extensive campaigns against Tipu Sultan, killing him while defending the capital, Srirangapatna, in 1799. The British annexed all remaining allies of Tipu in the Carnatic region, Wayanad in North Kerala, Coimbatore and Dharapuram. In the kingdom of Mysore, a submissive ruler, Krishnaraja Wadiyar III (r. 1799 - 1831), was enthroned from a previous dynasty to that of Hyder Ali[350].

British supremacy in India at the turn of the 18th century to the next was still contested by other powerful rivals to west and northwest India. On the west coast, the Maratha under a new leadership and inspired *peshwa*, Baji Rao II (g. 1796 - 1818), son of Raghunath, was gradually contained around the city of Pune and Indian rulers alliances were signed: with the maharajas of Gwalior, Indore and Baroda[351]. Broad internal and tax autonomy were secured, provided they obeyed British foreign policy and defence guidelines. These political contours of alliance with Indian rulers will serve as a guide to British imperial policy throughout the 19th century.

Another region of potential adversary to the British was in the northwest of India. In the region, the death of Mahadaji Shinde (r. 1768 - 1794) caused the rise of Sikhs who had consolidated a kingdom under the command of maharaja Ranjit Singh (r. 1801 - 1839) and captured the city of Lahore in 1799[352]. This Sikh leader proved to be a great and talented statesman. Like Tipu, he sought to learn and adapt the weapons and combat tactics of the Europeans, but he avoided whenever possible to confront the

British in the battleground.

Internally, Cornwallis' government sought to improve BEIC's administration in India to contain nepotism and corruption, something that seemed inherent in the ambitions of its officers. To that end, Cornwallis secured a generous regular salary for company employees and sought to promote those based on the merit of their trades[353]. In the legal field, the innovations were innovative. A new code of Indian laws, known as the Cornwallis Code, was drafted and put into effect in 1793. As legal sources, they sought to interpret and incorporate the costumes of every major religion in India, and each Indian was assured a judgment far from arbitrariness of local regents. For the codification of these laws, he was assisted by the great British jurist and philologist, Sir William Jones (1746 - 1794), who learned several Indian languages and costumes[354]. In addition, a Supreme Court was established in Calcutta. In the same sense, the costumes and traditional languages in India were valued. As a result, a college was inaugurated in Benares (Varanasi) for the study of Sanskrit works[355]. And other Koranic schools, *madrasa*, were opened in Calcutta.

Factors for British domination in India

What were the factors that allowed the extension and consolidation of the British from Robert Clive to the Cornwallis government? The explanations range in part from careful and disinterested cases of alliances made through the decades, to a successful strategy to exploit the divisions and weaknesses of the Indian rulers and intervene militarily only when extremely necessary. The conquest of India never aroused much interest from the British public. Neither was there any great national campaign for imperial aggrandizement. The battles and conflicts in India were the result of local and local intentions. In the battles many Indian soldiers and mercenaries were employed, without

considerable costs to the British taxpayer.

The use of force was parsimonious, since the large costs of mobility and battlefield supplies were always taken into account by BEIC officers, a trading company that sought its own financial backing away from the imperial coffers of London. In that sense, the British military campaigns used what they learned from the Indian military leaders, to support their men with what they plundered and piled with the conquests, assuring the loyalty of the soldiers and campaign.

In addition, there was BEIC's significant prosperity in Indian business mainly arising from taxes collected in the Madras, Bombay and Bengal regions, considered by the administration as presidencies[356] at the time. In the latter presidency, profits from cotton textile sales proved to be huge and promising, serving as attraction to many ambitious young Britons to serve on the company as a way to achieve fortune and glory as did Robert Clive.

In sum, the factors of British domination in India were the result of a combination of favourable elements. The French, closest European rivals, have been disarticulated since the mid-18th century with containment decisions of Paris. Indian anti-British rulers, such as Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, though ingenious, failed to secure broad coalitions - even with crucial aid from the French - against the long-running conflicts with the British who made extensive use of allies with local rulers, *nizams* and maharajas. Business, at the last moment, by the cotton fabrics prosperity of and the taxes collected by BEIC officers ensured the continuity of the company in India throughout the 18th century. In the face of this scenario of British expansion and consolidation, in the 19th century the British began to outline a more comprehensive imperial strategy for their domination.

From Wellesley to Curzon - 19th Century to 20th Century

By the beginning of the 19th century, British domination was clearly emerging in India. The biggest debates were about the policy to be adopted. Should BEIC keep the business monopoly in India? Or should the British Crown not renew the concession of this monopoly and intervene directly in the administration of the colony? It was these issues that were discussed in the first decades of the new century, something that was manifested by a new generation of BEIC and British military personnel who served in the Asian country.

The concessions to operate BEIC in India were to be approved by a directory in London every twenty years, something that was proposed in 1773 by William Pitt the Elder (1708 - 1778) and came into force in the Regulating Act (or Pitt's India Act) of 1784. From then on a directory examined the activities and costs of BEIC in India, as well as oversaw the military's civilian activities and the company's revenues[357].

In 1813, that law revised some terms of concession. The tea and trade with China were no longer exclusive to the company, paving the way for other business competitors, adventurers and missionaries. In 1833 the British directory and parliament decided to put an end to the entire monopoly of the company, effectively making it part of the British government, although it still retained responsibility for managing its possessions and officers in India.

This concurrent and dual system of authorities, between Calcutta and London, had a surprising longevity which ended only in 1857[358].

Wellesley to Hardinge

The general government of Lord Wellesley, the 1st Earl of Morrington (1760 - 1842), formally appointed Governor-General of the Presidency of Fort William in Calcutta, took place in 1798 and extended until 1805. It was under his government that Tipu Sultan was defeated and killed in 1799 and the kingdom of Mysore submitted as an ally in the Deccan. But it was his administrative reforms that marked his administration. The College of Fort William was inaugurated in Calcutta, where the new BEIC staff would be trained. Disciplines on Indian history, culture and languages were included in the programme, aiming for greater engagement and interaction with Indian society. In this institution were translated and studied numerous works and classics in Sanskrit, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, Hindi and Arabic by orientalist scholars. It was in this spirit that Wellesley stated at the inauguration that the officers to be trained by the institution should be regularly educated and instructed in the principles and system that constitutes the foundation of a wise code of regulations and laws promulgated 'in order to ensure (...) for the benefit of old and consolidated laws of that country'[359].

Together with the founding of the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781 (centre for Koranic studies), and the Asian Society - presided over by Sir William Jones - in 1784, Calcutta gradually became the intellectual centre of British India. Or as Majumdar considered the Fort William College[360]:

> Fort William College has emerged as both a research centre and publisher of classic works, as well as a cradle of creativity and research. Originally planned to train British civil servants in the

> languages and cultures of the country, the institution provided university-equivalent services in the studies of modern Indian literature, notably Bengali. (...) Under the leadership of William Carey, the College was able to also claim the credit of bringing together wise Sanskrit *pandits* along with the Arabic-speaking *munshis* to reformulate Bengali prose (...) [T]he variety of publications of the Academy is also worth highlighting. From colloquiums, debates on popular stories, chronicles and legends, for the definitive publication of literary texts.

With regard to the British allies, it was during Wellesley's period that it was systematized the practice of so-called Subsidiary Alliance System. It consists, in its principles, of making clear the exclusive acceptance by an Indian regent of British forces in his domain and no other foreign presence. It was agreed that these forces should be maintained and paid, just like any other non-military British presence. In case of conflict, the decisions would be made by the Britons. As a counterpart, the Indian regent would accept protection in foreign affairs and internal disorders. If there was a breach of these terms, the Indian side would have to accept the terms of indemnity or loss of part of its territory. In addition, the system allowed the residence of a British representative in the capital of the allied kingdom, with the purpose of supervising the terms of the alliance[361].

This system pleased Wellesley's expansionist aims, since he was in line with the idea that the British, as pleaded Clive, should be involved in Indian domination and administration. As a result, alliances were signed with Cochin (1791), Jaipur (1794), Travancore (1795), Hyderabad (1798), Mysore (1799), Cis-Sutlej states (1815), Central India Agency (1819)[362], Kutch and Gujarat Gaikwad territories (1819), Rajputana (1818) and Bahawalpur in Punjab (1833).

In 1812, the Earl of Moira (or Marquess of Hastings, not to be confused with Warren Hastings) was appointed as governor-general of India, who governed until 1823. During his

administration, BEIC's monopoly on tea and trade with China have been revised. And progress was made on part of the Nepalese territory against the Gurkha (1814-1816), just as the last campaign against the Maratha was held in 1818.

The war against the Gurkha was the result of BEIC's expansionist economic plan to have free access to the top-quality wool market in Tibetan Plateau for the making of cashmere, which passes through the kingdom of Nepal in the Himalayas. After the failed British diplomatic missions of 1792, 1795 and 1801, the Nepalese ruler (*Durbar*), Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah (r. 1799 - 1816), refused the British terms presented.

Moira assumed power in 1813 and sought to re-examine the boundaries between the Awadh region and Nepalese domains. In that sense, claiming to secure its borders north of the Ganges River valley, the Nepalese war was declared in 1814. The battles proved difficult and long in the face of mountain terrain and the resilience of Gurkha troops. The aggressions came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Sugauli, ratified in 1816. In that document parts of the south-western Nepalese kingdom were ceded to the British, as well as the region of Sikkim and Terai, Darjeeling in West Bengal and parts of the present state of Uttarakhand[363]. A British representative was established in Kathmandu, as well as the recruitment of Gurkhas to serve the British Army.

Another long war was waged against the Maratha from 1817 and 1818. Moira decided to invade northern Maratha territory in order to end the rebellions commanded by Baji Rao II (g. 1796 - 1818). Numerous diplomatic efforts succeeded in persuading the Maharaja of Gwalior, Daulat Rao Sindhia (r. 1794 - 1827), a former ally of the Maratha Confederation, to remain neutral in the conflicts by the terms signed in the Treaty of Gwalior of 1817, ensuring passage through Rajasthan. At the end of the conflicts, devoid of allies, the Maratha leader was defeated in the battles of Khadki (1817) and Koregoan (1818), near Pune in Maharashtra[364].

The Maratha *peshwa* was eventually captured in 1818 and most of its territory was annexed to the British province, the Bombay Presidency, some years later.

William Amherst (g. 1823 - 1828) succeeded Moira in office in 1823. During these years, Anglo-Indian expansion went eastward to include the region of Assam, Arakan and Tenasserim, resulting in conflicts against the kingdom of Burma (1824 - 1826)[365]. The battles lasted for about two years with the mobility of around 15,000 Indian soldiers at a cost of £ 13 million at the time[366], a hefty burden on BEIC coffers. As a result, Amherst reviewed his expansionist policy on the Eastern front, signing a peace treaty in 1826 - that of Yandabon - and leaving the Burmese royal family as sovereign in the southern part of the kingdom.

Indian internal issues gained emphasis on the reforms proposed in the subsequent government of William Bentick (g. 1828 - 1835). BEIC had presented years of loss to be rescued by London, something that should be solved by the new governor assigned to India. Thus spending cuts were implemented, generating discontent among those British in India who fed larger imperial ambitions in Asia.

With Bentick, the influence of politicians and thinkers who proposed a greater Westernization of India, inspired by Jeremy Bentham's (1748 - 1875) and James Mill's (1773 - 1836) utilitarian philosophy, gained prominence. Indian schools were reformed according to the ideas of Macaulay[367], with emphasis in the teaching of English language and literature and Western subjects. English became the official language of the court and government, replacing the ancient Persian used by the Mughal.

On traditional Indian costumes, Bentick sought to curb the practice of self-immolation of widows in her husband's funeral pyre, *sati*. He had the help and support of Ram Mohan Roy (1772 - 1833)[368] to contain the excesses of polygamy, rigidity of the caste division and child marriage[369]. These practices shocked the sensibilities of British Conservatives, among them Evangelicals,

Catholics and Anglicans. The rise of these conservative religious, together with utilitarianism, generated a intolerant and alienated colonial environment of the British classes from the rest of the Indian population in the later decades.

The general government of Lord Auckland (g. 1826 - 1842) was marked by a new expansion towards the northwest. In order to curb insubordination, Auckland published a manifesto, that of Simla, in which the Emir of Afghanistan, Dost Muhammad Khan (r. 1826 - 1839 and 1845 - 1863) was declared illegitimate. Subsequent conflicts started the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838 - 1842) in which the British sought to secure an old reliable ally on the Afghan throne in Kabul, Shah Shuja Durrani (r. 1803 - 1809 and 1839 - 1842). There were fears by the British government that the Russians, allied with the Persian Shah Mohammad Mirza (r. 1834 - 1848) of the Qajar Dynasty, would ally with the Afghans and thus threaten the north-western region of British India. In fact, the Persians attempted to invade Afghan lands with the help of the Russian Count Simonich, but were detained at the Battle of Herat in 1838[370].

In 1841, with Shuja on the Afghan throne, Kabul was seized by new insurrections by supporters of Dost Mohammad, led by his son, Wazir Akbar Khan (r. 1842 - 1845). Attempting to resolve the conflicts in Kabul, the British representative, Sir William MacNaghten, was killed and British forces retreated when they were attacked by Afghan Ghilzais on the way, resulting in the death of 4,500 soldiers and more than 12,000 Indo-British civilians. Only one British survived, assistant surgeon William Brydon, who arrived with the news in Jalalabad[371]. In the subsequent months, the British organized new counteroffensive and took Kandahar, Jalalabad and then Ghazni and Kabul. But the costs of the war were too high and the new governor general of India, Lord Ellenborough, decided to withdraw British troops and negotiate the terms of peace in 1842.

Lord Ellenborough (g. 1842 - 1844), in the face of peace with

the Afghans, gained notoriety and medal of honour with the legend *Pax Asiae Restituta*, decorated by the British government. But new fronts of battle occurred in the Sindh region. He appointed in 1843 to impose order and report the situation in the region, Sir Charles James Napier (1782 - 1853), with full political and military powers[372]. Harsh repression of the rebels followed to the point that, according to tradition[373], Napier sent a telegram with a single word back to Calcutta, *peccavi*, 'sinned' in Latin. As a result of the conflicts, Sindh was made part of the Bombay Presidency and Napier was appointed as the new governor of the region.

In 1844, the Viscount of Hardinge (g. 1844 - 1848) assumed the office in Calcutta. His greatest challenge was to have to deal with the growing concern of the Sikhs in the northwest Punjab following the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839. The Sihks since the reign of Ranjit Singh (r. 1792 - 1839) had strengthened and expanded over the Afghans, conquering Peshawar and Multan, as well as parts of Kashmir and Jammu. But internal disagreements in the Sikh kingdom generated political instability in Ranjit Singh's succession in 1839. In addition, the Sikh Army (Khalsa) had grown considerably, concerning the British authorities. In that sense, the authorities in Calcutta under Hardinge decided to mobilize their Bengali troops to the border, in the city of Firozpur, under the command of Sir Hugh Gough. In response, the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej River in December 1845, in response to the British declaration of war, initiating the First Anglo-Sikh War (1845 - 1846)[374].

In the Battle of Mudki in December of 1845, Gough and Hardinge obtained victory in spite of the considerable casualties. After the battles of Ferozeshah (December of 1845), Aliwal (January of 1846) and Sobraon (February of 1846) Hardinge concluded peace after the signing of the Treaty of Lahore on 9 of March 1846 and the Treaty of Amritsar on 16 of March, when the Hindu ruler of the Dogra Dynasty of Jammu, Gulab Singh (r. 1846

- 1857), acquired Kashmir from Sikh control with the payment of 7.5 million nanak rupees, Sikh currency of the time, and annual taxes[375]. The regent of Punjab, the Sikh Maharaja Duleep Singh (r. 1843 - 1849), being a underage, was tutored by the British - and his mother, the Maharani Jind Kaur - until his majority according to the Treaty of Bhyroval[376].

Dalhousie

Conflicts with the Sihks reached new heights during the general government of Lord Dalhousie (g. 1848 - 1856). Following the assassination of a British envoy to the city of Multan in 1848 by rebels loyal to a local governor, Diwan Mulraj, the British military commander in Bengal, Sir Hugh Gough, decided not only to send a punitive expedition to the city but to send contingents of the army to subdue the entire Punjab region, with the approval of Dalhousie, as he expressed himself: 'Disregarded by precedent, influenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war; and in my words, sirs, war they shall have and with vengeance'[377].

The Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848 - 1849) was initiated when Multan was besieged by troops from Bombay coupled with those mobilized from Bengal under General Whish's command in November 1848. But resistance in taking the city fort was tenacious and the battles lasted until January of 1849. In the diplomatic field, during the war, the Sikhs were able to extend their alliance by accord with Afghan leader Dost Muhammad Khan, who sent 1500 cavalries as support in exchange for his ambition to dominate the city of Peshawar. Elsewhere, the Indo-British army gained supreme victory in Gujarat in February 1849 over the Sikhs and some Afghan allies. Soon afterwards, in Rawalpindi, most Sikh forces surrendered and the terms of surrender were agreed upon. The Punjab was annexed by the British administration. The Sikh Empire had been dissolved and its last king, the young Duleep Singh (r. 1843 - 1849), had been

sent to the United Kingdom in exile together with his mother.

In Burma, an incident took on tragic proportions that started the Second Anglo-Burmese War (1852). A British-flagged military vessel commanded by Commodore George Lambert had gone to the region near the capital Rangoon to question the fulfilment of the signed Yandabon Peace Agreement of 1826 (which ended the First Anglo-Burmese War). He had questioned about his impeded free passage by a local Burmese governor. After a series of misunderstandings and the imperial ambition of some British in the government of Dalhousie[378], a naval squad was sent in 1852 and Rangoon was blocked along with the seizure of Burmese ships.

The Burmese offered little resistance. After controlling the capital, Rangoon, the Burmese imperial court had surrendered much of the country and the nearby province of Pegu had been annexed on the 20 December of 1853. But the later years of attempted integration of the Burmese regions with India proved to be costly because Burma was very distant, of a different culture and language than the Indian universe. Another burdensome consequence of Burma's continued occupation was the large contingent of Indian soldiers serving militarily in the region, generating growing discontent among Hindu soldiers, as it was considered a violation of the *kala pani* ('black water') precepts, keeping away from the sacred waters of the Ganges River basin, which could damage the personal and family caste condition (*varna*) and reincarnation[379].

But perhaps what had had the greatest consequences for British domination in India during Dalhousie's government was his application of the doctrine of lapse. Under this doctrine any non-British domain could be legally appropriate if the local regent did not present at the time of succession a capable male heir of direct family descent. It was under this policy that the annexations of Satara, Jaitpur and Sambalpur occurred in 1849, Jhansi and Nagpur in 1853, Tanjore and Arcot in 1855, Udaipur and Awadh

in 1856[380]. Further annexations were subsequently examined and found to be invalid by the British authorities. But the doctrine itself motivated indignation and fear among Indian rulers and princes who were fearful of losing their sovereignty once and for all.

Domestically, the Dalhousie government has made reforms in a number of areas, such as the civil, military and medical hierarchy. The tax system was simplified, aiming to eliminate the middlemen, many from an privileged elite (the *zamindar*), to contain cases of corruption and abuse of authority. This has generated growing dissatisfaction between the traditional landowner aristocracy and families of local rulers, historically the holders of taxes collected on their estates. Public works departments were set up in each presidency - that of Bengal, Madras and Bombay. Dalhousie, a fervent adept of utilitarianism, encouraged and planned a broad program of railroad works across India, which aimed primarily at transporting natural resources such as iron ore and coal to Indian port regions. In a short time, with government incentives, the capital was invested in railroads that were networked throughout Assam, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. The mileage of this network increased from 1349 km in 1860, ten years later, 7678 km, 25 495 km in 1880, 56 980 km in 1920-21 and 65 217 km in 1946-47, most radiating from the three major cities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta[381].

Other major public works were carried out. The Ganges Channel, a system of irrigation canals in northern India aimed at increasing Indian agricultural production, has in fact augmented yields eight times from the plains of Harwar to Cawnpore (Kanpur), extending to the mouth of the Ganges and Assam regions[382]. A new and efficient postal and telegraph system was implemented, and everything related to a efficient system of management and allocation of Indian resources. In short, Dalhousie valued all that was considered useful to the imperial administration in India, without further consideration for the

instruction and improvement of life of the Indian population. No major campaign of education and vaccination was carried out, demonstrating the government's bias towards big business and commercial interests. And so was the general perception of the Indian population in the 1850s, between civilians and the military. The government closed the College of Calcutta that valued the Indian and Asian studies, inaugurated by Warren Hastings and William Jones, considered costly and useless.

In foreign external relations and with Indian regents, the government of Dalhousie negotiated with the *nizam* of Hyderabad in 1853 and thus maintained him as ally in the region of Deccan under the Treaty of Berar. He avoided punishing the Afghan leader Dost Muhammad for his collaboration in the war with the Sikhs and proposed to him a peace and friendship treaty signed in 1855 with John Lawrence. In southern Baluchistan, the government sought to intervene and secure an ally with the Khan of Kalat, Nassir II (r. 1841 - 1857), as signed in the cooperation agreement in May 1854. The khan was granted an annual allowance of 50,000 rupees in exchange for political and military collaboration, aimed at safeguarding any Afghan advance from the north and the Persians to the west. In the Punjab, Dalhousie sought to directly administer the entire region by expanding the process of policing and control throughout the northwest region of India to contain the ambitions of mountain tribal groups such as the Afridi, Mohmand and others to attack the fertile Punjabi plains and cities .

But what proved to be the most troublesome and costly in the policy of annexation and direct administration was when, claiming the doctrine of lapse, it incorporated the populous Awadh region in 1856. This stemmed from an envoy's report, James Outram, to the royal court in Lucknow, capital of the Awadh kingdom, in March 1855. The difficulties in the succession of the throne and in the disorderly and confusing condition in the region were reported, leading to further British intervention. In

November 1855, the Awadh ruler, Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847 - 1856), a Muslim from a Persian Shiite dynasty with great appreciation for Indian arts, literature, dance, music and theatre[383], refused to sign the ultimatum presented and was then proclaimed the direct annexation of the province on February 13, 1856. The consequences were enormous for the entire British administration in India.

As a historical figure, Wajid Ali Shah, *nawab* of Awadh, epitomizes all Indian historical wealth and contradiction. Of complex character, the regent had little propensity to the usual policy and had acceded to the throne by chance, by real lineage. But he proved talented and generous in sponsoring the arts. At his court in Lucknow, plays, music (*ragas*) and dance - such as *kathak* - were generously sponsored, telling the Hindu mythology of Mahabharata and Ramayana. He was a man of refined and courteous taste. His poems, *ghazals*, and writings denounce his cultivated aesthetic taste, echoing the literary traditions of the Persian court. Despite enjoying worldly pleasures, he did not consume alcoholic beverages and, as a devout Shiite Muslim, he attended to the five daily prayers of Islam[384].

Rebellion of 1857 and Reorganisation

The series of uprisings in northern India that took place in 1857 almost resulted in the end of British domination. While Indians refer to these events as the First War of Independence, some British consider them to be just a riot by Indian soldiers (sepoys). It was neither one nor the other. For it did not involve all Indian regions, concentrating more in the north. But it also involved many other Indian social strata beyond the military.

The participant Indian elite was of the traditional landowners dissatisfied with the tax reforms, and regents displaced with the doctrine of lapse deployed by Dalhousie. The Mughal emperor himself, Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837 - 1857), a symbolic figure of the

imperial past residing in Delhi, emerged as a symbol of the anti-British rebels. As was the figure of the *peshwa* in the city of Pune, in the Maharashtra. They were merely symbols of inspiration, without any co-ordinated pretension for a new political order.

However, the rebels managed to mobilize a large contingent of displeased Indian society with the Dalhousie administration. And the British were thus caught by surprise by the breadth of the revolts, unprepared for a long and enduring confrontation. Below the Indian elite, the riots spread between the Rajput and Gurjara in the northwest of India, as they sought more autonomy from British policy interventions. The figure of the queen (*Rani*) of Jhansi was one of the most emblematic moments of this revolt, because the regent failed to secure a male natural heir to her throne, and so was taken by the British.

In 1856, in Awadh the doctrine of lapse was put into practice and the region was annexed by the British. Many of the Indian soldiers came from Awadh, causing great dissatisfaction in the military with the appropriation. It was among these that the first manifestations of revolt occurred in the city of Meerut on May 10, 1857. The immediate cause, the straw that broke the camel's back, was the distribution of ammunition lubricated with animal fat for the new Enfield P- 53. The handling of these by the soldiers was considered taboo, for there was a rumour that the fat came from cow, a figure sacred to the Hindu, and from pig, forbidden by the Muslims. The rumour spread was that the British did this intentionally, aiming to convert the soldiery to Christianity. This revealed the scarce dialogue and distrust of the British officialdom by the soldiery, seen as a privileged caste and distant from the pain and effort of the military life. Soldiers, on the other hand, lived largely tired after years of battles in Burma, Punjab, Afghanistan and other regions.

The British commander at Meerut's headquarters, Lieutenant-Colonel George Carmichael-Smyth, lacked charisma and leadership among the rank and file. It was to prove his command

to his superiors that he decided, on April 24, 1857, to give a lesson to questioners about ammunition. In this sense, he ordered 90 of his men to carry the new bullets, being obeyed by only five soldiers in line. The lack of conduct entailed imprisonment for military indiscipline of the those involved, further amplifying the displeasure of the British commander.

The next day the mutiny spread and the mutineers marched on to Delhi, 80 km away. The British were stunned by the events and were initially unable to prevent the catastrophe in its initial moments[385]. Delhi fell to the rebels thanks to the action of a former Indian corporal from the Artillery Division of the British Army, who maintained control of the munitions and weapons of the city from May to September 1857. The desperate British attempted to react by requesting the support of the *peshwa* in Cawnpore further south. This proved to be a fiasco, as most of the population had anti-British convictions and expelled them from the city in a few days.

News of the events in Meerut and Delhi quickly spread throughout the country. The alarm has led to the precipitous withdrawal of BEIC personnel from their posts in search of protection. In Agra, 250 km from Delhi, the British retreat caused rebellious occupation of the city fort. There were reports of looting, disorder and crime in the streets with absence of effective order.

The British command responded uncoordinated to the events. In the province of Maharashtra, on the west coast, there were those who called for a energetic intervention, disagreeing with those who saw the solution in dialoguing with the Maratha elite. In the cities of Benares and Allahabad, there was ineptitude of the local authorities in the disarmament of the people.

Although the rebellion had spread, there was, in contrast, unified command in the protests. Discussion and disagreement among the rebels about who should lead the province of Maharashtra, many supporting the return of the Maratha *peshwa*,

were notable. Others longed for an autonomous Republican government. And among Indian Muslims, there were calls for jihad against the infidels, with appeal only to only a few millenarian Shiites and Muslim artisans contrasting with the distrust of the Sunni and Sufi Indian majority.

In Lucknow, Awadh, the rebel advance was ill-favoured even after the siege of British quarters for almost six months in 1857 due to an organized resistance by local British commissar Sir Henry Lawrence (1806 - 1857)[386]. But the railroad linking Lucknow to Cawnpore was almost taken by rebels commanded by the queen of Baiswara, Rana Beni Madho[387]. In this last city, in the most infamous case of the uprising, an enraged mob surrounded the local British community and 120 women and children were killed and dismembered. The episode, known as the Bibighar Massacre, explored by the Victorian press at the time, shocked European opinion and angered authorities in London who decided to step up intervention in the country to reverse the instability. Orders of summary execution were given for hanging and death by cannon fire[388].

For a moment, it seemed that all of northern India would get lost in the British hands. But the loyal performance of Sikh regiments was crucial. The Sikhs still had hatred of the mutinous Indian soldiers who repressed and subdued them in two Anglo-Sikh wars (1845-1846) (1848-1849)[389]. Thus, Delhi was retaken on September 21, 1857, and Lucknow, after a long siege on the 27th November. Gwalior and its strategic fortress had been taken over by the Maratha *peshwa* and forces loyal to the Jhansi (*Rani*) queen, Lakshmi Bai (1828 - 1858), the great female figure of the cause of the rebel cause who was only rescued in June 1858 under the command of General Hugh Rose, event in which the queen came to die[390].

Conflicts and failures in containment by the British authorities left indelible marks. Self-confidence had been shaken, and many Britons no longer viewed themselves as superiors or

bearers of civilization to the Indian 'barbarians'. Many of the Indian elite have begun to consider the British presence as despotic and authoritarian. At the end of the riots, which had echoed among various sectors of Indian society, the authorities in Calcutta and London decided to adopt a less interventionist policy than Dalhousie's and sought the support and incorporation of the elite India's administrative affairs, thus opening privileged schools for access to the Indian Civil Service (ICS). An institution that would serve an elite Indian civil servant of just over 1,000 people managing, collecting, allocating resources, suppressing revolts and discontent, drafting laws, investigating crimes, prosecuting and overseeing municipalities, schools, hospitals of 300 million Indians, one-fifth of the world's population at the time[391].

In social and religious aspects, the British authorities reviewed their interference in Indian traditions deriving from the utilitarian vision of Dalhousie's government. Thus, Indian popular practices and costumes were tolerated. Traditional social order had been preserved, sustained with the support of local elites, religious leaders and landowners. At the political level, aiming to contain future rebellions, the new British imperial government in India created legal and political instances at provincial level. New schools and universities were opened as result of the Indian Universities Act which came into force in 1904, which increased the number of college and university courses and seats[392].

The costs of the riots were enormous. The treasury was almost devoid of funds and BEIC almost went bankrupt. Thus, in order to avoid the worst for its shareholders, the British company ceased to operate in India after 258 years. Parliament ruled that the British Crown would take over business and control in India, which presented good prospects for growth and profits for British collection. India, after years of investment in infrastructure, began to produce and export its products to the international market and to import British processed products[393].

Thus the administration's responsibility was transferred to

the British monarchy, directly subject to Queen Victoria, who showed keen interest in India. The monarch even took Hindi classes and was a student of the most famous Indologist at the time, Max Mueller. She assumed the title of Empress of India in 1876[394] and appointed a Viceroy of India to represent her interests in India who was to be in office in five years tenure. To counteract his power, the Governor-General of India office was abolished in 1858 and the post of Secretary of State was created to take care of administrative and economic affairs of India, Burma and Aden, in the Arabian Peninsula. The secretary would represent the Indo-British elite and could have more power than the viceroy if he had the interest and support of parliamentary majority in London. In addition, the secretary did not have to present any budget report to the House of Commons, since its revenue was independent of the British islands[395]. Thus, in this sense, interest and perception about India gradually ceased to be noticeable to MPs and Victorian society.

Regarding the leaders of the Indian revolts, a British military commission met in Delhi and decided to exile the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah II to Rangoon, Burma, where he died as a dervish[396] in 1862, ending the Mughal Dynasty. The *peshwa* Nana Sahib (1824 - 1857), who attempted to restore the Maratha empire in the rebellions, apparently disappeared after the British takeover of Cawnpore in 1857[397].

The British Raj - from Canning to Curzon

In November 1858, Queen Victoria generously declared in a proclamation read in Allahabad by Lord Canning that all rulers, chiefs of India that all would have their rights and privileges maintained in accordance with the terms signed with the defunct BEIC. And to Indian population in general, of all beliefs and races, rights and jobs were promised according to their abilities, instruction and integrity[398]. The generosity of her words intended

to bring the Indian nation closer to British rule after the instabilities of the rebellions.

The imperial proclamation, consistent with the term coined for the period in India until its independence, British Raj (Sanskrit term meaning empire) was followed by the endorsement of the Government of India Act of 1858 which outlined new guidelines policies[399]. A new Secretary of State for India was appointed. A Parliamentary Commission replaced the former Council of India, which was under the position of the Governor General of India before 1858, and was composed of fifteen members chosen by retired directors of BEIC or by those managers who had lived in India for more than ten years. It was a way to avoid over-managing from the British Isles and to value those who lived in India, doctrine called 'man on the spot'.

In this sense, the British administration in India began gradually to move to a centralized system to value British directors and officials in India. Indian participation in senior civil and military positions was still unusual. In the 1880s, for example, there were only 16 Indians among the 900 ICS members. In addition, admission exams to this elite body were conducted in England, a cost and travel prohibitive for most Indian candidates. Moreover, even with persistent demands for broader reforms to extend Indian access to the highest positions, there was the distrust or even an explicit racism among the British community in India, especially among those evangelicals and conservatives, such as demonstrated in the historical novel of William Dalrymple[400]. Or in the statement of the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, who wrote in 1879 that the high offices would never be substantially accessed by the Indians[401]. Despite this, a new Statutory Civil Service was approved in 1880, opening up the possibility of access to some managerial positions for Indians, even with the restrictive requirements of the admission exams. It was the old reluctance of the Indo-British elite in London and Calcutta to relinquish their power voluntarily.

In political troubles and relations with neighbouring potentates, India's four most prominent viceroys after 1858 - in successive order, Lawrence, Mayo, Northbrook and Lytton - faced the difficult issue of the Northwest Frontier region. Administration of Sir John Lawrence (1864 - 1869) sought to question the limits of his office, pursuing the utmost intervention in Indian administrative affairs, as did Dalhousie. In foreign policy, Lawrence faced calamitous problems in Afghanistan. With the Russians, allied with the Persians and some Afghan leaders, the administration allowed them to wear out with the political intrigues of Afghan tribes. But this was not the predominant view of the British with regard to the Russians, who saw them as a potential threat to British India. A possible broad Russian-Afghan alliance would secure a base in Kabul that would give access to Punjab and Ganges plains in northern India via the Khyber Pass.

His successor, Lord Mayo (1869 - 1872), was proactive in dealing with the Afghans, meeting the Emir, Sher Ali Khan (r. 1863 - 1879), at Ambala in January 1869[402]. Under the terms, the British assured the Afghan leader a border defence against Russian advances, and the Emir would, on the other hand, have the resources and training to organize a national army and ensure succession for his favourite son Abdullah Jan .

Lord Northbrook (1872 - 1876), unlike Mayo, was a man of peace, contrary to invasions on the Indian frontiers. His emphasis on management was directed at internal reorganization in order to contain excessive spending, lower taxes and prevent hunger recurrent in India with the widespread establishment of profitable monoculture plantations in the international market such as tea in Assam, indigo and jute in Bengal. In 1873, the Emir Sher Ali, alarmed at the Russian threats on his border, called for greater British presence and support, in response to a first refusal by the British authorities. Secondly, with the revision of its policy at the request of the new Prime Minister in London, Benjamin Disraeli, British troops were deployed to the Afghan border, demanding

from Sher Ali the presence of British agents in Kabul, Kandahar and Herat. The demand has displeased the Afghans who considered it as a provocation and prelude to future annexation. New disagreements aroused between officials in London and Calcutta. Northbrook defended commercial and economic interests of India, while Prime Minister Disraeli in London sought to safeguard the strategic interests of the British empire. Thus, as a result of this political wear and tear, Northbrook resigned in 1876.

He was succeeded by an experienced British diplomat, Lord Lytton (1876 - 1880), who sought to be in charge of Disraeli's policy. However, Sher Ali refused to have a British resident in Kabul, expressing the will and indignation of most of his allies and nation. Thus began the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878 - 1880), in which Sher Ali dies in 1879 and his troops are defeated in the interior. Peace was signed at Gandamak in May 1879, following the British terms with a resident in Kabul to oversee Afghan politics[403]. In fact, making Afghanistan a British protectorate.

The Afghan popular uprisings broke out in the face of the agreements. On September 3, 1879, the British representative in Kabul, Sir Louis Cavagnari was assassinated by Afghan rebels. And under the leadership of Ghazni Mohammad Jan Khan Wardak, Afghans attacked the British at the Sherpur base near Kabul in December 1879. A second phase of aggression began. The Afghan emir on the throne in Kabul, Mohammad Yaqub Khan, who had British support was regarded as a puppet. Subsequent battles have been exhausting for Indo-British troops often on mountainous terrain difficult to access against the Afghan guerrilla rebels. Disraeli and Lytton's aggressive policy proved to be a disaster and Lytton resigned in 1880.

Lord Ripon (1880 - 1884), who succeeded Lytton, was fortunate to identify and dialogue with a powerful and popular Afghan leader, Abdur Rahman (1880 - 1901), who managed to secure himself in power and to unify the country again in peace

for 20 years[404] with the discreet British support and no presence of a resident in Kabul.

Ripon was from a liberal school that followed the thoughts of British Prime Minister Gladstone, and his administration in India was marked by the first precautionary reforms towards a democratic system of government, specifically at the local, district level. But with these reforms underway, Ripon faced opposition from the business class of Europeans in Calcutta who saw the reforms as dangerous and harmful to their interests and privileges in Indian society. One of the most debated points was with regard to the judiciary, in which Ripon and his advisers considered unfair an Indian magistrate with no legal competence to judge a European even in criminal matters. To change this, Ripon proposed the Ilbert Bill in 1883, to abolish such a legal distinction[405]. There was furore in the press in Calcutta, and Ripon relented and amended the new law, giving the possibility of a European to resort to a popular jury trial, half of which would be composed of Europeans. In short, still retaining a certain racial distinction and making it clear that Indian defendants would not have recourse to a jury. Despite this, Ripon's administration gave signs to the Indians that reforms to fairer and participatory institutions and laws could be debated and approved.

One of the most inspiring moments in this political scenario to bring together reformist opinions - from liberal entrepreneurs, politicians, teachers, lawyers, doctors, journalists, intellectuals and religious leaders - in India was the founding of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885. This political organization was the fruit of decades of Indian reform debates and ideas toward greater liberation[406]. A trend in this direction that sought to reinvigorate Hinduism at the end of the 19th century was Vedanta philosophy which sought the liberation of the soul through meditation and renunciation of mundane matters. Another concept associated with this philosophy was that of the karmayoga that emphasized altruism and action in the worldly

affairs in search of the greater good as an affirmation of the individual, an affirmative self-realization instead of passive contemplation. The prophet of these new thoughts was Swami Vivekanda (1863 - 1902) who had impressed the Western public when he spread his message to the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1894. On his return, Vivekanda awakened Indian nationalistic ideas in search of greater autonomy and independence.

At the turn of the 20th century, in 1899, Lord Curzon (1899 - 1905) was appointed Viceroy of India. In his administration, Indians were heavily taxed to maintain the British military and police system. To these sectors, in the years of 1900 and 1901, about 40% of the public budget was allocated, which contrasted with the mere 5% for welfare, health and education services[407]. Expenditure on security was perhaps an unmistakable sign of the growing discontent of British domination. In 1871, Viceroy Mayo was assassinated by an Indian Muslim. In 1897, High Commissioner Rand was killed by a Brahmin. In the same year, boycotts were held against British institutions in Bombay, with violent clashes on the streets and the destruction of some public buildings in the city. In 1901, similar clashes took place in Cawnpore and in Bengal, where the Indian National Association in Calcutta was established by Surendranath Banerjee and Ananda Mohan Bose, in order to coordinate opinions and discussions about British rule. Revolutionary Indian newspapers and periodicals such as *Jugantar* and the popular weekly *Bangabasi*[408] were founded. Bengal became the epicentre of the critical and revolutionary intelligence of the British Raj.

In an attempt to defuse nationalist fervour in Bengal, Curzon decided to divide the province into an eastern Muslim majority - East Bengal - and a Western one, aiming to split the broad Indian mobilization of discontent. As a reaction to this, the All-India Muslim League (or Muslim League) was founded in Dhaka in 1906 with the aim of assembling the interests of Indian Muslims.

In the same city a year later, District Judge B. C. Allen was assassinated and in 1909 Sir William Wyllie, Lieutenant Colonel of the British Army and Ministry of Defence, was shot dead by an Indian revolutionary in the streets of London.

Bal Tilak (1856 - 1920), ardent advocate of the concept of *swaraj* ('self-rule'), articulated and formed a new party as a response to Curzon's partition of Bengal. In doing so, a radical nationalist wing was created within the INC party which had been conceived in 1885 to influence and cooperate, within the legal and constitutional boundaries, toward a reform in India. Tilak supporters, on the other hand, decided to act in form of protests, pickets and boycotts against British products[409]. INC supporters, embarrassed by the partition events, decided to go for negotiations. Gopal Gokhale (1866 - 1915), president of the INC, went to London between 1905 and 1906 and negotiated with the new Secretary of State for India, Lord Morley (1905-1910) in London, and achieved concrete promises of further constitutional reforms in India[410].

In the meantime, in 1905, an inspiring song (*Amar Sonar Bangla*, 'My Golden Bengal', now the national anthem of Bangladesh) was composed against the division of Bengal by Nobel laureate writer Rabindranath Tagore (1861 - 1941)[411]. In Baroda, in the Gujarat, Sri Aurobindo (1872 - 1950) from 1897 began to write critical political articles in the newspaper *Indu Prakash*. Years later, in 1906, Aurobindo joined the political rebels of Bengal[412].

Curzon government made some concessions in the face of Indian protests. He reconsidered Bengal division and reunited it in 1911. In 1909, the Indian Councils Act (also known as Minto-Morley Reforms) was approved which allowed the election of Indian representatives on legislative councils. To protect Indian minorities, however, a system of chair reservations on these councils aimed the Muslim electorate and other non-Hindu religions. In that sense, Muslims would have separate legislative

seats at municipal and district level, and a good part of those representatives came from the Muslim League. Thus a political environment of Indian separation and alienation was created by the British authorities to undermine any sense of Hindu-Muslim unity. Or following the maxim of the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar, *divide et impera*, divide and rule.

In order to prevent further troops from engaging in this political whirlwind, Indian soldiers were mobilized by the British empire. In 1882, for example, seven thousand men were displaced to repress the anti-British revolts in Egypt. The advent of the international crises that culminated in the First World War in 1914 was another factor of military deployment, but that would have unforeseen consequences to the foundations of British rule in India.

From Gokhale to Gandhi - Early 20th Century - 1947

Political Reforms and Nationalism in India

While Gokhale and his acolytes were in the National Congress' power, the party adopted a moderate and negotiating stance with the British government in Calcutta and London. However, in 1915, Gokhale died, which gave Tilak a chance to redirect the group's course of action. Recognizing the limits of radicalism after leaving his prison sentence in 1914, and identifying the difficulties of the war in Europe, Tilak began to adopt a thoughtful and negotiating approach. At the same time, another surprising leader emerged, Annie Besant (1847 - 1933), an Irish socialist who had come to India to propagate the ideas of Theosophy[413]. When she launched the Indian Home Rule League in the same way as the party in Ireland, her ideas had a major impact on the Indian critical elite. A young and brilliant lawyer at the time, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876 - 1948), who aspired to represent all Indian Muslim aspirations for autonomy, had been impressed and founded a party inspired by her ideas, the Muslim League, in 1916 .

During the First World War (1914 - 1918), Indian Muslims, during the British attacks against the Turks allied with the Germans, had great reservations about Indian participation in the

conflicts alongside the British Empire. For they considered the Ottoman Turkish Sultan in Istanbul, Mehmed V (r. 1909 - 1918), as the spiritual heir of the Prophet Muhammad (caliph). Which has led them to a dilemma: to whom do they owe the ultimate allegiance, to the British or to the spiritual leader of their religion? Many Indian Muslims eventually decided to follow the nationalist leadership of Jinnah. And so he had proposed and negotiated a political pact with Tilak, of the INC, in 1916, aiming to bring the two parties together towards an autonomous India. In 1917, there was exemplary cohesion of Jinnah and Tilak along with the British government in the war efforts.

In the next two years, constitutional reforms were gradually negotiated in what became the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, passed in 1919 and in force since 1921, which allowed for some political participation of Indians at local level, as well as some seats at the highest executive body in India below the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, on the Executive Council of India. In that, Indians would be entitled to three seats to look after health, education and agriculture, while the British still held crucial areas of defence, security and finance. At the local legislative level, two chambers were proposed, one British and the other Indian. The seats of the latter would be filled by Indians elected according to their religion, giving political voice to all religions in the country, but thus ensuring a complicated disunity.

The reform project produced a diarchy power, countering British against Indian. It inevitably brought bitter frustrations on the Indian side, as the ministers on the Executive Council depended on British financial support. And a broad Indian consensus in the legislature, constituted by a plethora of interests based on religious diversity, has hardly been reached.

At the end of the war, the British government in India, under the chairmanship of Sir Sidney Rowlatt, introduced and passed a series of emergency laws in 1919, known as the Rowlatt Act, to be enforced aimed at suppressing any manifestations of sedition and

those considered a risk to national security[414]. There followed a flood of protests by India, whose participants considered the unfair measures abusive and arbitrary after India's broad support and participation in the war effort on the side of the British, sending about two million men into battlefields. The majority went to regions of Mesopotamia, in present-day southern Iraq, and the Mediterranean region of the Ottoman Empire, now parts of Turkey[415].

Among the protesters against the Rowlatt Act was a young and inspired lawyer from Porbandar, Gujarat, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869 - 1948), who sought to articulate campaigns of civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance to the government[416].

Gandhi

The son of a local minister and a caste family of merchants from the Gujarat coast, Mohandas K. Gandhi completed his law studies in London and subsequently pursued his legal career in Bombay. He then accepted the proposal of a Muslim businessman who sent him to what is now South Africa, a former British colony, in Pretoria and Durban from 1893 to 1915. In that country, as one of the rare Indian lawyers, he eventually emerged as representative of the great community of his countrymen[417]. Most of the cases of racial discrimination that came to his hand sharpened his sense of questioning and revolt, sometimes adopting an extrajudicial manifestation of protest, always to explore the breaches and contradictions of the South African and British legal system.

When Gandhi decided to return to India in 1915, he had already made his fame among Indian communities in South Africa. At the age of 46, few could foresee his future social and political performance. Inspired by Gokhale's ideas, Gandhi sought to correspond with him and his followers. He made a year-long

trip through India to observe and verify the reality of the Indian people. In the following years, after Gokhale's death during his tour, he devoted himself to giving attention to peasant campaigns in the Champaran district of Bihar and Kheda in Gujarat, where he acquired political experience, charisma and social perception. It earned him admirers and some followers, such as Rajendra Prasad (1884 - 1963) in Bihar and Vallabhbhai Patel (1875 - 1950) in Gujarat.

In the last year of the Great War, in 1918, he organized a broad campaign for military recruitment for the Indo-British Army in Gujarat, demonstrating his loyalty to the empire, believing in the London government's commitment to reform and to grant effective autonomy to India after the conflicts. But the enactment of Rowlatt's Act profoundly disappointed him, noting that the British did not respect Indian loyalty. Reacting to this outrage, Gandhi proposed as a method of protest within British political and legal conditions in India, demonstrations that he had already organized in South Africa: closure of shops and businesses on certain days, (*hartal*, 'day of work stoppage, fasting and prayers'), in effect, a day of strike.

Meanwhile, India went through a delicate period after the war. At the end of 1918, inflation was notorious, affecting the most needy population in rural and in the big cities. Millions of soldiers returned to India, most of them to Punjab, home of nearly a third of the Indian soldiers who served in the war, between Sikhs and Punjabi Muslims, considered by the British as 'martial races'[418]. To this end, the imperial government treated Punjab with extreme caution in the face of possible revolts among the localities, not allowing the entry of political activists like Gandhi in the region. In order to control Punjab, the British government in India decided to send more troops and security forces there to contain and suppress as demonstration of authority and power.

On April 13, 1919, the governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer, sent the British general Reginald Dyer to Amritsar, who decided

in Jallianwalla Bagh, to open fire in front of about 15 thousand unarmed people gathered in the garden square (*bagh*) adjacent to the Golden Temple, one of the most sacred places of the Sikhs. As a result, 379 dead, including women and children, and an estimated 1200 injured[419]. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, as it was later known, carried a powerful message to the Indians that the British government would carry out arbitrary cases of repression, demonstrating its fragility and insecurity in power in India at the time of the troubled government of Viceroy Chelmsford (1916 - 1921). It was a sign that British domination was pointing to its limits and nervousness in the face of the turmoil of the Indian population in the years after the First World War.

Gandhi, realizing the historical occasion of Indian cooperation for the continuity of British rule in India, responded by coordinating a strategy of non-cooperation as his manifesto in order to achieve *swaraj*: autonomy and complete self-government for India. Gandhi was then sent to compose a commission of inquiry into what had happened in Amritsar. At the annual INC Congress in 1919 in the city, the tone of the party resolutions, presiding over the session by Motilal Nehru (1861 - 1931), father of Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 - 1964), future first leader of independent Indian government, were moderated for the disappointment of the most radical wing of the party and unhappy with the indignation of Indian society, especially in Punjab.

Gandhi, after the investigative commission and the INC session, began to adopt an increasingly political attitude. This took place in the following months in 1919 and 1920, in the face of the growing Khilafat Movement, which advocated a pan-Islamist ideal and increased Muslim political participation in India[420]. Gandhi decided to listen to the appeals of the Muslims, thus seeking to assume a pan-Indian leadership and not only as leader of the Hindu causes. Another factor for Gandhi's attitude shift was his indignation at the report produced at the end of the

investigations of Jallianwala Bagh, that eventually failed to condemn General Dyer and those involved in the massacre in disciplinary and criminal terms[421]. As if it's not enough, his sympathizers in the British Isles raised a substantial fund for his retirement and his actions were considered by Winston Churchill in a speech to the House of Commons 'an episode without precedent or parallel in the modern history of the British Empire' and Kipling praised him as 'he man who saved India'. He was later honoured and presented with a ceremonial sword with the inscription 'Defender of the Empire'[422].

Faced with this, conditions of radicalism and contestation in India became increasingly evident. In the mid-1920s, Gandhi began to systematize his policy of non-cooperation, in short, a boycott of British textile products, schools, universities and courts of law. In June of the same year, Gandhi added to the boycott the coming elections. In August 1920, the historic leader of the INC, Tilak, died, paving the way for Gandhi's leadership within the then largest Indian political party, with an estimated two million members[423]. In Calcutta, at a INC session, Gandhi got approval for boycotting by most party members, giving him greater political legitimacy, as well as a broad social visibility. Encouraged by such a prospect, Gandhi began to adopt a more contentious speech before the British authorities, to fight for Indian autonomy, *swaraj*, in a year.

In 1921, the boycott of the elections resulted in a notable absence of INC politicians in the Indian government, leading them to an ever greater radicalism in the face of the Indo-British imperial system. It was a historic moment with no return, with scarce possibility of political reconciliation between Gandhi's supporters and the British. In the same year, the social unrest stemming from the boycotts grew. The tour of India by the heir to the British imperial throne in 1921 and 1922, the Prince of Wales, Edward, made the British government in India adopt a posture of appeasement with anti-British protests. On February 4, 1922, in

the village of Chauri Chaura, however, the movement became violent with the fire of some police officers in a police station and Gandhi was arrested. After which he was detained for two years and many believed that this would be the end of his career.

In fact, the political influence of Gandhi and the INC declined sharply in the first half of the 1920s. Gandhi, after being released from prison in 1924, retired to an *ashram*[424] in Gujarat. The number of members of the INC plummeted, to 18,000 members in 1925[425], many seeing the failure of the non-cooperation movements. The boycotts organized in previous years lost followers. Many went back to school and university. And the most serious, there was growing disunion in the national movement in confronting the British with the withdrawal of the leading figure of Gandhi. Between 1923 to 1927, in the then United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh) there were several interreligious confrontations. In northwest India, the Hindu population of Kohat abandoned their homes and businesses in 1924. And those who dreamt of an independent Hindu India began to organize themselves into nationalist organizations like the Rashtriya Swayamsevek Sangh (RSS) in 1925 and the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association in 1928.

In that same year, the British government in India decided to revise in the constitution since the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, designating for this a commission of seven Britons, in the Simon Commission, after its president Sir John Simon. The absence of an Indian member provoked widespread indignation and new national protests and boycotts were held in 1928. The most notorious of these protests occurred in Lahore, Punjab, in October when police violently suppressed a quiet and peaceful popular march[426].

The Simon Commission report was published in May 1930 in which a representative government was proposed in the provinces but still retaining national control in the hands of British representatives. With the mood of Indian popular dissatisfaction

in the face of timid political reforms towards greater political autonomy, Gandhi decided to organize a major demonstration in April 1930. That's when Gandhi left Ahmedabad for more than 390 km to the coastal town of Dandi, Gujarat, marking his return to the national political scene. The purpose of this march, the Salt March (or Dandi March), was to boycott the purchase of this product, taxed by the British government which at that time represented 3% of Indian revenue. Gandhi headed to the Indian coast to promote a form of self-sufficiency (*swadesh*) to harvest with himself salt from the beach[427]. Thousands joined Gandhi's hike, over two thousand protestants, who were later beaten by the police force in the coastal town 250 km north of Bombay. Following the protest, Gandhi and more than 25,000 of his followers, including Jawaharlal Nehru, were arrested, demonstrating once again the British truculence in India in dealing with protest campaigns[428].

The 1930 and 1932 Conferences and the Government of India Act of 1935

Striving to resolve Indian political instability, the British government held three rounds of conferences in London between 1930 and 1932. The first round was opened by the monarch, George V, on November 12, 1930, and was presided over by the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald. Despite all the pomp, the absence of INC members, with some being imprisoned, compromised negotiations. An Indian federation was proposed, divided into 11 provinces and princely states, in addition to Indian participation at all levels of government. In the same year, as the spokesperson for the marginalized Indians of the *dalit* (untouchable) caste, B. R. Ambedkar (1891 - 1956) led a large movement of 15,000 people in the Kalaram Temple in Nashik at Maharashtra, demanding participation and policy equality for those who he represented[429].

The Indian Viceroy at the time, Lord Irwin (1926 - 1931), decided after meagre advances in the London negotiations, to grant Gandhi freedom from prison in January 1931 in exchange for ending the campaign of civil disobedience. Gandhi then participated in the second round of conferences from September 7, 1931. In the event he rejected the idea of separate constituencies according to social minorities and Indian religious categories. He also defended the idea that the Untouchables, whom he called the *harijans* (sons of Hari or Vishnu), did not consist of a minority but an integral part of Indian society. In the face of defending his ideas, of non-segmentation and integrity of Indian society for political ends, a new impasse occurred in the discussions.

The third and final round of negotiations came in late 1932. Both parties were barely represented and the bargains, unproductive and full of pessimism. At the end of the three rounds of conferences, however, some plan was outlined for Indian political reform that would have effect on the Government of India Act 1935. This, in general, granted greater equality and autonomy to Indians in British India, putting an end to the district system, according to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. The federative form for the whole of India, to be composed of British India and the princely states[430], and the latter, autonomous and allied to the British. Elections would be direct, increasing the franchise from seven million to 35 million voters, as well as some reorganizations, among the most important the separation of Burma and Aden as distinct colonies to be administered by the British Crown[431].

Despite broad reforms, the degree of provincial autonomy was still limited to the power of its governors, and the British government to exercise the right to administer India's defence and foreign policy and the power to suspend government in the event of national crisis. The Government of India Act came into effect in 1937 with the first district elections, but without the status of federation resulting from the widespread opposition of Indian

rulers of the princely states who feared loss of their sovereignties[432]. Exception was manifested by the regents of the great autonomous states allied to the British, Kashmir, Hyderabad, Mysore and Travancore[433]. There was open opposition from the INC as they feared that the federative form could be a threat to Indian unity.

Two new Muslim-majority provinces were created in the reforms of 1935, the Sindh and the North West Frontier. In doing so, British authorities had in mind fragmenting the two great provinces of Maharashtra and Punjab, places that had shown discontent in demonstrations and political confrontations towards full Indian autonomy. The biggest winner of these changes undoubtedly fell to the Muslim electorate and its largest political party, the Muslim League led by Ali Jinnah[434].

Following the London accords, Gandhi returned to India with bitterness at the disagreements with Ambedkar, with Jinnah's protests defending separate seats for Muslims and with Nehru who had already begun flirting with socialist ideas. Thus, Gandhi proceeded to review his political attitudes and considered Nehru as the most apt to take the leadership of the INC in 1936. Nehru also fed deep disgust with what was negotiated in London and approved in the Government of India Act of 1935, as anathema the autonomy given to the various rulers of the princely states, a retrograde symbol of the imperial past to socialist paradigms[435].

Indian elections held in India in 1937 were a resounding success for the INC, which won 707 seats in the district legislative chambers of all the 11 Indian provinces[436], almost 40% of the total seats across the country. Those of the Muslim League, to Jinnah's deception, only 106 of the 491 seats reserved for Muslim votes. The only states that did not have a majority of the INC were Bengal and Punjab, who preferred to vote in local parties[437]. The Muslim League then set out to form a coalition with the INC, which was rejected by most of its members, leading to a sharpening of moods of Jinnah's supporters who began to

consider Muslims as a threatened minority. In 1940 in Lahore, the Muslim League in conference decided to approve the so-called Pakistan Resolution, a commitment to form in the future a new Muslim-majority state, Pakistan, as they proposed to bring together the regions of Punjab, parts of Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan. Gandhi's dream of having a future independent state, bringing together Hindus, Muslims and all other ethnic, social and religious minorities, seemed to be increasingly distant.

The election success of the INC did not hide its internal fissures. In 1937, a radical leader of Bengal, Subhas Chandra Bose (1897 - 1945) decided to launch himself as candidate for the presidency of the party, with discreet support of Gandhi. Bhose eventually won party polls in January of the following year[438], giving the party a confrontational tone in the face of limited British political concessions.

Cripps Mission, 'Quit India' and the Second World War

In 1939, with the outbreak of the war in Europe, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow (1936 - 1943) declared, without consulting Indian politicians, India's entry into the conflict. The reaction to this was indignation in the Indian milieu that had sought to bargain the entrance of the country in the battles with the promise of full political autonomy. In Indian perspective, therefore, the Second World War came to be considered not only to deter the Nazi-fascist advance, but also to combat British imperial status.

As a result of the hasty decisions by the British authorities, the INC and its affiliates recommended that ministerial positions be dismissed from the Indian executive branch. In view of this, the British took control of the abandoned offices, leaving only the regional governments of Punjab and Bengal that remained under local Muslim parties. In sum, the INC's withdrawal from the political scene resulted in the party absence in politics during the

crucial and troubled period of the Second World War, remaining as opposition and organizing protests and boycotts based on Gandhi ideals of *satyagraha* ('holding onto truth'). For the Viceroy, Lord Lilithgow, a convicted imperialist conservative, concessions to Indian subjects during the war were seen as unnecessary and useless.

In the face of polarization and impasse between the Indian and British leaderships, Sir Stafford Cripps (1889 - 1950), a former friend of Nehru and future British ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1942, was sent to India from December 1939 onwards with the purpose of negotiating a compromise in the face of war efforts. His ambitious mission to convince the INC to join the UK's position in the war proved to be too innovative for conservative members of the British government, including Winston Churchill (who held the post of British prime minister from 1940 to 1945) and the Viceroy Lord Lilithgow himself, for he offered in return full Indian independence with the status of Dominion, as did the former British colonies of Canada, Australia, and South Africa[439].

Gandhi and other Indian leaders of the INC had realized this political inconsistency, the political mismatch between the influential members of parliament, the British Crown and the liberal vision of Cripps. To that end, frustrated by unsuccessful promises, Cripps's Mission failed in its goals of keeping the Indian political scene unified in the wartime period. As a result, the INC took the lead and proposed a rejoinder in the face of diplomatic failure, known as the 'Quit India' Movement, taken after a hard speech of Gandhi at a meeting of the INC and allies on 8 August 1942 in Bombay, which demanded the immediate withdrawal of the British from India, sparing the country from warlike conflicts threatened on the eastern border with the advancement of Japanese troops.

Lilithgow's response was even more relentless, sending all those involved and even suggesting that they be deported to Africa during the war. The arrest, as a consequence, did not

prevent a broad campaign of boycott and protests across the country. Telegraph wires were cut, railroad tracks dismantled, police stations invaded and flags of the INC were flown in occupied public buildings. In Bihar, the rebel peasants took government power. But these uprisings, however, in August of 1942, did not last much longer.

Year 1943 was critical to the future of the British government in India as the state had become increasingly interventionist, controlling the rebellions, but also coordinating war efforts and containing inflationary pressures, plummeting international trade and the uncertainties of war. To make matters worse, the year's crop was disastrous resulting in a major famine in Bengal that killed about three million Indians and many others due to malnutrition and related diseases[440]. The new Viceroy, Lord Wavell (1943 - 1947), ordered the deployment of the army to guard and distribute grain supplies to the Bengali population, but the hunger scourge already had made its devastating effect.

Faced with the crisis in Bengal, Subhas Bose, travelled to Nazi Germany and sought to negotiate with Hitler the future Indian independence. Then he went to Japan, and there he organized the Indian National Army, recruiting ex-Indian prisoners in Southeast Asia. The Japanese-backed military unit advanced to the Indian border with Burma in the Imphal region of Manipur in March 1944, but by the time Japan had begun a gradual retraction of its war operations in confrontation with US forces from the Pacific and the Philippines.

In the last years of the Second World War, seeing the Allies' prospects for victory, the British in India kept the nationalists under control. Gandhi, again in prison, decided to do a hunger strike as a protest against charges that he had led the uprisings of August 1942. In May 1944 he was released and his attention turned to Jinnah, a growing political figure, and his demands for partition. In addition, many Indian soldiers, veterans of combat and weapons, returned from the theatre of war.

Indian participation in World War II, in essence, represented the sending of about two million men to serve in the British Army in various fronts in Asia, Africa and Europe. They were instrumental in stopping the Japanese advance from Burma, and were prominent in the victories in Italy, with the death of six thousand men. In all, 87,000 Indians died throughout the war. In addition to these sacrifices, India has contributed considerably with its resources and funds to the war effort. The Indian economy suffered from the impositions of war, prices soared and grain production to meet the war demands resulted in a high human cost of millions of people killed by famine, as occurred in Bengal in 1943. After the war's hostilities, United Kingdom was ruined economically. With regard to India only, its debts totalled about £ 1, 200 billion[441].

In addition, the political climate in the United Kingdom changed after the Second World War. Prime Minister Winston Churchill was unable to maintain his position, losing to Clement Attlee (g. 1945 - 1951), of the Labour Party. Such a shift in political winds came from the enormous costs and war debts, with the British government more concerned with healing domestic finances, thereby reducing the external entanglements of the empire.

In India, dissensions with the war costs soon surfaced. In 1946, a major strike took over the streets of Bombay. The INC, strangely enough, did not join in the rallies, perhaps fearing to jeopardize negotiations of the Indian political future. To this end, Attlee's government with the endorsement of Viceroy Lord Wavell decided to call new provincial elections in India, a key moment to the formation of a Constituent Assembly of independent India[442]. The elections once again confirmed the strength of the INC with 923 seats, but the Muslim League also garnered substantial votes, 423 seats, which made it the main representative of the Indian Muslim community[443].

The differences between these two major Indian parties began

to be clear with the dispatch of a British government mission in April 1946 to define the future constituency and independence of India. Briefly, the Muslim League was concerned with the separation of Indian regions with evident Islamic majority, something that contradicted the desire to keep the country together as declared Nehru, as president of the INC at the time. After such a statement, Jinnah went furious and called large Muslim demonstrations across the country. As a result, in Calcutta on August 16, 1945, there were violent clashes between the Hindu and Muslim communities with more than 5,000 dead[444]. Similar interreligious conflicts occurred in Bihar. The alternatives after these events were clear, either the INC negotiated the partition with the Muslim League or there would be the risk of a long and bloody civil war.

By the end of 1946, as part of its post-war demobilization, the British government maintained an insufficient number of military personnel in India, a little more than 10,000 men, signalling the fragility and disinterest of London in maintaining its colonial structure in the country. In addition, a new Viceroy for British India, Lord Mountbatten, was chosen in February 1947 with the specific aim of giving power to the Indians by June 1948. Mountbatten soon realized the difficulties of negotiating with a unified leadership over the future of India. But he learned, along with Nehru, that without meeting the demands of the Muslim League for the creation of Pakistan, a minimum of future political order would impossible. In addition to this question, the Sikhs, realizing the historical conditions that their region, the Punjab, would be divided into two parts, also rebelled and sought independence from their country as Khalistan, as well as longed for other significant minorities in India among the nagas, Kashmiri, Pathans and Bengalis. Violent fragmentation haunted the prospects of an independent India. Nehru, aware of the urgency of the times, concluded negotiations with Jinnah on June 3, 1947, for the formation of an independent state of Pakistan to

the northwest and northeast of India, thereby seeking to calm the hearts of the large Muslim community. Mountbatten, meanwhile, after endorsing negotiations between the parties, signalled the complete withdrawal of the British until August 15, 1947.

Partition and Independence

With the aim of mapping and delimiting the new borders between Pakistan and India, the British government named a Border Commission under the chairmanship of a civil servant and lawyer, Cyril Radcliffe (1899 - 1977). His goal with the commission was to study in five weeks the religious composition of the communities in the border regions and define the places widely held of Hindu and Sikh against those of Muslim majority. Thus, the line of separation between the new independent states would be delimited. Faced with such historical impetuosity, millions of people abandoned their homes and businesses, fearing religious community reprisals between August and December 1947. Hindus and Sikhs fled areas defined as Muslim majority and those abandoned areas deemed to be contrary. A great tragedy was being announced. At the end of this forced mass migration, mainly in the Punjab and Bengal regions, an estimated 15 million were displaced with up to two million dead[445]. The largest forced migration in modern history with the omission and inactivity of British troops in India.

In the imminence of a humanitarian crisis, Mountbatten belatedly convened a conference with the rulers of the princely states in mid-1947. They were informed that they would be the new governors (*rajpramukhs*)[446], and that they would have to opt for integration or accession to India or Pakistan. Indeed, the meeting was the result of a series of earlier negotiations that had previously suggested the right to separation and autonomy, which effectively did not occur, as most princely states decided to join India, including with some reluctance from Kashmir and

Jammu which was ruled by a Hindu dynasty ruler (Maharaja), Hari Singh (1925 - 1961), over a Muslim majority population[447].

At the last moment, the Boundary Commission concluded its activities and defined the Pakistani borders with India. It established a Pakistan composed of the provinces of Baluchistan, North West Frontier, Sindh, western part of Punjab (much to the dismay of the Sikhs that had their region fractured) and, separated more than 1500 km to the east, East Bengal, effectively transformed in East Pakistan. In these terms, Nehru and Mountbatten, among other Indian leaders, believed in Pakistan's unsustainable future perhaps hoping for further integration.

Pakistan's independence was declared on August 14, 1947, with Muhammad Ali Jinnah becoming the first Pakistani ruler, and the country remained a Dominion[448] in the British Empire until the 1956 Constitution. To differentiate itself from its neighbour, Urdu was declared as one of its official languages in Perso-Arabic writing (*nastal'iq*). On August 15 of the same year, a day after Pakistan, India declared its new political life under the command of Nehru. While Karachi and Delhi celebrated independence festivities, violent conflicts and Sikh demonstrations took to the streets in Punjab and other Indian regions unsatisfied with the process of emancipation. A scar that the new country would have to deal with in the following decades.

The birth of the two nations occurred in a tragic and nervous way, largely due to irresolution and disinterest of the British authorities involved after the Second World War. The demarcation and division made by the Boundary Commission brought about the political disunity between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims explored during the growing Indian nationalism since the end of the 19th century. In this sense, in order to preserve the rights of Muslims, Jinnah and the Muslim League exacerbated even more the Indian disintegration, unrecognizable at the time of tolerance and plurality of the Mughal emperor Akbar in the 16th

century.

A year later, in 1948, another ethnic explosive potential came with the independence of the island of Sri Lanka, former Ceylon, to the south of India. The island decided, like Pakistan, to remain as Dominion of the British Empire until 1972, after which it declared as a Republic. The most sensitive issue that remained was the large Tamil community that inhabits northern and eastern parts of the island[449], something that would later be the cause of ethnic conflicts from the 1950s onwards.

From Nehru to Modi - 1947 - Beginning of the 21st Century

Upon assuming the post of prime minister and declaring the birth of the Republic of India on August 15, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru gave a speech on the uniqueness of events[450]:

> Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

The grandiloquence of Nehru's words, however, had to face a titanic will in face of the challenges of consolidating an Indian democracy. The new Indian leaders should propose a new national development project combining the inclusion of a stratified and unequal society, diversified in ethnic, linguistic and religious terms. And they should seek a delicate process of consensus and political unity in a country dangerously prone to multiple regional loyalties based on history.

Princely States and Accession

Among the first political challenges of the Nehru government was to integrate into the new country more than 500 princely states. Some authors point to a total of 521, others in 565. But the fact is that the scale was monumental, some the size of large European countries such as Kashmir and Hyderabad. Others, mere agglomerations of a dozen villages[451].

In 1946 and 1947, in the moments before independence, the INC under Nehru organized a series of conferences aimed at negotiating with the rulers of these states. It was thanks to the tenacity and pragmatism of Vallabhbhai Patel (1875 - 1950), appointed as one of the main ministers of Nehru, the Interior, that several Indian leaders were persuaded to negotiate with the nascent Indian state. One of the first rulers to be integrated into India was of Bikaner, Maharaja Sadul Singh (1902 - 1950), who served as a guide and example to the other Rajput leaders in northern India. Prompt loyalty was due to historical reasons, as they were traditional allies with the Indians and rivals of Muslim threats from Afghanistan and parts of northwest India.

A skilled career official was assigned to the project of political integration and to sew the new alliances in the Indian transition, Vappala P. Menon (1893 - 1965). Menon was instrumental in mediating the vanities of the Indian rulers, pampering with generous offers of securities and funds, and the pressing needs of Patel and the government. As a legal mechanism, Patel and his team developed the so-called Instrument of Accession, which provided the possibility for the princely states to transfer their control over defence affairs, foreign affairs and communications to the new government in Delhi.

On August 15, 1947, at the time of Nehru's speech, most princely states had signed membership. This was largely due to a

subtle and shrewd manoeuvre of Patel and Menon in convincing the regents by presenting them with prospects for economic aid and military assistance, in addition to payments (privy purse) and titles. In case of denial of adherence, the INC negotiators indicated to them the possibilities of popular demands questioning the traditional regal status of the region[452].

But not all readily adhered to the pact proposed by the new government. Travancore, in the far south of India, was one of the first states to question the terms of association. It was an important and strategic political unit, with a maritime tradition and with important mineral reserves of monazite, essential for the extraction of the thorium element used in the production of energy and atomic weapons.

The ruler of Travancore, the prime minister of the kingdom, the *diwan* C. P. Ramaswami Iyer (1879 - 1966) played and bargained with the counterproposals of privileged relations made by Jinnah of Pakistan if he were sovereign. The fate to Delhi's interests only came after Iyer's assassination attempt on July 25, 1947. After the event, Iyer was removed from power by the Travancore Maharaja who was persuaded to reconcile and yield to the terms of accession, decision taken on the 30th of July[453].

A second state that rejected membership at first was Bhopal. Located in the central Indian region, this state combined a majority of Hindu population under a Muslim ruler. Since 1944, the *nawab* Hamidullah Khan (1894 - 1960) was a fierce opponent of the INC and close to the Islamist ideals of the Muslim League. The political change came on April 30, 1949 after insistent requests from Lord Mountbatten, the former Indian viceroy, an old polo friend of his youth[454].

More curious was that of Jodhpur, in which a Hindu ruler ruled over a large population of the same creed. The young Maharaja Hanwat Singh (1923 - 1952) initially manifested favourably to Indian membership, but then resolved to seek better political offers from the Pakistan side, to bargain with the terms of

Delhi and Karachi. After some acts of youthful distemper and disruption (in one of them went to get a revolver and pointed to the head of an Indian representative of the INC), the Maharaja decided to sign the terms to India[455].

The Junagadh case in western India was a more serious case. The *nawab* Mahabat Khan III (1900 - 1959) was a Muslim who ruled over a Hindu majority and had three frontiers with Hindu states in the Gujarat. Only the fourth border to the west gave wide access to the Arabian Sea through its main port, Veraval. And within its territory were important Hindu shrines and temples, such as the one in Somnath, and Jains in Girnar, places of attraction for thousands of pilgrims from all over India.

On August 14, 1947, the Junagadh *nawab* was persuaded by one of his ministers, the *diwan* Shah Nawaz Bhutto, a supporter of the Muslim League, to stay away from the Indian Union and to accede to Pakistan. This made no sense of geography and religion, since Junagadh had no borders with Pakistani lands and 82% of its population were Hindus. Thus, at first the *nawab* decided to join Pakistan, infuriating Patel who came from the same region and thus sought allies of the *diwan* to review the political decision taken by the regent. Menon, for his part, articulated with local leaders to organize a plebiscite on the matter. The *nawab*, faced with the Indian military threat and being overthrown by popular will of Hindu majority, decided to go back and signed a contract with India on November 9, 1947[456].

Hyderabad had a Muslim ruler over a vast Hindu majority. But this state, unlike Bhopal and Junagadh, was a huge political entity which, if lost, would effectively block access from the Indian north to the south. The *nizam* of Hyderabad, Mir Osman Ali Khan (1886 - 1967), had great ambitions in having close relations with Muslim Pakistan, to counterbalance the Indian influence next to his kingdom. Thus, the regent decided not to adhere to the terms presented until August 15, 1947. This generated an impasse and impending military mobilization of the

Indian state before the local army organized by the *nizam*, the *razakars*[457]. Faced with such a situation, Patel decided to send military troops to the region before the situation became even more critical, and defeated rebels and military forces of Hyderabad, with estimated tens of thousands dead[458].

Kashmir and Jammu

The most serious case of all in this scenario of Indian political transition was that of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. A state greater than Hyderabad, with a population of nearly four million at the time and with a geographical and cultural heterogeneity. In the fertile valley of Kashmir, the Muslim population predominated, unlike the Hindu in Jammu, further south. In addition, the regent, Maharaja Hari Singh (r. 1925 - 1949), came from a Hindu Rajput dynasty, that of the Dogra, who only managed to assure himself of the region in the mid-19th century by negotiating with the British authorities of that time under the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846.

The location of this state held a strategic singularity of concern to the authorities in Delhi. For it was broadly contiguous to Pakistan to the west and had great borders with the lofty mountains of Ladakh, in Buddhist Tibet to the east. Its smaller border, in fact, was to the south with India. To aggravate, the Maharaja had a dislike of Nehru who came from a wealthy and powerful family in the region of Kashmiri Pandits[459] (Brahmins). And also because the Indian prime minister was allied with a popular local socialist politician, Sheikh Abdullah (1905 - 1982), who had organized in 1946 a large popular movement ('Quit Kashmir') aiming at the end of the anachronistic Dogra Dynasty[460]. But this did not make the Maharaja prone to Jinnah, for he did not sympathize with the Islamist longings of the Muslim League.

In June 1947, facing the alternative of joining Pakistan or

India, Hari Singh decided on none, after being visited by Lord Mountbatten in Srinagar, seeking to maintain his full independence. Then, on August 15, Jammu and Kashmir decided not to join India, but to propose a standstill agreement, maintaining the freedom of transport, commerce and people across its borders. Pakistan signed such the agreement, but India decided to wait to negotiate other proposals. Relations with Pakistanis soon deteriorate, due to border disagreements. Faced with the impasse, the impatient Maharaja fired his prime minister, Ram Chandra Kak, (1893 -1983) who sought greater autonomy for his state and appointed a Punjabi judge, Mehr Chand Mahajan, who was supportive of the leadership the INC and Nehru[461].

The Karachi government naturally expected to link, over time, Kashmir with its Muslim majority. Delhi, on the other hand, thought that religious factors were irrelevant, since the Indian political project was essentially secular and religiously diversified.

Events in Kashmir began to turn dramatic on October 22, 1947, when a force of thousands of men invaded Kashmir from the north and headed for the capital, Srinagar. Most of the invaders were Pathans, an ethnic group from the North West Province and partly incorporated into Pakistan. The crucial question was who helped and organized them and what were the reasons for the raid, issue that remained at the heart of the discussions over Kashmir.

The fact is that there were already popular discontent in Kashmir prior to this invasion, especially among Muslims in the Poonch district west of Srinagar, against the Maharaja due to increased taxes. To make matters worse, most of the Kashmiri soldiers who served the British command in the Second World War were from Poonch, who on returning from their campaigns brought a dangerous element of discipline and combat experience. It was in Poonch that on August 14, 1947, several flags in the Pakistani region were hoisted, causing several clashes between the local armed inhabitants, with arms and ammunition apparently

supplied by Pakistan against the troops of the Maharaja Hari Singh[462].

In the face of this crisis and with the rebel troops already close to Srinagar, the Maharaja sent Sheikh Abdullah as his representative to Delhi. Nehru, in response to requests, decided to send military troops to Kashmir on October 27. Conflicts lasted for a few months, resulting in an inconclusive victory for the Indian side at the end of 1948, as Maharaja Hari Singh decided to accede to India in an agreement signed on October 26, 1947 to secure his throne and protection against Muslim threats. Thus ended the first armed conflict in Kashmir.

On the diplomatic front, Jinnah was furious with Indian intervention in Kashmir. Mountbatten then suggested holding a popular plebiscite organized by the United Nations to decide on the political future of the region. Nehru endorsed such a decision, confident that many Muslim communities would decide to remain under Indian rule. Thus, after Resolution 47 was approved on April 21, 1948, the UN Security Council demanded the withdrawal of Indian military troops and armed rebels for voting. The issue remained contentious between Karachi and Delhi for decades to come and subsequent armed conflicts between the two independent countries resurfaced from time to time. The argument advocated by the Pakistani government is based on the status quo agreement signed with the Maharaja in August 1947 and on the will of the majority of the Muslim population. The Indian side, on the other hand, understood that there was an accession agreement signed by Maharaja Hari Singh on October 26, 1947, and that the invasions were financed and organized by Pakistani sources on October 22, 1947[463]. Concluding on the rivalries over Kashmir, Korbel wrote[464]: 'an uncompromising and perhaps irreconcilable struggle of two ways of life, two concepts of political organization, two scales of values, two spiritual attitudes'.

The Constituent Assembly

The deliberations for the elaboration of a new Indian constitution were initiated in December of 1946 and went until the end of 1949 and came into force in January 1950. The Magna Carta resulted in 395 articles, one of the largest in the world. Its elaboration was the result of different philosophical, religious, economic and political visions, to demonstrate the plurality and the collective spirit of the Indian environment of that time.

The first meetings of the Constituent Assembly took place from the end of 1946, with great expectation of the present members. Dominated by the figures of Nehru, Patel and the members of the INC, voice and participation was also given to the spectrum of Indian society and politics, from Sarat Chandra Bose (1889 - 1950) of Bengal, elder brother of Subhas Chandra Bose, to representatives of princely states, atheists, religious leaders, socialists, representatives of all social castes and women.

The primary demand of the Hindu radicals of the political party of Calcutta, the Varnashastra Swarajya Sangh (VSS), was to conceive a state around Hindu principles, prohibiting the slaughter of cattle and the closure of all abattoirs. The deputies of the most marginalized castes demanded an end to the discriminations of the highest castes and reserved quotas in the legislature and in the civil service. Linguistic and religious minorities have called for special safeguards. These demands attest to India's heterogeneous diversity.

Patel's performance was the most decisive factor in the negotiations in the Constituent Assembly. A man of political patience and talented negotiator who brokered the conflicting points of view in the meetings, balancing the demand of the majority of the INC, the secularist visions of Nehru, against the many Indian minorities, each claiming their rights. Perhaps this was his greatest asset, that no minority was privileged in the

Indian constitution. Together with Patel, Rajendra Prasad was appointed Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, whose serenity was essential to preside over the various sessions to reconcile diversified interests.

But the greatest brilliance came from Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a lawyer for the Dalit caste, who became the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. Ambedkar, on the committee, was assisted by a notable team, a Gujarat polymath, K. M. Munshi (1887 - 1971), and an experienced Tamil lawyer from the Madras region, Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar (1883 - 1953). In addition to these, the performance of B. N. Rau (1887 - 1953) was remarkable, who studied and sought other constitutions around the world to support the new political charter[465].

There were two main axes to be reconciled in writing the constitution. The national aspect, to establish a political union, democracy and freedom of all Indians. Another vector was social issues, to safeguard the rights of emancipation, inclusion and social equality aimed at ethnic minorities, women and the low castes, historically deprived of political participation.

In this sense, Ambedkar emphasized that Indian political rights should be, first and foremost, based on the individual rather than on collective groups and categories. In short, the new constitution expressed that the Indian state should not privilege any belief about the others, which resulted in conflicts against articulated religious groups like the some Hindus of VSS. Above all, the state would have prerogatives to plan all the resources and tax collection of the entire nation and to intervene and distribute according to its policies, not to depend on the political wills of each locality, which gave the Charter an emphasis on unit above its constituent parts. Clauses were approved that guaranteed to the state on matters of security and public order that, in cases of crisis and state of emergency, constitutional rights could be suspended for the purpose[466].

Despite the unitary centrality declared in the new

constitution, there was considerable attention to minority rights, giving substance to the social aspect of the political charter. To that end, a deputy from Madras continued to defend vague policies reserved for minorities, especially the large Indian Muslim community that feared being dominated by a Hindu majority electorate[467]. These demands displeased Patel, who conceived the quotas as a sign of the Indian divisions of the colonial past.

The vulnerability of women's rights was also the subject of considerable debate in the Constituent Assembly. Female members of the Assembly, such as Hansa Jivraj Mehta (1897 - 1995) from Bombay, defended full equal political and juridical rights without quotas and reservations. Naturally, there was strong opposition from the conservatives, especially those from radical Hindu parties like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) (National Patriotic Organization).

The political and social rights of the Untouchables (*dalits*), however, were considered separately, as peculiarly grave after centuries of discrimination. Following the ideals of Gandhi who considered that full Indian autonomy (*swaraj*) would come only after securing the rights of all in society, Ambedkar negotiated to secure legislative seats, as well as seats in the civil service for the Untouchables. Or how a Madras MP put it[468]:

> The righteous reputation of India has been insulted and tarnished by untouchability. (...) Holy saints have tried their best to abolish this, but this august Assembly and the new Constitution are given the opportunity to express in a high tone that there should be no more untouchability in our country.

Other minorities were not accorded with the same consideration as the Untouchables. Like the *Adivasi*, members of ethnic groups from remote regions, such as forests and mountains, were represented in the Assembly by Jaipal Singh of Chotanagpur

in southern Bihar state[469]. In the perspective of this group, the Indian Union expressed the unity of the great traditional political groups, Hindus, Muslims and sectors of the urban society and landowners against the indigenous nations traditionally ignored by India.

The most controversial subject treated in the meetings was the languages of the country, result of Indian historical and cultural diversity[470]. What language should be used in government institutions and courthouses? In which language should the new constitution be written? It is certain that the medium of communication, to be considered national, must be a widely spoken language understood by the Indian government and population.

In some sessions of the Assembly, some members pressed for the Hindustani[471] to be the official language, something that was rejected by the Drafting Committee, arguing that English would be more appropriate as it would provide the precise technical and legal terms for the drafting of the new constitutional document. In addition, English has been used for centuries by British colonial administration as the language of government and higher education in India.

Most of the members of northern India, however, some of whom sought to favour the supposed Indian historical roots free of Islamic influence and opposed to the partition of Pakistan, claimed the Hindi language, in Sanskrit-derived alphabet, as the official language of India. This led to widespread protests from the Muslim community and those politicians in southern India who saw Hindi as a form of northern supremacy. For them, it would be better to use English than some form of expression from certain Indian regions.

The Assembly has, at the last moment, reached a temporary solution. Hindi in Sanskritic set was considered official, but should thus be considered official after a period of fifteen years, after 1965. Until then, English would serve as a bureaucratic

expression and basis for governmental and juridical instances and for the time needed of the new constitution[472].

In the end, the Indian constitution gave India a parliamentary republican government, to be ruled by a prime minister to be appointed by the majority of the parliament, the Lower House or Lok Sabha. To be head of government, the prime minister would have to secure the majority and could be removed in case of lack of parliamentary majority or ungovernability. National elections would occur every five years only when there was a lack of parliamentary governance. In extreme cases of political impasse, the president, a figure with few effective political powers to represent India's interests overseas but without executive authority, could indicate a new prime minister[473].

Nehru

The new constitution came into force on January 26, 1950. Its lines manifested all the contradictions and political wills of the Indian spectrum. In the end, Nehru's ambitions prevailed, as he sought a new Indian, secular, and tolerant unity with centralized powers in a state to outline development strategies. Patel was the crucial man in the political networks and discussions. This talented man, however, passed away on December 15, 1950.

But what left the entire nascent Indian nation, or a good part of it at least, was the death by murder of Mohandas K. Gandhi, the *Bapu* ('father' in Gujarati, also referred to as Gandhiji) on January 30, 1948, in full swing of the Constituent. He was killed by a Hindu extremist who acted convinced that India had given way too much to the partition of Pakistan and the Muslim community. The event revealed a latent and shadowy side of India, the strength of extremist groups and interests and denial of tolerance and diversity. Gandhi's popularity and charismatic strength, far beyond political circles, have been shown at his funeral in Delhi, with the attendance of more than two million

mourners through the main streets. The cremated remains of this man were scattered throughout the numerous rivers and sacred places of India[474].

Nehru consolidated himself as prime minister of independent India grounded in a constitution approved by him, Patel and acolytes of his party. His most serious political opponent in 1950, the conservative Purushottam Das Tandon (1882 - 1962) and Patel's follower, had been overthrown by the leadership of the INC in the 1951 and 1952 party elections. The INC was majority and Nehru's power, uncontested and free for his political goals. Few parties and leaders of the world after colonial independence in the 20th century had such dominance. The Muslim League, in turn, occupied the power of nascent Pakistan, but that country after Jinnah's death in September 1948 entered a period of power strife and instability.

Nehru then ensued, from 1950, to define his strategy of economic and political development of the new nation. During the last years of the Second World War, INC party leaders had outlined some plans with Indian industrialists, among them friends of Gandhi, such as Ghanshyam Das Birla (1894 - 1983) and Jehangir RD Tata (1904 - 1993), within fifteen years, known as the Bombay Plan. This set of proposals emphasized public investments in infrastructure and heavy industry sectors to create a basis for future development. The private sector, in turn, was relegated to sectors of the low-investment economy that would have a faster investment return. A mixed economic framework, therefore, emerged in India in the years after independence. Nehru longed, thus, to make India a sustainable industrial economy.

But that was not so easy. There was resistance from the old Indian landlord class, plus the large peasantry class whose poverty did not make it enough to become a large consumer market for industrial goods. Land reform, which had a high priority on Nehru's agenda since its early 1930s, did not result in a

major change in the unequal land structure since British Indian times. Reforms in the area proved to be complex and change-resistant than was once imagined, since it depended on a network of dependencies and servitude difficult to break even though proposed agrarian reforms but with little rural impact, such as the popular movement led by Vinoba Bhave (1985 - 1982), considered as the spiritual successor of Mohandas K. Gandhi in the eyes of the population.

The immobility of agrarian reforms made Nehru impatient in his plans for land redistribution. Faced with this, he radicalized in a speech he delivered in 1955 in Congress, in the so-called Avadi Resolution. In this, a new, more radical rural justice program was proposed to serve the large Indian peasant class that had voted in favour of the INC delegates. Frightened, some conservative peasants and landowners began to migrate their votes to a party founded in 1959 in Madras by a disillusioned former member of the INC, Chakavarti Rajagopalachari (1878 - 1972), the Swatantra Party[475]. A dangerous political initiative of conservative dissent among the Indian rural constituency.

But perhaps the greatest danger away from the political control of the INC in India occurred in the state of Kerala with the election of Elamkulam M. S. Namboodiripad (1909 - 1989) of the Communist Party of India. This politician, elected in April 1957 as 1st Chief Minister of Kerala, became one of the most popular Indian politicians due to his agrarian and educational reforms, resulting in the nation's best social indicators[476]. In addition to Kerala, Indian communists had achieved prominence in the West Bengal region and between trade unions and some related sectors in large industrial centres.

On the other side of the political spectrum threatening the domination of the Nehru INC was the Bharatiya Jana Sangh Party (BJS, Indian People's Association) which advocated a Hindu approach to India. Emphasis on Hindi as the national language left this party unpopular with southern Indians and restricted to

some northern provinces. Its social base consisted primarily of urban traders and Punjabi refugees after the Partition. Much of their militants came from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Party (RSS), an association to which Mohandas K. Gandhi's murderer, Nathuram Godse, belonged. BJS, founded by prominent members of Bengali Brahmins in 1951, became the most serious right-wing threat to Nehru government, which later became the Bharatiya Janata Party (hereafter BJP) in 1977. But even in the face of threats of the left and right spectrum, the INC was able to secure parliamentary majority the Indian Lower House (Lok Sabha) in the elections of 1952, 1957 and 1962, and Nehru remained prime minister for almost 17 years.

In administrative reforms, the Indian government in 1956 sought to meet and restrain the dissatisfactions of Indians in the central and southern regions, and to review the Indian states and territories boundaries. In view of this, it was proposed a assessment of the country's units aiming to meet historical and linguistic specificities of each region, embodied in the States Reorganisation Act of 1956.

The first change occurred in the disintegration of Madras state, which grouped four great languages of Dravidian origin. Telugu speakers of Andhra region claimed a unit in the federation since the early political times of Mohandas K. Gandhi, and Nehru sought to avoid the subject for fear of Balkanizing the Indian Union. But this came to the fore in the 1950s when a State Reorganisation Commission was formed in 1953. Another state that had manifested itself in revising the borders was Kerala, for in addition to having a popular local communist government, was composed largely of Malayalam speakers, a community language that was also large in neighbouring states such as the southern region of Madras.

The most obvious problem to be addressed by the Reorganisation Commission was the division of the region of Bombay, which was a former presidency in British India. There

was in state a clear distinction between two large linguistic groups, the Gujarati speakers to the north and the Marathi to the south. The difficulties of splitting this state occurred over the city of Bombay, since much of its industry and commerce belonged to Gujarati entrepreneurs, although the city was located in the middle of a majority of Marathi speaking region. In this sense, Mohandas K. Gandhi had proposed a special status for the city of Bombay, but that did not please Nehru. The reforms in Bombay only came about after the growth of a regional party, the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti (Maharashtra Union Movement), which threatened the majority of the INC in the region. The solution only occurred in 1960, with Bombay becoming the capital of the new state of Maharashtra.

On foreign affairs, Nehru led India in accordance with its ideals of autonomy and pacifism in the nascent Cold War context. Despite the suspicions of the US government, Nehru did not ideologically align himself with the designs of the Soviet Union, although in his youth he had nurtured admiration for the Bolshevik struggles for social equality. And he made a point of sending his sister, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, to Moscow in April 1947.

Neighbouring relations with Pakistan have proved more pressing for the Indian agenda. The fact that Pakistan was independent and divided into two parts, one north-west of India and another close to Bengal in the east, together bordered India with more than 1600 km. From a Pakistani point of view, the vulnerability to Delhi was evident and therefore sought a military alliance with the United States as early as 1954. In this sense, the problem of Kashmir, the point of greatest tension between the two Asian countries, was internationalized in the context of Cold War. A cause of displease among Indian authorities who regarded the issue as domestic and regional.

Nehru sought to assert himself internationally as a mediating leader, and sent a message to US Secretary of State Dean Acheson at the time of the Korean War (1950 - 1953). He also acted in this

way in the dying moments of the conflicts between Vietnamese Communists (Vietminh) and the French at the 1954 Geneva Conference. The highest point of Nehru's diplomacy came in April 1955 with the Bandung Conference, in which several Afro-Asian leaders met and proposed a new spirit of solidarity. Ideals that blended well with Nehru's philosophy of creating an Afro-Asian environment of peace and cooperation[477]. His visibility and leadership posture was at its peak, earning him a state visit by Soviet First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev and then the Soviet premier, Bulganin, in that year to propose greater protection and alliance against neighbouring threats and internal controls[478].

The greatest international challenge to the Indian government came in the years after 1955. Nehru had denounced the unjust Western intervention against Egypt in the Suez Crisis in 1956 but adopted a stance of omission with regard to Soviet meddling in Hungary in the same year. His position of global neutrality seemed to be compromising. In 1957, some disagreements bordering with China began to gain the attention of the Indian government. The major public attention came, however, only two years later, with the flight in search of the political asylum of the greatest spiritual leader of the Tibetan Buddhists, the Dalai Lama, to India. Nehru, faced with these facts, was compelled to explain in 1959 to the Lok Sabha (Lower House), in which he reported the growing political tension between Delhi and Beijing. A few years later, border conflicts became inevitable.

This proved to be a deep displeasure to Nehru who had great regard for events in China since the communist rise there in 1949. He had hoped to create a large zone of peace and Asian cooperation independent of American and Soviet interference. In 1950, the Chinese occupied Tibet, which had until then been a semi-independent region since British Empire times. In the face of this, Nehru disregarded the region’s status, giving attention only to a few agreements made with regard to free movement of pilgrims and traders across the border with Tibet in 1954. But

there was no reference to the definition of borders between China and India. Everything seemed to move towards good coexistence between the two countries regarding its remote regions.

However, China's growing strategic interest in Tibet, occupation of the region since 1959 and the asylum granted to the 14th Dalai Lama who settled in the Indian city of Dharamsala have changed the coexistence. Chinese authorities began building a series of access roads to Tibet and thence to the remote Karakoram Range (Kashmir and Jammu border region) to Sinkiang (Xinjiang) and Mongolia further north. In this strategic Chinese attempt, access should pass through the border region with India, in Aksai Chin, leading to the decision of the leaders in Beijing to build roads in India without prior consultation.

To this end, the Chinese provoked incidents on another border with India further east, north of the Indian state of Assam, questioning the demarcations signed by a British Indian border commission and pre-communist China along the so called McMahon Line in 1914. The demarcation made by the commission, claimed the Mao Zedong government, had not been properly ratified by the Chinese delegate. As a matter of fact, the subject little interest aroused in Delhi and Beijing. Tibet at that time was still undefined in its status as an autonomous region within China. It was not until 1959 that the Tibet issue was finally settled by the sending of Chinese occupying forces.

The issue of Aksai Chin was quite different, as it was defined and seen within Indian territory for centuries as part of the Ladakh mountainous region, and when a Chinese map was published incorporating the region in 1958, it caused great indignation in Indian authorities and public[479]. Thus Nehru found himself in a delicate political situation exposed to widespread national criticism. At a given moment, in the face of Nehru's resistance to conflict with the Chinese, exhausting all previous diplomatic measures, the Chinese authorities decided to attack Indian military garrisons north of Assam in Arunachal Pradesh in

October 1962, causing perplexity on the Indian side. In this manoeuvre, the Chinese thought of distracting the Indians from the occupation they were carrying out further west, in Aksai Chin, a strategic way through the Tibetan Plateau, Xinjiang and Chinese Mongolia. In these strikes in Arunachal, the Indians had to withdraw before the Chinese offensives and with the difficulties of maintaining a line of supplies for a region of remote access.

This was a major political defeat for Nehru, who was considered inept and naive in the face of the Chinese offensive. The Indian leader, in 1962, was at the lowest point of his political career. A year earlier, his international prestige was still on the ascendant, as he had decided to force the expulsion of the Portuguese from the old city of Goa (*Velha Goa*)[480], causing great admiration of Afro-Asian leaders in their anti-colonial efforts. But this was Nehru's last act of success before the humiliation of the Chinese in 1962. His health thereafter worsened and after a few months he died in May 1964. His successor in power proved to be much more incapable and inexperienced in international affairs.

After Nehru's death, another INC leader, Lal Bahadur Shastri (g. 1964 - 1966), who had a short life in office, was chosen as Prime Minister of India. This did not make his political life insignificant, as it was during his rule that India faced another warlike conflict from April to September 1965, the result of a fruitless Pakistani infiltration, Operation Gibraltar, which aimed to generate an armed insurgency in Kashmir and Jammu[481]. The apparent Indian victory was a stroke of luck for the new Indian leader, sealed in the peace agreement signed in Tashkent in January 1966[482]. But the tragedy soon followed in the final moments of the conference, in which Shastri died from myocardial infarction.

Indira Gandhi

Indira Nehru Gandhi (1917 - 1984), daughter of Jawarharlal Nehru, was chosen as Shastri's political successor by the majority

of the Lok Sabha at the beginning of 1966. Her early years of rule, however, did not appear to be favourable since many parliamentarians threatened to run for other loyalties and parties. One of the rival leaders within the INC who threatened her position was Gujarat Morarji Desai (1896 - 1995), an opponent who was defeated by Indira by a narrow margin of votes in 1966[483]. In view of this, Indira, once in power and seeking to appease her critics within the INC, decided to appoint him for a few years as Minister of Finance. Her first year in office was, in short, of trials and political instabilities.

The following year, in 1967, Indira faced challenges in other areas. Parts of India were hit by droughts which resulted in agricultural setbacks, and also an industrial recession, creating a disturbing perspective of unemployment among Indian youth. A picture that has shifted to growing social protests against the government. In the face of political threats and opponents in parliament who have come together to overthrow her power, Indira has risked dividing the INC by seeking to marginalize its conservative and critical members led by Desai. At another time, she decided to detach the votes for the Lok Sabha from state elections.

Intending to garner popular votes against her political opponents, Indira organized a campaign for the national elections in 1971 around the *Garibi Hatao* (Abolish Poverty) slogan, earning her great visibility, national charisma and disarticulating her opponents. In addition, she proposed to nationalize banks and review all the system of privileges and privy purses granted to ex-regents of the princely states that were incorporated to the state. And she has succeeded in the broad program of seed distribution, irrigation projects, agricultural credits, use of new technology and fertilizers targeting the large class of Indian farmers in the so-called Green Revolution[484]. It was perhaps her greatest political moment but with that, she sealed her political fate against the conservative strata of Indian society.

On the international arena, Indira witnessed progressive social demonstrations in East Pakistan, which she had lost in the Pakistani elections in 1970 to a political wing favourable to national interests. In this sense, starting in March 1971, the Bihari community, which had supported West Pakistan, began to suffer a series of persecutions and killings in East Pakistan, provoking a harsh reaction from Karachi by sending troops into the region that further aggravated instability of the region, resulting in thousands of deaths in the local Hindu community and millions of refugees to the neighbouring Indian states, especially in the state of West Bengal[485].

Faced with a worrying picture of refugees on Indian soil, Indira expressed to the public and international organizations their solidarity with those persecuted in East Pakistan and advising a definitive political solution to the situation, the independence of the region in a new country. In that sense, she was able to articulate with General Manekshaw, known at the time as 'Sam Bahadur' (Sam the Brave), Chief of Army Staff, and supported and trained about 80,000 members of a resistance guerrilla, the *Mukti Bahini*, aiming at a broader plan of invasion. Thus, on December 3, 1971, military offensives was carried out with the support of the Indian Navy and Air Force. The surrender of the Pakistani military commanders occurred on December 16[486]. Despite the huge international propaganda, there was no significant interference in this short war, only some manifested support from the Soviets towards the Bengali rebels and the Indian government. The US, on the other hand, under the presidency of Richard Nixon who was in a delicate situation in the final years of the Vietnam War, expressed only rhetorical support for his ally in the conflicts, Pakistan. At the end of the aggressions, millions of refugees crossed back across the border to a new country in the region, Bangladesh. The relative speed and successful Indian intervention in the so-called Bangladesh War of Independence resulted in widespread popularity of Indira and a

major loss to the Pakistani government, which was restricted in its western territory[487].

Indira's popularity lasted until 1973 when there was a major energy crisis in the country. As a result of the increase in the price of a barrel of oil, as a result of the articulation of the oil exporting countries, there was a significant increase in fuel price in India, causing an inflationary rise in economy, making fertilizers more expensive in the field and aggravating industrial activity. Dependent on energy resources India had not invested in its own energy sources, and thus the Indira government faced severe crisis and strikes especially in the railway sector in 1974. The successful nuclear explosion test in the Rajasthan desert in May same year[488], making India one of the few countries in the world to have control of nuclear weapons production, failed to divert public attention from the national crisis. The following year came a series of political crises to take on the economic ones. Opposition to Indira was organized by alleging electoral fraud in 1971, backed by a legal decision of the Allahabad High Court. In that sense, threatened in her position as Indian prime minister elected by the majority of the Indian population, Indira appealed within the constitutional possibilities, and decreed State of Emergency on June 25, 1975, claiming that the national economic crisis demanded extraordinary measures[489]. Indian democracy was entering one of its most controversial periods.

The Emergency measures enacted by Indira in a way enabled her government to bypass opposition impediments and to have free economic planning in India. On the other hand, fundamental civil liberties guaranteed in the constitution, such as demonstrations of strike and stoppage, were seriously curtailed. In addition, Indira's son, Sanjay Gandhi (1946 - 1980) began to politically organize a young wing of the INC party in order to raise those aware in society and to contain future opponents of the party[490].

Although suppressed, demonstrations against the Emergency

regime began to gain momentum in India, one of the most prominent was led by a socialist politician, Jayaprakash Narayan or Lok Nayak (1902 - 1979), who called out to the crowd gathered in a square in the city of Patna in the state of Bihar on June 5, 1975 a radical change in Indian politics, a movement which later became known as the Bihar Movement[491].

Faced with powers of the Emergency, Indira proceeded to preventively detain numerous opposition political figures across the country. In 1976, with this delicate political scenario, the elections scheduled for the year were postponed, announced for the following year, trying to gain political capital. A few weeks before the national polls in 1977, Indira released opposition leaders, hoping that in doing so they would not have time to garner necessary votes for the opposition. At the last moment, one of the allies of Indira, the representative leader of the Untouchables in Lok Sabha, announced the formation of a new political party, the Congress for Democracy (CFD), adding to the opposition against Indira and her son, Sanjay. It was the first time in Indian modern history that most of the opposition spectrum of the INC was brought together to support a single candidate, Morarji Desai. The INC in the elections in 1977 lost almost 200 seats in parliament, of which 92 were lost to the electorate of South India. The unpopularity of Indira and her allies in politics was visible.

Morarji Desai (g. 1977 - 1979) rose to power on the basis of a large and unstable opposition alliance that gathered around a new party, the Janata Party. His years of office were marked by serious internal disunity stemming from his extensive political alliance, including members of the influential and conservative Bharatiya Jana Sangh movement who were viewed with suspicion by other members of the political alliance. In addition, Desai began to be considered too supportive and close to Jana Sangh and increasingly far from loyalty to the Janata Party. Despite having a flawless personal and historical reputation, Desai failed to be a

strong leader and was unable to prevent growing dissensions among his allies, causing disunity in the Janata Party.

One of the most articulate and popular leaders allied to Desai was Charan Singh (1902 - 1987), representative of agricultural entrepreneurs, who became increasingly distant from commitments to the new government. There were widespread protests in rural areas which, in mid-1979, resulted in the political fall of Desai and the end of the opposition government to the INC. On 15 July, Morarji Desai resigned as prime minister and no other leader of the opposition alliance, other than Charan Singh (g. 1979 - 1980), was able to form a tenuous consensus. But the fragility and disunity of the political opposition to the INC, orbiting around the Janata Party, were clearly evidenced.

In the 1980 elections, the Janata Party was shattered into several different wings, resulting in a political immobility in the face of the new return of the INC and Indira Gandhi. Only Indira managed to have enough national prominence to guarantee the return of the INC to power, a personal projection of her leadership over the rubble of the opposition, rather than a triumph of the INC[492].

Once in power, Indira was determined to weaken her political rivals in her campaigns and pronouncements, availing herself of the electoral changes she modified in 1971 and 1972, which disjointed the nationwide state elections[493]. In some cases, Indira got her political intent and strengthened her party allies. But in other states she was resigned to the electoral defeat, as in Karnataka ruled by a Janata Party politician, Dr. B. M. Hegde, or in the populous state of West Bengal under state government of the Communist Party. In other political spectres, in the 1982 elections, there was the rise of a new political party, Telugu Desam (TDP), under the leadership of a popular Indian movie actor, Rama Rao.

Indira was concerned about the prospects of the 1985 national elections for the Lok Sabha, which could have the disastrous

results for her party and allies as it did in 1977, and had understood that she would have to deal with national problems without the use of the state of emergency. In addition, there were increasing protests and regional unrest in Assam and Punjab. In Assam, she was faced with the problem of influx of refugees from Bangladesh, considered a risk to Bengali and Assamese popular perception that they came to regard these new immigrants as unwanted and a risk to their jobs and property, in what was later termed of Assam Movement. In order to resolve this situation, the government proposed to hold a census in the region and grant the newcomers the right to vote, which earned Indira ample support among the immigrant community in the 1983 elections in the region[494].

In the Punjab, Indira faced an even more serious problem. Her political career began in 1966 as prime minister granting some political rights to the Sikh communities of the region. To this end, she supported the separation of the southernmost region of Punjab, mostly Hindi speakers in the state of Haryana, from the remainder to the north where Punjabi-speaking Sikhs made up 60% of the population. One of the political parties of the Sikhs, the Akali Dal, then decided to take a radical stance towards greater concessions of autonomy for the Sikh nation, Khalistan. Aiming to contain political radicalism, Indira decided to split the Sikh movement, supporting the young Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (1947 - 1984), who then revolted and fled from her control. In that sense, Bhindranwale gathered all the radical Sikh elements and headed for the Golden Temple in the city of Amritsar, one of the most sacred sites for the Sikh community[495]. In that place, in October 1983, the rebels decided to erect an independent political structure from the Indian government and began to build with their supporters an armed fortress in the access to the Golden Temple. Indira, indignant and faced with the delicate political stalemate of risk of secession and political insubordination, then gave orders for the Indian army to reintegrate the temple's

possession in the 1st of June, 1984, in the so-called Operation Blue Star[496]. In confrontations with the military, Bhindranwale died and was soon regarded as a martyr. Due to the events, Indira Gandhi, after a few months, was shot and killed by two of her personal security guards, both Sikhs, on October 31, 1984.

Rajiv Gandhi

The immediate consequence of the Indira assassination was an insane persecution of Sikhs as it happened in the Bhogal and Ashram markets in Delhi and other large Indian cities[497]. And there remained the political successor of Indira, which came with her son, Rajiv Nehru Gandhi (g. 1984 - 1989), who sought a moderating line for the exalted spirits of the Sikh radicals and their antagonists. Rajiv had not been the obvious choice of his mother since she had already been encouraging the political career of her youngest son, Sanjay. But a tragic accident took his life on June 23, 1980 while doing aerobatic manoeuvre on a private aircraft near Safdarjung Airport in New Delhi. Rajiv, also a pilot but in the service of state-owned Indian Airlines company, had never shown any talent and interest in politics at first. He was therefore reluctant to take over the business assumed by his mother and was convinced by the President of India, Zail Singh, himself a Sikh, for only then would certain order and political stability be guaranteed within the framework of the INC.

Former Sanjay supporters were soon hopeful of Rajiv's appointment as prime minister, but were promptly disappointed by his disinterested attitude toward old allies. In fact, Rajiv sought as soon as possible to call Indian elections, adopting a moderate and cautious behaviour. That earned him and the INC the highest parliamentary supremacy in Indian history, conquering 404 within the 533 seats in the Lok Sabha. Rajiv has become a widely popular figure because of his ethical and incorrupt behaviour. Opposition parties were almost obliterated from the

parliamentary scene, with the exception of a few regional parties such as the Telugu Desam with 30 seats. The Janata party passed to a mere 10 MPs.

Dominating the national political landscape, Rajiv came to devise broad economic and tax reforms in India. He has further opened up the country's structure to international investment and made the Indian economy more liberal, stimulating market forces[498]. He also dealt with regional problems of the past. In Assam, Rajiv signed agreements with student leaderships responsible for the Assam Movement and elections were held in the state with the victory of the student Prafulla Kumar Mahanta (1951 - ?) of the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) party in September 1985. In Punjab, agreements with Delhi were concluded and the Akali Dal party was victorious in the state during the same period, which guaranteed a temporary tranquillity until May 1987, as many Sikhs became impatient with Rajiv's failure to transform the city of Chandigarh as the exclusive capital of the Punjab and not to share it with Haryana state. For this reason, Rajiv displeased both Haryana and Punjab voters. Thus, in an increasingly intolerant environment in Punjab, in 1987 local governor-elect Barnala resigned because of growing social disorder leading to direct intervention by the Delhi government as provided in Article 356 of the Constitution of India in case of serious crisis.

A year later, in May 1988, Rajiv decided to resort to an armed intervention in Punjab in Operation Black Thunder, in order to clear the access to the Golden Temple in Amritsar and remove the weapons stocked there by rebellious Sikhs. To this end, the sacred temple of the Sikhs was surrounded and besieged for 10 days. As a result, the operation was a success as few were injured and killed and all ammunition confiscated. Following this operation, the Indian government banned the use of religious shrines for political and military purposes and aggravated criminal measures for the carrying and use of illegal weapons as part of its strategy

to combat extremism in the Punjab region.

At the regional level, India under Rajiv took a major step towards integration with the countries of the South Asia in 1985. Gathered in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka in December the Indian delegation became a crucial member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), composed of eight countries[499]. This organization holds an estimated 21 per cent of the world's population and about 9 per cent of the global economy[500] and aims at an ideal of greater cooperation, aid and political coordination for peace, stability and development.

On the outskirts of southern India in July 1987, Rajiv brokered an agreement with the government of the island of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) and agreed to send troops to the country for a peace operation in ethnic conflicts led by Tamil radicals, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), an armed political organization whose aim is the self-determination of the Tamil people by creating in the northeast of the island of Sri Lanka an independent state called Tamil Eelam. From 1987, Rajiv decided to enforce the signed agreement and disarmed the Tamil rebels, but the Indian peacekeeping force became embroiled in recurring cases of abuse and violence, ultimately undermining any lasting peace on the island among the nationalist Sinhalese[501]. The final peace agreement only came 22 years later, in June 2009.

The Rajiv government's biggest political scandal was a corruption case with a Swedish armaments company, Bofors, in 1986. The case was in the form of an illicit kickback scheme paid in a deal valued at more than US$ 1 billion with arms manufacturer with the government of India in the sale of 410 shells of 155 mm calibre. A large volume of money was diverted from the Indian public coffers to secure this contract, disregarding any transparency of good governance. The Swedish company had disbursed about US$ 9.5 million in bribes to politicians and influential people in the Indian government's defence ministry[502]. The case came to light during the investigations of finance

minister V.P. Singh (1931 - 2008), who was soon barred from pursuing his investigations and forced to resign as minister in 1987. After the event, Singh turned against the government and the INC, emerging as the leading political figure in India at the time.

Rajiv thought of convening new general elections in 1988, but they were only held in November 1989, trying to get the opposition unprepared and thus guarantee another turn of his government. However, the parties Janata Dal and Bharatiya Janata, two of his greatest opponents, resolved their differences and agreed to hang around the figure of V. P. Singh, thus obtaining a large number of seats in the north of India. The INC, Rajiv's party, had a major parliamentary loss and was forced to relinquish the post of prime minister to the opposition coalition.

V. P. Singh remained as Indian prime minister for a short period, from December 2, 1989 to November 10, 1990, because the coalition of parties that elected him was plural and too divided to support a political base. It seemed that India's political conditions were returning to what they were in 1977. But Singh's personal figure was powerful at the time, given that he was seen as largely responsible for the revelations in the Bofors scandal. In his political office, Singh made an important gesture by visiting the shrine of the Sikh temple, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, to appease the wounds of the past. He also approved the report of the Mandal Committee, which increased quotas for the most marginalized Indians, the caste of Untouchables, into public office. This project, however, caused his allies of the conservative Bharatiya Janata party (BJP), largely supported by the Brahmin caste, to protest vehemently resulting in a political impasse unsustainable to the maintenance of his political leadership position in the Lok Sabha.

Perhaps the most notorious and revealing case of the political crisis in Singh's coalition with the BJP came from September 1990, when the BJP stood in favour of the popular demonstrations in the

town of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh around the supposed birthplace of the Hindu god Rama, one of the avatars of Vishnu, on a hill where a Babur mosque, Babri Masjid, was erected between 1528 and 1529. On this historical controversy, the Hindu multitudes were inflamed by the endorsement given by Lal Advani (1927 -?), president of the BJP and right-wing supporters of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), for the demolition of the mosque. V. P. Singh, faced with a worrying scenario of religious sectarianism around the issue, decided to declare imprisonment of Advani for disturbing the social order on October 30, 1990[503]. In that sense, Singh preserved the Indian social order, mainly between Muslims and Hindus, safeguarded the condition of the historic Babri mosque in Ayodhaya, but lost fundamental supporter of the BJP. Singh resigned from his post on November 7, 1990.

Political conditions in India remained fragile without a clear definition of a party-affiliated majority in the Lok Sabha until election campaigns in February 1991 when the INC decided to once again support Rajiv's candidacy for prime minister. The biggest tragic moment came when, on a campaign in the city of Madras (Chennai) in Tamil Nadu, Rajiv went to receive a wreath from a woman, probably from the Tamil Tigers (LTTE), who at the time triggered the explosives tied to her, murdering the political leader on May 21, 1991.

Narasimha Rao

In this sense, perhaps in the face of the tragic moment, the INC was able to garner more votes in the June 1991 elections, 244 in all, against 120 seats of Lal Advani's BJP. But it remained open who should be the new leader of the INC to be appointed as prime minister. It was thought for a moment, due to the historical charisma of the Nehru-Gandhi family, the widow of Rajiv, Sonia Gandhi (1946 - ?). But Sonia was an Italian by birth and a Catholic,

something that made her disregard the Indian political career. Instead, a veteran politician from the INC who was about to retire, P. V. Narasimha Rao (g. 1991 - 1996) was chosen.

Rao had served in the Andhra Pradesh region and then as cabinet minister for Indira and Rajiv Gandhi for more than a decade. Upon taking office in 1991, he was the first Indian from the South as prime minister[504]. Facing an adverse economic scenario in which India was in the early 1990s, Rao named as his man of confidence the Sikh Dr. Manmohan Singh (1932 -?) as finance minister, a brilliant technocrat who worked for years in the World Bank and that could thus guarantee good relations and credits with the international financial system.

Political change had immediate effects on the Indian economy. There has been an increase in the sending of international currencies to the country, largely stemming from the large Indian community abroad, and the devaluation of the Indian currency, the rupee, around 18%, which encouraged an increase in exports and attracted new foreign direct investments. Nonetheless, as a result, it also triggered a large volume of speculative capital into the Indian financial market, which caused a stock market crash in Bombay in 1992.

On 6 December of the same year, the tragic destruction of the Babri mosque (Babir Masjid) occurred in Ayodhya, in Uttar Pradesh, which was governed at the time by a BJP supporter. The popular reactions were mainly in Bombay, where between December and January of 1993 a multitude of Muslims appeared in the streets of the city and generated, as an irrational reaction, a series of hostilities on the part of the Hindu community, resulting in about 900 dead. There was no conclusive report on this, but the involvement of ultranationalist regional parties such as the Shiv Sena, who advocated an exclusively Hindu nation ideology (*Hindutva*)[505], was evident. In retaliation for these anti-Muslim conflicts, on 12 March 1993 twelve explosive devices were detonated in Bombay, coordinated by a Muslim and head of

organized crime in the city, Dawood Ibrahim (1955 - ?), causing more than 250 deaths. India seemed to be moving towards a scenario of intercommunal strife.

These events had an impact on the regional elections in late 1994. Rao and the INC performed poorly. The state of Andhra, region of origin of Rao, was dominated by the regional party of Telugu Desam. Karnataka, by the Janata Party, and Maharashtra by a coalition of regional parties including the BJP and Shiv Sena. The picture could not be worse for the government in Delhi targeting the national elections of April and May 1996. As predicted, they were the worst election results for the INC in Indian history. The old system of moderate alliances led by Rao fell to the ground and there was gradual party polarization on the part of opposition parties. Of the 537 seats, 160 went to the BJP, with 136 elected (largely from votes from populous states in northern India) to the INC, and surprising 155 seats won in the Lok Sabha by smaller regional parties. Narasimha Rao delivered his office in May 1996. The President of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma (g. 1992 - 1997), in order to circumvent future impasses in the political system, decided to appoint a politician from BJP, Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1924 - ?), to form a new government.

The era of party coalitions

The initial government of Vajpayee lasted only 13 days at the end of 1996, because the number of parliamentarians who had supported him was insufficient. He hoped when in the government that the myriad of small regional parties would reach a consensus and would give him the necessary support in the Lok Sabha, which did not materialize a few days after his rise to power. Thus, the President, who was to choose a head of government in a situation of political impasse in the parliament, chose a politician from the Janata Party, H. D. Deve Gowda (g. 1996 - 1997), governor of Karnataka, as prime minister. His party

had barely won 43 federal seats, 15 of them from Karnataka and 21 from Bihar, a fragile political situation that made him dependent on the numerous small regional parties present in large numbers in the Lok Sabha. The INC, on the other hand, was coy and reluctant around Narasimha Rao who began to suffer numerous accusations of corruption during his last government. Thus, the Indian political landscape was unpredictable and crumbling towards the end of 1996.

However, the Indian democratic system was resilient even in the unstable and disintegrating conditions in its parliament. In April 1997, the minority government of Deve Gowda did not support itself politically, and then was chosen as PM Inder Kundar Gujral (g. 1997 - 1998), who chose as the Minister of Finance Palaniappan Chidambaram (1945 - ?) receiving positive reactions from financial forces and international investors. But Gujral remained hostage to the unstable partisan coalitions that supported him in power. It was therefore urgent that new national elections be called, which in fact occurred in February 1998, resulting in a more evident parliamentary majority, 182 seats, for the BJP party, but still far behind a majority. And so on March 20, 1998, a new coalition government led by the BJP again appointed Vajpayee (g. 1998 - 2004) as prime minister.

Vajpayee

The coalition that the BJP party had formed with other parties in the so-called National Democratic Alliance (NDA) proved initially tenuous, as one of the allied parties, All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK, All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Party) of the Tamil Nadu region decided to abandoning the coalition in mid-1999, only 13 months after the rise of Vajpayee. In view of the absence of a parliamentary majority, it was necessary to call for new national elections held in September 1999. As a result, the BJP grew in the Lok Sabha to 270

seats, adding up to 303. And so, in a situation of greater parliamentary lag, Vajpayee was reassured again as Indian prime minister and this time his office would last until 2004. But the most surprising in the 1999 elections was the INC consensus, now as the second largest Indian party with 156 seats, in naming as its party president Sonia Gandhi. Despite internal party disagreements over Sonia as leader, the INC remained on the lookout for a more propitious moment to return to power.

It was external events that cemented the popularity of Vajpayee and his governing coalition in power in 1999 onwards. In February of that year, to seal the peace between India and Pakistan and to avoid possible nuclear conflict, the Treaty of Lahore was ratified. Peace seemed to be promising[506]. Meanwhile, in May and June 1999, terrorist plans of infiltration and occupation of Kashmir were discovered which distorted the entire peace pact between India and Pakistan when Vajpayee had visited the Pakistani city of Lahore three months before to inaugurate a bus line from Delhi. In subsequent warfare, Indian forces managed to dominate opposing forces infiltrated around the city of Kargil in Kashmir. The repercussion of this intervention was a success in terms of popularity for Vajpayee and his coalition led by BJP. Two years later, in July 2001, Vajpayee took another diplomatic step in front of the Pakistani government when he convened the Agra meetings with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. But few advances have been made in relation to Kashmir.

The government's popularity around its alliance with the National Democratic Alliance was affected after a series of political scandals and bribes by defence minister George Fernandes (1930 - 2019) who would have accepted large payments in the acquisition of new equipment military investigations unveiled in May 2001 by investigative journalism journal Tehelka, as well as reports of Indian intelligence failure that could have prevented the incidents at Kargil in 1999.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, the US government of George W. Bush suspended the sanctions that had been imposed against India and Pakistan in force since 1998 for fears of escalating nuclear conflict. The American political change was a reward for the sworn support of the two governments to combat terrorism.

Domestically, the greatest calamity that the Vajpayee government took place around a suspected train blaze on February 27, 2002, that killed about 60 Hindu pilgrims returning from Ayodhya in Godhra, Gujarat state. With the strange omission of the governor of the state at the time, Narendra Modi (1950 - ?) of the BJP party, that triggered a wave of violence leading to the death of more than 700 Muslims and 250 Hindus[507].

Vajpayee was more successful in his country's economic reforms, which resulted in sustained GDP growth of around 6 to 7 percent a year. As a result, there was a notable attraction for international investment and major works of modernization of the national infrastructure were undertaken starting in 2002. Thus, the BJP party gradually gained more political support mainly among the social sectors benefited by the new economic boom, entrepreneurs, the urban middle class and university students facing the new employment prospects, especially in the sectors of information technology and services.

In 2003, the Indian PM took bold initiatives to consolidate good relations with neighbouring countries. He visited China in July 2003, and signed China's recognition of Tibet, matching Beijing's official assent to northern parts of the Sikkim state claimed by India, something pending between the two countries since 1953. As a result, in July of 2006, the first road between China and India was inaugurated through Nathu La Pass in Sikkim.

At the end of 2003, in view of the advanced age of Vajpayee and in order to raise more support among the Indian Muslim population, BJP began to organize extensive publicity campaigns

aiming for better electoral results the following year. Controversy were raised due to the choice of the new party leader, Lal Advani, who had led the BJP at the time of the popular conflicts in Ayodhya in 1992.

Manmohan Singh

The elections in May 2004 took place in January. Surprisingly a broad alliance with regional and socialist parties, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), led by the INC, initially under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi won a majority in parliament, totalling 335 seats. Only the INC had won 218 seats, against 181 of the BJP Party. Sonia, however, after the election results decided not to assume the office of prime minister and instead named a Sikh technocrat, Manmohan Singh (g. 2004 - 2014), becoming the first non-Hindu Indian to the most powerful post in India. His apolitical past gained the confidence of most of the population who regarded him as an incorruptible and ethical person.

Already in late 2004, Singh's government began negotiating with the Pakistani government once again and withdrew some of its troops from Kashmir. In addition, a new bus line was inaugurated from the city of Srinagar to the Pakistani border city of Muzaffarabad, the first line to operate in Kashmir with Pakistani territory in more than 60 years[508].

In the economic field, Singh followed the reforms advocated by the International Monetary Fund and further liberalized the Indian economy that resulted in strong development. Singh, along with a competent economic team, which included former finance minister Palaniappan Chidambaram, coordinated a period of national GDP growth around an annual rate of 8% to 9%. In 2009, India had become the second fastest growing economy in the world. Much of this growth occurred in the services sector, corresponding to more than 50% in the following years of his government[509].

Relations with the US were solidified around a nuclear cooperation agreement during George W. Bush's visit to India in March 2006. In the agreement, the Indian government would have access to North American nuclear reactors and fuels in exchange for its commitment to limit its nuclear weapons program. In October of the same year, India successfully launched its first mission to the Moon, an unmanned probe called Chandrayaan-1. A year earlier, the country had already launched its first commercial space rocket.

In November 2008, organized terrorist attacks occurred in the city of Mumbai (formerly Bombay renamed since 1995), allegedly under the command of a Pakistani organization, resulting in the suspension of the peace process with the neighbouring country. In the general elections held between April 16 and May 13, 2009, the UPA, led by Singh's INC, won a new parliamentary majority with comfortable 322 parliamentary members within a total of 543. It was the first time since Jawaharlal Nehru in 1962 that an Indian prime minister managed to be re-elected after completing his full five-year term. The Indian elections of 2009 were a formidable political testimony of India, with the world's largest democratic election with an estimated 714 million voters[510].

In the external scenario, India's Singh government came as a founding member of the BRICS group (initially composed of Brazil, Russia, India and China, then South Africa from 2010) at the first summit meeting held in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg on June 16, 2009. The group's goal since then has been to further co-ordinate and co-operate with developing countries and to ground a new space in the international environment in search of alternatives and reforms of the global political and economic situation[511].

Faced with the political and economic performance of Singh's government, everything seemed to be under full control by the INC and its allies. But the opposition organized around the BJP party began to outline a new political counter-offensive from 2013.

On June 9, 2013, a new BJP leader, Narendra Modi, was appointed to represent the party in the 2014 general elections, after the resignation of Lal Adavani, considered by many in Indian society to be the biggest contributor to the conflicts in Ayodhya in 1992. The 2014 elections ran in an impressive order from 7 April to 12 May of the same year. It was the largest election in Indian history and, according to the Indian Electoral Commission, more than 814 million voters voted, confirming the country as the largest democracy in the world[512].

The electoral result of 2014 favoured the broad alliance formed by the BJP, the NDA, with 336 Lok Sabha seats. Only the BJP party won 282 seats in parliament. In the opposite field, the INC had only achieved 44 seats and its alliance only 58 seats in all. It was a major Indian political turnaround. Much has happened around the cases of corruption that members of the Singh government had been involved in, notably in the coal, telecommunications and even the organization of the 19th Commonwealth Games held in Delhi in October 2010. In addition, the Indian economy had been experiencing a high inflationary trend in the prices of basic food products, such as onion and salt, and consumer goods since February 2012[513].

In that regard, Singh stepped down as prime minister on May 25, 2014, when the former governor of Gujarat and the new face of the largest conservative coalition of the Indian political spectrum, Narendra Modi, of the BJP party took over. Modi´s coalition managed to secure 282 seats in the Lok Sabha and the INC and its coalition, in turn, begun to be organized around Rahul Gandhi (1970 - ?), son of Sonia Gandhi, but assured only 44 parliamentary seats. In the general elections of 2019, Modi and the BJP alone had won 303 seats, with the NDA coalition gaining 353 in total, further weakening the INC and any opposition party.

Epilogue

India is a vast country in every way. It guards a complex and diverse history of countless kingdoms, principalities and empires from the Indus Valley, further eastward to the broad and fertile plains of the Ganges and Yamuna, and further south, settling along the Krishna and Godaveri rivers. Kingdoms and potentates that have sometimes expanded into empires from antiquity, from the Guptas to the Mughals, the British and then into a unified republican form that has been in uninterrupted democratic form since 1947. Something amazing, as India has in its diversity all the factors for fragmentation and disunity. This extraordinary country has for much of its history been composed of political units that turned their allegiances to local chiefs and rulers with a certain ethnic, linguistic and religious unity, from Hinduism to Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and other traditional beliefs worshiped since the dawn of time. In India, nothing has ever been simple.

The Indian cultural and religious framework resulted from centuries of contacts, amalgamation and syncretism of various ethnic groups. The Vedic and Puranic texts were firmly established with Indian beliefs which later provided the material for Hindu epics such as the Mahabharata and Ramayana. Thus the mythologies, deities, values and ideals of an entire nation were compiled and each worshiped local deity was gradually incorporated into the Hindu pantheon. Dissent of Hindu orthodoxy resulted in renewed beliefs, as it did in the wanderings of Prince Siddhartha, the Buddha, in Bihar. And a few centuries

later, through its mountainous borders to the north and northwest, Islamic beliefs came in and some Christians came from the western coasts. From the reforming ideas of Guru Nanak, sixteenth-century Sikhism was born. India, through the ages, has created, housed and assimilated the world's ideas.

The frontiers and unification of India resulted from a relatively recent phenomenon, established since Mughal times from the 16th century and then being structured in civil, legal and bureaucratic terms by the British authorities in the 18th and 19th centuries. The culminating point was in its early republican moments during the accession negotiations with the countless rulers of the princely states in 1947, the work of politicians such as Menon, Patel and Ambedkar under Nehru and inspired by Mohandas K. Gandhi, perhaps one of the greatest historical figures of the 20th century. And no less important, from 1947 to 1950, a secular, republican and inclusivist constitution was developed that until today serves as a guide for the nation ensuring a pluralistic, diverse and cosmopolitan India.

In present times, due to the rich and vast heritage of its history, some vectors[514] may, if exacerbated in times of crisis, put at risk what is currently the largest democracy in the world, with an estimated 900 million people eligible to vote in the general elections of 2019. A first axis is its system of casts inherited from the past, which remains the primary identity form of many Indians, especially in rural areas, which may hamper full political participation and equality in a democratic society. The second axis is language. The Hindi language is the most spoken language in the country, with 400 million speakers. But there is a plethora of others, such as Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Bengali etc. which have their own alphabet and a long literary tradition. It is an enormous challenge to maintain cultural cohesion in the face of such diversity. The third axis is religion, with 80% of the Indian population declaring themselves as Hindus and having the second largest Muslim community in the world, around 140

million, 13% of the population, behind only Indonesia[515]. In addition, there is significant community of Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains. Since faith consists in one of the fundamental pillars of human identity, the differences in these terms remain in crisis situations in the country. Another axis consists of socioeconomic differences. There is a huge disparity in this regard in India, with some fabulously rich entrepreneurs in contrast to 26% of the population, 300 million people, living below the poverty line, a dangerous potential that can serve as future conflicts and political changes. Finally, we have the gender issue in which the country presents great obstacles. While on the one hand India has had a great female lead in the figure of Indira Nehru Gandhi, on the other hand there are recurring cases of aggression against women across the country. The condition of women, especially in the countryside, is like Ophelia, character in Shakespeare's Hamlet[516], unbearably judged and demarcated by the customs and traditions that relegate them to a conservative role of submission within the extent of their families and household chores, often stigmatized after they lose their husbands or when they remain without marriage. In marriage situations, prepubertal girls are often defined by the families involved. As a result, in cases of conflicts and marital disagreements, women are the main victims of physical aggression and social discrimination.

For future prospects, this country of contradictions carries with it an immense challenge. There are over one billion and 300 million people in 2019, almost one-fifth of humanity expected to surpass the Chinese population in 2022[517], with more than 2,000 ethnic groups, more than 122 languages and 1,500 dialects, an annual GDP in 2019 estimated at almost US$ 3 trillion, the 6th largest in the world, with 54% of its economy coming from the services sector and 29% from industry. In terms of purchasing power parity, its economy is the third in the world with an estimated US$ 11.468 trillion. Its world projection naturally follows from the stature of such numbers and so it seeks to

articulate new insertions in the new international environment, as attested in its prominence in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) since 1985 and a founding member of the BRICS group since 2009. As a crowning moment, in July 2019, Indian has advanced in space technology and launched its own lunar probe, Chandrayaan-2. India has a lot to show and the world remains to see its influence and example as the world's largest democracy, a secular and plural society and a promising economy.

Bibliographical notes

[1] Pannikar, K. M. *Asia and Western Dominance*. New York: Collier Books, 1969.

[2] The official name that the majority of Indians refer to their country is quite different, Bharata, as worthy sons of the mythical personage of the epic Mahabharata, the king Bharata, the "Cherished".

[3] McIntosh, Jane. *The Ancient Indus Valley: New Perspectives*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2008, pp. 396-400.

[4] People of linguistic group belonging to the Indo-Aryan family that have their history kept in memory in the Vedas epic, whose compilation over time served as a posterior basis for the ordination of Hinduism and the Sanskrit language.

[5] Fortson IV, Benjamin W. *Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction*. New York: Blackwell, 2010, p. 209.

[6] Bryant, Edwin F. *The Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture: The Indo-Aryan Migration Debate*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 43-45.

[7] Jones, William & Lord Teignmouth. *The Works of Sir William Jones* - With the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, v. 3. 'The Third Anniversary Discourse, on the Hindus, delivered 2nd of February, 1786'. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2013, pp. 24-46.

[8] Bryant, Edwin F. & Patton, Laurie L. *The Indo-Aryan Controversy*: Evidence and Inference in Indian History. New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 468-504.

[9] Bengali poet, novelist, polymath, musician and playwright, Nobel Prize for Literature winner in 1913, the first non-European to receive the award. In addition to the vast erudition and influence of his works, his writings inspired the national anthems of Bangladesh and India.

[10] Nehru, Jawaharlal. *The Discovery of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 79.

[11] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 33.

[12] The Ganges River was so crucial to human settlements that it is venerated as the most sacred of Indian rivers by Hindus, such as the goddess Ganga. Bhattachari, Sukumari. *Legends of Devi*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1995, p. 54.

[13] Griffith, Ralph Thomas Hotchkin. *The Hymns of the Rig Veda*. Benares, Lazarus: 1896–7.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Purusha, in the Rig Veda, is described as a being who becomes a sacrificial victim of the gods, and whose sacrifice has created all forms of life, including humans.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Eraly, Abraham. *The First Spring: The Golden Age of India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2011, p. 258.

[19] Thapar, Romila. *Early India: From the Origins to A.D. 1300*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004, pp. 63-64.

[20] Epic composed of more than two million verses, ten times more voluminous than Iliad and Odyssey combined.

[21] Divinity, first son of Shiva and Parvati, identified with a man's body and elephant's head. Ganesha is usually portrayed sitting cross-legged, with a book and pen in hand indicating his appreciation for intellect and wisdom, being the patron of the arts and sciences. Idolized by merchants and businessmen along with his consort, Lakshmi. Hiltebeitel, Alf. *Rethinking the Mahabharata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001, pp. 32-91.

[22] 'Descent' in Sanskrit, which consists of a full-bodied manifestation in human form used by divinities, such as Vixnu, to better guide and advise mankind.

[23] Deities and characters from the vast Hindu mythology.

[24] Easwaran, Eknath. *The Bhagavad Gita (Classics of Indian Spirituality).*

Tomale, California: Nilgiri Press, 2007.

[25] Wolpert, Stanley A. *India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, p. 32.

[26] Müller, Friedrich Max & Deussen, Paul. *The Golden Book of Upanishads*. New Delhi: Lotus Press, 2006, p. 15.

[27] Sharma, Ram Sharan. *Ancient India*. Madras: National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1981, p. 71.

[28] Singh, M. P. & Roy, Himanshu (eds.). *Indian Political Thought: Themes and Thinkers*. New Delhi: Pearson, 2011, p. 11.

[29] Indian philosopher and thinker (350 BCE to 275 BCE) who wrote extensively on politics, power, political economy and military strategy in his classic work, Arthashastra.

[30] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 49.

[31] One of the Indo-Aryan liturgical languages used between the 5th and 1st centuries BCE with possible origins from classic Sanskrit. The Pali was the medium used in the earliest period of Buddhist literature, as in the compilations of Tripitaka and the canons of Theravada Buddhism.

[32] Literary ensemble that narrates the 547 past incarnated lives of Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama.

[33] Harvey, Peter. A*n Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 88.

[34] Former name of a region in Central Asia, mostly in northern Afghanistan and Pakistan. Birthplace of Zoroastrianism and later a crucial region of Buddhist cultural flourishing, from where it radiated north and northeast towards Tibet and China. From the 7th century CE, it was incorporated into the Islamic caliphate Rashidun (632 CE – 661 CE).

[35] In Pali, 'The Questions of King Milinda', is a set of Buddhist texts from

about 100 BCE dealing with a dialogue between the Indo-Greek king Menander I (called Milinda in Pali) debating issues with the Buddhist sage Nagasena.

[36] Singh, Upinder. *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. New Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2008, p. 331.

[37] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 1999, pp. 142-144.

[38] Radhakumud, Mookerji. *Asoka*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995, pp. 8-9.

[39] Taranatha. *History of Buddhism in India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1990.

[40] Series of 33 inscriptions on pillars, stones and caves erected scattered around the Maurya Empire of Ashoka.

[41] Smith, Vincent Arthur & Williams, A. V. (eds.). *History of India, in Nine Volumes – From the Sixth Century B. C. to the Mohammedan Conquest, including the Invasion of Alexander the Great*. Vol. 2. New York: Cosimo Classics, 2008, p. 150.

[42] Theravada the oldest Buddhist school. At present, it predominates in most of the countries of Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka and by minorities in China, Vietnam and Bangladesh.

[43] Williams, Paul (ed.). *Buddhism: Buddhist origins and the early history of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia*. Vol. 1. London & New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 55-56.

[44] Burstein, Stanley M. (ed.). *The Hellenistic Age from the Battle of Ipsos to the Death of Kleopatra VII*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 68.

[45] Devi, Sanasam Sandhyarani. *India Nepal Relations: Historical, Cultural and Political Perspective*. New Delhi: VIJ Books India, 2011, p. 6.

[46] Radhakumud, Mookerji. *Asoka*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995, pp. 35-36.

[47] Literally 'old' in Sanskrit. It consists of a genre of Indian literature on an encyclopaedic range of topics including cosmogony, cosmology, genealogies of gods, goddesses, kings, heroes, sages and demigods, folktales, pilgrimages, medicine, astronomy, grammar , mineralogy, humour, love stories, as well as theology and philosophy. The authorship is anonymous and do not have scriptural status in Hinduism. They were probably composed between the 3rd and 10th century CE.

[48] Pruthi, R. K. (ed.). *Jainism and Indian Civilization*. New Delhi: Discovery Publishing House, 2004, p. 71.

[49] Jain book that deals with the succession for several generations of the leadership of religion after Mahavira.

[50] Thapar, Romila. *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 182-185.

[51] The clan claims to be offspring from Bharadvaja Bṛhaspatya, one of the revered Vedic sages (*rishi*) in Ancient India.

[52] Gokhale, Balkrishna Govind. *Ancient India: History and Culture*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1995, pp. 47-48.

[53] Kalidasa (5th century CE) was a renowned poet and playwright, generally regarded as the greatest writer in Sanskrit.

[54] Malavikagnimitram ('Malavika and Agnimitra') is a play written in Sanskrit by Kalidasa, which deals essentially with a love story of Agnimitra by a handsome servant of his wife and queen, Malavika.

[55] Avari, Burjor. *India: The Ancient Past: A History of the Indian Subcontinent from c. 7000 BC to 1200 AD*. London & New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 167.

[56] Chaurasia, Radhey Shyam. *History of Ancient India: Earliest Times to 1000 AD*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2008, p. 132.

[57] Kanishka was the emperor in the second century CE which led the Kushans to their highest and greatest extent, from Turfan in the Tarim River Basin in western China, through Bactria to the Ganges River plain in the imperial city of the Magadha, Pataliputra. Its main capital was established in Gandhara, now Afghanistan, where, with the intense exchanges and prosperity of the Silk Road, it flourished, radiated and syncretized the Mahayana Buddhist philosophy and art to Karakorum and China.

[58] Harmatta, J.; Puri, B. N.; Lelekov, L.; Humayun, S. & Sircar, D. C. 'Religions In The Kushan Empire'. In: Harmatta, J.; Puri, B. N. & Etemadi, G. F. (eds.). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia - the development of sedentary and nomadic civilizations: 700 BC to 250 AD*. Vol. 2. Paris: Unesco Publishing, 1994, pp. 313, 321-322.

[59] In the Mahayana school, a person who, before attaining Enlightenment and end of human suffering, postpones his supreme overcoming in order to deepen his compassion for all living forms.

[60] Gaulier, Simone; Jera-Bezard, Robert & Maillard, Monique. *Buddhism in Afghanistan and Central Asia – part one*. Vol. 2. Leiden: Brill, 1976, p. 15.

[61] Assavavirulhakam, Prapod. *The Ascendancy of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2010, pp. 44-46.

[62] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 86; Vohra, Ranbir. *The Making of India: A Historical Survey*. Armonk, NY & London: ME Sharpe, 2001, pp. 22-23.

[63] Tam, William Woodthorpe. *The Greeks in Bactria and India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 264.

[64] Manu is the name given to the progenitor of mankind, which appears in the world at the beginning of a new *kalpa* ('aeon') after universal destruction. According to the Puranas, fourteen Manus appear in each kalpa. The Manu Code served, after Sir William Jones' work of translation and compilation, on the juridical and moral basis for governing Indian society in the period of British domination.

[65] Brodd, Jeffrey. *World Religions: A Voyage of Discovery*. Winona, Minnesota, USA: Saint Mary's Press, 2015, p. 45.

[66] Chinmayananda, Swami. *Bhagavad Gita Chapter 4: Renunciation Through Action*. Mumbai: Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, 2014, pp. 15-17.

[67] Bassuk, Daniel E. *Incarnation in Hinduism and Christianity: The Myth of the God-Man*. London: Macmillan, 1987, p. 29.

[68] Epic composed over generations that had its final version under the authorship of the sage Valmiki, between 500 and 100 BCE.

[69] Doniger, Wendy. *The Hindus: An Alternative History*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2009, pp. 155-156.

[70] Prabhupada, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami. *Krishna - the Supreme Personality of Godhead*. Vol. 1. Boston: Iscon Press, 1970, pp. 190 – 191.

[71] Holt, John C. *The Buddhist Visnu: Religious Transformation, Politics, and Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, p. 14.

[72] DONIGER, Wendy. *The Hindus: An Alternative History*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2009, pp. 307-316.

[73] Wilkins, W. J. *Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Puranic*. Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co.; London: W. Thacker & Co., 1900, p 104.

[74] Doniger, Wendy. *The Hindus: An Alternative History*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2009, pp. 251-252, 269-272, 394.

[75] Wilkins, W. J. *Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Puranic*. Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co.; London: W. Thacker & Co., 1900, p. 106.

[76] Phillips, Charles; Kerrigan, Michael & Gould, David. *Ancient India's Myths and Beliefs*. New York: Rosen, 2012, p. 105.

[77] Storl, Wolf-Dieter. *Shiva: The Wild God of Power and Ecstasy*. Rochester, Vermont, USA: Inner Traditions, 2004, p. 92.

[78] Wilkins, W. J. *Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Puranic*. Calcutta: Thacker,

Spink & Co.; London: W. Thacker & Co., 1900, pp. 106-111.

[79] Kautilya. *The Arthashastra*. London: Penguin Classics, 1992.

[80] Vatsyayana. *The Complete Kama Sutra: The First Unabridged Modern Translation of the Classic Indian Text.* Translated by Alain Daniélou. Rochester, Vermont, USA: Inner Traditions, 1994.

[81] Satchidananda, Swami. *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. Buckingham, Virginia, USA: Integral Yoga Publications, 2012.

[82] Eraly, Abraham. *The First Spring: The Golden Age of India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2011, p. 40.

[83] Mookerji, Radhakumud. *The Gupta Empire.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishing, 1989, p. 14.

[84] Sharma, Tej Ram. *A Political History of the Imperial Guptas: From Gupta to Skandagupta*. New Delhi: Concept, 1989, pp. 11-14.

[85] Ruler who brought to the island the sacred tooth of Buddha (in Pali, *danta dhātuya)* to the city of Kandy.

[86] Mahajan, V. D. *Ancient India*. New Delhi: S. Chand, 2007, p. 467.

[87] Assumed birthplace of Krishna and current district of the state of Uttar Pradesh.

[88] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 1999, p. 213.

[89] A legendary ancient Indian emperor of controversial historicity, characterized as the ideal king, known for his generosity, courage and patronage of scholars. Some believe it was a historical figure before our era, while other scholars claim that Vikramaditya is a legendary figure. Vikramaditya thus became an honorific title adopted by several Indian kings. Sircar, Dineshchandra. *Ancient Malwa and the Vikramaditya Tradition*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1969, pp. 94-103.

[90] Agrawal, Ashvini. *Rise and Fall of the Imperial Guptas*. New Delhi:

Motilal Banarsidass, 1989, p. 162.

[91] According to tradition, his court had nine famous scholars, as it was at the court of the Mughal Indian emperor Akbar (1556 - 1605). Conforming to a supposed treatise of Kalidasa, the Jyotirvidabharana, the following nine scholars, including Kalidasa himself, participated in the court of Chandragupta II: Amara Sinha, Dhanvantari, Ghatakarapara, Kalidasa, Kshapanaka, Shanku, Varahamihira, Vararuchi and Vetala-Bhatta. However, many Indian scholars consider the term without historical value, as Dineshchandra Sircar, regarding this tradition as "absolutely useless for historical purposes". SIRCAR, Dineshchandra. *Ancient Malwa and the Vikramaditya Tradition*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1969, pp. 120-123.

[92] As in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh.

[93] Beal, Samuel. *Travels of Fah-Hian and Sung-Yun, Buddhist pilgrims, from China to India (400 A.D. and 518 A.D.).* London: Trübner & Co., 1869. p. 130.

[94] Legge, James. *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms – being an account by the Chinese monk Fâ-Hien of his travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 390 - 414) in search of the Buddhist works of discipline*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886. p. 43.

[95] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 1999, p. 240

[96] Lahiri, Latika. *Chinese Monks in India: Biography of Eminent Monks Who Went to the Western World in Search of the Law During the Great T'ang Dynasty.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986.

[97] According to Jains, sacred teachings are gradually forgotten over time. To reverse this tendency, a rare individual is born, a *tirthankara*, who in moments of his life renounces the world in order to conquer samsara ('the cycle of death and rebirth') on its own. Then he proceeds to teach others the way to the liberation of samsara and attain moksha

('liberation').

[98] Bhattacharji, Sukumari *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*. London: Sangam Books, 1993, p.93.

[99] Thurston, Hugh. *Early Astronomy*. Berlin: Springer, 1996, p. 188.

[100] Anonymous. *The Agni Purana*. Vol. 1. Chapter 43. New Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 2009.

[101] During his reign, the famous iron pillar found today at the Qutb complex in New Delhi was erected originally in Mathura.

[102] Sudraka. *The Little Clay Cart*. New York: New York University Press, 2009. Act 10, line 58.

[103] Unlike the Indo-European languages of northern India, Dravidian languages form a large linguistic family in the south of the Indian subcontinent. These languages include: Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu.

[104] Rath, Saraju. *Aspects of Manuscript Culture in South India*. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2012, pp. 9-11.

[105] Singh, Upinder. A *History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. New Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2008, p. 423.

[106] Literary ensemble that flourished during the Sangam Period (*Tamilakam*) spanning from about 300 BCE to 300 CE. The vast collection contains more than two thousand poems composed by 473 poets, of whom 102 remain anonymous. HART III, G. L. *The Poems of Ancient Tamil*. Oakland, USA: University of California Press, 1975.

[107] Majumdar, Ramesh Chandra. *Ancient India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1977, p. 106

[108] The oldest work in Tamil literature dealing with grammar, spelling, morphology, semantics, prosody and linguistics. Dating back to the 3rd century BCE and up to the 10th century CE.

[109] Eraly, Abraham. *The First Spring: The Golden Age of India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2011, p. 655.

[110] Zvelebil, Kamil. *Companion Studies to the History of Tamil Literature*. Leiden: Brill, 1992, p. 250.

[111] Ramachandran, S. *Love and Landscapes in Sangam Poetry*. 2016. Available at: <http://swarajyamag.com/culture/love-and-landscapes-in-sangam-poetry>. Accessed in: 1st July of 2019.

[112] The Holy Bible. New King James Version. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

[113] Sastri, K. A. Nilakanta. A History of South India: from prehistoric times to the fall of Vijayanagar. New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 2002, p 23; In his work *Indica* that survived only in fragments, Megasthenes informs that who ruled the kingdom of Pandya (*Pandaea*) are women descendants of Hercules. Fragment LVI. B. 'Catalogue of Indian Races'. In: Mccrindle, J. W. *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*. Translation by J. W. Crindle. Calcutta & Bombay: Thacker, Spink, 1877, pp. 30-174.

[114] Thapar, Romila. *Early India: From the Origins to A.D. 1300*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004, p. 211.

[115] Sahu, N. K. *History of Orissa*. Vol 1. Bhubaneswar: Utkal University Press, 1964, p. 303.

[116] Possibly behind a Jain relic in the Magadha realm. Sahu, N.K. *Kharavela*. Bhubaneswar: Utkal University Press, 1984, p. 79.

[117] Ibid., pp. 64, 98.

[118] Mccrindle, J. W. *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*. Translated by J. W. Crindle. Calcutta & Bombay: Thacker, Spink, 1877, pp. 30-174.

[119] Chattopadhyaya, Sudhakar. *Some Early Dynasties of South India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974, p. 37.

[120] Singh, Upinder. *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. New Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2008, p. 382.

[121] Sen, Shailendra Nath. *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*. New Delhi: New Age International, 1999, pp. 172-176.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Lienhard, Siegfried. *A History of Classical Poetry: Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit.* Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1984, p. 85. For more details on ancient Indian poetry Cf. WEBER, Albrecht. *Indische Streifen,* 3 vols. Berlin, 1868-1879.

[124] Dynasty that actively promoted the Buddhist arts as during the reign of Harishena (c. 475 - 500) in the Ajanta Caves complex.

[125] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 97.

[126] Farooqui, Salma Ahmed. *A Comprehensive History of Medieval India: from twelfth to the mid eighteenth century*. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, 2011, p. 26

[127] Sastri, Kallidaikurichi Aiyah Nilakanta. *A History of South India: From Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar*. Madras: Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 141.

[128] The term in Tamil refers to the geographical region inhabited by the ancient Tamil people, now the Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Lakshadweep and parts of southern Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

[129] Sastri, Kallidaikurichi Aiyah Nilakanta. *A History of South India: From Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar*. Madras: Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 82.

[130] Majumdar, Ramesh Chandra. *Ancient India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banardidass, 2003, p. 136.

[131] Sastri, Kallidaikurichi Aiyah Nilakanta. *A History of South India: From Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar*. 2nd Ed. Madras (Chennai): Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 85.

[132] Majumdar, Ramesh Chandra. *Ancient India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banardidass, 2003, p. 106.

[133] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 98.

[134] Huntingford, George Wynn Brereton. *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, Vol. 2, Part 4, Edition 151. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 1980, pp. 51, 116. In this, the kingdom of Pandya is referred to as 'Pandion'. The port of Nelkunda, mentioned in the ancient texts, is today 80 km south of the city of Kodungallur in the state of Kerala.

[135] Hill, John E. *The Peoples of the West from the Weilüe 魏略 by Yu Huan 魚豢: a third century Chinese account composed between 239 and 265 CE*. 2004. English translation with notes. Section 8. Available at: < http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/weilue/weilue.html>. Accessed in: 3 July of 2019. The Chinese narratives consist of an invaluable geographical description of China's western lands to include the easternmost regions of the Roman Empire (*Da Qin*).

[136] Strabo. *Geographica*. Book XV, sections 4 and 73. Available at: <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Strabo/home.html>. Accessed in: 4 July of 2019.

[137] Term that designates final notes of a manuscript or a printed book. Some Indian historians, however, denounce these colophons as late and unreliable additions.

[138] The Kalabhras dynasty ruled southern India in the Tamil region between the 3rd and 7th century CE. Information about them is scarce, as they left neither artefacts nor monuments and the only sources of information are mentioned in the Sangam, Buddhist and Jain literature. It was in the Kalabhras period that Buddhism flourished in South India and probably Jainism. The Sanskrit language and the Prakrit introduced

into the region from the north resulted in a grammar and Tamil literature of its own.

[139] Sastri, K. A. Nilakanta. *A History of South India: from prehistoric times to the fall of Vijayanagar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 1976, pp. 22-25.

[140] Tamil term of a distinct style that follows Dravidian architecture, that emphasizes towers in pyramidal forms and built using sandstone, soapstone or granite.

[141] Aiyangar, Sakkottai Krishnaswami. *South India and her Muhammadan Invaders*. Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 2009, p. 97.

[142] Farooqui, Salma Ahmed. *A Comprehensive History of Medieval India: From Twelfth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century*. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, 2011, p. 26.

[143] Sastri, K. A. Nilakanta. *A History of South India*. Chennai: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005, p. 213.

[144] Karashima, Noboru. *A Concise History of South India: Issues and Interpretations*. Oxford & New York: OUP, 2014, p. 121.

[145] Aiyangar, Sakkottai Krishnaswami. *Ancient India: Collected Essays on the Literary and Political History of Southern India*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1911, p. 103.

[146] Sastri, K.A. Nilakanta. *The Cholas*. Madras: University of Madras, 1984.

[147] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 115.

[148] Spencer, George Woolley. *The Politics of Expansion: The Chola Conquest of Sri Lanka and Sri Vijaya*. Madras: New Era Publications, 1983, p. 2.

[149] Dehejia, Vidya. *Art of the Imperial Cholas*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, pp. 14, 80-81.

[150] Müller, Friedrich Max. *The Sacred Books of the East. Vol 1. The*

Upanishads. Aitareya Upanishad. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879.

[151] Reddy, K. Krishna. *Indian History*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing, 2008, p. A244.

[152] Among the most important ports are: Muchiri Pattanam, Tondi, Semne, Podoperoura, Bakarei and Koreoura. Menon, A. Sreedhara. *A Survey of Kerala History*. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1967, pp. 58-59.

[153] Klostermaier, Klaus K. *A Survey of Hinduism*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2007, p. 252.

[154] Sastri, K. A. Nilakanta. *A History of South India: From Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 1976, p. 135.

[155] It was in the decisive battle of Mahodaya Puram in 1019 that King Bhaskara Ravi Varman I (962-1019) was defeated and killed by the Chola regent, Rajendra Chola, significantly weakening the Chera forces. Menon, A. Sreedhara. *A Survey of Kerala History*. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1967, p. 130.

[156] 'The Deeds of Harsha', considered as a landmark of poetic and historical works in the Sanskrit language. It is said that in this work, Bana makes the first references to a game of chess, to represent the dilemmas and strategies in the decisions of the regents in the political game.

[157] The displacement of an imperial capital along the Ganges and Yamuna river basin has allowed, according to Kulke & Rothermund, a greater projection of Indian rulers to the central and northern Indian regions. Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 105.

[158] Harsha. *Nagananda*. Translated by Palmer Boyd. Sanskrit Drama Series, Ontario: Cambridge, 1999.

[159] Tandle, Sanjeevkuma. *Indian History (Ancient History)*. Solapur, Maharashtra, India: Laxmi Book Publication, 2014, p. 187.

[160] In Sanskrit, *gur* denotes 'enemy' and *ujjar*, 'destroyer'. They are people who later will settle in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Singh, Kumar Suresh (ed.). *People of India: Maharashtra*. Vol. XXX. Part 3. Mumbai: Popular Prakashanp, 2004, p. xxviii.

[161] This name follows from what was known as *sveta huna* ('White Huns'). They were also called Hephthalites who formed a nomadic confederation in central Asia whose pinnacle was between the 6th and 7th centuries.

[162] The Rajput (from the Sanskrit *raja*, 'king', and *putra*, 'sons') consist of a set of descending clans of warriors (Kshatriya) from the central and northern regions of India.

[163] Smith, V. A. "White Hun' coin of Vyaghramukha of the Chapa (Gurjara) dynasty of Bhinmal". The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. Oct. 1907. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907, pp. 923-928.

[164] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 109-110.

[165] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*. New Delhi: New Age International, 1999, p. 266.

[166] Tripathi, Rama Shankar. *History of Kanauj: To the Moslem Conquest*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989, p. 224.

[167] Ibidem, pp. 268-269.

[168] Majumdar, Ramesh Chandra. *Ancient India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977, p. 288.

[169] Guha-Thakurta, Tapati. *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004, p. 260.

[170] Reu, Pandit Bisheshwar Nath. *History of the Rashtrakutas. (Rathodas) – from the beginning to the migration of Rao Siha towards Marwar*. Jodhpur: The Archaeological Department, 1933, p. 83.

[171] Kamath, Suryanath U. *A Concise History of Karnataka: from pre-historic times to the present*. Bangalore: Jupiter Books, 2001, p. 76.

[172] One of the languages of Dravidian branch of South India and one of the oldest in the country. It is the main language of Karnataka state and one of the current official languages of India.

[173] Pickover, Clifford A. *The Math Book: From Pythagoras to the 57th Dimension, 250 Milestones in the History of Mathematics*. New York: Sterling Publishing Company, 2009, p. 88.

[174] Lal, Mohan. *Encyclopaedia of Indian literature*. Vol. 5. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1992.

[175] Ramaswami, N. S. *Indian Monuments*. New Delhi: Abhinav, 1979, p. 50.

[176] Reu, Pandit Bisheshwar Nath. *History of the Rashtrakutas. (Rathodas) – from the beginning to the migration of Rao Siha towards Marwar*. Jodhpur: The Archaeological Department, 1933, pp. 35-36.

[177] Kamath, Suryanath U. *A concise history of Karnataka: from pre-historic times to the present*. Bangalore: Jupiter Books, 2001, p. 80.

[178] Sengupta, Nitish K. *Land of Two Rivers: A History of Bengal from the Mahabharata to Mujib*. Gurgaon: Penguin Books India, 2011. pp. 41–42.

[179] Mahajan, V. D. *Ancient India*. New Delhi: S. Chand, 2011, pp. 648-649.

[180] Ganguly, Dilip Kumar. *Ancient India, History and Archaeology*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1994, p. 47.

[181] Lal, Paul Pramode. *The Early History of Bengal – From the Earliest Times to the Muslim Conquest*. Vol. 2. Calcutta: Indian Research Institute, 1940, pp. 139-143.

[182] Scharfe, Hartmut. *Handbook of Oriental Studies – Education in Ancient India*. Leiden: Brill, 2002, p. 149; Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 113.

[183] Sankalia, H. D. *The University of Nalanda.* Calcutta: Oriental Publishers, 1972, p. 58.

[184] Kind of ancient Hindu school with the characteristics of an internal college, where students cohabit with a teacher, a guru, for a long time and learn to organize and work in the maintenance of the institution.

[185] A dynasty that reigned through much of the Tamil region in southern India, between the 3rd and 7th centuries, defeating and fragmenting the kingdoms of the Chola, Pandya and Chera.

[186] Warder, A. K. *Indian Kavya Literature*. Vol. 3. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1988, pp. 198–233; RAMASWAMY, Vijaya. *Historical Dictionary of the Tamils*. New York: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 178.

[187] The play portrays the accusations of a drunken Shaivite ascetic against a Buddhist monk accused of stealing his bowl of alms. In the end, it turns out it was just a dog that took the bowl. Lockwood, W. & Bhat, A. V. *The Farce of Drunken Sport.* Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1981.

[188] Legend has it that after the victory Pallava King Narasimhavarman I brought with him several Chalukya artists and sculptors who had designed and adorned the Ajanta and Ellora caves to beautify the city of Kanchi, thus bringing the artistic and architectural influence to his kingdom. Rao. P. R. *Indian Heritage and Culture*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1989, p. 30.

[189] Dikshit, Durga Prasad. *Political History of the Chālukyas of Badami*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications: 1980, p. 130.

[190] Mukund, Kanakalatha. *The World of the Tamil Merchant: Pioneers of International Trade*. London: Penguin Books, 2015, p. 28.

[191] Kamath, Suryanath U. *A Concise History of Karnataka : from pre-historic times to the present*. Bangalore: Jupiter books, 2001, p. 76.

[192] Chopra, P. N.; Ravinddran, T. K. & Subrahmanian, N. *History of South India - Ancient, Medieval and Modern*. New Delhi: Chand Publications, 2003, pp. 75–76.

[193] Dikshit, Durga Prasad. *Political History of the Chalukyas of Badami*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1980, p. 170.

[194] Ramesan, N. *The Eastern Chalukyas Of Vengi*. Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh Sahithya Akademi, 1975, pp. 1-4.

[195] Chopra, P. N.; Ravinddran, T. K. & Subrahmanian, N. *History of South India - Ancient, Medieval and Modern*. Nova Delhi: Chand Publications, 2003, p. 78.

[196] Flood, Gavin Dennis. *An Introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. pp. 238-239.

[197] Chattopadhyaya, Shyama Kumar. *The Philosophy of Sankar's Advaita Vedanta*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2000, pp. 96, 103, 320, 342, 345, 346, 368.

[198] Easwaran, Eknath. *The Bhagavad Gita (Classics of Indian Spirituality).* Tomale, California: Nilgiri Press, 2007. Chapter 9, verse 34.

[199] Flood, Gavin Dennis. *An Introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. p. 131.

[200] Some scholars emphasize the importance of Bhakti teachings in the thinking of the first Sikh guru and founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak (1469-1539). Lorenzen, David. *Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1995, pp. 1-2.

[201] Schorer, Karine & Mcleod, W. H. (eds). *The Saints: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987, pp. 1-2.

[202] The deities would have their space of influence according to their place in the pantheon hierarchy and by the distance of their place, *tirtha*, that could be crossings, temples, rivers, caves and natural landmarks. The greater the distance, its lesser the powers, assuming in the territory the power of the nearest local deities. Michaels, Axel. *Hinduism: Past and Present*. Princeton University Press, 2004, pp. 288-289.

[203] Hunter, William Wilson. *The Indian Empire: Its People, History, and Products*. London: Forgotten Books, 2016, p. 346.

[204] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 143-144.

[205] Like the influence of the Amaravati art school (3rd to 5th centuries) of the Pallava on the bronze statue of Buddha found in Sampaga on the island of Sulawesi in eastern Indonesia. It is also attested in the nomenclature of the official Indonesian language, Bahasa Indonesia. Bahasa comes from Sanskrit which means 'language'.

[206] In the eastern part of the island of Borneo there are indications of around the 5th century of a king, Kundunga, who was not recorded in Sanskrit and later succeeded by his son, done in Sanskrit writing, Ashvavarnam, who adopted and legitimized himself in power with the guidance of Brahmins to found a new dynasty. Hannigan, Tim. *A Brief History of Indonesia - Sultans, Spices, and Tsunamis: The Incredible Story of Southeast Asia's Largest Nation*. North Clarendon, Vermont, USA: Tuttle Publishing, 2015, p. 29.

[207] Shahabuddin Ghauri or Mohammad Ghauri (r. 1173 – 1206).

[208] The Sindh region was situated on the edge of the Islamic world east of the Persian lands at the time of the 7th century, a region which was later denominated by the Arabs of al-Hind with which the Muslims already had significant and lucrative commercial ties. Pirate raids on the coast of Sindh apparently led to a forceful intervention by Muslim commanders seeking to maintain commercial relations. Wink, Andre. *Al-Hind, the Making of the Indo-Islamic World: Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam 7th - 11th Centuries*. Vol 1. Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 51-52.

[209] Arab Muslims in India ruled from 871 under Islamic dynasties independent of the Arab Caliphates, ruling from cities in Sindh and Multan in Punjab. And they conducted a policy of peaceful and tolerant coexistence with the local non-Muslim population. Maclean, Derryl N. *Religion and society in Arab Sindh*. Leiden: Brill, 1989, pp. 24, 140-143.

[210] Islamic doctrine that believes the "True Imam", successor of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, is Ismail ibn Jafar. In Shi'ism, the "True Imams" are the successors and the highest leaders of the Prophet Muhammad, who possesses divine knowledge and authority (*Ismah*) over Muslims.

[211] Thapar, Romila. *Somanatha: The Many Voices of a History*. Gurgaon: Penguin Books India, 2004, pp. 36-37, 75.

[212] Epic composed in the 10th century that tells the history and mythology of Iran (Persia), from the creation of the world to the Arabian conquest in the 7th century.

[213] Author of *Tarikh Al-Hind* ('History of India') that analysis the Indian past, costumes, beliefs and politics. He was given the title of *al-Ustadh* ('The Master') for his exceptional description of Indian lands in the early 11th century and is regarded as the founder of Indology.

[214] Sachau, Edward.C. *Alberuni's India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 22.

[215] Chandra, Satish. *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals (1206-1526)*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2006, pp. 44-45.

[216] Ibid., p. 38.

[217] Reference to the dynasty that had as capital the city of Ghur, in central Afghanistan, from which came Muhammad of Ghur. The dynasty, which had sultanate status lasted from 879 to 1215. Like the Ghaznavids, they forged a large empire in Central Asia, Pakistan, Persia (Iran), Afghanistan and northern India and promoted the spread of Islam and the Persian literature and art.

[218] Wink, Andre. *Al-Hind, the Making of the Indo-Islamic World: Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam 7th – 11th Centuries*. Vol 1. Leiden: Brill, 2002, p. 156.

[219] Al-Badaoni (Abdul-Qadir Ibn-i-Muluk Shah). *The Muntakhabu-'rūkh*. Translated and edited by George S. A. Ranking, Sir Wolseley Haig & W. H. Lowe. Vol 1. Calcutta, Baptist Mission Press: 1884, p. 96.

[220] Chronicles that narrate the Islamic history compiled and written by the Persian historian Minhaj al-Siraj Juzjani, completed in 1260. Much of this collection, with 23 volumes, was dedicated to the deeds of the Ghaznavid and Ghurid dynasties. Al-Jawzjani, Siraj al-Din. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*. Calcutta: College Press, 1864.

[221] Syed, Muzaffar Husain; Akhtar, Syed Saud & Usmani, B. D. *Concise History of Islam*. New Delhi: Vij Books India, 2011, pp. 232-233.

[222] Jackson, Peter. *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 56.

[223] In the epic, Jayasi narrates that the stunning beauty of the queen of Chittor, Rani Padmini, was the cause of the offensives to the fort of the city.

[224] Ayalon, David. *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization*. Leiden: Brill, 1986, p. 271.

[225] Puri, B. N. & Das, M. N. *A Comprehensive History of India: Comprehensive history of medieval India*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2005, p. 41.

[226] Grousset, René. *Empire of Steppes: A History of Central Asia*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002, p. 339.

[227] Chandra, Satish. *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals (1206-1526)*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2006, pp. 76-79.

[228] Barni, Zia-Ud Din & Afif, Shams-i Siraj. *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*. Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2006.

[229] Smith, Vincent Arthur. *The Oxford History of India: From the Earliest Times to the End of 1911*. London: Oxford University Press, 1919, p. 238.

[230] Ahmed, Farooqui Salma. *A Comprehensive History of Medieval India: Twelfth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century*. New Delhi: Pearson, 2011, p. 78.

[231] Srivastava, Ashirbadi Lal. *The Sultanate of Delhi (711-1526 A. D.):*

Including the Arab Invasion of Sindh, Hindu Rule in Afghanistan and Causes of the Defeat of the Hindus in Early Medieval Age. Agra: Shiva Lal Agarwala, 1969, p. 203.

[232] Dunn, Ross E. *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2012, p. 205.

[233] Chaurasia, Radhey Shyam. *History of Medieval India: From 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2002, p. 68.

[234] Ibid., p. 74.

[235] Puri, B. N. & Das, M. N. *A Comprehensive History of India: Comprehensive history of medieval India*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2005, p. 84.

[236] Eaton, Richard M. *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 70-72.

[237] Mystical and contemplative order of Islam, in which seeks a intimate and direct relationship with Allah.

[238] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *Ancient Indian History and Civilization*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 1999, p. 438.

[239] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *A Textbook of Medieval Indian History*. New Delhi: Primus Books, 2013, pp. 97–100.

[240] Das, P. C. *History of Odisha*. New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 2011. pp. 86–94.

[241] Pathak, Durga Prasad. *Palm Leaf Etchings of Orissa*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1989, p. 4.

[242] Mansinha, Mayadhar. *History of Oriya Literature*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1962, p. 67.

[243] Recent studies indicate that the founders of Vijyanagara were already allied chieftains before settling in Kampili. Kulke, Hermann &

Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 188; Karmarkar, A. P. *Cultural history of Karnataka: ancient and medieval*. Dharwad: Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha, 1947, p. 30.

[244] Farooqui, Salma Ahmed. *A Comprehensive History of Medieval India: from twelfth to the mid eighteenth century*. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, 2011, p. 116.

[245] Kamath, Suryanath U. *A Concise History of Karnataka: from pre-historic times to the present*. Bangalore: Jupiter Books, 2001, pp. 164-168

[246] Eaton, Richard M. *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 88.

[247] Mukherjee, Sujit. *A Dictionary of Indian Literature*. Vol. 1. Telangana, India: Orient Blackswan, 1998, p. 78.

[248] Avelar, Pedro. *História de Goa – de Alfonso de Albuquerque a Vassalo e Silva*. Alfragide, Portugal: Texto, 2012, pp. 26-28.

[249] Kamath, Suryanath U. *A Concise History of Karnataka: from pre-historic times to the present*. Bangalore: Jupiter Books, 2001, pp. 157–158.

[250] Sastri, K. A. Nilakanta. *A History of South India: from prehistoric times to the fall of Vijayanagar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 2002, pp. 299, 304.

[251] Alam, Muzaffar & Sanjay, Subrahmanyam. *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 54–67.

[252] Sewell, Robert & Nunes, Fernão. *A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagara): a contribution to the history of India*. Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010, pp. 253–275.

[253] Probably Allasani Peddana, Nandi Thimmana, Madayyagari Mallana, Dhurjati, Ayyala-raju Rama-Bhadrudu, Pingali Surana, Ramaraja Bhushanudu and Tenali Rama Krishna.

[254] Reddy, Srinivas. *The Giver of the Worn Garland – Krishnadevaraya's*

Amuktamalyada. London: Penguin Classics, 2010; Krishnadevaraya. *Amuktamalyada*. Cannapatnam: Vavilla Ramasvamisastrulu and Sons, 1907.

[255] Eraly, Abraham. *Emperors of the Peacock Throne: The Saga of the Great Mughals*. New Delhi, Penguin Books India, 2000, pp. 6-8.

[256] Bose, Sugata & Jalal, Ayesha. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2004, p. 28.

[257] Mahajan, V.D. *History of Medieval India*. New Delhi: S. Chand Publisher, 2010, pp. 428–429.

[258] Collier, Dirk. *The Great Mughals and Their India*. New Delhi: Hay House India, 2016, [Kindle Edition]. Chapter 1, section 'Onward to Hindustan', paragraph 6.

[259] Mahajan, V.D. *History of Medieval India*. New Delhi: S. Chand Publisher, 2010, pp. 428–429.

[260] Majumdar, R. C.; Raychaudhuri, H. C. & Datta, K. K. *An Advanced History of India*. Noida: Macmillan India, 1973, p. 429.

[261] Chaurasia, Radhey Shyam. *History of Medieval India: From 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2002, pp. 91-92.

[262] Babur. *The Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor*. Translated and annotated by Wheeler M. Thackson. New York: Random House, 1996-2006, p. xii.

[263] Gulbadan. *Humayun Nama: The History of Humayun*. Translated by Annette S. Beveridge. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharial Publishers, 2001, p. 109.

[264] Newitt, Malyn. *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion 1400–1668*. London: Routledge, 2004, p. 109.

[265] Ibid., p. 109.

[266] Gascoigne, Bamber & Gascoigne, Christina. *The Great Moghuls*. New York: Harper & Row, 1971, p. 50.

[267] Gascoigne, Bamber. *A Brief History of the Great Moguls*. New York: Carroll & Graf, 2002, p. 39.

[268] Conflicts between Sunni and Shiite Islam are fundamentally based on disagreement over Prophet Muhammad's successors. Shiites believe that Ali ibn Abu Talib (known by his first name Ali), Muhammad's brother-in-law and cousin, had been named the 'First Imam' by divine means. The Sunnis, for their part, chose as successor Muhammad's skilled advisor, Abu Bakr, but with no blood relation to the Prophet.

[269] Shah, is a title given to emperors, kings, princes and rulers of Persia (present-day Iran) and regions with marked Persian influence, as was Mughal India.

[270] Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 11.

[271] Smith, Vincent. *The Oxford History of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 337.

[272] Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 9-13.

[273] Chandra, Satish. *History of Medieval India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007, p. 228.

[274] Sarkar, Jadunath. *A History of Jaipur: 1503 - 1938*. Telangana, India: Orient Blackswan, 2009, p. 37.

[275] Ibn Hasan. *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970, pp. 138–39; CHAURASIA, Radhey Shyam. *History of Medieval India: From 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D.* New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2002, pp. 215-216.

[276] Shah-Kazemi, Reza. *The Spirit of Tolerance in Islam*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2012, p. 33.

[277] Naim, C. M. 'Popular Jokes and Political History: The Case of Akbar, Birbal and Mulla Do-Piyaza'. In: Khanna, Meenakshi (ed.). *Cultural*

History of Medieval India. New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2007, pp. 27–28, 31–32.

[278] Mehta, J. L. *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India: Volume II - The Mughal Empire (1526 - 1707).* New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2009, pp. 310-311.

[279] Akbar, Muhammad. *The Administration of Justice by the Mughals*. Lahore, Pakistan: M. Ashraf, 1948, p. 34.

[280] Chandra, Satish. *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals – Part II*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2006, pp. 122-123.

[281] Schimmel, Annemarie. *The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture*. London: Reaktion Books, 2004, p. 290.

[282] The long resistance by the Ahmadnagar Marathis to the Mughals was remarkable, largely due to guerrilla command led by an Abyssinian slave, present-day Ethiopia, Malik Ambar (1549 - 1626). Richards, John F. *The Mughal Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 112-115.

[283] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *A Textbook of Medieval Indian History*. New Delhi: Primus Books, 2013, pp. 165–166.

[284] Canny, Nicholas (ed.). *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Origins of Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 272.

[285] Hunter, Sir William Wilson. *History of India: From the First European Settlements to the Founding of the English East India Company – vol. VII*. New York: Cosimo, 2008, p. 20.

[286] Wheeler, Sir Mortimer. *The Cambridge History of India: The Indus Civilization.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968, pp. 191-192.

[287] Chandra, Satish. *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals – Mughal Empire (1526-1748)*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2006, p 228.

[288] 'Four Gardens', concept of a quadrilateral garden divided by axes, walkways and running water. Koch, Ebba. *The Complete Taj Mahal: And*

the Riverfront Gardens of Agra. London: Thames & Hudson, 2006, p. 100.

[289] Kipling, Rudyard & Lycett, Andrew (ed.). *Kipling Abroad: Traffics and Discoveries from Burma to Brazil.* New York: I. B. Taurus, 2010, p. 41.

[290] Blake, Stephen P. *Shahjahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India 1639-1739*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 41-42.

[291] Nicoli, Fergus. *Shah Jahan*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2009, p. 112; Sharma, S. R. *Mughal Empire in India: A Systematic Study Including Source Material - Vol. 2*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1999, p. 446; Busch, Allison. *Poetry of Kings: The Classical Hindi Literature of Mughal India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 154.

[292] Mehta, J. L. *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India: Volume II - The Mughal Empire (1526 - 1707).* New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2009, p. 59.

[293] The constant disputes and intrigues to the Mughal throne refer to the absence of custom among those of the firstborn to assume power in the death of the predecessor. Markovits, Claude (ed.). *Histoire de l'Inde moderne: 1480-1950*. Paris: Fayard, 1994, p. 96.

[294] Nicoli, Fergus. *Shah Jahan*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2009, p. 248.

[295] Hansen, Waldemar. *The Peacock Throne: The Drama of Mogul India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986, pp. 321-322.

[296] Arabic word meaning 'Law of Allah', which regulates all aspects of life, from marriage, divorce, inheritance, to rituals, politics, economics, business, contracts and crimes.

[297] Malik, Jamal. *Islam in South Asia: a short history*. Leiden: Brill, 2008, pp. 194-197.

[298] Traditional Hindu practice of public appearance of the regent for blessing, tolerated since Akbar times.

[299] Sharma, S. R. *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*. London: Asia

Publishing House, 1962, pp. 132-133.

[300] Dhavan, Purnima. *When Sparrows Became Hawks: The Making of the Sikh Warrior Tradition, 1699-1799*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 3–4.

[301] Stein, Burton. *A History of India*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, p. 176.

[302] Sarkar, Jadunath. *Shivaji and His Times*. Telangana, India: Orient Blackswan, 2015, pp. 47–52.

[303] Mehta, J. L. *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India Mughal Empire (1526-1707)*. Vol. 2. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1996, p. 543.

[304] Sarkar, Sir Jadunath. *Shivaji and His Times*. Telangana, India: Orient Blackswan, 2015, p. 159.

[305] Majumdar, R. C. (ed.). *The Mughal Empire: The History And Culture Of The Indian People*. Vol. 7. Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 2007, pp. 365-70.

[306] Wolpert, Stanley. *A New History of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 167-168.

[307] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 196.

[308] Mehta, J. L. *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India (1707-1813)*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2005, p. 116.

[309] Apparently Delhi's sacking was so large - estimated at US$ 117 million at the time or more than US$ 6.5 billion today - that Nader Shah did not tax Persia for three years after his return. It enabled Persian emperors (shahs) to confront their archenemies to the west, the Ottomans, during the Ottoman-Persian War (1743-1746). Axworthy, Michael. *The Sword of Persia: Nader Shah, from Tribal Warrior to Conquering Tyrant*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2006, pp. 198-206, 211-212.

[310] Eraly, Abraham. *The Mughal World: India's Tainted Paradise*. London:

Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2007, p. 379.

311 Mehta, J. L. *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India (1707-1813).* New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2005, p. 251.

312 Vickers, Adrian. *A History of Modern Indonesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 10.

313 Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 201-202.

314 De Silva, Kingsley M. *A History of Sri Lanka*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 1981, p. 133.

315 Named after the chief negotiator and president of BEIC at the time, Sir Josiah Child (1630 - 1699).

316 Bandyopadhyaya, Sekhara. *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*. Telangana, India: Orient Blackswan, 2004, p. 39.

317 Haudrère, Philippe. *Les Compagnies des Indes Orientales: Trois siècles de rencontre entre Orientaux et Occidentaux (1600-1858).* Paris: Éditions Desjonquères, 2006, p 70.

318 Mccabe, Ina Baghdiantz. *Orientalism in Early Modern France: Eurasian Trade, Exoticism, and the Ancien Régime*. New York: Berg, 2008, p. 104.

319 Prakash, Om. *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India*. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 110.

320 Sarkar, Sir Jadunath. *The History of Bengal*. Vol. 2. New Delhi: B. R. Publishing, 2003, p. 404.

321 Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 208.

322 Family who were among India's most powerful bankers during the first half of the 18th century, later crucial to financing the wars of the British and allies against the Bengali rulers.

[323] David, M. D. *History of Bombay – 1661-1708*. Bombay: University of Bombay, 1973, pp. 179, 304.

[324] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 209.

[325] The name comes from the Carnatic (Karnatik) Coast (also known as Coromandel Coast) on the south east coast of India. These wars were a chain of confrontations between the British of BEIC and the French of the *Compagnie* in India from 1746 to 1748, 1749 to 1754 and 1756 to 1763. At the end, the British presence in India predominated, opening up the prospect of domination in India from the mid-18th century. The French essentially kept control over Pondicherry.

[326] Harvey, Robert. *Clive: The Life and Death of a British Emperor*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1998, pp. 35-36.

[327] Mahmood, Mahmood Khan. *Kingdom of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan: translated from Sultanat e Khudadad*. Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2013, pp. 134-135.

[328] Dodwell, Henry. *Dupleix and Clive: Beginning of Empire*. London: Routledge, 2013, pp. 34-38

[329] Vigié, Marc. *Dupleix*. Paris: Fayard, 1993, p. 363.

[330] Dalgliesh, Wilbert Harold. *The Perpetual Company of the Indies in the days of Dupleix: its administration and organization for the handling of Indian commerce, 1722-1754.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1933, pp. 65-66.

[331] Chopras, P. N.; Puri, B. N.; Das, N. S. & Pradhan, A. C. A. (eds.). *Comprehensive History of Modern India*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2003, pp. 31-32.

[332] Keith, Arthur Berriedale. *Speeches & Documents on Indian Policy, 1750-1921*. London & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922, pp. 13-18.

[333] Roy, Atul Chandra. *History of Bengal: Mughal period, 1526 – 1765 AD*.

Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1968, pp. 417-418.

[334] Bryant, G. J. *The Emergence of British Power in India, 1600 – 1784: a Grand Strategic Interpretation*. Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2013, pp. 111-112.

[335] Naravane, M. S. *Battles of the Honorourable East India Company*. New Delhi: A. P. H. Publishing, 2014, p. 42

[336] Chaurasia, Radhey Shyam. *History of Modern India - 1707 A. D. to 2000 A. D*. New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers, 2002, pp. 93-94.

[337] Ramaswami, R. S. *Political History of Carnactic Under the Nawabs*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1984, pp. 206-207.

[338] Chaurasia, Radhey Shyam. *History of Modern India - 1707 A. D. to 2000 A. D*. New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers, 2002, p. 59.

[339] Turnbull, Patrick. *Warren Hastings*. Los Angeles: New English Library, 1975, p. 73; WOLPERT, Stanley. *A New History of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 190.

[340] Considered by some authors as one of the most cruel and decisive battles of India in the 18th century. Cf. VERMA, Abhas. *Third Battle of Panipat*. New Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, 2013.

[341] Bernstein, Jeremy. D*awning of the Raj: The Life and Trials of Warren Hastings*. Plymouth, UK: Ivan R. Dee, 2000. pp. 137-138.

[342] Rathod, N. G. *The Great Maratha Mahadaji Scindia*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 1994, pp. 20-27.

[343] Starting the so-called Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780 - 1784).

[344] Mahmood, Mahmood Khan. *Kingdom of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan: translated from Sultanat e Khudadad*. Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2013, pp. 92-93.

[345] Bryant, G. J. *The Emergence of British Power in India, 1600 – 1784: a Grand Strategic Interpretation*. Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell &

Brewer, 2013, p. 315.

[346] Rathod, N. G. *The Great Maratha Mahadaji Scindia*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 1994, p. 74.

[347] The beginning of the Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790 - 1792).

[348] Forrest, Dennys. *Tiger of Mysore: The Life and Death of Tipu Sultan*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1970, p. 296.

[349] Hasan, Mohibbul. *History of Tipu Sultan*. New Delhi: Aakar Books, 2005, pp. 331, 342-343, 358.

[350] Keen, Caroline. *Princely India and the British: Political Development and the Operation of Empire*. London & New York: I. B. Tauris, 2012, p. 156.

[351] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *Anglo-Maratha Relations, 1785-96*. Vol. 2. New Delhi: Popular Prakashan, 1995, pp. 246-248.

[352] Singh, Patwant. *Empire of the Sikhs: The Life and Times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. London: Peter Owen, 2008, pp. 73–76.

[353] Wickwire, Franklin & Wickwire, Mary. *Cornwallis: The Imperial Years*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012, p. 43.

[354] Sir William Jones was a polyglot genius. He learned Persian, Arabic, Greek, Latin and Hebrew and some Chinese language at an early age, as well as Welsh, Celtic and English. Later, with his studies of the Vedas and Indian Classics, he became proficient in Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, Urdu among other Asian languages. His thesis sustained that Indo-European languages have a common origin with Sanskrit. He later founded, with other scholars, the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1784, home of Oriental Studies and Indology.

[355] Ibid., p. 94.

[356] British division in India which was administered by a local BEIC council and governor to be approved by Parliament in London. The management of each presidency was responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the company's business and, if necessary, making use

of local force and British officers to enforce the law. From 1765 until the Indo-British reforms of 1858 and the transfer of the Indian capital to Delhi in 1911, the Bengal presidency, centred in Calcutta, served as the political place and residence of the Governor-General. Franda, Marcus F. *West Bengal and the Federalizing Process in India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968, p. 9.

[357] Keay, John. *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company*. London: Macmillan Publishing, 1991, p. 390.

[358] Judd, Denis. T*he Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600 – 1947*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 34-35; Markovits, Claude (ed.). *A History of Modern India: 1480-1950*. London: Anthem Press, 2004, p. 241.

[359] Cassels, Nancy Gardner. *Social Legislation of the East India Company*. New Delhi: Sage Publications India, 2010, p. 346.

[360] Majumdar, Swapan. 'Literature and Literary Life in Old Calcutta' In: Chauduri, Sukanta (ed.). *Calcutta, the Living City*. Vol. 1. New Delhi: Oxford University Press India, 1990, pp. 107–9.

[361] Ingram, Edward. *Empire-building and Empire-builders: Twelve Studies*. London: Frank Cass, 2013, p. 117.

[362] British India region encompassing north-western parts of present-day state of Madhya Pradesh, located in central India.

[363] Singh, R. S. N. *The Unmaking of Nepal*. New Delhi: Lancer, 2010, p. 74.

[364] Naravane, M. S. *Battles of the Honourable East India Company*. New Delhi: A. P. H. Publishing, 2014, pp. 79-86.

[365] Blackburn, Terence R. *The British Humiliation of Burma.* Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2000, p. 28.

[366] Myint-U, Thant. *The River of Lost Footsteps: Histories of Burma*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 2006, p. 113.

[367] Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800 - 1859) was a British poet, writer,

historian who defended the idea that a culture, such as India, should be replaced by one considered more suited to the modern world, such as the English, thus acting on the Indian education system. His ideas gained vogue in India from the Bentick government onwards.

[368] One of the greatest Indian thinkers of the 19th century who proposed a religious reform movement, the *Brahmo Samaj* (Society of the Absolute or Community of Brahman Worshippers), which sought to embrace elements of Christianity such as monotheism, universalism and the rejection of misconceptions of man's condition before divinity. Moreover, he argued that the teaching of Western science and philosophy would reinvigorate Indian thought.

[369] Upadhyaya, Poonam. *Social, Political, Economical Ideas of Raja Rammohun Roy*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1990, p. 59.

[370] Ewans, Martin. *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics*. New York: HarperCollins, 2002, p. 51.

[371] Dalrymple, William. *Return of a King; the Battle for Afghanistan*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013, pp. 359 -387.

[372] Holmes, Rice T. *Sir Charles Napier*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 39.

[373] Knowles, Elizabeth (ed.). *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. 8th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. p. 831.

[374] Hernon, Ian. *Britain's Forgotten Wars.* Stroud, UK: Sutton Publishing, 2003, p. 554; Chhabra, G. S. *Advance Study in the History of Modern India (Volume 2: 1803 - 1920).* New Delhi: Lotus Press, 2005, p. 171; Sidhu, Amarpal Singh. *The First Anglo-Sikh War*. Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: Amberley Publishing, 2013, p. 20.

[375] Gupta, Jyoti Bhusan Das. *Jammu and Kashmir*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1968, p. 22.

[376] Chakrabarty, Rishi Ranjan. *Duleep Singh, the Maharaja of Punjab and the Raj*. Birmingham, UK: D. S. Samra, 1986, p. 49.

[377] James, Lawrence. *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997, p. 115.

[378] Dalhousie would have argued over the events, quoting a Wellesley phrase that any insult to the British flag in the Ganges would be the same offense if it were made on the Thames. Baird, J. G. A. (ed.). *Private Letters of the Marquess of Dalhousie*. Edinburgh, UK: William Blackwood & Sons, 1910. Available at: <https://archive.org/stream/privatelettersof00dalhiala/privatelettersof00dalhiala_djvu.txt>. Accessed in 25 of July 2019.

[379] Unzer, Emiliano. *História da Ásia: uma introdução à sua história moderna e contemporânea*. Vitoria, Brazil: SEAD/ Ufes, 2016, p. 41.

[380] Wolpert, Stanley. *A New History of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 226-28.

[381] Kerr, Ian J. *Railways in Modern India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 149.

[382] Gilmour, David. *The Ruling Caste: Imperial Lives in the Victorian Raj*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2007, p. 9.

[383] Bhatt, Ravi. *The Life and Times of the Nawabs of Lucknow*. New Delhi: Rupa Publications India, 2006, pp. 78–79; SINH, Ranbir. *Wajid Ali Shah: The Tragic King*. Jaipur: Publication Scheme, 2002, p. 144.

[384] Llewellyn-Jones, Rosie. *The Last King in India: Wajid ʿAli Shah, 1822-1887*. London: Hurst & Co., 2014, pp. 3, 10, 275-281.

[385] Mukherjee, Rudrangshu. *Awadh in Revolt, 1857-1858: A Study of Popular Resistance*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2002, p. 65.

[386] Nayar, Pramod K. *The Penguin 1857 Reader*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2007, pp. 11-16.

[387] Mukherjee, Rudrangshu. *Awadh in Revolt, 1857-1858: A Study of Popular Resistance*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2002, pp. 112-113.

[388] Mukherjee, Rudrangshu. *The Spectre of Violence: The 1857 Kanpur*

Massacres. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2007, pp. 102-103, 116.

[389] Harris, John. *The Indian Mutiny.* Ware, Hertfordshire, UK: Wordsworth Editions, 2001, p. 57.

[390] Jerosch, Rainer. *The Rani of Jhansi, Rebel Against Will: A Biography of the Legendary Indian Freedom Fighter in the Mutiny of 1857-1858*. New Delhi: Aakar, 2007, p. 2.

[391] Dewey, Calive. *Anglo-Indian Attitudes: Mind of the Indian Civil Service.* London: Adam & Charles Black, 1993, p. 3.

[392] Krishnaswamy, N. & Krishnaswamy, L. *The Story of English in India*. New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2006, p. 70.

[393] Bear, Laura. *Lines of the Nation: Indian Railway Workers, Bureaucracy, and the Intimate Historical Self*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, pp. 25–28

[394] Metcalf, Thomas R. *The Aftermath of Revolt: India, 1857-1870*. London & Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964, pp. 223, 272.

[395] Kaminsky, Arnold P. *The India Office, 1880-1910*. London: Greenwood, 1986, p. 38.

[396] The term refers to those in Islam of the Sufism branch who follow an ascetic and austere life to achieve divine mystical contemplation.

[397] Mazumdar, Shaswati. *Insurgent Sepoys: Europe Views the Revolt of 1857*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011, p. 103.

[398] Chaurasia, Radhey Shyam. *History of Modern India - 1707 A. D. to 2000 A. D.* New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers, 2002, p. 207.

[399] Ghosh, Peu. *Indian Government and Politics*. New Delhi: PHI Learning, 2012, pp. 7-8.

[400] Cf. Dalrymple, William. *The White Mughals*. London: Penguin Books, 2002.

[401] Seal, Anil. *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971, p. 142.

[402] Dupree, Louis. *Afghanistan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014, p. 404.

[403] Heathcote, T. A. *The Afghan Wars, 1839 – 1919*. Staplehurst, UK: Spellmount, 2007, pp. 134-135.

[404] Barthorp, Michael. *Afghan Wars and the North-West Frontier 1839–1947*. London: Cassell, 2002, pp. 85–90.

[405] Hirschmann, Edwin. *'White Mutiny': the Ilbert Bill Crisis in India and Genesis of the Indian National Congress*. New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1980, pp. 3-6

[406] Singh, M. P. & Saxena, Rekha. *Indian Politics: Constitutional Foundations and Institutional Functioning*. New Delhi: PHI Learning, 2011, p. 279.

[407] Robb, Peter. *A History of India*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 174.

[408] Gupta, Swarupa. *Notions of Nationhood in Bengal: Perspectives on Samaj, c. 1867-1905*. Leiden: Brill, 2009, p. 87.

[409] Vohra, Ranbir. *The Making of India: A Political History*. Armonk, NY, USA: M. E. Sharpe, 2012, pp. 119-121.

[410] Nanda, Bal Ram. *Gokhale: The Indian Moderates and the British Raj*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015, pp. 234-237.

[411] Prasad, Amar Nath & MALIK, Rajiv K. *Indian English Poetry & Fiction: Critical Elucidations*. Vol. 1. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2007, p. 12.

[412] Aurobindo, Sri. *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2006, pp. 68-77.

[413] Spiritualist doctrine of international vocation of the 19th century linked to occult traditions and Eastern religions.

[414] Lal, Kishan. *Revolutionary Activities in Delhi*. New Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1999, p. 10.

[415] Ellinwood, Dewitt C. & PRADHAN, S. D. *India and World War I*. New Delhi: Manohar, 1978, pp. 183-185.

[416] Majmudar, Uma. *Gandhi's Pilgrimage of Faith: From Darkness to Light*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2005, p. 138.

[417] Desai, Ashwin & Vahed, Goolem. *The South African Gandhi: Stretcher-Bearer of Empire*. Redwood City, California: Stanford University Press, 2015, pp. 30-33, 40.

[418] Kulke, Hermann & Rothermund, Dietmar. *A History of India*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 249.

[419] Collett, Nigel. *The Butcher of Amritsar: General Reginald Dyer*. London: A & C Black, 2006, pp. 262-263.

[420] Minault, Gail. *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 64.

[421] Collett, Nigel. *The Butcher of Amritsar: General Reginald Dyer*. London: A & C Black, 2006, pp. 400-401.

[422] Unzer, Emiliano. *História da Ásia: uma introdução à sua história moderna e contemporânea*. Vitoria, Brazil: SEAD/ Ufes, 2016, p. 57.

[423] Tomlison, B. R. *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-1942*. London: Macmillan, 1976, p. 33.

[424] A place of retreat and communion where yoga, music, study of religious and philosophical subjects are practiced.

[425] Ibid. p. 33.

[426] Bakshi, S. R. *Simon Commission and Indian Nationalism*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1977 , p. 102.

[427] Gandhi, Mahatma & Dalton, Denis (eds.). *Gandhi: Selected Political*

Writings. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986, p. 20.

[428] Johnson, Richard L. *Gandhi's Experiments with Truth: Essential Writings By and About Mahatma Gandhi*. London: Lexington Books, 2006, pp. 31-32.

[429] Keer, Dhananjay. *Dr. Ambedkar: Life and Mission*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 2005, pp. 136–140.

[430] Estimated at over 500 different units.

[431] Muldoon, Andrew. *Empire, Politics and the Creation of the 1935 India Act: Last Act of the Raj*. Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2009, pp. 101, 159.

[432] Ibid., p. 138.

[433] Sharma, Brij Kishore. *Introduction to the Constitution of India.* New Delhi: PHI Learning, 2015, p. 15.

[434] Akbar, M. J. *Nehru: The Making of India*. New Delhi: Roli Books, 2004, pp. 256, 335.

[435] Ramusack, Barbara N. *The New Cambridge History of India: The Indian Princes and their States.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 167.

[436] Composed at the time of the provinces of Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Madras, Orissa, Central Provinces, Northwest Province, United Provinces, Punjab and Sind.

[437] Hiro, Dilip. *The Longest August: The Unflinching Rivalry between India and Pakistan*. New York: Nation Books, 2015, p. 60.

[438] Getz, Marshall J. *Subhas Chandra Bose: A Biography*. Jefferson, NC, USA: Macfarland & Company, 2002, p. 36.

[439] Pandey, B. N. *Nehru*. London: Macmillan, 1976, pp. 226-230.

[440] Batabyal, Rakesh. *Communalism in Bengal: From Famine to Noakhali, 1943-47.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005, p. 380.

[441] Jackson, Ashley. *The British Empire and the Second World War*. London & New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2006, p. 47.

[442] Vohra, Ranbir. *The Making of India: A Political History*. London: M. E. Sharpe, 2013, p. 176.

[443] Sen, Sailendra Nath. *History of the Freedom Movement in India (1857-1947)*. New Delhi: New Age International, 2003, pp. 317-318.

[444] Bourke-White, Margaret. *Halfway to Freedom: A Report on the New India in the Words and Photographs of Margaret Bourke-White*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1949, pp. 15-16.

[445] Chatterji, Joya. *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947 – 1967*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 105; Tan, Tai Yong & Kudaysia, Gyanesh. *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia*. London & New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 231-234.

[446] Copland, Ian. *The Princes of India in the Endgame of Empire, 1917–1947*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 264.

[447] Menon, V. P. *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*. New York: Macmillan, 1956, pp. 394-395.

[448] Dominion refers to a political entity within those countries that were British colonies and that have full sovereignty except, symbolically, to retain the figure of the British monarchy as top representative of the head of state, but without any effective executive power. DOUGLAS, Roy. *World Crisis and British Decline, 1929-56*. London: Macmillan, 1986, p. 126.

[449] Wilson, A. Jeyaratnam. *Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Its Origins and Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000, pp. 1-2.

[450] Marsh, Kate. *Fictions of 1947: Representations of Indian Decolonization 1919-1962*. Berne: Peter Lang, 2007, p. 11.

[451] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's*

Largest Democracy. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, p. 36.

[452] Ibid., pp. 42-43.

[453] Sarkar, Sumit. *Modern India, 1885 – 1947*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989, pp. 451-452.

[454] Bakshi, S. R. & Ralhan, O. P. *Madhya Pradesh through the Ages*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2007, p. 360.

[455] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 48-49.

[456] Yagnik, Achyut & Sheth, Suchitra. *The Shaping of Modern Gujarat: Plurality, Hindutva and Beyond*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2005, pp. 222-224.

[457] Metcalf, Barbara D. & Metcalf, Thomas R. *A Concise History of India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 223-224

[458] Kate, P. V. *Marathwada under the Nizams, 1724–1948*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1987, p.75.

[459] Pandits are Hindu Kashmiris originating from the Kashmir valley. Their history goes back thousands of years and they preserved their faith from Buddhism, Islam and Sikhism in the region.

[460] Bajwa, Kuldip Singh. *Jammu And Kashmir War, 1947-1948: Political And Military Perspective*. New Delhi: Har-Anand, 2004, Pp. 90-91.

[461] Guha, Ramachandra. *India After Gandhi: The History Of The World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 62-63.

[462] Ibid., p. 65.

[463] Schofield, Victoria. *Kashmir In Conflict: India, Pakistan And The Unending War*. London & New York: I. B. Taurus, 2000, Pp. 67-71.

[464] Korbel, Josef. *Danger in Kashmir*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, p. 25.

[465] Khanna, H. R. *Making of India's Constitution*. Lucknow: Eastern Book Company, 2008, pp. 13-14.

[466] Ibid., pp. 134-135.

[467] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, p. 112.

[468] Ibid., p. 114.

[469] Ibid., p. 115.

[470] According to a 2001 census, India had 122 languages and over 1,500 dialects. Thirty languages spoken by over one million people were categorized, and 122 languages spoken by over 10,000 people. In Part XVII of the Indian Constitution, more than twenty official regional languages are recognized: Assamese, Bengali (Bangla), Bodo, Kannada, Kashmir, Konkani, Dogri, Gujarati, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Panjabi , Sanskrit, Santali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and other regional languages that are spoken but not declared as official by the state. KING, Robert Desmond. *Nehru and the Language Politics of India*. Oxford & New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 3-4; UNZER, Emiliano. *História da Ásia: uma introdução à sua história moderna e contemporânea*. Vitoria, Brazil: SEAD / Ufes, 2016, p. 97.

[471] Hindustani is a language widely spoken mainly in North Indian. The language incorporated elements of the Hindi and Urdu language, written in Devanagari form derived from Sanskrit and Arabic. Given this dual origin, Hindustani can be written in both Arabic and the Devanagari alphabet.

[472] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 119-120.

[473] Khanna, H. R. *Making of India's Constitution*. Lucknow: Eastern Book Company, 2008, p. 90.

[474] Todd, Anne M. *Mohandas Gandhi*. New York: Chelsea House, 2009, p.

87.

[475] Erdman, Howard Loyd. *The Swatantra Party and Indian Conservatism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 65.

[476] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 288-290.

[477] Tan, See Seng & Acharya, Amitav (eds.). *Bandung Revisited: The Legacy of the 1955 Asian-African Conference for International Order*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2008, p. 166.

[478] Mcgarr, Paul M. *The Cold War in South Asia: Britain, the United States and the Indian Subcontinent, 1945-1965*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 32-33.

[479] Orton, Anna. *India's Borderland Disputes: China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal*. New Delhi: Epitome Books, 2010, pp. 10-11.

[480] Heptulla, Najma. *Indo-West Asian Relations: The Nehru Era*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1991, p. 189.

[481] Schofield, Victoria. *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2003, p. 109.

[482] Bajwa, Farooq. *From Kutch to Tashkent: The Indo-Pakistan War of 1965*. London: Hurst, 2013, p. 362

[483] Brass, Paul R. *The Politics of India since Independence (The New Cambridge History of India: IV, I)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 38.

[484] Frankel, Francine R. *India's Green Revolution: Economic Gains and Political Costs*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971, p. 151.

[485] Sisson, Richard & Rose, Leo E. *War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 177.

[486] Singh, Vijay Kumar. *Leadership in the Indian Army: Biographies of Twelve Soldiers*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2005.

[487] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 457-461

[488] Nuclear test program codenamed 'Smiling Buddha' or 'Pokhran-I'.

[489] Dhar, P. N. *Indira Gandhi, The 'Emergency', and Indian Democracy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 259-265.

[490] Brass, Paul R. *The Politics of India since Independence (The New Cambridge History of India: IV, I)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 41-42.

[491] Krishna, Ananth V. *India since Independence: Making Sense of Indian Politics*. New Delhi: Pearson, 2010, p. 117.

[492] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, p. 547.

[493] Chopra, Joginder Kumar. *Politics of Election Reforms in India*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1989, pp. 81-82.

[494] Agrawal, S. P. *Reorganization of North-East India since 1947*. New Delhi: Concept, 1996, p. 274.

[495] J. S. Grewal. *The Sikhs of Punjab (The New Cambridge History of India, II.3)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 222.

[496] Aggarwal, J. C. & Agrawal, S. P. *Modern History of Punjab*. New Delhi: Concept, 1992, pp. 108-110.

[497] Tully, Mark & Jacobs, Satish. *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's Last Battle*. New Delhi: Rupa, 2006, p. 15.

[498] Chand, Attar. *Rajiv Gandhi: His Mind and Ideology*. New Delhi: Gian, 1991, p. 353.

[499] Bhutan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh and,

since 2008, Afghanistan.

[500] Das, Ramesh Chandra. *Handbook of Research on Global Indicators of Economic and Political Convergence*. Hershey, Pennsylvania, USA: IGI Global, 2016, p. 120.

[501] Wilson, A. Jeyaratnam. *Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Its Origins and Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000, pp. 148-151.

[502] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 596-597.

[503] Agrawal, S. P. & Aggarwal, J. C. *Nation in Crisis: Achievements, Failures, and Non-function of the Government.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1991, p. 175.

[504] Bose, Sumantra. *Transforming India: Challenges to the World's Largest Democracy*. Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press, 2013, p. 73.

[505] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. NewDelhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. 641-643.

[506] Aiyar, Mani Shankar. *A Time of Transition: Rajiv Gandhi to the 21st Century*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2009, p 71.

[507] Varadarajan, Siddharth (ed.). *Gujarat: The Making of a Tragedy*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2002, pp. 47-81.

[508] Sinha, Satyabrat. 'The Indian-Pakistan Peace Process: Incremental Progress?'. In: Ghosh, Anjali; Chakraborti, Tridib; Majumdar, A. J. & Chatterjee, Shibashis (eds.). *India's Foreign Policy*. New Delhi: Pearson, 2009, pp. 230-231.

[509] Nadkarni, Vidya. 'India – An Aspiring Global Power'. In: Nadkarni, Vidya & Noonan, Norma C. (eds.). *Emerging Powers in a Comparative Perspective: The Political and Economic Rise of the BRIC Countries*. London & New York: Bloomsbury, 2013, p. 141.

[510] Pylee, M. V. *Constitutional Government in India*. New Delhi: S. Chand, 2010, p. 530.

[511] Stuenkel, Oliver. *The BRICS and the Future of Global Order*. London & New York: Lexington, 2015, pp. 25-26.

[512] Russell, Malcolm B. *The Middle East and South Asia 2014: The World Today Series 2014-2015.* Lanham, Maryland, USA: Rowman & Littlefiled, 2014, p. 238.

[513] Anand, Rahul. *Understaning India's Food Inflation*. Washington, D. C.: International Monetary Fund, 2016, p. 6.

[514] Guha, Ramachandra. *India after Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New Delhi & London: Picador India, 2007, pp. xix-xx.

[515] The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry Of Home Affairs, Government Of India. *Census of India: Religious Composition*. New Delhi, 2001. Available at: <http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/religion.aspx>. Accessed in: 22 of June 2019.

[516] Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. London: Penguin Classics, 2015.

[517] The Economist. *Population Forecasts: The World's Biggest Country.* 15 August of 2015. Available at: <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21661055-worlds-biggest-country>. Accessed in: 10 July of 2019.

About the author

PhD in Social History at University of Sao Paulo and MScEcon in Postcolonial Politics at University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK. Professor of Asian History at the Federal University of Espirito Santo, Brazil, has written many articles and books on the subject.

prof_emil@hotmaill.com