

History of Rajasthan: An Introduction

The State of Rajasthan, came to be known by this name in 1949. It is generally believed that in 1800 AD George Thomas was the first person to call this region 'Rajputana', which is now called Rajasthan. Later on, in 1829, the author of the Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Colonel James Tod named this region 'Raithan' or 'Rajasthan'. After India became independent and the unification of the various princely States of the region took place on 30 March, 1949 AD, it was unanimously named Rajasthan.

In the ancient literature and inscriptions, we come across different names for different territories of the present Rajasthan. Some areas were named after their geographical characteristics and others were named after the name of the communities living there. Among the oldest names we come across in the Rigveda are: 'Maru', 'Dhanva', 'Jangala', 'Matsya', 'Shursena' etc. The terms 'Maru' and 'Dhanva' have the same meaning and both the terms were used for the area under the present Jodhpur Division. Jodhpur was first called 'Maru', then 'Maruvara' and later on came to be called 'Marwar'. The name 'Jangal' was given to the land where Shami (*Prosopis cineraria*), Kair (*Capparis decidua*), Pilu (*Salvadora indica*) etc. grew. Bikaner, Nagaur and the adjoining area were called the Jangal desh. Matsya, which has been mentioned in the Mahabharata as a kingdom, extended over the parts of Jaipur, Alwar and Bharatpur. Its capital was Viratanagar. Parts of Bharatpur, adjoining Mathura and the major parts of Dholpur and Karauli formed the Shursena kingdom. This also was an ancient kingdom. It finds mention in the Mahabharata also.

Some other areas named after their geographical features are as follows: the terrain of the Pratapgarh district adjoining the river Mahi was called 'Kanthal' (riverside terrain) because of its location on the kantha of the river. The middle part of Pratapgarh-Banswara being a cluster of 56 villages was known as Chhappan ka

Maidan. The terrain extending from Bhainsrorgarh to Bijolia, for being a plateau was known as Uparmala.

The area around Udaipur, a hilly terrain, was called Girava.



The ancient names of the various areas of Rajasthan

The ancient name of Jaisalmer was Mand. Dungarpur-Banswara region was called Vagad. Kota and Bundi region, Hadoti and the region stretching across Sikar, Jhunjhunu and Churu districts was jointly called Shekhawati.

Division of History

Broadly the human history is divided into three periods : (1) Pre-historical, (2) Proto-historical and (3) Historical. Pre-historical is the period before the invention of writing. Its knowledge is solely based on physical or archaeological evidence; Proto-historical is the period when we begin to come across written sources, but which remain un-deciphered or literary evidence which has not yet been committed to writing; Historical period is the one which is mainly known from written literary sources. On the basis of the above classification we may chronologically divide the history of India thus : (1) Pre-historical period – From the beginning up to the Harappan civilization; (2) Proto-historical period – from the Harappan civilization up to 600 BC; (3) Historical period – from 600 BC up to the present.

Pre-Historical Rajasthan (Rajasthan in The Pre-Historical Period)

The first human settlements have been found from the places near river streams where water, flora and fauna are available in abundance. Hundreds of years ago the geographical condition of Rajasthan was different from what it is today. A large part of Rajasthan is desert now. But hundreds of years ago a part of the desert was the sea, and the rivers Saraswati and Drishadwati flowed into it. These conditions were suitable for man to settle. Because of such geographical and climatic conditions Rajasthan happened to become one of the most ancient of regions where the journey of man towards civilisation began. The first phase of human history, which is called Paleolithic period, is further divided into three sub-phases: Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic.

Paleolithic Period – It is difficult to set a definite date as to the first settlements of man in Rajasthan. Yet from the tools of quartzite found in excavations at various places we can safely infer that man lived here from around one and half lac to two lac years ago. In 1870, C. A. Hackett discovered a Paleolithic hand-axe from Jaipur and Indragarh in Bundi. Later on, Seton Karr discovered Paleolithic tools from Jhalawar. Thereafter, Indian Archaeology and Museums Department, V. N. Mishra of Deccan College Pune, R. C. Agrawal, Vijay Kumar, Harish Chandra Mishra and others of the Department of Rajasthan Archaeology and Museums brought to light Paleolithic sites on the banks of the rivers, especially Chambal, Banas and their tributaries flowing through the districts of Ajmer, Alwar, Chittor, Bhilwara, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jhalawar, Jalore, Pali, Tonk, etc. The credit for finding the Paleolithic tools goes to B. Allchin. Evidently the Paleolithic man lived over such an extensive region in Rajasthan.

Mesolithic Period – The Mesolithic tools have been found from various places, mainly from the places on the sides of river Luni and its tributaries, from the banks of Berach river bank in Chittor and from Viratnagar. Bagor (in Bhilwara) is the largest Mesolithic site in India. Tilwara (in Barmer) is another important site of this period. The tools of this period include blades, engravers, triangles, crescents, trapeze, scrapers, pointers, etc. made of Jasper, agate, chert, carnelian, quartzite, chalcedony, etc. They are called microliths, as they are small in size. These tools are representative of improvement of tool-making technique.

Neolithic Period – Neolithic phase developed in Rajasthan as in different parts of India. Many tools of this period have been found in Ajmer, Nagaur, Sikar, Jhunjhunu, Jaipur, Udaipur, Chittor and Jodhpur.

Metal Ages in Rajasthan

From various places in Rajasthan have been found remains of the chalcolithic,

copper and copper-bronze cultures, which throw ample light on the history of the cultural development in this region. The prominent among the copper using cultures are: Ganeshwar (Sikar), Kalibangan (Hanumangarh), Gilund (Rajsamand), Ahar and Jharol (Udaipur), Pind-Padliya (Chittor), Kurada (Nagaur), Sabania and Pugal (Bikaner), Nandlalpura, Kiradot nad Chithwadi (Jaipur), Elana (Jalore), Budha Pushkar (Ajmer), Kota Maholi (Sawai Madhopur), and Malah (Bharatpur).

Iron Age – The age of Iron followed the age of copper and bronze. The knowledge of the iron and its use was a revolutionary event. The agricultural implements made of iron were far more superior in durability and working. They helped transform the whole socio-economic scenario. From Noh (Bharatpur), Jodhpura (Jaipur), Sunari (Jhunjhunu), Rairh (Tonk) iron implements and weapons have been found. The iron implements and tools from Noh are important source to fix the date of the advent of the Iron Age in India. From Jodhpura and Sonari remains of the furnaces for iron forging weapons and other implements have been found. Rairh is called the ancient ‘Tatanagar’ of Rajasthan because of the abundance of the iron articles found here.

In continuance with Iron Age a few centuries later arose cultures known for their pottery. These have been named Painted Gray Ware (PGW) cultures. Remains of these cultures were found from Viratnagar, Jodhpura, Sonari, Noh; etc. Thereafter, begins the historical period in Rajasthan.

Ancient Civilisations of Rajasthan

Kalibangan - The ancient Drishadvati and Saraswati river valley (present day Ghaggar riverine area) cradled the civilisation of Kalibangan. This civilisation situated in Hanumangarh district is six thousand years old. The site where this civilisation was excavated came to be called Kalibangan after the black bangles found during the excavations here. In Punjabi ‘bangan’ means bangles. Amalanand Ghose was first to report this site in 1952. In 1961-62 B. B. Lal and B. K. Thapar undertook the excavations here, which revealed five cultural levels. The first two levels are older than the Harappan civilisation. The material excavated from the rest of the three levels is similar to and therefore contemporary of the Harappan civilisation. On this basis the civilisation here has been dated as (1) Pre-Harappan and (2) Harappan.

Kalibangan was a planned city. Generally, the sunbaked bricks were used to build houses. The earthen pots and pot sherds found here are light, thin and not well-made. Pots are painted red with black and white line decorations. A ploughed field has also been found here. From the ploughing patterns it is inferred that they sowed two crops simultaneously. The burial ground discovered here provides information about the burial systems prevalent here. A skull of a child with six holes has also

been found. The holes may have been the indication of treatment given for encephalitis. Toy bullock-cart, fire altars, wooden drains and a cylindrical seal are some other finds of significance.

Ahar – A 4000-years old chalcolithic culture was discovered following excavations at Ahar on the banks of the Ahar river near Udaipur. It was found buried under a mound called Dhoolkot (dhoolkot means earthen mound). Excavations here were undertaken first by Akshyakirti Vyas in 1953 followed by Ratan Chandra Agrawal and H. D. Sankalia.

Houses here were made of sunbaked brick and stone. The Ahar people buried their dead with jewelry and ornaments, which testify their belief in life after death. Large quantities of clay Black and Red pottery have been found here, which makes Ahar a major center of the Black and Red Ware culture. Ahar was also known by the name Tamravati because a large number of copper implements and tools have been found here. Discovery of blocks indicate that dyeing and printing of cloth was one of the main professions.

Gilund – Excavations at two mounds in Gilund in Rajasamand district on the banks of river Banas brought to light a culture associated with the Ahar culture. It is also called Banas culture. The first excavation here was conducted under the supervision of B. B. Lal in 1957-58. Thereafter, another excavation was undertaken by V. S. Shinde of Deccan College, Pune and Gregory Possehl of University of Pennsylvania between 1998 and 2003. Remains of a Chalcolithic culture were found here in two phases. The Phase II may have begun in the middle of the second millennium B. C.

The Chalcolithic pottery found here can be classified in following broad groups: Red ware, Black and Red ware, Painted ware, Buff ware and Grey Ware. Clay toys, beads and ivory bangles are some other finds. Houses were made of mud-brick, but use and manufacture of burnt brick was also found. Burnt brick was not in use in Ahar.

Bagor – Bagor is an important Mesolithic and Microlithic site. It is situated in Bhilwara district on the banks of river Kothari. Bagor was excavated under the supervision of V. N. Mishra between 1967 and 1970. Four to five thousand years old remains of prehistorical period were found here. Copper implements have been found in abundance, a needle with an eye is an important find. The economy was based on hunting and stock-raising, though evidence of agriculture has also been found.

Ganeshwar – Ganeshwar is an important site of a copper culture discovered at the source of river Kantali at Neem ka Thana in Sikar district. Here, excavations first

undertaken by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, brought to light around 5000 years old culture. A large number of painted OCP (Ochre Colour Pottery) pot sherds decorated with patterns in black colour have been found. The copper implements found here have a very high copper ingredient, which suggest the abundant availability of the metal here. In fact, copper was supplied to the Harappans from here.

Some other Important Ancient Cultures

Excavations carried out by R. C. Agrawal have also yielded remains of an ancient settlement. An important find from the site is a Roman amphora; (water jug with a short neck and two bowed opposite handles from shoulder to neck); which may be indicative of its being a foreign trade center.

Similarly, from Iswal village in Udaipur district remains of an iron age culture have been found.

Bairath was ancient Viratnagar, the capital of the ancient Matsya janapad. where the Pandavas spent the thirteenth year of their exile in disguise (agyatavas). Two Ashokan inscriptions and some important ancient Buddhist relics have also been found here. Excavations carried out on the hill called Bijak-ki-Pahari have yielded remains of a Mauryan circular stupa-shrine made of lime-plastered panels of brickwork alternating with twenty-six octagonal pillars of wood, preceded by monastic remains with a double row of cells arranged around an open square courtyard. The Ashokan Bhabhru inscription is considered to be the most authentic document attesting Ashoka being a Buddhist.

Balathal is an important chalcolithic site from Vallabhnagar tehsil of Udaipur district. It was excavated by V. N. Mishra. Its contact with the Harappan civilisation is attested from their house construction; and Reserve-Slipped ware (high quality glossy bichrome pottery) found here.

Ancient cultures have also been recovered from Rangmahal (Hanumangarh), Ojhiana (Bhilwara), Nagari (Chittor), Baror (Ganganagar), Tilwara (Barmer), Jodhpura (Jaipur), Sunari (Jhunjhunu), Noh (Bharatpur), Nagar (Malpura Tehsil, Tonk); etc.

Expansion of Aryan Culture – After the decline of the Harappan civilisation (around 1800 B. C.) begins the age of the Aryan culture. Though many historians disagree with this view; as they believe that the Harappan and the Aryan were not two different civilisations. Sources of the history of early Aryans are the four Vedas (Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda), and therefore; this period is called the Vedic Period. Material remains of this culture have been found in Rajasthan from Anupgarh, Tarkhan Wala Dera and Chak-64.

A number of settlements of the Aryans find mention in the epics. Ramayana tells the story that when Lord Rama wanted to cross the ocean to reach Lanka, he requested the ocean deity for permission to cross over. The ocean did not pay any heed to Rama's request. This angered Rama and he loaded a divine arrow (amoghastra) on his bow to dry up the ocean. Seeing the danger, the ocean deity appeared and pleaded for mercy. But once loaded the divine weapon had to be used. Therefore, at the advice of the ocean deity divine arrow was launched towards the north and it created the Thar desert by drying up the whole area, which was under the sea. Though this is a legend, but it shows that this region was known to the author of the Ramayana.

The Aryans of Rajasthan find mention in the Mahabharata as well. According to the Mahabharata, The Jangal (Bikaner) was under the Kaurava-Pandava Kingdom. The kingdom of Matsya, where the Pandavas spent their thirteenth year in exile, was an ally. Virata, the king of Matsya died fighting on the side of the Pandavas in the war of Mahabharata.

Due to the lack of adequate archeological and literary sources from this period between the Mahabharata war and Gautam Buddha, not much light can be shed on this period. From the time of the Buddha, with the advent of the historical period, we begin to get more reliable evidence. From the Buddhist sources we come to know that this period is marked by two dominant trends apart from the rise of Buddhism and Jainism – the rise of the janapadas and struggle among them for empire.

Janapadas of Rajasthan

As in other regions of India many janapadas arose, developed and declined. Anguttar Nikaya, a Buddhist text, gives a list of 16 janapadas, which includes Matsya janapada, which was situated in Rajasthan. Moreover, many parts of Rajasthan were under the janapadas of Kuru, Shursen and Avanti. Apart from these the area around Chittor was known as the janapada of the Shivis. Later on, in the wake of Alexander's invasion of India in 327 B.C. republican tribes – Malavas, Yaudheya and the Arjunanayanas – migrated from Punjab to settle in Rajasthan.

Matsya Janapada – As an Arya tribe, the Matsyas has been first mentioned in the Rigveda. This is indicative of its being a very ancient tribe. The Shathpatha Brahmana and Kaushitaki Upanishad also refer to the Matsya tribe. The Mahabharata mentions the Matsya janapada as a prominent janapada. Its boundaries extended upto the hills of Chambal in the south and up to the forests of the river Saraswati in Punjab. Some parts of modern Jaipur, Alwar and Bharatpur formed this janapada. During the Mahabharata times, Matsya kingdom was ruled by king Virata, who built Viratnagar (Bairath) and made it his capital. It is situated around 85 kilometers from

Jaipur. King Virata's daughter was married to Arjuna's son Abhimanyu, whose son Parikshit later inherited the Pandava throne.

According to Dr. Gopi Nath Sharma, after the Mahabharata, Kuru and Yadava janapadas became weak and taking advantage of their weakness Matsya became powerful. In proximity to the janapada, in some parts of Alwar lived the Shalvas. Matsya janapada shared borders with the Chedi janapada. These neighbours often fought with each other. Later on, all of them fell victim to the Magadhan imperialist expansion and were incorporated into the Magadhan empire. During the reign of Mauryas the Matsya janapada was a part of the Magadhan empire. An Ashokan edict and other remains of the Mauryan period found from Bairath confirm this fact.

Origin of The Rajputs

After the death of Harshvardhana in 647 A.D., the political unity established by the Guptas ended and many small kingdoms came to be established in northern India. These kingdoms were ruled by new royal dynasties, which came to be called the Rajput dynasties. The importance of the new dynasties can be gauged from the fact that the post-Harsha period up to the establishment of the Delhi Sultaenate is called the Rajput period in the history of India.

The famous British historian Vincent Smith has written that after the death of Harshavardhana till the establishment of the Muslim rule, they (the Rajputs) had become so powerful that the period from the middle of the seventh century up to the end of the twelfth century may be called the Rajput period.

Who were the Rajputs? This still remains a tangled question. Many theories have been propounded by scholars regarding the origin of the Rajputs but there is no universally accepted view. Gaurishankar Ojha, writing about the origin of the Rajputs, says; that the term Rajput is not new. We come across this term in ancient texts as well. Chanakya in his Arthashastra, Kalidas in his plays and Banabhatta in his Kadambari have used its tatsam form rajputra. The Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang refers to the rulers as Kshatriya as well as Rajput. But this view of Ojha is not a universally accepted view. We do not come across the term Rajput used for a clan or a caste before the Muslim invasions of India, though the term Rajaputra was also used to refer to the kshatriyas of the royal family. Now, we will discuss in brief various theories about the origin of the Rajputs.

Descendants of the Vedic Aryans – According to Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha and C. V. Vaid the Rajputs are the descendants of the Vedic kshatriyas (rajanya). They argue that like the ancient Kshatriyas they perform the horse and weapon puja (worship) and yagina and sacrifice (bali). Their well-shaped bodies, long and sharp nose and elongated head make them the descendants of the Aryans.

Origin from Agni-Kunda (Sacrificial Fire-Pit) – Chandra Bardai, who was the court poet of Prithviraj III, relates the story in Prithviraja Raso about the origin of the Rajputs from agni-kunda. According to him, the ancient sages – Vishvamitra, Gautam, Agastya and others – were tormented by the Rakshasas, who would pollute the yajnas the sages performed. Therefore, sage Vashishtha performed a Yajna to safeguard the Vedic religion. Out of the Yajna-fire arose the warriors, whose descendants came to be known as the the Parmaras, Chalukyas and the Pratiharas. When these failed to provide protection, the sages created the fourth one, who was more powerful than the three and was adorned with weapons. They called him Chauhan. According to Bardai in this manner the Rajputs were born out of the Agni-Kunda as a result of the yajna performed by Vashishtha.

In this modern scientific age this story would not be accepted though, yet there are a few pointers in this story that the scholars have tried to understand. According to these scholars, the kshatriyas who had converted to Buddhism or the aboriginal tribes, such as the Bhils, Minas or the foreign invaders; such as the Shakas, Hunas, Yueh-chi etc. were consecrated by the yajna fire and integrated in the society as kshatriyas.

Brahmanical Origin – Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar was first to propound the theory of the origin of Rajputs from the Nagara brahmanas. He refers to the Bijolia rock inscription where the heir of Vasudev Chauhan has been referred to as a brahmana of Vatsa gotra, as an evidence for his view. Moreover, according to him the marriage of the brahmana Rajshekhara with Avanti Sundari is an incontrovertible evidence of the origin of the Chauhanas from a brahmana clan. Dr Gopinath Sharma also establishes the Guhilotas of Mewar as the descendants of brahmana Guhedatta of the Nagara clan. Maharana Kumbha of Mewar in his commentary on Gita Govinda accepts the fact that the Guhilotas are the descendants of a Nagara brahmana Guhedatta. But some other historians, especially Dashrath Sharma, do not accept this theory. According to them, some Rajputs adopted the gotra of their purohit, which leads to the impression that they are the descendants of a brahmana ancestor. Dr. Dashrath Sharma logically refutes this view.

Foreign Origin – James Tod says that the Rajputs are descendants of the Sakas or Scythians. On the basis of the fire-pit origin theory he tries to establish his view of foreign origin of the Rajputs. According to him these foreign tribes came to India and when these very foreign conquerors became the rulers, they were consecrated by performing the fire sacrifice and were anointed as kshatriyas. His argument to prove that the Rajputs were scythians is that their customs and traditions, such as horse-worship, weapon-worship, arms-training etc. are similar to that of the Scythian and the Hunas. V. A. Smith says that the Rajputs who appeared suddenly in the 8th or the

9th century were the descendants of the Hunas.

These views cannot be accepted for the following reasons: First, the Rajputs never believed that they were of the foreign origin. They call themselves the descendants of the solar and the lunar lines of the ancient kshatriyas. To show similarities between the customs of the Rajputs and the Scythians is right. As these customs were already prevalent in India.

It is clear from the above that there is a deep difference of opinion among the scholars. In the absence of any conclusive proof most scholars accept the Rajputs as the descendants of the Indo-Aryans. This is also true that the foreign tribes that came to India, settled down here and were gradually got integrated into the Indian society. Dr. Kanungo is right when he says that the 'fire pit' story would not be accepted by the modern mind, the same is true for the solar or lunar origins. But one thing is beyond doubt, that they kept the customs and traditions of the Kshatriyas of the epic period alive.

Prominent Rajput Dynasties of Rajasthan

Guhil Dynasty and its Important Rulers –

Udaipur, Rajsamand, Chittor, Pratapgarh and their surrounding area was known as Mewar. The Guhilas ruled Mewar. This dynasty was named after its founder Guhil. There are diverse views about the origin and the native place of the Guhilas. Abu'l Fazl relates them to a Naushekhan, a ruler of Iran. Tod associates them with the rulers of Vallabhi, whereas Nainasi and Gopinath Sharma refer to them as Brahmanas. According to Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, Guhil established his rule around 566 AD. After Guhil the next important ruler was Bappa.

Bappa Rawal (734-753) – From 'Raj Prashasti' we come to know that in 734 AD Bappa defeated Manmori, the ruler of Chittor and annexed Chittor. The capital of Bappa's kingdom was Nagada. He built a temple of Eklingaji (Lakulisha) at Kailashpuri. Eklingaji was the tutelary deity of the Guhilas. According to Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha the real name of Bappa was Kalabhoj. Bappa was his title. The author of Vira Vinod Shyamaladas says that Bappa was not anybody's name, it was a title. It is believed that Bappa was in the service of Manamori. When a foreign army attacked Chittor, Bappa Rawal took the challenge and chased them off as far as Sindh. It is because of this reason that historian C. V. Vaidya compares him with Charles Martel (a French commander, who was first to defeat Muslims in Europe).

Jaitra Singh (1213-1253) – Jaitra Singh, a Guhil descendant, conquered Chittor from the Parmaras and made it the capital of his kingdom. He also defeated

the army of Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi in the battle of Bhutala in 1227. This battle has been described in Jaisingh Suri's *Hammir Maradana*. In this book Iltutmish has been called Hammir. Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha has lavished praise on him. He writes, during the times of the Sultans of the Slave Dynasty in Delhi, Jaitra Singh of all the kings of Mewar, was the most brilliant and powerful, who earned praise even of his adversaries.

Ratan Singh (1302-1303) – Rawal Ratan Singh had to face the invasion of Alauddin Khilji in 1303. The cause of the attack was imperialist ambition of Alauddin and the strategic and commercial importance of Chittor. A later day writer Malik Muhammad Jayasi in his book *Padmavat* (1540 AD) says that the reason of the attack was to acquire Padmini, wife of Ratan Singh. Dr. Dashrath Sharma accords credence to it, but a large number of historians do not accept this view.

Alauddin Khilji's forces laid siege to the fort. It was a long siege. Eventually, Ratan Singh and his commanders, Gora and Badal fell fighting Alauddin's army and Rani Padmini with 1600 other women performed jauhar. Amir Khusrau, Alauddin's court historian who participated in this battle has described this battle in his *Khazain-ul-Futuh* (a short history of Alauddin Khilji's reign). Alauddin appointed his son Khijra Khan the administrator of Chittor and changed the name of Chittor to Khijrabad. Ratan Singh is regarded to be the last ruler of the Rawal branch of the Guhil dynasty.

Rana Hammir (1326-1364) – In 1326 AD, Hammir, a Jagirdar of Sisodha thikana, wrested and occupied Chittor and re-established the Guhil dynasty there. He was called Sisodiya as he was the jagirdar of Sisoda. Hammir's grandfather Lakshman Singh, with his sons, died fighting against Alauddin Khilji. The line of rulers after him came to be called the Sisodiyas. Hammir is also called the 'Liberator of Mewar'. Rana Hammir has also been called Vishamghati Panchanan (like a lion in arduous battles) in Rana Kumbha's *Kirtistambha Prashasti*. Hammir has the credit of defeating Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's army in the battle of Singoli (Banswara).

Maharana Lakha (1382-1421) – Maharana Lakha ascended the throne in 1382. Hansabai, sister of Ranamal of Marwar was to be married to Lakha's son Chunda, but by coincidence got married to Lakha instead. There was a condition attached to the marriage that the heir to the Mewar throne would be Hansabai's son. As a result, Lakha's worthy son lost his right to be the king. For his sacrifice, Chunda is also called the 'Bhishma Pitamah' of Rajasthan. During Rana Lakha's reign, increase in the extraction of silver and gold from Jawar mines lead to the prosperity of State. It was around this time, that a banjara constructed the famous Pichhola Lake.

Maharana Mokal (1421-1433) – Mokal was the son of Maharana Lakha and Hansabai. In 1421 AD, when he ascended the throne, he was a minor. Chunda took charge of his custody. But when he came to know that Mokal's mother suspects his motives, Chunda left Mewar and went to Mandu. In 1433, Mokal was murdered by his uncle and Mahapa Panwar.

Maharana Kumbha (1433-1468) – Kumbha succeeded Mokal in 1433 AD. He ended the influence of the Rathors from Mewar and earned the trust of the feudals of Mewar. He made Chittor and Kumbhalgarh the centers of power. In 1437, in the battle of Sarangapur, he defeated Mahmud Khilji I and made him prisoner. To commemorate this victory, he erected Vijay-Stambha. On the question of succession in Nagaur, Mewar fought a war against Gujarat in which Gujarat was defeated. In 1453, Kumbha seized Mandor from Marwar and later he entered into an alliance and married his son Raimal to a princess of Marwar.

Mahmud Khilji I of Malwa and Kutubuddin of Gujarat joined hands and signed the treaty of Champaner in 1456. They decided that they would attack Kumbha and after defeating him would equally divide his kingdom between them. The attack happened in 1457-58 AD, but Kumbha, shrewdly, created differences between them and the campaign failed to achieve the objective.

He is supposed to have built 32 forts. Forts of Sirohi, Achalgarh and Kumbhalgarh are more famous among them. Out of the 84 forts of Mewar, poet Shyamaldas, also gives credit to Kumbha for building 32 forts. Kumbhalgarh had special importance because of its geographical location, design and built. Mandan was the architect of this fort. In addition to forts, Kumbha also built the temples of Kumbhaswami and Shringarchanvari, rebuilt the temple of Eklingaji and built a Vishnu temple there. The temples built by Kumbha at Ranakpur stand out for their magnificence and exquisite carvings.

Kumbha was a scholar in his own right, a philomath and a patron of arts and sciences. From Eklinga Mahatmaya of Kanha Vyas we come to know that Kumbha took deep interest in the Vedas, smritis, mimamsa, upnishad, vyakarana and politics. He wrote Sangitaraj, Sangitamimamsa and Sudaprabandha. Moreover, Kumbha is also believed to have written commentaries on Chandishataka, Gita Govinda and Sangita Ratnakar. The Kirtistambha Prashasti was written by his court poets Atri and Mahesh. In the contemporary literary texts and the eulogies (prashastis) Kumbha has been addressed with titles, such as, Maharajadhiraj, Raorai, Danguru, Rajguru, Paramguru, Halaguru, Abhinavabhartacharya, Hindu Surtan etc.

The above account establishes undoubtedly that Kumbha was a great ruler. But he spent his last days in misery. He suffered from a mental disorder – hysteria or mania. He was murdered by his son Uda in 1468.

Rana Sanga (1509-1528) – Sanga (Sangram Singh) and his brothers, Prithviraj, Jaymal and Raj Singh, each one, regarded himself as the rightful successor to the throne. In this situation, there was bound to be conflict. Sanga emerged winner and ascended the throne in 1509. At this time, Sultan Nasiriuddin was the ruler of Malwa. There was a war of succession after the Sultan died in 1511 AD. Mahmud Khilji II, with the help of a Rajput sardar Medani Rai, defeated his enemies and became Sultan of Malwa. This success enhanced Medani Rai's stature and importance and he became de facto ruler of Malwa. Eventually, with the help of Gujarat the amirs of Malwa removed Medani Rai from power and he took shelter in Mewar. This led to war between Chittor and Malwa. Sultan Mahmud Khilji II was defeated and taken prisoner by the Rana.

The question of succession at Idar, efforts to establish his supremacy over Nagaur and extending support to Malwa were the issues that caused considerable friction between Sanga and Sultan Muzaffar. But both the parties failed to gain the upper hand. In 1517, Sanga defeated Ibrahim Lodhi of Delhi in the battle of Khatoli. Soon after, Rana's army again defeated Ibrahim Lodhi's army in the battle of Badi (Dholpur). These victories enhanced Rana's prestige and he established himself as the most powerful king in the northern India. In 1526, Babur occupied Agra after defeating Ibrahim Lodhi in the battle of Panipat. Thereafter, Babur proceeded against Rana Sanga on the pretext that Sanga had failed to keep his promise of help to Babur in the battle against Ibrahim Lodhi. But there is no proof available for this accusation. Since both Sanga and Babur were powerful and ambitious, battle for supremacy was inevitable. Before the decisive battle of Khanwa, Sanga's forces had defeated Babur in February 1527. But in the Battle of Khanwa on 17th March 1527, the artillery and the tulghuma tactics (flanking maneuver) clinched the battle in Babur's favour. The Rana was severely wounded and was taken to a safe place away from the battle ground. His feudatories were not in favour of continuing the fight. When Sanga refused to return to Chittor without avenging the defeat, they poisoned him. Sanga died on 30th January 1528 at Basawa (Dausa). There is a memorial of Sanga in Mandalgarh.

After the death of Rana Sanga, Rana Ratan Singh (1528-1531) and after him Rana Vikramaditya became the rulers of Mewar.

Rana Uday Singh (1537-1572) – Renowned Panna dai, saved the life of Uday Singh from Banbir, the usurper of the throne of Mewar, by replacing him (Uday Singh) by her son. Panna dai took Uday Singh to Kumbhalgarh for safety. Later in 1537, the coronation of Rana in Kumbhalgarh took place with the help of Maldeo and the Sardars of Mewar. In 1559, he built the city of Udaipur and made it his capital. Here he constructed Udayasagar lake and beautiful palaces of Moti Magari.

In October, 1567 AD Akbar attacked Chittor. On the advice of his Sardars Uday Singh left the fort in the charge of his commanders – Jayamal and Fatta – and went away to the hills. Jayamal and Fatta died defending the fort. Deeply impressed by their chivalry, Akbar got stone statues of Jayamal and Fatta riding on elephants installed outside the Agra Fort.

Maharana Pratap (1572-1597) – Born on 9 May, 1540 in Kumbhalgarh, Pratap became the ruler of Mewar in 1572 AD. Maharana Uday Singh had announced Jagmal as his heir, but the Sardars of Mewar did not accept him as the ruler and installed Pratap on the throne. At this time, Akbar was the ruler of Delhi. Pratap had two options before him: either accept the suzerainty of Akbar and live a life of comfort or keep his independence and the prestige of his country intact. The second option involved hardship and misery. And yet, Pratap chose the second one. He knew that he will have to face the might of Akbar. Therefore, he took upon himself to unify different sections in his State. He organised a group of committed feudatories and Bhils who were always ready to defend the country. He gave the Bhils important positions in his army and the honour that came with that. From Gogunda, he shifted his residence to Kumbhalgarh to avoid the Mughal gaze on his military preparations. Akbar wanted Mewar to accept his overlordship. To this purpose, between 1572 AD and 1576 AD he sent four embassies led by Jalal Khan, Man Singh, Bhagwandaas and Todarmal, to the Maharana. But he turned down Akbar's offers. This made the war inevitable. In the beginning of 1576, Akbar reached Ajmer to supervise preparations for the Mewar campaign and entrusted the command of the campaign to Man Singh.



On 18th June 1576 the Mughal army fought with Pratap near Khamnor, which is famous in history as the Battle of Haldighati. In this war, the Chief Commander of the Mughal army was Man Singh of Amer, while the Haraval (advance squad) of Pratap's army was led by Hakim Khan Sur. During the battle, seeing the life of Pratap in danger, Jhala Bida fought by wearing Pratap's crown and sent Pratap away from the battlefield. This war remained inconclusive but some of the historians of Rajasthan believed that Pratap won this battle. After the battle of Haldighati, Maharana Pratap, living in the mountains, started raiding from there, tormenting the Mughals. This war has been called the battle of Khamnor by Abu'l Fazl, the battle of Gogunda by Badayuni and the battle of Haldighati by James Tod.

From 1576 to 1585, Akbar sent many campaigns to capture Mewar but could not achieve much success. During this period two important events took place. Maharana's son Amarsingh suddenly attacked the Mughal camp of Sherpur in 1580 and imprisoned the women of Abdur Rahim Khan-i-khana's family. On receiving information about the entire incident, Pratap ordered the Mughal women to be sent back safely and respectfully. This is a unique example of the Indian tradition of respect for women. In 1582, during the attack on the Mughal outpost of Dewair, Kunwar Amarsingh killed the Mughal officer Sultan Khan, who was stationed there with a single blow of spear. After the conquest of Dewair, Pratap gained control over this mountainous region. It was a big victory for the small Mewar army and that is why Colonel Tod called Dewair as 'Marathon of Mewar'.

After 1585 Akbar could not launch more military campaigns in Mewar. From 1586 AD to 1597 AD apart from Chittor and Mandalgarh, Pratap recovered rest of Mewar from the Mughals. He made Chavand his capital and established administrative orderliness. Maharana Pratap died on 19th January, 1597. The last rites were performed in a village called Badoli near Chavand. Tod says that there is no valley in the Aravalli hills, which was not consecrated by some chivalrous deed, glorious victory or even more glorious defeat. Haldighati is Thermopylae and Dewair is the Marathon of Mewar.

Rana Amar Singh (1597-1620) – Amar Singh ascended the throne in 1597. He also had to face the Mughal incursions. In 1613 AD Jahangir arrived at Ajmer and entrusted the command of the Mewar campaign to Prince Khurram (Shahjahan). He created chaos in Mewar by looting. The feudatories of Mewar were war weary and their jagirs were left desolate after long years of war with the Mughals. In such a situation they, with the help of Kunwar Karna Singh, put pressure on Amar Singh for a treaty with the Mughals. Amar Singh succumbed to the pressure and gave his consent for the treaty. In February 1615 AD Mewar-Mughal treaty was signed. Chittor was returned to Mewar with the condition that repair work will not be undertaken there. This ended the 90 years of Mewar-Mughal struggle. Amar Singh could not reconcile with what he had done. He was so unhappy that he disengaged himself from all official work. The treaty with Mewar is counted as Jahangir's great achievement.

Maharana Raj Singh (1652-1680 AD) – Raj Singh, immediately after becoming the ruler, decided to complete the repair work at Chittor. But the Mughal emperor regarded it as a violation of the treaty of 1615, and therefore, sent a contingent of 30000 under Sadulla Khan to demolish the repairs done on the fort. Raj Singh did not consider it prudent to fight, therefore he withdrew his army deployed there. Mughal army demolished turrets and towers here and there in the fort and went

away. In 1658, when the war of succession broke out among the Mughal princes, Maharana did not want to take sides, so he kept avoiding. Eventually Aurangzeb became the emperor, his relations with him were cordial. Aurangzeb granted him a manasab of 6000 zat and sawar. But, later in 1660, he offended Aurangzeb by marrying Charumati, a princess of Kishangarh, who was to be married to Aurangzeb. In 1679 he opposed the imposition of jizya by Aurangzeb. Moreover, he sided with the Rathods during the Mughal-Marwar conflict. He died in 1680 AD.

One of his important welfare measures was construction of the Rajsamand lake by building a dam over river Gomti. At the place called nau chauki on the northern end of the lake, he put up an inscription, known as Rajprashasti. Ranchhod Bhatt was the author of this Sanskrit inscription. It is inscribed on 25 black marble rocks. This is believed to be the world's longest rock inscription.

Rathod Dynasty of Marwar and Its Prominent Rulers

The issue of the origin of the Rathods is quite contentious. Various copperplate inscriptions, rock edicts and ancient texts have offered various theories regarding the origin of the Rathods. Some scholars believe them to be the descendants of Hiranyakashyapa. In the Jodh Rajya ki Khyat, they have been called the progenies of king Vishvutman's son Brihadbal. Dayaldas in his khyat declares them to be the Suryavamshis and descendants of a brahmana Bhallarava. Nainsi believes them to have migrated from Kannauj. Colonel Tod on the basis of the vanshavalis of the Rathods proclaims them to be the Suryavamshis.

Thus, there is no consensus on the origin of the Rathods, but most of the scholars relate them to the Rashtrakutas of southern India. Rathods of Jodhpur and Bikaner are the more prominent branches of this clan. The Rathods of Jodhpur are believed to be the descendants of Siha, who in turn was a scion of Gahadvala Jaichand of Kannauj. Siha could establish a small principality on a small area on the north-western part of Pali in Marwar. Though Siha established a Rathod principality but could not consolidate it.

Rao Chunda (1394-1423 AD) – Through pluck and diplomacy, Rao Chunda occupied Mandor and made it his capital. Thereafter, he conquered the areas of Khatu, Didwana, Sambhar, Ajmer, Nadol etc. In 1423 AD he was treacherously killed by Bhatias of Pungal. His wife Chand Kanwar constructed Chand Baori (Jodhpur).

Rao Ranmal (1427-1438 AD) – Ranmal had shifted to Mewar as he could not reconcile his younger brother Kanha's accession to the throne. He married his sister Hansa Bai to Rana Lakha of Mewar. This marriage had a condition attached to it that Hansa Bai's son will be the heir to the throne after Rana Lakha. After the death of

Lakha, the ascension of his nephew Mokal to the throne made Ranmal very powerful in the setup of Mewar. In 1438 AD, with the help of his ladylove Bharmali, Ranmal was assassinated by the Mewar feudatories.

Rao Jodha (1438-1489 AD) – Rao Jodha was the son of Ranmal. After the assassination of his father in 1438 AD Jodha fled to the forests and began to gather and consolidate his forces. In 1453, he succeeded in capturing Mandor. He made peace with Mewar by marrying his daughter with a Mewar prince Raimal. He founded the city of Jodhpur in 1459 AD and made it his capital. To safeguard the city, he built a fort on top of a hill called Chidia-tunk. The fort is known as Mehrangarh Fort. Rao Jodha had earned prestige by defeating a force of Bahlol Lodhi. Dr. Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha regards him as the first eminent ruler of Jodhpur.

Rao Maldeo (1531-1562 AD) – Rao Maldeo fought in the battle of Khanwa on the side of Rana Sanga. He fought in the battle as a representative of his father Rao Ganga. He also helped Rana Vikramaditya in 1532 AD when Bahadur Shah attacked Mewar. In 1536, he married a daughter of Rao Lunakaran of Jaisalmer, Uma-De. She, later on, became famous by the name of ‘roothi rani’ due to her strained relations with her husband, Maldeo. Maldeo attacked Biram Deo of Merta and Rao Jaitsi of Bikaner in 1542 AD and took their territories under his domination. Biram Deo’s sons and Jaitsi’s relations sought refuge with Sher Shah. After his defeat at the hands of Sher Shah in 1539-1540 AD, Humayun was wandering from place to place. In this hour of need, Maldeo sent an offer of support to Humayun in his fight against Sher Shah, because Maldeo was aware that after Humayun he was going to be the next victim of Sher Shah.

Eventually, in 1543-1544 AD, Maldeo had to face the invasion of Sher Shah. Sher Shah created distrust between Maldeo and his commanders. Maldeo left the field, but his commanders, Jaita and Kumpa, fought a valiant battle at Giri Sammel, and died fighting. After winning a very hard-fought battle, Sher Shah is said to have exclaimed ‘I would have lost the throne of Delhi for a fistful of millet’.

After the death of Sher Shah in 1545 AD, Maldeo recovered Jodhpur, Pokharan, Falaudi, Barmer, Kotada, Jalore and Merta; which he had lost to the Afghans. He died in 1562.

Rao Chandrasen (1562-1581 AD) – After Maldeo’s death, the succession to the throne was not smooth. His sons competed for the throne. Maldeo himself was partly to blame for this. He had nominated his third son, Chandrasen, his successor as he was not happy with his elder sons; Ram Singh and Udai Singh. The elder brothers contested the claim of Chandrasen. In 1564 AD Ram Singh went to Akbar’s court for help. Akbar sent a force under Hussain Quli Khan, who occupied Jodhpur.

In 1570, with the hope of getting Jodhpur back, Chandrasen went to attend the Nagaur Darbar of Akbar. But, upon noticing Akbar's attitude in favour of Ram and Udai, he left Nagaur and chose the path of conflict. Akbar, in the meanwhile, put Jodhpur under the supervision of Rai Singh of Bikaner, thereby obviating the possibility of any help for Chandrasen coming from Jodhpur and possibility of creating trouble in Gujarat through this route.

After leaving Jodhpur in 1564, Chandrasen continued his resistance to the Mughals from Bhadrajun, but when he was encircled by the Mughal forces, he shifted his base to Siwana and strengthened the fortifications there. Siwana fort and the hilly area was very difficult and an inaccessible tract. When Chandrasen could not be found, the Mughals decided to finish his supporters and sympathisers. Rawal Sukhraj, Suja and Devidas were pursued and chased away. Thereafter the Mughal contingents were deployed in Siwana. Fed up with his plight, Chandrasen took refuge in the Rampura hills. Mughal forces pursued him even there, but could not lay hands on him. From Siwana he fled to Piplod and from there to the hills of Kanuja and began pillaging the areas acquired by the Mughal forces. This was resented by the people of Marwar. In this situation he went away first to Sirohi, then to Dungarpur and Banswara. The Mughals kept pursuing him wherever he went. Evidently, Chandrasen's whole career is a saga of his struggle against the Mughals. In spite of the hardships he suffered, he refused to submit to the authority of Akbar. Vishveshwarnath Reyu has compared him with Maharana Pratap. He also, like Pratap, suffered hardships but did not accept the suzerainty of the Mughals. That is why he has been acclaimed as the Pratap of Marwar. He died in 1581 AD.

Mota Raja Uday Singh (1583-1595 AD) – Between 1581 AD to 1583 AD Central Marwar was khalsa land (centrally administered territory). In 1583 AD Akbar appointed Uday Singh the ruler of Jodhpur under the Mughal suzerainty. He was the brother of Chandrasen. Uday Singh married his daughter Jodhabai (Jagat Gusain) to Jahangir. Khurram was Jahangir's son from this Jodhpur princess. On the occasion of the marriage, Uday Singh was conferred a mansab of 1000 zat and sawars.

Maharaja Jaswant Singh I (1638-1678 AD) – Jaswant Singh was born in 1628 AD in Burhanpur. When his father, Gaj Singh died, he was in Bundi for his marriage. With the news of his father's demise he received an invitation from Shah Jahan to reach Agra. He was duly received in Agra and was anointed successor to his father by a special decree and invested with tika, khilat, (ceremonial robe), jadau jamdhar (studded dagger). He was also bestowed with the title Maharaja and a mansab (position) of 4000 zat (soldiers) and sawar (horsemen). At this time, Jaswant Singh was 11 years old. The emperor appointed Thakur of Asope, Raj Singh Kumpawat as his minister with a mansab of 400 sawars.

In 1645 AD he was entrusted the supervision of Agra and in 1648 was sent on the Kandahar campaign. In the war of succession for the Mughal throne he fought on the side of Dara Shikoh against Aurangzeb in the battle of Dharmat. Dara Shikoh lost and Jaswant Singh had to return to Jodhpur. When he reached Jodhpur, his 'Udaipur Rani' refused to open the gates of the fort saying Rajputs either return victorious or lay down their life in the battle field. As Maharaja returned having lost the battle, she began preparations to perform Sati. Eventually, she relented and opened the gates of the fort after queen mother's persuasion and the word given by the Maharaja to avenge the defeat. Historians do not give credence to this story. Shyamal Das accepts it to be true. On 5 January, 1659, due to his differences with Aurangzeb, Jaswant Singh returned without participating in the battle of Khajuwala fought for the throne between Aurangzeb (who had declared himself the Emperor of Hindustan at Agra) and Shah Shuja (who had declared himself the Emperor of Hindustan in Bengal). Later on, mediation by Jai Singh reduced the estrangement between Aurangzeb and Jaswant Singh and he was reinstated in his mansab and made the subedar of Gujarat. In 1662 AD he was sent to help Shaista Khan in the campaign against the Marathas, but met with little success. In 1673 AD he was sent to Kabul. Later on, he was asked to stay put in Jamrud (Khyber district), where he died on 28 November, 1678.

Jaswant Singh was a patron of learning and the learned. Surat Mishra, Naraharidas, Navin Kavi, Banarasidas etc. are some of the prominent scholars of his times. Muhnot Nainsi was a minister in his court, who is the author of Nainsi ri Khyat and Marwar ra Pagana ri Vigat.

Rathod Dynasty of Bikaner and Its Prominent Rulers

Rao Bika (1465-1504 AD) – Bika was the son of Rao Jodha of Marwar. Stung by his father's barb he moved to the Jangal region. The story goes that with the blessings of goddess Karni he founded a new principality. There is another story that Rao Bika and a Jat Sardar Nara jointly conquered the Jangal region, which came to be called Bikaner after their names – Bika and Nara. Taking advantage of dissensions among the local clans Bhatias, Chauhans, Khinchis, and Kayamkhanis, Bika occupied number of villages. By marrying the daughter of Rao of Pungal, he consolidated his position further. In 1488 AD, he founded the city of Bikaner and made it the second center of Rathod power. He also built the original temple of Goddess Karni.

Rao Lunakarna (1505-1526 AD) – Lunakarna was the younger son of Rao Bika. He had defeated Muhammad Khan, ruler of Nagaur. In 1526, he died in the battle of Dhosi fighting against Nawab Abimira of Narnaul. Bithu Suja in his work Rao Jaisi ro Chhand, has described him as 'Karn of Kalyug'. In Karmchandravamshotkirtankavyam his charity has been compared with that of legendry Karna. He is also known to have constructed Lunakaransar Lake.

Rao Jaitsi (1526-1541 AD) – Among Jaitsi's achievements was his victory over Kamran (Humayun's brother), the ruler of Kabul. Bithu Suja has described this battle in his work Rao Jaitsi Ro Chhanda. During the attack of Maldeo on Bikaner he sent his minister Nagraj to Sher Shah asking for help. Before the help could arrive, he died in the battle of Saheba/Paheba (Jodhpur) (1541 AD).

Rao Kalyanmal (1541-1574 AD) – Kalyanmal had fought in the Battle of Khanwa in 1527 AD under Sanga. In 1544 AD he fought against Maldeo in the battle of Giri Sammel from Sher Shah's side. He conquered the fort of Bhatner and went to Akbar's Nagaur Darbar and accepted his suzerainty. He was the first Rathod ruler to accept the Mughal subordination. Kalyanmal had two sons – Rai Singh and Prithviraj. In 1572 Rai Singh was appointed by Akbar as the administrator of Jodhpur and Prithviraj was a court poet of Akbar. He was the author of the famous *Beli Kisan Rukmani Ri*.

Rao Rai Singh (1574-1612 AD) – Rai Singh had joined the Mughal army at the time of Akbar's Nagaur Darbar in 1570 AD. He had also proved his mettle in Akbar's Gujarat and Kandahar campaigns. In 1572, he was appointed the administrator of Jodhpur by Akbar. In 1574, he ascended the throne with the title of 'Maharajadhiraj'. Rai Singh built the fort of Junagarh and at the gates of the fort installed the statues of Jaimal Rathor and Fatta Sisodia (the defenders of the Chittor fort at the time of Akbar's attack in 1567-1568 AD). He also installed a eulogy (prashasti), which is called the Rai Singh prashasti. Once, his state faced a severe famine. He spent a lot of money in famine relief. Munshi Deviprasad has called him 'Karna of Rajputana'.

Rao Karna Singh (1631-1688 AD) – Karna Singh played an important role in Shah Jahan's campaigns of southern India. He fought a war over border dispute involving Jakhniya village against Amar Singh, which is known as 'matire ki raad'. During the war of succession to the Mughal throne Karna Singh stayed neutral. Later, when he saw Aurangzeb winning, he sent his sons Padm Singh and Kesari Singh to fight for Aurangzeb's cause. When the latter became the Emperor, Karna Singh joined Aurangzeb's Court. In Chintamani Bhatt's work *Shukrasaptati*, he has been called 'Jangaldhar Badshah' (emperor of Jangal). Karna Singh is credited to have composed *Sahitya Kalpdramu* and one of his court scholars, Gangananda Maithil composed *Karnabhushana* and *Kavya Dakini*.

Chauhan Dynasty of Shakambhari and Its Prominent Rulers

There has been dispute among the historians regarding the origin of this dynasty. In the genealogies (*Vamshavalis*) and the *Khyats* they have been described to be of Agnikul. According to Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, they were the kashatriyas of Solar dynasty. In the Achleshwar temple inscription the Chauhanas

have been called Chandravamshis. Dr. Dashrath Sharma, after discussing all the views regarding their origin, holds them to be of Brahmanical origin.

The Bijolia rock edict mentions Vasudeva, the builder of the Sambhar Lake, as the founder of the Chauhanas of Shakambhari, who is believed to have existed around 551 AD. He began his career as the vassal of the Gurjar-Pratiharas. Later, Guvak I freed them from vassalhood. His descendent Samant, who was the ruler of Sambhar, was believed to have been born in a brahmin family of the Vatsa gotra. Vakpatiraj was a powerful early Chauhan ruler, who had defeated the Pratiharas. Vighraaj II was another powerful Chauhan ruler. The Harshnath inscription of 973 AD describes his conquests. One of his significant achievements was his victory over a Chalukya ruler, Mulraj of Gujarat. Vighraaj was followed by Durlabhraj and Govind III on the throne. In Prithviraj Vijaya, Govind III has been described as vairigatta (destroyer of enemies). According to Farishta, a court historian of the Deccan Sultans, Govind III had stopped Ghazani from entering into Marwar.

Ajayraj (1105-1133 AD) – Ajayraj, who ascended the throne in 1105, was an eminent ruler of the Chauhan dynasty. He founded the city of Ajaymeru (Ajmer) and issued silver and copper coins, which were called Ajaypriya drumbh. On these coins the name of his queen Somalvati is also inscribed. Ajayraj, a devotee of Shiva, was a tolerant ruler. He gave due respect to the followers of other faiths – Jains, Vaishnavas etc. In the new city (Ajmer) he permitted the Jains to construct a temple and donated a gold kalash for the Parshvanatha Temple.

Arnoraj (1133-1155 AD) – Arnoraj defeated the Turks and the rulers of Malwa, but was defeated by Kumarpal Chalukya, a ruler of Gujrat. He built the Anasagar Lake and the Varaha Temple at Pushkar. Himself a Shaiva, he gave equal respect to other religions. He donated land to the followers of Khatargachcha in Ajmer. Devabodh and Dharmabodh were great scholars of his times. Though defeat at the hands of the Chalukyas was a setback to his prestige, but by defeating the Ghaznavids and leading the campaigns against Malwa and Haryana he kept the prestige of his dynasty high.

Vighraaj IV (1158-1163 AD) – Vighraaj defeated the Tomars and wrested Delhi from them. He was the first Chauhan ruler to have conquered Delhi. He defeated Khusroshah of Ghajini. Jayanak Bhatt has given him the title 'Kavibandhava'. Both Vighraaj; and his court writer Somadev composed a play each, Harikeli and Lalit Vighraaja respectively. He is credited to have constructed the building of a Sanskrit school and got inscribed lines from his play Harikeli on its walls. This Sanskrit school was later converted into a mosque called Adhai Din ka Jhonpada. Vighraaj also settled the town of Bisalpur and built the famous Bisalpur Lake.

Dr. Dashrath Sharma, evaluating Vighraaj, writes that his greatness is unquestionable. He was not only a successful military general, he was a patron of letters, a poet in his own right and an insightful builder. The writer of Prithviraj Vijayai writes that after the death of Vighraaj the title 'Kavibandhava' lost meaning and value, as there was none to be worthy of it. Somadev not only counted him first among great warriors but also as first among the men of letters. His praise of Vighraaj was not hollow as, his play, Harikeli stands testimony to his worthiness. Kielhorn extolls his competence as a playwright by comparing him with Kalidas and Bhavabhuti. The reign of Vighraaj is regarded as the golden period of Sapadalaksha.

Prithviraj III (1177-1192 AD) – Prithviraj III, the most famous among all the Chauhan rulers, came to the throne at the age of 11. He ruled over most of the modern Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi and parts of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. In 1182 AD he defeated the Bhandankas of the Satluj region. In the same year, he defeated Paramardidev, the Chandela ruler of Mahoba as well. In this battle, the famous brothers Alha and Udal of Mahoba died defending their State. Prithviraj defeated Jaichand of Kannauj and at the time of svayamvara he abducted Jai chand's daughter Sanyogita and married her. He defeated Muhammad Ghori in the first battle of Tarain in 1191 AD but lost the second in 1192 AD. This battle marks the decline of the Chauhanas and the beginning of the rise of the Turks in India.

Prithviraj III was a great warrior, patron of poets and scholars. Jayanak, the author of Prithviraj Vijay and Chandbardai, the author of Prithviraj Raso were his court poets.

Story of Sanyogita's Svayamvar – Jaichand, the ruler of Kannauj performed the Rajasuya sacrifice and svayamvar of his daughter Sanyogita. Many kings were invited to the svayamvar but Prithviraj was left out. Jaichand did not stop at this. To humiliate him further, Jaichand installed a statue of Prithviraj dressed as a gatekeeper outside the svayamvar-arena. Sanyogita and Prithviraj liked each other. Sanyogita's eyes were searching for Prithviraj. With the wedding garland (varamala) in her hands, Sanyogita moved around in the mandap to find Prithviraj. When in the end she reached the gates, there she saw the statue of Prithviraj. She put the garland around its neck. By that time Prithviraj had reached there. He picked Sanyogita and went off to Ajmer. The Chauhan soldiers blocked Jaichand's army from stopping Prithviraj. Upon reaching Ajmer, Prithviraj married Sanyogita. This incident further exacerbated the relations between the two rulers.

Historicity of the Sanyogita-Story – Historians are not unanimous on the historicity of the Sanyogita-story. Dr Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha regards it as a figment of imagination. He says that Prabandhkosh, Hammir Mahakavya, Prithviraja Prabandha and Prabandhachintamani do not mention this incident. Dr Romila Thapar

and Dr R. S. Tripathi also reject the historicity of the story. The contemporary Persian historical texts also do not refer to this story. But Abu'l Fazl has referred to this story in his account. Dr Dashrath Sharma opines that there are quite a few errors in the Hammir Mahakavya and Rambhajanari, therefore, the omission of Sanyogita incident in these texts does not imply that it is a figment of imagination. He further says that love is an important aspect of life. There is every possibility that this incident took place. C. V. Vaidya and Dr. Gopinath Sharma concur with this view.

It is difficult to reject this incident as complete fiction. The story, that has been told for centuries, may have come to acquire accretions over time. But the core of the present version may be accepted as historical.

Chauhan Dynasty of Ranthambhore and Its Prominent Rulers

The founder of the Chauhan dynasty of Ranthambhore was Govindraj (1194 AD). He was the son of Prithviraj III. Valhana, Pralhadana and Veernarayan were his successors respectively. Veernarayan died in a battle against Iltutmish. His successor Vagbhata managed to save his principality from the Turks. His son Jaitra Singh repulsed Nasiruddin's attack on Ranthambhore, but was obliged to agree to pay tribute.

Hammir (1282-1301 AD) – Upon his accession in 1282, Hammir adopted the expansionist policy. He forced the principalities of Abu, Kathiawar, Pushkar, Champa, Dhar etc. to accept his suzerainty and defeated Samar Singh, the ruler of Mewar. In 1291 Jalaluddin Khilji attacked Ranthambhore without success.

Hammir gave asylum to Muhammad Shah and Kehbru, the Mongol rebels, who after the battle of Jalore, in which they had sided with the Rajputs against Alauddin Khilji and had killed Allauddin's nephew, fled to Ranthambhore. This enraged Allauddin. When Hammir refused to surrender the rebels to him, Alauddin attacked Ranthambhore in 1299 AD. Hammir defeated the Turk army. In 1301 AD Alauddin, came himself to lead the attack. When he failed to defeat Hammir, he resorted to skullduggery. He lured Ranmal and Ratipal, two commanders of Hammir to his side by promising them that the Fort would be handed over to them. The betrayal resulted in the fall of Ranthambhore. Hammir fell fighting and his queen Rangdevi with the other women in the Fort committed jauhar.

Hammir was a brave and a generous ruler. Nayanchandra Suri's Hammir Mahakavya, Jodhraj's Hammir Raso and Chandrashekhar's Hammir Hatha describe Hammir's courage, chivalry and bravery. Even after more than 700 years Hammir still remains alive in the folklore.

Chauhan Dynasty of Jalore and Its Prominent Rulers

Jalore has a place of pride in the medieval history of Rajasthan. It was

strategically located on the Delhi-Gujarat and Malwa route, therefore, rulers of Delhi always wanted to control Jalore. During the Delhi Sultanate period when the Turko-Afgans were in power in Delhi, Jalore was under the Chauhan rule. The founder of the Chauhan dynasty of Jalore was Kirtipal who established this dynasty in 1181 AD.

Kanhad Dev (1305-1311 AD) – Kanhad Dev is regarded as the most powerful ruler of the Chauhan dynasty of Jalore. He came in conflict with Sultan Alauddin Khilji on the question of providing passage to Alauddin's army, which was on its way to attack Gujarat, through Jalore. In 1305 AD, Alauddin sent his general Ayn-ul-Mulk Multani to Jalore. Multani managed to persuade Kanhad Dev to come to Delhi. Kanhad Dev found the atmosphere of the court demeaning to his self-respect. He left the Delhi Darbar and came back to Jalore. His act soured his relations with Alauddin, which led to the conflict between them. According to Nainsi, the cause of conflict between the two was Viram Dev's (son of Kanhad Dev) refusal to marry Alauddin's daughter Firoza. In 1308 AD, the Sultan wrested Jalore's mighty fort of Siwana from Kanhad Dev and renamed it Khairabada and appointed Kamaluddin Gurg as his representative. In 1311 AD, Alauddin laid siege to Jalore without any success. Eventually, treachery by the Dahiya Sardar Bika led to the fall of the fort. Kanhad Dev died fighting and the women committed jauhar. Alauddin gave new name Jalalabad to Jalore.

Kachchhawa Dynasty of Amber and Its Prominent Rulers

Kachchhawa believed themselves to be the descendants of Lord Ram's elder son, Kush. Suryamal Misan, traces their ancestry from Kurma, a scion of Raghukula. Later they came to be called the Kachchhawas. They founded their own principality in the Dundhar region only after defeating the Meenas and the Badgujars. At first Dausa was their capital. They started their career as the feudatories of the Chauhanas. In 1137 AD Dulharai defeated the Badgujars and founded a new principality in Dundhar. Later on, Dulharai defeated the Meenas at Jamwa Ramgarh and made it his capital. In 1207 AD Kokil Dev defeated the Meenas of Amber and made Amber his capital.

Bharmal (1547-1573 AD) – Bharmal became the ruler of Amber in difficult circumstances. To strengthen and consolidate his position he needed a strong support, and such a support came in the form of Akbar. Bharmal was the first Rajput ruler to submit to the Mughal authority. In 1562 AD, Akbar came on a pilgrimage to Ajmer. On his way back to Delhi, at Sambhar. Bharmal married his daughter Harakhabai (who later came to be known as Mariam-uz-Zamani) to Akbar. Jahangir, Akbar's successor to the Mughal throne was the son of this Harakhabai. In 1562 AD in Sambhar itself, Bharmal, with his son Bhagwan Das and grandson Man Singh accepted the overlordship of Akbar.

Bhagwan Das (1573-1589 AD) – Bhagwan Das became the ruler in 1573 AD. He fought many battles for Akbar. He remained the Subedar of Punjab for seven years. In 1585 AD he married his daughter Manbai to Jahangir. Khusaro was the son of Manbai and Jahangir. In 1589 AD Bhagwan Das died in Lahore.

Man Singh (1589-1614 AD) – Man Singh went into the Mughal service at the young age of 12. He served two Mughal emperors – Akbar and Jahangir. During the Akbar's Ranthambhore campaign in 1569 AD, Man Singh played an important role in persuading Surjan Hada to accept the Mughal suzerainty. During Akbar's Gujarat campaign, Man Singh took the second proposal of treaty to Maharana Pratap. In the battle of Haldighati in 1576 AD, he led the Mughal forces against Pratap. He was counted among the nine jewels of Akbar. Akbar gave him the title 'Farzand' (son) and a mansab of 7000. In 1589 AD, when he was the Subedar of Bihar, his father Bhagwan Das died and he became the ruler of Amber. In 1592 AD, he conquered Orissa and annexed it to the Mughal empire. He died in 1614 AD at Ellichpur (Amaravati). Man Singh was a patron of the men of letters. In his reign works like Mancharitra and Maharajkosh were composed; Muraridan and Jagannath authored Manprakash and Mansinghkirti Muktavali. It was during Man Singh's reign that Rani Kankavati had constructed the Jagat Shiromani temple in the memory of her son, Jagat Singh.

Mirza Raja Jai Singh (1621-1667 AD) – Jai Singh was just 11 years old when he became the ruler of Jaipur. He served three Mughal Emperors—Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. He led many a Mughal military campaigns. In 1623 AD he was sent to Deccan against Malik Ambar, where he gave a good account of his extraordinary courage and bravery. In 1629 AD he quelled the Uzbek rebellion in the North-West Frontier Region and in 1630 AD he suppressed the rebellion of Khan-e-Jahan Lodi. He accompanied Shah Jahan in this Deccan campaigns against Bijapur and Golconda.

In 1637 AD he was honoured with the title Mirza Raja and sent to Kandhar with Prince Shuja. Later, at the time of the war of succession for the Mughal throne he was sent by Dara Shikoh against Shuja. He defeated Shuja in the battle of Bahadurpur in 1658 AD. But finally, towards the end he sided with Aurangzeb in the war of succession. Impressed by Jai Singh's competence and diplomatic skills, Aurangzeb sent him to south to suppress the Marathas. Jai Singh, through his diplomatic initiatives, managed to isolate Shivaji and conquer the fort of Purandar. What would be a greater proof of Jai Singh's ability that he stalled Shivaji's progress, who had defeated Aurangzeb's powerful general, Afzal Khan. Eventually Shivaji and Jai Singh signed the treaty of Purandar in 1665 AD. This treaty was a high point in the career of Jai Singh. Apart from his military achievements, he knew many languages and gave respect to scholars. Bihari was his court poet, who composed the famous Bihari Satsai.

Sawai Jai Singh (1700-1743 AD) – Finding Jai Singh, who was born on December 3, 1688, more heroic and eloquent than the Jai Singh I (Mirza Raja), Aurangzeb named him Sawai Jai Singh as he was a step ahead (sawaya) of Jai Singh I in many respects. After him all the rulers of Jaipur began to use the title Sawai with their name. In 1700 AD Jai Singh took over the reins of Amber. In 1707 AD, after the death of Aurangzeb, in the war of succession he sided with Muhammad Azam Shah. But in this war Muazzam emerged victorious after defeating Azam in the battle of Jajau. He ascended the throne assuming the title Bahadur Shah. Thereafter Bahadur Shah proceeded against Jai Singh, wrested Amber from him and declared Vijay Singh the ruler. But Jai Singh, with help from Mewar, regained Amber and reinstated himself to the throne. Later, the Emperor also recognised him as the ruler of Amber. In 1713 AD, Farrukhsiyar, who succeeded Bahadur Shah, made Jai Singh the governor of Malwa. It was on his initiative that the Hurda Conference was called on July 17, 1734 to put up a united front of the Rajput States to ward off the Maratha incursions in Rajasthan. But due to mutual differences among the rulers the Conference failed to achieve its objectives. In 1729 AD, Sawai Jai Singh intervened in the succession battle for the throne of Bundi. This gave the Marathas an excuse to enter into the politics of Rajasthan. Jai Singh died in 1743 AD. He was the one ruler who saw the reign of seven Mughal Emperors.

Jai Singh's contribution to society, culture and science is unparalleled at least among the medieval rulers of Rajasthan. Sawai Jai Singh built five observatories at Delhi, Mathura, Banaras, Ujjain and Jaipur to promote the knowledge of astronomy. The Jaipur observatory was the largest and is called Jantar-Mantar. In July 2010, it was recognised as a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. He prepared a set of tables to help people make astronomical observations. He named these tables Zij Muhammadshahi. He was the last Hindu ruler to have performed the ancient Vedic sacrifice, the Ashvamedha sacrifice. Construction of the city of Jaipur is regarded as his crowning achievement. Vidyadhar, an architect from Bengal, designed the city on grid pattern. The city was founded in 1727 AD. Moreover, he built the Nahargarh Fort in 1734 AD. He also built Chandra Mahal, Sisodia Rani Palace and Jalmahal. Jaivana cannon was manufactured during his reign. It was the largest cannon on wheels of that time. He worked for reforms in the society such as the abolition of Sati and widow remarriage.

Bhatti Dynasty of Jaisalmer and Its Prominent Rulers

The Bhatti royal family of Jaisalmer believe themselves to be the descendants of the Chandravamshi Yadavas. From the time of Vijairaj, we begin to get a regular account of their history. Vijairaj's son was Bhoj, who died fighting the Ghauris. Bhoj's successor was Jaisal, who laid the foundation of Jaisalmer.

The Jaisalmer Fort is famous for adhavi saka. The first saka was performed in 1295 AD after an eight years siege of Jaisalmer by Allauddin Khilji. Mularaj was the ruler at that time. The second saka took place in the 14th century when Rawal Duda was the ruler and Firoz Shah Tughlaq attacked Jaisalmer. The third saka, called the half saka, happened in 1550 AD. Lunkaran was the ruler. He provided asylum to Amir Ali, the ruler of Kandhar, but Amir Ali betrayed him and attacked Lunkaran. Lunkaran perished fighting with his men, but the Bhattis emerged victorious. Jauhar, that was to follow the Saka, did not take place. Therefore the event is called 'half Saka'.

At the time of Akbar's Nagaur Darbar, Hararai Bhatti accepted the Mughal suzerainty and married his daughter to him. Jawahar Singh was the last ruler of this dynasty.

Jat Royal Dynasty of Bharatpur and Its Prominent Rulers

The Jats are an agricultural community. Its rise as a political power began during the reign of Aurangzeb. In 1669 AD the Jats of the Mathura region rose in revolt against Aurangzeb under the leadership of Gokul. Gokul was killed early but the Jat revolt continued under Rajaram. After the death of Rajaram in 1688 AD his nephew Churaman took up the leadership.

Churaman (1695-1721 AD) – Churaman was the founder of the Jat principality of Bharatpur. His repeated incursions into the Mughal territories of Mathura and Agra had shaken the Mughals. Bishan Singh, the ruler of Jaipur was sent to suppress the Jats. But he met with limited success. Gradually, Churaman grew in power and stature. He constructed a fort at Thun, set up a small principality and declared himself the ruler.

Badan Singh (1723-1756 AD) – Badan Singh was the successor of Churaman. Jai Singh II, ruler of Jaipur, invested him with the title Brajraj and gave him jagirs of Mathura, Vrindavan, Mahavan, Hisar, Chhata, Kosi and Hodal. Badan Singh made Deeg his abode and constructed a strong fort, beautiful water palaces and laid expansive gardens. Apart from Deeg, he constructed forts at Kumher, Bharatpur and Weir as well. Badan Singh was a peace loving ruler. He fostered Jat-Kachchhawa friendship and expanded his possessions. He died in 1756 AD in Deeg.

Maharaja Surajmal (1756-1763 AD) – Surajmal was the son and successor of Badan Singh. He built a fort at Bharatpur and made it his capital. Like his father he also followed the policy of friendship and cooperation with Jaipur. After the death of Jai Singh II in 1743, in the succession battle he supported Ishwari Singh and fought on his side against his rivals. He went to fight against Ahmad Shagh Abdali in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 with the Marathas, but due to erratic and rude

behaviour of the Maratha general Sadashivrao Bhau, came back to Bharatpur. But after the defeat of the Marathas, he provided shelter and assistance to them. He died in the battle against the Rohillas in 1763. Najib Khan, the Rohilla chief, did not believe the news that Surajmal has died till he got the definitive proof. This is an example of the terror that Surajmal had struck in the minds of his adversaries.

Kalikaranjan Kanungo writes that Surajmal combined in him all the qualities of his tribe. He was wise, politic, valiant and grand, indefatigable and a man of indomitable spirit.



Maharaja Surajmal

Yadava Dynasty of Karauli

The royal dynasty of Karauli associate themselves with the Shurasena branch of Mathura and Shri Krishna. The Yadava dynasty of Karauli was founded by Vijaypal in 1040 AD. He made Bayana his capital. In 1348 AD, Arjunpal settled Kalyanpur, which is now called Karauli. Dharmapal II, in 1650 AD, shifted the capital to Karauli. Gopalpal constructed the famous Temple of Madanmohanji.

Paramar Dynasty

Literal meaning of Parmar is 'the destroyer of enemies'. In the beginning, the Parmars ruled over Abu and the adjoining areas. With the decline of the Pratiharas, the Parmar power began to grow.

Parmars of Abu – Dhumraj was the founder of the Parmar dynasty of Abu, but their genealogy starts with Utpalraj. Being neighbours, Parmar rulers were in constant conflict with the rulers of Gujarat. After his defeat at the hands of Mulraj Solanki, ruler of Gujarat, Dharanivaraha had to seek shelter at the doors of the Rashtrakuta ruler Dhaval. A little later, Dharanivaraha wrested Abu from the Solankis.

Dharavarsh (1163-1219 AD) was a powerful ruler of this dynasty. He commanded the forces of Gujarat in the battle against Muhammad Ghauri. Later on, he overthrew the yoke of vassalage of the Solankis and became independent. He kept good relations with the Chauhanas of Nadol. During the reign of his son Som Singh, Tejpal, a ministers in the court of Virbhaval, built a temple Luna Vasahi or the temple of Neminath, the 22nd Tirthankar of the Jainas in 1230 AD. Around 1311 AD Rao Lumba, the Chauhan ruler of Nadol, conquered Chandravati, the capital of the Parmars and established Chauhana Rule.

Entry of Marathas in Rajasthan

After the death of Aurangzeb (1707 AD) the Mughal empire gradually began to

decline. Meanwhile, Marathas had been consolidating and increasing their power under the able leadership of Peshwas. Though the influence of the Marathas was spreading in Gujarat and Malwa, still no Maratha commander had entered Rajputana. But this situation did not last long, and internal conflicts gave the Marathas a chance to enter Rajputana. There were 3 major centres of mutual conflicts in Rajasthan – Bundi, Jaipur, and Jodhpur.

Bundi – Conflict for Succession – Sawai Jai Singh wanted to increase his power. Situated on the border of his state, king Budh Singh of Bundi was the brother-in-law of Jai Singh. Till 1727 CE, good relations existed between the brothers-in-law. But suddenly relations between them got strained and were broken in the end. They turned opponents. Maharao Budh Singh started hating Jai Singh's sister (Kacchhawa queen) and started working on the directions of his Chundawat queen. After few days Budh Singh refused to accept Kacchhawa queen's son Bhawani Singh as his own. Jai Singh got angry and decided to dethrone Budh Singh. While Maharaj Budh Singh was away from his capital for some reason, in his absence Jai Singh sent his army and seized the Bundi fort. He made Dalail Singh, the second son of jagirdar Hada Salim Singh of Karwar, to sit on the throne of Bundi in 1730 CE. In a couple of years, Marathas got -an opportunity to interfere in the politics of Rajputana. In 1732, Jai Singh got his daughter, Krishna Kumari, married to Dalail Singh. To pave Dalail Singh's way to the throne, Jai Singh got Bhawani Singh murdered. This incident made Kacchhawa queen an opponent of Jai Singh and she tried to seek Maratha help. Marathas were looking for such an opportunity.

On April 18, 1734, Maratha army under the leadership of Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Scindhia, attacked Bundi. After four days of conflict, on 22 April, Bundi was under the Marathas occupation. Rule of Maharao Ummaid Singh (he was the son of Budh Singh, who was addicted to opium and alcohol) was established in Bundi. To express her gratitude, Kacchhawa queen made Holkar her brother by tying him a rakhi. As Ummaid Singh was still a minor, Pratap Singh was given the charge of the administration. Pratap Singh was the elder brother of Dalail Singh.

Hurda conference – The failure of Mughal rule to stop Marathas from entering Malwa, Gujarat and Bundelkhand, and the first interference of the Marathas in internal conflicts of the Rajput rulers was an eye opener for all the discerning rulers of Rajputana.

Sawai Jai Singh tried to gather all the rulers of Rajasthan in Hurda, to plan a strategy to face the Marathas effectively and to stop their entry in Rajputana. On July 16, 1734, the conference started at the proposed venue Hurda, which was presided by the new Maharana of Mewar, Jagat Singh II. In the conference, besides Sawai Jai Singh, other rulers like Abhay Singh of Jodhpur, Bakht Singh of Nagaura, Jorawar

Singh of Bikaner, Durjansal of Kota, Dalail Singh of Bundi, Gopal Das of Karauli, Raj Singh of Kishangarh, etc. were -also present. After much deliberations all the rulers signed an agreement on 17th July. As per the agreement all the rulers would maintain unity and disrespect of one will be considered disrespect of everyone. No state will give shelter to the rebels of the other state. The action against the Marathas would commence after the rainy season, for which all the rulers would gather with their army at Rampura and if any ruler is not present for any reason then he would send his son or brother. But the plans of this conference could never be executed, each ruler had his selfish interests and therefore solidarity was impossible. This way Hurda conference proved to be an unsuccessful effort.

Jaipur's War of Succession – In 1708 AD, Sawai Jai Singh got married to Chandrakunwar Bai, the daughter of Maharana Amar Singh II of Mewar. Before marriage, Jai Singh had signed an agreement according to which the son born to the princess of Mewar would sit on the throne of Jaipur irrespective of his age. Afterwards, in 1722, a son Ishwari Singh was born to Suraj Kunwar, Khinchi queen of Jai Singh and in 1728, Madho Singh, a son was born to the princess of Mewar, Chandrakunwar. Therefore, after Jai Singh's death, succession battle became inevitable between Ishwari Singh and Madhav Singh.

After the death of Sawai Jai Singh in September 1743, his eldest son Ishwari Singh sat on the throne but Madho Singh claimed his right to throne on the basis of the agreement signed in 1708 which resulted in a feud between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh. Both the parties sought help from the Marathas. Madho Singh promised Malhar Rao Holkar 20 lakh rupees in return for military assistance. Ishwari Singh got help from Ranoji Scindhia. In February 1745, Madho Singh attacked Jaipur but Ishwari Singh with the help of the Marathas defeated Madho Singh. Madho Singh sent a representative to Kalpi to get military help from Malhar Rao once again. In return, he promised to give him 2 lakh rupees. Malhar Rao sent his son Khanderao with one thousand horsemen to help these 3 Rajputs. As a result, on March 1, 1747, a fierce battle was again fought between the brothers at Rajmahal in which Ishwari Singh emerged victorious.

Prior to the battle of Rajmahal, Peshwa was inclined towards Ishwari Singh but after this battle when Maharana Jagat Singh (ruler of Mewar) offered to give him more money, Peshwa, who was deep in debt, left Ishwari Singh's side and supported Madho Singh. After this Ishwari Singh faced the Marathas at Bagru. In this battle which lasted for 6 days, Ishwari Singh was defeated (though this time Jat ruler Surajmal fought bravely alongside Ishwari Singh) and had to promise to give Madho Singh 4 parganas, return the state of Bundi to Ummed Singh and give Marathas a huge amount of money.

After the battle of Bagru (August 1748), Ishwari Singh failed to pay the amount promised to Marathas. For the recovery of this amount, Holkar moved towards Jaipur. On the way he met the ambassador of Jaipur with 2 lakh rupees but Holkar was not happy with this amount and he kept proceeding towards Jaipur. When the ambassador returned and informed Ishwari Singh about this, Ishwari Singh got petrified as he did not have the money to give to the Marathas. In a state of helplessness, he committed suicide in December 1750 and freed himself from all the political entanglement.

Now Holkar called Madho Singh and made him the ruler of Jaipur. Immediately after that, the Marathas put forth their demand of huge amount before Madho Singh. Madho Singh wanted to teach the Marathas a lesson. He got a golden opportunity on January 10, 1751. On this day approximately 4000 Marathas entered the newly constructed city of Jaipur to see its artistic temples and markets. In the afternoon Madho Singh closed all the gates of the city and suddenly Rajput soldiers and citizens started the massacre of Marathas. In the politics of Rajasthan, a new twist in the Rajput-Maratha relations developed after this incident, which proved to be ruinous for both the parties as well as for Rajasthan in the times to come.

Battle of Tunga

Chauth was a bone of contention between Jaipur state and the Marathas. As a result, Marathas used to plunder Jaipur State under the leadership of Mahadji Scindhia. Pratap Singh, the then ruler of Jaipur, was so harassed by these actions of the Marathas that he made an effort to get rid of them. Pratap Singh formed an alliance with Vijay Singh, the Maharaja of Jodhpur, against the Marathas and the rulers of Shivpur and Karauli also gave their military support to this union. Besides this, Mahadji's aide, Mughal commander Mohammed Beg Hamdani also joined the Rajputs. Eventually, on July 28, 1787 a battle was fought between the Marathas (Mahadji Scindhia) and the Rathore-Kachchhawa alliance at Tunga near Lalsot. In spite of a fierce battle and a lot of bloodshed the battle remained indecisive. Mahadaji retreated and the Rajput army had the upper hand.

Even after the battle of Tunga, the Marathas still were not ready to leave their dominance over the Rajput states. Therefore, the battle of Patan was also fought between the Rajputs and the Marathas on June 20, 1790 in which Maratha army was victorious and the Rajputs surrendered.

Pratap Singh, the ruler of Jaipur made one more effort to liberate himself from the Marathas. With the help of Jodhpur on April 16, 1800, he fought against the Marathas at Malpura. And yet again the Marathas were victorious. Hence Jaipur state had to reconcile themselves with the Maratha presence.

Krishna Kumari Dispute

War like situation occurred between the ruler of Jaipur, Jagat Singh and the ruler of Jodhpur Man Singh on the issue of marriage with the princess of Mewar, Krishna Kumari. Krishna Kumari was the daughter of Maharana of Mewar Bhim Singh, who was engaged to the ruler of Marwar Bheem Singh, but Bheem Singh died before the marriage. After the death of Bheem Singh, the ruler of Mewar fixed Krishna Kumari's marriage with the ruler of Jaipur Jagat Singh. But the new ruler of Marwar, Man Singh, took it as an insult and decided to attack Mewar. These developments once again gave an opportunity to Marathas and Amir Khan Pindari to interfere in the internal matters of Mewar and Marwar. Amir Khan Pindari supported the ruler of Marwar Man Singh, and encamped in Mewar. Amir Khan Pindari proposed two options before the Maharana: either Krishna Kumari be married to Man Singh or be killed, failing which, he threatened to destroy Mewar. This dispute finally came to an end with the end of Krishna Kumari's life on 21st July 1810.

War of Succession in Jodhpur

The significant problem which occurred in Rajasthan was on the question of succession of the Jodhpur state, which continued for many years. Maharaja of Jodhpur Abhay Singh's brother, Bakht Singh wanted to remove him from the throne and become the ruler. In June 1749, after the death of Abhay Singh, his son Ram Singh ascended the throne. In November 1750, Bakht Singh defeated Ram Singh and usurped the throne of Jodhpur from him. Ram Singh fled and came to Jaipur and under the protection of Madho Singh, started making efforts to secure help from the Marathas. In 1752, when Bakht Singh conquered Ajmer, Marathas got one more reason to oppose him as they wanted to take over Ajmer.

On September 21, 1752 Bakht Singh died and his son Vijay Singh ascended the throne of Jodhpur. Ram Singh was already trying to get back the throne of Jodhpur with the help of the Marathas. Therefore in June 1753, Raghunath Rao sent Jayappa Scindhia to attack Jodhpur to help Ram Singh become the ruler. On September 15, 1753 a fierce battle was fought between both the parties in which Vijay Singh was defeated and fled to Nagaur and took refuge in the fort of Nagaur. For a long period, Vijay Singh was not in a position to compete with the Marathas and was forced to sign a treaty with them in 1756. The conditions of the treaty were :

1. Ajmer and Garhbeetli (Taragarh) would remain under the Marathas.
2. Authority of Ram Singh was accepted over Jalore and half of Marwar -in which Sambhar, Maroth, Sojat, Parbatsar, and 84 villages of Kekri were included. The dominance of Vijay Singh was accepted on Jodhpur, Nagaur, and Merta.

3. Vijay Singh agreed to pay rupees 50 lakhs as war indemnity in which 25 lakhs were to be given in the first year and the remaining amount in 2 years in 2 instalments.
4. Ram Singh agreed to pay Marathas 5 lakhs rupees in lieu of their help.
5. Jodhpur State would give one and a half lakhs rupees as annual tax to Marathas.
6. Vijay Singh was free to take military action against Ram Singh if he infringed upon his boundary.

The entry and interference of Marathas had started in almost all other states along with the above-mentioned important states of Rajasthan. Only Bikaner and Jaisalmer escaped from the plunder of the Marathas. The dominance of the Marathas was gradually established over the remaining Rajasthan. After a while the aides of the Marathas, the Pindaris, organised their own armies and started plundering Rajasthan. The states of Rajasthan had never been prosperous and now their economic condition became worse.

Exercise

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Kalibanga is located in which district of Rajasthan?
(a) Sikar (b) Jaipur
(c) Sriranganagar (d) Hanumangarh
2. Who propounded the theory of origin of Rajputs through agni kund?
(a) Chandbardai (b) Amir Khusro
(c) Chandrashekhar (d) Barni
3. Padmini was queen of which ruler ?
(a) Sanga (b) Ratan Singh
(c) Raj Singh (d) Man Singh
4. In which year Prithvi Raj III defeated chandel ruler of Mahoba ?
(a) 1181A.D (b) 1182A.D
(c) 1191 A.D (d) 1192A.D

5. Krishna Kumari was princess of which state.
(a) Mewar (b) Jaipur
(c) Marwar (d) Bikaner

Very short answer type questions

1. Ganeshwar civilisation is situated in which district and on the banks of which river ?
2. Who has accepted Rajputs as foreign invader?
3. Write four upper paleolithic sites in Rajasthan?
4. Who was the ruler of Matsya Janpad in Mahabharat period?
5. Who was ruler of Chittor during the attack of Allauddin Khilji?
6. Where is Rana Sanga's monument located?
7. When and where was Battle of Diwer fought?
8. Who is famous as 'Roothi Rani'?
9. Match the following :

Dynasty	Founder
1. Rathore	Vasudev
2. Chauhan	Seeha
3. Jat	Dulharai
4. Kacchhwaha	Chudaman

Short answer type questions :

1. Write the changes that were evident in the feudal system during Mughal period?
2. Write short note on the battle of Tunga (1787).
3. Why did Hurda conference fail? Explain with reasons.
4. Give a brief introduction of the Parmar dynasty of Abu.
5. Throw light on the relations between Kanhad Dev and Allauddin Khilji.
6. Examine the historicity of Sanyogita -swayamvar.