

CLASS VI

CHAPTER 10

NEW EMPIRES AND KINGDOMS

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CLASS VI CHAPTER 10 NEW EMPIRES AND KINGDOMS (NCERT)

- Prashastis and what they tell us
- Samudragupta's prashasti
- Genealogies
- Harshavardhana and the Harshacharita
- The Pallavas, Chalukyas and Pulakeshin's prashasti
- A new kind of army
- Assemblies in the southern kingdoms
- Ordinary people in the kingdoms



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☐ Prashastis and what they tell us



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❑ Prashastis and what they tell us

- We know about Samudragupta from a long inscription, inscribed on the Ashokan pillar at Allahabad.
 - ✓ composed as a Kavya by Harishena poet and a minister at the court of Samudragupta.
- A prashasti, a Sanskrit word, meaning 'in praise of'.
- Prashastis are composed in long sentences.

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❑ Samudragupta's prashasti tells us.

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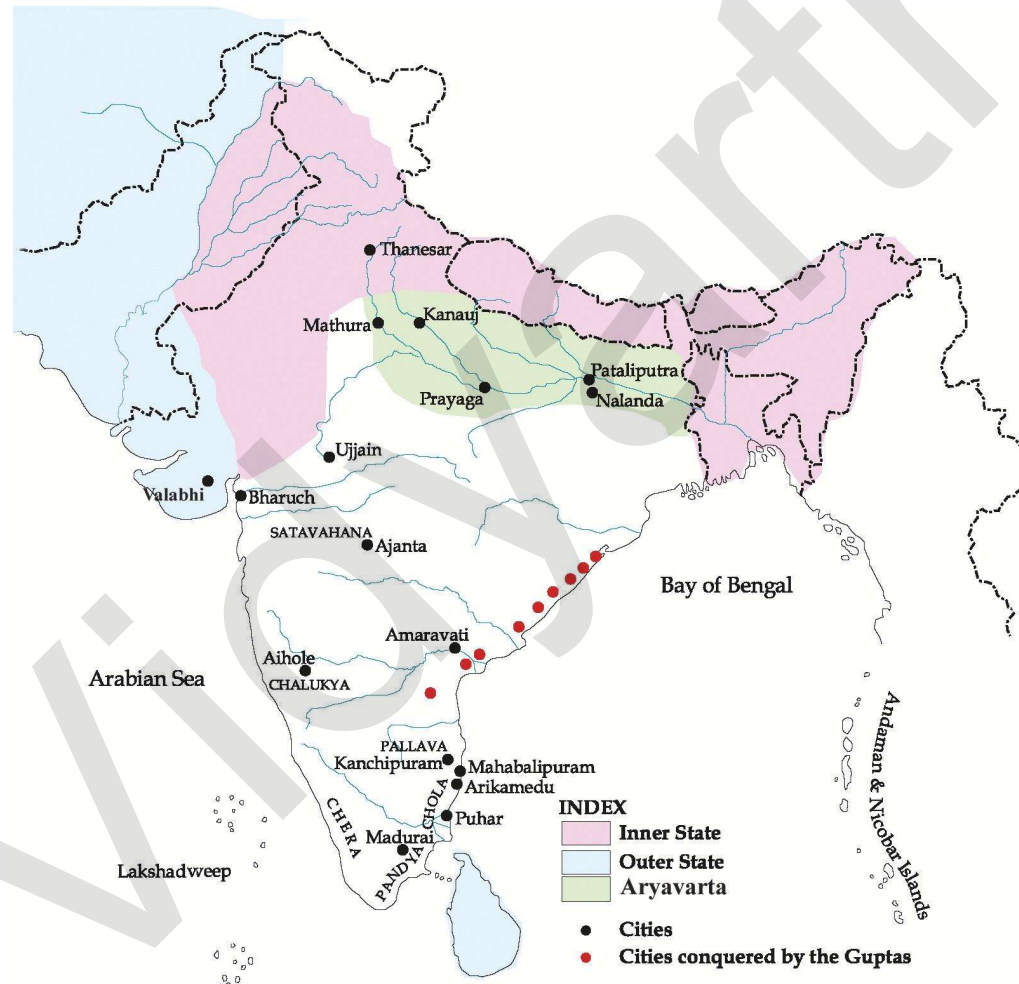
☐ Samudragupta's prashasti tells us.

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- i. praised the king in glowing terms - as a warrior,
- ii. as a king who won victories in battle,
- iii. who was learned and the best of poets.
- iv. Described him equal to god

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Types of rulers in Gupta empire

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- Prashastis also showed maps and the territories ruled by the king.
- Harishena describes four different kinds of rulers and tells us about Samudra Gupta's policies towards them.
 1. The rulers of Aryavarta (in green color) – nine rulers of were uprooted and kingdoms were made part of empire.

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2) The rulers of Dakshinapatha - twelve rulers whose capitals are marked with red dots on the map.

- ✓ surrendered to Samudragupta after being defeated and he then allowed them to rule again

3) inner circle of neighbouring states, including Assam, coastal Bengal, Nepal, and several gana sangha in the northwest, marked in purple on the map.

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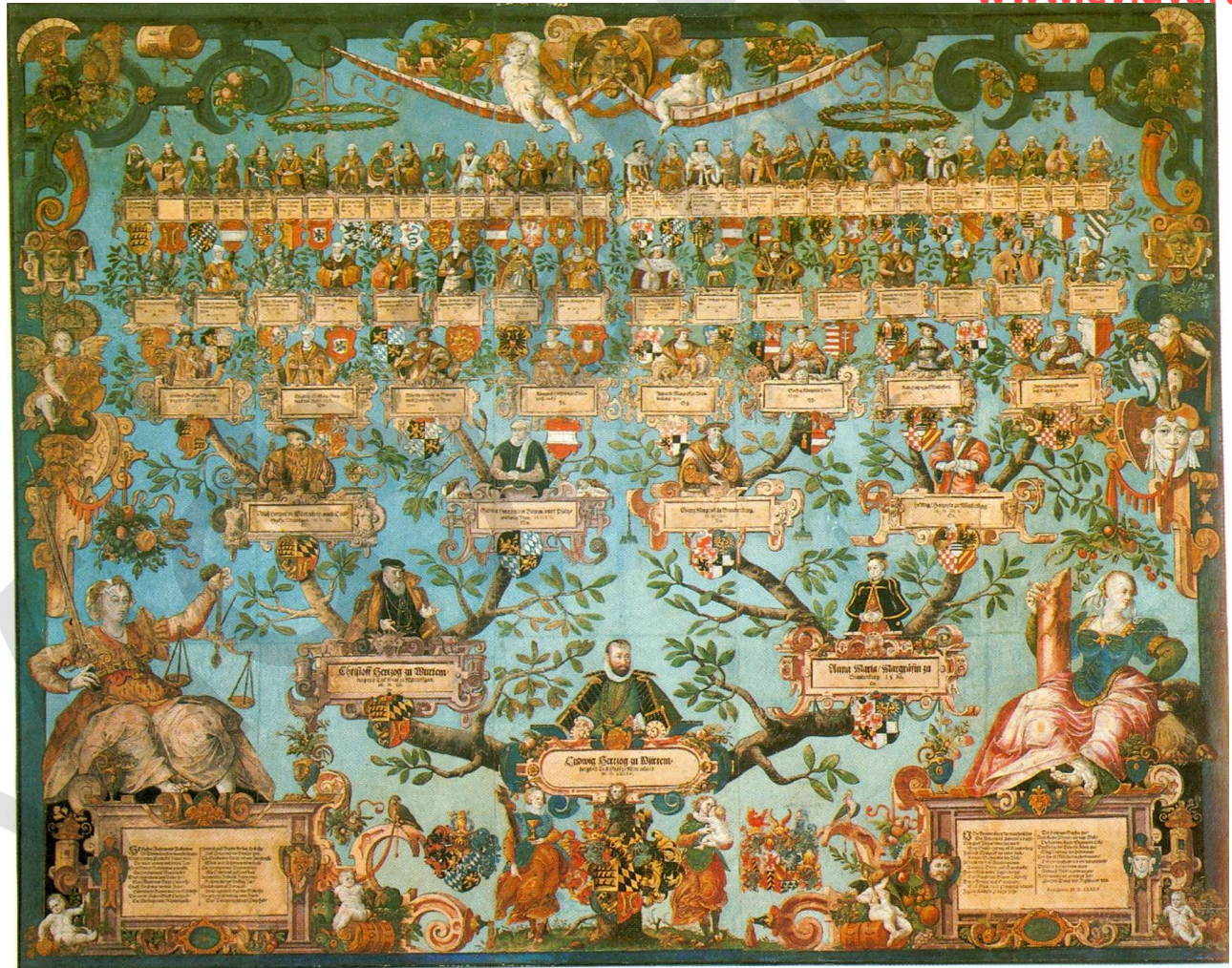
- ✓ brought tribute, followed his orders, and attended his court.

4. The rulers of the outlying areas, marked in blue on the map, perhaps the descendants of the Kushanas and Shakas, and the ruler of Sri Lanka, who submitted to him and offered daughters in marriage.

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□ Genealogies



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□ Genealogies

- Most prashastis also mention the ancestors of the ruler.



- Chandragupta adopted title of Maharaja-adhiraja which was later adopted by samundragupta too.

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- Inscriptions and coins provides information about Chandragupta II, son of Samudragupta.
 - He led an expedition to western India, where he overcame the last of the Shakas.

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❑ Harshavardhana and Harshacharita

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❑ Harshavardhana and Harshacharita

- ✓ ruled nearly 1400 years ago
- ✓ court poet, Banabhatta, wrote his biography, the Harshacharita
- ✓ In Sanskrit.
- ✓ gives us the genealogy of Harsha
- ✓ ends with his becoming king.

Xuan Zang, spent a lot of time at Harsha's court and left a detailed account of what he saw.

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- not the eldest son of his father
- His brother-in-law was the ruler of Kanauj, and was killed by the ruler of Bengal.
- Harsha took over the kingdom of Kanauj, and then led an army against the ruler of Bengal.
 - ✓ successful in the east,
 - ✓ conquered Magadha probably Bengal too.
 - ✓ not as successful elsewhere.

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- tried to cross the Narmada to march into the Deccan but was stopped by a ruler belonging to the Chalukya dynasty, Pulakeshin II.



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❖ The Pallavas, Chalukyas and Pulkeshin's Prashasti



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❖ The Pallavas, Chalukyas and Pulkeshin's Prashasti

- During this period, the Pallavas and Chalukyas were the most important ruling dynasties in south India.
- Pallava's territory – capital Kanchipuram to Kaveri delta.
- Chalukya's territory – centred around the Raichur Doab, between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra.

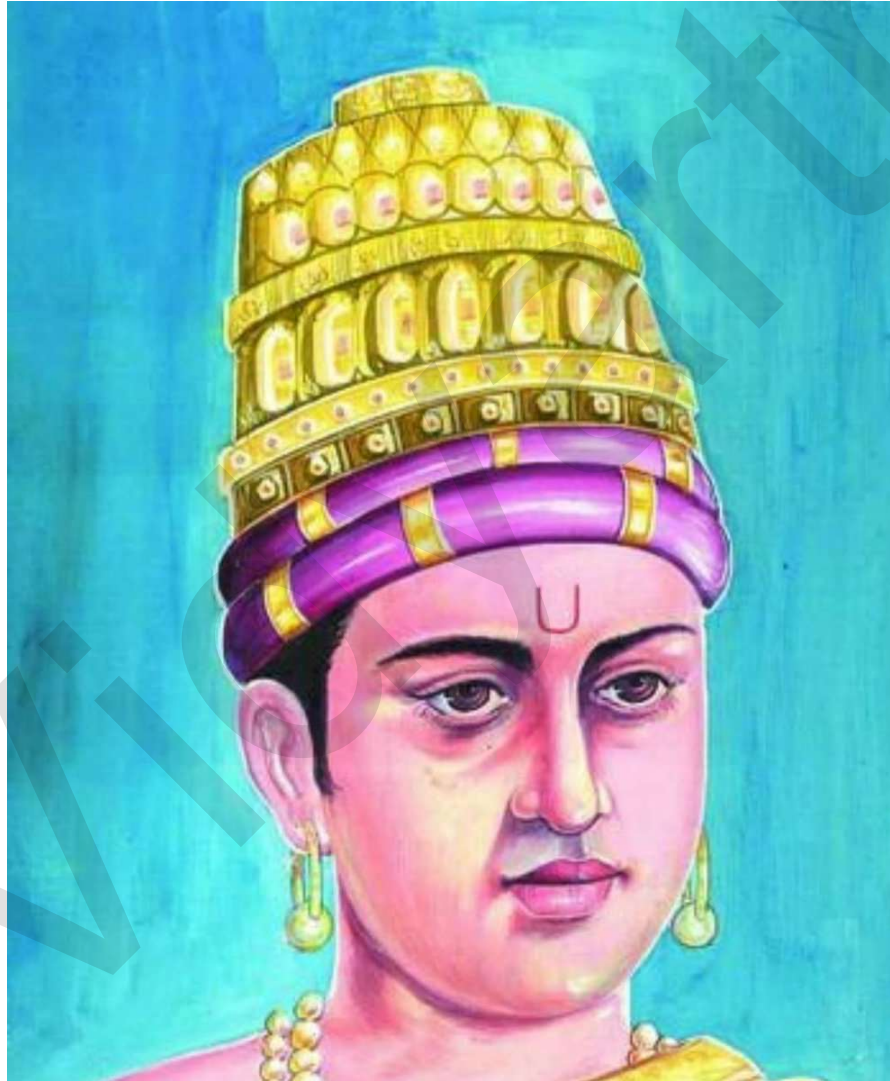
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- Aihole - the capital of the Chalukyas,
 - important trading center
 - a religious center, with a number of temples.
- Both dynasties frequently raided one another's lands, especially attacking the capital cities, which were prosperous towns.

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❑ Pulakeshin II



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❑ Pulakeshin II

- best-known Chalukya ruler.
- We know about him from a prashasti, composed by his court poet Ravikirti.
 - ✓ tells us about his ancestors traced back through four generations from father to son.
 - ✓ led expeditions along both the west and the east coasts.
 - ✓ checked the advance of Harsha.

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- got the kingdom from his uncle.
- also attacked the Pallava king, who took shelter behind the walls of Kanchipuram
- both the Pallavas and the Chalukyas gave way to new rulers belonging to the Rashtrakuta and Chola dynasties.

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☐ How were these kingdoms administered?

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☐ How were these kingdoms administered?

- Land revenue remained important for these rulers.
- The village remained the basic unit of administration.
- Kings adopted a number of steps to win the support of men who were powerful, either economically, or socially, or because of their political and military strength.

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- Administrative posts became hereditary, one person held many offices and important people influenced local administration.
- Sometimes, one person held many offices.
- important men had a say in local administration.
- policies were reasonably effective, but sooner or later, some of these powerful men grew strong enough to set up independent kingdoms.

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☐ A new kind of army



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□ A new kind of army

- Some of these kings maintained a well-organised army, with elephants, chariots, cavalry and foot soldiers.
- Also, there were military leaders who provided the king with troops whenever he needed them.
 - ✓ were not paid regular salaries
 - ✓ Instead, some of them received grants of land.

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- They collected revenue from the land and used this to maintain soldiers and horses and provide equipment for warfare. These men were known as samantas.

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❑ Assemblies in the southern kingdoms



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❑ Assemblies in the southern kingdoms

- The inscriptions of the Pallavas mention a number of local assemblies.
 - ✓ These included the sabha, which was an assembly of Brahmin landowners, which looked after local issues.
 - ✓ The **ur** was a village assembly found in areas where the landowners were not brahmins.
 - ✓ the nagaram was an organisation of merchants.

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- The assemblies were controlled by powerful merchants and landowners.

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❑ Ordinary people in the kingdoms



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□ Ordinary people in the kingdoms

- The lives of ordinary people can be taken from plays, and other accounts.
- The plays of Kalidasa depicted life in the king's court.
- The kings and Brahmins were shown speaking Sanskrit, while ordinary men and women spoke Prakrit in these plays.

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- The Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian noticed the practice of untouchability by the high and powerful people.
- Banabhatta provided an account of the marches of the large armies of the king.