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HISTORY OF ANCIENT INDIA
Earliest Times to 1000 A.D.
Radhey Shyam Chaurasia

Mehra Offset Press, Delhi

PREFACE

The aim of the author in writing this book on ancient history is to place the historical facts which have been accepted by the renowned authors. Ancient History of India is a very controversial subject and Western writers have expressed different opinions about this subject. On the other hand, new facts have come to light and recent Indian writers have expressed different opinions. For a student of Indian History it becomes a difficult task to come to right conclusion. In this book an attempt has been made to give the accepted conclusions because fate of a student depends on the accepted conclusion of the examiners.

The author has chosen to follow the historical and objective method and has confined himself to giving an accurate exposition of the views of the renowned historians together with fair and reasonable criticism of their views from various standpoints.

The book has been written for B.A. and B.A. (Hons.) students. It may also prove useful for M.A. students as well as for the candidates preparing for various competitive examinations.

I shall deem my labour amply rewarded if the merits of the book find due appreciation at the hands of the teachers as well as the students.

Suggestions, if any, for the improvement of the book in the next edition shall be gratefully received.

RADHEY SHYAM CHAURASIA

Features of Chola Art. The Chola art is characterised by a massive grandeur. The large structures were decorated with minute sculptures involving immense labour and infinite pains. As Ferguson very aptly remarked, "The Chola artists conceived like giants and finished like Jewellers." Another feature of the Chola art was the addition of a huge gateway called a 'Gopurams'. Ultimately the 'Gopurams' sometimes large in number came to occupy the dominant place by their lowering height and lavish decoration while the main shrine being far less imposing was reduced to comparative insignificance. The Gopuram at Kumbha Konam for example is a very splendid piece of work by itself but it so completely overshadows the main shrine that the structure taken as a whole is less pleasing and produces far less artistic effect.

The third feature of the Chola art in addition to Gopurams is the pillard halls and long colonnades of the temples. Travellers are struck with awe by the sight of the gigantic temples at Madina, Srirangam, Rameshwaram and other places with thousand pillard halls and long vistas of covered colonnades.

A review of the progress and development of Indian art is necessary for the proper understanding of the high culture and refinement of the ancient Indians. Judged by the standard of art Indian civilization must be regarded as occupying a very high place indeed among those of antiquity. It exhibits not only grace and refinement but technical skill and patient industry of a very high order. Indian art offers the most vivid testimony to the wonderful resources in men and money possessed by the rulers and the religious spirit that dominated the entire population. These depict that India was one of the most progressive, prosperous and glorious country of the world during ancient days, consequently its culture spread in foreign countries also during ancient time.

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Muslim Invaders (India upto 1206 A.D.)

ARABS UNDER MUHAMAD BIN KASIM AND MAHMUD GHAZNAVI AND MOHAMMAD GHORI

First Muslim invaders were Arabs, who invaded Sindh in 712 A.D. under Muhammad Bin Kasim and defeated Raja Dahir who was ruler of Sindh but Arab rule of Sindh was an empty triumph.

Arabs failed to establish their rule or influence in India but Mahmud Ghaznavi established his rule in western Punjab and Sindh etc. which is now Pakistan.

The Rise of Islam. Foreigners like the Huns and the Scythian who came to India invariably merged with the population of the country and adopted their ways of life. But the history of Islam in India is by and large the story of a continuous conflict, adjustment and mutual influence between two cultures with well marked traits of their own. True, the Indians suffered defeat several times but this did not mean the end of their well developed culture. The Muhammadans never really conquered the whole of India for there were always pockets of resistance in different parts of the country. The Rajputs in the Northern India strove against odds to preserve the civilization of their forefathers. The Vijayanagar Empire preserved the South for Hinduism. The Maratha had no mean share in disrupting the Mughal empire. Nepal, Assam, Manipur, Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh etc. they were unable to conquer.

On the eve of Mahmud's invasion India was divided into a number of small states and kingdoms. The unity of Northern India broke up with the death of Harshvardhana in A.D. 647. His dominions fell apart and there followed a long period of anarchy and disturbance. In the regrouping of powers that subsequently took place, the Rajputs

secured the upper hand and they established themselves as rulers in almost all the kingdoms that rose on the ruins of Harsha's empire. They also made themselves supreme in the south. The long period that intervened between the death of Harsha and the Muslim conquest of India towards the close of the 12th century has been called the Rajput period. The Rajput rulers were no doubt very brave and courageous but they always busy fighting among themselves on petty affairs, mutual jealousies, pride and selfishness. They could not unite even in the face of common danger from outside. They wanted to crush and humiliate each other. This provided the ideal condition for foreigners to invade India and take full advantage of the mutual fights to the Rajput princes. Himalyan states never felt Islamic invasions, so these states remained aloof.

Kingdoms of the Northern India

(1) **Hindu Shahi Kingdom.** The Brahman Hindu Shahi kingdom extended from the river Chenab to Hindukush in the north. The rulers of this dynasty checked the advance of the Arabs for about 300 years single handed. The other neighbouring states never stirred to face the common enemy. At the time of Mahmud's invasion on India Jaipal of this dynasty was ruling over the kingdom.

(2) **Kashmir.** Kashmir was ruled by the rulers of Utpal dynasty. Shankar was the powerful ruler of this dynasty. But the relations with Kanauj and Hindu Shahi were not very cordial.

(3) **Kanauj.** Kanauj was under the Pratihara rulers. It was a powerful kingdom under the reign of Vatsaraja and Naga Bhatta. But it was fighting against the neighbouring states in the north on one hand and the Rashtrakutas of the south on the other.

(4) **Bengal.** Bengal was under the rule of Pala dynasty. On the eve of Mahmud's invasion it was ruled by Mahipal.

(5) **Multan and Sind.** These were under foreign rulers. They were not very strong. The rulers were weak.

(6) **Other Small Kingdoms.** On the eve of Mahmud's invasion on India there was a number of other small kingdoms. There were Chalukyas in Gujrat, Chandelas in Bundelkhand, the Parmars of Malwa. Previously they were all under Kanauj but in course of time they had asserted their independence and did not come together to fight invaders. Mutual wars weakened their mily power.

from lack of nationalism and patriotism. The Rashtakutas and Chalukyas were engaged in long struggle for supremacy. It weakend both the kingdoms and led to their decline. In the same way the Pallavas supremacy also ended by the end of 9th century A.D. In the beginning of 11th century A.D. there were two important kingdoms in the South : (i) Chalukya kingdom of Kalyani, and (ii) the Chola Kingdom of Tanjore. Both these were victims of mutual jealousies and pride. Each wanted to crush and humiliate the other. They were constantly at war with each other, so both were weakened and others were two small.

Advent of the Muslims in India. A new Chapter of Indian history begins with the advent of the Muslims in India. The first Muslims to come to India were the Arabs who conquered Sind and Multan in A.D. 712. About three hundred years later Sultan Mahmud led a series of plundering raids and conquered a portion of the Punjab. Arab conquest of Sindh was an empty triumph as it was on avery small part of India and short-lived and did not produce any results.

Alptgin. Alptgin was a slave, who soon endeared himself to his master Abdul Malik and was made governor of Khurasan. On his master's death, Alptgin asserted his independence. He found the kingdom of Ghazni. He died in about A.D. 863 and Subuktigin his son-in-law made himself master of Ghazni.

Subuktigin (A.D. 977 — 997). During the early years of his reign Subuktigin was occupied in extending kingdom both in the east and west. About A.D. 986 he began to make raids into the territory of Jaipal the Hindu Raja of the Shahiya dynasty. Jaipal retaliated by invading the Ghazni territory but rigours of winter destroyed most of his army and he was compelled to purchase peace by a promise to pay a large indemnity. He, however, refused payment and Subuktigin continued his raids and conquered the Lamghan territory between Peshawar and Kabul. To ward off the growing Muslim menace, Jaipal organised a league of Hindu princes including the Rajas of distant Kanauj and Kalinjar. The allied army marched into the territory of Subuktigin but being caught in the different hilly country was completely defeated in the Khurram valley. As the result of this victory Subuktigin annexed Peshawar. He, however, did not follow up his success as he turned his attention to the north where he supported the Samani king against the Tartars. The Samani king out of gratitude appointed

Mahmud, son of Subuktigin as the governor of Khurasan. Subuktigin died in A.D. 997.

Thus Subuktigin was the first Muslim to attempt the invasion of India from the North West. Although his raids led to no more results than the conquest of Peshawar and the temporary submission of Jaipal they were important in as much as they pointed the way to Hindustan. His son Mahmud carried on his work on a war larger scale.

Sultan Mahmud (A.D. 997 — 1030). The death of Subuktigin was followed by a short interval of struggle for the throne between his two sons Mahmud and Ismail. Mahmud the elder of the two defeated Ismail and kept him confined in a fortress for the rest of his life. He spent the first two years of his reign in consolidating his power. He attacked and defeated the Samani king for his refusal to confirm him in the governorship of Khurasan. He then declared his independence of his Samani lord and secured his position by obtaining from Caliph an official diploma of investiture. He then assumed the title of Sultan and was the first man of Muhammadan history to hold such a title. It indicated ruler by his own efforts.

His Character and Aim. Mahmud had all the warrior qualities of his father and as a dashing cavalry leader had no equal. To his military abilities he had a devouring ambition, the temper of a zealot and the greed of a robber. The Hindus were rich and indolent. Their wealth roused his greed and their idolatry inflamed his religious zeal. He vowed to wage a holy war against the idols of India. This was a lame excuse as iconoclast was more interested in plunder than in propagation of Islam.

Mahmud's Indian Invasions. Between the years A.D. 1000 and 1026 Sultan Mahmud made in all seventeen plundering raids into India, in the course of which he ranged across the plains from the Indus to the Ganges. The rich spoil obtained in each expedition encouraged him to repeat the adventure almost every year, so that the looting of idolaters temples became practically an annual state function. The following are the most famous of his raids :

The first invasion of Mahmud was directed against some of the frontier towns of the Khaibar Pass. In 1001, he led his second expedition against Jaipal whom he defeated near Peshawar. Jaipal was taken prisoner but was released on terms. He, however, refused to survive his disgrace and put an end to his life by throwing himself upon a funeral pyre. The third expedition was a successful raid upon

the town of Bhira (Bhatia), whose ruler had refused to pay tribute. The fourth expedition was directed against the Muhammadan ruler of Multan, who fled before the invader. In the course of this expedition, he also attacked Anandpal the son of Jaipal and hunted him from place to place. Multan was captured in 1005-06 A.D. and became part and parcel of his empire.

The Sixth Expedition (A.D. 1008-09). It was one of the most important of his raids. It was directed against Anandpal, who had organised a league of Hindu princes including rulers of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kanauj, Delhi and Ajmer. Realising the gravity of situation, Mahmud remained on the defensive. The battle was fought near Waiband for 40 days. The Hindus were also joined by the powerful Khokhar tribe of the Punjab. These hill men slashed right and left killing three to four thousand raiders in a few minutes. But an unlucky accident turned the tide of the battle. Anandpal's elephant took fright and fled away. This disheartened the Indian troops, who being seized with a panic fled in disorder. The Sultan Mahmud chased the panic stricken crowd. He killed a large number of Indians and captured enormous booty. He also captured the fortress of Kangra (Nagarkot). Here he obtained vast quantities of gold, silver and jewels etc. with which he returned to Ghazni.

Patriotism of the Shahiya Kings. After his defeat Anandpal continued to offer resistance to Mahmud. On his death, his son Trilochanpal carried on the struggle with the help of the king of Kashmir. He was, however, compelled to retire to the east, where he formed an alliance with the Chandela king of Kalinjar. But all his efforts of resistance ended in failure and he was eventually assassinated. His son Bhimpal also carried on the struggle and with his death in 1026 the Shahiya dynasty came to an end. The rulers of this dynasty deserve remembrance for their patriotic efforts to defend their country against Sultan Mahmud, who was the greatest military commander of the age. They sacrificed all for defence of their country.

For generation after generation they were the vigilant sentinels of the north western frontiers of India. They carried on the struggle without being daunted by repeated defeats and disasters. Alberuni spoke very highly for their courage and patriotism and remarked that they were men of "noble sentiment and noble bearing".

Raids on Kanauj and Mathura. The twelfth expedition of Mahmud was directed against Kanauj, the imperial city of northern

India, then under the rule of Rajyapal Parihara. Overcoming all opposition on the way, Mahmud crossed the Jamuna in A.D. 1018 and attacked Baran (modern Buland Shabar), when the local ruler submitted to him and embraced Islam. Mahmud, then turned to Mathura, sacked it and destroyed all its beautiful temples. He then marched against Kanauj. Its ruler Rajyapal put up a feeble resistance and then fled across the Ganges leaving the city to its fate. He submitted to the Sultan Mahmud so spared the city as a whole but destroyed its fortifications and robbed it of its riches and splendours.

Expedition against the Chandela King. The admission of Rajyapal Parihar to the foreign foe (Mahmud) enraged the neighbouring princes. They combined against him under the leadership of a Chandella king Vidyadhar. They attacked and killed Rajyapal and set up his son Trilochanpal on the throne. Mahmud looked upon this act as a challenge to his power for he regarded Rajyapal as his vassal. To punish the Hindu chiefs, he set out from Ghazni in 1019. He forced the passage of the Jamuna in spite of the opposition of Trilochanpal and entered the territory of Chandella king. Vidyadhar had gathered a huge army to oppose him but his courage failed him and he ran away under cover of night leaving the camp a prey to the Sultan. He invested Kalinjar but was bought off by the Chandella ruler with immense riches. Being a greedy person, Mahmud went away with plunder.

Attack on Somnath (A.D. 1026). The crowning exploit of Mahmud's career was the plunder of the great temple of Somnath in the extreme south of Kathiawar. It is reckoned as the 16th expedition of Mahmud of Ghazni. The news of the fabulous wealth of the temple, excited his appetite for plunder and he left with a large army. He marched to Multan and then via Ajmer proceeded to Gujrat capturing Anhilwara on the way. He reached Somnath in A.D. 1026, and stormed the fortress after a desperate engagement. A dreadful slaughter ensued, the sacred shrine was sacked and an enormous mass of treasure was obtained. He is said to have broken idol but became disappointed because he did not find precious jewels in it.

The return journey from Somnath was a severe trial to Mahmud. His army suffered badly from want of water and was harassed by the tribes of Jats, to punish the Jats in the neighbourhood of Multan, Mahmud led his last expedition to India (1027 A.D.). Having chastised the Jats, Mahmud returned to Ghazni. The rest of his life was engaged

in domestic pursuits. He died in 1030 A.D. lamenting that he is dying leaving all wealth for which he killed lot of persons.

An Estimate of Sultan Mahmud. Mahmud's expeditions were nothing more than plundering raids. His aim was plunder and not conquest. He was a great soldier but not a statesman. He conquered considerable portion of Persia. It was no mean genius that could expand a little mountain principality into a big empire. But though a great soldier, he was no constructive genius or a far seeing statesman. He could conquer but could not organise and consolidate. As a ruler he was firm, just and generous. He was a liberal patron of art and literature and many men of distinction of letters adorned his court. The most prominent of them was Firdausi and Alberuni etc. He founded the university of Ghazni. His liberal endowment of art and literature is a proof that he knew how to spend. He was a staunch Musalman but not a bigot. His destruction of Hindu temple was prompted by his love of plunder. He plundered and massacred the co-religionists in Persia as much, he slaughtered the 'infidels' of India. The Ghaznevide dynasty continued about a century and a quarter. The last prince of the House of continued Ghazni was Khusru Malik, who was expelled by Muhammad Ghori.

Results of Mahmud's Invasions. The invasions of Sultan Mahmud do not reveal any scheme of permanent conquest of India. That was no part of his aim. His aim was plunder and not conquest. The only permanent result was the conquest of the Punjab. His raids left lasting result in conquering and establishing Muslim rule which is now called Pakistan. The chief effects of his invasions was establishment of Muslim rule on Indian parts which are now called Pakistan.

1. Punjab Became a Part of the Ghazni Empire. According to Prof. Habib : "Ever since the days of Mahmud, Punjab had remained an integral part of the Ghaznavi empire."

2. Mahmud's Invasions Facilitated the Muslim Conquest and Rule in India. Though Mahmud himself failed to found a lasting empire in India but he decidedly opened the gateways of India for the future invasions and established rule in that part of India which is now called Pakistan.

3. Political Weakness of India was Exposed. Mahmud invaded India seventeen times but not on a simple occasion he met with serious resistance. Every time he succeeded in his aim. It is clear how weak India was to defend its frontiers.

4. Loss of Life and Property. Plunder of single temple of Somnath yielded over 20 lakh Dinars worth of wealth. From Nagarkot he got 7 lakh Dinars worth of plunder besides 2 maunds of gold, 20 maunds jewels and precious stones, 2000 mds. of silver.

5. Spread of Islam in India. The Arabs had failed to advance beyond Multan and Sind. But Mahmud reached the interior of India and converted large number of people to Islam and succeeded in establishing Islam on permanent basis.

6. A Great Blow to Works of Art. The invasions proved disastrous to Indian works of art and sculpture. He destroyed temples and idols.

7. Mahmud Ghaznavi was able to establish his rule over Baluchistan, Sindh and West Punjab in India which is now Pakistan thus indirectly Mahmud Ghaznavi's rule made personal impact. Mohamad Ghori gave up policy of plundering and establishing rule only in north western part of India but he and his successors tried for whole northern India. In spite of short success ultimately it failed, while policy of Mahmud Ghaznavi to establish rule only in North-West India succeeded as it is now Pakistan.

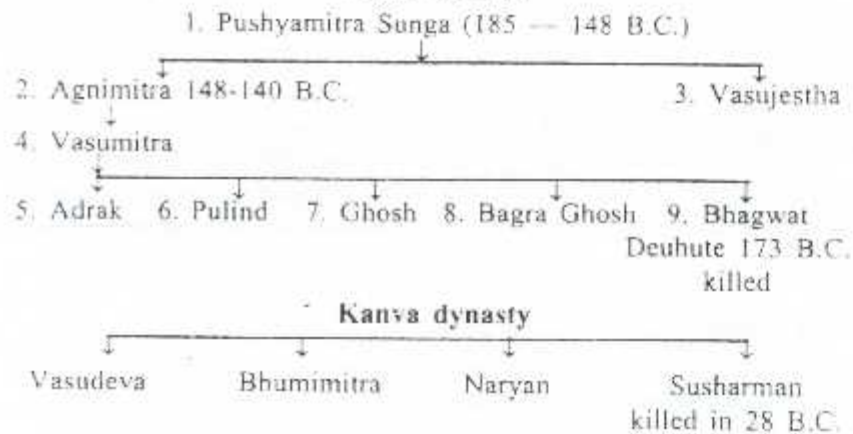
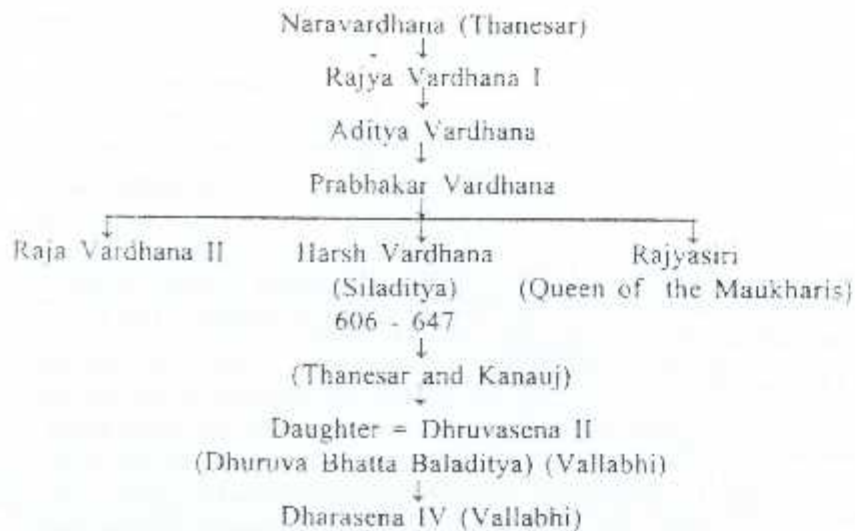
Political Condition of India. The serious efforts of the Muslims to conquer India began with the invasions of Muhammad Ghori towards the close of the 12th century. About this time northern India was split up into a number of independent Hindu kingdoms ruled by the Rajput families. There were two Muhammadan provinces viz. the Punjab ruled by the descendants of Mahmud Ghazni and Sind held by the Arab conquerors. The Hindu states were not subject to any paramount power. This absence of any controlling authority led to better rivalry and jealousy among the different kingdoms. The Hindu princes had no sense of cooperation even to meet a common adversary. There was no unity and so no united resistance to the foreign invader. It was this internal division that made Northern India a comparative easy prey to the Muslim conquest. Moreover, they did not try to drive away Arabs from Sind and Turks from Punjab as Europeans drove away Moors from Spain.

The Principal Hindu Powers of Northern India. The chief Rajput states of Northern India on the eve of Muhammadan conquest were : (i) The Tomars of Delhi, (ii) The Gahadevalas afterwards known as Rathors of Kanauj, (iii) The Chauhans of Ajmer and Delhi, (iv) The Baghelas of Gujrat, The Chandellas of Bundelkhand, (v) The

Patas and Sen of Bihar and Bengal. The different Rajput clans were torn by internal dissensions as well as by jealousies of each other. The Chauhans were the most powerful at that time but they had aggrandised themselves at the expense of the Tomars whom they had expelled from Delhi. The most renowned of the Chauhans was Prithvi Raj or Rai Pithora the ruler of Delhi and Ajmer. He had forcibly carried off the daughter of Jai Chand Rathor ruler of Kanauj and thereby incurred his hostility. It is a good instance of Rajput rivalry and jealousy at a time when Muhammad Ghori was almost knocking at their gates. He also attacked Chandelas, so he had to face Ghori alone.

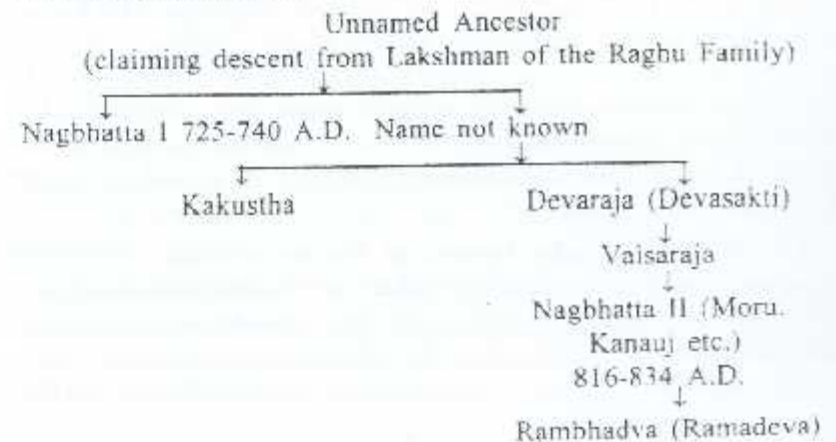
The House of Ghor. The principality of Ghor was a rugged mountainous country between Ghazni and Herat. The Ghories became supreme by supplanting the Ghaznavides. Having made his position secure at Ghazni, Muhammad Ghori turned his attention to India. His first object was to bring under his control the two Muhammadan provinces of the Punjab and Sind. He began with a successful attack on Multan then held by the descendants of the Arab conquerors. He captured Uchh in Sind (1175-76). Three years later, he tried to penetrate into Gujrat, but found the local Rajputs too strong for him. He was badly defeated by Mulraja, king of Anhilwara in 1178 A.D. But the victory was short-lived, because Anhilwara was occupied at a later date. By 1182 the whole of Sind was subdued. The object of his attention was Lahore then ruled by Khusru Malik, the last prince of the House of Ghazni. Muhammad Ghori captured Lahore, deposed Khusru Malik and annexed the Punjab to his dominions and made Lahore capital of Indian empire.

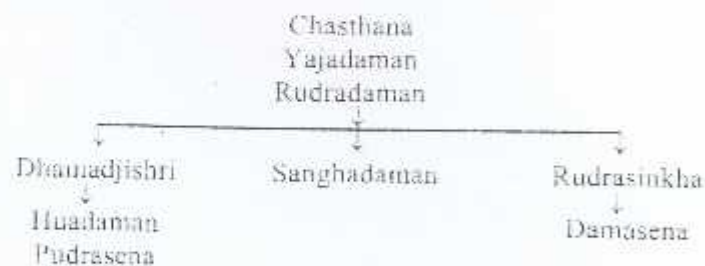
The Two Battles of Tarain (1191-92). The Muslim rivals having been disposed of Muhammad Ghori next turned to the conquest of the Hindustan. The Hindu princes realising the gravity of the situation hastily formed a confederacy and placed the allied army under the command of Prithvi Raj Chauhan of Delhi and Ajmer. Prithvi Raj gave battle to the invader at Tarain near Thanesar and completely routed the Ghori army in 1191. Next year, Muhammad Ghori returned and fought on the same battlefield, a desperate battle with the Prithvi Raj. This time he completely defeated the Hindus (1192). Prithvi Raj was captured and executed. The defeat of the Hindus was so overwhelming that the second battle of Tarain may be regarded as a decisive combat which ensured the success of Muslim attack on

Sunga dynasty**3. House of Pushyabhuti****Satvahan**

1. Simuk 281-243 B.C.
2. Krishna 248-230
3. Shri Satkarni I 230-220 B.C.
4. Purnot Sanga 220-202 B.C.
5. Skandstambhi 202-184 B.C.
6. Lambodra 184-128 B.C.

7. Meghvati 128-110 B.C.
8. Gautmi Putra Satkarni 110-58 B.C. or 44-43 B.C.
9. Pulumai I 43-19 B.C.
10. Shri Krishna 19-C B.C.
11. Hala
12. Puttarka
13. Purkema
14. Swati 44-43 A.D.
15. Skandvati
16. Mahendra Satkarni
17. Kuntala
18. Sundar Satkarni I 33-34 A.D.
19. Pulmai II
20. Shiva Swami I 34-42 A.D.
21. Pulmai III
22. Chandravati Satkarni
23. Shri Satkarni
24. Satkarni III
25. Shiva Shri II
26. Shiva Skand 121-128 A.D.
27. Vijaya 157-163 A.D.
28. Vas Chandra Shri 163-166 A.D.
29. Pulmai III 166-174 A.D.

4. Imperial Pratiharas

**Sakas**

Kushan Rule
40 to 220 A.D.

1. Kadphises I 40-78 A.D.
2. Kanishka 120-162 A.D. approximately
3. Houishk 162-185 A.D.
4. Basudeva 185-210 A.D.

Indian History

