Early Medieval & Rajputa Period

These notes are your ultimate revision weapon to revise Early Medieval & Rajputa Period history. We've distilled years of previous exam questions (PYQs) into one powerful, concise resource. Everything you need to know, nothing you don't.

- **PYQs, Decoded:** All key concepts from past exams, organized and simplified.
- **Revise in Record Time:** Short, precise, and designed for last-minute review.
- **Focus on What Matters:** Master high-probability topics and boost your confidence.

Medieval Indian Dynasties & History

The Chauhan Dynasty (Chahamanas of Ajmer)

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- **Identity & Lineage**
  - Prithviraj Chauhan is historically identified as **Prithviraj-III**.
  - The dynasty claimed to be **Suryavanshi** (Descendants of the Sun), as per the *Hammer Mahakavya*.
- **Major Events under Prithviraj Chauhan**
  - Famously **defeated Muhammad Ghori in the First Battle of Tarain (1191 AD)**.
  - Later **defeated by Muhammad Ghori in the Second Battle of Tarain (1192 AD)**.
- **Literature**
  - ***Prithviraj Raso***: Authored by his court poet, **Chand Bardai**.
  - ***Prithviraja Vijaya***: Authored by **Jayanaka**.

The Chandelas of Jejakabhukti (Bundelkhand)

- **Territory**
  - Their region, Bundelkhand, was anciently known as **Jejakabhukti**.
  - Famous warriors **Alha and Udal** were generals who served King **Paramardi (Parmal) Dev** (c. 1165-1203 CE) from **Mahoba**.
- **Key Rulers & Constructions**
  - King **Dhangdev (Dhanga)** constructed the **Kandariya Mahadev Temple**.
- **Conflicts & Literature**
  - Alha and Udal died fighting against **Prithviraj Chauhan**.
  - This conflict is documented in:
    - ***Prithviraj Raso*** by Chand Bardai
    - ***Parmal Raso*** (likely also by Chand Bardai)
    - ***Alha Khand*** by **Jagnik**

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The Pala Dynasty of Bengal & Bihar

- **Foundation & Rulers**
  - Founded by **Gopala** (750–770).
  - Important kings: **Dharmapala**, **Devapala**.
  - King **Devapala** had diplomatic contact with the **Sailendra dynasty of Java-Sumatra**.
- **Educational & Religious Patronage**
  - **Dharmapala** established:
    - **Vikramshila University** (primary center after Nalanda's decline).
    - The **Sompura Mahavihar** at Paharpur.
  - He was a devout Buddhist, titled **'Param Saugat'**.
- **Territory**
  - The ancient administrative division of **Pundravardhana Bhukti** was located in **North Bengal**.

The Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty

- **Founding & Origin**
  - Founded by **Nagabhata I** (730-756 AD).
  - A powerful Rajput group from the **Agni clan**.
  - Earliest references found in the **Aihole inscription of Pulakesin-II** and **Banabhatta's *Harshacharita***.
- **Major Rulers**
  - Key rulers: Nagabhata I, **Vatsaraja**, Nagabhata II, **Mihir Bhoja**, Mahendrapala I, Devapala.
  - **Mihir Bhoja** (836-885 AD) was the most powerful ruler; a Vaishnavite follower with titles **'Aadi Varaha'** and **'Prabhas'**.
- **Power Center & Conflicts**
  - Initial base: **Ujjain**. Capital later shifted to **Kannauj**.
  - Primary participant in the **Tripartite Struggle** (vs. Palas and Rashtrakutas) for control of Kannauj, which they won.

The Rashtrakuta Dynasty

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- **Founding**
  - Founded by **Dantidurga (Dantivarman)** in **736 AD**.
  - He performed a ritual called **'Hiranya-Garbha'**.
- **Capital & Rulers**
  - Capital: **Manyakheta**.
  - Notable Ruler: **Amoghavarsha (Amoghavarasha)**, born in a military camp on the banks of the Narmada River.

The Paramara Dynasty

- **Founding & Rule**
  - Founded by **Upendra Krishnaraj**.
  - Capitals: Initially **Ujjain**, later moved to **Dhar**.
  - Most famous ruler: **King Bhoja** (ruled from Dhar).
- **Cultural & Scholarly Contributions**
  - King Bhoja built the **Bhojshala Temple** in Dhar (1035 AD), dedicated to **Goddess Saraswati**.

    - He authored scholarly works, including:
        - ***Samarangana Sutradhara*** (on architecture and scientific equipment)
        - ***Saraswati Kanthabharan***
        - ***Rajamartand***
        - ***Yukta Kalptaru***

Other Important Dynasties & Rulers

- **Gahadavalas**
    - The Gahadavalas were a Rajput dynasty around the cities of Varanasi and Kannauj.
    - Rose to power after the decline of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty.
    - Defeated by the Ghurids in 1194
    - Queen **Kumaradevi**, consort of King Govind Chandra, was a Buddhist.
    - She constructed the **Dharmachakra-Jaina Vihara** at **Sarnath**.
- **Tomars**
    - Founded the city of **Dhillika (Delhi)** in the **8th century**.
- **Sena Dynasty**
    - Notable Ruler: **Lakshmana Sena**.
    - Achievement: Initiated a new calendar era, **'Laxmana Samvat'**.
- **Chalukyas of Gujarat**
    - King **Jayasimha Siddharaja** was known for religious tolerance; granted aid to restore a demolished **mosque in Khambhat**.
- **Kalachuris**
    - King **Gangeyadev** took the title **Vikramaditya**.
    - He revived the minting of **gold coins** in the medieval period.
- **Capital Cities of Dynasties**
    - **Chola Dynasty**: Tanjore
    - **Solanki Dynasty (Chaulukyas of Gujarat)**: Anhilwara

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Centers of Learning & Education

1. Vikramshila University

- **Founder**: King **Dharmapala** of the Pala Dynasty.
- **Time Period**: Founded between **770-810 AD**.
- **Location**: **Bhagalpur, Bihar** (modern-day).
- **Purpose**: Primary center for Buddhist teachings after the decline of Nalanda.
- **Curriculum**: Vedic literature, ceremonies, reasoning, medicine, law, astronomy, city planning.

2. Other Ancient Universities

- **Nalanda**: Established in the 5th century by Kumar Gupta; destroyed in the 12th century.
- **Odantapuri**: Established during the Pala rule.
- **Taxila (Takshashila)**: An ancient center in modern-day Pakistan; capital of Gandhara.

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Scholars, Jurists, and Poets

- **Jurists**
  - **Vigyanesvara**: Wrote the legal treatise ***Mitakshara***.
  - **Jimutavahana**: Wrote the legal treatise ***Dayabhaga***.
  - **Hemadri**: A famous jurist.
- **Poets & Scholars**
  - **Rajashekhara**: Sanskrit poet/dramatist in the court of Pratihara king **Mahendrapala I**.
  - **Hemchandra**: Jain scholar in the court of Solanki king **Kumarapala**.
  - **Vakpati**: Court poet of King Yasovarman of Kannauj; wrote ***Gaudavaho***.

Kingdoms, Trade, and Geography

- **The Kakatiya Kingdom**
  - Important Seaport: **Motupalli** (now in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh).
  - Visited by **Marco Polo**; its inscriptions detail taxes on goods like silk, pearls, spices, and metals.
- **Regional Places**
  - **Khajuraho**: Located in the **Bundelkhand** region.
  - **Tirupati**: Located in the **Rayalaseema** region.
  - *Other notes: Bodhgaya (Gaya district), Shirdi (Ahmednagar), Nashik (Maharashtra).*
- **The City of Kannauj**
  - After Harsha's death, it became the coveted center of power (like Magadha for Guptas).
  - Ancient names: **Mahodaya**, **Mahodaya Shri**, and **Nagar Mahoday Shri** (during Mihir Bhoja's reign).
- **Economic Terminology**
  - **'Araghatta'**: Refers to a **waterwheel** used for irrigation; an animal-powered Persian water-lifting device.

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Historical Literature (Summary)

Text	Author	Subject / Patron
Prithviraj Raso	Chand Bardai	Prithviraj Chauhan
Prithviraja Vijaya	Jayanaka	Prithviraj Chauhan
Alha Khand	Jagnik	Alha, Udal & Parmal
Parmal Raso	Jagnik	Heroic deeds of the Chandela king Parmal's feudal warriors, Alha and Udal
Hammer	Jain scholar	Chauhan lineage (biography of the

Mahakavya	Nayachandra Suri	13th-century Chahamana king Hammira)
Gaudavaho	Vakpati	King Yasovarman of Kannauj
Harshacharita	Banabhatta	Harshavardhana
Hamir Raso	Jodhraj Sarangdev	Describes the conflict between Hamir and Alauddin Khalji

- Narpati Nalha wrote Bisaldev Raso.
- Suja Ji wrote Rao Jaitsi Ro Chand.
- Ram Raso is written by Madhodas.
- Jaisingh Suri (or Jayasimha Suri) was a Jain scholar who wrote the historical play “Hammiramardana”.

Know More about Early Medieval & Rajputa Period:

- Early Medieval and; Rajputa Period One Liner Questions & Answers
- Early Medieval and; Rajputa Period – Old Year Questions and Answers