The past has continually played a vital role in shaping the future, with numerous prevailing organizations, customs and aspects like trade routes, types of crops, method of mineral exploitation, preferred building style and materials, and so forth having their roots in processes introduced in pre-historic and early historic times. These have noticeably been partial and transformed over time as results of many stimuli, one of them being cultural interactions. Thus, a general understanding of Rajasthan is essential when we try to understand pre-history, proto-history and historic facets of the region. However multi-disciplinary studies over the last sixty years or so in the area as of archaeology, geology, geomorphology, palaeo-botany and related fields, a general picture of the overall culture sequence for pre-historic and proto-historic Rajasthan, from the Palaeolith to the beginning of medieval times has now appeared. Where the written record is not available for us there, the study of archaeologist is very fruitful to elaborate the gap.

Protohistoric Period:

No remains of the Stone Age have so far been revealed in the region of present study. But in the entire state of Rajasthan all major phases of development of prehistoric cultures are documented in the early 20th century. These areas are very far from the present research area hence, history of Stone Age is not included here.

The archaeological investigations have revealed that the first occupants in the study region were the Early Harappan people who settled here in the third millennium BC. The remains of this earliest culture have been found on 71 sites and out of these, Kalibangan, Sothi, Dabdi and Dabliwas Chugta/Kamana are the only excavated sites which throw welcome light on the different aspects of this culture.

Three separate mounds were unearthed at Kalibangan, uncovering a distinct and significant early settlement below the 'Mature' Harappan levels. This Early Harappan settlement was found about 250m from north to south, and 180m from east to west in size, and was fortified by a plastered mud-brick wall. Mud-brick houses with three to four rooms and a courtyard were exposed during the excavations. The mud bricks were of the dimensions of 30cm x 20cm x 10cm
Drainage system of this period, made with sun-dried bricks also found along with a 1.50m wide east-west successive path.

Pot-like hearths were exposed in the rooms. A series of ovens, both above and below ground, were also revealed in a house. Similarly, noteworthy was the existence of cylindrical pits lined with lime plaster, probably for storing drinking water. Other finds included small blades of chalcedony and agate, carnelian, shell, terracotta, steatite disc beads, bangles of terracotta and shell. Terracotta objects like toy-cart, wheel, animal figurines etc. also came to light. Besides these, mullers, quern-stones, bone points, and around sixty copper objects, including bangles, rings, antimony rods, pins, beads, and copper flat axes were unearthed.

The pottery was wheel made, though it varied in range and B.K. Thapar\textsuperscript{1} classified it into six fabrics: A, B, C, D, E, and F on the basis of fabric, form painting and decoration style and general practice. It has been discussed in detail in chapter-IV.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{map.png}
\caption{Map showing Early Harappan settlements.}
\end{figure}
Kalibangan excavations yielded evidence of stone querns, used for grinding corn, attest the cultivation of cereals. Unique discovery was that of a ploughed field situated to the southeast of the settlement. The field showed a grid of furrows, with one set more closely spaced (approximately 30cm apart) running in an east-west direction and the other more widely spaced (approximately 1.90m apart) running in a north-south direction. Remarkably, this pattern closely looks like present-day agricultural practices in the area, in which two types of crops are planted in the same field. These are usually pulses in one direction and mustard in the other; the combination being dependent on the size and growth performance of the plants. This discovery suggests that agriculture was the economic base of this earliest farming culture. In the direction of time, this discovery of a ploughed field, remains the earliest archaeological evidence of proto-historic agricultural practices in the world.

After the Early Harappans, the area seems to have been occupied by the people belonging to the mature phase of the Harappan culture in the middle of the third millennium BC. The remains of their culture have been found located on 15 sites. Kalibangan is the only excavated site which has provided detailed information of these people in our region. The excavations revealed that the pattern of settlement slightly changed at Kalibangan during this phase. In this period, there were two parts of the settlement namely, Citadel and Lower city. The Citadel, situated atop the remains of the earlier Pre-Harappan occupation levels, was located on the western mound. The Lower city, represented by a widespread mound, was unearthed from the eastern mound. In addition to these, a third mound, located about 8-9m east of the Lower city was also excavated. This has yielded a structure containing five fire-altars.

The Citadel complex, an oblong of 240m by 120m, revealed two, nearly equal, but separately patterned portions. Both were surrounded by a thick mud-brick wall which was protected by regular pauses with rectangular bastions. In this wall, there were two entrances, one each from the north and south respectively, to the southern rhomb of Citadel. This part enclosed mud-brick platforms. One platform had seven fire-altars in a row, one of them having animal bones. Thus, it has been suggested that the people of Kalibangan (Period II) may have well-known about fire-worship and animal sacrifice.
The settlement pattern of the ‘Lower City’ was on a plan of a parallelogram measuring 360mx240m, fortified by a mud-brick wall. The plan of the lower city is similar to Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Lothal, Surkotda and Banawali. Wide streets and lanes crisscrossed each other at right angles, and divided the town into blocks on a grid-pattern. The houses were built from mud-bricks, and had a courtyard enclosed on two or three sides by rooms. Baked bricks were used only for drainage system, wells, door-sills and bathing platforms.\(^3\)

A cemetery area was also exposed near the inhabited area. Three types of burials were found. One type was an extended burial in rectangular or oval graves, second type was pot-burial with pottery and funerary items in circular pits, and the third was rectangular or oval grave-pits containing only funerary objects and pottery. Thus, it seems that the latter two types of burials were unassociated with actual skeletal remains.

The excavation at Tarkhanewala-Dera (District Ganganagar) has revealed a single culture site occupation i.e. mature phase of the Harappan culture and has
preserved only one structural phase. The cultural deposit ranges from 1.90m to 1.95m. In all, twenty-two structures were unearthed during the course of excavation, all are made of mud or mud-bricks. The bricks used measure 28 x 14 x 7cm and 32 x 16 x 8cm (4:2:1) and all of them are sun-dried. The structures are mainly north-south and east-west oriented. The bricks were laid in English bond. The structures are either square or rectangular in shape and were used for residential purposes. The width of the walls is of 1, 2, and 3 bricks. Plaster was not found on any of the structures except for the mud-walls (STR 18A and B) plastered with greyish mortar.

The next phase in the proto-history of the study region is distinguished by the late phase of the Harappan period culture. It dates to the first half of the second millennium BC.

Fig. 6.3: Map showing Late Harappan settlements.

Only seven sites of this cultural phase have been found during the course of explorations. But unfortunately, not a single site of this phase has been taken up for excavation till the date. In the absence of any excavation, we are unable to throw light on the different aspects of this phase of the Harappan culture. This phase has
been exposed at several sites in Haryana during their excavations such as Banawali, Mitathal, Balu, Mirzapur, Daulatpur, Bhagwanpura and Jognakhera. It is evident from the examination of the material remains recovered from these sites that there is a progressive degeneration in its architecture, ceramic industries, arts and crafts. The excavator of Mitathal has dated this phase between c. 1700 and c. 1500 BC.\(^5\)

The late Harappans were succeeded by the Painted Grey Ware (PGW) using people. The explorations have brought to light eight sites of PGW culture in the study region which has yielded sherds of painted and plain grey pots like dishes, bowls, basins etc., terracotta discs and ghata-shaped beads. Of these sites, no-one has so far been subjected to excavation and therefore, in the absence of any evidence from excavations, we are unable to throw much light on this culture of the region. However, out of the above eight sites, only two sites, namely Ramsaranarayan-I and Naival have been found located over the debris of late Harappan culture but rest of the six sites have occupied new grounds. But in the absence of evidence from the region, it is difficult to say whether there was a cultural continuity or break between both the cultures.

The Painted Grey Ware is generally associated with the Vedic Aryans. By correlating the archaeological evidence with the literary one, Lal\(^6\) has associated the Painted Grey Ware using people with the Aryans. *Rigveda* is considered the earliest work of the Aryans which is dated c.1000 BC\(^7\) while PGW is dated c. 1100 BC to c. 600 BC. Thus the overlap period of late Harappan and Painted Grey Ware culture which has been dated between c. 1600 BC to c. 1200 BC\(^8\) may be considered the first phase of migration of Aryans and the independent phase of PGW may represent the second phase of their migration to India.\(^9\) Banerjee has concluded about them “the users of the deluxe-Painted-Grey-Ware-ceramic, who have been provisionally identified with the Aryans and who imbibed and adapted several other ceramic traditions then extant in the country, including a plain variety of the wide-spread black-and-red ware, were responsible for the introduction of the Iron Age in India about 1000 BC in the northern plains and may have transmitted it by degrees to south India as well through the megalithic folks a little later.”\(^10\)

The region falls in different two *janapadas* as early times as the Vedic age such as Uśavadatas and Matsyas. The tehsil area of Bhadra and some part of Nohar falls in Uśavadatas *janapada*. Uśavadatas, this was one of splinter state of Śālavas
family, the original capital of which might have been Bhādrā (now a tehsil headquarters) in the north-eastern part of the earlier Bikaner state.¹¹ Rest of the research area falls in Matsyas janapada. The capital of this state was Virātanagara (modern Vairat or Bairat), occasionally called Matsyanagara.¹²

By the, later Vedic times, that is between 1000 and 500 BC, when the sacrificial cult of Indo - Aryan Brahmins had attained a prestigious place – the main locus of Aryan society had shifted from the river valleys of the Punjab and the plains of northern Rajasthan into the western parts of the plain (doab) formed by the Ganga and Yamuna rivers. In this fertile middle Ganga-Yamuna region, agriculture soon overtook pastoralism as the dominant mode of production, and sedentary villages with planted and irrigated fields replaced the wandering life of Aryan herdsmen.

**Historical Period:**

**Pre Mauryan Period**

In the beginning of the sixth century BC we find North India divided into a large number of states (Janapadas), some of which were independent clans with a republican or oligarchical form of government, while others were monarchies.¹³ The Buddhist (Ariyuttara Nikāya, I:213) and the Jain (Bhagwatī Sūtra, Saya XV) texts provide a list of sixteen great states (Ṣoḍaśa Mahājanapada) which were flourishing before the age of Buddha. They are pretty well-known, and we need not enumerate them here. The Ashtadhyāyī of Panini¹⁴ depicts a similar picture by mentioning both the classes of states, viz. republics (sarīghas or gaṇas) and kingdoms (Janapadas). Of them, Magadha ultimately succeeded and became a supreme power and by the time the Nandas appeared in the political ground towards the end of the fifth or the beginning of the fourth century BC.¹⁵ While the Madhyadesa and eastern India were undergoing the process of political unification, the North-Western frontier regions of the country were subjected to external attacks. The mighty Achaeminid empire of Iran, founded by Cyrus (558-530 BC) was first to threaten and rivet a good portion of these undefended and insecure zones. Nearly two centuries after that India fall a victim to the invasion of Alexander, when in the year 326 BC, the Macedonian adventurer crossed the Hindukush after the completion of his Iranian overthrows. But the tide of the Greek attack was soon crisscross when Chandragupta Maurya, after expelling the foreigners from the
Panjab and overthrowing the Nandas in Magadha, founded an all-India empire. In the list of **Mahājanapada** provided by the *Aśguttara Nikāya*, there is only one state which may be located in Rajasthan. That is the famous Matsyas or *Machchha Janapada* which roughly corresponded to the modern Jaipurs or Alwar division including the whole of the present territory of Alwar as well as a portion of Bharatpur. Other *Janapada* of Rajasthan which might have existed in that period are not mentioned anywhere in our sources. However, some *Janapadas* which primarily belonged to the regions that are now outside the boundaries of the present Rajasthan might have included some portions of this state as well. At least they were intimately connected with the history of this region.

Fig. 6.4: Map showing the sixteen Mahajanapadas according to Buddhist text.
The Mauryas

Rajasthan, including study area, was certainly included in mighty Mauryan Empire. This fact is supported by the discovery of the Aśokan edicts at Bairat, Hisar, and Topra. Moreover, the period is also characterized by the use of grey ware and Punchmarked coins and therefore, the existence of grey ware sites and discovery of Punchmarked coins from Pandusa (Nohar tehsil), the area under review attests Mauryan rule over it. The Mauryan conquest of Rajasthan marked a turning point in the history of this region. It was for the first time in the Mauryan age that Rajasthan became an integral part of an all-India empire and proficient the desires and pains of being a part of the main stream of national life. The best evidence for this transformation is provided by the inscriptions of Aśoka. For example, the Bhabru edict found in the Jaipur region, refers to the jurisdiction of the Magadha Buddhist centre in Rajasthan. Further, it refers to a number of Buddhist texts, the study of which was enjoined by Aśoka for the monks, the nuns as well as the laity. The reference to these sacred texts is significant not only from the point of view of the history of Buddhism and its literature but also from the point of view of the cultural history of Rajasthan, for it proves that Rajasthan was greatly influenced by the missionary activities of Aśoka as well as Buddhist sangha. It appears that Buddhism had acquired strong roots in this part of the country in the third century BC. The influence of Buddhism must have brought about some significant changes in the cultural life of the people. As in the earlier period, this area was a great center of the Brahmanical religion. Actually, it continued to give greater support to Brahmanical faiths even in the later period.

The empire of Aśoka declined and collapsed within half a century after his death (232 BC). His successors continued to occupy the imperial throne till 185 BC. During the later Mauryas, distant provinces of the empire became independent one after another. The dynasty ended with the assassination of Brihadratha, its last king, by his general Pushyamitra Śuṅga. What happened in Rajasthan in the age of the decline of the Mauryas is not definitely known. Though, according to the Jain sources Pushyamitra Śuṅga, the founder of the Śuṅga dynasty, who succeeded to the imperial throne of Magadha after the Mauryas in 185 BC, was the governor of Ujjayani before he murdered his royal master.
The Indo-Greeks

The history of the Greek kings of Bactria became a part of Indian history when the successors of Euthydemus tried to follow Alexander's example. They are referred to as 'Indo-Greeks' and there were about forty such kings and rulers who controlled large areas of northwestern India and Afghanistan.\(^{24}\) Their history, especially during the first century BC, is not very well recorded. Of some of these kings, we know the names only from coins. There are only two inscriptions in India to give us some information about the Indo-Greeks.\(^{25}\)

After the decline of the Mauryas, the invasion of India by the Greeks was a landmark event of far-reaching consequences from the point of view of the history of Rajasthan. Their invasion of Madhyamika (now called Nagri, near Chittorgarh) is
referred to by Patanjali in his *Mahabhashya*. Six copper coins of Appolodotus are reported from Nohar (tehsil headquarters) by Handa but are not described with additional details. Several coins of Indo-Greek kings have been found from various sites of our adjoining state of Haryana such as Jind, Sonepat, Khokharakot, Naurangabad, Sugh, Jagadhri, Raja Karan ka Qila, Theh Polar, Agroha, Sadhaura, etc. The discovery of these coins shows the Indo-Greek interference in the north-western parts of Rajasthan and Haryana. This accelerated the process of migration of a large number of tribes from Punjab into this region. Rajasthan, as we have noted earlier was a sort of cul-de-sac where people from the adjoining regions used to take shelter whenever they were pressed hard by the imperialist powers of the Ganga Valley or the invaders from the north-west. It happened on a grand scale in this period when Malavas, Sibis, Arjunayanas, Abhiras, etc. of Punjab migrated into various parts of Rajasthan when they were pressed hard by the Greeks. Some of them settled in north and eastern parts of Rajasthan and others in adjoining areas of Rajasthan. In the history of India, there were so many tribes those lived in a nomadic life in time to time. They took a chance of freedom when the king was in a weak position otherwise they shifted region to region.

**The Tribal Ruling**

It may be presumed, therefore, that the Arjunayanas and other allied tribes of India were in power sometime between the middle of the second century AD and the middle of the fourth century AD. Before the coming of the Kushanas to power, some tribes in Punjab and Rajputana, such as the Yaudheyas, Arjunayanas, Audumbaras, Sibis, Kshudrakas and others appeared to have held independent principalities as testified to by a fair number of coins issued by them. The existence of such tribal principalities is also attested by literary sources.

**The Kshudrakas**

The coins found from Nohar, prove beyond doubt that the Kshudrakas had their independent republican state in existence during the second century BC and that they did not amalgamate with the Malavas during their migration from Punjab to eastern Rajasthan as held by Jayaswal, Altekar and others. These coins are important as they served a model for the similar coinages of the Malavas, the Arjunayana and the Yaudheyas. The find-spot of these coins pin-points the location of the Kshudrakas. They seem to have proceeding from their original homeland in Montgomery district, east of the Hydaspas, towards the south-easterly direction and settled in the Drishadvati valley, in the present day Nohar-Bhadra region of Rajasthan. Probably the Kshudrakas were the first to make a move from Punjab and
settled in the nearest possible region. Even if we presume that the Kshudrakas and the Malavas, the two members of the league, began their southward journey together, it would be reasonable to believe that the former settled in their newer homes earlier than the latter that had to cover a vast region further south. And this fact is supported by their coins also.

The Arjunayanas

Two coins of the Arjunayanas from Nohar and one from Pandusar that are published by Handa, show that the tribal ruling was flourishing in the area of our study during the early centuries. Though, we have no definite proof about the Arjunayana territory in the period extending from the fall of the Mauryas (185 BC) to the first century AD.

It may be conjectured that the Arjunayanas and their neighbours remained under the subjection of the Kushanas during the reign of Kanishka and Huvishka and also probably of Vima. With the decline of the Kushana power, they asserted their independence and extended their influence. This seems to have been echoed in their coin-legends indicative of their martial triumphs over some enemies. The enemies, most probably the Kushanas, were ousted from power by constant attacks (and perhaps simultaneous attacks) of Indian peoples like the Yaudheyas, Malavas and Arjunayanas all of whom, it is interesting to note, issued coins with legends ending with the word jayah. If these people were not directly responsible for the downfall of the Kushanas, there seems to be little doubt that they accelerated it.

The Yaudheyas

The Yaudheyas occupy a very prominent position in the galaxy of ancient Indian republican tribes. The earliest references to their existence occur in Panini’s Aṣṭādhyāyī and Gānapatha (V.3:117). The later work mentions them as an āyudha-jīvī sangha i.e. a tribe living by the profession of arms. They were in power during 2nd century BC to 4th century AD in the north-western part of ancient India. They held sway over the adjoining tracts of Uttar Pradesh and Rajputana. During the long span of their existence they, however, experienced variations of fortune. But for an interregnum during the first-second century AD of the Scythian supremacy, the Yaudheyas were probably at the height of their power and glory during the period extending from circa second century BC to about early fourth century AD when they struck their coins also. Some coins of Yaudheyas are reported by Handa found from Pallu (sub tehsil headquarters), Pandusar and Dhansia (Nohar tehsil) area. It may safely be said that northern part of Rajasthan including parts of Hanumangarh
district was under their dominion. The Bijayagadh inscription (District Bharatpur) attests the expansion of Yaudheyas rule in Rajasthan. Clay seals, coins and coin-moulds found from a number of sites from adjoining state of Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh help us in tracing their territorial expansion.

In the region of Ganganagar and Hanumangarh districts, there are people still, who call themselves as Johiyas which is a corrupt form of ‘Yaudheya’ and their land, is known as Johiyawar.42

The Kushanas

The power of the Kushanas, who ruled over an extensive empire in north India till the last decades of second century AD under the leadership of the house of Kanishka, declined after the reign of Vasudeva-I (AD 145-175). Whether they tried and succeeded in penetrating Rajasthan at the expense of the Sakas in the post-Rudradâman period is not definitely known. The Kushana king, Kadphhises-I (Kujul Kadphises), ruled over Afghanistan and the Punjab from around AD 25. He was followed by Vima Kadphises and the latter by the famous Emperor Kanishka, who made Purushpur (modern Peshawar) his capital-city. Kanishka is remembered for his numerous achievements including the bidding of a Central Council of Buddhist monk-scholars in Kashmir.43

Aurel Stein found Kushana coins belonging to Kadphises I from old mound of Hanumangarh (Bhatner fort).44 Two coins of the ‘Elephant-Rider’ type belonging to the Kushana ruler Huvishka have also been found from the region.45 Handa also reported a few copper coins of late Kushana king Vasudeva from Karouti and Fatehgarh.46 Two Kushana coins reported by Tessitori47 from the region and presently housed in the Jodhpur museum belong to Kadphises-I and a later Kushana ruler. Kushana coins have also been unearthed at Rangmahal.48

Besides coins, a number of terracotta decorative plaques and tiles in the later Kushana style are found from Hanumangarh fort. Along with these, two terracotta capitals, with stepped pyramids, were found at the depth of 15m from the top of the mound. In addition, it seems that a pedestal of terracotta, broken into two parts, which apparently belongs to the same peril as the plaques, was found near the inner gate of the entrance.49 All these evidences of Kushanas clearly indicate their region over this reign.

It seems that authority of the Kushanas was challenged by the Yaudheyas and ultimately they succeeded in expelling them from north-western parts of

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Rajasthan, now comprising Bikaner, Ganganagar and Hanumangarh districts. Junagarh inscription of Rudradaman-I (c. 150 AD) testifies the fact that he had waged war against the freedom loving Yaudheyas. Thus, this insessional evidence clearly shows that after overthrowing the Kushanas, the Yaudheyas again become sovereign of this region by this time.

**The Guptas**

In the middle of the fourth century, the political map of the country was completely altered by the growth of the Gupta Empire under Samudragupta. Samudragupta's Allahabad Pillar legend, records much more than Samudragupta's victory over various states conquered by him. It exactly names not only the nine kings who were convincingly defeated and their kingdom captured, but also list five tributary kingdoms and nine feudatory tribal states bordering the Gupta Empire that had acknowledged the Imperial Gupta sovereignty. Among them the names of these nine feudatory tribal states are recorded on the Allahabad Pillar inscription as the Malava, Arjunayana, Yaudheyas, Madraka, Sanakanika, Abhira, Prarjuna, Kaka and Kharparka people. According to the text of the inscription, the chiefs of the tribal states were encouraged to pay tribute and render homage to the Gupta emperor, to attend on him when summoned, and to carry out imperial commands. The chiefs of forest-dwelling peoples or 'Atavikas', similarly, accepted Samundragupta's supremacy.

According to Sircar, Yaudheyas and other tribal Janapadas of Rajasthan were forced to pay all the taxes, obey imperial commands and send their chiefs to pay personal homage to the emperor. In other matters, perhaps, they were given a measure of internal autonomy though it could not have been very great as the subjects taken over by the central government did not leave much scope for the local rulers. It appears that Samudragupta tried to evolve a feudal structure in this region. Above list of nine tribal feudatory states, Yaudheyas lived in and around the area that today comprises Rajasthan (including research area). The Yaudheyas after defeating the Kushanas were apparently spread over a greater territory that extended up to the river Yamuna in the east, and included parts of the region under review as well as parts of the Punjab in the west.

Information available about the study region's administration during the Gupta period is very little. However, one may take note of a Gupta seal from Dhalia, near Bikaner, bearing the inscription 'Sri Samekajika Kumaratyadhikaranasya'. The text implies the existence of a local administrative representative of the empire in the
northern Rajasthan area. Unluckily, our information about Rajasthan’s polity and administrative structures of the Gupta Empire is fairly sketchy at present. Though the well-known terracotta plaques and figurines found at Badopal (Pilibangan tehsil), Munda (Hanumangarh tehsil), Rangmahal (Suratgarh tehsil, Distt. Ganganagar), Pir Sultan-Ki-Theri (Tibbi village), recognized to the late Kushana-early Gupta period, and depicting scenes of everyday life, also throw light on the art and society of the age. It is evident from Bhitri inscription of Sakandagupta that Hunas attacked Gupta empire during the reign of Skandagupta (455-470 AD) and after fierce battles, Skandagupta inflicted on them a crushing defeat. But after his death, the Hunas, under the leadership of Tormana, returned and swept over the whole of northwestern India including Gujrat, Kathiawad, Rajputana and Malwa in 499 AD. The discovery of a Huna coin from Pandusar also attests the invasion and rule of Hunas over the area under review.

Fig. 6.6: Map showing the Gupta Empire and Central Asian invasions (c.250 BC to 550 AD).

Early Medieval Period:

The Pushpabhutis

In the beginning of 6th century AD, the Pushpabhutis came into power at Thanesar. This seat of power was also known as ‘Srikantha Janapada’. Among the
most illustrious rulers of the dynasty, Prabhakarvardhan raised the small principality of Thanesar to a powerful kingdom in north India including Hanumangarh and Ganganagar districts of Rajasthan (formerly part of erstwhile Bikaner kingdom). Later the seat of political power shifted to Kanauj. We know this from a famous biography by the poet and playwright Bana, to which was appended a description by the famous Chinese Buddhist monk Hiuen Tsang, who spent thirteen years (630–43 AD) in the vicinity while collecting sacred texts and relics to take back to China. His scriptural translations from the Sanskrit were accompanied by detailed discussions of the sacred places he visited. After the death of Harsha in 647 AD, Bhandi, the cousin of Harsha, established his hold over the north-west region and his family continued to rule until the time of Vatsraja, a Pratihara king. Yashovarman of Kanauj appears to have ruled over some parts of Rajasthan during 725-752 AD. Lalitaditya Muktapida, the king of Kashmir defeated him and brought the whole east Punjab region under his control. But the description given in the Rajatarangini is somewhat contradictory in regard to the control over the kingdom of Yashovarman by Lalitaditya Muktapida. Several scholars admit that after defeating Yashovarman, Lalitaditya Muktapida did not include the territories of Yashovarman in his kingdom. Moreover, we are not definite about the fact whether the region under review was ever under the control of Yashovarman or Lalitaditya Muktapida.

The Pratiharas

The earliest known settlement of the Pratiharas was at Mandor (Jodhpur) in Central Rajputana, where ruled the family of Harichandra. The dynasty began well under Nagabhatta-I, who repelled the "armies of the powerful 'Mleccha king', i.e., the Arab raiders of the western borders of India, and carried his arms to Broach." The Pratihara kings now ruled over the major part of Northern India and on their policy and its success depended on not only the welfare of Rajasthan but also of the whole of Aryavarta. But in spite of these wider interests, their old and intimate connection with Rajasthan continued.

The next two rulers were nonentities. The fourth, Vatsaraja, rose to great prominence by his achievements. He defeated the Bhandi clan, perhaps Bhattis of Central Rajputana, over which his supremacy was recognized. Gwalior inscription of Mihirhoj informs us that Vatsaraja, grandson of Nagabhhatt-I, snatched power from Bhandikul in the parts of Haryana after occupying Kanauj. The scholars are of the view that Bhandi, a relative of Harsha, as is mentioned in the Hashacharit, reigned over the parts of Haryana and north-western Rajasthan after the death of Harsha, whom Vatsaraja defeated. But it is not a historical fact, rather it is an assumption.
Recently an earliest inscription of the Pratiharas, belonging to Vatsaraja is found from Jodhka village (District Sirsa, Haryana) which is dated to saka era 717 (795 AD). This inscription informs us that Vatsaraja was the first Pratihara king, who ruled over the parts of Haryana and adjoining areas of Hanumangarh and Ganganagar districts. Moreover, he acquired this region after defeating a Tomara ruler namely Vyaghraraja and not from any ruler of Bhandikula.

From Jodhka village inscription of Vatsaraja (795 AD), we come to know that Vatsaraj appointed his feudatory, namely Gallak, to look-after the region around Sirsa. According to Vani Dindori and Radhanpur inscriptions of Rashtrakuta Govinda-III, Dhruva, the Rashtrakuta king defeated Vatsaraja and compelled him to take shelter in the desert of Rajputana (Marudesh). It shows that the region under review might have been under the sway of Vatsaraj by this time. The same inscription tells us that Pala king Dharmapala also defeated him and when Dharmapala held a darabara at Kanauj, the king of Srikantha janapada was also present there. Unfortunately, Vatsaraja could not held this region under his control for a long time and thus it passed into the hands of Palas for a short time.

Fig. 6.7: Map showing the Regional kingdoms of the Early Medieval period (c. 647-1206 AD).
Gwalior inscription of Mihirbhoja furnishes that Nagabhatta-II (805-833 AD),
the successor of Vatsaraja, defeated Dharmapala along with his protege
Chakrudytha and conquered Kanauj.\textsuperscript{71} Pehowa\textsuperscript{72} and Sirsa\textsuperscript{73} inscriptions of
Mihirbhoj and Pehowa inscription\textsuperscript{74} referring to Mahendrapala also attests the
Pratihara rule over the regions of Haryana as well as north-western Rajasthan
through their feudatories, the Tomaras. After the death of Mahipala, the Pratihara
empire collapsed.

The Tomaras

Originally the Tomaras were the feudatory kings of the Pratiharas.\textsuperscript{75} After the
fall of the Pratihara empire, they became independent. The Harsha stone\textsuperscript{76}
inscription tells about the conflict took place between the Tomaras and Chahamana
king Simharaja in the tenth century AD in which Tomara king Salvana was defeated.
Finally, they were subjugated by the Chahamanas in the later half of the twelfth
century. The above said inscriptional evidences support the rule of Tomaras also in
the region of our study.

The Chahamanas

The Chahamanas, who are also known as the Chauhaanas, probably began
their political career as the subordinate partners of the Pratiharas but later on they
became independent. The Chahamana king Amoraja (1133-1157 AD) defeated the
Tomaras and his successor Bisladeva Vigrahara-IV completely subdued the Tomaras.
Amoraja was the son of Ajayaraja and his queen ‘Somalekha’ (who has also been
named as Somalladevi in Bijolia inscription). Both Ajayaraja and
Somalekha have been described in Jayanaka’s \textit{Prithvirij-vijaya} to have issued coins.

\textit{Sadurvarṇamayairbhūmiṁ rūpakaṁ}
\textit{paryapūrayat Tarih suvarṇamyaisatatraya}
\textit{kavivargavapūrayat Kirttiṁ sa}
\textit{varttamānānāṁ bhartairjare}
\textit{Jayapriyaiṁ Aṭīṭāniigatānam tu}
\textit{rūpakairajayapriyaiṁ Somalekhā}
\textit{priyāpyasya pratyahāṁ rūpakaimaivaṁ}
\textit{Kṛtairapi na sarṣpaṁ kalaṅkena}
\textit{Samādsādan}.\textsuperscript{77}

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Handa collected seventy coins, of which fifty-nine were found from Pallu, two from Pandusar, one from Karouti and Dhansia each, all in Hanumangarh district. Besides these, he saw five coins, obtained from the old mound of Sirsa (Haryana) with a local resident and about fifty coins from Pallu housed in the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, Jaipur. These coins of Chahamanas recovered from the region of Hanumangarh district attest their rule in the later half of the 12th century.

The most renowned Chahamaana ruler was Prithviraj-III. He established his hold all over the Hanumangarh region defeating the Bhadanakas. The region under review along with Agroha and Hansi finally passed on to the foreign invaders of Ghazni after the defeat of Prithviraj-III in the second battle of Tarain (1192 AD). After the battle of Tarain, Sultan Shihabuddin Muhammad Gori placed one of his generals in the Indian campaigns, Qutbud-din Aibak as in charge of his 'Indian Possessions' including Bhatner.

**Notes and References**

16 Ibid.
29 IAR 1963-64. p.90.
32 Ancient India. No. 9. p. 130.
33 Memoire of Archaeological Survey of India (1952). No. 61. Plate XIII.
36 Ibid.


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*Gaudavaho*. Verse 484.


*Rajatarangini*. IV. pp. 140, 144.


67 *Harshacharit.* p. 135.


72 *Indian Antiquity.* Vol. XII. pp. 184-86.


76 *Epigraphia Indica.* Vol. II. pp. 121-122.
