

Through the Eyes of Travellers of Society

(Perceptions of Society)

Accounts of Travellers

Whenever people travel to a different place, they come across a different world in terms of physical environment, customs, languages, beliefs and practices of people. Both women and men travelled for various reasons. The accounts that survive are often varied in terms of their subject matter. Some deal with affairs of court, religious issues, architectural features and monuments. Though women travelled but there are no accounts of travel left by women.

In this chapter, we will focus mainly on the travel accounts of three men namely, Al-Biruni (11th Century), Ibn Battuta (14th Century) and the Frenchman Francois Bernier (17th Century). These authors came from a very different environment. They were attentive to everyday activities and practices as compared to the indigenous writers for whom these were routine matters.

Al-Biruni

From Khwarizm to the Punjab

He was born in 973 CE, in Khwarizm in present day Uzbekistan which was an important centre of learning. He got the best education and was well versed in many languages like Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit. He did not know Greek but read the works of Plato and other Greek philosophers in Arabic translations.

Al-Biruni was one of the many scholars and poets who were taken to Ghazni

CHAPTER CHECKLIST

- Accounts of Travellers
 - Al-Biruni
 - Ibn Battuta
 - Francois Bernier
 - Other European Travellers
 - Women : Slaves, Sati and Labourers
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The objectives of Al-Biruni's work as described by him were:

- A help to those who wanted to discuss religious questions with them (the Hindus).
- A repertory (store house) of information to those who want to associate with them.

Al-Biruni developed interest about India in Ghazni. His interest development is not unusual because from the eighth century onwards, Sanskrit work on astronomy, mathematics and medicine were already translated into Arabic.

When Punjab became part of Ghaznavid Empire, contacts with local population created a friendly environment. Al-Biruni spent many years with Brahmana priests and scholars and learnt Sanskrit, studied religious and philosophical texts. He must have travelled widely in the Punjab and other parts of Northern India.

Al-Biruni was expert in several languages which allowed him to compare languages and translate texts. He translated several Sanskrit works including Patanjali's work on grammar into Arabic. For his Brahmana friends, he translated the works of Euclid, a Greek mathematician into Sanskrit.

Travel literature was already an accepted part of Arabic literature. This literature contained about far away lands like Sahara desert in the West and river Volga in the North. Before 1500, few people in India and outside India would have read Al-Biruni.

Al-Biruni and the Kitab-ul-Hind

Al-Biruni wrote Kitab-ul-Hind in Arabic in simple and easy language. It is divided into 80 chapters on subjects such as religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology.

Al-Biruni's style of writing was different. He used to start with a question, followed with a description based on Sanskritic traditions and conclusion was based on comparison with other cultures.

Present day scholars thought that geometric structures, remarkable precision and predictability in his writings were the result of his mathematical orientation.

Al-Biruni had intended his work for people living along

These texts were about different subjects like fables, astronomy and medicine. He wanted to improve these texts as he was not happy with the way these texts were written earlier.

Al-Biruni and the Sanskritic Tradition

Al-Biruni discussed about the problems in understanding the local practices. These problems were:

- (i) His first problem was Sanskrit. He said that Sanskrit was so different from Arabic and Persian and the ideas and concepts could not be easily translated from one language into another. According to Al-Biruni, learning Sanskrit was difficult. It had wide range and forms of words.
- (ii) The second problem was differences in religious beliefs and practices.
- (iii) The third problem was the local population were pre-occupied with their own feelings and their ignorance or lack of interest in cultures, ideas, or peoples outside their experience.

Despite these problems, Al-Biruni depended exclusively on the works of Brahmanas and often cited passages from the Vedas, the Puranas, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the works of Patanjali, the *Manusmriti*, etc to provide an understanding of Indian society.

Al-Biruni's Description of the Caste System

Al-Biruni tried to explain caste system by comparing it with similar systems in other societies. Caste system was not unique in India. He noted that in ancient Persia, four social categories were recognised. These were:

- (i) Knights and princes
- (ii) Monks, fire-priests and lawyers
- (iii) Physicians, astronomers and other scientists
- (iv) Peasants and artisans

He pointed out that in Islam, all men were considered equal and they differ only in their observance of piety. Al-Biruni's description of the caste system was deeply influenced by his study of normative Sanskrit texts. These texts laid down the rules for governing the system from the point of view of Brahmanas. But in real life system, it was not so rigid.

For example, categories defined as *antyaaja* which means born outside the system, were often expected to provide

Al-Biruni Views on Pollution

Al-Biruni accepted the Brahminical description of the caste system but he rejected the notion of pollution. Here pollution refers to the practice of untouchability and discrimination against lower caste people by upper caste people.

According to Al-Biruni, everything that is polluted will try to regain its original condition of purity. According to Al-Biruni the concept of social pollution which is present in the caste system is against the laws of nature.

Al-Biruni's Account on Varna System

As per Al-Biruni account of the system of varnas, the highest caste was the **Brahmana**. The books of **Hindus** mention that they were created from the **head of Brahman**, which was only name for the force called **nature**. Since head was the highest part of the body, Brahmana were considered as the very best of mankind among the **Hindus**.

The next caste were the **Kshatriya**, who were created from the **shoulders and hands of Brahman**. After them follow **Vaishya**, created from the **thigh of the Brahman** and then **Shudra** who were created from the **feet of Brahman**.

According to Al-Biruni, these classes though differ from each other, but they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings.

Check Point 01

- 1 Who was Al-Biruni?
- 2 Al-Biruni was born in
- 3 What were the subjects included in *Kitab-ul-Hind*?
- 4 What were the four social categories of caste system in ancient Persia according to Al-Biruni?
- 5 Kshatriyas were created from the of Brahman.

Ibn Battuta

He was born in Tangier, a city in Morocco, into one of the most respectable and educated families. His family was known for their expertise in Islamic religious law or *sharia*.

Ibn Battuta received literary and scholastic education when he was very young. Ibn Battuta's book of travels, called *Rihla* was written in Arabic. It has extremely rich and interesting information about the social and cultural life in the subcontinent in the 14th century. Ibn Battuta considered experience gained through travels to be a more important source of knowledge than books. He loved travelling and before travelling to India in 1332-33, he had

trading ports on the coast of East Africa. Ibn Battuta was an inveterate (habitual) traveller. He spent a great part of his life travelling through North Africa, West Asia and parts of central Asia, the Indian subcontinent and China.

Ibn Battuta's Travel to India

Ibn Battuta reached Sind in 1333 CE, by travelling overland through Central Asia. He was attracted by the reputation of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the Sultan of Delhi, for his generous patron of arts and letters. Hence, he moved for Delhi, passing through Multan and Uch.

The Sultan was impressed by his scholarship and appointed him as *qazi* or judge of Delhi. Later due to misunderstanding between Sultan and Ibn Battuta, he was thrown into prison. When this misunderstanding was cleared, he was restored to imperial service by the Sultan.

Ibn Battuta's Travel to China

Ibn Battuta was ordered in 1342 CE by Sultan to travel to China as the Sultan's representative to the Mongol ruler. Ibn Battuta with the new assignment, proceeded to the Malabar coast through Central India. From Malabar, he went to the Maldives.

He stayed in Maldives for eighteen months as the *qazi*, and then decided to travel to Sri Lanka. Before going to China, he once again went to Malabar coast, the Maldives and also visited Bengal and Assam.

He took a ship to Sumatra, and from there another ship for the Chinese port town of Zaytun, presently known as Quanzhou. He travelled extensively in China, went to Beijing, but did not stay long and decided to return home in 1347 CE.

Ibn Battuta's account was compared with that of Marco Polo, who visited China and India from his home country Venice in the late thirteenth century.



Analysis of Ibn Battuta's Travel

Ibn Battuta recorded his observations about new cultures, people, beliefs, values, etc. In 14th century, travelling was more difficult and dangerous than present times.

According to Ibn Battuta, it took forty days to travel from Multan to Delhi, about fifty days from Sind to Delhi, about forty days from Daulatabad to Delhi and about ten days from Gwalior to Delhi.

Travelling in those days was very insecure. Ibn Battuta was attacked by groups of robbers many times. He mostly preferred to travel in *caravan* along with companions, but it did not help because highway robbers also attacked these *caravans*. While he was travelling from Multan to Delhi, his *caravan* was attacked and many of his fellow travellers lost their lives. He survived but severely wounded.

Ibn Battuta and the Excitement of the Unfamiliar

Ibn Battuta reached Delhi in the 14th century. The subcontinent was part of a global network of communication i.e. from China in the East to North-West Africa and Europe in the West.

He visited sacred shrines, spent time with learned men and rulers. He enjoyed cosmopolitan culture as people spoke Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other languages. They shared ideas, information and anecdotes.

The Coconut and the Paan

Ibn Battuta described about coconut and *paan* which were completely unfamiliar to his people. He described that the coconut trees were similar to date-palms but the difference was that while date-palms produced dates, coconut trees produced nuts.

The coconut's fibre was used for making cords which were used to sew ships instead of using iron nails and they also made cables for vessels using this fibre.

He also described another fascinating thing i.e. *paan*. He described that betel is a tree which has no fruit and was grown only for the sake of its leaves.

Ibn Battuta and Indian Cities

According to Ibn Battuta, Indian cities were full of opportunities for those who had the necessary drive,

Most cities had crowded streets and bright and colourful markets that were arranged with a variety of goods. He described Delhi as a big city, with a great population, the largest in India. Daulatabad in Maharashtra was also equal in size with Delhi.

Ibn Battuta's Views about Delhi

According to Ibn Battuta the city of Delhi covers a wide area and had a large population. The defensive wall around the city had no comparison. The breadth of the wall was eleven cubits. There were houses inside for night sentry and gate keepers. There were also store-houses for storing edibles, magazines, ammunition, ballistas and siege machines.

The stored grains could last long without rotting. There were windows in the wall through which light enter inside. The lower part of the defensive wall was built of stone and upper part with bricks and also had many towers close to one another.

There are many gates called *darwaza* and the Budaun *darwaza* was the greatest among them. There was a grain market inside the Mandwi *darwaza* and near to *Gul darwaza*, there was an orchard.

City of Delhi also had a fine cemetery in which graves had domes over them and those without dome had an arch.



An arch in Tughlakabad, Delhi

Ibn Battuta's views about Daulatabad

According to Ibn Battuta, there was a market place for

It was one of the greatest and most beautiful bazaars. It had numerous shops and every shop had a door which leads into the house of the owner. These shops were decorated with carpets and at the centre of the shop, there was a swing on which a female singer sits.

In the middle of the market place, there was a large domed building known as cupola which was carpeted and decorated. Here the chief of the musicians took his place every Thursday after the dawn (morning) prayers with his servants and slaves.

There were mosques in the bazaars where prayers were offered. Whenever a Hindu or Muslim ruler arrives at the domed building and passed by the market places, female singers would sing before them.

Ibn Battuta's views about the Economy Agriculture and Trade

According to Ibn Battuta, the bazaars were important places of economic transactions, as well as hub of social and cultural activities.

Most bazaars had a mosque and a temple and in some of them, spaces were marked for public performance by dancers, musicians and singers.

Historians used Ibn Battuta's accounts and explained about the prosperity of the towns. The towns derived significant portion of its wealth from the surplus of villages.

Ibn Battuta found Indian agriculture very productive because of the fertility of the soil. This fertility allowed farmers to cultivate two crops a year. The subcontinent was well connected and integrated with inter-Asian networks of trade and commerce.

The Indian manufacturers were in great demand in both West Asia and South-East Asia, and this brought huge profits for artisans and merchants.

There was great demand for Indian textiles like cotton cloth, fine muslins, silks, brocade and satin. Few varieties of fine muslin were so expensive that only nobles and very rich class could afford it.

Ibn Battuta's Description about Indian Postal System

Ibn Battuta was surprised by the efficient postal system of India. The postal system not only allowed merchants to send information and remit credit across long distances, but also dispatched goods required at short notice. It took fifty days to reach Delhi from Sind, but it

Indian postal system was of two types:

- (i) The horse-post was called *uluq* which was ran by royal horses stationed at a distance of every four miles.
- (ii) The other was foot-post called *dawa*, which had three stations per mile.

At every third of a mile there was well-populated village where there were men present to carry the courier.

When a courier starts from the city, he holds the letter in one hand and the rod with copper bells on the other and ran as fast as he can.

The other men in next *dawa*, when hears this bell he gets ready and as soon as courier reaches them, he takes it and transfers it to next *dawa*. This continues till it reaches its destination.

The foot-post was quicker than the horse-post and was used to transport fruits of Khurasan which were much desired in India.

In the Footsteps of Ibn Battuta

Many writers and travellers followed the footsteps of Al-Biruni and Ibn Battuta. Among the best known writers were **Abdur Razzaq Samarqandi**, who visited South India in the 1440s. **Mahmud Wali Balkhi** travelled widely on the 1620s. **Shaikh Ali Hazin** came to North India in 1740s.

Some of them were fascinated by India. Mahmud Balkhi among them became a sort of *sanyasi* for a time. Others like Hazin were disappointed and disgusted with India because they expected to receive a red carpet treatment. Most of them saw India as land of wonders.

Check Point 02

- 1 Who was Ibn Battuta?
- 2 Ibn Battuta's book of travel was called
- 3 What does the market place for male and female singers in Daulatabad known as?
- 4 What were the two types of Indian Postal system?

Francois Bernier

He was a doctor, political philosopher and historian from France. He came to Mughal Empire in search of opportunities and was in India between 1656 and 1668 CE. He was closely associated with the Mughal court.

Later he worked as an intellectual and scientist with Danishmand Khan (an Armenian noble) at the Mughal court.



Bernier in European Clothes

Comparing East and West

Bernier travelled to several parts of India. He wrote accounts about what he saw and compared them with the situation in Europe in general and France in particular.

He dedicated his major writing to Louis XIV, and many of his other works were written in form of letters to influential officials and ministers.

He described the situation in India as not hopeful and not so encouraging compared to the developments in Europe. His main focus was on things which were depressing and he wanted to influence the policy makers and the intelligentsia to make right decisions.

Publishing of Bernier's Works

Bernier's works were published in France in 1670-71 CE and translated into English, Dutch, German and Italian within the next five years.

His account was reprinted in French eight times between 1670 and 1725 CE and by 1684 CE, it had been reprinted three times in English. As compared to it, Arabic and Persian accounts were circulated as manuscripts and were not published before 1800 CE.

Bernier's Book 'Travels in the Mughal Empire'

Bernier's book '*Travels in the Mughal Empire*' has detailed observations, critical insights and reflection of Mughals. He compared Mughal India with contemporary Europe and stressed on the superiority of the Europe.

The Question of Land Ownership

Bernier pointed out the major difference between Mughal India and Europe was that of ownership of land. In India, there was lack of private property in land. He strongly believed that it was good to have private property for both the state and its people.

He thought that in the Mughal Empire, the emperor owned all the land and distributed it among his nobles and this method had disastrous consequences for the economy and society. This perception was also found in other travellers' accounts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Disadvantages of Ownership of Land System in India

- According to Bernier, in crown ownership of land, landholders could not pass on the land to their children. This discouraged landholders to invest in the maintenance and expansion of production.
- The absence of private property in land prevented the emergence of the class of landlords who focus on improving their lands as in Western Europe.
- This practice had led to the uniform destruction of agriculture, excessive oppression of the peasantry and continuous decline in the living standards of all sections of society except the ruling aristocracy.

Truth about Ownership of Land

Mughal official documents does not show that state was the sole owner of land. The sixteenth century official chronicle Abu'l Fazl during Akbar's reign describes the land revenue as 'remunerations of sovereignty'.

This means that a ruler can claim on his subjects, for the protection he provided for the land and not the rent on land that he owned. European travellers assumed this claim to be rent because land revenue demands were very high in those times. But in reality this was not a rent or a land tax, it was a tax on crop.

Bernier's Views on Peasantry

Bernier described the exploitation of peasants in his travel accounts. He pointed that there were vast tracts of land in the empire of Hindustan and most of the land was barren, badly cultivated and sparsely populated.

A little fertile land was untilled (wasted) because of the lack of labourers. When poor people could not meet the demands of their cruel and greedy lords, they are not only deprived of the means of livelihood but also their children are carried away as slaves.

Thus, peasantry is driven to despair by cruelty and ultimately they abandon the country.

Bernier's Views about Towns

During 17th century, about 15 per cent of the population lived in towns. This was an average higher than the percentage of urban population in Western Europe in the same period. In spite of this, Bernier described Mughal cities as 'camp towns' which meant that these towns existed and depended on the imperial camp for their survival.

He believed that these towns came into existence when imperial court came and rapidly declined when it moved out. He pointed out that these towns did not have viable social and economic foundations and were dependent on imperial patronage (protection).

However, Bernier had drawn an oversimplified picture about towns. In reality there were all kinds of towns like manufacturing towns, trading towns, port-towns, sacred centres, pilgrimage towns, etc. Their existence was an index of the prosperity of merchant communities and professional classes.

Merchants and Other Professionals in Towns

Merchants had a strong community and kin ties were organised into their own caste-cum-occupational bodies. In Western India, these groups were called *Mahajans*, and their chief, the *sheth*.

In urban centres such as Ahmedabad the *Mahajans* were collectively represented by the chief of the merchant community who was called the *Nagarsheth*.

There were other professionals existed in towns like physicians (*bakim* or *vaid*), teachers (*pundit* or *mulla*), lawyers (*wakil*), painters, architects, musicians, calligraphers, etc. Some of these professionals depended on imperial

Criticism of Indian Society by Bernier

- Bernier criticised Indian society that it consisted of undifferentiated masses of poor people, suppressed by a small minority of very rich and powerful ruling class.
- He stated that there was no middle state in India i.e. in between the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich, there was no social group or class. Mughal Empire king was the king of beggars and barbarians.
- Subcontinent's cities and towns were ruined and polluted with bad air and its fields were overgrown with bushes and full of infectious waterlogged areas. Crown ownership of land was responsible for all this bad state of affairs.

Bernier's Account on Imperial Karkhanas

Bernier was the only historian who provided a detailed account of the working of the imperial *karkhanas* or workshops. He stated that large halls were seen at many places called *karkhanas* or workshops for artisans.

In each hall, different craftsmen were present superintended by a master like embroiderers, goldsmiths, painters, varnishers in lacquer-work, joiners, turners, tailors, shoe-makers, manufacturers of silk, brocade and fine muslins.

He pointed out that artisans came to their *karkhanas* every morning and remain employed the whole day and return to homes in evening. He criticised that in this way their time passes away and no one aspired for any improvement in the condition of life.

Influence of Bernier's Account on Other Scholars

Bernier's descriptions about the Indian sub-continent influenced Western theorists from the 18th century onwards. These theorists were :

Montesquieu, a French philosopher used Bernier's account to develop the idea of oriental despotism, which means rulers of Asia (the Orient or the East) enjoyed absolute authority over their subjects. They were suppressed and kept in poverty by making all land under ownership of king and not allowing private

Karl Marx developed Bernier's idea as the concept of the Asiatic mode of production in the 19th century.

According to Marx, before colonialism surplus was appropriated by the state in India and other Asian countries. This system led to the emergence of a society that was composed of a large number of independent and democratic village communities. The Imperial court respected the autonomy of these villages till the flow of surplus was not obstructed. Thus, this system was regarded as a stagnant system.

Reality of Rural Society

The picture depicted by Western thinkers about subcontinent's rural society was not real. Rural society was characterised by considerable social and economic differentiation during 16th and 17th centuries.

On one hand, there were big zamindars with superior rights in land and on the other, there were untouchable landless labourers.

Between them, there was the big peasant who used hired labour and engaged in commodity production and the smaller peasant who could barely produce for his livelihood.

Abdur Razzaq's Account on India

The travelogue of Abdur Razzaq written in the 1440s was an interesting mixture of emotions and perceptions about India. He did not appreciate what he saw in the port of Calicut in Kerala, which was populated by people whose likes were very different from the Abdur Razzaq's imagination. He described them as a strange nation.

Later, when he visited India, he arrived in Mangalore and crossed the Western Ghats. Here when he saw a temple, he was full of admirations. He described the temple that, such a kind of idol house could not be found anywhere in the world. He was amazed by the craft and artisanship of the temple.

Other European Travellers

After Portuguese arrived in India in about 1500, a number of European scholars wrote detailed accounts regarding Indian customs and religious practices.

A few of them, like Jesuit Roberto Nobili translated Indian texts into European languages. Duarte Barbosa was the best known among the Portuguese writers, he wrote a detailed account of trade and society in South India.

After 1600 CE, there were growing numbers of Dutch, English and French travellers coming to India.

Among them, the French jeweller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was famous, who travelled to India at least six times. He was especially fascinated with the trading conditions in India and compared India to Iran and the Ottoman empire.

Some travellers like Italian doctor Manucci, settled down in India and never returned to Europe.



A painting depicting Tavernier in Indian clothes

Women : Slaves, Sati and Labourers

Travellers who left written accounts were generally men, but they were attracted by the condition of women in the subcontinent. Sometimes, they took social inequities for granted as a natural state of affairs.

Slaves were openly sold in markets, like other commodities and were exchanged as gifts. Ibn Battuta himself bought slaves along with horses and camels when he reached Sind, as gifts for Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq. After reaching Multan, he gifted a slave and horse along with raisins and almonds to the Governor.

Muhammad bin Tughlaq became so happy with the sermon of a preacher named Nasiruddin and gave him a hundred thousand *tankas* (coins) and two hundred slaves.

Ibn Battuta's account shows that there was considerable differentiation among slaves. Some female slaves in the service of the Sultan were experts in music and dance.

Female slaves were also employed by Sultan to keep a watch on his nobles. Slaves were also used for domestic labour and Ibn Battuta found their services absolute necessary for carrying women and men on palanquins or *dola*.

Price of female slaves required for domestic labour was very low, therefore most families who could afford slaves, kept at least one or two of them.

European Traveller's Views on Condition of Women

Many contemporary European travellers and writers often highlighted the treatment of women as a crucial marker of difference between Western and Eastern societies.

Bernier chose the practice of *Sati* for this detailed description. He noted that while some women seemed to accept death cheerfully, others were forced to die.

Women were also involved in other things. Their labour was crucial in both agricultural and non-agricultural production.

Women from merchant families participated in commercial activities, sometimes even taking mercantile disputes to the court of law.

Check Point 03

- 1 Who was Francois Bernier?
- 2 Francois Bernier dedicated his work to whom?
- 3 The chief of the merchant community was known as?
- 4 Which idea of Bernier was developed by Karl Marx?
- 5 Name the Italian traveller who came and settled in India.

Timeline

Some Travellers who left Accounts

973 – 1048	Muhammad bin Ahmad Abu Raihan Al-Biruni (from Uzbekistan)
1254 – 1323	Marco Polo (from Italy)
1304 – 77	Ibn Battuta (from Morocco)
1413 – 82	Abd al-Razzaq Kamal al-Din ibn Ishaq al-Samarqandi (from Samarqand)
1466 – 72 (years spent in India)	Afanasii Nikitich Nikitin (from Russia)
1518 (visit to India)	Duarte Barbosa (from Portugal)
1562 (year of death)	Seydi Ali Reis (from Turkey)
1536 – 1600	Antonio Monserrate (from Spain)
1626 – 31 (years spent in India)	Mahmud Wali Balkhi (from Balkh)
1600 – 67	Peter Mundy (from England)
1605 – 89	Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (from France)
1620 – 88	Francois Bernier (from France)

TERMS TO KNOW (FROM NCERT)

- ① **Metrology** (pg. no. 117) It is the science of measurement.
- ① **Hindu** (pg. no. 117) The term 'Hindu' was derived from an old Persian word which was used in 6th century BCE. It referred to the region towards the East of the river Sindhu, i.e. Indus.
- ① **Globe-trotter** (pg. no. 118) It refer to a person who travels widely.
- ① **Antyaja** (pg. no. 125) It means born outside the system.
- ① **Tarabadad** (pg. no. 128) It means the music market in Daulatabad.
- ① **Uluq** (pg. no. 129) It was a horse-post service run by royal horses stationed at a distance of every four miles.
- ① **Dawa** (pg. no. 129) The foot-post has three stations per mile, which was called *dawa*.
- ① **Karkhanas** (pg. no. 134) It refers to large halls or workshops for artisans.
- ① **Camp Towns** (pg. no. 134) Those towns which owed their existence and survival to the imperial camp.

NCERT FOLDER

C Answer in 100-150 words.

1 Write a note on the Kitab-ul-Hind.

Ans Al-Biruni wrote Kitab-ul-Hind in Arabic, in very simple and easy to understand language. It is a big text, divided into 80 chapters on subjects such as religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy (magic), manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology. He followed a different structure, beginning with a question followed up with a comparison with other cultures. He followed a different structure in each chapter. He started with a question in each chapter, followed with a description based on Sanskritic traditions, and concluding with a comparison with other cultures. Some scholars praised about this structure and compared it with geometric structure known for its precision and predictability. This was due to Al-Biruni's mathematical orientation.

2 Compare and contrast the perspectives from which Ibn Battuta and Bernier wrote their accounts of their travels in India.

Ans Ibn Battuta's perspective in his accounts of travel in India was:

- He was very much excited about the new and unfamiliar things. He wrote a detailed description about coconut and *paan* that was used in India.
- He wrote stories about men noted for their devotion, kings who could be both cruel and generous, and about lives of ordinary men and women.
- He wrote about anything that was unfamiliar and particularly highlighted in order to ensure that the listener or the reader was suitably impressed by accounts of far but accessible worlds.

Bernier's perspective in his accounts of his travel in India was:

- Bernier compared the situations he saw in India with those of Europe in general and France in particular. He mainly focussed on the depressing things of India. He wanted to influence the European policy makers to make the right decisions.
- Bernier compared Mughal Empire with that of Europe and stressed on the superiority of the Europe. He showed India to be inferior to that of Europe.

3 Discuss the picture of urban centres that emerges from Bernier's account.

Ans The picture of urban centres from Bernier's account was:

- The cities and towns were ruined with contaminated air, its fields overspread with bushes and full of dirty stagnant water.
- Bernier described Mughal cities as camp towns. This means these towns owed their existence and depended on the imperial court for their survival. He believed that these came into existence when imperial court moved in and they will decline once when imperial court moves out.
- Bernier suggested that urban centres did not have viable social and economic foundations and were dependent on imperial protection.

4 Analyse the evidence for slavery provided by Ibn Battuta.

Ans The evidences of slavery provided by the account of Ibn Battuta were :

- Ibn Battuta account mentions that slaves were openly sold in markets.
- When Ibn Battuta reached Sind, he purchased slaves along with horses and camels, as gifts for Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq.
- He presented Governor of Multan with a slave and horse together with raisins and almonds.
- Muhammad bin Tughlaq informed Ibn Battuta that he gave a preacher named Nasiruddin, a thousand tankas and two hundred slaves.
- From Ibn Battuta's account, there was significant differentiation among slaves. Some female slaves in the service of Sultans were experts in music and dance. Female slaves were also employed by Sultan to spy on his nobles.
- Slaves were generally used for domestic labour and Ibn Battuta found their services absolute necessary. Price of Female slaves required for domestic labour, was very low and most families who could afford to do kept at least one or two of them.

5 What were the elements of the practice of sati that drew the attention of Bernier?

Ans The practice of sati according to Bernier showed the difference in the treatment of women in Western and Eastern society. He noticed how a child widow were forcefully burnt screaming on the funeral pyre while many of the older women were resigned their fate. Following elements drew his attention:

- (i) Under this cruel practices an alive widow was forcibly made to sit on the pyre of her husband.
- (ii) Hands and feet used to tie and burnt alive. People had no sympathy for her.
- (iii) The widow was an unwilling victim of the sati-practice. She was forced to be a sati.

C Write a short essay (about 250-300 words) on the following.

6 Discuss Al-Biruni's understanding of the caste system.

Ans Al-Biruni tried to explain the caste system by looking for similar systems in other societies. According to his accounts:

- He noted that social divisions were not unique to India and pointed out that similar system existed in ancient Persia. There were four social categories present in Persia. Knights and prices belonged to first, monk, fire-priests and lawyers belonged to second, physicians, astronomers and other scientists belonged to third and finally peasants and artisans belonged to fourth.
- Al-Biruni accepted Brahmanical description of the caste system, but he disapproved the notion of pollution. He stated that social pollution which is part of the caste system was against the laws of nature.
- He also described about the hierarchy present in the caste system which he learnt from various Sanskrit texts.
- He described that highest castes were the Brahmanas who were created from the head of Brahman and thus Hindus consider them as the very best of mankind. Next caste are the Kshatriyas who were created from the shoulders and hands of Brahman. They are followed by Vaishyas who were created from the thigh of

Brahman and Shudras were created from feet of Brahman. Al-Biruni stated that these classes live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings.

7 Do you think Ibn Battuta's account is useful in arriving at an understanding of life in contemporary urban centres? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans Yes, Ibn Battuta's account is useful for understanding life in contemporary urban centres. He has described about Indian urban centres in a positive way which was as follows:

- He found cities in the subcontinent full of exciting opportunities for those who have necessary drive, resources and skills.
- The cities were densely populated and prosperous, except for the occasional disruptions caused by wars and invasions. Most cities were crowded and had bright colourful markets that were arranged with wide range of goods.
- He described Delhi as a big city, with a great population, the largest in India. He also described that Daulatabad was also equally big as Delhi.
- He stated that bazaars in urban centres were not just places of economic transactions but also hub of social and cultural activities. Most bazaars had a mosque and a temple and some of them also had specific places marked for public performances by dancers, musicians and singers. Ibn Battuta suggested that towns derived significant portion of their wealth through the appropriation of surplus from villages.

8 Discuss the extent to which Bernier's account enables historians to reconstruct contemporary rural society.

Ans Bernier's account on India is not completely true in reality but few of his findings are true and some of them which enabled historians to reconstruct contemporary rural society are:

- Mughal emperor owned all the land and distributed it to his nobles, and this had disastrous consequences for the economy and society.

- Since land was under crown ownership, landholders could not pass on their land to their children and hence they were not interested in any long-term investment in the sustenance and expansions of production. This kind of system prevented the emergence of improving landlord class.
- It also led to destruction of agriculture, excessive oppression of the peasantry and a continuous decline in the living standards of all sections of society, except the ruling aristocracy.
- He pointed out that vast land of empire was left waste, badly cultivated, and thinly populated. Many of the poor peasants experienced bad treatment from their Governors and were unable to fulfil the demands of the greedy lords.
- Poor people's children were taken away as slaves when they could not satisfy the demands of their lords.
- Bernier also pointed out that Indian society is full of poor and impoverished people who are controlled and suppressed by a small minority of very rich and powerful ruling class.
- Indian society has only two extreme classes i.e. poorest of the poor and richest of the rich and there was no middle class in between them.
- He stated that Mughal empire and its king was the king of beggars and barbarians.

9 Read this excerpt from Bernier:

Numerous are the instances of handsome pieces of workmanship made by persons destitute of tools and who can scarcely be said to have received instruction from a master. Sometimes they imitate so perfectly articles of European manufacture that the difference between the original and copy can hardly be discerned. Among other things, the Indians make excellent muskets, and fowling-pieces, and such beautiful ornaments that it may be doubted if the exquisite workmanship of those articles can be exceeded by any European goldsmith.

I have often admired the beauty, softness and delicacy of their paintings. List the crafts mentioned in the passage. Compare these with the descriptions of artisanal activity in the chapter.

Ans The list of crafts mentioned in the passage are excellent muskets, fowling pieces, beautiful ornaments and paintings.

Comparison of these with descriptions of artisanal activity in the chapter is discussed below:

- In this chapter, boat manufacturing, terracotta sculpture and temple construction have been mentioned.
- Painting was also mentioned in this chapter, depicting travellers around a campfire. Another painting of Bernier with European clothes and Tavernier in Indian clothes are also depicted in this chapter.
- Artisanal activities related to arch, cemeteries are also mentioned in this chapter.
- Ikat weaving patterns and other textile related artisanal activities are mentioned.
- Arts like dance, music are also mentioned.
- Artisanal activity of goldsmiths is also mentioned. For instance, gold spoon with emeralds and rubies shows the skill of Mughal artisans.
- Various artisanal works that happened in *karkhanas* or workshops were mentioned in the chapter. They are embroiders, goldsmiths, painters, varnishers in lacquer work, joiners, turners, tailors, shoemakers, silken weavers and fine muslin manufacturers.

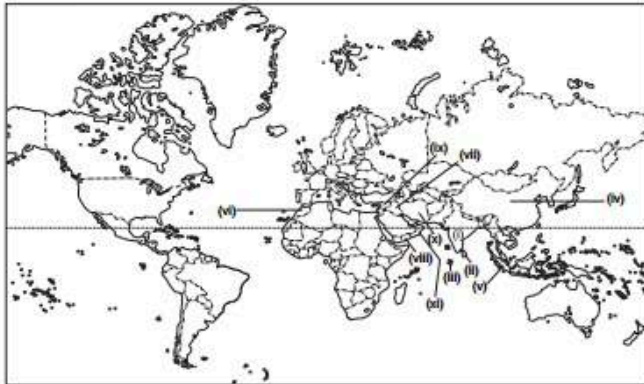
10 On an outline map of the world mark the countries visited by Ibn Battuta. What are the seas that he may have crossed?

Ans The countries visited by Ibn Battuta are:

- India
- Sri Lanka
- Maldives
- China
- Sumatra
- Morocco
- Iraq
- Yemen
- Syria
- Persia
- Oman

The seas he may have crossed are:

- Indian Ocean
- Bay of Bengal
- East China Sea
- North Atlantic Ocean
- Arabian Sea
- South China Sea
- South Atlantic Ocean
- Red Sea



CHAPTER PRACTICE

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

Multiple Choice Questions

1 When and where Al-Biruni was born ?

- (a) 873 CE, Uzbekistan (b) 973 CE, Uzbekistan
(c) 873 CE, Morocco (d) 973 CE, Morocco

Ans. (b) 973 CE, Uzbekistan

2 Who wrote the book Kitab-ul-Hind ?

- (a) Ibn Battuta (b) Al-Biruni
(c) Francois Bernier (d) None of these

Ans. (b) Al-Biruni

3 _____ means born outside the system, were often expected to provide inexpensive labour to both peasants and zamindars.

- (a) Caravans (b) Antyaja
(c) Zaytun (d) None of these

Ans. (b) Antyaja

4 How many social categories were recognised by Al-Biruni?

- (a) Three (b) Four (c) Two (d) Six

Ans. (b) Four

5 Which of the following is not the hurdle mentioned by Al-Biruni in understanding the local practices?

- (a) Sanskrit language
(b) Differences in religious beliefs
(c) Locals population were pre-occupied with their own understanding.
(d) Caste System

Ans. (d) Caste System

6 Which of the following is related to the Al-Biruni's concept of pollution ?

- (a) Concept of energy generation
(b) Sustainable development
(c) Destroying tree cover of earth
(d) Concept of social pollution

Ans. (d) Concept of social pollution

7 Which of the following statement is correct regarding Al-Biruni's Kitab-ul-Hind ?

- (a) It is in Persian language.
(b) It is divided into 100 chapters.

Ans. (c) It is divided into several subjects like religion, philosophy, festivals, etc.

8 Which of the following category of society of ancient Persia was not recognised by the Al-Biruni ?

- (a) Knights and princes
(b) Monks and fire-priests
(c) Peasants and artisans
(d) Children and women

Ans. (d) Children and women

9 Which of the following is the greatest gate ?

- (a) Gurl Darwaza
(b) Mandwi Darwaza
(c) Budaun Darwaza
(d) Buda Darwaza

Ans. (c) Budaun Darwaza

10 Where was market place for male and female singers was situated?

- (a) Delhi (b) Agra
(c) Daulatabad (d) Sind

Ans. (c) Daulatabad

11 There is a _____ at the centre of the shop on which a female singer sits.

- (a) chair
(b) throne
(c) stone
(d) swing

Ans. (d) swing

12 According to Ibn Battuta, Indian Postal system was used for which of the following activities?

- (a) To send information.
(b) To remit credit across long distances.
(c) To dispatch goods required at short notice.
(d) All of the above

Ans. (d) All of the above

13 Which of the following statement is correct, regarding the traveller Ibn Battuta?

- (a) He was born in Tangier, France.
(b) His book Rihla is written in Persian language.
(c) He was not travelled much before came to India.

14 Which one of the following pairs is correctly matched?
CBSE Term I 2021

- (a) Domingo Paes - Italian traveller
- (b) Abdur Razzak - Russian traveller
- (c) Nicolo de Conti - Persian Ambassador
- (d) Duarte Barbosa - A Portuguese traveller

Ans (d) Duarte Barbosa - A Portuguese traveller

15 Francois Bernier came to Mughal Empire in search of

- (a) thief
- (b) opportunities
- (c) judicial remedy
- (d) medical facility

Ans. (b) opportunities

15 Arrange the following visitors of India as per the chronology.

- (i) Marco Polo
- (ii) Francois Bernier
- (iii) Ibn Battuta
- (iv) Al-Biruni

Codes

- (a) (iii), (ii), (iv), (i)
- (b) (iv), (i), (iii), (ii)
- (c) (iv), (iii), (ii), (i)
- (d) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

Ans (b) (iv), (i), (iii), (ii)

16 As per Al-Biruni account of the system of varnas, arrange them according to the order of precedence.

- (i) Shudra
- (ii) Vaishya
- (iii) Brahmana
- (iv) Kshatriya

Codes

- (a) (iii), (iv), (ii), (i)
- (b) (iv), (i), (iii), (ii)
- (c) (iv), (iii), (ii), (i)
- (d) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

Ans (a) (iii), (iv) (ii), (i)

17 Arrange the journey of Ibn Battuta in chronological order.

- (i) Maldives
- (ii) Sri Lanka
- (iii) Malabar
- (iv) China

Codes

- (a) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv)
- (b) (iii), (i), (ii), (iv)
- (c) (ii), (iii), (i), (iv)
- (d) (iii), (ii), (iv), (i)

Ans (b) (iii), (i), (ii), (iv)

18 Read the following statements and identify the person.

- (i) He was doctor, political philosopher and historian.
- (ii) He was in India from 1656 to 1668.
- (iii) He was closely associated with Mughal Prince Dara Shikoh
- (iv) He was later associated with Danishmand Khan.

Ans Francois Bernier

19 Identify the name of the person from the information given below:

- (i) He was born in 973, in Khwarizm in present day Uzbekistan.
- (ii) He was the writer of Kitab-ul-Hind.
- (iii) He was well versed in several languages : Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit.
- (iv) He was familiar with the works of Plato and other Greek philosophers, having read them in Arabic translations.

Ans Al-Biruni

20 Identify the name of the person from the information given below.

- (i) He was born in Tangier into one of the most respectable and educated families.
- (ii) He considered experience gained through travels to be a more important source of knowledge than books.
- (iii) He had travelled extensively in Syria, Iraq, Persia, Yemen, Oman and a few trading ports on the coast of East Africa.
- (iv) He wrote a book named Rihla.

Ans Ibn Battuta

Fill in the Blanks

21 Abdur Razaq Samarquandi, a diplomat came from _____.

Ans Herat

22 The language of the people living East of the Indus was _____.

Ans Hindavi

23 The Science of measurement is known as _____.

Ans metrology

Assertion-Reason

24 Assertion (A) Ibn Battuta travelled to different countries.

Reason (R) He considered experience gained through travel.

Codes

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true, but R is false
- (d) A is false, but R is true

Ans (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A

- 25** Assertion (A) Bernier was a firm believer in the virtues of private property. He saw crown ownership of land in the Mughal empire as being harmful to both State and the people. Reason (R) Landlords could not pass on their land to their children, so they were averse to any long time investment in the expansion of production. All India 2020

From the above Assertion and Reason, find out which one the following is true?

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
 (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A
 (c) A is true, but R is false
 (d) A is false, but R is true

Ans (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A

- 26** Assertion (A) There was lack of private property in land in India.

Reason (R) The emperor owned all the land distributed it among his nobles.

Codes

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
 (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A
 (c) A is true, but R is false
 (d) A is false, but R is true

Ans (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A

Correct and Rewrite

- 27** Ibn Battuta's Kitab-ul-Hind, written in Persian focuses on religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology.

Ans Al-Biruni's, Kitab-ul-Hind, written in Arabic, focuses on religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology.

- 28** The Moroccan traveller, Francois Bernier considered experience gained through travels to be a more important source of knowledge than books.

Ans The Moroccan traveller, Ibn Battuta considered

- 29** Impressed by his wide knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, the Sultan of Delhi, Alauddin Khilji appointed Ibn Battuta as the qazi (judge) of Delhi.

Ans Impressed by his wide knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, the Sultan of Delhi, Mohammad bin Tughluq appointed Ibn Battuta as the qazi (judge) of Delhi.

- 30** In 1342 C.E., Ibn Battuta as a Sultan's envoy to the Mongol ruler, visited China via the land route passing Himalayas through Tibet.

Ans In 1342 C.E., Ibn Battuta as a Sultan's envoy to the Mongol ruler, visited China via sea route crossing the ports of Sumatra and Zaytun.

- 31** Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was Portuguese doctor who visited India at least six times in seventeen century C.E.

Ans Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was French jeweller who visited India at least six times in seventeen century C.E.

Match the Following

List I		List II	
A. Ibn Battuta	1.	Uzbekistan	
B. Francois Bernier	2.	Morocco	
C. Al-Biruni	3.	France	

Codes

A	B	C	A	B	C
(a) 2	3	1	(b) 2	1	3
(c) 3	2	1	(d) 3	1	2

Ans (a)

List I		List II	
A. Brahmana	1.	Thigh	
B. Kshatriya	2.	Feet	
C. Vaishya	3.	Hands	
D. Shudra	4.	Head	

Codes

A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
(a) 2	1	3	4	(b) 4	3	1	2
(c) 4	1	3	2	(d) 3	2	1	4

Ans (b)

List I		List II	
A. The horse-post	1.	Dawa	

Codes

A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D		
(a)	1	2	3	4	(b)	3	2	1	4
(c)	3	1	4	2	(d)	4	3	2	1

Ans (c)

35

List I	List II
A. Al Biruni	1. Uzbekistan
B. Francois Bernier	2. Italy
C. Duarte Barbosa	3. France
D. Manucci	4. Portugal

Codes

A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D		
(a)	1	2	3	4	(b)	2	1	4	3
(c)	3	1	2	4	(d)	1	3	4	2

Ans (d)

36

List I	List II
A. Al Biruni	1. Physician to Dara Shukoh.
B. Mahmud Balkhi	2. Translated Patanjali's work on grammar.
C. Francois Bernier	3. Pointed about the poverty in India.
D. Pelsaert	4. Became a Sanyasi.

Codes

A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D		
(a)	1	3	2	4	(b)	2	4	1	3
(c)	3	1	2	4	(d)	1	3	4	2

Ans. (b)

Picture Based Question

30 Identify the picture .



Ans It is a gold spoon studded with emeralds and

C VERY SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1 When did Al-Biruni reached Ghazni ?

Ans Al-Biruni reached Ghazni in 1017 CE

2 Name the book written by Al-Biruni on religion, philosophy, astronomy and laws of India. Delhi 2020

Ans Kitab-ul-Hind

3 Which kind of texts did Al-Biruni translated?

Ans Al-Biruni translated several Sanskrit works, like Patanjali's work on grammar into Arabic.

4 Name the book written by Ibn Battuta.

Ans The book written by Ibn Battuta was 'Rihla'.

5 What was Ibn-Battuta's observation about female slaves in the subcontinent?

Ans He observed that female slaves who were expert in music and dance appointed in service of Sultan.

6 Name the foreign traveller who was appointed as qazi or judge of Delhi by Muhammad bin Tughlaq for several years. Delhi 2020

Ans Ibn Battuta

7 Why travelling was difficult and risky during the fourteenth century?

Ans It is because of high risk of attacked by robbers.

8 Name some writers who followed the foot steps of Ibn Battuta and Al-Biruni.

Ans Abdur Razzaq Samargandi, Mahmud Wali Balkhi, Shaikh Ali Hazin etc.

9 When Portuguese were arrived in India?

Ans Portuguese arrived in India in about 1500 CE.

10 Name any two Portuguese travellers who wrote about India.

Ans Jesuit Roberto Nobili and Duarte Barbosa.

11 Jean-Baptiste belongs to which country?

Ans France.

12 What did Ibn Battuta do when he reached Sind and Multan?

13 Why did Ibn Battuta think slaves were important?

Ans It is because they used as domestic labour.

14 Why Ibn Battuta attracted by the Muhammad bin Tughlaq?

Ans It is because of his reputation as a patronage of Arts and letters.

15 "In real life the system was not quite as rigid" This statement is contradictory to whose caste system? Identify the person related to the statement.

Ans Al-Biruni

16 According to Ibn Battuta which kind of activities were occurred in Indian Bazaars?

Ans Economic transactions and also hub of social and cultural activities.

17 How do you think Francois Bernier was closely associated with the Mughal Court?

Delhi 2020

Ans Francois Bernier was closely associated with the Mughal court as a physician to Prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan and later as an intellectual and scientist with Danishmand Khan, an Armenian noble at the Mughal court.

18 Who was the Mughal Emperor when Francois Bernier came to India?

Ans Dara Shukoh.

19 What does 'remunerations of sovereignty' mean according to Abu'l Fazl?

Ans Remunerations of sovereignty means the land revenue.

20 Abu'l Fazl was chronicle of which emperor's reign?

Ans Mughal emperor Akbar

21 What was the name of Bernier's book?

Ans Travels in the Mughal Empire

22 What do you mean by oriental despotism according to Montesquieu?

Ans It means the rulers in Asia enjoyed absolute authority over their subjects.

24 Who try to place the history of the Mughals within some sort of a universal framework?

Ans Francois Bernier

25 What was the Bernier's view on towns?

Ans He said that the towns in India were just like camp towns.

26 Write the name of the professional classes that were included in the urban groups.

Ans Physicians, teachers, lawyers, painters, architects, musicians, calligraphers, etc.

27 What kind of activities performed by the merchant families?

Ans They participated in commercial activities even took mercantile disputes to court.

28 What do you mean by antyaja?

Ans It means someone born outside the system, were often expected to provide inexpensive labour to both peasants and zamindars.

29 What was the fundamental difference between Mughal India and Europe according to Bernier?

Ans According to Bernier, the fundamental difference was the concept of private property in land.

30 How did Bernier compared India with Europe?

Ans He always presented India as the inverse of Europe.

© SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1 Examine the causes that made Al-Biruni visit India. All India 2017

Ans The causes that made Al-Biruni visit India were:

- When Sultan Mahmud invaded Khwarizm, he took several scholars and poets back to his capital Ghazni, Al-Biruni was one of them.
- Al-Biruni developed an interest in India through Ghazni.
- Al-Biruni wanted to learn more of mathematics, astronomy and medicine, so he visited India. After visiting India, he contacted local people and also learnt Indian philosophy.

2 State the inherent problems faced by Al-Biruni in the task of understanding Indian social and Brahmanical practices. Mention any two sources that provided him the support. Delhi 2016

Ans The inherent problems faced by Al-Biruni in the task of understanding Indian social and Brahmanical practices were:

- First language, Sanskrit was so different from Arabic and Persian that ideas and concepts could not be easily translated from one language to another.
- Second was difference in religious beliefs and practices.
- Third was self-absorption and consequent intolerance of the local population.

The main sources that provided him the support are the Vedas, the Puranas, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the works of Patanjali, the *Manusmriti*, etc to provide an understanding of Indian society.

3 Discuss briefly about Al-Biruni.

Ans Al-Biruni was born in Khwarizm in Uzbekistan on 4th September 973 CE. He attained his early education in Khwarizm, which was the famous centre of learning at that time. Here, he became a well-versed in different languages like Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Sanskrit and Syriac. Due to his immense capability, he became the member of council of Khwarizm.

During Mahmud of Ghazni's invasion of Khwarizm in 1017 CE, he was made a prisoner and brought to Ghazni. Impressed by his ability, Mahmud Ghazni assigned him the title of Shah-e-Khwarizm.

4 How did the term 'Hindu' derive?

Ans The term 'Hindu' was derived from an old Persian word used around 6th - 5th century BCE, to refer to the region to the East of the river Sindhu (Indus). The Arabs continued the Persian usage and called this region 'al-Hind' and its people 'Hindi'.

Later, the Turks referred to the people East of Indus as 'Hindu' and their land as 'Hindustan' and their language as 'Hindavi'. These expressions did not indicate the religious identity of the people. It was much

5 Discuss about the travel plans of Ibn Battuta, after his new assignment of going to China as Sultan's envoy.

Ans The travel plan of Ibn Battuta was as follows :

- Ibn Battuta after his new assignment, proceeded to the Malabar coast through Central India. From Malabar, he went to the Maldives, where he stayed for eighteen months as the *qazi*, but then decided to proceed to Sri Lanka.
- He then went back again to the Malabar coast and the Maldives and before resuming his mission to China, he visited Bengal and Assam.
- He took a ship to Sumatra, and from there another ship for the Chinese port town of Zaytun.
- He travelled extensively in China, going as far as Beijing, but did not stay for long. He decided to return home in 1347 CE.

6 Discuss about initial days of Ibn Battuta in the subcontinent.

Ans Ibn Battuta reached Sind in 1333 CE. He was attracted by the reputation of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the Sultan of Delhi, as a generous patron of arts and letters and thus set off for Delhi. The Sultan was impressed by his scholarship and appointed him the *qazi* or judge of Delhi. He remained in that position for several years, until he fell out of favour and was thrown into prison. Once the misunderstanding between him and the Sultan was cleared, he was restored to imperial service and was ordered in 1342 CE to proceed to China as the Sultan's representative to the Mongol ruler.

7 Discuss about the Ibn Battuta's description of Indian economy.

Ans The views of Ibn Battuta on Indian economy were:

- Ibn Battuta found Indian agriculture very productive because of the fertility of the soil. This fertility allowed farmers to cultivate two crops a year.
- He described that the subcontinent was well connected and integrated with inter-Asian networks of trade and commerce.
- He also pointed out that Indian manufacturers were in great demand in both West Asia and South-East Asia, and this brought huge profits for artisans and merchants. There was great demand for Indian textiles like cotton cloth, fine

8 How did Ibn Battuta explain the system of communication in India? **All India 2020**

Ans Ibn Battuta examined the unique system of communication of India in the following ways:

- (i) There were two kinds of postal system in India. These were *uluq* (horse-post) and *dawa* (foot-post).
- (ii) *Uluq* stationed at a distance of every four miles while the *dawa* has three stations per mile, means one-third of a mile.
- (iii) The foot-post is quicker than the horse-post and often it was used to transport the fruits of Khurasan.

9 "India had a unique system of communication during the fourteenth century". Examine the statement of Ibn Battuta. **All India 2017**

Ans Ibn Battuta was quite amazed with the efficiency of the communication system present in India during fourteenth century. He described that Indian postal system was of two kinds. The horse-post was called *uluq*, which was run by royal horses stationed at a distance of every four miles and the other was foot-post which has three stations per mile, and was called *dawa*.

The postal system allowed merchants to not only send information and remit credit across long distance, but also to dispatch goods required at short notice.

The postal system was so efficient that while it took fifty days to reach Delhi from Sind, the news reports of spies would reach the Sultan through the postal system in just five days.

10 What was the reality about rural society in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in contradiction to Karl Marx's view?

Ans The picture depicted by Karl Marx about subcontinent's rural society was not real. The reality was as follows :

- Rural society was characterised by considerable social and economic differentiation during sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- On one hand, there were big zamindars with superior rights in land and on the other, there were untouchable landless labourers.
- There was the big peasant who used hired labour and engaged in commodity production and the

11 How did crown ownership of land effect the living standards of all sections of society according to Bernier?

Ans According to Bernier, the crown ownership of land effect the living standards of society in the following ways :

- Bernier argued that due to crown ownership of land, landholders could not pass on their land to their children. So they were not interested to any long-term investment in the sustenance and expansion of production.
- The absence of private property in land prevented the emergence of the class of improving landlords with a concern to maintain or improve the land.
- This led to the uniform abolition of agriculture, excessive oppression of the peasantry and a continuous decline in the living standards of all sections of society, except the ruling aristocracy.

12 Describe briefly about imperial *Karkhanas*.

Ans Bernier provided a detailed account of the working of the imperial *karkhanas* or workshops. There were large halls at many places called *karkhanas* or workshops for the artisans. In one hall, there were embroiders supervised by a master and similarly other artisans in other halls like goldsmiths, painters, varnishers in lacquer work, joiners, turners, tailors and shoe makers, manufacturers of silk, brocade and fine muslins.

The artisans came every morning to their *karkhanas* and remain employed the whole day and returned to their homes in the evening.

13 Explain the views of Bernier about a more complex social reality of the Mughal Empire. **All India 2010**

Ans Bernier's descriptions give hint about a more complex social reality. His views about this were as follows:

- He felt that artisans had no incentive to improve the quality of their manufactures, since profits were appropriated by the state. Manufactures were thus everywhere

- He also pointed that large quantities of the world's precious metals flowed into India, as manufactures were exported in exchange of gold and silver.
- He also noticed the existence of a prosperous merchant community, engaged in long-distance exchange.

14 "Bernier's description of imperial land ownership influenced Western theorists like French philosopher Montesquieu and German Karl Marx." Justify it with suitable arguments. Delhi 2013

Ans Bernier's description about imperial land ownership influenced Western theorists. These Western theorists like Montesquieu and Karl Marx have developed new theories based on this. **Montesquieu's Oriental Despotism** Montesquieu developed the idea of oriental despotism, which means the rulers in Asia enjoyed absolute authority over their subjects, and were kept under control and poverty. **Karl Marx's Asiatic Mode of Production** Karl Marx developed the concept of Asiatic mode of production. He argued that in India and other Asian countries before colonialism, surplus was appropriated by the state. This led to the emergence of a society that was composed of a large number of independent and internally democratic village communities.

15 Describe the perspective of Ibn Battuta and Francois Bernier on the condition of women in the Indian subcontinent. All India 2019

Ans **Perspective of Ibn Battuta**

- According to Ibn Battuta female slaves were expert in music and dance and they served for Sultan. Some were employed to keep watch on his nobles.
- According to Battuta, the price of female slave was very low and most of the family could afford to keep at least one or two of them.

Perspective of Francois Bernier

- According to Francois Bernier, some women seemed to embrace death cheerfully during 'Sati', but others were forced to die.
- Bernier pointed out that women were also involved in other activities of the society

from merchant families participated in commercial activities, sometimes even taking mercantile disputes to the court of law.

16 Read the following passage which describes the advent of European writers in India carefully and answer any three questions.

Once the Portuguese arrived in India in about 1500, a number of them wrote detailed accounts regarding Indian social customs and religious practices. A few of them, such as the Jesuit Roberto Nobili, even translated Indian texts into European languages. Among the best known of the Portuguese writers is Duarte Barbosa, who wrote a detailed account of trade and society in South India. Later, after 1600, we find growing numbers of Dutch, English and French travellers coming to India. One of the most famous was the French jeweller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, who travelled to India at least six times. He was particularly fascinated with the trading conditions in India and compared India to Iran and the Ottoman empire. Some of these travellers, like the Italian doctor Manucci, never returned to Europe and settled down in India.

- Why Europeans were interested in travelling India?
 - Because of the commercial opportunities.
 - To know more about the Indian Social customs and religious practices.
 - To get trading concessions and favors from Indian rulers.
 - All of the above
- Who among the following were the first European to settle in India?
 - French
 - Portuguese
 - English
 - Italian
- Choose the correct options.

Assertion (A) The French jeweller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier travelled to India at least six times.

Reason (R) He was impressed by the mineral wealth and trading situation in the country.

Codes

 - Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A true.
 - Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A

(iv) Consider the following statements.

- (a) Europeans were the first foreigners, who had written detailed account of trade, religion and society in medieval India.
- (b) Many among them were merchants, doctors and other professionals who were looking for commercial opportunities in India.

Choose the correct option.

- (a) Both (a) and (b) are correct
- (b) Only (b) is correct.
- (c) All of these
- (d) None of these

Ans. (i) (d) All of the above

(ii) (b) Portuguese

(iii) (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A

(iv) (b) Only (b) is correct

17 Read the following passage which describes the Bernier's understanding of India carefully and answer any three questions.

According to Bernier, one of the fundamental differences between Mughal India and Europe was the lack of private property in land in the former. He was a firm believer in the virtues of private property, and saw crown ownership of land as being harmful for both the state and its people. Further he described Indian society as consisting of undifferentiated masses of impoverished people, subjugated by a small minority of a very rich and powerful ruling class. Between the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich, there was no social group or class worth the name. Bernier confidently asserted: "There is no middle state in India."

(i) Which of the following can be inferred about the Francois Bernier's descriptions of Indian Society?

- (a) The Mughal emperor was the owner of all the land in the country.
- (b) The concept of private property was well developed in Europe.
- (c) The maximum population of India at that time was riddled with poverty.
- (d) All of the above

(ii) Which of the following statement is true regarding Francois Bernier?

- (a) He was a doctor, political philosopher and historian who visited Mughal India.

(b) He was a French journalist who visited India

(d) He wrote fascinating account of India in his book, 'Fables of the East'.

(iii) Choose the correct option.

Assertion (A) The main difference between European and Indian Society was on the basis of private property.

Reason (R) The concept of the private property was non-existent in Europe whereas it was prevalent in India.

Codes

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false, but R is true

(iv) Consider the following statements.

(a) Bernier believed that unproportional distribution of land was the main reason for poverty and impoverishment in India.

(b) On the patterns of European society, the Indian society was not classified on the basis of class.

Choose the correct option

- (a) Both (a) and (b) are correct
- (b) Only (b) is correct.
- (c) Only (a) is correct
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (i) (d) All of the above

(ii) (a) He was a doctor, political philosopher and historian who visited Mughal India.

(iii) (d) A is false, but R is true

(iv) (a) Both (a) and (b) are correct

18 Study this Mughal painting describing robbers attacking travellers in Medieval India and answer any three of the following questions by choosing the correct options.



- (a) Majority of travelers were merchants who carried considerable amount of wealth with them for trading purpose.
- (b) Robbers resided in the forested and sparse populated areas which remained aloof from state machinery and policing.
- (c) Because of the rampant poverty and impoverishment in India.
- (d) All of the above
- (ii) How can you distinguish the travellers from the robbers?
- (a) Robbers were half naked and looked impoverished.
- (b) The travellers in this painting were beautifully dressed.
- (c) Both (a) and (b)
- (d) None of the above.
- (iii) What can be inferred about the landscape projected in this painting?
- (a) Hilly and forested area
- (b) Desert area
- (c) City situated on the bank of a river
- (d) Both (a) and (b)
- (iv) Who among the following foreign traveller was attacked by the robbers?
- (a) Francois Bernier (b) Duarto Barbosa
- (c) Ibn Battuta (d) Al Biruni
- Ans.** (i) (d) All of the above (ii) (c) Both (a) and (b)
- (iii) (a) Hilly and forested area (iv) (c) Ibn Battuta

- 19** Study this sculpted panel from Mathura depicting travellers carefully and answer any three of the following questions by choosing the correct options.



- (i) What are the various modes of transport that are shown in the given sculpture?
- (a) Horses and horse driven palanquin
- (b) Elephant
- (c) Pedestrian
- (d) All of these
- (ii) Which of the following is/are correct regarding significance of Mathura in the context of architecture and trade and commerce?
- (a) Trade and commerce flourished in Mathura as it lied on the important

- (b) Since the ancient time, it was the seat of unique and indigenous style of architecture.
- (c) Being in close vicinity to Delhi, it was a centre for many crafts in India.
- (d) All of the above
- (iii) The given mode of transports opted by travellers reflects
- (a) the prevailing inequality in India.
- (b) the mineral wealth of the country.
- (c) the safety and security provided by the state to travellers.
- (d) the rich and luxurious life of merchant communities in India.
- (iv) Consider the following statements.
- (a) During the medieval era, India was visited by travellers from Europe and Arabian Peninsula.
- (b) They wrote extensive account on the culture, theology, mineralogy and about administration in India.
- Choose the correct option:
- (a) Both (a) and (b) are correct
- (b) Only (b) is correct.
- (c) Only (a) is correct.
- (d) All of these

- Ans.** (i) (d) All of these
- (ii) (d) All of the above
- (iii) (a) the prevailing inequality in India.
- (iv) (a) Both (a) and (b) are correct

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1** "Ibn Battuta found Delhi as a city full of exciting opportunities." Support your answer with evidences given by him.

Delhi 2013

- or Explain the observations of Ibn Battuta about the cities of India, with special reference to Delhi.

All India 2010

- Ans** Ibn Battuta found cities in the subcontinent full of exciting opportunities for those who had the necessary drive, resources and skills.

Some of the evidences given by him were:

- Cities were densely populated and prosperous, except for the occasional disruptions caused by wars and invasions.
- It appears from Ibn Battuta's account that most cities had crowded streets and bright and colourful markets that were arranged

- Ibn Battuta described Delhi as a vast city, with a great population, the largest in India. Daulatabad in Maharashtra was also no less than Delhi.
- Ibn Battuta account gives a detailed description about Delhi. He describes that city of Delhi covers a wide area and had a large population. The defensive wall around the city was very unique. The breadth of the wall was eleven cubits and inside it there were houses for the night sentry (watchman) and gatekeepers. Inside the defensive wall there were store houses for storing edibles, magazines, ammunition, ballistas and siege machines. The grains stored could last for a long time without rotting.
- In the interior of the defensive wall, horseman and infantrymen moved from one end of the city to another. The wall had windows from which light entered inside.
- The lower part of the wall was built with stone and the upper part of bricks. It had many towers close to one another.
- There were twenty eight gates for the city of Delhi which were called *darwaza*, and the Budaun *darwaza* was the greatest. Inside the Mandwi *darwaza*, there was a grain market and adjacent to the Gul *darwaza*, there was an orchard.
- The city of Delhi also had a fine cemetery in which graves had domes over them and those that do not had a dome, had an arch.

2 "Ibn Battuta's strategies of representation were evident in the ways in which he described the coconut and the *paan*". Look at the statement and give the description of Ibn Battuta on coconut and *paan*.

Ans Ibn Battuta was interested in writing about anything that was unfamiliar and exciting. Following are his descriptions about coconut and the *paan*:

Coconut Ibn Battuta described the coconut, that these trees were most peculiar and most astonishing in habit. He described that they look exactly like date-palms, without any difference between them except that the one produces nuts as its fruits and other produces dates.

He compared the nut of a coconut tree to a man's head and said that it looks like it had two

was a fibre which looks like hair. They made fibre from this, the rope with which they sew up ships instead of using iron nails, and they also made cables for vessels from it.

The Paan Ibn Battuta described that the betel was a tree which was cultivated in the same manner as the grapevine. The betel had no fruit and was grown only for the sake of its leaves. The manner of its use was that before eating it one takes areca nut which was like a nutmeg. It was broken up until it was reduced to small pellets, and one places these in his mouth and chews them. Then he took the leaves of betel, puts a little chalk on them and chews them along with the betel.

3 "Travellers who left written accounts were generally men who were interested in and sometimes intrigued by the condition of women in the subcontinent. Sometimes they took social inequities for granted as a natural state of affairs". Discuss about the condition of slaves and women in subcontinent.

Ans Many travellers have written about the condition of slaves and women in their travel accounts. These are discussed below:

- Slaves were openly sold in markets, like any other commodity, and were regularly exchanged as gifts. Ibn Battuta himself purchased horses, camels and slaves when he reached Sind, to gift to Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq. He gifted a slave along with horse, raisins and almonds to Multan's Governor.
- Muhammad bin Tughlaq was so happy with the sermon of a preacher named Nasiruddin that he gave him a hundred thousand tanks and two hundred slaves. He also kept his slaves to spy on his nobles. He also appointed female scavengers to whom slave girls communicate all the information they possess.
- According to Ibn Battuta, there was considerable differentiation among slaves. Some female slaves in the service of the Sultan were experts in music and dance. They were generally used for domestic labour, and Ibn Battuta found their services very important for carrying women and men on palanquins or *dola*.
- Price of female slaves required for domestic labour was very low and most families who

- Bernier described about the practice of sati and said that while some women embraced death cheerfully, others were forced to die.
- In reality, there was much more that happened in women's lives. For instance their labour was crucial in both agricultural and non-agricultural production. Women from merchant families participated in commercial activities, sometimes even taking mercantile disputes to the court of law.

4 Discuss about the travellers, other than Al-Biruni, Ibn Battuta and Bernier, who travelled to India and wrote their accounts.

Ans Many writers and travellers followed the footsteps of Al-Biruni and Ibn Battuta. Among the best known writers were

Abdur Razzaq Samarqandi

He visited South-India in the 1440s.

The travelogue of Abdur Razzaq written in the 1440s was an interesting mixture of emotions and perceptions about India. He did not appreciate what he saw in the port of Calicut in Kerala which was populated by people, and their likes were very different from the Abdur Razzaq's imagination.

He described them as a strange nation. Later, when he visited India, he arrived in Mangalore and crossed the Western Ghats. Here when he saw a temple, he was full of admirations. He described the temple that, such a kind of idol house could not be found anywhere in the world. He was amazed by the craft and artisanship of the temple.

Portuguese Writers

After Portuguese arrived in India in about 1500, number of scholars wrote detailed accounts regarding Indian customs and religious practices. A few of them, like Jesuit Roberto Nobili, translated Indian texts into European languages.

Duarte Barbosa was the best known among the Portuguese writers, he wrote a detailed account of trade and society in South India.

Other Travellers

After 1600 CE, there were growing numbers of Dutch, English and French travellers coming to India. Among them famous was the French jeweller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, who travelled

and compared India to Iran and the Ottoman empire. Some travellers like Italian doctor Manucci settled down in India.

C PASSAGE BASED QUESTIONS

1 A Warning for Europe

Bernier warned that if European kings followed the Mughal model, their kingdoms would be very far from being well-cultivated and people, so well built, so rich, so polite and flourishing. Our kings were otherwise rich and powerful and we must know that they were much better and more royally served. They would soon be kings of deserts and solitudes, of beggars and barbarians, such as those whom I have been representing (the Mughals)... We should find the great cities and the great Burroughs (boroughs) rendered uninhabitable because of ill air and to fall to ruine (ruin) without any bodies (anybody) taking care of repairing them; the hillocks abandoned and the fields overspread with bushes or filled with pestilential marishes (marshes), as hath been already intimated.

All India 2016

- In what ways did Bernier condemn Mughal rulers?
- What is the difference between the account of Bernier and Abu'l Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari?
- "Pride has its fall if power and negligence of duty rules any one." Explain the statement in relevance to the Bernier's warning.

- Ans**
- Bernier condemned Mughal rulers on ownership of land. He described that they were kings of deserts, beggars and barbarians. Because of them, the cities were ruined and people were suffering.
 - Bernier suggested that state was the owner of the land and there was no private ownership of land. On the other hand in Abu'l Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, it was mentioned that land revenue as a claim made by the ruler on his subjects for the protection he provided rather than as rent on land that he owned. It was actually a tax on the crop but not land.
 - This statement is relevant to the warning Bernier gave to the European king to not to

ownership of land and he distributed it to the nobles. Thus, Indian society consisted undifferentiated masses of poor people, suppressed by a small minority of a very rich and powerful ruling class. This has disastrous consequences for the economy and society.

2 The Poor Peasant

An excerpt from Bernier's description of the peasantry in the countryside.

Of the vast tracts of country constituting the empire of Hindustan, many were little more than sand or barren mountains, badly cultivated and thinly populated. Even a considerable portion of the good land remains untilled for want of labourers; many of whom perish in consequence of the bad treatment they experience from Governors.

The poor people, when they become incapable of discharging the demands of their rapacious lords, were not only often deprived of the means of subsistence, but were also made to lose their children, who were carried away as slaves. Thus, it happens that the peasantry, driven to despair by so excessive a tyranny, abandon the country. In this instance, Bernier was participating in contemporary debates in Europe concerning the nature of state and society and intended that his description of Mughal India would serve as a warning to those who did not recognise the 'merits' of private property. Delhi 2015, 2011, All India 2008

- (i) Name the book written by Francois Bernier on the critical insight and reflection on the empire of Hindustan.
- (ii) What description Bernier had given on the condition of Indian peasantry during the Mughal Empire?
- (iii) Which fundamental differences he found between Mughal India and Europe during 16th and 17th century?

or

- (i) How the tracts of Hindustan been described by Bernier?
- (ii) Why did the land remain untilled? Explain.
- (iii) What happened when the poor peasants were unable to fulfil the demands of their

- or (i) What were the problems about cultivating the land, according to Bernier?
- (ii) Why did the peasantry abandon the land?
- (iii) Explain the reasons given by Bernier for the exploitation of the peasants.

- Ans**
- (i) Francois Bernier wrote a book named '*Travels in the Mughal Empire*' which had critical insights and reflection on the empire of Hindustan.
 - (ii) Bernier said that peasants faced the excessive oppression and when they became incapable of discharging the demands of their greedy lords, they were then not only deprived of their means of subsistence, but were also made to lose their children, who were carried away as slaves.
 - (iii) The fundamental differences between Mughal India and Europe was the lack of private property in land in the Mughal India. There were also no class of improving landlords and middle class in India unlike Europe.

- or (i) Bernier described that vast tracts of country constituting the empire of Hindustan. Many were little more than sand, or barren mountains, badly cultivated, and thinly populated.
- (ii) The land remains untilled because of shortage of labourers, many of whom perish in the consequence of the bad treatment they experience from Governors.
- (iii) When poor peasants were unable to fulfil the demands of their landlords, they were not only deprived of their means of livelihood, but also they were made to lose their children who were carried away as slaves.

- or (i) The problems about cultivating the land according to Bernier were that most of it was sand, barren mountains and shortage of labourers and greedy demands from the landlords.
- (ii) Peasantry abandoned the land because they were driven to hopelessness by excessive cruelty and oppressive government. Even the landlords made the excessive greedy demands.
- (iii) The reasons for the exploitation of the peasants was that they could not satisfy the greedy demands of their landlords. They were driven to despair by the excessive tyranny of the state.

3 The Child Sati

This is perhaps one of the most poignant descriptions by Bernier.

At Lahore, I saw a most beautiful young widow sacrificed, who could not, I think, have been more than twelve years of age.

The poor little creature appeared more dead than alive when she approached the dreadful pit; the agony of her mind cannot be described; she trembled and wept bitterly; but three or four of the Brahmanas, assisted by an old woman who held her under the arm, forced the unwilling victim towards the fatal spot, seated her on the wood, tied her hands, feet and lest she should run away, and in that situation the innocent creature was burnt alive.

I found it difficult to repress my feelings and to prevent their bursting forth into clamorous and unavailing rage.

All India 2015, 2014, 2011

- (i) Why did Bernier consider this treatment as a crucial marker of the difference between Western and Eastern societies?
 - (ii) What role did the Indian patriarchal society play towards this social evil?
 - (iii) Compare the conditions of the women of the era mentioned above to that of today.
- or
- (i) How has Bernier described the practice of sati?
 - (ii) Describe the feelings of Bernier that he has expressed in the passage.
 - (iii) Explain how Bernier has highlighted the treatment of women as a crucial marker of difference between Western and Eastern societies.
- or
- (i) Describe what Bernier saw at Lahore.
 - (ii) How had the agony of the girl been described?
 - (iii) How and why was the girl forced towards the fatal spot?

- Ans**
- (i) Bernier used the practice of sati, in which women were forced to die and this kind of brutal act was absent in Western societies. Thus, this treatment of women was used as a crucial marker of difference between Western and Eastern societies.
 - (ii) Indian society is basically patriarchal and always put women next only to men. Men always considered women as their property

and thus the customs like sati were developed out of this mentality, in which women was made to die along with husband after his death.

- (iii) The condition of women in those days was not very satisfying. They had lot of restrictions and inhuman practices like sati were practised with justification. After independence, women also were given right to vote and were given equal rights in property. Successive governments also introduced many reforms and changing mindsets of people towards women also help to bring in lot of change in the status of women.
- or
- (i) Bernier noted that practice of sati had two dimensions, while some women seemed to embrace death cheerfully, others were forced to die.
 - (ii) Bernier felt so confused and had uncontrollable anger when he saw the practice of sati. He was in anger after looking at the condition of women which was different in West.
 - (iii) Bernier was so critical of Indian society and use of the sati practiced. Even other travellers described about this inhuman practice of sati and thus this kind of treatment of women was made a crucial marker of difference between Western and Eastern societies.
- or
- (i) At Lahore, Bernier saw a beautiful young widow who was hardly twelve year old and who looked more dead than alive she approached the dreadful pit. There were three to four Brahmanas, assisted by an old woman who held her under the arm, forced the unwilling victim towards the fatal spot and was burnt alive.
 - (ii) Bernier described the agony of the girl by telling how she was trembling with fear and wept bitterly when she was taken near to the pyre.
 - (iii) She was forced because she was unwilling to go towards the fatal spot. Three to four of the Brahmanas assisted by an old woman who held her under the arm, forced her towards the fatal spot, seated her on the wood and tied her hands and feet to prevent from running away.

4 Travelling with the Mughal Army

Bernier often travelled with the army. This is an excerpt from his description of the army's march to Kashmir.

I am expected to keep two good Turkoman horses and I also take with me a powerful Persian camel and driver, a groom for my horses, a cook and a servant to go before my horse with a flask of water in his hand, according to the custom of the country.

I am also provided with every useful article, such as a tent of moderate size, a carpet, a portable bed made of four very strong but light canes, a pillow, a mattress, round leather table-clothes used at meals, some few napkins of dyed cloth, three small bags with culinary utensils which are all placed in a large bag and this bag is again carried in a very capacious and strong double sack or net made of leather thongs. This double sack likewise contains the provisions, linen and wearing apparel, both of master and servants. I have taken care to lay in a stock of excellent rice for five or six days' consumption, of sweet biscuits flavoured with anise (a herb), of limes and sugar. Nor have I forgotten a linen bag with its small iron hook for the purpose of suspending and draining *dahi* or curds; nothing being considered so refreshing in this country as lemonade and *dahi*. All India 2012

- Who was Bernier? Give his brief introduction.
- What was the purpose of his travel and what was expected of him while going on travel?
- What things would you like to take with you while going on travel? Explain.

- Ans**
- Francois Bernier was a French doctor, a political philosopher and historian. He was closely associated with the Mughal Court.
 - His purpose of travel was to seek opportunities in the Mughal Empire. He was expected to keep two good Turkoman horses, a powerful Persian camel and driver, a groom for his horses, a cook and a servant.
 - While going to travel I would prefer to take clothes as per the weather condition of that place. I would keep necessary items like

5 Al-Biruni's Objectives and Translating Texts, Sharing Ideas

Al-Biruni described his work as a help to those who want to discuss religious questions with them (the Hindus) and as a repertory of information to those who want to associate with them.

Al-Biruni's expertise in several languages allowed him to compare languages and translate texts. He translated several Sanskrit works, including Patanjali's work on grammar, into Arabic. For his Brahmana friends, he translated the works of Euclid Greek mathematician into Sanskrit.

- How did Al-Biruni described his work?
- What is the meaning of word 'repertory'? How did expertise in several languages help Al-Biruni?
- What were the works that Al-Biruni translated?

- Ans**
- Al-Biruni stated that his work was to help those who wanted to discuss religious questions with them.
 - Repertory means 'collection'. Expertise in several languages helped Al-Biruni to compare languages and translate texts.
 - Al-Biruni translated Patanjali's Sanskrit work on grammar into Arabic. He also translated works of Euclid, Greek mathematician, into Sanskrit.

6 The Bird Leaves its Nest

This is an excerpt from the *Rihla*. My departure from Tangier, my birthplace, took place on Thursday... I set out alone, having neither fellow-traveller...nor caravan whose party I might join, but swayed by an overmastering impulse within me and a desire long-cherished in my bosom to visit these illustrious sanctuaries. So I braced my resolution to quit all my dear ones, female and male, and forsook my home as birds forsake their nests... My age at that time was twenty-two years.

Ibn Battuta returned home in 1354, about 30 years after he had set out.

- What is the source of the passage? At what age Ibn Battuta leave his home and when did

(ii) What is the birthplace of Ibn Battuta? What was the motivation behind Ibn Battuta's journey?

(iii) Discuss how did Ibn Battuta's journey start.

Ans (i) The passage is an extract from the book *Rihla* written by Ibn Battuta.

Ibn Battuta left his home at the age of twenty two years and returned after 30 years in 1354 CE.

(ii) Tangier is the birthplace of Ibn Battuta.

Ibn Battuta had strong urge within him and a desire he had in his mind for long time to visit the respected holy places and this was the motivation behind his journey.

(iii) Ibn Battuta started his journey alone and had no companion or fellow traveller. He also did not join any caravan. So he decided to leave all his dear ones and left his home just like birds leave their nests.

7 The Lonely Traveller

Robbers were not the only hazard on long journeys: the traveller could feel homesick, or fall ill. Here is an excerpt from the *Rihla*.

I was attacked by the fever and I actually tied myself on the saddle with a turban-cloth in case I should fall off by reasons of my weakness...So at last we reached the town of Tunis, and the townsfolk came out to welcome the *shaikh*...and...the son of the *qazi*... On all sides they came forward with greetings and questions to one another, but not a soul said a word of greeting to me, since there was none of them I knew. I felt so sad at heart on account of my loneliness that I could not restrain the tears that started to my eyes, and wept bitterly. But one of the pilgrims, realising the cause of my distress, came up to me with a greeting.

(i) What were the other hazards on long journeys other than robbers? What is the source of this passage and who is the author of the book?

(ii) Why did author tie himself with turban cloth?

(iii) What was the town where author reached?

Ans (i) The other hazards for travellers on a journey are that they could feel homesick, or fall ill. The source of the passage is *Rihla*. It was written by Ibn Battuta.

(ii) As author was suffering from fever, he tied himself on the saddle with turban cloth so that he shouldn't fall off due to weakness.

(iii) The town's name was Tunis. Once author reached the town Tunis, all the townsfolk came out to welcome the *shaikh* and the son of the *qazi*.

8 A Language with an Enormous Range

Al-Biruni described Sanskrit as follows:

If you want to conquer this difficulty (i.e. to learn Sanskrit), you will not find it easy, because the language is of an enormous range, both in words and inflections, something like the Arabic, calling one and the same thing by various names, both original and derivative, and using one and the same word for a variety of subjects, which, in order to be properly understood, must be distinguished from each other by various qualifying epithets.

(i) What is the meaning of the word 'inflections'?

(ii) Why is it so difficult to learn Sanskrit? What is the common thing between Sanskrit and Arabic according to Al-Biruni?

(iii) What should be done to properly understand the meanings in Sanskrit?

Ans (i) The meaning of the word 'inflections' is a change in the form of a word (typically the ending) to express a grammatical function or attribute such as tense, mood, person, number, case, and gender.

(ii) It is difficult to learn Sanskrit because it had wide range of words and forms of words. The common thing is, calling one and the same thing by various names, both original and derivative and using one and the same word for a variety of subjects.

(iii) In order to properly understand the words, they must be distinguished from each other by various qualifying expressions which describes that word.

9 The System of Varnas

This is Al-Biruni's account of the system of *varnas*.

The highest caste are the Brahmana, of whom the books of the Hindus tell us that they were created from the head of Brahman. And as the Brahman is only another name for the force called nature, and the head is the highest part of the...body, the Brahmana are the choice part of the whole genus. Therefore the Hindus consider them as the very best of mankind.

The next caste are Kshatriya, who were created, as they say, from the shoulders and hands of Brahman. Their degree is not much below that of the Brahmana.

After them follow the Vaishya, who were created from the thigh of Brahman. The Shudra, who were created from his feet.

Between the latter two classes there is not very great distance. Much, however, as these classes differ from each other, they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings.

- Why do Hindus consider Brahmanas as best of mankind?
- What are the four castes that Al-Biruni mentioned in the passage? Which body parts of Brahman represent castes other than Brahmanas?
- How do you know that there is cohesiveness between different castes?

Ans (i) The Brahmana is the other name for the force called nature. The Brahmana are made from head and the head is the highest part of the body. Therefore Hindus consider them as best of mankind.

- The four castes that were mentioned by Al-Biruni are Brahmanas, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra.
Kshatriyas were created from the shoulders and hands of Brahman, Vaishyas were created from the thigh and Shudras from the feet of the Brahman.

- There is cohesiveness between different castes because they live together in same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings.

10 The Paan

Read Ibn Battuta's description of the *paan*.

The betel is a tree which is cultivated in the same manner as the grapevine. The betel has no fruit and is grown only for the sake of its leaves. The manner of its use is that before eating it one takes areca nut; this is like a nutmeg but is broken up until it is reduced to small pellets, and one places these in his mouth and chews them. Then he takes the leaves of betel, puts a little chalk on them, and masticates them along with the betel.

- Who is the author of the passage and what does he describe about? What does the word 'masticate' mean?
- What is a betel? Why is betel grown?
- How does one use betel?

Ans (i) Ibn Battuta is the author of the passage. He described about the *paan*.

Masticate means chew.

- The betel is a tree which is cultivated in the same manner as the grapevine.
The betel has no fruit and is grown only for the sake of its leaves.
- Betel is used to make paan. Before eating it one takes areca nut, which is broken into small pellets and one places these in his mouth and chews them. Then one take betel leaves, puts a little chalk on them and chews them.

11 Music in the Market

Read Ibn Battuta's description of Daulatabad.

In Daulatabad, there was a market place for male and female singers, which was known as Tarababad. It was one of the greatest and most beautiful bazaars. It had numerous shops and every shop had a door which leads into the house of the

owner. The shops were decorated with carpets and at the centre of a shop there

was a swing on which sits the female singer. She was decked with all kinds of finery and her female attendants swing her. In the middle of the market place there stands a large cupola, which was carpeted and decorated and in which the chief of the musicians takes his place every Thursday after the dawn prayers, accompanied by his servants and slaves. The female singers come in successive crowds, sing before him and dance until dusk after which he withdraws.

In this bazaar there were mosques for offering prayers. One of the Hindu rulers alighted at the cupola every time he passed by this market place, and the female singers would sing before him. Even some Muslim rulers did the same.

- (i) What was Tarabad? How were shops decorated and who sits in the centre of the shop?
- (ii) What was cupola? What happened when Hindu rulers visited the cupola?
- (iii) What happens every Thursday?

Ans (i) In Daulatabad, there was a market place for male and female singers, which was known as Tarabad.

The shops were decorated with carpets and at the centre of a shop there was a swing on which the female singer sit.

- (ii) Cupola was a rounded dome forming or adorning a roof or ceiling.
Whenever the Hindu rulers came to the cupola, he would pass the market place and the female singers would sing before him.
- (iii) In the middle of the market place there stands a large cupola, which is carpeted and decorated. Every Thursday the chief of the musicians takes his place in the middle of the market place after the dawn prayers, accompanied by his servants and slaves.

12 On Horse and on Foot

This is how Ibn Battuta describes the postal system.

In India the postal system was of two kinds.

The horse-post, called *uluq*, was run by royal horses stationed at a distance of every four

miles. The foot-post had three stations per mile; it was called *dawa*, that was one-third of a mile... Not, at every third of a mile there was a well-populated village, outside which are three pavilions in which sit men with girded loins ready to start. Each of them carries a rod, two cubits in length, with copper bells at the top.

When the courier starts from the city he holds the letter in one hand and the rod with its bells on the other; and he runs as fast as he can.

When the men in the pavilion hear the ringing of the bell they get ready. As soon as the courier reaches them, one of them takes the letter from his hand and runs at top speed shaking the rod all the while until he reaches the next *dawa*. And the same process continues till the letter reaches its destination. This foot-post was quicker than the horse-post; and often it was used to transport the fruits of Khurasan which were much desired in India.

- (i) Who is the author of the passage and what did he describe about? What are the different kinds of postal system present?
- (ii) Discuss about *uluq* and *dawa*.
- (iii) Describe in short foot-post system.

Ans (i) Ibn Battuta is the author of the passage. He described about the Indian postal system.

There were two kinds of postal system in India. They were horse-post called *uluq*, and foot-post called *dawa*.

- (ii) The horse-post was called *uluq* and was run by royal horses stationed at a distance of every four miles. The foot-post had three stations per mile, it was called *dawa* which was one-third of a mile.
- (iii) In the foot-post system, a man carried a rod, two cubits of length, with copper bells at the top in one hand and letter in another. He runs at top speed shaking the rod all the while until he reaches the next *dawa*. This process continues till the letter reaches the destination.

13 The Imperial Karkhanas

Bernier is perhaps the only historian who provides a detailed account of the working of the imperial *karkhanas* or workshops:

Large halls are seen at many places, called *karkhanas* or workshops for the artisans. In one hall, embroiderers are busily employed, superintended by a master. In another, you see the goldsmiths; in a third, painters; in a fourth, varnishers in lacquer work; in a fifth, joiners, turners, tailors and shoe makers; in a sixth, manufacturers of silk, brocade and fine muslins. The artisans come every morning to their *karkhanas* where they remain employed the whole day; and in the evening return to their homes. In this quiet regular manner, their time glides away; no one aspiring for any improvement in the condition of life wherein he happens to be born.

- (i) What was so unique about Bernier according to the passage? Why did Bernier criticise artisans?
- (ii) Discuss about *karkhanas*.
- (iii) How do you know that artisans were not aspiring for better lives?

- Ans**
- (i) The unique thing about Bernier is that he is the only historian who provided the detailed account of the working of the imperial *karkhanas* or workshops. Bernier criticised artisans because they were not aspiring for any improvement of their lives.
 - (ii) Large halls were seen at any places, called *karkhanas* or workshops for the artisans. In halls, the artisans were busily employed who were supervised by a master.
 - (iii) It is known from the fact that artisans were doing routine work daily, by coming to *karkhanas* and returning to homes in evening in a quiet regular manner and passing the time.

SELF ASSESSMENT

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

- 1 When was Sultan Mahmud Invaded Khwarizm?
(a) 1018 CE (b) 1207 CE (c) 1017 CE (d) None of these
- 2 Which of the following statement is correct regarding the Ibn Battuta?
(a) He described about the mango and the people.
(b) He described that people tree leaves used for making cords.
(c) He described betal is a tree. (d) None of these
- 3 Which of the following is incorrect regarding the Francois Bernier?
(a) He was a doctor. (b) He was a historian.
(c) He was a political philosopher. (d) He came in the the Court of Shah Jahan.
- 4 Correct the following statement. While travelling from Multan to Delhi, the caravan of Al Biruni was attacked and many of his fellow travellers lost their lives.
- 5 Match the Following

List I	List II
A. Peter Mundi	1. Turkey
B. Antonio Monserrate	2. Italy
C. Marco Polo	3. Spain
D. Seyedi Ali Reis	4. England

Codes

- A B C D A B C D A B C D A B C D
(a) 1 3 2 4 (b) 2 4 1 3 (c) 4 3 2 1 (d) 1 3 4 2

VERY SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 6 What was the opinion of Bernier on Mughal India?
7 Give the name of the risks that described by the traveller Ibn Battuta?
8 What was the purpose of female slaves?

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 9 How did nature purify impurities according to Al-Biruni?
10 Explain the concepts of Karl-Marx and Montes quieu.
11 How were merchants organised themselves during tenth to seventeenth century?
12 What information we can get from travel accounts of Ibn Battuta about women slaves in India?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- 13 Discuss about Ibn Battuta's description of Indian cities focussing in Delhi and also discuss about Bernier's