



Class 9 Social Science – Chapter 5

Notes



State and Society up to 1000 CE



Textbook: *Understanding Society: India and Beyond – Grade 9, Part 1*



Subject: Social Science – History



Chapter: 5



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Chapter 5 traces the development of **state and society in the Indian subcontinent from the early Vedic period up to 1000 CE**. It explores the growth of political organisations, kingdoms and empires, administration, social structures, education, religion, agriculture, trade and cultural integration.



1. Introduction – State and Society

Human communities gradually became more organised as their populations increased and settlements became larger and more complex.

Two important concepts are:



Society

A **society** is a system of relationships among people who share a territory, culture and sense of belonging.

Society is mainly organised through:

-  Families
-  Social relationships
-  Customs
-  Traditions
-  Cultural practices



State

A **State** is an organised political system based on rules and laws.

A State generally has:

- 👑 Rulers
- 🏛️ Administrative institutions
- 📜 Rules and laws
- 👮 Officials
- 🛡️ Mechanisms for maintaining order

★ Remember

👥 **Society** → customs and shared practices

🏛️ **State** → political authority, rules and administration



2. Broad Timeline of Early India

The chapter covers a very long period.

🌾 Neolithic–Chalcolithic

Around 2000 BCE



📜 Vedic Period

Around 2000–500 BCE



🏠 Janapadas and Mahajanapadas

Around 1000–300 BCE



👑 Mauryan and Other Early Empires



Gupta and Regional Powers



Imperial Southern Kingdoms



Regional Empires

Up to 1000 CE

The textbook's timeline shows the broad movement from kin-based polities to janapadas, mahajanapadas, empires and regional political systems.

3. The Vedic Period

The **Vedas** are among the earliest known bodies of Indian literature.

The earliest Vedic literature existed in **oral form** for several centuries before being written down.

The Four Vedas

1.  **Rig Veda**
2.  **Yajur Veda**
3.  **Sama Veda**
4.  **Atharva Veda**

The Rig Veda is particularly important for understanding early Vedic society and political organisation.

4. Jana – The Early Clan

In the early Vedic period, people were organised largely into **janas**, or kin-based groups.

Jana

A **jana** was a community connected by kinship.

The **raja** was an important leader of the jana.

His responsibilities included:

-  Protection
-  Leadership in warfare
-  Maintaining order
-  Looking after the community

The political organisation of the early Vedic period was therefore strongly connected with kinship.



5. Early Vedic Assemblies

Three important assemblies are mentioned in the context of early Vedic society:



Sabha

Associated with discussion and decision-making among members of the community.



Samiti

A broader assembly concerned with important matters of the community.



Vidhata

An important gathering associated with social, religious and public activities.



Remember

Sabha + Samiti + Vidhata = Important Vedic assemblies



6. From Janas to Janapadas

Over time, political organisation changed.



Jana



 **Janapada**



 **Mahajanapada**



 **Large Kingdoms and Empires**

A major change was the shift from **kinship-based identity** to **territorial identity**.

 **Janapada**

A **janapada** was a territorial political unit in which people were associated with a particular geographical area.

This represented an important stage in the development of the State.



7. Mahajanapadas

By around the **6th century BCE**, larger political units known as **mahajanapadas** emerged.

There were traditionally **16 major mahajanapadas**.

Some important ones included:

-  Magadha
-  Kosala
-  Vatsa
-  Avanti
-  Vajji
-  Kuru
-  Panchala

★ **Magadha**

Among the mahajanapadas, **Magadha gradually became the most powerful**.

Its rise eventually contributed to the emergence of the **Mauryan Empire**.

8. Kingdoms and Republics

Early Indian political systems were not all identical.

There were:

Monarchical States

These were ruled by kings or **rajas**.

Gana / Sangha

Some political communities were organised as **gana** or **sangha** systems, where political decisions were taken by assemblies or groups rather than by a single hereditary king.

Thus, early India had a variety of political arrangements.

9. Early Southern Polities

Political developments also took place in southern India.

Important early southern powers included:

Satavahanas

Associated mainly with the **Deccan**.

Cholas

Associated with the **Kaveri region**.

Pandyas

Associated with the **Vaigai and Tamraparni regions**.

Cheras / Keralaputras

Associated with **Kerala**.

Satiyaputras

Associated with northern Tamil regions.

These regional powers show that political organisation developed in different parts of the Indian subcontinent.



10. The Mauryan Empire

The rise of Magadha eventually led to the emergence of the **Mauryan Empire**.

The Mauryan Empire became one of the largest political formations of ancient India.



Important Mauryan rulers

-  Chandragupta Maurya
-  Bindusara
-  Ashoka



Ashoka

Ashoka is especially remembered for his inscriptions and his emphasis on **dhamma**.

His inscriptions were placed across different parts of the empire and provide valuable evidence about his ideas of governance and social conduct.



11. The Idea of a Pan-Indian Realm

A recurring political ideal in early Indian history was the idea of a ruler whose authority extended over the entire subcontinent.

Terms associated with this idea include:



Jambudvipa

A geographical-cultural term used in ancient Indian traditions.



Bharatavarsha

A term expressing a broader geographical and cultural conception of India.

Chakravarti Samrat

The ideal of a **universal or paramount ruler** whose authority extends across a large part of the subcontinent.

These ideas contributed to the concept of the Indian subcontinent as a connected political and cultural space.

12. Dharma

Dharma is one of the central ideas of this chapter.

Here, dharma should not simply be understood as **religion**.

It can refer to:

-  Duty
-  Right conduct
-  Moral responsibility
-  Responsibilities towards society
-  Moral order

For rulers, dharma included the responsibility to:

-  Protect people
-  Administer justice
-  Maintain order
-  Act responsibly

★ Remember

Dharma = duty + right conduct + moral order

13. Duties of the King

The king had important responsibilities towards the people.

Protection

The ruler was expected to protect the kingdom from external threats.

Justice

The ruler was expected to provide justice.

Administration

The king had to ensure that the State functioned effectively.

Welfare

A good ruler was expected to work for the well-being of the people.



14. The Saptanga Theory of the State

Kautilya's **Arthashastra** described the State as an organic whole made up of **seven constituents**, known as **Saptanga**.



Seven Limbs of the State

 Sanskrit Term	 Meaning
① Swami	 King
② Amatya	 Ministers and officials
③ Janapada	 Territory and people
④ Durga	 Forts
⑤ Kosha	 Treasury
⑥ Danda	 Army / force
⑦ Mitra	 Allies

The idea was that the State could function effectively only when these constituents worked together.



Easy Memory Trick

 King →  Ministers →  Territory →  Fort →  Treasury →  Army →  Allies



15. Council of Ministers

A large kingdom or empire could not be administered by the king alone.

A **Mantri-Parishad**, or council of ministers, helped the ruler.

Ministers and officials:

-  Advised the king
-  Helped administer the State
-  Assisted in decision-making
-  Helped manage different parts of the kingdom

★ Key Idea

Good governance requires organised administration.



16. Administration of Large States

As kingdoms became larger, administration became more complex.

Large States could be organised into:



Provinces



Districts / administrative divisions



Villages

Different officials were responsible for different administrative functions.

This helped rulers govern territories spread across large geographical areas.



17. Village Administration

The village was an important unit of local administration.

Villages dealt with matters such as:

-  Agriculture
-  Irrigation
-  Local affairs
-  Economic activities
-  Community matters

In some regions, local institutions played an important role even when a powerful king or empire existed at the centre.



18. Chola Local Administration

The **imperial Cholas** developed important systems of local administration.

The **Uttaramerur inscriptions** provide evidence about village administration and the selection of members for local committees.



Kudavolai System

The **Kudavolai** method involved selecting eligible persons for village committees using a pot-based procedure.

This provides an important example of local participation in administration.



19. Society in Early India

Society became increasingly complex as communities grew.

Important social institutions included:

-  Family
-  Varna
-  Jati

- 🌳 Gotra
- 🎓 Educational institutions
- 🛠 Occupational groups
- 🤝 Guilds

Social organisation changed over time and differed across regions and periods.

20. Varna

The **varna system** described a fourfold social classification.

The four varnas were:

Brahmana

Associated traditionally with learning, teaching and rituals.

Kshatriya

Associated with protection, warfare and governance.

Vaishya

Associated with agriculture, trade and economic activities.

Shudra

Associated with various forms of service and labour.

Important

Varna and jati are not the same thing.

Varna is a broad fourfold classification, while **jati** refers to the many social groups that developed over time.

21. Jati

Jati refers to numerous social groups that developed in different regions and communities.

Jatis could be associated with:

-  Occupation
-  Community
-  Region
-  Social practices

The number and nature of jatis varied over time and across different parts of India.

★ Remember

Varna = four broad categories

Jati = numerous social groups

22. Gotra

A **gotra** refers to a lineage or clan traditionally traced to a common ancient sage.

Gotra played a role in regulating marriage relationships.

 **Gotra → Lineage → Social identity**

23. Family and Kula

The **kula**, or family, was an important unit of society.

Family relationships influenced:

-  Birth
-  Household life
-  Marriage
-  Social identity
-  Lineage

The family remained an important foundation of social organisation.



24. Four Ashramas

The traditional system of **ashramas** divided life into four stages.



1. Brahmacharya

Student life



Learning and discipline.



2. Grihastha

Householder life



Family responsibilities and social duties.



3. Vanaprastha

Retirement / withdrawal



Gradual withdrawal from worldly responsibilities.



4. Sannyasa

Renunciation



Giving up worldly attachments.



★ Easy Order



Brahmacharya →  Grihastha →  Vanaprastha →  Sannyasa



25. Purusharthas

The chapter also discusses four important goals of life:



Dharma

Duty and righteous conduct.

Artha

Material prosperity and economic well-being.

Kama

Desire and enjoyment.

Moksha

Liberation.

Remember

Dharma + Artha + Kama + Moksha = Purusharthas

26. Role of Women

The position and experiences of women varied across different periods and regions.

The chapter provides examples showing women's participation in:

-  Learning
-  Religious activities
-  Agriculture
-  Trade
-  Cultural life
-  Political affairs

Some women also became important political figures.

Example

Prabhavati Gupta is an important example of a royal woman who exercised political authority as a regent.



27. Religion and Cultural Developments

Religious life changed and developed over centuries.

Important traditions included:

-  Vedic traditions
-  Ritual practices
-  Upanishadic thought
-  Buddhism
-  Jainism
-  Shaivism
-  Vaishnavism
-  Shaktism
-  Bhakti traditions

These traditions contributed to the rich cultural diversity of the Indian subcontinent.



28. Buddhism and Jainism

The period around the **6th century BCE** saw the lives and teachings of:



Gautama Buddha

Founder of Buddhism.

His teachings emphasised ideas such as:

-  Ethical conduct
-  Compassion
-  Understanding suffering
-  The path towards liberation



Mahavira

The 24th Tirthankara of Jainism.

Jain teachings emphasised:

- ❤️ Ahimsa
 - 🧘 Self-discipline
 - 🌱 Non-attachment
 - ⚖️ Ethical living
-

❤️ 29. Bhakti Tradition

The **Bhakti tradition** emphasised personal devotion to a deity.

Devotion became an important part of religious and cultural life in many parts of India.

🌸 Important Bhakti traditions

- 🌸 **Alvars** – associated with devotion to Vishnu
- 🕉️ **Nayanmars** – associated with devotion to Shiva

Bhakti contributed to cultural and religious integration across different regions.

📖 30. Education in Early India

Education was traditionally transmitted through the **guru–shishya parampara**.

👤 Guru

Teacher.

🎓 Shishya

Student or disciple.

Students could live with their teacher and learn through a close teacher-student relationship.

Education could include:

- 📖 Literature
- 🕉️ Vedic learning
- 📊 Mathematics
- 🌌 Astronomy

-  Philosophy
 -  Martial training
 -  Arts
-

31. Centres of Learning

Over time, important centres of learning developed.

Nalanda

Nalanda became one of the famous centres of higher learning in ancient India.

Other centres of learning also developed in different regions.

These institutions attracted students and scholars and helped spread knowledge.

32. Agriculture and Irrigation

Agriculture was the foundation of the early economy.

Farmers depended on:

-  Rainfall
-  Rivers
-  Reservoirs
-  Canals
-  Wells
-  Tanks
-  Dams

Irrigation helped expand agricultural production.

Agricultural production was also important for State revenue.

33. Land Revenue

States collected revenue from agricultural production.

A commonly mentioned principle was that a portion of agricultural produce was paid as tax.

Agriculture



 Revenue



 State Administration



 Defence +  Governance +  Public Works



34. Trade and Commerce

Trade became increasingly important as political and economic networks expanded.

People traded:

-  Textiles
-  Gems
-  Shell products
-  Salt
-  Metals
-  Spices
-  Crafts
-  Agricultural products

Trade connected different regions of India and also linked India with other parts of Asia and the wider world.



35. Major Trade Routes

Two important land routes were:



Uttarapatha

The **northern route**.

It connected regions across northern India.

Dakshinapatha

The **southern route**.

It connected northern regions with the Deccan and southern India.

These routes were not only used for goods.

They also enabled the movement of:

-  People
 -  Scholars
 -  Religious teachers
 -  Merchants
 -  Ideas
 -  Cultural influences
-

36. Important Ports

India's maritime trade was supported by important coastal ports.

Some important ports discussed in connection with early Indian trade include:

-  **Muziris**
-  **Kaveripattinam**
-  **Arikamedu**
-  **Masulipatnam**

These ports connected inland trade networks with maritime routes.

37. Guilds – Shrenis

A **shreni** was a guild or organised group of people belonging to the same trade or occupation.

Guilds could include:

-  Artisans

-  Merchants
-  Craftspeople
-  Traders

Functions of Guilds

Guilds could:

-  Regulate quality
-  Help determine prices
-  Maintain professional standards
-  Settle disputes
-  Perform financial functions
-  Support members

Guilds therefore played an important role in the economic life of early India.

38. Cultural Integration

India's different regions were connected through:

-  Trade routes
-  Religious traditions
-  Literature
-  Education
-  Commerce
-  Art and culture
-  Migration and interaction

People, goods and ideas moved across regions.

This helped create **cultural connections across the diverse Indian subcontinent.**

39. Chapter at a Glance

 Topic

 Key Point

 Society	Organised through relationships, customs and traditions
 State	Organised political system based on rules and laws
 Jana	Early kin-based community
 Janapada	Territorial political unit
 Mahajanapada	Larger political unit
 Magadha	Most powerful mahajanapada
 Chakravarti	Ideal of a universal paramount ruler
 Dharma	Duty, right conduct and moral order
 Saptanga	Seven constituents of the State
 Swami	King
 Amatya	Ministers and officials
 Janapada	Territory and people
 Durga	Fort
 Kosha	Treasury
 Danda	Army / force
 Mitra	Allies
 Varna	Fourfold social classification
 Jati	Numerous social groups
 Gotra	Lineage
 Ashrama	Four stages of life
 Purushartha	Four goals of life
 Uttarapatha	Northern trade route

	Dakshinapatha	Southern trade route
	Shreni	Guild
	Guru-Shishya	Traditional teacher-student relationship

40. Important Terms to Remember

	State
	Society
	Jana
	Janapada
	Mahajanapada
	Raja
	Chakravarti Samrat
	Dharma
	Saptanga
	Swami
	Amatya
	Janapada
	Durga
	Kosha
	Danda
	Mitra
	Varna
	Jati
	Gotra
	Ashrama
	Purushartha
	Guru-Shishya Parampara
	Uttarapatha
	Dakshinapatha
	Shreni
	Kudavolai

41. Important Practice Questions

1

What is the difference between **society and State**?

2

How did political organisation change from **janas to janapadas and mahajanapadas**?

3

What were the important assemblies of the early Vedic period?

4

What were the major features of the **mahajanapadas**?

5

Why did **Magadha** become an important political power?

6

What is meant by **dharma** in the context of governance?

7

What is the idea of a **chakravarti samrat**?

8

Explain the **Saptanga theory of the State**.

9

What was the role of the **Mantri-Parishad**?

10

What is the difference between **varna and jati**?

11

Explain the four **ashramas**.

12

What are the four **purusharthas**?

13

Describe the role of women in early Indian society.

14

What was the **guru-shishya parampara**?

15

Explain the importance of **Uttarapatha and Dakshinapatha**.

16

What were **shrenis** and what functions did they perform?

17

How did trade routes contribute to cultural integration?

18

What was the significance of **Kudavolai** in Chola local administration?



42. Chapter 5 Exam Focus

Before your exam, make sure you can:

- ✓ Differentiate between **Society and State**
- ✓ Explain the transition from **Jana** → **Janapada** → **Mahajanapada**
- ✓ Explain the rise of **Magadha**
- ✓ Describe early Vedic assemblies
- ✓ Explain **Dharma** and **Chakravarti Samrat**
- ✓ Learn all **seven limbs of Saptanga**
- ✓ Explain the role of the **Council of Ministers**
- ✓ Understand **Varna, Jati and Gotra**
- ✓ Explain the **four Ashramas**

- ✓ Learn the **four Purusharthas**
 - ✓ Describe the role of women
 - ✓ Explain **Guru-Shishya Parampara**
 - ✓ Understand agriculture and irrigation
 - ✓ Learn **Uttarapatha and Dakshinapatha**
 - ✓ Explain the role of **ports and trade**
 - ✓ Understand **Shrenis / guilds**
 - ✓ Explain how trade, religion and education contributed to **cultural integration**
-

🌟 Final Quick Revision

🏛️ Political Development

Jana 👤 → Janapada 🌍 → Mahajanapada 🏰 → Empire 👑 → Regional States 🏛️

👤 Social Development

Family 👤 → Varna 👤 → Jati 🧬 → Occupational Groups 🔧 → Guilds 🤝

💰 Economic Development

Agriculture 🌾 → Irrigation 💧 → Surplus 🌾 → Trade 🛒 → Trade Routes 🛣️ → Ports ⚓
→ Guilds 🤝

🌐 Cultural Integration

Education 📖 + Religion 🌸 + Trade 🛒 + Travel 🛣️ + Literature 📜 + Art 🎨 = Cultural Connections 🌐

This is the central story of **Chapter 5 – State and Society up to 1000 CE**: how early Indian communities developed increasingly complex **political, social, economic and cultural institutions** over a long period of history.