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Pushpabhuti Dynasty or Vardhana Dynasty

- The founder of the Vardhana dynasty was Pushyabhuti who ruled from Thanesar.
- **Harshavardhana** (606-647 CE) belonged to the Pushyabhuti dynasty. Harsha shifted his capital from Thanesar to **Kanauj**.
- Kanauj was located in the rich agricultural region of the western Ganges Plain.
- Bhaga, Hiranya and Bali were the three kinds of tax collected during Harsha's reign. Bhaga was the land tax paid in kind. One-sixth of the produce was collected as land revenue. Hiranya was the tax paid by farmers and merchants in cash.
- **Hiuen Tsang** hailed as the prince of pilgrims, visited India during the reign of **Harsha**. Hiuen Tsang spent about five years in the University of Nalanda and studied there. Hiuen Tsang recorded the fame of the Nalanda University.
- **Banabhatta**, the author of Harshacharita and Kadambari, was a court poet of Harsha.
- Harsha himself was a learned scholar and patron of learning. He wrote the plays Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadarshika.
- The **Harshacharita** is the biography of Indian emperor Harsha.
- Harsha was a worshipper of Siva at least up to 631 CE. But he embraced Buddhism under the influence of his sister Rajyasri and the Buddhist monk Hiuen Tsang.

The Palas

- Gopala founded the Pala Empire in 750 CE.
- His son Dharmapala (770–815 CE) succeeded him. Dharmapala revived Nalanda university.
- Mahayana Buddhism flourished during the Pala reign.
- Dharmapala founded the **Vikramshila University**.
- The patronage of Palas to Vikramshila and Nalanda universities paved the way for the progress of Buddhist, Jain and Sanskrit literature.
- Dharmapala defeated Indrayudha, the king of Kanauj and installed his nominee Chakrayudha to the throne of Kanauj.
- Dharmapala held a grand darbar at Kanauj, which was attended by several kings. However, he could not consolidate his position.
- Rashtrakuta king, Dhruva defeated Dharmapala near Monghyr (Bihar) in a battle.
- Meanwhile Nagabhatta II, Pratihara king became more powerful.
- After Dharmapala, his son Devapala became the ruler. He was the mightiest Pala king. He conquered –Pragjotishpur (Assam) and Utkala (Orissa).
- The kings Palas dynasty ruled over Bihar, Bengal, and parts of Orissa and Assam with many ups and downs for over four centuries.
- The Pala dynasty was succeeded by Sena dynasty.
- Vijayasena of the Sena dynasty expelled the last pala ruler Madanapala (1130–1150 CE) from Bengal and established Sena dynasty.
- Jayadeva (the famous poet of Bengal) was the great court poet of Luxman sena.

The Rashtrakutas

- The greatest ruler of the dynasty was Dantidurga.
- Dantidurga who fixed his capital at Malkhand/Malkhed founded the Kingdom.
- Dantivarman was succeeded by his uncle Krishna I about A.D. 758.
- Krishna-I extended his kingdom from Maharashtra to Karnataka.
- Dhruva became king in about A.D. 779. It was the opening of a new era in the history of Rashtrakutas.
- Dhruva was the first Rashtrakuta ruler from Deccan who had intervene in the tripartite struggle of supremacy in north India. He had defeated two powers of the North India i.e the Pratihara king Vatsaraja and the Pala king Dharmapala of Bengal.
- Dhruva added the emblem of Ganga and Yamuna to his imperial emblem after his successful campaigns in north India.
- Dhruva was succeeded by Govinda-III (A.D. 793-813).
- Govinda-III also made invasions into north India and fought successfully against the Pala king Dharmapala and Chakrayudha the ruler of Kanauj.
- Govinda-III shattered the union of the Ganga, Chera, Pandya, and Pallava rulers in south India.
- Govind-III was succeeded by his son Amoghavarsha-I (A.D. 814-878).
- Amoghavarsha-I had been ruled for 60 years. He is better known for his leanings towards religion and literature.
- Amoghavarsha supported Jainism. He was a patron of literature and patronized as the men of letter.
- Amoghavarsha wrote *Kavirajamarga*. It was earliest Kannada work on poetics.
- Amoghavarsha was a great builder. He built the capital city Manyakhet.
- The successor of Amoghavarsha were Indra-III (A.D. 915-927) and Krishna-III (939- 965). Both were the great Rashtrakuta rulers.
- Indra-III had defeated the Pratihara king Mahipala-I and ransacked his capital Kanauj.
- The worship of Shiva and Vishnu was popular during the Rashtrakutas reign. The famous rock-cut Shiva temple at Ellora was built by Krishna I (756–775 CE).
- The rock cut shrines at Ellora and Elephanta belong to their period.

The Prathiharas

- The dynasty was founded by Nagabhatta I. He ruled from 730 CE to 756 CE.
- **Mihir Bhoja** was one of the great rulers for his dynasty. He was a devote of Vishnu and adopted **Adhivaraha** as the title.
- The last ruler of this dynasty was Rajyapal who was defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni.
- The Pratiharas dynasty dominated north India for over two hundred years from the 8th century to the 10th century A.D.

The Chauhans

- The Chauhans ruled between A.D. (CE) 956 and 1192 over the eastern parts of the present-day Rajasthan, establishing their capital at Sakambari.
- This Rajput dynasty was founded by Simharaji, who was popularly known as the founder of the city of Ajmer.
- The last of Chauhan Kings, Prithviraj Chauhan, was considered the greatest of all Chauhan rulers. He defeated Muhammad Ghori in the first battle of Tarain fought in 1191.
- However, he was defeated and killed in the second battle of Tarain in 1192.

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