1. Discuss the new historiographical trends pertaining to the study of colonial economy.

Ans: Ancient Indian economic history up to the middle of the twentieth century was largely dependent on incidental references in literary texts. U.N. Ghoshal’s Agrarian System of Northern India and A.N. Bose’s Social and Rural Economy of Northern India (c. 600 B.C. - A.D. 200), for example, are essentially based on textual material, despite the use of inscriptive data. Most works of this variety brought together factual details from different sources, cutting across time and space. It made it difficult to work out processes of change with regard to any institution. The analysis and explanation of economic life and institutions within incorporative concepts were unknown. Perspectives on early India have undergone significant changes from the middle of the 1950s and since then economic history, with bearings on society and polity, has occupied centre stage. From being a matter of marginal concern, economic history came to occupy an important position. Early India instead of being seen as a period dominated by numerous dynasties and their wars came to be perceived in terms of socio-economic stages. Explanations of change, including prosperity and decline, centering around political authority made way for another kind of analysis. Whether the Harapans had a plough or not or the Vedic people had access to iron or not or why it was that the rise of Magadha, emergence of urban centers and ‘heterodox’ sects happened to coincide in the middle of the first millennium B.C. were the types of questions that began to be asked and addressed. In brief, there was a significant shift in perspective. In the process some cherished notions were disturbed, and that was inevitable. With the illumination of the wide ranging economic activities in the post-Maurya centuries and the comparative decline or stagnation in the Gupta period the idea of the ‘Golden Age’ of the Guptas received a set-back and the Guptas lost some of their luster. The shift from dynastic to economic history made common people visible and, instead of kings and dynasties, it invested them with agency. Finally, it needs to be mentioned that today economic history is seen as a part of a wider canvas of history and it is not treated in isolation. The practice of interdisciplinarity and the concern for opening up and addressing new dimensions of early Indian history have led to enhanced interest in issues like social differentiation, stratification, social mobility and state formation. Studies in these areas clearly indicate that economy is not the sole agency of social change. Thus, it is realised that differentiation could emanate from multiple sources: access or absence of access to economic resources or political power. Upward social mobility was conditional upon acquiring economic or political power or both, which in turn were prerequisites for the observance and emulation of upper caste norms and rituals. The subject of state formation provides a good example of how one dimension of society cannot be studied to the exclusion of other dimensions. For the emergence of states an agrarian base, settlements and social differentiation of some kind are usually necessary. However, once states emerged they could, and in fact did, influence changes in each of the aforesaid areas. Examples such as these, and they can easily be multiplied, illustrate the continuous interplay of numerous forces in the making of history, while simultaneously drawing our attention to the overlap between economic history and other facets of history.

2. Locate cultures contemporary with the Harappan civilisation. Examine the possibilities of the existence of chiefdoms in the neolithic-chalcolithic cultures in the subcontinent.

Ans: Harappa
Harappa was an Indus civilization urban center. It lies in Punjab Province, Pakistan, on an old bed of the River Ravi. The latest research has revealed at least five mounds at Harappa that 3-D renditions of Harappa show to have been surrounded by extensive walls. Two mounds have large walls around them, perhaps as much for trade regulation as defense. A structure once considered a granary is now thought to have been a large building with ventilated air ducts. A set of working platforms to the south of this structure are also of great interest to archaeologists. An abundance of terracotta figurines at Harappa provided the first clues in the 19th century to the ancient Indus - often abbreviated as Harap - civilization.

Mohenjo Daro
Mohenjo Daro is probably the best known Indus site. Mohenjo Daro is in Sindh, Pakistan, next to the Indus River, not far from the very early human flint mining quarries at Rohri. The Indus may once have flowed to the west of Mohenjo Daro, but it is now located to the east.

Here the Great Bath, uniform buildings and weights, hidden drains and other hallmarks of the civilization were discovered in the 1920’s. This is where the most unicorn seals have been found. Due to a rising water table, most of the site remains excavated, and its earliest levels have not been reached.

Dholavira
Dholavira is located on Khadir Beyt, an island in the Great Rann of Kutch in Gujarat State, India. It has only been excavated since 1990. As large as Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, it has some of the best preserved stone architecture.

A tantalizing signboard with Indus script has also been discovered.

Dholavira appears to have had several large reservoirs, and an elaborate system of drains to collect water from the city walls and house tops to fill these water tanks.

Lothal
Lothal is on the top of the Gulf of Khambat in Gujarat, India, near the Sabarmati River and the Arabian Sea. It is the most extensively researched Harappan coastal site.

A bead factory and Persian Gulf seal have been found here suggesting that, like many sites on the Gulf of Khambat, it was deeply