

History of Ancient India Upto 1000 A.D

DHIS101



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P ROFESSIONAL
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HISTORY OF ANCIENT INDIA

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SYLLABUS

History of Ancient India

Objectives:

- To provide an understanding to Ancient Indian Civilization such as Indus and Vedic.
- To understand the historical developments and changes in the Indian religion and society during Ancient times.
- To understand the political developments, imperialism and monarchical polity of ancient India.
- To help the students to prepare for various competitive exams.

Sr. No.	Topics
1.	Evidences of Ancient Indian History: Literature, archaeology, Epigraphy, Numismatics, foreign travellers account. Physical Features: Physical features of India and their influence on the Indian history
2.	The Pre-Historic Cultures: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic.
3.	Indus Valley Civilization: Extent, Chronology, Origin, Society, Religion and Causes of decline.
4.	The Vedic Age: Original homelands, The Aryans, Political, Social, Religious and Economic Life, Difference and similarities between Indus Civilization and Vedic culture.
5.	The Later-Vedic Age: Political, Social, Religious and Economic Life.
6.	The Mauryas: ChandraGupta, Bindusara, Ashoka (Ashoka dhamm: its nature and propagation), Successors of Ashoka
7.	The Golden period: Guptas and their successors(to c.750 A.D.):Changes in political organization of empire, Economy and Society, Literature and Sciences, Arts. Samuragupta 'The Indian Napoleon': Extent of the empire, battles and Administration, Disintegration of the Gupta Empire.
8.	Religious movements: Jainism and Buddhism, Vardhamana Mahavira's and Gautama Buddha's contribution. Causes of decline of Jainism, Factors for the spread of Buddhism, Stupa architecture, Buddhist customs and manners.
9.	Bhagvatism, Shaivism and Brahmanism: Main Characteristics, important leaders, extent in India.
10.	State Formation and Urbanization: Urbanization, Society, political history, Mahajanapadas, Monarchies and Republics, Administration in Monarchies, Maps:- Important Historical places of Indus Valley Civilization, Ashoka's Empire, Empire of Samundragupta, Extent of Gupta's Empire

CONTENTS

Unit 1:	Sources of Ancient Indian History	1
Unit 2:	Pre-Historic Age (Stone Age)	17
Unit 3:	Indus Calley Civilization (3250-1750 BC)	28
Unit 4:	The Vedic Age	49
Unit 5:	Later-Vedic Period	65
Unit 6:	Maurya Period: Chandragupta, Bindusar, Ashoka	79
Unit 7:	Ashoka: Social, Economic and Religious Reforms	115
Unit 8:	Gupta's Empire	125
Unit 9:	India in Gupta's Age	153
Unit 10:	Religious Movements	173
Unit 11:	Jainism and Buddhism	179
Unit 12:	Bhagvatism, Shaivism and Brahmanism	208
Unit 13:	State Formation and Urbanization	228
Unit 14:	Maps	259

Unit-1: Sources of Ancient Indian History

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 1.1 Sources of Ancient Indian History
- 1.2 Geographical Environment
- 1.3 Geographical Effects on Indian History
- 1.4 Ancient Ethno-Linguistic Groups
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Keywords
- 1.7 Review Questions
- 1.8 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To know about sources of ancient Indian history,
- To understand geographical setting of Indian history.

Introduction

History of each nation is a heritage for its future generations to come. Glorious works done by the predecessors inspire next generations. After analyzing their mistakes, decide their course of actions and effort of regaining the glorious past is done. Any society can't save its cultural heritage by staying away from its past. Hence, every society is connected with its past and plans for the future on the basis of its past. This is the reason, each nation attaches prime importance to the study of its history.

When we study the importance of Indian history, then many characteristics of that time come across, which we don't get from any other nation's ancient culture. **Firstly**, India is the only country which made humans cultured and civilized first. The time, when other people of civilized and developed nations were living in forests living life of animals, India had already developed high class culture. **Secondly**, India is the only country, whose cultural lifeline has been flowing since very ancient periods. In all other countries, where developed any specific culture, have been lost in times and their existence ended. Today, they are only a subject of history. Famous poet of Urdu **Iqbal** said, "Greek, Egypt, Rome all got extinct, but there is something that our existence does not end." It means that all cultures of

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Greece, Rome and Egypt got extinct and replaced by new culture, which has got nothing to do with old culture. But India is the only country in the world, which is living up with its old tradition and culture with its great values being intact. **Iqbal** says that there is something fundamental in having this continuity of Indian culture. Student of history must study these superior values and elements else, we can't study India as India, and this can only be done by studying ancient Indian history. **Thirdly**, this is the quality of Indian culture only that has the power to give secular and spiritual satisfaction both, i.e. it has the ability to have all round human development. Due to this only India was called 'golden bird' and had the honor of being called 'World Guru'. **Fourthly**, Indian culture has the power to establish peace as this has seen the entire world as a family and has inspired Indians to put in efforts for the development of its peace and prosperity. Thus, people here done great job of making other people excel in their lives.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Only country of the world, which made humans cultured and civilized first is
2. Greece, Rome, Egypt all got extinct, but there is something special that our existence is intact. said this.
3. is called Father of History.

With above characteristics in context of our great ancient history, we can analyze the importance of ancient Indian history. In the absence of such study, student of India can't ever know that he is part of such great cultural heritage. Student shall feel proud towards glorious Indian culture and tradition. British have deformed Indian history and presented in such manner that Indian students feel inferior and their courage recede. Glorious Indian past can inspire Indian students to do great work and ambition of rekindling ancient glory of Indian history can be achieved.

1.1 Sources of Ancient Indian History

India is an ancient country. As per many **Indian scholars**, Indian culture is the oldest in the world. Indians pondered over all aspects of life and being expert in writing, they composed literature on poetry, philosophy, art, science and other topics. As per **foreign scholars** too, Indian culture is older than china, Egypt, Mesopotamia etc. Despite having such great scholars in greatly civilized ancient country, India does not have a written chronology of history, this looks surprising.

Some foreign historians have gone to the extent and said that Indian historian lacked **historical sense**. Reaching to conclusion that there was no historical creation in ancient Indian time, would be wrong. Actually, there were no such important historical development in that period that could be recorded. Actually this can be considered as truth that Indians were neutral to history and politics and they used to study these subjects under other social disciplines only. As per **Dr. R.C. Majumdar**, "**One of the greatest defects of Indian culture is the aversion of Indians to write history. They applied themselves to all conceivable branches of literature and excelled in many of them, but never seriously took to writing history.**" Alberuni says, **Hindus don't pay much attention to the historical order of things.**

As regards knowing Indian resources, sources to history prior to 6th century BC are limited, but post that period we have enough sources. Researches till now have dug out sufficient ancient Indian history resources. Even then, it is not possible to have chronological description of ancient Indian history, as other nations. Main reason being absence of great historians like **Herodotus of Greece** (father of history), **Livy of Rome** or **Alberuni of Turkey**.

Reasons of Neutralism of Indians towards History –Lack of chronological order in Indian history can't be justified to see it as lack of historical sense. There can be many reasons for such ignorance to historical chronology as mentioned below –

- (1) **Historical Writers were Brahmins** – Composer of entire Indian literature were Brahmins, who had little interest in politics. Their interest was more in poetry, arts, philosophy and science. This section of society was majorly involved in spiritual meditation and establishment of moral values. They had little interest in physical life. Instead of describing activities of kings and emperors, they mentioned different disciplines required for guidance of the society of their ages. This is why, their attention could not go to chronological listing of events.
- (2) **Historians gave importance to concepts rather than events** – Study of ancient material tells us that scholars that time were inclined towards propounding different concepts. They paid less attention to the events happening in the society. They were of the view that forces behind such events need to be analyzed. Events are not important. Hence, due to negligence of events, chronology got neglected.
- (3) **Huge point of view of Scholars** – Accepting that ancient Indians were totally ignorant about history is not true, as we have huge material available in form of ancient literature. Actually, ancient Indians had huge perspective about history and they considered it as part of knowledge. They saw history as part of religion, morality, politics, economics and literature. Hence, they never felt the need to write chronological history.
- (4) **Negligence towards writing History** – Even then, we can't deny that they were ignorant towards writing history. Though no other species of the world did such history writing, the way it is done in modern times, still the tendency of accepting history as a separate branch is more among foreigners than Indians.

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1.1.1 Search of Ancient Indian History

This is known to all that history is totally dependent on resources for study. This is the reason that foreign and Indian historians have tried to unite broken chain of ancient Indian history with great effort and dedication. Work of finding Indian history resources was started by British Scholars. They interpreted it as per their interest. It resulted in many misconceptions about Indian history. Later on, when Indian historians took job in their hands, then many of those were clarified and Indian history its deserved place.

Discovery of ancient Indian history started in the second half of 18th century. Maxmuller translated Vedas in English, which established superiority of Indian civilization over entire western world. After this English scholars translated Bhagwadgeeta, Hitopdesh and Shakuntala etc in English. In 18th century, 'Asiatic society of Bengal' started **research in Asia**. With this Indian historians too got inspired to know about Indian history. In 1862, department of law was **established in Indian Archaeology**. Lord Curzon showed interest and discovery and protection of old monuments got encouragement. This work is continuing with foreign and **Indian scholars**. In 1922 under John Marshall leadership, Harappa culture was discovered. This work is progressing. Different excavation work at various sites in India is helping to piece together scattered culture.

Thus, there is no big issue in knowing ancient Indian historical knowledge. Only problem is the chronology. In fact, there is no dearth of its resources of study. These sources as a result of regular researches are being more capable of interpreting history.



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Archaeological Survey of India was established in 1862 in India. Lord Curzon showed interest and discovery and protection of old monuments got encouragement.

1.1.2 Main Sources of Ancient Indian History

Before studying ancient Indian history, it is required that we study those main resources which help us know about history itself, they can be divided in three parts as below –

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1. Archaeological Sources.
2. Literary Sources.
3. Accounts of Foreign Travellers

I. Archaeological Sources

In ancient Indian history, archaeological material has helped a lot. In fact, it has helped in writing scientific historical writing. Archaeology itself has become independent discipline. Where historical material is silent or unclear, there is comes in as handy. In ambiguous situations, archaeological material only helps and fills up blank areas of history. Had archaeological materials did not help; we would not have been able to know about prehistoric Indian period. Archaeological materials can be divided in four parts in context of Indian history –

1. Excavation material
2. Epigraphs or Inscriptions
3. Monuments
4. Coins

(1) Excavation Material – Different sites have been excavated in India and remains and wreckages of towns, buildings, temples and various forts have been found. These provide ample information about ancient Indian history. Many blurred pages of our history have become clear, dates have been defined and many scattered pieces of information can be joined together. In Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa excavation, we have found remains of town, buildings, human body, animal skeletons, images of deities, utensils, tools, roads and bathing pools etc. These throw light on civilization of 5000 years ago. With the excavation of Takshshila, ambiguity on chronology of Kushan Vansh has been sorted. Many Buddha idols have found from Sanchi (near Bhopal), which are evidence to the rise and fall of Jain and Buddha faith. Similarly, remains found in Sarnath give ample information on Bauddha religion.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

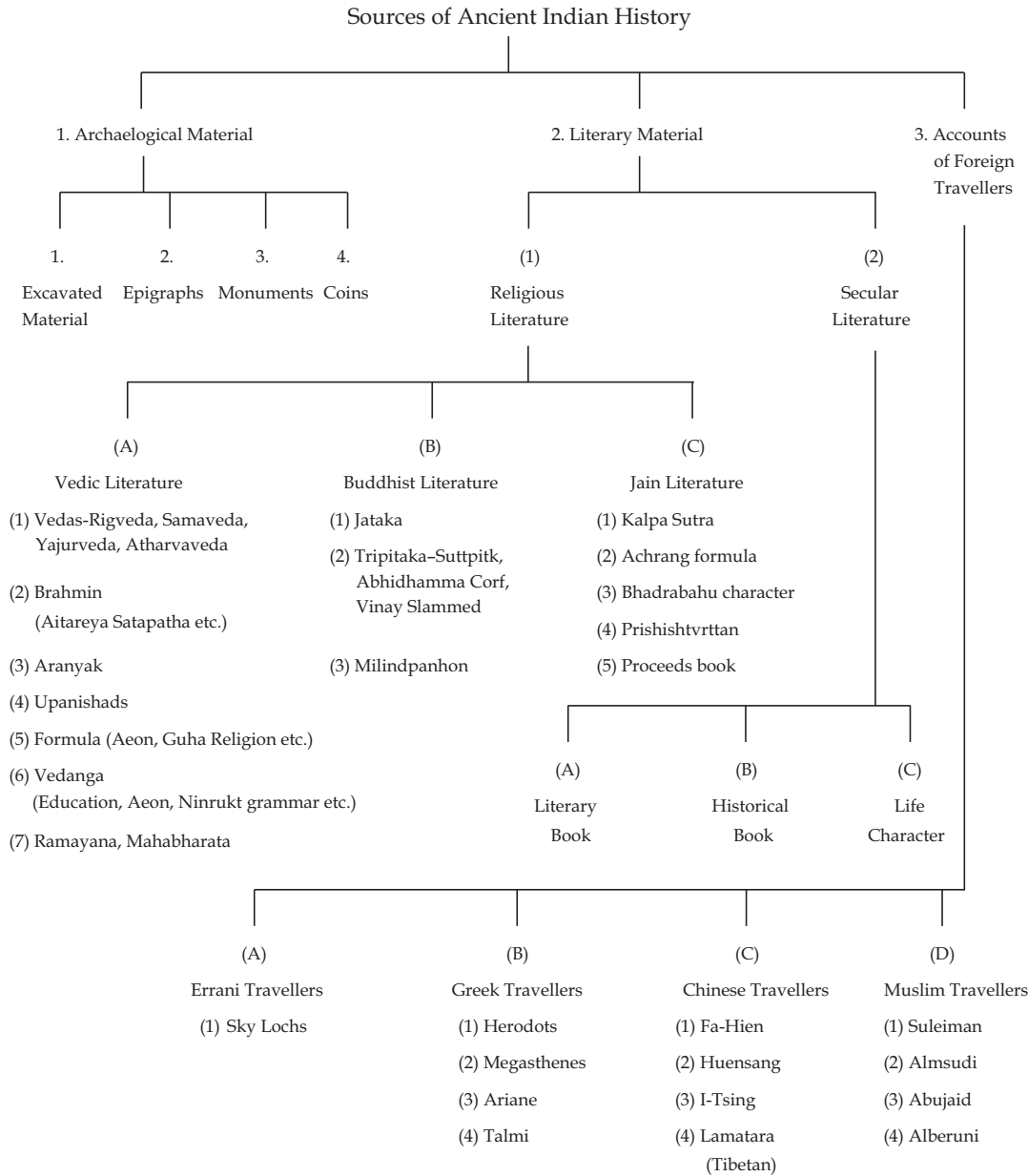
4. Archaeological Survey of India was established in
(a) 1860 (b) 1862
(c) 1740 (d) 1885
5. Idols of have been found from Sanchi (near Bhopal) in excavation.
(a) Mahavir (b) Buddha
(c) Parshvanath (d) Anand
6. Greek traveller Megasthanize came to whose Court?
(a) Chandragupta Maurya (b) Bimbisar
(c) Udayin (d) Ajatshatru
7. Magic, Occult, Mantra have been mentioned in
(a) Rigveda (b) Samveda
(c) Yajurveda (d) Atharvaveda

Thus, major part of unwritten ancient Indian history is based on these excavation material only and is has been scripted like this only.

(2) Epigraphs – These play vital role reconstruction of ancient Indian history. It helps in joining pieces of history. On the basis of these epigraphs, scholars have tried to refine information found from other sources. These are most reliable as their authenticity can't be doubted, as they are imprint of metals and stones. These inscriptions are imprint on stone bars, pillars, copper scripts, idols, caverns and walls of buildings. There have been use of many languages. Actually, these inscriptions have used that language which is relating to people of that area. These various inscriptions found from various parts of the country

have been written in various languages like Brahmi, Sanskrit, Pali, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam etc. Script of these inscriptions is majorly Brahmi (which is the mother of Devnagri and other north Indian script). Besides, many inscriptions have been found in Kharoshthi script, which is written from right to left and was prevalent in north-west part of contemporary India.

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Different inscriptions as found in various parts of India can be divided in four parts as; **Guhalekh**, **Shilalekh**, **Stambhalekh** and **Tamrapatra lekh**. Maximum inscriptions are in the form of donation paper, as monuments of important events and certificates of kings etc. we get to know about contemporary social, religious, political, economical and cultural condition of India.

First place in inscriptions is of **Asoka**. His inscriptions are not only in plenty, but full of variety. In fact, they present a live picture of his autobiography and situations of his time. These are scattered

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all across his kingdom and are inscribed mainly as king's decree or declaration and show Buddha faith's principles and ideals of Asoka's life. They are mainly written in **Brahmi** and Kharoshthi script.

Inscriptions of post Asoka period are both of government and nongovernmental nature. In state inscriptions, **state poets** have admired kings and emperors. One such script of **Samudragupt** is there in Allahabad fort, knowledge on Gupt period depends on this resource. At one side, certificate of Vikram Sen of Sen Vansh in Bengal and Gwalior certificate of Bhoja are major source of Pratihara rulers. The same of Chalukya king Pulkeshin II is also an important historical heritage. Number of **nongovernmental scripts** are more. Majorly, these are imprint on deity's idols or on walls of temple. At one hand, they tell us about religious life and art and on the other hand about literature and language of that period. There are many inscriptions found overseas which throw light on our history, like in Java, Sumatra, China, Japan, Tibet and Sri Lanka.

Thus, they not only tell us about emperor's dynasty, regime and the extent of their empire, but also about situation of country and time. In the absence of such material, our pages of ancient Indian history would have remained empty.

(3) Monuments – The way inscriptions tell us about political aspect of history, similarly monuments tell us about cultural and religious aspects of history. Buildings, images, art work, stupa, Math, Vihar, Chaitya, temple and painting etc are included in it. For academic objective, we can divide them in to Indian and foreign monuments.

Among Indian monuments Takshshila, Mathura, Kaushambi, Sarnath, Patliputra, Rajgriha, Jhansi, Nalanda etc are main. The monuments found from excavation at Takshshila, we have been able to **sort out issue of chronology for Kushan dynasty**. Similarly, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro excavation has told us about 5000 years old civilization. Sarnath excavation had brought to light carving work, which is incomparable to any work. Besides, painting of Ajanta caves, stone temple in Devgarh district of Jhansi, brick temple of Bhitargao (Kanpur) and copper idol of Buddha found from Nalanda which is not monument, is an introduction of great sculpture.

Monuments found overseas throw light on its foreign relations. These being in the form of temples or idols, give information of Indian religion and culture's propagation. Indian art can be proud of art work of Java and Kamboj. There are many temples and monuments in Java. Malay, Lanka, Bali etc also have many such monuments. These are sufficient to prove that Indians went there to promote their culture and religion. They were impressed by Indian concepts and thus Indians established cultural empire there. Hindus settled there also in large numbers.

(4) Coins – In ancient Indian history, contribution of coins, currency and seals is immense. Different types of currency have been found from different parts of country. Period of 206–300BC is mainly dependent on currencies. In their absence, this period would have remained dark. Initially, these currencies only had images of deities and did not carry king's picture or dates. In the north-west part of India, when Greek rulers of Bactria started ruling, then due to their contact, Indian kings also started the practice of printing their name and dates on them. **Shaka, Pallava and Kushan** kings followed Greek rulers. Contemporary currencies throw light on Shaka kings and Malavas and Yudhey republic. Picture of gods and goddesses give religious information of that time. Pictures imprint of coins issued for special occasions have details of that event. Extent of the empire also is known by the coins and currencies. The way coins of **Samudragupt** period has imprint of Ashwamedha Parakram, which indicates that he did Ashwamedha yagna. Knowledge of number of rulers for any particular dynasty is also known by coins. We have found enough **roman** currencies in India, which indicates that India had trade relations with them sometime.

Maximum currencies are made up with gold, silver and copper or by mixing two metals. With gold or mixture of copper in gold can give us idea of economic condition of that time. Total gold or little bit of copper in gold, tells about economic prosperity, whereas more mixing of copper tells us about economic weakness of that time.

Copper currencies of three Panchal rulers of BC, Rudraghosh, Ashwamitra and yogsen have been found. 110 copper coins in Azamgarh of Uttar Pradesh and 277 coins of Ikshvaku Vansh of Nagarjuna Kond have been found in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. There is a coin amongst such coins of Vashishthiputra Chantmool, in which a horse is standing in a up (that stone or pillar which is made in memory of somebody's sacrifice) shape. This proves that this king must have done Ashwamedha yagna.

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Self Assessment

Writes True/False in the following statements:

8. From the excavation of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, 5000 years old civilization has been discovered.
9. Samveda is the oldest Granth.
10. Suttapitak has collection of principles of Mahatma Buddha, which is based on five Nikayas (collection).
11. Mahabhashya of Patanjali gives information on preliminary times of Shunga Vansh.
12. Alberuni came to India with Mohammed Ghori.

II. Literary Sources

We include those in literary sources which are there in the form of Granth. We can divide this in to two categories—

- (1) Religious Literature
- (2) Secular Literature

(1) Religious Literature—India is a religious country and hence ancient Indian history too has religious form. Quality is that it not only analyzes religious principles, but also tells about political, social, economical conditions. Thus, this is a heritage of our history. Entire religious literature can be further divided in to three parts—

(a) Vedic Literature, (b) Bauddha Literature, (c) Jain Literature

(a) Vedic Literature—This is world's oldest literature. Veda have maximum importance in it. There are four **Vedas-Rigved, Yajurveda, Samveda, and Atharvaveda**. Though Veda is counted in religious literature, yet its historical importance is no less. Rigved and Atharvaveda have more importance. Rigved is oldest and gives information about Aryan life and throw light on social, political and economic condition. Atharvaveda is a live presentation of cultural development of Aryans. After Veda, comes Brahman Granth, which describe Vedic mantras in detail. Not only this, they also mention contemporary social, economical and political life. Among Brahman Granth, Gopath, Shatpath, Aitreya and Panchshil are important. Aaranyak and Upanishad are last part of Brahman Granth which ponders over philosophical questions. These throw light on religious and culture life of early Hindus.

After them, comes Sutras, which are divided in to three parts-**Kalpa, Grihya and Dharma**. Classical classification and detailed mention of vedic yagna is the subject matter of **Kalpa Sutra**. Rituals and yagna related with married life is mentioned in **Grihya Sutra**. It also tells about the social life of that time. **Dharma Sutra** has mention of political, social and constitutional provisions. Apart from sutra literatures, six **Vedanga- Shiksha, Kalpa, Nirukta, Vyakaran, Jyotish** also are very important.

In period of Mahakavya period (epic period), important literature was created, out of which **Ramayana and Mahabharata** are important. There is dispute on their actual date, as they are not clear. These throw detailed light on social, political and religious life of Aryans. Ramayana has mention of Kaushal of Awadh and Videh of Vihar, whereas Mahabharata has mention of war between Kaurava and Pandava and their allies coming from different parts of the country. Apart from epics, Puran and **Memories** are also part of vedic literature and these too give ample historical information. There are total eighteen Puran, like Vishnu Puran, Matsya Puran, and Vayu Puran etc. Puran has description of some dynasties, which are

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not found anywhere. Historical material is available in Vishnu Puran for Maurya Vansh and Matsya Puran about Andhra Vansh of south. **Smrities** are integral part of Aryan literature. Circulated in names of different sages, these too are vital historically. Manu, Narad and Brihaspati Smriti are major of them.

(b) Bauddha Literature– Just like Aryan literature, Bauddha literature too is important. **Jataka** present live picture of pre life of Mahatma Buddha filled with exaggerating events. Though they have used some imaginations also, yet they are best source of knowing about social condition of pre Buddha.

Religious Granth of Buddhism are known as Tripitak, which has details of Baudh principles. Each pitak has separate analysis of different subjects. **Suttapitak** has collection of Buddha's principles which is based on five Nikayas (collection). **Abhidhamma Pitak** discussed about Vedantic principles. Vinay pitak describes about organization and discipline of Bauddha Math.

There is more literature in Buddhism in Pali and Sanskrit language. There is discussion of Greek King Milind and Bauddha Bhikshu Nagsen in **Milind Panho** in Pali language. Besides, in **Deepvansh** and **Mahavansh**, there is historical mention related with Lanka, but is also throws light on Indian history. Many facts related to Chandragupta Maurya have been found from these Bauddha Granth. Bauddha literature is also found in Sanskrit language which is related with Heenyan and Mahayaan faith. Mahavastu, Lalitvistar, Buddha Charitra, Manjushree Moolkalpa etc are part of Sanskrit literature.

(c) Jain Literature–It also plays vital role in Indian history. It is more important since it has some information which are not even available in Vedic or Bauddha literature. **Kalpasutra**, **Aacharangasutra** and **Bhadrabahu** are important Granth among those written in 5th & 6th century. Their quality is that they are presented in such manner that historians don't have problems collecting facts. Aacharangasutra has details of behavioural rules for Jain Bhikshus. **Parishishtaparvan** was composed by Acharya Hemchandra. Description of kings and Jain emperors is found in this Granth since the time of Mahavir Swami. Grandson of Asoka Samprati (Chandragupta II) was Jain, whose detail is found in this Granth and others. Bhadrabahu Charitra has characterization of emperor Samprati's guru Bhadrabahu. Twelve Angas are important in Jain Aagam Granth.

(2) Secular Literature – In Indian history, place of secular or a religious literature is also important. We can divide this in to three parts:

(a) Literary Granth (b) Historical Granth (c) Auto Biography

(a) Literary Granth – Ancient Indian literature is reservoir of Granths important form historical point of view. **Mahabhashya of Patanjali** gives information about initial time of Shunga Vansh. Details of Maurya Vansh is received from **Panini's Ashtadhyayi**. Similarly, **Bilhan's Vikramank Devcharit** in the glory of Chalukya emperor Vikramank Dev briefs us about major events of that time. Political state of affairs of Shunga period is known by Kalidas's Malvikagnimitra. Knowledge about last stage of Nand Vansh and beginning period of Maurya Vansh is received by Mudrarakshas of Vishakhhatt. In 7th century, with help of Dandi's Dashkumarcharitam, we get to know about decline of Bauddha religion. In this context only, Prabandha Kosh of Rajeshwar, Kirtikaumudi of Someshwar and Sukrit Sankirtan of Ari Singh are vital.

(b) Historical Granth – Arthashastra of Kautilya is the most reliable historical Grantha. It contains political scenario, administration and social, political and religious life of Maurya time, by Chanakya prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya. Second important Granth is Rajtarangini of kashmiri scholar Kalhan. It throws ample light on middle of 12th century history of Kashmir. Harsh Charitra by Banbhatt is important, as it throws light on 7th century history. Details of south Indian states is found in Tamil and Prakrit language material. Vakpati of Prakrit language, has briefed in his book Gaudvaho, life history of Kannauj king Yashovarman.

(c) Jeevan Charitra – Harsh time India in Harsh Charitra of Banbhatt, details of Pal Vansh in Sandhyakar Nandi's Ram Charit, Ballal Charitra of Anand Bhatt has details Sen Vansh, Prithviraj Vijay of Jayanad and Prithviraj Raso of Chandbardai is important. Similarly, in Vikramankdevcharit describes about Chalukya Vansh. Navsahsankcharitra has details of Parmar Vansh.

III Accounts of Foreign Travellers

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Outside visitor's detail of India too are important from historical perspective. We can't expect exaggeration from them for admiring India. They are mostly neutral, but due to not having knowledge of Indian society and its language, at places they have gone imaginary. Nutshell, they are important to Indian history. Out of them we get briefs of- (a) **Irani** (b) **Greek** (c) **Chinese** and (d) **Muslim travellers**, who present Indian condition of that time.

- (a) **Irani Travellers** – When Indian prosperity became matter of discussion in western nations, then in the beginning of 6th century BC, Iran king sent his messenger Skylacs to India, he came to India and studied its geographical condition. His description is quite interesting. Even emperor of Iran, Darius too has written about India. These articles throw light on India-Iran relations. War tactics and farming details too is present in his articles. Head medical counselor of Iran, Tocius too has mentioned about India, but is not much reliable.
- (b) **Greek Travellers** – Description of travellers who came with Alexander are more reliable. One was commander Nearchus, another was Aristobolus who wrote his journey details in old age, but now his details are not available. After the demise of Alexander, his commander Seleucus took control of his eastern empire. He sent his ambassadors in Maurya king's courts. He did a treaty with Chandragupta Maurya after being defeated by him and Megasthenes was sent to his court. He stayed in India for long time and in his book Indica, threw light on administration and social life of India though this book is not available now. But writers after him took several contexts from his book like Arian, Appian, Strabo; Justin etc., importance of historical Granth of Arian is more. Ptolemy about geography and Plini has mentioned about animals and plants of India.
- (c) **Chinese Travellers** – Ashoka sent many propagators to central Asia for promoting Buddha faith, but from where in china promotion of Buddha faith and Indian culture happened, Chinese started seeing India with respect as a country of religion. To satisfy religious needs and understand Buddha faith, many visitors came from china and stayed here for long. Though their details are mostly religious, yet they throw some light on social, political situation. Most important of Chinese visitors were Fahian, **Huensang** and Itsing. **Fahien** has details of Chandragupta II. He confines himself to religious aspect only. Still his script has historical value. Huensang came to India during Harshavardhan rule. Apart from religious details, he also mentioned social, political, economical situation. **Itsing** came to India in 7th century and studied for long in Nalanda and Vikramshila university. He too mentioned religious and social conditions of that time. Another writer **Huiyue** is famous who wrote autobiography of Huensang. This too throws light on Indian history. Among Tibetan writers, Lamartine is famous. His Granth Kangyur and Tangyur has description on India.
- (d) **Muslim Travellers** – In the middle of 9th century one Arabic traveller Suleiman came to India, his description gives information on Pal and Pratihar Vansh. Second, Al-Masudi stayed in India in the middle of 10th century and has mentioned about Rashtrakut rulers. Abu-Jaid has written about trade between India and eastern countries. Amongst writers who wrote about India, **Alberuni** has the highest place who came with Mahmud Ghazanvi. When Ghazanvi was busy plundering the nation, Alberuni was busy in studying Sanskrit. After studying Sanskrit he studied various subjects and got knowledge about our culture and civilization. After this study only, he wrote **Tehkeek-e-hind**. This is an important historical material of India. Though it has less political details, yet it is important from geographical perspective.

Aforesaid details prove that though Indian scholars did not take history as separate discipline, yet they did not ignore it. Sources in access of modern historians give ample knowledge to them and while arranging it in order, does not become a problem for them.

Notes



Did u know? Amongst Tibetan scholars, Lamatara is famous. His Granth Kangyur and Tangyur give information about India.

1.2 Geographical Environment

Humans, Society and Environment—geographical material of any country like climate, minerals, rivers, mountain ranges and different types of land mass are geographical study material of that country. Whereas philosophical and scientific description about political, social, economic, religious and spiritual aspects of people living in that country is there in its history. From this perspective, both subjects seem to be different, that don't have an relation, but it is not true. In fact, on any country's history, effect of its geography is great. There is strong relation between man and environment. Environmental effect on human's body size, mental development and work. This effect is so micro, that human attention does not go towards it, but many times, humans can make nature conducive with the help of his will power. Even then, creation of geographical condition is out of human power.

Thus, people living in any particular areas are affected by its geographical surroundings and foundation of its political, social, economical and spiritual development is influenced by its geography. Philosophical and scientific description of different human aspects is the subject matter of history. Hence, before analyzing history of any country, it is important to know about its geography. Before studying Indian history, we study its geographic conditions, which gave India such special place in the world.



Task Express your views on ignorance of Indian Scholars shown towards history.

1.2.1 Nomenclature

Since very old times, it is being called Bharatvarsha. It is said that on the name of king Bharat, son of Dushyant, the name Bharat came to be used for India. When foreign invaders came to India, then they crossed Indus(sindhu) river and on its name, they started calling it sindhustan, Hindustan or Hindusthan on the name of sindhu river. Actually, in Persian pronunciation of 'S' is 'H', hence invaders called people living near sindhu rivers as Hindu and Hindusthan. This word Hindusthan too became popular and still today it is known by this name too. Greeks called it Indica or India, as they called sindhu river as Indus later on, many other species of Europe too adopted the name India. But this name India is confined to educated class only and in villages, still people call it Hindustan or Bharat. Name Bharat got recognition in the independent India's constitution and now this is the name in vogue, in common.

Boundary, Location, Area and Population

India is an important country in the middle of the world, which is separate from south Asia by mountain series and from sea in three directions. It is of triangular shape. India is situated between 68° and 97° east longitude and 8° and 37° latitude. Tropic of cancer passes it from its middle. Due to being in thermodynamic zone, its climate is both cold and hot. Whereas, south India is hot due to being in hot zone. Its area is approximate 32.68 Lac square kilometer. It has 7th place in world as per geographical size and is equal to size of Europe minus Russia. Its length from north to south is 3200 kilometer and breadth is 3000 kilometer from east to west.

Ancient India, which included areas of modern Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma etc, was known as sub continent. Himalayan ranges are there at north border of this ancient India, which separates it from other west Asian nations. Khyber and Bolan Pass are among many passes which are situated in these ranges. These passes are special as these were used by Indians to promote their culture and civilization and these only were used by foreign invaders to attach India. Eastern mountain ranges of Himalaya have separated India from nations like china, Malaya etc. India is surrounded by sea from three sides.

From population point of view, India is world's most populous country after china. Its population is now 121 crore as per 2011 census.

1.2.2 Physical Division of India

India is a complete unit from geographical perspective. It has different climate, minerals and land mass available. At one place, we have highest mountain Peaks and huge plateau land on the other. At one side we see huge fertile land made by soil brought from rivers and on the other hand large deserts. All these areas have affected lives of Indians. Following is the effect of such physical diversity along with physical division of India. We can divided physical India in four parts –

(a) Himalayan Ranges (b) Huge North Plains (c) South Plateau (d) South Plains.

(A) Himalayan Ranges – In the north of India, there are Himalayas, whose different ranges are spread from east to west. From Assam to Kashmir, these ranges are 1500 miles long and 150-200 feet wide. Himalaya separates Tibet from India. It has many high peaks, of which Mount Everest or Gauri Shankar peak is the highest in the world with around a height of more than 29,000 feet. There are many passes in the western part of Himalaya, which have affected India very much like; Khyber, Bolan, Kurram etc.

Hindukush mountains are its western boundary. Other branches of west are Safed Koh, Suleiman, and Kirthar etc. There are states of Afghanistan and Baluchistan towards its west, which were part of ancient Indian empire. After the division of 1947, these ranges have become part of Pakistan. In east, its ranges separate us from Burma.

1.2.3 Effect of the Himalaya

(1) Foreign Species Attack from West – In the north-west high ranges of Himalaya, there exist many passes like Khyber, Bolan, Kurram, Gomal, Tochi etc, from where many invaders like Yavan, Hoon, Shaka, Turk, Mughal etc invaded India. At times, these forces got defeated and at times they disturbed India's peace. These species left their influence on Indian culture. Thus, India has always been cautious towards its north-west border and whenever, central government was weaker, invaders damaged Northern India peace by attacking.

(2) Security of India – It has always worked as guard to its northern border for India. Eastern and western ranges of Himalayas are low, but Himalaya is unbreakable towards its north. To go towards china and Tibet, its passes are very narrow and always filled with snow. Hence, till modern times northern border of India is safe. In 1962 Chinese invasion, it has made us cautious to take care of northern border as well. Regions like Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim etc in the lap of Himalaya are flourishing as ever before and are influenced by Indian civilization.

(3) Protection from Cold Waves – Himalaya not only has proved to be a border guard, rather has stopped all cold winds from entering India, else we would be having a very cold climate.

(4) Contribution in Indian Prosperity – Not even this, Himalayas stop wind carrying water and thus makes us have rain in our plains. Many rivers emanating from its high peaks make our lands fertile. These rivers not only irrigate our land, but soil brought by them makes our land more fertile. That's why this region is known for its prosperity.

Notes

(5) **Separate Indian Culture**—Himalaya has made India separate and individual from rest of Asia, which resulted India in having a specific Indian culture different from the rest. Even today, India is famous for its incomparable culture is famous in entire world.

(6) **Increased Development in Spiritual**—Peaceful and secluded valleys of Himalayas has always inspired Indians to meditate and ponder over serious questions like life and death. Hermits of India have meditated in its caverns for spiritual topics and found way to happiness. Indian culture based on Indian spirituality is incomparable and better than any other culture of the world. India is indebted to Himalayas for such great culture.

(7) **Contact from Western World**—If the passes in its north-western parts gave invaders opportunity to attack India, on the other hand it gave Indians chance to have contacts with central and west Asian countries. Maximum promotion of Indian culture happened through this path only and even today, regions at its western passes are indebted to Indian culture. Not even this, Indian trade relations also developed with western regions with these passes.

(B) **Huge North Plains**—This huge plains spread between south of Himalaya till middle of Vindhyachal is almost 2000 miles long from Arabic sea to bay of Bengal and 150-200 miles wide. This region is mainly area of Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra and its subsidiary rivers.

(1) **Indus Plains**—To the west of Ganga plains is plains of Indus river. Both these area is separated by an area which is made up of mixing of two areas-Aravali at south and shivalik at north. Delhi is situated between these two plains. Kurukshetra, Thaneshwar, Panipat, etc ancient towns are famous from old times only situated in the Indus plains. There are huge plains spread up to Khyber pass in its west and due to no natural hindrances, invaders have attacked captured these area and invaded Delhi.

(2) **Ganges Plains**—Ganga plains are situated right in the south of Himalaya. This is middle part of north India. This is also called Aryavarta, as Arya kings laid foundation of strong empire here and Arya culture developed here. Subsidiary of Ganga and Yamuna have made this area very fertile. Hence, this is one of the most populous area of India. People here are prosperous.

(3) **Plains of Brahmaputra**—To the east of plains of Ganges, there is plains of Brahmaputra. Brahmaputra is actually mountainous river. Hence, valley of Brahmaputra is different from that of Ganga and Indus. This area is not very fertile and most part is rocky. Rains are more and hence, it is less prosperous.

1.2.4 Effect of Indo-Gangetic Plains

This huge plains had far reaching impact on Indian history. We can express like below:-

(1) **Fertile Land**—This huge north plains is made up of soil brought by many big rivers and its tributaries. In fact, there is a web of rivers in this area. Due to fertile land of this region, agriculture is main occupation of people here. It is considered as the most prosperous region.

(2) **Centre of Indian Civilization**—It has been the centre of Indian culture and civilization. Many civilizations were born at the bank of these rivers and their impression not only influenced India, but the whole world. Delhi, Varanasi, Lucknow, Mathura, Patna etc towns are famous for their specialties. Universities like Takshshila, Sarnath, Nalanda etc too were established here.

(3) **Attraction of Foreign Invaders**—Due to its prosperity only, it became famous by golden bird name. Its prosperity forced many foreigners to attack India. Hence, people of this place have been forced to have a struggleful life always.

(4) **Establishment of many Empires**—Actually Indian history is the result of upheavals in northern India, as its political events have impacted entire Indian history. This region saw the establishment of many powerful kingdoms. Some of them are Maurya, Gupt, Khilji and Mughal empire etc. Capital of these empire's were in these plains only.

(5) Birth place of Revered Personalities— This region has the credit of giving birth to many great personalities. Many great personalities like Buddha, Ram, Krishna, Nanak, Paramhans were born in this region only. This country became immortal by their births.

(C) Plateau of South— To the south of huge northern plains is Vindhya mountain. Triangular Area ranging from ranges of this Vindhya and Satpura to Kanyakumari in south is called south plateau. Vindhya mountain divided northern plains and south plateau in two parts. This plateau is slant from west to east. Major rivers of this area are Narmada, Tapi, Godavari, Krishna, Mahanadi and Kaveri etc. Due to being Vindhya in between, robust relation between north and south could not be established. It had benefits and losses both. At one side, foreign invaders could not cross Vindhya and remained confined to Aryavarta area. Hence, south was protected from those invaders, but there could not be relations between north and south and it took time to have uniformity being established among north and south.

1.2.5 Effect of Deccan Plateau

(1) Separation from North— Due to Vindhya in middle, influence of north could not reach south. Due to being different condition and issues, both areas developed different cultures. Specific culture of north took time to reach south. Even Muslim invaders took time to reach south. Hence, south largely remained untouched with effect of Muslim civilization. Language and art of south is different from north and they are able to maintain their exclusivity still now.

(2) Independent and War Loving Castes— South people are accustomed to hard life and spirituality as they have to put in hard work for their subsistence. This is the reason people here are war loving and don't get afraid in trouble. Their independence sentiment kept intact due to being free of north contact and whenever anyone from north tried to attack, they fought and maintained their independence. Though, Aurangzeb was successful, but he had to pay for this.

(3) Guerrilla Warfare— This region is rocky and surrounded by mountains and forests and it is tough to have war in open ground. Hence, warriors here adopted Guerrilla warfare. This proved very useful for them. Huge north Indian armies were afraid of this warfare. Marathas excelled in this art and were able to terrorize Mughal with this. Their love for war and independence helped in the establishment of a large Maratha empire.

(4) Establishment of Powerful Regimes— There have been many powerful regimes established in south. Sometimes it was Kalinga, Chola, Chalukya, Pallava and sometimes it was Vijayanagar empire. At one point of time, Bahmani rule was considered to be most powerful of the south empires. Marathas not only confined to south, but also attacked north many times and established huge empire.

(5) Quality work of Art— South was more peaceful than north. Invaders who attacked north could not come to south and hence, southern states progressed a lot in art and literature field. Even today we find many such examples of art, architecture and literature.

(d) Plains of South— There are long and narrow plains along coastal lines in the east and west of southern plateau, separated by ranges of eastern and western Ghats from plateau of south. These plains are fertile and equi-climate and hence densely populated. Due to sea, people here are brave and hard worker.

Effect of Deccan Plains

(1) Fertile Land— These lands are fertile and being close to sea, they have humid climate. Rain is also sufficient. Due to being coastal area, options of occupations are plenty. Hence this a populous area and people here are prosperous.

(2) Efficient Sailors— Due to living near to sea, people here expert in sailing and thus they established trade relations with many countries via water route. Since ancient time only, India has been having trade with eastern and western nations.

Notes

(3) Spread of Indian Culture—Indians not only did trade with other nations, rather promoted Indian culture among them also. Many countries of east like; javas, Sumatra, Malaya, china have influence of Indian culture even now.

(4) Protection from Foreign Invaders—In this coastal line, threat of foreign invaders was almost negligible before the arrival of western forces. Hence development of Indian culture kept growing here.

1.3 Geographical Effects on Indian History

Effect of physical conditions on our history, would have come to the knowledge of our readers from details in past pages. The more we go into detail of Indian history, its effect would be even more clear. For readers comfort, following are some major effects of geography on our history:-

(1) Effects of Division in many Regions—India has been divided into many geographical units due to being a huge landmass. These geographical regions are different from each other. These physically different regions have helped in the political and social diversity of our country. Different areas had different political leadership and India seems to be divided politically. But Indian boundaries are increasing and each political unit has tried to augment our cultural development. Hence, there were no opposite effects of these different units on life neither in India nor in the hearts of its citizens even if they belonged to different areas. Indian unity has always been intact and Indian culture has grown in entire geographical area.

(2) Cultural Unity—For a huge nation like India which is divided into many physical units, having cultural unity is its special quality. Public here is spiritual. Our quality is to have religious liberty to all, belief in some Sanatan principles and making human a real human, away from animal tendencies. This quality is found across India. Naturally India is a unified landmass. Its cultural unity has always affected its history.

(3) Special Effects of Natural Boundaries—Each natural unit of India has affected its region and Indian history. For example, desert of Rajasthan separates plains of Ganga and Indus. Due to this desert; foreign invaders could not go to other plains and proceeded to north always, thus importance of Delhi always remains. Punjab, due to its geographical location has always worked as its guard and sentry. Southern parts were untouched by invaders. Marathas due to their geographical strength, made special mark for them in the history.

(4) Spiritual Development—Due to basic needs of life being fulfilled easily, Indians could try to develop spiritually. They considered material world inferior and tried to attain Guru. Many people tried to grow spiritually living in the valley of Himalayas. This spiritual point of view influenced Indian history very much. Indian polity was based on spiritual values and hence proved to be welfare oriented.

(5) Protest of Imperialism—Indians have been against imperialism apart from being spiritual. Indian emperors have been content with Indian boundaries. Though, many Indians established colonies in different parts of the world, yet they never thought of having empires abroad. They wanted to win heart and brain and not body. Hence, Indians had cultural win and established cultural empire and India became famous with Jagat Guru.

(6) Special Development in Physical Space—At one place, where geographical condition favoured spiritual development, it gave ample opportunities in the area of physical gains on the other. India had such huge growth in agriculture, art, industrial production and scientific discoveries that people became prosperous and India was known as Bird of gold. Many invaders attacked India due to this factor.

(7) Separate from Rest of the World—Due to opposition against imperialism and content of Indian emperors with Indian boundaries, India remained secluded from the rest of the world. Natural boundaries of us forced Indians to remain within our boundary and hence India remained ignorant about changes of rest of the world. It had many adverse effects. It remained secluded of outside development and when invaders attacked, it found itself weaker and inferior that time.

1.4 Ancient Ethno-Linguistic Groups

Notes

On the basis of caste and language, India can be divided into four castes- (1) North India (2) Southern Plateau (3) Far South and (4) Other areas. Their brief are as below –

(1) North India – Middle part between Himalaya and Vindhya is called North India; this was known as Aryavarta in ancient times. At one side, it has Indus and its tributaries to its west and Ganga and its tributaries on its east, on the other. At one side, it has Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh and northwest frontier province and Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal on its east, on the other. Assam making eastern boundary and desert of Rajasthan are part of this region only. Post 1947, Sindh and northwest frontier have separated from India and new sovereign states have been formed by the division of Punjab and Bengal.

North India, famous as Aryavarta was land of Aryas. Still today, we can still see influence of high class Aryas in this region. Though in ancient times, Dravida only had authority here, but growth of Aryans ended their influence. After Aryas, many invaders attacked north India and settled here. Shaka, Hoon, Yavan, Kushan etc came here and merged within local culture. In contrast, Muslim invaders affected our culture badly and converted big population to Islam, which developed a new civilization.

Even today, physical appearance of Aryans in Punjab, Kashmir and Rajasthan is identical. Tall, fair skin, dense and black hairs, black eye, thin sharp nose and long head is symbolic of Aryan antecedents. The more we go towards east, the less we find Aryan features. We find mixed species in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Bengal, Assam and Orissa has mixture of Dravida and Mongol community. Though, here too high castes have some resemblances with normal Aryas.

North India uses Aryan languages out of which major are Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Assamese, Punjabi and Kashmiri. These are related with Sanskrit and some are hugely dependent on it. Hindi is spoken by huge north Indian region which has many dialects like; Braj, Awadhi, Marwari, Bhojpuri etc. another form of Hindi is Urdu. Urdu was developed by Muslims, Kayasthas and Kashmiri.

(2) Southern Plateau – River Krishna and its tributary Tungabhadra divides south India in two parts. Entire region to the south of north India, which is spread in between Krishna and Tungabhadra, is called southern plateau. In ancient times, it was Dravidian area, but due to Aryan movement to lower of Aryavarta, it was captured by Aryas. Here also people are mixed and languages here like Gujarati, Marathi, Oriya etc belong to Aryan family. To its northwestern part, we see mixture of Aryan and Sethians. Though high castes are majorly Aryan dynasty only.

(3) Far South – Far south situated to the south of Krishna river, even today is a region of Dravidian influence. This region has four major languages; Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam which are of Dravidian family. Though all these are advanced languages, yet Tamil is famous for its literary excellence. In ancient times, there were powerful regimes like Chola, Vishnaya and Kerala. Though language and culture here is totally Dravidian, yet we can see influence of Aryan culture on its language and culture. Their languages are affected by Sanskrit also.

People here are majorly Dravidian with short height and dark skin. They have flat nose, curly and dense hairs and long head. Even then number of Aryan family people is large here.

(4) Other Areas – Apart from these, there are some other forest and mountain dwellers, who have different languages from rest of the nation. These are middle height, dark skin people and majorly live in forest and mountain region of west Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Of them, Kol, Bheel, Santhal etc are major.

Apart from them, in the lowlands of Himalaya, which has majorly Garhwal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Assam areas, people from specific castes live. They are pale colored, small eyes and flat faces. Their languages too are different from the rest of the country.

Notes

1.5 Summary

- India is the only ancient country, which first made humans cultured and civilized.
- Poet Md. Iqbal too said that, 'Greece, Rome, Egypt all faded, but there is something special about us that our existence is intact.'
- India is an ancient country. As per many scholars, Indian civilization is the oldest. Indians pondered over all aspect of life, being expert in writing skills, they composed many literature in the area of poetry, philosophy, art and science. As per foreign scholars also, Indian civilization is older than china, Mesopotamia and Egyptian civilization.
- Idols of Buddha have been found at Sanchi (near Bhopal) in excavation.

1.6 Keywords

- **Historical Sense:** Sense or care of history.
- **Monuments:** Structure which gives memory of some old time or individual.

1.7 Review Questions

1. Describe main characteristics of ancient India.
2. Describe main source of knowing ancient Indian History.
3. Mention major regions of India.
4. What was the effect of its geographical condition on Indian History?

Answers: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. India | 2. Md. Iqbal | 3. Herodotus | 4. (b) |
| 5. (b) | 6. (a) | 7. (d) | 8. True |
| 9. False | 10. True | 11. True | 12. False |

1.8 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
2. Ancient Indian History – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
3. Ancient Indian History A New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
4. Ancient Indian History – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.*
5. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*

Unit-2: Pre-Historic Age (Stone Age)

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 2.1 Paleolithic or Old Stone Age
- 2.2 Neolithic or New Stone Age
- 2.3 Chalcolithic Cultures
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Keywords
- 2.6 Review Questions
- 2.7 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To understand Paleolithic Civilization,
- To be able to describe characteristics of Neolithic Age,
- To understand Chalcolithic Cultures.

Introduction

Origin and development of humans and its civilization is very interesting story. It can't be said with confidence that what the actual origin date of humans. As per scholars, many mountains like Himalayas were formed millions of years ago. After so many snow ages passed by, human started living on earth around 5 Lac years ago. He started fulfilling his needs by wandering like animals, but as compared to other animals, his brain was more sharp and active. Some historians believe that human originate in India only. Their origin point was south India, but after snow age, it moved towards Punjab. Evidences are found in north-west Punjab and mountains of shivalik.

There have been so many imaginations about primitive humans. Indians believe that during ancient times, there was Satyug. It was a period when everybody lived happily. They were religious and followed idols. Some philosophers gave it the name of Natural State. When humans used to live independently, then there were no difficulties. But some historians don't agree to this. They are of the view that humans have developed chronologically and he has inched towards civilization.

Notes

Primitive humans lived life like animals and after thousands of years; they started living a civilized life. There is no question of knowing about it more reliable resources; hence this information is based on other resources. This long period of pre civilization is known as Pre Historic Age. Pre historic age has been divided into many parts by historians, as during that period human life was not the same. Different periods have been named on the product by which those weapons and cores were made and used by them. During this entire period, humans used weapons and cores made up of stones; hence this period was called **Stone Age**. Gradually, humans started using weapons and cores made up of copper and iron; hence that period was called **Metal Age**.

Behavior of humans also was not same during entire Stone Age. Hence, it is further divided in to two parts- **(a) Paleolithic or Old Stone Age (b) Neolithic or new Stone Age**. Please find its detail mention ahead:

2.1 Paleolithic or Old Stone Age

Paleolithic age was the time when humans behaved like animals and was barbaric and uncivilized. His behaviour depended on two basis factors of hunger and security. He used to spend his major time in finding food and protecting himself from wild animals. He was violent and used to eat animals after killing them. As per historians, this period would have started around 10 Lac years ago and would have ended around 10,000 BC. We can further divide this long Old Stone Age in to three parts, which is based on the structure of weapons and cores of that period: –

- (1) Early Old Stone Age
- (2) Middle Old stone Age
- (3) Later Old Stone Age

1. Early Old Stone Age – Probably, this time major part used to be covered under snow. Humans were totally dependent on nature. He normally behaved like animals. But to having active mind, he made some stone cores. These helped him in killing animals and saving himself from wild animals. Main feature of these period cores is that, they were made by rubbing and filing and were handmade and was used by removing one layer of a stone. Shape of these cores found at different places is like choppers, which would have been used for cutting. Evidences of early old stone ages have been found in Punjab. Besides, we also find them near Narmada and Godavari river banks and in Sone river valley.

2. Middle Old Stone Age – During this period, there seems to be improvement in Cores. These Flake cores were made by removing one layer of a big stone and by sculpting them. Such cores are found in different parts of India. These remains have been mainly found in Sone river valley. They are also found to the right side of Tungabhadra river valley.

3. Later Old Stone Age – In the last phase of Old Stone Age, humans climbed one more step of development. This can be known from the shape of Cores of this period. Now climate too changed and it was less humid. In this period, humans used sharp edged weapons. Remains of such weapons have been found in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, hilly regions of Chhotanagpur and Karnataka.

Characteristics of Paleolithic Age – Historians have reached many conclusions on the basis of studies of weapons and cores of this period, which throw light on its characteristics, which are as below:

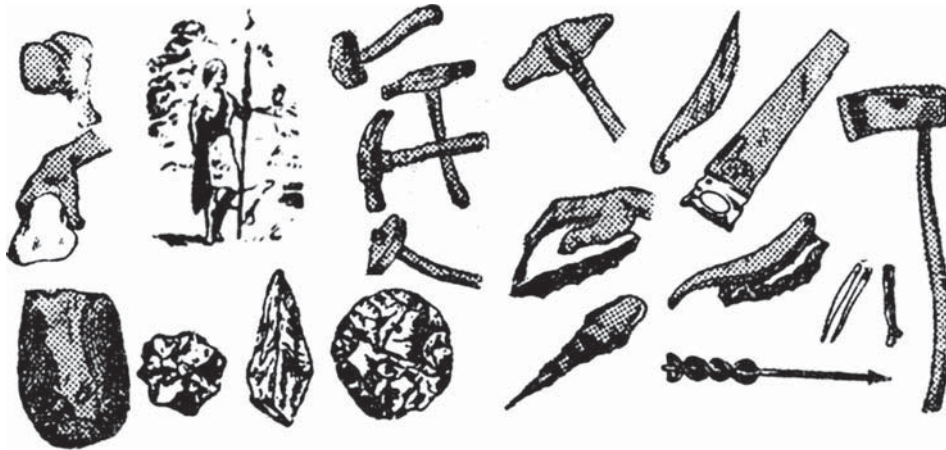
(1) Tools – Human of this age was uncivilized and behaved like animals. He didn't have knowledge of animal husbandry nor of agriculture. His main food was flesh of small animals. To kill such small animals and protect him from wild animals, he had made some tools and weapons. All such tools

and weapons were made up of hard stone called, Quartzite which was easily available on paths here and there. These tools were of two types- Core and Flake. For making Core, two parts of a stone were rubbed or broken to remove one layer of it in such a way, that rest of the stone can be used as a useful tool or core. Flake cores were little refined because, a layer was removed from one big stone and then by rubbing and sculpting it, it was made sharp edged and used as tool. Their weapons had axe, blade, spear, arrow point and tools of cutting and peeling. All these were bad shaped. It appears that humans used animal bones also to make some tools. This is also possible that branches of trees were used, as he used to live on and under the trees.



Quartzite

Notes



Ancient Tools and Weapons

(2) Centre of Civilization – In India, centre of Paleolithic age civilization were available at many places. Archaeologists have found these centres. On the basis of tools being used by them, it can be said that their centres were mostly concentrated at –Madurai, Trichnapalli, Dharwad, Gujarat, Riva, Thanjavur, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Due to no remains being found in eastern and northern India, we can say that those humans did not live in those regions. Another possibility can be that those remains might have been washed away by rivers or they drowned in sea. On this very basis, some scholars speculate that Paleolithic humans started their lives form central and southern India and gradually moved towards north and north-west regions.

(3) Place of Living – In this period, primitive humans used to wander like animals. They did not use clothes. They did not have any permanent place to live nor had they imagined about house. Normally, he lived under the trees and in case of need, used to climb the trees. Actually, his place of living changed as per climate. To protect himself from rain, sunlight and cold, he used to live in caverns. He also used to live near river and lakes. Many remains of humans and pictures of animals have been found at these places, hence we can assume that humans used to live there.

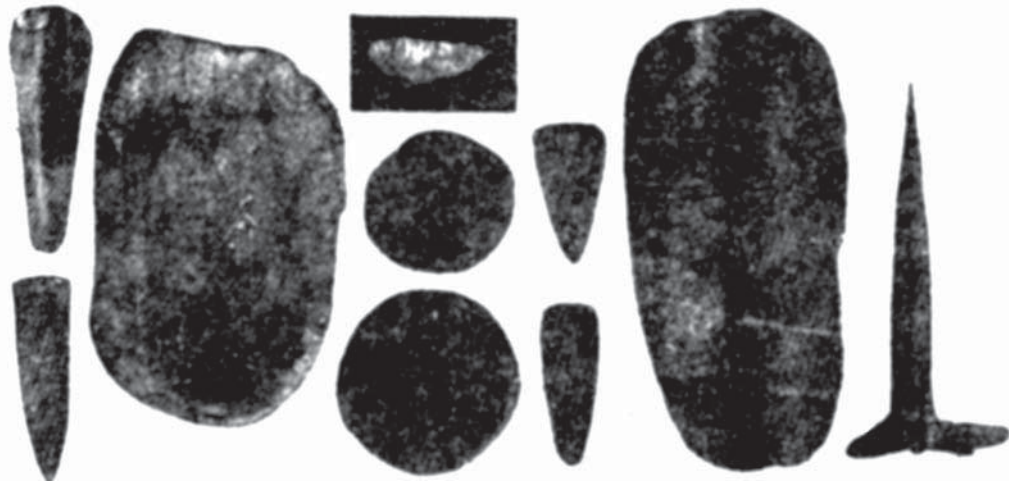
Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Tools made up of bones and stones are found in age.
2. Humans of Paleolithic ages used
3. Remains of Middle Old Stone Age humans were found in the valley of

Notes

(4) **Sources of Subsistence**—That time, humans were natural species totally dependent on nature. Being unknown of agriculture and ranching, he used to get his food from nature only in the form of fruits, bulbs, roots etc. besides, he also used to kill small animals and eat their flesh. Probably, unknown of fire, he must be eating flesh raw only.



Full Stone Age tools

(5) **Clothes and Ornaments**—Initially, humans used to be nude, but need of collective life and to be protected against cold and heat; they started using tree skins, leaves and animal skins. Till this time, human reach was only up to stones and bones. Hence, he used to sport ornaments made up of feather, shell cover, animal teeth and stones. Both men and women used to sport these ornaments. After living in groups, they would have felt blushed and started covering their private parts.

(6) **Art and Music**—Some samples of arts have also been found from living places of Paleolithic humans. They used to make animals and birds picture from clay and coal. These pictures are there on their tools as well. In the excavation, some vocal instruments made of bones have been found, which depicts that they had interest in music.

(7) **Simple Social Life**—Humans of this period were forced by their needs to live together. It would have become essential to live in groups to be protected against wild animals and also collectively, arranging food stuff would have become easier. This is how, they started living in small groups. Feeling blushed living in groups, they started using tree skins, leaves and animal skins to cover their private parts. Hence, social life of that period was very simple.

(8) **Lack of Religion**—There is no proof of religious sentiment for primitive humans. Perhaps, he did not have time for metaphysical world. Due to toughness and busyness of daily routine, he did not have opportunity to think and concentrate. Neither have we got any trance nor any signs, which indicate that they used to worship god/goddess. Probably, dead bodies were left in open to be eaten by animals/birds.

2.2 Neolithic or New Stone Age

Humans lived for thousands of years in Paleolithic period and then it entered Neolithic age. Though In this period also, he used tools and weapons made up of stones and bones, yet they were more developed this time and were different from **Quartzite** stone, of more different style, smooth and shape. Tools and weapons of this period were beautiful, meticulously made and sharp, as compared to

Paleolithic age tools. Hence, the period in which these refined tools were used, was known as Neolithic or New Stone Age.

In fact, between Paleolithic and Neolithic period, there was a Mesolithic period, in which humans developed little bit more as compared to Paleolithic period. Here for making study easy, Neolithic age had been described after Paleolithic age, which included period of Mesolithic age also.

Though, it is difficult to estimate how much time humans spent in Paleolithic age and when he entered Neolithic age. Reality is that the change happened very slowly. Hence, there can be no demarcation between both the periods. This is the reason, scholars have not mentioned different time periods. Normally, from 10,000 BC to 3,000 BC is considered to be period of Neolithic age.

Characteristics of Neolithic Age: Humans in this period were much developed. Now tools were specified. Agriculture and animal husbandry started. Permanent living also started by them. Clothes and clay pots were being made. This is how, humans put their next step towards civilization. Following are the characteristics of that period:-

(1) Tools and Weapons – After Paleolithic age, humans developed their tools and weapons. During Middle Stone Age, it made new type of tools as per changing climate. These were made up of Chalcedony, Jasper, Chert and Bloodstone stones and were used with a wooden lever attached to it. These tools were made for different works and utilities. Like blade, points, scrapers, engravers, triangles, crescents, borer and awls etc.



Excavations on the stones

Humans of Neolithic age got more expertise in making these tools and weapons. These stone tools were even beautiful and smooth. They were made smooth, brighter and sharp by rubbing and filing. Tools of bones and woods were also made in this period. Selt, axe, fabricator, polisher and hammer stone are more mentionable.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. In Paleolithic age, humans were totally dependent on

(a) Animal husbandry	(b) Nature
(c) Agriculture	(d) Forest
5. Remains of Early Paleolithic ages have been found from

(a) Uttar Pradesh	(b) Haryana
(c) Bihar	(d) Punjab

Notes

6. Period between 10,000 BC to BC is considered to be period of Neolithic Age.

- (a) 3000 BC
- (b) 7000 BC
- (c) 4000 BC
- (d) 5000 BC

7. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry started in

- (a) Paleolithic Age
- (b) Middle Stone Age
- (c) Neolithic Age
- (d) None of the above

(2) Areas of Settlement – Humans made different parts of India as its settlement area. Other Remains and tools of humans of that period have been found in Kashmir, south India, north east India and Baluchistan. Hence, we assume that he used to live in those areas. Tools of Middle Stone age have been found in all the places from Peshawar district to Tinavelli districts and from Karachi to Bihar. Apart from Punjab, Gujarat, central India, these tools are also found at Brahmagiri in Mysore and Kurnool. In Maharashtra, they have been found in Nevasa and Kale Gaon. Similar to remains of Gujarat, these have been found in Veerbhanpur in west Bengal also.

Remains of Neolithic age have been found in plenty from Kashmir, Sindh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Mysore etc. In south India, at Tekrulkota also, those remains have been found. With the excavation at different spots at south India it becomes clear that civilization at this place was of Neolithic age, similar in timing to Harappa civilization.



Notes Tools of Middle Stone Age have been found at all places from Peshawar distt to Tinneveli and from Karachi to Bihar.

(3) Beginning of Permanent Life – In this period, humans instead of wandering, started having permanent housing. Instead of living at caverns and tree, he started living at fixed places near river bank with permanent houses. His gypsy life ended. He used to make house by keeping stones up and down and then used to cover the roof with tree branches and leaves, animal skins and bones etc. Since, this was not one man’s job, hence he started living in group.

(4) Animal Husbandry and Agriculture – In this period, humans made remarkable progress in commercial area. He did not stop collecting fruits, bulbs, roots etc from forests nor stopped hunting, rather became more meticulous in it. But gradually, he understood that his needs can’t be fulfilled by these resources. To remove these difficulties, he started paying attention towards animal husbandry. With this, he got energy full milk at one hand and animal flesh on the other. This is how, humans started keeping cow, ox and goat etc which used to give milks. Slowly, he got to know about agriculture. By cleaning forests, he made to usable for agriculture and started farming. This is how, staying at one place became essential from this point only, humans rapidly started civilized life.

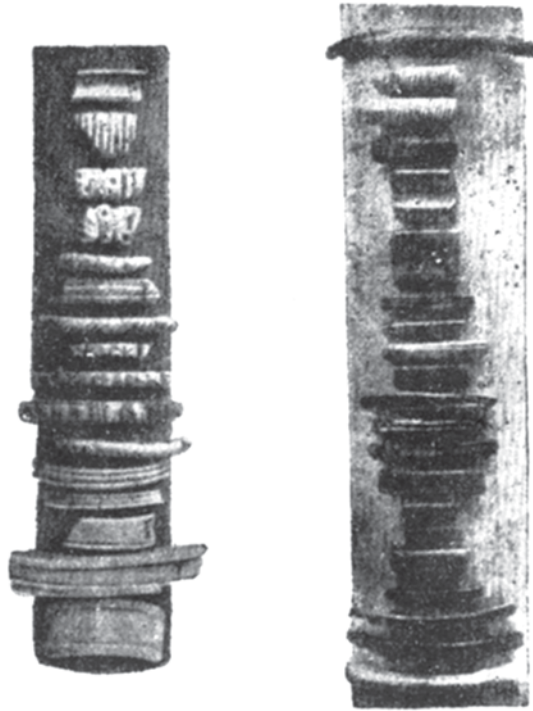
(5) Food – In this period, humans stopped eating raw meat. They used to roast it in clay pots through fire, as he learnt use of fire by now. He also used to eat fruits, bulbs and roots brought from forests. Knowledge of farming solved his food problem, as farming gave him other food stuff also.

(6) Clothes and Ornaments – In this period, humans started covering their private parts with tree leaves, skins and animal skins, but gradually it started producing cotton through farming. Clothes were being made of cotton and used. Not only this, he stated making woolen clothes from animal ‘s wool, to protect him from cold. That period humans were fond of colours. He used to colour clothes with vanaspati colors. Style of wearing clothes was very simple. Half of the clothe was wrapped around waist and rest half on shoulder. In that period, men used to sport turban and women skirt. Both men and women loved ornaments. They used to wear ornaments made up of stones, shell cover,

bones and Kaudi. Wearing Necklace in neck, earrings in ears, rings in fingers and bangles in hands were quite common.

Notes

(7) Development of Language—Gradually language developed. In social life, to communicate with each other made them feel the need of a medium. Primitive humans used to use shabby pictures for this purpose, but gradually dialect started, by which vocabulary was created and language developed. Tools and weapons of this period bore Swastika and X mark.



Bangles

(8) Development of Art and Clay Pots—In Neolithic age humans improved in the area of arts also. Sample of painting and picture have been found across India. These are the most ancient form of arts and are enough to prove that humans of that period had interest in arts. They had knowledge of colors and they made picture beautiful by coloring them. After seeing samples of art pieces, it seems that humans are following nature. These pictures and paintings are lively too. Many paintings of this age are found in the caves and cavern of Panchmadhi, Mirzapur, Manikpur and Hoshangabad, which included pictures of humans and animals both. Pictures of cavalier, archer, karwaal holder etc are found aplenty.



Pottery Neolithic Period

Notes

Humans used to make utensil and pots on potter's wheel in this period and used to colour them. Normally, black coloured clay pots were used. Some on theme had taps even. There are some huge pots in which they used to keep pieces of dead body and bury. Under the ground, some clay pots of deceased, have also been found, which indicate that after cremating dead bodies, ashes would be filled and buried with the pots.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the Following Statements:

8. Gugla and Rehman Dheri situated in Gomal Valley of north-west are main spots of Chalcolithic age.
9. In Paleolithic age, humans used to draw pictures of animals and birds by coal and clay.
10. Mehargarh is the oldest spot of Pakistan.
11. Neolithic spot Nurjhom is situated in Punjab.

(9) Wars and Weapons – There used to be war also for self defense. For safety, castles and ramparts. Normally, people were bellicose or fighters and used to establish authority on others. For war, weapons of stones, bones, woods or thorns were made. Spear, bow and arrow, axe, pike etc were used majorly.

(10) Rise of Religious Feelings – He improved his situation in religious sphere also as compared to Paleolithic ages. Now he started feeling life power in physical elements. Though till now he was not aware of Metaphysical experience, yet in the area of life and death, there seems to be some stability in his thoughts. It was a period of blindfold practices. People considered trees and mountains as centre of divine power and probably, worshipped them too. Some stones were given the status of goddess. We can assume by seeing bone pots and items kept in it that they used to do pitra puja. In this period, practice of burying and cremating both are found. In the worship process, custom of offertory was also prevalent. Milk, curd, grains and meats were offered to gods and goddesses. Slowly, Ling puja also developed. **Dr. Rajbali Pandey** mentions in his book **Role of Indian History**, "by looking at trance made up on dead bodies and bone pots, it can be believed that humans of this time believed in life cycle and rebirth and used to worship their pitra. Slowly, worship of flagstone started which developed in Ling Puja. Grains, milk, meats etc were used as offertory. Lower levels of the country till this time, had developed religious belief and structure of worship."

2.3 Chalcolithic Cultures

Chalcolithic age is that phase of last leg of Neolithic age, when humans used to use limited metals also along with stones. Actually, Neolithic age is considered as metal less period because, in this period we hardly find any proof of metal use, but at some places we find small use of metal along with stones. Hence, archaeologists call this period as Chalcolithic age, means that time period, when both stone and metal were used. Cultures developed during this period are called Chalcolithic cultures.

(A) Chalcolithic Settlements of North West India

At the end of Neolithic age, when use of metal started, then at many places, use of copper started with stones. At some places, use of iron started along with stones. Following are some of the major chalcolithic settlements of India:-

(1) Burjhom of Kashmir – Kashmir gave birth to a prosperous civilization in Neolithic age. Near Srinagar a place called Burjhom has been found, where we see many articles of Neolithic ages. In the first phase of this age, following hand usable tools have been found- hand made clay pots and saws, forks, knives and needles etc. Apart from these, tools for harvesting also have been found. In the next phase of Neolithic ages, we found evidence of raw brick and mud houses, clay pots of potter's wheel and limited use copper.

(2) **Mehargarh** – This is the oldest spot situated at Baluchistan. By chalcolithic articles, it appears that here they used stone along with copper. Not even this; there have been information of their business relations with Iran, Afghanistan and Central India.

(3) **Kili Gul Mohammed and Damb Saadat** – These two spots situated in Quetta valley were centres of Chalcolithic culture. Around 4,000 BC there was developed rural life. In the second phase of Neolithic age, there are evidence of different handmade coloured pots and tools. They used little bit of copper also along with stone. During this time, they had relations with Iran and Afghanistan.



Did u know? We have found a place called Burjhom near Srinagar, where many article relating to Neolithic age have been found.

(4) **Rana Ghundai** – Situated in Job Lorlai is very important place. Here coloured clay pots have been found. Later evidence of metal use also has been found. Rana Ghundai had relation with Iran in the last phase, but there is no sign of development of rural life.

(5) **Kulli and Naal** – Situated in south Baluchistan, these two places are associated with two specific cultures. Here they used coloured clay pots and widely used metal. These cultures had relations with regions of Persian Gulf. There is enough evidence of trade with western regions. Their specific feature is that they are even older than Harappa civilization.

(6) **Gumla and Rehman Dheri** – Situated in Gomal valley in North-West, Gumla and Rehman Dheri are also important spots of Chalcolithic age. Gumla in its early day was more of gypsy or semi gypsy mode. As at one place we find some clay washed/plastered holes and small tools of stones and animal bones on the other. But in next phase, we see proof of rural life. Raw housed, coloured pots, use of copper etc., were its specialities. Excavation work at Rehman Dheri is not complete yet, but proofs of it being older than Harappa civilization are enough.

(7) **Sarai Khola and Jaleelpur** – Sarai Khola near Rawalpindi in western Punjab and Jaleelpur near the confluence of Chenab and Ravi rivers, are found, which are two important pre Harappa culture points. In their first phase, we find handmade clay pots, stone axes, blades etc, but in second phase, apart from use of pre Harappa tools, wide use of copper and bronze have also been found.

(8) **Vedic Saraswati River** – Excavation work in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat has thrown special light on ancient Indian history. Saraswati River found in Vedic scriptures, used to flow after stone and chalcolithic age, for long in North-West part of India. In present times, the signs found of dry Ghaggar River, is Saraswati River of that period. It is famous as Hakra in Bahawalpur. Not even this, path of dry subsidiary rivers of Saraswati has also been found. Though this area has not been excavated, but information gathered from other sources reveal an extremely developed civilization. In Rajasthan part of this river, we find an important spot called Kalibanga, where we find remains of Indus valley civilization and beneath these remains, there are indications of pre Harappa civilization. This civilization was extremely developed and there was brick fortification around the settlement. They had knowledge of modern bricks. Their house features were identical with modern day's structure. There was an courtyard at the middle of house and at its end, work was done, food was cooked in courtyard. In that period, we find Tandoors both on ground and underground, which are identical with today's Tandoors. Plough was used for farming. Grains were collected in warehouse.

They used both stone and copper as both type of tools have been found. Stone was used more. Stone blades were used as sickle by fixing wooden lever. In this age, copper bangles and beads were also made. Shell covers and clay were also used.

Notes



Task Explain the characteristics of Stone Age.

(B) Chalcolithic Cultures of Inner India

Following were main Inner Indian Cultures:

(1) Ahad Culture of Banas Culture – Wide remains of chalcolithic culture have been found in Udaipur, Jaipur, Chittorgarh, Ajmer, Bhilwada and Tonk distt of Rajasthan and in Mandstaur distt of Madhya Pradesh. Though not much excavation work has been done, but culture found by excavation near Ahad and Gilund, is called **Ahad Culture**. Due to being situated in Banas river valley, it is also called **Banas Culture**. Ahad and Banas, both were huge human settlements. Settlements were quite developed. Houses were made up of stones and mud. Stones were used in foundation. Roofs used to be slant. There are multi faced Tandoors which are identical to modern day Tandoors. Gilund has evidence of modern day brick being used.

Copper was widely used. People used to bring raw copper from mines and make tools after melting them. Bangles, rings, knife blades, axes and needles of kohl were made out of it. Idols of animals, beads and coins too have been found. They cultivated rice and had animal husbandry too. This culture was existent near 3,000 BC and Rajasthan was the centre for copper works.

(2) Malwa Plateau Culture of Madhya Pradesh – In the fertile land of Malwa, rivers like Kshipra, Betwa, Ken, Chambal and Narmada flow. In the excavation done at many places here give proof of Chalcolithic age culture. Important articles have been found in the excavation of Kaytha and Navdatoli. In Kaytha culture region, clay pots made of potter's wheel and copper axes and bangles have been found. In the next phase of Kaytha, remains identical to Ahad culture have been found and third phase has been called as Malwa Chalcolithic culture. Its proof has been found in Navdatoli. Remains of this period's houses and settlements are also there. Clay pots found here are similar to ones found in other cultures. Copper was also used. Copper chisel, bangles, rings, big needles and thorns are major out of those articles. Navdatoli was a developed village of Chalcolithic age, where they used to sow modern day crops like wheat, pulse, gram, rice and pea.

(3) Chalcolithic Settlements of Maharashtra – Daymabad is famous here. Its excavation states that this is relating to the fourth phase of Chalcolithic culture, which is known as **Jokhe Culture**. This is the contemporary Maharashtra culture. Square, Rectangular and Circular houses have been found in Jokhe excavation. Structures of houses were like raw village homes. Here also, copper articles have been found, which has been found in Malwa culture. Man driving chariot, rhino, oxen and elephant images have been found made of copper in Daymabad. They are solid and are of huge weight. They cultivated different crops and also did animal husbandry.

(4) Chalcolithic Culture of South India – Just like north and central India, southern India has signs of life in the later stage of Chalcolithic age. Articles found from excavation of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, reflect life of this period. Raichur Doab area between Tungabhadra and Krishna rivers is very important from this perspective. Mainly Nagarjunkonda, Brahmagiri, Utnoor, Yayampalli, Maski and Kodekal etc have been excavated. In the third phase of cultural development here, utensils from potter's wheel and metal were made. Basis of house making was same as of north, but some changes were incorporated as per local needs. In this period, they made articles made up of stone, clay and copper and were sent to other areas. Probably, in this phase they started using gold.

(5) East India and Chalcolithic Culture – We don't have sufficient description of chalcolithic culture in the absence of major excavation work in this region. Signs have been found from Birbhum, Bardwan, Midnapore, and Bankura of west Bengal of chalcolithic culture. As per proofs available, we get to know about a developed rural Chalcolithic civilization based on rice, which existed around

2,000 BC. Proof of Chalcolithic life is found from Chirand and Sonepur of Bihar, which relates to later phase of this period.

Notes

2.4 Summary

Life of primitive humans were like animals and after thousands of years, they started living a civilized life. Information about this period can't be known by definite evidences; hence this information is based on other resources. This entire period pre civilization is called as Pre Historic Period.

2.5 Keywords

- **Tools:** Instruments used to do work like used by artist, warriors etc.
- **Points:** Dot signs.

2.6 Review Questions

1. Describe Paleolithic period.
2. Write Characteristics of Neolithic period in India.
3. Describe Inner Indian Chalcolithic cultures.
4. Describe major Chalcolithic Settlements of North-West India.

Answer: Self Assessment

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Neolithic | 2. Weapons and Tools of Stone | 3. Sone river Valley |
| 4. (b) | 5. (d) | 6. (a) |
| 7. (c) | 8. True | 9. True |
| 10. False | 11. False | |

2.7 Further Readings



Books

1. Social and Economic History of Ancient India—*Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*
2. Ancient Indian History—*Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.*
3. Ancient Indian History A New Perspective—*Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
4. Ancient Indian History—*Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*

Unit-3: Indus Valley Civilization (3250–1750 BC)

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

3.1 Name and Discovery of Indus Valley Civilization

3.2 Characteristics of Indus Valley Civilization

3.3 Decline of Indus Valley Civilization

3.4 Contribution of Indus Valley Civilization

3.5 Summary

3.6 Keywords

3.7 Review Questions

3.8 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To describe rise of Indus Valley Civilization,
- To mention characteristics of Indus Valley Civilization,
- To mention decline and contribution of Indus Valley Civilization.

Introduction

Regarding time period of Indus valley civilization, which is known as Harappa or Indus civilization, scholars are of the view that this civilization due to being town and trade oriented, is a changed form of Vedic civilization only. Some scholars opposing this view point say that, this civilization is even older than Vedic period.

3.1 Name and Discovery of Indus Valley Civilization

Indus civilization, civilization of Indus Valley and Harappa Civilization- these three synonyms are used normally for this civilization only. Before 1921, It was assumed that Indian civilization starts from Aryans only. But with the co-operated work of some scholars and archaeologists, we came to know even older civilization, which made Indian history even more ancient. Initially when in 1921,

excavation at Harappa started in western part of Punjab, then at same place to its south, excavation of Mohenjodaro (city of dead bodies) also started. So it was accepted that this civilization extended up to Indus valley only. Hence, it was initially called Indus valley civilization. But it did not end here and research continued on this civilization. After sometime, it was discovered that this civilization was not confined to this valley only, rather extended even beyond its boundaries. It was found even in the areas of Rajasthan, East Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat. After considering its geographical reach, it appeared that it is improper to call it only Indus Valley civilization. Then the word, Harappa civilization was used. Harappa is name of a place, which is situated to the left of Ravi river in modern Punjab. This civilization was spread on an area of 950 miles from north to south. Since, first we got to know about it at Harappa only, hence it was coined as Harappa civilization.

Overseas Relation – All questions which come about this civilization, out of it most important is that, did it have any relation with other civilization with other contemporary (3250-1750 BC) civilizations. When we compare it with Sumer civilization, then we find lot of similarities between them. Mutual relations of both regions can only be the major reason for this. Different types of identical clay articles and coins have been found in both places. So we can assume that there would have been strong relations between both the civilizations. Famous historians are also of the view. As per scholar **Hall**, "Sumer is indebted to India". But some other scholars like **Gordon Child** and **Macdonald** say that Indus civilization is only indebted to Sumer civilization.

Scholars have established their relation on the basis of copper made axe found in both places. Just like Pin found in Indus valley civilization, in Italy also similar copper Pin has been found. On the basis of goods found through excavation, scholars are of the view that Indus civilization had relation with Egypt. Above mentioned regions had trade relations with Indus civilization, as per scholars. Hence, these regions must have been influenced by each other culture as well.

Time Period of Indus Valley Civilization – On the basis of found articles made up of copper and stones, it is also called Chalcolithic civilization.

About its time period, some scholars due to it being a town and trade oriented civilization, call it is a changed form of Vedic Culture. Opposing this view, other scholars state that this civilization is even older than Vedic culture. These scholars consider Vedic period up to 2,000 BC. Since, Harappa civilization is considered to be 1500 BC before Vedic period, these scholars consider Harappa period between 3250-1750 BC. Famous historian **Dr. R.K. Mukharjee** also is of same view. As per **Rajbali Pandey**, "Indus Valley civilization period is around 4,000 BC. He states, in the excavation, up to water level, there have been 7 layers of remains of old towns have been found. If for the rise, development and fall of one town, we put 500 years time, then for these 7 towns rise, development and decline, around 3500 years would have taken. Lowest layer is also remains of a developed town. Hence, if groundwater would not have been a problem, we could have found remains after 7th level also. Hence, Harappa civilization is at least 4,000 BC." If this is true, then this civilization is contemporary to Nile river civilization and Dazla- Farat river valley of Mesopotamia civilization. Some other scholars, have considered Indus Valley civilization as the first centre of human civilization on the basis of time.

Scientifically, chronological order of Indus Valley is based on Radio Carbon Dating process. Radio Carbon dating is a chemical process, in which we can decide ages of bones and stones scientifically. As per-carbon dating process, Indus Valley Civilization can be around 2300-1750 BC. But to know precise historical dates, we have to amend Radio Carbon Dating. Hence, its period is around 2800/2900-2000BC. It is estimated that this civilization remained even after its period in some of its peripheral areas.

Due to its relation with Mesopotamia civilization also, scholars have tried to decide on its time period. Most ancient proof is found in 2600 BC (pre sargonic age). It means that this civilization came in to existence around 2800 BC. Hence, we can take 2800/2900-2000 BC as the correct time period for Indus Valley Civilization.

Notes



Notes

Indus Valley civilization worshipped Idols. Shiva Ling has been found in the excavation. Hence, majorly they were Shiva devotees. But, we find mention of wind, water, fire etc but not of Shiva.

Inhabitants and Makers of Indus Valley Civilization – There is no unanimous view amongst scholars about it. Even with archaeological articles found from this place, it is difficult to tell about inhabitants and makers. Some scholars have called it post Aryan civilization and some have called it Dravidian civilization. Having proximity with Sumer civilization, some scholars give credit to its development to Sumer civilization. Though, above mentioned facts have not passed truth test. By Recent research, it appears that they were not Aryans. Aryans were enemies and killers of Indus people. Then again we find that Indus valley did not have knowledge of Iron and Horses. On the other hand, Aryans were aware of Iron and Horse. From the article found from excavation, we find that Indus valley people had urban life style. They had influence of trade in their society. Aryans had dominance place for rural life. There is no trace of their trading in Rigvedic period. We also come to know that Indus people did not have armour and head cover for safety at war, but Aryans did have armour and head cover. Archeologically, we find that there was practice of idol worship in Indus valley. Shiva ling have been found at excavation; hence they were majorly Shiva followers. But in Aryan period, we find mention of wind, water, fire etc, but not of Shiva. Place for goddess worship too was better than Rigvedic period, in Indus Valley period. If importance of Fire worship was more in Rigvedic period, then less in Indus period. As per above point of view, we find indifference among Indus civilization and Rigvedic period. It is said that in western Uttar Pradesh, demons used to live and Aryans fought with them only. These demons migrated to west Asia. Thus, Indus people were either Demons or Dravida. But modern scholars don't agree with this either. Many scholars say that they were not Nonaryans. Scholars don't agree on Indus people being Sumerian also. They are of the view that Sumerians were older than Indus people. If similar article are found in both places at excavation, then we can assume trade relations between them. Many scholars consider Indus people as Dravidians. Actually, one of the languages of Dravidians is Brahurd and we find many people on north-west India, speaking it even now. It is said that after being defeated by Aryans, many people shifted to south India. Remaining population kept using Brahurd language. Hence, it can be said that Indus people were Dravidians. Some scholars link Indus civilization with Mangols also, but this logic does not have substance. On the basis of above mentioned facts, we can say that there were different people living in Indus civilization and due to their collective efforts only, this great civilization grew.

Before the development of Indus civilization, agriculture developed in this area. Around 3000 BC only, farming developed in Indus and Punjab region. After that, this farming moved towards east. Due to which ancient Saraswati valley also came within the boundary of Indus Valley civilization. Definitely, there is a great connection between agriculture system of Baluchistan and greater Indus region and the Indus civilization of later times. How and why Indus civilization developed on such ancient base, is difficult to mention. But on the basis of new research, we can say that roots of this civilization were strongly poised at this very local level. There is so much ambiguity about the development of settlements of civilization.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Harappa is name of a place, which is situated at the banks of river in modern Punjab.
2. First mention of Harappa Hillock was done by Charles Masson in
3. There was administrative system in Indus Valley civilization.

3.2 Characteristics of Indus Valley Civilization

Notes

Architecture and Town Planning

After the discovery of archaeological remains found after 1946, this is certain that Indus Valley civilization was spread over a huge area. So many mysteries have been unearthed by the excavations of 1958. Now only we have come to know that it spread up to Alamgir in East. Alamgir is situated 20 km from Delhi and around 17 km to the west of Meerut. Lothal (Gujarat), Kalibanga (Rajasthan), Kotdiji (25 miles east from Mohenjodaro), Chanhudro (80 km south to Mohenjodaro and at the left of Indus valley plains) and Nimri are major points of Indus Valley civilization. On the basis of articles found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa, it is said even today that both these were major centres of this civilization. Now both these, are in Pakistan. As regards, structure of towns of Indus civilization, we can study different towns.

Mohenjo-Daro – It was situated in the Larkana province of Sindh. It was spread in around one square mile area. For planning ease, it was divided in to two parts; East and West. Western part is relatively smaller than Eastern one. This space has been elevated by making a platform. Platform has been made by mud mortar and raw bricks. Construction has been done on this platform only. There is fortified wall all around it. This wall is made of raw bricks. There are towers and minarets also in it. There must be a main entrance in this fort, but scholars have not able to know about this. There are several public buildings in this west part. We get to know about prosperity of this place. It appears that different building had different names like; ‘Purohitawas’, ‘Anna Bhandar’, ‘Mahavidyalaya’ etc., but this can only be a estimate, as still there is no success in reading their script. Looking at grandiose of such buildings, it can be said that there must lived high profile people. Remains of such a building are found in Mohenjodaro which is standing on bamboos. It is assumed that this was a public hall of the town, where people used to assemble and do meetings. Another Logic by scholars is that this must be used to have a big market. There were lanes in between houses of Mohenjodaro in its western part. There is information of roads, which can be used to move from one place to other. Many remains of small houses have been found in excavation which indicates that there used to live smaller sections of society. A big pond has been found in this western part of Mohenjo-Daro. It is 39 feet long and 23 feet wide. Use of bricks has been done to make this pond. Bitumen plaster has been done after layering of bricks, so that water cannot go out. This large pond has been described as formal bathing place.

Eastern part of Mohenjodaro is relatively larger than western part. Similar to western part, this part also is surrounded by walls. Entire town of western part was based on platform, but not in eastern part. Here houses were made on separate platforms. Platforms perhaps were used for security point of view. Due to platform was higher than eastern part, eastern part was low height. Hence eastern part was called Lower Hillock. There were many houses in this part. Here we have found 3 feet wide roads. Due to these roads, many houses of eastern part were divided in many groups. Interesting thing is that houses were made up of modern bricks, unlike eastern part, where they used raw bricks. Some houses of eastern parts were double stoeryed also. There was provision to flush out dirty water from it. This dirty water used to come to drainage outside the house. These big drainages were at both sides of big roads. These were made of bricks. Much such drainages were covered from top. Drainages found of Indus period are still an example for us. We get to know by the remains found that there were holes in the drainage which were close to big roads. After they were filled with dirty water, it was flushed out. Archaeological remains clearly tell us that, house cleanliness was a major focus area. There were many wells for the use of common men, which were made of bricks.

There used to be one main door in houses of eastern part of Mohenjodaro. These doors used to open the nearing roads. Like modern times, there used to a courtyard in those houses in the middle. There used to be rooms around this courtyard. Sign of door has been found as remains which indicate that each room had one door. There used to be windows also. These windows were at high spots in the walls unlike modern day windows. Such windows can still be seen in the villages of Bihar, which are

Notes

quite high from ground. To conclude, we can say that houses of Mohenjodaro are not attractive but the methods used to construct them, tells us about the high level efficiency and effectiveness of their style.

Harappa— This place was situated at the left of Ravi river in modern Pakistan. Similar to Mohenjodaro, Harappa too was divided in to two parts on planning point of view. First part was at the eastern side and second at the western side. Unfortunately, practice of stealing bricks by modern people, has actually spoiled the eastern part. Hence, we could not get sufficient remains of this part.

As regards, western part, this was surrounded by walls. This part also was based on high platform; it is difficult to tell about fortification of this place, since inner wall bricks have been stolen by modern day people. No such thing has been found in excavation, which could give us some information.

Fortification of this western part tells us that, there were many doors for entry and exit. There was one main gate, which opened towards north. Just in front to its north gate, Ravi used to flow. Excavation in between Ravi river and north gate tells us that there was a grain storage house and houses for labourers. Round platforms made of brick also were there. There were small sockets in the platform for keeping grains. The place where common people lived, we have found a graveyard also in south.

Chanhydro— There have been no major excavation in this area, hence many mysteries are still under cover. Remains pertaining to making of many articles have been found. Excavation tells us that there was a bead making unit also.

Kalibanga— This also had two parts. Western part was called western hillock, this part also had fortification but was divided in two parts. Both these fort units were linked. One could go from one fort area from another. Proof of two fortification in one part reveals that there were separate demarcations for high and rich people. Use of second part was for high level platforms. Remains of Havankund also have been found. To the south of residential area of Harappa, but to the west of Kalibanga, proof of graveyard is found. There are some such remains in the eastern part of this place, which suggest practice of worship and puja etc.

Above description is for the western hillock of Kalibanga, information on eastern hillock is also there. A wall is found as remains, which gives us some information about its planning. Its planning is very much similar to Mohenjodaro. Still, there are some differences. Houses of Kalibanga have used raw bricks whereas Mohenjodaro has used modern bricks. There was no provision of flushing out dirty water alike Mohenjodaro. There was shortage of water drainage system. Hence we can say that position of Kalibanga was inferior as compared to Mohenjodaro.

Lothal— An important settlement of Indus civilization was Lothal. It was situated in modern Gujarat. Remains here tell that there were no two hillock like Kalibanga and other areas, means it was not divided in two parts. It appears that this was a port of Harappa civilization. As per map, this was 360 metre long and 210 meter wide, spread in north- south direction. This too was surrounded by a huge wall. Such boundary was probably done for safety purpose. South-eastern part of the town is like a big platform, which is approximately 4 metre of height. There are many lanes of smaller platforms over it containing many narrow paths. We can recall grain storage house of Mohenjodaro after seeing this huge platform. This platform is of 48.5 x 42.5 metre. There are many buildings at the back of this part of the town and are connected with one drain only. In other part of the town, there were many shops and houses. Major out of them were; factory for bead for necklace, jewelers and tinkers. Main road of this town is from north to south.

But a very wonderful achievement is a huge tank made up of bricks measuring 219 x 27 metres and its height is 4.5 metres. This is to the east of Lothal town and next to grain storage house. There must be a door at one point of this tank to control flow of water, just like used in modern Dams. It appears that it was port of Lothal, but this view is not accepted in general. Objective of making this tank is still not clear. Some scholars consider it small micro port, but scholars have rejected this logic as well. Alike other towns, there is a graveyard near this town as well.

Surkotda— Here we have found only one hillock. Alike, Kalibanga this too was surrounded by walls. There were two separate boundaries connected with each other. It appears that here too, in one part rich

used to live and other part was meant for worship. The part of religious rituals had higher platform. There was a graveyard in its western side. Thus, we see the replica of Kalibanga' western hillock planning here. There is no eastern hillock.

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Banwali—This place had planning similar to Surkotda and Kalibanga. Here also there were two boundaries connected with each other. In one part, rich used to live and other was used for worship.

House Construction—Above mentioned town planning tells us that, Indus people not only lived in big-small, mud and brick work houses, but also paid attention to the cleanliness of houses also. Bricks used for house construction were red, baked and strong. Bricks were heated in fire with wood fire. Excavation reveals small brick size as; 10.25 inches long and 5 inches wide. Another smaller brick has been found of 5 inches long and 2.25 inches wide. There is also one big size brick. This is 20.25 inches long, 10 inches wide and 3.5 inches thick. Archaeological analysis reveals that buildings of Indus civilization were made as per planning. Houses remains tell us that normally houses were 30 feet long and 26-27 feet wide. Rich people had double or at times treble the sizes of these normal houses. We have found remains of double or treble storey houses as well in Indus civilization. Walls were quite thick from security point of view, remains of plastering rooms and wooden plastering have also been found.

For the planned development, importance of drainage construction for water disposal is important. In Indus valley also we get to know about drainage. They used to be wooden and bricks stairs to go to first floor within houses. Width of such stair was around 1.25 feet.

Due to threat of flood, houses were normally made on high platforms. There used to be hearth of clay and bricks for making food similar to modern times. There were separate kitchens, where huge pots were fixed in the ground.

Houses had many rooms. These rooms had doors of around 3.75 feet width. There used to be big doors also in some big houses. Doors were of normally of one side only, so that apart from humans, cattles or vehicles could also walk past it.

Normally, each house had a square bathrooms. Its floor used to be very smooth. It was made of modern bricks. Bathrooms had water provision for bathing. Water used to be kept in big pot. Toilet used to be near bathroom. Water from bathroom used to go to toilet through small drains. This water kept toilets clean. Toilet water used to merge into road side drainage. There used to be a small drain between toilet and bathroom. Similarly, there was a small drain between toilet and drainage. To stop water from skidding away, side bricks were used to be smooth by rubbing so their joints used to stick together.

Looking at planned housing, water arrangement, cleanliness etc., it can be assumed that there must be some public body for taking care of town management. Indus civilization gives us information about our ancient town life and civilization.

Indus Script—There has been information about 400 signs of this script. These are in small sizes at all places. These signs are found on 5 paisa rectangular figure made of soap stone. They are imprint on copper blocks also. Their writing is like modern Hindi from left to right. This indicates that Indus valley people were aware of writing skill. But it is surprising and concerning that the script has been understood yet. Still today it is a mystery for scholars. These writings have come out of a type of picture story, where each sign depicts one word or article. Scholars like Father Herras say that by looking at the style of writing on the coins, it appears to be like Dravidian. Some other scholars consider it as script and language prior to Brahmi Aryans script, but there is no proof for this. Hence, Indus script has created a problem before scholars. As per **Wheeler**, "to translate this script necessary tools like-Bi lingual stone script which contains knowledge of a language or one long stone script, where some vital parts have been used many times, have not been found. Stone scripts found in Indus valley are normally of small size and contain on average 6 alphabets. Longest stone script also contains only 17 alphabets and the difference amongst them can't let us imagine that whether they are related with signs found on coins or not. We can only speculate that these are probably nouns and perhaps have been used with father's name, trade or title. It seems to solve this; we need to find lucky goods like Regatta stone. We know that if scholars would not have got trilingual scripts of Bahistan and Regatta, then Egypt and Sumer

Notes

civilization would also have been unsolved. Finally, we must accept that Indus civilization was not unaware of writing skills and in such ancient time, this was not a normal thing.

There were around 700 signs of this language, but it is not known, whether it was Indographic, Logographic or any other script. Some scholars of Scandinavia specially **A. Parpola**, have claimed that they have understood some scripts on the basis of ancient Tamil, but other scholars don't accept it. Sometimes ago, there was a convention in France of international scholars, in which one Indian claimed to have understood Indus script by reading it, but one Chinese scholars refuted it.

Peaceful – As per archaeological findings, it appears that Indus people were peace loving. In excavation, no findings of armour, sword, shield, and head cover etc., war materials depict that these people were not of fighting mentality. Spear, bow-arrow, axe etc are found from excavations which indicate that they used to hunt also. Indus civilization was far superior to other civilizations. People were ready to make their region prosperous by developing skills and trade.

Democratic Civilization – No trace of kings or palatial houses makes scholars believe that there was no monarchy. Huge meeting halls and bathing pools tell us about their social and collective life. This civilization was inclusive and democratic. Administration was very strong at centre level. There were two major centres of Indus civilization- Harappa and Mohenjodaro. It is assumed that Harappa was capital of north part, whereas Mohenjodaro was capital of south part.

Town Civilization – Indus civilization was not agriculture or rural based. It was actually a town civilization. Its society had dominance of trade. Due to business only, there were big towns. As regards trade, these people had overseas relations also. It appears that their economic base was industrial specialization. Each element/article carried some importance for them.

Old Civilization – Prior to 1921, scholars said that civilizations of Nile river and valley of Dazla-Farat are oldest ones. But after studying Indus civilization remains, this belief changed. As per **Sir John Marshall**, ex head of Archaeological Survey of India, "even a common inhabitant of Indus civilization used to consume article of luxury, comfort in such quantity, that can't be compared with any developed regions of its time". Like modern days, Indus people used solid bricks. Covered drainage was available. For common bathing, both cold and hot water bathing pools were available. Sumer and Mesopotamia civilization lack these features. Which proves that Indus civilization was well advanced as compared to other nations; this is why scholars have called it first centre of human civilization.

Political Life

There has been no concrete proof about political life. No traces of king palace like huge structure has been found, on the basis of which, political study could be done. Even no sign of huge temple or chief god is also available, on the basis of which, we can assume that there was any priest or chief administrator. Near huge bathing pool remains, there are remains of some structures. Some scholars call it king or administrative building, but it does not seem correct. Actually, these buildings have only one huge room and on the basis of one huge room, we can't term it as king palace. Despite that, we can surely say that such huge region must be under some political control. In favour of it, we can present logic of uniform weights and measure system in the region. Buildings too were almost of same style. Idols found here too have uniformity and script too was almost same. These factors indicate that there was a solid organized administration. On the basis of town planning seen, it can be said that there existed Town Corporation, which is in turn part of political structure only. Due to corporation only, provision of protection of roads and lanes and drainage was there. Hence, scholars agree that there existed a strong political structure.

On the basis of excavation **Wheeler** considers its administration as Middle Class Democracy. As per him, "From whatever source we got the fact, but we have to accept that there was some influence of religious tendency. Just like Sumer and Akkar priest kings, owner of Harappa too used to rule on their towns. In Sumer, all the money and administration used to rest in the hands of chief god of the temple. God here was called priest king." Sumer administrative system has been termed as Monarchical by

Hunter. Indus civilization had democratic system, which can be proved by buildings close to huge bathing pools. Scholars are of the view that people used to gather here to elect their representative in this huge house. To discuss on specific topic or issue also, they used to gather here. But it is not clear that administration was in the hands of one constitutional king or in the hands of public representatives. Perhaps, decentralization system can be prevalent.

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Did u know? People of Indus valley did not use sword, armour, head cover etc like Rigvedic period. They were unaware of these tools and weapons.

Indus people were not war oriented; this has been proved on the basis of materials excavated. They had peace loving civilization. As per study of weapons found in excavation, these were made of copper and zinc. These weapons were not very sharp. They did not use sword, armour, head cover etc alike Rigvedic people. They were unaware of these weapons. Residents had confidence in living peaceful life. Hence, we can say that administration was better in Indus period. It was free of disturbance and political disturbance. There is no surprise, if they were defeated by outsiders by invading them, as they were not war oriented and were peace loving.

Social Life

It is difficult to tell about their social structure and life, as their script has not been read yet. But article found in excavation like; idols, ornaments of gold and silver, different cosmetic goods made of Ivory throw some light on their social life. On the basis of building structure, not much can be said about social life. All the houses are almost similar. Hence, life style would have been almost similar. When we analyze people of Indus valley on economical perspective, then we don't find similarity in their life style. People were divided into many parts, for ease of study we can divide them into four major parts: traders in **first**, scholars in **second**, labours in **third** and soldiers in **fourth**. After Indus civilization, only other country we find, where position of soldiers was low, is china, as in ancient time, this too was a peace loving nation. Fighter class was in second place in Rigvedic period.

Priest, astrologist and medical counselors were in scholar category. People doing labour and domestic servants were in labourer category. Besides, in labourer category, cobbler, bucket makers and fishermen were also there. People doing different businesses formed part of trading community. As per economic criterion, Indus valley had all three classes like rich, middle and low. They traded with far regions and hence traders got immense respect.

Family Life and Condition of Women—Traditional family was a unit of society in Indus Valley civilization. On the basis of remains found, practice of living in families is known. In periods prior to Dravidian and Aryans, society was matriarchal. On the basis of remains, we can say that society was matriarchal. Hence, Indus people revered Mother goddess very much. Women were seen with respect in the society. No traces of veil system are found. Main job of women was bringing up children and making cotton. Many women idols have been found in excavation. Most surprising is one idol of a dancer made of bronze. This dancer is wearing a necklace in neck. She is covering her entire hands area and except neck, is nude. Her hairs are beautifully organized. Its one hand is on her pelvis. She is standing in erotic mode with her half curved naked thighs. It appears that it is proud of its live insolence. Example of such proud insolence is not found in any other civilization. During excavation, some idols of powerless goddesses have been found. It shows that condition of women in Indus period was different than that of later Rigvedic period. Scholars believe that these idols were of dancers, devdasis and prostitutes. In the civilizations of middle-east, there used to be devdasis and prostitutes, but to definitely consider idols as of found from Indus as of prostitutes, is difficult. But this is for sure that Indus people worshipped goddess, as there have been many normal type of idols found, which are almost nude. Their heads were well decorated.

Notes

Attire—It is very important for social perspective. We have not found any clothes from excavation, though it is not possible to get it in excavation. Couple of broken toys and idols attire can give us little idea. There is an idol wearing shawl of a man. He is wearing it from over his left elbow and going from its down hand. We can't know by this idol, whether he used to wear anything under this shawl or not. By looking at idol, we can assume that shawl would have been used with help of pin. For women there was a special cloth to be worn on head, which used to elevate behind the head like fan. We can compare this dress with that of Christian brides used at the time of marriage, which too is elevated from back like a fan. There was hardly any difference between men and women dresses. Gold and copper button found from excavation, we get some idea about their attire. There were different seasons, hence they used different attires. They used to wear sharp front edged cap. Both men and women used to wear cap. High profile people's attire was different than common men. Artistically high profile had their attire decorated. They kept beard also. Men and women kept long hairs. High profile women used to wear different dresses on auspicious occasions. These were similar to goddess artistic attire. Goddesses used to wear small skirts, but one seal is found, which has pictures of some women. These might be women priests, who used large skirts.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Mohenjodaro is situated in the district of Sindh.
(a) Larkana (b) Rozdi
(c) Surkotda (d) None of the above
5. Chanhudro was found by in the year 1921.
(a) M.S. Vats (b) M.G. Majumdar
(c) R.S. Bisht (d) None of the above
6. Lothal was one of the of Harappa civilization.
(a) Town (b) Main Port
(c) Harbour (d) None of the above
7. Lothal is situated in
(a) Gujarat (b) Bihar
(c) UP (d) None of the above

Hair Style—Like modern times, women of that time also like to decorate their hairs. Making locks of hairs was very popular in women society. Practice of hair nest too was popular by fixing hairs at the back. Rich men and women used golden strings to tie their hairs. Like ultra modern women, that time also women used to have short hairs. By looking at idols, it is seen that practice of keeping untied hairs was also prevalent. Men who used to keep moustache and beards, have been shown well organized in both statues and postures. For makeup, they used razor, vermilion, powder etc. to make their lips and face attractive, women used a special product. **Sir John Marshall** says about the luxury and make-up of Indus valley people that, even a common man here lived a life of comfort and luxury that was not seen in any other country of its time.

Ornament—To look prettier and by being influenced from occultism and magic they used to wear lots of ornament. As per excavation findings, it appears that they used to wear necklace, ring, ear ring, leg bangle, head band, other head ornament, and anklet etc. Poor section of society used to wear ornaments of bones, clay and copper. Rich people used to wear ornaments of gold, silver and ivory. Both men and women wore ornaments. To dress up, brass mirror and tusk combs were used. People used to use kohl also to make their eyes look good.

Living Style—Remains found from Indus valley also throw light on its living style. Rich people used to keep their houses well decorated. In front of house, there used to be a sitting room, where they kept stool, chairs and bed. To sleep, they used cots. Cots were normally made up of wood. Jute like mats was also made. For light, they used lamplight. These lamps were made of copper and clay. Shell cover was also used for brightness. Cotton or wax strips were used for light. Lamps were made of stones also. For carrying goods, buckets were used which were made of bamboo stick or wood.

Means of Entertainment—For a person tired of day activity, it was necessary to have entertainment just like modern day humans. Even today, it has got lot of importance to reduce mental tension. Indus valley people had many such means. Here people had interests in hunting, dancing and singing. Many idols have been found in excavation of dancing ladies, which depict that here people were fond of dancing. Practice of chess and gambling was also prevalent. They used to partake in chariot races also. Like Nawabs of Lucknow, flying birds too was a means of entertainment. Birds were fostered for this purpose. Playing pellet balls, normal balls, paasa etc were also entertainment sports. Playing with pellet balls was also popular in Sumer and Egypt. So many finds of Paasa suggest that people were quite habituated of gambling. In Rigvedic period too, playing paasa was quite popular. Indus people loved hunting. This information is given by seals found in excavation. Pictures on these seals tell that they love hunting goats, deers etc. with bow and arrow. Bull wrestling was also popular. Children's means of entertainment also come to fore. Small children used to make small vehicles and play. Toys of humans and animals were made. These were of clay. Clay sheep also used to be made for children. One toy like bull is found, whose head shakes. One elephant is also found, who gives sound on pressing its head. Remains of such an animal are found whose head is like a sheep, but body like birds. Mention of some birds is also there, which are in cage. We have clay bird also, in which legs can be joined separately. Rattle toys were also made for children of clay. Mouth whistle is also found. There are also toys in human shape. Dwarf toys are found. In Egypt also, we find mention of such dwarf toys. Wheeled cart was also used. One copper cart is also found in Harappa. On the basis of toys, we get help in understanding Indus valley life.

Last Rites—Though it is difficult to tell about the rituals, but on the remains found from Mohenjodaro, we can say that, three type of last rites were performed- (a) dead bodies were left in front of carnivores. Leftover bones etc were buried (b) body was simply buried (c) after cremating the body, bones were buried. Pots filled with bones, ashes and coals have been found aplenty in Indus region. This reveals that the practice of burying bones after cremation was more popular. Some remains tell us that dead body's head used to be in north direction. Dead bodies were kept in length. Jewellery and Cosmetics items were buried along with the dead body. Some dead bodies have been found with a copper ring in right hand finger. Anklet, necklace and mirrors etc are found near dead bodies. At one place, dead bodies of many people are found together. It seems that people died in a war or fights were buried together. At some places, both men and women dead bodies have been found together. Such remains are found in Harappa. Just like Harappa, ancient Sumer too had same tradition. One dead body has been found in Harappa with a body of goat along side. Scholars assume that at time of burial, goat would have been sacrificed.

Use of Medicine—It is difficult to tell about medicines which were used. Certainly, there would be disease. Hence, some medicines must have been used by people here. In Mohenjodaro excavation, shilajeet is found. This is of black colour, which turns in to dark almond colour after dissolving in water. It is even today used to cure several diseases. Sea lather too was used to cure diseases. As per **colonel Syuyel**, use of deers and stag thorns was also done to make medicines. Neem leaves were used like modern times to make medicines.

Food—Excavation also throws some light on their food pattern. They used to depend on nature for producing food stuff. Even today, Indian farmers are dependent on natural facility. Mohenjodaro excavation tells that people there used wheat and barley. They also cultivated peas and rye. Harappa excavation also throws light on many food items. Here people ate rice, pulse, vegetable, palm fruit, sesame, beans and watermelon also. They were aware of the facts that animal milk gives good health. They used to make Ghee with milk. They were aware of lemon. They were also aware of sweets and chapattis. Grain was crushed and grinded. There were huge godowns where rich people used to keep

Notes

their grains. Poor people used to keep their grains in normal plastered holes. They also ate meat. Stone tools found were used to cut animals and fishes. Bowl, spoon, plates were used as eating utensils.

Means of Transport— Bull cart was main means of transport. Development of wheel gave importance to transport. Carts made up of copper have been found. Umbrella was used to protect from sun and rain. Animals used to drive these carts. Mention of Mast ship is also there which used to ferry passengers and trader from one place to other via water route. It had rudder and helmsman used to drive it. Boat was also used as means of transport.

Population— **H.T. Lambrick** has estimated Mohenjodaro population to be around 39,000. As per another scholar **W.A. Fairservice**, its population was around 41,290. Fairservice also has given estimates about Harappa population. He tells Harappa population to be around 23,500.

Castes— As per thought carrying for long, Indus valley had dominance of Mediterranean. After them, protoaustraliad, mongoliad and elphin castes were found. Bones found from Harappa have been tested again in recent past. It tells that our first knowledge as a caste study perspective is incomplete. Initially it was studied on the basis of limited examples only. For example, dividing Harappa people between protoaustraliad, mongoliad, elphin etc is meaningless. Harappa people on caste perspective were not very different. Harappa and Mohenjodaro people were tall. They had long heads also. They had wide nose. Skull found at Lothal appears to be broader than those found at other places of Indus valley spots. Hence, we can agree with **Prof. Asia's** view. According to him, to divide Indus valley people between many human species is not logical.

Religious State

Excavations let us know about characteristics of their religious faith. Such characteristic is not there in ancient religious literature. For example, in Harappa period goddess worship is prevalent, but after 1000 years of its decline, again signs of goddess worship are found. Written literature or monument is unable to provide religious information. In this regard, some information can only be attained by estimating different pictures imprint of seals and metal scripts.

Worship of Mother Goddess— Just like mother goddess worship found near Egypt, Mesopotamia, kreet, Cyprus, Palestine, Syria, Asia Miner, Balkan, Elm, West Asia and Isean Sea, Indus valley also had mother goddess worship. It started with worshipping earth. Relation of this worship is with importance of origin. Such picture from Indus region is found, which has a plant coming out of her stomach. Scholars have assumed it to be earth, goddess, origin of plant and its development. One more picture of a lady has been found Harappa, who is sitting cross legged. Priests are sitting at both sides of the lady. Over its head, there is picture of pipal leaves. Thus in this period, worship of power was prevalent. People worshipped mother and goddess. In Indus civilization, at different places, different goddesses were worshipped. There were many forms of mother goddess. Her worship was done differently. A different type of mother goddess statue is found in Mohenjodaro. There is a bird sitting with its wings open in a way that is protecting the goddess. In this period, humans were dependent on nature for subsistence. Hence, it is natural for people to consider nature as mother goddess and worship.

Worship of Trees and Plants— Trees are being worshipped since Indus period only. Even today, in north India, pipal and emblica trees are worshipped. In south India, people worship tamarind plant. Trees were considered as gods-goddesses and are still being considered. Above mentioned facts are vetted by some seals. Such remains have been found from Harappa and Mohenjodaro. There is one such seal found from Mohenjodaro, in which one animal has two joined heads. From both these joined heads, there can be seen nine pipal leaves coming out. This reflects that some specific animals and pipal tree had special importance. Because of its long life, pipal still today has importance. It is also important from health perspective. It is one such tree, which does not release carbon dioxide at night unlike other tree, but releases oxygen, which is vital from health perspective. To have long life of bride and groom, women still today worship pipal before marriage. Main aim of this prayer is to have long life like pipal for both bride and groom. Rigved mentions about Ashwath tree. It is said that offering water to this tree

leads to heaven. This tree only later on was being called as pipal. Importance of pipal tree has been done by Shri Krishna in Geeta also. Propagator of Buddha religion, Mahatma Buddha got enlightened under pipal tree only. In Indus period, people worshipped Neem and Acacia tree also. This time, to appease trees, gods and goddesses, sacrifice of animals was also offered.

Worship of Pashupati – Statue found of three head from Indus valley suggests that Shiva worship was prevalent. Shiva prayer is linked to animal worship as Shiva is also called Pashupati. Apart from this, Shiva is known as the symbol of masculinity. Some seals and copper scripts have been found which have picture of three headed man. Three faced Shiva is in meditation. His both hands are on his knees. Even today, we see such pictures of Shiva in meditation. His both sides, there are pictures of animals. There is a picture like trident on his chest. To understand religious status in the absence of script is as tough as understanding other things. As per **John Marshall**, the statue found in Indus valley is certainly of modern day Shiva. **Mackey** considers it of Shiva absolutely. Some scholars have also agreed it to be Pashupati like idol. Some other images have been found from Indus valley. Looking at their gesture and posture, it appears that Shiva is dancing. As per some scholars, in this pose, there is upright ling also. There is another image of a man sitting in yoga gesture with two snakes in front of him and one each at his sides. This too appears to be picture of Shiva only. Another picture is found playing bow-arrow. Looking at its jungle attire, scholars consider this to be of Shiva only. Above mentioned facts tell us that Shiva worship was prevalent since Indus period only. Couple of facts related with Shiva needs to be understood here. Shiva is dark coloured. Aryans were not dark coloured, rather fair skin. Hence, this dark colour of Shiva represents actual natives of this place. Scanty clothes on body and animal skin as clothes indicate that Shiva is representing local tribes. Worship of Shiva ling depicts importance of masculinity. As per **D.D. Kaushambi**, Shiva ling is symbolic of production. Presence of bull with Shiva also denotes masculinity and religious importance of bull was there is Indus valley, it appears. Ox worship is also heard to be in Egypt. Some seals found in Indus valley, have influence of religious stories of Mesopotamia. The way, Shiva of Indus valley is shown in between snakes, similarly one character of Mesopotamia epic Gilgamesh is shown fighting with tigers. Like snake, tiger too is lethal. There is mention of another peculiar man, who is human but has thorns like buffalo and tail like horse. Then from seals of Mesopotamia, there is one seal on which we find religious signs. For example, one deity is in yoga gesture, which is surrounded by animals from all sides. Then there is another deity of tree, in front of whom, seven persons are standing.

Worship of Ling – Another name of Shiva worship is ling worship. Many articles have been found from Mohenjodaro which are of ling size. It is said that while searching for signs of deity, lings were suddenly found. One such ling of Stone Age is also found in south India. Ling worship was not only prevalent in India but in many countries in stone-copper age. Lings found in Indus areas are made up of stone, lime and snail. Majorly big lings are made of lime stone and smaller ones of snail. Some scholars believe that big lings were worshipped by different community in different manner. Apart from Ling worship, there was practice of cunt worship also. Majorly these practices have been related with solving human problems with witchcraft and magic etc. There were many such diseases, whose treatment was not easy. Hence, people like modern times, held that spirit like things responsible for this. They used to wear women ling being influenced by this thought only. Idols of yoga postures tell us that yoga started in Indus period only. Apart from idols, artworks of 6 seals also tell us about yoga. This yoga system of Indus period later on became first stage of pashupat yoga. As per old yoga rules, importance of ears, nose and asana was very important. Giving attention to them, some specific rules are still being followed in yoga. One statue inspired by such rules has been found in Mohenjodaro.

Animal Worship – Many coins have been found in Indus area by which we get information of animal worship. To make the study comfortable, **Marshall** has divided them in to three parts and has thrown light on the method of their worship. Indus people believed in rebirth. They said that deity worship in human form started later. Since deities used to be in animal form before, hence practice of worship of deity in animal form was prevalent in Indus period. It is said that when animal deities started taking human forms, then they were left with only horns as symbol. As a result, animal horns were considered very powerful those day. As a result, we have seen pictures of elephant, rhino, bull, buffalo

Notes

etc on seals. It is mentionable that looking at the power of bull or ox, even Egypt started worshipping them. As per coins of Indus region, it is assumed that both humped and normal bulls were worshipped. Shiva's vehicle of bull too started from here only. There is no solid reason to tell why animals were made deity's vehicle. But it seems that in this period, different animals were considered messengers of different deity and hence they were revered and later on some animals were considered to be deity themselves. For example-Hanuman, Ganesh, Narasimha etc. Indus society worshipped snakes. One image is found of a man, where we see snakes at both sides of him with hoods open. Worship of bull was prevalent in almost all ancient countries. After seeing a snake lying on an amulet, opinion of **Mackey** appears true that practice of giving milk to snake was popular. Even today, we offer milk to snakes on Nagpanchmi in India. There are some coins on which there is picture of duck. Duck worship was prevalent in Indus society. Major quality of duck is that it floats in water and eats insects of water. Hence, water remains hygienic. Water too had importance in Indus time

Other Religious Belief – Indus people believed in Idol worship. Though no temple has been found, but as per **Marshall**, there were wooden temples. About some women idols found, it is said that these are of worshippers at temple. Some women idols have been found in naked stage. Scholars tell them of Devdasis. It appears that people here looked at deities in human structure. This is why, we have found many pictures imprint on seals and idols.

In the absence of logical thoughts, magic, witchcraft and blindfoldedness was quite prevalent amongst them. Many amulets of rectangular shape have been found in excavation which has deities and goddess's picture and some mantra on it. Indus people used to wear such amulets as a protection against evil forces. These amulets were made up of copper. Some were made up of clay also.

They celebrated religious festival also. Both men and women used to dance in front of deities on these occasions. A picture made of a seal found from Harappa indicates the point that apart from dancing in front of deities, animal sacrifice was also given to satisfy the deity. Another seal with a dancer picture has been found. It appears that she is following music notes while dancing. They worshipped water also and people used to have bath in public bathing pools during religious bath.

Economic Life

Being economically sound depends majorly on the production of any country, even in modern times. If production exceeds demand, it is better for economy.

Agriculture – India still today is an agriculture major nation. During Indus period also, it was an agriculture major region. On the basis of farming related savings only, they developed a sound society. This period humans were closer to nature. Whatever he got had major natural contribution. For farming, one needs plain land and water for irrigation. In the flood prone areas near Indus River, they did farming. Water was available aplenty there. Initially, plains of Indus river flood area, soil used to be very smooth, but later on in the absence of smooth soil, it must be difficult to do farming. For farming one needs plough and we have seen one such instrument in Harappa, prior to Kalibanga. But there is no evidence of farming by plough. We have to agree that before Indus period, such a huge population would not have inhabited areas of modern India and Pakistan. Hence, only a developed farming could only have taken care of food needs of such big population. So we can assume that Indus people, used plough also for farming. Plough used to be made of wood, which got extinct with times. There is no trace of canals being found in excavation. Like modern times, Indus land was not dry and devoid of rains. Irrigation was taken care of by rivers like Indus, Mehran and its subsidiaries. Hence, they did not need any instrument for irrigation and therefore, we have not found any irrigation related instruments in excavation. Scholars are of the view that due to plenty rains in that period, there was no need for canals also. Major crops must have been sowed soon after flood water receded. When these crops used to grow, they must have been harvested around March-April. Then other crops would have been sowed in flood safe area. This would have happened before flood time, as during flood, these can be irrigated by flood water. This crop would have been harvested around September-October.

Fruits and Grains—There were two types of wheat and three types of Barley in Indus region. Out of wheat, one was knot like and other was of dwarf size. In the areas of Mohenjodaro and Harappa, Barley of six stripes was sowed. Apart from peas and date, mustard was also sowed. Rice has been found from Lothal excavation, but this is not sure whether it has been cultivated or been found in jungle stage. Grains were kept in godowns.. They produced cotton also. Harappans were aware of beans, sesame and watermelon. Seeds of date have been found in excavation. Ear ring has been found in excavation, which is of a lemon size. People here were aware of lemon and its various species. Hence, they produced many vegetables, fruits and grains in this region. They loved eating vegetables. They had strips to crush and grind wheat and other grains. They used hailstone for crushing grains. Practice of crushing grains by hailstone is indirectly linked to ling worship as per some scholars, because of which production is possible. On the same sentiment, potter’s wheel was used to make pots.

Animal Husbandry—Animals were important for economical perspective. Hence Indus people kept animals like cow, bull, pig, buffalo etc. In excavation at different sites, we have found bones of cow, bull, buffalo, pig, elephant etc. On the basis of excavated bones only, we came to know that they were aware of dog and donkey also. They were non-vegetarian also. They loved to eat cow, sheep, goat, crocodile and pig meat. They did not roast the meat, rather they used to sharpen flint and with its help, meat was cut in to pieces. There were many wild animals also. Major were- bear, cheetah, rhino, monkey, hippopotamus, lion and rabbit. They were also aware of small animals like; cat, squirrel, peacock, parrot, hen, mongoose etc. probably, they were not aware of horse. They used to hunt animals also. They used to eat animals got from hunting. Sometimes, by keeping meat for long, it used to turn poisonous and people used to die eating it. At times, for protecting agriculture, animals were killed and many articles were made from their bones.

Garment Industry—Cotton cloth has been found in Mohenjodaro. Due to cotton being produced first in this area and on the basis of Indus river, this region was started being called Sindh. Later on, Greeks started calling it Syndon. Cotton clothes were exported to Mesopotamia. Indus region had nice arrangement for cutting and stitching. Clay pots and bricks found from Harappa had imprint of clothes being made here. Some dilapidated idols have been found on the basis of which, some assumption can be made about its attire. Indus people also exported woolen and silk products. They used to make many pictures on these clothes. They were experts in printing on these clothes. Weaving work was done by weavers who were expert in this area.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. Proof of dockyard has been found from Mohenjodaro.
9. Indus people were fond of dancing and music; it is established by idol found of a dancing lady.
10. Indus people believed in ghosts and evils and wore amulets for protecting them.
11. Banwali was discovered by M.S. Vats.

Artisan—Various types of artisan style is seen in Indus valley. Apart from farming and ranching, various art works were also popular. We come to know about various artisans from excavations. We know on the basis of excavated articles, that people used to wear ornaments of gold, silver, ivory, sapphire and quartz. These ornaments were made by jewelers. Potters used to make various types of articles. They used to make attractive toys on potter’s wheel. They used to make pots for keeping food stuff and crocks & peal for keeping grains. Polish and painting on these pots were of high quality and very bright. Even artisans from Egypt and Sumer were unable to compete with them. These potters used to make pots on potter’s wheel. Apart from pots, they made rat cage and cages also. Ironsmith also used to make various iron related articles. Carpentry was also prevalent. Wooden tools and toys were made. These carpenters used to make carts being driven by bulls, which was used to ferry people and goods from one place to other. Such carts were made of wood. Some artisans used to make cotton clothes in plenty,

Notes

which were exported to western countries. They made woolen and silk clothes also. Beautiful pictures like flowers etc were crafted on these clothes.

Technique and Use of Metal—Indus people used to make many articles and ornaments of gold, silver, copper, brass etc. But in this entire period, use of brass and copper were more prevalent. Only Indus people were the first to use silver. As compared to gold, silver was used more. Since this civilization knew making brass, this age is also called Brass Age. Tool found from Excavation and buildings- axe, knife, spear, arrow, saw and blade etc. normally, all these tools were made by melting and crushing metals. In this period, brass has found less in comparison to copper. Knowledge of brass also happened after some time. Use of less brass as compared to copper suggests that brass awareness came later. Using lead in copper and making brass was a new chapter in Indus civilization. Utensils found from Harappa of brass and copper are of high quality. Utensils were made by casting metals. Small statues of metals were made by melting. This process was called closed melting or latent wax process. For example, there is no stylus in spears, in the absence of stylus spear can't be strong.

There was practice of making coloured toys from clay. Such material was called Fayeze. It was used to basically make necklace beads, amulet, seals and small utensils. Necklace beads and seals were made of stones also. Though seals were normally of stones, on which signs were engraved by chisel. Necklace beads were made of many materials. Art work was done on shell cap and ivory also. Combs of ivory and shell cover and bracelets etc were made. Apart from copper, other major metal was stone only. For Harappans, after copper stone was next most important. On this very basis, this period is called **Chalcolithic Period**. Chalco means copper and lithic means stone. Stone slabs were prepared by cutting from nearby Sakkam mountains. Sharp edged weapons were made of these stones only. Such tools have been found from almost all Harappa civilization. Such stones were used to make alabaster utensils. Lime stone was also used. Drainage covers were made from such lime stones only.

Looking at utensils, it appears that they were produced in large quantities. These were made on potter's wheel. Type of wheels Indus people used is called foot wheel. Even today, such foot wheels are used in the rural areas of south Pakistan. Utensils have been heated in fire. They lack beauty. Clay pots found from Harappa have the characteristic that its top is of red colour and main part of black colour. There is hardly much difference in coloured painting on pots. Triangular painting of Baluchistan became normal reaching Harappa period and maximum painting of this type is like fish eye. Pictures of fish, animals, birds and other pictures are quite rare. Amongst different utensils, one is of round, long and porous. There is no concrete information on their utilities.

Means of Weights and Measure—There was one uniform style of weights and measures. Many weights received from remains show that for small number multiple of 2 or dichotomy principle was used. For example- 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 etc. For large number decimal system was used like- 320, 620, 1600, 3200 etc. there have been many scale found for measurement. One of them is decimal scale also. Its length is 13.2 inches. One part or unit of this is of 1.32 inches. This measurement is equal to one foot of contemporary Asia. Another measurement is of brass stick. Its unit is 0.367 inches. It is at first sight equal to half part of one cubit (52 + 0.5 cm). Cubit too was used uniformly in contemporary Asia. It was of 2.7 inches. Some special instruments for precise measurement have been received. It appears that they were used for making buildings.

Use of weight was prevalent in Mohenjodaro for weighing goods. Their number is quite large. They are made of slate stone. Some scholars consider correctness of these weights even better than Elm and Mesopotamia weights. Some weights are so bulky that they need to be lifted by use of ropes only. Some very small weights are found, like some jewelers still use. Weighing scale's bar is made up of bronze and pans of copper. Use of thick wood was probably used to weigh heavy goods.

Trade and External Relations—Indus people being efficient in farming, animal husbandry and various artisan works had started taking interest in production also. In the area of trade, this region was more developed than any other regions of the world. For such development from administrative perspective, there must be uniformity as for growing business, we need solid regulations and security. Actual proof of export is not visible, but looking at the volume of production which

exceeded demand, it appears that they were being made to export only. Towns had wide roads. By the side of these roads, there used to be shops. This also indicates that trade was in an advanced state. Probably, they traded by road and sea both routes. Raw material which was not available in Indus area was imported from outside. They used to source gold from Karnataka province of modern India. Even today, we have gold mines in Kolar of south Karnataka. It is assumed that traders used to import gold from Iran and Afghanistan also. They used to possibly import silver from Afghanistan and Iran. Silver possibly was imported from south India as well. Looking at means of transport and minerals, it appears that silver was imported from Arab and Baluchistan also. In the construction of big houses, lapis lazuli stone was used. This stone was imported from north eastern part of Afghanistan called, Badakshan.

Precious stones were also imported. Agate, coral and ruby was imported from western India. Another famous market for such stones was in Saurashtra also. From here also, Agate, coral and ruby was brought. Jambunai stone used to come from Maharashtra. Firoja stone was imported from Iran. In central Asia, there used to be a green precious stone, which was called **Sangyashab**. This stone too was imported by Indus people from central Asia. From different places to the East and west parts of Indus valley, soap stone was imported. Thus by looking at variety of industries and use of specific products, it appears that traders here must have been in trade touch with outsiders. Such trade would have been of two types- with rural community nearby Indus region and with jungle tribes. This trade must have been for raw material. Extensive network of internal trade network was also established. Apart from this, people here would have been sourcing copper from Khetri of Rajasthan. Lead was imported from outside countries. These materials were imported from sea and land route both. On one seal of Indus period, picture of ship is there. It appears that goods would have been carried through ship. Bull carts were used for places connected with land route for goods carriage. It appears that Mohenjodaro was operating as an interstate port. Its trade was with Ur, Egypt, Kish etc nations. Traders from here used to import stag and woods from Kashmir. Apart from bringing raw material and luxury items, they also brought fish from nearby Arabian Sea. From export perspective we find that, cotton clothes, utensils were sent to Suber, Egypt and Babylon. Materials made from here were exported to Dazla-Farat i.e. Mesopotamia markets. What was the exchange system of trade, this is yet not known. For measuring values, system used is also unknown. Many godowns found here give information about its organized and prosperous traders. Traders used to have their own seals. Hundi and credit note was also practiced. From export perspective, agate beads especially of Indian kidney sized, shell cover etc was exported to Mesopotamia. For taking lice out, ivory comb, pearl and precious woods from Kashmir were also exported. Keeping in view above mentioned things, statement of **Sir John Marshall** seems to be true. He writes, "The type of life style and luxury was used to be exercised by Indus people, could not be compared with any other civilization of the world."

Art Skills

from the ruins of Indus valley, many proof of Art has been found. These achievements have their own significance. With this, we get help in knowing about life, thought process and religious faith of Indus people.

Music and Dance Style—They were fond of dance and music, which is expressed by the idol of dancing lady. This metal idol throws light on developed status of dancing style. For hair beauty, it used to be combed also. By remains found it appears that people here loved vocal instruments also. Some statues are made of leaves also. With these leaves' tail, whistle can also be sounded or flute can be played. Pictures of tabor and drum are also found.

Utensil Making Art—Remains tell that Indus people used utensil in their domestic works. Beautiful utensils were made by potter's wheel. It used to be just like modern potter. They knew techniques of colouring utensils which were made that time. These utensils were polished for making them bright

Notes

Notes

and strong. Black, yellow and blue colours were used to colour utensils and pots. Art of polishing of utensils was a surprise element for Sumer and Egypt civilization. Apart from colouring and polishing, they used to make pictures also on it. Many utensils with different pictures have been found in damaged state. Some utensils are found with some writing on it. Perhaps, it would be of makers of those utensils.

Painting – Many articles have been received which reflect their knowledge of painting. Some such seals have been found that have many attractive pictures on it. Pictures of buffalo and bull are live example of art. It appears that painter has made it with commitment and faith. There is no lack of softness in these pictures. Different pictures on different seals suggest to scholars that these represent different trades. Some picture of these seals appears of religious importance. Many proofs of pictures on amulets are also found.

Seal Making Art – From different places of Indus region, approximately more than 500 seals have been found. Importance of such seals is from many perspectives. Animal study perspective, there are two types of animal picture found on these seals. First type is of humped animals. These are special Indian Jebu or Kakudmaan. Another type of animal has flat back. These are called USS, which are now extinct in India. Buffalo picture on seal and picture of Shiva surrounded by animals on another seal is found. Goddess picture is found on some other seals. Picture of ship with oar and rudder is also found on seals. There are two seals in which picture of one man is there while strangulating a tiger. It appears this picture is a copy of Gilgamesh of Sumer. Image of bull man or Enkidu found in Iraq is also found on one seal of Indus civilization. It gives knowledge about trade ties between India and Iraq. From aforesaid statements, we come to know about religious implication of these seals.

Some stamping seals have also been found. Probably, these would have been used to stamp on goods packing. Pots filled with such seals were kept safe. Seals were used in China and Iraq with purpose of signing on papers, but in Indus valley there is no such sign of such use. There have been no signs of ropes or knots on these seals which indicates that seal must not be used on box packaging.

Writing Skills – Each seal found from Indus valley excavation, has something written on it, which indicate that they had their own script. Though still people are trying to read it, yet no success as of now. This script does not look like of Indo European group at all. It is not even related with Sumerian, Hurian or Elamite language. There seems to be relation with modern Munda language of India. It is assumed that to some extent, it has connection with Dravida language of south India. Like Urdu, Harappa script was written from right to left. This is confirmed after study of more than 2000 scripts.

There were around 400 sign alphabets of this language, but till now it is not clear that whether they were Indographic, Logographic or any other script. A Parpola of Scandinavia has claimed to read it on the basis of ancient Tamil, but it has not been endorsed.

Cutting and Coloring – From excavation of Indus area, series of spins have been found. This depicts that people here were interested in cutting and weaving. They were also aware of colouring work. Coloured clothes and coloured utensils have been found from excavation. Colouring men used to colour clothes in pots.

Building and Construction – Above description tells that Indus people expert in construction activity. Despite lacking style of house making, structures used to be neat and clean. Construction planning was in knowledge of people here; this can be known by huge halls, bathing pools etc.

Sculpture – People here understood importance of sculpture. Remains of idols found here suggest on the life, thought process and religious belief. Stone statues are very less here. Majorly, idols depict religious importance only. In the form of these statues, pictures of sitting men, animals and dance pose have been painted. Some of them are of high quality. Some small idols were made by melting brass. Some important of them are dancing girl, chariot, bull cart and some animals too. But popular art of this region is the baked clay idols. Some vital images amongst them are of standing women wearing ornaments. Some of such images are of standing men, who are shown in beard and thorns. Historians

agree that these are of gods and goddesses. Some women idols shown with children look like toys. Many animals, carts and toys made of fire baked or of terracotta have been found. A monkey is shown climbing on a string. A bull is shown shaking its head.

Notes

Entertainment – Harappa people were fond of gambling, this is depicted by Paasa found in the ruins. Proof of game like chess has also been found. They had interest in dance also, as established by the image of dancing girl.

Graves – There are graves also in Indus region. This indicates that Harappans believed in life after death also. Normally, dead bodies were buried straight in length. Head of the body was kept in north direction. There have been some graves, where bones of two humans have been found, which indicates that perhaps, Sati system started in that period only.

3.3 Decline of Indus Valley Civilization

Indus civilization approximately emerged around 2300 BC, continued up till around 1750 BC. By the end of eighteenth century BC, two major centre of this civilization; Harappa and Mohenjodaro, were totally destroyed. Other centres of this civilization too lost its existence gradually. There is no definite reason detected for the fall of this civilization.

It is assumed that foreign invasion destroyed it. Scholars give two reasons for their logic- (a) analysis of 48 skeletons found on the upper layer of Mohenjodaro (b) mention of Vedic deity Indra who destroyed many castles. Analyses of skeletons reveal that they were killed by the strike of some sharp object like sword. These skeletons were sporting ornaments. It seems that due to sudden attack, people had to rush. Due to haste, they could not even remove their ornaments. But none of the sources have been able to reveal clues about these invaders. Some scholars tell them Aryans. As per these scholars, Indra, as mentioned in Rigved only destroyed many castles. Due to mention of town named, Hari Upiya, scholars have understood them as Harappa. The same famous civilization was destroyed by Aryans. But this logic does not seem to hold water in respect of fall of Indus civilization. In the last phase of Harappa culture, some new people certainly came here as it appears from new types of clay utensils and weapons. But this can't be said that they came with a planning of attack. It does not look from remains that such a large number of people would have come that can destroy them. We have information about many towns, which got destroyed who were popular due to its administrative or religious specification or its behavior. Towns which are main centres of trade and production used to take place in and around its place or due to transport facility goods were brought in here, can't be affected for long due to any attack, as basis of any town is its money. When kalyani, capital of chalukyas was attacked, then it lost its major eastern point due to its administrative specification, but in south only, Goa was attacked many times, but it did not lose its glory nor it got destroyed due to its economic and trade importance. There are no enough evidence of war between Indus and Aryans. Skeletons of upper Mohenjodaro do not have links with any particular time period. Hence, there is no proof of any genocide of that time. This even is a matter of dispute whether Indus valley people were invaded at a high scale or not. Even if it happened, then who were the invaders. As per Famous historian **R.S. Sharma** (ancient India, page no 41), number of people attacking Indus valley people was not very high. Statement of Prof Sharma seems to be true and we can say that reason for the fall of this civilization was not foreign invasion. Though invaders seem to be like Aryans, who were trying to settle in Indus valley by coming from west via Iran. Their arrival to this region and subsequent war with local people seems natural. Here it is vital to clear that we can't say on above mentioned facts that there was any continued relation between Vedic Aryas and new Aryas of Indus valley period.

There is logic about its decline. As per them, a large scale fire could have finished them. They gave the logic in support of their claim that Indus valley people used wood at large scale in their homes. Wood is natural enemy of fire. Due to some reason, there caught a fire and it took a horrible shape of a large scale fire. Hence, entire area would have been gutted, then it is not a surprise. Above mentioned facts

Notes

get vetted by excavation also. In 1700 BC, from Naal, Ghundai, Rana, Davarkot etc, places ash has been found in large scale. This can to some extent prove the logic of fire being a reason for its destruction. Otherwise, we don't get any proof in Indus valley for the same.



Task

Express your views on the reasons of decline of Indus valley civilization.

Some scholars attach this to endemic like plague, malaria etc as a reason of destruction. Due to the endemic, growth would have stalled and gradually this civilization finished. But unfortunately, nothing like endemic is proved for this region. Some people say that people ate some poisonous article considering as fruits and kept dying. But this also looks baseless.

Thus, by trying to piece together the picture of Indus valley civilization, does not seem to be successful. It is surprising that in neighbouring nation, Egypt some king or the other kept ruling without any particular change. Though some invaders were there in Egypt also. These were Aryans only. Iraq too was attacked. With invasion, there were changes in language and process of worship, but towns did not get destroyed. Maximum this happened, that dignity kept changing from one city to another. Considerable part is that when any king ignored the irrigation system, then we find that fertile land turned in to desert. Due to desert, production became difficult. Hence, people will not get material for raw material or food grains. Therefore, people dependent on that land would leave that place, even if they don't wish to.

Is it not possible that under aforesaid conditions only, Indus civilization was destroyed. Is it not possible that due to growth in industries, agriculture declined. While throwing light on above, **D.D. Kaushambi** (culture and civilization of ancient India- page 97/98) says, there is shortage of canals. It appears that the towns which were situated at the bank of these rivers, changed their course, as it common for rivers to change their path. Due to this, towns at their banks got deserted. Shortage of food stuff started. Then if we consider invaders perspective, then we can say that those were not farmers. Hence, being cruel they damaged the dams also. Due to dams only, flood soil used to deposit at one place and made fertile land. Thus this process was the end of grain production. This is how, towns got destroyed. Due to lack of production, lack of mobility starts and then urban areas started getting decomposed.

Some other scholars have also expressed their views. As per them, due to geographical process, level of sea rose. Due to sea level elevation, Indus valley got submerged and destroyed.

It is said that during 1700 BC, economic condition of nations near Indus valley like Egypt, Mesopotamia etc got worsened. Reason for such instability has been said to be political instability. Due to this, trade with these nations stopped for Indus region or reduced heavily. For any town, trade is most important, as it gives money. When trade is at risk, then it is difficult for any town to keep its existence intact. As per **R.S. Sharma**, rise in population and lack of resources weakened its economic base.

After studying above mentioned facts, we can say that only one reason can't be held responsible for its destruction. But economic crisis was the most responsible, looks very closer to truth.

3.4 Contribution of Indus Valley Civilization

During this civilization, development process towards urban civilization can be seen. This development happened to a large extent to solve economic, social and geographical local issues. Due to being in touch with Mesopotamia culture, there must be some influence of Mesopotamia culture, but development process was indigenous only. Many scholars have accepted this logic. Special focus on drainage and bathing pools is there in this civilization. These factors and huge bathing pools of Mohenjodaro had

huge impact on north Indian culture. Type of bull cart and boat found in this civilization, has not been changed even now. Chariot and bangles were started in this period only. Multiplication used by Harappans like- 1, 2, 4, 8, 16 etc still today is taught in mathematics. Decimal system found in this time, is still seen. Even today in villages, use of Man, Ser, half Ser, Paav and chatank is used for weighing, which is contribution of Indus civilization.

Worship of Shiva, Kali, Parvati, Chandi, Lakshmi, Saraswati, etc, is still seen in our society. Pure, long and healthy life worship like pipal and tulsi are still continued. Snake worship is the contribution of Indus civilization only. In today's time, both Hindus and Muslims believe in witchcraft and magic and amulets. Wearing many ornaments also had same objective to stay protected from someone's casting eyes. Ornament is considered to be shield against magic. Hence, to be safe against invisible forces, magic etc wearing of ornaments was the main reason. All above mentioned things have been prevalent since Indus times. Indus people believed in ghosts and spirits and wore amulets to be protected, which became symbol of beauty after sometime. We are directly aware of Harappans amulet. This magic continuing from Indus period is also described in Atharvaveda, which tells us how to get rid of these supernatural powers. For this, suggestion has been given to have amulets.

Mention of Worship of Chandi, kali, etc different mother goddesses can be found in old literatures and tantric material also. It is interesting to see that both in Indus period and modern times, amulets are majorly given to ladies or children to wear. Its reason is not clear but it appears that due to being physically weak and less liberty to move out makes them more blindfold and they get afraid of supernatural power. Same is true with children. Being too soft, they get sick easily. Indus people too like modern times, relate these to ghost, souls and supernatural powers. To be safe from these threats, Indus people used various amulets for women and children and decorated with different ornaments and even today it is done.

Rat, elephant, bull, peacock, garud, lion etc were revered in Indus period and even today they are, due to being carriage of some of the gods or goddesses.

Playing drum at marriage and religious occasion is contribution of Indus civilization only. Gold, silver, ivory, pearl, sapphire etc are still prevalent in today's society like Indus period. Many ornaments to protect different parts of body were used against evil spirits. Indus people wore maximum ornaments in their neck like; necklace, garland, Kantha etc. Even today, we find neck related ornaments more. It appears that for the safety of throat, they used throat lace and for entire neck, they used necklace, garland etc and this is the contribution of Indus civilization only.

Today's game of paasa and chess is also contribution of Indus period only. Prevalent principle of rebirth of Hinduism is also coming from there.

Thus, we find that to make their lives content, they did many things and were successful also. Various social, economical and religious style adopted by them are still influencing us. Town planning and house structure is just wonderful. People here were so urbanized that they used to see each object with great sense of utility. Just like modern times, they had relations with foreign countries for economic growth.

3.5 Summary

As regard time period of this civilization, some scholars are of the view that due to being town and trade focused; this civilization was a changed form of Vedic civilization. Cutting this logic, other scholars say that this civilization was much older than Vedic period. These scholars consider Vedic period age around 2000 BC. Since Indus valley period is considered minimum 1500 BC before Vedic period, hence these scholars consider Indus period to be around 3250–2750 BC.

Notes

3.6 Keywords

- **Organization:** Process of establishing any institution or body.
- **Rule:** Administration.

3.7 Review Questions

1. What do you understand by Indus civilization? Briefly mention its town planning, art work and religious faith.
2. Describe main characteristics of Indus valley civilization.
3. Mention major reasons for the decline of Indus valley civilization.
4. Describe main characteristics of social, economical and religious life of Indus valley people.

Answers: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|---------------|----------|
| 1. Raavi | 2. 1826 | 3. Democratic | 4. (a) |
| 5. (b) | 6. (c) | 7. (a) | 8. False |
| 9. True | 10. True | 11. False | |

3.8 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
2. Ancient Indian History A New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
3. Ancient Indian History – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Publication.*
4. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*
5. Ancient Indian History – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*

Unit-4: The Vedic Age

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 4.1 Origin and Native Place of Aryans
- 4.2 Civilization and Culture of Vedic Age
- 4.3 Differences and Similarities between Indus Civilization and Vedic Culture
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 Keywords
- 4.6 Review Questions
- 4.7 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To understand the origin and native place of Aryans,
- To describe about the culture and civilization of Vedic Period,
- To compare between Indus and Vedic civilization.

Introduction

After the decline of Indus civilization, the civilization which emerged is known as Aryan or Vedic civilization. Since the makers of this period were Aryans, this is also known as Aryan civilization. We get information about this civilization from Vedas; hence it is also called Vedic civilization. Around 2000 BC, Aryans finished Indus civilization and developed a high quality civilization, culture and literature in India. Question remains that who were Aryans and what was their origin point and how they progressed in India? All these questions are actually controversial.

4.1 Origin and Native Place of Aryans

Still today, we can't confirm that who were Aryans and where they came to India. Meaning of Arya word is- of holy dynasty or birth. In other words, Arya is symbolic of superiority. Some scholars say that there is similarity between Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and other Indo European languages. Hence, ancestors of these language users must be same. Arya word denotes that particular group of people

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or species that have specific body structure. Aryans possess tall and well built body. They are fair and have long nose.

First, Arya word was used by Veda writers. They referred to themselves as Arya (superior) and opponents with Dasyu or Daas. They used to consider themselves noble and superior than non Aryans. Aryans belonged to thermo cold zones. Their main food was milk, meat and wheat. They were brave, adventurous and hard worker.

Even today, there is a dispute between scholars about their origin. Some scholars try to make them basic Indian citizen by saying they had foreign origins. Various logics are given in this regard. On the basis of history, language, archaeology, human anatomy and vocabulary, they propose following logics regarding origin point of Aryans: (a) Europe is origin of Aryans (b) Central Asia (c) Arctic region (d) India

Supporter of European Logic – Many scholars are of the view that they had Europe as their origin. First to express this view was Florence Philippi, a resident of Sesseetty. He lived for 5 years in Goa. He tried to prove similarity between Sanskrit and other European languages. Later on, **Sir William Jones** also supported this logic. He showed similarity between Greek, Latin, Gothic, Sanskrit and Farsi languages. For example, father is called Pitri in Sanskrit, Pater in Latin, father in English and Watar in German. Same similarity is found in the word, mother. On the basis of linguistic similarity, scholars started believing in European origin of Aryans. Later, zoological, geographical conditions and species too were used as a base to strengthen this logic. As per famous scholar **P. Gailles**, all those animals or plants as mentioned in Veda, are not found in India, hence it is sure that they came from outside. Possibly, these places can Austria, Hungary, Bohemia or Valley of Denube River. **P. Gailles** logic has many weaknesses, hence scholars don't agree to his logic. Another scholar **Penka** says that Germany and majorly Scandinavia was the origin of Aryans. He used species and body structure to present his logic. Biggest weakness of this logic is that, this similarity is not only there with Germany, rather with South Russia, Poland and Ukraine etc also. On the basis of plant similarity, **Nehring** has considered south Russia as their native place. Other scholars have taken North West Kirghiz or Scandinavia as their origin. Thus, on linguistic similarity scholars tried to prove that Aryans came from Europe.

But, critiques don't give value to this logic. They say that linguistic basis can't be a solid base. Being at same place, such similarities can be found in mutually opposite groups as well. Besides, there is no literature in Europe which contemporary to Vedas nor there is any proof, on the basis of which we can prove any article, animal or plant origin as European or which have similar names (eastern and western Arya culture). Logic of species or caste similarity too is not very strong because in ancient period or even now, we can find different similarity in different species or castes. Critiques are of the view that the utensils found from south Russia or central Germany, have not been found from any other places like; western Baltic sea shore, Ukraine, Newzealand, Russia and Turkistan etc. Some of these places are outside Europe, hence can't be their origin.

Supporter of Central Asia – In contrast to Europe, many scholars say that Aryans moved from central Asia to India, hence this can be their origin. This view point is very popular and supported. Supporters of this point try to prove this point on the basis of religious epics that Aryans came to Indian from central Asia. Major supporter for this principle is **Prof Maxmuller**. As per him, there is lot of similarity between Aryan literature **Rigveda** and Iranian **Jindawesta**. This similarity proves that Iranians and Indian Aryans used to live at any common place before and later on settled at different places. That place was somewhere in between Iran and India. Form here only, one branch of Aryans settled in India, another in Europe and third one in Iran. As per scholars, central Asia had conducive environment for agriculture and animal husbandry, which were major occupation for Aryans. Initially, Aryans computed their year calculation on the basis of Him, which indicates that they came from cold region. Later on, they started computing it on the basis of Sharad, which indicates that they moved towards south, where it was relatively warmer. They were aware of the usage of boats and horses. They knew about Pipal Tree also. Such situation is possible in central Asia only. From here only, Aryas went to different directions.

Self Assessment**Notes****Fill in the Blanks:**

1. Original native place of Aryans was considered as Arctic or Polar zone by
2. Aryans were aware of one long day and one night is one year and there is morning of many days, we get to know about it from
3. King Sudas of Bharat dynasty or Bharat Jana, defeated a union of 10 Kings at the banks of river.

Supporters of central Asia principle also state that maximum ancient literatures of Aryans have been found in central Asia only. **Bogajkoi** script from Asia Minor of 1400 BC approximately, mentioned Vedic gods like Indra, Varun and Mitra etc. On the basis of these logics, scholars believe that Aryans lived in central Asia and from there only, they moved to India. As per them, they possibly lived around Pameer region, Russian Turkistan or Khirgir.

Arctic or North Pole as their Native Place – This logic is strongly supported by **Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak**. He extensively studied **Rigveda** and **Jindawesta** and reached on conclusion that native place of Aryans was arctic or north pole. Veda has geographical description, which indicates that Aryans came from North Pole. For example, from Rigveda we know that Aryans knew that one long day and one long night is one year and morning is of many days. Many days morning indicates that there used to be heavy snowfall. As we are aware that North Pole has huge snowfall. Such snowfall is mentioned in Jindawesta also. Possibly, due to this snowfall only, Aryans moved from arctic zone to central Asia.

But, critiques don't agree to Tilak's logic. They say that if Aryans belonged to arctic area, then they would not call Seven Indus Region as Devkrit Yoni. There is no clear mention of North Pole in Rigveda. Critiques are also of the view that historical and literature proofs are not correct and reliable and they have exaggerations also. Hence, many scholars reject Tilak's logic.

India as the Native Place of Aryans – Many scholars believe that Aryans did not come from outside India, rather they were locals only. **Avinash Chandra Das, Ganganath Jha, DA Vrived, Rajbali Pandey, LD Kalla** etc are major supporter of this view point. They say that Rigveda has glorified mention of Saptasindhu. Hence, this could be the original native of Aryans. They also give logic that in the language of Arya group, use of Sanskrit words are more than any other language, but European languages don't have such use and this is the biggest logic to support their view. Besides, all other geographic condition and nature have been mentioned in Rigveda, is available in Saptasindhu region. Hence, India must be their native place. **Dr. Ganganath Jha** considers Brahmarshi region as their native place. **SC Das** and **Sampoornanand** consider entire Saptasindhu region as Aryans native place. Some scholars believe central region, Kashmir or Himalaya region as their native place.

Many modern scholars don't agree to this point. They say that if Aryans were locals, then before Aryans could have gone out of India, entire region would have been painted in Aryan culture, but it is not true. How come Harappans were not Arya?

Thus we see that there are very complexed and controversial question revolving their origin. All presented facts and logics have some merits and demerits, but no logic is beyond doubt. Major part of scholars believe that Aryans settled in India around 1500 BC from Central Asia. Hence, we can say that Aryans had their original native place somewhere in central Asia only.

Arrival of Aryans in India – When they entered India and invaded, there is no definite date. Their famous literature Rigveda's composition should be around 1000 BC. Hence, quite natural that after their arrival, at the time of peace and organization, this literature was composed. Means, Aryans entered India before 1000 BC. Decline of Indus Civilization is considered to be around 2500 BC, then certainly Aryans would have come in between both these period. Rigveda clarifies that Aryans were not from same family or tribe. They had many tribes which entered in India in pursuit of finding grazing and

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farming lands. They did not come here with invasion objective, but with an intention of peacefully settling here. Pace of their settlement would be slow, which took hundreds of years and that is why, there is no definite date of their arrival. They brought many useful articles of their lives with them.

Settlement of Aryans in Saptasindhu Region— We don't find any mention that Aryans belonged to which place, they went from which place to which place, still the region in which Rigveda has been composed, has been mentioned in Rigveda and that is Saptasindhu region. Initially, Aryans started living in this area only. This area starts from modern Afghanistan and stretches up to western parts of Ganga. We find names of some modern rivers of Afghanistan- Kum, Suvastu, Krumu and Gomati. There is mention of other rivers like; Saraswati, Indus and five rivers of Punjab- Vitasta, Askini, Parushni, Vipasa and Shatudri. Due to existence of these seven rivers, the region has been called Saptasindhu region. Land here was too fertile and conducive for animal husbandry. Hence, Aryans selected this region as their settlement area. Mention of Ganga and Yamuna River is less in this Veda; hence they must not have lived in Doab region. They knew minute details of Saptasindhu region and hence they have described about this area minutely, which certifies that they lived in Saptasindhu region. From here only, they scattered to different parts of India.

Spread of Aryans in other Parts of India— Aryans had to do lot of struggle while advancing to other parts of India with non Aryans, in their initial times. During this period, they were involved in internal conflicts as well, as mentioned in Rigveda. It is mentioned before that separate Aryans tribes entered India at different point of time like-Yadu, Bharat, Anu, Puru, Kribi, Trisu etc. These tribes tried to settle down after seeing the conduciveness of land fertility and ranching utility. Due to variety of tribes in race, they had fights. Head of such tribes were called leader or king. At times, they had conflicts. Such detail is there in Rigveda. King of Bharat tribe Devodas defeated king of non Aryans. Son of Devodas, Sudas defeated union of 10 kings to establish his control on Aryan tribes. Similarly, he defeated another union of non Aryans tribe at the bank of Yamuna River. This mention of Rigveda proves that they had conflicts and wars at various points of time.

When Aryans came to India, then non Aryans too had their regime at various parts. When Aryans tried to expand, they had to engage in war with non Aryans.

Arya-Non Arya Conflict—Expansion of Aryans in India is history of horrible struggle. Rigveda has mention of this struggle within Aryans and with non Aryans. Aryans had to fight with Dravidians and other residents to expand. Dravidians fought relentlessly to protect their culture and civilization and to stop the expansion of Aryans. This struggle kept going on for hundreds of years. This struggle was not between two species, rather between two civilizations and life style. Aryans were consistently progressing towards east and south to further their culture and civilization. Finally, with help of their strategy, physical power and enthusiasm and abundance of cavalry, they defeated non Aryans. They included non Aryans as Das Varna in their social structure. Generations of same Das Varna people were later named as Shudra. But many non Aryans after being defeated by Aryans went to mountains and forest areas and kept their struggle on. Finally, after being tired of Aryan power, they finally settled in mountain and forest region for ever.

Rigveda tells us about physical and cultural difference between Arya and non Arya. Aryans were tall, fair, high nose and beautiful face. Non Aryans were black, flat nose, short height and small head. They had different religious faith and worship style. Aryans used to worship Sun, Moon, Ashwin, Usha, Indra, Varun etc, deities by mantra and yagna. Hence, Arya while scoffing at their worship style have called them as- desecrator of gods (Devpiya), without deity (Adevyuh), Ling worshipper (shishnedeveh), non follower of Yagna (Ayagnawan) and adopter of other religious practices (Anyavratah). While commenting on their flat nose, they called them as nose less (Anasah). Understanding non Aryans language was tough for them, hence they called them Mridhravak (not to be understood). They called non Aryans religiously as Dasyu or Das.



Notes Aryans have in the verses of Rigveda, scoffed at anatomy, colour and worship style of non Aryans.

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Rigveda has mention of some non Aryan tribe's name and their leader's name. For example- Simyu, Pishach, Kikat etc were their species and Pishu, Dhuni, Chumuti, Shambar etc were their leaders. They used to make garrisons in towns and lived. Probably, there were more peace loving than Aryans and Indian climate them more lazy and sybaritic. They were civilized and content, but their military style, strategy and arms and weapons were of inferior quality than that of Aryans. Tough non Aryans fought with valour with their bow-arrow, but they kept being defeated by the cavalry army of Aryans and their garrisons and towns kept being razed. Possibly, this is the reason Rigveda has mentioned Indra as Purandar (destroyer of towns). In many stanzas and verses of Rigveda, we find mention of help request from deities like Indra and other, in their struggle against enemies. Undoubtedly, Aryans were successful in establishing their control on the huge Indian region, of their culture and civilization. Besides, as we have seen those defeated non Aryans, were included in their Varna system as Das or Shudra.

Mutual Conflict—Rigveda also mentions about their internal conflict. There were many Jana or tribes among Aryans, who kept fighting for farmable land and power struggle. It appears that not all tribes of Aryans entered India at one time. Some tribes kept coming for several hundreds of years. Hence, after arrival for farm land and settlement, they used to fight. Rigveda has mentioned major species of Aryans as Panchajanah. These major tribes were- Anu, Druhyu, Yadu, Turbsu, and Puru. Besides, there were other smaller ones like; Bharat, Trisu, Shrinjay and Kribu etc. there is mention of one such famous fight in Rigveda, which is called war of ten kings. In this war, king of Bharat dynasty Sudas, defeated union of ten kings at the bank of Parushni or Ravi River. This fight was led by terminated priest of Sudas, vishwamitra. After this fight, Sudas had complete control over Aryan tribes. Priest of Sudas, Vashishtha has done glorified mention of this victory in one of the verses of Rigveda. Soon after this war, Sudas defeated another union of kings led by non Aryans at the bank of Yamuna. Such wars kept happening with an objective of extension of power. Possibly, feeling of imperialism also started germinating. Sudas is considered to an Imperialistic king.

4.2 Civilization and Culture of Vedic Age

(1) Vedic Literature

Vedic Period—Most ancient period of Aryan history is called Vedic period. Reasons being that Vedas are the oldest literature of Aryans and with its study, we can get to know more about their civilization, culture and religion because in Vedic verses thoughts of Arya sages and statements are found aplenty in their own languages. The way Puran gives us information about their political description; similarly Vedic verses give us knowledge about their religion and civilization. We can call the period from Vaivaswat Manu to Mahabharata period as, Vedic period. Since in this large period (1500 years apprx), Vedic verses kept on being composed. After analyzing Vedic verses, we get to know about the culture and civilization; it is of this age only.

Vedic Sanhita—Most ancient literature of Aryans is Veda. It means—knowledge. Normally Veda is in poetic form only, but it contains paragraphs also. Vedic padya is called Rig or Richa, Vedic gadya is called Yajush, song style padya in Vedas are called Saam. Group of Richa and Saam is called Sukta, which means—quality or superior statement. There are thousands of Sukta in Veda. In ancient times, Veda was called Trayi also. Due to being three types of Padya-Richa, Yajush and Saam, it was called Trayi.

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But Vedic mantras are available in the form, is called Vedic Sanhita. In various sages communities, many such mantra were being used verbally, which later were collected and compiled. Initially, it was not customary to write Vedic mantras. With Guru-disciple and father-son tradition, these mantras kept within those families. Son or disciple by listening used to know about them by their father or Guru. This is why they were called Shruti. In different sage dynasties different types of Sukta were continued by Shruti, gradually they were later on compiled. Major credit of this work goes to sage Vedvyas. He was contemporary of Mahabharata and was extraordinarily brilliant. Vedvyas collected Vedic sutra in to Sanhita. Four Sanhita as compiled by him are – Rigveda, Yajurveda, Saamveda and Atharvaveda.

Four Vedas – There are total of 1017 Sukta in Rigveda. If we add another 11 Sukta of Balkhilya, then its number becomes 1028. These 1017 or 1028 Sukta are divided in 10 Mandal. With each Sukta and Richa, name of its sage and deity is given. Sage means – one who knows mantra or one has witnessed mantra. People, who consider Veda as divine, are of the view that though Veda was composed by god only, yet their meaningful interpretation was done by these sages only. But modern scholars believe that these sages were the creator of these mantras. Vedic deity is one such deity who has been worshipped in that particular mantra or in whose context, the mantra is quoted.

In the sages of Rigveda first comes – Gritsamad, Vishwamitra, Vaamdev, Atri, Bhardwaj, Vashishtha. These six sages and their generations composed or witnessed second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh Mandal. Eighth Mandal of sage is of Angiras or Kanva dynasty. Fifty Sukta of first Mandal was composed by Kanva dynasty of sages. Other sages composed other Mandal of first Sukta, whose names are mentioned with these Sukta. Out of these – Vaivaswat Manu, Shivi and Aushinar, Pratardan, Madhuchanda and Devapi are main. There are some women sages too in Rigveda, like Lopamudra. She belonged to a royal family. She was princess of Vidarbha regime and married sage Agastya.

We find two major forms of Yajurveda these times – Shukla Yajurveda and Krishna Yajurveda. Shukla Veda is called Vajsaneyi Sanhita also which has got two branches – Kanva and Madhyandiniyay. There are four branches of Krishna Yajurveda- Kathak Sanhita, Kapishtal Sanhita, Maitriya Sanhita and Taitriya Sanhita. There was possibility of difference in the basic form of recitation of these mantras due to Shruti system being practiced in the sage community and dynasties. Possibly, due to this reason only, there came different branches of Yajurveda. There are differences in recitation of various mantras at many places. Out of these, Vajsaneyi Sanhita is the most importance. Many scholars consider this is the real Yajurveda. It is divided over 40 chapters. It has separate collection of those mantras, which are used in different yagna activities. Last chapter of Yajurveda is Ishopnishad, which does not have relation with yagna activities, but with spiritual meditation.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Rigveda is divided in to Sukta and Mandals.
(a) 1028, 10 (b) 1040, 15
(c) 1020, 30 (d) None of the above
5. Samiti and Sabha have been called Duhita of Prajapati in
(a) Veda (b) Aaranyak
(c) Upanishad (d) None of the above
6. Main basis of economic life of Vedic Age were
(a) Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (b) Industries
(c) Forest based Industries (d) None of the above

7. Worship of was prevalent in the civilization of old Indus valley people.

- (a) Varun (b) Yam
(c) Shishna (d) None of the above

Notes

We have three branches of Samveda at now – Kauthum, Ranayaniya, Jaiminiya. Recitation is their base. Samveda has two parts – Purvacharchik and Uttaracharchik. Both have 1810 mantras. Atharvaveda has two branches – Shaunak and Pippalada. Out of them, Shaunak is more popular and accepted as authentic. Atharvaveda has total of 20 Kaands and 732 Sukta. Number of mantras under Sukta is around 6000.

Brahman Granth – Apart from four Vedic Sanhita, Brahman Granth too are included in Vedic literature. These Granth contain those rituals in which Vedic mantras are used. Apart from rituals, these also contain meaning and implementation method of these Vedic mantras. Each Brahman Granth is related to a Veda and he is considered to be Brahman of that Veda only. Here it also important that we mention Brahman Granth linked with Vedas, as without introduction of Brahman Granth, description of Vedic literature can't be complete.

Main Brahman Granth of Rigveda is Aitreya. As per Shruti, composer of Aitreya was Mahidas Aitreya. Second Granth of Rigveda is Kaushitaki or Sankhyayan Brahman. Brahman of Krishna Yajurveda is Taitriya. Major difference between Shukla and Krishna Yajurveda is that where Shukla Yajurveda contains only mantras, Krishna Yajurveda also contains Brahman parts also. Apart from mantras, Brahman concerning the method of ritual, yagna activities also have been space in it. Hence, Taitriya Brahman is not much different from Krishna Yajurveda on composition perspective. Brahman of Shukla Yajurveda is Shatpath, which is too huge. It has total of 100 chapters divided over 14 Kaands. Shatpath Brahman not only defines yagna activities in detail, but also tells what the objective of such activities is and why they form part of yagna. Yagyavalkya sage is considered to be the composer of Shatpath Brahman. There are three Brahmans of Samveda- Taandya Mahabrahman, Shadvinsh and Jaiminiya. As per many scholars, these three Brahmans are more older than any other Brahman Granth. Brahman of Atharvaveda is Gopath. As per many scholars, this is not very old; it also does not contain those yagna activities, as mentioned in other Brahman Granth.

Aaranyak and Upanishad – There is no doubt that yagna were major part of Aryan religion. They gave importance to rituals of yagna. Hence, for the implementation and use of Vedic mantras, they composed Brahman Granth. Besides, Vedic sages used to meditate on spiritual, philosophical and supernatural subjects as well. What is soul, how the universe originated, universe if formed of what elements, who is the creator and controller of universe, what is the form of conscious authority different from inertia – they considered such questions. For studying such mysterious and complexed questions, sages used to live in forests by making hermitage. Literature which is called Aaranyak and Upanishad, were composed there only. Many Aaranyak are part of Brahman Granth only. Sages composed those Upanishad in forest hermitage count more than 200 in number, but major are as following:

(1) Aitreya Upanishad – This is part of Aitreya Brahman of Rigveda. There is one Aaranyak part at the end of another Brahman Granth, Kaushitaki Brahman, which is called Kaushitaki Aaranyak or Kaushitaki Upanishad. (2) Ishopnishad – Last chapter is in the form of Ishopnishad. Last part of Brahman Granth Shatpath Brahman is also Aaranyak form, which is called Vrihdaranyakopanishad. Under Brahman Granth of Krishna Yajurveda comes – Kath Upanishad, Shwetashwataropnishad, Taitriya and Maitrayaniya Upanishad. (3) Upanishad having relation with Samveda Brahman are Ken and Chandogya. (4) Atharvaveda has relations with Mundak and Mandukya Upanishad.

(2) Political Life of Vedic Period

Study of Vedic Sanhita, Brahman Granth and Upanishad describe many things about civilization, political structure, religion, economic condition and culture about Vedic Aryas. Their brief study shall be useful.

Political Structure – When aryas entered India, they were developed in area of civilization. They crossed the stage of hunters and were in farming and animal husbandry level. They were organized

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as Jana politically. We can understand Jana as tribe. Composition of Jana was like a big family, in which it was considered that all men are offspring of one pristine man and are part of one family. The way, oldest member of family is the leader, similarly Jana family also was led by one head or father. He was called king and he was appointed traditionally or by election. Each vishah (subject) of this Jana followed this head. It was understood that vishah used to make an agreement with king that he shall pledge to protect them from all external enemies and would adhere to its rules just fully. For this purpose only, Vishah paid the king Bali (tax). At the time of coronation, king pledged to discharge his duty with dedication. In case of violation of this pledge, subjects had the right to remove him from the post. King used to rule with any divine rights, is not mentioned in any Vedic Sanhita. In contrast, this is mentioned that vishah accepts king for administrative work. When by such adoption, any king used to take charge of his post, then it was expected that he shall remain Dhruva (stable) at the post lifelong. Atharvaveda states that Dyoh and earth, all are Dhruva. This world is Dhruva and mountains are Dhruva. Similarly, king of the vishah also remain Dhruva. Subjects adore him and he never is removed of his post.

Job of electing king was in the hands of people called Rajkritah (electors of king). Rajkritah were called king themselves. Person elected at the post of king, was considered to be leader of such Rajashrayah Rajkritah. There is no clarity from Veda as to who these Rajkritah were. There is mention of Ratnis, who used to get Havi from king at the time of coronation. We shall write about these Ratnis while describing civilization of post Vedic period (pre Buddhist period). Possibly those called as Ratnis in Brahman Granth were 'Rajkritah Rajanah' because Rajkritah of Vedic period use to give king a 'Parna jewel' at the time of coronation, which was considered to be sign of authority. Probably, this was made of branches of Palash tree considering Palash as holy was prevalent in Vedic period also. Apart from Rajkritah Rajanah, different people like weaver, villagers, charioteers, artisans etc also participated in the coronation and entire vishah used to adopt the king.

Samiti and Sabha – After adoption by the subjects, king used to rule alone, this was not true. There were two institutions in Vedic period called Samiti and Sabha, which not only helped king in the execution of his duties, but also kept control over him. The Sukta which prays for king to be Dhruva, in the same very Sukta, it is mentioned that king's Samiti too be Dhruva. Who all were members of Samiti, this is not clear. Probably, it was institution of entire vishah and all subjects of Jana assembled in it. This is also possible that due to expanding population in Janpad in Vedic period, not all used to assemble in this Samiti, but some important members only had the right to be in it. In ancient Greek town-state Lok Sabha (like eclizia of Athens), everybody used to partake collectively. When town-state population increased to lacs, even then each citizen had the right to go and contribute with his opinion in Lok Sabha and give his consent. Possibly, this also was the form of Arya Janpad (that have similar form as town-state) of Vedic period. Entire vishah of Janpad could collect there. Assembled members used to debate on important issues, expertise in debate and speech was considered to be very important. In a Sukta of Atharvaveda, a person prays that he becomes effective orator and should hypnotize all by his methods, art and knowledge. There are many prayers for getting power to defeat opponents in debate and impress all by speech in Vedas. Undoubtedly, Samiti had open debate on various topics and different people used to demonstrate their vocal and orating skills. Samiti not only discussed political topics, rather spiritual and mysterious topics too. Chandogya and Vrihadaranyak Upanishad has mention of Brahma Vidya related topic in Samiti. Shwetketu appeared in one such Samiti in Panchal Janpad and contributed in spiritual topic. Samiti had its own head, called Ishan. He only presided over Samiti proceedings. But king also appeared in Samiti on various occasions. When Shwetketu went to Panchal Janpad, its king Pravahan Jabali was present.



Did u know?

Samiti and Sabha are called as Duhita of Prajapati in Vedas and it has been prayed that both protect the King actively.

Alike Samiti, Sabha too was an important institution of Vedic Janpad. Difference in the composition of Sabha and Samiti is not clear by Vedic Sanhita. It appears that Sabha was relatively smaller body and only senior people (Pitar and old), were its members and its main job was to deliver justice. Sabha has been called as 'Narishta' in Atharvaveda. **Saynacharya** while clarifying meaning of **Narishta** said, "that those facts as supported by many people should not be opposed, as majority can't be opposed. Hence, Sabha is called Narishta." Literary meaning of Narishta is—non violate able. Whatever used to be decided by majority was considered non violate able and hence Sabha was called Narishta. It appears that in Vedic Sabha also, debates on various topics used to take place and different speakers tried to impress members in his favour. Therefore, there is a prayer in Atharvaveda, "Oh Sabha, we are aware of you fully, your name is Narishta also. Whoever is your member, should be Sawachas (agree with me) with me. Here (Sabha) who all are sitting, I accept their eyes and knowledge (I take them behind me). Oh Indra, make me successful in my endeavour. Your (members) heart which is in support of someone else or has been attached to someone here and there, I return it, you all support me with your heart." This prayer to make members support and be hypnotized is so beautiful and very effectively throws light on Sabha system of that time.

Members of Sabha were called Sabhasad. They have been also called Pitar in Vedas. In later literature, word Vridha (old) has been used for them. It indicates that Sabha did not comprise of all, but of some senior and older people. Main function of Sabha was to deliver justice. Person presented as accused in Sabha was called Sabhachar. Yajurveda mentions Sabhachar in the context of Purushmedha. By Metaphorically considering, it is not difficult to take accused as Medhya (sacrifice able). In another mantra of Yajurveda there is mention of penance against a sin, in Sabha. While performing work of justice, if members faulted knowingly or unknowingly, then it was called sin in Yajurveda and prayers have been done to get rid of it. During Sutrashastra and Dharmashastra also, Sabha performed justice function. "Either don't to go to Sabha, if go then say thoughtfully, that who does not say conscience or wrong things, is sinner." This statement of Dharmashastra is in context of that Sabha that possibly delivered justice also.

(3) Social Life

Panch Jana—Indian arya of Vedic period were divided into many tribes. Rigveda has mention of Panchajanah or Panchkrishtayah at many places, which undoubtedly, addresses to the five major Aryan castes (tribes) of that time. These Panchajanah were Anu, Druhyu, Yadu, Turvashu and Puru. Besides, there is mention of Bharat, Tritsu, Shrinjay etc in Vedas, which establishes the point that the way arya kept expanding in India, development of different Jana kept happening between them. Social status of each person in Jana of Aryan tribes, was similar and each was considered part of same Vishah.

Arya and Das—People staying in India before Aryan entry, were called Das or Dasyu in Vedas. They had many prosperous settlements in India. Aryas won them and brought it under their control and these non Aryans started living as the subordinate of these Arya kings. It was quite natural, that condition of these Das and Dasyu was inferior to Aryans. Aryas hated them and considered them inferior and were not ready to give them similar status as of their own. This resulted in the division of entire subjects under Arya regime into two parts- (1) Arya and (2) Das. Due to the inferior condition of Das, literary meaning of Das word became slave in Sanskrit, this we have already written. These Das people were quite expert in sculpture. They used to make decent, big houses, lived in towns and were expert in many occupations. Even after being defeated by arya, their expertise did not end and continued to maintain their art. Winner arya were warriors. They used to consider yagna activities as matter of pride and lived life by being owner of farm lands and animal husbandry. Various artisan work remained in the hands of Das community only. This resulted in seeing artisans and sculptures as inferior since ancient times in India. It is not true that there was complete non existence of relations between arya and Das. In older times, where non arya were more in number, marriage used to take place between them. Population of such species kept increasing which were neither pure arya nor pure das, rather cross Varna. Probably, these cross Varna were called Vratya. Atharvaveda had mention of Vratya at several

Notes

places. Later by performing Vratya-Stom yagna, provisions were done to include them in to Arya creed. But, there is no doubt that there existed discrimination between Arya and das and only these two Varna were prevalent in Arya Janpad.

Varna System—Social status of all Arya Vishah was same. But gradually, they also started having distinction. Due to being in consistent war with non Aryans, in the Aryan society, necessity of such people (warrior, soldier) increased who have expertise in warring skills. Their main job was to protect subjects from enemy. They were called Kshatriya due to being savior(tran) from damage (Kshat). Though, these Kshatriya were part of Arya vishah only, but they were considered to be highly respected than other (vaishya). Sections dignified dynasty of specific Kshatriya were called Rajanya. Possibly, these Rajanya were the 'Rajkritah Rajanah' that used to adopt one of them for the post of king. They way Kshatriya enjoyed special position in the vishah, similarly intellectuals who had expertise in yagna activities, also enjoyed special status. When aryas settled in India permanently, then there was an increase in their religious methods and activities. Easy religion of ancient times, kept becoming more complexed. Hence it was essential that some people have expertise in yagna activities and rituals and this special of Yagniks should be seen with similar respect as that of Kshatriya. Thus, in Vedic period, beginning of that four Varna system started, which developed a lot afterwards and became important specialty of Hindus and Indian society. But despite the specific status of Kshatriya and Brahmans, there was absolute absence of caste or class difference. Any one is Kshatriya or Brahman, depended on one's skill set only. Anyone could become a Brahman by his knowledge, expertise and intelligence. Similarly, any one of Arya Jana can become Kshatriya due to his bravery. Vedic hermits imagined social structure of society like human body, where Brahmans were at the top at head position, Kshatriya were at arms level, Vaishya at belly and thigh level and Shudra were at feet level. Non Aryan people only comprised Shudra category.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. During Vedic period, animals like cow, bull, horse, sheep, goat, dog, donkey were mainly fostered.
9. Seventh Mandal of Rigveda has been written in the honor of Varun.
10. Vedic Aryans were not aware of metal.
11. In Rigveda, weaver was called Vaya, loom was called veman and spinner was called Tasar.

Family Life—Base of social life of Vedic period was family. As per Shruti of Mahabharata time, when marriage institution was not developed fully, then women were unveiled, independent and maligner. But if it prevailed any time during Arya life, then it would have happened before Vedic period, because by going through Vedas, it is clear that marriage system had been developed at that time and aryas of Vedic period used to marry and live their social life. Normally, they followed monogamy, but at times, we also find polygamy. Probably, this practice was prevalent in non Aryans. Marriage between brother and sister was prohibited. There was no child marriage. Girls too followed celibacy like boys and married in youth. Women were not kept uneducated. Women and Shudra should not be educated, this opinion was not prevalent in Vedic period. Some women were so bluestocking that their mantras have been included in Vedic Sanhita also. Lopamudra, Apalatreyi etc are many women who are sages of Vedic Sukta. Mention of many knowledgeable ladies have come in ancient literatures like Godha, Ghosha, Vishwavara, Aditi, Sarma etc. Mention of elementary meditators like Gargi, Maitreyi have come up in Upanishad. Ladies who entered married life after studying with celibacy, could not be under veils. They were considered as co-partners with her husband. Marriage used to be solemnized by self acceptance, only women used to choose their husband themselves. There are plenty description of swayamvar of princesses and in ancient literature. Not only princesses, rather normal Arya girls also choose husbands for themselves and they got sufficient opportunity for this in Vedic period.

(4) Religion**Notes**

Vedic speeches are primarily religion oriented. Hence, we get detailed information about this age's religious beliefs. Vedic arya worshipped various deities. Indra, Mitra, Agni, Varun, Yam etc were their deities, whom they tried to satisfy through various rules and rituals. Creator, nurturer and demolisher of this universe is one god, this fact was well prevalent amongst arya. They said that Indra, Mitra, Varun, Agni, Suparna, Garutman, Matrishwa, Yam etc are name of one authority only and scholars call them with different names like Indra, Mitra etc. Possibly, this faith developed later on, as initially Aryans considered various natural powers as deities and worshipped them. We see many forces in nature. Rain, sun, heat, cold all happen with one rule. There must be some authoritative deity for these nature forces and by worshipping them one can increase his prosperity and happiness, this faith was there in ancient Aryan minds. As per natural perspective, we can divide Vedic deities in to three parts—(1) Deity of Dyulok like Surya, Savita, Mitra, Pusha, Vishnu, and Varun (2) Deity of Antriksha Sthaniya like Indra, Vayu, Marut and Parjanya (3) Deity of Prithvi Sthaniya like Agni, Som and Prithvi. In different areas of Dyulok, Antriksha and Sthaniya Lok, whatever natural forces are apparent to Aryans, they created various Sukta and mantras in their worship. In form of Aditi, Usha, Saraswati etc, we find mention of many goddesses in Vedas and in their reverence also, many mantras have been composed. Though majority deities are reflection of natural forces and authorities, but there are some deities, which can be understood with expression also. Different sentiments in humans like Shraddha(dedication) and Manyu (anger), have also been accorded divine status in Vedas.

For worshipping these diverse deities, Aryas used to do various rituals and yagna. In firepit, Agni was called for and offering of milk, ghee, grains, liquor etc was given. It was understood that offerings put in to fire reach deities and Agni works as a medium for this. In Vedic period, flesh sacrifice was given or not, is not clear. As per one Shruiti of Mahabharata, possibly animal sacrifice was given in yagna. Later on during king Vasu Chaidyoparichar period, strong protest against this practice erupted. This is sure that before Baudha period, there was one time when animal sacrifice was prevalent during yagna. But this practice was there at Vedic times, is doubtful. At many places in Vedas, there is mention of offerings form of grains, ghee and liquor but no mention of horses etc. is found in Vedic Sanhita.

Aryans were influenced by the religion of those Das or Dasyu people, whom they defeated and established their authority. One mantra of Rigveda prays that Shishna Dev should not spoil our yagna. We have already written that ancient people of Indus civilization had practice of Ling (Shishna)worship in the monumental remains of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, we find many such Shishna(stone made). In Rigveda only at one place, we find description of win over town of Shishna Deva. Vedic arya hated reproductive powers of nature in form of Ling. But later on, Aryans adopted this practice and Shiva ling worship as Shishna worship got included in their worship method. Similarly, we find many witchcrafts in Atharvaveda, which have been adopted from non Arya community. To get rid of snake venom, many words like Taimat, Aaligi, Viligi, Urugula etc have appeared. As per many scholars, these words are not of Vedic language, rather of Caldian language. Caldians used to live in Iraq region and were different from Aryans. We have already mentioned that Indus civilization had trade relation with west Asia region. There is no doubt that words like Taimat etc came from west Asia to Indus civilization and later on Aryas adopted it from Das or Dasyu of Indus civilization people.

It is not possible for us to describe nature of these Vedic deities. But this much is essential to write that arya used to worship different natural forces as deities. This faith was rooted among them that all these deities are diverse expressions of one authority only. Vedic arya were not only active in deity worship and yagna rituals, but also in that elementary meditation, which late gave birth to Upanishad and philosophical stream. How this universe is created, what was the condition before universe, what will be the state when there is no universe—such questions were also discussed in Vedic period. There are many Sukta in Vedic Sanhita, which ponders over these questions beautifully and wit seriousness. This world emerged from the power, one who retains it, one who destroys it, one who is the owner and nurturer of this world, oh dear human, you know him, don't try to know anyone else. There was only Tama (darkness) in this world, heavy Tama. Then universe had not developed, everywhere nature

Notes

was existent in its oldest form. That supreme authority with its penance power, created this world. Whatever is there in this world in past, present and future emanates from that authority only – many such thoughts are available in Vedic mantras and indicate about that elementary meditation, in which many sages and thinkers of that period were involved.

Since, Vedic deities were mainly in natural forms, hence method of making idols and worshipping them was not existent then. Vedic Aryas did not make such temples for deity worship, where idols were placed. During Vedic period, main method of worship was yagna activities only.

(5) Economic Life

Agriculture and animal husbandry was main base of economic life of Vedic period. Cow, bull, horse, donkey, dog, goat, sheep etc were fostered majorly. Importance of cow in economic life was such, that it was considered Aghanya (not to be killed). Aryas used to keep these animals in big number and this helped them in their economic prosperity. In this period, Aryans possibly settled at various places and developed well in farming. For ploughing land, they used bulls. For increasing productivity of farm, even fertilizer was used. For irrigation, water of lake, reservoir, river and well was used. For watering farms, small canals and drain were made. The way modern farmers in India now do farming, plough their fields with wooden and iron plough, cultivate, irrigate and harvest, almost similar style was used by Aryans. Main farm produce were wheat, paddy, barley, sesame and maize etc. Though major medium of Aryan occupation was farming, yet gradually other art works and business were growing. Takshman (carpenter), Hiranyakar (jeweler), Karmkaar (metal sculpturer), Charmakar (cobbler), Vaya (weaver) etc many occupations have been described in Vedas. In that period, Aryas used chariot a lot. These not only were used to ferry passengers and goods, but also had great utility in wars. Non Aryas were involved in many art works, but even Aryas also started various professions like Kaaru (sculpture), Bhishak (medical counselor) etc. By keeping Das artisans as servants or slaves, they started managing these occupations.

Vedic Aryas knew use of many metals. In civilization, they marched quite ahead of Stone Age. They used gold and silver for their utensils and ornaments, but used a metal called Ayas for making their tools and weapons. In Sanskrit means, Iron, but many scholars are of the view that Ayas used in Vedas is copper and not Iron. Whether Ayas denotes Iron or Copper, there is no doubt that Vedic Aryas were well aware of its use and metal sculpturer used to make various tools from it.

Aryas used to make beautiful houses for residing. There is a Shalasukta in Veda which has nice description of Shala (house). Probably, for these Shala constructions, wood have been used extensively.

Clothes making art too was quite advanced in this period. Wool and silk were used specially to make clothes. We can easily assume that they were aware of cotton. While giving description of economic life of Indus civilization, we have mentioned those proofs by which their relation with cotton is established. For Aryans, it was easy to learn the farming and use of cotton from their predecessors Indus people. Aryas were expert in making yarn and thus making clothes of it. They wore Ushniya (pagdi or turban) on head, Adhovastra (dhoti or saree) at bottom and for upper parts used Uttariya (Chadar or sheet). Both men and women were fond of ornaments. They used many ornaments like Kundal, Keyur, Nishkragreeva, etc in that period. For trade, they used Barter system. But majorly, for evaluating any product was done by cows and considered cow as exchange unit for using Barter system. Any coin of any metal was prevalent or not, this is not clear. There is mention of a currency called Nishka in Vedic literature. But possibly, its use was more for ornament than for currency. In Vedic Sanhita, mention of boats has also appeared at several places. In these, some of the boats were very huge. Probably, in Vedic period also, they used to go various places for trade by road and water route. During Indus civilization, trade by sea route had started and in this age, it flourished even more.

There is mention of Pani Traders at many places in Vedic literature, who have been called Asur. Perhaps, these were Phoenician people, who are called Puni in Latin. Phoenician people had their settlement near Palestine sea shore, from where they used to go far places for trading. They were aware of Indian Aryans. Perhaps, in Vedic period, India had trade relations with Phoenician of Palestine (Pani or Puni).

4.3 Differences and Similarities between Indus Civilization and Vedic Culture

Notes

Generally, Vedic culture is considered developed in the latter part of Indus civilization. By Vedic culture we mean that culture, whose formulation is found in Vedic literature. After the rise of Indus civilization and the advent of Vedic period, beginning of a new era took place. It saw the end of town system and large rural system emerged. In the initial stage of civilization, Vedic Jana looks like ranching states of members of society who were also aware of farming. Later on, after permanent settlement, they got indulged in farming as major focus and we see urbanization again at the last phase of post Vedic period.

Thus, while keeping in view some fundamental differences between Indus and Vedic culture, they are considered to be result of different conditions. Marshall and some other scholars have mentioned about mutual differences of Indus and Vedic cultures. Vedic culture was rural culture; there is no mention of towns in Rigveda. Towns developed in later Vedic period, in contemporary literature, we find mention of Kampil, Karpashava, Karoti, Kaushambi, Naimish etc. But above mentioned towns developed quite later. These towns were developed with plan, roads were pre provisioned and entire system was organized, but there is no written mention. It indicates that Vedic people did not have knowledge of town planning initially. At the other hand, we see that Indus people had great town planning. System at Indus civilization was like any modern day planning. Town was divided in to wards. Roads mapping system was done prehand.

While stating another difference Marshall says that Aryas were aware of gold and silver. Rigveda has mention of gold ornaments. There is mention of Ayas metal in Rigveda. Scholars are of the view that Ayas is copper, which was used to make utensils by beating it. In Atharvaveda, Iron is called as Black Ayas and copper as Red Ayas. Lead has been told different than gold and silver. Kane states that, in Vedic literature, we find word of Ayastapa (heater of Ayas). Whereas, Indus people were aware of making tools and weapons making by copper and bronze, but unaware of Iron.

Horse had great importance in Aryan life. It was a symbol of power and mobility and besides, being symbol of Agni and Surya. Chariots used in war were pulled by horses. Possibly, for carrying goods and ploughing fields was also done by them. But Indus people were aware of horse, there is no definite proof. Bone proof found at the upper level from Mohenjodaro is not very authentic. From Surkotda also, horse bone has been found, but on the basis of solitary proof, we can't anything emphatically. Similarly, a clay idol found from Lothal can't be said to be replica of horse. Alchin couple is of the view that on the basis of above facts, we can't say with confidence, that pre Harappa and Harappa period had any use of horse.

There is no mention of tiger in Vedas, but on Indus currency, we can see many imprints of tigers. **Marshall** and **Macdonald** has opined that in Rigveda there is mention of elephant at only two places and for it, word Hastimriga was used, which was not more known animals. **Prof. A.C. Das** said that for elephant use of *Ibh* and *Vaaran* word has been done for elephant. Hence, we can't agree with Marshall that Rigvedic Aryas were unaware of elephants.

A currency (Marshall no. 420) has been found from Mohenjodaro, which has picture imprint of three faced man. As mentioned earlier, this image is supposed to be of pre Shiva Pashupati form. Elephant and tiger at the right side and rhino and bull at the left side and beneath his sitting two deers are shown. It proves that Indus people were aware of all those animals. Arya respected cow. 19th and 169th Sukta of 10th Mandal of Rigveda are in worship of cow. Prayers were done for their prosperity from deities like Rudra, Parjanya, and Prajapati etc. the Daskhina given to priests at the time of yagnic rituals also used to be cow only. On the other hand, from currencies and other art work found from Indus region, it does not appear that cow had such respect; rather bull was more important than cow. Various images of bull are found in the currencies of Indus region – humped bull, small bull etc. Though it can't be said that in Harappa culture, bull was related to Shiva Pashupati (early Shiva). Scholars are of the view that the reason of showing small horned bull in angry state can be that its imagination has been done in the form of a vehicle of terminator god (Shiva).

Notes

Aryans were not worshippers of Idols and images, whereas Indus people were. Indus people worshipped Ling and Aryans not only abstained from it, rather hated it and shishnedevah or Ling worship has been condemned. Non Aryans were called Ling worshippers.

Women images being found aplenty from Indus regions indicate that mother goddess had special position in Indus civilization. Such women images found from Harappa and Mohenjodaro have been called as mother goddess and scholars are of the view that Indus society was Matriarchal on the basis of these images found. In contrast, we see that for Aryans, men deity have been more important. Around 250 Richa have been written in respect of Indra. i.e. $\frac{1}{4}$ part of entire Vedic Richas is filled with Indra worship only. 7th Mandal of Rigveda is in worship of Varun. In other Vedic deities, Surya, Agni, Vishnu, Som etc are major. Rigveda also mentions women deities like Usha, Aditi, Prithvi, Saraswati, but they are less revered.



Task

Express your views on the similarity and dissimilarity of Indus civilization and Vedic Culture.

Marshall opines that absence of firepit remains from Harappa and Mohenjodaro is a proof that there was no practice of yagnic activity in Indus period. Though in subsequent excavations, remains of firepit have been found. From Kalibanga, remains of seven such huge firepit have been found near well on a platform of rectangular size, which are in a series, these are supposed to be symbol of religious rituals. **HD sankalia** opines that, there must be such remains in Harappa and Mohenjodaro, but they could not be identified in first rapid round of excavations. Though, Indus people were aware of yagnic methods, is tough to be said, in the absence of written material. But in Vedic period, aryas used to appease deities by doing yagnic rituals. Yagna has been called certificate or endorsement of deities. Yagna makes deity stronger and deities are eligible for yagna.

From found currency and tools, it appears that Indus people were aware of writing. About Aryas, some scholars believe that their language was Sanskrit and their script developed later which means; Aryans did not how to write and did all their academic work verbally. On the other hand, still there is no success in reading Indus script.

Rigveda has mention of castles. In one of the regions post Arya times, there is mention of town with 100 castles. Vedic deity Indra has been called Purandar means demolisher of castles. Historians believe that castles mentioned in Rigveda are indicative of Indus period towns and castles, as Vedic people were not only unaware of castle making, rather town planning too started quite later.

There is enough information about non Aryans from Rigveda—they have been called Mridhravak (speaker of unaware language), Akarman (devoid of Vedic rituals), Adevyuh (not follower of Vedic deity), Ayagvan (zero in yagna), Abrahman (devoid of religious belief) and Avrata (devoid of fast).

Aryans knew to make arms and weapons and also knew how to make armours. But Indus people were unaware of such armours and weapons. No defence related article has been found from Indus region.

Thus with above analysis, we can say that in both culture and civilization, many facts can be mentioned which self sufficient in proving both the civilizations and life style different. Rigvedic culture developed after Indus period and it developed independently. Though, we can't avoid the fact that cultures emerge by converging as a result of mutual conflicts and synergy.

Similarities—Apart from mentioned differences, there are some similarities too between the two. Their analysis shall be appropriate. Pashupati Shiva is imprint on Indus currencies, which had been mentioned before. Rigveda also has mention of Rudra means Shiva. Three Mantras (rhymes) have been written in the worship of Rudra. Rudra has been called forest dweller and supreme doctor. Scholars believe that possible concept of Rudra had been received from Indus culture.

As mentioned before, clay women images have been found from Harappa and Mohenjodaro, archaeologists have considered them as mother goddesses. There is no doubt about religious aspect of women pictures of currencies of Indus regions.

In ancient deities, first to be worshipped must be Akaash (sky) and Prithvi. Earth is mentioned as divine in Rigveda also. Maximum importance has been given to Aditi in Rigvedic period. She has been said to source of origin of all and creator of entire world. This fact indicates to that currency in which there is imprint of a bare lady lying upside down with her legs stretched and there is a tree projecting out from its abdomen. On the other face of it, a man with a scapula type article and a lady doing Namaste with both her hands up, has been shown. It is but natural to think that this picturisation is a worship of mother goddess as mother earth. Possible that Vedic sages got this thought of Aditi as creator of the world and worship of earth in divine form from Indus civilization.

Similarly, manors, hillock of Kalibanga and irregular sized holes on platforms of Kotdiji have been taken as symbol of fire worship. In Rigveda, Agni has been given special importance. Agni has been called as priest and it is a medium to send Havi for deities. Not only this, it has been called inspirator of knowledge karma and has been seen as glorious. Hence, in both cultures we see importance of Agni.

Many wells and bathing pools have been found Harappa and Mohenjodaro. Archaeologists are of the view that water and river worship were prevalent in Indus time. Imprint of crocodile imprint also is taken as river god confirmation. There was practice of collective bath on religious occasion and famous historians have painted these bathing pools in this respect only. Vedic sages also accept 'Parjanya' and 'Aapah' as water gods. Indra too has been called deity of rains. Saraswati River has been revered as river goddess.

We have found stone made images of animals. On currency also, we see many images like-buffalo, cheetah, bull, elephant, rhino, deer etc must have been topic of worship in one form or other. In Rigveda there has been mention of sheep, goat, dog, bull, deer, lion, elephant etc.

Rigveda has mention of gold ornaments. Major ornaments are—ear rings, throat lace, necklace, jewel etc. out of these; many were used by Indus people also.

Impeccable characteristic of Indus people were of making cloth from cotton. Rig Vedic period arya too had this as their major occupation. In Rigveda weaver is called Vaya. Loom is called veman, spindle is called Tasar, and thread is called Tantu.

Hence, we can say that there are many similarities between the two cultures. Many traditions, religious beliefs are seen in Vedic age. On the other hand, their town planning and sculpture has not been adopted. Where there is consistency in conceptual fundamentals, there is scarcity of proofs in artistic fundamentals, which is still a subject of mystery.

4.4 Summary

There is still difference of opinion as regards Aryan's origin and native place. Some scholars while proving them foreigners try to establish them as locals. Many logics are given in this regard. Scholars try to express their view points on the basis of history, language, archaeology, human anatomy and vocabulary – (a) Origin of arya is Europe (b) Central Asia (c) Arctic region (d) India.

4.5 Keywords

- **Fort:** Castle or garrison.
- **Religion:** Have faith in existence of god.

Notes

4.6 Review Questions

1. Who were Aryans? What was their original native place?
2. Give introduction of Vedic literature.
3. Throw light on various subjects and forms of Vedic period.
4. Describe difference between Indus civilization and Vedic culture.

Answer: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------|---------|
| 1. Bal Ganga Dhar Tilak | 2. Rigveda | 3. Parushni | 4. (a) |
| 5. (a) | 6. (a) | 7. (c) | 8. True |
| 9. True | 10. False | 11. True | |

4.7 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
2. Ancient Indian History – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
3. Ancient Indian History New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
4. Ancient Indian History – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.*
5. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*

Unit-5: Later-Vedic Period

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 5.1 Geographical Boundary of Later-Vedic Period: Economical, Social, Political, Intellectual and Religious
- 5.2 Summary
- 5.3 Keywords
- 5.4 Review Questions
- 5.5 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To be able to describe economical, social, political and religious state of later vedic age.

Introduction

Second and final stage of Vedic age is called Later Vedic period. It starts from 1000 BC and ends at 600 BC approximately.

For study of later Vedic period, we have **Atharvaveda**, **Samveda** and **Yajurveda** as material. These Vedas were composed after Rigveda. Yajurveda has collection of Sukta. Besides, it has description of religious rituals as well. As per Yajurveda, these rituals have to be performed with oral recitation. With these rituals, we get to know about social and political conditions of Yajurveda period (1000-800 BC). Later on, Rigvedic mantras were started being chanted as songs. To be able to be chanted like songs, they were arranged in proper notes. Thus, when Rigvedic mantras' form changed, then collection of rites and rituals mantras were started being called Samveda. Atharvaveda has mention of mantras and tantras (occult) to get rid of troubles. On the basis of Atharvaveda, we get to know about religious beliefs and practices of later Vedic period.

After composition of Vedic Sanhita, some more literature were composed, called Brahman. This too is a collection of several religious rituals. These rituals have been done keeping in view religious and social perspective. All Granth mentioned above, are in the period of 1000-600 BC.

To endorse facts and description of above mentioned religious literature, some literature was again composed, which are called Brahman. This too is collection of various religious rituals. On the basis of above resources, we get to know about 500 years of history post Vedic period. After Indus and

Notes

Vedic period, later Vedic period was such time, when society was changing from social, political and economical perspective.

5.1: Geographical Boundary of Later-Vedic Period: Economical, Social, Political, Intellectual and Religious

Geographical Limit—Centre of Rigvedic civilization was Punjab, but in later Vedic period, it spread up to Haryana, Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh. In this period, problem of conflicts with non Aryans also ended. Hence, people of later Vedic age got opportunity to have a peaceful environment to develop their culture. In comparison to Rigvedic time, development of later Vedic period happened in many more perspective. By merging small regions, environment of making big empire was also ready.

Kuru Regime—Granth tell us that two major tribes Kuru and Bharat merged together and were being called Kurujana. They defeated many nearby tribes and established their control over them. Their regime extended up to Delhi, Thaneshwar, plains of Ganga-Yamuna. On the name of Kuru tribe, this region was being called Kurukshetra. From administrative perspective, the place they made their capital was known as Hastinapur, which now lies in modern Meerut district. Importance of Kuru tribe increases when we know that Bharatyudh itself was the major event of epic **Mahabharata**. It is said that this war happened between Kaurava and Pandava somewhere around 950 BC. Both Pandava and Kaurava were members of Kurujana. It is said that due to this Kurujana war, entire tribe got extinct.

Excavation has been done at capital of Kuru Panchal; Hastinapur. Here some articles have been found between 900-500 BC, which indicates towards urban life at this place. But, this Hastinapur is not the one of Mahabharata time period, as there is no article found, which can be related with Mahabharata. Writing of Mahabharata has happened in Gupta period, which has description of houses of solid and baked bricks, whereas in later Vedic period, there is no find of baked, solid bricks. Scholars believe that Hastinapur destroyed due to flood. Hence, Kurus of this place settled in Kaushambi, near Allahabad in modern Uttar Pradesh.

Videh—This is confirmed that during 7th century BC, i.e. at the last phase of later Vedic period, Aryas started settling in Kaushal and Videh. Videh was in the northern part of Bihar. Its capital was Mithila. Name of Videh probably has been kept in the name of some Arya tribe. As per Shatpath Brahman, fire kept burning the earth and proceeded towards east. When it reached near Sadaneera river, it stopped. Sadaneera was the name of modern Gandak river. Sadaneera means, that river which always contains water. When fire stopped at the western side of the river, then to help it in proceeding towards east, head of Arya tribe Videh Madhav came. With his help (he managed to get fire across the river) went across Sadaneera. Finally, Aryans got control over Videh. It is said, Janak was the king there. Famous scholar Yagyavalkya also was in his court only. 7th century BC, they had tools made of Iron.

Kaushal—It was situated in modern eastern Uttar Pradesh. Its capital was Ajodhya, which was major centre of Arya culture. It is said that Kaushal has relations with king Rama of Ramayana. But we should know that there is no mention of king Rama in Vedic literature.

Kaikeya—This state existed in modern Shahpur, Jhelum and Gujarat area. King Ashwapati was famous for his justice.

Kashi—Modern Varanasi of eastern Uttar Pradesh is the ancient Kashi. It was a holy place from ancient times only. Most important king of Kashi was Ajatshatru, who was a scholar.

Gandhar—It was situated in modern Sindh of Pakistan at the bank of Indus River. We have mention of two towns—Takshshila and Pushkarawati. We get proof of Iron usage in this area from 11th century BC. Some dead bodies have been found in excavation. Many iron articles have been found along with these dead bodies. 11th century BC onwards, areas like Baluchistan, Eastern Punjab, Western Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, we find usage of Iron.

Self Assessment**Notes****Fill in the Blanks:**

1. was considered the greatest Justice in Later Vedic period.
2. Religious beliefs and customs post Vedic period is known by
3. Sadaneera was the name of modern river.

Economic Life

Due settling down at one place led to improvement in many areas during later Vedic period as compared to Vedic period. Rural establishment of Vedic age was slowly diminishing and people were moving towards urban system in post Vedic period.

Iron—If we look at technical development, then later Vedic period is the time, when actual use of Iron started in India. Prior to Iron, bronze was the main metal of technical development. This was made by mixing copper and lead. After bronze, slowly use of Iron started in later Vedic period. Granth of later Vedic period address it as shyam Ayas or Krishna Ayas. In India, use of Iron started around 1000 BC. Many tools have been found from Gandhar in Pakistan of this period. During 9th century BC, some Iron blades have been found from western Uttar Pradesh. These blades were used on arrow or spear to attack enemies. It seems that with the help of these weapons only, Aryas defeated their enemies. It is assumed that forests in the valley of north Ganga would have been cleaned up with Iron axe only. Due to not being excessive rainfall area, they would not have been dense, even then looking at woods utility, it would have been better to cut rather than burn. Without Iron, it is difficult to cut huge trees with any other tool. In western parts of Uttar Pradesh, Iron tools were found in 7th century BC only. Technical development of Iron influenced later periods of later Vedic period also. It appears from tools found from excavation, that though they were made initially for war purpose, later they started being used in farming and other purposes also.

Agriculture—In later Vedic period, farming tools have been found very less, though main occupation turned out to be farming. In the western part of Uttar Pradesh and nearby areas, Iron tools have been found. Besides Iron, pieces of ashes and clay pots have also been found. We can assume by this that later Vedic Aryas used to make such pots and utensils. This means that Aryas left gypsy life and started settling. Alike, Vedic period, even today people used to live in huts with their animals. But farming was taken up at more advanced level than Vedic time. Now manufacturing of bigger ploughs were being done to increase productivity. Hence, farms became more fertile and grain production increased. One year had around three crops. Irrigation also started to water the fields. Now they started producing rice, pulse, sesame, wheat etc., to protect crops in the field was a major challenge. Many poisonous insects, bacteria, rats, snowfall etc damaged crops. Then problem of famine or flood due to shortage or excess rains was another issue. Farmers had only one option against them of occult.

For irrigation, water was brought to the farms by drains. These drains sourced water from rivers. For farming purpose, buffalo was tamed animal. To cultivate land with plough, later Vedic Aryans used 6, 8, 12, 24 bulls. They were aware of beans. As importance of farming kept growing, tendency of ranching kept losing its appeal. Resulting in settled life and less animal husbandry. Vital reason being rise in population and only animal husbandry was not able to take care of needs of life.

Animal Husbandry—Ranching was losing its appeal as with rising population, Aryans started settling at one place and started farming with the help of Iron. But it does not mean that Aryans were driving animals out of their houses. Many people had farming as well as animal husbandry business. Still people had goat, sheep, bull, cow etc animals in plenty. In later Vedic period also, cows were worshipped. There used to be grazing fields for animals near village, with enough grass. Milk and curd were used to be healthy. Cow was donated in that period.

Metal Work—In Rigvedic times, we see few occupations only, but in later Vedic period literature, we find mention of many occupations. Gold became important metal in this period. Later Vedic literature

Notes

have mentioned about it many times. Stress has been on the purity of gold. We find mention of many types of gold ornaments in later Vedic literature. People also used silver ornaments. Melting of metal business too started in this time. It is difficult to tell, how much the usage of Iron was. But for copper, we can say that it was used to make many articles. Even today, copper is used more as compare to Iron. Mention of Tin and Lead is also found in later Vedic literature.

Other Occupations – Mention of other business is also there in later Vedic literature. Carpenter, weaver, cobbler, jeweler, coloring man, potter etc were on the rise. Even fishermen used to make their days end by trapping fishes. Charioteer was appointed to drive chariot. Shepherds used to make their bread by keeping sheeps. Fowler used to sell birds-animals by trapping them in forests and take care of his bread. Weaver, barber, bow makers, mat makers and rope makers started their business independently up till now.

As per later literatures, making of clothes also became one of the major businesses. Making of woolen clothes was very much prevalent. Jute was used to make sacks and mats. Rich people used to wear cloth called Shraum; animal skin was used by celibates and hermits. It is assumed that for weaving clothes, there must be something like loom. Weaving work was mainly done by women. There was a colourer called Rangsaaz. Potters used to make clay utensil with wheel. Out of them; pail, bowl, plate etc were more popular. Occult system was popular for treatment perspective.

Trade Association – In later Vedic period, development happened due to rise in trade. New traders liked to remain organized with safety and ease perspective. It appears that their association was known as Shreshthi. It is made up of Shreshtha means head or best. Later Vedic Granth, Aitreya Brahman has mention of Shreshthi. This possibly was used for head of association of traders or for Shreshtha. In some other literature of post Vedic age, mention of Gana and Ganapati are also found. It appears that these also have been used for any trader’s association only. There must be traders association due to being trade in existence, but there is no detailed mention Granth.

Commerce – From many literature of later Vedic age, we found use of Vanijya word, which indicates that trade and commerce were growing. Traders used to go from one place to other. They used to be majorly Vaishya only.



Notes

Custom of Mahajan has been described in Shatpath Brahman, which states money lending on Interest.

Interest earner has been called Kusudin. There is no definite mention currency of exchange, but we find mention of word Nishka in Granth. Scholars assume that Nishka is symbolic of coin. But no definite conclusion has been drawn.

In sale-purchase, still barter system was prevalent. Cow could be used as coins and anything could be bought. In some Granth, we find **Shatmanya** word. It is said, that this too was a type of coin. This has been endorsed by famous scholar **Dr. R. Bhandarkar** also. Some other scholars don’t consider it as coin. For Shatmanya they say that this was only a tool of exchange. Dr. Bhandarkar has said two words; **Krishna** and **Paad** are also coins, which are found in later Granth. He even goes to the extent and say that currency was in use since pre-Vedic period. But, definitely, we have not found currency before 7th century BC.

Social Life

Life of pre-Vedic people was simple and straight. If they did not have organized system, then they had less tension also. During later Vedic period, their life became organized due to permanent settlement. Which resulted in strong social division between Aryas, which was based on Varna.

Varna System – Different scholars have interpreted meaning of Varna differently. Literary meaning of Varna is colour. Other meaning is dignity and status. Hence, we can say that with the mixture of colour

and status, Varna system emerged. In modern times, use of word Jati is also done for Varna. We find four Varna in later Vedic age, which originated from different parts of Deity. It is said that, from mouth came Brahman, arms came Kshatriya, thighs came vaishya and from feet came Shudra. The deity from whose limbs these Varna emerged is based on imagination only. There is no historical evidence for the same. Hence, for academic comfort, we can say him First Human or Brahman or Deity or something else.

Thus, entire society of later Vedic period has been divided in to four parts considering it as human body. This division is religious and there is no rationale.

Rawson also has opined on this. He considers basis of Varna system as colour. Aryas had fair skin and fit body. After coming to India, their interaction with non Aryans increased. Non Aryans were dark skin and short height. Their nose too was flat. In other words, they were ugly. Hence, aryas did not want to mix up with them. Gradually due to independent separate existence of both Arya and non Arya, both of them got divided on the basis of colour or Varna in two species. Aryas who came from outside started considering themselves as superior in comparison with local non Aryans. Hence, initially there were only two sections of society on the basis of colour. Not seeing any important headway, there could not have been any division amongst dark skin. Good looking started calling them Aryas along with Dwij. Later on, this Dwij divided in to three parts, which were being called Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaishya. Thus, including Shudra, four Varna completed.

Development—With the effort of Brahmans, later Vedic period got divided in to four strong parts. Lower two parts, Vaishya and Shudra were involved in production work intensely, but despite doing any labour for production, Brahman section was in comfort. Brahmans and Kshatriya had total control on production. One part of Articles produced by Vaishya and Shudra was taken away by them in the name of religious rituals and security. Brahman and Kshatriya were in special category, but had mutual tension as well. There is mention of one such scene in later Vedic Granth, where fight between Brahma and Kshatra is shown. Similarly, fight between Mitra and Varun too has been shown. On the basis of mentioned logics, scholars say that due to selfish motives, there always was tension between the two. Though, they had selfish driven tension between them, for exploiting Vaishya and Shudra, they even joined together. Another reason of tension between these two higher castes was to get superior place in society. But, chief reason of conflict between them was to get maximum share of produce of Shudra and Vaishya, as has been told before.

Notes

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Kaushal State, situated in eastern Uttar Pradesh, had its capital at
 - (a) Ayodhya
 - (b) Kashi
 - (c) Hastinapur
 - (d) None of the above
5. King Kaikeya of later Vedic period was famous for his
 - (a) Justice
 - (b) Generosity
 - (c) Cruelty
 - (d) None of the above
6. In later Vedic period, kings were burdened with responsibility at the time of coronation only. Such description is found in
 - (a) Rigveda
 - (b) Aaranyak
 - (c) Shatpath Brahman
 - (d) None of the above
7. Word 'Vishamatta' has been used for King in
 - (a) Kaushitaki Brahman
 - (b) Upanishad
 - (c) Aitreya Brahman
 - (d) None of the above

Notes

At one side, we see Brahman, they only knew to receive. They received money from many sources. Apart from taking money from Vaishya and Shudra, they also took money from Kshatriya. On the other hand, Kshatriya only could take money from Shudra and Vaishya. They had to give money to Brahman on some or the other religious ritual pretext, leave aside taking from them, hence, Kshatriya needed more money. Since, main function of Kshatriya was to fight; hence Brahman had to be defeated by them. Finally, we see that Kshatriya started commanding all the sources of production. On articles more than demand or production, went to Kshatriya side. Brahman had to compromise as they did not have any other choice. But, Brahman kept their superior image intact, as their class was supposed to be getting respect in society. As per Aitreya Brahman; Shudra, Brahman, Vaishya all three had to be in touch with Kshatriya. Thus, all accepted supremacy of Kshatriya. Not even this, Kshatriya supremacy is proved by this point also that at the time of coronation, Brahman accords Kshatriya king with the title of Paramshreshtha Brahman. Later on, we get to know that Brahman were many times challenged by Kshatriya. Kshatriya king for its own interests, used to terrorize all sections of society.

In later Vedic age, Vaishya had third place. After crossing gypsy and ranching life, Arya adopted organized farming. This became new characteristic of Arya society. Under this system, onus of farming, animal husbandry and trade was on Vaishya community. Vaishya established trade relation with many settlements. Slowly, one section of Vaishya became farmers. Their major work became farming. Second section became traders. Initially, these traders came from prosperous farming community, as bearing losses of business was their cup of tea only.

As per study of later vedic Granth, it appears that despite being rich, their status in society was low as compared to Brahman and Kshatriya. Major duty of Vaishya was to ensure expenditure of Kshatriyas and Brahmans. They used to pay **Bali, Shulka, Bhaga** to king. King used to exploit these Vaishya so much that as per Aitreya Brahman, king has been called eater of production community, i.e. Vaishya and Shudra. Kshatriya always pressurized farmers also to act as per their will. This nature of king has not been opposed rather supported by religious Granth. Vaishya not following king's order has been called very bad human being. Exploitation of farmers was not only practices by king but by Brahmin also. Insects, birds etc damaged crops, which was a major challenge for farmers. Instead of giving solution for this problem, he could confiscate anyone's land and property in case of nonpayment of taxes.



Did u know? King used to exploit these Vaishya so much that as per Aitreya Brahman, king has been called eater of production community, i.e. Vaishya and Shudra.

In crisis times, king used to eat with everyone of the state together, but it does not mean that there was good relation between king and the subjects. During war times, vaishya were also forced to offer their soldier services. We don't find any protest by vaishya in later vedic Granth against such rigid behavior of Kshatriya and Brahman. But one thing becomes clear, that Brahman have emphasized on the concept of rebirth. 'Good deeds shall give you benefits in next life' this statement of Brahman was propagated mainly to exploit Vaishya only, so that they could not revolt against king. We also find mention how people from south Panchal went to north, as they failed to pay heavy taxes levied by the king.

We also get to hear about division among vaishya. They started dividing in sections. There was rising tension due to farming and trade. Some vaishya were doing farming, some vaishya by doing other works, started being called, goldsmith, ironsmith, carpenter, chariot maker, potter etc.

Condition of Shudra was even worse. They were at fourth position. His duty was to serve all three Varna. King as per his will could kill or terrorize him. Those formed part of Shudra community that were defeated by Aryas. Generation coming from mating of Arya and non Arya, too was kept under Shudra section. As per vedic Granth, those Aryas too were kept in Shudra class, who were defeated by other Aryas while capturing plain lands. Mainly, from three routes Shudra came in to existence. Vedic Granth considers Shudra as Sevak to offer any type of service. It was not called a sin, even if they are killed.

Caste System—Maximum benefit of aforesaid division of society accrued to Brahman. After the passage of time, Brahman understood this. For stopping any other changes in such division, taking cushion of religion was necessary. Hence, they managed to propound theory of Varna system coming out from deity body from mouth to feet.

To give this Varna system a permanent form, it was defined on birth basis from karma basis. Now, there was ban on all four Varna eating together. Same time, marriage rules were also framed. Rules for situation like ; within Varna or marriage of one Varna to another, were also framed. It is worth consideration that due to these rules, not only people of four Varna got affected, but other **Upvarna** in different sections like; farmer, sculpturer, artisan, soldier, king etc, also got affected. Caste were made on the basis of different occupation. Jati word is made from Janma. In caste system, there was no importance of Varna now. Some of Brahman Varna started worship work, some indulged in academics and some went to dense forests of east with their livestock in small groups. They used to go to jungle without any weapons and befriended with local jungle tribes. Due to poverty and non harmful nature, they started living with jungle tribes or nishad. Amongst Kshatriya also, some became king and other became his courtier and some became his soldiers. There were some Kshatriya who escorted traders in their journey to different risky places. Traders used to pay them money for rendering this services. Slowly, this Kshatriya group became money operated and could fight with anyone, in case of money being promised. Slowly, occupation of these Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaishya got dynastical. Hence, caste and occupation had strong bond between them. As a result, there was a cap on moving from one Varna to other.

In such condition, Brahman, Kshatriya or Vaishya could marry a Shudra girl, but Shudra men could not marry any girl from these three upper classes. Reason being that in later Vedic period, Varna system was getting stronger day by day. For ease of study, it is necessary to understand work of four Varna.

Brahman—As per Varna system, they enjoyed excellent position. They were mainly related with religious works. They used to get knowledge by reading many subjects. They used to teach students various subjects also. Mainly studying Veda and teaching students was their job. Besides, they used to work as priest in various complexed religious yagna activities. Their methods became so complexed that it was difficult to learn them. It used to take years to learn them. It really seems vital that Brahman learnt those tough things. Even learnt mantras by heart. They learnt Yagna related rules also. Thus, they made a respectful place for them in society. Their respect increased even further, when king used to keep them in his court by making them priest for performing religious rituals, but also started taking their advice in administration.

Hence, they got special social statues. To influence society, they started doing many religious service. Due to hard work they produced sages, hermits, scholars from amongst them. They tried to solve many problems related with life and death, with help of logical explanation. They started telling people about mysterious subjects like existence of soul, occult, magic etc. Out of doing such activities their interest was to keep their importance in society intact. Finally to keep their dignity intact, they started doing many fraudulent activity. They did not hesitate in lying to have their importance. As a result, their importance started diminishing and in 6th century BC, due to their wrong activities, they were relegated to unimportant position in society for long period.

Kshatriya—In Aryan society, one tribe kept fighting with another tribe. Then one kingdom had fight with another one. On this occasion, all eligible and well built youth used to go to fight. After war, they went back to their routine business. Slowly, wars became a daily affair and a faction of such youth kept being involved in such war forever. Thus, state felt the need of keeping permanent army. This military later on became Kshatriya, which had the job of protecting state and extending its boundary. Now, Kshatriya became another section.

Vaishya—Third section doing farming and trade was called Vaishya and who was after Brahman and Kshatriya class. Their main job was to fulfill economic needs of society. In other way, onus of running social expenses was on their shoulder. They used to give donation to Brahman, conducted yagna and gave donations in religious activities.

Notes

Shudra—Lowers class was called Shudra. It appears that this name came from any tribe. Shudra were such servants, who were property of entire tribe like animals. Unlike sale-purchase in ancient Rome and Greece, there was no such practice in Vedic period in India. It did not mean that Indians were kind. In fact, production and individual property had not developed that much by now.

Later on, these Varna divided in to several Upvarna. Main reason for this division was new occupation. People involved in new occupation, with passage of time, started eating or marrying within its own occupation people. Slowly, each caste started considering it different from another.

Just like, two faces of one coin, there were some benefits, then some losses of this system.

Benefits—Due to caste system, number of responsible persons increased. The way in joint family, number of lazy persons are more and when they separate, then forgetting all their laziness they have toil hard for subsistence, similarly being in different occupations increased productivity. This is how, in later vedic and later on, economic position improved. Caste system is also important to have expertise in different works. Due to this custom, anyone knew from childhood about his career. Hence, since childhood only, children started learning parent's occupation. This increases number of experienced and efficient people in any particular occupation.

Loss—Varna division increased social tension. On smallest of issues, there were possibility of having quarrel between people of one occupation and the other. Sentiment of lower and higher class also spread very fast in society. Due to caste system, Hindu's point of view became narrow. There was absence of mutual unity in society. Due to this lack of unity only, invaders attacked and succeeded many times. Due to caste system, difference of opinion in religious matters increased. People divided in many communities, which further increased tension. Caste system also increased untouchability evil in society.

Ashram System—Later vedic sages divided human life in to four stages- Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanprastha and Sanyas.

During **Brahmacharya**, one had to live first 25 years in to any Gurukul and receive knowledge. He had to be under strict discipline under the Guru. This was tough learning period. After spending first 25 years in Gurukul, **second ashram** becomes Grihastha. In this period, one had to earn and fulfill his social and religious obligations. This also continued for another 25 years. Grihastha period is seen with great respect. As per **Vashishtha sutra**, the way all small-big rivers finally end up in sea, similarly humans of all ashrams are dependent of Grihastha ashram.

Third ashram is Vanprastha. At the age of 50, one had to quit materialistic life after giving charge to his son or successor and used to live in meditation and sacrifice after giving up all desires. During this period, people used to live outside their village or town, by making ashram and used to educate people who were ready to move into their first ashram of Brahmacharya.

Forth ashram is of Sanyas or Parivrajak. Person at this stage of life did not stay at one place for long. He used to visit far places. Due to always being in moving mode, he was called Sanyasi or Parivrajak. In this ashram, human used to get free of all bonds. He only used to be in Brahma meditation and tried for salvation. Thus, Brahman of Vedic period adopted ashram system for the attainment of four obligations of humans- Dharma, Artha, Kaam and Moksha.

Family—Family was social unit. In this period, family was patriarchal, which means father had major say in the family. With the combination of many families, one Gharana or Gram was made. In initial settlements, families used to be connected with each other. Study of vedic Granth tell that normally, in a family, members up to three generations could stay together. It had dominance of men. Vedic Granth has mention of quarrel and brawl for land or animals in between them. Hence, there are many Richa in Vedic Granth, which prays for the peace of family. One man could marry many ladies and proof is that those ladies used to fight with each other. Though, eldest or the first wife had major right on the husband. Birth of son used to cheer all, on the other hand, birth of daughter was a reason for sadness. Study of Atharvaveda tells us that men used to have many wives which fought amongst themselves. Sometimes, ladies used to go back to their father's home getting fed up of these fights. This is how, in later Vedic period, both environment of peace and quarrel was there.

Women – During later Vedic period, due to permanent settlements, there came prohibitions on women. They had to show lot of loyalty towards husband. Wives had to be obedient to their husbands. Only faithful and chaste women commanded respect. To prove her chastity, she had to symbolically sacrifice her life when her husband died. Vedic Granth could not clarify that this custom of symbolic sacrifice of self immolation with husband, was prevalent only in rich families or in poor families too. It appears that Sati custom started from this period only. Vedic Granth does not like selling of girls, which indicate that practice of selling girls was prevalent. Women have been compared with liquor and pasha, which indicates their falling position. Birth of daughters has been considered as matter of sadness for family. There is even taboo on (more) speaking of women (Vrihदारanyakopanishad 6). Still ladies had some facilities. For example, after her husband's death, she could marry his younger brother. Thus, nutshell women condition was not good.

Marriage – It happened normally in youth. No marriage was allowed between 7th generation and 5th generation of father and mother. This was called Sapinda. Boy and girl from same mother could not marry. **Shatpath Brahman** prohibits only up to 3 or 4 generation of father and mother. After that, it permits to marry. Men can marry more than one. Vedic Granth describes 4 types of marriages. **Palagahi** which means king marrying daughters of high profile officers for political objective. **Vavaat** means beloved. **Vihivrikti** means that wife, who is not capable of producing a son and forth type of wife was called **Patrani or Mahishi**. After marriage wife had to be obedient and loyal to husband. In the event of husband's death, wife had to sacrifice her life symbolically, but in later ages, she had to actually give up her life by sitting in husband's pyre.

In this period, adultery or illicit relations with other women, were not considered good. Women normally had physical relation with husband only. Any immoral relation with anyone else was considered very bad.

Attire – There is not much difference in the attire from pre Vedic period. In this period, Aachhadan chola, Chora and Cheever etc came in use. Now Arya not only started dhoti, but also were using blankets. Turban was used to cover head. Turban custom is still there in Punjab and Rajasthan. Women started using saree. Saree were normally of borders. Fashion oriented youth, girls and rich people used to apply oil in hairs. Kohl was used for eye beautification. Later vedic period had more beautiful ornaments than pre vedic period.

Food – There is change in food also. Brihi i.e. rice was in use in this period. In Rigvedic period, barley was main food. In this period, animal meat was not very popular in society. Use of alcohol too was not considered good. Economic value of cow was being understood by later vedic people. Hence, eating beef was not considered good. Use of milk and ghee was increasing in this period.

Political condition

Establishment of Large States – When Aryas proceeded towards east and south, then they got vast opportunity of having extensive regime, but there were difficulty due to lack of transport and natural disturbances. Hence, they had to establish small states under big empire. Some Granth have used Adhiraj word. Which indicates that under one big king, there lived many small states under his leadership. Eminent rulers won neighbour states and presented the ideal of creating sovereign empire. Actually, this period was the first stage of ancient Indian imperialism. What was the principle of imperialism, we don't have information, but at some places, empire word has been used. Ambitious and courageous kings used to consider it as their religion to become emperor by winning their neighbours. To increase their influence and fame, they used to perform yagna like; Rajasuya, Ashwamedha etc. which were indicative of their sovereign authority. The more their influence area kept increasing, they started according themselves with new titles like; Adhiraj, Rajadhiraj, Samrat, Ektrat, Chakravarti, Sarvabhaum etc.

Increase in Power of Kings – With expansion of states, there had been major change in the situation of kings. There was major increase in the power and position of kings. Now king can punish anyone of his kingdom, can terminate any employee at his discretion and could levy tax at his will. It was right of

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king on the entire land of the state. His post became dynastical, he used to be judiciary, commander of forces and prajapalak, all in one. Sometimes, king was elected by subjects also. It appears that election also was confined to Rajavansh only and outside person could not be elected.

There were great changes in later vedic period in king's position and on the basis of fiefdom, king authority started building. Instead of small states, huge empires were created, but even at that time, anarchy was not that despotic and discretionary. There were many rituals, in which king had to step down from throne and had to bow in front of Brahman. He had to pledge that he shall betray the priest. Protection of rules and Brahman, were his primary duties. At the time of coronation, he had to pledge that if he fails to adhere to rules and can't protect religion and Brahman, then he has to lose his good deeds, heaven, future and life (from the time of his birth) in this life only. The type of responsibility was put on kings at the time of coronation, we get to know about it by **Shatpath Brahman**, in which it is said, "You (person being coronated) are being given this regime, so that you grow and develop by farming and public welfare." In case of king going stray from his duties, then he was removed from his post and on showing penance, was again given the post. Subjects could elect the king also. Shatpath Brahman tells us that Sabha and Samiti were considered divine institutions and taking its advice and keeping them happy was religion of king. King had to bow before religion i.e. holy laws and he had to rule as per religion. Thus we reach conclusion that though king was under control in this period, yet his powers were increasing steadily. But Brahman were above all provisions. Reason for their importance was that entire politics was religion based. Religion was discipline. Brahman was interpreter of religion and king his medium. Hence, in political system, his place was supreme.

Officials of the State – As compared to Rigvedic period, there was increase in number of officials and posts both in later vedic period. In vedic age, Purohit, Gramani and Senani were main officers, but in later vedic period many new officers came. As per **Panini** and **Atharvaveda**, Rajkritah were main officers of the state. Which were – Pramukh Mantri (Purohit), other Mantri, Sangrahotri (koshadhyaksha or treasurer), Gramani (leader of court), Senapati (commander), Tax collector, Soot or Bhat, Kshatri or Pratihari (guard of royal family), Mahishi (Patrani or Mahadevi), Akshavaya (accountant), Palagakh (messenger), Rajas (member of royal family) and yuvraj (prince) etc. Besides, in vedic Granth, we find mention of many other officials like Angrakshak (bodyguard), Dharmadhyaksha (justice), Dauvarik (main guard of royal gate), Paricharik, Vrindadhyaksha, Ashwadhyaksha etc. Below these officers, there were small officers like upyukta or Pal, who worked as assistant to higher officials. Besides, Rajdoot (ambassador) and Guptachar (spy) also were there. Police officer was called Ugra and officer of 100 grams was called Seemant Shasak. Small disputes of villages were solved by Gram Panchayat. Bigger and complexed issues were taken up in courts, i.e. Sabha and leader of Sabha used to give verdict in consultation with members. Even more complexed issues were sent to king. King's decision was final and admissible to all.

Sabha and Samiti – During Rigvedic period, Sabha and Samiti had great importance, but in later Vedic age, its importance reduced. In later Vedic age, boundary of the state increased a great extent. In such conditions, it was not easy to call meeting of Samiti at short intervals. It appears that Sabha had two types of members. Some members only attended some vital meetings and some attended every meeting. Members, who attended every meeting, were called Sabhasad. Political discussion possibly was done in Sabha. It is difficult to differentiate between working of Sabha and Samiti. Women could not be a part of Sabha.

Judicial System – King was the supreme justice. But he used to delegate his judicial rights to heads. Many cases for justice were presented in front of entire clan. Disposal of normal crime cases was done by Gramyavahin in villages. He was the judge of the village. In criminal cases, custom of reactive violence was prevalent. Practice of proving one innocent could be done by entering in water or fire. Killing of Brahman was considered as greatest sin. Capital punishment was awarded for war against state. Normally, civil cases were handled by Panch, but specific cases were handled by king with help of Sabha. In judiciary, Brahman had privileges. As regards, succession, it can be said that father's property was inherited by son. Women did not have any right.

Income of State—In the beginning of later Vedic period, subjects did not use to pay taxes to king regularly. There is prayer in Atharvaveda to Indra, that he should force subjects to pay taxes. In Brahman Granth, Bali has been used for tax.

Later on, tax collection process was given definite form and officer called, 'Bhagdudh' was appointed for this purpose. Maximum taxes were collected from Vaishya as this section was primarily involved in trade. As per Atharvaveda, state tax was collected in form of animals and grains and 16th part of state income was received by king.

In Aitreya Brahman, 'Vishamatta' has been used for king. **Hapkins** interprets it as eater of subjects and has proved that kings used to exploit masses. But Hawpkins logic is not entirely true. As per Shatpath Brahman, 'Atta' means consumer i.e. 'bhogi'. Means he used to consume mass's taxes and gifts. State tax was too high; there is indication in any of the literature.

Intellectual and Religious State

Rigvedic period was first step of civilization of Indian Aryas. Though in this first step also their progress is commendable as proven in Rigveda, but later Vedic Aryans tried to move further from their predecessors. Now they started developing interest for education, in the same age, progress started happening in writing skills. Some scholars believe that it developed in later Vedic period only and script started in India around 800 BC under influence from Mesopotamia. But till now, there is no concrete evidence by which we can accept this logic. There is so much of Indianness in ancient Indian script that it does not allow us to accept that it was influenced by Mesopotamia.



Task

During Later Vedic Period, there was immense development in the area of education discuss.

Education— Upanishad tells us that education grew a lot in later Vedic period. In Rigveda we don't see mention of educational institutes. It appears that parents used to teach them at home. But in later Vedic period, many educational institutes were established. Senior acharyas used to call students at their ashram and educated them. Due to staying at guru's house, students were called Antewasi. They did not have to pay any charges. They had to live a simple life. For students, it was important to live by begging, lead pure life and adoption of politeness and simplicity. For many years, students had to work hard and learn different streams of education. They had to learn vedamantras. After finishing education, at the time of leaving guru's ashram, student had to give Guru Daskhina. Discipline was given maximum importance in the Ashrams.

Acharyas used to behave equal with sons of kings and normal people. Main religion of students was Guru Loyalty. It was believed that those students used to get knowledge automatically, on whom guru showered his happiness. Hence, main aim of students was to impress guru by doing various services. Acharyas used to take tough periodical tests to examine loyalty of students. Many such examples are found in Upanishad.

Main onus of imparting education was on Brahman. In later Vedic period, acharyas made their own unions on the basis of gotra and stage, which were like Vedic institutes. They contained huge knowledge of Vedic literature without being decayed. In ashram, life of acharyas also was simple, pure, religious and spiritual. They were revered for morality and social qualities, even big emperors used to bow in front of them. They considered students as their child and were always tried for their physical, mental and spiritual development. For debate on religious questions, group of scholars use to meet, whose examples were found in Vrihadaranyak Upanishad and Shatpath Brahman. In Chhandogya Upanishad, there is mention of Narad and Sanatkumar, which indicates there were many subjects were taught like; Devavidya, Bhootvidya, Kshatra Vidya, Nakshatra Vidya, Devajana Vidya, Kalpa, Shraddha, Tarkashastra

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etc. Similarly with Vrihdaranyakopanishad, we got to know about history, Upanishad interpretation, lecture education. After conclusion of education, guru used to give exhortation to student that he should always tell truth, adhere to duties, continue reading Veda and be a Grihastha (family man).

State of Literature and Art—In this period, art and literature too advanced a lot. Brahman, Aaranyak and Upanishad were composed in this age only. Much part of sutra literature of Brahman was also written in this period. There were many changes in the field of arts. Nature of Poem style became wider than before. Rigved was only collection of stuti mantra, but now the scope of poems was widened by Yajurveda, Samveda, Atharvaveda, Brahman Granth and sutra composition. In Yajurveda, there is enough mention of yagna. Samveda is a poetic form and it had great influence on music. Brahman Granth had quality analysis of philosophy. Yajurveda has occult and mantras. Sutras got composed in this age only. At this time, skill of writing in brief developed. Astronomical study also developed. I this time, Aryas came to know about different Nakshatra.

Religion—In later Vedic period, religious life changed a lot as compare to pre Vedic period. There came big changes in their religious concepts and beliefs. Rigvedic life was simple and inartificial. Being influenced from various natural beauties, sages imagined various deities and had mantras in their reverence. Yagnic rituals too were simple, but in later Vedic period, it changed. There was no change in number of deities, but their positions changed. Varun, Indra etc were not that important now and Rudra, Vishnu and Prajapati grew in stature. Rudra now became welfare Shiva and he was being addressed as Mahadeva. Similarly, position of Prajapati too became important. It did not have great place in Rigved, but now he became leader of yagna. In Rigved, Vishnu has been considered another form of Surya. Now he was being worshipped everywhere.

Yagna and Bali—In Rigvedic period, there was great importance of yagna and Bali. In later Vedic period, scope of ritual expanded and Brahman's position improved. For different types of yagna, different types of priest were required. Now importance of Bali and Vedic mantra increased than before. Thus, practice of long costly yagna of weeks and months duration started. In many yagna, even 16-17 priests were required.

Rituals of yagna became too complexed. This belief started gaining ground that yagna can fulfill all desires. Common public started believing in ghost, spirit, occult, magic, hypnotization etc thus, there was a spread of blindfoldedness amongst the masses. Before, head of the family used to do yagna at home, but now it was impossible to do yagna without a priest. Hence, key to people's religious life reached in the hands of priests/Brahman.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. We find mention of public educational institutes in Rigveda.
9. 10th Mandal of Rigved throws more light on meditation.
10. In pre Vedic period, Aryans used to solve their problems with natural powers.
11. 'Without meditation, one can't get knowledge' this statement is found in Maitriya Upanishad.

In this period, practice of Bali increased. Shatpath Brahman says, if there is no Bali, then there shall be no rains. Hence, in yagna apart from milk, fruits, ghee, animal sacrifice also started. Many such sacrifices continued up to months and years. In the beginning of Ashwamedha yagna, 600 animals were sacrificed.

Meditation—Rigvedic period give more importance to meditation. Meditation was a tool to purify soul and heart. 10th Mandal of Rigved throws ample light on meditation. Other 9 mandals don't have description of meditation. Truth and seasons originated from meditation, meditation is window to future, and meditation is the source of huge divine powers. Deities meditate and with its help, they have acquired heaven. Prajapati meditated for the formation of this world, mention of primitive divine man

is found in Vedic literature. We find in Taitriya Upanishad that deities got divine status by meditation. In Taitriya Upanishad, Varun explains his son; understand Brahma by meditation, as meditation in Brahma. Maitriya Upanishad goes to the extent of saying that, without meditation, one can't get knowledge.

Development of Philosophical Principle – At one hand, later Vedic period was seeing evils entering in rituals and yagna methods, then on the other hand, strong sentiment of self introspection, Brahmgyan and elementary meditation were emerging and developing. Brahmgyani involved in such meditation started expressing their thought against complexity of yagna and rituals and started considering them meaningless, unimportant and misleading. They said that yagna can't attain salvation. These things gave birth to an intellectual revolution. This revolution was led by Brahman, sages and thoughtful kings. In first category names like; Yagyavalkya, Uddalak, Aaruni, Shwetketu, Satyakam, Jabali, Ashwapati, Kaikeya etc are foremost. In second category names like; Janak, Videh, Pravahan Jabali, Ashwapati, Kaikeya etc were important. Yagyavalkya and Janak can be said to be the life line of this revolution.

In the discovery of actual mystery of life, these thinkers gave their entire life. What is universe? How did it originate? What is human? What is the objective of its life? Such questions actually stirred minds of such thinkers. The thought which they expressed, are compiled in Aaranyak and Upanishad.

Thus, the emergence of wave of self introspection against complexed yagnic rituals gave way to a new religion, which got famous by the name of Bhagwat Dharma. Later on, this religion developed.

In pre-Vedic period, Aryas used to solve their problems with natural powers, but in later Vedic period Aryas started intense meditation. Hence, creation of Aaranyak, Upanishad and philosophical literature happened in this age. This elaborately discussed on soul, rebirth which is not found anywhere else. Principle of rebirth was propounded in this age only and told that next life depends on the karmas of this life. Person doing nice deeds gets good yoni and bad one gets bad yoni.

Discovery of unity among diversity started in philosophical sutra of Rigved only and was detected in the form of Sat. whereas, in unbelievable authority Upanishad, extensive concept developed for Brahma. This not only appeared as Sat, but rather Sat, Chitta and cheerful. As per Upanishad, Brahma is omnipresent, arbitrary, omniscient and without any alternative. It is the basis of universe creation, nurture and destruction. This is the real authority. There is no universe apart from it. Soul is the light of Brahma and not different from it. Humans due to their lack of knowledge consider him different from Brahma and confined to the body only. A soul trapped in ignorance, as per its holy or impure deeds, under the cycle of karma, gets in to continuous life and death. To get rid of this ignorance and feeling of faith in Brahma and soul, is the key to salvation. As per Upanishad, key to salvation is knowledge and moral behavior.

In this period, development of Indian philosophy i.e. Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshik, Mimansa and Vedanta has happened. These philosophies are considered as supernatural and in conformity of Veda. With the help of these philosophies, ancient aryas tried to gain knowledge about fundamental elements of the universe. Philosophical Granth scientifically tried to know that what are the fundamentals elements of the world and of which elements this universe is made up with. Is there any creator for this world?

In this period, many philosophical people and thinkers used to live in ashrams outside villages and towns and many other intellectuals too in search of knowledge came and tried to satisfy their knowledge needs by meditation and self introspection. There were many kings in this period, who were inspired from such thoughts. King Janak of Videh, Ashwapati of Kaikeya, Pravahan of Panchal, Jabali and Ajatshatru of Kashi are major ones out of such thinkers category. Apart from being self thinkers, they also patronized such sages, hermits, philosophers and thinkers. In the courts of these kings, many sages coming from different parts of country discussed on spiritual questions. Many scholars used to do Shastrartha (knowledge debate) and kings too took part in it. Out of different scholars, one with solid logics, was revered and given money.

Thus, we see that intellectual, religious and philosophical principles influenced Indian culture for centuries.

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5.2 Summary

During pre Vedic age, life was simple as gypsies. Though they were not organized, but there was no tension. In later Vedic period, they had organized life due to permanent settlement. As a result, social division between aryas became stronger. Social division was based on Varna.

In later Vedic period, we find mention of four Varna, which originated from four limbs of deity. It is said that Brahman from mouth, Kshatriya from arms, Vaishya from thighs and Shudra came from feet. The deity from which these Varna came, is based on imagination. There is no historical evidence in this effect. Hence, for academic convenience, we can consider him as First Man or Brahman or Deity or something else. Thus, entire society of later Vedic age has been divided in to four parts, considering it as one human body. Its base is religious and there is scope for any rationale.

5.3 Keywords

- **Discipline:** To have control on behavior or heart.
- **Unity:** State of attaining completeness.

5.4 Review Questions

1. What do you understand by Later Vedic Period? Describe its political state.
2. Describe intellectual and religious state of Later Vedic period.

Answers: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| 1. King | 2. Atharvaveda | 3. Gandak | 4. (a) |
| 5. (a) | 6. (c) | 7. (c) | 8. False |
| 9. True | 10. True | 11. True | |

5.5 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History – Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.
2. Ancient Indian History – Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.
3. Ancient Indian History New Perspective – Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.
4. Ancient Indian History – Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.
5. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – Om Prakash, New and Publishers.

Unit-6: Maurya Period: Chandragupta, Bindusar, Ashoka

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 6.1 Rise of Maurya Period
- 6.2 Rise of Chandragupta Maurya
- 6.3 Description of Megasthenes
- 6.4 Arthashastra of Kautilya
- 6.5 Bindusar
- 6.6 Ashoka and his Successors
- 6.7 Decline of Maurya Empire
- 6.8 Summary
- 6.9 Keywords
- 6.10 Review Questions
- 6.11 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- Apart from rise of Maurya period, to be able to describe about the success of its kings,
- To be able to describe about introduction of Ashoka life and his expansion of empire and religion spreading scripts,
- What was the reasons of decline of Maurya empire.

Introduction

Maurya period has a special place in Indian history. With the arrival of Mauryas, end of one era and beginning of another takes place in Indian Political and cultural history. In ancient Indian history, Maurya dynasty is the first historical dynasty. V.A. Smith has rightly said, that with the arrival of Maurya dynasty, ancient Indian history emerges from darkness to light.

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6.1 Rise of Maurya Period

There is no order before Maurya period and it is completely without series. Neither we can define correct historical dates nor there exist any concrete historical evidences available. Majorly with help of religious material only we define history of this period. But in the beginning of Maurya period, both these issues get solved and chronological history starts. Historical dates of Maurya period are fixed and there are solid tools of knowing history of this time. Hence, from this time onwards, we can study Indian history chronologically.

Beginning of Political Unity – After the establishment of Maurya empire, north India saw political unity first. Before this period, there was lack of unity and entire nation was divided in to small states. though, dream of political unity and imperialism was started being seen by earlier rulers, yet the attainment of such dreams was done by founder of Maurya regime, Chandragupta. He removed Greeks from Punjab and Indus area and bonded entire north India in one string by finishing many small states. Thus, for the first time, India saw political unity being established. This ideal of political unity kept inspiring later dynasties and rulers and it is continued.

Uniformity of Administration – When Mauryas established political unity in entire north India, then automatically a type of strong and organized centralized administration emerged on this huge land mass, as for political unity it is imperative to have a very strong and organized administration. The administrative system which Chandragupta developed, became the ideal administration for future rulers and by having small and time based changes, future rulers formed their administration system. Maurya period was so successful in maintaining peace and growing in prosperity, that we can say it as the era of peace and prosperity.

Development of Art and Literature – Maurya period saw development of art and Literature. During Ashoka's period immense progress in Sculpture, construction, painting, writing etc. Stupas and buildings made by him were so majestic that even foreign visitors were spell bound. Ten Stupas have been found of his time, which has still the same brightness intact. Even modern artists are amazed to see such art work.

Propagation of Baudh Dharma – Maurya period saw the development of Buddhism. Great king of this dynasty, Ashoka got rules of Buddhism embossed on stones and Stupas and sent propagators overseas to help it grow. By giving message of peace and love, he not only made a mark in Indian, rather in world history for himself. Such great work of Ashoka brought great and high place to Maurya dynasty.



Notes Greeks called Chandragupta as Sandrocotus or Andracotus.

Resources of Maurya Period – There are sufficient and concrete tools of knowing Maurya period. Apart from religious Granth, we find historical Granth, foreign description, notes etc are available. Following resources are considered as base for knowing about Maurya dynasty:

Greek Description – For constructing Maurya history, Greek sources are most important. They have called Chandragupta as Sandrocotus or Andracotus. On its basis, we can say the Chandragupta was contemporary of Alexander. This finding gives us lot of information about Chandragupta and his time. These foreign sources throw light on a chapter which could have been incomplete without them and which is full of great achievements. Indian history too is indebted to these resources as chronological Indian history starts from Greeks only. These colleagues of Alexander are famous for three compositions:

1. Niarcus – Alexander sent him to find coastal area between Indus and gulf of Iran.
2. Unecicratus – He who accompanied in journey of Niarcus and later on wrote book on India.
3. Aristobolus – Alexander handed him some responsibility in India.

In this discussion we must include Megasthenes. He came to India in 3rd century BC. He wrote his collection as **Indica**, which physically has been lost, but some pieces of his description as mentioned in scholars of later times have been compiled and **Indica** is composed.

Megasthenes was a Greek scholar who was sent to Chandragupta's court by Cellucus. He stayed in patliputra between 304-299 BC. Whatever he saw and heard of this period, he wrote in his book Indica. This Indian description of his proved very handy. He did elaborate mention of patliputra's administration, royal court, military organization etc. **Strabo** and **Plini** etc have written in detail about his description in their own books. There are some parts in Indica, which can't be believed. Possibly, Megasthenes wrote them on the basis of public mouth, but even then his description is too important about Chandragupta.

Arthashastra of Kautilya—Another vital resource about Maurya history is **Arthashastra** of Kautilya. He was prime minister of Chandragupta and was known as Vishnugupt or Chanakya. He had major role in making Chandragupta a king. His book **Arthashastra** is important Granth from historical and political perspective, for ancient India. Kautilya has mentioned about political, social and economical status of Chandragupta regime, besides has done high class political principle's analysis. In entire Sanskrit literature world, this book is incomparable. Kautilya was a great philosopher and diplomat. He has mentioned about the duties of an ideal king and successful administrator. By separating religion with politics, alike Machiavelli of 16th century, has educated on the use of good and bad means for the attainment of objectives. There are 15 chapters in the book, which throw light on state administration and policy. As per famous historian **Winternitz**, "This is an incomparable book throwing light on the ancient Indian state administration, trade, war and peace etc subjects." This book is a science of social opulence. It has description of contemporary political system and political philosophy both. Thus, it is quite important on political and historical perspective both. This not only endorses the description of Megasthenes, rather is complementary to it also.

Inscription—Most trustable source about Maurya period is inscription of Ashoka. He constructed many stone and pillar inscriptions and other monumental signs in his kingdom. Through these inscriptions, he told public to follow Buddhist principles and rules of purity. Hence, these inscriptions give ample detail about his religion and morality principles. Besides, we get to know about his empire, his welfare works, his behaviour with subjects, his individual life, revenue principles etc. Hence, these inscriptions are very important from historical perspective.

Mudrarakshas of Vishakhadatt—It is a historical play which Vishakhadatt wrote in 5th century BC. He has presented story of destruction on Nand dynasty and emergence of Maurya Empire. It briefs us about preliminary stage of Mauryan history. How Chandragupta got Magadha Empire with Kautilya's help, is the subject of play. But due to a blend of imagination, not all facts are believable.

Puran—Maurya dynasty and previous history can also be examined with help of purans but they too contain imagination and exaggeration, hence these too are not very much trustable.

Bauddha and Jain Traditions—Bauddha traditions throw sufficient light on Maurya period. Divyadan mentions historical facts about Kunal and Ashoka, which are quite important for us. The way Bauddha literature throws light on Ashoka, similarly Jain traditions tell us about Chandragupta Maurya.

Maurya Period Wreckage—Architecture and wreckage of Maurya period are an important source of knowledge about its culture and civilization. Stupas, Vihaars, Maths, and Caves etc can tell us how developed Maurya art and culture and how Maurya rulers contributed in its growth and development. Thus, stupa of Sanchi and other remains are important from historical perspective.

Introduction of Maurya—Chandragupta was the founder of Maurya dynasty. There is difference of opinion amongst scholars about family tradition of this great and meritorious ruler. For the historical introduction of Mauryas, details found Vrihatkatha and Mudrarakshas, clarify that Chandragupta belonged to a lower class and possibly was related to Nand Vansh. Mudrarakshas is a historical creation and is based on Vrihatkatha. In contrast, as per another Granth, Chandragupta was born to a Kshatriya family. Puran Granth too express that at the time of emergence of Nand Vansh, there was no sign of

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Shudra kings, but these Granth nowhere accept that inclusion of Chandragupta in the list of Shudra kings, was ever logical. Puran don't describe Mauryas as Shudra and consider them as new royal family. Hence, it is clear that Mauryan were Kshatriya. Thus, there are many principles concerning Mauryas.

As per Greek writer **Justin** and some ancient writers, Chandragupta was prince of Nand Vansh. 'Mudrarakshas' not only denotes Chandragupta as Maurya, rather of Nand dynasty also. This Granth specifically states that Chandragupta was Vrishal (Shudra) and Kulheen (not belonging to respected dynasty). As per Tikakkar of Vishnu Puran, Chandragupta was child of Nand king and one of his wives, Mura; hence his dynasty was known as Maurya. Tikakkar of Mudrarakshas **Dhundhiraj** has said that Chandragupta was son of Nand king Maurya, who was born to the wife of Nand emperor Mahapdmanand, named as Mura and who herself was Shudra.

But some scholars try to prove that Mauryas were not Shudra. Possibly they were a developing royal dynasty and this is why, this dynasty never believed in old traditions and orthodox systems. Secondly, Mauryas had accepted Buddhism. After adopting Buddhism, orthodox Hindu writers have termed them as Vratya (out of Vedic religion), Vrishal (Shudra) and without any family base. This would be sufficient to say that some scholars proved that Vrishal i.e. Vrish means chief among kings and Kulheen relate to the normal position of this dynasty, as Chandragupta himself reached this position from a low background. As Tikakkar of Vishnu Puran said that Chandragupta who was born to a lower class lady Mura, who was wife of Nand king, does not seem to be logical, as from Mura word, Maryeya is made against the rules of grammar and not Maurya. Maurya word is identical to Mur gotra as mentioned in 'Ganpath' Granth of **Panini**. Finally, Greek writer's statement that Chandragupta was born in a normal family denotes to his social status pre coronation and not to his Shudra background. Hence, it becomes clear that Mauryas were not Shudra or of lower class.

As per Bauddha religion Granth Mahavansh, Chandragupta was a Kshatriya of Mauriya dynasty. In this Granth, they have been told as rulers of Pippaliban republic. Moriya in Sanskrit has been given title of Maurya. In 'Mahaparinirvana sutt' also, he has been said to be Kshatriya. In another Granth Divyadan, successor of Chandragupta-Bindusar and Ashoka have been called Kshatriya. Mahavansh goes to the extent that Mauryas used to call themselves Aditya or Surya Vanshi Kshatriya. As per many saying of medieval writers it is proved that the dynasty, in which Chandragupta was born, was Surya Vanshi. As per Mahavansh, origin of Maurya Vansh is from Surya Vanshi prince Mandhatri. **Dr. Hemant Rai Chaudhary** has said that in 6th century BC, in Pippaliban, small democratic rulers Moriya were ruling. This regime was in between Rummindai in Nepal plains and Kasia of Gorakhpur. Hence, alike other eastern states of India, this too have got merged with Magadha Empire. As per saying, it appears that 4th century BC, they were in trouble and here only among Mayurposhak cowherd of Vindhya and hunters, Chandragupta grew. Chanakya also has indirectly accepted Mauryas of high class dynasty. Even today, we find existence of Mauri Vansh among Rajputs. In Rajputana Gazetteer, Mauryas have been told as Kshatriya or Rajput and later scholar **Todd** has also expressed similar views.

Bauddha articles too confirmed relation of Maurya Vansh with Mayurs and as per Jain follower's famous Granth Kalpasutra also describes Mauryas of Kashyap gotra, which clarifies that Mauryas were from high class. As per Jain article of **Parishishtaparvan**, main founder of Maurya dynasty was born to a daughter of head of such a village, where Mayurposhak lived and this is the reason, Chandragupta and his dynasty became famous as Mauryas. Possibly for this reason only, as per **Sir John Marshall**, peacock pictures have been printed on the eastern gates of Sanchi. As per **Arian**, in patliputra royal buildings, peacocks were kept. As per stanza of Mahavansh, Mauryas were branch of famous Kshatriya dynasty Shakya. When Kaushal prince Nirudhak attacked them, they fled to a place where peacocks were in plenty. Possibly from this time onwards, they were known as Maurya. At this point only, when Nand Vansh power was growing and Nand kings suppressed Mauryas besides other states. This time only father of Chandragupta (name not known) was killed by despotic Nand king and his pregnant wife (Chandragupta's mother) along with other relatives fled. Now she started living in patliputra secretly i.e. under the protection of Mayurpalak Mauryas. Maurya Vansh was under trouble at the time Chandragupta took birth. This is why; Justin has called Chandragupta of normal family origins.

6.2 Rise of Chandragupta Maurya

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We have to be dependent on Bauddha saying only for knowing more about Chandragupta. As per Bauddha literature, father of Chandragupta left his wife in helpless condition. In such condition she settled in patliputra and gave birth to a boy, who was raised by a shepherd. This shepherd later on sold him to a hunter. Chandragupta used to look after his animals while staying there. It is said that while living here, Chandragupta used to play royal games with village children. He used to play king and acted as delivering justice to subjects. Once Chanakya crossed from there and saw him doing this act. He bought him from the hunter. After this, Chanakya took him to Takshshila and imparted required trainings to him in quite less period of time. Thus, Chandragupta spent his youth in Takshshila only.

It is said that Chanakya used to go to patliputra for debates and knowledge. Dhananand was the king there. He used to donate lot of money from Danshala (charity institution). This was controlled by a small Sabha and head of this Shala used to be Brahman. Chanakya was appointed as the head of this Shala. But soon after he was removed saying he was ugly and bitter from nature. Such thing was unacceptable for a scholar like Chanakya. Hence, he vowed to destroy Nand Vansh. When he was pondering over tools to destroy Nand Vansh, then only he met Chandragupta.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Megasthaneze came to India in BC.
2. Historical play Mudrarakshas was written by in 5th century BC.
3. Chandragupta with help of six Lac strong army, triumphed entire India. This was written by and

There is another saying in this regard. In the troubled times of Maurya Vansh, Chandragupta worked at contemporary Nand king's place. He was quite brilliant since his childhood and he impressed the king with his ability. Hence, we rewarded him with the post of commander of his huge army. At this time, king of Sinhala dweep (lanka) sent a wax lion in a cage to Nand king with message that whosoever is able to bring it out from cage without opening the cage, must be very intelligent and brilliant. That lion was made so meticulously that it appeared as original. When all courtiers were being puzzled to see that, Chandragupta used his brains. He touched that lion with a heated iron rod and soon the lion melted and finished. This statement is enough to prove that he worked at Nand king court.

Thereafter due to some differences in situation, king got angry with Chandragupta and gave him death sentence. To save his life, Chandragupta ran from Magadha but also vowed to destroy Nand dynasty. On the other hand, famous scholar of Takshshila Vishnugupt was also dissatisfied by the insult meted by Nand king Mahapdmanand. He too vowed to take revenge. Chanakya and Chandragupta got together and incited anger against Nand empire. Though king was successful in suppressing this revolt, yet he was unsuccessful in capturing both Chandragupta and Chanakya.

First Chandragupta tried to take Padmanand head on in a war, but thereafter he tried to contact Greek invader Alexander to understand his power and method of his military organization. **Plutarch** has clearly stated, he went to Alexander the great. Some scholars are of the view that he went to inspire Alexander to attack India, but this does not seem to be logical, nor are any concrete proof. Alexander got so angry with this insolent and audacious youth, that he too ordered death sentence for him. But before the execution of his order, he fled from there. Finally he reached conclusion that if Nand king Padmanand is a despotic ruler, then Greek leader Alexander too is unbridled, discretionary and oppressive. He started finding ways to destroy both these regimes after giving his thoughts final shape. He felt that had he revolted against Magadha Empire after winning bordering provinces, then he would have become more successful. At present, he lacked resources of war.

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During his migration period, he met famous scholar of Takshshila Vishnugupt in the forests of Vindhyachal. Kautilyas alias Vishnugupt's motherland was Takshshila only, but he had come to Magadha's capital, patliputra and the way he was insulted by Magadha king, has been mentioned above. It is said that the time Chandragupta was wandering in forests of Vindhyachal to attain his objective, and then only he met Kautilya there. When Chandragupta was sleeping on the soil after being tired, a lion came and licked his entire body and after left after licking sweat and did not hurt him at all. As per Shakun thinkers, this was a good omen for attainment of his dream kingdom. At the same time, Chanakya got huge underground wealth. With this money, he arranged a huge army of dacoits and soldiers for Chandragupta, with whom he was impressed. All of them accepted Chandragupta as their boss and became his staunch followers. Now a undefeatable leader like Chandragupta had the resource of his ambition in his hands.

Initial Victory Expeditions of Chandragupta—Now Chanakya and Chandragupta started making plans to attack Nand dynasty and attacked Magadha. But could not withstand the might of Nand Empire and were defeated. Somehow, they fled and lived in disguise. Nand king Dhananand declared death sentence for them. One day moving in disguise Chandragupta got inspiration. He went to a home. Head of the home was an old lady. While eating, her son started eating chapatti from middle, while feeling acute hunger and burnt his mouth. Old lady told him that you have committed a mistake like Chandragupta. If you eat from the sides, you won't get hurt. Chandragupta understood his mistake that attacking centre of such huge empire was a blunder. At centre, the control is quite strong and difficult to be defeated. In contrast, bordering areas are easier targets and dissatisfaction too is more there. So he decided to make military base outside Nand Empire and from there he should attack bordering area. Due to this, Chanakya took Chandragupta to Uttarapath and got indulged in making plans. Chanakya was aware of situation of Uttarapath and it was to make base for attack there.

After Alexander withdrew from India, Uttarapath situation became conducive for Chandragupta. Public anger and dissatisfaction was already there against Greek regime and after his movement, revolts started. Chandragupta and Chanakya were instrumental in igniting fire of revolt. Greek writers accept that Chandragupta led the rebels and finally drove Greeks out of India and captured big part of their empire. But this did not complete his dreams, which was the destruction of Nand Empire and establishment of a huge political empire.

After capturing Punjab, he proceeded towards east and within 2 years was successful in capturing entire north and central valley of Ganga from Hardwar to Allahabad. After becoming lord of such great area made his power and military grow. Now he was undisputed ruler of Punjab and upper valley of Ganga. Now he had huge army of experienced soldiers and some neighbouring states too joined hands with him.

Magadha Victory—These victories increase his powers. Now he along with Chanakya made plan to defeat Magadha king. It is said that initially they made mistake and attacked the centre. He did not try to win bordering areas first; as a result attack was unsuccessful. Second time, he started from border areas and kept winning and moving all the posts and checkpoints enroute and finally surrounded patliputra. Nand king Dhananand was killed in the war. There were various reasons for his defeat. He was a worthless ruler and masses hated him. He had huge wealth. Possibly, he filled his exchequer by exploiting the masses. Whatever is the case, finally Chandragupta throned Magadha in 321 BC.

Grand Victories of Chandragupta—It was really big thing that a normal youth of sometime before became king of Magadha. It possibly was the first example of ancient Indian history that a normal man on the basis of his ability and determination became emperor. He had enough time to be content, but he had the dream of a vast and organized empire. He could not have been content with only Magadha Empire. He studied Alexander time's political situation of India. He saw that being divided in smaller states is how much dangerous, which gives inspiration to foreign invaders and failure to local rulers. The effort which he put in to get Magadha Empire, it was essential to give it strength and stability by extension of his empire, so that after huge empire, military and economic condition can improve.

First, Chandragupta attacked Punjab and removed Greek signs of victory from there. Now there was no existence of Greek rule in India. After getting nation free from foreigners, he decided to win other provinces.

There are no details available for his other victories, but it is obvious from the spread of his empire that his entire life would have been spent in wars. Greek writers Justin and Plutarch have written that with help of 6 Lac army, he triumphed India. Other tools also endorse it. Ashoka inscriptions tell that his empire spread up to Mysore in south. His son Bindusar had any victory, there is no detail for that and Ashoka only won Kalinga. Hence, it is clear that southern regions must be won by Chandragupta only. There is detail of Maurya attack on far land of Tinneveli in old Tamil literature. Malwa and Saurashtra were part of Chandragupta Empire, there is no doubt. There is an inscription of Rudradaman 1st in Junagarh, which says that Chandragupta appointed one governor (Pushyagupta) for handling affairs of that province and made a lake for irrigation called, Sudarshan. During Ashoka regime, a Greek called king Pushashka was the governor of that province. One inscription of Ashoka has been found at Sopara in Thana district, which proves that this part too was under his empire.

Conflict with Cellucas – Last conflict of Chandragupta was with Alexander’s commander Cellucas. The moment Chandragupta was trying to win Indian territories, same time Cellucas was planning to attack India, at west Asia. Cellucas was one of the commanders of Alexander, who distributed his kingdom after his death. He following Alexander’s footprints attacked India in 305 BC. Cellucas wanted to regain those Alexander’s regions which were captured by Chandragupta. But there was big difference in India of Alexander and India of Chandragupta. Alexander had to face small and weak rulers. He only faced those kingdoms, which were not only weak by military, but were also filled up with mutual jealousy. In contrast, Cellucas was going to face a force, which was incomparable by far as regards military and political organization. Cellucas reached Sindh to attack. Chandragupta too prepared well for the security of northwestern parts of his empire. Undoubtedly, Greek strategy was excellent and it was difficult for any force to withstand such great power. But Chandragupta too had received some training of Greek warfare in their camp. Hence, he was aware of their tactics, rules and principles. His army stopped Cellucas’s army across the Indus River only. There was terrible fight between them and finally Chandragupta defeated Cellucas. Cellucas had to do a treaty with Chandragupta, which has following four points:

- (i) Entire area of modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan, which spread from Khyber Pass to Hindukush Mountains, was handed over to Chandragupta.
- (ii) Cellucas married his daughter with Chandragupta.
- (iii) Chandragupta presented 500 elephants as gift to Cellucas.
- (iv) Exchange of messenger was decided. One such messenger came to patliputra.

Result of this victory was that there fixed a geographical boundary in north west for Chandragupta’s empire. Highlighting the importance of the victory **V.A. Smith** wrote that 2000 years before, boundaries of Chandragupta’s empire stretched so much, that even British who came after centuries, could not establish these boundaries and even Mughal emperors could not keep it intact in 16th and 17th century.

After these victories Chandragupta extended his empire phenomenally. His huge empire spread from Kashmir in north to Mysore in south and from Kamrup in east to Herat, Kabul, Kandhar, and Baluchistan in west. His empire boundaries were touching boundary of Persia, far to the west of Hindukush mountains. Such a big empire was not established by any Indian emperor in past.

Administration of Chandragupta

He not only was a great winner, rather a great administrator too. He ruled his huge empire in organized manner. Besides being a good administrator, he had the support of great politician like Chanakya. Both of them established such great, organized and high quality administration, which kept being used as an example for generations to come.

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About his administration, we get to know from 'Indica' of Megasthenes and 'Arthashastra' of Kautilya. As told before, Indica is not available, but on the basis of excerpts of Greek and Roman scholars, we get details of Chandragupta's administration with Kautilya's Arthashastra, a clear picture of Chandragupta's fundamental administrative nature comes before us. Some scholars don't accept this book and its composer as contemporary of Chandragupta. But this doubt does not have water and considering Chanakya and Chandragupta both contemporary is more logical and rationale. With study of these two tools, we get to know following information about administration and public life of Chandragupta's regime: –

Position of King – Maurya kings were unbridled. Emperor was the head of entire administration. Entire power of the empire was concentrated in his hands. Final authority was with king in all matters of executive, legislature, judiciary and military. He was chief commander, chief justice and chief punisher. He used to issue decree and appointed chief officers. Income and expenditure of state was done by him. War control and justice were his main function; his position was not like constitutional king and public did not have control over him. Though he used to work in consultation of his ministers only, yet he was not bound to adhere. Still he was not discretionary. Till this age, many Granth had been written in which duties and ideals of emperor were defined. Emperors used to follow those ideals only. Kautilya writes in Arthashastra "that is not Sukarma by which king gets happy, but actual Sukarma is one which makes subject happy and content." Hence, king considered their subject as their son. They did not consider their power as given by god nor considered themselves as representative of god. They had to respect religious and social tradition of country. Hence, we can call Maurya rule as Liberal Despotic Regime. King used to deliver verdict after thoughtful discussion with his ministers. He took care of his subjects and was always ready to look into their grievances. Chanakya was of the view that king should not make any person seeking justice; wait for long at his doorstep. Chandragupta accepted this logic and was always ready to hear public grievances. As per Megasthenes, he was not hesitant to hear any type of grievance of his masses. He was nurturer of masses and not exploiter. In brief, his administration was an appropriate blend of despotism, liberalism and justice.

Cabinet – It was difficult for one individual to control such huge empire. Hence to help emperor, there was a committee of ministers, called Council of ministers. It comprised of 12-20 or as per need less or more number of ministers. All ministers used to be intelligent, eligible and experienced, but due to being appointed by emperor, did not represent masses. Emperor could appoint or terminate them at his discretion. Job of council of ministers was to only give advice. Adhering to such advices was the sole discretion of emperor. As per Chanakya, function of minister was very vital. They used to get 48,000 Pana (currency) as annual salary. They used to advise on examination and appointment of Aamatyas. They also had control over prince. They had knowledge of confidential matters and used to suggest emperor on those topics. Apart from main ministers of cabinet, there were some other ministers too, who were paid 1,200 Pana as annual salary. They had little lower post as compared to cabinet ministers. They were only called for discussing very important and necessary topics and as per the majority of the available minister's strength, emperor used to deliver his verdict. At the time of respect ceremony of ambassadors or other auspicious occasion, each member of council of ministers used to be present.

Aamatya Mandal – There was a different category of Aamatyas apart from ministers. For governance comfort, central administration was divided in many parts, called as Tirth. Each department had a head, called Aamatya. There were many heads of sub departments also under Aamatyas. Their position was very important. They performed magistrate's duty. Some of them arranged Haat; some did look town and some military. Some people used to inspect rivers and some used to do measurement of land. They also had to arrange for hunting. They could punish or reward. They also collected tax. Total of eighteen departments were there in central administration. Hence, there must be eighteen Aamatyas. Their names are as below:

Self Assessment**Notes****Multiple Choice Questions:**

4. Last confrontation of Chandragupta was with
 - (a) Cellucas
 - (b) Alexander
 - (c) Demetrius
 - (d) None of the above
5. From where we get to know about administration of Chandragupta?
 - (a) Kamayani
 - (b) Indica
 - (c) Mudrarakshas
 - (d) None of the above
6. Who received the titles of 'Devnam Priya' and 'Priyadarshi', at the time of coronation?
 - (a) Chandragupta Maurya
 - (b) Bindusar
 - (c) Ashoka
 - (d) None of the above
7. Mention of two brothers of Ashoka is found in-
 - (a) Divyadan
 - (b) Puran
 - (c) Aaranyak
 - (d) None of the above

(1) Purohit (2) Mantri (3) Senadhyaksha (4) Dandpal or head of police (5) Dauvarik or gate guard (6) Yuvraj (7) Durgpal or home officer (8) Antpal or border security officer (9) Antarvashik or guard of antahpur (10) Sannidhatri or officer of treasure, arsenal and cell officers (11) Prashasta or jail officer (12) Samaharta or officer of state income-expenditure (13) Nayak or town guard (14) Pradeshta or commissioner (15) Vyavharik or chief justice (16) Paur or police officer (17) Mantrimandaladhyaksha (18) Karmatik or officer of factories.

Apart from above mentioned officers, there were some others too, who headed following: Kosh Akaar (mines), Lauh (metals), Lakshan (mint), Lavana, Suvarna, Koshtagar (warehouse), Panya (government occupation), Kupp (forest), Ayudhagar (weaponry), Potab (weight measure), Shulka, Sutra (cutting-weaving), Sura, Suna (slaughter house), Mudra (passport), Viveet (grazing field), Dyoot (gamble), Bandhanagar (jail), Gau (cattle), Nau (boat), Pattan (port), Ganika, Sanstha (trade), Devta (temple), Maan (measure of time and place and time related department), Ashwa, Hasti Padati and Chariot department.

Provincial Administration – Chandragupta was emperor of huge empire. Hence for the comfort of governance, administration was divided in many parts. Each province was divided in many Ahar and Vishay. It is difficult to tell how many provinces were there in his regime. Probably, five or six major province would be there. First province was Uttarapath with capital at Takshshila. Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Sindh, Punjab and Kashmir were controlled from here. Second was Avantirupa with capital at Ujjaini. Malwa and Gujarat were handled from here. Third was Dakshinapath with capital at Suvarnagiri. Forth province was kalinga and its capital was Toshali. Fifth one was Prachya and its capital was patliputra. Since, Kalinga was captured by Ashoka, hence can assume that Chandragupta would have had only four provinces. For governance of farthest provinces, princes were given the responsibility. Management of areas like Prachya and central areas was taken care of by emperor himself with help of Mahamatras. Those Mahamatras used to live in big towns like patliputra, kaushambi etc. A Vaishya named pushyagupt used to manage Saurashtra. Apart from these areas, there were some regions which had autonomy in local matters. Such areas accepted them under Mauryan empire and paid annual tax.

Town Planning – In Chandragupta governance, centre and source of entire state power was emperor himself, yet there was importance of local autonomous bodies. Megasthaneze has told about municipal administration of patliputra, but to think that all other towns would have same provisions, would be wrong. There was a commission of 30 heads for patliputra. This commission was divided in six committees of five members each. Each had different work.

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- (i) **Shilp Kala Samiti**—Patliputra had hoards of sculpturer. Industrial art too developed a lot. Hence, for the inspection of industrial art, sculpture committee was formed. It used to fix wages for committee artists, workers and other labourers. Onus of safety of industrial artists was on it. It also had a vigil on the purity of production.
- (ii) **Vaideshik Samiti**—This committee was made to look after foreigners living in the state, its duty was to take care of their arrival, accommodation and medicines in need. Besides, they had the onus of their safety. After the death of foreigners, their last rites too were performed by this committee and their money-assets were handed over to their successors.
- (iii) **Janasankhya Samiti**—It kept records of life and death. Its purpose was not only to count population nor to levy tax on the basis of population, rather to keep government abreast of the situation of population by life and death of low and high class people irrespective. Objective of getting information about growth and decline in population is obvious and its relation is not with state tax. Certainly this census had got economic relevance rather than political relevance.
- (iv) **Vanijya Vyavsaya Samiti**—Importance of this forth Samiti is quite mentionable. It was formed to look after affairs of traders and Vaishya. At one hand, they tried to get it sold at right time by having public pronouncements and on the other hand, it ensured in public interest that traders could not cheat public with wrong weight measures. Nobody could do more than one business without permission and whosoever did more than one business, had to pay taxes in same proportion.
- (v) **Vastu Nirikshak Samiti**—Patliputra was major of the industrial centres of Maurya empire. Hence, for the inspection of goods production, a separate committee was required. With this objective only, to inspect the produce of industrialists was fixed as its main duty. It ensured that industrialists should not be doing any adulteration and thus get undue advantage. New and old goods could not be mixed and Samiti ensured that they are sold separately. Violators had to pay penalties.
- (vi) **Kar Samiti**—It collected taxes on sold items. This too was important one. Traders who tried to evade taxes, were given death sentence.

These committees collectively handled town cleaning. Safety of temple, ports, markets and other public institutions were also their work area.

Patliputra—While describing about patliputra Megasthaneze said that it was situated at the convergence point of Ganga and Sone river. Town was 9 miles long and quarter to two miles wide. There was a strong and high wall across it. It had 64 doors and 570 towers. Wood was used extensively in making the wall. Surrounding the wall was a 600 feet wide and 45 feet deep ditch, which remained filled with water always. Grandeur of town was excellent. At that time, no other town was as grand and beautiful as patliputra.

Rural Administration—Each village had a Panchayat which looked after governance. Normally old and senior people were its members. Sarpanch of Panchayat was the head of village and was called Gramik. He ruled village and resolved disputes with help of other Panchayat members. He was elected by villagers and his post did not carry salary. In each village, on Bhritya (gram bhritak) was appointed to collect tax and duty for emperor. On every ten villages, there was a Gope. It used to take care of administration and law and order under its jurisdiction. There was a Sthanik over many Gope, which controlled one fourth of a district. Samaharta used to take care of duties of Gramik, Gope and Sthanik.

Military Arrangement—Chandragupta had huge army for protecting its empire. He arranged a Chaturangini military i.e. Elephant, Horse, Chariot and Infantry and had provisions for its training. Emperor himself was the chief commander of military and led the army in wars. Chandragupta also had a naval army. There was a committee of 30 members for taking care of military arrangements. Military administration was divided into 6 parts and each part was controlled by 5 members. Each department had one head. First department looked after naval force. Second, used to see logistics for food and supply for military. Third infantry, forth cavalry, fifth elephants and sixth looked after Chariot

division. There used to be a medical treatment division with military to look after injured and wounded soldiers. Chandragupta had permanent army and military got salary and weapons from government. There were government factories for making weapons.

Police Arrangement—For internal governance and safety, police department was created. It had two sub divisions- Police Prakat and Gupt Vibhag. Sepoys of police Prakat were called Rakshit. Spies had two divisions- Sansthan and Sancharan. Sansthan spies used to stay at one place and Sancharan used to roam around. Women too worked as spies. Spies used to update emperor about every time and place. They also inspected work of high profile officers of state and used to update emperor about public thought process and activities.

Spy Department—Basis of Maurya rule was centralized. Hence, spies had special place in it and hence spy division was created. Some spies were recruited permanently in different places of empire. Some used to roam around in disguise. Women too worked as spies. Spies had many works. They used to get information on thieves, criminals and enemies. They used to inspect activities of government employees and update emperor about their activity and character. Those spies found negligent in their work, were punished severely by emperor. There were another layer of spies to look after work of spies working. Thus, spy division was important in maintain law and order in the state. All small and big officers of the state used to work efficiently and carefully due to spy network.

Justice and Criminal Code—Emperor was the chief justice of the empire. His court was the highest of all. For towns and Janpad, there were separate courts. Judges of towns were called Vyavharik Mahamatras. Courts were of two types-civil and criminal. Civil and Criminal courts were called Dharmastha and Kantik Shodhan respectively. Accused Dissatisfied of lower court verdict could appeal in a higher court. Emperor's verdict was final. On the convergence of two Janpad borders, there used to be Janpad Sandhi court, which resolved disputes of both Janpad. This was the lowest court. Above it, Sangrahan, above it Dronamukh and above it Sthaniya used to be there. Appeal against Sthaniya court was heard in emperor's court. In each of these courts, there were 6 judges, out of which 3 were from Dharmastha and Aamatya (criminal) judges.

From description of Kautilya's Arthashastra and Megasthenes's Indica, those punishments were severe. There were fines for small crimes which were divided into three class. Fine for first class was up to 16 Pana, for second class up to 500 Pana and for third class it could go to 1000 Pana. For crimes bigger than these, provision of amputation and death sentence was there. In case of wrong witness, tongue used to be cut. Death sentence was awarded on doing damage to sculpture, nonpayment of government tax and crimes committed by government officials. For crimes like theft, illicit behavior, fraud verdict of fine and amputation in case of it being of serious nature was awarded. Vaidyas and other medical counselors were fined for negligence in duties. Due to strong justice system, crimes like theft, illicit behavior were quite less. There was custom of releasing prisoners in event of emperor's birthday, coronation ceremony, and birth of prince or on victory of any new region.

Revenue—Main source of government was land duty. As per Greek writers, land had government ownership. It was not considered individual property. Normally, 1/6th of production was taken as state tax, which was called 'Bhaga'. Under special conditions, it was 1/4th or 1/8th part. For collecting state tax, separate officials were appointed, who have been called 'Agronomoi' by Greek writers. Land and irrigation was taken care of by these officials only.

Government used to have good income from state lands, grazing fields and forests. Farmers had to give irrigation tax also. This tax was taken keeping in view quality and type of crop. In towns, there were life and death tax, house tax and sales tax. On state borders, traders had to pay Bahishulka and at the gates and Ghats, Octroi was collected. Government had monopoly on mines, weaponry, salt, intoxicating items, gambling and prostitution etc and state had huge income from them. Sculpture, traders and many others had to take licenses with some fees. Fines as decided by courts for crimes, gifts, property of childless people etc were other major source of government income.

Main heads of state expenditure were—royal family, religious work, military, official's salary, education, transport and other social service activities. Controller of revenue department was Samaharta and many heads worked under him.

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Public Welfare Activities—Chandragupta tried for maximum facilities for his subjects. First commendable work in this regard was an efficient transport system. He constructed roads for movement and ensured their safety. He got many new roads constructed and repaired old ones. There was a separate department for roads. Trees at both sides of road were planted and wells were dug at frequent intervals. This made transport easy and helped trade to grow.

He provisioned for effective irrigation. Many canals were made. State took special interest in developing agriculture and farmers were given special assistance. Chandragupta constructed a lake in Saurashtra named Sudarshan, which helped farmers in their irrigation.

He also took care of public health and cleanliness. He opened many dispensaries and kept medical counselors (Vaidyas) in it. Appointed inspectors for checking cleanliness of towns and quality of food items. There were arrangements from government to protect public from natural calamities like epidemic, endemic, drought, fire, flood etc.

Individual Life of Emperor—Chandragupta lived life as per directive principles of Granth. He spent maximum time in his royal court only. He was so conscious of his duty that he issued a decree that anyone could approach him anytime for justice, even when he is being massaged. As per **Megasthaneze**, emperor was beware of his enemies, he was afraid of his assassination, never slept on bed for two times, his food was tasted before he ate to avoid threat of poison. No one could enter the palace without permission. There was huge army of spies who kept updating emperor about developments of town and empire. Every tool was used to terminate enemies of state. There was a large team of lady servants (dasis) at his service. Those dasis only made food for him, massaged him and entertained him with dance and singing. Bodyguards patrolled the palace in nights. Emperor only moved out of palace on special occasions. At that time, a huge procession followed him. Huge team of servants followed him with gold pots, table, chair, clothes etc. bodyguards used to move along both side of the road, so that viewers are at distance from emperor. Anyone moving in to women's lane was punished with death sentence. When emperor used to wash his hairs that time there used to be a court and knights used to come and greet him. Thus, emperor had a luxurious life style.

Megasthaneze tells that there used to be lady bodyguards instead of male. King always feared for his life. Hence, he never used to sleep at one place for more than two nights. First son of the king used to succeed him. King was fond of hunting and such programmes were organized with great fervour. King used to do hunting on elephant in far areas of his kingdom. On such occasions, female bodyguard escorted him. These bodyguards were armed. For royal procession, both sides of the road were blocked with strong ropes. Violating that rope meant death, means no one could cross them. His grace and style was grand. His palace was grand in all respects. Palaces of Susa and Ecbatana were nothing in comparison with his palace. All pillars had golden climbers. Silver birds were decorated on it. Buildings were made in huge gardens. There were water pools in these buildings, in which fishes used to swim. They were surrounded by live bushes and trees. Resources of luxury were available. Normally, pots and utensils were of gold.

Emperor's life was of hard labour. He used to wake up with morning music. After having bath and worships, he used to go to court of justice and gave Darshan to public in his royal court. Then used to discuss with ministers, looked at reports and news of spies and had rest post lunch. In evening, used to inspect forces and fort and had entertainment. He was fond of hunting. Animal wrestling, horse race and chariot race were his favourite means of entertainment.

Chandragupta's Religion—Initially he had faith in Jainism. As per **Hemchandra**, he was protector of people of Mithyamatavalambi. In his court, there was a minister Jatilak. Mention of Jatilak community is found in Baudddha Granth. He must have influence of Chanakya over him. As per Greek writers, he used to come out of palace for yagnic rituals. It is difficult to say whether he had faith in Buddhism or not. In last phase of his life, he became Jain follower. He was supporter of religious independence.

Last Days of Chandragupta—As per Jain sayings, he accepted discipleship of Mahavir swami. It is said that this great commander and ruler after ruling for 24 years, left royal comfort and accepted retirement

in 298 BC. In the last part of his regime, there was a serious drought. Hence, a big team of Jain Bhikshus moved towards Karnataka in the leadership of Jain leader Bhadrabahu. Chandragupta too developed detachment and he handed over regime to his son Bindusar and moved to the mountains of Karnataka and there only like a true Jain, sacrificed his life with fast. Thus, founder of the great Maurya empire finished his life. His regime is considered to be between 324 or 321-298 BC.

Evaluation of Chandragupta—He has high position in history. He is counted amongst greatest emperors and winners. He founded such an empire that touched boundaries of Persia. Though, India has been ruled by others also, but the way he ruled northwestern parts of India, nobody else can. Credit of driving Greek rulers out of India and attaining independence goes to Chandragupta only. The period when Chandragupta started his expedition, there was lack of political unity and India was divided into many parts. Hence, it lacked strength to stop foreign attacks. Chandragupta won great regional areas and founded single window regime in entire India. He established such a hugely strong army, that not only in his times, but in his successor's times also, India was free from threat of foreign invasions.

Religiously, he was very liberal. He gave respect to all religions and faiths. Each one in his kingdom had the right to follow his desired religion and revere his deity. There was no sign of religious atrocities. Hence, Brahman, Buddha, Jain all considered him to be follower of their own faith.

His period is not devoid of artistic work. Arthashastra of Kautilya and Jainsutra were composed in his period only. He always encouraged literature lovers.

He loved nature and beauty. He used to live a beautiful palace, which were larger than Irani palaces in grandiose and beauty. All across the palace, there were pools and gardens. These had beautiful trees. Peacocks used to roam around in palace premises. Ponds and pools were filled with fishes. Even Megasthenes was stunned to see his palace. All items of luxury were available in his royal court. Pots of gold and silver, tables embedded with diamonds, throne, pillars used to force viewers go spell bound. Thus, it is proved that he loved nature.

He was a high class administrator. His administration was of such high quality and organized that it remained being followed for many emperors after his time. Babar too established Mughal empire, but he did nothing for administration. Chandragupta not only established huge empire like a great winner, but founded solidly organized administration system in his empire for the law and order and general administration. He inspired Indian emperors in this regard. During negligible administration of Bindusar and religious ruling of Ashoka, the speed with which Maurya Vansh was founded, would have faded with even greater speed, but it was the quality of administrative arrangements of Chandragupta that it continued for so long. The army which he created was so strong and terrifying that even in the period of Ashoka, when he retired from the use of violence, there could be no internal disturbances or external aggression. We find stringent measure in his justice system and on this basis only, Justin has called him cruel and merciless, but in Mudrarakshas, he has been referred as divine incarnation, who has come to earth to provide happiness and satisfaction. Megasthenes too has admired his administration very much.

6.3 Description of Megasthenes

Indica Megasthenes's—Indica is another source to know about Mauryan period history of India. He has written many things about contemporary times. He was Greek ambassador, who was sent by Seleucus to Chandragupta's court. We don't have original copy of Indica now. Some excerpts of Greek writers taken from his notes are found. **Diodorus** has used some excerpts of Indica for his readers. It is possible that while interpreting them they got little deformed or while doing so, some important facts were left, but this can never be accepted that Indica only contains fictions. Scholars like **Dr. Jolly** believe Indica less. He says that Megasthenes has added things of other nations also with India. He did not know any Indian language. He did not visit entire India. He only stayed in Punjab and Patliputra. Besides, he did not stay for long in India. In such condition, how much information he would have got? Possible that

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he could not get complete knowledge of institutions and traditions here. Also possible that he could understand specific Indian names. This is also possible he could not understand clear pronunciation of Indian words. When he started writing *Indica* after long, he forgot vocabulary and pronunciations. One more logic is that those writers, who have used *Indica*'s inference, might not have understood it.

Despite all these expected errors, we have to accept that Megasthenes has painted well what he witnessed. As per **Dr. Smith**, whatever the case be, Megasthenes's description is believable, he wrote, whatever he saw. Military and general administration as written by him are believable. We should accept it without any hesitation. It is correct that his Indian description has been found in pieces instead of one book; still these descriptions are so vital that they give sufficient information on Chandragupta. With help of these pieces only, we can view on micro basis, administration and contemporary institution of his times. He has tried to throw light on India's geographic, political and social life.

Geographical Condition—While describing its physical boundaries, **Megasthenes** wrote that Himalaya is to its north, sea to its east and south and rivers like Ganga, Sone and Indus to its west. He did not mention south Indian rivers at all. Since, Afghanistan was part of Maurya empire, he has mentioned afghan rivers like Kabul, Swat, Gomal etc. As regards climate, he has written that there is enough heat in summer. Rain happens in both summer and winter. But summer period has more rains.

Political Condition—As per Megasthenes, king used to be in his court entire day and delivered justice. He was afraid for his life and hence he never slept at one place for more than two nights. When he used to go on hunting, then the roads were barricaded with ropes and anyone trying to violate this rope was give death sentence. He has described king's palace beautifully. He writes that king's palace was in patliputra. There were gardens and ponds surrounding the palace. Peacocks were kept in palace premises. There were large number of parrots in the gardens, which kept moving at the palace sky. There were beautiful fishes in the ponds. No one was allowed to catch them, but sometimes prince etc use to catch them for entertainment. Emperor used to be within palace only and had women bodyguards for his safety. Megasthenes used to go out only on four occasions—at war, to take over post of justice, to offer Bali and for hunting. He has given beautiful description of his royal court. As per him, emperor's court was wonderful. Utensils of gold-silver, table embedded with jewellery, chairs and beautiful clothings used to make people spell bound. Emperor used to go out of palace on palanquin decorated with pearl garlands and flowers, which was fixed on elephant. Emperor was fond of hunting. Huge forests were kept reserved for his hunting. He liked wrestling, horse race, animal fights etc and he used to entertain him with them only.

Megasthenes had also described patliputra. He writes that patliputra is the largest town of India and is situated at the convergence point of Ganga and Sone river. Town was 9 miles long and quarter to two miles wide. There was a strong and high wall across it. It had 64 doors and 570 towers. Surrounding the wall was a 600 feet wide and 45 feet deep ditch. As regards management of patliputra, Megasthenes writes that town was managed by 6 committees of 5 member each. We have already discussed their work while describing Chandragupta's administration.

Social Condition—As per megasthenes's description, we find that social and individual morality standard was quite high. People were honest and never told lies. People believed in each other and there was no thieves or dacoits in the town. People used to leave their houses unlocked.

People were beautiful, healthy and tall. They had simple food. Except at the time of offering Bali, they never drank. On Bali, they drank Somras. They were fond of costly and beautiful clothes and ornaments. Their clothes had embroidery work. Women had respectable place in society. Only elite class had the permission of polygamy. There was no veil or Sati system in society.

Society was divided into seven parts—(i) philosopher (ii) council members (iii) officials (iv) soldiers (v) farmers (vi) sculpture and traders (vii) hunters and shepherds. Caste systems were rigid. Inter caste marriages were not allowed.

Megasthenes writes that Indians were less spenders. There was no fixed time for eating and they ate alone. There was no slave system. This can't be accepted, as India had slave system, but behavior was not like Greece.

Apart from above, he has written some things which look peculiar and its base seem to be fictitious. May be he heard some of these from people. He has written that many people in India have one eye, many have heads like dogs and many don't have even nose. But these details are totally untrue and unbelievable.

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6.4 Arthashastra of Kautilya

Arthashastra was discovered in 1909 and Dr. Ram Shastri translated it. It was composed looking at the interest of administration. It is divided in 15 parts and 180 sub parts and it has around 6000 shlokas. Scholars have difference of opinion in context of its composition. Many scholars say it has been written by Kautilya (prime minister of Chandragupta) and some say this has been written in even ancient times. Their logic is that if he was prime minister, then he must have mentioned emperor's victories and style of administration. At least, he would have mentioned Maurya dynasty. But, scholars don't agree with this logic.

Arthashastra is an important book for knowing Mauryan period. Original name of Kautilya was Vishnugupt or Chanakya. He was prime minister of Chandragupta. In the success of Chandragupta, Kautilya's contribution was immense. Kautilya was expert in politics and administration. No one could match him in politics. He was not physically attractive, but had extraordinary brains and ability. He led simple life. He was Brahman by caste and was always firm on his decisions. To attain political objective, he used good-bad all types of tools.

He had major hand in the destruction of Nand Vansh and victory of Magadha by Chandragupta. It is said that once Nand king insulted him in full royal court and thereafter he became enemy of Nand Vansh and pledged to remove Nand Vansh. Chandragupta too was unhappy with Nand rulers. Hence having common objectives made them friends. Later, Kautilya always kept guiding Chandragupta in political moves and kept advising him as prime minister. Mudrarakshas of Vishakhadatt tells us about destruction of Nand Vansh and rise of Maurya dynasty and Kautilya's contribution is also detected in it.

Arthashastra is such extensive composition which not only describes political principles, but also about organization of administration and various issues of society and state. We get proof of extraordinary talent and political mastery of Chanakya with this book. This is the oldest and important book of India on political principles. In this, he has described various subjects of state administration like; prince education, daily routine of governance, election of ministers and test of their loyalty or honesty, formation of different government departments, justice, tax, principles of revenue, foreign policy etc. this book not only describes political principles, but also has mention of political events of that time. On this quality only, Arthashastra can be called as incomparable book on political science of Indian history and describer of history in its own way. Following are the major things in this book as below:

King – He has expressed beautiful thoughts on king. As per him, place and position of king should be supreme with unbridled powers, but to be successful, he must be welfare ruler. His relation with masses should be of father and son. Happiness and welfare of his subjects should be his happiness and satisfaction. He must take care of public opinion, traditions and customs. He must consult his ministers in matters of governance. He has emphasized that king should be educated and polite, since if king is not educated and civilized, his subjects can also not progress. Cultural and physical progress of subjects depends on its king only. To make character of king higher, Kautilya has suggested him to be free of six enemies – Kaam, Krodh, Lobh, Moh, Ahankar and uchchhrinkhalta. If king is not able to save him from these, he shall decline.

Aim of Kautilya was to make an ideal king winner. He was of the view that as long as king becomes a winner and increases his empire, he can't attain his objective. But it was necessary that for victory, soldiers should be charged religiously, so that they can fight with zeal and valour.

Minister – Though Kautilya's administration was of supreme powers and despotic nature, yet he believed that to run administration, existence of ministers is essential. He said that vehicle with one wheel can never run. Hence, we must give important place to ministers. While appointing them, their

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honesty and loyalty should be tested by giving them inducements. King should discharge his duties in consultation with advice of minister, but he is not bound to adhere to them.

Provincial and Civil Administration—To run administration, it was necessary to divide it into provinces and governors be appointed, who can rule as king's representative. Town management too should be given to some council, which can fulfill all its needs and manage administration. Kautilya has also said that towns should have census.

Detective System—Arthashastra gives great importance to spy system. Kautilya is of the view that king can get information on every activity happening in state, by spies only, which can help him suppress revolts etc. Main duty of spies was to update king on anything happening in the state and to ensure a feeling of love and respect develops among the masses for king. Kautilya was of the view that women should be more in numbers as spy, as they are can perform this duty better.

Water Transport—We get vital information about water transport from Arthashastra. As per it, it was a focus area of Chandragupta's period. There was an officer at each port to take care of ships and boats going in sea or rivers. All ships and boats were under control of state. Hermits and traders also paid tax.

Religion and Morality in Politics—Important contribution of Kautilya is that he did not give any space to religion or morality in politics. He said that while attaining political objective, king should not look into religion or morality. Good and bad, each tool can be used in politics. It does not mean that king should be religious. In contrast, religion and morality have been emphasized more for king in his personal life. He has been asked to be of high character and be polite and has been cautioned against six enemies. But, we can't pay attention to these things in politics and diplomacy. Kautilya says, religion and diplomacy are two different things and there is mutual relation between them.



Did u know? There was a serious revolt in Bindusar's period in and around capital of Uttarapath, Takshshila.

Thus, we get to know so many historical and political details in Kautilya's Arthashastra. This is the reason; this Granth is considered as very important.

6.5 Bindusar

After Chandragupta his son Bindusar succeeded him in 300BC on the throne of Magadha. His regime does not have much importance in Indian history. One reason is that we have less information of his time. As per Jain and Bauddha saying, after Chandragupta's death, Chanakya was alive for some time and his policy were continued in earlier days of Bindusar regime.

Major Events of Bindusar Period

Bindusar followed his father's policy of complete victory. He destroyed around sixteen capital's kings and ministers and after long battle, won areas between eastern and western sea. Chanakya helped him in his policy. Some scholars believe that Bindusar only won south India, but many believe that in the age of Chandragupta only, this area between eastern and western sea was won. Hence, destruction of sixteen towns may imply that there was a revolt and Chanakya suppressed it.

Revolt in Uttarapath—As per Divyavdan, in the period of Bindusar, there was a severe revolt in capital Takshshila and nearby areas. That time, elder son of Bindusar, Suseem was the representative and provincial governor of his father. He could not control the revolt. when Bindusar got this news, then he sent Ujjaini's king Ashok to Takshshila and he finally suppressed it.

This description proves that Bindusar was able to protect his father's empire. Even if he did not win any new states and extended his empire further, yet he was the ruler of entire north and south.

Foreign Policy of Bindusar—He followed foreign policy of his father only. He continued friendly relations with Greek rulers of west. King of Syria sent Dimacus as ambassador in place of Megasthenes. As per **Plini**, king of Egypt Ptolemy II also sent his ambassador called Dionysus in Indian emperor's court. Story of letter friendship between Syrian king Antiochus I and Bindusar, has been written by a Greek called Athanius. These prove that Bindusar had a friendly policy with all its neighbours.

Bindusar had many sons and daughters. Amongst them, Ashoka was brave and eligible. Mention of Ashoka's two brothers Suseem and Vigatashok is found in Bauddha Granth Divyadan. Suseem was Ashoka's step brother and Vigatashok was his younger and own brother. Bindusar died in 273 BC.

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6.6 Ashoka and his Successors

Preliminary Life of Ashoka

Ashoka is one of world's greatest rulers. The empire he rules was the largest of all. He is considered incomparable in terms of extension of kingdom, administration, and care for subjects and conservation of religion and magnanimity of heart. We can find many examples of huge empires and emperors, but finding a great emperor who is a great human being too, is difficult. But we find this quality in Ashoka and this is why he is considered to be incomparable individual of Indian history.

There is enough material available on Ashoka in Purans and other Granth, but historical facts received by his own inscriptions are incomparable in terms of authenticity. Had we not got his inscriptions with us, then probably we would not have known his ideals and fame. Bauddha Granth can't be trusted more due to being partial at times.

There is less information about his birth and preliminary life. His father Bindusar had many wives. There is difference of opinion about his mother also among historians. Some are of the view that Ashoka was born to Greek wife of Bindusar. But there is hardly any proof to justify this logic. Divyavadan mentions that his mother was Janpad kalyani. At some place, her name appears as Subhradangi. It is said that she was the daughter of a Brahman from Champa and was very beautiful. She gave birth to two sons, Ashoka and Vigatashok (Tishya). Suseem was step brother of Ashoka.

Ashoka received education with his brother Tishya and step brothers only. He was more able and smart than all other princes in terms of education, warfare etc. His merit, ability and intelligence was better than his brothers. His step brother Suseem was jealous of him due to this. Bindusar made Ashoka governor (Kumar) of Ujjain and later on, of Takshshila. When Suseem failed to suppress the revolt of Takshshila, then Ashoka was sent by Bindusar. Ashoka succeeded and Bindusar got impressed with his ability and intelligence. He awarded him with post of Yuvraj.

There is another description of his early life. It is said that when he was going to take charge of Ujjain, then he halted at Vidisha. He fell in love with daughter of a trader, her name was Devi and he married her. This wife gave birth to his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra. Both of them have special place in the history of Bauddha religion.

Struggle for Empire—After getting news of Bindusar's illness, Ashoka came to patliputra, who was the then representative administrator of Ujjain. Ashoka was second son of Bindusar. Bindusar had many wives and sons. Eldest son was Suseem or Suman. He was step brother of Ashoka. From second wife of Bindusar, two sons were born—Ashoka and Tishya. Thus, Tishya was his own brother. Another name of Tishya was Vigatashok or Veetashok. Ashoka had another elder brother, Mahendra. Some historians have considered Mahendra as Ashoka's son. But there is no detailed information on this. As per Divyavdan, Ashoka had to get into big struggle with his brother for kingdom. Finally, Ashoka won and he throned after four years of his father's death, in 269 BC. In these four years what happened, who was the king, there is no definite evidence. As per Bauddha Granth, before taking blessings of Bauddha Granth, Ashoka was very cruel. He was Chandashok and he did not hesitate in murdering his 99 brothers. But after he became Bauddha follower, he became Dharmashok and adopted policy of

Notes

non violence. This statement of Bauddha Granth is not feasible. They have tried to malign Ashoka's character just to give importance to Bauddha religion. As per them, their influence converted such a sinner into religious personality. But as per Ashoka's inscriptions, it is known that in his lifetime, his brethren were taken care of by state. Hence, it is wrong to say that he murdered his brethren. Besides, if a person after seeing bloodshed in war can become so soft, that he vows not to indulge in violence anymore, how can he kill his 99 brethren? Did he not get affected by blood relation? Hence, statement of Sinhala can be only a work of fiction.

Then what would have happened in those four years between Bindusar's death and Ashoka's coronation. Some historians are of the view that he must be of less age by the time of his father's death and after four years, he would have become the king. But, Ashoka went to Takshshila to suppress the revolt in his father's time only, so he must not be of less age. There are many examples in Indian history of coronation of non adult princes. Coronation of Maharaja Parikshit happened in the age of 5 years. **Dr. Bhandarkar's** view on this seems correct. As per him, Ashoka due to not being eldest son of Bindusar could not become king. Suman or Suseem was the eldest, but Ashoka was an ambitious prince and he wanted to be king. Hence, it is definite that he had to fight with his elder brother. Possibly, in this struggle, he had to kill one or two of his brethren. But killing of 99 brethren can't be possible for even most cruel and barbaric person. Hence, Ashoka probably fought with his brethren who were in favour of Suseem. Due to this struggle only, his coronation took place after four years.

At the time of coronation, he received titles of Devnampriya and Priyadarshi.

Extension of Ashoka's Empire

Ashoka too followed his predecessor's policy of extension of kingdom and friendly relations with some of neighbouring nations. He sent his ambassadors to Green courts and welcomed their ambassadors. He appointed Greek officials in his kingdom. But internal policy was to expand kingdom. As per ancient ruler's tradition, he too had ideal of winning all regions. As a result, he decided to attack those regions, which were not part of Mauryan Empire even till now. First, he attacked Kashmir and merged it in his kingdom. In historical Granth of Kashmir (Rajtarangini), he has been presented as first Mauryan king. We can assume with this that Chandragupta or Bindusar did not have control over Kashmir.

Kalinga War – In the 13th year of his regime and 9th year of his coronation, Ashoka attacked Kalinga. Kalinga was a strong state that time and it had powerful army. During last ruler of Nand Vansh, Dhananand, Kalinga was part of Magadha Empire. It appears that taking benefit of transition phase of decline of Nand and rising of Maurya regime, they became independent. But, it was intolerable for Magadha to have such a powerful state in its neighbourhood. Hence, Ashoka decided to finish its liberty and planned an attack on Kalinga and formed huge military for its. After sufficient preparation, Kalinga was attacked. With 13th inscriptions of Ashoka, we get to know that Kalinga was defeated and merged in Magadha Empire. There occurred horrible war. It is said that around 2.5 lacs were killed and the same injured in this war. Solider, officer warrior and normal people were out of the deceased. Around 15,000 were made captive, lacs of women and children were rendered orphans. After such bloodshed and cruel genocide, kalinga was merged into Magadha Empire. One prince was made its governor, who started living in its capital Toshali to look after its affairs.

The horrible bloodshed of kalinga was had great influence on Ashoka's mind. His thoughts changed and he gave up policy of imperialism. In his inscription he himself writes, "After 8 years of coronation, Devnampriya king Priyadarshi won Kalinga. 1.5 Lac people were made captive and sent out, 1 Lac got killed and many more got destroyed".

Kalinga war has importance place in Ashoka's life. It changed Ashoka's life totally by revolutionalizing it. Bloodshed of Kalinga war had such impact on Ashoka that he quit policy of empire consolidation and war. In place of war, he shall do friendship and in place of regions, he shall do Dharma Vijay. After Kalinga war, he declared- "If today there is damage of 100th or 1000th of the number of people killed or made captive during kalinga victory, and then Devnampriya shall be highly aggrieved. Not even this, if someone tries to do some damage to Devnampriya, then everybody should tolerate it.

Now as per emperor, real win was of religion. Hence, now we can hear Dharmaghosh (religion bigul) instead of Bherighosh (war bigul) and in place of Digvijay (win of world) efforts shall be put in for Dharma Vijay.”

These expressions of Ashoka were not only goodwill gestures. He was not a dual character politician like modern times, who talks of love and peace at one hand and tries to suppress its weak neighbours on the other. Ashoka lived up to his pledge lifelong. After Kalinga, he kept sword back. Yudhaghosh ended and Dharmaghosh started in the nation. Though his kingdom stretched too much, yet there were some small areas outside his control. After Kalinga, Ashoka never tried to win them. Ashoka not only kept this policy for him, rather educated his sons and grandsons also for not doing war.

Importance of Kalinga War – Giving up violence had adverse impact on Magadha Empire. Gradually, it started declining. This had adverse political effect on Indian history, but it had great effect on religious and cultural life. After this war, Ashoka accepted Bauddha religion and devoted his life in promoting it. With friendly relations with other countries, he tried to promote Indian culture and civilization.

Importance of Kalinga war is even more from this perspective. It is normally seen that after winning war, ambition for more wins increases. But this is a wonderful example of leaving violence after winning a war and has pledge of doing dharma Vijay instead of Yudhavijay. But Ashoka did the same after Kalinga war. He immediately adopted non violent Bauddha religion and devoted his life, money, heart in promoting it. As a result, Bauddha religion went outside Indian boundaries. **Dr. Hemchandra Rai Chaudhary** has written in context of Kalinga war – “Kalinga victory is a milestone in the history of Magadha and India. It ends that policy of win and development, which was started by Bimbisar by winning Anga Desh. It marks the beginning of a new era. This era is of peace, social development, and religious promotion and of political impediments and decline of soldier. In this period, due to lack of military, military excitement of imperial Magadha diminished slowly. War of Adhyatmik Vijay or Dharmavijay was about to start.”

Boundaries of Ashoka Empire – Defining boundaries of Ashoka empire is not tough task. On the basis of his inscriptions found at various places, we get help in deciding his regime. Ashoka himself won Kalinga, but got huge empire from his grandfather, whose northwestern boundary was Hindukush. He still had Herat, Kandahar, Kabul valley and Baluchistan which Chandragupta won from Cellucas. Form the geographic condition of Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra inscriptions of Peshawar and Hazara district respectively, it gets certified. Its confirmation is done by Huensang’s script also as he writes that, he saw Stupas of Ashoka in Kapisha (kafiristan) and Jalalabad. As per same Chinese Bhikshu and Rajtarangini, Kashmir was under Ashoka and he inhabited Srinagar town there. Apart from this northwest, his boundary was Himalaya himself in north. As per Bauddha traditions, Nepal too was in his empire. He inhabited town called Lalitpatan there. He travelled there with his son-in-law and husband of Charumati, Devpal Kshatriya. This north boundary is confirmed by his inscriptions and lowland inscriptions of that part. His inscriptions have been found at Kalsi in Dehradun district and in Rummindai and Nigliva village.

In east, Bengal was under his empire. This is certified by Bauddha sayings and scripts of Huensang. It is said that when Mahendra and Sanghamitra were going to Sri lanka, then Ashoka came to see them off at Tamralipti port in Bengal. Besides, many Stupas made by him were seen by Chinese visitors in Bengal. Kalinga was won by Ashoka himself. Inscriptions of Dhauli and Jaugad are monuments of his eastern boundary.

In west, its boundary was western sea, which gets certified by inscriptions of Girnar at Kathiawar and Sopra at Thane district in Mumbai. Saurashtra was in his empire has one more evidence. Shaka king Rudradaman writes in his inscription that provincial governor of Ashoka Greek Tushaspa carved out canals for farming from Sudarshan lake, made by stopping river flow by provincial governor of Chandragupta, Pushyagupt.

Southern boundary was up till Maski and Iragudi of Nizam and up to Cheetalduurg of Mysore since Ashoka inscriptions have been found there. To the south of this boundary, there were estates of Chola,

Notes

Pandyas, Satiaputra and Keralputra. Alike these, Yavan, Kamboj, Gandhar, Rashtik, Petenik, Bhoja, Namak, Nabhpanti and Pulind etc were independent and out of Ashoka empire's boundary.

Ashoka's Religion (Dhamma)

Fame of Ashoka in the world is not due to his empire and administrative skills, but for his high religious idol, his faith towards them and his eligible behaviour to implement it. What was the religion of Ashoka is a much disputed question and different historians have expressed different opinion on it. As per **Herras**, he was Brahman. As per **Dr. Tomas**, he followed Jainism. As per **Dr. Fleet**, he followed Raj dharma. As per **Senartha** and **Bhandarkar**, he was follower of Buddhism. **Dr. Smith** and **Dr. R.K. Mukharjee** have considered his religion of sovereign nature, which included goodness of all religions and which could not be encompassed by one religion.

In fact, Ashoka's religion was not a conservative and communal. All above mentioned facts have little truth in all. We need to know chronological development of religious concepts of Ashoka to know which one is closest to truth. Actually, change in his religious thoughts started happening slowly. Hence, after studying his religious activities from beginning to end, we can know his actual religion.

His religious life and thoughts were greatly influenced by Kalinga war. This war changed him so much that he changed his religion and became follower of Buddhism. Before this, Ashoka was Shaiva and he was not shy of genocide and Bali. Thousands of animals were killed daily for his meal. Writer of Rajtarangini, **Kalhan** also has accepted this. He writes that Ashoka was a Hindu fellow before. He respected Brahmans and had great respect for them. Up till eight years since his coronation, this situation remained intact.

He attacked Kalinga in the 9th year of his coronation. After fierce struggle and bloodshed, he got victory. One Lac were killed, 1.5 Lac were captive and thousands were injured. Screams of injured, widows and orphaned children had great impact on his mind. His mind was full of repentance. He considered him responsible for such bloodshed and decided not to indulge in war in future. After sometime, Ashoka came in contact with Baudha Bhikshu Upp Gupta and was impressed with his purity of behavior, thoughts and greatness. In he company, his inclination towards Baudha faith increased and he accepted Buddhism. Initially, some historians had doubt about him following Buddhism, but there are plenty evidences of his Buddhism following. From his article itself, it appears that he was an enthusiastic Baudha. Baudha Granth Deepvansh and Mahavansh clearly state that he accepted Buddhism from a small Bhikshu. Chinese visitor Huensang too has mentioned about his Buddhist tradition. In his Bhabru script, he has told him as disciple of Baudha faith and Sangh. In his Sarnath inscription, he has referred to him as guardian of Sangh and has fixed penalties for dividing Sangh. At one place, it has been said that for 2 years, he lived like a worshipper and did not show interest in religious activity. Afterwards, he adopted Buddhism. After that, he toured Baudha pilgrim sites, started constructing Stupas, closed yagna and had a convention of Baudha followers. These prove that, he was a strong follower of Buddhism.

We get solid evidence of his being Buddhist from 13th inscription of Chaturdesh stone inscriptions. It is written, "After Kalinga war, soon Devnampriya Ashoka, was encouraged towards following Dhamma, its love and its preachings." Thus Ashoka started promoting practical aspects of supporting principles of Baudha faith. The religion he propagated is called "**Dhamma of Ashoka.**"

Dhamma has been used several times in his inscriptions. There is difference of opinion among scholar about actual meaning of Dhamma. In second pillar inscription his anxiety is like this, "kich Chu dhamme" (what is Dhamma)? He replies himself – 'Aapsinve bahu kathne daya Dane Dane sochye.' Which means that state of sinlessness, public welfare, mercy, charity, honesty and purity is Dhamma. Except Bhabru inscription, he has not used Dhamma for Buddhism. For Baudha faith, use of Sadharma or Sangh is used.

Form of Ashoka's Religion – What was Dhamma of Ashoka? Actually it was a synopsis of all religions. It had influence of all religions. He selected any principle from any religion, which he liked. Such

selected religious principles have been counted in second pillar inscription, seventh pillar inscription and seventh stone inscription. This is like this – sanyam, bhav shuddhi, dridha bhakti, shauch, sadhuta, kritagyata, daya, daan, satya, mata-pita, guru aur aadar jano ki seva sushrusha, bandhu bandhava, Brahman, shraman, deen dukhhiya ko daan aur uchit aadar satkar. Actually, the religion he adopted and promoted, was welfare and beneficial for all. He promoted such moral principles which could be followed by any caste, religion or countrymen.

While opining, **Dr. Radha Kumud Mukharjee** has said, “religion of Ashoka was a blend of principles of life and thought, which even today are relevant and can be applied on entire humanity.” Famous historian **Bhandarkar** has said in his book, “Ashoka did not follow any rules, vrat etc merely to show it off. He adopted these elements which raise level of soul and which contain actual seeds of development.” **Senart** writes about his religion, “Ashoka’s religion was based on collection of behavioural principles. He focused less on specific and mysterious aspect of Buddhism.”

Characteristics of Ashoka Religion – He did not emphasize on religious activity, rituals and customs. He stressed on purity of character, behaviour and karma. In one article, he emphasized on Indriyavijay, purity of thoughts, gratitude and staunch dedication. In another article, mercy, charity, truth, shauch etc have been referred to as supreme. Similarly, he has asked to suppress bad habits like anger, ego, jealousy etc, but his religion was not only confined to principles. He presented his religion in practical form also. His fundamental mantras were service of parents, friends, relatives, guru and servants. His preaching was to respect Brahman and have mercy for animals. Biggest characteristic of his religion was perseverance. He wanted to have synergy between all the castes and religion of the world. His 12th stone inscription is an evidence for this. He stressed on mutual cohesiveness and faith and has mentioned four ways for the development of these sentiments – (i) to encourage basic elements of all religions (ii) never criticise any religion and stress on basic unity of all religions (iii) to let people from different religion meet and exchange of thoughts (iv) follow other religious Granth to make our perspective wider.

In one of Ashok article following statement is found – “One who respects his religion and disrespects others and thus wants to increase name of its religion that in fact damages his own religion. Such human lacks genuinity of religion. It is crux of all religions to respect other religion.”

He did not confine religious tolerance to preachings only but implemented in his life as well. He respected Brahman, Aajivik, Nirgranth etc faiths and considered interests of everyone. He got constructed caves for Aajivik community in the mountains of Barabar.

Non violence was important part of his religion. He said, all forms of life are pure. His non violence was not only confined up to humans, he also considered lives of animals pure. He stopped killing of animals for royal feast. He not only kept non violence to himself, but also implemented it in politics as well. Post Kalinga war, he gave up policy of empire expansion and war forever. Finding such an example In entire world’s history is impossible.

Religious Propagation Works

As mentioned, being Bauddha himself, he never tried to impose his religious thoughts on other religion’s followers. Each one in his kingdom had liberty to follow his own religion. Still the level of effort he put in to promote his religion in his empire and outside can’t be equated with anyone else. Hence, the statement “That in history of Bauddha religion, most important place after Mahatma Buddha, is only of Ashoka is 100% true.” After Kalinga war, he pledged that he shall do Dharmaghosh in place of Ranaghosh. He wrote in his 7th inscription, “I shall have religious declaration. Shall promote religious teachings. People, who will learn this and be ready to follow it, shall have spiritual growth and religion shall prosper.” This script gets us to know about his religious promotion. For this objective only, he adopted following methods and as per them, propagated Buddhism in India and abroad.

Bauddha Religion as State Religion – Ashoka made Buddhism as the State Religion. As a result, many of his subjects converted to Buddhism. Even successors of Ashoka adopted is considering it as parental religion and hence it continued to be State religion for long.

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Moulding Life as per Buddhism – Ashoka changed his life as per principles of Buddhism. He presented his life before subjects as example. In royal kitchen, there used to be animal meat as food. Now he presented example before subjects and stopped killing of animal for food and other violent acts by making law. He also stopped hunting and started moving Bauddha pilgrim places. These actions of Ashoka brought lot of influence among subjects and they started converting to Buddhism

Administrative Reforms for Promoting Religion – He did many reforms to propagate religion. First he sent kind hearted government officials to visit each province every 5 years. His work was to check activities of government staff so that there should be no injustice with subjects. After sometime, he formed a permanent religion department to look after promotion of religion. Officials like Rajuk, Pradeshik and yut were involved in religious promotion. Mahamatras started visiting different parts of empire and helped in religious promotion. Job of these religious Mahamatras was to stop unjustified imprisonment and stopping of death penalties. Besides, they also promoted religion. They also had to promote moral principles for women. Thus, Ashoka brought his staff together in religious promotion. It was the result of such organized efforts that he got such great success, which has been described in his inscriptions.

Organization of Third Bauddha Convention – In his 17th year of rule, he convened a Bauddha convention at patliputra in the leadership of Mogaliputra Tishya, to resolve internal conflict of Bauddha faith. This was third Bauddha convention and Bhikshus from across India participated. Some scholars have expressed doubts on its historicity, but it is not true. Its biggest proof is Ashoka's Bhabru's inscription. In this inscription we find Emperor Ashoka addressing Bauddha Bhikshus as Magadha emperor. **Dr Bhandarkar's** statement is totally appropriate, as some of Bhikshus who attended were from outside Magadha also. Hence, Ashoka thought it proper to introduce him as Magadha emperor. Ashoka himself has said in it, "Priyadarshi emperor of Magadha desires to wish health and consistent pondering for Sangh by greeting all Sangh members." He said it while welcoming acharyas of Sangh. Further we see – "Respectable acharyas, as you know how much faith and dedication we have in Buddha religion and Sangh, preachings of lord Buddha have been expressed so nicely, but respected; if we direct some actions towards this welfare religion, then we take it as our duty. Respected, these are religion oriented Granth." Emperor further takes name of Dharma Vishayak Granth, which are Sutt Pitak and Vinay Pitak. Then he expresses his desire to men and women Bauddha Bhikshus to listen to Bauddha Granth- all men and women Bhikshus should listen to these Granth in maximum numbers. After listening, do meditate on it. After 9 months of discussion and introspection, this convention concluded. This convention joined 18 contemporary factions of Bauddha religion together and ended the division of it and provided strength. Some linguistic amendments were done in Bauddha Granth. In fact, after this convention only, activity of sending propagators overseas, took speed.

Importance of Ashoka's Dharmavijay in world history is great. Due to the efforts of Ashoka only, Buddhism became integral part of world culture and especially of Asia. Apart from religion, Indian culture too was promoted. But vital point is that there was no political or economical objective behind this campaign. In fact, interest less example of such religious promotion is difficult to be found in world.

Promotion through Plays – For religious promotions, Ashoka arranged many social events. As per his religious scripts, he stopped many such festivals and social celebrations, which were against religion. These included animal wrestling, eating meat or use of alcohol. He introduced new modes of entertainment in place of them. Many such plays and processions were planned, in which deities were shown on elephants or on divine aircrafts. Such many divine and spiritual creations were shown to public, so that their interest grows in religion. There were state sponsored religious recitations, which had speeches on religious topics and story etc. Many people got influenced and became Buddhist.

Donation of Huge Money – Ashoka used to donate hefty amount to Bauddha Bhikshu, propagators, institutions which were involved in religious promotion. This too helped a lot in promoting religion. His help to downtrodden and sages and hermits and thus promotion of Buddhism, is commendable. He not only donated himself, rather asked his relatives and other colleagues to donate. From his 7th pillar

inscription, it becomes clear that he formed one charity department, which looked after donation records of his queens and princesses. In this regard, we can see queen's inscription on Allahabad inscription, which has mention of donations like mango orchards, entertainment houses and other things. By 7th inscription, we clearly know the objective of Ashoka's charity. It reads like this – "I have done with the objective that each one follows Lok Dharma (public religion)."

Religious Trips – For promoting religion, he started Dharmayatra in place of Ranyatra. He himself did such trips and also sent his officials for such objectives.

Construction of Maths – Ashoka made several Bauddha Maths in his state and provided financial assistance to old ones. Many men and women Bauddha Bhikshus used to live there.

Religious Listening – He arranged debates and speeches on religious topics. This was done in the interest of people having religious interest and for common public. Rajuk, Vyusht, Pradeshik, yut etc were responsible for its success.

Embossing Religious Articles – Ashoka put all his state machinery in promoting religion. In his empire, he got embossed simple and universally accepted rules on stones and pillars. In the farther areas, such rules were embossed on permanent stones in local languages, so that they could read and follow it. These scripts were imprinted in nearby border areas on beautiful pillars. Even after 2000 years of his death, his stone and pillar inscriptions are still intact and are spreading his greatness. His 14 stone inscriptions, 7 pillar inscriptions, some cave inscriptions and many miscellaneous articles have been found and published.

Translation of Bauddha literature in Local Language – Ashoka managed to carve teachings of Bauddha religion in contemporary popular Pali language only on stones, pillars etc and translated some Bauddha literature in Pali language. This helped in reaching teachings and principles of Bauddha faith to the public and they started getting attracted towards it.

Making Welfare Activities Medium of Religion Promotion – Ashoka opened dispensaries for treatment of humans and animals in not only his empire, rather in overseas locations as well and got plants implanted for herbal medicines. He encouraged public to follow non violence and have mercy on animals. Thus, he used welfare activities to give boost to his religious promotion.

Propagation of Religion Abroad – Ashoka sent men and women Bauddha Bhikshus, propagators, preachers and even members of his family in huge contingents to promote Buddhism in Lanka, Java, Sumatra, China, Japan, Asia minor, Greece and Egypt etc of eastern African countries. Leadership of contingent going to Sinhala Dweep (Lanka) was led by his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra. When this team reached Lanka, then the king Tissa welcomed them. Ashoka himself tells about his Dharmavijay – "Devnampriya considers this victory through dharma as major victory. Have got victory in neighbouring nations and even nations as far as 600 miles."

Objective of these religious missions was not only promotion of religion. Government officials used to accompany these contingents with money and do social welfare activities there. Historian **Smith** says about these missions – "Sending religious propagators by Ashoka is an important event in the history of mankind. Before Ashoka for approximately 250 years, Buddhism was confined to Ganga valley only and their standing was a branch of Hinduism only. This local faith was converted into a global religion by Ashoka only."

These Bauddha propagators took Indian culture and civilization too along with them. In Lanka, Mahendra developed carving on stones and irrigation system. In fact, many barbaric tribes were converted into civilized societies by these people only.

Ashoka and Brahman Dharma – There is an allegation on Ashoka that due to his stopping of yagna by force, he hurt feelings of Brahman followers. But, this can't be held true. No government can accept such a large scale Bali system in its kingdom. Ashoka treated humans and animal as having equal soul and considered killing as killing. In such situation, he was not ready to be in consensus with Brahmans on animal sacrifice. He not only stopped animal sacrifice for Buddhist principle, he acted individually

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also in this regard. We all know the effect of aftermath of Kalinga war on Ashoka's mind. After this, not giving consideration to his own interest, he stopped wars and violence. If such emperor stops animal sacrifice, then we should not be surprised. Another characteristic of his religious policy was to end communalism and have fraternity in entire world. Hence, he permitted his subjects to keep knowledge of every religion.

His religious policy helped in establishing friendly relations abroad. Thus, we see that while keeping Brahman, Shraman, Ajivik etc, he successfully promoted his religion. Biggest proof of his policy is propagation of Buddhism and no revolt from Brahman community. As we know by stopping animal killing and sacrifices, he already had neglected Brahman Yagna. In such a condition, revolt by Brahmins was not a big deal, but Ashoka by dint of his subject loving nature and other characteristics, succeeded in his religious policy.

Effect of Ashoka's Religious Policy on Indian History – Acceptance of Buddhism by Ashoka had a great impact on Indian history. Now Emperor Ashoka left policy of empire expansion and war and adopted Dharmavijay as his aim. By adopting this policy, he gave a new twist to Indian history. Establishment of Maurya Empire was an important phenomenon of Indian history. It started political unification of the country. Such political unification could be possible only by power and war. If Ashoka would not have given up war and policy of empire expansion, then probably in the beginning of Indian history only, entire Indian unification would have been done and no decentralization forces would have come in force in times to come. But his policy of Dharmavijay stopped it in between and proved to be a bane on Indian history.

There was good result also of Ashoka adopting Buddhism. He became a big propagator and he sent his people in many countries. Before this, nobody went outside India. Due to Ashoka's promotion, many Indians went out and established relations with outside world. Later, many foreigners came to India. Thus, exchange of thoughts started and later trade too. This was the good part of Ashoka becoming Buddha and from here only, India's chapter of foreign relations started.

Buddha faith has influenced Indian history even after Ashoka. It was possible that if Ashoka would not have supported it, this could have become extinct from India with strong jolt of Brahman faith. But due to the patronage of such strong emperor, it became a powerful revolution and whatever effect it had on Indian history later, all credit goes to Ashoka.

Even today, Buddhism is prevalent in many neighbouring countries like Lanka, Nepal, Burma etc. even today, India has strong relations with these nations and contribution of Buddhism is immense in this regard. Credit of propagating Buddhism in these countries goes to Ashoka. His adoption of Buddhism has great historical importance. It not only influenced ancient periods, rather modern times too.

But, there was an adverse effect of his policy. Due to his policy of dharma and non-violence, military powers of Maurya Empire became weak and after his death, soon Maurya Empire declined. **Dr Hem Chandra Rai Chaudhary** writes, "With screams of Kalinga war, power of imperial Magadha Empire too got extinct. Ashoka gave up policy of his predecessors of expansion of empire and developed such a policy of Dharmavijay, which certainly damaged its military might. He also advised his sons and grandsons to adopt Dharmavijay and leave violence and have enjoyment in the spirit of perseverance. His successors heard Bherighosh instead of Dharmaghosh more. Hence, this is not surprising that his successors handling the throne of Patliputra could not sustain that powerful empire which was established by Chandragupta and Chanakya."

Inscription of Ashoka

Importance of inscriptions – In Indian history, place of Ashoka's inscriptions are very important. They tell about everything of his regime. On the basis of them only, we have reached the conclusion that apart from Pandyas, Chola, Satiaputra, Keralputra etc, and entire India was under his empire. Ashoka was Buddha follower, also is known by these inscriptions only. These inscriptions exhibit heart of

Ashoka. As a patronizer of idol of charity like mercy, service etc, Ashoka is represented to us through these inscriptions only. They only tell us about him being a big donator. They also tell us which countries Ashoka sent his promoters and with whom all he made friendly relations. Another good thing of these inscriptions is that they tell us about Ashoka's administration, his principles of governance, his relations with his subjects and public welfare. He expressed his behaviour in his orders to his staff. He said, "Everybody is like my child. The way I want welfare and happiness for my child, similarly I want in this world and coming world, happiness and welfare for all."

Stupa and pillars made by Ashoka are such artistic that even modern day humans get stunned to see them. Hence we can assume that artwork prospered in his times. Besides, inscriptions as found in entire kingdom denote that education was progressing and people were educated.

His inscriptions don't have special place in history merely due to being archaeological material, but because they are words from the Emperor himself. These are found on stone pillars and mountain rocks from Himalaya to Mysore and up to Kathiawar of Odissa. In the popular local language of Pali these take his message to the masses. Ashoka understood this clearly small communication gap in language can distort main preachings. Hence, he tried to reach to his masses himself.

Classification of Inscriptions—We can classify them in three parts—(a) Stone inscriptions (b) Pillar Inscriptions (c) Cave inscriptions (oldest of all). Pillar inscriptions were made after stone inscriptions. These are found almost in all parts of India. They tell us about his expansion of empire, administration and religious provisions. The language used was of local natural dialect. As per **V.A. Smith**, it can be divided in to eight parts—(1) Two Miniature inscriptions (2) Bhabru (3) Chaturdash (4) Kalinga (5) Sapta Stambha (6) Miniature pillar (7) Lowland pillar (8) Cave. Brief mention of the each is as following:

- (1) **Two Miniature Inscriptions**—They have been called miniature I and miniature II. Possibly, they were engraved in 258 or 250 BC. First one throws light on Ashoka's personal life and second one tells us about religious summary. Miniature I is found in—Brahmagiri, Sidhpur, Rameshwar and Jatinga at Chitalgdurga district of Mysore, at Sahasram of Shahabad district of Bihar, at Barat and Maski Gavimath, Palkigundu Cheragudi of Madhya Pradesh. Second one is found in Sidhpur, Brahmagiri. Maski Raichur inscription has great importance. Only this one mentions Ashoka's name. other have used Devnampriya, Priyadarshi etc.
- (2) **Bhabru Inscription**—This provides evidence of Ashoka being a Buddhist. He has expressed his faith for Buddhism and Sangh. It contains some excerpts of Bauddha Granth and Bhikshus have been asked to read it and mediate it.
- (3) **Chaturdash Inscriptions**—They are total 14 in number. It contains Ashoka's policy and his administration details. Out of it, 13th is very important as it contains his change of heart post kalinga war. Its date is around 257 and 256 BC. Its copies are found at following places—
 - (1) Shahbazgarhi (Peshawar District, Pakistan)
 - (2) Masehra (Hazara District, Pakistan)
 - (3) Junagarh (Girnar District, Saurashtra)
 - (4) Sopara (Thana District, Saurashtra)
 - (5) Dhauri (Puri District, Odissa)
 - (6) Kalsi (Dehradun District, near Mussorie, Uttarakhand)
 - (7) Jogda (Ganjam District, Andhra Pradesh)
 - (8) Irugudi (Hyderabad District, Andhra Pradesh)
- (4) **Kalinga Inscriptions**—They are two in number. They are found at Dhauri in Puri district of Odissa and at Jogda in Ganjam district of Andhra Pradesh. They were made around 256 BC. These contain those behavioral instructions of Ashoka to his men, which were to be put in practice for people, after winning Kalinga and nearby areas.

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- (5) **Cave Inscriptions** – 19 Kilometer from Gaya of Bihar, there are four Caves in Barabar mountain. Out of them, in three caves, his inscriptions are engraved, which tell that these Caves have been dedicated to the Bhikshus of Aajivik faith. These inscriptions might have been done around 257-250 BC.
- (6) **Sapta Stambha Inscriptions** – Perhaps they were made around 242 BC. They are found at six places in north India engraved on pillars. (i) Delhi Topra is quite famous. It was situated in Topra village of Khijrabad district. This village is 12 kilometer from Delhi. It was brought to Delhi by Sultan of Delhi, Firoz Tughlak. This pillar has seven inscriptions. Others have only six. (ii) Meerut pillar was in Meerut before and this too was brought to Delhi by Firoz Tughlak. (iii) third is in Allahabad. It was in kaushambi before, but Akbar brought it to Allahabad. There are two inscriptions on it-first is called kaushambi inscription and another Rani inscription. Later, Gupt emperor Samudragupt too engraved his inscription on this one. (iv) Lauria Areraj (v) Lauria Nandangarh (vi) Rampurva. Last there are in Champaran district of Bihar.
- (7) **Miniature Pillar Inscriptions** – These inscriptions are found on pillars of Allahabad, Sanchi and Sarnath. These give information on the potential threats from the split in the math.
- (8) **Rutarai Pillar Inscription** – These have been found in Tammandai and Nigliva. Both the places are in the low land of Nepal (Tarai). Hence they have been called Tarai inscriptions. These inscriptions prove that Ashoka did pilgrim spots tour related to mahatma Buddha. These inscriptions tell us that Buddha was born a place called Miru. These were made around 249 BC.

Sculpture Work of Ashoka – From art perspective, his inscriptions are very important. For engraving these inscriptions many pillars, rock stones and caves were made. Construction of rock stones and caves gave encouragement to sculpture and art and architecture. Peacocks at base and lion, bull etc animals images at the top, were carved on the pillars. These are so natural, that we might be illusioned to take them as real. Looking at their polish liveliness, scholars have told them to be generating out of Irani samples. As a result, painting and sculpture developed. These stone pillars were 50 feet high and almost 50 tones of weight. These were supposed to be taken from one place to other and at times, even on the mountains. This proves, that time engineering also developed a lot. Images made at the top of these pillars present a glaring example of art and architecture. These are so beautiful, smooth and bright, that we feel these are made of metal. **Smith** has rightly written in this regard, “it was almost impossible to get such an example of developed art and architecture in ancient times in any country of the world.”



Task

Discuss Ashoka's Kalinga victory and his Dhamma Policy.

Administration of Ashoka

Ashoka's Principles of Kingship – Ashoka not only got a huge empire, rather a very organized and strong administrative system as well. Chandragupta Maurya provisioned an extremely organized administration. Hence, Ashoka did not need to bring in any change in it or introduce a new system. At least, till the time of Kalinga war, this system was intact. But Kalinga had great influence of his principles and perspective. His mental and religious changes affected his political ideals and administrative system too. As principle, objective of king is always to have public interest, but in general most kings used to be self oriented. Due to his religious and moral beliefs, Ashoka dedicated his entire political and personal life in the service of his people. He included new principles and ideals in politics. In such conditions, it was required to do some changes in old system and he did. Though, the structure remained the same, yet its soul changed and it was filled with new life.

Ashoka considered his subjects as their children. He loved his subjects and was always involved in their welfare. The way father is always trying to get mental, spiritual and physical happiness and development, similarly Ashoka channelized his entire empire power in the welfare of the subjects. He writes, "Each subject is like my child, the way I want physical and mental prosperity of my sons, similarly I want prosperity for all my subjects." He says at other place, "The way a person hands over his child to a smart nanny and becomes content, similarly I have appointed governors who try for the prosperity and happiness of my subjects." He kept example before his officials himself. He writes, "whether I am having food, whether with my queens, whether in private room, whether on any vehicle and whether in garden- spies should inform me about my subjects. I am never satisfied with my work and hard work. I have to be consistently working for my subject's happiness." He made these ideals and principles base of his administration and made some relevant changes. Most important was the appointment of religious Mahamatras. For women, he appointed women Mahamatras, for castes working and living in grazing fields he appointed Brajbhumik and appointed Antamahamatra for bordering areas. Besides, Rajuk, yukta and Pradeshik were instructed to tour entire Empire.

Prativedak were instructed to update Emperor on the issues of subjects, even if wherever he is and whatever he is doing. Rajuk were given extra power in areas of penalty and respect so that they can discharge their duties more effectively.

On the annual occasion of coronation of Emperor, practice of releasing prisoners was started. Prisoner of death sentence was given 3 days leave before his date of punishment, so that he can prepare for the next journey with meditation, fast etc.

Stringent policy against semi civilized and fighter castes of bordering areas was dropped. They were treated liberally and focus was given to their economical and moral upliftment.

Ashoka not only took interest in the spiritual and moral upliftment of his subjects. He also worked for their physical upliftment and happiness. He wrote, I got trees of Banyan and Mango planted, got wells dug every half mile and made water pools for animals and humans. Besides, he opened medical dispensaries for animals and humans.

He permitted his subjects to well informed. As his rule was, before telling others to do something, he did it himself. Hence, he himself was well informed. He knew various kingship principles. He himself was pundit of principles. His politics did not have blend of Chanakya's, he forgot whatever little it had after his change of religion and thoughts. Main features of his kingship principles are-purity, idealism, love for subjects, morality and fundamentalism. We can understand his administration in the backdrop of these.

Autonomous Region—On the basis of his 13th inscription, some historians believe that there were some regions in his empire, which indirectly accepted his authority, but were allowed to be autonomous. For example-Yavan, Kamboj, Nabhik, Nabhpatti, Andhra, Bhoja, council etc. Scholars have estimated about their locations as—Yavan and Kamboj were possibly in northwest frontier areas, Bhoja in western sea or Barar and Andhra was possibly coastal areas of Krishna and Godavari.

Central Administration of Ashoka—As per 12th inscription of Ashoka, scholars are of the view that there were some regions which were not under the direct control of empire. They had internal liberty. Apart from these regions, Ashoka's empire was so huge, that to govern it was not an easy task. He worked on those principles which were established by his father and grandfather. As per need, he made some changes here and there. He sustained his predecessor's central council. It was called Parishad and it has been described in stone inscription 3 and 6. This was council of ministers. It was only an advisory body and its suggestions were taken in the governance.

Parishad had great importance and 6th inscription describes that its sitting should happen when king issues any verbal order on charity or declaration and when Mahamatras are entrusted with some task.

Decision on necessary matters were taken in council only. Apart from 6th inscription, 3rd also throw light on its work. It was the duty of council to ensure that order of king is executed. Council kept vigil of activities of staff. Council used to order officials. Council had special responsibility towards

Notes

census department. Before king's orders were executed, council used to investigate them and in case of need, king used to reconsider them. On urgent matters, council used to suggest Mahamatras. In case of unanimity between council members and Mahamatras, there was no need to consult king, but in case of difference of opinion, king's advice was compulsory.

Council used to work as a link between king and officials. In a limited scope, it also used to work as a controller on king. Council had following functions:-

- (1) To inspect king's orders
- (2) In cases of difference of opinion, forwarding matter to king for advice
- (3) To execute King's orders
- (4) To keep vigil on activities of officials
- (5) Give suggestions to officials on above matters
- (6) To get government job done by giving orders
- (7) To take care of Census department

Major Government Officials—In Ashoka's inscriptions, words like Purush, Varg, Mukh, and Mahamatra etc have been used for officials. Male were into high positions. In first, fourth and seventh pillar inscription, we find mention of word, Purush and it is assumed that they were ministers of council. Purush were closer to king, were abreast with his policies and guided or ordered Rajuk. Rajuks were appointed on every Lac of people but Purush were appointed on even higher population to take care and their jurisdiction was huge. There are three classes of Purush, as mentioned in first inscription— Utkrishta, Nikrishta and Madhyam. In fourth and seventh inscriptions, Purush have been kept with Rajuks only. Purush worked as per order of king and executed his orders. Use of Varg has been done for both public and normal staff. Mukh has been used for head of department or state officers.

For higher officials, Mahamatras have been used in scripts. Study of scripts tell us about different categories of Mahamatras. Some were called only Mahamatras and in some cases, name of their department was added before or after their names. For example- Dharma Mahamatra, Female Speaker Mahamatras, Antamahamatra, Mahamatras Nagar Practical, Mahamatras Nagarak. There were some Mahamatras, who were assigned special tasks and council used to suggest them.

Provincial Administration— Ashoka followed his predecessor's policy in this regard and did not do any changes. There were different types of employees having different work portfolios. Empire was divided into four provinces and each province had one prince as a ruler. There was a deputy king for the help of king. This post was handled by his brother. Besides, Yuvraj and Aamatya also helped king in administration. On the post of Agramatya, Radha gupt was working. King was also helped by Kumar and Aryaputra in the administration. Farther areas had provincial rulers. People were very loyal and close to the king were appointed on such posts and from whom, we could not think of a revolt. Ashoka's scripts have used the word Pradeshik. There is difference of opinion among scholars on this word. As per some scholars, it was local stationed governor and knight, but as per V.A. Smith, he was district administrator. As per some scholars, Pradeshik are Pradeshi of Arthashastra. Pradeshi's job was to collect tax, look after criminal cases, find thieves and to keep control over Adhyaksha and tribals.

King used to appoint highest official of the state. He used to be king's representative and worked as per king's orders. King and his officials used to visit each region.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. Ashoka was second son of Bindusar.
9. Bindusar made caves for Aajivik community people in Barabar Mountain.

10. In fourth pillar inscription and second Kalinga stone inscription, light has been thrown on Ashoka's justice system.
11. Vrihadrath was killed by Chandragupta Maurya.

Notes

Justice System – Forth pillar inscription and second Kalinga stone inscriptions throw light on Ashoka's justice system. King was source of justice and chief justice. During his time, liberty of judiciary was considered necessary. He freed judiciary from control of executive so that Rajuk (judge) can work freely and honestly. Ashoka says, "Their right of abhihar of puraskar, (gift or penalty) has been given by me so that they can work effectively and be expert. So that Rajuk can provide public of Janpad with satisfaction and confidence. They should know reasons of public worry and happiness and shall guide public with help of Dharmayukt, so that their current and future life (after life) be settled. Rajuk are bound to adhere to my instructions. Purush too shall follow my orders and they shall guide Rajuks so that they are able to please me. Rajuks are appointed on many Lac of population."

Forth pillar inscription tells about his justice system. For justice system, state was divided into some fixed parts. Justice was independent and audacious. King never interfered in his work. Judge not only had to punish, but also to reward. In case of death sentence, 3 days time was given to appeal. It was necessary for judge to have knowledge of law. He was instructed not to delay matters of justice. He was ordered to do tours. To inspect work of judges, Mahamatras used to tour. Rajuks too used to tour every 5 years. Public could appeal at king's place also.

Ashoka reduced stringent nature of law for criminal cases. On every coronation anniversary, he released many prisoners. He mixed mercy in the stringency of law, but he did not remove criminal code. He considered justice system essential for law and order.

Reforms of Ashoka – As per contemporary Indian polity, two neighbouring states were considered enemies and stronger state tried to weaken the weaker one. But Ashoka declared for his neighbours-bordering species should not be afraid of me, they should trust me and get happiness from me. They should never be sad and have trust, that as far as possible, king would forgive them, be with them.

Biggest reform was that by bringing changes in the social system, tried to raise life style of public. He stopped some violent celebrations and festivals. Alcohol, meat, dance etc were time or money consuming, hence he tried to stop them.

Above description prove that there was an influence of his morality based religious touch on his administrative reforms. New officials appointed by him might not have worked well in political sphere, but in social, economical and religious areas, they worked fine. The pages he added in the cultural history so far and presented ideal Indian culture, is totally memorable.

Evaluation of Ashoka's Administration – Ashoka was a great ruler. Possibly he was the first ruler in the history whose power of rule was based on perseverance, tolerance, willingness and consent in place of fear. Post Kalinga war he equipped his administration with high ideal. He started spending his time in treating subjects as his children, execution of public welfare activities and in thinking about welfare of public. He tried hard to raise his subject's moral and religious standards and made them religious and well behaved. At many place, he got engraved his orders and preachings on stones and pillars. He appointed officials for inspecting character and behaviour of people. He opened medical dispensaries for animals and humans and planted trees at the sides of the road for passengers comfort, got wells dug and made rest houses. He made his administration such strong and organized that there was no revolt in his forty years of regime. Entire kingdom was at peace. Government officials, Mahamatras and state preacher kept trying to make subjects religious, well behaved, duty oriented and having respect for seniors. Ashoka himself gave up luxurious life and lived life of a Bhikshu and kept thinking about the upliftment of his subjects. Thus, there was no difference between his personal and public life. Both type of his life style were of high class and were exemplary for other emperors of entire world. An emperor filled with simple living, high thinking neither has born nor will be seen in future. Qualities of being a great ruler, as found in emperor Ashoka, have not been found in such ruler in the world. Therefore, Ashoka has been called the greatest ruler of the world.

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Ashoka's Place in History

Ashoka was an emperor of highest idol, standard personality in Indian history. There is no example in the world, where an emperor has adhered to his ideals as done by him. His regime in world history is a bright and wonderful chapter. He is considered to be world's greatest administrator. Apart from being winner and ruler, he was promoter of peace and religion. Politically, his empire was too huge. Despite having power and force, he gave up greed of victory and adopted path of peace. This was the first such example in the history of mankind. He rejected physical empire and established religious empire. He promoted Dharmavijay in place of bhumivijay. This is the reason, he can't be compared with any other ruler. In fact, he was simply incomparable and his work area was phenomenal. India developed in all directions in his regime. In world history, his regime is a chapter of brilliant, bright and incomparable. Due to his high ideals, selfless life, high quality religious thoughts, organized administration, public welfare, desire of providing peace and prosperity and efforts for the upliftment of entire mankind has made him secure the best place amongst emperors, sages, hermits, religious propagators and thinkers, not only in India, but at global scale. His greatness, elevation and superiority is based on the following qualities of his –

Man of Great Personality – His personality is his biggest asset. Pre Kalinga war, he lived luxurious life style. He used to travel to Vihar and participated in social festivals. He was filled with sentiment of expansion of empire. He was a man of determination and was always working hard to attain his goals. As per some scholars, initially he was cruel, bloody and led voluptuous life style apart from being tough hearted and insolent. But after Kalinga war, he changed totally. The bloodshed of the war changed his life completely. After this, his character, aims and philosophy changed. He embraced Buddhism and became follower of non violence. He gave up all royal comforts and started living simple life style. Now his life became extremely pure, pious and merciful. He was successful in self control and sacrifice became fundamental mantra of his life. He became honest, kind hearted and follower of peace. Now he was always busy in the welfare of his subjects. As per his inscriptions it appears that he was the greatest person of his times. He got so much interest in doing noble causes that he made two aims of his life; propagation of Buddhism and upliftment of physical, moral and spiritual of his subjects. In fact, he was a deity in the form of a human and we should not hesitate in accepting him as the greatest and not great due to his divine works.

Able Commander – He had all the ability of being a capable commander from the beginning only. He was never afraid of fierceness of war being a strong soldier. He gave his proof of ability by winning Kalinga and Kashmir and by suppressing revolt of Takshshila. In his regime also, when there was a revolt in Takshshila, he suppressed it with force. All these are testimonial to his successful and able commander.

Great Ruler – He was also a great ruler. We count him among greatest rulers of the world. He considered welfare of public as his dharma and remained busy in it for his life, considering subjects as his children. He stopped Vihar tours and started religious tours. His regime was so well organized that there was no revolt or internal disturbances in his times and subjects spent their life with peace and happiness. Ashoka arranged for moral, physical and spiritual development of the masses and was always involved into it. For this, he appointed Mahamatras and ordered government officials to tour and inspect conduct of the masses and try them to be religious and well behaved. As a ruler his greatness lies in the fact that he mixed idealism, purity and dutifulness in the political life of the nation. Spent his life like a Bhikshu and devoted himself to the betterment of his subjects. This can be a matter of glory for any ruler.

Great Religious Leader and Propagator – His name is famous in history not for raising his victory flag after wins in wars, rather for raising his victory flag in the field of religion. In the 9th year of his regime, after having bloodshed of lacs of soldiers in Kalinga war, he stopped war instruments and determined to do Dharmavijay. This was not an easy task for him. Rather, it was a very tough and challenging task. This was not a victory of military force like Alexander and Napoleon rather victory of self confidence, force of love and sacrifice, like Jesus Christ and mahatma Buddha. This victory was of non violence and not of violence, not of disturbance but of peace, not of limited geography but of huge landmass, not

to win only some people, rather to win entire world. Hence, Ashoka put his entire force behind this. He gathered huge army of religious propagators, Mahamatras, religious preachers, sages-hermits and religiously loyal people and conditioned them with noble thoughts, disciplined conduct, noble karma, noble saying and thoughts and thus readied them for Dharmavijay. This unbelievable, tremendous and incomparable army not only made entire India, rather Sinhala dweep, Swarnbhumi, china, Japan and other south Asian nations also, part of his religious empire with the use of their pure conduct and holy preachings weapons. Gradually, his religious flag was hurling over known parts of Asia continent. This Dharmavijay proved to be stable. All these nations kept tied in the love for India for centuries. Such an example of Dharmavijay like that of Ashoka, is not seen anywhere else in the world. Up till now, no emperor of the world has been able to match his greatness.

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Great Nation Builder – He was a great nation builder also. He did many works for the integrity and unity of the country. Firstly, he used one official state language. This is proved from his inscriptions which are in Pali. In maximum part of his empire, he used Brahmi script. Thus, unity of language and script provided solid base political unity. He sent religious promoter in various parts of the country and tried to give cultural unity by this. For entire state, only one judicial system was formed. He also contributed in development of sculpture, art and architecture. Pillars made of his time are still considered to be example of great art work. Thus, by doing such nation building activities, he has made a special place for himself in the Indian history. Due to his various activities, we see uniformity in the cultural and religious spheres in India.

Public Servant and Generous – Ashoka was an example of mercy and generosity. After Kalinga war he changed so much that he started worshipping non violence. His mercy and generosity not only confined to human beings rather, he became protector of entire species. He stopped animal killing and opened medical dispensaries for animals too. On some occasions, he released prisoners. These were testimony to his merciful and generous behaviour.

He always was busy in betterment of his subjects. He treated them as his child and behaved like a father. He focused on their moral and intellectual development. He was endeavouring that his subjects follow correct path. For this, his determination was tough and he worked hard to get it with money, heart and body.

Great Idealist – His greatness can be seen in his high ideals and principles. He established such new ideals in political, social and religious areas that even the greatest emperors of his times, could not imagine. In political area his ideals were-establishment of peace and fraternity, friendly relations with neighbours and always have interest of masses in mind. In social area, he was great democrat. Independence, equality and fraternity were the pillars of his social idols. In religious area, his idol was perseverance and convergence. By blending quality elements of contemporary religions, he founded a universally accepted religion.

Ashoka is counted amongst world's greatest personalities. His comparison is often done with Roman Emperor Constantine and Aralias, Mughal Emperor Akbar, Khalifa Omar and propagator of Christian world Saint Paul. But no one of them can stand in front of Ashoka since he was an image of generosity and biggest worshipper of mankind. His sympathy, love, affection and generosity was not only limited to humans, but for entire creatures of the world. He was careful of his duties and he sacrificed his own comforts to attain his duties. He was always busy in the betterment of his subjects. For attaining his idols and public welfare, he channelized his entire state resources. Even after his victory, he is the solitary emperor in the world history for converting himself into Dharmaghosh from Bherighosh. Even after being at the peak of political and military might, the way he tried to win hearts of people with force of love, was a new and very noble effort in the history of mankind, which no other emperor could do. He gave up the policy of victory of world and established highest standard of idols in the political world by organizing Dharmavijay, giving orders to his staff to follow ideal of physical development apart from spiritual and moral upliftment for the subjects, behaving with generosity with uncivilized and barbaric bordering tribes and need for such a policy is still being felt by modern politicians. In nutshell, entire glory of Mauryan dynasty and regime is dependent of greatness of Ashoka, the great.

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Keeping in mind these factors, historian **H.G. Wales** has said, "Pages of history are filled up with names of hundreds of emperors out of them, only the name of Ashoka glitters like a star. From Volga to Japan, his name is still revered. In China, Tibet, India (though India has forgotten his preachings), tradition of his greatness is still continued. Number of people who heard about Contestatine and Sharlman, much larger number of alive people keep his memories in heart." **H.G. Rawlinson** writes about him, often Ashoka is compared with Contestatine, Marcus, Aralias and saint Paul. But none of the emperor made Jesus Christ's preaching as given on mountain hill nor he ever declared in front of his subjects like—"Even if anyone does harm to the emperor, he should tolerate it with patience." 250 BC, Ashoka regretted on the successful result of a war and gave up the policy of war for ever, even though in north west frontier in his kingdom, many independent tribes used to live. He stopped atrocities on humans and animals and established religious tolerance in entire India. He fulfilled the idol of Plato, which says that, "Administrator should be philosophical and philosopher should be administrator".

Thus, any analysis of his character proves him only to be a man of highest character. His is compared with many emperors in the world, but this is futile. Number of qualities Ashoka possessed, can't be found in any other person. He is one of its kind. He was such a personality of that era, that can't be compared with anyone. Indian and foreign scholars have applauded him greatly.

Some historians consider his generosity and non violence, as the factor responsible for the decline of Magadha empire. **Dr. Rajbali Pandey** writes, "The way world is formed, even for the protection of valuable and soft heritages of culture, religion, art etc, you need strong military preparation, political acumen and awareness. Due to his policy, rigidness of life became soft. Maurya army and politics became weak due to absence of practice. Effect of Dharmavijay was good on public, but his policy could not have an impact on barbaric and blood loving tribes of central and west Asia and their political ballgame. After Ashoka's exit, their invasions started on the militarily feeble and politically careless India."

There is no doubt that Dr. Pandey has a valid point. His character was great and his imagination of ideal world is spiritual key, but world history has proved it time and again that any ruler can't defend its territory by following quality principles of morality from foreign invaders and internal disturbances.

Thus, whatever perspective we look at Ashoka, we find him a great personality. This is the reason his name is till imprint on millions of people's mind. Barometer of anybody's greatness is this only. He is quite bigger than Alexander, Caesar and Sharlman etc from this perspective. He is incomparable in history of mankind, from whom modern stumbling world and strayed human beings can come back on right track. In the words of this historian, "Ashoka was not only ahead of his times, but also far ahead of modern times, which is still struggling to attain his idols. In fact, he was supporter of world peace and a true harbinger." After considering above mentioned facts, we reach to conclusion that he has a great place in history and he was one of the greatest ruler of the world.

Successors of Ashoka

After a long and important rule, Ashoka died in 232 BC. Maurya period after this is quite dark. But this is sure that after this, it proceeded towards its decline. There was not even one in his successors that could take care of his empire. As a result, his empire started breaking into pieces and within 50 years of his death, Magadha empire slipped out of Mauryan hands.

Kunal—Contemporary sources tell that Ashoka had five sons named as Teevar, Kunal, Mahendra, Kustun and Jalauk. Kunal succeeded Ashoka which is testified by purans. It appears that at same time, north west part of his empire started breaking away. After Ashoka, his second son Jalauk became independent ruler of Kashmir. Kunal died after eight years.

Dashrath—He succeeded Kunal. He was of religious mind. He made Cave Vihar for Aajivik community in Nagarjuna hills. Kalinga separate from Magadha in his times. He died in 216BC.

Samprati – Since Dashrath did not have any son, hence Samprati succeeded him. Till this time, he had received experience of administration. In fact, after Ashoka, he was the only ruler who could keep his empire intact on maximum parts of the kingdom. Patliputra and Ujjaini were his two capitals. He was follower of Jainism and he has same place in Jain religion, what Ashoka has in Buddhism. Many historians consider him as second Chandragupta of Maurya Vansh. He died in 207 BC.

Shalishuk – He captured power by killing his elder brother. As per Gargi Sanhita, he was evil soul, pain giver to own people, disgracer for the nation, religious but areligious. In his time only, Kashmir king Jalauk attacked on Magadha and Samprati's son Veersen took independent control of northwestern Indus area. This time only Antiochus III attacked India, but returned from border only after doing treaty with Subhagsen. Up till now, Magadha empire was not totally lifeless, hence he could not muster courage to proceed further.

Devvarma, Shatdhanush and Vrihdrath – After Shalishuk, there were two kings named as Devvarma and Shatdhanush. Last ruler of Maurya empire was Vrihdrath. He was too voluptuous and careless and he lost touch with military and administration. As a result, his commander Pushyamitra Shunga killed him while pretending to show him military and captured balance Magadha empire. This incident is mentioned in Purans and Harshcharit of Banbhattacharya. For this act of his, Ban has called him as Anarya (non Arya). In fact, this incident initiated tradition of conspiracy of capturing kingdom by soldier-minister, which kept continued from shunga Vansh till end of Andhra Vansh.

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6.7 Decline of Maurya Empire

Some scholars especially Mahamahopadhyaya **Hari Prasad Shastri** says that revolt of Brahmans only uprooted Mauryan empire. He considers those stone inscriptions responsible, by which Ashoka stopped animal killing. For Brahmans, it was unacceptable that these inscriptions were established by a Shudra king. Ashoka appointed Mahamatras for inspecting morality of public and had uniform criminal justice and judiciary. Brahmans had special place in the society for long and in context of justice system, they had been using some privileges. Hence, reforms of Ashoka must have hurt religious beliefs and specific social status of Brahmans. Hence, they opposed Maurya Vansh after Ashoka. In the end, Maurya dynasty was destroyed by the hands of a Brahman only. Hence, historians have held Brahmans responsible for Mauryan decline. But this logic is not acceptable. Scholars like **Dr Rai Chaudhary** and **Neelkanth Shastri** have opposed it. **First**, we have to accept that the moral and spiritual principles which Ashoka promoted, were not anti Vedic dharma. Principles of non violence too was not totally against it. Their explanation has been done in the Upanishad. Hence, terming Ashoka as enemy of Vedic dharma is wrong. In fact, perseverance was the life of his religion. Brahman historian **Kalhan** has admired his generosity and kind heartedness. He also writes that there were cordial relations between him and Brahman subjects. **Second**, considerable point is that Maurya Vansh declined 50 years after his death. Till then, people would have forgotten his policy and work and if Brahmans were dissatisfied from him, then they would have revolted against him in his lifetime only or would have tried to finish Maurya empire soon after his death. They ever tried like this, there is no concrete evidence for this. This is also considerable that if there existed enmity between him and Brahmans, then he would not have made Pushyamitra, a Brahman, as his commander. Pushyamitra capture the throne by killing his lord, was identical of individual ambition. On this basis, we can't give importance to the logic of hands of Brahman behind Mauryan decline. Still, this can be accepted that by putting Buddhism as the state religion, must have given some dissatisfaction to Brahman community, as they lost their erstwhile status in the society now.

Some historians consider his non violence policy as the main factor of decline. They are of the view that he made generosity, mercy and perseverance as the foundations of his empire and not military might and dignity. Entire resources of empire were put in to public welfare and forgot importance of military might. As a result, empire developed military feebleness and tendency to fight kept going slowly. Military became lazy and their decline became essential. **R.D. Banerjee** writes, "Amongst many

Notes

reasons for decline of Maurya empire, Ashoka himself was one of them. His idealism and religious sentiment hurt military discipline badly. When he presented the sentiment of Dharmavijay before his subjects and said that Dharmaghosh has replaced Bherighosh, then he himself belled the decline of his empire." Other scholars too have criticized his policy. As per **Dr. Rai Chaudhary**, "Post Kalinga war Magadha wasted its winning power in search of religious revolution, the way Akhenaton did in Egypt". Hence **Dr. Jaiswal** says, Ashoka actually was fit for the post of priest. As per these writers, his religious policies gave strong jolt to political India. Post Kalinga war, empire was so huge, that without military power, it could not have been handled, which he overlooked. The time when he threw sword and took bhikshapatra (begging bowl) in his hands and put army officers in work of religious promotion in place of military arrangement, same time he sowed the seeds of decline of his empire.

But, we can't assign more weightage to this point only as there have been empires which fell even after being based on violence and military power. There are hundreds of examples like this in history. Without non violence also, one point or the other, Maurya empire had to decline. Principally, this logic seems to be right, but can't be any important reason. First, this concept is not right that Ashoka neglected military power. He stopped attacks. We can't assume by this that he forgot importance of military force. Had it been true, in his regime only, revolts or external aggression would have taken place, but it didn't happen. In fact, in his regime there was complete peace. All were his friends and his fame and name kept rising in and outside India. Nobody even could raise his finger against him and all walks of life had great development. As per **R.K. Mukharjee**, "This logic seems alright principally, but how far this is responsible for the decline of Maurya empire, is difficult to tell." As per **Prof. Neelkanth Shastri**, "Ashoka's following peace, giving up war and giving preaching to his successors to follow his principles etc were not impractical. He did right as per contemporary situation and human objective. There is no proof that he reduced his army or reduced the resources of dignity of empire."

As per **Dr. Mukharjee**, reason of decline of Maurya Vansh is not military and religion, but any internal and natural weakness of political organization. This empire was despotic monarchy. In such system there is a defect that any king can't have assurance of having qualities in his successors which are needed for the administration. Any person can't incorporate his personal qualities his children. This is the reason that the religious empire he established, started stumbling in his life time only as this was largely dependent on wishes of subjects.

Writer above is of the view that, Ashoka himself stopped some independent and irrational elements from growing further and which developed later as the factors for the decline of Maurya empire. All countries and people are equal, this principle too became one of the reasons. In place of suppressing enemies, their regime and country were returned. Their names are found in Ashoka's inscriptions-Gandhar, Kamboj, Yavan, Nabhpanthi, Rashtrik, Bhoja, pitinak, pulund, Andhra, chola, Pandyas, Satiaputra, Keralputra etc. These only became powerful after Ashoka's death and became factors of Magadha decline.

All these things clarify that there was no special contribution of Ashoka in Magadha decline. If there was a weakness in his empire after his death, then it would be wrong to hold him responsible. In fact, there were various reasons for its decline, which are as following: –

Large Empire—Sometimes, expansion of empire too is lethal. With the efforts of Chandragupta and Ashoka, there established a huge empire. It did not have capital at centre and means of transport were not developed. It was difficult to rule over south India. Incapable successors of Ashoka failed to handle it.

Ashoka's Successors – After his death, many kings ruled Magadha, but none of them was able enough to have managed such a huge empire. Burden of his empire went on shoulders, which were not strong. They could not stop those mutually opposing powers, which erupted after the death of Ashoka. As a result, different parts of Maurya empire kept becoming independent and finally they declined totally. **Kalhan**, writer of Rajtarangini says, after death of Ashoka, one of his sons Jalauk, became independent ruler of Kashmir and won over Kannauj plains. As per Tibetan scholar **Taranath**, Veersen who was one of the successors of Ashoka and Magadha lord, snatched state of Gandhar. Thus, empire declined and Ashoka's successors could not save it from being disintegrated.

Tendency of Independence among Border Provinces—Soon after Ashoka's death, provincial regions developed sense of liberty. Ashoka's successors were weak. Hence, one after another, regions started becoming independent. First, Ashoka's son Jalauk, who was ruler of northwestern part of the empire, declared independence. After that, king of Kalinga declared freedom. Thus after Ashoka's death, soon Maurya empire got disintegrated and proceeded towards path of decline.

Religious Policy of Ashoka and Reaction of Brahman—Due to Ashoka's religious policy, sentiments of discontent started brewing among Hindus and especially Brahmans, as they could not see decline of Brahman dharma and rise of Buddhism. This gave birth to jealousy against Buddhism. Looking at the decline of empire patronizing Buddhism, Brahmans came in action to regain their lost glory. Hence, reaction of brahmas too proved costly for Magadha.

Atrocities of Provincial Governors—Another reason was unjust behavior of Maurya governors handling farther regions of empire. It is said that in Bindusar's regime, people of Takshshila revolted against wrong policies of the then governor and termed him as treacherous minister of governor. In Ashoka's regime too once there was a revolt in Takshshila. Reason for this too was same as before. Kunal was sent to suppress this revolt. When Kunal reached there, public clearly said that they don't have any objection towards emperor, rather they were unhappy with the despotic Aamatya appointed by the king. **Dr Rai Chaudhary** says in this regard, proof of atrocities done by minister is found in Ashoka's kalinga inscription also— "All are my child. The way I want my children to prosper and have happiness of every world, similarly I want my subjects to be free of worries. But, you don't discharge this truly. Some official heeds to my advice, but not totally. You must ensure that your arrangement is error free. It normally happens that if a person is punished without any sin, then others might not tolerate and fell sad as a result".

Split in Royal Family and Conspiracy in Court—Selfishness of Ashoka's sons and daughters made them revolt against each other. Their split made the foundation of the empire hollow. Signs of revolts and disturbance became apparent and made empire facing decline. Split of his weak and incapable successor was so strong that they were not even bothered for the proper arrangement of the empire. Ashoka had many queens and sons, due to which there were many conspiracies after his death. As a result, empire started to decline. Officials too started indulging in factionalism. It did hurt the regime.

Negligence of Military—Same happened with military department of the empire. Post Kalinga war, Ashoka became negligent towards it. Which resulted in slackness in defence arrangements and level of military came down. It did not have that same old power. But this time of military might and empire could have become stronger with this only.

Lack of Organization in Spy Department—Spy department started becoming slack in the times of Ashoka only. In Chandragupta period, it was quite organized. In fact, looking at the expansion of emperor, a strong and efficient spy network was essential. In the absence of it, there could be no information on revolt in farther areas or of any conspiracy. But in Ashoka regime, it went into disarray and it proved costly for the empire.

Greek attack on India can also be taken as one of the reasons. Its proof is found in the book of Polybius. Gargi Sanhita too confirms it. Gargi Sanhita mentions it like this—"Then immoral, but powerful Greeks would reach Kusumdhvaj by winning Saket (Awadh), Panchal and Mathura. After this, they would reach pushpapur(patliputra) and would certainly destroy all provinces." Due to not being able to manage Greek forces, Maurya kings would have lost respect of subjects and this is why Maurya empire would not have lasted long.

Killing of Vrihadrath by Pushyamitra Shunga—Now a stumbling Maurya empire in the absence of public support was standing on the brink of decline, which was finished by one small jolt of Pushyamitra shunga. Due to peaceful approach, soldiers were dissatisfied and were ready for a change, as they did not have opportunity to express their military sentiments. Getting encouraged from this, Pushyamitra killed Vrihadrath and took control over Magadha empire.

Conclusion—These all factors contributed in the decline of Maurya empire. **Dr. Radha Kumud Mukharjee** while describing them has written in 'The Age of Imperial Unity'—"We can't forget looking at contemporary

Notes

situations that this is not a surprise that empire was disintegrated in next 50 years. In fact, it is a surprise that such a huge empire was controlled for almost a century from centre only. In India, before Ashoka and after him also, many empire smaller than Maurya empire, rose and got destroyed. Hence, there must be some reasons for their decline also. Sentiment of local autonomy, issue of travel in farther areas, rule of atrocity of governors and their rebellious attitude, conspiracy of palaces and betrayal of officials etc can be considered real factors. External aggression is another factor which gives strength to other factors. In other parts of the empire also there would be a situation like Takshshila, which saw couple of revolts. From Kalinga inscriptions, it appears that Ashoka himself knew about his official's despotic rule and he tried to contain them also. With the betrayal of Pushyamitra, it is clear that officials of the state were not loyal to the empire". This analysis of decline of Maurya empire seems to be totally appropriate.

6.8 Summary

Ashoka not only took interest in his subject's spiritual and moral upliftment, rather he also worked for their physical growth and development and happiness. He wrote himself, "I got planted Banyan and Mango trees on both sides of the road, got well dug every half mile and made pools of water for animals and humans." Besides, he opened medical dispensaries for humans and animals both.

6.9 Keywords

- **Historical:** Based on real history.
- **Surprising:** To make someone amaze.

6.10 Review Questions

1. Who were Mauryas? Evaluate Chandragupta Maurya as an emperor and winner.
2. Describe Chandragupta's administrative system on the basis of Megasthenes description.
3. Briefly mention Bindusara's regime.
4. Describe Ashoka's religious policy.
5. What were the reasons of decline of Maurya empire?

Answers: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. Third | 2. Vishakhdat | 3. Plutarch | |
| 4. (a) | 5. (b) | 6. (c) | 7. (a) |
| 8. True | 9. False | 10. True | 11. False |

6.11 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History – Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.
2. Ancient Indian History – Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.
3. Ancient Indian History New Perspective – Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.
4. Ancient Indian History – Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.
5. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – Om Prakash, New and Publishers.

Unit-7: Ashoka: Social, Economic and Religious Reforms

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

7.1 Social Life

7.2 Economic Life

7.3 Religious Life

7.4 Education, Language, Script and Literature

7.5 Summary

7.6 Keywords

7.7 Review Questions

7.8 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To describe Maurya civilization and culture.
- To describe Maurya art and skills.

Introduction

Kautilya's Arthashastra, Ashoka's inscriptions and monuments and Greek ambassador Megasthenes's description throw light on Maurya society, culture and economic life. On the basis of these resources, we can paint a picture of life of Maurya period.

7.1 Social Life

Varna System – As per fifth inscription of Ashoka, Maurya society had many Varna. Varna system existed and society was divided into Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. But up till now, Varna system had developed complexity. Its base shifted to Janma in place of Karma. No one could change his Varna and it was the duty of the state to protect Varna system. In this time also, Varna ashram was

Notes

emphasized and people were expected to spend their lives as per Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanprastha and Sanyas. Thus, basis of society was Varna system and Varna ashram.

Apart from four Varna, there existed some commercial groups or sections, but they were counted among other four Varna only. **Megasthaneze** has mentioned seven castes which are – (1) Philosopher (2) Farmer (3) Cowherd (4) Artisan (5) Soldier (6) Inspector (7) Aamatya. It is possible that Megasthaneze did not understand social system well and keeping in view Greek society, mixed up some Varna, profession and government sections in to one. As per Greek writers we know that no one could marry outside his caste or could not adopt other profession apart from his own. Due to interaction with outside world, some caste bonding must have been relaxed and inter caste marriages would have started. Even emperor Chandragupta married Cellucas’s daughter. In this age, gap of Vaishya and Shudra was diminishing.

As per **Megasthaneze**, in Maurya period, life was simple and organized and life style was high. Different castes loved each other and trusted too. They considered essential to follow social rules and there were few disputes among them. Farmers led simple lives.

Megasthaneze description creates some confusion about caste system, but his articles throw ample light on contemporary social system. In subject of philosopher, his articles are very entertaining and important. He has divided philosophers in to two parts – Brahman and shraman. By Brahman philosopher, he implies normal Brahmans and under shraman comes Baudha anchorite, which can be of any caste. Anchorites of other religion too were called shraman.

As per his articles, life of Brahmans was divided in two stages. First stage was of simple life. He used to live at a simple place and led simple life without alcohol, meat or other comforts of life. His time was spent on listening preachings or imparting education to people. After spending 37 years of his life, he entered life of comfort. This time, as per is will, he used to marry many women and use of fashionable clothes and meat and alcohol was not prohibited for him. His description tallies with those details of ashram, Brahmacharya and Grihastha of Brahmans, which we find in Smriti or religious literatures.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Megasthaneze has mentioned. castes in India.
2. ‘All Indians are independent and no one is slave’ writes this.
3. In Maurya period, and. were people’s major.

Another section of philosophers was divided into two parts. Those who were quite famous used to live in forests meditating. They used to live on tree leaves and fruits and used to wear tree skins only. In other category were people who were medical consultants. They used to treat people free of cost and society in return used to take care of their subsistence.

Status of Women in Society – Women were treated well. They had their share in family property. People behaving badly with women were punished by state. In case of no child, man could marry another woman. Widows had right to remarry. But, liberties of women were little curtailed as compared to Rigvedic period. They normally had to be within the house and did not have liberty to move out freely. But, they could move out in case they become Bhikshu. In entire nation, no similar rules were there for women status or marriage. We see eight types of marriages in this period. In Takshshila, wrestling was organized for finding matches for girls and winner used to marry the girl. Women could take Sati route as per their will, but this custom was confined to Kshatriyas only. There is some sign of veil system among women. Ladies had the facility to receive art training. Some women used to be master in music, dance and painting. Even a military career option was not barred for them. **Megasthaneze** has mentioned about Chandragupta’s lady bodyguards. He says, “Some women sit on horses and some on elephants and they are armed with various weapons. It seems they are going for some attack mission”. Prostitution also prevailed but controlled by government. A Description of Manikadhyaksha

in Kautilya's Arthashastra and of Stri Mahamatra in Ashoka's inscription is found. Kautilya also has mentioned about poisonous girls.

Notes



Notes Megasthenes has mentioned about lady bodyguards of Chandragupta Maurya.

Marriage System – In this period, marriages were governed by classic principles and customs, yet there were some exceptions too. There were eight types of marriages – (1) Brahma- to decorate girl and hand over to groom by the father (2) Prajapatya- marriage for child, as per which in money, religion and love, status of bride and groom was equal (3) Aarsh- father of the bride used to take one pair of cows from groom and then donated it back to the groom (4) Daiva- to hand over girl to a person involved in divine works and who is decently behaved (5) Aasur- to marry bride after taking money (6) Gandharva- marrying without seeking consent of parents while being in love (7) Rakshas- to forcibly take away girl from her family (8) Paishach- by any deceitful or forceful act, having physical relations with a girl in sleeping mode or in inebriated condition. Out of these, first four were considered, but not last four. Though, last four too were considered by the then laws. Normally, marriages happened in own caste and Varna, but inter caste and non Varna marriages too took place. In some caste as Shakya and Maurya, marriages used to happen within Gotra. Dowry system too was prevalent. Man could practice polygamy. Its reason is defined in Arthashastra as- marrying many women is to have more sons. Even Megasthenes has written that, some women were married for entertainment and some for having child. Both men and women had right to remarry. For men remarriage there was system that if the lady could not produce any issue within 8 years of marriage or is only producing daughters or who is sterile, then his husband should wait for 8 years before remarrying. If woman gives birth to a dead child, then man had to wait for 10 years.

Alike men, women too had to follow some rules for remarriage. She could use her right on death of her husband, but she had to return all the money she received from her in-laws, but in case of his father-in-law and concerned relative's consent, she could have kept it as well. Besides, there were some more conditions for her remarriage. If there is no child to a woman, whose husband is out of country, then she had to wait for 1 year. In case of no child at all, she had to wait longer. If while going overseas, if husband has arranged subsistence for the wife, then she had to wait for double the period. Wife without child had to wait for 10 years and with child for 12 years, in case the husband has gone for education.

Slave System – It has been into existence since very ancient times in India. It was there in Maurya period as well, but Greek scholars have contrasting opinion about it. As per **Arian**, every Indian is independent and none is slave. **Megasthenes** too has said like this and **Strabo** while expanding his view has said that no Indian keeps slaves. But other sources give so confident existence of slave system that opinion of Greek writers seem to be wrong. Slave system had been mentioned in Smriti and Arthashastra. Ashoka has differentiated in wages between slaves and temporary labours and has ordered to behave equally with all, in his inscriptions. It is possible that Megasthenes did not see slave system in any particular part of India and he understood it not to be present anywhere. Another reason of writing this can be that as compared to Greece, India had better treatment for slaves and hence he thought of no slave system in India. Famous scholar **Reese Davids** writes, normally slaves used to be domestic helps and were not treated badly and their numbers too was negligible.

Life Style– Megasthenes writes that Indian lived frugally and followed correct principles. High quality simplicity was their characteristic and there used to be no allegation of lying on any Indian. There were no cases of theft. In mutual agreements, there was no need of witnesses. People did not lock their houses. There was less court cases. In brief, people had simple and easy life style.

Notes

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Indians respect truth and moral values. They don't respect elders till the time they don't possess specific qualities. This statement has been given by –
(a) Arian (b) Strabo
(c) Megasthaneze (d) None of the above
5. Water irrigation system is mentioned in
(a) Arthashastra (b) Neetisar
(c) Ashtadhyayi (d) None of the above
6. became State religion in Maurya period and Emperor Ashoka accepted it and tried to promote it in entire world.
(a) Jainism (b) Buddhism
(c) Shakta (d) None of the above
7. After Ashoka made Cave temple for Aajivik community in Barabar hills.
(a) Dashrath (b) Bindusar
(c) Chandragupta Maurya (d) None of the above

Food – Main food was grains, fruits and meat. Maximum people used to eat meat. As we have mentioned before, in royal palace many animals were killed daily for royal kitchen. Later, Ashoka stopped it. Barley liquor and Taadi were main beverages. Rich used to consume foreign liquor also. Places to sell and drink alcohol were fixed by government. **Megasthaneze** writes, "When Indians used to sit for food, there is kept a triangular table in front of each person. There is a golden bowl, where first rice is put. They are boiled in a way like boiled barley. After this, many other recipes are served made with care".

Clothes – Maximum people used cotton. People were fond of showoff and ornaments. They used umbrella to be safe of sun. Indians loved minuteness and beauty and their clothes were embroidered with gold and costly gems were added to their attire. People used to wear silk made dumpling clothes.

Entertainment – People loved to be entertained. Main means of entertainment were- chariot and horse races, wrestling of bulls and elephants etc. Hunting too was popular. Megasthaneze too has mentioned about hunting. Vihar tours were common. Gambling was prevalent. But places of gambling were controlled by state. We have mentioned before that there used to social celebrations in which there used to be liquor consumption and dances etc. Ashoka replaced them with religious celebrations. At the time, there used to be wrestling between animals and humans. Ashoka stopped them due to being violent. Kautilya tells that individual art used to be popular and people like acrobat, dancer, singer, vocalist, juggler, rope dancer, people able to talk many sounds etc used to entertain public with their skill. Patanjali has mentioned about theatrical exhibitions. Chess and Dyoot (gambling) became popular by this time. Women loved to play ball. Kings and knights had interest in hunting. While describing hunting about Maurya kings **Megasthaneze** writes, "When Maurya king used to come out of royal palace for hunting, he was surrounded with armed lady bodyguards. After rope barricades, there used to be a group of soldiers with spear. Path direction was fixed by putting up ropes. Anyone entering that rope boundary was inviting his death only. Drum beaters etc used to lead his procession. That time also, two or three armed lady bodyguards used to stand near the king. If king wanted to do hunting in open ground, then he used elephant for using his arrows. That time also, armed lady body guards used to surround him on chariots, horses and elephants".

Moral Standard – Ashoka's religious promotion had emphasized heavily on moral standards. It stressed on internal purification rather than external exhibitions. To follow parents orders, serving gurus, behave properly with relatives, friends and neighbours, truth, softness, non violence, charity, forgiving and

perseverance etc had been emphasized more. But we should not infer at all from these that their moral standard was low. Megasthenes has admired character of Indians. He said- Indians used to live happily due to being frugal and simple. They don't consume liquor except on yagna occasions. Theft is very low. They leave their things unprotected, their laws and agreements are simple and hence they seldom come to courts. Indians used to give more value to ability than age. He further writes- Indians respect high character and moral behaviour. They don't respect elders unless they possess specific qualities.

Notes

7.2 Economic Life

Agriculture—During Maurya period, farming was at very advanced stage. Farming, sculpture and trade, all three grew tremendously. Status of farming and farmers both was good. Farmers used to spend their time in farming. Farming society was considered pure. Even during war, farmers used to work without interruption. They were considered to be well wisher for the society. **Megasthenes** writes, "There has been no famine in India and normally prices for edibles never rose." Farming was done with plough and ox. There is mention of many irrigation tools in Arthashastra. Fertilizer was used to make land fertile. In rural areas, there was fear of flood, fire and insects. Philosophers used to intimate public in advance. To handle extra rains and no rain situation, huge grain storage were created. In crisis time, state used to help public with seeds and food. Farms were protected from wild animals.

State used to make welfare laws for the betterment of farming. Farmer's interests were taken into consideration and no act of atrocity was allowed to happen on them. Excellent irrigation system was in place. While describing irrigation system Megasthenes writes about officials whose duties were to measure land and inspect those small drainage which used to carry water to irrigation links, so that each one could get his share of water. At one place, Greek ambassador has written that, maximum part of land is under irrigation, which produce two crops in a year. We find water irrigation system in Arthashastra also. At one place, we find three types of irrigation system—(1) irrigation by hand (2) irrigation by motor (3) use of water apparatus for irrigation.

Trade and Industry—Business was at its peak due to trade and industry growing. Land and water routes were totally safe. Rivers used to be prime tool of carrying goods. Big ships used to reach up till Varanasi through Ganga River. One road used to connect Patliputra with Varanasi and went up to Uttarapath. Second trade route was from Patliputra to western coastal port areas via Varanasi and Ujjain. There were many other trade routes of these two major routes from where traders bunches used to commute. Both the sides of the road had trees with shades and fruits. Within one mile, arrangement for stay of traders and water was available. Due to commercial development, there had established many commercial centres and prosperous towns across empire. Takshshila, Ujjain, Kaushambi, Patliputra, Tosali etc were main centre of business. There were many ports on the coastal lines of India, where trading ships from Lanka, Java, Sumatra, Burma, Egypt, Syria, Greece, Rome, Persia etc used to come and go. Patliputra was counted amongst world's major towns of the world.

Business and Sculpture—As per Megasthenes description, we know that business and sculpture were too at its peak. Garment business was incomparable in the world. Designer clothes of cotton, woolen and silk were prepared in such huge quantities, that meeting with domestic demand, they were exported outside. There were thousands of garment markets in north and south India, which used to export high quality clothes of print, silk and muslin were exported to other countries worth crores. Famous historian **Strobel** has gone ahead to say that Indian clothes were decorated with gold and silver linings and were decorated with costly gems. There were separate associations of weaver, ironsmith, tinker, jeweler, oil merchant, carpenter and other sculpture and artisans. Those associations used to work for their artisans as bank also. Head of the association was respected well in the royal court. As per **Dr. Majumdar**, "That time artisans and sculptures were divided into different classes and associations. Heads of these categories had respectable place in royal court. Rules for each category were different and were recognized by state."

Notes

Art of making articles by artisans from cutting stones was wonderful. Amazing pillar stones of Ashoka's period are example of that. As **Dr. Smith** rightly said, "Art of making tough stones smooth had reached such a stage that it would be right to say that for modern time art, this can be said to be a lost art form." We can understand the quality of this time art by looking at Barabar Caves, which shine like glass. Making of fragrance products too developed a lot. Kautilya has mentioned five types of fragrance items- chandan, Aguru, Tail, Parnik, Bhadrashri and Kaaleyak. These items were considered different by their place, colour and intensity of smell.

Coins and Medium of Exchange – Mention of Suvarna, Karshaap, Mashak and Kakani types of coins is found in Kautilya's Arthashastra. Currency was made in government mint factory only, but anyone could get it made by giving his own metal. Kautilya has mentioned Sauvarnik and Lakshanadhyaksha as the officer of the mint. Goods were exchanged also as barter.

Loans and Interest – Maurya emperors arranged well to save farmers, labourers and artisans from the hands of wealthy money lenders. Interest rate was fixed. As per Arthashastra, 15% rate of interest was appropriate. There was no interest for poor, juvenile, people involved in yagna and academics.


Animal Husbandry – State gave special attention towards development and safety of live stock. There was a separate department to look after it, which did accounting of live stock, protected grazing fields, made laws for milk etc, arranged for the treatment of sick animals and controlled atrocity against animals. There was special focus towards horses and elephants.

There was special arrangement for the protection of forest and forest animals. Maurya emperors were fond of hunting. Hence, special areas of forests were kept reserved for them and normal public was not allowed to hunt there. Severe penalty was there for making fire in the forest. Due to mushrooming of forests, there was enough rain in that period.

7.3 Religious Life

To know about religious status, we have to depend on Baudha religious Granth, inscriptions of Ashoka and description of Greek writers. After analyzing all evidences, we reach the conclusion that religious society of Maurya period was divided in majorly three parts – Vedic, Jain and Baudha. There was no ban of any type on any religion. Description of these religions are as following: –

Vedic Religion – In this period, Vedic religion was major religion. Life before, Vedic followers used to perform various yagnas. Huge numbers of animals were sacrificed in these yagnas and heavy fees was to be given to priests. Hence, yagnas were quite expensive. Only kings or rich people could afford them. As priests used to be benefitted by it a lot, hence there must be increment of greed among them. Ashoka banned animal killing, we have already discussed. It is memorable that we find mention of Ashwamedha and Bajpai yagna in this time literature, but no emperor of this time performed Ashwamedha yagna.



Did u know? Bhadrabahu was contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya and sixth Ther (Sthavir or Guru) of Jain Religion.

Megasthaneze also describes about philosophical communities of Brahmins. It proved that the path of knowledge shown by sages of Upanishad times was growing. Ashoka has mentioned in his seventh inscription about Brahmins, Nirgranth and Aajivik. Dashrath, the Grandson of Ashoka, also made caves for Aajivik Bhikshus in Nagarjuna hills. It tells us that influence of Aajivik community increased in Maurya time, but its effect was only confined up to Magadha. Megasthaneze has told about a group of philosophers who remained naked for life, did not eat meat and lived by collecting fruits etc. Probably, he referred to Nirgranth only. Ashoka too has mentioned them along with Aajivik in this 7th inscription.

Jain Religion—During Chandragupta’s time, a major phenomenon happened in Jainism and its nature changed drastically. Bhadrabahu was contemporary of Chandragupta and sixth Ther (Sthavir) of Jain religion. As per Jain sayings, he only baptized Chandragupta to Jainism. When Bhadrabahu was Ther of Jain religion, there was a severe famine in Magadha and Bhikshus found it tough to receive alms. Fearing disaster, Bhadrabahu proceeded towards Karnataka. Many Jain followers remained in Magadha in the leadership of Sthoolbhadra. After famine ended, many followers returned to Magadha, but Bhadrabahu went to Nepal. There he left his body by strict meditation and fast. Jain followers left in Magadha organized a huge convention of Jainism. They were of the view that form of Jain religious literature has been deformed and it needs refinement and reconciliation of concrete religious literature should be done. This convention was organized with this objective only. In between, there was a dispute between those Bhikshus who went to Mysore and who remained here. Jains of Magadha started wearing white clothes, but followers of Bhadrabahu followed original Jain teachings and preferred to remain naked. Thus, first foundation of split in faith was created and Jainism divided in Shwetambar and Digambar.

Baudha Religion—Maurya regime is very important in the history of Buddhism. In this period only, Baudha religion was made state religion and Ashoka tried to promote it all across the world. Hence, it flourished within and outside India. But by this time, split had entered Buddhism also and it was dividing in to two parts. This split became aggressive in Ashoka rule only. To resolve this difference, Ashoka called a convention in patliputra. Mogaliputra Tissa presided over the convention. Only Ther follower of Bhikshus attended it. The meeting refuted principles of non Ther Bhikshus and effort of establishing original principles of Buddha was put in. decisions of the convention were compiled as Kathavastu and were considered as part of Abhidhamma pitak.

Ashoka made other arrangements to sustain unity of Sangh. He ordered hi officials to control the level of split in the Sangh. Order of Ashoka is engraved in the Sarnath inscription—“Nobody should try to divide the Sangh. But if anyone tries to do it, then whether it is Bhikshu or lady Bhikshu, he should be made to wear white clothes and be forced to live at a place, which is not a place for Bhikshus”.

Ashoka could not stop the division of Buddhism but the promotions he did to promote Buddhism and the level of growth it saw; there is no doubt about it.

Art and Skills—Maurya period is also special for art and skills perspective. After establishment of huge Mauryan Empire, countries witnessed peace, prosperity and law and order. It helped art and skill sector to grow. As per **Prof Bagchi** and **Shastri**, Maurya period did significant work in the field of art and skills. So real historical beginning of art and skills start from Maurya time, especially in Ashoka regime.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. Stupa of Sanchi is excellent example of Indian art.
9. Famous poet Subandhu was minister of Ashoka.
10. Acharya Bhadrabahu was contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya.
11. Vasavdatta was the princess of Ujjain, who is related with story of Udayin.

Building Construction Art—We first start with architecture skill of this period to analyze art of this period. There was a grand and huge royal palace of Chandragupta Maurya in patliputra. The building stood on pillars on which beautiful painting and sculpture work was done. As per **Megasthaneze**, his palace was even more decorated and grand than the palace of Susa, capital of Iran. Ashoka too got many royal palaces made. When Chinese visitor Fahian visited patliputra in 5th century, then there many buildings, which were made by Ashoka. He got stunned seeing them and thought they have been made by divine forces. As per Baudha sayings, Ashoka made thousand of Stupas (solid egg shaped trance), Chaitya (common worship place) and Vihar (math for living of Bhikshus). Bottom part of Dharmarajika Stupa of Sarnath is still there. He made one Chaitya in Bodh Gaya, which collapsed with the passage

Notes

of time and now there is a modern temple in place of it. After Ashoka, Dashrath made caves temple for Aajivik hermits in the hills of Barabar. In ancient Indian sculpture art, wood was majorly used. Though use of brick and stone too started, yet wood was extensively used. Main characteristics of sculpture was grandiose and decoration.

Pillars – Out of artistic heritages of this period, pillars of Ashoka are important. To promote his dharma scripts, he got constructed many of them at many places, as raised hands of the earth for declaration. All his pillars have been made up of sandstone of Chunar. One pillar was made by cutting one single huge rock stone. Average height of pillars is 40 feet. They are broader at base and narrower at top. We can divide them into three parts – (1) Dhvaj or Stem of pillar, which is very simple but extremely smooth and bright (2) Anda or Neck which is round and decorated with religious symbols like wheel, animals, birds, creeper, flowers etc (3) at top is Vertex (head), which has images of lion, elephant, horse and bulls etc most beautiful example of such is Sarnath pillar with lion at its head. From sculpture perspective, the pillars and images of animals made on it are exceptional. They are so close to nature and looks lively. Such growth of sculpture is possible only with centuries of experience. Of this period images-Yaksha idol of Parkham at Mathura, women idol of Besnagar, Yaksha idol of Didarganj, Patna (identical with Parkham) are mentionable. Looking at these, we know that art and architecture were at advanced stage.

Mention of auditoriums and theatre podiums also are important to be discussed. There are many description of auditorium in Arthashastra.

Caves – These are another example of architecture of that time. These caves were made for Bhikshus for resting in Chaturmas. Caves made by Ashoka and his grandson Dashrath in the hills of Barabar and Nagarjuna are more famous. There are inscriptions engraved of those kings. As per scholars, they were made up of wood and hay prevalent that time. Oldest of it cave named Sudama. It was made in the 12th year of Ashoka’s rule and dedicated to Bhikshus of Aajivik community. It has two rooms, outside room is rectangular and its roof is arch style dome and doors have slant edges. Towards its length, there is another dome roofed circular room. There is a door in between both the rooms and outside rooms, thatch style hailstones. Second cave is called Karna Chaupal. Engraved inscription tells us that it was made in the 19th year of Ashoka’s regime. This is a rectangular room and arch roof. Apart from that, there is no more specific art work in this.

Stupas – Sometimes to as a memorial also, Stupas were made. Stupas were in vogue for long, but Jains and Buddhists used it in special way. As written before, Buddha’s bones were distributed by Kshatriya kings and erected on them after burying it. There used to be a platform around the stupa for parikrama and was covered by wooden boundary. As per Baudha literature, Ashoka made 84,000 Stupas. He took out Buddha’s bones and erected new Stupas on them. Sanchi, Sarnath and Bharhut Stupas are famous out of him Stupas. Sanchi stupa is an excellent example of Indian art. Basis stupa was made of bricks and was small in size. Later after one or half century, bricks around it were polished and smoothed and size was doubled. At present, it is of 120 feet diameter semi circle. Around it, there is 16 feet high and 6 feet wide parikrama path. At the base, there is another parikrama path, which is surrounded by brick boundary. Basis boundary would be of wood, later it was replaced with brick boundary of 9 feet height. There are stairs to reach on the top parikrama path. There are four arches in the boundary, which were made later.

Ornaments – Maurya artisans got expertise in making ornaments and gems. Their interest was not in image moulding rather in high level expertise by which they used to cut costly stones and polished them or they used to do soft engraving work on metal or made granular sample. Crystal bowl found from Pipraha and remains of blue gems pot found from Bhattiprolu are creation of Maurya period, as per Sir John Marshall.



Task Discuss on Maurya period Art and skills.

7.4 Education, Language, Script and Literature

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Maurya period has special place in the area of education also. This time, states used to run schools. Ashoka engraved religious articles on pillars and stones. Its objective was that common public could read it and follow it accordingly. It appears from it that common public were literate. Name of Takshshila was famous in education field.

There were two major scripts of its time – (1) Sanskrit in which entire Vedic literature, Brahman, Aaranyak, Upanishad and sutra literature was written. This was language of educated and literature peoples. Its nature was related with rules of grammar. Prakrit or Pali, which was language of common public, was used by Gautama Buddha as his medium for giving teachings. Initial Baudha literature-Tripitak and Jataka were written in this language only. This language acquired literary form, but it was closer to common public than Sanskrit. This was language of common literature of north India and had similarity with other province's local language. Ashoka made it as his state language and his religious scripts, which were scattered in entire India, were written in this language only. There were two scripts- Brahmi, which is the mother of modern Devnagri and other provinces like Burma, Lanka, Tibet etc, was popular in entire India, except north western region. It was written from right to left this was national script of India. It developed in this country only. Its composition is reflective of high standards of ancient Indians. (2) Kharoshthi- it was in use in north western region and was written from left to right. Ashoka's inscriptions found in this region have Pali as language, but its script is Kharoshthi. For writing, special Palm leaf was used.

This time, literature was based on three major religious lines. In Vedic style, this period was of Sutra Granths, for which many Grihya sutra, Dharmasutra and Vedanga sutra were written. In pure literature, plays of Bhas plays was also done in this period only. Probably, some addition to epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata was also done in this period. Most famous Granth of this period is Kautilya's Arthashastra based on politics. Kautilya has mentioned many shastras and vidhas on which Granths have been written, but many of them are not available now. Subandhu was the famous poet of this time. He was minister of Maurya emperor Chandragupta and Bindusar. He wrote play named Vasavdatta Natyadhara. This Vasavdatta was same princes of Ujjain which is related to Udayin. There was a minister named Kavi in Chandragupta's period. Probably, he too was a poet.

This period has special importance in respect to Baudha literature. Time of creation of Baudha Tripitak, is assumed after third Baudha convention, which held in the regime of Ashoka. Presiding officer of this convention, Mogaliputra Tissa wrote the basic plot of Abhidhamma pitak. Many more sutras were composed in Maurya time only as per scholars. Composition of many famous Jain writers – Jambuswami, Prabhaas and Swayambhav were written in this period. The top most Jain writer of this time Acharya Bhadrabahu was contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya second and as per Jain sayings, he was baptized by him to Jainism. Bhadrabahu compiled a speech on preliminary Granths like Nirukta. As regards, composition and collection of Jain literature, this period is even more important as many important sections of Granths like, Acharang Sutra, Samvay Sutra, Bhagwati Sutra, Upasak Dashang, Prashna Vyakaran etc were written in this period only.

7.5 Summary

As per Megasthaneze, life was simple, organized and easy in this period and life style was quite high. Different castes used to have cordial relations and trusted each other. They used to consider following social rules as their duty. They had few cases of disputes. Farmers led simple life.

7.6 Keywords

- **Stupa:** It were made in the memorial of Buddha.
- **Ornament:** Jewellery.

Notes

7.7 Review Questions

1. Describe religious status of people of Maurya period.
2. Describe social and economical status Maurya period society.
3. Kautilya's Arthashastra, Ashoka's inscriptions and monuments throw light on cultural and economic life of Maurya period. Explain.

Answers: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|---------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| 1. 7 | 2. Arian | 3. Barley Alcohol, Taadi | |
| 4. (c) | 5. (a) | 6. (b) | 7. (a) |
| 8. True | 9. False | 10. True | 11. True |

7.8 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic publishers and Distributors.*
2. Ancient Indian History – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
3. Ancient Indian History New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
4. Ancient Indian History – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.*
5. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*

Unit-8: Gupta's Empire

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 8.1 Resources of History of Gupta's Period
- 8.2 Rise of Gupta Empire
- 8.3 Samudragupt: Crowning, Victory and Organization of Empire
- 8.4 Chandragupta II Vikramaditya
- 8.5 Description of Fahien (399-411 A.D.)
- 8.6 Reasons of Decline of Gupta Empire
- 8.7 Summary
- 8.8 Keywords
- 8.9 Review Questions
- 8.10 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To describe about rise of Gupta Vansh and its Kings.
- To describe about all aspects of India through Fahian's description.
- To know about reasons of fall of Gupta Vansh.

Introduction

Gupta period is an important chapter in Indian history. It was an era of re rising of India, both from political and cultural perspective. Hence, resources of information of this period are available more as compared to early periods. There is plenty of availability of both literary and archaeological material in Gupta resources.

8.1 Resources of History of Gupta's Period

Literary Sources – Under literary sources, we find Purans, Kavya, and Smriti etc. Though, all purans which are 18 in number, we get information about Gupta Vansh, but major mentionable of them are;

Notes

Vishnu Puran, Vayu Puran and Brahmand Puran. They give ample information about Gupta's initial history and their state boundaries. As per above Granths, Chandragupta I ruled over Prayag, Saket and Magadha. Purans give information about Samudragupt's contemporary Nag, Vakatak and Shaka etc.

Apart from purans, we also get information about Gupta Vansh from books for Dharma Shastras and Neeti Shastras. Many Smriti Granths were written in Gupta period. These Smriti writers keeping in mind pre Gupta conditions, propounded new rules and procedures, which helped in rebuilding ancient Indian culture and civilization. Smriti of Brihaspati, Narad etc are possibly compositions of this time only. During Chandragupta II regime, Kamandkiya Neeti Shastra was composed. Objective and contents of this book is similar to Arthashastra of Kautilya in many respects. It guides king to administer in organized manner. It throws sufficient light on Gupta's administration.

Kavya Natak—Literature also gives us sufficient knowledge about history, civilization and culture of gupt period. We can keep **Devichandraguptam, Mudrarakshas, Manjushreemoolkalp** of Vishakhhatt, and **Kamsutra** of **Vatsyayan**, autobiography and **Kaumudimahotsav** of Vasubandh, **Mrichakatikam** of Shudrak and compositions of Kalidas, in this category. Vishakhhatt composed historical plays like **Mudrarakshas** and **Devichandraguptam**. Devichandraguptam has description of Chandragupta II and Shaka's relation. Mudrarakshas had nice description of diplomacy. Writer of Kaumudimahotsav was a bluestocking named Kishorika. This play has mention of relations between Magadha ruler Sundervarman and Chandrasen (Chandragupta I). This play throws light on origin and rise of Guptas. Manjushreemoolkalp gives information on political history. **Mrichakatikam** of Shudrak throws light on social and administrative system of that time. **Kamsutra** gives information on public life. Compositions of Kalidas are the most important for Gupt period. Though it gives less information on political life, yet it is essential for cultural study. Kalidas was one amongst the nine jewels of Chandragupta II Vikramaditya. He has done lively description of contemporary civilization and culture in his compositions. His nine plays are- **Ritusanhar, Raghuvansh, Kumarsambhav, Meghdoot, Malvikagnimitra** and **Abhigyanshakuntalam**. Above mentioned literature give enough information on history, culture and civilization of gupt period.

Descriptions of Foreign Travellers—In the composition of gupt period history, details of foreign visitors too are important. Chinese visitor **Fahian** is most important. He has mentioned local customs, religious beliefs, climate and vegetation by staying in different historical centres from Pushkarawati in west to Tamralipti in east. **Huensang** came to India in 7th century during **Harsh's** regime. He too has mentioned about gupt period at some places. As per him, founder of **Nalanda University** was Kumargupt. He has also mentioned about other Gupt Kings like **Buddhgupt, Baladitya** and Vajra etc. Another Chinese Itsing reached Tamralipti via **Shrivijay** by water route. He too has mentioned about Nalanda university. Travel document of **Al-baruni** called **Tehkeek-e-hind** is very important. As per him, Hindus were expert philosopher, astrologer and astronomers and mathematicians. He has called Varanasi as Mecca of Hindus.

Archaeological Sources—Inscriptions, monuments, coins, currency and memorials etc come under this category. Under inscriptions come-pillar inscription, stone inscription and copper inscription.

Inscriptions—Most important archaeological resources is inscriptions. Gupt period inscriptions are engraved on stonepillars and copper paper. Scripts on seals and currencies too help us. These inscriptions tell about their dynasty chronology, works, charity orientation and their political prowess. We also know about government officials and administrative system by it. Gupt period inscriptions give information on social, economical and religious status. Out of them, most important is Samudragupt's Prayag Prashasti. This article is engraved at the bottom of stone inscription of emperor Ashoka in kaushambi. At present, this is found in Allahabad Fort. Writer of this inscription was Harishen. It has details of event of Samudragupt's life. This inscription only tells about his conquering all regions. This also contains name of gupt rulers from first ruler Shrigupt to Samudragupt. "**Srigupta Prapautrasya Maharaja Sri Ghatotkach Pautrasya Maharajadhiraj Sri Chandragupta Putrasya Lichchhavidauhitrasya Kumardevyan Utpannasya Maharajadhirajasya Sri Samudraguptasys.**" This inscription clarifies that how the titles of kings kept increasing from Shri Gupt to Samudragupt. This inscription also throws light on the administration of gupt period.

Among other important Gupta period inscriptions are- Eran, Nalanda and Gaya inscription of Samudragupt, eastern Malwa inscription of Ramgupt, Mehrauli Iron Pillar and Mathura inscription of Chandragupta II, copper paper inscription of Damodarpur and Mandasaur stone inscription of Kumargupt I, Bhitri pillar inscription of Skandgupt. These tell us about political activity of gupt emperors.

Apart from these, scripts of contemporary rulers, post gupt period inscription and knight's inscriptions are also resources of gupt history. We can name Yashodharman, Torman and Mihirkul among them. these give information on gupt-Hoon relations.

Inscriptions give information on administration also apart from political condition. Prayag Prashasti refers to Samudragupt as **Lokdhamnodevasya** i.e. God on earth. It is clear that in this period also, divine principle of origin of king was popular. Inscriptions tell us about different ministers, their department, head of departments, government officials, forms of taxes, administrative units etc. These are also important to know about social, economical and religious conditions. They have mentioned about Varna system. Apart from Dwij, Kayasthas too have been mentioned. It also speaks about Ashram system. Agriculture and trade were two pillars of economy. Shreni and Nigam and units of land measurement have been mentioned too. Land donation is also spoken about. We know about Shiva and Vishnu worship, imagination of incarnation, Buddhism and Jainism from these inscriptions.

Seal – They also provide information on gupt period. Study tells that seals were made up of clay. Only Bhitri seal of Kumargupt I is exception, which is made of silver. Maximum gupt period seals are written in Sanskrit. Mostly they have been found from Vaishali and Nalanda. Some seals are religious, some of officials and some individual too. Dhruvswamini seal of Vaishali is quite famous. Dhruvswamini (Dhruva Devi) was wife of Chandragupta II. Among official seals, use of word **Kumaramatyadhikaran** has been used many times. Seals mention about other officers like- **Ranbhandagarik, Mahadandnayak, Vinatsthitisthapak. Religious** seals establish influence of Brahman religion. **Shreshthi, Kulik** and **Sarthvahak** are also mentioned in seals. One charity bowl seal too has been found from Vaishali, which was made by Kumaramatya. Seals found from Nalanda briefs about royal chronology. Dispute relating to throne after Kumargupt I too is found here. Besides, Nalanda seal of Kumargupt II gives chronology from Sri Gupt to Kumargupt. Quality of Nalanda seal is that due to this only, place of Vishnugupt has been assured in Gupt dynasty.

Coins – These have proved to be very helpful in constructing gupt dynasty history. Coins were made of gold, silver and copper and have been found from Gujarat in west to Bengal in east. These throw light on the extent of their empire. Some coins have special events engraved. For example, in one coin there is picture of Chandragupta I and his wife kumardevi on one side and word Lichvayah on the other. It tells us that in that period there was marriage relation between the two. In one of the coins, there is picture of horse of Ashwamedha yagna, which tells that he performed Ashwamedha yagna. Coins of Chandragupta Vikramaditya were made on the ideals of Shaka coins, which tells us that he defeated Shakas and got the title of Shakari. In one of the coins, Samudragupt is shown as playing lute, which tells us about his love for music. In some of the coins, gupt emperors have been shown hunting lions and tigers. Coins give us ample idea about their power, prosperity and their huge empire.

Monuments – Temples, pillar, images and caves are famous among gupt period monuments. Among temples-Bhumra Shiva temple in Nagod state, Tigva Vishnu temple near Jabalpur, Parvati temple of Nachnakuthar of Ajaigarh state, Dashavtar temple of Devgarh state, Brick temple and Ladkhan temple of Bhitargao are quite mentionable. These are symbolic of contemporary art and sculpture, religious belief and customs. Custom of vertex formation in temple starts with gupt period. Dashavtar temple of Devgarh is a burning example of this. From the script of Mandasaur in period of Kumargupt II (Malwa Sanwat 529 = 372-370 BC), it is known that Dashpur Surya temple of Malwa was famous for its vertex.

Much like Mauryan pillars, gupt period pillars too have been made by cutting one huge rock only. Bhitri pillar of Skandgupt and Garud pillar of Eran In Buddha period are burning example of this. Iron pillar of Mehrauli is still rust free even after centuries of sun and rain. This is an excellent example of that time developed iron business. Many Vaishnav, Shaiva, Baudha, Jain images have been found, which

Notes

throw light on contemporary carving art. They tell about religious tolerance of gupt emperors. There is a script at the front part of Baudha image of Sarnath of Kumargupt II period. As per this, in gupt Sanwat 154(423) a Bhikshu named Abhaymitra dedicated this image to his parents and teachers.

Contemporary Cave temples (Chaitya griha) are top class. Chiseled with finesse, these caves are excellent examples of sculpture. Some of them are Brahman caves and some Baudha. Cave of Udaygiri is contemporary of Chandragupta Vikramaditya. There is a script on its inner wall, as per which it was made by its secretary Veersen due to his Shiva dedication. This cave has been made by cutting a huge rock. There is a Devalaya inside, which is oldest example of Brahman cave temple. Examples of Baudha caves have been found from Bagh and Ajanta. Bagh caves have been made by cutting rock stones. They are in the form of Maths, where Bhikshus live. For their worship, there are Stupas (Chaitya). In its inner wall, there is painting also. Caves of Ajanta (No. 16 and 17, 19) are contemporary of gupt empire. They are linked with Mahayaan faith. This is the reason; images of Gautama Buddha and Bodhisattva are aplenty among them. Majorly, they are famous for their painting.

Who were Guptas?

There is still confusion and dispute on the issue of their origin. Some consider them Vaishya and some Kshatriya. Some consider them as Brahmans.

Prof. H.C. Rai Chaudhary on the basis of Puna and Sthipur inscriptions of Prabhavati (Grand Daughter of Samudragupt and wife of Vakatak King Rudrasen II), has tried to prove them of 'Dharan Gotra'. He is of the view that they were descendent of Shunga emperor Agnimitra's wife Jarini. But **Prof Goyal** says, "Idea of linking any queen's name with the dynasty 500 years after her, shall not be correct."

Allan considers them as Shudra. He says that the way Chandragupta Maurya was Shudra, similarly Guptas too were Shudra. This too is not perfect. These days, many scholars consider Chandragupta Maurya as Kshatriya. With this opinion, Guptas are Kshatriyas and not Shudra.

Apart from Allan, other scholars too consider Guptas as Shudra. Among such scholars, **Dr. Kashi Prasad Jaiswal** and **B.G. Gokhale** have tried to prove them of lower caste or of Shudra origin alike Mauryas. **Dr. jaiswal** on the basis of following logics try to prove them Shudra: –

- (a) In Kaumudimahotsav play of gupt period, Chandragupta I (chandrasen) has been referred as Karaskar and person of such low caste has been considered ineligible for royal throne. In this play only, it is mentioned that due to being of low caste, he was declared ineligible for the royal throne.
- (b) Second logic is that Kaumudimahotsav clearly shows marriage relation between gupt and lichchavi. Since lichchavi were Shudra, hence gupt too must be Shudra. **Gokhale** also consider Guptas as Vratya Kshatriya.
- (c) **Dr. Jaiswal** on the basis of Dharan gotra, which has been mentioned before, has considered them as Jaat. From Manjushreemoolkalp also, proof of Guptas being Jaat is found. Dr jaiswal also has referred to gupt rulers of Nepal, where they have been called as Aheer caste. **Dr. Sharma** too considers Guptas as Jaat. He says that Dharan gotra is still prevalent among Jaat.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

- 1. Fahian came to India in the regime of
- 2. Most famous event in Skandgupt's period is of on India.
- 3. Smith has called as India's Napoleon.

Hence, on the basis of above facts, some scholars consider Guptas as Shudra, Jaat or lower casted origin, but these don't have weight. On the basis of Karaskar word of **Kaumudi Festival**, we can't declare

chandrasen as Shudra. These plays have bias. Since, this play was composed in the time of chandrasen's opponent kalyanverman, hence possibly play writer taking side of his king, tried to project him as of low caste, so that he could not claim right on the throne. There is no concrete proof to accept lichchavi as Shudra; rather many proofs indicate that they were Kshatriya. **Dirghnikaya** proves that they were Kshatriya. Again, Dharan word is a deformed product and basic nature of Dharan and Dhari are different. This is possible that people of different castes have same gotra, since in ancient times, fixation of gotra used to happen in the name of priest. Hence, Dharan and Dhari can't be equated together or on this basis, we can't accept Guptas as Jaat. There are no concrete proofs to prove them Shudra either.

Many other scholars like; Anant Sadashiv Altekar, S.K.A. Iyengar, V.V. Mirashi etc consider Guptas as Vaishya. They have expressed their opinion on the basis of their title, Gupt. There have been mention of many people, princes, rulers in Baudha and Brahman literature, whose name end with gupt. As per Brahman Granth, it is clear that majorly title of Gupt was used by Vaishya only. In fact, gotra of Vaishya which was Dharan was related to gotra of Agrawals. Thus, gupt rulers were vaishya. But as **Prof. Goyal** has shown in his book that in ancient India, people with gupt titles were found in every Caste. For example-writer of Arthashastra Vishnugupt and famous astronomer Brahma gupt were Brahmans by caste. Similarly, Kumarguptayak of Mrichakatikam was Kshatriya. Hence, on this basis, it is not right to keep them under Vaishya category.

Other scholars have tried to prove them as Kshatriya. Gauri Shankar Hiranand Ojha and Sudharak Chatopadhyaya are major in this category. At present, this logic is more popular. It is as following:—

- (a) In **Kaumudi Festival** play, Magadha ruler Sudervarman has been accepted as Kshatriya. This king only adopted chandrasen as his son. As per Indian tradition, normally own caste child is only adopted. Hence, it is possible that chandrasen was Kshatriya. Hence, gupt rulers too were Kshatriyas.
- (b) Though gupt rulers have not mentioned about their caste in their inscriptions nor contemporary Granths tell about it, but later gupt inscriptions give us some information. For example-in Sirpur (Raipur) inscription, Maharaja Mahashivgupt has been called as Chandravanshi Kshatriya. There is mention of six gupt titled kings in Panchobh (Bihar) copper inscription. They consider themselves as Shaiva follower and descendent of Arjun (Kshatriya).
- (c) Guttal Kings of Dharwad (Maharashtra) consider themselves as descendent of Chandragupta II. They have been referred as Somvanshi Kshatriya. On this basis, Guptas too can be considered Kshatriyas. This is also endorsed by Manjushreemoolkalp.
- (d) In a Granth of Java, **Tantri-Kamandak**, Ikshvakuvanshi Maharaja Aishwaryapal tell him as related to the family of Samudragupt.
- (e) On the basis of marriage relations with Nag, Lichchavi and Vakatak also, we can say that Guptas were Kshatriya, as those dynasties are proven Kshatriya and inter caste marriages were not accepted easily at that point of time. Hence, there is no reason for Nag and Lichchavi people to marry their daughters in a lower caste family. Though marriage of Brahman Vakatak prince's marriage with Prabhavati gupt is a burning example of inter caste marriage. But still it is not clear that Brahman Vakatak had marriage relations with lower caste people Guptas. Hence, we can say that Guptas were Kshatriya only.

Prof. Goyal refuses to accept these logics. He says that though in inscriptions there is mention of gupt relations with Kshatriya families, but it does not prove that Guptas were Kshatriya. Similarly, with marriage agreements of Guptas, only this conclusion can be drawn that Guptas were not inferior to Kshatriya in caste system. By this, chances of their being Vaishya or Shudra is totally stricken out, but chances of their being Brahman increases. Hence, **Prof. Goyal** says that gupt rulers were Brahmans. He says that in Skand Puran, we find mention of Dharmaranya Pradesh (Mirzapur, Eastern UP), where lived Dharan Gotra Brahmans. Since, gupt too were residents of eastern Uttar Pradesh and their gotra too was **Dharan**, hence they were Brahmans. Another important proof in this context is that some initial gupt rulers married daughter of Kadamb king **Kakutstha Verman**. This is known by **Talgund** inscription of Shanthi Verma (Kadamb king). Since, Kadamb were Brahmans, hence they would have

Notes

married their daughter to a Brahman only. Gupt rulers married their daughters with Brahmans only. The way, daughter of Chandragupta II, Prabhavati was married to Vakatah king Rudrasen II. Baladitya and Bhanugupt too married their sisters with Brahmans. This establishes the fact that Guptas were Brahmans only.

Thus, we see that different scholars have used different evidences to their use. On their logic basis, they have tried to link them to different Varna of the society. Still, reaching on one conclusion is difficult.

Native Place of Guptas

Just like their caste, great difference is there in their native place as well. As per description of Itsing, scholars say their native place was Magadha. Itsing says that **che-li-ki-to** named king (Srigupt) made a temple near Mrigshikhavan (Sarnath) for Chinese travellers and donated 24 villages for its maintenance. This king met Itsing in Bodh Gaya, hence it is said that he was ruler of Magadha. But this point can't prove that he was ruler of Magadha. Rather it proves the point that his rule was in eastern Uttar Pradesh, as the temple was made near Varanasi.

Discovery spots of currency and inscriptions too indicate to this logic. Maximum currencies of Chandragupta I are found in Ajodhya, Lucknow, Sitapur, Tanda, Gazipur, Varanasi etc we have found only one coin from Bihar. Hence, it is clear that gupt gold currencies are majorly found in eastern Uttar Pradesh. It is clear that initial gupt emperors had stronger relations in regions of eastern Uttar Pradesh more than any other region.

Inscription evidences also indicate the point that gupt used to live eastern Uttar Pradesh only. From beginning till period of Skandgupt, 8 out of 15 inscriptions have been found in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Only 2 (Samudragupt's Gaya and Nalanda copper paper inscription) have been found in Bihar, their credibility is also doubtful. Inscriptions found in Bihar and Bengal (5) are donation papers only, whereas other important inscriptions (Prayag Prashasti) have been found in eastern Uttar Pradesh only.

As per information from Purans also, it appears that Guptas were from eastern Uttar Pradesh only. As per **Vayu Puran**, gupt rulers shall have Anuganga, Prayag, Saket and Magadha. **Vishnu Puran** too says that, riverside area of Ganga from Prayag to Gaya shall be controlled by Guptas and Magadha. It has mention of joint rule of Guptas and lichchavi and lichchavi have been called as Magadha. Hence, it is clear that extended landmass of eastern Uttar Pradesh till Prayag and due to being co ruler of Guptas with Magadha, both Magadha and Prayag were part of this joint kingdom. Hence **Mr. Goyal** says that gupt kingdom was to the west of Magadha and Prayag was its centre.

8.2 Rise of Gupta Empire

Preliminary history of gupt period is less known. As per Purans, rise of Guptas happened in kaushambi between Prayag and Saket in the end of 3rd century. It is said that founder of this Vansh was Srigupt.

Srigupt—In Prabhavati gupt's Puna copper paper inscription, Srigupt has been referred as Pristine of Gupta dynasty. Riddhapur copper paper inscription says that Srigupt was of Dharan gotra. As per **Dr. R.C. Majumdar**, temporarily we can consider Srigupt of gupt Vansh as the Srigupt of Itsing. Temple as told by Itsing was not situated In Magadha, but somewhere at the north or central Bengal's western borders. Sri Gupt's kingdom must have got some part of Bengal under it.

In Gupta scripts, title of Maharaja has been used for both Srigupt and Ghatotkach. This title was in general was used by knights. It is suggested that preliminary gupt rulers were ruling under Murund rulers, but there is no solid proof for this.

Ghatotkach—He has been referred as son and successor of Sri Gupt in Gupt inscriptions. But in the two inscription of daughter of Chandragupta II, Prabhavati gupt, Ghatotkach has been told as first king of gupt dynasty. How he was considered as the founder of gupt empire, it is difficult to tell. But taking

Ghatotkach of royal family as Ghatotkach as mentioned in currency found from Vaishali, shall not be correct. Ghatotkach gupt was head of that province in Chandragupta II time, whose capital was Vaishali. This is mentionable that instead of calling him Maharaja, he has been referred to as Kumaramatyā.

Chandragupta I—Third ruler of this dynasty was powerful king. He got the title of Maharajadhiraj. It appears that instead of being under other ruler like earlier two kings, he became independent ruler. By this, power and respect of Guptas increased. It appears that this king extended his empire also. It is said that he started a Sanwat also, which starts from 20 December, 318 or 26 February, 320. But some scholars are of the view that this Sanwat was started by Samudragupt.

Marriage with Lichchavi Princess—Most important event of his life was marrying Lichchavi Princess **Kumardevi**. Proof of this marriage is found currency of Chandragupta-Kumardevi, Prayag Prashasti of Samudragupt and Parokshta Puran. These coins were issued sometime in the memory of marriage of Kumardevi with Chandragupta. On one side of it there is picture of Chandragupta I and lichchavi princess Kumardevi and on the other side of goddess Lakshmi of happiness and prosperity. Prayag Prashasti also calls Samudragupt as Lichchavi Dauhitra (grandson). From political perspective, this marriage has special place in gupt's history. After this marriage only, magnificence of gupt Vansh increased. As per **Dr. V.A. Smith**, lichchavi rulers used to rule over patliputra as knights of Kushan and Chandragupta by establishing marriage relations with them, got his wife's right from them. As a result, Chandragupta became king of patliputra. As per opinion of **Mr. Altekar**, lichchavi and gupt empire got together. With this, lichchavi got dignity equal to Guptas and their princess was called as Mahadevi, not only being Chandragupta's wife but for being royal successor and co administrator. Some scholars don't accept this logic that Kumardevi was successor of lichchavi empire. Hence, she was not the co ruler of joint empire. Legitimate successor of lichchavi republic was her son Samudragupt. But we can assume that death of kumardevi's father, who was contemporary of Ghatotkach, happened around 319 BC. At that time, due to Samudragupt being juvenile, the official administration was handled by Chandragupta, though not legally, but formally.

Expansion of Empire—There is no concrete evidence of victories of Chandragupta I, but scholars have tried to fix his boundaries on the basis of purans and other resources. As per historian **Smith**, his authority was on Tirhut, South Bihar, Awadh and on all its hilly regions. Vayu Puran tells that descendent of Guptas shall rule over Anuganga, Prayag, Saket and Magadha. With these statements, it appears that Chandragupta must have ruled over these areas. As per some scholars, Vaishali too was under control of Chandragupta, but there is no proof for this. As per some scholars, Chandragupta defeated Shaka or Kushan and set Magadha free from their clutches, but other writers don't accept this. Some say that patliputra was their patriarchal state and with marriage of Chandragupta and Kumardevi, both state of Guptas and Lichchavi got together.

As per **Dr. R.D. Banerjee**, Chandragupta led the struggle against Kushan in north India. **Kashi Prasad Jaiswal** on the basis of Kaumudimahotsav has tried to prove that Chandragupta captured Magadha by killing its ruler Sundervarman. Scholars like **R.G. Vasak** and **S.K. Iyengar** try to prove him ruler Chandra, as mentioned in **Mehrauli Inscription**. But for this logic, there is no clear proof available.

As per resources, Chandragupta appointed Samudragupt as his successor during his last phase. **Harishen** says in Prayag Prashasti, Chandragupta who was thistledown and who had tears of joy in his eyes, embraced Samudragupt while saying; you are the best and requested him to rule over entire planet. This fact is also endorsed in **Eran Inscription** and Rithupur charity inscription.

Thus, we see that Chandragupta I was the first important king of Guptas. Since him time only, influence of gupt empire started rising and they became ruler of entire India. As per Gaya copper inscription of Samudragupt, Chandragupta died around 328 BC.

8.3 Samudragupt: Crowning, Victory and Organization of Empire

Sources of Information—There are enough sources available of his victory, empire expansion and character. His two stone inscriptions and two copper inscriptions have special importance. Most

Notes

important is his script on Ashoka Pillar of Allahabad. It contains contemporary political condition of the nation and Samudragupt's personality and success. This was composed by one of the highest officials of the state, Harishen. Besides, Eran, Raghuvansh Aryam and currencies also throw ample light on it, but most special resources is Prayag Prashasti only.

Crowning of Samudragupt – As per Allahabad inscription, though Samudragupt was not eldest son, yet Chandragupta made him his successor due to his ability and power of character. In front of his court with tears in his eyes, he said that you are able, rule over earth. Poet writes that with this declaration, courtiers were pleased, but others who were in the race of the throne and were his competitor, had jealousy. As per some scholars, Chandragupta gave up administration in his last phase and gave throne to Samudragupt in life time only. As per other, Samudragupt crowned himself after his father's death.

As per scholar's assumption, Samudragupt's brethren revolted against him and crowned his eldest brother Kach. There have been some coins in the name of king Kach which are identical to the coins of Samudragupt. But as per **Allan** and other scholars, "Kach was original name of the emperor only and later he conferred this name of Samudragupt after his victories."

This is also assumed that at the time of ascending the throne, there was some anarchy. Neighbouring kings did not accept his succession and many kings attacked him jointly, but Samudragupt got over all those conditions and strengthened his position very soon.

As regard his crowning, there is still dispute among scholars. As per some, he ascended the throne around 340 or 350 BC and some consider it as between 325 and 335 BC. Probably, he ascended around 328 or 330 BC after Chandragupta I and ruler until 380 BC.

Victories of Samudragupt – The time Samudragupt ascended the throne, which has been called Napoleon of India, was politically very shaky. Due to pressure of Nag and Vakatak rulers, power of Kushan in Ganga-Yamuna Doab was almost finished, but western Punjab and border areas were still under their control. In this area (eastern and western Punjab) also, many independent states had been established. Almost, similar situation was in central India. Independent tribes used to live in the unapproachable areas of Vindhya and Bundelkhand, which were under the control of local knights. There were other independent rulers in other parts of the country. Hence, nation was divided into many units. There lacked a central power in the country. This situation was very much similar to the time of decline of Mauryan empire. Being ambitious leader, Samudragupt wanted to end this status by having an organized empire. He adopted the policy of win over entire nation. Prayag Prashasti throws light on it. His victories can be divided in to five categories: –

(1) Aryavarta (North India) (2) Aatvik States (3) South Indian States (4) Border States (5) Republic.

(1) Aryavarta Victory – In ancient times, region between Vindhya and Himalaya was called as Aryavarta. They were also called north Indian states. Samudragupt defeated nine major states and merged them into his empire. Thus, he establish his single leadership in entire north India. Prayag Prashasti has mention of these nine kings, but their boundary is not shared. Their names are– **Rudradev, Matil, Nagdatt, Chandraverman, Ganpatinag, Nagsen, Achyut, Nandi and Balverma.**

Scholars have identified these nine kings differently. As per **Rapson**, these kings are **Nava Nag Kings** as mentioned in **Vishnu Puran**. These kings established a joint empire, which Samudragupt defeated and merged. But this logic is not accepted. In fact, these rulers ruled over different regions. Historian **Jaiswal** and **Mr. Dikshit** consider Rudradev as Vakatak king Rudrasen I, though many scholars don't agree to it. There is no definite opinion about **Matil** yet. Historians consider him as ruler of Bulandshahar in Uttar Pradesh, where his name imprint seal is found. **Allan** does not agree with it. Besides, **Kashi Prasad Jaiswal** refers to him as Nag ruler of Antardevi. Many currencies of Nagdatt has been found from Mathura. On this basis, scholars consider **Nagdatt** as ruler of nearby areas of Mathura, but Dr Jaiswal considers him also as Nag king. Identity of Chandraverman too is unsolved. Susunia (Bangladesh, Bankura) inscription tells him as ruler of Pushkaran. **Har Prasad Shastri** considers this Pushkaran as Pokaran of Marwad and tells Chandraverman as ruler of Marwad. But **Dr. Bhandarkar** and **Dr. Chaterjee** does not agree. Jaiswal considers him as ruler of east Punjab. Thus, there is no concrete evidence for this king. Ganapati Nag was Nag Vanshi king. He was ruler of Nag capital Padmavati (Padma-Pavaya near Gwalior). As per

Dr. Bhandarkar, probably he ruled over Vidisha branch of Nag, which has been mentioned in Vishnu Puran. Coins of this king have been found from Marwad and Besnagar. Nagsen too Nag Vanshi king. He was king of other branch of Nags and probably ruler over Mathura. Some scholars consider him as Nagsen as mentioned in Harshcharit, which is not correct. There is ambiguity in regard to Achyut also. Jaiswal considers Achyut and Nandi as one and accepts him as ruler of Ahichchatra (Bareilly, UP). Other scholars believe that Achyut too was some Nag Vanshi ruler and ruled over Ahichchatra. Nandi too was Nag king, but boundary of his state is not known. Balverma is the last ruler of Aryavarta list as mentioned in Prayag Prashasti. There is no definite thought about this king among scholars. Some consider him as ancestor of contemporary harsh ruler, prabhakarverman of Assam, which does not seem to be logical. Samudragupt defeated them all and expanded his empire boundaries to a great extent.

(2) Aatvik States – After defeating north Indian rulers, he shifted his focus towards south. But before south, it was essential for him to defeat **Aatvik** rulers, as to proceed south; you must cross huge jungles of central India. Prayag Prashasti says, he won over Aatvik kings and made them his servants. Eran inscription too endorses it. As per **Fleet**, Aatvik Kings were spread from Gazipur to Jabalpur. As per stone inscription of a king of Parivrajak Vansh, it appears that number of Aatvik kings was 18. This region is also called Mahakantaar, which is considered as jungle of central India by **Dr. Hemant Rai Chaudhary** and as per **Raidas**, it was area of Jharkhand from Chotanagpur to Jabalpur. After defeating these kings only, Samudragupt moved towards south.

(3) Victory of South India – After crossing central India, he attacked south and defeated and merged them with his empire. Prayag Prashasti mentions those rulers of south. As per **Dr. Kashi Prasad Jaiswal**, these kings joined together and intercepted Samudragupt near Koleru pond and fought. They were led by king Mantraj and Vishnu Gope. This battle happened around 345–46 BC. But many scholars believe that war with south Indian kings happened separately. South rulers were defeated and accepted his leadership. Names of defeated south Indian rulers are as following: –

Mahendra of Kaushal: Districts of Mahakaushal, Vilaspur, Raipur, Sambalpur. This Kaushal is called south Kaushal, which had its capital at Shripur (Raipur).

Mahakantaar Vyaghraraj: Ruler of Mahakantaar was Vyaghraraj. Mahakantaar is used for dense forests.

Mantraj of Kerala: South India's Korad or Sonepur area, whose capital was Yayatinagari at the bank of Mahanadi. As per **Kolharn**, this region was Kolerukasar between Krishna and Godavari rivers. Probably, this region was in between Odissa and Madras.

Swamidatt of Paishtpurak-Mahendragiri-Kauttur – Swamidatt was the ruler of Pishtpur, Mahendragiri and Kauttur. Some people consider Pishtpur as major town of kalinga region. Mahendragiri and kauttur are in Ganjam district.

Daman of Arandpalla – This place is near Chikakol in Arandpalli in Ganjam district. There is no information about Daman.

Vishnugope of Kancheya – He was ruler of Kanchi. Kanjivaram near madras is Kanchi only.

Neelraaj of Avumukta – Its capital Pithunda near Godavari.

Hastivarm of Baingeya – Hastivarman was king of Vengi. This place is identical with Pedvegi in Eller.

Ugrasen of Pallak – Ugrasen was ruler of Pallak. This is situated in Nellore district. Some consider it as situated in Krishna district.

Kuber of Daivrashtra – King Kuber hailed from Daivrashtra. This is Elmanchi of Vishakhapatnam district. It was in Andhra Pradesh.

Dhananjay of Kosthalpur – King of Kosthalpur was Dhananjay. This place is Kuttulur of Aarkat.

(4) Bordering Areas – After defeating south rulers, Samudragupt took control over border area rulers (Pratyam Nripatis). Two categories of such rulers have been mentioned in Prayag Prashasti. Out of them, five were rulers of different areas, for whom word Nripati has been used. Besides, there is mention of nine more states, which were republic. Under this expedition, Samudragupt defeated kings of north and

Notes

east and nine republics of west. Their names have not been mentioned, but names of their states have been. In such republics – (i) **Samtata** (ii) **Davak** (iii) **Kamrup** (iv) **Nepal** (v) **Kartripur** were included. Samtata was coastal are of east Bengal (Bangladesh). It was situated between Ganga and Brahmaputra. Its capital was Karmant. Districts of Bogra, Dinajpur and Rajshahi were included in Davak. Kamrup (Assam) was part of state of Pragjyotishpur. Contemporary Nepal ruler was probably Jaidev-I. Though his name is not mentioned, yet in the same time, Nepal started Gupt Sanwat. Kartripur is modern Kartarpur, near Jalandhar. This state possibly had areas of Garhwal, Kumaon and Ruhelkhand. After these victories, Samudragupt turned towards west and capture the republics.

(5) Republics – Western part of India was ruled by many republics since ancient times only. Taking benefit of political anarchy, they had become quite strong. Maurya and Kushan too did not focus on them, but Samudragupt decided to finish them. Independence of these republics was destroyed. Though, they kept ruling as before, but under the authority of Samudragupt. They were as following: – (1) Malwa Republic which included area from Ajmer to Chittaud (2) Arjunayan which was area between Bharatpur and Alwar (3) Yaudheya which was area between Indus and Yamuna (4) Madrak which was between Ravi and Chenab (5) Aameet which was area between Betwa river and hilly areas of Saurashtra and central India (6) Arjun, which was near Narsinhapur of Madhya Pradesh (7) Kharparik which was in Damoh district of Madhya Pradesh (8) Sankanik (9) Kaak which was in nearby areas of Vidisha.

Thus, with his victory expeditions, Samudragupt expanded his empire in entire India. But following his policy, except Aryavarta rulers, he left all other to operate in autonomy mode. They accepted supremacy of emperor and to pay annual taxes and other services.

Foreign Relations or Policy – There were states inside and outside Samudragupt’s empire both within India and abroad for example – Sinhala Dweep and across the sea states, which whom Samudragupt wanted to have relations, so that peaceful atmosphere can be created. he did treaty of service and co-operation with them on following grounds –

- Aatmanivedan (friendship proposal),
- Kanyopayan (gift of girls for serving in royal palace),
- Donation (gift of local items),
- Appeal of engraved charter of proving their autonomy and safety (Swavishaybhukti).

These foreign states are as following – (1) **Devputrashahi Shahanushahi** – They were Kushan rulers of northwestern part (2) **Shaka** – They were in north west and western India (3) **Murund** – Was name of a Kushan Caste. **Sinhala** and **Hindmahasagar** other dweep of Indian ocean did not have the courage to face Samudragupt. Prayag Prashasti also mentioned about a word called **Sarvadweepvasin**. Indians settled in **Islands of South Asia** would have had strong relations with India even up till now. King of Sinhala Meghverman sent a team of messenger with gifts, in Samudragupt’s court and asked permission for making one temple in Bodh Gaya for the resting of travellers and Samudragupt did approve it. Fahian saw one prosperous Indian colony in Java. As per **Tantrika Mandak**, it is known that Ikshvaku King **Aishwaryapal** considered himself a **Descendent** of **Samudragupt**. Due to these reasons, Samudragupt should have the credit of keeping a strong naval force, so that he could maintain relations with nations and islands across the sea. In his period, beginning of **Greater India** started.

Expansion of Samudragupt’ Empire – As per **Dr. R.C. Majumdar**, except Kashmir, Western Punjab, Western Rajputana, Sindh and Gujarat, his empire included entire India and areas of Chhattisgarh and Odissa along eastern coast plus Vinganpat in south and even farther areas. As per **Dr. R.K. Mukharjee**, Samudragupt increased his empire till Brahmaputra in east, till Narmada in south and up till Himalaya and Kashmir in north. As per **Dr. V.A. Smith**, “In the middle of 4th century, regions of most fertile land and population were under his empire. His empire extended from Brahmaputra in east to Yamuna

1. Sarva-Dan-Agyakaran-Praman Agaman-Paritoshit-Prachand Shasanasya.
 2. Daivputrashahanushahishakamurundaih Sainhalkadibhishchah Sarvadweepwasibhiratmanivedanak Nyopayandangarutpadankswavishay Bhuktishasanyachnadupaysevakritvahviryaprasardharnibandhasya.

and Chambal in west and from bottom of Himalaya in north to Narmada in south. Beyond these boundaries, there were friendship treaties with bordering states of Assam and delta of Ganga, southern slant states of Himalaya and with Rajputana and Malwa region. His army won over almost all regions of south India and they accepted his authority. Thus, this empire was the biggest after the largest empire of Ashoka in 6th century and was natural for foreign powers to respect such a huge power."

Organization of Empire—Samudragupt was not only a great winner. The way he organized those captured areas reflects how high level politician he was. He was ambitious and wanted to establish a universal empire. But, he did not try to rule over empire with centre. He synchronized principles of central dominance and local autonomy. To stop powers of decentralization and disintegration, he arranged for a strong centre, but alongside he left farther areas rulers to be autonomous under his authority. He had similar friendly relations with his neighbouring foreign neighbours. From the protection of empire, this policy was quite far sighted.

Ashwamedha—There was no other great and famous emperor like him in his times. So as homage to his victory expeditions, he decided to perform Ashwamedha yagna. This yagna was identical with universal sovereignty. He made gold coins for the yagna purpose. There is picture of Yagna-Stambha (yup) on one side and picture of his wife with a fan in hand on the other and the word Ashwamedha is imprint on those coins. His descendents have called him- 'Chirotsannashwamedhahartuh', which proves that he performed Ashwamedha yagna, which was not done for ages. He must have done it after his military expeditions, as there is no mention in Prayag Prashasti. We come to know from prabhavati's plate inscription of Puna that he performed many Ashwamedha yagna. It tells about resurrection of ancient political ideals inspired by religion. This was the symbol of political unity of India also.

Currency—He released many currencies which reflect his merits and karma. From Dhvaj type currency, his sovereignty reflects, archers and weapons of war reflect his military power, lute playing reflects his love for music and Ashwamedha reflects his victories. He was 'Aprativaryaviryah' i.e. insurmountable.

Vyaghrhanta currency reflects his win on forest areas. His currency had pictures of royal attire and of Indian deities like Durga, Lakshmi, and Kartikeya and of animals like tiger, lion, rhino, and elephants and sign of Garuda-Dhwaj. Influence of Kushan currencies is found on his currencies. He has been termed as—**Aprativaryaviryah**, **Ajitrajjetajitah** (winner of Ajit kings), **Vyaghraparakramah** (fierce like tiger), **Dharnibandhasya** (integrator of nation), **Mriduhridayah** (soft hearted), **Anukancha**, **Lokanugrah**, **Vigrahvan**, **Amanuj** and **Kaviraj** in those currencies. His coins can be divided into six parts:— (i) With signs of **Garuda-dhwaj** towards lower side of his left hand, **Samudra** or **Samudragupt** is engraved and **parakramah** is written nearby (ii) Second type of coins has this **Apratiratho Vijitya Kshitisucharitaiha Dive Jayati** (iii) Third type of coins has writing in circular style **Kritantparshurjatyajatrajetajitah** (iv) Fourth type has **Vyaghraparakramah** and **Samudragupt** (v) Fifth type has picture of music loving emperor (vi) In sixth one **Rajadhirajah Prithvi Vijitva Divam Jayatyahatvajimedhah** is at one side and **Ashwamedha-Parakramah** on the other. Weight of his gold coins is around 118–112 Grain. Two copper coins have been found, on which picture of Garuda is there.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Major resource of State income of Gupta period was
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) forest Tax | (b) land Tax |
| (c) irrigation Tax | (d) none of the above |

- "Whatever his earlier position, Samudragupt turned out to be one of the ablest Gupta sovereigns and by his exploits more than justified his father's selection."
— R.S. Tripathi
- "Samudragupt, the second Gupta monarch, was one of the most remarkable and accomplished king of Indian history."
— V.A. Smith

Notes

Notes

5. was called as Mahasenapati.
 (a) supreme officer of army (b) head of elephants army
 (c) head of cavaliers (d) none of the above
6. Dhruva-devi or Dhruvswamini was wife of
 (a) samudragupt (b) skandgupt
 (c) chandragupta vikramaditya (d) none of the above

Administrative System of Samudragupt— Apart from being a great winner, warrior and musician, he was a successful administrator as well. He not only founded a huge empire, rather organized it and established strong centralized administrative mechanism. He based his regime on strong centre and divided empire in to provinces and appointed provincial rulers. He had complete control over these rulers. There were many departments in central administration which were totally organized and well knit. There was a cabinet to take care of administration and to suggest emperor on matters of governance. He gave many titles to officials and gave new names in place of their sethian names. Hence, main commander was called Mahabaladhikrit and Mahadandnyak to chief justice. Administration was such solidly organized and knitted that, no one of his defeated or under authority kings tried to ever revolt or conspire. Not only within his lifetime, but long after his death, there was peace and law and order in his entire kingdom.

Evaluation of Samudragupt— As per **R.S. Tripathi**, “Whatever be his initial condition, he was a great ruler of Gupt dynasty”. As per **Smith**, “Samudragupt who was second emperor of gupt Vansh, was a very important and multi talented emperor.” While describing his multifarious personality **Dr. Majumdar** writes, “His military victories were great already, but his individual merits were no less great. His state poet Harishen has admired his- generous to residents of defeated areas, refined ability, knowledge of Dharma Shastra, poetic bent and musical ability.” Actually, prakramank Samudragupt’s period in Indian history is a melodious exhibition of political and cultural consciousness. His distinguished merits represents an emperor blessed with multi talent, who was a great warrior, meticulous commander, successful organizer, poetry lover and patronizer of art and culture. We can evaluate him on the basis as following:-

Pleasing Personality- he had very pleasing and productive personality. He was great warrior and brave, as mentioned in inscriptions. As per **Smith**, “Samudragupt was a man of amazing individual ability. He had extraordinary qualities. He was a real human being, a scholar, a poet, a musician and a military commander.” While admiring his high characteristics **Harishen** has said in Prayag Prashasti, The way water of Ganga purifies the world after being released from the tresses of lord Shiva, similarly emperor’s fame, charity, physical might and literature knowledge, rising at many places, purifies this world.” Undoubtedly, he had great personality.

Great Conqueror—He was a great winner undoubtedly. He was winner of entire north, central, south and bordering India. As known, he defeated nine kings of Aryavarta-Rudradev, Matil, Nagdatt, Chandraverman, Ganpatinag, Nagsen, Achyut, Nandi, Balverma. Not even this, he defeated 18 Aatvik states, after which his boundaries extended from Jabalpur to Gazipur and Chotanagpur. Thus, entire Vindhya area came under his belt. There is a word in Prayag Prashasti; ‘Sarvadakshinapath Rajgrahan’, i.e. he defeated all kings of south India. Mahendra of Kaushal, Vyaghraraj of Mahakantaar, Mantraj of Kerala, Mahendragiri of Pishtpur, Swamidatt of kauttur, Vishnugope of Kanchi, Bheelraj of Aavmukta, Hastivarma of Baingi, Ugrasen of Pallak, Kubera of Daivrashtra and Dhananjay of Kosthalpur were in that list. After south victory, his ambition of being pan India ruler became fulfilled.

1. “Samudragupt was a man of exceptional personal capacity and unusually varied gifts. He stands forth as a real man, scholar, musician and warrior.”
 – V.A. Smith
2. Yasya Pradan-bhuj Vikram-Prasham-Shastra Vakyodaye Rupacharupari- Sanchayochit Manek Marg Yashah Punati Bhuvantram Pashu Paterjarantargaha Nirodh-Parimosh-Lighramiva Pandugangapayah.
3. “It appears that Samudragupt was a vigorous and resolute ruler and had the great qualities of a statesman.”
 – P.L. Gupta

Rulers of bordering areas got terrorized by his southern victory and agreed to accept his authority and accepted to offer periodic gifts and annual taxes. His pan India wins prove him to be a great military commander. He has been called "Samarshatavatarandakshah" i.e. winner of hundred wars. In one inscription, he has been called as "Aprativaryaviryah" i.e. insurmountable. His empire extended from Himalaya in north to Vindhya in south and eastern Malwa in west to Bengal in east. After that huge empire also there were some republics and states in south, which were under his authority. Besides, he established friendly relations with some foreign powers in northwest India, Sinhala dweep and some other island rulers.

Great Administrator – He was a great administrator besides being a great conqueror. He initiated knight system to run his huge empire. He handed over charge of farther areas of his empire to his knights, who worked as his representatives. Sandhivigrahik, Kumaramatya, Mahadandnayak and other high officials. Harishen was Sandhivigrahik or Parrashtramantri. Kumaramatya was high profile official of the state. Mahadandnayak was commander who led the army. As per Prayag Prashasti, Samudragupt divided his empire into many Bhukti and Vishay. Bhukti and Vishay are identical to modern province and Janpad or district respectively. Ahichchatra, shravasti, kaushambi, Vardhman etc were his Bhukti. Eastern Malwa too was part of his empire.

By bringing reforms in currency, he gave example of a good rule. He stopped low quality gold coins of later Kushan time and started pure gold coins, which were of six types- Garuda, Dhanurdhar, Parshu, Ashwamedha, Vyaghranihanta and Veenadharan). First three (garud, Dhanurdhar and Parshu) are related to soldiers of emperor and life of bravery. Garuda currencies were also introduced by this ruler only. In Bayana Nidhi, 183 coins have been found, out of which 136 are of Garuda type. It reflects that garud coins were most famous. It appears that garud, Dhanurdhar and Parshu coins were issued when he was busy in his campaign against his enemies and empire expansion. After winning all, he would have issued Ashwamedha coins. In his dynasty only he performed Ashwamedha yagna, hence his successors conferred him with title of Ashwamedhaharta. Vyaghranihanta category of coins are possibly related to his Sarvatvikraj victory and Dakshinapath Vyaghraraj victory. Probably, this is exemplary of his individual interest (hunting) also. Lutedharan (Gandharva-lalit) currency throws light on his love for art. As per Prayag Prashasti, he was an expert of music. His currencies have been quite helpful in understanding his individual interests, cultural achievements, empire boundaries, religious and economical condition. Nowadays, his currencies are kept in British museum, lucknow museum, Bayana Nidhi, Indian museum and oxford museum etc.

Great Politician – He was a great politician as well. As per **Dr. Parmeshwari Lal**, "It appears that Samudragupt was a powerful and determined ruler and qualities of a great politician were inherent in him." From Prayag Prashasti, we come to know that he had the ambition of making India one strong country. But as a practical politician he experienced that, due to transportation constraint, this is tough. Hence, he only directly included major parts of north India in his empire and established an organized and strong kingdom. As a clever and far sighted politician, he did provisions to keep his empire secure. For this objective, he made Aatvik kings bow under his authority. In bordering areas by giving him taxes, accept his orders and by greeting him his authority was accepted. He behaved with these bordering provinces with respect and politeness. He did not remove kings whom he won, but returned their state and money. This made them great loyalists of emperor. This gave stability to gupt empire. This endorses Samudragupt as a great politician.

Patronizer of Literature and Art – As per **Dr. Ramashankar Tripathi**, "He was owner of amazing abilities. He was not only expert in weapons, but in literature also. He himself was cultured and like company of learned people." His minister Harishen writes in Prayag Prashasti, "In art of music, he even failed Narad and Tumburu. He got the title of Kaviraj by writing much poetry." It appears that he removed the difference of Lakshmi and Saraswati. He gave patronage to scholars. Baudha scholar Vasubandh and Harishen etc were in his court. He was art lover. In one of his coins, he is seen playing lute. It gives proof of him being a music lover.

1. "Samudragupt was versatile genius. He was proficient not only in war, but also in the sacred lore. Himself highly cultured, he was fond of the company of the learned." – R.S. Tripathi
2. He was in fact a man of genius who may fairly claim the title of Indian Napoleon. – Smith

Notes

Generous Ruler—He was generous, donator and of soft heart. He never hesitated in rewarding scholars and Brahmans. In gupt period scripts, he has termed as giver of crores, cows and gold coins (anek-gau- hiranya-koti-pradasya). He has termed as protector of decent people and terminator of bad (sadhvasadhudaya- parlay- hetu- purushasya). He was available for hapless, orphan and sick. As per **Fahian's** travel document, that downtrodden, handicapped, poor and widows were treated free of cost and they were provided food and clothes. This proves his subject loving attitude.

Religious Tolerance—He was religious personality. In Prayag Prashasti, he has been called as boundary of religion (dharma pracheer bandhah). He was a Vaishnav in his personal life. His official orders used to be in Garuda currencies (garutmandak). There are signs of garud Dhvaj and Vaishnav faith imprint on his coins. But he was tolerant towards other religions. Famous Baudha scholar **Vasubandhu** was in his court. **Hemchandra Rai Chaudhary** is of the opinion that because of his generosity and tolerance, he reminds us of Ashoka. King of lanka, Meghverman sent his messenger to get permission for making one Baudha temple at Bodh Gaya to Samudragupt. He approved it. Later, this temple developed in to a huge Baudha math.

Napoleon of India—Since Samudragupt was brave, courageous and gallantry warrior, hence **Smith** has termed him as **Napoleon of India**. In his words, he was in fact owner of amazing abilities and he deserves to be called as Napoleon of India. The way emperor of France was great warrior and winner and with his might and strategy terrorized entire Europe, similarly Samudragupt not only made entire India bow down against him but bordering and foreign nations too. As regards, it is said that he was winner of 40 wars, but Samudragupt is called winner of 100 wars. It is worth mention, that here we compare Samudragupt with Napoleon only because he was a great winner. Like Napoleon hatred was not his religion, revenge was not his duty and clemency was not his disgrace. From this perspective, personality of Napoleon appears shorter than that of Samudragupt.

On the basis of above description, we can say that apart from being gallantry earth winner, he was an expert administrator, meticulous politician, religiously tolerant and patronizer of literature and art.

Ramgupt—Until sometime before, historians were of the view that after Samudragupt, his son Chandragupta II ascended the throne, but after getting some new facts, this perception has changed. Some excerpts of Vishakhdat's play 'Devi Chandragupta' have been found, as original Granth is lost. They tell us that after Samudragupt, Ramgupt ascended the throne, but he turned out to be weak and coward. Once he had a battle with some Shaka ruler and himself got trapped and was in danger. In the end to save himself and his subject, he agreed to send his wife **Dhruvdevi** or **Dhruvswamini** to the Shaka king's seraglio. Younger brother Chandragupta could not digest this and he played a trick to save his dynasty and sister-in-law dignity. He himself reached at Shaka ruler's place in Dhruvswamini's attire and killed him there. After this event, Chandragupta's respect to greater heights in the eyes of his sister- in-law and subjects and Ramgupt had to face flak. There was a conflict between both the brethren. Life of Chandragupta came in trouble. To save him, he pretended to be insane and later on killed Ramgupt and captured that throne and also made Dhruvswamini his wife.

Many more pro and anti things have been said about this story. On the basis of some excerpts of Harshcharit of Banbhatt, it has been endorsed. Plus, Vishakhdat was of gupt period only, hence his play must have got some historical relevance. Against it, people say that there have been no coins of Ramgupt nor there is any mention of his in gupt's inscriptions. Some scholars say that in that period, marrying elder brother's wife was not in line with Shastra. But these are not logical pleas. Since Ramgupt's period was too small, he would not have got opportunity to issue coins. No mention of Ramgupt in gupt's inscriptions too is not surprising, as inscriptions mentioned chronology of dynasty and not their traditions. Still, till the time it is established that there was a king named Ramgupt, till then this question would remain to be disputed.

8.4 Chandragupta II Vikramaditya

Notes

After Samudragupt, Chandragupta II Vikramaditya was the greatest emperor of gupt dynasty. Like his father, he too was an able fighter and diplomat. Probably, due to his these very qualities, his father removed Ramgupt from the throne and declared Chandragupta as his successor. It appears from Vishakhhatt's 'Devichanraguptam' that he killed his brother Ramgupt and married his widow Dhruvadevi. Though historicity of this play is doubtful, but this is sure that Chandragupta was the real successor of Samudragupt II, whose mother's name was Datt Devi. We get information about Chandragupta from 6 inscriptions— **pillar stone of Mathura, cave inscription of Udaygiri, stone inscription of Gadhwa, Sanchi inscription, Guha inscription of Udaygiri, stone inscription of Mathura and Iron inscription of Mehrauli.**

On the basis of these resources we come to know that Chandragupta ruled between 380 to 414–15 BC. His mother was Datt Devi. His initial name was Chandragupta, but after becoming emperor he conferred himself title of **Vikramaditya**. His another name was Devraj or Devgupt as known by gupt and Vakatak inscriptions. His first wife was **Kubernaga** who was a Nagkanya. Prabhavati Gupt was daughter of this queen only. Dhruvadevi or Dhruvswamini was his second wife, which gave birth to Govind Gupt and Kumargupt.

Marriage Relations—It was vital part of gupt's foreign policy to establish marriage relations with contemporary royal houses to strengthen the empire. Chandragupta I established marriage relations with Lichchavi and expanded his empire. Samudragupt too adopted similar policy. He married many girls of his knight's family, who were under his authority. He must have got great help in winning new states and sustaining his authority on the regions captured. Chandragupta II also followed his ancestor's policy. He established many marriage relations with powerful important authorities. First, he married Kubernaga of Nag Vansh. He had a daughter from this marriage, Prabhavati gupt, whom he married to Vakatak king Rudrasen II. Due to this marriage, friendship between Nag and Vakatak automatically established. His relation with Vakatak was more stronger than Nag. During gupt period, Vakatak were quite strong. Though, Samudragupt defeated Vakatak king Rudrasen (Rudradev), yet Rudrasen II increased his power in central India and became an important ruler of his times. His influence was also in an area from where he could become an obstacle to any expedition of any north Indian ruler, against Shaka Kshatrap of Gujarat and Saurashtra. Probably, Chandragupta analyzed this strategic advantage of his and hence established marriage relations with him. With this, Chandragupta developed friendship with a vital power without any effort.

Apart from Vakatak, he also established relations with Kuntal kings. Kuntal (southern part of Mumbai and northern part of Mysore) was ruled by Kadamb dynasty rulers. There is proof of healthy relation of Chandragupta with Kuntal king Kuntaleshwar. In Shringar Prakash of Mahakavi Bhoja, there is mention of discussion between Kalidas and Chandragupta II about king of Kuntal. Probably, Kalidas was sent to Kuntal king as envoy by Chandragupta. Son and grandson of Kadamb ruler Mayursharman were contemporary of Chandragupta II. Talgunda inscription tells that Kuntal king (possible kakutsyaverman) married his daughter in gupt Vansh. **Auchitya Vichar Charcha** of Kshemendra also endorses this marriage. Besides, as per Talgunda inscription, Kuntal king kakutsyaverman had marriage relations with gupt Vansh and other dynasties. **Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sarkar** suggests that Kadamb king married one of his daughter with Narendrasen (Vakatak) and other with son or grandson of Chandragupta. With these relations, Chandragupta made all of them his well wisher. These friendship gave gupt empire solid protection. Some scholars assign greater importance to his marriage relations than his victories.

Chandragupta's Victory Expeditions—In Hindu sayings, Chandragupta II is considered as a very gallant warrior. There is no doubt that he was ambitious and brave like his father. Then, he got a huge empire in inheritance, hence he need not do any empire building activity, yet there were many rulers and states who only accepted gupt's authority for the namesake. Out of them, Shaka of Malwa and

Notes

Saurashtra and Kushan of western Punjab were more powerful. Chandragupta organized a huge army against Shaka and attacked them. There is a script found of Chandragupta's war and peace minister Veersen in the Udaygiri hills of Malwa. Veersen himself accompanied emperor in this mission. It appears that gupt army attacked from Bhilsa route. Kshatrap Rudra singh III lost the battle and was killed. This victory proved to be totally decisive. Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra became part of gupt empire. Empire boundaries stretched up to western seas. This gave boost to both domestic and export business. Commercial towns and port of western coasts rendered huge growth to economic growth of the empire. These ports had decent business with western nations. Defeated regions were fertile. This increased state's income manifold. Another result of this victory was-Ujjain which was centre of education, art and literature became second capital of gupt empire.



Notes

We get information about Chandragupta from six important inscriptions – Iron Pillar of Mathura, Guha inscription of Udaygiri, stone inscription of Garhwa, sanchi inscription stone inscription of Mathura and Iron pillar inscription of Mehrauli.

Besides, he achieved many more victories. There is an Iron pillar at Mehrauli in Delhi, which has victory details of a king named Chandra. It writes that Chandra destroyed a union of enemies in Bang and won Vahwik after crossing seven deltas of Indus. This was probably Chandragupta Vikramaditya only. There is no ruler called Chandra in history, who won areas of Bengal in east and across Indus river in west. It appears that small union of knights who were under Samudragupt's authority created a joint front against gupt dynasty and tried to be sovereign, but they were defeated and probably now entire Bengal came under the authority of gupt Vansh.

In north-west, possibly he would have attacked Kushan rulers of western Punjab and Afghanistan. If we infer Balakh (Bactria) from Vahwik, then we have to agree that the success which Chandragupta got, was not achieved by anyone, not even by Chandragupta Maurya. But if his claim turn out to be true also, even then we can't say that his victories had any stable historical results, as there are no proofs that like Bengal, Punjab and Afghanistan were part of gupt empire. Hence, some scholars consider Vahwik as valley of Beas river. Even if we agree this, there is no doubt that his achievements were astonishing. It is said that after these victories only, he erected Iron pillar on Vishnu pad hills, which was taken by king Anangpal to Delhi.

Gupt's empire expanded a lot as a result of these victories. It contained entire Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, parts of Madhya Pradesh, entire central India and areas of Gujarat and Kathiawar.

Titles of Chandragupta – He conferred himself many titles due to his valour, fame and victories. For example after destroying small republics he got 'Ganari' and after win over Shaka got 'Shakari'. After his grand and universal victory, he got the title of Vikramaditya. In his other titles, he has been said as 'Nareshchandra', 'Sinhachandra', 'Sinhavikram', 'Devraj', 'Devshree' and 'Devgupt'.

Capitals – Normally it is accepted that during Chandragupta's regime, patliputra was capital of gupt empire, but when Shaka planned to attack him, he shifted his capital temporarily to Vidisha in eastern Malwa. After Shaka effect, their capital became Ujjain. Chandragupta II has been called 'Shreshthatam Nagar Ujjain Ka Swami' and 'Shreshthatam Nagar Patliputra ka Swami'. Possibly, during his north west expedition, his capital was Ayodhya as well. This is described in autobiography of Vasubandh. As per some scholars, he made Kaushambi too as his temporary capital, situated on highway leading from Ujjain to north India. As per **Allan**, his copper coins are majorly found in and around Ayodhya.

Administrative System – Apart from being a great conqueror, he was an expert administrator also. He organized his huge empire and provisioned for its proper administration. His administration was based on Unitary mode. Entire state administration was handled from patliputra. Kings used to be dynastical and not elected. Despite having such huge powers, he was not a despotic or discretionary

ruler. Religion, policy, tradition and cabinet were forces which restrained his despotism. Emperor was friendly with subjects. He himself was commander of the army and chief justice of state. He used to fight with great valour in war.

There was a council of ministers, in which post of ministers were patriarchal. His chief minister was called Mantrin. 'Sandhivigrahik' used to be minister for war, peace and treaties. Veersen was one minister who took care of administration as well as army.

For the convenience of administration, entire empire was divided into provinces, which were called **Desh** or **Mukti**. Its highest officer was called **Gotri** and officer of Mukti was called **Uparik**. Each province was divided into districts, which were called Pradesh or Vishay. Its highest officer was called **Vishayapati**. Each Vishay used to be made up of many towns and villages. Administrator of village was called **Gramik**. This post was given to the head of the village. There used to be Panchayat for the help of **Gramik**. There were separate designations for officers of centre and province. For example-Uparik, Baladhikaran, Ranmandadhikaran, Mahadandnyak, Mahapratihar, Mashvapati etc.

Judicial courts were divided into four categories. Emperor was head of judiciary. He himself heard cases and delivered verdict. Penalty was as per the crime. Serious criminals were given severe penalties. Right hand of traitors was used to be cut.

During regime of Chandragupta II, trade and industries grew handsomely due to peace and law and order. This time, India used to have trade with western nations by water route. Domestic trade too was developing. For exchange, various currencies were used. Chandragupta issued beautiful and artistic gold, silver and copper coins.

He was religious, generous and donator king. He always donated to hapless, poor and orphans. On religious occasions, he used to donate to Brahmans. He founded one charity cell under one officer.

He was follower of Brahman faith and worshipper of Vishnu. But he was tolerant towards Shaiva, Baudha, Jain etc everyone in the state had liberty to follow his own religion. His one minister was Baudh and another Vaishnav.

Thus, to sustain his empire for longer period, he established total administration and inspected each part of administration, keeping in view interests of his subjects.

Evaluation- Chandragupta Vikramaditya is counted amongst greatest rulers of Indian history. Evaluation of his achievements can be done as per following –

Conqueror – He was a great winner. Like his father Samudragupt, he too followed the policy of planet victory. By defeating Shaka, he merged Malwa and Saurashtra in his kingdom. He defeated Vahwik or north Kushan. He also has the credit of Bang victory. He also defeated republics and merged. On the occasion of his great victory, he performed Ashwamedha yagna and had the title of Vikramaditya. His empire spread from Punjab in west to Bengal in east and from southern boundary of Kashmir in north to Gujarat and Kathiawar in south west.

Ruler – He was an expert ruler. There was a council of ministers for help and suggestion in matters of governance. Veersen was Sandhivigrahik minister. Many high profile officials and knights like Shikharswami, Amrakardava, Govindputra, Sankanik Maharaja, and Maharaja Trikmal etc were there. Province officer was called Uparik. Province was divided into many districts. District was called Vishay. There was great village and town administration. His administration was innovative also. Organization of empire on new basis, formation of Aamatya Mandal, recruitment of new officials, measures of safety and law and order are indicative of his fundamental ability and merit.

Diplomat – He was expert in diplomacy. He gave introduction of his diplomacy several times. As known, he killed Shaka ruler in guise of a woman and killed his brother Ramgupt pretending to be insane and got the throne. His marriage policy too is indicative of his diplomatic skills. By marrying Nag girl Kubernaga himself and marrying his daughter with Vakatak king Rudrasen II and his son Kumargupt with Kadamb princess, he made his position very strong. It proves that he was a pundit of politics and acted as per the situation.

Notes

Patronizer of Literature and Art—He protected art and literature. He himself was fond of education. Mahakavi **Kalidas** writes, “Lakshmi and Saraswati who by default stay at different places have made their joint house in this king.” Composer of Kavyamimansa **Rajshekhar** says, emperor has permitted in his Antahpur, the use of only one language of Sanskrit. **Subandhu** too while admiring emperor’s love for poetry says in his Granth Vasavdatta – poetry declined due to his demise. He was protector of poets and artists. There were Navratna in his court-Dhanvantari, Kshapnak, Udaysingh, Shanku, Betalbhatt, Ghatkarpar, Kalidas, Varahmihir and Varruchi. Name of Kalidas is at top out of them, who composed Raghuvansh, Meghdoot, Kumarsambhav, Ritusanhar, Abhigyanshakuntalam etc, which even today are the unfailing treasure of Sanskrit literature. Sandhivigrahik minister of Chandragupta, Veersen was a high class grammar expert, judicial expert, politician and poet. As appears from Kavyamimansa of Rajshekhar that, there were councils of experts in patliputra and Ujjaini, which examined poetry writers.

Chandragupta had deep understanding of art. He heralded a new era in currency making art. There reflects high quality of artistic taste in all his currencies of gold, silver and copper. His Sinhanihanta, Ashwarohi, Dhawajdhari, Chakravikram and Paryak situated king-queen idol are new and fundamental and throw light on specific qualities of his character. His Sinhanihanta currencies are indicative of his valour, bravery and gallantry. Beautiful palaces of patliputra and Ujjaini reflect his love for art. After seeing palace of patliputra, Fahian told it as if made by divine forces. As per Kathasaritsagar, Ujjaini town was gem of earth. Kalidas too has termed it as a glittering block of gold.

Religious Tolerance—He was very liberal and tolerant in religious matters. He was Vaishnav but all other subjects were free to follow their religion. Sanchi stone inscription tells us that Baudh follower Amrakardava was his commander. Similarly, his Sandhivigrahik minister Veersen was Shaiva. Condition of Baudh Vihar and Jain Chaitya was satisfactory. Different communities had fraternity and sympathy. People used to live in harmony. There was no place for communalism and bitterness.

Thus, from above description it is clear that Chandragupta II was a great conqueror, efficient administrator, diplomat, scholar of literature and art and religiously tolerant emperor. His period represents golden period of gupt dynasty due to his political and cultural achievements. In the words of **Arvind**, India has never seen all round development of its life before. Similarly **Smith** says, India was never ruled with such orientalism, the way it was ruled by Chandragupta II.

8.5 Description of Fahien (399–411 A.D.)

Introduction and Voyages—Fahien was a Chinese traveller who came by land route and returned by sea route. He was a Baudha Bhikshu. In the search of religious books and visiting pilgrim sites, he came to India, the pious land of Buddha, after tolerating hardships of journey. It took him a total of 15 years in his travel, out of which he spent 6 years in India, out of which he stayed in patliputra for 3 years.

As known, Fahien reached Tartar via east Turkistan from china. Here he saw Baudh Bhikshus reading Indian language and books. From here, he reached to Khotan, where he saw fourteen. Vihar. There were 14,000 Bhikshus only in **Gomati** Vihar. From here he reached Purushpur (Peshawar) via Kashgar, Kufen (Kabul), Gandhar and Takshshila. Influence of Buddhism was quite high in all these places. He saw 3,000 Bhikshus of Mahayaan and Heenyan in Afghanistan. In Gandhar also, number of Heenyan followers were more. He saw such crowd in Takshshila at Baudh Stupas that queue to offer lamp and flower never ended.

From Peshawar, he reached Punjab, where he met around 10,000 Bhikshus. From here, he came to Mathura and saw 20 Vihar and met with 3,000 Bhikshus. Then he reached Madhya Pradesh. From there he reached shravasti while halting at Kannauj, where he saw many Baudh monuments. After that, he

travelled to all places concerned with Gautama Buddha like; Kapilvastu, Rajgriha, Kushinagar, Vaishali, Sarnath, Bodh Gaya, Nalanda, Patliputra etc and then he reached Tamralipti port. From here he went to Sinhala dweep where he spent 2 years. From here he returned to china via java by sea route.

Surprising thing is that Fahien was so involved in his India travel and study that he admired contemporary administration too much. He appreciated social, religious and economical condition but never mentioned about contemporary ruler Chandragupta Vikramaditya. His description is as below: –

Description of India by Fahien

Political Status – As per Fahien, administration of Magadha king was effective and of high quality. Aim of the state was welfare of the subjects in best possible manner. People had liberty of every type. Entire empire was handled and controlled from capital patliputra. Monarchy was prevalent. King's post was patriarchal and entire authority of the empire was inherent in the king. Still, state was welfare. Religion, policy, tradition and council of ministers were means of restraint on king.

There was a council of ministers for running government. Its post was normally patriarchal. There was only one minister for war, peace and treaty called Sandhivigrahik. He used to accompany emperor at war. Other departments too had ministers.

Entire empire was divided into provinces, called Desh or Mukti and its highest officer was called Uparik. They normally belonged to royal family. Provinces were divided into districts called Pradesh or Vishay and its head was called Vishaypati. Ruler of village was called Gramik.

Major source of state income was land tax, which was called Udrang. This used to be 1/6th of the produce. On the basis of land fertility, tax could vary from 16–25%. Major taxes were taken from those who did not have land ownership. Vat, Bhoot, Dhanya (grain tax), Hiranya (tax on costly items), judicial tax, Economic penalty, Bhog tax (on commercial items) etc were some taxes.

There were many officials and staff to run the administration looking at its huge expansion, whose list is given by Fahien as following: –

(1) Rajamatya-advisor to emperor (2) Mahasamant and Mahapratihar-Antahpur Officer (3) Rajsthaniya-officer of emperor's royal palace (4) Deshpashadhikari-highest officer of police (5) Choroddharnik-officer of spy department (6) Mat (sepoy of police) (7) Uparik-justice and revenue officer (8) Vinay Sthiti Sthapak-main penalty officer (9) Dandnayak and Mahadandnayak-other officers of justice system (10) Bhandaragaradhikrit-head of treasure (11) Mahakshpatlik- officer of state accounts (12) Mahasenapati-highest officer of military (13) Mahapeelupati-head of elephants army (14) Mahashvapati-head of horse army (15) Ranbhandagarik-war and supplies officer.

All these officers used to get cash salary from state. They used to work with full honesty and dedication. There was peace and order in country and theft and crimes were less. Fahian used to wander on deserted roads and jungles for years, but no thief or robber touched him. As per him, crimes were very less and criminal justice system was not stringent. Normally guilty was punished by fine only. People doing regular revolts were amputated or were crushed under elephants. Traitors were made blind. Visitors were given huge respect. They could move from one place to another without identity card.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. Ruler of Lanka, Meghverman sent his messenger to Samudragupt for seeking permission to build a Baudha temple in Bodh Gaya.
9. Chandragupta I established marriage relations with lichchavi and expanded his power and kingdom.

Notes

10. Raghuvansh, Meghdoot, Kumarsambhav were composed by Banbhhatt.

11. Mahashvapati was officer of war and supplies.

There were many institutions of charity. People used to make charity houses near or far from road. Shady trees and rest houses were made at both sides of the road, where travelling Bhikshus and passengers had the facility of bed and food. Permanent residents and Bhikshus were given bed, mat and food apart from clothes and rooms. Pagodas were made in respect of Sariputt, Mogalan, Abhidhamma, Anand Vinay and Sutt. If any foreign visitor used to go to Vihar, then chief priest used to drop him to guest house and also picked his clothes and charity pot. They gave him water for cleaning feet and oil for massage and special food was made for them. After little rest, Dharma Acharya's post was asked and accordingly place and bed was allocated.

Social Status – There was an environment of new freshness, renaissance, self meditation and cultural composition under patronage of peace, prosperity, administration, generosity, tolerance, affection to education and fine arts. People had happy and prosperous life. Generosity, religiousness, charity orientation, guest houses full of facilities, prospering farming and various charity places are indicator of the fact that normal public was content, happy and prosperous.

As per Fahien, people of this age had etiquettes, charity, hospitality, morality, well behaviour types of qualities in plenty. People were so honest that there was no written agreement for giving or taking. Theft, robbery and crimes were less. Normally, people followed principle of non violence. Consumption of liquor was considered bad. People did not eat meat, garlic and onion. Chandal were outcast of society. Foreign species which came to India like; Shaka, Pallava, Kushan, Hoon, Greeks etc; gradually merged into Indian society.

Society was based on Varna system. People used to follow Brahman, Kshatriya, vaishya, Shudra and four ashram also-Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanprastha, and Sanyas. Brahmins were most respected in the society. They used to be expert in Vedic mantra, sutra, and lecture and conducted all religious work of the society. Kshatriya used to protect the society. Vaishya did trade and commerce and Shudra did service to all. There were some lowest caste people doing low level job like Chandal. They used to live outside town and within town; they used to create sound with wood so that none should touch them.

Custom of joint family was there. Head of the family was oldest male who was responsible for social, religious and economical arrangements of the family. Slave system was prevalent. They were sold or bought or those who could not repay loans, used to sell themselves or become slaves. Veil system was almost negligible. Women used to move out freely, but ladies of elite families did use veil on going out.

Women used to partake in social and religious affairs with men. Normally they were expert in singing, dancing and home affairs. Sometimes, they also contributed in administration. South Indian ladies used to exhibit their dancing skills publicly.

Society had monogamy, but elite men also practiced polygamy. Widow marriages and to some extent, offbeat marriages also happened. There were inter caste marriages in various communities. Both morganatic and inverse types of marriages were prevalent.

Both men and women used to wear cotton, woolen and silk clothing. Men used one upper garment and one lower dhoti. Women used to wear saree, sarong and blouse. Some places, women wore skirt and scarf too. Due to influence of Shaka, use of coat, overcoat and pajama started. Having turban was in vogue. Both men and women used to be bare foot.

Both men and women loved cosmetics. For the beauty of lips and face, various types of packs were used. Sandal powder was used for face. When in a festival, Fahien was applied perfume first time; he became quite happy with its fragrance. Perfumed oil was used for hairs and women used to make hair locks in various style. Among ornaments, they used ear rings, pearl necklace, flower garland, hand band, armband, gem embedded bangles and rings, were quite popular. Nose ring was not used probably.

Economic Condition – Fahien writes that nation was filled with money and food and there was economic prosperity everywhere. Main occupation was agriculture. Wheat, pulse, rice, jute, corn, cotton, fruits and vegetables, spices, supari and indigo were cultivated. Main business of nation was clothes which were made in Gujarat, Bengal, Assam and Tamil Nadu. Silk products were made in Mathura and Banaras. Various articles were made by melting metal. Iron pillar of Mehrauli is an excellent example of metal art of that time, which still is available without rust since centuries. Art of grinding and polishing gems too was in advanced stage. Ship building was also prevalent. Beautiful images of ivory were also made.

There were classes of people doing different occupations like sculpturer, weaver, potters and Mahajan. In large towns, vaishya, Mahajan and sculpturer used to have their corporation. In this period, there was a big corporation in Vaishali which had its rules, by rules and laws.

Both land and water route was used for business. Main items of trade were cotton and silk clothes, gold, silver, gems, salt and spices. Major trade centres were Vidisha, Ujjain, Mathura, Saket, Prayag, Banaras, Gaya, Tamralipti, Bhraigukuch (Bharauch), pushpapur, Madura etc. There were sufficient state highways for internal trade. One land route went to eastern coastal towns via south and another went to western coastal towns via Vidisha, Ujjain and Nasik. Another land route went to bordering provinces from patliputra. This land route was used to trade with Tibet, Khotan, china etc in east and Iran, Arab and other countries in the west. Godavari, Krishna and Brahmaputra rivers were used for trading by boats. Besides, sea route was used do business with eastern and western countries. Cosmetics were supplied to Roman Empire. Silk clothes used to come from china. In trade exchange, various currencies of gold, silver and copper were used for trading. Local coins too were used for trading.

Religious Condition – Fahien's description also tells about religious status of that time. It tells that Brahman faith was in a very strong position and it had great influence in central India. Chandragupta himself was follower of Vaishnav faith. But Punjab, Mathura and Bengal had dominance of Buddhism and both Mahayaan and Heenyan faith were existing. Fahien saw many Baudha Vihar in the country.

Fahian went to Shan-Shan, where he saw 4,000 Bhikshus of Heenyan faith. He saw many Bhikshus reading Indian language and books in Tar-Tar. He saw thousands of Bhikshus in Khotan. Only Gomati Vihar had 3,000 Bhikshus and there were 14 such Vihar in Khotan. He saw 1,000 Bhikshus in Kashgar and the king himself was a Baudh, follower of Heenyan. He also travelled to Gandhar, Takshshila and Peshawar and there were numerous Baudha monuments. He saw 3,000 Bhikshus of Mahayaan and Heenyan faith in Afghanistan. He also travelled to Bannu and saw many Bhikshus there. He saw many Vihar in Punjab and estimated, there were more than 10,000 Bhikshus. In Mathura only, he saw 10 Vihar, where 3,000 Bhikshus were there. He travelled Madhya Pradesh also. He saw many Baudha monuments in shravasti. He also travelled to Lumbini, Vaishali, Bodh Gaya, Nalanda, and Gaya, Rajgriha etc. He also went to lanka and stayed there for 2 years. From lanka, he went to java and then returned.

His description proves that in gupt period, people had full religious liberty.

Education – As per him, education too was in advanced state. Though, there were no government sponsored institutes, yet gurus used to impart education in their ashram. These acharyas normally lived in pilgrim spots, capitals or big towns. Their expensed were met by performing rituals for people, charity and government support. Patliputra, Padmavati, Mathura, Ujjaini, Ajodhya, Vastgalm, Varanasi, Nasik and Lalmi were major education centres. Scholars of Ajodhya were quite expert in mantra, sutra and bhashya. Takshshila which used to be major education centre in ancient times was in a decline state, but Nalanda had developed as an advanced centre of study, where apart from Buddhism, Jainism too was imparted. Vallabhi in Saurashtra too was important education centre. Education was more prevalent among Brahmins, but Shudra remained uneducated. In place of Veda, in this period Puran, Smriti, logic, philosophy, law and grammar were taught. In other subjects, astrology, math and ayurved were taught. At the end of the education, no title was awarded. This period saw growth of literature along with education and Sanskrit language flourished. Articles of this time are found poetic Sanskrit.

Description of Patliputra – He has also mentioned about patliputra. He was impressed with this town and palace of Ashoka. In his opinion, such multi structured palace, was made by divine souls, which

Notes

kept putting stone over stone, made walls and doors, did painting and performed graving and carving work in inhumanly manner. During his visit, Ashoka palace was there. Near his palace, he saw two Stupas, in which one place was used by Mahayan and other by Heenyan Bhikshus. There used to live around 600-700 Bhikshus in both these Vihar. But they were so famous for their knowledge that students from distant places used to come to listen to their speeches. Fahien himself took 3 years to learn Sanskrit. He was pleased to get Neeti books of Bhikshus. He appreciated the procession comprising of 20 huge and well decorated chariots. These processions were done every year and were moved in the town on 8th of next month. It also had rulers and musicians. As per Fahien, such processions were taken out in other cities also.

He tells that, rich people have made free medical pharmacy in their capital and poor, hapless, orphan, widow and handicapped come there. They are well taken care of there and medical counselor treats them and food and medicines are given as per need. When they get well, they depart.

Kumargupt (415 to 455 A.D.)

After Chandragupta II, his son Kumargupt ascended the throne. In his period, gupt empire condition was stable, but in his last stage, descendents of Pushyamitra **Shunga** started fierce attacks on Gupt Empire. Due to old age and weakness, Kumargupt himself did not face them. He handed over this job to his son Skandgupt. As per some historians, Kumargupt laid his life while fighting those enemies in battle field. Thereafter, Skandgupt proceeded to handle those rebellions. His enemies were quite powerful, fierce and technically equipped. Their inhabitation was near coast of Narmada near to its origin. Showing exemplary valour, Skandgupt destroyed his enemies.

Many inscriptions of Kumargupt period is available, such numbers are not available for any of the ruler. They don't throw much light on the events happened during his regime, but this much is known that he was able to keep intact the empire, which he inherited from his father. His coins have been found in western India at distant place, which stands as a testimony.

From his coins, it appears that he too performed Ashwamedha yagna like his grandfather Samudragupt. The reason for performing this yagna is not known.

He issued many new gold coins of variety. In one coin, Kartikeya is shown on peacock and on the other side; king is showing bowing down to Kartikeya. It proves that he was staunch devotee of Kartikeya. Around 445 or 446 he died. **Dr. R.C. Majumdar** writes about him, "His regime is considered normally as effect and interest less. But while evaluating his character and achievements, we must focus on those details, which are normally neglected. Among many inscriptions of this time, only one is seen pertaining military expedition, which happened in his last stage. Besides, there appears a stable and huge empire from Arab sea to Bay of Bengal under his leadership. Such a huge empire can only be taken care of by an effective and strong leader. Soon after his death, defeats of Hoon and other forces give testifying strength of is royal army. It was worth credit for him that for long period of 40 years, army was kept intact. Modern historians give whatever respect to him; he must get more than this. His regime appears as dark background, against which regimes of two of his ancestors and successors appear glittering. As we know, this is not logical and not in conformity with historical facts."

Skandgupt Vikramaditya (455-467 A.D.)

Skandgupt was last great emperor of gupt dynasty. He kept his father's huge empire intact, but since from his time only, there were troubles to the kingdom, as a result of which soon after his death, his empire saw its fall.

As per **Dr. R.C. Majumdar**, after Kumargupt's death, there was a fight for succession. Skandgupt defeated all is brethren, even the legitimate successor the throne Purugupt and became emperor. After it, he got the title of emperor. The way god Krishna rescued mother Devaki, similarly he rescued his mother.

Dr. Majumdar' logic is based on Bhitari inscription, which we have discussed before, he also says that in this inscription and Vihar inscription does not mention his mother's name, in the chronology they have mentioned. It proves that she was not the chief queen. Thus, Skandgupt was not the legitimate successor of the throne. Actual successor was Kumargupt and Anant Devi's son Purugupt.

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Did u know? Hoon attack happened in Skandgupt has been mentioned in Bhitari Inscription.

Modern scholars don't agree to this fact. Many literature and currency evidences prove that in the last phase of his life, Kumargupt handed over his reigns to one of his sons. As per **Prof Goyal**, this son should be Skandgupt, since in **Kathasaritsagar**, he has been called Vikramaditya, which was title of Skandgupt and he has been given credit of win over Shudra. Hence, concept of Dr Majumdar of war for succession is not right. In fact, being impressed with Skandgupt's abilities (destruction of Pushyamitra and party), his father gave him the throne.

Biggest event of his time is Hoon attack on India. These hoons were barbaric civilization and used to plunder Asia and Europe as they increased their power. In 5th century, they became a strong force in central Asia. One of its branches, white hoons took control on **Oxis Valley**. From there, they moved to Gandhar and had an eye on India.

Bhitari inscription has the mention of Hoon attack on India during Skandgupt period. But in his Junagarh inscription, instead of hoons, word Shudra (malechcha) has been used. Though, some scholars (Sudhakar Chatopadhyaya, Radha Krishna Chaudhary) believe that hoons and malechcha were different, but many believe that both were same. Hoon attack has been mentioned in Somdev's Kathasaritsagar.

In above sources, it is not clear that this war with hoons took place where, but the ferocity of the attack can be felt. Bhitari inscription says that when hoons attacked, with the majesty of Skandgupt's arms, earth got vibrated and there was a huge storm. But after this horrible carnage, Skandgupt turned out to be victorious. This defeat made hoons lose their confidence for long. They could muster courage to attack again in 5th century till the beginning of 6th century.

Thus, even if taking charge in adverse situation, Skandgupt came out with flying colours. He kept inherited empire intact, though he could not add any new region with new wins. His command over western region is proved by Junagarh inscription and with silver currencies of Garud, Veda and Nandi. From inscriptions of Indore (Bulandshahar), Bhitari (Gazipur), Kahom (Gorakhpur) and Supiya (Reva) and Mayor coins, it is proved that he had control over Madhya Pradesh also. Gold coins found from Bihar and Bengal proves his control over these regions as well. Like Kumargupt, he had control over huge area from Bengal in east to Gujarat-Kathiawar in west and western border of Uttar Pradesh and from Himalaya in north to Vindhya Mountains in south.

Apart from keeping the empire intact, he provisioned for its effective governance as well. He did many reforms in this area. He replaces new provincial governors with new ones. As per Junagarh inscription, it appears that he appointed Parndatt as governor of Saurashtra. Chakrapalit was made in charge of Girnar. He reconstructed Sudarshan Lake in 456. He performed yagna to satisfy deities and made a temple of lord Vishnu (chakra bhrit) near Sudarshan Lake. Besides, Sharvanag, prabhakar and Bheem Verma too were his governors or ruler under his authority.

Skandgupt inscriptions also throw light on local administration. Mention of officers like **Agraharik**, **Saulik** and **Gaulmik** has been done in Vihar inscription. First one was responsible collecting tax and other one took care of forests. Junagarh inscription throws light on head of town- Nagarrakshask. Chakrapalit was one such **Nagarrakshask**, about which we have mentioned above.

Skandgupt was famous for his bravery, spirit of public welfare and soft character. Bhitari inscription tells him as – **Jagatibhoj-Baladhayo-Guptvansaikeveerah**. He has been compared with Indra and Rama. His religiousness and honesty too has been discussed and he has been compared with Dharmaraj

Notes

Udhishtir. He has been told as 'Parahitkari' in some of his coins. He was a Vaishnav by faith, but treated other religions with respect. All had liberty to follow their own religion in his empire.

Hence, it is clear that he was a great ruler of his dynasty. He protected his empire in crisis period. Writer of 'Aryamanjushreemoolkalp' has called him a **Superior, Intelligent and Religious** King in the impious time.

Purugupt and Kumargupt II

Skandgupt died around 467. Purugupt succeeded him. He possibly was his step brother was born to queen of Kumargupt, Anant Devi. From his coins it appears that he got titles of 'Shrivikram' and 'Prakashaditya'. In this period only, there is mention of another king Kumargupt II of gupt Vansh. He was ruling in 474. It is difficult to tell what was the relation between both of them. Some scholars believe that he successor and son of Skandgupt. Purugupt removed him and got the throne. Some believe that he would be son of Purugupt and ascended throne after him. Both the rulers had small regime period.

Buddhagupt

After Purugupt, Buddhagupt ascended the throne. Many inscriptions of him have been found. He was ruling in 477. He probably ruled for 20 years or more. He sustained peace and law and order in the empire. His control over Malwa, Gujarat and Bengal etc continued. Still, in his time power and dignity of gupt empire started diminishing. Rulers of farther areas increased their powers and many of them only accepted gupt authority for namesake only. Buddhagupt died probably around 500.

Last Gupt Rulers

Narsinhagupt ascended the throne after Buddhagupt. After him, Kumargupt III and Vishnugupt became king. These three collectively would have ruled around 570 in this period only, two more gupt, Vainyagupt and Bhanugupt were there. Their relation with gupt Vansh can't be described. Only one inscription of Bhanugupt has been found from Eran(Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh). It tells that he and one of his knights, Goperaj showed exemplary courage in a war. Possibly, that battle would have been against hoons. Goperaj died in the battle and his wife became sati.

Narsinhagupt, as mentioned before, was the last great ruler of gupt Vansh. He got the title of Baladitya. Lot of troubles hit Gupt Empire in Narsinhagupt regime. There was a king in Malwa named Yashodharman, who caused serious damages to Gupt Empire and capture many regions. We shall describe about him ahead.

In this period only, Mihirkul attacked many times and forced Narsinhagupt to pay tax. Hoon king also subjected the subjects to great atrocities. How descendent of Skandgupt and Vikramaditya could digest this insult. As per description of Yuan Chuang, Narsinhagupt defeated Mihirkul comprehensively and imprisoned him, but released him later. He made one Baudha Vihar in Nalanda.

Successor of Narsinhagupt were weak and could not stop the process of decline. In their times, fate of gupt empire rapidly nosedived. There were revolts all across. As a result, an empire made with the muscle power of Chandragupta Vikramaditya and Samudragupt declined.

8.6 Reasons of Decline of Gupta Empire

Samudragupt and Chandragupta II established the empire with great effort, but their successors were so weak that they could not save this huge empire. Apart from incapable successors, politics of later half of 5th century was changing very fast. In fact, many local kings rose that time, which caused the

decline of Gupt Empire to start. Just like Mughal Empire, fall of Gupt Empire too was gradual. Weak successors, split in royal court, independence of provincial governors, rise of new royal dynasties, economic weakness and foreign invasions were major reasons of its fall, in the backdrop. Following are the major reasons of its decline –

Incapable Successors – Chandragupta II and Samudragupt contributed a lot in the expansion of Gupt Empire. Till the time of Skandgupt, situation was satisfactory, but after his death, there was none who could keep the empire intact and well knitted. **Buddhagupt, Bhanugupt, Narsinhagupt** etc were all weak rulers. Neither had they have bravery and valour nor qualities of an able ruler. As a result, central government became weak and empire moved towards its fall.

Foreign Invasion – External aggression too damaged the empire substantially. Gupt Empire had to face Pushyamitra, Hoon and Yashodharman aggressions respectively. Each attack made the situation of the empire weaker. First such attack was done by Pushyamitra and party in Kumargupt I's time. Though this invasion did not do any damage, yet it opened the path of future invasions. After this, series of invasions started. Pushyamitra aggression did a lot of damage to Gupt Empire's dignity.

Even fierce was the attack of hoons. This destroyed Gupta's dignity and power forever. It is not sure whether Kumargupt fought with hoons or not, but Skandgupt certainly faced them. Though, Skandgupt became victorious, yet the effect of this attack was far reaching. Their morale kept increasing and after Skandgupt's death, they started attacking again. Weak successor of later periods were unable to fight with them. Since the time of Purugupt, their confidence increased even further. In the last phase of 5th century, there was a rain of Hoon attacks and they made their foundation in north India. In the leadership of Torman and Mihirkul, they started denting Gupt Empire. As a result, kingdom weakened. Taking cue from Hoon aggression, slowly other rulers too started becoming independent. Within half a century, many independent states had born. Thus Hoon invasions caused great damage to the empire. Some scholars believe that main reason of decline of gupt regime was Hoon attack only. But this does not seem to be correct. It is right that empire suffered serious damage due to their attacks, but other vital factors too contributed in its decline. As per **R.C. Majumdar**, Yashodharman's contribution was more that the attacks of hoons in its decline.



Task Discuss the reasons of decline of Gupt Empire.

Rise of New Powers – In fact, there was great damage by emerging new powers in India. Weakness and invasions of hoons inspired the rise of many states. Most important of them was **Yashodharman** of Malwa. He disdained the power of Guptas and increased his authority. In the regime of **Narsinhagupt** only, he took control of many areas. Rise of Yashodharman encompassed the sun of Gupt Empire like Rahu. **Mandsaur Inscription** tells us that he used to have titles of Rajadhiraj and Parmeshwar. This only tells that he also took control of those areas, which were not under control of even Guptas. Even hoons feared him. Yashodharman was born in a knight family and his rise is very incidental. As per **Mandsaur inscription**, he violated his family limits. He has said his Vansh to be Aulikar (famous Aulikar Lachchan Atmavanshi). He declared his independence after increasing his power. His state extended from eastern sea to the opening of Lohitya river. It tells that he also defeated Magadha king Kumargupt III. This event is of 532. Possibly this time only, he defeated Hoon king Mihirkul. Taking inspiration from this, many more independent states came into existence. As a result, gupt's control was confined only to Magadha and nearby areas. Thus, birth of Maukhari, Maitrak and Gaur etc powerful states happened on the remains of Gupt Empire only. In south also, influence of Gupt Empire was almost finished and other independent states were born. Gradually, gupt kingdom was decaying slowly.

Lack of Definite Rule of Succession – Apart from these external factors, internal factors too made the fall on Gupt Empire unavoidable. Biggest issue was that there was no definite rule of succession. Since

Notes

the time of Samudragupt only, beginning of the custom of removing eldest son and giving it other, put the existence of Gupt Empire in danger. Due to the absence of rule of succession, Gupt Empire had to face dispute and struggle for succession in almost every king's time. To the extent that many dissatisfied princes like Harigupt and Prakashaditya gave support to hoons. Due to this, internally the empire began to weaken. Their image too declined and their subordinate states took advantage of this. This process finally divided Guptas in two parts.

Administrative Weaknesses – As per **Prof. Romila Thapar** and **Prof. Goyal**, reason of fall on Gupt Empire was that administrative system, foundation of which was laid by Samudragupt. He organized his empire as a union of many units of knighthood. Kings and republics outside Ganga valley were given liberty and partial independence. They used to keep representative control over a large area of Gupt Empire. Emperor directly controlled only the centre. The titles which gupt rulers got like, **Parmeshwar, Maharajadhiraj, Param Bhattarak** etc, gave idea of their knights and kings under them. Successors of Samudragupt too instead of bringing it down, increased number of subordinate kings and knights. Malwa had special status in gupt regime. Kings there even though under the authority of Guptas, did not use Gupt Sanwat. It proves that they were given special privileges. Dynastical succession at Malwa was accepted, which was a blunder of gupt rulers and its repercussion they had to face in future. System of donating land increased their powers even more. Such a system could only function well in the leadership of an able ruler. Weak gupt rulers could not keep them in control. Taking advantage of the situation, they became independent. Not even this, many such rulers joined hands with foreign invaders and rising powers against Guptas. All these worked as catalyst in the fall of Gupt Empire.

Economic Reasons – There were some economical reasons too. System of land donation was prevalent from before. Such donation receivers were given ownership of salt and mines too, which was under the control of the king before. Besides, such new people were given some administrative powers as well. At one side it reduced king's power and affected economic system on the other. This system ended freedom of farmers and made them farm slaves or semi farm slaves. This resulted in reduced focus in agriculture and as a result, production declined. Forced labour (vishti) even badly impacted the situation. Due to this, mobility of farmers, artisans, sculpturer got limited. Result of all this was the rise of self sufficient village units. Producers now started making goods to be used for their own institutions only. It badly affected internal and external business. As a result, trade and commerce started declining. All these contributed in the decline of economy. Money economy existing from pre gupt period, was no more the system in present. Biggest proof of this is that, number of gold coins were plenty, but number of daily use coins like, silver and copper etc were very less. It clarifies that the currency which was prevalent in 1st or 2nd century BC (copper coins of Kushan, contemporary rulers and even of republics have been found aplenty), became weak due to some reason in gupt period. Fahien writes further that custom of clay coin exchange was popular. In the absence of a money economy, trade and commerce could not sustain. Rural economy again intensified. Thus, gupt emperors had to face economical crisis. During Skandgupt's time, even gold coins were diminishing. Hoon invasions and contemporary political situation also shook the entire economic structure. Internal and external business had adverse effect. In the absence of any strong economic structure, no regime can survive and the same happened with Gupt Empire as well.

Revolts of Knights – Gupt period had knighthood system. Prayag Prashasti tells us that this system was prevalent since the time of Samudragupt, who used to emperor taxes of all types and adhered to his orders. They used to rule in their regions in an autonomous mode. Mentionable among them are **Maukhari, Parivrajak Maharaja, Aulikar, Maitrak** etc. It appears from **Mandsaur Inscription** that, these knights were given special privileges. Hence, in opportune times, they used to revolt against the king. Hence, in future it proved to be dangerous for Guptas and they started developing the sense of independence. First, Maitrak Vansh of Vallabhi became independent. For example, in the inscriptions of successors of **Drona Singh**, there is no mention of accepting sovereignty of Gupt Empire. As a result, Saurashtra province (Gujarat and Kathiawar) separated. Similarly, in the first half of 6th century, Malwa king **Yashodharman** became independent. By the middle of 6th century, Maukhari established independent state in leadership of **Ishanverma** in Kanyakubja. His **Harha inscription** (554 A.D.) does not

give any hint of accepting Gupta Empire's authority. **Ishanverma** started behaving like an independent king and had title of Maharajadhiraj. He also defeated many rulers and they accepted his authority. At that time only, in the leadership of **Kumargupt**, later Gupta Empire was established in Magadha. He has been called first amongst braves (puruha saram) and famous for displaying power in war (vikhyatshakti bhajishu) in **Afsadh inscription**. Similarly, after 543, Bengal (Pundravardhan Bhukti and Vardhman Bhukti) became independent. As per Harha inscription, Gaur of Bengal became quite strong in 554. Thus independent behaviour of provinces gave a severe jolt to Gupta Kingdom. Farther area went out of control.

Privileges of Provincial Rulers – Apart from princes, confidants and able officials too were appointed at the post provincial rulers. Parndatt in Saurashtra and Chiratdatt in Bengal (Pundravardhan Bhukti) were the provincial rulers. Similarly, in Sharvanag in antard (doab of Ganga-Yamuna) and Surashmichandra in doab between Yamuna and Narmada River, were provincial rulers. They used to behave like deputy emperors in their areas. In inscriptions, some of them have been said as Tatpadparigrihit of emperor. Obviously, they had special treatment from emperor. They had the right to appoint provincial officials. From **Junagarh inscription** we come to know that Parndatt himself appointed his son Chakrapalit as head of the town for capital of Saurashtra province. Chiratdatt, Governor of Pundravardhan appointed Netravarma as Vishaypati (district head) of Kothivars district. Provincial staffs were appointed by Tanniyukt (governor). Inscriptions tell that there was a Datt family in Bengal, whose members were appointed governors of north Bengal (Pundravardhan Bhukti) dynastically, as after Parndatt, names of Brahmaddatt and Jaydatt are mentioned. It tells us that post of governor had become patriarchal. This proved dangerous for the stability of Gupta Empire.

Military Reason – Organization of military too was one of the reasons. Unlike Mauryan, Guptas did not have a strong, organized army. Inscriptions nowhere tell us about military might and organization. Even Chinese visitor Fahien also has not mentioned quantitative details of army, the way Roman and Greek historians have done. It proves that Gupta kings were dependent on their knights and subordinate kings. Later on, when central administration weakened, they did not help them. Not even this, taking advantage of their weak position, they overpowered them and which made the fall of Gupta Empire inevitable.

Religious Reason – This also played major role. Initial Gupta rulers were Vaishnav, but later Gupta rulers accepted Buddhism, which proved costly for the empire. This destroyed their spirit of fight, which was necessary for the safety and stability of the kingdom. In fact, negligence towards military aspect was very natural to come post adoption of Buddhism. As a result, they did not pay attention to military effectiveness. **Huensang** mentions that when Mihirkul came to attack Baladitya, he said to his ministers, "I have heard that thieves are coming and I can't fight with them. If my ministers allow, I would hide in mud." He not only said this, rather went to an island with large number of his subjects. **Huensang** even told that Mihirkul was caught in the war, but at the behest of Baladitya's mother, he was released. Such policy of later Gupta rulers proved costly for the empire.

Huge Size of Empire – Fundamental reason of the decline is also the size of its empire. Chandragupta, Samudragupt and Chandragupta II expanded the empire quite large. Their empire was established on a large geography of India. Those days, means of transport were not developed. Spy system was not well organized. Hence, it was tough to rule over such huge landmass. There was no problem in the times of able leaders, but during later Gupta rulers, disintegrative forces started gaining ground. As a result, farther area rulers got themselves rid of the central governance.

Criminal Justice System – Criminal code of conduct was very soft. Even in serious crimes, no severe penalties were awarded. By bringing generosity in justice system and annulling death sentence, it encouraged internal enemies to look forward to destroy regime by spreading disturbances and anarchy and they started being successful in their anti government activities.

Giving up Foreign Policy – Later Gupta rulers gave up their ancestor's foreign policy. Chandragupta I with Lichchavi, Samudragupt with foreign tribes, Chandragupta II with Vakataks, Nag and Kadamb established marriage and diplomatic relations. Rulers from later period, did not follow this. Hence, they did not get help from them in need. Hence, their decline became inevitable.

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It is clear from above analysis, that sun of Gupt Empire set between 550-595. It was founded in 319. Chandragupta I, Samudragupt and Chandragupta II consolidated the empire. Up till Kumargupt and Skandgupt, it remained firm, but it started crumbling in the time of later rulers after Skandgupt. Attacks of Pushyamitra and party and hoons increased. Internal dispute was simmering. Non violence policy of later gupt rulers (Buddhagupt and Baladitya) prove lethal for the empire. Independence of knights and rise of gupt of Malwa, Maukhari of Kanyakubja and Maitrak of Vallabhi bit Gupt Empire.

8.7 Summary

It is said about Napoleon that he had the credit of 40 war wins under his belt, but Samudragupt has been called Samarshat (winner of 100 battles). It is worth mention here that Samudragupt is compared with Napoleon only since he was a great conqueror like Napoleon. Like Napoleon hatred was not his religion, revenge was not his duty and clemency was not his disgrace. From this perspective, personality of Napoleon appears shorter than that of Samudragupt.

8.8 Keywords

- **Administration:** System of governance.
- **Justice:** To give somebody his right.

8.9 Review Questions

1. Samudragupta was a great victor, discuss it.
2. What are the causes of downfall of Gupta empire?
3. In the period of Gupta monarches literature developed to its apex discuss.

Answer: Self Assessment

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Chandragupta II Vikramaditya | 2. Hun Invasion | 3. Samudragupta |
| 4. (b) | 5. (a) | 6. (c) |
| 7. True | 8. True | |
| 9. False | 10. False | |

8.10 Further Readings



Books

1. History of Ancient India – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.*
2. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*
3. History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
4. History of Ancient India – *Shalendra Sangar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
5. History of Ancient India A New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*

Unit-9: India in Gupta's Age

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 9.1 Central Ruling
- 9.2 Local Administration
- 9.3 Social Conditions
- 9.4 Religious Conditions
- 9.5 Economical Conditions
- 9.6 Education and Literature
- 9.7 Art
- 9.8 Summary
- 9.9 Keywords
- 9.10 Review Questions
- 9.11 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To know about social condition of Gupta's age,
- To study about the development of art in Gupta's age in India

Introduction

After Maurya Empire in India, credit for establishing a strong empire and organized political power in one entity, goes to emperors of Gupta Dynasty. Under the leadership of glorious and powerful leaders like Samudragupta and Chandragupta II, lost glory of Magadha had been revived. A huge empire in major parts of India had been established again. Gupta kings not only established a huge empire, rather arrange for its efficient administration too. This period can be studied through many available materials like Fahien's description, inscriptions and coins, Vishakhdat's 'Mudrarakshas' Kalidas-Granthavali, kamandkiya, 'Neetisar' various Smritis and others. But Gupta's administration was not as perfect as that of Mauryas. Major difference between the two is that where we find Centralization of power in Maurya administration, Gupta administration was decentralized on the contrary.

Notes

We can study administration system of Gupta Empire by classifying into Central, Provincial and local administration groups.

9.1 Central Ruling

King – As per the system of monarchism, entire powers were vested with king. He was the head of state principally and everything used to happen with his discretion. In this era, divine theory of king was very popular. This is the reason that in Prayag Prashasti, Samudragupta has been called **God on Earth** (Lok Dhamnodevasya). Prevalence of this theory was instrumental in increased power and prestige for the king. Following Gupta kings, many Other kings acquired title of **Maharajadhiraj (Great Kings), Param Bhattarak, Parmeshwar (God), Paramdevta (Almighty)**. Despite enjoying huge power and position, Gupta Kings were not despot and rather generous. Main duty of king was to protect people. Smritis and other contemporary scriptures have emphasized on establishment of a welfare state. There were some practical control on the king though. He was the head of the executive, judiciary and military.

Crown Prince – Gupta rulers gave proper consideration to crown prince too in administration. Special focus was given to prince's education and important administrative posts were given to them. Eldest son of the king was supposedly the heir apparent, but in special cases younger but able prince, could become crown prince. But this provision was not correct and it encouraged civil-war later on and contributed in the downfall of Gupta Empire. Crown Prince was bestowed with several administrative rights. He helped king in the administration. He could be appointed as the head of Province too.

Cabinet – King used to rule with the help of several ministers. There was no fixed specific number of such ministers or secretaries. Theirs major function was to help and counsel King. We get to know from Narad-Smriti that cabinet members were "expert in mythology, economics, aristocrat and truthful". With their help only, king managed his administration. These ministerial posts were generally based on hereditary or ancestral model. One minister used to head of many departments. Harishen at one time was made Sandhivigrahik, **Kumaramatya** and **Mahadandnayak** simultaneously. King himself presided over cabinet. In this period, priest was not given any position in cabinet. Ministers were given responsibilities for number of portfolios. Posts like Sandhivigrahik, Kumaramatya and Mahadandnayak have been mentioned in many inscriptions.

Bureaucracy – There is not much information available as regards bureaucracy or central administration system, but some bureaucratic posts have been mentioned definitely. Gupta ruler did not initiate new governance system rather continued old system with some modifications. Gupta age inscriptions mention following officers: –

Mahasenapati (Commander-in-Chief) – Theoretically, king was the chief of military, but there were several commanders and chief commanders under him to operate in the battle field.

Ranbhandagarik (Manager of foods for Forces in War) – This too relates to military only. Their main work was to arrange necessary material for military.

Mahabaladhikrit (Main War Strategy Maker) – He was the chief of military, cantonment and strategy department. There were many Baladhikrit under his belt. He possibly appointed people for military.

Dandpashik (Chief Police Commissioner) – He was the head of Police department. There were many officers under him to control law and order viz; Chauroddharnik (thief catcher), Doot (messenger), Bhatt (warrior). In some inscriptions, this officer has been called as Dandpashadhikarnik.

Mahadandnayak (Chief Warfare and Judicial) – His work was war and judiciary related. During war time, he used to command the military under Commander in chief. Under him, Chief of horse force (Mahashvapati), Ashwapati (head of horse battalion) Mahapeelupati (Chief of Elephants Force) etc operated. Normal soldiers were referred to as "chaat" and small troops as "chamu". Weapons like Sword, Arrow, Halberd, Spear etc were used in the war. Mahadandnayak worked as a judge also.

1. "If imperial Guptas continued the traditional machinery of bureaucratic administration with nomenclature mostly borrowed or adopted from earlier times." – U.N. Ghoshal

Self Assessment**Notes****Fill in the blanks:**

1. Mudarakshas is creation of
2. Main work of was to manage essential material for military.
3. During Skandagupta period, Chakrapalit, son of governor of Saurashtra, was mayor of

Mahasandhivigrahik – His work as an ambassador. He took care of war and truce related matter with other states, in other words, he was the chief of foreign policy.

Vinaysthitisthapak – He was the officer for law and order (religious policy).

Bhandagaradhikrit – He was the chief of State treasury.

Mahakshpatlik – He was the head of inscriptions or Record keeper.

Sarvadyaksha – perhaps he looked after central secretariat.

Mahapratihar – The chief security officer of palace.

Dhruvadhikaran – This department was responsible for collecting tax for the state. Shaulkik (land tax collector) operated under dhruvadhikaran.

Gaulmik – (revenue generator from forests), Gope (looked after villages), Karnik (Modern Registrar) and writer or clerks worked.

Pustpal – Assistant of Mahakshpatlik

Agraharik – Head of charity department.

Besides a number of other officers too have been mentioned in these inscriptions. As a **Sthapit Samrat**, **Pratinartak**, **Yuvraj Kumaramatya**, **Parambhattarak**, **Padeeya**, **Kumaramatya**, **Yuvraj Bhattarak**, **Padeeya Kumaramatya** are major. Different departments of Central administration were called Tribunal (adhikaran) and people related with royal family operating at vital positions were called **Kumaramatya**. Each tribunal had their own coins. Out of these, many posts were based on hereditary model. Apart from cash salary, they also got land in lieu of their service. As a result, they went on to become powerful.

Military Organization – Military department was the most important department of centre. King himself was the chief of army. Crown prince used to command the military in case of king being old. Mahadandnyak was the commander in chief of military, which operated right under the king. Elephant and horse troops were the main part of army. Head of elephant troops was called **Mahapeelupati**. There were several deputy-heads under him, which were known as **Peelupati**. Head of horse troop was called **Mahashvapati**. We find mention of weapons like sword, arrow, halberd, Bhindipal etc in Prayag Prashasti.

Police – Gupta age had adequate police management. Senior officer of police department was called Dandpashik. Normal employees were called chaat and Bhaat. Security guards were called Rakshin. Fahien's description tells us that there was no theft or robbery at that point of time. This tells that that police administration was too tight. There was peace and tranquility in the kingdom. Theft, robbery, murder etc crime were rarely seen. Spy department was quite efficient. Their employees were called messenger (doot). Police and spy used to be alert.

Judiciary – Judiciary was completely developed in Gupta period. It had a wonderful Judiciary system. King was the chief officer of judiciary. Verdict of king was considered to be final in complex cases of different courts complicated issues regarding king decision is considered to be final. As per Narad Smriti, there were four types of court – (1) Clan court (2) Category court (3) Virtue court and (4) Governmental court. First three were public's own court. Fourth one was of government. Artisan association court used to resolve disputes of artisans.

Gupta penal code was not too harsh. There was no capital punishment. Traitors or people indulging in repeat act of theft were amputated from arms. Normally, culprits were given economic punishment

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only. Amount of punishment was decided by judge considering economic status of the convict. As per Fahien, crime was less in the period. Gupta Kings was generous as regards to judiciary. Generally they used to accept and approve mercy petition filed before them by convicts, as declared by courts. Even heinous crimes were normally pardoned on filing mercy petition.

Revenue Management—There were a numbers of means of revenue of state. Maximum revenue used to come from land tax. Besides, many other source of income has been mentioned in contemporary literature and articles; as a fixed tax, periodic tax, economic punishment, income from state property and gifts from zamindars. Under regular tax—**Land Tax, Utility tax, Bhutovat, Pratyaya, Vishti** and others formed part of Fixed Taxes. King used to take sixth part of yield as tax. There was Octroi on Goods entering villages and towns from outside. Barren land, forest, grazing land, salt mines etc were under the authority of king. There were also means of income.

Provincial Rule—For the ease of administration, Gupta Empire had been divided into various administrative units. We come to know from Gupta inscriptions that province was called “Bhukti” and state was called “Desh, Rashtra or Prithvi”. Thus, Gupta Empire was divided into Bhukti which is as following Bhukties:—

1. **Pundravaradhan Bhukti**—It contained north Bengal and parts of Purnea. Here Karna Kayastha hereditiy. Uparik Maharaja Jaydatt and Brahmadutta are mentioned.
2. **Vardhman Bhukti**—(Part of Bengal only)—This was under the control of Maharaja Vijaysen.
3. **Teer Bhukti**—(Tirhut or north Bihar)—Govind Gupta was its governor.
4. **Malwa Bhukti**—(Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh).
5. **Kaushambi Bhukti**—(Uttar Pradesh).
6. **Saurashtra Bhukti**—(Kathiawar)—Parndatt was its governor.
7. **Magadha or Shree Nagar Bhukti**.
8. **Navyav kashik Bhukti**—Nagdev was its governor.

The head of Bhukti was also known as Prantpati, **Uparik Maharaja, Rashtriya Bhogpati, Gopta**. All these governors used to function as representatives of central rule. For their help also, there was regional cabinet. Damodarpur’s copper inscription tells us, that tenure of Bhukti was of five years. Officials like **Mahadandnayak, Mahapratihar, Ranbhandagarik** etc used to help in the administration of Bhukti.

There were many Vishay (district) under a Bhukti. Its administrator was called Vishaypati. He was also called as **Tanniyuktak**. He was appointed by head of the Province only. He had no relation with central ruler. He used to live in main town, which was called Adhishthan. His office was called tribunal (Adhikaran). Coins received from Vaishali throw much light on this. There was a local committee too to assist him, with whose help he used to govern. Vishay’s regional committee has been mentioned in Damodarpur Copper inscription. As per it there were four members in this committee—Nagar Shreshthi, Saarthwah, Pratham Kulik and Pratham Kayastha. Among them Nagar Shreshthi was the chief. Dealers represent convoy. Pratham Kulik used to be Chief Sculpture or head of association of sculptures. Pratham kayastha was chief clerk. Inscriptions tell us about another officer called **Sadhnik**, whose main job was to arrange administrative resources. **Vishaypati** used to appoint **Mahattar** for the district, that helped him in administrative affairs. Onus for Law and order, security and tax collection of entire Vishay was on district collector. For discharging these duties, he used to take help of **Yukta, Ayukt, Niyukta, Dandpashik, Chaurodddharnik (Thief Catcher), Pustpal** etc.

Information about Vishaypati working committee is received from Damodarpur copper Plate. Alike governor, he too was appointed for a period of five years. In this inscription (No. 124 and 129), officers equal in authority have been mentioned, on which basis we consider their tenure to be of five years. These officers were—Vishaypati—Kumaramatya Vetravarman, Nagar Shreshthi—Dhritipal, Saarthwah—Bandhumitra, Pratham Kulik—Dhritimitra, Pratham kayastha—Shambpal and Pustpal—Rishidatt, Jayanandi and Vibhudatta.



Notes During Gupta period, we find mention of Brahman dynasties; Vakatah and Kadamb were major among them.

Notes

Vishayapati had many titles. Following titles have been mentioned in inscriptions and articles—Kumaramatyadhikaran, yuvraj padeeya Kumaramatya, Yuvraj Bhattarak padeeya Kumaramatya and Parambhattarak Padeeya Kumaramatya.

Out of these, Kumaramatya term is controversial. Some scholars take it as courtier of prince. In Prayag Prashasti, Harishen too has been referred as Kumaramatya. Perhaps, this Aamatya received similar respect and dignity as that of a Prince. Yuvraj padeeya term is also vague. Perhaps this officer was related to prince's office. Thus we see that Guptas gave prime importance to Provincial administrative system. Their provincial management was much better than that of Mauryas.

9.2 Local Administration

Gupta Age inscription gives us knowledge on village and town administration to us. Town officer was called Drangik. During Skandgupta's period, son of Saurashtra governor, Chakrapalit was Mayor of Saurashtra (Girnar). His major duty was to keep town clean, pay attention to health of people and generate tax from town. There was a town committee for his help. We also find mention of officer called **Purpaal** in town, who ruled with the help of municipal corporations.

There were many villages under one Vishay. Their head was called **Grampati** (Village head) or **Mahattar**; he was the Chairman of village administration. For his help, there was a Panchayat. Members of Panchayat have been mentioned in Damodarpur copper Plate. These members were—**Mahattar, Aatkuladhikari, Gramik and Kutumbin**.

Onus of Village administration was on the Panchayat only. Flexibility was awarded to them in administrative affairs. The employee who kept account of village revenue and expenditure was called **Talwarak**. Major function of village committee was to maintain law and order, collect tax and keep account of lands sales and purchase.

9.3 Social Conditions

Caste System—Gupta Age Society was divided into four traditional classes- Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. Brahman had greatest position in society. He enjoyed special privileges in education; politics, society, religion and economics. Brahmans had six major karmas—study Veda, teach Veda, offer Yagna, conduct Yagna, receive charity, give charity.¹ These deeds formed part of his Swadharma. He always indulged in social development. By his penance and meditation, he used to guide society on noble path and harmony. It appears from Gupta literature that Brahman was never awarded death punishment. In 9th part of Mrichakatikam of Shudrak, Brahman Charudatta was proved to be a murderer, even then he was not given death punishment. Manu has termed Brahman killing as the greatest sin.² In Dashkumarcharitam, Brahman minister accused of sedition was only made blind. There is mention of Brahman dynasties in Gupta Age, out of which, Vakatah and Kadamb were major ones. Knight ruler of Guptas was Matri Vishnu, a Brahman. As per Manu, due to not being able to earn livelihood by adopting

1. Adhyapnamadhyaynan Yajnan Tatha.
Danam Pratrigrashchaiv Shat Karmavyagrajannamaah. — Manusmriti, 10.75
2. Brahmahatya Surayanan Steyn Gurvannganagmaah.
Mahanti Patkanyahuah Sansargashchati Ne, Seh. — Manusmriti, 11.54

Notes

Kshatriya lifestyle, Brahman can adopt Vaishya profession like agriculture, raising cows and trade.³ At crisis period, he could indulge into business. Manu statements that Brahman should sell profit-earning goods.

Kshatriya were next in position to Brahman in the society. All memory writers and Puran writers of Gupta period have accorded second position in society to Kshatriyas. It was their responsibility to protect country and society. Everything that was won in a war was the property of Kshatriyas. As per Manu, chariot, horse, elephant wealth and food (all types of grains), cattle, women (including maid servant), all types of materials, (raw sugar, salt) and metal (besides gold and silver, copper bronze) belonged to the warrior who actually used to win it.⁴ He had complete authority on won articles. Not only this, gifts and offering received from subordinate or won over kings, was the special privilege of king himself. Emperor Samudragupt too got such invaluable wealth and royal girls (rajanya) from various kings. Manu has suggested Kshatriyas to follow vaishya karma, but desisted from taking up agriculture.⁵ At the time of family crisis, they can do indulge in trade and commerce.

Vaishya were at third place in the society sequentially. Management of business and agriculture was their responsibility. They were referred to as Shreshthi, Vanik, Sarthwah etc during Gupta period. Vaishya was the community which contributed maximum to state in terms of taxes, who used to pay taxes from profit margin by selling of goods. Alike Brahman and Kshatriya, Vaishya too in the times of crisis, adopted other activities. Vaishya could take weapons in hands for the protection of cows, Brahman and other Varna.

Shudra's position was the lowest in society. **Hemchandra** has indicated six nouns for Shudra—Shudra, Antyavarna, Vrishal, Padya, Pajjah and Jaghanya. He was considered to be degenerate and looked down upon. He lacked enthusiasm, endeavour and conduct. All the norms related to his social, religious political, and moral life, exhibited their inferior position in society. Manu had given them some facilities. They were permitted to do carpentry, metal sculpting, potter work, painting art etc., they were also permitted to receive education. Generosity has been shown towards them in Purans also and mention of Senses control along with attainment of salvation is there. Yet, Shudra depended comprehensively on the mercy of Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

There is description of some mixed castes in Gupta period in the Smriti viz; Murdhavishikt, Ambashth, Parshav, Ugra and Karan. Stone inscriptions of this period make it clear that there was more dynamism in sub-caste of this period as compared to later time sub-castes. Fahien description tells us about one untouchable caste. They practiced low profession. Hunting wild animals, fishing, taking care of cremation ground etc were their work. They had to live outside the village. While entering village or town, they used to drum around, so that one could not touch them. They have been called as Antyaj or Chandaal or born from Pratilom Vivah or Inverse marriage (lower class boy wedding higher class girl).

Marriage System—Contemporary essays and literature tell us about marriage system as well. Practice of inter-caste marriages was practiced in Royal families. Kshatriya Guptas had marriage relations with Brahman, Vakatak and Nag Kings. Widow marriage and custom of Sati too was prevalent. Polygamy too existed. Un-matched marriage also used to happen whose example is Kumar gupt. High class male could marry a low class girl. Such marriage was known as Anulom marriage. High-class female and low class male could also marry. Such a marriage was called pratilom. Examples of such marriages too are there. Kadamb dynasty was Brahman but their daughters were married to Gupta Family.

3. Ubbabhyamapyajivanstu Kathan Syaditi Chedbhavet.
Krishi Gorkshamasthay Jive Dvaishyasya Jivikam.
4. Rathashchan Hastinang Dhanam Dhanyam Pashunstriyaah:
Sarvadravayani Kupyam ch yo Yajjayti Tasya Taat. — Manusmriti, 7.96
5. Vaishyvritiyapi Jivanstu Kshatriyodpiv Brahmin.
Hinsaprayan Paradhinan Krishi Yatnen Vajeyet.

Self Assessment**Notes****Multiple Choice Questions:**

4. In Gupta Age Society the position of was the highest.
 - (a) Brahman
 - (b) Kshatriya
 - (c) Vaishya
 - (d) Shudra
5. In Gupta Age Prostitutes were seen as
 - (a) Inferior
 - (b) Respectfully
 - (c) Both *a* and *b*
 - (d) None of the above
6. In which state have we found One Mouthed Shivaling situated in Bhumra and khoh.
 - (a) Jabalpur
 - (b) Kashi
 - (c) Nagod
 - (d) None of the above
7. Collection of statues of Gupta Age is in the museum of
 - (a) Ajmer
 - (b) Varanasi
 - (c) Kannauj
 - (d) None of the above

Slave System—Like other countries of the world, India too has had domestic slave system continued from ancient times. It has been described in the era of Mahajanpad, but surprisingly none of the foreign travellers, have mentioned it. Prisoners of war, Debtors and people losing in Gamble had to accept slavery. Sometimes poor people accepted slavery themselves during famine, which took care of their subsistence, mainly food. But Indian slave system was not like European Countries. Slaves could be set free. They were treated well. Mostly they performed domestic works only. Like ancient Rome and Greek, we do not find thousands of slaves working in the fields.

Lifestyle—Majority of people had simple and vegetarian food. Mostly people were vegetarian. Meat and wine etc were taken by Chandaals. It makes it clear that in Gupta Period too, people were still under the influence of Jain and Baudha religion.

Common People used simple cloths. General class people wore cotton clothes and higher class people used silk. Men and women both craved for ornaments. Different type of beautiful ornaments were used. Women used to wear decorated ear rings, chain of pearl and garland in neck, bangles embroidered with gems in hands, rings in finger and girdle in waist. They also wore anklets in feet. Women showed special interest for hairs. We can see contemporary hair style specimens in Ajanta Pictures. These specimens are very much attractive. Men too used to wear garland in neck, ear-ring in the ear, bracelet in the hand and rings in the fingers. For the beautification of face and lips, colour and perfumed powder were used. Luxurious goods were widely used in the society.

Recreation—There was enough means of games and sports entertainment in the society. Both men and women played chess and gambling. People were fond of seeing sheep and cocks fights. On the occasion of festival and celebration, women used to sing, dances and played several games using playing ball. Children had interest in playing with ball and hide and seek. Plays and games were considered to be means of recreation. Religious festival had a special place amongst the masses. Public showed special interest towards these festivals. They used to enjoy a lot being a part of it. Chariot race and chariot travel were more popular. Ladies too participated in Chariot travel. Prostitutes used to entertain the society by their singing and dance. Prostitutes were seen with respect in the society. Gupta Kings were fond of hunting. They used to go for hunting with full preparation. There was system of Seminars in the society. Seminar used to happen normally between people of similar level.

Family System—This era was of combined family system. Father was considered to be head of family property. But brothers and sons too had share in it. This period had Mitakshar system,(Patriarch)

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according to which, son had birth right in the ancestral property. Widows only got stipend for subsistence. Daughters did not have any share in father's property.

Condition of Women – Women's position was not satisfactory. Child marriage existed. In some Smriti books, it has been made compulsory for the fathers to marry their daughters before puberty. Those who did not do so, deserved going to hell. Gupta period Smriti Granth do not permit education for women. Still it appears that high class women received education. Girls living in ashrams studied history and Puran. They themselves composed verses. In Abhigyan Shakuntalam, Anusuya comprehends versed love request message of Shakuntala. The Great Poet Kalidas has also mentioned about expertise in fine art apart from other qualities of an ideal wife. Shankuntala's friend Anusuya was skilled in Painting and Yaksha's wife was skilled in playing harp. Amarkosh (a type of dictionary) mentions about women teachers (Upadhyaya and Upadhyayi) and about ladies imparting education on Vedic mantra. It is clear from Lalit Vistar that a royal girl called Gopa, had mastery in many subjects. Manu states that it is essential for a cultured civilian's wife to possess knowledge for keeping account of daily, monthly and yearly time periods. Women had right on property too.

Yagyavalkya has directed that in the absence of son and widow in a family, daughter can be heir. **Brihaspati** too has accepted her right as heir apparent. Analyst Vigyaneshwar too explained at least six types of women property – father, mother, brother and given by husband, in front of fire at the time of marriage as gift and dowry. Not only this, after marriage whatever was given to her during feet touching ceremony by her father-in-law or mother-in-law, too was woman's property. Besides family land, her expensive attire and ornaments, that she consumed herself, were also considered as property of woman. Veil system existed to some extent in gupt period. Ladies from elite families used to do Ghoonghat or Veil. Condition of widows continued to deteriorate. They not only had to lead life of celibacy but becoming 'Sati' was considered to be more superior. In some of the warrior clans of northern India, custom of widow becoming Sati (burning on husband's pyre) was quite rampant.

Prostitution – Mrichchhakatikam throws light on life of prostitutes. This book refers to brothel as residence of youth, people frequenting to such places were looked down upon. Glamour business of those prostitutes used to end, once they grew older. Hence, they used to start work as a kuttini. In a way, they worked as guide for new comers in prostitution and shared part of their earnings. Their major job was to push girls in distress towards prostitution and mislead young boys. Two remarkable books on the life and tricks used by Kuttani are 'kuttinimitam' and 'Duteekarma-Prakash'.

Public Life – In Gupta Age, masses were prosperous and happy. In different parts of the empire, many huge and prosperous towns were adding glory to the beauty of the empire. Population of the kingdom was increasing rapidly, whose main reason was based on comfortable lifestyle of masses, diet, residence and abundance of ornaments. Chinese traveller Fahien has applauded good conduct and ethical value of Indians. He writes "People dealt with each another very cordially. They lived a life of brotherhood." Except Chandaals, no one used meat; wine etc. Garlic and onion etc were also not consumed. Keeping Pig and cock was considered to be detestable. Only Antyaj and Chandaal indulged in these activities. Ethical sentiment was robust in the society. Wealthy people used to help poor with free hand and assisted in the making of temple, guest house, water arrangements etc and spent large sum of money. Rich people opened charitable dispensaries and eateries, where sick were treated and handicapped and hungry people were given food. In market, necessary goods were kept at stall for sale.

9.4 Religious Conditions

Vedic Religion – Gupta emperors were Vaishnav and extended their full support to Vedic religion from state, which resulted in promotion of Vedic religion in the state lying in the middle of Ganga-Yamuna and in Central India etc. In recent years, Vedic yagna gained prominence again. In Gupta period too, it continued. Kings from Nag, Vakatak, Gupta dynasties performed several Ashwamedha and other yagna, but popularity of Vedic religion certainly diminished a lot. Performing yagna was confined only

up to kings, lords and wealthy people. They were beyond the economic might of common public and they lost faith in it too. Smriti of this period clearly states that yagna should be done by only those, whose store carries resource sufficient for three years. General Public was inclining towards religion as propagated in Smriti. Thus, Vedic religion was advancing towards its downfall and later on, its importance further decreased.

Vaishnav – Due to Gupta rulers being follower of Vaishnav Bhagwat religion, this religion progressed by leaps and bounds under their protection. Many Vaishnav temples were built in this era. Religious sentiment and form of belief changed. Out of ten incarnations of Vishnu, worship of Varah and Krishna was practiced mainly in this period. Puran mentions about this incarnation that Varah saved earth at a time when it was quickly submerging in fast paced flow of doom. It appears that worship of this Varah incarnation gained prominence due to this religious saga only, because Gupta kings too rescued India like Varah incarnation from a situation similar to doom, which erupted due to consistent invasion of Dasyu and Malechha. Until this period, worship of Lord Rama as the incarnation of Lord Vishnu had not been started because we have not received any indication from the analysis of remains of this period about worship of Rama. Many rock inscriptions mention about worship of Krishna. This is true that like Krishna, worship of Rama too had not started so far. But thought about divine relation about grand and most pious character of Rama had started by this time. Still worship of Rama started in India after 6th century BC only.

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Did u know? Out of ten incarnations of Vishnu, worship of Varah and Krishna was practiced mainly in this period.

Shaiva Religion – Shaiva religion was quite popular in Gupta period. Ministers, Commanders and higher officials of Gupta Empire were Shaiva. Second Chandragupta's minister Veersen had built Shiva temple at Udaygiri. At the time of Kumargupt I, Dhruva Sharma was Shaiva, who donated to Kartikeya temple. "Namoh Mahadevo" word is inscribed in the Khoh inscription of Maharaja Hastin, who was knight of Gupta Empire. In Damodar inscriptions, we find mention of Agrahardan, for worshipping Shiva. There was a Shaiva sect called Maheshwar Vakatak in Mathura. Vakatak, Nal, Maitrik, Kadamb and Parivrajak kings were followers of Shaiva religion.

Shiva statues pertaining to Gupta period have been found. It appears that there was practice of worshipping one or four mouthed Shiva in this period. One mouthed Shivaling has been found in Bhumra and Khoh situated in the state of Nagod. Collection of statues pertaining to Gupta Age has been kept in Ajmer museum. There are plenty of four mouthed Ling and Shiva statues. From Karamdanda too, one Shivaling has been found. It was built by Prithvisen. Many signs of trident and Nandi have been found.

In Gupta period, Shakti (Devi or Deity) too was worshipped. In the course of time, Deity and Shiva worship combined and started happening together with each other. Shiva and Deity worship was done in both the forms-compassionate and dreadful. In the various forms of deity – Uma, Gauri, Parvati, Bhavani, Annapurna, Lalita etc were compassionate form and Chamunda, Durga, Kaalratri, Katyayini and Bhairavi form are dreadful. All forms of statues of deity have been found in various parts of India. Bengal was the main centre of Shakta sect.

Along with Shiva, Ganesh and Kartikeya were worshipped too. Ganesh and Kartikeya were sons of Shiva and Shakti (Parvati). Kartikeya was also called as Swami Mahasen. Ganesh too was worshiped. In the course of time, there developed a group of Ganesh followers. Many statues of Ganesh have been found in Paharpur, made up of rock and metal. Ganesh was a very popular God. He was considered to be destroyer of all miseries and harbinger of success. Not only different sects of Hindu religion, but also followers of atheist faiths like Buddhism and Jainism too worshipped them. Buddhists promoted Ganesh statue in Indo-Asia also.

Notes

Jain Religion—Through analysis of Gupta period inscriptions data, we come to know that followers of Vedic religion were quite large in number, there were many Baudha followers too, but in north India Jain religion follower were very few. On the one hand, due to strict behavioural mandate it could not attracts masses, on the other hand, to protect itself from characterless foreigners, Jain religion was slowly shifting towards south. Alike Vedic and Baudha religion in Jainism too, worship of statue of Tirthankar in the temple, recitation of hymns, pilgrimage, charity etc were practiced. From Skandgupt period inscription received from Deoria, we get to know that a person named Madra naming established five Jain Tirthankar Statues.

Surya (Sun) Worship—There were many Surya temples built in this period. First such Surya temple of has been found in Malwa and Mandsaur, second in Gwalior, third in Indore and fourth in Baghelkhand. Some statues of Surya have been found in Bengal.

Cobra and Yaksha Worship—In this period Cobra and Yaksha worship too was popular, but was confined to lower class people only.

Making of Temples—Temples were built at large scale in Gupta period. People used to worship in the temples and lectures and seminars too took place here. Due to temple establishment, art of architecture and Painting too progressed very much. Prayers (Kirtan) and dance were performed in these temples. Hence art of dance too developed. God's statues were installed in the temples. Statues were started being built. Hence their worship style became even more complexed. Awakening of God by melodious songs, putting beautiful clothes on them, performing Aarti(form of worship in which fire is used to please god) and offering Bhog(fruit, sweets etc offered to god first and then used by others) started taking place. Besides, this era saw the rise of group chanting of hymns in evening, meditation, fasting, Shraddh (paying tributes to people who have died) etc. In other words, by Gupta Age modern form of Sanatan religion had almost acquired its shape. Normal masses still worshipped snakes, trees and animals and practice of animal sacrifice continued.

Religions Harmony—Element of harmony has always been a characteristic of Indian life. In this period, we clearly witness this. Vaishnav, Shaiva, Baudha and Jain religion prospered together in this period. Most Gupta Kings were Vaishnav followers, but they respected Shaiva, Surya worshippers and Baudha and Jain followers equally. Not only this, all sects had freedom to worship and follow religious their own faith; rather there was no differentiation with respect to government jobs and charity on the basis of religion. Commander of Chandragupta Vikramaditya, Amarkardav was a Baudh. Samudragupta was a staunch Hindu but he gave responsibility of his son's education to a famous Baudha scholar Vasubandhu. Gupta Kings donated with free hands to famous Baudha Vihar of Nalanda and the institution flourished under their patronage. Other royal dynasties too followed the same policy.

9.5 Economical Conditions

India in Gupta regime progressed immensely in economic sector. There was law and order in the huge Empire of Guptas. Hence, agricultures, industry and trade and commerce flourished. Country was prosperous and people were happy and living comfortable lives. Following are the different aspects of economic life:—

Agriculture—By Gupta and post Gupta period, agriculture had reached its zenith. Its growth proliferated. Varahmihir has mentioned about three types of crops-summer (rabi), Autumn (kharif) and crops of normal time. Amarkosh too mentions about these crops viz; wheat, paddy, millet, sugarcane, pulse, beans, mustard, ginger, vegetables, black pepper, etc. There developed a variety of paddy that time viz; Nivar, shali and kalam. One crop of paddy used to be finished in 60 days. Rice produced in Magadha had nice fragrance. It was costly. It was consumed by higher class people. Apple, Grape, pomegranate etc, were also produced. Banana, mango, jack fruit and vine etc were also found in different parts of India. Saffron was produced in Datel (Afganistan) and Kashmir. In hot spice category, Black pepper, Cardamom, cloves etc were sown. These were majorly produced in the coastal parts of Pandyaadesh (modern Kerala).

For irrigation, they depended on rain. In the absence of rain, artificial irrigation was arranged. Lake, well, pond etc were used for irrigation. **Varahmihir** has given ample details on rains by his study of planets, based on astrology. For irrigation big artificial lakes were constructed. We get to know from Junagarh inscription of Skandgupt that Sudarshan Lake of Girnar (Saurashtra) was revived.

Available resources tell us that land was considered as individual property. Land which remained unused was considered to be state property. In many villages, there were some farmable pieces of land which were considered to be state property. King used to donate such land, gainer of such land became its owner. Landlords who could not cultivate themselves, used to give their land to farmer for farming. In such case, farmers used to get 33 to 50% of crop yield. Land value depended mainly on its fertility. Woods of Teak, Sandal and Ebony were found from forests.

Industry—Besides agriculture and animal husbandry, there were many types of industrial activities. Cotton weaving and cloth fabrication was undertaken in different parts of the country. Carpenter, Potter, blacksmith etc were always busy in their profession. Ornaments were made of pearls, gold and silver. Statues and pots of copper and bronze were made. Iron industry was most developed. Blacksmiths were highly skilled. Iron pillar near Delhi is a masterpiece example of the art. This is still free from rust even bearing centuries of sunshine and rain. Boat and ship were also made. Ivory was used to make a number of beautiful items.

Trader's corporation and artisan's shrenis that has been mentioned before continued to work up till this period. Their importance did not diminish, rather increased.¹ These institutions operated as banks. People deposited their money there and got regular interest from them. If any people from any particular corporation or Shrenis used to shift somewhere, even then people continued to have faith in them. Management of such institutions used to be in the hands of small committees, which comprised of four to five members and one chairman. State did not interfere in their activities. They made their own laws and by laws. Mutual conflicts of members were settled by their executive only. They did not need to go to state's court.

Town—In Gupta period, towns were major centres of trade and culture. Patliputra, Vaishali, Ujjaini, Dashpur, Bhrigukuch, Tamralipti were major amongst them. Fahien had described about grandiose of palace of Patliputra. Vaishali was the capital of Teer Bhukti (Tirhut). Fahien had visited this city. He writes that there was a Vihar in it, which was made by famous prostitute called, Amrapali due to her devotion towards Gautama Buddha for his dwelling.

In west India, Ujjaini was the famous most city. It appears from description of Mrichhakatikam that in Gupta period, this city was very prosperous. There existed many Vihar, temples, Ponds, well, yagna places, which added colours to its grandness. Town prostitute (Nagar Veshya) Vasantsena's palace was splendid. Raghuvansh (book) describes about palaces, Mahakal temple, Shipra River and many beautiful gardens of Ujjaini. Dashpur too was a famous city of west India. Mandsaur article has beautiful and comely description of it. Meghdoot also has mention of Dashpur. BhriguKuchcha (Bharauch) was the most famous port of the western coastline. As per Periplus, this city was famous centre for imports and exports. Tamralipti was the biggest port of eastern coastline. Paithan, Vidisha, Prayag, Varanasi, Gaya, Kaushambi, Mathura, Peshawar etc were major cities of this period.

1. "The mention in an inscription of the corporation of guild presidents, traders and chiefs of groups of artisans and of kindred bodies, etc provides interest in glimpses in the economic organization of the Gupta period. Corporate activity seems to have been the outstanding feature of all the three aspects of national life, social, political and economic."

— R.N. Dandekar: *A History of The Guptas*, P 195

Notes



Task

Discuss in detail economic condition of society during Gupta period.

Trade—Trade had developed quite well prior to Guptas, which resulted in the increase in number of cities and its prosperity too. Preliminary period of Guptas saw the continuation of same growth. Not only Intra-country and with West Asia, but trade was also happening with South-east Asia. Many traders started going abroad along with goods and sold at huge profit. With the rise of trade, sea travelling and ship-building knowledge also increased. Ships bigger than before were being built now and western and eastern coast Sea Ports started witnessing more ship traffic than before.

Tamralipti (Tamluk) port situated in the delta of the Ganges was majorly used for trading with **Suvarna Bhumi** (Burma), **Yawadweep** (Java) and **Kamboj** (Kampuchea) countries of south East Asia. Bharauch, Sopara and Kalyan were main ports at western coastline and from there too, ships were sent to south-east Asia. Along with trade, Indian religion and culture—Baudha religion, Hindu religion, Sanskrit language, art and other forms of Indian culture reached south-east Asia. People of South-east Asia liked some aspects of Indian Culture and adopted them. But they continued to practice their own tradition and culture as well. Even today, there are many similarities between cultures of India and South-east.

Calicut and Cochin ports of Malabar Coast were used to ship Indian goods to Africa, Arab, Iran and Mediterranean Countries. Groups of traders and religious Promoters too used to go to Central Asia and China through land route. Commodities of domestic trade were garments, foods items, spices, salt and expensive metals. Towns like Bharauch, Ujjaini, Paithan, Vidisha, Tamralipti, Prayag, Varanasi, Gaya, Vaishali, Kaushambi, Mathura, Peshawar, etc city were connected with each other. They were centres of trade. Goods were supplied through roads and rivers both. Goods were carried by bullock carts and at the back of animals. Big boats were built. In Gupta period, water ways was the most used mode of transport. Rivers were used for domestic trade, in which all types of big or small boats used to operate. Boats used to float in rivers like Sindhu, Ravi, Chenab, Ganga, Yamuna, Saryu etc. Kalidas has written that groups of traders moved on mountains in a way as if they were their homes, floated on rivers in a way as if they were well and passed through forests as if they were gardens.¹ Huge water Ships used to move in the sea and ocean. Indian traders could go to countries like Bali, Sumatra, Java, Suvarna bhumi, through sea route. Tamralipti was the biggest port of Bengal. This was used for trading with China, Lanka, Java, and Sumatra. There were many good ports at the banks of Krishna and Godavari rivers, which were used to trade with groups of eastern islands and china. Kalyan, Chola, Bharauch and Kambe were main ports of south and Gujarat. Valuable stone, clothes, perfumed items, spices, medicine, indigo; coconut, ivory etc were exported. Gold, Silver, Copper, Tin, glass, silk, camphor, coral, date (palm fruit), horses etc were imported. Luxury goods as exported from Bhrigukuch (Bharauch) port had great demand in Rome. Their markets were flooded with Indian silk, gems, pearl. **Plini** expressed greatest dissatisfaction and anger on his countrymen as, due to their luxurious lifestyle, national wealth is being shifted to India. As per him, approximately five Crore coins used to come to India every year.

But in the final phase of Gupta regime, there was a decline in trade in north India. Towns situated in the plain of Ganges reveal its symptoms. A partial reason was the instability in Central Asia, caused by the fear of invasion from Hoons. . Another reason can be the changes in the basin of Ganga due to flood and change in river routes.

Barter system was used for buying and selling. Kaudi (local coin) was used in purchase of daily needs. Gupta Kings issued different types of gold, silver and copper coins. This shows their luxury and prosperity.

1. "The high standard of living and luxury of town life, to which the literary records of the Gupta age bear witness, tell their own tale of economic prosperity, at least among the upper classes of the people".

— R.C. Majumdar

9.6 Education and Literature

Notes

There was great amount of development in the field of education and literature also in Gupta regime. Many historians have compared literary prosperity of Gupta Age with Periclean age of Athens history and with Elizabethan age of English literature history.¹

Although at that point of time, there were no government run academic institutions. Gurus (teacher) used to impart education personally to pupils at their homes only. Famous Acharyas used to impart education in their ashrams. Patliputra, Mathura, Ujjain, Ajodhya, Varanasi, Nasik, Vastgulum and Vallabhi were major centres of education. At that period, Nalanda University in Bihar was emerging. Vallabhi in Saurashtra was also an important academic institution. In south India, Kanchi was the centre of education, where both Hindu and Buddhist religion were taught. Buddhist Vihar too promoted education. Education was more prevalent in Brahman community. Exorcist and commercial education were imparted to sculptures and artisans. In this period, Puran, Smriti, Epic, Logic, Philosophy, Justice System, Grammar etc were studied extensively. Subjects like Astrology, Mathematics and Ayurved were taught too. There was lack of education among Shudra and untouchables. For preliminary education there were schools in villages which were called Lipishala.

Literature— Sanskrit literature flourished in this era. Sanskrit was used in rock inscription, Pillar inscription; charity inscription etc. Sanskrit literature had the honour of becoming the national language. Even Buddhist and Jain accepted Sanskrit and rejected Prakrit and Pali. As a result, Sanskrit got a fresh lease of life and flourished as much as it never did before. In fact, Gupta kings patronized many scholars and poets in their Court. Some rulers were scholars themselves. Samudragupt had tremendous poetic and artistic talent.

In the court of Chandragupta Vikramaditya, Navratna (nine gems) were patronized. Kalidas amongst them was the brightest star, who is a wonderful legend of literature, not only for India, but globally. He was unmatched play writer and poet of Sanskrit. Among famous books of **Kalidas** were 'Kumarsambhav' and 'Raghuvansh'—two epics, 'Abhigyanashakuntalam', 'Vikramorvashiyam', 'Malvikagnimitra'—three plays, 'Meghdoot' and 'Ritusanhar'—two lyrical epics.

The tradition of Epic writing which started from Ramayana and Mahabharata, Kalidas brought it to its apex. By making spiritual and social ideals of Hindu's life as the base of his epic, he has narrated them in an exemplary way. Among other great poets, **Vatsabhatti** was one, who composed 'Ravana vadh' in which; every verse (Shlokas) mentioned explains rules of Sanskrit grammar. **Dandi** composed 'Dashkumarcharitam' and 'Ritigrantha kavyadarsh'. **Veersen Sav** was the famous poet and grammar expert during Chandragupt II. The writer of 'Kiratarjuniyam', **Bharvi** too was a very talented poet of this period. Scholars are of the view that famous poet **Bhartrihari** too belonged to same period, whose three epics are incomparable—'Shringar Shatak', 'Vairagya Shatak' and 'Neeti Shatak'. Among other poets of this period, mentionable are Bhatrigupt, Saumilla and kulputra. Mamatta composer of "Kavyalankar" was the asset of that period.

This period is also famous for Sanskrit plays. Besides Kalidas, **Shudrak** wrote 'Mrichhakatikam'. **Vishakhadatt's** 'Mudrarakshas' and 'Devi Chandraguptam' are famous. The writer of 'Swapanvasvadatta', **Bhas**, the famous dramatist and play writer, too belonged to this period.

'Nitisar' of Kamandak is one of the best book in the category of Niti Granth (code of conduct) of this period. This period saw composition of Smriti Granth or Law Granth too. Out of them, Narad Smriti, Katyayan Smriti, Brihaspati Smriti, Parashar Smriti, Yagyavalkya Smriti etc are famous.

Dictionary and Grammar too were composed in this period. **Amar Singh** wrote 'Amarkosh' in this period only. Grammar of Panini, Katyayan and Patanjali were famous, but 'Chandra Vyakaran (grammar) composed by a Buddhist monk Chandragopi became most popular.

1. Gupta period is the annals of classical India, almost what Periclean age in the history of Greece.

— Barnett

Notes

In this period, two story books, 'Panchatantra' and 'Hitopadesh' were also composed. Panchatantra originally was written by **Vishnu Sharma**. These books impart moral and conduct training with help of different stories in a very entertaining manner.

In Gupta Period, different religion heads and propagators presented new logic and philosophical ideas for the sake of mutual debate and thinking. This helped in the growth of Brahman, Jain and Baudha Philosophy and many books were composed on all three religious philosophies.

Shawar Swami wrote "Shawar bhashya" approximately in year 300 on Mimansa Darshan (theoretical philosophy). Ishwar Krishna wrote book called 'Sankhyakarika', on Sankhya system (statistics). On yoga Darshan (yogic philosophy), **Acharya Vyas** composed 'Vyas Bhashya'. **Vatsayayan** wrote on "Nyaya Bhashya" on Justice System.

In Gupta period, Baudh philosophical literature also progressed. "Chatuh Shatak" of **Arya Dev**, "Yogachar Bhumi Shastra" and 'Mahayansutralankar' of **Aasang** and many books by Vasubandhu- 'Abhidharma Kosh' 'Vinshtika' 'Trinshtika' were written. **Dignath** was the most famous Baudh writer, whose two famous compositions are – 'Praman Samuchya' and 'Nyayamukh'. **Budhghosh** wrote many thesis and articles on Tripitak.

In this period, Jain literature too developed. Jain Acharya siddhasen wrote many books on judicial philosophy; his famous book is 'Nyayavatar'. **Bhadrabahu II** wrote thesis and articles on ancient Jain books and Presented Philosophical thoughts in a new style. Acharya Umaswami, Jin Chandramani, and Devnandani etc were other famous scholars.

In this period, to make Hindu religious literature more popular, Brahman spiritual acharyas recomposed many religious books by amending them. As a result, thesis and articles on many Smriti and aphorism (sutra). Epics like Puran, Mahabharata and Ramayana were given final touch in this era only. In this period, literature in southern India too progressed. Due to such development in various fields of literature, this period is called the "Augustan Period" of India.

Science—In Gupta Age, there was specific development in the field of science. Astronomy, Medical Science and Mathematics saw many new inventions. Among them, Varahmihir, Aryabhata, Nagarjuna, Vagbhata-I are worth mentioning. **Varahmihir** was greatest scholar of astrology. His two famous books are 'Vrihatsanhita' and 'Panchsiddhantika'. Vrihatsanhita analyses about Astrology, Architecture (Vastu) and art of Carving. Panchsiddhdantika promulgates five principles of Astrology (Paitamah theory, Vashishtha theory, Surya theory, polish theory and Romak theory). **Aryabhata** was a great mathematician. His famous book is 'Aryabhattiyam'. He explained about Decimal, Pi (ratio of diameter of circle and circumference) eclipse etc. He said that there is no role of Rahu and Ketu in eclipse. It is the result of sun and moon's shadow on earth. He only told it for the first time that earth moves on her axis and revolves around the sun. **Nagarjuna** was a highly accomplished doctor. He is considered to be the Acharya (father) of chemistry. He invented a new type of treatment—Ras Chikitsa (liquid treatment). He proved that the Powder (bhasma) of Iron, Copper, Gold, Silver etc metals, can be used to treat incurable diseases. He only invented Mercury. **Vagbhata** was a high class Ayurved expert and doctor. He composed a book called "Ashtangasangrah", which is a summary of Charaksanhita and Sushrutsanhita.

9.7 Art

In Gupta period art developed a lot. In the words of **Dr. V. S. Agarwal**, "Visible artistic work of creation provided stability to the glory of Gupta period."¹ We find vigour, patience and technological finesse in art of Gupta period. In the words of **Dr. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar**, "In general a high class idol,

1. "The glories of Gupta age proper have been made permanent through the visible creations of its art."
—V.S. Agarwal

charm and beauty element is found in Gupta art. "Gupta period art does not have foreign effect and it is developed purely as indigenous. It neither has Gandhar style Indian subject nor Greek touches. Gupta Age art is immune from influence of Greek, Kushan, Sathian foreign art. Another characteristic of this period art is its simplicity. Gupta period statues neither have loads of clothes and ornaments nor a curve shaped body. Third characteristic is artist's beauty sense. Gupta Age artists have manufactured transparent clothes with such finesse that it exhibits natural beauty and serenity. Another specialty is spirituality. For example, statue of Mahatma Buddha at Sarnath in sitting position in a very calm and composed mood, depicts spirituality. Another specialty is nobility and chastity. As a result, in this period making of nude statues was almost closed. Another characteristic is equal proportion and equilibrium. Statues of this period have well measured parts, neither maximization nor minimization.

Different constituents of Gupta Age's art are following: –

Architecture – In this era, many small temples of god and goddess were made from stone, which were used only to install the statues. There were no large hall to sit for devotees. Initially, its roof were flat but later on, dome were started being built on the top. On the pillars of entrance and entry frame, magnificent art used to be engraved. A number of those temples still exist. For example Vishnu's temple in Devgarh district of Jhansi, whose 12 metre tall dome is the most ancient in India. Shiva temple of Bhumra (Madhya's Pradesh), Parvati Mandir of Nachna Kuthar (Madhya Pradesh), Bheetar Gaon's (Kanpur) temple, Bijapur's Ahol temple, Vishnu temple of Udaygiri (Vidisha), and Sun temple of Chittore and Mandu.

In this period, many Vihar, Stupa and Chaitya of Baudha religion were built. In Sarnath remains of many Gupta Age Baudha Vihar have been found. Stupa of Rajgriha, Baudha Vihar and Stupa of Jauliyian and Pushklavati and Baudha temple of Sanchi and Bodh Gaya also belong to Gupta period.

In the hills of Udaygiri, statues of many Hindu gods and goddess have been engraved after cutting many Shaiva and Vaishnav caves. Caves of Ajanta, Alora (Maharashtra), Bagh (Madhya-Pradesh), Vihar, Chaitya and Stupas have built by cutting hills. Cave number 16, 17, 19 of Ajanta, present masterpiece work of art of Gupta Period. South India's Bhogalrajputam and Akhann-Madann caves were also built in Gupta Period. In that period, rock pillar and flag pillar were also constructed. Unfortunately, in the field of architecture, not much remains of Gupta period achievement are available.

Painting – In Gupta period, painting developed to a great extent. In the words of **Dr. Vasudev Agarwal**, "The art of painting reached its perfection in the Gupta age."² The great poet **Kalidas** used word (post)"Chitracharya", for imparting education on painting. Vatsayayan has counted painting amongst one of the 64 art forms. In his book 'Kamsutra' he has mentioned six parts of art form – Bhed, Pramaan Bhav, Lavanya Yojan, Sadrishya and Vanika bhang.

Ajanta and Bagh's paintings are marvelous example of Gupta Period painting. In the words of famous painter **Rathenstein**, "On hundreds of walls and pillars we see a vast drama that is enacted by princes, sages, actors and different types of males and females in different backgrounds settings." In words of **Dr. Agarwal**, "Assurance and delicacy of lines, brilliance of colours, richness of expression along with buoyant feelings and pulsating life have rendered this art all time supreme."³ Ajanta is situated 4 miles south-west from Fardapur village, 35 km from Jalgaon station. 29 rock caves have been built by carving rocks. Pillar inscriptions of 10th cave and wall paintings of 16th and 17th caves belong to Gupta period. Pictures and attires of men and women found on pillars of 10th cave seem to be influenced from Gandhar art. In 16th and 17th caves, subject matter is depicted through pictures. Fruit,

1. In general, a sublime idealism combined with a highly developed sense of rhythm and beauty characterizes the Gupta Sculpture. – R.C. Majumdar
2. The art of painting reached its perfection in the Gupta age. – V.S. Agarwal
3. The assurance and delicacy of lines, the brilliance of colors, the richness of expression with buoyant feelings and pulsating life have rendered this art supreme for all time. – Dr. Agrawal

Notes

leaves, animal, birds etc have been engraved as ornamentation. In 16th cave, there is a wall painting of a dying princess. This picture is very natural. Relatives encompassing her appear to be helpless and sombre. This picture is a best example of expressive or emotive style. Pictures of 17th cave are descriptive and various stories have been shown through pictures. These pictures are very energetic, lively and natural. It shows Lord Buddha in very meditative posture. Among the caves, pictures of Mata (mother) and Putra (son) are very famous. In this picture, Gautama Buddha's wife Yashodhara has been shown dedicating her son Rahul, to her husband. It depicts mother's love and affection for son. In another picture of this cave, one emperor has been depicted listening very attentively to a golden royal swan. In another pictures of 17th cave, Mahabhinishkraman of Gautama Buddha has been portrayed. This is very natural.

Bagh's paintings too are wonderful. Bagh is a small village near Gwalior. Here caves are built by carving rocks of Vindhya Mountain. Internal wall pictures are of Gupta period. Ajanta Pictures are majorly associated with religious topic, but Bagh picture are inspired from physical life of humans. We get to know about contemporary dress style, hairstyle and cosmetic style. One picture show women dancing and singing. Main characteristic of Bagh painting is that the imagination to make these pictures were done at one time only, hence these pictures are exhibit uniformity in front of viewers.

Sculpture – Biggest contribution of this period are statues of Hindu, Jain, and Buddha. Many statues of Buddha and Bodhisattva were built Sarnath, Mathura and Patliputra. Copper and bronze statue were also made. Many events from the life of Buddha have been engraved on the rock pillars here.

Statues of Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Parvati were also built in this period. Artist engraved many scripture stories relating to incarnation of Vishnu and Shiva on rocks viz; Krishnaleela (childhood miracles of Krishna) in Devgarh temple, Krishna tour of Gokul, execution of Kans, Krishna-Sudama meeting, Ramleela scenes, Ram's exile etc. In Rajshahi district of Bengal, many portrayals relating to Krishna Leela have been found in excavation.

From Mathura and Gorakhpur, we get statues of Jain Tirthankar of that period. Images were also made from clay and spices. Statues of this age are totally Indian in terms of Shape, Gesture and Posture and Expression.

Metal Art – In this art, many metals were melted and mixed and thus many objects and statues were made. Making of copper statues was in full swing. Grand statue of Buddha from Sultanganj (Bihar), 80 feet high bronze statue of Buddha in Nalanda and pit iron pillar of Mehrauli are the best examples of Gupta age metal art.

Music, Dance and Art of Acting – Gupta King themselves were music lovers and liberally protected it. It is known from Prayag Prashasti that Samudragupt was even superior in playing harp as compared to Narad and Tumburu. Both men and women used to sing, dance and played cymbal clarion, flute and various other instruments. Theatre and drama art had also developed.

Coin Art – Many gold and silver coins of true Indian style were casted during Gupta age. On these coins, pictures of Gupta kings, goddess Laxmi, Garudahwaj and lion are embossed. They also depict glorious stories of Gupta Kings.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. In Gupta period, Vaishnav temples were not built.
9. Navratna (nine gems) were patronized in the court of Chandragupta Vikramaditya.
10. Varahmihir was the greatest scholar of astronomy.
11. In Gupta period, child marriage was not in practice.

Thus, in Gupta period Indian society developed a lot in the field of art, religion, philosophy, literature, science. This is the reason that, this era is known as the Golden era.

Golden Era- In Indian history, Gupta period is addresses as Golden age. History refers to Golden era as a period, in which state and public's all around development takes place. Undoubtedly, under Gupta regime India progressed multi dimensionally and our heads held high in front of other nations. In this period social, political, economical, religious and cultural development took place and masses grew spiritually, mentally and physically. **Dr. Smith states-** "In the history of Hindu India, period of Gupta Kings presents a more noble and satisfactory picture as compared to any other dynasty regime. Literature, Art and Science developed much more than normal and sequential changes were brought about in the religion without any suppression or tyranny."

Following are the major reasons for calling Gupta period as Golden Period –

Era of great Emperors – From political point of view, Gupta age was era of great people. Many great and meritorious rulers were born in this period, who exhibited extra-ordinary talent. Valiant and courageous rulers like Samudragupta, Chandragupta II, Skandgupt etc were born in this era only. These great personalities not only established huge empire but organized it too. They conquered entire India and drove out foreigners from India. In their reign, foreign power did not get chance to set foot in India and India remained free in their period. From administration and all-round development perspective too, Gupta kings were outstanding. Gupta kings always took care of their people and subject.

Quality of Political Unity – After the death of Asoka, India's unity had collapsed and country got divided into many smaller parts. Gupta kings reinstated this disappeared political unity and organized the county. Gupta kings adopted the policy of victory and knitted entire India in one sovereign powerful entity; by dint of their magical gallantry and wonderful valour, chained India with singular political control. Singular chain of command is the sign of greatness of Gupta kings. Thus, from political unity point of view, Gupta age was phenomenal.

Era of Peace and Harmony – Gupta period is considered as the age of peace and harmony in Indian history. This was such an age, in which masses got best opportunity for their upliftment. Samudragupt and Chandragupta II established such a huge, systematic and well organized administration that it continued for countries. Though criminal justice system was not as harsh as Maurya period, but adequate judicial system was in place. By arranging maximum means of transport, Gupta kings facilitated flourishing of trade. Efforts for the development of mines and forests and agriculture were made and proper irrigation system was put in place by constructing ponds and water reservoirs.

State also took initiative for the moral and spiritual development of the masses. Efforts were made to ensure assistance is made available for poor and destitute. Local institutions had adequate freedom. Full encouragement was provided to Autonomous style of administration. This is why, it is considered as the Golden age.

Era of Literature Growth – Gupta period is also important from the perspective of upliftment of literature. In this period, literature developed tremendously. Several Gupta kings were themselves scholar and writer and respected other scholars and artists. Samudra gupt's name is worth mentioning in this regard. He was a great lover of epic and music. His courtier poet Harishen was a great scholar. His Prayag situated Prashasti is a great prayer creation in Sanskrit language. Veersen, minister of Chandragupta II, too was a great scholar. Vasubandhu and Dingnag were the famous Baudha scholars of this time and they used to write in Sanskrit only.

Chandragupta II was also a lover of knowledge and scholars. As per saying, his court was glorified by nine great scholars. They were famous as Navratna (Nine Gems). All names are not knows correctly, but Kalidas was on top of the chart of all. He had unmatched ability in poetry and drama. He commands similar stature in Sanskrit literature what Shakespeare commands in English literature.

In the field of Sanskrit literature, Abhigyanshakuntalam holds a specific position. Is contains love story of Dushyant and Shakuntala. Dushyant was the son of a king and Shakuntala was the daughter

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of a fairy. This has been translated in almost all civilized languages of the world. Scholars from and outside country, have admired and applauded it full heartedly. In the words of one Indian scholar, "Beautiful and fascinating imagination of a soft and gentle hearted forest dweller girl like Shakuntala has never been penned by any human being." In the words of a German great poet, "Shakuntala is such a creation that combines a bud in form of love, which was born in youth with fruit in form of expression which originated in mature age. It makes earth meet heaven." **Meghdoot** also is a masterpiece on Birah (separation). Other creations of **Kalidas** are also unique in its field.

Besides Kalidas, there were many more famous dramatist and creative writers. Shudrak composed *Mrichhakatikam* and Vishakhadatt composed *Mudrarakshas* and *Devichandraguptam*. Bhatti presented great epic called *Ravana Vadh*. In the field of prose, **Vasubandhu** wrote *Vasavdattam* and **Baan** admired this book very much. *Panchatantra* is also remarkable. It tried to impart education by way of storytelling. It has been translated in many languages of the world. Arthur Rider, a western scholar considers *Panchatantra* as world's best story collection.

Age of Scientific Advancement—Gupta period witnessed growth of science as well. Mathematics, Astrology, Medicine, Chemistry and Metallurgy progressed quite well. There are proofs available which hint that geometry was in practice in this age. Decimal fraction was invented in this period only. Scholar named **Aryabhata** composed "*Aryabhatayam*" in this period only, which had analysis of Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry, all three. Astrology too progressed a lot in this age. Aryabhata was a great astrologer of this period. He refuted the concept of Puran and other articles that eclipse occurs due to Rahu-Ketu and proved that eclipse is caused due to moon coming in between sun and earth. **Aryabhata** also proved the fact that earth rotates at its axis. **Varahmihir** was another prestigious and famous astrologer. Medicine also progressed in this period and adequate arrangement of dispensaries were done in big cities. Charak and Sushrut were famous Vaidyas (medical counselor/doctor) of this period.

Apex period for rise of Art—In Gupta period Indian art developed very much. Architecture, sculpture, statue making, music etc developed sufficiently in Gupta Period. Paintings of Ajanta caves, Baudha and Hindu statues, temple, Vihar, Chaitya, and Stupa are the strongest evidence of this age art marvel. Many temples made up of rocks and clay and their remains exist even now. Among them, Vishnu temple in Jabalpur district, Shiva temple of Nagod, Parvati temple near Ajaygarh, Dashavatar temple of Devgarh and Bheetargaon Jain temple in Kanpur district are very famous. Bheetargaon's temple is made up of bricks; Hindu mythological scenes are portrayed on its walls. In the history of India sculpture, this temple has an important place, especially for its arch. Roofs of this period's temples were generally plain and there used to be entrance in front of them. By the end of this age, tradition of making vertex on the temples had begun. Vertex of Devgarh's Dashavtar temple was almost 40 feet high. Later on, this style developed even better.

Art of making Vihar and Chaitya by cutting rocks and stones had become old in India. In this period it developed even more. Ajanta, Alora and Bagh's Cave Vihar had been dug in this age only. With the help of chisel and hammer, making beautiful caves by cutting huge rocks seemed to be work of supernatural artistic ability.

Age of Protection for Vedic civilization and culture—Gupta kings were patronizer of Vedic civilization. They treated Arya civilization with great respect and remained in pursuit of its upliftment. At that time, Vedic religion had declined badly. Gupta kings rejuvenated it by adopting it. By doing Ashwamedha Yagna, they established the glory of Vedic religion again. A number of Shiva and Vishnu temple were built in this age. By giving donations to Brahmans and respecting them, Gupta Kings re-established the glory of Varna Ashram religion (class based social system). Along with Vedic religion, Sanskrit developed too. Sanskrit too regained its lost glory. Now Buddhist and Jain followers too started composing their books in Sanskrit. Thus, Vedic civilizations and culture got full sufficient opportunity for their advancement under the patronage of Gupta Kingdom.

Age of Religious Tolerance—it is said that in Indian history, Gupta Age was the era of religious tolerance, generosity and sovereignty. Followers of different religions lived in the country, but there was

no violence ever in the name of religion and kings followed policy of religions tolerance. Gupta's Age was the era of revival of Hindu religion. Generally all the kings of that time followed one or the other religion. In such situation, had Gupta kings wanted, they could have uprooted Baudha religion totally. But he did not do so, and he exhibited example of unexceptional religious tolerance. In their time, both Baudha and Jain religion were given ample opportunity of growth along with Hindu religion. All three religions were running concurrently at that point of time in India. Kashmir, Punjab and Afghanistan were main centre of Buddhism. Baudha religion was still popular at many places in India and there was no decrease in number of their followers. There is no any proof till date in the history, that any type of discrimination or suppression in the name of religion was practiced by Gupta kings against Buddhism. On the contrary, kings, merchants, association of artisan etc used to donate heavily to Baudha Vihar and helped the monks. Temples, Vihar and caves built at places like Kund Mahar, Bedsa Kanher, Janhar, Ajanta, Alora, etc used to receive high amount of donations. Kanchi in Tamilnadu was the main centre of Buddhism.

Conduct of Gupta kings with Jain followers too has been commendable. A huge Jain congregation took place in this period in Vallabhi, in which many exegesis and stanzas of Jain scriptures were written in Sanskrit. Although there was tough competition among Jain, Baudh and Hindu followers, yet there was environment of religious tolerance and harmony everywhere.

Age of expansion of Indian Civilization and Culture in foreign land—Gupta period will remain important in history due to its foreign contacts. The rise in level of Interaction with external world experienced in this period was never before. Merger of Gujarat and Saurashtra into Gupta Empire opened gate for commercial interaction with European countries. Ambassadors of Gupta kingdom used to receive lots of respected in those countries. Due to this consistent contact, cultural thought were also exchanged and cultural upliftment got facilitated. Indian culture expanded in China, central Asia, Java, Sumatra, Indochina, Borneo etc. Influence of Hindu and Baudha religion remained there for centuries. Even today we find millions of Baudha followers in these countries, whose customs, traditions; festivals depict a blend of Indianness.

Review—Thus, there was no one sector in this period, which did not see its progress less than apex. Literature, art, science, religion, society, culture, trade, industries, agriculture, administrative system and foreign contacts etc; in all these fields historical advancement was registered. Liberal approach, love for art and protection of culture made its talent grow multi dimensionally. These are the reasons, due to which, Gupta period is called Golden Age in Indian history.

But there are some factors which lessen the importance of that era. Form of society, economy, administration and military was feudalistic. In view of several historians, period of Kushan was more prosperous than Gupta period. Secondly, Gupta period prosperity was confined to only northern part of India. We see progress in southern part of India post Gupta period. This is true that Gupta period was the period of rejuvenation of Hindu religion, but at the same time it was also the period of decline for Buddhism. Hence, it would be better to call Gupta period as progressive period and not Golden period. Any case, Golden period is only a mythological thought.

9.8 Summary

Criminal justice system of Gupta Kings was not harsh. Death punishment was not given to anybody. Traitor and repeat offenders as regards theft were amputated from hands. Normally, convicts were awarded economic fine. The amount of fine was decided by the judge depending upon economic status of the culprit. As per Fahien, there were hardly any crime. Gupta kings were very liberal regarding justice. They pardoned all types of convicts once they appealed after being sentenced from courts. Even Gruesome crimes were pardoned in case of mercy petition.

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9.9 Keywords

1. **Currency** – Coin.
2. **Trade** – Business.

9.10 Review Questions

1. Describe political condition of Gupta period.
2. Gupta period will remain important due to its foreign contact, review this statement.
3. Women's condition was not satisfactory, explain.

Answers: Self Assessment

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Vishakhdatt | 2. Ranbhandagarik | 3. Saurashtra (Girnar) |
| 4. (a) | 5. (b) | 6. (c) |
| 7. (a) | 8. False | 9. True |
| 10. False | 11. False | |

9.11 Further Readings



Books

1. History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
2. History of Ancient India – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
3. History of Ancient India a New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
4. Social and Economical History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and Publishers.*
5. History of Ancient India – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyananda Publication.*

Unit-10: Religious Movements

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

10.1 Nature of Religious Movement

10.2 Success of Religious Movement

10.3 Summary

10.4 Keywords

10.5 Review Questions

10.6 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To understand the cause of nature of religious movement and success.
- To know about comes of religious movement did in India.
- To know about changes in society due to religious movement.

Introduction

In the sixth century B.C., several (62) religious sects came up in the Central Ganga Valley region of North-East India. The effect of many views and Philosophy took the form of intellectual revolution. The followers of different opinions used to publicize their philosophy among the masses and opposed to one another's philosophy. Magadh was the centre of these intellectual activities. It is not causal that here in this period, on one hand a vast empire was being established and on the other hand religious intellectual movements were contradicting against old life philosophy. It is not of less importance that proofs of such types of intellectual movements are also found in other countries. In China, Iran and Greece challenge to ancient assumptions were given by Confucius, Jurthrustra and Pythagoras respectively.

10.1 Nature of Religious Movement

In India, there were several direct and indirect causes of this religious movement which were placed in the contemporary social and economic changes. Due to these changes, the religious and social beliefs of ancient Vedic traditions and several elements of life style remained conservative, which appeared as obstacle in social development. Amongst the various religions being prevalent in the 6th

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Century B.C., only Jainism and Buddhism religions gained importance. These religious sects attacked the various demerits of ancient Vedic Brahmin religion. Therefore, these religions are also called reformatory movement which will be discussed later. What were the cause of rise of these sects and what was the form of movements operated by them, for its complete knowledge, it is essential that first we understand through and through social and economic change and their physical perspective.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. People responsible for giving challenge to old beliefs in Iran and Greece were
2. It is mentioned in that with the aid of Yagna fire Vedic people should move ahead by burning forests.
3. In Vedic books particularly cattle killing has been condemned.

In Post-Vedic period sacrificial intensive Vedic religion in its original form started expanding towards north east of Kuru Panchal Pradesh. It was not only an expansion of religion but also a new technique of production expansion and development. It has mentioned clearly in Shatapath Brahman that by medium of sacrificial fire burning forest, Vedic people marched ahead. In fact it was process of making forest land agricultural by burning forests and cutting trees. The cleanliness of forest really was a very tough task. The use of iron played a historic role in this task. Iron (i.e., weapons of iron) was being used earlier in wars, but later on it was started being used as an agricultural tool. With the use of this strong metal in both war and agriculture some fundamental changes started coming up. The rise of a new armed and powerful Kshatriya class took place, which by establishing its ownership on the relatively weak people or class, was capable of deploying them in both war and agriculture. On the other hand in agriculture too revolutionary results started coming out. Clearing of forests became easier. Due to intensive plugging by iron cutler increased yield was natural. Less labour caused much production. An historical event paved the path of extensive social change.



Notes Amongst the various religions being prevalent in the 6th Century B.C., only Jainism and Buddhism religions gained importance.

Based on the iron technique, the new agriculture system got production surplus. It proved helpful in big town's creation and their existence. New production technique had revolutionary effect on North East India's old tribal life style. In these regions tribes produced scattered populated crops. They kept cattle only for non vegetarian diet, not for milk or cultivation. It is clear that their production system and life style was much backward in comparison to Vedic Aryans.

In Kuru Panchal Pradesh rather development in agriculture for non-vegetarian animal killing was continuing. Due to sacrificial rule tradition animal killing was especially in practice. But in new agriculture system for cultivation, the requirement of more cattle started being felt. People started feeling the need of cattles safety. Animal sacrifice whether in Vedic books or tribal communities of north-east, had now become unnecessary conservation. Vedic books, specially in Upanishad – animal killing has been condemned and preaching of non-violence has been given but these preachings are not so strong as those found in Buddhist books in which cattle have been referred as happiness givers (Sukhda) and crops giver (Annada). Besides development of agriculture, increased use of iron tools caused many crafts and industry development. As a result adequate development of organization took place, additionally process of urbanization stated in North-east India. In Pali books, the description of development of several cities in those days, in middle Ganga Valley can be found. Among them

Champa, Rajgrih, Vaishali, Varanasi, Kaushambi, Kushinagar, Shravasti and Patliputra were important. Between 600 B.C. to 300 B.C., proof of existence of 60 cities in entire country can be found. In cities mainly craftsmen and petty traders used to live. In this period, due to the use of coins trade extended to a great extent. Due to radical development in agriculture and trade, traditional values of tribal life started being broken. Ruling class and businessmen became more and more rich. Private property concept became rigid and it got social confirmation. The statement of Mr. Kaushambee is true that in the Ganga Valley existence of new class is non-controversial. Within the tribes, instead of new Vedic pastoral class of Vaishyas, now such farmers had come for which tribes had no importance. Rich businessmen (Shreshthi and Grihpati) were important in the society due to their property. Now cattle were not the only unit of property. The accumulation of property could be done in form of trade, production and agriculture. It is very natural that consequently poverty also increased. According to Buddhist books without acquiring wealth manifestation of poverty occurs. Due to poverty theft, lie, violence, hatred, cruelty etc occurs. To resolve this, Baudh preaching was to provide seeds and other facility to peasants, wealth to traders and appropriate wages to labour.

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It is clear from observation of this physical changing background that in Kuru Panchal region in practice Vedic culture's many elements had become worthless because they were appearing as obstacles in social development. Due to this reason North-Eastern India's old tribal life had been not suitable for new social and economic format. But the roots of developing Vedic culture in Western Ganga Valley were very strong because of being more organized. Many factors of Vedic culture had reached in the east such as caste system, sacrificial, priest's superiority related concept and Vedism. In North-East India religious movement made these factors its strike point.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Vedic Mantras are considered to be God's Statement, they cannot be changed. It is known from

(a) Brahmin Books and Upanishads	(b) Aryanakas
(c) Memories Books	(d) None of these
5. By Mahatma Buddh questionnaire truth verification and complicated problems solution has been explained –

(a) From Upanishads	(b) From Brahmin Books
(c) From Aryanakas	(d) From Baudh Literature
6. In Baudh books cattle have been called grain giver.

(a) Sukhda	(b) Annada
(c) Pashuda	(d) None of these
7. Worship, sacrificial responsibility was on

(a) Brahmins and Priests	(b) Rajputs
(c) Vaishyas	(d) Shudras

It is known from Brahman books and Upanishads that Vedic enchants was assumed as God's statement, it could not be changed. This belief was prevalent in the masses that any error in pronunciation of enchants and worship would cause dreadful results. It is but natural that in such a cultural environment, priests gained much importance. But their greediness became trouble some for society and consequently sacrificial and religions deeds too became uninteresting, complicated and as external show piece. Due to animal sacrifice and valuable gifts being offered to priests in complicated and longer yajnas like Rajsuya and Ashwamedha etc, loss of money and cattle was taking place. Although the performers of such yajnas, ruler class and businessmen, had the belief

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that through sacrifice and Karmakand (a spiritual rituals) attainment of heaven is possible. It is like a boat ferrying towards heaven. Only from this spiritual and physical benefit can be obtained. Even yajnas began to be considered as the basic cause of origin of whole universe which was performed by Prajapati. In Satpath Brahman the expansion of Vedic sacrifice towards North-East is discussed. It is known from Upanishads that King Janak performed a great Vedic sacrificial. But in this field, sacrificial oriented Vedic culture is not accepted by society. Deeds intensive Vedic culture inclined path, knowledge path of Upanishad religion and Nivirti Path of listening tradition was opposite to sage intensive religion. In Vedic culture society had been classified into four classes – Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. In Vedic period according to profession caste was determined but now it started being determined by birth. In society Brahman and Kshatriya superiority had been established. The people of these classes despite being degraded by their deeds expected respect from society. Caste system was also in practice in North-East India. Tribal class people that participated in new production system gradually used to obtain social status in the form of member of any one class according to their position and capacity. Due to new production system large rise in population started taking place and on caste basis social classification process in this period became very fast. Due to this reason also in society caste related mismanagement was spreading. Secondly Kshatriya cast was authorized to hold weapons. It was on this Kshatriya class that the foundation stone of the state was resting. They only collected tax from public and surplus of agricultural yield from farmers. The concern of the Rulers and new Kshatriya class towards their social status was very natural.



Did u know? That in Vedic period cast was determined according to deeds but by this time it was being determined by birth.

These religious movements occurring in India were not destructive rather reformative. Just like in 19th Century Luther and Kalwin reformed the evil elements of Catholic religion, likewise in India Buddhist and Jainism criticized the misdeeds and evils prevalent in Hindu society and religion. They wanted to remove the evils in Hindu region and wanted to reform it. They wanted to strike off the barriers which blocked the intelligence path and drive it on the path of development. The names of Mahaveer and Mahatma Buddha are the first among these reformers. There was nothing new in the path and religious theories told by them. These were already mentioned in Upanishads. The discussion and logic propagated by these two preachers were already given in the Upanishads. Truth reformation and solution to complicated problems by means of Mahatma Buddha questionnaire has been mentioned in Upanishads. By high level scholar performed discussion and logic was an important part to increase knowledge and go ahead in religious reform path and was approved by Vedic sage also.

10.2 Success of Religious Movement

This religious reformation movement of Six century B.C. came into shape in form of Jain and Buddhist religion and at that time this movement got full success. The main reason of this success was that this religious reformation movement was staunch oppose of caste system. With the advent of 6th century B.C., this cast bonding had become so complicated and tight that masses were fed up with it. Hence when Mahaveer and Buddha suggested caste system to be wrong, there was no lack of their supporters. Then, the root cause of the evils which had entered in religion was superstition. The Pioneer of religious reformation movement tried to remove superstitions. Similarly Pioneer of religious reformation movement, proved rituals and sacrifice as wrong. General public had detested these sacrificial due to many reasons. Hence when these Pioneers explained simpler ways for salvation then people were attracted toward them.



Task Give views on the success of religious movements that occurred in 6th Century BC.

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Aryans loved freedom most right from the beginning. In Vedic period Aryans had full personal freedom. In Post Vedic period and in epic era, Brahman and Kshatriyas authority by crushing the personal freedom of individuals produced a great obstacle in their intellectual development. Vaishya and Shudra's majority were crushed. The freedom of Shudra and women remained not even for namesake. They were considered to be inferior. In 6th Century BC due to the awareness of freedom, common man started raising their voice against religious, social and political shackles. Preachings of the founders of new religions of that time started playing important role in the upliftment of downtrodden and paving the way for their revival. Hence a large majority of people by following those religious preachers started making the new religions successful.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. In 6th Century BC several (62) religious sects arose in the central Gangetic valley of North-east India.
9. In 6th Century BC due to the awareness of freedom, common man started raising their voices against religious, social and political shackles.
10. The form of these religious movements in India was destructive instead of being reformative.
11. In this period sacrificed supposed to be a boat carry to heaven.

Worship and performing sacrificial rites was the responsibility of Brahmans and Priests. From this important situation, Brahmans had taken unfair profit. They have had great authority in country's political and social life. They had become contractors of salvation. The Pioneers of religious reforms gave challenge to this position of theirs. People, who were fed up of Brahman religion, became their followers in large numbers which helped in the propagation of new religion.

The time when great dissatisfaction was being developed amongst the masses due to prevalence of social evil, at that very time various learned people living solitary life in remote forest, were trying to solve several tough problems like soul, God and salvation. They established three paths for salvation that are called – knowledge path, meditation path and deed path. Great scholars and hermits have revealed that attainment of God and to merge soul into greatest soul is only possible when man develops his wisdom using his knowledge. All these things had great influence on the masses.

10.3 Summary

It is known from Brahman books and Upanishads that Vedic enchant were supposed to be God's statement, it can not be changed. People believed that any error in enchanting the mantras would lead to dreadful result. It is very natural that in such cultural environment, priests have had much importance. But their greedness started becoming troublesome for society and at the same time sacrifice become monotonous, complicated and external show.

10.4 Keywords

- **Palace** – Kings Residence.
- **Non-Violence** – Abstain from Violence.

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10.5 Review Questions

1. What were the causes of religious movement in India?
2. Explain the format of religious revolution.
3. What were the reasons of success of religious movement in India?

Answer: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------|
| 1. Jarthrust and Pythagoras | 2. Shatpath Brahman | 3. Upanishads | |
| 4. (a) | 5. (a) | 6. (b) | 7. (a) |
| 8. True | 9. True | 10. False | 11. True |

10.6 Further Readings



Books

1. History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
2. History of Ancient India – *Shalendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
3. History of Ancient India – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyannanda Prakashan.*
4. Ancient India's Social and Economic History – *Om Prakash, New end Publishers.*
5. History of Ancient India A New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*

Unit-11: Jainism and Buddhism

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 11.1 Mahaveer Swami and Jainism
- 11.2 Mahatma Buddha and Buddhism
- 11.3 Comparative study of Buddhism and Jainism
- 11.4 Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture
- 11.5 Difference between Jainism and Vedic and Baudha Religion
- 11.6 Summary
- 11.7 Keywords
- 11.8 Review Questions
- 11.9 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- To describe Jainism's Principle and its Publicity.
- To know the causes of downfall of Jainism and Buddhism.
- To understand teaching and Preachings of Buddhism and comparative study of Buddhism.

Introduction

There was a time when Jainism was considered a branch of Buddhism only, but later on scholars find out that Jainism is not a branch of Buddhism, rather a separate religion in itself. Mahaveer is credited with organizing Jainism, but according to Jain literature and tradition, Jainism is quite ancient. According to Jain tradition, prior to Mahaveer, this religion had 23 preceptors that were called Tirthankar. Mahaveer was 24th and the last Tirthankar. We have limited information regarding Preliminary Tirthankar. The facts and details found In Jain literature regarding them are not historical and reliable. 23rd Tirthankar Parshvanath was born in approximately 8th Century B.C and he seems to be a historical Personality.

According to **Kalpasutra** he was the son of Ikshvaku descendent of Kshatriya king Ashwasen, who was the king of Varanasi. He gave up family life at the age of thirty and after months of meditation,

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he got enlightenment. Non-violence, Truth, No stealing (Asteya) and Giving up of property/Asset; were his four main sermons or preachings.

11.1 Mahaveer Swami and Jainism

Biography of Mahaveer: Last Tirthankar of Jainism was Mahaveer Swami. He was born in approximately 600 B.C. at Kundagram near Vaishali, which is situated in modern Vaishali district of state of Bihar. There was a republic of Kshatriyas In Kundagram named as Jantrik. Siddhartha, the father of Mahaveer was head of that state. His mother Trishla Devi was sister of Lichchavi's king Chetak, a small state, which was under the authority of Vaishali Republic. Mahaveer was married to a girl called yashoda after he grew up. He had a daughter with this marriage. After the demise of his Parents, at the age of thirty he did rigorous 12 years of penance in the forest for attainment of enlightenment. Peoples used to beat him with Sticks, threw bricks, stones and dirty things on him, scoffed at him and tried many ways to break his penance with many more ways, but he did not relent. Due to such rigorous penance and meditation he attained wisdom and his heart brightened with wisdom. Now he broke the Shackles and got rid of all types of materialistic attractions. Hence he was called Nirgranth, which means bondless. He got control over his Senses; therefore he was called **Jin**. After 12 year of rigorous penance, he got enlightenment (kaivalya) outside Jummik village at the bank of river Rijupalika. Since then, he was called **Arhat** (adorable). He engaged months in penance without taking bath and food. Neither he tried to heal up his Wounds nor tried to take any medicine. He faced all his troubles with great perseverance and hence called Mahaveer. Followers of Parshvanath started seeing him as 24th Tirthankar. Parshwarath's follower were known as Nirgranth, but they were started being referred to as Jain after Mahaveer became Jin.

After attainment of enlightenment, Mahaveer did not live his life in solitude, rather promoted his teachings for around 30 years roaming in regions of Magadha, koshal, Anga, Mithila, Kashi etc. Initially he roamed around alone, but after some time he found a follower named Ghoshal. Mahaveer and Ghoshal first met at Nalanda. They stayed together at a place called kollag. But after that there developed a difference of opinion concerning their preachings and they separated. Both Ghoshal and Mahaveer criticized each other. Ghoshal actually is known as the founder of Aajivik Sect.

Mahaveer didn't only have to face normal problems in his religious Propagation. That point of time in India, many branches of ancient Vedic religion and some other religious groups existed. Major amongst them were Baudha, Barhaspatya, Atheist or Charvak, Vedantic Sankhya, Aprishthanadiya, Aajivik, Trairashik and Shaiva. There were many Prophets and their Opinions doing the rounds during Mahaveer period. Many school of thoughts like Kriyavad, Akriyavad, Agyanvad etc were in high prevalence. Mahaveer had to establish his opinion in competition with such school of thoughts.

Mahaveer continued his work with great Sincerity. Gradually several kings, land lords, rich businessmen, Vaishya and common people revered him and become his followers. Mahaveer got support from many contemporary kings. Some of them were emperor Bimbisar, Ajatshatru and Ghoshal, founder of Aajivik faith. Mahaveer propagated Four Principles as established by Parshvanath-Non violence, Truth, Abstain from Stealing (asteya) and Abstain from alms (aparigraha). He added 5th principle himself which was Brahmacharya or celibacy. These five norms collectively were called "Panchayam". **Mahaveer used to give more emphasis on** Non-violence, Abstain from alms and Celibacy and said that only those can attain Kaivalya, who practice these principles truly. He attained Nirvana (salvation) in 527 B.C, at the age of 70 at a place called Pawapuri, near modern Patna.

Principles of Jainism

God Related Thought— There is a great amount of confusion amongst scholars, as to whether Jains believed in existence of God or not. But now it has been established that Jain followers do not believe in the existence of God. Mahaveer himself did not see God as the creator of the universe. He was of

the view that, “Whatever great is there in human soul and power and morality, that is God.” Jains opine that for the governance of this universe, we don’t need supernatural authority called god. In this religion Tirthankar are considered God and are worshipped in temples in place of God. In Jainism God is considered as abstract. They opine that creator have hand and feet and he creates objects with his hands only. Not all agree that God is abstract. Hence God, who does have not any form, can’t be creator of the universe. In their opinion, this world is Eternal, Infinite and Independent. They considered God as Omnipresent and bondless.

Solipsism: Mahaveer was not anti solipsism even though he was an atheist. He was of the opinion that there are two basic substances in the universe—living and non living. Both are existing since eternal, no one created them and both are independent. Creature means soul only. Mahaveer believed that soul did not only exist in humans, animal or plants but in each Particle of the universe. There exists life in stones and rocks, water and in other natural objects too. There are infinite creatures in the universe and all are equal.



Notes Mahaveer attained Nirvana (salvation) in 527 B.C, at the age of 70 at a place called Pawapuri, near modern Patna.

Non-living does not only mean matter. After removing live world from universe, whatever remains is called Non-living. There are 5 substances under Non-life category-Pudgal (matter), sky, Religion, Adharma (immorality) and Time. Mass containing Touch, liquid, Smell is called Pudgal. Generally Pudgal are of two types—atom which is indivisible and Skandh; group of atoms. Second substance is religion. Religion means state of motion and stagnation of immorality or adharma. Sky which is fourth matter, gives rest to everything else. There are two types of Sky- illuminated sky and non-illuminated sky. Fifth matter time; helps in the transition or change of all other matters/substances. Universe functions on the basis of action and reactions of livings and non-livings.

Supremacy of Deeds (Karma): Jains accept supremacy of karma. They believe that our last life’s karma only determines where will we take birth and how will be our physique/body. There are many types of karma and they bring types of results as well. Due to effect of karma only, one takes birth either in a king palace or at a scavenger’s place. We can secure a nice future by doing good deeds in this life. One must face consequences for his deeds or karma. Anguish, attachment, anger etc only imprisons the soul.

Jainism also believes in re-incarnation. As per them, humans have to take birth time and again. They believe that soul is trapped into many materialistic bonds. Human gets salvation only by taking repeated births and getting rid of materialistic shackles. Jainism believes in the existence of soul and its immortality. They consider souls as Omni-observant, but due to bondage of deeds/karma, it weakens. Jains believe that soul is different from body and though it has no image, but it has existence alike light. According to Jains soul absolute and Insentience by nature, but it gets trapped due to karma.

Salvation of Soul—For getting soul free from bondage of karma, Jainism considers its Tri-ratna as sufficient tool, which are-Noble Vision (Samyak Darshan), Noble wisdom (Samyak Gyan), Noble Deeds (Samyak Karma). Mahaveer opined that like human body, soul exists in every living creature. Hence it is advisable for all humans/living beings that they consider every creature as equal. This was his Noble vision. Noble Vision only helps in the attainment of Noble Wisdom and men can get rid of ignorance, anger, greed, attachment etc. One must try to get Noble Deed and Character too besides trying for attainment of Noble Wisdom and Vision. One can attain it by controlling senses, thought and speech. After getting Tri-ratna, human and its soul, both get free from the clutches of Karma (deeds) trap or bond.

Notes

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Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. According to Jainism main sin are
2. Kharwell was follower of
3. Tiruvalluvar's is considered as the master piece of Tamil literature.

Eighteen Guilt – According to Jainism, there are eighteen major sins. As per Avashyak Sutra, they are as following: – (1) Violence (2) Lie (3) Theft (4) Sex (Maithun) (5) Alms (Parigraha) (6) Anger (7) Dignity (8) Allurement (9) Greed (10) Raag (11) Envy (12) Pugnacity (Kalah) (13) Accusation (dosharopan) (14) Tattle (chugli) (15) Sex without control and control without sex (16) Criticizm (17) Deceit (18) Illusion (Mithya Darshan)

Panch Mahavrat (5 Major Refrains) – Mahaveer swami experienced himself that principles of Hindu Philosophy are not acceptable by entire masses as accepted by some select religious Persons or scholars. All the laws propagated by Hindu thinkers can't be practiced by all mankind. Not all can indulge in penance or in yagna. Hence he considered two types of preaching as most essential – (i) For ascetic and (ii) For family man (Grihastha). Mahaveer Propagated five rules for general People that is called Panch Mahavrat and Jain religion emphasizes on practicing it. It is also called as Panch Mahasheel (five conducts) also. Its greatness can be gauged from the fact that is has been mentioned in Upanishad too. These Five Vrat are-Non-violence, Truth, Giving up property/Asset, Aprigraha (No Alms) and Celibacy (Brahmacharya). Late on, avoidance of dinner was included in the Panch Mahavrat.

Jainism strictly emphasizes on Non-violence. Non-violence does not only prohibits murdering someone, but the true meaning of it is to never think and talk about violence ; others should not be allowed to engage in violence , nor should they be encouraged to do so. Similarly, Jainism emphasizes on truth also. They not only give teachings to speak truth, but state that truth should be polite and tender. To discharge this Vrat, one must get control over anger, fear and greed.

Jains also consider Asteya as an important Mahavrat, which means "No stealing". Jainism also advises not to take others wealth or asset. They explain that there is great nexus between Non-violence and Asteya. Fourth Mahavrat of Jainism is Celibacy. Giving up all types of lust is only known as Brahmacharya (celibacy). Fifth and final Mahavrat of Jainism is Aprigraha which is, giving up desire for everything. Things towards which our senses get attracted, should be Sacrificed and that is called Aprigraha.

Penance – Mahaveer emphasized on rigorous penance/meditation. He himself got enlightenment after rigorous penance and meditation.

It is essential for Bhikshus to test their bodies with lots of hardships, fasting and serious meditation and thinking. Jain sages consider penance/meditation a complete tool to get control over senses. There are majorly two types of penance or meditation – One is Brahma Tapasya, which includes fasting, testing body with hardships and abandoning all types of interest. Second type of penance includes atonement, services, meditation and self-realization. epilate and fast unto death is the best indicator of Jain penance or meditation. There is description of such Jain followers in ancient times, which tolerated tremendous hardships and agony sitting on stones or rocks, waiting for death and finally sacrificed their lives doing this.

Abandoning of Clothes – According to Mahaveer family men can't attain complete Nirvana. For getting complete Nirvana, one must give up all materialistic lust and bonds and even clothes. Although Digambar sect followers started wearing clothes now, yet both sects accept that abandoning clothes is essential for attainment of complete Nirvana.

Jainism after Mahaveer – Until approximately two centuries post the death of Mahaveer ,his followers,Bhikshuks etc remained organized in the form of small sect. Ten out of eleven disciples of Mahaveer died before the Nirvana of Mahaveer. After the death of Mahaveer Sudharman became head

of Jains. It appears that after Ajatshatru, Udayin too patronized Jainism, both of whom were rulers of Magadha. Kalinga king's Kharvel's Elephant Cave Rock Inscriptions tell us that king Nand too favoured Jainism.

In Maurya period, Jain religion divided into two main branches. One was called Digambar and another Shwetambar. According to Jain literature, in the regime of Chandragupta, Magadha faced severe draught. There was no rain for many years. As a result, more than half of Jain fled away and settled in southern India. They came back after a period of 12 years when the draught was over. They condemned those Bhikshus who did not accompany them and called him Pathbhrasht (deviated from path). Thereafter, Jain religion divided into two factions. Both the factions had difference of opinion on many topics. Bhadrabahu shifted to Nepal and bestowed Sthoolbhadra with permission to teach 10 "Poorvas" **only out of 14**. To sort out differences among these two sects, there was a congregation planned, but south returned Bhikshus refused to partake. Jain congregation of Patliputra accepted one section of Jainism. In this section only, Principles of Shwetambar got originated.

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Did u know? Second Jain congregation was held in Gujarat at a place called Vallabhi under the chairmanship of Dev Riddhigani.

Differences between Shwetambar and Digambar – There are no fundamental differences between Shwetambar and Digambar sect because both of them believe in principles of Jainism. Both have similar fundamental principle. Only difference is that Digambar sect comprises of staunch Jain followers. They follow principles of Jainism with rigidity and strict sincerity. They are of strong view and belief that Jain sages should abandon everything. That is why, Digambar sages do not put on clothes and remain naked. Even in their temple too, naked statues are worshipped. Digambar believe that those sages who attain Samyak Gyan (noble wisdom), does not even need food. All his necessities like hunger, thirst etc get satisfied automatically. According to them, women can't get rid of Karma bondage, till the time she takes birth as a man. In contrast, Shwetambar sect does not agree with this viewpoint. In their sect, strictness in adherence to rules is relaxed little bit and they have not completely done away with human weaknesses or ignored it. They agree to wear white clothes.

Second Jain congregation was held at in Gujarat at a place called Vallabhi under the chairmanship of Dev Riddhigani. Objective of the meet was to compile all original sacred teaching and to give them shape of books. As a result it so happened. All basic sermons have been shaped as books and those books are even today available.

Promotion of Jain Religion – Jainism propounded by Mahaveer grew rapidly in India. Although it could not spread overseas like Buddhism, yet within India, it proliferated quite well. Initially this religion was confined up to Bihar, Tirhut and Awadh Province only. Thousands of Jain families moved to south India with famous Jain sage, Bhadrabahu during the grave draught that gripped Magadha for a prolonged period of 12 years. They took shelter at a place called Shravanbelagola in the state of Mysore. Famous king Chandragupta Maurya too embraced Jainism and attained salvation by doing fasting at the very place. From here only, Jainism spread its wings in south India and majority of traders accepted this sect. In Kushan Period Mathura was the centre of Jainism and from here this sect gradually spread in to Gujarat, Kathiawar etc. Kharvel, king of Orissa, was follower of Jainism. He did his best for upliftment of Jainism and Jainism Progressed manifold.

Mahaveer started Propagating his religion soon after attaining enlightenment. He used to spend 8 months in a year promoting his sect and spent rainy season in any big town. As Mahaveer's **name and fame grew**, public started welcoming and accepting him and kings and emperors started coming to hear his sermons. Jainism spread to the state of Koshal, Videh, Magadha and Anga in his lifetime only. Some Jain sages marched towards west and made Mathura their Centre of propagation. In this region

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too Jainism Progressed quite well. During 1st and 2nd centuries BC, Malwa and Ujjaini became major centre of Jain followers. In south India, followers of Digambar sect propagated Jainism. Following are major reasons for the rapid growth of Jainism:-

Royal Patronage – Basic cause of upliftment of Jainism was the support and patronage it received from contemporary kings. Several kings, emperors, landlords, high ranked officials and influential people were impressed by Mahaveer’s teachings and embraced Jainism and become Jain follower. Political Patronage helped Jainism spread fast. Subjects of those kings, who embraced Jainism, also accepted Jainism. As a result, Jainism proliferated quite well.

Uses of Local Dialect – All the books of Vedic religion were composed in Sanskrit language. It could be studied only by Brahmans. These books were beyond the comprehension of common masses. But Principles of Jainism were written in local language and dialect and Mahaveer and his disciples gave Preachings and propagated the religion in local language and dialect only. It was easy for the masses to understand the principle of this religion. Therefore, their interest in Jainism grew and they slowly drifted towards this new religion.

Principle of Equality – Jainism was primarily based on the principle of equality. Mahaveer opposed caste system and opened the gate of his religion for all. He was of the view that souls of every object of this universe are same. We can’t discriminate amongst people for the attainment of Salvation. At that time, all doors of religions were closed for lower class people and they could not get salvation. When Jainism expressed its pledge to get society free from such controls and shackles, common masses got naturally attracted towards it. Common Public supported this new religion.

Practicality of Jainism – Jainism was free of ostentation or complexed rituals and its principles were simple, implementable and accessible to all. For home-makers, Mahaveer made very simple religion norms so that they do not face any specific trouble. Anyone could practice these rules without any difficulty. It didn’t have complexed rituals or rigorous religious practices like Hinduism. Norms and rules like Non-violence, Adherence to Truth, Abstain from Theft and having cordial relations with one and all were such, which could be liked by all and following these was also not a problem. There was no room for violence and animal sacrifice in this religion. For Jain sages, rules were tough though, yet due to rules which could be used in normal day to day life easily, it got adequate success.

Establishment of Sangh – Jain religion originated only with an organized form of revolution. Mahaveer organized his disciples into an association. Members of Sangh were to live a restrained and simple life. They were supposed to spend their time in study and seminars and dedicate whole life for the promotion of the religion. Even after the death of Mahaveer, Jainism continued with similar activities. President of Jain Sangh, Sudharman served Jainism for a period of 22 years relentlessly. After him, famous Jain hermit Jambko, became the head of Sangh. Jainism prospered a lot during his tenure also.

Decline of Jainism

Although Jainism was promoted with great zeal, yet in course of time there developed many obstacles in its road to progress. Later on, popularity of this religion decreased and it raced ahead on the Path of decline. Some of the key reasons for its decline are following:-

Not being State Religion – Though during Mahaveer’s tenure, it got patronage of some royal families but it never got the status of being accepted as State Religion. Many Indian kings and emperors were though liberal to this religion but this generosity was not sufficient enough for the diversity and intra-nationalism of our country. Had any Ashoka, Harsh or Samudragupta would have born as Jain, then its growth would not have been limited.

Re-arrival of Caste system – Initially Jainism opposed caste system, but later on caste system entered Dharma Vyavastha. Due to this, its freshness disappeared somewhere and it lost popularity amongst the masses, particularly amongst lower class.

Lack of propagator – In course of time, Jainism lacked the availability of enthusiastic missionaries. There remained few promoters or propagators who could promote the religion with zeal and enthusiasm. Those who were left too were infected with many evils. They could not lead a restrained life and inclined towards materialistic pleasure. As a result, Jainism failed and met its decline.

Competition with other Religions – Buddhism was also being propagated almost at the same time when Jainism was being promoted. Thus, Buddhism in a way became rival of Jainism. Buddhism comparatively became more popular. After Buddhism, Hinduism too saw development of many sects which got support from kings. Jain temples of Mathura were converted into Shiva temple by chola kings. Some Chalukya ruler too removed Jain Statues from Jain temple and replaced it with Hindu Gods and Goddess. Orissa too saw growth of Shaivism. During Rajput Period, less importance of non-violence played vital role and downfall of Jainism became inevitable.

Internal Differences – In the beginning, Jainism was a Powerful movement. But in due course, it developed internal difference and it got divided in two major sects-Shwetambar and Digambar. This division and difference proved to be fatal for Jainism. In the state of differences, it becomes almost impossible to work together.

Lacks of Public Interface – Jain Propagators were engaged in missionary work with great enthusiasm. They tried to become Jitendriya (winner of senses) by following tough fasts, suppressing their desires and by making their body pure through rigorous penance.

Their efforts of internal purification had great impact on common public. There were many resources in Sangh to increase public contacts. Now promoters were losing the source of zeal to propagate. The membership of Sangh declined and public-propagators contacts curtailed to a great extent and resultantly, there was no more attraction left in public for Jainism.

Austerity of Penance – Jainism stressed on penance a lot. Living naked, fast Un- to death, epilite, etc. Physical sufferings are considered as desirable in Jainism. All these were difficult for masses and hence it was impossible for such type of religion to remain popular. Initially, many people accepted this penance vrat in zeal, but later on lost steam.

Vagueness of Language – Initially Jainism was promoted in normal public language and dialect, but later on Jain literature started being composed in Sanskrit. As a result there was no direct link with public anymore. Common public remained ignorant to Jain literature

Concomitance with Brahman Religion – In the beginning Jain religion appeared on the horizon as a revolution against Brahman religion, but later on, it could not keep itself at a distance from it and moved towards it and many evils of Brahman religion entered Jainism. Devotional practices (bhaktivad) and multiplicity of deities entered in Jainism just like Brahman religion. As a result, freshness of Jainism ended. Due to this fact also, Jainism declined.

Jainism spread all over India, but with the Passage of time its decline started. According to Jains, destruction of their temples first started due to protests of Brahmans and specially during 1774-76 A.D. in the regime of Ajaypal. But the level of devastation it received at the hands of Muslims was incomparable with what Ajaypal did to them. Alauddin Khilji who conquered Gujarat in 1297-98 has been called "Murderer" by Jains. He demolished maximum Jain temples. He murdered thousands of Jain followers and destroyed their libraries. Muslims built beautiful mosques in India with the debris of such temples.

Comparison between Jainism and Hinduism – Jainism in fact was not a new religion. We can assume it as a branch of Hinduism only, because it has many similarities with ancient religion. Jain Tirthankar in place of pronouncing any new religion, tried only to reform old Vedic religion. At that time, Vedic religion had many evils. It was full of complexed rituals laced with ostentation and violence. Vedic religion emphasized on animal sacrifice. Hence many People became its opponent. Before Mahaveer, Jain religion was called 'Nigranth mat' that was not opposed to Hinduism. For this reason, Jainism should not be considered as against Hinduism. Alike Hinduism, Jainism also accepts principles of Omnipresence of soul, rebirth, facing results of good and bad deeds. There is similarity between major principles and norms of Vedic Religion and Jainism. There is space for anti-Veda sentiment of

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Charvak and Atheism in Jainism. Jainism is not opposed to caste system. Only difference being that Jains consider Karma as the basis of caste system. Hindu customs are celebrated in Jain families the same way Hindus celebrate it. They revere Ram and Krishna just like Hindus. In current time, Jains have even started marrying Hindu vaishya also. While describing duties of anchorites in his book Arthashastra, Chanakya writes that major duties of a sage are- control over senses, giving up lust for materialistic objects, subsistence on alms, living in forests away from main population, keep changing place of dwelling, mercy on animals, stay away from violence, sacrifice of envy and jealousy, pardon, complacency and leading pure, pious life by keeping internal purity. All these rules or way of life have been written in all Jain literature.

Therefore, many historians have stated while expressing their views that daily routine of Jain hermits and Brahman anchorites have great similarities. Only difference is that Jainism is an atheist religion while Hinduism is theist. Hinduism considers god as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe while having belief in Omnipresence of god and believes in Yagna and sacrifices while having belief in Vedas. On the contrary, Jainism does not treat God as creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. As per Jainism, universe is eternal and infinite. Jains do not approve Vedas as paragon nor believe in yagna and animal sacrifice.

Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture

Literary Contribution—Although promotion of Jainism was limited and it never could become an influential movement, yet it contributed immensely to the culture of our country. Its most important contribution seems to be in the fields of art and literature. Jain scholars in different time periods composed different books in folk language, thereby giving a great contribution in the growth and polishing of these languages. Jain literatures majorly have been written in Prakrit language, which helped in the development of natural (prakritik) languages. In Rajput Period several Jain Acharya wrote many books in Prakrit and Apbhransh (mixed) languages. Most famous literature of Jainism; ‘Shrutang’, has been written in Magadhi language. There is compilation of twelve sections in it, which is fundamental base of Jainism.

Commentaries written on ancient Jain religious books Poetry are found in Jain Marathi. After BC Sanskrit language started spreading towards north India. This language was adopted first by Baudha then by Jain writers. More than half of Jain literature is filled with medieval period Philosophical thoughts. Its composers have tried to prove them meticulous and great while writing it in terms of description of moral story, grammar and dictionary. Two critical books written on Panchatantra were signs of Jain influence.

In Tamil literature, Jains have important place for centuries. Most important poem of Tamil literature ‘Jeevak’ is the gift of Chintamani Jains. Tiruvalluwar’s ‘Kundal’ has been considered to be the masterpiece of Tamil literature. Its composer was a Jain. Ancient Tamil grammar and dictionary both are considered to be composition of Jain writer. The foundation of Telugu literature too begins from Jain writers and scholars.

Artistic Contribution—In the field of art too, Jain contribution is marvelous. Jain art developed a lot during 11th and 12th centuries. Magnificent Jain temples are even today found in different parts of country. Jains too built Bhikshu griha and caves just like Baudha. Bhikshus used to live in those. We get to know about these dwelling places even today at Singh cave in Udaygiri, Indrasabha in Allora, Lakkundi, Pulitan, Abu Hills, Girnar, remains of Parshvanath hills, Ranpur in Jodhpur, Khajahari in Bundelkhand, Ghantai and Adinath temple and in Chittore. Evidences of beautiful Jain temples in south India are still found in Shravanbelagola, Mudrabidri, and Guruvayankeri’s. There are many signs of Jain temples on whose remains, mosques have been built. We find beautiful pictures on hand written Jain books, which are specimen of Jain paintings. Though Jain art of painting is not much important and is simple yet it has helped in the development of Indian culture a lot. Janis developed art of sculpture as well.

Philosophical Contribution—Philosophical gift of Jains too is important from many angles. In pursuit of exploring truth, Jains propagated “Syadwad”, **which** is an invaluable gift. Syadwad means “it is so possibly,” **because we** make one concept or ideology by observing only one aspect of truth, whereas truth has many facets. By solving this mystery, Jains have equipped India with a great cultural asset.

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Thus it is clear that in various fields, contribution of religion is immense. Though Jainism is never considered as one of the important religions of India, yet it kept nurturing. A reviewer wrote aptly, “Jainism is not a religion rather it is a compilation of living a moral life.”

It does not believe in God, but considers those colossal personalities as gods, who have gained spiritual superiority. Anyone can be as superior as they were; if need be then Jainism was read to include any popular Hindu deity in their own religion. This religion was not against principles of caste system. It was always prompt to merge other religion in itself. As per its fundamental element, it never accepted or rejected any such principle, from where return is not impossible. According to their ideology, when all the knowledge is possible then your opponent view is as right as yours. This is the major reason that Jainism still exists here whereas Buddhism disappeared from its own land of genesis.

11.2 Mahatma Buddha and Buddhism

Biography of Mahatma Buddha—Rise of Buddhism in 6th century A.D. was a revolution. It was a reaction against Vedic rituals and a logical conclusion to the movement started by Upanishad. Gautama Buddha was the propagator of Buddhism and was contemporary to Mahaveer. He was Kshatriya by caste. His original name was Gautama or Siddhartha. He was born in a royal family. One famous federation of Shakya dynasty Kshatriyas was situated in the foothills of Himalaya within the boundary of state of Nepal. Shuddhodhan was the ruler of this Janpad in 6th century B.C. Buddha was born in approximately 563 B.C. near Kapilvastu, in a garden called Lumbini. Soon after his birth, his mother died. Hence he was raised by his step mother Mata Prajapati Gautami. Gautama was his surname (gotra) and he was known as Buddha ever since he attained enlightenment.

Siddhartha was quite introvert, calm and thinker since childhood and did not pay attention to kingship, wealth and wife, son or family etc. normally he used to ponder over enigmatic problems of life. Looking at his interest for solitude and meditative tendencies, his father thought to engage him in family life, so that he gets embroiled in worldly affairs. At the time of birth, one astrologer forecasted that either this boy will become a great emperor or would abandon home and become an anchorite or sage. This was the reason his father was even more worried. He quickly married him with a beautiful girl called Yashodhara and arranged all the luxuries for him. After some time a son was born too to Siddhartha.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. “After my death, the Principles which I have propagated in this life, will guide you”. This preaching was given to Anand by while lying at death bed.

(a) Mahatma Buddha	(b) Mahaveer
(c) Parshvanath	(d) None of the above
5. Third congregation of Baudha took place in the reign of Ashok at

(a) Patliputra	(b) Vaishali
(c) Kundalvan	(d) None of the above

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6. was accepted as human being in Heenyan sect and pure and elementary form of religion was accepted.
- (a) Mahaveer (b) Sudharman
(c) Mahatma Buddha (d) None of the above
7. In Purush Sukta as mentioned in Mandal of Rigved we find description about origin of Four Varna.
- (a) Eighth (b) Tenth
(c) Ninth (d) None of the above

But luxurious life did not bring about any change in Gautama's life. He saw four scenes that had great impact on his life. While walking in the morning, Siddhartha saw, a very weak ailing person, old person who was hardly able to walk, a dead body and finally a calm sage. These four sights stirred his life badly. He was not aware of such human conditions at all. His charioteer Chhandak told him that every human has to face such suffering and agony after falling victim to these diseases some point of time. Old age brings toughest sufferings and in the end death is inevitable. The more Siddhartha thought over it, the more he felt restlessness, but memories of the sage brought him some Peace and respite. Finally he decided to give up royal comfort to find out solution for the sufferings of world. At the age of twenty nine Prince Siddhartha, left his sleeping wife Yashodhara and newly born Rahul in the palace, considering youth, health and body as temporary and world as mortal and sorrowful, along with his charioteer Chhandak.

In this course, he met with many sages and great personalities and had spiritual discussions. He met with philosophers like Alar kalam near Vaishali and with Ramputra Rudrak near Rajgriha, Where he tried to quench his thirst for knowledge, but his objective did not get satisfied. Finally he arrived at Gaya from Rajgriha and sat at penance along with his five friends at a place called Uruvela in the forests. It continued up to Six years. In the meantime his body became decrepit but his soul remained unquenched like before. Once some women of the village, close to his meditation place were singing a song that went through his ears. Gist of this song was "Neither tighten the wire of harp so much that it gets broken nor loosen it so much, that it produces no sound". This had great impact on Gautama's mind. From this song, Gautama learnt middle path or Madhyam Pratipada. By doing rigorous penance he was too much tightening harp wire of his life. Hence, now he decided to follow middle path and leave rigorous meditation. A woman called Sujata brought sweat rice for worshipping tree, which Gautama accepted and ate. Due to this, his companions left him assuming him as depraved.

Now Siddhartha started meditating alone. Sitting under the pipal tree, he engrossed in intensive thinking. There only he got enlightenment one day, which was attainment of Bodhisattva. That time onwards, he was being called as Buddha. The Pipal tree, under which he got enlightenment, was known as **Bodhi vriksh**.

Propagation—Buddha wanted to spread his ideology attained by enlightenment in the entire world through propagation. First he wanted to meet those old five companions who left him considering depraved. He reached Sarnath and gave his first sermon to those five companions. His first sermon is famous as "**Dharma Chakra Pravartan**". After this Buddha went to Varanasi with his companions and made son of a wealthy person and many others as his disciples. From Varanasi, Buddha reached Rajgriha. That point of time in Magadha, many Acharyas and religious missionaries used to roam around amongst people and propagated their principles. It took long time for Buddha to refute their principles and establish superiority of his thoughts. But finally he succeeded and many people became his disciples. In Rajgriha only, Magadha king Bimbisar accepted Buddhism after listening to his preachings. Now he started roaming everywhere and started disciples from rich to poor and all types and categories of people. Famous amongst these people were-Sariputra and Maudagalyayan, Upali, Seth AnathPindak and Ajatshatru. Besides Rajgriha Buddha also visited Gaya, Nalanda, and Patliputra. With help and assistance from AnathPindak, he got an opportunity to settle in Koshal. He spent huge sum of money and constructed a Vihar called Jetvan near Shravasti. King Prasenjeet listened to his sermons very attentively.

Once Buddha went to Kapilvastu too and made many members of his family as his disciples including his son Rahul and step mother Mahaprajapati Gautami. He spent some time in Vaishali also. There at the request of Gautami, he permitted to form a Sangh of woman Bhikshus or monks. People from Mall community did not welcome his teachings yet some of them became his disciple.

King of kaushambi, Udayin too did not show any interest to his teachings. But one of his queens became disciple of Buddha. Buddha Marched up to Mathura in the west. Pradyot, King of Avanti once invited him, but he could not go. He sent one of his disciples, who baptized some People with Buddhism there.

Thus up to a period of 44 years Propagating his religion and making people like Ajatshatru, Udayin, Prasenjeet and many other kings and Princes, money lenders and general Public his disciple, he attained "Mahaparinirvana " at the bank of river Hiranyavati near Kushinagar, at the age of eighty in 483 B.C . Ashes of his body were shared by eight casts and they made different Stupas on it. The spot In Kushinagar where Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana, a huge statue of his has been erected. This statue is even present now. Kushinagar too is a very sacred Pilgrim site for Baudha.

Baudha pilgrims get the sight of Buddha's huge statue and spot of Mahaparinirvana. Forests of Lumbini near Kapilvastu too remain to be one of the most sacred pilgrim sites for Baudha, where Mahatma Buddha was born.

Buddha's Teachings and Sermons

It is essential to know before understanding his principles that Buddha did not have faith in God, did not consider soul as eternal, did not consider any religious book as self-explanatory and did not accept that lifeline is confined up to the body only. Mahatma Buddha strongly opposed restrictions of social discriminations of lower and upper. He considered sentiment of untouchability as tyrant. He made people from Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra and even much inferior classes including Prostitutes. He was of the view that I will not call someone a Brahman only because he had been given birth by a special woman.

Buddha gave preachings to two Brahmans who came to meet him in similar context, that whether a Brahman should be by Janma or Karma; main summary is presented in following words. We story is found in Buddha literature in detail. "Only that person that has no attachment towards anything, does not possess anything, will be called a Brahman by me. Only that Person who is free from anger, is truthful and performs pure deeds, and is able to control his senses, will be called Brahman by me." Meaning of his Statement is that one can't become a Brahman by taking birth in a Brahman family nor one can be a non-Brahman by taking birth in a non-Brahman family. Only reason to be a Brahman is Karma.

Fundamental principle of Buddha's sermons was non-violence. He not only opposed animal sacrifice staunchly in Yagnic rituals, but also considered any type of damage or torture to the animals as violence and strongly protested against it and this is the reason that he promulgated Ashtangik Marg to raise a voice against such violence. In this context he clarified while giving sermon to a Brahman called "Vasty" that if a Brahman, expert in three streams of knowledge does not apply so acquired qualities into practical life, works like a non- Brahman but Prays that –I invoke Brahma Prajapati, I invoke Indra, I call Mahesh and Yama, then will they come to him as in person? In fact, such a Prayer is neither beneficial nor dutiful.

Buddha was a staunch supporter of freedom of speech. He advised People not to blindly emulate and rather think justifiably over matters or topics. His was of the view that no one should follow his religion blindly, rather should test it logically and in the event of it satisfying him/her logically, should follow. Mahatma Buddha was idealistic and there was no room for superstitions in his religion.

Chatvari Arya Satwani – Buddha Propagated four Aryan truth as following – (1) Grief (2) Reason of grief (3) Prevention of grief (4) Path going towards resolution of grief; Ashtangik path.

Grief – Buddha opined that this world is a depot of sorrow. There is nothing but grief in the world- "sarve dukham dukham." **Each one has to endure sufferance after coming in this world. Buddha**

Notes

said, "Birth is sore, old age is sore, and death, mourning, disappointment of mind, perplexity is sore. Meeting with disliking and separation from likings too is sore. To not get something after desiring---that is sore too." In this mortal world, one who takes birth, has to die. Hence after coming to this world, one can't escape sorrow. At least one type of sorrow or grief, one must face.

Reason of Grief – Buddha not only explained sorrow but also told reasons for it to the world. The grief, sorrow, sore one faces in the world, has some reason behind it. In a way, cause of death is birth. If soul gets salvation before acquiring a new body, then it does not have to endure sufferance of death.

The way experienced medical counselor diagnoses reason of illness before treatment; similarly Buddha found cause of sorrow prevalent in this world. As per him, main cause of sorrow is desire. This desire only gives birth to sorrows like ego, affection, jealousy, envy, feuds. Human desires many things but some of them remain unfulfilled. This is the reason one gets sorrow. If desires are suppressed, then one can get rid of grief.

Prevention of Grief – There is cure, prevention or eradication for sorrow, what a human being suffers. If there is no reason for sorrow then grief will automatically get removed. Destruction of ignorance brings about knowledge and that knowledge is called 'Nirvana'. One can get Nirvana in present life only by this, but Nirvana does not mean lethargy. If Sensible people discharge Karma after getting rid of envy, affection and desire then they can't be trapped in shackles and finally get Salvation at the end and from the cycle of life and death. Nirvana is nothing but a state of absolute loss of desires and sorrow.

Grief preventive Ashtangik Path – First sermon of grief prevention of Ashtangik Path was given by Gautama Buddha to his five companions that is famous as **Dharma Chakra Pravartan**. Buddha propagated that desire or lust is the root cause of sorrow and it is necessary to suppress it in order to get rid of it. Even death cannot get you free from the bondage of grief because, passion, lust and Karma keeps the human entrapped in the cycle of life and death. Therefore, Buddha propounded Eight Paths for the suppression of desire, which is called as Ashtangik Path. There are eight major element – Noble Vision (samyak drishti), Noble Commitment (samyak sankalp), Noble Speech (samyak Vaak), Noble Deeds (samyak karma), Noble Subsistence (samyak Aajiv), Noble Exercise (samyak vyayam), Noble Memory (samyak Smriti) and Noble state of Trance (samyak Samadhi). Out of these, first two come under knowledge, other three under behaviour and last three come under trance. Full description of Ashtangik Path is as following: –

1. **Noble vision** – Buddha declared four Arya truths; sorrow, reason of sorrow, suppression of sorrow and ways and means of suppressing grief. To get know ledge of these four Arya truths is called Noble Vision.
2. **Noble Commitment** – To abandon all types of luxury and worldly Pleasures and to resolve to transform oneself is called Noble Commitment. For this, one must always be acting towards abandoning affection of Physical objects, kith and kin's and friends and should refrain from harming others.
3. **Noble Speech** – Always speaking truth and to protect oneself from speaking lies with full force, is called Noble Speak. Not criticizing others, no use of harsh words and abstain from using abusive words, help tremendously to follow a life of Nobility.
4. **Noble Deeds** – It means doing auspicious things. Humans should indulge in good karma and try to abandon evil and condemnable deeds such as – theft; gambling etc. practicing such efforts makes human noble and called Admirer of Non-violence (Ahinsapriya) and controller of senses (Jitendriya).
5. **Noble Subsistence** – humans should always earn their livelihood with honestly. One should escape such deeds while earning livelihood, which can harm others and in which there can be blend of violence.
6. **Noble Exercise** – noble exercise means noble endeavors. One should always pursue to suppress evil thinking and develop good thinking and behaviour.

7. **Noble Memory** – It means to memorize all those good elements which one who received through the preachings of Mahatma Buddha. One should always keep vigil on soul, speech, deeds and other activities, so that one should not be deprived of right path.
8. **Noble Trance** – It means to be engrossed in Brahma (divine power) by concentrating in your mind and attainment of divine pleasure. There are four stages in it. After crossing these four stages only, one can get Nirvana or salvation. In the first stage, humans pursues to be involved in pure or holy thinking to make its heart clean. Second stage comes when human's heart starts having absolute faith on four Arya truths as Propagated by Mahatma Buddha after getting clean and pure.

Atheism – Buddha was fundamentally an atheist. He had no faith in existence of god and its power. Normally he used to say in his preachings that universe is not created by any divine power called, God and there is nothing called God in this world. The origin of the universe lies in the theory of "Cause and effect. Basis of this law is any function or series of reasons, i.e. due to any particular cause there is a work dispensed and that work becomes the reason of origin for another work. Similarly, from first to second, second to third and third to fourth, works keeps happening affairs of entire universe keep happening in that functions and chain itself.

Non-Solipsism – Solipsism was the basis of thinking of Upanishad and at the time of Buddha too, this theory was widely Prevalent. Followers of Solipsism believed that in each creature, exists an eternal element called soul, which does not decay even after death. Buddha did not accept this theory. He was of the view that that universe is free of soul. There is no such element in human beings, which is eternal or non perishable. All those elements which contribute in the making of a body are perishable. He used to say that as an artisan makes cart by adding different objects like Axels and wheels, similarly our body is constructed by the combination of many limbs and in the same way humans speech, work and thinking takes place through penta group (panch samooh):- rites, noun, form, sensitivity and science. The way there exists nothing apart from parts after dismantling the cart, similarly after the decay of human body, there exists nothing called soul apart from those limbs.

Karmavad (theory of karma) and Reincarnation – Even being a non-solipsist, Buddha believed in principles of karma and rebirth. He was of the view that rebirth happens but not of soul, but of ego of human being rather. This process of repetitive births occurs under the law of cause and effect. Feeling unsatisfied even after satisfying one's desires leads to the state of ego and due to this ego only, process of life and death continues. Hence, it is absolutely necessary to abandon desires for attaining Nirvana.

Nirvana – Buddha considered entire universe as momentary. He opined that everything is variable which keeps on changing. They seem to be stable only in form of a flow. Now the question is that is anything in the world permanent? Is there any situation where there is no grief? Buddha explained that state of Nirvana is Permanent and free of grief, but Buddha did not clarify the meaning of Nirvana. Hence, as per many scholars, Nirvana is such a state in which everything is perished. Not only Physical body gets perished, but consciousness and thinking element too vanishes. There is no special Place of Nirvana. It can be attained anywhere and at any point of time.

In this life too Nirvana can be attained. It can be called ordinary Nirvana. Nirvana attained after death will be called as Parinirvana.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

1. Mahatma Buddha was born in 563 B.C in an orchard called Lumbini near Kapilvastu.
2. Buddha said, "Birth is sore, old age is sore, and death, mourning, disappointment of mind, perplexity is sore. To not get something after desiring it too is sore."

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3. Buddha believed in principles of karma and reincarnation even though being a non-solipsist.
4. To keep Buddhism united, fourth Baudha congregation was held in the regime of Ajatshatru.

Middle Path – Buddhism is based on Middle Path. He suggested that one should stay away from two extremes – rigorous penance and too much of luxury. Middle condition between both of these two is desirable. He promoted this path in the following fashion – Bhikshus and anchorites should not consume two extremes. What are these two---one is to get involved in erotic and materialistic pleasure which is very inferior, uncultured, non-Aryan and meaningless and other is giving unnecessary hardships to the body, which is non-Aryan and meaningless. By sacrificing these two extremes, Buddha followed Middle Path which opens eyes and offers knowledge.

Giving example of harp, Buddha explained his Path more convincingly. The way if we loosen wires of the harp, then it can't be played; similarly if we tighten it too much, then it would break. Thus, neither luxurious life is desirable nor full of rigorous penance. Balanced life is better.

Ten Norms – Too much emphasis has been given on behaviour in moral teachings of Buddha. It is essential to adhere to following ten norms for a moral conduct: – (1) No desires for other's property (2) No violence (3) No lies (4) No use of intoxicants (5) No use adultery (6) No participation in music and dance (7) No use of flowers substances of fragrances etc. (8) No untimely meals (9) No use of comfortable sleeping cot (10) Don't accept money or preserve it.

Besides aforesaid moral commandants, Buddha also suggested to obey Parents, respect teachers, offering alms to worthy, conduct of love and generosity, no intoxication and decent conduct with every creature.

Buddhism after Buddha – Buddha continued to promote his principles throughout his life and after his death also, Bhikshus of his Sangh continued to do so in all corners of India. With above description of principles of Buddha, we come to know that Buddhism had fair chances of growth, since there were many receivables elements for Hindus in it. Simple principles of Buddhism were easily understandable by common public and could be followed easily too. Buddha promoted his religion in local language, which helped it spread in entire India very quickly.

First Baudha Congregation – After the demise of Mahatma Buddha, congregations continued to take place at different interval of time for the compilation of Baudha literature and books or to monitor the affairs of the Sangh. Buddha gave sermon to his favourite disciple Anand while lying at death bed that "After my death, principles which I propagated in this life, will guide you." Buddhism was a reaction against Vedic religion, but in due course, it started seeing several changes.

To discuss this, couple of years after the demise of Buddha in 487 B.C. first such meeting was held in Satpanni near Rajgriha, in which approximately five hundreds Bhikshus participated. Buddha's speech, conversations and sermons were compiled and classified in many categories. These compilations were given form of official compositions (granth). Teachings of Buddha were divided in to two parts and they were called as Vinay Pitak and Dhamma Pitak.

Sutt pitak, Vinay pitak, and Dhamma pitak are part of Tri pitak of Buddhism. Religious principles of Buddhism are found in Sutt Pitak. Vinay pitak has description of composition of Baudha Sangh and norms for Bhikshus. Abhidhamma pitak has spiritual analysis of these principles. In sutt pitak only has collection of Jataka Katha (moral stories).

Second Congregation – Second congregation held after 100 years of Buddha's death in 387 B.C. Baudha Bhikshus of Vaishali accepted some norms which were against Vinay pitak. As a result there was a great dispute amongst Bhikshus and they divided into Sthavir and Mahasanghik factions. Sthavir were anti-change and Mahasanghik were pro-change.

Third Congregation – Third such meeting was held in patliputra in the regime of Ashoka. In this meeting, old and authentic Baudha books were re-divided, and a new book was added. This time Buddha's **authentic books** were composed with such panache that it could not be divided again and people involved in splitting activities could be punished. Once again, Baudha monks started taking

religious promotion with great enthusiasm. Another important work of this congregation was formation of a new Pitak - Abhidhamma pitak. This Pitak has philosophical description of first two pitak. Thus, making of Tri pitak of Buddhism takes place in this period only.

Fourth Congregation – To keep Buddhism as united, fourth such meeting was held in the regime of Kanishka, but even after such congregations, Buddhism got divided into two major factions in the later time. One was Heenyan and another Mahayaan. It appears that there was a lot of heated debate in the fourth meeting between Baudha factions. In this meeting, three grand commentaries on Tri pitak were composed and Mahayaan faction's supremacy was declared. From this time only, Mahayaan started promoting in north India. Mahayaan introduced statue worship in Buddhism, but Heenyan continued to adhere to Buddha's Path. Gradually Heenyan disappeared completely from north India and grew in southern part of India and overseas.

Baudha Sangh – Buddha made a well organized association for the promotion of Buddhism, where people used to live as monks after abandoning their homes and promoted Buddhism for the rest of their life. There were two types of follower of Buddha- Upasak and Bhikshu. Buddha clarified that without being a Bhikshu or monk, one can't attain Nirvana. One can't attain Nirvana, till the time one does not sacrifice love for materialistic pleasures. Thus, more emphasis is given on Sangh in Buddhism. Monks of Sangh were very relinquished and austere. They used to live on alms and wore fewer clothes. Initially, they used to live in forests or caves, but later on some followers constructed Vihar for them, which became their dwelling units.

There was defined age for admission in Sangh. People ageing more than 15 years, got admission in Sangh with permission of their parents. After that, one had to shave beard and moustache, wear saffron clothes and had to take following pledge for Buddhism and Sangh – " Buddham Sharnam Gachhami, Dhammam Sharnam Gachchami, Sangham Sharnam Gachchami." After that one had to repeat ten commandants as written by a Bhikshu and thus became disciple of a Bhikshu, who used to teach him about Buddhism and its principles. When he gets familiar with all the principles, then he was produced before a council of ten monks. When all of them gave consent unanimously, then only he could become a Bhikshu and then he had to obey Sangh discipline.

Sangh members had the right to punish any monk in case of violation of rules or discipline. It was compulsory to have at least ten monks in the meeting of the committee and women monks or new monks were not taken in this institution. Committee could punish the accused monk by majority. Thus, Sangh administration was purely democratic where majority was always emphasized. In each Sangh, chairman used to read sermons of Mahatma Buddha every 15th day. Monks did not have the power to keep private properties or assets.



Task Discuss the cause of decline of Jainism and Buddhism.

There were tough rules for male and female monks in the Sangh and they had to follow all these rules. Intoxicating material, wealth, perfumes were prohibited for them. Eight months in a year, monks had to live outside the Sangh and promote Buddhism. During four months of rains only, they resided in the Sangh. At that time they studied Buddhist scripture and got a chance to remove their doubts. By the selfless service, sacrifice and religious promotion of the monks of the Sangh, Buddhism grew so fast in such a short span of time.

Baudha Sangh influenced Indian culture to a great extent. These Sangh were not only centre of religious propagation but also of educational propagation. People coming from far off places in search of knowledge, were satisfied here by knowledge. This Sangh produced many scholars that contributed in the development of literature.

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But Sangh system did have some defects too. Biggest defect was the absence of a central authority. There were thousands of Sangh in India, but there were none at their top which could manage and organized them. All the Sangh were independent. Its result was that if, there is any change in any Sangh, then other Sangh were not updated and it was also possible that other Sangh do not accept that change.

Heenyan and Mahayaan Factions

With the passage of time, many changes started taking place and difference of opinion started creeping in. Due to this reason only, Buddhism got divided in to two groups. One was Mahayaan other was Heenyan.

Mahayaan faction originated in the reign of Kanishka. This branch of Buddhism was different from Heenyan. It so happened that Baudha reformers tried to soften rigidity of religious rules and principles so that masses can accept it easily. But staunch Baudha were against any type of change. Hence after deepening of differences between unchangeable staunch ones and soft hearted pro change ones, they isolated from each other, and Buddhism got divided in to two factions- staunch anti-change old path followers Baudha were called Heenyan and pro-change faction called Mahayaan. Thus, Mahayaan was mainly a reformative form of Buddhism. Though both these sects are the branches of one religion only, yet there are many differences in them.

Difference between Heenyan and Mahayaan—There is acute difference between these two sects of Buddhism. Heenyan accepted pure and elementary form of religion by considering founder of Buddhism, Buddha as human being. Hence, there was no room for statue worship, prayers of Buddha, complexed rituals and incarnation. It did not recognize emotions. As a result this sect was less liberal, rigid and of narrowed perspective and non-solipsist. This faction considered suppression of desires as the natural path to salvation. Its religious scripture has been written in Pali language. This faction was only promoted in Syam, Burma, Lanka etc Countries.

In contrary, in Mahayaan faction, Mahatma Buddha was worshipped and revered as they considered him to be divine soul, God, incarnation of God. Having built the statue of Buddha and Bodhisattva, they adored him. Gradually this sect started building temples, established Buddha statue in them and custom of offering gift, valuables etc started gaining ground. Thus in this faction, statue worship, rituals, divinity and incarnation theory got importance, which resulted in making it emotion dominant, liberal and solipsist and it came closer to religion. Its scriptures started being written in Sanskrit. Eminent scholars like Parshwa, Ashwaghosha, Nagarjuna, Vasumitra and powerful rulers like Kanishka started patronizing this particular faction. In the fourth Baudha congregation also, this faction was given dominance and recognition. This sect was more promoted in Tibet, Japan, China and Central Asia. Number of its followers reached in millions and it was considered as one of the most prominent religions of the world. Monks from Mahayaan used to tell common public that Buddha not only attained Nirvana for himself, rather he opened the path to salvation for all. He made eradication of sore and grief of people engrossed in the cycle of life and death and to help them attain salvation, as his major objective.

On the basis of above description, it can be said that Heenyan sect emphasizes on its own advancement and growth, Whereas Mahayana strives for the betterment of all including themselves. Heenyan accepts ancient rules as they are, while Mahayana simplifies them, so that common people can follow it.

Promotion of Buddhism and Its Success

In ancient times, Buddhism developed very fast and quite well. In his lifetime only, Buddha got unprecedented success in spreading his Principles. Afterwards, it proliferated and soon it became prominent religion of not only India but of most regions of Eastern and North-South Asia. At present also, there are large number of followers of this religion in many countries. Following are the major reasons for the success and popularity of Buddhism –

Religious Simplicity – It is not unreasonable to say that the rise of Buddhism in India was a result of religious revolution. This religious revolution was against rituals of Vedic religion and influence of the priests. Buddhism rose at a time when the social and religious conditions were favorable for a change. Vedic religion was already quite old. Earlier simplicity, spontaneity and purity did no longer exist. Initially there was no such hypocrisy in yagnic rituals, but later on religious rituals were considered to be more practicable. People forgot conduct and started investing time in rituals. Yagna and Sacrifices became so complexed and expensive that it was no longer within the reach of common masses. Therefore, when Buddha started challenging superiority of Brahmans while opposing Vedic rituals, many people got impressed with him and acknowledged to be his disciple. Buddha's teachings were simple and plain. His foundation was Moral Conduct and not religious worships. In such circumstances, it was natural for masses to gravitate towards him. There is no doubt in the fact that, the way of life Buddha suggested, contained no philosophical complexity or impenetrability. Buddha explained in simple and easy terms that human life is anguished.

Thus, taking birth again and again is the cause of suffering. Rebirth is the only cause of internal human desires. Therefore it is his duty that he destroys all the desires. For this, he must adopt the middle path. Buddha explained the theory of karma in simplest of ways. He advised human being to be self-reliant. There is nothing in his teachings which is difficult to be understood. Buddha himself was a very subtle thinker and the way he presented his principles before the masses, depicts his fundamental genius. He emphasized on conduct and karma in his principles. He did not fall at all in Subtlety and complexity of philosophical principles. Buddha stressed on of Conduct so much that in some people's opinion, Buddhism seems to be a robust set of behavioural rules rather than religion. In fact, emergence of disorders and evils in the Vedic religion only led to the rise of Buddhism and due to the defects in Vedic religion only, Buddhism developed with rapid pace.

Buddha's Personality – Buddha's magnetic personality had a big contribution in the popularity of Buddhism. His personality was impressive, radiant and great. His character was so simple and holy that whosoever came into his contact, could not remain being affected. In fact, he fully characterized his principles in his own life and with that only he proved his supremacy over others. Some selfish people attempted to malign him but, all their efforts failed due to the superiority of his character. Humans should try to win anger with love, evil with good, greed with generosity and lies with truth. Buddha practices the principle himself in his life. Which implies that, whatever be other reasons of popularity of Buddhism, but it is was his character that won the hearts of the public. Buddha's wonderful, divine and great personality contributed in the advancement of Buddhism, which let to its fast paced rise.

Buddha was a prince himself but he gave up royal comforts and pleasures for public welfare and embraced the life of an anchorite. Hence, everybody was influenced by his personality. He maintained his cool even when somebody was abusing him. In his view, there was no distinction between humans. It helped in the promotion of Buddhism a lot.

Using Colloquial – Buddha gave his sermons in local language and dialect. Religious texts of this period were written in Sanskrit language. Religious debates and lectures etc. also used to happen in Sanskrit language only. Normal public became neutral or disinterested with this, as "Pali" was the language spoken by the common peoples. Buddha started promoting his religion in Pali. This gave him great comfort in spreading Buddhism. Buddha never intended to demonstrate his scholarship or knowledge, rather presented his concept in simplest of fashion, so that each individual could receive his message without any difficulty. In Buddhist texts we find one incident where one Brahman disciple of Buddha asked him "Why don't you give teachings in Sanskrit?" On this, Buddha replied, "I want to reach out to the poor by the language of the poor." Buddha knew very well that Sanskrit is prevalent only amongst well educated segments only. Therefore, propagation of his teachings in Sanskrit would make his principles grow amongst handful of educated class only. This is the reason, his thoughts proved to be quite popular. Uneducated women and men did not have any difficulty understanding them.

Logical Religion – Rationality was the major cause of rise of Buddhism. Buddha adopted logic by abandoning superstition. Simplicity of his logical religious interpretation often left many great

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personalities and scholars of Hinduism speechless. Renowned scholars and teachers of Hindu religion like “Mahakashyap Sariputra” were defeated and became his disciple.

Spirit of Tolerance—Tolerance was one of the most integral part of principles of Buddhism, which impressed people. Buddha was not doctrinaire. His ideas were neither staunch nor intolerant. That was the reason, King, Emperor, merchant, moneylender, Brahman, Kshatriya, all received his teachings. Contemporary organized Brahmans too did not do any type of protests against him, which proves that Buddha did not do any propagation which could hurt followers of any other religion.

Religion, Beyond Race—Mahatma Buddha had no place for casteism in his religion. Buddhism kept its door open for entire humanity. As per Buddha, people from every Varna were entitled to attain Nirvana. Automatically, those people easily got attracted towards him, for whom doors of Brahman religion were closed. That segment of masses, which were fed up with vile behaviour of the Brahmans saw, doors of social liberty in Buddhism. Buddha emphasized hugely on the purity of thoughts and Conduct. This was enough to attract downtrodden people. Underprivileged section of society received his teachings with enthusiasm. That point of time, abhorrent practice of untouchability was rampant in Hindu society. Thousands of so called untouchables accepted Buddhism and broke ties with Hinduism.

Devotion of Promoters—Propagators of Buddhism put in relentless efforts for promoting Buddhism. This religion had the benefit of availability of such groups of disciples and followers, who propagated his teachings with full enthusiasm. No other set of followers of any religion in the history of mankind, promoted their religion with such enthusiasm, promptness and sacrifice, what followers of Buddha did. Buddha himself was a great propagator. After enlightenment, he himself did a lot for promoting his principles. Buddhism as a reform movement was means of motivation in itself and its followers put everything at stake for its case and traveled to distant inaccessible places taking impassable routes. They offered their entirety in promoting Buddhism. Those selfless mystics, scholars, monks Acharyas etc who traveled long and impassable distances through stirring waves of oceans of Lanka, Java, Sumatra and China, to spread message of non-violent principle of Arya Buddhist religion are worthy of accolades.

Besides, various Baudha congregations took place at different time periods at different places, which helped in the promotion of this religion. There were four such Baudha congregations at different time periods, in which principles of the religion were compiled and they were given practical shape.

Fascinating Style of Campaigning—the style of promotion adopted by Buddha, was simple, comprehensible and appropriate for public interest. He used folklore, proverbs and idioms in abundance in his teachings. The examples and metaphors he used to explain his theories belonged directly to daily and normal life of human beings. He also had a blend of Humour and satire in his teachings, which brought about proper amount of interest. Besides being accomplished in esoteric philosophy, he was an expert in practical life too. Illustrations given by him demonstrate his practical skills. Buddha taught his disciples to follow that policy, because of which promoting Buddhism became even simpler.

Organization of Sangh (Federation)—Buddha was not only a great philosopher and religious shepherd, but he had immense organizing ability too. He understood clearly that no religion can sustain the waves of time, if it is not organized. Therefore, he advised his followers to be knitted in a strong organization. Major reason for the success of Buddhism was the organization of the Sangh. Buddha too was born in a Federal state. Therefore, he had a penchant for the organization of Sangh. While organizing the monks, he made their federation too. Buddhist Sangh was truly based on democratic platform. This pattern made the Sangh more famous. Those religious federations who have caste and class difference and where officials want to maintain their dominance and consider it their right to receive best service from disciple community, they do not succeed in attracting people. At least in the early centuries, life of monks was so pure and simple; they were filled with the spirit of service and devoid of ego sentiment, that it had a profound impact on the masses.

Buddha thus inspired his followers “Monks! For the interest of people, for the pleasure of people, go to different directions. Do not go two of you together.” His disciples followed this advice for a longer period. When they moved away from these ideals, Buddhism disappeared from their native land.

Protection by Emperors and Kings—A main cause of the rise of Buddha's religion was that kings, emperors and influential persons were embracing his religion and helping propagate the religion. Gautama Buddha himself was a heir apparent of a state, but still he was spearheading the path to the welfare of mankind by sacrificing all his luxuries. His sacrifice had great impact on people right from slaves to the likes of kings. Maharaja Bimbisar, Kaushal king Prasenjeet, Avanti's Chand Pradyot, Kaushambi's high king Maharaja Udayin and later on, even Emperor Ashoka, Kanishka and Harshavardhan etc. accepted Buddhism conferred the status of state religion. Emperor Ashoka, who is remembered as Second Buddha in history, was the staunch protagonist of Buddhism. . After Kalinga victory, he declared Buddhism as the state religion and continued promoting Buddhism lifelong. He converted Buddhism from a local religion to global religion and sent monks to promote Buddhism overseas. He sent even his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra to promote Buddhism in Lanka. Ashoka helped proliferate the religion by funding the Sangh and arranged to get various articles inscripted on rocks and pillars all across India and thus, his subjects started following Buddhism. No other Propagator gave such state level patronage to any religion in India, the way Ashoka did for Buddhism. After Ashoka, Kanishka took Buddhism to even China. Harsh too was an ardent devotee of Buddhism. Due to the efforts of these emperors, Buddhism spread quite well.

Decline of Buddhism

Downfall of Buddhism was equally fast as its rise. This religion declined so much that it soon disappeared from India. After eleventh century, there is no mention of even Buddhism in the history of India.

There were several reasons for the collapse—

End of State Protection—Advancement and rapid propagation of Buddhism was highly supported by Indian kings. But the situation did not remain the same forever. Later on, Buddhism was stripped of the status of state religion and this honour went to Brahman religion. Therefore, Brahman religion started growing and Buddhism started declining. After Kushans, except for Harsh and Pal emperors, all other emperors favoured Hinduism.

The rise of Hinduism—The Dysfunction or fatigue which had gripped Hinduism was reduced by the emergence of ardent campaigners. Great Scholars like Shankaracharya, Kumaril Bhat, Ramanand and Prabhakar etc, roamed across India from one corner to another, started indulging and defeating Buddhist scholars and monks in debate and thus started attracting the masses towards them. Emperors and wealthy people started respecting Hinduism and began to provide every kind of support. As a result, the powerful rebirth of Hinduism made Buddhism powerless and pushed towards its decline.

Internal Differences—Internal differences were biggest cause of the decline of Buddhism. After the death of Buddha, its unity was shattered and it divided into several branches, which had fundamental differences. These differences led to the rise of personal envy and people started drifting away from Buddhism.

Lack of thinkers and Philosophers—After Buddha's death, there was no great thinker and reformer in Buddhism. As a result, the evils which entered Buddhism could not be reformed. As a result, Buddhism continued to dwindle.

Corruption in Buddhist Association—With the passage of time, Buddhist monastery became the centre for immoral behaviour. Sangh of Religion union converted into homes of interpersonal conflict and discord of monks. Both men and women monks started living a comfortable and materialistic lifestyle. In such a characterless state, they could not continue to be a beneficial proposition in front of the Brahmins. As a result, people began to lose faith in them. Masses started seeing them with despise. Their driving force was finished; hence people saw them with hatred. Monks of Heenyan and Mahayaan indulged in open and public fight. These internal differences caused heavy damage to Buddhism. It is true that from time to time, Buddhist councils tried to eliminate the mutual discord, but there was no positive result came out of it.

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Women's entry into the Union – Initially, Buddha did not accept entry of women in the Sangh. He did not consider it appropriate, but circumstances forced him to allow women to enter the Union. However, entry of women into Sangh saw roll out of strict rules pertaining to Sangh conduct, so that both men and women monks had to live separately and in a way it was impossible for their character to fall down. But, after his death, women's entry in the Union was simplified. As a result; element of stringency related to conduct ceased to exist. It proved fatal for the conduct and restraint of monks. Pure and religious Life of Vihar (Sanctuaries) ended and there developed a blending of luxury and debauchery.

Competition with Other Religions – Another cause of the decline of Buddhism was its competition with other religions. Buddhism did not succeed competing with other religions like Jain, Shaiva, and Vaishnav etc. Jainism and Buddhism had lots of similarity. In some aspects, ideals of Jainism were better than the ideals of Buddhism. Therefore, Jainism also attracted a lot of people. Thus Jain, Shaiva and Vaishnav religions had a devastating effect on Buddhism.

Entry of False frills – Reason of Success of Buddhism was its simple and adoptable teachings. But later on, forgot preachings of Buddha and it got blend of hypocrisy and false conduct. Throughout his life, Buddha opposed these defects only, but in the course of time, these defects became part of his religion. As a result, in a few years only, Buddhism became weak.

Rise of Rajputs – Between eighth century and twelfth century, a large part of northern India Was under the control of Rajput kings. They enjoyed war and bloodshed. Buddha's path of non-violence was not useful to them. Hence, they encouraged Hinduism which believed in struggle. As a result, Buddhism disappeared altogether from northern India. On the other hand, South India too embraced Brahman religion. Hence, Buddhism could not set its foot even there.

Muslim Attacks – Buddhist monasteries were full of money and gold. This lured many Muslim invaders and it resulted in demolition of several monasteries and were plundered. Because of this wealth only, Muslims attacked these Buddhist monasteries and plundered huge amount of money. So in a way, Buddhism was badly damaged by Muslims. Muslims hated idol worshipers. Buddhists did not have any o military might. Therefore, they could not stand in front of the Muslim invaders. Thus, in such invasions, many Buddhists were killed. Some of them became Muslim and Some Fled towards the mountains in the north. This is how; Muslims gave a lethal blow to Buddhism.

Establishment of Divinity – Lord Buddha did not accept the existence of God. He did not promote divinity. But due to the influence of Hinduism, Buddhism too saw establishment of divinity in it and Worship of the deities started. Later on, monks started believing that Buddha himself was incarnation and God exists. They started making idol of Buddha worshipping them. As a result, Buddhism was started being seen as part of Hinduism only and masses did not have any special attraction towards it. Although, there are many reasons for the decline of Buddhism, but dysfunctioning of the Sangh, disorder and degenerate character of the Monks; can be considered as the actual reasons for its downfall. These Led to slackness in the propagation and masses started losing its liking for it.

This religion altogether disappeared from India, yet its remains can be found in countries where it was promoted and still in many parts of the world, this religion still exists. Buddhism is still practiced in many parts of the world. An attempt has been made to revitalize Buddhism in India and Mahabodhi Society in India has also been formed for improving religion state, which is trying to rejuvenate Buddhism. Sanctuaries, Vihar, pilgrimage centers, dispensaries and libraries have been built in ancient Buddhist pilgrim sites and efforts have been put in especially in Sarnath in to spread the religion. Besides, efforts are on in Shravasti, Kushinagar and Bodh Gaya to revitalize Buddhism by remaking Nava-Nirvana.

11.3 Comparative study of Buddhism and Jainism

Similarities – Both Buddhism and Jainism were the outcome of the general religious and spiritual consciousness that originated in India around seventh and sixth centuries A.D. Therefore, there are

bound to be similarities between them. Founder of both religions belonged to Kshatriya dynasties and not to a Brahman family. They did not preach their doctrines in Sanskrit, but rather used natural language, "Prakrit". Both broke rules of castes and gender in their faith. Both opposed the ritual of animal sacrificial. Both accepted the principle of karma in their preachings. Both emphasized that repeated human birth is result of their Karmas. Both religions did not accept Veda as divine sentence. Although they did not consider them as the basis of their faith, but Vedic literature had influence on them. Both agitated against Brahmanism and Seek to eliminate caste and other types of differences. Both had firm belief in holiness of life. By high ethical conduct and moral values can only one can attain salvation. Until Purity of mind, words and karma is not there, salvation could not be achieved. Both opposed activities like theft and causing loss of life. Both emphasized suppression of self desires.

Both suggested adherence of stringent rules for living to attain salvation. Though, one of them was little moderate on these code of conduct. Both Buddhism and Jainism emphasized on true character and true knowledge for salvation. Both were against Vedic rituals and legislations. Both stated salvation as goal of life. Both the unions were divided into two parts; one saint and other Adorer. Both the faiths setup Sangh and did publicity. Rules of Sangh were quite stringent. Each member of the consortium had to essentially follow these rules. Action was taken against those who violated discipline. Rise of both the religions took place region of India and their activities remained confined to the same region for long.

Dissimilarity of Both Religions – Both stressed on purity life but Jainism was ahead of Buddhism in this regard. Jains were way ahead in saving any form of life. They did not want to harm even smallest of creature. No meal after sunset and covering the mouth with a piece of cloth were results of the same assumption. Jains lived harsher life than Buddhists for salvation. Buddha prohibits excessive testing of body. But, Mahaveer's followers were way ahead in this respect. Even Mahaveer too tested his body with lots of physical tortures. When a new person used to come to a Jain temple intending to accept Jainism, he had to prove his tolerance level by plucking his hairs by hands. Jainism was way beyond Buddhism in testing the body like this.

It is true that Jainism and Buddhism both were different from Hinduism. Where Buddhism distanced itself entirely from Hinduism, Jains did not clearly steer away from Hinduism. Jains did keep in touch with the Brahmins.

Jains gave importance to the family, but Buddhists attached more importance to the Union. Buddhist stressed on eight elements viz; non-violence, truth, honesty, no stealing, celibacy etc, which was called Ashtangik Marg. But Jains emphasized on strict philosophy, knowledge and character, which was called Tri-rattan. Kings and emperors following Buddhism tried to bring people of other religion in their religion with full exuberance and power. On other hand Jainism could not get protection of emperors.

Monks have more important place than Upasak (family man) in Buddhism. But on the contrary, Jainism gives more importance given to home makers than monks. Jainism never established seclusion policy with Hinduism, while Buddhism always followed a policy of isolation. While Buddhism accepted adherence to a policy of isolation. The point was, that from the beginning only, Buddhism had revolutionary point of view, due to which, they could not establish harmonious relations with prevailing religious beliefs. But Jainism had absolutely tolerant perspective. Although, caste distinctions were opposed in the teachings of Jainism too, yet it was far more moderate than that of Buddhism. Buddha himself caste distinctions at many places in strong words and even opposed yagna rituals. But Jains never launched any scathing attack on prevailing practices of life. In later times, there developed such similarities between Jains and Vaishnav community that it became almost impossible to differentiate between the two. Even today, both have almost identical conduct.

Hinduism and Buddhism

Hinduism had been a great and grand religion since beginning. It has the wonderful ability of encompassing other religions in itself. Due to this only, it was successful in interpreting Buddhism

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as one of its branch in due course of time. Principles propounded by Buddha are normally found in Vedas and Upanishad. Buddha did not start his religion with an objective of eliminating Hinduism. He wanted to eradicate its evils. Even then, there are many similarities and dissimilarities between the two. We find following similarities and dissimilarities, if we do comparative analysis of both the religions –

Objective of both religions was same i.e. freedom from materialistic world and from cycle of life and death. Both believed in principle of karma, Incarnation and Salvation. Both were against religious propagation by force. Though, Buddhism was promoted outside India as well, but with peaceful means and not at the edge of sword. Both religions emphasized on purity of deeds and in practical life, Buddha proposed many idols of Hinduism only.

Despite having many similarities, Buddhism was different from Hinduism of that time. Vedas are most authentic source of knowledge in Brahman Hindu religion, but Buddhism is based on logic and it opposed authenticity of Vedas. In Hinduism, Brahmins had special place in society and no religious activity could be performed without them, but there was no such class in Buddhism and each could attain nirvana by doing noble deeds. Buddhism did not believe at all in the basic fundamental principle of Varna system of Hinduism and it composed society on the basis of equality, where there was no difference between a Brahman and a Shudra. Buddhism does not have space for yagna, sacrifice and other Hindu customs and rituals. Mahatma Buddha did not believe in magic and exorcism. Buddhism strongly opposed traditional, orthodox and superficial concepts of Hinduism. Mahatma Buddha formed Sangh for religious promotion and gave importance to Bhikshus, but Hinduism did not have such arrangements. Hinduism believed in god the divine power, but Buddhism was an atheist religion.

As per Hinduism, knowledge is essential for salvation, but as per Buddhism, nirvana can be attained by pure deeds. As per Hinduism, women and Shudra don't have the right to salvation, but as per Buddhism each one can attain nirvana, if he/she does noble deeds. Hinduism believes in customs, rituals, worship and daily meditation but Buddhism does not believe in this. Hindu religion did not have flexible ability to adjust to situations, but Buddhism had and hence it could be propagate itself outside India.

11.4 Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture

It is true that Buddhism vanished from its place of genesis India as a prominent religion. Still it does not mean that it did not affect Indian history. Buddhism was a great revolution in itself. Hence, it greatly influenced cultural, social, religious and political life of Indians. Emergence of this religion proved to be very beneficial for Indian culture. Richness of Indian culture got increased due to it and it helped people of India to develop a specific perspective towards life.

Influence on Indian political History – Buddhism emphasized on non violence and raised the slogan of “ ahinsa parmo dharmah”. Indian polity was influenced by this. As a result, Indian kings and emperors developed sentiment against bloodshed and violence. Due to influence of Buddhism, Emperor Ashoka gave up war and defined propagation of religion as his state objective. Due to his policy, India saw military weakness and Maurya Empire declined. Later dynasties and kings also got influenced by the principles of this faith. Its effect for Indian history was not good. But At one hand, where Buddhism proved to be reason for decline of Indian culture, on the other hand, it inspired Indian kings and emperors to be public oriented and drove them towards public service.

Influence on Hinduism – Buddhism gave us a religion loved by all, which did not need any priest, useless rules/customs/rituals. Hinduism was severely affected in this regard. Before Buddhism, Hinduism had dominance of Vedic rituals and yagna etc. This religion had become unaffordable for normal public. Shudra were maltreated. Mahatma Buddha used simple language and attracted people from Hindu religion. He had eminent personality, whose effect was bound to be on people who came in his contact. His followers later on started worshipping him with his idols. He emphasized majorly on purity, truth, non violence etc. which reduced the need of yagna etc. He made religion very simple which affected Hinduism to large extent.

Beginning of Paganism—It is quite possible that paganism was started by Buddhism only. It is correct that initially they were satisfied with some symbols of war, but later on images of Buddha and bodhisattva flooded the country. Gandhar is filled up with such images and idols and even now, these idols are found there. Many structures were constructed for these images and as a result, humungous amount of Vihaars came into existence. Thus, custom of paganism was transferred to Hindus from Buddhists only. Ancient Arya worship method was substituted by paganism of Buddhists.

Beginning of Math System—Buddha was the founder of math system also. Before Buddha also, many Hindus used to go to forests, but such math system was not in place. Buddha also founded a neutral fraternity religion. All Bhikshus used to live together as brethren and lived with lovable teacher and led disciplined life. Buddha propagators were not given any salary. In the promotion of Buddha principles, use of money was miniscule.

Sangh System—Composition of Sangh can be considered as the most important contribution of Buddhism to Hinduism. Custom of formation of Bhikshu Sangh started in Baudha period. Buddhists promoted Sangh religion. There was no such provision in Hinduism before. Thus, a new style of religious promotion started. Buddhists used to live in Vihar and led a disciplined life. These Baudha Vihaars became major centres of study later.

Political and Social Unity—Buddhism only broke the bond of caste system and subdued sentiment of separatist feelings. Due to this, by destroying different caste systems and superstitions, it started a revolution of uniting entire political formation of aryas in one string. Historian Havell writes, “Baudha religion by breaking caste system of Aryavarta and removing deep rooted superstitions of spiritual environment, contributed in shaping uniformity to entire Arya creed and laid the foundation of great Maurya dynasty.”

Foreign Relations—Buddhism played pivotal role in establishing foreign relations with other nations. Buddhism was invaluable gift to other nations from India. It was such a religion which was accepted by many countries coming out of caste shackles. This religion can be called as global revolution. Bhikshus and scholars from India started propagating it from 3rd century BC. As a result, people of foreign origin baptized by Buddhism, started considering India as pilgrim centre. Thus, on cultural level, India established relations with foreign countries.

Economic Results—For promoting Buddhism, Bhikshus travelled every nook and corner of the country and thus facilitated the mode of transportation, so that people can go from one place to other. Besides, these Bhikshus went outside India and broke separation of India from the rest of the world and thus religious relations with many nations were established. These religious relations led to economic relations later on and India started trading with them as well.

Moral and Intellectual Idols—Mahatma Buddha emphasized on purity of behaviour. He specifically stressed on mercy, sacrifice, truth and non violence. Besides, he propounded many principles for the moral upliftment which affected Indian society to a great extent. Besides, environment of intellectual independence also emerged due to Buddhism. Hindus accepted authenticity of Vedas. But Gautama Buddha opposed it and taught people to have independent meditation. He was of the view that anything should be adopted only by testing it perfectly. Hindu society was influenced by this also.

Development of Philosophy—As a result of Baudha religion, a new philosophical literature emerged in India. Propounder of Nihilism and Intermediate philosophy **Nagarjuna** has special and glorified place amongst world’s greatest scholars. Philosophical Buddhist literature was not only rich and aplenty, rather thoughts stirrer as well. Within Baudha faith itself, there emerged many philosophical sects. Pratitya Samutpad, Shunyavad, Yogachar, Sarvastivad, Sotrantik, Vigyanvad and Anityavad etc and many more philosophical concepts developed. Without studying creations of Vasumitra, Dignag and Dharmakirti, no one can said to be Acharya of Indian philosophy. To refute philosophical thoughts of Buddhism, many philosophers emerged, out of which names of Shankaracharya is foremost. If we analyze philosophical literature of India post Buddhism, then it becomes clear that Buddhism has direct or indirect contribution in its formation.

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Influence on Indian Art—Buddhism has unprecedented contribution in the field of arts. All fields of arts; architecture, sculpture, painting etc are indebted to Baudha religion. Ancient artwork is not available now. Major reason being that use of wood and clay was done in that period which was perishable. Use of stones was started by emperor Ashoka. It is proved from his inscriptions that these stones were used to leave immortal effect. In that sense, Buddhism was behind first use of stone. Ashoka made 84,000 Stupa, out of which Sanchi stupa is still considered to be of high artistic quality and value. Besides, he made many pillars in Baudha pilgrim places and construction of polished caves for Bhikshus was also carried out in his time only. These creations depict high quality of art work, which is considered a gift of Buddhism. After Ashoka, many emperors and wealthy people kept this architecture alive by making Stupa and Vihaars. Some creations of Baudha sculpture art present highest examples of world class art form. Sanchi, Bharhut and Amravati had world class artistic creations. Entrance of Sanchi stupa and its railings are invaluable creations of art.

Even reason for birth of sculpture could be linked to contribution of Buddhism only. After the emergence of Mahayana faith, images and idols of Mahatma Buddha started being built in every village and were installed at many places. Such huge number of idols were create that even now we see many of them and there is no museum in the world, where we don't find idol of Mahatma Buddha. These idols gave birth to sculpture art. In the period of kanishka, credit of origin of Gandhar art form goes to Buddhism only. Even in Gupta period, best examples of sculpture art form are found from three images of Buddha only. Apart from stone idols, metal idols too were made, of which copper image of Sultanganj is very important. Besides, 70 feet high Buddha image from Nalanda has been found. These images developed sculpture art form of India to a great extent.

In the area of paintings also, Baudha contribution is immense. Example of beautiful paintings on walls of caves and temples are found and main subject of painting in world famous caves of Ajanta and Alora is portrayal of different picture of life of Buddha and bodhisattva. Besides, we find beautiful examples of painting in caves of Badami, Bagh, Sittan Basal and Barabar.

Development of Literature—Buddhism created huge literature in the language of people for the people. For reading these, there was no need of priests. Thus, Prakrit and Pali language grew. Some of such examples are found even today.

- (1) **Abhidhamma Pitak**—It contains Buddhist philosophy and analysis of its religious element. It has been divided in seven sub parts and each sub part is considered as one volume. In this part, most important volume, Kathavastu, was compiled by religious guru of Ashoka, Mogaliputta.
- (2) **Vinay pitak**—It contains those moral rules which were considered to be necessary for all Buddhist male and female monks. It was divided in to three parts-Sutt Vibhang, Parivar and khandak. Sutt Vibhag is further divided into two sub parts-Bhikshu Vibhang and Bhikshuni vibhang. Parivar contains complete summary of Vinay pitak. Khandak has been divided in to two sub parts—Mahavagya and Chulyavagya. In both of these, everything related to Bhikshu Sangh, has been explained in story form. Entry to Sangh, clothes of Bhikshus, bed, fasting and major available questions issues and their answers have been described in detail in both these volumes. These have been explained with examples of Buddha that when Buddha was in such condition, how he handled it and thus he made this rule. Hence, khandak throws ample light on contemporary social and political condition and on life of Buddha.
- (3) **Sutt Pitak**—This Granth has five parts—Anguttar Nikaay, Dirgh Nikaya, Khuddak Nikaya, Majhim Nikaya and Sanyukta Nikaya. Following is the brief description of all five:—
 - (a) **Anguttar Nikaay**—It has 2300 Sukta divided in 11 parts
 - (b) **Dirgh Nikaya**—It contains very large 34 Sukta which are divided into Khanda. These khandas have interpretation in the form of Mahatma Buddha's interaction for almost all subjects, which are -how superiority of human depends upon Vansh, Janma and karma; reincarnation and attainment of nirvana and god and its authority etc. out of these Sukta; Mahaparinirvana Sukta is the most vital and famous.

- (c) **Khuddak Nikaya**—It contains 15 books which have Sukta on different subjects. Out of these, Dhammpad and Jataka are most famous. Dhammpad is referred to as Geeta of Buddhism. Jataka has around 500 stories mentioning previous births of Mahatma Buddha.
- (d) **Majhim Nikaya**—It has 125 Sukta. These Sukta have brief description of larges Sukta of Dirghnikaya in smaller format.
- (e) **Sanyukta Nikaya**—It has 56 Sukta and has been divided in five parts. Of them, one part is related with one subject, another with another and so on and so forth, each part is related with some subject and thus compilation of Sukta relating to different subjects has been done.

Baudha Bhikshus also focused on compilation of literature Granths. Epic named Buddhacharitra and play called Sariputra Prakaran is contribution of Buddhism. Granth named Manjushreemoolkalp and Divyavadan are Baudha Granths. These literatures are not only important in the context that they throw light on the principles of religion, rather they have proved to be quite helpful for historians in the tough task of rebuilding ancient Indian history. Milindpanho and Mahavastu have provided us with ample historical material.

11.5 Difference between Jainism and Vedic and Baudha Religion

6th century BC saw emergence of many religions in the middle of Ganges valley. We get to know about 62 such religious faiths in that time. Jainism and Buddhism were most prominent of all. They rose as powerful religious reformist revolution.

Jain religion is different from Vedic and Baudha religion in many aspects

Jainism is newer as compared to Vedic religion, but older than Buddhism. Rigvedic Aryas were nature worshipper and polytheists. They used to worship those powers of nature, which they feared or were influenced with. Rigved mentions 33 deities, all of which were symbol of different powers of nature for example—Prithvi, Agni, Som, Indra, Vayu, Marut, Parjanya, Rudra, Varun, Shiva, Vishnu, Ashwin etc. Indra was most important of all. He was deity of rain, light and justice. He can be compared with Irani deity Ahurmajda. Besides, male deities, Rigved mentions about female deities as well. Aryas have revered the fascinating period before sunrise as Usha deity. On the other hand, Jain religion stresses on the existence of soul. It searches development of soul or creature in vegetation, rocks, air and water. In contrast, Buddhism does not believe in soul or creature. It is silent on this topic.

In Vedic religion, yagna and religious recitation were done to appease deities. These recitations had great importance in Rigvedic period. These were done individually and in group both. In these prayers Arya did not seek salvation or Moksha, but wished hundred years of age, sons, wealth and victory.

There was no custom of temples or paganism. They tried to appease deities by meditation and invocation only. Yagna was in prevalence. In initial times, instead of external rituals, doing yagna with mantras was considered better. In later times, practice of yagna with Havan(holy fire) started rising. Ghee, milk, grains, flesh etc were offered in yagna. Normally, each one used to do yagna individually, but group yagnas also used to happen, which were helped by priests. Priests were given gold, cow, males and female slaves etc as offering for doing yagna. Despite worshipping many deities, Aryas were inclined towards monotheism. On all deities, one supreme element was installed, which was called as Hiranyagarbha, Prajapati and Vishwakarma. They used to worship Pitar (old dead people from dynasty) also along with deities. Rigved also has imagination of paap-punya and swarg-narak. Aryas also believed in immortality. But there was no concrete effort of attaining salvation. They believed in reincarnation and soul. On the other hand though, in both Jainism and Buddhism, non violence has been emphasized, but Jains have more stringent adherence to practice of non violence than Buddhists. They considered killing of even smallest of creature a sin. In their view, even thought of doing damage to any creature was sin. As per them, even farming is sin as it kills small insects etc. in contrast; Buddhism is not so much rigid. In special conditions, especially in other countries, Buddhists used to eat flesh. It is

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said that even Gautama Buddha had diarrhoea due to eating pork and he died. Thus, on the question of non violence, Buddhists were more practical.

Purush Sukta as mentioned in 10th Mandal of Rigveda describes about origin of four Varna. As per it, from the mouth, arms, thighs and feet of supreme element (Brahma), emerged Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra respectively. But 10th Mandal was added later on. Hence, fourth Varna emerged in later Vedic period. Thus, in Rigvedic period, social classification system existed. Effect of such classification was there on contemporary religion. On the other hand, Jainism did not believe in caste system at all. Buddhism was more vocal against caste system than Jainism. In fact, Jainism did not criticize caste system the way Buddhism did. As per Mahaveer, accumulated holy or sinful acts only take you to any particular high or low class birth or Varna. Vedic religion does not emphasize on rigorous penance and sacrifice, but Jain religion does. Even to the extent that, Mahaveer swami asked to give up clothes as well. Buddhism does not talk about total attire sacrifice. This religion was against any type of excessiveness. It talked about adoption of Madhyam Marg for (middle path) nirvana attainment.

Vedic religion does not talk about nirvana. It wished about long age, wealth, sons and victory. Jain religion did not consider Grihastha (married men and women) eligible for nirvana. Without living life of Sanyasi (anchorite) or penance or being in Sangh, none could attain nirvana. We don't find such things in Buddhism. Even Grihastha could attain nirvana being in Grihastha life. Vedic religion does not endorse Moksha. As per Jainism, Moksha is that stage of soul, when it gets free of worries. As per Buddhism, Moksha refers to finishing entire personality and existence. As per Jainism, Moksha can be attained after finishing life, but in Buddhism Moksha can be attained in the life itself.

There was no importance of Sangh in Vedic religion. For religious congregation, many people used to meditate, worship at one place and do yagna. Buddhism emphasized on Sangh very much. It was considered as one of the Ratna of Triratna. But Jain Sangh was neither that important, nor was it well organized as that of Buddhism.

Vedic religion had custom of yagna. Offering of ghee, milk, grains and flesh was started being given in yagna. Sages and hermits emphasized on yagna, meditation and also on moral values. They also used to pray gods and deities to be saved from sins. There was no place for yagna in Jainism. Buddhism was totally in contrast with Vedic religion. This is the reason; Buddhism could grow more than Jainism.

We don't find mention of royal patronage to Vedic religion. Besides, the level of royal patronage Buddhism received, Jainism could not and hence, Buddhism grew more than Jainism.

Bhagwatvad – One reaction against Brahman customs and rituals emerged in the end of later Vedic period. Around 6th century BC, many such religious and social reformist revolutions started, which were against fundamentalism, rituals and animal sacrifice of Brahman religion. One such religion was Bhagwat religion. But much like other atheist faiths, it could not sustain its existence and soon became part of Brahman religion. But even after getting merged in Brahman faith, it did affect Brahman faith to a great extent. It helped Brahman religion get rid of many useless customs and rituals especially with animal sacrifice. This actually changed the nature of Brahman religion and it gradually shifted towards dedication and worship based Hindu religion.

In fact, Bhagwat religion is the preliminary part of development of huge Hindu religion, Vaishnav religion. Vaishnavism is based on worship of Vishnu, but base of Vaishnav religion is found in Rigved only. But in this ancient period, Vishnu was not a very strong deity- only in the form of Surya and Vedic period was a phase when there was no special reverence for a deity with physical form or nature. First effort of devoutness is found in **Panini's** Asthama Adhyaya, which is a grammar book of 5th century BC. Word Vsaudevakah of this book is referred to as a person who is devout of Vasudev. There is another evidence of 4th century BC, which indicates that worship of Vasudev had started. This is proved by Megasthaneze which describes that people of Mathura revered Heracles. Heracles is supposed to be the Greece name of Vasudev Krishna. There is no doubt that Vasudev Krishna was a historical figure. Father of Vasudev was Vasudev. His father was leader of Yadav dynasty Vrishnis or Saatvats. Vasudev Krishna became the most prominent leader of this dynasty. He led a contemporary religious

revolution of his time and attained the status of a divine figure in his lifetime only. He was given the title of Bhagwat which means, such a person towards which devoutness is shown. It appears that by 2nd century BC, he was being worshipped as a deity. This gets proven by the Wasay nagar pillar inscription of Heliodors, in which Heliodors is shown as a devout of Vasudev.

Chandogya Upanishad also throws light on the life of Krishna. Krishna has been mentioned as son of Devaki and disciple of hermit Ghor. It appears that Krishna was influenced by this hermit, especially of devout religion. Krishna and his teachers showed respect to Surya and by this time, Surya was being worshipped as Vishnu. Religious philosophy of Krishna comprehensively gets reflected in the Geeta. Sage Ghor strongly opposed animal sacrifice and believed in meditating on a glittering form. It appears that sage Ghor's thoughts had influenced Krishna, as this preaching of Sage Ghor became fundamental pillar of the Geeta. This religious epic had many philosophical elements which were late added by worshipper of Krishna apart from Ghor and Krishna. Hence, the way Krishna propounded Bhagwat religion, became basis of Vaishnav religion later. Probably, this religion was the extended form of sun worship.

Gradually, there developed many stories revolving Krishna's personality, of which his childhood activities and Raas leela are most famous. Besides, he has been shown as a shepherd. He has been mentioned as shepherd in purans possibly due to the reason that in purans or Rigved and other vedic scriptures, Vishnu (Krishna was his incarnation) has been called as Gope or protector of livestock. He has been shown as shepherd due to some other possible reason also.

Mathura region which is related with Krishna is famous for its livestock since Vedic times only. In Taitriyasanhita, we find mention of a religious teacher called Gobal, who is understood to be descendent of Krishna's Vrishnis family. But many stories related with Krishna's life have been taken from contemporary tribe's deity stories. It is difficult to fix the period to which Vasudev Krishna belonged, but as per Chandogya Upanishad, he is said to be existing somewhere between 6th and 7th century BC. It appears that Bhagwat religion started when saint Krishna was started to be worshipped and considered as incarnation of Vedic deity lord Vishnu. This process possibly finished by the time of creation of Bhagwat Geeta and Bhagwat religion was started being recognized as Vaishnav religion as well. It is suggested that Brahmans deliberately accepted Vasudev Krishna as incarnation of lord Vishnu, so that influence of this new popular religion subsides and it becomes part of Vedic religion.

From Shatpath Brahman and Bauddhayan dharma sutra it appears that there was another sage at that time known as Narayan who was later considered to be as one form of Krishna only as he too encouraged sun worship. Probably another name of him was Hari and was considered as very powerful in Mahabharata. Initially, followers of sage Narayan who was considered as deity were called panchratrik. But it appears that afterwards, these pachratriks merged with followers of Bhagwat religion and started worshipping lord Krishna only as, Vasudev Krishna and Narayan both worshipped sun and were considered as incarnation of lord Vishnu. Hence, Vasudev Krishna, Narayan and Vishnu all became one. Bhagwat religion, which emerged amongst people of Mathura and Yadav community, gradually shifted towards west India, as many Yadav tribes started shifting to that region. Saint Vasudev Krishna took some centuries to become a complete deity and his image worship and acceptance of incarnation of lord Vishnu started by 1st century BC only. Even in Bhagwat Geeta also, Krishna has not been shown as a god which is comprehensive, supreme and one who can't commit mistakes.

Bhagwat Philosophy

Best example of Bhagwat philosophy is found in Bhagwat Geeta, which is said to be of 1st or 2nd century BC. Fundamental element of Bhagwat philosophy is principle of karmayoga. Best example of this principle is found in hesitation of Arjun when he was shying away from his duty. Karmayoga is such a principle in which it is necessary to do karma or discharge duty; though having attachment with result of karma or having its desire is prohibited. Yoga is such equilibrium of mind where there is neither scope for selfishness nor for result of karma. Benefit of yoga is that a karmayogi would also recognize

Notes

genuine karma and would do it and would not cross his limit while executing his duty or doing karma. In other words, his karma would be in correct magnitude or amount as in the greed of result of karma only; one crosses the limit, which becomes a hindrance in the path of Moksha or salvation. Hence, Geeta adopts a path between abstinence and inclination which is a golden tool of attaining Moksha.

As per Geeta, while discharging duty or Karma, it is possible to sacrifice results. As per Geeta, karma is not a shackle or obstacle which stops one from Moksha, since even a staunch anchorite even can't stop all its karma of life. As long as he is alive, he will breathe and as per Geeta, taking breathe too is karma in itself. Hence, karma is not bad; rather expecting results for karma is biggest evil and root cause for all evils. Hence, adoption of Sanyas while discharging karma is self proclaimed path of Geeta.

This is quite possible that one does not discharge his duties in the absence of inspiration and become totally worthless. Geeta is aware of such possibilities. Hence, Karma suggests two types of inspiration which can keep a karmayogi on right path. First inspiration is for cognitive followers (gyanmargi) whose goal is self purification and identification of soul, by which soul can unite with Brahma and become one. Hence, for different karmas, no different inspirations or objectives have been suggested. Rather for all karmas, only one objective has been suggested and that is to become one with Brahma.

Second objective is for devout and which is that, karmayogis should discharge all their karmas in the service of lord and results for all these karmas should be wished for lord only. Objective of such inspiration should be to have total contact with god. Objective of both these paths karmayogi is to attain peaceful and comprehensive condition after coming in contact with god.

Spirituality of Geeta—Geeta accepts difference between a mortal and unchangeable quality and volatile and mortal quality, which is final truth. This is not volatile nature. This is an infinite creature, which lives inside each of us and hence it is not different from physical matters, rather fundamental of those elements and puts life into it. Pure Brahma or providence is eternal and would continue to be, but its physical form or nature would keep on changing. This knowledge is attained by looking at external world. With our own self introspection, we analyze ourselves, then we reach on conclusion that some things remain to exist even after our death. This is soul which neither takes birth nor dies. Neither is it body nor experimentative mind. Each individual soul is part of supreme element or providence or lord. There is illusion of Soul pride due to the fact that we don't understand that soul is part of supreme lord; in fact it is a form of soul and whatever we do in this world, don't do it as a soul rather as nature which is illusion and keeps on changing every second. As per teaching of Geeta, physical formed providence is a mixture of non-volatility of Brahma and volatility of nature both in itself. There is no beginning of nature or illusion and God and both depend on each other. Geeta also explains principle of reincarnation as per which, each birth is the result of previous birth's karma and cycle of life and death ends with right karma and salvation is attained. In the end, we can say that Bhagwat philosophy of Geeta, establishes a balance between different concepts of that time period. As per it, there are three paths of salvation attainment- karma, Gyan and Bhakti (deeds, knowledge and dedication or devoutness).

Path of karma is another meaning of Vedic yagna or animal sacrifice. Alike Vedic period, offering or sacrifice is also talked about in this, but it talks of sacrificing selfish motives of oneself and not of animals. As per Geeta, actual offering or sacrifice is surrender before supreme god. A karmayogi offers his entire karma and its results as sacrifice before the supreme lord.

With knowledge path, we can identify latent ultimate truth, which is Brahma which we can't see in normal nature. But Geeta's inclination is towards Bhakti Marg, which can be understood as love with god and emotional bonding. As per Geeta, this is the easiest path to salvation, which can be adopted by one and all. It is not possible for all to concentrate on abstract Brahma as suggested by Gyan Margi, rather if we worship it as physical god of one form only, then it is possible for all and each devout can be satisfied with this. This is the secret of success of Bhagwat religion.

Still we find that Bhakti Marg is not different from karmayoga. Both can be adopted simultaneously. A true devout can be a karmayogi also, if he does not stray from god worship even if being involved in his karma. Thus, we find a synergy between Karma Marg, Bhakti Marg and Gyan Marg in Bhagwat Geeta.

There are four other names of relatives of Vasudev Krishna, who have been accorded status of deity they are-Sankarshan, Pradyumna, Samb and Anirudha.

Notes

Bhagwat religion not only gave birth to Vaishnav religion, but it had huge on Hindu religion of later times. For example- paganism started in this religion first and bhakti system too started with it.

11.6 Summary

Narratives written by Jain followers on ancient Jain literature and Jain poems are found in Marathi. After Century Sanwat, Sanskrit language started expanding in north India. This language was first adopted by Buddhists and then by Jains. More than half of Jain literature is filled up with medieval philosophical thoughts. Its composers while writing it have tried to establish their supremacy and greatness in description of moral stories, grammar and vocabulary. Two critical Granth written on Pancha Tantra are symbolic of Jain influence.

11.7 Keywords

1. **Worship** – To revere, meditate.
2. **Branch** – Religion divided in two parts.

11.8 Review Questions

1. What were the reasons for religious revolution in India?
2. Throw light on the character and teachings of Vardhman Mahaveer.
3. Explain principles of Jain religion.
4. Mention reasons of rise and fall of Jain religion.
5. Analyze principles of Gautama Buddha while describing his character of life.
6. Present comparative analysis of major teachings of Gautama Buddha and Mahaveer.
7. What is Bhagwatism? What do you know about it?

Answers : Self Assessment

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-----------|
| 1. Eighteen | 2. Jain Religion | 3. Kundal |
| 4. (a) | 5. (a) | 6. (c) |
| 7. (b) | 8. True | 9. False |
| 10. True | 11. False | |

11.9 Further Readings



Books

1. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New and publishers.*
2. Ancient Indian History – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.*
3. Ancient Indian History-A New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
4. Ancient Indian History – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic publishers and Distributors.*
5. Ancient Indian History – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*

Notes

Unit-12: Bhagvatism, Shaivism and Brahmanism

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

12.1 Vedic Religion

12.2 Religion of Epic Age

12.3 Shakta Religion

12.4 Mythological Religion

12.5 Vaishnav Religion

12.6 Shaiv Religion

12.7 Summary

12.8 Keywords

12.9 Review Questions

12.10 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the student will be able to:

- To understand characteristics of Shakta Religion,
- To be able to describe origin and development of Bhagwat religion.

Introduction

Religion always has special place in Indian culture. In fact, it is the life of Indian culture. Since ancient times, it has been accepted as a pious inspirational element. Landmass of India has been playground of many religion and faiths. The religious tolerance we see here, is difficult to be seen in any part of the world. Each religion has contributed in the making of Indian culture. Brahman(vedic), Bauddh and Jain are ancient Indian religions. Their detailed description would be given in following lines –

12.1 Vedic Religion

We firstly get knowledge about ancient Indian religion from vedic literature, in which we count Veda, Upanishad, Brahman Granth and Aranyak. Oldest Granth of this literature is Rigveda, in which we

first witness polytheism. Aryas believed in many deities. Out of it, most were symbolic of different natural forces, which have been humanized and it is assumed that all the world is run by the grace of these deities only. Each deity has been shown as the creator and controller of this world.

Majorly, there are three types of vedic deities –

- (1) *Deities of Dyusthan (sky deities)* – Varun, Pushan, Mitra, Surya, Vishnu, Ashwin, Usha etc.
- (2) *Deities of Antriksha* – Indra, Apam, Parjanya, Aapah, Rudra, Marut etc.
- (3) *Deities of Prithvi* – Agni, Brihaspati, Som etc.

Mostly mentioned deities in Rigvedas are male and female deities have subsidiary place. Aditi is the important goddess of this time. Some deities are symbolic of intangible sentiments like-shraddha, manyu, dhatri, pran, kaal etc. Deities were worshipped by means of yagna. On this occasion, deities were called with help of mantras. Rigveda has mention of mantras specifically used for different deities. Offerings of ghee, grains, agni, flesh etc were given. It was assumed that through agni, offerings reach deities. Deities were assumed to be present in person and accept offerings and bless with desired results. Brahman granths have detailed mention of yagna. Major yagnas were- Somyagna, Agnihotra, Purushmedha, Panchmahayagna, Vajpeya, Rajsuya, Ashwamedha etc. Rigveda has detailed mention of Somyagna. It was an exhaustive yagna, which was participated by four head priests, numerous priests along with three altar and three agnis. Naturally, it would have been a costly yagna. In pitra yagna, for the satisfaction of pitars, sacrifice was given. Purushmedha used to come under the ambit of Somyagna. It made 11 or 25 yupa, in which middle person was bound. It run for five days. Panchmaha yagna is considered necessary for each grihasth. It contained bhoot yagna, manushya yagna, pitri yagna, dev yagna and brahma yagna. Rajsuya yagna was performed by crowned king. It appears that on the occasion of Rajsuyayagna, king used to go to house of queens, who conferred him title of rajpad. This yagna was performed only by kshatriyas. Ashwamedha was identical to som yagna. Kings desirous of sovereign authority used to perform this yagna. It had provision of horse sacrifice.

Vedic deities are protector of noble behaviour and moral rules. They are told to be related with rit. Rit means truth and immortal authority. Rigveda has beautiful description of rit. It is told that in the beginning of the universe, rit took birth first- 'Ritam cha satyam chabhidhat tapsodhyajayat'. This only establishes dignity and proper organization in this world. Rit is the regulator of world organization or system. Deities are forms of rit or have emerged out of it and they protect rit with their divine powers. Som emerge and develop through rit, surya magnifies rit and rivers carry the same rit. Thus, by rit we mean universal physical and moral system. **Dr. Radhakrishnan** has defined rit as path of noble behaviour and real path free of evils.

Vedic sages imagined deities in human forms and implanted all human qualities in them. Difference between deity and human was that deities were immortal and omnipresent. They did not have human weaknesses. They contained humungous powers and morality. In contrast, human was mortal and of limited resources. He was desirous of deity grace and mercy and his development was possible only with his grace. Anger of deities could destroy him. Hence, humans were always busy trying to appease them.

Characteristic of vedic religion is that the deity worshipped in it, has been accepted as almighty and supreme. At times Varun and at times Indra, has been accepted as supreme and all other deities have been seen as emerging out of them. **Maxmuller** has termed this tendency as Henotheism and Kathenotheism. With pursuit of Vedic literature, it appears that sages started finding who is the most powerful and supreme deity of all, getting puzzled by the number of deities. Question arose that for which deity havi should be arranged (kasmai devaya havisha vidhem). To reduce number of deities, some were mixed up in same category only. Prithvi and Akash were merged and called as Dyavaprihvi. Mitra-Varun and Usha-Ratri were combined. Marut, Aditya and Ashwin too were considered as one category. Thus, number of deities got reduced. But sages did not get satisfy with this as they wanted to find supreme god. In the last phase of their meditation they found this important element that supreme truth(sat) is one which is known as agni, yama, matrishva by intellectual people- 'Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti. Agni yamam matrishvanamahu'. The same ultimate element has been referred to as

Notes

Notes

hiranyagarbh, prajapati, vishwakarma etc this is realization of monotheism. Thus, rigvedic converted in to monotheism after starting from general polytheism. Detailed description of monotheism is found in later philosophy.

We find thoughts pertaining to supreme element in two forms –

- (1) **Pantheism**—Its analysis is found in **Nardiya Sukta** of Rigveda which says that in the origin of universe, there was only one supreme element. Universe emerged out of that only. That only is rife in entire universe.
- (2) **Monism**—Its analysis if found in **Purush Sukta** which says that ultimate element of this universe is that broad personality. It is rife in the universe, yet not in it.

Major objective of Rigvedic religion was to attain physical comfort. Deities were worshipped for victory at war, better farm output, attainment of offspring etc. It also believed in attainment of heaven through yagna. Their thoughts were totally optimistic. They wanted to consume luxuries of life completely. They did not believe in penance etc. Initially, customs of yagna were very simple, but became very complexed and tough later on. Some yagnas were very exhaustive and costly. In Upanishad period, importance of yagna decreased and in place of rituals, knowledge was encouraged. Penance, sacrifice and retirement were given importance. For salvation, retirement and change of outlook were considered important. Main teaching of Upanishad is synergy of distil element of individual (soul) with distil element of universe (brahma).

12.2 Religion of Epic Age

By mixing pre vedic ritual oriented religion and later vedic knowledge path religion, during epic ages, one public religion was developed, which was comfortable for all. Importance of some deities decreased and some saw increase in their powers. Our of deity group, major importance was given to Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Out of them, Vishnu and Shiva were more popular. Other deities had formal recognition. These deities were imagined in human form and some qualities were incorporated in each of them. Despite being equipped with divine powers, they used to live on earth and did many pageants. Soon, Brahma's importance finished and Shiva and Vishnu only remained as major deities of epic age. Ram and Krishna were considered to be incarnation of Vishnu only and they were incorporated with specific qualities. Thus, incarnation school of thought developed. Character has been given special importance to Ramayana. Character only makes human divine. This is called religion. Morality, veracious, noble conduct etc are qualities of religion as per Ramayana. Character of Ram had all such qualities and hence he is called supreme creature. Later on, he was considered as deity. Mahabharata also had respect of public religion and Krishna has been told as incarnation of Vishnu. Reason of popularity of such epics was that they told a simple way of attainment of salvation for general public. This resolution is of meditation or worship, which was available for all. Supreme lord gets worshipper rid of his sins with his prayers. Krishna tells Arjuna in Geeta –

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Agni, Brihaspati, Som are deities of
2. is a yagna alike Som yagna. It had provision of horse sacrifice
3. Detailed description of goddess importance is there in

'Come to my recourse and leave all other religion. I would set you free of all your sins, don't lament'.

Geeta characterizes Krishna as omnipotent Brahma, who is the creator and lord of this universe. It has the synergy of Brahma of Upanishad and Vasudev of public religion. Krishna became centre of bhakti

revolution and it had individual effect on public minds. Upanishad philosophy was not comprehensible for all due to its deeper meanings and general public needed a religion of utility. Public needed a deity which could be trusted and which could help him at crisis. Epics presented such a public religion. Bhagvatgeeta presents such a lively personality of providence which incarnates on earth for the protection of its devotees, established religion, protects noble people and eradicates evil and evil people. While accepting Upanishad knowledge, bhakti has been accorded importance. This is the easiest way of attainment of salvation.

We witness blending of vedic and non vedic beliefs in epic age religion. Yagna, Shiva, Krishna, Durga, Indra etc deities have been worshipped. We also find worship of parvat, nag, rakshas, yaksha puja etc. we find description of several types of yagna. Kings used to do yagna like Rajsuya and Ashwamedha. Main goal of epics was to establish truth and justice in the society. It depicts victory of truth over false and of justice over suppression through different stories.

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12.3 Shakta Religion

Origin and Development

Those who worship goddess as ishtadevi, are called as Shakta. In ancient Indian group of deities, goddesses too had special place along with gods and shakti (goddess) has been worshipped since ancient times. Alike Vaishnav and Shaiva religion, Shakta religion too has been popular. Gradually many names were attached with Shakti-Durga, Kali, Bhawani, Chamunda, Rudrani, Lakshmi, Sarswati etc. Durga was accepted as supreme power of the universe and was given recognition as creator, sustainer and destroyer.

Shakt religion had strong bonding with Shaiva religion in past. Wife of Shiva (uma) has been called as Jagatjanni (mother of the universe). Much like Shaiva faith, Shakta religion too is as old as pre historic age. In Indus valley civilization, practice of Matri devi was prevalent. Many images and idols of matri devi have been found in excavation. Vedic literature tells us about Aditi, Usha, Sarswati, Shree Lakshmi etc. We find Devi sukta in 10th mandal of rigveda which worships Vakshakti. It states at one point-I am the lord of entire universe, an instrumental in getting my devotees wealth, consider myself as separate from Brahma and head of deities. I am present in all the past. All deities residing at various places, do everything for me, whatever they do. Similarly, mention of Aditi in the form of mata is found in many richas. It is mother, father, and son all in one. All the gods, Panchjan, past and future are all Aditi. Saraswati has been praised in the Rigveda, saying Saubhagydayini (Subhgamayskart Na Saraswati). Mother Earth, saying his son Atharvaveda, money, sweet word of praise has to offer. It is clear from these citations Vedic sages importance of power was clearly accepted. Force behind the emergence of worship of the Vedic and non-Vedic trends both continued.

Mahabharata and Mythology gives a detailed description of the divine majesty. By the time of the Mahabharata Sakta sect had already a solid base in society. Krishna advises Arjuna to Bhishmparva stated that in order to achieve victory in the war was the praise of the goddess. That morning there's a man who worshiped power conquered in war, and it leads to Lakshmi. Viraatparva of the goddess Vindywasini Yudhisthira, Mahishasurmrdini, arising from the womb of Yashoda, parampriya Narayana and Krishna's sister saying that their praise. Was reported in a family of Nandgop Yashoda Devi took birth from the womb. Kansa Shila being thrown by the girl on the left from the skies, and the visiting Vindhyparwat settled. In mythology, Vindhya parwat is residence of the goddess. Markandeya Purana celebrates his praise of the glory of the Divine has been. Divine in all beings Vishnu - Maya, consciousness, intelligence, sleep, hunger, shade, strength, desire, shame, race, faith consoles, Kanti, Lakshmi, instinct, smriti, compassion, contentment, variations in maternal and confusion by telling their has been worshiped.

Upper class and all of heaven and give him the auspicious said. His creation, and destruction of follow Shaktibhuta, Sanatani goddess of properties has been praised as a base and Gunmayi. To that described killing of Mahishasur, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Indra, Chandra, Varuna and the sun gods Tejpunji

Notes

exude from the mouth of the origin of the power. All the gods-their weapons are provided. He had Siva Trident, Vishnu Chakra, Varun Conchshell, Dhnushbanyukt quiver of pawan, fire sharp, Indra's thunderbolt, Yama Dand, Brahma Kmandlu, Kall the shield and sword and Vishwakarma halberd Devi was presented. That force which he Mahishasur (Mahishasurmrdini) was known.

Markandeya Purana and praise associated with the legend of Durga (Durga Saptshati) which is part of the text in the days of Navratri is very devoutly. Another legend says that god when he suffered Sumbh and Nishumbh Asuron like going to the Himalayas to worship. It pleased him to reveal the goddess and put Asuras destruction. She Ambika, Kali, Chamunda, Koushiki etc names were noted.

Goddess was worshiped in three forms:

- (1) As peaceful or benign.
- (2) As violent or stormy.
- (3) As Kamprdhan.

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Krishna advises Arjuna to the gods in order to achieve victory in the war was praised Described.
(a) Bhishma Parva (b) Peace Festival
(c) Forest Parva (d) None of these.
5. Viraat festival Vindwasini the Goddess, Mahishasuramardini, Prmpriya Narayana and Krishna's sister saying that their praise.
(a) Arjun (b) Bhim
(c) Yudhisthir (d) None of these.
6. Geetagovind creation.
(a) Somadev (b) Jayadev
(c) Banbhatta (d) None of these.
7. In related to the reign of Chandragupta II, there is the mention of a pasupata opinion named Uditacharya who got excavated two Lingas.
(a) Ayodhya Article (b) Mathura Article
(c) Banskhera Incription (d) None of these.

Under the three above mentioned, several goddess have been unassigned. Normally, this gentle form of the goddess is worshipped. Uma, Parvati, Lakshami etc names are the representatives of the gentle form. Durga, Chandi, Kapali, Bhairvi etc names exhibit violent forms. Kapalik and Kalmukh community people worship this form. In this, in order to please the goddess animals are sacrificed and wine, flesh etc. are chiefly used. Passion-inclined form of the goddess is worshipped by the 'Shakt worshippess' who call her by 'Anand Bhairvi', 'Tripura Sundari', 'Lalita' etc. names. Temples with all the three forms of the goddess are present even today in different parts of India. Gentle form of temple is of Vaishno Devi near Jammu, where the idol of 'Sharda' is present. Similar form of a temple is near Satna (M.P.) situated in the high mountain of Maiher. The Kali temple, situated in Calcutta, is of the violent form of the goddess; and the 'Kamakhya temple' of Assam is a representative of the passionate form of the goddess.

The worship of 'Shakti', right from pre-historic era till date is being done continuously and is quite prevalent among the Hindus. The first historic archaeological evidence of 'Shakti' worship can be found by the inscriptions of the pictures of the goddess in the coins of the Kushan king, Huvishk.

With this we came to know that by 1st century A.D. statues of the goddess were started being built. In the Gupta period, the progress of ancient Hindu religion reoccurred. During this period, along with several gods, the worship of goddess was also quite prevalent. During this time, the temple of goddess Parvati was built in Nachna-Kuthar. Durga, Ganga; Yamuna's multiple statues were found at different places during this period. The inscription of Ganga and Yamuna can be found on the door-frames of the temples of the Gupta period. 'Shakti' worship was also quite prevalent in the 'Harsha' period. The description of the worship of goddess Durga can be found in several places in 'Harsh-Charit'. From this description of Hieunsang, it is evident that in those days, humans were sacrificed as offerings to goddess Durga. He writes that once while travelling through sea route, he was captured by the pirates and was taken as an offering for goddess Durga but storm saved his life. In the early medieval period, this worship of goddess had become quite prevalent. Majority of the temples of goddess are of this era only. Near **Bhera Ghat** in Jabalpur (M.P.), is the temple of '**Chausath Yogini**' where several statues of the goddess were built in the 9th-10th centuries. Among this, there are 44 statues of Durga and **Sapt-Matrika**". Similar types of statues are found in Khajuraho. From several parts of Odissa, Rajasthan, etc statues of Goddess and writing related to her worship can be found. From the writings of Pratihara Mahendra Pal, the eulogy of Durga's assassination of Mahishasurmardini, Kachan Devi, Amba, etc names can be found. Rastrakoot Amoghvarsh was a great worshipper of Maha Lakshmi. It appears from this Sanjan inscription that once, after cutting his left-hand finger, he offered it to the goddess. The literary men and foreign writers of the pre-Medieval period have mentioned the temples of the goddess and her worship. It appears from the description of **Kalhan** that the followers of Gaur king came to Kashmir to have a 'Darshan of goddess Sharda'. Abul Fazal also describes the temple of goddess 'Sharda'.

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Shakt-Tantrik Thought

By the time of pre-medieval period, the **Shakt** religion was completely influenced by '**Tantrism**' and the '**Shakt-Tantrik**' thought became very popular in society; so much so that even the ancient religion came under its influence. Buddhist, Kashmir Shaivism, Vaishnavism Jainism etc. all the religions were influenced by this '**Shakt-Tantrik Thought**' and people faith gained ground in supernatural powers. 'Sachiva Devi', the goddess of Jainism, began to be worshipped in the 'Shakt' way and some Jain teachers claimed to have attained realization over 64 'Yoginis'. Shri Harsh demonstrated this importance of 'Saraswati Mantra' in his book "Naishad-Charit" whereas Kumar Pal, the Chalukya ruler of Gujarat had unflinching faith in Jain 'Namaskar Mantra'. He believed that he had been successful everywhere due to this 'Mantra'. Due to the increasing influence of 'Tantrism' many superstitious gained strong ground in society. But by 'Tantrism', the Hindu social and cultural viewpoints got some benefits also, as is evident from Rasaranva' (12th century) that 'Tantrism' gave a great impetus to the development of Indian chemistry. The 'Tantrik' thought contributed to some extent in improving the conditions of women and weakening the bonds of caste-system. The 'ShaktTantrism' emphasized on the worship of one God only. This viewpoint gave a great impetus to this Bhakti movement during this pre-medieval period. The 'Nath' cult arose from the 'Tantrik Sahajyan', which cleaned the path for saints like Kabir, Dadu, Nanak, etc. in the medieval period.

The basis of 'Tantrik view-point' is 'Shakhtism'. This is the reason that Kashmir recognizes 'Shaivism' Shakti as the under kept Nature of Shiva and the highest 'Shakti' (power). This is present in the whole creature. The aim of 'Tantrism' centres around the 'aggregate of knowledge, and action.' In it, special emphasis is laid on worship, penance, and magic. Through them, the devotee gets health, wealth and power.

There are three main centers of 'Samprati Shakt' worship -Kashmir, Kanchi and Kamakhya in Assam. The 1st two are the main centers of 'Sri Vidya' whereas the last is this famous centre of this 'Kaul' Sect.

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Principles and Ceremonies of Shaktism

The followers of 'Shaktism' worship 'Mahamatri Devi' taking her to be the Prime Power. She originates maintains and destroys this creation. The devotee of Shakti, believes in identifying himself with the form of the goddess after accepting her as his house-hold deity. Actually, 'Shakti' is an active form of Shiva. In this sect, devotion, knowledge and action all the three have been given importance; charms and speeds, meditation, 'yoga' etc. have also got its place in it. Worldly enjoyments are considered as devotee in the path of attaining salvation. In "Shaktism" the mysterious power, called 'Kundalini' has great importance. One gets salvation only when this power is rekindled by devotion and mantras. The 'Kaulmargi Shakts' believe in this attainment of salvation by worshipping "Panchmakar" i.e. wine, flesh fish, gesticulation and copulation. Their conducts are very disdainful. In 'Shakt sect' this goddess is usually invoked in three ways.

1. In the 1st, full attention is diverted on the goddess sitting in the lap of Shiva in 'MahapadmaVan'. Their contemplation delights the heart and mind. The goddess is herself the emblem of happiness.
2. In it, a circle of nine 'yonis' is made with the help of Bhurjpatra, silk clothes and swarnapatra and a Chakra is made by drawing the picture of a 'yoni' in its middle. This is called 'Sri Chakra' – that is worshipped in two ways-one of a 'yoni' of a living lady and another of an imaginary 'yoni'. On this basis, it has two branches.
3. In it, the goddess is worshipped on the basis of knowledge in a philosophical way. In this system study and knowledge have been given chief priority. While denouncing mean conduct, they have been described as capable of being abandoned.

Those who worship the goddess by this last process are regarded as the pure and virtuous devotee.

The 'Shakt' sect is even today an important religion of this Hindus. The worship of the goddess is done with great reverence and merriment in different parts of the country. This sect is specially spread in Bengal and Assam. Various types of functions are held in the country on the occasion of Durga Puga.

12.4 Mythological Religion

The extensive expansion and publicity of Hinduism was possible through the puranas. In this puranic religion we found co-ordination of the religious faiths of Vedic, non-Vedic and common people. The purans present an exhaustive picture of Hindu religion in a simple and beautiful style. The aim of puranic religion is to present the Vedic religion in a simple way before the common people. After accepting Vedic gods like Shiva, Vishnu etc. the puranas gave them a new shape. 'Brahm' (God) was imagined as Brahma and Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh were acknowledge as 'Tridev' (Trimurty). They were respectively the creator, supporter and destroyer of the world. Different incarnations of Vishnu were imagined. God, with the external elements of the universe, was accepted possessed of a form, and imbued with remarkable powers. Idol-worship became prevalent. God was acknowledged in the form of male or female and rules were presented for worshipping them by flowers, incense, food offered to an ideal, lamps offerings etc. By giving the vedic yagnas ie religious sacrifices a simple form, the puranas made this feasible for all. Salvation is possible only with the blessing of God and this blessings man can get through devotion, this is the strong belief of puranas. For devotion, the directions of the 'Guru' are also necessary. One gets knowledge only through the blessings of the 'Guru.'

Due to the influence of non-vedic thought, provision was made in this puranas for the worship of various goddess like Durga, Kali, Chamunda etc. Side by side, we get a glimpse of various types of religious observances. Fasting, charity, pilgrimage, feeding the Brahmans etc were part of the religious life. Rubbing dust in the body and the system of putting 'tilak' also became prevalent with this religion. It was considered that by the religious observances of fasts, body and soul became pure which leads to the attainment of salvation. Rules for different fasts, relating to different gods, have been presented. The puranas lay great stresses on the following of 'Varna-Ashram Dharma'. For attainment of salvation,

knowledge along with the following of “Varna Ashram Dharma” has been told as compulsory. In Vayu Puran, it is mentioned that a person who does not follow ‘Varna Ashram Dharma’, has to face hardships in hell.

These developed various independent sects in Hinduism which were related to different gods and goddess, mentioned in the puranas. There arose vaishnav from Vishnu, Shaiv from Shiva, Shakt from this worship of Shakti etc sects, which had there different methods of worship. They are the chief sects of Hinduism. Later on there came into existence their many sub-sects.

In the next mentioned lines, a thorough discussion will be made about the rise and development of chief sects of Hinduism.

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It is mentioned in Vayu Puran that a person who does not follow the Varna-Ashram Dharma, has to face hardship in hell.

12.5 Vaishnav Religion

Rise and Development

The Vaishnav religion developed from the “Bhagvat religion”. According to tradition, its founder was Krishna of the Vrishni (Satvat) lineage, who being the son of Vasudev, is called Vasu-Dev Krishna. He was originally a resident of Mathura. He has been called “Devaki-Putra” (son of Devaki in “chandogya Upanishad”) and has been told as a disciple of Ghor Angiras. The followers of Krishna called him ‘Bhagvat’ (venerated). Due to this reason, the religion founded by them was given the name of Bhagvat. In Mahabhart, Vasudev Krishna was identified with Vishnu and Bhagvat religion became Vaishnav Religion. Vishnu is a Rigvedic god and like other gods, is the god of Nature. He represents the active form of the Sun. The greatest importance of Vishnu is due to this reason that he measured the entire Earth in three steps. He has been told as ‘Urugaya’ (great dynamic) and ‘Urukaram’ (projector of expansive feet). It has been said in his eulogy, that place is dearer to Vishnu where people inclined towards gods feel happy. That is the source of nectar. In the later compilations (hymns of a single Veda) and ‘Brahman Granth’, we find increase in this influence of Vishnu. In ‘Shatpath Brahman’, he has been accepted as the counter part of religious sacrifice (yagna) and it has been told that in the war between the gods, he was proved as the most powerful and was declared as the most famous one. In ‘Aitreya Brahman’ also Vishnu has been described as the pre-eminent god. In ‘Mahabhart’, we find Vishnu being established as the paramount god. Actually the whole of Mahabhart is full of Vishnu. In it, we find mention of different incarnations of Vishnu, one of whom incarnation was Krishna Vasudev. From this time, the Bhagvat religion becomes Vaishnav religion and Vishnu becomes a presiding deity. Patanjali has also described Vasudev as a form of Vishnu. In Vishnu Puran, “while describing Vasudev as one of the names of Vishnu, it has been said that ‘Vishnu’ is omnipresent, all reside in him, and hence he is Vasudev.” Thus we see that this ancient Bhagvat religion was later on transformed into Vaishnav religion. Similarly, when the identity of Krishna-Vishnu with “Narayana” was established then Vaishnav religion was called ‘Panchratra religion’ because the devotees of Narayan are called “Panchratra”. As far as ‘Narayan’ is concerned, we find his first mention in Brahman Books. In “Shatpath Brahman”, he has been described as ‘Supreme Being’, in whom the whole universe, Vedas, gods reside. It has been told further that to surpass all he performed ‘Panchratna yagya’ (sacrifice) and became supreme and omnipresent. In the ‘Shanti Parva’ of Mahabhart, while identifying Narayan with Vasudev Krishna. He has been described as omnipresent and creator of all.

The antiquity of Vasudev or Bhagvat religion goes up to 5th century B.C. Great Saint Panini has mentioned Bhagvat religion and worship of Vasudev. He has called the devotees of Vasudev as ‘Vasudevak’. In

Notes

the beginning, this religion was prevalent in Mathura and its adjacent regions. The Greek ambassador Megasthenese tells that people of 'Sursen' (Mathura) were devotees of 'Heracles' which means Vasudev Krishna. The contemporary Greek writers of Alexander tell us that the army of Porus fought while keeping an idol of Heracles before it. In Bhagvat religion, Krishna was recognized as the supreme god and rules were presented for attaining salvation by his devotion. Like Mahaveer and Buddha, Vasudev Krishna has been now acknowledged as a historical person. He was the chief of this 'Vrishni' clan. Before the beginning of A.D era, his worship as a god had already begun. In the "Gita", Krishna has called himself Vasudev, among this 'Vrisninam Vasudevoshmi'.



Did u know? That the Mehrauli inscription tells us that Chandragupta II had got the temple erected of Vishnu Banner. On the Vishnupad Mountain.

From Mathura, the Bhagvat religion began to spread slowly and slowly in other parts of India. It appears that it first became prevalent in the North-West, and South and this religion came to Eastern India very late. There is no mention of this religion in the Ashoka inscriptions. After the Mauryan period, this religion became very popular in central India. This religion developed during the 'Shunga' period and even foreigners began to embrace it. The yavans (Greeks) played a special role in making it popular. Archaeological evidences also inform us about the popularity of this religion. The 1st stone memorial, related to Bhagvat religion is the 'Garur Pillar' of Vidisha (Besnagar). We came to know from it that Helioderus, the Greek envoy of Taxshila, had accepted Bhagvat religion and worshipped this pillar after getting it erected. In its inscription, Helioderus has been mentioned as Bhagvat and Vasudev as 'Devdevas', i.e., "god of gods". The 1st region of Bhagvat religion are available on the coins of Apolodotes. From North-West to 'Madhya Desh', wherever the Greeks went, the religion also spread. By the 2nd century B.C. Vasudev began to be worshipped in society as the paramount deity.

In 'Gita', Krishna says, "In the last birth of many births, the enlightened man is all Vasudev." One who recites my name in this way, that great man is very unique. From another inscription, excavated from Besnagar, we found mention of construction of a temple for the worship of god and a 'Garur Dhvaj' (an epithet of Vishnu). From an inscription discovered from Ghosundi of Rajasthan mention is made of a follower, getting a stone-boundary constructed for the worship of God. This inscription is of 1st century B.C. From this it is evident that by this time, Bhagvat religion had become very popular in Rajasthan. At the same time, one inscription has been found from Nana Ghat of Maharashtra where mention has been made of the worship of 'Sankarshan' (Balram and Vasudeva). From this, it is concluded that Bhagvat religion had been spread in Maharashtra also. During the Kushan period, this religion also became prevalent in different parts of India. Rules like Huvishak and Vasudev were followers of Vaishnav religion. At this very time, idol-worship became prevalent in India and it became an integral part of Bhagvat religion (Vaishnav religion) though before it the mention of idol-worship is found in a scattered form in literature.

The Bhagvat or Vaishnav religion reached its apogee during the reign of the Gupta kings (319-550 AD). The Gupta Emperors were followers of Vaishnavism and they had made it a state religion. Most of the rulers adopted the title of 'Param Bhagvat' (Great Bhagvat) 'Garur' (Eagle), the vehicle of Vishnu, was the Royal symbol of the Guptas. We are informed by Prayag inscription that the Gupta Govt. Papers contained the seal of 'Garur' (Garutmandak shasan). Many temples were got erected for the worship of Vishnu. [It appears from the Mehrauli inscription that Chandragupta II had got erected 'Visnu Dhvaj on the Vishnupad Mountain (pransurvisnupade giro bagvato visnordvaja sthapitah)']. From the Bhitri (Gazifpur) inscription of the Skandgupta period, we get mention of the erection of Vishnu's statue. It is also known from this Junagadh inscription that Chakrapalit had got erected a statue of Vishnu on the bank of Sudershan Lake; Remains of the temples and statues, built during the period have been found at Tigwan (Jabalpur, M.P.), Devgarh (Jhansi), Mathura, etc. In the Devgarh statue, Vishnu has been shown as resting on the bed, provided by Shesha serpent. In the purans, written then during the Gupta period,

detailed description is available of the incarnations of Vishnu. Amar Singh, the Lexicographer of this period, while mentioning 39 names of Vishnu in his book, has described him as son of Vasudev.

Notes

Even after Gupta period, the Vaishnav religion went on gaining ground. Even during the Harsha period, it was chief religion. In "Harsh Charit" we find mention of 'Panchratra and Bhagvat sects'. During the Rajput period the Vaishnav religion had the greatest rise. In various inscriptions, due obeisance has been shown to Vishnu by saying 'Om namo bagwate vasudevay' Various rulers had got temples and statues constructed in honour of Vishnu. The Chandela Kings had got several temples of Visnu constructed in Khajuraho. During the reigns of the Chedi, Parmar, pal and Sen kings many temples and statues were made. This period are quadrilateral and they have conch-shell, wheel, mace, and lotus in their hands. Side by side, statues of Lakshmi and Garur also got constructed. There was an exhaustive prevalence of the story of the ten incarnations of Vishnu and statues of each of them were constructed. There also came into prevalence in society different fasts and religious ceremonies associated with Vaishnav religion.

Like Northern India Vaishnavism also progressed in the South. It is known from Sangam literature that during 1st century AD, this was an important religion in Tamil country. Many temples and statues of Vishnu are available in south India. The Eastern Chalukya ruler of Vengi were followers of Vaishnav and like the guptas, the royal symbol was also 'Garur'. In their inscriptions, worship of boar is found. During the Rashtrakoot period also, Vaishnav religion progressed in 'Dakshina Path' (South), though the Rashtrakoot kings were supporters of Jainism. Dantidurg had got constructed the famous temple of 'Ten Incarnation' (dashawatar) in Ellora, in which the story of the ten incarnation of Vishnu is inscribed in the statues.

In Tamil country, the publicity and expansion of Vaishnav religion was made by the Alwar Saints. The word 'Alwar' means a person having vast knowledge. The number of Alwar saints has been told as 12 out of which names like Tirumangai, Periyar, Alwar, Andal Nammalwar etc. named special mention. They manifested themselves between the 7th and 9th centuries AD. The names of Poygai, Poodam and Paya are available as initial Alwar Saints, who were residents of Kanchi, Mallai and Malyapuram respectively. They preached bhakthi in a straight and simple manner. Their views were devoid of narrower and communal terrorism. After them, we come across the name of Tirumalishai who probably flourished during the reign of Pallav king, Mahendra Varman-I. Tirumangai was a very famous Alwar saint. Through his Bhakti songs, while attacking Jainism and Buddhism, he made a vigorous propagation of Vaishnavism. It is said that he stole a golden idol from the Buddhist vihara of Nagapattam for the repair of the Srirangam monastery. Comparatively, his views about Shaivs were liberal. Among the Alwars, the name of only one lady-saint, Andal is available in whose Bhakti songs, Krishna story are mainly available. Andal was also mad in Krishna love like the Krishna Bhakt of poetess Meera Bai of the medieval period. In the last chain of Alwar saints, names of Nammalwar and his dear discipul, poet Madhur, are worth mentioning. Nammalwar was born in a Vellal family of Tineveli. He Wrote Bhakti songs in huge quantity. Serious philosophical thinking is visible in his songs. Taking Vishnu as eternal and omnipresent, he told that his realization is possible only by Bhakti. One of his songs, written in praise of Vishnu is worth mentioning:—

"you have not still become so generous that
You can give your compassion to your beloved (poetess)!
Before she leaves her body for being disappointed by your
indifference, show so much merely to her,
Through your messenger and vehicle, 'Garur"
O, ocean of mercy, send a message to that beloved
That she should not lose heart and act boldly till,
as anticipated, My lord comes back,
You will definitely come. "

Poet Madhur, the discipul of Nammalwar has described the greatness of the 'Guru' through his songs. The Alwar Saints, by their fervent devotion completely surrendered themselves to him. They were

Notes

of the view that the whole world is God's body and real happiness is in serving him and coordinate work with devotion and knowledge sought to establish. Alwar has been compared to that lady who is separated from her lover and loses her life due to separation-pains of her lover. Thus Alwar was a true devotee of Vishnu. He propagated Vaishnavism through recitation, accompanied by singing in loud music in praise of God, utterance of God's name and having a view of the idols etc. There was no philosophical intricacy in his preaching. He told only to propitiate Vishnu who incarnates from time to time for the welfare of human beings. According to him, it was not knowledge but devotion of Vishnu which was important for attainment of salvation. Even a person who does not know the Vedas, if repeats the name of Vishnu, can attain salvation. Being influenced by this Alwar saints and teachers, many Pallava rulers embraced Vaishnavism and made it a state-religion and got constructed temples and statues in honour of Vishnu. Singh Vishnu had got constructed the temple of Adivarah in Mamallapuram. During the time of Narsingh Verma II, the Vaikunth Perumal temple of Kanchi was got constructed. Dantiverma was a great worshipper of Vishnu. In this inscription, he has been described as an incarnation of Vishnu. The Chalukya kings of Bedami were also supporters of Vaishnavism and some of them had adopted the title of 'Param Bhagvat' (Great-Bhagvat). Several temples of Vishnu were built in Aihol.

During the time of Chola kings, Vaishnavism also progressed along with Shaivism. During this period, the propagation of Vaishnavism was done by the religious perceptors in place of the Alwars. They provided a philosophical base to the personal Bhakti of the Alwars. The religious perceptions were scholars of Tamil and Sanskrit, both the languages. Therefore they preached Vaishnav principles in both the languages. The 1st name mentioned in this religious perceptor's tradition is of Nath muni. He is said to be the disciple of the last Alwar poet Madhur. He arranged the Bhakti – songs of the Alwars. He is credited with the composition of 'Nyaya Tatva'. Besides this, he demonstrated this philosophical aptness of 'Prem Marg'. According to the tradition, Nath Mumi penetrated into the idol of Srirangam temple and was immersed in God. The second great perception was Alvandar whose another name was Yamunacharya, is also available. While demonstrating the importance of this science of Tantras, he told them being equal to the Vedas. Through his songs, he presented before his pupil in a beautiful manner the principles of devotion.

In the perception-tradition the name of Ramanuj is most fit for being written. Their period is generally accepted as 1016-1137. He was born in a place known as Sriperumbadur near Kanchi. He got education in Vedanta for Yadav Prakash in Kanchi. After some time he had differences with Yadav Prakash on the explanation of some upnishadik formulas and he accepted the discipleship of Vaishnav perception, Yamunacharya. After the death of Yamanuacharya, Ramanuj became the religions perceptor of his sect. He wrote a commentary on 'Brahma Sutra' which is called 'Sri Bhashya'. His faith became famous as 'Vishistadvait'.

Ramanuja believed in God who was possessed of attributes. While living in the Sriramgam Monastery (Trichanapalli) he did splendid works for the propagation and extension of Vaishnavism. Due to his efforts this religion became prevalent in society on a large scale. It is possible that it may have affected the dynastic religion (ie, Shaivism) of King Cholas and being enraged by this, a fanatic Shaiv Chole ruler may have tortured him. But the identification of this Chola king is not definite. Generally the Chola period was a period of good feelings and conciliation between the shaivas and their Vaishnavas and the story of Ramanuia was an exception. During this period like Shiva, temples were built in honour of Vishnu also and monasteries were built. The temples and monasteries were central points of the religious life of the Chola period. The saint-poet had written 'Mantra' (hymns) in Tamil language for the worship of Vishnu.

Chaturvyuha

In 'Bhagvat' or 'Panchratra' religion other persons are also worshipped along with Vasudeva Vishnu (Krishna). Their names are as following:

1. **Sankarshan (Balram)** – He was the sum of Vasudev, born of Rohini.
2. **Pradumna** – He was the son of Krishna, born of Rukmani.
3. **Aniruddha** – He was the son of Pradumna.

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The above four mentioned are called 'Chaturvyuha'. Like Vasudeva, the Bhagvat followers used to worship them by making their idols. In 'Narayani' section of Mahabharata, we get the detailed description. In Vayu Purana, by including 'Samb' (Krishna's son, born of Jambvanti) in these four, they are called 'Panch Veer.' It appears that the speculation of 'Chaturvyuha' is before the 2nd century BC. Its oldest mention is available in 'Brahma Sutras'. From an inscription of the 1st century, discovered from Mora, a place near Mathura, it appears that a lady, named Tosha, had got established the idols of the aforesaid four persons along with Vasudev in a temple. Prior to all of them, the use of the epithet of 'Bhagvat' is available. Rules have been given in 'Vishnu Dharmottar Purana' for making images of 'Panch Veers'. In 'Arthshastra' also we find mention of the worshippers of sankarshan. It seems that like Krishna, the other four also propounded other principles and were established as religious teachers. Later on, the element of divinity was added to them. Vasudev Krishna was recognized as one who had all the essential elements of the Universe and the remaining four were accepted as his past. Sankarshan, Aniruddha and Pradyumna are respectively accepted as the specimen of soul, self-conceit and intellect.

Principles of Vaishnavism

In Vaishnavism, emphasis has been laid on attaining salvation through god 'devotion. God is pleased with devotion and he takes his devotee under his protection. The Vaishnav principles find a detailed description in 'Gita'. In it, we get a demonstration of attaining salvation through 'Bhakti' by the co-ordination of knowledge, action and devotion. Lord Krishna himself says, 'Leaving all religions come only under my protection, I will free you from all sins.'

In Vaishnavism, the principle of incarnation is very significant. According to it, god comes to this earth from time to time for this, deliverance of his devotees. Krishna says in 'Gita', 'Whenever there is loss of religion and increase in irreligion, then I take birth. I protect the kinds and annihilate the wicked and take birth in different ages for establishing righteousness.' It is mentioned at another place that those devotees who always concentrate in me and recite my name with intense devotion, he is the most excellent ascetics among the ascetics. Those who dedicate all the actions to me and worship me with unbounded faith, I immediately grant them deliverance from the worldly ocean of death. In the 'Puranas,' we get description of ten incarnations of Vishnu which are as follows: –

1. **Matsya (Fish):** According to the story when the Earth was frightened by the great water-flood, then Vishnu took the incarnation of 'Matsya.' He protected Manu, his family and seven 'Rishis' by putting them in a water-boat the string of which was tied with the horn of 'Matsya'. He had also protected the Vedas from the final destruction of the universe.
2. **Koorm or Kachhap (Tortoise or Turtle):** At the time of great waterflood, nectar and other precious stones etc all the most precious articles vanished in the sea. Vishnu incarnated himself into a huge Tortoise (Kachhap) and entered the very base of the sea. The gods placed Mandrachal Mountain on his back and churned the ocean by making serpent Vasuki as the string. Consequently, along with nectar and Lakshmi, fourteen precious articles were found.
3. **'Varah (Boar)':** Once a demon, named Hirnyaksh hid the Earth in the base of the great sea. Vishnu took the form of a huge Boar (Sukar) for the protection of the Earth. He killed the demon and established the earth at its original place, by carrying it by his teeth.
4. **Narsingh:** In the ancient times, there was a great demon, named Hirnyakashyap. He got the boon from Brahma that he should not die during the day-time or night, and neither by god or human beings. He began his atrocities on deities and human being. So far so that he even began to torture

Notes

his son, Prahlad in several ways. On the call of Prahlad, Vishnu took the incarnation of 'Narsingh' (half human being and half lion). He killed Hirnyakasyap at the time of dusk and made Prahlad the king.

5. **Vaman:** There was a demon, named Bali, who began to penance after establishing his authority over the world. He became so powerful that the gods were embarrassed and prayed to Vishnu. As a result, he appeared before the demon, taking the form of a dwarf. In charity, he demanded three steps of land. Bali accepted it. After that, his form became very colossal and measured Earth, Sky and Cosmos in two steps. He did not raise his third step and left the under (nether) world for Bali: Hence, he (Bali) left the earth and went to the (nether) world.
6. **Parshuram:** Vishnu took the incarnation of Parshuram in the form of the son of a Brahman named Yamdagni. Once a king named Kirtavirya robbed Yamdagni. Parshuram killed him. The son of Kirtavirya killed Yamdagni. Parshuram became very angry and he killed all the Kshatriya kings. This was done 21 times. At last his arrogance was broken to pieces and went to the forest for doing penance.
7. **Ramavtar:** Vishnu incarnated himself in the form of the son of king Dashrath in Ayodhya and became famous by the name of 'Ram.' He killed several demons along with Ravana. This incarnation of Vishnu is the most popular in Northern India.



Task

The principle of incarnation in Vaishnavism was very significant, discuss it.

8. **Krishna:** To protect the people from the atrocities of king Kansa of Mathura, Vishnu took the incarnation of Krishna in the form of the son of Vasudev and Devaki. Like Rama, Krishna is also very popular. He showed many supernatural marvels, did amorous sports and killed Kans, Jarasandh and Shisupal etc. In this Mahabharata war, he sided with the Pandavas and got Duryodhan killed and established truth, justice, and religion on Earth. Even today, Ram and Krishna are the venerable gods of crores of Hindus. They are worshipped even today in foreign lands.
9. **Buddha:** He is considered as the last incarnation of Vishnu. We came to know from Jaydev's compilation 'Geet Govind' that Vishnu incarnated himself into the form of Buddha to show his mercy for animals and for the purpose of preventing ceremonies like bloody animal sacrifice. Later on, the Hindus gave recognition to Buddha as a god in their worship-system. This incarnation of Vishnu is present today.
10. **Kalki (Kali):** This is to happen in future. It has been assumed that at the end of 'Kaliyug', Vishnu will incarnate on earth, with a sword in his hand and riding a white horse. He will annihilate the wicked and reestablish Heaven Age (satyug) on Earth.

In Vaishnavism, idol worship and temples etc have a significant place. Idol is considered as the direct form of God. Devotees go to the temple for worshipping him. Festivals like Dussehra, Janmashtami etc are symbols of showing due reverence to Vasudev-Vishnu. The Vaishnav devotees recite God's name, accompanied by number. They gather at sacred places meditate on him. Among the chief teachers of Vaishnavism, the names of Ramanuja, Madhav, Vallabh, Chaitanya etc are worth mentioning, who propagated the religion more and more. Later on, Vishnu, incarnation as Ram became most widespread and popular. During the medieval period, there was great development of Ram's story. Goswami Tulsidas, by writing 'Ram Charitmanas,' established the significance of the Ram, devotion in society. Even today, crores of Hindus worship Rama, who is possessed of attributes.

12.6 Shaiv Religion

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Rise and Development

The religion, related to Shiva is called 'Shaiv' in which there are regulations for worshipping Shiva, taking him to be the presiding-deity. The worshippers of Shiva are called 'Shaiv'. The antiquity of Shiva and the religion related to him, goes to the pre-historic period. During the excavations of Indus valley civilization, picture of a 'yogi' has been discovered from Mohenjo-Daro, who is sitting in the 'Padamasan' posture. He has a trident like ornament on his head and his three mouths. Sir John Marshal has identified his god with Shiva of the historic period. At several sites, Shivlings have also been found. From this it is known that this is India's oldest religion.

In Rigveda, Shiva has been called 'Rudra' who is famous for his violent form. When furious, he annihilates human and animal race and spreads epidemics. Therefore, during this Rigvedic period, 'Rudra' was worshipped from escaping from his wrath. Actually, both the qualities of destruction and blissfulness were embodied in him. It is believed that he destroys those people by his arrows that have no faith in him. But he is very beneficent towards his devotees. That is why he is called 'Shiva'. He can be easily pleased by devotion. He is the protector of human beings and Lord of the world. He had thousands of medicines which helped in getting rid of diseases. 'Rudras' place was not of special significance among the gods of Rigveda but in the later collection of hymns and 'Brahman' books. We find his increasing importance in this 'Shatrudiyā Mantra' of 'Vajsanayee Sanhita', Rudra has been told as the Lord of this whole universe. Along with being the lord of food-grains, fields and forests, he is also said to be the lord of thieves, dacoits, 'thugs' (cheats) etc detestable creatures. In 'Atharvaveda', he has been called 'Bhav', 'Sharv', 'Pasupati', 'Bhutpati' etc. He is also said to be the lord of non-Aryans. He has been identified with fire and sun. In Brahman grantha, Rudra is reckoned as the most prominent gods from whose powers even the gods felt afraid. He has been called 'Sahasraksh' (ie, Vishnu, Indra). His eight names have been told – 'Rudra', Sarv, 'Ugra', 'Ashni', 'Bhav', 'Pasupati', Mahadev and Ishan. In them, the 1st four are illustrative of his violent form and last four of blissful form. It has been told in 'Aitreya Brahman' that 'Prajapati' had sexual intercourse with his daughter which made the gods very furious and they decided to punish him. They created 'Bhutpati' with their violent forms, who killed 'Prajapati' and due to this action he was adorned with the title of 'Pashupati'. This shows that during the Brahman period Shaiv religion was gaining solid foundations.

In the Upanishad period, we find great enhancement in the reputation of 'Rudra'. In 'Shwetashvatar' and 'Atharvshiras', we get proof of Rudra's glory. 'Shwetashvatar' upanishid, while equalizing 'Rudra' with supreme God, says 'one who rules over this world with his power, who is always present before everything at the time of 'deluge' who creates all things at the time of origin, he is Rudra. He himself is eternal or unborn. We get the same views from 'Atharvshiras'.

By The coming of the Epic period, Shaiv religion got an extensive public support. We come to know from the 'Ramayana' that Shiva had not only become a god of the northern but of southern India also. He was worshipped as far as Ceylon. He has been given titles of human such as 'Mahadev', 'Shambhu', 'Tryambak', 'Bhootnath' etc. But the 'Ramayana is basically a Vaishnav Book.' Therefore, here Vishnu has been shown as greater god than Shiva. We get a detailed description of the glory of Shiva in the Mahabharata. In its initial parts, Shiva does not appear to be an important god but into the later portions, we get his description in the form of the highest god. He has been shown as equal and at some places better than Vasudev Krishna. It appears from 'Drona Parva' that Krishna and Arjun go to this Himalyan mountain to worship him (ie, Shiva) for procuring Shiva's Trident. They call him 'Soul of the world'. Being pleased with his devotion, Shiva gives his Trident to Arjun. In 'Mahabharata', Shiva has been given the names of universal god, omnipresent, omnipotent etc. at different places and it has been said that from god 'Brahma' to the devils (spirits) – all worship him. It has been said in 'Anushasan Parv' that Krishna himself went to the Himalyas to worship Shiva for getting a son and being pleased had granted him the boon of getting his desired object. From this it is evident that he was respected as the paramount

Notes

god. At one place, Krishna says to Yudhishtir that Shiva is the creator of all movable and immovable objects and there is none other to excel him.

The worship of Shiva is proved from various literary and archaeological sources. The oldest-coins which date back to the 6th- 5th, century BC, have symbols of Shiva worship such as 'Brishabh', 'Nandipad' etc. The Greek ambassador, Megastheneze mentions Shiv worship by the name of 'Dynosus' which was mostly prevalent in the Mediterranean regions. We came to know from 'Arthshastra' also that Shiv worship was prevalent during the Mauryan period. Kautilya suggests for the establishment of Shiva place of worship in the middle of the town. We come to know from Patanjali's 'Mahabhashya' that during 2nd century BC, Shiva was worshipped by making his idol. In Mahabharata, we find mention of the different names of Shiva – 'Rudra', 'Girish', 'Mahadev', 'Tryambak', 'Bhav', 'Sarv' etc. The worshippers of Shiva have been called 'Shaiv'. Figures of 'Shiv', 'Vrishabh', 'Trishul' (Trident) are found on the coins of shaka, pallav, kushan etc rulers. From this it is clear that even in foreign land Shiv worship was prevalent.

During the reign of Gupta kings, Shaiv religion progressed very much along with Vaishnavism. Temples and idol were established for the worship of Shiva. We came to know from the Udaygiri cave inscription that virsen, this Prime minister of Chandragupta II, was a Shaiv and he had got constructed a Shaiv cave on the 'Udaygiri' mountain. (Bhaktaya bhagvatasshmbhoh guhamekamakarayat). During the reign of Kumargupta I, 'ShivLings' were established in Karamdanda and Khoh (cave). During the Gupta period temples of Shiva and Parvati were got constructed at Bhoomra and Nachna Kuthar respectively. In Gupta composition, references to Shiva worship are found at several places. Kalidas was an ardent devotee of Shiva. In 'Kumar Sambhav', he has praised the glory of Shiva. The Puranas of this period also ascertain the greatness of Shiva. He has been called 'supreme Mahadev' among the gods. In puranas, we get mention of 'Ling worship' also. It appears from all these description that Shaiv religion had got an extensive foot hold in the 5th century society and Shiva was worshipped by different names and forms. Probably, it was during the Gupta period that Shiva worship in 'Ling' form progressed.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. The preaches of 'Lingayet sect' wrote all their literature in Kannad prose.
9. 'Malti Madhav' play was the composition of Bilhan.
10. Shashank and Bhaskar Verma, the contemporary rulers of Harsha, were followers of Shaivism.
11. The Greek ambassador, Megastheneze (Dynosos) mentions Shiva worship, which was mostly prevalent in the mountaineous regions.

Shaiv religion went in progressing even after the Gupta period. During the Vardhan period, it had got influence in society. Both BanBhatt and Huensang mention it. It has been said in 'Harsh Charita' that in every house of Thaneswar town, Lord Shiva was worshipped. Huensang writes that Vanarasi was the chief centre of Shaiv religion where he had over hundred temples. There lived ten thousand Shiva devotees. The 'Mahakal' temple of Ujjain was famous all over the country. Shashank and Bhaskar Verma, the contemporary rulers of Harsha, were also followers of Shaivism. Shashank was an ardent Shaiv.

Shaiv religion was also very popular in society even during the Rajput period (700-1200 AD). Several Rajput rulers were ardent worshippers of Shiva and they had got constructed palatial and grand temples. During the Chandel period, the famous 'Kandariya' Mahadev temple of Khajuraho was constructed. Shiva temples and idol were built everywhere in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Central India, Bengal, Assam etc. The Somnath temple of Kathiawad in Gujarat was the most famous and prosperous in pre-medieval period which was demolished by Mahmud. Alberuni gives its description. Besides the temple, many idols of Shiva and Parvati were built. 'Shiv Lings' were also established.

Side-by-side with northern India Shiv worship also got great publicity and progress in southern India also. During the reign of the dynasties rulers of the south – Chalukyas, RashtraKoots, Pallavas, Cholas, etc – Shaiv religion progressed and many temples and idols of Shiva were got constructed. During this time of RashtraKoots, the famous Kailash temple of Ellora was constructed. During the Pallava period, the propagation and development of Shaiv religion was made by ‘Nainars’. The number of Nainar saints is said to be 63, out of which the names of Appar, Tirugyan, Sambandar, Sundermurti, Manikkwachgar ect. are worth mentioning. Their devotional songs have been compiled in ‘Devaram’. Appar, who was also known by this second name of Tirunabukkarshu, was a contemporary of the Pallava ruler, Mahendra Varman I. He was born in the Bellal family of Nirugmur. It is said that at first he spent the life of a ‘Bhikshu’ in a Jain monastery. Later on, by the blessings of Shiva, he was cured of an incurable disease as a result of which he deserted Jainism and became a confirmed Shaiv. Appar worshipped Shiva as a slave and preached it among the common people. **Tirugyan Sambandar** was born in a Brahman family of Shiyali (Distt-Tanjore). It has been said about him in a story that by the blessing of Parvati he had attained Divine knowledge at the age of three. His father took him around all the religious places. It is said that after travelling through the Pandya territory, he had initiated its king and people into Shaiv religion from Jainism. Sambandar had discussion with Buddhist teachers also and he defeated all of them in the debate. He sung many devotional songs and thus he was recognized as the most pious saint. Even today, he is worshipped in most of the Shaiv temples of Tamil region. Sundermurti was born in a poor Brahman family of Navlur. He was bright up by Narsingh Muvaidarayan, commander of army. Though his life-span spread over 18 years only, yet he became one of the unique vaishnav devotees of his times. He wrote about 1,000 devotional songs. Sundermurti was addressed with the title of “Ishwar Mishra” similarly; Manikkvachgar was born near a village near Madurai in a Brahman family. He gained prominence by defeating the Buddhists of Ceylon in discussion in Chidambaram. He also wrote many devotional songs, which have been compiled in “Tiruvashgam.” The love-element is pre-eminent in his songs. The Hindi adaptation of one of the devotional songs, written by him, is as following: –

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Indra or Vishnu or Brahma
 I don't desire their divine comfort
 I want the love of your saints
 Though it may destroy my house.
 I am ready to go to the heedful hell
 If your blessings are with me, which is excellent,
 How my mind can think of another god besides you,

I had no quality, penance, knowledge and self-control,
 I was only a puppet.
 I danced at another's command, was pleased and fell, but he has
 fitted in me the intoxicating ambition of love
 So that I may reach there from where there is no return.
 He has made me his by showing me his beauty.
 Oh! when I shall go to him?

All the Shaiv saints made a vigorous propagation of Shiv-Bhakti, in Tamil society through the meditation of recitation of devotional songs, discussions and instructions. He said that the only way to obtain God is through devotion. The Naynars were against-casteism and he went to all sections of society to preach advocate his principles. During the rein of the Cholas, there was a great rise of Shaivism to the far-south. The Chola ruler, Rajraj I, was a great worshipper of Shiva who had got constructed the famous (Rajrajeshwar) Shaiv temple in Tanjore. Several idols of Shiva were also established. Rajendra Chola, the son and successor of Rajraj I, was a devotee of Shiva who had got constructed this temple of “Bridishwar” in his capital. During his time, Shaiv religion became the most popular religion of southern India. The

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reign of Chola king, Koluttung I, (1070-1120 A.D.) is worth mentioning for the progress of Shaiv religion. He was a staunch Shaiv, about whom it has been said that due to his unbounded veneration of Shiva that he uprooted Vishnu's statue erected in Chidambaram Temple and got it thrown into the sea. Being perplexed by this incident, the Vaishnav teacher, Ramanuja had to leave the chola kingdom for some time. It has also been told that he had tortured Ramanuja and his disciples. It is clear from these narratives that Shaiv religion was predominant in the Tamil society of the chola period. Most of the kings of this dynasty showed deep interest in the construction of huge and magnificent Shaiv Temples, "Shiv-lingas" and statues.

Thus we see that the worship of Shiva, beginning in India from the pre-historic period, went on progressing up to the end of the ancient period and Shiva got a very prominent place in Hindu Religion. He was counted among the three "Devas" (gods)—Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh—Even today, Shaiv religion is one of this prominent religions of the India Hindu people. The faithful Hindus think themselves to be very fortunate by visiting the 12 "Jyotirlingamas", situated in different parts of the country.—e.g., Somnath, Kedarnath, Vishwanath (Kashi), Baidyanath, Mallikarjun (Andhra), Nageshwar (near Dwarka), Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain), Rameshvaram, Onkareshwar (Amleswar—M.P.), Bhimeshwar (Nasik), Tryambakeshwar (Nasik) and Ghushmeshwar (Aurangabad—Maharashtra).

In Shiva's personality, we see the co-ordination of the Aryan and post Aryan elements. Along with Vishnu and Shiva, the third prominent god of the Hindus is "Brahma" but no Sect came into prevalence after his name. The solitary temple of Brahma is situated in the "Pushkar Tirth" near Ajmer. Over its entrance gate is engraved a figure of his vehicle i.e. Swan.

Main Sects of Shaiv Religion

Many sects of the Shiva-worshippers came into existence which had different basis and rules. The introduction of some sects is as following:

Pashupat Sect

This is the oldest sect of the Shaiva which originated in the 2nd century B.C. According to Puranas, this sect was founded by a celibate, named Lakulish or Lakuli. The followers of this sect regard Lakulish as an incarnation of Shiva. They carried a stick on staff in their hand which was considered as the symbol of Shiva. Its oldest mark is found in one of the coins of Kushan ruler Huvishk (2nd century). There were the followers of this sect even during the Gupta period. From the Mathura inscription of Chandragupta II we find mention of one Uditacharya, who was a follower of the Pashupat sect who had got the establishment of two "Lingas". Banbhatt has mentioned this sect in "Kadambari" and has written that its follower applied ashes on their forehead and carried "Rudraksh rosary in their hand. Huensang calls the people of Sindh and Ahi-Chhatra as followers of Pashupat. During the Rajput period, this sect was widespread and several rulers were its supporters. There is mention of Pashupat sect in an inscription of Chahman Vighrahpal. The rulers of Kalchuri—Chedi dynasty were followers of this sect. At some places has been told as synonymous to each other. The use of the word "Pashupati Acharya" for Shaiv saints is found mentioned. We know about the principles of "Pashupat sect from Maheshwars" compilation "Pashupat sutra" and "Vayu-Purana". Under the Pashupat sect the authority of 5 things has been accepted—

1. **Karya**—It is one which has no dependent power. Under it, comes all the powers of the 'living' and the 'senseless'.
2. **Karan**—It is one which creates and destroys all things. This is an independent element which has endless knowledge and power. This is 'Parmeshwara' (Shiva).
3. **Yoga**—It helps in establishing contact between the 'living-being' and God through intellect. It has two kinds: "Active" (Recitation of God's name and penance) and "Inactive" (to attain Divine knowledge after being free from worldly actions).

4. **Vidhi**-The medium which helps the 'living-being' in the attainment of God is called 'Vidhi. It has two divisions - Main (performance) and Secondary. To apply ashes on the body, Mantra, Jap (Repetition of God's Name, (circumambulation are said to be its main organ).
5. **Dukhant**-It means to get deliverance from sufferings. It is said to have two division - **Anatmak** (Soul-less) i.e. simply getting rid of suffering and **Satmak** (together with the soul) i.e. to achieve transcendental power through the power of knowledge and action.

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Even today, the Pashupat sect is prevalent in some parts of India and other parts of the world. The Pashupati Temple of Kathmandu in Nepal is even today the prominent centre of the followers of this sect.

Kapalik Sect

This is the second Sect of the Shaiv Religion whose follower worship Bhairav; taking him to be an incarnation of Shiva. The followers of this Sect enjoy wine and women, keep matted hair, eat meat, smear their bodies with the burial-place ashes and carry a severed human head in their hand. Its ceremonies are dreadful. The worshippers of this cult are of a very cruel-nature. We come to know from **Bhavbhuti's** drama, "Maltimadhav" that a place, named "Shreeshail" was the chief centre of the "Kapaliks". They always wore rosary of the severed human heads. To please Bhairav, they even gave human- sacrifice.

Lingayat Sect

Luigayat or veer , was one of the sects of shaiv religion which spread widely in the 12th century in southern India (especially Karnataka and Telugu region). This sect began a public-movement for bringing a real revolution in the socio-religious life of the South.

The founder of the "Lingayat Sect", Basav, was the minister of the Kalachuri King, Vijjal (Vijayaditya, 1145-1167 A.D.) of Kalyani. According to Shaiv tradition, the founder of this Sect were five "Rishis" – Renukacharya, Darukacharya, Ekoramacharya, Panditaradhya, and Shivaradhya. He was born out of the five prominent Shiv-Lingas. According to some writers its principles were taken from Rigveda and the Upanishids. But there is no solid proof for such a contention. The fact is that we get reliable information about the Lingayat Sect on the basis of Basav and his disciple, Channvasav. Basav was born in village Vagewadi of Bijapur Distt. He was the son of Madiraj and Madlambika who were religious-minded Brahmins. According to tradition, he took birth for the upliftment of Shaiva sect which was on decline at that time. He gained sufficient knowledge about the Shaiv religion at the age of eight (8). He said himself to be the great devotee of Shiva and declared that he has come to the world to eradicate casteism from the world. The Kalyani king, Vijjal, appointed him as his chief-minister, chief-army commander and treasurer. While holding these posts, he made a vigorous propagation of his religion. In this work, he got the support of his able nephew, Channbasav. In this process, he perpetrated atrocities on Jain and some other religious sects. By and by, his followers began to increase and his sect assumed the form of a movement. The name of one of his fanatic follower was Ekantad Ramyya, who played a significant role in the propagation of this sect. Fleet is of the opinion that he was the real founder of the Lingayat movement and Basav gave it political support after a very long time. This is fully supported by Basav Purana.

The preaches of Lingayat sect, wrote all then literature in Kannad prose. This is called "Vachan". "Vachan" are separate paragraphs from one another. At the end of each, comes one of the name of Shiva by which he is worshipped. These were about 200 "Veer Shaiv" writers, which included some ladies. Pride of wealth, emancipation from religious ceremonies and bookish-knowledge, uncertainty of life, spiritual prerogatives of Shiva-devotes etc and its subjects. People have been instructed to relinquish the resources of worldly wealth and comforts, to spend a detached worldly life and going under the protection of Shiva. The instruction of "Vachan" is very instructive, full of devotions and all-meaningful. Basav broke his "Janeyu" (religious thread). Denouncing "Varna Ashram" religion, renouncement of the world, penance etc., granted the right of attaining salvation to all the castes.

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The followers of "Lingayat Sect" always kept a small "Shiv-Ling" with them. Generally it remained in a silver box which they hang round the neck, tying it with a thread. They worshipped "Ling and Nandi" Basav has been said to be an incarnation of "Nandi". They are anti-Brahman don't believe in idol-worship and rebirth. They don't believe in the reliability of the Vedas and they oppose the sacrifice, given at the time of 'yagnas.' In it, child-marriage was looked upon with hatred and widow remarriage was given recognition. The following satire, given by Basav on the religions and social hypocrisy is worth mentioning –

"The sheep brought from the slaughter house eats the leaves of that rosary, with which she is decorated. The frog in the mouth of this snake wants to swallow the fly which is lying near his mouth. Such is our life. The person who is pushed into the mouth of death, drinks milk and 'ghee..... when they see the snake, engraved on stone, they offer milk to it and if the living snake is sighted, they shout" kill-kill. To the servant of God – who can eat the food, when served, they say "run-away run-away"; but to the image of God – which cannot eat – they offer food."

Monasteries have an important place in the organization of "Lingayats". Complete social and religious equality can be seen among all the members of this sect. It was possible due to this influence of Islam and Jainism Basav opposed pilgrimage and 'yagya'-sacrifice, etc. He was also against burning of the dead and advocated for the internment of this dead. Even to-day, some of his followers are interned underground. Due to the most liberal social views of the 'Lingayats,' they got the support of the lower castes and their religion took the form of a public religion.

They offer veneration towards the 64 Naynar saints and regard them as their ancient 'guru'. Besides, they also respect 770 "Rishis".

The Lingayats believe in selfless service. Shiva has been recognized as the chief element who is completely self-conceited and independent. The creation of the universe is from Shiva and one gets his identity with Shiva due to Bhakti (devotion). Ling-worship has got a special place in this sect. Ling has been divided into three parts.

1. **Bhav Ling** – This is the supreme element which is beyond the limit of direction and time. This is devoid of the Ling Power and is an emblem of truth. It can be seen only through devotion.
2. **Pran Ling** – This is devoid of the 'Ling-power' and also imbued with Ling-Power. Its knowledge can be had by subtle vision. This is subtle element.
3. **Isht Ling** – This is the material form which can be seen by eyes.

These three have been called truth, mind and exhilaration respectively. The power of Ling is called "Kala" and the power of the body is called 'Bhakti' – Shiva has two variations – body spot and 'leg-spot'. The First is worthy of reverence and the second is worshipped (Living-Being). According to the "Lingayats" a person who is duly initiated into their sect, gets deliverance. Some scholars believe that here 'Ling' is not a symbol of penis but is the symbol of the attainment of God.

Thus the 'Lingayat' Sect began as a socio-religious movement in the 12th century which strongly attacked the bad customs of contemporary society and religion. In spite of this, the "Varna Ashram" religion remained in prevalence in the South and the caste-superiority of the Brahmans remained intact. The "Lingayats" have even got their hold in some parts of Hyderabad and Mysore.

Kashmiri Shaiv Sect

A new Sect of Shaiv religion developed in Kashmir which was different in principles and rules of conduct from other sects. This sect is purely philosophical and Gyanmargi in which the detestable ceremonies of the kapaliks – use of wine and women, to put ashes of the burial-ground on the body, to eat in the grave-yard, to sacrifice humans and animals etc. were criticized in harsh words. Knowledge was considered as the only way to reach god.

In Kashmir Shaiv sect, Shiva has been accepted as "Advait" (monotheistic) power. This is omnipresent and the world is his image. He creates universe with the help of "Shakti". Mind exuberance, knowledge,

action, desire-have been considered to be his powers --“Jeev” (creature) in his real shape is Shiva but due to ignorance, he fails to understand reality. As the cover of ignorance is removed, he attains Shiva. This is ‘moksha’ (deliverance). The significance of ‘Bhakti’ (devotion) has also been accepted in this Sect.

Along with these aforesaid prominent Shaiv-Sects, there also came into prevalence some other sects. By the end of the 10th century, Matsyendra Nath started a sect, called ‘Nath panth’. In it accepting Shiva as the prime God, the nine ‘Naths’ were given recognition as super natural beings. Their rituals and rules of conduct resemble with the ‘Vajrayani’ Buddhists, The woman have a prominent place in the devotional system of the ‘Naths’ – Baba Gorakhnath greatly preached and propagated this sect in this 10th-11th centuries.

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12.7 Summary

In Vaishnav religion emphasis has been laid on attaining salvation through god’s devotion. God is pleased by devotion and he takes the devotee under his protection. The principles of Vaishnavism find their greatest explanation in the ‘Gita’. In it, while establishing co-ordination between knowledge, action and devotion is found this ascertainment of the attainment of salvation through devotion. Lord Krishna himself says “Leaving all religion come only under my protection; I will free you from all sins.”

12.8 Keywords

- **Polytheism** – Faith in the existence of different gods and goddess.
- **Mysteries** – Secret religious truths which normally cannot be understood.

12.9 Review Questions

1. “Religion is life of the Indian culture”. Explain this statement?
2. Describe in detail the causes of the origin of Shakt religion?
3. “Shaiv religion went on progressing even after the Gupta period”, comment on this statement.

Answer : Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------|--------------------------|---------|
| 1. Earth | 2. Ashvamedha | 3. Mahabhart and Puranas | 4. (a) |
| 5. (c) | 6. (b) | 7. (b) | 8. True |
| 9. False | 10. True | 11. True | |

12.10 Further Readings



Books

1. Ancient Indian History A New Perspective – Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.
2. Ancient Indian History – Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.
3. Ancient Indian History – Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.
4. Ancient Indian History – Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Prakashan.
5. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – Om Prakash, New and Publishers.

Unit-13: State Formation and Urbanization

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 13.1 Context of Urbanization
- 13.2 Urbanization's Contribution in Economic Growth
- 13.3 Rising of Magadha Kingdom and Republic
- 13.4 Summary
- 13.5 Keywords
- 13.6 Review Questions
- 13.7 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the students will be able to:

- Understand the context of Urbanization,
- Explain the contribution of townships in economic growth,
- Explain about the Rise of Magadha Empire and Republic.

Introduction

Along with the establishment of powerful states is seen the beginning of the process of the development of urbanization during this period. Beginning from the 6th century B.C., it was for the second time that there arose towns. This organization was important from the point that it remained in existence for a long time and during this period there began the tradition of writing literature. The Antiquarians are of the view that this period of history has connection with settlements which used high quality utensils like Northern Black Polished Wares. There was a constant progress of trade and commerce in these settlements. Proofs are available that there were fortification walls around Kaushambi, Ujjaini, Varanasi and Rajgriha.

The process of urbanization began during the historical period of 6th century B.C. on the banks of river Ganges and its tributaries. The rivers of this region were also a medium of communication. In the beginning, most of the towns were the capitals of small states and were centers of other political and commercial activities. The definition of towns has been given by **Patanjali** on the basis of **Panini** and the division of villages and towns has been done on the basis of profession.

Patanjali has mentioned four types of settlements. Gram, Ghosha, Nagar and Samwaha. The places inhabited by farmers and five types of workers (artisans) and Brahmins were given the name of Gram. The places inhabited by herdsmen were called Ghosha. The places where various types of workers and artisans lived in different localities were called Nagar and bigger than this (Nagar) was called Samwaha. **R.S. Sharma** is also of the same view that in the classification of a town, no special importance should be given to its population. **Professor Sharma** writes that most of the people in towns are not agriculturists. Therefore, unless there is a huge growth of food grains in the surrounding areas of a town, no provision can be made for their food and hence a huge population cannot live in the town.

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We should understand about the towns of this age which developed in the Gangetic valley were not well planned like those of Harappan towns. In other words, the original settlements were the result of natural colonization. Whereas the Harappan towns were inhabited as per pre-planning, that technique had not developed in this age. Though the process of planned towns is visible by the second century B.C. The details we get in contemporary literature about the rise of towns in the 6th century B.C. and in the following centuries are exaggerated ones. In contemporary literature, the area of towns like Ayodhya and Vaishali was shown from 30 to 50 square km but this is not supported by the proof we get from the excavations. Similarly, the description of palaces etc is also exaggerated. **Professor R.S. Sharma** has mentioned on the basis of materials obtained after the excavation of the temporary towns, "The material life of these towns was not very high. There was a rise of towns situated on the banks of mid-Ganges such as Kaushambi, Varanasi, Khairadeeh, Vaishali, Rajgriha and Champa. But there houses were built of mud-clay and it appears that these houses were covered with straw. Houses were built with wood also. Burnt bricks were not used for making houses before the Mauryan period." Memorial building remains are available from the Mauryan period when the capital was transferred from Rajgriha to Patliputra. During the post-Magadha period, the processes of urbanization had been accelerated and towns began to be centers of commercial and political activities. Then people began to use bricks in place of wood. It can be said that in the building of post Magadha towns; the same materials began to be used that was done in case of Harappan towns. Therefore the Harappan towns are considered as the first phase of urbanization and the towns that flourished during the 6th century B.C. are given the title of second phase.

13.1 Context of Urbanization

Before discussing town planning, it is necessary to understand the background of the development of urbanization. It has been said in Aitreya Brahmin that in the eastern states like Magadha, Kalinga, Bang, etc, the kings are anointed and they are called Samrat. There are details of different classes of kings in this Brahmin Granth and the empire has been described as the supreme one. The ruler of an empire was addressed as Samrat and their policy of state expansionism gave an impetus to the pursuit of imperialism. This process of a king, occupying another state, increasing his armies, sending army from one place to another and their encampments, etc gave great encouragement to new profession and commercial activities. Several towns were fortified. Ancient literature is full of the description of fortification. Strong force came to be considered as an important source of security. This race of fortification gave more and more opportunities to the town craftsmen. The fortification by the states also affected the town people and thus the citizens began to use bricks in the construction of their houses. It should be remembered that the development of some of the towns in the initial stage was due to the capitals. But those places which were centers of commercial activities or those situated on the banks of rivers and where sources of communication were available or were situated on trade-routes- they were more urbanized in number.

Self Assessment

Fill in the blanks:

1. Nikh and Suvanna (Suvarna) named gold coins are found in literature.

Notes

2. In ancient time, the word has been mostly used for town.
3. In, the description about the different classes of makers of gold, Brass, iron, lead, tin, etc. articles can be found.

The fertile valleys of the rivers have played a significant role in the development of towns. The development and expansion of agricultural land is easier in plains as compared to the mountainous regions. The main jungles of India's Ganges valley were cleared for expansion of agricultural land and thus the prominent towns of India developed in the Ganges valley. The towns situated in the Ganges territory got the benefit of the harbours, situated at the banks of the Ganges and its tributaries. The huge quantity of trade was carried on through the river route. Descriptions are available in contemporary literature about the situation of many harbours. Ayodhya on the banks of Saryu, Shravasti on Rapti, Kashi (Varanasi) on Ganges, Kaushambi and Mathura on Yamuna, Paatein (Capital of Atraaka territory) on Godavari, are worth mentioning. In Buddhist literature, Champa, Rajgriha, Shravasti, Saket (Ayodhya), Kaushambi and Varanasi were counted among the six prominent towns. Among other prominent towns, it finds mention in Buddhist literature are Vaishali, Capital of the Lichchavis, Kapilvastu, Capital of the Shakyas, Mithila capital of Videh, Saagal of Madra Desh and Ujjaini of Avanti. It can be said that in the development of towns of Ganges territories, the Ganges and its tributaries have played a special role. Through the Ganges, one could reach the sea. Secondly, it passed through Bihar's iron producing areas. The expansionist policy of the states and their mutual conflicts had made iron an important metal from the very beginning.

The use of iron for agricultural equipments brought a great progress in agricultural production. On the basis of proofs got from the excavations at Atranjkhera in U.P. and other places, scholars are of the view that iron came to be used in India around about 1000 B.C. At many places in the Gangetic plains, heaps of copper made articles have been found. It must have been definitely used by prosperous Janpads from getting their arms and weapons made. The use of iron in the agricultural field had brought the agricultural production to a surplus state. From the military point of view, this kind of surplus was very important for the powerful Janpads, which believed in the policy of expansionism. **Dr. D.D. Kaushambi** has drawn the attention of scholars to the fact that the use of iron and the knowledge of the technique of sowing rice gave stimulus to the development of towns. The use of iron plough share made the cultivation of the field more effective and there was great progress in the agricultural occupation. Now people of the Ganges valley were more dependent on agriculture than on rearing animals. With the adoption of agriculture as a substantive occupation, there began to be rise of surplus and this surplus made the development of towns very mobile. This is also worth mentioning that with the rise of surplus, the sale and purchase of goods began to flourish.

During the 6th Century B.C., the use coinage and the progress in trade were the important aspects of the Indian economic system. There was a great development in trade and commerce due to the use of metal (currency). With the introduction of coinage system, the barter system became less and less. Now generally, the medium of sale-purchase were a single type of coins which were called "Kaasharpan." Kaasharpans were copper-made 146 grain coins. Besides, names of gold coins, such as Nikh (Nishka) and Suvanna (Suvarna) find mention in the Pali literature. Small copper coins of small denomination as Maasak and Kaaknika were also prevalent. The discovery of thousands of silver coins from the excavations bear testimony to the extensiveness of trade. Historians have accepted three economic characteristics of this period – commercial harbours, development of towns and overseas trade.

This was the time when trade with Rome began to increase and by the time of the Kushans, this trade reached its climax. The Kushans knit together central Asia and Indian sub-continent which gave an impetus to trade with Rome. The silk-route, beginning from China and going to the West and Europe, passed through the Kushan Empire. This route was famous for the silk trade. Through the silk-route, some goods came to India and were exported to other countries from Bhrigukuchh harbour. The trade with Rome continued up to the first two B.C. Centuries. According to **Dr. R.S. Sharma**, "Due to trade with central Asia there was development of Indian towns and due to trade with Rome and South-East Asia,

the towns of southern India developed." Thus we can say that with the introduction of coinage system and with the coming of Roman coins in India, the trade exchange of received a great encouragement which resulted in the urbanization of trade centers. The towns situated on the trade routes had special importance. Kamboj, situated in the south-west, and Kaushambi, Koshal, Varanasi, etc of Ganges valley had special importance for being situated on the trade routes. In these towns, references are available in contemporary literature about horse traders. There are references about the traders coming from 'Uttarapath' and selling horses in Banaras.

It is noteworthy that some towns developed as main centers of education. It appears from the Buddhist, Jain and Brahmin literature that Takshshila, Banaras and Ujjain were main centers of education. Jeevak, the native of Patliputra, had studied at Takshshila, who afterwards became a great scholar of Ayurved. Prasenjeet, King of Koshal, Emperor Chandragupta Maurya, Kautilya, Panini (Grammarians) and Patanjali, etc had got their education from here. In this age, the development of education attracted people to the newly developing sections of people. People, desirous of joining the army and state services also began to settle in the capital.

For the towns which developed near the sea, the word 'Kutch' was used for eg. Bhriku Kutch, the present Kathiawar was called Daarukutch. Similarly, Mahirewa was known as Pipli Kutch. Thus many factors contributed to the development of towns. No single reason can be assigned for the development of towns but on the whole this is the result of a combination of various circumstances and facts. This can be definitely said that in one town, one element was more effective while in another, another element was effective.

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Notes Ashoka's pillar inscription (on which the victory of Samudra Gupta has been inscribed) and three Kushan inscriptions have been found from Kaushambi.

Town Planning

This period's urban houses were made usually of mud and wood and roof was of mud tiles. These types of houses are still seen in the landscape around Ganga. Slowly bricks and stones started to be used in making houses. On the basis of contemporary books, the visualization of urban life can be done easily.

In the towns, the houses of chief employees were made in the center. The King and chief people used to enhance the beauty of towns by their capabilities. Several examples of the grandeur of the royal palace are found in those days' literature. Chanakya (Kautilya) in Arthashastra (Third paragraph) has explained about town rule and fort rule. He has presented the picture of an ideal township according to which, "One huge local town formation of 800 villages in the center of the district shall be made, which shall also be the center of the King's revenue collection (there revenue officers shall be appointed)." As per architects, such a township shall be built near some strong place, near the meeting point of river or at the banks of water filled big water body. That town according to Architectural rules shall be kept round, square or broad. All around the town, there should be river flowing full of water and a ditch full of water. There should be full facility of collecting things and their sale-purchase that are produced all around the town and it should be linked via land-water routes also. All around the town at a distance of one 'dand' (length of four cubits), there should be three ditches which should be 14 dand, 12 dand and 10 dand wide respectively and it should be $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ deep than this, i.e., the depth should be $\frac{1}{3}$ rd the width. The bed of those ditches should be made permanent by placing stones; their walls should also be made strong by using stones. In the ditches, ground water and river water should always flow.

Notes

Self Assessment

Multiple Choice Questions:

4. Shreshthi of Rajgriha purchased prince Jait's garden for 18 'Koti' gold coins and presented it to Buddha for his residence.
(a) Anaath Pindak (b) Anand
(c) Chanak (d) None of above
5. Articles produced in are called Atwick.
(a) gardens (b) fields
(c) forests (d) none of above
6. For land revenue, the words 'Bali' and 'Bhaga' are found in
(a) Buddhist literature (b) Jain literature
(c) Vedic literature (d) None of above
7. In Jain and Buddhist Literature, the description of Mahajanpads are found.
(a) 18 (b) 16
(c) 24 (d) None of above

In case of non-availability of bricks, construct ramparts with stones. The ramparts should not be of wood. With the wooden ramparts, there is always danger of fire. Within the ramparts, buildings (Attalikas) should be built. Each should be at a distance of 30 dands from one another and between every two houses there should be a road for chariot movement. Though Chanakya's town-planning depicts the picture of an ideal town but a mixture of some of its elements must have been there in the construction of contemporary towns because the town planning of Chanakya is supported by Megasthaneze's description of Patliputra. Megasthaneze (Mac Crindal's Ancient India, page 187) has mentioned six committees of five members each for the administration of Palivothra (Patliputra). According to him, Patliputra was 80 stadia long and fifty stadia wide, its shape was like a quadrilateral and it was surrounded by wooden walls in which some holes were left for shooting arrows. There was ditch in front of the capital. Arian (Mac Crindal, page 209-210) while extending this description writes that there were 570 pillars and 64 gates in Patliputra. Patanjali has described Patliputra several times in his 'Mahabhashya'. He has told us that Patliputra was situated on the bank of Sone river and also mentioned its palatial buildings and the ramparts.

In contemporary literature, we get description of highways which passed through the town and went to the inhabited places. On both sides of the highways, several palatial buildings were constructed which were embellished with small windows and arched gateways. The huge buildings of distinguished rich people were the center of attraction of the people. Fahien, the Chinese traveller, while mentioning the royal palace of Ashoka after 700 years wrote that Ashoka's royal palace and assembly hall are still there. All these have been constructed by 'Asurs'. The walls and doors have been made with stones. The highways were not constructed with tarcoal or cement as is done today. Therefore, when a caravan of traders passed through the contemporary highways they were followed by dust balloons.

For supporting literary groups, it would be proper to discuss archaeological sources. Detailed information can be had from the information gathered from the excavations about the towns of ancient India. **Professor Ram Sharan Sharma** is of the opinion that, "in the Indian continent out of the huge available original historical places, excavations were extensively made only in Takshshila, Kaushambi, Ahichchhatra and Nagarjuna Kunda. Sufficient excavations were made in Atranji Khera, Raj Ghat, Kheradih and Chirand but so far full excavations have not been made at a very important place like Mathura." We can form a clear idea about the shape and population of a town only by excavating it on a large scale. The presence of many mounds on specific place is a sign of its dense population and

the density of its houses points towards its more population. Similarly if a town is not situated on the bank of a river, it can easily be assumed from the abundance of its tanks and circular wells that it met the drinking needs of a huge population. The presence of different classes (categories) of workers in a place is considered a proof of its being a town settlement. In other words, presence of non-agriculturists is a special feature of town population. As was mentioned most of India's initial towns were situated on rivers or trade-routes. Indraprastha (Delhi) and Hastinapur in Kuru Kingdom, Kaushambi on bank of Yamuna and Banaras (Varanasi or Kashi) on the banks of Ganges- are proofs of this contention. **Dr. D.D. Kaushambi** had said, "During the beginning of 1st century B.C., the foundation of these towns can be understood in the context that in these huge rivers flowing rapidly through dense forests and marshy territories, there was already movement of boats." There is a brief description in Rigveda of 100 oar boats, and three days river journey from the nearest land which proves that the Aryans new boating. The only conclusion that can be drawn from these is that at the beginning of the first century B.C., these unknown courageous, ambitious people of the first century B.C. had reached high seas and they had discovered store of raw materials. Otherwise there would have been no reason for the discovery of historical remains from the excavation of the fort of Varanasi on the bank of Ganges beneath the river bed.

Around the seventh century B.C. Ayodhya, kaushambi and Shravasti were in existence. People residing in these places used various types of clay vessels. By the coming of sixth century B.C. the people of this entire region started using 'Northern black polish wares' (NBPW). Different types of shining wares are the proof that at this time there was evident cultural unity in the towns of the Gangetic valley. Probably artisans of only few towns used to make these types of vessels and at other places, this type of clay vessels were exported by businessmen.

The excavations of Shravasti have been done only in a small portion. It appears from the description of Fahien that in the fifth century B.C. this town was on decline. At Kaushambi, situated at a distance of about 60km to the south-west of Allahabad, excavations have been made in a more extended region. From here, have been discovered Ashoka Pillar Inscription (on which is engraved Samudragupta's victory) and three Kushan inscriptions. In one inscription, there is reference of Kaushambi's Ghoshit Ram Vihar from which the identity of this place is confirmed. From here have been discovered large quantities of coins of the Magadha of second and third century B.C. In 1969-70, small excavations were made in Ayodhya. From its Kuber mount have been discovered remnants of huge buildings built of bricks through various phases. The previous phase points to town planning. Scholars hold that this site was in existence during the Northern black polish wares period. Takshshila was established in the fifth century B.C. on Bhir Mount which extended over an area of 12000 yards from north to south and 730 yards from east to west. During the Mauryan period, it was in a developed state. The best example of town planning was seen again in Takshshila. This town is called Circup. The Greeks of Bactria established it in the second century B.C. Its planning was based on the chess style of Greek towns. Minus its sub township part, it was 3.5 miles long.

As a site of grey-colored painted wares, Hastinapur in Meerut district can be mentioned which developed round about 200 B.C. and red wares remained in existence in 300 A.D. Scholars have divided it into seven sub periods in which burnt bricks built houses have been found. Here it has been seen that town planning, suited to all the four directions. In a locality of Ahichchhatra (District Bareilly), capital of the Panchals, clay bricks were used in 300 B.C. and burnt bricks came into use in the first century B.C. At that time the town was fortified with 3.5 miles long wall of burnt bricks. From here have been found many coins of Kings having the title of 'Mitra'.

It can be said on the basis of the above description that the ancient towns mentioned in literature are testified by the remains found from the excavations. In the beginning wood was used for building purposes when it was available in huge quantity. But gradually people began to use clay bricks and later on, burnt bricks and stones. Though during the second town revolution, there was no development of well planned towns like the Harappan civilization and neither there could be full development of the water system (drains for water outlet). The development of these towns was the result of natural process.

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Full attention was given to the laying of roads during this period. Gradually, palatial houses began to be built by bricks and stones as we find mention in contemporary literature. Though in contemporary literature the splendour of the towns have been shown in an exaggerated manner yet in the preceding period, towns were symbols of developed culture. In the ancient Indian literature, there is an extensive use of words like Pur, Durg, Nagar, Nigam, etc as a symbol of towns.

Pur: In the initial Vedic literature, there is the use of the word 'Pur'. Here they have been used for fortified settlements. After it came to be used for the residence of the Kings and Royal families, rulers of Jansangh and their relatives and in future the word Pur began to be used for city or town.

Durg: Since Vedic times, it began to be used as a capital covered with security walls. Its encirclement not only offered security to the town but it was also possible to have an easy control over the activities of the citizens.

Nigam: It has got special mention in Pali literature. Probably it was related to such places where traders carried on the sale and purchase of their goods. But scholars believed that Nigams developed in those villages where utensils, wooden material, iron materials and salt etc were produced. It can be said that they were trade-villages which is proved from the fact that the coins of the previous period were issued by the Nigams. Sometimes in literature the word 'Nigam' has been used for the place where artisans and craftsmen lived and produced their goods.

Nagar: In the ancient period the word 'Nagar' has been mostly used for towns. It first finds mention in Tattariya Aranyak. Similarly the word 'Mahanagar' has been used for towns. It can be said to be the mixed form of the political activities of the 'Pur' and trade occupation of the 'Nigam'. The contemporary towns were centers of administration, trade and religious activities, which are residential places of administrative class, traders and artisans. There is mention of six Mahanagar in Buddhist literature, which were situated in the mid-Gangetic valley- Rajgriha, Champa, Kashi, Shravasti, Saket and Kaushambi.

Main Occupations of Towns

Craftsmen and traders had their hold on urban occupations. Some factors had their special contribution in the growth of urban economic system for eg, extra food production, whose demands were met from the nearby villages, production of craftsmen, progress of trade community, and circulation of metal coinage, administrative assembly and educated class. Generally the town craftsmen by being busy with their profession did the production work and the trading class carried on business with cities and other towns. One section of the towns which was called craftsmen or production class produced goods through various professions. There was one class which was not associated with any type of production. The second class was of the officers under the government services. Army was kept under this category. They had no control on the urban economic system. This section of people was kept under the category of services. The trading class was of a similar nature but they contributed in the growth of urban economic system by distribution and exchange of goods. Contemporary occupations can be easily classified on the basis of the remains discovered from their excavations. For example, the importance of the community of makers of earthen pots (Kumhar or Kulal) is clear from the discovery of large quantity of NBPW. There is reference to carpentry and makers of wooden goods in Rigveda also. The importance of this class remained intact in future also. It finds mention in later Vedic literature Baudh and Jain Grantha. We begin to get information from the Rigveda about the people engaged in the work of various metals. The Buddhist and Jain literature kept goldsmith and ironsmith among the important production sections. In Milind Panhao, there is mention of separate classes of people who were engaged in the making of gold, copper, iron, lead and tin goods. The discovery of ivory goods, coins, stone and glass goods, beads, copper and iron goods found from the excavations of contemporary urban sites are proofs of the existence of artisan class.

Present Banaras, which is amongst one of the oldest towns of India, had its prominence due to its being a pilgrimage center. People came from all over the country to the sacred places situated in towns and offered something to the Gods and Goddesses. Thus the Priestly class of the temples was able to attract the resources of the pilgrims. In other words, besides the religious services these urban centers offered administrative and economic services to the people living beyond their material limits. The religious services were controlled by the Brahmins or priestly class, the administrative by the state servants and economic activities by the trading class. Being residents of towns, the trading class, by controlling the supply of metals, minerals and luxurious items, were successful in having a grip over one part of the resources of the villages which fell under the influence of the urban areas.

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Thus the urban people who were successful in attracting the extra resources are wealthier than the village folk and on the basis of this wealth are able to get splendid houses constructed. The urban people used their wealth in getting respect and power. Just like today, in those days also people got constructed palatial palaces and beautiful temples with their money. Some people were interested in the increment of their wealth. Similarly some people made a collection of valuable metals and stones with the help of their money. As far as craftsmen and workers are concerned, they had no special rights like the wealthy people. But from the increase in their trade skill and desire for more profit, there appears a tendency developing among them to organize themselves. We get information from Pali books that during the time of Gautama Buddha, different types of craftsmen lived in towns and they had their own alleys. They organized themselves in the form of 'Shreni' and 'Nigam'. **Romila Thapar** has written about them that with the development of towns, there was increase in the number of craftsmen who were organized in shrenis. Each Shreni was settled in a particular part of the towns so that numbers of one Shreni could remain together and work collectively and generally such a relation was found among them, they began to be seen as a community.

Among the town dwellers, worst condition was of scavengers (Bhangi), Chandaals, washermen and beggars. Scavengers had importance for performing the last rites. Their position was the worst. In the caste system, their position was the lowest and their living places were outside the towns. Whereas the position of workers was better due to their trade deftness, the condition of this damned community was very deplorable and thus the existence of rich and poor became a special feature of urban life.

13.2 Urbanization's Contribution in Economic Growth

Several scholars while acknowledging the contemporary urbanization as a culture of its dwellers do not accept their special contribution for society because all the consumption goods were received from the villages and the urban people consumed the surplus of the villages and were like a burden on the people of the Janpad. This class included ruling class, state officials, soldiers, Purohits and to some extent traders. In this connection **Professor Ram Sharan Sharma** has said that some people had definitely connection with the production system but they themselves did not help in production of any kind. But there is no doubt that many craftsmen and different types of workers were engaged in handicrafts in the towns. Due to the activities of artisans and traders, towns had become centers of barter system and technology. Therefore the contribution of towns in the production of handicrafts and in one way, the production of food and cereals cannot be denied. It would be wrong to consider the whole town as interdependent. Therefore the production aspect in ancient cities cannot be overruled. Due to the towns kingship also became very strong. Gradually, the categories of craftsmen and organizations of the traders were becoming influential in towns. In different towns, special types of goods were produced in huge quantity and then they were distributed in the entire country. With the circulation of coinage, there was a tremendous progress in trade. It was the result of the flourishing crafts of this urban culture that India's contacts were established with Rome. Silk clothes and other handicraft goods were being exported in large quantity there and gold was coming to India through coins.

One of the outcomes of urbanization was also the progress of trade and commerce and development of trade routes, the climax of which is seen during the Kushan period. Mention of the trade routes will be made in the following pages. It is sufficient to know here that large part of trade with the Roman Empire

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passed through these routes. It appears from the Pali books that traders carried goods with 500 carts. Many goods brought from Kashmir and Ujjaini were sent to Western countries through the Bharaucah harbour. Therefore the contribution of the urban people in economic development cannot be denied.

Decline of Urbanization

After 3rd century A.D., there began the decline of most of the towns. According to **Y.D. Sharma**, large towns had reached a decadent position during the Gupta and post Gupta period. **Dr. R.S. Sharma** has written about the decline of towns and has collected some significant facts. It is of the view that up to the 5th and 6th century B.C. the commercial, trading and craftsmanship element had an important role in town administration and their consent was necessary in the sale and purchase of land. Without their consent, no one could sell land in town administrative district. But later Gupta period does not have the same practice. There was no contribution of traders, businessmen and sculptures in public administration. On this basis it has been mentioned conclusively that during the period from 7th to 10th century trade and urbanization became slow and there was decrease in the importance of those people who indulged in crafts and commerce.

According to **Dr. Sharma**, the second main reason was the rapid decline in the trade between India and Rome. Due to the trade with India and eastern countries, Rome's treasury began to be empty. The Roman rulers banned the import of Indian products. By the end of 3rd century B.C., there was a great decline in Rome's trade with India. Besides, the Indian politics adversely affected the Indian trade and occupation. So long as the Satvahanas and the Kushans remained powerful, law and order was intact, which is an important condition for the progress of trade. Traders had not to pay toll tax at different places. After their downfall, the towns headed towards their decline gradually.

The tradition of land donation of the Gupta period proved very fatal for urbanization. The Gupta rulers and feudal lords began to donate towns along with land. With the decline of towns and villages, many restrictions were imposed on trade and commerce. Now under the new lords (Buddhist monks or Purohites who received donations of land and town), the traders and craftsmen had no freedom as was previously. Now towns became in one way, parts of the feudal system. Thus many factors combine during the Gupta and post Gupta period for the decline of urbanization.

Economic Activities—Just like the present, most of the people lived in villages during this period. All around the group of houses in the villages, there was extensive agricultural land. Connected with the villages were pastures which were called Van or 'Daav'. Generally farmers cultivated their lands themselves but big landlords got this work done by labourers which resulted in the advent of labour class in society. This class earned its livelihood by working on the lands of others. Several descriptions are available in contemporary literature which point to the relations of the landlord and the servant. At that time, the wealthy Brahmins and Kshatriyas had hundreds of bullocks and ploughs for cultivating their agricultural land and appointed several labourers (Bhritaks) to accomplish the agricultural works. The labourers got their wages in the form of grains or money. Women also worked from morning to evening for earning their livelihood. Rajidavid has written that in India a large part of population has always been dependent on agricultural work for their livelihood. During the time of Buddha also, India's rural Economy was mainly based on the pattern of village groups established by the landlords.

Contemporary literature informs us about the availability of huge quantity of food grain goods. The fertility of land was its main reason. Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. From the social point of view also agriculture had a high place. In Buddhist literature out of the three superior occupations, agriculture has been placed on the first position. Modern Historians differed on the views expressed by ancient writers about the land lords. Some scholars hold that the King had the proprietary right on land whereas some historians are of the view that it was considered as a personal ownership. **Smith** is of the view that in ancient India, land was considered as the property of the king. During the ancient period several kings gave pieces of land as charity to Brahmins, educational institutions etc which explains their personal ownership. **Ghoshal** is of the view that the personal ownership of agricultural land is very much prevalent from the Vedic period. **Jaiswal** is also of the view that personal

ownership of land in ancient India is proved. **R.S. Tripathi** has written that the village economy was based on the independent ownership of land. The agriculturist was the owner of his land but he could not sell or mortgage his land without the permission of the village Panchayat or village Parishad. Several proofs of personal land ownership are available in contemporary literature. Accounts are available of a Brahmin giving 1000 Karees (probably acre) as charity from his landed property.

Anathpindak (Sudat) the Shreshthi of Rajgriha, after purchasing the garden of prince Jait for 18 crores gold coins, presented it to Buddha for his residence. As per the demand of Prince Jait, these coins were spread in the gardens which were brought there on carriages. This description proves the individual's personal legal right on land and he was free to transfer the right through the sale of land. Women could also donate land. The description of Amrapali gifting a garden (Amravan) to Buddha proves the right of women on land. The iron implements played an important role in clearing jungles from the Gangetic plains. Different kinds of grains began to be produced on a large part of this region. The expansion of agriculture increased the importance of cattle. Buddhists laid stress on the production of animals. It has been said in **Suttanipaata** that animals should not be killed because they provide food grains.

The peasants had to labour hard for the preparation of agricultural land. Sometimes the field was ploughed from three to seven times or more than that. Ploughing of the field was done by a plough for which the word 'Nangal' has been used in the Buddhist books. Just like the present, bullocks were used for drawing the plough. The plough was driven by two or more than two bullocks. To prepare the infertile land, probably ploughing was done many times, and then seeds were sown. Women also helped in the sowing work. As compared to later Vedic period, one of the reasons for the more production of food grains during the Buddhist period was the adoption of sowing system in the production of rice. Several descriptions are available in Jain literature relating to the agricultural work. During that period, three types of crops were produced. The crops produced in the fields were called 'Kshetrik' and the ones produced in gardens were called 'Araamik' and items produced in the jungles were called 'Atwiks'. Budhghosh (Vinay pitak commentary) has mentioned 'Udakvapp' and 'Thoolvapp'. In the first case, seeds were thrown in the water-filled fields and in the second in the dry fields. In Brihtkalp Bhashya, the crop produced in the fields (Kshetrik) have been divided into two parts- one 'setu' which was irrigated by artificial sources and the second 'ketu' which was dependent on rains.

Information is also available about various sources of irrigation. Fields were irrigated in the Sindhu territory by rivers, through tanks or ponds in Dravidian territory and through wells in Uttarapath. Description of 'Tul' (an appliance in the form of see-saw for lifting water) and 'Chakkvattak' (water-wheels) are available. The ripe crop was cut by a scythe (asisahi) for which Panini has used the word 'patra' and 'lavitra'. Grains were cleaned by winnowing basket (suppkattar). In contemporary literature, details of various types of grains are available- Yav (barley), Brihi or shaali (paddy), godhoom (wheat), kangu (millet), mugg (black grain), chanak (gram), saasap (mustard), cane (sugarcan), cotton, long, long pepper, betel leaves (tambul), saana (jute), etc. Among the main fruits were pomegranate, date-palm, mangoes, apple, fig fruit, grapes, etc. Besides them the other agricultural products were turmeric, ginger, garlic, pepper, red pepper, onion, etc.

It is clear from the above description that during this period, following the 6th century B.C., people were going ahead with the production of various produces and the market of economy based on maintenance was transiting towards economic system. The ploughing of fields several times and the use of more than two bullocks for drawing ploughs is the illustration of the fact that there was a surplus production of food grains. If this had not happened, the food needs of other classes could not be met and the existence of 16 Maha Janpads, their important towns and permanent forces would not have been possible. Moreover, during this period such important towns had been established which was situated on the trade-routes and where various types of high standard occupations had been developed. The existence of such towns in the vast plains of river valleys are the proof of more production of food grains through agriculture.

For land-tax, words like 'Bali' and 'Bhaga' are available in Buddhist literature. With regard to the portion of tax payment, Manusmriti had described different rates such as 1/6th, 1/8th and 1/12th. Gautama

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Buddha has accepted $1/10^{\text{th}}$, $1/8^{\text{th}}$ or $1/6^{\text{th}}$ part of production as the royal share. Vashishtha and Vishnu dharma sutra have mentioned $1/6^{\text{th}}$ as land revenue. In one Jataka (Kaam Jataka) the measurement of land has been accepted as the basis of Bali fixation. During this period, a state officer called 'Rajjugahak Amachch' appears to have preceded the 'Rajuk' described in the Ashoka inscriptions. Probably the fixation of land tax through measurement was done by this officer. During this period, Bali (land revenue) was received in the form of articles.

In Jain and Buddhist books, there is sometime mention of famine conditions due to the lack of rains. At such a time the monks had to face great problem in getting arms. There is a mention of one famine in 'Mahavag' when people were forced to eat animals like dogs, horses, etc for their survival.

Breeding of cattle was considered a superior (excellent) profession just like agriculture and commerce. Various types of birds and animals were reared and some of them were also hunted. At the several archaeological sites of this period, huge quantity of bones of sheep, goats, horses, bores, etc have been found. This points to the fact that animals were not only used for ploughing and carrying goods but probably of class of society was meat-eater too. Nets were also used for hunting. Among the domestic animals, cow was the most important because besides milk, calves were used as bullocks for agriculture purposes. Goat, buffalo, horse, elephant, etc were among other important animals.

Shreni and Trade – There was great progress of industrial enterprises during this period. Advent of several commercial classes is seen among the people engaged in separate professions and industries. The interest of the people related to different professions was for a mutual organized life, developed during the period. 'Shreni', 'Gana' and 'Poog' are the illustrating words of such organization. Scholars believe that Shreni was an organization of people who were engaged in the same trade and profession of one and separate classes. Jataka contain description of eighteen shrenis but none of them contains description of all the shrenis. R. David has described 18 shrenis on the basis of contemporary literature.

(1) We come to know from Jataka that carpenters made boats and oars. (2) Metal workers made weights and measures by melting metals. In Milindpanho, there is description of different class of people who made goods of gold, copper, iron, lead, tin, etc. For agricultural work, ploughs, spade, shovel, sickle were made. (3) Leather workers made leather ropes, shoes, etc. (4) Potters provided earthen pots to society. (5) Workers of stone constructed houses. (6) At this time, textile industry was very much developed. Different types of cotton, woolen and silk garments were made. There is a description of the settlement of weavers who lived in the out-skirts of Rajgriha. (7) There also existed a class of workers who made artistic goods from ivory. Information is available about the great development of this industry in Banaras. (8) Dyers after cleaning clothes decorated them with blue, yellow, red and pink colours. (9) Ornament makers: Goldsmith made different types of ornaments. Most of the people had interest in gold ornaments and used them for their body decoration. (10) Painters beautified the houses, mansions, Vihaars by using different colours. (11) Among other classes worth mentioning are fishermen (12) Butchers (13) Hunters (14) Barbers (15) Gardener (16) Boatmen (17) Food and sweets makers and (18) Basket makers.

This age as is known, was an age of development of towns. Thus the craftsmen and artisans who worked in stones got an opportunity to show their craftsmanship in building houses and attics in the houses. The use of stone for constructing houses had begun in this period. Probably, the advent of sculpture is also the contribution of the sixth century B.C. period. Similarly, fabric making was also the most developed industry of this period. Many places were famous for their superior fabric industry. Pradyot, the ruler of Ujjaini, being pleased with the services of Jeevak gifted him a pair of coverlets, produced in Shivi region. People felt very proud by wearing dresses produced in Kashi, hence the dresses of that place had special importance.

Just like shrenis, the description of Gana and Poog is available from the Dharma sutras. When people of different classes and professions united themselves into one organization for gaining wealth and profit, it resulted in the formation of Poog. The head of every Shreni was called 'jeshtak' or chief. Every member had to abide by the fixed rules framed by the shrenis. Any dispute between the shrenis was

settled by mahasetthi. The shrenis had sufficient autonomy, i.e., these organizations were managed on the basis of cooperation.

Due to the expansionist policy of states, there arose large states. As movement became more secure, there came stability in public life also. On the other hand, the advent of urban culture and development of art and sculpture- all these factors contributed to the commercial progress. The circulation of coins greatly contributed to this process. It gave more mobility and also progress to profession and commerce and encouraged economic activities in a large area. The states also helped in the commercial activities because taxes levied on commercial goods played an important role in increasing the state treasury. After inspecting their goods, the state officials collected octroi tax from the traders. With the great increase in trade, Shreshthis and Grihapatis had amassed enormous wealth. There is description of Grihapati Medak in Buddhist literature that he paid the salary of army had gifted 1250 flock of cow for services of Mahatma Buddha and Buddhist Sangh.

Trade-Routes- We do not get much information about the prevalent trade-routes of this period but it would be proper to mention the probable trade-route suggested by several scholars. Out of the internal trade-routes, one route started from Rajgriha (present Bihar), passing through Patliputra, Vaishali, Kushinagar, Shravasti (present U.P.), reached Takshshila (North-Eastern Pakistan) situated in the Gandhar territory of North-Eastern Frontier. This route testifies to the rise of trade system which was spread in that part of 'Uttarapath', which connected with the Himalayan base and afterwards, Takshshila with Rajgriha. In this route, there were 12 halting places from Rajgriha to Kushinagar. The description of this route is available in context of the caravan of Shravasti's Anathpindak. In this route, the Ganges had to be crossed at Patna one time.

The second route united towns like Shravasti, Ayodhya, Kaushambi, Vidisha, Ujjaini and Pratisthan (Paithan). It had six halting places. Another route beginning from Shravasti reached Rajgriha after passing through Kapilvastu, Kushinagar, Pawa, Vaishali, patliputra. This route was useful for the travelling of Buddhist followers and monks. Description is also found in Suttanipaat that the southern and western routes met in Kaushambi and the routes for the travelers going to Koshal and Magadha began from here.

One route passing through the deserts of western India, Rajasthan went to Sauvira region. Among other routes mentioned is made of the other routes going from Varanasi to Swarnbhumi. In Swarnbhumi were included Burma, Malaya, Siam, Cambodia, etc. Accounts are available that from Tamluk in the east and Bharuch in the west people went up to foreign countries like Sri Lanka (Tamparuni) and Burma through sea route. We learn from 'Balahass Jataka' that people had to lose their lives during their sea journey of Sri Lanka because they lived two Kshinis in this route which used to finish the mislead people. We come to know from Sussodijatak that people went to Swarnbhumi, through southern Chamapa harbour of eastern country. Sudharak Jataka and Baweru Jataka mention about the trade journey of western countries like Babylon (Baweru) and Egypt. Accounts are available in the Jataka about the Bharukutch harbour of western India which is identified with the Bharuch town of Kathiawar. A thorough investigation of 'Sudharak' harbour of Aprant region has been given in Dhammpad commentary, Deepvansh and Mahavansh. Dr. B.C. Law had identified this place with Supara (Sopara) of Thana district of Mumbai from where have been discovered rock inscriptions of Ashok. In Sushmarak Jataka, this name has been used for the masters of the sailors of the harbour town.

The trade routes were not always safe. In Satigamb Jataka, there is mention of a village inhabited by 400 thieves. They robbed traders in the way. Therefore traders moved with armed security forces and with their attendants for their safety. The commercial goods were carried by bullock-carts. Several traders accompanied their carriages for sake of trade who were called 'Saarth' and the leader of the group was given the name of 'Saarthwah'. Such a commercial group (Saarth) had to pay toll-tax at fixed places. There was lack of roads and bridges at that time. So bullock-carts moved slowly and they had also to cross rivers. Traders also used river routes. Main articles worth export were silk, muslin, precious stones, armaments, knives, carpets, scented goods, medicines, ivory goods and gold

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Notes

and silver ornaments. Contemporary literature mentions several traders who became rich due to the trade of these goods.

Weights and Measures—Several words are available in Buddhist literature regarding weights and measures. Panini has mentioned scale (Tula), measurement (like a coin), nishpad (a small weight for weighing gold), shaaran (twenty rattis), bist, shatmaan, aadhak, etc. Up to the time of Panini, coins like Kaasharpan, Nishka, pan, Paad, masha, etc were in prevalence. In Aamighammaappdipika, there is mention of several weights and measure- Kundava-1 parstha, 4 prastha-1 aadhak, 4 aadhak-1 drone, 4 drone-1 maani and 4 maani- 1 khari. Yojan was the symbol of distance or length. According to Reij David, as per the description of the Pali books of 5th century, this points to 7-8 miles. The existence of any bank like institution is not found in this period. People kept their wealth safe by burying it underground.

Thus during the Buddhist period, people in India were not prosperous from the economic point of view but they were also a great progress in trade, industry and handicrafts. Due to the industrial and commercial development of this period, India was able to become exporter of various commodities to the western countries in future.

13.3 Rising of Magadha Kingdom and Republic

During the Vedic period, India was divided into small states but by this period the kings had become very influential. Now it was quite natural that there should be great struggle among states for the expansion of the boundaries and increase of their power. In this process the Magadha rulers established a notion of universal emperor as **Rai Chaudhary** has written that, Bimbisara had annexed Anga and a part of Kashi in Magadha by his diplomacy and power. Then Magadha continuously went on expanding until Ashoka the Great lay down his sword after the Kalinga war. Before discussing about the Magadha empire, it is important to view the contemporary political condition of India. So we can form a broad picture of the political atmosphere. There are references to 16 Janpads in Jain and Buddhist literature out of which Magadha Janpad was one of them. Besides these, Vajji and Mall republics were also included in Mahajanpads. In these republic states, democratic form of government was prevalent.

Mahajanpad—Even before this period, details of chief states are available in Vedic literature- Gandhar, Kaikeya, Madra, Vash-Ushinar, Matsya, Kuru, Panchal Kashi and Koshal. Towards their east were Magadha and Anga; Andhra, Pulind, Matil, etc towards the south about which we had talked before. But we get information from Bhagwatisutra and Anguttarnikaay about the division of northern India from Gandhar to the border of Bengal into 16 Janpads. Anguttarnikaay has just described the 16 Janpads-Anga, Kashi, Koshal, Vats, Avanti, Cheti, Kuru, Panchal, Matsya, Shoorsen, Gandhar, Kamboj, Ashmak, Vajji and Mall (republics) and Magadha.

Anga—This Janpad was situated to the east of Magadha and to the west of Rajmahal mountains. It included Bhagalpur and Munger districts of south Bihar. Towards the north, it extended up to Kosi river and some parts of Purnea Districts were also included in it. Champa (Chandan) near Bhagalpur was its capital. Champa river flowed between Magadha and Ang. Champa nagar was situated on its banks. Champa nagar was counted among the 6 large towns of the time of Buddha. It was famous for its commerce and information is available of traders going from here to the Far East by crossing the Ganges. In the beginning, Anga was a powerful Janpad. According to Vidhur Pandit Jataka, Rajgriha was at first a town of Anga kingdom. Afterwards it clashed with its neighbouring state Magadha which weakened its position. In Buddha's time, the state of struggle continued between Anga and Magadha. Its king Brahmadatt, once defeated Magadha in war but afterwards, he had to be defeated by Magadha and Brahmadatt was killed and during the war period, Anga was merged with Magadha. A large quantity of northern black polish wares have been discovered from the excavations at Champa near Bhagalpur.

The archaeologists have not clearly given details in chronological order. There is a large earthen rampart. In the first and second phase, there are four rooms in each and earthen spoons, hangings and slabs have also been found in this phase.

Kashi – To the south-east of present U.P. was Kashi, the capital of which was Varanasi (Banaras) which is the confluence of Varuna and Asi rivers (Ganges and Gomati). During this period, this town was famous for trade, crafts and education. Kashi is also said to be the main center of the trade of cotton clothes and horses. References are available about the great fertility of this land. Details are also given in Sambhav Jataka that the area of this town was 12 Yojan (96 miles). It has been reckoned among the chief towns of India. In Mahavagg, we get details of the power and prosperity of the town of Kashi. Ashwasen, father of Jain Tirthankar, Parshvanath, is said to be the king of kashi. In Dashrath Jataka, Dashrath, Ram, etc have been described as kings of Kashi instead of Ayodhya. Lord Buddha had given his first sermon at Sarnath, near Banaras. During the reign of Kashi's powerful king Brahmadatt, it had become a leading state. We know from Mahavagg that king Brahmadatt, etc had subjugated Koshal. The Brahachat Jataka contains details of the attack of Kashi on Koshal with a huge army during its struggle with Koshal. But in the end Kashi was defeated.

In Assak Jataka, Potali, the capital of Assak, situated on the bank of Godavari, has been said to be a town of kashi. Probably the Assak ruler may have acknowledged the over lordship of Kashi for a brief period. It appears from Sonnand Jataka that the Kashi ruler Manoj had brought rulers of Koshal, Magadha under his control. The kings of this place have been described as the most prominent and prosperous among all the kings. Antiquarians are of the view that no solid proofs have been found from Rajghat identified as Banaras, about its urbanization in the 6th century B.C. It must have risen to an important state around 450 B.C. It is said that it began to be called Kashi because of it making red ochre dresses (Kashiv) of the monks.

Koshal – During Buddha's period, it was an important state in northern India. It is said that on its northern frontier was Nepal, river Ganges in the south, Allahabad and Shakya kingdoms in the east. **Rai Chaudhary** has thus drawn the demarcation of Koshal- towards the west of Koshal kingdom was Gomati, Sarpika (Saryu river) in the south, Sadaneera in the east, which separated Koshal from Videh and Nepal mountain towards the north. We come to know from the 1969-70 excavations of Ayodhya that this region was populated during the northern black polish wares period.

We find statement of Koshal king in Majjhim Nikaya that, 'He is also of Koshal and Lord Buddha is also of Koshal.' It appears from Ramayana and Koran that the predecessors of Koshal were of Ikshvaku (Ikshvaku) race. The descendants of Ikshvaku ruled in Kushinagar, Mithila and Vaishali. From this it came to be imagined that the rise of Koshals was possible due to the union of small units. Probably in the beginning of 6th century B.C., this region was divided among small rulers who ruled over different towns. During the Ramayana period, Koshals capital was Ayodhya. There is a narrative of Dighu in Vinay – Kashi king Brahmadatt attacked Koshal. At that time, 'Digti' was the king of Shravasti. After his victory, Brahmadatt annexed his whole state into his kingdom but Digti's son had again won back his kingdom. Information is available that Koshal king Bunk, Dabbsen and Kans had attacked Kashi. There is an interesting account in Rajovadaan Jataka which at first, the struggle of two kings was told and along with several stories; the qualities of kings of Varanasi were also mentioned. During this period, except Kashi, there is no description of Koshal's struggle with any other king or clan. Probably the merger of clans (small principalities) situated towards its north was very gradual. But its relations with Kashi were not good. Hence struggle began between the two Janpads. Its result went in favour of Koshal and in the end, Kans occupied kashi. Prasenjeet had said that during the time of his father, Mahakoshal, Kashi was a dependent state of Koshal Janpad. Mahakoshal and Prasenjeet must have occupied Kashi by the closing years of 6th century B.C. The struggle of Kashi and Koshal was an event which occurred after the birth of Buddha. Reij David was of the view that four kings remained engaged in war step by step and the struggle continued for 100 years. With the merger of Kashi with Koshal and the bringing of three large towns of Ayodhya, Saket and Shravasti under its control, Koshal became a prosperous kingdom.

According to the Atthkatha of Buddhist Dhammpad, Prasenadi (Prasenjeet) was the king of Koshal who was educated at Takshshila. He was said to be a class mate of 'Mahali' who was famous for giving charity. Prasenjeet was a contemporary of Buddha and was related to another branch of Ikshvaku clan. This statement is supplemented from the very statement of Prasenjeet that "Lord Buddha is of the eighty and

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I am also 80 years old". Details are available of the discussions between Lord Buddha and the king at a place called Medlump. Suman, the sister of Koshal king had expressed a desire to become a Buddhist but she could not do so. This information is available from Sanyukta Nikaya. The contemporariness of Prasenjeet and Buddha is testified from the writing on one of the Buddhist statues of Bharhut Stupa of Madhya Pradesh. The Koshal king had given Setavya (Saket) and Uttkath (Shravasti or Salwati) to the Brahmins in charity. At the time of the marriage of his daughter Koshaldevi with Bimbisar, Samrat of Magadha, Mahakoshal had given the village of Kashi to meet the expenses of her ornamentation.

Descriptions of two wars are available in Sanyukta Nikaya- according to the first, the Magadha ruler Ajatshatru attacked Prasenjeet, the king of Kashi and he was forced to take refuge in Shravasti (Shrawatthi). In the second war, Prasenjeet imprisoned Ajatshatru after defeating him and freed him too after sometime and married his daughter Wajeera with him (Ajatshatru).

Prasenjeet was polygamist, once he saw Mallika, daughter of the head garland maker and was enamored of her beauty. Though he had, become old yet he married the 16-year-old girl. There is another version of his marriage. He wanted to establish matrimonial relation with the Shakyas of Kapil Vastu but the Shakyas did not agree with this still out of fear they could not refuse. Therefore they got Prasenjeet married to the maid Wasverwattiya by a trick. From this marriage, Prasenjeet got a son named Viddabh (Viruddhak). According to Tibetan folklores, the name of Viruddhak was Mallika, who was a made of the Shakyas.

There was a council of ministers in the state who advised Prasenjeet. It had 500 members. Majjhim Nikaya contains the name of one minister as Shri Vaddtha (Shri Vridha). Uvsagdasay has mentioned Mrigdhar as another minister, at other places the name of Deerghkaraayan is also mentioned. Once Viruddhak had won over the members of council of ministers by allurements and deception and dethroned Prasenjeet and himself became king. The destitute Prasenjeet moved towards the kingdom of his son-in-law Ajatshatru for taking refuge. But he died on his home front. After that Viruddhak decided to take revenge on the Shakyas. His chief minister Umbreesh acted diplomatically and assured the Shakyas of his non-enmity and got the forte doors open. With the opening of security gate Viruddhak's forces attacked and he was victorious. About 7700 Shakyas were killed in the battle. Thus the autonomous authority of the Shakyas came to an end and when he was himself returning, he was washed away by the floods along with his army while crossing Achrawati river.

Vats- Vats' (Vachh) capital was Kaushambi (modern Kosam) near Allahabad, situated on the banks of Ganges. It is said that kaushambi was 400 miles away from Ujjain and at a distance of 230 miles from Banaras. In Suttanipaat, there is a mention of a route going up to Kaushambi which passed through Ujjain and Vidisha. It is said that Vats was situated to the south of the Ganges. The present Kosam situated on the bank of Yamuna near Allahabad is identified as Kaushambi. Several remains of the Kushan period have been found from here. On the famous Ashoka inscription discovered from here is engraved the conquest expedition of Samudra Gupta.

In the time of Buddha, Udayin ruled over here who has been accepted a descendent of Paurav. His father's name was Parantap (Shataaneek) and one of his son's names is said to be Bodhi Kumar. Probably he died before ascending the throne. Udayin was a contemporary of Avanti king Pradyot, Magadha emperor Bimbisar and Ajatshatru. Dramatist Bhas has immortalized Vats ruler Udayin by his dramas. It appears from Bhas' composition 'Swapnvaasvdutta' that there was enmity between Udayin and Pradyot but they became friends after the marriage of Vasavdatta. The whole narrative of this play is based on the love affairs between Udayin and Avanti princess Vasavdatta. After this matrimonial alliance, Yogandhnarayan, the tactful minister of Udayin, also got his master married to Padmavati, daughter of the Magadha ruler Darshan. In Atthkatha, there is a description of three queens of Udayin. During this period were written Udenvathu in Pali and Makandika avdaan in Sanskrit. Interesting narratives are available about his enmity with the Avanti ruler Pradyot. But the description of the love affair topic of Vasavdatta and Udayin needs special mention.

Olden Berg has held 'Vanshas', described in Aitreya Brahmin, as Vansh or Vats. But this identification appears to be doubtful. We find mention of Vats ruler in the Puran. There is a mention of the establishment

of Kaushambi town by a certain Chedi king of Mahabharata. When Hastinapur was destroyed by a heavy flood of the Ganges, then Vichakshu, the great grandson of Janmejey, made Kaushambi his capital. Kaushambi town was situated on the confluence of trade-routes.

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Accounts of Udyain's conquests are found in Priyadarshika and Kathasaritsagar. He conquered Vung and Kalinga in the east, Chola kingdom and territories up to Kol kingdom in the south. He defeated Malechchha, Turks, Persians and Hoons in Western India but this description is not accepted as historical evidence. There is information that Sunsumaargiri Bhagga Janpad (Mirzapur) was under Udayin.

Once in an inebriated state, he got one basketful of yellow ants tied to the body of Buddhist monk Pindol Bhardwaj but afterwards, he got education in Buddhism from Pindol Bhardwaj.

Avanti- Avanti, situated in western India, was one of the most powerful Janpads of the 6th century B.C. Modern Malwa region is identified with Avanti kingdom. Mainly it had two parts, northern and southern Avanti, whose capitals were Ujjain and Mahishmati respectively. Both are said to be at a distance of 50 Yojan (400 miles) from one another. Mahishmati (Maandhata island) was situated on the bank of Narmada. These towns are said to be important centers of religion and culture. In ancient period, Haihey and before that Ikshvaku dynasty ruled over it. In Mahabharata, Avanti and Mahishmati are said to be two kingdoms. In the time of Buddha, a kind named Pradyot (Prajot) ruled over it. In Mahavagg, he is addressed as Chand whereas Bhas has called him as Mahasen. Avanti and Vats were enemies. The Vats king Udayin had married Vasavdatta, daughter of Avanti king Pradyot after abducting her. But gradually their enmity came to an end.

It appears from Majjhim Nikaya that out of fear of Pradyot's attack, Ajatshatru got Rajgriha fortified. The king of Mathura's Shoorsen kingdom was called 'Avanti Puto' during Buddha's time. Probably its ruler must have been a prince of Avanti. In Lalit Vistara the contemporary ruler of Buddha has been called Subaahu. At that time Avanti was the chief center of Buddhism. The names of some of its adventurous preachers are available- Abhay Kumar, Eesidaasi, Asidutta, Dhampal and Sona Kuttin, etc. Soan Kuttin has been accepted as the most proficient in the art of lecturing. The religious preachers roamed for propagation in Shravasti, Takshshila, Avanti, etc. There is mention of small and big towns of Avanti. Among other towns of Avanti there is mention of Kurradhar, Makkarkar, Sudershanpur, etc in Buddhist and Jain literature.

It appears from the Purans that the establishment of Avanti and Vidarbha was made by Yaduvanshis. The Yadus had established here a centralized kingdom as it was a fertile land for agriculture and also was situated on the southern trade-route. In Aitreya Brahmin also, Saatvats and Bhoja have been called the southern expanded branch of Yadus. Haihey dynasty has five main branches- Vitihotra, Bhoja, Avanti, Kundiker and Taaljungh. In the 4th century B.C., Avanti had become a part of Magadha. The Avanti ruler Chand Pradyot had embraced Buddhism due to the influence of Mahakachhayan, the disciple of Lord Buddha. Pradyot invited Mahatma Buddha also to Avanti, but he could not and sent his seven disciples along with Mahakachhayan.



Did u know? The capital of Kashi, situated to the south-east of present day Uttar Pradesh was Varanasi (Banaras) which is the confluence of Varuna and Asi (Yamuna and Gomati) rivers.

After Pradyot, the Magadha emperor Shishunag annexed Avanti to his empire by defeating it which has been described in the pages ahead. The Avanti kingdom had sufficient economic importance because several trade-routes passed through this region. From Ujjain have been discovered remains of NBPW, earthen statues, statues of mother Goddess, precious stones and iron implements. The earthen statues and caste copper coins of Shunga period have also been found.

Chedi- It was spread to the present Bundelkhand and adjacent areas situated on the bank of river Yamuna. Its capital was Shaktimati. The Jataka mention 'Sotyavati Nagari' which is identified with Shaktimati which was probably situated in Banda district of Uttar Pradesh. We find mention of Chedi

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kingdom in Riga Veda. In Mahabharata, Shishupal was said to be the Chedi king. During his reign, this state was at its climax but after his death, its decline began. One of the branches of this dynasty also ruled over Kalinga. There is description in Mahabharata that the Chedis were in close contact with Matsya, Kashis of Banaras and Karush of Sone river valley which were situated on the other side of Chambal. In Odissa (Kalinga), the Chedi dynasty king was Kharvel. Probably, certain prince of Chedi dynasty must have established this dynasty here.

Kuru- The regions near present Delhi and Meerut were part of Kuru kingdom. Its capital was Indraprastha on the bank of Yamuna. Besides Indraprastha, Hastinapur and Ishukar were said to be the capitals of the Kurus. Each of them had its own ruler. Most of the information we get about the Kurus is from the Mahabharata. All are well acquainted with the story given in it about the war of succession between the Kauravs and the Pandavas. The dynasty which established itself in Vats region was probably a branch of the Kurus. We know from the Purans that after the destruction of Hastinapur due to flood, some people of the royal family settled in Vats kingdom. The excavations of Hastinapur support the coming of floods. Hastinapur has been famous as a site of Painted Brown Polish Wares. From its excavations, houses of burnt bricks have been found in seven sub periods. The coins of Mathura rulers of the 2nd century B.C. have been discovered. According to Mehmoot Som Jataka, this kingdom had 300 confederations. It appears from the Pali books that the rulers of this place were of Yudhishtala lineage. In Jain books, Uttradhyayan Sutra, the Kuru king has been called of the Ikshvaku family. In Jataka fables, Sutt, Som, Kaukh, Dhananjay etc were accepted as kings of Kuru domain. In the beginning, Kuru dominion was a powerful dynasty but later on, republicanism was established there. In 'Artha Shastra', Kuru kingdom has been included in republics (ganrajya).

Panchal- From the very later Vedic period, Panchal kingdom was divided in to two parts- Northern Panchal, the capital of which was Ahichchhatra and Kaampilya was the capital of Southern Panchal. The whole of Ruhelkhand and eastern parts of Ganga-Yamuna, i.e., present Western U.P. were under this Janpad. From the Himalayan valley to Chambal river in the south, Koshal in the east and Kuru Janpad in the west decided its boundaries. It is mentioned in Mahabharata. Draupadi was the daughter of Drupad, king of Panchal; she was also called Panchali. The famous town of Kannauj was situated in this Janpad. In 300 B.C., Ahichchhatra had developed as a highly populated town where clay bricks were used for construction work. From here have been discovered coins of different kings who had the title of Mitra. Panchal was ruled by a king but probably by the time of Kautilya, republicanism had been established here also. Brahmatt was a powerful king of this kingdom. It finds mention in Mahaumagg Jataka, Uttradhyayan Sutra, and Swapnvaasvudutta. He (Brahmatt) has been described in Uttradhyayan sutra as the greatest king on earth. In this very book, there is description of Sanjay, king of Kaampilya, abdicating his throne and embracing Jainism.

Matsya- The present Jaipur, Bharatpur and Alwar regions were included in this Janpad. Cunningham has described Viraat (present Bairath) as its capital. Probably its capital Viraat Nagar became famous after the name of the founder king Viraat. Literally books tell us about upper Matsya, Veer Matsya etc. probably they must have been branches of the original kingdom. In Mahabharata there is mention of king Sahaj who was said to be the ruler of Chedi and Matsya. This region was suitable for breeding cattle. It is mentioned in Mahabharata that the Kauravs attacked Viraat and drew away the cattle. It is clear that Matsya could not face the powers based on permanent agriculture. There is no mention of the state in Buddhist literature. It appears that during this period, Matsya had become a subordinate state of the Chedis. Afterwards, it was annexed in the Magadha Empire. The famous Edicts of Ashoka have been found from Vairat (district Jaipur).

Shoorsen- It was situated towards the south of Kuru Janpad and north-west of the Chedis. Its capital was Mathura, towards the east of which were the Janpads of Yaduvanshis, Andhak and Vrishnis. During the Mahabharata period, Mathura was an important town. Lord Krishna was born in the Yadu dynasty. The Shoorsen king Avanti was a follower of Buddha. He got Buddhism propagated in his state. He is said to be a contemporary of Buddha. It appears from the name of Avantiputra that there were matrimonial relation between Mathura and Avanti. Panini has described Mathura as the residential; place of Andhak and Vrishnajan. Mathura was situated between Uttarapath and Dakshinapath, the two famous ancient

Indian trade-routes. It was due to the fact that Mathura was situated between the permanent agriculture plains and pastures of Gangetic plains which extended to the Malwa plateau. Therefore the importance of Mathura had increased. Excavations were made in Mathura in 1954-55 where was seen a brick structure of NBPW phase. During the next phase, different types of beads of precious stones and copper coins have been found. Coins of the Kushan period have also been found from here.

Gandhar- This Janpad was situated in the North West region of India (which is also called Uttarapath). It was extended up to the east of present Afghanistan, large portion of west Punjab, modern Peshawar and Rawalpindi. In one Jataka, Kashmir was also included in it. According to Buddhist literature, Takshshila is said to be its capital. At that time, this town was the famous center of learning and trade. Students came here from different places for study. We come to know from Jataka that students came here from distant parts of the country to learn the art of craftsmanship by living in close contact with the teachers. Jeevak, the inhabitant of Patliputra went to Takshshila for study who afterwards became great scholar of Ayurved. He was a contemporary of Mahatma Buddha. Prasenjeet, king of Koshal, Chandragupta the Mauryan emperor, Kautilya the great statesman, Jeevak the renowned physician, the grammarian Panini and Patanjali, all became famous in their respective fields after getting education from here.

In the 6th century B.C., king Pushkar Saaren ruled over Gandhar. He fought with Chand Pradyot, the king of Avanti and defeated him in the battle. He had good relations with Magadha; he had sent his ambassador to Magadha. It appears from the excavations at present Takshshila that by 1000 B.C., this town had been inhabited. By the coming of 6th century B.C., Takshshila had assumed the form of a developed town. It can be said on the basis of the materials discovered from the excavations that this town was in existence from the 5th century B.C. to the 5th century A.D. Handicrafts played an important role in the development of this town. At first, Takshshila is identified with Bhir mound. In the 5th century B.C., settlements were made in a disorganized manner. People lived here up to the Mauryan period. The second part of Takshshila was settled by Greeks of Bactria to the north of Bhir mound. It was developed on chess pattern. People began to settle in its third part during the Kushan period.

Kamboj- Situated in the Uttarapath, the old Kamboj kingdom was limited to the present Rajori and Hazara districts. According to some scholars, this Janpad extended to the North-West region of Gandhar and the neighbouring Pamir and Badakshan were included in it. Its capital is said to be Hatak or Rajpur. In Buddhist scriptures, Gandhar-Kamboj has been mentioned together. Before the time of Kautilya, it was a kingdom ruled by a king but by the time of Mauryan period, federal government had been established there. In Arthashastra, Kamboj has been mentioned as 'Vartsshastra Pajeevin' i.e. organization of farmers, pastures, traders and warriors.

Ashmak- Potan or Potali, situated on the bank of river Godavari, was the capital of Ashmak. It appears from the Purans that rulers of this kingdom were of the Ikshvaku dynasty. Ashmak and Mulak Pradesh have been considered as neighbouring states. Sometimes it was under the kashi Janpad. The mention of Ashmak king, Pravar Arun and his minister, Nandi Sen is made in Chul Kalinga Jataka who brought Kalinga under his subjugation after conquering it. Details are available in Mahagovind Sutt of Dirgha Nikaya that Mahagovind, the Brahmin Purohit of Emperor Renu divided his empire into seven separate parts in which Ashmak was one of the. In pre- Buddhist period, it struggled with Avanti and it was annexed to the Avanti kingdom.

Republic

The existence of republics in the Indian political system is an important feature of the Buddhist period. Some republics had been developed even during the later-Vedic period. The republics developed due to the lack of interest shown by the kings in administrative matters and efforts of freeing themselves from their despotism. We know about the existence of ten republics from contemporary literature. Scholars have described the names of administrative centers and republics in this way:- Koliyas of Kapilvastu, Mall of Pawa, Mall of Kushinagar, Moriyas of Pippaliban, Videhs of Mithila, Lichchhavis of Vaishali, Naay of Vaishali (Gyatrik). Ram Sharan Sharma has said that excluding Ram Gram the existence of all

Notes

chief towns, associated with republics, is testified by the evidences collected from the excavations for eg, Kapilvastu, Shravasti, Kushinagar, etc. These towns have been associated with Buddhism. Megasthenes has mentioned some more republics but their identification could not be made. In these republics, the republics of the Shakyas and the Lichchavis were the most important and most of the information are available about them. The Lichchavi republic was also called 'Vajjigan' and it was formed with union of several Kshatriya dynasty. Vajji was extended to the north of Ganges up to the Terai territory of Nepal. It included Muzaffarpur and Champaran districts and Saran and some parts of Darbhanga district of Bihar were included in it. This kingdom was situated to the north of Magadha and to the east of Koshal and Mall states. The capital of this republic was Vaishali which is identified with Basarh, situated on the bank of Gandak in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar. We come to know from Mahavag that there were 7707 mansions, 7707 granaries, 7707 groves, 7707 large lotus ponds or lakes. Vaishali was divided into three parts. 7000 houses were of gold tops, 14000 houses of silver tops and 21000 houses of copper tops. This is a symbol the rich, middle and low classes respectively.

The Vajji republic had organized eight states into one group during the time of Buddha, which was called Atthakulik. It included Videhs, Gyatriks, Lichchavis and Vajji, etc. the other four are said to be Ugra, Bhog, Ikshvaku and Kaurava. No distinction can be made between the Vajjisangh and the Lichchavis because Vajjisangh also had a separate class and with the inclusion of clans like Lichchavis, this republic was named Vajji. Thus Vaishali was not only the capital of Lichchavi dynasty but was the dynasty of the entire Vajji republic. We know from the Purans that Vishal, son of Ikshvaku, established Vaishali dynasty and he had colonized the Vaishali town.

Self Assessment

Write True/False in the following statements:

8. Famous Kannauj town was situated in Panchal Janpad.
9. 'Potan' or 'Potali', situated on the banks of Yamuna River was the capital of Ashmak.
10. Bimbisara was the founder of Haryak dynasty.
11. It is known from Suttapitak that when Pradyot was suffering from Jaundice, then Bimbisara had sent physician Jeevak for his treatment.

Some scholars are of the view that the Lichchavis were foreigners. Beal (Samuel) has accepted Lichchavis as members of the Yu-Chi clan because the advent of Yu-Chi clan in India was in the 1st century A.D. Therefore this fact cannot be accepted. Dr. Smith is of the view that they were Tibetans. This has been said on the basis of judicial system and cremation rights (the corpses were thrown away for the eating of forest animals). Rai Chaudhary says that the Tibetan judicial system which had three courts cannot be separated from the seven-court judicial system of the Lichchavis. It cannot be said definitely about the cremation rights that there was the practice of throwing the dead for the eating of forest animals. Scholars like Jaiswal and Rai Chaudhary, etc accept the Lichchavis as Kshatriyas. In this connection, it has been said that when Lord Buddha attained salvation, the Lichchavis asked for his remnants on the ground that 'Lord Buddha was also a Kshatriya and they were also Kshatriyas'. In Jain book, Kalpasutra, Trishla, the sister of Chetaka of Vaishali has been called Kshatrani. Manu has called Lichchavis and Malls as Vratya Kshatriyas. Rai Chaudhary has written that it can be concluded that Lichchavis were also Kshatriyas but for disregarding the Brahmin rules they were called Vratya and were acknowledged as of low status.

Kshakya- It has been said that the administrative center of the Kshakya republic situated in the Himalayan terrain was Kapilvastu, which was situated on the western bank of river Rohini. Probably it must have been under the rule of Koshal. Therefore it doesn't find mention in the 16 Janpads. According to Suttanipaat, when Bimbisara enquired from Buddha about his introduction, Buddha said himself to have been born in the Kshakya clan and as inherent of Koshal. The Kshakya federation had 80,000 families or a population of 5 lacs. Out of them, Viruddhak (Viddabh) had mercilessly killed 77000

Kshakyas. In this confederation, besides the capitals we get information about all other towns also- Chhatuma, Saamgara, Komdaass, Silawati, Medlumpa, Nagarka, Ulampa, Devdaha, Sakara, etc. Its chief was called king. Buddha's father Shuddhodhan has been called king. At the time of Viruddhak's attack, the kshakyas had gathered in the meeting place of the federation. Attempts were made to know the majority view whether the gates of the town should be opened or not.

Koliya- They have been recognized as Nag Vanshi. Their ancestor was Naga king of Ram Kashi, their kingdom was situated in the southern part of Gorakhpur. Their capital was Ramagaam. Apart from this there is mention of five other towns- Haldavasaana, Sajnela, Saapga, Uttara and Kakarapatta. It is said that the Koliyas had close relation with kshakyas (due to matrimonial alliances).

Mall- The Mall federation was divided into two centers- Pawa and Kushinagar. In Pawa, Mahavir had breathed his last. On the other hand, Buddha was born in Kushinagar. Sumangal Vilasini has said that Pawa was situated at a distance of three Gaavut (about 6 miles) from Kushinagar. From the excavations at Kasia in Devaria district of U.P. have been discovered great salvation stupa and Chaitya which point to the place of salvation of Buddha.

Moriyas of Pippaliban and the Bulleys of Alkamp had also demanded a part of Buddha's mortal remains. The name of Aalar Kalaam of Kesputra comes in Buddhist literature. Kesputra was probably under Koshal kingdom. In Chullvagg, we get description of Kumar Bodhi, son of Vats king Udayin who had welcomed Lord Buddha in his newly constructed red lotus palace at Sunmaargiri.

For the management of Vajji federation's administrative system, there were 7707 kings in the federal assembly who were selected from Vaishali's twice calculated 84000, i.e. 168000. They had the same number of deputy kings, army commanders and storekeepers. It has been said about the majority of the kings of Lichchhavi federation that none of them thought himself to be inferior to the other and all said "I am king," "I am King". They came to the assembly house into beautiful dresses. The meeting place of the federation was called Santhagaar. Sometimes meetings were held in the garden (araam) also. We come to know from Atthkatha that before the meeting a big gong was rung. In the meeting of the kings, discussions were not only held on foreign matters but commercial, agricultural, social and matrimonial matters were also settled.

Detailed description of the working system of the republics is not available but the working mode of the Buddhist Sanghas finds mention in Buddhist books. Scholars believe that the rough picture we get about the working system of the Buddhist Sangh, the working system of the republics must not have been very different.

For the meeting, a special experienced senior officer presided over it in order of seniority. There was provision of quorum. For quorum, there was provision of at least ten members (five from frontier regions). Actually, five different works of the confederation, the required presence of the members was varied (5, 10, 20 and more than 20). For quorum, persons of other republics or against whom cases were under discussion, could not be included. The officer, known as Ganpurak tried to complete the quorum. The President of the federation was called Vinaydhar. He was not included in the quorum. If the house was not full, the federation was called disturbed. The decision of this disturbed federation was considered irregular and the consent of the absentee monks could not regulate it.

It was necessary that the proposal should be presented formally by the proposer. Afterwards, it was repeatedly read out so that all could hear it. Thus the discussion was limited to the subject matter. Discussions couldn't be made on unrelated matters. The silence of a member on any proposal was the sign of his consent. For getting full consent on a controversial subject, examples of another federation were cited. If there was no decision on a controversial subject, a sub-committee was formed which was called Ubbahik (Uddvahika). The selected people of this committee could only become members. That committee could hold discussion on another place. Its decision was acceptable to all. R. David has taken the words 'Netti' and 'Ubbahik' as symbols of verdict of the 'Panchas'. According to him, controversial matters were sent to the Panchas for final decision.

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If there was no unanimity on a very complicated and controversial subject, it was decided by a majority vote. As we know that at the time of Viruddhak's invasion, Koshal's king (Viruddhak's lordship should be accepted or not) this had to be decided by a majority vote. The election officer was called 'Shalaka Grahapak'. The spikes were made of wood which were distributed among the members. Each member had to select that colour of the spike which showed his views and the selection of the spikes was kept secret. By the procedure of 'Swakarnjalpak', the presiding officer used to whisper in the ear of the member and told him secretly the meaning of each of the coloured spikes and which colour of the spikes he should choose.

Due to the indifferent attitude among members or the voting carried out by the division of the class was considered illegal. There is not much information about the writing of proceedings of the meetings. But it appears from Mahagovind Sutt that there was meaningless discussion in the meeting house. From this it is clear that there was arrangement for noting down the proceedings. Probably this work was done by the officials or writers.

There is mention in one place in Vinaypitak of presenting one individual, desirous of killing his characterless wife, before the Lichchhavi council. It is assumed from this that Gana Sabha also performed the work of judicial assembly.

But justice system was very complexed and comprehensive. As per Sumangalvilasini, accused of any crime was brought before Vinichchhaymahamatt (investigation officer). He could release the accused if find innocent, but in case of his involvement, he could not penalize him, but the case was forwarded to Vauharik (judicial expert). Later he was sent to Suttadhar (expert of mutual rules), Atthakulik (judicial council of eight people), commander and Deputy King. Final hearing was done by the king himself, who used to deliver verdict on the basis of Panik-Potthak (Granth of old example's compilation).

Eradication of Mall and Vajji Sangh- these republics had to become victim of contemporary royal regime's imperialism policy, as they did not have the power to face them. Only lichchhavi republic fought for some time with Magadha. Vajji was a union republic. Vajji, Mall and Kashi-Koshal joined together to form a union, whose objective was to fight attacks of Ajatshatru. Jain Kalpasutra tells us that there were 9 lichchhavi, 9 Mall and 18 republics of Kashi-Koshal in that union. Though, members of union republic were independent, as some kings stepped back from its membership. Hence, Chetak head of lichchhavi Ganadhyaksh had to fight with Ajatshatru alone.

Chetak tried to strengthen his position through marriage relations. His sister Trishla (mother of Mahavir) was married to Gyatrik king Siddhartha. Chetak had seven daughters, out of which Chellana was married to Magadha king Bimbisar and Mrigavati was married to Vats king Shataanek. Even after marrying his daughter with Magadha Vansh, he could not avoid war with Magadha.

As per Pali Granth, lichchhavi people used to create nuisance by attacking nearby areas. Even, people of Patliputra was disturbed by their terror. It is said that once they drove out locals from there and kept it under control for one and half months. There were more reasons for Ajatshatru to have battle with Vajji union, which we shall discuss ahead. But Ajatshatru tried to know the strength of Vajji union. As per Mahaparinirvanasutt, Ajatshatru sent Vasskar to Buddha to get the formula of defeating Vajji. Buddha told that as long as Vajji people would keep following seven principles, they would remain to be insurmountable, which has been termed as Aparihaniya Damm. It can be described as below:-

1. Complete attendance in Sangh Sabha and convention at fixed time.
2. To be unanimously available in Sangh or in totality. Have convention and do the duty of Sangh Karma.
3. To not accept unaccepted proposal and not to boycott accepted proposal, it implies that work had to be done in accordance with accepted facts of union.
4. Respect seniors, old, leaders, have spirit of faith and reverence for them, do worship and follow order.
5. To worship Chaitya of Vajji union and executed religious activities.

6. To respect all religious Arhant of Vajji union.
7. Be hospitable with Mahallaks (old) of Vajji union, keep their respect and pride high, do worship and no act of kidnapping of ladies and girls of the clan.

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This makes it clear that Sangh had regular conventions and were attended by majority. Besides, rules and regulations were adhered to. Respect for elders used to give boost to the spirit of unity, i.e. was the basis of their power, which was tried to be broken by diplomat like Vasskar by split policy.

Rise of Magadha Empire

In the beginning of 6th century BC, Magadha was situated in south Bihar near Patna and nearby areas of Gaya. In its north and east, there were Sone and Ganga rivers respectively. It spread up till plateau of Chotanagpur in east. Champa rivers used to flow to its east, which used to separate it from Anga. Its capital Rajgriha was surrounded by five hills and was impermeable. Around 5th century BC, capital was shifted to patliputra.

Spirit of imperialism was seen in Vedic period, but the development of this policy took more speed in Baudha period. Magadha Mahajanpad not only tried to expand the empire in this respect, rather did first successful attempt to unite entire India. We can ask that what are the reasons of success for the imperial policy of Magadha, which resulted in such a huge empire.



Task What were the reason of disintegration of urbanization? Discuss.

It is endorsed by Brahman, Jain and Baudha Granth that aryas moved from west to east. In most of the eastern Janpads, Arya people used to rule, but they were outnumbered by non-Aryans. It means small number of Aryas ruled over majority non-Aryans. Hence, they were free of the restriction of Arya species. People here did not follow Varna system and Brahman rituals. In contrast, this area had strong influence of Buddhism. Buddha got enlightenment in this region only. Ray Chaudhary writes that main feature of Magadha people was their flexibility of behaviour. This characteristic was not available in people of Saraswati and Drishdwati.

Rigved mentions Magadha to be outside Aryavarta boundaries. Purans have description of ritual of purity if one returns from visiting Anga, Magadha and Bang. It is clear that in Magadha and other eastern areas, Vedic religion and traditions were not accepted. As per information received from Aitreya Brahman, **Neelkanth Shastri** writes that, whoever is eastern king in eastern direction, they get ordained and post that they are called emperor. Many ambitious emperors were from this region only. **Rai Chaudhary** states that, in the region where famous warriors were born, where Jarasandh, Ajatshatru, Mahapadma and kalinga conqueror Chand Ashoka and warriors like Samudragupt were born, that same region accepted preachings of son of Pratibodhiputra Mahavir and Gautama Buddha and apart from establishing pan India, also propagated world religion.

It is said, that people there were ready to do anything for their emperor. Event of making one Shudra lady queen is an example in that context only. Thought of offering government post to Yavan too could be considered by these people only. Some scholars believe that availability of natural and military resources is not that important, but only a strong desire can only found an empire, Magadha has this will power. Apart from it, huge ability on convergence, mixture of many species, Jain and Baudha religion and division in union are the indicator of lacking of traditional tendencies. Making of king of a Shudra is symbolic of elevated ambition level of people of this region.

Aamatya and ministers of Magadha too have been of great abilities. Vasskar of Bimbisar and Suneeth of Ajatshatru, Kautilya of Chandragupta etc had diplomatic mastery. As per **Rai Chaudhary**, in the royal court of Magadha, with rulers of Girivraj and in patliputra too, there were loyal people who

Notes

could create public opinion in their favour in entire nation. There were plenty resources of security all around Magadha i.e. strategically, position of Magadha was very strong. Capital of Magadha was surrounded by hills from all sides. As per Mahabharata, due to being surrounded by five hills (Vaihar, Varah, Vrishabh, Rishigiri and Chaityak), it was like impermeable fort (Puram Duradharsh Samantatah). Position of being at the centre of the nation too was advantageous for Magadha. Due to its new capital being at the convergence of Ganga and Sone river, became major centre of water route. In ancient times, elephants were considered to be special part of army and by adding Anga in to Magadha, availability of its elephants facilitated Magadha in getting them. With help of elephant battalion, even strong fort could be penetrated.

Iron mines near Magadha (south Bihar) provided ample raw material for making weapons. Clearing up of forests of this area helped boosting new industries. Large quantities of grains being produced in plains of Ganga not only helped the large army to sustain but also helped increase prosperity of its people and state exchequer started getting more revenues, which indicates its relatively stronger position against others. It also got revenue due to its control over commercial routes of Ganga, Gandak and Sone rivers.

Haryak Vansh- Founder of this dynasty was Bimbisar. Some scholars initially believed that he was from Shishunag Vansh. Basis of this logic is that purans say that Pradyot Vansh ruled over Magadha and Shishunag became ruler by destroying Pradyot Vansh and Bimbisar was considered to be of same Vansh. But now this is proved that Shishunag dynasty ruled after the fall of Bimbisar and Shishunag was the ancestor of Bimbisar. As per Baudha Granth, King Chand Pradyot Mahasen ruled over Avanti and not Magadha. As per purans, after Chand Pradyot also, Avanti was ruled by Pradyot Vansh rulers like Palak, Aryak, Avantivardhan and Vishakhyupa. If we accept Shishunag as predecessor in chronology, then it was not possible for him to destroy Pradyot Vansh of Avanti.

On the other hand, we get to know from Mahaparinirvanasutt that son of Bimbisar; Ajatshatru defeated Vajji union and took control over Vaishali. As per Mahaalankarvatthu, Shishunag made Vaishali the capital in place of Rajgriha. Shishunag positively came after Ajatshatru. It also tells that after the shifting from Rajgriha, Shishunag kept on declining, whereas in the times of Bimbisar and Ajatshatru, Rajgriha was at its zenith. Hence, Shishunag can't be considered as ruler before the times of Bimbisar. Shishunag's son Kalashok (Kaakvarna) made patliputra his capital. He can't be considered a ruler pre Bimbisar time, as there was no existence of patliputra before. Patliputra was founded by Udayin, a descendent of Bimbisar.

Ashwaghosha had told Bimbisar to be of Haryak Vansh. As per D.R. Bhandarkar, Magadha was ruled by Vajji before Bimbisar took control of it and Bimbisar was commander of Vajji. He defeated Vajji and founded his independent kingdom and a new dynasty. But this fact is not more reliable since as per Mahavansh, father of Bimbisar himself was ordained in the age of 15 years as king of Magadha. Initially, some scholars have related his father to Hemjit, Kshemjit, Kshetroja, Bahttiya, Bhatiya etc, but this does not seem to correct as per Rai Chaudhary.

Neighbour states of Magadha were Avanti, Koshal, Vats and Vajji (republic) etc. Bimbisar tried to have friendly relations with them. He had marriage relations with many of them. His senior most wife Koshaldevi was daughter of Koshal king Mahakoshal and sister of Prasenjeet. With this relation, Magadha not only got a friend like Koshal, but also got one gram of Kashi Janpad worth one Lac Kaasharpan annual income. He also married Chellana, seventh daughter of lichchhavi king Chetak (Mukhya). Thus, he had friendly relations with Vajji. His third wife Khema was daughter of Madra (Shakal) king from Punjab. Jain Granth has description of another queen Vaidehi, as his son Ajatshatru has been called as Vaidehiputo. As per Mahavag, he had 500 queens. Rai Chaudhary writes— He established marriage relations with Madra, Koshal and Vaishali. This policy of his was quite important. This not only made above mentioned military powers content with Bimbisar, rather they helped him expand in north and west.

Bimbisar did not think it logical to fight with powerful states, but formed diplomatic relations with them. it is worth recall that Chand Pradyot was contemporary of Bimbisar. As per Vinaypitak, once Pradyot had Pandu Rog (jaundice), then Bimbisar sent his royal consultant Jeevak to him. Thus, Avanti

became a friend of Magadha. As per contemporary literature, Gandhar king Pushkarsarin attacked Avanti, Pushkarsarin asked for Bimbisaar's help, but Bimbisar did not consider it right to help him and thus having a powerful friendly state turn in to an enemy. He did not accept the request of Takshshila (Gandhar) king, who was a friend of his.

Bimbisar was supported of imperialism. First, he attacked Anga. As per Mahavag and Shondandsutt, he used diplomacy to win Anga. King of Anga, Brahmadatt was killed in the war and Anga was merged with Magadha. In Sumangalvilasini, Anga has been mentioned as separate from Magadha Empire and was governed by Magadha yuvraj Ajatshatru-Champayam Kunikoraja. As per Brahman Granth, in order to get the favour of Brahmans of Champaganagar, income of Champa was dedicated to Brahman Shondand. Perhaps, to have stability in the newly conquered area, it was necessary. As per Atthkatha and Buddhacharya, Bimbisaar's kingdom was spread up to an area of 300 miles, which was extended by another 200 miles by Ajatshatru. As per Vinaypitak and Mahavagg, his empire had 80,000 villages or towns. It is said that Bimbisar organized a convention of Gramins of all 80,000 villages. This figure might be exaggerated, but it makes clear that in his regime, villages emerged as the vital unit of structure. Gramins were head of the villages.

Ancient capital of Magadha, Girivraj (Kushagrapur), which was situated to the north of the town, was vulnerable to the attacks of Vajji union. There was great damage from fire at the time of Vajji attack, as mentioned by Huensang. Hence, in the north east of Girivraj, new capital Rajgriha was established. Architect of Bimbisar, Mahagovind planned it. Though, Fahien gives this credit to Ajatshatru.

Bimbisar was effective administrator. He terminated incapable Aamatyas and rewarded able people. He gave high posts to Aamatyas like Vasskar and Suneeth. He appointed many officials for helping in administrative works- Deputy King, Sabbatthak, Voharikmahamat, Senanayak Mahamatt, Mandlik, Gram Bhojak etc. He appointed his elder son Darshak as deputy king, with whose help, he did administer. Sabbatthak used to look after general affairs; he can be called chief minister. Voharik Mahamatt used to look after judicial affairs. As per Vinaypitak, justice system was stringent. Apart from imprisonment, stringent penalties like lashing, burning by iron, cutting tongue, breaking ribs, amputation and death were prevalent. Importance of Senanayak Mahamatt was quite high for imperialist king like Bimbisar. His army must have been controlled by any efficient and experienced person. Commander used to contribute in kingdom expansion. Grambhojak probably used to collect taxes from rural areas. As per Mahavagg, representatives of all villages were given seat in Rajya Sabha. Possibly, 1/10th of produce was taken as land revenue.

Bimbisaar's regime spread to north of Ganga in north, Chhotanagpur in south, Anga in east and Sone river in the west. His empire included western areas of west Bengal, south Bihar, northern area of Odissa and eastern areas of Madhya Pradesh. Mention of Mahatma Buddha and Bimbisar is there in Baudha literature. Before taking retirement from normal life, Buddha came in contact with Bimbisar. He told him to be his commander and offered huge money, but Buddha refused. This incident was 7 years before enlightenment of Buddha. When Buddha revisited Magadha after some time, Bimbisar made him stay at Venvan. There is information of royal medical consultant Jeevak being appointed in his service. As per Lalitvistar, he exempted Baudha Bhikshus by an order from Tarpanya tax (taking boat across). On the other side as per Jain Granth, Uttaradhyayansutra, we know that he used to go to Chaitya of Jain Mahavir along with his sons, queens and servants to listen to his exhortations.

As per Mahavansh, Bimbisar ruled for 52 years. Whereas purans tell it about 28 years and another 24 years of his son Ajatshatru. Mention of 32 years regime for Ajatshatru and 16 years by Udayin is there in purans as well. As per Sinhala sources, nirvana of Buddha was in 544 BC. As per Chinese dotted records, it happened in 487BC (as per some scholars it was 483BC). Sinhala date is not confirmed by the known date of Greek description; hence we can consider Chinese records as correct. As per contemporary literature, Buddha got nirvana in the 8th year of Ajatshatru's regime. Thus, 52 years regime of Bimbisar (including 24 years of the decade) and 8 years of Ajatshatru(52+8=60), hence Bimbisar ascended the throne 60 years before Buddha nirvana. On the basis of Buddha nirvana (487BC as per Chinese record)

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Notes

and 60 years of Bimbisara and Ajatshatru regime, we can say (487+60) that Bimbisara coronation would have happened around 547 or 546 BC. Rai Chaudhary accepts the date as 545-544 BC.

In his last time, Bimbisara had to face lot of pain. It is said that he was imprisoned for 15 years. He became victim of his son and king of Champa, Ajatshatru's conspiracy, who got him killed. As per Baudha Granth Vinaypitak, he did it at the instigation of his brother-in-law, Devdatt. Later, he confessed his crime before Mahatma Buddha. Rai Chaudhary has written that history which knows him by the names of Ajatshatru, Kunik and Ashokchand etc, it is said about that ingratitude son, that he killed his father.

Ajatshatru- Bimbisara had many sons. Apart from Darshak and Ajatshatru, we see mention of Abhay in Mahavagg and Sheelvant and Vimal Kondanna in Theragatha. Being afraid of Ajatshatru, Darshak and 3 other brethren became Bhikshus. As per Sanyuktnikaya, he was son of Prasenjeet's sister Koshaldevi. But he is said to be Vaidehiputo in Jain literature, he is accepted as son Chellana, daughter of Vaishali king Chetak on this basis. As known, Ajatshatru killed his father and took control of Magadha throne. This event is 8 years before Mahaparinirvana, i.e. Bimbisara had ruled for 52 years till then. As per Baudha Granth, Bimbisara's chief wife Koshaldevi gave up her life mourning his husband's death. Koshal king Prasenjeet recaptured village Kashi, which was given to take care of his sister's expense on cosmetics etc on her marriage, which gave annual income of 1 Lac Kaasharpan. Being shocked by Ajatshatru's killing of his father, he took back Kashi. As per Sanyuktnikaya, there was a war between Ajatshatru and Prasenjeet on the issue of Kashi and initially Prasenjeet had to face defeat and he took refuge in a gardener's house. Prasenjeet married his daughter Mallika too after falling in love with her. In second fight, Prasenjeet imprisoned Ajatshatru. But he released him after some time and married his daughter Wajeera with him and returned Kashi Gram also.

Merger of Vajji Union in Magadha- There were mall and lichchavi republics to the north of Magadha. Vajji union of Vaishali was a strong republic. As known, 9 mall, 9 lichchavi and 18 Koshal kings joined together and formed a front. This was led by king Chetak for some time. Rai Chaudhary writes that this front of lichchavi, mall and Koshal was against Magadha Empire. It is said that even in the times of Bimbisara, these across Ganges Vaishali rulers were so obstinate that they used to attack their across Ganges neighbour quite often. For Ajatshatru too, they must be an issue in his initial days and hence Magadha decided to terminate them.

As per Jain Granth Uvasgadsav and Niravalisutra it is known that, Bimbisara gifted his famous elephant Seygan(useful in Sechnak coronation) and 18 locks costly diamond necklace to his sons Hall and Vehall, who were born to daughter of Vaishali king Chetak's daughter Chellana. Ajatshatru after taking charge of the kingdom asked his brethren to return both the gifts of father as the instigation of his wife, Padmavati. Both brethren did not accept it and ran away to their grandfather Chetak. Thus, Ajatshatru attacked Vaishali.

Sumangalvilasini has different reason for this attack. As per it, there was a port in between Magadha and Vajji union on river Ganga and there were mines in nearby area too. As per earlier treaty, both shared ownership on them. But for the past some time, Vajji Sangh had greater control over them. Ajatshatru decided to settle this issue with muscle power. Some precious diamonds and perfumed fluids too are considered as one of the reasons. Besides, right to water of river flowing in between both the states and issue concerned with trade too would have been one of the issues.

There was difference in philosophy of both states. Where Magadha had monarchy, on the other Vajji was a republic. Republics had feeling of development for all states equally, but Ajatshatru was of imperialist tendency. From this point of view, actual reason of his attack seems to be his imperialistic approach. To involve neighbouring states against Vajji union was the planned effort by this war.

Details of war are found in Mahavagg and Mahaparinirvanasutt. To handle offense of Vajji, a fort was made to the south of Ganga in Patligram by two of his ministers Suneeth and Vasskar, which was called as patliputra. Borders of both the states were strengthened. Mahaparinirvana sutta says, on one of the hills of Rajgriha, that supremely blessed (Buddha) used to live. That time, king of Magadha was desirous of attacking Vajji. Has even said—I shall destroy Vajji, whatever powerful and strong they may be. I shall destroy these vajjis and uproot them. To execute and to know success formula for this

objective, Ajatshatru sent his minister Vasskar to Buddha, living at Trikut hills, as to how can vajjis be destroyed. Buddha told that as long as they keep following 7 principles of Aparihaniya Dhamma, they shall be unbeatable; rather they shall keep strengthening their powers. Question here is that, why Buddha facilitated the path of republican system. As per scholars, Buddha was so much impressed with the lichchavi that he made principle of Baudha Sangh emulating Vajji principles. Whatever he said to Vasskar was actually an admiration for lichchavi. If Ajatshatru read between his lines and got some idea from it, then it can be his smartness only. It is also said that in that period, republic had started weakening. From knitting entire nation in one string perspective also it was necessary.

Ajatshatru told his minister to adopt policy of Uplayan (diplomacy) and Mithubhed (Sangh split). Vasskar entered Vajji union on the grounds that he fled due to Ajatshatru's fear and took refuge. Thus, within 3 years after taking refuge in Vajji, he created split amongst them. Rai Chaudhary mentions that, to divide and destroy Vaishali and its allies, politician like Vasskar of Magadha used Machiavelli's diplomacy.

As per Jain Granth Niravalisutt, Chetak invited 9 lichchavi, 9 Mall and Kashi and Koshal republic for his help. As per Uvasgadsav, new weapons like Rathmoosal and Mahashilakantak (stone thrower machines) were used in this war. Post war, union of republics of north of Ganga were defeated and some parts of Vaishali and Kashi were merged with Magadha empire. When the war started and how long it continued, there is no specific dates. But Niravali mentions that Aajivik Acharya Makhaliptura Ghoshal too was killed in this war. Makhaliptura was alive till 16 years after Mahavir's nirvana, hence this war continued for around 16 years. Rees David writes, Ajatshatru did same cruelty with lichchavis, as done by Viruddhak in past.

Magadha Empire extended up to central Ganga valley in north. Now Anga, Varanasi and Vaishali were part of Magadha Empire. Only Avanti was one state, which could withstand Magadha. Probably, Ajatshatru would be afraid of Avanti king. Fearing attack of Pradyot, he fortified his capital Rajgriha. R.S. Tripathi writes that victory of Magadha over Vaishali made it a powerful regime in north India. It naturally increased envy and chances of Pradyot's attack increased. Though we see Ajatshatru solidifying his fort boundaries for safety of capital, yet there was any battle, is doubtful.

Two important event of Ajatshatru's regime was nirvana of two era changers Mahavir swami and Buddha. Initially, his inclination was towards Jainism. He went to Vaishali with his queen to see Mahavir swami and admired Jain Bhikshus and teachings. In Jain literature, he has not been criticized as father killer. On the other hand, it appears from Baudha Granth that under influence of Devdatt, he had envy with Mahatma Buddha, but later he repented his father killing and asked for clemency from Buddha for such a heinous act. After Buddha nirvana, first Baudha convention held in Rajgriha. Ajatshatru made a convention hall in the cave of hills of Vaibhar. Mahaparinirvana sutt mentions that after Buddha nirvana, Ajatshatru made one stupa in Rajgriha by taking remains of Buddha. From the Bharhut inscription of 2nd century BC it is known that, Mahatma Buddha and Ajatshatru met. Ajatshatru Bhagwato Vandate- is engraved in this inscription.

Udayin- As per purans, Darshak ruled after Ajatshatru, but Baudha literature don't agree. His successor is mentioned as Udayibhatt in Baudha literature. It is endorsed by Sinhala Granth also. It is said in Deepvansh that, he ascended the throne after his father. In Jain Granth Kathakosh, Parishishtaparvan, Samantpasadika, Sumangalvilasini, we find names like Uday, Udayin. We can't assign more Weightage to puran's evidences. Parishishtaparvan says that he was the son of Kunik's wife Padmavati.

As per Mahavansh, Udayin killed his father for throne. But Dr Jaiswal does not accept it, as he has been said to be Dharmatma (religious) in Gayatri Sanhita. Hence, he can't be father killer. As per Rai Chaudhary, before the coronation, son of Ajatshatru; Udayin or Udayibhatt was viceroy (deputy king) of Champa.

As per Gargi Sanhita, Vayu Puran and Jain Granth Parishishtaparvan it is known that Udayin founded Kusumpur at the bank of river Ganga. This city was situated at the convergence of river Ganga and Sone. Sthaviravlicharit mentions that Udayin attacked one neighbouring state and killed its king,

Notes

his son took refuge in capital of Avanti, Ujjain and in disguise of a sage, Udayin too was killed by conspiracy. As per Parishishtaparvan, the king of Avanti; Palak (son of Chand Pradyot) was enemy of Udayin.

In purans, successor of Udayin is said to be Nandivardhan or Mahanandin. In Sinhala Granth, his successors are mentioned as Anurudha, Mund and Bhagdasak. Divyadan and Anguttarnikaay too mentions about Mund.

Shishunag- in Mahavansh, Shishunag has been kept after Bimbisar in chronology and has been told as founder of separate Vansh. Haryak rulers were father killers, hence public captured Nagdashak and made him minister (Aamatya) and deputy ruler of Kashi as king. Shishunag appointed his son as deputy king and made Girivraj capital after its refabrication. Shishunag has been called as Nagarshaubhini and offspring of a lichchavi king. Probably, for this reason only Vaishali was made second capital. Purans say that Shishunag will destroy power of Pradyot. This is also mentioned that Aryak (Ajak) became king of Avanti as a result of revolts and Nandivardhan (Vartivardhan) later. Names of Pradyot's sons are Gopal and Palak. Their successor were Vishakh and Aryak and Nandivardhan became king after them. Purans further say that Shishunag shall become king after destroying powers of Pradyot. Reason of Avanti's defeat has been considered as difference between Gopal and Palak.

As per purans, Kaakvarna was Shishunag's son. Divyavdan endorses this. Sinhala Granth mentions name of Kalashok, who was governor is Varanasi. Two important events of kalashok's regime were-second Baudha convention in Vaishali, in which Baudha Sangh did split in two parts. Second one was the shifting of capital back to patliputra from Vaishali.

As per Harshcharit, Kaakvarna (Shaishunagi) died due to stabbing near his town. Mahabodhivansh tells his successor as Nandivardhan. Divyavdan tells about four of his sons. Whereas purans only tell about Nandivardhan. Dr. K.P. Jaiswal has equated him with Nandraj as mentioned in elephant cave inscription of Kharvel. As per Dr. Jaiswal, the headless image found from Patna (pavya), on which 'Sap (sav) Khate Vat Nandi' is engraved, is also of this king. But R.P. Chanda and Rai Chaudhary don't agree with jaiswal and have considered that image of a yaksha. Rai Chaudhary writes that Shishunag Vansh was totally different from Nand Vansh. There is no such mention in purans, on the basis of which we can related Nandivardhan with kalinga. After Kaakvarna, his 10 sons collectively ruled for around 22 years. After this, Shishunag dynasty got destroyed and Nand Vansh emerged. Thus, an era of imperialism ended. Though rulers of this era tried to rope India in one string, yet they were only partially successful.

Rai Chaudhary has given following chronology in its context, its mention would not be improper:-

- 563 BC - Birth of Buddha
- 560 BC - Birth of Bimbisar
- 545-544 BC - Coronation of Bimbisar
- 536 BC - Retirement of Buddha (Sanyas)
- 530 BC - Meeting of Bimbisar and Buddha
- 527 BC - Nirvana of Mahavir
- 493 BC - Coronation of Ajatshatru
- 486 BC - Parinirvana of Buddha
- 461 BC - Coronation of Udayin
- 457 BC - Founding of Patliputra
- 437 BC - Nagdashak
- 413 BC - Shishunag
- 395 BC - Kaakvarna
- 386 BC - Vaishali Convention

367 BC – Sons of Kaakvarna and Mahapadmarajya

Notes

345 BC – End of Shishunag Vansh

Nand Vansh– With the emergence of Nand Vansh in Magadha, first time region besides Ganges area of south also could be added and chances of having one united India and an extended empire was looking to be a reality. In such an empire, under centralized administration development of mutual interaction, means of trade and transport developed for people. Rai Chaudhary writes that Sapta Sindhu finally acquitted shape of Jambdweep. That time was not far when India was united in culture and politics also. Credit of extending Magadha Empire beyond Ganges valley goes to Nand Vansh. Nand Vansh was founded after destroying Shishunag Vansh. Regarding foundation of Nand Vansh, there are interesting things in contemporary literature. Hemchandra has told Nand emperor in Parishishtaparvan, to be son of a barber Divakirti and a prostitute. He has been referred as Napitdas in Avashyaksutravritti of Haribhadrasuri and Napit Ganikasutt in Vividh Kalptaru of Jinprabh. Purans too endorse this fact. It refers to Nand king as son of last Shishunag king Mahanandi and a Shudra lady (Shudragarbhodbhavah) and its descendents as Shudrabhupalah. As per purans, Mahapadma or Mahapadmapati was the first Nand of the dynasty. As per Mahabodhi Vansh, its name was Ugrasen.

These facts are endorsed by foreign writers. Those statements which were popular regarding Nand Vansh must have been heard by writers contemporary of Alexander. While describing it, Curtias says that his father was barber. Somehow, he used to meet both ends meet with his income. But, he was quite handsome in appearance, hence queen liked him. With support of the queen, he reached closer to the king and one day, deceitfully he killed the king. Declaring himself as the guardian of the princes, he took all control in his hands, killed many princes and fathered new son too. Diodorus has endorsed Curtias and has termed cotemporary king Jendramij of Gengerdai and Prasi (Gangeya and Prachya), as born in ignoble family and unknown dynasty and barber as caste.

There is dispute on the king which Curtias has mentioned as Agremis ruling in 326 BC, as whether he was first Nand ruler or one of his sons. After the evidence of classical Granth, there is no doubt of any type. Agremis was king's son. His father deceitfully took control of regime and killed all legitimate claimant of throne. The king mentioned by Curtias does not correspond with first Nand king, who was Ganika Kukshijanma (Ganika sutt) and whose father did not have sovereignty. It takes us to the conclusion that Jendramij of Diodorus or Agremis was second generation king of Nand Vansh and his father was the first king of the dynasty. It means Indian Mahapadma or Ugrasen was this person only.

Western descriptions also tell that people of eastern region (Prasi) and Ganga valley were controlled by one emperor only. Its capital was patliputra (Palibroth). Chandragupta met Alexander in 326 BC at Punjab. That time Magadha was ruled by Nand Vansh. During this time after 355 BC, Xenophon died; he has mentioned in his famous book that there ruled a powerful king in India. He desired to be a mediator of disputes happening between great emperors of west Asia. His book also tells that the emperor was very rich. Though Xenophon considers him to be of 6th century BC, who wanted be a mediator, but in 6th century BC, there was no other ruler, but his contemporary Nand ruler only and by mistake was considered as predecessor.

Archaeological sources also throw light on Nand Vansh. Mention of period of Tivsasat between Nandraj and Kharvel in Hathi Gufa inscription and in his 5th year (coronation of Kharvel) and bringing of 300 years old canal from Tansuliya route is found. In 12th year of Kharvel, he repossessed Jin idol taken by Nandraj.

Mahapadmanand- Founder of Nand Vansh has been called as Mahapadmanand or Mahapadmapati in purans. He founded empire by eradicating all Kshatriyas. Mahabodhi Vansh has mention of founding of Nand Vansh by Agrasen.

Agremis as mentioned by Curtias is taken as deformed version of Augrasenya (Sanskrit), son of Ugrasen by Rai Chaudhary. Harshcharit of Banbhatt has mention of brutal killing of ruler of Shishunag Vansh Kaakvarna by stabbing a sword in his neck by founder of Nand Empire. Jain Granth Parishishtaparvan endorses it.

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Mahapadmananda was staunch imperialist like Bimbisara and Ajatshatru. Purans refer to the founder of Nand Vansh as Sarvakshtrantak and Ekraat. As known by Bhagwat Puran Teeka, he had assets of ten quadrillion or similar number of army, hence was referred to as Mahapadma. It proves that he not only had a powerful army rather he was a fierce conqueror, as well. Porxitar mentions that Mahapadma destroyed all contemporary Kshatriyas, which is endorsed by purans. Sthaviravlicharit mentions about one minister Kalpak, who was famous for his intelligence and conspiring bent of mind, he contributed a lot in the expansion of Magadha. It is said that with the help of Kalpak, who was expert in all warfare, Nand captured entire coastal area. Mahapadma almost devoid each ruler of north India of their power, which has been mentioned by Rai Chaudhary as this-Ikshvaku, Panchal, Kashi, Haihey, Kalinga, Ashmak, Maithil, Shoorsen and Vitihotra etc.

Ikshvaku king was ruler of Koshal (modern Awadh). Ajatshatru had defeated Koshal king. Shishunag too appointed his son as viceroy (deputy king) of this place after coming in to power. There is mention of military camp in Ayodhya in Kathasaritsagar. Probably after Ajatshatru defeated him, it became independent again and it was necessary to have another camp.

Panchals ruled in upper part of Ganga and on central part of Gomati doab. Mention of people of Ganga valley and Prasi being ruled by one emperor only is found in Jain literature. Possibly, Panchal area was part of it, since brave castes of desert (Rajasthan) also seem to be part of that empire. It appears that before the rise of Nand Vansh, they never fought with Magadha Empire. Nand Vansh would have defeated them, as known by evidences of ancient Granth.

Nearby areas of Kashi was called Kasheya and in the regime of Bimbisara and Ajatshatru, it was under Magadha. After Shishunag made Girivraj capital, one prince was appointed as ruler of Banaras. Probably, from descendent of this Vansh only, Nand would have snatched authority of Banaras.

On one part of Narmada river valley, was the control of Haihey Vansh and its capital was Mahishmati. Haihey have been referred as a branch of Yadavs. As per Porxitar, it can be related with Mandhata. Some scholars accept a town called Maheshwar as Mahishmati, which is situated to the north of Narmada River in Indore area. During Chandragupta Maurya's regime, Malwa and Gujarat were under Magadha. Probably, Nand only did this work. Capturing of Avanti by Shishunag is mentioned in purans.

Large area of Vizagapattam and Varah River was called kalinga. The area on which Nanda had control, its capital was called as Dantpur (Dantkur). Dantvakatra situated on the banks of Langulya River (Lagulini) in Ganjam district near Chikakol, has been related with ancient Dantpur

Mention of Nandraj has come twice in Kharvel's Hathigufa inscription. One place it has been said that Kharvel brought 300 years old canal made by Nandraj from Tansuliaivat in 5th year of his regime. While mentioning his 12th year of regime, it is written that Kharvel brought that Jin idol back, which was taken away by Nandraj. Some scholars consider Nandraj as local (kalinga) king, but this logic is not endorsed by this inscription. **Rai Chaudhary** says that in this inscription we see mention of works of Nand King. Many victories of Nand king is mentioned here. Looking at kalinga victory by Nand kings, it is not surprising that they would have won Ashmak and smaller parts of south India. There was a town called Nau Nand Dehra (Nander). It appears that Nand rulers had captured quite large part of south India also.

Some parts of Godavari river valley were called Ashmak; its capital is called as Patel (Potun, Potan). Potan looks similar to Bodhan, which is situated at the convergence of Manjeera and Godavari River, some distance from Nizamabad in Hyderabad. Nau Nand Dehra town is situated to the west of Nizamabad district as mentioned by Rai Chaudhary. Hence, after taking control of Ashmak, it would have been established.

There are no specific proof of capturing Kuru area, but this was included in Gangeya region. There is no proof of Magadha control over Kuru, Panchal and Shoorsen Janpad before Nand era. As per classical writer's article, it appears that these regions were under control of Nand. As per Curtius, when Alexander reached near Beas River, then an Indian ruler Fegelus told him that after Beas River, there is a huge desert and after that plains of Ganga, which is largest river of India and after that there lives

Gengerdai and Prasi caste, whose king is Agremis. On the basis of such descriptions, R.K. Mukharjee has accepted Nand Empire's expansion up till Punjab.

On Nepal border, one small town called Janakpur is equated with Maithil, to the south of which, boundaries of Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts meet. Ajatshatru merged this area in his kingdom, in his time; Vajji (Lichchavi) was the republic with its capital at Vaishali. Nand too possibly used it as a military camp.

Vitihotra has had relations with Haihey and Avanti area. Scholars believe that before the rise of Pradyot Vansh, Vitihotra were finished. If there is any truth in the last pages of Bhavishyanukirtan that some Vitihotras were contemporary of Shishunag Vansh, and then it is possible that Shishunags by taking away total glory (defeat) of Pradyot, reinstated prince of any earlier royal dynasty. Chandragupta Maurya had authority on entire west India, with this possibility increases that this path was facilitated by Nand only. It was extended in modern Malwa region to the north of Avanti. Thus, Nand Empire was there in almost entire north. Shoorsen in west, eastern Punjab, Kuru and Maharashtra in south west, Gujarat and entire Bihar, some parts of Odissa in east and northern part of Andhra was included in Nand Empire. To conquer and protect such huge empire, huge military was required. His military might has been discussed by western writers. As per Curtias, Augrasenya appointed 20,000 cavalry, 2 Lac infantry and 2,000 chariot battalion to protect territory. Besides, 3,000 strong elephant battalion, which was considered emphatic those days, was also inducted. Number of elephants by Diodorus has been given as 4,000 and 6,000 by Plutarch. Baudha Granth also mentions name of commander Bhadrasaal.

While describing incredible wealth of Nand, Huensang tells about 5 treasures of 7 types of precious gems. Mudrarakshas and Kathasaritsagar mentions about 990 Crore gold coins collected by Nandraj. Mahapadma not only was a great conqueror, but also a good administrator. Kharvel took canal made by Nandraj to his town by Tansuliya route. Successors of Mahapadma have been called as eight sons, who probably ruled together. Sinhala Granths tell a total of 22 years of regime for all Nand rulers including Mahapadma and his sons. But purans gives 18 years regime to Mahapadma and 12 years to his sons. If we agree with Sinhala fact, then Mahapadma would not have ruled for more than 10 years.

Nava Nand have been described in Mahabodhivansh like this- Pundr, Pundagati, Bhootpal, Rashtrapal, Govishanaak, Dashsidhak, Kaivart and Dhan. Last ruler Dhananand has been called as Agremis by classical writers and Augrasenya by contemporary writers. Probably, his name only would have been Dhananand due to incredible wealth. He applied many new taxes and collected huge wealth.

Chronology- Second Baudha convention happened around 100th year of Mahaparinirvana (387-386 BC) and in the 10th year of Kalashok's regime. As per Sinhala Granth, Kalashok (Kaakvarna) ruled for 28 years and his sons for 21 years. Kalashok had spent 9 years of his regime (386-387 BC) and ruled for 19 more years. Certainly, he started ruling around 396-395 BC. Kalashok and his sons collectively ruled for 50 years. Hence, coronation of Mahapadma (395-50 BC) is possible after 346-345 BC. As per Sinhala sayings Nava Nand i.e. Mahapadma and his sons ruled for 22 years collectively. Thus, Nand Vansh ended around 324-323 BC. Thereafter, Chandragupta Maurya founded his empire in Magadha.

13.4 Summary

It is the result of urbanization only that growth of trade and commerce and development of trade routes flourished in Kushan period. Trade routes shall be discussed ahead; here it is necessary to know that a large part of business happening with Roman Empire used these routes. As per Pali Granth, traders used to carry approximated 500 bullock carts filled with goods. Many articles brought from Kashmir and Ujjaini were sent to western nations from Bharauch port. Thus, contribution of urban people in economic growth can't be discounted.

Notes

Notes

13.5 Keywords

- **Rising up:** Progress.
- **Imperialism:** Empire Rule.

13.6 Review Questions

1. Explain the background of urbanization along with its definition.
2. Describe the town planning of sixth century B.C. and its different occupations.
3. What were the reasons for the decline of urbanization planning?
4. Describe the 16 Mahajan posts of 6th century B.C.
5. Explain about the rise of Magadha Empire.

Answer: Self Assessment

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|------------------|---------|
| 1. Pali | 2. Nagar | 3. Milind Panhos | 4. (a) |
| 5. (c) | 6. (a) | 7. (b) | 8. True |
| 9. False | 10. True | 11. False. | |

13.7 Further Readings



Books

1. History of Ancient India – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanada Publication.*
2. History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
3. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New End Publishers.*
4. History of Ancient India A New Perspective – *Kittu Reddy, Gyan Books.*
5. History of Ancient India – *Shailendra Sengar, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*

Unit-14: Maps

CONTENTS

Objectives

Introduction

- 14.1 Important Historical Places of Indus Valley Civilization
- 14.2 Empire of Ashoka
- 14.3 Expansion of Gupta Empire and Empire of Samudragupta
- 14.4 Important Rivers and Archaic Places of Ancient India
- 14.5 Summary
- 14.6 Keywords
- 14.7 Review Questions
- 14.8 Further Readings

Objectives

After study of this unit, the student will be able to:

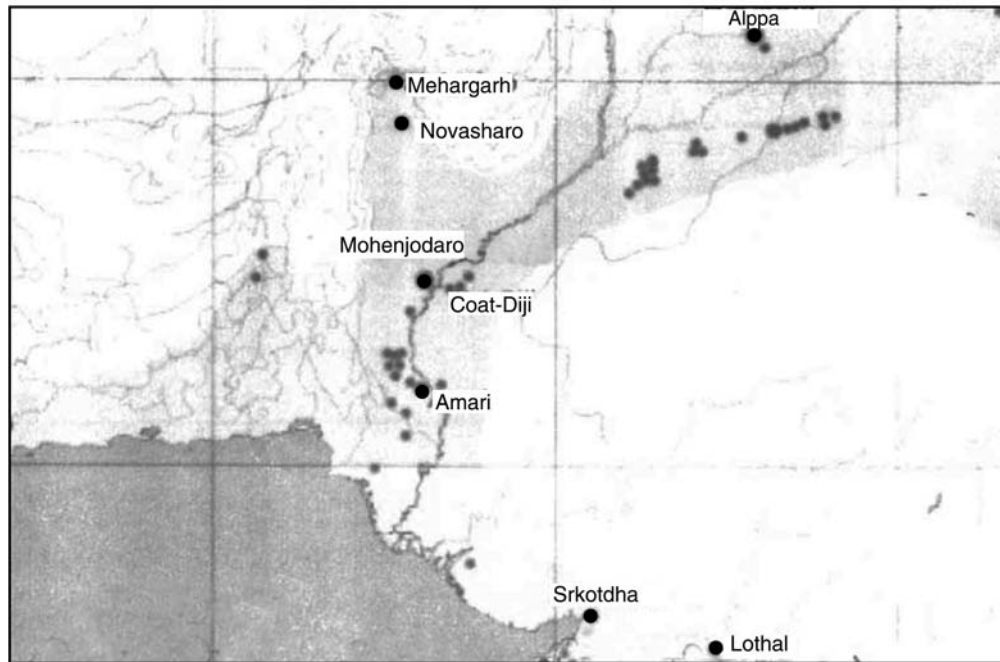
- Knowledge of important historical places of Indus Valley Civilization,
- To be aware of empire expansion of Ashoka through map,
- Knowledge of Samudragupt's empire through map,
- To know about expansion of Gupt empire on map.

Introduction

Out of major historical places of Indus valley civilization are – Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Mehargarh, Amri, Surkotda etc. Gandhar, Arakoshian, shravasti, Sasaram, Tanjaur etc were under Ashoka's empire. Gupt kingdom was extended up to Kashmir, Yaudheya, Pallava, Chola and Mahendragiri.

Notes

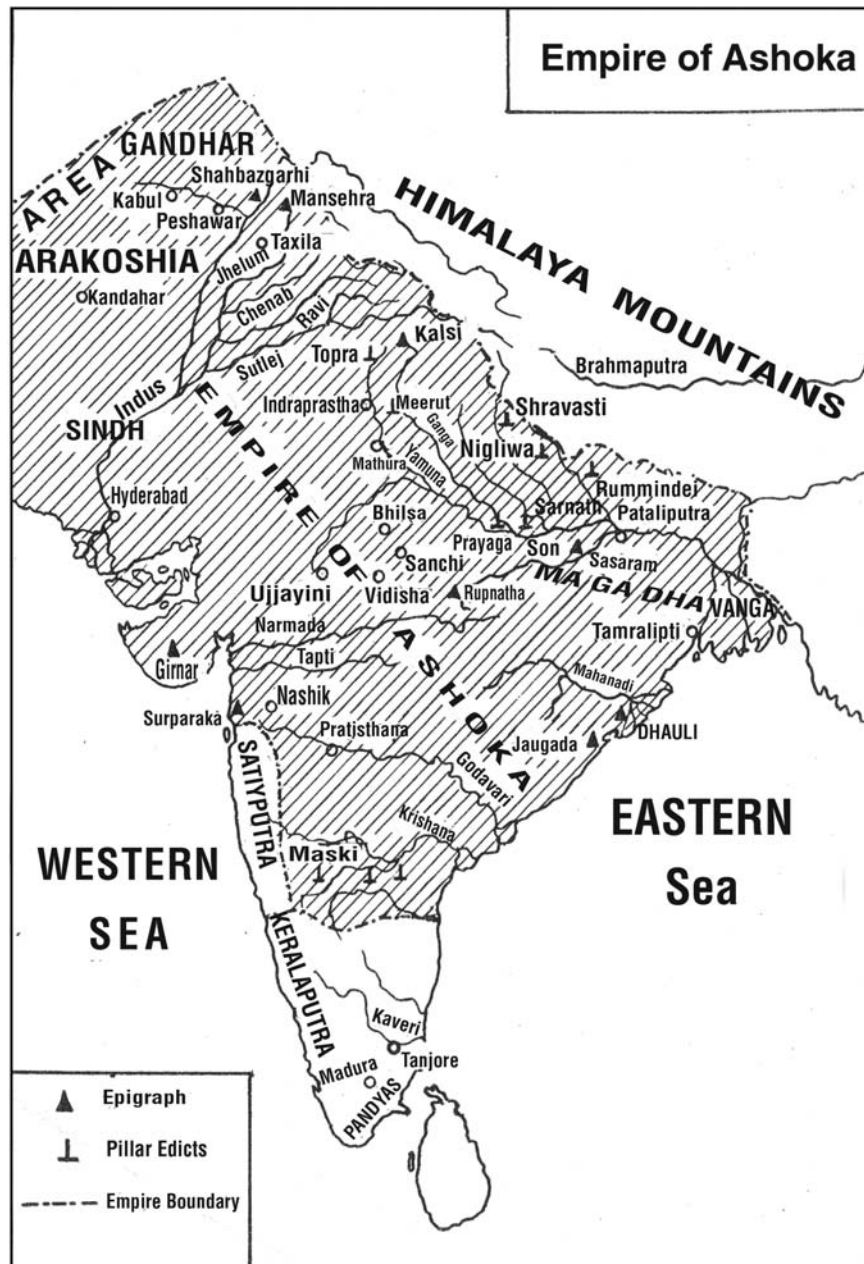
14.1 Important Historical Places of Indus Valley Civilization



Map 14.1: Important Historical Places of Indus Valley Civilization

14.2 Empire of Ashoka

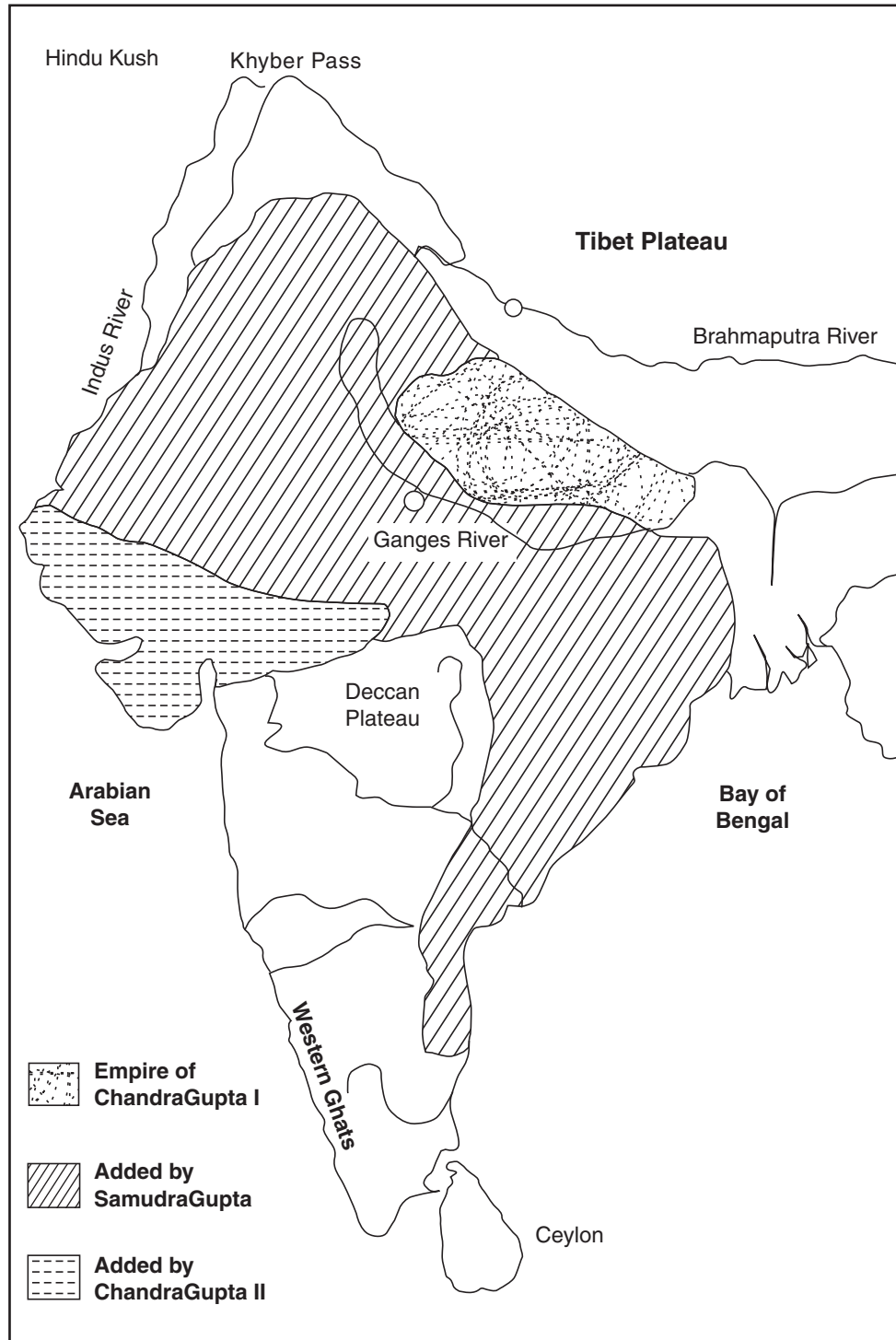
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Map 14.2: Empire of Ashoka

Notes

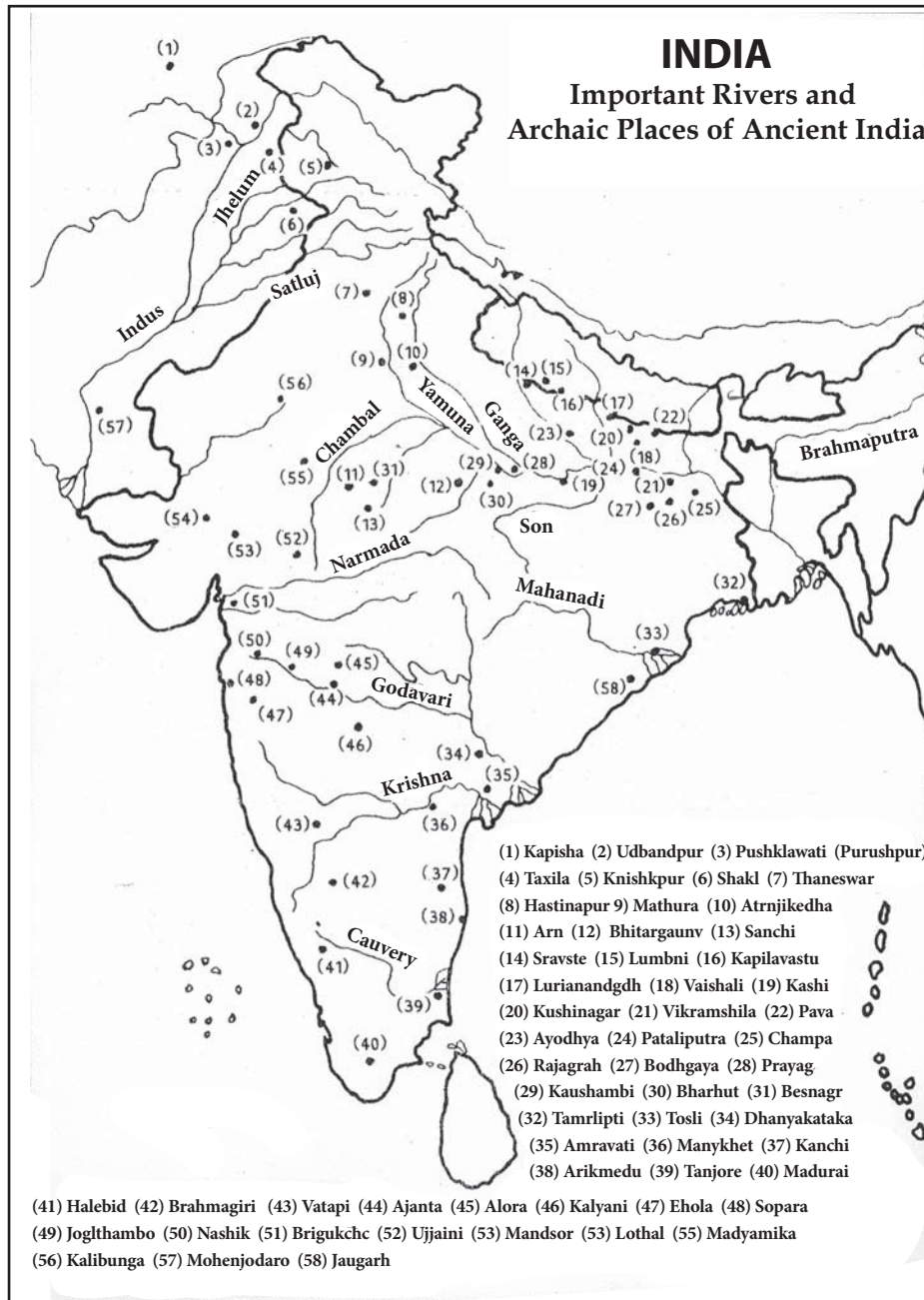
14.3 Expansion of Gupta Empire and Empire of Samudragupta



Map 14.3: Expansion of Gupta Empire and Empire of Samudragupta

14.4 Important Rivers and Archaic Places of Ancient India

Notes



Map 14.4: Important Rivers and Archaic Places of Ancient India

Notes

14.5 Summary

- Important historical places of Indus valley civilization- Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Mehargarh etc.
- Empire of Ashoka- Ujjain, Gandhar, Tanjaur, patliputra etc.
- Gupt Empire-Takshshila, Indraprastha, Sanchi, Koshal, Bodh Gaya etc.
- Major rivers and archaic places of ancient India-Jhelum, Sindhu, Ganga, Brahmaputra, Yamuna, Krishna, Takshshila, Kanishkapur, Hastinapur, Kapilvastu, Kaushambi etc.

14.6 Keywords

- **Important:** Something which is valued more.
- **Historical:** Related with past, history.

14.7 Review Questions

1. Show major places of Indus valley civilization through map.
2. Show empire of Ashoka on map.
3. Show empire of Samudragupt through map.
4. Show expansion of Gupt empire on map.
5. Show the following on map- Sindhu, Jhelum, Sutlej, Krishna, Kaveri, Narmada, Brahmaputra, Sone, Godavari.

14.8 Further Readings



Books

1. History of Ancient India – *Dr. Bipin Bihari Sinha, Gyanda Publication.*
2. History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, Om Prakash Books.*
3. Social and Economic History of Ancient India – *Om Prakash, New end Publishers.*
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