

# Ancient India

## The Prehistoric Period

The prehistoric period in the history of mankind can roughly be dated from 200000 BC to about 3500-2500 BC, when the first civilisations began to take shape. The history of India is no exception. The first modern human beings or the Homo sapiens set foot on the Indian subcontinent anywhere between 200000 BC and 40000 BC and they soon spread throughout a large part of the subcontinent, including peninsular India. They continuously flooded the Indian subcontinent in waves after waves of migration from what is present-day Iran. These primitive people moved in groups of few 'families' and lived mainly on hunting and gathering.

### *Stone Age*

The age when the prehistoric man began to use stones for utilitarian purpose is termed as the Stone Age. The Stone Age is divided into three broad divisions — Paleolithic Age or the Old Stone Age (from unknown till 8000 BC), Mesolithic Age or the Middle Stone Age (8000 BC-4000 BC) and the Neolithic Age or the New Stone Age (4000 BC-2500 BC) on the basis of the specialization of the stone tools, which were made during that time.

### *Paleolithic Age*

The human beings living in the Paleolithic Age were essentially food gatherers and depended on nature for food. The art of hunting and stalking wild animals individually and later in groups led to these people making stone weapons and tools. First, crudely carved out stones were used in hunting, but as the size of the groups began to increase and there was need for more food, these people began to make "specialized tools" by flaking stones, which were pointed on one end. These kind of tools were generally used to kill small animals and for tearing flesh from the carcass of the hunted animals. The basic technique of making these crude tools was by taking a stone and flaking its sides with a heavier stone. These tools were characteristic of the Paleolithic Age and were very rough. By this time, human beings had come to make and use fire.

### *Mesolithic Age*

In the Mesolithic Age, the stone tools began to be made more pointed and sharp. To ensure a life that had abundance of food and clothing, the stone tools began to appear in increasingly specialized way. The simple handheld stone tools were now attached to thick branches from trees with rope made from animal skin and sinew. These tools are known as hand axes, which could be flung at fast-moving animals from a distance. Apart from hand axes, they also produced crude stone-tipped wooden spears, borers, and burins. This period also saw the domestication of animals and graving of wild varieties of crops. Because of farming, small settlements began to take shape. Archaeological excavations have unearthed Mesolithic sites in the Chotta Nagpur area of central India and the areas south of the Krishna River. The famous Bhimbetka caves near Bhopal belong to the Mesolithic Age and are famous for their cave paintings. The exact date of these paintings is not certain, but some of the paintings are as old as 12,000 years. The prehistoric artist used natural white and red pigments in depicting the various themes, which were close to his heart and sustenance.

## ***Neolithic Age***

The Neolithic Age (4000 BC-2500 BC) or the New Stone Age was the last phase of the Stone Age and is characterized by very finely flaked, small stone tools, also known as blades and burins. The Neolithic Age also saw the domestication of cattle, horses, and other farm animals, which were used for dairy and meat products. An important invention of this time was the making of the wheel. The Neolithic Age quickly gave way to a number of small “cultures” that were highly technical. These people used copper and bronze to make a range of utilitarian tools. This phase or period is termed as the Chalcolithic Age (1800 BC-1000 BC).

## ***Chalcolithic Phase***

Towards the end of the Neolithic period, metals like bronze and copper began to be used. This was the Chalcolithic phase (1800 BC to 1000 BC). Chalcolithic cultures extended from the Chotanagpur plateau to the upper Gangetic basin. Some of the sites of this era are Brahmgiiri (near Mysore) and Navada Toli on the Narmada.

## ***Indus Valley Civilization***

***(2500 BC • 1500 BC)***

From the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, the individuality of the early village cultures began to be replaced by a more homogenous style of existence. By the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium, a uniform culture had developed at settlements spread across nearly 500,000 square miles, including parts of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Baluchistan, Sindh and the Makran coast. It was a highly developed civilization and derived its name from the main river of that region—Indus. The cities were far more advanced than their counterparts in prehistoric Egypt, Mesopotamia or anywhere else in Western Asia.

### ***Important Discoveries***

Year	Site	Discovered by
1921	Harappa	Dayaram Sahni
1922	Mohenjodaro	R. D. Banerjee
1927	Sutkagendor	R. L. Staine
1931	Chanhudaro	N. G. Majumdar
1953	Rangpur	M. Vats
1953	Kalibangan	A. Ghosh
[1955-56	Ropar	Y. D. Sharma
1957	Lothal	S. R. Rao
1972-75	Surkotada	.I. Joshi
1973-74	Banwali	R. S. Bisht

### *Sources of Materials*

Material	Source
Gold	Afghanistan, Persia Karnataka
Silver	Afghanistan. Iran
Copper	Baluchistan & Khetri (Rajasthan)
Tin	Afghanistan. Central Asia
Agates	Western India
Chalcedony	Saurashtra
Lead	Rajasthan. South India. Afghanistan. Iran
Lapis Lazuli	Badakashan (N. Afghanistan)
Turquoise	Central Asia. Iran
Amethyst	Maharashtra Jade Central Asia
Carnelian	Saurashtra



## ***Difference Between Pre-Harappan and proto-Harappan Cultures***

Cultures that preceded Harappan culture are pre-Harappan, while proto-Harappan cultures are those pre-Harappan cultures which have some close similarities with the Harappan culture or which may be said to have anticipated certain essential elements of Harappan culture. In short, all proto-Harappan cultures are necessarily pre-Harappan cultures, but all pre-Harappan cultures are not necessarily proto-Harappan cultures.

## **Script and Language**

Harappan script is regarded as pictographic since its signs represent birds, fish and a variety of human forms. The script was boustrophedon. written from right to left in one line and then from left to right in the next line. The number of signs of the Harappan script is known to be between 400 and 600. The language of the Harappans is still unknown and must remain so until the Harappan script is deciphered.

## *Pottery*

- Harappan Pottery is bright or dark red and is uniformly sturdy and well baked.
- It is chiefly wheel made, and consists of both plain and painted ware, the plain variety being more common.
- Harappan people used different types of pottery such as glazed, polychrome, incised, perforated and knobbed. The glazed Harappan pottery is the earliest example of its kind in the ancient world.
- On the whole, Harappan pottery was highly utilitarian in character, though the painted designs on some pieces show a remarkable artistic touch.

## *Seals*

- They are the greatest artistic creations of the Indus people.
- Most commonly made of steatite (soft stone).
- The technique of cutting and polishing these seals with white luster was a unique invention of the Harappans.
- The majority of the seals have an animal engraved on them with a short inscription.
- Unicorn is the animal most frequently represented on the seals.
- Main type - (a) the square type with a carved animal and inscription, (b) the rectangular type with inscription only.

### *Some New Finds*

Site	Location	Discovered by
Dholavira	Rann of Kachh (Gujarat)	R. S. Bisht
Ganverivala	Pakistan	Rafeeq Mugal
RakhiGarhi	Jeend (Haryana)	Rafeeq Mugal

## *Burial Practices*

Three forms of burials are found at Mohenjodaro, viz. complete burials. fractional burials (burial of some bones after the exposure of the body to wild beasts birds) and post-cremation burials. But the general practice was extended inhumation, the body lying on us back, with the head generally to the north.

## *Religion*

- The chief male deity was the Pashupati Mahadeva (proto-Siva), represented in seals as sitting in a yogic posture on a low throne, and having three faces and two horns. He is surrounded by four animals (elephant, tiger, rhino and buffalo), each facing a different direction, and two deer appear at his feet.
- The chief female deity was the Mother Goddess, who has been depicted in various forms
- There is sufficient evidence for the prevalence of phallic worship. Numerous stone symbols of female sex organs (yoni worship), besides those of the phallus, have been discovered.
- The worship of fire is proved by the discovery of fire altars at Lothal, Kalibangan and Harappa.
- Indus people also worshipped Gods in the form of trees (piapal, etc.) and animals (unicorn etc)
- Further they believed in ghosts and evil forces and used amulets as protection against them.

## ***Trade and Commerce***

Inter regional trade was carried on with Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Maharashtra. South India, parts of Western Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Foreign trade was conducted mainly with Mesopotamia and Bahrain. Trade was carried on by overland as well as overseas transport. Bullock carts and pack-oxen were employed for land transport. There is evidence of sea and river transport by ships and boats in several seals and terracotta models, apart from the dockyard at Lothal. The Sumerian texts refer to trade relations with Meluha' which was the ancient name given to Indus region and they also speak of two intermediate stations called Dilmun (identified with Bahrain) and Makan (Makran coast).

## ***Decline***

After 2000 BC, the Indus culture slowly declined and gradually faded out. Some ascribe this to the decreasing fertility of the soil ii account of the increasing salinity, caused by the expansion of the neighbouring desert. Others attribute ii to some kind of depression in the land, which caused floods. Still others point out that the Aryans destroyed it. According to some scholars, decline of trade, particularly oceanic trade with the Sumerians, must have contributed partly in the decline. Even though there are various theories for the downfall of this civilization, the most accepted version is that of ecological destruction.

## ***Major Sites***

### ***Harappa***

- ❖ The Great Granary measuring 169 ft x 35 feet is the largest and the most remarkable structure found at Harappa.
- ❖ So far 891 seals have been recovered from Harappa, and that is 40% of the total number of seals belonging to Indus Valley Civilization that have been found.
- ❖ A red sandstone naked male torso has been found, which shows traces of Jainism
- ❖ Between the granary and the citadel, have also been found a series of circular platforms, probably for the pounding of grain
- ❖ At a lower level below the granary, platforms and the citadel were crowded one-room dwellings, which suggest slave habitats.

### ***Mohenjodaro***

- ❖ In Sindhi language, the word Mohenjodaro means mound of the dead'.
- ❖ It is the largest of all Indus cities
- ❖ The Great Bath is the most important public place, measuring 39 feet (length) X 23 feet (breadth) X 8 feet (depth). Located at the center of the citadel, it is remarkable for beautiful brickwork. Its floor is made of burnt bricks set in gypsum and mortar. It must have served as a ritual-bathing site
- ❖ Remains have been found of an oblong multi-pillared assembly hall and a big rectangular building, which must have served administrative purposes.
- ❖ Most of Mohenjodaro houses are built of kiln-fired brick
- ❖ The major streets are 33 feet wide and run north-south, intersecting subordinate ones, running east-west at right angles.
- ❖ The evidence of Indian ships (figured on a seal) and a piece of woven cloth has been discovered from here
- ❖ There is a large granary consisting of podium of square blocks of burnt-bricks with a wooden superstructure
- ❖ Parallel rows of two-roomed cottages found The workmen or poor sections Of the society perhaps used these cottages.

- ❖ A bronze dancing girl, a statue of a priest and a seal bearing Pashupati have been found here
- ❖ It is important to remember that Mohenjodaro shows nine levels of occupation towering over 300 feet above the present flood plain
- ❖ Excavation reveals that the city was flooded more than seven times

### ***Kalibangan***

- ❖ Has pre-Harappan as well as Harappan cultural phases.
- ❖ Less developed compared to Mohenjodaro
- ❖ There is evidence of mud-brick fortification
- ❖ Pre-Harappan phase here shows that the fields were ploughed unlike the Harappan period.
- ❖ Archaeologists have discovered two platforms (within the citadel) with fire altars suggesting the practice of cult sacrifice
- ❖ The existence of wheel conveyance is proved by a cartwheel having a single hub

### ***Chanhudaro***

- ❖ Only Indus city without a citadel.
- ❖ Existence of Pre-Harappan as well as Harappan cultural phase
- ❖ A small pot was discovered here, which was probably an ink pot.
- ❖ Excavations reveal that people of Chanhudaro were expert craftsmen. Archaeologists have discovered here metal-workers', shell-ornament makers' and bead-makers' shops
- ❖ The city was twice destroyed by inundations. Here more extensive but indirect evidence of super-imposition of a barbarian lifestyle is seen

### ***Banwali***

- ❖ Like Kalibangan, Amri, Kot Diji and Harappa, Banwali also saw two cultural phases - pre-Harappan and Harappan.
- ❖ Human and animal figures, clay bangles and statue of mother Goddess found here.
- ❖ Here we find large quantity of barley, sesamum and mustard.

### ***Surkotada***

- ❖ Excavations reveal a citadel and a lower town, both of which were fortified.
- ❖ It is the only Indus site where the remains of a horse have actually been found.

### ***Kot Diji***

- ❖ Pre-Harappan and Harappan phases found.
- ❖ According to excavations, the city was probably destroyed due to fire
- ❖ Wheel made painted pottery, traces of a defensive wall and well-aligned streets, knowledge of metallurgy, artistic toys etc.
- ❖ Five figurines of Mother Goddess discovered

### ***Ropar***

- ❖ The excavations have yielded five-fold sequence of cultures — Harappan, PGW, NBP, Kushana-Gupta and Medieval.

- ❖ The evidence of burying a dog below the human burial is very interesting
- ❖ One example of rectangular mudbrick 'chamber' was noticed.

## ***Dholavira***

- ❖ It is the latest and one of the two largest Harappan settlements in India, the other being Rakhigarhi in Haryana
- ❖ The other Harappan towns were divided into two parts — Citadel and the Lower Town, but Dholavira was divided into three principal divisions, two of which were strongly protected by rectangular fortifications.
- ❖ There are two inner enclosures — the first one hemmed in the citadel (which probably housed the highest authority) and the second one protected the middle town (meant for the close relatives of the rulers and other officials). The existence of this middle town, apart from the lower town, is the real exclusive feature of this city.

## ***Lothal***

- ❖ Only Indus site with an artificial brick dockyard. It must have served as the main seaport of the Indus people. It was surrounded by a massive brick wall, probably as flood protection.
- ❖ Lothal has evidence for the earliest cultivation of rice (1800 BC). The only other Indus site where rice husk has been found is Rangpur near Ahmedabad.
- ❖ Fire altars, indicating the probable existence of a fire cult, have been found
- ❖ A doubtful terracotta figurine of horse is found here

# ***Vedic Age***

## ***(1500 BC-1000 BC)***

It is generally agreed that Aryans originally lived somewhere in Steppes stretching from southern Russia to central Russia. The consensus of opinion is that originally they lived somewhere in the East of Alps. On their way to India, Aryans first appeared in Iran and a little later than 1500 BC they appeared in India. Kassite Inscription of about 1600 BC and Mittani Inscription of 1400 BC found in Iraq bear some Aryan names, which suggest that from Iran a branch of Aryans moved towards west. The Rig Veda has many things in common with the Avesta - the oldest text in Iranian language. Rig Veda is the earliest specimen of any Indo-European language. According to Rig Veda, early Aryans first settled in the region called 'Sapta-Sindhava' or the land of seven rivers encompassing the present East Afghanistan, Punjab and Western UP. Early Aryans were semi-nomadic and kept large herds of cattle. As they settled down in villages, they also became cultivators using ox to draw their ploughs. They were ruled by warriors, who depended upon priests to perform the rituals to protect their crops and cattle, and insure victory in war. The Indian sub-continent got its name Bharat Varsha after the Bharata tribe, which was the strongest one. During the later Vedic phase, the Aryans moved away from their

### *Original Home of Aryans*

Central Asia	Max Muller
Tibet	Dayanand Saraswati
German plain	Prof. Penka
Pamirs	Mayor
Turkistan	Hurz Feld
Bactria	J.C.Rod
Steppes	Brandstein
Arctic Region	B.G. Tilak
Central India	Rajbali Pandey
Kashmir	L. D. Kala
Sapta Sindhu	A. C. Das

### **Rivers Mentioned in Rig Veda**

<b>Old Name</b>	<b>New Name</b>
Gomati	Gomal
Krumu	Kurram
Kubha	Kabul
Suvastu	Swat
Sindhu	Indus
Drishadvati	Ghaghar/Chitang
Satudri	Satluj
Vipas	Beas
Parushni	Ravi
Asikni	Chenab
Vitasta	Jhelam

### *The Sun Gods*

Surya Similar to that of the Greek God

Helios.

Savitri The famous Gayatri mantra is addressed to Savitri.

Pusan His main function was that of guarding of roads, herdsmen and cattle.

Vishnu A relatively minor God at that time.

### ***Words Mentioned in Rig Veda***

Word	Times mentioned
Om	1028
Ashva	315
Jana	275
Gau	176
Vs	171
Brahmana	14
Kshatriya	9
Yamuna	3
Sudra	1
Vaishya	1
Rajya	1
Kulpa	1
Ganga	1
Samudra	1

### ***Metals Known***

Gold	Hiranya
Iron	Shyama (Krishna Ayas)
Copper	Ayas

### ***Rig Vedic Polity***

- The chief was the protector of the tribe or Jana.
- However, he did not possess unlimited powers for he had to reckon with the tribal Assemblies.
- Sabha, Samiti, Vidhata and Gana were the tribal Assemblies. Of these, Vidhata was the oldest. These assemblies exercised deliberative, military and religious functions.
- The two most important Assemblies were the Sabha and Samiti. Samiti was general in nature and less exclusive than Sabha.
- Women attended Sabha and Vidhata in Rigvedic times.
- There were a few non-monarchical states {ganas}, which are described whose head was Ganapati or Jyestha.

## *A Celebration of Life*

The Aryans were a wild, turbulent people and had few of the taboos prevalent in later India. They were much addicted to inebriating drinks, of which they had at least two, soma and sura. Soma was drunk at sacrifices and its use was sanctified by religion. Sura was purely secular and more potent, and was disapproved by the priestly poets. The Aryans loved music, and played the flute, lute and harp, to the accompaniment of cymbal and drums. People also delighted in gambling. They enjoyed chariot races.

## *Rigvedic Gods*

The early Vedic religion was naturalistic. Evidently, there were neither temples nor idols. The mode of prayer was recitation of mantras. Sacrifice was offered for Praja (children), Pasu (cattle) and Dhana (wealth) and not for spiritual upliftment or misery.

### **Indra**

- 250 hymns are attributed to India.
- He was the Aryan warlord and also controlled the weather.
- Has been called Purandhar or destroyer of forts.
- He was the proverbial Rain God (prajanya), responsible for causing rainfall.
- He was associated with thunder and storm and bore the thunderbolt (Vajra), with which he destroyed his He has been addressed by various names - Ratheshtha, Jitendra, Somapa, Purandra, Vritrahan and Maghayan.

### **Varuna**

- He was the upholder of Rta or cosmic order and whatever happened in the world was thought to be reflection of his desire.
- As an administrator of the cosmic law (Rta), he regulated all activities in the world. It is he who has spread out the earth and set the sun in motion.
- He is therefore called the world sovereign and is also regarded at the of human morality.
- His worship gives the earliest signs of Bhakti.
- In every hymn for Varuna. there is an appeal for forgiveness.

### **Agni**

- About 200 hymns on the Rig Veda are attributed to Agni.
- He was the intermediary between Gods and men. He consumed the sacrificial offerings and carried them to Gods.
- He dwelt in heaven in the form of lightning. On earth he existed in many forms.
- He dwelt in the domestic hearth.

### **Yama**

- A sort of Adam - The first man to die, who became the guardian of the world of dead.

### **Soma**

- The God of plants. An intoxicant drink was also named Soma. The

Soma sacrifice was an important Vedic rituals.

- He is the special God of Brahamans, who referred to him as their patron deity.

## *Later Vedic Gods*

- Indra and Varuna lost their previous importance and Prajapati attained the Supreme position.
- Rudra and Vishnu became more important than before.
- Pushan became the God of Shudras.
- Brahmin monopoly over divine knowledge was established.
- An elaborate system of Yajnas developed. Among the important ones were— Rajasuya, Ashvamedha and Vajapeya.

### *Other Gods*

Vayu	Wind God
Dyaus	Father of Heaven
Aditi	Mother of Surya
Morals	Storm spirits
Gandharvas	Divine musicians
Ashvins	Healers of diseases and experts in surgical art
Ribhus	Gnomes
Apsoras	Mistresses of Gods.
Rudra	An archer God, whose arrow brought disease

## *Rig Vedic Society*

- Based on kinship, the early Aryan society was essentially tribal and egalitarian.
- People owed their primary loyalty to their tribe, which was called Jana.
- The family was essentially patriarchal and birth of son was desired.
- The family was a large unit, indicated by a common word for son, grandson, nephew and one word for paternal and maternal grandfather.
- Rashtra (kingdom) had not come into existence

## *The Cow*

- The cow seems to be the most important form of wealth.
- Most wars were fought for cows.
- The term for war in Rig Veda is Gavishthi or search for cows.
- Duhitri is a word for daughter, which literally means one who milks cows.

The term Aghanya, or not to be killed has been used for cow. This indicated cow's economic importance.

- Primarily a military leader, the King fought for cows and not for territories
- Guests were called Goghana, which indicates that beef was offered to them.
- The gift made to priests usually consisted of cows and women slaves and never of land.

## ***Position of Women***

- Women held respectable position in society. They could attend tribal assemblies. They took part in sacrifices alongwith their husbands. There are no examples of child marriage and the marriageable age for girls was 16 to 17 years.
- We also get evidence of widow remarriage and practice of Niyoga (levirate) in which a childless widow would co-habit with her brother-in-law until the birth of a son.
- Monogamy was the established practice. However, polygamy and polyandry were also known.

## ***Female Deities***

Usha	Goddess of dawn.
Aditi	Mother of Gods.
Prithivi	Earth Goddess.
Aryani	Forest Goddess
Saraswati	The River deity.

## ***Important Rituals***

- Rajasuya: The King's influence was strengthened by rituals. He performed this sacrifice, which was supposed to confer supreme power on him.
- Asvamedha: A King performed the Asvamedha, which meant unquestioned control over the area in which the royal horse ran uninterrupted. The ceremony lasted for 3 days at the end of which horse sacrifice was performed.
- Vajapeya: A King performed the Vajpeya or the chariot race, in which the royal chariot was made to win the race against his kinsmen (a case of match-fixing!). The ritual lasted for 17 days and was believed not only to restore the strength of the middle-aged king but also to elevate him from the position of Raja to that of Samrat.

## ***Chief Priests***

The chief priests who were engaged in performing the sacrifices were -

- a. Hotri - the Invoker, he recited hymns from Rigveda.
- b. Adhvaryu - the executor, he recited hymns from Yajurveda.
- c. Udgatri - the singer, he recited hymns from Samveda.

## ***Social Divisions***

- When the Aryans first came to India, there was no consciousness of caste, nor were the professions hereditary. The word 'Varna' is used in the Rig Veda with reference to only the

Aryan or Dasa having respectively, fair or dark complexion, but never with reference to the Brahmana or Rajanya (Kshatriya).

- Quadruple division of society made its formal appearance only at one place in the Tenth Mandala of Rig Veda (Purushsukta hymn). The term Shudra is mentioned for the first time in the Tenth Mandala of Rig Veda.
- The Ashrama system had not developed fully till the Later Vedic Period.

## ***Types of Marriage***

- i) Brahma: Marriage of a duly dowered girl to a man of the same class.
- ii) Daiva: The father gives a daughter to a sacrificial priest as a part of his fee.
- iii) Arsa: A token bride-price of a cow and a bull is given in place of the dowry.
- iv) Prajapatya: The father gives the girl without dowry and without demanding the bride-price.
- v) Gandharva: Marriage by the consent of the two parties (love marriage).
- vi) Asura: Marriage in which the bride was bought from her father. It was looked down upon with disfavour by all sacred texts, though Arthashastra allows it without criticism.
- vii) Rakshasa: Marriage by capture, was practised especially by warriors.
- viii) Paishacha: Marriage by seduction.

Of these eight forms the first four were generally approved and were permissible to Brahmans. Daiva marriage was considered 'the ideal'. The other forms were looked down upon with varying degrees of disfavour. Gandharva marriage, which often might amount to no more than a liaison, was surprisingly respected.

A special form of the Gandharva marriage was the Swayamvara

## ***Administrative Officers***

Purohita Chief priest

Senani The leader of the army.

Vrajapati Officer who enjoyed authority over pasture ground.

Kulapas Heads of families led by Vrajapati.

Gramini Head of fitting hordes under Vrajapati.

- There was no officer for tax collection, nor we do hear of any officer for administering justice.
- Spies (Spasa) were employed to watch over anti-social activities like theft and burglary.
- The chief received from people voluntary offering called Bali.

## ***Later Vedic Age***

***(1000 BC-600 BC)***

During the Later Vedic Age the Aryans thoroughly subdued the fertile plains watered by Yamuna, Ganges and Sadanira. They crossed the Vindhya and settled in the Deccan, to the north of Godavari.

## ***Political Organisation***

- During the Later Vedic Age popular assemblies lost much of their importance and royal power increased at their cost. In other words, chiefdom gave way to kingdom. Formation of large kingdoms made the king more powerful. For all practical purposes, kingship became hereditary.
- The Vidhata completely disappeared. Sabha and Samiti continued to hold ground, but their character changed and they were no more representative of the will of the majority.
- Women were no longer permitted to attend the assemblies. which came to be dominated by nobles and Brahamanas.
- The term *rashtra* indicating 'territory' first appeared in this period.

## ***Gotra***

- The institution of Gotra appeared in the Later Vedic Age.
- Literally meaning cowpen, Gotra signified descent from a common ancestor.
- The Gotra has been regarded as a mechanism for widening the socio-political ties, as new relationships were forged between hitherto unrelated people.
- People began to practice Gotra exogamy. In other words, marriage between persons belonging to the same Gotra was prohibited.

## ***Regions and Kings***

Eastern King	Samrat
Western King	Suvrat
Northern King	Viral
Southern king	Bhoja
King of middle country .	Raja

## ***Pottery***

Various types of pottery known:

- (a) Black and Red ware
- (b) Black Slipped ware
- (c) Plain Grey ware
- (d) Red ware

- Red ware was most popular.
- However, the most distinctive type of pottery was Painted Grey Ware.

## ***Aranyakas***

- There were some sages dwelling in the forests who explained the Vedic

scriptures to their pupils in the form of Aranyakas (Aranyaka means belonging to the forest) and they came to be known as “forest texts”.

- They explain metaphysics and symbolism of sacrifice.
- They are the forest books and were taught in the forests due to their magical powers.
- They form the concluding part of Brahmanas.

## ***Brahmanas***

The Brahmanas are the prose commentaries on various Vedic hymns. They explain the Vedas in an orthodox way. They explain the hidden meaning behind the hymns. They are ritualistic by nature. They are expressive of the cause (hetu), etymology (nirvachana), censure (ninda), doubt (samshaya) and injunction (vidhi).

## ***Social Organisation***

Society in the Later Vedic Age came to be increasingly complex and came to be divided into four Varnas - Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras.

**Brahmanas:** The growing cult of sacrifice enormously added to the power of Brahmanas, who performed various rituals and sacrifices for their clients. In the beginning, they were merely one of the sixteen classes of priests, but later on they overshadowed others.

**Kshatriyas:** They constituted the warrior class. Majority of the rulers belonged to this class.

**Vaisyas:** They were the agriculturists, cattle-rearers, traders, artisans and metal workers, which formed the bulk of population. In some texts, the Kshatriyas are represented as living on the tributes collected from the Vaisyas.

**Sudras:** They were the lowest in social hierarchy and were meant to serve the upper three varnas.

- The upper three varnas were known as the Dvijas (twice born).
- The upper three varnas were entitled to ‘upanayana’ or investiture with the sacred thread.
- Education began with upanayana ceremony. Sometimes the girls were also initiated. The age of upanayana was 8 years for Brahmanas, 11 for Kshatriyas, and 12 for Vaisyas.
- Certain sections of artisans such as Rathakara or chariot-maker enjoyed high status and were entitled to the sacred thread ceremony.
- In Later Vedic Age, polygamy was prevalent and there were instances of child-marriage.
- The term Nagara appears for the first time in the Later Vedic Age, showing faint beginnings of town life.

## ***Vedic Literature***

- The word Veda is derived from the Sanskrit word Veda meaning, to know or knowledge par excellence.
- Vedic texts are divided between Sruti (based on hearing), which is distinct from Smriti (based on memory).
- Four Vedas and their Samhitas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the

**Rig Veda**

Upanishads form a class of literature known as Sruti.

- It is divided into 10 Books or Mandalas. Books II to VII are considered the oldest. Book I, VIII and X seem to be later additions.
- A collection of 1028 hymns of a number of priestly families.
- Written between 1700-1500 B.C. when Aryans were still in Punjab.
- Books II to VII are earliest and are also called as family books. They are attributed to Gritsamada, Visvamitra, Vasudeva. Am.

Bhardwaj, Vashishtha. Kanva and Angiras.

- The IX Mandala is dedicated exclusively to Soma
- The X Mandala contains the famous Purushukta hymn that explains the origin of four Varnas.

**Yajur Veda**

- A ritualistic Veda.
- It is divided into Shukla Yajurveda and Krishna Yajurveda.
- Atharvaveda mentions beliefs and practices of non-Aryans.
- In Atharvaveda, Sabha and Samiti are described as uterine sisters – the two daughters of Prajapati.
- Written in prose, it deals with procedure for performance of sacrifices and contains rituals as well as hymns.

**Sama Veda**

- Sam Veda derives its roots from Saman. which means a melody.
- A collection of melodies.
- A collection of 1603 hymns. Except 99, all others were derived from Rig Veda.

**Atharva Veda**

- A collection of 711 hymns, it is divided into 20 Kandas.
- It is the latest Veda.
- Atharva Veda is a book of magical formula.
- It contains charms and spells to ward-off evil and disease.
- Its content throws light on the practices of non-Aryans.

***The Upanishads***

- The term Upanishada indicates knowledge acquired by sitting close to the teacher. They consisted of discussions on several problems such as the creation of the universe, the nature of God, the origin of mankind etc. They are anti-ritualistic and define the doctrine of Karma (Action), Atman (Soul) and Gad (Brahma).
- They are spiritual and philosophical in nature.
- They are called the Vedanta or the end of Vedas. They advocate Jnana Marga and are anti-ritualistic in nature.
- There are 108 Upanishads. Generally, the period from 800 to 500 BC is known as the period of Upanishads.
- The Aitareya and Kaushitaki Upanishads belong to Rig Veda.
- Chhandogya and Kena Upanishad belong to Sama Veda. Taittiriya, Katha and Svetasvatara Upanishad belong to the Krishna Yajur Veda.
- Brihadaranyaka and Isa belong to the Shukla Yajur Veda.

- Prasna. Mundaka and Mundukya belong to the Atharva Veda.

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## *Ashramas*

- The ashrama system is found mentioned for the first time in the Aitareya Brahmana.
- Meant mainly for regulating the life of the male members of the higher castes, they consisted of four stages: (a) Brahmacharin or student life; (b) Grihastha or life of the householder; (c) Vanaprastha or partial retirement and Sanyasin or complete retirement (ascetic life).
- Full recognition of the fourth stage was done only in the post-Vedic period.

## *Kalpa Sutras*

These are the treatises dealing with Vedic rituals on one hand, and with customary law on the other. They are written in a laboriously compressed style, sometimes approaching the structure of algebraic formulas, unintelligible without the help of authoritative commentaries. With a view to conveying to the future generations the ancient and contemporary literature, the Aryan sages invented a special concise method called the Sutra style. Thus the massive Vedic texts were condensed into short, terse formulae, which could be easily remembered and transmitted orally - from father to son or from Guru to Shishya. Most of the Vedic literature was handed down orally in this manner. The Sutra literature is divided into three classes: (a) Sruta Sutras - dealing with large public sacrifices. (b) Griha Sutras: dealing with rituals connected with birth, naming, marriage etc. (c) Dharma Sutras - explain social and local customs. which later on became the basis of Manu Smriti.

## *Dharma-Shastras*

Dharma-Shastras are the later Vedic Age or Epic Age treatises on ethical and social philosophy. They deal systematically with the proper conduct of life and describe social, ethical and religious obligations. The Dharma-Shastras are, in fact, another name for Smritis, which are the law books, written in the sloka metre. The chief among them are the Manu Dharma Shastra, the Vishnu Dharma Shastra, the Yajnavalkya Smriti, and the Narad Smriti. Manu Dharma Shastra or Manu Smriti is the oldest and the most famous. Its author Manu is supposed to be the first king and the first law-giver. Later on, some minor Smritis and commentaries like the Mitakshara were compiled. These books are not merely accounts of civil and criminal laws of the time but they also cover all aspects of the daily life of the individual. They

throw considerable light on the social and political life of the age -the caste system, Ashramas of life, economic conditions as also state of professions, arts and crafts, architecture and the working of administration.

## *Vedangas*

In order to understand the Vedic Literature, it was necessary to learn-Vedangas or the limbs of Vedas. These are treatises on science and arts. They are

- a. Shiksha (Phonetics)
- b. Kalpa (Ritual)
- c. Vyakarana (Grammar)
- d. Chhand (Metrics)
- e. Nirukta (Etymology)
- I. Jyotisha (Astronomy)

- Yaska's Nirukta (5<sup>th</sup> century BC) is the oldest Indian linguistic text.
- Panini wrote Ashtadhyayi (4<sup>th</sup> Century BC) on Vyakaran,

## *Upvedas*

There were four Upvedas-

Ayurveda dealing with medicine

Dhanurveda dealing with the art  
of the warfare

Gandharvaveda dealing with music

Shilpaveda dealing with art and  
Literature

## *Epics*

- Mahabharata is older compared to Ramayana and possibly reflects the state of affairs from 10<sup>th</sup> Century BC to 4<sup>th</sup> Century . AD.
- Originally Mahabharata consisted of 8800 verses and was called Jayasamhita'. These were raised to 24000 and came to be known as Bharata. The final compilation brought the number of verses to 100,000 and came to be known as Mahabharata.
- The Ramayana of Valmiki originally consisted of 6000 verses which were raised to 12000 and finally to 24,000
- Composition of Ramayana started in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. It passed through several stages and attained its present form as late as 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.

## *Six System of Philosophy*

- 1 Nyaya (Analysis) Gautam
- 2 Vaisesika (Atomic Characteristic) Kanada
- 3 Sankhya (Enumeration) Kapil
- 4 Yoga (Application) Patanjali
5. Purva Mimansa (Enquiry) Jaimini
- 6 Uttar Mimansa (Vedanta) Vyasa

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## *Later Vedic Religion*

- Towards the end of the Vedic Age, a section of society began to resent priestly domination. The Upanishads criticised the cult of rituals and sacrifices and laid stress on Right Belief and Right Knowledge.
- They emphasised that knowledge of self (Atman) should be acquired and relation of Atman with Brahma (God) should be properly understood.
- Deeds of one life affected the next. This gave the theory of Karma.

## *Puranas*

The strikingly varied nature of the contents of Puranas seems to be the result of diverse materials: tales, anecdotes, songs and ballads, traditional lore etc. These include mythology, cosmogony, various legends, genealogical accounts, folk beliefs, law codes and miscellaneous topics. The Puranic literature is thus a unique outcome of the ever-continuing synthesis of various socio-economic formations operative between the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. Every addition in the Puranic literature brought in its train numerous new deities with images and temples, pilgrimages and vows, sects etc. The change in the mode of worship (from sacrifice to worship of idols), visual appeal of the deities as against the worship of ideas, the fact of idol worship being more satisfying than yajna or sacrifice, revulsion to the violence and bloodshed involved in animal sacrifices—all these explain the socio-religious-economic transformations taking place in the Aryan society. The Puranas may be regarded as a unique record of the outcome of continual clash and friction, readjustment and mobilization, conservatism and the accommodating spirit of the Indian society. keen to come to terms with its evolving ethos.

# *The Sangam Age*

## *Three Early Kingdoms*

### **The Pandayas (Emblem - Fish)**

The Pandyas were first mentioned by Megasthenes, who said that then kingdom was famous for pearls.

The Pandyan territory included modern districts of Tirnelveli, Ramanad and Madurai in Tami Nadu it had its capital at Madurai. Situated on the banks of Vaigai river.

The Pandya king Profited from trade with Roman Empire and sent emissaries to Roman emperor Augustus and Trojan

The Pandyas find mention in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The earliest known Pandyan ruler was Mudukudumi, who ruled from Madurai. He accused Kovalan of theft. As a result, the city of Madurai was laid under a curse by Kannagi (Kovalan's wife).

### **The Cholas (Emblem - Tiger)**

The Chola kingdom called as Cholamandulam was situated to the north-east of Pandya kingdom between Pennar and Vellar rivers.

The Chola kingdom corresponded to modern Tanjore and Tiruchirapalli districts.

Its inland capital was Uraiyaur a place famous for cotton trade. One of the main sources of wealth for Cholas was trade in cotton cloth.

Puhar identical with Kaveripattanam was the main port of Cholas and served as alternative capital of Cholas.

The earliest known Chola king was Elara who in 2<sup>nd</sup> century B C conquered Sri Lanka and ruled over it for nearly 53 years.

Their greatest king was Karikala (man with charred leg) who founded Puhar and constructed 160 km of embankment along the Kaveri River.

They maintained an efficient navy. The Cholas were wiped out in the attack of Pallavas from North.

### **The Cheras (Emblem - Bow)**

The Chera country occupied the portion of both Kerala and Tamil Nadu

The capital of Cheras was Vanji.

Its main ports were Muzris and Tondi.

The Romans set up two regiments at Muzris (identical with Cranganore) in Chera country. They also built a temple of Augustus at Muzris.

One of the earliest and better known among Chera rulers was Udiyangeral. It is said that he led both the armies of Kurukshetra war and so earned the title Udiyangeral.

The greatest of Chera king however was Senguttuvan of Red Chera. It is said that he invaded north and even crossed the Ganga.

He was also the founder of the famous Pattini cult related to worship of goddess of chastity - Kannagi.

## ***Sangam Administration***

The king was the center of administration. He was called Ko, Mannam, Vendan, Korraivan or Iraivan, Avai was the court of crowned monarch.

### **Officials**

Amaichhar - Ministers

Purohitar - Purohites

Dutar • Envoys

Senapatiyar - Senapati

Orar - Spies.

The kingdom was divided into mandalam, nadu (province), ur (town), sirur (small village), perur (big village).

### **Revenue Administration**

Karai - Land Tax

Irai - Tribute paid by feudatories and booty collected in war.

Ulgu - Customs duties.

Iraivan - Extra demand or forced gift.

Variyam - A well known unit of territory yielding tax.

Variyar - Tax collector

## **Sangam Literature**

Sangam was a college or assembly of Tamil poets held probably under royal patronage of Pandyan kings in Madurai. According to tradition, the assembly lasted for 9990 years and was attended by 8,598 poets and 197 Pandyan kings.

- The first Sangam was attended by Gods and legendary sages and all its works have

perished.

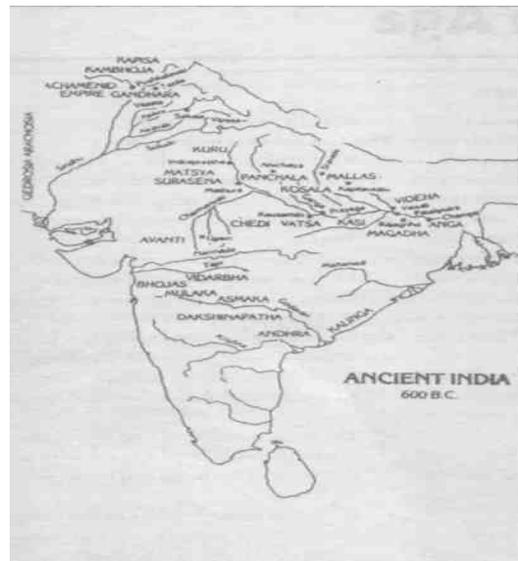
- Of the second Sangam, the only surviving work is *Tolkappiyam*, an early work on Tamil grammar written by *Tolkappiyar*.
- The Sangam literature can roughly be divided into two groups: narrative and didactic.
- The narrative texts are called *Melkannaku* or eighteen major works consisting of eight anthologies (*Ettutogai*) and ten idylls (*Pattupattu*).
- The didactic works are called *Kilkannaku* or eighteen minor works consisting of *Tirukural* and *Naladiyar*.

### The Epics

- *Silappadikaram* (The Jewelled Anklet) - Written by *Mango Adigal*. It deals with the story of *Kovalam* and *Madhavi* of *Kaveripattinam*.
- *Manimekalai* - Written by *Sattnar*. It deals with the adventures of *Manimekalai*, daughter born of *Kovalan* and *Madhavi*.

## *The rise of the Magadha Kingdom*

*(600 to 300 BC)*



Mahajanapadas	Capitals	Mahajanapadas	Capitals
I. Gandhara	Taxila	10. Matsya	Virat Nagari
2. Kamboja	Rajput	11. Vajjis	Vaishali
3. Asmaka	Potna	12. Anga	Champa
4. Vatsa	Kaushambi	13. Kashi	Banaras
5. Avanti	Ujjain	14. Kosala	Sravasti
6. Shurasena	Mathura	15. Magadha	Giirvraja
7. Chedi	Shuktimati	16. Panchala	Ahichhata
8. Malla	Kushinara		(North).
9. Kurus	Hastinapur		Kampilya (South)

## ***PGW and NBPW***

Painted Grey Ware (PGW) (1000-700 BC) was finely made of well-leigated clay on a wheel. It is typically grey in color, thin in section and painted with black or red geometric patterns. The limited range of shapes includes a flat-based convex-sided dish, a small hemispherical bowl, medium and large flat-based straight-sided bowls and a vase (lota) with a straight-sided body, sharp carination at the shoulder and a straight neck. PGW represents the deluxe ware in a mixed ceramic assemblage of various fabrics and manufacture. These ceramic assemblages have been found in the Ghaggar and Indo-Gangetic regions and belong to the Early Iron Age in India.

The appearance of Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) (600- 200 BC) marked the beginning of the second phase of urbanisation in India. This was a very glossy and shiny type of pottery made of very fine and hard fabric. It is technically the finest Pottery of the time, with a brilliantly burnished dressing almost of the quality of a glaze in colour from jet black to a deep grey or metallic blue and iron. Shreds of NBPW have been found from the Gangetic plains to the northern Deccan.

## ***The Mahajanapadas***

About 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, iron implements began to be used widely. As iron implements helped clear the dense forests of the Gangetic plains, civilization expanded eastwards. The new agricultural tools and implements improved the knowledge of cultivation. This helped in the production of surplus food grains, which could be collected by the Kings to meet their military and administrative needs. Establishment of an agrarian economy enabled the people to lead a settled life, to stick to their land, and also to expand at the cost of the neighbouring virgin areas. Around this time, sixteen Mahajanapadas or kingdoms rose to pre-imminence in India. According to Anguttara Nikaya, they were –

Kashi, Kosala, Anga, Magadha, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Assaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja. These Mahajana padas were either monarchical or republican in character. The Mahajanapadas of Anga, Kashi, Kosala, Chedi, Vatsa, Matsya, Shursen, Ashmak, Avanti, Gandhar and Magadha were ruled by kings or monarchs. The kings in these states had the supreme authority. The Mahajanapadas of Vrijji, Malla, Kuru, Panchal and Kamboj were republican states and so were other smaller states like Lichhavi, Shakya, Koliya, Bhagga and Moriya. These republican states had a Gana-parishad or an Assembly of senior and responsible citizens. This Gana-parishad had the supreme authority in the state. All the administrative decisions were taken by this Parishad. Again the republic were basically of 2 types:

- (a) the republics comprising a single tribe like those of the Sakyas, the Kollis and the Mallas.
- (b) the republics comprising a number of tribes or the republics of confederacy like the Vrijjis.

## ***Magadhan Ascendancy***

Of the sixteen Mahajanapadas, Magadha, Kosala, Vatsa and Avanti were more powerful. They fought amongst themselves for political pre-eminence for about a hundred years. Ultimately, Magadha, under the leadership of Bimbisara (542 BC - 493 BC) and Ajatshatru (493 BC - 461 BC) emerged victorious. The victory of Magadha was a victory for the monarchical system, which was now firmly established in the Ganges plain.

Magadhan ascendancy began with Bimbisara of the Haryanka dynasty. He married the princesses of Kosala, Vaishali and Madia, which helped him in his expansionist policy. His one and only conquest was that of Anga. He also gained a part of Kashi as (he dowry in his marriage with the sister of King Prasenajit of Kosala. Bimbisara was murdered by his own son. Ajatasatru (492-460 BC). He defeated Prasenajit, married his daughter, and annexed Kashi. Ajatasatru was succeeded by Udayin (460-444 BC), who founded the new capital at Pataliputra.

The Haryanka dynasty was succeeded by the Sisunaga dynasty, which destroyed the power of Avanti and incorporated it in the Magadhan empire. Thus, the 100-year-old rivalry between Avanti and Magadha came to an end.

The Sisunagas were succeeded by the Nandas. Who annexed Kalinga to the empire. Mahapadma Nanda was the most important king of his dynasty. The Nandas are said to have checked Alexander's army from advancing towards Magadha. Their rule was supplanted by that of the Mauryas,

## *Religious Movements*

The period between 7<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century BC was a turning point in the intellectual and spiritual development of the whole world, for it witnessed the emergence of early philosophers of Greece, the great Hebrew poets, Confucius in China and Zoroaster in Persia. It was at this time that Jainism and Buddhism arose in India, each based on a distinctive set of doctrines and each laying down distinctive rules of conduct for attaining salvation

### *Causes of New Movements*

- The Vedic philosophy had lost its original purity.
- The Vedic religion had become very complex and degenerated into superstitions, dogmas, and rituals.
- Supremacy of the Brahmins created unrest in the society and Kshatriya reacted against the Brahmanical domination.
- Introduction of a new agricultural economy in eastern India.
- The desire of Vaishyas to improve their social position with the increase in their economic position due to the growth of trade.

### *Buddhism*

#### *Buddha's Life*

- Gautama, the Buddha also known as Siddhartha, Sakyamuni and Tathagata.
- Born in 563 BC (widely accepted), on the vaisakha purnima day at Lumbini, near Kapilvastu, capital of the Sakya republic.
- Left home at the age of 29 and attained Nirvana at the age of 35 at Bodh Gaya.
- Delivered his first sermon at Sarnath.
- He attained Mahaparinirvana at Kusinara in 483 BC.

#### *Buddhist Councils*

- **The first Council** was held in 483 BC at Sattapanni cave near Rajagriha to compile the Sutta Pitaka and Vinaya Pitaka.
- **The second council** was held at Vaisali in 383 BC. The monks of Vaisali wanted some change in the rites. Schism into Sthaviravadins and Mahasankhikas.
- **The third council** was held at Pataliputra during the reign of Ashoka. 236 years after

the death of Buddha. It was held under the Presidentship of Moggliputta Tissa to revise the scriptures.

- **The fourth council** was held during the reign of Kanishka in Kashmir under the President ship of Vasumitra and Asvaghosha and resulted in the division of Buddhists into Mahayanists and Hinayanists,

## ***Buddhist Scriptures***

- The Vinaya Pitaka: (a) mainly deals with rules and regulations, which the Buddha promulgated, (b) it describes in detail the gradual development of the Sangha. © An account of the life and teaching of the Buddha is also given.
- The Sutra Pitaka: (a) Consists chiefly of discourses delivered by Buddha himself on different occasions, (b) Few discourses delivered by Sariputta, Ananda, Moggalana and others are also included in it. © It lays down the principles of Buddhism.
- The Abhidhamma Pitaka: Contains the profound philosophy of the Buddha's teachings, (b) It investigates mind and matter, to help the understanding of things as they truly are.
- The Khandhakas: contain regulations on the course or life in the monastic order and have two sections - the Mahavagga and the Cullavagga. The third part - the Parivara is an insignificant composition by a Ceylonese monk.
- Among the non-canonical literature Milindapanho, Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa are important. The later two are the great chronicles of Ceylon.

## ***Know The Important Facts***

- Asvaghosha—Contemporary of Kanishka. He was poet, dramatist, musician, scholar and debator.
- Nagarjuna—He was a friend and contemporary of Satavahana king Yajnasri Gautamiputra of Andhra. He propounded the Madhyamika School of Buddhist philosophy popularly known as Sunyavada.
- Asanga and Vasubandhu—Two brothers who flourished in the Punjab region in fourth century AD. Asanga was the most important teacher of the Yogachara or Vijnanavada School founded by his guru, Maitreyanatha. Vasubandhu's greatest work, Abhidharmakosa is still considered an important encyclopaedia of Buddhism.
- Buddhaghosha — Who lived in the fifth century AD was a great Pali scholar. The commentaries and the Visuddhimaga written by him are a great achievement in the Post-Tripitaka literature.
- Dinnaga—The last mighty intellectual of the fifth century, is well known as the founder of the Buddhist logic.
- Dharmakirti—lived in the seventh century AD was another great Buddhist logician. He was a subtle philosophical thinker and dialectician.

## ***Buddhist Philosophy***

- Idealism: Two source of valid knowledge: (a) Perception and (b) Inference.
- Doctrine of dependent origination (Pratisamutpada): Central theory of Buddhist Philosophy. It tells us that in the empirical world dominated by the intellect, everything is relative, conditional, dependent, subject to birth and death and therefore impermanent.

- Theory of momentariness (Kshanabhanga or Impermanence): It tells that everything in this world is merely a conglomeration of perishable qualities. According to it. Things that can produce effect exist and whatever can not produce effect has no existence.

## ***Five Great Events of Buddha's***

### ***Life and their Symbols***

- Birth: Lotus and Bull
- Great Renunciation: Horse
- Nirvana: Bodhi tree
- First Sermon: Dharmachakra or wheel
- Parinirvana or Death: Stupa

### ***Four Noble Truths***

- The world is full of sorrows.
- Desire is root cause of sorrow.
- If Desire is conquered, all sorrows can be removed. Desire can be removed by
- following the eight-fold path.

### ***Eight Fold Path***

- Right understanding
- Right speech
- Right livelihood
- Right mindfulness
- Right thought
- Right action
- Right effort
- Right concentration

### ***Three Ratnas***

- Buddha
- Dhamma
- Sangha

### ***Sacred Shrines***

- Lumbini, Bodh-Gaya. Sarnath and Kusinagar, where the four principal events of the Buddha's life, namely, Birth, Enlightenment, First sermon and Mahaparinirvana took place. To these are added four places Sravasti, Rajgriha, Vaishali and Sankasya—these eight places have all along been considered as the eight holy places (ashtamahasthanas).
- Other centres of Buddhism in Ancient India—Amravati and Nagarjunikonda in Andhra Pradesh; Nalanda in Bihar; Junagadh and Valabhi in Gujarat; Sanchi and Bharhut in MP; Ajanta-Ellora in Maharashtra, Dhoulagiri in Orissa; Kannauj, Kausambi and Mathura in

U.P.: and Jagadala and Somapuri in West Bengal.

- Buddhist architecture developed essentially in three forms, viz. (a) Stupa (relics of the Buddha or some prominent Buddhist monk are preserved) (b) Chaitya (prayer hall) (c) Vihara (residence)

## *Types of Buddhism*

- **Hinayana** (a) Its followers believed in the original teachings of Buddha, (b) They sought individual salvation through self-discipline and meditation. (c) They did not believe in idol-worship, (d) Hinayana, like Jainism, is a religion without God, Karma taking the place of God. (e) Nirvana is regarded as the extinction of all. (f) The oldest school of Hinayana Buddhism is the Sthaviravada (Theravada in Pali) or the 'Doctrine of the Elders', (g) Its Sanskrit counterpart, which is more philosophical is known as Sarvastivada or the doctrine which maintains the existence of all things, physical as well as mental, (h) Gradually, from Sarvastivada or Vaibhasika branched off another school called Sautantrika, which was more critical in outlook.
- **Mahayana**: (a) Its followers believed in the heavenliness of Buddha and sought the salvation of all through the grace and help of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. (b) Believes in idol-worship, (c) Believes that Nirvana is not a negative cessation of misery but a positive state of bliss, (d) Mahayana had two chief philosophical schools: the Madhyamika and the Yogachara. (e) The former took a line midway between the uncompromising realism of Hinayanism and the idealism of Yogachara. (f) The Yogachara school founded by Maitreyanatha completely rejected the realism of Hinayana and maintained absolute idealism.
- **Vajrayana**: (a) Its followers believed that salvation could be best attained by acquiring the magical power, which they called Vajra. (b) The chief divinities of this new sect were the Taras. (c) It became popular in Eastern India, particularly Bengal and Bihar.

## *Know The Important Facts*

- The Buddha extended the teaching of two elder contemporaries, Alara Kalama, and Udlaka.
- According to Buddhism there is no-self, no God, no soul and no spirit.
- There is very little theological or philosophical speculation involved
- Buddhism is scientific in approach, a search for cause and effect relationships and knowledge of reality, as each individual human being experiences it.
- It is psychological in approach, that is, it begins with human being.
- "If women were not admitted into the monasteries, Buddhism would have continued for a thousand years, but because this admission has been granted, it would last only five hundred years" – Buddha

### **Roots of Buddhism in the Past**

- The Vedanta
- Sankhya philosophy
- The Upanishads : Ideas about Karma, soul, rebirth, moksha, ahimsa etc.

## *Contribution of Buddhism*

- The doctrine of Ahimsa—so strongly stressed, devoutly preached and sincerely practiced by the Buddhists. Was incorporated in Hinduism of later days.
- The practice of worshipping personal Gods, making their images and erecting temples in their honour became a part of the later day Hinduism.
- Buddhism proved to be one of the greatest civilising forces, which India gave to the neighbouring countries.
- Buddhism broke the isolation of India and helped in establishment of intimate contacts between India and foreign countries.

## ***Jainism***

### ***Life of Mahavira***

- Born in 540 BC at Kundagrama near Vaisali.
- Siddhartha was his father: Trisala his mother, Yasoda his wife and Jameli was the daughter.
- Attained Kaivalya at Jrimbhikagrama in eastern India at the age of 42.
- Died at the age of 72 in 468 BC at Pavapuri near Rajagriha.
- He was called Jina or Jitendriya, Nirgrantha and Mahavira.

### ***Way to Nirvana***

#### ***(Three Ratnas)***

- Right faith (Samyak vishwas)
- Right knowledge (Samyak jnan)
- Right conduct (Samyak karma)

### ***The Principles of Jainism as***

#### ***Preached by Mahavira***

- Rejected the authority of the Vedas and the Vedic rituals.
- Did not believe in the existence of God.
- Believed in karma and the transmigration of soul.
- Laid great emphasis on equality.

### ***Five Main Teachings***

- (i) Non-injury (ahimsa)
- (ii) Non-lying (saryai)
- (iii) Non-stealing (asateya)
- (iv) Non-possession (aparigraha)
- (v) Observe continence (Bralmmcharya).

(The first four principles are of Parsavanath and the fifth Bramacharya was included by Mahavira).

## *Sacred Literature*

The sacred literature of the Svetambaras is written in a form of Prakrit called Ardhamagadhi, and may be classified as follows:

The twelve Angas

- (b) The twelve Upangas
- (c) The ten Parikarnas
- (d) The six Chhedasutras
- (e) The four Mulasutras.

## *Jaina Philosophy*

- Syadvada: All our judgements are necessarily relative, conditional and limited. According to Syadvada (the theory of may be) seven modes of predication (saptabhangi) are possible. Absolute affirmation and absolute negation both are wrong. All judgements are conditional.
- Anekantavada: The Jaina metaphysics is a realistic and relativistic pluralism. It is called Anekantavada or the doctrine of the 'manyness of reality'. Matter (Pudgala) and Spirit (Jiva) are regarded as separate and independent realities.

## *Spread of Jainism*

Jainism received patronage from the kings of the time, including Chandragupta Maurya. In the south, royal dynasties such as the Gangas, Kadambas, Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas patronized Jainism. In Gujarat, patronage came from wealthy merchants. The concrete expression of Jainism's religious zeal is seen all over the country in works of art and architecture. The 57-foot high statue of Gomateshvara at Sravanabelagola in Mysore, erected in 983 or 984 AD is a marvel of its kind. The temples at Mount Abu and those at Palithana in Gujarat and Moodabidri and Karkala in the south make a rich contribution to the Indian heritage.

## *Jaina Councils*

By the end of fourth century BC, there was a serious famine in the Ganges valley leading to a great exodus of many Jaina monks to the Deccan and South India (Sravana Belgola) along with Bhadrabahu and Chandragupta Maurya. They returned to the Gangetic valley after 12 years. The leader of the group, which stayed back at Magadha was Sthulabahu. The changes that took place in the code of conduct of the followers of Sthulabahu led to the division of the Jainas into Digambaras (sky-clad or naked) and Svetambaras (white-clad).

- **First Council** was held at Pataliputra by Sthulabahu in the beginning of the third century BC and resulted in the compilation of 12 Angas to replace the lost 14 Purvas.
- **Second Council** was held at Valabhi in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD under the leadership of Devaradhi Kshamasramana and resulted in final compilation of 12 Angas and 12 Upangas.

## *Invasion of Alexander*

Alexander crossed the Indus in 326 BC. After defeating the fierce tribes of the north west, he encountered two powerful kings, Ambhi and Porus. Ambhi, the king of Taxila, sent a mission to Alexander, offering to help him, if his own kingdom was spared. Porus, however, decided to oppose the Macedonian and the battle of Hydaspes (Ravi) was fought on the banks of the river Jhelum. Greek sources mention that Porus was defeated but was restored to his dominion as a vassal of Alexander. Alexander wanted to continue his advance but his soldiers mutinied and refused to go beyond river Hyphasis (Beas) and he had to retreat.

Alexander died in Babylonia in 323 BC. After his death, most of the Macedonians returned home by 316 BC. Though Alexander's stay in India was brief; it was an important influence. By curbing the fierce tribes who inhabited the hills and passes of North-west India, he paved the way for the rise of a united empire under the Mauryas. Alexander's campaign opened up and reinforced a number of trade routes between North-Western India, via Afghanistan and Iran to Asia Minor and to the ports along the eastern Mediterranean.

## *The Mauryan Empire (325 BC -183 BC)*

### *Chandragupta Maurya*

- In 305 BC Chandragupta defeated Seleucus Nikator, who surrendered a vast territory.
- Megasthenes was a Greek ambassador sent to the court of Chandragupta Maurya by Seleucus.
- Chandragupta became a Jain and went to Sravanbelgola with Bhadrabahu, where he died by slow starvation (Sale/than).
- Under Chandragupta Maurya, for the first time, the whole of northern India was united.
- Trade flourished, agriculture was regulated, weights and measures were standardized and money came into use.
- Taxation, sanitation and famine relief became the concerns of the State.

### *Bindusara*

- Bindusara extended the kingdom further and conquered the south as far as Mysore.
- Bindusara asked Antiochus I of Syria to send some sweet wine, dried figs, and a Sophist. Antiochus I sent wine and figs but politely replied that Greek philosophers are not for sale.
- Bindusara patronized Ajivikus.

### *Asoka*

- According to the Buddhist tradition, Asoka usurped the throne after killing his 99 brothers and spared Tissa, the youngest one. Radhagupta a Minister of Bindusara helped him in fratricidal struggle.
- Under Asoka, the Mauryan Empire reached its climax. For the first time, the whole of the subcontinent, leaving out the extreme south, was under imperial control.
- Asoka fought the Kalinga war in 261 BC in the 9<sup>th</sup> years of his coronation. The king was moved by massacre in this war and therefore abandoned the policy of physical occupation in favour of policy of cultural conquest. In oilier words, Bherighosha was replaced by Dhammaghosha.

- Asoka was not an extreme pacifist. He did not pursue the policy of peace for sake of peace under all conditions. Thus he retained Kalinga after its conquest and incorporated it into his empire.
- Asoka sent missionaries to the kingdoms of the Cholas and the Pandyas, and five States ruled by Greek kings. We also know that he sent missionaries to Ceylon and Suvarnabhumi (Burma) and also parts of South East Asia.

## *Asoka's Dhamma*

- Asoka's Dhamma cannot be regarded as sectarian faith. Its broad objective was to preserve the social order it ordained that people should obey their parents, pay respect to Brahmanas and Buddhist monks and show mercy to slave and servants.
- He held that if people behaved well they would attain Swarga (heaven). He never said that they would attain Nirvana, which was goal of Buddhist Teaching.

## *The empire*

- The empire was divided into a number of provinces. Probably, five.
- The northern province, called Uttarapatha had Taxila as its capital
- Western province, known as Avantipatha had its capital in Ujjain.
- Prachyapatha with its capital Toshali (Kalinga) formed the Eastern province while Dakshinapatha with its capital Surarnagiri was the Southernmost province.
- Central province. Magdha, with its capital at Pataliputra, was the headquarters of the entire kingdom.

## *Arthashastra*

Arthashastra, written by Chandragupta Maurya's Prime Minister Chanakya, primarily delves into the statecraft and administration. The treatise lays down various rules that should be formulated for a ruling monarch. It laid down strategies for a well-planned state economy. The Arthashastra has 15 adhikarnas or books. Of which, the first five deal with tantra or internal administration of the state, eight deal with avapa or its relations with neighboring states, and the last two are miscellaneous in character. The work is concerned with all the topics that deal with the internal administration and foreign relations.

## *Army*

- The most striking feature of Mauryan administration was maintenance of a huge army. They also maintained a Navy.
- According to Megasthenes the administration of Army was carried by a board of 30 officers divided into six committees, each committee consisting of 5 members. They are:
  - (i) Army
  - (ii) Cavalry
  - (iii) Elephants
  - (iv) Chariots

- (v) Navy
- (vi) Transport
- The state controlled almost all economic activities.
- Tax collected from peasants varied from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the Produce.
- The state also provided irrigation facilities and charged water-tax.
- Tolls were also levied on commodities brought to town for sale and they were collected at gate.
- The state enjoyed monopoly in mining, sale of liquor, manufacture of arms etc

## ***Facts about Mauryas***

- During Mauryan rule, though there was banking system in India. yet usury was customary and the rate of interest was 15% per annum on borrowing money. In less secure transactions (like sea Voyages etc) the rate of interest could be as high as 60% per annum.
- During Mauryan period, the punch marked coins (mostly of silver) were the common units of transactions.
- Tamralipti in the Gangetic delta was the most prosperous port on the East Coast of India.
- Megasthenes in his Indies had mentioned 7 castes in Mauryan society. They were philosophers, farmers, soldiers, herdsmen, artisans, magistrates and councilors.

## ***The Mauryan Administration***

### **The King**

The Mauryan government was a centralised bureaucracy of which the nucleus was the king.

### **The Mantri Parishad**

The king was assisted by Mantri Parishad, whose members included -

(i) The Yuvaraj, the crown prince

The Purohita, the chief priest

The Senapati. the commander-in-chief of the army a few other ministers.

### **Important officials**

Amatyas The Secretaries

Sannidhata Chief treasury officer

Samaharta The collector general of Revenue

Durgapala Governor of fort

Antapala Governor of the frontier

Akshapatala Accountant General

Vachabhumika Officer in charge of the rest houses, groves and wells etc.

Dhamma- A new post created by Asoka, empowered with the dual functions of mahamatras propagating Dhamma and taking care of the common folk for their material well-being.

Lipikaras Scribes

Prativedikas Reporters.

Kumaras The viceroys in charge of a province. Generally they were of regular though the exceptions were also there. In order to check the growing power of the viceroys the

provincial ministers were empowered sufficiently.

**Pradesikas** They were the modern district magistrates and in charge of district. They were to make tours once in every 5 years to inspect the entire administration of the areas under control.

**Rajukas** They were the later day Patwaris. They were responsible for surveying and assessing the land. In rural areas they were the judicial officers.

**Yukra** A subordinate revenue officer of the district level. He was responsible for the secretarial work of accounting.

**Gopa** Responsible for accounts.

**Sthanika** The tax collecting officer directly under the control of the Pradesikas.

### **The village level officers**

**Gramika** Head of a village. He was generally elected by the people. He was not a paid servant.

**Gramviddhas** Village elders (To assist the Gramika in his work). Every village had its own Panchayat to settle the disputes.

### **The municipal administration**

**Nagara** The officer in charge of the city administration.

**Sitaadhyaksha** Supervised agriculture.

**Panyaadhyaksha** Superintendent of commerce.

**Samsthadhyaksha** Superintendent of market.

**Pauthavadyaksha** Superintendent of weight and measures.

**Navadyaksha** Superintendent of Ships.

**Sulkadyaksha** Collector of tolls.

**Akaradyaksha** Superintendent of mines.

**Lohadyaksha** Superintendent of Iron.

## ***Art & Architecture***

- The Mauryas introduced stone masonry on large scale.
- Fragments of stone pillars and slumps indicating the existence of an 80-pillared hall have been discovered at Kumarhar on outskirts of Patna.
- The pillars represent the Masterpiece of Mauryan sculpture. Each pillar is made of single piece of sandstone. only their capitals which are beautiful pieces of sculpture in form of lion or bulls are joined with pillar on the top.
- Single Lion capital at Rampurva and Lauriya Nandangarh.
- Single bull capital at Rampurva.
- Four lion capital at Sarnath and Sanchi.
- A carved elephant at Dhauri and engraved elephant at Kalsi.
- The Mauryan artisans also started the practice of hewing out caves from rocks for monks to live in. the earliest example are Barabar caves in Gaya.
- Stupas were built throughout the empire to enshrine (the relics of Buddha. Of these, the most famous are at Sanchi and Bui hut

## *The Decline*

The Mauryan Empire lasted a little over a century and broke up fifty years after the death of Asoka. Slowly, the various princes of the empire began to break away and set up independent kingdoms. In 185 BC, the Mauryan king was overthrown by Pushyamitra Shunga, an ambitious Commander-in-Chief of armed forces. He started the Shunga dynasty in Magadha. The Mauryan Empire ushered in a dream that was to survive and echo again and again in centuries to come. Some probable causes of decline of the Mauryan Empire:

1. Brahmanical reaction
2. Financial crisis
3. Oppressive rule
4. Neglect of north-west frontier.
5. Weak successors
6. Pacific policy of Asoka
7. New knowledge in outlying areas-Dissemination of knowledge of manufacturing Iron

## *The Age of the Guptas (320 AD-550 AD)*

Some 500 years after the collapse of the Mauryan Empire, a new dynasty called the Guptas arose in Magadha and established its control over the greater part of India (though their empire was not as large as that of the Mauryas). This period is also referred as the 'Classical Age' or 'Golden Age' of ancient India and was perhaps the most prosperous era in the Indian history.

### *The Gupta Dynasty*

Chandragupta I	320 - 335 AD
Samudragupta	335-375 AD
Ramagupta	375 - 380 AD
Chandragupta Vikramaditya	380-413 AD
Kumargupta Mahendraditya	415-455 AD
Skandagupta	455-467 AD

#### **Later Guptas**

Purugupta, Narasimhagupta, Baladitya, Kumargupta II, Buddhagupta\*,  
Bhanugupta, Harshagupta, Damodargupta, Mahasenagupta

. Buddhagupta was the last emperor of Guptas, who preserved unity. When he passed away, Huns safely entered into Sialkot region and eastern Malwa

### *Chandragupta I*

- He was the first Gupta ruler to assume the title of Maharajadhiraj.
- He strengthened his kingdom by matrimonial alliance with the powerful family of Lichchhavis who were the rulers of Mithila. His marriage to Lichchhavi princess Kumaradevi brought an enormous power, resources and prestige. He took advantage of the situation and occupied the whole of fertile Gangetic valley
- He started the Gupta Era in 319-20 AD.

## *Samudra Gupta*

Samudragupta was perhaps the greatest king of Gupta dynasty. His name appear in Javanese text Tantrikamandaka, and Chinese writer, Wang-Hiuen-Tse refers that an ambassador was sent to his court by King Meghvamma of Sri Lanka, who had asked his permission to build a Buddhist monastery at Bodh Gaya for the monks travelling from Sri Lanka.

- The most detailed and authentic record of his reign is preserved in the Allahabad pillar inscription, composed by his court poet Harisena.
- Samudragupta believed in policy of war and conquest and has been termed as the Napoleon of India by Vincent A. Smith.
- When he died his mighty empire bordered with Kushan of Western province (modern Afganistan and Pakistan) and Vakatakas in Deccan (modern southern Maharashtra).
- Samudragupta was a staunch Hindu. Allahabad pillar inscriptions mentions the title Dharma Prachar Bandhu for him - that is he was the upholder of Brahmanical religion.
- After all his military triumphs, he performed the Ashwamedha, which is evident on some of his coins. Ashwamedha gave him the coveted title of Maharajadhiraj, the supreme king of kings. His greatest achievement can be described as the political unification of most of (the India or Aryavarta into a formidable power.
- Coins - Archer type, tiger type and Battle type. On some of his gold coins he is represented playing the Veena.

## *Kumargupta I*

- Adopted the title of Mahendraditya.
- Introduced worship of God Kartikeya. Founded the monastery of Nalanda, which developed into a great centre of learning.
- Kalidas flourished in the reign of both Kumar Gupta I and Chandragupta II.

## *Social Developments*

- The Brahmanas claimed many privileges on account of wealth accumulated by land grants.
- The position of Sudras improved in Gupta period. They were now permitted to listen to the epics and Puranas. They could also worship lord Krishna. They were also allowed to perform certain domestic rites. which brought fees to priests.
- The practice of untouchability became more intense than before. The untouchables especially Chandalas increased in number.

## *Art*

- Bronze image of Buddha recovered from Sultanganj.
- Lofty stone images of Buddha at Bamiyan in Afghanistan belonged to Gupta period.
- Among the best specimen of the images of Buddha is a sealed Buddha image

of Sarnath, which depicts the Buddha preaching the Dhamma.

- For the first time we get images of Vishnu, Shiva and other Gods.
- The fragmentary remains of Vishnu temple at Deogarh is the example of the most ornate and beautifully composed Gupta temple building. Another fine example of Gupta architecture is found in the Vaishnavite Tigawa temple at Jabalpur (415 AD). Bhitia in Uttar Pradesh has a number of ancient Gupta temples. Some of the caves at Ajanta may be assigned to the period of Guptas.

## *Administration*

- It was during the Gupta rule that the village headmen became more important than before.
- In towns, organised professional bodies (Guilds) were given considerable share in the administration. Guilds of artisans, merchants and scribes conducted the affairs of the town.
- The Kumaramatyas were the most important officers of the Gupta period who were in charge of several portfolios. It was from them the mantris, Senapati, Mahadanda-nayaka (Minister of justice) and Saiulhi vighraha (Minister of war and peace) were generally chosen.
- The Gupta military organisation was feudal by character (though the emperor had a large standing army).
- Decentralisation of the administrative authority began during the Gupta age.
- The Gupta age also experienced an excess of land grants. Land grants included the transfer of royal rights over salt and mines, which were under the royal monopoly during the Maurya period.
- In Gupta period land taxes increased in number and those on trade and commerce declined.
- The king collected taxes varying from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the produce.
- In Gupta period the army was to be fed by the people whenever it passed through the countryside. This tax was called Senabhakta.
- The villagers were also subjected to forced labour called vishti for serving royal army and officials.
- In the Gupta period for the first time civil and criminal law were clearly defined and demarcated.

## *The Huns*

Huns were primitive pastoralists owning herds of cattle and horses but knowing nothing of agriculture. They roamed in the steppe in search of pasture and water. For their food they depended on hunting and food gathering. From the Oxus, the White Huns came into Afghanistan, destroyed the Kushan power there (in 415 AD) and after establishing themselves there, began to pour into India in 458 AD. However, Skandagupta, who was at the time ruling in Northern India, checkmated them effectively. In 466-67, the Huns attacked again under Tormana and with the fall of the Persian empire to the Huns, the Gupta empire's resistance collapsed and Huns occupied the areas up to Central India and Malwa about 500 AD.

## *Ajanta Paintings*

In A.D. 1817, some British soldiers chanced upon a collection of caves in a horseshoe shaped ravine close to Aurangabad lying abandoned. This was when the art of Ajanta was exposed to the enthralled world. Started in the second century BC and given up some time in the seventh century AD this complex of 29 chaitya and vihara caves were chiselled into live rock and are host to some of the best preserved paintings and sculptures of the Gupta period. The themes of the paintings on the walls are religious in tone and center around Buddha, Bodhisattva, and the Jatakas. The depiction of the Jatakas and incidents from the life of Buddha (which offer visual representations of didactic themes to supplement the teachings of the elder monks to their pupils), offered the painter an unlimited scope. The paintings at Ajanta were mirrors of the contemporary life in the palace, court, town, village, hamlet and hermitage.

### ***Religious Developments***

- Under the patronage of Gupta ruler, Vaishnavism became very popular.
- The Gods were activated by their unions with the respective consorts. Thus, Laxmi got her association with Vishnu (Skandgupta's time) and Parvati got her association with Siva (Kumaragupta I's time).
- This was the period of evolution of Vajrayanism and the Buddhist tantric cults.
- Idol worship became a common feature of Hinduism from Gupta period onwards.

### ***Position of Women***

The position of women deteriorated further. Polygamy was common. The first example of sati appears in Gupta time in 510 AD in Eran in Madhya Pradesh. The women of higher orders did not have access to independent source of livelihood. Women lacked property rights. However her stridhana was considered her property.

<i><b>Literature</b></i>	
<b>Author</b>	<b>Book</b>
Bhasa	Svapnavasavdattam
Shudrak	Mrichchakatika
Amarkosh	Amarsimha
Iswara Krishna	Sankhya Karika
Vatsyana	Kama Sutra
Vishnu (Gupta)	Panchatantra
Narayan Pandit	Hitopdesha
Bhattin	Ravan Vadha
Bhaivi	Kiratarjunyam
Dandin	Daskumarachanta
Aryabhata	Aryabhattyam
Vishakha Datta	Mudura Rakshasa
Indrabhuti	nanassiddhi
Varahamihara	Panchasiddh antika. Brihad Samhita

### ***Trade and Coinage .***

- In Gold content Gupta coins are not as pure as Kushans
- The Guptas also issued good number of silver coins for local exchange.
- The Gupta copper coins are very few as compared to Kushanas, which show that use of money did not touch common people.
- Gupta period witnessed decline in long distance trade.
- Trade with the Roman Empire declined after the third century AD.
- Indian merchants began to rely more heavily on the south-east Asian trade.

### ***Kalidas***

Kalidas wrote a number of such excellent dramas like Sakuntala, Malavikagnimitram, Vikramorvasiyam, epics like the Raghuvamsa, and lyric poetry like the Ritu-Samhara and the Meghaduta. The best-known work of Kalidas is his drama Sakuntala. His Meghaduta is among the most fascinating little poems that ever came to be written in Sanskrit. Both in drama and poetry Kalidas stands not only unsurpassed, but even unrivalled. His poetry is characterized by grace, simplicity and sentiment, and is decorated by striking figures of speech. He is unsurpassed in describing love and pathos. His works are

famous not only for their aesthetic beauty and poetic appeal, but for the ideal which they place before us.

## ***Astronomy***

Aryabhata wrote *Suryasiddhanta*, which dealt with epicyclic revolution of earth, nature of eclipse, reckoning of time etc. Aryabhata calculated Pi as 3.1416 and the length of the solar year as 365.358 days. He postulated that the Earth was a sphere rotating on its own axis and revolving around the Sun as well. He also postulated the exact cause of eclipses. He propounded the Heliocentric theory of gravitation, thus predating Copernicus by almost one thousand years. Aryabhata's Magnum Opus, the *Aryabhatiya* was translated into Latin as early as 13<sup>th</sup> century.

## ***The Post-Gupta Period***

### ***Harshavardhana (606-647 AD)***

- Harsha belonged to Pushyabhuti dynasty, which ruled from Thanjavur. Pushyabhutis were the feudatories of the Guptas, but had assumed independence after the Huna invasions.
- His reign is comparatively well-documented, thanks to his court poet Bana, who was the author of works such as *Harshacharita* (an account of Harsha's rise to power), *Kadambari* and *Parvatiparinay*.
- Harsha's dramas such as *Ratnavali*, *Nagananda* and *Priyadarsika* give us information about the political conditions in those days.
- In his first expedition, Harsha drove away Sasanka from Kanauj who had occupied it after murdering Harsha's brother. He made it his new capital.
- The area under his control covered many parts of northern India, including the Punjab, eastern Rajasthan and the Ganga valley as far as Assam. But, his empire included territories of distant feudal kings too.
- Harsha governed his empire on the same lines as the Guptas. The kings he conquered paid him revenue and sent soldiers when he was fighting war. They accepted his sovereignty, but remained rulers over their own kingdoms.
- Harsha's ambition of extending his power to the Deccan and southern India were stopped by Pulakesin II, the Chalukya king of Vatapi in northern Mysore.

### ***Pallavas (560-903 AD)***

- There is controversy regarding the origin of Pallavas. Possibly the Pallavas were a local tribe who established their authority in the Tondamadu or the land of creepers.
- They were orthodox Brahmanical Hindus and their capital was at Kanchi.
- Both Chalukyas and Pallavas tried to establish their supremacy over land between Krishna and Tungabhadra.
- Pallava king Narshimhavarman (630-68 AD) occupied Chalukyan capital at Vatapi in about 642 AD and assumed the title *Vatapikonda*.

## ***The Chola Empire (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Century)***

- The founder of Chola Dynasty was Vijayalaya, who was at first a feudatory of the Pallavas. He captured Tanjore in 850 AD.
- The greatest Chola rulers were Rajaraja (985-1014 AD) and his son Rajendra I (1014-1044 AD).
- Raja built a Saiya a temple of Rajarajeshwara at Temple.
- Rajendra I assumed the title of Gangaikondachola and built a city called Gangaikondacholapuram)
- The Chola Empire was divided into Mandalams or provinces and these in turn were divided into Valanadu and Nadu.
- The arrangement of local self-government has been regarded as the basic feature of the administration of Cholas.
- The style of architecture which came into vogue during this period is called Dravida e.g. Kailashnath temple of Kanchipuram.
- Another aspect was image making which reached its climax in dancing figure of Shiva called Natrāja.
- Kambama who wrote Ramavatrama was one of the greatest figures of Tamil poetry. His Ramayana is known as Kamba Ramayana.
- Pampa, Ponna and Ranna are considered as three gems of Kannada poetry.

<b>Pallavas (300-888 AD)</b>	<b>Cholas (850-1276 AD)</b>	<b>Pratiharas (773-1019 AD)</b>	<b>Chalukyas (973-1192AD)</b>	<b>Rashtrakutas (750-1142 AD)</b>	
Simhavishnu	Vijayalaya	Nagabhata I	Pulakesin I	Dantidurga	Govinda IV
Mahendravarman I	Parantakal	Vatsaraja	Kirtivarman I	Krishna I	Amoghavarsha III
Narasimhavarman I	Rajarajal	Nagabhata II	Mangalesa	Govinda II	Krishna III
Mahendravarman II	Rajendral	Mihira Bhoja	Vikramaditya I	Dhruva	Khottiga
Paramesvaravarman I	Rajadhiraja	Mahendrapala I	Vinayaditya	Govinda III	Karka II
Narasimhavarman II	Rajendrall	Mahipala	Vikramaditya	Amoghavarsha I	Krishna II
Paramesvaravarman II	Virarajendra		Vikramaditya II	Krishna II	Indra III
Nandivarman II	Kulottungal		Kirtivarman II	Indra III	Amoghavarsha II

## ***Northern India: Age of three Empires***

A Dumber of powerful Empires arose in northern India and the Deccan between 750-1000 AD. These were Palas, which dominated eastern India till the middle of (>)h century, the Pratiharas, which dominated eastern India and the upper Gangetic valley and the Rastrakutas, which dominated Deccan.

### **The Palas**

- Gopala founded the Pala Empire in 750 AD. His son Dharmapala succeeded him.

- Dharmapala revived Nalanda University, which had been famous all over the eastern world.
- He also founded the Vikramshila University

### **The Pratiharas**

- The Pratiharas are also called Gurjara-Pratiharas probably because they originated from Gujrata of southwest Rajas than.
- Bhoja was the greatest ruler of this dynasty.
- He was a devotee of Vishnu and adopted the title of 'Adivaraha'. He is sometimes called Mihir Bhoja to distinguish him from Bhoja Parmara of Ujjain

### **The Rashtrakutas**

- Dantidurga who fixed his capital at Manyakhet or Malkhed near modern Sholapur founded the kingdom.
- The greatest Rastrakuta rulers were Govinda III and Amoghavarsha. Amoghavarsha ruled for 68 years but by temperament he preferred pursuit of religion and literature to war. He was himself an author and wrote 'Kavi Rajamarga' the earliest Kannada book on poetics.
- The famous rock cut temple of Shiva at Ellora was built by one of the Rastrakuta kings Krishna I in 9<sup>th</sup> century.

## ***Chalukyas (543-757 AD)***

- They established their capital at Vatapi (Badami) in district of Bijapur in Karnataka.
- Pulakesin II was able to check Harsha's design to conquer Deccan.
- Aihole Inscription is a eulogy written by his court poet Ravikirti.
- The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited his kingdom.
- Pallava ruler Narsimhavarman I invaded the Chalukya kingdom, killed Pulakesin II and captured Badami.

## ***Chalukya Art***

- They developed the Deccan or Vesara style in the building of structural temples, which reached culmination, however, only under the Rashtrakutas and the Hoyasalas
- They perfected the art of stone building, that is, stones finely joined without mortar.
- Under their auspices, the Buddhists, Jains and Brahmins competed with each other in building cave temples.
- Though the cave frescoes began earlier, some of the finest specimens belonged to the Chalukyas. The murals that were executed on the walls dealt with not only religious themes but also with secular ones.

## ***Hiuen Tsang***

The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang visited India during Harsha's reign. He has left a lengthy account of his travels. Hiuen Tsang noticed that Buddhism was not as popular in all parts of India as he had thought it would be. But in eastern India, it was still popular. Nalanda University was still a famous centre of Buddhism. He also recorded the existence of a rigid caste system and talks about the existence of many subcastes. He also takes note of many outcastes and untouchables, who were segregated and not allowed to mix with the people of the higher varnas.

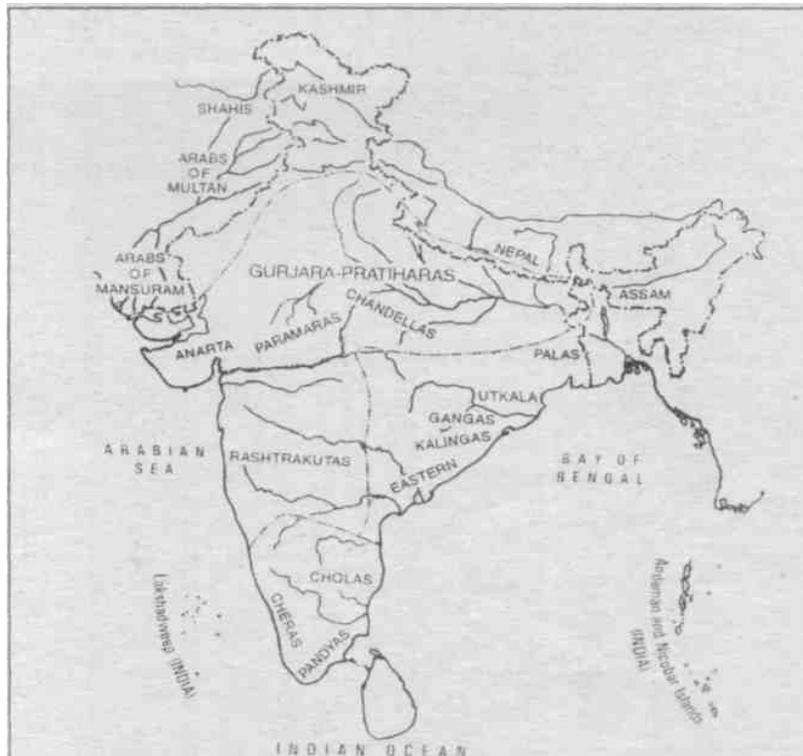
and had habitations marked with a distinguishing sign.

## *Chola art*

- In the temples, the Vimana or the tall pyramidal tower dominates the whole structure of the shrine and imparts an extraordinary dignity to it.
- Gopuram and Garbhagriha are the other two important structures.
- The best specimens are the temples of Vijayala-Choleswara, the Nageswara temple, the Koranganatha temple and the Muvarakovinta temple.

## *Hoyasala art*

- Temples usually stand on a high platform.
- The minute carving of the Hoyasala temples is their most attractive feature, achieving the effect of Sandalwood and ivory carving and reproducing the same infinite variety of ornamental decoration.
- The temple at Hoyasaleshvara at Halebid is the greatest achievement of Hoysala art.



## *Art and Architecture*

### *Gandhara Art*

- It Clearly exhibits the influence of Greek and Roman art.

- However, patrons of this art were not Greeks but Sakas and Kushanas.
- The school specialized in Buddha and Bodhisattva images, stupas and monasteries.
- Built mostly of blue schist stone.
- Buddhas of this school are gentle, graceful and compassionate. (Lacking the spirituality of those of the Gupta period).
- The chief characteristics are the realistic representation of human figures, distinguished muscles of the body and transparent garments.

### ***Gupta Art***

- Achieved the highest level of perfection.
- The art was sensitive, secular and anthropomorphic.
- Gupta temple was not excavated from rock, it was an independent structure built of dressed stone blocks.
- Dasavatara temple at Deogarh is a beautiful example of Gupta architecture.
- Two of the best examples of Gupta images are the standing Buddhas from Mathura.
- The rock sculpture showing the Varaha avatara of Vishnu in the Udayagiri cave represents the vigour of which the art was capable.

### ***Mathura Art***

- Buddhas of Gandhara were copied here but in a more refined way.
- The art represents an important formative stage in the history of Indian art.
- The great majority of creation consisted of nude seminude figures of female Yakshinis or Apsoras in erotic pose.
- The images exhibited not only form, masculinity and energetic body but also grace and religious feeling.
- The attempt to display spiritual strength by halo began with Mathura School.
- The forms of Brahmanical deities became crystallized at Mathura for the first time.

