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SEMESTER-I**

BHYS-11

**HISTORY OF INDIA
(UPTO 1206 A.D.)**

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BLOCK I

- Unit 1 : Sources of Ancient Indian History -
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Unit 1

SOURCES OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY - EFFECTS OF GEOGRAPHY ON THE HISTORY OF INDIA

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Legends and Ballads

Archaeological Sources

Monuments or Material Remains

Numismatics

Epigraphy

Literary Sources for study of Ancient India

Historical Geography of India

Effects

Let us Sum up

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

OVERVIEW

Indian History is divided chronologically, into three ages such as: Ancient Indian History upto A.D. 1206, the Mediaeval Indian History from 1206 to 1707 and to the modern Indian History to the present day. But, for

the purpose of our study we will only take the first, into consideration. For the construction of Ancient India, major sources are 1. Archaeological Sources 2. Literary Sources 3. Foreigners Accounts 4. Legends. It is further supplemented by the role of Geography and understanding the History of India like Size, Boundaries and Divisions.

A list is given below as how the Geography influenced History while highlighting the physical features of India.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you should be able to

- classify the sources of History
- explain the term epigraphy, numismatics
- trace the basis of the Historical Geography of India
- analyse the climatic features on the study of History of India

INTRODUCTION

History is the record of the past for which we have evidences. These evidences are the traces of the actions and thoughts of people left behind. These traces are left unintentionally or deliberately, provide informations for a historian to reconstruct the history of the past. The sources of the Ancient Indian History are classified into three categories. They are:

1. Legends and Ballads
2. Archaeological Sources
3. Literary Sources

LEGENDS AND BALLADS

The primitive and ancient peoples, had conveyed their memories and traditions through myths, legends and ballads. The Legends are the traditional stories told by the ancestors to the successive generations. In the

legend the divine side tends to decline and the human side tends to develop. The legends are preserved for generations in the form of folklore and dramas. The legends are in oral form, since the people were illiterate and had no written language. The tribal legends are useful to trace the history of Chotta Nagpur. Even today the Ranapratap Singh of Mewar's deeds have been recorded in folklore.

Myths are a fabulous narrative founded on some real or imaginary developments. The Myths embodied the ideas developed during the early existences of the people as to their origin, Gods, supernatural phenomenon and the like. The early human beings preserved the Myths of divine and supernatural element, in their traditions.

Ballads are short narrative poems, composed for easy recitation. The fall of Panjalam Kurichi and the story of Sivaganga come under this category.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES

Archaeology, is the study of the material remains of the past. It adds to the evidence of literature. For pre-history and proto history we have to depend mainly on archaeology, the science which enables us to dig the old mounds in a systematic manner, in successive layers, and to form an idea of the material life of the people is called archaeology.

The archaeological sources are sub-divided into:

- (1) Material Remains
- (2) Numismatics
- (3) Epigraphy

Monuments or Material Remains

The material remains are buildings, utensils of various metals, implements, pottery, statues, sculptures, paintings, etc. The Stone Age is reconstructed by a close study of the tools. Excavations have brought to light the Indus Valley Civilization. The excavation at Taxila, Saranath, Patna, Nagarjunagonda, Kancheepuram, Kaverippoompatinam, Adichanallur and

Korkai revealed valuable informations. Archaeological evidence was of immense help to fix the Chronology of the Kushanas. The paintings at Ajanta, Ellora, Chittannavasal and Mandagappattu are also useful for the study of history. In dry climate antiquities are found in a better state of preservation. In the moist and humid climate and in the deltaic regions even iron implements suffer corrosion.

Pottery is one of the oldest inventions of man. Study of Pottery helps us in fixing the date of the civilizations. A careful and scientific analysis of Pottery will reveal an important aspect of life of the people who made it.

Numismatics

The study of Coins is called Numismatics. Coins are serving as an important source to study the political, administrative, socio-economic and cultural history. Coins help us to judge the economic prosperity. Ancient coins were made of metal such as gold, silver, copper and lead. The coins of the earliest period contain symbols. The later coins bear the date and names of gods and kings or titles of the rulers. The coins help us to learn that nearly thirty Indo-Bactrian Greek rulers held sway in India. Coin moulds made of burnt clay of the Kushan period were discovered in large numbers. The Gupta rulers issued a variety of coins. The large number of Roman coins was discovered in Deccan and the south. The Roman coins help us for the study of Indo-Roman commercial links. Numismatics is the major source for the reconstructing the history of the early foreign dynasties such as Indo-Bactrians, Kushans and Kshatras

Epigraphy

Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions. The study of the old writings used in inscriptions and other old record is called Paleography. The Epigraphy is one of the main branches of Archaeology. Inscriptions are far more important than coins to construct the history of the past. Inscriptions were carved on seals, stone, rocks, copper plates, walls, bricks and earthenware. The earliest inscriptions are found on the Harappan seals. But, they have not been deciphered so far. The history of the Indian epigraphy begins with the third century B.C. rock and pillar edicts of Asoka. The edicts of Asoka provide valuable informations to construct the boundaries of Asoka's empire.

Asokan inscriptions help us to judge accurately the period of Asoka's contemporaries in Syria, Egypt, Macedon and his efforts to propagate Buddhism abroad. Asokan inscriptions may be divided into official and private records. The official records were known as *prasastis* or conventional eulogies of kings. The Asokan inscriptions were first deciphered in 1837 by James Prinsep, a civil servant at the service of the East India Company in Bengal.

Most inscriptions bear the history of Maurya, post Maurya and Gupta times. They have been published in a series of collections called *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicasum*. The Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta, the Gwalior inscription of Bhoja, the Aihole inscription of Pulekesin, Pallava and Chera inscriptions are the valuable sources belonged to this category. There are different categories of inscriptions some of the inscriptions are commemorative. These inscriptions were recorded with a view to celebrate victories. The Allahabad pillar inscription belongs to this category. Some convey royal orders pertaining to social, religious and administrative matters. Asokan inscriptions belong to this category. There are inscriptions dedicated in the name of religion. Another category is donative inscriptions.

Private records form the bulk of inscriptions. Most of them record grants to temples and other institutions and they throw light on many social and religious aspects. The inscriptions are only helpful to know the history of the early Pallavas and Pandyas because they refer to great historical events but also help us in fixing the chronology and tracing the evolution of art and religion.

LITERARY SOURCES FOR STUDY OF ANCIENT INDIA

Indigenous sources - Non-Historical Works

The earliest literature of India is purely of a religious kind. The patience and industry of a multitude of scholars have, however succeeded in extracting from it, useful bits of historical information. For instance, the Vedas especially the Rig Veda furnished us with fragments of historical information relating to the progress of the Aryans in India, their internal divisions and wars with the "Dasyus" and other cognate topics. Similarly, the Brahmanas (eg. Aitareya, Stapatha, Taitiriya) and the Upanisads, like the

Brihadaranyaka and Chandogya and also the Buddhist Pitakas, Nikayas, Jatakas, etc and Jain canonical works (eg Kalpa sutra, Uttarajjjhayana sutra) incidentally embody historical traditions that may be utilized profitably. Modern research has further demonstrated how such non-historical sources as the Gargi-Samhita, an astronomical work or the dramas of Kalidasa and Bhasa or even the change illustrations of grammatical rules by Panini in the Astadhyayi and Patanjali in the Mahabhasya sometimes afford us welcome light on dark corners of history. But, valuable and trustworthy as these casual references are that they are far too meagre to satisfy our curiosity.

Historical Literature

The two Epics - the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* represent the first notable attempts of the ancient Hindus in this direction. No doubt, they give an interesting picture of the, then religious and social conditions but as chronicles of political events they seem lamentably full of tale-telling and chronological aberrations. Next are the Puranas, eighteen in number which are said to have been recited by the Suta Somaharsana or his son (Sauti) Ugrasravas. Normally they should deal with five set subjects, viz (a) Sarga (primary creation) (b) Pratisarga (recreation after periodical dissolution of the universe), (c) Vamsa (genealogies of Gods and Risis) (d) Manvantara (groups of mahayuga “great ages” in a Kalpa, in each of which the first father of mankind was Manu) (e) Vamsanucarita (histories of old dynasties of kings) of these, the last topics alone is important for the purpose of history. But, this is found in the following Puranas namely, Matsya, Vayu, Visnu, Brahmanda, Bhagavata and Bhavisya only out of the extent Puranas. Thus, most of these “collections of ‘old word’ legends” have got no historical value what so ever. Even the rest contain much that is manifestly mythological and altogether confused from the chronological point of view. They sometimes treat contemporaneous dynasties of rules as successive or omit some of them entirely. The Puranas are silent about the Kushans, Indo-Greeks Indo Parthians, etc. Very often, no dates are given and even names or list of Andhra kings are inaccurate. Not withstanding these defects, the Puranas certainly transmit scraps of historical data, and it would not be fair to disparage their authority roundly. Among other early productions relevant to our purpose, we may particularly mention Bana’s Harsacharita, Sandhya Kamandi’s Ramacharita, Padmagupta’s Navasahasnakacharita, Bilhana’s Vikramankadevacharita, and Jayaratha’s Pritbviraja-Vijaya. Unhappily, however these works preserve very little

historical matter and are more of literary pieces, being full of elaborate metaphor and imagery. The only work in Sanskrit, which can be described as a near approach to history as we understand it is the Rajatarangini of Kalhana. It was begun in 1148 A.D. and is based on writings of previous chroniclers as well as on royal charters and laudatory inscriptions. Kalhana's account of Kashmir for a few centuries immediately preceding his time is quite reliable, but for the earlier period he too is unfortunately subject to strange lapses. In addition to these we cannot fail to consider the evidence of some works mainly Tamil works (eg. The Nandikkalambakam, Ottakkuttan's Kulotungan Pillaittamil, Jayagondar's Kalingattupparani, Rajarajacholan's Ula, Cholavamsa-charitam etc); the Ceylonese chronicles, the Dipavamsa (4th Century A.D.) and the Mahavamsa (6th century A.D.), and such Prakrit compositions as Vakpati's Gaudavaha and Hemachandra's Kumarapalacharita all of which demand a cautious and critical use.

The Vikramankadevacharita was written by the Kashmiri poet Bilhana about A.D. 1085. wherein a partial biography of King Vikramaditya IV is presented. The Prithivirajavijaya, written during the reign of Prithviraj is a better historical work than the above but no complete manuscript has been found. Janaraja, the Kashmir historian wrote a useful commentary on this work. The Ramacharitha by Sandhya Kamandi gives an account of the revolution in Bengal, its failure and the Pala restoration under Ramapala. Kalhana's Rajatarangini may be regarded as a fairly reliable history of Kashmir. Janaraja wrote the second Rajatarangini. The main source of the history of Gujarat is written in Prakrit. Ratnamala for the history of the Chapotkalas and the Dvyasraya and the Prabandha Chintamani for the Chalukyas. The tradition of writing history persisted in Rajasthan and an example is the Raja-Prasasti Mahakavya.

Foreign Writings

No less valuable than the above sources are the accounts of foreign writers or travelers, whose knowledge of India was based either on hearsay or an actual stay in the country for a short time. To this category belong men of several nationalities - Greek, Roman, Chinese, Tibetan, and Muslim. The earliest reference to India is made by Herodotus who records the political connection of North-western India with the Achaemenian empire in the fifth century B.C. Following this, Alexander's hurricane campaign in the Punjab and Sind formed the subject matter of a number of Greek and Roman works

by Quintus Curtius, Diodoros Siculus, Arrian, Plutarch, and others. The value of their testimony can best be judged from the fact that, but for them we should have known nothing about the Macedonian invasion. The reason for this is the fact that the Indian writers have maintained silence regarding this memorable episode. The Indica of Megasthenes, the Seleucid ambassador at the Maurya court, is another important source of information about the institutions, geography and products of India. It is now lost to us, but fragments are still preserved in the form of quotations by later authors, such as Arrian, Appain, Strabo, Justin, etc. Similarly the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea and Ptolemy's Geography furnish geographical data of interest.

Like the classical (Greek and Roman) works, Chinese literature is also of great help in reconstructing ancient Indian history. There are numerous notices in it regarding the movements of the predatory central Asian tribes that profoundly affected the destinies of India and above all, we have the excellent narratives of Fahien (399-414 A.D.), Hiuen-Tsang (629 - 45 A.D) and I -Tsing (673-95 A.D), three of the most distinguished pilgrims who visited India in search of knowledge and with the desire to worship at the sites hallowed by the memory of the Buddha. Further the works of the Tibetan Lama Taranatha, the Dulva and Tangyur etc, may also be profitably consulted.

With the Gupta period the number and value of the Chinese sources increase. For the period A.D. 405 - 12 we have Fahien's Record of the Buddhists, for the years A.D. 518 - 522, the account of the embassy of Sung Yun and for the 7th Century, Hiuen Tsang's Buddhist religion as it was practiced in India and in the Malay Archipelago. It sing refers to Srigupta, who is generally believed to have been the first ruler of the Gupta dynasty. Hiuen Tsang writes about the Huna ruler, Mihirakula (a contemporary of the Gupta emperor Baladitya). Budhagupta and some others patronised the Nalanda Vihara. The value of the Chinese sources for the times of Harsha vardhana is even greater and one may even so far as to assert that Hiuen Tsang's account of India is the best that we have in the first millennium A.D. Nearly a century later Hui-Chao (A.D. 727) refers to the doings of Muktapida of Kashmir and Yasovarman of Kannauj. For the first decade of the 13th century, we have the record of Dharmasvami, who was in Bihar at the time.

The observation and writings of these foreigners are particularly not only for the light they throw on the political events, society, manners, geography and religion of ancient India, but also because they establish synchronisms in the troubled sea of Indian dates. Indeed the identification of Sandrakottos with Chandragupta Maurya has been regarded on almost all hands as the sheet-anchor of Indian chronology.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA

The lives of men and of nations are to a large extent moulded by their surroundings. India's geographical position and shape has influenced its history. India is a three-cornered peninsula, right in the middle of peninsular system of south Asia.

Size

Historically the Indian peninsula consisted of Pakistan, Bangladesh (former East Pakistan) and the states of the Indian union. In 1971 Bangladesh broke away from Pakistan and became independent. Therefore India shares a common history with Pakistan which dates to its pre-Independence. In its geographical extent India is as vast as the continent of Europe minus of course Russia.

Geographical Boundaries

On the Northern side the country is bounded by the Himalayas, on the Eastern side by the Bay of Bengal and on the Western side by the Indian Ocean. The Indian subcontinent lies roughly between 61° and 96° E longitude and 8° and 37° N latitude. The total land area of country is 1575,000 Sq miles.

India is geographically divided into three distinct categories.

- i) North India comprising of the Himalayan region, the Indo-Gangetic plains and the Rajputana desert.
- ii) The Deccan plateau and

- iii) the Southern part of India which is separated from the northern part by the Vindhya mountains and Narmada and Tapi rivers.

This can be further subdivided into

- a) the Himalayan ranges
- b) the northern fertile plains
- c) the central plateau
- d) the Deccan plateau
- e) Southern India
- f) East and West coastal regions or plains

a) Himalayan Ranges

The Himalayan ranges seem to form an unbroken chain from Jammu and Kashmir in the extreme North to Arunachal Pradesh in the extreme East. In reality, these are a series of parallel ranges with varying heights. The two main ranges vary from 160 to 320 km in width and are about 2,400 km in length. Mount Everest is the highest peak not only in the Himalayas but also in the world. Most of the population in this area is found in the valleys in the flat areas between the two mountains along lakes and streams.

The mountains are rugged and the peaks are covered with snow round the year. The highest area is known as the Himadri Range or greater Himalayas. The next range which is lower in height is known as Himachal Range or the Lesser Himalayas. The lowest range is also referred to as the Siwalik range.

b) The Northern Fertile Region

This is a flat region watered by the three great rivers the Brahmaputra, the Ganges and the Sind. Between the Brahmaputra in the East and the Sind in the West lies the fertile Gangetic plain measuring 6, 00,000 Sq.km.

c) The Central Indian Plateau

To the West of the Northern fertile plain lies the Thar Desert or the Great Indian Desert which is a very hot and dry, sandy area. Towards the East of this region is the Aravalli range. The Western part of Rajasthan lies in this area. This area is not watered by any permanent rivers. Only the Luni and a few other channels get filled up after rains and that too, only for some part of the year.

d) The Plateau

South of the Northern plains is the Plateau region. Triangular in shape, it is divided from the Northern part by the Vindhyas, the Satpuras, Aravalli and Rajmahal Ranges. The (plateau) table land slopes from West to East. The Western edge has many hills known as the Western Ghats. The Eastern edge is broken by the Eastern Ghats which are much lesser in height than the Western Ghats.

e) Southern Region

Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu are situated in the Southern part of India and are separated from the rest of India by the river Krishna. This region is watered by rivers like the Godavari, Tungabhadra, Cauvery, Vaigai and Tamiraparani. They flow from the West to East and fall into the sea. The capitals of Ancient kingdoms like the Vijayanagar, Chola and Pandya were established on the banks of these rivers.

f) Coastal Plains

Last but not the least important region is the narrow strips of the land called the coastal plains which are found between the mountains and the seas. There are rivers that flow forcefully on the western coast and these are not fit for transport or irrigation. Though we find that the sea-shore is deep, there are no natural harbours. A few good harbours on the western side are Calicut, Goa and Bombay. On the Eastern side the coastal plains are broader. The Eastern harbours are not very deep, hence big ships have to remain some distance away from the shore.

Puhar and Mamallapuram are two famous ancient harbours on the Eastern coast. Madras, Tuticorin and Visakapattinam are modern artificial harbours in this area. The Eastern coastal plain stretches from Cape Comorin to the Gangetic delta and is wider than the Western coast. Huge rivers like the Mahanadhi, Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery form deltas at their mouths and thus lead to fertile plains. The Southern half of the coast is referred to as the Coramandal coast and the further half as Northern Circars.

g) Climate

Indian climate can be classified into i) Summer or Hot season ii) Monsoon or Warm, Wet season and iii) Winter or cool dry season. Summer is from March to June. The whole of India with the exception of the mountain region is very hot in summer. As the mountains are high and the air thinner, it is cool and dry. The plains are also hot and dry. The coastal strips are not as hot as the other parts as the land gets breeze from the sea. By the end of the June, cool winds begin blowing over the hot dry land. These winds, which flow from the sea to the land, are called South West Monsoons. This is when most parts of India get rain. From the middle of September to the end of February is the cool dry winter season. The Himalayas and the Northern mountain regions are very cold. Many states like Himachal get snow fall during this season. The Himalayas which act as a barrier prevent the cold Northern winds from blowing into India.

In the South, it is only the Plateau region which experiences winter. The coasts are warm as the warm sea breeze flow over them. The rest of country, excluding coasts of Tamil Nadu get very little rainfall. These winter rains are called North East Monsoons. These do not bring the same amount of rainfall to all parts of the country. The Brahmaputra basin, the Northern Eastern India and the Western coastal plain get the heaviest rainfall. Cherrapunji in Meghalaya gets the highest amount of rainfall in the whole country.

Thus, we can say that the climate of India is linked with its geographical positions.

EFFECTS

It will not be wrong to say that, the course of Indian History has been deeply influenced by her geography. In fact, nature of geographical conditions plays an important part in responding to human activities. That is why, the life of Indian people was greatly influenced by the vast dimensions, lofty mountains, dense forests and great rivers of India. In fact, "Geography is the foundations of all historical knowledge."

Boundaries

The Himalayas delineated India from the rest of Asia, but, did not isolate her. From ancient times we see the movement of various races through the Himalayas frontiers.

Size

India is rich in its natural resources. As a result of this and also because of its vastness, no ruler with the exception of Rajendra Chola aimed for expansion outside its boundaries. No Indian ruler attempted colonization. India was very vast and also there was a lack of naval transport. Before the British rule, the whole of India was never unified under one king. Even if it did happen, the lands became independent after the death of rulers. The ignorance of people in other lands, their techniques and equipments prevented Indians from being victors even when people like Babur invaded India.

Mountains

In this section we shall study about the influence of the Himalayas, the Aravalli, the Vindhyas and Eastern and Western Ghats on India. The Himalayas figure prominently in Indian Religion and Literature. The Himalayas moderates the climate of India by saving the country from cold Northern winds. The Himalayas have served as an insurmountable barrier to invaders. The one bad influence has been that, the Himalayas have given a false sense of security to the Indians. The defence of the North - West frontier was neglected. Only when foreign invaders advanced upto Punjab, Indian rulers woke up to the fact that, the Himalayas were not totally secure. The Himalayas also formed a barrier and prevented India from

having good international relations with the rest of the world. All the foreign invaders made use of the Khyber, Bolan and Gomal passes to enter India. The history of North India is to some extent a history of her invaders. The passes also served as passage for trade and commerce and contributed to the diffusion of Indian culture outside India.

The next important mountain range is the Aravalli. This prevented the entry of the Arabs into India after they captured Sind. The Aravalli hills and the Thar deserts were responsible for the rise and growth of the Rajput kingdoms.

The third most important mountains are the Vindhyas. Though there is a mingling of cultures, we find a marked difference in the cultures of the South and the North, protected by the Vindhyas. The South received far less foreign impact and there was a stronger Dravidian domination. In the North there is a predominant Aryan influence. The last and the equally important mountains are the Ghats. They prevented foreigners from entering into India not only through the sea but also through the plains. Only because of their naval strength were the European powers able to have trade with South India. The Western Ghats prevent the passing of raining winds and hence the Deccan was often affected by drought. But, they bring good rainfall in the Palghat pass area. The Eastern and Western ghats flank the triangular Deccan plain on either side and mark off the South as a separate unit. The flat summits of this hills provided excellent opportunities for building forts especially in the medieval history of south. The famous Shivaji and his successors warred against Mughals from these forts. Indian mountains in general had produced sturdy, independence loving, and heroic soldiers. Nepalese and Coorg regiments, Pathans and Marathas are good examples of this kind.

Rivers

With her vast system of tributary rivers the “Indus formed the second line of defence for India”. The rich and fertile Gangetic basin became the target of foreign invaders. From Mauryas to the Marathas all the imperial dynasties based their power in the Gangetic valley. The Indo-Aryan civilization originated here and spread to other parts. The Dravidian civilization developed on the banks of the Godavari, Krishna, Tungabhadra, Cauvery, Vaigai and Tamiraparani. Big empires were established on the banks of

these rivers because of the plains adjacent to the rivers. Easy living and lethargy led to the subordination of the rulers by foreigners.

Unlike the North, the South was never under one single monarch. The intersection of south Indian rivers cut the plateau into well marked regions. The history of the South, centers around the struggle for the over lordship of Dakshinapatha between the dynasties in three regions. The Krishna - Tungabhadra doab was the bone of contention in this struggle.

Sea

India has long unbroken coastline of over 5000 kms which is not conducive for the growth of natural harbours. Therefore, India never earned the reputation of being a maritime power. The Northern part of India was far away from the sea. In spite of this, India had a tradition of maritime contacts.

The South has contact with Europe and other parts of Asia through the sea. Pliny, the Greek historian and the historical work, Periplus of Erythraean Sea gives a clear picture about the Indian coast, foreign trade etc.,. The Satavahanas, the Cholas and Vijayanagar rulers commanded large navys. Vincent Smith, a historian attributes the down fall of the Mughals to the fact that they neglected the navy.

Climate

Climate is a major factor in influencing the history of the people. The hot climate of India made Indians unfit for any sustained effort. The failure of monsoon, the floods during rainy season, all these contributed to the damage of life and property. Prof. A. L. Basham says that, "fatalism of the Indian outlook is due to the uncertainty of the monsoon and controllability of the rivers". The fertile soil led to an easy means of livelihood. On the other hand this proved detrimental to the spirit of enquiry which leads to the growth of positive science and technological development. On the other hand the natural surroundings gave Indians a poetic and philosophic turn of mind. We can therefore conclude that the physical features of India were largely responsible for the peculiarities of political and intellectual developments of India.

Due to the peculiar geographical conditions and its uniqueness, India has turned into many separate units, each with its unique culture and habits. A single kind of culture or civilization is not prevalent throughout the country. India is a melting pot of a variety of religions, castes and dialects in India. Many European historians refer to India as a sub-continent in their historical records only because of these diversities.

Check your progress

1. Who wrote the Arthasastra?
2. The Pitakas (original Buddhist - texts) were written in _____.
3. Hiuen-Tsung belongs to which country?
- 4) Which is the world's highest mountain?
- 5) Which were the famous harbours in ancient times in Southern India?
- 6) _____ gives a clear picture about the Indian ports and foreign trade.
- 7) The Indus basin was the cradle of the famous_____.

Let us Sum up

In this unit you have studied about Legends and Ballads, Archaeological Sources, Monuments or Material Remains, Numismatics, Epigraphy, Literary Sources for the study of Ancient India, Historical Geography of India and the Effects of geography on Indian History.

Glossary

Rig Veda: First and one of the most important Vedas

Indica: The only source for the study of Pataliputra administration

Abu Zaid: Arabian writer

Arikkamedu: Site of Archaeological study

Answers to Check your Progress

- 1) Kautilya
- 2) Pali Language
- 3) China
- 4) Himalayas is Mount Everest
- 5) Poompuhar, Mamallapuram
- 6) Periplus of Erythrean Sea
- 7) Harappan Civilization

Ref;

Rig Veda- <https://www.google.com/search?q=Rig+veda>

Indica- <https://www.google.com/search?q=Indica>

Abu Zaid- <https://www.google.com/search?q=Abu+Zaid>

Unit 2

PRE HISTORIC PERIOD

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Palaeolithic Age

Distribution

Habitation

Mesolithic (Microlithic) Age

Neolithic Age

Northern Neolithic

Eastern Neolithic

Southern Neolithic

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OVERVIEW

This unit deals with the Stone ages. The stone ages represent the earliest cultural phase in the history of India. This phase is named on the basis of

the tools used by the ancient man. During this period the stone tools formed the basic source material. Many sites yielded the stone tools. The distribution and the tool types are described in this unit. The cultural elements of the Palaeolithic period, Mesolithic period and Neolithic period are explained below.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- explain the tools, distribution and life of the palaeolithic people.
- outline the various aspects of the Mesolithic culture in India.
- classify the three regional types of the neolithic people.
- appreciate the life of the neolithic cultures in India.

INTRODUCTION

The earliest phase of Ancient Indian history is represented by the Pre-historic period. It was a stage in the development of Indian civilization for which no written records are available. The evidence for the study of this period mostly consisted of the stone tools manufactured by the Pre-historic people. These tools are collected from the river terraces in different parts of India. The bones and fossils are the other set of evidence useful for the study. The evidence of pottery is useful for the Neolithic period and afterwards.

The pre-historic period in India existed 2,00,000 before. This period in India is generally divided into five broad cultural periods as follows:

a) Palaeolithic (Old stone) age, b) Mesolithic (Microlithic) age, c) Neolithic age, d) Chalcolithic age and e) Iron age. In the first cultural period, i.e. Palaeolithic Age the tools were made from river pebbles. During the second period i.e. Mesolithic Age the tools were also made from stone, but they are very small in size.

The neolithic age was yet another age of importance in the development of Indian Culture. During this period man invented the use of fire, and pottery

and some household implements. Besides, he developed a settled life and lived in houses designed by him. About the end of the neolithic age copper was discovered and technique of making bronze, an alloy of copper was developed. From then onwards bronze was increasingly used for making implements. This period was named as the chalcolithic age and it lasted from about 5000 B.C. to 1000 B.C. The technique of smelting iron, was discovered in 1000 B.C. and revolutionized the human civilization. Since the tools and implements were mostly made of iron, this period was named as Iron Age. During the Iron Age some more new developments like the invention of writing etc., took place and this led to the Historical period.

PALAEOLITHIC AGE

The evidence for the study of Palaeolithic Age comprise stone tools, bones and fossils. No written documents or pottery available for this period. The implements during this period were made from river pebbles. The earliest of the stone tools are known by the term, eolithis. They are crude tools made out of pebbles by removing a few flakes from the pebble core to form a crude cutting edge. From these crude tools later developed the palaeolithic tools. Very few implements of this type were discovered in India. This age is further sub divided into three periods as follows: a) Early or Lower Palaeolithic period, b) Middle Palaeolithic period, c) Late or Upper Palaeolithic period.

Distribution

During the Early Palaeolithic period, hand axes and choppers were the most important tools used by the ancient man. Hand axe was an oval shaped tool prepared from a large sized pebble by removing few flakes on the one side to make a pointed cutting edge. It was the principle tool used by the palaeolithic man throughout India. It was used for digging the earth to extract edible roots and as well as for cutting trees. Another important tool type was chopper. It was a tool used for cutting. Flakes from one side of the pebble were removed to form the cutting edge. These tools were called as core tools, since all the tools were prepared from pebble cores. Some flakes from the pebble were detached and the remaining pebble core was used as a tool. Besides handaxes and choppers, cleavers, discoids and flake tools were also used. The tools were mostly prepared from quartzite and volcanic rocks.

The tools were found mostly from the surface and also from the river terraces. They are found throughout India, with the exception of Sind and Kerala. They are found in places like Soan (Punjab), Sabarmati valley (Gujarat), Narmada valley (Maharashtra), Kibbanahalli (Karnataka), Rallukalva (Andhra Pradesh) and Attirampakkam, and Vadamadurai (Tamil Nadu).

The tools in the Middle palaeolithic period were mostly prepared from flakes detached from the pebble cores. Therefore they are smaller in size than those of the Early Palaeolithic Age. Hand axe was also an important tool used during this period. Other tools used by them are a) scarpers, b) cleaves, c) borers, d) points and e) choppers. Scarpers were meant for dressing skins and barks of trees. In extent the Middle Palaeolithic culture covers a vast area of India. They are found at Luni valley (Rajasthan), Nevasa (Maharashtra), Belan valley (Uttar Pradesh), Maheswar (Madhya Pradesh), Bagalkot (Karnataka), Renigunta (Andhra Pradesh) and Vadamadurai (Tamil Nadu). Most of these tools were made from semi-precious stones like agate, jasper and chalcedony. The Middle Palaeolithic culture flourished between 45,000 and 30,000 B.C.

The tools during the Late Palaeolithic Age were further reduced in size. They are relatively thin and slender. During this period also the tools were made out of flakes. Blades and burins constitute the most important tools of the Late Palaeolithic people. The burin is a tool meant for engraving soft stone, wood, and bone. Besides, points, scrapers, awls, borers were used. Arrow-heads were another important tool type used in this period. Since these tools were smaller in size than the tools of the middle palaeolithic period they were tied to a handle and used. Sometimes many tools were attached to a handle and used as a composite tool. In this way by attaching a few points a saw was prepared. These tools are found in several places in India. Some of the representative Later Palaeolithic sites are as follows: Belan valley (Uttar Pradesh), Singhbhum (Bihar), Borivli (Maharashtra), Pavagarh (Gujarat), Nagarjunakonda (Andhra Pradesh), and Shorapur Doab (Karnataka).

In addition to the stone tools, bone tools were also made. Bone tools were found in the Billa Sargam cave in Kurnool district in Andhra Pradesh. They also made beads of shell. The engraved shell bead from Patne (Maharashtra) represent the first evidence of art. Rock paintings assignable

to the Late Palaeolithic period are available in several caves used by early man. In these, paintings are depicted as the hunting scenes, ceremonial dances and animals like rhinoceros, wild buffalo, elephant, antelope, cattle and monkey.

Habitation

The habitat of the palaeolithic man is usually decided on the basis of the locations from where the tools were collected. However, he led a nomadic life, roaming from place to place. He lived along the banks of the rivers, because water was easily available and pebbles, the raw materials for making tools. The foothills near the sea were also preferred by them. They have also settled at the edge of the forests where they could hunt animals for their food. During the middle palaeolithic period he lived in the lightly forested areas where animals are available in plenty. They also lived on river banks, near sea shores and at the foot-hills and also in the interior regions on the plains. During the lower palaeolithic period his settlements changed towards the plains where water reservoirs and river systems were available. Some of the caves and rock shelters were inhabited by them at times of need. Bhimbetka in Maharashtra and Gudiyam in Tamil Nadu were occupied by the paleolithic people. These caves served as temporary halting places for them and was not used as permanent places of occupation.

The Palaeolithic people were primarily hunters and food gatherers. However, he lived in caves and rock shelters. At least during the late palaeolithic period they developed some social features. In some localities groups of people lived together and exchanged their products. Animal flesh, vegetables, roots and fruits seem to have been consumed by them. One of the significant aspects of the Late Palaeolithic period was the knowledge of drawing and painting. Some of the caves inhabited by him have these paintings. The Bhimbetka caves have a good variety of paintings on the walls. These paintings represent the reminiscent of some of the events of his life. The animal life painted in these paintings are deer, wild pig, rhinoceros, and buffalo.

MESOLITHIC (MICROLITHIC) AGE

The Late palaeolithic Age was followed by the mesolithic Age. It is characterised by the use of very small stone tools like blades and points. They generally vary in size from 10 mm. to 50 mm. They are shaped in the geometric forms like triangles, trapezes, lunates and rhombs and are described as microliths. Blades, scrapers, points, borers and burins form the tool kit of the mesolithic people. Since, the tools are very small, they were fixed in a small slot on to a wooden or bone piece in a row to form composite tools like a sickle, knife or a saw. The tools were made of semi precious stones like jasper, chert and chalcedony. Quartz was also used for making microliths. Such tools are found throughout the Indian Subcontinent with the exception of the Indo Gangetic plains and Assam. The most important tool assemblages are found at Birbhanpur (West Bengal), Langhnaj (Gujarat), Adamgarh hills (Maharashtra), Jalahalli (Karnataka) and Teri sites in Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu.

The settlements of the mesolithic period were much more extensive than the earlier stone age cultures. They ventured into territories away from the river banks and occupied coastal regions, sandy places and even open rocky terrains. Some of the caves and rock shelters were made in to regular settlements by them. The walls of these rock-shelters were painted with animal and human motifs. Hunting scenes and group dances were also depicted. It is highly probable that huts were erected at the factory sites. Fishing must have formed an important occupation during this period. Improved methods of trapping and fishing could have been known. Agriculture could have also emerged into an important occupation. These aspects could have played an important role in their economy. The occurrence of bones of animals such as dog, cattle, goat, sheep and pigs indicate that the Mesolithic people had domesticated these animals during the later phase of their existence. They could have developed slowly some network of social contacts with the neighbouring groups. During this period man probably acquired the knowledge of building boats and canoes and also weaving baskets and plaiting of mats.

NEOLITHIC AGE

The next stage in the prehistoric cultures is represented by the neolithic age. This age is represented by technological and economic changes in

society. During this period is noticed a deliberate change from the making of crude stone tools to the well polished and sharp edged tools called "celt". Economically man transpired from the food gathering stage to the food producing stage. Food production involved a primitive form of agriculture and animal husbandry. The other important developments are the manufacture of pottery. Another important development that took place in this age, was the idea of settled life in villages and domestication of animals. These new developments therefore were called, 'neolithic revolution', has changed the economy and life style of the people.

The technique of pecking and grinding stone to obtain a neat shape and sharp cutting edge may be regarded as neolithic innovation. This technique was adopted for making hammer stones, querns and grinding stones. Rocks such as dolerite basalt and chert were first brought to the required shape by flaking. The blade and sometimes the whole body of the tool was then ground and polished.

The neolithic culture in India is divided into (a) Northern (b) Southern and (c) Eastern neolithic cultures on the basis of regional peculiarities.

Northern Neolithic

The Northern neolithic culture is represented at Burzahom and a few other sites in the Jhelum valley of Kashmir. It shows some distinct features such as pit dwelling, pottery, polished celts and bone tools distinguish it from the other neolithic cultures of India. The people lived in circular or oval pits dug into the soil. They were narrow at the top, wide at the base. The side walls occasionally plastered with mud. Steps were provided in to this pit for easy movement. The whole pit was encompassed with a timber super-structure supported by wooden poles, planted around the pit.

In the later phase pit dwellings were abandoned and structures of mud and mud-bricks were built at the ground level. These huts were provided with plastered floors, often coated with red ochre. They had hearths for cooking food. They used grinding stones and mullers to grind the grains. Besides polished stone tools, they made bone tools including awls, needles, chisels, points, and harpoons. Their pottery was largely hand-made and showed mat impressions. Black burnished pottery also appeared in this period. Another innovation in the craft was the introduction of this potter's wheel.

Some of the pots were painted with animal motifs. Both primary and secondary burials are known from the sites. In the graves, domesticated animals like dog and goat or their bones were deposited along with human skeletal remains. The burials, both human and animal were found within the habitation area.

Eastern Neolithic

The tool types are different from the tool types found in the other two regions. The characteristic tool types are the faceted hoe, shouldered hoe, splayed axe and rounded buttaxe. The grooved hammer stones are peculiar to this region. Tools of this group are found in Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The raw materials used for tool making are mostly the greenstone, and indurated shale. Bone tools were also used. They include picks, chisels, hammers, daggers, scrapers and needles. There were also arrowheads.

The settlements were mostly situated on plateaus and hill. A few settlements are located in the alluvial plain. The structures were mostly circular in shape and they are situated close to one another. The floors of the huts were paved. The walls were made of clay or mud plastered over a bamboo screen on both sides. The pottery was hand made. It was a coarse grit-tempered red ware with a slip and finger tip decorations on the exterior. Cord impressed pottery is more numerous.

The Neolithic people were acquainted with cultivation of grains. However, the economy was mostly dependant on hunting of animals. Some ideas of the artistic qualities of the Eastern Neolithic people are available. They manufactured beads and pendants of faience and steatite. Among the ornaments were bangles of terracotta and bones. They manufactured numerous terracotta figurines of bulls, birds and snakes. The Neolithic culture of the Eastern India is dated between 4000 B.C. and 2000 B.C.

Southern Neolithic

The southern neolithic is represented in the regions of Deccan and South India. The most important sites are Brahmagiri, Sanganakallu, Piklihal, Maski, T. Narasipur (all in Karnataka) Tekkalikotta (Andhra Pradesh) and Paiymapalli (Tamil Nadu). The lithic industry represented by the typical

ground and polished stone celts. In addition to the celts, blades were also used. The other tools comprise adzes, wedges, hummers, mace heads, and chisels. Some of the domestic tools are pounders, and grinding stones. There are mostly on trap rock or basaltic rock. The pottery used in this area was a pale-grey ware. Their pottery was predominantly hand-made grey or buff-brown. Head-rests form a distinctive feature of the age.

The earliest settlements were made by a people who possessed a ground stone axe industry and a somewhat rudimentary flake or blade tradition. They had domesticated animals such as buffalo, sheep and goat. The presence of saddle-querns and bounders suggest that some kind of grain was crushed for preparing food. The hills were favoured for settlement. The flat areas on hill sides were preferred for houses. In this period habitation sites are only rarely found on the banks of rivers away from hills. They lived in circular huts with floors coated with mud or with cow-dung plaster. Hearths are sometimes associated with tripods of small upright slabs of granite. A large pot buried up to the neck served as a storage jar. Both extended and urn burials were in vogue. They burials are found in the habitation itself. Their economy was pastoral. They domesticated animals like buffalo, sheep and goat. Another feature of the neolithic people was the construction of large cattle pens with stockades of timber posts.

Let us sum up

The palaeolithic people lived near the river terraces and forests. Earlier they used crude tools made from stones. The handaxe and choppers were the most important tools used by them. The culture of the palaeolithic people are distributed all over India. Microlithic culture developed at the end of the palaeolithic period. Small tools were prepared. Their habitat and cultural levels changed. At the end of this cultural phase developed the Neolithic period. Celt or the polished stone tools were prepared. Several changes in the life of the ancient man, including cultivation and settled life could be noticed in this period.

Check your Progress

1. Explain the distribution and life of Palaeolithic age.

2. Give an account of the Neolithic cultures in India.

Glossary

- Celt** : Polished stone tool.
- Chopper** : Tool of the palaeolithic period, used for cutting.
- Core** : The pebble or a lump of stone used as tool after removing flakes.
- Flake** : Small chips removed from the core; also used as a tool.
- Hand axe** : Multi purpose tool of the palaeolithic period, used for digging etc.
- Igneous Rock** : Rocks formed out of molten lava.
- Microlith** : Small or miniature tools.
- Palaeolith** : Tool of the old Stone age.
- Teri** : Ancient sand dunes found near the sea shore.

Terrace : The ancient river banks developed due to erosion or deposition; habitat of palaeolithic people.

Answers to Check your Progress

1. Use the material in sections 2.2 and 2.3.
2. Use the material in sections 2.4 to 2.4.3.

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Ref;

Celt - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Celt>

Flake - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Flake>

Teri - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Teri>

Terrace - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Terrace>

Unit 3

THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Extension

Town Planning and Structures

The Great Bath of Mohenjodaro

Granaries

Social Life

The Harappan Script

Domestication of Animals

Economic Life

Technology and Crafts

Trade

Weights and Measures

Religion

Male Deity

Tree and Animal Worship

Political Organisation

Decline of the Harappan Culture

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to Check your Progress

OVERVIEW

This unit introduces the age old civilisation of India the Indus Valley civilisation. This civilisation of India is not only confined to Indus region alone but spread to a larger area. The outlining feature of this Harappan culture is the town planning and urbanisation. The discovery of the remains of this urban culture reveals that the Harappan rulers were possibly the merchants.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- explain the age old culture of India.
- describe the town planning, social, economic and religious life.
- infer the causes for of the Harappan Culture.

INTRODUCTION

The Indus Civilisation is older than the chalcolithic cultures. The Indus Civilisation arose in the north Western part of the Indian subcontinent. It is called Harappan culture because this civilisation was discovered first at the modern site of Harappa. Further, the Harappan Culture is not confined to Indus river valley but covered parts of Panjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan and the borders of western Uttar Pradesh. Harappa is situated in the province of West Punjab in Pakistan.

The remains of the civilization, prove that the Indus civilisation is one of the oldest of the world. Till the discovery of the Indus Valley civilisation it was believed that the history of India practically began with the advent of the Aryans. But, the discovery of the Harappan culture carried back the history of the Indian culture beyond the advent of the Aryans and Vedic culture. The Indus Civilisation is contemporaneous with the civilisations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and etc.,

EXTENSION

The Harappan culture covered parts of Punjab, and Sindh, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan and the fringes of Western Uttar Pradesh. The culture extended from Jammu in the north to the Narmada estuary in the south, and from the Makran coast of Baluchistan in the west to Meerut in the north-east. The area of the civilisation formed a triangle and accounted for about 1,299,600 square kilometers. Of the 250 Harappan sites only six can be regarded as cities. Harappa in Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sindh were the most important cities of the Indus Valley civilisation. These two cities Mohenjodaro called Mount of the dead and Harappa were discovered between 1922 and 1923 by R.D. Banerjee and R.B. Dayaram under the able supervision of Sir John Marshall. Both the cities forming parts of Pakistan and were linked together by the Indus. The other important cities were Chanhudaro in Sindh, Lothal in Gujarat at the head of the Gulf of Cambay, Kalibangan in northern Rajasthan and Banwali in Hissar district of Haryana.

TOWN PLANNING AND STRUCTURES

Town - planning was the most outstanding feature of the Harappan culture. Harappa and Mohenjodaro each had its own citadel or acropolis. The citadel was possibly occupied by the members of the ruling class. In each city lay a lower town below the citadel. Brick houses were found in the lower town. The lower towns were inhabited by the common people. Everywhere the main streets ran from north to south. The streets cut across one another almost at right angles. The city was divided into so many blocks. Houses, residential or others stood on both sides of the streets. The remarkable thing about the arrangement of the houses is that the Indus people followed the grid system.

The houses at Harappa and Mohenjodaro were built of Kiln - burnt bricks. An average house had four or six living rooms besides kitchen and bath room. The large houses with thirty rooms and staircases suggest that there were large two or three storeyed buildings. The houses had wells within them. There was a drainage system which emptied the wastewater into the main underground drain of the street. The covered drains of the streets had manholes for clearing. The cities had public baths with wells. The drainage system of Harappa is almost unique. The Harappan Culture gave so much attention to health and cleanliness.

The Great Bath of Mohenjodaro

The most important public place of Mohenjo-darao seems to be the Great Bath. The citadel at Mohenjodaro had a tank. It measures 11.88 and 7.01 metres and 2.43 metres deep. It was remarkable brick structure. There were steps leading to its bottom from its north and south ends. The sides and bottom had been made Water – tight with gypsum plaster. The tank had a broad platform attached with galleries and side rooms for changing cloths. The great Bath was filled with water from a large well situated in one of the rooms. It had an outlet drain too, to empty the water. It is suggested that the Great Bath was for ritual bathing.

Granaries

The largest building at Mohenjodara is its granary. It is 45.71 metres long and 15.23 metres wide. It had facilities for loading and unloading grains. In the citadel of Harappa there found twelve granaries in two rows of six each. These granaries measured about 15.25 x 6.09 metres. At Kalibangan we notice in the southern part, brick platforms, which maybe used for granaries. The granaries constituted an important part of the cities of the Harappan culture. The granaries stood by the citadel, showing that there was central control over them.

Social Life

The archaeological remains of the Harappans provide very interesting evidences to trace the social life of the Harappan people. One cannot say anything definitely about the dress of the Harappans. Ornaments were popular among both the sexes. Necklaces, fillets, armlets, finger-rings and

bangles were possibly used by both men and women. Girdles, nose studs, ear-studs, anklets etc, may have been worn by women only. The seals tell us about the hair dressing of the Harappan people. The use of some sorts of collyrium, face powders, lip-sticks, face - paints and perfumery is quite interesting.

The Harappan people had a simple diet. Wheat and barley were commonly used. Fish also may have been a common dish. The people of Harappa preferred indoor hobbies to outdoor amusements. Dance and music was the popular amusements of the Harappans. The discovery of tubular and conical dices show the game of dicing is as old as history. Marble dolls and animal toys show that the children were supplied with playthings.

The Harappan Script

The Harappans invented the art of writing. The earliest specimen of Harappan script was noticed in A.D. 1853. The complete script was discovered by 1923. Still the Harappan script has not been deciphered. As a result we cannot judge anything about the Harappans. Harappan seals contain only a few words. Altogether we have about 250 to 400 pictographs and in the form of picture. The Harappan script is not alphabetical but mainly pictographic.

Domestication of Animals

The Harapans domesticated Oxen, buffaloes, goats, sheep and pigs. The Harapans favoured humped bulls. Dogs and cats were also domesticated. The Harappans kept asses and camels. The Harappan people in Gujarat produced rice and domesticated elephants.

ECONOMIC LIFE

The basic economy of the Indus people was agricultural. Cultivation was carried on extensive scale, facilitated by the presence of rivers. The principal food grains were wheat, barely peas and sesame. Of particular interests is the discovery at Lothal of rice husks.

The Indus region was prosperous and fertile. The natural vegetation of the Indus attracted more rainfall. Timber fuel for baking bricks and construction

was available on large scale. The extension of agriculture, large scale grazing and supply of fuel destroyed natural vegetation. The fertility of the Indus carried far more alluvial soil and deposited on the plains. The Indus created Sindh and fed its people. Similarly we could see the river Nile created Egypt and supported the people. The Harappans probably used the wooden ploughshare. The Indus people cultivated wheat, barley, rai, peas, etc. The discovery of granaries proves that the Indus people stored food grains. The people of Indus were the earliest people to produce cotton. Greeks called Colton as sindon which is produced from Sindh.

Technology and Crafts

The Harappan culture belongs to the Bronze Age. The people of Harappa used stone tools and implements. The Harappans were also well acquainted with the manufacture and use of Bronze. The bronze tools and weapons were discovered from the Harappan sites. The discovery suggests that the bronzesmiths constituted an important group of artisans. The bronzesmiths of the Harappan society produced images, utensils, axes, saws, knives and spears. Several other important crafts like weaving, brick – laying, boat-making, seal-making terracotta manufacture and beadmaking flourished in the Harappan towns. The goldsmiths made jewellery of silver, gold and precious stones. Harappans used potter's wheel. The Harappans made glossy and shining pottery.

Trade

We do not have an idea about the currency of the Harappans. The Harappans probably carried their trade through barter system. The Harappans procured metals from the neighboring areas in return for their goods and foodgrains. The knowledge of the use of wheel suggest that the Harappans used some kind of modern carts. The discovery of Harappan seals in Mesopotamia suggests their commercial links with Mesopotamia. The Harappans imitated some cosmetics of Mesopotamia to strengthen their trade connection with Mesopotamia. The Harappans also engaged in trade with Rajasthan, Afganistan and Iran.

Weights and Measures

Numerous articles used for weights and measures for trade and other transactions have been found. The articles show that in weighing mostly 16 or its multiples were used. Sticks inscribed with measure marks were also found. One of these sticks is made of bronze. The discovery suggests that the Harappans knew the art of measurement.

RELIGION

Numerous terracotta figurines of women have been found in Harappa. A plant is shown growing out of the embryo of a woman in one figurine. Probably the image represents the goddess of earth. The image was intimately connected with the origin and growth of plants. The Harappans probably looked upon the earth as a fertility goddess.

Male Deity

The male deity is represented on a seal. This deity has three heads and horns. The god is represented in the sitting posture of a yogi. He has placed one foot on the other. This male deity is surrounded by an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros, and has a buffalo below his throne. At his feet appear two deer. This seal recalls the traditional image of Pasupati Mahadeva. The four animals surrounding the male deity look towards the four directions of the earth. Numerous symbols of the Phallus and female sex organs made of stone were also found in Harappa. Probably these symbols were meant for worship.

Tree and Animal Worship

The Harappan people worshipped trees, animals and human beings. The picture of a god in the midst of the branches of the pipal tree is represented on a seal. Animals were also worshiped in Harappan times. The most important of the worshipped animals was the humped bull. The animals surrounding Pasupati Mahadeva indicate that these animals were also worshipped.

Amulets were discovered in large numbers. This discovery of amulets suggests that the Harappans had the fear of ghosts and evil forces.

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

The political organisation of the Harappans is not clearly known. No temples have been found at any Harappan site. The only exception was the Great Bath. The Great Bath may have been used for ablutions. Therefore, the rule of priests in Harappa would not have been possible. There are some indications of the practice of fire cult at Lothal in Gujarat. All these suggest that the Harappan rulers were more concerned with commerce. Probably Harappa would have been ruled by a class of Merchants.

DECLINE OF THE HARAPPAN CULTURE

The Harappan culture flourished between 2500 B.C and 1750 B.C,. The mature phase of the Harappan culture lay between 2200 B.C. and 2000 B.C. Similar kind of tools, weapons and houses were found, throughout the period. The whole style of life of the Harappan appears to be uniform. It is difficult to explain the origin of the Harappan culture as its decline. Harappan culture disappeared at about 1750 B.C.

Most of the archaeologists suggest that the climatical change in the Indus region was by and large responsible for the decay of the Indus civilisation. Some scholars say that was due to the decreasing fertility on account of the increasing salinity of the soil. The decreasing fertility caused by the expansion of the neighbouring desert.

Others ascribe that the floods was the cause of the decline. And still some historians point out that the Aryans destroyed the Harappan Culture. Traces of new people appear in a cemetery belonging to the late phase of Harappan Culture. New kinds of pottery also occur in the late levels of the Harappan sites. All this can be attributed to the barbarian horse – riding people. These people may have come from Iran. The Rig Vedic Aryans settled down mostly where the Harappan culture once flourished. Yet we have varying opinions about the disappearance of the Harappan Culture.

Check your progress

1. Explain the social life of the Harappan people.
2. List the important crafts of the Harappans.

3. Describe the deities of the Harappans people.

Let us sum up

The discovery of the Indus Civilisation placed Indian culture amongst the most ancient civilisation of the world. The Indus Valley opened up a new phase of Indian History. The civilisation was not limited to Indus valley region alone. Harappa and Mohenjadarro were the most important cities of the Harappan culture. The Harappan culture reveals an organised town planning. Great Bath, granary, burnt bricks, drainage system and etc were the outstanding features of the Harappan culture. Agriculture was the basic economy of the Harappan people. The Harappans had trade relations with Rajasthan, Afganistan and Mesopotomia. The worship of Mother Goddess, Pasupathi, trees, stones and animals seems to have practiced. The Harappan civilisation is quite different from the Aryan civilisation. Scholars suggest that the Aryans were most significant for the end of Harappan culture.

Key words

Civilisation, Culture, Citadel, Grannary, Collyrium, Conical dices, Pictographs, Plough, Implements, Terracotta, Embryo, Humped bull, Ablutions

Answers to check your progress

- 1) Use the material in section: 3.4
- 2) Use the material in section: 3.5.1
- 3) Use the material in section: 3.6 to 3.6.2

Glossary

1. **Civilization** : The stage of human social and cultural development
2. **Culture** : The art of human intellectual achievement
3. **Citadel** : A fortress
4. **Grannary** : A storehouse for grains
5. **Collyrium** : A medicated eyewash
6. **Pictographs** : A pictorial Symbol for a war
7. **Ablution** : A military base building

Ref;

Civilization - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Civilization>
Citadel - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Citadel>
Collyrium - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Collyrium>
Ablution - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Ablution>

Unit 4

PRE MAURYAN INDIA - POLITICAL LIFE

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Rig Vedic Period

Rajan

Popular Assemblies Sabha and Samithi

Later Vedic Period

King and Administration

Government

Justice

Mahajanapadas

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

This unit describes the political life of the Pre Mauryan period. The political life was not an organised one during the Rig Vedic and later Vedic period. But, there was gradual development of the political system. The discovery and use of iron weapons lead to emergence of small and large kingdoms in ancient India.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to:

- discover the advent of the Aryans and the conflict with the natives
- explain the gradual Aryanisation of the land and
- outline the institutionalization of government and administration

INTRODUCTION

The Aryans came to India in several waves. The Aryans conflicted with the natives. The conflict of the Aryans in the Indian subcontinent was of two sorts. The Aryans fought against the indigenous inhabitants, Dasas and Dasyus and secondly among themselves. The expansion of the Aryans into the Indo Gangetic Plain was result of long-drawn out struggles with the natives. The possession of chariots driven by horses, introduced by the Aryans for the first time and better arms owned by the Aryans led to their success in India. Further, frequent conflicts among the Aryan tribes, Bharatas, Tritsu, Purus, Kurus and Panchalas increased the power and prestige of their tribal chiefs. The Aryans possibly lived in some sort of fortified mud settlements and certainly not in cities at that time.

RIG VEDIC PERIOD

The Aryans lived in small tribes or Janas. People gave their primary loyalty to the tribe. The political organization of the Rig Vedic Aryans was obviously a patriarchal family, headed by the eldest male member. The highest political unit was called Jana or vis., which stands for the tribe is Rig

Veda. Vis was divided into grama or smaller tribal units. Gramas were further divided into Kula or Griha or family.

RAJAN

The administrative system of the Aryans centered around the tribal chief. He was called Rajan. The form of government among the Rig Vedic Aryans was monarchy. On some occasions, the kings were elected by the tribal assembly. The king did not exercise unlimited power. The Rajan was not just a leader of an Aryan tribe. He occupied an important status, distinguished from the rest of the people.

The king was not the owner of the land and the king was the warlord. The king was assisted by a number of officers in the administration. The officers were Purohita, Senani and Gramani. Among the officers, Purohita or priest was the most influential. The Senani was the commander of the army. The village headman or the gramani was also a sub-commander. The prime duty of the king was to protect the people. In turn, he secured loyalty and voluntary presents in kind from his subjects.

Popular Assemblies: Sabha and Samithi

The power of the rajan was controlled mainly by the Purohita, Sastras, Sabha and Samithi. The popular element is to be found in the two popular assemblies, Sabha and Samithi. These assemblies controlled the affairs of the state. These assemblies also exercised an effective control over the king. The assemblies, Sabha or Samiti, formed the popular part of the political organization of the Vedic Aryans.

The nature and functions of these assemblies are obscure, apart from a few references. When the Sabha met, a sacrifice was offered in the assembly - hall on behalf of the Sabha, the fire used being called Sabha. Women did not participate in the Sabha proceedings. It reveals that the women did not have the political role during the Vedic period. The Sabha met more often for the administration of justice than for political discussion. The Sabha appears to be an active institution housed in a place, where legal rather than political business was more often transacted. The meeting place of the Sabha also served as the venue of social gatherings and games, Sabha was considered to be the assembly of the village or clan.

Samithi was the larger body or the popular assembly of the tribe. The business of the tribe was carried out in the Samiti. Both Princes and people were represented in the Samiti. It discussed judicial as well as political matters.

The discussions and decisions on policies of all kinds as well as legislation constituted the main business of the assembly, Samithi. War was an important activity of the early Vedic Aryans. There was no regular army. The tribe formed the army in times of war. Senani was the commander of the army. The soldiers wore coats of mail, metal helmets and shields for protection. Their offensive weapons chiefly consisted of bows, arrows, swords, spears, axes as well as lance and slings. They used two kinds of arrows. One was poisoned and it had a head of horn and the other was made of copper or iron head. The Purohita accompanied the Rajan to the battlefield to pray for the protection of the Rajan. The Purohita ensured the safety of the king and victory in battle by his prayers. The purohita was the regular advisor of the king at the time of peace or when the Rajan did not engage in war. The king had to protect the brahmana on the other hand.

LATER VEDIC PERIOD

During this later Vedic period, the Aryans had the sway of the fertile plains of northern India. The Kurus and the Panchalas, were the important tribes of this period, who established supremacy over the Bharathas, Purus and the Tritsus. The non-Aryan tribes, who lived beyond the Aryan occupation were the Angas of East Bihar, the Magadas of South Bihar and the Dasyus or aboriginal people known as the Pundaras of North Bengal, the Pulindas and Savaras of the Vindhya forest and the Andhras of the Godavari Valley.

The amalgamation of tribes, acquisition of new territories and expansion of the kingdom increased the power and prestige of the royal authority. The Rajan claimed absolute royal power over the tribes. The priests, who were powerful during the early vedic phase were removed at will. The common man paid taxes or tributes such as bali, sulka and bhaga to the king. This indicates significant development in the system of taxation and revenue administration.

Panchala, Kasi and Kosala were the powerful states, which emerged towards the end of the later vedic period. The political horizons of the

Aryans are said to have widened more extensively. The ruler called himself Samrat, when he established sway over the petty rulers or Rajans. The assumption of the title of Samrat was emphasized by the performance of the sacrifices like Rajasuya or Asvamedas. The Rajans as feudal lords attended the ceremonies of the Samrat. They helped their Samrat in his wars. Mantri Parisad assisted the ruler. The Brahmanas, who were dominant in the society, were eligible to become the minister in guiding and advising the king. There were no popular assemblies like Sabha and Samithi to check and advise the king. During the end of the later Vedic period, the kings led an extravagant life. Gambling, music, hunting, fighting, wrestling and drinking were popular during this period.

King and Administration

Sacrifices and prayers were instituted and performed in an extensive manner to increase the royal authority. The king is said to have identified as a Prajapathi by virtue of Vajapeya (drink of the strength), and Rajasuya (royal consecration) and Asvamedha (horse sacrifice). The ambitious kings demonstrated their degree of power and prestige by performing through these sacrifices. Titles such as Samrat, Bhoja, Virat, Adhiraja and Rajadhiraja declare the growth of imperialism. The king performed military and judicial functions. Usually, the king was a kshatriya. Monarchical form of government and Sabha and Samithi existed. The kingship was hereditary during the later Vedic period. The prosperity of the kingship depended upon the agreement with the popular assemblies.

Samithi occasionally expelled absolute or tyrannical kings. Sometimes, the king was elected and re-elected by the Samithi. More or less, the system of government and organization was perhaps more democratic. The power of the king increased in spite of the popular assemblies, due to the expansion of the territorial power.

Towards the end of the later Vedic period Ganas or states had the republican form of government. Many ganas combined together and formed Sangha or confederation. Kingship became hereditary. The eldest son succeeded the throne after the death of his father. The states maintained a royal army which included infantry, chariots, elephants and cavalry. The arms used were bows, poisoned arrows, swords and battle-axes. Death in the battlefield was considered the noblest.

Government

The growth of realm necessitated the expansion of the government machinery. The officers were collectively known as Viras or Ratnins. The officers were Samgrahitri (treasurer), Bhagadugha, (tax collector) Suta (charioteer) the Kshathri (chamberlain) Akshavapa (gambling superintendent), Govikartana, (king's companion in the chase), Palagala (courtier) besides Purohita (priest), Senani (Commander) and Gramini (leader of the village).

Justice

The king used to dispense with justice and punished the criminals. The king entrusted the judicial administration in the hands of Adhyakshas or overseers. The tribe also adjudicated certain cases occasionally. A small body of Sabhasads used to conduct the judicial proceedings of the tribal assembly. The Gramyavadin, the village judge, decided petty cases in the sabha. Punishments for crime were rather severe.

MAHAJANAPADAS

Sixth century B.C marked the emergence of the Kshatriyas or warrior class as dominant in the state due to the use of iron weapons. There were sixteen large kingdoms found in the age of the Buddha. They were, Anga (Champa), Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vriji (Vaiji), Malla, Chedi, Vatsa (Vamsa), Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asvaka or Asmaka (Assaka), Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja. All these sixteen Mahajanapadas were called after the people. The distinctive feature of Indian politics of sixth century. B.C. was the existence of many such clans and republics with a non monarchical form of government of petty republics or oligarchies. The main political development in this period was the emergence of Magadha as a kingdom in northern India.

Magadha became prominent under the leadership of Bimbisara of Haryanka dynasty. He was a contemporary of Buddha. After the rule of Haryankas the Magadhan empire was ruled by the Sisunga dynasty between 642 and 413 B.C., followed by the Nanda dynasty from 413 to 322 B.C. The earliest capital of Magadha was Rajgir and was called Girivraja at that times. Avanti, Magadha's most serious rival during the reign of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru

became a part of the Magadhan empire under the dynasty of Sisungas. The Nandas, who succeeded Sisungas were the most powerful rulers of Magadha. The Macedonian army of Alexander, which invaded the Punjab, refused to move towards east farther than the river Beas or Magadhan empire. Dhana Nanda, the last ruler of the Nanda dynasty of Magadha was overthrown by Chandragupta Marya and founded the Maruyen Empire.

Check your progress II

1. List the non-Aryan Tribals who lived beyond the Aryan occupation.
2. Compare the royal authority of later vedic age with the vedic age.
3. Name the official to whom the king entrusted the judicial administration.
4. Write a note on 'Mahananapadas'.

Let us sum up

The Aryan migrated into India and established their sway in India. The administration centred around the tribal chief. Tribal chief or the Rajan was not the owner of the land. The Aryans established their rule in the fertile lands of northern India during the later vedic period. Religious practices of sacrifices and prayers were institutionalized and made essential for royal authority. By the sixth century B.C. there existed sixteen large states. The popular and active assemblies Sabha and Samithi of the early vedic period were continue to exist during the later vedic period.

Key Words

Monarchy, Hereditary, Aswamedayaga, Imperialism, Democratic, Republic, Chariots, Cavalry, Clans, Oligarchy.

Answers to check your progress I

- 1) Use the material in section: 4.1
- 2) Use the material in section: 4.2.1

3) Use the material in section: 4.2.2

Answers to check your progress II

1) Use the material in section: 4.3

2) Use the material in section: 4.3.1 and 4.2.1

3) Use the material in section: 4.3.3

4) Use the material in section: 4.4

Glossary

1. Monarchy : a form of government with a single head
2. Ashwamedha Yaga : a horse sacrifice ritual
3. Imperialism : a policy of extending a country's power
4. Democratic : a form of government – People's rule
5. Republic : a state where the supreme power rests in all citizens
6. Cavalry : Soldiers who fought on horseback
7. Clans : a close knit group of inter related families
8. Oligarchy : a small group of people having control of a country

Ref;

Monarchy - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Monarchy>

Imperialism - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Imperialism>

Republic - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Republic>

Oligarchy - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Oligarchy>

Unit 5

PRE MAURYAN INDIA - SOCIAL LIFE

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

The Origin of Caste System - Rig Vedic Age

The Development of Caste System - Later Vedic Age

Dharmasutras

Demerits

Family

Marriage

Four Stages of Life:

Position of Women

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to Check your Progress

OVERVIEW

In this unit we shall try to learn about the social life in the Pre Mauryan period and the outstanding feature of this period is the genesis and growth of the caste system.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you should be able to

- explain the origin and development of the caste system
- describe the institution of family and marriage in the pre Mauryan society.
- distinguish the position of women

INTRODUCTION

The occupational classification of society for a comprehensive growth and welfare came to be structured in the form of caste. The caste system, the ulcer of the Indian society had the genesis in the Rig Vedic Age. The caste system further got strengthened during the Later Vedic Age. If racism is to the west, then casteism is to India.

THE ORIGIN OF CASTE SYSTEM - RIG VEDIC AGE

The society was simple without any divisions when Rig-Veda was composed. The Aryans who migrated into Punjab were literate. The literate Aryans composed and chanted hymns of the Rig Veda. At this stage of composing the Rig Veda, Aryans carried on various occupations. No group was confined to any particular profession in the initial stage of the Rig Vedic period. Everybody was sharing the burden of life. People in the Rig Vedic society did not have exclusive rights such as chanting of hymns or taking up of arms. The society was not rigid. It was the *Varna* or colour differentiated the people into two divisions. The natives were dark in complexion while

the Aryans were fair. The Aryan conquest of the natives were due to the Dasas and Dasyus who were the major factors for the creation of divisions.

The expansion of the Aryan settlements towards the Indo Gangetic plain and the transformation of settlements into kingdoms were the major factors for the emergence of social divisions in the society. The protection of kingdoms and the subjects needed a standing army. The Aryan transition from nomadic pastoralism to a settled community gave importance to the role of agriculturist. Thus divisions gradually emerged in the Rig Vedic society. One section of people emerged as priestly class by learning vedic hymns and performing rituals. Another section specialized in possessing arms and administering the kingdom. The third group engaged themselves in cultivation and trade. These three divisions were based on the social and economic organization. Inter-dinning and inter-marriage, the vital characters of the caste system find no trace in the Rig Vedic Age. The frequent wars in this period brought the tribal chiefs and the priests a huge share in the war booty. Acquiring wealth at the cost of the common people created social inequalities. Towards the end of the Rig Vedic period the fourth division called the *Sudras* appeared. The reference of *Sudras* is found in the tenth book of the Rig Veda. The tenth book was the latest addition. Thus divisions based on occupations had originated in the age of Rig Veda. But this division was flexible and not rigid. On the whole the Rig Vedic society was tribal and largely egalitarian.

The Development of Caste System - Later Vedicage

The caste system is found to have crystallized and became complex during the later Vedic Age in India. The caste system is described in Yajur Veda. The doctrine of four castes Brahmana, whose duty was to learn the Vedas and guide the people, Kshatriya, the warrior, the guardian of the people and ruler, Vaisya the common folk and Sudra, the slaves and servants. The skilled men, who were well versed in the scriptures, came to be known as Brahmanas. The Brahmanas assumed priestly functions and chanted Vedic mantras for the welfare of all in the society. Thus, the Brahmanas claimed superior status in the society over others. The Brahmanas started giving an authoritative explanation of their divine origin to establish the superior position. The Brahmanas also executed sastric injunctions and maintained exclusiveness from the rest.

The Kshatriya class was composed of the Rajan and the men, who fought for the Aryan tribes in the leafless war against the Dasyus. The Kshatriyas, who became the guardian of the people and their might, began to govern the country.

The more common understanding is that the Brahmana was superior to the king. The king being the head of the government brahmana was the dependent. The Brahmana occupied a lower seat by the side of the king but claimed to be superior to the king as per the Vedas. A Kshatriya can never get along without a Brahmana, while a Brahmana can. It is said that the power of the Kshatriya derived from the Brahmana.

The rest of the Aryans were known as Vaisyas. The Vaisays were engaged in agriculture, trade and industry. The Vaisyas were separated from the other two castes by their lack of priestly and noble blood. The Vaisyas paid tribute to the rajan in return for the protection given to them. Brahmanas and Kshatriyas have undoubted precedence over Vaisya and Sudra.

The plight of the Sudras was miserable, as defined by Aitareya Brahmana, "He is to be the servant of another, to be expelled at will and to be slain at will". The main duty of the sudras was to serve the other three classes. The enslaved Dasyas who accepted the Aryan supremacy, were also called Sudras. The Sudras had no rights of property. It is quite evident that caste had not yet become a rigid system. The three factors, which characterize caste today, i.e., prohibition of inter-dining, inter – marriage and determination by hereditary descent were not yet established on a secure basis.

Dharmasutras

Caste system became complex in course of time. The power and dominance of the Brahmanas was growing. The Brahmanas became a well- organized priesthood. The study and teaching of Vedas became the exclusive privilege of the Brahmanas. The Brahmanas were exempted from paying tax to the king. The prestige and influence of a Purohita in the state was considerable. The Brahmana could become a king but a Kshatriya could hardly become a Purohita. A Kshatriya came closest to Brahmana in power and prestige The country consisted only of the three castes (with the Sudras excluded) i.e. Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas.

The position of Vaisyas gradually deteriorated. Due to the virtue of their occupations, namely agriculture, cattle breeding and commerce, Vaisyas came into close contact with Sudras. The privilege of performing the sanctifying rituals was denied to a Sudra, due to his low position. But, a Sudra retained the status of a regular member of the household.

The ceremony of Upanayana could not be neglected by the three castes. As a result the negligence of Upanayana ceremony for three generations in a family whether Brahmana, Kshatriya or Vaisya, the members became outcastes. The Dhahmasutras shows that caste distinction outstripped its proper limits and had even invaded the field of civil and criminal law.

The contact of the three Aryan castes with Sudras through intermarriage was bound to lead to the rise of mixed castes. The *Anuloma* type of marriage, whereby a member of a higher caste could take unto himself a wife or wives of the lower castes in addition to one of his own caste, was accepted. On the other hand, *Pratiloma* marriages where the high caste female married a low caste male, which apparently took place, was prohibited. The caste system even in this period had not become as rigid and exclusive as it is today.

Demerits

The most glaring evil of the caste system was the doctrine of impurity which was communicated by the touch or contact of lower castes. The caste system became an instrument of subdivision and endless ramifications of Indian society. The accident of birth becomes the base for all activities by an individual.

The caste system is said to have enabled Hinduism to expand its ranks and to preserve the Hindu culture. Casteism preached the skilled labour. The caste system prohibited learning and pursuing of higher knowledge. The denial of basic human rights to Sudras and the growth of the institution to maintain untouchability was a bad footnote in the pages of Indian history.

The caste system became an instrument of oppression and it encouraged disruptive social and political forces. In sum, the caste system had broken the solidarity of the Indian union. In the Aryan social life, the family rather than the individual was regarded as the social and political unit.

FAMILY

The character of the Aryan social life was the patriarchal family. Father or the senior male member was the head of the family. The members of the family lived in the house built of wood or bamboo. Joint family system was the framework of the society. It was the responsibility of the head of the family to educate the urchins, give daughters away in marriage, care for the widows, relatives, revere guests, perform daily worship and periodical offerings to the ancestors and look after family properties. Each member of the household contributed one's share to maintain the family.

On the death of the father, the eldest son took charge of the family. Sometimes, the family broke into a number of smaller joint families. The joint family led a deep sense of family solidarity. The system had taken care of the children, aged relatives, dependents and destitute in the most equitable manner. Family crafts and arts were well protected and passed on from generation to generation. The common legacy of noble traditions and the skills in particular crafts enabled the members of the household to protect and develop the good traditions.

The purpose of man was considered to get rid of the endless cycles of births and deaths. The Sastras lay down *samskaras* or rites to be performed by an individual. One or two rites began for the welfare of the individual even before the child was brought forth to the world. Others performed the most important rites for the welfare of the dead.

Special recitals were performed for a male child and continuation and growth of the family after marriage. Ten days after a child was born, a ceremony for purification was conducted. The ceremony of feeding '*annam*' or cooked rice was done with recitation of Vedic rites to please the gods. The education of the child commenced only after the performance of a suitable rite.

Upanayana or investiture with the sacred thread was an important ceremony in the life of a brahmachari. Upanayana was performed at the age of eight in the case of a Brahmin boy, eleven in the case of a Kshatriya and twelve in the case of a Vaisya. The individual was conferred with the right to study Vedas the ceremony of Upanayana. The termination of learning was marked by a ceremony known as *Samavartana*. This

ceremony called upon one to lead a virtuous life, propagate the family for performing many rites to please the gods and protect the ancestors. Further, one had to venerate teachers, parents and elders with great esteem and obedience.

MARRIAGE

At the end of his studies, the individual returned home. The individual had to marry without delay and found a household. Though marriage within the 'gotra' was not explicitly prohibited, marriage outside the 'gotra' was frequent. Order of birth was generally respected in a family, when marriages were arranged. The re-marriage of a widow was allowed. Monogamy i.e., a man marrying a woman was the common practice. At the same time polygamy i.e. a man marrying many women was not prohibited. Kings and great chiefs practised polygamy.

Eight types of marriages are referred to in the Dharmasutras. They are Brahma, Daiva, Arsha, Prajapatya, Gandhara, Asura, Ratshasa and Paisacha. The Brahma was the common form of marriage. The bride was offered as a gift to a suitable groom with appropriate presents in the Brahma form of marriage. In the Daiva form, the daughter was given in marriage to the priest for having performed a sacrifice. The Arsha form of marriage indicates that the daughter was given in marriage after the receipt of a cow and a bull from the bridegroom. In the Prajapatya, there was no gift from either side of the marriage parties. Gandharva marriage was in vogue, when two loved each other and chose to marry with or without parental approval. Rakshasa, the seventh type of marriage, was common among the Kshatriyas. In this form of marriage, the Kshatriyas abducted the girl after a fight with her relatives. The last one was Paisacha, where the girl was carried off while her relatives were sleeping or were indifferent. The last four forms of marriages were not favoured.

The marriage ceremony was simple. During the vedic age, the marriages took place at the home of the bride. The main marriage rite was taking the bride by his hand the groom led her round the sacred fire. Great stress was laid on the offerings to celestial gods through fire God in the marriage ceremonies. The 'grihasta' or the householder devoted himself to the four ends of life, i.e. 'Dharma' or religious merit acquired by following the smritis,

'artha' or wealth was acquired honestly, 'kama' was worldly pleasure and 'moksha' was salvation.

Like birth, death was also considered impure. The mourners were ritually impure. Rituals for the safe journey of the departed soul were performed. The son of the deceased had to perform ceremonies to help the soul proceed to the other world or take a new birth.

FOUR STAGES OF LIFE

The evolution of the four stages in the life of a man is portrayed in the Upanishads. The Aryans developed an institution called the Ashramas. An individual was required to pass through four stages or ashramas of life to obtain 'moksha' or salvation. 'Brahmachari' a religious, student, was the first stage, the second 'Grihasta', the householder, the third *vanaprastha*, one who has retired from active life and the fourth 'Sanyasin', ascetic. These four ashramas could be an ideal rather than reality. '*Vanaprastha*' and 'Sanyasin' were the ashramas meant exclusively for Brahmanas. The other castes were led to find out other methods to obtain salvation.

POSITION OF WOMEN

Women in the Vedic Age were respected. There is no evidence to state that women had a dependent status in Vedic society. In fact women were honoured at home and in society. Both boys and girls were educated. Rig Veda mentions women like Vishwavara, Ghosha and Apala who rose to the ranks of rishis and composed hymns. There were women poets, philosophers and warriors. Marriage was regarded as a sacrament. The girls had chosen their own husbands with the consent of their parents. Weddings were conducted in the house of the bride's parents. Purchase of girls and giving dowries were common practices. The wife was admitted to full religious rites. She participated in the entire major ceremonies and offerings of her husband. There is no evidence to show that women were left out in social functions or gatherings. Though, monogamy was a common practice, polygamy was practised in royal household and widows without issues were allowed to marry.

There was a marked contrast in the position of women during the later Vedic period. The respect of women in society deteriorated. Women were

not denied access to the Sabha. Women took part in the intellectual life of the society. Scholars like Gargi and Maitreyi belonged to this age. Dance and singing were recognized as feminine accomplishments. Marriage rules became rigid. Marriage at an early age was preferred. Dowry system came into vogue. 'Sati' came into practice. Polygamy became more common among the Kshatriyas.

The position of women marked further deterioration towards the end of the later Vedic Age. The educational standard of women had fallen low. The Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas could marry women of low castes. There existed no child marriage. Sati was not encouraged. The wife participated with her husband in the social and religious ceremonies.

Dharmasastras or smritis did not give equal privileges and rights to men and women. A woman became a subordinate of a man. She was not allowed to study Vedas and other sacred works. She was not allowed to perform sacraments. She was denied the right to property. Early marriage of a girl became a religious duty. Widow marriage was prohibited. A widow was not allowed to participate in auspicious ceremonies even at her own home. The practice of 'niyoga' - begetting of children by a widow through her dead husband's brother-came into practice. 'Sati' was widely prevalent.

The institution of prostitution came into vogue during the later period. Dharmasastras prohibit Brahmins patronizing public women as well as prescribed severe punishments for lapses. The public women were accomplished in different arts such as dancing, singing etc. 'Vesya' or 'Gnika' was the term used to denote the public woman of the town. The practice of maintaining prostitutes out of temple funds became a practice.

Check your progress

1. Name the four varnas.
2. List the different types of Marriages.
3. Describe the demerit of the caste system.
4. Discuss the status of women.

Let us sum up

The migration of the Aryans into the land of Indus was the cause for the emergence of divisions based on colour. The colour distinction between the Aryans and the indigeneous people gave rise to social orders. The frequent wars and sharing of warbooty created social inequivalities. The society was divided as priests, warriors and people. The division was based on occupation. The native inhabitants were classed as sudras.

The society in the later vedic age was divided into four varnas. They were brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaisya and sudras. The growing cult of sacrifice, emergence of rituals , ceremonies and chanting of hymns helped the brahmanas to emerge as the most important class. During the later vedic period the caste system was more or less rigid. Untouchability, prohibition of inter-dinning and inter-marriage are the evils of caste system. In the pre – Mauryan age the society was patriarchal. Eight types of marriages and four stages of life were existed. In the beginning the woman was honoured in the family and society. In the closing years of the later vedic age the position of women deteriorated.

Key words

Nomadic, Egalitarian, Tribute, Sanctity, Ceremony, Patriarchal, Urchins, ancestors, destitute, legacy, traditions, monogamy, Polygamy, Sati.

Answers to check your progress

- 1) Use the material in section: 5.2.1
- 2) Use the material in section: 5.2.3
- 3) Use the material in section: 5.4
- 4) Use the material in section: 5.6

Glossary

1. Womadic : roaming about from place to place
2. Egalitarian : a trend of thought of Political Philosophy
3. Tribute : a gift of gratitude
4. Patriarchal : a social system where men are superior
5. Urchins : a young child poorly dressed
6. Monogamy : a relationship with one partner
7. Polygamy : the custom of having more husbands or wives
8. Sati : a practice where a widow threw herself to her husbands funeral pyre

Ref;

Womadic - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Womadic>

Tribute - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Tribute>

Monogamy - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Monogamy>

Sati - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Sati>

Unit 6

RELIGION IN ANCIENT INDIA

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Religion during the Harappan Culture

The Vedic Religion

Religion in Later Vedic Phase

Causes for the Emergence of Jainism and Buddhism

Jainism

Main Doctrines of Jainism

Schism in Jainism

6.4.1 Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture

Buddhism

Doctrines of Gauthama Buddha

Outstanding Features of Buddhism

Causes for the Decline of Buddhism

Let us Sum up

Key Words

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OVERVIEW

This unit provides a brief account on religion in ancient India. The ritualistic oppression of Brahmanas leads the protest movement of the Kshatriyas. The protest movement initiated major changes in Indian society but towards the common people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to:

- explain the idea of religion and its transformation.
- discuss the factors which contributed to the emergence of Jainism and Buddhism.
- describe the ideas and doctrines associated with Jainism and Buddhism.
- outline reformation of brahmanism and the decline of Jainism and Buddhism.

INTRODUCTION

Every society has its own religious beliefs and practices which are very ancient. Religion is a universal social institution. Fear, emotional stress, feelings of guilt, impersonal character of nature, belief in the existence of soul have all combined and contributed to the origin of religion. Image worship, offering of flowers, fruits and water to the deities, symbols of gods and goddesses like lion or bull, the cult of Siva were found during the pre Harappan period.

RELIGION DURING THE HARAPPAN CULTURE

Mother goddesses, Pasupathy Siva, trees, swasthika, humped bull, fire and water were the important gods and goddesses of the Indus people. Numerous terracotta figurines of women were found in Harappa. In one terracotta figurine, a plant coming out of the womb of a nude female was unearthed. The seal seems to depict the worship of goddess of earth. The otherside of the seal has a man having a sickle. Shaped knife in hand and a woman seated on the ground with raised hands. The seal indicates the practice of human sacrifice. Animal sacrifice was prevalent among the Indus people. Along with the Mother Goddess, a male deity was also found. The male deity has three heads with horns. The male deity is in the sitting posture of a yogi, placing one foot on the other. The deity was found with an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros, a buffalo and two deer. The male deity is regarded a representation of God Siva. The discovery of numerous symbols of the Phallus and female sex organs made of stone reveal the possibility of Phallus worship. Amulets were discovered in large numbers in Indus region. The discoveries of amulets reveal that the Indus people had the fear of ghosts and evil spirits. The people of Indus worshipped gods in the forms of trees, animals and human beings. The figure of a deity with a hooded cobra over the head shows the prevalence of the snake worship. Thus the Indus valley people were worshippers of nature in its various forms.

The Vedic Religion

Rig-Veda refers to the existence of thirty-three gods. There was no hierarchy among the gods. The basis of religion was the worship of nature in its various forms. The gods represented one or the other phenomenon of nature. The Rig Vedic gods could be classified into three categories. They are: (I) the terrestrial gods such as Prithvi, Agni, Brihaspati etc., (ii) the atmospheric gods such as Indra, Rudra, Vayu, etc., and (iii) celestial gods such as Surya, Usha, Savithri, Vishnu, Varuna etc.,

Indra, Varuna, Agni and Surya were the prominent gods of the Rig Vedic times. Indra was regarded as the god of rain and thunderstorm. Indra was the most prominent God. One fourth of the Rig Vedic hymns were sung in praise of Indra. Varuna was the god of power and upholder of moral order. Agni was the God of food. Surya was the god of light.

The Rig Vedic people were predominantly ritualistic, offerings were made to the gods, and sacrifices were performed for gods, grace and favour. Grahapati, the head of the family, performed most of the religious rites. During the Vedic period, there was practiced no image worship and there was no priestly class. Male gods were more popular than female goddesses. The Aryans had contemplated life after death but attached no importance to it.

6.2.3 Religion in Later Vedic Phase

The remarkable feature of the later Vedic period was the organisation of the Hindu way of life. During the later Vedic phase, some of the main gods of the Rig Vedic period became unimportant. Gods like Indra, Varuna, Agni and Surya lost their prominence. Rudra or Siva, Vishnu or Narayana, and Brahma or Prajapathi became the most important gods of worship. The number of gods increased. The later Vedic phase witnessed a great growth of ceremonial religion. Some of the minor gods of the Rig Vedic period became prominent. Besides, new deities also arose. The important aspect of the later Vedic culture was the cult of sacrifice. Sacrifices involved the killing of animals on a large scale. Animal sacrifice reduced the cattle population. Numerous rituals and formulae accompanied the cult of sacrifice. The formulae had to be carefully pronounced by the sacrificer. These rituals and formulae were invented and adopted by the priests called the Brahmanas. The priests, who officiated at sacrifices, were rewarded generously and given dakshinas or gifts. The success of the sacrifice towards the desired results was supposed to deepen on the right performance of the rituals and the magical power of words of formulae. The simple religious ceremony performed by Grahapati or head of the family became complicated ritual. During the later Vedic period, various gods lost their contact with nature. Nature was the basis of the origin of the Gods. Instead, Gods were considered primarily as heroes and killers of demons during the later Vedic period.

The later Vedic religion was a synthesis particularly of the Aryans and the non-Aryans. Some scholars say that the religion of magic and spells of the Atharvaveda was the result of the influence of the religion of the non-Aryans on the religion of the Aryans. The clearest evidence of this synthesis in religion between the Aryans and the non-Aryans is the reduction in status of a few most important gods of the Rig Vedic Age in the later and post Vedic

Age. The snake worship and the worship of Siva as Linga or phallus are the important examples of the synthesis. Besides, the origin of different female goddess, their acceptance as wives of different gods and their worship in different forms are another clear evidence of the influence of non-Aryans on the religion of the Aryans. The worship of female gods by the Aryans, a patriarch society justifies the deep influence of the matriarchal society of the non-Aryans on the Aryan society and religion. Thus, it is mostly accepted that Hinduism as a synthesis of religious between the Aryan and the non-Aryans is a heritage of the later Vedic Age.

CAUSES FOR THE EMERGENCE OF JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

The society in the Post Vedic period was clearly divided into four varnas. They were Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. The higher the varna, the more privileged and purer a person was. The lower the varna of an offender, the more severe was the punishment prescribed for him. The society based on varna seems to have generated tensions. The Kshatriya rulers reacted strongly against the ritualistic oppression of the brahmanas. The protest movement of the kshatriyas was one of the causes for the origin of new religious. Persons belonging to the clan of kshatriyas founded both Jainism and Buddhism.

The emergence of these new religions lay in the introduction of a new agricultural economy in northern eastern India. The north - east India before colonization was thickly forested. About 600 B.C. iron came to be used. A few iron axes have been recovered from the layers belonging to circa 600-500 B.C. The use of iron tools helped to clear the thick jungles. The iron tools made possible large - scale settlements and agriculture. The iron plough required the use of bullocks. But, killing of cows and bullocks indiscriminately in numerous Vedic sacrifices blocked the development of new agriculture. It became essential to stop killing animals, if the new agrarian economy had to be stable.

The large number of cities and the introduction of coins facilitated trade and commerce. The cities were Kausambi, Kusinagar, Banaras, Vaisali and Rajgir. The use of the earliest coins belonged to the 5th century B.C. The development of trade brought out the importance to the Vaisyas. The Vaisyas looked for some religion to improve their position. The Vaisyas

supported Jainism and Buddhism very generously. It was due to the following facts. First, the new religions did not give any importance to varna system. Secondly, both the religions preached non-violence. The practice of non-violence would promote trade. The promotion of trade was to be the consequence of the end of the war between the kingdoms. Further, the brahmanical Dharmasutras condemned lending money on interest.

Accumulation of coins, new dwellings and dresses and introduction of transport accounted for luxury. These new forms of property created social inequalities. The inequalities among the people caused misery and suffering. The people in the sixth century did not want the new forms of property and the new style of life. The people wanted to get back to the pre-iron age life. The new religions, Jainism and Buddhism, recommended puritan ascetic living.

JAINISM

Vardhamana Mahavira is often regarded as the founder of Jainism. But, the Jains believed that Mahavira was the 24th Tirthankara. Vardhamana Mahavira was born in 540 B.C. at Kundalagrama, a suburb of Vaisali. Mahavira belonged to a Naya Kshatriya family of Videha. Mahavira's father was Siddhartha and mother Trishala was a Lichchavi princess. Siddhartha's wife was Yasoda and daughter Priyadarshana. At the age of 30, Siddhartha became an ascetic. There after, Mahavira was wandering from place to place. After 12 years of constant meditation, Mahavira attained supreme knowledge or Kaivalya at the age of 42 from then, he was called Mahavira or the great hero. Mahavira also came to be known as Jina, i.e., the conqueror or Nirgrantha, i.e., free from worldly fetters. The followers of Mahavira are known as Jainas. Mahavira propagated his religion for 30 long years. Mahavira preached his doctrines in Magadha, Anga, Mithila and Kosala. Mahavira died at Pavapuri near modern Rijiir at the age of 72 in 468 BC,

Main Doctrines of Jainism

Jainism emphasized five doctrines. They are:

- (1) Do not commit violence,

- (2) Do not speak a lie
- (3) Do not steal,
- (4) Do not acquire property and
- (5) Observe Brahmacharya or continence.

Mahavira rejected the doctrine of the divine creation of the universe. Mahavira maintained that the world is eternal. The world is passing through periods of progress and decay. The world is full of Jeevas or souls according to Mahavira. Animals as well as inanimate objects also have souls. According to Mahavira, soul was to begin with a small object, pure and innocent. The soul became heavy, cumbersome and lost its purity and innocence over the years.

The soul lost its purity because of karmic influences from the outside. Mahavira recommended that one should become free from this Karma and attain salvation from world by bonds. The salvation can be achieved through supreme knowledge. Thus, Nirvana or salvation depends on ratnatraya or the three jewels or gems of Jainism. They are (1) right belief, (2) right knowledge and (3) right action. Rejection of food, clothing, property and marriage were all great virtues. Nudity helped one overcome the feelings of distinction and shame. One without supreme knowledge commits sins and is prone to other ills and evils like anger, greed and jealousy. Jainism preaches extreme ahimsa or tolerance to living and non living beings.

Mahavira organised an order of his followers to spread Jainism. The order admitted both men and women counted 14,000. Jainism failed to spread among masses because it did not clearly mark out itself from the brahmanical religion. The Jain faith became established in a number of areas in India in the early stages. The Jains were numerous in Mathura and Kalinga. Jainism also got established in the region of Mathura and certain portions of South India. The spread of Jainism in Karnataka is said to be because of the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Chandragupta Maurya gave up his throne and became a Jain. Chandragupta spent his last years in Karnataka as a Jain, an ascetic. But, we have inscription evidences for the spread of Jainism in Karnataka since 3rd century A.D.

Jainism seems to have reached southern districts of Tamilnadu about the 2nd century B.C.

Schism in Jainism

The great famine that took place in Magadha towards the close of the 4th century BC lasted for 12 years. Due to the severity of the famine, one section of the Jainas headed by Badrabahu migrated to the Mysore region in the South. Main Jainas stayed back in Magadha under the leadership of Sthalabahu. The immigrant Jainas on return to Magadha claimed that they only observed the religious rules strictly. Further Badrabahu group charged that the Jainas of Stalabahu group violated the religious rules and became careless. In order to settle the disputes and to compile the main teachings of Jainism, a council met at Pataliputra. Badrabahu boycotted and refused to accept the decisions of the council. As a result, Jainism got divided into two sects. Those who stayed in Magadha wore white garments and were called as Swathambaras. The followers of Badrabahu were called as Dikambaras and preached the naked truth of Mahavira. After sometime, a further split occurred in Jainism. The monastic orders declined in morality in course of time. The rejected caste distinction was reimposed and become more active. In the meanwhile, the brahmanas reformed their religion to eliminate Jainism and Buddhism. Jainism, though it did not reach its zenith, still survives in many parts of India.

Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture

Jainism greatly enriched literature, art, architecture and sculpture. Jainism in the beginning discarded the use of Sanskrit language. The Brahmanas patronised Sanskrit. The doctrine of Jainism was preached through Prakrit, the common language of the people. The Jainist religious texts were in Prakrit.

BUDDHISM

Gauthama Buddha or Siddhartha was born in 563 BC in Kapilavastu. Kapilavastu is situated in the foothills of Nepal. His father Suddhodana was the elected ruler of Kapilavastu. Suddhodana headed the republican clan of the Sakyas. His mother Mayadevi was a princess from the Kosalan

dynasty. Siddhartha belonged to a noble Kshatriya family. Siddhartha's wife was Yasodara and had a son, Rahula.

Siddhartha led a royal life and lived in the palace. Accidentally Siddhartha saw an old man, a diseased man and a dead one. Siddhartha was moved by the misery of the people. Siddhartha wanted to find out the causes for the sorrow of the world. At the age of 29, Siddhartha left home. Siddhartha kept on wandering in search of truth, as an ascetic, for about seven years. After severe penance, Siddhartha attained knowledge at the age of 35, under a pipal tree at Bodhgaya. From then, Siddhartha began to be called the Buddha or the enlightened.

Gauthama Buddha was preaching and meditating for the next forty- five years. Gauthama Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath in Benaras. Buddha undertook long journeys and spread his message far and wide. Buddha encountered many staunch supporters of rival sects including the Brahamanas. The missionary activities of Gauthama Buddha did not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and man and woman. Kings like Bimbisara and Ajatasatru accepted the doctrines of Gauthama Buddha and became disciples. Gauthama Buddha passed away at the age of 80 in 483 B.C. at a place called Kusinagar. Kusinagar is identified with the village called Kasia in the Deoria district in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Doctrines of Gauthama Buddha

Gauthama Buddha preached that the world is full of sorrows and the cause for sorrow is desire. Desire leads to sufferings and disappointments. If desires are conquered, nirvana or salvation will be attained. The man, who attains nirvana, will be free from the cycle of birth and death.

Gauthama Buddha recommended an eight - fold path or astangikamarga for the elimination of human misery. They are 1) right observation, 2) right determination, 3) right speech, 4) right action, 5) right livelihood, 6) right exercise, 7) right memory and 8) right meditation. This eight fold-path lies between the extremes of life and it is called as middlepath.

Gauthama Buddha laid down a code of conduct for his followers. The important items in this conduct are:

1. Do not covet the property of others
2. Do not commit violence
3. Do not use intoxicants
4. Do not speak a lie and
5. Do not indulge in corrupt practices.

Outstanding Features of Buddhism

Buddhism does not recognise the existence of God and soul or atman. The early Buddhism did not engage in philosophical discussion but appealed to the common people. Buddhism attacked the Varna system. As a consequence, Buddhism won the support of the so called lower orders of the society. Buddhism made a special appeal to the people of non-vedic areas. The people of Maghada readily accepted Buddhism because the Brahmanas looked them down upon. In comparison with Brahmanism, Buddhism was liberal and democratic. Buddhism brought women on par with men by admitting women into the Sangha or the religious order.

Buddhism used the common language of the people, Pali. The use of Pali facilitated the spread of Buddhist doctrines among the common people. Gauthama Buddha also organised the Sangha. Irrespective of caste and sex, everybody was accepted into Sangha. The monks had to observe the rules and regulations of the Sangha faithfully. The monks had to take the vow of continence, poverty and faith. So, there are three main elements in Buddhism: Buddha, Sangha and Dhamma. As a result of organised preaching under Sangha, Buddhism spread far and wide. The monarchies of Magadha, Kosala and Kausambi and several republican states and their people adopted Buddhism.

The great Mauryan king Asoka embraced Buddhism two centuries after the death of Gauthama Buddha. Asoka spread Buddhism into central Asia, west Asia and Sri Lanka through his agents. Thus, during the time of Asoka, Buddhism transformed into a world religion.

The Buddhist monks resided in the rooms made out of rocks. Thus began the cave architecture in the Barabara hills in Gaya and around Nasik in western India. Buddhist art also flourished in the Krishna delta, Mathura and Gandhara.

Causes for the Decline of Buddhism

Buddhism became practically extinct in India by the twelfth century AD. Buddhism yielded to rituals and ceremonies, which were denounced originally in the beginning. To meet the Buddhist challenge, the Brahmanas reformed their religion. Brahmanas stressed the need for protection of cattle. Brahmanas assured women and Sudras of admission to heaven. Buddhist monks were cut off from the mainstream of the people's lives. Buddhism used Sanskrit and gave up the use of Pali. Further, Buddhist monks practiced idol worship on a large scale. The monks received numerous offerings from devotees. The rich offerings with generous royal grants to Buddhist monasteries made the monks to lead an easy life. The Buddhist monasteries became centres of corrupt practices. Buddhists came to look upon women as objects of lust. The ease-loving monks with women living in monasteries led Buddhism to further degeneration.

Check your progress

1. Did the people of Indus practice human sacrifice?
2. Describe the cult of sacrifice.
3. Explain the reasons for the emergence of new religions
4. what do you mean by 'Jina'?
5. State the doctrine of Jainism
6. Siddhartha was born in 563 B.C in _____
7. Highlight the outstanding features of Buddhism.

Let us sum up

Religion is universal and India is not an exception. Indus people worshipped Mother Goddess and Pasupathy siva. But on the whole the Indus Valley people were the worshippers of nature. The religion during the later Vedic period reached a stage of rigidity whereas the religion of Vedic Age was more of less an age of formation.

Rituals and sacrifices were predominant during the Vedic period. These rites were performed by the head of the family himself. There was a synthesis of Aryan and non Aryan religions during the later Vedic period. The reduced status of the Rig Vedic gods, worship of snake and phallus, worship of female goddess by the Aryans are the evidence of the synthesis of religion.

The emergence of Jainism and Buddhism were due to the protest movement of the Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, introduction of new agricultural economy and coins. Vardhamana Mahavira and Gaudhama Buddha were Kshatriyas in origin. Unlike Brahamism, the new religions preached in pali the language of the people. From the beginning, Buddhism enjoyed royal patronage and spread very fast. Though Buddhism spread far and wide, it practically disappeared from the Indian subcontinent. On the otherhand, Jainism did not spread very fast in the beginning. But still, Jainism retains its hold in the areas, where it spread.

Key words

Depict, Grahapathi, Matriarchal, Swathambaras, Digambaras, Discriminate, Disciple, Doctrines, Monarchy.

Answers to check your progress

1. Use the material in section: 6.2
2. Use the material in section: 6.2.3
3. Use the material in section: 6.3
4. Use the material in section: 6.4

5. Use the material in section: 6.4.1
6. Use the material in section: 6.5
7. Use the material in section: 6.5.2

Glossary

1. Grahapathi : the head as per Vedas
2. Matriarchal : a form of social organization where woman is the head
3. Swathambaras : means white – clad or practice of wearing white clothes
4. Digambaras : a member of one of the principal sects of Jainism
5. Doctrines : a belief taught by a religious organization or other groups

Ref;

Grahapathi - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Grahapathi>

Matriarchal - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Matriarchal>

Digambaras - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Digambaras>

Doctrines - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Doctrines>

BLOCK II

Unit 7 : Mauryan Empire

Unit 8 : Asoka and the spread of Buddhism, Mauryan

Administration

Unit 9 : The Sungas and Kanvas

Unit 10 : The Sakas and Kushanas

Unit 7

MAURYAN EMPIRE

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Pre Mauryan Empires

The Haryanka Dynasty

Sisunagas

The Nanda Dynasty

Contact with Persia

Greek Contacts

Alexander the Great - His early career

Conquest of Persia

Battle of Hydaspes

Results of Alexander's invasion:

Mauryan empire

Sources

Chandra Gupta Maurya

Bindusara

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

This unit helps the reader to learn the circumstances in which the Mauryan dynasty was founded.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to

- explain the political condition of North India before the emergence of Mauryan empire and the Indian invasion of Alexander.
- describe the establishment of the Mauryan dynasty and rule of Chandragupta Maurya.

INTRODUCTION

The foundation of the Mauryan Empire was a unique event in ancient Indian History. V.A. Smith states “The advent of the Mauryan dynasty marks the passage from darkness to light for the historian”. Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of the Imperial Mauryan dynasty. The Mauryan dynasty gives to India for the first time a continuous history. Mauryans contributed towards a unified imperial history affecting India as a whole involving all peoples and regions of India.

PRE MAURYAN EMPIRES

Predecessors of Mauryan Dynasty

The political condition of northern India before and during the rise of Mauryan Empire was the existence of a group of fragmented states or republics. From the sixth century B.C., the widespread use of iron facilitated the formation of large territorial states. These fragmented states were fighting among themselves for expansion and supremacy. In the age of the

Buddha, there existed 16 large states called *Mahajanapadas* or great *Janapadas*. The names of the 16 **Mahajanapadas** were Kasi, Kosala, Anga, Magadha, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Machcha, Saurasena, Assaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja.

Magadha corresponds to the present districts of Patna and Gaya. Further, the state of Magadha was associated with the development of Buddhism and Jainism. Many scholars flourished here. The great ancient universities like Nalanda and Vikramasila were founded in Magadha. Magadha played an important role in the political and cultural activities of ancient India.

On the basis of available sources like **Puranas**, the earliest dynasty of Magadha was founded by Brihadratha. A number of Brihadrathas ruled over Magadha for many centuries. Probably, the Brihadratha dynasty came to an end in the 6th century B.C.

The Haryanka Dynasty

There are controversies with regard to the successors of the Brihadratha dynasty. But according to Asvaghosha, the ruler Bimbisara was the descendant of Haryanka dynasty. Bimbisara (603 – 551 BC) was not the founder of the Haryanka dynasty. He added prestige and strength to Haryanka dynasty. Bimbisara was the first important king of the Magadhan Empire with the capital at Rajagriha. He strengthened his empire through the policy of matrimonial alliances and annexations by conquests. It has been said that Bimbisara had five hundred wives. Though the numbers may not be agreeable, it is certain that Bimbisara entered into dynastic relations based on marriage with several important royal families. He married Kosa Devi, the princess of Kosala and Chellana, the Lichchavi princess. The king of Kosala Prasenajit gave a part of the kingdom of Kasi in dowry to Bimbisara. Bimbisara conquered the state of Anga. Anga was a big and prosperous state at that time. The conquest of Anga marked the beginning of the greatness of Magadha. Bimbisara ruled for about 52 years and built the city Rajagraha.

Ajatasatru (551 - 519 BC)

Ajatasatru killed his own father, Bimbisara, and seized the throne of Magadha. The Jain and the Buddhist texts have expressed different

opinions regarding the episode of the death of Bimbisara. It was during the reign of Ajatasatru, Haryanka dynasty reached its zenith. Throughout his reign, Ajatasatru pursued an aggressive policy of expansion. Ajatasatru fought against Kosala, Lichchavis, Vaisali and Avanti. The prolonged conflict between Magadha and Kosala forced the Kosalan king to make peace by giving his daughter in marriage to Ajatasatru. Ajatasatru was also given the possession of Kasi. Ajatasatru destroyed the independence of Lichchavis. It took Ajatasatru full sixteen years to destroy Vaisali. The victory gave Magadha an unchallenged supremacy over East India. The king of Pradyota of Avanti started preparations to attack Magadha because of the success of Ajatasatru. As a result, Ajatasatru began to strengthen the fortifications of Rajagraha to defend his territories. The invasion of Avanti against Magadha did not materialise. The first Buddhist General Council was held under his patronage near Rajagraha. Ajatasatru is believed to have built several Buddhist Chaityas.

Udayin or Udayabhadra

Udayin or Udayabhadra succeeded his father Ajatasatru. Udayin ruled for sixteen years. The **Parisishtaparavan** of Hema Chandra confirms the reign of Udayin. In the fourth year of his reign, Udayin built the fort upon the confluence of the rivers Ganges and Son at Patna. The position of the fort at Patna became crucially strategic. The fort came to be called as Pataliputra or Kusumpura. Anurudha, Munda and Nagadasaka succeeded Udayabhadra respectively. None of them proved themselves capable of ruling. The disgusted people revolted against the rulers. As a consequence, Sisunaga, one of the ministers of the last king, established the rule of a new dynasty.

Sisunagas

The Ceylonese Chronicles and the Puranas state that Sisunaga was an Amatya or a minister. The important achievement of Sisunaga was the destruction of the glory of the Pradyota dynasty of Avanti. The neighbouring rival states of Avanti, Vatsa and Kosala were defeated and annexed to Magadha. Sisunaga brought the century old rivalry between Magadha and Avanti to an end. Kalashoka or Kakavarna succeeded his father Sisunaga. Pataliputra became the capital of Magadha during the rule of Kalashoka.

The second Buddhist Council was convened during the rule of Kalashoka at Vaisali.

The Nanda Dynasty (413 - 322 BC)

The Nandas succeeded the Sisunaga dynasty. The **Puranas** and **Mahabodhivamsa** state that Ugrasena or Mahapadma was the first Nanda ruler or Mahapadmapati. Mahananda married a sudra woman. Mahananda's son was not regarded as a Kshatriya because he was born to a sudra mother. The Purana describe Mahapadma Nanda as the destroyer of all the kshatriyas. The Nandas tremendously expanded the Magadhan empire. They overthrew many Janapadas and Kshatriya dynasties in northern India. The dominion of Mahapadmananda covered a considerable part of the Deccan too. The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela refers to the conquest of Kalinga by the Nandas. Matsyapurana states that Mahapadmananda ruled for 88 years. He has been described as the second Parasurama, the destroyer of all Kshatriya rulers. The Nandas were fabulously rich and enormously powerful. The Nandas maintained a huge army of 2,00,000 infantry, 60,000 cavalry and 6,000 war elephants. The later Nandas were weak and unpopular. Dhana Nanda was the last ruler of Nanda dynasty.

Downtall of Nandas

The Nanda king was hated and despised by his own subjects on account of the wickedness of his disposition and the meanness of his origin. Dhana Nanda collected fabulous wealth by means of excessive taxation. The oppressive financial system also made the subjects to hate the rulers. The unpopularity of the Nandas and the political confusion helped Maurya Chandragupta to capture Magadha in 322 B.C. Chandragupta Maurya was greatly assisted by Kautilya in dethroning the Nandas.

CONTACT WITH PERSIA

The relations between India and Persia had existed from ancient times. Afghanistan and Baluchistan served as the link between India and Persia. Before 7th century B.C., India and Babylon were engaged in trade and commerce through the Persian Gulf.

The great Achaemenian Emperor Cyrus I of Persia conquered Bacteria, Media, Babylonia and Assyria. Cyrus I was succeeded by Cambyses and Darius I. Darius I ruled the Achaemenian dynasty from 522 – 486 B.C. He conquered Gandhara, the Punjab and many parts of North – West India. Herodotus stated that these provinces were included in the Empire of Darius I. They annually promised to pay 360 **talents** of gold dust that was one third of the revenue of the Persian Empire. The Persian control over North – West India lasted for over a century.

During this period, there took place active trade between Persian and Indian merchants. As a result, Indian scholars freely moved into the Persian Empire. The Persian school of art greatly influenced the Indian art and architecture.

Greek Contacts

The invasion of Alexander the Great is a milestone in the history of India. Alexander stayed in India for about nineteen months. The brief stay and the invasion of Alexander had notable effects on India. In the ancient Mediterranean world, the Greek civilization was highly esteemed. Particularly, it flourished from the seventh to fourth century B.C. The Greek civilization was known for its democratic city-states.

The government of Pericles from 460 B.C. to 430 B.C. was the most prosperous period for Athens, a Greek state. Great philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle added fame and name to Greece. The prosperous Athens was defeated by the warlike state, Sparta. Alexander the Great of Macedonia was responsible for the revival of the glory and splendour of Greece.

Alexander the Great - His Early Career

Alexander was born in 356 B.C. Alexander was the gifted son of Philip of Macedonia. Philip appointed Aristotle, a great philosopher as tutor to Alexander. Alexander was very much impressed with the philosophy of his tutor, Aristotle. Alexander ascended the throne at the age of nineteen when his father died in 335 B.C. Alexander was an ambitious ruler. The ambition of Alexander was to conquer the world and to spread the philosophy of

Aristotle. He recruited and trained a huge army and set out for the conquest of the world.

Conquest of Persia (334 - 300 B.C)

During 334 – 330 B.C, Darius Codomannus was the king of Persia, when Alexander engaged in Persian wars. Darius I could not check the advance of Alexander in the battle of Gaugamela in Babylon in 331 B.C. Darius was defeated and murdered by one of his own satraps. Subsequently, Alexander captured and destroyed Persepolis. Persepolis was the capital of Persia. Alexander founded a new city called, Alexandria of which is now called as Qauthar. Alexander also conquered all the territories of the Persian empire and Afghanistan by 328 B.C. Alexander took up the title the “Great King of Persia”.

The Taxila ruler Ambhi made his submission to Alexander and also sent presents to him. From Ohind, Alexander proceeded to Taxila. Ambhi greeted and recognized Alexander as his overlord, in return Alexander also treated him with a great courtesy and generosity. The ruler of Abhisara tribe sent his envoy to Taxila and recognized Alexander as his overlord. The rulers more or less surrendered to Alexander one after another.

Battle of Hydaspes

Alexander demanded Porus, the king of the Jhelum to submit. Unlike the other kings Porus refused to surrender. As a result the Greek invader Alexander marched up to Jhelum. The other side of the river Jhelum Porus organised his forces and waited for the Greek invader. Alexander found that it was practically impossible to cross the river in the face of an organised opposition. After a long delay, Alexander worked out a plan. As per the plan a lot of sound was created by the soldiers of Alexander to make Porus to think that the Greek soliders were going to cross the river in front of his army. In reality the army of Alexander crossed the river about sixteen miles above the camp at night. After having stolen a passage, Alexander made a sudden attack on the army of Porus. Porus was taken by surprise. Inspite of his bravery Porus was defeated and captured as prisoner. The captived ruler Porus demanded Alexander to treat him as a king. Alexander appreciated the bravery of Porus and bestowed back his kingdom. Alexander also gave some additional territories, which belonged

to the "15 Republican states with their 5000 considerable cities and villages without number" to Porus. To commemorate the victory, Alexander founded two cities called Boukepala and Nikaia near the Jhelum river.

Alexander crossed the Chenab or Akesines and subdued the tribe inhabiting the region between Chenab and Ravi. Then, he crossed the river Ravi to conquer the territories of the Kathaioi. At this stage the armies of Alexander at Beas or Hyphasis revolted. The army was not ready to advance any more. Alexander made a stirring appeal to his soldiers but his words could not change the re-routing soldiers. It was because the soldiers were tired of fighting and were away from their families for several years. Further the soldiers felt that they had covered such a long distance and they would never return to their homeland. Alexander yielded to the will of his soldiers and decided to retreat. Alexander divided his possessions into six satraps. Three satraps were created on the west of the Indus and three on the east of Indus. The three western satraps were Greek and the three eastern satraps were Indians. Alexander returned in 323 B.C., after one year and seven months of campaigning in India. In 323 B.C, he reached Babylon near Baghdad, where he died at a very young age of 32. Within thirteen years, Alexander had compressed the energies of any life time.

Results of Alexander's Invasion

Historians remarked that there were no permanent results in the aftermath of the invasion of Alexander. Some believed that Alexander came as a whirlwind and went away as a storm. The conquests and commercial schemes of Alexander opened up entirely new prospects.

Socially Alexander's invasion could not touch the fringe of the Indian social structure. On the contrary, the Greeks who remained in India after the departure of Alexander became Hindus with the passage of time. These Greeks merged into the Hindu society and their traces were permanently obliterated from India. Culturally, India was unreceptive for Hellenism.

Politically, the invasion of Alexander paved the way for the rise of a united empire under the Mauryas. The greatest impact was felt in the socio - cultural field. The ties between the east and west were cemented as the means of communication and transportation developed. The sea and the land routes were permanently utilized for closer connection between the

East and the West. This led to the greater exchange of ideas and understanding.

Geographically, the voyages and expeditions planned by Alexander widened the geographical horizons of his contemporaries. The invasion of Alexander opened up new vistas of communication and new routes for trade and maritime enterprise.

Historically, the accounts of Alexander's Indian campaign left by his companions helped to build Indian chronology on a definite basis. The date of Alexander's invasion, in fact, forms the sheet anchor of Indian chronology.

The contact with these Indo-Greek or Indo-Bactrian kings was responsible for the improvement of the Indian coinage. The system of Indian astronomy is largely influenced by the Hellenic system. The invasion also led to the growth of a new type of sculpture known as the Gandhara School of Art. But, the Gandhara art did not have a real hold on India. As regards the Greeks, they learned a good deal of the sciences, arts, philosophy, mathematics and medicine from India during the period of this contact. Indian philosophy greatly influenced the Greek thought and culture.

MAURYAN EMPIRE (322 B.C - 184 B.C)

The ascendancy of Mauryan rule in the Magadhan kingdom and to the whole of India was significant event in the political and cultural history of ancient India. The Mauryan rule achieved both cultural progress and political unity. The Mauryan rulers also gave an efficient system of administration and maintained diplomatic relationship with many countries. Many valuable and authentic sources both native and foreign, were useful to reconstruct the history of the Mauryas.

Sources

The **Mudrarakshasa** of Vishakhadatta throws light on the downfall of Nandas and the rise of Chandra Gupta Maurya. **Arthashastra** of Kautilya was the most important literary source for writing the history of Mauryas. The **Arthashastra** is an important political and administrative treatise on the Mauryas. **Arthashastra** is divided into 15 divisions or **Adhikaras** and 180

sub-divisions or **Prakaranas**. Kautilya's **Arthashastra** contains the philosophy and fundamental principles of the Mauryan administration. Kautilya is also popularly known as Chanakya. The treatise **Arthashastra** explains about the views of Kautilya on punishment, administration of various departments and the salaries paid to the various officials. **Arthashastra** also explains the socio-religious life of the people.

Indika of Megasthenes provides detailed information about the boards and the city administration of the Mauryas. **Indika** explains the existence of social divisions during the Mauryan period. The **Jatakas, Puranas, Dharmasastras Tripitakas, Indika Ceylonese** Chronicles like **Mahavamsa, Deepavamsa** and **Rajavali** and inscriptions of Asoka are important sources for the study of the Mauryas.

Chandra Gupta Maurya (322 – 298 B.C)

Chandragupta Maurya founded the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta Maurya took advantage of the growing weaknesses and unpopularity of the Nandas in the last days of their rule. Kautilya guided Chandragupta Maurya in the endeavour to overthrow the Nandas and to establish the Mauryan dynasty.

The Puranas state that Chandragupta Maurya was the son of Nanda through a wife named Mura. Mudrarakshasa interprets that Mura was the daughter of a Sudra. But, the entire Buddhist and Jain texts described Mauryas as Kshatriyas.

THE CONQUESTS OF CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

Seleucus emerged as the ruler of Babylon and ruled over the area West of Indus. Chandragupta Maurya defeated Seleucus, the Greek invader in 305 B.C and liberated north-western India. Further Chandragupta Maurya forced Seleucus to accept a humiliating treaty. Seleucus also sent Megasthenes as his ambassador to the Mauryan court. Megasthenes lived at Pataliputra between 304 and 299 B.C.

There is a reference in Junagadh Rock Inscription of Rudradaman about the existence of Chandragupta's governor namely Pushpagupta in Saurashtra region. The inscription confirms the extension of Chandragupta's rule in

western India also. An epigraphic record of A.D. 600 associates Bhadrabahu with Chandragupta muni. Another inscription of A.D. 1129 from Saravana belgola also associates the names of Chandragupta Maurya with Bhadrabahu. The indirect evidences concluded the extension of Chandragupta Maurya's rule towards the Deccan plateau.

Chandragupta Maurya thus built up a vast empire. The empire of Chandragupta Maurya included Bihar, portions of Orissa and Bengal, Western and North-Western India and the Deccan. His reign was terminated about 298 B.C.

Chandragupta was a great soldier, statesman, diplomat and administrator. He abdicated the throne under the influence of the Jaina monk Bhadrabahu. Chandragupta Maurya retired to the south and said to be died of starvation and fasting at Saravana selagola. Chandragupta Maurya was one of the greatest and most successful kings known to history.

Bindusara (299 – 274 B.C)

Bindusara, the son of Chandragupta Maurya ascended the throne of the Mauryan empire. The great writers titled Bindusara as "Amitraghat." or 'slayer of enemies'. The Greek writers also mentioned that Bindusara took delight in pleasure and wine. Bindusara maintained friendly relations with the Greek rulers. During the reign of Bindusara, the Greek king Antiochus I sent Deimachus Patriochlis to him as his ambassador. Deimachos Patriochlis, the Greek ambassador, succeeded Megasthenes and lied served for a long time in the court of Bindusara. Dionysius was yet another Egyptian ambassador who visited the court of Bindusara. A revolt broke out in the province of Taxila, during the time of Bindusara.

Bindusara followed the footsteps of his father in administration. He followed the policy of religious toleration. His son, Asoka (273 - 236 B.C.) ascended the throne.

Check your progress

1. Name the Dynasties which ruled India before the emergence of the Mauryas

2. Write briefly on the following
 - a) Bimbisara
 - b) Nandas
3. The great Archaemenian emperor_____.
4. The government of _____ from 460 BC to 430 BC as the most prosperous period for_____.
5. Alexander founded two cities and near the Jhelum river.
6. Describe the impact of Alexander's invasion.
7. List the sources for the study of Mauryas.
8. _____ a Greek ambassador, succeeded Megasthenes, was sent by the Greek king _____.

Let us sum up

Chandragupta Maurya laid the foundation of the Maurya dynasty with the assistance of Kautilya. **Mahajanapadas** existed during the age of Buddha. Magadha played an important role in the political activity among the sixteen **Mahajanapadas**. The kingdom of Magadha started its rise to importance during the rule of Bimbisara. Magadha became the first empire in India by the time of Nandas. Invasion of foreigners especially Persians and Greeks started when Magadha was emerging as an empire in India. The political effect of the Persian invasions on India was negligible when compared with the impact of culture from its Persian contacts. The invasion of Alexander had the consequence on Indian politics and culture, Chandragupta was the great soldier, and diplomat. Chandragupta conquered almost the whole of the Indian subcontinent and more or less brought the political unification of the country. Bindusara held the vast empire of Chandragupta intact.

Key words

Fragment, Episode, Confluence, Strategic, Despised, Dethrone, Philosopher, Revival, Tutor, Ambassador, Ascended, Matrimonial, Generosity, Obliterated, Hellenism.

Answers to check your progress

- 1) Use the material in section: 7.2
- 2) Use the material in section: a) 7.2.1 b) 7.2.3
- 3) Use the material in section: 7.3
- 4) Use the material in section: 7.3.1
- 5) Use the material in section: 7.3.4
- 6) Use the material in section: 7.3.5
- 7) Use the material in section: 7.4.1
- 8) Use the material in section: 7.4.2

Glossary

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| 1. Fragment | : | a small part broken off from something |
| 2. Episode | : | an event or a group of events |
| 3. Confluence | : | flowing together |
| 4. Strategic | : | relating to the identification of over all aims |
| 5. Depised | : | to regard as unworthy |
| 6. Dethrone | : | remove from power |
| 7. Philosopher | : | a person learned in philosophy |
| 8. Revival | : | an improvement in condition |
| 9. Tutor | : | a private teacher |
| 10. Ambassador | : | A diplomat sent by its state as a representative in a foreign country |
| 11. O Bliterated | : | wipe out |
| 12. Hellenism | : | a national character or culture of Greece |

Ref;

Fragment - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Fragment

Strategic - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Strategic

Tutor - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Tutor

Hellenism - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Hellenism

Unit 8

ASOKA AND THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM, MAURYAN ADMINISTRATION

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Asoka

Conquest of Kalinga

Religious Policy of Asoka

The Mauryan Administration

The Government

The Assembly

Espionage System

Revenue Administration

Provincial Administration

Municipal Administration

Military Administration

Judicial Administration

Social And Economic Conditions

Decline Of The Mauryas

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to Check your Progress

OVERVIEW

This unit deals with the paramount role of the Mauryan empire which preached the policy of non-violence and contributed a highly centralised administration for the first time in the history of India.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to

- explain the Asoka and his Kalinga war.
- describe the transformation of Buddhism into world religion.
- discuss the administrative system and the decline of the Mauryas.

INTRODUCTION

Asoka was one of the greatest kings of India. The greatness of Asoka was not just the vastness of his empire but the ideals and principles by which he governed the vast empire. Being an ambitious and skillful warrior Asoka dreamt of establishing a huge empire by conquests. Asoka followed the policy of war and annexation with neighboring states and friendly relations with far off states. But, the Kalinga war totally transformed Asoka's life to seek, follow and spread the Buddhist principles of peace and non-violence. The Mauryas established the first ever-centralised administration in Indian soil.

ASOKA

Asoka Vardhana commonly called Asoka was the son of Brindusara, ascended the throne of Maurya in 273 B.C. The Ceylonese Chronicles criticised about Asoka's war of succession. This was not sufficiently supported by other evidences. Previous to his succession Asoka served as Licorice of Taxila and Ujjain. There is lot of controversies regarding the first four years of the reign of Asoka. Asoka has been referred in the inscriptions as Devanampriya priyadarsi, which means beloved of the Gods and of amiable appearance. The name Asoka is mentioned in Maski edict of Asoka and Junagarh Inscription. The Saranath inscription of Kumaradevi also mentioned the name *Dharmasoka*.

In the early years of his reign he envisaged many wars. It is believed that before Kalinga war he encouraged festivities and flesh. He also enjoyed with the worldly pleasures. He carried away the Digvijaya and diplomatic friendly relations with foreign powers for the expansion of his kingdom within India.

Conquest of Kalinga

The Kalinga war was an important event that transformed the political and personal life of Asoka. In the 13th regnal year Asoka conquered Kalinga. Kalinga was a powerful state in the boundaries of his territory. Therefore the conquest of Kalinga was felt necessary for safety and serenity of Mauryan Empire. In addition, the conquest of Kalinga could bring enormous wealth to the empire. It would also facilitate better trade with South India and trans-oceanic trade towards South Asian countries respectively.

The conquest of Kalinga was a great landmark in the history of India. Asoka himself quoted the Kalinga war and its effects on people in the Rock edict XII. Kalinga war was envisaged to safeguard Asoka's seat and gracious majesty. Asoka carried nearly about 4, 50,000 persons as captives. One lakh people were died. Though Asoka was victorious he felt unhappy. Asoka never experienced such bloodshed. He began to think how unworthy it was to conquer the world by sword. Asoka came across a Buddhist monk Upagupta. Upagupta ironically praised the victory of Asoka. Upagupta as well advised Asoka to follow the peaceful life taught by Buddha.

The Kalinga war opened a new era of peace, social progress and religious propaganda throughout the world. Asoka put an end to *Digvijayas* and started *Dharma Vijayas*. *Dharmavijaya* means spiritual conquest.

Extent of Asoka's empire

The Mauryan Empire during Asoka's reign extended from Kashmir in the north to far south excluding the *Thondai Mandalam* region and from the Persia in the northwest to Bengal in the East. Asoka consolidated and kept his empire intact with the capital Pataliputra.

Religious Policy of Asoka

The conquest of Kalinga transformed Asoka to follow Buddhism. The emperor Asoka supported and preached Dharma principles throughout his empire and foreign countries. Asoka gave up the slaughter of animals in the royal kitchen to make *currie*. In the Bhabru edicts, Asoka declares his faith in the Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha. Asoka himself went on pilgrimage to Lumbini and Bodhagaya. He himself closely associated with Buddha Sangha as Buddha *bhikshu*. The Sangha was presided over by Moggaliputra Tissa from Ceylon. He convened the third Buddhist Council that was held at Pataliputra to consolidate Buddhist doctrines. Many reputed scholars participated in this council. Asoka constructed and dedicated few caves for *Ajivikas*, a separate sect of Buddhist monks.

Asoka believed in the policy of religious toleration. He patronized brahmans and sages but he opposed certain practices like slaughter of animals, violence to animate beings and festivities or *Samajas*. The laws of Dharma had, self-purity, loving others and serving others. The laws of Dharma were elaborated and inscribed in the second minor edict. Asoka propagated the Dharma principles throughout his empire. He erected fourteen major rock Edicts, two minor edicts and seven pillar Edicts throughout his empire. Asoka's edicts were engraved on rocks and pillars to proclaim the royal ideas to his subjects. These edicts were written in Brahmi and Pali scripts. Asoka himself preached Buddhism to the people. His visit was otherwise called as Dharmavijaya and *Dhammaghosha*. Asoka appointed various officials like, *Yuktas*, *Rajukas*, *Purughas* and *Predesikas* to preach law of Dhamma or piety throughout his empire in addition to their official duties.

Asoka appointed Dharmamahamatras to promote Dhamma in the socio-economic and political life of all his subjects irrespective of religion and sects. In brief Asoka's Dhamma was a code of moral duties, benevolent acts and freedom for passions of life. Asoka's son Mahendra and daughter *Sangha* were sent to Ceylon to propagate Buddhism. Asoka also sent missionaries to western Asia, Egypt and Eastern Europe to preach Buddha Dhamma. The script of Asoka's inscriptions depended on the language of that region. Asoka organised and supported Buddhist *Sangha*. Asoka dedicated cave dwelling for the monks. He constructed *stupas*, *Chaityas*, *Viharas* and pillars in Sanchi, Sarnath, Buddhagaya, Lumbini and other places to encourage the Buddha *Dhamma*. Asoka strictly practiced Buddha *Dharma* in all walks of his life. In other words Asoka propagated universal peace, love and non-violence over many countries.

Asoka's policy of non-violence and *Dharmavijaya* adversely affected the safety and security of his Kingdom. The policy on non-violence weakened the army. The weak successors of Mauryan Empire and the weakened army ultimately led to down fall of the Mauryan Empire in course of time. Asoka raised the Buddhism from the stage of local religion to world religion. Asoka was not merely a follower and supporter but an apostle of Buddhism.

THE MAURYAN ADMINISTRATION

The vast territory of Mauryan Empire was efficiently controlled. The empire was administered by a well-defined and classified administrative system. Asoka followed the basic structure of administration followed by Charndragupta Maurya with some minor changes. The minor changes pertaining to moral, material and spiritual progress of his subjects by introducing Raja Dharma. The Raja Dharma means duties of State.

SOURCES

The vital sources useful for the study of the Mauryan Administration are inscriptions of Asoka, Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, the *Indika* of Megasthenes, various greek accounts, Ceylonese Chronicles like Mahavamsa and Deepavamsa, Buddhist and Jain texts, *Mutharakshasa* of Visakadhata, Tibetan and Nepali texts. These Sources are greatly sufficient to build up political and administrative history of Mauryan period.

The Government

In the Mauryan dynasty monarchy was accepted and prevailing form of government. The welfare of the state depends upon kingship. The king was the symbol of sovereignty. The law of primogeniture was followed by the various dynasties of India.

The king was the head of the state and administration. The king was an autocrat and enjoyed absolute power. Pataliputra was the capital of the Mauryan empire. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* was a great administrative treatise. *Arthashastra* greatly emphasised on the efficiency of the king. The body of politics gets affected if the king lacks discipline, education and training in the art of government and administration. *Arthashastra* mentions that a king should be quick in action and remarkable in discharging his duties towards his subjects and safeguarding his empire.

King discharged his administrative measures with the help and deliberations of well-formed council of ministers. The council of ministers were called *Mantriparishad* or the *Mantrins* or the *Amatyas*. Kautilya headed the *Mantriparishad*. The ministers were directly responsible to the king in discharging their duties.

The Assembly

The Mauryas organised many advisory bodies of the town and the country. They were called the *Paura - Janapadas*. The *Paura - Janapada* was the assembly of the people. The *Janapada* assemblies were issued *paura* coins. King also attended the various business of *Paura - Janapada* assemblies. These assemblies of the people passed the various resolutions of the government measures and policies. The assemblies also undertook social services during the time of natural calamities. These assemblies of the people were acted as a powerful check on royal authority.

Espionage System

Mauryan rulers had established an efficient espionage system. The system of espionage accelerated the progress, efficiency and stability of the state administration. Kautilya had placed great emphasis on the organisation and various types of spies. Snake charmers and women were also employed as

spies. The spies moved among the people, roamed around the country and reported to the emperor. This helped the emperor to know the minds of his subjects. Further, the emperor could see that his Ministers and Officials worked in accordance with his orders.

Revenue Administration

The works of Kautilya and others, laid special emphasis on Revenue administration. Kautilya explained about the efficient tax collection and finance management of revenue officials. The primary source of income of the state was land tax. The land tax was normally one-sixth of the total produce. Though, it was some times collected as one fourth of the total produce. The State collected several other duties, on customs, fines, excise, mines, salt, fisheries, forests liquor shops, gambling houses, etc. The Mauryan rulers exempted brahmans, warriors, children, students, women, the blind and the lunatics from paying the tax to the state.

The major expenses of state were maintenance of army, official's salaries, expansion of irrigation, transport facilities and other developmental and security measures. Pushyagupta, the Mauryan Governor constructed the Sudarshan, a lake at Girnar in Kathiawar. Many roads were laid connecting important towns and cities to encourage trade and commerce. The best example for the Mauryan development was the construction of Royal road from Pataliputra to Taxila and even beyond to the boarder of the empire.

Provincial Administration

To simplify the territorial administration, Mauryan empire was divided into four provinces with centres in Taxila, Ujjain, Kosalai and Suvarnagiri. Governor or Viceroy administered other territories. They appointed the princes and royal persons as Viceroys in the provinces and were called as *Kumarmahamatras*. The others viceroys who did not belong to royal family were known as *Mahamatras*. The *Kumarmahamatras* and *Mahamatras* were discharged their duties in the provincial administration under the guidance of the Emperor. There was an Advisory committee like a council of ministers at the centre were also of help to the *Mahamatras*.

Each province was further divided into many districts. *Sthanikas* and *Gopas* administered the districts. Various subordinate officials also assisted *Gopas*

in the collection of taxes, transfer of properties and maintenance of land records. There were 5 to 10 villages placed under the *Sthanika*. Apart from that there were different grades of superintendents and *Pradeshikas* were appointed in the District administration.

Village was the smallest unit of administration. The villages were mostly self sufficient and self-contained in providing the basic needs of the people. Each village placed under the administration of *Granika*. The village elders played a significant role in the disposal of criminal cases in villages level. The village elders also assisted in the maintenance of tanks and collecting taxes in the villages. The towns and cities were placed under the charge of *nagaraks*. The *nagaraks* maintained the law and order in the respective cities.

Municipal Administration

A distinctive system was followed to manage the administration of Pataliputra, the capital of Mauryan empire. It was magnificent city and wonder of its age. It was situated at the meeting place of the Ganga and the Son rivers.

The city was 14 kilometres long and 21/2 kilometres broad and had the shape of a parallelogram. There was a strong wooden wall, which contained 64 gates and 570 towers. The wall was surrounded by a deep and broad moat. The royal palace was situated in the middle of the city. It was carved out of wood with matchless beauty and splendor. It was also a famous seat of learning and fine arts. Its population was about 4 lakhs.

The administrative affairs of Pataliputra were managed by a Committee that consisted of 30 members. The committee was divided into six boards of five members each. The first board looked after fine arts and handicrafts of the city. The second board was assigned to facilitate the boarding lodging and all other arrangement to foreigners. The third board was related to systematic registration of births and deaths.

The fourth board was placed to look after the affairs of trade and commerce. It enforced regulations and levied license taxes to merchants. The fifth board was responsible for supervising manufacturers and to avoid the sale

of old goods and materials. The sixth board was assigned to collect 10 percent of tax on value of goods sold.

All the committees were jointly responsible for the city's sanitation, security, maintenance, roads, public places, temples and gardens. Probably other cities like Taxila, Ujjain, Vaisali and Benares too had municipal committees like Pataliputra.

Military Administration

The Mauryan rulers protected their vast empire from the internal and foreign enemies. This was because the Mauryas maintained a large, efficient, and well trained army. The army was very powerful and with strength of seven lakhs. It consisted of six lakhs infantry, three lakhs cavalry, nine thousand elephantry, eight thousand chariots and a large fleet of ships.

A committee of 30 members here again maintained the administration of the army. The committee was divided into six Boards each containing five members. The first Board was in charge of the navy. The second Board maintained the transport commissariat, and all army services and repairing. The third Board was assigned to maintain the infantry. The fourth Board was allotted the duty to look after the cavalry. The fifth Board was in charge of chariots, and the sixth Board maintained the elephantry.

The important weapons of war were bows, arrows, swords, and lances. Armors and shields were used for protection. The king himself led the army in wars.

Judicial Administration

The Emperor was the fountainhead of Justice. The law was placed in high esteem and power. There were several courts that existed from village level to king in Council. The king in Council was the highest court of appeal. The civil courts were called as *Dharmasthiya*. The *Dharmasthiya* decided the cases and disputes regarding transfer of property, boundaries, marriages etc. The criminal courts were called as *Lantakasodhan*. The *Lantakasodhan* tried the cases like thefts, robbery, murder, sex offences etc. In Pataliputra the Supreme Court was presided over by the king or the Chief Justice.

The Judicial Department administered the Jails. There were fines for minor crimes and mutilation of limbs for giving false evidence, non-payment of tax and cutting of sacred trees. Capital punishments like sentence to death, and torture were used for grave offences. The Panchayators decided petty cases in the villages.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The people were generally tall, healthy and brave. Their food was simple. It consisted of wheat, rice, Barely and milk. They also used meat and wine. Some cities and towns were centres of fashion, and luxury. The people were prosperous and happy. They celebrated the festivities like, *Vasant*, *Divali*, *Giripuja* etc. They engaged in amusements like wrestling, hunting, swimming, boating, archery, chariot races, animal fights, cockfights, bullfights and etc.

Taxila, Ujjain, Benares and Pataliputra were important centers of learning and arts. The main subjects of curriculum were *Dharmashastras*, grammar, the rhetoric and politics. Women were educated. They were treated with great respect. *Sati* was practiced mostly among Kshatriyas. Royal household and Kshatriyas practiced Polygamy. Women also served as spies and bodyguards, to the king by them. The society was divided into seven classes namely, philosophers or scholars, counselors, soldiers agriculturists, spies, traders and artisans, shepherds and hunters. Caste system was very rigid in the society.

The Mauryan people engaged in the internal and trans - oceanic trade. The superintendents of trade handicrafts, and various industries who controlled taxed and regulated the trade through a well-defined system of administration.

The craftsmen and traders organised *sreni* (or) Guilds. An official called *Srenimukhya* headed the Guild. Guilds played an important role in the economic development of the empire during the period of Mauryas. The Guilds formulated rules for the promotion and streamlining their trading activities. The most popular coins were *Niksha* gold coin, *Purana* a silver coin and *Karshapana* a copper coin were used for the purpose of economic transactions.

Asoka built many public works like wells, tanks, *Dharmasalas*, *Serais* and planted shady trees along the roads. Asoka constructed hospital for men and animals. Asoka extended the care to beasts also.

DECLINE OF THE MAURYAS

The Mauryan empire collapsed within half a century after the death of Asoka. Seven kings, Kunals, Dasarath, Sampraati, Salisuk, Devaverma, Satadhan and Brihadrata succeeded the emperor Asoka within this period of fifty years. Brihadrata was the last ruler of the Mauryan dynasty. His Commander –in – Chief Pushyamitra Sunga assassinated Brihadrata. Pushyamitra Sunga founded a new dynasty, the Sunga dynasty. Historians expressed different opinions regarding the decline of the Mauryas.

One school of thought expressed that the religious policy of Asoka was primarily responsible for the decline of the Mauryas. Asoka's patronage of Buddhism, disregard to ritualism and sacrifices, appointment of Dharmamahamatras, deliberate humiliation of the Brahmanas, the framing of laws by the sudra Maurya rulers made the brahmanas to rise against the Mauryas. The reaction of the brahmanas was carried to success by the brahmana Pushyamitra Sunga. Just because Pushyamitra Sunga was a brahmana we could not ascribe it to brahmanical reaction against the Mauryan rule.

Another school of historians point out that Asoka's policy of Ahimsa or non-violence was the basic cause of the decline of the Mauryas. Asoka's doctrine of Ahimsa, a policy of 'no war' after the war of Kalinga reduced the martial spirit of the soldiers. The military weakness of the Mauryas gave rise to foreign aggressions and revolts within the empire. There is no evidence to justify that Asoka had reduced the strength of the Army or fear of law and punishment in his empire. The policies of Asoka and brahmanical resentment can not be regarded as the primary causes for the decline of the Mauryan empire.

Over-centralization was the characteristic feature of the Mauryan government. The success of the Mauryas depended on the efficiency and loyalty of a highly centralized bureaucracy. There were no representative assemblies. There was no difference between the state and the emperor. Everything in the empire was depended on the capacity of the emperor.

The evils of over - centralisation swallowed the very vitals of the empire. The evils became fully manifest under the weak successors of Asoka. The decline of the Mauryans are largely due to the weak successors of the vast Mauryan empire, the revolt of the provincial governors and the annexed independent states and treachery of the Commander - in - chief.

Check your progress

1. _____ was the primary source of income of the State.
 2. Describe the Municipal administration of Pataliputra.
 3. Name the sources for the study of the rule of Asoka.
 4. Explain briefly the religious policy of Asoka.

Let us sum up

Asoka was one of the greatest kings of the Mauryan dynasty. The conquest of Kalinga transformed the political and personal life of Asoka. The Kalinga war brought an era of peace and social progress. Asoka followed the policy of non-violence and preached Buddhism after the Kalinga war. Throughout the Mauryan period the lawgivers like Kautilya formed out a systematic and efficient administration in all the spheres. Organisations, efficiency, standing army, separation of civil and military administration are the highlights of the Mauryan Administration. The administration of Mauryan rule brought peace, prosperity and harmony in the society. The Mauryan emperors were the forerunners of many modern administrative systems. The Mauryan empire disappeared very shortly after the death of Asoka. There were no specific causes spelt out for the decline of the Mauryas. Historians suggest the causes for the decline are Asoka's policy of non-violence and Buddhism, centralized Mauryan administration, revolts and weak successors of Asoka.

Key words

Transform Supremacy, Digvijaya, Regnal year, Serenity, Ironically, Efficient Tax, Governot, Boards, Commissariat, Humiliation, Over Centralisation.

Answers to check your progress

- 1) Use the material in section: 8.3.4
- 2) Use the material in section: 8.3.6
- 3) Use the material in section: 8.2
- 4) Use the material in section: 8.2.2

Glossary

1. Transform Supremacy : change of a leading or controlling position
2. Digvijaya : victory in all directions
3. Regnal Year : a date of a Sovereigns
4. Serenity : quality of being calm
5. Ironically : a way that is done directly opposite
6. Efficient Tax : payment of least amount of tax
7. Commisariat : a military department that supplied food
8. Humiliation : to reduce to a lower position
9. Over Centralisation : Concentration of too much power

Ref;

Digvijaya - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Digvijaya>

Serenity - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Serenity>

Ironically - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Ironically>

Humiliation - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Humiliation>

Unit 9

THE SUNGAS AND KANVAS

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Sources

The Sungas (187-75 B.C.)

Pushyamitra

Successors of Pushyamitra

Contributions of the Sunga rule

The Kanvas (76-31 B.C.)

Other kingdoms

Kharavela of Kalinga (150 B.C.)

Let us sum up

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

Reference

OVERVIEW

We have seen the disintegration of the Mauryan kingdom in the last unit. In this unit we shall study the history of two kingdoms that ruled the Magadhan territory after the decline of the Mauryan rule. The Sungas ruled immediately after the Mauryas, inheriting a part of the territories of the Mauryas and ruled for 112 years. They were overthrown by the Kanvas and ruled for 45 years. During this period, the Kalinga region was ruled by the Chedis, under the king Kharavela.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- describe the political history of the Sungas.
- trace the developments in art and architecture of the Sungas.
- explain the history of the Kanvas.
- outline the conquests of Kharavelas.

INTRODUCTION

The last king of the Mauryan dynasty, namely Brihadratha, was killed by his Commander, Pushyamitra. Pushyamitra established the Sunga dynasty and ruled the Magadhan territory. About 10 kings ruled for 112 years. The most important ruler of the dynasty was Pushyamitra, the founder of the dynasty. The Sungas were overthrown by the Kanvas. Both the dynasties followed the Hinduism and patronized Vedic ceremonies. During their rule some important monuments were built in Sanchi and other places. In the Kalinga region, the Chedi king Rudradaman was powerful enough to invade the territories of the Sungas.

SOURCES

Our sources of information for this period are mainly literary works, especially, the Puranas. The Yugapurana mentions the invasion of the Yavanas (Greek). The Gargi Samhita, the Mahabashya of Patanjali

provides some information on the political and social aspects. Among the later works the Malavikagnimitram of Kalidasa mentions the Asvamedha sacrifice of Pushyamitra and the conflict of Agnimitra with the king of Vidarbha. The two Buddhist works, namely Arya-Mulakalpa and the Divyavadana, also supply interesting and important details like the policy of religious persecution followed by the Sunga rulers. The Jaina work Theravali by Merutunga refer to the policy of religious persecution followed by the Sunga kings.

The Ayodhya inscription of Dhanadeva records the two Asvamedha sacrifices of Pushyamitra. The only inscription of Kharavela was the most important one for understanding the history of the Chedi dynasty of this period. Though numerous coins are available, they are often insufficient and difficult to interpret. The several monuments of the Sunga period testify to the development of art and architecture. Among those monuments the Sanchi stupa complex has a number of Stupas constructed by the Sunga kings. The several sculptures also provide useful information about the social life of the people.

THE SUNGAS (187-75 B.C.)

Under this section the following topics namely Pushyamitra, successors of Pushyamitra and contributions of the Sunga rule are discussed.

Pushyamitra (188-152 B.C.)

Pushyamitra was the founder of the Sunga dynasty. He established the Sunga rule after killing the Brihadratha Maurya, the last ruler of the Maurya kingdom. The Sungas were brahmanas and they belonged to the family of royal priests. Pushyamitra inherited only a part of the Mauryan territory. Earlier the kingdoms of Kalinga and Kashmir had already asserted their independence. His control seems to have extended upto the river Narmada in the South. Pataliputra continued to be the capital.

He fought the Bactrian Greeks (Yavanas) twice during his reign. On the first occasion the Bactrian Greeks under the leadership of Demetrios invaded the kingdom and reached Pataliputra. However Demetrios was compelled to withdraw to his own kingdom to handle internal troubles created by Eucratides (168 B.C.) The intervention of Kharavela, the King of Kalinga in

Northern Indian politics also considered as a valid reason for his retreat. Saketa (Ayodhya), Madhyamika and Nagari (near Chittor) conquered by the Bactrians were recovered by Pushyamitra. On a second occasion Bactrians were led by Menander. Vasumitra, Pushyamitra's grandson repulsed the enemies on the Southern bank of the Indus. In the battle Sungas were successful. Pushyamitra had a conflict with the kingdom of Vidarbha (modern Berar). Its Governor, Yajnasena, was a relative of Brahadratha, the last Mauryan king. When Pushyamitra killed Brihadratha, Yagnasena declared himself independent. Agnimitra, the son of Pushyamitra was sent to retrieve the kingdom from him. In the war the king of Vidharba was defeated. Vidarbha was divided into two divisions and one division was given to Madhavasena and the other to Virasena, the two cousins of Yagnasena. They accepted the overlordship of the Sungas and maintained friendly relations with them. Agnimitra, was in love with the beautiful princess Malavika of Vidharbha, whom he married her later.

Kharavela of Kalinga attacked Magadha twice during the reign of Pushyamitra. The first attack was in or about 165 B.C. and Pushyamitra made a strategic withdrawal to Mathura and Kharavela considered it wise not to advance further. The second attack took place in about 161 B.C. and was more successful. He stabled his elephants in the Sugangiya palace, subdued Bahasatimitra (identified with Pushyamitra), the king of Magadha, and returned home with a Jain image, which had been taken away by a Nanda king and other spoils of war.

Buddhist traditions narrate that Pushyamitra was a great persecutor of Buddhism. He burnt several monasteries, killed many monks. The Divyavadana adds further that he offered a reward of 100 dinars for head of every monk. This does not seem to be correct, as the Sunga period marked the building of many Buddhist monuments at Sanchi, Barhut and other places. Though, staunch adherent of orthodox Hinduism, the Sungas do not appear to have been so intolerant as some writers represent them to be. Pushyamitra espoused the cause of Brahmins is clear from his sacrifices. In order to celebrate his victories Pushyamitra performed two asvamedha sacrifices. One was performed after his victory over the Yavana, Demetrius and the other was performed towards the end of his reign after defeating Menander. Patanjali the great grammarian and the commentator of the grammatical work of Panini, participated in one of them.

The performance of horse sacrifices indicated the revival of Brahmanic religion.

Successors of Pushyamitra

Pushyamitra was succeeded by his son Agnimitra (152-144 B.C.). He was the hero of the famous drama, *Malavikagnimitram* by Kalidasa. He was the viceroy of the Southern region of his father's kingdom. Vidisa was his capital. As already mentioned, he launched a successful war against Yajnasena, the king of Vidarbha and married his daughter, Malavika. After a short rule his son Sumitra ascended the throne. As a young prince he was successful in the battle against the Yavanas (Greeks). Bana Bhatta remarks that Sumitra was fond of music and dance. He was killed by Muladeva while enjoying a concert. He was succeeded by Vajramitra. Vajramitra ruled for nine years and he was succeeded by Bhaga (Bhagavatha). Bhagarata ruled for 32 years. In his fourteenth regnal year a Garuda monolith at Besnagar (Gwalior State) was dedicated to Vasudeva, by Heliodoros. He was the Yavana ambassador from the Greek King, Antialcidas, the king of Takshasila (Taxila) sent to the court of the king Kasiputra Bhagabhadra (Bhaga). This record of about 90 B.C. informs about the friendly relations between the Sungas and the Indo-Greek ruler and the conversion of a Greek to Vaishnavism.

The last Sunga ruler was Devabhuti. He was murdered by his Brahman minister, Vasudeva. The Sunga king lost his life at the hands of the daughter of his female attendant disguised as his queen. The murder was committed at the instance of Vasudeva a minister of Devabhuti. After disposing his master Vasudeva ascended the throne and founded the Kanva dynasty in about 76 B.C.

Contributions of the Sunga rule

Pushyamitra stopped the tide of foreign invasion and maintained his authority over a large part of the Gangetic region. The Bactrian Greeks also maintained friendly relations with them. The Sungas revived Brahmanical religion. Some of the Greeks also adopted the native Hindu religion and worshiped Lord Vishnu. This is testified by the Besnagar inscription. The Bhagavata sect of the Hindu religion was in vogue. The Sunga period witnessed the development of art and architecture. The Barhut stupa was

the splendid specimen of this type of the Sunga Art. The relief sculptures on the gateways and balustrades of the stupa were executed during the Sunga rule. The sculptures represent nature and Jataka stories were sculptured on the railings and gateways. The famous vihara at Bhaja, the Chaitya hall at Nasik, are some of the finest monuments of this age. The Sungas were the great patrons of vedic literature and vedic studies. Sanskrit became the predominant language of the scholars and Pali remained only the language of the common people. Patanjali, the Chief priest of Pushyamitra wrote his commentary, Mahabashya, to Panini's grammatical work, Ashtadhyayi. Manusmriti was composed during this period.

THE KANVAS (76-31 B.C.)

The first ruler of the Kanva line was Vasudeva, the Chief Minister of the Sunga king. He became the ruler of Magadha territory after killing Devabhuti, the last Sunga king. The Kanvas were a Brahman dynasty. Four members of the dynasty ruled over a part of the Sunga dominions for forty five years from 76 B.C. After the death of Vasudeva his son Bhumimitra became the king and ruled for fourteen years. We come across coins bearing the legend Bhumimitra and they were assigned to the Kanva ruler. However the attribution of these coins to this king is questionable and the numismatists suggest that they could be local issues. The next ruler was Narayan, son of Bhumimitra. He ruled for twelve years. The last ruler of the Kanva dynasty was Susarman, who was killed by Andhras. The identity of the Andhra king who conquered the Kanva kingdom is difficult to ascertain from the available evidence.

The Kanvas followed the religious policy of the Sungas. The vedic religion was encouraged. Buddhism showed some decline. The Kanvas did not contribute anything to the cultural development and there was no worthy and efficient ruler who could check the process of disintegration. The Southern provinces, Madhya Pradesh, the Frontier provinces had broken away from the empire and declared their independence. The Greeks had extended their sway over the Western India.

OTHER KINGDOMS

After the decline of the Sunga-Kanvas several kingdoms flourished in the North India. The existence of these kingdoms is traced from the coins and a few inscriptions issued by them. Ahichchatra (Rohilkhand), Kausambi (Kosam) and Ayodhya seem to have been ruled by some local kings. They issued several coins with their names. The Nagas, the Bharasivas and the Malvas were the other family of rulers who ruled in this period.

In addition to the above kingdoms a number of tribal states flourished in the southern Punjab and Northern Rajaputana. They had a republican or monarchical form of government. After the decline of the Sungas and Kanvas, these tribes asserted their independence. The Arjunayanas occupied the region to the southwest of Mathura. They are known from their coins. They seem to have ruled this area from the 2nd to 1st century A.D. They were considered as the direct descendants of Arjuna, the younger brother of Dharma and a hero of the Mahabharata. They seem to have been conquered by the Sakas about 75 B.C. The Audumbaras were rulers of the land between the upper course of the Ravi and the Beas. The Yaudheyas were one of the important tribes who occupied the country between the Sutlej and the Jumna. They were great warriors. They issued a several coins in their name suggesting their independent existence. They probably fought with the Saka Satrap Rudradaman (150 B.C.) and grew powerful after the decline of the Kushana power. The Kulutas, and Kunindas are the other ruling clans who ruled the Kulu valley and Simla region respectively. They were know from the coins and ruled in the 1-2 centuries A.D.

KHARAVELA OF KALINGA

Another kingdom that arose out of the ruins of the Magadha kingdom was Kalinga. It was ruled by the Chedis and the Hathingumpha (Udayagiri hill, Bhuvaneshvar) inscription provide details of king Kharavela. This is the only inscription available for understanding the history of Kharavela. At the time of Kharavela Kalinga included the districts of Puri, Cuttack and a portion of Visakhapatnam district. Aira and Mahamegavahana are mentioned as early kings of the dynasty.

Kharavela belonged to the third generation of the Chedi family of Kalinga. As a young prince he was initiated to the study of writing, coinage, accountancy, administration and legal procedure. At the age of sixteen he was installed as the crown prince. Eight years later he was crowned king and began a career of conquest. In the second year of his rule he sent an army to the banks of the Krishnaveni River, ignoring the Satakarni, and shattered the city of Asika. In the sixth year he performed Rajasuya sacrifice. In his eighth year he sacked the Gorathagiri (a fort in the Barabar Hills near Gaya) and attacked the city of Rajagriha. Consequent to this attack, the Yavana king Dimita (Demetrius) withdrew from the Sunga territory.

In his eleventh year he broke the confederacy of the Tamil kingdoms which had lasted for 113 years. In his twelfth year, he again invaded Magadha, and made Brihaspatimitra the king of Magadha bow at his feet. After this victory he returned home with a Jain image, which was taken away by a Nanda king. The identity of Brihaspatimitra is disputed, however he could be identified with an amount of reasonable certainty with Pushyamitra the Sunga ruler. In the same year he exacted a tribute of hundred thousand pearls and jewels from the Pandya king.

Kharavela was not only a conqueror but also a good administrator. Himself a great musician, he entertained people by dance and music. He spent large amounts for irrigation and other works of public utility. He was a Jain and brought back the Jain image from the Magadhan capital. He excavated several caves in the Khandagiri hill. He decorated his capital city with gardens, and gates.

Let us sum up

The political history of three kingdoms that survived after the decline of the Mauryas has been narrated. You shall be able to know the ascendancy of the Sungas and their rule in the Gangetic valley. Within a short period of 112 years they were able to stop the aggressiveness of the Bactrian Greeks. The Kanvas ruled for a short period of 45 years. During this period the Kalinga country was ruled by Kharavela, the Chedi king and his conquest were narrated. You shall have a good idea about the cultural contributions of the Sungas.

Check your Progress

1. Write a note on the political history of the Sungas.

2. Give an account of the conquests of Kharavela.

Glossary

Mahabashya : Commentary by Patanjali on Panini's Ashtadhyayi.

Bhagavatha cult : Worshippers of Vishnu.

Railing : A fence provided at the side of the circumambulatory passage in a Stupa.

Hathingumpha : Udayagiri hill near the Bhuvanesar.

Answers to Check your Progress

1. Use the material in section 9.3.
2. Use the material in section 9.6.

References

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2. Kosambi, D.D., *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*.
3. R.C. Majumdar, *Ancient India*.

Ref;

Mahabashya - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Mahabashya>

Railing - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Railing>

Hathingumpha - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Hathingumpha>

Unit 10

THE SAKAS AND KUSHANAS

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

The Sakas (Scythians) and Pahlavas (Parthians)

The Sakas

The Pahlavas

The Kushanas (45 A.D.-230 A.D.)

Origin

Kadphises I and Kadphises II

Kanishka I (78-101 A.D.)

Post Kanishka rulers

Decline

Western Satraps

Satrapal families

Nahapana

Chastana and Rudradaman

Administration and cultural aspects

Administration

Economic Conditions

Social life

Gandhara Art

Let us sum up

Glossary

Answers to Check your Progress

References

OVERVIEW

We have already seen that in the 1st century B.C. the Indo Greeks disappeared from the North-Western India. This created a political vacuum and was followed by confusion. Taking advantage of this position the Sakas established their kingdom. The Parthians, succeeded the Sakas. They were over thrown by the Kushanas. They established a powerful kingdom and ruled country for about years. The most important king was Kanishka, who patronised Buddhism. The western Satraps also ruled the western regions of India. These political transformations are narrated in this unit.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- discuss the origin and history of the Sakas and Pahlavas.
- trace the history and conquests of the Kushnas.
- describe the political condition of the Western Kshatrapas.
- outline the administration and cultural contribution of the period.

- explain the salient features of the Gandhara art.

INTRODUCTION

The Sakas and Pahlavas established their kingdom and ruled the western India and Punjab for a brief period. When their rule declined, Kushanas occupied the region. It was during the rule of Kanishka that the Saka era (A.D. 78) was inaugurated. They administered the territory by appointing Satraps. The kings of the Western satraps later Indianised. The Gandhara art form was introduced during this period especially in the northwest India. These aspects are narrated in this unit.

THE SAKAS (SCYTHIANS) AND PAHLAVAS (PARTHIANS)

Under this section the following topics namely the Sakas and the Pahlavas are discussed.

The Sakas

The Sakas were a nomadic tribe belonged to the region to the north of the river Syr Darya in Central Asia. They were turned out from their homeland by the the Yue-Chi tribes sometime in 165 B.C. They entered into Bactria, but were checked in the Kabul valley by Hermaeus, the Greek ruler. After crossing the Hindu Kush Mountains, they entered the lower Indus valley through the Bolan pass. One of those early settlements in this region is known as Sakistan (Seistan). Some of the Saka chiefs joined services under the Parthians and were even appointed Governors or Satraps of the various provinces of the Parthian kingdom.

The coins provide more copious information about the rulers. Two or more lines of Saka kings ruled over the Northern, Northwestern and Western parts of India. The founder of one of the Saka kingdom was Maues (100-75 B.C.). The second line of the Saka kingdom was established by Vonones, a Parthian prince. Maues ruled over eastern Iran. His kingdom extended from Pushkalavathi to Taxila. In his coins the images of Siva and Buddha are depicted with the Greek gods, suggesting his quick assimilation of Indian traditions. He was followed by Azes I. He ruled Punjab, Gandhara and Kapisa regions. Azes is wrongly credited with the creation of the Vikrama Era. According to a Jain work he invaded Ujjain and its ruler

Gardhabhilla was defeated and imprisoned. Gardhabhilla's son Vikramaditya repelled the invaders and re established his rule at Ujjain.

There is a marked Persian and Greek influence upon the administration of the North-Western Sakas. It was during the time of Ayes II that the occupation of the Western frontier of India passed into the hands of the Pahlavas. The titles seems to have been introduced either by Mithridates I or Mithridates II whose conquests according to the names of Maues and Vonones appear to be Saka element.

The Pahlavas

There is some close connection between the Sakas and Pahlavas. The Parthians are those Sakas who had lived under the Parthian rulers for a long time in Parthia and rose to power afterwards. Parthia was a province of the Syrian empire and comprised of Khursan and the South-East Coast of the Caspian Sea. The Pahlavas came to India and occupied at least a part of Gandhara. This Parthian family gradually lost their original customs and adopted the Indian culture and came to be known as the Indo-Parthians or Pahalavas.

The greatest king of the Pahalavas was Gondophernes (19-45 A.D.). He began his career as a Parthian viceroy in Southern Afganistan (Arachosia). He made extensive conquests and assumed the title "Great King of Kings". In the west he conquered Seistain and some other regions of the Parthian emperor. He took possession of the Kabul Valley by defeating Hermaeus, the last of the Bactrian kings. His authority over the Kabul valley was short lived, since the Kushana king Kajula Kadphisis destroyed the Parthian authority. The dominion of Gondophernes consisted of Seistan, Sind, Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, and Southern Afghanistan. He was succeeded by Pacores. He had a short rule. The end of the Parthian rule in India is marked by the conquest of the Kushanas, sometime in A.D. 50.

Gondophernes introduced the Parthian system of administration in his Indian dominion and appointed his trusted chiefs as Governors. Like the Indo-Bactrian Greeks they kept their princes as joint rulers. The Saka-Pahalvas, did not make any cultural impact on Indian culture and were easily assimilated into the Indian way of life. They began to adopt the Indian way of life by adopting Indian names. They also effected matrimonial

relations with Indian families. They simply followed the Indo-Greek technique in the minting of coins. The Indo-Greek style of Greek and Kharoshthi legends were adopted by them. A further deterioration in the monetary system was caused by the use of copper and bullion for minting coins. While the Bactrian Greeks were the innovators of the Gandhara School of sculpture, and while the Kushanas were the refiners of it, the Saka-Pahalvas were the one who nurtured it. Taxila was the main centre of their artistic activities. The chaste and simple style of architecture in the royal palace at Sikrap, the remains of Buddhist stupas and the great fire temple of Taxila are the few representations of the architectural style of the Saka-Pahalvas.

THE KUSHANAS (45 A.D.- 230 A.D.)

The period of Kushana rule marks an important epoch in the history of India. For the first time after the fall of the Mauryas there was a vast empire which not only embraced nearly the whole of North India, but extended as far as the Central Asia. The period also witnessed important developments in religion, literature and sculpture, especially the rise of Mahayana Buddhism, Gandhara art, and the appearance of the Buddha figure. New literary forms like the drama and court epic make their appearance.

Origin

The Kushanas were a branch of the nomadic tribe called the Yue-Chi of north-western China. In 165 B.C., they were driven by the Hunas and moved westward and settled in the valley of Syr Darya after displacing another tribe called the Sakas. The Yue Chi were driven from there by the Hunas for a second time and they reached the Oxus valley and occupied Bactria by the beginning of the first century B.C. Finally, Kujula Kadphises, the chief of the Kushana tribe subdued all the others and established the Kushana Empire in the middle of the 1st century A.D.

Kadphises I (45 A.D.- 64) and Kadphises II (64 A.D.- 75)

Kujala Kadphises was the first Kushana King. He made himself the master of Gandhara and Kabul territory and consolidated his power in Bactriaby defeating the Indo-Greek and Indo-Partian rulers. His empire extended from the frontiers of Persia to the Indus and pushed his rule upto Taxila.

His son Kadphises II (Wema Kadphises) succeeded to the throne. He completed the conquest of northern India, which was started by his father. He extended his dominion upto the Mathura region. He was the first Kushana king to conquer India proper. His dominion included Afghanistan, Afghan, Turkistan, Bukhara and parts of Russian Turkistan. He ruled his Indian province through military governors styled as Mahasenapati. He asserted his equality with the Chinese emperor by demanding a Chinese princess in marriage.

The conquests of Kadphises I and Kadphises II opened up the path of commerce between China, the Roman Empire and India. Roman gold began to pour into India as India enjoyed a favourable balance of trade. Indian silks, spices and gems were in demand, in the Roman Empire. Kadphises II must have embraced Hinduism and became a votary of Siva. His coins contain the titles of Mahesvara, Rajadhiraja, Sarvalokesvara which confirm, that he was a devotee of Siva. After the death of Kadphises II, Kushana history passed into a phase of uncertainty till the rise of Kanishka.

Kanishka I (78-101 A.D.)

Kanishka was a great conqueror. He ruled over Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, North-western Frontier Province and a part of Sind. Mathura, Varanasi and Malwa were the other territories included in his rule. He conquered Eastern India, annexed Ayodhya. The Sakas acknowledged the supremacy of Kanishka and also surrendered a portion of Malwa to him. He faced reverses at the hand of Pan Chao, the general of Chinese Emperor Ho li. Kanishka possessed a vast empire from Kashmir in the north to the Vindhya in the South and from Bihar in the East to the Indus Valley in the west. Outside India it consisted of three regions the Trans Pamir region, the Oxus valley region and the vast stretch of land lying between the Hindukush and the Indus comprising Kabul, Kandahar, Seistan, Afghanistan and Baluchistan.

He established his capital at Purushapura (Peshawar). He adorned his capital with many noble edifices. Public buildings and Buddhist monasteries. Kanishka erected a great relic tower. The super structure of carved wood rose in thirteen stories to a height of at least 400 ft. It was surmounted by a mighty iron pinnacle. There were a monastery along with

the tower. According to the Buddhist tradition Asvaghosha, the great Buddhist philosopher was brought by him from Magadha.

Religious policy

Kanishka was converted to Buddhism by Asvaghosha. He patronised Mahayanist school of Buddhism. Although an ardent Buddhist, he was tolerant towards all other religions. In his coins are found the images of Hindu, Persian, Greek and Byzantine deities. A large number of stupas were set up in memory of the Buddha. Missionaries were also sent to foreign countries. It was with the help of those missionaries that Buddhism spread to China, Japan, Tibet and Central Asia.

An important contribution to Buddhism was the codification of Buddha's teachings and commentaries on the three Pitakas. The codification was initiated in the Fourth Buddhist Council convened at Kundalavana Vihara in Kashmir. According to another account, the council was convened at Jallunder in eastern Punjab. About 500 monks were present and it was presided over by Vasumitra. On the basis of the new school called Mahayanism, a select committee under Parsva prepared a text of the scriptures with commentaries. This text was known as Mahavibhasha.

There was a transformation of Buddhism in the time of Kanishka. The old Hinayana form of Buddhism was replaced by a new form of religion, namely Mahayanism. It added divinity to Buddha, and Buddha was given a human form. Buddha and Bodhisatvas and their images were objects of regular worship. One of the earliest images of Buddha was found in the coins of Kanishka. Kanishka therefore added a new dimension to Buddhism and in its new form it spread to Tibet, China, Burma and Japan.

Estimate of Kanishka

Kanishka was not only the greatest kings of the Kushans, but one of the most outstanding figures of the history of India. A great conqueror and administrator, he combined in himself some of the greatness of Asoka and much of Chandragupta Maurya. He introduced the Saka era starting from 78 A.D. He was a great patron of art and learning and during his rule Sanskrit works of high standard, were produced. The greatest literary figure of Kanishka's court was Asvaghosha whose works have been compared to

those of Milton, Goethe Kant and Voltaire in richness and variety. Another great figure was Vasumitra who presided over the deliberations of the Fourth Buddhist Council. Kanishka was a great builder. His important buildings and works of art are found in Peshawar, Mathura, Kanishkapura and Taxila. An important relic of this period is the headless statue of Kanishka. He is called the second Asoka. Kanishka deserves the place in the history of Mahayana Buddhism, as Asoka has in the Hinayana Buddhism.

Post Kanishka rulers

Kanishka's son Vasishka succeeded him. He (102-106 A.D.) had an insignificant rule over a small dominion of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. He was succeeded by Huvishka (106 A.D. to 138 A.D.). Huvishka was succeeded by Vasudeva (138 to 176 A.D.). The Kushana authority started declining in the North and the North-Western parts of India because of the revolts of the local chiefs. The extent of his empire was confined to the Mathura region only. After his death in 176 A.D. the Kushana authority began to disintegrate. He was succeeded by Kanishka II (180 to 210 A.D.) and he had authority over the Punjab, Seistan, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Bactria. Kanishka II was succeeded by Vasudeva II (210). The authority of Kanishka II and Vasudeva II was confined to the northern and north-western parts of India and they lost their hold over the Indian interior.

Decline

It was during the reign of Vasudeva that the decline of the Kushanas was set in. The internal revolts and external aggressions were the basic factors responsible for the downfall of the Kushanas. The Kushanas had weak successors who were incapable of carrying the administration. The Saka-satrapas of Western and Central India who had their allegiance to the Kushanas taking advantage of the weakness of their overlords declared their independence. Similarly the Nagas shook of their allegiance to the Kushanas. The Yasudeyas, the Malavas, the Kunindas, the Sakas, became independent. The Sassanian invasion from Persia was the external force at work which destroyed the Kushana authority.

WESTERN SATRAPS

In sub sections, 14.4.1 to 14.4.3 we will be examining the topics like Satrapal families, Nahapana and Chastana and Rudradaman.

Satrapal families

The Indian Governors of the Saka rulers were called Kshatrapas. This term was probably borrowed from the old Persian title of Kshathrapavan, meaning a provincial Governor. One of the early Satraps ruled the territories around Taxila. They belonged to the Kshaharata family and were related to the Satrapal house of Mathura. Another Satrapal house ruled the country around Mathura. They were originally Sakas and were later Indianised. The Satrapal house of Mathura was overthrown by Kanisha I.

The Satrapal system introduced by the Saka Parthians developed in Western and Central India into a regular institution under the Kushans. Although they were of the Saka Parthian origin, they ruled as vassals of the Kushana Kings. Among the western Satraps, the Kshaharata family ruled the Maharashtra region and the Kardamakas ruled the Ujjain area. Bhumaka was the earliest known satraps of Western India. He belonged to the Khakharata clan of the Saka tribe. Not much is known about him. There is no evidence of the relationship between Bhumaka and Nahapana.

Nahapana

Nahapana (119 to 124 A.D.) was the greatest ruler of this dynasty. He took the titles of Kshatrapa, Mahakhatrapa and Rajan. Since he adopted the title Rajan, it is probable that he was an independent ruler and Kushanas had only a nominal authority over him. He ruled an extensive territory from Ajmer in Rajputana in the north to Nasik in Maharashtra in the South. He ruled over Kathiawar and Broach. He became a rival of the Satavahanas and snatched away a part of Maharashtra from them. Nahapana's son-in-law, Ushavadatta acted as the Governor of this region. Ushavadatta added Malwa to his principality. He built temple and caves for the Buddhists and the Hindus. A large number of silver coins of Nahapana were found. Ushavadatta played an important role in the administration of Nahapana. The Satavahana king Gautamiputra Satakarni defeated Nahapana. The

family virtually came to an end after the death of Nahapana and the Satrapal authority in Western India became temporarily eclipsed.

Chastana and Rudradaman

Chashtana was appointed as the Satrap of Ujjain. He belonged to the Kardamaka clan of the Sakas. Chashtana started his career as a vassal of the Kushanas in Sind. He restored the territories that had been snatched away by the Satavahanas. Chashtana issued coins engraved with the Satavahana symbols. He also got back from the Satavahanas the City of Ujjaini, which he made his capital. He assumed the title of Mahashtrapa. He appointed his son Jayadevan and grandson Kudradman to work under him as Kshatrapas. He died in 130 A.D. when his grandson Rudradaman ascended the throne.

Rudraman came from the region of Cutch and at Junagadh a lengthy inscription provides evidence of his achievements. He was able to restore the glory of the house by his efforts and also took up the title a Mahakshtrapa. He defeated a Satavahana king twice. His daughter was married to Satakarni, the Satavahana ruler. Rudradaman ruled the territory which included the areas of Akara (East Malwa), Avanti (West Malwa), Anupa, Marta (North Kathiawar), Saurashtra (South Kathiawar), Svabhra (the region of the Sabarmati), Maru (probably Marwar), Kachha (Cutch), Sindhu (Sindhu), Sauvira (east of the lower Indus), Kukura (North Kathiawar), Aparanta (north Konkan) and Nishada (West Vindhya and Aravali). He rebuilt the Sudarsana lake which was devastated by huge floods and heavy rains. He conducted the government on the advice of the council of ministers. He was well versed in grammar, polity, music, finance and logic, etc. Except on the battle-fields he did not kill men and he adhered to this principle to the last day of his life. During his time Ujjaini became a centre of learning and cultural activities. The Sakas were now assimilated by Indian culture and society. Very little information is available about the successors of Rudradaman. The last Satrap Rudrasimha III was killed by Chandragupta II in 338 A.D. thus ended the Saka Satrapal house of Ujjain.

ADMINISTRATION AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

In sub sections, 14.5.1 to 14.5.3 we will touch upon the topics like administration, economic conditions and social life.

Administration

The Kushana administration was a blend of Indian and foreign elements. The kingdom was divided into various units such as Rashtra, Ahara, Janapada, Desa and Vishaya. The governance under Satraps of provinces and designations Kshatrapas and Mahakshatrapas were of Persian origin and borrowed from the Sakas. They believed in the divine right as is evident from their titles like Devaputra and Mahesvara. The Mathura inscription of Huvishka refers to a Devakula or a shrine; where the statue the grandfather of Kanishka was installed. Amatyas and Mahasenapati were installed as officers to Administer the territory. Dandanayaka and Mahadandanayakawere the other officers. There are references to Gramikas and Dadrapalas. The Kushana administration must have ensured safety which was responsible for progress and prosperity of the country.

Economic Conditions

Agriculture was the principal occupation. Different types of lands existed and on it several crops were cultivated. They initiated the means for the improvement to techniques of irrigation. By these innovative methods they improved and increased the production. Cattle rearing was another important profession encouraged in this period. However there were famines and efforts were made to overcome the crisis by initiating proper measures.

There were the professional groups who produced several articles of trade. Among those there were goldsmiths, coppersmiths, workers in glass and lead, workers in tin, brass, ivory and iron etc. produced several articles. The production and trade were normally handled by trade guilds. They accepted permanent deposits and helped in the development of trade. There were sea-farming merchants. There were attendant class, the entertainers, and other professionals worked to develop the economy of the period. During this period there existed a brisk trade with foreign countries. The establishment of law and order in the country and the absence of foreign invasion must have made the people prosperous. Commodities were sent from different parts of the empire of foreign countries. There were land routes through the North West and there were sea routes from the West coast. India had a favourable balance of trade with the Roman Empire.

Social life

Society was divided on the basis of birth. Brahmans occupied a position of privilege. There are references to marriages in the same caste between members following different professions and of varying status, but there is no reference to inter-caste marriage. Social life is well represented in a range of activities in the several sculptures. The ladies enjoyed considerable freedom and they were provided with separate apartments in the houses. There was no uniformity in the matter of dress which varied with region and people and the cloth used for dress varied with people from different regions and according to their status. People had their pastimes and recreations. Singing, dancing, music and other items of entertainment like dramatic performances and magical shows providing amusement to many. The musical instrument depicted in sculptures are cymbals, drums, harp, flute, lyre, mandoline, pan pipes and tambourine. Inscriptions record donations by pious people for their respective religious orders.

Religious Condition

It was during the Kushana period that Mahayanism made its appearance and the Buddhist religion was divided into two parts. Kanishka called the fourth Buddhist council to settle the Buddhist doctrines. On the whole Kushanas followed a policy of religious toleration. Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism flourished side by side. The performance of Vedic sacrifices was common. The Jains were also fairly active with their Ganas and Kulas. The Tirthankaras enjoyed the respect and adoration of all the schools. There are references to the cult of snake worshippers in many records.

Literature

The Kushana rulers were great patrons of literature and a large number of standard books were written in Sanskrit during their period. The Kushana literature used Buddhist themes and Sanskrit language. The most important writers of this period are Asvaghosha and Nagarjuna. Ashvaghosha was the author of Buddacharita and Saundarananda. He portrayed the life of Buddha with devotion and admiration in Sanskrit. Asvaghosha was the author of the drama Sariputraprakarana. It deals with the story of conversion of Sariputra. It was during this period that Nagarjuna wrote the Prajnaparamita Sutra. Vasumitra wrote the

Mahavibhasha. Charaka wrote his famous treatise on Indian medicine. The other works attributed to this period are the Lalitavistara, Divyavadana, Suddharma-Pundrika and Milindapanha. Excepting Milindapanha, the other works are in Sanskrit.

Coinage

Kanishka I, Huvuishka and Vasudeva issued gold and copper coins. The later Kushana struck only gold coins. A large number of silver and copper coins were issued by Malavas, Yaudheyas, Arjunayanas, Audumbaras, Kunindas, etc. Large number of Roman gold coins were also imported into India. An interesting feature of the Kushana coinage is that the figures of the various deities worshipped by the different subjects living in the Kushana Empire and in its different parts were represented. Images of the deities from countries like Iran, Bactria and other neighbouring religions are also depicted.

GANDHARA ART

The Gandhara art flourished from about the middle of the first century B.C. to about the first century A.D. The province of Gandhar, the centre of Mahayanism, was so situated as to be the meeting ground of the Indian, Chinese, Iranian, and the Greco-Roman cultures. It was, therefore, quite natural for the province to absorb foreign ideas and influences. The real patrons of the Gandhara art were the Central Asian Sakas and Kushanas. They carried the art traditions of their Greek predecessors and protected the West-Asiatic Hellenism in their region. It was during the reign of Kanishka that a vast number of the Buddhist monasteries and stupas were constructed and Buddhist images were executed on the ideals of Greek art.

The Gandhara art is derived from the Hellenistic Art of Asia Minor and the Roman Empire. Accordingly, it is also known as Indo-Greek or Greco-Roman art. It was also called the Greco Buddhist School of art. The statues of Buddha and other divine figures were modelled, and draped according to the Greek art traditions. Olympian divinities of Greece provided characters and models to the Buddhist pantheon. Yaksha, Garudas, Nagas and even Vajrapani, with their usual Indian attributes, were conceived and represented in terms of the bearded Genji, Atlantea, Bachus,

Zeus Herakles, Eios, Hermes, or Poseidon. The Indian subjects were interpreted through the Greco-Roman modelling. The most important contribution was the evolution of an image of Buddha. The life of Buddha formed the inspiring motive of this art.

The Gandhara sculptures were found in the ruins of Taxila and in the various ancient sites in Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier province of Pakistan. They are mostly of images of Buddha and relief sculptures representing scenes from Buddha's life. They were carved in stone, stucco, terracotta and clay and appear to have been invariably embellished with gold leaf or paint. The best representative specimens are from Hadda Jaulian and Dharmarajika stupa at Taxila and from Hadda near Jalalabad. A large number of Gandhara art pieces were preserved in Peshawar, Lahore and other museums. These figures are characterised by an intensity of feeling and realism; their drapery is displayed in small and narrow folds, symmetrically arranged.

The Gandhara art was also visible in architecture. A very large number of Buddhist monasteries were erected. A monastery had a votive Stupa and a dwelling place for the monks. The roofs of these chapels were so designed that a cupola alternated with a trefoil vault, each an architecturally decorative motif and depicting a separate construction. Cupola was Greek device and trefoil vault was the Indian device used in the Chaitya-hall. These were the distinctive features of the Gandhara architecture. The Gandhara style of architecture continued to be followed not only in the Kushana period but also in two subsequent centuries. It is a noteworthy feature that Gandhara art never took real hold upon India, because the Indians and Greeks were radically different and dissimilar in their culture. Its influence spread on one side through central Asia to China and Japan and on the other in India itself and by the seas to the islands of Southeast Asia.

Hellenistic motifs like the Corinthian capital, triangular pediments entablatures, medallions and mouldings were adopted for the stupas and edifices of monasteries. To these Hellenistic adoptions were also added ornamental features of Parthian extraction. This is a graceful and artistic synthesis of some elements of Indian and Hellenistic cultures.

Mathura School of Art

About the beginning of the first century A.D., Mathura became very active art centre and in the succeeding centuries, it produced varied works of art and exported images to Central Asia and Taxila on one side and Sravasti, Prayag and Sarnath near Varanasi, on the other. The Mathura artists carried on the earlier sculptural tradition of Bharhut and Sanchi. Its tradition is best represented by a series of high relief sculptures on the front side of pillars and pillars-bases discovered at various sites of Mathura. These sculptures belong to the second century A.D. Mathura artists evolved Buddha images in their own way, independent of Gandhara artists. Besides the Buddhist images, Mathura artists in the Kushana period, carved out images of Brahmanical and Jain divinities and statues of Nagas and Naginis.

Let us sum up

It has been shown that the Greeks, Sakas, Parthians, and Kushana, came to India as invaders, but were absorbed in the Indian culture. The Indian society has adopted itself to the new environments and changing circumstances. The Mahayana sect of Buddhism developed and spread to the countries of Asia as far as Syria and China, Africa, Europe, Indo-China and Indian Archipelago. It led to trade and maritime enterprises. The period also saw the rise of classical Sanskrit and the various forms of Prakrit. The Gandhara school of art and architecture flourished. These aspects were told in this unit.

Check your Progress

1. Trace the political history of the Sakas and Pahlavas.

2. Write a note on the contributions of the Kushanas.

Glossary

- Chaitya** : A Buddhist place of worship
- Gandhra Art** : The Art form developed out of the mixture of Hellenistic and Indian art forms.
- Kshatrapa** : The Provincial Governor of the Sakas.
- Saka Era** : Inaugurated by Kanishka, (78. A.D.)
- Satrap** : The Provincial Governor of the Sakas.
- Stucco** : Images made out lime mortar.
- Terracotta** : Figures made out of burnt clay.
- Yue Chi tribe** : A central Asian tribe who later became the Kushanas.

Answers to Check your Progress

1. Use the material in section 10.2.
2. Summarise the material in sections 10.5 and 10.6.

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Chaitya - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Chaitya>

Satrap - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Satrap>

Stucco - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Stucco>

BLOCK III

Unit 11 : Rise and Consolidation of the Gupta Empire

Unit 12 : Gupta Administration

Unit 13 : Harshavardhana Administration and Social Life

Unit 11

RISE AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Sources

Foundation of the Gupta Dynasty

Chandragupta - I

Samudra Gupta

Rama Gupta

Kumara Gupta

Skanda Gupta

Last Gupta Rulers

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to Check your Progress

OVERVIEW

The Guptas established their imperial rule in India for more than two centuries. This unit helps us to learn the political history of the Gupta empire.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the unit you should be able to

- explain the foundation the of the age of Gupta.
- discuss the consolidation of the empire by war and matrimonial alliances.
- describe the invasion of Huns and the decline of the Gupta.

INTRODUCTION

The empire of the Guptas was one of the most important rule which flourished in Ancient India after the Mauryas. The decline of the Mauryan empire gave way to the emergence of Satavahanas and Kushnas. The Satavahanas brought political unity and economic prosperity in the South. Almost the whole of Northern India was brought under one rule by the Kushnas. Like Satavahanas, Kushnas carried on thriving trade with the Roman empire. The fall of the empires of Satavahanas and Kushnas was followed by a century of confusion. Many independent states came into existence during this period. It was the Gupta empire which united the whole of North India under a strong rule for more than a century.

The most important feature of the Gupta age was the revival of Brahmanical religion. The Sanskrit literature reached its peak of glory during this age. The Guptas revived the political supremacy of native rulers in northern India in the fourth century A.D. Gupta Dynasty was founded in A.D. 320.

SOURCES

There is an abundance of sources throwing ample light on the history of the Guptas. Of the Puranas, Vayu Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Matsya Purana and Vishnu Purana give details regarding the political history of the Guptas.

The Dharmasastras like, Danda Nitisastra, the Kamandaga Nitisastra and Smritis are useful to reconstruct the history of the Guptas. The shastras and smritis were aimed to give instructions and social norms to the king and his people. The works of Visakadhatta like Devichandraguptam and Mudrarakshasa are political dramas full of diplomacy and politics. It also throws light on the list of tribes in the time of Chandragupta-II.

The accounts of the Chinese traveller Fahien is called as FO-KUO-KI or Record of Buddhist Kingdoms. The accounts of Fahien give details about socio, economic and religious conditions of that time. The accounts of Itsing mention about the rule of Sri Gupta.

Inscriptions are very helpful in ascertaining the historical facts and conditions of the Gupta period. In the year 1888, Atfleet deciphered and published his, Corpus Inscriptions Indecorum, containing inscriptions of the early Gupta kings and their successors. Udayagiri Cave Inscription, the Mathura Stone Inscription and the Sanchi Stone Inscription mention about state and religion during the reign of Chandragupta-II.

The achievements of Skanda Gupta and Kumaragupta are mentioned in the Bhitari Pillar Inscription. A variety of seals were also excavated from Muzaffarpur district of Chandragupta-II and Kumara Gupta I. The seals supply the list, of civil and military officers of provincial and local administration.

The monuments found at Mathura, Banaras and Nalanda Schools of Art are very helpful to reconstruct the cultural history of this period. The coins of Chandragupta-I, Kumara Gupta I, Samudara Gupta and Chandra are found useful, to confirm the chronology and economic prosperity of the Guptas.

FOUNDATION OF THE GUPTA DYNASTY

The origin of the Imperial Gupta is obscure. Around A.D. 275 the dynasty of the Guptas came to power. The Guptas were possibly the feudatories of the Kushanas in the beginning. It was twenty-five years after the fall of Kushana rule, the Guptas emerged as a strong power. The inscriptions of Prabhavati Gupta and the accounts of Itsing mention about Sri Gupta. The first known ruler of the dynasty was Sri Gupta A.D. 240 - 280. Sri Gupta had assumed the title of Adhiraja and Maharaja. Ghatotkacha Gupta was succeeded his father, Sri Gupta and ruled over from 280 to A.D. 320. Ghatotkacha Gupta assumed the title Maharaja. Ghatotkacha is described as the first Gupta king and regarded as the founder of the Gupta dynasty.

Chandragupta-I (A.D. 320 – 335)

Chandragupta-I was the first eminent ruler of the Gupta dynasty. Chandragupta-I assumed the title of Maharajadhiraja or king of kings as a result of his conquests. He strengthened his political supremacy through matrimonial alliance. The important event of his reign was his marriage with a Lichchhavi princess, Kumara Devi. His son and successor was Samudra Gupta, who was also the greatest ruler of the Gupta dynasty. A majority of the historians accepted the fact that the matrimonial alliance definitely raised the political status of the Guptas. The states of the Guptas and the Lichchhavis were united only after the reign of Chandragupta-I.

Chandragupta-I wisely nominated his son, Samudra Gupta, as his successor to the throne. Samudra Gupta was not his eldest son but proved the most competent and successful amongst his sons. The last years of Chandragupta-I is not clear. Probably, Chandragupta became a hermit and died as such.

Samudra Gupta A.D. 335 - 375

Samudra Gupta himself proved to be a great conqueror and the most successful commander, who remained an undefeated ruler throughout his reign. The notable source of information about his political achievements was Allahabad Pillar Inscription. Allahabad Pillar Inscription was composed by his court poet and minister, Harisena. It explains about the various northern and southern expeditions of Samudra Gupta.

As per Allahabad Pillar Inscription, Samudra Gupta never knew a defeat. Hence, V.A.Smith called him the 'Napoleon of India'. After establishing a vast empire he performed Asvamedha Yaga, a symbol of imperialism. He also maintained good relations with the neighbouring states both in India and outside. The rulers of the frontier states either accepted the suzerainty or paid homage to Samudra Gupta.

We have Chinese evidence to show that Samudra Gupta had cordial relations with Mega Varman of Ceylon. The Ceylon king Sri Mega Varman sent an embassy to Samudra Gupta to erect a monastery at Bodhgaya. Samudra Gupta built a splendid monastery for the convenience of Buddhist pilgrims. Samudra Gupta patronized art and architecture. He was an accomplished scholar, learned in Vedas and Shastras, a poet of the highest order, a patron of learning and an excellent musician well versed in the seven notes of music. He had a vision to establish an All India Empire. He reorganized the system of government and administration. The empire of Samudra Gupta was extended from the Brahmaputra on the east to the Jamuna and Chambal on the west and from the foot of the Himalayas on the north to the Narmada on the south.

Rama Gupta

Samudra Gupta's son Rama Gupta, whose wife was Dhruvadevi succeeded Samudra Gupta. According to certain references of Visakhadhatta in his work, 'Devi Chandraguptam', he himself agreed to surrender his wife to the Saka king. Chandragupta-II went to the saka camp and murdered the Saka king. Then, Chandragupta-II killed Rama Gupta, captured the throne and married Dhruvadevi. There are differences of opinion among the historians regarding the reign of Rama Gupta.

Chandra Gupta-II A.D. 375 - 414

Chandragupta-II, the son and successor of Samudra Gupta was born to his chief queen, Dattadevi. He assumed the title, 'Vikramaditya', which means 'Son of Valour'. Chandra Gupta II was an efficient administrator and his reign of about forty years was said to be the most glorious in the history of India.

Chandragupta-II continued his father's policy of conquest. He was anxious to subdue the whole of northern India. He extended his territorial limits both by diplomacy and wars. Nine scholars of repute or 'Navaratnas' headed by Kalidasa adorned the court of Chandragupta-II. Kalidasa, the greatest poet and dramatist was a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II.

During his reign, the Saka kingdom became weak because of internal conflicts. Chandragupta-II took advantage of it and invaded the kingdom of the Sakas in A.D. 409. He killed the Saka chief, Rudrasimha-III, and annexed the territory. In order to commemorate his victory over the Sakas he performed 'Aswamedhayagna' and assumed the title, "Sakasi". "Sakasi" means the destroyer of Sakas. He strengthened his empire by matrimonial alliances with Nagas and Vakatakas. He married a Naga princess and gave one of his daughters in marriage to the Vakataka king Rudrasena-II.

Chandragupta-II led military expeditions in the East as well as in the North-West and advanced up to Bactria. Chandragupta was named 'Devaraja', 'Deva Sri Dhava' and 'Deva Gupta' as well.

The greatest of the military exploits of Chandragupta-II was his war against the Satraps. The Satrap king accompanied by his minister, Virasena Saba, and his general Amarkardove. Rudra Simbal III, the ruling Satrap, was defeated, dethroned and slain and his territories were annexed.

Chandragupta-II issued gold, silver, and copper coins. In one type of his gold coins, he is represented as slaying a lion. Chandragupta-II's empire included practically the whole of northern India and stretched from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. The western extension facilitated sea trade. The main reason for the economic prosperity of his age was the immense economic advantage of Indian commerce with the western world.

Chinese pilgrim Fahien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta-II. Fahien came to India to collect Buddhist works. The account of Fahien mentions that the Government of Chandragupta-II was very efficient. The people were happy. The criminals were punished on the basis of circumstances and nature of the crimes and the punishments ranged from fines to mutilation of limbs. Throughout his empire, the people strictly followed Ahimsa.

Fahien mentions that there were free hospitals for the poor, orphans, widows and cripples. The account also refers to the desolate condition of Buddhist centres like Gaya, and Kurinagara. The Gupta kings greatly patronized the progress of Hinduism.

Kumara Gupta A.D. 415 - 455

Chandragupta-II was succeeded by his son, Kumara Gupta. He brought necessary changes in the administration. He successfully reigned the kingdom for about 40 years. He performed 'Aswamedha' sacrifice. According to the Mandasor Inscription, Kumara Gupta-I conquered the western Malwa and annexed it. Kumara Gupta's rule seems to have been badly shaken towards the close of his reign.

In between the conquest of a river Narmadha which his strained relations with the Vakatakas ultimately resulted in the hostility of Pushyamitra towards the close of his reign. In the later part of his rule he faced the invasion of Huns. His son Skandagupta defeated the Huns. Kumara Gupta kept intact the vast empire inherited from his father. Also, he maintained peace and prosperity within its frontiers. The foundation of the Nalanda University was the most important socio-cultural event of the reign of the Kumara Gupta. He performed *asvamedayaga* as well assumed titles like Mahendraditya, Srimahendra, Aswamedha Mahendra etc. The period of the Gupta greatness seems to have come to an end with Kumaragupta's reign.

Skanda Gupta 455 - 467 AD

Skanda Gupta has been regarded as the last great Gupta ruler. Skanda Gupta was away from the capital when Kumara Gupta died. But Skanda Gupta, after returning from his victorious camping against Puhyamitras probably ascended the throne. However, the situation became worst due to the internal problems. But, practically after the death of Skanda Gupta. Some of his feudatories revolted to ascertain independence. They issued debased coins, which created a deep economic crisis in the empire. Skanda Gupta's victory over Pushyamitras saved the Gupta empire, but it was invaded by the Huns. Skanda Gupta rallied his forces against the Huns and defeated them. Skanda Gupta assumed the title of Vikramaditya in celebrating the victory over the Huns. He maintained the power, glory and

prestige of the Gupta empire. The threatening invasion of Huns materialized during the reign of Kumara Gupta's successors. The successors of Skanda Gupta could not keep the empire intact. He died in about A.D. 467

Last Gupta Rulers

Pura Gupta (A.D. 467- 469) succeeded the throne at a very old age after the death of his step brother, Skanda Gupta. Too many military campaigns of Skanda Gupta against the Huns taxed heavily the resources and the treasury of the empire. Pura Gupta ruled and died within two years. He did nothing to check the disintegration of the empire. Budha Gupta succeeded Pura Gupta. After Budha Gupta, Kumara Gupta-II ascended the throne of Gupta dynasty in A.D. 474.

Budha Gupta was the son of Pura Gupta. Budha Gupta ruled for about twenty years. The provincial governors of Budha Gupta set themselves as independent rulers. The succession question and the invasions of the Huns and the Vakatakas together led to the decline of Gupta Empire.

Check your progress

1. The most important feature of the Gupta Age was the revival of _____
2. Name the ruler who assumed the title of Vikramaditya.
3. Explain the sources for the study of the Gupta.
4. Describe the achievements of Chandragupta II.

Let us sum up

The Guptas established their empire on the ruins of the Kushanas and Satavahanas. Sri Gupta was responsible for the origin of the Gupta empire. Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II were the important rulers of the Guptas. The reign of Chandra Gupta II witnessed the high watermark of the Gupta empire. It was Samudra Gupta who enlarged the Gupta Kingdom enormously. Samudra Gupta defeated more than 20 kings of North India and Deccan. After the reign of Chandra Gupta II the greatness of the Gupta

empire come to an end. The invasion of the Huns and the Vakatakas brought the Guta empire to the end.

Key words

Revival, Traveller, Consolidation, Obscure, Eminent, Navarathanas, Inherit.

Answers to check your progress

- 1) Use the material in section: 11.1
- 2) Use the material in section: 11.3.6
- 3) Use the material in section: 11.3
- 4) Use the material in section: 11.3.4

Glossary

1. Revival : an improvement in the condition
2. Traveller : a person who goes from one place to another
3. Consolidation : the action of making something strong as combining many together
4. Obscure : not discovered ; uncertain
5. Eminent : famous and respected within a particular
6. Navarathanas : a group of nine extraordinary people in the court of Akbar
7. Inherit : receive from previous holder as a heir at his death

Ref;

Revival - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Revival>

Traveller - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Traveller>

Eminent - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Eminent>

Inherit - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Inherit>

Unit 12

GUPTA ADMINISTRATION

Structure

Overview

Learning objectives

Introduction

Central Government

Provincial Administration

Judicial Administration

Literature

Art and Architecture

Religious Conditions

Social and Economic Conditions

The Huna Invasion and the decline of the Gupta Empire

Let us sum up

Keywords

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

The administration of the Guptas was founded on the Historical traditions and modified to the conditions of times. This unit helps us to learn about the administrative structure, developments in the fields of literature, art and architecture and the end of the Gupta empire.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to

- explain the Gupta administration.
- describe the Social and Economic life as well as Cultural developments.
- outlines the decline of the Guptas.

INTRODUCTION

The Gupta period politically was an age of Indo-Aryan revival. The Guptas were undoubtedly the representatives of the Aryan Kshatriya tradition and champions of Aryan cause against Aryavarta's adversaries. The victorious career of the warrior kings had led to the foundation of the greatest empire in India since the time of the Mauryans. The happy and the contented life of the people and their affluence found expression in the many sided development of culture.

We have a glimpse of the general characteristics of the Gupta imperial administration in the valuable account of the Chinese pilgrim Fahien. Fahien visited Northern India during the reign of Chandragupta II. Guptas achieved political unity. Their strong arms could establish such peace and order that a solitary pilgrim from abroad had no reason to complain of the molestation by robbers. It redounds to the glory of the Guptas that they gave their subjects the benefits of "Gupta peace" without resorting to those harsh methods of police control and criminal justice that had disfigured the administration of the Maruryans.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The administration of the Guptas cannot be justly claimed to be original. It was founded on the historical traditions of the past, improved upon and adopted to the conditions of times. Though not original, it was at once imposing, efficient and benevolent. The king was all powerful and regarded as the representative of God on earth. However, the Gupta king did not claim any infallibility on account of his divine origin. The king was required

to wait upon elders, study the art of government and cultivate righteousness. Irreligious and tyrannical kings were condemned. The Gupta king was expected to build up his body well so that he could successfully discharge the duties of the high office. The successions to the throne were normally hereditary. But in some cases the king was nominated.

The king controlled the whole machinery of the government and had the largest responsibility in the formulation of the policy. The king was assisted by a body of high officials, Mantrin (C.M.) Sandhivigrahika (Minister of peace and war) and Akshya Patalika (Minister of records). These ministers along with the Yuvaraja formed the council of ministers. Kanohuki was an officer, who acted as the agent between the king and the council of ministers.

A large number of officials were employed by the Gupta rulers to carry on the administration of the country. Some important officers were Rajapurusha, Rajanayaka, Mahapratihare, Mahasamanta, Ranabhadagarika (In-charge of military Stores).

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

A study of the Gupta inscriptions reveals that there was a hierarchy of administrative divisions from top to bottom. The Gupta Empire was divided into provinces called 'Desas' and 'Bhuktis'. The Desas were governed by officers called Goptris. The Bhuktis were governed by Uparikas. Deshas and Bhuktis were again divided into Vishayas or Pradeshas. The Vishyas or districts were administered by Vishayapati.

Vishya was divided into a number of villages. The village was the lowest unit of administration and was administered by Gramikas. The Gramika was assisted by a council of village elders.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Gupta inscriptions refer to such judicial officers as Mahadandanayaka, Mahakshapatalika etc. Mahadandanayaka perhaps combined the duties of the judge and a general. According to Fahien, punishments were very lenient. Criminals were fined lightly or heavily according to the circumstances of each case. Even in cases of repeated attempts at

rebellion, the punishment was only the loss of the right hand. However, the testimony of Fahien is not accepted and it is pointed out that punishments were rather harsh in the Gupta period. The most brutal form of capital punishment was infliction of death by elephants.

Fahien has nothing but praise for the Gupta administration, which was mild, benevolent and free from bureaucratic tyranny. "The people are prosperous and happy without registration or official restrictions. Those who want to go away, may go, those who want to stop may stop."

The administration of civil law was a happy combination of justice and humanity. The people had a hand in the administration as the government was decentralized. The local bodies enjoyed a large number of powers.

The Gupta administration is a striking contrast to the administration of the Mauryas. The Mauryan rule was characterized for the severity of criminal law, vexations of official regulations and by the hateful system of espionage. All these were conspicuously absent in the Gupta period. The Gupta administration was mild and at the same time efficient.

LITERATURE

The Gupta period witnessed a great literary impulse particularly of Sanskrit language. This epoch is usually called "The Augustan Age" of Sanskrit literature. Classical Sanskrit, after 500 years of evolution from the time of Panini reached its zenith now. The rededication of the major puranas took place in this period. The rewriting of Mahabharata alone should give a prominent place to the Gupta period. The Bhagavata, the Skanda, Siva, Mastya, Vayu and Brahmanda puranas representing the earlier traditions were rewritten during the Gupta age.

Kalidasa was the greatest poet and dramatist of the period. Kalidasa was author of Abhignana Sakuntala. His skill in lyric poetry is exhibited in Meghasandesa and Ritusamhara. Visakhadatta, the author of Mudrarakshasa and Budraka, the author of Mrichchhakatika also belong to this period. Panchatantra, the most remarkable treasure house of tales is of this period. Among the other great poets, mention may be made of Bharavi, Dandi, Subandhu, the lexicographer. Amarasimha and the famous jurist Yajnavalka. Indian speculative philosophy also attained prominence.

Vatsayana wrote Nyayabhashya on the Nyaya system of philosophy. Vasubandhu wrote many books on Mahayana and Hinayana philosophy.

There was a remarkable progress in the field of medicine, mathematics, astronomy and astrology. Aryabhatta, Varahamihira and Brahmagupta were "the foremost astronomers and mathematicians of the World." Varahamihira was not only an astronomer but also an expert in all branches of natural science. Truly "it could be said that the scholars of the Gupta period were gifted with an insatiable scientific curiosity, a desire to go forward in seeking knowledge and a courage in facing conclusions, which is almost modern in its outlook".

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The achievements in the field of fine arts, sculpture and painting were marvelous. The Gupta art was essentially Indian, free from foreign influence. In spite of the destruction of many of the monuments due to invasions, some still remain to show the splendour of the Gupta art. The temple at Bhumra dedicated to Siva and the Ajaigarh temple are examples. The famous Dasavatara temple at Deogarh is also assigned to this period.

The Madura School of sculpture continued to influence for a longer time than the other great artistic centres of the north. The Gupta art is generally considered the culmination of classical art which had its beginning very early. Gupta art has been praised for its intellectuality.

Specimens of Gupta paintings are found at Bagh, Ajanta (India), Sugiya in Ceylon. The paintings of the Gupta Age show "the art at its best". The Gupta craftsmen were very successful in working on metals. The huge iron pillar at Delhi made of wrought iron testifies to the metallurgical skill of the period. The Gupta coins are noted for their variety and beauty.

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

The Gupta kings patronized Brahminism and hence Gupta Age was a period of Hindu renaissance. The Gupta kings were tolerant towards other religions though they styled themselves as Paramabhagavatas. The figures of Lakshmi and Garuda are found on coins of this age. Temples were built for various Hindu Gods and goddesses. Different religious festivals were

celebrated. The Puranas, the Mahabharath and the Buddhist texts were rewritten and took the final form. Vasubandhu, a Buddhist scholar was patronized by Sakudragupta. Anavarkadeva, the commander of Buddhism was popular in India, but the Buddhist Centres like Kapilavastu, Kusinagaa and Buddha Gaya were in a deserted condition.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The economic conditions and the life of the people of this period were generally prosperous due to increased overseas trade both with the west and the East. Use of silk had become a general practice. Kalidasa specially mentions about the Chinese silk in his works. There was notable progress in the fields of agriculture, industry, trade and commerce. Every industry had its own occupational guild. Some of the guilds also acted as banks. Tamaralipti in Bengal and Barukachacha in Baharastra were the flourishing parts. The issue of large number of gold and silver coins by the Gupta rulers speak of the economic prosperity of the period.

There was the revival of Brahminism. The people competed with one another in practicing dharma. Fahien says, "Throughout the country, no one kills any living thing, nor drinks wine, nor eats onions or garlic, but Chandalas were segregated." Sati was not common. The Chandalas lived outside the villages, ate meat and consumed liquor. People never locked their houses or used documents in their financial transactions. The rich and the prosperous maintained charitable institutions for the poor. There were free hospitals for the poor maintained by the rich.

THE HUNA INVASION AND THE DECLINE OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

The Hunas or Huns were nomads belonging to Mangolia. They hailed from the regions beyond the Gobi desert. The Hunas divided themselves into two groups. One group marched towards Europe. The other group settled in the valley of the Oxus invaded Persia and India. In the 5th century A.D. this group is known as the white Huns or Eppthalities. They operated from Kabul.

The Huns started their invasions during the closing period of Kumaragupta. They were driven back by Skandagupta about 455 A.D. The Huns renewed

their incursions and occupied Gandhara. They pushed their way upto Eastern Malwa, under the leadership of Toramana. He conquered Vallhi and extended his influence in the northern, western and central India.

Mihirakula succeeded his father Toramana. His capital was Sakala. He persecuted many Buddhists. Yasodharman of Malwa organized a confederacy against the Huns. He defeated Mihirakula and took him as a prisoner. Mihirakula was set free on the condition that he would quit India. On his release, Mihirakula became the ruler of Kashmir, after dethroning his host. He was finally driven out of Kashmir and on his way he died. After Mihirakula's departure, Yasodharman of Malwa conquered and ruled over a great part of the Gupta Empire. The Makharis and later Gupta declared independence after the death of Yasodharman. Thus Yasodharman, Manukharis later Guptas. Vakatakas and Huns were responsible for the down fall of the Guptas.

The short time rule of the Huns was significant in the world history for their barbarious raids. The glorious empires of the world were destroyed by the Huns. While Atilla became the scourge in Europe, Mihirakula played the same role in India. Dr.Smith considers the Huns invasions to be "a turning point in the history of northern and western India, both political and social." The Hun invasions destroyed the political system of the Guptas and the political unity of India. It took nearly 150 years for the Indo-Aryans to revive the Hindu tradition under Harsha.

The Huns, embraced Hinduism and joined the Hindu society. This also contributed to the rigidity of the caste-system.

Buddhism suffered severe persecution by the Huna rulers. The Hunans destroyed Buddhist monasteries and hastened the decline of Buddhism.

Check your progress

- 1) Explain the administration of the Gupta empire.
- 2) Discuss the decline of the Gupta empire.

Let us Sum up

“Thus the age of the great Guptas was an era of resplendent glory. It was an age of triumphant nationalism and dazzling imperialism, of benevolent administration and ordered freedom; of fruitful activity and wide spread prosperity; of dynamic geniuses and progressive commerce. In short striking success stamped the age and elegant glory clothed it. Verily, it was the Golden Age of India.”

In short, the homeless, brutal race came all the way from central Asia only to be absorbed into Hindu-fold.

Keywords

Fahien, Akshya Patalika, Desas, Varahamihira, Mantrin, Sandhivigrahika, Yuvaraja, Ranabhadagarika.

Answers to Check your Progress

1. Use the material in section: 12.1 to 12.3
2. Use the material in section: 12.8

Glossary

1. Akshya Patalika : an inexhaustible vessel
2. Desas : a village community
3. Varahamihir : an ancient astronomer
4. Mantrin : a minister
5. Sandhivigrahika : foreign relations minister
6. Yuvaraj : prince
7. Ranabhadagarika : brain child

Ref;

Desas - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Desas

Mantrin - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Mantrin

Yuvaraj - <https://www.google.com/search?q=> Yuvaraj

Unit 13

HARSHAVARDHANA ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL LIFE

Structure

Overview

Learning Objectives

Introduction

Sources

Administration

Buddhism

Hiuen - Tsang (630 A.D. - 642 A.D.)

I-Tsing (672 A.D)

Let us Sum up

Key Words

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

Reign of Harsha is said to be the last Hindu rule in ancient India. In this unit we learn about the condition of north India during the 6th century A.D. and the rule of Harsha.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to

- explain the Harshavardhana and his Administration
- discuss the social Condition of North India.

INTRODUCTION

After decline of the Gupta Empire, there arose a number of independent kingdoms, namely, Aulikaras of Mandasor, Maitrakas of Valbabhi, Maukharis of Kanauj, the Gaudas of Bengal and the Vardhanas of Thaneswar. Among the independent kingdoms Vardhana dynasty of Thaneswar was founded by Pushpabhuti. The important ruler of this dynasty was Prabhakara Vardhana who ruled about the 6th century A.D. He had two sons Rajyavardhana, Harshavardhana and a daughter Rajashri. Prabhakaravardhana successfully rebelled the attacks of the Huns. He gave his daughter in marriage to Grahavarma of Kanauj.

After Prabhakara Vardhana, Rajya Vardhana was crowned. Rajya Varman defeated Devagupta, as his brother –in-law Grahavarman was killed and his sister was imprisoned by Devagupta of Malwa. But Rajya Vardhana was treacherously murdered by Sasanka, king of Gauda who was an ally of Devagupta. It was in such a critical situation Harsha ascended the throne and saved his sister Rajasri.

SOURCES

We get more precise information about Harshavardhana than any other king of Ancient India. The sources for the study of Harsha are Bana's Harshacharita, Hiuen – Tsang's writings, the Madhuban plate Inscriptions, the Sonpat Inscription, the Banasahera Inscription and the Aihole Inscription of Pulakesin II.

Harsha Charita is a biography of Harsha written by Bana. It is a detailed history of the reign of Harsha and his ancestors. Bana gives a true picture of the social conditions of the period and Harsha's military campaigns and religious learnings. In this respect it is of great historical value. But the

account is incomplete. Hiuen Tsang, who visited Harsha's court, has recorded his observations in his "Travels of the western world". He gives information about Harsha, his court, Patronage of Buddhism.

In 606 A.D., at sixteen, Harsha ascended the throne. He was offered the extended empire. He defeated Devagupta and made Madhavagupta, king of Malwa. He also defeated Dhruvasena II and gave him his daughter in marriage. About 634 A.D., he attempted to cross the Narmada but was defeated by Pulakesin II, the king of Western Chalukyas, on the banks of Narmada. This river became the southern boundary of his empire. Harsha led an expedition against Bengal, defeated Sasanka and annexed to his kingdom. In 643, A.D. he conquered Kongoda (Ganjam).

He maintained diplomatic relations with China. He sent an embassy in 641 A.D. to the Emperor Tai Tsung of China. Chinese missions were sent to India in 643 and 646 A.D. Harsha died before the arrival of the third Buddhist mission.

ADMINISTRATION

Harsha was a benevolent ruler. He was helped by a Mantri parishad. His empire was divided into Bhuktis, Vishayas and Gramas. The village administration was in the hands of the village headman "Gramaksha – Patalika". He was assisted by a body called Karanikas. Harsha collected one sixth of the produce from lands as revenue. Officers received grants of lands instead of salary. Public records were maintained.

Criminal law was more severe than in the Gupta times. Imprisonment for life, banishment and mutilation of limbs, were the usual punishments. Roads were less safe and crimes were more frequent.

BUDDHISM

Harsha emulated Asoka in making provision for charity. He built many institutions for the benefit of travellers, the poor and the sick. He used to arrange quinquennial assembly at Prayag. The proceedings lasted for 75 days. After worshipping Buddha, Surya and Siva on the first three days, he distributed all the wealth, which he accumulated during the preceding five

years among the Buddhist monks, Brahmanas, Jains and the poor. The last such assembly, the sixth, was attended by Hiuen Tsang.

According to one view, Harsha actually became a convert to Buddhism like Asoka. Prabhakara Vardhana was a saivite and even Harsha worshipped Siva and Surya, along with the Buddha in the assemblies at Prayaga. Harsha continued the worship of Siva and Surya and was tolerant of other faiths. (Mahamokshaparisad) During the later part of his life, he was attracted towards Mahayana Buddhism, due to the influence of his sister and of Hiuen-Tsang. He created a number of Buddhist stupas and monasteries. Rest houses were built and arrangements were made for the supply of free food and medicines to the poor and the sick. He held conferences of Buddhist monks. Even Brahmins and Jains attended them. He builds in Kanauj a splendid monastery at Kannauj with a tower of 100 feet and installed a golden statue of the Buddha.

Harsha was a great patron of learning. He himself was a great scholar and an author of Sanskrit dramas, Nagananda, Ratnavali and Priyadarsika. He was always among learned men. Bana was the author of Harshacharita and Kadambari. Mayura, Diwakara and Bhatruhari are also said to have adorned his court. He evinced great interest in education. He made large endowments to the famous Nalanda University, which attracted a large number of students from all directions.

HIUEN – TSANG (630 A.D. – 642 A.D)

Hiuen -Tsang is called “the prince of pilgrims”. He visited India during the reign of Harshavardhana. Not being satisfied with the Chinese translation of the Buddhist scriptures, this pious Buddhist monk set out on his pilgrimage. He arrived in India in 630 A.D. He spends 12 years in India visiting the assemblies Kanauj and Prayag. He visited Buddhist sacred places. He studied at Nalanda University and became the master of the Buddhist law. His work on India “Siyuki”, is a treasure house of information about the condition of India.

Hiuen - Tsang was much impressed by the prosperity of India. Silver and gold coins were in circulation. People ate healthy and costly food. Kanauj was the most important city in North India. There were beautiful gardens,

palaces, tanks and museums besides Buddhist monasteries and two hundred Hindu temples.

Hiuen - Tsang stated that the Nalanda University received endowments from kings and the rich people, belonging not only to India but also to the Hindu colonies of South-East Asia. There were eight colleges and ten thousand students and teachers. Beside Nalanda, other states of learning were Vallabhi, Vikramasila and Taxila. Hiuen - Tsang stayed in Nalanda, where he learnt Sanskrit and rose to the position of the Vice-Chancellor. The cosmopolitan character the Universities and great learning of the teachers were highly praised by him. He showed high regard to scholars like Dharmapla, Seelabhadhara and Jeenamitra. Even after returning to China, he continued to correspond with his teachers at Nalanda.

He visited the court of Harsha, who was attracted to Buddhism owing to his influence. He spend some time in the monasteries at Mahabodhi, Monghyr and other places. He visited Vengi, which was ruled by the Eastern Chalukya king, Kubja Vishnu Vardhana (639 A.D.) He also visited the Amaravati stupa. The monasteries at Smaravati were empty. Hiuen - Tsang visited Kanchi the capital of the Pallava kingdom (640 A.D.) Narashimhavarman was the then king. In 641 A.D., he visited the kingdom of Pulikesin II.

I-TSING (672 A.D)

I-Tsing alighted at Tamralipti in 671 A.D. He visited Nalanda, were he was robbed by thieves. He visited Rajagriha, Budhgaya, Vaisali, Kusinagara, Kapilavastu, Sravasti and Kasi. He stayed at Nalanda for ten years went back home with copies of Buddhist scriptures.

Check your progress

- 1) List the various kind of sources for Harsha's administration.
- 2) Write a note on I-Tsing

Let us Sum up

Harsha was “at once a prince, a poet, a warrior and a man of letters”. Thus we find in Harsha, a happy blending of the qualities of Asoka and Samudragupta. Like Samudragupta, he led a number of expeditions and achieved the political integration of Northern India by his brilliant victories. Like Asoka, he devoted himself to the spread of Buddhist ideals. He led his people along the path of material prosperity and spiritual elevation. Harsha, sometimes is compared to Asoka. Like the great Moghul, Harsha extended his religious toleration to all, held discourses on religion with the leading scholars of all faiths and perfectly indifferent to the higher call of religion. Like Akbar, he was a military monarch for the greatest part in his reign. His reign may be said to mark the culmination of Hindu culture.

Key words

Harshacharita, Hiuen - Tsang, I - Tsing, Nalanda University

Answers to check your progress

1. Use the material in section: 13.2
2. Use the material in section: 13.6

Glossary

1. Harshacharita : the biography of Harsha
2. Hiuen-Tsang : a Chinese Buddhist member who visited Court of Harsha
3. I-Tsing : Chinese Monk famed as traveler
4. Nalanda University : Higher Educational Center in Ancient India

BLOCK IV

Unit :14 History of the Deccan: The Satavahanas – The
Chalukyas of Vatapi – The Rashtrakutas

Unit 14

HISTORY OF THE DECCAN: THE SATAVAHANAS - THE CHALUKYAS OF VATAPI - THE RASHTRAKUTAS

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning objectives

Introduction

Sources of the Satavahanas

History of the Satavahanas

**Religious, Social and Economic Conditions under the
Satavahanas**

The History of Chalukyas

Origin

Pulakesin II (610-642 AD)

The Western Chalukyas of Kalyani

The Eastern Chalukyas

The Importance of the Eastern Chalukyas

The Rastrakutas

The Achievements of the Rashtrakutas

Let us Sum up

Key words

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

In this unit we shall try to learn about the reign of Satavahanas, the Chalukyas of Vatapi and the Rastrakutas who succeeded the Mauryan in deccan.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

After reading this unit you should be able to

- discuss the history of the Satavahanas and the religious, social and economic conditions.
- describe the chalukyas and their importance.
- explain the Rastrakutas and their achievements.

INTRODUCTION

The downfall of the Mauryan Empire gave rise to the growth of many independent states as well as to the foreign invasions. Among the various invading tribes, the prominent were the Sakas (also called Scythians), Parthians (sometimes called Pahalavas) and the Greeks (also known by the name of Yavanas). The Sakas of Central Asia first established their sway in Sind about 75B.C. Under the Kushans, the Sakas spread their authority to other regions of India, perhaps as the viceroys of the Kushan rulers. The Saka power rose to its heights under Nahapana. The territories of the Saka empire extended as far as Ajmer in the North and Poona in the South. At the same time, another important and powerful state that existed in South India was the Satavahanas. The Satavahanas had extended their sway over the whole of the Deccan and South Indian Peninsula, sometimes even controlling Magadha and Malwar. Towards the end of the first century A.D a fierce struggle ensued between the Satavahanas and the rising power of the Sakas which lasted for more than two centuries.

SOURCES OF THE SATAVAHANAS

The writings of the Periplus of Erythraean Sea' written about A.D. 70 and 80 gives a sad description of the declining power of the Satavahanas. It appears to us that the fortunes of the Satavahanas became very low for about one century, from the death of Satkarni I, end of first century B.C. to the commencement of the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni beginning of the second century A.D. The Satavahanas became the vassals of the Saka ruler Nahapana. It is also believed that Nahapana had married his daughter Dakshamitra to Satavahana Rishabhadatta. Therefore Nahapana allowed Rishabhadatta to act as his viceroy in his Southern province, then the land of Satavahanas.

HISTORY OF THE SATAVAHANAS

The Satavahanas established their sway in the area forming the deltas of Godavari and Krishna rivers. Their empire lasted for about four and a half centuries. In the days of its glory, the territories of the Satavahanas extended over the whole of the Deccan, sometimes spreading even in Northern India up to Magadha. The downfall of his empire was caused by the growing power of Sakas. There were long wars between the Satavahanas and the Sakas in the first and second century A.D. In the third century A.D. this great empire gave way to various minor, independent dynasties.

The Satavahanas are also known by the name of the Andhra's. The history of the Andhra's can be traced to a very remote past. In the Vedic work 'Aitareya Brahamana' they are mentioned as living to the South of Vindhya. A tradition says that they were the descendants of the Vedic Seer Visvamitra. An inscription of Asoka (256 B.C.) mentions them as semi-independent people. Pliny, the geographer (1st century A.D.) speaks of the Andhras as a powerful state with fortified towns, and large armies. He mentions that they had 30 walled towns, numerous villages and an army of 100,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 100 elephants. The Puranas mention that 30 Satavahanas kings ruled for over 460 years. Another version is that there were 19 kings who reigned for a total period of 300 years.

It is very difficult to determine the exact date of the foundation of the Satavahanas power. Simuka was the founder of the dynasty. He belonged

to the Satavahanas family. That is why, the later Andhra rulers called themselves by the name of Satavahanas. Simuka was succeeded by his brother Krishna (also called Kanha) who extended the territories of the Satavahanas Kingdom up to Nasik. But, it was in the times of Satakarni, the son of Simuka, that the empire rose to greater heights of prominence. He is said to have conquered Malwa and performed twice an asvamedhayaga (horse – sacrifice). He issued a large number of coins, which indicate that his reign was that of great prosperity. Among the rulers, who followed Satakarni, Hala as a lover of literature was very prominent. He compiled 'Saptasati', a collection of 700 erotic 'gathas' (verses) in Maharashtri language of those days. The Satavahana power received a grave set-back at the hands of the weak successors of Hala and for about a century, the Satavahanas dynasty was eclipsed from power. The Satavahanas recovered both their power and glory under Gautamiputra Satakarni. He is described as the destroyer of the Sakas, Pahlavas and Yavanas. He overthrew Nahapana and killed him in the battle. Later, he re-struck large numbers of silver coins of Nahapana. His achievements are recorded in glowing terms by his mother Gautami Balasari in an inscription at Nasik. Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerjee writes that Gautamiputra was not merely a militarist. He was equal to the tasks of peace. He reformed society of its abuses, upholding the interests of all its four castes.

Gautamiputra was succeeded by his son, Pulumayi. He married the daughter of Rudraman, the Saka Satrap of Ujjain. This matrimonial alliance did not prevent Rudraman inflicting two crushing defeats over his son-in-law and recovering the territories lost by the Sakas to Gautamiputra Satakarni. The last great Satavahana ruler was Yajna Satakarni. Yajna Satakarni revived the glory of Gautamiputra Satakarni and conquered the Southern dominions of the western Satraps. The coins issued by Yajna Satakarni contain figures of ships, probably indicating the naval power of the Satavahanas. The Kingdom was split up into various principalities. Andhrapatha passed to the ikshvakus before the middle of the third century. The Pallavas of Kanchi conquered both Andhrapatha and the Satavahaniya district before the end of that century.

RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS UNDER THE SATAVAHANAS

At the height of their power the Satavahana Kings governed the Deccan from sea to sea. The ports of the Western Coast were also in their possession. This brought immense prosperity to them. Rawlinson writes that Paithan and Tagara (the modern Ter in the Hyderabad State) were the great emporiums known for the distribution of trade from both the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Paithan is described by contemporary Jain writers as a prosperous town with splendid temples, palaces, and wide streets, surrounded by high walls and a moat. Roads must have been good and communications easy, for the Nasik cave inscriptions record donations from inhabitants of Sind and Northern India, while on the other hand Nasik Merchants were among the donors to the Bharhut Stupa near Allahabad.

Now coming to the administrative structure of the State, the Kingdom was divided into provinces governed by separate hereditary Chieftains. They were formally appointed by the King. King was the supreme head of the polity. The local administration was, however, left to the local functionaries subject to over-all control of the royal officials. The units of the local administration were called 'Aharas' or 'Janapadas'. They were governed by the administrators called (1) 'Amatyas or Civil governors or (2) Military governors known as 'Mahasenapatis or (3) local chiefs called 'Mahabhoja' or 'Raja' or Maharathi. To quote an instance, an 'Amatya' ruled in Aparanta and Goverdhana. A 'Maharathi' was placed at Nanaghat, Kanheri and Karle. Mahasenapatis ruled in Nasik, under Yajnasri Satkarni and in Bellary under Pulumayi. These military governors later founded independent kingdoms when the Satavahana empire declined. Below them there were district officers. The districts were further divided into villages.

There seems to have been no antagonism among various sects. Buddhism and Brahmanism were flourishing side by side. The Satavahana rulers followed the policy of religious toleration. The prominent rulers like Satakarni, Hala and Gautamiputra were devoted to the Brahmanism. They tried to emulate the epic heroes, Rama, Kesava and Arjuna. But this was also the glorious period of Buddhism in Deccan. The stupa of Amaravati was enlarged and embellished. New Stupas were also built at Alluru, Gudivada, Goli and various other places.

The people under Satavahanas rule were very prosperous. Trade and industry flourished. Trade was in the hands of guilds. These were very powerful associations. We hear of guilds of oil pressers, mechanics, potters, weavers, corn-dealers, bamboo workers, and braziers. The guilds, as in medieval Europe, decided their affairs in an assembly, at which each member had a vote. The guild regulations prescribed hours of work, wages and rules of competition among its members. Accused were fined, and the money thus collected was used for feeding beggars and other charitable purposes. The head of the guild was the seth or chief merchant. Great fortunes must have been made in trade. The guilds also acted as banks. Money was deposited with the guilds at fixed rates of interest. The rates of interest varied from five to seven and a half percent. Other classes mentioned in the inscriptions are traders, heads of caravans, physicians, goldsmiths, druggists, cultivators, carpenters, gardeners, and blacksmiths.

In social life, women ranked equal to men. Women held property in their own right. In religious ceremonies, women took part along with their husbands. Women wore beautiful dresses and men vied with them in the scantiness of their dresses and the profusion of their ornaments. The prosperity of the country was not confined or restricted. Even in the cottages, there were found luxurious items like jugs, jars, chairs, table, stools and beds of attractive designs.

THE HISTORY OF CHALUKYAS

The Chalukyas played a dominant part in the history of Deccan. The Chalukyas were three dynasties, namely the Chalukyas of Badami or Vatapi (The early Chalukyas), the western Chalukyas of Kalyani and the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. The early Chalukyas ruled for about two centuries from the middle of the 6th century to the middle of 8th century A.D. The early Chalukyas were overthrown by the Rastrakutas. In the later half of the 10th Century the Rastrakutas were ousted by the western Chalukyas of Kalyani and ruled till the end of 12th century. The eastern Chalukyas ruled from the 7th century to the 12th century.

Origin

The origin of the Chalukyas is a matter of controversy. The Chalukyas claimed descent from the lunar race in their inscription. They called

themselves Hariputras of Manavya gotra. Dr. Smith believes that they belonged to the Hun-Gwrjara tribe and migrated to Deccan from the north. This view is not supported by any authentic evidence. Dr. Sircar views that the Chalukyas were indigenous Kshatriyas of Kanarese origin.

The Chalukya dynasty was founded by Jayasimha. The real founder of the dynasty was Pula Kesin I (543-566 AD). Pulakesin I laid the foundation for the fort of Vatapi. He performed various sacrifices like Hiranyagarbha, Aswamedha. His capital was at Badami. Pulakesin I was succeeded by his son Kirthivarma I, who is believed to have won victories over the Nala, Mauryas and Kadambas. He was succeeded by his brother Mangalesa in about 598 A.D. Mangalesa extended his empire by his victories over the Kalachuris. His attempt to crown his son, resulted in a civil war between Mangalesa and his nephew Pulakesin II. Pulakesin II, was the son of Kirthivarman. In the civil war Mangalesa (608 AD) was killed.

Pulakesin II (610-642 AD)

Pulakesin II, was the greatest of the Chalukyan rulers. It was due to civil war, many feudatories declared their independence. Pulakesin II faced the task of opposing foreign invasions and subduing the rebels with equal vigour. The Aihole Inscription, composed by the Jain poet Ravi Kirthi gives an account of the conquest of Pulakesin II. Pulakesin II besieged and reduced Banawasi, the capital of the Kadambas. Pulakesin II also subdued the Gangas of Mysore. The Ganga king gave his daughter in marriage to him. He also defeated the Latas, the Malavas and the Gurjaras. The most notable achievements of Pulakesin II, was the defeat of Harsha. Pulakesin II formed a confederacy with Sasanka of Bengal and kings of Vallabhi and Broach (637 AD) and defeated Harshavardhana. He took the title "Parameswara" in honour of his victories.

Pulakesin II stormed the fortress of Pistapura and usurped the Vengi country from the Pallavas. He appointed his younger brother Kubja Vishnu Vardhana to the post of Viceory. Kubja Vishnu Vardhana later on founded the Eastern Chalukya dynasty of Vengi. Pulakesin II marched against the Pallava kingdom and defeated the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I. King Kushru of Persia having known his fame, sent an embassy to his court. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang paid a visit to his court in 41 A.D and was much impressed with his power and fame. The Pallava ruler

Narasimhavarama II destroyed, Vatapi, the Chalukyan capital and killed Pulakesin II in 642 AD.

After, Pulakesin II the glory of the Chalukyas was on the decline. His son Vikramaditya I, defeated the Pallavas and captured their capital Kanchi. The endless struggle went on with varying successes. Vikramaditya II scored a great victory over the Pallava ruler, Nandipatavarman and occupied Kanchi. He is believed to have subdued the Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras. As a token of his success, he erected a pillar of victory on the shores of the southern ocean. The Arab Invasion of South Gujarat was repulsed by one of his chieftains. Nirthivarman II, carried on the traditional enmity towards the Rashtrakutas. He was defeated by Dantidurga, the Rashtrakuta king in 753 AD. With him ended the main Chalukya dynasty and the power passed on into the hands of the Rashtrakutas.

The western chalukyas were patrons of vedic religion, but they were tolerant of other religious. They built temples at Aihole, Badami and Pattakkadal. The caves at Badami and Ellora bear testimony to the artistic excellence of the period. The western Chalukyan rulers showed reverence towards Jainism. The famous poet Ravikirti, the composer of the Aihole Inscription, adorned the court of Pulakesin II. The Hindus adopted the Buddhist and Jain practice of excavating cave temples.

The Western Chalukyas of Kalyani

The founder of this dynasty was Taila or Tailapa II, who overthrew the Rashtrakutas. His capital was Kalyani. The most famous king of this dynasty was Vikramanka(1076 -1126) A.D. He fought successfully with the Cholas and occupied the Pallava Hoyasala king. He was a great patron of letters. After the death of Vikramanka the decline of the western Chalukyan started. The Yadavas of Devagiri and the Hoyasalas of Mysore attacked the Chalukyas. Their power came to an end in about 1190 A.D.

The Eastern Chalukyas

The Eastern Chalukyas were a branch of the western Chalukyas. Pulakesin II defeated the ruler of Pishtapura and appointed his brother Kubja Vishnu Vardhana, the viceroy of the new territory. Kubja Vishnu Varadhana became independent of Badmi and founded the dynasty of the

Eastern Chalukyas. His capital was Vengi. Bharavi, the author of Kirarjuniya enjoyed his patronage. It is believed that Vishnu Vardhana ruled for 18 years (615 - 633AD).

Vishnuvaradhana I, was succeeded by his son Jayasimha I (633-663AD). Jayasimha did not appear to have extended any help to his kinsmen during the Pallava - Chalukyan conflict. Vijayaditya I, was an important ruler (746 to 764AD). His reign witnessed a great political change in the Deccan. The Western Chalukyas of Badami were overthrown by the Rashtrakutas. Vijayaditya I was defeated by Govinda, the Rashtrakuta prince.

Vijayaditya III, (844-888 AD) was the greatest of the Eastern Chalukya rulers. It was during his reign that the Eastern Chalukya power reached its highest mark. Vijayaditya III defeated Krishna II, the Rashtrakuta king and destroyed his capital Malkhed. He defeated the Gangas of Mysore and the Pallavas. Vijayaditya III overran Kalinga and Kosala.

Vijayaditya III was succeeded by Chalukya Bhima I, Ammaraja and Bhima II. It was during the reign of Amma II that Rajamahendrapura, the modern Rajahmundry was founded and became the capital. From this time onwards, the Eastern Chalukya dynasty became the patrons of Telugu literature.

After the death of Ammaraja II, there was a war of succession between Saktivarman and Vimaladitya. Rajaraja, the great helped Saktivarman (1000-1011AD) to regain his throne. He gave his daughter Kundava in marriage to Vimaladitya. This interference of the Cholas, reduced Vengi to a bone of contention between the Cholas and the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani.

The Chalukya Chola conflict in Vengi reached a high pitch during the reign of Rajaraja Narendra (1009-1061 AD). He was the patron of Nannya Bhattaraka. Vijayaditya of Vemulavada, the step-brother of Rajarajanarendra usurped the throne with the help of Jayasimha Wallabha, the western Chalukyan king. Rajendra Chola helped Rajarajanarendra to regain his throne and gave his daughter Ammangadevi to him. Rajarajanarendra concluded a treaty with Someswara, the western Chalukyan king, who sent Narayanabhatta to the court of Rajarajanarendra. Narayanabhatta helped Nannan in writing the Andhra Mahabharata. When Rajarajanarendra died in 1061 AD there was confusion again. Vijayaditya

again captured Vengi and crowned his son Saktivarman II as king. But the Chola king Virarajendra killed Saktivarman, defeated Vijayaditya and placed Rajendra II, son of Rajarajanarendra on the throne.

On the death of Virarajendra Chola, Rajendra II ascended the Chola throne as Kulothunga Chola I, at Tanjore. Rajendra II, unified the Chola and Vengi kingdoms.

The Importance of the Eastern Chalukyas

The Eastern Chalukyas ruled the country for nearly 500 years. Their system of government was a traditional monarchy. The king was helped by ministers. Niyogadhikrita was the supreme head of the executive. The kingdom was divided into Vishayas or Nadus. The administrative system was similar to that of the Cholas. There was village administration. The gramani was the representative of the king.

The Eastern Chalukyas were patrons of Saivism and some Vaishnavism. They extended patronage to Jainism also. The centers of Buddhism like Amaravati became centers of Hinduism. Smartha type of Hinduism made rapid progress owing to the efforts of Sankara. Many Saivite temples were constructed. Temples at Chalukya Bhimavaram, Raksharaman, Palakol, Amarav Chebrolu etc. became pilgrim centers.

The period witnessed the growth of Telugu literature. The Chalukyas recorded their grants in Telugu. Telugu in 'Desi style began at this time. The reign of Rajarajanarendra is a land mark in the history of Telugu literature. His court poet Nannaya Bhattaraka commenced the Telugu rendering of Mahabharata. Narayana Bhatta and Nannechoda, the author of Kumarsambhavam were contemporary poets. Pavuluri Mallana translated the Ganitasarasangraha, the Sanskrit work of Jainamana Viracharya into Telugu. Thus the Eastern Chalukya period witnessed the growth of Telugu literature.

THE RASTRAKUTAS

The Rashtrakutas came to political lime-light in the Deccan soon after the fall of the western Chalukyas. The Rashtrakutas were originally subordinates to the Western Chalukyan rulers. Several views have been

expressed regarding the origin of the Rashtrakutas, various accounts are mentioned. In the Asokan inscriptions, they were mentioned to be southern neighbours along with others. The Rashtrakutas of the 7th century AD were the descendants of 'Rathikas' of the inscriptions of Asoka. Secondly 'Rathos' of Rajaputana were said to be the founders of Rashtrakutas dynasty. Thirdly, the Reddis of Andhra Pradesh are said to be the forefathers of the Rashtrakutas. Rashtrakutas originally and literally means an officer in-charge of a 'Rashtra'. The Reddis of Andhradesa were hereditary officers kept in charge of villages. Probably the early rulers of the Rashtrakutas Indra and Danthidurga might have occupied such positions, as a result of which the dynasty got the name. Malkhed or Manyaknetta was the original capital of the Rashtrakutas rulers. As Manyakhetta is a part of Maharashtra, the Rashtrakutas are claimed to be Maharashtrais rather than Andhras.

The Rashtrakutas are usually known in connection with the triangular struggle for political supremacy in the 8th century A.D. along with Ghurjara-Pratiharas of western India and Palas of Bengal. During this period, the Rashtrakutas were undoubted by the masters of Deccan. With Deccan as their strong hold, they aspired for the expansion of their power in North India. Learning a lesson from the Chalukyan history, the Rashtrakutas never diverted their attention to conquer the South.

Indra the first king of the Rashtrakutas, was succeeded by Danthidurga, the real founder of the dynasty. Danthidurga began his career as a subordinate of the Western Chalukyas and taking advantage of the Chalukyan power, he became independent about 750 A.D. As a token of his victory over Keerthivarman II, the Chalukyan ruler, he issued an inscription. As Danthidurga had no sons, he was succeeded by his uncle Krishna. Krishna undertook a struggle with the Chalukyas in 760 A.D. He defeated the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengipura and the Gangas of Mysore. Krishna was responsible for the consolidation of the Rashtrakuta power. He was responsible for the construction of rockcut cave temple at Ellora. Krishna died in 763 A.D.

Krishna was succeeded by Govinda II, who led a carefree and vicious life. As a result, he was dethroned and his younger brother Dhruva became the king. He was ambitious and war like. He embarked upon military expeditions both into the South and the North. He subdued the Gangas of

Mysore and proceeded to the Pallava capital and conquered it. Flushed with success, he entered into a controversy with Vatsaraja of Ghurjara - Pratiharas. Dhruva's military exploits were short lived for the reason that the south Indian kings formed a confederacy. As a result of which the Rashtrakutas lost their importance in South India. At the same time, Dhurva was compelled to fight with the Pratiharas and the southern confederacy. Sending his brother Indra to the south, Dhurva concentrated on the north. In the middle of the campaign he died and his son Govinda III, succeeded him. He followed the aggressive policy of his father. Govinda III, the third son of Dhurva was particularly chosen by his father, because of his great qualities. He subdued the Ghurjara king and annexed a part of Mysore by defeating the Gangas. He defeated the Pallavas as well as the Chalukyas. From the river Narmada in the north upto Tungabhadra in the south, he became an undisputed master. The king of Ceylon feared him so much that he sent a statue of himself as a token of submission to Govinda. Govinda III, was the greatest among the Rashtrakutas.

Govinda III, was succeeded by his son Amoghavarsha, who was equally powerful, Amoghavarsha entered into an alliance with the Gangas of Mysore to put an end to the enmity and cement the friendship, by giving his daughter in marriage to the Ganga king. During the period, Bhoja occupied the entire Malwa. In spite of the military losses, his reign was prosperous. Kannada and Sanskrit were patronized by him. He was also a patron of Jainism. Arab merchants, who visited the western coasts and heard of his greatness, praised him. He was succeeded by Krishna II. The Rashtrakuta power slowly declined and they directed that attention towards the Cholas. The Chola king was defeated by Krishna III, son of Krishna II, after whom the Rashtrakuta power slowly disappeared, with the revival of the Cholas. The last Rashtrakuta king Karka was ousted by Tailapa the founder of the later Chalukya dynasty.

The Achievements of the Rashtrakutas

The Rashtrakutas ruled over the Deccan for about two centuries. Their period constitutes the most brilliant chapter in the history of the Deccan. The Rashtrakutas kings were the most feared and powerful rulers of India. All the powerful rulers of India submitted to their might and acknowledged their overlordship.

The Rashtrakuta kings also excelled in the arts of peace. Most of them showed great concern for the welfare of the people. Trade and industry were encouraged and the kingdoms grew prosperous. They had friendly relations with the Arabs of Sind and carried on extensive commerce with them. Most of Rashtrakutas rulers were patrons of Jainism but were tolerant of other religious. According to the Salotig Inscription (Bijapur Dt), the rulers promoted popular education. There was a college with 27 boarding houses. The Rashtrakutas were great patrons of Kannada and Sanskrit literature. The court of Amoghavarsha I was adorned by a large number of poets and scholars like Linasena, Mahaviracharya and Saketayana. Though the Rashtrakuta kings built very few temples, it must be said to their credit that the few temples they built, were well built. The most famous of them was the Kailasnath temple at Ellora. According to Dr. Smith 'the Kailasnath temples is the most marvelous architectural freak in India by far the most extensive and sumptuous of the rock cut shrines one of the wonders of the world, a work of which any nation might be proud, and an honour to the king, under whose patronage it was executed.'

Check your progress

1. List the sources of the Satavahanas.
2. Explain the religious, social and economic conditions under the Satavahanas.
3. Explain the administration of the Pulakesin II.
4. Estimate the achievements of the Rastrakutas.

Let us sum up

The administration of the Guptas was developed, improved and adopted to the conditions of the times. Though not original the administration of the Guptas was efficient. The empire was divided into Desas, Bhukis, Vishayas and villages for easy administration. The punishments were lenient. The age of Guptas witnessed the significant development of brahmanism and sanskrit language and literature. The achievements of Guptas in the field of art and architecture was marvelous. The Huns destroyed the rule of Guptas.

Key words

Pahalavas, Aitareya Brahamana, Asvamedha yaga, Ganapadas, Aparanta, Badami, Jayasimha, Aihole inscription, Rathikas, Malkhed.

Answers to check your progress

1. Use the material in section: 14.2
2. Use the material in section: 14.4
3. Use the material in section: 14.5.2
4. Use the material in section: 14.6.1

Glossary

1. Pahalavas : people mentioned in Manu Smiriti
2. Ganapadas : kingdoms of the Vedic Period
3. Aparanta : a geographical region
4. Rathikas : satisfied
5. Malkhed : a place in Karnataka

Ref;

Pahalavas - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Pahalavas>

Ganapadas - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Ganapadas>

Rathikas - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Rathikas>

Malkhed - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Malkhed>

BLOCK V

Unit 15 The Rajputs

Unit 16 The Arab Conquest of Sind

Unit 15

THE RAJPUTS

Structure

Overview

Learning objectives

Introduction

The origin of the Rajputs

Theories and Views of Different Writers

The Rise of the Rajputs

THE KINGDOM OF RAJPUTS

The Pratiharas

Decline and Downfall of the Pratihara Empire

Socio-Economic and Religious Life of the Rajputs

Let us sum up

Key words

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

In this unit we study about the Rajputs who ruled the small states for nearly five centuries. Though warfare was the life and death of the Rajputs they could not come together to finish the common enemy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to

- describe the various theories regarding the origin of the Rajputs.
- estimate the principal Rajput Kingdoms established in Northern India.
- explain the socio-economic and religious life of the Rajputs.

INTRODUCTION

The sagacity of Rajputs dominancy commenced in the history of North India between the period 647 AD and 1200 AD Dr. Smith Calls this “the Rajputs Age in Indian History”. British historians described Rajputs as, the people of mixed blood or descendants of those foreign invaders who made India their homeland and were accepted as Kshatriyas within the Hindu society. It rather meant a new pattern of life and behaviour which was accepted and pursued by all the ruling dynasties of India at that time so all of them were assigned the nomenclature of the Rajputs.

THE ORIGIN OF THE RAJPUTS

Considering the origin of the Rajputs, it is till now an unsolved question. Many of the scholars opined that the Rajputs are the descendants of foreign invaders like Sakas, Kushanas, white Hunas etc. These foreigners were settled in Indian Hindu Society and were accredited them as the status of Kshatriyas. The Rajputs believe that they are descended from the old Kshatriya heroes. Infact, this term applied in medieval India, in the post Harsha period and was used to refer to many important Hindu ruling dynasties of North India, particularly, western and central India.

THEORIES AND VIEWS OF DIFFERENT WRITERS

Earliest and much debated opinion about the origin of the Rajputs is that all Rajput families were the descendants of the Gurjaras and the Gurjaras were of foreign origin. Cunningham described them as the descendants of the Kushanas. A.M.T. Jackson described that one race called Khajar lived in

Arminia in the 4th Century. When Hunas attacked India, Khajaras also entered India and both of them settled themselves here by the beginning of the 6th century. These Khajaras were called Gurjaras by the Indians. Kalkana has narrated the events of the reign of a Gurjara King. Alkhana ruled Punjab in the 9th century. In 9th century, a part of Rajputana was called Gurjana Pradesh. During the 10th century, Gujarat was referred to as Gujara. Therefore, it is possible to believe that Gurjaras were the ancestors of the Rajputs.

A stone inscription at Rajora of 959 A.D. reveals mathadeo, a feudal chief of Vijaypala as Gurjara – Pratihara. Now one can come to the conclusion that the pratiharas were also a branch of the Gurjaras. It is said that the name of Gujarat was given to that particular territory by the Chalukyas. It meant that the Chalukyas were also the Gujaras. Prithviraja Raso also described that the Pratiharas, the chalukyas, the parmara and the chauhanas originated out of a sacrificial fire-pit which supported the theory of foreign origin of the Rajputs. Therefore, many scholars explained that all thirty-two kulas of the Rajputs originated from the Gurjaras who were foreigners and thus, all Rajputs were foreigners and were provided the status of the Kshatriyas only afterwards. Most of the modern historians deny the view that all Rajput kulas were the descendants of the Gurjaras and as the Gurjaras were foreigners, so all Rajputs had a foreign origin.

Tod holds the view that the Rajputs were of scythian origin in his famous work *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. He compares the customs of foreigners like Sakas, Kushanas and Hunas, etc with the Rajputs. In course of time they had married Indian women and mingled into Indian Society.

William Brook upholds the view of Tod. He correlated that many family names of the Rajputs could be traced back only to the period of invasion of these foreigners. He told that Gurjaras were foreigners who arrived India during the invasions of the Hunas. They accepted Hinduism, entered into marriage alliance with Indians. It hastened for the emergence of many Rajput families. After that they strengthened their lineage and claimed themselves as Kshatriyas. The above view was supported by Dr. V.A. Smith. He expressed that many changes in the Indian Society were witnessed due to the expeditions of the Hunas.

According to Dr. Iswari Prasad and Dr. Bhandarkar, the Rajputs were belonged to foreign origin. It is a traditional belief that Chand Bardai, the court-poet of Prithiraj Chauhan, state that the Rajputs originated from a sacrificial fire-pit. According to them when Parasuram destroyed all the Kshatriyas, the ancient sages did a yajna on Mount Abu to safeguard the vedic religion. Out of that yajna fire four heroes were born and the descendants of these heroes were the four Rajput families, viz, the Chandhan, the Solanki or Chalukya, the Paramara and the Pratihara. This also supports the view of the foreign origin of Rajputs.

But, Pandit Gaurisankar Ojha has refuted the above view point in his book, the History of Rajputana. He states that the Rajputs were not foreigners on the basis of race or physical features. Therefore, he regards the Rajputs as descendants of ancient Kshatriya families. This view is also held by a few modern historians like R.C. Majumdar, Hariram and Dashratha Sharma. Rajput clans of different origin become united by constant inter-marriage and by the adoption of common customs. In general we may conclude that the origin of a families can be traced from foreigners but most of the Rajputs have descended from the aborigines of India and were either Brahmanas or Kshatriyas.

THE RISE OF THE RAJPUTS

After the death of Harsha, his empire as divided between his nobles and governors. Yet the fame of Kannauj persisted. The Hindu ruler from Kashmir namely Lalithaditya, aimed to conquer the entire north India there by establishing a great Hindu empire. Yaso Varman, the ruler of Kannauj and Vinyaditya, the order of chalukya Kingdom wanted to establish a great empire which inturn leads to conflict with each other. The Gurjara Pratihara in western India, the palas in Bengal and the Rastruktas in the South had the idea of capturing Kannauj. Therefore, Kannauj remained the central point of the politics of north India and the rulers of Kannauj were to be the master of northern India. The political condition of India after the death of Harsha favoured for the emergence of Rajput Kingdoms. The following are the important Rajput Kingdoms that appeared in central and western India, and later in Eastern India.

THE KINGDOM OF RAJPOTS

THE EMPIRE OF KANNAUJ

i) Yasovarman: (690 – 740 A.D)

Yasovarman became the ruler of Kannauj in the beginning of eight century. He was a powerful monarch and undertook many military expeditions. He had the diplomatic relations with China in 731 A.D.. Vakapathi, a court poet of Yasovarman described his conquests and achievement in his poetical work Prakrit. It is believed that Yasovarman succeeded in conquering Magadha and Bengal. He defeated the Arabs. His empire entered upto North West.

The inscriptions refer Yasovarman the greatest king of North India. Rajatarangini of Kalhana has given a vivid picture about the incessant fight between Yasovarman and Lalithaditya. After the defeat at the hands of Lalitaditya, Yasovarman lost his name. His successors failed to revise the glory of Kannauj. He was not only a great warrior but also a patron of learning.

ii) The Ayudhas

a) Vajrayudha

There was no substantial evidence and details about the antecedents of their family. The Ayudhas also ruled over Kannauj and had three successive rulers – Vajrayudha, Indrayudha and Chakrayudha. In 770 A.D. Vajrayudha was the ruler of Kannauj.

b) Indrayudha

In 783 A.D. Indrayudha became the ruler of the empire. He was calm and pious. His weakness and inefficiency invited the opponents and even his immediate successor to capture the throne in advance. At first Indrayudha was defeated by Vatsraj, a Pratihara ruler in the battle in which he lost all of his possessions. Secondly he met a severe failure at the hands of Dhruva, a Rashtrakuta ruler. Afterwards, he was forced to abdicate the throne to Chakrayudha by the Pala ruler Dharmapala.

c) Chakrayudha

Chakrayudha was the last ruler of the Ayudhas dynasty. It was Pala ruler Dharma Pala who defeated Indrayudha. Indrayudha was compelled give up his throne. Chakrayudha became the ruler of Kannauj. Then the Rashtakuta ruler Govind III attached Chakrayudha and Dharmapala at a battle and suppressed them. Atlast the Pratihara ruler Nagabhata II involved in that affair and defeated Chakrayudha and captured Kannauj. Thus, the Ayudha dynasty failed to produce any capable ruler.

THE PRATI HARAS

Origin of Pratiharas

The scholars have different opinions about the origin of the Pratiharas. Some regard them as Kshatriyas of the Suryavansh but others regard them foreigners.

Harichandra laid the foundation of the Pratihara kingdom near modern Jodhpur. He was a Brahmana, who married a Brahmin girl as his first wife and again married a Kshatriya girl. He had four sons and each of them established a separate kingdom for themselves.

i) Nagabhata I

The Pratiharas rose to prominence under Nagabhata I. He ruled between 730-756 A.D. He defeated the Arabs of Sindh. He claimed the suzerainty over the Pratiharas rulers of Jodhpur, Broach and Nandipura. Nagabhata established an empire which extended from Gujarat to Gwalior. Nagabhata left to his successor an extensive empire which included Gujarat, Malwa and a part of Rajputana.

ii) Vatsaraja (778-805 A.D)

Nagabhata was succeeded by his brother's sons, Kakkuta and Devaraja. Devaraja was succeeded by his son Vatsaraja. Vatsaraja was a powerful ruler. Inscriptions tell us that Vatsaraja ruled over central Rajputana also. It is stated that Vatsaraja forcibly wrested the empire from the Bhandi clan. The Bhandi clan wielded imperial power probably with its seat of authority of

Kannauj. Vatsaraja was an ambitious person and he wanted to set up an empire in North India. He defeated Dharmapala, the ruler of Gauda or Bengal and by doing so, he laid the foundations for mighty empire.

But there was a struggle for supremacy in North India between the Gurjaras, Rashtrakutas and Palas. They were all aiming to control Kannauj. Vatsaraja occupied Kannauj before embarking against the ruler of Bengal. He defeated Dharmapala the ruler of Gauda or Bengal. But Dhurva defeated Vatsaraja and captured Kannauj.

iii) Nagabhata II (805-833 A.D)

Vastaraja was succeeded by his son Nagabhata II. He revived the policy of conquest and extension of the empire to retrieve the fallen fortunes of his family.

He defeated the rulers of Andhra, Saindhava, Vidarbha and Kalinga. He subdued Mastsayas in the North, Vatsas in the east and Turnkka (Muslims) in the west. He attacked Kannauj and occupied it. He defeated Dharmapala and entered into his territories as far as Monghyer in Bihar. He was defeated by Govind III, the Rashtarkuta ruler in 910 A.D. Nagabhata lost his western part of the empire to the Rashtrakutas. However he extended his empire towards the east and annexed the territories of Gwalior, Kalinjar and upto Kannauj by successful conquest.

iv) Mihirabhoja (836-882 A.D)

Rambhadra, the son and successor of Nagabhata II proved incapable and lost some of his territories probably, to Pala ruler, Devapal. He was succeeded by his son Mihirabhjoa. The accession of king Bhoja was a glorious chapter in the history of the Pratiharas. King Bhoja succeeded in consolidating the power of the Pratiharas. His suzerainty was acknowledged upto the foot of the Himalayas. He made kannauj his capital. The successive defeats at the hands of Dhurva, Kalachuri and King Kokkalla resulted in weakening his hold over Rajputana.

The death of Devapal, ruler of Bengal and his weak successors gave him an opportunity to revive his strength towards the east. He defeated the Pala king Narayanapala and extended his western dominions. Next, he took

offensive the defeat of the Rashtrakuta ruler Krishna II. This enabled him to occupy Malwa and Kathiawar. Mihirabhoja consolidated his power in Rajputana. The Kalahari's of Bihar and Chandelas of Bundelkhand had accepted his sovereignty.

v) Mahendrapala I (885 – 910 A.D)

King Mihirabhoja was succeeded by his son Mahendrapala I. He is also known as Nirbhayaraja. In the beginning, he conquered the greater part of Magadha and North Bengal. In the years 893 and 899 A.D. his authority was recognised as far as Saurashtra where his feudatories were ruling. It is believed that his empire extended from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas and from the eastern to the western ocean.

vi) Mahipala

After the death of Mahendrapala I, his son Bhoja II came to the throne. However, he was soon displaced by his cousin Mahipala. Mahipala ruled from about 912 to 944 A.D. The attack of Rastrakutas and the Palas one after another diminished the name and fame of the Pratiharas. The advantage was also drawn by his feudatories. These chandelas, the chedis, the Paramaras etc. succeeded in asserting their independence. Though Mahipala could safeguard a large part of his empire, his period marked the beginning of the decline of the power of Pratiharas.

DECLINE AND DOWNFALL OF THE PRATIHARA EMPIRE

The Successors of Mahipala: (944-1036 A.D)

Mahipala was succeeded by his son Mahendrapalla II alias Rajyapala. He ruled only for a year. Afterwards Devapala, Vinayapala II, Mahipala II and Vijayapala ruled Kannauj but none of them proved to be a capable ruler. This resulted in the disintegration of the Pratihara. In 963 A.D. Rashtrakuta king Indra III again attacked northern India and gave the final blow to the Pratihara domination in central India. Out of the ruins of the Pratihara empire arose the independent Kingdoms of the challenger in Gujarat, the Chandellers in Jejakabhuki, the kach chaghata in Gwalior, the Kalachuris in central India, the pramaras in Malwa, the Gulilas in south Rajputara the Chhahamanas (chanhanas) in sakambhari, etc. Thus, by the time

Rajyapala ascended the throne of Kannauj in the late tenth century, he was a ruler of a small kingdom.

THE GAHADVALAS DYNASTY

Origin

After the fall of the Pratiharas, the Chedis, the Paramaras the Cholas etc., in turn, attacked and destroyed the city of Kannauj. The invasions of Sultan Muhammad destroyed the glory of Kannauj. But once again the glory of Kannauj was revived by the Gahadvalas between 1080 to 1085 A.D. It appears that the Gahadvalas who were connected with the Rashtrakutas, have been accepted as Rajputs.

Ascendancy to the Throne

i) Chandradeva

Chandradeva was the first ruler of this dynasty who seized the throne of Kannauj from the Rashtrakuta ruler Gopal between 1080-1085 A.D. It is said that Chandradeva checked the aggression of Vijayasena of Bengal. He had already defeated the rulers of Benaras and Ayodhya and annexed their territories in his kingdom. He adopted the titles of 'Param Bhaddarak', 'Maharaja Dhiraj', and 'Parmeshwar'. He died in about 1100 A.D. Chandradeva was succeeded by his son Madanapala.

ii) Govindachandra (1114-1154 A.D)

Govindachandra was the son and successor of Madanapala. He extended his kingdom both by war and diplomacy. He captured Magadha from the Palas, annexed Malwa and fought against the rulers of Orissa and Kalinga. He maintained good relations with the Kashmir ruler Jayasingha, Gujarat - ruler Sidharaja and also with the Chola rulers of the south. He also defeated Ghaznavid Muslim governor of Lahore and thus checked the penetration of the Muslims towards the east. He was certainly the greatest ruler among the Gahadvalas. He was a great patron of learning and art. Lakshmidhara, his minister was the author of a book on Law known as *Kritya - Kalpataru*.

iii) Vijayachandra (1154-1170 A.D)

In 1154 Vijayachandra succeeded his son Govindachandra. Prithviraja Raso tells that Vijayachandra drove out Amir Khusro from Lahore. He ruled in the East as far as South Bihar. He defeated the Muslim invaders many times and protected his territory from their repeated raids.

iv) Jayachandra: (1170-1193 A.D)

Vijayachandra was succeeded by his son Jayachandra. He was the last king of this dynasty. He performed the Rajsuiyajna. Mohammed Ghori took full advantage of the enmity between the two Hindu rulers Prithviraj Chaudan of Delhi and Jaichandra and defeated both, one after another. Jaichand was defeated and killed in 1194 A.D. After Jaichand whose son Harichandra ruled over Kannauj till 1225 A.D as a Subordinate of Mohammed Ghori. In 1225 A.D. Itumish annexed Kannauj.

THE PALAS AND THE SENAS OF BENGAL

Rise of the Pala Dynasty

The Palas established a great empire in Northern India in the middle of the Eight Century. Nothing is clear about the antecedents of the Palas but it is certain that their homeland was Bengal.

i) Gopala (750 to 775 A.D)

Gopala was elected as the king of Bengal and Bihar. The order which he founded has come to be designated the Pala dynasty. Pala means protector. Gopala was a Kshatriya by caste. The original kingdom of Gopala was in Vanga or East Bengal. He consolidated his rule over the whole of Bengal and had extended his empire upto Magadha. Taranath, the Tibetan Lama, tells us that Gopala built the famous monastery at Octantapura. He was a devout Buddhist

ii) Dharmapala

Dharmapala successfully converted the kingdom of Bengal into one of the foremost empires of northern India. He was a great conqueror.

Dharmapala's rule extended from the Bay of Bengal to Delhi and from Jalandhar to Vindhya. Yet it is certain that Bengal, Bihar and Kannauj were under his direct rule. Other rulers of Punjab, Rajputana, Malwa and Berar also acknowledged his overlordship.

He assumed the titles of parameswara, Paramabhattarak and Maharajadhiraj. Dharmapala distinguished himself in the peaceful pursuits of life as well. He formed the famous Vikramsila monastery which later developed into a great center of Buddhist learning. He also founded a great Buddhist Vihara in the Rajahahi district.

iii) Devapala (810-850 A.D)

Devapala was a worthy son of Dharmapala. During his rule he made Mudgagiri (Monghyr) as his capital. He followed an aggressive imperialistic policy and spent a great part of his life in military campaigns.

He started his attacks from the Himalayas in the north to the Vindhyas in the south. Devapala, who reigned nearly forty years was also a patron of Buddhist religion, literature and fine arts.

The Failure of the Palas: (850-988 A.D.)

The peaceful policy of the weak successors of Devapala led to the weakening of the Pala Empire. Virahapala I, the successor of Devapala ruled for a very short period. His son Narayanapala was a man of religious disposition and followed a pacific policy. This encouraged the enemies of the Rashtrakutas and the Pratiharas to take advantage. Narayanapala not only lost Magadha but also north Bengal for some time. The feudatories of Assam and Orissa asserted their independence.

Narayana Pala was succeeded by Rajyapala, Gopala II and Vighrahapala respectively. As a whole they ruled for eight years only. Thus, the Palas lost their glory and territories one by one.

The Re - emergence of the Pala's Power

Mahipala I: (988-1038 A.D.)

Mahipala succeeded Viraghapala II about 988 A.D, when the Palas had lost even their ancestral kingdom in Bengal. He constantly engaged in wars to strengthen his empire. He conquered west and east Bengal and extended his territories upto Benaras.

Mahipala not only saved the Pala kingdom from impending danger and ruin but restored the lost glory and power of the Palas also. Therefore, he was regarded as the founder of second Pala Empire.

i) Nayapala (1038-1055 A.D)

Nayapala succeeded Mahipala to the throne. The struggle between Nayapala and Karna, a Kalachuri ruler, was an important incident in his regime. The long-time enmity between the Palas and the Kalachuris came to an end because of the efforts taken by a Buddhist monk Dipankara Srijinana.

ii) Vighrahapala III (1055-1070 A.D)

Nayapala was succeeded by Vighrahapala III. Different powers made their efforts to attack Bengal. The attack of Kalachuri King Karna of the Chalukya rules Vikramaditya II and the foreign powers, dismantled the growth and the very foundations of the Palas.

In 1010 A.D Mahipala II, son of Vighrahapala III, ascended the throne. He was quite incapable. His nobles revolted and killed him. After that Divya, a noble who occupied Varendri (North Bengal). After Mahipala II, his brother Surapala ruled for nearly two years. After wards, the throne was occupied by his youngest brother, Ramapala.

iii) Ramapala

Ramapala the youngest brother of Mahipala became the ruler of Pala dynasty in the year 1077 A.D. Both by diplomacy and war, Ramapala succeeded in restoring and maintaining the power of the Palas. He died in 1120 A.D. That resulted in the fall of the Palas.

The Disintegration of the Pala Dynasty

After the death of Ramapala, the empire started its disintegration because of the weak successors like Kumarapala, Gopala III and Madanapala. There were internal dissensions, revolts of the nobles and foreign attacks. These destroyed the Pala kingdom. However, the Senas and the Nanyas proved to be the worst enemies of the Palas. Thus, the power of Madanapala, the last ruler of the Palas, was restricted to central Bihar and he died as an ordinary noble.

THE SENAS

In ancient times, Bengal was known as Banga or Gauda. It was once the part of Gupta Empire. The Senas originally belonged to Karnataka region. They were Brahman Kshatriyas. The founder of the dynasty was Samantasena who regarded himself as the descendant of Veersen Chandra Vanshi. He established his rule at Radha in Bengal. His son, Hemantasena, consolidated his position in Radha region.

i) Vijayasena (1095-1158 A.D.)

Vijayasena was the greatest ruler of the Sena dynasty. He was a son of Hemantasena. He converted the small principality of Radha into the strong empire of Bengal. He married Vilasadevi, a princess of the Sura family. He defeated the rulers of Kotatavi, Kausambi and Nanyadeva, the ruler of Mithila. He occupied Gauda and defeated the last Pala ruler Madanapala. In the middle of 12th century A.D he defeated Bhojavarman and annexed East Bengal. Thus, the entire Bengal was united under his rule.

He made an expedition against Raghava, the King of Kalinga. He also defeated the ruler of Kamarupa. He proved himself as the real founder of the Sena dynasty of Bengal. He ruled for nearly 60 years and maintained peace and prosperity in Bengal. He was a devotee of Siva and built a temple in the Rajshahi district.

ii) Vallalasena (1158-1178 A.D.)

Vijayasena was succeeded by his son, Vallalasena. It is suggested that he conquered Mithila and North Bihar. He kept the empire which he had inherited from his father, intact.

iii) Lakshmanasena (1178-1205 A.D)

Lakshmanasena ascended the throne at the age of sixty. He was a great military leader. He fought many victorious battles during the reign of his father and grandfather. But because a few nobles asserted their independence his empire began decline. Mahammad Bakhtyar khalji attacked and occupied capital Nadia in a surprise move. Immediately Lakshmanasena fled to east Bengal. He died shortly after 1205 A.D.

Downfall of the Sena Dynasty

Lakshmanasena was succeeded by Visvayyasena and Kesavasena upto 1245 A.D. Later east Bengal was occupied by the Deva-dynasty ruler Dasarathadeva.

THE CHAHAMANAS OR CHAUHANS OF DELHI AND AJMER

Ajmer was ruled by the chauhan chief of the Rajput clans. The chauhans occupy an important place among the Rajput dynasties of this period. There were also other branches of the family ruling at different times in different places in northern India. Some of this clan was subject to the governor of Vijain under the Gurjar Mahendar Pal II and the chauhans, who were vassals of Nagabhatta I was nearly as old as the house of sambha.

i) Vighraha Raja

Vighraharaja IV who ruled in the middle of the 12th century, was a descendant of Anangapala, who built the Red Fort, where Kutti mosque now stands. He also removed the Iron pillar of Chandra perhaps from Mathura and set it up at the present site in 1052 A.D of the rulers. Prithviraj III was the last and the greatest ruler of Chauhans of Delhi and Ajmer.

ii) Prithviraja III alias Rajpithora (1178-1192 A.D.)

Prithviraja, is a great figure in the popular literature of Rajputana. Chandra Bardri was the well known poet of Prithviraja's court. He immortalised his master in 'prithviraj raso' the Hindi epic. There is another book 'Prithviraj vijaya' by Jayank in which we get the details of his life and achievements. He greatly extended the boundaries of his small state kingdom by the conquests. He conquered the territory of Bundshel khand or Mahaoba and annexed it.

Muhammed Ghori defeated and killed Prithviraj Chauhan in the battle of Tarain in 1192. Prithviraj lost his power completely because of his military expeditions. As a result, he could not face Muhamed Ghori.

THE CHALUKYAS OR THE SOLANKIS OF ANHILWADA (GUJARAT)

The Chulukyias of Gujarat existed in Gujarat prior to the rise of Chalukyias of the south.

i) Mularaja I

Mularaja I, has been considered as the real founder of the dynasty. He was a great conqueror. He conquered large territories and made Anhilwada (Anhilwara) his capital. In his old age Mularaja abdicated his throne infavour of his son, chamundaraja. After sometime, Chamundaraja abdicated his throne infavour of his son, Vallabharaja and after his death, to his second son Durlabharaja. During the later period of his reign, Durlabharaja gave his throne to his nephew Bhimaraja I. Muhammad of Ghazni plundered the Somanatha temple during the reign of Bhimaraja I. Bhimaraja I fled to Kutch and returned to his capital after the departure of the invader. He gave up the throne to his son Karna. Karna fought against the Paramas of Malwa and the Chauhans of Marwar.

Karna was succeeded by his son. Jayasindha who assumed the title of Siddharaja. He was the greatest king of this dynasty. He fought against the Chauhans of Sakambhari, the Paramas of Malwa, the Chandalas of Bundellkhand and the Chalukyian of Kalyana. His kingdom extended upto Bali in Jodhpur and Sambhar in Jaipur in the north, Bhilsa in the east and

Kathiawar and Kuthr in the west. He left an extensive kingdom to his successor Kumarapala who ruled between 1143-1145 A.D.

Kumarapala was a capable commander. He defeated the Chauhana Arnoraja, Paramara Vikramasinha and king Ballala of Malwa. Further, he conquered Konkan in the south. After the death of Kumarapala, there ensued a war of sucession between Pratapamalla, son of his sister, and Ajayapala, son of his brother, Mahipala. In this conflict Ajyanpala got victory. But he was murdered soon by Pratihara Vijayalaya deva. Then, Mularaja II, son of Ajayapala, succeeded the throne. He repulsed all Muslims invasions during his reign. In 1197 A.D Quth-ud-din Aibak plundered his capital, Anhilwada. However, one of his relations who was a minister, Lavanaprasad, succeeded in establishing an independent kingdom in south Gujarat. It meant the establishment of independent Banghela Kingdom in south Gujarat, which ultimately absorbed within itself the entire kingdom of the Chalukyas of Gujarat.

HINDUSHAHI OR BRAHMANASHAHI DYNASTY

After the fall of the Kushana Empire, the descendants of Kusharas established their kingdom and called themselves as Hindu -Turks. The last ruler of this dynasty Lagaturman, was deposed from the throne by his Brahamna Minister, Kallar, who laid the foundation for a new dynasty called the Hindushahi or Brahmanashahi dynasty, in the second half of the ninth century A.D.

In Rajatanagiri of Kalkana, Kallar has been referred to as Lallyashah. Its empire covered the entire area between the valley of Kabul and the valley of Kishanganga, in Kashmir. Kallar was succeeded by sri-samanta, Kamaluka and Bhima respectively. Bhima had one or two succesors, but nothing is known about them.

In the late tenth century A.D., Jayapala became the ruler of the Hindushahi dynasty. Jayapala, Anandapala, Trilochanpala and Bhimapala successive rulers of the Hindushahi kingdom, fought against Sabuktagin and Mahammud, rulers of Ghazni. First, they fought courageously to check the invasions of the Turks but failed later. Ultimately, the Hindushahi kingdom was destroyed by Mahammud of Ghazni in the beginning of the eleventh century A.D.

Naga – Karkota Dynasty

We know the history of Kashmir from the beginning of the seventh century A.D when Durlabha Vardhana of Naga-Karkota dynasty established his rule there. Durlabha Vardhana ruled over 36 years. He was succeeded by Durlabha who ruled for 50 years. His son, Chandrapida, succeeded to the throne after him. During his reign, the Arabs attacked Kashmir in 713 A.D. but were defeated.

Lalithaditya Muktapida (724 nearly 760 A.D) was the brother of Chandrapida proved the most illustrious king of his dynasty. He had good relations with China, defeated Tibetans and the mountain tribes on the north-western frontiers of his kingdom such as the Dards, the kambojas and the Turks, and conquered part of Punjab. His main success proved against yaso Varman, the ruler of Kannauj. We come to know from Rajatarangini that Lalithaditya undertook a digvijaya or world-wide campaign and defeated all rulers of India, including those of the south. He gave protection to Hinduism and Buddhism.

He was succeeded by Jayapida Vinayaditya (779-810 A.D). Jayapida tried to revive the glory of the dynasty and attempted to conquer Magadha, but failed. He was a patron of scholars. He was followed by a succession of weak rulers and the dynasty was replaced by another one, the utapala dynasty, about the middle of the ninth century A.D.

The Utpala Dynasty

Avantivarman (885-888 A.D) was the founder of the Utpala dynasty. He did not engage himself in wars of conquest. But he brought about economic prosperity of Kashmir. He was succeeded by Sankara Varman, who concentrated in wars of conquest but ruined the whole economy. All the successors proved themselves weak and this led to the ruin of the Utpala dynasty.

The Lohara Dynasty

Didida, wife of Bimagupta, the last ruler of Utpala dynasty appointed her nephew Sangramaraja of Lohara, as her successor. The Lohara dynasty failed to produce any capable ruler. In 1021 A.D. Muhammad attacked

Kashmir but failed to capture it. Ultimately Sahamera, who called himself sultan Shams-ud-din captured Kashmir in 1338 A.D. He and his successors ruled Kashmir for a longtime.

THE CHANDELLAS OF BUNDELKHAND OR JEJAKAKHUkti

Chandellas have been accepted as one of the thirty six ruling Rajput dynasties. After the breakup of the Pratihara Empire, a number of dynasties rose to power in central and western India. One of them was the Chandelas ruled by Bundelkhand. The dynasty was founded by Nannuka. In the beginning, Chandala rulers were the vassals of the Pratiharas of Kannauj. When the powers of the Pratiharas broke down, Yasovarman, who was also known as Lakshavarman took advantage and made the power of the Chandalas more effective in Bundelkhand in its neighboring territory.

i) King Dhanga (954-1002 A.D)

Dhanga, son and successor of Yasovarman declared himself independent. He captured eastern part of the Pratihara kingdom Banaras from the Palas, Kuntalas and the Andhras thereby extending his territories further. He assumed the title Maharajadhiraja.

Ganda, son and successor of Dhanga, was also a capable ruler. The Chandellas however, continued to rule over a part of Bundelkhand till Alaud-din Khalji conquered the rest of their kingdom.

ii) The Parmaras of Malwa

Some scholars have expressed the view that the Paramaras belonged to the family of the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan. It is believed that the Parmaras were the feudatory chiefs of the Rashtrakutas. Upendrakisharaja founded dynasty of the Paramaras and made Dhara its capital. Upendra was succeeded by Vairisingha, Siyab I, Vakpati I and Vairisingha II respectively, but very little is known of them.

After that Siyaka II who ruled between 949-973 A.D took advantage of the weakness of the Pratiharas and extended his kingdom. He defeated the Rashtrakutas and declared independence.

iii) Munja

Siyaka II was succeeded by his son Munja. Munja defeated the rulers of the Kalachuris, the Hunas, the Guhilas and the Chalukyas of Lata and Anhilapataka. He was taken as a prisoner and later killed.

iv) Sindhuraja

Munja was succeeded by his brother Sindhuraja. He defeated the Chalukya king Satyasraya and recovered the territories lost by Munja. He was also victorious in capturing Aparanta and defeating the king of Hunamandela. He died in 1000 A.D.

v) Bhoja (1000 - 1055 A.D)

Bhoja raised the power of Paramaras to an imperial rank. He joined in a confederacy of the Rajput – chiefs against the Turks and conquered Jhansi, Thaneshwar, Nagartotet. He wrote more than twenty-three books on varied subjects. He was also a patron of arts and literature.

Bhoja was succeeded by Jayasinha I. Jayasinha was defeated and killed by Someswara II, Chalukya king. The last ruler of the Parmaras Mahlak Deo was attacked by Allah-ud-din-Khalji in 1305 A.D. and was killed by his General Ain-ul-Mulk. Malwa was finally conquered by the Muslims.

THE KALACHURIS OF CHEDI

The Kalachuris, also known as Haihayan, established their kingdom south of the Chandellas in Madhyapradesh. Kokkalla I who was the founder of this dynasty, ruled during 845-888-A.D. Kokkalla I defeated the Pratihara ruler, Bhoja I and his feudatory chieftain, the Arabs of Sindh, the Rastrakuta ruler Krishna II and attacked upto east Bengal. He made Tripuri (near Jabalpur) his capital. His descendants were called the Kalachuris of Tripuri or Dahala. One of his sons established his independent kingdom in south Konkan whose capital was Ratanpur. His descendants were called the Kalachuris of Ratanpur.

Among the Kalachuris of Tripuri, the most notable ruler was Gangeyadeva, son of Kokkalla. He conquered Utkala and also annexed the territories upto

Banaras and Bhagalpur towards north-east. Karna, son and successor of Gangeyadwa annexed Allahabad to his kingdom and a part of west Bengal. The powers of the Kalachuris began to decline during the later period of his reign.

THE GUHILAS OF MEWAR

The Atpur inscription, dated 977 A.D give the names of twenty kings of the dynasty of Guhilas or Sisodiyas. It seems that the dynasty was founded by Guhadatt. Bappa Rawal, the ninth ruler in succession recaptured Mewar from the Arabs and has therefore, been regarded as the real founder of the dynasty. The Sisodiyas gained prominence in the twelfth century. Mewar became the most powerful kingdom of Rajputana under them. However Rana Ratansinha of Mewar was defeated by Al-ud-din Khalji and Mewar was occupied by him in 1303 A.D.

THE TOMARAS OF DELHI

The Tomaras established their kingdom in the north-east of the Chauhans of Sakambhari. It is believed that Delhi was established by the Tomaras in 736 A.D. In the beginning, the Tomaras were the feudatory chiefs of the Pratiharas.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE RAJPUTS

After the death of Harsha, disunity prevailed in Northern India upto the 12th century A.D. This situation was controlled by the various Rajput dynasties. During this period of about five hundred years India presented the following picture in its political, social, religious and cultural spheres.

i) Political Condition

There was complete lack of political unity. The whole country was divided into small independent states. All these states were undermining their strength in mutual jealousies and quarrels. The political organization of the Rajputs were based on the feudal system. The land was distributed among the various lords, who paid the king fixed annual revenues and also

rendered military service at the time of need. The Rajput rulers had a great passion for fighting. Warfare was their life and death.

The Rajput army was not well organized and trained. It comprised of infantry, cavalry and elephantry. There was a political apathy among the people. The rulers had very small personal army. Feudal lords supplied soldiers at the time of emergency. The soldiers were not properly trained and equipped. They were also not loyal to the king.

Administrations of justice of the Rajput rulers were praise worthy. The king was the supreme judge. The main source of income to the royal treasury was the annual tax paid by the feudal lords. Presents, gifts, fines, income from various taxes on trade and industry were other sources of state income.

ii) Social Conditions

The society was divided into castes and sub-castes. The castes had great influence on social customs, ceremonies, worship, marriages and eating habits. Many new castes were born on the basis of professions. A new caste of kayasthas, originated. The people of this caste were mainly government servants and their main work was writing. The caste system had grown very rigid and narrow.

The Rajputs were very proud of their high descent from the Aryan heroes like Rama (Suryavanshi) and Krishna (Chandr Vanshi). No doubt they were very brave and chivalrous and would never show their backs in the battlefield. They were always true to their word. They hated deceit and treachery.

They would not attack an unarmed enemy. Even if the most bitter sought their protection, they would treat him most generously. They honoured their women and staked their lives to protect them and their honour.

iii) Position of women

The women were held in high respect. They were gradually losing their traditional high position. They had to observe strict 'purda'. Rajput women were equally brave and courageous like their men folk. They were devotedly loyal to their husbands and performed the 'sati' willingly. Pride,

honour and self respect were dearer to them than anything in the world. In order to save their honour they would burn themselves on the pyre and perform the practice of 'Jauntar' or mass sacrifice. Widow marriage was not so uncommon.

iv) Character of the people

Generally the people were very honest and hard working, trustworthy and hospitable. The Rajputs were held in high respect on the defenders of the country. They were God fearing and worshipped a large number of Gods and Goddesses. They led a luxurious life. They were very fond of wine and opium and were inclined towards pleasure.

v) Marriages

There were hardly any inter caste marriages. Early marriage was the general custom. The marriage was arranged by the parents and elderly people of their own caste. Widow re-marriage was not regarded good. The widows led a miserable life. The birth of a girl in the house was regarded in auspicious. The newly born girls were killed alive especially among the Rajputs.

vi) Religious conditions

The Rajputs were strict followers of Hinduism. There were mainly three religions prevalent in the society were Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The Rajputs were the followers of Hinduism. They worshipped Siva, Vishnu and Goddess Durga. They constructed a number of temples. They celebrated many Hindu festivals.

vii) Art and Literature

They were great patrons of art and architecture. During the Rajputs period the Indian masons and craftsmen produced beautiful works of art. They were also builders of beautiful palaces, forts, temples and other works of art. Their irrigation works, tanks and lakes, bathing ghats, reservoirs and fortresses testify their skill of engineering and architecture. "Fortress of Chittor, Ranthambhore, Mandu and Gwalior are conspicuous examples of their architectural skill. The Rajput rulers laid the foundation of many

beautiful cities and built a large number of palaces by the side of beautiful lakes, surrounded by natural scenes. The Linga-Raja temple of Bhuvneshwar (Orissa) is a fine example of the medieval Hindu temples of Northern India. Another example is Mahadeva Temple of Khajwraho. The Tajpal Temple was built of pure white marble and show excellent and dedicated workmanship. Its central dome, has won the admiration of people from all over the world.

viii) Literature

The Rajputs Kings were the great patrons of learning. Learned scholars adorned their courts. There was all round development of Sanskrit. Most of the books were written in Sanskrit language. The writers of the outstanding works were encouraged by the Rajput rulers. Bhavabhuti, Kalidasa, Jaidevi, Ghosh, Rajshekar etc., are names which shine brilliantly on the horizon of literature, Bhavabhuti was a dramatist of the highest order. He produced Malti, Madhava and Mahavir Charita Kalhan's 'Rajatarangini' is a historical work.

ix) Education

The system of education was based on the 'Gurukul System'. The students were imparted education in the Guru's Ashram which was generally faraway from the crowded towns in the lap of nature. Temples and monasteries were the great seats of learning. Nalanda was the most renowned centre of learning. The other centres of learning were Odattapuri (Bihar) Somapura (Bengal) and Vikramashila (East Bihar).

x) Painting and Music

The Rajput kings were very fond of music, dance and painting. All the fine arts found excellent development. Musicians and dancers got patronage, encouragement and help at the hands of the Rajput rulers. Many philosophers and religious reformers like Kumarami Bhatta and Shankracharya preached during this period. This was the time when Rajput monarchs concentrated in magnificence, diverted from other pursuits to the pious labour of elaborating the embellishment of the temple service in stone.

Check your progress

1. Examine briefly the different theories regarding the origin of Rajputs.
2. Describe the social, economic and religious life of the Rajputs.

Let us sum up

The Rajput rulers had a great love for battle. Warfare was their life and death. They wasted much of their resources in the endless and altogether unnecessary warfare. They possessed all the necessary resources and courage. In spite of their outstanding courage they failed miserably in establishing a permanent empire. The causes responsible for their failure were - feudal system as a chief cause of disunity, lack of unity and existence of numerous petty states, mutual jealousies and quarrels, lack of far sightedness and statesmanship, absence of any national leader of political insights, absence of spirit of nationalism, evil effects of caste system and luxurious life of the Rajput chiefs. Ultimately, the invasions of Muslims checked the Rajput, the kingdom of Rajputs declined.

Key words

Rajora, Rajatarangini, Ayudhas, ParamBhaddarak, Kritya - kalpataru, Chandra Bardri, Jauntar, Gurukul System

Answers to check your progress

1. Use the material in section: 15.2
2. Use the material in section: 15.8

Glossary

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. Rajora | : a group of Jats who lived in Madhyapradesh |
| 2. Rajatarangiwi | : historical chronicle written by Kalhana |
| 3. Ayudhas | : weapons |
| 4. Parambhaddarak | : an official at the Administrative System |
| 5. Kritya | : achievement |
| 6. Kalpataru | : wish fulfilling divine tree |
| 7. Chandra Bardi | : India poet who wrote Prithviraja Raso |

Ref;

Rajora - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Rajora>

Ayudhas - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Ayudhas>

Kalpataru - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Kalpataru>

Kritya - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Kritya>

Unit 16

THE ARAB CONQUEST OF SINDH

STRUCTURE

Overview

Learning objectives

Introduction

The Condition of India at the Time of the Arab Invasion

The Causes of the Arab Invasion

The Invasion

The Causes of the Success of the Arabs and the fall of Sindh

The Arabs in Sindh after Muhammad

The Effects of the Arab Invasion

The Invasions of the Turks and the Establishment of Muslim Rule in India

Mahmud of Ghazni

The Causes of the Invasions of Mahmud

The Condition of India at the Time of the Invasions of Mahmud

The Invasions of Mahmud

An Estimate of Mahmud's Achievements

The Successors of Mahmud

Shahah-ud-Din Allias Muiz-ud-Din Muhammad of Ghur

The Causes of the Invasions of Muhammad on India

India at the Time of the Invasions of Muhammad of Ghur

The Invasions of Muhammad and the establishment of Turkish Rule in India

As Estimate of Sultan Muiz-ud-din Muhammad of Ghur

Let us sum up

Key words

Answers to check your progress

OVERVIEW

Mahmud Gazni repeated raids on India mainly for her wealth. In the process he destroyed many Hindu temples. These temples were depositories of vast quantities of wealth. Later attack made by Mahmud of Ghor started a new era in Indian history. In this unit we shall study about Arab conquest of India.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you should be able to

- explain the condition of India at the time of Arab invasion.
- discuss the causes, courses and results of the Arab's conquest.
- outline the raids of Mahmud of Ghazni.

- describe the invasions of Muhammad of Ghur.

INTRODUCTION

The rise and growth of Islam have been regarded as one of the most important events of world history. Islam grew up in the desert of Arabia. Its first converts, the Arabs, made it a powerful force in the politics of Asia. Afterwards, the Persians took up the cause of Islam and strengthened it. Then, the Turks extended it towards both the west and the east and made it one of the foremost religions of the world. Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D), the founder of Islam, propagated Islam, both by peace and war. Thereafter, his followers propagated Islam both by propaganda and force. From its very beginning. Islam inspired a war-like spirit and national consciousness among the Arabs. The Arabs decided to spread their new religion and carry-on military conquests all over the world. Within a short time, the Arabs established a vast empire which extended from the Atlantic sea in the west, to the banks of the river Indus in the east and from the Caspian Area in the north, to the valley of the river Nile in the south. The successors of Prophet Muhammad, were elected as head of the Islamic faith and also that of the state. He was a Sunni Muslim and his family was called the Umayyad. In 750 A.D., the Abbasids, who were Shias, replaced the Umayyad family of the Khalifas. The Khalifa continued to be the nominal head of the Islamic faith till the abolition of the title by the British Government. It was under the Umayyad Khalifas that the Arabs succeeded in conquering Sindh.

THE CONDITION OF INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE ARABINVASION

Politically, India was divided into rival states. India is a sub-continent and it was not possible to keep it under one rule. There existed quite a few extensive kingdoms at that time, which were powerful enough to meet the challenge of the foreign aggressions. But, these kingdoms couldn't withstand before the Arab invasion. The reason was not the division into many states but the constant fighting among them for power and glory.

When Arab invasion took place Afghanistan was ruled by Hindu kings. Politically and culturally it had been a part of India since the period of the mighty Mauryas. In course of time, it was divided into the kingdoms of Jabul

and Kabul. The kingdom of Kabul was extended up to the borders of Kashmir in the north-east and touched the borders of Persia in the west. The kingdom of Jabul lies between the territories of Baluchistan and the kingdom of Kabul. Being situated in the north-west of India, these kingdoms had to meet the challenge of the Muslims first. However, the Hindu rulers of these kingdoms succeeded in maintaining their independence till the end of the ninth century A.D. Kashmir was also an independent state. It became a powerful state during the reign of Lalitaditya (725-755 A.D.) Yasovarman of the Pratihara dynasty of north India ruled the empire that extended Punjab in the west, to Bengal in the east and from the Himalayas in the north, to the banks of the river Narmada in the south. The Pala dynasty ruled over Bengal. Thus, there were powerful states in north India during the Arab invasion.

The Vakatakas, the Pallavas, the Pandyas and the Cholas had strong kingdoms in the south. Even Sindh was an extensive kingdom whose boundary touched the border of Kashmir in the north, the state of Kannauj in the east and the Arabian Sea in the South. Baluchistan was also a part of its territories. Sindh was ruled by Dahar, a Brahmana, who had captured the throne of Sindh quite recently. Dahar did not consolidate his position when, the invasion of the Arabs took place. Besides, his policy remained ambiguous. The oppressive policy of Dahar towards the Sudras caused internal dissensions. Sindh was comparatively a weak state in India at that time.

THE CAUSES OF THE ARAB INVASION

The Arabs had contacts with India prior to their attack on Sindh. They engaged in trade, particularly in the south-west coast of India. The growth of their military power, combined with their ambition made Arabs desire to capture territories in India. The first attack in 636 A.D to capture Thana near Bombay did not succeed. Afterwards, they made frequent attempts through both sea and land to capture Makarana in the border of Sindh. The Arabs, ultimately captured Makarana (modern Baluchistan) in the beginning of the eighth century A.D. The capture of Makarana paved the way for the conquest of Sindh.

Cause of the attack of the Arabs was their religious zeal. The propagation of Islam by force and conquest had been the aim of all the Khalifas. The attack

on Sindh was also a part of that policy. Secondly, the Khalifas who were the heads of Islamic faith as well the heads of the Islamic state. Like any other rulers they also desired to extend their empire. So the attack on Sindh was also a part of their expansionist policy. Thirdly, the Arabs, having trade relations with India, knew that India was a rich country. Therefore, to lure the wealth through conquest they attacked Sindh.

However, the immediate cause of their attack was the activity of sea-pirates of Sindh who looted certain Arab-ships. Historians have expressed different opinions regarding his incident. Sir Wolseley Haig has observed that the king of Ceylon sent a ship to Hajjaj, the Muslim governor of Iraq, was captured by the pirates of Debal, a sea-port of Sindh. Some other scholars have expressed the view that the pirates looted the presents and carried off the women who were offered by the king of Ceylon to the Khalifa. Some others have said that the king of Ceylon had embraced Islam and he had sent some women and other presents to the Khalifa and those presents were looted by sea-pirates. There is no conclusive evidence to prove that the king of Ceylon had embraced Islam. But all historians have accepted that certain women, whosoever they might be, and some articles sent by the king of Ceylon to Hajjaj were captured by the sea-pirates of Singh. Hajjaj demanded from Dahar, the then ruler of Sindh, to set free those women or to pay compensation. Dahar refused to do anything and replied that he had no control over those sea-pirates who had captured those women. As a result Hajjaj got permission from Khalifa Walid to attack Sindh.

The Invasion

The first attack under Ubaidullah failed. He was defeated and killed. Another army sent under Budail met the same fate. Then Hajjaj made elaborate preparations for the attack on Sindh. He sent a powerful army under the command of his nephew and son-in-law, Muhammad-bin-Qasim, in 711 A.D. Muhammad first conquered Debal where he received fresh reinforcement sent by Hajjaj through the sea. Then he conquered Nerum, Siwistan and a few other strongholds. By then Dahar gave no resistance to the Arabs. The battle took place between Dahar and Mohammed on 20 June, 712 A.D. Dahar fought gallantly, but, just when the Muslim army was on the verge of collapse, his elephant, which got wounded, rushed away from the battle-field. This incident created panic and confusion in the army of Dahar. Still Dahar returned to the battle-field, courageously fought and

ultimately fell fighting in the midst of his enemies. The fort of Raor was ultimately captured by the Arabs. Jaisingha, the son of Dahar, resisted the Arabs at the fort of Brahamanabad Muhammad captured the entire treasury of Dahar and also one of his queens, Ladi and her daughters, Suryadevi and Parmaldevi. He himself married Ladi and sent her virgin daughters to the Kahlifa as presents. The Arabs also captured Alor and a few other forts which completed their conquest of Sindh. In 713 A.D., Muhammad besieged the fort of Multan. The people offered resistance for two months. Muhammad cut off the source of water-supply to the town and Multan was forced to surrender. Muhammad got a vast quantity of gold in Multan and therefore, named it "the city of gold". Multan, however, was the last city, which was conquered by Muhammad. Muhammad, the conqueror of Sindh, could not live long after his successful campaigns. He met a tragic end.

The Causes of the Success of the Arabs and the fall of Sindh

The Arabs succeeded in conquering Sindh and Multan due to several reasons. Primarily, the internal weaknesses of Sindh were responsible for its fall. Sindh was a weak state of India. It was thickly populated, its economic resources were meager. There were sharp social divisions in Sindh. Besides, the usual distinctions in Hindu society - higher and lower castes, the rule of Brahmana kings had been oppressive towards war-like people like Jats and Meds which alienated them from their rulers. Sindh, of course, was not poor and it had good foreign trade. Yet, it was not so prosperous as to provide the means to develop itself into a strong state militarily. The family of Dahar, had captured the throne quite recently and neither his family nor, had he succeeded in providing a stable and strong government in Sindh. His provincial governors were virtually semi-independent and quite a large section of the populace were not loyal to him.

Dahar committed many tactical mistakes from the very beginning. He could not foresee the danger of the Arab invasion after the conquest of Makarana. He remained inactive when Muhammad was conquering Debal, Nerun and other places at lower Sindh.

Muhammad was certainly a more capable commander than Dahar and that was fairly responsible for the success of the Arabs. The Arabs could get traitors also from the Indian side. Nerun surrendered to the Arabs without fighting and the Jats supported the Arabs after the battle of Sesam. The

treachery from the Indian side certainly helped in the success of the Arabs. Besides, the superior commandership of Muhammad, the religious zeal of the Arabs, their better arms and military tactics were certainly responsible for their success.

The Arabs possessed superior arms, cavalry, and military tactics with religious zeal. As compared to the Arabs, the Indians lacked not only the military resources but, also unity.

The Arabs in Sindh after Muhammad

The Arabs did not penetrate further into India after the capture of Sindh. When the Abbasids replaced Umayyads as Khalifas, the Arabs in Sindh were also divided. They fought against each other. Ultimately, the weakened powers of the Khalifas could not control the distant provinces. Sindh also became free from the control of the Khalifas in 871 A.D. The kingdom of Sindh was divided into two viz., lower and upper Sindh.

The Arabs failed to administer their kingdom in Sindh well. Their administration in Sindh was like a military Jagir. The Arabs simply collected taxes and maintained their position with the force of arms. However, as their number was limited, they refrained from interfering in the local administration.

The Effects of the Arab Invasion

Colonel Tod, the famous historian of the history of Rajasthan, described that the invasion of the Arabs had a tremendous effect. The entire north India was terrorized by it. Now, no historian accepts his view. The Arab conquest had a very limited effect on the politics of India. Sir Wolseley Haig also writes, "It was a mere episode in the history of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country." They simply drew closer the contacts of Indians with the Arabs and the Islamic world. Besides, they were the first who established the rule of Islam in India and converted Hindus into Islam in quite a large number.

The Arabs were influenced by the culture of India. The Arabs learnt much from fine arts, astrology and science of medicines and literature of India. They employed Hindu artists and architects to construct buildings. They

also learnt from Buddhist and Hindu philosophy, literature and religious ideals. The Sanskrit texts **Brahma Siddhanta** and **Khanda Khadhyak** were translated into Arabic language during the period of Khalifa Al-Mansur. The Arabs learnt the philosophy of Sanyas and Tapa from the Indians. The Arabs also gained the knowledge of numericals and profited from the science of medicine of Indians. Dr. A.L. Srivastava has expressed the view that not only the Arabs but Europeans also drew advantage from the knowledge of the Indians in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. because of their contacts with them through the Arabs. Thus, though the Arabs came to India as conquerors they failed to influence Indian politics and culture in any way.

THE INVASIONS OF THE TURKS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MUSLIM RULE IN INDIA

The credit of establishing the Muslim rule in India goes to the Turks. The leadership of Islam was captured from the Arabs, first by the Persians and then by the Turks. In the beginning, the Turks were barbaric hordes and their only strength was their power of arms. The Turks were new converts to Islam and, therefore, proved more fanatical in their religious zeal as compared to the Persians and the Arabs.

The Turks conquered a large part of western Asia and, ultimately, moving towards the east, penetrated into India. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni was the first to break the military strength of the Hindus and plundered the wealth of India. But, he did not establish his empire. The credit of establishing the Muslim empire in India goes to Muhammad of Ghur who followed Muhammad of Ghazni after a lapse of nearly 148 years.

Mahmud of Ghazni

The Yamini dynasty generally known as Ghaznavi dynasty claimed its origin from the family of Persian rulers. During the course of Arab invasion, the family fled to Turkistan and became one with the Turks. Therefore, the family was accepted as Turk. Alptigin founded the independent kingdom of this dynasty. He captured the kingdom of Jabul, with its capital Ghazni in 963 A.D., and died in the same year. He was succeeded by his son Is-haq. Then, the throne was captured by Balkatigin, the commander of the Turkish troops, Balkatigin was succeeded by his slave, Pirai, in 972 A.D. But Pirai

was a cruel king. Sabuktigin, the son-in-law of Alptigin ultimately, dethroned Pirai and became the ruler of Ghazni in 977 A.D.

Sabuktigin was an ambitious ruler. Sabuktigin started attacking the boundaries of the Hindushahi kingdom of east Afghanistan and the Punjab. He occupied a few forts and cities. The struggle between the kingdoms of Ghazni and Hindushahi continued till Sultan Mohamud finally extinguished the Hindushahis. The attempt of the Shahi ruler Jayapala over Sultan Mohamud failed.

Sabuktigin died in 997 A.D. He nominated his younger son Ismail as his successor before his death. But, Ismail's elder brother, Mahamud captured the throne of Ghazni in 998 A.D. Mahamud repeatedly attacked India and paved the way for the conquest of India.

Mahamud was born on 1 November, 971 A.D. He had received a fairly good education and had participated in many battles during the reign of his father. After ascending the throne, Mahmud first consolidated his position in Heart, Balkh and Bust and, then conquered Khurasan. In 999 A.D. Khalifa Al Qadir Billah accepted him as the ruler of these places and conferred on him the titles of Yamin-ud-Daulah and Amin-ud-Millah.

The Causes of the Invasions of Mahmud

Various reasons have been given by historians which resulted in repeated attacks by Mahmud on India.

1. Mahmud desired to establish the glory of Islam in India. Professor Muhammad Habib has contradicted this view. He says that Mahmud's barbaric deeds instead of raising the prestige of Islam destroyed its image before the world. Jafar opined that he attacked Hindu temples not because of his religious zeal but because he desired to get their wealth. Utbi, the court historian of Mahmud, described the attacks of Mahmud in India as Jihads (holy wars) to spread Islam and destroy image-worship. It is mostly accepted that the main aim of Mahmud was the propagation of Islam and establishing its glory in India.

2. Another aim of Mahmud was to loot the wealth of India. No historian has contradicted this view. The wealth of India was alluring for him and he repeated his attacks to acquire more and more wealth from India.
3. Besides, Mahmud had a political purpose also. The Ghaznavids and the Hindushahis were fighting against each other since the reign of Alptigin. The Hindushahi rulers had attacked Ghazni thrice. So it made Mahmud to destroy this aggressive neighbour. Therefore, he himself pursued an aggressive policy against it. The success against the Hindushahi kingdom encouraged him to penetrate deeper into India.
4. Like all other great rulers of his age, Mahmud also desired to get fame by his conquests.

The Condition of India at the Time of the Invasions of Mahmud

Politically, India was divided. There were many kingdoms which constantly fought against each other. Many of them were quite powerful but, because of their internal conflicts, none of them come together to unite themselves against Mahmud. Multan and Sindh constituted the two Muslim states of India. Kashmir was also an independent state and it had family relations with the Hindushahis. There were independent kingdoms in Gujarat, Malwa and Bundelkhand as well. In the south, the later Chalukyas and the Cholas had their powerful kingdoms.

Socially, the division of the Hindus into castes and sub-castes had created sharp differences and weakened the society. Besides the traditional four castes, there was a large section of the people called Anjaya. The hunters, the weavers, the fishermen, the shoe-makers and the people engaged in like professions belonged to this section. Their position was lower than that of the Sudras.

The position of the lower castes in the society can simply be imagined when we are told that even the Vaisyas were not allowed to study the religious texts. Al Beruni wrote that if anyone dared to attempt it, his tongue was cut off. Thus, the position of the lower castes, including the Vaisyas had been lowered very much and the caste-system had become very rigid as well.

Such a state of affairs had divided the society into several different antagonistic groups.

There was deterioration in religion and morals as well. Both Hinduism and Buddhism suffered from ignorance and corruption. The people, particularly the rich and upper classes, engaged themselves in corrupt practices. The true spirit of religion was lost. The religion was used as an instrument for the fulfillment of their worldly desires. The temples and the Buddhist monasteries became centres of corruption. The practice of Devadasis in the temples also degraded the function of the temples. Even educational institutions did not remain free from corruption. The deterioration in society and religion led to deterioration in culture as well.

The Hindus had not attempted to improve their arms and methods of warfare. They largely depended on their elephants. Sword was still their chief weapon. Their policy was yet defensive. They neither cared to build forts in the north-west nor adopted any other means to defend their frontiers. Thus, militarily, too, India was weak.

Politically, socially and militarily India was weak at the time of the invasions of Mahmud. The one primary cause of the weakness of the Indians was that they did not try to know, understand and learn from what was happening in neighbouring countries in political, military, social, religious and cultural fields.

However, one thing that India possessed as yet was its wealth. Its agriculture, industries and trade were in a good condition and it had amassed wealth which was concentrated in the hands of upper classes and in the temples. India's wealth was a temptation for a foreign aggressor. The wealth of India was like the wealth of a weak person which could tempt any strong man to possess it. Mahmud was not an exemption.

The Invasions of Mahmud

Mahmud invaded India seventeen times. There are no sufficient proofs of that, yet, all historians agree that Mahmud attacked India at least twelve times. His first expedition took place in 1000 A.D. He occupied a few frontier fortresses. In 1001 A.D., he defeated the Hindushahi king, Jayapala and captured him. Mahmud advanced as far as the capital city of Waihand and

then returned to Ghazni. He released Jayapala after getting 25 elephants and 2, 50,000 dinars from him. Jayapala burnt himself to death. He was succeeded by his son, Anandapala, in 1002 A.D.

In 1004 A.D., Mahmud defeated Baji Ray the ruler of Bhera. In 1006 A.D., Mahmud proceeded to attack the Shia kingdom of Multan. The Hindushahi king, Anandapala, fought against him near Peshawar, but was defeated and fled. Mahmud captured Multan in 1006 A.D. Daud and Nawasa Shah revolted in his absence and, therefore, he came to India in 1008 A.D., defeated them both and annexed all the territories including Multan to his empire.

Anandapala was succeeded by his son Trilochanapala in 1012 A.D. In 1013 A.D., Mahmud attacked Nandana and occupied it. Mahmud did not attack Kashmir, though he plundered the places on its border. Trilochanapala retired to the Sivalik hills and strengthened his position with the help of Vidyadhar, the Chandela ruler of Bundelkhand. Mahmud defeated Trilochanapala in 1019 A.D. The Hindushahi kingdom was now reduced to the status of a small Jagir. Since Trilochanapala was murdered by his son, Bhimapala succeed. Bhimapala died as a petty chief in 1026 A.D., and with him ended the mighty Hindushahi kingdom of north-western India. The end of the Hindushahi kingdom encouraged Mahmud for repeated raids on India. He met no challenge anywhere.

In 1009 A.D., Mahmud had defeated the ruler of Narayanpur and plundered its wealth. In 1014 A.D., he defeated Rama, the chief of Dera and looted Thaneswar. All the temples and the images of Thaneswar were destroyed, while the principal deity of Chakraswami was taken to Ghazni and placed in a public square for defilement. In 1018 A.D., Mahmud attacked Ganga-yamuna Doab and looted Mathura. Mahmud looted the city for twenty day's, broke up all the idols and destroyed all the temples. He got enormous booty from Mathura. From Mathura, Mahmud marched to Kannauj. Rajyapala, the Pratihara ruler of Kannauj, fled and left his capital at the mercy of Mahmud. He looted the city and destroyed it. He invaded a few more places and returned to Ghazni.

In 1019 A.D., Mahmud returned to India with a view to punish Vidyadhar. He defeated the Hindushahi ruler, Trilochanapala, on the way and reached the

border of Bundelkhand, sometimes during 1020-21 A.D. Vidyadhar faced him with a large army but left the field during the night.

In 1024 A.D., Mahmud took the famous expedition of Somanath temple on the coast of Kathiawar. The temple received offerings in different forms from lakhs of devotees daily. It had a permanent income from the resources of ten thousand villages. It was a beautiful temple and possessed enormous wealth. Its Shiva-linga had a canopy studded with thousands of costly jewels and diamonds. The chain attached to one of its bells weighed 200 maunds of gold. One thousand Brahmanas were appointed to perform the worship of the linga and 350 males and females were employed to sing and dance before the deity.

Mahmud reached the capital city of Anhilwara through Multan in 1025 A.D. The ruler of Anhilwara Bhima I fled the country. As a result Mahmud reached Somanath without any resistance. The devotees of the temple offered him resistance but the next day Mahmud entered the temple, looted and destroyed it. He returned with a huge booty.

Mahmud came back to India for the last time in 1027 A.D. to punish the Jats. The Jats had troubled him on his return journey from Somanath. The Jats were severely punished. Mahmud looted their property, killed the males and enslaved their women and children. Besides engaging himself in loot and plunder, he annexed Afghanistan, the Punjab, Sindh and Multan to his empire. Mahmud died in 1030 A.D.

An Estimate of Mahmud's Achievements

Mahmud was a courageous soldier and a successful commander. He ranks among those successful generals of the world who have been regarded born-commanders. His army consisted of the people of different nationalities like the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans and even Hindus. Yet, it became a unified powerful force under his command. He converted this small inheritance into a mighty empire which extended from Iraq and the Caspian Sea in the west, to the river Ganges in the east.

Mahmud was successful in maintaining peace and order protect trade and agriculture and safeguard the honour and property of his subjects within the boundaries of his empire. Mahmud's greatest weakness was that he was

not an able administrator. He failed to form a stable empire. His empire existed only during his own life time. After this death his empire was shattered into pieces.

Mahmud was an educated and cultured person. He was a patron of scholarship and fine arts. Al Beruni, the scholar of Turki, Sanskrit, Mathematics, Philosophy, Astrology and History was at his court. The same way Utbi, Farabi, Baihaki, the Iranian poet Ujari, Tusi, Unsuri, Asjadi, Farrukhi and Firdausi, who were scholars of repute of his age, were all at his court. During his rule, Ghazni became not only a beautiful city of the east but also the centre of Islamic scholarship, fine arts and culture.

Mahmud ranks among the great rulers of Central Asia. But, in the history of India, Mahmud was a fanatical Sunni Muslim, a barbaric foreign bandit, a plunderer and destroyer of fine arts.

It has been said by many scholars that Mahmud made a permanent impact on India. He came like a strong storm and destroyed everything and then passed off. But, it would be wrong to accept that Mahmud left no permanent mark on Indian history. Mahmud broke up the economic and military strength of the Indians.

The inclusion of the Panjab, Multan and Sindh in the Ghaznavid Empire made easier for the later Muslim invaders to advance into India. The most important achievement of Mahmud was the destruction of the Hindushahi kingdom of Afghanistan. It paved the way for the conquest of India by the Muslims.

The Successors of Mahmud

After the death of Mahmud a war of succession ensued between his two sons, Muhammad and Masud, in which Masud emerged victorious and ruled between 1030 -1040 A.D. He was defeated by Seljuq Turks. Besides, there rose two new powers in Central Asia, viz., the Khwarizms and the Ghurs. Ultimately, the Ghurs captured Ghazni and forced their last ruler Khusrav Shah to seek shelter in the Panjab.

SHAHAH-UD-DIN ALLIAS MUIZ-UD-DIN MUHAMMADOF GHUR

Ghur is situated at a high altitude of more than ten thousand feet between Ghazni and Heart. The district of Ghur was agricultural but Ghur was well known in Central Asia for its good horses and steel. The horse and steel were the most effective means of warfare during those days. In 1009 A.D., Mahmud of Ghazni defeated the ruler of Ghur. But with the decline of the Ghaznavids, Ghur became virtually not only independent but also started contending for power against the Ghaznavids. Ala-ud-din Husain of Ghur completely devastated the city of Ghazni. Ala-ud-din was succeeded by his son, Saif-ud-din and Saif-ud-din by his cousin Ghiyas-ud-din. Ghiyas-ud-din sent his brother

Shahah-ud-din alias Muiz-ud-din Muhammad to conquer Ghazni. Muhammad conquered Ghazni in 1173-74 A.D. This was the very Muhammad who attacked India in the 12th century and succeeded in establishing his empire in India. While his elder brother tried to extend his empire towards the west and came in conflict with the Khwarizm Shah of Persia, Muhammad tried to extend the empire towards the east. Muhammad always accepted his brother Ghiyas-ud-din as his suzerain till his death, though virtually he enjoyed the status of an independent ruler.

The Causes of the Invasions of Muhammad on India

Muhammad attacked India due to several reasons. Historians have accepted the following reasons among them.

1. Muhammad was an ambitious ruler. Like all great rulers of his age he wanted to extend his empire for power and glory.
2. The royal families of Ghur and Ghazni were hereditary enemies. By that time, the Ghaznavids still ruled in the Panjab, Muhammad after the capture of Ghazni desired to annex the Panjab and also provide security to its kingdom from towards the east.
3. The ambition of the Ghur dynasty to extend their power towards the west was checked by the rising Khwarizm dynasty of Persia. Therefore, the next alternative was to proceed towards the east viz.,

towards India. Therefore, Muhammad himself decided to conquer India.

4. Probably, Muhammad also desired to acquire wealth from India and also to extend the sway of Islam and these too tempted him to invade India. But, in no case, these were the basic causes of his invasions.

India at the Time of the Invasions of Muhammad of Ghur

Nearly 148 years had lapsed after the last invasion of Mahamud in 1027 A.D. as Mahammad's first attack on India took place in 1171 A.D. But, there was not a single remarkable change in the condition of India except changes in the ruling dynasties and territories of their kingdoms.

Politically, India was divided into many kingdoms, both in the north and the south. Their constant fighting against each was their primary weakness. At that time, Sindh and Multan were ruled by two independent Shia Muslim rulers, while the Panjab was in the hands of the last Ghaznavid ruler, Khusrav Shah. Khusrav Shah was not a powerful ruler.

The Gahadavala empire was the most extensive in north India and was ruled by Jayachandra. Chandelas ruled in Bundelkhand while the Palas and the Sevas ruled in Bengal. The south was similarly divided politically and was totally indifferent to the fate of north India.

Gujarat and Kathiawar were ruled by the Chalukyas. The Chalukyas had lost much of their power by fighting against the Chauhanas of Delhi and Ajmer. Delhi and Ajmer were ruled by the Chauhanas. The Chauhan ruler Prithviraja III, had extended his empire at the cost of his neighbouring kingdoms. Prithviraja III received no support from any of his neighbours in his fight against the Mulsim invader.

India had not changed itself socially culturally or militarily, since, the days of the invasions of Mahmud. There was no change in Indian society except that a large section of Muslims had settled in many parts of India peacefully. These small colonies of the Muslims were not directly effective in any way, in the Indian politics.

The Invasions of Muhammad and the establishment of Turkish Rule in India

Muhammad first attacked Multan in 1175 A.D. and conquered it easily. Next, he annexed Uch and lower Sindh to his territories. In 1178 A.D., Muhammad attacked Gujarat. Mularaja II, the ruler of Chalukyas defeated Mahamud near Mount Abu. This was the first defeat of Muhammad in India. Afterwards, he changed his route and attempted through Punjab. Muhammad conquered Peshawar in 1179. After two years attacked Lahore and received huge presents from the last Ghaznavid ruler, Khusrav Shah. He conquered Sialkot in 1185 A.D. Muhammad attacked Lahore again in 1186 A.D. and occupied the entire territories of the Panjab. Khusrav was murdered later on, in 1192 A.D.

After the capture of the Punjab in 1198 A.D., Muhammad captured Bhatinda. He was planning to come back when he received the news of the advance of Prithviraja III, against him with a view to recapture Bhatinda. Muhammad proceeded forward to face him. The enemies met each other in the first battle of Tarain 80 miles from Delhi in 1190-91 A.D. Muhammad was defeated in the battle. The Muslim army was routed and the battle was completely won over by the Rajputs. Prithviraja, captured the fort of Bhatinda only after thirteen months.

Muhammad could not forget his defeat at the battle of Tarain. Muhammad collected a strong force of one hundred and twenty thousand men and then proceeded towards India to avenge his defeat. After the capture of Bhatinda, Muhammad marched again to the plain of Tarain. Though Prithviraja III came with a large army to face him, he was decisively defeated. He was taken prisoner to Ajmer. Prithviraja III, was found guilty of a conspiracy against Muhammad and was sentenced to death. The second battle of Tarain, fought in 1192 A.D., proved to be one of the decisive battles of Indian history.

The battle of Tarain opened the way for the conquest of India by the Muslims. Ajmer and Delhi both were occupied by Muhammad. After leaving Qutb-ud-din Aibak as the Governor of Delhi and Ajmer, Muhammad went back. Aibak consolidated the Indian conquests of Muhammad, suppressed the revolts of the Chauhanas at Ajmer, made Delhi the capital of Muslim

kingdom in India in 1193 A.D. and conquered Meerut, Bulandshahar, Aligarh, etc. in the absence of Muhammad.

Muhammad came back to India in 1194 A.D. This time his target was the kingdom of Kannauj. Jayachandra, the ruler of Kannauj, had enmity with Prithviraja III and therefore, had not helped him against the Muslim. The battle between Muhammad and Jayachandra took place near Chandawar on the river Yamuna. Jayachandra was killed in the battle. Muhammad proceeded as far as Banaras and occupied the kingdom of Kannauj.

Leaving Aibak again, Muhammad went back. Aibak consolidated his fresh conquests and suppressed the revolts which took place at Ajmer, Aligarh, etc.

Muhammad came back to India in 1195 A.D. This time he conquered Bayana and attacked Gwalior. Pratihara Chief, Salhakshana, accepted the suzerainty of Muhammad and peace was granted to him.

Muhammad could not come back to India for the next few years. A serious revolt in Rajasthan was suppressed by Aibak after much difficulty. One of the most important conquests of Aibak was that of Bundelkhand. Aibak attacked the fort of Kalinjar in 1202-1203 A.D and occupied the Chandala fort.

The conquest of Bengal and Bihar was not attempted either by Muhammad or Aibak but by a petty noble named Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji.

When the nobles of Muhammad were extending and consolidating his empire in India, Muhammad's elder brother, Ghiyas-ud-din, had died in 1202 A.D. Therefore, Muhammad had become the ruler of the entire Ghur Empire. Ghiyas-ud-din had always fought against his western neighbour, the Khwarizmians. Muhammad pursued the same policy. But, he was severely defeated in 1205 A.D. at the battle of Andkhud. This defeat of Muhammad made a set back in India. It led to revolts in different parts of India. In the north-west, the Khokars tried to capture Lahore.

Muhammad came to India in 1205 A.D. and fought a battle against Khokars between the rivers Chenab and Jhelum. The Khokars fought fiercely but

were defeated and punished mercilessly. After setting right, the affairs at Lahore, Muhammad returned to Ghazni. On the way, he was stabbed on 15 March 1206 A.D. at Damyaka, on the banks of the river Indus, while he was engaged in his evening prayers. The body of Muhammad was carried to Ghazni and buried there.

As Estimate of Sultan Muiz-ud-din Muhammad of Ghur

While making an assessment of the character and achievements of Muhammad of Ghur, one is usually tempted to compare him with those of Mahmud of Ghazni. Muhammad of Ghur had no comparison with Mahmud of Ghazni a military leader. Mahmud was a born military commander. His every Indian campaign was successful and he had been equally successful in Central Asia. Mahmud, thus, established an extensive and powerful empire. Muhammad of Ghazni rightly deserved to be the first Sultan of the Islamic world. Muhammad's military successes are of no match to the successes of Mahmud. While Mahmud remained undefeated during his lifetime, Muhammad was badly defeated by his different adversaries three times. Mularaja II, the ruler of Gujarat, Prithviraja III, the ruler of Delhi and Ajmer and Khwarizm Shah, the ruler of Persia defeated him in turn. But the greatness of Muhammad was that none of those defeats could weaken his spirit or check his ambitions. He took every failure as an experience, realized his weaknesses, removed them, and got success in the end. The successes and conquests of Muhammad brought about more permanent results than the conquests of Mahmud.

Mahmud was never defeated. He did not think of establishing his empire. He limited his vision simply to plunder the wealth of India. But, Mahmud possessed a higher ideal as compared to Mahmud. Muhammad also gave proof of his political farsightedness in dealing with different Rajput rulers. He tried to get the sympathy or support of a few of the Rajputs. That is why, he did not annex Delhi and Ajmer to his territories just after the second battle of Tarain.

Muhammad neither changed the status of those Hindu chiefs who accepted his suzerainty nor interfered in their administration. He simply established military posts here and there and garrisoned them with Turkish troops in order to consolidate his hold over the conquered territories. This helped him in consolidating the Turkish power in India. Qutb-ud-din Aibak, Taj-ud-din

Yulduz and Malik Bahauddin Tughril, who proved themselves fairly capable, were largely responsible for the successes of Mahamud in India, were trained by Muhammad.

Check your progress

1. Describe briefly the condition of India at the time of Arab invasion.
2. Explain the causes, courses and results of the invasion of Arabs conquest in India
3. Critically evaluate the raids of Muhammad of Ghazni.
4. Explain the invasions of Muhammad of Ghor and the establishment of Turkish rule in India.

Let us sum up

The success of Muhammad was largely due to his own strength of character. He possessed a higher ideal from which he never deviated. Muhammad planned his attacks and conquests before hand, changed them whenever necessary. He did not take unnecessary risks in battles and politics. After his defeat at Anhilwara, he changed his course of attack on India. As a military commander, he kept his eyes upon all his campaigns. Muhammad was the real founder, of Turkish rule in India and therein laid his greatest achievements and greatness.

Muhammad concentrated more on conquests and so had no time to look after the administration of his territories in India. Virtually, he remained the ruler of Ghazni and Ghur. The task of administering his Indian conquests was mostly left to his slave and Governor of Indian provinces, Qutb-ud-din Aibak.

He patronized scholars like Fakhr-ud-din Razi and Nizami Uruni. However, his greatest achievement was the establishment of the Turkish Empire in India, which added a new chapter in the Indian history.

Key words

Khalifa, Hajjaj, Brahma Siddhanta and Khanda Khadhyak, Ghaznavid Dynasty, Utbi, Jihads.

Answers to check your progress

1. Use the material in section : 16.2
2. Use the material in section : 16.3
3. Use the material in section : 16.4
4. Use the material in section : 16.5

Glossary

1. Khalifa : Successor, leader of the Religious group
2. Hajjaj : Refer to people
3. Brahma Siddhanta : One of the first five books to give ideas on negative numbers and zero
4. Khanda Khadhyak : Unknown
5. Ghaznavid Dynasty : The dynasty began by Ghazni
6. Jihads : Holy Wars

Ref;

Khalifa - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Khalifa>

Hajjaj - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Hajjaj>

Brahma Siddhanta - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Brahma+Siddhanta>

Jihads - <https://www.google.com/search?q=Jihads>

MODEL QUESTION PAPER

PART - A

Answer any Three Questions out of Five Questions (3x3=9)

1. What is Numismatics?
2. Characteristics of Mesolithic Tools
3. Great Bath
4. Rajan
5. Anuloma Prathiloma

PART - B

Answer any Three Questions out of Five Questions (3x7=21)

6. What is the role of Inscriptions and Copper Plates in writing the History?
7. Explain the features of Palaeolithic Period.
8. Discuss about the Social Life of the Indus Civilization People.
9. Explain the Later Vedic Period existed before the Mauryan Period.
10. What was the Caste System that existed before the Mauryan Period?

PART - C

Answer any Four Questions out of Seven Questions (4x10=40)

11. Explain in detail about the Literary References that helps in writing the Indian History.
12. Give an elaborate account on Salient Features of Neolithic Period.
13. Discuss about the Origin and Destruction of Indus Civilization in detail

14. Record the Political Condition that was in existence before the Mauryan Period in elaborative manner.

15. Explain the social condition that existed before the Mauryan Rule.

16. Bring out the Religious, Social and Economic conditions that lasted during the Shatavahana period.

17. Explain the consequences that led to the Invasion of Arabs.