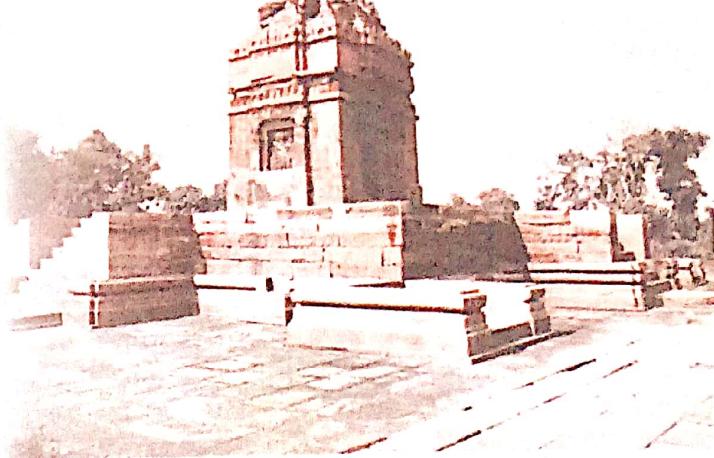


CHAPTER 6

The Age of the Guptas



SYLLABUS

The Age of the Guptas

Sources: Accounts of Fa-hien; Allahabad Pillar Inscription.

Political history and administration (Samudragupta and Chandragupta Vikramaditya); Contribution to the fields of Education (Nalanda University), Science (Aryabhata) and Culture (works of Kalidasa, Deogarh temple). Vedic society and economy.

The period of about two centuries from early fourth century AD is known as the Imperial Age of the Guptas. The rulers of this dynasty established a vast empire comprising almost the entire northern India. In the process of carving such a huge empire they were facilitated by certain material advantages such as fertile land in eastern UP and Bihar and iron ore found in Central India and Bihar, which they could exploit to their advantage. The material progress thus gained enabled them to make progress in the field of literature, art and architecture, science and culture. This period is therefore, also known as the "classical age" or the 'golden age' of Indian history.

SOURCES

The main sources of information about the Guptas are the following:

1. Accounts of Fa-hien: Fa-hien was the earliest Chinese pilgrim who visited India on a religious mission during the reign of Chandragupta II. During his stay in India, he went on a pilgrimage to Mathura, Kannauj, Kapilavastu, Kushinagar, Vaishali, Pataliputra, Kashi and Rajagriha. He

made careful unbiased observations about the conditions at that time. According to Fa-hien's accounts:

- Magadha was a prosperous country with large towns, teeming with wealthy population.
- Pataliputra was a flourishing city with numerous charitable institutions, including a hospital endowed by benevolent citizens.
- Although the people were wealthy, they led simple lives, generally observing the Buddhist rules of conduct.
- Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Buddhism and Jainism were the main religions. People, however, had no ill-will towards other sects.
- Hindu gods and goddesses were depicted on coins and also in sculptures and paintings.
- The penal code was mild and the offences were ordinarily punished by fines only.



Fa-hien

From the above accounts, it can be inferred that the Gupta Empire was prosperous and governed on enlightened principles.

2. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription or Prayaga Prashasti: It is one of the important epigraphic evidences of the Imperial Guptas. Composed by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta, Allahabad Pillar inscription, also known as Prayaga Prashasti, is written in praise of Samudragupta, arguably the most powerful of the Gupta rulers. It describes the reign of the Guptas in ancient India. Besides, it provides an impressive list of Kings and tribal republics that were conquered by Samudragupta. The inscription is also important because of the political geography of India that it indicates by naming the different kings and peoples who populated India in the first half of the 4th century AD.

An excerpt from the Prayaga Prashasti

He was without an antagonist on earth; he, by the overflowing of the multitude of (his) many good qualities adorned by hundreds of good actions, has wiped off the fame of other kings with the soles of (his) feet; (he is) Purusha (the Supreme Being), being the cause of the prosperity of the good and the destruction of the bad (he is) incomprehensible; (he is) one whose tender heart can be captured only by devotion and humility; (he is) possessed of compassion; (he is) the giver of many hundred-thousands of cows; (his) mind has received ceremonial initiation for the uplift of the miserable, the poor, the forlorn and the suffering; (he is) resplendent and embodied kindness to mankind; (he is) equal to (the gods) Kubera (the god of wealth), Varuna (the god of ocean), Indra (the god of rains) and Yama (the god of death)...

REIGN OF GUPTA PERIOD

The history of the first two rulers of the Gupta dynasty — Sri Gupta and his son Ghatotkacha is obscure. So, it is believed that the Gupta Era originated with the reign of Chandragupta I.

Chandragupta-I

Chandragupta I was the first independent king with the title of Maharajadhiraja or 'the king of kings'. After declaring his independence in Magadha, Chandragupta-I extended his empire through matrimonial alliance by marrying a Lichchhavi princess, Kumaradevi. This event is recorded in a series of gold coins issued by Chandragupta-I.

Samudragupta

He was the son of Chandragupta I. Much of the information about him is obtained from a long inscription composed by his court poet, Harisena. This inscription is engraved on a Pillar at Allahabad. He was a great conqueror, an able statesman as well as a patron of arts.

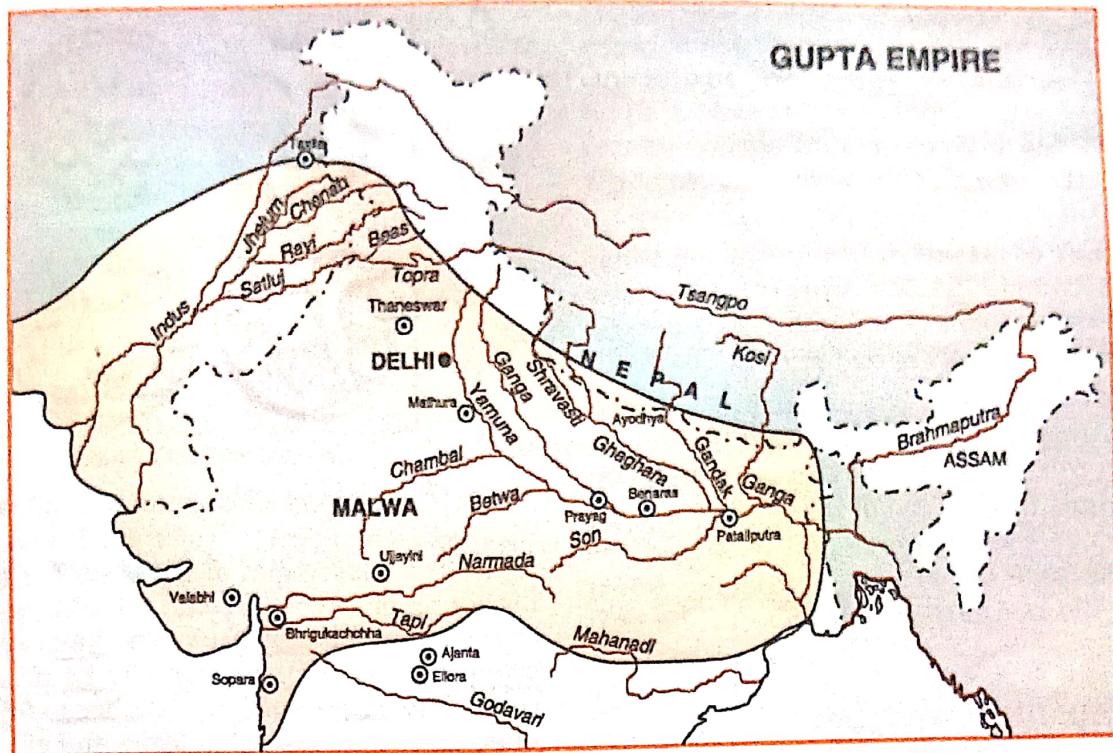
His empire extended from Brahmaputra in the east to rivers Yamuna and Chambal in the west and from Himalayas in the north to Narmada in the south. It is because of his bravery and generalship that he is known as the 'Napoleon of India'. He further extended his empire up to the Chambal river by defeating the Naga kings of Mathura, Gwalior and Ahichhatra. Like Alexander he was daring. During his famous Deccan campaign he covered more than 3,000 miles through dense forests. Though he defeated many powerful rulers, he did not annex southern territories. He made the southern kings accept his authority and allowed them to rule.

The Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta describes four different kinds of rulers and tells us about Samudragupta's policies towards them:

- (a) The nine rulers of Aryavarta were uprooted and their kingdoms were made a part of Samudragupta's empire.
- (b) The twelve rulers of Dakshinpatha (South India), who surrendered to



Allahabad Pillar



Samudragupta after being defeated, were liberated and allowed to rule again over their kingdoms.

- (e) The inner circle of neighbouring states, including Assam, Coastal Bengal, Nepal and a number of gana sanghas (organisation of many kings) in the north-west paid tribute, followed his orders and attended his court.
- (d) The rulers of the outlying areas submitted to him and offered their daughters in marriage.

According to Samudragupta's court poet Harisena, Samudragupta performed an *Ashvamedha Yajna* or horse sacrifice. Samudragupta was not only a brave warrior and conqueror but also a great ruler, a musician and a poet. In one of his coins he is shown playing the *veena*. Samudragupta issued eight types of coins made of gold. His court was full of great scholars and literary persons.

Samudragupta was a follower of Brahmanism and worshipped Lord Vishnu. He also had faith in Vedic sacrifices. But he was tolerant towards other religions.

Chandragupta II Vikramaditya: The Gupta inscriptions mention that Chandragupta II succeeded his father, Samudragupta. He inherited the military genius of his father

and extended the Gupta empire by conquest of his own. He annexed the territories of Sakas of Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra. For this he was given the title 'Sakari' or conqueror of Sakas.

According to noted historian, Dr. Vincent Smith, "the annexation of Saurashtra and Malwa not only added to the empire, provinces of exceptional wealth and fertility, but opened up access to the ports of the western coast; and thus placed Chandragupta II in direct touch with the seaborne commerce with Europe through Egypt."

Chandragupta II entered into matrimonial alliances as a part of his foreign policy. He married Kuberanaga of the Naga family. The Nagas were a powerful ruling clan and this matrimonial alliance helped the Gupta ruler in expanding his empire. The marriage of Chandragupta's daughter, Prabhavati with the Vakataka ruler, Rudrasena II helped him to establish his political influence in the Deccan.

It was during the reign of Chandragupta II that the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien visited India. Fa-hien does not mention the name of Chandragupta II in his accounts, but he gives interesting information on the life of the people and the general condition of the kingdom.

Like Samudragupta, he issued a wide variety of gold coins. The differences in design between the coins of the two rulers are significant. Chandragupta II is represented as slaying a lion on some coins with the legend *simha-vikrama* whereas Samudragupta is shown as slaying a tiger.

On many of his coins, Chandragupta II has the title *Vikramaditya*. His court is said to have been adorned by 'nine gems' including Kalidasa, Varahamihira and Amarsimha.

He was succeeded by Kumaragupta. It was during Kumaragupta's reign that Hunas, a barbarian tribe of Central Asia invaded India for the first time. At the time of the next attack the crown prince Skandagupta had ascended the throne. He gave the Hunas a crushing defeat and they did not dare attack India in the next 50 years.

GUPTA ADMINISTRATION

The Gupta period saw the gradual disappearance of the Republican form of government. However, unlike the Mauryan Empire, the Gupta administration was decentralised in nature. It means that feudatories, i.e., local kings and smaller chiefs ruled a large part of the empire. These chiefs and rulers adopted the titles like *raja* and *maharaja*, whereas the imperial Gupta rulers adopted pompous titles like *parameshvara*, *maharajadhiraja* and *paramabhattaraka*.

MONARCHY

Monarchy was the prevailing form of government during the Gupta period. The theory of the divinity of kings became popular during this period. The Gupta Kings were compared to different Gods such as *Yama*, *Varuna*, *Indra* and *Kubera*. They were compared to Vishnu as regards their function of preserving and protecting the people. Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity, appears on many Gupta coins.

The Gupta kings enjoyed a large number of powers which covered the political, administrative, military and judicial fields. They were the commanders-in-chief of the army. Samudragupta, Chandragupta II and Skandagupta personally led their armies. The kings appointed all the governors and important military and civil officers. The governors and their officers had to work



Coins of the Gupta Period

under the control and guidance of the king. Likewise, the central secretariat also worked under the supervision of the king. The king was the source of all honours and titles. All land in the country was the property of the king who could give away the same to anybody he pleased. He could construct dams, give shelter to foreigners, impose, recover and remit taxes and give justice. If any property was unclaimed, that went into the coffers of the king.

Despite the divine elements attributed to Gupta kings, the brahmans as the chief custodians and interpreters of laws, exercised a check on royal power.

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The Gupta rulers had their councils. Kalidasa, the renowned poet, refers to the *Mantri-Parishad*. It consisted of the prince, the high officials and the feudatories. Among the high officers were the *kumaramatyas* and the *sandhivigrahika*. The *kumaramatyas* formed the chief cadre for recruiting high functionaries. Some of the *kumaramatyas* functioned in their own right and maintained their regular office.

The office of the *sandhivigrahika* (minister of peace and war) first appeared under Samudragupta and Harisena held this title. The main duty of *sandhivigrahika* was to deal with the feudatories. In addition to these officers, there are references to a dozen other officers engaged in managing military, fiscal and rural matters. The growing importance of cavalry is supported by seals and inscriptions. Civil officials such as *amatyas*, *kumaramatyas*, etc., performed military functions or were promoted to the rank of high military officers.

There were officers connected with land transaction. Some of these maintained records of land, sales and other records connected with land.

Revenues might have been collected mostly in kind; but rich peasants probably paid in cash. The officer connected with the collection of tolls on commodities is known as *shaulkika*.

PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The Gupta rulers evolved the first systematic provincial and local administration, which was primarily concerned with the collection of revenues and maintenance of law and order.

Provincial Administration: The core of the Empire directly controlled by the Guptas was divided into *bhuktis*, each of which was placed under the charge of an *uparika*. The *uparika* was a governor appointed by the king.

The *bhuktis* were divided into *vishayas*, placed under the charge of the *vishayapati*. The *vishaya* was divided into smaller units. This pattern, however, was present mainly in the territories directly governed by Gupta kings. Elsewhere, there existed different fiscal and administrative units such as *desa*, *mandala*, *bhoga*, etc., especially in central and western India.

Village Administration: The village administration was managed by the village headman. The Gupta inscriptions refer to the participation of leading local elements in the administration of the village or small towns called *vithis*. No land transactions could be effected without their consent and this may have been also true of other important affairs. Thus, while villages in Mauryan times were managed from above, those in the Gupta times seem to have been managed from the grassroot level.

Town Administration: There were various towns (*janapadas*), which issued their seals and coins. They were administered by a committee of five. Some towns were being administered by some kind of *parishads*.

The towns in the Gupta Empire were usually placed under an officer called *purapala*. The leading local men were also associated with the work of administration in towns. Such people belonged to the guilds of artisans and traders which flourished during the Gupta age. Vaishali in Bihar was an important town where there

were separate guilds of artisans (*kulika*) and of merchants (*shreshthi*).

FEUDAL NATURE OF POLITY

The system of administration underwent several changes under the Guptas.

The Mauryan state is credited with "comprehensive competence based on centralised control", which may have been true of its rule in the core area of the middle Ganga plains. The Gupta period shows the process of the devolution of the state authority. The functions of collection of taxes, regulation of mines, agriculture etc., together with those of the maintenance of law and order and defence, which were earlier performed by the state officials, were now gradually delegated, first to the priestly class and later to the warrior class.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF INDIAN CULTURE

The Gupta period is described as the *Golden Age of Indian culture* because of the high level of civilisation and culture of this period. Along with the revival of Hinduism, the power of creativity was unleashed in the fields of education, literature, arts, architecture and science. This period also saw the extension of this influence beyond India's frontiers.

EDUCATION

During the Gupta Age, education was given utmost importance. This is evident from the intellectual output in various fields like literature, science, mathematics, astronomy, astrology and medicine. There were many centres of learning in cities like Pataliputra, Valabhi, Ujjain, Ayodhya and Nasik. According to the inscriptions, the teachers were learned Brahmanas, who were known as *Acharyas* and *Upadhyayas* and sometimes they were also given the title of *Bhattas*. These teachers were supported by the grant of villages, called the *agraharas*, given by the Gupta rulers and charities given by generous public. The disciples, called *shishyas* had to learn fourteen sections of science (*chaturdasavidya*), comprising the four Vedas, six *Vedangas*, the *Puranas*, the *Mimansa*, *Nyaya* and *Dharma*, besides *Vyakarana* (*Ashtadhyayi* of Panini) and the *Satasahashri-samhita* or the *Mahabharata*.

In the Gupta period, the Jain and Buddhist systems of education assumed a different

dimension. Buddhist monasteries admitted students for ten years. Learning began with the oral method. Later they shifted to the reading of literary texts. The monasteries had libraries. Important manuscripts were copied and stored. Students from other countries like China and South-East Asia came to the Buddhist monasteries for education. The monasteries were normally maintained by grants from kings and the rich mercantile class. They attracted scholars from far and near. Fa-hien also spent several years in the monastery at Pataliputra, studying Buddhist religious books.

Higher education was given equal importance during the Gupta Age as is evident from a number of universities which existed during this period. The two popular universities were Takshila and Nalanda. The Takshila university was one of the first few centres in the world which offered higher education. This university was however, established before the Gupta Empire came into existence.

Nalanda University: It was the most renowned educational institution of ancient India. It was located at Nalanda in Rajagriha in Bihar. A lot of information about the Nalanda University is given in the inscriptions and in the accounts of Hiuen Tsang, a Chinese Buddhist scholar, who visited India during the reign of Harshavardhana.

The University of Nalanda had imposing buildings. There were at least eight colleges built by different patrons including one by Balaputradeva, King of Sumatra. According to Hiuen Tsang the whole university area was enclosed by a brick wall.

The Nalanda University provided various facilities to the students for their studies. There were three great libraries (called Ratnasagar, Ratnodadhi and Ratnaranjak). There were more than 10,000 students and teachers. They came from Korea, Mongolia, Japan, China, Tibet, Ceylon and various parts of India.

The subjects of study at Nalanda University were all the four Vedas, logic, grammar, medicine, sankya, yoga, nyaya and the Buddhist works of the different schools.

Nalanda University was not an ordinary university. It was a post-graduate institution to which admission was very difficult. Before admission, an examination was held in which

hardly 20% students passed and the rest were rejected. Only the most brilliant were admitted to the University.

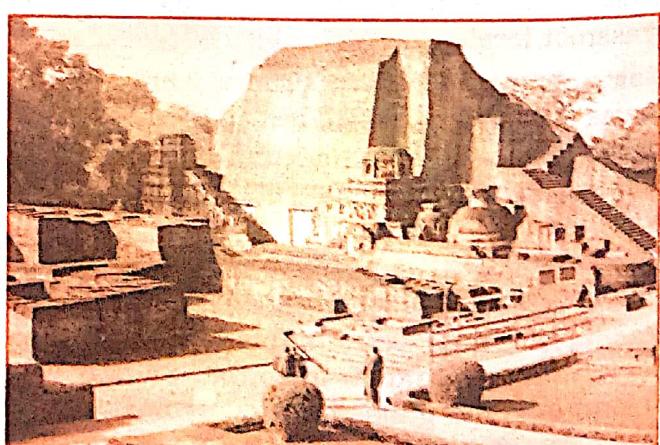
Nalanda continued to be a beacon of light upto 12th century AD when it was destroyed by Mohammad-bin-Bakhtiyar Khilji, a general of Mohammad Ghori. Today only the remains of its magnificence and glory can be seen.

SCIENCE

During the Gupta period, great contribution was made in many branches of sciences like astronomy, medicine, metallurgy, etc. Varahamihira was a great astronomer. He proved that moon rotates round the earth and the earth rotates round the sun. The Brihat Samhita of Varahmihira deals with astronomy, botany, natural history and physical geography. Brahmagupta was a mathematician and astronomer. He described the law of gravitation several centuries before Newton. Charaka and Sushruta were famous scholars of Ayurveda.

Metallurgy or the scientific study of metals had reached an advanced stage during the Gupta period. This is evident from the Iron Pillar at Mehrauli near Qutub Minar in New Delhi which has not gathered rust even after so many centuries. The bronze images of Buddha produced on a considerable scale in the period are also an example of advanced technology. The beautiful paintings of Ajanta prove that the art of making colours was quite advanced during the Gupta period.

Aryabhatta : He was a great astronomer and mathematician. He flourished during the reign of Gupta dynasty. His two famous books include



Ruins of Nalanda University

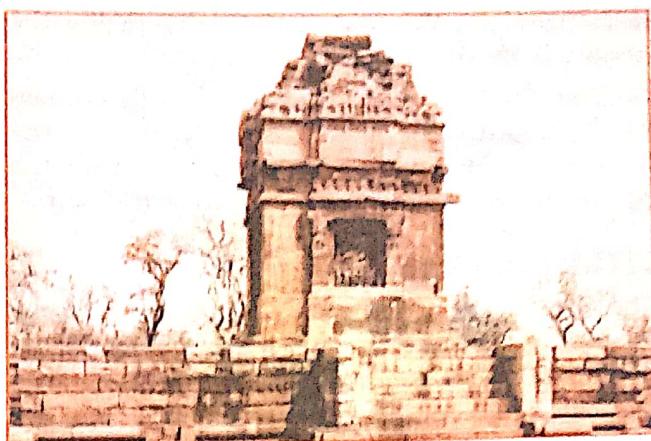
Aryabhattiyam and Surya Siddhanta. His main achievements were the following:

- (i) He said that the earth moves round the sun. It was several centuries before the Europeans said the same thing.
- (ii) He discovered the rule for finding the area of a triangle.
- (iii) He calculated the exact value of pi which was equal to 3.1416. The credit for development of trigonometry should actually go to him.
- (iv) In his work Surya Siddhanta, he explained the exact causes of solar and lunar eclipses.
- (v) Aryabhata was acquainted with the decimal system and use of 'zero'.

CULTURE

The Gupta empire was a well-organised state under a succession of versatile and mighty rulers who led it from one point of achievement to another. There was political stability so trade and commerce flourished. This economic prosperity allowed people to pursue various arts and crafts and literary activities. Thus, the ideal conditions available in the Gupta Age, led to the unprecedented development of Indian culture.

During the Gupta period temples were built with elaborate details. Unlike the earlier period, when wood or other perishable material was

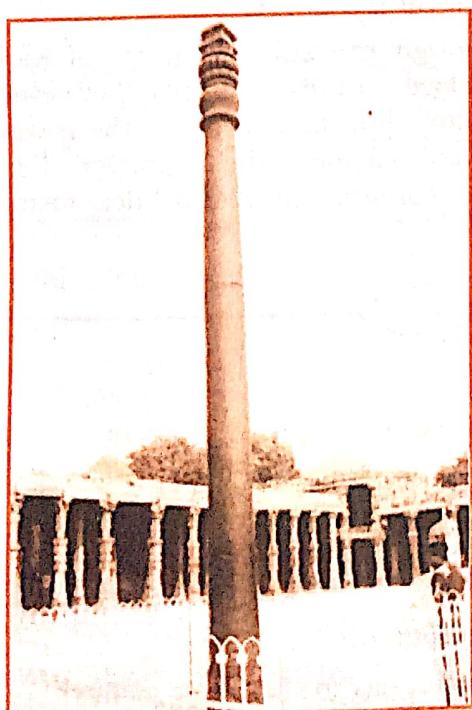


Vishnu Temple at Deogarh

used for temple construction, the temples in Gupta period were built of solid material like bricks and stone. These temples were built in the architectural style known as *Nagara*. Two of these temples, one made of stones at Deogarh in Jhansi and the other made of bricks at Bhitargaon in Kanpur have been found in Uttar Pradesh.

The Vishnu Temple at Deogarh: The Vishnu temple, also called the *Dashavatara Temple*, is one of the finest examples of Gupta architecture. It is about 125 km from Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh. It is one of the earliest Hindu stone temples to survive till date. It was the first North Indian temple with a *Shikhara* or tower, although a part of it has disappeared. Inspite of its dilapidated condition, the temple has a compelling presence. The temple was built on a 1.5 metre high platform. Four stairways outside the platform provide access to the temple. Its exterior is decorated with scenes from *Ramayana*. The entrance and pillars are adorned with countless paintings and carvings. The front entrance has sculptures of various Gods and Goddesses in moods varying from contemplation to affection and above them is Vishnu flanked by two of his avatars *Narasimha* and *Vamana*. On each of the three sides of the temple, a niche is made in the wall. Carved into them are dramatic representations of Lord Vishnu's various forms. One nook has Vishnu asleep on the coil of the giant serpent called *Sheshnaga*.

The niche at the back shows the concept of *Nar Narayana* or the fusion of divine and the human. The third niche depicts Lord Vishnu coming to the aid of the trapped elephant, *Gaja* in the famous story of *Gajendra moksha*.



Iron Pillar, Delhi

Unfortunately, the idol of the deity inside the temple is missing.

The Dashavatara temple is locally known as the *Sagar mark*, which literally means, 'the temple on the tank', a name it gets from the square water pool cut into the rock in front.

LITERATURE

The Gupta age constitutes an important phase in the history of Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit replaced Prakrit not only in inscriptions but also in religious and philosophical literature. Sanskrit became the language of the learned and retained its supreme position for a thousand years. Guptas made Sanskrit the official language for administrative purposes. Sanskrit was used in official documents as well as in inscriptions. The classical Sanskrit literature that flowered during the Gupta period consisted of epics, poetry, drama, lyrics and prose. Both religious and secular literature existed side by side.

The Gupta period marked the beginning of the writing of important works known as *Puranas* like *Vishnu Purana*, *Vayu Purana*, *Varaha Purana*, *Narsimha Purana*, *Vaman Purana*, *Shiva Purana* and *Matysa Purana*. The texts refer to the stories related to different Gods and mention the ways to please them through fasts and pilgrimages. Some *Smritis* or the law books were also compiled in the Gupta period.

The Gupta Age was distinguished by a number of writers, whose contributions vastly enriched the different branches of Indian literature. These included *Kalidasa*, *Sudraka*, *Bhasa*, *Harisena*, *Dandin*, *Subandhu* and

Bharavi. But the most shining light was of course, *Kalidasa*, the famous poet and dramatist.

Kalidasa: Kalidasa is regarded as the greatest poet and playwright, India has ever produced. Vincent Smith has rightfully compared the Gupta Age with the Elizabethan period in the history of England. According to him, "In India all the lesser lights are outshone by the brilliancy of Kalidasa as in England all the smaller authors are overshadowed by Shakespeare.". His four poetic works are: *Ritusamhara*, *Raghuvamsa*, *Meghaduta* and *Kumarasambhava*. The *Meghaduta*, (the Cloud Messenger) is an outstanding lyrical poetic work.

The three dramatic works of Kalidasa were: *Vikramorvashiyam*, *Malavikagnimitram* and *Abhijnanashakuntalam*. His dramatic work *Abhijnanashakuntalam* narrates the love story of king Dushyanta and Shakuntala whose son Bharata later became the ruler.

A notable feature of Kalidasa's works is that the characters belonging to higher castes speak in Sanskrit while those of lower castes and women speak in Prakrit. This shows that the status of women declined during the Gupta period.

All the works of Kalidasa specially dramatic works have been translated into many major languages of the world.

Although the subject-matter of Kalidasa's works is love, nature and beauty, they nevertheless give reliable information about the government, society and religion of the Gupta period. Besides, they also contain traces of political history.

EXERCISES

I. Multiple-Choice Questions

A. Choose the correct answers to the questions from the given options.

1. Which of the following is true according to the Chinese traveller, Fa-hien?
 - (a) Though people were prosperous, they led simple lives
 - (b) Though people were poor, they led extravagant lives
 - (c) People were rich and extravagant
 - (d) Though the cities were flourishing, people were poor.
2. According to Fa-hien which of the following was a major city in the Gupta empire?
 - (a) Rajagriha
 - (b) Vaishali
 - (c) Patliputra
 - (d) Mathura

B. Read the two statements given below and select the option that shows the correct relationship between (A) and (B).

- relationship between (A) and (B)**

 1. (A) Fa-Hien made careful unbiased observations about conditions during the Gupta period.
(B) According to him, the Gupta Empire was prosperous and governed by enlightened principles.
(a) (B) contradicts (A) (b) (B) is the reason for (A)
(c) (A) is true but (B) is false (d) (A) and (B) are independent of each other.
 2. (A) Samudragupta defeated the three rulers of Ayodhya and made their kingdoms a part of his empire.
(B) Samudragupta defeated the twelve rulers of Deccan region and annexed their kingdoms.
(a) (B) contradicts (A) (b) (B) is the reason for (A)
(c) (A) is true but (B) is false (d) (A) and (B) are independent of each other.
 3. (A) Unlike the Mauryan Empire, the Gupta administration was decentralised in nature.
(B) Local kings and smaller chieftains ruled a large part of the Gupta empire.
(a) (B) contradicts (A) (b) (B) is the reason for (A)
(c) (A) is true but (B) is false (d) (A) and (B) are independent of each other.
 4. (A) Unlike the earlier phases in history, the Gupta emperors were not interested in perishable material.
(B) The Gupta period marks the beginning of writing of important works like the Mahabharata.
(a) (B) contradicts (A) (b) (B) is the reason for (A)
(c) (A) is true but (B) is false (d) (A) and (B) are independent of each other.

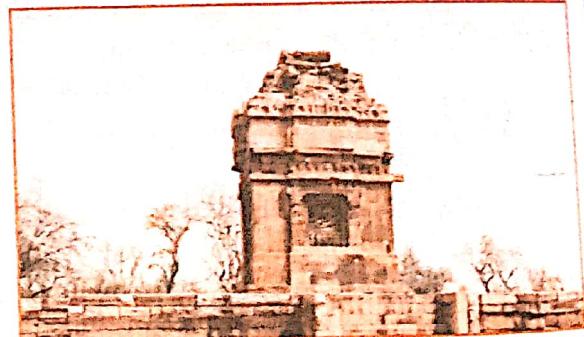
U.S. Steel Hammer Standard

- Q. Who was Deafness? What did he say about India?
Q. Who was the ruler when Deafness visited India? Name the three states of pilgrimage that Deafness visited in India.

3. Name two dramas written by Kalidasa.
4. Why is the Gupta Period known as the Golden Age of Indian culture?
5. How was Samudragupta a bold and great conqueror?
6. Name the famous university that existed during the Gupta period. In which present day state is it?
7. Name any two titles adopted by the Gupta rulers.
8. During the Gupta period name the officer who (i) collected toll tax; and (ii) the one who was in charge of a province or *bhukti*.
9. Name any two famous literary figures of the Gupta Age.
10. What contribution did Aryabhatta make in the field of science?

III. Structured Questions

1. With reference to the sources of information about the Gupta Age, write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Accounts of Fa-hien
 - (b) The Allahabad Pillar Inscription
 - (c) Nalanda University
2. With reference to the Age of the Guptas, answer the following questions:
 - (a) Explain the extent of Samudragupta's Empire based on the information given in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription.
 - (b) Explain how Chandragupta II expanded his empire.
 - (c) Briefly mention any four observations of Fa-hien about the reign of Chandragupta II.
3. With reference to the administrative system of the Guptas, answer the following questions:
 - (a) Explain the position and powers of the king during the Gupta Age.
 - (b) Describe briefly the administration of villages during the Gupta period.
 - (c) According to the Allahabad Pillar, which kinds of rulers were there? How did Samudragupta deal with them?
4. With reference to the picture given alongside, answer the following:
 - (a) Identify the temple given in the picture. Where is it located? To which God is this temple dedicated?
 - (b) Mention the architectural features of this temple.
 - (c) Briefly describe the educational institution set up during this period.



IV. Thinking Skills

1. Imagine a meeting between Fa-hein and Harisena. Write down the discussion between them about religion in the Gupta period. How would they have conversed with each other due to the barrier of language the two had?
2. What role did the Gupta Kings play in promoting religion? Do you think that the religion followed by the rulers gained prominence? Give reasons to support your answer.

