

The Stone Ages

DEFINITION AND PHASES

- The Stone Age covers the earliest phase of human life.
 - It can be categorised as the **prehistoric past** during which humans evolved from primates in Central Africa and spread to other parts of the world.
 - This process began roughly 2 million years ago and is categorised by man in his primitive form, before the concept of civilisation emerged.
- Since humans had not yet invented the script, **no written records** exist.
 - Historians have to rely on archaeological evidence to study it.

On the basis of stratigraphic analysis, The Stone Age may be divided into:-

1. Palaeolithic Age – 2 mya-8000 BCE – Hunter-Gatherers

- a. Lower Palaeolithic Age – 2 mya-40,000 BCE
- b. Middle Palaeolithic Age – 40,000 BCE-20,000 BCE
- c. Upper Palaeolithic Age – 20,000 BCE-8,000 BCE

2. Mesolithic Age – 8000-5000 BCE – Animal Domestication

3. Neolithic Age – 5000 BCE-1000 BCE – Agriculture

4. Chalcolithic Age – 2000 BCE-700 BCE – Agro-Pastoral – Metal Use **PALAEOLITHIC AGE**

- It corresponded with the **Pleistocene Epoch/ The Great Ice Age**, when Earth's climate was extremely cold and fauna was dominated by large, woolly mammals.
 - Human beings started evolving and did not have the ability to dominate their environment.
 - Thus, their population was quite low.

Human Evolution

Lower Palaeolithic Age

- The story of human evolution begins in central Africa when primates began walking on two feet and evolved into **HOMO HABILIS**, that is the half-erect, hand-using men.
- He gradually evolved into **HOMO ERECTUS**, that is the upright man, who started migrating to different parts of the world around 5 Lakh years ago.

It is believed that they **come to India from Africa using rafts** to cross the sea, which would have been very shallow during the Ice Age.

- The first evidence of prehistoric life discovered in India was the **PALLAVARAM HAND AXE**, by **Robert Bruce Foote** in 1863.
- Earliest human fossils have been discovered from **Hathnora MP**, from the banks of Narmada. Thus, it is also called the **Narmada Man**.

Middle Palaeolithic Age

- Homo Erectus evolved into **HOMO SAPIENS ARCHAIC**

Upper Palaeolithic Age

- Homo Sapiens Archaic evolved into **HOMO SAPIEN SAPIENS**

Technology

During the **Palaeolithic Age** primarily **quartz** was used to make tools.

- **LPA**- Core tools – Hand Axes, Cleavers, Choppers
- **MPA**- Flake tools – Points, Borers, Scrapers
- **UPA**- Blade tools – Blades , Burins

Living Pattern

- During the **Palaeolithic Age** humans had to depend on hunting and gathering to sustain themselves.
 - Initially, they were gatherers before they began hunting with stone tools.

- They did not practise sedentary life and were **migratory** in nature.
- They lived in **natural dwellings** like caves and rock shelters- Bhimbetka caves.
- Human population was extremely small, and **for a large part, human existence was solitary.**
- They competed with each other for food and shelter.
- The concept of community was absent for a majority of the **Palaeolithic Age**.
- It was only during the **last part of the Upper Palaeolithic Age** that a small groups emerged and **language** developed.
 - This coincided with the **discovery of fire** which would have undoubtedly improved the chances of human survival.

Geographical Extent

The **Palaeolithic Man** occupied the **entire subcontinent except the alluvial indo-gangetic plains** because of-

- Absence of natural shelters, such as caves
- Lack of stone to make tools
- Frequent flooding of the young rivers
- Large animals which dominated the plains thick forest.

As a result, **Palaeolithic men** prefer living on **plateaus, hills and rifts, valleys**. Some sites are-

- Sohan River Valley, Punjab, Pakistan
- Kashmir
- Belan Valley, Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh
- Didwana, Rajasthan
- Narmada Valley
- Bhimbetka Caves

Culture

The Palaeolithic man took an interest in **painting**, for example the Bhimbetka cave complex.

- The common themes included hunting scenes, figures of birds, animals and human beings, hand prints and fingerprints.

Natural pigments were used for colour

- Common colours were red (hematite), white (lime), black (soot) and green (chalcedony).
- **Blue was absent** since it is not found in nature.

MESOLITHIC AGE

Climatic Changes

The Pleistocene Epoch ended along with the Palaeolithic Age and **Holocene Epoch** started.

- **Fast, dry winds** began blowing over the earth surface, and swamps and marshes were replaced by **grasslands**.
- As a result, the population of **grazing animals** increased.

Changes in Living Pattern

Simultaneously due to milder conditions, the **human population also increased**.

- Hunting and gathering were no longer sufficient to sustain them.
- This led to the beginning of the **domestication of animals**, the first being goats and sheep.
- Since natural shelter was not available in grasslands, people started living in **artificial homes** known as **wattle and daub huts**.
- **Pastoral communities used to migrate** from one place to another in search of greener pastures, thus, settled life had not yet emerged.

Technology

New kinds of stone tools called **microliths** (chipped, flaked pieces) emerged.

- These were extremely small in size of 1- 3 centimetres and were more refined. • They were mostly used as arrowheads and spearheads.

Composite tools emerged, such as bows and arrows and tipped spears.

- Man mastered the **projectile motion** with the use of arrows, spears, single shots, etc. which enabled him to hunt big game.

Culture

The Mesolithic man took an active interest in **painting**.

- Most Bhimbetka paintings belong to the period.
- Along with the previous themes, **new themes** were included such as **community scenes, scenes from family life, child bearing, food preparation and abstract paintings**.
- **Gender based division of labour** was also reflected in these paintings.
 - Most hunting scenes have male hunters, while women have been shown as gathering food, preparing food and raising children.
 - Men were usually depicted as stick figures, while women had fuller forms.
- A unique style of painting called **x-ray paintings** emerged in which the internal organs of animals and humans are depicted.
- Mesolithic paintings are remarkable for their **depiction of animals** which are carefully drawn in **correct proportions**.
 - The **relationship between man and animal** is also a recurrent theme, where man is both the hunter and the hunted.

Religious beliefs appeared for the first time, depicted in ritualistic burials found from **Mahadaha (UP)** and **Sarai Nahar Rai (UP)**.

- These graves have been dug in a **North-South direction** and also give evidence of the emergence of **superstitious beliefs and practices and belief in life after death**.
 - The feet of some of the skeletons at Chopani Mando (UP) have been cut off below the ankle.

The **first evidence of human conflict** also comes from this period.

- Some graves at Sarai Nahar Rai have skulls with arrow wounds.

Sites

- Langhnaj (District Mehsana, Gujarat)
- Bhimbetka (Near Bhopal, MP)
- Chopping Mando (Allahabad, Belan Valley)
- Birbhanpur (West Bengal)
- Bellary (Karnataka)
- Tuticorin (Southern Tamil Nadu)

NEOLITHIC AGE

Beginning of Agriculture and Settled Life

The **climate warmed up further** and conditions became more conducive for human life.

As the human population increased, **agriculture began to meet the growing food requirement**, marking the beginning of the Neolithic age.

- **Wheat and Barley** were the first crops to be cultivated.
- The first evidence of cultivation has come from **Mehrgarh** in the **Bolan Valley**, Balochistan.
- **Rice** was also cultivated, its earliest example coming from **Koldihwa** (near Allahabad) in the **Belan Valley**.
- **Millets** were the first crop cultivated in **South India**.

With the advent of agriculture, **sedentary life** emerged and human beings started living in permanently settled villages, in **mud brick dwellings**.

Technology

Vincent Gordon Childe has termed the technological advancement witnessed during this age as the '**Neolithic Revolution**'.

1. Agriculture introduced the need for **storage**, leading to the emergence of **pottery**.
 - At first, these pots were handmade, and later, the **Pottery Wheel** was invented.
2. The intervention of the wheel revolutionised **transportation**.
 - Men and material could be transported over longer distances using animal power.
 - As a result, exchange networks emerged, connecting several communities.
3. The **exchange of ideas triggered technical innovation** in several fields such as agriculture, irrigation, textile, and stone technology.
4. New kind of stone tools called **Celts** emerged.
 - These were stone **tools with handles**, such as hammers and axes.
 - Neolithic tools were also **highly polished and refined**.
 - Instead of quartz, **igneous rocks** such as basalt and granite.
 - Thus, they were more precise, effective, and robust.

The remarkable technological progress **prepared the ground for the emergence of civilisation**, characterised by intensive agriculture, large cities, and extensive trade.

Sites

- Jammu and Kashmir
 - Gufkral - Pit Dwelling
 - Burzahom - Pit Dwellings + Burial of dogs with human beings
- Bihar
 - Chirand - bone tools
- Balochistan - Mehrgarh
- UP - Koldihwa
- Assam - Daojali Hading
- Karnataka - Maski & Brahmagiri

CHACOLITHIC AGE

It was characterised by the emergence of **agro-pastoral communities** in different parts of the subcontinent.

Technology

They used **stone tools with copper tools**, such as hand axes, copper angles, copper boards, knives, pins, hooks, rods, etc.

Occupation

These people continued to **hunt, gather, domesticate** animals and **cultivate** their food.

- Domesticated animals include sheep, buffalo, goat, pig, dog etc.
- Crops grown were barley, wheat, rice, lentils, millets, grams, peas, cotton etc.

Other important occupations included pottery, metallurgy, weaving, bead making, shell-work etc.

- These were probably cottage industries.

Living Pattern

They lived in **settled villages** with well established **socio-economic hierarchies**.

- Houses of different sizes made of mud bricks have been discovered.

The concept of **private property** also seems to have emerged since-

- Almost all houses had **animal enclosures** which indicates that animals were privately owned, instead of being owned by the communities as a whole.
- Further the **burial of dead with their personal belongings** also points towards the concept of private property along with the belief in afterlife.

External Contacts

- Some chalcolithic cultures had contacts with contemporary cultures, such as the Harappan civilisation. The Harappans obtained copper from the **Khetri Mines (Rajasthan)**.
- Archaeological evidence suggests that chalcolithic pottery was also used by the Harappans, since pottery from the **Rangpur** and **Prabhas** culture has been found at several harappan sites.

Culture

Painted pottery emerged during this age. The characteristic pottery of this age is **Ochre Coloured Pottery (OCP)** with designs of flowers, animals, birds and linear patterns painted on them in black.

Important chalcolithic cultures in India-

Ahar Culture	Southern Rajasthan Banas valley	Ahar, Gilund, Balathal
Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Culture	North-eastern Rajasthan near Jaipur	Ganeshwar, Jodhpura
Kayatha Culture	Madhya Pradesh Chambal Valley	Kayatha (Ujjain)
Malwa Culture	In place of Kayatha	Navdatoli, Eran, Nagda
Jorwe Culture	Maharashtra	Daimabad, Inamgaon
Prabhas/Rangpur Culture	Gujarat-Saurashtra Region	Rangpur

Harappan Civilisation

DISCOVERY

- In the 1860s During the construction of Indian Railways, some artefacts such as Bricks, Pottery, Tools, and Ornaments were discovered.
- In the 1870s a few preliminary excavations were conducted by Alexander Cunningham, but no concrete discoveries were made.
- The issue captured the attention of the British in the early 20th century when some excavations were planned but had to be postponed due to World War I.
- In 1921, **John Marshall and Dayaram Sahni** excavated **Harappa** in Montgomery, Punjab, Pakistan, on the banks of the Ravi.
- In 1922, **RD Banerjee** excavated **Mohenjo Daro** in the Larkana district, Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of the Indus.

CHARACTERISTICS

- The Harappan civilisation was a **riverine** civilisation.
 - All-important sites were situated along important perennial rivers and their tributaries, the Indus and the Saraswati- present day Ghaggar-Hakra.
 - This was because the Harappans practised intensive agriculture and depended heavily on flood irrigation.
- The Harappan civilisation belongs to the **great tradition**, that is, literacy was widespread, as is evident from seals, pots, sign boards etc.

- Since the Harappan script remains undeciphered, the civilisation was **protohistoric** and not historic.
- It was a **Bronze Age Civilisation** contemporary of the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Persian and Chinese civilisations.
- It is unique among contemporary civilisations due to its **extensive town planning**.

ORIGIN

According to most historians, the Harappan Civilisation **emerged gradually and was built by the indigenous people of India**.

They point towards the existence of distinct **Pre-Harappan and Early-Harappan cultures** in the same region to prove the **gradual evolution of life from the Neolithic age to Bronze Age**, which took place over more than 4000 years-

- **7th Millennium BCE**- small communities of animal herders started practising **subsistence agriculture**, evidence of which are found from Nal, Zhob, Quli, Mundigak, Rana Ghundai etc.
- **6th Millennium BCE**- agriculture improved and population increased leading to emergence of large **neolithic villages** such as Mehrgarh.
- **5th Millennium BCE**- over time, people **migrated from Baluchistan to the Indus region**.
 - The evolution of **farming communities gained momentum** due to
 - Presence of fertile plains.
 - Perennial rivers
 - Gentle climate
 - Abundant mineral resources
- **4th Millennium BCE**- by the middle of the 4th millennium, agriculture improved substantially resulting in the emergence of **larger settlements and some features of town life**, for example Amri, Kot Diji.
- **2800 BCE**- A stage of **agricultural surplus** was achieved which revolutionised life by freeing productive labour to engage in secondary economic activities such as crafts production, trade, and commerce.
 - **Centres of craft production and trade** began emerging, leading to the rise of even larger settlements which were increasingly urban in character.
 - **Trade was mostly local**.
 - Eg. Kalibangan, Rakhigarhi, Mohenjo Daro, Harappa etc.
- **2300 BCE onwards**- this was the **Mature Harappan Phase** characterised by
 - Extensive inter-regional and inter-civilisational trade networks
 - High material prosperity due to the favourable trade
 - Significant population increase
 - Emergence of larger, **well planned cities** such as Harappa, Mohenjo Daro, and Dholavira etc.

Thus, the presence of antecedent cultures indicates that the Harappan civilisation was indeed an indigenous civilisation which evolved gradually over several millennia.

GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT

The remains of the Harappan civilisation have been unearthed from-

- Pakistan - Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab
- India - Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra
- It is believed that the Harappan civilisation was largest among all contemporary civilisations of the Bronze Age, with an area of roughly 13 lakh square kilometres.
- Northernmost site - Manda, Jammu
- Southernmost site - Daimabad, Maharashtra.

- Easternmost site - Alamgirpur, Western UP.
- Westernmost site - Sutka-gen-dor, Iran- Pakistan border, along with the Makran coast.
- The shape of the Harappan civilisation was roughly triangular.

IMPORTANT SITES

Mohenjo Daro - Larkana, Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of the Indus.

1. **Great Bath** - It is made of burnt bricks, and measures $11.08 \times 7.01 \times 2.43$ m.
 - It is believed that the Harappans were the first in the world to use burnt bricks.
 - It also gives us insights into the advancement of masonry, as they had developed the technology to make waterproof surfaces.
 - Although historians are still divided on the issue, most believed that it was used for ritualistic bathing.
2. **Great Granary** - Its existence indicates-
 - The existence of a food surplus.
 - There must have been some from a civic body which collected grains.
 - It may indicate the practice of taxation.
 - It may also point towards emergency planning.
 - The fossils of grains inform us about the crops cultivated and their agricultural practices.
 - They must have mastered the art of transportation and storage of grains.
3. **Multi pillar Assembly Hall**
4. **Dancing girl** - a bronze figurine of a dancing girl has been unearthed indicating
 - The advancement of metallurgy and alloy making.
 - This figurine has been made using **Lost wax/ Cire Perdue Technique**
 - Harappan culture and tastes.
 - The ornaments, hairstyle, clothing etc, reflect the Harappan fashion preference.
 - It also indicates that they enjoyed music and dance.
5. **Bearded Priest** - it is a stone bust of a bearded man wearing a robe with a trefoil pattern.
 - His eyes are half closed, as if in meditation.
 - His beard is well groomed and he is wearing a fillet on his forehead.
6. **Cotton cloth, spindle, whorls and needles** - Indicate the existence of a flourishing cotton textile industry.
 - They were discovered from private homes, which tells us that spinning, weaving and stitching were household **cottage industries**, performed by people of all backgrounds.
7. The **largest collection of seals** made of Steatite, a small soft riverine stone, has been found here.
 - They were usually Square/Rectangular, roughly 2×2 inches square
 - They have intaglio carvings of both Harappan script and images of humans, animals, plants, deities, etc.
 - Eg. Mother Goddess Seal, Pashupati Seal.

The mother goddess seal depicts a female deity with a plant emerging from her womb and a man about to sacrifice a woman with a knife.

The Pashupati Seal depicts a horned deity in a seated posture/ Yogic posture believed to be **Proto- Shiva**.

He is surrounded by 4 animals - Tiger, Buffalo, Elephant and Rhinoceros. There are 2 deer under his seat.



Harappa - Montgomery District, Punjab, Pakistan, on the banks of the Ravi.

1. **Twelve Granaries**- Each of equal size in 2 rows of 6.
2. **Red sandstone male torso** with socket holes for the attachment of head and arms.
3. **Different burial practices** - Direct burial, Urn burial, Coffin burial, Partial burial o They indicate the presence of different faiths for example.

Kalibangan- Hanumangarh District, Rajasthan on the banks of the Ghaggar (dried up).

1. **Evidence of pre-Harappan culture**
2. **Fire altars** indicating some kind of ritual sacrifice
3. **Ploughed field** - But no sign of any ploughing equipment indicating that it was probably made of perishable material, such as wood.

Lothal - Gujarat on the banks of the Bhogwa.

1. **Dockyard** made of burnt bricks - It is the first man made dockyard in India; it indicates the existence of maritime activity.
2. **Mesopotamian seals** indicating cultural contacts between 2 civilisations
3. **Rice husk** indicating cultivation of rice
4. **Double Burial** - the practice of burying 2 people together.

Chanhudaro - Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of the Indus.

1. **Industrial site** - Factories of beads and bangles have been found here.
 - o Tools for polishing and grinding stone have been found along with large quantities of coral, shells, semi precious stones and semi processed bangles and beads.
2. **Single level** of settlement without citadel.
3. **Use of lipstick**.

Dholavira - Kutch, Gujarat on the banks of the Luni.

1. **Sign Board** - consisting of 10 large pictographic symbols
2. **Water conservation system** - consisting of tanks, reservoirs, drains and channels.
3. **Stone** was the primary building material, instead of burnt brick
4. **Three level of settlements** - unlike typical Harappan settlements it was divided into
 - o Citadel
 - o Middle town
 - o Lower town

5. Stadium

Rakhigarhi - Hisar, Haryana, on the banks of the Ghaggar.

1. **Largest site** of the Harappan civilisation
2. **Animal sacrifice pit**
3. **Fire altar**
4. **Terracotta bricks**
5. **DNA study** - proves independent origin of the Harappan Civilisation.

Ropar - Punjab, India on the banks of the Sutlej

1. First Harappan site of independent India
2. Dog buried with human in oval burial

Surkotada - Gujarat

1. Only site with horse remains (horse teeth have been excavated but the finding remains unsubstantiated)

Banawali - Haryana

- 1.Toy plough
- 2.Lapis Lazuli
- 3.Oval shaped settlement - only city with radial streets instead of perpendicular.

TOWN PLANNING

Q. To what extent has the urban planning and culture of the Indus Valley Civilization provided inputs to the present day urbanisation? Discuss. (200 Words, CSE – 2014)

- The Harappans planned their cities on the **grid/ chess-board pattern**.
 - The roads and streets were straight, intersecting each other at right angles.
 - This planning has certain benefits such as lower traffic congestion and self clearing mechanism.
 - Present day Delhi and Chandigarh follow a similar plan.
- Generally Harappan cities had **two levels of settlements**-
 - Citadel/ Upper Town - containing all important public buildings, was meant for the ruling class
 - Unfortified Lower Town - meant for the common classes
 - Such distinction is also present in the modern cities such as New Delhi
- Harappan cities had a **fully covered drainage system** beneath the roads, with regular manholes.
 - Harappans were the first in the world to make such drains.
 - This is a feature of all well planned cities of the modern world.
- In Harappan cities, **waste pits and baskets** were placed at regular intervals on the roadside to keep the city clean and hygienic.
- Another essential feature of the civilisation was the presence of **street lightning**. Both are present in every modern planned city.
- **Shared community spaces** such as assembly halls, stadiums and marketplaces found in Harappan cities, are common to all modern cities, meant to enrich the lives of residents.
- Different sized houses made of burnt bricks indicate **class differences, also** a feature of modern cities.
- **Rear facing doors and ventilation** can be observed in Harappan houses which did not open from the front, like many modern cities such as Chandigarh

MATERIAL LIFE

Agriculture

- The Harappans grew **2 seasonal crops**, summer and winter, and cultivated crops such as Wheat, Barley Rice, Millet and Mustard, Dates, Watermelon, Sesame etc.
 - However there is **no evidence of pulses**.
- From **Kalibangan** we find evidence of **tilling** of soil.
- The Harappans practised relied on **flood irrigation**.
 - Although evidence of canal irrigation has been found from Shortugahi (Afghanistan), a trading outpost, it cannot be conclusively said the canal irrigation was widely used.
 - The Harappans also did not use wells for irrigation.
- They practised **intensive agriculture** and had a large agricultural base since their entire civilisation was based on guarantee of a large **surplus**.

Metallurgy

- The Harappans used **copper, gold, silver, lead and tin** to make tools, weapons, ornaments, toys etc.
- They also had knowledge of **alloy making** and used bronze, a copper-tin alloy.

- However, they **did not have any knowledge of iron.**

Crafts Production

1. **Pottery** - They were expert potters and made painted, fire baked, wheel-turned pottery. Their pottery is known as **Black and Red Ware**.
2. **Terracotta figurines** - They excelled in making terracotta figures depicting humans, animals and objects.
 - Some important specimens include Terracotta figure of the Mother Goddess
 - Horned deity mask found from Harappa
 - Toy carts and whistles
 - A large quantity of **imitation jewellery** was made of terracotta.
3. **Stone sculptures** - these were made of sandstone, greystone, limestone, steatite etc.
 - Bearded priest - Mohenjo Daro
 - Male torso - Harappa
 - Male dancer/ Natraj - Harappa
4. **Metal casting**- the lost wax technique was used to produce specimens like-
 - Dancing girl - Mohenjo Daro
 - Bronze bull - Kalibangan
 - Copper bird and dog - Lothal
5. **Beads and ornaments-**
 - Some ornaments such as necklace, armlet, fillet, and finger rings were worn by both men and women.
 - Only women wore girdles, earrings and anklets.
 - Harappan beads have even been found from Mesopotamia.
6. **Seal making**- seals were made of steatite and were square or rectangular in shape, measuring roughly 2 square inches.
 - They had intaglio carvings of both Harappan script and images.

Harappan Script

- It remains undeciphered.
- It is a pictographic script and most paleographists believe that it consisted of more than 396 symbols.
- It was written in the **BOUSTROPEDON** style beginning from right to left, then left to right, then right to left, and so on.
- It has been found from seals, pots, potsherds & sign boards indicating its wide usage and high levels of literacy.

Trade and commerce

- The Harappans had **extensive trading contacts**, both internally and externally.
- Trade was carried out by **barter** but seals may have been used as a medium of exchange.
- **Most internal trade was riverine** in nature, carrying grains, pottery, bricks etc.
 - The Harappans also traded with nearby Catholic communities
 - Eg. They obtained **copper from Rajasthan's Khetri mines and gold from Karnataka's Kolar mines.**
- They also **traded extensively with Mesopotamia and Persia**, over the **land and sea routes**.
- Evidence of such trade comes from-
 - **Lothal**- It has an artificial **dockyard** and has revealed Mesopotamian **seals**.
 - **Shortughai**- Harappan trading outpost has been discovered.
 - **Mesopotamian records** refer to Harappa as **Meluhha** and mention that it also had trading contacts with **Dilmun** (Bahrain) and **Magan** (Oman).
- The Harappans **exported grains, pottery, beads, bangles and cotton clothes**.
- Meanwhile they **imported Gold, Silver, Tin and precious stones** from West Asia and

Afghanistan

- For example Lapis Lazuli was imported from Badakhshan, Afghanistan. • External trade was highly favourable to the Harappans.

HARAPPAN FAITH & RELIGION

Archaeology give us insights into the religious life of Harappans –

1. Like most other ancient people, they were **nature worshippers**.
 - Images of different animals and plants have been found from seals, the most prominent being the humped bull, unicorn and snakes.
 - The discovery of the Pashupati seal also indicates the cult of nature worship.
2. The Harappans also observed the **fertility cult**, and practised both Phallus worship and Yoni worship.
 - The most significant representative of this cult was the Mother goddess believed to have been the goddess of fertility.
3. Most historians agree that the Harappan religion was **materialistic** in nature.
 - People prayed for the fulfilment of material desires such as crops, wealth, safety and children.
 - The spiritual element with emphasis on salvation was not dominant.
4. Most historians believe that the Harappans believed in **life after death**, as is evident from the presence of **grave goods**.
5. The discovery of amulets indicates a belief in spirits, charms and spells thus, indicating the prevalence of **superstition**.
6. Despite the **discovery of idols** of gods and goddesses, there is **no conclusive evidence of idolatry**.
 - Harappan idols do not have any incense burn marks, a common trait of idol worship.
7. Although the religious element was present it did not dominate public daily life and **religion was probably a private affair**, attested to by the **absence of any dedicated place of worship** such as temples or shrines.
8. Although **fire altars and animal sacrifice pits** have been discovered there is no conclusive evidence of large scale ritual sacrifice.
 - Small personal sacrifices were offered within the houses in small votive tanks.
9. There was **no state religion** and the Harappan civilisation was **predominantly secular**.
10. Religion was not dominated by single faith and **multiple beliefs systems** flourished within the civilisation as is evident from the use of different burial practices.

Early Vedic Age (1500-1000 BCE)

VEDIC LITERATURE

It is consist of 4 Vedas

Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda

Each Veda consists of-

- a) **Samhita** - compilation of hymns
 - b) **Brahmana** - detailed descriptions of rituals and sacrifices.
 - c) **Aranyaka** - Forest books, consisting of philosophical explanations of sacrifices.
 - d) **Upanishad** - philosophical aspect of Vedic religion, dealing with metaphysics.
- Vedic literature is called **Shruti** literature, i.e., that which is heard.
 - The Vedas are considered to be revealed works of divine origin.
 - They were composed during Vedic period but compiled later.
 - They were orally transmitted through generations.

- Only the Rig Vedic Samhita was composed during the Early Vedic Age, while the rest of the Vedic corpus was composed during the Later Vedic Age.

POST- VEDIC LITERATURE

Other important religious works such as **Dharmashastras, Puranas, Vedangas, Upavedas, Nibandhas and Epics** were composed after the Vedic Age ended.

They are categorised as **Smriti** literature i.e., recalled/ memorised, as they are believed to have been created by saints/ascetics from memory.

- Thus, they have human origin and lack the authority of Vedas.
- They cover various subjects such as law, ancestral history of kings and dynasties, stories about deities, treatises on Vedas, and commentaries on Dharma, Karma, and the relationships between God and man.

RIG VEDA

- The word Aryan comes from the Sanskrit word '**Arya'** meaning noble, and the word Veda comes from the root word '**Vid'**, meaning to know.
- The Rig Veda is a good source of the socio-economic and political lives of early Aryans.
 - It is the oldest book in India composed between 1500 BCE -1000 BCE , but compiled much later.
 - It is considered to be a revealed work of divine origin belonging to the Shruti tradition.
 - The language used is Vedic Sanskrit.

The Rig Veda consists of **10 books known as Mandalas**, of which II - VII are the oldest.

- The others were added later.
- The Rig Veda consists of **1028 hymns called 'Suktas'**, which are subdivided into **10,466 'Slokas' / Verses**.
 - Originally, there were 1017 Suktas in the Rig Veda.
 - The later additions are called 'Khilatilye'.
- The Rig Vedic Samhita is thus a **collection of hymns to deities**, including the famous Gayatri Mantra (Mandala III - compiled in praise of the sun of Goddess Savitri).
- According to Mandala VII, The Aryans settled in the Indus Valley region and struggled with non- Aryans.
- It tells the story of 'Dasrajanyudha' / Battle of the 10 kings.
 - The Aryan **Bharat tribe, led by King Sudas** and assisted by sage **Vashishta**, fought against the **5 Aryan and 5 non-Aryan tribes**, assisted by sage **Vishwanitra**, on the banks of the Parushini/ Ravi.
 - The Bharatas emerged victorious.
 - The defeated tribes were relegated to a lower social status, and enslaved.
 - They were called -
 - a. Dasas - Non Aryans
 - b. Dasyus - Aryan
 - c. Panis- Cattle thieves

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Most linguistic scholars studying Sanskrit, Persian, Latin and Greek, concur that the Aryans **were a group of people speaking a common language** and living in a cold place, probably **Central Asia or Eurasia**.

They **started migrating** to different parts of Europe and Asia some time in the **middle of the 2nd millennium BCE**.

This analysis is backed by the **cultural and linguistic** similarities these different groups-

- Many words in the Indo-European family of languages have the same roots.
- There are undeniable similarities between the Rig Veda and Zend Avesta, the holy book of the Zoroastrians (Parsis).

The **Boghazkoi inscription** in modern-day Turkey mentions 4 Vedic deities –

- Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Ashwini (Nasatyas), indicating the presence of Aryan culture here during the mid 2nd millennium BCE.

The Aryans **started arriving in India via Afghanistan in small groups** and settled in the '**Sapta-Sindhava' (Punjab) region**, also called the '**Aryavarta**' in Later Vedic texts.

- a) Kubha – Kabul
- b) Sindhu – Indus
- c) Vitasta – Jhelum
- d) Askini – Chenab
- e) Parushini – Ravi
- f) Bipisa – Beas
- g) Sutudri – Sutlej
- h) Saraswati – Ghaggar

- In the Rig Veda, the rivers **Yamuna** and **Ganga** have been mentioned only **thrice** and **twice** respectively, indicating that these rivers were probably not very important.
- In contrast, the **Indus** is mentioned **75 times** and the **Saraswati**, **72 times**.

Thus, the Indus was probably the most important river for early Aryans followed by the Saraswati, which is referred to as '**Naditama**' (**mother river**), indicating that it was the most revered.

OCCUPATION

- The early Aryans were **primarily involved in the domestication of animals**.
 - Their **chief occupation was animal husbandry**, and they **moved frequently** in search of greener pastures.
- **Cattle**, referred to as '**Gau**', was the **most important form of wealth**.
- Its importance in their daily life is reflected by the vocabulary of Vedic Sanskrit, in which '**Gau**' forms the root word for many words, such as
 - Gavishti - struggle/war(for cattle)
 - Gopat - rich man
 - Gavyuti - unit of distance
 - Duhitri - who milks me cow - used for 'daughter'
 - Goghana - an honoured guest
 - controversial interpretation - consumer of cattle meat
 - other interpretation - one who is offered ghee
- Agriculture was not very advanced.
 - The Rig Veda mentions one crop grown by early Aryans called '**Yava**' used for both wheat and barley.

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

The early Aryans were divided into tribes '**Jana**', which were subdivided into ● **Vis** - Collection of villages headed by Vispati.

- **Gram** - Village headed by Gramini
- **Kul** - family, headed by Kulpati, the patriarch of the household. ○ The family was the Lowest unit of political organisation.

Rig Vedic polity was **tribal and democratic** in nature.

- The Gana was headed by the '**Rajan**' who was simply the **elected tribal chief**.
- His most important duty was to search for or capture cattle.
- His power was not absolute, as he was assisted by other officials and political assemblies
 - Important Officials
 - **Purohit** - chief priest
 - Senani** - commander-in-chief.

- Important assemblies
 - **Vidhata**- both genders participated - (oldest assembly of any kind in India)
 - **Sabha** - assembly of all men of the tribe - elected Rajan and other functionaries.
 - **Samiti** - assembly of village elders - both genders - advised the Rajan politically
- The Rajan collected a voluntary gift called **Bali** which later became compulsory.
 - Thus, it was the **first known tax** of any kind in India.
- Since the early Vedic society was nomadic and the concept of land as property had not emerged, **territorial kingdoms did not exist**.
 - Thus, the Rajan was not the ruler of territory but only a tribal chief.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early Aryans were **nature worshippers**

- Rig Vedic Aryans prayed to overcome **fear** of nature due to ignorance.
- **Desire** was another motivating factor.
 - They prayed for 'Praja' (Children) and 'Pashu' (cattle).
- Thus, the Early Vedic religion was **materialistic** in nature.
 - The high philosophy of metaphysics was absent.
- The Rig Vedic Aryans performed **Yajnas** (sacrifice) along with the chanting of **hymns** (mantras).
 - These yajnas were **simple, inexpensive and personal**, with most being performed within the household by the **householder**.
- Some yajnas performed with the assistance of different classes of priests. ○ The Rig Veda mentions 16 priestly classes, such as –
 - Hotra made sacrifice.
 - Udgatra - sent out invitations
 - Brahmin – supervisor
 - Later, Brahmin became the most prominent, and others vanished.

The names of **33 deities** have been mentioned in the Rig Veda but none was supreme.

- They were probably **adjectives or different aspects of the same Supreme God**.
- Therefore, the element of **monotheism** was also present.

The most important gods were-

- **Indra** - God of rain and thunder, also worshipped as 'Purandhar' (breaker of forts) - 250 hymns in Rig Veda have been dedicated to him.
- **Agni** - God of fire, also the intermediary between God and man - 200 hymns have been dedicated to him.
- **Varuna** - God of Rta (moral cosmic order), also worshipped as god cosmos and heavenly bodies - 175 hymns
- **Soma** - God of drink, which was derived from a plant - Mandala IX is entirely dedicated to Soma.
- **Vishnu** - Sun God
- **Aditi** - Mother Goddess (mother of all Gods)
- **Usha**- Goddess of Dawn
- **Prithvi** - Goddess of the Earth

SOCIAL LIFE

- The Early Vedic society was **largely egalitarian**.
 - Since the **concept of private property had not fully developed** and cattle wealth was owned by the tribe, sharp class differences were absent.

- The **position of women**, though not equal to men, was quite good.
 - They enjoyed the right to **education**, participation in **social and political activities**, and the right to **marry and divorce freely**.
 - **Polygamy**, both polygyny and polyandry was the norm.
 - Some learned women called '**Brahmavadinis**' composed Rig Vedic hymns.
 - Lopamudra
 - Vishwvara
 - Sikta
 - Ghosha
 - Maitreyi
- **Four-fold varna system** had emerged but was **not hereditary**.
 - It depended on merit.
 - It was flexible and allowed complete social and varna mobility.
 - There was no untouchability.
- However, certain classes such as Dasas, Dasyus and Panis, were treated as slaves .
 - Purusha Sukta hymn in Mandala X describes the 'Purushamedha' sacrifice
 - 'Prajapati' /the primordial man sacrificed himself and the 4 varnas emerged
 - Brahmins - from the mouth
 - Kshatriyas - from the arms
 - Vaishyas - from the thighs
 - Shudras - from the feet
 - This is believed to be the first written evidence of the Varna system

Later Vedic Age (1000- 600 BCE)

SOURCES

Archaeological

1. **Pottery - Painted Grey ware (PGW)** is the characteristic pottery of the Later Vedic Age.
2. **Iron implements** - Iron weapons have been found.
 - This was the first time that iron was used in India.
 - Such artefacts have been found from several sites in the Ganga - Yamuna doab.

Literary

1. Samhitas

Sama Veda

- It consists of **musical** hymns divided into verses set to a metre.
 - Most verses are derived from Rig Veda.
- Its Upaveda is called '**Gandharvaveda**', on which Bharatamuni based his '**Natyashastra**'.

Yajur Veda

- It is a collection of hymns dedicated to **Yajnas/ sacrificial rituals**.
- It has 2 forms-
 - Shukla Paksha (white Yajurveda)- written in poetry form
 - Shyama Paksha (black Yajurveda) – written in prose

Atharva Veda

- It is known as the **non-Aryan veda**.
 - It deals with **magic, charms, and spells**.
 - It was composed in the '**Brahmavarta**' (gangetic plains), outside the traditional Aryan cultural zone that is '**Aryavarta**' (Sapta-Sindhava).

2. Brahmanas

- These are **commentaries on the Vedic samhitas**, written in prose.
- They are detailed **descriptions of yajnas**, and lay emphasis on correct **procedures and pronunciation** of mantras.
 - e.g. Satapatha Brahmana
 - The lengthiest and most famous of all Brahmanas.
 - Attached to the Yajur Veda.
 - Speaks of the clearing of forests by Prince Videha Mahadeva with the use of 'Ayas' (iron) and 'Agni' (fire) to expand eastward.

3. Aranyakas

- 'Forest books', written by sanyasis (renunciants).
- They offer **philosophical interpretations of the vedic sacrifices**.
- They oppose meaningless rituals and form the link between Brahmanas and Upanishads.

4. Upanishads/ Vedanta

- The literal meaning of Upanishad is to '**sit down near someone**' (**guru**).
- Their motto is '**knowledge for salvation**'.
- There are 108 Upanishads composed in classical Sanskrit, and they act as **philosophical treatises on the vedas**.
- They deal with **metaphysics** and explore the nature of the universe, reality, God, soul, the meaning of existence, and the ideas of Dharma, Karma, life after death and salvation.

Important Upanishads

Aitareya Upanishad

- Associated with the Rig Veda.
- '**Prajnaram Brahma**' - consciousness is Brahma.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

- Contained within the Satapatha Brahmana
- '**Asto ma Sadgamaya**' - From ignorance, lead me to truth
- '**Aham Brahmasmi**' - I am Brahma

Taittiriya Upanishad

- Associated with Yajur Veda
- It describes happiness.

Chandogya Upanishad

- Associated with Sama Veda
- '**Tat twam asi**' - 'thou art that'
- It also talks about various **types of marriages**.

Ken Upanishad

- Also called Talavakara Upanishad, it belongs to Sama Veda

Isa Upanishad

One of the latest, dating approximately to Mauryan times

Katha Upanishad

- Its central story is immortality and the **encounter of Nachiket with Yama**.
- It was translated into German by Max Muller in 1879.

Mundaka Upanishad

- Source of the phrase '**Satyameva Jayate**'

Mandukya Upanishad

- It is the shortest upanishad, containing 12 verses expounding the mystic syllable 'Om'.
- '**Ayam Atma Brahma'** - This self/ Atma is Brahma.
- It also talks about the 3 psychological states of waking, sleeping and dreaming and the transcendental 4th state of illumination.

Jabala Upanishad

- Talks about the Ashram System.

5. Upavedas/ Vedangas

- They are treatises on science and art, as a means to understand the Vedas. Thus, they were known as 'limbs of Vedas'.
- They are also called Sutra literature.
- There are 6 Vedangas -
 - Shiksha- phonetics
 - Kalpa - rituals and ceremonies
 - Vyakarana - grammar
 - Nirukta - etymology
 - Chhanda - metrics and rules of poetic composition
 - Jyotisha - astronomy

GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT

There was a **migration** of Aryans from the Aryavarta (Indus valley) to the Brahmaputra (Gangetic valley) sometime during the Later Vedic Age.

Archaeological evidences of this migration have been found from sites such as

1. Hastinapur (Meerut)
2. Ahichchhatra (Bareilly)
3. Atranjikhera (Etah)
4. Noh (Bharatpur)

The Satapatha Brahmana also talks about eastward migration.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES

- Pastoralism and domestication of animals was still important, **but by the end of the Later Vedic Age (7th - 6th century BCE), agriculture came to dominate** the economy.
- Later Vedic sources mention crops such as Yava - wheat and barley
 - Vrihi - Nice
 - Gaudhuma - wheat
- As an **agricultural surplus** emerged, **secondary economic activities** such as crafts production and trade started developing. Some important industries included
 - Pottery
 - Chariot making
 - Carpentry
 - Basket weaving
 - Metallurgy/ blacksmithing
 - Cloth weaving
 - Tanning/ leather work
- As industry, trade and commerce flourished, **cities emerged**.
- Trade guilds/ merchant guilds called '**Ganas/Sernis**' also emerged.
 - They were headed by senior traders and master craftsmen called '**Shreshthi**'.
 - They performed-
 - Regulation of standards
 - Maintenance of discipline

- Training
- Setting of prices
- They also had the authority to punish their members, including expulsion from the guild.

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

- Initially, no change was visible in the tribal character of the polity, but gradually the **concept of territory emerged**.
 - As **agriculture** gained importance, settled life began and **land became a valuable economic resource**.
 - The **Rajan** became responsible for **protecting the land** of his subjects.
 - Towards the end of the 7th century BCE, territorial kingdoms, called **Janapadas** emerged.
 - By the end of the 6th century BCE, they became large territorial kingdoms, called **Mahajanapadas** (16, according to Jain and Buddhist sources).
 - Most were in the Gangetic valley, but a few were in the Indus Valley and Narmada valley regions.
- The Rajan's position became more powerful, and the concept of **absolute monarchy** emerged.
- Elements of democratic polity, such as **Sabha and Samiti became obsolete**.
- The institution of **hereditary monarchy** also emerged, and the Rajan was no longer an elected official.
- The **importance of armed forces increased** due to **frequent territorial wars**.
 - This was aided by the development of trade and commerce, which allowed kingdoms to raise large armies.
- Due to the compulsion of raising armies, a **regular taxation system** developed-
 - '**Bali**' **became compulsory**, and an officer called '**Sanghitri/ Bali Sadhak**' was appointed to collect it.
 - '**Bhaga**' was the land revenue, which became the most important source of state income. It represented the State's share of the total produce.
 - '**Bhoga**' was offerings of flowers and fruits made by the subject to the king.
 - '**Shulka**' was a tax collected on secondary economic activities, such as crafts, trade and commerce.
- During the Later Vedic Age, kings performed **elaborate sacrifices** such as-
 - **Ashwamedha** - to gain territory
 - **Rajasuya** - at the coronation ceremony, to increase the king's power
 - **Vajapeya** - shortly after coronation, a chariot race was held between the king and his kin to legitimise his power.
 - During these sacrifices, large numbers of cattle were also sacrificed.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

- **Nature worship continued**, but the simple, personal and inexpensive faith of Early Vedic Religion gave way to **rigid ritualism, priestly domination and mysticism**.
 - There was an overemphasis on **yajnas and correct pronunciation of mantras**, which could now be performed only with the help of priests.
- The simple, materialistic Early Vedic faith was replaced by the **high-minded philosophy** of Upanishads.
 - **Spiritualism** became extremely important, and religion became increasingly concerned with **salvation and the afterlife**.
- Along with this, a number of **philosophical and social constructs** were codified, such as :
 - **Dharma** - duties and obligations of each individual.

- **Rta** - moral and cosmic order governing the universe.
- **Varna** - fourfold division of society became **rigid**, extremely **hierarchical** and determined by **birth** - Varna **endogamy**.
- **Ashrams** - With Dharma and Varna, it framed the Varnashrama Dharma system. The ashrams were
 - Brahmacharya
 - Grihastha
 - Vanaprastha
 - Sanyas
- **Gotra** - Kinship group - exogamy
- Later Vedic religious life was characterised by rigid ritualism.
 - As many as 16 Samskaras (major vedic rituals) were conceived and had to be performed by an individual from the cradle to the grave –
 - Garbhdharan
 - Namkaran
 - Annaprashana
 - Chudaparana
 - Upanayana/ Yagyopaveet - sacred thread ceremony, considered to be the second birth. Those who received the sacred thread were called 'Dwija' (Twice Born)
 - It was given to Brahmins at the age of 8, Kshatriyas at the age of 11, and Vaishyas at age of 12.
 - Shudras and women were excluded.
 - Vivaah
 - Antyeshti
 - The importance of Agni and Indra declined.
 - Prajapati/ Brahma (creator) became the most important god.
 - Vishnu was now worshipped as the sustainer.
 - However, the concept of Holy Trinity had not yet emerged.

SOCIAL CHANGES

The social life of the Later Vedic Age also changed dramatically in response to the major economic, political and religious changes which had occurred.

- As the concepts of private property and land ownership emerged, **class differences** started becoming visible.
 - They became more pronounced with the development of trade and commerce.
 - Thus, by the end of the Later Vedic Age, the society no longer resembled its classless, tribal Early Vedic form.
- The **position of women began deteriorating but was relatively good due to the absence of social evils** such as sati, child marriage and purdah.
 - However, **restrictions** were placed on their **education**.
 - They could not perform the Upanayana ceremony.
 - Their **political participation** was **restricted** since political assemblies had become irrelevant.
 - They were **not allowed to offer sacrifices**.
 - **Marriage became sacrosanct** and could not be dissolved.
 - The ideas of **varna endogamy and gotra exogamy** restricted their choices of marriage.
 - Polygamy continued but **polygyny** increased.
 - The **birth of a girl child was considered burdensome**. ○ **Widow remarriage was allowed but discouraged**.

- The four-fold varna system emerged fully and a rigid, hereditary varna hierarchy was established.
 - Untouchability was absent, but shudras were excluded from education.

QUESTION 1

Q. Which one of the following animals was not represented on the seals and terracotta art of the Harappan culture? [2001]

- a) Cow
- b) Elephant
- c) Rhinoceros
- d) Tiger

QUESTION 2

Q. Regarding the Indus Valley Civilization, consider the following statements: [2011]

- 1. It was predominantly a secular civilization and the religious element, though present, did not dominate the scene
- 2. During this period, cotton was used for manufacturing textiles in India

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

QUESTION 3

Q. Which of the following characterises the people of Indus Civilization? [2013]

- 1. They possessed great palaces and temples
- 2. They worshipped both male and female deities
- 3. They employed horse-drawn chariots in warfare

Select the correct statement/ statements using the codes given below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3
- d) None of the statements given above is correct

Question 4

Q. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists: [2002]

List 1(Ancient site)	List 2 (Archaeological finding)
A. Lothal	1. Ploughed Field
B. Kalibangan	2. Dockyard
C. Dholavira	3. Terracotta replica of a plough
D. Banawali	4. An inscription comprising ten large sized signs.

A-B-C-D

- a) 1-2-3-4
- b) 2-1-4-3
- c) 1-2-4-3
- d) 2-1-3-4

Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements in context of ancient Indian History:

1. The Paleolithic Age was spread in all parts of the Indian Subcontinent.
2. Palaeolithic Man used tools made of a hard rock called quartzite.

Which of the above given statement/s is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

QUESTION 2

Q. The term 'Aryan' denotes [1999]

- a) an ethnic group
- b) a nomadic people
- c) a speech groups
- d) a superior race

Q21. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

List 1(Phase of Stone Age) List 2 (Characteristics of Tools)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| A. Upper Paleolithic | 1. Blade Tools |
| B. Middle Paleolithic | 2. Core Tools |
| C. Lower Paleolithic | 3. Flake tools |

Microliths Codes:

ABC

- a) 231
- b) 132
- c) 421
- d) 124

List 1(Culture)

- A. Pre Harappan
- B. Early Harappan
- C. Mature Harappan
- D. Late Harappan

List 2 (Characteristic)

- 1. Elaborate Town Planning & Urban Features
- 2. Decline of a Civilization
- 3. Nomadic People began to have a settled life
- 4. Transition from Rural to Urban Life

ABCD

- a) 1234
- b) 3412
- c) 3142
- d) 2341

List 1(Ancient site)

- A. Mohenjodaro
- B. Kalibangan
- C. Lothal
- D. Harappa

List 2 (River)

- 1. Ghaggar
- 2. Ravi
- 3. Indus
- 4. Bhogwa

ABCD

- a) 1234
- b) 3412
- c) 3142
- d) 2341

QUESTION 1

Q. The river most mentioned in early Vedic literature is [1996]

- a) Sindhu
- b) Sutudri
- c) Saraswati
- d) Ganga

QUESTION 3

Q. Which one of the following four Vedas contains an account of magical charms and spells? [2004]

- a) Rig-veda
- b) Yajur-veda
- c) Atharva-veda
- d) Sama-veda

QUESTION 4

Q. The 'dharma' and 'rita' depict a central idea of ancient Vedic civilization of India. In this context, consider the following statements: [2011]

1. Dharma was a conception of obligations and of the discharge of one's duties to oneself and to others.
2. Rita was the fundamental moral law governing the functioning of the universe and all it contained.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

QUESTION 5

Q. The famous dialogue between Nachiketa and Yama is mentioned in the [1997]

- a) Chhandogyopanishad
- b) Mundakopanishad
- c) Kathopanishad
- d) Kenopanishad

QUESTION 6

Q. Who among the following was a Brahmavadini who composed some hymns of the Vedas? [1995]

- a) Lopamudra
- b) Gargi
- c) Leelavati
- d) Savitri

QUESTION 7

Q. The religion of early Vedic Aryans was primarily of [2012]

- a) Bhakti
- b) Image worship and Yajnas
- c) Worship of nature and Yajnas
- d) Worship of nature and Bhakti

QUESTION 8

Q. With reference to the difference between the culture of Rigvedic Aryans and Indus Valley people, which of the following statements is/are correct? [2017]

1. Rigvedic Aryans used the coat of mail and helmet in warfare whereas the people of Indus Valley Civilization did not leave any evidence of using them.
2. Rigvedic Aryans knew gold, silver and copper whereas Indus Valley people knew only copper and iron. Rigvedic Aryans had domesticated the horse whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having been aware of this animal.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following Veda is considered a non-Aryan work?

- a) Rigveda
- b) Samaveda
- c) Yajurveda
- d) Atharvaveda

Q2. Match the following pairs:

List I: Upanishad	List II: Important Contents
A. Chandogya Upanishad	1. Satyamevjayate
B. Kathopanishad	2. The four Ashrams
C. Mundakopanishad	3. Types of Marriages
D. Jabala	4. Story of Immortality

Select the correct answer using codes given below:

- a) A-1; B-4; C-3; D-2
- b) A-3; B-4; C-1; D-2
- c) A-2; B-4; C-1; D-3
- d) A-2; B-4; C-3; D-1

Q3. With reference to the comparison between the culture of Rigvedic Aryans and Indus Valley people, which of the following statements is/are INCORRECT?

1. Both the Rig Vedic and the Harappan Cultures were rural in nature.
2. Religion was a very important aspect of life of Rig Vedic Aryans but people of Indus Valley did not practise religion and were secular.
3. Rig Vedic Aryans had domesticated the horse whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having been aware of this animal.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Q4. In context of religion in Rigvedic society, consider the following statements:

Assertion (A): The Religion of the Rig Vedic Aryans was materialistic in nature.

Reason (R): There were no temples or idols in the Rig Vedic period Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) Both assertion and reason are true and reason is correctly justifies assertion

- b) Both assertion and reason are true but reason does not correctly justify assertion
- c) Assertion is true, but reason is false
- d) Assertion is false, but reason is true

Q5. Consider the following statements about the religious practices of Later Vedic culture and identify the correct one/s:

- 1. Indra and Agni which were smaller deities in the Rig Vedic society became extremely important.
- 2. People did not believe in idolatry.
- 3. People worshipped Gods in the forms of trees and animals.
- 4. Some of the important yajnas of this time were – ashvamedha, vajapeya, rajasuya,etc.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 3 and 4 only
- b) 2 and 4 only
- c) 3 and 4 only
- d) 2, 3 and 4 only

Q6. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Painted grey ware became the most important form of pottery in the later vedic period.
- 2. Similar to Rigvedic period, taxes in the later Vedic period was also mandatory.

Which of the statement/s given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

ORIGIN

- The rise of material culture towards the end of the later Vedic Age created classes of 'haves' and 'have-nots', leading to social tension and disharmony.
 - This became the single most important factor for the emergence of as many as 63 heterodox sects during the 6th and 5th centuries BCE including Jainism, Buddhism, Ajivikas, Lokayat/ Charvaka, etc.
 - Among these, Buddhism and Jainism were the most popular.
- The Brahmanical religion had become very complex and costly.
 - The rigid ritualism and priestly domination had made the goal of spiritual salvation unattainable for the Common man.
- Brahminical sacrifices involved the large-scale slaughter of cattle.
 - This created a huge economic strain on the agricultural classes, who wanted to preserve their cattle wealth.
- The need was felt for new moral and spiritual doctrines to address the political and social upheaval of the Mahajanapada period.
 - The emergence of territorial kingdoms was creating frequent conflict, leading to loss of life and property.
 - It was also harmful for trade and commerce.
 - Due to the second urbanisation some aspirational groups, such as traders, artisans and craftsmen, had become prosperous and were looking to improve their social status.
 - This was impossible with the rigid Varna system.
 - Thus, they had an appetite for alternatives.
- It was in this background that some wise spiritual leaders proposed their philosophies, leading to the emergence of a number of religious sects.

JAINISM

VARDHMAN MAHAVIRA - PERSONAL DETAILS

- Birth - He was born into a Kashtariya clan called 'Jantrika' in 540 BCE at Kundagram, Vaishali, Bihar.
- His relatives were:
 - Father - Siddhartha
 - Mother - Trishala
 - Wife - Yashoda
 - Daughter - Priyadarshika
 - Son-in-law - Jamali (also his first disciple)
- According to Jain literary tradition, Mahavir left his home at the age of 30.
- He wandered and experimented with different methods of meditation for 12 years and finally attained 'Kaivalya'/ Supreme Knowledge at Jhribikagram under a Sal tree on the banks of the river Rijupalika.
 - Kaivalya or enlightenment is attained by conquering the senses.

- After its attainment, Mahavira came to be known as 'Jina' meaning 'the Conqueror'. He delivered his first sermon at Vipulchal, Nalanda, Bihar.
- Throughout his life, Mahavir **lived and preached in and around the Gangetic valley**.
- At the age of 72, he attained **Nirvana** at **Pavapuri**, Deoria.
 - In Jainism, this refers to the end of suffering and freedom from the cycle of birth and death.
- He preached in the **Ardha Magadhi dialect of Prakrit language**.

JAIN TEACHINGS & PHILOSOPHY

1. 'Triratnas' of Jainism -

- These are
 - Right Knowledge
 - Right Faith
 - Right Conduct
- Right conduct comprises the 5 noble rows called '**Pancha Mahavrata**' -
 - **Ahimsa** - "non-violence": not kill any living organism under any circumstances.
 - **Asteya** - "not to steal": not to keep or consume more than necessary.
 - **Apagriha** - "not to accumulate wealth": renunciation of worldly pleasures and living like an ascetic.
 - **Satya** - "not to speak lies": to speak the truth in all circumstances.
 - **Brahmacharya** - "celibacy": not to marry, not to have relations with the opposite sex, and not to hear, see or have feelings for the opposite sex.
- The first four were given by Parshvanath, the 23rd Tirthankar.
- Brahmacharya was given by Mahavir.

2. 'Syadvada/ Anekantavada' -

- Truth is relative and there are several possibilities –
 - Truth
 - Non-truth
 - Truth/ non-truth
 - Can't say
 - Truth/ Can't say
 - Non-truth/ Can't say
 - Truth-Non-truth/ Can't say

3. 5 stages of knowledge -

- According to Jain belief, the path to attain Kaivalya consist of attaining 5 stages of knowledge -
 - **'Shruti'** - knowledge acquired by hearing
 - **'Mati'** - common sense
 - **'Avadhi'** - knowledge about distant events
 - **'Manaha Praya'** - knowledge of others' minds and heart

- ‘Kaivalya’ - supreme knowledge attained by conquering the senses.
- At each stage, the disciple has to take the help of a guru or spiritual instructor.

JAIN PHILOSOPHY/ METAPHYSICAL CONSTRUCT

God

- According to Jainism, Gods do exist but are inferior to Tirthankaras.
- God is not the creator of the universe.
- Thus, according to modern-day historians, Jainism is an atheist/agnostic religion.

Universe

- According to Jainism the universe was never created, nor will it ever end.
 - Therefore, it is permanent.
- However, it is made of some living and non-living elements, and is governed by universal law. Thus, it undergoes -
 - ‘Utsarpani’ - a phase of rise
 - ‘Avsarpani’ - a phase of decline

Soul

- Jainism believes that all living and non-living beings have souls.
 - Therefore, the entire universe is full of soul.
- Wherever there is soul, there is ‘Dukha’ (suffering/ sorrow).

Life after Death

- In order to attain ‘Nirvana’ (freedom from the cycle of reincarnation) the soul must be liberated from “karma” which accumulates around it as ‘Pudgala’ (cosmic matter).
- Therefore, Karma is considered to be the bane of the soul.
- Penance and right conduct can destroy karma and liberate the soul by bringing it to the state of ‘Shunyata’ (nothingness).

Path to attain salvation

- A. Following Triratnas
- B. Living an ascetic life
- C. Giving up clothes
- D. Performing ‘kesh lochana’ (pulling out of hair)
- E. Performing ‘sallekhana/ santhara’ (starving oneself to death)

JAIN SECTS

There are 2 Jain sects-

Digambara

- The space/ sky clad followers of Jainism, who remain naked
- It has the following sub-sects -
 - a) Mula Sangha (original community)
 - b) Terapanthi
 - c) Taranpanthi
 - d) Bispanthi

Shwetambara

- Those who wear white clothes, with the sub-sects
 - Sthanakvasi
 - Moorti Pujaka

The difference first emerged during Chandragupta Maurya's reign.

- According to Jain literature, a great famine took place in Magadha.
 - A group of Jains led by Bhadrabahu migrated to South India and settled at Shravanabelagola (Karnataka)
 - Another group led by Sthulbhadra remained in Magadha.
- After 12 years, Bhadrabahu and his group returned and accused Magadan Jains of corrupting the Jain tradition. They had started wearing white clothes and were referred to as Digambaras.
 - The Shvetambaras responded by convening a Jain Council at Pataliputra.
 - The earliest known Jain literature, called 'Purvas' consisting of Mahavira's teachings, were compiled here. However, they are lost.
 - In the 5th century CE, the Shvetambaras convened a Second Jain Council at Vallabhi (Gujarat). Mahavira's teachings were compiled again.
 - This compilation was called 'Angas' with several 'Upangas' (commentaries on Angas).
- However, the Digambaras did not accept any of these texts.
 - According to them, the original teachings have been lost. Bhadrabahu was the last saint to correctly recall them.
 - They further claimed that they will create an authentic compilation at some stage in the future. However, it is yet to be created.

JAIN CONTRIBUTION TO ART & LITERATURE

- The earliest surviving **manuscripts** in India are Jain texts of the 5th and 6th centuries CE, written in **Prakrit**, using the **Brahimi** script.
 - They were written on palm leaves in the Pothi style, and are thus called '**palm leaf pothi**'.
 - As the Pothi style of manuscript developed further, **paintings** began appearing within these works.
 - This marked the beginning of **Indian miniature art**.

- The most famous is the ‘**Caurapancasika**’ written by Bilhana, a Kashmiri poet.
- Jainism made huge contributions to **architecture, painting and sculpture** -
 - The **Mathura, Amravati and Gupta schools** of sculpture have Jain influences, with popular Jain themes.
 - It is visible in the **temple architecture of the Dilwara temples, Ellora caves and Sitanavassal caves**.
- A number of **rulers** patronised Jain art, such as Chandragupta Maurya and Kharvela of Kalinga.
- Jain art was also supported by the **prosperous Jain trading community** of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka.

BUDDHISM

SIDDHARTHA - PERSONAL DETAILS

- **Birth** - He was born into the ‘**Sakya**’ clan of Kshatriya varna in 563 BCE at **Lumbini**, located in the city-state of Kapilavastu (present-day Piprahwa, Gorakhpur).
 - Due to his clan lineage, he was also called the ‘Sakya Simha’.
- **His relatives were-**
 - Father - Shuddhodhan
 - Birth mother - Mahamaya
 - Foster mother - Gautami (also maternal aunt)
 - Wife - Yashodhara
 - Son - Rahul

According to Buddhist tradition, when Siddhartha was conceived, his birth mother, Mahamaya, dreamt that an elephant was wading into a lotus pond.

- As per the chief priest's instructions, he was kept sheltered from the outside world in his father's palace.
- When he left the palace for the first time, he spotted 4 things which changed his life, i.e., the **4 sights of the Buddha** –
 - An old man
 - A sick man
 - A dead body
 - A smiling monk
- Thereafter, he left his house at 29 years of age, with Channa (charioteer) and Kanthaka (horse). The act of the Buddha leaving his house is ‘**Mahabhinishkramana**’.
- He then wandered for 6 years in search of true knowledge in the company of other saints. However, he failed.
- At the age of 35, Siddhartha sat under a Pipal tree at Bodh Gaya, on the banks of Niranjana (present-day Phalgu). After 49 days of meditation he attained ‘**Nirvana**’ (enlightenment), and became the Buddha.

- He meditated again for 49 days and resisted the attempts of the demon, Mara, to break his concentration, and once again attained Nirvana.
 - Thereafter, he went to Sarnath (Varanasi) where he delivered his first sermon to 5 disciples, the most prominent being Anand and Upali. This sermon is called the ‘Dharmachakrapravartana’ (setting the wheel into motion).
 - He gave sermons at various places within the Gangetic valley, except during monsoon.
 - He died at the age of 80 at Kushinagar.
 - This event is known as ‘Parinirvana/ Mahaparinirvana’.
- * In the Buddhist context, ‘Nirvana’ refers to enlightenment. For Jains, ‘Kaivalya’ is enlightenment, while ‘Nirvana’ is freedom from rebirth.

BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS

Four Arya Satyas (Noble Truths)-

1. The world is full of Dukha (sorrow).
2. The reason for Dukha is Trishna (desire)
3. There is a way to extinguish Trishna.
4. That way is the Ashtangika Marg (Eightfold path).
 - a. Right view
 - b. Right resolve
 - c. Right speech
 - d. Right concentration
 - e. Right livelihood
 - f. Right effort
 - g. Right recollection
 - h. Right meditation

BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

God

- Buddha remained silent when asked about the existence of God.
- Most modern historians concur that Buddhism was also an atheistic religion.

Universe

- The universe was created and will end.
- Thus, it is mortal.

Soul

- The soul dies along with the body.
- Thus, it is mortal.

Rebirth / Life after death

- It is not the soul which transmigrates. Rather, it is the ‘Chetna’ (consciousness) which becomes the medium for rebirth.
- Nirvana liberates Chetna from all karma.

- A person who has attained nirvana may also attain ‘Parinirvana’.
 - However, those who delay Parinirvana after the attainment of Nirvana are called ‘Bodhisattvas’.
 - They remain inside the cycle of reincarnation to guide others onto the path of Nirvana.

BUDDHIST LITERATURE

Most Buddhist literature was produced in Pali or Prakrit but some is in Sanskrit, Sinhala and Chinese.

- Buddha himself preached in Prakrit using the Ardha Magadhi dialect.
- Buddhist literature was mostly compiled in the early Christian centuries, i.e. 1st- 5th centuries CE. Among them, the Tripitakas (3 baskets) in Pali are the holiest.

Tripitakas

1. Sutta Pitaka

- Composed in the **First Buddhist Council** (recited by Ananda)
- It contains **Buddha's teachings** and is divided into **5 Nikayas (books)** -
 - Digha Nikaya
 - Majjhima Nikaya
 - Samyutta Nikaya
 - Anguttara Nikaya
 - Khuddaka Nikaya (Jataka tales > 550)

2. Vinaya Pitaka

- Also composed at the **first Buddhist Council** (recited by Upali).
- It consists of the **rules of the Sangha** (Buddhist monastic order) to be observed by Bhikkhus (monks) and Bhikkunis (nuns).
 - They lived in ‘**Viharas**’ (hospices).
 - ‘**Chaityas**’ were their prayer halls.
- Some important rules mentioned were-
 - They had to eat one meal a day.
 - They had to wear a deep-red uniform.
 - They had to live within the Viharas.
 - They had to sleep on the floor.
 - They had to beg for alms in nearby villages.
 - They were not allowed to drink, wear jewellery, or establish relations with the opposite sex.
 - Preaching and begging were prohibited during the Monsoon season.
 - They had to participate in the ceremony of ‘Pavarana’ in the monsoon season, where they confessed their offences during their stay at the Vihara.
 - Anyone could join the Sangha , except -
 - Children under 15
 - Persons facing criminal charges

3. Abhidhamma Pitaka

- Compiled in the **Third Buddhist Council**
- It contains the **philosophical aspect of Buddhism** and deals with metaphysics i.e., the Relationship between man and the universe.

Works in other languages include

1. '**Buddhacharita'** - It is the first **biography** of the Buddha, written in **Sanskrit** by **Asvaghosha** in the post-Mauryan period.
2. '**Milindapanho**' (Questions of Milinda)- Written in **Sanskrit** by **Nagesena** in around the 1st century CE, in the form of a **dialogue** between Milinda (Indo-Greek king, Menander) and Nagesena (a Buddhist saint- scholar), in which the latter answers the former's philosophical questions.
3. '**Dipavamsa**' and '**Mahavamsa**' - These were **Sinhalese** works written by Buddhist scholars in Sri Lanka, probably in the post-Mauryan era.

FOUR BUDDHIST COUNCILS

Year	Venue	King	President	Important Developments
400 BCE	Rajgir	Ajatashatru	Mahakashyapa	Sutta & Vinaya Pitakas were compiled
383 BCE	Vaishali	Kalashoka	Sabakami	Disagreement over the rules of Vinaya Pitaka led to emergence of three groups 1. Sathviravadins 2. Mahasanghikas 3. Sarvastivadins
250 BCE	Pataliputra	Ashoka	Moghaliputta Tissa	Abhidhamma Pitaka was compiled
72 CE	Kundalvana	Kanishka	Asvaghosha and Vasumitra	A schism emerged between- 1. Mahayanans 2. Hinayanas

BUDDHIST SECTS

1. **Mahayana Buddhism** -

- It emerged as a result of the **modification of original principles of Buddhism**.
 - This happened due to the **growing materialism** of the society and the **growing popularity of Buddhism**.
- It was patronised by rulers such as Kanishka, Harshavardhan, etc.
- It received its final shape at the **Fourth Buddhist council** and reached its zenith during the early Christian era.

Its major postulates are -

- The position of **Buddha** was elevated from that of a great teacher to the **Supreme God**.
- The **Bodhisattvas** were conceived as **Buddha's divine incarnations**, based on Jataka.
- The practice of **idolatry** began in India for the first time. Before this, there is no concrete evidence of idol worship.
- The importance of individual effort to attain salvation following the Ashtangika Marg was reduced. Instead, **devotion to Buddha** was emphasised upon, marking the beginning of **Indian Bhakti**.
- The concept of **transference of religious merit** also emerged, where it could be transferred between people and generations.
- It displayed a **greater tolerance for luxury**. The Sangha received huge endowments from kings and wealthy patrons. There was reduced emphasis on asceticism.
- It **accepted Sanskrit** as a medium of religious instruction, education and literacy discourse to the point of it being preferred over Prakrit.

Hinayana Buddhism –

It emerged along with Mahayana Buddhism and stressed the **validity of the original Buddhist teachings and practices**.

BUDDHIST ART

Buddhist followers made great contributions to the growth of architecture, painting, sculpture and cave art -

- **Stupas** - They were the earliest religious buildings of any kind to be constructed in India. The finest example is the Sanchi stupa built by Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE, and enlarged over the next several centuries.
- **Rock-cut caves** - They were excavated in the hills of
 - Ajanta, Ellora and Karle (Maharashtra)
 - Nagarjunakonda (Andhra Pradesh)
 - Barabar and Nagarjuni (Bihar)
- **Sculpture** - Several schools emerged, such as Gandhara, Mathura, Amravati and Gupta.
- **Painting** - Murals in the Ajanta and Bagh caves (MP); Miniature Pala art.

DECLINE OF BUDDHISM

Buddhism flourished in the subcontinent **until the early medieval period**, i.e., the 7th-8th centuries BCE, and thereafter declined rapidly. Factors responsible included -

Internal problems -

- **Buddhism had lost its identity** and started resembling the Brahminical faith. Thus, its decline was inevitable.

- In the early Christian era, Buddhism was no longer the simple spiritual and moral doctrine given by the Buddha, but had become **highly ritualised and complex**, making it difficult for the common man to follow.
- The **shift of focus** from individual agency towards **Bhakti**, the beginning of **idolatry** and rigid **ritualism** created an avenue for **priestly intervention**.
- **Corrupt practices** had become commonplace within the Sangha, which was not as disciplined and organised as before.
- Prakrit gave way to **Sanskrit**, which Buddha had avoided.

External factors -

- The **revival of Brahmanism** took place from the 5th century CE inward.
 - The ancient forms of Bhakti, including **Bhagavatism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism** were more **democratic, egalitarian and tolerant**.
 - Salvation was attainable by personal devotion to God, without the involvement of complex rituals, costly sacrifices and priestly domination.
 - Thus, the revived Brahminical faith became more attractive.
- ‘**Avataravad**’ was an essential feature of Vaishnavism in which 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu were worshipped.
 - The **followers of Buddhism were incorporated** under the umbrella of Vaishnavism, when the **Buddha came to be celebrated as Vishnu's 9th incarnation**.
- **Loss of royal patronage** under the Later Guptas, Cholas and Rajput, etc. who patronised other faiths.
- **Advent of Islam** with its emphasis on equality and universal brotherhood marked Buddhism's final decline as Islam became very attractive for people who stopped receiving spiritual nourishment from Buddhism.
- Further, **early Muslim invaders also propagated Islam at the tip of the sword**.
 - Famous Buddhist monasteries such as Nalanda and Vikramashila were destroyed by Ikhtiyar-ud-din Mohammed bin Bakhtiyar Khilji.

Mahajanapada Period (6th–5th Century BCE)

Introduction

By the 6th century BCE, **16 large territorial polities** called ‘Mahajanapadas’ had emerged. Most were located in the Gangetic valley, but a few were also in the Indus and Narmada valleys.

Their names have been mentioned in the ‘**Anguttara Nikaya**’-

1. Gandhara -Takshila
2. Kambhoja - Rajpura
3. Kuru - Indraprastha
4. Panchal - Ahhichata/Kampilya

5. Matasya - Virathnagar/Bairat
6. Sursena - Mathura
7. Vatsa - Kausambi
8. Chedi -Suktimati
9. Kosala- Sarvasti /Saket/Ayodhya
10. Kasi- Rajghat
11. Malla - Pavapuri
12. Vajji - Vaishali
13. Magadha - Rajgir/Patliputra
14. Anga- Champa/ Bhagalpur
15. Avanti - Ujjain/ Mahishmati
16. Asmaka – Potali

5 Mahajanapadas were Ganas (republics)-

1. Kambhoja
2. Kuru
3. Panchal
4. Malla
5. Vajji

Instead of a king they were ruled by a powerful aristocracy consisting of a few clans.

Most powerful Mahajanapadas

- **Magadha**
 - It was located in Central Bihar (Patna-Gaya-Nalanda region)
 - Its early capital was Gṛihavrija/ Rajgir/ Rajgirha
 - Later the capital was shifted to Patliputra.
- **Avanti**
 - It was located in the Narmada valley stretching over parts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
 - Its capitals were Ujjain and Mashismati.
- **Vajji**
 - It was situated in northern Bihar, with its capital at Vaishali.
 - Unlike most Mahajanapadas it was ruled by a confederacy of 8 clans and is thus considered to be republican polity.
- **Kosala**
 - It was located in North East UP in the Ayodhya district.
 - Its capital was Saket - Located on the banks of Saryu.
- **Kasi**
 - Its capital was Rajghat (Varanasi).

Among these, **Magadha and Avanti emerged as the most powerful**, gradually annexing all other Mahajanapadas.

They competed with each other for almost 200 years for supremacy, before Magadha emerged victorious thus establishing the first empire in India.

Magadhan Dynasties

Magadha ruled by the total of six dynasties namely-

- Haryanka
- Sisunaga
- Nanda
- Maurya
- Sunga
- Kanva

Haryanka Dynasty (544-413 BCE)

Bimbisara and Ajatashatru were contemporaries of the Buddha.

- **Bimbisara**
 - He was the brother-in-law of Mahavira.
 - He efficiently organised the kingdom's administration.
 - His first **matrimonial alliance** was with Kosala.
 - He defeated Bhramadatta of **Anga** and annexed it.
 - He was murdered by his son, Ajatashatru.
- **Ajatashatru**
 - His reign was remarkable for his military conquests-
 - Kosala
 - Vaishali
 - He is believed to have been a **follower of Jainism but later embraced Buddhism**.
 - His **meeting with the Buddha is depicted in Bharhut sculptures**.
 - He was instrumental in convening the first Buddhist council, soon after Buddha's death.
 - He was killed by his son Udayana.

Shishunaga Dynasty (413- 345 BCE)

- Its important rulers were **Shishunaga and Kalashoka/Kakavarman**.
- They **defeated Avanti** under Kalashoka, and the second Buddhist council was convened.

Nanda dynasty (345 - 322 BCE)

- **Mahapadma Nanda**
 - He uprooted the Kashtariya dynasties of north India and assumed the title '**Ekrat**' (emperor).
 - He was the first king of Magadha to have conquered Kalinga, as mentioned in the **Hathigumpa inscription**.

- He is also believed to have constructed an embankment of Mahanadi.
- **Dhanananda**
 - He kept his empire intact and possessed a powerful army.
 - However, his oppressive rule and tax policy was resented by the people.
 - Thus, he was **supplanted by the Mauryan dynasty**.
 - His reign saw **Alexander's invasion**.

Reasons for the rise of Magadha

- Magadha was located in the **most fertile stretch of the Gangetic valley** leading to the large agricultural surplus, resulting in strength and prosperity.
 - It also created a **large revenue base** for the state.
- Magadha was **rich in mineral resources**, especially coal and iron.
 - Thus its military had a steady supply of iron weapons, giving it an edge over its competitors.
- Magadha had **thick forests** which provided **timber** and **elephants** which formed the core of its army.
- It was situated at the crossroads of **2 important trade routes** connecting all four corners of the subcontinent.
 - Thus it **developed commercially** and benefited from the **revenue** extracted from subcontinental trade.
- Magadha's **capitals were strategically located**. They had natural fortification
 - **Rajgir** was surrounded by 5 hills
 - **Patliputra** was surrounded by 3 Rivers
- Magadha was situated **outside the pale of holy Aryavarta**.
 - The **Varanshrandharma system** was not imposed rigidly.
 - **Heterodox sects such as Jainism and Buddhism** served to decrease the social conflict, creating stability-
 - They did not observe **casteist restrictions** on occupation. Magadha was able to build a **large army and developed trade**.
 - They also **abjured violence and animal sacrifice** thus cultivators were able to preserve their animals wealth which improved productivity and led to prosperity.
- The Magadhan kings followed the policy of **matrimonial alliances** giving it strong allies against enemies.

Alexander's Invasion

Alexander of Macedonia invaded India from 326- 324 BC via the **Khyber Pass**.

- He penetrated the Indian subcontinent up to **Hyphasis** (Beas).
- He retreated from India through Rajasthan, Gujarat and Sindh towards Iran.
- He died in 323 BC at the age of 32 at Babylon.

His victims in India:

- **King Ambhi of Taxila** was the first Indian king to be defeated by him, on the banks of the **Indus**.
- **King Porus of the Purus** was defeated in the famous battle of the **Hydaspes (Jhelum)**

Alexander was accompanied by 2 historians

- **Aristobulus**
- **Anasecretes**

After defeating Porus, Alexander is said to have **returned because of-**

- India's hot climate
- Strength of the Nanda army
- Tired soldiers, who had been away from home for 9 years.

The effects of his invasion were-

- Encouragement of **political unification under Mauryas**.
 - The end of the system of small independent states.
- **Direct contact between India and Greece** using the land routes and naval routes opened by him.

Mauryan Dynasty (321-185 BCE)

Chandragupta Maurya

- He is referred to as '**Androchottus/Sandrochottus**' in Greek literature.
- According to **Puranic** literature he was the son of Mura, a Shudra woman and Dhannanda the Nanda king but the two were not married.
 - According to this tradition the Mauryan dynasty was named after his Mother.
- **Buddhist** literature tells us that he was a Kashtariya.
- **Jain** literature attributes his lineage to a tribe that tamed peacocks.
- According to **Greek** literature he came from humble origins.
- According to various sources he was **trained by Vishnugupta/Chanakya**, a Brahmin scholar from Takshila who later became the Mantrin (Prime Minister) and Purohit (Chief Priest).
- He **overthrew Dhanananda**, and then successfully **defeated Seleucus Nicator**, receiving territories such as Kabul, Kandahar, Herat and Balochistan.
 - They later became good friends and later entered a marriage alliance.
 - He received Megasthenes as an ambassador of Patliputra.
- He was the **first Indian king to lay down the foundations of centralised administration**.
- According to Jain literature Chandragupta Maurya migrated to South India with Bhadrabahu and performed **Sallekhana at Shravanabelagola**.

Bindusara

- He assumed the title '**Amitraghata**' (slayer of foes), and is referred to in Greek literature as '**Amitrachottus**'.
 - According to Taranath, a Tibetan monk, Bindusara ruled over all the 16 states comprising the land between the 2 seas.
- He also conquered some territories in South India as has been **mentioned in Sangam literature**.
- He **appointed his son Ashoka as the governor of Ujjain**.
- During his reign, the **Greek king of Syria, Antiochus I sent his ambassador, Diamachus** to Pataliputra.
 - Bindusara requested Antiochus I to send 3 gifts –
 - A Philosopher
 - Figs
 - Sweet Wine
- He was a follower of the **Ajivika sect**.

Ajivika Sect

- It was founded by **Maskariputta Gosala**.
- It is considered to be a **fatalistic sect**.
 - It was a deterministic philosophy which believed that the universe is governed by the preordained cosmic order called '**Niyati**'.
 - Thus, the Ajivikas had **no belief in karma**.
 - Since fate cannot be altered, they **did not believe in the concept of enlightenment or spiritual salvation**.
 - They also **rejected all forms of worship and rituals**.
 - They advocated an **ascetic and austere lifestyle** to reduce one's cosmic footprint, rather than pursuing any defined purpose.

Ashoka

Chronology

- The first 4 years of his reign were the period of **civil war**.
 - Buddhist literature mentions that Ashoka killed 99 of his brothers to finally acquire the throne in 269 BCE.
- In the **8th year of his coronation (261 BCE)** the famous **Kalinga war** was fought as mentioned in **MRE XIII**, according to which, over 1 Lakh people perished.
 - After witnessing this, Ashoka had a change of heart.
 - Thus he gave up the policy of '**Bherighosha**' (waging war), and adopted the policy of '**Dhammadhosh**' (conquering hearts and minds) - '**Digvijaya v/s Dharmavijaya**'.
- In his **10th regnal year he visited Bodh Gaya**, immediately after converting to Buddhism.
 - He was converted by **Upagupta**, a Buddhist monk.

- In Buddhist literature he was shown in a negative light before his conversion, referred to as Chandashoka.
- In sharp contrast the converted Ashoka was portrayed as the Dhammashoka.
- In his **13th regnal year** he appointed '**Dhammadhammatyas**' a new class of officers to popularise the message of Dharma.
- In the **20th regnal year** he visited Lumbini.
 - According to the **Rummindei pillar inscription** he exempted the people of Lumbini from paying Bali and reduced Bhaga to 1/8 of the produce.
 - It also mentioned the name of his favourite wife Kaurvaki and her son Kunal.
 - His first wife was Vidisha Devi of the Chedi kingdom.
 - Buddhist sources have also mentioned his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra who were sent to Sri Lanka to spread Buddhism.
 - However, their names are not mentioned in any edicts.

Ashokan Edicts

Ashokan edicts were royal orders/proclamations issued by Ashoka.

They were first **deciphered by James Princep**.

Type of edicts	Language	Script
Major rock edicts	Prakrit	Brahmi
Minor rock edicts	Prakrit	Brahmi
Pillar rock edicts	Prakrit	Brahmi
Cave rock edicts	Greek and Aramaic	Greek and Aramaic

Major Rock Edicts (MREs)

- **14 have been discovered from 8 places-**
 - Shahbazgarhi (Pakistan) - Kharosthi Script
 - Mansehra (Pakistan) - Kharosthi Script
 - Kalsi (Near Dehradun) - Brahmi Script
 - Sopara (Maharashtra) - Brahmi Script
 - Girnar (Gujarat) - Brahmi Script
 - Yerragudi (Andhra Pradesh) - Brahmi Script
 - Dhauli (Kalinga) - Brahmi Script
- Jaugada (Kalinga) - Brahmi Script

Important MREs-

- **MRE I**
 - It talks about non violence.
 - Ashoka advised his subject to not kill animals and promised to follow the same.
- **MRE XIII**
 - It is the **longest** rock edict describing the **Kalinga war**.

- It also mentions the **slave system** and the **names of foreign kings** to whom Ashoka had dispatched ambassadors including –
 - Antiochus II - Syria
 - Ptolemy II Philadelphus - Egypt
 - Magas - Cyrene
 - Alexander - Epirus
 - Antigonus II - Macedonia
- **MRE XIII Is missing from the Kalinga inscriptions**, Jaugada and Dhauli and has been replaced by 2 separate edicts called the **Kalinga edicts**.
 - They talk about the **rehabilitation programme** for the people of Kalinga.
 - He addresses them as **his children**, indicating the paternalistic nature of ancient monarchy in India.

Minor Rock Edicts (mREs)

- They are associated with **Ashoka's interest in Buddhism**.
- Of the 15 mREs discovered, **4 mention Ashoka by name** including-
 - Maski (Karnataka)
 - Nettur (Karnataka)
 - Udegulam (Andhra Pradesh)
 - Gurjara (Madhya Pradesh)
- The other edicts refer to him by his royal title '**DEVANAMPIYA PIYADASI**'.
- A post-Mauryan sculpture of Ashoka has been found from **Kanaganahalli** which carries the inscription '**Ranyo Ashoka**'.

Pillar Edicts

- 7 pillar edicts are found from 11 locations,
 - Topara (Haryana) - brought to Delhi by Firoz Shah Tughlaq
 - Meerut (UP) - brought to Delhi by Firoz Shah Tughlaq
 - Kausambi (UP) - brought to Allahabad by Jahangir
 - Sarnath (UP)
 - Rampurva (UP)
 - Sanchi (Madhya Pradesh)
 - Lauriya Araraj (Bihar)
 - Lauriya Nandangarh (Bihar)
 - Sansika (Bihar)
 - Rummimdei (Nepal)
 - Nilgirva (Nepal)

- Pillar edicts shed light on
 - Ashoka's Dhamma
 - Duties of officials, especially Rajjuka (incharge of revenue collection and rural justice)

Cave Edicts

- They have been found from Kandahar and are **bilingual**, that is, in **Greek and Aramaic**, indicating that these languages were spoken in the northwestern part of the empire.

Ashoka's Dhamma

- 'Dhamma' is the Pali equivalent of the Sanskrit word 'Dharma', that is, **social order**.
 - Ashok's Dhamma was a **social code of conduct**, with several do's and don'ts.
 - Each individual had a set of duties and obligations towards others and the society at large.
 - The observation of these duties would lead to peace and social harmony.
- Ashoka appreciated the rich religious, cultural, linguistic and regional **diversity** of his empire.
 - He released that the **plurality of faiths and the rising inequality** among classes could sow discord.
 - Thus, he preached the Dhamma, emphasising on **peaceful coexistence and tolerance**.
- This policy was also an expression of his **enlightened despotism**.
 - The Mauryan empire had been expanded through a series of bloody conflicts.
 - The subjects thereafter needed to be **emotionally and psychologically integrated**. This was impossible under tyrannical rule.
 - Thus, the Dhamma sought to **establish Ashoka as a benevolent ruler**.
- Some historians interpret the Dhamma's emphasis on non violence as an **expression of his belief in Buddhism**, while others consider it to be a **political tool to prevent violent rebellions** by breeding the creed of violence out of the psychology of his subjects.

Content of Dhamma

Ashoka Dhamma is known to us through his edicts –

- He advised his subjects to be **non violent towards both humans and animals**.
 - This was important because costly sacrifices increased the empire's economic burden.
- To establish social order and reduce conflict, he advises his subjects to-
 - **Obey and respect parents, teachers, and elders.**
 - **Love the younger ones and neighbours.**
 - **Treat slaves affectionately.**

- **Dhammadammatyas**, were appointed to popularise the message of Dhamma.
 - However, it was **not imposed forcibly** as Ashoka realised that coercion would invite resistance and create conflict.

Significance of Ashokan edicts

From a historical perspective, Ashoka's edicts are priceless. They contain a wealth of information regarding Ashoka and his empire-

- The discovery of edicts from different parts of the subcontinent indicates the **extent of the empire**, and that **literacy** was not uncommon.
- The **language and script** used in the edicts indicates the linguistic composition of Ashoka's empire.
- The **chronology** of Asoka's reign has been clearly established in terms of years since his coronation.
- The mention of **foreign kings and countries** indicates that Ashoka had established diplomatic relations with them.
- Ashokan edicts are **free from interpolation**, that is, any tampering is easily recognisable.
- They are **more reliable than contemporary literary sources** as they present a first hand account of important developments and policies.
- They also give **useful insights into Ashoka's personality and disposition**. He appears to be a **paternal despot**.
 - The edicts are proclaimed as general guidelines, instructions and appeals to his subjects with no element of coercion.
 - This indicates that he was a benevolent despot, and not tyrant.

Indica of Megasthenes

Megasthenes was the ambassador of **Seleucus Nicator** at the court of Chandragupta Maurya. He wrote the Indica in Greek.

However, the **original work has been lost**. References to it can be found in other Greco-Roman works by writer such as-

- Arrian
- Pliny the Elder
- Justin
- Diodorus
- Plutarch
- Strabo

Life in Patliputra

- Megasthenes praised its beauty.
- He says that the city was **rectangular** and surrounded by **wooden fortifications**.
 - The king also lived in a wooden palace. Even his throne was wooden.

- Due to large scale use of wood for construction, fire hazard was a major concern.
- As a result, fire safety was paramount, and violations of the fire code were punishable by death.

Chandragupta's Place

- Megasthenes praised its beauty and mentioned an **80 pillared hall**.
 - One such pillar has been found at Kumrahar.
 - They were **inspired by Persepolitan pillars**, with a bell and capital, consisting of palm leaf designs.

City Administration

Megasthenes wrote that the city was governed by a **30-member council, with 6 committees of 5 members each**.

Each committee was responsible for a specific function –

1. Industry, art and crafts
2. Maintenance of foreigners records
3. Record of birth and deaths
4. Trade, commerce and sales
5. Quality of sold goods
6. Collection of tolls

Military administration

The military was also governed by 30 member council with 6 committees governing different branches of the armed forces-

1. Navy
2. Logistics
3. Infantry
4. Cavalry
5. Elephant force
6. Chariot contingent

Indian society

According to Megasthenes it was divided into 7 classes-

1. Philosophers
2. Peasants
3. Herdsmen/ Shepherds

4. Craftsmen
5. Soldiers
6. Inspectors
7. Councillors

However, This observation seems to be inaccurate as –

- The Indian society was divided on the basis of caste and not class
- Further, there was no philosopher class in India
- Moreover, the position of peasants above soldiers, inspectors and councillors is inconsistent with the reality of Indian society.

Utility of foreign accounts and recreating history-

Accounts of foreign travellers, such as Megasthenes, Fa Hien, Huein Tsang, Al-Biruni, Ibn Battuta, etc. are **very useful** for learning about India's past, especially for periods when **indigenous records are sparse**. However, such travelogues **must be treated with a critical eye** before they are accepted-

- Foreign travellers interacted with alien culture for **short periods of time**.
 - Thus, their understanding is bound to be limited.
- They perceived these lands and societies through **their own cultural lenses** which may lead to misinterpretation of certain observations.
- Prominent travellers were **often patronised by native rulers**.
 - Thus, they tended to write in a flattering manner about them and their countries.
- The travellers were composing their records for **consumption by their own countrymen**.
 - The **language and expression** used was such that sometimes the true meaning was **lost in translation**.
 - These accounts often have a tendency to lend themselves **some degree of storytelling and embellishment**, which warrants careful analysis by historians.
- Like any literary source they **cannot be accepted at face value and must be corroborated by other contemporary archaeological and literary sources**.

ARTHASHASTRA OF KAUTILYA

- Discovered in the late 19th century, the Arthashastra was a work on **statecraft, general administration, polity and economy**.
- It was written by **Kautilya** in **Sanskrit**.
- **It does not mention any king by name**.

Saptanga Theory of the State

- In this, Kautilya imagines 7 limbs of the State, which may be used by a '**Vijigishu**' (would-be-conqueror/aspirational king) to expand his influence.
- They include -

- Janapada (Population)
- Swamin (King)
- Mantrin/ Amatya (Minister)
- Durga (Fort)
- Danda (Army)
- Mitra (Ally)
- Kosha (Treasure)

Desirable qualities in a King

- The king should be of noble birth.
- He should be well-trained in combat and military strategy
- He should possess experience of general administration.
- He should be well aware of his subjects' cultural and social preferences.
- He should have a good understanding of economics.
- He must discharge his duties 24 x 7.

Probity in Governance

- The Arthashastra advises the king that his **ministers and officials should be intelligent and loyal.**
- It also advises the king on **how to prevent corruption and disloyalty.**
 - He prescribes that officials should have **very high salaries** so that they are not motivated by lust for money.
 - **Espionage** - There should be an effective spy system to observe the behaviour of officials.
 - Kautilya advised the king to recruit '**Gurhpurush'** (regular spies), and to use the services of **locals** such as barbers, shopkeepers, vendors, etc.
 - According to Kautilya, they should be **paid in cash** and **transfused frequently** so that they cannot carve out their own fiefdoms.

Works on statecraft by Indians-

- a) 'Arthashastra' by Kautilya, of the Mauryan age.
- b) 'Nitisara' by Kamandika, of the Gupta age.
- c) 'AmuktaMalyada' by Krishnadeva Rai, of the Vijayanagara empire (Telugu)
- d) 'Fatwa-i-Jahangiri' by Barni, of FST's reign (Persian)

MAURYAN ADMINISTRATION

Sources

- Arthashastra
- Indica
- Buddhist texts
- Ashokan edicts
- **Mauryan coins**

- The **oldest metallic coins** in India were issued during the 5th century BCE, i.e. **Mahajanapada** period, in the **Magadha region**.
- They are known as **punch-marked coins**, having symbols punched on them.
- These coins were issued by **both kings and traders**, using silver, copper and bronze.
- Mauryan coins were also punch-marked and called '**Panas/ Karshapanas**'.
 - They were issued in silver, copper, bronze and potin (greenish-brown alloy of copper and lead).
- They carried the image of a **peacock**, the royal Mauryan emblem.

Importance of coins in reconstructing history-

- The study of coins is called **numismatics**.
- The **abundance** of coins indicates the **size of the economy**.
 - A large number of coins Indicates a heavily-monetised economy with many commercial transactions.
 - Meanwhile, a decrease in the number of coins indicates that the economy is contracting.
- The **purity** of coins indicates the level of **prosperity** In the economy.
- Coins also reveal the **material and technological advancement** of the society.
 - They tell us what metals were in use, what was the knowledge of alloy on and level of refinement in metallurgy.
- Coins help recreate **chronology** since they often carry the names of rulers and dynasties and the year of issue.
- The discovery of **foreign coins** indicates external **trading relations**.
- The locations of their discovery indicate the **extent of the empire**.
- They have cultural significance as the inscribed **images and legends** give insight into the **language and religion**.
- **Consistency** of weights and **purity** the control and **organising power** of the issuing authority.
- The **denominations** of coins indicate the **nature of the economy**.
 - A large number of low-denomination coins indicates a strong currency which is heavily circulated and used for daily transactions.
 - Numerous high- denomination coins indicate brisk external trade.

Features of Mauryan Administration

- The Mauryan administration was **centralised**, with absolute power vested with the king.
 - Other than Dharma, there was no check on his authority.
 - The element of **divine origin** was associated with Mauryan kingship, reflected in Asoka's title of '**Devanampiya Piyadassi**'.
- The **state controlled all economic resources**, whether fertile land or minerals.
 - Even salt was monopolised by the State.

- The Mauryan had the **largest bureaucracy in Ancient India** because
 - The state controlled and organised all resources.
 - The empire was extensive with almost the entire subcontinent under its direct control.
 - The tax net was very wide.
 - The Mauryans collected revenue even from gambling and prostitution.
- **Officials had to periodically tour** their areas of jurisdiction and were paid **cash salaries**.
- **Surprise inspections** and audits were commonplace.
- Unlike China, there was **no competitive exam** in India to recruit officials.
 - Instead, top officials were **directly appointed by the king**, who also oversaw their salaries, transfers and promotions.
- The Mauryans had **separate central and provincial bureaucracies**.
- **Village** administration was overseen by **local officials**.

Central Administration

The king was assisted by **18 Tirthas (top officials)**. Some important ones were -

- Mantrin (PM)
- Purohit (chief priest)
- Yuvraj (crown prince)
- Samharta (chief revenue collector)
- Sannidhata (chief treasures)
- Dharmasthyei (chief Justice)
- Kantak Shodhan (chief criminal justice)

Below the Tirthas were **28 Adhyakshas (heads of departments)**, including -

- Sita Adhyaksha (crown's agricultural land)
- Lavan Adhyaksha (salt)
- Akara Adhyaksha (mines)
- Pautuva Adhyaksha (weights and measures)
- Rupadarshaka (royal mints)
- Mudra Adhyaksha (passports)
- Maudra Adhyaksha (currency)
- Nava/ Nauka Adhyaksha (boats and ships)

Various taxes have been mentioned by different sources, and were collected from peasants, traders craftsmen and service providers -

- **Bhaga** - was the most important source of state income, collected at the rate of 1/6 of the produce in both cash and kind.
- **Bali** - collected as a symbol of sovereignty.
- **Hiranya** - collected as cash from traders and service providers.
- **Pranaya** - it was a tax collected during emergencies and natural calamities (1/3 or 1/4).

Provincial and local administration -

The Mauryan empire was divided into **5 'Rajyas' (provinces)**, each headed by a **Rajyapal** (provincial governor), who was usually a member of the royal family. The 5 Rajyas were -

- **Uttarapatha**, with its capital at Taxila.
- **Dakshinapatha**, with its capital at Suvarnagiri (Karnataka).
- **Prachyapatha**, with its capital at Tosali (Odisha).
- **Paschimapatha**, with its capital at Ujjaini (MP).
- **Madhyapranta**, with its capital at Pataliputra (Bihar).

During the reign of Bindusara, Ashoka was the governor of Ujjaini and was sent to Taxila, to suppress a rebellion.

The Rajyapal was assisted by **top officials called Mahamatyas/Mahamatras**.

The Rajya was further divided into -

- **Pradesh** - headed by 'Pradeshika' assisted by 'Rajjuka' (incharge of rural justice) and 'Yukta' (assistant of Rajjuka)
- **Vishaya**
- **Sthaniya**
- **Draunamukha**
- **Kharvantika**
- **Sangarahan**
- **Grama** - headed by 'Gopa' (village headman)

MAURYAN ART & ARCHITECTURE

1. Palace / Royal Art -

a) City and palace at Pataliputra

b) Stupas

According to Buddhist tradition, Ashoka constructed 84,000 stupas. The most prominent and recognisable of all is the **Sanchi Stupa (MP)**, the largest ancient stupa in the world .

A stupa is a **hemispherical building** constructed over the **relics of holy Buddhist personalities**, including the Buddha.

- The upper portion is called the '**Harmika**' (abode of the gods) considered to be the holiest part of the Stupa.
- The Harmika is generally surmounted by a '**Chhatrayasti**'.
- The '**Anda**' (dome) is made up of constructive layers of stone and Buddhist scrolls, symbolising the shape of the universe.
- The Anda was built atop the '**Medhi**', a raised platform.
- '**Pradakshinapatha**' (circumambulatory passage) was built around the Anda so that devotees may walk around it.
- The '**Vedika**' (outer wall) symbolised the separation of the spiritual and material worlds.
- The **Toranas** (gateways) in the 4 cardinal directions.
 - They were **sculpted** with intricate figures inspired by Jataka tales.

- **Dwarpals** (gatekeepers) and **Shalbhanjikas** (tree spirits) were also used for ornamentation.

c) Ashokan Pillars

- These were made of **sandstone**, obtained from **Chunar** (near Varanasi).
- They were **monolithic**, measuring 50-55 feet in height and weighing over 50 tonnes.
- The shape is **round** with a broad base which **tapers upwards**.
- They have a **brilliant shine**, indicating that Mayuran craftsmen had mastered the art of grinding and polishing.
- The shaft was mounted with a **capital figure**, consisting of an animal capital, such as lions, bulls, elephants, etc.
 - The most famous of these is the Sarnath capital consisting of 4 crouching roaring lions facing different directions.
- Below the animal figure was a **disc-shaped abacus** on which several animals and symbols are depicted, such as the **lion, bull, horse, elephant and chakra**, each having special significance within Buddhism.
- Below the abacus was the **inverted bell or lotus motif**.

d) Rock-cut caves

- **Ashoka and his grandson, Dashratha** excavated some rock-cut caves in the **Nagarjuni and Barabar hills** (Bihar), for **Ajivika monks**.
- The most famous is the **Lomas Rishi cave** built by Dashrath.
 - It is beautifully - carved gateway in the form of a wooden hut is its most recognisable feature.
- Important caves excavated by **Ashoka** include
 - Karan Chapar cave
 - Sudama cave
 - Vishwa Jhopdi cave

2. Folk Art -

a) Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) pottery - It was made of clay with intricate geometrical designs painted on a black background . After this, the entire surface was covered with a natural resin and fried, leaving a highly lustrous glaze.

b) Terracotta figures- These usually depicted **humans, animals and mythological figures**.

- They reflected **local customs and beliefs** through the depiction of **Yakshas and Yakshinis** (semi-divine entities).
- The most famous is the **Didarganj Yakshini** (Bihar), who is shown with a fan in one hand with the other hand having been destroyed.
 - Her face has pleasing and soft features.
 - She is heavily ornamented and half-clad.
 - Most art historians consider this work to be a reflection of ancient standards of Indian beauty.

QUESTION 1

Q. The concept of Anuvrata was advocated by (1995)

- (a) Mahayana Buddhism
- (b) Hinayana Buddhism
- (c) Jainism
- (d) the Lokayukta school

QUESTION 2

Q. Assertion (A) : The emphasis of Jainism on non- violence (ahimsa) prevented agriculturalists from embracing Jainism.

Reason (R) : Cultivation involved killing of insects and pests

Select the correct answer using the code given below: (2000)

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

QUESTION 3

Q. With reference to the religious practices in India, the “Sthanakvasi” sect belongs to (2018)

- (a) Buddhism
- (b) Jainism
- (c) Vaishnavism
- (d) Shaivism

QUESTION 4

Q. With reference to ancient Jainism, Which one of the following statements is correct?

(2004)

- (a) Jainism was spread in South India under the leadership of Sthulubahu
- (b) The Jainas who remained under the leadership of Bhadrabahu were called Shvetambars after the Council held at Pataliputra
- (c) Jainism enjoyed the patronage of the Kalinga king Kharavela in the first century BC
- (d) In the initial stage of Jainism, the Jainas worshipped images unlike Buddhists

QUESTION 5

Q. Which of the following statements is/are applicable to Jain doctrine? (2013)

1. The surest way of annihilating Karma is to practice penance
2. Every object, even the smallest particle has a soul
3. Karma is the bane of the soul and must be ended

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

QUESTION 6

Q. The Jain philosophy holds that the world is created and maintained by (2011)

- (a) Universal Law
- (b) Universal Truth
- (c) Universal Faith
- (d) Universal Soul

QUESTION 7

Q. Which of the following kingdoms were associated with the life of the Buddha? (2014, 2015)

1. Avanti
2. Gandhara
3. Kosala
4. Magadha

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 3 and 4
- (d) 3 and 4 only

QUESTION 8

Q. Which one of the following describes best the concept of Nirvana in Buddhism? (2013)

- (a) The extinction of the flame of desire
- (b) The complete annihilation of self
- (c) A state of bliss and rest
- (d) A mental stage beyond all comprehension

QUESTION 9

Q. The concept of Eight-fold path forms the theme of (1998)

- (a) Dipavamsa
- (b) Divyavadana
- (c) Mahaparinibban Sutta
- (d) Dharma Chakra Pravartana Sutta

QUESTION 10

- Q. Who among the following presided over the Buddhist council held during the reign of Kanishka at Kashmir? (2001)
- (a) Parsva
 - (b) Nagarjuna
 - (c) Sudraka
 - (d) Vasumitra

QUESTION 11

Q. With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements: (2016)

- 1. The concept of Bodhisattva is central to Hinayana sect of Buddhism
- 2. Bodhisattva is a compassionate one on his way to enlightenment
- 3. Bodhisattva delays achieving his own salvation to help all sentient beings on their path to it

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

QUESTION 12

Q. In Mahayana Buddhism, the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara was also known as (1997)

- (a) Vajrapani
- (b) Manjusri
- (c) Padmapani
- (d) Maitreya

QUESTION 13

Q. Lord Buddha's image is sometimes shown with the hand gesture called 'Bhumisparsha Mudra'. It symbolizes (2012)

- (a) Buddha's calling of the earth to watch over Mara and to prevent Mara from disturbing his meditation
- (b) Buddha's calling of the earth to witness his purity and chastity despite the temptations of Mara
- (c) Buddha's reminder to his followers that they all arise from the Earth and finally dissolve into the earth, and thus this life is transitory
- (d) Both the statements (a) and (b) are correct in this context

QUESTION 14

- Q. Some Buddhist rock-cut caves are called Chaityas, while the others are called Viharas, what is the difference between the two? (2013)
- (a) Vihara is a place of worship, while chaitya is the dwelling place of the monks
 - (b) Chaitya is a place of worship, while Vihara is the dwelling place of the monks
 - (c) Chaitya is the stupa at the far end of the cave, while Vihara is the hall axial to it
 - (d) There is no material difference between the two

QUESTION 15

Q. Which of the following were common to both Buddhism and Jainism? (1996)

- 1. Avoidance of extremities of penance and enjoyment
- 2. Indifference to the authority of the Vedas
- 3. Denial of efficacy of rituals
- 4. Non-injury to animal life

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- (b) 2, 3 and 4
- (c) 1, 3 and 4
- (d) 1 and 2

QUESTION 16

Q. With reference to the history of ancient India, which of the following was/were common to both Buddhism and Jainism? (2012)

- 1. Avoidance of extremities of penance and enjoyment
- 2. Indifference to the authority of the Vedas
- 3. Denial of efficacy of rituals

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

QUESTION 17

Q. Which one of the following dynasties was ruling over North India at the time of Alexander's invasion? (2000)

- (a) Nanda
- (b) Maurya
- (c) Sunga
- (d) Kanva

QUESTION 18

Q. The name by which Ashoka is generally referred to in his inscriptions is (1995)

- (a) Chakravarti
- (b) Dharmadeva
- (c) Dharmakirti
- (d) Piyadassi

QUESTION 19

Q. Which one of the following statements regarding Ashokan stone pillars is incorrect? (1997)

- (a) These are highly polished
- (b) These are monolithic
- (c) The shaft of pillars is tapering in shape
- (d) These are part of architectural structures

QUESTION 20

Q. Which one of the following edicts mentions the personal name of Asoka? (1997)

- (a) Kalsi
- (b) Rummindai
- (c) Special Kalinga edict
- (d) Maski

QUESTION 21

Q. Assertion (A): Ashoka annexed Kalinga to the Mauryan Empire

Reason (R): Kalinga controlled land and sea routes to South India

Select the correct answer using the code given below: (2000)

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

Practice Questions

Q1. The period between 6th to 5th century BCE witnessed the emergence of new sects and religions in the Indo Gangetic plains in India. In this context, which of the following are the correct reasons behind the emergence of Jainism and Buddhism in this period?

1. Disenchantment with the caste-ridden Brahmanical religion.
2. Complex & Expensive Brahmanical rituals.
3. Development of Agriculture in Eastern India.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q2. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Jainism was founded by Lord Mahavira.
- 2. Vardhaman Mahavira introduced the Panch-Mahavratas of Jainism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q3. Consider the following statements in context of sub-sects under Jainism:

- 1. Monks of Digambaras sect wore no clothes.
- 2. Sthulbhadra was a great exponent of the Digambara sect.
- 3. Monks of Svetambara school of Jainism wear simple white clothing.
- 4. Bhadrabahu was an exponent of the Shvetambara sect.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- (d) None of the above

Q4. In ancient Indian Buddhist monasteries, a ceremony called Pavarana used to be held. It was the:

- (a) Occasion to elect the Sanghparinayaka and two speakers one on Dhamma and the other on Vinaya
- (b) Confession by monks of their offences committed during their stay in the monasteries during the rainy season.
- (c) Ceremony of initiation of new person into the Buddhist Sangha in which the head is shaved and when yellow robes are offered
- (d) Gathering of Buddhist monks on the next day to the full-moon day of Ashadha when they take up a fixed abode for the next four months of the rainy season.

Q5. In the context of Buddhist Literature, identify the pair/s which are not correctly matched?

Literary Work Main

Contents

- 1. Sutta Pitaka
- 2. Abhidhamma Pitaka

A collection of Buddha's sermons

Rules of discipline in Buddhist Monasteries.

3. Vinay Pitaka

Philosophical explanations of Buddhist principles.

Q6. In context of history of Buddhism in India match the following pairs correctly:

Personality

Related Pairs

A. Nagasena

1. Spiritual Guru of Ashoka who helped him to convert to Buddhism.

B. Vasubandhu

2. Chairman of the fourth Buddhist Council.

C. Vasumitra

3. He answered questions related to Buddhism asked by Indo-Greek King Milinda.

D. Upagupta

4. Proponent of Mahayana Buddhism from Gandhara.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

A-B-C-D

- (a) 3 4 2 1
- (b) 1 2 3 4
- (c) 3 2 4 1
- (d) 1 4 2 3

Q7. Consider the following statements in context of Mahajanapadas:

- 1. The government became centralized in all Mahajanapadas and the king became sovereign.
- 2. Concept of 'divinity of King' and priestly rituals became important in many Mahajanapadas.
- 3. Elements of tribal organization in the governance structure completely vanished which were present during Vedic Age.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Only 3
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q8. Consider the following statements in context of Mahajanapadas (c. 600 – 300 BCE):

- 1. Buddhist text – Anguttara Nikaya acts as an important source of information on Mahajanapadas.
- 2. According to Buddhist texts, Indian subcontinent was divided into 16 Mahajanapadas.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q9. In context of ancient Indian History (c. 300 BCE – 600 BCE), the term Suvarnabhumi referred to:

- (a) Magadha
- (b) Kalinga
- (c) Kabul
- (d) South East Asia

Q10. In context of Pre-Mauryan Dynasties ruling Magadha, consider the following Statements:

- 1. Ajatshatru was the founder of the Haryanka Dynasty.
- 2. Ajatshatru foundd the new capital of Magadha at Patliputra.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q11. With reference to ancient history of India, Saptanga Theory relates to:

- (a) Seven elements of nature
- (b) Seven elements of state
- (c) Seven types of Yajnas
- (d) Political relations between seven main Mahajanapadas.

Q12. With reference to Mauryan Administration, match the following pairs:

List (I)	List (II)
Office	Function
A. Yuvraj	1. Chief Revenue Collector
B. Purohita	2. Crown Prince
C. Sannidata	3. Chief Priest
D. Samaharta	4. Chief Treasurer

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A-B-C-D
- (a) 2 3 1 4
 - (b) 2 3 4 1
 - (c) 2 1 3 4
 - (d) 1 3 4 1

13. Consider the following statements in context of Arthashastra:

- 1. It was written by Kautilya.
- 2. Economy & revenue management is its central theme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Post - Mauryan History (2nd C. BCE - 3rd C. CE)

SUNGA DYNASTY

1. Pushyamitra Sunga -

- He was the Commander-in-Chief of the Mauryan empire, who - **assassinated Brihadratha**, the last Mauryan emperor, and usurped the throne.
 - His empire had Magadha as its political centre, and **extended south up to Narmada**, including cities such as Pataliputra, Ayodhya and Vidisha.
- He also **defeated the Bactrian king Demetrius**.
- Unlike the Mauryan, the **Sungas were staunch followers of Brahmanism**.
 - Contemporary sources mention that he performed **2 Ashwamedha Yajnas**.
- Patanjali wrote his '**Mahabhashya**' during his reign.
 - It is a commentary on the 'Ashtadhyayi' of Panini, India's earliest Sanskrit grammar work.
- Although Buddhist sources show him to be a persecutor of Buddhism, he **renovated and enlarged the Bharhut and Sanchi stupas**.

2. Agnimitra -

- He is the protagonist of Kalidasa's famous play, '**Malavikagnimitram**'.

3. Bhagabhadra -

- He was the 5th Sunga king.
- During his reign, the Greek ambassador, **Heliodorus** visited India and erected the **Besnagar Pillar** with an inscription devoted to 'Devadeva' (Vasudeva).
 - It is in Sanskrit in the Brahmi script.

KANVA DYNASTY

- Its founder was **Vasudeva** who assassinated Devabhuti, the last Sunga ruler.
- The **short-lived** dynasty was swept away by the Satavahanas of the Deccan.

CHETTIS OF KALINGA

- The Chetti's were followers and **patrons of Jainism**.
- The **Hathigumpa inscription of Kharvela** informs us about Chettis.
- Kharavela pushed his kingdom **beyond the Godavari** in the south. He has boasted of **bringing back Jaina idols from Magadha**.

INFLUX & IMPACT OF FOREIGN RULERS

1. Indo-Greeks / Bactrians -

- They were **descendants of Greeks** who had come with Alexander, settled in Afghanistan and mingled with Indians.
- From the 2nd century BCE onwards, they established a strong kingdom in Bactria.
- They occupied a large part of NW India and had **Taxila** as their capital.
 - **Demetrius** - first known king

- **Menander** (Milinda) - most important king, mentioned in 'Milindapanho'.
- The Bactrians made significant contributions to the development of **astronomy** in India.
 - The **names of known planets** and heavenly bodies were used for naming the **days of the week**.
- They were **pioneers of gold coinage** in India.
 - They also introduced the tradition of engraving **images, dates & names of rulers** on coins.
 - **Images of gods** have been found on their coins, indicating that they followed **Indian faiths** such as Jainism, Buddhism and Vaishnavism.
- They introduced the '**Yavanika**' (curtain in theatres).
- They helped in the development of the **Gandhara school of sculptural art**.

Gandhara school of art - (2nd century BCE - 2nd century CE)

- It is a form of **Hellenistic** art.
- Under this school, many sculptures of **humans, animals and supernatural beings** were made, the most important being the **Buddha**.
- The sculptures were made both **independently** and as **structural** parts of monuments, rock faces and cliffs.
- The materials used were **mud, schist and stucco**.
- This school flourished in the **NW part of the subcontinent** and its important centres included Kandahar, Kabul, Herat, Hadda, Bamiyan, Badakhshan, Bagram, Taxila, etc.
- It was also patronised by the **Sakas and Kushanas**.

Aspects of the Buddha

- The Buddha is depicted both as **standing and seated**.
- The sculptures are **devoid of facial expression** and emotion.
- He has been depicted with **strong musculature** having **wavy hair and sharp features**, in the traditional Greek manner of depicting gods.
 - He most closely resembles Apollo.
- He is shown with certain supernatural features such as **large earlobes, long arms and a protuberance** on the forehead.
- He is also shown with a **Halo** behind his head.
- In keeping with the Greek tradition, he is shown as wearing **long flowing robes** in **several stages of undress**.
- An element of eroticism is visible.

Bodhisattvas

- Under Mahayana, the concept of Bodhisattvas was conflated with the Jataka tales. These Bodhisattvas began appearing as protective deities around the Buddha's image -
- **Avlokiteshvara/ Padampani/ Lokeshvara**

- He embodies Buddha's **compassion**, and is depicted as holding a lotus flower.
 - It is **also depicted as female**.
 - Cave 17 of the Ajanta cave complex has an entire fresco dedicated to Padampani.
- **Manjari**
 - It embodies Buddha's **wisdom** and is depicted with a flaming sword in his hand.
- **Vajrapani**
 - It embodies Buddha's **power** and is depicted with a Vajra (lightning bolt) in the hand.
- **Samantabhadra**
 - It means 'universal worthy' and embodies Buddha's **Karma**.
 - It is associated with **meditation**.
- **Ksitigarbha**
 - Depicted as a **staff-carrying monk**
 - He is regarded as the **protector of children**
- **Akasagarbha**
 - He is the **twin brother of Ksitigarbha** and also embodies the Buddha's **wisdom**
- **Maitreya Buddha**
 - He is the **successor of Buddha**, and is regarded as the **future Buddha**.
 - He is depicted as holding a **finial**.
 - In Chinese Buddhist tradition the **Laughing Buddha** is said to be his incarnation.
- **Sadaparibuddha**
 - It manifests Buddha's **never-disparaging spirit**

2. Sakas / Scythians -

- They were a **tribal group from Central Asia**, who arrived in India in the 1st century BCE, settling over large parts of N and W India.
- Their rule extended from Punjab to Maharashtra.
- Their capitals were **Ujjain** (MP) and **Pratishthan/ Paithan** (Maharashtra).
- They patronised Gandhara and Mathura schools.

Important Kings

- **Nahapana** - earliest known king.
- **Rudradaman** - He ruled from Ujjain in the early 2nd century CE -
 - He ruled over a vast area, comprising Gujarat, Sindh, Saurashtra, Malwa, parts of Rajasthan, and north Konkan.
 - **Junagarh rock inscription**

- The first Indian inscription in chaste Sanskrit (Brahmi script), has been attributed to him.
- It informs us about the **repairs** carried out by him on a dam on the **Sudarshan** lake, built by Vishnugupta the provincial governor of Chandragupta Maurya
- ‘**Vikramaditya**’ - It was the title adopted by a Saka king of Ujjain who introduced a new calendar called ‘**Vikram Samvat**’ in [58 BCE]. It is the oldest calendar still in use in India.

3. Pahlavas/ Parthians -

They came to India from **Persia** in the 1st century CE, and established rule in the NW part of India.

- The Most important king was **Gondophernes**, whose famous inscription has been found from the ‘**Takht-i- Bahi**’ Buddhist Complex, Taxila.
 - It gives us information about his rule and foreign contacts.
- According to some Christian traditions, the first Christian Missionary, **St. Thomas**, came to his court in 52 CE.
- Soon after Gondophernes, Pahalwa rule in India ended.

4. Kushanas/ Yueh-chi tribe -

They came from **Central Asia** in the 1st century CE. They established a huge empire including-

- Afghanistan
- UP
- Kashmir
- Punjab
- China- Khotan and Kashgar

Among all foreign ruling groups, **their empire was the largest and most prosperous**, based on their status as the **masters of the silk road**.

They had 2 headquarters

- **Purushpur/ Charsadda (Peshawar)**
- **Mathura**

Important Kings

- **Kujula Kadphises** - He established his authority over Afghanistan, and called himself ‘great king’.
- **Wima Kadphises** - He extended his territory upto Punjab, issued gold and copper coins, and was a devotee of Shiva.
- **Kanishka**
 - He was their greatest and most famous king.
 - His court was adorned by some great scholars, such as-

- **Charak**

- He was his court physician, who authored the '**Charak Samhita**', the first Indian scientific book on medicine , often called the encyclopaedia of Indian medicine.
- It contains detailed descriptions of diseases, their symptoms, causes and remedies.

- **Vasumitra**

- He was a Buddhist scholar and the **co-president of the 4th Buddhist Council**.

- **Asvaghosha**

- He was also a Buddhist scholar and **co-president of the 4th Buddhist Council**.

- His famous works include

- '**Buddhacharita**' (Sanskrit)
- '**Sariputraparikarna**', the earliest known sanskrit drama

- Kanishka introduced the '**Saka Samvat**' in [78CE], probably after defeating a Saka king.
 - It is a solar calendar which is 365/ 366 days in length, having 12 Months of 30/31 days.
 - It was adopted as the National Calendar of India in 1957 through an Act of Parliament.

They also introduced -

- The **hat, leather shoes, over coat and trousers** to India, indicating their origin from a cold place.
- **Saddle and stirrup**, which revolutionised Indian cavalry.
- They issued the **purest gold coins** in ancient India.
 - They also issued the largest number of copper coins.
- They patronised the **Gandhara and Mathura** schools.
- The Kushans introduced the **Devakula tradition** in India, also known as Henotheism/ Kathenotheism. E.g., Shiva was imagined with his family for the first time.
 - Along with this, the practice of families keeping particular gods as '**Ishta Devata**' or primary deity also emerged.

Mathura School of Art - (1st - 3rd century CE)

- It developed in the Mathura region, with important centres at **Mathura and Kankalitila**.
- Its subjects and themes are varied, including sculptures of **Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Tirthankaras** (Parsvnath and Mahavir) **Vaishnavite** gods (Surya, Kuber, etc), and images of **Shiva**.
- It was **indigenously** developed.

- The sculptures have **highly emotive** faces.
- The **lives of common people** and **local flora and fauna** have been prominently depicted, especially at Kankalitala.
- The materials used were **mud and sandstone**.
- The Buddha is often shown as having an **emaciated body**.
- He has a tonsured head with a **single lock/ braid at the back**.
- He is shown wearing **Indian garb**, such as the dhoti.
- As opposed to Gandhara eroticism, Mathura sculptures are considered more **graceful and genteel**.
- Most scholars believe that the **earliest sculptures of Buddha** were made under this school.

SATAVAHANAS/ ANDHRAS (Ist- 3rd century CE)

- They ruled over parts of **South Central India** (parts of MP , Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh) from their capital at **Pratishtan/ Paithan** (Maharashtra).
- They had emerged after the fall of the Mauryan empire
- Their rulers claimed **Brahmin status** to legitimise their rule.

Important Kings

- **Simuka** – founder of the dynasty.
- **Satakarni I**
 - His achievements are described in the **Naneghat inscription**, and he is referred to as the Lord of Dakshinapatha.
 - **His name is also mentioned on one of the gateways of the Sanchi stupa** due to donations made for its renovation and expansion.
- **Gautamiputra Satkarni**
 - His achievements are recorded in the **Nasik inscription of Queen Mother, Gautami Balasri**, where he has been described as the one who destroyed Sakas, Yavanas, and Pahlavas.
 - He was the **first ruler to bear a matronym**, and this tradition was followed by nearly all his successors.
- **Vasistha Putra Sri Pulumavi**
 - His **coins and inscriptions are found in Andhra Pradesh**, showing that he annexed it to the empire.
 - He **married the daughter of Rudradaman** (Saka ruler) to prevent Saka invasions.
 - Despite this, Rudradaman defeated the next Satavahana ruler twice, as mentioned in the Junagarh inscription.
- **Sri Yajna Satakarni**
 - His inscriptions have been found from Andhra Pradesh, MP and Maharashtra, and he is said to have **regained the territory conquered by Sakas**.
 - His **coins depict a ship with a fish and conch**, indicating maritime trade.

Other Important Details

- The official Satavahana language was **Prakrit**.
- The tradition of using **matronyms** indicates the strong status of women in the society.
- The practice of making **land grants emerged** for the first time during this period.
 - They were made by the State to both **Buddhist and Brahmin priests**.
 - Such grants were recorded on **stone and copper plate inscriptions**.
 - Many inscriptions are attributed to **traders and bankers**.
 - Many are also attributed to **women** indicating that not only did they own property but also participated in trade and commerce.

- The Satavahanas were the **first to issue lead coins** in India, by importing large quantities of lead from West Asia.
- They patronised the Amravati school.
-

Amravati school of art - (1st - 3rd century CE)

- It flourished under the Satavahanas in the Andhra Pradesh region including important centres such as **Amravati, Guntur, Goli and Ghantasala**.
- Its important features included -
 - **Relief sculptures** - They were made on walls, pillars, gates, railings etc of monuments such as stupas chaityas and viharas.
 - The materials used were **marble, sandstone and mud**.
 - Most of them were inspired by the **Jataka tales**, and also **local legends**.
 - The **main subject is the Buddha**, often shown as the hero.
 - The sculptures are **narrative** in style.
 - They are **highly expressive**.
 - They also depict **common life and local flora and fauna**.

SANGAM AGE (1st-3rd centuries CE)

- The word 'Sangam' literally means 'confluence'.
- In the context of Tamil history, it refers to an 'assembly of poets'.
- According to **Tamil legend**, 3 Sangams were held at Madurai, Kapathpuram and again at Madurai over 9,990 years, patronised by 197 Pandyan kings in which 6598 poets participated.
 - Historically, this legend seems inaccurate.
 - Most historians believe that Sangam literature was probably **compiled between the 6th-7th centuries CE by an assembly of poets at Madurai**.
- This literature depicts the **political, economic, social and cultural life** of the Tamil region during the Sangam age.
- The Tamil region has been referred to as '**Tamilham/ Tamilkam**' (Tamil country).

Sangam Literature mentions 3 prominent kingdoms -

- **Cheras/ Kerala Putras**
 - They were situated in the **Kerala** region, with their capital at **Vanji**.
- **Cholas**
 - They covered **northern Tamil Nadu**, occupying the Kaveri delta and adjoining regions, to the north of Pandyas.
 - Their capital was earlier at **Uraiyur** (Tiruchirapalli), but later was shifted to **Puhar**.
- **Pandyas**

- They covered **southern Tamil Nadu**, with **Madurai** as their capital.
- These kingdoms **constantly fought** against each other for supremacy.

Sangam Literature

Prominent Sangam literary works include

'Tolkappiyam'

- Written by **Tolkappiyar**.
- It is the oldest of all sangam literature, and is the **first work on Tamil grammar**.
- It throws light on the political, economic, cultural and religious life of Tamil people during the Sangam age.

'Padinekelkanku'

- It is a collection of **18 anthologies** (compilations of poems), written by various poets.
- It is divided into
 - **'Padittapattu'** - 10 anthologies
 - **'Ettuthogai'** - 8 anthologies
- The most important among these is the '**Thirukkural**', written by Thiruvalluvar
 - It is a work on **ethics and morals** and is often referred to as the Fifth Veda/Bible of the Tamil land.
- **Tamil poetry** can be divided into 2 genres –
 - **Akam** - It revolves around the themes of love, loneliness and longing. It is usually set in forests, reflecting the feminine sensibilities of Tamil poetry.
 - **Puram** - It revolves around heroism usually set in cities and covering the masculine themes of war, death and sacrifice.

'Silappadikaram'

- It is an **epic**, written by **Ilango Adigal**.
- It has 3 protagonists
 - Kovalan - a Merchant of Puhar
 - Kannagi - Kovalan's wife
 - Madhavi - famous courtesan of Madurai, and paramour of Kovalan
- This epic established the **cult of Kannagi** as the goddess of chastity in south India.

'Manimekalai'

- Written by **Shattanar**, it is also an **epic**.
- It continues the tale of Manimekalai, the **daughter of Kovalan and Madhavi**.
- It is a valuable source of information about the economic life, urban culture and flourishing state of Buddhism during the Sangam Age.

Sangam Society

Horizontal/ Regional Division

- In the beginning, the society was horizontally divided.
- There was a **fivefold regional division**—
 - Kurinji (hilly tracts),
 - Mullai (pastoral),
 - Marudam (agricultural),
 - Neydal (coastal) and
 - Palai (desert).
- However, these divisions were **not clearly demarcated**, and were scattered all around the region.
- The people living in these five divisions had **different occupations and kept different gods**.

Varna Based Division

- Gradually, the Sangam society became **extremely hierarchical with the advent of Aryan culture** and the Varna System.
- However, in place of the four-fold varna division in North India, the Sangam society was segregated into **two varnas — Brahmins and Non-Brahmins**.
- **Brahmins enjoyed the supreme position** in the society:
 - Tamil kings claimed Brahmin status.
 - They also held important government offices.
 - The priestly class among them was rewarded heavily by the kings and the society at large, with elaborate gifts.
 - Their importance increased with the growing popularity of large-scale vedic rituals and yajnas.
 - They controlled education and religious institutions.
 - Unlike north India, there was no taboo against the consumption of alcohol or meat.

Occupational Division

- The sangam society was **also divided on the basis of occupation**, such as artisans, salt merchants, textile merchants, etc.
- The society had a **complex class structure** as well.
 - The rich lived in well decorated brick houses and wore costly clothing, but the poor lived in mud huts and had scanty clothes to wear.
- The concepts of **purity and pollution** were also visible. The occupations were categorised as:
 - **Right Hand Occupations:** Non-Polluting
 - **Left-Hand Occupations:** Polluting

Tolkappiyam's Four Castes

- Tolkappiyam refers to **four castes**, namely,
 - **Arasar** - the ruling class
 - **Anthanar** - the priestly class
 - **Vanigar** - the trading class
 - **Vellalar** - the agriculturists

Status of Women

Overall, the position of women was **better than their North-Indian counterparts**.

- **Women poets** like Avvaiyar, Nachchellaiyar, and Kakkaipadiniyar contributed to Tamil literature in the Sangam period, which shows that women were educated.
- They were also engaged in **various economic activities** such as paddy plantation, cattle rearing, basket-making, spinning, etc.
- **Love marriage was common** and women were allowed to choose their life partners.
- The **courage of women was also appreciated** in many poems.
- A **class of women dancers** was patronised by the kings and nobles.

However, **elements of decline** had started becoming visible.

- ‘**Karpu**’ or chaste life was considered as the highest virtue of women.
- The practice of ‘**Sati**’ called ‘**Tippayadal**’ was prevalent in the society.
- However, the **position of widows was miserable** as they were prohibited to decorate themselves or participate in any form of amusement.

1. Sources

a) Literary -

- i) 'Periplus of the Erythraean sea' - written by an unknown Greek writer
- ii) 'Historia Naturalis' - written by Pliny the Elder.
- iii) 'Geographia' - written by Strabo
- iv) Buddhist literature, such as 'Mahavastu' and 'Ashokavadana'
- v) Sangam literature

b) Archaeological -

- i) Roman coins discovered from TN, Kerala and Arikamedu (Pondicherry)
- ii) These places have also yielded some Roman settlements and temples.
- iii) Aurentineware (Roman glassware)

2. Trade routes -

- Indo-Roman trade was **initially** carried out over the **land route** via Taxila to the Trans-Oxiana region, and then to Rome and Egypt.
- **Later**, from the 1st century CE the **sea route** was preferred due to the discovery of Monsoon winds. It comprised the Arabian sea, Red sea and the Mediterranean sea.

3. Important ports -

- Sopara (Maharashtra)
- Barygaza (Gujarat) - Greek name for Bhrigukachchha/ Bharuch
- Barbaricum (Sindh) - at the mouth of the Indus
- Muziris (Kerala)
- Puhar (TN)
- Tamralipti (WB)

India also traded with:

- Suvarnabhumi (Thailand & Malaysia)
- Suvarnadwipa (Indonesia)

4. Items of export -

- Spices, especially **Yavanpriya** (black pepper), were exported in large quantities.
- **Cotton and silk** were also exported in large quantities (Raw silk was imported from China, processed, dyed, and then exported westward).
- **Sandalwood and perfume** were in high demand in Rome.
- **Gems, jewellery and ivory works**, especially from Vidisha, were also exported in large quantities.

5. Items of import-

- Romans did not have anything substantial to export to India.
- Thus, they balanced their trade with **gold and silver coins**.
- Other than this, **Roman wine** was exported to India, but mostly for consumption by the Indian elite.
 - Thus, the volume of wine trade was very low.

QUESTION 1

- Q. The Indo-Greek kingdom set up in north Afghanistan in the beginning of the second century B.C. was: (1999)
- (a) Bactria
 - (b) Scythia
 - (c) Zedrasia
 - (d) Aria

QUESTION 2

- Q. Milindpanho is in the form of a dialogue between the king Menander and the Buddhist monk (1997)
- (a) Nagasena
 - (b) Nagarjuna
 - (c) Nagabhata
 - (d) Kumarilabhatta

QUESTION 3

- Q. The practice of military governorship was first introduced in India by the (2000)
- (a) Greeks
 - (b) Shakas
 - (c) Parthians
 - (d) Mughals

QUESTION 4

- Q. The term 'Yavanapriya' mentioned in ancient Sanskrit texts denoted (1995)
- (a) A fine variety of Indian muslin
 - (b) Ivory
 - (c) Damsels sent to the greek court for dance performance
 - (d) Pepper

QUESTION 5

- Q. With reference to the invaders in ancient India, which one of the following is the correct chronological order? (2006)
- (a) Greeks- Sakas- Kushans
 - (b) Greeks- Kushans- Sakas
 - (c) Sakas-Greeks-Kushans
 - (d) Sakas- Kushans- Greeks

QUESTION 6

Q. With reference to the guilds (Shreni) of ancient India that played a very important role in the country's economy, which of the following statements is/are correct? (2012)

1. Every guild was registered with the central authority of the state and the king was the chief administrative authority on them

2. The wages, rules of work, standards and prices were fixed by the guild

3. The guild had judicial power over its own members

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1,2 and 3

QUESTION 7

Q. Many of the Greeks, Kushans and Shamas embraced Buddhism rather than Hinduism because: (1998)

(a) Buddhism was in the ascendant at that time

(b) They had renounced the policy of war and violence

(c) Caste-ridden Hinduism did not attract them

(d) Buddhism provided easier access to Indian society

Practice Questions

Q1. With reference to the ancient history of India consider the following statements about Pushyamitra Sunga of Sunga Dynasty:

1. Pushyamitra Sunga acceded to the throne after assassinating Brihadratha – the last Mauryan ruler.

2. He performed two Asvamedha yajna.

3. His dominions extended included cities like Patliputra and Ayodhya.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2

(b) 2 and 3

(c) 1 and 3

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Q2. Consider the following statements:

1. Megasthenes was a Greek historian who was sent to the court of Chandragupta Maurya.

2. Greek Ambassador Heliodorus was sent to the court of Bhagabhadra by Indo-Greek King Antialcidas.

Which of these statements is/are INCORRECT?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q3. With reference to post Mauryan history of India, consider the following pairs:

Dynasty	Founder
1. Sunga	Pushyamitra
2. Kanava	Simuka
3. Satavahana	Vasudeva

Which of these pair/s is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1 only
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q4. The term 'Yavanika' mentioned in ancient Sanskrit texts denoted

- (a) A fine variety of Indian muslin
- (b) Pepper
- (c) Damsels sent to the greek court for dance performance
- (d) Curtains

Q5. With reference to post Mauryan History of India, which of the following can be attributed to the impact of Bactrian Greeks on India?

- 1. Introduction of military governorship.
- 2. Introduction of coins.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q6. Which of the following pairs is/are correctly matched?

1. Charak Samhita	– Treatise on Surgery
2. Sushruta Samhita	– Treatise on Medicine
3. Sariputra Prakarana	– Treatise on statecraft

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None

Q7. Consider the following statements in the context of post Mauryan Economy, during the period when several Central Asian dynasties ruled in different parts of the country:

1. Economy of this period was largely an agriculture based rural economy.
 2. Coins were minted on a large scale by Indo- Greeks, Kushanas, Shakas and Satvahanas.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q8. Who were the first rulers to introduce Gold Coins in India?

- (a) Guptas
- (b) Mauryas
- (c) Indo-Greeks
- (d) Nandas

Q9. With reference to Sangam Literature of South India, which of the following pairs is/ are INCORRECTLY matched?

Literary Work	Author
1. Silappadikaram	Tolkappiyar
2. Manimekalai	Shattanar
3. Thirukkural	Thiruvalluvar

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q10. With reference to South Indian History during Sangam Age, which of the following was referred to as Chola Lake?

- (a) Arabian Sea
- (b) Indian Ocean
- (c) Bay of Bengal
- (d) Andaman Sea