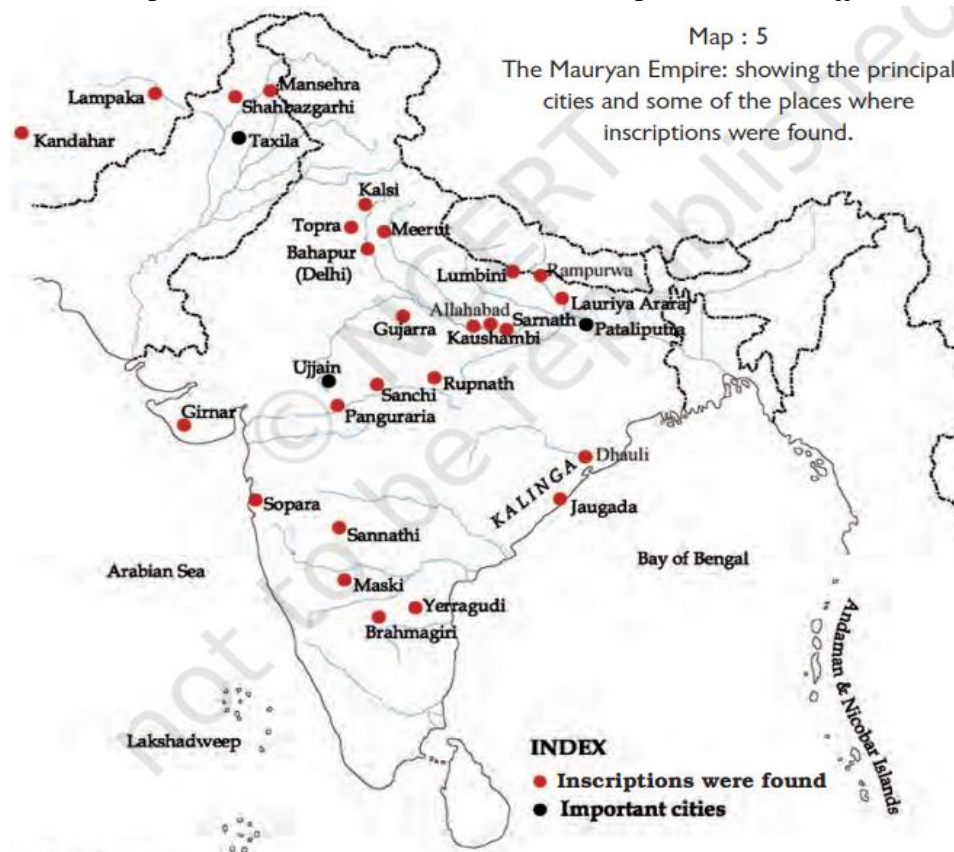


## Chapter – 7: From a Kingdom to an Empire

- Lions – notes and coins – long history – carved in stones – placed on top of pillars in Sarnath
- Ashoka – greatest ruler in history – instructed – make inscriptions on pillars and rocks
- Before finding out about inscriptions – let's find out why his kingdom was called an empire?
- Empire – Ashoka ruled over – founded by grandfather – Chandragupta Maurya – 2300 years ago
- Chandragupta – supported by wise man – Chanakya (Kautilya) – many of his ideas – written down in book – *Arthashastra*
- Several cities in empire – marked with black dots – Pataliputra, Taxila, Ujjain



- Taxila – gateway to northwest, including Central Asia
- Ujjain – on the route from north to south India
- Merchants, officials, craftspersons – probably lived in these cities
- Other area – villages – farmers and herders
- Some areas – Central India – forests – people gathered forest produce – hunted animals
- Different parts of the empire – different languages – different kinds of food – different kinds of clothes

### Dynasty

- Members of same family – rule one after another
- Family – called as dynasty
- Mauryas – dynasty – 3 imp. rulers – Chandragupta – son Bindusara – son Ashoka

### How are empires different from kingdoms?

- Emperors – need more resources – empires – much larger than kingdoms – need to be protected

- Need more officials – collect taxes

## **Ruling the Empire**

- Empire – so large – different parts – ruled differently
- Area around Pataliputra – ruled directly by emperor
- Officials – appointed to collect tax from – farmers, herders, craftspersons, traders – also punished those – who disobeyed rules
- Many officials – received salaries
- Messengers – sent to and fro – spies – kept watch on officials – emperor – supervised all – help of royal family and senior ministers
- Other provinces (states) – ruled from provincial capital – Taxila or Ujjain – some control from Pataliputra
- Royal princes – sent as governors
- Vast area – between these centres
- Mauryas – controlled – roads and rivers – imp. for transport – collect taxes there
- *Arthashastra* –
  - North-west – imp. for blankets
  - South India – gold and precious stones
- These resources – collected as tribute
- Also present – forested areas – people here – more independent – expected to provide to Mauryan officials – elephants, timber, honey, wax

## **Tribute**

- Taxes – collected regularly
- Tribute – collected whenever possible
- Given by people in various forms – less willingly

## **The emperor and the capital city**

- Megasthenes – ambassador (foreign official) – sent by Greek ruler of West Asia – Seleucus Nicator
- He came to court of Chandragupta – wrote his experience
  - Occasions – emperor appears in public – celebrated – grand processions
  - Carried in golden palanquin (carriages)
  - Guards – ride elephants – decorated with gold and silver
  - Some guards – carry trees – live birds – trained parrots
  - Kings – surrounded by armed women – he is afraid – someone may kill him
  - Special servants – taste the food before him – he never sleeps in same room for more than 2 days
- Also wrote about Pataliputra (current Patna)
  - Large and beautiful city – surrounded by massive wall
  - 570 towers – 64 gates
  - Houses – 2 or 3 storeys – made of wood and mud brick
  - King's palace – made of wood – decorated with stone carvings – surrounded by gardens and enclosures for birds

## Ashoka – a Unique Ruler

- Most famous Mauryan ruler – Ashoka
- First ruler – sent his message to people – through inscriptions
- Most inscriptions – written in Prakrit language and Brahmi script

## Ashoka's War in Kalinga

- Kalinga – ancient name of coastal Orissa
- Ashoka – fought a war – conquer Kalinga
- He was horrified – so much bloodshed – decided to stop wars permanently
- Only king in the history – gave up winnings after winning the war

## Ashoka's inscription describing the Kalinga war

- Ashoka declared –
  - After 8 years of being king – I conquered Kalinga
  - Around 1.5 lakh – captured – 1 lakh – died
  - This filled me with sorrow – independent land captured – lakhs of people die – many more captured – brahmins and monks also die
  - People – lose their loved ones
  - That's why – I am sad – decided to observe *dhamma* – teach others as well
  - I believe – winning through *dhamma* – much easier than fighting
  - I am inscribing this message – in future – my son and grandson – should not think about war – instead – spread *dhamma*
  - Dhamma (Prakrit) means Dharma (Sanskrit)

## What was Ashoka's dhamma?

- This *dhamma* – did not involve worship of god or performing sacrifice
- He believed – just as father teaches his child – he has to teach his pupils – also inspired by Buddha
- Number of problems – troubled him
- People in empire – followed different religions – led to conflict – animals were sacrificed – quarrels (fight) between neighbors and families – slaves and servants were ill treated
- Ashoka – believed – his duty – teach others – solve problems
- He appointed officials – *dhamma mahamatta* – travelled place to place – teach people about *dhamma*
- Ashoka – inscribed his message – instructed officials – read it out for those – who can't read it
- Ashoka – sent messengers – spread ideas about *dhamma* to different lands – Syria, Egypt, Greece
- Also sent – his son (Mahendra) and his daughter (Sanghmitra) – to Sri Lanka
- He built – roads, wells, houses – arranged for medical treatment – both humans and animals

## Ashoka's message to his subjects –

- People – perform various rituals – when ill, when marry, when travelling
- These rituals – not helpful – instead – observe other practices –
  - Being gentle with slaves and servants
  - Respect elders
  - Treat all creatures equally

- Give gifts to brahmins and monks
- Praising own religion and criticizing other's religion – both wrong
- Respect each other's religion
- Praising own religion while criticizing other's religion – doing more harm to own religion

