

**B.A., First Year
History, Paper - I**

**HISTORY OF INDIA FROM
EARLIEST TIME TO
1200 A.D.**



मध्यप्रदेश भोज (मुक्त) विश्वविद्यालय – भोपाल

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SYLLABUS-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

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INTRODUCTION

History is the root of all social sciences. It is one of the oldest subjects of study, desired to record important events for knowing and understanding the past. The wide range of physical structures of India makes the country a complete geographical study. A thorough knowledge of the geography of a country has a very important role to play in a complete study of its history, and India is no exception. The Stone Age is divided into three periods, namely, Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. As the name suggests, the technology in these periods was primarily based on stone. The first urbanization of the subcontinent was brought to light through the accidental discovery of the sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Although termed commonly as Indus Valley Civilization, it is also known through the names Harappan Culture, Harappan Civilization or Indus-Saraswati Civilization. The decline of Indus Valley Civilization was not the end, rather it saw the evolution of another glorious civilization which showed its moral light and wisdom to the world till today. The name of the new civilization was Vedic Civilization and its people are known as Aryans. The Buddhist literature Anguttara Nikaya gives a list of sixteen great kingdoms called ‘Sixteen Mahajanapadas’. They were Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asmaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kambhoja. The 6th century B.C. is one of the cardinal epochs in the history of Asia. The extraordinary mental and spiritual unrest among the human beings contributed to many religious revolts. It was because the age-old religious traditions, beliefs, rituals and class domination could not cope with the changing lifestyle of the time. After two centuries of the Persian invasion, Alexander from Macedonia invaded India. On the eve of his invasion, there were a number of small kingdoms in north-western India. The Gupta dynasty ruled over India for about 200 years. This dynasty freed India from foreign shackles of Kushanas and broke the Huns who were invincible throughout Asia and Europe. The decline of the Gupta Empire was followed by a period of political disorder and disunity in North India. It was only in the beginning of the 7th century A.D. that Harshvardhana succeeded in establishing a larger kingdom in north India.

The period of big empires began in south India by the Satavahanas. Their empire included most of the territories of South India and a part of North India though, of course, the Chera, the Chola and the Pandya kingdoms of the far south were, certainly, excluded from it. After them, the politics of south India passed in the hands of the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Pallavas and the Cholas who ruled there during the period 600-1200 A.D. The Arab invasion of Sindh marked the beginning of Muslim inroads into India. It was under Muhammad-bin-Qasim, the Arabs, made their successful attack on India in 712 A.D. Mahmud of Ghazni was the most prominent ruler of the Ghaznavid Empire from 997 A.D. to 1030 A.D. Appearance of Sultan Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghori on the political firmament of India heralded a new era, i.e., Muslim rule in India. It is true that he was the finest Muslim invaders of India who laid the foundation of the Muslim empire by creating a trained land of successors, who consolidated the Muslim rule after his assassination.

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CHAPTER 1 HISTORY – ITS CONCEPT, NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

History is the root of all social sciences. It is one of the oldest subjects of study, desired to record important events for knowing and understanding the past. It helps in conserving what event has happened in the past and then affected the progress of man in one way or the other. Therefore, history not only offers new ways of viewing and understanding the grip of the past but also a means of generating the confidence of critical knowledge and to produce a changing consciousness. **A systematic study of history was started during the 19th century; it does not mean that earlier to 19th century there were no historians to write history. But they had no critical approach.** A change, however, came in the later part of the 19th century in the era of history writing.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the concept, meaning, and definition of history.
- Describe the nature of history.
- Discuss the significance of the study of history.

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1.2 CONCEPT OF HISTORY

History is considered an indispensable subject in the complete education of man and it has been defined differently by different scholars. According to modern concept, history does not only contain the history of kings and queens, battles and generals, but also the communities and the societies are the subject of study of history as well. History is a unique subject possessing the potentialities of both science and art. As an inquiry after truth, history is a science and as a narrative account of the past, it is an art or a piece of literature. History is a study of man. It is concerned with man in time and space. It explains the present in the light of the past. Continuity and coherence are the necessary requisites of history. The scope of history is vast; it is the story of man in relation to totality of his behavior. It starts with the past; makes present its sheet-anchor and points to the future. It is the story of man in time, an inquiry into the past based on evidence. Indeed, evidence is the raw material of history teaching and learning. It is an inquiry into what happened in the past, when it happened, and how it happened. It is an inquiry into the inevitable changes in human affairs in the past and the ways these changes affect, influence or determine the patterns of life in the society. History is, or should be an attempt to re-think the past. History aims at helping students to understand the present existing social, political, religious and economic conditions of the people. Without the knowledge of history we cannot have the background of our religion, customs institutions, administration and so on. The teaching of history helps the students to explain the present, to analyze it and to trace its course. Cause-and-effect relationship between the past and the present is lively presented in the history. History, thus, helps us to understand the present-day problems both at the national and international level accurately and objectively.

1.2.1 Meaning of History

The origin of the word history is derived from the Greek word "***Historia***" which means **knowledge through inquiry, investigation, research, exploration, and information**. But what inquiry or investigation is it? It is the inquiry or investigation of the past. Is history equal to the past? No never. It is the record of valuable past. Then what is the difference between the past and valuable past? The past refers to a period of time what has happened before and the valuable past refers to the time and events which happened in past and left some valuable legacy for the present and future. Therefore, **E.H. Carr rightly viewed history as "a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past"**. This line signifies the positive correlation between past and present for analyzing historical events. We cannot make a watertight compartment between these two. The past is intelligible to us only in the light of the present and we can fully understand the present only in the light of the past. **The German equivalent of the word history is *Geschichte* which means an intelligent and intelligible narration of past events. History is, thus, a**

simple narrative account of past events. The Sanskrit word *Itihasa* refers to legend.

1.2.2 Definition of History

The word history is used quite often but it is a word which cannot be easily defined. Many historians viewed history differently. According to some historians, history is a systematic record of the past reflecting man's activities. While others define it is a biography of great men. More widely, history is a continuous process, an interaction between past and present, written or going to be written. History has been defined differently by different scholars. Right from the origin of the idea of history in ancient times to date, there are various definitions and conceptions expressed by philosophers but the implications are fundamentally not so different. Certain definitions are simple and others are complex. The definitions of history can be classified into five categories, i.e.,

- History as a record of past events.
- History makes men wise.
- History as a science.
- History is contemporary.
- History as an unending dialogue between the present and the past.

The Greeks were the first to define history and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, one of the earliest Greek writers who introduced the art of historical writing and author of *Persica* in five volumes which narrates the history of Persia, defined history as “Philosophy drawn from examples”.

- Lord Acton defined **history as a generalized account of the personal actions of men, united in bodies for any public purposes whatever.** According to Benedetto Croce, **“all history is contemporary history”**. History is concerned neither with the past by itself, not with the historian's thought about it by itself but with the two things in their mutual relations, asserted Collingwood. Thus, the philosophical explanations expounded by later historians were all a commentary on the definition given by Dionysius.
- The Oxford Talking Dictionary defines history as **“the continuous methodical record of important or public events especially those connected with a particular country, individual, etc. and the branch of knowledge that deals with past events, the formal record or study of past events especially human affairs”**.

History as a Record of Past Events

History is primarily concerned with past events. The past historical facts are given a new study in light of the present-day thought process. Hence, many philosophers of history defined it in terms of record or as a record of past events. These are as follows:

- **“History is the scientific analysis of past activities of human beings.”**

– Herodotus

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He considered history as the record of the results of inquiries into what men had done and achieved so that their memory has not perished from the world.

- “*History is essentially the record of the life of men in societies in their geographical and physical environment. Their social and cultural environment arises from the interaction of the one with the other, the society and its geographical conditions.*” – A.L. Rowse
- His definition underlines the inevitable interaction between societal development and geographical condition.
- “*History is concerned with all those human sayings, thoughts, deeds, and sufferings that occurred in the past and has left the present deposit and it deals with them from the point of view happening change and the particular.*” – G.R. Elton
- “*History, in its broadest sense, is everything that ever happened and it is the past-self, whatever that may be.*” – Henry Johnson

History Makes Men Wise

A group of philosophers supposed that historical facts and analysis provide knowledge to the human being. They considered that it is a storehouse of knowledge due to its coverage of many-sided activities of humankind since time immemorial, enhancing the learning experiences of each generation.

- “*History is a discipline that makes men wise.*” – Sir Francis Bacon
- His analysis reveals that history makes a man wise and enables him to strengthen his virtue. According to him, history is not a mere collection of facts, nor a catalogue or chronology of events, but a discipline that inculcates wisdom in its readers. Wisdom is not mental alertness but wrong, useful and useless, practical and impractical, eternal and ephemeral.
- “*History is nothing but the biography of great men.*” – Thomas Carlyle

He opined that history reads about great men like Asoka, Akbar, Mahatma Gandhi, Subash Chandra Bose and so on. He considered history as nothing but the life story of great men. He is, in fact, the originator of the Great Men Theory of History.

- “*History is the transmission of our mental, moral, technical and aesthetic heritage as fully as possible, to as many as possible, for the enlargement of man's understanding, control, embellishment and enjoyment of life.*” – Ariel and Will Durant
- According to the Dutch historian, G.J. Renier, *history is “the story of the experiences of men living in civilized societies”*. History is a story because like a story it is an admixture of theory and of preconceived notions. It is not a mere narrative which is like gold can be used only in the form of an alloy. A narrative is turned into a story when it contributes to the performance of its social function. In other words,

history must serve a social purpose. The historian must, therefore, understand the events he narrates and to explain their social significance.

- “*The end and the scope of history is to teach us by an example of times past such wisdom as may guide our desire and action.*”

– Sir Walter Raleigh

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History as a Science

Most of the philosophers considered history as a Science. According to J.B. Bury, “**History is a science no less and no more**”. History is a science in the sense that it pursues its own techniques to establish and interpret facts, like other natural sciences such as Physics and Chemistry, uses various methods of inquiry such as observation, classification, experiment, and formulation of hypothesis and analysis of the evidence before interpreting and reconstructing the past. History also follows the scientific method of inquiry to find out the truth.

- “*History is the record of the life of societies of man, of the changes which those societies have gone through of the ideas which have determined their development.*”

– Charles Firth

- “*History is essentially a science of reasoning since all historical knowledge is indirect. It is the historian who gives reasoning or interpretation to the historical facts on the basis of reasoning.*”

– Seignobos

- “*History is a science that investigates and presents in their context of psycho-physical causality the facts determined by space and time of the evolution of men in their individual as well as typical and collective activity as social beings.*”

– Ernst Bernheim

History is Contemporary

According to the most illustrious Italian historian Benedetto Croce (1866-1952 A.D.), “**all history is contemporary history**”. In his inimitable words, the practical requirements which underlie every historical judgment give to all history the character of contemporary history because however remote in time events thus recounted may seem to be, the history, in reality, refers to present needs and present situations wherein those events vibrate.

- To Croce, history consisted essentially of seeing the past through the eyes of the present and the light of its problems. Croce's conviction was that the main work of the historian must not merely to record the events but also to evaluate them. Historians convert past events into history. This is possible because historical events and episodes are rehearsed, re-enacted and relived in the minds of historians.
- R.G. Collingwood (1889-1943), the celebrated author of “The Idea of History”, asserted that “**all history is the history of thought**”. He was convinced that history did not consist of a mere recital of facts; it is the reconstitution of the past in the historian's mind based on empirical

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evidence. The process of such reconstitution involves the selection and interpretation of facts; this is what makes them historical facts.

History as “An Unending Dialogue between the Present and The Past”

E.H. Carr defines history as “**a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past**”. He contends that the facts of history are not pure and as such, they are always refracted through the mental prism of the recorder. To make use of facts, the historian needs imaginative understanding in order to know and study the minds of the people with whom he is dealing and the thought behind their acts. Such an understanding is possible only through the eyes of the present since the historian is the product of his age. Thus, the historian starts with a provisional selection and ordering of facts, which belong to the past, understands them imaginatively, and interprets them from the plan of the present, since he is part of the present. The historian without his facts is rootless and futile; the facts without their historian are dead meaningless.

Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the concept and meaning of history.
2. Explain the definition of history.

1.3 NATURE OF HISTORY

In the past, history was merely a catalogue of events serialized in a descriptive way. Later on, the trend became to study history in a critical and scientific way, and thus, history became a study of reality. A historian at present deeply studies the past with a view to properly understand the present. He is required to view events objectively.

- There are three functions of a historian: **Firstly**, he gathers facts as a scientist. **Secondly**, interprets the facts as a philosopher. **Lastly**, expresses the facts in a clear and attractive manner. He is not allowed to mix his personal ideas into historical facts. Since history is concerned with analyzing, explaining, and describing the events of the past, it is necessary for a historian to remember the nature of history. There are certain features that reveal the nature of history.

History Repeats Itself

History is generally understood as the study of accounts of past events. It is a systematic account of the origin and progress of the world, a nation, an institution, etc. If we analyze closely all those historical events that have something common whether it is war, progress, or revolution, they all have some common characteristics. They have a general tendency to repeat themselves. There are some historians who believe that history repeats itself from time to time, whereas others do not agree with this viewpoint.

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- History repeats itself in the sense that things of the world are the same all the time but the ways are different every time. The forces that influence the human mind and shape the course of action are uniform all over the world. The events have a link in a chain of cause and effect and are related to one another in a systematic and permanent manner.
- Although historical events do not occur in the same order and in the same place, they have a basic unity and conform to a particular pattern that is easily discernible on a close study. On the other hand, truth always wins and one cannot deny it. First World War, Second World War were good examples of this view of point, the aggressive policy of Napoleon or Hitler were not lasting and it had to be brought down. In the same way, the Kalinga War of Asoka shows that might never become right. All these point out that history always repeats itself.

History is Humanistic

Primarily the nature of history is humanistic because it deals with human actions that are presented and understood within the backdrop of human actions.

History is Concerned with Change

The changing political, social, economic, artistic, philosophical, scientific, and other aspects of humanity are dealt with in history. Interpreting these changes may differ from historian to historian but the feature common to the historian is changing, how, when, and why change takes place in human society.

History is Scientific

Historical writing is based upon an inquiry into facts but also upon a rational scientific analysis of the facts. The primary responsibility of the historian is to analyze available facts and to provide an analysis or interpretation of the facts. In this process, the historian has to be objective without giving priorities to personal opinions and feelings.

A Linear or Cyclic Nature of History

According to some historians, historical forces are linear in nature. They agree that historical events have continuity and there is a link between the past and the present. On the other hand, other scholars viewed that the nature of historical forces is cyclic.

- According to them, history moves in a circle. In every event, there is a starting point as well as a climax and thereafter downward movement starts till it reaches the lowest point. The process begins again and again.

Unending Dialogue

“History is an unending dialogue between the present and the past”. – E.H. Carr. According to him, the value of a historian does not lie in the cataloguing

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of events but in solving as many controversies relating to past events as possible and bringing these to focus on society.

- **History helps us to understand the development of human society with its entire ramification in arts, letters, religion, philosophy, and administration, an adventure of ideas, culture and way of life.** Through history alone, one can know, understand and appreciate the world as it is. It is the hyphen that connects and the buckle than binds the present with the past and enables us to see how man has discovered better ways of living and discounted bitter ways of discards and disputes. Is it not true that history is “an unending dialogue between the present and the past”.

All History is Contemporary History

According to some scholars, historical facts are correlated with each other. Thucydides is of the view that all historical facts are related to one another in a rational way and permanent manner, which in effect means that the entire march of history, is one continuous whole.

- Benedetto Croce opined that **all history is one supreme spirit which is indivisible but has four different aspects namely art, logic, economics, and ethics. These emerge from the basic unity of spirit.** The mainsprings of all historical forces are this spirit and as such all history is contemporary history.
- Again, he said that human nature does not change, therefore, the action which is the product of that nature cannot vary in substance. Collingwood is of the view that historians while writing past are not free from compulsions of their age. So, their writings are largely influenced by modern ideas. In this way, the present and the past are co-related with each other. These scholars hold that there was a uniformity of the messages of Gautama Buddha, Vardhaman Mahavira, Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus Christ. This fact supports the contemporary nature of history.

Variation in History

History varies not only according to the time but also from historian to historian. It is quite obvious that the nature of history is largely influenced by the philosophy of that age. The history written during the colonial rule varies from that is written by historians after the freedom.

- Contemporary historians present historical events from his viewpoint and a patriot will point out the different look of history. The social, economic, and religious factors also affect the historical outlook.

Importance of Value Judgment by Historians

At present, there arises a controversy that whether value judgment has importance in history or not. Lord Acton emphasized that **value judgment is not only desirable but also it is essential in history.**

- A historian is required to view the historical facts objectively, evaluate and assess them, and then express his own ideas. On the contrary, Bury feels that a historian should satisfy himself with the reconstruction of past events. He should only present the facts as these are but he is not required to come out of his own interpretation.

Roots of Historical Phenomena

Modern diplomacy and foreign policy of every country are closely linked with its past experiences. In fact, because of learning from the past many make predictions about forthcoming events. Sometimes, their prediction proves true.

- In this way, history becomes a prophecy and prepares the ground for the future. The historical events happen at a particular time and because of human nature, it can be easy to guess about the causes and course of future events. It need not be forgotten that the nature of historical forces is temporal, material, and not metaphysical. Therefore, unforeseen factors contribute to historical events at least to some extent.

History is the Study of Man

History deals with man's struggle through the ages. History is not static. By selecting innumerable biographies and presenting their lives in the appropriate social context and the ideas in the human context, we understand the sweep of events. It traces the fascinating story of how man has developed through the ages, how man has studied to use and control his environment, and how the present institutions have grown out of the past.

Knowledge of the Past is Incomplete

To better understand the nature of history, we shall have to take a closer look at the historical method and particularly at its shortcomings. The method begins with an attempt to identify all relevant information about a historical episode. Because the historian cannot study the past directly, he must rely on available evidence. And here we must make a distinction between actual history and known history. Actual history is everything that actually occurred at the time and place of the historical event under study, while known history is merely the scanty evidence left behind.

Check Your Progress

3. Discuss briefly the nature of history.
4. Mention history is a scientific study and a record of our complete past.

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1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY OF HISTORY

The study of history is no waste of time or luxury, but a pressing need. It takes us out of the narrowness and commonplace, events of everyday life. It depicts before us an exciting picture of the march of man through the ages and the work of the multitudes of men trying to pass on to us a better life than theirs. It is the story of the development of man in various fields, i.e., social, political, cultural, economic and religious, etc. and helps us to understand how the world developed into what it is. In addition, it links the present with the past.

1.4.1 History Helps Us to Understand People and Societies

History offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave. Understanding the operations of people and societies is difficult, though a number of disciplines make the attempt. An exclusive reliance on current data would needless handicap our efforts. How can we evaluate war if the nation is at peace – unless we use historical materials? How can we understand genius, the influence of technological innovation, or the role that beliefs play in shaping family life, if we do not use what we know about experiences in the past? Some social scientists attempt to formulate laws or theories about human behaviour. But even these resources depend on historical information, except for in limited, often artificial cases in which experiments can be devised to determine how people act. Major aspects of a society's operation, like mass elections, missionary activities, or military alliances, cannot be set up as precise experiments. Consequently, history must serve, however imperfectly, as our laboratory, and data from the past must serve as our most vital evidence in the unavoidable quest to figure out why our complex species behaves as it does in societal settings.

1.4.2 History Contributes to Moral Understanding

History also provides a ground for moral contemplation. Studying the stories of individuals and situations in the past allows a student of history to test his or her own moral sense, to hone it against some of the real complexities individuals have faced in difficult settings. People who have weathered adversity not just in some work of fiction, but in real, historical circumstances can provide inspiration. "History teaching by example" is one phrase that describes this use of a study of the past—a study not only of certifiable heroes, the great men and women of history who successfully worked through moral dilemmas, but also of more ordinary people who provide lessons in courage, diligence, or constructive protest.

1.4.3 History Provides Identity

History also provides identity, and this is unquestionably one of the reasons all modern nations encourage its teaching in some form. Historical data include evidence about how families, groups, institutions and whole countries were formed and about how they have evolved while retaining cohesion. For many

Americans, studying the history of one's own family is the most obvious use of history, for it provides facts about genealogy and a basis for understanding how the family has interacted with larger historical change. Family identity is established and confirmed. Many institutions, businesses, communities, and social units, such as ethnic groups in the United States, use history for similar identity purposes. And of course nations use identity history as well—and sometimes abuse it. Histories that tell the national story, emphasizing distinctive features of the national experience, are meant to drive home an understanding of national values and a commitment to national loyalty.

1.4.4 Studying History is Essential for Good Citizenship

A study of history is essential for good citizenship. History that lays the foundation for genuine citizenship returns, in one sense, to the essential uses of the study of the past. History provides data about the emergence of national institutions, problems, and values – it is the only significant storehouse of such data available. It offers evidence also about how nations have interacted with other societies, providing international and comparative perspectives essential for responsible citizenship. Further, studying history helps us understand how recent, current, and prospective changes that affect the lives of citizens are emerging or may emerge and what causes are involved. More important, studying history encourages habits of mind that are vital for responsible public behavior, whether as a national or community leader, an informed voter, a petitioner, or a simple observer.

1.4.5 The Ability to Assess Evidence

The study of history builds experience in dealing with and assessing various kinds of evidence the sorts of evidence historians use in shaping the most accurate pictures of the past that they can. Learning how to interpret the statements of past political leaders one kind of evidence helps form the capacity to distinguish between the objective and the self-serving among statements made by present-day political leaders. Learning how to combine different kinds of evidence – public statements, private records, numerical data, and visual materials develops the ability to make coherent arguments based on a variety of data. This skill can also be applied to information encountered in everyday life.

1.4.6 Experience in Assessing Past Examples of Change

Experience in assessing past examples of change is vital to understanding change in society today – it is an essential skill in what we are regularly told is our “ever-changing world.” Analysis of change means developing some capacity for determining the magnitude and significance of change, for some changes are more fundamental than others. Comparing particular changes to relevant examples from the past helps students of history develop this capacity. The ability to identify the continuities that always accompany even the most dramatic changes also comes from studying history, as does the skill to determine probable causes of change.

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Check Your Progress

5. Narrate the significance of the study of history.
6. How study of history helps us?

1.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. History is considered an indispensable subject in the complete education of man and it has been defined differently by different scholars. According to modern concept, history does not only contain the history of kings and queens, battles and generals, but also the communities and the societies are the subject of study of history as well. History is a unique subject possessing the potentialities of both science and art.
2. The origin of the word history is derived from the Greek word “***Historia***” which means **knowledge through inquiry, investigation, research, exploration, and information**. The German equivalent of the word history is ***Geschichte*** which means **an intelligent and intelligible narration of past events**. History is, thus, a **simple narrative account of past events**. The Sanskrit word ***Itihasa*** refers to legend. Lord Acton defined history as **a generalized account of the personal actions of men, united in bodies for any public purposes whatever**. According to Benedetto Croce, all history is **contemporary history**. According to Henry Johnson, “**History, in its broadest sense, is everything that ever happened and it is the past itself, whatever that may be.**”
3. In the past, History was merely a catalogue of events serialized in a descriptive way. Later on, the trend became to study history in a critical and scientific way, and thus, history became a study of reality. A historian at present deeply studies the past with a view to properly understand the present. He is required to view events objectively. There are three functions of a historian: **Firstly**, he gathers facts as a scientist. **Secondly**, interprets the facts as a philosopher. **Lastly**, expresses the facts in a clear and attractive manner. He is not allowed to mix his personal ideas into historical facts. Since history is concerned with analyzing, explaining, and describing the events of the past, it is necessary for a historian to remember the nature of history. There are certain features that reveal the nature of history.
4. Historical writing is based upon an inquiry into facts but also upon a rational scientific analysis of the facts. The primary responsibility of the historian is to analyze available facts and to provide an analysis or interpretation of the facts. In this process, the historian has to be objective without giving priorities to personal opinions and feelings.
5. The study of history is no waste of time or luxury, but a pressing need. It takes out of the narrowness and commonplace, events of everyday

life. It depicts before us an exciting picture of the march of man through the ages and the work of the multitudes of men trying to pass on to us a better life than theirs. It is the story of the development of man in various fields, i.e., social, political, cultural, economic and religious, etc, and helps us to understand how the world developed into what it is. In addition, it links the present with the past.

6. The study of history builds experience in dealing with and assessing various kinds of evidence the sorts of evidence historians use in shaping the most accurate pictures of the past that they can. Learning how to interpret the statements of past political leaders one kind of evidence helps form the capacity to distinguish between the objective and the self-serving among statements made by present-day political leaders. Learning how to combine different kinds of evidence-public statements, private records, numerical data, and visual materials develops the ability to make coherent arguments based on a variety of data. This skill can also be applied to information encountered in everyday life.

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1.6 SUMMARY

- **History is the root of all social sciences.** It is one of the oldest subjects of study, desired to record important events for knowing and understanding the past. It helps in conserving what event has happened in the past and then affected the progress of man in one way or the other.
- History is the analysis and interpretation of the human past enabling us to study continuity and changes that are taking place over time. It is an act of both investigation and imagination that seeks to explain how people have changed over time. Historians use all forms of evidence to examine, interpret, revisit, and reinterpret the past.
- The origin of the word history is derived from the Greek word “*Historia*” which means **knowledge through inquiry, investigation, research, exploration, and information**. The German equivalent of the word history is **Geschichte** which means **an intelligent and intelligible narration of past events**. History is, thus, a simple narrative account of past events. The Sanskrit word ***Itihasa*** refers to legend.
- **The Greeks were the first to define history and Dionysius of Halicarnassus one of the earliest Greek writers who introduced the art of historical writing and author of Persica in five volumes which narrates the history of Persia, defined history as “Philosophy drawn from examples”.**
- The Oxford Talking Dictionary defines history as “**the continuous methodical record of important or public events especially those connected with a particular country, individual, etc., and the**

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branch of knowledge that deals with past events, the formal record or study of past events especially human affairs”.

- According to Sir Walter Raleigh, “*The end and the scope of history is to teach us by an example of times past such wisdom as may guide our desire and action*”.
- According to Ernest Bernheim, “*History is a science that investigates and presents in their context of psycho-physical causality the facts determined by space and time of the evolution of men in their individual as well as typical and collective activity as social beings*”.
- In the past, history was merely a catalogue of events serialized in a descriptive way. Later on, the trend became to study history in a critical and scientific way, and thus, history became a study of reality. A historian at present deeply studies the past with a view to properly understand the present. He is required to view events objectively.
- History varies not only according to the time but also from historian to historian. It is quite obvious that the nature of history is largely influenced by the philosophy of that age. The history written during the colonial rule varies from that is written by historians after the freedom.
- The study of history is no waste of time or luxury, but a pressing need. It takes out of the narrowness and commonplace, events of everyday life. It depicts before us an exciting picture of the march of man through the ages and the work of the multitudes of men trying to pass on to us a better life than theirs. It is the story of the development of man in various fields, i.e., social, political, cultural, economic and religious, etc. and helps us to understand how the world developed into what it is. In addition, it links the present with the past.

1.7 KEY TERMS

- **Historia:** The origin of the word history is derived from the Greek word “*Historia*” which means knowledge through inquiry, investigation, research, exploration, and information.
- **Geschichte:** The German equivalent of the word history is Geschichte which means an intelligent and intelligible narration of past events. History is, thus, a simple narrative account of past events.
- **Philosophy Drawn from Examples:** The Greeks were the first to define history and Dionysius of Halicarnassus one of the earliest Greek writers who introduced the art of historical writing and author of Persica in five volumes which narrates the history of Persia, defined history as “Philosophy drawn from examples”.

1.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. From which Greek word History has come?
2. Who is the father of History?
3. Who did write a book entitled ‘Peloponnesian War’?
4. Who is the author of ‘What is History’?
5. Write the meaning of History.
6. Define History according to Herodotus.
7. “History is a story of things worthy of being remembered.” Explain in three sentences.
8. From which word, History has been derived? Which people of civilization gave a definition to History?

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Long Answer Questions

1. Define the term “History” and discuss various definitions of history.
2. Discuss the nature of history.
3. Write a detailed note on the significance of history.

1.9 FURTHER READING

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CHAPTER 2 SURVEY OF SOURCES

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Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
 - 2.1 Objectives
 - 2.2 Survey of Sources: Sources of Ancient Indian History
 - 2.3 Literary Sources
 - 2.3.1 Religious Literature
 - 2.3.2 Secular Literary Sources
 - 2.3.3 Scientific Treaties/Literary Sources
 - 2.3.4 Sangam Literature
 - 2.3.5 Foreign Accounts
 - 2.4 Archaeological Sources
 - 2.4.1 Inscriptions
 - 2.4.2 Monuments
 - 2.4.3 Coins
 - 2.4.4 Sculptures and Paintings
 - 2.5 Historical Facts in Puranas
 - 2.6 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
 - 2.7 Summary
 - 2.8 Key Terms
 - 2.9 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises
 - 2.10 Further Reading
-

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The tradition of writing history had not developed in ancient India as our country could not produce the men like Herodotus and Thucydides of Greece or Livy and Tacitus of Rome. Later on, when the importance of writing history was felt, we did not have any scope to know it because all our writings were only religious. However, the inquisitiveness and consistent efforts of some scholars no doubt could shed light on our glorious past. It became possible because they could read out the history of our country from indestructible inscriptions, edicts, excavated materials, coins, and also from the religious texts by separating facts from fiction. These materials from where they could collect the information regarding our past are called sources of history. Sources are considered as the basic raw material for recreating past. Sources reflect the historical process and give a chance for studying the past of human society. These sources are in the form of indigenous literature, foreign literature, inscriptions, coins and material remains. Broadly, the indigenous literature and foreign literature can be termed as *Literary Sources*, while the inscriptions, coins and material remains are called the *Archaeological Sources*.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the sources of ancient Indian history.
- Describe archaeological sources of history.
- Discuss the historical facts in Puranas.

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2.2 SURVEY OF SOURCES: SOURCES OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY

The history of ancient India can be fairly reconstructed only with the help of the sources. The sources are broadly divided into literary sources and archaeological sources. Literary sources are further divided into indigenous literature and foreign literature. Archaeological sources are divided into inscriptions, coins and material remains. We are now going to discuss all these different forms of sources separately in sub-headings.

Check Your Progress

1. Mention two types of literary sources.
2. Into how many types are archaeological sources are divided?

2.3 LITERARY SOURCES

The literary sources to reconstruct ancient Indian history can be classified among three major categories: (i) Religious, (ii) Secular and (iii) Scientific. It also comprised of some different kinds of sources like: (i) Sangam literature and (ii) travelogues of foreign travelers.

2.3.1 Religious Literature

Old Hindu texts like the Vedas, the *Upanishadas*, the *Puranas*, the *Epics* and other *Dharmashastras* depict a clear picture of India of that period. The Vedic literature proves to be an important source for ancient Indian history. The Vedas derived from the root word *Vid* which means to know were basically compilation of prayers of Aryans for the Gods, which were mainly the powers in nature. According to Aryans, the Vedas were heard (and not created by men). Hence, these were called ‘Shrutis’ and ‘Apaurusheya’ (not created by any man). The Vedas are also called as ‘Samhita’.

1. **Rigveda:** The Rigveda is the oldest Indian literature and it gives us a good deal of information regarding the socio-religious and political condition of the early Indo-Aryans. It is the earliest among 4 Vedas. It is comprised of 10 *mandalas* and 1028 *suktas*. These were prayers to the gods like Indra, Varuna, Agni, Parjanya, Vayu, Marut, etc. It gives us information regarding socio-economic, religious, political condition of Early Aryans, located in the area of Sapta-Sindhus. For example,

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the ‘Purushsukta’ of its 10th mandala depicts the origin of Varna system in India.

2. **Yajurveda:** It comprised the prayers to be recited while performing sacrifices or Yajnya. Actually, the major parts of the prayers are borrowed from the Rigveda. It has two parts, Shukla and Krishna and six other Samhitas. The Vajasaneyi Samhita of Yajurveda throws ample lights on various Vedic sacrifices.
3. **Samveda:** It comprised the prayers to teach how to recite the prayers while performing sacrifices. Again, it comprised the prayers from Rigveda, and provided methods to recite them. Hence, it is considered as the origin of Indian classical music.
4. **Atharvaveda:** It comprised assorted subjects like magic, black magic, superstitions, etc. We find origins of medicines, botany and surgery in this Veda.

After Vedas, some other important works were compiled by Vedic Aryans. These were basically created to explain the thoughts and laws in the Vedas, and to make them more understandable. Hence, these work as appendices of Vedas and were mostly in prose. These were comprised of Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Vedangas and Shad-darshanas.

1. **Brahmanas:** The Brahmanas were created to teach the procedure of sacrifices that were compiled in the Vedas. Hence, each Veda has its own Brahmana, e.g., of Rigveda – Aitareya Brahmana, of Samveda – Jaiminiya Brahmana, of Yajurveda – Shatapath and of Atharvaveda – Gopath. From these Brahmanas, we get information of Vedic Aryans’ various institutions like four Varnas, four Ashramas, philosophy, etc.
2. **Aranyakas:** The Aranyakas were created to teach the learning of Vedic religion, especially sacrifices and mystic philosophy into seclusion. Aitareya Aranyaka is meant for Rigveda whereas Taiteriya Aranyaka is for Yajurveda.
3. **Upanishads:** The word **Upanishad** means ‘to learn, by sitting close to one’s teacher’. These were created to teach the learning of Vedic spiritualism, comprising the subject of knowledge of one’s self, knowledge of God, relations between self and God, creation of Universe, our place in such a vast Universe, etc. **Traditionally, there are 108 Upanishads. However, some of the important are, Ken, Kath, Prashna, Aitareya, Chandogya, etc.** As these come, chronologically, at the end of Vedas. Hence, the Upanishads are also known as ‘Vedanta’. The basic backbone of Indian religions were based mostly on Upanishads. Hence, with the help of later, we can understand Indian religions more holistically.
4. **Vedangas:** These were created to make Vedas more understandable, as follows:
 - **Shiksha:** How to pronounce the Vedic prayers in proper manner.
 - **Kalpa:** Rules to perform sacrifice in a proper manner.

- **Vyakaran:** To know the proper grammar of Sanskrit language.
 - **Nirukta:** Etymology of words, mentioned in the Vedas.
 - **Chanda:** Various meters in which Vedic shlokas are structured to recite. It comprised of Gayatri meter (chanda), Anushtubha meter (chanda), etc.
 - **Jyotish:** It deals with proper time (Shakun) on which sacrifices should be performed. It also discusses the subjects of astronomy like Sun, Moon and constellations, on cycles of seasons, etc.
5. **Shad-darshanas:** These works deal with philosophical teaching or aspects in the Vedas. These are six like Vaisheshik (Kanad), Nyay (Gautam), Sankhya (Kapil), Yog (Patanjali), Mimansa (Jaimini), Uttar-Mimamsa (Badarayana). These cover topics like the theory, logic, unity of soul with God, atoms, Vedic rituals, structure of universe, etc.
- **Sutras:** The 6th century B.C. was the landmark in the history of India. The period witnessed appearance of early states and growth in economy and coinage. In this period, India went through its second urbanization. This was the period where heterodox religions like **Buddhism**, **Jainism** and **Ajivakas** were grew and developed. They challenged Vedic religion and its shortcomings and provided a strong alternative.
- Besides, during that period, India was came into closer contacts with foreigners. In response to such changes, the custodians of Vedic religion resorted to reconstruct and regulate their religion. Hence, Sutras were created to provide norms, rules and regulation to consolidated Vedic religion. Sutras were compiled around 6th century B.C. These were comprised of three Sutras, viz., **Dharmasutras**, **Shrautsutras** and **Grihyasutras**. Together, they are called as **Kalpasutras**. They throw ample light on such processes, going through during 6th century B.C.
- **The Smritis:** The Smritis, like Sutra, are the books of norms, codes, rules, regulations to consolidate and reconstruct Vedic religion. These were written by various scholars like Manu, Narad, Parashar, Yajnyavalka, etc. Hence, we find many Smritis on their name, e.g., Manu-smriti, Narad-smriti, etc.
 - **Puranas:** There are 18 Puranas and classified according to the devotional cults, prevailed in 3rd and 4th century A.D. For instance, the Puranas of Shaiva consisted of Shaiv Puranas, Vayu Puranas, Skanda Puranas; whereas the Vaishnavas venerated Vishnu Purana, Garud Purana, Matsya Purana and Varaha Purana. The Shakti cult (devoted to mother goddesses) and Ganapatya cult also created their own Puranas.

Such Puranas have common sections like origin of universe, stories regarding respective God and its family, importance of

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pilgrim centers and pilgrimages, political dynasties and myths of lineages (vansha and vanshanucharit), etc.

Subsequently, other related subjects were also touched in the Puranas like iconography, architecture (Vishnudharmottara Purana), medicines, geography, political history, etc. In short, to understand India of 3rd to 6th century A.D., the Puranas help historians in a large manner.

Buddhist Canonical Literature

The Buddhist literature comprised of mainly the Pitakas, the Jatakas, etc. The Buddhist literature were written in various languages like Prakrit (Pali), Tibetan, Chinese, Sinhali, etc. To challenge Vedic religion, these were also written in Sanskrit language.

- **Pitakas:** The Pitakas comprised of three compilations, viz., Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidhamma. Together, they are known as ‘Tripitakas’. The Vinaya Pitaka was compiled by Upali and comprised of five books. These were basically created to provide codes of conducts for Monasteries, Bhikkus, Bhikkhunis, their daily routine, ethics, etc. It has parts like Sutta-vibhangha (origin of codes regarding Bhikkus), Khandaka (rules regarding entry into monastery and admissions, etc.) and Parivar. The Sutta Pitaka compiled by Ananda. These were created to teach Buddha’s teaching with examples, parables and lectures.
- **The Jatakas:** The Jatakas are the compilation of the stories regarding previous births of Buddha. To solve the problems of his followers, Buddha devised a beautiful method to tell the stories from his own experiences that of his previous births and the skeptic or problem follower drew answers from these stories. These were the Jatakas who throw light on India during 6th century B.C.
- **Dipavamsha and Mahavamsha:** These Buddhist works are of Sri Lankan origin. They inform us about Ashoka the Mauryan Emperor and various Buddhist scholars.
- **Divyavadan:** This Buddhist work is of Nepali origin. It tells Buddhist stories and throws light on northern dynasties, from Mauryan kings to Shunga period. The Buddhist literature also comprised of other important works like Milind-Panha (discussion between Bhikku Nagsena with Milind (Menander), Buddhist turned Greek king; Ashvaghosha’s *Buddha Charita* (Biography of Buddha); *Mahavastu*, *Lalitvistar*, *Manjushri Mulkalpa*, etc.

Jain Canonical Literature

Ancient Jain literature is in various languages like Prakrit (Ardhamagadhi, Shaurseni), Tamil, Sanskrit, etc. The literature can mainly be classified into two parts: Anga (fourteen) and Agamas (Purva). Besides, Cheda Sutras (six) and Mul Sutras (four) are also important parts of it.

- ***Anga and Agam:*** These works throw light on the teaching of Mahavir. The Acharang Sutra reflects on codes of conducts of Jain monks whereas Bhagavati Sutra throws light on Mahavir's biography and his exploits.
- ***Philosophical:*** These comprised of Samaysar, Pravachansar, etc. These were mainly created by Acharya Kundakunda, reflected upon Jain spiritualism.
- ***Puranas:*** The Jain Puranas were based on the framework of Vedic epics and Puranas. However, with the main content of Jain philosophy, these comprised of Harivamsha Purana, Maha Purana, Padmacharit, etc.
- ***Biographies:*** These were comprised of Bhadrabahu-Charita, Jasaharchariu, Naykumar-chariu, etc. The Bhadrabahu-Charita throws light on the events related to Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta and his teacher, Bhadrabahu-Jain Acharya. The Jain literature also comprised of Kathakosh of Harisen, Parishishta-parva of Hemchandra Suri, Dhananjay-mala (thesaurus), Alankar-chintamani (on literature), Mahavir-Ganit-Sarsamgraha (Mathematics), Niti-vakya-mrita of Somdeva (Political Science), etc.

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2.3.2 Secular Literary Sources

Rajtarangini the history of Kashmir was written by Kalhana. He was born in 1100 A.D. in Kashmir. He completed this book within two years during the reign of King Jayasimha of Kashmir. It is in Sanskrit, comprising 8 Khandas (chapters/volumes) and 7826 shlokas (verses). Apart from Rajtarangini, the 'Ras Mala' and 'Kirti Kaumudi' (written by Someswara) inform us about the history of Gujarat during the Chalukya (of Lata) period. **Vikramankadevacharita** was written by Bilhana who praises the king Vikramaditya (of Chalukya dynasty) and his various deeds. **Gaudavaho** was written by Vakpati in praise of Yashovarman's (of Malwa) victory over Bengal (Gaud region). **Harshacharita** was written by Banabhatta in praise of Harshavardhana. Besides, some other notable eulogies comprised of Kumarpala-Charita (by Hemchandra), Hammir-Mardan (by Jaychand Suri), etc.

Epic and Kavya Literature

The literature comprised of dramas, poetry, epics, etc. These are secular kind of literature. Hence, we find factual information regarding society and economy, sometimes polity of specific period. However, these should be used with caution as their purpose was not to write history but to entertain readers.

- ***Epics:*** Epics comprised of Mahabharata (by Vyasa) and Ramayana (by Valmiki). We get information from these epics of vast areas of interests like the movement of Aryans throughout Indian subcontinent, their relations with local or native communities and tribes, their political thoughts, institutions, society, social customs and traditions, forest tribes, economy, etc.
- ***Dramas:*** The 'Sariputta-prakaran' was considered as the first drama, written by Ashvaghosha. Then, one scholar Bharat wrote his famous

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'Natyashastra' on dramatics. Some of the important dramas are as follows:

- ***Mudra-rakshas***: This is a drama, written by Vishakhadatta. The drama deals with one incident concerned with Chanakya (the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya) and Rakshasa (Amatya of Dhanananda). The play gives information on Chankya's politics, espionage and the foundation of Mauryan Empire. His drama 'Devi-chandraguptam' deals with the life of Chandragupta II of Gupta dynasty.
- ***Mrichcha-katika***: This drama revolves around the love between one poor Charudatta and beautiful Ganika (prostitute) Vasantasena. It is written by Raja Shudrak which sheds light on economical affluence of ancient India, the prostitutes and respect to them in society, the social structure, etc.
- ***Malvika-agnimitra***: This play was written by Kalidasa, great poet and dramatist during Gupta period. The subject of the drama is the love between one Malvika and Agnimitra, brave king of Shunga dynasty. Kalidasa also wrote beautiful dramas like Vikramorvashiya, Shakuntal, etc.
- ***Nagananda, Ratnavali and Priyadarshika***: These plays were written by king Harshavardhana. These reflect upon socio-economic condition and religious outlook during his reign. Other dramas of importance comprised of Uttar-Rama-Charita and Malati-madhav of Bhavbhuti, Svapna-vasavadatta of Bhasa, etc.
- **Poetry**: During Gupta period, India witnessed growth of classical literature. The 'Raghu-vamsha' 'Kumar-sambhav', 'Riti-samhar' and 'Meghaduta' were the classic creation of Kalidasa. The last two are world-famous and the description of nature and cycles of seasons, written therein reflects, not only the classicality India received at that time, but, the contemporary ecology of that time. Other works of poetry consisted of Dashakumara-Charita (Dandi), Kiratarjuniya (Bharavi), Ravan-vadha (Bhatti), Vasavadatta (Subandhu), etc.

2.3.3 Scientific Treaties/Literary Sources

Considerable amounts of scientific work were created during ancient period. They were mainly comprised of works on Political Sciences and Grammar. However, after early centuries, many scientific works were started showing up on subjects like medical science, agro-irrigation science, mathematics, astrology-astronomy, art-architecture, iconography, etc. Especially, Gupta period witnessed the emergence of various sciences.

- ***Arthashastra*** was written by **Chanakya/Kautilya/Vishnugupta**, the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya. This book is a firsthand document which informs us about the polity and administrative system of Mauryan Empire. As it is an administrative document and especially written for the king, it is in court language, i.e., Sanskrit.

The Arthashastra comprised of 15 parts (pradhikaranas), 150 chapters (adhyayas), 180 headings (up-vibhagas) and 6000 verses (Shlokas).

- ***Ashtadhyayi and Mahabhashya:*** Ashtadhyayi deals with Grammar, written by Panini. It throws light on social condition of 6th century B.C., i.e., the period of second urbanization in India. Similar work is Mahabhashya, written by Patanjali, informs us about social condition during early historic period.
- ***Charak-Samhita and Sushrut-Samhita:*** These works inform us about medical sciences during ancient India and considered as the basis of Ayurveda branch of medicines.
- ***Brihat-Samhita:*** It is written by Varhamihir and of an encyclopedic nature. It touches various subjects like, crops, cropping pattern, agriculture technology, how to foresee earthquakes, astronomy, astrology, etc. It testifies the scientific progress in India during Gupta period. He also has written ‘Pancha-siddhantika’, concerns with eclipses, path of planets and pace of constellation, etc. Other works on astronomy and astrology comprised of Aryabhatiya (by Aryabhata), Brahma-sphuta-siddhant (by Brahmagupta), etc.

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2.3.4 Sangam Literature

The Sangam literature gives us information regarding early historic and historic Southern India. The Sangam means an assembly. The body of Sangam literature comprised of the poems presented in three assemblies by Tamil poets. These poems were actually collected by the poets, from various eco-regions in southern India. Thus, these are basically folklore compiled by urban poets. The important works are Shilappadikaram, Manimekhala, Pattupattu, etc. *Tolakappiyama* written by the *Tolokappiyar* is a famous Tamil grammar which is the main source of Tamil history. The Sangam literature comprises about 30,000 lines of poetry which are arranged in eight anthologies called *Ettuttokai*. The poems are collected in groups of hundreds such as *Purananuru* (The Four Hundred of the Exterior) and others. There are two main groups *Patinenkil*, *Kanakku* (The Eighteen Lower Collections) and *Pattupappattu* (The Ten Songs). They vividly describe certain events that took place in South India in 4th century A.D. Thus, without the help of these literary sources, the ancient history of India cannot be completed.

2.3.5 Foreign Accounts

Since time immemorial, many foreign travellers came to India and left an interesting account regarding India of their days. Among those foreigners, **Megasthenes** visited the Court of Chandragupta Maurya. He was a Greek ambassador of **Seleucus Nicator**, one of the generals of Alexander. He has left an account of India in his book ***Indika***. Deimachus, the Greek ambassador visited the court of Bindusara and described the life of the people of that period. Hacataeus described the geography of North-Western India during 5th century B.C.

- A notable Chinese traveller named **Fa-Hien** visited India during the reign of the famous Gupta ruler Chandragupta II. He remained in

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India from 405 to 411 A.D. In his famous book **Fo-Kuo-Ki**, he has discussed various aspects of the Gupta age and also throws flash of lights upon the social, religious, economic and political conditions of India during the reign of Chandragupta-II or Vikramaditya.

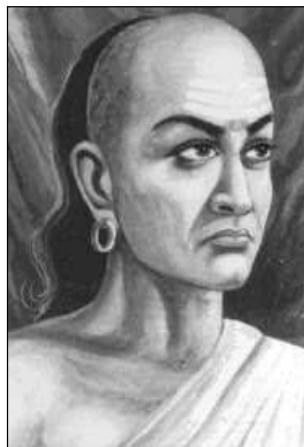
- **Hiuen Tsang** visited India in the 7th century A.D. during the reign of Harshavardhan of Kanauj. He remains in India from 630-643 A.D. and out of which eight years in the court of Harshavardhana. In his famous book **Si-Yu-Ki**, he has described the prevailing socio-religious-political and other conditions of India during Harsha's time.
- After Hiuen Tsang, another Chinese traveller **I-Tsing** visited India. He was the third Chinese traveller reached in India through sea route in 673 A.D and stayed in India till 685 A.D. He also described the contemporary political, social, religious and economic conditions of ancient India which is very valuable.
- The **Periplus of the Erythraean Sea** is written in Greek by an unknown author, provides valuable data for the study of ancient geography and commerce. The Geography of Ptolemy described the geography of India. Pliny's **Naturalis Historia** was written in Greek language during the 1st century A.D. tells us about trade between India and Italy.
- The Tibetan Monk **Lama Taranath** was a famous historian also wrote about the different conditions of India. His two important books Kangyura and Tangyura are the famous source of information for Buddhism.



Hiuen Tsang



Fa-Hien

**NOTES***Kautilya*

Source: www.tripadvisor.com

Check Your Progress

3. From which Sanskrit word, the word Veda has been derived?
4. Into how many parts Veda was divided?
5. Write the name of the two great Epics?
6. Write two important works of Harshavardhana.
7. Write the two important dramas of Kalidasa.
8. Who is the author of Mudrarakshasa?
9. What was the name of the foreign traveller who visited India after Hiuen Tsang?

2.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES

The term Archaeology derives from the Greek words '*Archious*' meaning ancient and '*Logos*' means knowledge. But the word has slightly different meaning and is defined as a branch of knowledge dealing with the remains of ancient human activity, revealed after digging up the earth to find the remains of the past which lies buried under it. However, it will be wrong to say that archaeology is all digging up and discovering the remains of old buildings, coins, relics of the past and nothing else but also deals with restoring, conserving and publishing them for intelligent appreciation, interpretation and information. In other words, we may say that the science which enables us to dig the old mounds in a systematic manner and in successive layers, and to form an idea of the material life of the people is called archaeology. In India, archaeology as a separate branch of the study of ancient Indian history began during the Viceroy of Lord Curzon, and with the discoveries of the two important sites Mohenjo-daro and Harappa in 1921-22 A.D., history writing took a specific shape in India. Archaeology forms an important area of study to discover the past. It is the study of man-made antiquities. So, it is history approached from a study of the surviving objects of the past. Archaeological sources give us some knowledge of the life of the ancient people. It consists of

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inscriptions, monuments and coins. Now, let us study archaeological sources under different heads. The archaeological sources comprised of: (i) inscriptions, (ii) coins, (iii) ancient monuments, and (iv) sculptures and paintings.



Lord Curzon

Source: www.alamy.com

2.4.1 Inscriptions

- Of all the archaeological sources, inscriptions occupy a unique position as source material of Indian history. Inscriptions supply valuable historical facts. The study of inscriptions is called **epigraphy**.
The study of the writings on ancient inscriptions and records is called paleography. Inscriptions are seen on rocks, pillars, stones, slabs, walls of buildings, and body of temples. They are also found on seals and copper plates.
- We have various types of inscriptions. Some convey monarchical orders regarding administrative, religious and major decisions to the public in general. These are called royal proclamations and commandments. Others are records of the followers of major religions. These followers convey their devotion on temple walls, pillars, stupas, and monasteries. The achievements of kings and conquerors are recorded in *prashastis*, or eulogies (praiseworthy descriptions of a ruler).
- These are written by their court poets, who never speak of their defects. Finally, we have many donations, i.e., grants for the religious purpose. **James Prinsep** first deciphered Indian inscriptions in 1837. The inscriptions are of various types like eulogy and *prashasti*, commemorative, religious, royal orders, records of donations, gifts, etc.
- The earliest of these inscriptions are those of Emperor Asoka engraved on rocks and pillars found all over India. As that emperor himself proclaimed, he got his edicts engraved on the stone so that they might last long. The inscriptions of Asoka are the best examples of religious and administrative inscriptions. *The Hatigumpha Inscription of Kharavela*, the *Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta*, and many other rock and pillar inscriptions contain

most valuable historical accounts. Political, administrative and religious matters are gathered from such sources.

- The *Allahabad pillar inscription* written by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta is an example of the eulogistic inscriptions. The *Aihole inscription of the Pulakesin-II* is an example of votive inscription. The *Nasik inscription* describes the achievements of the Satavahan king Gautamiputra Satakarni. The *Girnar inscription* describes the achievements of Rudradaman. Earliest inscriptions, namely, the seals of Harappa, are commercial inscriptions. The later inscriptions were carved within the Prakrit language in the 3rd century B.C. Ashokan inscriptions were written within the *Brahmi script* from left to right. Some were also engraved in the *Kharosthi script* from right to left. Sanskrit was used as associate epigraphic medium in the 2nd century A.D.

2.4.2 Monuments

- The monuments are another valuable source of material consisting of buildings, statues of stone or metals, terracotta ornamental and decorative fragments, pottery, etc. The remains of temples, caves, Stupas sculptures and paintings are of immense value not only for the study of Indian art and architecture but of the religious and cultural life of the period. The excavations of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro changed our old conception of ancient Indian history and new discoveries of the major sites of Indus Valley may compel the historians to rename this culture.
- The seals and terracotta objects discovered from different sites of the Harappa civilization throw welcome light on its economic, religious, and social life. Remains of art of Ashokan Period reflect the highly developed art style and culture of the Mauryan Period. Similarly, the Stupas at *Bharhut and Sanchi* are glaring examples of art and architecture belonging to the Sunga Period. The seals and sealing of Gupta Period speak about the trade and commerce of that time. The temples of Deogarh, Sarnath, Bhitargaon, Mathura, Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh, etc. speak highly about the architecture of Gupta Period.
- The discovery of Taxila threw more light upon the history of Kushanas. The monuments of Taxila give idea about Gandhara School of Art. The Gomates Vara statue of the Bahubalin at Sravana Velgola, Khandagiri and Udayagiri at Bhubaneswar, Ellora of Madhya Pradesh and the Jaina Caves of Maharashtra, the Parsvanath temple and Pavapuri and Rajgiri at Bihar and Dilwara temple at Mount Abu in Rajasthan speak highly of Jainism.
- The places like Sanchi, Sarnath, Mathura, Rumindei, Bharhut, KanherI, Dhauli, Jaugargh, etc. are full of Buddhist art remains which speak about Buddhism. The Siva temples at Bhubaneswar, Gujarat, Kanchipuram, Khajuraho, Tanjore, Bhumara, Varanasi, Kashmir, etc. speak a lot about Saivism. The places like Nachna Kuthara, Viraja,

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Ranipur Jharial, Kamrup, etc. sing the glory of Saktism. Discovery of the Deogarh temple in Jhansi and Bhitargaon near Kanpur threw more light and the splendour of Guptas came to the surface. Outside India also, the monuments like Angkorvat in Cambodia and Borobudur in Java bear the testimony to the colonial and cultural activities of the Indians in ancient times.

2.4.3 Coins

- Apart from inscriptions and monuments, coins are very vital and imperishable aids to the reconstruction of history. The study of coins is known as numismatics. The coins or numismatic proof is also vital to see the chronology, property, territorial extent, religion, and relation with neighbouring countries of the reigning king and dynasty. The history of the Sakas, Kushanas, Scythians, Parthians and Bactrian Greeks are based on coins. The coins of Kushana pointed out the relation between India and Rome. The numerous coins of different metals of Gupta kings prove their prosperity and their artistic sense.
- Ancient coins were mostly manufactured from gold, silver, copper or lead. Among the coins of ancient India, *punch-marked coins* of the Maurya period were the oldest. They were either of silver or copper metal bearing the symbols of birds, animals, mountains, trees, etc. We get the largest number of coins in Post-Maurya times, made up of lead, tin, copper, bronze, silver, and gold for Bactrian, Indo-Greek, and Indo-Parthian, Saka and Kushana dynasties. The most important series of coins, with the names of kings clearly engraved on them, were those issued by the Greek rulers of Bactria.
- The famous *Bayana coin hoard* of the Gupta period also throws much light especially on the decline of trade. The use of coins of Harshavardhana also gives information about his rule. Some of the coins have religious and legendary symbols that throw light on the culture of that time. Coins also contain the figures of kings and gods. Some contain names and dates of the rulers. Coins also throw significant light on the economic life of ancient people. They indicate relating to trade and commerce and assist to reconstruct the history of many ruling dynasties. Coins have been the primary source of our information regarding the various Indian states during the same period.



Gupta Coins



Kushana Coins

Source: en.wikipedia.org

2.4.4 Sculptures and Paintings

- **Sculptures:** Since Harappan period, we find evidences of sculptures in India. These were made of various materials like stone, steatite, clay, terracotta, lime, bronze, ivory, wood, etc. Some of them got place in shrine and became idol or icon. Some of them were made to beautify the walls of temples. Some of them were individual sculpture, made for various purposes like toys and for entertainments. The bronze statues of dancer (Harappan civilization) and toys (Diamabad) during Chalcolithic Period show artistic merit, as well as expertise in metallurgy of India. Various other statues of the same periods indicate place of entertainment, hairstyles, ornaments and costume of Harappans. Same is true with terracotta toys, belonged to Shunga period. The Mauryan sculptures like the Yakshi of Didarganj indicate the contemporary affluence and aesthetic sense of people. The sculptural reliefs on the gateways of stupas (Sanchi, Barhut), not only display growth of Buddhist ideology, but also of various other things like flora, fauna, civic architecture, etc. The statue of Kanishka indicates the foreign origin of the king and costume of foreign style like high shoes, overcoats, etc.
- **Paintings:** Earliest instances of paintings can be found in the rock-shelters of Bhimbetaka (Madhya Pradesh). These were drawn by Mesolithic cave-dwellers by using colours and tools from his surrounding nature. Through these rock-paintings, we can understand the lifestyle of Mesolithic people like his way of living, methods of hunting, the flora and fauna in his surrounding, etc. Then, we find beautiful paintings, especially from Ajanta and then at Bagh. The world-famous paintings of Ajanta give us information about religious ideology, the spiritual serenity, the ornaments, the costumes, the foreign visitors, etc. And of course, through these paintings, we can understand the artistic merit and great aesthetic sense of concerned period. Whereas, the paintings of Chola king on the walls of temples at Tamil Nadu display the concept of ‘divine kingship’ of Chola polity.

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Check Your Progress

10. During which Viceroy, the Department of Archaeology was created?
11. Who first deciphered Indian inscriptions in 1837?
12. Who was Harisena?
13. Which coin of the Gupta period also throws much light especially on the decline of trade?
14. Write the meaning of Epigraphy.
15. Write the meaning of Numismatics.

2.5 HISTORICAL FACTS IN PURANAS

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The Puranas form a very important branch of the sacred literature of India. They enable us to know the true purpose of the ethics, philosophy and religion of Vedas. They are the frameworks of the Dharma-Satras, without which the life force of the Vedas cannot function with effect. The Puranas were written, according to Indian Tradition, with the object of the popularizing the Truths, taught in the Vedas. **In general, the word Purana is used in the sense of "Old".** Even in the Rigveda, it is used in the same connotation taking into account the Puranas being considered as an individual literary form, the Puranas derives the word different ways. The Vayu-Purana derives the word from “*Pura*” and the root “*An*” and gives the meaning of the word as “that which breathed in old times”. The Padma and Brahmnda Puranas also give similar meanings. **The authorship of all these Puranas is attributed to Vyasa by tradition.** The Puranas consist of five characters (Pancalakshna). They are:

- **Sarga:** Primary creation or cosmogony;
- **Pratisarga:** Secondary creation or the destruction and renovation of worlds, including chronology;
- **Vamsa:** Genealogy of gods and patriarchs;
- **Manvataras:** Reigns of Manus or periods called Manvataras;
- **Vansanucharitam:** History or such particulars as have been preserved of the princes of the Solar and Lunar races and of their descendants to modern times. The Theogony and Cosmogony of the Puranas may probably be traced to the Vedas.

The Puranas are of two kinds, viz., **Maha Puranas and Upa Puranas.** The Maha Puranas, which are in 18 in number, are generally considered to be main and more authoritative than the latter. The same in number are the Upa Puranas or Subsidiary Puranas. In the enumeration of 18 Maha Puranas, there are only two or three variations. The Devi Bhagavatha states them as follows:

1. Markendeya Purana.
2. Matsya Purana.
3. Bhagavatha Purana.
4. Bhavisya Purana.
5. Brahmnda Purana.
6. Brahma Purana.
7. Brahma Vivarta Purana.
8. Vishuna Purana.
9. Varaha Purana.
10. Vamana Purana.
11. Vaayu Purana.

12. Agni Purana.
13. Narada Purana.
14. Padma Purana.
15. Linga Purana.
16. Garuda Purana.
17. Kurma Purana.
18. Skanda Purana.

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- **Markandeya Purana:** Elaborate descriptions of creation and deluge, stories of Vedic gods like sun, fire, Indra gods, etc. are available in this purana. The purana narrated by the **Sage Markandeya** and **contain 9000 shlokas**. The Devi Mahatyam or Durga Saptasati is a part of it. This is the base for Chandi homa, Sata homa, Sahasra Chandi homa, etc., stories of the Lord Rama and Krishna are also in this. In this purana, we find the worship of the goddess.
- **Matsya Purana:** Lord Vishnu narrated this in the form of fish to Manu, the first king after the deluge (pralaya). The Matsya puranas contains 14,000 Shlokas. The stories of Kartikeya, Yayati and Savitri were described in this purana. The holy places Prayaga and Varanasi, festivals, omens and rites to be observed by Saivaites and Vaishnavaites are described. References of the South India and South Indian architecture are available in this purana. The Matsya Purana divided into two parts and 201 chapters.
- **Bhagavatha Purana:** This is the most popular purana. It has been translated in all major Indian languages. It contains 18,000 shlokas. There are 12 books (Skandas) in it and the tenth book describes the birth of Lord Krishna. 24 incarnations of Lord Vishnu is described and a large number of devotional poems with high philosophical content are available. **This purana narrated by Sage Vyasa to Sage Suka. Suka narrates to the king Parikshit.**
- **Bhavishya Purana:** Talking about the future particularly kaliyuga continues in 14,500 shlokas. The puranas narrated by the god Sun to Manu, duties of four castes and methods to worship the Sun, Agni and Nagas.
- **Brahma Purana:** **Brahma Purana is also known as Surya Purana**, and this was narrated by the creator Brahma to Daksha Prajapati in 10,000 shlokas. It contains greatness of holy places, the stories of Sri Krishna, Markandeya, Kasyapa, and the description of heaven and hell.
- **Bramhanda Purana:** This purana narrated by **Brahma to Sage Mariachi in 12,000 shlokas**. This is in the form of dialogue between Siva and Parvati. The stories of Radha, Krishna, Parasurama, Sri Rama, Sri Lalitha, Siva and Krishna are available in it. It describes the Vedangas and Adhi Kalpa.

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- **Brahma Vivarta Purana:** It describes that the whole universe is the illusory transformation of Supreme Being in 18,000 shlokas. **Savarna Manu narrated this purana to Sage Narada.** Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati and Radha who were known as Panch Shakti are described in it.
- **Varaha Purana:** This purana was told to Bhudevi by Mahavishnu in 24,000 shlokas. It describes different Vratas, Lord Vishnu glories and the stories of Lord Shiv-Parvati. It describes Dharma-Shastra and holy places. It is describing the daily life of a devotee of Lord Vishnu.
- **Vamana Purana:** Starting with the description of Vamana avatar and proceeds to the worship of Siva Linga, the marriage of Siva and Parvati, the stories of Ganesh and Kartikeya, pilgrimage to Siva temples in total 10,000 Shlokas narrated by the Sage Pulastya to the Sage Narada.
- **Vayu Purana:** This purana was narrated by Vayu Deva in 24,000 Shlokas. It contains the glory of Lord Maheswara, describes the universe and solar system.
- **Visnu Purana:** **This is the oldest purana and was narrated by Parasara, father of Veda Vyasa to his disciple Maitreya, stories of various devotees a description of the age of Kali, etc. in 23,000 verses.** This purana is divided into six parts, each of which is subdivided into many chapters. The first part gives an account of creation, which is attributed to Purusha and Prakriti. The second part describes the earth and the nether worlds. Other parts contain some Gathas, Akhyanas, genealogies of Vedic seers and King's mythology, cosmogony, Dharmasasta, etc. First part contains 22 adhyayas, second part contains 16 adhyayas, third part 18 adhyayas, fourth part 24 adhyayas, fifth part contains 38 adhyayas and the last part contains 8 adhyayas. In Vishnu Purana, we find only one Lakshmi Stotra [Sree stotra] in the ninth chapter. Agni, the fire god to Sage Vasistha, narrated this purana in 15,400 Shlokas. It is describing that Siva and Durga cult. It also describes grammar and the worship of Siva, Durga and Ganesh.
- **Narada Purana:** 'Narada Purana' is also called as 'Brihannaradiya Purana'. This is in the group of 'Sattvik', it contains a synopsis of everything, and it describes Purijagannatha, Dwaraka, Badrinatha, etc. In this purana, there are 25,000 verses. Narada Purana comprised 25,000 Shlokas based on Brihad Kalpa Katha. **Narrated by Suta Maha Muni to Shounaka Muni, the Purana was basically conceived by Brahmarshi Narada himself but preached by Sanaka Brothers to Narada.** The earlier part of the Purana dealt with 'Pravritti Dharma' and the second part was devoted to 'Moksha Dharma'. Sanandana described at length the Six Vedangaas as Moksha Sadhanas and about the illustration of Suka Deva in this context. The Third Part gave 'Upadeshas' to Narada by Sanat Kumara about 'Pashu paasha vimoksha' and mantras concerning major deities,

diksha, puja procedures, stotras, etc. The fourth part provided details of tithi-wise and maasa-wise vratas as also an index of ‘Ashtadasa Puranas’.

- **Padma Purana:** It contains 55,000 verses contains the glory of Srimad Bhagavatam. It describes the creation, genealogy of kings, many sacred places of pilgrimage etc. In this too, many ceremonies to be observed by the devotees are described. It also contains the stories of Ramayana, story of Shakuntala, Ekadasi Mahatmyam, etc. It also describes the killing of Madhu Kaitabha demons, the greatness of Ganga, the story of Gayatri, the worship and worshipper rules are contained. The Padma Purana is contains five parts that as Srishti Khanda, Bhoomi Khanda, Swarga Khanda, Patala Khanda and Uttara Khanda.
- **Linga Purana:** The Linga Purana describes the 28 incarnations of lord Siva and contains the greatness of Linga Rupa, different types of worships and Vratas. It also describes the universe.
- **Kurma Purana:** This purana narrated by Vishnu in his incarnation as a tortoise. The avatars of Varaha and Narasimha are described. It contains the conversation between Krishna and Sun god, Dhanvantari and it describes the Lakshmikalpa in 17,000 verses. It also describes the holy places like Varanasi, Prayaga, etc. and the worship of Siva and his incarnations.
- **Garuda Purana:** This purana was narrated by Lord Vishnu to his vehicle Garuda in 19,000 verses. Methods of worship, feasts, soul after death and ceremonies are described.
- **Skandha Purana:** It consists of 81,000 verses narrated by Skandha. It describes the story of Siva, and the birth of Skandha. Based on this purana, the great poet Kalidasa composed Kumara Sambhava. The purana describes so many stotras like pradosha, etc. Kasha, Kedara, Reva, Vaishnava, Ultala, Kumarika, Brahma, Bahmottara, Avantika are the Khandas of this purana.

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Table 2.1: Sources of Ancient Indian History

Literary Sources	Vedic, Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and other literature
Archaeological	Epigraphic, numismatic and architectural remains, archaeological explorations and excavations 1. Study of Development of Scripts: Palaeography 2. Study of Inscriptions: Epigraphy 3. Study of Coins: Numismatics 4. Study of Monuments, Material Remains: Archeology
Foreign Accounts	Chinese, Greek and Tibet

Table 2.2: Notable Chinese writers**NOTES**

Notable Chinese writers	
Fa-Hien	Visited India in 5 th century A.D. described social-religious and economic conditions of India in the time of Guptas.
Hiuen-Tsang	Visited India in 7 th century A.D. in the age of Harshavardhana and some other contemporary kings of Northern India.
I-Tsing	Visited India in 7th century A.D. describes social-religious and economic conditions of India.

Check Your Progress

16. How many puranas are there?
17. Who did compose Mahabharata?
18. Write two kinds of puranas.
19. Who did narrate Markandeya purana?
20. Which purana is also known as Surya Purana?
21. Write a short note on Skandha Purana.

2.6 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. Indigenous literature and foreign literature.
2. Three.
3. Vid.
4. Four parts.
5. The Mahabharata and Ramayana.
6. Nagananda and Ratnavali.
7. ‘Raghu-vamsha’, ‘Kumar-sambhav’.
8. Visakhadutta.
9. I-Tsing.
10. Lord Curzon.
11. James Prinsep.
12. Court poet of Samudragupta.
13. The Bayana Coin Hoard.
14. The study of inscriptions is known as Epigraphy.
15. The study of coins is known as Numismatics.
16. Eighteen.
17. Vyasa.
18. Maha-puranas and Upa-puranas.
19. Sage Markandeya.
20. Brahma Purana.

21. Skandha Purana consists of 81,000 verses narrated by Skandha. It describes the story of Siva, and the birth of Skandha. Based on this purana, the great poet Kalidasa composed Kumarasambhava. The purana describes so many stotras like pradosha, etc. Kasha, Kedara, Reva, Vaishnava, Ultala, Kumarika, Brahma, Bahmottara and Avantika are the Khandas of this purana.

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2.7 SUMMARY

- Sources are considered as the basic raw material for recreating past. Sources reflect the historical process and give a chance for studying the past of human society. These sources are in the form of indigenous literature, foreign literature, inscriptions, coins and material remains. Broadly, the indigenous literature and foreign literature can be termed as **Literary Sources**, while the inscriptions, coins and material remains are called the **Archaeological Sources**.
- The Rigveda is the oldest Indian literature and it gives us a good deal of information regarding the socio-religious and political condition of the early Indo-Aryans. It is the earliest among 4 Vedas. It is comprised of 10 mandalas and 1028 suktas.
- After Vedas, some other important works were compiled by Vedic Aryans. These were basically created to explain the thoughts and laws in the Vedas and to make them more understandable. Hence, these work as appendices of Vedas and were mostly in prose. These were comprised of, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Vedangas and Shad-darshanas.
- The Brahmanas were created to teach the procedure of sacrifices that were compiled in the Vedas. Hence, each Veda has its own Brahmana, e.g., of Rigveda – Aitareya Brahmana, of Samveda – Jaiminiya Brahmana, of Yajurveda – Shatapath and of Atharvaveda – Gopath. From these Brahmanas, we get information of Vedic Aryans' various institutions like four Varnas, four Ashramas, philosophy, etc.
- **The word Upanishad means ‘to learn, by sitting close to one’s teacher’.** These were created to teach the learning of Vedic spiritualism, comprising the subject like knowledge of one’s self, knowledge of God, relations between self and God, creation of Universe, our place in such a vast Universe, etc. **Traditionally, there are 108 Upanishads. However, some of the important are Ken, Kath, Prashna, Aitareya, Chandogya, etc.**
- The Smritis, like Sutra, are the books of norms, codes, rules and regulations to consolidate and reconstruct Vedic religion. These were written by various scholars like Manu, Narad, Parashar, Yajnyavalka, etc. Hence, we find many Smritis on their name, e.g., Manu-smriti, Narad-smriti, etc.
- There are 18 Puranas and classified according to the devotional cults, prevailed in 3rd and 4th century A.D. For instance, the Puranas of Shaiva consisted of Shaiv Puranas, Vayu Puranas, and Skanda Puranas; whereas the Vaishnavas venerated Vishnu Purana, Garud

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Purana, Matsya Purana, and Varaha Purana. The Shakti cult (devoted to mother goddesses) and Ganapatya cult also created their own Puranas.

- The Buddhist literature comprised mainly of the Pitakas, the Jatakas, etc. The Buddhist literature were written in various languages like Prakrit (Pali), Tibetan, Chinese, Sinhali, etc. To challenge Vedic religion, these were also written in Sanskrit language.
- The Pitakas comprised of three compilations, viz., Vinaya, Sutta, Abhidhamma and together they are known as 'Tripitakas'. The Vinaya Pitaka was compiled by Upali and comprised of five books. These were basically created to provide codes of conducts for Monasteries, Bhikkus, Bhikkunis, their daily routine, ethics, etc.
- **Rajtarangini**, the history of Kashmir, was written by Kalhana. He was born in 1100 A.D. in Kashmir. He completed this book within two years, during the reign of King Jayasimha of Kashmir. It is in Sanskrit, comprising 8 Khandas (chapters/volumes) and 7826 shlokas (verses).
- **Mudra-rakshas**: This is a drama, written by Vishakhadatta. The drama deals with one incident concerned with Chanakya (the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya) and Rakshasa (Amatya of Dhanananda). The play gives information on Chankya's politics, espionage and the foundation of Mauryan Empire. His drama 'Devi-chandraguptam' deals with the life of Chandragupta II of Gupta dynasty.
- **Arthashastra** was written by **Chanakya/Kautilya/Vishnugupta**, the prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya. This book is a firsthand document which informs us about the polity and administrative system of Mauryan Empire. As it is an administrative document and especially written for the king, it is in court language, i.e., Sanskrit. The Arthashastra comprised of 15 parts (pradhikaranas), 150 chapters (adhyayas), 180 headings (up-vibhagas) and 6000 verses (shlokas).
- **Hieu-Tsang** visited India in the 7th century A.D. during the reign of Harshavardhana of Kanauj. He remains in India from 630-643 A.D. and out of which eight years in the court of Harshavardhana. In his famous book **Si-Yu-Ki**, he has described the prevailing socio-religious, political and other conditions of India during Harsha's time.
- Of all the archaeological sources, inscriptions occupy a unique position as source material of Indian history. Inscriptions supply valuable historical facts. The study of inscriptions is called **epigraphy**. **The study of the writings on ancient inscriptions and records is called paleography**.
- The seals and terracotta objects discovered from different sites of the Harappa civilization throw welcome light on its economic, religious and social life. Remains of art of Ashokan Period reflect the highly developed art style and culture of the Mauryan Period. Similarly, the *Stupas at Bharhut and Sanchi* is glaring examples of art and architecture belonging to the Sunga Period. The seals and sealing of Gupta Period speak about the trade and commerce of that time. The

temples of Deogarh, Sarnath, Bhitargaon, Mathura, Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh, etc. speak highly about the architecture of Gupta Period.

- Apart from inscriptions and monuments, coins are very vital and imperishable aids to the reconstruction of history. The study of coins is known as numismatics. The coins or numismatic proof is also vital to see the chronology, property, territorial extent, religion and relation with neighbouring countries of the reigning king and dynasty. The history of the Sakas, Kushanas, Scythians, Parthians and Bactrian Greeks are based on coins. The coins of Kushana pointed out the relation between India and Rome. The numerous coins of different metals of Gupta kings prove their prosperity and their artistic sense.
- The Puranas form a very important branch of the sacred literature of India. They enable us to know the true purpose of the ethics, philosophy and religion of Vedas. They are the frameworks of the Dharma-Satras, without which the life force of the Vedas cannot function with effect. The Puranas were written, according to Indian tradition, with the object of the popularizing the Truths, taught in the Vedas. **In general, the word Purana is used in the sense of “Old”.**

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2.8 KEY TERMS

- **Rigveda:** The Rigveda is the oldest Indian literature and it gives us a good deal of information regarding the socio-religious and political condition of the early Indo-Aryans.
- **Samveda:** It comprised the prayers to teach how to recite the prayers while performing sacrifices. Again, it comprised the prayers from Rigveda, and provided methods to recite them.
- **Upanishads:** The word Upanishad means ‘to learn, by sitting close to one’s teacher’. These were created to teach the learning of Vedic spiritualism, comprising the subject like knowledge of one’s self, knowledge of God, relations between self and God, creation of Universe, our place in such a vast Universe, etc.
- **Pitakas:** The Pitakas comprised of three compilations, viz., Vinaya, Sutta, Abhidhamma and together they are known as ‘Tripitakas. The Vinaya Pitaka was compiled by Upali and comprised of five books. These were basically created to provide codes of conducts for Monasteries, Bhikkus, Bhikkunis, their daily routine, ethics, etc.
- **Archaeology:** The term Archaeology derives from the Greek words ‘*Archios*’ meaning ancient and ‘*Logos*’ means knowledge. But the word has slightly different meaning and is defined as a branch of knowledge dealing with the remains of ancient human activity, revealed after digging up the earth to find the remains of the past which lies buried under it.
- **Puranas:** The Puranas form a very important branch of the sacred literature of India. They enable us to know the true purpose of the ethics, philosophy and religion of Vedas. **In general, the word Purana is used in the sense of “Old”.**

2.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

NOTES

Short Answer Questions

1. Into how many parts the sources of Indian history has been divided? What are they?
2. What do you understand by Sources?
3. Into how many parts, Veda is divided? Write the name of those Vedas.
4. What is Samveda?
5. What is Yajurveda?
6. What is Tripitaka?
7. What are Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa?
8. What is the meaning of Epigraphy?
9. Who was Megasthenes? Write the of his book.
10. Who was Fa-Hien? Write the name of his book.
11. Who was Hiuen Tsang? Name the book written by Hiuen Tsang.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the sources of ancient Indian history.
2. Describe the literary sources of ancient Indian history.
3. How does archaeological remains construct the history of ancient India?
4. What is Foreign Account? How does it help in history writing?
5. What is Literary Sources? Discuss the role of literary sources in writing history.
6. Narrate historical facts in puranas.

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Survey of Sources

NOTES

CHAPTER 3 PHYSICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE OF INDIA

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
 - 3.1 Objectives
 - 3.2 The Mountain Ranges of the Himalayas
 - 3.2.1 The Great Indo-Gangetic Plain or Northern Plain
 - 3.2.2 The Deccan Plateau
 - 3.2.3 The Coastal Ghats
 - 3.2.4 The Islands
 - 3.2.5 The Indian Desert
 - 3.2.6 The Effect of Physical and Geographical Structure of India
 - 3.3 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
 - 3.4 Summary
 - 3.5 Key Terms
 - 3.6 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises
 - 3.7 Further Reading
-

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The wide range of physical structures of India makes the country a complete geographical study. A thorough knowledge of the geography of a country has a very important role to play in a complete study of its history and India is no exception. The history of any country cannot be understood without some knowledge of its geography. Geography has also given India a distinct existence and maintains a clear identity of her own. India is a huge country divided into four geographical regions, each one having its own particular and peculiar features. These features have in every way, i.e., social, economic and cultural, affected the course of our history. To the North, India is surrounded by the Himalayas. In the East, West, and South, there are seas and oceans. In the North-West, the Hindukush and Suleiman Mountains separate India from Russia, Afghanistan and Iran. In the East, the Arakan Mountains separate her from Myanmar. Therefore, it is essential to study the geographical features of India while going through its history. In this aspect, Richard Hakluyt is very much true when he says, “Geography and chronology are the sun and the moon, the right eye and the left eye of history”.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the physical structures of India.
- Describe the physiographic divisions of India having special characteristics.
- Discuss the effect of physical and geographical structure of India.

India is an important country in the middle of the world, which is separate from South Asia by mountain series and from sea in three directions. It is of triangular shape. India is situated between 68° and 97° East longitude and 8° and 37° latitude. Tropic of Cancer passes it from its middle. Due to being in thermodynamic zone, its climate is both cold and hot whereas South India is hot due to being in hot zone. Its area is approximate 32.68 lakh sq. km. It has seventh place in world as per geographical size and is equal to size of Europe minus Russia. Its length from North to South is 3200 km and breadth is 3000 km from East to West. Since very old times, it is being called Bharatvarsha. It is said that on the name of king Bharat, son of Dushyant, the name Bharat came to be used for India. When foreign invaders came to India, then they crossed Indus (Sindhu) river, and on its name, they started calling it Sindhustan, Hindustan or Hindustan on the name of Sindhu River. Actually, in Persian, pronunciation of 'S' is 'H'. Hence, invaders called people living near Sindhu rivers as Hindu and Hindustan. This word Hindustan too became popular and still today it is known by this name too. Greeks called it Indica or India, as they called Sindhu River as Indus later on. Many other species of Europe too adopted the name India. But this name India is confined to educated class only and in villages, still people call it Hindustan or Bharat. Name Bharat got recognition in the independent India's constitution and now this is the name in vogue, in common.

Ancient India, which included areas of modern Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, etc. was known as subcontinent. Himalayan ranges are there at North border of this ancient India, which separates it from other West Asian nations. Khyber and Bolan Pass are among many passes which are situated in these ranges. These passes are special as these were used by Indians to promote their culture and civilization and these only were used by foreign invaders to attack India. Eastern mountain ranges of Himalaya have separated India from nations like China, Malaya, etc. India is surrounded by sea from three sides.

India is a complete unit from geographical perspective. It has different climate, minerals and land mass available. At one place, we have highest mountains, peaks and huge plateau land on the other. At one side, we see huge fertile land made by soil brought from rivers, and on the other hand, large deserts. All these areas have affected lives of Indians. Following is the effect of such physical diversity along with physical division of India. The physical structure of India can be grouped under the following physiographic divisions having special characteristics. These are as follows:

- The Mountain ranges of the Himalayas in the North.
- The Great Indo-Gangetic Plain or Northern Plain.
- The Deccan Plateau.
- The Coastal Ghats.
- The Islands.
- The Indian Desert.

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3.2 THE MOUNTAIN RANGES OF THE HIMALAYAS

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In the North of India, there are the lofty Himalaya Mountains which spread out both to the East as well as the West stretching from Kashmir in the West to Assam in the East. The word Himalaya means the “abode of snow” (Sanskrit word *Hima* means “Snow” and *Alaya* means “abode”). The great Himalaya mountain wall is about 2500 km long and its width varies from 240 km to 320 km. Its highest peak, Mount Everest is 29,142 feet in height.

- In the North-West of India, there are several passes like the **Khyber**, **the Tochi**, **the Gomal**, etc. which served as channels of commercial and cultural exchange between India and other countries in the past. These passes have always provided easy routes for travellers and invaders. Here, Dr. R.C. Majumdar has also pointed out that “The Himalaya is the most inaccessible frontier that, nature has designed for any country but even here, there are roads from Tibet to Nepal that has carried for ages not merely peaceful missionaries of culture and religion, but on rare occasions even formidable hosts of soldiers as well”.



Fig. 3.1: The Mountain Range of Himalaya

Source: www.gettyimages.in

- The ranges of Himalayas are divided into two groups. The hills like the **Hindukush**, **Sulaiman**, **Safed Koh** and **Kirthar** forms the first group, which lie the North-West region of the Himalayas, while the second group consists of the hills like the **Khasi**, **Jaintia**, **Pat Koi**, etc. which lie in its Eastern region. The Eastern offshoots of the Himalayas are always covered with the thick forest due to the heavy rains, while its Western offshoots are dry and of lesser heights.
- The Himalaya comprises of three parallel ranges in its longitudinal extent. A number of valleys lie between these ranges. The Northernmost range is identified as the Great or Inner Himalayas or the ‘Himadri’. It is the most continuous range consisting of the loftiest peaks with an average height of 6,000 meters. It contains all the prominent Himalayan peaks. The range lying to the South of the Himadri forms the foremost rugged mountain system and is identified as Himachal or Lesser Himalaya. The ranges are primarily composed

of extremely compressed and altered rocks. The altitude varies between 3,700 m and 4,500 m, and also the average breadth is of 50 km. While the Pir Panjal range forms the longest and the most vital range, the Dhauladhar and the Mahabharat ranges are also outstanding ones. This range comprises of the famous valley of Kashmir, the Kangra and Kullu Valley in Himachal Pradesh. This region is famous for its hill stations.

- The outer range of the Himalayas is called the Shiwalik Hills. The Shiwalik Hills, also known as Churia Hills that stretches from the Indus River about 2,400 km eastwards close to the Brahmaputra River. It is 10 to 50 km wide with an average altitude varying between 900 and 1100 meters. These valleys are enclosed with thick gravel and alluvium. The longitudinal valley lying between lesser Himalaya and also the Shiwaliks are known as Duns. Dehradun, Kotli Dun, and Patli Dun are some of the well-known Duns. In some Sanskritic language texts, the region is called Manak Parbat. The word Shiwalik literally means ‘tresses of Shiva’.
- Apart from the longitudinal divisions, the Himalayas have been divided on the basis of regions from West to East. These divisions have been demarcated by river valleys. For instance, the part of the Himalayas lying between Indus and Sutlej has been traditionally known as Punjab Himalaya, but it is also known regionally as Kashmir and Himachal Himalaya from West to East respectively. A part of the Himalayas lying between Sutlej and Kali rivers is known as Kumaon Himalayas. The Kali and Tista rivers demarcate the Nepal Himalayas and the part lying between Tista and Dihang rivers is known as Assam Himalayas.
- The Brahmaputra marks the Easternmost boundary of the Himalayas. Beyond the Dihang gorge the range of the Himalayas bends sharply to the South and spread along the Eastern boundary of India. They are known as the Purvachal or the Eastern hills and mountains. These hills running through the North-Eastern states are mostly composed of strong sandstones which are sedimentary rocks. Covered with dense forests, they largely run as parallel ranges and valleys. The Purvachal comprises the Patkai Hills, the Naga Hills, Manipur Hills, and the Mizo Hills.
- In the North-Western direction, the broken Himalayan ranges contain the major routes linking the Indian plains with Iran and Central Asia through Afghanistan. These routes links through the Gomal, Bolan and Khyber pass. The Greeks, Shakas, Kushanas, Hunas and other foreign tribes reached Asian country, particularly India, following these routes. Similarly, Buddhism and other Indian elements were carried out to Afghanistan and Central Asia through these mountain passes.

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3.2.1 The Great Indo-Gangetic Plain or Northern Plain

The great Indo-Gangetic Plain or the Northern Plain has been shaped by the interaction of the three major watercourse systems of India that is the Indus, the Ganga and the Brahmaputra alongside their tributaries have fed the foothills of the Himalayas. Since these watercourse basins had an enormous quantity of alluvial deposit from these glacial rivers, these regions grew fertile over many years. The Indo-Gangetic Plain or the Northern Plain extends from the Suleiman Mountain in the West to the edge of the Assam Hills is the most important natural region of India. The Northern plains again divided into three significant parts, i.e.,

- **The Punjab Plains:** The Indus River and its tributaries specifically the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, and the Sutlej lead to the formation of these vast plains, a part of that currently lies in Pakistan.
- **The Ganga Plains:** This spreads across the states of North India, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Delhi and West Bengal.
- **The Brahmaputra Plains:** This covers major parts of Assam and the other North-eastern States.

The Northern Plain is regarded as one of the most fertile lands of the world. In fact, the prosperity of this region proved to be a cause of suffering to its inhabitants. Its enormous wealth was always a source of temptation and attraction for foreign invaders. The renowned cities of India, Banaras, Allahabad, Agra, Delhi, and Pataliputra belong to this plain which witnessed the rise and fall of mighty kingdoms of ancient times. Trade and commerce, wealth and richness, art and literature, etc. have also flourished in this Plain. Due to the fertility of the great plain, its people were happy and peace-loving. They had much spare time for their cultural pursuits. Moreover, they wished to spread, their culture to other parts of the world. Thus, the importance of Indo-Gangetic plain in shaping the history of India cannot be denied.

3.2.2 The Deccan Plateau

- The Deccan plateau lies in the South of the Indo-Gangetic plain. The Deccan plateau looks almost like a triangle. It is surrounded by mountains and hills. On its North, the Vindhya and the Satpura ranges separate it from the Indo-Gangetic plain and slope down to the Cape Comorin. In the East, it starts from the Bay of Bengal and spreads right up to the Arabian Sea in the West. The Krishna, the Godavari, the Narmada, and the Tapti are the important rivers of this region.
- The Satpura and Vindhya mountains are covered with dense forests. Besides, the lack of the means of transportation made it almost impassable for the North Indians to cross over to the South. The mountain ranges, dense forests and irregular terrain had made this region well high impregnable. That is why the people of this region are by nature very laborious, brave and courageous.

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- The Western and the Eastern Ghats spot the Western and the Eastern edges of the Deccan Plateau respectively. The Western Ghats lie parallel to the Western coast. The Western Ghats are over the Eastern Ghats. The Eastern Ghats stretch from the Mahanadi Valley to the Nilgiris within the South. The highest peaks of the Western Ghats are the Anai Mudi and the Doda Betta.
- The Mahendragiri is the highest peak of the Eastern Ghats. The Shevroy Hills (near the city of Salem, in Tamil Nadu state, Southern India), and the Javadi Hills (an extension of the Eastern Ghats spread across parts of Vellore and Tiruvannamalai districts in the Northern part of the state of Tamil Nadu in South-Eastern India) are located to the South East of the Eastern Ghats.

3.2.3 The Coastal Ghats

- The Deccan plateau is flanked by a stretch of narrow coastal strips, running along the Arabian Sea on the West and the Bay of Bengal on the East. It consists of three sections. The Northern a part of the coast is termed as the Konkan (Mumbai-Goa), the central stretch is called the Kannada Plain while the Southern stretch is referred to as the Malabar Coast. Large rivers like the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna, and also the Kaveri have produced extensive delta on this coast.

3.2.4 The Islands

- India has two main offshore Island possessions, i.e., the **Lakshadweep Islands** and the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**. The **Lakshadweep**, which lies closer to the Malabar Coast of Kerala, consists of clusters of coral Islands. It covers a little region of 32 sq. km. Kavaratti Island, which is the administrative headquarters of Lakshadweep, has a great diversity of flora (vegetation) and fauna (animal life). Another island known as Pitti Island, which is uninhabited, has a bird sanctuary.
- The **Andaman & Nicobar Islands** located in the Bay of Bengal and lie on the Indian Ocean. These groups of islands are larger in size than their Western counterparts and have a rich biodiversity. Because the Andaman & Nicobar Islands are closer to the equator, the region also experiences equatorial climate. It is generally believed that these islands are an elevated portion of submarine mountains.

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Fig. 3.2: An Island

Source: www.gettyimages.in

3.2.5 The Indian Desert

- The Indian desert lies towards the Western margins of the Aravali Hills. It is a rolling sandy plain covered with sand dunes. The only desert of India is that the Thar Desert. A major part of this desert lies in Rajasthan but a little portion of its spread in Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, and Pakistan. Luni is the sole river which flows from this land. The desert receives only 150 mm rainfall in a year. It is also known as the Great Indian Desert or Marusthali. The Great Rann of Kuchchh also falls into this desert.



The Indian Desert



The Northern Plains

Source: www.gettyimages.in

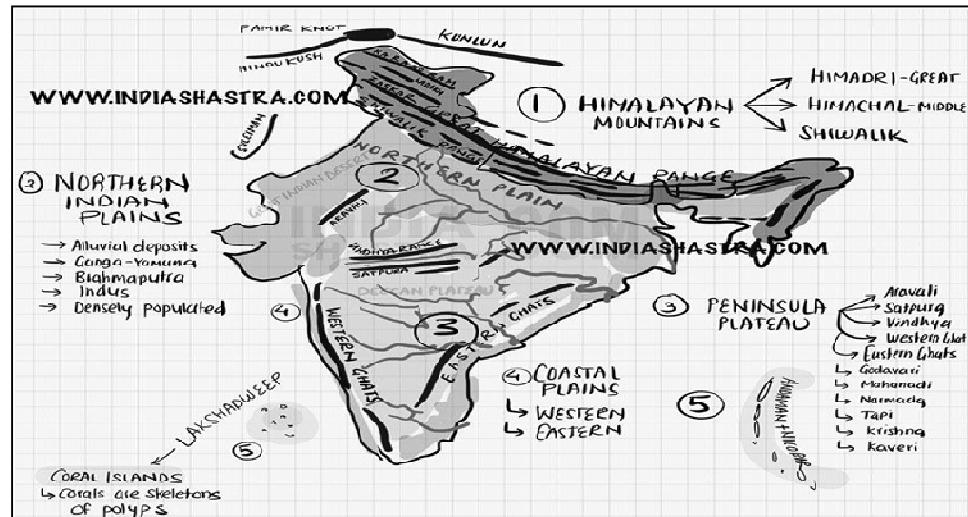
3.2.6 The Effect of Physical and Geographical Structure of India

- The huge Himalayan Mountain and its Western and Eastern ranges in the North have separated India from the rest of Asia. It serves almost like a wall separating our land from the other parts of Asia. It is because of the Himalayas that India and China though neighbours possess entirely different histories.
- In the North-West, there are many passes from where the invaders like the Aryans, the Iranians, the Greeks, the Sakas, the Hunas, the Turks, the Mughals, and others came to India. Some of these invaders settled down permanently here, while others left after loot and plunder. These passes served as the gateway to foreigners. Except for these passes, the boundaries of India were secure from all sides.

- Our rivers which flow from the Himalayas are responsible for giving us prosperity and development, which otherwise would have made India a desert.
- India is endowed with huge mountains, vast plains, deserts, big rivers add beautiful valleys. This geographical diversity has divided our country into various territorial divisions. This is the reason that in ancient times India could not be unified politically and hundreds of small kingdoms continued to exist.
- The huge rivers originating from the Himalayan Mountains such as the **Ganga**, **the Jamuna**, **the Indus**, **the Brahmaputra**, etc. have made the Northern plain extremely productive. It is counted among the most productive regions of the world. Because of its fertility, this region has always been very prosperous and rich. The famous cities of Pataliputra, Banaras, Allahabad, Agra, Delhi, Multan and Lahore are situated in this region. Because of the wealth and prosperity, the inhabitants of this region have always been peaceful and have led a life of luxury.
- Big deserts, dense forests and succeeding mountain ranges carved out several areas which were inaccessible. The old tribes of these places gave shelter to the fugitives of the plains. In such places lived the ancient tribes like Bhils, Santhals, Kols, Gonds, and others.
- In the sphere of cultural, the contribution of North India is supreme. The wealth of this region made the people peace and ease-loving. Free from the worries of livelihood, they had enough time for the cultivation of art and literature. The Vedic literature is the most valuable treasury of our country. The art and crafts developed dramatically during the Mauryan and Gupta periods. The famous Gandhara School of Art too developed in this region. In the domain of literature, the Arthashastra of Kautilya and dramas of Kalidas are the immortal gifts of ancient India. The world-renowned universities of Taxila and Nalanda too flourished in Northern India. This progress in the field of culture in Northern India is due to its geographical situation.
- Because of geographical situation life in the South as compared with that of the North, was more secure and safe. As a consequence, South proved to be the defender of Indian civilization and culture at a time when the North had to face the attacks of foreign invaders.
- Due to the lack of the means of transportation and communication, trade and commerce could not expand a good deal. The paucity of natural ports too added to this weakness but this does not mean that Indians had no commercial relations with countries abroad. During the Gupta period, Indian trade and commerce were at its prime and it was due to the establishment of certain colonies abroad that India was termed as '**Greater India**'.

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Map No. 1

Check Your Progress

1. What is the meaning of the term Himalaya?
2. Write the name of the highest peak of the Great Himalaya.
3. Write two main offshore islands of India.
4. Which islands are located in the Bay of Bengal?
5. Write briefly about the Northern Plain.

3.3 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The word Himalaya means the “abode of snow” (Sanskrit word *hima* means “snow” and *alaya* means “abode”).
2. Mount Everest.
3. India has two main offshore island possessions, i.e., the **Lakshadweep Islands and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.
4. The **Andaman & Nicobar Islands** located in the Bay of Bengal and lie on the Indian Ocean.
5. The Northern Plain is regarded as one of the most fertile lands of the world. In fact, the prosperity of this region proved to be a cause of suffering to its inhabitants. Its enormous wealth was always a source of temptation and attraction for foreign invaders. The renowned cities of India, Banaras, Allahabad, Agra, Delhi, and Pataliputra belong to this plain which witnessed the rise and fall of mighty kingdoms of ancient times. Trade and commerce, wealth and richness, art and literature, etc. have also flourished in this Plain. Due to the fertility of the great plain, its people were happy and peace-loving. They had much spare time for their cultural pursuits. Moreover, they wished to spread their culture to other parts of the world. Thus, the importance of Indo-Gangetic plain in shaping the history of India cannot be denied.

3.4 SUMMARY

- The history of any country cannot be understood without some knowledge of its geography. Geography has also given India a distinct existence and maintains a clear identity of her own.
- The geographical features of India can be grouped under the following physiographic divisions having special characteristics. These are the Mountain ranges of the Himalayas in the North, the great Indo-Gangetic Plain or Northern Plain, the Deccan Plateau, the Coastal Ghats, the Islands, and the Indian Desert.
- In the North of India, there are the lofty Himalaya Mountains which spread out both to the East as well as the West stretching from Kashmir in the West to Assam in the East. The word Himalaya means the “*abode of snow*” (Sanskrit word *hima* means “snow” and *alaya* means “abode”).
- The ranges of Himalayas are divided into two groups. The hills like the **Hindukush**, **Sulaiman**, **Safed Koh** and **Kirthar** forms the first group, which lie the North-West region of the Himalayas, while the second group consists of the hills like the **Khasi**, **Jaintia**, **Pat Koi**, etc. which lie in its Eastern region.
- In the North-West of India, there are several passes like the **Khyber**, **the Tochi**, **the Gomal**, etc. which served as channels of commercial and cultural exchange between India and other countries in the past.
- The outer range of the Himalayas is called the **Shiwalik Hills**. The **Shiwalik Hills**, also known as Churia Hills that stretches from the Indus River about 2,400 km Eastwards close to the Brahmaputra River.
- The Great Indo-Gangetic Plain or the Northern Plain has been shaped by the interaction of the three major watercourse systems of India that is the Indus, the Ganga, and the Brahmaputra alongside their tributaries have fed the foothills of the Himalayas.
- The renowned cities of India, Banaras, Allahabad, Agra, Delhi and Pataliputra belong to the Northern plain which witnessed the rise and fall of mighty kingdoms of ancient times.
- The Deccan plateau lies in the South of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. The Deccan plateau looks almost like a triangle. It is surrounded by mountains and hills. On its North, the Vindhya and the Satpura ranges separates it from the Indo-Gangetic Plain and slope down to the Cape Comorin.
- The Mahendragiri is the highest peak of the Eastern Ghats. India has two major offshore island possessions, i.e., the **Lakshadweep Islands** and **the Andaman & Nicobar Islands**. The **Lakshadweep**, which lies closer to the Malabar Coast of Kerala. This Island consists of clusters of coral Islands.
- The **Andaman & Nicobar Islands** located in the Bay of Bengal and lie on the Indian Ocean. The Indian desert lies towards the Western margins of the **Aravali Hills**.

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- The huge Himalayan Mountain and its Western and Eastern ranges in the North have separated India from the rest of Asia. The huge rivers originating from the Himalayan Mountains such as **the Ganga, the Jamuna, the Indus, the Brahmaputra**, etc. have made the Northern plain extremely productive.

3.5 KEY TERMS

- **Himalaya:** The word Himalaya means the “abode of snow” (Sanskrit word *hima* means “snow” and *alaya* means “abode”).
- **The Punjab Plains:** The Indus River and its tributaries specifically the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, and the Sutlej lead to the formation of these vast plains, a part of that currently lies in Pakistan.
- **The Ganga Plains:** This spreads across the states of North India, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Delhi and West Bengal.
- **The Brahmaputra Plains:** This covers major parts of Assam and the other North Eastern States.

3.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Write briefly about the Northern Plain.
2. Give a brief account on the Deccan Plateau.
3. Write a short note on the Coastal Ghats.
4. Mention about the Indian Desert.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the physical and geographical structure of India.
2. What is the effect of geography on Indian history? Explain.

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CHAPTER 4 INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
 - 4.1 Objectives
 - 4.2 Meaning and Concept of Palaeolithic Culture
 - 4.2.1 Tools of the Lower Palaeolithic Culture
 - 4.2.2 Major Sites of Early or Lower Palaeolithic Culture
 - 4.2.3 Middle Palaeolithic Culture
 - 4.2.4 Tools of Middle Palaeolithic Culture
 - 4.2.5 Major Sites of Middle Palaeolithic Culture
 - 4.2.6 Upper Palaeolithic Culture
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 - 4.3 Mesolithic Culture
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-

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Humankind’s past is divided into two broad periods; the pre-historic and the historic. The pre-historic period belongs to the time before the emergence of writing and the historic period to the time following this event. Pre-historic period is that period in which we do not have any written records. So, our knowledge of the cultures that developed in this period is based only on the materials found in the archaeological excavations. The vast period of pre-historic age has been further divided into three ages namely stone, bronze and iron. These ages, besides being technological stages, also have economic and social implications. The Stone Age is divided into three periods, namely Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. As the name suggests, the technology in these periods was primarily based on stone. Economically, the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods represent the hunting-gathering stage while the Neolithic represents the stage of food production, i.e., plant cultivation and animal husbandry. In the history of mankind, the Stone Age was succeeded by a culture where metal was used for the first time. And the earliest metal using culture of human history was known as “Chalcolithic”, or “Copper Age” which refers to a transitional period where early copper metallurgy appeared alongside the widespread use of stone tools. This period witnessed growth of early village

culture with agro-pastoral economic activities. Within this Chalcolithic culture, some regions across the globe witnessed development of technology and economic activities which ultimately gave rise to the early urban settlements. In Indian context, such an urban culture was flourished on the Indus River Valley in North-West India popularly known as Indus valley Civilization. The Chalcolithic culture is succeeded by a new metal using culture known as Iron Age culture. In the history of mankind, the Iron Age refers to the appearance of ferrous metallurgy. The adoption of iron coincided with other changes in some past cultures, often including more sophisticated agricultural practices, religious beliefs and artistic styles and political entity and the beginning of historical age.

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4.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning and concept of Palaeolithic culture.
- Describe major sites and tools of Palaeolithic culture.
- Discuss Mesolithic culture.
- Explain Mesolithic Rock Art.
- Narrate Neolithic culture.

4.2 MEANING AND CONCEPT OF PALAEOLITHIC CULTURE

The Palaeolithic culture constitutes the longest phase of pre-history and covers the whole range of the Pleistocene period. The word Palaeolithic was coined by archaeologist Sir John Lubbock in 1865 A.D. The Palaeolithic Age or Old Stone Age in India covered from 2,500,000 B.C. to 10,000 B.C. in the Pleistocene Period of the Ice Age. It was the primary part of the Stone Age. The term Palaeolithic is derived from two Greek words *Palaois* means Old and *Lithos* means Stone. Thus, Palaeolithic means Old Stone Age. During this period, the progress made was very slow though it was the longest age in the history of mankind. This period, in the history of the world will however, be remembered for the evolution of man on earth. During the entire of this period, humans predominantly used stone tools. These tools underwent many changes like the types of stone used, the shape of tools, the way and purposes for which tools were used as also other materials used side by side with stone, i.e., wood, bones and others. It was not only the tools which underwent change, but even the physical features and anatomy of humans also changed during this phase of human culture. In this period, man relied on hunting and had no knowledge of cultivation and house building. They belonged to a very primitive grade of civilization. They lived in natural caves or under the shelter of rocks and sustained themselves on natural products, i.e., fruits, herbs, which grew in the forest land. According to the nature of tools and the change in the climate, the Palaeolithic Age in India is divided into three phases: Lower Palaeolithic, Middle Palaeolithic, and Upper Palaeolithic. Later,

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the Palaeolithic age is succeeded by the Mesolithic ('Middle Stone Age'), in which people adapted to the changing environment after the end of the most recent Ice Age, and the Neolithic ('New Stone Age') which saw the spread of agriculture and ended with the coming of shiny bronze tools. The Palaeolithic age finally ended with the end of Ice Age in about 10,000 B.C. The conversion from each of these phases to successive phases was slow and marked by increased fineness in the stone tools and technology of the time as follows:

- Early or Lower Palaeolithic age tools – Hand-axe and cleaver.
- Middle Palaeolithic age tools – Flakes.
- Upper Palaeolithic age tools – Flakes and blades, burins and scrapers.

Robert Bruce Foote established the science of pre-history in India when in 1863 A.D. He discovered the first Palaeolithis. Subsequently, in the next two decades many pre-historic sites were reported in the Southern peninsula. But it was only in the 1930s when H.de Terra and T.T. Paterson undertook a detailed survey of Kashmir, Potwar and Jammu areas, that the pre-historic research gained importance and a number of archaeologists began focusing their attention on the discovery of new pre-historic sites, construction of cultural sequences and reconstruction of palaeo environments. By the 1960s Indian pre-historians could confidently divide the Palaeolithic industries of the Pleistocene (Ice Age), into Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic on the basis of the shape, size and methods of manufacture of the principal artifact types.

Early or Lower Palaeolithic Culture

The first phase is called Early or Lower Palaeolithic which covers the greater part of the Ice Age. This phase lies between 250,000 B.C. to 100,000 B.C. on the basis of scientific dating available so far. Their presence has been recorded in fairly widespread regions. Evidence for their presence is available in Europe, Africa and Asia. The presence of both these hominids has been confirmed by the presence of fossilized bone of skull fragments, tools and other artifacts.

4.2.1 Tools of the Lower Palaeolithic Culture

The major tools of the lower Palaeolithic phase were hand axes, cleavers, and choppers. These are called chopping tools. These were rough and heavy and were created by chipping the sides of the stones. Gradually, sharper and less heavy tools came to be made. The flake tools were the chief tools throughout the middle Palaeolithic period. The tools of the upper Palaeolithic period primarily consisted of burins and scrapers. In hand axes, the butt end is broader and the working edge is narrow. These were used for cutting the trees or digging the roots. The cleavers had a bi-faced edge. These were meant for splitting objects like the trunks of trees. The choppers were the massive core tools with a unifacial working edge and were used for chopping purposes. The hand axes which were found in India are more similar to those of Western Asia, Africa, and Europe. The bruins were like flakes or blades. These were used for engraving on soft stones, bones or rocks. The scrapers were also made of flakes. They used their tools mainly for digging, chopping, and skinning. The tools were all created by removing flakes from a block or core of stone till it reached

the desired size and form. The raw material used for making tools was mainly quartzite but quartzite and basalt was also used.

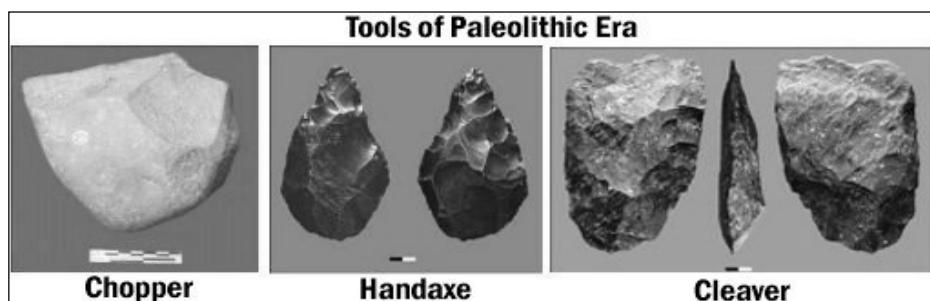


Fig. 4.1

Source: en.wikipedia.org, www.gettyimages.in

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4.2.2 Major Sites of Early or Lower Palaeolithic Culture

The important Palaeolithic sites in India are those areas where archaeologists have found tools fashioned by the hunters. The distribution of the Palaeolithic tools tells not only about the areas in which the hunters lived and moved but also about their environment.

- Bori in Maharashtra is considered to be the first Lower Palaeolithic site.
- Lower Palaeolithic stone tools have also been found in the valley of river Soan or Sohan in Punjab (now in Pakistan), and several sites in Kashmir and the Thar Desert. These were known as the Soanian industries (while the artifacts found over much of the rest of India were known as Acheulian or Madrasian industries) and were dominated by pebble or core tools and characterized as a predominantly chopper or chopping tools. The Acheulian industries were defined by bi-facial flaked artifacts, hand axes, and cleavers besides rough scrapers, spheroids, and picks amongst different tools. The Acheulian artifacts were made principally on hard and durable quartzites.
- The Soan or Sohan culture named after river Soan, a tributary of the Indus in Potwar plateau of Northern Pakistan. This culture is named by Helmut De Terra, Dr. Thomas Patterson of the Yale and Cambridge Mission in 1939 A.D. The Acheulian or Madrasian culture is named after Robert Bruce Foote (a Geologist), who discovered a hand-axe belonging to Early Palaeolithic period at Pallavaram (Modern Chennai) in 1863 A.D.
- The desert area of Didwana in Rajasthan, Belan valley in Uttar Pradesh, Chirki-Nevasa in Maharashtra, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh are some of the significant sites which have yielded Lower Palaeolithic tools.
- The caves and rock shelters of Bhimbetka near Bhopal also show features of the Lower Palaeolithic age. Majority of Lower Palaeolithic artifacts found in all parts of the subcontinent are made of quartzite.

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- The banks of rivers Tapti, Godavari, Bhima and Krishna have yielded a large number of Palaeolithic sites.
- The rivers Palar, Penniyar and Kaveri in Tamil Nadu are rich in Palaeolithic tools. Attiranmpakkam and Gudiyam (in Tamil Nadu) have yielded each early and middle Palaeolithic artifacts like hand axes, flakes, blades, scrapers, etc.
- The Luni river (Rajasthan) complex has many Palaeolithic sites. In Rajasthan also, the evidence of Palaeolithic cultures comes from both Marwar and Mewar. The significant sites are Didwana and Singhitalav.
- Odisha is also rich in Palaeolithic material and mainly found from the district of Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Sambalpur and Bolangir. In Jharkhand, the districts of Singhbhum and Hazaribagh have yielded Palaeolithic tools.

4.2.3 Middle Palaeolithic Culture

The next phase is called the Middle Palaeolithic. The Early or Lower Palaeolithic culture gradually transformed into the middle Palaeolithic by shedding some of the tool types and by incorporating new forms and new techniques of making them. In comparison to the lower Palaeolithic age, the tools in middle Palaeolithic became smaller, thinner and lighter. Further, there was also an important change in the choice of raw material for making tools. The period of flourishing of their culture is referred to as Middle Palaeolithic and their technology as Mousterian. The name is drawn from the site of Le Moustier in Southern France where their tools were found. The spread of Neanderthals is reported from Northern Africa, Southern Africa, East Africa, Europe and Asia.

The credit for the recognition of the Middle Palaeolithic culture in India goes to H.D. Sankalia in 1956 A.D. He discovered a Flake industry comprising scrapers, points, and Borers at Nevasa. Therefore, it is called as Nevisian culture. Another tool tradition of Middle Palaeolithic period is known as Levalloisian culture as it discovered from a French site. The Levalloisian culture tools are look like as tortoise shape.

4.2.4 Tools of Middle Palaeolithic Culture

The tools which are classified as Mousterian have been found in Middle Palaeolithic sites. The main finds are from Europe and Asia and their users have been identified as various species of Homo Sapiens and predominantly Neanderthals. A large number of different types of varying tools have been credited to this culture. They are scrapers, borers, knives, blades, burins, etc. These tools were associated with tool making, hunting, butchering, scraping of bones and maintenance activities. One of the important aspects of the middle Palaeolithic tools is the use of bones, horns, and wood. Sharpened wooden sticks with points hardened with fire to be used and spears are indicative of the hunting of large animals.

The Middle Palaeolithic industries are characterized by smaller and lighter tools based upon flakes struck from cores, which in some cases are carefully shaped and prepared in advance. These flakes are found in different parts of India and show local variations. In most regions, quartzite's continued to be used, and in such cases, Lower Palaeolithic elements continued into the Middle Palaeolithic. The principle tools are verities of blades, points, borers, and scrapers made of flakes. According to the scientific basis, the Middle Palaeolithic phase lies between 100,000 B.C. and 40,000 B.C.

4.2.5 Major Sites of Middle Palaeolithic Culture

The sites belonging to Middle Palaeolithic phase are found in Soan valley.

- The artifacts of Middle Palaeolithic age are found at several places on the river Narmada, and also at several sites, South of the Tungabhadra River, the Wagon and Kalamali rivers in Mewar, Bhandarpur near Orsang valley.
- At Bhimbetka, the tools representing the Acheulian tradition were replaced at a later stage by the Middle Palaeolithic culture.
- The most remarkable group of Middle Palaeolithic sites perhaps in the subcontinent are those in the Rohri hills of upper Sind.

4.2.6 Upper Palaeolithic Culture

This was the final phase of Palaeolithic which lasted till around twelve thousand years back after which the Mesolithic culture appears. This phase as a whole is called upper Palaeolithic. This phase lies between 40,000 B.C. and 10,000 B.C. However, within this phase a number of cultures flourished with distinct characteristics, tool types and regional and geographic variations. The important phases of upper Palaeolithic are Aurignacian, Solutrean, Magdalenian and small cultural groups identified are Perigordian, Gravettian, Szeletian, etc. Upper Palaeolithic culture has been recorded with a large number of evidences from all parts of the world including Australia, and North and South America.

Tools of Upper Palaeolithic Culture

During the upper Palaeolithic phase the art of tool making reached new heights with Homo Sapiens. Large variety of tools, regular use of materials other than stones, tools which could be used from a distance, composite tools through hafting, use of specials intermediary tools for making tools, manufacture of microlithic tools, and certain artistic and aesthetic sense in tool making are some of the major achievements in tool making during this phase. During this period, technology of blade production was perfected. The shape of blade was regular with parallel edges to serve as knife. The tools were now processed by pressure flaking with stone, bone or wood. It was perfected by retouching the edge and point. Burin was perfectly made and was an important tool for engraving or drilling. The use of material other than stones is on a much larger scale in an organized manner. These were bones, horns, antlers, teeth, tusks and wood. These tools comprised standardized forms such as spear points, daggers

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various points, picks, polished tools, pins, needles, and spoon-like implements, clubs, perforated antlers and others which were designed for various important tasks. A number of them were composite tools or were lengthened by a handle. Many of these tools made of organic materials have not survived due to natural decay. Another important feature was introduction of very small tools called microliths. These were used as independent tools or were joined with some handle, or a sharp edge or harpoon or heads of projectiles for specialized tasks for hunting small animals, fishing, processing the hunted animal or giving shape to tools or engraving some aesthetic and art work.

In India, Blade and Burin tools was found during the 19th century by Newbold in 1844 A.D. from Limestone caves in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. For the first time, the Bone tool was also excavated by Robert Bruce Foote from Billasurgam cave.

Quartzites: A kind of hard rock.

Major Sites of Upper Palaeolithic Culture

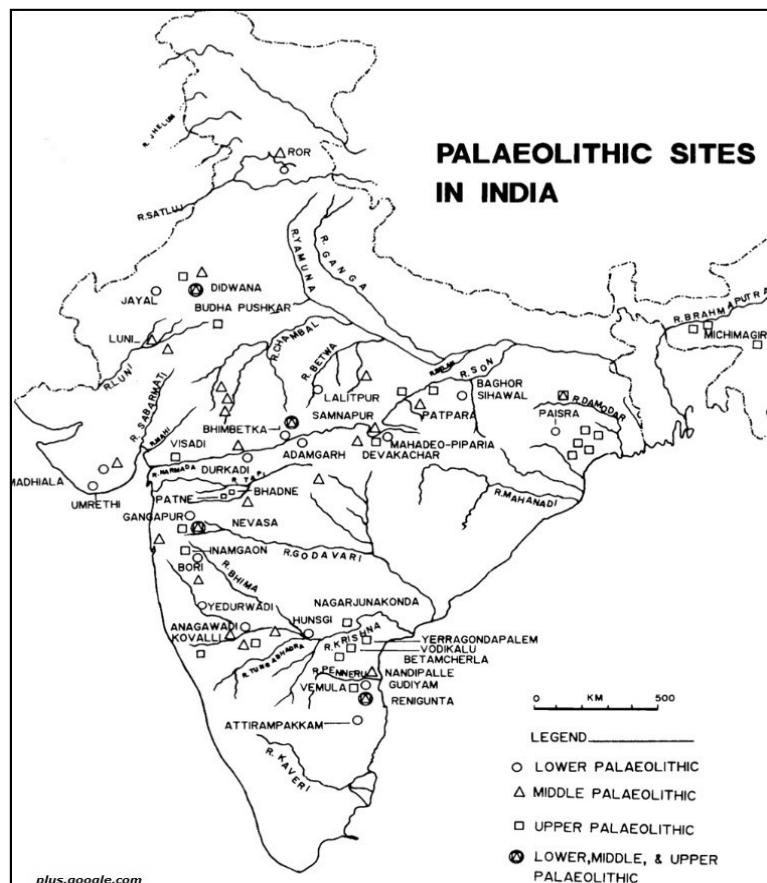


Fig. 4.2: Palaeolithic Sites In India

Source: www.tutorialspoint.com

- The existence of Upper Palaeolithic artifacts has been reported in the Thar regions (though they are more sparsely distributed than those of the Middle Palaeolithic), at Sanghao caves in the North West Frontiers Province and in the Potwar plateau of the Northern Punjab (both in

Pakistan), from parts of South India, central Gujarat and North-Western Kathiawar. An Upper Palaeolithic blade and burin industry from a group of sites near Renigunta in Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh was also found.

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4.2.7 Social Life of the Palaeolithic Culture

The man of the Old Stone Age or Palaeolithic Age played a significant part in the march of civilization. He began life with no better equipment than two hands. Gradually, he made his life better and more secure. Then he used his intellect or power of thinking. He made tools and weapons of stone for his protection and to hunt animals.

Social Life

The early man had to live in constant danger of fierce animals and alone he could not fight against these wild animals. So, he started living in groups. This group formation of the early man was the beginning of his social life. Each group had its own leader. These groups moved from one place to another place in search of food. The Palaeolithic people were ignorant of the use of cloth and remained naked. But with the passage of time, they began to cover their bodies with the skin of animals or the barks of trees. Family life did not fully develop in this Old Stone Age. People of one group generally mixed with each other and jointly shared their joys and sorrows. Probably, all men and women were regarded as of equal importance, and social qualities had not yet come into existence.

Food Gathering and Hunting

The way of obtaining the food of the early man is peculiar. Man in the Old Stone Age was a food gathering man. As the primitive men, he had no idea of cultivation of land to grow his food. He was a food gatherer and hunter. Hunting was his main occupation. He wandered from place to place and gathered his food from fruits, herbs, roots that grew in the forest land. He hunted wild animals with his crude stone weapons and ate their flesh. He took to fishing in rivers and lakes. He had no idea how to cook his food. In due course of time, he discovered the use of fire and started roasting the flesh of animals.

Use of Tools and Implements

Tool making was another chief occupation of the early men of the Palaeolithic period. It was during this period that stone tools began to prepare and the man thought of fighting against powerful animals with the help of these tools. The main tool of early man was the first hatchet (a small axe-cum-hammer). It could be used as an axe, a knife, a hammer or a dagger. Bones and horns of animals were also used for making implements towards the close of the Palaeolithic period. Hand-axes were made of quartzite stone. Both male and female were engaged in building stone tools and household articles. The stone implements used by man in the Palaeolithic period were, however, crude in shape and were not polished.

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Use of Caves as Dwellings

The early man in the Palaeolithic period did not build houses. At first, they climbed tall trees and lived on the top to save him from the attack of wild animals. Later on, they used to live in caves or on the banks of rivers and lakes. In due course of time, they began to make huts to live in.

Discovery and Use of Fire

The most significant achievement of early man of the Palaeolithic period was the discovery and use of fire. Perhaps, he found it first of all in the woods, where it was caused by a lightning flash. He carried burning sticks to the caves where he lived. He kept the fire burning by putting in more sticks and also carried the burning sticks with him as he moved from one cave to another cave. Later on, he discovered fire by rubbing two stones. He used fire for keeping himself warm.

Development of Art and Language

Various forms of arts have come down to us from Palaeolithic societies. These are in the form of engravings, markings, colouring of bones, some polishing, holes in bones, etc. We get a lot of evidence in the form of objects, artifacts, statues, cave or rock paintings and engravings only in the upper Palaeolithic period. The best elaborate surviving art is in the form of rock or cave art. This is available in the form of drawings made on walls, ceiling or floor of caves.

- The engravings and colours have been used to draw them. The drawings mainly pertain to animal figures representing mammoths, deer, fishes, birds, etc. Human figures are less frequently drawn. Hunting scenes with weapons in the hands of hunters are also drawn. The most remarkable find of cave paintings is in Spain in the Altamira caves which were discovered in 1879.
- The paintings done on the ceiling had bison, horses, deer, wolves, and boars. These are life size and brown, yellow, red and black colours were used. Other art forms are decorated tools of bones, horns or stones. Some decorated objects have been found which seem like ornaments. These were used to adorn arms, wrists, neck or feet. The decoration is done by colouring, drawing lines, engraving, polishing, drilling holes and giving specific shapes to art objects.
- Language is the medium of communication. They might have communicated with the use of symbols, markings or limited sounds. It is believed that Homo Sapiens during upper Palaeolithic were capable of speech as they are akin to modern humans.

Religious Beliefs

The early man experienced wonders of nature such as change of seasons, rain, wind, and floods. All these appeared to him strange powers which he failed to understand. In order to get the goodwill of these natural powers, he started worshiping them. They also worshiped the fierce animals such as the lion, the

tiger and the snake. The early man of the Palaeolithic period also believed in a life after death.

Indian Sites of Old Stone Age (Palaeolithic Age)

Lower Palaeolithic	1.	Valley of Sohan in Punjab (now in Pakistan)
	2.	Kashmir and Thar Desert
	3.	Belan Valley in Mirzapur district, UP
	4.	Bidwana in Rajasthan
	5.	Narmada Valley
Middle Palaeolithic	1.	Narmada River Valley
	2.	Tungabhadra River Valley
Upper Palaeolithic	1.	Andhra Pradesh
	2.	Karnataka
	3.	Central Madhya Pradesh
	4.	Maharashtra
	5.	Southern Uttar Pradesh
	6.	South Bihar Plateau

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Check Your Progress

1. Which culture constitutes the longest phase of pre-history?
2. Who first coined the word ‘Palaeolithic’?
3. From which period the Palaeolithic period was covered in India?
4. Who established the science of pre-history in India?
5. What were the major tools of the lower Palaeolithic phase?
6. Write the tools of Middle Palaeolithic culture.
7. Write the major sites of Middle Palaeolithic culture.
8. Write the major sites of Upper Palaeolithic culture.

4.3 MESOLITHIC CULTURE

The Mesolithic culture or Middle Stone Age, which began around eight thousand B.C., was a middle phase between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Age. The word Mesolithic derives from the Greek word *Mesos* means ‘middle’ and *Lithos* means stone. Most Mesolithic sites in India are known from the surface collection of tools. Evidence of Mesolithic cultures has been found at many places in India, and cultures of this period showed a wide variety of subsistence patterns. Hunting cultures often enough co-existed in Mesolithic age and interacted with pastoral and agricultural communities.

- Although man remained nomadic hunter-gatherer, he made changes in his tool kit and hunting techniques. The man started using composite tools, largely, which were more speedy and accurate. For that purpose, he started making microliths. With the help of those, now, he could

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easily hunt smaller and faster games like that of deer-family and flying birds. In the Mesolithic age, there was a change in the pattern of hunting from big game to small game hunting. The Mesolithic cultures in India are generally placed between 8,000 BCE to 4000 B.C.

- The first proof of the presence of Mesolithic man in India was noted in 1867-68 A.D. by **A.C.L. Carlyle (English Archaeologist)**. He had discovered a large number of Microliths in the caves and rock shelters in the Kaimur range in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh. The first Mesolithic site was excavated by **H.D. Sankalia (Hashmukh Dhirajlal Sankalia)** in 1950 A.D. at Langham and other places of Gujarat.
- We can know about the social life and economic activities of the Mesolithic people from the art and paintings found at sites like Bhimbetka, Adamgarh, Pratapgarh and Mirzapur. Mesolithic rock paintings depict people hunting game, gathering plant resources, trapping animals, eating together, dancing and playing instruments. Animals are the most frequent subjects. Other subjects include animal-headed human figures; squares and oblongs partly filled in with hatched designs which may represent huts or enclosures and what appears to be a picture of unusual events, such as the chariots waylaid by men armed with spears and bows and arrows at Morhana Pahar group of rock shelters near Mirzapur.

Development of New Technology in Mesolithic Period

The technology of producing tools also underwent change and this stage is marked by the excessive use of small tools which are called Microliths. The Microlithic tools are small stone tools in size and their length ranges from one to eight centimeter. Blade, core, point, triangle and trapeze are the main types of tools. Besides these Palaeolithic tools like scraper, burin, and even choppers are also continue during this period. A number of the microliths were used as components of spearheads, arrowheads, knives, sickles harpoons and daggers.

Microlith: A **microlith** is a small stone tool usually made of flint or chert. They were made by humans from around 35,000 to 3,000 years ago, across Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. The microliths were used in spear points and arrowheads.

Hunter-gatherers: A term used to describing a society whose main sources of food is hunted wild animals and gathered wild plants. During the last 3 million years of human evolution, hunter-gathering has been the main method of subsistence.

4.3.1 Mesolithic Sites

The important Mesolithic sites in India are as follows:

- The Pachpadra basin and the Sojat area (Rajasthan) are wealthy in microliths. Tilwara, a vital site, has two cultural phases, i.e., the first Phase is characterized by the presence of microliths.

- In the second phase, wheel made, pottery and pieces of iron, along with microliths, are found. Bagor, excavated horizontally, on the River Kothari is the largest Mesolithic site in India.
- The rivers Tapti, Narmada, Mahi and Sabarmati (Gujarat) have also yielded many Mesolithic sites.
- Many Mesolithic sites have also been found in the rivers Tapti, Narmada, Mahi, and Sabarmati (Gujarat). Langhnaj, situated East of River Sabarmati, has produced microliths (mostly blades, triangles, crescents, scrapers, and burins), burials and animal bones. Akhaj, Valasana, and Hirpur are other important Mesolithic sites.
- The Vindhyas and Satpuras are rich in Mesolithic sites. Morhana Pahar and Lekharia (both in Uttar Pradesh) are two important Mesolithic sites in Kaimur range. Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh), with a favourable ecological setup, has yielded many microliths. Adamgarh in Hosangabad is another important Mesolithic site.

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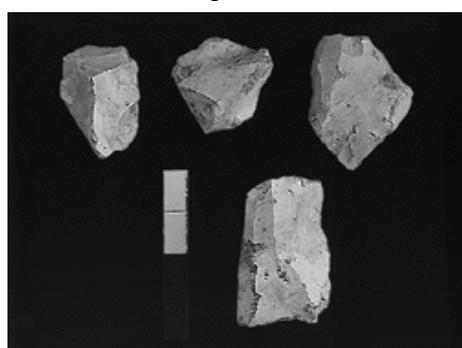


Fig. 4.3: Microliths

Source: www.alamy.com, www.stoneagetools.co.uk, www.himalayanlanguages.org

- The Chhota Nagpur plateau, the coastal plains of Odisha, the Bengal delta, the Brahmaputra valley, and the Shillong plateau have yielded Mesolithic microliths.
- The Krishna and Bhima rivers have produced a lot of microliths, both Mesolithic and Neolithic. Sangankallu located on the Western fringe of the Karnataka plateau has produced cores, flakes, points, and crescents. Microliths have also been found from Kurnool and Renigunta in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Bagor, Sarai-Nahar-Rai, Mahadaha and Adamgarh are truly Mesolithic sites due to their early dates and associated material culture.

Artifact: Any object that has been made, modified or used by human beings. It may range from a coarse stone used in the manufacture of flint to anything of high technical accomplishment in any material.

Hand-axe: A hand axe (or handaxe) is a pre-historic stone tool with two faces that is the longest-used tool in human history. It is usually made from flint or chert.

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Changes in Lifestyle and Economy: From Nomadism to Sedentary Settlements

There were some more remarkable changes in the lifestyles of the Mesolithic people. The good climate, better rainfalls, warms the atmosphere and increased food security led to a reduction in nomadism to seasonally sedentary settlement.

Disposal of Dead and Making of Graves

Mesolithic people started to bury their dead. Mesolithic human burials have been found at Bagor in Rajasthan, Lang in Rajasthan, Langhnaj in Gujarat, Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh, etc. The dead were buried in graves both in extended and crouched position (in crouched position knees are bent and the upper body is brought forward and down). In few cases, two individuals were buried in a single grave. The dead were rarely provided with grave offerings which include chunks of meat, grinding stones, stone, bone and antler ornaments, and pieces of hematite. The proof from different sites indicates that four types of burials were prevalent.

- Extended burial,
- Flexed (folded) burial,
- Fractional (secondary) burial,
- Double burial (two individuals were buried in the single grave); probably, the double burials indicate the development of family units, consisting of male and female.

The Emergence of Arts

The Mesolithic man was a lover of art, evident from the painting in several thousand rock shelters located throughout the world. The paintings have been found in both inhabited and uninhabited shelters. The paintings are made mostly in red and white pigments, made from the nodules found in rocks and earth, (Red made by minerals of iron oxide and white by limestone). From the art and paintings, we can have an idea about the social life and economic activities of the Mesolithic people. It also tells us about the division of labour on the basis of sex. The theme of the painting is mostly wild animals and hunting scenes, though there are some related to human social and religious life such as sexual activity, childbirth, rearing of children, burial ceremony, gathering plant resources, trapping animals, eating together, dancing and playing instruments. Animals are the most frequent subjects. Other subjects include animals headed human figures; squares and oblongs partly filled in with hatched designs which may represent huts or enclosures.

Clothing and Ornaments

The human figures in the rock shelter paintings are shown wearing a loincloth. A few figures are ornately decorated with ornaments, headgear, feather, waistbands, shell, ivory and bone beads also are evident from painting sites. Mesolithic man in rejoicing moods is seen in the rock and cave paintings. Some

of the dances may be of ritual significance. The musical instruments depicted are the blowpipes and horns.

Hunting Methods

The use of composite tools revolutionized hunting, fishing and food gathering. The Mesolithic paintings throw interesting light on the contemporary hunting practices and the kinds of weapons used in hunting. The bow and arrow, barbed spears and sticks were used in hunting. Ring stones were used as stone clubs. The Masks in the form of animal heads such as of rhinoceros, bull, deer, and monkey were used as disguises to deceive the game.

Food Production

The hunting-gathering way of life was slowly replaced by food production from about 6000 B.C. A study has suggested cultivation of plants around 7000-6000 years back. Agriculture had not fully developed. The core economic activities were now included hunting, fowling, fishing and wild plant food gathering. The first animals to be domesticated were dog, cattle sheep, and goat and the first plants to be cultivated were wheat and barley. This new subsistence economy based on food production had a lasting impact on the evolution of human society and the environment. In the humid lands, extending from the middle Ganga valley to China and Southeast Asia, rice cultivation and domestication of the pig was accomplished probably around the same time because rice and pig existed in wild from in this region. Domesticated animals proved to be useful not for meat but also for milk, hide, agriculture operations, and transport. The spread of Neolithic cultural trait including farming, herding, polished stone axes, timber longhouses, and pottery into Europe resulted in the marginalized Mesolithic way of life and its eventual disappearance. Mesolithic adaptations such as population size and use of plant foods are cited as evidence of the transition to agriculture.

4.3.2 Mesolithic Rock Art

Mesolithic Rock-art was a milestone in the developing process of early people. During 1867-68 A.D., A.C.L. Carlyle of Archaeological Survey of India discovered traces of Mesolithic Rock-art in the rock shelters of Sohagighat in the mountain range of Kaimur (Dist. Mirzapur). Since then, around 150 such rock shelters discovered which again can be classified among 19 types. Among these, most of the rock shelters (3/4) are located in the Vindhya-Satpura ranges in Madhya Pradesh. The Rock-art of Bhimbetka (45 km from Bhopal) is a much more noteworthy and widely appreciated. V.S. Vakankar found these rock paintings in 1957 A.D. Here, we see 642 rock shelters in its periphery of 10 km and 7 mountains. Due to ample rains, perennial supply of water, raw material in large quantity, dense forest holding a diversity of animals; Bhimbetka remained favourite choice of pre-historic man to reside. Mathapal classified these painting in three stages. These paintings are mostly in line drawings, of which, art historians identified around 12 styles. Some of them are in single colour and some are in multicolour. Sometimes, we find geometrical design on the paintings of animals.

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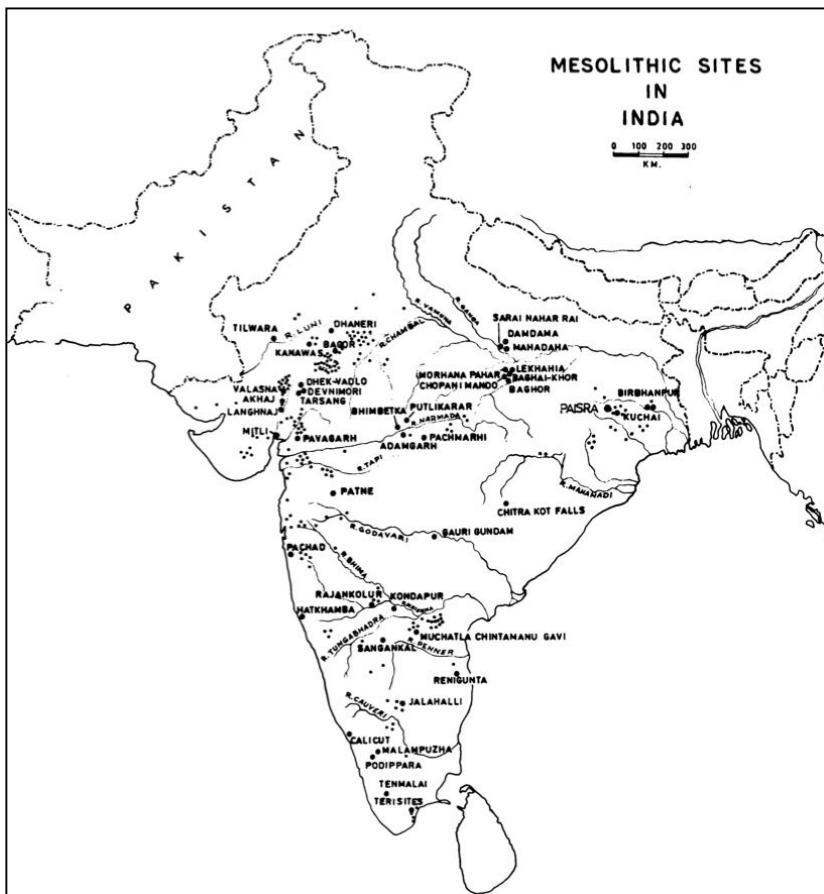
The animal-cache, comprising twenty nine types, included tigers, leopard, elephant, rhino, deer, wild boar, monkey, rabbits, foxes, squirrels, etc. in various movements. Snake is absent from these paintings. They filled their bodies with various geometrical designs. The hunting scenes comprised of mob as well as individual hunting and catching games with the help of trap. The hunters show horn-headed. They also show wearing ornaments like necklaces, bangles, armlets, etc. The scenes also reflect his toolkit, which found from various Mesolithic sites, like, composite tools with microliths, bow-arrow, sticks, catapult, etc. Sometimes, the hunters were shown in company with dogs.

- Apart from hunting, the animals were shown in various activities/movements like the pregnant animal, father-mother playing with their kids, deer chasing birds, jumping rabbits and monkeys, animal grazing, etc. The paintings also depict various modes of subsistence of Mesolithic people like, honey gathering and fishing.
- Around 55 rock shelters discovered from the districts of Sundargarh and Sambalpur in Odisha. However, the paintings over there of geometrical nature besides the paintings of people and animals are quite rare. In the 'Yezuthu rock shelter' in Kerala, display paintings of animals but not of humans. A special mention should be made of 'rock painting' of Jaora caves (M.P.). From this painting, we can understand the concept of Mesolithic people about the creation and nature of universe. Here we find a whole world comprising of animal-human world along with wind, water, etc. It seems that these paintings mostly done for some religious purpose. For, the caves where the paintings drawn; never utilized for residence. Besides, the outlines were repeatedly drawn. It indicates the ancient concept of getting the desired animal through drawing repeatedly on the same painting.

List of Indian Mesolithic Sites, their Locations and Characteristics

Name of Mesolithic Sites	Location	Characteristics
Bagor	Rajasthan	It had a microlithic industry and its people lived on hunting and pastoralism.
Adamgarh	Madhya Pradesh	It shows the earliest evidence for the domestication of animals.
Bhimbetka	Madhya Pradesh	It has more than 500 painted rock shelters.
Langhnaj	Gujarat	Provides the earliest evidence of burial of the dead.
Mohrana Pahara	Mirzapur and Uttar Pradesh	Provides the earliest evidence of burial.

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Map No. 1

Source: <https://indianpre-history.medium.com/india-during-the-mesolithic-f4a8da55e9bb>

Check Your Progress

9. Who noted the first proof of the presence of Mesolithic man in India?
10. Who excavated the first Mesolithic site?
11. Write the major sites of Mesolithic culture.
12. Write a short note on Mesolithic Rock Art.

4.4 NEOLITHIC CULTURE

Neolithic culture or New Stone Age is one of the most significant periods in the history of mankind. It was primarily because, in this period, many significant changes took place and secondly it spread almost in all parts of the world. Therefore, the Neolithic period has considerable importance of its own. In 1842, captain Meadows Tylor picked up the first Neolithic tool, a polished stone axe, in Lingasagur in Raichur District, Karnataka. In 1872, Fraser discovered the first Neolithic settlement in Bellary District, Karnataka. Later, Robert Bruce Foot discovered more than 200 Neolithic sites in South India.

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4.4.1 Meaning and Concept of Neolithic Culture or New Stone Age

The Neolithic has been defined in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as those archaeological assemblages having: (i) polished stone tools, (ii) pottery, and (iii) horticulture and domestication of animals. The word Neolithic has been derived from two Greek words i.e. *Neo* means “New” and *Lithos* means “Stone”, hence the Neolithic period is also known as New Stone Age. This period is considered as one of the significant cultural stages when man started producing food and shifted to production economy from their previous hunting-gathering stage. The man started making specialized tools to suit this economic behaviour and also modified their social behaviour to a large extent which is reflected in the material record. This period spread from 10000 to 5000 B.C. and ended with the commencement of the Metal Age. The New Stone Age began in Europe about 10,000 years ago but it began much earlier in Asia. During that time, geography and climate of the world were very much similar to the geography and climate of the present day. The man was also smart enough to choose better places for living.

The term Neolithic was coined by Sir John Lubbock in his book “Pre-historic Times” first published in 1875. V. Gordon Childe defined the Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture as a self-sufficient food economy. Miles Burkit put forward the following four characteristics a culture should fulfill to be known as a Neolithic culture:

- Agriculture practice.
- Domestication of animals.
- Grinding and polishing stone tools, and
- The manufactured pottery.

In the world context, Neolithic Age started in 10000 B.C. The only Neolithic settlement in the Indian subcontinent attributed to 7000 B.C. lies in Mehrgarh, which is situated in Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan. V.D. Krishnaswami in 1962 A.D. divided the Indian Neolithic complex into four provinces :

- Central and Western India.
- Southern India.
- Eastern India including two regions, i.e., (i) Assam and (ii) Bengal-Bihar-Orissa, and
- Kashmir and grouped the East Indian Neolithic complex as Province.

B.K. Thapar in 1978 divided the New Stone Age into six geographical zones;

- Northern covering the Kashmir valley.
- Belan valley covering the Vindhyan Plateau in the districts of Allahabad, Mirzapur, Rewa and Sidhi.
- Northern Bihar.

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- North-Eastern covering Assam and the adjacent sub-Himalayan region.
- Central-Eastern covering Chotanagpur plateau with its Pen plains extending in West Bengal and Orissa, and
- Southern, covering Peninsular India.

4.4.2 Neolithic Sites

The important Neolithic sites are as follows:

- Mehrgarh, situated on the Karachi plains on the frontier between Baluchistan and Sindh (now in Pakistan), provide evidence of some five or six thousand years of occupation comprising two major periods: First period (8000-6000 B.C.) characterized by a ceramic (lacking pottery) culture, and second period (5000-3000 B.C.) characterized by the emergence of pottery and improvements in agriculture. A fresh kind of building, the small regular compartments, first appeared during this phase. Mehrgarh is the earliest known agricultural settlement of South Asia. Excavations at the site began in 1974 A.D. under the guidance of J.F. Jarrige (French archaeologists Jean-François Jarrige) and in 1986 under Catherine Jarrige.
- In Baluchistan, we have Kili Ghul Muhammad, Rana Ghundai, Anjira, Siah-damb and Mundigak as sites of Neolithic age. The Neolithic sites at Kili Ghul Muhammad provide evidence of four phases of occupation. It was excavated from 1949-1951 A.D. by the American Archaeological mission headed by W.A. Fairservis (popularly known as Walter Fairservis). The first period produced radiocarbon samples of 4400 and 4100 B.C. The people had domesticated sheep, goats, and oxen. They had also constructed houses of mud-brick or hard packed clay by the end of the period. Tools discovered include blades of chert, jasper, rubbing or grinding stone, awls or points of bone.
- This period belongs to the pre-ceramic phase. Second and third periods yielded crude handmade and basket-marked pottery. In the third period, copper was found along with wheel thrown and handmade decorated potteries. At Rana Ghundai, a series of living surfaces and hearths of nomadic people were unearthed. The Rana Ghundai sequence was established after brief excavations by Brigadier E.J. Ross in 1946 A.D. Plain handmade pottery, bone points and a stone blade industry were also found. Bones of sheep, goat, ass, cattle and four teeth of semi-one or semi-ass were unearthed.
- At Anjira, a chert blade industry, bone awls, spatula, and a small bead was found. The pottery was wheel thrown and painted with motifs. This stage was followed by a level where house walls of river boulders were prepared. At Mundigak in Southeast Afghanistan, J.M. Casal found a very important sequence of settlements. At first, it was a settlement of semi-nomadic people followed by a level with oblong

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cells with walls of pressed earth. In the subsequent levels, larger houses were built with several squares or oblong rooms made of sun-dried bricks.

- The Neolithic Culture of Kashmir valley (Burzahom and Gufkral) is characterized by pit-dwellings with well-made floors smeared with red-ochre as well as dwellings in the open. The Kashmir Neolithic culture was distinguished by its dwelling pits, the range of ceramics, variety of stone and bore tools. Burzahom is an important site which is situated sixteen-kilometer North-West of Srinagar. The Neolithic people lived there on a lake-side in pits and perhaps had hunting and fishing economy.
- **The Burzahom site was discovered by Helmut De Terra and Dr. Thomas Patterson in 1935 A.D. The site was excavated in 1960-71 A.D. under the guidance of T.N. Khazanchi.** The people of Gufkral, a Neolithic site forty-one kilometer South-West of Srinagar, practiced both agriculture and domestication of animals. However, in subsequent phases, coarse grey pottery was used by the people of Gufkral.
- Excavated sites of the Belan Valley, in the Vindhyan Plateau, indicating transition from the food-gathering to the food-producing stage are Chopani-Mando, Koldihawa and Mahagara. The Neolithic culture of the valley shows a developed sedentary life with defined family units living in circular huts made of timber posts and thatch.
- The Neolithic cultures of the hills of Assam including North Cachar, the Garo and the Naga hills, which fall in the monsoon zone, are characterized by shouldered Celts, small ground axes of rounded form and cord-impressed pottery. The Assam Neolithic Culture phase is maybe dated around 2000 B.C.
- Archaeologists have classified the Neolithic culture in South India into three phases. At Sangankallu and Nagarjunakonda, the people had an only rudimentary knowledge of cultivation. In the second phase, besides the continuation of the features of the first phase, lapidary art and domestication of animals are the new features. In the third phase, the grey ware pottery is predominant. Excavated sites of South India are Sangankallu, Nagarjunakonda, Maski, Brahmagiri, Tekkalokota (Karnataka), Piklihal, Piyampali (Tamil Nadu) and Hallur. Uthur is an important site in Andhra Pradesh.
- The Neolithic people in Piklihal were cattle herders. They set up seasonal camps surrounded by Cowpens. Both ash mounds and habitation sites have been found in Piklihal.
- Those sites produced distinctive burnished grey pottery, smaller quantities of black on red painted pottery, stone axes, and bone points and in some instances evidence of a stone-blade industry. The caves have a generally oval section and triangular form with pointed butts. Cattle bones are in the majority; those of sheep or goats are less common.

- In the Neolithic sites of Upper, Central, and Western Deccan, besides the ground stone tools made on black trap, a large number of parallel-sided blades and microliths of agate, chalcedony and carnelian were found along with grey ware and chalcolithic type painted pottery, though no clear-cut Neolithic phase has been recorded in this region.
- Leaving aside a few parts of the South, Neolithic Age spread over India also. Traces of this age have been found in extreme South in Tinnevelly, Mysore, Malabar, and at Bellary, Cuddapah and Anantapur districts. The Neolithic man of India had a fine sense of colours which he used on pottery. He used figures of flowers and animals on the pottery.
- Gumla is another Neolithic site situated North-West of Dera Ismail Khan on the right bank of the River Indus. Out of a series of six periods, the first belongs to the Neolithic phase in which hearths, community ovens, animal bones, coarse pottery, and microliths have been found.
- Jalilpur is another site of Neolithic age which is situated in South-Western Punjab (Multan) near the left bank of the river Ravi. This site is characterized by stone-blade industry, bone points, use of mud-bricks, terracotta net sinkers suggesting fishing as an element of the economy, handmade pottery of bright red clay, gold, coral, and semi-precious beads.
- Explorations conducted in different parts of Odisha have yielded several Neolithic sites and a few of them have been excavated, which placed the Neolithic culture of these areas in a chrono-stratigraphical position. The excavations carried out at Kuchai, Baidipur and Shankarjang (Dhenkanal district) confirmed Neolithic Celts in association with a coarse grit-tempered red ware. Baidipur is characterized by the occurrence of rice. Suabarei of Puri district is one of the recently excavated sites of Odisha. This site was excavated by excavations Branch IV of Archaeological survey of India.

Centers of New Stone or Neolithic Age

Of course, New Stone Age developed slowly and gradually all over the world, but the center of its development were the Nile Valley, Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Mesopotamia, Indus River, Hwang Ho River, Crete islands, Andes Mountains and Yucatan Peninsula regions.

4.4.3 Transition from Palaeolithic to Neolithic Period

The earliest inhabitants of the world were food-gatherers. It took them a pretty long time to change from food-gatherers to food-producers. But once they learnt to produce food, their progress was very fast. The Neolithic man profited from the experience of the earlier culture.

- Firstly, he made improved in the verities of stone tools. They polished the stone to make it sharp. Sharp tools served several useful purposes. They prepared axes in stone and tied them to handles made of wood

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which proved a very useful weapon to kill animals and to cut wood. They also prepared sharp arrowheads. Improved weapons made hunting easy.

- Secondly, they realized the value of animals. Before the Neolithic age, animals were hunted and killed for food. Now, they were domesticated. Domestic animals served many useful purposes.
- Thirdly, though hunting was the chief occupation of the Neolithic men, they gradually came to learn the art of agriculture. They saw how plants grew out of seeds. By thinking intelligently, the Neolithic men sowed seeds and got crops.
- Fourthly, the Neolithic men came to know pottery and made earthen pots for use.
- Fifthly, the Neolithic men became capable weavers. In the beginning, they were using dry skins of animals as clothes. Later on, they prepared cloth from barks of trees.
- Sixthly, during the New Stone Age, men learnt to construct huts to live permanently. That was the beginning of human settlements. They could learn in due course of time how to live together in groups in some kind of village like settlements.
- Seventhly, towards the close of the New Stone Age, man learnt the use of metals. Metal implements proved better than stone implements. Of course, till the end of the Neolithic period, stone tools were used in plenty. But the very knowledge of gold, copper, tin, bronze and iron pointed to a more developed time.

4.4.4 Neolithic Tools

Neolithic tools were of a superior variety than those of the preceding periods. The stone tools of the Neolithic people consisted of ground stone tools like axes, adzes, wedges, chisels, microliths and stone blades. At Palavoy, a rich bone tool assemblage comprising axes, blades, and points has been found. In the later stages of the culture copper and bronze tools also came to be used. Unlike Palaeolithic and Mesolithic tools, Neolithic tools have signs of polish, either all over the body or at the ends. Many of the tools were grooved and polished till they became highly finished objects of various forms and adapted to diverse purposes.

- The material of the tools of this age was primarily fine-grained dark-green traps, although diorite, basalt, slate, chlorite, schist, gneiss, sandstone, and quartzite were also occasionally used. The pottery was initially only handmade, of poor quality and drab grey colour, and consisted of jars, spouted vessels, and bowls of various sizes, sometimes decorated with incised designs. In later stages, wheel made, sturdy pottery, occasionally decorated with painted motifs, also came into use.

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- An important new ceramic was black and red ware. According to Bruce Foote, the Indian Neolithic implements can be classified into 78 distinct types. 41 types belong to the polished class and rest 37 to the unpolished class. Chisels, hammers, mortars, beads, buttons, discs, toys, etc. belongs to the polished class and arrows, knives, lancets, wedges, and mallets belongs to the unpolished class. Here are some outstanding achievements of the inhabitants of the Neolithic period.

Food Production

The concluding phase of the Stone Age, the Neolithic Age, which followed the Mesolithic, heralded the beginning of food production. The people of Neolithic age had made a significant improvement in the quality of their food. In due course of time, they had made themselves acquainted with fire and began taking cooked food. Instead of eating the uncooked flesh of various animals, they now started roasting the flesh of various animals. Their food consisted of fruit, milk, curd, ghee, butter, and juice of various forest vegetables. Apart from this, the people used to eat the flesh of various animals and birds.

Dress

As people had come to know the art of agriculture, they began to grow cotton. The art of weaving and spinning began to develop. They made spinning wheels and started making clothes by spinning cotton. The Neolithic people had started to cover their bodies with a loin cloth which can be compared with modern Dhoti. Women probably used a petticoat up to their knees. They also combed their hair to form various shapes. They also put on beads, rings, bangles, and armlets. Clothes woven of linen, cotton and wool had started replacing skins and skirts of leaves. People tanned leather and also used animal skins for clothing along with flax, wool, and goat hair which was spun into thread.

Beginning of Agriculture

How the early men came to know the art of agriculture still remains a mystery? Why did people give up hunting and gathering for farming? There are many probable reasons which played an important role in the development of agriculture in the Neolithic period. The reasons are as follows

- Changes in climate may have made it too cold or too dry to rely on wild food sources.
- Larger population density may have demanded more food that could be harvested from the wild.
- Changing technology, such as domesticated seeds, would have made agriculture a more feasible lifestyle.

Probably, the Neolithic people came across wheat, rice and barley growing wild and found them delicious to eat. The people of the Neolithic period sowed some of these grains as seeds. These seeds grew into plants and in this way men of the Neolithic age began to produce their own food. Though they did not give up hunting, they were no longer fully dependent on it. In the beginning, they had shifting system of cultivation. The deep variations in

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human interactions and subsistence ways related to the onset of early agricultural practices within the Neolithic are referred to as Neolithic Revolution, a term coined in the 1920s by the Australian archaeologist V. Gordon Childe.

- With the commencement of the Neolithic age, human beings became less dependent on hunting and food gathering and began to produce their own food. Cultivation of cereals and development in agriculture transformed the nomadic hunter-gatherers into sedentary farmers. This led to the beginning of village settlements, manufacturing of new types of tools and greater control over nature by utilization of natural resources. Now, with the development of agriculture, technology and the inventions of more sophisticated tools used in agriculture, people of the Neolithic age were able to build permanent shelters.
- The most common tools used were daggers and spear points, used for hunting and hand axes, used for cutting up different meats, and scrapers, which were used to clean animal hides. Advances in tool making and domestic technology led to progress in agriculture. Farming started a revolution in the world and helped set us on a path that would eventually lead to the technological revolution and invention of different things.
- The distinctive characteristic of Neolithic technology is the use of polished or ground stone tools, in contrast to the flaked stone tools used during the Palaeolithic era. Neolithic people were skilled farmers, manufacturing a range of tools necessary for the tending, harvesting, and processing of crops (such as sickle blades and grinding stones) and food production (e.g., pottery and bone implements). The people of the Neolithic period were also skilled manufacturers of a range of other types of stone tools and ornaments, including projectile points, beads, and statuettes.



Fig. 4.4: Agriculture and Domestication of Animals

Source: www.alamy.com, www.stoneagetools.co.uk, www.himalayanlanguages.org

Excavations at Burzahom and Gufkral have given proof of lentil, masur, pea, wheat, and barley. Chopani-Mando in Belan Valley yields significant evidence of the presence of wild rice, while excavations at Koldihawa, another

site in the Valley, have given the evidence of domestication of modern variety of rice. At Senuwar (Rohtas, Bihar), the Neolithic farmers cultivated rice, barley, field pea, lentil, and some millets. A variety of wheat and grass pea have also been found from this site. Millet (ragi) was one of the earliest crops cultivated by the Neolithic farmers in South India. It is usually believed that the domesticated ragi came from East Africa. Other crops cultivated by the Neolithic people in South India were wheat, horse gram and moong (green gram). Date palm was also grown.

Thus, Agriculture during the Neolithic period gave the human species a new feeling of security that their past way of life could not. However, this new manner of living created new issues within the communities. Famines and pests yielded new diseases that the people of this period had not seen before. Sanitation became a problem due to the fact that most primitive villages did not have a proper form of waste disposal. Due to the fact that agriculture led to technological innovations, it can be said that the Neolithic Era was the catalyst for the future of technology.

Domestication of Animals

To help them in the work of agriculture, men of the Neolithic Age began to domesticate animals. Certain concerns must have guided the selection of animal to be domesticated. The important ones of these were:

- The provision of food for these domesticated animals was easily available through human efforts and guidance.
- They were not too aggressive to cause harm to the persons domesticating them, and
- They could easily move from one place to the other with the groups keeping them under captivity.

Probably, the first animals to be tamed were dogs and asses. Next to be tamed were pig, goats, sheep and cattle (cows, oxen and buffaloes). The dog helped them in hunting as well as in protecting their houses, fields, and cattle. The ass and the ox were used as beasts of burden. Cattle were kept for milk. They kept goats and sheep for their meat. The goats also gave them milk. The sheep gave them wool for their clothes. Some men of this age kept herds of animals (goats, sheep, cows, etc.) only. They did not cultivate the land. They became shepherds. They were still wanderers or nomads and did not lead a settled life. They roamed about the plains and hill slopes in search of grass for their animals.

Beginning of Settled Life

Agriculture, thus, paved the way for a settled life. When men took to agriculture, they began to lead a more settled life. They started living near the fields where they cultivated. They built small houses of tree branches and plastered them with mud.

- To protect themselves from wild animals, these men built fences of sharpened wooden poles round their huts. Thus, the wandering groups

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of the Palaeolithic Period now settled in different places. These small settlements gradually developed into villages and even small fortified towns. This was the beginning of the settled life. Now different families and groups learnt to live together.

- They developed some sort of common language which was understood by the inhabitants of the village. The head of the family now enjoyed great respect. People had an elaborate political organization. The principle of division of labour among the people also emerged in this period. There were farmers, miners and traders and others. But the mining and trading works were in rudimentary conditions.

Development of Community Life

When people had settled life, the community life also began among them. They built houses and small huts with the help of the branches of trees. Villages were constructed in lakes on long wooden platforms, supported by thousands of piles. Such constructions provided them protection from enemies and wild animals.

- They made boats by burning the inner parts of the long logs. Such boats were used to move on the water from one place to other place. Gradually, group and family life began to emerge. They lived in organized societies governed perhaps by a council of elders. Their activities and relationships were governed by customs which was law for them.

Better Stone Implements

The stone implements made by the Neolithic men were better than those made by men of the Palaeolithic Age. They needed more implements now. They had to till the soil in order to sow seeds. They made a digging stick for this purpose.

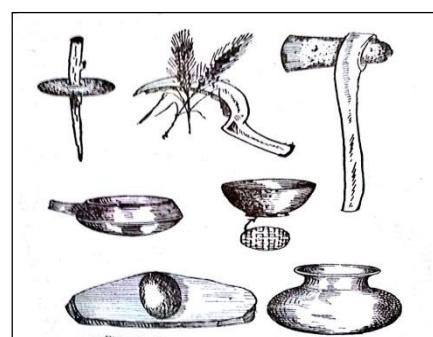


Fig. 4.5: Stone Tools

Source: www.alamy.com, www.stoneagetools.co.uk, www.himalayanlanguages.org

- Their axe was now larger and had a wooden handle. They made knives of stone to cut plants, fruits and meat. They made a stone sickle in order to cut down the crops of wheat and also other grains. The hammer used by them was now better and had also a wooden handle. The Neolithic men also made stone utensils to store food and water. All these stone tools and weapons were well shaped and polished.

Development of Art of Pottery and Weaving

Art of pottery and earthen goods were developed quickly. Beautiful colours were applied on the potteries which assumed graceful form. When men started growing their own food, they needed vessels to store the grains. First of all they made stone vessels. Then they learnt to make baskets by using thin branches of trees. In the meantime, they had also learnt how to cook their food. So, they needed utensils. The stone utensils could not serve this purpose. So, they learnt to make earthen pots. The earliest pots were made by plastering clay round the baskets. Later, they were made without using baskets. These earthen pots were hardened or baked by heating them on the fire.



Fig. 4.6: Art of Pottery

Source: www.alamy.com, www.stoneagetools.co.uk, www.pinterest.com

Invention of the Wheel

The most important invention of this period was wheel. The cart with the wheels became his chief means of transport. Its invention led to a big advance in the pattern of living. The wheel was soon put to numerous uses. It was used to give shape to an earthen pot, to roll a wagon, to turn a spindle and to work as a pulley. The inventor of the wheel was, in fact, one of the greatest accelerators of human progress. This invention accelerated the pace of progress and communication between different groups became quick and feasible.

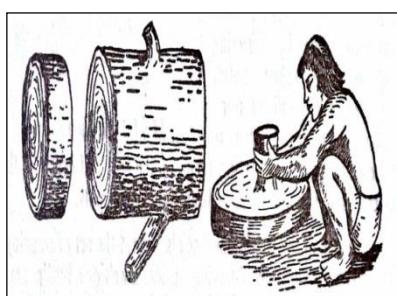


Fig. 4.7: Wheel

Source: www.alamy.com, www.stoneagetools.co.uk, www.pinterest.com

Dwelling Houses and Development of Art during Neolithic Age

The Neolithic people had learnt the art of making dwelling houses. They were made of mud and stone. Probably the Neolithic people preferred to build huts on lakes in order to protect themselves from the attack of wild animals. They

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constructed huts on timber platforms supported by pillars driven into the bed of the lake.

- The internal walls of these houses were decorated with the paintings of wild and domesticated animals. Scenes of hunting and dancing were also painted on these walls. Besides drawing pictures on the walls, the artists of the Neolithic Period made statues of stone and ivory. They polished and decorated their stone tools and implements by different designs. The potter of the Neolithic Age was a great artist. He could not only make beautiful earthen pots but could also carve artistic designs on their surface. He polished his pots in different colours. The pottery-pieces of this period excavated at different places of the world small retain the brilliance of their coloured polish.

Disposal of the Dead

The Neolithic people did not throw the dead bodies in the open fields, but they used to dispose of the dead bodies in two different ways. Firstly, the dead one was buried, as evident from various skeletons found in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh. Secondly, the Neolithic people followed the practice of urn burial, the urns did not contain the ashes of the dead but the whole body, reduced in bulk by pounding or dissection.

Religious Beliefs

The religious beliefs of the Neolithic people were almost the same as those of the Palaeolithic people. The men of the Neolithic age had belief in the supernatural powers. They worshiped Mother Earth, Rain, and Sun. They tried to win the favour of nature gods by offering sacrifices and conducting certain religious ceremonies. The religious beliefs of the Neolithic men also comprised of the worship of ancestral spirits and performance of some ceremonies on the occasion of death.



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Map No. 2

Source: <https://img.brainkart.com/imagebk34/NMsVM8g.jpg>

Check Your Progress

13. Who picked up the first Neolithic tool, a polished stone axe, in Lingasagur in Raichur District, Karnataka?
14. Who coined the term Neolithic in his book “Pre-historic Times” first published in 1875?
15. In which year V.D. Krishnaswami divided the Indian Neolithic complex into four provinces?
16. Who discovered the Burzahom site in 1935 A.D.?
17. Write down different centers of Neolithic age.
18. Explain the food production in Neolithic age.

4.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The Palaeolithic culture constitutes the longest phase of pre-history.
2. The word Palaeolithic was coined by archaeologist Sir John Lubbock in 1865 A.D.
3. The Palaeolithic Age or Old Stone Age in India covered from 2,500,000 B.C. to 10,000 B.C in the Pleistocene Period of the Ice Age.

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4. Robert Bruce Foote established the science of pre-history in India when in 1863 A.D.
5. The major tools of the lower Palaeolithic phase were hand axes, cleavers and choppers. These are called chopping tools.
6. A large number of different types of varying tools have been credited to this culture. They are scrapers, borers, knives, blades, burins, etc. These tools were associated with tool making, hunting, butchering, scraping of bones and maintenance activities. One of the important aspects of the middle Palaeolithic tools is the use of bones, horns, and wood. Sharpened wooden sticks with points hardened with fire to be used and spears are indicative of the hunting of large animals.
7. The sites belonging to Middle Palaeolithic phase are found in Soan valley. The artifacts of Middle Palaeolithic age are found at several places on the river Narmada, and also at several sites, South of the Tungabhadra River, the Wagon and Kalamali rivers in Mewar, Bhandarpur near Or-sang valley. At Bhimbetka, the tools representing the Acheulian tradition were replaced at a later stage by the Middle Palaeolithic culture. The most remarkable group of Middle Palaeolithic sites perhaps in the subcontinent are those in the Rohri hills of upper Sind.
8. The existence of Upper Palaeolithic artifacts has been reported in the Thar regions (though they are more sparsely distributed than those of the Middle Palaeolithic), at Sanghao caves in the North West Frontiers Province and in the Potwar plateau of the Northern Punjab (both in Pakistan), from parts of South India, central Gujarat and North-Western Kathiawar. An Upper Palaeolithic blade and burin industry from a group of sites near Renigunta in Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh was also found.
9. The first proof of the presence of Mesolithic man in India was noted in 1867-68 A.D. by A.C.L. Carlyle (English Archaeologist).
10. The first Mesolithic site was excavated by H.D. Sankalia (Hashmukh Dhirajlal Sankalia) in 1950 A.D. at Langham and other places of Gujarat.
11. The important Mesolithic sites in India are as follows: The Pachpadra basin and the Sojat area (Rajasthan) are wealthy in microliths. Tilwara, a vital site, has two cultural phases i.e. the first Phase is characterized by the presence of microliths. In the second Phase, wheel made, pottery and pieces of iron, along with microliths, are found. Bagor, excavated horizontally, on the River Kothari is the largest Mesolithic site in India. The rivers Tapti, Narmada, Mahi and Sabarmati (Gujarat) have also yielded many Mesolithic sites.
12. Mesolithic Rock-art was a milestone in the developing process of early people. During 1867-68 A.D., A.C.L. Carlyle of Archaeological Survey of India discovered traces of Mesolithic Rock-art in the rock-shelters of Sohagighat in the mountain range of Kaimur (Dist.

Mirzapur). Since then, around 150 such rock shelters discovered which again can be classified among nineteen types. Among these, most of the rock-shelters (3/4) are located in the Vindhya-Satpura ranges in Madhya Pradesh. The Rock-art of Bhimbetka (45 km from Bhopal) is a much more noteworthy and widely appreciated. V.S. Vakankar found these rock paintings in 1957 A.D. At here, we see six hundred forty two rock shelters in its periphery of ten km and seven mountains.

13. In 1842, captain Meadows Tylor picked up the first Neolithic tool, a polished stone axe, in Lingasagur in Raichur District, Karnataka.
14. The term Neolithic was coined by Sir John Lubbock in his book “Pre-historic Times” first published in 1875. V. Gordon Childe defined the Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture as a self-sufficient food economy.
15. V.D. Krishnaswami in 1962 A.D. divided the Indian Neolithic complex into four provinces.
16. The Burzahom site was discovered by Helmut De Terra and Dr. Thomas Patterson in 1935 A.D. The site was excavated in 1960-71 A.D. under the guidance of T.N. Khazanchi.
17. New Stone Age developed slowly and gradually all over the world, but the center of its development were the Nile Valley, Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Mesopotamia, Indus River, Hwang Ho River, Crete islands, Andes Mountains and Yucatan Peninsula regions.
18. The concluding phase of the Stone Age, the Neolithic Age, which followed the Mesolithic, heralded the beginning of food production. The people of Neolithic age had made a significant improvement in the quality of their food. In due course of time, they had made themselves acquainted with fire and began taking cooked food. Instead of eating the uncooked flesh of various animals, they now started roasting the flesh of various animals. Their food consisted of fruit, milk, curd, ghee, butter, and juice of various forest vegetables. Apart from this, the people used to eat the flesh of various animals and birds. For the first time, people began staying in one place to grow grains and vegetables. Slowly, farming replaced hunting and gathering as the main source of food. Simultaneously, people began to domesticate or tame animals for human use. Animals transported goods and provided meat, milk, and wool. The Neolithic men had settled life. They practiced agriculture and grew fruits and corn.

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4.6 SUMMARY

- The Palaeolithic Age or Old Stone Age in India covered from 2,500,000 B.C. and 10,000 B.C. in the Pleistocene Period of the Ice Age. It was the primary a part of the Stone Age. The term Palaeolithic is derived from two Greek words Palaois means Old and Lithos means Stone. Thus, Palaeolithic means Old Stone Age.

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- This period has been divided into three phases: lower Paleolithic, middle Paleolithic and upper Paleolithic with distinctive features. The characteristics feature of Lower Palaeolithic is the use of hand axes, cleavers, and choppers. The hand axes which were found in India are more similar to those of Western Asia, Africa and Europe.
- The Soan or Sohan culture named after river Soan, a tributary of the Indus in Potwar plateau of Northern Pakistan. This culture is named by Helmut De Terra, Dr. Thomas Patterson of the Yale and Cambridge Mission in 1939 A.D.
- The credit for the identification of the Middle Palaeolithic culture in India goes to H.D. Sankalia in 1956 A.D. He discovered a Flake industry comprising scrapers, points, and Borers at Nevasa.
- The pattern of habitation and settlement of hunting gathering cultures also changed during this period. Apart from caves and rock shelters, they made dwellings of various types in almost all parts inhabited by them. Discovery and use of fire had a lot of impact on food consumption and way of life during the Paleolithic period.
- The artifacts of Middle Palaeolithic age are found at several places on the river Narmada, and also at several sites, South of the Tungabhadra River, the Wagon and Kalamali rivers in Mewar, Bhandarpur near Orsang valley.
- In the Paleolithic cultures, we come across arts in various forms. Some important ones were cave paintings, decorative arts and statues which have come down to us from various Paleolithic settlements.
- Tool making was another chief occupation of the early men of the Palaeolithic period. It was during this period that stone tools began to prepare and the man thought of fighting against powerful animals with the help of these tools. The early man of the Palaeolithic period also believed in a life after death.
- The Mesolithic culture or Middle Stone Age, which began around 8000 B.C., was a middle phase between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Age. The word Mesolithic derives from the Greek word Mesos means 'middle' and Lithos means stone.
- The first evidence of the presence of Mesolithic man in India was noted in 1867-68 A.D. by A.C.L. Carlyle (English Archaeologist). He had discovered a large number of Microliths in the caves and rock shelters in the Kaimur range in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The technology of producing tools also underwent change and this stage is marked by the excessive use of small tools which are called Microliths. The Microlithic tools are small stone tools in size and their length ranges from one to eight centimeter.
- Many Mesolithic sites have also found in the rivers Tapti, Narmada, Mahi, and Sabarmati (Gujarat). Langhnaj, situated East of River Sabarmati, has produced microliths (mostly blades, triangles, crescents, scrapers and burins), burials and animal bones.

- Mesolithic people started to bury their dead. Mesolithic human burials have been found at Bagor in Rajasthan, Lang in Rajasthan, Langhnaj in Gujarat, Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh, etc. The dead were buried in graves both in extended and crouched position in crouched position knees are bent and the upper body is brought forward and down.
- The paintings are made mostly in red and white pigments, made from the nodules found in rocks and earth (red made by minerals of iron oxide and white by limestone). From the art and paintings, we can have an idea about the social life and economic activities of the Mesolithic people. It also tells us about the division of labour on the basis of sex.
- The hunting-gathering way of life was slowly replaced by food production from about 6000 B.C. A study has suggested cultivation of plants around 7000-6000 years back. Agriculture had not fully developed. The core economic activities were now included hunting, fowling, fishing and wild plant food gathering.
- Neolithic period or New Stone Age is one of the most important periods in the history of mankind. In 1842, captain Meadows Tylor picked up the first Neolithic tool, a polished stone axe, in Lingasagur in Raichur District, Karnataka. In 1872, Fraser discovered the first Neolithic settlement in Bellary District, Karnataka. Later, Robert Bruce Foot discovered more than two hundred Neolithic sites in South India.
- The term Neolithic was coined by Sir John Lubbock in his book “Pre-historic Times” first published in 1875. V. Gordon Childe defined the Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture as a self-sufficient food economy.
- In the world context, Neolithic Age started in 10000 B.C. The only Neolithic settlement in the Indian subcontinent attributed to 7000 B.C. lies in Mehrgarh, which is situated in Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan.
- In Baluchistan, we have Kili Ghul Muhammad, Rana Ghundai, Anjira, Siah-damb and Mundigak as sites of Neolithic age. The Neolithic Culture of Kashmir valley (Burzahom and Gufkral) is characterized by pit-dwellings with well-made floors smeared with red-ochre as well as dwellings in the open.
- Excavated sites of South India are Sangankallu, Nagarjunakonda, Maski, Brahmagiri, Tekkalokota (Karnataka), Piklihal, Piyampali (Tamil Nadu), and Hallur. Uthur is an important site in Andhra Pradesh.
- Leaving aside few parts of the South, Neolithic Age spread over India also. Traces of this age have been found in extreme South in Tinnevelly, Mysore, Malabar, and at Bellary, Cuddapah and Anantpur districts.
- Jalilpur is another site of Neolithic age which is situated in the South-Western Punjab (Multan) near the left bank of the river Ravi. This site is characterized by stone-blade industry, bone points, use of mud-

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bricks, terracotta net sinkers suggesting fishing as an element of economy, handmade pottery of bright red clay, gold, coral, and semi precious beads.

- Neolithic tools were of a superior variety than those of the preceding periods. The stone tools of the Neolithic people consisted of ground stone tools like axes, adzes, wedges, chisels, microliths and stone blades.
- The people of Neolithic age had made significant improvement in the quality of their food. Their food consisted of fruit, milk, curd, ghee, butter, and juice of various forest vegetables. Apart from this, the people used to eat flesh of various animals and birds.
- The Neolithic people had started to cover their bodies with a loin cloth which can be compared with modern Dhoti. Women probably used a petticoat up to their knees. They also combed their hair to form various shapes. They also put on beads, rings, bangles, and armlets. Clothes woven of linen, cotton and wool had started replacing skins and skirts of leaves.
- With the beginning of the Neolithic age, human beings became less dependent on hunting and food gathering and began to produce their own food. Cultivation of cereals and development in agriculture transformed the nomadic hunter-gatherers into sedentary farmers. This led to the beginning of village settlements, manufacturing of new types of tools and greater control over nature by utilization of natural resources.
- Advances in tool making and domestic technology led to progress in agriculture. Farming started a revolution in the world and helped set us on a path that would eventually lead to the technological revolution and invention of different things. Inventions such as the plow helped in the planting of seeds. The North-Western region, i.e., present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan, provides the earliest evidence of the origin of wheat and barley. Village settlements appeared in the Kashmir Valley by about 2500 B.C. Excavations at Burzahom and Gufkral have given evidences of lentil, masur, pea, wheat and barley.
- In South India, millet (ragi) was one of the earliest crops cultivated by the Neolithic farmers.
- To help them in the work of agriculture, men of the Neolithic Age began to domesticate animals. The first animals to be tamed were dogs and asses. Next to be tamed were pig, goats, sheep and cattle (cows, oxen and buffaloes). The dog helped them in hunting as well as in protecting their houses, fields and cattle. The ass and the ox were used as beasts of burden. Cattle were kept for milk. They kept goats and sheep for their meat. The goats also gave them milk. The sheep gave them wool for their clothes.
- Agriculture, thus, paved the way for a settled life. When men took to agriculture, they began to lead a more settled life. They started living

near the fields where they cultivated. When people had settled life, the community life also began among them.

- Art of pottery and earthen goods were developed quickly. Beautiful colours were applied on the potteries which assumed graceful form. The most important invention of this period was wheel. The cart with the wheels became his chief means of transport. Its invention led to a big advance in the pattern of living.
- The men of the Neolithic age had belief in the supernatural powers. They worshiped Mother Earth, Rain, and Sun. They tried to win the favour of nature gods by offering sacrifices and conducting certain religious ceremonies.
- Immediately after the Neolithic Age, man came to learn of the use of metals. In the beginning, they were greatly attracted by the shine of gold, but later on, it was given up in favour of hard metals such as copper and bronze.
- In due course of time, the people came to know the use of iron, the hardest metal in comparison with copper and bronze, and began to use it as a substitute for copper. The invention of iron brought about a revolution in the field of civilization.

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4.7 KEY TERMS

- **Palaeolithic:** The term Palaeolithic is derived from two Greek words *Palaois* means Old and *Lithos* means Stone. Thus, Palaeolithic means Old Stone Age.
- **Quartzites:** A kind of hard rock.
- **Mesolithic:** The word Mesolithic derives from the Greek word *Mesos* means ‘middle’ and *Lithos* means ‘stone’.
- **Microlith:** A microlith is a small stone tool usually made of flint or chert. They were made by humans from around 35,000 to 3,000 years ago, across Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. The microliths were used in spear points and arrowheads.
- **Artifact:** Any object that has been made, modified or used by human beings. It may range from a coarse stone used in the manufacture of flint to anything of high technical accomplishment in any material.
- **Neolithic:** The word Neolithic has been derived from two Greek words, i.e., *Neo* means “New” and *Lithos* means “Stone”. Hence, the Neolithic period is also known as New Stone Age.

4.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short Answer Questions

1. What were the major Palaeolithic tools?
2. Who did discover a hand-axe belonging to Early Palaeolithic period at Pallavaram (Modern Chennai) in 1863 A.D.?
3. Which rivers have yielded a large number of Palaeolithic sites?
4. What is the meaning of Palaeolithic culture?
5. What do you understand by Pre-history?
6. Write the three phases of Palaeolithic age.
7. What is the meaning of Mesolithic culture?
8. What do you understand by Microlith?
9. Write the two important Mesolithic sites.
10. What is Neolithic culture?
11. Who did divide the Indian Neolithic complex into four provinces?
12. Who did divide the New Stone Age into six geographical zones?
13. What is the name of the recently excavated Neolithic site of Odisha?

Long Answer Questions

1. Write a descriptive note on Paleolithic culture.
2. Discuss the social life of the Palaeolithic culture.
3. Briefly discuss the major sites of Palaeolithic age.
4. Write a descriptive note on Mesolithic culture.
5. Briefly discuss the major sites of Mesolithic culture.
6. Briefly discuss the significance of Neolithic age in the history of mankind.
7. How man was changed from hunter and food gatherer to food producer?
8. Write a descriptive note on the beginning of agriculture and domestication of animals.
9. What are the main features of the Neolithic period?

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UNIT – II

CHAPTER 5 SARASWATI CIVILIZATION (HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION)

Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Saraswati Civilization (Harappan Civilization)
 - 5.2.1 Discovery and Time Span
- 5.3 Origin and Extent
 - 5.3.1 Town Planning
 - 5.3.2 The Great Bath
- 5.4 Social Life of Harappan People
- 5.5 Economic Conditions of Harappan Civilization
- 5.6 Religion and Culture of Harappan Civilization
- 5.7 Decline of the Harappan Civilization
- 5.8 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- 5.9 Summary
- 5.10 Key Terms
- 5.11 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 5.12 Further Reading

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The first urbanization of the subcontinent was brought to light through the accidental discovery of the sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Subsequent archaeological excavations at these places followed by explorations and excavations within its neighbouring and distant regions made us understand the intricacies of the Indus Valley Civilizations, its rise, internal developments, and fall. These works have resulted in situating Indus Valley Civilization in the global context and brought India within the global map of Ancient World Civilizations. Although termed commonly as Indus Valley Civilization, it is also known through the names Harappan Culture, Harappan Civilization or Indus-Saraswati Civilization.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain Saraswati civilization.
- Describe origin, extent and time span of Harappan civilization.
- Discuss the social life of Harappan civilization.
- Narrate the economic condition of Harappa civilization.
- Explain the religious and culture of Harappa civilization.

5.2 SARASWATI CIVILIZATION (HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION)

The Saraswati, a mythological Himalayan river, is believed to have existed in the North-Western plains of India through the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat and parts of modern Pakistan during the Vedic period which supported and sustained a big Vedic/Indus/Harappan civilization on its plains. Existence of the Saraswati River is one of the oldest debated issues in Indian geology and archaeology. The “lost river Saraswati” was first proposed by Oldham (1886 A.D.) who traced a dry river bed in Rajasthan to the coast of Gujarat. The course showed several tributaries in Punjab plains between modern Ghaggar and Sutlej rivers which joined to form the main Saraswati river in Northern Rajasthan. Many of these studies also drew support from the ancient Hindu text Rigveda in which the existence of the Saraswati river is frequently mentioned as a river that drained North-Western India during the Vedic period and sustained the Indus Civilization in its basin from Himalayan front to Gujarat coast.

- Similarly, the dynamics of distribution, migration and dispersal of Harappan/Indus civilization *vis-à-vis* its association with the Saraswati river and climate change were also vigorously pursued. The Indus was a large Bronze age civilization of the old world scattered in North-Western India and Cholistan of Pakistan under varied physiography and climate. In spite of similar palaeo courses of the Saraswati River (also referred to as Ghaggar-Hakara) proposed by remote sensing techniques in Rajasthan and Gujarat, divergent views still persist on its upstream continuity in the Himalayas for a perennial water source and the timing of river drying.
- The Indus-Saraswati river plains in North-Western India and adjoining regions were inhabited by human communities from the Neolithic to the fourth-millennium historic period but are best known for the old world’s largest Harappa (Indus) civilization that thrived on the flood and alluvial plains, in the desert and alluvial fans. Even though the Saraswati plains experienced arid and semi-arid climate as compared to the humid climate of the Ganga plains, the early human societies favored the former probably due to its low forested surface.
- The Pre-Harappan, also known as Hakara, was a village-based culture scattered in the Cholistan desert and also along the palaeo channel of the Saraswati in Hissar and Fatehabad. The mature Harappan (2600-1900 B.C.) was a highly evolved urban phase with five major cities of Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Rakhigarhi and Dholavira each with large village hinterlands.
- Agriculture and trading were dominant occupations. It is suggested that the perennial supply of water by the Saraswati River sustained this society. Interestingly, the society collapsed when it was well developed and transformed into a village-based society which is

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known as the late Harappan phase. The density of dwelling units reduced in the Western and central parts of the basin and increased towards the East and the North.

5.2.1 Discovery and Time Span

Harappa civilization was discovered in 1920-22 A.D. when two of its most important sites were excavated. These were Harappa on the banks of the river Ravi and Mohenjo-daro on the banks of the Indus. The first was excavated by Dayaram Sahani and the second by Rakhal Das Bannerji. On the basis of the archaeological findings, the Harappan civilization has been dated between 2600 B.C.-1900 B.C. and is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. It is also sometimes referred to as the 'Indus Valley civilization' because in the beginning majority of its settlements discovered were in and around the plains of the river Indus and its tributaries. But today, it is termed as the Harappan civilization because Harappa was the first site, which brought to light the presence of this civilization. Besides, recent archaeological findings indicate that this civilization was spread much beyond the Indus Valley. Therefore, it is better it is called as the Harappan civilization. It is the first urban culture of India and is contemporaneous with other ancient civilizations of the world such as those of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Our knowledge of the life and culture of the Harappan people is based only on the archaeological excavations as the script of that period has not been deciphered so far.

- The Harappa civilization did not appear all of a sudden. It developed gradually from earlier Neolithic village cultures. It is believed that the better technology to exploit the fertile plains of river Indus might have resulted in increased agricultural production. This led to the production of larger surplus to feed and maintain non-agricultural people such as artisans, administrators, etc. It also helped in the promotion of exchange or trading contacts with distant regions. It brought prosperity to the Harappan people and they were able to set up cities.
- By around 2000 B.C., several regional cultures developed in different parts of the subcontinent which were also based on the use of stone and copper tools. These Chalcolithic cultures which lay outside the Harappan zone were not so rich and flourishing. These were basically rural in nature. The origin and development of these cultures is placed in the chronological span between circa 2000 B.C.-700 B.C. These are found in Western and Central India and are described as non-Harappan Chalcolithic cultures.
- This civilization is commonly called after the river Indus because it originally spread mainly along the valleys or basins (low lying areas) of the Indus river system, comprising the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, and the Saraswati (later covered by the dry bed of the river Ghaggar) rivers. This civilization is also well-known after one of its two major cities, named Harappa. Situated on the bank of the river Ravi in Pakistan Punjab, Harappa was the first to be revealed and

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excavated by archaeologists. Mohenjo-Daro in Larkana district in the Sind province of Pakistan was the afterward and the largest city to be excavated, but it decayed before Harappa. Therefore, archaeologists incline to call this civilization ‘Harappan’ (i.e., relating to Harappa). Scholars often use the term ‘culture’ interchangeably with ‘civilization for the whole way of life of a people.

- The first credit of identification of the ruins of the Indus civilization goes to Charles Masson, a deserter from the East India Company’s army. In 1829 A.D., Masson toured over the princely state of Punjab and came across his major archaeological finding in the Punjab. That was Harappa, a city of the Indus civilization that lay buried in the valley of Indus’s tributary, the Ravi River. In 1842, Masson incorporated his clarifications of Harappa in the book ‘Narrative of Various Journeys in Baluchistan, Afghanistan, and the Punjab’.
- After the formation of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in 1861 A.D., Alexander Cunningham, and the Survey’s first director-general toured Harappa. Cunningham published his discoveries in 1875 A.D. First time, he described a Harappan stamp seal, with its unidentified script, which he established to be of an origin alien to India. After some years, John Marshall, director general of ASI directed archaeologist Daya Ram Sahni to excavate the site’s two mounds in Harappa. Meanwhile, farther South, along the main stem of the Indus in Sind province, the largely undisturbed site of Mohenjo-daro had brought notice. Marshall allotted a series of ASI officers to survey the location. These comprised D.R. Bhandarkar (1911), R.D. Banerji (1919, 1922-1923), and M.S. Vats (1924). Methodical excavations began in Mohenjo-Daro with K.N. Dikshit’s (1924-1925), continuing with those of H. Hargreaves (1925-1926), and Ernest J.H. Mackay (1927-1931). Much of the site Mohenjo-daro had been excavated by 1931. The first person to use the term ‘Indus civilization’ was the man Sir John Marshall. The Indus or the Harappan culture belongs to the Chalcolithic or Bronze Age since the substances of copper and stone were found at the various places of this civilization. Nearly, 1,400 Harappan sites are recognized so far in the sub-continent. Some of the remarkable sites which have been excavated are Harappa (1921) by Daya Ram Sahni, Mohenjo-daro (1922) by R.D. Banerjee, Dholavira (1967-68) by J.P. Joshi and (1990-91) by R.S. Bisht, Kalibangan by Dr. A. Ghosh, Lothal (1955-63), Chanhudaro, Banawali (1975-77), etc.

Check Your Progress

1. Write a short note on the Saraswati civilization.

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5.3 ORIGIN AND EXTENT

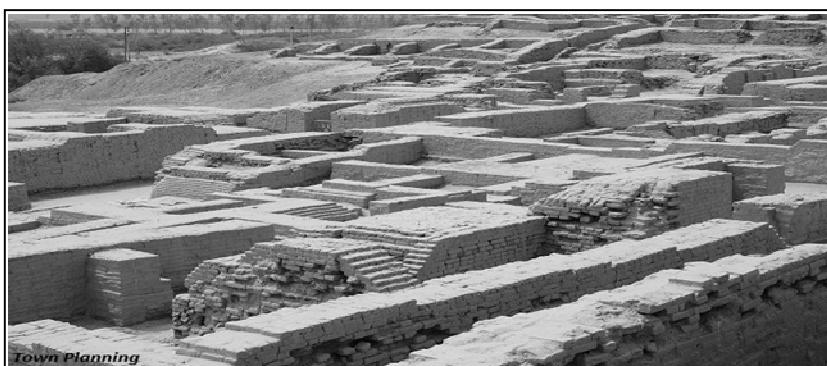
The archaeological remains show that before the emergence of Harappan civilization the people lived in small villages. As the time passed, there was the emergence of small towns which ultimately led to full-fledged towns during the Harappan period.

- The whole period of Harappan civilization is in fact divided into three phases: (i) Early Harappan phase (3500 B.C.-2600 B.C.) – it was marked by some town-planning in the form of mud structures, elementary trade, arts and crafts, etc., (ii) Mature Harappan phase (2600 B.C.-1900 B.C.) – it was the period in which we notice well developed towns with burnt brick structures, inland and foreign trade, crafts of various types, etc., and (iii) Late Harappan phase (1900 B.C.-1400 B.C.) – it was the phase of decline during which many cities were abandoned and the trade disappeared leading to the gradual decay of the significant urban traits. Let us first have a glance over the geographical extent of the Harappan civilization.
- The archaeological excavations reveal that this culture was spread over a vast area which included not only the present-day states of India such as Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Western Uttar Pradesh but also Pakistan and some parts of Afghanistan. Some important sites of this civilization are: Manda in Jammu and Kashmir; Shortughai in Afghanistan; Harappa in Western Punjab (Pakistan); Mohenjo-daro and Chanhudaro in Sind; Kalibangan in Rajasthan; Lothal and Dholavira in Gujarat; Banawali and Rakhigarhi in Haryana; Daimabad in Maharashtra while Sutkagendor on the Makran Coast (near Pakistan-Iran border) is the Western most site of the Harappan civilization and Alamgirpur in Western Uttar Pradesh marks its Eastern most limit. The location of settlements suggests that the Harappa, Kalibangan (On River Ghaggar-Hakra generally associated with the lost river Saraswati), Mohenjo-daro axis was the heartland of this civilization and most of the settlements are located in this region. This area had certain uniform features in terms of the soil type, climate and subsistence pattern. The land was flat and depended on the monsoons and the Himalayan Rivers for the supply of water. Due to its distinct geographical feature, agro-pastoral economy was the dominant feature in this region.
- Besides the urban settlements of the Harappans, there were many sites inhabited by the primitive communities consisting of stone-age hunter-gatherers or pastoral nomads, which existed side by side. Some sites served as ports or trading out-posts. It may be noted that the important determinants of urbanization are well-planned cities, specialized arts and crafts, trade, taxation, script, etc. In this respect, Harappan culture fulfilled all these criteria for being called as an urban culture.

5.3.1 Town Planning

The most interesting urban feature of Harappan civilization is its town-planning. It is marked by considerable uniformity, though one can notice some regional variations as well. The uniformity is noticed in the layout of the towns, streets, structures, brick size, drains etc. Almost all the major sites (Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Kalibangan and others), are divided into two parts – a citadel on higher mound on the Western side and a lower town on the Eastern side of the settlement.

- The citadel contains large structures which might have functioned as administrative or ritual centers. The residential buildings are built in the lower town. The streets intersect each other at right angles in a criss-cross pattern. It divides the city in several residential blocks. The main street is connected by narrow lanes. The doors of the houses opened in these lanes and not the main streets. The houses of common people, however, differed in size from a single-room house in Harappa to bigger structures. The houses were largely built of burnt bricks. The bigger houses had many rooms surrounding a square courtyard. These houses were provided with private wells, kitchens and bathing plate forms.
- The difference in the size of the houses suggests that the rich lived in the larger houses whereas the one-room buildings or barracks might have been intended for the poorer section of the society. The drainage system of the Harappans was elaborate and well laid-out. Every house had drains, which opened into the street drains. These drains were covered with manholes bricks or stone slabs (which could be removed for cleaning) were constructed at regular intervals by the side of the streets for cleaning. This shows that the people were well acquainted with the science of sanitation.



5.3.2 The Great Bath

At Mohenjo-daro, the ‘Great Bath’ is the most important structure. It is surrounded by corridors on all sides and is approached at either end by flights of steps in North and South. A thin layer of bitumen was applied to the bed of the Bath to ensure that water did not seep in. Water was supplied by a large well in an adjacent room. There was a drain for the outlet of the water. The bath was surrounded by sets of rooms on sides for changing cloth. Scholars

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believe that the ‘Great Bath’ was used for ritual bathing. Another structure here located to the West of the ‘Great Bath’ is the granary. It consists of several rectangular blocks of brick for storing grains. A granary has also been found at Harappa. It has the rows of circular brick platforms, which were used for threshing grains. This is known from the finding of chaffs of wheat and barley from here. At Lothal, a brick structure has been identified as a dockyard meant for berthing ships and handling cargo. This suggests that Lothal was an important port and trading centre of the Harappan people.



Check Your Progress

2. In which plains of India, The Saraswati, a mythological Himalayan river, is believed to have existed through the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat?
3. In which Veda, the existence of the Saraswati River is frequently mentioned as a river that drained North-Western India during the Vedic period?
4. In which year Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was formed?
5. To whom does the first credit of identification of the ruins of the Indus civilization goes, a deserter from the East India Company’s army?
6. In how many phases is the whole period of Harappan civilization in fact divided?
7. What is the most interesting urban feature of Harappan civilization?
8. Write about the Great Bath.

5.4 SOCIAL LIFE OF HARAPPAN PEOPLE

Harappan or Indus people had their urban way of life with at most simplicity and comfortable. They were very social and happy with their lifestyle. Archaeological evidences from diverse sites reveal their habits of food, dress, ornaments, clothing, and amusements; which was very high level. They had a specific religious practice for their smooth way of life. Worship to trees,

animals, symbols shows their value, civilization to preserve their environment and wanted a balance of life in the society. Systematic way of life by planning good buildings, granaries, sanitation and hygiene shows the organizational capabilities of a central authority and good administrative chief. Moreover, their artistic way of life in every field stands their civilization an urban one. From the various articles found in the remains of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, we can draw a picture of the social life of Indus valley people. They can be divided into four classes, viz., learned persons, warriors, businessmen and working class or labourers.

- **Food:** The people of Indus valley civilization were both vegetarian and non-vegetarian. Their life was chiefly agrarian and they, therefore, mostly depended on the yield of the crops that they could grow. Vegetarians used wheat, barley, rice, milk and milk products. Vegetables were also consumed by them. Non-vegetarian people, apart from the above eatables, were fond of fish, beef, mutton and tortoise. Dates were one of their favorite fruits.
- **Dress:** As regards their dress, we have no definite source which can give us much information on their dressing styles. We can only guess about their dress from the figures which have been found during excavation. Both cotton and woolen clothes were used by the Indus valley people. The discovery of needles and threads confirms that clothes were also sewn. Weaving was an important occupation of the people. Indus civilization was not confined within the limits of the Indus basin only. It spread over a vast area of India, viz., Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province, Punjab, Sind, Saurashtra, and Rajasthan and to the North of the Gangetic valley. It has also affinity and likeness with the old civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia, because same types of artifacts were discovered there also.
- **Fashion (Hairdressing, Toilet and Cosmetics):** The Indus valley people were also very fashionable. Both men and women had special inclination for keeping themselves smart. Both of them wore long Shari and dressed it according to their choice. Some people had long beard and mustache and others were clean-shaven. The discovery of ivory combs, bronze mirrors, razors, powders, perfumed oils and lipsticks confirm their love for fashion.
- **Ornaments:** The people of Indus valley had a deep love for ornaments. Both men and women used ornaments frequently. The ornaments were made of different metals such as gold, silver, copper, bronze, shell and ivory. The poor people's ornaments were made of clay. Bangles, necklaces, armlets, finger rings, earrings and bracelets were very popular. Beads were also much in use as an ornament. They were made of different shapes and sizes with precious and semi-precious stones. The beads of pottery were used by the poor persons.
- **Sports and Games (Amusements):** The Indus valley people had great love for sports and games. Their life was not very dull. They not

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only loved music and dancing, but also played various games such as chess and enjoyed hunting, fishing, bird fighting, bull fights and gambling. Dicing was a common pastime as it was in the Vedic age. Small children used to play with toys made of clay.

- **Weapons of War:** Mackey writes, “The Indus valley people were peace loving and unwarlike”. His statement seems to be based on the fact that no defensive weapons such as shields and armor have been found in excavation. On the other hand, various types of weapons made of copper and bronze have been unearthed from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. They knew the use of iron; their chief weapons were axe, spear and bow. They also used sword like weapon which used to be pointed at the end and thick in the middle.
- **Medicines:** Very little is known about the medicines which were used by the Indus valley people. But shilajeet, coral and leaves of neem have been discovered during excavation and all these possess medicinal qualities. So, it is estimated that Indus valley people cared for their health.
- **Condition of Women:** The condition of women was very respectable. They used to get great respect in the society. The figures of mother goddess affirm the fact that women were not only a source of entertainment and were housekeepers but were worshiped in the society in the form of mother goddess.
- **Disposal of the Dead:** It is very difficult to form a definite idea as to how the people of the Indus valley used to effect disposal of their dead. However, from the material discovered from the excavations carried out in Sind province, it is estimated that they used to dispose of their dead in three ways:
 - (i) The dead body was buried under the ground.
 - (ii) The dead body was burnt and its remains were collected and buried under earth in an urn.
 - (iii) The dead body was left in the open plain for wild animals and birds to eat and when the entire flesh was eaten by them, the skeleton was buried under the earth. Most of the historians including Sir John Marshall are of the opinion that the second method of disposal of the dead was very much practiced.

Check Your Progress

9. Mention the staple foods of Harappan people.
10. Write about dress and ornaments of Harappan people.
11. Write the condition of women of Harappan civilization.

5.5 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

The big and planned cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro point to good economic condition of the people. They were not only agriculturists but also had a sound knowledge of various trades and commerce.

- **Agriculture:** The Indus valley people were chiefly agrarian. They took to the use of agricultural produce like wheat, barley, rice, cotton, vegetables etc. There was a great state granary to store foodgrains. The land of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro was quite fertile and people were prosperous.
- **Domestication of Animals:** Besides agriculture, it was domestication of animals that helped the economic condition of Indus valley people. Bull, buffalo, sheep, goat, pig, camel and cow were some most common animals which were domesticated by them.
- **Industrial Achievements:** The Indus valley people were engaged in different industries. The discovery of many spindles and spinning wheels in the houses of the valley show that the people of that age had a fairly good knowledge of spinning and weaving of both cotton and woolen cloth.
- **Science of Metallurgy:** The science of metallurgy was also known to the Indus valley people. Their use of gold, silver, bronze, lead, tin and copper for their pots indicated that the economic condition of the Indus valley people was good.

The most important industry of the Indus valley people was pottery. The discovery of a number of pottery kilns shows that there was a potter's colony in the city. Mainly there were two kinds of pots. One kind of pot was hand-made and the others were made on the potter's wheel. These pots may be subdivided into two groups. The first group includes the pots which were used in people's daily life while the other group comprises the painted pots used for the preservation of valuables and funeral urns. The people of Indus valley were capable of making pottery of a very high standard and it is "the earliest example of its kind in the ancient world".

- **Trade and Commerce:** The discoveries have confirmed the belief that the Indus valley people had trade relations not only with the people of their own country but also with the traders abroad. Gold, silver, copper and other precious stones, discovered in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, must have been imported while the trade of exporting cloth was carried on by the Indus valley people. For their internal trade they carved out land routes by bullock-carts while commercial relations with the countries abroad were maintained through water routes. The trade relations with many countries of Western Asia,

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particularly with Mesopotamia, are proved by the different artifacts at Mohenjo-daro.

- **Weights and Measures:** One more factor that shows that economic well-being of the Indus valley people is the discovery of a large number of weights found during the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. These weights were of different sizes. Some of them were so big and heavy that they could be lifted only with the help of a rope while others were of very small size which must have been used by the jewelers and goldsmiths. There were also cubical weights which appeared to be common in use. For measurement, the Indus valley people used a bronze bar with suspended copper pans. Their industrial achievement in different fields, their trade in export and import clearly show that the Indus valley people were economically prosperous.

Check Your Progress

12. What was the main occupation of the Harappan people?
13. Mention about the trade and commerce of the Harappan.

5.6 RELIGION AND CULTURE OF HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

Religion played a significant role in the life of the Harappan people. Though neither any temple nor any shrine has been unearthed at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, yet a large number of statues and terracotta figurines suggest that the Indus valley people were idol worshipers.

- **Cult of Mother Goddess:** The chief deity of Indus valley people was Mother Goddess whose worship formed an important part of their religious life. A number of statues have been unearthed. One is a semi-nude female figure wearing a girdle or band round her loins with fan-shaped dress. According to Sir John Marshall, these figurines represent the Mahadevi of the people. As some of the figures are smoke stained, Mackay is of the view that the people must have used some sort of oil or burnt incense before them to please their goddess.
- Mother Goddess was called by various names, such as, Mata, Amba, Kali, Karali, etc. Moreover ,a long seal discovered at Harappa showing the figure of Mother Goddess with a man with a dagger and women with hands lifted, represent the prevalence of human sacrifice which was made to Mother Goddess by the people of Indus valley.
- **Worship of Lord Shiva:** Lord Shiva was very popular among the male gods of Indus valley people and he was worshiped by all and sundry. The seal which was discovered at Harappa shows a three-faced deity sitting with crossed legs on a throne, wearing a horned dress surrounded by several animals like elephant, tiger, buffalo, etc.

Due to these things, Sir John Marshall has opined that it is the figure of Lord Shiva. Moreover, these things point to three concepts about Lord Shiva which are:

- (i) Trimukha (Three-faced),
- (ii) Pashupati (Lord of Animals), and
- (iii) Yogeshvara.

An eminent scholar like Dr. R.C. Majumdar is of the view that Shiva-cult was later on borrowed by the Aryans.

- **Animal Worship:** Animal worship is also indicated through many figures and representations on seals discovered at the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. The animals worshiped by the Indus valley people were of three categories:
 - (i) **Mythical Animals:** They were semi-human or complex animals with the heads of different animals attached to a central body.
 - (ii) **Ambiguous Animals:** Among the second category there was the strange unicorn which appears to have been the titular deity of the city.
 - (iii) **Actual Animals:** The actual animals like rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, buffalo, humped bull, zebra, etc. fall under the third category which was worshiped by the Indus valley people. Some of the actual animals were also regarded as the vehicle or vahana of the gods. For example, the bull was regarded as the vehicle of Lord Shiva.
- **Worship of Water:** The Great Bath discovered at Mohenjo-daro indicated that water also played an important role in the religious rituals of Indus valley people. According to some writers, the Great Bath was like the temple of the River god. It is also suggested that before performing some puja or ritual ceremony, every person used to take bath in that so-called ritual tank for the purification of the body.
- **Worship of Trees and Birds:** Trees of peepal and neem appear to have been worshiped by the Indus valley people as shown in seal found during the excavation. Besides this, duck was regarded to be a sacred bird.
- **Worship of the Sun and Fire:** The representation of Swastika and wheel on certain seals shows that the Indus valley people also worshiped the Sun god. Moreover, indications are also found about their worshiping the god of Fire too.

Thus, it is obvious that Hindu religion of today owes a lot to Indus valley culture. Lord Shiva was as popular a god for the Indus valley people as is today. The worship of peepal tree and tulsi plant is still a part of Hindu religion.

Development of Art and Architecture

The architectural skills of the Indus valley people came to be known after excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. The people of this civilization had

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built dwellings ranging from one-roomed houses to big palatial buildings which could be divided into three parts:

- (i) Dwelling houses or residential buildings.
- (ii) Public halls.
- (iii) Public baths.
- The dwelling houses were constructed of baked bricks which were fixed in place with the help of mud mortar. The buildings were generally two or more storied and had staircases. They had big doors, perhaps of wood. Each house had a number of rooms, in addition to a bath and a kitchen, all having brick floors. Pillared hall and great state granary need special attention among the public buildings. 24 meters square pillared hall was perhaps a meeting hall where people used to assemble for state business. The state granary was about 50 meters square in area, which was used for storing grains. The third type of buildings was public baths.
- The great public Bath at Mohenjo-daro was the largest and the most significant, which measured 180 feet × 108 feet. The bathing pool inside, measures 39 feet × 23 feet and 8 feet in depth. The bricks used were of various sizes. The smallest being 23 cm × 10 cm and the biggest 50 cm × 20 cm. The great Bath had some religious significance and was used by the public on the eve of festivals. It was also surrounded by large number of rooms. It has a flight of steps at either end and is fed by a well, situated in one of the adjoining rooms. There was separate drainage system to let off the dirty water. It is estimated that this great Bath was connected with religious rituals and religious festivals. Dr. A.D. Psalter mentions, “the architecture of Mohenjo-daro, in general, is plain, utilitarian, and rather solid than beautiful.”

Art and Craft

Indus valley people were not skillful in architecture only. They had remarkable ability and proficiency in other arts like sculpture, carving, pottery and painting. Though different articles and human figures found after excavation, it reveals that there was very little art in the Indus valley and all things which have seen the light of day through excavations lack in ornamentation, yet from utilization point of view, their achievements were praiseworthy. The proficiency of Indus valley sculptor can be seen easily in human and animal figures that have been excavated. Among these figures, those of a bull, a strong dog, a yogi, a dancing girl are most significant. The majority of human figures are female and they are nude except for narrow girdle round the waist.

- Mohenjo-daro seems to have been the home of potters as some fine specimens of pottery have been excavated at this site. From them, we come to the conclusion that the potter of the Indus valley civilization was a very skilled craftsman. The clay pots were only polished and glazed to give shine like those of the present day. About 500 seals

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have been found in different excavation sites which show that artists of Indus Valley were highly skilled in carving. The engravings are quite simple and are full of beauty and variety. There are engravings of bull, rhinoceros and elephant on these seals. The art of carving seemed to have reached a high point during the Indus valley civilization.

- The Indus valley people loved painting very much. Their pots and pans were not only polished and glazed to give bright luster, but were also painted to look beautiful. Different kinds of designs, figures and objects of nature were painted on them. The painters of Indus valley civilization were super in their art. Terracotta Art Harappan pottery is perhaps the finest in India and is betokening of the achievement of the Harappan potter. It is made of extremely fine, well-levigated clay, free from impurities, and is uniformly well fired. The surface is treated with a red slip over which designs are executed in black.
- The painted patterns are rich in variety and the characteristic ones include intersecting circles, fish scales, the peepal leaf, etc., but the bulk of the pottery is plain. Typical Mature Harappan shapes include S-shaped jars, the dish-on-stand and perforated cylindrical jars. Terracotta figurines of humans and animals are an important part of the cultural assemblage of a Harappan site along with beads.
- Copper/Bronze Metallurgy – Use of copper and bronze for shaping tools, vessels and ornaments was a characteristic feature of the Harappans. Most of the artifacts found are tools of everyday use such as axes, adzes, knives fish hooks, chisels including pots and pans and items of personal use such as jewellery in form of bangles, beads, diadem strips, while relatively few weapons of war have been found. Though the technique of manufacture of these objects is advanced, we do not witness any elaborate ornamental decorative aspects to these items and were at large of a simplistic and modest style probably very typical to the Harappan ideology.

The Harappans were literate people. Harappan seals are engraved with various signs or characters. Recent studies suggest that the Harappan script consists of about four hundred signs and that it was written from right to left. However, the script has not been deciphered as yet. It is believed that they used ideograms, i.e., a graphic symbol or character to convey the idea directly. We do not know the language they spoke, though scholars believe that they spoke “Brahui”, a dialect used by Baluchi people in Pakistan today. However ,further research alone can unveil the mystery and enable us to know more about the Harappan script.

Check Your Progress

14. What do you know about the religious life of the Harappan people?
15. Mention about the Harappan script.
16. Mention about the art and craft of the Harappan.

5.7 DECLINE OF THE HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

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Since there is no written material of historical evidence, it is quite difficult to say anything definite about the destruction of the Indus valley culture. Yet a healthy speculation has led the historians to specify the following causes which might have been responsible for its destruction. Around 1900 B.C., signs of a gradual decline began to emerge, and by around 1700 B.C., most of the cities had been abandoned. Recent investigation of human skeletons from the location of Harappa has established that the end of the Indus civilization saw an increase in interpersonal violence and in infectious diseases like leprosy and tuberculosis. Historian Upinder Singh remarks, “The general picture presented by the late Harappan phase is one of a breakdown of urban networks and an expansion of rural ones”.

- **Aryan Invasion:** Aryan invasion theory was proposed by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in 1953 A.D. He said that the invasion of an Indo-European tribe from Central Asia, the “Aryans” caused the decline of the Indus Civilization. As evidence, he cited a group of 37 skeletons identified in various parts of Mohenjo-daro.
- **Floods:** There have been records of flooding at Mohenjo-daro, Kalibangan and Dholavira, as cited in the excavation reports. This was inferred from collapsed buildings and houses and streets covered with silt clay intervening actual periods of occupation. This clay is thought to be left by the receding floodwaters. At Mohenjo-daro, these abnormal floods and consequent rebuilding of the town seems to have happened at least thrice. Chanhudaro was also twice destroyed by ‘massive’ inundations. The devastating floods obstructed the normal process of irrigation, leading in turn to the economic decline of some of the Harappan settlements.
- **Climate Change and Drought:** By 2016, many historians believe that drought, and a decline in trade with Egypt and Mesopotamia, caused the collapse of the Indus Civilization. The climate change which caused the collapse of the Indus Valley Civilization was possibly due to “an abrupt and critical mega-drought and cooling 4,200 years ago,” which marks the beginning of the Meghalayan Age, the present stage of the Holocene. The Ghaggar-Hakra system was rainfed, and water-supply depended on the monsoons. The Indus Valley climate grew significantly cooler and drier from about 1800 BCE, linked to a general weakening of the monsoon at that time. The Indian monsoon declined and aridity increased, with the Ghaggar-Hakra retracting its reach towards the foothills of the Himalaya, leading to erratic and less wide-ranging floods that made inundation of Civilization less sustainable.
- **Change in the Course of Indus:** Mackay was the first to argue that Mohenjo-daro was abandoned due to the shifts in the course of the

Indus River. Later, Lambrick furthered this theory. He argued that Indus being an unstable river shifted its course many times during the Harappan occupation which led to the collapse of the civilization. Flam documented major changes in the Indus river system in its lower reaches since Pre-Harappan and Mature Harappan periods. During the period from 8000 to 4000 B.C., there were two chief courses unlike the present single course, the Jacobabad course on the Western edge for the Indus River and the Nara River running parallel to the Indus on Eastern edge of the plains which was part of the Ghaggar-Hakra system. Between 4000-2000 B.C. the course shifted Eastward and now followed the Sindhu river course and the confluence of the Nara river with the Sindhu River shifted farther South, just North of the coastline.

- Many historians criticize the theory saying that though shifts may have occurred, but no pattern is evident in the location of Early, Mature and Late Harappan sites indicative of adjustments to river Shifting. Earthquakes Archaeological evidences of major earthquakes are found at Dholavira in 2200 B.C. as well as at Kalibangan in 2700 and 2900 B.C. Such series of earthquakes, along with drought, may have backed to decline of Ghaggar-Hakra system. Sea level changes are also identified at two possible seaport sites along the Makran coast which are now inland.
- Earthquakes may have contributed to decline of several sites by direct shaking damage, by sea level change or by change in water supply. Further, a number of the mature Harappan settlements are located along the dry Ghaggar-Hakra river system. These sites, however, declined during the Late Harappan coinciding with the divergence of the Ghaggar-Hakra system to the Indus and Ganga river systems. This was supposedly induced by tectonic forces and aridity. All the above evidence has been cited to demonstrate that earthquakes were an instrumental factor in bringing about the demise of several Harappan sites either by direct shaking damage, changing the water supply or by altering the relative sea level.
- **Ecological Imbalance:** Walter Fairservis tried to explain the decline and abandonment of Harappan cities in terms of anthropogenic causes dismantling the ecological balance in the region. He calculated the impact of Harappan land use around Mohenjo-daro by computing the population of Mohenjo-daro and its requirements. He estimated the population of Mohenjo-daro as 41,250 inhabitants and the area under cultivation in the vicinity of Mohenjo-daro at around 22,715 acres (on the basis of pre-modern rates of wheat output per acre in the region). On the basis of the number of cattle needed for ploughing, he estimated the total cattle population at 8700 or more. He, however, underestimated the cattle requirements by missing the use of cattle for lift irrigation. It must have also needed a huge network of villages serving the needs of the city.

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- He advocated that the growing demands of the increasing human and cattle population led to depletion of forest, food and fuel resources. Over-cultivation and over-grazing disturbed the symbiotic ecological balance of the region. Over-manipulation of natural resources and such huge scale alterations to the landscape resulting from human activity perhaps caused floods and salinity further aggravated the problem. This is reflected in the gradual deterioration in town planning and living standards. Depletion of resources for subsistence caused a shift Eastwards towards more viable regions.
- **Plague:** There is another reason for the decline of Harappan civilization. That is outbreak of the plague epidemic. Skeletal remains from the chief roads of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro as identified out through archaeological efforts tell a sad story. When an epidemic-like plague spreads in a human habitation, it leaves its trail of death everywhere. The scattered skeletal remains therefore lead some to attribute it to epidemic like plague, though there is no concrete proof of outbreak of plague in the region.

Thus, a number of causes described above were responsible for the decline of Harappan Civilization. Though, actual and one cause cannot be framed, historians took the help of archaeological sources and remains to imagine what made the downfall of such a dynamic civilization like Harappan.

Check Your Progress

17. What were the main causes of the decline of Harappan civilization?

5.8 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The Saraswati, a mythological Himalayan river, is believed to have existed in the North-Western plains of India through the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat and parts of modern Pakistan during the Vedic period which supported and sustained a big Vedic/ Indus/Harappan civilization on its plains. Existence of the Saraswati River is one of the oldest debated issues in Indian Geology and Archeology. The “Lost River Saraswati” was first proposed by Oldham (1886 A.D.) who traced a dry riverbed in Rajasthan to the coast of Gujarat.
2. The Saraswati, a mythological Himalayan river, is believed to have existed in the North Western plains of India through the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat and parts of modern Pakistan during the Vedic period which supported and sustained a big Vedic/ Indus/Harappan civilization on its plains.
3. Rigveda.
4. 1861 A.D.

5. The first credit of identification of the ruins of the Indus civilization goes to Charles Masson, a deserter from the East India Company's army.
6. The whole period of Harappan civilization is in fact divided into three phases: (i) Early Harappan phase (3500 B.C.-2600 B.C.) – it was marked by some town-planning in the form of mud structures, elementary trade, arts and crafts, etc., (ii) Mature Harappan phase (2600 B.C.-1900 B.C.) – it was the period in which we notice well developed towns with burnt brick structures, inland and foreign trade, crafts of various types, etc., and (iii) Late Harappan phase (1900 B.C.-1400 B.C.) – it was the phase of decline during which many cities were abandoned and the trade disappeared leading to the gradual decay of the significant urban traits.
7. The most interesting urban feature of Harappan civilization is its town planning. It is marked by considerable uniformity, though one can notice some regional variations as well.
8. At Mohenjo-daro, the 'Great Bath' is the most important structure. It is surrounded by corridors on all sides and is approached at either end by flights of steps in North and South. A thin layer of bitumen was applied to the bed of the Bath to ensure that water did not seep in. Water was supplied by a large well in an adjacent room. There was a drain for the outlet of the water. The bath was surrounded by sets of rooms on sides for changing cloth. Scholars believe that the 'Great Bath' was used for ritual bathing.
9. The people of Indus valley civilization were both vegetarian and non-vegetarian. Their life was chiefly agrarian and they, therefore, mostly depended on the yield of the crops that they could grow. Vegetarians used wheat, barley, rice, milk and milk products. Vegetables were also consumed by them. Non-vegetarian people, apart from the above eatables, were fond of fish, beef, mutton and tortoise. Dates were one of their favourite fruits.
10. As regards their dress we have no definite source which can give us much information on their dressing styles. We can only guess about their dress from the figures which have been found during excavation. Both cotton and woolen clothes were used by the Indus valley people. The discovery of needles and threads confirms that clothes were also sewn. The people of Indus valley had a deep love for ornaments. Both men and women used ornaments frequently. The ornaments were made of different metals such as gold, silver, copper, bronze, shell and ivory. The poor people's ornaments were made of clay. Bangles, necklaces, armlets, finger rings, earrings and bracelets were very popular.
11. The condition of women was very respectable. They used to get great respect in the society. The figures of mother goddess affirm the fact that women were not only a source of entertainment and were

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- housekeepers but were worshiped in the society in the form of mother goddess.
12. Agriculture.
 13. The discoveries have confirmed the belief that the Indus valley people had trade relations not only with the people of their own country but also with the traders abroad. Gold, silver, copper and other precious stones, discovered in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, must have been imported while the trade of exporting cloth was carried on by the Indus valley people. For their internal trade, they carved out land routes by bullock-carts while commercial relations with the countries abroad were maintained through water routes. The trade relations with many countries of Western Asia, particularly with Mesopotamia, are proved by the different artifacts at Mohenjo-daro.
 14. Religious life of the Harappan people can be known from the archaeological remains of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. The people were idol worshipers. They worshipped Lord Siva. Female energy was worshiped as Mother Goddess, Nature Goddess or Divine Mother. It was believed that female energy was the source of creation. Besides, Harappan people also worshiped trees, water and fire.
 15. The Harappans were literate people. Harappan seals are engraved with various signs or characters. Recent studies suggest that the Harappan script consists of about 400 signs and that it was written from right to left. However, the script has not been deciphered as yet. It is believed that they used ideograms, i.e., a graphic symbol or character to convey the idea directly. We do not know the language they spoke, though scholars believe that they spoke “Brahui”, a dialect used by Baluchi people in Pakistan today. However, further research alone can unveil the mystery and enable us to know more about the Harappan script.
 16. Indus valley people were not skillful in architecture only. They had remarkable ability and proficiency in other arts like sculpture, carving, pottery and painting. Though different articles and human figures found after excavation, it reveals that there was very little art in the Indus valley and all things which have seen the light of day through excavations lack in ornamentation, yet from utilization point of view, their achievements were praiseworthy.
 17. Aryan invasion, floods, climate change and drought, etc.

5.9 SUMMARY

- The Harappa or Indus Valley Civilization, nowadays, frequently referred to as ***Sindhu-Saraswati*** Civilization in India is regarded as one of the oldest civilizations of the world.
- The Excavation of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, by ***Rakhal Das Banerjee (R.D. Banerjee)*** and ***Rai Bahadur Dayaram Sahani (R.B. Dayaram Sahani)***, was the most exhilarating event of the 20th century A.D.

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- This civilization developed at two centers, i.e., Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Harappa is situated in the Montgomery district (now in Pakistan) which is about 180 km from Lahore. This site was larger than Mohenjo-daro. Another main center of Indus valley civilization was Mohenjo-daro which is situated in the Larkana district of Sind. Mohenjo-daro literally means the '**Mound of the Dead**'.
- Apart from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, the remains of Indus valley civilization have been discovered at various other sites where towns were planned in a very systematic and scientific way.
- The first site Harappa was excavated and discovered by **D.R. Sahani** in 1921 A.D. It was a main urban center during its mature phase surrounded by extensive walls.
- The huge mounds at Harappa were first reported by **Charles Masson** in 1826 A.D. and later **Alexander Cunningham** visited the site in 1853, 1857 and 1873 A.D., and recorded the existence of a series of mounds.
- The site of Mohenjo-daro is located in the Larkana district of Sind (Pakistan) on the bank of river Indus. It is the largest site of Harappan Civilization which is situated 540 km South of Harappa.
- In Mohenjo-Daro, the largest building is **the great granary** which is 45.71 m long and 15.23 m wide and lies to the West of the great bath.
- Harappan had a specific religious practice for their smooth way of life. Worship to trees, animals, symbols shows their value, civilization to preserve their environment and wanted a balance of life in the society.
- The staple food of the people included wheat, barley, rice, milk and some vegetables like peas, sesamum and fruits like date palms. Beef, mutton, pork, poultry, fish, etc. were also eaten by the Indus people.
- Both men and women used two pieces of cloth. The men folk wore some lower garment like dhoti and upper garment like shawl. The upper garment covered the left shoulder. Female costume was the same as that of men. Men had their long hair, parted in the middle and kept tidy at the back.
- Domestication of animals supported in the production of crops in the field. Humped bull, buffalo, sheep, pig, dog, elephant and camels were tamed. Horse was not domesticated.
- The people were loving ornaments. Both male and female of all classes used necklaces, fillets, armlets, finger rings, and bangles. Girdles, nose studs, earrings and anklets were used by the women alone.
- Indus valley people had their diverse kinds of pastimes for entertainment during leisure. Among amusements, dancing with the accompaniment of the drum, and dice playing was very common.
- The economic condition of the Harappan people was very good. Their affluence was due to agriculture, animal husbandry, industry, trade

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and commerce. These made them prosperous and opened for them the opportunities of a comfortable life.

- The richness of the Harappan civilization was based on its prosperous economic activity that is agriculture. The handiness of fertile Indus alluvium contributed to the surplus in agricultural production.
- **Wheat** is frequently documented, apparently of three variations, the club wheat (*triticum compactum*), the Indian dwarf wheat (*triticum sphaerococcum*) and the Mexican dwarf wheat (*triticum aestivum*). **Barely** (*hordeum vulgare*), probably of a small-seeded six-rowed variety, was also found both at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro.
- Different animals were domesticated by Harappan people. They were cow, buffalo, sheep, elephant, camel, pig, etc.
- Harappan people were busy in manufacturing different articles for their need or amusement. Each of their handiwork proofs their artistic interest and excellence. Metallic works, pottery, weaving and other artifacts reveal their art and craft work.
- The excavations yielded a rich collection of objects in stone, bronze and terracotta as these were the most popularly used materials to make jewellery.
- Trading system, both internal (within the country) and external (foreign), was a noteworthy feature of the urban economy of the Harappans.

5.10 KEY TERMS

- **Mohenjo-daro:** The site of Mohenjo-daro is located in the Larkana district of Sind (Pakistan) on the bank of river Indus. It is the largest site of Harappan Civilization which is situated 540 km South of Harappa.
- **Aryan Invasion:** Aryan invasion theory was proposed by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in 1953 A.D. He said that the invasion of an Indo-European tribe from Central Asia, the “Aryans”, caused the decline of the Indus Civilization.
- **Dwelling Houses:** The dwelling houses were constructed of baked bricks which were fixed in place with the help of mud mortar. The buildings were generally two or more storied and had staircases. They had big doors, perhaps of wood. Each house had a number of rooms, in addition to a bath and a kitchen, all having brick floors.
- **The Great Bath:** At Mohenjo-Daro the ‘Great Bath’ is the most important structure. It is surrounded by corridors on all sides and is approached at either end by flights of steps in North and South. A thin layer of bitumen was applied to the bed of the Bath to ensure that water did not seep in. Water was supplied by a large well in an adjacent room.

5.11 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Name two archaeologists who discovered the Harappan culture.
2. Where are Harappa and Mohenjo-daro situated?
3. Describe the extent of Harappan culture.
4. Write briefly about the Great Bath.
5. Throw light on the social life of Harappan people.
6. Narrate the religion of the Harappans.

Long Answer Questions

1. Write an essay on the economic life of the Harappans.
2. Write an essay on the decline of Harappan civilization.
3. Describe the socio-religious life of the Harappan people.

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CHAPTER 6 VEDIC PERIOD

Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Rigvedic Age (c. 1500-c. 1000 BCE)
 - 6.2.1 Origin of Aryans
 - 6.2.2 Social Conditions in the Rigvedic Period
 - 6.2.3 Political Conditions in the Rigvedic Period
 - 6.2.4 Economic, Religious and Cultural Conditions in Rigvedic Period
- 6.3 Later Vedic Period (1000-600 B.C.)
 - 6.3.1 Political Condition in the Later Vedic Period
 - 6.3.2 Social Conditions – Varna, Jati, Occupational Categories and Marriage
 - 6.3.3 Sixteen Sanskaras and Concept of Purusharthas
- 6.4 Iron Age
- 6.5 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- 6.6 Summary
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6.0 INTRODUCTION

The decline of Indus Valley civilization was not the end rather it saw the evolution of another glorious civilization which showed its moral light and wisdom to the world till today. The name of the new civilization was Vedic civilization and its people are known as Aryans. The literary meaning of Aryan is the man of ‘noble character’, and the ‘free born’. Unlike the urban culture of Indus people, Vedic civilization had its remarkable rural features. They were very famous to contribute the language ‘Sanskrit’ which is named the mother of all languages in India in modern times. It is said that Sanskrit and other languages had their origin from the Indo-European language of the Aryan which they were using in their daily life. Though many theories are debated to identify the origin of the Aryans, it is true that they started their settlement in Sapta-Sindhu (Punjab) region and their culture lasted between c. 1500 to c. 500 BCE which is regarded as the Vedic age or Vedic Age. From the initial settlement of Punjab region, they now shifted to Indo Gangetic plains regions. By 6th century B.C., they captured the whole North India which they named it as ‘Aryavarta’. As per the evidences, historians divided the Vedic Age into the Early Vedic Age or Rigvedic Age (1500 B.C.-1000 B.C.) and the Later Vedic Age (1000 B.C.-600 B.C.).

The first urbanization of the subcontinent was brought to light through the accidental discovery of the sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Subsequent archaeological excavations at these places followed by explorations and excavations within its neighbouring and distant regions made us understand the intricacies of the Indus Valley Civilizations, its rise, internal developments, and fall. These works have resulted in situating Indus Valley Civilization in the

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global context and brought India within the global map of ancient world civilizations. Although termed commonly as Indus Valley Civilization, it is also known through the names Harappan Culture, Harappan Civilization or Indus-Saraswati Civilization.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the origin and native place of Aryans.
- Describe about the culture and civilization in Rigvedic Period.
- Discuss the social and political conditions in Rigvedic period.
- Narrate the economic, religious and cultural conditions during Rigvedic period.
- Explain the social condition – Varna, Jati, occupational categories and marriage in later Vedic period.
- Give a brief account on Sixteen Sanskars and Purusharthas and Iron Age.

6.2 RIGVEDIC AGE (C. 1500-C. 1000 BCE)

Early Vedic Age is also known as Rigvedic Age which was spanned over a millennium from 1500 B.C. to 1000 B.C. They first established down in the Sapta-Sindhu region or Punjab and its adjacent regions. Their rural culture is revealed in their socio-economic life.

6.2.1 Origin of Aryans

- It is difficult to ascertain the original position of the Aryans. Different scholars opined in different ways by giving their evidences and imaginations. So, it is a debatable issue that whether Aryans were Indian origin or came from outside. So, we can discuss the following account which tries to conclude the position of origin of Aryans.
- The most significant theory which accepted for a long time was that the Aryans originally belonged to Central Asia. In his 'Lectures on the Science of Languages', Professor Max Muller, a German scholar of comparative languages remarked that the ancestors of the Indians, Greeks, Persians, Romans, Germans and the Celts must have existed together originally.
- The late Bal Gangadhar Tilak was of the opinion that the original home of the Aryans was the Arctic region. This view was propounded by him in his book 'The Arctic Home of Aryans'. Most of the Western scholars accepted the theory that the original home of the Aryans was in South-East Europe.
- According to Professor MacDonell, the common trees like the oak, the beech and the willow and the common animals like the horse and the

cow with which the ancestors of the Aryans were familiar, as is shown by a study of the Rigveda and Zendavesta, could be discovered in those days in South-Eastern Europe.

- According to Dr. Giles, the original home of the Aryans was “the region which is bounded on its Eastern side by the Carpathians, on its South by the Balkans, on its Western side by the Austrian Alps and Bohmer Wald and on North by the Erzgebirge and the mountains which link them up with the Carpathians”, i.e., the plains of Austria and Hungary. The ancestors of the Indians, Greeks, Germans and English lived originally at some common position.
- Some scholars remarked that the Aryans entered into India from the region of South Russia. **Brandenstain** has recommended that the Aryans migrated to India from Kazakh Steppe in Russia.
- **Schrader**, the great Philologist admits South Russia as the original home of Russians from where they travelled to different regions.
- **Swami Dayanand Saraswati** and **Pargiter** suggested that the original home of the Aryans was Tibet. The view has been expounded by them in the Satyarth Prakash and ancient Indian historical traditions respectively.
- According to A.C. Das, a Bengali historian, the original home of the Aryans was the Sapt-Sindhu or the Punjab. This point of view was put forward by him in his book named “Rigvedic India”. The Sapt-Sindhu, land (of seven rivers) which was the name of Punjab was irrigated by seven rivers, viz., The Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Satluj and Saraswati.

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It is commonly assumed that the Aryans came to India in groups that established in the regions of North-Western Province in Pakistan and the Punjab which they had then named Sapt-Sindhu or the ‘land of seven rivers’, namely, **the Indus, the Sutlej, the Ravi, the Beas, the Chenab, the Jhelum and the Saraswati**. Later, they named this region Brahmaparta or ‘the land of Brahma’. The Aryans captured the whole of the present region of Punjab from about 1500 B.C. The first group of Aryans clashed against the Dravidians and other inhabitants whom they conquered and are supposed to have been pushed down towards South of India.

6.2.2 Social Conditions in the Rigvedic Period

Social life of the Aryans was very simple and pure. They started living a well established family life which was patriarchal, i.e., in the family, father was the head who exercised absolute control over his children. Usually, joint family system prevailed among the Aryans. Wife assisted and actively participated in household affairs. In performing religious ceremonies, presence of wife was unavoidable. Hospitality was considered religious duty of every Aryan. The Rigvedic society was patriarchal. The basic unit of society was family or *Graham*. The head of the family was known as Kulapa, Kulapati or *Grahapathi*. Monogamy was generally practiced while polygamy was

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prevalent among the royal and noble families. The wife took care of the household and participated in all the major ceremonies.

- **Position of Women:** Women enjoyed a very high position in the society. No religious rites could be performed without women. Women were both educated and highly civilized. They participated in philosophical debates and were also well versed in music and dancing. Girls had considerable freedom in selecting their life partners. There was also a desire on the part of married couples to have children because without children life was considered incomplete. There was a system of widow marriage. Polygamy was prevalent among the kings and the nobles. Women freely moved out of their houses and attended public functions. Females were always under the care of the males, both before and after marriage. Women were given equal opportunities as men for their spiritual and intellectual development. There were women poets like Apala, Viswavara, Ghosa and Lopamudra during the Rigvedic period. Women could even attend the popular assemblies. There was no child marriage and the practice of sati was absent.
- **Caste System:** There was no caste system in the Rigvedic period. When the Aryans came to India, they were divided into three social classes: the warriors, the priests and the common people. At that time, professions were not hereditary nor were there any restrictions regarding marriage or dining within these classes. It is only when the Aryans came in contact with the non-Aryans and allowed them a place within their society, that the necessity to maintain class distinctions arose. However, the early Aryans divided the society only in two parts – Dvija or twice born and Advija.
- All Aryans whether warriors, priests or common people were called Dvija while non-Aryans and those of mixed blood were called Advija. The distinction was maintained only on the basis of culture but primarily on the basis of colour of skin or what is called varna in Sanskrit. However, during the later period of Rigveda, the fourfold division, that is, chaturvarna-system started to take its form. In the chapter 10 devoted to Rigveda, viz., Purushasukta, it has been mentioned that God created Brahmanas Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras from his head, arms, thighs and feet, respectively.
- Among the Aryans, priestly class was called the Brahmana, the warriors were called the Kshatriyas, the common people devoted to agriculture, pastoral pursuits, trade and industry were called the Vaishyas and the Dasas or non-Aryans and people of mixed blood were assigned the status of the Sudras. Thus, the chaturvanya-system which has been gradually distorted in shape and meaning and replaced by the prevalent caste system in India, had its beginning during the later Rigvedic period. Besides, the sudras who were distinguished from the rest, there was no rigidity in the system. Change in Varna was quite often possible with change in profession and there was no

restriction on inter-dining and intermarriage within the three upper varnas of the society.

- The caste system was, however, perfected during the later Vedic age in various directions. The Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas emerged as the leading classes. The Brahmanas claimed superiority over all other Varnas but the Kshatriyas remained their contenders. The Vaishyas, as the remaining Aryans were called, were no doubt much superior to the Sudras but their position steadily deteriorated while the position of the Sudras definitely went down.
- However, untouchability did not yet rear its ugly head. The tradition of Gotra which meant that a man should normally marry a woman of equal birth, i.e., within his caste but not with the same Gotra, was also developed. Yet, the caste system had not become rigid by that time. The caste of an individual was not solely determined by birth and the professions normally laid down for the different castes were not scrupulously followed in practice. The same way, barring the Sudras there was no prohibition to inter-dining and intermarriages among different castes. A man of an upper class could marry woman of lower class than himself. However, a male of a lower class could not marry a woman of an upper class than himself.
- **Food and Dress:** Milk and milk products were in common use. Wheat, barley, fruits and vegetables were usually used. They used Soma Rasa with joy and so was the position about honey. They used cotton and woolen clothes and also the skin of the animals. Both male and female used two garments. Ornaments were also used both by men and women. Precious stones were also used. Yava which probably meant wheat, barley and beans were the chief vegetarian food stuff of the Aryans. They made bread and cakes of flour. Milk and its various preparations, such as Ghee, butter and curd together with fruits, vegetables and sugarcane were also favourite commodities of food. The flesh of ox, sheep and goat was normally eaten. Horse flesh was eaten only on the occasion of horse sacrifice and so was the case with beef and there too only barren cows called Vasas were sacrificed.
- However, during the later Vedic age, the killing of the cow gradually came into disfavour. Probably, rice was eaten by them while nothing can be said definitely about fish. Sura and Soma were favourite drinks of the Aryans. Probably, Soma was bhang and it was a sacrificial drink while Sura was a popular intoxicating drink like wine or whisky and was brewed from grain.
- Both male and females wore practically the same dress. The upper garment was called adhivasa and the lower garment was called Vasa. Another undergarment called nivi was used probably by females only. An embroidered garment called pesus seems to have been used by female dancers. A special garment was worn by the bride at the

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marriage ceremony. Both cotton and woollen garments were used and were of different colours.

- Sometimes, garments were made of animal skins also. There was gradual improvement in the quality and variety of garments during the later Vedic age. Not only cotton and wool but now silk was also used for making garments. Besides, we now find the use of turban, undergarment and over garment also. Shoes were also used by the people now.
- Several kinds of ornaments, both of gold and precious stones, were worn by members of both the sexes. Earring, finger ring, armlet, necklace, etc. were normally worn by men as well as women. The Kurira was some kind of head-ornament worn specially by brides. Nishka, Rukma and Mani were other popular ornaments. During the later Vedic age, besides gold and precious stones, the Aryans started to use silver for making ornaments.
- **Houses:** Originally, the early Vedic people were pastoralists and always travel in search of fresh pasture. For the search of pastures, they settled in the area of seven rivers in North-West India. They were living in wattle-and-daub huts. Some affluent families live in wooden houses. Such hoses comprised of rooms for various purposes, like, hall, bedroom for women, room for worship and a spacious courtyard.
- **Medicine:** The science of medicine also made progress during the later Vedic age. Atharvaveda has mentioned that various diseases such as consumption, dysentery, ulcer, headache, jaundice, etc. were treated. Fractures, wounds and snake-bites were also attended by physicians. Both men and women oiled and combed their hair, which was plaited or braided. The men kept beard and mustache but sometimes also shaved them.
- **Cities and Amusements:** During the early Vedic age, the Aryans had not built cities. They lived in villages. The houses were built of clay and bamboo. Roads were built and carts and chariots were the popular means of transport and communication though riding on horseback was also much in vogue. During the later Vedic age, the Aryans, however, built cities like Indraprastha, Hastinapur, Kosambi, Banaras, etc. which grew up as principal cities.

The chariot race, hunting, gambling and dicing, dancing and music were the main sources of entertainment of the Aryans. Music, both vocal and instrumental, was well known. The drum, the lute and the flute were very much familiar to them. Both men and women enjoyed themselves in festive assemblies with music and dance. During the later Vedic age, horse racing was also added as a favourite amusement by the Aryans.

- **Morality and Education:** The Aryans, on the whole, led a merry and easy going life but they also observed dutiful and moral life. Truth, honesty, good thoughts, good deeds, helping the poor, hospitality to

guests, etc. were observed by them while theft, robbery, telling lies, sorcery, witchcraft, seductions were not only denounced but were punishable offences. They prayed to God Agni to urge them on to holy thought and to God Varuna to loosen the bonds of sin committed by them. The Aryans still practiced high moral virtues. Good deeds and good behaviour formed the basis of their lives.

- There were no regular educational institutions in the present sense of the term. Education on the whole was oral. It aimed at developing character and was religious in nature. Teachers enjoyed high respect.

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6.2.3 Political Conditions in the Rigvedic Period

The well regulated disciplined life in the society of Aryans gives the indication of a strong and centralized administration. The King or Rajan with the help of many officials organized the function of the government in a very smooth way. Rigveda proves high political life of the Aryans which was revealed by the political institutions like Sabha and Samiti. Monarchy was the normal form of Government. Kingship was hereditary. But there were also references of democratic form of government and their chiefs were elected by the assembled people.

Administrative Divisions

- The patriarchal family was the lowest unit of the Rigvedic administrative division. Kulapa or Kulapati was the head of the family. A number of families bound together by ties of blood organized a clan, several class organized a district, and a number of districts composed a tribe, the highest political unit. Rigveda gives reference about some administrative units such as ‘grama’, ‘vis’, and the ‘jana’.
- The ‘Gramma’ consisted of several families. It was under a headman known as ‘gramani’. He as the head, used to lead the soldiers from his village to fight in the battle field. He attended the meetings of the ‘Sabha’ and ‘Samiti’. Several villagers organized a ‘Vis’. It was positioned under a ‘Visapati’. He was a military leader.
- A group of ‘Visyas’ organized a ‘Jana’ (tribe) whose members were bound together by real or supposed ties of kinship. ‘Gopa’ was the head of one ‘jana’. Rigveda mentions about various tribes such as Bharatas, Matsyas, Krivis and Tritsus. But the tribes which attained great prominence are the Purus, Trigvasas, Yadus, Aus and Drahys. Several Janas organized a ‘janapada’ or ‘kingdom’ which was led by The ‘Rajan’ or the king.

The King

The king was named ‘Rajan’. The king enjoyed a position of preeminence in the tribe. Kingship was hereditary. He was helped by the priests as king in the both nomination and coronation ceremony. He wore attractive clothes with lavish ornaments and lived in a grand palace. The king had the duty to protect the life and property of his people. Rigveda gives the reference about the role

played by the king as ‘Indra’ in valour, ‘Mitra’ in kindness and ‘Varuna’ in virtues. The king was the head of the legislative, executive and judiciary body of the state.

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Officials

For the administrative convenience the king appointed following officials:

- **Purohita (priest):** The most powerful official was the Purohita. He was the principal adviser to the king. Purohita pre-organized all the ceremonial activities for the rise and growth of the king. He also organized coronation ceremony, holy recitation before a military campaign. King needed blessings from the Purohita in every great activity.
- **Senani (general):** Senani was the commander in chief who helped the king in military warfare.
- **Suta:** Suta was chieftaining daily diary of the king.
- **Gramani:** Gramani was the village headman.
- **Vispati:** He was the head of the Vis which was the administrative unit consisted of many villages.
- **Bhagadugha:** He was the revenue collector of the king.
- **Sangrahitri:** He was the treasurer of the king.

Popular Assemblies

Sabha and Samiti were the two popular assemblies which we can find that the very names are mentioned in the Rigveda. Though the king enjoyed substantial power, yet he was not an autocrat. These two bodies helped the king in the work of law making and administration and often influenced the king with their decision.

- **The Sabha** was a select body of elders. The head of the sabha was known as ‘Sabhapati’. The Sabha advised the king on administration. It also functioned as a court of law and tried the cases of criminals and punished them.
- **The Samiti** was the most popular assembly and comprised common people. The head of Samiti was known as ‘Pati’. The Samiti chiefly dealt with the political business of the state. It also used to elect the king. In the early Vedic Age, the Sabha and Samiti had a commendable role to play as the political organization of the Aryans.

Military Administration

A large army was chieftain by the King. The army was chiefly consisting of Patti (infantry) and Rathins (chariots). The cavalry had also an essential role in the war. The ‘Senani’ was the commander in chief of all these combined army. The soldiers used the weapons like bows, arrows, swords, axes and spears. These weapons were made up of irons. They also used head gear or helmet, metal dress and shields for self-defense. For the shelter of the army, forts or ‘Pura’ were constructed by the king. The king was not attacking any country to

extent the kingdom but he clashed for the defence of the kingdom. The soldiers were divided into many units for better administration. They were like as Sardha, Vrata and Gana.

Judicial Administration

The King was the head of the judicial administration. Delivery of justice was on the basis of laws and tradition of the society. The chief judge was named ‘Adhyaksha’. The village level cases were judged by the officials named ‘Gramavadi’. The law code was very strict and severe. Normal crimes of those times were burglary, stealing of cattle, snatching, default of loans, etc.

Thus, due to the leadership of king or Rajan, the political condition of the Rigvedic Society was an organized one. For the administrative convenience, the king was taking the help of many officials. Extensive welfare measures were taken by the king with the help of the officials and the tax collected from the people.

6.2.4 Economic, Religious and Cultural Conditions in Rigvedic Period

Economically, the Rigvedic people were very well off. The land was productive and with little labour they could get much. The Aryans had rural economy and each village was in itself a self-sufficient unit.

- **Agriculture:** Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. Oxen and yoke used for ploughing the field. They knew about irrigation and wheat and barley were their main produce. They also used manures to increase produce. Pastures were also for the animals. Their most valuable possession was cow and oxen. Cow was not killed as that was considered sacred. It was also one of the sources of exchange. They domesticated animals like horse, goat, sheep, buffalo and camel.
- **Trade and Commerce:** During those days, markets were usually very busy, there was extensive external and internal trade. Barter system existed in those days for sale and purchase of commodities. Coin ‘Nishka’ was a unit of value and in common circulation. Chariot horses and bullock carts were used in trade. Main commercial commodities were clothes and leather goods.
- **Occupation:** Agriculture was main occupation of the people. Domestication of animals, manufacturing arms and developing trade and commerce were some other occupations of the people of those days. Sewing, weaving, carpentry, goldsmith, etc. were some other occupations. There was dignity of labour and the people could choose a profession which suited their taste. No profession was considered either high or low.

Religious Beliefs of the Rigvedic Period

The people had very simple and pure religious life. They tried to interpret every aspect of their life in terms of religion.

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- **Aryan Gods:** The Aryans worshiped Indra, Varuna and Surya. There were no hereditary priests but head of the family acted as priest. Gods were of different kinds but there were no ranking among the gods. The gods were considered as source of strength and their worship was deemed desirable for meeting desires.
- **Sacrifices:** In those days, the people used to perform daily sacrifices in which ghee and flesh were used. Since the Aryans had faith in the theory of Karma, therefore they made their sacrifices to please gods and to improve their lot. The sacrifices were simple.
- **Worship of Nature:** The Aryans had no temples where they could worship. They believed in the worship of nature. Surya, Indra, Agni and Prithvi were their common gods. Varuna was their sky god and Indra was rain god.
- **Idea of One God:** According to the Aryans, God is one. He was most powerful and strong and moved the universe. All other gods were only his images. They chanted hymns in their praise. There was no system of idol worship.
- **Yajnas:** In almost every Aryan family, Yajnas were daily performed. These Yajnas were very simple and did not take much time. Sometimes, however, costly yajnas were also performed. These yajnas continued for days and sometimes for months together.

Vedic Gods

From oldest collection of texts, the Vedas
1,500 – 1,000 BCE



Indra, primary warrior god



Agni, fire, key to rituals



Surya, the Sun, one of several "elemental" gods

Check Your Progress

1. What is the literary meaning of Aryan?
2. By what name, the Head of the Vedic family was known?
3. In which period, Caste system was created?
4. In which age, worship of nature was prevalent?
5. Who was the head of the kingdom?
6. In which area, first the Aryans had started living?
7. What was the role of Sabha and Samiti in the Vedic period?

6.3 LATER VEDIC PERIOD (1000-600 B.C.)

The Aryans further moved towards East in the Later Vedic Period. The Shatapatha Brahmana refers to the expansion of Aryans to the Eastern Gangetic plains. Several tribal groups and kingdoms are mentioned in the later Vedic literature. One important development during this period is the growth of large kingdoms. Kuru and Panchala kingdoms flourished in the beginning. Parikshat and Janamejaya were the famous rulers of Kuru kingdom. Pravahana Jaivali was a popular king of the Panchalas. He was a patron of learning. After the fall of Kurus and Panchalas, other kingdoms like Kosala, Kasi and Videha came into prominence. The famous ruler of Kasi was Ajatasatru. Janaka was the king of Videha with its capital at Mithila. His court was adorned by scholar Yajnavalkya. Magadha, Anga and Vanga seem to be the Eastern most tribal kingdoms. The later Vedic texts also refer to the three divisions of India – Aryavarta (Northern India), Madhyadesa (Central India) and Dakshinapatha (Southern India).

It was during Later Vedic Period, much of the simplicity of the Rigvedic Religion was lost. The hold of the priestly class becomes more absolute. The priests developed complicated modes of worship. Sacrifices become more common. The rites and rituals became more difficult. Superstitions entered on the name of religions. Fear of evil spirits and witches came in. Philosophical and theological speculations became more complex. The rigid caste system cropped up. The Upavedas like Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Gandharvaveda and Shilpaveda, the Vedangas, the Sutras, Darshana-Sastras, Puranas, the Epics, Manu smritis, etc. are a few important sources for the study of Later Vedic Civilization. On the basis of these sources, a flood of light can be thrown on the political, social, economic, cultural and religious life of the then people.

6.3.1 Political Condition in the Later Vedic Period

Larger kingdoms were formed during the later Vedic period. Many *Jana* or tribes were amalgamated to form *Janapadas* or *Rashtras* in the later Vedic period. Hence, the royal power had increased along with the increase in the size of kingdom. The king performed various rituals and sacrifices to strengthen his position. They include *Rajasuya* (consecration ceremony), *Asvamedha* (horse sacrifice) and *Vajpeya* (chariot race). The kings also assumed titles like Rajavisvajanan, Ahilabhuwanapathi (lord of all earth), and Ekrat and Samrat (sole ruler). In the later Vedic period, a large number of new officials were involved in the administration in addition to the existing *Purohita*, *Senani* and *Gramani*. They include the treasury officer, tax collector and royal messenger. At the lower levels, the administration was carried on by the village assemblies. The importance of the *Samiti* and the *Sabha* had diminished during the later Vedic period.

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- **The King:** According to Aitareya Brahman, political necessity was responsible for the origin of the King. The King was elected. Shatapatha Brahmana believes that King was required by the people to bring law and order in the society. By now, the concept that the

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King had divinity had considerably developed. Both the Puranas and Manu Smriti support the idea of divinity of King. But even up to this time, it must be remembered, that the king had not become absolute. He was required to respect the law of the land. Though there are references in Atharvaveda and Shatapatha Brahmana that the king was selected yet there is not much to support it in practice.

- It is also clear that though at places there were elected monarchies yet hereditary monarchy was well known and quite widespread. From the available literature, it becomes amply clear that the position of the king had gone considerably high. Sabha and Samiti now did not stand in his way. The king now maintained armies for maintaining law and order and to check foreign aggression. To enable him to have arms, he was authorized to collect taxes on regular basis. He was supposed to take interest in the welfare of the people. The king was very prosperous and had both power and authority. He was supposed to impart justice and administer laws with the help of his officers. He was required to pay considerable attention to the organization of army which consisted of infantry, cavalry, chariots, elephants, etc. It also appears that the king was required to maintain and develop latest war requirement and methods.
- **Rise of Powerful Kingdoms:** It appears that by now resistance of non-Aryans had come to an end and that the Aryans were now colonizing many territories. In place of small kingdoms, now powerful kingdoms of Kosala, Magadha and Kasi had come into existence. The Kings had now begun to assume the title of 'Samrat' and also began to perform 'Ashvamedha Yajna' to establish their undisputed authority.

6.3.2 Social Conditions – Varna, Jati, Occupational Categories and Marriage

The available records also threw sufficient light on the social life of the people of later Vedic age which may briefly be discussed as follows:

- **Family:** Family still continued to be the unit of life. It was considered that happy family was essential for the sake of life. Joint family system was quite common and many families having same parentage lived under the same roof. Patriarchal system still continued and the father headed the family. He had absolute and complete control over the members of the family.
- **Caste System:** In this period, caste system developed. The society was divided into four castes namely Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudras. The Brahmanas were supposed to educate the people, Kshatriya to fight on the battlefield, Vaishyas to trade and run business and the Sudras to do other jobs. The system had now begun to degenerate and become rigid. Birth and not worth had become the basis of the system. In this system, unlike the early Vedic period, Kshatriya had become very powerful. The Kings usually belonged to

this caste. The Brahmanas still enjoyed social respect but not to the extent to which it was enjoyed during early Vedic age.

- **Position of the Women:** So far as the women are concerned in many cases, the position remained unchanged. The woman was still allowed to get high education and participate in philosophical discussion. There was still no *purdah* or *sati* system. But on the whole position of the women had considerably come down. The women now did not enjoy that high respect. Women were considered as personal property of men and even they could be put on dice. It was considered better for a woman to live in the four walls of the house and look after the welfare of the members of the family. She was now supposed not to enjoy political power and had been excluded from the right of inheritance. The kings and nobles could now marry more than one wife.
- **Education:** There were no public schools for imparting education. Education was given by learned teachers to the students who stayed with the guru throughout his educational career. Stress was laid on Vedic literature and aim of education was to develop knowledge, character, truthfulness and devotion. The gurus enjoyed great respect and the students thought it their religious duty to obey the guru. There was the system of imparting medical education also.
- **Degradation in Nobility:** The nobility had now sufficiently degenerated itself. A person from nobility could keep more than one wife. They used to gamble and had dancing girls to please them. They used to use liquor and other intoxicating drinks. The war was not that fair and all sorts of deceit methods were used in war and even the enemy was burnt alive by wicked and treacherous means.
- **Food and Dress Habits:** Rice, barley, ghee, milk, beans and their products were in common use. Meat eating was now quite common but common but cow slaughter was much condemned. Though use of liquor was quite known yet the people on the whole used that only on ceremonial occasions. Honey was also used in abundance. Woollen clothes were in common use. Wool was taken from goat and sheep. The dress consisted of three garments. The women used ornaments and embroidered cloth. Armlet, finger rings, pearls, jewels and rubies were in use. Mirror has been often mentioned.
- **Living Standard of the People and Amusements:** Living standard of the people was usually the same as it was in the early Vedic civilization. The people still lived in villages and small towns. Agriculture was the main profession of the people. Both indoor and outdoor games were played during this period. Gambling and decline was in practice. Chariot racing and horse racing were good pastimes. Both instrumental and vocational instruments were used in music.
- **The Ashrams:** During this period, life was ordinarily divided into four Ashrams. First one was Brahmacharya Ashram in which an

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individual was required to remain bachelor and pursue his study. Second was Grahasthya Ashrama in which people lived a married life. Vanaprastha Ashram came next in which people were required to gradually withdraw from worldly life. Sanyasa Ashrama came last in which a person was required to completely renounce the world. Each ashram was of 25 years' duration.

- **Brahmacharya Ashrama:** Education was the main work given in this Ashrama. In this Ashrama, one had to spend his childhood at his teacher's hermitage called 'Gurukul'. When he was 8-year old, the child entered into this Ashrama with the religious sacrament (*samskara*) of 'upanayana'. After upanayana, he was expected to remain in the teachers' hermitage up to 12 to 14 years. Here he learned various knowledge-systems of this period, viz., the Vedas, literature, warfare, political science, trade, etc.
- **Grihasta Ashrama:** In this ashrama, he had to follow his duty in family and commitment towards society. He had to marry and become parent. Besides, he had to perform many duties assigned to him by the scriptures. There were four purusharthas or duties assigned to him by the scriptures they were like ***dharma* (socio-religious duties), *artha* (occupation), *kama* (marital life) and *moksha* (to strive for union with God).** He had to perform the first three duties during this ashrama. But in the next two ashramas, he had to long for moksha, the fourth one. The foremost important work here was to take care of his parents and serve the society.
- **Vanaprastha Ashrama:** This stage means the gradual withdrawal from the family to practice for the Sanyasa ashrama. Now, householder's life came to an end. He was having grown up and independent children. Now he had to leave all physical, material, and sexual pleasures of his home and prepare for the forest hut where he had to spend his time for meditation and prayer. He can take his spouse along with him but little contact should be made with the rest of the family.
- **Sanyasa Ashrama:** The fourth ashrama was the last stage of his life. Here, he realized the god and dharma. A person had to devote all time to God. Now he was a sanyasi, he had no home, no attachment; he had renounced all desires, fears, hopes, duties and responsibilities. He merged himself with God, all his worldly ties were broken, and his main concern was to realize the truth behind the birth and death and get moksha.

This system of ashram helped a lot in the maintenance of social order in this period, like:

- All the needs of human being were honoured and properly timed which made his life healthy and satisfactory.
- Through grihasta ashrama, the family institution was maintained and strengthened. It also took care of the aged people in the family. It

became a support for the society. Hence, society also maintained through this ashrama. Thus, with the completion by domestic and social duties, the entire Vedic society was maintained and sustained in this period.

- Through last two ashrama, the tensions emerged among different generations resolved and the issue of generation gaps regularized.

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Varna, Jati and Occupational Categories

In the Indian social system, Varna is only a reference category and not a functioning unit of social structure, and only refers broadly to the ascribed status of different *jatis*. It is also a classificatory device. In it, several *jatis* with similar ascribed ritual status are clustered together and are hierarchically graded.

- The three upper levels – the Brahmana, the Kshatriya, and the Vaishya – are considered twice-born, as in addition to biological birth they are born a second time after initiation rites. The Sudra, the fourth level, includes a multiplicity of artisans and occupationally-specialized jatis who pursue clean, i.e., non-polluting occupations. Though the Varna hierarchy ends here, but there is a fifth level which accommodates those following supposedly unclean occupations that are believed to be polluting. They are *Antyaja*, i.e., outside the Varna system.
- They constitute what are known as the ‘Untouchables’. On the other hand, the ‘Jati’ refers to an endogamous unit within which one must marry. Members of a jati are members of a descent group, traditionally assigned to a specific occupation. Further, each jati also has its own cultural traditions with its own food habits, rituals, dress codes and even art forms and may, thus, ‘appear’ to be merely functioning along an axis of difference, evidence of the enormous variation in Hindu society.
- Due to the cultural cohesion, the spiritual authority codified the social discrimination and came up with a clear-cut division of the society, termed as Varna. Most important change was the evolution of Varna or caste system. Various subcastes evolved in addition to the traditional four varnas. While the early Vedic society was casteless, Later Vedic society created caste system and inequality. The Brahmanas and Kshatriyas emerged as the two leading varnas out of the general mass of population. Vaishyas were the third onem and Sudras are the lowest and most suffering group. The Aitareya Brahmana clearly indicates the position of all varnas or castes in the society.

The Brahmanas

The duties of the Brahmanas were teaching, learning, performance and hosting of sacrifice. Hence, they became the sole authority on the religion of this period. As their authorization was necessary for the rulers to rule, the rulers also gave large sum donations to the Brahmins for the religious legitimization to their power.

NOTES**Kshatriya**

The Kshatriyas were meant for fighting in the society. The principal duties of the Kshatriyas were battle, war and administration. Many Kshatriyas performed sacrifices to be powerful and challenged the supremacy of Brahmanas. Two Kshatriya kings, Janak and Viswamitra, attained the status of Rishi.

Vaishyas

Vaishyas were engaged in trade, industry and agriculture, and animal husbandry. They were not having the advantages what the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were enjoying. The rich people among the Vaishyas were known as Sresthin who were highly respected in the king's court.

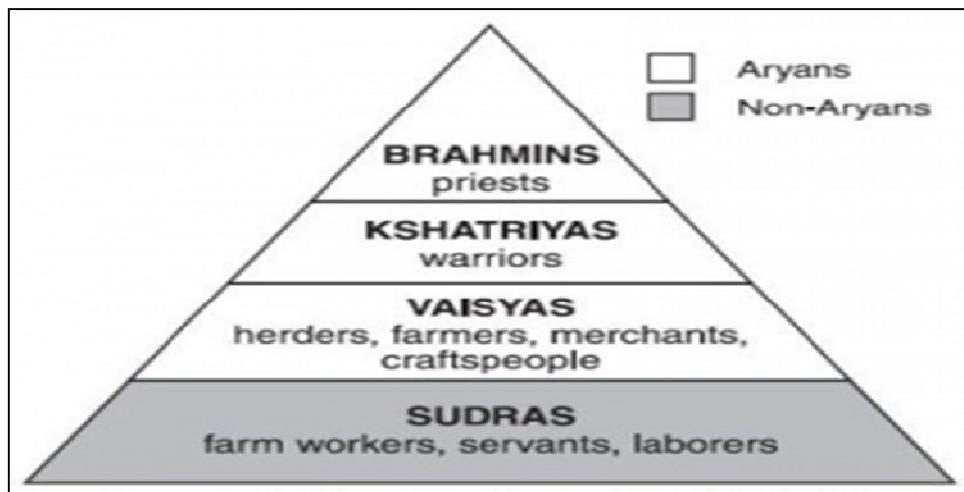
Sudra

Sudras were living in miserable condition. They were serving all the other three varnas. They were regarded as untouchables in the society and were debarred from manifold participation in the society. They could not perform sacrifice, or to read the sacred texts. This untouchability spread a lot and made the society a complex one. Following are the highlights of Varna system of later Vedic period:

- The Varna system later on became hereditary. Thus, Varna transformed into Jati (group based on birth), i.e., caste. Thus, we find the emergence of castes in this period.
- The Varna system was hierarchical. As there was no mobility or flexibility in such system, in this period, it became rigid and remained favourable only to the first three Varnas.
- As sacrifice or yajna was given more importance, Brahmanas dominated the Varna system in this period.
- The three (Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) in combination supposed as men of higher Varnas, i.e., traivarnikas.
- However, the Shudras remained powerless and required to provide labour to the traivarnikas.

On the other hand, the terms *Jati* and *Kula* appear in concrete situations quite frequently. What really seems to matter the Buddhists were the *Kula* and *Jati* divisions. The *Vinaya Pitaka* states that there are two *Jatis*: the low *Jati* (*Hina Jati*) and the excellent *Jati* (*Ukkatta Jati*). Buddha also accepts this bipartite division, but at several instances refuted the relation of *Jati* in the matter of spiritual attainment. In doing so, Buddha though recognizes the importance of *Jati* and *Gotra* in social interaction, but rules out their extrapolation to the spiritual field. This stratification not only provides this broad structure of the society in terms of different colour groups, it further resolute low *Jati* group into a hierarchical scheme of occupational groups. This textual resolution of the low *Jatis* into occupational groups starting with *pukusuka* should be taken to indicate an order of lowness. This in overall character seems as a forerunner to Manu's scheme. The Buddhists believed that good behaviour and wisdom being rewarded with rebirth in the high *Kulas* of

Kshatriyas and *Brahmanas* and *Gahapatis*. The opposite characteristics on the other hand would result in rebirth in the low *Kulas* of *Chandalas*, *Nesadas*, *Vennas* and *Pukkusas*.



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Marriage

Marriage was considered as main duty of Vedic people and hence it became a point of religious importance. After Brahmacharya Ashrama, a person entered into Grihasta Ashrama. He is expected by the canons to get married in this Ashrama. We know that It is perceived that through marriage and giving birth to children one could become free from the ‘Rina’ of his parents. It was one of the 16 important religious sacraments (Samskar) of Vedic religion. In this period, ‘Inter-Varna’ marriages were disliked, whereas ‘similar gotra/family marriages’ were forbidden. Hence, they had to marry in the own Varna but in other families than theirs. They came forward with two types of legalized structures of marriages, viz., Anuloma marriage (between bridegroom from higher Varna and bride from lower Varna) and Pratiloma marriage (between bridegroom from lower Varna and bride from higher Varna)

Eight types of marriages were prevalent in the society. These types clearly reflect contacts of Vedic people with different kinds of cultures, like:

- **Brahma-vivaha:** Father gives his daughter's hand to the knowledgeable and well-behaved bridegroom with proper rites and rituals.
- **Daiva-vivaha:** Father gives the bride's hand to the priest, engaged in sacrifice.
- **Prajapatya-vivaha:** Father greets bridegroom and appeals the couple to follow religious duties.
- **Arsha-vivaha:** After receiving a pair of cattle from the groom, the father gives the bride's hand to the bridegroom.
- **Gandharva-vivaha:** Marriage-at-will, i.e., through the consent of bridegroom and bride only.
- **Asur-vivaha:** Bridegroom gives money to the father and relatives of bride and purchases her for marriage.

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- **Rakshasa-vivaha:** Forceful abduction of a crying girl and marrying her.
- **Paishacha-vivaha:** With force, making the girl unconscious and violet her Chastity.

The Vedic jurists only recommended the first four types of marriage. However, to make the patriarchal system strict, the marriages-at-will disrespected by the jurists. Besides, there were references of inter-caste marriages like Anuloma (son of higher Varna with daughter of lower Varna) and Pratiloma (son of lower Varna with daughter of higher Varna) vivaha. The marriages in this period were controlled by the patriarchal head of the family and the religion. Hence, ‘marriage-at-will’ was disliked in this period. At the same time, the age of marriages decreased. Besides, the polygamy became prominent feature of this period.

6.3.3 Sixteen Sanskaras and Concept of Purusharthas

Sanskaras were the socio-religious sanctions to every stage of physical and psychological development of a person and need of his social commitment; the jurists provided the system of *Sanskara* to the society. There are three meanings of a ‘*Sanskara*’ in Hinduism. Whatever basic habits are formed in very childhood under some influence is called ‘*Sanskara*’ in later years. For example, “if parents keep the foundation of good ‘*Sanskar*’ in a child, he will become a good man in later years.” If parents make a habit to do daily chores (a set of daily routine) in early morning time, say at 5.00 am, and if it continues, that is called ‘*Sanskara*’. Such habits die hard and, sometimes do not die at all. Whatever actions we have done in our previous lives, they form our future and nature. This nature resulted from such actions is called ‘*Sanskar*’.

When a person behaves in a certain way, then it is said that “his ‘*Sanskars*’ are like that”. ‘*Sanskar*’ implies a Hindu rite that he performs since his birth till death. These are 16 *Sanskars*. According to Hinduism, ‘*Sanskars*’ are instruments in attuning the individual to the higher reality. These ‘*Sanskars*’ cover different stages of life cycle of the individual and instill in him the need to make sacred all the important events in his life. These help man to acquire higher range of values.

They are an integral part of man’s normal life. ‘*Sanskars*’ also refer to the acts of purification so that particular acts related to different areas of life activities could be performed in a manner that is pure and clean. The substantive purpose of *Sanskars* is to purify or refine life. As such, they refer to those acts that are performed for physical, psychological and intellectual purification and refinement of an individual so that he lives a purposeful life and attains ‘*Moksha*’ by doing good deeds. A brief account of these ‘*Sanskars*’ is given below:

- **Garbadan Sanskar:** This relates to the prayer for a child. It is performed as soon as the conception is known. It is done for the fulfillment of parents duty to continue the race.

- **Punsavana Sanskar:** This is performed during the third or the fourth month of pregnancy. The significance of this ‘*Sanskar*’ is to invoke good qualities in the child. It is performed in the desire of a male child. The belief is that the male child carries the race ‘*Vamsha*’ forward.
- **Seemantonnayana Sanskar:** This is performed during the seventh month of pregnancy and prayers are offered for the healthy physical and mental growth of the child. Another objective is to free the expectant mother from worries since the last three months are difficult for the pregnant mother.
- **Jatkarma Sanskar:** This is performed at the birth of a child as a welcome sign to the new born child into the family.
- **Namkama Samskar:** The baby child gets name on the completion of this ‘*Sanskar*’.
- **Nishkarmana Sanskar:** This ‘*Sanskar*’ is performed when the child is taken out of the house for the first time. This is supposed to enhance the age and physical and mental development of the child.
- **Annaprasanna Sanskar:** This ‘*Sanskar*’ is performed when the child gets the solid food.
- **Mundan Sanskar:** In this ‘*Sanskar*’, all the hairs of the head (hairs of birth) of the child are shaved. This is done to protect the body of the child.
- **Karnvedh Sanskar:** This ‘*Sanskar*’ is performed at the end of the first year after the ‘*Mundan Sanskar*’. This relates to the cleaning of the ear especially so that the child can hear smoothly.
- **Upanayana Sanskar:** The word ‘*Upanayana*’ means bringing near. The child is brought near the ‘*Guru*’. The ‘*Upanayana*’ ceremony was performed when a student commenced his Vedic education under the supervision of a teacher, with whom he usually lived. Usually, this ceremony was performed when the child was between eight to twelve years of age. This ceremony was performed under the holy ‘peepal’ tree. Whenever a student went to a new teacher, this ritual was performed.
- **Vidyaramba Sanskara or ‘Akshar Sanskar’:** This ‘*Sanskar*’ marks the commencement of child’s education. This stage may be compared with the modern pre-primary stage. In the midst of a magnificent congregation this ceremony was performed. It took place when the child was five years old. ‘*Saraswati*’ (goddess of learning) was worshiped. The child was taught to write the letters of alphabets with a pen of silver or gold on a mound of rice spread on the floor. The child was put under the charge of the preceptor (teacher). This was the first ceremony in the educational career of the child.
- **Samavartana Sanskar:** This ‘*Sanskar*’ is performed before entering the ‘*Grihastha Ashram*’ or the life of a householder and at the end of child’s study in *Gurukul*. The student has to take the permission of his

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‘Gum’ before entering the ‘Ashram’. After this, the *guru* gives him important guidelines or tips for the ‘*Grihastha Ashram*’.

- **Vivaha Sanskar:** This Sanskar is entry into the second ‘*Ashram*’. Entering this stage of life, man has to take on his duties and has to pay spiritual debts by sacrifice, by procreating children and study. The bride and groom walk around ‘*Agni*’ hand in hand. The bride sacrifices grains in the fire and chants ‘*mantras*’.
- **Vanprastha Sanskar:** Man withdraws himself from all worldly activities, retires into the forest and prepares himself for taking ‘*sanvasa*’. This is the life of a ‘*vanprastha*’.
- **Sanyasa Sanskar:** A *sanyasi* renounces the world and leads a life of study and meditation by living on alms.
- **Antyeshti Sanskar:** A small piece of gold, ‘*tulsi*’ leaf and drops of Ganga water are put in the mouth of the person on the death bed. The body is laid on the ground with the head towards the North. The eldest son generally performs the last rites before which he takes a purificatory bath amidst the chanting of ‘*Mantras*’. The dead body is washed, perfumed and wrapped in a new white cloth and decked with flowers.

Concept of Purusharthas

The concept of Purushartha is closely connected with the Ashrama system. The ultimate aim of human life is to attain Moksha. This aim of human life is common to all system of Indian philosophy. But its attainment is possible only when there is proper management of conduct and activities. Hence, along with the scheme of ashrams, we find a parallel system of purusharthas. These purusharthas are closely connected with ashrams. In ashram system, individual is oriented towards the management of Purusharthas.

Number of Purusharthas

According to Hindu Dharmashastras, the purusharthas are four in number, viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Artha and Kama are duly subordinated to Dharma and Moksha. The last, viz., Moksha comprises the supreme eternal value which regulates all interests and duties of life.

- **Dharma (Righteousness):** The word ‘dharma’ has been formed from the root ‘dhri’ which means to hold a thing. It represents a right action. Dr. Radhakrishnan observed “It stands for both the satya and the truth of things as well as the dharma or the law of evolution. Every form of life, every group of men has its dharma, which is the law of its being. Dharma or virtue is in conformity with the truth of things; adharma or vice is in opposition to it.” According to Mahabharata, “Dharma is created for the well-being of all creation. All that is free from doing harm to any created being is certainly dharma” Thus, dharma protects all. It is capable of preserving universe. Thus, in principle, the social implication of dharma is to regulate human behaviour towards a path of righteousness. In other words, Dharma does not mean a creed

or religion. It denotes to a mode of life or a code of conduct. It regulates the work and conduct of a man as a member of society. The aim of Dharma is to bring the gradual development of a man and to enable him to reach what is deemed to be the goal of human existence.

- **Artha (Wealth):** The term ‘Artha’ refers to worldly prosperity such as wealth and power. According to Zimerman, “It includes the whole range of tangible objects that can be possessed, enjoyed and lost, and which are required in daily life for the upkeep of household raising of a family and discharge of religious duties for the fulfillment of life’s obligations. A man is unable to conduct his life so long as the material means of living are not available.” The Hindu thinkers give proper importance on this world and its good things. The Upanishad says, “In darkness are they who worship only world, but in greater darkness are they who worship the infinite alone. He who accepts both saves himself from death by the knowledge of the forms and attains immortality by the knowledge the latter”. Thus, the Hindu thinkers recognize the legitimate aspiration of human being towards ‘Artha’. Every man must attain Artha through the path of righteousness.
- **Kama (Artistic and Cultural Life):** Kama, on the other hand, is to be understood referring to all desires in man for satisfaction of the life of senses. At its lowest manifestation, karma is referred to sex drive. It helps to the propagation of species. Therefore, the Hindu thinkers have recognized its importance. It is basic human instinct which must be satisfied at proper time and place.
- **Moksha (Spiritual Freedom):** Moksha, according to Hindu thinkers, is the ultimate aim. The other three purusharthas namely dharma, artha and kama are the means for the attainment of the supreme end. According to P. Prabhu, “Moksha seems to be concerned mainly with the individual. It refers perhaps to the appeal of the inner man to the individual unaffected by the group. It is perhaps too personal an outlook that defines the struggle and hope and justification within the individual for moksha”.

It is, thus, evident from the above description that the supreme end of human life is moksha. The Hindu thinkers have therefore presented a scheme of motivating forces around which the conduct and life of an individual is to be comprehended. Dharma refers to moral needs, artha to material needs and kama to biological needs. These needs of human life have been formulated with reference to the supreme end of life namely ‘Moksha’. In other words, Dharma, Artha and Kama are the three principle problems of life. Hence, in accordance to these problems, we find three division of Hindu literature, viz., the Dharmashastra, the Arthashastra and the Kamashastra.

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Check Your Progress

8. Who was the famous ruler of Kasi?
9. Write the political condition in the Later Vedic period.
10. Write Vana-Prastha-Ashrama during the Later Vedic period.

6.4 IRON AGE

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Immediately after the New Stone Age man came to learn of the use of metals. At first, they were greatly attracted by the lustre of gold, but later on, it was given up in favour of hard metals such as copper and bronze. But they were still not acquainted with iron. But historians hold divergent opinions regarding the use of metals, as to which metal was first of all used. In Northern India, stone was replaced by copper, and articles made of copper have been found all over Northern India. People of this age started making tools and implements with copper and bronze in place of stone. These tools of the Metal Age were sharper and more beautiful than the tools of the Stone Age. As the metal is harder than the stone, tools of metal proved to be more durable. During this period, the clay pots were replaced by utensils made of metal. The man had become more civilized during the Metal Age. Their knowledge of agriculture, animal breeding, and arts made them more civilized than before. Now, they used to wear clothes made of cotton and wool, but these clothes were improved upon a lot if compared to the New Stone Age. In addition to different colours, they were decorated with various prints and paintings. They had also improved their dwelling houses. Now, they had improvised ventilators and windows and had begun to live in colonies situated in the river valleys. The people of the Metal Age had started worshiping various gods and goddesses in the shape of trees and stones. Sun worship had also begun and people had developed faith in magic and spells. Cremation of the dead was becoming popular day by day.

The discovery of iron brought about a revolution in the field of civilization. It is estimated that iron was first of all used by Aryans in India. Copper and Bronze Age flourished in North India but Iron Age immediately succeeded the Stone Age in South India. Man during this age gave up making tools and weapons with copper and bronze and started the use of iron for making different implements, such as swords, plough shares, axes, daggers, etc. With the passage of time, there happened to be a great improvement in the quality of food and dress during this period. We find all-round progress in civilization during the Iron Age. The people had not only started to adorn themselves by wearing various ornaments and fine clothes but also made their life happier with recreation and amusement. They had also improved their dwellings and means of communication. The political life which was quite improved now during the Copper and Bronze Age remained unchanged. But during the Iron Age people started worshiping various forces of nature. Thus, in the early stages of civilization men had to struggle with the land of India as one of those from where the story of man's life began. Due to this, the Indian civilization is known as one of the most ancient in the world. The changing Nature also attributed much to the making of this civilization and different races also helped in its rise.

Check Your Progress

11. Write a short note on the caste system in Later Vedic period.
12. Discuss about ten lines on Sanyasa Ashrama in Later Vedic period.
13. Explain the concept of Varna.
14. Write about the concept of Purusharthas.
15. Discuss about ten lines on Iron Age.

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6.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The literary meaning of Aryan is the man of ‘noble character’ and the ‘free born’.
2. The head of the family was known as Kulapa, Kulapati or Grahapathi.
3. Later Vedic period.
4. Rigvedic period.
5. Rajan.
6. Sapta-Sindhu.
7. The Sabha was a select body of elders. The head of the sabha was known as ‘Sabhapati’. The Sabha advised the king on administration. It also functioned as a court of law and tried the cases of criminals and punished them. **The Samiti** was the most popular assembly and comprised common people. The head of Samiti was known as ‘Pati’. The Samiti chiefly dealt with the political business of the state. It also used to elect the king. In the early Vedic Age, the Sabha and Samiti had a commendable role to play as the political organization of the Aryans.
8. The famous ruler of Kasi was Ajatasatru.
9. Larger kingdoms were formed during the later Vedic period. Many Jana or tribes were amalgamated to form Janapadas or Rashtras in the later Vedic period. Hence, the royal power had increased along with the increase in the size of kingdom. The king performed various rituals and sacrifices to strengthen his position. They include Rajasuya (consecration ceremony), Asvamedha (horse sacrifice) and Vajpeya (chariot race). The kings also assumed titles like Rajavisvajanan, Ahilabhuwanapathi, (lord of all earth), Ekrat and Samrat (sole ruler).
10. Vanaprastha Ashrama means the gradual withdrawal from the family to practice for the Sanyasa ashrama. Now, householder’s life came to an end. He was having grown up and independent children. Now, he had to leave all physical, material and sexual pleasures of his home, and prepare for the forest hut where he had to spend his time for meditation and prayer. He can take his spouse along with him but little contact should be made with the rest of the family.

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11. In the later Vedic period, the society was divided into four castes namely Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudras. The Brahmanas were supposed to educate the people, Kshatriya to fight on the battlefield, Vaishyas to trade and run business and the Sudras to do other jobs. The system had now begun to degenerate and become rigid. Birth and not worth had become the basis of the system. In this system, unlike the early Vedic period, Kshatriya had become very powerful. The Kings usually belonged to this caste. The Brahmanas still enjoyed social respect but not to the extent to which it was enjoyed during early Vedic age.
12. The Sanyasa ashrama was the last stage of his life. Here, he realized the god and dharma. A person had to devote all time to God. Now, he was a sanyasi, he had no home, no attachment; he had renounced all desires, fears, hopes, duties and responsibilities. He merged himself with God, all his worldly ties were broken, and his main concern was to realize the truth behind the birth and death and get moksha.
13. In the Indian social system, Varna is only a reference category and not a functioning unit of social structure, and only refers broadly to the ascribed status of different jatis. It is also a classificatory device. In it, several *jatis* with similar ascribed ritual status are clustered together and are hierarchically graded.
14. The concept of Purushartha is closely connected with the Ashrama system. The ultimate aim of human life is to attain Moksha. This aim of human life is common to all system of Indian philosophy. But its attainment is possible only when there is proper management of conduct and activities. Hence, along with the scheme of ashrams, we find a parallel system of purusharthas. These purusharthas are closely connected with ashrams. In ashram system, individual is oriented towards the management of Purusharthas.
15. The discovery of iron brought about a revolution in the field of civilization. It is estimated that iron was first of all used by Aryans in India. Copper and Bronze Age flourished in North India but Iron Age immediately succeeded the Stone Age in South India. Man during this age gave up making tools and weapons with copper and bronze, and started the use of iron for making different implements such as swords, plough shares, axes, daggers, etc.

6.6 SUMMARY

- After the decline of Harappan civilization, the North-Western part of India witnessed an existence of a different culture.
- There was still a controversy on the original home land of the Aryan; and whatever bits of information we gather that is from the vast body of literature they have created and preserved through oral tradition.

- What we know is that they were nature worshipers and used to perform sacrifice and pray to the Gods. The prayers, collectively known as ‘Vedas’ were in Sanskrit and the people who spoke that language were called as Aryans.
- The Aryans believed in Vedas hence called as ‘Vedic Aryans’. The people were of nomadic-pastoral tribe. They had specific kind of administrative system and a king. However, the people-assemblies possessed the basic control of their tribe.
- They were pastoralists. Hence, their main occupation was ‘Cattle Pastoralism’. They also followed subsistence agriculture and some crafts and exchanges on quite a small scale. Initially, it was a stock of pastoral people with social divisions on occupational basis and space for women in the society. They were nature worshipers, and through sacrifices and reciting suktas, they expressed their religious faith. Rigveda, the earliest of four Vedas, documents this early phase of Aryans.
- When the Vedic Aryans entered into more internal part of India, they were exposed to other communities, language groups and belief systems foreign for them. However, their contacts and relations changed their way of life.
- The growth of ruled land made King powerful than earlier. Along with priests and through sacrifices, he became supreme and divine. In this age, the earlier controls on the kings were diminished, and thus, emerged the hereditary kingship.
- All the other administrative bodies were systematized and properly structured. The Pastoralism remained basic form of economy. However, we witnessed larger orientation towards agriculture and growth in craft and trade.
- We also find the emergence of central places in this period. When they moved out to internal parts of India, after contacts with various other cultures, Vedic culture came up with rigid ideas regarding society and religion.
- They laid the foundation of various institutions, which remained until today like the Varna system, Ashramas, Samskaras, Purusharthas, etc.
- Besides, to maintain authority and monopoly on religion and power, the classes of priests and warriors came forth, putting labourer class out of the Vedic institutions. In such condition, women also faced the same fate as the labourers. This information can be known from vast body of literature in Sanskrit.

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6.7 KEY TERMS

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- **Concept of Purushartha:** It was expected from every man to follow four main duties in his life, viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.
- **Dharma:** He was expected to follow religious rules/regulations, prescribed by Vedic canons. Besides, he should perform sacrifices, regularly in his life. Thus, by following ‘Dharma’, he could become free from the ‘Rina’ (lit. = loan; the responsibility) of Gods.
- **Shudra:** Submission of service to upper three classes. This was the lowest of the Varna-ladder and had no powers and no rights in the society. They had no hold on any kind of mode of production and subsequent production. According to some historians, the people belonged to this Varna were native people of the land.
- **The System of Marriage:** Marriage was considered as main duty of Vedic people. Hence, it became a point of religious importance. After brahmacharya ashrama, a person entered into grihasta ashrama. He is expected by the canons to get married in this ashrama. We know that It is perceived that through marriage and giving birth to children one could become free from the ‘rina’ of his parents.
- **Samavartana Sanskar:** This ‘Sanskar’ is performed before entering the ‘Grihastha Ashrama’ or the life of a householder and at the end of child’s study in Gurukul. The student has to take the permission of his ‘Guru’ before entering the ‘Ashram’. After this the guru gives him important guidelines or tips for the ‘Grihastha Ashram’.
- **Vivaha Sanskar:** This Sanskar is entry into the second ‘Ashram’. Entering this stage of life, man has to take on his duties and has to pay spiritual debts by sacrifice, by procreating children and study. The bride and groom walk around ‘Agni’ hand in hand. The bride sacrifices grains in the fire and chants ‘mantras’

6.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Into how many parts Veda is divided? Name them.
2. Write about the dress and ornaments of the Rigvedic Aryans.
3. What was the caste system during later Vedic period?
4. Write about the family of the Vedic age.
5. What was the position of women in later Vedic period?
6. What was the role of Sabha and Samiti in Vedic age?

Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the social and religious conditions in Rigvedic period.
2. Elucidate the political and economic conditions in later Vedic period.
3. Write an essay on the Vedic literature.
4. Give an account on the original home land of Aryan.
5. Discuss the changing nature of Aryan social, economic and political aspects in the later Vedic phase.

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UNIT – III

Sixteen Mahajanapadas, Rise of Magadha and ...

CHAPTER 7 SIXTEEN MAHAJANAPADAS, RISE OF MAGADHA AND RISE OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN NORTH INDIA

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Structure

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Sixteen Mahajanapadas
- 7.3 Rise of Magadha
 - 7.3.1 Bimbisara (546-494 B.C.)
 - 7.3.2 Ajatasatru (494-462 B.C.)
 - 7.3.3 Shaishunaga Dynasty
 - 7.3.4 Nanda Dynasty
- 7.4 Causes of the Rise of New Religious Movements in North India
 - 7.4.1 Jainism
 - 7.4.2 Vardhaman Mahavira (539- 467 B.C.)
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 - 7.4.4 Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture
 - 7.4.5 Gautama Buddha (567- 487 B.C.)
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- 7.5 Alexander's Invasion of India
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- 7.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 7.7 Summary
- 7.8 Key Terms
- 7.9 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 7.10 Further Reading

7.0 INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of the 6th century B.C., the Northern India consisted of a large number of independent kingdoms. Some of them had monarchical forms of government, while some others were republics. While there was a concentration of monarchies on the Gangetic plain, the republics were scattered in the foothills of the Himalayas and in North-Western India. Some of the republics consisted of only one tribe like the Sakyas, Licchavis and Mallas. The Buddhist literature Anguttara Nikaya gives a list of sixteen great kingdoms called 'Sixteen Mahajanapadas'. They were **Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asmaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja**. The Jain texts also contain references to the existence of sixteen kingdoms. In course of time, the small and weak kingdoms either submitted to the stronger rulers or gradually got eliminated. Finally, in

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the mid 6th century B.C., only four kingdoms – Vatsa, Avanti, Kosala and Magadha survived. The Buddhist sources refer to the presence of sixteen Mahajanapadas in the period when the Buddha lived. The Mahajanapadas and their major settlements are found mentioned repeatedly when references to the Buddha are made in the Buddhist texts. The exact dates of the Buddha's life are still disputed by historians. The list of Mahajanapadas varies from text to text. However, we can get a fair idea of the political and economic conditions of various regions of India by studying these lists. These Mahajanapadas represented a conglomerate of thousands of villages and a few cities. These Mahajanapadas extended from the North-Western Pakistan to East Bihar and from the submontane regions of the Himalayas to the river Godavari in the South. Of all the kingdoms of North India, Magadha emerged powerful and prosperous. It became the nerve centre of political activity in North India. Magadha was endowed by nature with certain geographical and strategic advantages. The 6th century B.C. is one of the cardinal epochs in the history of Asia. The extraordinary mental and spiritual unrest among the human beings contributed too many religious revolts. It was because; the age-old religious traditions, beliefs, rituals and class domination could not cope with the changing lifestyle of the time. After two centuries of the Persian invasion, Alexander from Macedonia invaded India. On the eve of his invasion, there were a number of small kingdoms in North-Western India.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain Sixteen Mahajanapadas.
- Describe the rise of Magadha with special reference to Bimbisara and Ajatasatru.
- Discuss the rise of new religious movements in North India.
- Explain the teachings of Mahavira and Gautama Buddha.
- Narrate the Alexander's invasion of India.

7.2 SIXTEEN MAHAJANAPADAS

The Buddhist text **Anguttara Nikaya** which is a pan of the **Sutta-Pitaka** gives the following list of sixteen Mahajanapadas in the time of Buddha:

Sr. No.	Mahajanapadas	Capital	Modern Location
1	Anga	Champa	Munger and Bhagalpur
2	Magadha	Girivraja/Rajangir	Gaya and Patna
3	Kasi	Kasi	Banaras
4	Vatsa	Kausambi	Allahabad
5	Kosala	Sravasti	Eastern Uttar Pradesh
6	Surasena	Mathura	Mathura
7	Panchala	Ahichchatra and Kampilya	Western Uttar Pradesh

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8	Kuru	Indraprastha	Meerut and S.E. Haryana
9	Matsya	Viratnagar	Jaipur
10	Chedi	Sothivati/Bonda	Bundelkhand
11	Avanti	Ujjain/Mahismati	Madhya Pradesh and Malwa
12	Gandhar	Taxila	Rawalpindi
13	Kamboja	Pooncha	Rajori and Hajra (Kashmir)
14	Asmaka	Pratisthan/Paithan	Bank of Godavari
15	Vajji	Vaishali	Vaishali
16	Malla	Kusinara	Deoria and U.P.

- **KASHI:** The kingdom of Kasi was the most powerful and rich state of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It was located in the region around Varanasi (modern Banaras) which was bounded by the rivers Varuna and Asi in the North and South with its capital at Varanasi. King Asvasena was known to be the earliest king of Kasi. He was the father of twenty-third Jaina Tirthankara Parsvanath. Under the rule of Brahmadatta, the king of Kasi defeated King Dighiti of Kosala. Later on, during the period of Kamsa, Kasi came under the suzerainty of Kosala.
- **ANGA:** Anga comprised the districts of Bhagalpur and Monghyr in Bihar. It may have extended Northwards to the river Kosi and included some parts of the district of Purnea. It was located to the East of Magadha and West of the Rajmahal hills. Champa was the capital of Anga. It was located on the confluence of the rivers Champa and the Ganga. Champa has been considered one of the six great cities in the 6th century B.C. It was noted for its trade and commerce and traders sailed further East through the Ganga from here. In the middle of the sixth century B.C. Anga was annexed by Magadha. Excavations at Champa near Bhagalpur have yielded NBPW in large numbers.
- **MAGADHA:** Magadha consisted of the areas around Patna and Gaya in South Bihar. It was protected by the rivers Son and Ganga on its North and West. Towards the South, it reached upto the Chotanagpur plateau. In the East the river Champa separated it from Anga. Its capital was called Girivraja or Rajagriha. Rajagriha was an impregnable city protected by five hills. The walls of Rajagriha represent the earliest evidence of fortification in the historical India. The capital was shifted to Pataliputra somewhere in the 5th century B.C. They bear testimony to the power of the early Magadhan monarchs. In the Brahmanical texts, the Magadhans were considered people of mixed origin and inferior type. This was probably because the people in this area did not follow the **varna** system and the Brahmanical rituals in the early historical times. The Buddhist tradition, on the other hand, attaches great importance to this area.

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- The Buddha achieved enlightenment in this area. Rajagriha was one of his favourite haunts. The Magadhan monarchs Bimbisara and Ajatasatru were his friends and disciples. With its fertile agricultural tracts suited to wet rice cultivation, control over the iron ores of South Bihar and relatively open social system Magadhan became the most important Kingdom in the subsequent history. Its control over the trade routes of the Ganges, Gandak and Son rivers could provide it substantial revenues. The Magadhan king Bimbisara is said to have called an assembly of the **Gaminis** of **80,000** villages. The number might be fictitious but it indicates that Bimbisara's administration was based on the village as a unit of organization. The **Gamini** were not his kinsmen but representatives and chiefs of villages. Thus, his power was based not on the goodwill of his kinsmen. Ajatasatru usurped the throne and starved Bimbisara to death. Magadha as a Kingdom kept prospering with the extension of its control over the Vajjis of Vaisali. This was to culminate in the Mauryan Empire in the 4th century B.C.
- **VAJJI:** Centered on the Vaisali district of Bihar, the Vajjis (literal meaning pastoral nomads) were located North of the Ganga. This Mahajanapada extended upto the hills of Nepal in the North. It was separated from Kosala by the river Gandak. Unlike the Mahajanapadas previously discussed, the Vajjis had a different kind of political organization. The contemporary texts refer to them as a Ganasmagha, a term which has been variously translated as a republic or an oligarchy. The Ganasmaghas of this period represented a rule not by an all-powerful King but a joint rule by a group of Kshatriya Chiefs. This ruling class, members of which were called rajas, were now differentiated from different non-Kshatriya groups. The Vajjis represented a confederacy of eight clans of whom the Videhas, Licchavis and the Jnatrikas were the most well known. The Videhas had their capital at Mithila. It has been identified with Janakpur in Nepal. Although the Ramayana associates it with the king Janaka, the Buddhist sources consider it a chiefship. Licchavis, the most well known of the ancient Indian Ganasmaghas, had their headquarters at Vaisali. Vaisali is said to have been a large and prosperous city. The Jnatrikas were another clan settled somewhere in the suburbs of Vaisali. This was the clan which produced Mahavira, the Jain teacher. The other members of confederacy were the clans of the Ugras, Bhogas, Kauravas and Aiksavakas. Vaisali seems to have been the metropolis of the entire confederacy. They conducted their affairs in an assembly. Accordingly to a Jataka story, the Vajjis were ruled by many clan chiefs. This Mahajanapada was a major power in the 6th century B.C.
- **MALLA:** The republican state of Malla was situated to the North of Vrijian confederacy. It was divided into two parts by the river '**Kuka'** one with its capital at Kusinara and the other with the capital at Pava respectively. Kusinara has been identified with Kasia about thirty-five

miles to the East of Gorakhpur while Pava with the village called Padaraona, twelve miles to the North-East of Kasia. Both the places occupy a significant position for the Buddhists as well as Jains. Buddha breathed his last at Kusinara whereas Mahavir left for his heavenly abode at Pavapuri. Mallas retained their independence till Buddha's death and then became prey to Magadhan imperialism. Some of the greatest personalities of Buddhism like Ananda, Upali, Aniruddha, Devadatta, and Khand-Sumana were belonged to Mallas.

- **CHEDI:** The Chedi territory roughly corresponds to the Eastern parts of the modern Bundelkhand. It might have stretched upto the Malwa plateau. Sisupala the famous enemy of Krishna was a Chedi ruler. According to the Mahabharat the Chedis seem to have been in close touch with the chiefs of Matsya beyond the Chambal, the Kasi of Benaras and the Karusas in the valley of the river Son. Its Capital was Sotthivati (Suktimati) probably located in the Banda district of M.P. Other important towns in this territory were Sahajati and Tripuri.
- **KURU:** The Kingdom of Kuru consisted of the present Delhi, Meerut, and Thaneswar. Its capital was Indraprastha (Delhi). The Kurus maintained Matrimonial alliance with Yadavas, Bhojas, and Panchalas. The Kurus of Mahabharata fame ruled over this Kingdom. Hastinapura was another important city of the Kuru kingdom. In the Buddha's time, the Kuru kingdom was ruled by a titular chieftain named Koravya who had no political importance.
- **PANCHALA:** The Panchala Mahajanapada was located in the Rohilkhand and parts of Central Doab (roughly Bareilly, Pilibhit, Badaun, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, etc.) The ancient texts refer to the presence of two lineages of the Panchalas, i.e., the Northern Panchalas and the Southern Panchalas with the river Bhagirathi forming the dividing line. The Northern Panchalas had their capital at Ahicchatra located in the Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh. The Southern Panchalas had Kampilya as their capital. They seem to have been closely linked to the Kurus. Although one or two Panchala chiefs are mentioned, we have very little information about them. They too are called a **Samgha**. By the 6th century B.C., they seem to have become an obscure power.
- **MATSYA:** The Matsyas were located in the Jaipur-Bharatpur-Alwar region of Rajasthan. Their capital was at Viratnagara famed as the hiding place of the Pandavas. This region was more suitable for cattle rearing. That is why in the **Mahabharata** story when the Kauravas attacked Virat they took away cattle as booty. Obviously, Matsya could not compete with the powers that emerged on the basis of settled agriculture. It was absorbed in the Magadhan Empire. Some of the most famous edicts of the King Asoka have been found in Bairat (Jaipur district), the ancient Virat.
- **SURASENA:** The kingdom of Surasena was situated to the South-West of Matsya territory and West of Yamuna River. Mathura was its

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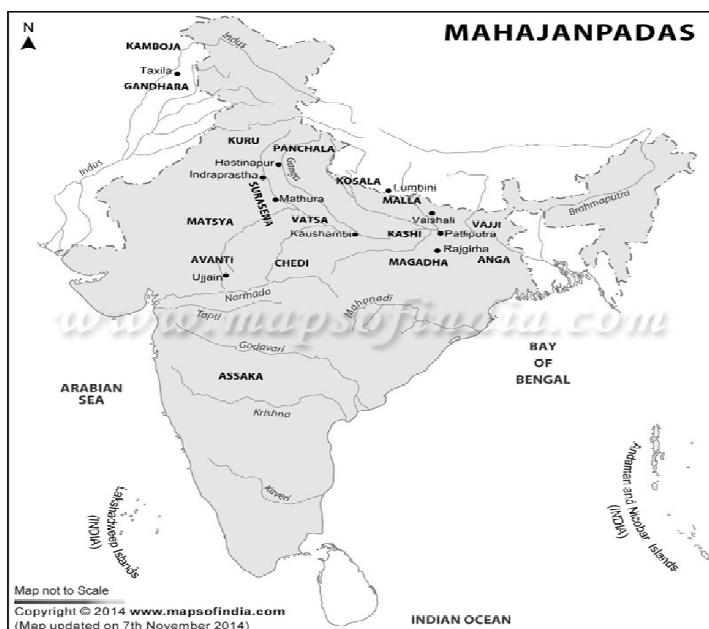
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capital. The rulers of Mathura belonged to the Yadu or the Yadav family. Avantiputra was the first king of Surasena. He was a follower of Buddhism. Due to his patronage, Buddhism spread in Mathura. In due course of time, Surasena was annexed to the Magadhan Empire.

- **ASSAKA:** The kingdom of Assaka or Asmaka was located in Dakshinapath or South India on the bank of the river Godavari, Potali or Potana (Bodhan in Nizam's dominion) was its capital. The rulers of Assaka belonged to the Ikshvaku dynasty. The Mahabharata describes that king Asmaka had built the city of Potana. Asmaka is found associated with another king of the South named Mulaka. King Brahmadatta of Asmaka was the contemporary of Brahmadatta of Kalinga.
- **GANDHARA:** Gandhara was located between Kabul and Rawalpindi in North Western Province. It might have included some parts of Kashmir. Although it was an important area in the early Vedic period, it lost its importance in the Brahmanical and Buddhist traditions of the later phases. The capital Taxila was an important city where people from all the Janapadas went for learning and trading. In the 6th century B.C. Gandhara was ruled by a King named Pukkusati. He was friendly with Bimbisara.
- **KAMBOJA:** Kamboja was located somewhere close to Gandhara, probably around the present-day Punjab area. Already by the 7th century B.C., the Kambojas were regarded as uncultured by the Brahmanical texts. The **Arthashastra** calls them **vartasastropajivin Samgha** meaning a confederation of agriculturists, Herdsman, traders and warriors.
- **VATSA:** The Vatsa kingdom was situated on the banks of the river Yamuna. Its capital was Kausambi near modern Allahabad. Its most popular ruler was Udayana. He strengthened his position by entering into matrimonial alliances with Avanti, Anga and Magadha. After his death, Vatsa was annexed to the Avanti kingdom. It was one of the most powerful principalities of the 6th century B.C.
- **AVANTI:** Avanti was one of the most powerful Mahajanapadas in the 6th century B.C. The core area of this kingdom would roughly correspond to the Ujjain district of Madhya Pradesh, extending up to the river Narmada. It had another important city Mahismati which is sometimes mentioned as its capital. Several other small and big towns are mentioned as dotting the Avanti region. The capital of Avanti was Ujjain. The most important ruler of this kingdom was Pradyota. He became powerful by marrying Vasavadatta, the daughter of Udayana. He patronized Buddhism. The successors of Pradyota were weak and later this kingdom was taken over by the rulers of Magadha.
- **KOSALA:** The Mahajanapada of Kosala was bounded on the West by the river Gomati. To its East flowed the river Sadanira which separated it from the Videha Janapada. Towards the North it skirted

the Nepal hills while the river Syandika defined its Southern boundary. Ayodhya was the capital of Kosala. King Prasenajit was its famous ruler. He was highly educated. His position was further strengthened by the matrimonial alliance with Magadha. His sister was married to Bimbisara and Kasi was given to her as dowry. Subsequently, there was a dispute with Ajatasatru. After the end of the conflict, Prasenajit married the daughter of Bimbisara. After the death of this powerful king, Kosala became part of the Magadha. The Kings of Kosala favoured both Brahmanism and Buddhism. King Prasenajit was a contemporary and friend of the Buddha. In the succeeding phases, Kosala proved to be one of the most formidable adversaries of the emergent Magadhan Empire.

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Check Your Progress

1. Who was Asavasena?
2. Write a short note on Magadha.
3. Write a short note on the Panchala Mahajanapada.
4. Who was King Prasenajit?

7.3 RISE OF MAGADHA

Of all the kingdoms of North India, Magadha emerged powerful and prosperous. It became the nerve centre of political activity in North India. Magadha was endowed by nature with certain geographical and strategic advantages. These made her to rise to imperial greatness. Her strategic position between the upper and lower part of the Gangetic valley was a great advantage. It had a fertile soil. The iron ores in the hills near Rajgir and copper and iron deposits near Gaya added to its natural assets. Her location at the centre of the highways of trade of those days contributed to her wealth. Rajagriha was the

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capital of Magadha. During the reign of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, the prosperity of Magadha reached its zenith.

7.3.1 Bimbisara (546-494 B.C.)

Bimbisara belonged to the Haryanka dynasty. He consolidated his position by matrimonial alliances. His first matrimonial alliance was with the ruling family of Kosala. He married Kosaladevi, sister of Prasenajit. He was given the Kasi region as dowry which yielded large revenue. Bimbisara married Chellana, a princess of the Licchavi family of Vaisali. This matrimonial alliance secured for him the safety of the Northern frontier. Moreover, it facilitated the expansion of Magadha Northwards to the borders of Nepal. He also married Khema of the royal house of Madra in central Punjab. Bimbisara also undertook many expeditions and added more territories to his empire. He defeated Brahmadatta of Anga and annexed that kingdom. He maintained friendly relations with Avanti. He had also efficiently reorganized the administration of his kingdom. Bimbisara was a contemporary of both Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. However, both religions claim him as their supporter and devotee. He seems to have made numerous gifts to the Buddhist Sangha.

7.3.2 Ajatasatru (494-462 B.C.)

The reign of Ajatasatru was remarkable for his military conquests. He fought against Kosala and Vaisali. His won a great success against a formidable confederacy led by the Licchavis of Vaisali. This had increased his power and prestige. This war lasted for about sixteen years. It was at this time that Ajatasatru realized the strategic importance of the small village, Pataligrama (future Pataliputra). He fortified it to serve as a convenient base of operations against Vaisali. Buddhists and Jains both claim that Ajatasatru was a follower of their religion. But it is generally believed that in the beginning he was a follower of Jainism and subsequently embraced Buddhism. He is said to have met Gautama Buddha. This scene is also depicted in the sculptures of Barhut. According to the Mahavamsa, he constructed several *chaityas* and *viharas*. He was also instrumental in convening the First Buddhist Council at Rajagriha soon after the death of the Buddha. The immediate successor of Ajatasatru was Udayana. He laid the foundation of the new capital at Pataliputra situated at the confluence of the two rivers, the Ganges and the Son. Later, it became famous as the imperial capital of the Mauryas. Udayana's successors were weak rulers and hence Magadha was captured by Shaishunaga. Thus, the Haryanka dynasty came to an end and the Shaishunaga dynasty came to power.

7.3.3 Shaishunaga Dynasty

The genealogy and chronology of the Shaishunagas are not clear. Shaishunaga defeated the king of Avanti which was made part of the Magadhan Empire. After Shaishunaga, the mighty empire began to collapse. His successor was Kakavarman or Kalasoka. During his reign, the second Buddhist Council was held at Vaisali. Kalasoka was killed by the founder of the Nanda dynasty.

7.3.4 Nanda Dynasty

The fame of Magadha scaled new heights under the Nanda dynasty. Their conquests went beyond the boundaries of the Gangetic basin and in North India they carved a well-knit and vast empire. Mahapadma Nanda was a powerful ruler of the Nanda dynasty. He uprooted the *Kshatriya* dynasties in North India and assumed the title *ekarat*. The Puranas speak of the extensive conquests made by Mahapadma. The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga refers to the conquest of Kalinga by the Nandas. Many historians believe that a considerable portion of the Deccan was also under the control of the Nandas. Therefore, Mahapadma Nanda may be regarded as a great empire builder.

According to the Buddhist tradition, Mahapadma Nanda ruled about ten years. He was succeeded by his eight sons, who ruled successively. The last Nanda ruler was Dhana Nanda. He kept the Magadhan empire intact and possessed a powerful army and enormous wealth. The fabulous wealth of the Nandas is also mentioned by several sources. The enormous wealth of the Nandas is also referred to in the Tamil Sangam work *Ahananuru* by the poet Mamulanar. The flourishing state of agriculture in the Nanda dominions and the general prosperity of the country must have brought to the royal treasury enormous revenue. The oppressive way of tax collection by Dhana Nanda was resented by the people. Taking advantage of this, Chandragupta Maurya and Kautilya initiated a popular movement against the Nanda rule. It was during this time that Alexander invaded India.

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Check Your Progress

5. Varanasi was the capital of which state?
6. Whose son was Ajatasatru?
7. Champa was the capital of which kingdom?
8. In to how many Mahajanapadas was India divided in the 6th century BCE?
9. Write a note on Kosala.
10. Write a note on Bimbisara.

7.4 CAUSES OF THE RISE OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN NORTH INDIA

The 6th century B.C is one of the cardinal epochs in the history of Asia. The extraordinary mental and spiritual unrest among the human beings contributed too many religious revolts. It was because; the age-old religious traditions, beliefs, rituals and class domination could not cope with the changing life-style of the time. So, reformations in age-old socio-religious pattern became inevitable. Parmenides, Empedocles and Heraclites in Greece, Zoroaster in Iran, Lao-Tse and Confucius in China busied themselves in bringing psycho-

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philosophical changes in the existing mind setup of the people. India did not lag behind in this run. It was at this critical juncture of time that Swami Mahavir and Mahatma Buddha revolted against the degraded Brahmanism.

Post-Vedic society was clearly divided into four Varnas: Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Each varna was assigned well-defined function. Though Varna was based on birth, the two higher Varnas captured power, prestige and privileges at the cost of the two lower Varnas. The Brahmanas who were allotted the functions of priests and teachers, claimed the highest status in society. They demanded several privileges, including those of receiving gifts and exemption from taxation and punishment. The next in hierarchy were the Kshatriyas who lived on the taxes collected from the cultivators. The third category thrived on agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade. They were the main tax payers. This Varna divided society generated frustration among the adversely affected people. The Vaishyas and the Sudras were not satisfied with the division of society on the basis of birth but we do not have evidence of their open resistance. The reaction came in strongly from the Kshatriya class because Mahavira and Buddha both belonged to Kshatriya clan.

Proliferation of Sacrifices

During Later Vedic period, the sacrifices became mandatory for receiving favour of God or fulfilling any wish. The scriptures suggested various types of sacrifices, which were time-money consuming and filled with violence. Besides, similar to the sacrifices, various types of specialized priests and crowd of Gods also emerged in the society. In all, the entire system became very complex and, except favorable to priest class, beyond the limits of common person.

Discriminatory Institutions

The later Vedic culture based on rigid caste system. The Vedic culture represented with the hierarchy of castes, proliferation of castes and sub castes, humiliating condition of women and Shudras, etc. The non-Kshatriya rulers and economical superior trader class, along with common person, found no prestigious place or respect in this system.

Ambiguous Scriptures

The Vedic literature was varied and specialized. However, it was written in ambiguous Sanskrit language, which was known to only Brahmins. Hence, it was necessary for the common person to know their religion in understandable and clear language and literature.

Need of New Thoughts

Even among Vedic people, many thinkers were dissatisfied by the ritual extremity of Later Vedic period. Hence, they created a different kind of Vedic literature, i.e., the Upanishads. The Upanishads preferred meditation and introspection to the extravagant sacrifices of Vedic scriptures. However, the

meditation of Upanishads was revolving around the subjects like atman, Brahma, dvait-advait, etc.; even more abstract than the rituals themselves.

Sixteen Mahajanpadas, Rise of Magadha and ...

7.4.1 Jainism

According to Jain tradition, prior to Mahavir, this religion had 23 preceptors that were called Tirthankar. Mahavira was 24th and the last Tirthankar. We have limited information regarding Preliminary Tirthankar. The facts and details found In Jain literature regarding them are not historical and reliable. 23rd Tirthankar Parshvanath was born in approximately 8th century B.C and he seems to be a historical Personality. According to **Kalpasutra** he was the son of Ikshvaku descendent of Kshatriya king Ashwasen, who was the king of Varanasi. He gave up family life at the age of thirty and after months of meditation, he got enlightenment. Non-violence, truth, no stealing (asteya) and giving up of property/asset were his four main sermons or preaching.

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7.4.2 Vardhamana Mahavira (539- 467 B.C.)

Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th Tirthankara of the Jain tradition. He was born at Kundagrama near Vaisali to Kshatriya parents Siddhartha and Trisala. He married Yasoda and gave birth to a daughter. At the age of thirty he became an ascetic and wandered for 12 years. In the 13th year of his penance, he attained the highest spiritual knowledge called Kevala Gnana. Thereafter, he was called Mahavira and Jina. His followers were called Jains and his religion Jainism. He preached his doctrines for 30 years and died at the age of 72 at Pava near Rajagriha.

7.4.3 Teachings of Mahavira

The three principles of Jainism, also known as Triratnas (three gems), are:

- Right faith.
- Right knowledge.
- Right conduct.

Right faith is the belief in the teachings and wisdom of Mahavira. Right Knowledge is the acceptance of the theory that there is no God and that the world has been existing without a creator and that all objects possess a soul. Right conduct refers to the observance of the five great vows:

- Not to Injure Life.
- Not to Lie.
- Not to Steal.
- Not to Acquire Property.
- Not to Lead Immoral Life.

Both the clergy and laymen had to strictly follow the doctrine of *ahimsa*. Mahavira regarded all objects, both animate and inanimate, have souls and various degrees of consciousness. They possess life and feel pain when they are injured. Mahavira rejected the authority of the Vedas and objected to the Vedic

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rituals. He advocated a very holy and ethical code of life. Even the practice of agriculture was considered sinful as it causes injury to the earth, worms and animals. Similarly, the doctrine of asceticism and renunciation was also carried to extreme lengths by the practice of starvation, nudity and other forms of self-torture.

Spread of Jainism

Mahavira organized the *Sangha* to spread his teachings. He admitted both men and women in the Sangha, which consisted of both monks and lay followers. The rapid spread of Jainism was due to the dedicated work of the members of the *Sangha*. It spread rapidly in Western India and Karnataka. Chandragupta Maurya, Kharavela of Kalinga and the royal dynasties of South India such as the Gangas, the Kadambas, the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas patronized Jainism. By the end of the 4th century B.C., there was a serious famine in the Ganges valley. Many Jain monks led by Bhadrabahu and Chandragupta Maurya came to Shravanabelagola in Karnataka. Those who stayed back in North India were led by a monk named Sthulabahu who changed the code of conduct for the monks. This led to the division of Jainism into two sects *Svetambaras* (whiteclad) and *Digambaras* (Sky-clad or Naked). The first Jain Council was convened at Pataliputra by Sthulabahu, the leader of the Digambaras, in the beginning of the 3rd century B.C. The second Jain Council was held at Vallabhi in 5th century A.D. The final compilation of Jain literature called 12 Angas was completed in this council.

Jain Scriptures

According to tradition, the original preaching of Mahavira compiled in 14 volumes, called as Parva. In the first grand-assembly, held at Pataliputra, Sthulabhadra classified Jainism into 12 Angas. These Angas included famous angas like Acharanga sutra and Bhagavati sutra. Further in the second grand-assembly, held at Vallabhi, these supplemented by the Upangas. The original Jaina canons (85) comprised of sutragrantha (41), prakirnakas (31), Niyukti/Bhashya (12), Mahabhashya (1). These are called as Agama, written in ardhmagadhi script.

Grand Assemblies

During the drought of 12 years in Magadha, Bhadrabahu, with his disciples departed to Shravanabelagola, in South India, whereas, some Jain, mostly Svetambaras, remained in Magadha under the leadership of Sthulabhadra. Around 300 B.C., he organized first grand assembly at Pataliputra. The assembly came up with the classification of Mahavira's preaching in 12 Angas. When Jain from South India, mostly Digambaras, returned to Magadha, they refuted these Angas and stated that all the original scripture were lost. After many years, in 512 A.D., second grand assembly was held at Vallabhi (Gujarat) presided by Devardhigani Kshamasramana. Meanwhile, the 12th Angas was lost. Hence, the assembly tried to consolidate and compile the scripture. They created new texts like Upanga and supplemented to remaining Angas.

7.4.4 Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture

The teachings of Mahavira became very popular among the masses and different sections of society were attracted to it. One of the important causes for the success was the popular dialect (Prakrit) used in place of Sanskrit. The simple and homely morals prescribed to the masses attracted the people. The royal patronage by the rulers of Magadha later made Mathura and Ujjain great centers of Jainism. Jain councils collected the material of the sacred texts to write them down systematically, in Ardhamagadhi. But in the absence of popular religious preachers after the death of Mahavira, its division into two important sects, absence of protection by the later rulers, revival of Hinduism under the Guptas, Cholas, Chalukyas and Rajput kings also contributed to its slow decline. But its contribution to Indian culture particularly literature, architecture and sculpture has been remarkable. Though the language of its religious texts had been Prakrit, it helped in giving a literary shape to some spoken languages of India. The temples and idols still existing in various cities as Mathura, Gwalior, Junagarh, Chittor, Abu have been accepted as some of the best specimens of Indian architecture and sculpture particularly the temples of Abu, the Jaina tower at Chittorgarh, the elephant caves of Orissa and the 70 feet high idol of Bahubali in Mysore.

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7.4.5 Gautama Buddha (567- 487 B.C.)

Gautama or Siddhartha, the founder of Buddhism, was born in 567 B.C. in Lumbini Garden near Kapilavastu. His father was Suddodhana of the Sakya clan and mother Mayadevi. As his mother died at child birth, he was brought up by his aunt Prajapati Gautami. At the age of 16, he married Yasodhara and gave birth to a son, Rahula. The sight of an old man, a diseased man, a corpse and an ascetic turned him away from worldly life. He left home at the age of twenty nine in search of Truth. He wandered for seven years and met several teachers but could not get enlightenment. At last, he sat under a bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya and did intense penance, after which he got Enlightenment (Nirvana) at the age of 35. Since then he became known as the Buddha or 'the Enlightened One'. He delivered his first sermon at Sarnath near Benares and for the next 45 years he led the life of a preacher. He died at the age of 80 at Kusinagara. The most important disciples of Buddha were Sariputta, Moggallanna, Ananda, Kassapa and Upali. Kings like Prasenajit of Kosala and Bimbisara and Ajatasatru of Magadha accepted his doctrines and became his disciples. Buddha in his lifetime spread his message far and wide in North India and visited places like Benares, Rajagriha, Sravasti, Vaisali, Nalanda and Pataligrama. It should be noted that he did not involve himself in fruitless controversies regarding metaphysical questions like god, soul, karma, rebirth, etc., and concerned himself with the practical problems confronting man.

7.4.6 Teachings of Gautama Buddha

The Four Noble Truths of Buddha are:

- The world is full of suffering.

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- The cause of suffering is desire.
- If desires are get rid of, suffering can be removed.
- This can be done by following the Eight-fold Path.

The Eight-fold Path consists of right view, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Buddha neither accepts god nor rejects the existence of god. He laid great emphasis on the law of karma. He argued that the condition of man in this life depends upon his own deeds. He taught that the soul does not exist. However, he emphasized Ahimsa. By his love for human beings and all living creatures, he endeared himself to all. Even under the gravest provocation he did not show the least anger or hatred and instead conquered everyone by his love and compassion. His religion was identical with morality and it emphasized purity of thought, word and deed. He was a rationalist who tried to explain things in the light of reason and not on the basis of blind faith. Though he did not make a direct attack on the caste system, he was against any social distinctions and threw open his order to all. Therefore, Buddhism was more a social than religious revolution. It taught the code of practical ethics and laid down the principle of social equality.

Spread of Buddhism

Buddha had two kinds of disciples – monks (bhikshus) and lay worshipers (upasikas). The monks were organized into the *Sangha* for the purpose of spreading his teachings. The membership was open to all persons, male or female and without any caste restrictions. There was a special code for nuns restricting their residence and movement. Sariputta, Moggallana and Ananda were some of the famous monks. The *Sangha* was governed on democratic lines and was empowered to enforce discipline among its members. Owing to the organized efforts made by the *Sangha*, Buddhism made rapid progress in North India even during Buddha's life time. Magadha, Kosala, Kausambi and several republican states of North India embraced this religion. About two hundred years after the death of Buddha, the famous Mauryan Emperor Asoka embraced Buddhism. Through his missionary effort, Asoka spread Buddhism into West Asia and Ceylon. Thus, a local religious sect was transformed into a world religion.

Buddhist Councils

The first Buddhist Council was held at Rajagriha under the chairmanship of Mahakasapa immediately after the death of Buddha. Its purpose was to maintain the purity of the teachings of the Buddha. The second Buddhist Council was convened at Vaisali around 383 B.C. The third Buddhist Council was held at Pataliputra under the patronage of Asoka. Moggaliputta Tissa presided over it. The final version of Tripitakas was completed in this council. The fourth Buddhist Council was convened in Kashmir by Kanishka under the chairmanship of Vasumitra. Asvagosha participated in this council. The new school of Buddhism called Mahayana Buddhism came into existence during this council. The Buddhism preached by the Buddha and propagated by Asoka

was known as *Hinayana*. The Buddhist texts were collected and compiled some five hundred years after the death of the Buddha. They are known as the *Tripitakas*, namely the *Sutta*, the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidhamma Pitakas*. They are written in the Pali language.

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Causes for the Decline of Buddhism in India

The revival of Brahmanism and the rise of Bhagavatism led to the fall of popularity of Buddhism. The use of Pali, the language of the masses as the language of Buddhism was given up from the 1st century A.D. The Buddhists began to adopt Sanskrit, the language of the elite. After the birth of Mahayana Buddhism, the practice of idol worship and making offerings led to the deterioration of moral standards. Moreover, the attack of the Huns in 5th and 6th centuries and the Turkish invaders in 12th century destroyed the monasteries. All these factors contributed to the decline of Buddhism in India.

24 Tirthankaras	
Tirthankar - Symbol	Tirthankar - Symbol
1. Bhagwan Rishabhdevji - Bull	13. Bhagwan Vimalnathji - Boar
2. Bhagwan Ajitnathji - Elephant	14. Bhagwan Anantnathji - Falcon
3. Bhagwan Sambhavnathji - Horse	15. Bhagwan Dharmnathji - Vajra
4. Bhagwan Abhinandanj - Monkey	16. Bhagwan Shantinathji - Deer
5. Bhagwan Sumatinathji - Kraunch-bird	17. Bhagwan Kunthunathji - Goat
6. Bhagwan Padmaprabhiji - Lotus	18. Bhagwan Arhanathji - Nandavart
7. Bhagwan Suparshvanathji - Swastika	19. Bhagwan Mallinathji - Urn
8. Bhagwan Chandraprabhiji - The Moon	20. Bhagwan Munisuvrat Swamiji - Turle
9. Bhagwan Suvidhinathji - Crocodile	21. Bhagwan Neminathji - Blue Lotus
10. Bhagwan Sheetalnathji - Shrivateja	22. Bhagwan Arishtanemiji - Conch Shell
11. Bhagwan Shreyansnathji - Rhinoceros	23. Bhagwan Prashvanathji - Snake
12. Bhagwan Vasupujyaji - Buffalo	24. Bhagwan Mahaveer Swamiji - Lion



Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture

Buddhism has made a remarkable contribution to the development of Indian culture:

- The concept of ahimsa was its chief contribution. Later, it became one of the cherished values of our nation.
- Its contribution to the art and architecture of India was notable. The stupas at Sanchi, Bharhut and Gaya are wonderful pieces of architecture. Buddhism takes the credit for the chaityas and viharas in different parts of India.
- It promoted education through residential universities like those at Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramasila.
- The language of Pali and other local languages developed through the teachings of Buddhism.
- It had also promoted the spread of Indian culture to other parts of Asia.

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Check Your Progress

11. Who is the 24th trithankar of the Jainas?
12. Where was Gautama Buddha born?
13. Where Gautama Buddha did preached his first sermon?
14. Write about three jewels of Jainism.
15. Write about the teachings of Gautama Buddha.

7.5 ALEXANDER'S INVASION OF INDIA

After 2 centuries of the Persian invasion, Alexander from Macedonia invaded India. On the eve of his invasion, there were a number of small kingdoms in North-Western India. The leading kings were Ambhi of Taxila, the ruler of Abhisara and Porus who ruled the region between the rivers of Jhelum and Chenab. There were many republican states like Nysa. In short, the North-Western India remained the most disunited part of India and the rulers were fighting with one another. They never come together against common enemy. Yet, it was not easy for Alexander to overcome so many sources of opposition.

Causes of the Invasion

Alexander ascended the throne of Macedonia after the death of his father Philip in 334 B.C. He conquered the whole of Persia by defeating Darius III in the battle of Arbela in 330 B.C. He also aimed at further conquest Eastwards and wanted to recover the lost Persian Satrapy of India. The writings of Greek authors like Herodotus about the fabulous wealth of India attracted Alexander. Moreover, his interest in geographical enquiry and love of natural history urged him to undertake an invasion of India. He believed that on the Eastern side of India there was the continuation of the sea, according the geographical knowledge of his period. So, he thought that by conquering India, he would also conquer the Eastern boundary of the world.

7.5.1 Battle of Hydaspes

In 327 B.C. Alexander crossed the Hindukush Mountains and spent nearly ten months in fighting with the tribes. He crossed the Indus in February 326 B.C. with the help of the bridge of boats. He was warmly received by Ambhi, the ruler of Taxila. From there Alexander sent a message to Porus to submit. But Porus refused and decided to fight against Alexander. Then Alexander marched from Taxila to the banks of the river Hydaspes (Jhelum). On the other side of the river, he saw the vast army of Porus. As there were heavy floods in the river, Alexander was not able to cross it. After a few days, he crossed the river and the famous battle of Hydaspes was fought on the plains of Karri. It was a well-contested battle. Although Porus had a strong army, he lost the battle. Alexander was impressed by the courage and heroism of this Indian prince, treated him generously and reinstated him on his throne. Alexander continued his march as far as the river Beas encountering opposition from the local tribes.

He wanted to proceed still further Eastwards towards the Gangetic valley. But he could not do so because his soldiers refused to fight. Hardships of prolonged warfare made them tired and they wanted to return home. Alexander could not persuade them and therefore decided to return. He made arrangements to look after his conquered territories in India. He divided the whole territory from the Indus to the Beas into three provinces and put them under his governors. His retreat began in October 326 B.C. and the return journey was not free from ordeals. Many republican tribes attacked his army. Anyhow he managed to reach beyond the Indus. On his way, he reached Babylon where he fell seriously ill and died in 323 B.C.

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7.5.2 Effects of Alexander's Invasion of India

The immediate effect of Alexander's invasion was that it encouraged political unification of North India under the Mauryas. The system of small independent states came to an end. Alexander's invasion had also paved the way for direct contact between India and Greece. The routes opened by him and his naval explorations increased the existing facilities for trade between India and West Asia. However, his aim of annexing the North-Western India to his empire was not fulfilled due to his premature death. His authority in the Indus valley was a short-lived one because of the expansion of Mauryan Empire under Chandragupta Maurya.

Check Your Progress

16. Who was Ambhi?
17. Who was Alexander?
18. Write about the effects of Alexander's Invasion.

7.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. Asvasena was the earliest king of Kasi.
2. Magadha consisted of the areas around Patna and Gaya in South Bihar. It was protected by the rivers Son and Ganga on its North and West. Towards the South it reached upto the Chotanagpur plateau. In the East the river Champa separated it from Anga. Its capital was called Girivraja or Rajagriha. Rajagriha was an impregnable city protected by five hills.
3. The Panchala Mahajanapada was located in the Rohilkhand and parts of Central Doab (roughly Bareilly, Pilibhit, Badaun, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, etc.) The ancient texts refer to the presence of two lineages of the Panchalas, i.e., the Northern Panchalas and the Southern Panchalas with the river Bhagirathi forming the dividing line.
4. King Prasenajit was the famous ruler of Kosala.
5. Kashi
6. Bimbisara
7. Anga

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8. 16
9. The Mahajanapada of Kosala was bounded on the west by the river Gomati. To its east flowed the river Sadanira which separated it from the Videha Janapada. Towards the north it skirted the Nepal hills while the river Syandika defined its southern boundary. Ayodhya was the capital of Kosala. King Prasenajit was its famous ruler.
10. Bimbisara belonged to the Haryanka dynasty. He consolidated his position by matrimonial alliances. His first matrimonial alliance was with the ruling family of Kosala. He married Kosaladevi, sister of Prasenajit. He was given the Kasi region as dowry which yielded large revenue. Bimbisara married Chellana, a princess of the Licchavi family of Vaisali. This matrimonial alliance secured for him the safety of the northern frontier.
11. Mahavira
12. Lumbini
13. Deer Park Saranath
14. The three principles of Jainism, also known as Triratnas (three jewels), are:
 - Right faith
 - Right knowledge
 - Right conduct.
15. The Four Noble Truths of Buddha are:
 - The world is full of suffering.
 - The cause of suffering is desire.
 - If desires are get rid of, suffering can be removed.
 - This can be done by following the Eight-fold Path
16. Ambhi was the ruler of Taxila
17. Alexander was the ruler of Macedonia. He conquered the whole of Persia by defeating Darius III in the battle of Arbela in 330 B.C.
18. The immediate effect of Alexander's invasion was that it encouraged political unification of north India under the Mauryas. The system of small independent states came to an end. Alexander's invasion had also paved the way for direct contact between India and Greece. The routes opened by him and his naval explorations increased the existing facilities for trade between India and West Asia. However, his aim of annexing the northwestern India to his empire was not fulfilled due to his premature death. His authority in the Indus valley was a short-lived one because of the expansion of Mauryan Empire under Chandragupta Maurya.

7.7 SUMMARY

- The Buddhist literature Anguttara Nikaya gives a list of sixteen great kingdoms called 'Sixteen Mahajanapadas'. **They were Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru,**

Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asmaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kambhoja.

- The kingdom of Kasi was the most powerful and rich state of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It was located in the region around Varanasi (modern Banaras) which was bounded by the rivers Varuna and Asi in the North and South with its capital at Varanasi.
- Magadha consisted of the areas around Patna and Gaya in South Bihar. It was protected by the rivers Son and Ganga on its North and West. Towards the South it reached upto the Chotanagpur plateau. In the East the river Champa separated it from Anga.
- The republican state of Malla was situated to the North of Vrijian confederacy. It was divided into two parts by the river ‘Kuka’ one with its capital at Kusinara and the other with the capital at Pava respectively.
- Bimbisara belonged to the Haryanka dynasty. He consolidated his position by matrimonial alliances. His first matrimonial alliance was with the ruling family of Kosala. He married Kosaladevi, sister of Prasenajit. He was given the Kasi region as dowry which yielded large revenue.
- According to the Buddhist tradition, Mahapadma Nanda ruled about ten years. He was succeeded by his eight sons, who ruled successively. The last Nanda ruler was Dhana Nanda. He kept the Magadhan empire intact and possessed a powerful army and enormous wealth.
- Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th Tirthankara of the Jain tradition. He was born at Kundagrama near Vaisali to Kshatriya parents Siddhartha and Trisala. He married Yasoda and gave birth to a daughter. At the age of thirty he became an ascetic and wandered for twelve years.
- Gautama or Siddhartha, the founder of Buddhism, was born in 567 B.C. in Lumbini Garden near Kapilavastu. His father was Suddodhana of the Sakya clan and mother Mayadevi. As his mother died at child birth, he was brought up by his aunt Prajapati Gautami. At the age of sixteen he married Yasodhara and gave birth to a son, Rahula.
- Alexander ascended the throne of Macedonia after the death of his father Philip in 334 B.C. He conquered the whole of Persia by defeating Darius III in the battle of Arbela in 330 B.C. He also aimed at further conquest Eastwards and wanted to recover the lost Persian Satrapy of India.

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7.8 KEY TERMS

- **Kuru:** The Kingdom of Kuru consisted of the present Delhi, Meerut, and Thaneswar. Its capital was Indraprastha (Delhi). The Kurus maintained Matrimonial alliance with Yadavas, Bhojas, and Panchalas.
- **Kamboja:** Kamboja was located somewhere close to Gandhara, probably around the present day Punjab area. Already by the 7th century B.C., the Kambojas were regarded as uncultured by the Brahmanical texts.

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- **Tirthankara:** In Jainism, a Tirthankara is a savior and spiritual teacher of dharma.
- **Battle of Hydaspes:** The Battle of Hydaspes was fought in 326 B.C. between Alexander the Great and King Porus of the Paurava kingdom on the banks of River Jhelum.

7.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Write two capitals of Kosala.
2. Throw light on the kingdom of Magadha.
3. Describe about the kingdom of Vajji.
4. Name the parents of Mahavira.
5. Write the teachings of Mahavira.
6. Write about the Battle of Hydaspes.

Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the Sixteen Mahajanapadas of the 6th century B.C.
2. Discuss the life and teachings of Mahavira.
3. Discuss the life and teachings of Gautama Buddha.
4. Give a brief note on the Alexander's invasion of India.

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CHAPTER 8 THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

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Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
 - 8.1 Objectives
 - 8.2 The Mauryan Empire
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 - 8.3.1 Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 B.C.)
 - 8.3.2 Bindusara (298-273 B.C.)
 - 8.3.3 Asoka (273-232 B.C.)
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 - 8.3.7 Causes for the Decline of the Mauryas
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8.0 INTRODUCTION

The foundation of the Mauryan Empire opens a new era in the history of India. For the first time, the political unity was achieved in India. Moreover, the history writing has also become clear from this period due to accuracy in chronology and sources. Besides plenty of indigenous and foreign literary sources, a number of epigraphically records are also available to write the history of this period.

Literary Sources

Kautilya's Arthashastra

This book in Sanskrit was written by Kautilya, a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya. Kautilya was also called 'Indian Machiavelli'. The manuscript of Arthashastra was first discovered by R. Shama Sastri in 1904. The Arthashastra contains 15 books and 180 chapters but it can be divided into three parts: the first deals with the king and his council and the departments of government; the second with civil and criminal law; and the third with diplomacy and war. It is the most important literary source for the history of the Mauryas.

Visakadatta's Mudrarakshasa

The Mudrarakshasa written by Visakadatta is a drama in Sanskrit. Although written during the Gupta period, it describes how Chandragupta with the assistance of Kautilya overthrew the Nandas. It also gives a picture on the socio-economic condition under the Mauryas.

Megasthenes' Indica

Megasthenes was the Greek ambassador in the court of Chandragupta Maurya. His book Indica has survived only in fragments. Yet, his account gives details about the Mauryan administration, particularly the administration of the capital city of Pataliputra and also the military organization. His picture on contemporary social life is notable. Certain unbelievable information provided by him has to be treated with caution.

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Other Literature

Apart from these three important works, the Puranas and the Buddhist literature such as Jatakas provide information on the Mauryas. The Ceylonese Chronicles Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa throw light on the role Asoka in spreading Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

Archaeological Sources

Edicts of Asoka

The inscriptions of Asoka were first deciphered by James Prinsep in 1837. They are written in Pali language and in some places Prakrit was used. The Brahmi script was employed for writing. In the North-Western India Asokan inscriptions were found in Karoshti script. There are fourteen Major Rock Edicts. The two Kalinga Edicts are found in the newly conquered territory. The major pillar Edicts were erected in important cities. There are minor Rock Edicts and minor pillar Edicts. These Edicts of Asoka deal with Asoka's Dhamma and also instructions given to his officials. The XIII Rock Edict gives details about his war with Kalinga. The Pillar Edict VII gives a summary of his efforts to promote the Dhamma within his kingdom. Thus, the Asokan inscriptions remain valuable sources for the study of Asoka and the Mauryan Empire.

8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the foundation of the Mauryan Empire.
- Describe the political history of the Mauryas.
- Discuss the administration of the Mauryans.
- Explain Asoka's policy of Dhamma.
- Narrate the Mauryan art and architecture.
- Explain the causes for the decline of the Maurya Dynasty.

8.2 THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

The age of the Mauryas is a landmark in the history of Ancient India. The great historian Dr. Vincent Smith has aptly stated that, the advent of the Mauryan dynasty marks the passage from darkness to light for the historian. Chronology

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suddenly becomes definite, almost precise; a huge empire springs into existence unifying the innumerable fragments of distracted India. The Maurya Empire was physically extensive and most dominant kingdom of Indian ancient history in the reign of 322 B.C. to 185 B.C. The Maurya Dynasty ruled over the state of Magadha from the capital city at Pataliputra. Chandragupta Maurya, established the Kingdom in 322 B.C. under the guidance of Kautilya after dethroning the Nanda Dynasty. Bindusara succeeded Chandragupta and he was succeeded by his illustrious son Asoka. The Maurya dynasty established first Empire in India stretching from Himalaya in the North to Mysore in the South and Assam in the East to Afghanistan in the West. After Asoka the empire crumbled into pieces, finally in 185 B.C., Pushyamitra Sunga depose the last Maurya King Brihadratha, he himself ascended the throne and established Sunga dynasty in Magadha.

Check Your Progress

1. In which year the Mauryan Kingdom was established?
2. Who was the founder of the Mauryan dynasty?
3. Who was the last ruler of the Mauryan dynasty?

8.3 POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE MAURYAS

In 326 B.C., the flood of Macedonian invasion had overwhelmed the Indian states of the Punjab, and was threatening to burst upon the Madhyadesa. In this critical juncture, the rise of Chandragupta Maurya is described by Justin that “India after the death of Alexander had shaken, as it were, the yoke of servitude from its neck and put his governors to death. The author of this liberation was Indians who chafed under the Macedonian yoke, and after Alexander’s departure defeated his generals and “shook the yoke of servitude from the neck” of India. With the rise of Chandragupta and emergence of the Mauryan Empire culminated the growth of Magadhan Imperialism. Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the empire, extended control as far North-West as Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and his son Bindusara annexed the Deccan finally, Asoka, arguably the most famous ruler of early India, conquered Kalinga. The foundation of the Mauryan Empire opens a new era in the history of India. For the first time, the political unity was achieved in India.

8.3.1 Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 B.C.)

Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of the Mauryan Empire. He, at the young age of 25, captured Pataliputra from the last ruler of the Nanda dynasty, Dhanananda. In this task he was assisted by Kautilya, who was also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta. After firmly establishing his power in the Gangetic valley, he marched to the North-West and subdued the territories up to the Indus. Then he moved to central India and occupied the region North of Narmada River. In 305 B.C., he marched against Selukas Niketar, who was Alexander’s General controlling the North-Western India. Chandragupta

Maurya defeated him and a treaty was signed. By this treaty, Selukas Niketar ceded the trans-Indus territories – namely Aria, Arakosia and Gedrosia to the Mauryan Empire. He also gave his daughter in marriage to the Mauryan prince. Chandragupta made a gift of 500 elephants to Selukas. Megasthenes was sent to the Mauryan court as Greek ambassador. Chandragupta embraced Jainism towards the end of his life and stepped down from the throne in favour of his son Bindusara. Then he went to Shravanabelagola, near Mysore along with Jain monks led by Bhadrabahu and starved himself to death.

8.3.2 Bindusara (298-273 B.C.)

Bindusara was called by the Greeks as “Amitragatha” meaning slayer of enemies. He is said to have conquered the Deccan up to Mysore. Taranatha, the Tibetan monk states that Bindusara conquered sixteen states comprising ‘the land between the two seas’. The Sangam Tamil literature also confirms the Mauryan invasion of the far South. Therefore, it can be said that the Mauryan Empire under Bindusara extended up to Mysore. Bindusara received Deimachus as ambassador from the Syrian king Antiochus I. Bindusara wrote to Antiochus I asking for sweet wine, dried figs and a sophist. The latter sent all but a sophist because the Greek law prohibited sending a sophist. Bindusara supported the Ajivikas, a religious sect. Bindusara appointed his son Asoka as the governor of Ujjain.

8.3.3 Asoka (273-232 B.C.)

There is little information regarding the early life of Asoka. He acted as Governor of Ujjain and also suppressed a revolt in Taxila during his father Bindusara's reign. There was an interval of four years between Asoka's accession to the throne (273 B.C.) and his actual coronation (269 B.C.). Therefore, it appears from the available evidence that there was a struggle for the throne after Bindusara's death. The Ceylonese Chronicles, Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa state that Asoka captured power after killing his ninety nine brothers including his elder brother Susima. The youngest brother Tissa was spared. But according to Taranatha of Tibet, Asoka killed only six of his brothers. Asoka's Edict also refers to his brothers acting as officers in his administration. However, it is clear that the succession of Asoka was a disputed one. The most important event of Asoka's reign was his victorious war with Kalinga in 261 B.C. Although there is no detail about the cause and course of the war, the effects of the war were described by Asoka himself in the Rock Edict XIII: “A hundred and fifty thousand were killed and many times that number perished...” After the war he annexed Kalinga to the Mauryan Empire. Another most important effect of the Kalinga war was that Asoka embraced Buddhism under the influence of Buddhist monk, Upagupta.

Asoka and Buddhism

According some scholars, his conversion to Buddhism was gradual and not immediate. About 261 B.C. Asoka became a Sakya Upasaka (lay disciple) and two and a half years later, a Bikshu (monk). Then he gave up hunting, visited Bodh-Gaya, and organized missions. He appointed special officers called

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Dharma Mahamatras to speed up the progress of Dhamma. In 241 B.C., he visited the birth place of Buddha, the Lumbini Garden, near Kapilavastu. He also visited other holy places of Buddhism like Sarnath, Sravasti and Kusinagara. He sent a mission to Sri Lanka under his son Mahendra and daughter Sangamitra who planted there the branch of the original Bodhi tree. Asoka convened the Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra in 240 B.C. in order to strengthen the *Sangha*. It was presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa.

Extent of Asoka's Empire

Asoka's inscriptions mention the Southernmost kingdoms – Cholas, Pandyas, Satyaputras and Keralaputras – as border-states. Therefore, these states remained outside the Mauryan Empire. According to Rajatarangini, Kashmir was a part of the Mauryan Empire. Nepal was also within the Mauryan empire. The North-Western frontier was already demarcated by Chandragupta Maurya.

Later Mauryas

Asoka's death in 232 B.C. was followed by the division of the Mauryan Empire into two parts – Western and Eastern. The Western part was ruled by Kunala, son of Asoka and the Eastern part by Dasaratha, one of the grand sons of Asoka. Due to the Bactrian invasions, the Western part of the empire collapsed. The Eastern part was intact under Samprati successor of Dasaratha. The last Mauryan king was Brihatratha, who was assassinated by Pushyamitra Sunga.

Estimate of Asoka

Asoka was “the greatest of kings” surpassing Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar and other renowned Emperors of the world. Asoka was true to his ideals. He was not a dreamer but a man of practical genius. His Dhamma is so universal that it appeals to humanity even today. He was an example in history for his benevolent administration and also for following the policy of non-aggression even after his victory in the war. His central ideal was to promote the welfare of humanity.

8.3.4 Mauryan Administration

Central Government

The ascendancy of the Mauryas had resulted in the triumph of monarchy in India. Other systems like republics and oligarchies that were prevalent in the pre-Mauryan India had collapsed. Although Kautilya the foremost political theorist of ancient India supported the monarchial form of government, he did not stand for royal absolutism. He advocated that the king should take the advice of his ministry in running the administration. Therefore, a council of ministers called Mantriparishad assisted the king in administrative matters. It consisted of Purohita, Mahamantri, Senapati and Yuvaraja. There were civil servants called Amatyas to look after the day-to-day administration. The method of selection of Amatyas was elaborately given by Kautilya. Asoka appointed Dharma Mahamatras to supervise the spread of Dhamma. Thus, the Mauryan state had a well organized civil service.

Revenue Department

Samharta, the chief of the Revenue Department, was in charge of the collection of all revenues of the empire. The revenues came from land, irrigation, customs, shop tax, ferry tax, forests, mines and pastures, license fee from craftsmen, and fines collected in the law courts. The land revenue was normally fixed as one sixth of the produce. The main items of expenditure of the state related to king and his household, army, government servants, public works, poor relief, religion, etc.

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Army

The Mauryan army was well organized and it was under the control of Senapati. The salaries were paid in cash. Kautilya refers to the salaries of different ranks of military officers. According to Greek author Pliny, the Mauryan army consisted of six lakh infantry, thirty thousand cavalry, nine thousand elephants and eight thousand chariots. In addition to these four wings, there were the Navy and Transport and Supply wings. Each wing was under the control of Adyakshas or Superintendents. Megasthenes mentions six boards of five members each to control the six wings of the military.

Department of Commerce and Industry

This department had controlled the retail and wholesale prices of goods and tried to ensure their steady supply through its officers called Adyakshas. It also controlled weights and measures, levied custom duties and regulated foreign trade.

Judicial and Police Departments

Kautilya mentions the existence of both civil and criminal courts. The chief justice of the Supreme Court at the capital was called Dharmathikarin. There were also subordinate courts at the provincial capitals and districts under Amatyas. Different kinds of punishment such as fines, imprisonment, mutilation and death were given to the offenders. Torture was employed to extract truth. Police stations were found in all principal centres. Both Kautilya and Asokan Edicts mention about jails and jail officials. The Dhamma Mahamatras were asked by Asoka to take steps against unjust imprisonment. Remission of sentences is also mentioned in Asoka's inscriptions.

Census

The taking of Census was regular during the Mauryan period. The village officials were to number the people along with other details like their caste and occupation. They were also to count the animals in each house. The census in the towns was taken by municipal officials to track the movement of population both foreign and indigenous. The data collected were cross checked by the spies. The Census appears to be a permanent institution in the Mauryan administration.

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Provincial and Local Administration

The Mauryan Empire was divided into four provinces with their capitals at Taxila, Ujjain, Suvarnagiri and Kalinga. The provincial governors were mostly appointed from the members of royal family. They were responsible for the maintenance of law and order and collection of taxes for the empire. The district administration was under the charge of Rajukas, whose position and functions are similar to modern collectors. He was assisted by Yukta or subordinate officials. Village administration was in the hands of Gramani and his official superior was called Gopa who was in charge of ten or fifteen villages. Both Kautilya and Megasthenes provided the system of Municipal administration. Arthashastra contains a full chapter on the role of Nagarika or city superintendent. His chief duty was to maintain law and order. Megasthenes refers to the six committees of five members each to look after the administration of Pataliputra. These committees looked after: (1) Industries, (2) Foreigners, (3) Registration of birth and deaths, (4) Trade, (5) Manufacture and sale of goods, and (6) Collection of sales tax.

8.3.5 Asoka's Dhamma

Although Asoka embraced Buddhism and took efforts to spread Buddhism, his policy of Dhamma was a still broad concept. It was a way of life, a code of conduct and a set of principles to be adopted and practiced by the people at large. His principles of Dhamma were clearly stated in his Edicts. The main features of Asoka's Dhamma as mentioned in his various Edicts may be summed as follows:

- Service to father and mother, practice of ahimsa, love of truth, reverence to teachers and good treatment of relatives.
- Prohibition of animal sacrifices and festive gatherings and avoiding expensive and meaningless ceremonies and rituals.
- Efficient organization of administration in the direction of social welfare and maintenance of constant contact with people through the system of Dhammayatras.
- Humane treatment of servants by masters and prisoners by government officials.
- Consideration and non-violence to animals and courtesy to relations and liberality to Brahmins.
- Tolerance among all the religious sects.
- Conquest through Dhamma instead of through war. The concept of non-violence and other similar ideas of Asoka's Dhamma are identical with the teachings of Buddha. But he did not equate Dhamma with Buddhist teachings. Buddhism remained his personal belief. His Dhamma signifies a general code of conduct. Asoka wished that his Dhamma should spread through all social levels.

8.3.6 Mauryan Art and Architecture

The monuments before the period of Asoka were mostly made of wood and therefore perished. The use of stone started from the time of Asoka. Even of the numerous monuments of Asoka, only a few have remained. His palace and monasteries and most of his stupas have disappeared. The only remaining stupa is at Sanchi. The artistic remains of the Mauryan period can be seen in the following heads:

Pillars

The pillars erected by Asoka furnish the finest specimen of the Mauryan art. Asokan pillars with inscriptions were found in places like Delhi, Allahabad, Rummindai, Sanchi and Saranath. Their tops were crowned with figures of animals like lion, elephant and bull. The Saranath pillar with four lions standing back to back is the most magnificent. The Indian government adopted this capital with some modifications as its state emblem.

Stupas

Asoka built a number of stupas throughout his empire but majority of them were destroyed during foreign invasions. Only a few have survived. The best example is the famous Sanchi stupa with massive dimensions. It was originally built with bricks but later enlarged after the time of Asoka.

Caves

The caves presented to the Ajivikas by Asoka and his son Dasaratha remain important heritage of the Mauryas. Their interior walls are polished like mirror. These were meant to be residences of monks. The caves at Barabar hills near Bodh Gaya are wonderful pieces of Mauryan architecture.

8.3.7 Causes for the Decline of the Mauryas

The causes for the decline of the Mauryan Empire have been widely debated by scholars. The traditional approach attributes the decline to Asoka's policies and his weak successors. Another approach holds the inadequate political and economic institutions to sustain such a vast empire. It was said that Asoka's pro-Buddhist policies antagonized the Brahmins who brought about a revolution led by Pushyamitra Sunga. But Asoka was never acted against Brahmins. That Asoka's policy of non-violence reduced the fighting spirit of his army was another charge against him. But Asoka had never slackened his control over his empire despite following a pacifist policy. Therefore, solely blaming Asoka for the decline of the Mauryan Empire may not be correct because Asoka was more a pragmatist than an idealist.

Brahminical Reaction

Asoka held responsible for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire. The end of the dynasty at the coup of Pushyamitra Shunga was considered Brahminical revolt against the pro-Buddhist policy of Asoka. But there is no support for this contention. Asoka never allowed his personal religion to come into conflict with his state religion (Dharma). A king who never felt tired of teaching his

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subjects the virtues of religious toleration, and who encouraged the different religious demonstrations all over his empire could not be blamed of religious intolerance.

Centralized Nature of Empire

History of India is a continuous interplay of centrifugal (i.e., breaking away from the centre) and centripetal (i.e., on a centre) tendencies, when the former are on the ascendance regionalism and disintegration assert themselves as was the case after Asoka, and when the latter manifest themselves, the political unification becomes a natural sequence. The nature and scope of the unification depends on the personality of the unifier. The Mauryan Empire was not an exception to his historical phenomenon.

Asoka's Policy of Peaceful Existence

Asoka's eschewing of war and its substitution by Dharmavijaya (conquest by religion of course did not lead to the disbanding of the army; nor was the advocate of it for his non-violence was not of such an unrealistic nature. It had likely dimmed the moral and spirit of the army and farsightedness of his successors. It is because of this that the rise of powers and new political combination of the Bactrians and Parthians across the Hindukush were overlooked, and frontiers were left inadequately guarded. The Mauryans, in spite of creating a permanent cadre of administrative service under the name Mahamatras could not check these tendencies, mostly because of the weak successors of Asoka.

Worthless Successor of Asoka

Notwithstanding any high sounding theoretical basis claimed of monarchy in ancient India, Mauryan kings in practice were more or less despots. And as you know quite well no despot however, efficient, benevolent or conscientious and who knows his obligation to his subject, can despite his best efforts assure that his successors would follow his footsteps. There is no certain method by which he can pass on his virtues and qualifications to his successors. Thus, most frequently—and the history of India is replete with innumerable such instances—a good and benevolent king is succeeded by a worthless, profligate and inefficient successor. This is the chief bane of almost every personal rule.

Expensive Mauryan Bureaucracy

We should never ignore the economic cause which precipitated the downfall and disintegration of the Mauryan Empire. The cumbersome and expensive Mauryan bureaucracy despite its excellent record of efficiency under Chandragupta and Asoka tended to be lax, indifferent and parasitic. The cost of administration increased phenomenally. But the resources remained almost static. Growing weakness of the economy had its inevitable impact on administrative efficiency and his coupled with the weakness of the rulers who succeeded Asoka unavoidably led to the early dissolution of the once powerful Mauryan Empire. Asoka by preaching his Dharma had unwittingly deprived monarchy of its traditional strength based on the claims of divinity. This irresistibly led to one inevitable outcome. Gradually, Dharma replaced the idea

of a state. Thus, a number of causes are responsible for the decline of Mauryan dynasty, but it is difficult to place them in order of importance.

Table No. 1

Approximate Dates of Mauryan Dynasty		
Emperor	Reign Start	Reign End
Chandragupta Maurya	322 BCE	298 BCE
Bindusara	297 BCE	272 BCE
Asoka The Great	273 BCE	232 BCE
Dasaratha	232 BCE	224 BCE
Samprati	224 BCE	215 BCE
Salisuka	215 BCE	202 BCE
Devavarman	202 BCE	195 BCE
Satadhanvan	195 BCE	187 BCE
Brihadratha	187 BCE	185 BCE

NOTES**Check Your Progress**

4. Who was known as Indian Machiavelli?
5. Write the name of the capital of Magadha.
6. Who was the last ruler of the Mauryas?
7. Who was known as Amitraghata?
8. In which year Kalinga war took place?
9. What was the capital of Kalinga?
10. Write about the Revenue department of the Mauryans.
11. Write about Mauryan art and architecture.

8.4 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. 322 B.C.
2. Chandragupta Maurya.
3. Brihadratha.
4. Kautilya
5. Pataliputra
6. Brihadratha
7. Bindusara
8. 261 B.C.
9. Tosali
10. Samharta, the chief of the Revenue Department, was in charge of the collection of all revenues of the empire. The revenues came from land,

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irrigation, customs, shop tax, ferry tax, forests, mines and pastures, license fee from craftsmen, and fines collected in the law courts. The land revenue was normally fixed as one sixth of the produce. The main items of expenditure of the state related to king and his household, army, government servants, public works, poor relief, religion, etc.

11. The monuments before the period of Asoka were mostly made of wood and therefore perished. The use of stone started from the time of Asoka. Even of the numerous monuments of Asoka, only a few have remained. His palace and monasteries and most of his stupas have disappeared. The only remaining stupa is at Sanchi.

8.5 SUMMARY

- The Maurya Empire was physically extensive and most dominant kingdom of Indian ancient history in the reign of 322 B.C. to 185 B.C. The Maurya Dynasty ruled over the state of Magadha from the capital city at Pataliputra. Chandragupta Maurya, established the Kingdom in 322 B.C. under the guidance of Kautilya after dethroning the Nanda Dynasty.
- Bindusara was called by the Greeks as “Amitragatha” meaning slayer of enemies. He is said to have conquered the Deccan up to Mysore. Taranatha, the Tibetan monk states that Bindusara conquered sixteen states comprising ‘the land between the two seas’.
- The Ceylonese Chronicles, Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa state that Asoka captured power after killing his ninety nine brothers including the his elder brother Susima. The youngest brother Tissa was spared. But according to Taranatha of Tibet, Asoka killed only six of his brothers.
- Asoka’s death in 232 B.C. was followed by the division of the Mauryan Empire into two parts –Western and Eastern. The Western part was ruled by Kunala, son of Asoka and the Eastern part by Dasaratha, one of the grand sons of Asoka.
- Kautilya mentions the existence of both civil and criminal courts. The chief justice of the Supreme Court at the capital was called Dharmathikarin. There were also subordinate courts at the provincial capitals and districts under Amatyas. Different kinds of punishment such as fines, imprisonment, mutilation and death were given to the offenders.
- The Mauryan Empire was divided into four provinces with their capitals at Taxila, Ujjain, Suvarnagiri and Kalinga. The provincial governors were mostly appointed from the members of royal family. They were responsible the maintenance of law and order and collection of taxes for the empire. The district administration was under the charge of Rajukas, whose position and functions are similar

to modern collectors. He was assisted by Yuktas or subordinate officials.

- Although Asoka embraced Buddhism and took efforts to spread Buddhism, his policy of Dhamma was a still broad concept. It was a way of life, a code of conduct and a set of principles to be adopted and practiced by the people at large.
- The monuments before the period of Asoka were mostly made of wood and therefore perished. The use of stone started from the time of Asoka. Even of the numerous monuments of Asoka, only a few have remained. His palace and monasteries and most of his stupas have disappeared. The only remaining stupa is at Sanchi.
- The causes for the decline of the Mauryan Empire have been widely debated by scholars. The traditional approach attributes the decline to Asoka's policies and his weak successors. Another approach holds the inadequate political and economic institutions to sustain such a vast empire.

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8.6 KEY TERMS

- **Mudrarakshasa:** A drama in Sanskrit written by Visakadatta.
- **Indica:** A book Written by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador in the court of Chandragupta Maurya.
- **Dhanananda:** The last ruler of the Nanda dynasty.
- **Selukas Niketar:** The Greek general of Alexander.
- **Amitragatha:** Bindusara was called by the Greeks as “Amitragatha” meaning slayer of enemies.
- **Samharta:** Samharta, the chief of the Revenue Department, was in charge of the collection of all revenues of the empire.
- **Dharmathikarin:** The chief justice of the Supreme Court at the capital of the Mauryans was called Dharmathikarin.

8.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the contact of the Mauryans with the Greeks.
2. What was the impact of the Indo-Greek contact?
3. Write a note on the early life of Asoka?
4. How did Kalinga campaign influence the life of Asoka?
5. How does Arthashastra help us to know about the Mauryas?

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the foundation of the Mauryan Empire.
2. How did Asoka promote Buddhism? Discuss his concept of Dhamma.
3. Describe the administrative system of the Mauryan Empire.
4. Assess the causes behind the downfall of the Mauryan Empire.

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CHAPTER 9 POST-MAURYAN PERIOD

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Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
 - 9.1 Objectives
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9.0 INTRODUCTION

After the death of Asoka, his successors were not able to keep the vast Mauryan Empire intact. After the Mauryas a large number of big and small kingdoms emerged in different parts of Indian subcontinent. The provinces started declaring their independence. The North-West India slipped out of the control of the Mauryas and a series of foreign invasions affected this region. Kalinga declared its independence and in the further South the Satavahanas established their independent rule. As a result, the Mauryan rule was confined to the Gangetic valley and it was soon replaced by the Sunga dynasty. The Sunga dynasty succeeded the Mauryas at Magadha; the Satavahanas emerged as a great power in the Deccan. The Indo-Greeks, the Sakas, the Parthians and the Kushanas also ruled over several territories in India. The intermingling of various races, Indian as well as foreign had far-reaching consequences on the social and cultural life of India.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain Saka Kshatras.
- Describe the administrative system of the Sakas.
- Discuss the rise of Kushanas.
- Explain the administration and cultural development of Kushanas.
- Narrate the achievements of Sunga and Satavahana rulers.

- Explain the political, social, religious and cultural condition of the Satavahanas.
- Explain Mathura and Gandhara School of Art.

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9.2 SAKA KSHATRAP

The Sakas or the Scythians attacked Bactria and Parthia and captured them from the Greek rulers. Following the footsteps of the Greeks, the Sakas gradually extended their rule over North-Western India. There were two different groups of Sakas the Northern Satraps ruling from Taxila and the Western satraps ruling over Maharashtra. The founder of the Saka rule in India in the 1st century B.C. was Maues. His son and successor was Azes I, who was considered to be the founder of the Vikrama era. The Saka rulers of Taxila were overthrown by the Parthians.

9.2.1 Important States of the Saka Kshatrapas

The word ‘Kshatrap’ was used for the provincial governor of the Saka ruler. All Saka rulers used ‘Kshatrap’ with their names. They were mainly divided into two categories in India: (1) The Northern Saka Kshatrapas and (2) The Western Saka Kshatrapas.

The Saka Kshatrapas of the Northern states were divided into two parts, and they had established their separate and own kingdoms.

- **Northern Kshatrapas of Taxila:** This kingdom of the Sakas comprised Punjab and North-West provinces. Taxila was the capital of this kingdom. The first important ruler was ‘Mauses’ or ‘Maus’. He was a very powerful king. He had abolished the Greek power from East Punjab and other neighbouring states. He ruled in about the 1st century B.C. Besides him, Azes I, Azes II, Ellis were the other rulers of this dynasty. Consequently, this state was captured by the Pallavas.
- **Northern Kshatrapas of Mathura:** The second branch of the Northern Saka Kshatrapas belongs to Mathura. At the time of their first invasion, Sakas extended their sway over Mathura after conquering Ujjain. It is evident from the coins and inscriptions that the main rulers of this kingdom were Hangamash, Hagan, Kharoshta, Rajul, and Sodasa. Among these, Rajul and Sodasa were the most powerful rulers. Both these rulers were called ‘Mahakshatrapas’. Later on, these rulers merged themselves with the Indian culture and embraced either Buddhism or Jainism or Brahmanism.. The kingdom of Mathura was destroyed by the Kushans.
- **Western Kshatrapas of Maharashtra:** Maharashtra was the center of the Saka Empire. The Sakas of Maharashtra belonged to the

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Kshaharata family. Bhumika was the first ruler of this family. The kingdom of Bhumika extended to Gujarat, Kathiawar, Malwa, Rajputana, and Sindh. The second and perhaps the most famous and powerful ruler of the Kshaharata family was Nahapana. During his reign, Maharashtra was a part of the Saka kingdom. He ruled from about 119 to 124 A.D. He was defeated by the Satavahana ruler, Gautamiputra Satakarni. Thus, he lost his empire, and Maharashtra was annexed to the kingdom of the Satavahanas. Thereafter, the glory of this family began gradually to decline.

- **Western Kshatrap of Ujjain:** After the conquest of Saurashtra and Gujarat, the Sakas attacked Ujjain and established their rule over it. Chashtana was the founder of this kingdom. He ruled for a period of twenty-two years, from 78 to 100 A.D. He was a good and efficient administrator. The kingdom of Ujjain was strengthened and reorganized during the reign of Chashtana. He also assumed the title of ‘Maha Kshatrap’. Rudradamana was the most prominent ruler of this dynasty. He was the grandson of Chashtana. He was a great warrior. He extended the Saka Empire by conquering many states. His character and achievements have been described in the Junagarh inscription. We come to know from this inscription that Rudradamana defeated the Satavahana ruler, Satakarni, and married his daughter to him. This inscription also indicates the extent of the Saka Empire during the reign of Rudradamana. The provinces of Akar, Avanti, Anup, Anarta, Saurashtra, Swabhra, Maru, Kachchha, Sindh, Kukur, Aparanta, Nishad were included in his kingdom.
- The title of ‘Maha Kshatrap’ was assumed by Rudradamana also. Rudradamana was not only a great conqueror but also an efficient administrator. He did much work for the welfare of his subjects. He was benevolent to all. He always ruled according to the wishes of the people. The Brahmins and the cows were venerated during his reign. But the most important event of his reign was the reconstruction of the Dam of Sudarshan Lake. The Mauryan rulers constructed this lake in Saurashtra. This Lake was used for the purpose of irrigation. The Dam of the Lake collapsed due to heavy rains. Rudradamana got it repaired at his own expense. Thus, he performed the greatest work of public utility. He was also a great scholar of politics, grammar, and logic. Sanskrit language and literature flourished to a considerable extent due to his able patronage. Thus, Rudradamana left a vast empire to his successors. But none of his successors could maintain the glory of the Sakas, as marked the reign of Rudradamana. After his death, the Saka dynasty began to decline day by day. Although, this dynasty lasted for about two hundred years after Rudradamana, yet his successors had no significant achievements to their credit.

9.2.2 Administrative System of the Sakas

The administrative machinery of the Saka rulers was of a very high standard. It was an admixture of Indo-Greek systems of administration. The administration of the Sakas was based on the monarchical system of government, as it was in practice during the reign of the Mauryas and the Sungas. The king was the head of the administration. The Saka rulers adopted many titles, such as, 'Adhiraja', 'Rajadhiraja', 'Devputra', 'Chakravarti'. There was also a council of ministers in order to make the administration efficient. The Prime Minister was the head of this council. In addition, many other officials, such as, Mahamatra, Rajuka, Mahasenapati, Dandanayaka, Mahadandanayaka, Senagopa, Koshadhyaksha, Bhandarika, Rajalipikar, etc. were also appointed in order to assist the king in the administration. The kingdom of the Sakas was divided into many provinces, Janapadas, and villages. Villages and towns were counted as the most important units of administration. The village was the smallest unit of administration. The small towns were known, as 'Nigarns'. The administration of the provinces was placed under the charge of Royal princes or other persons related to the royal family. The village unit and the town unit usually worked as the local bodies of modern India, and the Saka rulers did not interfere with the administration of these local bodies. The rulers of the Saka dynasty made untiring efforts for the good and welfare of their subjects. They all were benevolent. They were always anxious of finding the difficulties of the people and they always tried to remove them.

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Religious Toleration of the Saka Rulers

The rulers were tolerant in their religious policy. They gave charity liberally to the Brahmin, Buddhist, and Jain Bhikshus without any distinction. Since they had adopted the Indian culture, they also embraced one of the Indian religions according to their own will. The Saka Kshatrapas of Mathura had embraced Jainism while the Sakas of the North-Western provinces had their faith in Buddhism. During this period, Taxila, the capital of the North-West province, was the main center of Buddhism. Brahmanism was adopted by the rulers of Maharashtra. The figure of 'Shiva Parvati' is found engraved on some coins of the Saka period. Thus, it can be said that some of the Sakas were followers of Shaivism also. In the same way, some of the Saka rulers worshipped the Sun. They built many temples for the sun-worship in Chittor and Mandasor. It is clear from the above that the Saka rulers were quite tolerant in their religious attitude. They never compelled people to adopt any particular sect or religion. They dispensed charity to all sects with open hearts.

Effect on Trade and Commerce

Under the Sakas, India had established trade and cultural relations with the different important countries of Middle Asia. The guilds of traders and artisans might have been seen in the country on a large scale. Although the Saka rulers had been busy in the wars, yet they encouraged Indian trade and commerce to a considerable extent and thus they played a prominent role to make India a prosperous country. There were two main commercial routes during the reign

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of the Sakas—first, from Pataliputra to Bharaunch via Kauasmbi and Ujjain. The second lay from Pataliputra to Bactria (Greece) via Mathura and Indus valley. Through these routes, India came into contact with the Western countries. Mathura, Ujjain, and Paithan were the main commercial centers at that time. Many articles made of ivory, valuable jewels, cotton, and silken clothes, medicines, etc. were exported to other countries, especially, Rome. India received a lot of gold in return for these articles.

Contribution to Art and Literature

Under the patronage of the Saka rulers, Indian art and literature made much progress. They gave royal patronage to Sanskrit language and literature. All inscriptions of the Sakas were in Sanskrit. The ‘Girnar’ rock inscription of Rudradamana indicates that the superior style of prose writing of Sanskrit was highly developed at that time. In addition to it, India also made considerable progress in the field of astronomy. Ujjain, the capital of the Saka state of Maiwa, was the chief center of astronomy. Many scholars came here for the study of Grihas and Nakshatras’ (the position of the planets and stars), i.e., astronomy for which some special facilities were provided to them. The Saka rulers were also great lovers of music. The art of music received royal patronage under the rule of Rudradamana. Some new clothes styles were also added to the Indian dress during this period. Some fashionable articles, such as, ‘Salwar’, ‘Achkan’ were made popular by the Sakas.

Check Your Progress

1. Who was Maues?
2. Write a note on the Northern Kshatrapas of Mathura.
3. Who was Rudradamana?
4. Write a short note on the administrative system of the Sakas.

9.3 KUSHANAS

The Kushanas were a branch of Yuchi tribe, whose original home was central Asia. They first came to Bactria displacing the Sakas. Then they gradually moved to the Kabul valley and seized the Gandhara region. The founder of the Kushana dynasty was Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I. He occupied the Kabul valley and issued coins in his name. His son Wima Kadphises or Kadphises II conquered the whole of North-Western India as far as Mathura. He issued gold coins with high-sounding titles like the ‘Lord of the Whole World’. He was a devotee of Lord Siva.

9.3.1 Kanishka (78-120 A.D.)

Kanishka was the most important ruler of the Kushana dynasty. He was the founder of the Saka era which starts from 78 A.D. He was not only a great conqueror but also a patron of religion and art.

Conquests of Kanishka

At the time of his accession his empire included Afghanistan, Gandhara, Sind and Punjab. Subsequently he conquered Magadha and extended his power as far as Pataliputra and Bodh Gaya. According to Kalhana, Kanishka invaded Kashmir and occupied it. His coins are found in many places like Mathura, Sravasti, Kausambi and Benares and therefore, he must have conquered the greater part of the Gangetic plain. He also fought against the Chinese and acquired some territories from them. During the first expedition he was defeated by the Chinese general Pan-Chao. He undertook a second expedition in which he was successful and he scored a victory over Panyang, the son of Pan-Chao. Kanishka annexed the territories of Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan into his empire. The empire of Kanishka was a vast one extending from Gandhara in the West to Benares in the East and from Kashmir in the North to Malwa in the South. His capital was Purushapura or modern day Peshawar. Mathura was another important city in his empire.

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Kanishka and Buddhism

Kanishka embraced Buddhism in the early part of his reign. However, his coins exhibit the images of not only Buddha but also Greek and Hindu gods. It reflects the Kanishka's toleration towards other religions. In the age of Kanishka the Mahayana Buddhism came into vogue. It is different in many respects from the religion taught by the Buddha and propagated by Asoka. The Buddha came to be worshiped with flowers, garments, perfumes and lamps. Thus image worship and rituals developed in Mahayana Buddhism. Kanishka also sent missionaries to Central Asia and China for the propagation of the new faith. Buddhist chaityas and viharas were built in different places. He patronized Buddhist scholars like Vasumitra, Asvagosha and Nagarjuna. He also convened the Fourth Buddhist Council to discuss matters relating to Buddhist theology and doctrine. It was held at the Kundalavana monastery near Srinagar in Kashmir under the president-ship of Vasumitra. About 500 monks attended the Council. The Council prepared an authoritative commentary on the Tripitakas and the *Mahayana* doctrine was given final shape. Asvagosha was a great philosopher, poet and dramatist. He was the author of Buddhacharita. Nagarjuna from South India adorned the court of Kanishka. The famous physician of ancient India Charaka was also patronized by him.

9.3.2 Administration and Cultural Development of the Kushanas

The geographical spread of the Kushana coins and inscriptions as well as the richness of the Kushana layers in terms of archaeological material found in various sites from Central Asia to Varanasi would on the face of it suggest the existence of a well organized, centralized state. However, the available administrative details appear to be far from satisfactory. It is said that the political organization did not possess the rigid centralization of the Mauryas. The inscriptions and coins do not indicate powerful and large administrative machinery. We however, come across grandiloquent titles of the rulers such as

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maharaja, *ratatiraja* (king of kings), devaputra (son of God), etc. Kanishka and his successors used the title *shaonanoshao* (*shahanushahi* being its Persianized form) as a prefix to their names on the coin legends. Even the epithet Kaiser or Kaisara was used. Kanishka, for example, in an inscription at Mathura represents himself as *maharaja-rajatiraja-devaputra-shahi*.

- The Kushana titles on the one hand suggest their superior position in relation to other petty rulers and chieftains and on the other point to the possible influences which went into their making. While maharaja was an old Indian title, encountered as early as the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela, rajatiraja was of Sanskrit origin and had been used by the Sakas. The term devaputra being close to the Chinese idea of “mandate of heaven” may have had something to do with such influences.
- The details of provincial and local administration are hazy. It is doubtful if the Kushanas exercised direct administrative control over all parts of their territories. Below the king there seems to have been the Kshatrapas at the provincial level. It has been suggested that there were about five to seven satrapies. Contemporary sources do not provide sufficient information about such administrative units or the Kshatrapas themselves. The Sarnath Buddhist image inscription of the time of Kanishka refers to the reinstatement of two Kshatrapas who were the descendants of a Mahakshatrapa. In some cases people erected a stupa and sangharama in honour of the kshatrapa. This was analogous to the system of giving religious donations to ensure the well-being of the Kushana kings. Such evidence points to the autonomous status of the Kshatrapas.
- There are references to vishayas as administrative units and the grama at the bottom of the hierarchy constituted the basic unit of administration. We come across terms like Dandanayaka and Mahadandanayaka, offices which combined civil and military functions, and the Kshatrapas seem to have exercised their power through these officials. However, as in the case of the Kshatrapas here too their territorial jurisdiction and functional aspects are far from clear. There are references to some other officials like bakanpati (incharge of religious affairs), danapati (to do with donations) and the padrapala, who looked after uncultivated land around the villages.
- In the region of Mathura the gramika as the village headman seems to have looked after the maintenance of local law and order. The importance of the institution is also borne out by other contemporary references. Manusmriti refers to the term gramasyadhipati and in the Shanti parva we come across the expression gramadhipati. The Kshatrapas were also known as gramasvami. All these indicate the importance and authority of the village headmen.
- The guilds similarly have played an important role in the administration of urban centers. For analyzing the political system, the

administrative details are rather insufficient. How the different levels of administration related to one another is not known. Given the small size of the administrative machinery and the abundance of Kushana coins, particularly in gold and copper, it is said that the officials would have been paid in cash. Deriving from the autonomy of the Kshatrapa and the use of such terms as *rajatiraja*, *Mahakshatrapa* and *Mahadandanayaka*, denoting the existence of lesser rulers, there have been efforts to look for feudatory relations in the Kushana polity.

- The Kushanas used high-sounding titles derived from a variety of cultural contexts. Titles like Devaputra unmistakably sought to link them with divinity. This aspect is further elaborated in their coins. The evidence for religious donations by people for the well-being of the kings and the institution of devakulas under the Kushanas, involving the housing of the statues of dead rulers in temple like structures, together suggest the efforts towards bestowal of divinity status to the kings or conferring of this status to the kings. The reverse of the Kushana coins bear Indian (Hindu and Buddhist), Greek and Persian symbols and deities, indicating their syncretic religious ideology.
- There is archaeological and epigraphically evidence to show that numerous later day Hindu sects associated with Saivism and Vaishnavism thrived along with Buddhism and Jainism under the Kushanas in Northern India. The Kushanas seem to have accepted and reinforced the assimilative nature of Indian socio-religious and political system. Turning to the socio-cultural situation obtaining within their empire one observes the prevalence of numerous languages, religions and cultures. The population in Bactria was already composite by virtue of having integrated varied influences. North Indian society was characterised by rich diversity, the Upper and Middle Gangetic plains being different from the ancient Punjab. In the Punjab and adjoining regions there were a number of Gana samghas, which outlived the Kushanas and continued up to the Guptas, suggesting the existence of varied socio-economic and political patterns.
- The official language of the Kushana state was Bactrian written in Kushanised Greek script. Sanskrit too was in use and records were written in Brahmi and Kharosthi as well. A coin of Kanishka found near Termez on the Oxus bears legends in Bactrian on the obverse and Sanskrit on the reverse. The extensive territory of the Kushanas inhabited by various ethnic groups, speaking different languages and practicing diverse religions made it necessary for the state to adopt a liberal and accommodative approach.
- The Kushana state characterized by ethnic, linguistic and cultural pluralism tried to integrate varied groups by being non-sectarian accommodating variety and developing a syncretic ideology. Thus, the state tried to sustain and perpetuate itself by being responsive to the aspirations of diverse groups. That explains the adoption of

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multiple royal titles and the accommodation of numerous deities from various traditions, across the empire. The Kushana titles and motifs on the coins show how zealously they tried to legitimize their rule.

- With the establishment of Kushana power in Gandhara and Indus region the land trade from Ganges to Euphrates and sea trade across Arabian sea and Persian Gulf to Rome flourished and expanded. The silk route passed through Kushana territories in central Asia and it was linked with China and Asian provinces of Roman Empire. Kushanas might have imposed tolls on caravans passing through this route. Kushana gold and copper coins indicate that internal trade flourished under them. Kushana rule led to the establishment of new settlement with an admixture of population. This must have led to mobility in society and with the increase in the number of crafts and guilds and growth of foreign trade the rigidity of the caste system weakened especially in the trading ports and towns. Kushanas had established trade links with the Romans.
- The adoption of the title Caesar (Kaisarasa) in the Ara (Attock) inscription of the year 47 throws light on Kushana contacts with the Romans. Both the Kushanas and the Romans minted gold coins to be used in trading transactions. Kushanas were the beneficiaries in this trade. They also established trading relations with South East Asia, China and Central Asia in this period. There is no evidence for state monopoly in any sector of the economy or for that matter state intervention in day-to-day economic transactions. It seems to have been a non-intrusive state allowing for a good measure of autonomy at various levels. However, it did play an important role in encouraging trade and other commercial activities. Under Kanishka and his immediate successors integrative forces seem to have prevailed over tendencies to fission or break away. If the Kushanas borrowed aspects of political ideas and organization from their predecessors and contemporaries, their coinage, titles and images, sculptures, kingship, including the deification of the ruler, influenced the Guptas and other polities in early medieval India.
- The rulers of Kushana dynasty were great patrons of art. Kanishka's reign is a landmark in the realm of art and architecture. Four eminent schools of sculpture developed from four centres. They were Sarnath, Mathura, Amaravati and Gandhara. Each school of sculpture had a separate style of its own. The Gandhara School had a significant progress in Kanishka's reign. In art, the reign of Kanishka is marked by the growth of two distinct styles, one Indian and the other exotic. The Indian style is represented by the headless statue of Kanishka at Mathura and the image of Buddha found at Sarnath. The exotic school known as Gandhara art was the Graeco-Roman art applied to Buddhist subjects found in Gandhara region. The Gandhara art flourished on Buddhist theme

Successors of Kanishka and end of Kushana Rule

The successors of Kanishka ruled for another one hundred and fifty years. Huvishka was the son of Kanishka and he kept the empire intact. Mathura became an important city under his rule. Like Kanishka, he was also a patron of Buddhism. The last important Kushana ruler was Vasudeva. The Kushana Empire was very much reduced in his rule. Most of his inscriptions are found in and around Mathura. He seems to have been a worshipper of Siva. After Vasudeva, petty Kushan princes ruled for sometime in North-Western India.

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Check Your Progress

5. Who was the founder of the Kushana dynasty?
6. Who was Vasumitra?
7. Who was Charaka?
8. Write a short note on the successors of Kanishka.

9.4 SUNGAS AND SATAVAHANAS

The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga, who was the commander-in-chief under the Mauryas. He assassinated the last Mauryan ruler and usurped the throne. The most important challenge to the Sunga rule was to protect North India against the invasions of the Bactrian Greeks from the North-West. The Greeks advanced up to Pataliputra and occupied it for some time. However, Pushyamitra succeeded in regaining the lost territory. He also fought a campaign against Kharavela of Kalinga who invaded North India.

- Pushyamitra was a staunch follower of Brahmanism.. He performed two asvamedha sacrifices. Buddhist sources refer him as a persecutor of Buddhism. But there is enough evidence to show that Pushyamitra patronized Buddhist art. During his reign, the Buddhist monuments at Bharhut and Sanchi were renovated and further improved. After the death of Pushyamitra, his son Agnimitra became the ruler. The last Sunga ruler was Devabhuti, who was murdered by his minister Vasudeva Kanya, the founder of the Kanya dynasty.
- The Kanya dynasty ruled for 45 years. After the fall of the Kanyas, the history of Magadha was a blank until the establishment of the Gupta dynasty. The rule of the Sungas was important because they defended the Gangetic valley from foreign invasions. In the cultural sphere, the Sungas revived and horse sacrifice. They also promoted the growth of Vaishnavism and the Sanskrit language. In short, the Sunga rule was a brilliant anticipation of the golden age of the Guptas.

Satavahanas

In the Deccan, the Satavahanas established their independent rule after the decline of the Mauryas. Their rule lasted for about 450 years. They were also known as the Andhras. The Puranas and inscriptions remain important sources

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for the history of Satavahanas. Among the inscriptions, the Nasik and Nanaghad inscriptions throw much light on the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni. The coins issued by the Satavahanas are also helpful in knowing the economic conditions of that period.

- The founder of the Satavahana dynasty was Simuka. He was succeeded by Krishna, who extended the kingdom up to Nasik in the West. His reign seems to have lasted 18 years. Siri Satakani (Satakarni), son of Krishna was the next king after whose title most of the Satavahana rulers came to be known, as exemplified by Cakora Satakarni, Mrgendra Satakarni, Gautamiputra Sri Yajna Satakarni and so on. He conquered Western Malwa and Berar. He also performed asvamedha sacrifices. The seventeenth king of the Satavahana dynasty was Hala. He reigned for a period of five years. Hala became famous for his book *Gathasaptasati*, also called *Sattasai*. It contains 700 verses in Prakrit language.
- The greatest ruler of the Satavahana dynasty was Gautamiputra Satakarni. He ruled for a period of 24 years from 106 to 130 A.D. His achievements were recorded in the Nasik inscription by his mother Gautami Balasri. Gautamiputra Satakarni captured the whole of Deccan and expanded his empire. His victory over Nahapana, the ruler of Malwa was remarkable. He patronized Brahmanism. Yet, he also gave donations to Buddhists. Gautamiputra Satakarni was succeeded by his son Vashishtputra Pulamayi. He extended the Satavahana power up to the mouth of the Krishna River. He issued coins on which the image of ships was inscribed. They reveal the naval power and maritime trade of the Satavahanas. The last great ruler of Satavahanas was Yajna Sri Satakarni.
- The Satavahana reign got interrupted by the Sakas, Kushanas, Parthians, Yavanas, etc. Gautamiputra was succeeded by Vasishtputra Pulumavi who ruled for 24 years. According to the puranic genealogy, the next Satavahana king was Siva Sri Satakarni followed by Sivamaka Sada, Madhariputra, Sri Yajna Satakarni, Vasishtputra Cada Sati and Pulumavi-III. It is believed that the line of rulers came to an end with Pulumavi-III.

9.4.1 Political and Social Condition of the Satavahanas

The Satavahana state was structured by the dominance of the monarch, a miniature variant of the Kautilyan *vijigishu* assisted by a team of *amatyas*, *senapatis* and *dandanayakas*. It seems to have incorporated chieftains of the agrarian localities as *samanas* and of 'tribal' zones as *rathikas* and *bhojas*. Epigraphs mention *mahasamanta*, *maharathika*, *mabhoja*, *mahasenapati*, and *mahadandanayaka* showing that they worked as higher level constituents of a hierarchical structure. This is not to suggest that it was a well-organized bureaucracy with defined structure and function. Their functions were not just what their name presupposed. For instance, *mahasenapati* was a provincial ruler too like *mahasamanta* and for that matter any high-ranking dignitary was

a local ruling authority. The dignitaries, who constituted the nuclei of the king's power structure, were the most prominent among the *gahapatis* (*swami-s*) of the *nagaras* and *gramas*. The *gahapatis* of the *nagaras* were merchants, generally called *vanija* or *negama*. They were organized into a corporation called *nigama* headed by *sethi* or *sreshti*.

Social Condition of the Satavahanas

By 3rd century B.C., the Krishna-Godavari valleys had witnessed the rise of agrarian localities of paddy cultivation as the place name Dhanyakataka or Dhamnakada suggests, presupposing specialization of arts and crafts, trade networks, urban enclaves, social differentiation and the entailing political processes. However, it was obviously not more than a simple hierarchy of the landed households (*gahapatis*) and their servants (*dasas* and *bhrtakas*) at the level of production relations.

- The agrarian localities were small compared to the large uplands and forest tracks inhabited by the 'tribal' people who constituted the majority. Paithan was the region's nerve centre of economic activities and its strategic importance in the context of trade and urbanism also accounts for its Buddhist and Jain importance as well as the Mauryan political control. The ports of trans-marine commerce, such as Barygaza, Supara and Kalyan added to the region's significance. The Mauryan control in its turn further enhanced its importance and in the process over the years, gave rise to a local ruling aristocracy transcending the structure of the 'tribal' political relations. It is out of this aristocracy that the line of the Satavahana rule began. In short, the historical context of the emergence of the Satavahana state relates to the differentiated economy and stratified societies in the Krishna-Godavari valleys.

9.4.2 Economic and Cultural Condition of the Satavahanas

There was a remarkable progress in the fields of trade and industry during the Satavahana rule. Merchants organized guilds to increase their activities. The craft guilds organized by different craftsmen such as potters, weavers and oil pressers also came into existence. Silver coins called Karshapanas were used for trade. The Satavahana period also witnessed overseas commercial activity. Ptolemy mentions many ports in the Deccan. The greatest port of the Satavahanas was Kalyani on the West Deccan. Gandakasela and Ganjam on the East coast were the other important seaports.

- The Satavahana state followed by and large the Mauryan revenue system that was based on regular returns from agriculture, trade and industry as well as from a variety of periodically exacted taxes. The Satavahanas had crown lands and the revenue from them was substantial. The state enjoyed monopoly over all the mines of metals and minerals and the salt production. The lands held by the *gahapatis* were subjected to more than one tax. An important source of revenue was the tax levied on merchant *gahapatis* and merchandises. As it was

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a money economy, all the dues to the state were appropriated in cash. There seems to have prevailed a high rate of interest, i.e., 12% per month, suggestive of a state of deflation. The variety and distribution of the Satavahana coinage indicates how great was the demand for money as medium of exchange, measure of value and means of payment.

- The Saka, Kushana, Nahapana Kshatrapa coins co-existed with those of the Satavahanas who struck such coins again as their own. Coins were minted with the name or legend of kings and hence their distribution was symbolic of the king's identity and the extent of his dominions. This accounts for the Satavahanas' reproduction of their intruders' coins, as for example Nahapana's silver coins restrike by Gautamiputra Satakarni. Under the Satavahana rule, agriculture, trade, markets and urbanization made headway. Amaravati, Naneghat, Pune, Bhaja, Karle, Kanheri and Nasik were the major towns and trade centres developed in the age of the Satavahanas. These were centres of Jainism and Buddhism as the vestiges of several *basatis*, *caityas*, *viharas* and *stupas* in the region indicate. The funding and joint patronage of these monuments by the monks, merchants, local chieftains and kings shows the group relations and processes of power that manifested as the Satavahana state.

Cultural Contributions

The Satavahanas patronized Buddhism and Brahmanism. They built chaityas and viharas. They also made grants of villages and lands to Buddhist monks. Vashishtaputra Pulamayi repaired the old Amaravati stupa. Their architecture in Nagarjunakonda was also notable. Brahmanism was revived by the Satavahanas along with the performance of asvamedha and rajasuya sacrifices. They also patronized the Prakrit language and literature. Hala's Sattasai is an excellent piece of Prakrit literature.

9.4.3 Mathura and Gandhara School of Art

The school of art that developed at Mathura in modern Uttar Pradesh is called the Mathura art. It flourished in the 1st century A.D. In its early phase, the Mathura school of art developed on indigenous lines. The Buddha images exhibit the spiritual feeling in his face which was largely absent in the Gandhara school. The Mathura school also carved out the images of Siva and Vishnu along with their consorts Parvathi and Lakshmi. The female figures of yakshinis and apsaras of the Mathura school were beautifully carved.

Gandhara Art

The home of the Gandhara School of art is the territory in and around Peshawar in North-Western India. The best of the Gandhara sculpture was produced during the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. It originated during the reign of Indo-Greek rulers but the real patrons of this school of art were the Sakas and the Kushanas, particularly Kanishka. Gandhara art was a blend of Indian and Graeco-Roman elements. Specimens of Gandhara sculpture have been found in

Taxila, Peshawar and in several places of North-West India. The Gandhara school made sculptures of the Buddha in various sizes, shapes and postures. The reliefs depict Buddha's birth, his renunciation and his preaching. The salient features of Gandhara art are: Moulding human body in a realistic manner with minute attention to physical features like muscles, mustache and curly hair.

- Thick drapery with large and bold fold lines.
- Rich carving, elaborate ornamentation and symbolic expressions.
- The main theme was the new form of Buddhism – Mahayanism and the evolution of an image of Buddha.

A large number of monasteries were also built from 1st to 4th centuries A.D. Ruins of about fifteen monasteries were found in and around Peshawar and Rawalpindi. The Buddhist stupas erected during this period had Graeco-Roman architectural impact. The height of the stupa was raised and ornamentation was added to the structure of the stupa. These changes made the stupa more attractive.

Table No. 1



Check Your Progress

9. Write two different groups of the Sakas.
10. Write a note on the Northern Kshatrapas of Taxila.
11. Who was the founder of Western Kshatrapas of Ujjain?
12. Write the different titles adopted by the Saka rulers.
13. Who was the founder of the Kushana dynasty?
14. Write the official language of the Kushanas.
15. Who was the founder of the Sunga dynasty?
16. Who was the founder of the Satavahana dynasty?
17. Write the cultural contribution of the Satavahanas.

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9.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The founder of the Sakas.
2. The second branch of the Northern Saka Kshatrapas belongs to Mathura. At the time of their first invasion, Sakas extended their sway over Mathura after conquering Ujjain. It is evident from the coins and inscriptions that the main rulers of this kingdom were Hangamash, Hagan, Kharoshta, Rajul and Sodasa. Among these, Rajul and Sodasa were the most powerful rulers.
3. Rudradamana was the most prominent ruler of Ujjain. He was the grandson of Chashtana. He was a great warrior. He extended the Saka Empire by conquering many states.
4. The administrative machinery of the Saka rulers was of a very high standard. It was an admixture of Indo-Greek systems of administration. The administration of the Sakas was based on the monarchical system of government, as it was in practice during the reign of the Mauryas and the Sungas. The king was the head of the administration. The Saka rulers adopted many titles, such as, ‘Adhiraja’, ‘Rajadhiraja’, ‘Devputra’, ‘Chakravarti’. There was also a council of ministers in order to make the administration efficient. The Prime Minister was the head of this council. In addition, many other officials, such as, Mahamatra, Rajuka, Mahasenapati, Dandanayaka, Mahadandanayaka, Senagopa, Koshadhyaksha, Bhandarika, Rajalipikar, etc. were also appointed in order to assist the king in the administration.
5. Kujula Kadphises.
6. The Buddhist Scholar.
7. The famous physician of ancient India.
8. The successors of Kanishka ruled for another one hundred and fifty years. Huvishka was the son of Kanishka and he kept the empire intact. Mathura became an important city under his rule. Like Kanishka, he was also a patron of Buddhism. The last important Kushana ruler was Vasudeva. The Kushana Empire was very much reduced in his rule.
9. There were two different groups of Sakas – the Northern Satraps ruling from Taxila and the Western satraps ruling over Maharashtra.
10. The Northern Kshatrapas of Taxila comprised Punjab and north-west provinces. Taxila was the capital of this kingdom. The first important ruler was ‘Mauses’ or ‘Maus’. He was a very powerful king. He had abolished the Greek power from east Punjab and other neighbouring states. He ruled in about the 1st century B.C. Besides him, Azes I, Azes II, Ellis were the other rulers of this dynasty. Consequently, this state was captured by the Pallavas.
11. Chashtana

12. The Saka rulers adopted many titles, such as, ‘Adhiraja’, ‘Rajadhiraja’, ‘Devputra’ and ‘Chakravarti’.
13. The founder of the Kushana dynasty was Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I.
14. The official language of the Kushana state was Bactrian written in Kushanized Greek script. Sanskrit too was in use and records were written in Brahmi and Kharosthi as well.
15. The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga.
16. The founder of the Satavahana dynasty was Simuka.
17. The Satavahanas patronized Buddhism and Brahmanism. They built chaityas and viharas. They also made grants of villages and lands to Buddhist monks. Vashishtaputra Pulamayi repaired the old Amaravati stupa. Their architecture in Nagarjunakonda was also notable. Brahmanism was revived by the Satavahanas along with the performance of asvamedha and rajasuya sacrifices. They also patronized the Prakrit language and literature. Hala’s Sattasai is an excellent piece of Prakrit literature.

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9.6 SUMMARY

- The North-West India slipped out of the control of the Mauryas and a series of foreign invasions affected this region. Kalinga declared its independence and in the further South the Satavahanas established their independent rule. As a result, the Mauryan rule was confined to the Gangetic valley and it was soon replaced by the Sunga dynasty. The Sunga dynasty succeeded the Mauryas at Magadha; the Satavahanas emerged as a great power in the Deccan.
- There were two different groups of Sakas – the Northern Satraps ruling from Taxila and the Western satraps ruling over Maharashtra. The founder the Saka rule in India in the 1st century B.C. was Maues.
- The title of ‘Maha Kshatrap’ was assumed by Rudradamana also. Rudradamana was not only a great conqueror but also an efficient administrator. He did much work for the welfare of his subjects. He was benevolent to all. He always ruled according to the wishes of the people.
- The administration of the Sakas was based on the monarchical system of government, as it was in practice during the reign of the Mauryas and the Sungas. The king was the head of the, administration. The Saka rulers adopted many titles, such as, ‘Adhiraja’, ‘Rajadhiraja’, ‘Devputra’ and ‘Chakravarti’.
- The Saka Kshatrapas of Mathura had embraced Jainism while the Sakas of the North-Western provinces had their faith in Buddhism. During this period, Taxila, the capital of the North-West province, was

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the main center of Buddhism. Brahmanism was adopted by the rulers of Maharashtra.

- The Kushanas were a branch of Yuchi tribe, whose original home was central Asia. They first came to Bactria displacing the Sakas. Then they gradually moved to the Kabul valley and seized the Gandhara region. The founder of the Kushana dynasty was Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I.
- Kanishka was the most important ruler of the Kushana dynasty. He was the founder of the Saka era which starts from 78 A.D. He was not only a great conqueror but also a patron of religion and art.
- The Kushanas used high-sounding titles derived from a variety of cultural contexts. Titles like Devaputra unmistakably sought to link them with divinity. This aspect is further elaborated in their coins.
- With the establishment of Kushana power in Gandhara and Indus region the land trade from Ganges to Euphrates and sea trade across Arabian sea and Persian Gulf to Rome flourished and expanded. The silk route passed through Kushana territories in central Asia and it was linked with China and Asian provinces of Roman Empire.
- The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga, who was the commander-in-chief under the Mauryas. He assassinated the last Mauryan ruler and usurped the throne. The most important challenge to the Sunga rule was to protect North India against the invasions of the Bactrian Greeks from the North-West.
- In the Deccan, the Satavahanas established their independent rule after the decline of the Mauryas. Their rule lasted for about 450 years. They were also known as the Andhras. The Puranas and inscriptions remain important sources for the history of Satavahanas. Among the inscriptions, the Nasik and Nanaghad inscriptions throw much light on the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni.
- The school of art that developed at Mathura in modern Uttar Pradesh is called the Mathura art. It flourished in the 1st century A.D. In its early phase, the Mathura school of art developed on indigenous lines.
- The home of the Gandhara School of art is the territory in and around Peshawar in North-Western India. The best of the Gandhara sculpture was produced during the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D.

9.7 KEY TERMS

- **Kshatrap:** The word Kshatrap was used for the provincial governor of the Saka ruler. All Saka rulers used ‘Kshatrap’ with their names.
- **Devputra:** The Saka rulers adopted many titles, such as, ‘Adhiraja’, ‘Rajadhiraja’, ‘Devputra’ and ‘Chakravarti’.
- **Yuchi Tribe:** The Kushanas were a branch of Yuchi tribe, whose original home was central Asia.

- **Huvishka:** Huvishka was the son of Kanishka.
- **Pushyamitra Sunga:** The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga, who was the commander-in-chief under the Mauryas.

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9.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the important states of Saka Kshatrapas.
2. Write about the administrative system of the Sakas.
3. Write a note on development of art and literature during the Sakas.
4. Mention the successors of Kanishka.
5. Write about Gandhara School of Art.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the achievements of Kanishka.
2. Explain the administration and cultural development of the Kushanas.
3. Describe the political and social condition of the Satavahanas.
4. Narrate Mathura and Gandhara School of Art.

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CHAPTER 10 GUPTA EMPIRE – POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL LIFE, HARSHAVARDHAN AND HIS TIMES

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Structure

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Achievements of Chandragupta-I, Samudragupta and Chandragupta-II
 - 10.2.1 Gupta Administration
 - 10.2.2 Social, Economic and Cultural Contribution of the Guptas
- 10.3 Harshavardhana (606-647 A.D.)
 - 10.3.1 Harsha's Military Conquests
 - 10.3.2 Harsha's Administration
- 10.4 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 10.5 Summary
- 10.6 Key Terms
- 10.7 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.8 Further Reading

10.0 INTRODUCTION

Chandragupta Maurya founded the Maurya dynasty in 320 B.C.; exactly six hundred years later another Chandra Gupta founded the Gupta dynasty, in 320 A.D. The Gupta dynasty ruled over India for about two hundred years. This dynasty freed India from foreign shackles of Kushanas and broke the Huns who were invincible throughout Asia and Europe. This is probably the dynasty which gave Vikramaditya, an immortal legendary ruler of India. Like any other dynasties of India, the history of the Imperial Gupta dynasty is a dark cloud. Though we might know the first ruler of this dynasty, however their origin and rise to kinghood is obscured in mystery. However, study of the Guptas has held a very prime position in Indian history and correctly pointed out by V.A. Smith, who states that, with the accession of the Guptas, light again dawns, the veil of oblivion is lifted and the history of India regains unity and interest. This chapter will look at the political history of the imperial Guptas from the days of Chandragupta-I to that of Skanda Gupta.

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10.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the achievements of Chandragupta-I, Samudragupta and Chandragupta-II.
- Describe the administrative system of the Guptas.
- Discuss the social, economic and cultural contribution of the Guptas.
- Explain the military conquests of Harsha.
- Narrate the administrative system of Harsha.

Sources

There are plenty of source materials to reconstruct the history of the Gupta period. They include literary, epigraphical and numismatic sources. The *Puranas* throw light on the royal genealogy of the Gupta kings. Contemporary literary works like the *Devichandraguptam* and the *Mudrarakshasha* written by Visakadatta provide information regarding the rise of the Guptas. The Chinese traveler Fahien, who visited India during the reign of Chandragupta-II, has left a valuable account of the social, economic and religious conditions of the Gupta Empire.

- Apart from these literary sources, there are inscriptions like the Mehrauli Iron Pillar Inscription and the Allahabad Pillar inscription. The first refers to the achievements of Chandragupta-I. The most important source for the reign of Samudragupta is the Allahabad Pillar inscription. It describes his personality and achievements. This inscription is engraved on an Asokan pillar. It is written in classical Sanskrit, using the Nagari script. It consists of 33 lines composed by Harisena.
- It describes the circumstances of Samudragupta's accession, his military campaigns in North India and the Deccan, his relationship with other contemporary rulers, and his accomplishments as a poet and scholar. The coins issued by Gupta kings contain legends and figures. These coins provide interesting details about the titles and sacrifices performed by the Gupta monarchs.

10.2 ACHIEVEMENTS OF CHANDRAGUPTA-I, SAMUDRAGUPTA AND CHANDRAGUPTA-II

Chandragupta-I (320-330 A.D.)

The founder of the Gupta dynasty was Sri Gupta. He was succeeded by Ghatotkacha. These two were called *Maharajas*. Much information was not available about their rule. The next ruler was Chandragupta-I and he was the

first to be called *Maharajadhiraja* (the great king of kings). This title indicates his extensive conquests.

- He strengthened his position by a matrimonial alliance with the Licchavis. He married Kumaradevi, a princess of that family. This added to the power and prestige of the Gupta family. The Mehrauli Iron Pillar inscription mentions his extensive conquests. Chandragupta-I considered as the founder of the Gupta era which starts with his accession in A.D. 320.

Samudragupta (330-380 A.D.)

Samudragupta was the greatest of the rulers of the Gupta dynasty. The Allahabad Pillar inscription provides a detailed account of his reign. It refers to three stages in his military campaign:

- Against some rulers of North India.
- His famous Dakshinapatha expedition against South Indian rulers.
- A second campaign against some other rulers of North India.

In the first campaign Samudragupta defeated Achyuta and Nagasena. Achyuta was probably a Naga ruler. Nagasena belonged to the Kota family which was ruling over the upper Gangetic valley. They were defeated and their states were annexed. As a result of this short campaign, Samudragupta had gained complete mastery over the upper Gangetic valley.

- Then Samudragupta marched against the South Indian monarchs. The Allahabad Pillar inscription mentions that Samudragupta defeated twelve rulers in his South Indian Expedition. They were Mahendra of Kosala, Vyaghrraj of Mahakanthara, Mantaraja of Kaurala, Mahendragiri of Pishtapura, Swamidatta of Kottura, Damana of Erandapalla, Vishnugupta of Kanchi, Nilaraja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Vengi, Ugrasena of Palakka, Kubera of Devarashtra and Dhananjaya of Kushtalapura. Samudragupta's policy in South India was different. He did not destroy and annex those kingdoms. Instead, he defeated the rulers but gave them back their kingdoms. He only insisted on them to acknowledge his suzerainty.
- The third stage of Samudragupta's campaign was to eliminate his remaining North Indian rivals. He fought against nine kings, uprooted them and annexed their territories. They were Rudradeva, Matila, Nagadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapathinaga, Nagasena, Achyuta, Nandin and Balavarman. Most of these rulers were members of the Naga family, then ruling over different parts of North India. After these military victories, Samudragupta performed the *asvamedha* sacrifice. He issued gold and silver coins with the legend 'restorer of the *asvamedha*'. It is because of his military achievements Samudragupta was hailed as 'Indian Napoleon'.

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Extent of Samudragupta's Empire

After these conquests, Samudragupta's rule extended over the upper Gangetic valley, the greater part of modern U.P., a portion of central India and the South-Western part of Bengal. These territories were directly administered by him. In the South, there were tributary states. The Saka and Kushana principalities on the West and North-West were within the sphere of his influence. The kingdoms on the East coast of the Deccan, as far as the Pallava Kingdom, acknowledged his suzerainty.

Estimate of Samudragupta

Samudragupta's military achievements remain remarkable in the annals of history. He was equally great in his other personal accomplishments. The Allahabad Pillar inscription speaks of his magnanimity to his foes, his polished intellect, his poetic skill and his proficiency in music. It calls him Kaviraja because of his ability in composing verses. His image depicting him with Veena is found in the coins issued by him. It is the proof of his proficiency and interest in music. He was also a patron of many poets and scholars, one of whom was Harisena. Thus, he must be credited with a share in the promotion of Sanskrit literature and learning, characteristic of his dynasty. He was an ardent follower of Vaishnavism but was tolerant of other creeds. He evinced keen interest in Buddhism and was the patron of the great Buddhist scholar Vasubandu.

Chandragupta-II (380-415 A.D.)

Samudragupta was succeeded by his son Chandragupta-II Vikramaditya. But according to some scholars, the immediate successor of Samudragupta was Ramagupta, the elder brother of Chandragupta-II. But there is little historical proof for this. Chandragupta-II inherited the military genius of his father and extended the Gupta Empire by his own conquests. He achieved this by a judicious combination of the policy of diplomacy and warfare. Through matrimonial alliances he strengthened his political power. He married Kuberanaga, a Naga princess of central India. He gave his daughter Prabhavati in marriage to the Vakataka prince Rudrasena-II. The political importance of this marriage lies in the fact that the Vakatakas occupied a geographically strategic position in the Deccan. This alliance served a useful purpose when Chandragupta-II undertook his campaign in Western India against the Sakas.

Conquest of Western India

The greatest of the military achievements of Chandragupta-II was his war against the Saka *satraps* of Western India. Rudrasimha-III, the last ruler of the Saka *satrap* was defeated, dethroned and killed. His territories in Western Malwa and the Kathiawar Peninsula were annexed into the Gupta Empire.

- After this victory, he performed the horse sacrifice and assumed the title *Sakari*, meaning, 'destroyer of Sakas'. He also called himself *Vikramaditya*. As a result of the conquest of Western India, the Western boundary of the Empire reached to the Arabian Sea gaining access to Broach, Sopara, Cambay and other sea ports. This enabled

the Gupta Empire to control trade with the Western countries. Ujjain became an important commercial city and soon became the alternative capital of the Guptas. The fine cotton clothes of Bengal, Indigo from Bihar, silk from Banaras, the scents of the Himalayas and the sandal and species from the South were brought to these ports without any interference.

- The Western traders poured Roman gold into India in return for Indian products. The great wealth of the Gupta Empire was manifest in the variety of gold coins issued by Chandragupta-II. Chandragupta-II defeated a confederacy of enemy chiefs in Vanga. He also crossed the river Sindh and conquered Bactria. The Kushanas ruling in this region were subdued by him. With these conquests, the Gupta Empire extended in the West as far as Western Malwa, Gujarat and Kathiawar. In the North-West, it extended beyond the Hindukush up to Bactria. In the East, it included even Eastern Bengal and in the South the Narmada River formed the boundary.

Fahien's Visit

The famous Chinese pilgrim, Fahien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta II. Out of his nine years stay in India, he spent six years in the Gupta empire. He came to India by the land route through Khotan, Kashgar, Gandhara and Punjab. He visited Peshawar, Mathura, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Pataliputra, Kasi and Bodh Gaya among other places. He returned by the sea route, visiting on the way Ceylon and Java.

- The main purpose of his visit was to see the land of the Buddha and to collect Buddhist manuscripts from India. He stayed in Pataliputra for three years studying Sanskrit and copying Buddhist texts. Fahien provides valuable information on the religious, social and economic condition of the Gupta Empire. According to him, Buddhism was in a flourishing condition in the North-Western India but in the Gangetic valley it was in a state of neglect. He refers to the Gangetic valley as the 'land of Brahmanism'. Fahien mentions the unsatisfactory state of some of the Buddhist holy places like Kapilavastu and Kusinagara. According to him, the economic condition of the empire was prosperous.
- Although his account is valuable in many respects, he did not mention the name of Chandragupta-II. He was not interested in political affairs. His interest was primarily religion. He assessed everything from the Buddhist angle. His observations on social conditions are found to be exaggerated. Yet, his accounts are useful to know the general condition of the country.

Estimate of Chandragupta-II

The power and glory of Gupta Empire reached its peak under the rule Chandragupta-II Vikramaditya. He also contributed to the general cultural progress of the age and patronized great literary figures like Kalidasa. He

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promoted artistic activity. Because of the high level of cultural progress that was achieved during this period, the Gupta period is generally referred to as a golden age. A detailed account of the cultural progress in the Gupta age is given below.

Successors of Chandragupta-II

Kumaragupta was the son and successor of Chandragupta-II. His reign was marked by general peace and prosperity. He issued a number of coins and his inscriptions are found all over the Gupta Empire. He also performed an *asvamedha* sacrifice. Most importantly, he laid the foundation of the Nalanda University which emerged an institution of international reputation. At the end of his reign, a powerful wealthy tribe called the ‘Pushyamitras’ defeated the Gupta army. A branch of the Huns from Central Asia made attempts to cross the Hindukush mountains and invade India. But it was his successor Skandagupta who really faced the Hun invasion. He fought successfully against the Huns and saved the empire. This war must have been a great strain on the government’s resources. After Skandagupta’s death, many of his successors like Purugupta, Narasimhagupta, Buddhagupta and Baladitya could not save the Gupta Empire from the Huns. Ultimately, the Gupta power totally disappeared due to the Hun invasions and later by the rise of Yasodharman in Malwa.

10.2.1 Gupta Administration

Monarchy was the form of government which was in vogue during the Gupta Age. But it was the benevolent monarchy. The king was the head of the state as well as that of administration. The theory of the divinity of kings was popular during the Gupta period by which the royal power and prestige had increased. The Guptas discarded the modest title of raja and adopted the high-sounding ones brought into vogue by the Kushans.

- According inscriptions, the Gupta kings assumed titles like *Paramabhattaraka*, *Maharajadhiraja*, *Parameswara*, *Samrat* and *Chakravartin*. The Gupta Kings enjoyed a large number of powers. Those powers covered the political, administrative, military and judicial fields. Samudragupta, Chandragupta-II and Skandagupta personally led their armies. The Gupta Kings appointed all the governors and important military and civil officers. They were also responsible to the king. The governors and their officers had to work under the control and guidance of the King. The King was the source of all honours and titles. All land in the empire was the property of the King who could give away the same to anybody he pleased.
- The king was assisted in his administration by a council consisting of a chief minister, a Senapati or commander in-chief of the army and other important officials. A high official called *Sandivigraha* was mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions, most probably minister for foreign affairs. The king maintained a close contact with the provincial administration through a class of officials called

Kumaramatyas and *Ayuktas*. Provinces in the Gupta Empire were known as *Bhuktis* and provincial governors as *Uparikas*. They were mostly chosen from among the princes. *Bhuktis* were subdivided into *Vishyas* or districts. They were governed by *Vishyapatis*. *Nagara Sreshtis* were the officers looking after the city administration. ‘*Purapala Uparika*’ was another officer who controlled the heads of the various cities. A city was governed by a ‘*Parishad*’. In the city, there was a reference of ‘*Avasthika*’, who was a special officer who acted as the ‘Superintendent of *Dharamsalas*’.

- The villages in the district were under the control of *Gramikas*. The village was the smallest unit of the administration. ‘*Gramika*’ was the head of the village but there were other officials known as ‘*Dutas*’ or ‘*Messengers*’, headsmen, *Kartri*, etc. He was assisted by a village assembly but due to the lack of references, it is not possible to describe the exact duties and functions of the assembly.
- The administrative and judicial business of villages was carried on by the *Gramikas*. He was assisted by a group of village elders, such as *Kutumbikas*, *Mahamataras*, etc. The royal servant in the village was the *Gram-Vridha*. Fahien’s account on the Gupta administration provides useful information. He characterizes the Gupta administration as mild and benevolent. There were no restrictions on people’s movements and they enjoyed a large degree of personal freedom. There was no state interference in the individual’s life. Punishments were not severe. Imposing a fine was a common punishment. There was no spy system.
- The administration was so efficient that the roads were kept safe for travelers, and there was no fear of thieves. He mentioned that people were generally prosperous and the crimes were negligible. Fahien had also appreciated the efficiency of the Gupta administration as he was able to travel without any fear throughout the Gangetic valley. On the whole, the administration was more liberal than that of the Mauryas.

10.2.2 Social, Economic and Cultural Contribution of the Guptas

The pre-Gupta period in India witnessed a series of foreign invasions. Indian society had given way to those foreigners who had become permanent residents here. But during the Gupta period, the caste system became rigid. The Brahmins occupied the top ladder of the society. They were given enormous gifts by the rulers as well as other wealthy people. The practice of untouchability had slowly begun during this period. Fahien mentions that Chandalas were segregated from the society. Their miserable condition was elaborated by the Chinese traveler.

- The position of women had also become miserable during the Gupta period. They were prohibited from studying the religious texts like the Puranas. The subjection of women to men was thoroughly regularized.

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But it was insisted that they should be protected and generously treated by men. The practice of *Swyamvara* was given up and the *Manusmriti* suggested the early marriage for girls.

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- In the sphere of religion, Brahmanism reigned supreme during the Gupta period. It had two branches – Vaishnavism and Saivism. Most of the Gupta kings were Vaishnavaites. They performed *Aswamedha* sacrifices. The worship of images and celebration of religious festivals with elaborate rituals made these two religions popular. Religious literature like the *Puranas* was composed during this period. The progress of Brahmanism led to the neglect of Buddhism and Jainism. Fahien refers to the decline of Buddhism in the Gangetic valley. But a few Buddhist scholars like Vasubandhu were patronized by Gupta kings. In Western and Southern India, Jainism flourished. The great Jain Council was held at Valabhi during this period and the Jain Canon of the *Swetambras* was written.

Economic Condition: Source of Revenue

In order to meet the vast expenditure incurred on the maintenance of such a vast administration of the empire, the king levied different types of tax. Land revalue has always been an important source of income in an agricultural country. Land revalue was one of the primary sources of the income of the Guptas and they helped in increasing agricultural production and provided security to the cultivators. The waste lands were brought under cultivation and pasture land was also protected and increased. The government increased the man-made means of irrigation at both-capital and provincial levels. All this helped in the growth of agricultural and animal husbandry.

- During the Gupta days, ‘*Uparika*’ or ‘land tax’ which was levied on cultivators who had no property rights on soil, ‘*Vata*’, ‘*Bhuta*’, ‘*Dhanya*’, ‘*Hiranya*’ or gold, ‘*Adeya*’, etc. Perhaps, it was one-sixth of the total produce. Though there were other means of source of income like surplus or income tax known as ‘*Bhaga*’, customs, mint, inheritance, presents, etc. In addition to these taxes, fines known as ‘*Dasa-Paradha*’ from offenders and free labour due to the king known as ‘*Vaishtika*’ formed the source of income. On the whole, the Gupta administration was well organized.
- Peace and prosperity of the subjects and the progress achieved by them in practically all walks of their life was its proof. It is to be observed that the designation of Gupta officials continued even after the passing away of the Gupta Empire. The early Kalacuriyas were the first to be influenced by the Gupta administrative system. Likewise the Chalukyas of Badami, the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed and the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani were also accepted the Gupta administrative system.

Cultural Contribution of the Guptas

Gupta Empire – Political,
Social, Economic...

The Gupta period witnessed a tremendous progress in the field of art, science and literature and on account of this it has been called “a golden age”. A few scholars even call this period a period of renaissance. But it should be remembered that there was no dark period before the Gupta rule. Therefore, the cultural progress witnessed during the Gupta period may be called the culmination of Indian intellectual activities.

Art and Architecture

In the history of Indian art and architecture, the Gupta period occupies an important place. Both the Nagara and Dravidian styles of art evolved during this period. But most of the architecture of this period had been lost due to foreign invasions like that of Huns. Yet, the remaining temples, sculptures and cave paintings provide an idea about the grandeur of the Gupta art. The temple at Deogarh near Jhansi and the sculptures in the temple at Garhwas near Allahabad remain important specimen of the Gupta art. There was no influence of Gandhara style. But the beautiful statue of standing Buddha at Mathura reveals a little Greek style. The Buddha statue unearthed at Saranath was unique piece of Gupta art.

- The Bhitari monolithic pillar of Skandagupta is also remarkable. Metallurgy had also made a wonderful progress during the Gupta period. The craftsmen were efficient in the art of casting metal statues and pillars. The gigantic copper statue of Buddha, originally found at Sultanganj now kept at Birmingham museum, was about seven and a half feet height and nearly a ton weight. The Delhi Iron Pillar of the Gupta Period is still free from rust though completely exposed to sun and rain for so many centuries.
- The paintings of the Gupta period are seen at Bagh caves near Gwalior. The mural paintings of Ajantha mostly illustrate the life of the Buddha as depicted in the Jataka stories. The paintings at Sigiriya in Sri Lanka were highly influenced by the Ajantha style. The Gupta coinage was also remarkable. Samudragupta issued eight types of gold coins. The legends on them throw much light on the achievements of that marvelous king. The figures inscribed on them are illustrative of the skill and greatness of Gupta numismatic art. Chandragupta-II and his successors had also issued gold, silver and copper coins of different varieties.

Literature

The Sanskrit language became prominent during the Gupta period. Nagari script had evolved from the Brahmi script. Numerous works in classical Sanskrit came to be written in the forms of epic, lyrics, drama and prose. The best of the Sanskrit literature belonged to the Gupta age.

- Samudragupta was a great poet. He patronized a number of scholars including Harisena. The court of Chandragupta-II was adorned by the celebrated Navratnas. Kalidasa remain the foremost among them. His

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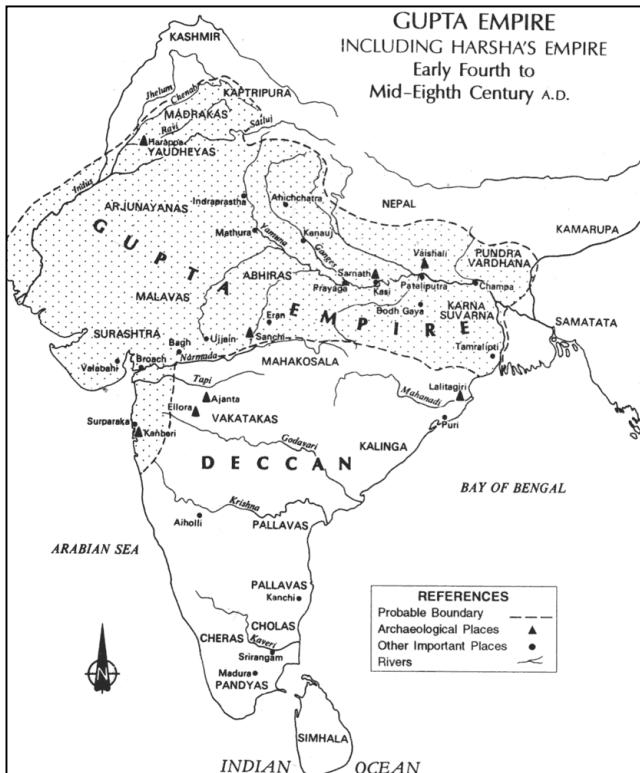
masterpiece was the Sanskrit drama *Shakuntala*. It is considered one among the ‘hundred best books of the world’. He wrote two other plays – the *Malavikagnimitra* and *Vikramorvashiya*. His two well-known epics are *Raghuvamsa* and *Kumarasambhava*. *Ritusamhara* and *Meghaduta* are his two lyrics.

- Visakadatta was another celebrated author of this period. He was the author of two Sanskrit dramas, *Mudrarakshasa* and *Devichandraguptam*. Sudraka was a renowned poet of this age and his book *Mrichchakatika* is rich in humour and pathos. Bharavi’s *Kritarjuniya* is the story of the conflict between Arjuna and Siva. Dandin was the author of *Kavyadarsa* and *Dasakumaracharita*. Another important work of this period was *Vasavadatta* written by Subhandhu. The *Panchatantra* stories were composed by Vishnusarma during the Gupta period.
- The Buddhist author Amarasimha compiled a lexicon called *Amarakosa*. The Puranas in their present form were composed during this period. There are eighteen Puranas. The most important among them are the *Bhagavatha*, *Vishnu*, *Vayu* and *Matsya* Puranas. The Mahabharatha and the Ramayana were given final touches and written in the present form during this period.

Science

The Gupta period witnessed a brilliant activity in the sphere of mathematics, astronomy, astrology and medicine. Aryabhatta was a great mathematician and astronomer. He wrote the book *Aryabhatiya* in 499 A.D. It deals with mathematics and astronomy. It explains scientifically the occurrence of solar and lunar eclipses.

- Aryabhatta was the first to declare that the earth was spherical in shape and that it rotates on its own axis. However, these views were rejected by later astronomers like Varahamihira and Brahmagupta. Varahamihira composed *Pancha Siddhantika*, the five astronomical systems. He was also a great authority on astrology.
- His work *Brihadsamhita* is a great work in Sanskrit literature. It deals with a variety of subjects like astronomy, astrology, geography, architecture, weather, animals, marriage and omens. His *Brihadjataka* is considered to be a standard work on astrology. In the field of medicine, Vaghata lived during this period. He was the last of the great medical trio of ancient India. The other two scholars Charaka and Susruta lived before the Gupta age. Vaghata was the author *Ashtangasamgraha* (Summary of the eight branches of medicine).



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Map No. 1

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the greatest of the rulers of the Gupta dynasty?
2. Which inscription provides a detailed account of Samudragupta's reign?
3. Write a short note on the South Indian expedition of Samudragupta.
4. Who was the successor of Samudragupta?
5. Give a brief account on the Fa-Hien's visit.
6. Write a short note on the land revenue system of the Guptas.
7. Who did compose Pancha Siddhantika?

10.3 HARSHAVARDHANA (606-647 A.D.)

The decline of the Gupta Empire was followed by a period of political disorder and disunity in North India. It was only in the beginning of the 7th century A.D. that Harshvardhana succeeded in establishing a larger kingdom in North India. The chief sources for tracing the history of Harsha and his times are the *Harshacharita* written by Bana and the Travel accounts of Hiuen Tsang. Bana was the court poet of Harsha. Hiuen Tsang was the Chinese traveler who visited India in the 7th century A.D. Besides these two sources, the dramas written by Harsha, namely *Ratnavali*, *Nagananda* and *Priyadarshika* also provide useful information. The Madhuben plate inscription and the Sonpat

inscription are also helpful to know the chronology of Harsha. The Banskheda inscription contains the signature of Harsha.

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Early Life of Harsha

The founder of the family of Harsha was Pushyabhuti. Pushyabhus were the feudatories of the Guptas. They called themselves *Vardhanas*. After the Hun invasions they assumed independence. The first important king of Pushyabhuti dynasty was Prabhakaravardhana. His capital was Thaneswar, North of Delhi. He assumed the title Maharajadhiraja and Paramabhattaraka. After Prabhakaravardhana's death, his elder son Rajyavardhana came to the throne. He had to face problems right from the time of his accession. His sister, Rajyasri had married the Maukhi ruler called Grihavarman. The ruler of Malwa, Devagupta in league with Sasanka, the ruler of Bengal had killed Grihavarman. Immediately on hearing this news, Rajyavardhana marched against the king of Malwa and routed his army. But before he could return to his capital, he was treacherously murdered by Sasanka. In the meantime, Rajyasri escaped into forests. Harsha now succeeded his brother at Thaneswar. His first responsibility was to rescue his sister and to avenge the killings of his brother and brother-in-law. He first rescued his sister when she was about to immolate herself.

10.3.1 Harsha's Military Conquests

In his first expedition, Harsha drove out Sasanka from Kanauj. He made Kanauj his new capital. This made him the most powerful ruler of North India. Harsha fought against Dhruvasena-II of Valabhi and defeated him. Dhruvasena-II became a vassal. The most important military campaign of Harsha was against the Western Chalukya ruler Pulakesin-II. Both the accounts of Hiuen Tsang and the inscriptions of Pulakesin-II provide the details of this campaign. Harsha with an ambition to extend his kingdom South of the Narmada river marched against the Chalukya ruler. But the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin-II mentions the defeat of Harsha by Pulakesin, who after this achievement assumed the title *Paramesvara*. Hiuen Tsang's accounts also confirm the victory of Pulakesin.

- Harsha led another campaign against the ruler of Sindh, which was an independent kingdom. But, it is doubtful whether his Sind campaign was a successful one. Nepal had accepted Harsha's over lordship. Harsha established his control over Kashmir and its ruler sent tributes to him. He also maintained cordial relations with Bhaskaravarman, the ruler of Assam. Harsha's last military campaign was against the kingdom of Kalinga in Odisha and it was a success. Thus, Harsha established his hold over the whole of North India. The regions modern Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha were under his direct control. But his sphere of influence was much more extensive. The peripheral states such as Kashmir, Sind, Valabhi and Kamarupa acknowledged his sovereignty.

Harsha and Buddhism

*Gupta Empire – Political,
Social, Economic...*

In his early life, Harsha was a devout Saiva but later he became an ardent Hinayana Buddhist. Hiuen Tsang converted him to Mahayana Buddhism. Harsha prohibited the use of animal food in his kingdom and punished those who kill any living being. He erected thousands of stupas and established travellers' rests all over his kingdom. He also erected monasteries at the sacred places of Buddhists. Once in five years, he convened a gathering of representatives of all religions and honoured them with gifts and costly presents. He brought the Buddhist monks together frequently to discuss and examine the Buddhist doctrine.

Kanauj Assembly

Harsha organized a religious assembly at Kanauj to honour the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang towards the close of his reign. He invited representatives of all religious sects. It was attended by 20 kings, 1000 scholars from the Nalanda University, 3000 Hinayanists and Mahayanists, 3000 Brahmins and Jains. The Assembly went on continuously for 23 days. Hiuen Tsang explained the values of Mahayana doctrine and established its superiority over others. However, violence broke out and there were acts of arson. There was also an attempt on the life of Harsha. Soon, it was brought under control and the guilty were punished. On the final day of the Assembly, Hiuen Tsang was honoured with costly presents.

Allahabad Conference

Hiuen Tsang mentions in his account about the conference held at Allahabad, known as Prayag. It was the one among the conferences routinely convened by Harsha once in five years. Harsha gave away his enormous wealth as gifts to the members of all religious sects. According to Hiuen Tsang, Harsha was so lavish that he emptied the treasury and even gave away the clothes and jewels he was wearing. His statement might be one of admiring exaggeration.

10.3.2 Harsha's Administration

The administration of Harsha was organized on the same lines as the Guptas did. Hiuen Tsang gives a detailed picture about this. The king was just in his administration and punctual in discharging his duties. He made frequent visits of inspection throughout his dominion. The day was too short for him. Taxation was also light and forced labour was also rare. One-sixth of the produce was collected as land tax. Cruel punishments of the Mauryan period continued in the times of Harsha. Hiuen Tsang condemned the trials as barbarous and superstitious. Harsha's army consisted of the traditional four divisions – foot, horse, chariot and elephant. The number of cavalry was more than one lakh and the elephants more than sixty thousands. This was much more than that of the Mauryan army. The maintenance of public records was the salient feature of Harsha's administration. The archive of the Harsha period was known as *nilopitru* and it was under the control of special officers. Both good and bad events happened during his time had been recorded.

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Society and Economy Under Harsha

Both Bana and Hiuen Tsang portray the social life in the times of Harsha. The fourfold division of the society Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra was prevalent. The Brahmins were the privileged section of the society and they were given land grants by the kings. The Kshatriyas were the ruling class. The Vysyas were mainly traders. Hiuen Tsang mentions that the Sudras practiced agriculture. There existed many sub castes.

- The position of women was not satisfactory. The institution of Swyamvara (the choice of choosing her husband) had declined. Remarriage of widows was not permitted, particularly among the higher castes. The system of dowry had also become common. The practice of sati was also prevalent. Hiuen Tsang mentions three ways of disposal of the dead cremation, water burial and exposure in the woods. The trade and commerce had declined during Harsha's period.
- This is evident from the decline of trade centres, less number of coins, and slow activities of merchant guilds. The decline of trade in turn affected the handicrafts industry and agriculture. Since there was no large-scale demand for goods, the farmers began to produce only in a limited way. This led to the rise of self-sufficient village economy. In short, there was a sharp economic decline as compared to the economy of the Gupta period.

Cultural Progress during the Period of Harsha

The art and architecture of Harsha's period are very few and mostly followed the Gupta style. Hiuen Tsang describes the glory of the monastery with many storeys built by Harsha at Nalanda. He also speaks of a copper statue of Buddha with eight feet in height. The brick temple of Lakshmana at Sirpur with its rich architecture is assigned to the period of Harsha. Harsha was a great patron of learning. His biographer Banabhatta adorned his royal court. Besides *Harshacharita*, he wrote *Kadambari*. Other literary figures in Harsha's court were Matanga Divakara and the famous Barthihari, who was the poet, philosopher and grammarian. Harsha himself authored three plays – *Ratnavali*, *Priyadarshika* and *Nagananda*. Harsha patronized the Nalanda University by his liberal endowments. It attained international reputation as a centre of learning during his reign. Hiuen Tsang visited the Nalanda University and remained as a student for some time.

Nalanda University

The Chinese travelers of ancient India mentioned a number of educational institutions. The most famous among them were the Hinayana University of Valabhi and the Mahayana University of Nalanda. Hiuen Tsang gives a very valuable account of the Nalanda University. The term Nalanda means “giver of knowledge”. It was founded by Kumaragupta-I during the Gupta period. It was patronized by his successors and later by Harsha. The professors of the University were called *panditas*. Some of its renowned professors were Dingnaga, Dharmapala, Sthiramati and Silabadhra. Dharmapala was a native of

Kanchipuram and he became the head of the Nalanda University. Nalanda University was a residential university and education was free including the boarding and lodging. It was maintained with the revenue derived from 100 to 200 villages endowed by different rulers. Though it was a Mahayana University, different religious subjects like the Vedas, Hinayana doctrine, and Sankhya and Yoga philosophies were also taught. In addition to that, general subjects like logic, grammar, astronomy, medicine and art were in the syllabus. More than lectures, discussion played an important part and the medium of instruction was Sanskrit.

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Map No. 2

Check Your Progress

8. How many years the Gupta dynasty ruled over India?
9. Who did write Mudrarakshasha?
10. Who did visit India during the reign of Chandragupta-II?
11. Who was the founder of the Gupta dynasty?
12. Which inscription provides a detailed account of Samudragupta's reign?
13. Write about Chandragupta-I.
14. What was the position of women during the Gupta period?
15. Who was Harshavardhana?

10.4 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOU PROGRESS’

1. Samudragupta.
2. The Allahabad Pillar inscription.
3. The Allahabad Pillar inscription mentions that Samudragupta defeated twelve rulers in his South Indian Expedition. They were Mahendra of Kosala, Vyaghrraja of Mahakanthara, Mantaraja of Kaurala, Mahendragiri of Pishtapura, Swamidatta of Kottura, Damana of

Erandapalla, Vishnugupta of Kanchi, Nilaraja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Vengi, Ugrasena of Palakka, Kubera of Devarashtra and Dhananjaya of Kushtalapura.

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4. Chandragupta-II Vikramaditya.
5. The famous Chinese pilgrim, Fahien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta-II. Out of his nine years' stay in India, he spent six years in the Gupta empire. He came to India by the land route through Khotan, Kashgar, Gandhara and Punjab. He visited Peshawar, Mathura, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Pataliputra, Kasi and Bodh Gaya among other places. He returned by the sea route, visiting on the way Ceylon and Java.
6. Land revalue was one of the primary sources of the income of the Guptas and they helped in increasing agricultural production and provided security to the cultivators. The waste lands were brought under cultivation and pasture land was also protected and increased. The government increased the man-made means of irrigation at both-capital and provincial levels.
7. Varahamihira composed Pancha Siddhantika, the five astronomical systems.
8. The Gupta dynasty ruled over India for about two hundred years.
9. Visakhadatta.
10. Fahien.
11. The founder of the Gupta dynasty was Sri Gupta.
12. The Allahabad Pillar inscription provides a detailed account of his reign.
13. Chandragupta-I strengthened his position by a matrimonial alliance with the Licchavis. He married Kumaradevi, a princess of that family. This added to the power and prestige of the Gupta family. The Mehrauli Iron Pillar inscription mentions his extensive conquests. Chandragupta-I considered as the founder of the Gupta era which starts with his accession in A.D. 320.
14. The position of women had also become miserable during the Gupta period. They were prohibited from studying the religious texts like the Puranas. The subjection of women to men was thoroughly regularized. But it was insisted that they should be protected and generously treated by men. The practice of Swyamvara was given up and the Manusmriti suggested the early marriage for girls.
15. Harshavardhana was the ruler of Pushyabhuti dynasty.

10.5 SUMMARY

Gupta Empire – Political,
Social, Economic...

- The Gupta dynasty ruled over India for about two hundred years. This dynasty freed India from foreign shackles of Kushanas and broke the Huns who were invincible throughout Asia and Europe.
- The founder of the Gupta dynasty was Sri Gupta. He was succeeded by Ghatotkacha. These two were called *Maharajas*. Much information was not available about their rule. The next ruler was Chandragupta-I and he was the first to be called *Maharajadhiraja* (the great king of kings).
- Samudragupta was the greatest of the rulers of the Gupta dynasty. The Allahabad Pillar inscription provides a detailed account of his reign. It refers to three stages in his military campaign: Against some rulers of North India, His famous *Dakshinapatha* expedition against South Indian rulers, a second campaign against some other rulers of North India.
- The greatest of the military achievements of Chandragupta-II was his war against the Saka *satraps* of Western India. Rudrasimha-III, the last ruler of the Saka *satrap* was defeated, dethroned and killed. His territories in Western Malwa and the Kathiawar Peninsula were annexed into the Gupta Empire.
- The famous Chinese pilgrim, Fahien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta-II. Out of his nine years stay in India, he spent six years in the Gupta empire. He came to India by the land route through Khotan, Kashgar, Gandhara and Punjab. He visited Peshawar, Mathura, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Pataliputra, Kasi and Bodh Gaya among other places.
- Monarchy was the form of government which was in vogue during the Gupta Age. But it was the benevolent monarchy. The king was the head of the state as well as that of administration. The theory of the divinity of kings was popular during the Gupta period by which the royal power and prestige had increased. The Guptas discarded the modest title of raja and adopted the high-sounding ones brought into vogue by the Kushans.
- During the Gupta days, ‘*Uparika*’ or ‘land tax’ which was levied on cultivators who had no property rights on soil, ‘*Vata*’, ‘*Bhuta*’, ‘*Dhanya*’, ‘*Hiranya*’ or gold, ‘*Adeya*’, etc. Perhaps, it was one-sixth of the total produce. Though there were other means of source of income like surplus or income tax known as ‘*Bhaga*’, customs, mint, inheritance, presents, etc.
- Samudragupta was a great poet. He patronized a number of scholars including Harisena. The court of Chandragupta-II was adorned by the celebrated Navratnas. Kalidasa remain the foremost among them. His masterpiece was the Sanskrit drama *Shakuntala*.

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- The Gupta period witnessed a brilliant activity in the sphere of mathematics, astronomy, astrology and medicine. Aryabhatta was a great mathematician and astronomer. He wrote the book *Aryabhatiya* in 499 A.D. It deals with mathematics and astronomy. It explains scientifically the occurrence of solar and lunar eclipses.
- The decline of the Gupta Empire was followed by a period of political disorder and disunity in North India. It was only in the beginning of the 7th century A.D. that Harshvardhana succeeded in establishing a larger kingdom in North India.
- In his first expedition, Harsha drove out Sasanka from Kanauj. He made Kanauj his new capital. This made him the most powerful ruler of North India. Harsha fought against Dhruvasena-II of Valabhi and defeated him. Dhruvasena-II became a vassal. The most important military campaign of Harsha was against the Western Chalukya ruler Pulakesin-II.
- The position of women was not satisfactory. The institution of Swyamvara (the choice of choosing her husband) had declined. Remarriage of widows was not permitted, particularly among the higher castes. The system of dowry had also become common.
- Harsha was a great patron of learning. His biographer Banabhatta adorned his royal court. Besides *Harshacharita*, he wrote *Kadambari*. Other literary figures in Harsha's court were Matanga Divakara and the famous Barthihari, who was the poet, philosopher and grammarian. Harsha himself authored three plays – *Ratnavali*, *Priyadarshika* and *Nagananda*.

10.6 KEY TERMS

- **Sandivigraha:** The minister for foreign affairs.
- **Bhuktis and Uparikas:** Provinces in the Gupta Empire were known as Bhuktis and provincial governors as Uparikas. They were mostly chosen from among the princes.
- **Gramikas:** The villages in the district were under the control of Gramikas. The village was the smallest unit of the administration. 'Gramika' was the head of the village.
- **Uparika:** During the Gupta days, 'Uparika' or 'land tax' which was levied on cultivators who had no property rights on soil.
- **Dasa-Paradha:** The fines known as 'Dasa-Paradha' from offenders and free labour due to the king known as 'Vaishtika' formed the source of income.
- **Visakadatta:** Visakadatta was celebrated author of the Gupta period. He was the author of two Sanskrit dramas, *Mudrarakshasa* and *Devichandraguptam*.

10.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the important sources of the Gupta period.
2. Write about the achievements of Chandragupta-I.
3. Write a note on the extent of Samudragupta's empire.
4. Mention the conquest of Western India by Chandragupta-II.
5. Write about the accounts of Fahien.
6. Write about Kanauj Assembly.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the achievements of Harshavardhana.
2. Explain the administration and cultural development of the Guptas.
3. Describe about Harsha's administrative system.
4. Narrate the social, economic and cultural contribution of the Guptas.

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CHAPTER 11 IMPORTANT DYNASTIES OF THE NORTH INDIA

Structure

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11.0 INTRODUCTION

The anarchy and confusion which followed Harsha’s death is the transitional period of Indian history. This period was marked by the rise of the Rajput clans who began to play a conspicuous part in the history of Northern and Western India from the 8th century A.D. onwards. They became so prominent that the centuries from the death of Harsha to the Muslim conquest of Northern India, extending in round numbers from the middle of the seventh to the close of the 12th century, might be called with propriety the Rajput period. The term Rajput has no concern with race. It merely denotes a tribe, clan, the members of which claimed themselves as Kshatriyas belonging to the Solar or Lunar dynasties.

According to some scholars the origin of the Rajputs is connected with that of the Gurjaras. In the early years of the 6th century, A.D, a tribe known as the Khazars along with the Huns poured into India and settled there. These Khazars were known as Gurjaras. The Pratiharas and the Chalukyas were racially connected with the Gurjara tribe. According to the bardic tales, the Pratiharas, Chalukyas (Solanki), the Paramaras and the Chahamanas are fire-born (Agnikula), originating from a sacrificial fire-pit at Mount Abu in Southern Rajputana. This refers to purificatory rites for removing the impurity of their being foreigners and absorbing them within the Hindu caste system.

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Again the Huns, Gurjaras, and the other allied tribes who entered India during the 5th and 6th centuries could not be obliterated by the Hindus. It seems that they merged-themselves with the Indian, just as their predecessors like the Greeks, the Kushanas and the Sakas had done. In the Southern group, the principal clans are the Chandellas, Kalachuris or Haihayas, Gaharwars and Rashtrakutas. They are apparently descended from the so-called aboriginal tribes, Gonds, Bhars, Kols and the like. The evidence of a close connection between the Chandellas and the Gonds is particularly strong. The Chandella Rajputs were originally Hinduised Bhars or Gonds or both, who became Kshatriyas on attaining political power. The Garhawars similarly are associated with the Bhars; the Bundelas and the Northern Rathors are offshoots of the Garhawars. The Dharmasastras recognize the possibility of lower castes being elevated to higher castes. As a general rule, the Rajputs formed by the social promotion of aborigines were inimical to the Rajputs descended from foreigners.

11.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the achievements of the Gurjara-Pratihara rulers.
- Describe the administrative system of the Pratiharas.
- Discuss the social, economic and cultural condition of the Gurjara-Pratiharas.
- Explain the achievements of the Kalachuris.
- Narrate the achievements of the Chandella and Paramara rulers.
- Explain the political, social, religious and culture condition of the Chandellas and Paramaras.
- Explain the Himalayan Kingdom with special reference to the Karkota and Lohara dynasty.

11.2 THE GURJARA-PRATIHARAS

The Gurjara-Pratiharas belong to the Suryavamsa. They are known as the descendants of the Agnikula Rajputs. Nagabhatta-I founded the dynasty of Gurjara-Pratiharas at the beginning of the 8th century. But some historians are of the opinion that Pratiharas belong to that branch of Central Asia which came to India through the North-West provinces during the Gupta period. According to Dr. Majumdar, the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Kannauj was the sub-branch of the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Ujjain branch. The following kings of Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty contributed to the rise of this dynasty.

11.2.1 Achievements of the Gurjara Partihara Rulers

- **Nagabhatta-I (730-756 A.D.)** He was the first significant king of Pratihara dynasty. Kannauj once again had the distinction to be the

capital. Nagabhatta boldly faced the Arabs and defeated them. Nagabhatta at the time of his death left behind him a strong state consisting of Malwa, Gujarat, and parts of Rajputana.

- **Nagabhatta-II (815-833 A.D.)** After Nagabhatta-I, Devraja succeeded to the throne. He was followed by Vatsaraja who breathed his last in the year 805 A.D. Nagabhatta-II became king after the death of Vatsaraja and ruled from 805 to 833 A.D. He had dauntless courage. He not only consolidated the empire but also extended its boundaries over large areas. He conquered Kannauj after mobilizing his forces and destroying the family of Yashovarman. He also defeated Dharmapala and Govinda-III of the Rashtrakuta dynasty.
- **Mihirbhoja (836-882 A.D.)** After the death of Ramabhadra, his son Mihirbhoja ascended the throne in 836 AD. During the reign of King Bhoja, the Pratihara dynasty was at the zenith of its glory. The king was the most glorious and illustrious among all other rulers of this dynasty. He not only consolidated the inherited empire but also brought a new era of prosperity for the Pratiharas. He made many conquests, the famous of which are given below in brief.

Conquest of Bundelkhand: Bundelkhand had declared independence during the reign of Ramachandra. But Mihirbhoja attacked Bundelkhand and the King Jaya Sakti accepted his suzerainty again.

Conquest of Rajputana: It has been revealed through different inscriptions that he had brought under control Rajputana and other provinces. The Kakkata's son, Bahuka was also defeated by Mihirbhoja. Pratapgarh inscription confirms that Mihirbhoja ruled over the Southern part of Rajputana.

Conquest of Punjab: It is indicated in Kalhana's "Rajatarangini" that Mihirbhoja ruled over the Karnal region of Punjab. Though King Shankaravarman of Kashmir, taking the advantage of Mihirbhoja's wars of Eastern India, captured Punjab, yet some part of the Karnal region remained under the supremacy of Mihirbhoja.

Conquest of Western and Central India: Mihirbhoja also conquered Western India and Central India. His representatives governed Central India.

Mihirbhoja and Rashtrakutas: Amoghvarsha and Krishna-II were the two ruling kings of Rashtrakutas during the reign of Mihirbhoja. Due to their weakness, Mihirbhoja could capture Kannauj but later on Mihirbhoja was defeated by a Satnanta of the Rashtrakuta king and was compelled to run away. Avanti remained an apple of discord for a long time between the Rashtrakutas and the 'Pratiharas'.

Mihirbhoja and Palas: Devapala was the most prominent king of the Pala dynasty. He ruled over a vast territory. Though his inscription gives an exaggerated account of his achievements, yet his power was quite strong as king Bhoja and Devapala both shared victories and defeats in their wars with each other. Ultimately, king Bhoja had an upper hand.

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Evaluation of Mihirbhoja: The Gurjara-Pratihara empire achieved great successes under the rule of Mihirbhoja. Their empire was extended from the Terai of Himalaya to Bundelkhand and Kanshambi to the frontier of Pala kingdom in the East and Saurashtra in the West. A big part of Rajputana was also-ruled by him. King Mihirbhoja had a fine cavalry and was one of the greatest foes of the Muslims. He was not only a conqueror but also a great lover of art and literature. He was a great patron of men of letters. He gave shelter to poets like Raj Shekhar at his court. He was a great devotee of Vishnu and Shiva and therefore he adopted the title of ‘Adi Varah.’

- **Mahendrapala (885-910 A.D.):** After the death of Mihirbhoja, his son Mahendrapala ascended the throne. He was a very chivalrous king. He conquered Magadha and Northern Bengal and made the power of Pala kings weak. He got a victory over Saurashtra and brought under his control Kurukshetra in Punjab. But he lost some of the provinces in the North. He was a patron of scholars and bestowed honour on Raj Shekhar, a famous scholar of Sanskrit. He wrote some famous books, “Karpuramanjari”, “Bhavana Kosha”, “Harvilasa”, “Bal Bharat”, etc. After the death of Mahendrapala, the Pratihara dynasty began to disintegrate. After the death of Mahendrapala, a war of succession took place that reduced the power and prestige of the Pratihara kings. Several small states cropped up due to the feeble position of the successors of Mahendrapala.
- **Mahipala (912-944 A.D.):** He ascended the throne after defeating his stepbrother Bhoja-II in the war of succession. He was a brave king but he had to face various difficulties at the outset of his career. Just after his accession, a war broke out between Pratiharas and Rashtrakutas. Indra-III of Rashtrakutas defeated Mahipala, but later on, Mahipala taking advantage of the internal problems of Rashtrakutas re-established his authority over Kannauj. However, it may be safely laid down that the Pratihara kingdom remained intact and most probably, its boundaries extended in the time of Mahipala. Raj Shekhar, the court poet has referred to various conquests of Mahipala but his death caused a setback to the Pratihara Empire and the weak successors failed to hold the reins of the empire tightly.
- **Rajyapala (994-1018 A.D.):** He was the last famous king of the Pratihara dynasty. When the army of Mahmud Ghaznavi entered the city of Kannauj, in 1018 A.D. Rajyapala out of fear and confusion fled away from Kannauj. The Muslim aggressor not only plundered the city but also destroyed beautiful temples and buildings. This act of cowardice offended the Rajputs who killed him and enthroned his son Trilochanpala.
- **Trilochanpala:** Mahmud Ghaznavi again attacked Kannauj during the reign of Trilochanpala and defeated him. He also invaded Vidhyadhar of the Chandella dynasty but he took to flight. No reference about the death of Trilochanpala is available in the contemporary sources but it is sure that the Pratihara dynasty fell into

decay after a long rule over Northern India. Dr. Majumdar has concluded the achievements of the Pratihara dynasty in these words “The Pratihara Empire, which continued in full glory for nearly a century, was the last great empire in Northern India before the Muslim conquest.”

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11.2.2 Administration of the Pratiharas

In the Gurjara-Pratihara history, King occupied the highest position in the state and had enormous powers, kings adopted big titles such as ‘Parmeshwara’, ‘Maharajadhiraja’, ‘Parambhaterak’. The appointment of the samantas and ‘singing on giants and charities were also the works of the kings.

- The samantas used to give military help to their Kings and fought for them the advice of the high officers was taken in matters of administration. However, there is no reference of mantriparishad or ministers in the inscriptions of that period.
- There are eight types of different officers in the administration of the Pratiharas such as Kottapala; highest officer of the fort, Tantrapala; representative of the King in Samanta states, Dandapashika was highest officer of the police, Dandanayaka look after the military and justice department, Dutaka carry order and grants of the king to specified persons, Bhangika was the officer who wrote order of charities and grants, Vynaharina was probably some legal expert and used to provide legal advice and finally Baladhikrat was the chief of army.
- The entire state was divided into many Bhuktis. There were many Mandals in each Bhukti and each Mandala had several cities and many villages as well. Thus, the Pratiharas had organized their empire into different units for administrative convenience. The Samantas were called Maha Samantahipati or Maha Pratihara. The villages were locally administered. The elders of the villages were called Mahattar who looked after the administration of the village. Gramapati was an officer of the state who advised in matters of village administration.
- The administration of the city was looked after by councils which are referred as Goshthi, Panchakula, Sanviyaka and Uttar Sobha in the inscriptions of the Pratiharas. Thus, the administration of the Pratiharas was quite efficient. It was on account of the efficient administration that the Pratiharas were able to defend India from the attacks of the Arabs.

11.2.3 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Gurjara-Pratiharas

Social Condition

Caste system was prevalent in Indian during Gurjara-Pratihara period and the reference of all the four caste of the Vedic period is found in the inscription as well. The inscription refers the Brahmans as Vipra and several Prakrit wards

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are used for Kshatriyas. The people of each caste were divided into different classes. Chaturveda and Bhatta groups were prominent among the Brahmans. Among the Vaishyas, the Kanchuka and Vakata groups were prominent. The Arab writer Ibda Khurdadab has referred seven castes in the time of the Pratiharas. According to him, there existed the classes of Savakufria, Brahman, Kataria, Sudaria, Bandalia and Labla.

- The King was selected from the Savakufria class whereas people of Brahman class did not take wine and married their sons with the daughters of the Kataria class. The Kataria classes were regarded as Kshatriyas. The people of Sudaria were regarded as Sudras and usually did farming or cattle rearing. Basuria class was the Vaishya class whose duty was to serve other classes. The people of Sandila class did the work of Chandals. Lahuda class constituted of low and wandering tribe.
- Some references of the inter caste marriage have also been found. The prominent Sanskrit scholar Rajasekhar had married Kshatriya girl named Avanti Sundari. Kings and the rich classes practiced polygamy. However, usually, men had only one wife. It can also be known from some reference where on the death of their husbands, women had burnt themselves along with their husbands. Thus, Sati Pratha was there though it was not very much prevalent. There was no Purdah system among the women of the royal families. According to Rajasekhar, women learned music, dancing and paintings. Women were very much fond of ornaments and also used oils and cosmetics. People of the rich families used to wear very thin clothes.

Economy in Pratihara Empire

Economy in Pratihara Empire was largely based on agriculture. The major expenditure of government during the Pratihara Empire was on the royal household and the army. Economy in Pratihara Empire was mainly dependent on agricultural production. Thus, the major source of government revenue at that time was the tax derived from the bulk of agricultural production. The feudal levies due from subordinates to the Gurjara king were supplemented by standing armies garrisoned on the frontiers.

- The use of money was strongly implied by such a system. The maintenance of large permanent military forces required the regular disbursement of pay or expenses in the form of ready cash. The forms of money needed to fulfill two conditions: sufficiently high value units to be easily transportable from point of collection to point of disbursement; yet sufficiently low value units to meet the modest salary or expenditure levels of individual soldiers. The commercial enterprises of the Gurjara-Pratihara kingdom were considered to be both users of money on a regular basis and source of revenue through taxes. Some historiographers have interpreted the period as one in which commerce was moribund, with trade highly localized and

dispersed to the village level, where barter relationships replaced monetary exchanges.

Religion in India during the Pratihara Period

This age was the age of the progress of the Brahminical religion. Vaishnava, Shaiva, Sakta and Surya were the important sects of Brahmanism where the Brahmins enjoyed the first class. This age was the age of the progress of the Brahminical religion. Different sects of Brahmanism further progressed during this period. Vaishnava, Shaiva, Sakta and Surya were the prominent sects of Brahmanism, which were prevalent during this period. The people of these sects considered the construction of temples and statues a sacred duty.

- The kings and other rich persons gave donations to the temples for their expenses. The followers of Shaiva religion worshipped Siva with different names such as Indra, Sankar, Pashupati, Yoga swami, Shambhu, etc. Kings such as Vatsaraja, Mahendrapala and Trilochanpala were the worshippers of Siva. The statues of Vishnu, Surya, and Brahma were also established in the Siva temples. Besides this there were other small sects who worshiped different goddesses.
- The most prominent among these goddesses were Durga, Chamunda, Bhagavati and Kali. Surya and Vinayaka were also worshiped at some places. From the religious point of view, the Pratihara kings were tolerant and had allowed the people to follow any acts they looked. But as a whole, they cannot be said to have followed a policy of religious toleration. It is because that though within a religion people was free to follow any sect. There are also some references of the persecutions of the followers of other religion.

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Art and Architecture under the Gurjara-Pratihara

The Gurjara-Pratihara rulers were great patrons of arts, architecture and literature. Mihirbhoja, was the most outstanding ruler of the dynasty. Notable sculptures of this period include Viswaroopa form of Vishnu and Marriage of Siva and Parvati from Kannauj. Beautifully carved panels are also seen on the walls of temples standing at Osian, Abhaneri and Kotah. The female figure named as Sursundari exhibited in Gwalior Museum is one of the most charming sculptures of the Gurjara-Pratihara art. The most important groups of architectural works generally credited to the early Pratiharas are at Osian in the heart of Gurjara, to the East in the great fort at Chittor and at Roda in the South by the border of modern Gujarat - which the Pratiharas had absorbed by the end of the 8th century. They had also reached North-central India, where several temples around Gwalior are comparable to the later works at Osian. The extraordinary Telika Mandir in Gwalior fort is the oldest surviving large-scale Pratihara work. Dedicated to a Shakti cult, the Telika Mandir at Gwalior consists of an elevated rectangular mulaprasada and a double oblong *shikhara* and a closed portico. The sides have three bays, though there are small intermediate recessions and the central zone steps out in diminishing planes below the bizarre superimposed horseshoe window motifs of the *shikhara*'s two levels.

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Check Your Progress

1. Who was the first significant king of Pratihara dynasty?
3. In which year Mihirbhoja ascended the throne?
4. Write the relation of Mihirbhoja and Rashtrakutas.
5. Who was Mahendrapala?
6. Write about Rajyapala.
7. Write about the titles adopted by the kings of Partiharas.
8. What was the economy in Partihara empire?

11.3 THE KALACHURIS

The Kalachuris also known as the Haihayas have been referred in the Epics and the Puranas. When they became associated with the Chedi country, they were also known as the Chedis. Their earliest seat of power was possibly at Mahishmati, on the Narmada. An era starting from 249 or 250 A.D. was later used by the Kalachuris and henceforth came to be known as the Kalachuri era. But the Kalachuris were not a factor to be reckoned with in the 3rd century A.D. and their association with the era seems to be far-fetched.

- In the second half of the 6th century A.D., the Kalachuris emerged as political power, and their kingdom comprised Gujarat, Northern Maharashtra, and even parts of Malwa. Three Kalachuri kings Krishnaraja, his son Samkaragana and the latter's son Buddharaja are known to have ruled from 550 to 620 A.D. They had to contend with the two powerful neighbours the Maitrakas of Valabhi and the Chalukyas of Badami. Buddharaja suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Mangalesa, the Chalukya king of Badami in 601 A.D. Though Buddharaja succeeded in recovering his position, ultimately he was overthrown by the mighty Chalukya, Pulakesin-II. But the Kalachuris were not exterminated.
- They continued to exist as families of some importance in Eastern Malwa and the neighbouring regions and established matrimonial relations with the Eastern and Western Chalukya princes. The main branch of the Kalachuris ruled from Tripuri near Jabalpore in Madhya Pradesh. The most important ruler of this dynasty was Gangeya Vikramaditya (1019-1041 A.D.) who extended his territories in the North-East up to Benaras and a part of Bihar. The Kalachuris fought for supremacy against the Chandellas as well as the Paramaras. The history of the Kalachuris had been like other Rajput neighbours, a saga of conflict and eventual decline and absorption within the growing Delhi Sultanate.

11.3.1 Kalachuris of Tripuri

In the 8th century A.D., several branches of the Kalachuris were settled in different parts of Northern India. One of them founded a principality in Sarayupara in the modern Gorakhpur district and the other, the most powerful, ruled in Chedi country in Bundelkhand. The Kalachuris of Chedi, also known as kings of Dahala-mandala, had their capital at Tripuri, the modern village of Tewar, 9.5 kilometers from Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. In the early years of the 9th century A.D. the Rashtrakuta king Govinda-II, conquered the Dahala country. In 841-842 A.D. it was ruled by one Lakshmanaraja whose relationship with the Rashtrakutas King Kokalla-I, remains unknown. With the accession of Kokalla-I in 845 A.D. The real history of the Kalachuris of Tripuri may be said to have begun.

- Kokalla-I a great military leader credited with victories over many powerful kings. He came into conflict with the Pratihara king Bhoja-I and his feudatories like the Kalachuri Sankaraganna of Sarayupura in Uttar Pradesh, the Guhila Harsharaja of Mewar, and the Chahamana Guvaka-II of Sakhambhari near Ajmer. He gained a resounding victory over the Pratihara king and came to amicable terms with the latter assuring him that he would not disturb the territories of his feudatories. In the course of his invasions in Rajputana, he defeated the Turushkas, who were obviously Turkish soldiers in the service of the Arab governors of Sind.
- He is said to have plundered Vanga or East Bengal, vanquished the Rashtrakuta king Krishna-II, who was his son-in-law, and invaded Northern Konkan. Thereafter, the Kalachuris entered into a series of matrimonial alliances with the Rashtrakutas till the time of Krishna-III and the two families maintained amicable relations. All these conquests made by Kokalla-I raised the Kalachuris to the status of the imperial dynasties of his age. Kokalla-I married the Chandella princess Nattadevi and had 18 sons. The eldest son, Shankaragana, succeeded him on the throne while the others were appointed rulers of provinces. One of them founded a separate kingdom in South Kosala with its capital at Tummana.
- Shankaragana ascended the throne in 888 A.D. assumed high-sounding titles. He defeated the Somavamsi king of Kosala and wrested from him Pali, situated in the Bilaspur district, Madhya Pradesh. His brother-in-law, the Rashtrakuta Krishna-II ingratiated his favour against the Eastern Chalukya king Vijayaditya-III, who had invaded the Deccan. But the combined army proved to be of no avail and suffered a disastrous defeat at Kiranapura, a small town in the Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh. Shankaragana had two sons, Balaharsha and Yuvaraja-I, and two daughters Lakshmidevi and Govindamba. Both these princesses were married to the Rashtrakuta king, Jagattunga.

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- Shankaragana was succeeded by his son, Balaharsha who enjoyed a brief reign. He was succeeded by his brother Yuvaraja who flourished in the second quarter of the 10th century A.D. He invaded Gauda or North Bengal and defeated its ruler who was either the Pala Rajyapala or his successor Gopala-II. Next, he overwhelmed the Kalinga ruler, belonged to the Ganga dynasty. But he had to suffer defeat at the hands of the Chandella Yasovarman though this did not lead to the diminution of the Kalachuri dominions. Notwithstanding the close relationship between the Kalachuris and the Rashtrakutas, the latter under Krishna-II invaded the Kalachuri kingdom and acquired the whole of Dahala-mandala. The Jura stone inscription testifies that Krishna-II made himself master of all the regions, at least up to Maihar, in Baghelkhand.
- Later Yuvaraja-I, succeeded in driving the Rashtrakutas from his kingdom. This was a significant achievement in commemoration of which the famous poet Rajasekhara, who now lived in the Kalachuri court, staged the famous drama *Viddhasalabhanjika* at the court of Yuvaraja. Yuvaraja-I was a Saiva and helped the Saiva ascetics in preaching their doctrine in his kingdom. A famous ascetic, Durvasa, founded a Saiva monastery known as Golakitnatha in the Dahala-mandala. Sadbhavasambhu, the high priest of that monastery, received from Yuvaraja-I a large number of villages for its maintenance.
- Yuvaraja-I was succeeded by his son Lakshmanaraja who ruled in the third quarter of the 10th century A.D. Pursuing the traditional expansionist policy of his predecessors, he invaded Vanga, East Bengal, and defeated its king, Trailokyachandra. The king of Odra or Odisha conciliated him by offering him a bejewelled effigy of the serpent Kaliya. He also won a victory over the king of Kosala, who was the Somavamsi king Mahabhavagupta. He humbled the chief of Lata, who was a feudatory of the Rashtrakutas and won a victory over the Gurjara king, Mularaja-I, the founder of the Chalukya dynasty. Like his father, Lakshmanaraja had predilections towards the Saivas. He appointed the Saiva teacher Hridayasiva the chief of the monastery of the holy Vaidyanatha, situated at Bilhari in the Jabalpur district. His minister Bhatta Somesvara Diskshita built a temple of Vishnu at Karitalai in the Jabalpur district.
- Lakshmanaraja was succeeded by his son Shankaragana-II, who was a Vaishnava. After a short and uneventful reign, he was succeeded by his brother Yuvaraja-II. He beautified the city of Tripuri which looked like the city of Indra. His maternal uncle Chalukya Tailya-II attacked his kingdom. Hardly had he recovered from this shock when he was overwhelmed by the Paramara king Munja and the latter made a triumphal entry into Tripuri. Yuvaraja fled from the capital. After the withdrawal of the Paramaras, the ministers placed his son Kokalla-II on the throne. Under Kokalla-II, the Kalachuris recovered their power. He invaded the Gurjara country and defeated its ruler Mularaja and his

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son Chamundaraja. He also invaded the Deccan and avenged the defeat inflicted upon his father by Taila-II. In the East, he advanced up to the Gauda country and forced its ruler, Pala Mahipala-I to take shelter in the watery fort of the sea. Thus, by the end of the 10th century A.D., the Kalachuris reappeared again as a great power on the political horizon of India.

- Kokalla-II was succeeded by his son, Gangeyadeva during whose reign the Kalachuris became the greatest political power in India. He assumed the title Vikramaditya and followed an aggressive policy for the expansion of the kingdom. He made an alliance with the Paramara Bhoja and Rajendra Chola and led an expedition against the Chalukya Jayasimha-II (1015-43 A.D.). The Chalukyas succeeded in defeating the confederate troops.
- In the East, Gangeyadeva achieved brilliant success. He avenged the humiliation inflicted upon the Kalachuris formerly by the Somavamsi King of South Kosala when he defeated its ruler, Mahasivagupta Yayati. He commemorated this great victory by assuming the proud title of ‘Trikalingadhipati’ or ‘Lord of Trikalining’. He sent an expedition under his son Karna against Anga (Bhagalpur) and Magadha,’ which were under the Pala king Nayapala. But he failed to annex any part of Magadha. In the North-East, he advanced as far as Banaras and conquered it from Mahipala-I of Bengal. He led a successful expedition against the Muslim poor in the Kira country, modern Kangru valley in Punjab. Gangeyadeva died in the sacred city of Prayag (Allahabad) in 1040 A.D.
- Gangeyadeva was succeeded by his son Lakshmi-Karna, better known as Karna. He invaded Vanga or East Bengal. Its ruler Jatavarman concluded a treaty with him and married his daughter Virasri. But his encounter with the Gauda kings, Pala Nayapala, and the latter’s son, Vigrahapala-II, proved to be abortive. A treaty was concluded with the Palas which was cemented by the marriage between Yavvanasri, Karna’s daughter, and Vigrahapala. After overrunning Odisha and Kalinga along the Eastern coast, Karna reached Kanchi, modern Conjeeveram Madras which was then ruled by the Cholas.
- He defeated a confederacy of the kings of the Pallavas, Kungas (Salem and Coimbatore districts), the Muralas (of the Malabar Coast), and the Pandiyas, organized under the leadership of the Chola king. He claims to have subdued the Chalukya Somesvara-I. In 1051 A.D., Karna defeated the Chandela ruler Kirttivarman and occupied Bundelkhand. But ultimately Gopala, a feudatory of the Chandellas freed the country from the Kalachuris and restored Kirttivarman to the throne.
- Far more important was Karna’s invasion of the Paramara kingdom of Malaya in alliance with Bhima-I, the Chalukya king of Gujarat. When the war was in progress, the Paramara king Bhoja died in 1055 A.D,

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and the two allies got possession of Malaya. In this, dark hour, Bhoja's son Jayasimha appealed to the Chalukya Somesvara for help and with his help recovered his kingdom. Bhima invaded Dahala and appropriated the rich booty conquered from Malava. The series of reverses that Karna suffered particularly at the end of his reign diminished his earlier glory and loosened his hold over his feudatories. He built a temple at Banaras and established a city near Jabalpur.

- In 1072 A.D., Karna abdicated the throne in favour of his son Yashkarna. The new king tried to follow the aggressive imperialism of his predecessors by leading two military expeditions, one against Champaran in North Bihar and the other against the Andhra country which was then ruled by the Eastern Chalukya King Vijayaditya-VII. The Chalukya Vikramaditya-VI raided his kingdom, Chandradeva of the Gahadavala dynasty wrested Allahabad and Banaras, the Chandellas defeated him and Paramara Lakshmadeva plundered his capital.
- Yashkarna's successor was his son Gayakarna ruled in the first quarter of the 12th century A.D. Gayakarna lost Baghelkhand to the Chandella Madanavarman. He also suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Ratnadeva 11 of a collateral branch of the Kalachuris ruling in South Kosala. Gayakarna ruled at least up to 1151 A.D. and was succeeded by his elder son Narasimha. Narasimha was succeeded by his brother Jayasimha, who ascended the throne 1167 A.D. He defeated the Chalukya Kumarapala as well as the king of Kuntala, identified with the Kalachuri Bijjala of the Deccan. He also repulsed an invasion of the Turushkas, led by Khusrav Malik.
- Vijayasimha, Jayasimha's son, was the last known king of the Kalachuris, who succeeded to the throne in 1177 A.D. He succeeded in maintaining his hold over the kingdom at least up to 1211 A.D. but within a year Chandella Trailokyavarman conquered the whole of the Dahala-mandala. Vijayasimha had a son, named Mahakumara Ayayasimha.

11.3.2 Kalachuris of Sarayupara

From the 8th century A.D. a collateral branch of the Kalachuri family ruled in Sarayupara, i.e., the bank of the Sarayu River, modern Gogra in Uttar Pradesh. Rajaputra, the 'earliest king of the family seems to have defended his kingdom successfully against Dharmapala of Bengal. Rajaputra's son and successor was Sivaraja-I. The next successor was Shivaraja-I's son, Shankaragana, who suffered a defeat at the hands of the Kalachuri Kokalla-I. Shankaragana's son and successor Gunambhodhdeva, also known as Gunasagara-I, ruled in the second half of the 9th century.

- He defeated the king of Gauda and joined the Pratihara Bhoja against the Pala Devapala. In recognition of this service, Bhoja granted some territories to this Kalachuri chief. After Gunambhodhdeva's death, his two sons Ullabha and Bhamanadeva successively ascended the throne.

Bhamanadeva lent assistance to the Pratihara-Mahipala-I in wresting Malaya from the Paramaras. After Bhamanadeva, the throne was successively occupied by Shankaragana-II, Mugdhatunga, Gunasagara-II, Sivaraja-II, Bhamana, Shankaragana-III, and Bhima, each being the son of his predecessor. In the early part of the 11th century, Bhima lost his kingdom as a result of the civil war and in 1031 A.D. Vyasa, son of Gunasagara-II, was raised to the throne. The last known king of the dynasty was Vyasa's son Maharajadhiraja Sondhadeva, ruling in 1079 A.D., whose kingdom extended from the Gogra to the Gandak.

Minor Kalachuri Dynasties

Early in the 11th century A.D., a scion of the royal Kalachuri family founded a kingdom in South Kosala, with its capital first at Tummana, modern Tumana in the Bilaspur district, and later at Ratanpur, 25 kilometers North of Bilaspur. The family remained subordinate to the Kalachuris of Dahala till the early 12th century A.D. when Jajalladeva declared independence. He extended his power over parts of Odisha and Central Provinces. Another branch of the Kalachuris ruled in the neighbourhood of Kasia in the Garakh district, and another conquered the Deccan by defeating the Chalukyas and ruled for a brief period.

Check Your Progress

8. Who was Kalachuris?
9. Who was the most important ruler of the Kalachuri dynasty?
10. Who was Shankaragana?
11. Who invaded Vanga or East Bengal?
12. Write about Kalachuris of Sarayupara.

11.4 THE CHANDELLAS AND THE PARAMARAS

The Chandellas established their control over Bundelkhand, the region to the South of Kanauj. They assumed prominent position in the 10th century in the region of Khajuraho. The most important ruler of the Chandella dynasty was Vidhyadhara. He was responsible for the defeat and death of Rajyapala, the last ruler of the Pratihara dynasty of Kanauj who had failed to resist Mahmud Ghazni. The Chandella ruler, Kirtivarman, resisted an invasion of his territory by a Ghaznavid army from the Punjab. The Chandella dominion comprised of Mahoba, Khajuraho, Kalinjar and Ajaigarh. In spite of various attempt to annex the kingdom by the Delhi Sultanate, the Chandellas existed as a political entity till the beginning of the 14th century.

Like other Rajput clans, the origin of Chandellas is a source of contradiction among the historians. There is no definite view accepted by all the historians regarding their origin. Different opinions about their origin are given below to help draw a clear picture of their origin

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- A few inscriptions indicate their origin from the moon and describe them as the Kshatriyas of Chandravamsi.
- According to Chandrabardai, the Chandellas were born of a Brahmin girl, Hema Vati, and Moon.
- Prof. V.A. Smith writes that “The early Chandella Rajas appear to have been petty Gond chiefs in the territory now called the Chhattarpur state in the Central India Agency.”
- Prof C.V. Vaidya rejects the above views and said the Chandellas have been regarded as Rajputs. The original homes of Chandellas were Khajuraho, Chhattarpur, Mahoba, Kalinjar, Rajgarhi, etc. The Chandella kingdom was also known as Jaijaka-bhukti. It is stated that the name of the state, Jaijaka-bhukti took after the name of Jaya Sakti. He was a very famous king during the Chandella reign. As Kalinjar was under the rule of Gurjara-Pratiharas earlier, it is estimated that the kings of Chandella dynasty were not independent rulers in the beginning. They must have been the chiefs of the kings of Pratiharas but later on they established their own rule and became independent rulers.

11.4.1 Achievements of the Chandella Rulers

- Chandavarman was the founder of the Chandella dynasty. Nannuka succeeded after his father's death. Vakpati was the son of Nannuka who succeeded his father on his death. He defeated many enemies and extended his territory. Jaya Sakti was the son of Vakpati and was a very brave king of the Chandella dynasty. After him, the Chandella state came to be known as Jaijakabhukti. After Jaya Sakti, we find a reference of three more kings—Vijaya Sakti, Rahel and Harsha who ruled the Chandella state before the advent of Yasovarman. Harsha was a chivalrous king. He provided help to Bhoja Parmara when his brother revolted against him. He died in 925 A.D.
- Yasovarman, the son of Harsha, ascended the throne after the death of his father. Yasovarman declared as an independent king. He conquered Pala, Kosala, Kashmir, Kuru, Mithila, and Malwa kingdoms. Gopala-II was the contemporary of Yasovarman. He attacked the Pala king and established his supremacy over the areas of Gauda and Mithila. After that, he led his campaign against the Kosala state. Two dynasties ruled over the two parts of the Kosala state. The North Kosala was under the control of the Pratihara dynasty while the South Kosala was ruled by the Suma dynasty. The king of Kosala, according to the Khajuraho inscription was defeated by Yasovarman but it is not indicated anywhere which part was conquered by Yasovarman or the entire Kosala state was subdued. Yasovarman also conquered Kashmir.
- Then he conquered Mithila. Gopala-II was the ruler of Mithila. He defeated Gopala-II and established his control over Mithila.

Yasovarman's contemporary Paramara Siyak was the ruler of Malwa. Siyak was a chief feudatory of Rashtrakuta ruler. He was not an independent ruler. Yasovarman defeated him and brought Malwa under his control. He also defeated the ruler of Kuru and compelled the Khas king, Chawduraj to accept his supremacy. The fort of Kalinjar was also conquered by him. His conquests and victories indicate clearly that he was not only a powerful king but also an ambitious ruler of the Chandella dynasty. He assumed the title of 'Maharajadhiraj. His reign lasted up to 950 A.D.

- Dhanga was the son of Yasovarman and he succeeded to the throne after the death of his father. Dudhai inscription indicates that Yasovarman had one more son, Devalaledhi who was also known as Krishna but no further details are available about him. As Dhanga was a powerful and mighty ruler, he tried to extend the territory of the Chandella kingdom to a great extent. He ruled from Bhilsa to Taunasa and from river Yamuna to river Narbada. He also established his control over Gwalior.
- Dhanga was the ablest and the most powerful king of Chandellas. In the beginning of his career as a king, he was merely a chief of the Pratihara king but afterward, he defeated the ruler of Kannauj and established his independent rule. After this he devoted himself to the task of further conquests. He had defeated the kings of Kosala, Sinhala, Krath, Kuntala, Kanchi, Andhra, etc. He also helped king Jayapala of Bhatinda against Subuktagin and joined the confederation called by the Hindu kings to crush Subuktagin. Dhanga was an efficient and powerful ruler. He freed himself from the supremacy of Pratiharas and established his independent rule over central India. He was also a great empire builder. He patronized architecture and built a temple at Khajuraho.
- Ganda ascended the throne in 1002 A.D. after the death of his father Dhanga. He was also as brave as his father. He joined the confederation of Hindu kings to crush the Muslim invader and killed Rajpala who submitted to the Ghaznavi ruler. Ganda was very much disturbed and confused when he had been attacked by the Muslim ruler all of sudden with a huge army. Out of fear and confusion, he fled from the battlefield but Mahmud continued the pressure of his attacks over the Chandellas. He was succeeded by Vidyadhar.
- Vidyadhar's accession to the Chandella throne marked a new era in the history of Chandella kings. He was a very able and powerful king. The Chandella kingdom reached its zenith during his reign. When Mahmud came to know about the accession of Vidyadhar to the throne, he after defeating Trilochanpala attacked him. Vidyadhar escaped and saved his life. The Muslim invader, taking the advantage of the absence of the king, plundered and devastated his country. After an interval of about three years, Mahmud again invaded India. He also mounted an attack on Vidyadhar but failed to achieve victory over the

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fort of Kalinjar. The Rajput bravery and valour were unsurpassed. Therefore, a treaty was concluded between Vidyadhar and Mahmud and both of them presented gifts to each other.

- Besides compelling Mahmud to conclude a treaty with him, he also attacked some Indian kings and forced them to accept his supremacy. It is revealed through the inscriptions that, Bhoja, the king of Malwa, and Gangeyadeva, the king of Kalachuris used to worship Vidyadhar due to his valour and efficiency. Perhaps, both of them might have been defeated by him and this is why they were his subordinate rulers. In fact, the reign of Vidyadhar was a long and distinguished one, probably unmarred by the defeats at the hands of the enemies. Vidyadhar was the most prominent patriot and lover of freedom not only in the history of the Chandella dynasty but perhaps the greatest also among the Rajputs. Vidyadhar defeated the Pratiharas and shattered their power.
- After the death of Vidyadhar, his son Vijaipala succeeded to the throne in 1030 A.D. He was an able ruler and achieved some success in the beginning against Gahadvalas but later on, he was defeated. We do not know much about his activities but find a number of kings after him who sat on the throne of Chandellas without showing any merit. The names of these insignificant rulers are given as follows: (1) Devvarman, (2) Kirtivarman, (3) Sallakshamanvarman, (4) Jayavarman, (5) Prathviravarman and (6) Madanvarman.
- After the death of Madanvarman, his grandson Parmardi succeeded in 1163 A.D. as his son Yasovarman had died during his lifetime. According to “Prithviraj Raso”, a fierce battle was fought between Prithviraj and Parmardi in which famous warriors, Alaha and Udal were killed. Jai Chand Gahadvala helped Parmardi during this battle. Parmardi was attacked by Qutub-ud-din during the last year of his reign. He endeavoured his best to defeat the Turk invader but after the continuous battle, for many days he had to surrender for want of water in the fort of Kalinjar.
- Thus, the fort of Kalinjar was conquered by Aibak. The Muslim soldiers plundered the fort. The loss of Kalinjar gave a fatal blow to the Chandella dynasty. After the defeat of Parmardi, the position of Chandellas declined and they had to satisfy themselves with a very limited area. But their contribution in the field of art and literature is very significant. Jaganika’s composition of Alaha-Udal about the bravery of the two warriors, Alaha and Udal is a famous book of the reign of Parmardi. The Chandellas are chiefly known for the temples of Khajuraho.

The Paramaras

The Paramaras of Malwa began as feudatories of the Rashtrakutas but revolted against their overlords at the end of the 10th century and became independent with Dhar as their capital. The Paramaras became powerful under their greatest

ruler Bhoja (1010-1055 A.D.). He was a contemporary of Mahmud Ghazni. His achievements were considered to be greater in the field of literature and arts due to his generous patronage than in political and military spheres. During the 12th century, a considerable portion of the Paramara territory including Ujjain, was occupied by the Chalukyas of Gujarat.

- The kingdom of the Paramaras was situated to the West of that of the Kalachuris. Some of the scholars trace their origin from a fire-pit at Mount Abu, in the Sirohi State, Rajasthan. But according to the earliest Paramara record (Harsola grant), the Paramara rulers were born in the family of the Rashtrakutas. Different opinions are expressed by the scholars regarding the origin of the Paramaras.
- The Paramara Rajputs were belonged to Suryavamsi Rajputs. The Paramaras were also Agnikula Rajputs. Some scholars are of the opinion that Paramaras were the descendants of foreigners and in order to purify them and bring them to the Kshatriya fold, this theory of Agnikula was propounded. The Harsol inscription reveals that Paramaras were a branch of Rashtrakutas, as the king of Rashtrakuta dynasty assumed the titles of ‘Amoghvarsha’, ‘Prithvi Ballabh’, etc., like those of Paramara rulers.

11.4.2 Achievements of the Paramara Rulers

The foundation of the Paramara dynasty of Malwa was laid by Upendra. He was not an independent king but merely a chief of the Gurjara-Pratiharas. In fact, the dynasty of Paramaras arose on the ruins of Pratiharas. After the death of Upendra, Vairi Singh-I succeeded Upendra and he was followed by Siyaka-I, Vakapati-I, Vairi Singh-II and Siyaka-II. The last king of the Paramara dynasty of Malwa was Siyaka-II, also known as Siyaka Harsha. He made some efforts for the progress of this dynasty. He defeated Hunas and also conquered Chalukya king Avantivarman Yogiraja-II. He also invaded Rashtrakutas and plundered their capital. He died in 973 A.D.

- Vakapati Munja ruled over Malwa from 973 to 998 A.D. The real progress was made by Malwa during the reign of Vakapati Munja who was a very brave king. He was the son of Siyaka Harsha. Vakapati Munja is also known, as Utpalraj, Munja, and Amoghavamsa. He assumed the title of ‘Sriballabha’ and ‘Prithviballabha’, and ruled efficiently for more than two decades, He made extensive conquests and waged wars with the Kalachuris, Chalukyas, Chauhans, Guhilas, and Hunas. In fact, the chivalry of Vakapati Munja was unsurpassed.
- Vakapati Munja fought with Kalachuris of Tripura. During his reign, Yuvaraj-II was the king of Kalachuris. He defeated Yuvaraj-II. Moolaraja-I of the Chalukya dynasty of Gujarat was also defeated by Munja Paramara. In order to save his life, he fled to the desert of Marwar. He had also defeated the Chauhans of Naddol and established his control over the Abu region. He appointed his son

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Arnayraj, the Governor of the Abu region. He defeated King Sakti Kumar of the Guhila dynasty of Mewar, and plundered his capital. Vakpati Munja also conquered the Hunas.

- He also fought six times against Chalukyas of Karnataka but he failed to achieve his mission. To crush the Chalukya king, Taila-I completely, Vakpati Munja attacked against the advice of his Rudraditya. He crossed the river Godavari and entered the Taila kingdom. This was a very wrong step. Rudraditya was so much disgusted with it that he committed suicide. Vakpati Munja was surrounded by the Chalukya army and imprisoned. His minister wanted to release him and made a plan. But during his imprisonment, Munja had fallen in love with Mrinarvati, sister of Taila-II. So, he disclosed the plan to her. She betrayed him and disclosed the secret to her brother. Consequently, Munja was not only treated badly but also killed later on. Thus, a brave and efficient king died of his own fault.
- Sindhuraj ruled in the period intervening Vakpati Munja and Bhoja Paramara for a short time. He established matrimonial relations with the Nagas by marrying himself to a girl of the Naga dynasty. He defeated Chalukyas and endeavoured to extend his territory.
- Bhoja Paramara was the most powerful, and illustrious ruler of the Paramara dynasty. He succeeded to the throne, after the death of his father Sindhuraj and reigned for about 55 years, i.e., from 1000 A.D. to 1055 A.D. He led several military campaigns and conquered many kings. He enhanced the strength and fame of Malwa by his bravery and ability. Bhoja Paramara fought many battles and extended the boundaries of his kingdom by continuous wars. The Paramara power grew during the reign of Bhoja and he attacked the Chalukya kingdom but failed to achieve complete victory over the latter.
- Though he achieved some success, in the beginning, he had to face defeat later on. Bhoja wanted to wipe out the humiliation of defeat inflicted on him by Jay Singh of the Chalukya dynasty. He, therefore, turned his attention to the Kalachuris of Tripuri. He gained victory over the Kalachuri king, named Gangayadeva. Bhoja Paramara also defeated the king of Odisha, named Indrarath. King Kirtiraj of Lata was also conquered by Bhoja Paramara. The King of Kanyakubla was also defeated by Bhoja. Bhoja intended to extend his territory towards Bundelkhand but he was defeated by the Chandella ruler Vidyadhar. Hence he gave up the idea of advancing towards Bundelkhand.
- He attacked the Chauhans of Shakumbhari and Naddul. Bhoja also waged wars against the rulers of Gujarat and Gwalior. He also conquered Thaneswar, Hansi, Nagarkot, etc. from the Muslim ruler of Northern India. These continuous successes of Bhoja roused a feeling of jealousy in his enemies and they joined in a confederation against Bhoja Paramara. When the members of the confederation attacked him, he faced them bravely but could not be successful and died in the midst of war.

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- The victors looted the capital of Bhoja Paramara. In fact, the continuous battles of Bhoja proved very harmful for him and his kingdom. Firstly, it had an adverse effect on the state treasury and the king ran short of funds. Secondly, it roused feelings of jealousy and malice in other Rajputs and they became the deadliest enemies of Bhoja Paramara. Thirdly, the establishment of the confederation against Bhoja proved that they did not like to see him be as much powerful as he had made himself. The Paramara king, Bhoja Paramara died in 1050 A.D. and left behind a vast empire. The power and prestige of Paramara were at their zenith during his reign.
- After the death of king Bhoja, the following Paramara kings ascended the throne but they failed to establish that much reputation as was attained by their predecessors. All the time they remained preoccupied with fighting the neighbouring Rajputs. Their mutual conflicts and jealousies made the Paramara kingdom feeble: (i) Jaya Singh, (ii) Udaiditta, (iii) Laksamandeva or Jagatdeva, (iv) Narvarman, (v) Yasovarman, (vi) Jaivarman, (vii) Vindhavarman and (viii) Subhatvarman.
- The last Paramara ruler, Subhatvarman succeeded to the throne in 1193 A.D. and ruled up to 1210 A.D. He suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Yadav king. Thus, the Paramara dynasty after ruling for a long time came to an end.

11.4.3 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Chandellas and Paramaras

Social Condition

Caste system was the foundation stone of the Rajput society. The four major castes were—Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras and the society was further divided into various sub-castes. The Brahmins held supreme position and enjoyed great respect in the society. They used to impart all kinds of knowledge to the people. The post of Purohit was reserved for a Brahmin only and they were supposed to be a privileged class. Capital punishment was never given to Brahmins as they were considered to be an authority in the field of religion and spiritualism. Kshatriyas and Rajputs were the administrators and fighting class. It was their responsibility to safeguard the kingdom from foreign attacks and internal turmoils. Vaishyas had strong control over trade. Previously they were agriculturists but they gave it up and started trading. The lowest class was of Shudras. They used to serve all three classes. In fact, the condition of Vaishyas and Shudras was deplorable. Just as Shudras were prohibited from studying the Vedas, in the same way, Vaishyas were also not entitled to go through the Vedas during the period. The untouchable class of Shudras was not allowed to live in the city or in the village. The caste system had become rigid during the period.

- The women enjoyed complete liberty. They were not compelled to confine themselves within four falls of the house and had the right to

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select their husbands. “Swayamvara Pratha” was prevalent. Proper attention was paid to the education of women. Women were all educated and took an active part in public life. Girls could read and write and understand Sanskrit. They learnt to play, dance and paint portraits. Women participated in discussions on various subjects with men and there are references where they defeated men in the discussions. The wife of Mandan Mishra had defeated the great Brahman scholar Shankaracharya in the discussion. The famous Sanskrit poet, Raj Shekhar’s wife Avanti Sundari was a great scholar. The women were also well versed in warfare. They learned how to use swords and spears.

Economic Condition

The chief source of income of the state was land revenue. Besides, gifts and tributes from Samants and trade taxes also formed an important part of the income of the state. The rate of lard revenue was from 1/4 to 1/6 of the total produce. It could be deposited in cash or kind (grains). In case, a man died without an issue, his property was confiscated by the state, such property thereby vesting in the state. About half of the total income of the state was spent on the army. Maintenance of a big army was the need of the day, hence the king used to pay special attention to the welfare of the soldiers. A considerable portion of state income was spent on construction works, charities, festivals, and the development of education and learning. They organized a strong and powerful army. The army consisted of small units of infantry, cavalry, and elephants. Bhandagarik was the designation of the officer of the army who used to make arrangements for food and lodging of the army. Senapati was the chief officer of the army.

Cultural Progress

Munja was an efficient commander as well as a great scholar and a lover of art and literature. He patronized a famous poet Padma Gupta, who wrote ‘Navasahasanka’. Dhananjaya also completed his work ‘Dasbarupka’ during his reign. There were some more famous scholars such as Halayudha, in his court. He was also a lover of architecture. He built some tanks in his reign; the most famous of them is the tank of Dhara is popularly known as Munj-Sagar. Some temples were also built during his reign.

- Besides being a great ruler and conqueror, king Bhoja was a great poet, scholar, a lover of art and literature, and patron of men of letters. He has been described as ‘Kavirai’ in Udaipur Prasasti, because of his love of education and literature. He provided his royal patronage and support to numerous men of letters. He set up a college at Dhara. Bhoj’s dedication to education and literature is expressed marvelously by K.M. Munshi, “Bhoja was a poet, scholar, and a patron of learning. Kingship and conquest were to him subsidiary activities.” He accorded patronage to scholars like Dharmapala, his brother Solhara, poetess Sita. Arundhati, the wife of king Bhoja was a great scholar.

- He built several temples in his kingdom dedicated to Lord Shiva because he was a staunch worshipper of Shiva. But he did not victimize any religion. Jainism flourished during his reign. He organized several religious conferences and invited scholars of different religions to participate in them.
- Thus, Bhoja the king was a great scholar. He wrote books on medical science, astrology, mathematics, grammar, etc. Bhojshala of his capital rose to the status of a University where scholars from far and wide thronged for education. Whatever contribution was made by the Paramara dynasty in the field of education and literature, the whole credit goes to Vakapati Munja and, especially, to king Bhoja Paramara.

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Check Your Progress

13. Write about the Chandellas.
14. Who was the founder of the Chandella dynasty?
15. Who was Dhanga?
16. Which inscription reveals that Paramaras were a branch of Rashtrakutas?
17. The foundation of the Paramara dynasty of Malwa was laid by whom?
18. Who assumed the title of ‘Sriballabha’ and ‘Prithviballabha’, and ruled efficiently for more than two decades?
19. Who was the most powerful, and illustrious ruler of the Paramara dynasty?
20. What was the economic condition during the Chandellas and Paramaras?

11.5 THE HIMALAYAN KINGDOM

Kashmir

The kingdom of Kashmir is located between Punjab and Central Asia. In ancient times it was restricted to the upper valley of the Vitasta (Jhelum). The principal source of our information about Kashmir is Kalhana’s Rajatarangini, written in the 12th century A.D. Kashmir formed part of the Maurya Empire of Asoka, who is credited with having built, numerous stupas and monasteries and the ancient city of Srinagar. After Asoka’s death, Kashmir became independent at the time of Jalauka (Asoka’s son). Kashmir was also a province of the Kushana Empire and Kanishka is said to have convened there the third general assembly of the Sangha. Kashmir came under the Hunas whose chief Mihirakula sought to win religious favour by building Siva shrines.

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11.5.1 The Karkota Dynasty

The history of Kashmir really begins with the Karkota or Naga dynasty founded by Durlabhavardhana. He had started life as a humble officer of Baladitya of Kashmir, the last king of the Gonanda dynasty. He married the daughter of Baladitya, and as the latter had no son, succeeded to the throne in 627 A.D.

- Durlabhavardhana reigned for thirty six years. It was during his reign, Yuan Chwang visited Kashmir. According to the Chinese pilgrim, Takshasila (Rawalpindi district), Simhapura (Salt Range region), Urasa (Hazara), Punch, and Rajapura (Rajaori) were subject to Kashmir. Therefore, it seems that apart from Kashmir his dominion included part of Western and North-Western Punjab. Durlabhavardhana was succeeded by his son, Durlabhaka. He had three sons, Chandrapida, Tarapida, and Muktapida. Durlabhaka died after a reign of fifty years and was succeeded by Chandrapida.
- When Kashmir was threatened with an Arab invasion led by Muhammad-bin-Qasim, Chandrapida sought the assistance of the Chinese emperor by sending an envoy to him. Although no help came from him, Chandrapida was able to beat back the Arabs. The recall of Muhammad-bin-Qasim which shortly followed saved the country from further Arab aggression. Chandrapida was famous for his piety and justice. But he was murdered in the ninth year of his reign by his brother Tarapida. Tarapida's reign was marred by cruel deeds and he too was murdered after four years. He was followed by his younger brother Lalitaditya Muktapida, the greatest king of Kashmir.
- Lalitaditya began his reign in 724 A.D. He sent a diplomatic mission to the Chinese emperor in 733 A.D. to solicit armed assistance against the Tibetans. Though the mission was received with due honour, no military assistance was sent from China. Despite this refusal, Lalitaditya fought alone and succeeded in defeating not only the Tibetans but also the mountain tribes on the North and North-Western frontier of his kingdoms, such as the Dards, Kambojas, and the Turks.
- The most important achievement of Lalitaditya was his victory over Yasovarman which not only made him the master of Kanauj but also enabled him to acquire theoretically the vast dominions of his great rival. Lalitaditya also marched towards the East and overran Magadha, Gauda, Kamarupa, and Kalinga. Turning towards the South-West, he conquered Deccan and Karnataka and advanced as far as Dvaraka. Then he conquered Avanti and many other regions and reached the hilly regions in the North-West. Here he conquered the Kambojas, Tukharas (Turks), Bhuttas (Tibetans), Daradas, and an Arab king called Mammuni. Despite the lack of corroborative evidence, Lalitaditya's conquests are by no means insignificant. By his victories, he made Kashmir one of the most powerful kingdoms in the history of

ancient India. For centuries, the people of Kashmir hailed him with the epithet universal monarch.

- Lalitaditya laid many towns, built Buddhist Viharas at Hushkapura and other places and temples for Brahmanical gods—Siva and Vishnu. His most famous work is the Martanda temple which still forms “one of the most striking remains which have survived of the ancient architecture of Kashmir.” Lalitaditya died in 760 A.D. after a reign of thirty six years. Lalitaditya Muktapida of the Karkota dynasty was followed by his two sons Kuvalayapida and Vajraditya.
- During the latter’s reign Hisham, the governor of Sind (768-772 A.D.) raided Kashmir and secured many prisoners. Vajraditya had three sons’ – Prithiviyapida, Samgramapida-I and Jayapida. Jayapida, who was also known as Vinayaditya was a valiant general like his grandfather Lalitaditya. He defeated the king of Kanauj. Jayapida was a great patron of letters and his court was graced by great scholars like Kshira, Bhatta, Udbhata, Damodaragupta (author of the *Kutianimata*) and others. In his later years, he became very cruel and oppressive and a conspiracy of the Brahmanas brought about the end of his thirty one years.
- Jayapida was followed by his infamous son, Lalitpida, whose twelve years rule was a period of disgrace in the history of Kashmir. He became a slave to a concubine named Jayadevi. Lalitpida was succeeded by his brother and the latter by the son of Jayadevi, who was called Brihaspati. During Brihaspati’s reign, the royal power was usurped by the five brothers of Jayadevi, who ultimately killed him in 813 A.D. The brothers began to fight among themselves for power and ruled Kashmir by setting up puppet kings for nearly forty years. At last Avantivarman, the grandson of Utpala, the eldest of the five brothers, was raised to the throne by his minister Suyya. Thus, ended the Karkota dynasty and was supplanted by the Utpalas.

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11.5.2 The Utpala Dynasty

Avantivarman, the founder of the Utpala dynasty ruled from 855-883 A.D. with the assistance of his able minister Suyya. He took various steps to tone up the administration, establish internal security, and rehabilitate the state resources. He effectively curbed the power of the Damaras, a turbulent class of rural aristocrats. Avantivarman founded a new city Avantipur (Bantipur). He was a patron of learning and the most prominent literary man of his time was Anandavardhana, the author of the *Dhvanyaloka*. Other intellectuals who adorned his court were Ratnakara, Muktakana and Sivasvamin.

- Avantivarman also erected temples and built monasteries. Avantivarman died in 883 A.D. His death was followed by a civil war among several descendants of Utpala for the throne. Ultimately, the minister Ratnavardhana secured the throne for Shankaravarman, the son of Avantivarman. Shankaravarman’s reign (885-902 A.D.) is memorable for his spirited foreign policy. He subjugated Darvabhisara,

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the territory between the Jhelum and the Chenab in Punjab. Prithivichandra, the king of Trigarta (modern Kangra) accepted Shankaravarman's supremacy.

- His greatest victory was against the king of Gurjara (between the Jhelum and the Chenab) in Punjab, the latter being helped by Lalliya Shahi. But he failed to secure any success against Lalliya Shahi. The Pratihara king Mahendrapala conciliated Sankaravarman by ceding some territories in Punjab. Shankaravarman's ambitious foreign policy drained the resources of the treasury which he tried to replenish by forcible exactions from the people. Shankaravarman met his death in tragic circumstances while returning from an expedition through the Hazara country (Urasa).
- Sankaravarman was succeeded by his son Gopalavarman (902-904 A.D.), who ruled the kingdom with the help of his mother Sugandha. Gopalavarman was murdered and was succeeded by his so-called brother Sankata who died ten days after accession. As there was no direct heir to the throne, the dissolute queen Sugandha assumed the royalty. The period from the death of Gopalavarman in 904 A.D. to the end of the Utpala dynasty in 939 A.D. is overshadowed by the Tantrin soldiers, the Praetorian guard of Kashmir, who assumed the role of king-makers.
- The Tantrins deposed Sugandha when the latter selected Nirjitavarman, a half-brother of Avantivarman as her heir. The Tantrins thereafter placed on the throne, a child of ten years old, Partha, the son of Nirjitavarman in 906 A.D. Eight years later Sugandha returned and tried to seize political power with the help of the Ekanga troops, a military body rival to the Tantrins. Sugandha was defeated, imprisoned, and put to death. In 921 A.D., the Tantrins deposed Partha and began to make and unmake kings at the behest of money. Chakravarman and Suravarman were successively placed on the throne only to be deposed thereafter.
- The next king Unmattavanti son of Partha was one of the worst kings that ever occupied the throne of Kashmir. He was died in 937 A.D. after a brief reign of two years. After him Suravarman-II was succeeded to the throne of Kashmir. Before a week was over, Kamalavardhana, the commander-in-chief deposed Suravarman-II and occupied the capital. But instead of ascending the throne, Kamalavardhana called an assembly of Brahmanas to select the next king. But the assembly rejected Kamalavardhana and selected Yashaskara, the son of the former minister Prabhakara, who had earned great reputation as a man of learning. Thus, the Utpala family came to an end in 939 A.D.

11.5.3 The Yashaskara and The Lohara Dynasty

Yashaskara (939-48 A.D.) restored peace and order in the country. Yashaskara died in 948 A.D., and was succeeded by his minor son Samgramadeva. About

six months after his accession he was murdered by his minister Parvagupta who usurped the throne in 949 A.D. He was notorious for his exactions and had a short reign of one year. He died in 950 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Kshemagupta. The new king married Didda, the daughter of king Simharaja of Lohara, and the grand-daughter of Shahi king Bhima. Kshemagupta died in 958 A.D., and was succeeded by his young son Abhimanyu, his mother Didda acting as the regents. Abhimanyu died in 972 A.D. and was succeeded by his young son Nandigupta. But Didda brought about the death of Nandigupta and two other grandsons who succeeded him, and she ascended the throne in 980 A.D. Before her death in 1003 A.D., Didda appointed her nephew Samgramaraja of the Lohara dynasty as her successor.

The Lohara Dynasty

Samgramaraja (1003-28 A.D.) proved a weak king as the real power lay in the hands of the Prime Minister Tunga. In 1014 A.D., Samgramaraja sent Tunga, with a well-equipped army, to aid Shahi Trilochanpala against Sultan Mahmud. After some initial success, Tunga was ultimately defeated. Samgramaraja died in 1028 A.D. and was followed by his son Hariraja. After a reign of 22 days, Hariraja died. Ananta was succeeded Hariraja to the throne. He crushed a rebellion of the Damaras and repelled an invasion of the Dards. He overthrew Salavahana, the king of Chamba, and installed his nominee to the throne. He also asserted his supremacy over Daryabtiisara, Trigarta and Bhartula. After the death of Ananta, Kalasha ascended the throne. Kalasha was succeeded by Utkarsha and Harsha one after another.

- Harsha restored the lost glory of Kashmir by his able administration and patronage of culture and learning. He sent an expedition against Rajapuri (Rajaori) and compelled its ruler to pay tribute. He put down the rebellion of his half-brother Vijayamalla who with the help of the king of Darada invaded Kashmir, but lost his life. The reckless extravagance of the king exhausted the treasury. Later on, Harsha was killed by two of his kinsmen, named Ucchala and his brother Sussala, who belonged to a collateral branch of the Lohara dynasty in 1101 A.D. With Ucchala, begins the history of the second Lohara dynasty. He appointed his brother Sussala as ruler of Lohara. Sussala had to face the repeated rebellions of the Damara. Bhikshachara, the grandson of Harsha, put himself at the head of the Damara and drove away Sussala. But Sussala reoccupied the throne in 1121 A.D.
- Sussala, however, could not dispose of Bhikshachara who made repeated attempts to regain the throne. For years, Kashmir witnessed a series of factious fights in which the Damara played the leading role. In 1123 A.D., Sussala abdicated in favour of his son Jayasimha while retaining all powers in his hands. In 1128 A.D., Sussala was treacherously murdered. Sussala was succeeded by his son Jayasimha (1128-55 A.D.) who re-established law and order in the distracted country. But his military weakness was demonstrated by his failure to capture Lohara and Darada. Jayasimha, however, recovered Lohara

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later. He maintained diplomatic relations with the Gahadavalas and the Silahara king of Konkan. Jayasimha died in 1155 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Paramanuka. He was an unworthy ruler and became a mere tool in the hands of his ministers. He died in 1165 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Vantideva.

- With the death of Vantideva, the Lohara dynasty came to an end. A succession of incompetent rulers followed among whom Jagadeva (1198-1213 A.D.) is regarded as a good ruler. After Jagadeva's death, a civil war followed. But ultimately his son Rajadeva ascended the throne that in turn was succeeded by his son Samgramadeva. Samgramadeva was a more powerful king than his predecessors, but he had to deal with the unruly nobles, aided by his brother Surya. In the civil war that followed, Surya was killed. Kalhana's family became very powerful and in the end, they murdered Samgramadeva (1252 A.D.)
- Samgramadeva was succeeded by his son Ramadeva. As Ramadeva was childless, he adopted a Brahmin boy, Lakshmanadeva, who succeeded to the throne in 1273 A.D. The new king was a learned man, but in 1286 A.D., he was defeated and killed by a Turk named Kajjala. Lakshmanadeva's death was followed by a struggle for power which resulted in the partition of Kashmir between Sangramachandra and Simhadeva. As long as his rival lived, Simhadeva's rule was restricted to the valley of the Lidar. However, after the death of his rival, he succeeded to the kingdom. Like all good kings of Kashmir, he established a number of pious foundations.



Map No. 1

Check Your Progress

- What is the principal source of our information about Kashmir?
- The history of Kashmir really begins with which dynasty?

23. Who was the founder of the Utpala dynasty?
24. Who was succeeded by his son Jayasimha (1128-55 A.D.) who re-established law and order in the distracted country?

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11.6 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. Nagabhatta
2. 1836 A.D.
3. Amoghavarsha and Krishna-II were the two ruling kings of Rashtrakutas during the reign of Mihirbhoja. Due to their weakness, Mihirbhoja could capture Kannauj but later on Mihirbhoja was defeated by a Satnanta of the Rashtrakuta king and was compelled to run away. Avanti remained an apple of discord for a long time between the Rashtrakutas and the 'Pratiharas'.
4. After the death of Mihirbhoja, his son Mahendrapala ascended the throne. He was a very chivalrous king. He conquered Magadha and northern Bengal and made the power of Pala kings weak. He got a victory over Saurashtra and brought under his control Kurukshetra in Punjab.
5. Rajapala was the last famous king of the Pratihara dynasty. When the army of Mahmud Ghaznavi entered the city of Kannauj, in 1018 A.D. Rajapala out of fear and confusion fled away from Kannauj. The Muslim aggressor not only plundered the city but also destroyed beautiful temples and buildings. This act of cowardice offended the Rajputs who killed him and enthroned his son Trilochanpala.
6. The Partihara Kings adopted big titles such as 'Parmeshwara', 'Maharajadhiraja' and 'Parambhaterak'.
7. Economy in Pratihara Empire was largely based on agriculture. The major expenditure of government during the Pratihara Empire was on the royal household and the army. Economy in Pratihara Empire was mainly dependent on agricultural production. Thus, the major source of government revenue at that time was the tax derived from the bulk of agricultural production.
8. The Kalachuris also known as the Haihayas have been referred in the Epics and the Puranas. When they became associated with the Chedi country, they were also known as the Chedis. Their earliest seat of power was possibly at Mahishmati, on the Narmada. An era starting from 249 or 250 A.D. was later used by the Kalachuris and henceforth came to be known as the Kalachuri era.
9. The most important ruler of this dynasty was Gangeya Vikramaditya (1019-1041 A.D.) who extended his territories in the northeast up to Benaras and a part of Bihar.
10. Shankaragana ascended the throne in 888 A.D. assumed high-sounding titles. He defeated the Somavamsi king of Kosala and

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wrested from him Pali, situated in the Bilaspur district, Madhya Pradesh.

11. Karna
12. From the 8th century A.D. a collateral branch of the Kalachuri family ruled in Sarayupara, i.e., the bank of the Sarayu River, modern Gogra in Uttar Pradesh. Rajaputra, the earliest king of the family seems to have defended his kingdom successfully against Dharmapala of Bengal.
13. The Chandellas established their control over Bundelkhand, the region to the south of Kanauj. They assumed prominent position in the tenth century in the region of Kajuraho. The most important ruler of the Chandella dynasty was Vidhyadhara.
14. Chandravarmana.
15. Dhanga was the ablest and the most powerful king of Chandelas. In the beginning of his career as a king, he was merely a chief of the Pratihara king but afterward, he defeated the ruler of Kannauj and established his independent rule. He had defeated the kings of Kosala, Sinhala, Krath, Kuntala, Kanchi, Andhra, etc.
16. The Harsol inscription.
17. Upendra.
18. Vakpati Munja.
19. Bhoja Paramara was the most powerful, and illustrious ruler of the Paramara dynasty. He succeeded to the throne, after the death of his father Sindhuraj and reigned for about 55 years. i.e.. from 1000 A.D. to 1055 A.D.
20. The chief source of income of the state was land revenue. Besides, gifts and tributes from Samants and trade taxes also formed an important part of the income of the state. The rate of lard revenue was from 1/4 to 1/6 of the total produce. It could be deposited in cash or kind (grains).
21. Kalhana's Rajatarangini.
22. The Karkota or Naga dynasty.
23. Avantivarman was the founder of the Utpala dynasty.
24. Sussala.

11.7 SUMMARY

- The anarchy and confusion which followed Harsha's death is the transitional period of Indian history. This period was marked by the rise of the Rajput clans who began to play a conspicuous part in the history of Northern and Western India from the 8th century A.D. onwards.

- The Gurjara-Pratiharas belong to the Suryavamsa. They are known as the descendants of the Agnikula Rajputs. Nagabhatta-I founded the dynasty of Gurjara-Pratiharas at the beginning of the 8th century.
- **Nagabhatta-I (730-756 A.D.)** was the first significant king of Pratihara dynasty. Kannauj once again had the distinction to be the capital. Nagabhatta boldly faced the Arabs and defeated them.
- The Gurjara-Pratihara Empire achieved great successes under the rule of Mihirbhoja. Their empire was extended from the Terai of Himalaya to Bundelkhand and Kanshambi to the frontier of Pala kingdom in the East and Saurashtra in the West.
- After the death of Mihirbhoja, his son Mahendrapala ascended the throne. He was a very chivalrous king. He conquered Magadha and Northern Bengal and made the power of Pala kings weak. He got a victory over Saurashtra and brought under his control Kurukshetra in Punjab.
- In the Gurjara-Pratihara history, King occupied the highest position in the state and had enormous powers, kings adopted big titles such as ‘Parmeshwara’, ‘Maharajadhiraja’, ‘Parambhaterak’. The appointment of the samantas and singing on giants and charities were also the works of the kings.
- Economy in Pratihara Empire was largely based on agriculture. The major expenditure of government during the Pratihara Empire was on the royal household and the army. Economy in Pratihara Empire was mainly dependent on agricultural production. Thus, the major source of government revenue at that time was the tax derived from the bulk of agricultural production.
- The most prominent among these goddesses were Durga, Chamunda, Bhagavati and Kali. Surya and Vinayaka were also worshipped at some places. From the religious point of view, the Pratihara kings were tolerant and had allowed the people to follow any acts they looked.
- The Kalachuris also known as the Haihayas have been referred in the Epics and the Puranas. When they became associated with the Chedi country, they were also known as the Chedis. Their earliest seat of power was possibly at Mahishmati, on the Narmada. An era starting from 249 or 250 A.D. was later used by the Kalachuris and henceforth came to be known as the Kalachuri era.
- Shankaragana ascended the throne in 888 A.D. assumed high-sounding titles. He defeated the Somavamsi king of Kosala and wrested from him Pali, situated in the Bilaspur district, Madhya Pradesh.
- Yuvaraja-I was succeeded by his son Lakshmanaraja who ruled in the third quarter of the 10th century A.D. Pursuing the traditional expansionist policy of his predecessors, he invaded Vanga, East

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Bengal, and defeated its king, Trailokyachandra. The king of Odra or Odisha conciliated him by offering him a bejewelled effigy of the serpent Kaliya.

- Vijayasimha, Jayasimha's son, was the last known king of the Kalachuris, who succeeded to the throne in 1177 A.D. He succeeded in maintaining his hold over the kingdom at least up to 1211 A.D., but within a year, Chandella Trailokyavarman conquered the whole of the Dahala-mandala.
- The Chandellas established their control over Bundelkhand, the region to the South of Kanauj. They assumed prominent position in the 10th century in the region of Kajuraho. The most important ruler of the Chandella dynasty was Vidhyadhara. He was responsible for the defeat and death of Rajyapala, the last ruler of the Pratihara dynasty of Kanauj.
- Chandravarman was the founder of the Chandella dynasty. Nannuka succeeded after his father's death. Vakpati was the son of Nannuka who succeeded his father on his death. He defeated many enemies and extended his territory.
- Dhanga was the ablest and the most powerful king of Chandellas. In the beginning of his career as a king, he was merely a chief of the Pratihara king but afterward, he defeated the ruler of Kannauj and established his independent rule.
- The Paramaras of Malwa began as feudatories of the Rashtrakutas but revolted against their overlords at the end of the 10th century and became independent with Dhar as their capital. The Paramaras became powerful under their greatest ruler Bhoja (1010-1055 A.D.). He was a contemporary of Mahmud Ghazni.
- Vakpati Munja ruled over Malwa from 973-998 A.D. The real progress was made by Malwa during the reign of Vakpati Munja who was a very brave king. He was the son of Siyaka Harsha. Vakpati Munja is also known, as Utpalraj, Munja, and Amoghavamsa.
- Bhoja Paramara was the most powerful, and illustrious ruler of the Paramara dynasty. He succeeded to the throne, after the death of his father Sindhoraj and reigned for about 55 years, i.e., from 1000 A.D. to 1055 A.D. He led several military campaigns and conquered many kings.
- The women enjoyed complete liberty. They were not compelled to confine themselves within four falls of the house and had the right to select their husbands. "Swayamvara Pratha" was prevalent. Proper attention was paid to the education of women. Women were all educated and took an active part in public life.
- The history of Kashmir really begins with the Karkota or Naga dynasty founded by Durlabhavardhana. He had started life as a

humble officer of Baladitya of Kashmir, the last king of the Gonanda dynasty. He married the daughter of Baladitya and as the latter had no son, succeeded to the throne in 627 A.D.

- The most important achievement of Lalitaditya was his victory over Yasovarman which not only made him the master of Kanauj but also enabled him to acquire theoretically the vast dominions of his great rival.
- Avantivarman, the founder of the Utpala dynasty ruled from 855-883 A.D. with the assistance of his able minister Suya. He took various steps to tone up the administration, establish internal security, and rehabilitate the state resources. He effectively curbed the power of the Damaras, a turbulent class of rural aristocrats.
- Harsha restored the lost glory of Kashmir by his able administration and patronage of culture and learning. He sent an expedition against Rajapuri (Rajaori) and compelled its ruler to pay tribute. He put down the rebellion of his half-brother Vijayamalla who with the help of the king of Darada invaded Kashmir.

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11.8 KEY TERMS

- **Gurjaras:** In the early years of the 6th century A.D., a tribe known as the Khazars along with the Huns poured into India and settled there. These Khazars were known as Gurjaras.
- **Chandella Rajputs:** The Chandella Rajputs were originally Hinduised Bhars or Gonds or both, who became Kshatriyas on attaining political power.
- **Maharajadhiraja:** In the Gurjara-Pratihara history, King occupied the highest position in the state and had enormous powers, kings adopted big titles such as ‘Parmeshwara’, ‘Maharajadhiraja’ and ‘Parambhaterak’.
- **Dandanayaka:** Dandanayaka look after the military and justice department in Gurjara-Pratihara period.
- **Kataria:** The Kataria classes were regarded as Kshatriyas.
- **Haihayas:** The Kalachuris also known as the Haihayas have been referred in the Epics and the Puranas.
- **Dhangā:** Dhanga was the son of Yasovarman and he succeeded to the throne after the death of his father.
- **Paramaras:** The Paramaras of Malwa began as feudatories of the Rashtrakutas but revolted against their overlords at the end of the 10th century and became independent with Dhar as their capital.

11.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the military conquest of Mihirbhoja.
2. Write about the achievements of Nagabhatta-II.
3. Write a note on Mahendrapala.
4. Mention the conquest of Trilochanpala.
5. Write about the social condition of the Gurjara Partiharas.
6. Write about Kalachuris of Tripuri.
7. Write about Shankaragana.
8. Who was Chandravarman?
9. Who was Dhanga?
10. Write about the Karkota Dynasty.
11. Write about the Lohara Dynasty.

Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the achievements of the rulers of Gurjara-Partiharas.
2. Describe the administrative system of the Pratiharas.
3. Discuss the social, economic and cultural condition of the Gurjara-Pratiharas.
4. Explain the achievements of the Kalachuris.
5. Narrate the achievements of the Chandella and Paramara rulers.
6. Explain the political, social, religious and culture condition of the Chandellas and Paramaras.
7. Explain the Himalayan Kingdom with special reference to the Karkota and Lohara dynasty.

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**CHAPTER 12 IMPORTANT DYNASTIES
OF SOUTH****NOTES****Structure**

- 12.0 Introduction
- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 The Rashtrakutas (755-975 A.D.)
 - 12.2.1 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Rashtrakutas
- 12.3 The Cholas
 - 12.3.1 Achievements of the Chola Rulers
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12.0 INTRODUCTIN

The period of big empires was begun in South India by the Satvahanas. Beginning from late 1st century B.C., they maintained an extensive empire in the South till early 3rd century A.D. Their empire included most of the territories of South India and a part of North India though, of course, the Chera, the Chola and the Pandya kingdoms of the far South were, certainly, excluded from it. Their rule remained glorious in South India from several points of view. After them, the Vakatakas repeated their performance. Beginning from late 3rd century A.D., the Vakatakas maintained a big empire in the South till early 6th century A.D. After them, the politics of South India passed in the hands of the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Pallavas and the Cholas who ruled there during the period 600-1200 A.D.

12.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the achievements of the Rashtrakutas.
- Describe the social, economic and cultural condition of the Rashtrakutas.
- Narrate about the achievements of the Chola rulers.
- Discuss the social, economic and cultural condition of the Cholas.

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- Explain the achievements of the Pallavas.
- Narrate the achievements of the Chalukyas.
- Explain the social, political, religious and culture condition of the Pallavas.
- Explain the social, political, religious and culture condition of the Chalukyas.

12.2 THE RASHTRAKUTAS (755-975 A.D.)

The Rashtrakutas were of Kannada origin and Kannada language was their mother tongue. Dantidurga was the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. He defeated the Gurjaras and captured Malwa from them. Then he annexed the Chalukya kingdom by defeating Kirtivarman-II. Thus, the Rashtrakutas became a paramount power in the Deccan. His successor Krishna-I was also a great conqueror.

- He defeated the Gangas and the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. He built the magnificent rock-cut monolithic Kailasa temple at Ellora. The next important king of this dynasty was Govinda-III. He achieved victories over North Indian kingdoms. His successor Amoghavarsha-I (815-880 A.D.) ruled for a long period of 64 years. He had lost control over Malwa and Gangavadi. Yet, his reign was popular for the cultural development. He was a follower of Jainism. Jinasena was his chief preceptor. He was also a patron of letters and he himself wrote the famous Kannada work, *Kavirajamarga*.
- He had also built the Rashtrakuta capital, the city of Malkhed or Manyakheda. Among the successors of Amoghavarsha-I, Krishna-III (936-968 A.D.) was famous for his expeditions. He marched against the Cholas and defeated them at Takkolam. He marched further South and captured Tanjore. He went as far as Rameswaram and occupied it for some time. He built several temples in the conquered territories including the Krishneswara temple at Rameswaram. Throughout his reign, he possessed the Tondaimandalam region including the capital Kanchi. After his death, the power of the Rashtrakutas declined.

12.2.1 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Rashtrakutas

The Rashtrakuta Empire was divided into several provinces called *rashtras* under the control of *rashtrapatis*. They were further divided into *vishayas* or districts governed by *vishayapatis*. The next subdivision was *bhukti* consisting of 50 to 70 villages under the control of *bhogapatis*. These officers were directly appointed by the central government. The village administration was carried on by the village headmen. However, the village assemblies played a significant role in the village administration.

Social and Economic Condition of the Rashtrakutas

The Hindu sects of Vaishnavism and Saivism flourished during the period of Rashtrakutas. Yet, they did not affect the progress of Jainism under the patronage of Rashtrakuta kings and officers. Almost one third of the populations of the Deccan were Jains. There were some prosperous Buddhist settlements at places like Kanheri, Solapur and Dharwar. There was harmony among various religions. There was a college at Salatogi, situated in modern Bijapur district. An inscription gives details of this educational centre. It was run by the income from the endowments made by the rich as well as by all the villagers on occasions of functions and festivals. The economy was also in a flourishing condition. There was an active commerce between the Deccan and the Arabs. The Rashtrakuta kings promoted the Arab trade by maintaining friendship with them.

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Cultural Contributions of the Rashtrakutas

The Rashtrakutas widely patronized the Sanskrit literature. There were many scholars in the Rashtrakuta court. Trivikrama wrote *Nalachampu* and the *Kavirahasya* was composed by Halayudha during the reign of Krishna-III. The Jain literature flourished under the patronage of the Rashtrakutas. Amoghavarsha-I, who was a Jain, patronized many Jain scholars. His teacher Jinasena composed *Parsvabhudaya*, a biography of Parsva in verses. Another scholar Gunabhadra wrote the *Adipurana*, the life stories of various Jain saints.

- Sakatayana wrote the grammar work called *Amogavritti*. The great mathematician of this period, Viracharya was the author of *Ganitasaram*. The Kannada literature saw its beginning during the period of the Rashtrakutas. Amoghavarsha's *Kavirajamarga* was the first poetic work in Kannada language. Pampa was the greatest of the Kannada poets. His famous work was *Vikramasenavijaya*. Ponna was another famous Kannada poet and he wrote *Santipurana*.

Art And Architecture

The art and architecture of the Rashtrakutas were found at Ellora and Elephanta. At Ellora, the most remarkable temple is the Kailasa temple. It was excavated during the reign of Krishna-I. It is carved out of a massive block of rock 200 feet long, and 100 feet in breadth and height. The temple consists of four parts – the main shrine, the entrance gateway, an intermediate shrine for Nandi and mandapa surrounding the courtyard. The temple stands on a lofty plinth 25 feet high.

- The central face of the plinth has imposing figures of elephants and lions giving the impression that the entire structure rests on their back. It has a three-tiered *sikhara* or tower resembling the *sikhara* of the Mamallapuram *rathas*. In the interior of the temple, there is a pillared hall which has sixteen square pillars. The Kailasa temple is an architectural marvel with its beautiful sculptures. The sculpture of the Goddess Durga is shown as slaying the Buffalo demon. In another sculpture, Ravana was making attempts to lift Mount Kailasa, the

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abode of Siva. The scenes of Ramayana were also depicted on the walls. The general characteristics of the Kailasa temple are more Dravidian. Elephanta is an island near Bombay. It was originally called Sripuri.

- The Portuguese after seeing the large figure of an elephant named it Elephanta. The sculptural art of the Rashtrakutas reached its zenith in this place. There is a close similarity between the sculptures at Ellora and those in Elephanta. They might have been carved by the same craftsmen. At the entrance to the sanctum there are huge figures of *dwara-palakas*. In the walls of the prakara around the sanctum, there are niches containing the images of Shiva in various forms Nataraja, Gangadhara, Ardhanareesvara and Somaskanda. The most imposing figure of this temple is *Trimurthi*. The sculpture is 6 meter high. It is said to represent the three aspects of Shiva as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer.

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty?
2. Write a short note on the cultural contribution of the Rashtrakutas.

12.3 THE CHOLAS

After the decline of the Sangam period, the Cholas became feudatories in Uraiur. They became prominent in the 9th century and established an empire comprising the major portion of South India. Their capital was Tanjore. They also extended their sway in Sri Lanka and the Malay Peninsula. Therefore, they are called as the Imperial Cholas. Thousands of inscriptions found in the temples provide detailed information regarding the administration, society, economy and culture of the Chola period.

- The founder of the Imperial Chola line was Vijayalaya. He captured Tanjore from Muttaraiyars in 815 A.D. and built a temple for Durga. His son Aditya put an end to the Pallava kingdom by defeating Aparajita and annexed Tondaimandalam. Parantaka-I was one of the important early Chola rulers. He defeated the Pandyas and the ruler of Ceylon. But he suffered a defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakutas in the famous battle of Takkolam.
- Parantaka-I was a great builder of temples. He also provided the *vimana* of the famous Nataraja temple at Chidambaram with a golden roof. The two famous Uttramerur inscriptions that give a detailed account of the village administration under the Cholas belong to his reign. After a gap of thirty years, the Cholas regained their supremacy under Rajaraja-I.

12.3.1 Achievements of the Chola Rulers

Rajaraja-I (985-1014 A.D.)

It was under Rajaraja-I and his son Rajendra-I that the Chola power reached its highest point of glory. His military conquests were:

- The defeat of the Chera ruler Bhaskararavarman in the naval battle of Kandalursalai and the destruction of the Chera navy.
- The defeat of the Pandya ruler, Amarabhujanga and establishment of Chola authority in the Pandya country.
- The conquest of Gangavadi, Tadigaipadi and Nolambapadi located in the Mysore region.
- The invasion of Sri Lanka which was entrusted to his son Rajendra-I. As the Sri Lankan king Mahindra-V fled away from his country, the Cholas annexed the Northern Sri Lanka. The capital was shifted from Anuradhapura to Polanaruva where a Shiva temple was built
- The Chola victory over the growing power of the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani. Satyasraya was defeated and Rajaraja-I captured the Raichur Doab, Banavasi and other places. Hence, the Chola power extended up to the river Tungabhadra.
- The restoration of Vengi throne to its rulers Saktivarman and Vimaladitya by defeating the Telugu Chodas. Rajaraja gave his daughter Kundavai in marriage to Vimaladitya.
- Rajaraja's last military achievement was a naval expedition against the Maldives Islands which were conquered.

By these conquests, the extent of the Chola empire under Rajaraja-I included the Pandya, Chera and the Tondaimandalam regions of Tamil Nadu and the Gangavadi, Nolambapadi and the Telugu Choda territories in the Deccan and the Northern part of Ceylon and the Maldives Islands beyond India. Rajaraja assumed a number of titles like Mummidhi Chola, Jayankonda and Sivapadasekara. He was a devout follower of Saivism. He completed the construction of the famous Rajarajeswara temple or Brihadeeswara temple at Tanjore in 1010 A.D. He also helped in the construction of a Buddhist monastery at Nagapattinam.

Rajendra-I (1012-1044 A.D.)

Rajendra-I had demonstrated his military ability by participating in his father's campaigns. He continued his father's policy of aggressive conquests and expansion. His important wars were:

- Mahindra-V, the king of Sri Lanka attempted to recover from the Cholas the Northern part of Ceylon. Rajendra defeated him and seized the Southern Sri Lanka. Thus, the whole of Sri Lanka was made part of the Chola Empire.
- He reasserted the Chola authority over the Chera and Pandya countries.

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- He defeated Jayasimha-II, the Western Chalukya king and the river Tungabadhra was recognized as the boundary between the Cholas and Chalukyas.
- His most famous military enterprise was his expedition to North India. The Chola army crossed the Ganges by defeating a number of rulers on its way. Rajendra defeated Mahipala-I of Bengal. To commemorate this successful North-Indian campaign Rajendra founded the city of Gangaikondacholapuram and constructed the famous Rajesvaram temple in that city. He also excavated a large irrigation tank called Cholagangam on the Western side of the city.
- Another famous venture of Rajendra was his naval expedition to Kadaram or Sri Vijaya. It is difficult to pin point the real object of the expedition. Whatever its objects were, the naval expedition was a complete success. A number of places were occupied by Chola forces. But it was only temporary and no permanent annexation of these places was contemplated. He assumed the title Kadaramkondan.
- Rajendra-I had put down all rebellions and kept his empire intact.

At the death of Rajendra-I, the extent of the Chola Empire was at its peak. The river Tungabadhra was the Northern boundary. The Pandya, Kerala and Mysore regions and also Sri Lanka formed part of the empire. He gave his daughter Ammangadevi to the Vengi Chalukya prince and further continued the matrimonial alliance initiated by his father. Rajendra-I assumed a number of titles, the most famous being Mudikondan, Gangaikondan, Kadaram Kondan and Pandita Cholan. Like his father, he was also a devout Saiva and built a temple for that god at the new capital Gangaikondacholapuram. He made liberal endowments to this temple and to the Lord Nataraja temple at Chidambaram. He was also tolerant towards the Vaishnava and Buddhist sects.

- After Rajendra-I, the greatness of the Chola power was preserved by rulers like Kulottunga-I and Kulottunga-III. Kulottunga-I was the grandson of Rajendra-I through his daughter Ammangadevi. He succeeded the Chola throne, and thus, united the Vengi kingdom with the Chola Empire. During his reign, Sri Lanka became independent. Subsequently, Vengi and the Mysore region were captured by the Western Chalukyas.
- Kulottunga-I sent a large embassy of 72 merchants to China and maintained cordial relations with the kingdom of Sri Vijaya. Under Kulottunga-III, the central authority became weak. The rise of the feudatories like the Kadavarayas and the emergence of the Pandya power as a challenge to Chola supremacy contributed to the ultimate downfall of the Chola Empire. Rajendra-III was the last Chola king who was defeated by Jatavarman Sundrapandya-II. The Chola country was absorbed into the Pandya Empire.

12.3.2 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Cholas

Important Dynasties
of South

Chola Administration

- **Central Government:** The Cholas had an excellent system of administration. The emperor or king was at the top of the administration. The extent and resources of the Chola Empire increased the power and prestige of monarchy. The big capital cities like Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram, the large royal courts and extensive grants to the temples reveal the authority of the king. They undertook royal tours to increase the efficiency of the administration. There was elaborate administrative machinery comprising various officials called *perundanam* and *sirudanam*.
- **Military Administration:** The Cholas maintained a regular standing army consisting of elephants, cavalry, infantry and navy. About seventy regiments were mentioned in the inscriptions. The royal troops were called *Kaikkolaperumpadai*. Within this, there was a personal troop to defend the king known as *Velaikkarar*. Attention was given to the training of the army and military cantonments called *kadagams* existed. The Cholas paid special attention to their navy. The naval achievements of the Tamils reached its climax under the Cholas. They controlled the Malabar and Coromandal coasts. In fact, the Bay of Bengal became a Chola lake for some time.
- **Provincial Administration:** The Chola Empire was divided into *mandalams* and each *mandalam* into *valanadus* and *nadus*. In each *nadu*, there were a number of autonomous villages. The royal princes or officers were in charge of *mandalams*. The *valanadu* was under *periyanattar* and *nadu* under *nattar*. The town was known as *nagaram* and it was under the administration of a council called *nagarattar*.
- **Village Assemblies:** The system of village autonomy with *sabhas* and their committees developed through the ages and reached its culmination during the Chola rule. Two inscriptions belonging to the period of Parantaka-I found at Uttiramerur provide details of the formation and functions of village councils. That village was divided into thirty wards and each was to nominate its members to the village council. The qualifications to become a ward member were:
 1. Ownership of at least one-fourth veli of land.
 2. Own residence.
 3. Above thirty years and below seventy years of age.
 4. Knowledge of Vedas.However, certain norms of disqualification were also mentioned in the inscriptions. They were:
 1. Those who had been members of the committees for the past three years.

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2. Those who had failed to submit accounts as committee members.
3. Those who had committed sins.
4. Those who had stolen the property of others.

From the persons duly nominated, one was to be chosen for each ward by *kudavolai* system for a year. The names of eligible persons were written on palm-leaves and put into a pot. A young boy or girl would take out thirty names each for one ward. They were divided into six *varyams* such as *samvatsaravariyam*, *erivariyam*, *thotta varyam*, *pancha varyam*, *pon varyam* and *puravuvari varyam* to take up six different functions of the village administration. The committee members were called *varyapperumakkal*. They usually met in the temple or under a tree and passed resolutions. The number of committees and ward members varied from village to village.

Socio-Economic Life of the Cholas

Caste system was widely prevalent during the Chola period. Brahmins and Kshatriyas enjoyed special privileges. The inscriptions of the later period of the Chola rule mention about two major divisions among the castes – *Valangai* and *Idangai* castes. However, there was cooperation among various castes and sub-castes in social and religious life. The position of women did not improve.

- The practice of ‘sati’ was prevalent among the royal families. The *devadasi* system or dancing girls attached to temples emerged during this period. Both Saivism and Vaishnavism continued to flourish during the Chola period. A number of temples were built with the patronage of Chola kings and queens. The temples remained centers of economic activity during this period. The *mathas* had great influence during this period. Both agriculture and industry flourished. Reclamation of forest lands and the construction and maintenance of irrigation tanks led to agricultural prosperity.
- The weaving industry, particularly the silk-weaving at Kanchi flourished. The metal works developed owing to great demand of images for temples and utensils. Commerce and trade were brisk with trunk roads or *peruvazhis* and merchant guilds. Gold, silver and copper coins were issued in plenty at various denominations. Commercial contacts between the Chola Empire and China, Sumatra, Java and Arabia were extensively prevalent. Arabian horses were imported in large numbers to strengthen the cavalry.
- **Revenue:**-The land revenue department was well organized. It was called as *puravuvarithinaikkalam*. All lands were carefully surveyed and classified for assessment of revenue. The residential portion of the village was called *ur nattam*. These and other lands such as the lands belonging to temples were exempted from tax. Besides land revenue, there were tolls and customs on goods taken from one place to another, various kinds of professional taxes, dues levied on ceremonial occasions like marriages and judicial fines. During the hard times, there were remission of taxes and Kulottunga-I became famous by

abolishing tolls and earned the title – *Sungam Tavirtta Cholan*. The main items of government expenditure were the king and his court, army and navy, roads, irrigation tanks and canals.

Cultural Contribution of the Cholas

Education and Literature

Education was also given importance. Besides the temples and *mathas* as educational centres, several educational institutions also flourished. The inscription at Ennayiram, Thirumukkudal and Thirubhuvanai provide details of the colleges existed in these places medicines were taught in these institutions. Endowment of lands was made to run these institutions. The development of Tamil literature reached its peak during the Chola period. *Sivakasintamani* written by Thiruthakkadevar and Kundalakesi belonged to 10th century.

- The Ramayana composed by Kamban and the *Periyapuram* or *Tiruttandarpuranam* by Sekkilar are the two masterpieces of this age. Jayankondar's *Kalingattupparani* describes the Kalinga war fought by Kulotunga-I. The *Moovarula* written by Ottakuthar depicts the life of three Chola kings. The *Nalavenba* was written by Pugalendi. The works on Tamil grammar like *Kalladam* by Kalladanar, *Yapperungalam* by Amirthasagarar, a Jain, *Nannul* by Pavanandhi and *Virasoliyam* by Buddhamitra were the products of the Chola age.

Art and Architecture

The Dravidian style of art and architecture reached its perfection under the Cholas. They built enormous temples. The chief feature of the Chola temple is the vimana. The early Chola temples were found at Narthamalai and Kodumbalur in Pudukottai district and at Srinivasanallur in Tiruchirappalli district. The Big Temple at Tanjore built by Rajaraja-I is a masterpiece of South Indian art and architecture. It consists of the *vimana*, *ardhamandapa*, *mahamandapa* and a large pavilion in the front known as the *Nandimandapa*. Another notable contribution made by the Cholas to temple architecture is the Siva temple at Gangaikondacholapuram built by Rajendra-I. The Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram in Tanjore District and the Kampaharesvara temple at Tribhuvanam are examples of later Chola temples. The Cholas also made rich contributions to the art of sculpture. The walls of the Chola temples such as the Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram temples contain numerous icons of large size with fine execution. The bronzes of the Chola period are world-famous. The bronze statues of Nataraja or dancing Siva are master pieces. The Chola paintings were found on the walls of Narthamalai and Tanjore temples.

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Check Your Progress

3. Who was Vijayalaya?
4. Write a note on the military administration of the Cholas.
5. Give a brief note on the art and architecture of the Cholas.

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12.4 THE PALLAVAS AND THE CHALUKYAS

After the decline of the Sangam Age in the Tamil country, the Kalabhras rule lasted for about 250 years. Thereafter, the Pallavas established their kingdom in Tondaimandalam with its capital at Kanchipuram. Their rule continued till Tondaimandalam was captured and annexed by the Imperial Cholas in the beginning of the 10th century A.D.

Origin of The Pallavas

There are different views on the origin of the Pallavas. They were equated with the Parthians, the foreigners who ruled Western India. Another view was that the Pallavas were a branch of the Brahmin royal dynasty of the Vakatakas of the Deccan. The third view relates the Pallavas with the descendants of the Chola prince and a Naga princess whose native was the island of Manipallavam. But these theories on the origin of the Pallavas were not supported by adequate evidences.

- Therefore, the view that the Pallavas were the natives of Tondaimandalam itself was widely accepted by scholars. They are also identical with the Pulindas mentioned in the inscriptions of Asoka. When Tondaimandalam was conquered by the Satavahanas, the Pallavas became their feudatories. After the fall of the Satavahanas in the 3rd century A.D., they became independent. The Pallavas issued their earlier inscriptions in Prakrit and Sanskrit because of their Satavahana connections, and also patronized Brahmanism.

12.4.1 Achievements of the Pallava Rulers

The early Pallava rulers from 250 A.D. to 350 A.D. issued their charters in Prakrit. Important among them were Sivaskandavarman and Vijayaskandavarman. The second line of Pallava rulers who ruled between 350 A.D. and 550 A.D. issued their charters in Sanskrit. The most important ruler of this line was Vishnugopa who was defeated by Samudragupta during his South Indian expedition. The rulers of the third line who ruled from 575 A.D. to their ultimate fall in the 9th century issued their charters both in Sanskrit and Tamil. Simhavishnu was the first ruler of this line. He destroyed the Kalabhras and firmly established the Pallava rule in Tondaimandalam. He also defeated the Cholas and extended the Pallava territory up to the river Kaveri. Other great Pallava rulers of this line were Mahendravarman I, Narasimhavarman I, and Narasimhavarman-II.

- **Mahendravarman-I (600-630 A.D.):** The long-drawn Pallava-Chalukya Conflict began during his period. Pulakesin-II marched against the Pallavas and captured the Northern part of their kingdom. Although a Pallava inscription refers to the victory of Mahendravarman-I at Pullalur, he was not able to recover the lost territory. Mahendravarman-I was a follower of Jainism in the early part

of his career. He was converted to Saivism by the influence of the Saiva saint, Thirunavukkarasar alias Appar.

- He built a Siva temple at Tiruvadi. He assumed a number of titles like Gunabhara, Satyasandha, Chettakari (builder of temples) Chitrakarapuli, Vichitrachitta and Mattavilasa. He was a great builder of cave temples. The Mandagappattu inscription hails him as Vichitrachitta who constructed a temple for Brahma, Vishnu and Siva without the use of bricks, timber, metal and mortar. His rock-cut temples are found in a number of places like Vallam, Mahendravadi, Dalavanur, Pallavaram, Mandagappattu and Tiruchirappalli. He had also authored the Sanskrit work Mattavilasa Prahasanam. His title Chitrakarapuli reveals his talents in painting. He is also regarded as an expert in music. The music inscription at Kudumianmalai is ascribed to him.
- **Narasimhavarman-I (630-668 A.D.):** Narasimhavarman-I was also known as Mamalla, which means ‘great wrestler’. He wanted to take avenge the defeat of his father at the hands of Chalukyan ruler Pulakesin-II. His victory over Pulakesin-II in the Battle of Manimangalam near Kanchi is mentioned in Kuram copper plates. The Pallava army under General Paranjothi pursued the retreating Chalukya army, entered Chalukya territory, captured and destroyed the capital city of Vatapi. Narasimhavarman-I assumed the title ‘Vatapikonda’.
- He regained the lost territory. Another notable achievement of Narasimhavarman-I was his naval expedition to Sri Lanka. He restored the throne to his friend and Sri Lankan prince Manavarma. During his reign, Hiuen Tsang visited the Pallava capital Kanchipuram. His description of Kanchi is vivid. He calls it a big and beautiful city, six miles in circumference. It had 100 Buddhist monasteries in which about 10,000 Buddhist monks lived. According to his account the people of Kanchi esteemed great learning and the Ghatika at Kanchi served as a great centre of learning. Narasimhavarman-I was the founder of Mamallapuram and the monolithic rathas were erected during his reign.
- **Narasimhavarman-II or Rajasimha (695-722 A.D.):** Narasimhavarman-I was succeeded by Mahendravarman-II and Parameswaravarman-I and the Pallava – Chalukya conflict continued during their reign. Thereafter, Narasimhavarman-II became the ruler of the Pallava kingdom. He was also known as Rajasimha. His regime was peaceful and he evinced more interest in developing the art and architecture. The Shore Temple at Mamallapuram and the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram were built in this period. He was also a great patron of art and letters.
- The famous Sanskrit scholar Dandin is said to have adorned his court. He sent embassies to China and the maritime trade flourished during his reign. Rajasimha assumed titles like Sankarabhakta,

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Vadhyavadyadhara and Agamapriya. He was succeeded by Parameswaravarman-II and Nandivarman-II. The Pallava rule lasted till the end of the 9th century A.D. The Chola king Aditya-I defeated the last Pallava ruler Aparajita and seized the Kanchi region. With this, the rule of Pallava dynasty came to an end.

12.4.2 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Pallavas

The Pallavas had a well organized administrative system. The Pallava state was divided into *Kottams*. The *Kottam* was administered by officers appointed by the king. The king was at the centre of administration in which he was assisted by able ministers. He was the fountain of justice. He maintained a well-trained army. He provided land grants to the temples known as *Devadhana* and also to the Brahmins known as *Brahmadeya*. It was also the responsibility of the central government to provide irrigation facilities to the lands.

- A number of irrigation tanks were dug by the Pallava kings. The irrigation tanks at Mahendravadi and Mamandoor were dug during the reign of Mahendravarman-I. Detailed information on the tax system could also be traced from the Pallava inscriptions. Land tax was the primary source of the government revenue. The *Brahmadeya* and *Devadhana* lands were exempted from tax. Traders and artisans such as carpenters, goldsmiths, washer-men, oil-pressers and weavers paid taxes to the government. The Pallava inscriptions throw much light on the village assemblies called *sabhas* and their committees. They maintained records of all village lands, looked after local affairs and managed temples.

Social and Economic Condition

The Tamil society witnessed a great change during the Pallava period. The caste system became rigid. The Brahmins occupied a high place in the society. They were given land-grants by the kings and nobles. They were also given the responsibility of looking after the temples. The Pallava period also witnessed the rise of Saivism and Vaishnavism and also the decline of Buddhism and Jainism. The Saiva Nayammars and the Vaishnava Alwars contributed to the growth of Saivism and Vaishnavism. This is known as the Bhakti Movement. They composed their hymns in the Tamil language. These hymns revealed the importance of devotion or Bhakti. The construction of temples by the Pallava kings paved the way for the spread of these two religions.

- The major source of revenue was from land, since the revenue from mercantile activity was not fully exploited. Land tax was the primary source of the government revenue. The *Brahmadeya* and *Devadhana* lands were exempted from tax. Traders and artisans such as carpenters, goldsmiths, washermen, oil-pressers and weavers paid taxes to the government.
- Regarding expenditure, most to the revenue went for the maintenance of army. The army consists of foot soldiers, cavalry, and elephantry.

Indeed, the Pallavas developed a navy although the mercantile activity was not great. Two dockyards were built at Mahabalipuram and Nagabatnam.

- This pioneering effort of the Pallavas reached its climax during the days of Cholas. The navy served a double purpose. It was meant for defense and also assisted the maritime Trade with South-East Asia, particularly with the three kingdoms of Kambuja (Cambodia) Champa (Annam) and Shrivijaya (Malayan peninsula and Sumatra).

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Cultural Contribution of the Pallavas

The Pallava rulers adopted the policy of religious toleration. In spite of the fact that Buddhism and Jainism were on the decline, no restrictions were imposed by the Pallava rulers on the followers of Buddhism or Jainism rather donations were given to the Jain monks and preachers by the Pallava ruler. Hieun Tsang has referred to complete religious freedom having been allowed to the followers of Jainism and Buddhism. There were several Buddhist Viharas and monasteries in which several hundred monks and nuns used to live.

- The Pallavas were great patrons of learning. Their capital Kanchi was an ancient centre of learning. The *Ghatika* at Kanchi was popular and it attracted students from all parts of India and abroad. The founder of the Kadamba dynasty, Mayurasarman studied Vedas at Kanchi. Dinganaga, a Buddhist writer came to study at Kanchi. Dharmapala, who later became the Head of the Nalanada University, belonged to Kanchi. Bharavi, the great Sanskrit scholar lived in the time of Simhavishnu. Dandin, another Sanskrit writer adorned the court of Narasimhavarman-II.
- Mahendravaraman-I composed the Sanskrit play *Mattavilasaprahasanam*. Tamil literature had also developed. The Nayanmars and Alwars composed religious hymns in Tamil. The *Devaram* composed by Nayanmars and the *Nalayradivyaprabandam* composed by Alwars represent the religious literature of the Pallava period. Perundevanar was patronized by Nandivarman-II and he translated the *Mahabharata* as *Bharathavenba* in Tamil. *Nandikkalambagam* was another important work but the name of the author of this work is not known. Music and dance also developed during this period.

Pallava Art and Architecture

It was a great age of temple building. The Pallavas introduced the art of excavating temples from the rock. In fact, the Dravidian style of temple architecture began with the Pallava rule. It was a gradual evolution starting from the cave temples to monolithic *rathas* and culminated in structural temples. The development of temple architecture under the Pallavas can be seen in four stages. Mahendravarman-I introduced the rock-cut temples.

- This style of Pallava temples are seen at places like Mandagappattu, Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Dalavanur, Tiruchirappalli, Vallam,

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Siyamangalam and Tirukalukkunram. The second stage of Pallava architecture is represented by the monolithic *rathas* and Mandapas found at Mamallapuram. Narasimhavarman-I took the credit for these wonderful architectural monuments. The five *rathas*, popularly called as the *Panchapanadava rathas*, signifies five different styles of temple architecture. The mandapas contain beautiful sculptures on its walls. The most popular of these mandapas are Mahishasuramardhini Mandapa, Tirumurthi Mandapam and Varaha Madapam. In the next stage, Rajasimha introduced the structural temples. These temples were built by using the soft sand rocks.

- The Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi and the Shore temple at Mamallapuram remain the finest examples of the early structural temples of the Pallavas. The Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi is the greatest architectural master piece of the Pallava art. The last stage of the Pallava art is also represented by structural temples built by the later Pallavas. The Vaikundaperumal temple, Muktheeswara temple and Matagengswara temples at Kanchipuram belong to this stage of architecture.
- The Pallavas had also contributed to the development of sculpture. Apart from the sculptures found in the temples, the ‘Open Art Gallery’ at Mamallapuram remains an important monument bearing the sculptural beauty of this period. The Descent of the Ganges or the Penance of Arjuna is called a fresco painting in stone. The minute details as well as the theme of these sculptures such as the figures of lice-picking monkey, elephants of huge size and the figure of the ‘ascetic cat’ standing erect remain the proof for the talent of the sculptor.

Fine Arts

Music, dance and painting had also developed under the patronage of the Pallavas. The Mamandur inscription contains a note on the notation of vocal music. The Kudumianmalai inscription referred to musical notes and instruments. The Alwars and Nayanmars composed their hymns in various musical notes.

- Dance and drama also developed during this period. The sculptures of this period depict many dancing postures. The Sittannavasal paintings belonged to this period. The commentary called *Dakshinchitra* was compiled during the reign of Mahendravarman-I, who had the title Chittirakkarpuli. Besides the Pallavas, the Western Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan constitute important political forces. Both these kingdoms had their rivals in the far South, namely the Pallavas and later the Cholas. Their period has also been important in the history of India for their cultural contributions.

12.4.3 Achievements of the Chalukya Rulers

The Western Chalukyas ruled over an extensive area in the Deccan for about two centuries after which the Rashtrakutas became powerful. The family of Western Chalukyas had its offshoots like the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi and the Chalukyas of Kalyani. Pulakesin-I was the founder of the Chalukya dynasty. He established a small kingdom with Vatapi or Badami as its capital.

- **Pulakesin-II (608-642 A.D.):** The most important ruler of this dynasty was Pulakesin-II. The Aihole inscription issued by him gives the details of his reign. He fought with the Kadambas of Banavasi and the Gangas of Mysore and established his suzerainty. Durvinita, the Ganga ruler accepted his overlordship and even gave his daughter in marriage to Pulakesin-II. Another notable achievement of Pulakesin-II was the defeat of Harshavardhana on the banks of the river Narmada.
- He put a check to the ambition of Harsha to conquer the South. In his first expedition against the Pallavas, Pulakesin-II emerged victorious. But he suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Narasimhavarman-I near Kanchi. Subsequently, the Chalukya capital Vatapi was captured and destroyed by the Pallavas.
- The most important event in the reign of Pulakesin-II was the visit of Hiuen Tsang to his kingdom. The successor of Pulakesin-II was Vikramaditya. He once again consolidated the Chalukya kingdom and plundered the Pallava capital, Kanchi. Thus, he had avenged his father's defeat and death at the hands of the Pallavas. Kirtivarman-II was the last of the rulers of the Chalukyas. He was defeated by Dantidurga, the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty.
- The later Chalukyas who ruled from Kalyani claim descent from the mainline of Chalukyas of Badami. After a period, of about two hundred years the Chalukyas again asserted their power at Kalyani.
- **Taila-II** was the founder of this dynasty. Taila-II was the son of Vikramaditya-IV and Bonthadevi (the Kalachuri Princess). Immediately after his accession, Taila-II made every effort to consolidate and strengthen his power. His great rival was Panchala Deva, the ruler of the Ganga kingdom. Assisted by the Ganga Bhutigadeva and many feudatories, Taila-II defeated and killed Panchala Deva in 977 A.D. He established his supremacy over the region up to Northern Mysore.
- He defeated the Rashtrakuta ruler Karka-II and established his authority. He waged a war against the Chola king and defeated him. The rulers of the South Konkan and Silahara dynasty were also forced to accept his suzerainty. Taila-II with the help of his feudatory, Yadava Bhillama-II of the Seunadesa defeated the Pararnara king Munja in 995 A.D. He was a brave warrior and he laid a very strong foundation of the kingdom of Chalukyas of Kalyani. The rulers of Lata and Gujarat also acknowledged his supremacy. He assumed the

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titles of ‘**Maharajadhiraja**’ and ‘**Chakravarti**’. Taila’s capital was Manyakheta and Kalyani began to assume importance only under Somesvara-I.

- **Somesvara-IV** was the last king of the later Western Chalukya dynasty. He was not a successful warrior and completely failed to face his enemies. He was defeated by Hoysala king Vir Ballal-II. The Yadav dynasty of Deogiri finally deposed the last ruler, Somesvara-IV in 1190 A.D. Thus, the later Western branch of the Chalukyas came to an end after reigning for about one hundred fifty years.
- The third branch of the Chalukyas was known as the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. This dynasty was founded by Vishnuvardhana who was appointed Viceroy in Andhra Pradesh by Pulakeshin-II. They ruled for a pretty long time from 621 A.D. to 1120 A.D. The Eastern branch failed to achieve any glorious victory though they could anyhow manage to rule for a long time.
- Vishnuvardhana ruled for eighteen years from 624 A.D. to 641 A.D. A part of Kalinga has included in his kingdom. Vishnuvardhana’s queen was Ayyana-mahadevi, built a Jain temple at Vijayawada in the Krishna district. This is the earliest reference of Jainism in the Telugu country. Vishnuvardhana himself was a Bhagavata.
- Vishnuvardhana was succeeded by his son **Jayasimha-I** in 641 A.D. Early in his reign in 642 A.D., the Pallavas defeated and killed Pulakesin-II and occupied Badami.
- The last recognized ruler of the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi was **Saktivarman-II**. After his death in 1062 A.D., Kulottunga Chola came to the throne. During his reign, both the Chalukya and the Chola kingdoms were merged.

12.4.4 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Chalukyas

The Chalukya administration was highly centralized unlike that of the Pallavas and the Cholas. Village autonomy was absent under the Chalukyas. The Chalukyas had a great maritime power. Pulakesin-II had 100 ships in his navy. They also had a small standing army. The Badami Chalukyas were Brahmanical Hindus but they gave respect to other religions. Importance was given to Vedic rites and rituals. The founder of the dynasty Pulakesin-I performed the *asvamedha* sacrifice. A number of temples in honour of Vishnu, Siva and other gods were also built during this period. Hiuen Tsang mentioned about the decline of Buddhism in Western Deccan. But Jainism was steadily on the path of progress in this region. Ravikirti, the court poet of Pulakesin-II who composed the Aihole inscription was a Jain.

- The age-old system of castes, the **four varnas**, i.e., Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra continued to exist during this period. Brahmanas, especially the priests and the teachers, were held in high esteem. The Brahmanas were the protectors of dharma in the society.

and by their erudition and scholarship guided the society on a righteous path.

- The Sudra is very rarely mentioned in the records. Besides the cultivators of the soil, a large number belonging to skilled professions were included in the chaturtha-varna. The merchant class formed a big part of the population. Women occupied an honoured place in society. Under the Chalukyas of Kalyani, women belonging to higher strata of society used to take part in public affairs. A good number of others belonging to lower strata also took part in social and political activities.
- The temple served as the nucleus of **cultural and religious** activities. Belagave and Dambal were the main centers of Buddhism. The two most important religions of the period were Jainism and Saivism, though the former lost its influence towards the closing years of the Chalukya. Saivism was the dominant creed in the country as well as in the royal family. Saivism had several sects like the Saiva, Pasupata or Lakula, Kalamukha and Kapalika. Of these, the Pasupata School was the most important which had important centers at Balligave, Sudi, Srisailam and other places. The members of the royal family were generally devotees of Shiva and Vishnu for whose worship they built temples at Badami, Pattadalcal and elsewhere.
- The temple played an important role in imparting education, maintaining students and teachers and promoting arts. The temple received liberal gifts from all people, from the king to the common man. Besides the Vedas, subjects like grammar, logic, astrology, drama, polity, dancing art, the eighteen Smritis, Puranas, the six systems of philosophy were some other subjects studied.
- **Land revenue** formed the chief source of revenue. The land was divided into different types and taxes were assessed according to the fertility of the soil. The different land taxes to be paid were Siddhaya, Dasavanda, Niruni-sunka, and Melivana. Siddhaya was a fixed tax levied, not only on land but also on houses and shops. Dasavanda was the one-tenth portion of tax payable to the authority from out of the yield from land or revenue. Niruni-sunka was the water cess to be paid by the farmer. Melivana may be taken to mean the tax levied on ploughs.
- The sources of income included other kinds of taxes like the commercial taxes, profession tax, social and community taxes, judicial fines and the like. Perjjumka, Volavaru (import), Horavaru (export) and the like were customs levied on trade and articles of merchandise, Angadidere (tax on shops), Gaanadere (tax on oil mills), Navidadere (tax on barbers) were professional taxes. The House-tax (*manevana*), and tax on the threshold (*hosatilu*) were property taxes levied by the local bodies. Dandaya was the revenue collected from judicial fines.
- There existed various guilds during this period. These guilds had their headquarters at Ayyavole, the modern Aihole in Bijapur district. They

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traded in elephants, horses of the finest breeds, large sapphires, moonstones, pearls, rubies, diamonds, lapis-lazuli, topaz, emeralds and other precious articles and in cardamoms, cloves, sandal, camphor,' musk, saffron, and other spices and perfumes.

- The Chalukya period witnessed a phenomenal growth in **literature**. Telugu verse makes its first appearance in the inscriptions of the time of Gunaga Vijayaditya in the latter half of the 9th century. Rajaraja Narendra was the patron of Nannaya Bhatta, whose Mahabharata is the earliest extant work of Telugu literature. Nannaya was not the first poet in the Telugu language, but unfortunately, no work of the pre-Nannaya period has survived. Nannaya's Telugu version of the Great Epic is universally regarded as a masterpiece of literature. It has set the norm for epic poetry in Telugu. Graceful and dignified in its diction, the poem has a charm rarely met with elsewhere in Telugu literature.
- Next to Sanskrit, Kannada occupied a prestigious position in the literary world and three great poets, Ponna, Pampa and Nagavarma shed luster on the development of that language. Among the Sanskrit writers of the period, the foremost is Bilhana, the court poet of Vikramaditya-VI.
- Vikramankadevacharita of Bilhana is a maha kavya, composed in eighteen Cantos, which purports to narrate the life story of his patron. Bilhana wrote many other works. The great jurist Vijnanesvara, who lived at the court of Vikramaditya, wrote his famous Mitakshara commentary on the Yajnavalkya Smriti. Somesvara-III is the author of encyclopedic work named Manasollasa, also called Abhilashi-tarthachintamani.
- The Chalukyas were great patrons of art. They developed the *vesara* style in the building of structural temples. However, the *vesara* style reached its culmination only under the Rashtrakutas and the Hoysalas. The structural temples of the Chalukyas exist at Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal. Cave temple architecture was also famous under the Chalukyas. Their cave temples are found in Ajanta, Ellora and Nasik. The best specimens of Chalukya paintings can be seen in the Badami cave temple and in the Ajanta caves. The reception given to a Persian embassy by Pulakesin-II is depicted in a painting at Ajantha. The Chalukya temples may be divided into two stages. The first stage is represented by the temples at Aihole and Badami. Among the seventy temples found at Aihole, four are important.
 1. Lad Khan temple is a low, flat-roofed structure consisting of a pillared hall.
 2. Durga temple resembles a Buddha Chaitya.
 3. Huchimalligudi temple.
 4. The Jain temple at Meguti.

Among the temples at Badami, the Muktheeswara temple and the Melagutti Sivalaya are notable for their architectural beauty. A group of four rock-cut temples at Badami are marked by high workmanship. The walls and pillared halls are adorned by beautiful images of gods and human beings. The second stage is represented by the temples at Pattadakal. There are ten temples here, four in the Northern style and the remaining six in the Dravidian style. The Papanatha temple is the most notable in the Northern style. The Sangamesvara temple and the Virupaksha temple are famous for their Dravidian style. The Virupaksha temple is built on the model of the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram. It was built by one of the queens of Vikramaditya-II. Sculptors brought from Kanchi were employed in its construction.

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Check Your Progress

6. Who were the Rashtrakutas?
7. Name the capital of Rashtrakutas.
8. Which literature was widely patronized by the Rashtrakutas?
9. Who wrote *Amogavritti*?
10. Who was the founder of the Imperial Chola line?
11. Who assumed a number of titles, Mudikondan, Gangaikondan, Kadaram Kondan and Pandita Cholan?
12. Who built a Siva temple at Tiruvadi?
13. Who was also known as Mamalla, which means ‘great wrestler’?
14. Name the capital of the Pallavas.
15. Who was the most important ruler of the Chalukyas?
16. Who was the last king of the later Western Chalukya dynasty?
17. Write about the chief source of income during Chalukyan period.

12.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. Dantidurga.
2. The Rashtrakutas widely patronized the Sanskrit literature. There were many scholars in the Rashtrakuta court. Trivikrama wrote Nalachampu and the Kavirahasya was composed by Halayudha during the reign of Krishna-III. The Jain literature flourished under the patronage of the Rashtrakutas. Amoghavarsha-I, who was a Jain, patronized many Jain scholars. His teacher Jinasena composed Parsvabhudaya, a biography of Parsva in verses. Another scholar Gunabhadra wrote the Adipurana, the life stories of various Jain saints.
3. The founder of the Imperial Chola line was Vijayalaya. He captured Tanjore from Muttaraiyars in 815 A.D. and built a temple for Durga. His son Aditya put an end to the Pallava kingdom by defeating Aparajita and annexed Tondaimandalam.

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4. The Cholas maintained a regular standing army consisting of elephants, cavalry, infantry and navy. About seventy regiments were mentioned in the inscriptions. The royal troops were called Kaikkolaperumpadai. Within this, there was a personal troop to defend the king known as Velaikkarar. Attention was given to the training of the army and military cantonments called kadagams existed. The Cholas paid special attention to their navy. The naval achievements of the Tamils reached its climax under the Cholas. They controlled the Malabar and Coromandal coasts. In fact, the Bay of Bengal became a Chola lake for some time.
5. The Dravidian style of art and architecture reached its perfection under the Cholas. They built enormous temples. The chief feature of the Chola temple is the vimana. The early Chola temples were found at Narthamalai and Kodumbalur in Pudukottai district and at Srinivasanallur in Tiruchirappalli district. The Big Temple at Tanjore built by Rajaraja-I is a masterpiece of South Indian art and architecture. It consists of the vimana, ardhamandapa, mahamandapa and a large pavilion in the front known as the Nandimandapa. Another notable contribution made by the Cholas to temple architecture is the Siva temple at Gangaikondacholapuram built by Rajendra-I.
6. The Rashtrakutas were of Kannada origin and Kannada language was their mother tongue. Dantidurga was the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty.
7. Malkhed.
8. The Rashtrakutas widely patronized the Sanskrit literature.
9. Sakatayana.
10. The founder of the Imperial Chola line was Vijayalaya.
11. Rajendra-I assumed a number of titles, the most famous being Mudikondan, Gangaikondan, Kadaram Kondan and Pandita Cholan.
12. Mahendravarman-I.
13. Narasimhavarman-I.
14. Kanchi.
15. Pulakesin-II.
16. Somesvara-IV was the last king of the later Western Chalukya dynasty.
17. Land revenue formed the chief source of revenue. The land was divided into different types and taxes were assessed according to the fertility of the soil. The different land taxes to be paid were Siddhaya, Dasavanda, Niruni-sunka and Melivana. Siddhaya was a fixed tax levied, not only on land but also on houses and shops. Dasavanda was the one-tenth portion of tax payable to the authority from out of the yield from land or revenue. Niruni-sunka was the water cess to be paid

by the farmer. Melivana may be taken to mean the tax levied on ploughs.

12.6 SUMMARY

- Dantidurga was the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. He defeated the Gurjaras and captured Malwa from them. Then he annexed the Chalukya kingdom by defeating Kirtivarman-II.
- The Rashtrakutas widely patronized the Sanskrit literature. There were many scholars in the Rashtrakuta court. Trivikrama wrote *Nalachampu* and the *Kavirahasya* was composed by Halayudha during the reign of Krishna-III.
- The founder of the Imperial Chola line was Vijayalaya. He captured Tanjore from Muttaraiyars in 815 A.D. and built a temple for Durga. His son Aditya put an end to the Pallava kingdom by defeating Aparajita and annexed Tondaimandalam.
- Rajendra-I assumed a number of titles, the most famous being Mudikondan, Gangaikondan, Kadaram Kondan and Pandita Cholan.
- Caste system was widely prevalent during the Chola period. Brahmins and Kshatriyas enjoyed special privileges. The inscriptions of the later period of the Chola rule mention about two major divisions among the castes – *Valangai* and *Idangai* castes.
- The land revenue department was well organized. It was called as *puravuvarithinaikkalam*. All lands were carefully surveyed and classified for assessment of revenue. The residential portion of the village was called *ur nattam*.
- The early Pallava rulers from 250 A.D. to 350 A.D. issued their charters in Prakrit. Important among them were Sivaskandavarman and Vijayaskandavarman. The second line of Pallava rulers who ruled between 350 A.D. and 550 A.D. issued their charters in Sanskrit.
- The Tamil society witnessed a great change during the Pallava period. The caste system became rigid. The Brahmins occupied a high place in the society. They were given land grants by the kings and nobles. They were also given the responsibility of looking after the temples.
- The Pallavas were great patrons of learning. Their capital Kanchi was an ancient centre of learning. The *Ghatika* at Kanchi was popular and it attracted students from all parts of India and abroad. The founder of the Kadamba dynasty, Mayurasarman studied Vedas at Kanchi.
- The most important ruler of the Chalukyan dynasty was Pulakesin-II. The Aihole inscription issued by him gives the details of his reign. He fought with the Kadambas of Banavasi and the Gangas of Mysore and established his suzerainty. Durvinita, the Ganga ruler accepted his overlordship and even gave his daughter in marriage to Pulakesin-II.

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- The Chalukya administration was highly centralized unlike that of the Pallavas and the Cholas. Village autonomy was absent under the Chalukyas. The Chalukyas had a great maritime power. Pulakesin-II had 100 ships in his navy. They also had a small standing army. The Badami Chalukyas were Brahmanical Hindus but they gave respect to other religions.
- The sources of income included other kinds of taxes like the commercial taxes, profession tax, social and community taxes, judicial fines and the like. Perjjumka, Volavaru (import), Horavaru (export) and the like were customs levied on trade and articles of merchandise, Angadidere (tax on shops), Gaanadere (tax on oil mills) and Navidadere (tax on barbers) were professional taxes.

12.7 KEY TERMS

- **Malkhed or Manyakheda:** The capital of Rashtrakutas.
- **Rashtras:** The Rashtrakuta Empire was divided into several provinces called rashtras.
- **Kavirajamarga:** It was the first poetic work in Kannada language written by Amoghavarsha.
- **Tanjore:** The capital of the Cholas.
- **Kaikkolaperumpadai:** The Royal troops of the Cholas.
- **Valangai and Idangai:** The major divisions of castes during Chola period.
- **Puravuvarithinaikkalam:** The land revenue department of the Cholas.
- **Maharajadhiraja and Chakravarti:** The Rashtrakuta rulers adopted the titles.

12.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the military conquest of Krishna-III.
2. Write about the achievements of Parantaka-I.
3. Write a note on the art and architecture of the Rashtrakutas.
4. Mention the conquest of Rajaraja-I.
5. Write about the social condition of the Cholas.
6. Write about Rajendra-I.
7. Write about the origin of the Pallavas.
8. Who was Mahendravarman?

9. Who was Rajasimha?
10. Write about the Chalukyan Dynasty.
11. Write about the achievements of Pulakesin-II.

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Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the achievements of the Rashtrakutas.
2. Describe the social, economic and cultural condition of the Rashtrakutas.
3. Narrate about the achievements of the Chola rulers.
4. Discuss the social, economic and cultural condition of the Cholas.
5. Explain the achievements of the Pallavas.
6. Narrate the achievements of the Chalukyas.
7. Explain the social, political, religious and culture condition of the Pallavas.
8. Explain the social, political, religious and culture condition of the Chalukyas.

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CHAPTER 13 SANGAM AGE AND GREATER INDIA

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Structure

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- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Sangam Literature
 - 13.2.1 Political History
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- 13.4 Summary
- 13.5 Key Terms
- 13.6 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.7 Further Reading

13.0 INTRODUCTION

The Sangam Age constitutes an important chapter in the history of South India. According to Tamil legends, there existed three Sangams (Academy of Tamil poets) in ancient Tamil Nadu popularly called Muchchangam. These Sangams flourished under the royal patronage of the Pandyas. The first Sangam, held at Madurai, was attended by gods and legendary sages but no literary work of this Sangam was available. The second Sangam was held at Kapadapuram but the all the literary works had perished except *Tolkappiyam*. The third Sangam at Madurai was founded by Mudathirumaran. It was attended by a large number of poets who produced voluminous literature but only a few had survived. These Tamil literary works remain useful sources to reconstruct the history of the Sangam Age.

13.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the literature of the Sangams.
- Describe the political history of the Sangam age.
- Discuss the social, economic and cultural condition of the Sangam period.

13.2 SANGAM LITERATURE

The corpus of Sangam literature includes *Tolkappiyam*, *Ettutogai*, *Pattuppattu*, *Pathinenkilkanakku*, and the two epics – *Silappathigaram* and *Manimegalai*. *Tolkappiyam* authored by Tolkappiyar is the earliest of the Tamil literature. It is

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a work on Tamil grammar but it provides information on the political and socioeconomic conditions of the Sangam period. The *Ettutogai* or Eight Anthologies consist of eight works – *Aingurunooru*, *Narrinai*, *Aganaooru*, *Purananooru*, *Kuruntogai*, *Kalittogai*, *Paripadal* and *Padirruppattu*. The *Pattuppattu* or Ten Idylls consist of ten works – *Thirumurugarruppadaai*, *Porunararruppadaai*, *Sirupanarruppadaai*, *Perumpanarruppadaai*, *Mullaippattu*, *Nedunalvadai*, *Maduraikkanchi*, *Kurinjippattu*, *Pattinappalai* and *Malaipadukadam*. Both Ettutogai and Pattuppattu were divided into two main groups – *Aham* (love) and *Puram* (valour). *Pathinenkilkkanakku* contains eighteen works mostly dealing with ethics and morals. The most important among them is *Tirukkural* authored by Thiruvalluvar. *Silappathigaram* written by Elango Adikal and *Manimegalai* by Sittalai Sattanar also provides valuable information on the Sangam polity and society.

- In addition to the Sangam literature, the Greek authors like Megasthenes, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy mention the commercial contacts between the West and South India. The Asokan inscriptions mention the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers on the South of the Mauryan Empire. The Hathikumbha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga also mentions about Tamil kingdoms. The excavations at Arikamedu, Poompuhar, Kodumanal and other places reveal the overseas commercial activities of the Tamils.
- The chronology of the Sangam literature is still a disputed topic among the scholars. The sheet anchor of Sangam chronology lies in the fact that Gajabahu-II of Sri Lanka and Cheran Senguttuvan of the Chera dynasty were contemporaries. This is confirmed by *Silappathigaram* as well as the *Dipavamsa* and *Mahavamsa*. Also the Roman coins issued by Roman emperors of the 1st century A.D. were found in plenty in various places of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the most probable date of the Sangam literature has been fixed between the 3rd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D. on the basis of literary, archaeological and numismatic evidences.

13.2.1 Political History

The Tamil country was ruled by three dynasties namely the Chera, Chola and Pandyas during the Sangam Age. The political history of these dynasties can be traced from the literary references.

Cheras

The Cheras ruled over parts of modern Kerala. Their capital was Vanji and their important seaports were Tondi and Musiri. The Pugalur inscription of the 1st century A.D refers to three generations of Chera rulers. *Padirruppattu* also provides information on Chera kings. Perum Sorru Udhyan Cheralathan, Imayavaramban Nedum Cheralathan and Cheran Senguttuvan were the famous rulers of this dynasty. Cheran Senguttuvan belonged to 2nd century A.D. His younger brother was Elango Adikal, the author of *Silappathigaram*. Among his military achievements, his expedition to the Himalayas was remarkable. He

defeated many North Indian monarchs. Senguttuvan introduced the Pattini cult or the worship of Kannagi as the ideal wife in Tamil Nadu. The stone for making the idol of Kannagi was brought by him after his Himalayan expedition. The consecration ceremony was attended by many princes including Gajabahu-II from Sri Lanka.

Cholas

The Chola kingdom of the Sangam period extended from modern Tiruchi district to Southern Andhra Pradesh. Their capital was first located at Uraiur and then shifted to Puhar. Karikala was a famous king of the Sangam Cholas. *Pattinappalai* portrays his early life and his military conquests. In the Battle of Venni, he defeated the mighty confederacy consisting of the Cheras, Pandyas and eleven minor chieftains. This event is mentioned in many Sangam poems. Vahaipparandalai was another important battle fought by him in which nine enemy chieftains submitted before him. Karikala's military achievements made him the overlord of the whole Tamil country. Trade and commerce flourished during his reign period. He was responsible for the reclamation of forest lands and brought them under cultivation thus adding prosperity to the people. He also built Kallanai across the river Kaveri and also constructed many irrigation tanks.

Pandyas

The Pandya ruled over the present-day Southern Tamil Nadu. Their capital was Madurai. The earliest kings of the Pandyan dynasty were Nediyon, Palyagosalai Mudukudumi Peruvaludhi and Mudathirumaran. There were two Neduncheliyans. The first one was known as Aryappadai Kadantha Neduncheliyan (one who won victories over the Aryan forces). He was responsible for the execution of Kovalan for which Kannagi burnt Madurai. The other was Talaiyalanganattu Cheruvenra (He who won the battle at Talaiyalanganam) Neduncheliyan. He was praised by Nakkirar and Mangudi Maruthanar. He wore this title after defeating his enemies at the Battle of Talaiyalanganam, which is located in the Tanjore district. By this victory, Neduncheliyan gained control over the entire Tamil Nadu. *Maduraikkani* written by Mangudi Maruthanar describes the socio-economic condition of the Pandya country including the flourishing seaport of Korkai. The last famous Pandyan king was Uggira Peruvaludhi. The Pandyan rule during the Sangam Age began to decline due to the invasion of the Kalabhras.

Minor Chieftains

The minor chieftains played a significant role in the Sangam period. Among them, Pari, Kari, Ori, Nalli, Pegan, Ay and Adiyaman were popular for their philanthropy and patronage of Tamil poets. Therefore, they were known as Kadai Yelu Vallalgal. Although they were subordinate to the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers, they were powerful and popular in their respective regions.

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13.2.2 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of the Sangam Period

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Sangam Polity

Hereditary monarchy was the form of government during the Sangam period. The king had also taken the advice of his minister, court-poet and the imperial court or avai. The Chera kings assumed titles like Vanavaramban, Vanavan, Kuttuvan, Irumporai and Villavar, the Chola kings like Senni, Valavan and Killi and the Pandya kings Thennavar and Minavar. Each of the Sangam dynasties had a royal emblem – carp for the Pandyas, tiger for the Cholas and bow for the Cheras. The imperial court or avai was attended by a number of chiefs and officials. The king was assisted by a large body of officials who were divided into five councils. They were ministers (amaichar), priests (anthanar), military commanders (senapathi), envoys (thuthar) and spies (orrar). The military administration was also efficiently organized during the Sangam Age. Each ruler had a regular army and their respective Kodimaram (tutelary tree).

Sangam Society

Tolkappiyam refers to the fivefold division of lands – Kurinji (hilly tracks), Mullai (pastoral), Marudam (agricultural), Neydal (coastal) and Palai (desert). The people living in these five divisions had their respective chief occupations as well as gods for worship.

- Kurinji – chief deity was Murugan – chief occupation, hunting and honey collection.
- Mullai – chief deity Mayon (Vishnu) – chief occupation, cattle-rearing and dealing with dairy products.
- Marudam – chief deity Indira – chief occupation, agriculture.
- Neydal – chief deity Varunan – chief occupation fishing and salt manufacturing.
- Palai – chief deity Korraivai – chief occupation robbery.

Tolkappiyam also refers to four castes namely arasar, anthanar, vanigar and vellalar. The ruling class was called arasar. Anthanars played a significant role in the Sangam polity and religion. Vanigars carried on trade and commerce. The vellalars were agriculturists. Other tribal groups like Parathavar, Panar, Eyinar, Kadambiar, Maravar and Pulaiyar were also found in the Sangam society. Ancient primitive tribes like Thodas, Irulas, Nagas and Vedars lived in this period.

Position of Women

There is a plenty of information in the Sangam literature to trace the position of women during the Sangam age. Women poets like Avvaiyar, Nachchellaiyar, and Kakkaipadiniyar flourished in this period and contributed to Tamil literature. The courage of women was also appreciated in many poems. Karpu or Chaste life was considered the highest virtue of women. Love marriage was

a common practice. Women were allowed to choose their life partners. However, the life of widows was miserable. The practice of Sati was also prevalent in the higher strata of society. The class of dancers was patronized by the kings and nobles.

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Economic Condition

Land revenue was the chief source of state's income while custom duty was also imposed on foreign trade. The Pattinappalai refers to the custom officials employed in the seaport of Puhar. Booty captured in wars was also a major income to the royal treasury. Roads and highways were well maintained and guarded night and day to prevent robbery and smuggling.

Agriculture was the chief occupation. Rice was the common crop, Ragi, sugarcane, cotton, pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon and a variety of fruits were the other crops. Jackfruit and pepper were famous in the Chera country. Paddy was the chief crop in the Chola and Pandya country. The handicrafts of the Sangam period were popular. They include weaving, metal works and carpentry, ship building and making of ornaments using beads, stones and ivory. There was a great demand for these products, as the internal and external trade was at its peak during the Sangam period. Spinning and weaving of cotton and silk clothes attained a high quality. The poems mention the cotton clothes as thin as a cloud of steam. There was a great demand in the Western world for the cotton clothes woven at Uraiur. Both internal and foreign trade was well organized and briskly carried on in the Sangam Age. The Sangam literature, Greek and Roman accounts and the archaeological evidences provide detailed information on this subject. Merchants carried the goods on the carts and on animal-back from place to place. Internal trade was mostly based on the barter system. External trade was carried between South India and the Greek kingdoms. After the ascendancy of the Roman Empire, the Roman trade assumed importance. The port city of Puhar became an emporium of foreign trade, as big ships entered this port with precious goods. Other ports of commercial activity include Tondi, Musiri, Korkai, Arikamedu and Marakkanam. The author of Periplus provides the most valuable information on foreign trade. Plenty of gold and silver coins issued by the Roman Emperors like Augustus, Tiberius and Nero were found in all parts of Tamil Nadu. They reveal the extent of the trade and the presence of Roman traders in the Tamil country. The main exports of the Sangam age were cotton fabrics, spices like pepper, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon and turmeric, ivory products, pearls and precious stones. Gold, horses and sweet wine were the chief imports.

Cultural Condition

Religion

The primary deity of the Sangam period was Seyon or Murugan, who is hailed as Tamil God. The worship of Murugan was having an ancient origin and the festivals relating to God Murugan was mentioned in the Sangam literature. He was honoured with six abodes known as Arupadai Veedu. Other gods worshiped during the Sangam period were Mayon (Vishnu), Vendan (Indiran), Varunan and Korraivai. The Hero Stone or Nadu Kal worship was significant in

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the Sangam period. The Hero Stone was erected in memory of the bravery shown by the warrior in battle. Many hero stones with legends inscribed on them were found in different parts of Tamil Nadu. This kind of worshiping the deceased has a great antiquity.

Fine Arts

Poetry, music and dancing were popular among the people of the Sangam age. Liberal donations were given to poets by the kings, chieftains and nobles. The royal courts were crowded with singing bards called Panar and Viraliyar. They were experts in folk songs and folk dances. The arts of music and dancing were highly developed. A variety of Yazhs and drums are referred to in the Sangam literature. Dancing was performed by Kanigaiyar. Koothu was the most popular entertainment of the people.

End of the Sangam Age

Towards the end of the 3rd century A.D., the Sangam period slowly witnessed its decline. The Kalabhras occupied the Tamil country for about two and a half centuries. We have little information about the Kalabhras rule. Jainism and Buddhism became prominent during this period. The Pallavas in the Northern Tamil Nadu and Pandiyas in Southern Tamil Nadu drove the Kalabhras out of the Tamil country and established their rule.

Check Your Progress

1. Write the name of the three important literature of the Sangams.
2. The Sangam literature has been fixed between which periods to which period?
3. Write the capital name of the Cheras.
4. Mention the capital of the Cholas.
5. Write the fourfold division of lands according to Tolkappiyam.
6. Mention the names of the women poets during Sangam age.
7. What was the chief occupation during the Sangam period?

13.3 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai and Pattuppattu.
2. The Sangam literature has been fixed between the 3rd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D. on the basis of literary, archaeological and numismatic evidences.
3. Vanji.
4. Uraiyyur and Puhar.
5. Tolkappiyam refers to the fivefold division of lands – Kurinji (hilly tracks), Mullai (pastoral), Marudam (agricultural), Neydal (coastal) and Palai (desert).

6. Women poets like Avvaiyar, Nachchellaiyar and Kakkaipadiniyar flourished in this period and contributed to Tamil literature.
7. Agriculture was the chief occupation. Rice was the common crop, Ragi, sugarcane, cotton, pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon and a variety of fruits were the other crops. Jackfruit and pepper were famous in the Chera country.

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13.4 SUMMARY

- The Sangam Age constitutes an important chapter in the history of South India. According to Tamil legends, there existed three Sangams (Academy of Tamil Poets) in ancient Tamil Nadu popularly called Muchchangam. These Sangams flourished under the royal patronage of the Pandyas.
- *Tolkappiyam* authored by Tolkappiyar is the earliest of the Tamil literature. It is a work on Tamil grammar, but it provides information on the social, economic and political conditions of the Sangam period.
- The Cheras ruled over parts of modern Kerala. Their capital was Vanji and their important seaports were Tondi and Musiri. The Pugalur inscription of the 1st century A.D refers to three generations of Chera rulers.
- The Chola kingdom of the Sangam period extended from modern Tiruchi district to Southern Andhra Pradesh. Their capital was first located at Uraiyur and then shifted to Puhar. Karikala was a famous king of the Sangam Cholas.
- The Pandya ruled over the present day Southern Tamil Nadu. Their capital was Madurai. The earliest kings of the Pandyan dynasty were Nediyon, Palyagascalai Mudukudumi Peruvaludhi and Mudathirumaran.
- Land revenue was the chief source of state's income while custom duty was also imposed on foreign trade. The Pattinappalai refers to the custom officials employed in the seaport of Puhar.
- The primary deity of the Sangam period was Seyon or Murugan, who is hailed as Tamil God. The worship of Murugan was having an ancient origin and the festivals relating to God Murugan was mentioned in the Sangam literature.

13.5 KEY TERMS

- **Kurinji:** Chief deity was Murugan – chief occupation, hunting and honey collection.
- **Mullai:** Chief deity Mayon (Vishnu) – chief occupation, cattle-rearing and dealing with dairy products.
- **Marudam:** Chief deity Indira – chief occupation, agriculture.

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- **Neydal:** Chief deity Varunan – chief occupation fishing and salt manufacturing.
- **Palai:** Chief deity Korraivai – chief occupation robbery.

13.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the important literature of the Sangams.
2. Write three important dynasties of the Tamil country.
3. Write a note on the Cheras.
4. Write about the Sangam polity.
5. Write about Sangam society.
6. Write about the cultural contribution of the Sangams.

Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the literature of the Sangams.
2. Describe the political history of the Sangam age.
3. Discuss the social, economic and cultural condition of the Sangam period.

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CHAPTER 14 ARAB INVASION

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Structure

- 14.0 Introduction
 - 14.1 Objectives
 - 14.2 Causes of the Arab Invasion
 - 14.2.1 Muhammad-bin-Qasim and His Conquests
 - 14.2.2 Effects of Arab Invasion
 - 14.2.3 Mahmud of Ghazni
 - 14.2.4 Military Conquests of Mahmud of Ghazni
 - 14.2.5 Muhammad Ghori
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 - 14.3 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
 - 14.4 Summary
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14.0 INTRODUCTION

The Arab Invasion of Sindh marked the beginning of Muslim inroads into India. It was under Muhammad-bin-Qasim, the Arabs, made their successful attack on India in 712 A.D. However, Arab invasions were confined to a very limited territory and also their rule was for very short period. So, it was a conquest without any lasting impact on India or Indians. According to Dr. Ishwari Prasad, ‘The story of Mohammad-bin-Qasim’s invasion of Sindh is one of the romances of history. His blooming youth, his dash and heroism, his noble deportment throughout the expeditions and his tragic fall have invested his career with the halo of martyrdom.’ Mahmud of Ghazni was the most prominent ruler of the Ghaznavid Empire from 997 A.D. to 1030 A.D. In the name of Islam, he conquered the Eastern Iran and ravaged the North-Western subcontinent. By the prowess of his arms and ferocity, he transferred the provincial city of Ghazni into the wealthy capital of an extensive empire. Appearance of Sultan Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghori on the political firmament of India heralded a new era, i.e., Muslim rule in India. It is true that he was the finest Muslim invaders of India who laid the foundation of the Muslim empire by creating a trained land of successors, who consolidated the Muslim rule after his assassination.

14.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the causes of Arab invasion of Sind.
- Describe the conquest of Muhammad-bin-Qasim.

- Explain the conquests of Mahmud of Ghazni.
- Narrate the military conquest of Muhammad Ghori.

14.2 CAUSES OF THE ARAB INVASION

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- It is stated that the Arabs were provoked to undertake the conquest of Sindh in 711 A.D. for so many reasons.
- It was after the death of Prophet Muhammad, the Arabs could establish an extensive empire. They conquered Persia, Herat, etc. After the conquest of these territories, they exerted their attention on fabulous India.
- The Arab conquest of Sindh in India was merely a part of their general aggressive policy which could bring under them vast regions in Western Europe, Africa and Europe.
- Another cause of the Arab invasion of Sindh was the determination of the Arabs to conquer Sindh with the object of spreading Islam. After the conquest of Persia and Heart, India now came in their systemic line of conquest to expand their Islamic empire.
- From time immemorial, there was commercial contact between India and Arabia. The Arab merchants were familiar with the Western sea coast of India. They also knew about the fabulous wealth of India. So, the wealth of India tempted the Arabs to invade Indian territories and also to enrich themselves with plunder.
- The immediate cause of their invasion was the plunder of Arab ships by Sind pirates near the coast of Debal. It is said that the king of Ceylon had sent to Hajaj, the Viceroy of the Eastern Provinces (Iraq) of the Khalifa, some valuable gifts like, orphan daughters of the Muslim merchants who had died in his dominions. His vessels were attacked and plundered by pirates of the coast of Sindh.
- According to another account, the Khalifa had sent agents to India to purchase female slaves and other commodities. “Whose agents, on reaching Debal, the principal sea-port of Dahir, were attacked and plundered by pirates. So Hajaj demanded compensation from the king Dahir of Sind. But Dahir refused to pay reparation towards the ships plundered near the coast of Debal. Dahir replied that he had no control over the pirates. So, Hajaj got the permission of the Khalifa to launch a military expedition against king Dahir. Hajaj sent an expedition under Ubaidullah against Dahir but it ended in failure. The second invasion under Budail also failed. At last, Hajaj sent a powerful army under his son-in-law, Muhammad-bin-Qasim.

NOTES**14.2.1 Muhammad-bin-Qasim and His Conquests**

Muhammad-bin-Qasim started his campaign at the head of an army consisting of 6,000 Syrian horses, the followers of the armies of the Caliphs, 6,000 cavalry and a baggage train of 3,000 Bactrian animals. He had reinforcements from the Governor of Makran. Mohammad Harun brought with him 5 catapults which served as medieval artillery. Each catapult had 500 trained men and thus the total of artillery men was 2,500. Abdul Aswad Jahan had been sent in advance to join Mohammad Qasim on the border of Sindh. The army of Mohammad bin Qasim continued to increase till it was 50,000 strong when it marched down to Multan.

- **Debal:** From Makran, Mohammad-bin-Qasim proceeded to Debal. On the way, the Jats and Meds joined him against Dahir. It was in the spring of 712 A.D. that he reached the port of Debal and besieged it. A nephew of Dahir was in charge of the town and he offered stiff resistance. It is stated that Brahmanas of Debal prepared a talisman and placed it near the great red flag which flew from the temple. The Arabs were not able to conquer Debal in spite of best efforts. However, a Brahman disclosed the secret of the talisman to the Arabs.

The result was that the Arabs made the flagstaff the target and broke the talisman. Once the red flag was pulled down, the people surrendered in despair. There was a great massacre for three days. The Hindus and Buddhists of Debal were given the option to become Muslims and those who refused to do so, were murdered or enslaved. Huge booty fell into the hands of the Arabs. 700 beautiful females were among the prize of Mohammad-bin-Qasim. A part of the booty and women were sent to Hajaj and the rest were distributed among the soldiers. In the place of idol-temples, mosques were created. Khutbah (Friday prayer) was read. The call to prayer was raised, so that devotions are performed at stated hours.

- **Nerun:** From Debal, Mohammad-bin-Qasim advanced to Nerun. It was then in the hands of Buddhist priests and Sramanas. The Buddhists surrendered without a fight. They argued thus: "We are a priestly class; our religion is peace. According to our faith, fighting and slaughter are not allowable". So, Nerun was occupied without any difficulty.
- **Sehwan:** From Nerun, the Arabs marched on Sehwan which was held by a cousin of Dahir named Bajhra. He surrendered after some feeble resistance.
- **Dahir:** Muhammad-bin-Qasim ordered a bridge of boats to be constructed in order to cross the Indus. Dahir was taken by surprise and with his men he fell back upon Rawar. It was here that the Arabs met imposing arrays of war elephants and a powerful army thirsting to give battle to the Muslims. Dahir was seated on an elephant. His frightened elephant took him into the river Indus. Although the king saved himself and continued to fight after mounting a horse, the army

thought that they had lost their leader and fled away. Ultimately, Dahir was defeated and killed. Ranibai, the widow of Dahir, put up a heroic defence from the fort of Rawar and her garrison 15,000 strong, rained stones and missiles on the Arabs. When they could not hold out, they saved their honour by performing the ceremony of Jauhar.

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- **Brahmanabad:** From Rawar, Muhammad-bin-Qasim proceeded towards Brahmanabad which was defended by Jai Singh, the son of Dahir. The fighting was bitter. As many as 8,000 persons were killed. When Jai Singh found that further resistance was useless, he retired from Brahmanabad. It was after the fall of Brahmanabad that Mohammad-bin-Qasim captured Rani Ladi, another widow of Dahir and his two daughters Surya Devi and Parmal Devi.
- **Aror:** Aror, the capital of Sindh, was held by another son of Dahir. It was stoutly defended for some time. But at last fell into the hands of the Arabs. It was in this way that the conquest of Sindh was completed.
- **Multan:** Muhammad-bin-Qasim proceeded towards Multan, the main city of the Upper Indus. There was tough resistance everywhere, but in spite of that he appeared before the gates of Multan and captured it through treachery. A deserter told him the stream from which the people got their water-supply and by cutting off the same, Mohammad-bin-Qasim was able to capture Multan. The Arabs got so much of gold that they named Multan as the city of gold.

After capturing Multan, Muhammad-bin-Qasim began to draw a plan of conquering the rest of India. He sent an army of 10,000 horses under Abu Hakim to conquer Kanauj. However, before that could be accomplished, Qasim himself was finished.

Death of Qasim: There is a difference of opinion with regard to the circumstances which led to the death of Muhammad-bin-Qasim. One view is that Surya Devi and Parmal Devi, the daughters of Dahir were sent to the Khalifa as presents from Qasim. The Khalifa selected Surya Devi for the honour of sharing his bed but she stated that she was not worthy because Qasim had dishonoured her and her sister before sending them to the Khalifa. This annoyed the Khalifa who wrote with his own hand directing that Muhammad-bin-Qasim should suffer himself to be sewn up in a raw hide and thus dispatched to the capital. When the order reached Mohammad-bin-Qasim, it was at once obeyed. He caused himself to be sewn up in the hide and thus the box containing his body was sent to Damascus. When the box was opened in the presence of Surya Devi and the Khalifa, the Khalifa pointed out to the dead body as evidence of the obedience which he was able to get from his servants. However, Surya Devi told the Khalifa at that time that her charge against Muhammad-bin-Qasim was false and she had merely invented the story to have revenge against him. The Khalifa was so much annoyed that he ordered both the sisters to be tied to the tails of horses and dragged till they died. Another view is that there were two rival groups in the court of the Khalifa and one group was opposed to Hajaj whose cousin and son-in-law was

Muhammad-bin-Qasim. The rivals of Hajaj poisoned the ears of the Khalifa against Qasim and orders were passed to torture him to death.

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14.2.2 Effects of Arab Invasion

Among the Muslims, the Arabs first invaded the Indian territories. The Arabs achieved their political and religious unity with the spread of Islam. Sir Wellesley Haig rightly says that the rise of Islam is one of the marvels of history. It was in the year 622 A.D. that the prophet of Islam was driven away from his native city but within a century, his successors and followers were able to set up an empire which extended from the Atlantic to the Indus and from Caspian Sea to the cataracts of the Nile. But the Arabs failed to extend their territories beyond Sind and Multan.

- The Rajput rulers of the North and of the East were quite powerful to check the invasion of the Arabs. The rulers of other parts of India considered the defeat of Dahir as a local event. The financial resource of Sind was very limited. It was not enough to meet the administrative expenditure. The Arabs entered India from a wrong direction. It was not easier on their part to enter into the Indian soil through Sind.
- Thus, the Arab could not extend their territories beyond Sind. They conquered only a small part of India. They also did not introduce any new system of administration. So, politically, the Arab conquest of Sind was very insignificant. According to Lane Poole, “The Arab conquest of Sind was a mere episode in the History of India and of Islam, a triumph without result.”
- The work of conquest of Sindh started by Muhammad-bin-Qasim was cut short by his death. The Khalifa also died in 715 A.D. Under his son, Omar II, Jai Singh, the son of Dahir, became a convert to Islam. However, even his conversion did not save him. Junaid, the Governor of Sindh under Khalifa Hisham (724-43 A.D.), invaded his territory and killed him. In 750 A.D., there was a revolution at Damascus and the Omayyids were replaced by the Abbasids. The control of the Khalifas became more and more loose and the governors and chiefs of Sindh became more and more independent. By 781 A.D., authority of the Khalifa in Sindh became virtually extinct. The Arab chiefs established two independent kingdoms, one on Mansurah or Sindh proper up to Aror on the Indus and the other comprising Multan.
- The Arab invasion of Sind had no impact on Indian society and religion. No doubt, some Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam but most of the Hindus being conscious of the superiority of their culture refused to have any contact with the Muslim invaders.
- The Arab culture was enriched by its contact with Hindu culture and civilization. The Arabs acquired knowledge on Hindu philosophy, astronomy, mathematics and medicine.

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- Khalifa Harun-ul-Rashid invited many scholars to Baghdad. Among them mention can be made about Manaka, Bhala, and Bazigar. Dhana an Indian physician was serving as the chief medical officer of a hospital at Baghdad. Manaka had cured Khalifa Harun-ul-Rashid from a serious disease.
- The Indian astronomical works such as Brahma Siddhanta and Khanda Khadyaka of Brahmagupta were translated into Arabic with the help of Indian scholars. The Arabs also acquired knowledge on India mathematics and numerals.
- The Arabs were considerably influenced by Indian art and architecture. Indian architects were invited to Baghdad to build mosques and Buildings. Indian paintings also influenced them immensely. The Arab culture was enriched because of its contact with Indian civilization and culture.
- On the other hand, it exposed the weakness of the Indian rulers and their military strategy. It also brought into light the disunity among Indian rulers and thus encouraged the Muslim invaders for further conquests.
- The Arab invasion of Sindh also spread the message in the Muslim states about its wealth and disunity and thus tempted the Muslim invaders for easy invasions for mastering the wealth and spreading their religion in the new conquered land.

14.2.3 Mahmud of Ghazni

Mahmud of Ghazni was the most prominent ruler of the Ghaznavid Empire from 997 A.D. to 1030 A.D. In the name of Islam, he conquered the Eastern Iran and ravaged the North-Western subcontinent. By the prowess of his arms and ferocity, he transferred the provincial city of Ghazni into the wealthy capital of an extensive empire. His empire extended mostly over Afghanistan, Eastern Iran, Pakistan and North-Western India. His achievement was nothing but the act of invasion and plundering fabulous wealth. However, preserving the ideological link to the suzerainty of the Caliph, he established him the first ruler in Indian history to carry the title Sultan which means “authority”. He is remembered by the Indian for his ferocious seventeen times attack and collection of heavy booties from conquered territories and temples.

In 971 A.D., Dawlah Abdul-Qasim Mahmud-bin-Sabuktegin, well known as Mahmud of Ghazni, was born in the famous town of Ghazni, now in South-East Afghanistan. His father Abu Mansur Sabuktegin was a former Mamluk warrior-slave from Ghazni. When the Samanid dynasty, based in Bukhara (now in Uzbekistan) began to disintegrate Sabuktegin seized control of Ghazni in 977 A.D. He then went on to conquer other major Afghan cities, such as Kandahar. His kingdom formed the core of the Ghaznavid Empire, and he is credited with founding the dynasty.

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Rise to Power – Not much is known about Mahmud of Ghazni's childhood. Only it is known that he had one younger brother. Although he was the elder son of his father yet he was not born from the Sabuktegin's principal wife. So, the principal queen exerted immense influence on Sabuktegin to make her son Ismail his heir apparent. She also became successful in her mission and Ismail was nominated as successor to the throne of Ghazni. It seems likely that he chose Ismail because he was not descended from slaves on both sides, unlike Ismail. It was in 997 A.D. Sabuktegin breathed his last. When Mahmud, who was stationed at Nishapur (now in Iran), heard of his brother's appointment to the throne, he immediately marched to challenge Ismail's right to rule. Mahmud overcame his brother's supporters in 998 A.D. and seized Ghazni. He now adorned the throne for, and placed his younger brother under house arrest for the rest of his life. He now ruled from 998 A.D. to 1030 A.D.

14.2.4 Military Conquests of Mahmud of Ghazni

In 994 A.D., Mahmud joined his father Sabuktegin in the capture of Khorasan from the rebels. During this period the Samanid state became highly unstable, as various factions vied for control. The chief among them was Abu'l-Qasim Simjuri. Mahmud took over his father's kingdom in 998 A.D. after defeating and capturing Ismail at the Battle of Ghazni. He then marched to the West to occupy Kandahar region. He own over and turned it into a militarized city. Having settled the affairs of his kingdom, Muhammad turned his attention towards Hindustan and led as many as seventeen invasions during the years 1000 A.D. to 1026 A.D.

Causes of Indian Conquests – Until the rise of the West, India was famous for its prosperity and fabulous wealth. Its moderate climate was also another temptation. Thus, India presented an irresistible target for the ravening Mongols and their descendants who settled in present day Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, all within comparatively easy reach of North-Western India. The North-West was at this time, a mish-mash of warring kingdoms, more interested in settling scores with their neighbours than in unifying against the Mongols. It then provided an opportunity to defeat those Indian kings very easily.

It is argued that Mahmud of Ghazni was not a religious proselytizer. Indeed, with the exception of Punjab, which he needed as his "forward operating base" for his Indian expeditions, he made no attempt to rule any of his conquests. His intention was economic than political.

Others, however, have argued the reverse. To them, he may have wanted the money, but also wanted to spread Islam for which he destroyed Hindu temples although he was offered large sums to leave the temples undestroyed. Romila Thapar takes a middle view that Mahmud needed money for his wars. India's temples were known to contain fabulous treasures. These were his chief target. Again writes, Mahmud was undoubtedly an iconoclast, and hardly averse to destroying temples to gain favor when he went to heaven. Nonetheless, he warred equally with other Islamic sects, because he was a

Sunni. The secondary purpose of his raids may have been tied up with his need to convert Shia Muslim to Sunni beliefs.

Arab Invasion

- **1000 A.D.:** The first expedition in 1000 A.D. resulted in the capture of several frontier districts which were entrusted by Muhammad to his governors.
- **1002 A.D.:** Mahmud invaded Sistan, dethroned the then Khalifa, last of the Saffaridamirs, and ended the Saffarid dynasty. From there, he decided to focus on Hindustan to the South-East, particularly the highly fertile lands of the Punjab region since South Eastern Khorasan (where he was from) was mostly mountainous, dry deserts and the fertile lands had been poorly harvested and gone to waste during the reign of the previous rulers. It should be noted that Punjab was well known for its mangoes, oranges, bananas and other tropical fruits that Khorasan lacked and instead was famous for pomegranates and watermelons. It suggests that this has been the main reason for the Ghaznavids invading India because the fruit as well as rice, sugar, wheat, and other products exported to the Middle East and Central Asia generated more income than anything else for the rulers.
- **1001 A.D.-1003 A.D.:** Jaipal was the king of Hindushahi Kingdom. Mahmud had already fought against him, when Subuktagin was the king of Ghazni. When Mahmud became the king, he decided to attack on Hindushahi kingdom, as its king Jaipal, was his old enemy. In 1001, Mahmud attacked the Hindushahi Kingdom. 15,000 Hindu soldiers were killed. Jaipal was defeated and captured. He was presented before Mahmud with his 15 other relatives. Huge numbers were also brought along as slaves. Mahmud looted all his wealth. He also received 250,000 Dinars to free Jaipal. Though Jaipal was freed, he refused to survive his disgrace. He cast himself upon a funeral pyre and died.
- **1004 A.D.-1005 A.D.:** In these years, expeditions were designed against the city of Bihar. Raja of Bihar had failed in his promises made to Mahmud. Raja of Bihar offered stiff resistance but he could not be successful and fled away from the battle field. Bihar was annexed easily. Raja was persuaded and ultimately stabbed. On his death, a large number of Hindus were butchered and those who accepted Islam were only spared.
- **1006 A.D.:** In this year, invasion was made against Abul Fateh Daud, the heretic ruler of Multan. He did not confirm to orthodox Islam. In the eyes of Mahmud, Daud was as bad as a Kafir as a Rajput. Mahmud started from Ghazni to Multan in 1006 A.D. via Punjab. Raja of Punjab was Anandpal who offered stubborn resistance but ultimately failed and fled to Kashmir. Now, Mahmud advanced to Multan and captured it after seven days of stiff fighting. He levied upon the people twenty thousand dirhams with which to respite their sins. Mahmud put Sukhpal alias Nawasa Shah, the grandson of Jaipal,

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in charge of the Punjab and Multan, and retired to Ghazni. After some time, Mahmud was informed that Sukhpal had declared himself independent and also given up Islam. In order to teach a lesson, Mahmud invaded India once again, defeated him and took over the administration in his own hand. Sukhpal was arrested and imprisoned.

- **1008 A.D.:** Anandpal was the son of Jaipal, and now became the king of Hindushahi Kingdom. In 1008 A.D., Mahmud attacked on Anandpal. Anandpal called other Hindu kings to help him. The kings of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kannauj, Delhi, Ajmer, etc. came to help him with their armies. In the battlefield of Peshawar, both the armies remained standing before each other with daggers and spears. Long awaited battle now started. Meanwhile, the Khokhars (a race) also came there to help Hindus. Mahmud deployed 6000 archers to attack. Khokhars attacked the Muslims and killed approximately 5000 Muslims. Mahmud was so much disappointed that he decided to sue for peace. To his good luck, Jaipal's elephant became infuriated and ran from the battlefield. As soon as Jaipal left the battlefield, the Hindu army got confused and ran away. Muslims chased them and killed 20000 Hindus. Thus, the best organized national efforts ever made by medieval Hindu India against the foreigners ended in defeat. A huge booty fell in the hand of Muslims.
- **1009 A.D.:** Invasion of Nagarkot [Kangra] – Nagarkot was very famous for its wealth kept in its temples. So, Mahmud decided to invade Nagarkot. Like a swarm of locusts, his army destroyed everything in its path. Paralyzed with fear, the defenders opened the city's gate and fell on the ground in submission. Mahmud got so much jewellery, gold and silver, that when he returned to his capital, his people congregated to see the incredible wealth of India.
- **1014 A.D.:** Mahmud came to know of the riches in the temples of Thanesar. In 1014, he invaded Thaneswar. The Hindus wanted to reach on a compromise, but Mahmud refused. His army destroyed the city, massacred the inhabitants, and plundered the sacred temples.
- **1015 A.D.** He attacked upon Kashmir valley and collected heavy booties but he was not successful to subdue the ruler of Kashmir. His attack for second time was also unsuccessful. At last, he gave up the idea of conquering Kashmir.
- **1018-19 A.D.:** In these years, he conquered over Mathura and Kannauj. When Mahmud invaded Mathura, he was amazed to see so many huge and beautiful Hindu temples. No one would resist him and he entered the city unopposed, leaving with untold wealth. Then he attacked Kannauj in January of 1019 A.D.. The King of Kannauj, Rajpal Pratihar did not dare to stop him and ran away. The invaders looted the sacred temples. Many innocent people were killed. The king of Kanauji, Rajpal Pratihar, accepted the superiority of Mahmud Ghaznavi and then Mahmud turned back to Ghazni.

- **1021 A.D.:** Attack against Kalinjar – Rajpal Pratihar, the king of Kannauj had accepted the superiority of Mahmud. This made other Rajput kings angry. The Rajput kings of Kalinjar, Gandda Chandel, with the king of Gwalior and others attacked Rajpal of Kanauj and killed Rajpal. Mahmud was unhappy with this. To punish the culprits, he attacked Kalinjar. The king, Gandda Chandel, ultimately accepted the superiority of Mahmud. Mahmud was satisfied with the money the King gave him and he returned.
- **1023 A.D.:** He made his attack on Lahore and returned victorious.
- **1025 A.D.:** The most famous and terrible invasion launched by Mahmud was his sixteenth attack upon India designed against the Somnath Temple in Gujarat, in Western India. This was an immense distance from Ghazni. Fear of his wrath made easy passage for him. The Somnath temple was very famous for its treasures. There were one thousand priests to serve the temple. Hundreds of dancers and singers played before its gate. There was famous Linga, a rude pillar stone, adorned with gems embroidered with precious like stars, which decorated the shrine. The brave Hindu Rajputs came forward to defend the temple. They fought very bravely and the invaders could not damage the temple. The battle lasted for three days. After three days, the invaders succeeded and entered into the Somnath temple. Mahmud ordered his men to destroy the sacred idol Linga. He looted the treasures of the temple. It is said that he got wealth worth 20 million Dinars, eighty times the huge sum he had gained on his first invasion.
- **1026 A.D.:** It was in this year the 17th and the last invasion took place. After looting the Somnath temple, when Mahmud was going back to Ghazni, the Jats had attacked his army. So, to punish the Jats, he returned and defeated them in 1026 A.D.

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Extent of His State

Over the next three decades, Mahmud of Ghazni would make more than a dozen military strikes into Hindu and Islam kingdoms to the South. His empire stretched all the way to the shores of the Indian Ocean at Southern Gujarat before his death. Mahmud appointed local vassal kings to rule in his name in many of the conquered regions, easing relations with non-Muslim populations. He also welcomed Hindu and Ismail soldiers and officers into his army. However, as the cost of constant expansion and warfare began to strain, the Ghaznavid treasury in the later years of his reign. Mahmud ordered his troops to target Hindu temples, and strip them of vast quantities of gold.

- **Public Works:** The Sultan Mahmud loved books, and honoured learned men. In his home at Ghazni, he built up a library to rival that of the Abbasid caliph's court in Baghdad, then in Iraq. Mahmud of Ghazni also sponsored the construction of universities, palaces, and grand mosques, making his capital city the jewel of Central Asia.

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- **Religious Temperament:** The Sultan Mahmud spent much of his lifetime battling against “infidels” – Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, and Muslim splinter-groups such as the Ismailis. In fact, the Ismailis seem to have been a particular target of his wrath, since Mahmud (and his nominal overlord, the Abbasid Caliph) considered them heretics. Nonetheless, Mahmud of Ghazni seems to have tolerated non-Muslim people so long as they did not oppose him militarily. This record of relative tolerance would continue into the following Muslim empires in India: the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526 A.D.) and the Mughal Empire (1526-1857 A.D.).

The last four years of Mahmud’s life were spent contending with the influx of Oghuz Turkic tribes from Central Asia, the Buyid Dynasty and rebellions by Seljuqs. Initially, the Seljuqs were repulsed by Mahmud and retired to Khwarezm but Togrul and Cagri led them to capture Merv and Nishapur (1028-1029 A.D.). It was at last on 30th April, 1030 Sultan Mahmud breathed his last.

Estimate

Indeed he is a great soldier, a man of immense courage and undefeatable energy of mind and body. He was a brilliant commander in the field. As a dashing cavalry leader, he had no parallel. He was a great patron of art and letters, great architects, poets and artists flocked to his court. But in spite of that, he appeared to the historians of India merely “as an insatiable invader”. It is thus rightly said that “To the muslims of the day, he was a champion of the faith, who tried to extirpate infidelity in heather lands. To the Hindus, he is to this day a human tyrant, a veritable Hun, who destroyed their religious susceptibilities. But the unbiased enquirer who keeps in mind the peculiar circumstances of the age must record a different verdict. In his estimate, Mahmud was a great leader of men, a just and upright ruler according to his own lights, one interpret and gifted soldier, a dispenser of justice, a patron of letters and deserves to be ranked among the greatest kings of the world.”

14.2.5 Muhammad Ghori

Appearance of Sultan Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghori on the political firmament of India heralded a new era, i.e., Muslim rule in India. It is true that he was the finest Muslim invaders of India who laid the foundation of the Muslim empire by creating a trained land of successors, who consolidated the Muslim rule after his assassination. From his time onwards till historic sepoy mutiny, there was always a Muslim King upon the throne of Delhi.

It was in 1009 A.D. the independent ruler of Ghur, a state between Ghazni and Herat, Muhammad-bin-Suri was defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni and served under him as a vassal. After the defeat of Mahmud in 1030 A.D. situation changed. Under the order of the king Baharam of Ghazni, Malik-Qutub-ud-din, prince of Ghur was murdered. So, Saif-ud-din Suri the father of the deceased attacked Ghazni and defeated Baharam but was killed by Baharam later. Ala-ud-din Hussain, the younger brother of Saif-ud-din attacked

Ghazni and destroyed it in 1155 A.D. He was succeeded later by Ghias-ud-din who recovered Ghazni and put it in charge of his brother Muhammad Ghori. Muhammad Ghori latter declared his independence and ruled as sovereign.

14.2.6 Conquests of Muhammad Ghori

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Reasons behind Indian Conquests

- As an ambitious and enterprising prince, he wanted to conquer upon Punjab and Multan.
- It was an age of military glory. So, he wanted to establish his military genius by Indian conquests. He was indeed very fond of conquest and power.
- Being a Muslim, he would like to conquer the Hindus of India and spread Islam in that country.
- He liked to have prestige and wealth by conquests.

Multan, Uch and Sindh: The first attack was waged against Multan in 11th century A.D. It was captured easily. He being whetted by the easy victory now marched towards Uch in upper Sindh and also conquered it without difficulty. In 1182 A.D., he also compelled the ruler of lower Sindh to accept his suzerainty.

- **Anhilwara:** Anhilwara was the capital of Bhima II, the Vaghela ruler of Gujarat. However, in this war, Muhammad's army was compelled to retreat being defeated by Bhima-II. The resistance offered by the king Bhima-II was so stubborn that in the words of Habibullah Muhammad, "Ghori was lucky to escape with his beaten army."
- **Punjab:** Muhammad Ghori was well-convinced that key to conquer India lay with Punjab. So, in 1179 A.D., he attacked Peshawar, which was a part of Punjab. He now plundered the countryside. It was in 1186 A.D. Muhammad once again attacked on Punjab and occupied Lahore.
- **First Battle of Tarain:** After conquering Multan, Sindh and Punjab he raged on the Rajput kingdom in the heart of the India. By this time, Prithviraj Chauhan or Rai Pithora, the ruler of Delhi and Ajmer now became his target. However, as a Rajput, Prithviraj was proud of his pedigree and very conscious of his honour. So, he now marched against Muhammad Ghori to check his further aggression. Many other rulers, except Jaichandra, whose daughter had been kidnapped and married by Prithviraj, now joined Prithviraj against Muhammad Ghori. The historic war took place at Tarain, 14 kilometers from Thaneswar, in 1191 A.D. Prithviraj Chauhan achieved a great victory. Being defeated, Muhammad Ghori returned back to Ghazni.
- **Second battle of Tarain:** In 1192 A.D., Muhammad Ghori marched with a large army against Prithviraj. A fierce battle took place at Tarain. As many as 150 Rajput princesses joined with Prithviraj. The war continued from very morning to the sunset. However, towards the

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end, Rajput could not but suffered severely. Prithviraj got disheartened, got down from his horseback while fighting, tried to escape but was captured at the hand of Ghori's army. Capture of Prithviraj at the hands of the enemy disheartened the Rajput rulers and demoralized the Rajput army. The result was that no other king now came forward to check the march of Muhammad Ghori. So, the Muslims now got a freehand to capture after Indian territories like Samana, Kuhram, Hansi, etc. without difficulty. A son of Prithviraj was put in charge of Ajmer. Qutub-ud-din Ibak was put in charge of his other Indian possessions and then Muhammad Ghori went back to Ghazni.

- **Kanauj:** At the defeat of Prithviraj, Jaichandra became very happy as if he could revenge the insult made upon him. But soon, he had to face the army of Muhammad Ghori. It was in 1194 A.D. Muhammad Ghori marched against Kanauj. In the battle of Chandwara, Jaichandra was struck in the eye by a fatal arrow and he fell down dead from the elephant. In the words of S.R. Sharma, "the fall of Jaichandra of Chandwar made Muhammad the master of the political as well as the religious capitals of Hindustan, Kanauj and Banaras."
- **Bundelkhand:** In 1197-98A.D Qutub-ud-din Ibak occupied Badawn, reoccupied Banaras on behalf of Muhammad Ghori as he was in charge of Indian possessions. He also occupied Kawnian, Mahoba and Khajuraho.
- **Bihar:** Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad-bin-Bakhtiyar Khalji, the commander of Qutub-ud-din Ibak, attacked on Bihar suddenly and captured the fortress. Thousands of Buddhist and Hindu monks were butchered. He looted and plundered the territories around.
- **Bengal:** Ikhtiyar-ud-din was so much emboldened by his success in Bihar that he planned the conquest of Bengal. It was during 1204-05A.D he attacked on Nadia one of the capitals of Bengal. The king was in his dines when he heard the hue and cry. Being panicked he fled away in his bare foot by the back door. His all wives, maid servants, women attendants and all the treasures now fell in the hand of Ikhtiyar-ud-din. In this way, Ikhtiyar-ud-din conquered over complete Western Bengal but left Eastern Bengal remained untouched.
- **Khokhars:** It was in 1205 A.D. Muhammad Ghori with Qutub-ud-din Ibak won a miraculous victory against Khokhars, between the Jhelum and the Chenab. There they organized large number of massacre and plundered huge wealth.

Estimate

Mahmud Ghori was undoubtedly a great warrior, that he proved by his extensive conquests. Of course, he did not possess the grandeur of Mahmud of Ghazni but was superior to him as a constructive statesman. In spite of his extensive conquests and sudden association, he built up an empire that lasted for centuries. No doubt Mahmud Ghori like Mahmud organized massive

plundering. But he made up his mind from the very beginning to build up an empire in India and also succeeded in his mission. Like Mahmud, Ghori was not so fanatic rather more political. He decided to take advantage of the politically disunited India and to build up a Muslim empire. Indeed he was shrewd diplomat. No doubt, he was a cruel but at the same time he did not hesitate to extend generosity. "He was a practical statesman." Although his sudden death did not allow him to set a strong empire, yet he trained up a brand of men who were to prove more loyal to his ideals and better fitted to hold the empire. "From the days of Muhammad Ghori to the catastrophe of the Indian mutiny, there was always a Mohammadan king upon the throne of Delhi."

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Check Your Progress

1. In which year the Arabs made their successful attack on India?
2. Who was the Governor of Markan?
3. Who was Muhammad-bin-Qasim?
4. Who was the son of Dahir?
5. Write two important works which were translated into Arabic.
6. Who was Mahmud of Ghazni?
7. Write the name of the father of Mahmud of Ghazni.
8. In which year Mahmud invaded Thaneswar?
9. Who was Rai Pithora?
10. In which year the second battle of Tarain took place?

14.3 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. 712 A.D.
2. Mohammad Harun.
3. Muhammad-bin-Qasim was the son-in-law of Hajaj.
4. Jai Singh.
5. The Indian astronomical works such as Brahma Siddhanta and Khandaka Khadyaka of Brahmagupta were translated into Arabic.
6. Mahmud of Ghazni was the most prominent ruler of the Ghaznavid Empire from 997 A.D. to 1030 A.D.
7. Sabuktegin.
8. 1014 A.D.
9. Chauhan or Rai Pithora, was the ruler of Delhi and Ajmer.
10. 1192 A.D.

14.4 SUMMARY

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- The Arab Invasion of Sindh marked the beginning of Muslim inroads into India. It was under Muhammad-bin-Qasim, the Arabs, made their successful attack on India in 712 A.D.
- Mahmud of Ghazni was the most prominent ruler of the Ghaznavid Empire from 997 A.D. to 1030 A.D. In the name of Islam, he conquered the Eastern Iran and ravaged the North-Western subcontinent. By the prowess of his arms and ferocity, he transferred the provincial city of Ghazni into the wealthy capital of an extensive empire.
- Appearance of Sultan Shahab-ud-din Muhammad Ghori on the political firmament of India heralded a new era, i.e., Muslim rule in India.
- From time immemorial, there was commercial contact between India and Arabia. The Arab merchants were familiar with the Western sea coast of India. They also knew about the fabulous wealth of India. So, the wealth of India tempted the Arabs to invade Indian territories and also to enrich themselves with plunder.
- From Makran, Mohammad-bin-Qasim proceeded to Debal. On the way, the Jats and Meds joined him against Dahir. It was in the spring of 712 A.D. that he reached the port of Debal and besieged it. A nephew of Dahir was in charge of the town and he offered stiff resistance.
- Mohammad-bin-Qasim proceeded towards Multan, the main city of the Upper Indus. There was tough resistance everywhere, but in spite of that he appeared before the gates of Multan and captured it through treachery.
- In 1002 A.D., Mahmud invaded Sistan, dethroned the then Khalifa, last of the Saffaridamirs, and ended the Saffarid dynasty. From there, he decided to focus on Hindustan to the South-East, particularly the highly fertile lands of the Punjab region since South-Eastern Khorasan (where he was from) was mostly mountainous, dry deserts and the fertile lands had been poorly harvested and gone to waste during the reign of the previous rulers.
- Anandpal was the son of Jaipal, and now became the king of Hindushahi Kingdom. In 1008 A.D., Mahmud attacked on Anandpal. Anandpal called other Hindu kings to help him. The kings of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kannauj, Delhi, Ajmer, etc. came to help him with their armies.
- The most famous and terrible invasion launched by Mahmud was his sixteenth attack upon India designed against the Somnath Temple in Gujarat, in Western India. This was an immense distance from Ghazni.

Fear of his wrath made easy passage for him. The Somnath temple was very famous for its treasures.

- In 1192 A.D., Muhammad Ghori marched with a large army against Prithviraj. A fierce battle took place at Tarain. As many as 150 Rajput princesses joined with Prithviraj. The war continued from very morning to the sunset. However, towards the end, Rajput could not but suffered severely. Prithviraj got disheartened, got down from his horseback while fighting, tried to escape but was captured at the hand of Ghori's army.
- Mahmud Ghori was undoubtedly a great warrior, that he proved by his extensive conquests. Of course, he did not possess the grandeur of Mahmud of Ghazni but was superior to him as a constructive statesman. In spite of his extensive conquests and sudden association, he built up an empire that lasted for centuries.

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14.5 KEY TERMS

- **Aror:** Aror, the capital of Sindh.
- **Hajaj:** The Viceroy of the Eastern Provinces (Iraq) of the Khalifa.
- **Dahir:** The ruler of Sindh.
- **Jaipal:** Jaipal was the king of Hindushahi Kingdom.
- **Ghur:** A state between Ghazni and Heart.

14.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short Answer Questions

1. Narrate the important causes of the Arab invasion of Sindh.
2. Write three important conquest of Muhammad-bin-Qasim.
3. Write a note on the effects of the Arab invasion of Sindh.
4. Who was Mahmud of Ghazni?
5. Who was Prithviraj Chauhan?
6. Who was Muhammad Ghori?

Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the causes of Arab invasion of Sind.
2. Describe the conquest of Muhammad-bin-Qasim.
3. Explain the conquests of Mahmud of Ghazni.
4. Narrate the military conquest of Muhammad Ghori.

14.7 FURTHER READING

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