

2<sup>nd</sup> Elective (Optional)

SASTRI/B.A I YEAR  
Part II - Paper - I

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## Indian History & Culture upto 1100 A.D

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National Sanskrit University  
(Erstwhile Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Tirupati)  
Accredited at 'A' level by NAAC  
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## **Indian History and Culture up to 1100 A.D**

### **Unit – I**

#### Sources of Ancient Indian History

1. Archaeological
2. Literary

#### **Contents:**

- 1.0 Objectives
  - 1.1 Archaeological sources
    - 1.1.1 Epigraphy
    - 1.1.2 Monuments**
    - 1.1.3 Numismatics**
  - 1.2 Literary sources
    - 1.2.1 Indigenous sources
    - 1.2.2 Accounts of foreign travelers

#### **1.0 Objectives:**

By studying this unit the student is expected to know the importance of various sources to reconstruct the ancient Indian History from the earliest to the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The sources can broadly be classified into archaeological and literary.

1.1 Archaeological Sources: Archaeological sources include Epigraphy (study of inscriptions), monuments and numismatics (study of coins).

#### **1.1.1 Epigraphy:**

Epigraphy means study of inscriptions. Inscriptions are of great value for the reconstruction of Indian history, particularly history of ancient India. Inscriptions being contemporary to the events of history they are reliable. Inscriptions based on the writing material can be classified broadly into (a) inscriptions engraved on stone and (b) inscriptions engraved on metals. Most of the inscriptions are engraved on stone. Of the metals copper is mostly used to engrave inscriptions. The earliest stone inscriptions belong to the Mauryan emperor Asoka of 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. The earliest copper plate inscription belongs to the Ikshvaku king Ehavala chantamula (3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D).

The stone and copper plate records can be classified into various groups depending on their contents. A great majority of the inscriptions record the grants like villages, land, money etc. to the learned brahmanas

and institutions like temples. The general format of the inscriptions is as follows:

- a. Preamble in the form of prayer to the god
- b. Date
- c. Mention the name of the king, his dynasty and genealogy
- d. Occasion of the grant
- e. Nature of the grant (village or land etc.)
- f. The name of the recipient (individual or institution)
- g. Conditions of the grant (whether exempted from taxes)
- h. Boundaries (in the case of village or land)
- i. Imprecatory portion (requesting the future generations to protect the grant and cursing the people who dishonor the grant or destroy it).

This is only a general format and several inscriptions, depending upon the nature of the contents, are written in different forms also.

S.A.Q.

1. Define epigraphy and note the general format of the inscriptions ?

The inscriptions are more reliable for the following reasons:

1. They are contemporary to the historical event or persons.
2. Several inscriptions bear the date either in the regnal year of the king or the Vikrama era or the Saka era etc. Hence the date of the king or the historical event is correctly known to us. Even if the inscription is not dated its approximate period can be fixed on its paleographical features (*i.e.* the formation of letters). Thus the information provided by the inscriptions can be dated with certainty unlike in other cases.
3. The genealogy provided by the inscriptions helps us to reconstruct the dynastic history.
4. The achievements of the kings can be taken as authentic since they are mentioned in the inscriptions which were contemporary. But often exaggerations in respect of the achievements of the kings find place in inscriptions. So care should be taken while taking such achievements into account.

S.A.Q.

1. Why inscriptions are reliable sources for writing history ?

In spite of a few drawbacks inscriptions can be taken as more authentic sources when compared to other archaeological and literary sources.

Based on the contents the inscriptions may be broadly classified into the following groups:

1. **Donative:** A great majority of inscriptions belong to this group. As noted above they record grants made to individuals or institutions.
2. **Edicts:** Royal orders e.g. Edicts of Asoka.
3. **Prasasti or Eulogistic:** The main purpose of this type of inscriptions is to record the achievements of the kings. The best example for this type of inscriptions is the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta which records the victories of the Gupta emperor both in North and South India. Another example is the Aihole inscription of Pulakesi II. Generally this type of inscriptions is composed by the court poets of the emperors and they have excellent literary merits. The Allahabad inscription was composed by the poet Harishena while the Aihole inscription was composed by Ravikirti.
4. **Commemorative:** These inscriptions record the visit of kings to holy places, or the construction of temples, tanks, etc. On such occasions grants were also made to temples etc. For example, the Rummindei inscription of Asoka refers to his visit to that place (then called Lumbinigrama, the birth place of Buddha) and to commemorate that event granted some tax – exemptions. The inscriptions which record the construction of temples or parts of temples help us to date the structures correctly. There are several inscriptions of this group.
5. **Private inscriptions:** These inscriptions form the majority. They may or may not help us to reconstruct the political history. But they are certainly useful for the social and economic history of their times.

There are several other types of inscriptions useful to the cultural history of India. They reveal many customs and traditions belonging to those times.

S.A.Q.

1. Classify the inscriptions on the basis of their contents.

The copper plate inscriptions, though small in number when compared to stone inscriptions, are very important to know the political as well as cultural history of the period to which they belong. In most of the cases they record the grants – villages, piece of lands, etc. – made to scholar – brahmanas. Since such grants were made by kings to scholarly personalities the inscriptions were composed in classical Sanskrit. Further, they give information about the educational qualifications of the donors, often of their fathers and grand fathers also. They also bear the names of the composers of the copper plate charters. Thus they help us to understand the status of education and the poets of their periods which are not known to us from any other sources.

S.A.Q.

1. Why copper plate inscriptions are important sources for writing cultural history of India ?

In view of the above observations it is clear that inscriptions are, as source material to reconstruct the history of ancient India, of immense value.

### 1.1.2 **Monuments:**

Ancient structures like temples, stupas, chaityas, sculptures, paintings, etc. come under this category. The architectural remains that were laid bare in the excavations of Mohanjodaro and Harappa brought a great ancient civilization to light. This unique civilization is known to us only through these architectural remains. A study of sculptures found in Takshsila throw welcome light on the Gandhara art. Similarly the features of the Mauryan art are known from the sculptures and beautifully polished Mauryan pillars. The Satavahana cave architecture reveals the architectural styles of that period. The temples of Chalukyas of Vatapi (Aihole and Patladakal), Chalukyas of Kalyana, Vengi Chalukyas, Cholas

(Tanjavur) and Kakatiyas (Warangal) are excellent source material to understand the evolution of temple art and architecture of the ancient and medieval India. As far as North India is concerned the excavations at Sanchi, Sarnath, etc. throw light on Buddhist art and architecture. The temples of Deogadh in Jhansi and Bhitargaon near Kanpur are good examples for the artistic values of the Guptas. The dates or periods of the Monuments are usually suggested by taking their styles into consideration. The principal architectural styles of temples are Nagara (North Indian), Dravida (South Indian) and Vesara (combination of Nagara and Dravida).

S.A.Q.

1. Explain the importance of monuments for the architectural studies ?

### **1.1.3 Numismatics:**

Numismatics is the study of coins. The coins of ancient and medieval periods are often found in excavations and some times as surface finds also. They are very useful to understand the political, cultural, religious and also economic history of the periods concerned. Large numbers of coins are found in different parts of India. In many instances the coins bear the names of the kings who are not known to us from any other source. For instance the excavations at Kotilingla (A.P) yielded several coins bearing the names of the rulers and they are known to us only through these coins. Some of these coins belonging to the Pre – Satavahana period have the names of the rulers like Gobhada who are known to us for the first time and they are not known to us from any other source. The Satavahana coins which bear the picture of ‘ship’ indicate the flourishing stage of overseas trade. The discovery of Roman coins in India indicates our trade contacts with that country in the early centuries of the Christian era. The coin showing Samudragupta playing Vina attests to the king’s mastery over music. The coins bearing the images of the gods show the religious leanings of the kings who issued them. For instances the coins of the Kushana king Kadphises II bear the image of Siva. Coins serve as good source material to know the economic conditions of the period concerned. Number of gold coins belonging to the period of Samudragupta show that his period was quite prosperous. The coins were

of pure gold. But the coins issued by his successors like Kumaragupta I were not as pure as those of Samudragupta. Further silver and copper coins were also issued during this period. This shows the change in the economic conditions during the later years of the Gupta rule.

S.A.Q.

1. What is Numismatics ? What is its source material for economic and cultural history of India ?

## **1.2 Literary sources:**

Literary sources are also of much value to know the ancient history of India. Though some times the literary works may present exaggerated accounts of the kings, if they are contemporaneous to the period, their value cannot be overlooked. If the literary works belong to a later period than the history they deal with the accuracy of the narration is to be carefully examined. Some times the literary sources may be biased. In spite of these demerits their value as source material cannot be underestimated. The literary sources for the ancient Indian history may be broadly classified as follows

1. Indigenous Literature
2. Foreign Accounts

### **1.2.1 Indigenous Literature:**

1. Vedic Literature
2. Epics
3. Puranas
4. Buddhist Literature
5. Jain literature
6. Classical literature

S.A.Q.

1. What are the demerits of literary sources for writing history ?

#### **1.2.1.1 Vedic Literature:**

Ancient Indian literature in the form of the four Veda, viz. Rik, Yaju, Sama and Atharva is considered as valuable to know particularly about the cultural and political history of the Aryans of that period. The Vedic literature comprises Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads. These



reflect not only the social customs etc. but also present a clear picture of the religious and philosophical thoughts of the Aryans. Gradually the Vedangas, the Kalpa – sutras (manuals of rituals), the Srauta – sutras (deal with the rules relating to sacrifices), the Grihya – sutras (deal with the rules relating to domestic rites); the Dharma – sastras (deal with law) and the Sulba – sutras (deal with the measurement of buildings, places of sacrifices and fire – altars). The information provided by the above noted literature is of utmost importance to know the cultural heritage of ancient India.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the importance of Vedic literature to understand our ancient civilization ?

#### **1.2.1.2 Epics:**

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are two great epics. These two works give an insight into the political and social conditions of the people of their times. Scholars hold different opinions regarding the date of the epics. According to some scholars the original composition of these epics may be dated back to centuries before the Christian era; but the latest recensions may belong to about 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. By this time the Aryans established several small kingdoms along the banks of the Ganga and Yamuna. The king was the most powerful and he was also the leader of the army. The caste system in the society came to be well defined.

There was a council of ministers to advise the king. The **guru** of the king was treated with utmost respect and his advice was followed meticulously as can be seen from the **Ramayana**. The ethics and human values preached in these epics and the **karma** theory of the **Bhagavadgita** have earned international repute. Hence the epics are also important source material if utilized cautiously and with discretion.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the importance of epics for social history of India ?

#### **The Puranas:**

The **Puranas** are 18 in number. Every **Purana** has five topics, viz. **sarga, pratisarga, vamsa, Manvamtara** and **vamsanucharita**. The fifth

topic *i.e.* **vamsanucharita** is useful as source material for history. Of the **puranas** the **Vishnupurana** has valuable information about the Mauryan dynasty, the **Matsyapurana** about the Satavahanas and the **Vayupurana** about the Guptas. Certain **Puranas** give the list of the dynasties like Abhira, Sakas, Yavanas, Haunas, etc. The dynastic lists given in the **Puranas** are to be carefully studied comparing them with the more reliable sources like inscriptions. The **Puranas** are undoubtedly valuable source – material for the political as well as cultural history of ancient India.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the importance of Puranas for political history of India ?

#### **1.2.1.4 Buddhist Literature:**

The Buddhist Literature is very rich and valuable source material for the ancient history of India. The Buddhist Literature is in the two languages, namely Pali and Sanskrit. The **Tripitakas** – the **Vinaya – pitaka**, the **Sutta – pitaka** and the **Abhidhamma – pitaka** are in the Pali language. These throw light on the rules and regulations to be followed by Buddhist monks, the teachings of Buddha and the doctrines of Buddhism. The other important Buddhist works are the **Milindapanha** the **Dipavamsa** and **Mahavamsa** (these two are the chronicles of Srilanka), and the **Jataka** stories (numbering 549) dealing with the previous births of Buddha. The Buddhist Literature is a very valuable source to know not only the development of Buddhist philosophy but also the social, cultural and economic history of the period concerned.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the important Buddhist works ?

#### **1.2.1.5 Jain Literature:**

The Jain Literature is very important source material to understand the political, religious and social history of ancient India. The original teachings of Mahavira are in the fourteen books called **Purvas**. The 12 works called **Angas** of the later period also deal with Jain philosophy. The Jain Literature is mostly in the language Ardhamagadhi, a variant of

Prakrit. The Jain Literature contains valuable information regarding the contemporary social life.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the important Jain works ?

### 1.2.1.6 Classical Literature:

Sanskrit classics of the ancient period are valuable to understand particularly the social and cultural life of that period. The **Artha – sastra**, though not a classic, is of immense value to know the polity of the early Mauryan period. This was written by Chanakya also known as Kautilya. It deals with the fundamental principles of administration or of political science. It describes the machinery and functions of the government during the periods of peace as well as war. This work can be considered as a manual of administration. The drama **Mudrarakshasa** of Visakhadatta gives the story of Maurya Chandragupta and Chanakya and the dismissal of Nandas from power. Again though not classic Patanjali's **Mahabhashya** and Panini's Ashtadhyayi contain much information about the kings, Republics, certain political events and social life of ancient India. The dramas **Svapna Vasavadattam** of Bhasa, the **Harshacharita** of Bana, **Rajatarangini** of Kalhana, the **Vikramankadevacharita** of Bilhana and various other Sanskrit works throw welcome light on the political, social and cultural life of India during the ancient period. The **Gathasaptasati** of the Satavahana period is of immense value to understand the social life in ancient India. This contains 700 **slokas** in Prakrit compiled by the Satavahana king Hala in the early centuries of the Christian era.

S.A.Q.

1. Name some classics important for political and cultural history.

### 1.2.2 Foreign accounts:

The writings of the foreigners of the ancient period have much information about India. Herodotus gives much information about the Persian and Greek wars and Indo – Persian relations. He describes the political conditions of north – west India of his times (4<sup>th</sup> century B.C).

Of the foreign accounts the **Indika** of Megasthenese, a Greek ambassador sent by Seleucus to the court of the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta is noteworthy. Though the original work is lost certain passages from his book, as quoted by later authors, are available. They have good information about the history of the period of Maurya Chandragupta.

The Greek author of the **Periplus of the Erythraean Sea** (A.D. 80) describes ports, harbours and merchandise of India. Ptolemy (2<sup>nd</sup> Century A.D) wrote about the geography of India. However, Greek sources are to be used with caution.

The Chinese travelers like Fahien, Hiuan Tsang, and Itsing traveled in India and left valuable information about the contemporary history. Fahien's account of India during the period of Chandragupta II is very valuable. Hieun Tsang is described as "Prince of Pilgrims". He stayed in India for many years and studied in the University of Nalanda. He was patronized by the king Harsha. His writings are considered as authentic. Itsing visited India during 7<sup>th</sup> century. His writings throw welcome light on the social, religious and cultural life of that period.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the foreign accounts and how they are important for history of India.

**I. Essay type Questions (15 marks)**

1. Discuss the importance of Epigraphy and Numismatics as source material to reconstruct the history of ancient India.
2. Write an essay on the Indigenous sources to reconstruct the ancient Indian history.

**II. Brief Questions (10 marks)**

1. Importance of monuments
2. Importance of numismatics
3. Vedic and epic literature
4. Puranic literature
5. Classical literature and Arthashastra
6. Buddhist literature
7. Jain literature
8. Accounts of foreign travellers

**III. Short type Questions (5 marks)**

1. What is the meaning of Epigraphy?
2. Into how many groups the inscriptions may be classified based on the material on which they are engraved?
3. To which period does the earliest stone inscriptions belong?
4. What is the date of the earliest copper plate inscription?
5. What is the broad classification of inscriptions based on their contents?
6. What do you mean by the **Prasasti** type of inscriptions?
7. Give two inscriptions as examples to the **Prasasti** type of inscriptions.
8. Who wrote the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta and the Aihole inscription of Pulakesi II.
9. Who issued the earliest edict – type inscriptions?
10. Give an example to the commemorative type of inscriptions.
11. What are the three styles of the temple architecture?
12. What is the meaning of Numismatics?
13. The coins of which dynasty bear the image of ship?
14. Who was the local ruler mentioned on the Kotilingala coins?
15. On whose coins we find the image of the King playing vina?

16. The image of which god is found on the coins of Kushana Kadphises II?
17. How many Vedas are there and what are they?
18. What are the important epics?
19. What are important five topics the **puranas** deal with?
20. Which of the five topics of the **Puranas** is useful for the reconstruction of ancient Indian history?
21. What are the Tripitakas?
22. In which language the Tripitakas were composed?
23. In which country the Buddhist chronicles 'Dipavamsa' and 'Mahavamsa' were composed?
24. What is the main theme of the Jataka stories?
25. What is the language of the early Jain literature?
26. What do the 'Purvas' contain?
27. Who wrote the 'Artha Sastra'?
28. What is the main subject matter of 'Artha – Sastra'?
29. Who wrote the drama 'Mudrarakshasa'?
30. Who wrote the 'Vikramankadevacharita'?
31. Who is the author of 'Rajatarangini'?
32. Who compiled the 'Gathasaptasati'?
33. Who wrote Indika?
34. Who was Megasthenese?
35. In whose reign period Fahien visited India?
36. In which University did Hieun Tsang study in India?
37. Who was the Indian king patronized Hieun Tsang?

**Objective type Questions (one mark each)**

1. Archaeological sources include
  - a. Epigraphy      b. Literature
  - c. Folklore      d. Travellogues
2. Epigraphy is
  - a. Study of Puranas      b. Study of temples
  - c. Study of inscriptions      d. Study of coins
3. Monuments are
  - a. Ancient writings      b. Structures of historical importance
  - c. Ancient Travellogues      d. medieval literature.

4. Numismatics is
  - a. Study of new inscriptions
  - b. Study of Buddhist literature
  - c. Study of modern history
  - d. Study of coins
5. The number of Vedas is
  - a. 2
  - b. 6
  - c. 5
  - d. 4
6. The earliest Veda is
  - a. Yajurveda
  - b. Ayurveda
  - c. Rigveda
  - d. Samaveda
7. Of the Vedas the one related to music is
  - a. Samaveda
  - b. Atharvaveda
  - c. Gandharvaveda
  - d. Yajurveda
8. The Ramayana and Mahabharatha are the
  - a. Epics
  - b. Ancient works on history
  - c. Ancient Puranas
  - d. Vedangas
9. The number of principal puranas is
  - a. 2
  - b. 4
  - c. 18
  - d. 22
10. The earliest Buddhist literature is in the
  - a. Pali
  - b. Magadhi
  - c. Prakrit
  - d. Proto-Dravidian
11. The original teachings of Mahavira are in the 14 books called
  - a. Pitakas
  - b. Purvas
  - c. Granthas
  - d. Jatakas
12. The Jain literature is mostly in
  - a. Proto – Sanskrit
  - b. Ardha – Magadhi
  - c. Prakrit
  - d. Pali
13. Artha – Sastra is one of the important sources for the history of the
  - a. Mauryas
  - b. Pallavas
  - c. Guptas
  - d. Cholas
14. Dipavamsa is
  - a. Buddhist work
  - b. Jain work
  - c. Ajvaka sect Philosophy
  - d. Later – Puranic work
15. Rajataranigini was written by
  - a. Bhasa
  - b. Kalhana

- c. Bilhana            d. Kalidasa
16. Vikramankadevacharita was written by  
a. Bilhana            b. Kalhana  
c. Harshavardhana   d. Harishena
17. Gathasaptasati belongs to  
a. Guptas            b. Satavahanas  
c. Mauryas           d. Prabhakaraavardhana
18. The foreign account of Megasthenes is called  
a. Indika            b. Travels of Alexander  
c. Si – Yu – Ki      d. Zylanica
19. Fa – Hein visited the court of  
a. Chandragupta – II   b. Samudragupta  
c. Harsha            d. Asoka
20. Hieun – Tsang visited the court of  
a. Bindusara           b. Harsha  
c. Chandragupta – I   d. Prabhakaravardhana

**Answers:**

- |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |   |
|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|
| 1.  | a | 2.  | c | 3.  | b | 4.  | d | 5.  | d |
| 6.  | c | 7.  | a | 8.  | a | 9.  | c | 10. | a |
| 11. | b | 12. | b | 13. | a | 14. | a | 15. | b |
| 16. | a | 17. | b | 18. | a | 19. | a | 20. | b |



**Unit – 2 (a)**  
**Indus Valley Civilization**

**Contents:**

- 2.a.0 Objectives
- 2.a.1 Introduction – Discovery of the civilization – Importance – Date
- 2.a.2 Harappa
- 2.a.3 Mohenjodaro
- 2.a.4 Seals
- 2.a.5 Script
- 2.a.6 Religion
- 2.a.7 Art
- 2.a.8 Food, Ornaments
- 2.a.9 Agriculture
- 2.a.10 Trade
- 2.a.11 Decay

**2.a.0 Objectives:**

The study will help the student to understand the importance and salient features of the Indus civilization. The study includes the date of the civilization, expansion, script, religious faiths, trade and the causes for the decay. It also deals with the question of the authors of the civilization – Aryans or Dravidians.

It was believed till 1924 that the history of India begins with the advent of Aryans into the country. But the excavation conducted in the Indus valley in 1922 revealed a great civilization that flourished even before the Rigvedic or early Vedic Age. Thus this was indeed a revolutionary revelation in the history of world civilizations.

**Discovery:** Harappa is the most famous in the civilization of the Indus Valley. Harappa is on the banks of the river Ravi in the Montgomery district of West Punjab in Pakistan. In 1921 the archaeologist R.B. Dayaram Sahni discovered the ruins of a city here. The excavation work was supervised by Sir John Marshall, the then Director – General of the Archaeological Survey of India. This civilization was named “Harappan Civilization”.

In 1922 R.D Benerjee excavated Mohenjodaro which revealed the remains of a great city. Mohenjodaro, which means ‘the Mound of the

Dead' is near the river Sindhu in the Lankana district of the Sind province in Pakistan. The distance between Harappa and Mohenjodaro is 655 kms.

S.A.Q.

1. Note the importance of discovery of Indus civilization for the study of Early Indian Civilization.

**Extent:** Since the discovery of the great civilization at Harappa and Mohenjodaro number of excavations were conducted both in Pakistan and India which laid bare towns, settlements – big and small – numbering about 100. Based on these excavations it is concluded that the Harappan (or Indus Valley) civilizations extended from Jammu in the north to the Narmada valley in the south, from Mahran in Baluchistan in the west to the Meerut (U.P) in South – East, covering Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh in the Indian sub-continent, the total area being approximately one million square kilometers. This is the largest area of a civilization that flourished during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium before the Christian era. The following are the important places where the Harappan civilization is discovered:

1. Baluchistan: Sukhtagen-dor (Pakistan)
2. Sind: Mohenjodaro, Kot Diji, Chanhudaro (Pakistan)
3. Punjab: Harappa (Pakistan), Ropar (India – Punjab)
4. Haryana: Banwali
5. Rajasthan: Kalibangan
6. Uttar Pradesh: Alamgirpur (near Meerut)
7. Gujarat: Lothal, Rangapur, Sarkotada, Daimabad.

Of the most ancient civilizations of the world like those of Mesopotamia and Egypt the Indus Valley Civilization or Harappan culture is the most extensive one. As the famous archaeologist Mortimer Wheeler says, “Harappan civilization is the most spatially extensive of all civilizations”.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the the extent of Indus civilization ?

Importance: The ancient civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia were not spatially as extensive as that of Indus Valley. Secondly, there are certain features which place the Indus Valley Civilization foremost. The use of cotton is known only to the Indus Valley Civilization. In the Egyptian Civilization flax was used for making the clothes. The important structures like the ‘great bath’ in Mohenjodaro and ‘great granary’ of Harappa are not found in the other ancient civilizations. Similarly the excellent town planning system which includes the underground drainage system is unique to the Indus Valley Civilization. Similarly certain beautiful sculptures and objects of artistic value are not found in other ancient civilizations. These are some of the factors which earned place of importance to Harappan civilization in the map of the civilizations of the ancient world. Until the discovery of the Harappan culture world thought India had no significant ancient civilization of her own. But the discovery of Harappan culture earned a place of distinction in the world.

S.A.Q.

1. “ Indus civilization is far greater than other early world civilizations.”- Do you agree ?

**Date:** There are different opinions about the date of the Indus civilization. Some scholars like Sir John Marshall compared this civilization with that of Mesopotamia and dated it to B.C. 3250 – 2750. Another archaeologist dated it to B.C. 3050 – 2550. Opinions of some other scholars are as follows:

1. Mortimer Wheeler: B.C. 2500 – 1500
2. F.R. Allchin: B.C. 2150 – 1700
3. Dales: B.C. 2700 – 2050
4. Charles Fabri: B.C. 2800 – 2500
5. S.R. Rao: B.C. 2500 – 1500

However, the latest researches suggest different dates, which are mostly accepted. They classify the Harappan culture into two stages, *viz.*,

1. Mature Harappan culture: B.C. 2500 – 1900
2. Later Harappan culture B.C. 1900 – 1600 / 1500

Thus it is widely accepted that the Harappan culture flourished between B.C. 2500 – 1600 / 1500. It is suggested that by 18<sup>th</sup> century B.C the two important cities, Harappa and Mohenjodaro of the Harappan culture disappeared. In some other places it declined while it continued for some time in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. Thus it is accepted by many scholars that the Harappan culture flourished between B.C. 2500 and B.C. 1500.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the widely accepted date of Indus civilization ?

**Harappa:** The most important feature of the Harappan culture is ‘Town planning’. The cities discovered in Harappa and Mohenjodaro are the best examples of their excellent planning. Harappa is a bigger city than Mohenjodaro and survived for more period. Compared to them Lothal and Ropar are smaller. Lothal was a port town.

**Town planning:** The ‘town planning’ of both Harappa and Mohenjodaro is based on scientific principles. Though there were towns in Mesopotamia they do not disclose the scientific town planning system as we find in Harappa and Mohenjodaro. A striking feature is that though Harappa and Mohenjodaro separated by a few hundreds of kilometers they exhibit significant similarity in ‘town planning’. The streets and lanes were laid out to a set plan. These towns had a fort in the west on elevated place and residential colony at a lower level. The main streets were north – south oriented and the lanes east – west. The main streets were four to ten meters in width and the lanes were about three meters to four meters wide. The streets cut each other at right angles. Their corners were rounded off to permit the turning of the heavy vehicles easily. The streets were paved with fire – burnt bricks and had covered drains running under them. Lamp posts were provided for every street at regular intervals.

S.A.Q.

1. Compare the salient features of town planning system of Harappa with those of modern system.

**Houses:** On either side of the streets were the buildings. The buildings can be classified into two categories:

1. Residential houses and
2. Public buildings

The town was built in 'grid system'. As a result the city was divided into rectangular blocks measuring roughly 366 X 183 meters. There were 12 such blocks in Mohenjodaro. The eastern street was the widest resembling a royal highway.

Generally the houses and shops were on either side of the streets. The houses were built on elevation due to the threat of floods. The houses of the rich were big with five or six rooms while those of the common people were small. The open court yard was an important feature of house – planning of the Indus Valley civilization. The room surrounding the open courtyard opened into it. The ground floor contained store rooms, well-chamber and bath room. The kitchen was in the sheltered corner of the ground floor. The bathroom was at the street side. It had a paved floor, slanting so that the used water could flow off to the underground drains. Many houses had stairways of solid masonry work, connecting the ground floor with first floor. The first floor had bed rooms and other rooms. In Harappa rows of houses were discovered in which labourers were living. These houses had only two rooms. Only one well was provided for all houses. But in Mohenjodaro every house had a well for the exclusive use of that house. However, the number of the wells discovered in Harappa is significantly less. The houses were built of burnt bricks. The walls were thick. The windows, which were less in number, were placed at a very high level. Every house had latrines. Drains were provided for dirty water to flow into the underground drainage. Every house had at least one bath room. Arrangements were made to dispose off the waste material. The most amazing feature of Indus Valley civilization is the utmost importance given by the people of Harappan culture to public and personal hygiene and sanitation.

S.A.Q.

1. ' The houses of Harappan civilization reflect advanced stage in the civilization ' – Justify.

**Underground Drainage System:** The underground drainage system of the Harappan culture is superb and can be compared well with the modern system. The drains which were built of bricks were covered with slabs and they were under the ground of each street. The house drains opened into this underground drain. The housewives used pits in which the heavier parts of the waste material would settle down and only sewage water was allowed to drain off. At regular intervals the main drains were provided with manholes for regular inspection and clearance. The small drainage canals were connected to the main ones and finally they joined the river outside the city. This kind of highly developed and efficient underground drainage system is not found in any other ancient civilization of the world.

**Great granary:** Among the buildings at Harappa the 'great granary complex' is the most remarkable and the largest. It measures 61.5 meters by 15.5 meters. It consists of two similar blocks with an aisle of 6.9 meters wide between them. Each block has six halls alternating with fire corridors and each hall is further partitioned into from small compartments. The entire structure was constructed on an elevated platform built of bricks. To the south of this were threshing floors, round in shape. They were also built on elevated platforms of bricks. They were probably used for threshing or cleaning barley or wheat, as can be surmised by their discovery in these threshing floors. Near the threshing floors are rows of houses of two rooms each perhaps for the labourers worked here. This 'Great Granery Complex' was built near the fort and the river. This granary was probably intended to store the grains collected by way of levy by the municipal authorities.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the important land marks of Harappan civilization ?

**Mohenjodaro:** The town planning system, houses and underground drainage system are discussed above. The uniqueness of this civilization is that the systematic town planning can almost uniformly be seen in all the towns extended over a vast area. Generally the government

offices, religious structures and public buildings were constructed in the fort itself.

**The Great Bath:** The great bath at Mohenjodaro is a remarkable construction. This was built with bricks in the fort. The length of the outer walls of the ‘great bath’ measure 55 meters from north to south and 32.9 from east to west. The thickness of the outer walls was about 2 meters to 2.4 meters. The thickness of the inner walls is about 1.2 meters. The bathing pool was in the centre of this construction. Its length was 11.88 meters, width 7.01 meters and the depth was 2.43 meters (*i.e.* 39’ x 23’ x 9’). Steps to this bathing pool were on the north and south sides of the pool. There was an outlet in the south-west corner, for the discharge water and periodical cleaning. The bathing pool was made water – tight and its foundations were secure. The lining of the tank was made of finely dressed bricks laid in gypsum mortar about four feet thick; backing this was an inch thick damp – proof course of bitumen. It is stabilized by another thin wall of burnt bricks behind it. After that was a packing of crude bricks and behind that there is another backing of burnt bricks encompassing the whole. The pool was surrounded by veranda, except on the west. The veranda was two storied and behind it were rooms. One of the rooms had flight of steps and in another room which was in the east, was a well. Water was fed to the pool from this well. The bed of the bathing pool is slant to different levels. There was also a provision for the supply of hot water for bathing (Turkish Bath or ‘Hamam’). The ‘Great Bath’ of the Indus Valley civilization is the most unique and Sir John Marshall correctly described it as “A marvel of Engineering”. The ‘Great Bath’ is still in good condition. Scholars opine that the Indus people might have been using the ‘Great Bath’ particularly during the days of festivals and festivities.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘ Great Bath ’ is unique in the Harappan civilization, why ?

**Public buildings:** Of the public buildings at Mohenjodaro a ‘big hall’ of 24 square meters deserves mention. It has 20 massive pillars of burnt – bricks arranged in four rows of five each. It might have been an

‘Assembly hall’ where the king held court. It has also a municipal office which looked into the town planning and sanitation.

**Cottage, etc.:** Along the ‘great bath’, by its side was a big building which might have been the house of a religious head.

Two ‘assembly halls’ were in the fort itself. Another big structure at Mohenjadaro was the ‘big granary’. It is situated to the west of the ‘great bath’.

Most of the structures of the Indus Valley civilization were built on elevation, obviously, as a measure of safeguard from floods.

**Seals:** one of the significant features of the Indus Valley civilization is the ‘seals’. More than two thousand seals made of steatite, terracotta and copper have been discovered in the excavations. Generally the seals are rectangular but some are circular while some are cylindrical in shape. Most of the seals bear on them the figure of a human or an animal and have on top an inscription. The seals bearing figures like ‘Pasupati’ (an individual surrounded by four animals and sitting in ‘yogic’ posture – probably representation of Siva – Pasupati), a ‘humped bull’ and a unicorn are the best examples for the beautiful execution. The ‘Pasupati’ seal throws light on the religious faith of the Indus people. The ‘humped bull’ shows the great strength and vigour of the animal. It attests to the keen observation of the Indus people and skill to depict it artistically. The ‘unicorn’ is also beautifully depicted on the seal. This is a mythological animal and reflects the folk beliefs of the Harappan people. Undoubtedly the seals of the Harappan culture are the best examples for the art of the people of that period.

Further, these seals throw light not only on the artistic skill, but also religious beliefs, dress, ornaments and hair styles, trade contacts and commercial relations and script. Most of the seals have a knob at the back through which runs a hole. This led some scholars to believe that they were used by different guilds or merchants or traders for stamping purposes. Some others believed that they were used as amulets also.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘Harappan Seals is a unique feature of Indian civilization.’ – Justify.



**Script:** As noted above many seals of the Indus culture bear script. Eversince the seals with script were discovered many Indian and foreign scholars tried their best to decipher the Indus script and interpret the contents. But till date the script remains undeciphered as there is no unanimity among scholars in this respect.

The most important scholars who offered their opinions regarding the Indus script can be classified broadly into two groups:

1. Those who consider the Indus language as related to Dravidian and

2. Those who relate it to Indo – Aryan.

1. G.R. Hunter, Father Heras, Iravatham Mahadevan, Askoparpola (Finnish scholar), Yuriz, V. Krorozov (Russian scholar), Fair service, Kimmer Wilson and others related the Indus language with Dravidian. Of these Kroroza was the first to analyze the data with the help of computers. They and Iravatham Mahadevan prepared concordances with the help of the analyzed data.

2. M.V.N. Krishna Rao and S.R. Rao extensively worked on the problem of the language of the Indus people. They analyzed the Indus script taking the Semetic script as basis. They suggested that the language of the Indus people was Indo – Aryan language which was Pre – Vedic – Sanskrit language. According to S.R. Rao the script first began as pictographic script and later on gradually developed into Ideograph, Logograph and rebus writing. At the final stage it developed into syllabic and phonetic and finally into alphabet.

There is no uniform opinion among the scholars about the way in which the Indus script was written. Some scholars opine that the script was written from right to left while another group of scholars believe that it was written from left to right. There is another school of scholars, according to whom the script was written in Boustrophedon system (writing one line from right to left and the next from left to right and so on). There are a few similarities between the Sumerian, Egyptian, Krete

and Chinese scripts but these may be only accidental. Scholars like Langden, Cunningham, Pandey opine that the Brahmi script of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C evolved from the Indus script.

As in the case of the Indus language scholars hold different opinions about the founders of the Indus Valley civilization. Scholars who support the Dravidian theory of the Indus language consider that Dravidians were the founders of the Indus civilization. The scholars who advocate the theory of Indo – Aryan – Language consider the Aryans as founders of the Indus Valley civilization.

Thus till date there is no unanimity among the scholars regarding the ‘Indus language’ and the founders of the Indus Valley civilization.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘ The Harappan script remains to be a baffling problem to the scholars .’- Why ?

2. Different scholars offered different views on Harappan script. In your opinion whose view may be serious note of.

**Religion:** It is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion regarding the religion of the Indus people basing on the available data. So far no building which can be definitely considered as temple is discovered in the excavations. The small figures found on the seals, independent sculpturines found in the excavations help us to some extent to form an idea about their religion.

Worship of Mother Goddess was very popular during the period under study. Several figurines of Mother Goddesses are found in the excavations. Many seals showing a male deity clad in tiger skin, sitting in yogic posture (*padmasana*) are found. This diety has three horns on his head. He is surrounded by a leaping tiger, a rhinoceros and an elephant. Taking all these into consideration scholars considered that Harappan people worshipped ‘Pasupati’, a form of Siva. They also worshipped animals (bulls), trees, like peepul, snakes etc.

Large numbers of amulets are found indicating that the Indus people believed in charm and magic. Sacrifice of animals and men was of their religion. They disposed off their dead by both cremation and burial. Ashes of the burnt bodies were preserved in clay urns. The graves

contained household pottery, ornaments and many other articles of daily use. This suggests that the Harappans believed in life after birth. Probably ritual bath was also a part of their religion.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the salient features of Harappan religion ? Do you think they stand in comparison to the folk religion of early times ?

**Art:** We do not have enough data to understand and appreciate the art of the Harappans. However, figures of beautiful torso of a male, a *purohita* with half closed eyes, a bronze statuette of a female dancer and number of animals and beautiful figures carved on seals suggest the excellency they achieved in the field of art.

**Food, ornaments, entertainments:**

The Harappans used wheat, barley, vegetables, honey, and fruits like dates, fish and meat for their food. They domesticated the animals like dog, cat, and for transportation of articles elephant, camel, bull etc.

Both men and women wore ornaments like necklaces, bracelets, rings. Nose studs, earrings and bangle like ornaments were worn only by women. Their ornaments were made of copper, ivory, pearls and beads. Women were conscious of their hair. They were using cosmetics and perfumes extensively.

The Harappans were wearing cotton and wool clothes. They know the art of sewing clothes. Men were wearing 'dhoti' and 'shawl'.

Many types of toys like cart with wheels, small chains were among the play – things of the Harappan children. Elders were playing dice. They showed much interest in dance and music.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the sources to know about the food, ornaments and entertainments of Harappans ?

**Agriculture:** During the days of Harappan culture the region had good rainfall and fertile soil. The rivers like Sindhu, Ravi, Ghaggar, Sutlej were good sources of water for irrigation for the cities like Harappa,

Kalibangan, Ropar, Lothal. So the Harappans became good agriculturists. They used light wooden ploughshares drawn by both men and oxen. The Harappans were the first to grow cotton in the world.

**Trade:** Harappans had trade contacts with West Asia, particularly Mesopotamia. The Sumerians imported copper, ivory objects, pearls and cloth. Harappans in turn imported silver from Sumeria. Iron was not known to the Harappans. They were able to know the directions with the help of stars. Cambay in Gujarat and Suktagen-dor were the chief trade centres. Articles were transported by bullock carts and boats.

S.A.Q.

1. Note the trade contacts of the Harappans with outside world.

The Indus people used weights and measures in connection with their trade and commerce. Usually 16 and its multiples of 64, 160, 320 and 640 were used both in measurement and weight.

**Decay:** The Harappan culture disappeared by B.C. 18<sup>th</sup> century. Scholars differ in their opinions regarding the causes for the decay of the Harappan culture.

1. According to some scholars the Harappans destroyed forests for fuel to burn bricks which they used extensively to construct buildings. This resulted in the drastic change of climate. The decrease in the rainfall converted the once fertile land into almost a desert. So the Harappan culture decayed.
2. According to some other scholars heavy floods in the Sindhu region destroyed the Harappan culture.
3. The invasions of Aryans led to the destruction of the Harappan culture.
4. S.R. Rao opines that Harappan culture did not disappear all of a sudden in the B.C. 18<sup>th</sup> century. It continued for about 400 years after circa B.C. 1900 and during that period it gradually transformed from urban civilization to rural civilization. According to S.R. Rao and some others the Indus people are not different from the Rigvedic Aryans.

The Harappan culture changed its characteristic features by about 1600 – 1500 B.C and continued as Rigvedic rural culture.

S.A.Q.

1. What could be the strong reason for the decay of Harappan civilization in your view?

**Essay type questions: (15 marks)**

1. Write an essay on the discovery, extent and date of the Indus civilization.
2. Write an essay on the town planning system in the Harappan culture.
3. What are the salient features of Great Bath and public buildings in Mohenjodaro
4. Discuss the importance of Indus seals and Indus script.
5. Write an essay on the religion and art of the Harappan culture.

**Brief questions (10 marks)**

1. Write a note on the discovery of the Harappan culture.
2. Explain the extent of the Harappan culture
3. Discuss the importance of the discovery of Indus civilization.
4. Write a note on the date of the Indus civilization.
5. Bring out the salient features of Indus seals.
6. Write a note on the Indus religion
7. Write a note on the food, dress and ornaments of the Harappan culture.
8. Give the causes of the decay of the Indus civilization.

**Short type questions (5 marks)**

1. Location of Harappa
2. Who discovered the ruins of the Harappan culture in 1921?
3. Who excavated Mohenjodaro in 1922?
4. What are the important places of Indus civilization now in Pakistan?
5. What are the important places of Indus civilization in India?

6. “Harappan civilization is the most spatially extensive of all civilizations” – who said this?
7. What are the dates assigned to the Indus civilization by the following scholars:
  - a. Mortimer Wheeler
  - b. F.R. Allchin
  - c. Dales
  - d. Charles Fabri
  - e. S.R. Rao
8. What are the two stages of the Harappan culture?
9. What is the most important feature of the Harappan culture?
10. Who are the scholars that related Indus language with Dravidian?
11. Name the scholars who considered that the Indus language was Indo – Aryan or Pre – Vedic Sanskrit language.
12. Write notes on Mother goddess, Pasupati in Indus civilization.

**Objective type questions (one mark each):**

1. Harappa is on the banks of the river
  - a. Ravi
  - b. Chenab
  - c. Sutlej
  - d. Ganga
2. In 1921 the Harappan city ruins were discovered by
  - a. R.B. Dayanand Sahni
  - b. A. Ghosh
  - c. Mortimer wheeler
  - d. H.D. Sankalia
3. ‘Great Bath’ in the Indus Civilization is in
  - a. Roper
  - b. Kot Diji
  - c. Kalibangan
  - d. Mohenjodaro
4. The ‘Great Granary’ of the Indus Civilization is in
  - a. Mohenjodaro
  - b. Lothal
  - c. Harappa
  - d. Rangapur
5. The date of the ‘Mature Harappan Culture’ is
  - a. B.C 2500 – 1500
  - b. B.C 2500 – 1900
  - c. B.C 2150 – 1700
  - d. B.C 2800 – 2500
6. The date of ‘Late Harappan Culture’ is
  - a. B.C 2700 – 2050
  - b. B.C 2800 – 2500
  - c. B.C 1900 – 1600 / 1500
  - d. B.C 2150 – 1700
7. The most important feature of the Harappan Culture is

- a. Trade and commerce                      b. Administration  
 c. Town Planning                              d. Efficient Revenue system
8. One of the significant features of the Indus Civilization is  
 a. Seals    b. Battle axes  
 c. Poisonous arrows                              d. Daggers
9. According to G.R. Hunter and Iravatham Mahadevan Indus language belongs to  
 a. Dravidian                                        b. Proto Prakrit  
 c. Ardha Magadhi                                d. Pali
10. According to M.V. Krishna Rao and S.R.Rao Indus language was  
 a. Dravidian                                        b. Proto – Dravidian  
 c. Proto Prakrit                                    d. Pre – vedic Sanskrit
11. Indus people worshipped  
 a. Indra    b. Varuna  
 c. Mother – goddess                              d. Surya
12. The Harappans had trade contacts with  
 a. Mesopotamia                                    b. Africa  
 c. Russia    d. China

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Answers:

1.    a      2.    a      3.    d      4.    c      5.    b  
       6.    c  
 7.    c      8.    a      9.    a      10.   d      11.   c  
       12.   a
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## Unit – 2 (b)

### Vedic Culture: Rig Vedic and Later Vedic Culture

- 2b.0 Objectives
- 2b.1 Introduction
- 2b.2 Aryans
  - 2b.2.1 Original home of Aryans
  - 2b.2.2 Early settlements of Aryans
- 2b.3 Sacred Books of the Aryans
  - 2b.3.1 Rigveda
  - 2b.3.2 Yajurveda
  - 2b.3.3 Samaveda
  - 2b.3.4 Atharvaveda
  - 2b.3.5 Brahmanas
  - 2b.3.6 Aranyakas
  - 2b.3.7 Upanishads
  - 2b.3.8 Vedangas
- 2b.4 Early Vedic Culture
  - 2b.4.1 Early Vedic Religion
  - 2b.4.2 Early Vedic Society
  - 2b.4.3 Early Vedic Economy
- 2b.5 Late Vedic Culture
  - 2b.5.1 Late Vedic Religion
  - 2b.5.2 Late Vedic Society
  - 2b.5.3 Late Vedic Economy

#### **2b.0 Objectives:**

The student is expected to know about the advent of the Aryans, their original home, early settlements and the four Vedas, later Vedic literature, religion, society and economy during the Early as well as Late Vedic periods.

#### **2b.1 Introduction:**

The Harappan Civilization made its exit by about the 18<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Scholars date the composition of Rigveda c. B.C. 1500. No definite information is available to know the history of India between the disappearance of the Harappan culture and the emergence of the Vedic culture. The Vedic period in India can, in a way, be regarded as a



continuation of the Indo – Iranian phase of the Aryan civilization. Rigveda of the Aryans is the earliest work in any Indo – European or Aryan language. Beyond this literary source there are no material evidences for the period 1500 – 600 B.C

## **2b.2 Original home of Aryans:**

There are diverse opinions about the original home of the Aryans. Some foreign scholars opined that the original home of the Aryans was Germany. But D.D Kosambi rejected this view on the ground that the present day German – Scandinavian race and that of the Uttar Pradesh (India) cannot be one and the same. Some Indian scholars like G.N. Jha, D.S. Trivedi argued that India was the original home of the Aryans. According to them region of Kashmir and the foot of the Himalayas was the original home of the Aryans. Their argument is on the following lines: The Aryans stated that the Sapta – Sindhu region was their original home. The Sapta – Sindhus mentioned in the Vedas are identified with the rivers Sindhu (Indus), Ravi, Beas, Chenab, Jhelum, Sutlej and the Sarasvati. According to some other scholars the original home of Aryans extended up to Afghanistan (from the Saptasindhu region) as the rivers Kurram, Gomal, Kubha, Suvastu of Afghanistan are mentioned in the Vedas. Balgangadhar Tilak opines that the original home of Aryans was the Arctic region (his work, Arctic home of Aryans). His observation was based on certain astronomical factors. But many scholars do not take this suggestion seriously. Some European historians like MacDonell and others believe that the Aryans appeared from South – Eastern Europe (modern Austria and Hungary).

There is another theory. Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and Persian languages belong to one family and in the past all these were one language. The people who spoke this language originally lived in the region around Caspian Sea. The scholars believe that the Indus Valley Civilization had almost completely disintegrated in the second millennium B.C. when the Aryans appeared in the north – western part of the Indo – Pakistan subcontinent. The Indo – Aryans had remained for some time in Bactria (modern Balkh in north Afghanistan) and the north Iran plateau before crossing over to India through the passes in the Hindukush

mountains. That is why there is a close similarity between the Vedic language and the primitive Iranian language.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the different theories regarding the original home of Aryans and what is the place of different languages in this context ?

### **2b2.2 Early settlement of Aryans:**

The Aryans did not occupy whole of northern India at one stretch. First they settled in the Sapta – Sindhu region. From the Sapta – Sindhu the Aryans moved forward along the courses of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna and gradually occupied the whole of northern India. The whole region came to be known as Aryavarta. The date of this settlement is generally placed between 2400 – 1500 B.C.

### **2b.3 Sacred Books of the Aryans:**

The principal sacred books of the Aryans are the four Vedas. Of them the earliest is the Rigveda, the hymns of which were composed during 1500 – 1400 B.C. The Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda together are known as ‘Sruti’.

#### **2b3.1 The Rigveda:**

The Rigveda consists of 1017 (or 1028) hymns of unequal size. Most of the hymns are prayers to *divas* (gods). They were largely composed in the modern Punjab region. The Rigveda is divided into ten *mandalas* and to each *mandala* is attached to the name of *rishi* to whom the hymns are revealed. The Rigveda contains the Gayatri – mantra, the most sacred one.

#### **2b.3.2 The Yajurveda:**

The Yajurveda contains hymns to be recited at the time of performing *yajnas*. It lays down rituals and methods pertaining to the performance of *yajnas* in a proper way.

#### **2b.3.4: The Atharvaveda:**

The Atharvaveda contains hymns pertaining to *jnana* (knowledge), *karma* (deeds) and *upasana* (invocation). Some of the *mantras* help to ward off evil spirits, while some bestow success, happiness and long life. Certain hymns are magical formulae in the nature of spells and charms to

ward off evil spirits. The Atharvaveda is an important source not only to know the social life, beliefs, etc. of the Aryans but also to the history of science in India.

### **2b3.5 The Brahmanas:**

The *Brahmanas* are in the nature of explanatory notes on the Veda – mantras. The *Brahmanas* are in easy prose so that even a common man can understand. The difficult concepts in the Vedas are explained through legends and stories for easy understanding.

### **2b.3.6 The Aranyankas:**

The *Aranyankas* deal with the philosophy of life. They are helpful to the people who renounce worldly life and retire to forests to perform *tapas* (penance).

S.A.Q.

1. Which of the four Vedas is the last one and what is importance to social life compared to the other three Vedas ?

### **2b.3.7 The Upanishads:**

This is the most unique literature of the Aryans dealing with spiritual religious life. They are the concluding parts of the *Brahmanas* and are collectively known as ‘Vedanta’. They contain excellent discussions on the subjects *Prakriti* (matter), *atman* (soul) and *brahma* (god). They expound the doctrines of *karma* (action), *mukti* (salvation) and *maya* (illusion) and the transmigration of the soul. Significantly, the Upanishads are translated into almost all languages of the world and the philosophical concepts they contain are relevant even to the present day society.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘The Upanishads are considered to be the most unique in the Vedic literature’. Do you agree ?

### **2b.3.8 The Vedangas:**

The *Vedangas* are: Siksha, Kalpa, Nirukta, Vyakarana, Jyotisha and chhandas. The Siksha is a guide to the correct pronunciation of the

Veda – mantras. The Kalpa sutras lay down the duties and social responsibilities of householders in detail. The Nirukta discusses the etymology of words. The Vyakarana is needed for the study of language in a systematic manner. Jyotisha deals with astronomical details. The chhandas deals with the meters of the Vedic mantras. Thus the Vedangas are of immense help to study and understand the Vedas and perform Vedic sacrifices in proper manner.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The Vedangas are of immense help to understand the Vedas and perform Vedic sacrifices in proper manner'.- Explain.

#### **2b.4 Early Vedic culture:**

The Rigveda has abundant information regarding the religion, society and economy of the Aryans of that ancient period. Here we may note that there is no other source to know these details except the Rigveda. The Rigveda is a treasure in this respect.

##### **2b.4.1 Early Vedic religion:**

The early Aryan religion was a kind of Nature worship. They deified the forces of Nature and worshipped them in the names of Agni, Surya, Mitra, Dyu, Varuna, Marut etc. Dyauspitar was the 'sky father' and Prithivi personified earth was his consort. Some resemblance can be noticed between the early Aryan gods and those of the Greek and Roman epics. For example Dyauspitar can be compared with the Zeuspater of ancient Greeks, the Jupiter of the Romans and the Tiw of the ancestors of the Anglo – saxons. The last name Tiw is still preserved in Tues – day. The goddess Aditi was implored for blessings on children and cattle, for protection and forgiveness. She is supposed to have control over the regions beyond the earth and beyond the sky. She came to be regarded as the mother of all the gods.

The chief gods of the Vedic pantheon are Agni (the god of fire), Indra (the war God, and the god of atmosphere and weather) and Varuna, the universal encompasser. Agni was the most important of them and hundreds of hymns were addressed to him. The other deities of the Early Vedic Religion include ushas (the goddess of dawn), yama, vayu, Maruts

(storm – gods), Asvins (twin sons of Surya). There is no mention of temples or statues of gods in the Rigveda.

The early Aryans were performing Vedic sacrifices (yajna, or homa). There were no human sacrifices. Milk, grain, ghee, flesh and *soma* were the usual offerings to the gods. In this period the Vedic sacrifices, except soma – sacrifice, had not become elaborate.

Some hymns of the Rigveda of the 10<sup>th</sup> *mandala* give some idea about the philosophical thoughts of the early Aryans which are in the formative stage.

The dead were cremated or buried. Sati (widow burning) was unknown. The dead man's soul is supposed to depart to the plants and waters. Life in the next world was looked upon as a replica of life in this world.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The early Vedic religion was a kind of Nature worship'. Do you agree ?

#### **2b.4.2 Early Vedic society:**

The Aryan society was patriarchal monogamic. However, polygamy was in existence particularly among the princes. There were few restrictions on marriage. Child marriage was not in practice. There was freedom to select the spouse. Dowries and bride – prices (*Kanya – sulka*) were both common. We do not find any reference to divorce or re-marriage of widows in the Rigveda. Aged father used to hand over the family responsibilities to his eldest son.

According to the Purushasukta there were four functional groups viz. brahmanas, kshatriya, vaisya and sudra. However, in the beginning these distinctions were not hereditary. There is evidence in Rigveda to show that slavery was in existence. Slaves were regarded as a form of wealth. Bronze smiths and carpenters were much respected.

S.A.Q.

1. Is the Early Vedic society reflected in Purushasukta ?

The food of the early Aryans consisted of vegetables, milk in plenty, either in the form of curds or butter, beef, fruits, etc. In respect of food the Rigvedic Aryans had few of the taboos of later India. There were two kinds of drinks *soma* and *sura*. *Soma* was drunk at Vedic sacrifices as a sacred drink. *Sura* is disapproved by the priestly class.

The Aryans loved music and played the flute, lute and harp. Cymbals and drums were the accompanying instruments. Dancing was also another pastime of the Aryans. Besides religious music they also had secular music. These two had their own special features.

The early Aryans wore simple dress consisting of one or two garments. They were of wool and sometimes skin was also used. Both men and women wore gold ornaments. The hair was carefully combed and oiled; it was plaited by women and worn in coils by both men and women.

The chief amusements of the period were gambling and chariot race. Debts were often incurred in gambling and failure in races sometimes resulted in slavery. The Aryan chariots are described in great detail in the Rigveda. The chariots were two – wheeled and four – wheeled. They were drawn by ox or horse.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the salient features of Early Vedic social life ?

### **2b.4.3 Early Vedic economy:**

The early Vedic economy was essentially agricultural and pastoral. They raised grain crops like yava (barley). Early Vedic Aryans knew ploughing, reaping corn and winnowing. They also knew irrigation. Pastoral economy was more popular. Land was rarely an object of sale or gift. Barter system was in vogue. An image of Indra costed ten cows. The Rigveda often mentions *Nishka*, perhaps in the sense of a golden necklace. Later on *Nishka* came to denote gold coin. They do not seem to be averse to trade and industry. Commerce seems to have been in the hands of *panis* whose identity is not clear. There seems to have been maritime activity.

### **2b.5 Later Vedic Culture:**

The Yajurveda and Samaveda came up along with Rigveda. The Atharva Veda probably came up at a later date. It may be noted that the Rig, Yaju and Samaveda together are called *Trayi*. The *Samhitas* of the Atharva veda are sometimes known as Brahma – Veda as they are used by the Brahman, *i.e.* the chief priest at a Vedic sacrifice. The Atharva Veda throws welcome light on the social life of the later Vedic people. During this period the Aryan tribes started spreading along the banks of the Yamua and gradually they occupied entire north India. By the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C the region between the Himalayas and the Vindhya came to be known as Aryavarta. Significant changes occurred in the social life of the Aryans during this period.

#### **2b.5.1 Later Vedic Religion:**

The Vedic sacrifices became very elaborate and complicated. Some sacrifices were to be performed for a very long time, even up to a whole year. The Atharva Veda gives numerous details of long and complicated Vedic sacrifices. The Pre – Aryan gods got mixed up in the elaborate Aryan rituals. This was the forerunner to the growth of popular Hinduism at a later stage. Rudra (Siva) and Vishnu (Krishna) became prominent gods. People believed that by performing Vedic sacrifices one can attain everlasting bliss.

Another significant change occurred during this period. Deep thinkers were fed up with the complicated ritualism. They desired to get at the ultimate truth regarding man and his relationship with universe. This led to the appearance of the Upanishads which are among the most valued treasures of the mankind. Among the new elements in the Upanishads are the ‘doctrine of rebirth’ (transmigration of soul) and *karma*. The *karma* (action) of man determines the nature of his life in the next birth. This thought soon became fundamental to most Indian thought. To escape from the cycle of births and rebirths one must realize the nature of Brahman (the Absolute Reality). These are some thoughts of the Upanishads. The age of the genuine Upanishads comes to a close by about 600 B.C.

S.A.Q.

1. Compare the Early and Later Vedic religions.

### **2b.5.2 Later Vedic society:**

Several changes took place in the social life of the Later Vedic Aryans. During this period the Aryans came to live a settled life. Professions were not yet totally restricted to a particular caste. However, the influence of the brahmanas was steadily increasing and was becoming predominant in the society. The priest came from the priestly classes and was an important factor in the society. It was not possible to perform Vedic sacrifices and rituals without him.

The profession of war was carried out by the fighting classes. The king was leading the army. The simple distinction between vaisya and sudra began to grow into an increasing number of endogamous groups which can be considered as the seeds of the caste system. Social distinctions became more prominent. Artisans were losing their status and forming separate castes of their own. The sudras on the other hand were no longer slaves but gaining in status. The Aryans were trying to bring the tribes into their social structure and the process of naturalization naturally involved many social changes. There was no unnatural rigidity in the social order. A high priest accepted Satyakamajabla, son of a slave girl, as his pupil as he (Jabala) spoke truth about his birth.

In the social life of the Later Vedic Aryans the rituals increased in number and variety. The rules regarding girls' marriage became more complicated. The Atharva Veda deals with these rules in detail. However, the marriages were not restricted on the base of one's caste. In course of time when the caste system became rigid inter – dining and inter – marriages among castes were prohibited.

The nobles were wealthy and priest flocked around them chanting prayers for their prosperity and destruction of enemies, both human and demon. The bulk of the people were poor and borrowed at high rates of interest. Women had no inheritance or property of their own. However, they occupied an honourable position in the family. Wife took part in religious ceremonies. Many professions were open to women such as weaving, embroidery, cane – splitting, dyeing, etc. Women were moving about freely. There were scholars like Gargeyi, Maitreyi among women.

The social life of the Aryans was based on the four - fold *asrama* system. During the first asrama – brahmacharya pupil would stay in



gurukula and acquire knowledge. The second is grihastha in which man leads married life, beget children and help the society in various ways. During the third – vanaprastha one would retire to forests with his wife, after he attains 50 years of age and spends time in search of Absolute Truth or Brahman. The last is sanyasa in which man renounces the worldly pleasures *in toto*, and guides the society to follow the righteous path. The man's goal was to achieve the four *purusharthas*, namely, dharma, artha, kama and moksha. This kind of social order was advocated for the harmony, welfare and prosperity of the Aryan society.

The Later Vedic Aryans' food was as that of their ancestors. However, meat eating and consuming sura were censured. Wheat, barley and rice were used for food. They wore, besides woolen clothes, silk and dyed garments. Amulets were worn to avert evil eye and ward off illness. They used copper, iron, stone and earthen vessels.

S.A.Q.

1. Compare the Early and Later Vedic society.

### **2b.5.3 Later Vedic Economy:**

Agriculture and pastoralism made good progress. The main occupation was agriculture. Heavy ploughs drawn by as many as 24 oxen came into use. Iron plough shares were used in place of wooden ploughshares. The irrigation facilities also improved. Agriculture became a source of wealth also. Cattle breeding occupied second place and goat and sheep were also reared.

Weaving in cotton and wool was popular and done by both men and women. The other occupation included making chariots by carpenters, practicing medicine and astrology, boat making. Merchants organized themselves into guilds.

The gold coin *nishka* was in more use. *Krishnala* was a weight. The *satamana* was a piece of gold weighting 100 *Krishnalas*. *Pana*, *karshapana* were other coins in currency. However, barter system was also in vogue.

One sixth of the agricultural produce, depending upon the fertility of the soil, was collected as tax. The herbs used in medicines and honey were among the trade commodities. They were collected from forests.

Roads, bridges, two wheeled carts facilitated transportation of trade articles.

**I. Essay Type Questions (15 Marks)**

1. Discuss about the original home and early settlements of the Aryans.
2. Write an essay on the sacred books of the Aryans.
3. Write an essay on the Early Vedic Culture.
4. Write an essay on the Late Vedic Culture.
5. Explain the evolution of the Vedic society and religion from the Early Vedic Age to Late Vedic Age.

**II. Brief Questions (10 Marks)**

1. Write a note on the date of the Vedic culture.
2. Write a note on the early settlements of the Aryans.
3. Write a note on the Rik, Yaju and Samavedas
4. Explain the importance of the Atharvaveda to know the social life of the Aryans.
5. Write a brief note on the following: a. Brahmanas b. Aranyakas c. Vedangas
6. Write a brief note on the early Vedic religion.
7. Write a brief note on the early Vedic society.
8. Write a brief note on the early Vedic economy.
9. Write a note on the Later Vedic religion.
10. Write a note on the Later Vedic society.
11. Write a note on the Later Vedic economy.

**III. Short Type Questions (5 Marks)**

1. What is the probable date of the composition of the Rigveda?
2. What is the earliest literary work in Indo – European or Indo – Iranian languages?
3. Why did D.D. Kosambi reject the view that the original home of the Aryans was Germany?
4. Who argued that India was the original home of the Aryans?
5. Which region was known as Sapta – Sindhu?
6. Who opined that the Arctic region was the original home of the Aryans?

7. What is the opinion of the Mac Donell regarding the original home of the Aryans?
8. What is Aryavarta?
9. What is the date of the earliest settlement of the Aryans in India?
10. What is sruti?
11. In which Veda the Gayatri – mantra is found?
12. Which Veda is related to the ancient Indian music?
13. Which Veda contains magic formulae and charms?
14. What is the significance of the sacred text Brahmanas?
15. What is the collective name of the Upanishads?
16. What are the Vedangas?
17. What is the subject matter of Vedangas?
18. Who are the Dauspitar and Prithivi?
19. What for the Aditi was prayed by the early Vedic Aryans?
20. Who were the chief gods of the Vedic pantheon?
21. How did the Early Vedic Aryans dispose off the dead?
22. According to the Purushasukta how many functional groups were there in the Early Vedic society?
23. What was the food of the Early Vedic Aryans?
24. Name some of the musical instruments of the Early Vedic Aryans.
25. Describe the dress and ornaments of the Early Vedic Aryans.
26. What are the chief amusements of the Early Vedic Aryans?
27. What are the two chief features of the Early Vedic Economy?
28. What is a *nishka*?
29. Who were associated with trade during the Early Vedic period?
30. What does *Trayi* denote?
31. What is Brahma – Veda?
32. Who were the gods that came into prominence during the Late Vedic period?
33. What is karma according to the Upanishads?
34. Name some great women scholars of the Later Vedic period.
35. What are the *asramas* in man's life during the Later Vedic period?
36. What are the Purusharthas?
37. What is *satamana*?
38. Name some of the coins of the Later Vedic culture.

39. What metals were used by the Later Vedic Aryans for their household utensils?
40. Name some of the trade articles during Later Vedic culture.

**IV. Objective Type Questions (1 Mark each)**

1. The date of the composition of the Rigveda is
  - a. B.C.1500      b. B.C.1000
  - c. B.C.1800      d. B.C.1875
2. The earliest work in any Indo – European or Aryan language is
  - a. Satapatha – Brahmana      b. Samaveda
  - c. Atharvaveda      d. Rigveda
3. According to Balgangadhar Tilak the original home of the Aryans was
  - a. Iraq      b. Arctic region
  - c. Himalayas      d. Madhya Bharat
4. According to Mac Donell the Aryans came from
  - a. Iran      b. Sapta – Sindhu region
  - c. South – Eastern Europe      d. Hindukush Mountain Region
5. The Aryans first settled in
  - a. Sapta – Sindhu region      b. Region between Ganga and Yamuna
  - c. Nepal      d. Trivishtapa (Tibet)
6. The Vedas together are known as
  - a. Prasthanatrayi      b. Sruti
  - c. Upanishads      d. Vedanta
7. One of the following is in the nature of Explanatory notes on the Veda – mantras
  - a. Bhagavadgita and Mahabharata      b. The Brahmanas
  - c. The Aranyakas      d. The Upanishads
8. The Upanishads are collectively known as
  - a. Vedanta      b. Darsanas
  - c. Vedangas      d. None of the above
9. The Siksha deals with the
  - a. Correct pronunciation of the Veda mantras
  - b. Philosophy of the Vedas
  - c. Customs and traditions of the Vedic society

- d. Crimes and punishments as laid down in the Vedas
10. The Nirukta deals with
- a. The *mantras* of the Rigveda                      b. Etymology of the Vedic words
- c. The philosophy of the Brahmanas              d. The Vedic sacrifices
11. The Early Aryan Religion was a kind of worship of
- a. Rudra - Siva    b. Mother goddess
- c. Defied forces of Nature                      d. Vishnu - Narayana
12. The sukta that mentions the four functional groups, viz. brahmanas, kshatriya, vaisya and sudra is
- a. Purusha – sukta                                      b. Prithvi – sukta
- c. Durga – sukta    d. Agni – sukta
13. The Rig, Yaju and sama – Veds are collectively known as
- a. Nirukta    b. Sukta
- c. Trayi    d. Samhita
14. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are collectively known as
- a. Asramas    b. Functional groups
- c. Names of Upanishads                      d. Purusharthas
15. ‘Satamana’ during the Vedic period was
- a. A piece of gold weighing 100 krishnalas
- b. A piece of silver weighing 100 krishnalas
- c. Blessing person with a hundred years of life
- d. Any object weighing 100 karshapanas

Answers:

1. a      2. d      3. b      4. c      5. a
6. b
7. b      8. a      9. a      10. b      11. c
12. a
13. c    14. d    15. a
-

## UNIT-3 : a : BUDDHISM

- 3. a. 0. Objectives
- 3. a.1. Introduction
- 3. a. 2. Buddhism
- 3. a. 3. Teachings of Gautama Buddha
- 3. a. 4. Four Buddhist Councils
- 3. a. 5. Buddhist Sects
  - 3. a. 5.1. Hinayana
  - 3. a. 5. 2. Mahayana
- 3. a. 6. Decline of Buddhism

### **3. 0. Objectives:**

The student is expected to know from this lesson the circumstances that led to the founding of Buddhism, the founder of Buddhism, the teachings of Gautama Buddha, royal patronage to Buddhism, the four Councils of Buddhism that were organized at different times and places, the emergence of the important sects of Buddhism and, finally, the causes for the decline of Buddhism.

### **3. a. 1. Introduction:**

Sixth century BC has a unique place in the history of not only India but also of the world. It has seen great philosophers like Mahavira and the Buddha of India, Isaiah of Babylon, Heraclitus and Confucius of China. All these great thinkers propounded new philosophical thoughts waking up men out of the traditions of kingship and priests and blood-sacrifices. The thoughts of these great men were answers to the most penetrating questions that were troubling the minds of sensible people. Buddha and Mahavira, the founders of Buddhism and Jainism respectively, brought a revolutionary change in the Indian society.

### **3. a. 2. Buddhism:**

Both Buddhism and Jainism had the Vedic society as backdrop and their roots in the Upanishads. Aversion against the extravagant Vedic sacrifices had been becoming more and more prominent in the society. The most meaningful philosophical thoughts of the Upanishads did not reach the common man. He was only confronted with senseless sacrifices and wasteful expenditure incurred on them. The domination of the priestly

class created aversion among people against that class. The *karma* theory was misinterpreted to the advantage of certain classes of the society. Caste system became rigid and created unrest in the society. The society was becoming directionless and restless. According to some scholars the Buddhism and Jainism were revolts against the Aryan culture by those who were not Aryans. In support of their argument they point out that both Buddha and Mahavira belonged to the Mongolian race. Sramanas and Parivrajakas rose against killing of animals in the name of sacrifice in the *yajnas* and earthly pleasures to which certain affluent classes resorted to. Naturally people were attracted towards these revolutionary ideas. All these positive thoughts had their roots in the Upanishads. But, as noticed above, they were beyond the reach of common man. Due to all these factors the Buddhism and Jainism became the need of the hour.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Both Buddhism and Jainism had the Vedic society as backdrop and their roots in the Upanishads.' – Do you agree with this view ?

### **3.3. Teachings of Buddha:**

#### **3.3.1. Gautama Buddha:**

The founder of Buddhism was Gautama (Siddhartha). He was born in 567 BC in Lumbini. His father Suddhodana was the king of the Sakya clan. Gautama's mother died when he was only a few days old. So he was brought up by Mahaprajapati Gotami. That is why Siddhartha was also known as Gautama. At the age of 16 his marriage took place with Yasodhara and to them was born Rahul. He spent his life happily for some time. Once he saw a sick person, a man suffering from old age, an orphan and a dead body. This incident brought a great change in the outlook of Gautama. He became restless and started thinking over the sufferings of the man. He could not understand the cause of the human miseries. So he left his family and started wandering in search of 'truth'. He reached a place called Uruvela and began to perform severe penance. Though he became like a skeleton he could not find out the 'truth'. After severe

penance, one day as he was sitting and meditating under a peepal tree at Gaya Divine Light dawned upon him and he became the 'Enlightened', Buddha (537 BC). The four tragic sights he saw, as noted above, came to be known as 'Four Great Sights' and his leaving the royal palace in search of 'truth' is known as 'Great Renunciation'. Buddha delivered his First Sermon at 'Mrigavana' (Deer Park) at Sarnath, near Varanasi. This event is called 'Dharmachakra-pravartana'. Later Buddha spent his entire life in preaching his principles. He passed away at the age of 80 years at Kushinagara (Nepal) in 487 BC.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Four tragic sights are responsible for Buddha's renunciation'.- Explain.

### **3. a. 3. Teachings of Gautama Buddha:**

The religion of Buddha is known as 'Middle Path' (Madhye-marga). Buddha rejected both the materialistic as well as the 'Atma-vada' which subjects the body to rigorous austerity and chose the 'Middle Path'. Buddha advocated Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path. They are: (a) Four Noble Truths: i) World is full of suffering, ii) Human desires are the root-cause for suffering, iii) The renunciation of desires is the path to salvation and iv) The salvation can be achieved by following The Eightfold Path. The Eightfold Path consists of: i) Right Belief, ii) Right Thought, iii) Right Speech, iv) Right Action, v) Right Means of Livelihood, vi) Right Meditation, vii) Right Effort and viii) Right Remembrance or Right Memory. This Eightfold Path is also known as the 'Middle Path' as noted above. By following this Eightfold Path one can attain *Nirvana* (salvation).

Like Hinduism Buddha recognized the law of *karma* which declares that a man's condition in the present life is determined by the consequences of his actions in his past existence. No person can escape the consequences of his action.

Buddha laid great emphasis on *Ahimsa*. Thus he rejected Vedic rituals which involved blood-sacrifices. He also preached sanctity and simplicity in man's life. He rejected the caste system unequivocally. Buddha kept



silent about the existence of God. He neither accepted nor rejected His existence. According to Buddha the whole universe is controlled by a universal law which he called *dharma*. He rejected the performance of *Vedic yajnas* which involved extravagancy and animal sacrifices and in no way useful to find the 'truth'. He laid great emphasis on morality and laid down a code of conduct for his followers. Buddha adopted the Pali language to propagate his principles so that they would reach the heart of the common man. In short, Buddha advocated absolute *Ahimsa*, simplicity, a social conduct of morals and sanctity and sincere effort to attain the final goal, namely, *Nirvana*.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the essence of the Buddha's teachings ?

### **3. a. 4. Four Buddhist Councils:**

Four Buddhist Councils were held after the *Mahapari-nirvana* of Buddha. A few weeks after the death of Buddha, the First Buddhist Council was held at Rajagriha (487 BC) by his followers. They collected and compiled the teachings of Buddha. The literature thus compiled was in two books, namely, Vinaya-pitaka and Sutta-pitaka. The First Book contains the rules of monastic discipline for the Buddhist monks and the Second Book contains the religious discourses of Buddha.

The Second Buddhist Council was held 100 years after the death of Buddha at Vaisali (387 BC). In this council some modifications were made in the Buddhist literature and the monastic order was made less vigorous. The Third Buddhist Council was held at Pataliputra during the reign of Asoka. The council made a new classification of the Buddhist canonical texts by the addition of a Third Book, Abhidhamma-pitaka. This contained the philosophical interpretations of the doctrines of the Vinaya-pitaka and Sutta-pitaka. All these three books are collectively known as 'Tri-pitakas' (Three Baskets). The canonical literature was definitely and authoritatively settled.

The Fourth Buddhist Council was held at Jullander or in Kashmir under the leadership of Vasumitra and Asvaghosha during the reign of Kanishka. In this council the Buddhism came to be split into two sects, namely, Hinayana and Mahayana.

S.A.Q.

1. Which of the Four Buddhist Councils had a longlasting impact on Buddhism ? Explain.

### **3. a. 5. Buddhist Sects:**

During the deliberations of the Fourth Buddhist Council the Buddhists were split into two sects, namely, Hinayana and Mahayana.

#### **3. a. 5. 1. Hinayana:**

The term Hinayana ('Lesser Vehicle') conveys the original and orthodox philosophy of Buddha who is regarded to be the guide and teacher. The Hinayana Buddhists do not believe in the worship of Buddha in the form of idol. In this Buddha is represented by symbols only. They also do not consider Buddha as god. They believe in the Eightfold Path as laid down by Buddha for attainment of *nirvana* (salvation) from the cycle of births and deaths.

#### **3. a. 5. 2. Mahayana:**

The Mahayana is the combination of old Buddhism and Hinduism. The Mahayana Buddhists believe that Buddha was an incarnation of God. They worship Buddha and Bodhisattvas in the form of images. The renowned Buddhist monk Nagarjuna was the first leader of the Mahayana sect of the Buddhism. The Mahayana sect adopted many practices of the old Hinduism. They believed that the concept that Buddha was the incarnation of God and his worship in the form of images would help Buddhism to maintain its popular appeal. Consequently several beautiful images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas came into existence opening a new chapter in Buddhist art. Thus the Mahayana came close to Hinduism and finally merged into it.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Mahayana came close to Hinduism and finally merged into it'. Do you support this view ?

### **3. 6. Decline of Buddhism:**

It is an irony that Buddhism, which was once enjoyed royal patronage and popular faith, in course of time almost disappeared from the land of its origin. Its simplicity and austerity attracted people of not only India but also of many in Asia. In its days of glory it spread far and wide because of the missionary zeal of the members of the Sangha. But due to many reasons Buddhism declined. They are:

1) The extravagant and luxurious Vedic sacrifices, the caste system, etc, resulted in the loss of popular support to Hinduism. It is at this time that Buddhism came into existence and could win over the people. This made the Hindu thinkers to reform their own religion. The Vedic sacrifices were discouraged. The great philosophers like Kumarilabhatta and Adi-Sankara successfully conveyed the message of true Hinduism to people. The Buddhist philosophers could not compete with them in the philosophical discussions and uphold their religion.

2) In the beginning the Sangha was well organized and it could win the hearts of the common people with its ideals of simplicity, austerity and equality among all sections of people. Their messages, because of their honesty and integrity, could reach and influence the common man. But in course of time the Buddhist *bhikshus* and *bhikshunis* became easy going and even immoral. This distanced Buddhism from common man and consequently he lost faith in it and turned to the reformed Hinduism.

3) By about 7<sup>th</sup> century AD the Buddhist *viharas* and monasteries became very rich. During the royal patronage of Asoka, Kanishka and Harsha vast extents of fertile land were endowed to the *viharas* for their maintenance. Consequently the Buddhists became very rich and started leading luxurious life. Often the Buddhists and Buddhist nuns were involved in

immoral practices. This created aversion in the society towards the Buddhist establishments and their members.

4) The Mahayana principles were similar to the traditional Hinduism and as a result the former lost its identity.

5) Originally the Buddhist writings were in Pali, common man's language. So it was easily understood by common man. But Kanishka introduced Sanskrit in place of Pali. Sanskrit was not well understood by common man. So Buddhist tenets failed to reach him.

6) After the death of Kanishka Buddhism lacked royal patronage, which earlier helped the spread of Buddhism far and wide.

7) The invasions of first Huns and next Muslims dealt a death blow to Buddhism.

Although Buddhism almost disappeared in the land of its origin it survived in the Asian countries like China, Japan, particularly, in South-East Asia. Tibet became a stronghold of Buddhism.

S.A.Q.

1. What were the chief factors contributed to the decline of Buddhism ?

## **Unit 3 b. Jainism**

- 3. b. 0. Objectives
- 3. b. 1. Introduction
- 3. b. 2. Jainism
- 3. b. 3. Teachings of Mahavira
- 3. b. 4. Contribution of Jainism to Indian culture

### **3. b. 0. Objectives:**

This unit enables the student to know about the foundation of Jainism, the 24 Tirthankaras, Mahavira and his teachings, Sects of Jainism, namely, Digambara and Svetambara, and the salient features of the contribution of Jainism to the Indian culture in different fields.

### **3. b. 1. Introduction:**

It has been noted above, while dealing with Buddhism, that 6<sup>th</sup> century BC has a unique place in the history of world. This century witnessed the birth of new religious and philosophical thoughts all over the world. India's contribution to these ideas and thoughts was in the form of two religions, namely, Jainism and Buddhism. Both these were the products of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC and were the results of the resentment of intellectual as well as common men against the extravagant and purposeless Vedic rituals. Both, though differ in their philosophies, preached absolute non-violence, simplicity, and austerity in man's life to attain the final goal, namely, salvation. Both emphasized on the truth and morals in one's life. Though in course of time the Buddhism lost its ground in India, Jainism survived because of its rigorous rules of austerity and the simple way of life the Jain monks led.

### **3. b. 2. Jainism:**

According to the Jaina tradition there were 24 Tirthankaras ('ford-makers across the stream of existence'). Each of them preached the doctrine to the people of his own period. Of them, the first twenty two are of doubtful historicity. The last two, i.e. 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, namely, Parsvanatha and Mahavira, are known to history with certainty. Parsvanatha lived for a

hundred years. It is said that he founded Jainism. He enjoined four great vows on his followers. These vows are: 1) to avoid injury to life, 2) to be truthful, 3) not to steal and 4) not to possess any property. Mahavira added charity to these vows as the fifth one. Obviously, some kind of Jain faith existed before Mahavira and his teachings were based on it. Thus Mahavira was more a reformer of an existing religion than the founder of a new faith called Jainism.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Mahavira was more a reformer of an existing religion than the founder of a new faith called Jainism'. - Justify.

### **3. b. 2. 1. Mahavira:**

Mahavira's original name was Vardhamana. He was born in Kundagrama, a suburb of Vaisali, to Siddhartha and Trisala. Vardhamana married Yasoda and had a daughter by her. At an age of 30 years he left his family to become a monk. Fifteen months after this, in winter, he gave up his clothing and began to wander as a naked monk. Probably this was the first reformation in Jainism as Parsvanatha allowed two garments. It is likely that the followers of Parsvanatha became Svetambaras and those who followed Mahavira became Digambaras. Vardhamana attained Supreme Knowledge (*Kevala-jnana*) as a wandering naked monk. For nearly 30 years after his attainment of 'supreme knowledge' he traveled in the middle valley of the Ganga preaching his principles. Mahavira died at the age of 72 at Pava near Rajagriha.

### **3. b. 2. 2. Teachings of Mahavira:**

As noted above there are two divisions in Jainism, namely, Svetambara and Digambara. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC some Jains, under the leadership of Sthulabhadra, accepted wearing of white garments (*svetambara*) and they came to be known as Svetambara Jains. But Mahavira emphasized that the Jains should not possess anything, including

clothes, and those who followed this view became Digambara-Jains. However, in course of time the Digambara-Jains too took up to clothing and became Svetambara-Jains.

The chief goal of Jainism is *Siddhasila-samprapti* ('Liberation from the cycle of births and deaths'). This can be achieved by following three virtues, namely, Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Action. These three virtues collectively are called *Tri-ratnas* ('Three Jewels').

Mahavira did not believe in the existence of God. He also did not accept the Vedic sacrifices. He laid great emphasis on virtue, morality and nonviolence. According to him body should be subjected to maximum suffering to realize the 'truth'. He also approved death by gradual starvation (*sallekhana*). He recommended life of celibacy to his followers. According to Mahavira not only men and animals but even plants have souls and hence no harm, in any way, should be caused to them. The austerities prescribed by Mahavira were: fasting, gradual abstention from food, begging, giving up delicious food, humility, service, etc.

Jainism spread all over India. The important centres of Jainism were Mathura, Ujjain and Gujarat. Although Buddhism disappeared from the land of its birth, Jainism survived. This is due to the simplicity, austerity, the policy of tolerance and accommodation followed by the Jainism.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the salient features of the teachings of Mahavira and how far do they differ from those of Buddha ?

### **3. b. 4. Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture:**

Both Buddhism and Jainism had great impact on Indian literature, art and religion. Buddhist architecture, art, particularly of Gandhara school, are of great significance. Similarly Buddhist literature was valuable

addition to Indian literature. Similarly Jainism too influenced Indian culture in many ways.

#### **3. b. 4. 1. Social life:**

The Jainism, which disapproved caste system, influenced Hinduism in that direction. The Jain doctrine of *ahimsa* led the Hindu religion to discard animal sacrifices in their rituals. By preaching brotherhood of man and undertaking works of public utility Jainism attracted the attention of the Hindu society.

#### **3. b. 4. 2. Religious Life:**

Jainism denounced extravagant and luxurious Vedic sacrifices and rituals which had no relevance to the common man in the society. This had great influence on the Hindu religious life. The impact of the Jainism led to the reformation of the Hindu religious principles. Vedic sacrifices and rituals lost their importance. Further, the Hindu religious ideas underwent significant changes as a result of which they could reach common man. On the lines of Buddhist and Jain monasteries Hindu *mathas* came up.

#### **3. b. 4. 3. Political Life:**

Scholars opine that the doctrine of *ahimsa* emphasized by both Buddhism and Jainism resulted in the weakening the martial spirit of the people. So they could not withstand the onslaughts of foreign invaders and lost their independence.

#### **3. b. 4. 4. Cultural Life:**

Jainism made valuable contribution to Indian literature and art. The original teachings of Mahavira were contained in fourteen books called 'Purvas'. Later on this body of knowledge was transformed into twelve new books called 'Angas' which form the most important part of the Jain literature and this was written in the Ardha-Magadhi and Prakrit dialects. Some of the Jain literature was later written in Sanskrit, Old Gujarati, Tamil and Kannada also. Thus the Indian literature was enriched. The Jain art and architecture in the form of icons, sculptures and temples made rich contribution to Indian art and architecture.



S.A.Q.

1. Assess the impact of Jainism on Indian culture.

**I. Essay type questions for units 3 a. and 3 b. (each 15 marks):**

1. Write an essay on the origin of Buddhism and its principles.
2. Write an essay on the life of Buddha and examine his teachings.
3. Write an essay on the Buddhist Councils and different Sects of Buddhism.
4. Discuss the reasons for the decline of Buddhism in India.
5. Discuss the origin of Jainism and the role of Mahavira in its evolution.
6. Discuss the teachings of Mahavira and their impact on Indian culture.

**II. Brief Questions for units 3 a. and 3 b.: (each 10 marks):**

1. Discuss the significance of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC in the history of world philosophy and thought
2. Explain the circumstances that led to the origin of Buddhism.
3. Write a short essay on the life of Buddha.
4. What are the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path?
5. Write a short essay on Four Buddhist Councils.
6. Write a note on Hinayana and Mahayana.
7. Write a note on the origin of Jainism.
8. Write a note on the contribution of Jainism to Indian culture.

**III. Short Answer type Questions (each 5 marks):**

1. The original name of Buddha.
2. Why Buddha was called Gautama?
3. What were the incidents that brought change in Buddha?
4. Where did Buddha attain Enlightenment?
5. What is the 'Law of Karma'?
6. Where did Buddha deliver his first sermon?
7. Where did Buddha attain Mahaparinirvana?
8. Where and when was the First Buddhist Council held?

9. Where and when was the Second Buddhist Council held?
10. Where and in whose reign the Third Buddhist Council held?
11. Where and in whose reign was the Fourth Buddhist Council held?
12. Under whose leadership was the Fourth Buddhist Council was held?
13. What are the Tri-pitakas?
14. What is the important feature of the Mahayana?
15. What is Hinayana?
16. How many Tirthankaras were there in Jainism?
17. Who was the 23<sup>rd</sup> Tithankara?
18. Wha are the 'Great Vows' enjoined by Parsvanatha?
19. Who was the 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthankara?
20. What is the original name of Mahavira?
21. What is the 'Great Vow' added by Mahavira to the earlier ones?
22. What are the two important sects of Jainism?
23. What is 'Siddhasila-Samprapti'?
24. Wahat are the 'Tri-Ratnas'?
25. What is 'Sallekhana' in Jainism?
26. What are the 'Purvas' in Jainism?
27. What are the 'Angas' in Jainism?
28. Originally in what language the Jain literature was written?
29. Where and at what age did Mahavira die?
30. What is the meaning of Tirthankara?

**IV. Objective type Questions (each one mark):**

1. Gautama Buddha's original name is  
(a) Sramana (b) Mahasanghika (c) Siddhartha (d) Munisvara
2. Gautama was born in

- (a) 567 BC (b) 582 BC (c) 593 BC (d) 596 BC
3. Buddha was brought up by
- (a) Yasomati (b) Dharmadevi (c) Mahaprajapati-Gautami (d) Mayadevi
4. The 'Four Great Sights' in Buddha's life are
- (a) Four Tragic Sights (b) Four Great Truths (c) Four Great Principles (d) Four Great Stages in Buddha's life
5. 'Dharma-chakra-pravartana' is
- (a) The event of delivering the First Sermon by Buddha at Sarnath (b) Enlightenment at Gaya
- (b) Mahayana teachings (d) The First Buddhist Council
6. The main principle of Buddhism is
- (a) Performance of Vedic sacrifices at low cost (b) Sallekhana (c) Ahimsa (d) Liberal caste system
7. According to Buddhism the final goal in one's life should be
- (a) Nirvana (b) Becoming a Sramana (c) Becoming an Upasaka (d) Preaching Buddhist philosophy
8. The language adopted by Buddha to preach his principles was
- (a) Simple Sanskrit (b) Prakrit (c) Ardha-Magadhi (d) Pali
9. The First Buddhist Council was held at
- (a) Rajagriha (b) Mathura (c) Sarnath (d) Gaya
10. The Second Buddhist Council was held at
- (a) Rajagriha (b) Vaisali (c) Varanasi (d) Ujjain
11. The Third Buddhist Council was held at
- (a) Pataliputra (b) Vaisali (c) Kausambi (d) Purushapura
12. The Fourth Buddhist Council was held during the reign of
- (a) Asoka (b) Harsha (c) Kanishka (d) Samudragupta
13. The Buddhist sect which believes that Buddha is a God and worships his images is known as
- (a) Hinayana (b) Mahayana (c) Vajrayana (d) Neo-Buddhism
14. According to the Jain tradition the number of Tirthankaras is

(a) 24 (b) 26 (c) 29 (d) 28

15. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Tirthankara was

(a) Mahavira (b) Parsvanatha (c) Vardhamana (d) Suparsva

16. Mahavira's original name was

(a) Parsvanatha (b) Vardhamana (c) Subandhu (d) Kevalin

17. Mahavira was born at

(a) Kundagrama near Vaisali (b) Mahura (c) Varanasi (d) Gaya

18. The Digambara and Svetambara sects belong to

(a) Early Buddhism (b) Hinayana Buddhism (c) Jainism (d) Vajrayana Buddhism

19. The chief goal of Jainism is

(a) Siddhasila-samprapti (b) Arhathood (c) Sanyasa (d) Rebirth as Jina

20. The Jaina Sallekhana is

(a) Severe penance (b) Fast unto death (c) Moksha (d) Sanyasa

**ANSWERS:**

(1) c (2) a (3) c (4) a (5) a (6) c (7) a (8) d (9) a (10) b  
(11) a (12) c

(13) b (14) a (15) b (16) b (17) a (18) c (19) a (20) b

## Unit 3 – C Bhagavatism and Saivism

3.c. 0. Objectives.

3. c. 1. Introduction

3. c. 2. Bhagavatism

3. c. 3. Saivism

### 3. c. 0. Objectives:

The student will know the origin and evolution of Bhagavatism and Saivism, and different sects of Saivism.

### 3. c. 1. Introduction:

The Vedas prescribed *yajnas* which were elaborate and costly and so failed to reach common man. The animal sacrifices offered in those *yajnas* were detested by them. So the people were looking for an alternative. To achieve salvation (*mukti*) through *bhakti* is the aim of the Bhagavata and Saiva sects. These have exercised much influence on the society. Since these sects do not involve elaborate and difficult rituals they easily attracted the common man.

### 3. c. 2. Bhagavatism:

According to the Chhandyogyopnishad the Bhagavata principles were explained by a sage Krishna, who was the disciple of Aghora-rishi. The Bhagavata sect gained great popularity from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. However, some scholars date this to as far back as 7<sup>th</sup> century BC on the basis that the sage Krishna was a contemporary of the Jaina Tirthankara Arishtanemi. The Bhagavata-purana, the Harivamsa and the Vayu-purana speak of this sect. Panini, the great grammarian (5<sup>th</sup> century BC), referred to Bhagavatas as 'Vasudevakas' in his Ashtadhyayi. Different forms of the gods of this sect are referred to in the Bodhayana-Dharmasutras, the Taittiriyaopnishad, etc. Further, the Vidisa Garuda Pillar inscription of the Greek commander Heliodoros confirms the popularity of the Bhagavata sect in North India by the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC itself. The Pavai inscription of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC states that the Manibhadra-bhaktas are recognized as Bhagavatas. The Bhagavatism gradually evolved into Vaishnavism.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The Bhagavatism gradually evolved into Vaishnavism'.- Explain.

The main principles of the Bhagavatism are *tapas*, *dana*, *arjava*, *satya* and *ahimsa*. Bhagavatism stresses on the observation of these principles and declare that they will lead to salvation (*mukti*). These principles were preached by Krishna, son of Devaki and Vasudeva of the Vrishni family. As he was the son of Vasudeva, Krishna came to be known as Vaasudeva and the sect came to be known as 'Vaasudeva Sect'. Damodara of the Badarayana-sutras, Govinda of the Taittiriyanopanishad, Gobala of Jaiminiyanopanishad-Brahmana are considered as one and same and this concept is of prime importance in this sect. Further, Narayana of the Satapatha-Brahmana-pancharatra-sutras, Vishnu of Badarayana are equal to Vaasudeva. Vaasudeva himself, in the form of Narayana, bestows knowledge; in the form of Vishnu he is all-pervader of universe. Thus the Bhagavata sect evolved into Vaishnavism. The principal god of this sect is Vishnu in *sthanaka* (standing) form. He wears *sankha* and *chakra* in his two upper hands and *gada* and *anguliyaka* in his two lower hands. In this *vyuha* there are 24 forms of Vishnu. They are: Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda, Vishnu, Madhusudana, Trivikrama, Vamana, Sridhara, Hrishikesa, Padmanabha, Damodara, Sankarshana, Vaasudeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Purushottama, Adhokshaja, Naarasimha, Achyuta, Janardana, Upendra, Hari and Sri-Krishna. These forms can be recognized by the placement of different attributes like *sankha*, *chakra*, *gada*, etc, in different arms. This is an important stage in the evolution of Bhagavatism into Vaishnavism.

The Bhagavata sect evolved into the Vaasudeva sect by the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC itself as noted earlier. This sect enjoyed the patronage of the Kushana Huvishka. His coins bear the images of Vishnu. It may be noted that interestingly the name of the son of Huvishka was Vaasudeva. Similarly the Satavahana Satakarni worshipped Vaasudeva. The temple of

Ashtabhuja-Narayanaswami of the Ikshvaku period attests to the popularity of the Bhagavata sect during the early years of the Christian era in the lower Krishna valley. It may be noted that during the Gupta period the Puranic religion gained currency.

### **3. c. 3. Saivism:**

In the Saivism Siva (Rudra) of the Rigveda, Svetasvataropnishad and the Kenopanishad is the supreme god. Paasupata, Kashmira-Saiva, Saiva-siddhanta and Sivadvaita are the branches of Saivism. Saivism is the oldest religion. We have information about Saivism in the Indica of Megasthenese and the Mahabhashya of Patanjali. The Siddhantagrantha of Lakulisa and the Mathura inscription of Chandragupta II are related to Pasupata-Saiva. The Siva-sutras of Vasugupta, the Pratyabhijnadarsanam of Abhinavagupta, the Pratyabhijnahridayam of Kshemaraja belong to Kashmira-Saivism. The Periya-puranam, Silappadigaram, Manimekhalai speak of Sivadvaita.

The Rigveda's Rudra, Mahadeva of the Svetasvataropnishad, Umanatha of the Kenopanishad are the same and the central and supreme god of the Saivism. The followers of the Saivism worship Siva as Pasupati. They do not accept the authority of the Vedas. Siva is considered in this sect as Yogisvaresvara, capable of creating, sustaining and destroying. Linga is his emblem. Nandi is his vehicle and he roams in burial grounds. He is Mahayogi, wears the hide of animal, surrounded by cattle and served by spirits. His abode is Kailasa. He is beyond place, time and form. The Pasupata-Saivas believe that Siva is the creator and meditates upon Sati, and takes the form of Ardhanarisvara to create the world. In the Kashmira-Saivism *jnana* is important. The Virasaivism is essentially found in Karnataka while Saivasiddhanta is popular in Tamilnadu.

### **I. Essay type Questions (each 15 marks):**

1. Write an essay on the evolution of Bhagavatism.
2. Write an essay on the evolution of Saivism.

### **II. Short Essay type Questions (each 10 marks):**

1. Discuss the date of Bhagavatism.



2. What are the main principles of Bhagavatism?
3. Write a note on the principles of Saivism.

**III. Small Answer-type Questions (each 5 marks):**

1. Write a note on the circumstances led to the evolution of Bhagavatism.
2. Write a note on the circumstances led to the evolution of Saivism.
3. Write a note on the Vaasudeva Sect.
4. What are the 24 forms of Vishnu?
5. What are the branches of the Saivism?
6. Write a note on the Kashmira-Saivism.
7. Write a note on Sivayogisvara.
8. What is the difference between Kashmira-Saivism and other Saiva sects?

## **Unit. 4 (a). Foreign Invasions**

4. a. 0. Objectives

4. a. 1. Introduction

4. a. 2. Persian Invasions

4. a. 2. 1. Cyrus

4. a. 2. 2. Darius I

4. a. 2. 3. Xerxes and Later Kings

4. a. 2.4. Results of Persian contact

4. a. 3. Alexander's invasion

4. a. 4. Results of Alexander's invasions

### **4. a. 0. Objectives:**

The study of this unit enables the student to know about the Persian invasions against India and their results. Alexander's invasion against India and its impact on Indian culture are also dealt with in this unit. Student will also know about the early contacts between ancient Persia and India.

### **4. a. 1. Introduction:**

India and Persia had contacts from ancient period itself. According to some scholars who compared the Rigveda and the Zend Avesta: "not only simple words and phrases but even whole stanzas may be transliterated from the dialect of India into the dialects of Iran without change of vocabulary or construction." There are also references to gods Indra, Vayu, Mithra, Naonhaithya and Veretraghna in the Zend Avesta who can be compared to the gods Indra, Vayu, Mitra, Nasatya and Vritraghna respectively of the Vedas. Obviously, there were some contacts between ancient Persia and India during the Vedic period itself.

### **4. a. 2. 1. Cyrus I:**

Persian invasions started with Cyrus I who founded the Achaemenian Empire in Persia (modern Iran) and ruled from 558 BC to 530 BC. He conquered Bactria, Media, Babylonia and Assyria. He even advanced

towards India but without success. However, he conquered the region to the west of the Indus right upto Kabul. Cyrus I was succeeded by his son Cambyses (528-522 BC) who did not advance towards India.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the military achievements of Cyrus I ? Why could he not achieve success in entering into India ?

**1. a. 2. 2. Darius I (522-486 BC):**

He was the grandson of Cyrus I. His two inscriptions — one at Persepolis (518-515 BC) and the other at Naksh-i-Rustam (515 BC) — mention *Hi(n)du* or Punjab as a part of his kingdom. Obviously, the conquest of Punjab by Darius I must have taken place about 518 BC. The famous historian Herodotus states that India was the 20<sup>th</sup> *satrapi* (division or state) of the Empire of Darius I. According to his account the Indians paid a tribute of 360 *talents* of gold dust equivalent to over a million pounds sterling to Darius I. The same historian states that Darius I sent a naval expedition to the Indus under Skylax in about 517 BC. The exact limits of the Indian 'satrapi' under Darius I are not known. However, it may have comprised the course of Indus from the limit of Gandaria (Kalabagh) to the sea, including the whole of Sind and perhaps a considerable portion of the Punjab to the east of the Indus. According to Herodotus there was a special force in the army of Darius I which took prominent part in the wars between the Greeks and Persia. The Indian contingent consisted of infantry, cavalry and chariots. The foot soldiers fought with cane-bows and iron tipped arrows.

S.A.Q.

1. Do you consider Darius I as a successful invader ?

#### **4. a. 2. 3. Xerxes (465 BC—456 BC) and Darius III:**

Indian 'satrapy' continued to be part of Achaemenean Empire under the Emperor Xerxes. One of his inscriptions mentions Gandhara and Sindhu as his 'satrapis'. His army, which fought Greece, consisted of Indian infantry, cavalry and chariots. It is possible that Indian territories continued to be under the control of Persia up to Darius III. Indian army participated in the battle of Arbela (330 BC) fought by Darius III against Alexander, the king of Macedonia. In this battle Darius III was defeated and consequently the Persian control over India became very weak and the whole of the north-western India split into large kingdoms and republics and they were fighting one against another.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the place of Xerxes in the context of Indian conquests ?

#### **4. a. 2. 4. Results of Persian Contact:**

- 1) According to Basham the expansion policy of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru was in part inspired by the example of the Persians.
- 2) As V. A. Smith observes, the Persian Empire set the model for the Mauryan Empire. The Persian title *Satrap* continued to be used by Indian provincial governors for a pretty long time, down to the 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3) The presence of the Kharoshthi script in north-west India was perhaps a vestige of the Persian rule. This script is a localized adaptation of Aramaic and written from right to left.
- 4) As a result of the Persian contact India was brought into touch with Greeks and it paved way for Alexander's invasion of India after the overthrow of the Persian Empire.
- 5) The Persians brought India into contact with the West and thus gave an impetus to India's commerce with the West.
- 6) Early Buddhist thought influenced the philosophic and religious movements in Persia and further West.

7) The Persians taught the Indians the technique of giving lustrous polish to stones. Hellenistic influence on Indian art was received through Persia.

8) As VA Smith observes, the example of the great Empire of Persia must have served as a model for the unification of North India and for the administrative institutions to the Maurya Chandragupta in so far as they were not indigenous.

S.A.Q.

1. Do you consider the Persian contact as an important chapter in Ancient Indian history ?

#### **4. a. 3. Alexander's Invasion:**

##### **4. a. 3. 0. Introduction:**

Alexander's invasion was a landmark in the history of India. The Greek writings are important sources to know about Alexander and his invasions. Though the Greek writers elevate Alexander's raid to a conquest of India, it can only be regarded as a passing show, because no Greek dominion worth the name was established in India.

##### **4. a. 3. 1. North-West India at the time of Alexander's Invasion:**

At the time of Alexander's invasion the population of Punjab was divided into a small number of tribes, the kshatriyas holding the dominant position. They were, though brave and valorous, sharply divided because of their old feuds. This greatly helped Alexander to make inroads into India.

S.A.Q.

1. ' Had the population of North-West India been united the course of Alexander's invasion against India would have been different'. Do you agree ? Substantiate your answer.

##### **4. a. 3. 2. Alexander's Invasions:**

Alexander was the son of Phillip, the king of Macedonia which lay to the north of Greece proper. Alexander ascended the throne in 335 BC at the age of 20 years after the death of his father. His ambition was to become world famous by his military campaigns. In that process he

conquered Persia, Afghanistan and Bactria. He crossed the Indus and reached the kingdom of Taxila (Takshasila—now in Pakistan). It was not only of commercial importance but also an important educational centre at that time. Another important kingdom was that of Paurava (Greek name Poros) which lay beyond the river Jhelum. Paurava was a powerful king and man of self respect. There were many other minor kingdoms and many war-like Republics on the banks of the tributaries of the Indus and in its lower valley. The Malloi (Malavas) and Oxydrakas (Kshudrakas) of the southern Punjab were among the determined opponents of Alexander.

Under these circumstances the king of Taxila sent his son Ambhi to Bactria to assure his support to Alexander in his military campaigns against India. In February, 326 BC, when Alexander crossed the Indus he was received by Ambhi. At that time Poros was ready with a strong army of 50,000 waiting to attack Alexander. After the submission of the king of Taxila and Abhisara to Alexander now it was the turn of Poros. But Poros refused to submit himself to Alexander. The armies of Alexander and Poros faced each other on the opposite banks of the river Jhelum. Alexander found that it was practically impossible to cross the river at that point. So he hatched a plan and misled Poros that he was going to cross the river at that point itself and attack Poros. But actually he crossed the river about 16 miles above the camp and made sudden attack on the army of Poros taking him by surprise. In spite of his bravery Poros was defeated, wounded and taken prisoner. When Poros was brought before Alexander he (Poros) demanded that he should be treated as a king would treat another. Alexander was greatly impressed by the reply of Poros and treated him in the way as demanded by Poros. He not only restored his kingdom to him but also added another large country to his kingdom.

In course of his military campaign Alexander crossed the river Chenab and subdued the tribes inhabiting the region between the Chenab and Ravi. Next he defeated the Kathas who were highly courageous. In the battle between Alexander and the Kathas seventy thousand people were killed and equal number were taken prisoners. The neighboring cities like Sambhuti were struck with terror and submitted themselves to Alexander without resistance.

When the armies of Alexander reached the river Beas they refused to proceed further. His fervent appeals to them were of no avail. His soldiers became homesick. They had to bitterly fight the valiant attacks of even small Republics of the Punjab and so were completely exhausted. So Alexander had no choice before him. Alexander and his army returned to the Jhelum from the Beas. He divided his conquered possessions into six 'satrapis' and appointed governors.

In course of his return when Alexander reached the Ravi he had to face the powerful Malavas and Khudrakas who were very brave and valiant. In his fight with the Malavas Alexander himself was wounded. Finally both the Malavas and the Khudrakas submitted themselves to Alexander. In spite of all these successes Alexander was not destined to reach his motherland. He died at Babylon at the age of 33 years (June, 323 BC). Thus the chapter of a courageous and ambitious career of a great fighter came to an end.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The military strategy and diplomacy of Alexander deserve appreciation'.- Justify.

**4. a. 3. 3. Results of Alexander's Invasions:** 1) The disruption of the small scattered Republics created a favorable situation for the political unity of India. The Maurya Chandragupta utilized this situation to build up a unified Empire. 2) The invasions of Alexander resulted in the opening of land and sea routes of communications with the West. Europe's knowledge of India vastly increased. Many valuable writings of Alexander's companions appeared. India's contact with the Western neighbors had also increased significantly. 3) A few coins of Alexander are found in India. A ten *drachm (dramma)* coin of silver is found. On obverse it shows Alexander standing and on the reverse a horseman charging elephant mounted by the driver and a soldier armed with a lance. It is believed that the coin commemorates the battle of Jhelum and that the rider on the elephant was Poros. 4) The Greek settlements of Bactria and Parthia influenced India in many ways. Kanishka invited many Graeco-Bactrian sculptors to Gandhara for making images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas. These sculptures represent a blending of the Greek and

Indian art. The influence of Greeks and Gandhara School of Art is a welcome addition to the Indian art.

According to VA Smith the campaign of Alexander was only a brilliantly successful raid on a gigantic scale. It had no important impact on India. In fact, Alexander stayed in India for only 19 months, too short a period to make any significant impact on this land. Further, it must be noted that within two years after the death of Alexander the entire arrangements made by him for administration of the conquered territories in India totally collapsed and by 316 BC not a trace of it remained.

S.A.Q.

1. Do you agree with the statement that ‘ Alexander’s invasion had no longlasting impact on India’ ?

**I. Essay type Questions: (each 15 marks):**

- 1) Write an essay on the Persian invasions of India.
- 2) Write an essay on the Alexander’s invasion of India.

**II. Brief Questions (each 10 marks):**

- 1) Write a note on Cyrus I’s invasion of India.
- 2) Give a brief account of the invasions of Darius I.
- 3) Write a note on the loss of Persian control over India.
- 4) Give a brief account of the results of the Persian invasions of India.
- 5) Write a note on Paurava (Poros).
- 6) Why did Alexander leave India even before completing his military campaign ?

**III. Short type Questions (each 5 marks):**

- 1) Vedic Gods referred to in the Zend Avesta.
- 2) Who founded the Achaemenian Empire?
- 3) What are the countries conquered by Cyrus I before invading India?
- 4) Who was the grandson of Cyrus?
- 5) What are the two inscriptions of Darius I which mention Hindu as part of his kingdom?
- 6) How many ‘Satraps’ were there in the empire of Darius I?
- 7) What was the 20<sup>th</sup> ‘Satrapi’ of the Empire of Darius I?
- 8) Who led the naval expedition under Darius I to the Indus region?
- 9) What was the extent of Indian ‘Satrapi’ under Darius I?
- 10) In which battle fought by Darius III Indian army participated?
- 11) During whose reign Persia lost control over India?
- 12) Write a note on the Kharoshthi script.
- 13) Who was the father of Alexander?
- 14) When did Alexander ascend the throne and what was his age at that time?
- 15) What was the importance of Taxila at the time of Alexander’s invasion?
- 16) Who was the king of the Jhelum region at the time of Alexander’s invasion?



- 17) When and where did Ambhi receive Alexander?
- 18) Where did Alexander fight Poros?
- 19) How was Poros wanted to be treated by Alexander after he was defeated and brought to his (Alexander's) presence?
- 20) What was the response of Alexander to the demand of Poros when he was brought to his presence?
- 21) Why did the army of Alexander refuse to continue invasions of India?
- 22) When and where did Alexander die and at what age?
- 23) How many 'Satrapis' were there in Alexander's Indian dominion?
- 24) What did the ten *Drachm* coin of Alexander contain on its obverse and reverse?
- 25) Whom did Kanishka invite for making images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas?
- 26) How long did Alexander stay in India?
- 27) By which year the administrative arrangements made by Alexander collapsed in India?
- 28) Do you think that Alexander's invasions of India had any longstanding and significant political impact on India?

#### IV. Objective type Questions (each one mark):

1. The founder of the Achaemenian Empire in Persia was  
(a) Darius I (b) Cyrus I (c) Xerxes (d) Alexander, the Great
2. The son of Cyrus I was  
(a) Cambyses (b) Darius I (c) Xerxes (d) Darius III
3. The reign period of Darius I is  
(a) 525—451 BC (b) 560—500 BC (c) 522—486 BC (d) 501—490 BC
4. India was the 20<sup>th</sup> Satrapi under  
(a) Cyrus I (b) Cambyses (c) Darius I (d) Alexander, the Great
5. The Arabela battle (330 BC) was fought between  
(a) Darius III and Alexander (b) Cyrus I and Cambyses (c) Cambyses and Darius I (d) Xerxes and Alexander
6. Alexander ascended the Macedonian throne in  
(a) 310 BC (b) 335 BC (c) 343 BC (d) 345 BC
7. The battle between Alexander and Poros was fought on the banks of  
(a) Jhelum (b) Satlez (c) Ganga (d) Cheenab
8. Alexander died in  
(a) 320 BC (b) 323 BC (c) 325 BC (d) 327 BC
9. Alexander died at  
(a) Bactria (b) Parthia (c) Babylon (d) Purushspura
10. The *Drachma* of the period of Alexander was a  
(a) silver coin (b) gold coin (c) copper coin (d) lead coin

#### Answers:

- 1) b 2) a 3) c 4) c 5) a 6) b 7) a 8) b 9) c 10) a

## UNIT 4. B. THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

- 4. b. 0. Objectives
- 4. b. 1. Mauryan Empire: Introduction
- 4. b. 2. Chandragupta Maurya
- 4. b. 3. Bindusara
- 4. b. 4. Asoka
- 4. b. 5. Downfall of the Mauryan Empire
- 4. b. 6. Mauryan Administration
- 4. b. 7. Society under the Mauryas
- 4. b. 8. Culture under the Mauryas

**4. b. 0. Objectives:** The lesson enables the student to learn about the foundation of the Mauryan Empire, Chandragupta, his conquests and his greatness, his successors Bindusara and Asoka, the great humanitarian and his noble deeds, the downfall of the Mauryan Empire, salient features of Mauryan administration and society and culture.

**4. b. 1. Introduction:** There are several sources to know about the Mauryas such as the Jataka stories, the Ceylonese chronicles Dipavamsa and the Mahavamsa, the Puranas, the Indika of Megasthenes and the Mudrarakshasa of Visakhadatta and above all the inscriptions of Asoka. There is also considerable evidence of coins and art objects to know about the Mauryas.

Scholars are of different opinions about the name 'Maurya' of the dynasty. Some scholars think that the name of the mother of Chandragupta was Mura and hence he came to be known as Maurya Chandragupta. Thus the dynasty acquired the name 'Maurya'. Some others relate the word Maurya to *mayura*, 'a peacock'. According to them, born of peacock-tenders in humble circumstances Chandragupta, by his ability and with the help of Chanakya (Kautilya) built up an Empire which for the first time in the history of India gave political unity to the country.

S.A.Q.

1. What could be the near possible explanation of the name 'Maurya' ?

**4. b. 2. Chandragupta Maurya:** According to one story Chanakya, who was insulted by the Nandas, found Chandragupta in a village. Finding him

suitable instrument to take revenge against the Nandas, Chanakya bought him and took him to Taxila where he educated the boy. Finally Chandragupta turned out to be a brave and valiant soldier. So with the help of Chanakya he put an end to the Nanda rule and ascended the throne of Magadha with the capital at Pataliputra (modern Patna). Thus the Mauryan dynasty came into existence. According to another story, which is more probable, Chandragupta was a general in the army of the Nandas. He had some grievances of his own and so joined Kautilya to overthrow the Nanda power. The last Nanda king was very tyrannical and people were very unhappy with him. This made the task of Chandragupta easy.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The tyrannical rule of the last Nanda king made the task of kautilya easy'. Do you agree ?

There were two challenges before Chandragupta---- 1) to liberate the north-western part of India from the Greeks and 2) to defeat the Nandas who had big contingent of army and establish an empire. Of these Chandragupta accomplished the first successfully, though the details how he achieved are not available. With the wise counsel of Chanakya, ascended the Magadha throne and allowed the Nanda king to leave the country with his family.

Chandragupta ruled over a vast Empire which extended as far as the Hindukush in the west and up to Tamil Nadu in south and Bihar in east. Seleucus, who invaded India to regain the lost Greek territories after the death of Alexander, was defeated by Chandragupta (305 BC) and entered into an alliance with him. Accordingly, he gave away Heart, Kandahar, Kabul and Baluchistan. He also gave his daughter to Chandragupta in marriage. Seleucus sent Megasthenese as his ambassador to the royal court of Chandragupta. During the closing years of Chandragupta a severe famine broke out in North. So Chandragupta, accompanied by some Jain monks, migrated to Sravanabelagola in Karnataka and spent his last days there. Finally he performed *sallekhana* in accordance with Jain tradition and died in 300 BC. Before proceeding to

South he proclaimed his son Bindusara as his successor to the Magadha throne.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Chandragupta was diplomatic in dealing with the Greek invasion'. – Justify.

**4. b. 3. Bindusara (300—279 BC):** Bindusara is known as *Amitraghata* ('slayer of foes'). Details of the reign of Bindusara are not presently known. According to some writings Chanakya, who out lived Chandragupta, made Bindusara master of sixteen towns. Bindusara, though took to easy life, could at least keep the vast empire he inherited from his father in tact. He appointed his son Asoka as viceroy of Ujjain and Takshasila.

**4. b. 4. Asoka (273—232 BC):** After serving as viceroy, as noted above, Asoka succeeded his father to the Magadha throne. He was one of the greatest rulers of the world. Though some Buddhist writers claim that Asoka killed his 99 brothers before ascending the throne, and hence call him *Chandasoka*, it is incorrect. Asoka had four wives, Tissarakkha, Charuvachi, Karuvaki and Padvavati, of whom the first was his chief queen. He had two daughters, Sanghamitra and Charumati and four sons, Kunala, Trivara, Jalauka and Mahendra.

Thirteen years after his coming to the throne Asoka waged war against Kalinga. This was a fierce battle in which more than one lakh soldiers died, 1, 50, 000 became war prisoners and another one lakh became destitutes. Asoka in his 13<sup>th</sup> Rock Edict gives a graphic picture of this war and the resulting miseries and loss of life. This brought a great change in Asoka. Within a short time after war he embraced Buddhism and spent rest of his life in propagating *Dharma*. He got his teachings engraved on rocks and pillars. Engraving inscriptions on stone, in such a large extent, was started by Asoka which later became a regular practice to all the successive dynasties all over India.

**4. b. 4. 1. Asoka's Dharma:** Through his inscriptions, of which majority are rock and pillar edicts, he propagated the principles in which he believed and practiced. He exhorted people of his empire to follow them sincerely. Strictly speaking, Asoka never asked people to follow Buddhism. His teachings contain the basic tenets of *dharma* which help building up a welfare state. Asoka refers to himself as *Devanampiya Piyadasi* in his edicts. Only his inscriptions at Maski, Nittur and Udegolam (all in Karnataka) and Gujjarra (MP) refer to him by name Asoka. His 13<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict describes the effect of the Kalinga war on Asoka. His 9<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict explaining the great values of *dharma* says: Have regard for slaves and servants; respect teachers; show restrained behavior towards living beings; give alms to brahmanas and sramanas. His edicts make it clear that he had great respect for other religions and was very careful not to wound their feelings. He pleaded for absolute non-violence. He asked people not to kill animals and birds for food. He asserts that he was following non-violence to the core. He extensively toured in his empire exhorting people to follow his example in this respect. He advised his people to show compassion not only to human beings but also to all the living beings. It was during his period that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Buddhist Council was held. Asoka undertook many welfare activities like planting trees on either side of the roads, establishing hospitals for both men and animals and importing medicinal herbs even from foreign countries in case of necessity, etc.

Asoka's inscriptions enable us to know the extent of his empire. His empire covered almost entire India excepting the states of Tamil Nadu and Assam. Kabul, Kandahar, Makron and Hearat were also parts of his empire.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Asoka's dharma reflects the cultural and moral values of India always stood for'. – Discuss.

**4. b. 5. Downfall of the Mauryan Empire:** Indeed almost in a dramatic way the Mauryan power, which held sway over almost entire India

including some of its neighboring regions for 137 years, disappeared after the death of Asoka. The decline was complete within half-a-century. The reasons for such a rapid decline were given by historians differently. They are: (1) the main reasons, according to some scholars are: (a) the pacifist policy of Asoka and (b) the undue favor he showed to Buddhism which provoked the brahmana reaction. But it must be noted that (a) though Asoka gave up war after the Kalinga event he did not reduce the strength of the army. In fact, he employed force whenever it was necessary in the interests of the society and the state. He warned the forest tribes of his power; (b) the brahmana reaction came under Pushyamitra Sunga about 50 years later than the death of Asoka. Further, brahmanas were treated by Asoka respectfully as he always placed them before sramanas in his edicts. (2) The Mauryan Empire was not a highly centralized one. It was rather a loosely organized empire. So when the central control of an able monarch (Asoka) disappeared the empire disintegrated into separate states. (3) The successors of Asoka were weak and incapable rulers. They could not hold the vast empire they inherited in tact. (4) Another cause of downfall of the Mauryan Empire was Greek invasions. When the Greeks reached Pataliputra the Mauryans failed to check them and consequently the Mauryan Empire disintegrated. (5) The Mauryan officials were very oppressive in the outlying provinces which resulted in the revolt by the people. Once during the reign of Bindusara and again when Asoka was the monarch such revolts took place. This was the case particularly with Takshasila. (6) According to Romilla Thapar the organization of state or the nation was of great significance in the causes of the decline of the Mauryas. The Mauryan administration was highly centralized. In such cases there is need for the ablest monarch to be at the top. With the death of Asoka extremely centralized authority collapsed and the Mauryan Empire disintegrated. The absence of national consciousness which can prevent the authority being concentrated in the hands of a few persons was also another cause for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire. But Nilakanta Sastri does not accept this view. He opines that national consciousness, which emerged only in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe, cannot be expected to be present in the Mauryan period which existed before the

Christian era. So absence of national consciousness cannot be a cause for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Absence of national consciousness cannot be a cause for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire'. Do you agree ?

**4. b. 6. Mauryan Administration:** The main sources of information for Mauryan administration are the Arthashastra of Kautilya, the Indica of Megasthenes and inscriptions of Asoka.

Chandragupta took over a vast empire from the Nandas, protected by a numerous and powerful army. The administrative set up of the Nandas was continued by Chandragupta and Chanakya with some necessary changes for improving efficiency.

**4. b. 6. 1.** The administrative machinery modeled by Kautilya is in accordance with theory of Hindu polity. It consists of 1) the sovereign (*svami*), 2) the ministers (*amatya*), 3) the territory (*janapada*), 4) fortification (*durga*), 5) financial strength (*kosa*), 6) military strength (*danda* or the army camp comprising *chaturangas* (four limbs), namely, infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariots) and 7) alliances (*mitrani*). This is the *saptanga* theory on which the Mauryan administration was expected by Chanakya to be modeled.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the *saptanga* theory on which the Mauryan administration was expected to be modeled? Does the Mauryan administration reflect this ?

**4. b. 6. 2. The King:** According to the ancient Indian polity the king was only the guardian of the law and not maker. He should follow 'dharma' in

discharging his duties as king. But Kautilya exalts royal power and holds that royal edicts are supreme. A large part of the administrative work devolved upon the king. So the king should be suitably educated. The ideal king in view of Asoka is: 'In the happiness of his subjects lies the happiness of the king; in their good is his own good, and not in what is pleasing to him. He must find his pleasure in the pleasure of his subjects'.

**4. b. 6. 3. Mauryan capital:** Megasthenes has an interesting account of the Mauryan capital Pataliputra. It was built at the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Son. It was protected by a moat which had a depth of about 60 feet and a width of 200 yards. The city was further protected by a massive timber palisade surrounding along the moat. It had 64 gates and 570 towers.

**4. b. 6. 4. Royal Palace:** According to Greek writers the splendor of the Mauryan royal palace excelled that of Persian palaces. The palace was adorned with gilded pillars, silver images of birds and animals. The king had his own suite of rooms. On rising from his bed he was to be received by his Amazonian body guard and women archers. His personal servants would receive him in the second apartment. In the third apartment were dwarfs, hunchbacks and 'kiratas' (mountaineers of foreign origin). The outermost apartment leads to the exterior of the palace. This was in charge of armed retinue door-keepers as well as the king's ministers and kinsmen. The palace had a large tank in the center for boating. When Fa-hien saw it (319--414 AD) it was still in a good condition and he was taken by surprise at its magnificence. Some of the wooden remains of the palace have been recently discovered in Kumrahar near Patna.

**4. b. 6. 5. Administration of Towns and Villages:** In the Mauryan period there were number of towns and villages. The village (*grama*) had *gramani* and *grama-vridhdhas* for its administration. It had its independent internal economy and was the unit of rural administration. For administrative purpose the villages were grouped together and the *gopas* and *sthanikas* were their officers. Towns and cities were divided into convenient units and were placed in charge of the officer called *nagaraka*.



Everywhere simple rules of sanitation and preventive measures against fire were implemented.

**4. b. 6. 6. Administration of the Capital:** The capital was administered by a Town Council. It functioned through six committees or boards dealing respectively with: 1) the industrial arts, 2) the entertainment of foreigners, 3) the registration of births and deaths, 4) trade and commerce including weights and measures, 5) supervision and sale of manufactured articles and 6) collection of taxes on sales. Each board consisted of 30 members. Apart from these boards, the Municipal Council collectively looked after public buildings, water supply, roads, gardens, hospitals, schools and temples. The towns of Takshasila and Ujjain too had similar type of administration. *Samaharta* was the head of the organization at the centre. He was the Minister of the Interior and Chancellor of the Exchequer. *Pradesikas* were to assist the minister in the supervision and control of the region.

**4. b. 6. 7. Administration of the Empire:** The Empire was divided into provinces under governors or princes (*kumaras*) acting as viceroys. Kausambi, Ujjayini, Takshasila, Suvarnagiri (Jonnagiri, near Erragudi, Kurnool dt., AP), Isila (subdivision)( Siddhapura, Karnataka), Tosali (Dhauri, Orissa), Samapa in Kalinga were important headquarters of provinces. *Rajukas* were provincial officials of highest class. *Purushas* were king's personal agents who maintained constant personal touch with the *rajukas*.

Chandragupta was assisted by a Council of Ministers of two ranks---the *mantris* and *amatyas*. The *mantris* were senior ministers. They advised the king on all important matters of state policy. The *amatyas* held subordinate positions and performed executive and judicial functions. Below the *amatyas* were the *adhyakshas* or superintendents. The Arthashastra lists 32 departments such as treasury, mint, mines, shipping, chariots, horses, agriculture, crafts and so on.

**4. b. 6. 8. Asoka's Administration:** The Mauryan Emperor Asoka added some more departments to the administrative machinery to suit to his

religious policy. His most important innovations in the administration were the introduction of periodical tours of officers to prevent maladministration of justice and appointment of new class of officers called *Dharma-mahamatras* to supervise the actions of the officials of the state, particularly in religious matters. Thus his administration aimed at moral as well as material well being of his subjects. But for these innovations his administration was no different from that of Chandragupta.

**4. b. 6. 9. Military Administration:** The Mauryans maintained a large army. Chandragupta had a standing army of six lakhs infantry, 30,000 horsemen, 36, 000 men with elephants. This large army was controlled by a War Office constituted by 30 members consisting of six Boards of five members each. *Senapati, Prasasta, Nayaka* and *Mukhya* were the chief officers of the War Office.

**4. b. 6.10. Judicial Administration:** The Village Tribunals settled petty disputes. Besides these Tribunals, there were two classes of courts---1) the *Dharmasthiya* which settled all civil disputes and 2) *Kantakasodhana* which tried all political offences and cases of misconduct of officials ; they also dealt with difficult cases of theft, murder, burglary, trespass, etc. These were special courts introduced by Kautilya. Special judges were appointed to try foreigners. Punishments were severe including amputation of limbs and death by various means.

**4. b. 6. 11. Espionage:** The Mauryan rulers maintained strict vigilance over the entire administrative machinery. Both Megasthenese and Chanakya mention the existence of an elaborate spy system. There were two kinds of spies—stationary and wandering. With the help of this efficient espionage system the Emperor was able to know every thing that took place through out his Empire.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the innovations you find in the administrative machinery of the Mauryan period ?

**4. b. 6. 7. Society:** The society under the Mauryans consisted of the four castes of people, viz., brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaisyas and sudras. Apart from Vedic religion, Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivaka sects were in existence. Asoka mentions brahmanas first and next the sramanakas in his edicts which shows the prevalence of religious tolerance. However, Buddhism was favored by a sizable section of the society. The efficient espionage system over the administrative machinery, constant check about the movements of foreigners, severe punishments to criminals had their impact on the society. The artisans were respected. Asoka, in particular, took various measures of welfare to keep his subjects happy. His propagation of ethics and human values through tours by himself and his officers all over his empire certainly had the impact on social life.

#### **4. b. 8. Culture:**

**4. b. 8. 1. Language:** From the Rigvedic period onwards over centuries Sanskrit developed considerably. The Sanskrit that Panini defined and described in his *Ashtadhyayi* is called *Bhasha* as contrasted with the language of the Vedas. This was the language spoken at the time of the Mauryans in the north-west when Taxila was still a great centre of learning. This was spoken by the *sishtas* (elite), particularly on ceremonial occasions. Popular dialects were also developing side by side. Prakrit (Magadhi) was perhaps the language of the Asokan court. Asoka used Prakrit, the language spoken by the people at large and not Sanskrit, the language of elite, in all his edicts.

**4. b. 8. 2. Literature:** Patanjali's *Mahabhashya* contains casual references to a great deal of grammatical and literary activity in the Mauryan period. Subandhu, who was the brahmana minister under Nanda, Chandragupta and Bindusara, was the *mahakavi* ('great poet') of the age. He authored 'Vasavadatta-natya-dhara', a drama describing the love story of Vasavadatta and Udayana. The 'Chhando-sutras' of Pingala, the 'Sutras' of Gautama, Baudhayana, Apastamba and Vasishtha and the kernel of the Epics in the present form may be assigned to this period. The first

redactions of the Buddhist and Jain scripture texts also belong to this period. Dramatic arts, grammatical, religious, and secular works saw the light during this period.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The activities in the fields of literature and grammar during the Mauryan period paved way for the future literacy classics'. Do you agree ?
2. 'During the Mauryan period popular dialects were also developing side by side'. Justify.

**4. b. 8. 3. Art:** In the field of art the Mauryan age constituted a notable epoch. Most of the surviving monuments of the Mauryan period belong to Asoka's reign, because of the use of stone. The splendor of the Mauryan palace and the capital are noted above. Seven rock-cut sanctuaries—four on the Barabar hills and three on the Nagarjuni hills (Bihar) belong to this period. Of these, the Lomasa-rishi cave in Barabar perhaps is the latest. The 'Yakshas' of Parkhan, the 'Yakshinis' of Besnagar and the female 'chauri bearer' of Didarganj are some examples of the Mauryan art. Particularly the Didarganj 'Yakshini' exhibits the aesthetic ideal of the Indian womanhood.

The best specimens of Asokan art are a number of monolithic columns with their majestic animal capitals found at places like Bakhira (near Vaisali), Rampurva, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Sarnath, Sanchi and other places. The most beautiful of these is the Sarnath pillar raised in the 'Deer Park' where Buddha preached his first sermon. It is surmounted by a richly decorated capital comprising in order from below: an inverted 'bell shaped' lotus; an entablature with a frieze carrying fine sculptures in high relief of an elephant, a galloping horse, a bull and a lion, separated by intervening wheels (*chakra*); at the summit, the fore-part of four lions standing back to back carrying the 'Great Wheel of the Law' crowning the four quarters of space. The sculptures of the animal figures take a high

place in the history of art. Further, the highly polished stone pillars are the distinguished feature of the Mauryan art.

S.A.Q.

1. 'In the field of art the Mauryan age constituted a notable epoch'. Justify.

The culture of the Mauryan period is obviously a notable one in various fields such as language, literature, religion, art and architecture.

**I. Essay type Questions (each 15 marks):**

1. Discuss the place of Chandragupta and Bindusara in the Mauryan history.
2. Discuss the Kalinga war of Asoka and its impact on him.
3. Estimate the Dharma of Asoka.
4. Trace the causes for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire.
5. Write an essay on the salient features of the Mauryan administration.
6. Discuss the salient features of society and culture under the Mauryans.

**II. Brief Questions (each 10 marks):**

1. Evaluate the sources to know about the Mauryan history.
2. Write a note on the dynastic name 'Maurya'.
3. Write a note on the role of Chanakya in founding the Mauryan Empire.
4. What are the circumstances that led to the founding of the Mauryan Empire.
5. What are the results of Chandragupta's war with Seleucus?
6. Estimate the personality of Chandragupta.
7. What is the extent of the Mauryan Empire under Chandragupta and Asoka?
8. Do you agree that Asoka's pacifist policy was responsible for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire?

9. Do you agree with Romilla Thapar's view that lack of nationalism among the people was responsible for the downfall of the Mauryan Empire?
10. What is the administrative machinery modeled by Kautilya?
11. Write a note on the place of king in Mauryan Polity.
12. Write a note on the Mauryan capital.
13. Describe the Mauryan royal palace.
14. Write a note on Mauryan administration of towns and villages.
15. Write a note on the administration of the Mauryan capital.
16. Write a note on the Mauryan military administration.
17. Write a note on the Mauryan judicial administration.
18. Write a note on the Mauryan espionage system.
19. Explain briefly the salient features of the Mauryan society.
20. Write a note on the literature during the Mauryan period.
21. Describe the Sarnath Pillar of the Mauryan period.

### **III. Short type Questions (each 5 marks):**

1. Sources to know about the Mauryan history.
2. Write a note on the author of the Arthashastra.
3. Write a note on the author of the Sanskrit drama Mudrarakshasa.
4. What are the two meanings suggested to the dynastic name 'Maurya'?
5. Write a brief note on the capital of Magadha.
6. What is the extent of the empire of Chandragupta?
7. Write a brief note on the ambassador of Seleucus in the Mauryan court.
8. Where did Chandragupta migrate at the closing years of his reign and why?
9. How did Chandragupta die?
10. Who succeeded Chandragupta and when?
11. What are the two regions over which Asoka served as viceroy?
12. Who were the children of Asoka?
13. Write a note on the importance of the 13<sup>th</sup> Rock Edict of Asoka.
14. Who was *Devanam-piya Piyadasi* and why he is called so?
15. What are the inscriptions that mention Asoka by his personal name?
16. What is the extent of the Empire of Asoka?

17. What are the main sources to know about the Mauryan administration?
18. Where was the Mauryan capital built?
19. Who were the administrators of 'grama' during the Mauryan period?
20. Who were the officers of the different groups of villages during the Mauryan period?
21. Who was in charge of the city in Mauryan administration?
22. How many committees (Boards) were there in the Town Council in Mauryan administration?
23. How many members were there in each Board of the Town Council?
24. Who was *Samaharta* in Mauryan administration?
25. Who were the *Pradesikas* in the Mauryan administration?
26. Who were the governors of provinces in the Mauryan administration?
27. What are the important headquarters of provinces in the Mauryan Empire?
28. Who were the *Rajukas* in the Mauryan administration?
29. Who were the *Purushas* in Mauryan administration?
30. What are the two ranks in the Council of Ministers in the Mauryan administration?
31. Who were the *Mantris*, *Amatyas* and *adhyakshas* in Mauryan administration?
32. Who were the *Dharma- mahamatras* in Mauryan administration?
33. What was the constitution of the War Office in Mauryan administration?
34. Who were the Chief Officers of the War Office in Mauryan administration?
35. What were the duties of the *Dharmasthiya* and *Kantakasodhana* in the Mauryan administration?
36. What is *Bhasha* in relation to Sanskrit during the Mauryan period?
37. In which language were the Asokan Edicts were written and why?
38. Write a brief note on the author of the Mahabhashya.
39. What is the Sanskrit drama written by Subandhu and what is its theme?
40. Write a brief note on the author of the Chhando-sutras during the Mauryan period.
41. What are the seven Rock-cut Sanctuaries of the Mauryan period?
42. Describe briefly the sculpture of the 'Female Chauri-bearer' belonging to the school of Mauryan art.

**IV. Object type Questions (each one mark):**

1. The author of the 'Arthashastra' is  
(a) Visakhadatta (b) Bhartrihari (c) Bana (d) Kautilya
2. Visakhadatta is the author of  
(a) Vakyapadiya (b) Mudrarakshasa (c) Raghuvamsam (d)  
Arthashastra
3. The capital of Magadha was  
(a) Purushapura (b) Pataliputra (c) Ujjain (d) Mathura
4. Megasthenes was the Greek ambassador in the court of  
(a) Chandragupta Maurya (b) Bindusara (c) Asoka (d) Nanda kings
5. 'Amitraghata' was the title of  
(a) Chandragupta Maurya (b) Asoka (c) Bindusara (d) Kautilya
6. Chandragupta Maurya migrated from Magadha to  
(a) Ujjayini (b) Afghanistan (c) Dwaraka (d) Sravanabelagola
7. Maurya Chandragupta's son was  
(a) Asoka (b) Bindusara (c) Sasanka (d) Hastivarma
8. Asoka's war with Kalinga is described in his  
(a) 13<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict (b) Rummindei pillar inscription (c) 4<sup>th</sup>  
Rock Edict (d) 9<sup>th</sup> Rock Edict
9. *Devanampiya-Piyadasi* was the title of  
(a) Chandragupta Maurya (b) Asoka (c) Bindusara (d) The Nanda  
Kings
10. The inscription which mentions Asoka by name is found at  
(a) Amaravati (b) Pataliputra (c) Maski (d) Mathura
11. Asoka describes the great values of Dharma in his  
(a) 9<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict (b) 13<sup>th</sup> Major Rock Edict (c) Amaravati  
inscription (d) Rummindei Pillar inscription
12. The office of the *Dharma-mahamatras* was introduced by  
(a) Chandragupta Maurya (b) Asoka (c) Bindusara (d) The Nanda  
kings

**Answers:**



1.(d) 2. (b) 3. (b) 4. (a) 5. (c) 6. (d) 7. (b) 8. (a) 9. (b) 10 (c) 11 (a)  
12 (b).

## Unit. 4. C. KUSHANAS

- 4. c. 0. Objectives
- 4. c. 1. Introduction
- 4. c. 2. Kujula Kadphises I
- 4. c. 3. Kadphises II
- 4. c. 4. Kanishka
- 4. c. 5. Society under Kushanas
- 4. c. 6. Economy under Kushanas
- 4. c. 7. Religion under Kushanas
- 4. c. 8. Art and Architecture under Kushanas

**4. c. 0. Objectives:** By studying this unit student will be able to know the place and dynasty of the Kushanas, the early kings, namely Kadphises I, Kadphises II and the achievements of Kanishka, society, economy, religion and art and architecture under the Kushanas.

**4. c. 1. Introduction:** Originally the Kushanas belonged to the steppes of Central Asia in the neighborhood of China. They were one of the clans into which the Yuch-chi tribe was divided. The Kushanas first occupied Bactria (north Afghanistan) and gradually moved to the Kabul valley and conquered Gandhara. They invaded India in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and occupied the western part of India. Their rule, particularly of Kanishka, is an important chapter of the history of India in many respects.

**4. c. 2. Kujula Kadphises I:** He was the first ruler of the Kushana dynasty. He bore the imperial titles of ‘maharaja’, ‘mahanta’, ‘maharajadhiraja’ and ‘satyadharmasthita’. These show the impact of the Indian culture on him. He issued gold coins. Some of his coins bear the figure of Siva. Kadphises I died in about 64 AD after a long and prosperous reign.

**4. c. 3. Kadphises II:** Kadphises II succeeded his father Kadphises I in 64 AD. He is also known as Wima Kadphises. His kingdom extended up to

Mathura (UP). A large number of gold and copper coins issued by him testify the economic prosperity of his kingdom. His reign period witnessed a brisk trade in silk, spices and other articles. Heavy inflow of Roman money seems to have influenced the gold coinage of the imperial Kushanas. Kadphises II was probably a Saiva. The coins of his reign bear the image of Siva, with or without his bull and the trident or battle axe, his emblem. He also bore the imperial titles like his father. He died in c. 78 AD.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the importance of the Kushana coins for the cultural history of the Kushanas ?

**4. c. 4. Kanishka:** Kanishka, the greatest among the Kushanas, succeeded Kadphises II in about 78 AD. However, his relationship with the Kadphises kings is not known. Generally the Saka era, which commences from 78 AD, is associated with Kanishka. Kanishka's capital was Purushapura (modern Peshawar in Pakistan) in Gandhara. Apart from Gandhara, Kashmir, the whole of the Punjab and the Ganga valley up to Patna were under his rule. In the south his kingdom extended up to Upper Sind and perhaps to Malwa. Although Kanishka may have lost some of the dominions in central Asia his Indian Empire was intact. Nothing is known about the time and manner in which the rule of this great Kushana emperor came to an end.

#### **4. c. 4. 1. Kanishka's Wars:**

Kanishka's wars may be summarised thus:

1) Kashmir: During the early years of his reign he annexed Kashmir to his Empire.

2) War against Parthians: After consolidating his position in India Kanishka defeated the Parthians in the West.

3) Magadha: Kanishka conquered parts of Magadha. According to the Buddhist texts after his conquest of Pataliputra he met the celebrated Buddhist monk and writer Aswaghosha.

4) War against China: He subdued the chiefs of Kashgar, Khotan and Yarkand who were tributaries of China. The conquest of these Chinese provinces greatly enhanced the prestige of Kanishka. No king of India before or after him ruled over these territories. However, Kanishka's successes in these regions were short-lived.

**4. c. 5. Society:** Like Asoka Kanishka too patronized Buddhism. People of the Kushana period witnessed the emergence of two sects in Buddhism. As trade and commerce were flourishing people could afford not only basic amenities but also luxuries. Several monuments and monasteries were built during this period and as a result artisans commanded respect in society. Though Buddhism was on its zenith religious harmony was the order of the day as attested by the numismatic evidence.

**4. c. 6. Economy:** The Kushana kings maintained active trade with the Roman Empire, the Chinese, the Parthians and others. Roman coins, in gold, poured into India. Trade articles included silk, spicess, gems and others. Pliny (1<sup>st</sup> century AD) deplores the heavy drain of the gold coins of the Roman Empire into the Kushana Empire. Wima Kadphises is known by the large number of gold and copper coins that were issued during his reign.

**4. c. 7. Religion:** Buddhism received great impetus during the reign of Kanishka. However, Saivism too seems to have received royal patronage during the period of Wima Kadphises as suggested by the numismatic evidence. It is probable that Wima Kadphises was a Saiva. As noted above, Siva, with or without his bull and trident or battle axe, his emblem, were depicted on the coins of his reign. The legend on the coins describe him as *Maharajasa Rajatirajasa sarvaloga Isvarasa Mahisvarasa Vima Kathapisasa*, the last word meaning 'defender or savior'.

As noted above, the period of Kanishka heralded a new era in the history of Buddhism. The Buddhists claim that Kanishka was almost like a second Asoka to their religion. Kanishka's personal faith was Buddhism. It is during his reign that the 4<sup>th</sup> and last Council of Buddhism was held under the leadership of Vasumitra and Asvaghosha. In this Council Buddhism was split into two sects, namely, Hinayana and Mahayana. This Council prepared

authoritative commentaries on Buddhist scriptures which were engraved on sheets of copper and placed for safety in a 'stupa' built for the purpose. Kanishka built a huge and beautiful relic tower and monastery at Purushapura. The 4<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Council also prepared an Encyclopedia of Buddhist Philosophy called 'Mahavibhasha' in Sanskrit. But now only its Chinese translation is available.

Kanishka's name is associated with three eminent Buddhist writers, namely, Asvaghosha, Vasumitra and Nagarjuna. Asvaghosha was the author of the Buddha-charita. Vasumitra compiled the Mahavibhasha, noted above. Nagarjuna was a great scholar. He was the author of several philosophical treatises in which he expounded the doctrine of the Mahayana sect of Buddhism. His 'Madhyamika-sutra' is an authority on the Buddhist Philosophy.

Kanishka, in spite of being Buddhist, showed great tolerance towards other religious faiths. This is attested to by the fact that the large number of deities pertaining mainly to Zoroastrian and partly to the Hindu, Greek and Roman religions are found on his coins. The deities were used as the reverse devices on his gold and copper coins.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The period of Kanishka is a landmark in the history of Buddhism'.

Substantiate.

5. **c. 8. Art and Architecture:** Kanishka was a great builder. He constructed many stupas, towers, monasteries and sculptures in various parts of his empire. The "headless bronze statue" of Kanishka at Mathura is a master piece of art. At Peshawar he built a huge tower over the relics of Buddha. The Gandhara school of art made great progress under Kanishka. Superb beauty, refinement and dress of these sculptures arrest the attention of the onlooker. Apart from the Gandhara school of art, in other centres like Sarnath, Mathura and Amaravati produced best specimens of sculptural art. Each of these developed its own distinctive style of art.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the distinguishing features of the Gandhara art ?

**I. Essay type Questions (each 15 marks):**

1. Estimate the greatness of Kanishka.

**II. Brief Questions (each 10 marks):**

1. Write a note on Wima Kadphises (Kadphiseis II).
2. Write a note on the wars waged by Kanishka.
3. Write a note on the religion under Kanishka.
4. Write a note on Art and Architecture under Kanishka.

**III. Short type Questions (each 5 marks):**

1. Who were the Kushanas?
2. What are the titles of Kujula Kadphises I?
3. Who succeeded Kujula Kadphises and when?
4. What are the countries with which India had brisk trade contacts under the Kushanas?
5. Write a note on the Kushana coins.
6. How do the coins of Wima Kadphises describe him?
7. Under whose leadership was the 4<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Council was held, where and when?
8. Name the important centers of Art under the Kushanas.

**IV. Objective type Questions (each 1 mark):**

1. The Kushanas belonged to  
(a) Steppes of Central Asia (b) Afghanistan (c) Iraq (d) North India
2. The first great ruler of the Kushana dynasty was  
(a) Kushana (b) Kujula Kadphises I (c) Wima Kadphises II (d) Huvishka

3. Kujula Kadphises issued gold coins bearing the image of the god  
(a) Narayana-Vishnu (b) Mother Goddess (c) Krishna (d) Siva
4. Wima Kadphises II was succeeded by  
(a) Huvishka (b) Kanishka (c) Kujula Kadphises (d) Kushana
5. Kanishka's capital was  
(a) Mathura (b) Vaisali (c) Pataliputra (d) Purushapura
6. The 4<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Council was held under the leadership of  
(a) Vasumitra and Asvaghosha (b) Vasumitra and Subandhu (c)  
Asvaghosha and Kanishka (d) Kanishka and Subandhu
7. Kanishka built a huge tower and beautiful monastery at  
(a) Varanasi (b) Mathura (c) Purushapura (d) Pataliputra
8. Asvaghosha was the author of  
(a) Buddha-charita (b) Bauddha Dharma (c) Hinayana Dharma (d)  
Mahayana Dharma
9. The author of the Madhyamika-sutras was  
(a) Nagarjuna (b) Vasumitra (c) Kanishka (d) Subandhu
10. The compiler of the Mahavibhasha was  
(a) Vasumitra (b) Nagarjuna (c) Charaka (d) Kanishka

**ANSWERS:** 1. a. 2. b. 3. d. 4. b. 5. d. 6. a. 7. c. 8. a. 9. a.  
10. a.

## **Unit 4d: The Gupta Empire (320 – 540 A.D)**

- 4.d.0 Objectives
- 4.d.1 Introduction
- 4.d.2 Samudragupta's predecessors
- 4.d.3 Samudragupta
- 4.d.4 Samudragupta's successors
- 4.d.5 Administration
- 4.d.6 Economy
- 4.d.7 Society
- 4.d.8 Religion
- 4..d.0 **Objectives:**

Study of this unit will enable the student to know about the predecessors of Samudragupta, namely, Chandragupta – I and the greatness of Samudragupta himself and his successors Chandragupta II, Kumaragupta and Skandagupta. Salient features of the administration, society, economy and religion under the Guptas are also dealt with in this unit.

### **4.d.1 Introduction:**

The Gupta period (320 – 540 A.D) in the Indian history is memorable one. Some scholars describe this period as “Golden Age” in the cultural history of India. The origin of the Guptas is not clearly known. Of the Gupta emperors Samudragupta and Chandragupta II Vikramaditya were illustrious in many respects. At hey days the Gupta empire extended from the Himalaya in the north to the Narmada in the south and from the Brahmaputra in the east to the river Yamuna and Chambal in the west. Thus the Gupta Empire was large.

### **4.d.2 Samudragupta's Predecessors:**

Srigupta of the Gupta dynasty was probably a feudatory of the Lichchavis and ruled over a small state near Pataliputra (modern Patna, Bihar). He was succeeded by his son Ghatotkacha. But the first independent ruler of the Gupta dynasty was Chandragupta I, the son of Ghatotkacha.

#### **4.d.2.1 Chandragupta I (c, 320 – 335 A.D):**

Chandragupta I married the Lichchhavi princess Kumaradevi and got Pataliputra as dowry. This matrimonial alliance resulted in the



amalgamation of the Gupta territory with that of the Lichchhavis which greatly enhanced the power and prestige of Chandragupta I. He became an undisputed independent ruler of a part of Magadha (south Bihar), Prayag, Saketa (Ayodhya) and probably a part of Bengal. He assumed the imperial title 'maharajadhiraja'. He established the Gupta Era probably in 320 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Samudragupta.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The marriage of Chandragupta with Kumaradevi is an important event in the Gupta history'. Do you agree ?

#### 4.d.3 **Samudragupta (c. 335 – 380 A.D):**

Samudragupta was the most illustrious emperor of the Gupta dynasty. Samudragupta's conquests were eulogized in his Allahabad pillar inscription which was composed by his court poet Harishena in chaste Sanskrit language. His conquests, as described in the Allahabad inscription can be summarized thus:

##### I. **Northern conquests:**

Practically the whole of the Uttar Pradesh, a part of central India and the south – western part of Bengal fell within the Samudragupta's empire. At the time of the conquest of Samudragupta Mathura was under the rule of Ganapatinaga while the Bambura region (in Bengal) was being ruled by Chandravaman. The five kingdoms on the frontier and the nine tribal states were paying taxes to the emperor. The five frontier kingdoms were: 1. Samatata (South – East Bengal), 2. Kamarupa (upper assam), 3. Nepala 4. Davaka (Nowgang Dt. Assam) and 5. Kantripura (probably Kantapur – Punjab and parts of Kumaon, garhwal and Rohilkhand). Among the tribals were the Malavas, Arjunayanas, Yaudhiyas and Madrakas. The Naga confederacy comprising the Vindhyan region of Ghazipur and Jabalpur were subdued by him.

##### II. **Southern campaign:**

In his southern campaign Samudragupta encountered as many as 12 kings of Dakshinapatna whom he defeated and captured and then liberated. They were:

1. Mahendra of Kosala (part of Madhya Pradesh)

2. Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara (part of Orissa)
3. Mantaraja of Kaurala (Kolleru lake A.P)
4. Mahendragiri of Pishtapura (Pithapuram, A.P)
5. Svamidatta of Kottura (East Godavari Dt., A.P)
6. Damana of Erandapalla (Vizianagaram, A.P)
7. Vishnugopa of Kanchi (Pallava ruler of Kanchi)
8. Nilaraja of Avamukta (unidentified)
9. Hastivarman of Vengi (Salankayana king of Vengi)
10. Ugrasena of Palakkada (probably Nellore Dt., A.P)
11. Kuvera of Devarashtra (Yelamanchili region, Visakhapatnam dt.)
12. Dhananjaya of Kusthalapura (unidentified)

Although there was no extension of territory in the south under Gupta rule, the raid of Samudragupta, who returned to his capital with war booty, caused enough unsettlement in southern region. Because of his daring military activities V.A. Smith described him as Indian Napoleon. Samudragupta celebrated his resounding victorious campaigns by performing Asvamedhayaga.

S.A.Q.

1. Do you agree with the statement that Samudragupta can be described as Indian Napoleon.
2. 'The military campaigns of Samudragupta reflect his diplomacy'. Justify.

#### 4.d **Samudragupta's successors:**

Samudragupta was succeeded by his son Chandragupta II (380 – 412 A.D). He assumed the title *Vikramaditya*. He was the worthy son of a worthy father. He married Kuberanaga, a Naga princess and gave his daughter Prabhavatigupta in marriage to Vakataka Rudrasena II. Samudragupta's chief queen was Dhruvadevi. These matrimonial alliances, particularly the one with Vakatakas, helped Chandragupta II greatly in his military campaigns. He extended his empire in all directions. His campaigns included the conquest of Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra. He annexed the Saka kingdoms including Ujjain, to his empire and

assumed the title 'Sakari'. The reign of Chandragupta II marked the highest point of power and prosperity attained by the imperial Guptas.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The matrimonial alliance of the Guptas with Vakatakas had far reaching consequences in the history of the Guptas'. Justify.

Kumaragupta and Skandagupta, in that order, ascended the Gupta throne after Chandragupta II Vikramaditya. However, due to many reasons the Gupta power declined and finally disappeared by the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

#### 4.d.5 Administration:

The Gupta administration was highly organized and far more liberal than in Mauryan times. Kamandaka's *Nitisara* reflects well the administrative system of the Guptas. In Gupta polity the king was the supreme authority and was considered as the very God. King was to be ideal to his subjects.

King was assisted by ministers whose number was limited. *Sachiva* and *mantri* were of higher cadre while *amatyas* were next in order. The following were the officials at the centre.

1. Sandhivigrahika: Peace and war were under his control
2. Akshapataladhikrita: Record keeper
3. Mahadandanayaka: Chief justice; maintenance of peace and order in the empire were among his duties.
4. Mahabaladhikrita: Chief commander of army
5. Kumaramatyas: Younger officers also explained as princes acting as amatya
6. Mahapratihari: Superintendent of the royal harem.
7. Uparika, Bhogika, Bhogapati, Gopta, Rajasthaniya: Head of the province
8. Mahapilupati: Head of the elephant corps of the army.

Gupta Empire was divided into provinces called *desas* and *bhuktis*. These were again divided into districts called *vishayas*. The head of the *vishyas* was *vishayapati*. Usually *kumaramatyas* were acting as *vishayapatis*. Grama or village was the lowest which was headed by

*gramika*. *Vishayapati* was assisted by a *Nagarasabha* consisting of four unofficial members namely, *Nagara – sreshthi*, *sarthavaha*, *Prathama – kulika* and *Prathama kayastha*. City was administered by *Nagaradhyaksha* or *Purapalaka*. In villages justice was administered by royal officials with the help of the members of the village council.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The Gupta administration was highly organized and far more liberal than in Mauryan times'. Do you agree ?

#### 4.d.6 **Economy:**

The chief revenue to the state was agricultural tax.  $1/6^{\text{th}}$  of the produce was collected as tax either in kind or cash. The war booty collected during the reign periods of Samudragupta and Chandragupta II Vikramaditya was enormous. Though there was decline in trade and commerce during the Gupta period the income from this source was in no way less. Income from forest produce, mines and mints was also considerable. The numismatic evidence is also important to know the economic conditions during the Gupta period. Chandragupta I issued gold coins containing the images of himself and his wife Kumaradevi. Samudragupta also issued different types of gold coins including those showing Samudragupta as playing vina, Asvamedha type (Asvamedhayaga – parakrama), etc. Chandragupta II issued gold coins bearing the image of lion and also silver coins. However, as the decline of the Gupta power started there was a noticeable change in the economic prosperity of the empire. There were many causes for the decline of the economic well – being, one of them being the Huna invasions which could not be checked by the weak Gupta kings who succeeded Chandragupta II.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the importance of the Gupta coins to know the economic and cultural history of the Guptas ?

#### 4.d.7 **Society:**

Fa – hien, a Chinese traveler, visited India during the reign of Chandragupta II and left a graphic description of the social life of that period. He stayed in India for about ten years keenly observing every aspect of the society and hence his account is reliable to a great extent. He visited several places including Peshwar, Mathura, Kanauj, Varanasi, Kapilavastu, Kusinagar, Vaisali, Pataliputra collecting Buddhist literature.

According to Fa – hein people were, by and large, vegetarians and followers of the principle of *Ahimsa*. Religious tolerance was the order of the days. Except *chandalas*, who were to live outside the village, others were generally vegetarians. The use of onion and garlic was avoided and people were generally not consuming liquor. Crime was much less. There were good rest houses along the highways. The rich and the philanthropic were running hospitals and free feeding houses, particularly for the benefit of physically challenged, widows, sick people, orphans and destitutes.

The society was based on *varna* and *asrama* systems. There was well – known caste system. Rulers were evincing keen interest in maintaining harmony among various classes of people. There were no restrictions on following different professions. There were occasions when brahmanas took to weapons and participated in wars. Similarly, the kshatriyas were engaged themselves in trade and commerce. Sudras also took up the professions of agriculture and trade. Untouchability was in practice. *Sati* (burning the wife on her husband's pyre) was not known. Joint family system was given importance.

#### 4.d.7.1 Literature:

There were great scholars and poets during this period. Among them Harisena (the author of the Allahabad pillar inscription), Kalidasa (author of the great works like *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, *Raghuvamsam*, *Meghadutam*), Sudraka, Subandhu, Asanga, Dingnaga, Amarasimha, Kamandaka deserve special mention. Kalidasa is the internationally acclaimed poet and dramatist. It was during this period that various *puranas* took final shape. The *smritis* of Katyayana, Brihaspati, Yajnavalkya and Narada are the products of this period.

Mathematics, Astronomy, Chemistry and Medical Sciences of this period were of high standard. Aryabhatta, Varahamihira and Brahmagupta were the distinguished mathematicians and astronomers of this period.

The Surya – siddhanta and Aryabhattiyam of Aryabhata, the Brihtasamhita of Varahamihira, the Susrita samhita (Medicine) of Susrita, the Ashtangasangraha (Medicine) of Vagbhata, Charaka – samhita (medicine) of Charaka are among several highly distinguished works of the Gupta period. Even plastic surgery was known to the surgeons of this period.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘The Gupta period is a golden chapter in the history of Sanskrit literature’. - Substantiate.

#### 4.d.8 Religion:

The notable feature of the Gupta social life was religious harmony. Temples were built to the Hindu gods like Vishnu, Krishna, Siva, Kartikeya, Ganesvara, Lakshmi, Parvati, Durga, Bhavani. Agama – sastras and puranas were important works for religious life of the people. The Bhakti cult gained supreme importance during the Gupta period. The Vyuha, avatara theories based on Panchavira, Bhagavata faiths led to the devotion and respect towards the god Vishnu and his ten *avatars* which became quite popular. The Guptas encouraged the *Bhakti* cult and thus the Vaishnava faiths.

Even the foreigners like Sakas, Yavanas, Pahlavas and Kushnas followed Hinduism. The epics like Ramayana and Bharata and the Bhagavadgita became very popular. People used to visit sacred places and take bath in holy rivers. Thus the *tirtha* concept gained currency. People had faith in the concept of *karma* which led to the liberal endowments, particularly in the form of land, to temples and *brahmanas*. All these activities helped people to live with peace and harmony. Further, the concept of worshipping gods in temples resulted in the coming up of magnificent temples and the development of beautiful sculptural wealth. Not only of Hindu temples but also Jain and Buddhist monuments enhanced the artistic and architectural glory of the period. The Dasavatara temple at Devghar (M.P), for Hinduism, Buddha monuments of Sarnath and Gaya are among the distinguished examples of Gupta architecture.

S.A.Q.

1. ' The notable feature of the Gupta social life was religious harmony '.- Justify.

On the whole, it may be said that the Gupta period witnessed a great development in all fields such as literature, religion, secular and sciences, art and architecture. Apart from Hinduism, the Buddhism and Jainism too were respected in the society. Peace and harmony prevailed in the society. The advancement attained in various fields rightly enabled the Gupta Age to be known as Golden Age.

**I. Essay type Questions (15 Marks)**

1. Describe the achievements of Samudragupta.
2. Write an essay on the salient features of the social and religious life under the Gupta.

**II. Brief Questions (10 Marks)**

1. Write a note on the predecessors of Samudragupta
2. Write a note on Chandragupta I.
3. Give an account of the northern conquests of Samudragupta
4. Write a brief note on the southern campaigns of Samudragupta
5. Write a note on the successors of Samudragupta
6. Bring out the salient features of Gupta administration.
7. Write a brief note on the economy under the Guptas.
8. Write a brief note on the social life under the Guptas.
9. What are the significant features of the religion under the Guptas?
10. Write a note on Fa – hiens’s observations on the social and religious life under the Guptas.
11. Do you agree with the view that the period of Guptas is ‘Golden Age’? Discuss

**III. Short type Questions (5 Marks)**

1. Who was the first independent ruler of the Gupta dynasty?
2. Who was the Lichchavi princess that Chandragupta I married?
3. Who established the Gupta Era and in which year?
4. Who succeeded Chandragupta I?
5. Which inscription gives the details Samudragupta’s military campaigns?
6. Who wrote the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta?
7. What were the frontier kingdoms that were subjugated by Samudragupta?
8. Which tribal kings were defeated by Samudragupta?
9. Who were the Naga kings that were defeated by Samudragupta?
10. Identify the following kings that were defeated by Samudragupta a. vishnugopa of Kanchi b. Hastivarma of Vengi
11. Name the Gupta emperor described as ‘Indian Napoleon’.
12. Name the Gupta emperor who performed Asvamedha – yaga.
13. Who succeeded Samudragupta to the Gupta throne?



14. Who were the wives of Chandragupta II?
15. Name the Gupta emperor who had the title 'Vikramaditya'.
16. Name the Gupta emperor who had the title 'Sakari'.
17. Who wrote the work 'Nitisara'?
18. What types of the gold coins were issued by Samudragupta?
19. Name the Chinese traveller who visited India during the period of Chandragupta II?
20. When did Fa – hein visit India?
21. Name the important Sanskrit scholars of the Gupta period.
22. What are the works written by Kalidasa?
23. What are the works written by Aryabhatta and Varahamihira.
24. Name the great scholars who wrote books on medicine during the Gupta period.
25. Where is the Dasavatara temple of the Gupta period?

**IV. Objective type questions (5 marks)**

1. Gupta Ghatotkacha's son was
  - a. Srigupta
  - b. Samudragupta
  - c. Chandragupta I
  - d. Ramagupta
2. The first independent ruler of the Gupta dynasty was
  - a. Srigupta
  - b. Ghatotakacha
  - c. Samudragupta
  - d. Chandragupta I
3. The Gupta king who married the Lichchavi princess Kumaradevi was
  - a. Chandragupta I
  - b. Srigupta
  - c. Samudragupta
  - d. Chandragupta II
4. Chandragupta I was succeeded by his son
  - a. Chandragupta II
  - b. Ghatotakacha
  - c. Samudragupta
  - d. Ramagupta
5. The Allahabad Prasasti pillar inscription describes the victories of
  - a. Samudragupta
  - b. Chandragupta I
  - c. Chandragupta II
  - d. Srigupta
6. The Allahabad Prasasti pillar inscription was composed by
  - a. Ravikirti
  - b. Visakhadatta
  - c. Subandhu
  - d. Harishena
7. The Kanchi king defeated by Samudragupta was

- a. Hastivarma    b. Vishnugopa  
c. Svamidatta    d. Mantaraja
8. Samudragupta's successor was  
a. Chandragupta II    b. Chandragupta I  
c. Skandagupta    d. Srigupta
9. 'The Record Keeper' in the Gupta administration was known as  
a. Sandhivigrahika    b. Akshapataladhikrita  
c. Uparika    d. Gopta
10. The Gupta emperor who performed Asvamedha – yaga was  
a. Samudragupta    b. Srigupta  
c. Ramagupta    d. Ghatotkacha
- 

**Answers:**

1.    c      2.    d      3.    a      4.    c      5.    a  
6.    d      7.    b      8.    a      9.    b      10.   a
-

## Unit 4 e: Harshavardhana

- 4.e.0 Objectives
- 4.e.1 Introduction
- 4.e.2 Predecessors of Harshavardhana
- 4.e.3 Harshavardhana
- 4.e.4 Administration
- 4.e.5 Religion
- 4.e.6 Society and Education
- 4.e.7 Account of Hiuen Tsang

### 4.e.0 **Objectives:**

This lesson enables the student to know about the emergence of the Vardhana dynasty as political power to be reckoned with and the circumstances in which Harshavardhana came to power. The student will also know the place of Harshavardhana in the history of India. Hiuen Tsang's association with Harsha and his observations are also dealt with in this unit. The rule of the Vardhana dynasty began in c. 550 A.D and ended in 650 A.D.

### 4.e.1 **Introduction:**

After the collapse of the mighty Gupta power in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D the North India was again split into many petty kingdoms. The constant wars among them resulted in political instability and disorder in the Northern kingdoms. At that time Thaneshvar (now a small town near Kurukshetra in Haryana) was governed by a dynasty which claimed descent from a Pushyabhuti, a vaishya. The Huns established their supremacy over the Punjab and certain other parts of Central India. It was at this juncture the Vardhamanas of Pushyabhuti family rose to power.

### 4.e.2 **Predecessors of Harshavardhana:**

Adityavardhana of the Vardhana family married Mahasenagupta of the later Gupta family.

#### 4.e.2.1 **Prabhakaravardhana:**

Prabhakaravardhana was the first in the dynasty to assume an imperial title. He defeated the Gurjaras, Malavas and Latas in the latter part of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. He had two sons Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana and a daughter Rajyasri by his queen Yasomati. Rajyasri was married at a very young age to Grahavarman, the Maukhari ruler of

Kanauj. Prabhakaravardhana sent the crown prince Rajyavardhana against the Hunas. Harshavardhana, who followed his brother at some distance, hearing the illness of his father returned to the capital. Prabhakaravardhana died (606 A.D). His queen died as a *sati*.

#### 4.e.2.2. **Rajyavardhana:**

Rajyavardhana returned victorious and ascended the throne. Immediately after this he learnt that Grahavarman was killed by the king of Malwa and Rajyasri was taken as prisoner. Rajyavardhana immediately attacked the king of Malwa and defeated but Sasanka of Bengal treacherously killed Rajyavardhana. At this juncture Rajyasri escaped from prison and fled to the Vindhya forest.

#### 4.e.3 **Harshavardhana:**

Consequent on the death of Rajyavardhana Harshavardhana ascended the throne and at that time his age was only 16 years. The immediate challenge before him was to find out his sister. He could finally locate her and save her as she was about to commit *sati*. With the death of Grahavarman, the Kanauj throne was vacant as the treacherous Sasanka escaped to Bengal. According to Hieun Tsang at the request of the nobles and dignitaries of the kingdom and also of his sister, who had no children, Harsha ascended the throne of Kanauj also. The unity of the Thanesvar and Kanauj kingdoms created a large and powerful state in North India. He shifted his capital from Thanesvar to Kanauj as the latter was a central place.

#### 4.e.3.1 **Harsha's wars and successes:**

The dissention among the petty states that rose after the collapse of the Gupta empire became prominent. This gave an opportunity to the ambitious Harsha to build up an empire. The wars waged by him can be summarized thus:

##### (1) **War against Sasanka:**

Harsha, with a very large contingent of army and with the assistance Bhaskaravarman of Kamarupa (Assam), who was his ally, attacked Sasanka and defeated him. However, Sasanka continued to be a source of trouble for Harsha. Finally Harsha could annex Bengal only after his death (619 A.D).

##### (2) **Conquest of Five Indies:**

The five Indies were Svarashtra (Eastern Punjab), Kanyakubja (Kanauj), Gauda (Bengal), Mithila and Orissa. According to Hieun Tsang after a war of about six years Harsha conquered these Five Indies.

(3) **Conquest of Gujarat:**

Between 633 and 641 A.D Harsha defeated the Maitraka king Dhruvasena II Baladitya of Valabhi (Gujarat). He made peace with Harsha. Harsha gave his daughter to him in marriage and allowed him to rule Valabhi in a semi – independent status.

(4) **War against Pulakesi II:**

After consolidating his power in North India Harsha turned his attention towards South India. He waged war against Badami Chalukya emperor Pulakesi II. But the mighty Pulakesin defeated him, thus putting check to his ambition to annex South India to his empire. With this the river Narmada became the southern boundary to his empire.

(5) **Conquest of Ganjam:**

Harsha's last military campaign was against Kongoda (Ganjam, Orissa) (643 A.D). He conquered this region.

Purnavarman of Magadha, the last of the race of Asoka was Harsha's vassal. That Bhaskarvarman of Assam was his ally is noted above. According to literary sources the king of Nepal also acknowledged the supremacy of Harsha. Harsha maintained diplomatic relations with China and Persia.

Harsha's empire extended from the Brahmaputra in the east to the eastern Punjab in the west and from the Himalayas in the north to the Narmada in the south. According to the dramatist of the time of Harsha his empire included also Nepal, Kashmir, Assam and Sind. After the collapse of the Gupta empire Harsha was the only monarch of ancient India who built a great empire in India. He died in 647 A.D.

4.e.4 **Administration:**

A significant feature of Harsha's administration is that he relied more on personal supervision than on the assistance of an organized bureaucracy for the efficient rule of his vast empire. According to Hieun Tsang Harsha made visits of inspection throughout his dominions not resting long at any place. Only during the rainy season he was not touring.

People's welfare was upper most in his mind. He was never tired of touring over his empire and supervise the welfare of his subjects.

There was a *mantriparishat* to assist the king in the administrative matters. The most befitting persons in all respects were appointed as ministers by the emperor. Hence the *Parishat* had a high place with special power in the administrative set up. The emperor was, of course, the supreme authority. The notable difference between the Mauryan administrative system and that of Harsha is the 'absence of centralization of power' in the latter.

Mahabaladhikrita (commander – in – chief of army), Bhandagaradhikrita (treasurer), Mahasandhivigrahi (in – charge of war and peace), Rajasthaniya (in – charge of foreign affairs), Mahapratihara (superintendent of royal harem), Mahakshapatalika (chief record keeper), Kirtaka (Judicial officer) were among the officers of higher rank. At the lower level were *divirapati* (head – clerk), lekhaka, ayuktaka, sarvaghata, distaka.

For the sake of administrative convenience the empire was divided into Bhuktis, Vishayas and gramas in the descending order. Bhogapati or Uparika was the head of Bhukti; Rajasthaniya was the head of rashtra; vishayapati was the head of vishaya; karanikas were looking after the village administration. A council called 'Vishaya-mahattara', consisting of sarthavaha, nagara-sreshthi, prathama – kulika, etc. was providing assistance to the *vishaya – pati*. The employees were paid salaries mostly in the form of land.

One – sixth of the produce of land was collected as tax either in kind or cash. Taxes were levied on various items, but were light. Bhogapati, saulkika were among the tax collecting officials. Punishments for criminal offences were very harsh. They included amputation of limbs. Surprisingly the capital punishment was not in vogue. In spite of severe punishments for crimes roads were not safe. Hiuen – Tsang himself was robbed more than once during his tour in the country.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the significant feature of Harsha's administration ?

#### 4.e.5 Religion:

Harsha was personification of religious tolerance. Harsha was initially worshipper of Siva and Surya. In the latter part of his life he followed Buddhism, particularly the Mahayana, under the influence of his sister Rajyasri and Hieun Tsang. He discouraged the slaughter of animals and the use of flesh for food. He got the old Buddhist monuments, stupas and monasteries renovated and built new ones. He encouraged propagation of Buddhism by making liberal endowments to Buddha *bhikshus* and *sanghas*. In spite of his leanings towards Buddhism he honoured Hindu gods and brahmanas.

Harsha convened a big religious assembly in Kanauj in 643 A.D which was attended by as many as 18 feudatory kings, including the king of Assam from the extreme east and the king of Gujarat from the extreme west, 3000 brahmanas, 3000 Bauddha sramanas, 3000 Nirgrandhis (Jains) and 1000 Buddhist scholars from the Baudhdha Sangharama of Nalanda. This large assembly, the Mahamoksha Parishat, was presided over by Hieun Tsang. On this occasion Harsha built a big *gopura* in Kanauj and installed a life – size golden image of Buddha in it and worshipped him. The main objective of this Mahamoksha – parishat was to give wide publicity to Hieun Tsang;s exposition of Mahayanism. After the deliberations in this grand Parishat continued for 23 days, it moved on to Prayag (Allahabad). At this Assembly Harsha gave away in charity, all the wealth he had accumulated during the previous years to the Buddhist, brahamana and Jain scholars. Harsha is stated to have repeated this kind of charity every five years after the Prayag Assembly. During the Prayag Parishat Buddha, Surya and Siva were worshipped on different days.

S.A.Q.

1. 'Harsha was personification of religious tolerance'. – Justify.

#### 4.e.6 Society and Education:

##### 4.e.6.1 Society:

The four – fold caste system was the order of the day. People formed into sub – castes basing on the profession the pursued. Brahmanas occupied high position in the caste – order. Untouchability was present.

Personal hygiene was given much importance. Though inter – caste marriages and inter – caste dining were absent the people of all the castes were living with peace and harmony, cooperating with each other in all respects. Their food was devoid of onion and garlic and mostly vegetarian. Child – marriages were not known. Widow – marriages were absent. *Sati* was in practice. The country was prosperous. The earlier cities like Takshasila, Purushapura (Peshwar), Pataliputra (Patna) lost their glory and were almost in dilapidated condition. Kanyakubja (Kanauj), Varanasi, Prayaga developed into prominent cities. Of these Kanyakubja with high buildings, wide roads, tanks with plenty of water and beautiful gardens was a feast to eye.

#### **4.e.b.2 Education:**

Harsha himself was a dramatist and poet and patron of poets and scholars. The state language was Sanskrit. Elite and rich were speaking in Sanskrit even in their house while common people were speaking Prakrit. However, Sanskrit was understood by everybody. Harsha is said to have personally composed his Banskhedra copper plate inscription and the Madhuban Charter, probably in collaboration with Banabhatta, his court – poet. He (Harsha) also wrote three dramas, Nagananda, Ratnavali and Priyadarsika. He also authored a Buddhist poem Ashtamana – srichaitya – stotra in praise of the Eight Great Chaityas. Among the scholars patronized by Harsha, Bana or Bana – Bhatta was the most distinguished. He wrote the Harshacharita and Kadambari, a scholarly prose work. But unfortunately he died before completing Kadambari which was completed by his son. The language of this prose work is the extreme example of highly polished and ornate Sanskrit with endless compounds (*samasas*) and fantastic similies. Bhartrihari, poet and grammarian, who wrote the poem Subhashita – trisati (three satakas on policy, love and renunciation) and the grammer Vakyapadiya. Vakpatiraja, the author of the Prakrit poem Gaudavaho, also belongs to this period. Mayura composed Suryasataka during this period. Other great scholars who were patronized by Harsha were Matanga, Divakara and Jayasena.

The most distinguished centres of higher learning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century were Nalanda, Valabhi, Ujjayini and Takshasila. Both religious and secular education was imparted in these institutions. Students not only



from India from foreign countries like Korea, Mangolia, China, Japan, Tibet, Srilanka also were studying in these universities. Students who wish to join them had to get through an entrance test which used to be very tough.

Of these universities that of Nalanda was the most prestigious one. This was managed by the Bauddhas. The head of this university was Silabhadra, a scholar par excellence. Hieun – Tsang, who was a student here, described it in glorious terms. The Nalanda university was established during the 5<sup>th</sup> century itself. Since then the kings, nobles and wealthy made liberal endowments for its maintenance. Harsha himself gave 100 villages for its maintenance. This university had as many as 1500 teachers who were eminent scholars in various fields of specialization. The teacher – student ratio was 1:6. There were eight colleges in which lectures were delivered. Nagarjuna, Silabhadra, Vasubandhu, Dharmapala, Chandrapala, Jnanananda were some of the most distinguished teachers of this university. Nalanda University admitted only the most brilliant students who joined it to perfect their knowledge. It is no surprise that the Nalanda University earned international acclaim.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘The period of Harsha is a landmark in the history of Indian Education’. – Justify.

#### 4.e.7 **Account of Hieun – Tsang**

Hieun – Tsang was a Chinese pilgrim who visited India between 630 and 644 A.D. He is praised as ‘Prince of Pilgrims’, ‘Master of Law’ and ‘Present Sakyamuni’. At the age of 29 he reached Gandhara in 630 A.D via Tashkakhand, Samarkhand and Balkh. From there he went to Kashmir where he stayed for two years. He came to the Punjab and also visited the important places connected with the life of Buddha. He joined the Nalanda University as a student and spent much time there taking part in scholarly discussions. He was greatly impressed by the high academic standards of this University. He had many words of appreciation with regard to this institute. Hieun – Tsang was invited by Harsha. Harsha had a great regard to him. On his request the Chinese pilgrim presided over the Mahamoksha – parishat convened at Kanauj. During his stay in India

he toured throughout the empire. He was highly impressed by the personality of Harsha. It is said that at his instance Harsha made Mahayana Buddhism as his personal faith.

Hieun – Tsang recorded his observations and experiences he had in India in a book ‘Si – yu – ki’. This book contains mine of information regarding political, social, economic and religious life of the people of the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The most significant feature of this work is that it was given by a person who stayed in India for a long period, knew the language of the land and wrote what he saw with his own eyes. This made the Si – yu – ki a reliable source for the history of North India of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In 644 A.D Hieun – Tsang left India. Harsha died in 647 A.D.

S.A.Q.

1. Why is the account of Hieun – Tsang a reliable source to know the history of the times of Harsha ?

Harsha was a great emperor who cared for the welfare of his people. He was personification of religious harmony. He was a brave warrior, able administrator, benevolent monarch and philanthropist. We see in him all the great qualities of Asoka and Samudragupta put together. After his demise the Vardhana power declined.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘We see in Harsha all the great qualities of Asoka and Samudragupta put together’. Do you agree ? Substantiate.

### **I. Essay type Questions:**

1. Write an essay on the wars and conquests of Harshavardhana.
2. Give an account of the administration under Harsha.
3. Write an essay on society and education during the period of Harsha.
4. Estimate the personality of Harsha.

### **II. Brief Questions:**

1. Write a note on Prabhakaravardhana and Rajyavardhana.
2. Trace the circumstances that led to the ascending of the royal throne by Harshavardhana.
3. Write a brief essay on the social life during the period of Harsha.

4. Write a note on literary activities during the period of Harsha
5. Write a note on the educational centres during the period of Harsha with special reference to Nalanda University.
6. Write a note on Hieun Tsang.

### **III. Short type Questions:**

1. Who were the sons and daughter of Prabhakaravardhana?
2. Who was Rajyasri's husband and who killed him?
3. What were the earlier and later capitals of Harsha?
4. What were the 'Five Indies' that were subjugated by Harsha?
5. Who was the Deccan king that defeated Harsha?
6. What is the place of the Mantri – parishat in the administration of Harsha?
7. What is the name of the Religious Assembly that was convened by Harsha?
8. At what places the Mahamokshaparisat was conducted?
9. What are the literary works of Harsha?
10. Name the most distinguished centres of higher learning during the 7<sup>th</sup> century.
11. Who was the head of the Nalanda University at the time of Harsha?
12. Name the great scholars associated with the Nalanda University.
13. Who was Hieun Tsang? When did he come to India and return to his native land?
14. Who presided over the Mahamokshaparisat convened by Harsha?

### **IV. Objective type Questions:**

1. Harsha belonged to the dynasty of
  - a. Vardhana      b. Maurya
  - c. Satavahana    d. Gupta
2. Prabhakaravardhana's father was
  - a. Pushyabhuti      b. Sasanka
  - c. Adityavardhana    d. Harshavardhana
3. Rajyasri was the daughter of
  - a. Prabhakaravardhana      b. Harshavardhana
  - c. Adityavardhana          d. Rajyavardhana
4. The reign period of Harshavardhana was
  - a. 590 – 610 A.D      b. 606 – 647 A.D

- c. 630 – 670 A.D      d. 601 – 620 A.D
5. The Five Indies conquered by Harsha were
- a. Svarashtra, Kanyakubja, Gauda, Mithila, Orissa  
b. Svarashtra, Dravida, Kanyakubja, Chera, Andhra  
c. Kanyakubja, Gauda, Mithila, Assam, Punjab  
d. Gauda, Punjab, Andhra, Karnataka, Assam
6. Harsha was defeated by Badami Chalukya
- a. Vinayaditya      b. Pulakesi I  
c. Vijayaditya      d. Pulakesi II
7. During the reign of Harsha the supreme authority was
- a. King      b. Mantriparishat  
c. Mahabaladhikrita      d. Sandhivigrahi
8. 'Bhukti' during the period of Harsha was
- a. An administrative division      b. A free feeding house  
c. A popular Sangharama      d. An endowment for a free feeding house
9. During the reign of Harsha 'the in – charge of war and peace, was known as
- a. Sandhivigrahi      b. Mahabaladhikrita  
c. Mahapratihara      d. Vishayamahattara
10. The Chinese pilgrim who visited India during the period of Harsha was
- a. Fa - hein      b. Hieun - Tsang  
c. Megasthanes      d. None of the above
11. The author of Si – yu – ki
- a. Fa - hein      b. Hieun - Tsang  
c. Harsha      d. Seleucus
12. Mahamokshaparisht was held at
- a. Thaneshvar and Kanauj      b. Kanauj  
c. Kanauj and Prayag      d. Prayag and Varanasi
13. Harsha was the follower of
- a. Hinayana Buddhism      b. Mahayana Buddhism  
c. Vajrayana Buddhism      d. Bhagavatism
14. The most famous University of the reign of Harsha was located at
- a. Varanasi      b. Thaneshvar

- c. Kanauj                      d. Nalanda
15. Harsha wrote the dramas
- a. Naganandam, Ratnavali, Priyadarsika
- b. Naganandam, Ratnavali, Kadambari
- c. Ratnavali, Priyadarsika, Saundaranandam
- d. Priyadarsika, Ratnavali, Venisariharam
16. Famous Sanskrit prose work Kadambari was written by
- a. Bana                      b. Kalidasa
- c. Harsha                      d. Bhartrihari
17. Mayura is the author of
- a. Vakyapadiya              b. Subhashita - trisati
- c. Surya – sataka            d. Priyadarsika
18. The Prakrit poem Gaudavaho was written by
- a. Mayura                      b. Vakpatiraja
- c. Harsha                      d. Prabhakaravardhana
19. The head of the Nalanda University was
- a. Silabhadra                  b. Hieun - Tsang
- c. Bhartrihari                  d. Mayura
20. Hieun – Tsang left India in the year
- a. 640 A.D                      b. 675 A.D
- c. 644 A.D                      d. 650 A.D

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**Answers to the objective type questions:**

1. a    2. c    3. a    4. b    5. a
6. d    7. a    8. a    9. a    10. b
11. b    12. c    13. b    14. d    15. a
16. a    17. c    18. b    19. a    20. c
-

## Unit 5a: Satavahanas

- 5a.0 Objectives
- 5a.1 Introduction
- 5a.2 Satavahanas
- 5a.3 Society
- 5a.4 Economy
- 5a.5 Religion

### **5a.0 Objectives:**

The student, by studying this unit, will know the brief history of the Satavahana dynasty, social, economic and religious life under the kings of that dynasty.

### **5a.1 Introduction:**

Satavahanas is the most powerful dynasty that ruled the Dakshinapatha after Asoka from c. 271 B.C to c. 174 A.D.

#### **5a.1.1 Sources:**

The main sources to know their history include their coins, inscriptions, the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela and the Matsya, Vayu, Vishnu and Bhagavata – Puranas.

#### **5a.1.2 Name of the Dynasty:**

In spite of the rich sources there are many controversial opinions regarding their genealogy, chronology and even the dynastic name. Some of the above mentioned puranas refer to 30 kings who ruled the country for about 450 years and call them Andhras. Since the names of the Satavahana kings mentioned in the inscriptions and those referred to in the puranas are same, with some minor differences, scholars are of the opinion that the ‘Satavahanas’ of the inscriptions and the ‘Andhras’ of the Puranas are one and the same and call them Andhra – Satavahanas. Some Puranas refer to them as ‘Andhra – bhrityas’. So some scholars opine that they were initially the ‘bhrityas’ of the Mauryas and after the fall of the latter they established an independent kingdom.

#### **5a.1.3 Home – land of the Satavahanas:**

There are different opinions regarding the home – land of the Satavahanas. According to some scholars their home – land was Maharashtra and some others locate them in Andhra. Recent numismatic

discoveries at Kotilingala (Karimnagar district in Andhra Pradesh) lend support to the view that their home – land was the Andhra country.

#### **5a.1.4 Caste of the Satavahanas:**

There is no unanimity regarding the caste to which Satavahanas belonged. In her Nasik inscription Gautami Balasri describes her son Gautamiputra Satakarni as “eka – brahmana”. On the basis of this and the fact that they performed Vedic sacrifices some scholars opine that the Satavahanas were *brahmanas* while others interpret “eka – brahmana” as the ‘sole protector of the brahmanas’.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘In spite of the rich sources there are many controversial opinions regarding their genealogy, chronology, dynastic name, caste and homeland’. Explain.

#### **5a.1.4 Reign – period of the Satavahanas:**

The chronology of the Satavahanas is a vexed problem. Generally accepted view is that the Satavahana rule started in about 271 B.C and ended in about 174 A.D.

### **5a.2 The Satavahana Kings:**

#### **5a.2.1 Srimukha (Simuka):**

Srimukha was the founder of the Satavahana dynasty. He is first mentioned in the Naneghat inscription of Naganika, the queen of Satakarni II. He was initially a Jain and in the last years of his rule he favoured Vedic religion. According to Jain tradition he became wicked during that period and was dethroned and killed. He was succeeded by his brother Krishna. After his death he was succeeded by his son Satakarni I.

#### **5a.2.2 Satakarni I (B.C 230 – 220):**

The Naneghat inscription of his wife Naganika describes him as “eka – vira”, “sura” and “Dakshinapathapati”. He conquered the Western Malwa, Anupa (the region of the Narmada valley) and Vidarbha. Satakarni I performed two Asvamedha sacrifices and one Rajasuya and several other Vedic sacrifices. He made many liberal endowments. He was probably killed in a battle – field.

#### **5a.2.3 Satakarni II (B.C 184 – 128):**

During his reign he was challenged by Kharavela of the Kalinga (Hathigumpha inscription). Satakarni II annexed Kalinga after the death of Kharavela. He also conquered Avanti and Akara.

#### **5a.2.4 Hala (6 – 7 A.D):**

The next important Satavahana king was Hala. He not only wrote some *gathas* but also compiled Gatha – Saptasati in Prakrit. He seems to have married Lilavati the princess of Simhala – desa (Srilanka). After his death the western part of the Satavahana kingdom was lost to Kshaharatas and Kshatrapas.

#### **5a.2.5 Gautamiputra – Satakarni (62 – 86 A.D):**

He was the greatest of the Satavahana kings. The Nasik inscription of his mother Gautami – Balasri extols his achievements and personality. He not only restored the fallen fortunes of his dynasty also brought vast territories under his rule. He destroyed the power of the Sakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas. His greatest achievement was the extirpation of the Kshaharata dynasty to which the king Nahapana, the Saka chief belonged and annexed Aparanta, Anupa, Surashtra, Kukura, Akara and Avanti. Rishika, Asmaka, Mulaka and Vidarbha also came under his sway. The boundaries of the territory under his direct control extended from the Krishna in the south to Malwa and Kathiawar in the North and from Berar in the East to the Konkan in the West. He enjoyed the title *Tri – Samudra - toya – pita – vahana* (whose charges drank the waters of three seas, viz., The Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean). This suggests the extent of his empire. He upheld the interests of all the four varnas and stopped their intermingling (*Varna – sankara*). He was *eka – brahmana* and *agama – nilaya*. He was obedient to his mother. He levied taxes according to what he considered just and spent the revenue for the welfare of his subjects. During his period the empire was peaceful and people were happy in all respects.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the importance of the Nasik Care inscription of Gautami – Balasri for the history of Gautamiputra – Satakarni ?

#### **5.a.2.6 Vasishthiputa Pulomavi II (86 – 114 A.D):**



He was the second son of Gautamiputra Satakarni. He inherited a vast empire from his father. Pulumavi II was helped in administration by his paternal grandmother Gautami Balasri. Since his inscriptions are found in Amaravati and Dharanikota (Guntur district, A.P) it may be concluded that his empire included the Krishna region in south. He is referred to by the famous geographer Ptolemy who says that he was a contemporary of the King Chastana. It seems that Pulumavi II lost the north – west part of his empire.

The successors of Pulumavi were weak rulers. They failed to keep the Satavahana empire intact. The last important king of this dynasty was Gautamiputra Yajnasri. However, he too could not retain his control over the empire and finally the Satavahana power was restricted to Andhradesa. By about 174 A.D the Satavahana kingdom disappeared from the political map of the country.

### **5a.3 Society:**

One of the important features of the Satavahana period is that the Sakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas who were aliens to the land, became part of the Hindu society by accepting its customs and traditions. The *chaturvarna* system became firm because of this development as evidenced by the statement that Gautamiputra Satakarni stopped the intermingling of the four caste orders. He protected the *dharma* of *varna* and *asrama*. That the brahmanas commanded respect in the society is evidenced by the Satavahana inscriptions. Although the caste system was well established there was no restriction on the professions one could follow.

Another important feature is that women were much respected and the royal ladies were taking active part in administrative matters. The Satavahana queens Naganika, Gautami Bala – sri are examples. The women of the Satavahana society made liberal endowments to various institutions, particularly Buddhist viharas. They had right to property. A notable feature is the Satavahana kings had their mothers' names as prefix to their own names. Joint family system was favoured and father was the head. The Gathasaptasati attests to the fact that women were not only literate, some of them were also poets. On the whole the Satavahana society was peaceful and prosperous.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the important features of the society during the Satavahana period ?

#### **5a.4 Economy:**

During the Satavahana period the main profession was agriculture and it received patronage from the rulers. As a result the allied professions also prospered. The inscriptions mention various professionals who include corn – dealers, oil millers, potters, etc. An important feature of the Satavahana economy is the formation of professional guilds called *srenis*. They played important role not only in the economic activities like banking and protecting the interests of their members but also in the welfare activities of people in general. Kings were also supporting these *srenis* and were not interfering in their rules and regulations framed by themselves (*i.e. srenis*).

Another important feature of the Satavahana economy is the prosperous state of trade and commerce both internal as well as foreign. Paithan, Junnar, Nasik, Vijayanti, Dhanyakatakam, Vijayapuri, Vinukonda, Kudura (the last four are in A.P) were among the important trade centres. Among the trade centres on sea – coast the important were: Bharukachcha, Sopara, Kalyan, Ghantasala, Koduru, Maisolia (Machilipatnam) (the last three are in A.P). The ship – type Satavahana coins bear testimony to the sea – trade of the period. Ivory, diamonds, pepper, silk cloth, gold, copper, silver, glass articles, etc. were imported while spices, certain types of silk cloth, first variety of cloth were among the exported articles. Due to the trade contacts Indian culture spread to Burma (Myanmar), Siam and other north – east countries.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the important features of the Satavahana economy ?

#### **5a.5 Religion:**

One of the significant features of the Satavahana society is religious harmony. Though the Satavahana kings patronized Vedic

religion, Buddhism too enjoyed the patronage of the Satavahana queens, traders and members of different professions. The Satavahana king Sitakarni I performed various Vedic sacrifices including Asvamedha and Rajasuya and made munificent grants of thousands of cows and gold coins to brahmanas. They protected the *varna – asrama – dharma*. Along the Vedic religion the Puranic religion too became popular. This is evidenced by the Naneghat inscription which contains prayers to Indra, Vaasudeva, Surya, Chandra, Yama, Varuna and other gods. The Gathasaptasati reflects the religious conditions of the period. Number of Buddhist viharas and Chaityas were in flourishing stage. Particularly the Mahayana Buddhism found favour of the Satavahana society. It is stated that Acharya Nagarjuna, the Mahayana Buddhist teacher, wrote ‘Suhrillekha’ and gave it to his Satavahana king – friend, probably Yajnasri - satakarni.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘Religious harmony marked the social life during the Satavahana period’.- Justify.

**I. Essay type questions (15 marks):**

1. Write an essay on the social, religious and economic conditions during the Satavahana period.

**II. Essay type questions (15 marks):**

2. Discuss different opinions regarding the home – land and caste of Satavahanas.
3. Write an essay on Gautamiputra – Satakarni
4. Write a note on the society during the Satavahana period.
5. Discuss the religious conditions during the Satavahana period.
6. Describe the patronage enjoyed by the Vedic religion during the Satavahana period.
7. Write a note on Satakarni I, Satakarni II and Hala.

**III. Short type questions (15 marks):**

1. Write a note on the terms Satavahana, Andhra and Andhra – bhrityas.
2. Caste of the Satavahanas
3. Home land of the Satavahana
4. Srimukha (Simuka)
5. Satakarni I
6. Titles of Gautamiputra Satakarni
7. The regions conquered by Gautamiputra Satakarni
8. Varna – asrama – dharma during the Satavahana period.
9. Guilds or srenis during the Satavahana period.
10. Important trade centres during the Satavahana period.
11. Buddhism during the Satavahana period.

**IV. Objective type questions:**

1. The most powerful dynasty that ruled the Dakshinapatha after the fall of the Mauryas is
  - a. Kushana
  - b. Parthian
  - c. Nanda
  - d. Satavahana
2. The founder of the Satavahana dynasty was
  - a. Satakarni - I
  - b. Simuka (Srimukha)
  - c. Hala
  - d. Yajnasri - Satakarni
3. Naganika was the wife of
  - a. Satakarni - II
  - b. Satakarni - I

- c. Yajnasri                      d. Hala
4. The compiler of the Gathasaptasati was
- a. Hala                              b. Satakarni - I
- c. Gautami Balasri              d. Naganika
5. *Trisamudratoyapita vahana* was the title of
- a. Gautamiputra Satakarni      b. Naganika
- c. Hala                              d. Yajnasri
6. Vasishthiputra Pulomavi II was the son of
- a. Hala                              b. Gautamiputra Satakarni
- c. Yajnasri                        d. Satakarni – I
7. The Satavahana king referred to by Ptolemy was
- a. Vasishthiputra Pulomavi II    b. Hala
- c. Satakarni – II                      d. Vijaya Satakarni
8. Suhrillekha was written by
- a. Hala                              b. Yajnasri
- c. Acharya Nagarjuana              d. Asvaghosha

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**Answers to the objective type questions:**

1.    d      2.    b      3.    b      4.    a
5.    a      6.    b      7.    a      8.    c
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## Unit 5 b: Sangam Age

- 5b.0 Objectives
- 5b.1 Introduction
- 5b.2 Sangam literature
- 5b.3 Sangam society
- 5b.4 Sangam Economy

### **5b.0 Objectives:**

By studying this unit the student is expected to know about the richness of the Sangam literature, prosperity of the economy and the culture of the Sangam period (c. B.C. 4<sup>th</sup> century - 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.), which is considered as Golden Age in Tamil history.

### **5b.1 Introduction:**

The important source to know the post-Mauryan Tamil history and culture from c. B.C. 4<sup>th</sup> century to 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. is the Sangam literature. "Sangam" denotes an "Academy of poets patronized by the Pandyan kings". The Sangam poets produced excellent literature which reflects the culture, society, polity and economy of the contemporary period.

#### **5b.1.2 Date:**

There are different opinions regarding the date of Sangam period. According to Ramachandra Dikshitar the Sangam period was B.C 6<sup>th</sup> century to A.D. 5<sup>th</sup> century; K.A. Nilakanta Sastri: A.D first centuries; N. Subramanyam: B.C. 4<sup>th</sup> century to A.D 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Many scholars agree with the opinion of Subramanyam.

S.A.Q.

1. What is Sangam Literature and to which period does it belong ?

#### **5b.1.3 Ancient Tamil kingdoms:**

Asokan inscriptions refer to Chola, Pandya and Keralaputa (Chera) kingdoms of the South. The Kalinga king Kharavela destroyed the 'Dravidian Federation'. Probably as a result by about B.C 2<sup>nd</sup> century the Dravidian region was fragmented into small kingdoms. However, by about 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D we find the emergence of three major kingdoms viz.

#### **1. Chola:**

The region of the Kaveri Delta – *i.e.* Arcot to Tiruchchirapalli in Tamil Nadu. Its capital was Oraiyur.

**2. Kerala – putra (Chera):**

The region between Kochin and Tiruvankur. Its capital was Vanji (Tiruvanjikkulam – Cochin).

**3. Pandya:**

The region between the river Vallar (Pudhukkottai) and Kanyakumari. Its capital was Madurai. All these three kingdoms together were called ‘Dravidadesa’ or ‘Tamilagam’.

**5b.1.4 Cholas:**

Several wars were fought among these countries for political supremacy. Karikala – Chola (2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D) was the first Chola king to score victory in these battles. He also defeated the Srilanka king and had the port – town Kaveripumpatnam built by war – prisoners. Trilochana – pallava was also defeated by him. Karikala was extolled by the Sangam poets for his welfare activities. He brought large extents of land under cultivation which resulted in significant economic prosperity of his kingdom. He rightly won the great appreciation of the Sangam poets. During his period Kaveripumpatnam became an important centre for foreign trade. After his death the Chola kingdom lost its glory and the Cheras became the lords of the Dravida – desa.

**5b.1.5 Cheras:**

Of the Cheras Senguttavan, son of Nedunjeral Adan, was a great monarch (2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D). He fought several battles for over a period of 50 years. Probably he had a powerful naval fleet. He introduced the worship of the goddess Pattini in Kerala. His brother Ilamgo – Adigal wrote the famous work Silappadikaram.

**5b.1.6 Pandyas:**

After Senguttavan Pandyas gained control over the Tamil country. Of them Nedunjeliyan was the greatest. He successfully fought with the Cholas, Cheras and five minor chiefs at a place called Talaiyalanganam (Tanjavur dt) and ascended the throne. He was valiant and powerful. The work called Maduraikkanji gives a detailed description of Madurai and the Pandyan country of that period. Nedunjeliyan patronized scholars and

poets. The Pandyan power declined with the Pallava ascendancy in Kanchipuram.

S.A.Q.

1. Name the important ancient Tamil kingdoms.

### **5b.2 Literature:**

As noted above the Sangam literature has its pride of place in Tamil literature. The Sangam literature displays notable fusion between Sanskrit and Tamil cultures. The Sangam literature comprises about 30,000 lines of poetry arranged in eight schematic anthologies and another collection known 'Ten Idylls' (pattu – paattu). The fertility of the land cultivated by the waters of the Kaveri was the favourite theme of the Sangam poets. The work called Purananuru gives traces of the state of society before it was Aryanized. One of the pattu – paattu presents realistic description of the residences of hunters, shepherds, brahmanas. Another gives a vivid idea of the state of commerce in Kaveripumpattinam under Karikala. Some of odes of the Sangam literature deal with various aspects of love and war. The Jain and Bauddhas made significant contribution to the Tamil literature of this period. Jivakachintamani is a famous Jain work of this period while the Silappadikaram and Manimekalai are the noteworthy works of the Bauddhas.

S.A.Q.

1. 'The Sangam literature has its pride of place in Tamil literature'.  
– Justify.

### **5b.3 Society:**

The Sangam literature has interesting information regarding the social life of the Sangam age. There were four social groups called Tudiyan, Panam, Paraiyan and Kadambam. Brahmanas, who were Vedic scholars commanded much respect in the society. It is stated that some brahmanas walked from far off land to settle down in South and they came to be known as Brihachcharanas. Consuming of alcohol and meat was not taboo even among brahmanas. Stealing was the profession of the people



called Malavars. Marriage system betrays influence of Aryanization. The Sangam literature narrates eight types of marriages. The condition of widows was pitiable. The sati system was not unknown.

Entertainment had an important place in Sangam social life. Poetry, music and dance were patronized by kings and nobles. Mridangam, yali, virali were some of the musical instruments of the day. Hunting, gambling, wrestling and aquatic sports were among the favourite pastimes.

Though the society was organized in castes with habits and traditions of their own the population of large cities and port towns tended to be cosmopolitan in its constitution.

By the time of the Sangam age the Vedic religion struck its roots in Dravida – desa. However, we find a mixture of practices and beliefs of diverse origin often jointly observed by one and the same section of the people. Kings performed Vedic sacrifices. One poem mentions the gods Siva, Balarama, Krishna and Subrahmanya together. Kali was supposed to be the mother of Subrahmanya. During the worship of Subrahmanya (Murugan) primitive dances were performed in his presence. The goddess Sarasvati is mentioned in the Manimekalai. Jainism and Buddhism were also present.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the salient features of social life during the Sangam Age ?

#### **5b.4 Economy:**

Agriculture was the main occupation of the Sangam people. Cultivable land was abundant and the land watered by Kaveri was very fertile. Kings took keen interest in providing irrigation facilities as evidenced, particularly by the activities of Karikala who got a bund constructed across the Kaveri for the benefit of cultivable lands. Sugarcane, cotton and pepper were among the cash crops grown during this age.

Next to agriculture the most important industry of the land was the production of cloth. Trade, both indigenous and foreign, was prospering

well. Kaveripumpattinam, Kanganur were among important port – towns. The Periplus (75 A.D) gives many details regarding trade with Roman Empire. The observations of the Periplus are well supported by the discovery of the Roman gold coins in the Pudukkota, Coimbatore, Tiruvankur districts of the coastal Tamil country. The Yavanas brought gold to Musiri in ships. Pandyas were importing horses. According to the Periplus Nera (Kannanur), Tindis (Ponnani), Mujiris (Musiri), Nelkinda near Kottayam were among the important port towns on the west – coast; Komari (Kanyakumari), Kamara (Kaveripattinam), Paduka (Pondichcheri) were among the port – towns on the east coast. Pepper, ginger, cardamom, teak, cotton cloth, rice, pearls, ivory, diamonds were among exports. Horses, copper, lead, glass, tin were among imports.

On the whole the Sangam age witnessed economic prosperity of high standard in all spheres.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the main industries and professions during the Sangam Age ?

By about the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D the decline of the Tamil kingdoms started. The main reason for this was the wars fought by them among themselves. After the end of the Sangam age the Tamil country was ruled for some time by the Kalabhras, a forest tribe.

**I Essay type questions (15 marks)**

1. Write an essay on Ancient Tamil kingdoms
2. Describe the social and economic life during the Sangam age.

**II Brief questions (10 marks)**

1. Write an essay on social life and literature during the Sangam life.
2. Describe the economic conditions during the Sangam age

**III Short type questions (5 marks)**

1. Meaning of 'Sangam' and the date of the the Sangam age
2. Extent of the three kingdoms of the Ancient Tamil country
3. Karikalachola
4. Senguttavam
5. Nedunjeliyan
6. Entertainments during the Sangam age
7. Important trade articles – imported and exported.

**II Objective type questions (1 mark)**

1. The 'Dravidian Federation' was destroyed by
  - a. Nedunjeliyan
  - b. Senguttavan
  - c. Kharavela
  - d. Asoka
2. The Chola capital was
  - a. Oraiyur
  - b. Vanji
  - c. Kanyakumari
  - d. Madurai
3. The Chera capital was
  - a. Oraiyur
  - b. Vanji
  - c. Madurai
  - d. Tanjavur
4. The Pandya capital was
  - a. Oraiyur
  - b. Madurai
  - c. Tanjavur
  - d. Chidambaram
5. The port – town Kaveripumpattinam was built by
  - a. Karikala - chola
  - b. Senguttavan
  - c. Nedunjeliyan
  - d. Srivijaya
6. Nedunjeliyan defeated Cholas and Cheras in the battle of
  - a. Talaiyalanganam
  - b. Madurai
  - c. Tanjavur
  - d. Kaveripumpattinam
7. The work that gives a detailed description of Madurai and the ancient Pandyan country

- a. Silappadikaram                      b. Manimekalai  
c. Jivakachintamani                  d. Maduraikkanji  
8. Ilango – adigal wrote  
a. Silappadikaram                      b. Manimakalai  
c. Maduraikkanji                      d. Jivakachintamani

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**Answers:**

1.    c        2.    a        3.    b        4.    b  
5.    a        6.    a        7.    d        8.    a
-

## Unit 5C: Pallavas of Kanchi

5C.0 Objectives

5C.1 Introduction

5C.2 Society

5C.2 Religion

### 5C.0 Objectives:

By studying this lesson the student is expected to know the outlines of the political history of the Pallavas and social life and religious conditions during their period.

### 5C.1 Introduction

The Pallavas of Kanchi who ruled parts of south India for over five centuries occupy an important place in the Indian history. It is during their period that Aryanization became complete in south India. Simultaneously Tamil culture also developed well in the Tamil country. There are different opinions regarding the origin of the Pallavas. However, they had close association with the Andhra country right from the beginning. They were initially brahmanas. Later they are referred to in their inscriptions as brahma – kshatriyas. Generally the Pallavas are divided into four groups viz.

1. Pallavas of Prakrit charters
2. Pallavas of Sanskrit charters
3. Mahapallavas
4. Later Pallavas.

The relationship between groups is not clear.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the four groups of the Pallavas of Kanchi ?

#### 5C.1.1 Pallavas of Prakrit charters:

Virakurchavarma (285 – 310 A.D) was the founder of this family. He married the daughter of Skandanaga, the commander of the army of the Satavahana king Pulomavi IV. He ruled over a vast kingdom comprising South – Andhra, Dravida, Karnataka and Kuntala.

Virakurchavarma was succeeded by his son Sivaskandavarma or Vijayaskandavarma (310 – 335 A.D). He performed Vedic sacrifices like

Agnishtoma, Vajapeya and Asvamedha and acquired the title 'Dharmamaharajadhiraja'.

The next king is Vishnugopa. His relationship with Sivaskandavarma is not known. He was defeated by Samudragupta as evidenced by his Allahabad pillar inscription. Trilochanapallava came to the throne in 350 A.D. He cleared the forest in the Srisailam region and established number of agraharas. He was defeated by Karikala – Chola. The Pallava kings who succeeded Trilochanapallava were Kumara – Vishnu I (360 – 385 A.D), Buddhavarma (385 – 410 A.D), Kumara – Vishnu II (410 436 A.D) Simhavarma I (436 – 460 A.D) and Skandavarma (460 – 485 A.D). The last king of the early Pallava family (Prakrit charters) was Nandivarman I (485 – 510 A.D). During his reign the Kalabhras invaded the Tamil country and gained complete control over it. This marked the end of the reign of the Pallavas of Prakrit charters.

#### **5C.1.2 Mahapallavas:**

Simhavarman was the founder of the Pallavas of this branch. His son, Yuvaraja Simhavishnu (575 – 600 A.D) conquered parts of Andhra and Tamil countries up to the Kaveri. He had the title Avanisimha. He ruled over 30 years from c. 550 A.D. His son Mahendravarman I was a worthy son of a worthy father. He was great in war and peace. He had many titles like Mattavilasa, Vichitrachitta and Gunabhara. He was also a great poet and he authored the 'prahasana' (farce) called Mattavilasa – prahasana. He took great interest in music as evidenced by the Kudimiyamalai Music Inscription. He was probably first a Jain and later embraced Saivism at the instance of the great Saiva saint Appar. He retaliated the attack of the Badami Chalukya Emperor Pulakesi II.

Mahendravarman I was succeeded by his son Narasimhavarman I Mamalla (630 – 38 A.D). He defeated Pulakesi II, who once again attacked the Pallavas. Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveler, visited Tamil Nadu during the reign of Narsimhavarman I. Narsimhavarman I developed and beautified the port of Mammallapuram (modern Mahabalipuram). His son was Mahendravarman I and the latter's son was Paramesvaravarman I (670 – 700 A.D). He had to fight with Gangas of Mysore, Chalukyas of Badami and the Pandyas. Paramesvaravarman scored victory over the Badami Chalukya Vikramaditya I. Paramesvaravarman I was succeeded

by his son Narasimhavarman II Rajasimha (700 – 728 A.D). His reign was marked by peace and prosperity. He built several temples including the Kailsanatha temple at Kanchi. He was a patron of scholars and poets. The great Sanskrit poet Dandi was in his court. Rajasimha sent embassy to China. He was succeeded by his son Paramesvaravarman II (728 – 31 A.D). The latter was defeated by Badami Chalukya Vikramaditya II.

As Paramesvaravarman II died without any heir to succeed him to the throne Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, a prince of the collateral branch of the Pallavas, came to the throne. When he came to the throne he was a boy of 12 years. He performed the Asvamedha sacrifice. During his reign Badami Chalukya Vikramaditya II temporarily occupied Kanchi. His son Kirtivarman II also attacked Kanchi during the reign of Nandivarman II. Nandivarman II, on his part defeated Western Ganga Sripurusha. The Pallava king ruled till 795 A.D. He was a worshipper of Vishnu and patron of learning. He built the Vaikunthaperumal temple at Kanchi.

Nandivarman II Pallavamalla was succeeded by his son Dantivarman (795 – 845 A.D). He lost much of his kingdom to the Pandyas. He was succeeded by his son Nandivarman III (846 – 69 A.D). He was more powerful than his father. Nripatunga, son of Nandivarman III succeeded his father to the Pallava throne. In the last quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century the Pallava king Aparajita was defeated by the Chola king Aditya I.

S.A.Q.

1. What is the place of the Mahapallavas in the Pallava history ?

### **5C.2 Society:**

The fourfold *varna* system struck deep roots in the society. The Aryanization was complete. The brahmanas commanded much respect as evidenced by the large extents of land and number of villages granted to them tax – free. There were four social groups, namely, Tudiya, Panam, Pariyan and Kadamgan. The scholar – brahmanas engaged themselves in performing various Vedic sacrifices and teaching. They also held important posts in the royal service. The bhakti cult also gained great popularity. As a result, though the caste system was firmly in existence

there was co-operation among different social groups. The people were following asrama - dharma *i.e.* brahmacharya, grihastha, vanaprastha and sanyasa. Rice was the staple food. Betel leaves and nuts were extensively used by all classes of people. They also wore variety of ornaments. The rich clad themselves in silk clothes. Education was imparted free to the students and brahmadeyas were granted for this purpose. The society consisted of different functional groups like agriculturists, weavers, carpenters, goldsmiths, potters, barbers, traders, etc. People were generally rich because of the excellent agricultural lands which were receiving perennial water supply from number of large tanks. Great care was taken to protect and maintain water resources. The brahmadeyas, devadeyas and agraharas played prominent role in promoting Aryan and Tamil cultures.

The field of education during the Pallava period betrays marked influence of Aryanization. Though in the initial stages Jain and Buddhist education centres played important role their place was taken by the brahmanas. They established educational institutions of high standards called 'ghatikas'. They imparted education in Vedic literature, puranas, Vedangas and other subjects. The ghatika at Kanchi was an important ghatika-sthana where students from different parts of the country were receiving education. The Mathas and Brahmadeyas also contributed greatly to the spread of knowledge.

S.A.Q.

1. What do you understand by 'Aryanization' ?

### **5C.3 Religion:**

As noted above the Aryanization of south was complete during the Pallava period and the Aryan culture was flourishing along with Tamil culture. Pallavas patronized the Vedic religion. The early Pallava rulers performed Vedic sacrifices like Asvamedha. They were following Saivism. Their lanchana was vrishabha (Nandi) and the banner was Khatvanga (Siva's weapon). Some kings like Rajasimha were Vaishnavas.

The Bhakti cult gained currency and consequently the Saivism and Vaishnavism became very popular. These sects inculcated ethics and



human values among people. By about 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries Bhakti movement won the hearts of the Tamils. In the Saivism there were the subsects of Kapalika and Kalamukha. Scenes of 'Bloody sacrifices' were depicted in the sculptures of the Pallava period. Mahendravarma's Mattvilasa – prahasana criticizes the superstitious practices in the society. The Saiva saints 'nayanmars' enlightened the society and kindled bhakti in them. According to the Periyapuram there were sixty three nayanmars who included not only the Kshatriyas but also chandalas. Their principal work was Tevaram and Appar, Sundaramurti, Jnanasambandar and Manikkavasagar were important Saiva saints.

Alvars propagated bhakti through Vaishnavism. There were 12 Alvars, from all castes. The Nalayiraprabandham was an important Vaishnava work of this period. Andal was a great saint who dedicated her life to Lord Vishnu. Srirangam and Tirupati were the most important Vaishnava centres, while Kanchi was a Saiva centre. Since Tamil was the medium of propagation the bhakti cult, both Saivite and Vaishnavite, penetrated into the hearts of common people.

S.A.Q.

1. 'It is during the period of the Pallavas that Aryanization became complete in South India'. - Substantiate.

Jainism and Buddhism also contributed much to the development of Tamil literature. However, the impact of the Bhakti cult on the society had its effect on the growth of Jainism and Buddhism in the Tamil land. Hieun Tsang observed that Buddhism was on the decline and that Jainism was enjoying patronage at least to some extent.

On the whole, the Pallava period is a significant chapter in the religious history of India in general and of South India in particular.

**I. Essay type questions (15 marks)**

1. Give an account of the Pallavas of Prakrit charters (or early Pallavas).
2. Write an essay on the political history of the Mahapallavas.
3. Give an account of the society under the Pallavas.
4. Describe the religious condition under the Pallavas.

**II. Brief questions (10 marks)**

1. Write a brief note on the early Pallava political history.
2. Write a brief note on the society under Pallavas.
3. Write a note on the Vedic religion during the Pallava period.

**III. Short type questions (5 marks)**

1. Vira – Kurchavarman and Sivaskandavarman
2. Trilochalana – Pallava
3. Mahendravarman I
4. Narasimavarman I
5. Paramesvaravarman I and Narasimavarman II
6. Nandivarman II
7. Ghatikas
8. Bhakti cult under Pallavas
9. Nayanmars
10. Alvars
11. Jainism and Buddhism under Pallavas.

## Unit 5d: Cholas of Tanjavur

- 5d.0 Objectives
- 5d.1 Introduction
- 5d.2 Society
- 5d.3 Polity
- 5d.4 Religion

### 5d.0 Objectives:

By studying this unit the student is expected to know about the outlines of the political history of the Cholas with special reference to Rajaraja I; salient features of the social life, noteworthy features of the Chola polity and religion under the Cholas.

### 5d.1 Introduction:

In the last quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century Aparajita, the Pallava king was defeated by Chola Aditya I, son of Vijayalaya. The period 850 – 1200 A.D is marked by the rise of the Cholas to an imperial power.

#### 5d.1.1 Predecessors of Rajaraja I:

The founder of the imperial Chola dynasty was Vijayalaya (846 – 871 A.D). He was followed by his son Aditya I who was an able warrior and great diplomat. He defeated Aparajita and occupied Kanchi. This marked the end of the Pallava kingdom and rise of the Chola power to imperial status. Next he defeated the Pandyas and occupied the Kongu country.

Aditya I was succeeded by his son Parantaka I (907 – 55 A.D). He defeated the Pandya king, occupied Madura and earned the title 'Madurakonda'. He also defeated the Rashtrakuta Krishna II. However, Rashtrakuta Krishna III, to avenge this defeat, attacked Parantaka I and defeated him in the Takkolam battle in 949 A.D. This proved to be a severe blow to the Chola power. As the Rashtrakuta power declined Chola Parantaka II regained supremacy. His son Rajaraja I was the most able monarch during whose period the Chola power reached new heights.

#### 5d.1.2 Rajaraja I (985 – 1014 A.D):

During the reign of Rajaraja I the Chola fame reached far and wide. The history of the Cholas became the history of the entire Tamil country which became a single powerful state. He first attacked the confederation of Pandya, Kerala and Srilanka in the south. Then destroyed the power of

the Pandyas and subjugated Kerala. He sent a naval expedition against Srilanka and occupied northern half of the island. He destroyed Anuradhapura and Polannavaruva. Tanjavur became the capital of the newly acquired Chola province. Next he conquered major part of the Mysore region. He succeeded in converting the Vengi Chalukya kingdom into a protectorate of the Chola power. He gave Kundavai, one to his daughters, to Vimaladitya in marriage. This resulted in harmonious relationship between these important powers of the south. He defeated Kalyana Chalukya and returned to his capital with war booty. He bestowed this wealth on the magnificent temple of Rajarajesvara (now Brihadisvara) built by him at Tanjavur. He defeated the Gangas of Kalinga. His last war was against the Maldivs (1012 A.D). This victory was achieved by the efficient naval fleet of the Chola emperor. With these resounding victories his empire extended from Tanjavur in the south to the Tungabhadra and parts of Srilanka and Maldivs. The Vengi Chalukyias were his allies and his power reached to Kalinga. He earned the titles Mummadi Chola, Cholamartanda, Jayangonda and Keralantaka.

Rajaraja I was the greatest conqueror and diplomat. He built up a large empire. He was an able administrator and patron of poets and scholars. He built the great temple of Rajarajesvara, named after himself, at Tanjavur. A remarkable feature of his administration was the introduction of self – government of the villages. He was a great devotee of the god Siva and had the title ‘Sivapadasekhara’. His religious tolerance is evident from the Vishnu temples he built in his empire. During his reign the Sailendra king of Sumatra Maravijayottungavarman built a Buddhist vihara called Chudamani – vihara at Nagapattinam to which Rajaraja I gifted the village Anaimangalam (1006 A.D). Rajaraja I was succeeded by his son Rajendra in 1014 A.D.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘Rajaraja I was the greatest conqueror and diplomat’. – Justify.

### **5d.1.3 Rajaraja’s successors:**

Rajendra succeeded his father to the Chola throne in 1014 A.D. He was a worthy son of a worthy father. He completed the conquest of

Srilanka. However, the Srilankans never reconciled themselves to the Tamil rule and were giving constant trouble to the Cholas. Rajendra supported the claim of Chalukya Rajaraja to the Vengi throne. From Vengi he marched up to the Ganga enroute Kalinga. This exploitation brought him the title 'Gangaikonda'. He founded a new capital Gangaikonda – Cholapuram to commemorate his expedition to the Ganga.

S.A.Q.

1. Describe the relations between the Cholas and Srilanka.
2. Describe the relations between the Cholas and the Vengi Chalukyas.

### **5d.2 Society:**

The social life was not much different from that of the Pallava period. The four fold caste system became strong. Brahmanas commanded much respect in the society. There was a division known as Valangai (right) and Idangai (left) among the working class. Many a time there were disputes between them and harmony was lacking. Sati and Devadasi system were present.

During the Chola period Tamil literature made tremendous progress. In fact for Tamil literature this period is considered as golden age. Saiva, Vaishnava and Jain religious teachers made significant contribution to the Tamil bhakti literature. The 'Periya Puranam' of the Saiva poet Sekkilar, the Ramayana of Kamba, the Kalingattupparani (Kulottunga's Kalinga invasion) of Jayangondar are the products of this period. The Cholas patronized Sanskrit also. Venkata – Madhava of the period of Parantaka wrote commentary on the Rigveda. Rajendrachola established a vedic college at Ennayiram in which there were 340 students and 14 teachers. The curriculum included Vedas, Vyakarna, Mimasa, Nyaya etc. There was a separate college for Ayurvedic studies.

S.A.Q.

1. Describe the literacy activities during the Chola period.

### **5d.3 Polity:**

Chola administrative system, particularly village administration was remarkable. They were successful in coordinating the administration at central and village levels. The king was the supreme. He was assisted by ministers. Among the senior government officials Olayanayakam (Secretary) was important. Senior officials were called Perundaram and the junior officials Sirundaram. The kingdom was divided into mandalams, valanadus and nadas in the descending order. Grama (village) was the lowest unit. Mandalams were also known as rajyas and they were generally headed by princes. Kottam was another administrative division.

#### **5d.3.1 Village administration:**

The Uttiramerur inscription gives elaborate details about the village administration during the Chola period. Every village had a village council. These councils were of two types – 1. ur and 2. sabha or Mahasabha. Ur was a village council while sabha was the council of ‘agrahara of brahmanas’. They were the authority on all matters related to village administration. There were executive sub – committees called ‘variyaam’. The members of ‘variyaam’ were elected by people. Eligibility conditions to become a member of ‘variyaam’ were significant. The conditions were –

1. The individual should be aged between 35 and 70 years of age.
2. He should be educated.
3. He should have a house of his own.
4. He should be owner of a land of stipulated extent.
5. He should not have misappropriated others’ property.
6. He should not have been a member in any sub – committee during the past three years.
7. An individual who had not submitted proper accounts is ineligible
8. An individual who had committed ‘five great sins’ (‘pancha – mahapatakas’) and his relatives were ineligible.

Each village was divided into 30 wards (Kudumbas) and one from each ward was elected. The names of the contestants were written on slips which were put in a pot. A young boy was to pick up the slip and the one whose name was on the slip was declared elected. This system was called Kuda – olai. The elected members were supervising various activities like

maintenance of tanks, gardens, tax collection, etc. There were various committees for this purpose and they were supervised by a committee called 'Panchavara – variyam'. The Sabha or Mahasabha had extensive powers related to agricultural land, deciding disputes regarding land, water management, crimes and punishments, etc. Unless it was warranted normally central government was not interfering in the village administration.

S.A.Q.

1. "The village administration under the Cholas is remarkable"- Explain.

OR

What is the importance of the Uttiramerur inscription in the Chola administration ?

#### **5d.4 Religion:**

The Cholas were patrons of Hindu – dharma. Both Saivism and Vaishnavism were popular in the Chola country. Many of the Chola kings were the followers of Saivism and so naturally it enjoyed royal patronage. During the Chola period we see sub – sects like Kalamukha, Kapalika and Pasupata. Some of their forms of worship were gruesome and repellent. The practice of the devotee offering his own head to the goddess is evidenced by several sculptures of the Chola period. But it may be noted that majority of the Saivites belonged to the Bhakti cult. They never supported the practices like wearing skull – garlands, human sacrifices, bloody worship, consuming intoxicating drinks and meat followed by Saiva sects noted above. Because of such abhorrent practices these sects could not gain popular approval and Sankara's smarta sect became very popular. Though the Chola kings favoured Saivism they were much tolerant towards other religious faiths like Vaishnavism.

S.A.Q.

1. What are the significant features of the religious conditions under the Cholas ?

**I. Essay type Questions (15 Marks)**

1. Bring out the greatness of Rajaraja I.
2. Write an essay on the salient features of administrative system of the Cholas.
3. Discuss society and religion under the Cholas.

**II. Brief Questions (10 Marks)**

1. Write a note on the wars fought by Rajaraja I.
2. Describe the social life under the Cholas.
3. Describe the village administration under the Cholas.
4. Write a note on the religious conditions under the Cholas.
5. Describe the achievements of Rajendra Chola.

**III. Objective type Questions (1 Mark each)**

1. Aditya I was the son of
  - a. Vijayalaya
  - b. Aparita
  - c. Rajaraja
  - d. Rajendra
2. The founder of the Chola dynasty was
  - a. Aditya I
  - b. Rajaraja
  - c. Rajendra
  - d. Vijayalaya
3. The Chola capital in Srilanka was
  - a. Anuradhapura
  - b. Polannaruva
  - c. Kandy
  - d. There was none
4. The Brihadisvara temple at Tanjavur was built by
  - a. Aditya I
  - b. Rajendra
  - c. Rajaraja I
  - d. Parantaka
5. The Periyapurnama was written by
  - a. Sekkilar
  - b. Kamban
  - c. Ramanuja
  - d. Tiruppanalvar

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Answers:

1. c    2. d    3. b    4. b    5. a
-



## Unit 5e: Eastern and Western Chalukyas

- 5e.0 Objectives
- 5e.1 Introduction
- 5e.2 Eastern (Vengi) Chalukyas
- 5e.3 Society
- 5e.4 Economy
- 5d.5 Religion
- 5e.6 Western (Kalyana) Chalukyas
- 5e.7 Society
- 5e.8 Economy
- 5d.9 Religion

### **5e.0 Objectives:**

By studying this unit the student will know the outlines of the political history of the Chalukyas of Vengi and the Chalukyas of Kalyana; the salient features of social life, economy and religion under those two dynasties.

### **5e.1 Introduction:**

The Badami Chalukya emperor Pulakesi II was an able and ambitious warrior. He defeated part of the Andhra country and appointed his brother Kubja Vishnuvardhana as his vassal over the newly acquired Andhra region of his empire. Later he permitted Kubja Vishnuvardhana to rule the kingdom as sovereign ruler. Consequently Kubja Vishnuvardhana became the founder of the Vengi Chalukya dynasty which ruled the Andhra country for about 450 years. During this long period the Vengi Chalukya kingdom had seen many ups and downs.

The Badami Chalukya empire was constantly at wars with the Pallavas. The last king of the dynasty was Kirtivarma II. During this period Rashtrakuta Dantidurga put an end to the Badami Chalukya power. The Rashtrakutas ruled Karnataka for more than two centuries. The Chalukyas of Kalyana, were initially the vassals of the Rashtrakutas. When the power of the Rashtrakutas was declining Tailapa II defeated Karka II, the last of the Rashtrakutas and declared independence and became the founder of the Kalyana Chalukya dynasty. The rulers of this line ruled from 973 A.D to about 1200 A.D. The Kalyana Chalukyas belong to the Badami Chalukya family.

## **5e2. Chalukyas of Vengi:**

As noted above Kubja Vishnuvardhana, the younger brother of Badami Chalukya Pulakesi II, became the independent sovereign with Vengi (West Godavari dt. A.P) as capital (624 – 642 A.D). His kingdom extended from Visakhapatnam in the north to Guntur in south. Kubja Vishnuvardhana was a devotee of Vishnu. His wife Ayyanamahadevi built a Jain temple in Vijayavada.

S.A.Q.

1. How Kubja Vishnuvardhana became a sovereign ?

The next important king of this dynasty was Vijayaditya I (753 – 770 A.D). He was the son of Vishnuvardhana III. He had titles ‘Maharajadhiraja’, ‘Paamesvara’ and ‘Parambhattaraka’ indicative of imperial status. His period marked the beginning of wars with the Rashtrakutas. Vijayaditya was succeeded by Vishnuvardhana IV, who conceded defeat in the battle fought with Rashtrakutas. He gave his daughter Silamahadevi in marriage to Rashtrakuta Dhruva.

The next important king was Gunaga Vijayaditya (848 – 891 A.D), son of Kali Vishnuvardhana. Gunaga Vijayaditya was the greatest of the Vengi Chalukya kings. Gunaga Vijayaditya is credited with victory over boya – kottams and consequent annexation of south coastal Andhra up to Nelluru to the Vengi kingdom. Vijayaditya faced defeat at the hands of Rashtrakuta Amoghavarsha and became his subordinate. After the death of Amoghavarsha (880 A.D) he defeated his son Krishna II and declared independence. Vijayaditya’s general Pandaranga was an able warrior with whose assistance he defeated the kings of Kalinga, Kosala and Vemulavada. Finally the Vengi army under the generalship of Pandaranga, reduced Kiranapura and Achalapura of the Rashtrakuta kingdom to ashes. Rashtrakuta Krishna II accepted the suzerainty of Gunaga Vijayaditya and became his vassal. Gunaga Vijayaditya had the able assistance Pandaranga, Vinayadisarma and Rajaditya in the wars fought by him. His diplomacy is evident from the fact though he crushed the power of Rashtrakuta Krishna II did not annex his kingdom to his own but permitted to be his vassal.

S.A.Q.

1. Estimate the diplomacy of Gunaga Vijayaditya.

The next important king was Rajarajanarendra (1019 – 1060 A.D). The period between Gunaga Vijayaditya and Rajarajanarendra was a period of disturbances. Chalukya Bhima I (892 – 922 A.D) after overcoming the initial problems became the king. He was responsible for the construction of the Bhimesvara temples at Chalukya Bhimavaram and Draksharamam (East Godavari dt.), which are noteworthy examples of the architectural style of the Vengi Chalukyas.

The reign period of Rajarajanarendra is marked by internecine wars and external attacks. Many a time he had to fled the kingdom. He had constant troubles from his step brother Vijayaditya VII who was helped by the Kalyana Chalukyas. Rajarajanarendra was the son of Vimaladitya and Kundavai, the sister of Chola Rajendra I. Rajarajanarendra with the help of his Chola maternal uncle Rajendra I ascended the Vengi throne and ruled till 1030 A.D. At this time VijayadityaVII defeated Rajarajanarendra and ruled for four years. In 1030 Rajarajanarendra defeated the usurper and regained the throne. After the death of Chola Rajendra I his son Rajadhiraja came to the Chola throne. By this time the Vengi Chalukyas and the Chalukyas of Kalyana were constantly in wars. Finally Rajarajanarendra had to enter into peace with Kalyana Chalukya Somesvara I. Narayanabhattu, a ‘pradhani’ of the latter came to the Vengi Chalukya capital Rajamahendravaram, settled there and helped Nannayabhattu, the court – poet of Rajarajanarendra, in translating the Sanskrit Mahabharata into Telugu, the first classic of that (Telugu) language. Though Rajarajanarendra had to always face tough times his interest in and contribution to the field of Telugu literature is well remembered by the Telugu speaking people and earned him a permanent peace in their hearts.

S.A.Q.

1. ‘ The period of Rajarajanarendra was hardly peaceful ’. – Explain.

The Vengi Chalukya history ended with the death of Vijayaditya VII in 1075 A.D. Rajendrachola, son of Rajarajanarendra, with the title of 'Kulottinga', became, the king of the Chola country, which belonged to his maternal line. Thus the Vengi Chalukyas became one with the Chola country and gradually lost their identity with the Andhra country.

### **5e.3 Society:**

The fourfold caste system came to be established in the society. The vedic – scholar -brahmanas were much respected. Kings granted them tax free land and agraharas to promote not only vedic studies but also secular literature. Some brahmanas occupied important posts in royal service. They also took to weapons on some occasions. The goldsmiths also were respected in the society. They were engaged for engraving inscriptions on copper plates. Vaisyas engaged themselves in trade and commerce, both inland and seaborne. The Ahadanakaram copper plate inscription of Vishnuvardhana V mentions 'sarthavahas' (caravan) and 'mahanavikas'. Many inscriptions record the munificent grants made by vaisyas to temples. They organized themselves into guilds which had their own rules and regulations in which even kings were not interfering. Upward social mobility can be noticed during this period. Telugu literature made a start during the period of Rajarajanarendra. Nannayabhatta, his court poet, translated part of the Sanskrit Mahabharata into Telugu, at the request of the king. This is the first literary classic of Telugu literature and hence Nannayabhatta is called 'Adikavi' (the first poet). Because of the intensive temple building activity the temple architects commanded respect in the society.

S.A.Q.

1. Explain the position of the Vaisyas in the Vengi Chalukya society.
2. 'The period of Rajarajanarendra marked the beginning of classical Telugu literature'. - Justify.

### **5e.4 Economy:**

Agriculture was the main occupation of the people and source of revenue. The land was fertile. There are many references to tanks in the inscriptions of the Vengi Chalukyas suggesting that irrigation facilities were taken care of well. In spite of wars, both internal and external, economy seems to be quite sound. Trade and commerce, both inland and foreign, was flourishing well. As noted above, there were merchant guilds suggesting organized trade. Nakaram was an important merchant guild. Penugonda (west Godavari dt.) was an important seat of the guild of Virabalanjas. Not only tax on agriculture but also customs and tolls were a source of revenue to the state. Some gold coins of the Vengi Chalukya Saktivarma were found in Burma suggesting the flourishing state of sea – borne trade.

#### **5d.5 Religion:**

This period witnessed the decline of Buddhism and growing popularity of Hindu – dharma. Some of Buddhist stupas were converted into Hindu temples. Temples at Chebrolu, Pithapuram can be cited as examples. Vengi Chalukya kings were the followers of Saivism. Narendramrigaraja Vijayaditya constructed as many as 108 Siva temples and named them Narendresvara after his title. The Pancharamas, namely the temples of Siva called Amararama, Daksharama, Kumararama, Kshirarama and Bhimarama came up during this period. Jainism found the popular support. Vengi Chalukya Amma II built the Jain basadis called ‘Sarvalokasraya’ and ‘Katakabharana’. Ayyanamahadevi, wife of Kubja Vishnuvardhana, built a Jain basadi at Vijayawada. Attili, Bejavada, Kollipaka were among important Jain centres. In spite of their personal religious leaning Vengi Chalukya kings maintained religious tolerance and harmony. Many Saiva and Jain mathas made significant contribution not only to the growth of respective religious faiths but also served as important centres of education and welfare activities.

S.A.Q.

1. “ Vengi Chalukya kings maintained religious harmony ”. – Do you agree with this view ?

#### **5e.6 Chalukyas of Kalyana:**

The Chalukyas who ruled with Kalyana (Bijapur dt., Karnataka) as capital are known as Kalyana Chalukyas. They are also called Western Chalukyas to distinguish them from the Vengi (Eastern) Chalukyas. The founder of the Kalyana Chalukya line was Tailapa II whose ancestors served the Rashtrakutas as vassals. Kalyana Chalukyas belonged to the Badami Chalukya family. Tailapa defeated Rashtrakuta Karka II (973 A.D), declared sovereignty and ruled till 997 A.D. He had the title 'Ranarangabhima'. His capital was Manyakheta. He defeated and killed Paramara Bhoja. He was succeeded by his son Satyasraya (997 – 1008 A.D). During his period Chola prince Rajendra conquered the region between the Krishna and Tungabhadra, Banavasi (Karnataka) and Kollipake (modern Kolanupaka, Nalgonda dt., A.P).

Somesvara I was next important king (1042 – 1068 A.D). He was a great intellect and warrior. He shifted his capital to Kalyana, newly built by him. He conquered the Konkan region. Vengi Chalukya Rajarajanarendra was defeated by him. But Somesvara I was defeated by Cholas in the battle fought at Koppam. Suffering from some severe disease he entered into the Tungabhadra and died (1060 A.D).

The next important king was Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya VI (1076 – 1126 A.D). He started a new era called Chalukya Vikrama Era (1076 A.D) after his own name. He was the most distinguished monarch in his dynasty. He defeated the kings of the Solanki and Kalachuri dynasties. Hoysala Ballala was his vassal. Vijayabahu of Srilanka was his friend. After the death of Kulottungachola he occupied Vengi for some time. His inscriptions are found in the coastal Andhra country. He was a great patron of literature and fine arts. Bilhana, the author of Vikramankadeva charita was his court – poet.

S.A.Q.

1. Describe the relationship of the Kalyana Chalukyas with Vengi Chalukyas and Cholas.

Vikramaditya VI was succeeded by his son Somesvara III (1126 – 1138 A.D). During the reign of his son Jagadkamalla (1138 – 1151 A.D) Hoysalas were becoming powerful. During the reign of Tailapa III (1150

– 57 A.D) Kalachuri Bijjala became a force to be reckoned with. By about 1200 A.D the Kalyana Chalukya power came to an end.

### **5e.7 Society:**

The *varna* and *asrama* system came to be firmly established. An interesting feature was that all sections of people took part in the wars which were fought very frequently with Vengi Chalukyas of the Andhra country. Pampa wrote *Vikramanjunavijaya*, Kannada version of Sanskrit *Mahabharata*. The noteworthy feature of the *Vikramanjunavijaya* is its hero was Arjuna and not Dharmaraja as in the case of the Sanskrit epic. Ranna, who was the court poet of Tailapa II, authored *Ajitapuranam*. Another poet Durgasimha wrote *Panchatantram*. The contribution of the Virasaiva sect to the Kannada literature is of great significance. The ‘*vachana*’ literature is their unique contribution. Composed in simple Kannada poetry form called ‘*vachana*’ penetrated into even the lowest strata of the society. People of all sections of the society including the lowest and women followed Virasaivism and wrote many works in Kannada. The *vachanas* of Basava, Akkamahadevi were much popular. The *vachana* literature earned a permanent place in the hearts of the Kannadigas.

S.A.Q.

1. “ Virasaiva literature reflects attempts towards social reforms ”. – Justify.

### **5e.8 Economy:**

Agriculture was the chief source of revenue to the state and it received much encouragement as the irrigation facilities were greatly improved. Another important source of revenue was taxes levied on various articles. Trade and commerce were flourishing well. Trade guilds like Ayyavali, Nanadesi, nakaramu played important role in conducting trade and commerce in an organized manner. These guilds had several branches throughout south India. Ayyavole (Aihole, Bijapur dt. Karnataka) was the headquarters of the Ayyavoli guild which was the most important of all the guilds. The members of these guilds were conducting trade by moving from place to place as caravans. They were accompanied

by armed men appointed by them for their safe journey. The available numismatic evidence shows the sound economy of the Kalyana Chalukya empire. There were mints at towns like Lokki where gold coins were minted. In spite of constant wars the economy was quite sound during the Kalyana Chalukya period.

S.A.Q.

1. What was the role of merchant guilds in trade and commerce ?

### **5d.9 Religion:**

Irrespective of their personal preference the Kalyana Chalukyas adopted the policy of religious tolerance. The Early Chalukya kings favoured Jainism. From Jayasimha onwards the kings followed Saivism. The Pasupata branch of the Saivism was popular during this period. This branch gives more importance to Saiva – agamas than to the Vedas. The important development in the history of religions in India is the emergence of Virasaivism during this period. Basavas, the minister of Kalachuri Bijjala, founded this religion. It declares Siva as the supreme god. It does not accept the vedic rites and caste system. All the followers of virasaivism were equal without any kind of distinction. They worship Siva in the form of ‘linga’ and wear it on their person. In Karnataka they are known as ‘lingayats’ while in Andhra they are generally called ‘Jangamas’. The Virasaiva poets, who belonged to all sections of the society, wrote in simple Kannada which appealed to all Kannadigas. In spite of laudable ideas like casteless society, Virasaivism believed that Siva was the only god and those who did not worship him were called as ‘Bhavis’ and were detested. This feeling of hatred towards non – virasaivites proved to be a serious set back to this sect. As the very name suggests ‘vira – saivism’ was a militant Saivism. Basava declared that the followers virasaivism were superior to the god Siva himself whom they worship and hence did not attract punishment to any crime they might commit. This kind of unlimited freedom allowed to them led to degeneration. In spite these drawbacks Virasaivism was popular in Karnataka during this period. The advent and spread of vira – saivism adversely affected Jainism which started showing the signs of decline.



S.A.Q.

1. What are the drawbacks of Virasaivism ?

**I. Essay type Questions (15 Marks)**

1. Describe the achievements of Gunaga Vijayaditya
2. Write an essay on the achievements of Rajarajanarendra.
3. Bring out the achievements of Somesvara I and Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya
4. Describe the salient features of social and religious life during the period of the Vengi Chalukyas.
5. Bring out the salient features of social and religious life under the Chalukyas of Kalyana.

**II. Brief Questions (10 Marks)**

1. Write a note on the internecine wars during the period of Rajarajanarendra.
2. Write a note on the economy during the Vengi Chalukya period.
3. Write a note on the Telugu literature during the Vengi Chalukya period.
4. Describe the achievements of Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya
5. Write a note on Kannada literature during the Kalyana Chalukya period.
6. Write a note on Virasaivism
7. Write a note on the economy during the Kalyana Chalukya period.

**III. Short type Questions (5 Marks)**

1. Write a note on the founder of the Vengi Chalukya period.
2. Write a note on Vengi Chalukya Vijayaditya I.
3. Pandaranga's achievements as the general of Gunaga Vijayaditya I
4. Write a note on Chalukya Bhima I.
5. Write a note on Nannayabhatta.
6. Write a note on Jain centres during the Vengi Chalukya period.
7. Write a note on Narendramrigaraja Vijayaditya
8. Write a note on Pancharamas.
9. Write a note on vachana literature in Kannada.
10. Write a note on Basava.

**IV. Objective type Questions (1 Mark each)**

1. Kubjavishnuvardhana was the brother of
  - a. Gunaga Vijayaditya I
  - b. Rajarajanarendra
  - c. Chalukya Bhima I
  - d. Pulakesi II
2. The founder of the Vengi Chalukya dynasty was
  - a. Pulakesi I
  - b. Kubjavishnuvardhana
  - c. Rajarajanarendra
  - d. Chalukya Bhima I
3. Ayyanamahadevi built a Jaina temple at
  - a. Bejavada
  - b. Amaravati
  - c. Chebrolu
  - d. Draksharamam
4. Gunaga Vijayaditya was the son of
  - a. Pulakesi II
  - b. Chalukya Bhima I
  - c. Kali Vishnuvardhana
  - d. Vijayaditya II
5. Pandaranga was the general of
  - a. Gunaga Vijayaditya I
  - b. Rajarajanarendra
  - c. Chalukya Bhima I
  - d. Pulakesi II
6. The Vengi Chalukya king who built 108 Siva temples was
  - a. Narendramrigaraja Vijayaditya
  - b. Rajarajanarendra
  - c. Chalukya Bhima I
  - d. Kubjavishnuvardhana
7. The Telugu poet Nannayabhatta was the court poet of
  - a. Rajarajanarendra
  - b. Chalukya Bhima I
  - c. Kali Vishnuvardhana
  - d. Vijayaditya VII
8. The Jaina basadis called Sarvalokasraya and Katakabharana were built by
  - a. Ayyanamahadevi
  - b. Amma II
  - c. Chalukya Bhima I
  - d. Kubjavishnuvardhana
9. The founder of the Kalyana Chalukya dynasty was
  - a. Tailapa II
  - b. Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya
  - c. Karka II
  - d. Satyasraya
10. Bilhana wrote
  - a. Mitakshari
  - b. Vikramankadevacharita
  - c. Manasollasa
  - d. Vikramarjunavijaya
11. Manasollasa was written by
  - a. Kalhana
  - b. Bilhana
  - c. Somesvara III
  - d. Ranna

12. Vikramanjanavijaya was written by  
a. Pampa                      b. Ranna  
c. Ponna                      d. Bilhana
13. Ajitpurana was written by  
a. Pampa                      b. Ranna  
c. Somesvara III              d. Ponna
14. The founder of the Virasaivism was  
a. Somana              b. Akkamahadevi  
c. Basava              d. Ponna
15. Basava was the minister of  
a. Kalachuri Bijjala                      b. Kalyana Chalukya  
Tailapa II  
c. Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya              d. Somesvara III

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Answers:

1. d    2. b    3. a    4. c    5. a  
6. a    7. a    8. b    9. a    10. b  
11. c    12. a    13. b    14. c    15. a
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