

# Biyani's Think Tank

Concept based notes

## Under Graduation Program

**(B.A. SEM I)**  
**(As per NEP 2020)**

**(Paper I- HISTORY OF INDIA)**  
**FROM THE BEGINNING UPTO**  
**1200 A.D.**

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*Published by:*

**Think Tanks**

**Biyani Group of Colleges**

**ISBN No. 978-93-83343-52-2**

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**First Edition: 2023**

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**Biyani College Printing Department**

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# Think Tank Subject: History of India

## **Paper I: History of India (From the Beginning Upto 1200C.E.)**

**Course Objective:** This course aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the history of India up to 1200 CE. It seeks to familiarize students with the main sources and methodologies used in the study of ancient Indian history. By exploring the major political, social, economic, religious, and cultural developments during different periods of ancient Indian history, the course aims to develop student's knowledge and critical thinking skills.

**Course Outcome:** By the end of this course, students will have a sound knowledge of the main sources and methodologies used in studying ancient Indian history. Overall, the course aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of ancient Indian history and develop analytical and critical thinking skills in interpreting historical sources.

### **Unit-I**

Main sources of the history of India up to 300 CE. A brief survey of Prehistoric times in India. Harappan civilization origin, extent, salient features, and continuity. The Vedic Age - Vedic literature, polity, society, economy and religion, a brief survey of Iron Age cultures in India. Rise of Janapadas and Mahajanapadas - monarchies and republics.

### **Unit-II**

Rise of Magadhan imperialism up to the Nandas; Jainism and Buddhism - origin, teachings, contribution. The Mauryan empire - main sources, Chandragupta Maurya and Asoka's Dhamma -its nature and propagation. Mauryan state and administration, society and economy, art and architecture, Decline of the Mauryas.

### **Unit-III**

The Post Mauryan period (c.200 B.C. E to 300 C.E.) achievements of the Sungas, Satavahanas, Sakas and Kushanas. Social, Religious and Economic life and development of literature and arts during the post-Mauryan period. The Sangam Age - literature, society, economy, and culture.

The Gupta empire- achievements of Samudragupta, Chandragupta II Vikramaditya, Skandagupta; State and administrative institutions; Social and economic life; Religious thought and institutions; Development in literature, arts and science.

### **Unit - IV**

Post Gupta Period up to 750 CE. Achievements of the Vardhanas, Chalukyas Pallavas. Tripartite Struggle.

The Imperial Cholas and their achievements. A study of social and economic changes and a brief survey of cultural life during the c. 750 to 1200 CE.

## Very Short Questions

**1. What do you mean by Carbon 14?**

Scientific dating method used in Archaeology.

**2. What are Samhitas?**

Collection of ancient Hindu scriptures namely the Vedas.

**3. What are Aranyakas**

The forest

**4. Upanisadas**

Treatises containing sacred instructions

**5. Archaeology**

The study of the human past.

**6. Epigraphy**

The study of Inscriptions.

**7. Paleography**

The study of old writings held in inscriptions.

**8. Numismatics**

The study of coins.

**9. Artefact**

A portable object made by human hands.

**10. Ardha Magadhi**

An eastern dialect of Prakrit.

**11. Homo sapiens**

Automatically modern humans or wise men

**12. Citadel**

Core fortified area of a town or city.

**13. Pleistocene**

Geological era

**14. Seal**

An engraved piece of metal used as a stamp for identification.

**15. Pebble tools**

An oldest type of tool

**16. Janapada**

A region consisting of urban and rural settlements alongwith its inhabitants.

**17. Rashtra?**

The state or tribal kingdom

**18. Samhita**

A collection of hymns associated with the Vedas.

**19. Rajan**

Head of the *Rashtra* or King.

**20. Polyandry**

A system in which a woman can have several husbands.

**21. Kula**

A patriarchal family where the head of the family was called *Kulapati* or *Grihapati*.

**22. Sangam Age**

In Tamil land the period between 500 B.C. to 300 A.D.

**23. Mahajanapada:**

Big and powerful kingdom

**24. Republic**

A form of government where the people elected their leader.

**25. Monarchy**

Rule of the King.

**26. Oligarchy**

Refers to a government where power is exercised by a group of people.

**27. Samantas**

Feudal lords or land lords.

**28. Who was the founder of Mauryan Empire ?**

Chandragupta Maurya

**29. The capital of Mauryan Empire**

was : Pataliputra

**30. Arthashastra was written by :**

Kautilya

**31. Who was also called Indian Machiavelli ?**

Kautilya

**32. Arthashastra was written during the period of :**

Maurya

**33. The book Indica was written by :**

Megasthenes

**34. Edicts of Ashoka was first deciphered by :**

James Prinsep

**35. Ashoka was the son of :**

Bindusara

**36. Who was also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta ?**

Kautilya

**37. Which Mauryan emperor went to Shravana Belagola along with Bhadrabahu ?**

Chandragupta Maurya

**38. Which of the following ruler was called as 'Amitragatha' by the Greeks :**

Bindusara

**39. Ashoka embraced Buddhism under the influence of Buddhist monk :**

Upagupta

**40. Who was called as Devanampriya Priyadarshi ?**

Ashoka

**41. Seleucus Nicator was**

**defeated by : Chandragupta**

Maurya

**42. The drama Mudrarakshasa was written by :**

Vishakadatta

**43. Who took throne after Chandragupta Maurya ?**

Bindusara

**44. The best specimen of the Mauryan art represented by their :**

Pillars

**45. Ashoka convened third Buddhist council at Pataliputra in :**

240 BC

**46. Who captured Pataliputra from the last ruler of the Nanda Dynasty ?**

Chandragupta Maurya

**47. In which year Kalinga war was took place ?**

261 BC

**48. Who was the last ruler of Mauryan dynasty ?**

Brihadrata

**49. In the revenue department of Mauryas, who was in-charge of the collection of all revenues in the empire?**

Samahatra

**50. In the Mauryan empire, the post Devatadhyaksha is related to**

Religious Institutions

**51. In the Mauryan period, the duties of Mudradhyaksha were concerned with**

Passports

**52. As per the officials mentioned in the Arthashastra, the duties related to Crown lands was performed by whom ?**

Sitadhyaksha

**53. Who was Seleucus Nicotar?**

He was Alexander's General and was appointed the ruler of North-West India.

**54. To whom Seleucus' daughter was married?**

Chandragupta Maurya.

**55. Which provinces did Seleucus give to Chandragupta Maurya at accordance with the treaty signed by them in 303 BC?**

Kabul, Qandhar, Herat and Baluchistan.

**56. How many elephants did Chandragupta give to Seleucus?**

500

**57. Who was Megasthenes?**

He was Seleucus's ambassador in the court of Chandragupta Maurya. He was a great Philosopher.

**58. Who wrote the book 'Indika'?**

Megasthenes.

**59. What information does the book 'Indika' provide?**

This book provides us with a lot of information about the political social and economic conditions in Chandragupta's empire.

**60. Who constructed the Sudarshan lake at Junagarh (Gujarat) ?**

Chandragupta Maurya.

**61. Under whose influence Chandragupta Maurya embraced Jainism?**

Bhadrabahu, a renowned Jain Muni.

**62. On which mountain Chandragupta Maurya ended his life by slow starvation?**

Chandragiri

**63. What title did Bindusara assume?**

Amitraghata (killer of the enemies).

**64. By which name Bindusara was known to the Greeks.**

Amitrochates

**65. Who was the governor of Taxila during the reign of Bindusara?**

Susima, the eldest son of Bindusara.

**66. How many sons Bindusara had?**

It is generally believed that he had one hundred sons.

**67. Who was the governor of Ujjain during the reign of Bindusara?**

Ashoka, the second eldest son of Bindusara.

**68. During the reign of Bindusara at which place the public revolted and why?**

At Taxila, due to maladministration of Susim, the governor of Taxila.

**69. Whom Bindusara sent to Taxila to crush the revolt?**

Ashoka.

**70. By whom during the reign of Bindusara the second revolt at Taxila was crushed.**

Susim.

**71. What was the centre of education during Mauryan regime? Taxila**

**72. What was the main occupation of the people during Mauryan period?**

Agriculture.

**73. How much did agriculturists pay taxes during Mauryan Period?**

1/4th of the total produce.

**74. Which coins were in practice during the reign of Mauryan period?**

Pann, which was made of silver.



**75. Where the Mauryan court was located at Patliputra?**

Kumharar.

**76. Of which material most of the buildings were made of at Patliputra during Mauryan period?**

Wood.

**77. By which name Ashoka is generally inscriptions?**

Priyadarshi.

**78. The Ashoka's which inscription gives an account of the Kalinga war and its effects?**

Minor Rock-edict - XIII.

**79. Where was the main centre of production of woolen fabrics during Mauryan period?**

Kashmir.

**80. When did Ashoka conquer Kalinga?**

In 261 BC.

**81. Who was the founder of Gupta Empire?**

Shri Gupta

**82. What was the period of rule of Samudra Gupta?**

330-375 AD

**83. The Gupta king who was good player of Veena?**

Vikarmaditya

**84. The Vengi king who was defeated by Samudra Gupta?**

Hastiverma

**85. The Gupta king who destroyed Sakas?**

Chandra Gupta 2

**86. The gold coin during Gupta period called?**

Rupaka

**87. The Gupta king who has the title of "Mahendraditya"?**

Vishnu Gupta

**88. The Gupta ruler who repaired Sudarshan Lake for second time?**

Skand Gupta

**89. How many inscriptions are available for Guptas Period?**

42

**90.The court Poet of Samudra Gupta was?**

Harisena

**91.Who was the author Allahabad Pillor inscriptions?**

Harisena

**92.Gupta kings ruled over North India for a period of.....**

330

**93.Who was the title of “Kaviraja”?**

Samudra Gupta

9

**94.Gupta Era was started in.....?**

320 AD

**95.Who was son of Samudra Gupta?**

Chandra Gupta 2

**96.The Kosala king who was defeated by Samudra Gupta?**

Mahendra

**97.The language patronized by Guptas was.....?**

Sanskrit

**98.Who called Samudra Gupta as Indian Napoleon?**

V.A. Smith

**99.What was the normal rate of interest on loans during the Guptas period?**

15%

## **Short Type Questions Unit-1**

### **1. What is archaeology?**

Archaeology is the study of the human past using material remains. These remains can be any objects that people created, modified, or used. Portable remains are usually called artifacts. Artifacts include tools, clothing, and decorations. Non-portable remains, such as pyramids or post-holes, are called features. Archaeologists use artifacts and features to learn how people lived in specific times and places. They want to know what these people's daily lives were like, how they were governed, how they interacted with each other, and what they believed and valued. Sometimes, artifacts and features provide the only clues about an ancient community or civilization. Prehistoric civilizations did not leave behind written records, so we cannot read about them.

### **2. What is epigraphy?**

Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions or epigraphs carved into sturdy materials such as stone or cast in metal. It's an essential tool for recovering many of antiquity's firsthand records. Ancient writings had their meaning in their respective cultural and historical eras. If one wants to learn about the past, one must understand what these writings mean. Epigraphy is the study of determining and analyzing such ancient graphemes. Epigraphers are specialists in this field. The term epigraphy comes from the Greek word *epigraphē*, which means 'to write on.' The term epigraph first appeared in English to describe any inscription on a structure or a commonly used motto or saying. When the study of such inscriptions became a field of study, researchers were known as epigraphers or epigraphists, and the discipline itself was called epigraphy.

### **3. What do you mean by Numismatics?**

Numismatics is the study of the physical embodiment of various payment media (i.e. currencies). The study of numismatics as it applies to coins is often in the research of the production and use of the coins to determine their rarity. The first English usage of the word "numismatics" was in 1829, stemming from the word adjective numismatic, which translates to "of coins", and stemmed from the French word numismatiques, which itself derived from the Latin word numismatis. Numismatists study the physical technology and historical context of

coinage and money. Coins or other tokens that are rare or unique or that have some special history that can be documented are considered most interesting for study and valuable as collectibles. Specimens that show errors from their production process of striking the coins or printing the notes are especially notable.

#### **4. Write Short note on Vedas.**

Veda, (Sanskrit: "Knowledge") a collection of poems or hymns composed in archaic Sanskrit by Indo-European-speaking peoples who lived in northwest India during the 2nd millennium

BCE. No definite date can be ascribed to the composition of the Vedas, but the period of about 1500–1200 BCE is acceptable to most scholars. The hymns formed a liturgical body that in part grew up around the soma ritual and sacrifice and were recited or chanted during rituals.

They praised a wide pantheon of gods, some of whom personified natural and cosmic phenomena, such as fire (Agni), the Sun (Surya and Savitri), dawn (Ushas, a goddess), storms (the Rudras), and rain (Indra), while others represented abstract qualities such as friendship (Mitra), moral authority (Varuna), kingship (Indra), and speech (Vach, a goddess).

#### **5. What is Secular literature?**

Secular literature is defined as literature that does not regard religion seriously or as one of the plot's key foundations. This indicates that secular literature refers to stories that deal with topics other than religion and the concept of religion. The term "secular" usually means "worldly," not "spiritual." There was a wide range of non-religious writings in prehistoric India. The ancient Indian legal writings were called 'Dharmasutras' and 'Smritis.' Secular literature was the name given to these works of literature. The term "secular literature" refers to writing that is neither one that is made up of non-religious items and has nothing to do with religious rites or beliefs. This literature is of high quality. It takes a more reasonable, scientific approach. The code of obligations for kings, administrators, and the general public used to be found in these writings.

#### **6. What is pre-history?**

Prehistory is any time that occurred before Human societies developed writing systems. Because different cultures across the world developed writing at different times, prehistory ends at different points in history depending on

location. Prehistory is made up of every point in time since the beginning of the universe, though for world history it is usually used to refer to the span of time between the evolution of the first Humans to the development of writing. In Egypt, prehistory is thought to have ended around 3200 BC. Historians use a three-age system to divide up the ages of Human progress in Eurasia.

## **7. What do you mean by neolithis?**

Neolithic, also called New Stone Age, final stage of cultural evolution or technological development among prehistoric humans. It was characterized by stone tools shaped by polishing or grinding, dependence on domesticated plants or animals, settlement in permanent villages, and the appearance of such crafts as pottery and weaving. The Neolithic followed the Paleolithic Period, or age of chipped-stone tools, and preceded the Bronze Age, or early period of metal tools.

## **8. Write a short note on seals.**

Seals are the most distinctive part of Harappan Culture. They are square tablets made of clay with embossing on one side engraving on the other, and are often glazed. Animals like the bull, rhino, tiger, elephant and crocodile are engraved the seals. A large number of seals have the humped bull engraved on them which indicated that it was considered sacred. A figure resembling Shiva is also engraved on the seals. Some seals have inscriptions which remain unread as the script remains undeciphered. The seal was used either for religious purposes or trade.

## **9. Write short note on Vedic literature.**

The Vedas are the large bodies of religious text that is composed of Vedic Sanskrit and originated in ancient India. They form the oldest scriptures of Hinduism and the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature. The Vedas are said to have passed on through verbal transmission from one generation to the next. Therefore, they are also known as Shruti. The Vedic literature consists of four Vedas, namely: Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, and Atharva Veda. The mantra text of each of the Vedas is called Samhita.

Types of Vedic Literature

There are broadly two types of Vedic literature:

**Shruti Literature** – The word ‘Shruti’ from the term ‘Shruti Literature’ means ‘to hear’ and describes the sacred texts which comprise of Vedas, Brahmanas,

Aranyakas, & Upanishads. Shruti Literature is canonical, consisting of revelation and unquestionable truth, and is considered eternal.

**Smriti Literature** – Whereas, the word ‘Smriti’ literally means to be remembered and which is supplementary and may change over time. Smriti Literature is the entire body of the post-Vedic Classical Sanskrit literature and consists of Vedanga, Shad darsana, Puranas, Itihasa, Upveda, Tantras, Agamas, Upangas.

#### **10.What do you mean by Painted Grey Ware culture?**

It is an Iron Age Indian culture of the western Gangetic plain and the Ghaggar-Hakra valley in the Indian subcontinent, conventionally dated 1200 to 600–500 BCE. It is characterized by a style of fine, grey pottery painted with geometric patterns in black. PGW culture is associated with village and town settlements, domesticated horses, ivory-working, and the advent of iron metallurgy. Pottery generally has a red surface and is wheel thrown although handmade ones too exist. Polished wares were well. Most of the pottery is polychrome meaning more than two colours are used to colour the pottery. Most of the pottery is such that they usually have flat bases. Geometrical designs along with paintings depicting flora and fauna are observed. Perforated pottery was also found may be used for straining liquor. Pottery throughout the civilization was uniform (mass thrown) revealing some form of control and leaving less space of individual creativity. Presence of luxurious pottery obtained from certain sites reveals economic stratification in the society.

#### **11.What is Sangam age?**

The Sangam Age is a significant period in South Indian history. According to Tamil folklore, there were three Sangams (Academies of Tamil poets) in ancient Tamil Nadu, which were widely known as Muchchangam. These Sangams thrived under the Pandyas' royal support. Sangam Period refers to the time period in South India (the area south of the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra) between the third century B.C. and third century A.D.

## Unit-2

### **12. Mention any three big or prominent cities of the Mauryan empire. Why were these cities popular (or famous)?**

Pataliputra, the capital town of the Mauryan empire. It was main centre of all political activities and administration.

Taxila (nowadays in modern Pakistan) was a gateway to the northwest, including Central Asia. Ujjain lay on the route from north (India) to south India.

Merchants, officials and crafts persons probably lived in all the above mentioned three cities.

### **13. Write three main features of life of the people of the Mauryan empire.**

The main features of life of the people of the Mauryan empire were:

There were several cities in the empire. Mainly emperor and his other family members along with important officials of the kingdom lived in capital. Merchants, officials and crafts person probably lived in cities.

In other areas (other than cities), there were villages of farmers and herders.

In some areas, such as central India, there were forests, where people gathered forest produce and hunted animals for food.

People in different parts of the empire spoke in different languages. They probably ate different kinds of food and wore different kinds of clothes as well.

Besides, there were the forest regions. People living in these areas were probably more or less independent, but may have been expected to provide elephants, timber, honey and wax to Mauryan officials.

### **14. Mention main features of administrative system of the Mauryan empire.**

The ruling system (or Administration) of the Mauryan Empire was:

As the Mauryan empire was very large, its different parts were ruled differently.

The area around Pataliputra was under the direct control of the emperor. This meant that officials were appointed to collect taxes from farmers, herders, crafts persons and traders in villages and towns in the area. Mauryan government's officials also punished those who disobeyed the ruler's order. Some of the Mauryan officials were given salaries. Messengers went to and fro, and spies kept a watch on the officials. The Mauryan emperor supervised all officials, species, ambassadors etc. probably with the help of members of the royal family and senior ministers.

### **15. Write three or four sentences about provinces and the administration of**

### **the Mauryan Empire.**

There were several provinces in the Mauryan empire.

Each province was ruled from a provincial capital such as Taxila or Ujjain.

Although there was some amount of control from Pataliputra and royal princes were often sent to provinces as governors. In provinces local customs and rules were probably followed.

#### **16. Why was control of roads and rivers considered important during the Mauryan Age?**

The Mauryas tried to control roads and rivers. These were important for transport and to collect whatever resources were available as tax and tribute.

For example, according to the Arthashastra (the famous literary work of Kautilya or Chanakya) the north-west was important for blankets and south India for its valuable gold and precious stones.

#### **17. Explain the following terms:**

Tribute      The Brahmi script

1. **Tribute.** Unlike taxes, which were collected on a regular basis, tribute was collected as and when it was possible from people who gave a variety of things, more or less willingly.

2. **The Brahmi script.** The most of the modern Indian scripts have developed from the Brahmi script.

#### **18. Who was the most famous ruler of the Mauryan dynasty? How did he try to teach his message to the people?**

The most famous Mauryan ruler was Ashoka. Ashoka was the first ruler who tried to teach his message to the people through inscriptions. The most of Ashoka's inscriptions were written in Prakrit.

### **Unit-3**

#### **19. What is meant by the term 'the Sangam Age'?**

The Sangam age refers to the period when bulk of Tamil literature was composed by a body of Tamil scholars and poets in three successive literary gatherings called Sangam. These gatherings took place between first century BC and second century AD in the kingdom of Pandya.

#### **20. Who was the author of Tirukkural? Name the three sections into which the chapters of Tirukkural are categorised.**

The author of Tirukkural was Tiruvalluvar, Tamil poet and philosopher. The three sections into which the chapters of Tirukkural are categorised are: Aaram (Righteousness), Porul (Wealth), Inbam or Kamam (Pleasure).



**21. What are Megaliths? Why are they so called?**

The Megaliths are box-like structures erected with the stone slabs, resting on each other without any mortar. Sometimes there was an opening cut into one of the sides. Some megaliths are seen on surface while some are underground with stone circles or boulders placed on surface to serve as signpost to find the burial site. Megaliths are called so because they are huge stones that acted as either burial sites or commemorative memorials. They are also known as memorial stones.

**22. Name any four divisions (tinai) mentioned in the Sangam literature.**

Four divisions (tinai) mentioned in the Sangam literature are:

Backwoods

(Kurinji) Parched

zones (Palai)

Pastoral tract

(Mullai) Wet land

(Marutam)

**23. Who were the Vellalars during the Sangam Age?**

The Vellalars were landed aristocrats, who cultivated the wetlands during the Sangam Age. They had close associations and held high positions of office with the three main dynasties, Cheras, cholas and Pandyas. They also carried out trade.

**24. Name the main crops grown during the Sangam Period.**

The main crops grown during the Sangam Period were rice, cotton, ragi, sugarcane, pepper, ginger, cardamom, turmeric, cinnamon, different varieties of fruits etc.

**25. Explain the position of women during the Sangam Age.**

The status of women in Sangam society was not equal to that of men. The Sangam society consisted of different kinds of women. There were married women who had settled down as dutiful housewives looking after their husbands and children. There were female ascetics belonging to Buddhist or Jain tradition like Kaundi Adigal and Manimegalai. There were a large number of courtesans. Women also enjoyed freedom of movement in society and the number of women poets of the age is a proof that the women were provided with good education. The worship of Kannagi or Pattini was perhaps a very early institution and was an extension of the worship of the Goddess of chastity.

**26. What does the Tolkappiyam say about ways of living of the people during the Sangam Age?** The Tolkappiyam was written by Tolkappiar, in second Sangam. It has mentioned four castes, namely, Brahmanas, Kings, Traders and Farmers. It ignores most of the other names of people. This shows the influence of the Sanskrit social ideal. The Brahmins during the Sangam Age were a respectable and learned community. They served the king occasionally as judicial officers and always as priests and astrologers. The Vaishyas were assigned the duties of learning, performing sacrifice, making gifts, agriculture, protection of cows etc. The Vellalars were landed aristocrats who cultivated wetlands. The ordinary ploughmen were known as uzhavar and the landless labourers were known as kadasiyar and adimai.

**27. Name any two literary sources to reconstruct history of the Sangam age.**

There is no clear evidence regarding the literary works of the first Sangam. 'Tolkappiyam', written by Tolkappiar, a disciple of Agastya, is a standard treatise on grammar and it belongs historically to the Second Sangam. Tiruvalluvar, the famous Tamil poet who attended the Third Sangam, wrote 'KuraP. The literary works of the third Sangam constituted the most important part of the Sangam literature and they are the main source of information about the life and traditions of the Tamil people.

**28. What are the sources that tell us about the Gupta period?**

The various sources that tell us about the Gupta period are as follows: Archaeological Sources  
Allahabad Pillar inscriptions  
Inscriptions on temples, coins and paintings  
Literary Sources.

**29. What is a Prashasti?**

Prashasti was a written account of a king and his rule. These written accounts were later engraved on pillars for the common man to read. Prashastis were usually written by court poets to glorify the rule of the king. The term Prashasti, meaning in praise of, proves that these accounts were rather biased or exaggerated accounts of a king's rule. Samudragupta's prashasti is the finest example of such an historical source.

**30. List the military campaigns of Harsha.**

The military campaigns of Harsha can be listed as follows:

He conquered Punjab, eastern Rajasthan and Ganga valley till Assam. He attacked Chalukyan king, Pulakeshin II but was defeated.

He did not annex every territory he conquered. At some instances, the defeated ruler was allowed to still govern his territory only after having accepted Harsha as his overlord.

**31. List the conquests of Samudragupta as mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar**

**Inscription.** Archaeological and literary sources are the major sources that provide information about the Gupta Empire. The Allahabad Pillar Inscriptions provide details about Samudragupta's military campaigns. These campaigns are as follows:

In the north, Samudragupta annexed four major kingdoms. All these kingdoms were directly administered by him.

In the south, he defeated 12 rulers but he did not annex them. They were asked to pay annual tribute. They accepted the overlordship of Samudragupta.

Samudragupta annexed many kingdoms in the East such as Nepal, Assam and Bengal. They were also asked to pay annual tribute.

He defeated forest tribes of Vindhya and they offered him gifts and tributes.

**32. Why did Samudragupta decide not to annex the kingdoms of 'Dakshinapatha'?**

Since iron age, the term Dakshinapath was used to describe the southern highway connecting Pataliputra to southern Godavari kingdom. Samudragupta was a powerful king who wanted to expand his glory and power by making a powerful kingdom. He attacked the rulers of Dakshinapath but later he restored them to their kingdoms after they accepted his suzerainty and overlordship.

Samudragupta's decision was driven not only by generosity but also by strategic motives. He estimated that in the absence of proper transportation link between the north and south India,

governing such a wide kingdom would be impossible. From his centre of power in the north, efficiently managing the far flung Dakshinapath would have been really difficult. That is why he gave up his idea of directly controlling the Dakshinapath.

### **33. Who Was King Harshavardhana?**

King Harsha, well known as Harshavardhana, was the leader of a massive empire in the northern region of India from 606 CE to 647 CE. Harshavardhana's reign appeared to indicate a transition from the old to the medieval periods, while decentralized provinces fought for expansionism all the time. He was the final leader of the Vardhana Empire, also ancient India's last great empire prior to the Islamic Intrusion. Harshavardhana joined the majority of northern India and reigned for 40 years from the capital of Kanyakubja post the decline of Great Gupta Empire in the midst of the sixth century CE, during which India witnessed its own golden age.

### **34. Describe Harshvardhana Empire- Education and Art**

Harsha supported art as well as education. He was also an author, having written three Sanskrit plays, Ratnavali, Nagananda, and Priyadarshika. Scholars received a quarter of his earnings.

Furthermore, the famous Nalanda University was at its peak during Harsha's reign. In addition, a renowned Indian author and poet called Banabhatta used to serve as the 'Asthana Kavi' in Harshavardhana's court.

Banabhatta wrote Harshavardhana biography.

### **35. What is the Vardhana dynasty?**

The Pushyabhuti dynasty, well known by the name of Vardhana dynasty, rose to prominence after the Gupta Empire fell. His elder brother, Rajyavardhana, succeeded Harshavardhana. After his brother died at the age of 16 years, Harshavardhana ended up becoming the undisputed king of Thaneshwar. It was one of the most powerful Indian imperial powers in the 7th century CE, encompassing all of India's northern and western regions. His empire in eastern India extended all the way to Kamarupa and down to the Narmada River.

### **36. Write a note on the development of science during the Gupta period.**

Varahamihira, Bhaskara, Aryabhata, Charaka, Dhanwantari and Sushruta were the great scientists of the Gupta period. Dhanwantari was a famous scholar in the field of medicine. He compiled a dictionary of Ayurveda. Therefore, he is called the father of Indian Medicine. Aryabhata was a famous astronomer and mathematician. He made significant contributions to mathematics and astronomy. He is said to have invented the number 'Zero'. He was also the first Indian to master algebra. He also explained the cause of the eclipses. Varahamihira, a famous astronomer, wrote 'Pancha Siddhantika', 'Bruhat Samhita', 'Bruhat Jataka' and 'Laghu Jataka'. Charaka wrote

‘Charaka Samhita’. Sushruta, a surgeon, was the first Indian to explain the process of surgery.

**37. Why is the Gupta age called the Golden Age of Sanskrit literature?**

The Gupta kings extended great patronage to Sanskrit literature. Their court had great poets and writers like Kalidasa, Amarasingha, Shudraka and Vishakhadatta. Their writings enriched Sanskrit

literature. The Dharma Sastras and Puranas were also written during this period. It is for this reason Gupta Age is considered as the Golden Age of Sanskrit literature.

**38. Write a note on the achievements of Harshavardhana.**

Harshavardhana was a prominent king of the Vardhanas. He became the king of Thaneswar after the death of his father Prabhakaravardhana and brother Rajyavardhana. He captured Kanauj and attacked the king of Bengal. Bengal and Magadha came under his rule. But he could not advance beyond the Narmada river in the south as his progress was halted by the Chalukya king Pulakeshi II.

**39. Who were the Huns?**

The Huns were the nomadic tribes, who, under their great Attila, were terrorising Rome and Constantinople. Associated with these tribes were the White Huns who came to India through Central Asia. They undertook regular invasions and were giving trouble to all Indian frontier states. After defeating Skandagupta, they spread across Central India.

**40. Give an account of Samudragupta’s military conquests.**

Samudragupta was a great general and when he became emperor, he carried on a vigorous campaign all over the country and even in the south. In the southern Pallava kingdom, the king who was defeated by Samudragupta was Vishnugopa. Samudragupta conquered nine kingdoms in northern India. He reduced 12 rulers of the southern India to the status of feudatories and forced them to pay tribute. He received homage from the rulers of East Bengal, Assam, Nepal, the eastern part of Punjab and various tribes of Rajasthan.

**41. Highlight the contribution of Guptas to architecture.**

The Guptas were the first to construct temples, which evolved from the earlier tradition of rock-cut shrines. Adorned with towers and elaborate carvings, these temples were dedicated to all Hindu deities. The most notable rock-cut caves are

found at Ajanta and Ellora (Maharashtra), Bagh (Madhya Pradesh) and Udaygiri (Odisha). The structural temples built during this period resemble the characteristic features of the Dravidian style.

#### **42. Estimate Harshvardhana as a poet and a dramatist.**

Harsha, himself a poet and dramatist, gathered around him a host of poets and artists. Harsha's popular works are Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadharshika. His royal court was adorned by Banabhatta, Mayura, Hardatta and Jayasena.

## **VERY LONG TYPE QUESTIONS**

### **Unit-1**

#### **1. Source Of Ancient Indian History**

To know ancient history, it is very important to study the sources which tell us about the history of India. There are several pieces of evidence which give us information about histories like inscriptions, coins and others but mainly the most important sources to know history are literary, archaeological, and foreign resources. Many foreign travellers visit India in the different empires which tells us about the economy, administration, and trading with foreign countries. So, this topic will give you a better understanding of this. There are 3 types of sources to know ancient history-

1. Literary sources
2. Archaeological sources
3. Foreign accounts

#### **1. Literary Sources-**

It includes Religious texts, Cosmic texts, and details of foreign travellers. Many foreign experts believed that Indians had no understanding of history writing and that everything produced in the name of history was nothing more than nonsense fiction. However, it looks that this is a harsh verdict. Because ancient India regarded historical information as extremely valuable. It was given Vedic-like sacredness. Itihas-Purana is one of the branches of knowledge in the Atharvaveda, Brahmins, and Upanishads. In his Arthashastra (fourth century B.C. ), Kautilya encourages the king to set aside a portion of each day to listen to historical narrations.

#### **Puranic literature-**

There are 18 primary Puranas, 18 subsidiary Puranas, plus a great number of other volumes in the Puranic literature.

According to the Puranas, the following are historical topics:

- SARGA- evolution of universe
- PRATISARGA - involution of universe
- MANVANTARA - recurring of time

VAMSA - genealogical list of kings and sages VAMSANUCHARITA  
-life stories of some selected characters.

Later on, it featured a description of the tirthas (holy places of pilgrimage) and their mahatma (religious significance). There are four ages mentioned- Krita\Treta\Dvapara\Kali

## **Vedic Literature:**

There are 4 Vedas. The Vedas provide reliable views of Vedic culture and civilization. The Vedic literature is written entirely in a distinct language known as the Vedic language. Its vocabulary encompasses a wide range of meanings, as well as grammatical variations.

It has a distinct speech style in which the accent completely affects the word. This is why a complex system has been established to maintain and preserve the Vedic pronunciation.

We can not only determine the meaning of the mantras but also hear the original tone using Ghana, jata, and other sorts of Pathas.

## **2..Archaeological Sources:**

These include inscriptions, coins, pottery, seals, Sculpture/painting, and

Architecture(monument). Religious texts- Brahmin Literature, Buddhist Literature, Jain literature.

Brahmin Literature-

Veda, Brahmin, Aranyaka, Vedanga, Sutra, Mahakavya, Theology (dharmasutras, Memoirs, commentaries)

There are 4 parts of Vedic literature- Veda, Brahmin, Aranyaka, Upanishads

The Atharvaveda is the first to mention the word history. The Upveda of the Atharvaveda is Itihasa.

Some important facts:

Kautilya had said,--- “The king should spend some time every day listening to history”. According to E.H.Carr --- “History is the continuous dialogue between past and present.” According to Bury--- “History is science, Nothingless Nothing more.”

According to Bacon-- “History makes man intelligent.” According to Barney--- history is the

queen of the sciences.

According to Abul Fazl--- “History is a hospital where a person gets medicine for his sorrows and gets treatment for sadness.”

History and historians were censored by Augustus, the first Roman emperor. Aurangzeb did the same thing in the medieval period. Historiography was forbidden. History is thought to be a more powerful weapon than a sword or a pistol.

Our country is known by several names, including Jambudweep, India, Hindustan, and In-tu. When foreigners (Persians) first encountered the Indus people, they dubbed the entire country Indus or Indus. The initial shape of the Indian subcontinent was triangular or arched.

In Varahamihira's Brihat Samhita, India is depicted as having the shape of a tortoise, with a bow similar to those found in the Puranas, such as the wain in Dighanikaya and an equilateral triangle in the Mahabharata.

The Bhuvankosha chapter of the Puranas contains a description of India's geography. Earth is referred to as Lotus in the Puranas. India was known as Ajnabha and Haimavatvarsha, according to the Puranas Bharatvarsha.

Bharatvarsha, or Bharata's country. This country was given the name Bharatvarsha after the old Bharata dynasty. Bharata was India's first “Chakravarti Emperor.” Kautilya's Arthashastra contains the definition of the Chakravarti Emperor. “The part of the thousand Yojana spanning from the Himalayas to the sea under the reign of the Chakravarti king,” according to Kautilya.

Yin-tu was the Chinese name for India. First and foremost, Zhang Qian or Chanquian made use of the Shen-du, which is the Chinese name for the Indus River. India is known as Arya Desha and Brahma Desha by Itsing.

The description of Bhardhavas (bharatvarsha) is first found in Kharavel's Hathigumpha inscription which is in Prakrit. The first description of India as a state is in the Ashtadhyayi of Panini. In the Manusmriti and Bhagavata Purana, India has been called the country developed by gods. The term Bharatiya has been used for the first time for his meaning of Indian is Somitevasuri's Neetivakyamritam. Gandhar, Mujawat, Mahavrisha, Balik, Magadha, Anga, Ashtachakra, Ayodhya, and Varunavati (Varanasi and Kashi) are all mentioned in the Atharvaveda.

### **Important notable writers:**

KALIDAS--The events of the reign of Pushyamitra Sunga, the dynasty that succeeded the Mauryas, are depicted in Kalidasa Malavikagnimitram.



Abhgyanshakuntalam: a Gupta glimpse.

BHASA and SUDRAKA-Plays based on historical events were composed by Bhasa and Sudraka. BANABHATTA-Many historical facts are revealed by Banabhatta Harshacharita.

VAKPATI-Based on the deeds of Yasovarman of Kannauj, Vakpati authored Gaudavaho.

BILHANA-The victory of the later Chalukya monarch Vikramaditya is described in Bilhana Vikramankadevacharita.

KALHANA-Rajatarangini is his novel.

### ***Foreign Accounts:***

Important statements of Foreign travellers in relation to India:

**Hiuen Tsang**-Indians are rash and agile. But strictly honest and truthful by profession. They do not cheat on anyone. They fulfilled their promise. They believe in sacred moral principles. They do not take anyone's possession by trickery, tend to be tolerant, and are afraid of the fruit they would receive in the next birth due to sinful actions they had committed at the present birth. They do not cheat and follow their vows'.

**Marcopolo**-The brahmins here are the best traders in the world. They are very honest because they do not lie to get anything most coveted in the world. Probably they were alien to worldly attachments.

**Arian**-In martial art, Indians were superior to other erstwhile Janas.

**Megasthenes**- Indians are not the perpetrators of false speech. They have great respect for truth and virtues.

**Al-idrisi**-Indians believe in natural justice. He is so famous because of his qualities that people from all parts were attracted to India.

**Nearchus**-"clothes worn by Indians were made from produced by the plants. The Indians wore ivory earrings. They used umbrellas to avoid sunlight. They wore shoes made of white cloth which were finally carved.

Greek kingdoms dispatched ambassadors to Pataliputra. Megasthenes, Deimachus, and Dionysios are notable. Sandrokottos (Chandragupta Maurya) is mentioned, which aids in putting his accession date at 322 BC. In Ancient Indian Chronology, this serves as a sheet-anchor.

## **2. Write Short Note on Prehistoric Cultures in India**

The term Prehistoric refers to a time frame before we began to write. Because of this, there is no written proof of its existence. The prehistoric cultures in India is studied through existing

artworks, pottery, tools, and other physical things found at archaeological sites. There are three ages in total namely – Stone Age, Bronze/Copper Age, and Iron Age. The Stone age was 2.6 million ago and lasted till 3300BC. The Bronze and Iron Age eventually followed.

These stages were almost 8000 years long in total. They have their own characteristics and tools making them different from each other.

<b>Period / Age</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>The Stone Age</b>	<b>30.000 BCE – 3000 BCE</b>
<b>The Copper Age</b>	<b>3000 BCE – 1050 BCE</b>
<b>The Iron Age</b>	<b>1050 BCE – 500 CEAns.</b>

Prehistoric cultures in India has five parts – Paleolithic Period, Mesolithic Period, Neolithic Period, Chalcolithic Period, and Iron Age. The first three are part of the stone while Chalcolithic is another name for the Bronze Age. These periods are the first part of Ancient Indian History. Let's take a look at the distinctive features of each of this division to understand Indian History better.

<b>Prehistoric Cultures in India</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Paleolithic Age	2 million BC – 10.000 BC
Mesolithic Age	10,000 BC – 8000 BC
Neolithic Age	8000 BC – 4000 BC
Chalcolithic Age	4000 BC – 1500 BC
Iron Age	1500 BC – 600 BC
Paleolithic Period	– 2 million BC – 10,000 BC

This was the earliest period of human evolution in India. The man was a hunter at this age. They were dependent on hunting to fill their stomachs. They used sharp tools to hunt and for other activities as well. Agriculture was not a part of this age.

A man was a hunter and a food gatherer in this period. The archaeologists suggest that humans lived in caves, ate roots and fruits, and hunted. It is part of

the stone age and is further divided into three parts – the Lower Paleolithic Period, the Middle Paleolithic Period, and the Upper Paleolithic Period.

#### Lower Paleolithic Period – up to 100,000 BC

Bori in Maharashtra is the earliest lower paleolithic site in India. Their habitat was mainly caves and rock shelters. Bhimbetka rock shelters in Madhya Pradesh is a prominent example of their habitat. It became a world heritage site in 2003.

Another important feature is that they lived near water bodies as the stone was accessible there. Most of their hunting tools like axes made of Limestone and used for skinning, digging, and cutting of animals.

Some of the important Lower Paleolithic Sites in India are – Belan Valley of Mirzapur, Didwana in Rajasthan, Narmada Valley, and Soan Valley.

#### Middle Paleolithic Period – 100,000 BC – 40,000 BC

Most of the features of this age are similar to the lower paleolithic period. The evidence of using fire was first in this period. The tools for hunting changed from using axes to using flakes. They were more pointed and sharp in appearance.

They were also lighter, thinner, and smaller in size. Some of the important and earliest Middle Paleolithic sites are – Narmada River Valley, Tungabhadra River Valley, and Luni Valley.

#### Upper Paleolithic Period – 40,000 BC – 10,000 BC

This period saw the emergence of Homo Sapiens. The culture of this period is called the Osteodontokeratic culture which had tools made up of bones, teeth, and horns. This also included fishing tools rather than just hunting tools.

This period was very short, some say it was 1/10 of the total Paleolithic Period. The paintings in Bhimbetka Rock shelters are from this period. Some of the important and earliest sites of the Upper Paleolithic Period are – Belan. Son, Chota Nagpur plateau, Maharashtra, and Orissa.

#### Mesolithic Period – 10,000 BC – 8000 BC

This period is also a part of the stone age. Though the hunting and food gathering continued in this period, the domestication of animals was seen for the first time. Major climate took place during this period, the weather became more warm and humid.

The rainfall increased and varieties of flora and fauna grew in this period. Cattles and dogs were kept as pet animals mainly the tools were very small during this time thus called microliths.

Backed blade, core, point, triangle, lunate, and trapeze were some of the microliths of this period. Painting in many of the rock shelters is from this period. Adamgarh, Madhya Pradesh has the earliest evidence of animal domestication.

Langhnaj in Gujarat and Moharana Pahara in Uttar Pradesh have the earliest evidence of burial of the dead. The first human colonization of the Ganga plains is from the Mesolithic period too.

Some of the important and earliest sites of the Mesolithic period are – Brahmagiri, Narmada, Vindhya, Gujarat, and UP.

Neolithic Period – 8000 BC – 4000 BC

This is the last period of the Stone Age. This period was the beginning of Agriculture in India. The lifestyle of humans changed from nomadic to a settled one. These people had common right over the property and made circular houses of mud and reed.

These were the food producers, and ragi, horse gram, cotton, rice, wheat, and barley were some prominent crops of this period.

They were interested in Art and Pottery as well. The tools made of bones and stones were present for farming. This was also the start of using clothes to cover the human body. Intentional disposal of the dead started in this period.

Some of the important and earliest Neolithic Sites in India are – Mehrgarh, Inamgaon, Hullar, Burzahom, Gufkral, Chirand, and Utnur.

Chalcolithic Period – 4000 BC – 1500 BC

It is the first Metal Age of India. It is part of the Bronze and Copper Age. The tools of this period were of low-grade metals. It was mainly famous for farming communities. Hunting was still an occupation in addition to fishing and farming.

Animals including sheep, buffalo, goats, cattle, and pigs served as food to these people. The rice cropping pattern and cotton farming developed in this period. Some of the main crops were barley and wheat, lentil, bajra, jowar, ragi millets, green pea, green and black gram.

The houses were rectangular with mostly one room and were of mud and cow dung. Black and Red pottery were prominent during this time. Humans were buried under the house with their ornaments.

These people were colonizers and settled near hills and rivers mostly. The Harappan culture was part of this period. Some of the important and earliest Chalcolithic Periods are – Brahmagiri Navada Toli, Chirand, Mahishadal, and more in different regions of the country.

Iron Age – 1500 BC to 600 BC

The Painted Grey Ware culture and the Northern Black Polished Ware were the most prominent culture of this period. This period marked the arrival of the Aryans (Vedic Period). The Janapadas were the realms of this period and gave rise to 16 Mahajanapadas.

These were the 16 kingdoms of ancient India. The smelting of iron to make tools and weapons marks the start of this period. This was the start of civilization and the emergence of states in the country.

Ochre Colour Pottery and worship of statues began in this period. The idea of a white painting called Ahar-Banas is from this period as well. The idea of using ceramic to make pots began here only. The religion division like Jainism and Buddhism comes from the Iron Age as well.

The first civilization on the banks of the river Ganga after the Indus Valley was by Mahajanapadas. This period ended with the rise of the Mauryan Empire. Some of the important Iron Age sites in India are – Malhar, Dadupur, Raja Nala

Ka Tila, Lahuradewa, Kosambi and Jhusi, Allahabad.

### **3. Origin extent and salient features of indus valley civilization**

#### Overview

The Indus River Valley Civilization, 3300-1300 BCE, also known as the Harappan Civilization, extended from modern-day northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India.

Important innovations of this civilization include standardized weights and measures, seal carving, and metallurgy with copper, bronze, lead, and tin.

Little is understood about the Indus script, and as a result, little is known about the Indus River Valley Civilization's institutions and systems of governance.

The civilization likely ended due to climate change and migration. Geography and time-frame

In 1856, British colonial officials in India were busy monitoring the construction of a railway connecting the cities of Lahore and Karachi in modern-day Pakistan along the Indus River valley.

As they continued to work, some of the laborers discovered many fire-baked bricks lodged in the dry terrain. There were hundreds of thousands of fairly uniform bricks, which seemed to be quite old. Nonetheless, the workers used some of them to construct the road bed, unaware that they were using ancient artifacts. They soon found among the bricks stone artifacts made of soapstone, featuring intricate artistic markings.

Though they did not know it then, and though the first major excavations did not take place until the 1920s, these railway workers had happened upon the remnants of the Indus Valley Civilization, also known as the Harappan Civilization, after Harappa, the first of its sites to be excavated, in what was then the Punjab province of British India and is now in Pakistan. Initially, many archaeologists thought they had found ruins of the ancient Maurya Empire, a large empire which dominated ancient India between c. 322 and 185 BCE.

Before the excavation of these Harappan cities, scholars thought that Indian civilization had begun in the Ganges valley as Aryan immigrants from Persia and central Asia populated the region around 1250 BCE. The discovery of ancient Harappan cities unsettled that conception and moved the timeline back another 1500 years, situating the Indus Valley Civilization in an entirely different environmental context.

Relief map of Pakistan including the origins of the Indus Valley empire, Mehrgarh, in the foothills of a mountain pass. Map shows Pakistan, Afghanistan, the northwest part of India and Punjab, and part of the Arabian Sea.

Relief map of Pakistan including the origins of the Indus Valley empire, Mehrgarh, in the foothills of a mountain pass. Map shows Pakistan, Afghanistan, the northwest part of India and Punjab, and part of the Arabian Sea.

Relief map of Pakistan. Image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

Scholars are still piecing together information about this mysterious civilization, but they have learned a great deal about it since its rediscovery. Its origins seem to lie in a settlement named Mehrgarh in the foothills of a mountain pass in modern-day Balochistan in western Pakistan. There is evidence of settlement in this area as early as 7000 BCE.

The Indus Valley Civilization is often separated into three phases: the Early Harappan Phase from 3300 to 2600 BCE, the Mature Harappan Phase from 2600 to 1900 BCE, and the Late Harappan Phase from 1900 to 1300 BCE.

This map shows the extent of the Indus Valley Civilization during the Mature Harappan Phase. Civilization is highlighted in brown in the area of modern-day Pakistan and northern India. The rest of the map is green and is a partial map of India and the area northwest of Pakistan.

This map shows the extent of the Indus Valley Civilization during the Mature Harappan Phase. Civilization is highlighted in brown in the area of modern-day Pakistan and northern India. The rest of the map is green and is a partial map of India and the area northwest of Pakistan.

Indus Valley Civilization in the Mature Harappan Phase (2600-1900 BCE).

Image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

At its peak, the Indus Valley Civilization may have had a population of over five million people. The Indus cities are noted for their urban planning, a technical and political process concerned with the use of land and design of the urban environment. They are also noted for their baked brick houses, elaborate drainage systems, water supply systems, and clusters of large, nonresidential buildings.

The Indus Valley Civilization began to decline around 1800 BCE. Archaeological evidence indicates that trade with Mesopotamia, located largely in modern Iraq, seemed to have ended. The advanced drainage systems and baths of the great cities were built over or blocked. Writing began to disappear, and the standardized weights and measures used for trade and taxation fell out of use.

### Urban infrastructure and architecture

By 2600 BCE, small Early Harappan communities had developed into large urban centers. These cities include Harappa, Ganeriwala, and Mohenjo-daro in modern-day Pakistan and Dholavira, Kalibangan, Rakhigarhi, Rupar, and Lothal in modern-day India. In total, more than 1,052 cities and settlements have been found, mainly in the general region of the Indus River and its tributaries.

Mohenjo-daro is thought to have been built in the twenty-sixth century BCE; it became not only the largest city of the Indus Valley Civilization but one of the world's earliest major urban centers. Located west of the Indus River in the Larkana District, Mohenjo-daro was one of the most sophisticated cities of the period, with advanced engineering and urban planning.





Harappa was a fortified city in modern-day Pakistan that is believed to have been home to as

many as 23,500 residents living in sculpted houses with flat roofs made of red sand and clay. The city spread over 150 hectares—370 acres—and had fortified administrative and religious centers of the same type used in Mohenjo-daro.

Both cities had similar organization and featured citadels, central areas in a city that were heavily fortified—protected with defensive military structures. Additionally, both cities were situated along the Indus River. This structure would have allowed those at the higher levels of the buildings in either city to look down the river and see into the distance.

The remains of the Indus Valley Civilization cities indicate remarkable organization; there were well-ordered wastewater drainage and trash collection systems and possibly even public baths and granaries, which are storehouses for grain. Most city-dwellers were artisans and merchants grouped together in distinct neighborhoods. The quality of urban planning suggests efficient municipal governments that placed a high priority on hygiene or religious ritual.

Harappans demonstrated advanced architecture with dockyards, granaries, warehouses, brick platforms, and protective walls. These massive walls likely protected the Harappans from floods and may have deterred military conflicts. Unlike Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt, the inhabitants of the Indus Valley Civilization did not build large, monumental structures. There is no conclusive evidence of palaces or temples—or even of kings, armies, or priests—and the largest structures may be granaries. The city of Mohenjo-daro contains the Great Bath, which may have been a large, public bathing and social area.

### Innovation and exchange

The people of the Indus River Valley Civilization achieved many notable advances in technology, including great accuracy in their systems and tools for measuring length and mass. Fire-baked bricks—which were uniform in size and moisture-resistant—were important in building baths and sewage structures and are evidence that Harappans were among the first to develop a system of standardized weights and measures. The consistency of brick size across cities also suggests unity across the various urban areas, which is evidence of a broader civilization.

**Agriculture:** The Harappans cultivated wheat and barley, peas and dates and also sesame and mustard which were used for oil. However, the people cultivated rice as early as 1,800 B.C. in Lothal. The Harappans were the earliest people to grow cotton. Irrigation depended on the irregular flooding of the rivers of

Punjab and Sind.

Canal irrigation was not practised. The evidence of a furrowed field in Kalibangan indicates that the Harappans were using some sort of wooden plough. It has also suggested that the Harappan people used a toothed harrow.

Stock Breeding: No less important than agriculture was stock breeding. Besides sheep and goats humped cattle, buffalos and elephants were domesticated. The camel was rare and the horse was probably not known to the Harappans.

Trade and Its Network: There was extensive inland and foreign trade. It has also been reasonably established that this trade might have been overland as well as maritime. It is proved by the occurrence of small terracotta boats, and above all, by the vast brick built dock at Lothal.

As there is no evidence of coins, barter must have been the normal method of exchange of goods. But the system of weights and measures was excellent. For weighing goods – small as well as large – perfectly made cubes of agate were employed. The weights followed a binary system in the lower denominations: 1, 2, 4, 8 to 64 and then going to 160 and then in decimal multiples of 16, 320, 640, 1,600, 3,200 etc.

#### **4. The Vedic Age**

The Harappan civilisation was followed by another great civilisation and culture known as the Vedic culture. The Vedic texts are the primary sources for the reconstruction of the Vedic culture/Vedic age. Archaeological materials have also supplemented the texts, though not comprehensively. Vedic texts are believed to be composed by the Indo-Aryans. Indo-Aryans refer to the speakers of a subgroup of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family of languages. Rig Veda composers describe themselves as Arya, etymologically derived from “Ar” meaning to cultivate, literally meaning kinsmen or companion; in Sanskrit, it means favourably disposed newcomers and later it came to mean “men of good family” or noble.

There are different theories associated with the Aryans, their origin and possible migration/invasion in the Indian Subcontinent. These are as follows:

Central Asian theory – This theory was propounded by Prof. Max Muller, a German scholar of comparative languages. As per this theory, the Aryans originally lived in Central Asia. With the comparative study of the “Avesta” (Iranian text) and the “Vedas”, one finds a striking linguistic relationship between them of not just words but of concepts also. The interchangeability between ‘h’ and ‘s’ and incredible consistency in this change as seen in Hepta Hindu (Sapta Sindu), Ahura

(Asura), Haoma (Soma), Daha (Dasa), further substantiates the claim.

European theory – Sir William Jones, Giles (Hungary), Shroeder (France), Morgan (Western Siberia) are supporters of this theory. As per this theory, the Aryans inhabited Europe and voyaged to various places and the Aryans who came to India were an offshoot of the Europeans. The proponents of this theory established the resemblance of Sanskrit with the European languages. For example, the Sanskrit words Matri and Pitri are similar to the Latin Mater and Pater. Suryyas and Maruttash of the Kassite (Mesopotamia) inscriptions are equivalent to the Vedic Surya and Marut.

Theory of North Pole/Arctic theory – According to Bal Gangadhar

Tilak, the Northern Arctic

region was the original home of the Aryans. He commented that the Rig Veda comprises specific references to a place where harsh cold and long days and nights of six months each are found.

Tibet theory – Swami Dayanand Saraswati was the proponent of this theory. According to this theory, Tibet is the original home of the Aryans with reference to the Vedas and other Aryan texts.

Indian theory – Dr. A.C Dass, Ganga Nath Jha, Sri L.D Kalla, Sri D.S Trivedi have acknowledged this theory. According to this theory, the Aryans were the residents of the Sapta Sindhu. This region stretched from the river Indus, reaching up to Saraswati river. Kashmir and Punjab were also under this region. The sacrificial rituals of the Vedic Aryans point to their Indian origin. The river hymns in the Rig Veda mention the names of the rivers of this region. The flora and fauna mentioned are mostly similar to the Himalayan region. Regarding the affinity of the Indian and European languages, this theory states that in the language of the Aryans, there is a plethora of Sanskrit words, but this is not the case with the latter. If Aryans had come from outside, their ancient Literature (Vedas) should have been found there, but no Vedic literature has been found outside India.

The most accepted view is that there was a series of Aryan immigration and they came to the subcontinent as immigrants. The earliest Indo-Aryans lived in the geographical area covered by Eastern Afghanistan, Punjab and the fringes of

Western Uttar Pradesh. Some rivers of Afghanistan, such as the river Kubha (Kabul) and the river Indus (Sindhus) and its five tributaries are mentioned in the Rig Veda. The five tributaries are the Jhelum (Vitasta), Beas (Vipasa), Chenab (Askini), Ravi (Parushni), Satluj (Sutudri). The Sindhu, identical with the Indus, is the river par excellence of the Aryans. Another river mentioned is the Sarasvati, now lost in the sands of Rajasthan, the area represented by it is covered by the Ghaggar river. The whole region in which the Aryans first settled in India is called the land of seven rivers.

The Early Vedic or The Rigvedic Civilisation( c. 1500 – 1000 BCE)

The only source of Vedic culture is the Vedic literature. It is divided into:

Early Vedic Literature/Rig Vedic Culture (c. 1500 – 1000 BCE) – It includes the Rig Veda Samhita and other texts of the family. They are called family books since they are believed to have been composed by the families of a few seer poets like Atri, Vasishtha, Vishvamitra, Bharadvaja and Gritsamada.

Later Vedic Literature/Later Vedic Culture (c. 1000 – 500 BCE) – It includes books 1, 8, 9, & 10 of the Rig Veda Samhita, the Samhitas of the Sama Veda, the Yajur and the Atharva Vedas and the Aranyakas, Brahmanas & Upanishads attached to the 4 Vedas.

#### Vedic Literature

The Vedic literature is the most significant source of information about the Vedic civilisation. The word “Veda” means knowledge. The Vedic literature has evolved in the course of many centuries and was handed down from generation to generation by the word of mouth. Later, they were compiled and written down, and the earliest surviving manuscript is from the 11th century.

There are 4 Vedas and each Veda generally has 4 parts – Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka, and Upanishads. The four Vedas are – Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, and Atharva Veda.

#### Rig Veda

It is the oldest Veda and depicts the life of early Vedic people in India. UNESCO has included the Rig Veda in the list of literature signifying World Human Heritage.

Its text consists of 1028 hymns (Sukta) which are divided into ten Mandalas or books. Mandalas 2 – 7 form the oldest part of the Rig Veda Samhita and are called “family books”

as they are ascribed to particular families of seers/rishis.

Mandala 8 – Here, the hymns are dedicated to various gods and have been mostly composed by the Kanva clan.

Mandala 9 – All the hymns are dedicated entirely to Soma.

Mandala 1 – It is primarily dedicated to Indra and Agni. Varuna, Surya, Mitra, Rudra, and Vishnu have also been mentioned.

Mandala 10 – It contains Nadi Stuti Sukta praising the rivers. It also contains Nasadiya Sukta and Purush Sukta. It contains hymns that are traditionally chanted during marriage and death rituals.

Only surviving recension of Rig Veda is the Shakala Shakha.

The Upaveda of Rig Veda is the Ayurveda. Sama Veda

The Sama Veda or the “Veda of Chants” is the collection of verses drawn almost wholly from the Rig Veda, that are provided with musical notations and are intended as an aid to the performance of sacred songs.

Yajur Veda (Worship or ritual knowledge)

This Veda deals with the procedure for the performance of sacrifices. It is further divided into-

Shukla Yajur Veda/ Vajasaneya / White Yajur Veda – it contains only the mantras. It contains the Madhyandina and Kanva recensions.

Krishna Yajur Veda / Black Yajur Veda – it includes mantras as well as prose explanations/commentary. It contains Kathaka, Maitrayani, Taittiriya and Kapishtala recensions.

The Upaveda of the Yajur Veda is the Dhanur Veda.

Atharva Veda

It concerns itself with magic spells to ward off evil spirits or dangers.

It is considered to be a non-Aryan work and is classified into 20 kandas or books, with 711 hymns.

It contains Shaunaka and Paippalada recensions. Shilpa Veda is the

Upaveda of Atharva Veda.

Brahmanas

## Unit-2

### 5. What is the origin and source of Mauryan Empire?

The Mauryan Empire was established in 322 B.C. by the great king Chandragupta Maurya. The era of the Mauryas is a milestone throughout the entire existence of Ancient India. The Mauryan Empire was broad and the most powerful in the realm of old Indian history in the ruling from 322 BC to 185 BC. The Mauryan Empire was not just about the vast extension of its geographical territories. It gave the Indian subcontinent a strong centrally-controlled administration. During this period, even trade, commerce, and agriculture flourished. This led to overall economic development in the region.

#### **Mauryan Empire: Origin**

Before the Mauryan Empire was founded, a major part of the Indian Subcontinent was under the rule of the Nanda dynasty. The capital of the Nanda Empire was Pataliputra in the Magadh region. People in the Nanda Kingdom were unhappy with the oppressive tactics used by its ruler Dhana Nanda.

Kautilya also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta had an old enmity with the Nanda Dynasty. He had mentored Chandragupta Maurya since his young days and had trained him to develop his administrative skills, governing skills as well as military

skills.

On the advice of Chanakya, Chandragupta Maurya started preparations of gathering troops and resources for the battle to attack Magadh. Chandragupta Maurya planned a unique strategy to conquer the Nanda Empire.

On one hand, he kept the soldiers of Dhana Nanda busy on the battlefield fighting with his forces. On the other hand, he conspired with the corrupt military generals within the Nanda Kingdom to initiate a civil war.

In this commotion, the heir to the throne of the Nanda Empire died. The reigning king Dhana Nanda was heartbroken by this incident and decided to step down. Then he handed over his powers to Chandragupta Maurya. Thus, the rule of the Nanda Dynasty came to an end and the Mauryan Empire was founded in the year 322 B.C.

#### Mauryan Empire: Expansion Phase

After establishing the Mauryan Empire in Pataliputra, Chandragupta Maurya took up the task of

geographical extension of its territory. He focused on expansion of its northwest frontiers in between 317–316 BCE. First, he took control over those Greek satraps which were left behind by Alexander.

When Alexander died, Chandragupta Maurya forced Alexander's army to move away from the west bank of the Indus River. Thus, entire northwest India came under the control of the Mauryan Empire.

There was Seleucid–Mauryan war (305–303 B.C.) between Chandragupta Maurya and Seleucus I Nicator, founder of the Seleucid Empire. At the end of a 2-year long war, Chandragupta acquired the territory of the Indus Valley region and part of Afghanistan.

The Mauryan empire was ruled by Chandragupta's son Bindusara during the period of 298–269 B.C. Bindusara focused on the Southern parts of India and had annexed the territory in the Deccan region.

Bindusara's son was Ashoka who is considered the greatest ruler of the Mauryan Empire. The Mauryan Empire reached its highest glory under his reign between 269 and 232 B.C. He continued with the expansion of the Mauryan Empire.

His greatest achievement was defeating the Kalingas in the deadly Kalinga War fought in 262–261

B.C. Thus, Kalinga which was located on the east coast of India came under the Mauryan Empire. Mauryan Empire Decline: Causes

Ashoka was devastated to see the huge loss of lives during the Kalinga War and

decided to put an end to all expansion campaigns. Later, he embraced Buddhism and started spreading messages of peace and non-violence.

The Mauryan Empire began to decline after the death of Ashoka. There were constant internal conflicts on who would rule the Mauryan Empire next. Moreover, certain policy matters adopted by Ashoka weakened the Mauryan Empire and led to its downfall. Those policies were:

Highly centralized

administration Total apathy

towards war and violence

Neglect of the North-West frontier led to several attempts of invasion from

outsideSuppressive action over the provinces

Local provincial leaders were unhappy as they were not given

sufficient powerWhen the central rule became weak, they started

revolting

The last king of the Mauryan dynasty was Brihadratha who was unfortunately killed by his own commander-in-chief Pushyamitra. The Mauryan Empire declined in 185 B.C. Later, Pushyamitra established the Shunga dynasty and mostly ruled in the central part of India.

### Mauryan Sources

There are two authentic sources from which we have learned about the history of the Mauryan Empire.

These are –

Literary

evidences –

- a) The Arthashastra by Kautilya – As we know, Kautilya or Chanakya was Chandragupta's mentor and advisor. This book has detailed information on administrative functions and state policies of the Mauryan empire during Chandragupta's time.
- b) Indica by Megasthenes – The author of this book, Megasthenes, shared a good relationship with Chandragupta. Actually, he was a Greek Ambassador but was impressed with the administrative functions of the Mauryas which he mentioned in his book.
- c) The Puranas – In Vishnu Purana, it is mentioned that the Nanda Dynasty was destroyed by Chandragupta.

- d) Buddhist Literature – Texts on Buddhism like Jatakas, Dighanikaya and Sumangalavilasini provide sufficient information about the history of the Mauryan Empire.
- e) Jain Literature – The Jaina Parishishta Parvan was written by Hemchandra describing details of various aspects of Chandragupta's life including his embrace of Jainism. Jaina Kalpasutra by Acharya Bhadrabahu captured the Mauryan history.

#### Archaeological Sources-

- a) The archaeological remains of the Mauryan palace in Patliputra were found in Kumrahar, present- day Patna.
- b) The structural remains excavated in Kaushambi provide evidence of the robust defence system of the Mauryas.
- c) There are other prominent sites where archaeological remains were found are Taxila, Mathura, and Bhita.
- d) The stupas constructed by Ashoka still exist in different parts of India – Sanchi, Amaravati, Dhauri, Bodhgaya, etc.
- e) Various forms of Ashoka's Inscriptions. Ashoka's edicts were written on rocks, pillars and slab stones and can still be found in different locations. Examples – Fourteen Major Rock Edicts, Six Pillar Edicts and Two Minor Rock Edicts.

#### Conclusion

Summing up the topic – Mauryan Empire-Origin, Sources and Decline here are the 4 important points to remember:

Mauryan Empire was established in 322 B.C. with its capital in Pataliputra which is now known as Patna.

Mauryan Empire is believed to be the largest empire ever established in India.

After the demise of Ashoka, bad governance led to the decline of the Mauryan Empire in 185 B.C.

The historical evidence which authenticates the power and vastness of the Mauryan Empire are the literary works based on that era and the Mauryan art and architecture.



### Unit-3

#### **6.Economy of the Sangam Age.**

India is a vast and substantial nation that has been governed by one of the most magnanimous dynasties of the world. Either these dynasties had Indian origin or got their birth from areas of west or north around the world. Instead of becoming a temporary dynasty in the country, these dynasties decided to loot India to its fullest and settled here for their whole lifetime.

One such period of the enormous ruling was in the Sangam period which was inhabited by the three most liberal regimes of Indian History i.e., Cheras, Pandyas, and Cholas. These monarchies thrived in almost all the characteristics of belief and faith, society, economy and administration of their kingdoms. Talking about the economy during the Sangam period, agriculture was the chief occupation of the people and the port city of Puhar was considered as the significant place for foreign trade.

#### About Sangam Period

The Sangam period was inhabited by the three most magnanimous regimes of Indian History, Cheras, Pandyas, and Cholas. The period of the Sangam dynasty went on from 300 BCE to 300 AD in the areas of South India which lie to the south of rivers Tungabhadra and Krishna. This eternity was designated after the Sangam academies (Academy formed by Tamil poets) that prospered during the Pandya regime. A total of three Sangams were held in the ancient period of South India from the 3rd century BCE to AD.

The first one is speculated to have been held at Madurai which was given attention to by the Legendary sages and Gods. However, no such literary work is available from the Sangam held at Madurai. The second one was the one held at Kapadapuram from which the only survivor was the Tolkappiyam. The last one was held at Madurai and this is the only Sangam from where we got some of the useful sources that provide us information regarding this Dynasty.

#### Economy during the Sangam period

According to the literary works that are gained from the lands of the Sangam period, provide a flourishing and developing economy during the times of Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras. The people of the Sangam period engaged in all kinds of economic activities like exports, imports, hunting, draining out and trade balances in the economy.

## Agriculture

Agriculture was the chief occupation of the people in the Sangam period. It was one of the most significant reasons as to why the Sangam economy flourished during that time and how the expansion of trade in the Sangam economy took place only due to the presence of developing agriculture. Following the Madurai Kanji, trade and agriculture were the major driving forces of the economic development in the dynasty.

Rightfully, the Poems from the Sangam dynasty also gave certain signs of how agriculture was prospering and how people attached so much of importance to the practice of cattle rearing and cultivation of the crops. The protection of the cattles was considered one of the most important tasks for the kings of the kingdom. Apart from that, the texts of Silappadikaram also interpreted the happiness and satisfaction people affixed to the occupation of agriculture.

## Industry

The period of Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas substantiated a vast amount of industrial activities in the economy. The poems that are derived from the Sangams held at various places provided details on various occupations like a potter, goldsmith, the sculptor, the blacksmith, the weaver and the painter. These occupations were hereditary and passed on to the son from his family or the ancestors. Thus, each of them was skilled and superfluous in their art of particular occupations they did.

Paripadal and Silappadikaram brought out that there was even a museum for the paintings to be sold to the people. Apart from that, not only the paintings, people had great demand and interest in painting all the things of their day to day usage, keeping them colourful. The cloth that was exported to the people around the world was made not only from the basic essentiality of cotton, wool or silk but also from the colored yarn and rat's hair. These clothes had a huge demand from the Roman merchants, who were in great admiration of these skills.

## Trade

There was an enlarged exchange relation between the people of the Sangam era and the people of the Mediterranean world that included countries like China, Egypt, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. Clothes produced by the Sangam industries had a huge demand from the Roman merchants, who were in great admiration of these skills. These are depicted from the literary texts who have referred to trade relations of the

people of the Sangam period with the Greeks and Romans.

Amidst all this the port city of Puhar became a major centre for the foreign trade and the trade of various expensive and important artefacts of the time. If we talk about the inclusions in the trade, the major exports of the Sangam Age were cotton fabrics and spices and the imports in the area included horses, sweet wine, and gold coins that were issued by the great Roman emperors of those times. The currency system of barter was one of the most important, where people bought commodities in exchange of commodities only.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the Sangam dynasty was inhabited by the three most magnanimous regimes of Indian History, Cheras, Pandyas, and Cholas. The period of the Sangam dynasty went on from 300 BCE to 300 AD in the areas of South India which lie to the south of rivers Tungabhadra and Krishna. The literary works from the Sangams provide a very elaborated and defining economic development in the Sangam Period. The Sangam period had a flourishing and developing economy during the times of Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras. The people of the Sangam period engaged in all kinds of economic activities like exports, imports, hunting, draining out and trade balances in the economy.

## 7. What is the history of Sungas?

Sungas were an ancient Indian dynasty that ruled over the northern and eastern parts of

the Indian subcontinent from 185 to 73 BCE. The dynasty was founded by Simuka, a satrap of the Maurya Empire. He overthrew the last ruler of the Nanda Dynasty and founded the Sunga Dynasty. The empire reached its greatest extent under Dharmasoka, who conquered most of the Indian subcontinent.

### **Pushyamitra Sunga**

- Pushyamitra Sunga was Brahmin army chief of Brihadratha, the last king of the Mauryas.
- During a military parade, he killed Brihadratha and established himself on the throne in 185 or 186 BC.
- According to some historians, this was an internal revolt against the last Mauryan king. Some say it was a Brahminical reaction to the Mauryan overwhelming patronage of Buddhism.

- Pushyamitra Sunga's capital was at Pataliputra.
- He successfully countered attacks from two Greek kings namely, Menander and Demetrius.
- He also thwarted an attack from the Kalinga king Kharavela.
- He conquered Vidarbha.
- He followed Brahminism. Some accounts portray him as a persecutor of Buddhists and a destroyer of stupas but there has been no authoritative evidence to this claim.
- During his reign, the Stupas at Sanchi and Barhut were renovated. He built the sculptured stone gateway at Sanchi.
- He performed Vedic sacrifices such as Ashvamedha, Rajasuya and Vajapeya.
- Pushyamitra Sunga patronised the Sanskrit grammarian Patanjali.
- According to the Puranas, his reign lasted for 36 years. He died in 151 BC.

### **Agnimitra**

- Was Pushyamitra's son who succeeded him to the throne.
- His reign lasted from about 149 BC to 141 BC.
- By this time, Vidarbha broke away from the empire.
- Agnimitra is the hero of Kalidasa's poem, Malavikagnimitram.
- His son Vasumitra succeeded him as king.

### **Last of the Sunga kings**

- Vasumitra's successors are not clearly known. Different names crop up in several accounts such as Andhraka, Pulindaka, Vajramitra and Ghosha.
- The last Sunga king was Devabhuti. He was preceded by Bhagabhadra.
- Devabhuti was killed by his own minister, Vasudeva Kanva in around 73 BC. This established the Kanva dynasty at Magadha from 73 to 28 BC.

### **Effects of Sunga rule**

- Hinduism was revived under the Sungas.
- The caste system was also revived with the rise of the Brahmanas.
- Another important development during the Sunga reign was the emergence of various mixed castes and the integration of foreigners into Indian society.
- The language of Sanskrit gained more prominence during this time.

Even some Buddhist works of this time were composed in Sanskrit.

- The Sungas patronised art and architecture. There was an increase in the usage of human figures and symbols in art during this period.

#### **Unit-4**

### **8. Give an account of the Society during the Post- Mauryan Period**

The post-Mauryan period in India marks a crisis in India's social history. Buddhism with state support had become a world religion and Jainism was transformed into an all- India cult. The situation was complicated by the influx of large hoards of foreigners with altogether alien social and cultural practices.

The growth of arts, crafts and trade resulted in attaining changed social status by the vaishyas and shudras. The first reactions to these changes are seen in the gloomy prophecies of universal decay and dissolution that are met with in the brahmanical works. This is known as the kali age.

This age is significant for many far reaching changes in the traditional concept of varna; and this change is reflected in the concept and system of jati. Jatis emerged within the varna system through fragmentation, consolidation (of artisans and shr'enis) as well as the incorporation of tribal and foreign communities within a structure which regulated hierarchy through marriage rules and endogamy.

Privileged heredity or birth in a particular lineage, leading to the use of the term jati for indicating membership in a particular community. In this sense, the varnas were extended to provide the institutional and ideological base for the growth of a wider society.

The earliest use of jati in connection with a Varna is found in the Nirukta which speaks of a woman of a shudra jati. By the time of Panini, the shudra Varna was divided into aninvasita and niravasita. The second category included chandalas and mritapas.

Around second century BC concepts of vratya and varnasamkara were invented because of the assimilation of widely divergent social, economic and cultural groups. These two concepts largely contributed to the

formation of separate jatis due to non- performance of the sacred duty (vratya) or because of the mixed marriages of original founder couples {varnasamkara). These theoretical devices, it is believed, were highly successful in extending the Varna system into the jati system.

In recent years, the differences between the Varna and jati have amply been shown. Jati

generally operates at the local level whereas the Varna system remains the same all over India. Further, theoretically the varnas are divided on the basis of their functions, but the jati hierarchy is organised on the principle of the absolute purity of the brahmana caste and the relative impurity of all other castes.

Varnas are broad categories subsuming within them a large number of jatis in a rather loose fashion. Despite all their differences these two sets of identities have often been used interchangeably probably since the time of Panini.

The vratya and varnasamkara concepts seem to have led to a dilution or modification of the Varna concepts particularly in the early historical period. The notions of vaishya and shudra Varna acquired new meanings which favoured a shift from the relative purity of function to relative purity of birth implied in the transition from Varna to jati.

Within the vaishya and brahmana varnas, territorial and occupational differences played a major role in the emergence of segmented identities as castes ranked within these categories generally emphasize their specialisation in a particular craft or tradition of learning or their territorial affiliation. Adoption in the Kshatriya Varna was necessitated by the arrival of new ruling and powerful groups, foreign as well as indigenous, which required constant adjustments.

The process of evolution of jatis under the broad categories of varnas acquired a new dimension in the post-Mauryan period. The chief characteristic of the jati system was the crisis in the old order and the lawgiver's desperation to preserve brahmanical society, not only by ordaining rigorous measures against the shudras, but also by inventing suitable genealogies for the incorporation of foreign elements into varna society.

Manu reaffirms the old theory that the king should compel a vaishya to trade, to lend money, to cultivate land or to tend cattle, and a shudra to serve the three upper varnas. But in the chapter on times of distress (apad-dharm) the service was to be mainly reserved for the brahmanas and kshatriyas. The Yuga Purana informs us that during this period, even women took to ploughing.

Manu lays down that, if in times of distress the vaishya cannot support himself by his own occupations he should take to the occupations of the shudras. This shows that the distinction between the functions of the vaishyas and the shudras was being gradually obliterated. However, unlike the vaishyas, the shudras do not appear as peasants, paying taxes to the state. It is because there is no evidence of the existence of independent shudra peasants. It seems that shudras were mostly employed as agricultural workers.

Artisans and craftsmen were largely drawn from the shudra category. These artisans and craftsmen were organised in guilds. Consequently they became wealthy and rose in status. However, since they were mostly located in towns and cities the general

condition of the shudras remained the same; and possibly they sometimes refused to perform their duties. To prevent this situation, the dharmashastra writers suggested measures of both coercion and concessions. No doubt the Satavahanas declared themselves to have been the restorer of varnashramadharma.

## **9. What were the achievements made by Samudra Gupta as a conqueror?**

Samudragupta was one of the brilliant kings of ancient India. He took the Gupta dynasty from its insignificant position to its dizzy heights. For his marvellous achievements he has been described as the Napoleon of India. Dr. V.A. Smith remarks "Samudragupta, the second Gupta monarch was one of the most remarkable and accomplished king of India history". Samudragupta was the son of Chandragupta-I and Kumaradevi. He was considered to be the best among their sons if not eldest. Chandragupta-I selected Samudragupta as his successor in the presence of all his courtiers in the royal court. There Chandragupta-I blessed him,

saying, and “Protect you this Earth”.

If Chandragupta-I and Kumardevi were the joint rulers, Samudragupta succeeded both of them. He was, in fact, proud of being the son of the daughter of the Lichchhavis. He ascended the throne about 335 A.D. The selection of Samudragupta as king was accepted with joyous satisfaction by the counsellors. But those who were of equal birth and were rivals to the throne became ‘pale-faced’ with disappointment.

So scholars conclude that there were other sons of Chandragupta-I who aspired to the throne and therefore, the accession of Samudragupta was disputed. It is said that the revolt of the other princes was headed by the eldest brother Kacha. But Samudragupta suppressed the revolt, killed Kacha and ascended the throne. But some other scholars say that Kacha was able to seize the throne for a brief period during which he struck some coins. And several such coins bearing the name of Kacha have been found.

But other scholars do not accept this view. They believe that Samudragupta had another name as Kacha, and the coins bearing that name were of Samudragupta himself. The coins of Kacha earn the epithet ‘Sarva-Rajochhetta’ which term can be applicable only to a great warrior and conqueror like Samudragupta.

Allan says, “Kacha was the original name of the emperor and he took the name Samudragupta in allusion to his conquests”.

Samudragupta’s title of Parakramanka indicates his power. He has been described by some as the Chakravartin of the Ganga Valley and Digvijayi of other countries, the Eran inscription states that. “The whole tribe of kings upon the earth was overthrown and reduced to the loss of the wealth of their sovereignty” by Samudragupta. “It was the

aim of Samudragupta to bring about the political unification of India and to make himself and Ekraat or sole ruler like Mahapadma Nanda. He wanted to make himself the paramount ruler in India, subjugating the rulers of the neighbouring kingdoms. Samudragupta turned out to be one of the ablest Gupta sovereigns and by his exploits more than justified his father’s selection.

### **Allahabad Pillar Inscription:**



(Allahabad Prasasti of Harisena)

The Allahabad Pillar Inscription is the most important source which throws a flood of light upon the history of Samudragupta. The inscription was engraved in Sanskrit verse on one of the Ashoka Pillars at Kausambi. The pillar was shifted later by a Muslim king of Delhi to Allahabad, where it now stands on a fort.

This inscription is along royal prasasti (eulogy) of thirty lines composed by Harisena who was known to have held various important posts of the state.

He was the Mahadanayaka or Chief Justice and also Sandhibigraha or Minister of War and Peace. He was a poet of high merit. Harisena has depicted the conquest of Samudragupta both in the Aryavarta and the Deccan in a systematic manner as he had a first hand knowledge of his master's activities. But the Allahabad; pillar inscription is not dated.

The inscription also does not mention about the Horse sacrifice of Samudragupta. So it is probable that it was set up before sacrifice of Samudragupta.

### **Conquests of Samudragupta:**

According to V.A. Smith "From the moment of his accession, Samudragupta assumed the part of an aggressively ambitious monarch, resolved to increase his dominions at expense of his neighbours.

Wars of aggression never have been condemned by such public opinion as exists in the east and no king who cared for his reputation could venture to rest contented with in his own borders. Samudragupta had no hesitation in acting on the principle that 'kingdom taking' is the business of king and immediately after his succession to the throne plunged into war. This occupied many years of his unusually protected reign".

Samudragupta's aim was the restoration of political unity of India. So he followed the policy of Digvijaya. He carried on his policy of wars and conquests soon after his accession. Before taking up distant expeditions he subdued the neighbouring kingdoms first.

### **(1) His first Aryavartta War:**

Samudragupta first directed his military campaign against the rulers of Ganga-Jamuna

Valley or Aryavarta. It seems that three Naga kings of Northern India formed a confederacy and joined hands with the rival Gupta Princess who had launched a war of succession against Samudragupta. But Samudragupta completely defeated them. They were king Achyutanaga of Ahichchhatra, Nagasena of Mathura and Ganapatinaga of Padmavati. Ahichchhatra corresponds to modern Rampur and Bareilly districts of Uttar Pradesh; Padmavati is identified with Padma Pawaia near Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh. Samudragupta also defeated a ruler of the Kota family probably of the Eastern Punjab and Delhi region.

### **(2) Southern Campaign of Samudragupta:**

In his northern expedition, Samudragupta had followed the policy of 'Dig-Vijaya' by defeating the kings and then annexing the kingdoms to his empire.

In his Southern campaign he followed the policy of 'Dharma-Vijaya' in which the rulers were defeated, captured and then liberated, so the subjugation of South was based on three stages such as Grahana (capture of the enemy). Moksha (liberating him) and Anugraha (favouring him by reinstating him in his kingdom.)

Dr. R.K. Mookherji writes that in the distant South he (Samudragupta) was only anxious that his position as the paramount sovereign of India should be recognized. There was yet another motive behind expedition to the South. It was in the second century A. D. that some good ports were found to have flourished in the eastern coast of South India. And possibly Samudragupta wanted to have those parts his control.

Furthermore. Samudragupta also wanted to curb the power of the Vakatakas in the Maharashtra region as they were becoming more and more dominating a power. So a check to their domination in the political domain was a necessity. Hence he felt a successful military expedition to the South was imperative".

The route Samudragupta took in his Southern campaign is a controversial subject. Nevertheless a more accepted view given by B. G Gokhale is as follows “From Pataliputra he proceed to a triangular area formed by Bilaspur, Raipur and Sambalpur in the East-central parts of Madhya Pradesh and North Orissa.

From there he struck into the heart of the forest tracts of Orissa and then along the eastern seaboard to kingdom of the Pallavas centered round Kanchi and followed more or less the eastern route to his capital.”

Samudragupta defeated twelve kings in course of his Deccan campaign. The rulers who were defeated by him were.

**(1)Mahendra of Kosala:**

Who ruled over Mahakosala region of the districts of Durg, Raipur, Bilaspur and Sambalpur.

**(2)Vyaghraraja of Mahakantar:**

who ruled over the dense forests and wild tracts of Gondwana.

**(3)Mantaraja of Kurala:**

Who ruled over modern Sonapur region of Madhya Pradesh?

**(4) Mahendra of Pistapura:**

Who ruled over the Pithapuram region in Godavari district?

**(5)Swamidatta of Kottura:**

Who ruled over a part of the Ganjam district in Orissa.

**(6)Daman of Erandapalia:**

Who ruled over Erandapalli in the Ganjam district?

**(7)Vishnugopa of Kanchi;**

who ruled over Kanjeeveram near Madras.

**(8)Nularaja of Avamukta:**

Who ruled over territories near Guava?

**(9)Hastivarman of Vengi:**

Who ruled over the Ellore region in Andhra Pradesh?

**(10)Ugrasena of Palakka:**

Who ruled in some parts of Nellore.

**(11)Kubera of Devarashtra:**

Who ruled in Vizagapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh?

**(12)Dhananjaya of Kusthalpur:**

Who ruled in North Arcot district of Tamilnadu.

**(13)His Second Aryavartta War:**

When Samudragupta was busy, in his Deccan Campaign he came to know that a fresh confederacy of nine states in North India was formed against him.

**Extent of Samudragupta's empire:**

Samudragupta was a great conqueror and he extended the kingdom inherited by him far and wide. The Empire included nearly the whole of Northern India. Western Punjab, Western Rajputana, Sind, Gujrat and Orissa were not included in the Gupta Empire.

Anyway his far flung empire extended from the Himalayas in the North to the Vindhya in South and from Assam in the East to the Punjab in the West. V. A. Smith writes:

“The dominion under the direct Government of Samudragupta in the middle of the fourth century thus comprised of the most populous and fertile countries of Northern India.

It extended from the Brahmaputra on the East to the Jamuna and Chambal on

the West ; and from the foot of the Himalayas on the South Beyond these wide limits, the frontier kingdoms of Assam and the Gangetic delta as well as those on the Southern slopes of the Himalayas and the tree tribes of Rajputana and Malwa were attached to the empire by bonds of supporting alliance while almost all the kingdom of the South had been over run by the emperor's armies and compelled to acknowledge his irresistible might.

The empire thus defined was by far the greatest that had been seen in India since the days of Ashoka sixth centuries before and its possession naturally entitled Samudragupta to the respect of foreign powers."

### **10. What was the social and economic condition during Guptas?**

The salient features of Gupta economy included a flourishing trade (which was badly affected in later periods due to Huna invasions), abundant custom revenue from ports in west and east, flourishing robust guild system, flourishing manufacturing industries and a high standard of living. Trade

Agriculture

Occupation

s Guild

System

Trade

Gupta had a still a flourishing Roman Trade but in the later part, trade was badly affected by Huna invasions. The Trade contacts developed during the Kushana Period continued and Chandragupta II's conquest in western India further added to this trade. The people were prosperous and they were free to grow and flourish. The important port towns were Brigukachchaha, Kalyana & Sind, which were bulk trade centres with Romans. Ujjain had

become a major commercial center and it was linked to southern and northern India. Nasik, Paithan, Pataliputra, Benares were other major trade centers.

Silk, Leather goods, Fur, Iron Products, Ivory, pearl, Spices and Indigo were major export items. The Port of Tamralipti was a good source of Trade with East Asia. Most of the commodities were taxed One Fifth of the value as a toll in international Trade.

## **Agriculture**

Agriculture was the main occupation in Gupta Empire and there was no governmental interference. The land was fertile and means of irrigation were simple.

## **Occupations**

Gupta period had many cloth centers and silk industry witnessed a significant development during this period. The Mandsor Inscriptions gives account that Gupta people were helped to a great extent for the growth of Silk Industry. Gold, silver and Copper was used in making ornaments and issuing coins. The Gold coins show the pomp, power and prosperity of the empire.

The Coins of Samudragupta and Kumaragupta issued after the Ashvamedha depict the horse tied to a Yupa-stambha. The coins of Chandragupta bear Garuda preying a snake.

## **Guild System**

In ancient history, the glimpses of guild systems are seen in Jatakas Tales. Guilds refer to organizations of artisans, and traders, which have high place in the society. In Gupta Era, the activities of Guilds were increased and these activities are recorded in various literature, inscription, clay seals etc. There is a mention of Guild of architects in Raghuvamsha. The Indore Copper plate inscription mentions about a guild of oilmen. The Mandsor Inscription mentions the guild of silk weavers. The guild system declined after the Gupta Period.

### **11. Describe the achievements of Harshavardhana and his Connection with Buddhism.**

Harshavardhana was the greatest ruler of the Vardhana empire. He came to power in 606 CE. Prabhakara Vardhana and Yashomati were his parents. He had an elder brother namely Rajavardhana and a younger sister named Rajashri. He was also called “Shiladitya“. Thaneshwar was his capital.

Yashomati, her mother, pained by the death of her husband, committed in Sati in 605 CE. Devagupta of Malwa killed Rajashri's husband Gruhavarman and

imprisoned her at Kannauj. Raja Vardhana who went to get her released was killed by Shashanka of Gaudadesha. Harshavardhana came to power under such painful circumstances. The release of Rajashri and revenge on Shashanka were his main aims.

### **Harshavardhana's Achievements**

Rajashri escaped from prison and went towards Vindhya mountains. Harshavardhana who came to know of this, searched her with great difficulty and prevented her from jumping into the pyre. Then he added Kannauj to his empire and made it his second capital.

Harshavardhana, with the help of Bhaskara Varma of Kamarupa attacked Shashanka of Gaudadesha/Gauda Kindgom (Bengal) and took revenge. But as long as Shashanka was alive, he could not defeat him completely. Then he defeated Devagupta of Malwa and annexed it to his kingdom. By 612 CE, he achieved complete control over Pancha Sindhus of Punjab. Kannauj, Bihar, Orissa and other places were added to his kingdom. He defeated Dhruvasena II of Vallabhi. Later he gave his daughter in marriage to him and established a good relationship with him.

After the demise of Shashanka of Gaudadesha, Harshavardhana won Orissa, Magadha, Vodra, Kongonda (Ganjam) and Bengal (Gaudadesha). Later he defeated the ruler of Nepal and received tributes from him. He established his supremacy by defeating North-Indian Kingdoms. In commemoration of these achievements he took the title "Uttarapatheswara".

### **War with Pulakeshin II**

Harshavardhana tried to extend his empire in the South beyond the river Narmada. The battle of Narmada took place between Harshavardhana and Pulakeshin II in 634 CE. He was defeated in this battle. Pulakeshin, who won, took the title "Parameshwara". Aihole inscriptions says that Harsha's Harsha (joy) flew away seeing his war elephants falling in the battle field. Hiuen Tsang also mentions about Harsha's defeat. Narmada river became the border between these two empires.

### **Harshavardhana's Empire**

Harshavardhana called himself the king of Magadha in 641 CE. His fame spread in foreign countries as well. He exchanged ambassadors with China. The credit for uniting North India after the Guptas goes to Harshavardhana. His empire extended from Punjab in the West to Bengal and Orissa in the East and Himalayas in the North to Narmada river in the South. Here is the map of his empire given below : –

### **Harshavardhana and Buddhism**

Harshavardhana, a devotee of Lord Shiva later embraced Buddhism. He prevented animal sacrifices in the empire and prohibited the practice of non vegetarian food. He built stupas in the prominent places of Buddhism. The opponents of Buddhism and characterless people were punished by him. He brought the remains of Buddha's teeth from the king of Kashmir and keeping it inside built a stupa over it at Kannauj.

### **Religious council at Kannauj 643 CE**

Harshavardhana conducted a huge Buddhist council at Kannauj for religious debate and

to felicitate Hiuen Tsang. Hiuen Tsang presided over this council. Twenty kings, thousand scholars, more than three thousand Buddhist monks, three thousand Brahmins and Jains participated in this council. A golden statue of Buddha, as tall as the king was installed in the auditorium. This council went on for 23 days. Hiuen Tsang explained the philosophy of Mahayana in this council.

### **Prayag (Allahabad) Buddhist Council 643 CE**

Harshavardhana organised a conference known as Maha Moksha Parishad at Prayag which comes once in five years. Hiuen Tsang was invited to this council. The council went on for 75 days. He gave donations to poor people of all religions. In this council the procession of Buddha's idol along with that of Shiva and Surya were taken.

Among the Vardhanas of Thaneshwar, Harshavardhana occupies a high position. He is one of the achievers of Ancient India. He was an able administrator, a brave soldier, a patron of literature and cared for the welfare of the people. He himself was a scholar. He wrote dramas



“Ratnavali”, “Priyadarshika” and “Nagananda” in Sanskrit. He patronized famous poet Banabhatta who wrote an invaluable work called “Harshacharita” about Harshavardhana. A patron of learning, he gave lot of donations to the Nalanda University.

## **12. Explain about the The Tripartite Struggle.**

The Tripartite Struggle, also known as the Kannauj Triangle Wars, took place in the 8th and 9th centuries, between the three great Indian dynasties, the Palas, the Pratiharas, and the Rashtrakutas, for control over the Kannauj area of northern India. The Palas ruled India's eastern regions (Bengal region), while the Pratiharas oversaw India's western regions (Avanti-Jalaor region) and the Deccan area of India was dominated by the Rashtrakutas. This war lasted for two centuries and was finally won by the Rajput Pratihara emperor Nagabhata II, who established the city as the capital of the Pratihara state, which ruled for nearly three centuries.

### **Causes of Tripartite Struggle**

- During the early medieval period, Kannauj was seen as a sign of status and authority.
- Kannauj was the former capital of Harshvardhana's empire and control of it represented the political domination over northern India.
- Control of Kannauj also meant control of the Central Gangetic valley, which was rich in resources and hence strategically and commercially significant.
- Because it was connected to the silk road, this location was ideal for trade and commerce.
- Between the end of the eighth century and the first quarter of the ninth century, three kings ruled over Kannauj: Indrayudha, Vijrayudha, and Chakrayudha.
- These kings were very weak and could be easily defeated.
- The desire to plunder through warfare attracted the Rashtrakutas to Kannauj.

### **Tripartite Struggle - Phase I**

- A tripartite struggle occurred between the Pala, Pratihara, and Rashtrakuta dynasties for control of Kanauj.
- The first phase of the tripartite struggle began around 790 AD with a clash between Dharmapala and Vatsaraja.
- The battle between Dharmapala and the Pratihara king Vatsaraja at Prayag resulted in the defeat of Dharmapala.
- After some time Vatsaraja was defeated by Rashtrakuta king Dhruva.
- Dharmapala took control of Kannauj after Vatsaraja's fall, but he was again defeated by Dhruva.
- Dhruva, on the other hand, was unable to consolidate his victory because he needed to return to the south to save his own kingdom.
- Rashtrakutas were devastated by a succession struggle after Dhruva's death in 793 CE.
- By quickly withdrawing from Northern India, the Rashtrakutas not only decimated the Palas' adversaries, the Pratiharas but also provided the Palas with a good opportunity to add to their might.
- Dharmapala took advantage of the situation and recovered Kannauj, putting Chakrayudha on the throne.
- Dharmapala, via a series of successful expeditions, established himself as the lord of virtually all of Northern India.

### **Tripartite Struggle - Phase II**

- Pratihara ruler Nagabhatta II, the successor of Vatsaraja, invaded Kanauj and expelled its ruler Chakrayudha and established control there.
- As Chakrayudha was Dharmapala's protege, a battle between Nagabhatta II and Dharmapala was inevitable.
- Nagabhatta II defeated Dharmapala in a battle near Munger.
- After Nagabhatta II took possession of Kannauj, the battle for the city intensified.

- His victory was short-lived, as he was soon overthrown by Govinda III (Rashtrakuta king), the successor of Dhruva.
- Govinda III left for the Deccan soon after this victory.
- By the end of the 9th century, the Rashtrakutas' power had begun to wane alongside that of the Palas.
- The Pratiharas emerged victoriously and established themselves as the rulers of central India by the end of the tripartite struggle.

## **Conclusion**

The tripartite conflict between the three great Indian dynasties, the Palas, the Pratiharas, and the Rashtrakutas, for control over the Kannauj area, lasted for two centuries. In the end, Pratiharas emerged victoriously and established themselves as the rulers of central India. However, tripartite struggle rendered all three dynasties feeble. This led to the country's political breakdown, which aided the Middle Eastern Islamic invaders.