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# GENERAL STUDIES

**PAPER-I**

**2015**

**FOR CIVIL SERVICES PRELIM EXAM**

*Edited & Compiled by*  
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## *Publisher's Note*

**V&S publishers**, after the grand success of a number of Academic and General books, is pleased to bring out a series of books, *The Gen X series* which means **generating Xcellence in generation X**. Under the series we are going to publish a comprehensive and updated book '**General Studies - Paper - I**' which is based on new pattern of Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT) exam. The book has been designed keeping in mind the real-time problems faced by the aspirants of civil services and the changing scenario of the questions asked in the Civil Services Preliminary Exams. It will help the aspirants to grasp concepts in depth and learn through 4000 plus questions given with explanatory notes. The book is also useful for various other competitive exams such as State Civil Services, SSC, Banking, and Railway etc. conducted at national and state levels.

The book has been divided into eight major sections namely: *History of India, World Geography and Geography of India, Indian Polity, Economic and Social Development, Environment and Ecology, General Science – Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Computer, General Knowledge, Current Affairs*. In the beginning of each chapter the theory and concepts have been discussed in detail followed by 300 plus Multiple Choice Questions with Answer Key and Explanatory Notes. *Last four years Solved Papers* help candidates to know the level of difficulty and grasp the structure of questions asked in the exam. *Five Mock Test Papers* have been included for thorough practice and to understand the pattern of exam. A *step-wise preparation strategy* has been given in the introductory section of the book.

To get success in such prestigious exam as civil services conducted by Union Public Service Commission, the aspirants have to go through extensive study of the topics covered in the new syllabus and make a dedicated effort during preparation. This exam not only tests the in-depth knowledge of the candidates but also identifies their efficiency in terms of application of the gained knowledge in problem solving. The main objective of this exam is to identify decision making potentials and problem solving approaches of a candidate. Therefore, this exam requires careful attention towards comprehension of concepts and theories, thorough practice, and application of the concepts in everyday life situations. *Hard working, Regularity, and Self-Confidence* are essential to go through such a tough exam and achieve the unique goal. Therefore, a candidate should make a sincere effort to qualify in the exam.

We wish you success in the examination and a very bright future in the field of civil services.

Good Luck!!!



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# Preface

Aspiring for great things in life is human tendency. A person without any ambition in life is like a ship without a rudder. He has no destination. He does not have any urge to make a start. He is tossed up like a straw in the wind. He achieves nothing. But an aspirant wants to scale the greater height of success. However, success is not a matter of luck or mere intellect but of well oriented and disciplined effort. In the battle of life, the man who wins is the one who tries to win and believes what he can. *Success has its own price that is hard work.* It comes to those who dare and act. Today, life has become very fast-paced. Everyone is striving to be the best and as a result, competition has increased manifold. The ticking of the clock is one of the most important things in the world, for it marks the passage of time. It reminds that another second, another hour, another day has gone. Despite this constant reminder, most of us are as a mere wastrel of time. There is plenty of time, we tell ourselves. Certainly, we are mistaken. The challenge is ahead. There is no time to stand and stare. Come forward with strong determination and self-belief, you will be the winner.

Every year the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) announces for the recruitment of Officers for different Central Services Groups-A & B including IAS, IFS, IPS, IRS, etc. The book in your hand has been prepared exclusively for the aspirants of the UPSC Civil Services Exams taking into consideration the changed syllabus and the new scheme of exams. Taking this book as your base, you may impart a solid foundation to your preparation, which will be useful for your success in every way.

This book is unique in several ways. From the very inception, it has been our policy not to compromise with quality and quantity in the preparation of this book. Therefore, we have provided each and every topic as per the syllabus and based on the previous years' papers.

All the questions included in this book are of a standard nature and entirely based on the syllabus and therefore, quite useful for taking the exams at ease. The questions have been framed in appropriate patterns so that the candidates may handle the level of difficulty of questions quite efficiently. The competitive exams are much more difficult these days than they used to be earlier. At the same time, the number of candidates is also increasing, while the number of vacancies is not increasing in the same proportion. Therefore, the candidates need to take this exam as a challenge and from this respect, this book is quite useful.

A word of apology is also perhaps due to the readers, who may come across some errors and others. While every effort has been made to avoid mistakes, we crave for the inclusion of the readers' suggestions, for the errors that might have inadvertently crept in, due to the great volume and the rush of work which we have to cope with today. Suggestions for the improvement of the book will be highly appreciated and will be duly incorporated.

Finally, we hope you will keep us informed about your opinion on the book, as it has been our endeavour to include the valuable suggestions of our esteemed readers wherever possible.

*Wishing You All the Best ....*





# History of India



# History of India

## 1. FROM THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILISATION TO THE MAHAJANPADS

The *Indus* or the *Harappan* culture is older than the *Chalcolithic cultures*. It arose in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent. It is called Harappan because it was first discovered in 1921 at the modern site of Harappa situated in the province of west Punjab in Pakistan. The Harappan civilisation covered parts of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Haryana, Gujarat, Rajasthan and the fringes of Western Uttar Pradesh.

### 1.1 AGE (BRONZE AGE)

The archaeological excavations conducted under the direction of *Sir John Marshall* at *Mohenjodaro* in Larkana District (Sind) and at Harappa in Montgomery District (Punjab) have revealed the existence of a great civilisation, commonly known as the *Harappa civilisation*. Excavations of other sites in Sind, Punjab, Gujarat, Haryana, Northern Rajasthan and North-Western Uttar Pradesh give more details about this civilisation. Among the sites excavated in recent years are Dholavira, Ropar, Kalibangan, Bonawali and Lothal.

**Origin :** Some scholars regard the Harappan civilisation as an offshoot of the *Mesopotamian civilisation* which was brought to the Indus Valley by the *Sumerians*. This view is not supported by adequate proof. Others hold the view that it was indigenous in origin. It is likely that the stimulus for urban development in the Indus Valley might have come from outside, most likely from *Sumeria* where a well developed urban culture was already in vogue.

**Extent :** The Harappan culture extended from *Jammu* in the north to the *Narmada estuary* in the south and from the *Makran Coast* (Baluchistan) in the west to *Alamgirpur* (Uttar Pradesh) in the north-east, covering an area of about 1300000 square kms. No other culture zone in the third and second millennium B.C. in the world was as large as the Harappan Zone.

The Harappan culture flourished between 2300 B.C. and 1800 B.C.

**Characteristics :** Although, nearly 1000 Harappan sites are known, only six can be regarded as cities. Of these the two most important cities were Harappa in Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sindh, both forming parts of Pakistan. Situated at a distance of 483 kms they were linked together by the *Indus* river.

Some characteristics of Indus Valley civilisation are given below :

(i) **Social life :** People lived in cities in houses built with burnt bricks. The houses were often of two or more storeys. They were equipped with rubbish bins and bathrooms, which were connected by drains with sewers under the main streets.

Wheat, barley, rice, milk and dates were important food items of the Harappans. Animal flesh was also eaten.

The household utensils were made of clay, stone, copper and bronze. The dress worn by men resembles the modern dhoti. Female dress did not differ from that of men. Iron was unknown to the Indus people.

(ii) **Economic Life :** Agriculture was the main occupation of the *Indus* people. They produced rice, wheat, barley, peas and cottons and domesticated animals like bull, sheep, pig, buffalo, dog and camel.

The Harappans were well acquainted with the manufacture and use of bronze. The *bronzesmiths* formed an important group of artisans in the Harappan society.

The Harappan used weights and measures, for trade and other transactions.

(iii) **Religion :** The cult of *Mother Goddess* was very popular among the Harappans. The Mother Goddess is believed to be represented by numerous nude female figurines in terracotta. The cult of *Shiva* was prevalent among the Harappans. Shiva is depicted as a horned God on some seals and as a God surrounded by four wild animals on one of these seals. Phallic worship seems to have been prevalent among the Harappans. Many polished stones mostly small but up to 60 cm or more in height and pierced stones have been found. The Harappans also worshipped trees and animals.

(iv) **Art :** The fine engraving, on the seals and the beautiful ornaments show that the Harappans had some amount of artistic sense. Statuary is rare. Statues were cut from soft stones, limestone, alabaster and steatite. The sculptural perfection of the dancing figure in bronze of a young woman is striking.

(v) **Art of writing :** The Harappans invented the *art of writing*. The harappan script is not alphabetical but *pictographic*. It is yet to be deciphered. The direction of writing seems to be from right to left though in some cases it is from left to right. Professor Hangdon is of the opinion that Indus script is the parent of the *Brahmi script* of Asoka's inscriptions.

"It is certain that two major cities of the Indus civilisation – Harappa and Mohenjodaro were completely abandoned by 1700 BC. Many causes are suggested for their disappearance:

- It is said that the amount of rainfall might have decreased, affecting agriculture and stock breeding.
- The soil might have lost its fertility due to increasing salinity caused by the expansion of the adjacent desert.
- There might have occurred a sudden uplift or subsidence of the land, causing floods.
- The course of the Indus river might have been changed by earthquakes leading to inundation of the hinterland of Mohenjodaro.
- The Aryans might have destroyed this culture.

## 1.2 VEDIC CULTURE

The main sources of information for the study of the Vedic Aryans, were the four *Vedas* comprising the *Rig*, the *Sama*, the *Yajur* and the *Atharva* and the *Samhitas*, the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* associated with them.

The Vedic Age (1500 B.C. – 600 B.C.) may be studied in two parts

- (1) The early vedic phase or Rig Vedic period (1500 B.C. – 1000 B.C.)
- (2) The later Vedic phase (1000 B.C. – 600 B.C.)

### The Early Vedic Phase

The Rigveda is the main source of information for the study of the Early Vedic Phase.

**Social division :** The Rigveda shows some consciousness towards the physical appearance of people in north-western India in about 1500 – 1000 B.C. *Varna* was the term used for colour, and it seems that the Aryans were fair and the indigenous inhabitants dark in complexion. The colour distinction may have partially given rise to social orders, but its importance has been exaggerated by those western writers, who believed in racial distinction. The factor which contributed most to the creation of social division was conquest of the indigenous inhabitants by the Aryans. The *dasas* and the *dasyus*, who were conquered by the Aryans, were treated as slaves and sudras. The tribal chiefs and the priests acquired a larger share of the booty and they naturally prospered at the cost of the common people, which created social inequalities in the tribe.

The Rigvedic society was essentially tribal. Its basic unit was the patriarchal family. Yet the position of woman was much better than what it was in subsequent periods. She could take part in sacrifices with her husband. She could freely mix with youngmen. Girls normally married after puberty. Polygamy was practised. Though polyandry was known, it was not practised. Widow remarriage was known. Rigvedic women were said to have composed some of the Rigvedic hymns and rose to the rank of seers like Visvavara, Ghosha and Apala.

The Rigvedic Aryans lived in villages. Their houses were made of wood or reed. Their clothes were made of cotton, wool or deer skin. They used ornaments and flowers, particularly on festive occasions. The hair was combed and long. Women folded their locks in broad plaits. Besides parched grain, cakes, milk, vegetables and fruits, they used animal flesh; particularly at great feasts.

### Political Institutions

During the Rigvedic period, the Aryan came to India in several waves. The region where they first settled is called *Sapta Sindhawu* i.e. the land of the seven rivers. The Aryans defeated the native people, called the *Dasyus*. Their success everywhere was due to the fact that they possessed chariots driven by horses. The Aryans were probably better equipped. After their complete success over the indigenous people, they fought amongst themselves, being divided into the five peoples, (*Panchajanas*). In the intra – tribal conflicts, they secured the support of the non-Aryan peoples, finally, the

Bharatas, one among the Panchajanas, emerged victorious in the battle of the ten kings. Later they joined with the *Purus* and formed a new ruling class called the *Kurus*.

Kingship was a tribal institution. The king ruled over his tribe and not over specified territory. Primarily a military leader, he fought only for cows and not for land. He was the protector of his tribe.

We have evidence of election of King by the tribal assembly, though kingship was perhaps confined to certain families. Since, the available evidence does not indicate the continuance of royal succession in one family for more than three generations, it is likely that the principle of hereditary succession was not yet firmly established. The King was not autocrat. His power was substantially restricted by the tribal assemblies, particularly the *Sabha* and the *Samiti*. The King was assisted by a few functionaries such as the Purohita and the Senani. He received from the people voluntary offerings called *Bali*.

### Economic Conditions

The Rigvedic people practised agriculture. Cultivated fields were known as *urvara* or *kshetra*. People used ploughstone probably made of wood. They were acquainted with sowing, harvesting and threshing. They grew yava or dhana. They were pre-dominantly a pastoral people. The Rigveda speaks about such artisans as the carpenter, the chariot maker, the weaver, and the potter (*kulala*) etc. Metal working was also known. The metal worker made all sorts of weapons, implements and ornaments from gold and ayass (copper, bronze or iron). Though we come across the word *samudra*, it is doubtful whether they were acquainted with sea or ocean. The Panis controlled the trade which consisted mainly of barter. Cow was the standard unit of value. The Rigveda refers to necklets of gold called *nishka* which also served as a mean of exchange. Chariots and wagons (*anans*) were the chief means of transport.

### Religious and Philosophical Ideas

The religion consisted of worship of gods with simple ceremonies which were known as *Yajna* or *sacrifices*. The worship comprised primarily oblation and prayer. Sacrifice consisted of offering of milk, ghee, grain, flesh and soma.

The Rigveda offers no consistent theory regarding life after death. The dead were either buried or cremated and according to some passages, dwelt in the realm of Yama, "The king of dead".

The Rigvedic people venerated the natural forces around them (like wind, water, rain, thunder, fire etc.) which they could not control and invested nature with divinity conceived in human forms which were mostly masculine, very few female deities were venerated.

The most important divinity in the Rigveda is *Indra*. He was the *God of thunder* and was the rainmaker who was asked periodically to release the water. *Agni*, next in importance to Indra, was the *God of fire*.

The chief deities in early days grew out of personification of natural phenomena, such as the sky (*Dyuh*), earth (*Prithvi*), sky god (*Varuna*), god of thunder, storm and rain (*Indra*), morning and evening stars (*Asvins*), goddess of dawn (*Usas*)

with them came the domestic deities including the fire god (Agni) in his three forms (that in heaven, lightning in atmosphere and domestic fire on earth), and Soma (drought of immortality, some times identified with the moon). Later on, abstract deities like Dhatri (Establisher), Vidhatri (ordainer), Prajapati (Lord of creature), Sradha (faith) and Manu (Wrath) made their appearance. The Vedic religion was sacrificial. Sacrifices or yajnas were performed to invoke the gods in order to grant boons or for acquisition of cattle, sons *etc.*

Prayers formed an important part in Rigvedic religion. The people prayed mainly for children, cattle, food and health.

### The Later Vedic Phase

The Expression "Later Vedic Civilisation" comprise the changes and developments that took place in the religious, social, economic and political conditions of the people during the period when the later Samhitas – Atharva, Yajur and Sama and the Brahmanas and Sutras were composed.

All these later Vedic texts were compiled in the upper Gangetic basin in circa 1000 – 600 B.C. In the same period and in the same area, digging and exploration have brought to light nearly 700 sites inhabited for the first time. These are called *painted Grey Ware (PGW)* sites because they were inhabited by people who used earthen bowls and dishes made of painted grey pottery. They also used iron weapons.

The texts show that the Aryans expanded from Punjab over the whole of western Uttar Pradesh covered by the Ganga-Yamuna doab. The Bharatas and Purus, the two major tribes, combined and thus formed the Kuru people. In the beginning they lived between the Sarasvati and the Drishvati just on the fringe of the doab. Soon, the Kurus occupied Delhi and the upper portion of the doab, the area called *kurukshetra* or the *land of the kurus*.

The Vedic people succeeded in the second phase of their expansion because they used iron weapons and horse – drawn chariots.

### Social and Political Institutions

Settled life resulted in further crystallisation of the four – fold division of society. This in turn led to the emergence of certain social norms. The two higher classes, the *Brahmanas* and the *Kshatriyas*, enjoyed privilege denied to the *Vaisyas* and the *Sudras*. The *Vaisyas* and *Sudras* could be oppressed at will. The *Sudras* were deprived of the sacred thread ceremony. They were regarded as impure. While marriage of the member of higher varnas with the lower orders was allowed, marriage of members of higher varnas with *Sudra* women was not much approved. Marriage between men of the lower orders and women of the higher classes was discountenanced. But rules restricting inter-dining between the higher and the lower classes has not yet evolved.

The family became much more patriarchal than before. The power of the father had increased considerable. The birth of son was more welcomed than that of a daughter, who was often regarded as a source of misery. The *institution of gotra* appeared in this period. People began to practise gotra exogamy. Polygamy was prevalent. Polyandry was known. There were instances of child marriages. The origin of the later

practice of Sati can be traced to this period. As we hear of *remarriage of widow (niyaga)*, it may safely be assumed that Sati was symbolic. There was some deterioration in the position of women. Women was classed with dice and wine as one of the three great evils. Women ceased to participate in the deliberation of the sabha. Instances of women learning the Vedas in this period are rare.

As regard food, the eating of meat was being looked upon with disfavour. New kinds of social entertainment such as singing gathas and acting at public festival appeared in this period.

There is a reference to three stage of life (asramas) of an Aryan in Chandogya Upanishad — *Brahmacharya*, *Grihasta* and *Vanaprastha*. The fourth stage – *Sanyasin* – was not yet well-established, though ascetic life was not totally unknown.

Education began with Upanayana. It was confined to the first three social groups which was called *dvijas* (twice born). Though it was oretically open to all, the study of the Vedas tended to become an exclusive preserve of the Brahmanas. The *Vedas* constituted the main subject of study. Arithmetic, grammar and prosody were also taught. Education was imparted orally. The student was called upon to memorise, the scripture syllable by syllable. The Brahmanas developed a unique system of memory training.

Several kingdoms emerged in this period. The Kurus ruled from Hastinapura. The kingdom of Kosala existed to the east of the Ganga-Yamuna confluence. Kasi lying to the east of Kosala, was another important kingdom. The king of Videha is mentioned more than once in the later Vedic literature. The kingdom of Magadha was to the south of Videha.

The formation of the large kingdom led to the growth of the power of the King. Kingship was normally hereditary, though cases of election by the people were probably not rare. A glomour was created round the king by invoking many gods at the time of the coronation to endow him with their qualities. In the rituals, he was sometimes represented as a god. He was usually, though not always, a *Kshatriya*. He derived much support from the emerging Brahmana class. He is described in the Atharva Veda as the protector of the Brahmanas, and as also the eater of the people because he had to live on the taxes collected from the people. He was required to take on oath in front of the Brahmana priest that he would stand by law.

With the growth of the power of the king and with the collection of taxes made possible by the production of considerable agricultural surplus on account of settled life, the administrative machinery became elaborate. We come across new officials such as *bhagadugha* (collector of taxes) and *sangrahitri* (treasurer) in addition to other officials. These officers were under the direct control of the king and were maintained out of taxes collected from the people. The growth of royal entourage led to the growth of the power and prestige of the king. The increase in royal power in turn led to the gradual weakening of the Sabha and Samiti which lost some of their activities to new officials. References to *Sthapati* and *Satapati* indicate the emergence of a regular system of provincial government in this period.

## Economic Conditions

From around 1000 B.C. iron was used in the Gandhara area in Pakistan. At about the same time the use of iron appeared in eastern Punjab, western Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Excavations show that iron weapons such as arrow heads and spear heads came to be commonly used in western Uttar Pradesh from about 800 B.C. With iron weapons the vedic people may have defeated the few adversaries that they faced in the upper portion of the doab.

Towards the end of the vedic period, knowledge of iron spread in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Videha. Iron implements of the seventh century B.C. have been discovered in this area and the metal itself is called *shyama* or *krishna ayas* in the later vedic texts. The objects which are found in the excavations are iron tipped arrow heads, spearheads *etc.*, i.e. weapons which show that the use of iron was restricted to making weapons.

Although very few agricultural tools made of iron have been found, undoubtedly agriculture was the chief means of livelihood of the later Vedic people. Progress in agriculture and pastoral pursuits was steady and continuous. The plough became large and heavy, having a sharp point and a smooth handle and sometimes required as many as 24 oxen to draw it. Manure was known. Different varieties of rice, barley, beans, sesame and wheat were grown. Fruit trees were cultivated. Two crops were harvested in a year. Among dangers to crops, drought, excessive rain and pests are mentioned.

Industrial life witnessed remarkable development and a variety of new occupations—those of fishermen, hunters, fire-rangers, charioteers, washermen, dyers, door-keepers and footmen, among others came into existence. Specialisation had gone very far, distinction for instance was made between the chariot maker and the carpenter, the tanner and the hide-dresser and the maker of bows and the maker of arrows. Women worked as dyers, embroiderers and basket makers.

## Religious and Philosophical Ideas

The two outstanding Rigvedic gods, *Indra* and *Agni*, lost their former importance. On the other hand, *Prajapati*, the creator, came to occupy the supreme position in the later Vedic pantheon. *Rudra*, the god of animals, became important in later Vedic and *Vishnu* came to be conceived as the preserver and protector of the people who now led a settled life instead of a semi-nomadic life as they did in Rigvedic times.

Prayers continued to be recited, but they ceased to be the dominant mode of placating the gods. Sacrifice, became far more important, and they assumed both public and domestic character.

Sacrifices involved the killing of animals on a large scale and specially the destruction of cattle wealth. The guest was known as *goghna* or one who was fed on cattle.

Brahmanas were only one of the sixteen classes of priests. The priests who officiated at sacrifices were rewarded generously and given *dakshinas* or *gifts*.

In addition to cows, which were usually given on sacrificial gifts, gold, cloth and horses were also given. Sometimes, the priests claimed portion of territory as *dakshina*, but the grant of land or sacrificial fee is not well established in the later Vedic period.

In the Upanishads, we came across a clear expression of belief in the migration of human soul from one life to another. Soul was thought of as being born to happiness or sorrow according to their action in the previous life. From this originated the theory of *Karma*.

## 1.3 EMERGENCE OF JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

### Jainism

*Vardhamana Mahavira* was born in 540 B.C. in a village near *Vaishali*, which is identical with *Basarh* in the district of *Vaishali*, in north Bihar. His father *Sidhartha* was the head of a famous Kshatriya clan, and his mother was named *Trishala*, sister of the *Winchhavi* chief *Chetaka*, whose daughter was wedded to *Bimbisara*. Thus *Mahavira's* family was connected with the royal family of *Magadha*. High connections made it easy for *Mahavira* to approach prince, and nobles in the course of his mission.

In the beginning, *Mahavira* led the life of a house holder but in the search for truth he abandoned the worldly life at the age of 30 and became an ascetic. He kept wandering for 12 years from place to place. During the course of his long journey, it is said, he never changed his clothes for 12 years, and abandoned them altogether when he attained *Omniscience* (*Kaivalya*) at the age of 42. Through *Kaivalya* he conquered misery and happiness. Because of this conquest he is known as *Mahavira* or the *great hero of Jina*, i.e., the conqueror, and his followers are known as *Jainas*. He propagated his religion for 30 years, and his mission took him to *Koshala*, *Magadha*, *Mithila*, *Champa etc.* He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 B.C. at a place called *Pavapuri* near modern *Rajgir*.

Jainism has great antiquity. The *Jainas* believe that their most important religious teacher, *Mahavira* has twenty-three predecessors who were called *Tirthankaras*. The name of two *Jain Tirthankaras*, *Rishabha* and *Arishtanemi*, are found in the *Rigveda*.

### Doctrines of Jainism

Jainism taught five doctrines :

- (i) do not commit violence
- (ii) do not speak a lie
- (iii) do not steal
- (iv) do not acquire property; and
- (v) observe continence (*brahmacharya*)

According to Jainism, the sole purpose of life is the purification of the soul, which could be achieved only through *right knowledge*, *right faith* and *right action*, which are considered to be the *three jewels (Triratna)* of *Jainism*. Right knowledge is comprehension of the theory that there is no God. Jainism is thus essentially *atheistic*. It regards the concept of God as irrelevant. But it accepts a group of *trithankaras* (*Prophets*) who were divine men. Right faith is the firm belief in omniscience and in fallibility of *Mahavira*. In later times, Jainism was divided into two sects — *Svetambaras* (white-clad) and *Digambaras* (sky-clad). In order to spread the teachings of Jainism, *Mahavira* organised an order of his followers.

Jainism spread to many parts of India — *Karnataka*, *Orissa*, *Tamil Nadu*, *Gujarat* and *Rajasthan*. The early *Jainas*

adopted Prakrit, the language of the masses, to preach their doctrines and thereby helped the growth of Prakrit language and literature. With Prakrit, many regional languages such as Marathi developed. In early medieval times, the Jains made a good use of Sanskrit and produced many works in the language. They also contributed to the growth of Kannad and Tamil literature. Jains were interested in art. When at a later date, they began to worship Mahavira and the twenty-three tirthankaras, they sculpted, for the purpose of worship, beautiful and sometimes massive images in stone. In South India, there are many monolithic images of Jain Saints. 'Gomateswara' at Sravanabelogola in Karnataka is the most notable one. They also built temples for the purpose of worship. There are marble temples in Mount Abu in Rajasthan. *Palitana* and *Girnar* in Gujrat are known as Jain temple cities.

### Causes of Decline of Jainism

With the passage of time many evils entered the Jain faith. It was no longer a pure and pious religion. Most of its enthusiastic workers withered away. Secondly, the royal patronage was not forthcoming. Thirdly, the Jain church was split again and again. Fourthly, the caste system was revived with all its ills. Fifthly, the foreign invaders, first the Shukas and the Hunas and later the Muslims gave it a serious setback. Lastly, the revival of Hinduism sounded the death bell of Jainism.

### Buddhism

Budhism was the movement that gave the greatest challenge to Brahmanism. It was started by *Gautama Buddha*. Gautama Buddha or Siddhartha was a contemporary of Mahavira. He was born in 563 B.C. in a Shakya Kshatriya family at *Lumbini, Kapilavastu*, which is situated in the foot hills of Nepal. Gautama's father seems to have been the elected ruler of Kapilavastu, and headed the republican clan of the Shakyas. His mother was a princess from the Koshalan dynasty. Thus, like Mahavira, Gautama also belonged to a noble family. Born in a republic, he also inherited some egalitarian sentiments.

From his early childhood Gautama showed a meditative bent of mind. He was married early, but married life did not interest him. He was moved by the misery which people suffered in the world, and thus started looking for solution. At the age of 29, like Mahavira, he left home. He kept on wandering for about seven years and then attained knowledge at the age of 35 at Bodh Gaya under a Pipal tree. From this time onwards he started to be called as Buddha or the enlightened.

Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon at *Sarnath* in *Banaras*. He undertook long journeys and took his message far and wide. He had a very strong physique which enabled him to walk 20 to 30 km a day. He kept on wandering, preaching and meditating continuously for 40 years, resting only in the rainy season every year. During this long period he encountered many staunch supporters of rival sects including the Brahmanas, but defeated them in debates. His missionary activities did not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and the men and women. He preached most of his sermons at Sravasti. Gautama Buddha passed away at the age of eighty in 483 B.C. at a place called

*Kusinagar*, identical with the village called *Kasia* in the district of *Deoria* in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

### Buddhist Doctrines

According to the Buddha, life is full of suffering; and the cause of suffering is desire. If desires are conquered, Nirvana will be attained. That is, man will be free from the cycle of birth and death. Buddha recommended an eight-fold path for conquering desires. It comprises :

- (i) Right view
- (ii) Right resolve
- (iii) Right speech
- (iv) Right conduct
- (v) Right livelihood
- (vi) Right effort
- (vii) Right mindedness; and
- (viii) Right concentration

Buddha organised the Sangha to spread his doctrines. The monastic system introduced by Buddhism has served as a model to other religions.

In the field of art, its legacy is remarkable. The magnificent Stupas, Viharas and Chaityas found in places like Sanchi, Bharhut, Bodh Gaya, Amaravati and Nalanda, speak about the great contribution made by the Buddhists. The *Stupa* at *Sanchi* is a masterpiece of Buddhist architecture. The Buddhist cave temples at *Ajanta* and *Ellora* are monuments of typical Buddhist art and depict Buddha's life in paintings. The first human statues worshiped in India were those of the Buddha. The various events in the life of the Buddha were portrayed on stone. The Buddhists enormously enriched Pali language by their writings.

Certain features are common to Jainism and Budhism. Both Jainism and Budhism accepted the theory of Karma. Both rejected the authority of the Vedas and Brahmanas, as the spiritual guide to attain salvation. Both, opposed animal sacrifice. Both Mahavira and Buddha preached in the language of the people and organised Sangha for propagation. Though neither sought to abolish the caste system, both adopted a liberal attitude towards the lower castes. Both tried to improve the position of slaves in some ways. But the Buddha differed from Mahavira with regard to the soul theory of Jainism and its attachment to severe asceticism.

**Buddhism declined in India because of the following reasons :** Buddhism gradually succumbed to rituals and ceremonies, which it had originally denounced. On the other hand, Hinduism became more reformed religion, to meet the challenge of Buddhism. The Brahmanas stressed the need for preserving cattle wealth and assured women and Sudras of entry into heaven.

The Buddhist monks were gradually cut off from the main stream of people's life. They gave up Pali, the language of the people and took to Sanskrit, the language of the intellectuals. There was corruption in the Buddhist Sangha. The enormous wealth in the monasteries with women living in them, led to further degeneration. Several rulers like Pushyamitra Sunga persecuted the Buddhists. In South India,



it was bitterly opposed by the Saivites and the Vaishnavites. The Turkish invaders chose the Buddhist monasteries for their attack, as they were found in possession of vast wealth.

#### 1.4 MAHAJANAPADAS

Around 6th century B.C., North India was divided into a number of states both big and small. The rise of large states with towns as their base of operation strengthened the territorial idea. Sixteen of these were referred to as '*Mahajanapadas*'. These were located over a major part of the Ganga Valley with a few to the north-west and south-west of it. Of these Magadha, Koshula, Vatsa and Avanti seem to have been considerably powerful.

Magadha embraced the modern districts of Patna, Gaya and parts of Shahabad, and grew to be the leading state of the time. The early history of Magadha commences with the famous Bimbisara of the Haryanka Kula.

#### 1.5 RISE OF MAGADHA

Magadha came into prominence under the leadership of *Bimbisara*, who belonged to the *Haryanka* dynasty. He was a contemporary of Buddha. He started the policy of conquests and aggression which ended with the Kalinga war of Ashoka. Bimbisara acquired Anga and placed it under the viceroyalty of Ajatashatru at Champa. He also strengthened his position by marriage alliances relations with the different princely families which gave enormous diplomatic prestige and paved the way for the expansion of Magadha westward and northward.

Bimbisara made Magadha the paramount power in the sixth century B.C. His kingdom is said to have consisted of 80,000 villages, which is a conventional number.

Nobody exactly knows the religion in which Bimbisara believed. Some say that he believed in Jainism, others say that he was a Buddhist. The Brahmanas claimed that he was a follower of Brahmanism.

The earliest capital of Magadha was at Rajgir, which was called Girivraja at that time. It was surrounded by five hills, the openings in which were closed by stone-walls on all sides. This made Rajgir impregnable.

According to the Buddhist chronicles, *Bimbisara* ruled for 52 years, roughly from 544 B.C. to 492 B.C. He was succeeded by his son *Ajatashatru* also known as *Kunika* (492 – 460 B.C.). *Ajatashatru* killed his father and seized the throne for himself.

Magadha also had another capital called *Patiliputra*, which was situated at the confluence of the Ganga, the Gandak and the Sone and a fourth river called the Saryu joined the Ganga not far from Patliputra.

In terms of expansionist policies the new Magadh King followed a decisively more aggressive policy. He gained complete control over Kashi and broke the earlier amicable relations by attacking his maternal uncle Prasenjit, the King of Koshala. The Vajji confederation of people whose Mahajanapada was to the north of the Ganga was Ajatashatru's next target of attack.

Ajatashatru is said to have ruled from 492. B.C. to 460

B.C. He was succeeded by Udayin (460 – 444 B.C.). During Udayin's reign the Magadha kingdom extended in the north to the Himalayan ranges and in the south to the Chhota Nagpur Hills.

The great achievement of the dynasty of Shishunagas was the destruction of the power of Avanti with its capital at Ujjain. This brought to an end the 100-year old rivalry between Magadha and Avanti. From now onwards Avanti became a part of the Magadha empire and continued to be so till the end of the Maurya rule. The rule of the Shishunaga dynasty too was of short duration and gave way to the rule of the Nanda dynasty headed by the usurper Mahapadama.

The *Nandas* proved to be the most powerful rulers of Magadha. So great was their power that Alexander, who invaded Punjab at that time, did not dare to move towards the east.

The *Nandas* were fabulously rich and enormously powerful. It is said that they maintained 2,00,000 infantry, 60,000 cavalry and 6000 elephants. Such a huge army could be maintained only through an effective taxation system. It was because of these considerations that Alexander did not advance against them.

The later *Nandas* turned out to be weak and unpopular. Their rule in Magadha was supplanted by that of the Maurya dynasty under which the Magadhan empire reached the apex of glory.

#### 1.6 MACEDONIAN INVASION AND ITS EFFECTS

Shortly after the death of Mahapadma Nanda, India was invaded by the famous conqueror, Alexander the Great of Macedonia in May 326 B.C. He was welcomed by Ambhi, the Indian ruler of Taxila and this ignoble example was followed by a few other Indian Chiefs, but most of the Indian kings and non-monarchical clans offered a stiff resistance.

When he reached the Jhelum, Alexander met Porus the first and the strongest resistance. Although Alexander defeated Porus, he was impressed by the bravery and courage of the Indian prince. So, he restored his kingdom to him and made him his ally. Then he advanced as far as the Beas river. He wanted to move still further eastward but his army refused to accompany him. The Greek soldiers had grown warweary and disease-stricken. The hot climate of India and ten years of continuous campaigning had made them terribly home sick. They had also experienced a taste of Indian fighting qualities on the banks of Indus, which made them desist from further progress.

Alexander continued his march to the Beas. But his army was not prepared to go any further particularly when the soldiers were told of the formidable power of the Ganges. He stayed in India for 19 months which were full of fighting. Alexander left India in 325 B.C.

Though he had barely any time to organise his conquests, he still managed to make some arrangements. He restored most of the conquered states to their rulers once they offered their submission. The remaining parts of his conquests were divided into three and placed under three Greek Governors. He also established a number of cities to maintain his power in this area.

Alexander's invasion provided the first occasion when ancient Europe came into close contact with ancient India. It produced certain important results. The Indian campaign of Alexander was a triumphant success. He added to his empire an Indian province which was much larger than that conquered by Iran, though the Greek secessions in India was soon lost to the Mauryan rulers.

The most important outcome of this invasion was the establishment of direct contact between India and Greece in different fields. Alexander's campaign opened up four distinct routes by land and sea. It paved the way for Greek merchants and craftsmen and increased the existing facilities for trade.

Alexander's historians have left valuable geographical accounts. They also have clearly dated records of Alexander's campaign, which enable us to build Indian chronology of subsequent events on a definite basis. Alexander's historians also give us important information about social and economic conditions. They tell us about the *Sati* system, the sale of girls in market places by poor parents, and the fine breed of oxen sent to Macedonia for use in Greece. The art of carpentry was the most flourishing craft in India, and carpenters built chariots, boats and ships.

By destroying the power of petty states in north-west India, Alexander's invasion paved the way for the expansion of the Mauryan empire in that area. According to tradition Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the Mauryan empire, had seen something of the working of the military machine of Alexander and had acquired some knowledge which helped him destroying the power of the Nandas.

## 2. HISTORY OF INDIA FROM 4TH CENTURY B.C. TO 3RD CENTURY A.D.

### 2.1 FOUNDATION OF THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

The foundation of the Mauryan Empire is a unique event in Indian history, its glory enhanced by the circumstances in which it was achieved. *Alexander's* victorious campaigns in the Punjab during 326 – 325 B.C., had established a formidable foreign rule in the country, the six regions of Greek India being governed by *Satrap*s appointed by Alexander himself. The battle of India's independence against these heavy odds called for a leader of exceptional ability and vision who could infuse new life and enthusiasm into the drooping spirits of defeated people, and organised a fresh rational resistance against alien domination. Fortunately, the country produced such a leader in young *Chandragupta* who had been prepared in advance for his great mission in life by the Brahmin *Chanakya*, better known as *Kautilya*. Chanakya's superior vision and insight led him to discover in this youth the disciple who would be able, under his direction, to free the fatherland of foreign rule.

A flood of source material is available for the study of the Mauryan period in various forms — literary, epigraphical, numismatic and archaeological. Literary source consists of both indigenous and foreign. The indigenous literary sources are either religious or secular. Religious literary source consists of Brahmanical, Jaina and Buddhist literature. The Puranas representing Brahmanical literary source throw light on the chronological sequence of the Mauryan rules. The Jaina

sources refer to a famine during Chandragupta's reign. The Buddhist scriptures, such as the *Digha Nikaya* are helpful in determining the influence of Buddhist ideas on the political sphere of the secular literature. The most important single source is the *Arthashastra* given by *Kautilya*, who is sometimes described as the *Indian Macchiavelli*. The *Arthashastra* gives a clear methodical analysis of economic and political thoughts prevalent at that time. The *Mudrarakshasa*, a Sanskrit drama written by Visakhadatta speaks of the Mauryan revolution. Among the foreign literary sources, the Ceylonese chronicles, the *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa* in particular, described the part played by Asoka in spreading Buddhism, more particularly in spreading it in Ceylon. There are accounts gathered from classical writings in Greek and Latin of the impressions of travellers who visited India in this period. Foremost among these is the *Indica* of Magasthenes, who visited the court of Chandragupta and remained at the capital, Pataliputra for some time.

We have a number of inscriptions throwing considerable light on the history of the Mauryas, the bulk of which belong to the reign of Asoka who inscribed his edicts on rocks and pillars. The Junagarh Rock inscription of Rudradaman, dated 150 A.D., refers to a provincial governor of Chandragupta Maurya.

We have many silver and copper punch-mark coins and silver bar coins of the period. They help us to know the extent of Mauryan empire.

Over the last fifteen years, many excavations have been conducted in north-west India and the Ganga basin, in addition to the earlier ones at Taxila. They have revealed the interesting phenomenon of the *Northern Black Polished Ware* (NBPW), which was widespread throughout the Mauryan empire with the exception of its southernmost parts.

### Chandragupta Maurya

*Chandragupta*, the founder of the *Mauryan* dynasty, belonged to the *Moriya* tribe. According to some scholars, he was a man of low origin. Some others represent him as belonging to a Kshatriya ruling class. He was the protege of the Brahmin *Kautilya*, who was his guide and mentor both in securing the throne of Magadha from the Nandas and in keeping it intact. He inherited from the Nandas a huge army, which he strengthened by some addition. The army comprised 80,000 cavalry, 9,000 elephants, 60,000 infantry and a number of chariots. With the help of this big army, Chandragupta Maurya brought all the northern states up to the Narmada in the south under his authority.

*Seleukos Nikator*, one of the generals who followed Alexander the Great during his invasion of India, wanted to re-establish the Greek satrapes of India. In 305 B.C., Seleukos Nikator crossed the Indus and tried to imitate the victorious march of Alexander. This led to a war between Seleukos and Chandragupta. The detail of the campaign is not known but the result of the war is clear. In 303 B.C. a treaty was concluded. The terms of the treaty were favourable to Chandragupta Maurya. The Mauryan emperor gave 500 elephants to Seleukos and obtained from him the satrapies of Aria, Arochosia, and Paropanisadai. *Kabul* was the capital of Paropanisadai. *Herat*

and *Kandahar* were the capitals of Aria and Arochosia respectively. Gedrosia was also ceded by Seleukos. The peace was ratified by a matrimonial alliance. Seleukos gave one of his daughters in marriage to his Indian rival. Soon after the treaty, Seleukos sent his representative, Megasthenes, to the court of Chandragupta Maurya as his ambassador.

According to Jaina tradition, Chandragupta embraced Jainism towards the end of his life and stepped down from the throne in favour of his son Bindusara. Accompanied by Bhadrabahu and several other Jaina monks, he is said to have gone to Sravanabelagola near Mysore, where he deliberately starved himself to death in the approved Jaina fashion.

## 2.2 ASOKA AND HIS DHARMA ASOKA (273–232 B.C.)

Asoka ruled over a vast empire which was bounded on the south by approximately a line drawn from Nellore to the mouth of the Kalyanpuri river in the western coast with the probable exception of Assam, nearly all of India and Pakistan, together with Afghanistan was included in his empire. One write in the same language and script ran from Sindhu river to Mysore. Nothing like it was witnessed again.

Asoka died about 232 B.C. and with him departed the glory of the Mauryan Empire. The Vishnu Purana gives the names of his seven successors. Internal dissensions and foreign invasion destroyed the power and prestige of the Mauryan empire till *Brihadratha*, the seventh king in succession from Asoka who was killed by his commander-in-chief *Pushyamitra* who ascended the throne in about 185 B.C.

### Kalinga War

The only major war which Asoka fought was the *Kalinga* war. In the thirteenth year of his reign, Asoka embarked upon the only aggressive war of his life against Kalinga, the strip of territory extending along the coast of the Bay of Bengal from the Mahanadi to the Godavari. The cause of the war is not known. The kingdom of Kalinga maintained a huge army of 60,000 infantry, 1,000 cavalry and 700 war elephants. The resistance from Kalinga was so stubborn that the conquest involved immeasurable suffering. The terrible slaughter on the battlefield filled Asoka with remorse. The Kalinga war was a turning point in Asoka's life. Asoka was drawn to the teachings of the Buddha who is described in the Amarakosa, as an ocean of wisdom and compassion. The old view that he was dramatically converted to Buddhism immediately after the battle, is not acceptable. Asoka states in one of his inscriptions that only after a period of two and a half years did he become a great devotee of Buddhism. It led him in due course of time, to abandon *digvijaya* in favour of *dharmavijaya*.

### Asoka and Buddhism

Gradually, Asoka introduced the Buddhist spirit into his administration and resolved to change his foreign policy in the direction of peace. He became a *Sakya-Upaska*, i.e., Buddhist by disciple and in course of time, he became a *bhikshu* (monk).

Asoka gave up hunting. Special officers, called *Dharmamahatras* to speed up the propagation of Dhamma were appointed. He declared that the 'real conquest' was that

won by the law of piety. He desired his descendants to give up the notion that conquest by army was the duty of kings. He decided to utilize his unlimited authority over his vast empire, in the teaching, propagation and enforcement of the law of piety, i.e. Dhamma. In order to spread Buddhism, he organised Buddhists, missions to places within and without India. Rock Edict XIII says that the Buddhist missionaries were sent to Syria, Egypt, Epirus and Macedonia, to the Cholas and Pandgas and to the north-western and southern parts of his empire including the Maratha and Andhra countries. The Ceylonese Chronicles give a list of the missions organised by the Sangha. The mention of the Buddhist country in the Chronicles clears up the doubtful references to it in the edicts.

Asoka made a solemn pilgrimage to the most sacred spots in the Buddhist Holy Land. He started from Pataliputra, and advanced towards Nepal. From Nepal he visited the famous Lumbini Garden. Asoka was accompanied by his guide and preceptor *Upagupta*. A pillar was set up by Asoka to preserve the memory of his visit to Lumbini Garden. From there, Asoka went to Kapilavastu, Sarnath, Sravasti, Bodhgaya and Kushinagar, where the Buddha attained nirvana.

All this can be said on the basis of Asoka's inscriptions. If we rely on the Buddhist tradition, it would appear that he sent missionaries for the propagation of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and central Asia. As an enlightened ruler, Asoka tried to enlarge his area of political influence through propaganda.

Asoka propagated Buddhist tenets through edicts. An *edict* means a command from a legal superior enforced by penalties for its violation.

Asoka dharma was not a narrow dharma. It cannot be regarded as a sectarian faith. Its broad objective was to preserve the social order. It ordained that people should obey their parents, pay respect to the Brahmins and Buddhist monks and show mercy to slaves and servants. These instructions can be found in both the Buddhist and Brahmanical faiths.

Asoka taught people to live and let live. He emphasised compassion towards animals and proper behaviour towards relatives. He held that if the people behaved well they would attain heaven. He never said that they would attain nirvana, which was the goal of Buddhist teachings. Asoka's teachings were thus intended to maintain the existing social order on the basis of tolerance. He does not seem to have preached any sectarian faith.

## 2.3 MAURYAN ADMINISTRATION

The Mauryan administration can be studied under three headings, namely *central*, *provincial* and *municipal*.

The king was the head of the state and enjoyed enormous power. There was a *mantriparishad* to assist the monarch. The mantriparishad consisted of the prime minister, the purohit, the commander-in-chief and the yuvaraja (the crown prince). There were also two assemblies called the *Paura* representing the capital and *Janapada* representing the village. These assemblies more often met separately. To discuss important measures, they met in joint session.

The civil administration was divided among eighteen departments. Each department was under an *amatya* (minister). The finance department had two *amatyas*. Public revenue was

mainly derived from cultivated land (the state demand was on sixth of the produce), pastures, forests, mines *etc.* There were also receipts from customs and excise, and licence fees from workmen, artisans and traders. The other sources of public revenue were fines from law-courts, special taxes and *pranaya*.

### Economy

If we rely on the Arthashastra of Kautilya it would appear that the state appointed 27 superintendents (*adhyakshas*) mostly to regulate the economic activities of the state. They controlled and regulated agriculture, trade and commerce, weights and measures, crafts such as weaving and spinning, mining and so on.

For the first time in the Mauryan period, slaves were engaged in agricultural work on a large scale. The state maintained farms on which numerous slaves and hired labourers were employed. 1,50,000 war captives brought by Asoka from Kalinga might have been engaged in agriculture.

The Mauryan period constitutes a landmark in the *system of taxation* in ancient India. Kautilya names many taxes to be collected from peasants, artisans and traders. This required a strong and efficient machinery for assessment, collection and storage. The Mauryas attached greater importance to assessment than to storage and depositing.

We have epigraphic evidence of the existence of rural store-houses, which show that taxes were also collected in kind and these granaries were meant for helping local people in times of famine, drought, *etc.*

It seems that the *punch-marked silver coins* which carry the symbols of the peacock, and the hill and crescent, formed the *imperial currency* of the Mauryas. They have been discovered in large numbers. Apparently, they contributed to the collection of taxes and payment of officers in cash. Further, because of its uniformity the currency must have facilitated market exchange in a wider area.

### Art and Architecture

The Mauryas made a remarkable contribution to art and architecture. They introduced *stone masonry* on a wide scale. Megasthenes states that the Maurya palace at Pataliputra was as splendid as that in the capital of Iran. Fragments of stone pillars and stumps, indicating the existence of an 80-pillared hall, have been discovered at Kumrahar, on the outskirts of modern Patna.

Although these remains do not recall the magnificence mentioned by Megasthenes, they certainly attest the high technical skill attained by the Maurya artisans in polishing the stone pillars, which are as shining as Northern Black Polished Ware. It must have been a difficult task to carry the huge blocks of stone from the quarries and to polish and embellish them when they were placed erect. All these seem to be a great feat of engineering. Each pillar is made of a single piece of sandstone. Only their capitals, which are beautiful pieces of sculpture in the form of lion or bulls, are joined with the pillars, on the top. These polished pillars were set up throughout the country, which shows that technical knowledge involved in their polishing and transport had spread far and wide.

### Disintegration of the Mauryan Empire

Now, let us think of the several causes for the disintegration of the Mauryan empire.

(i) **Reaction of Brahmins:** The reaction of Brahmins began as a result of the policy of Asoka. There is no doubt that Asoka adopted a *tolerant policy* and asked the people to respect even the Brahmins. But, he prohibited killing of mammals and birds, and derided superfluous rituals performed by women. This naturally affected the income of the Brahmins. Hence in spite of the tolerant policy of Asoka the Brahmins developed some kind of antipathy towards him. Obviously they were not satisfied with his tolerant policy.

(ii) **Financial Crisis:** The enormous expenditure on the army and payment to bureaucracy created a financial crisis for the Mauryan empire. As far as we know in ancient times the Mauryans maintained the largest army and the largest regiment of officers. Despite all kinds of taxes imposed on the people, it was difficult to maintain this huge structure. It seems that Asoka made large grants to the Buddhist monks which left the royal treasury empty. In order to meet expenses in the last stage they had to melt the images made of gold.

(iii) **Oppressive Rule:** Oppressive rule in the provinces was an important cause of the break up of the empire. During the reign of Bindusara, the citizens of Taxila bitterly complained against the misrule of wicked bureaucrats (*dushtamatyas*). When Asoka became emperor, a similar complaint was lodged by the same city. Kalinga edicts show that Asoka felt very much concerned about oppression in the provinces and therefore asked the mahamatras not to torture townspeople without due cause. For this purpose he introduced rotation of officers in Tosila (in Kalinga), Ujjain and Taxila.

(iv) **Neglect of the North-West Frontier:** Since, Asoka was mostly preoccupied with missionary activities at home and abroad, he could not pay attention to the safeguarding of the passage on the north-western frontier. This had become necessary in view of the movement of the tribes in Central Asia in the third century B.C.

The result of all this was that the various parts of the Mauryan empire became independent and ultimately the Mauryan empire disappeared. The Mauryan empire was finally destroyed by *Pushyamitra Sunga* in 185 B.C.

(v) **Weak Successors of Asoka:** Another cause of the downfall of the Mauryan empire was the weak successors by a progeny of pigmies whose shoulders were not fit to bear the weight of his mighty monarchy. They could not stop the disintegrating forces which were working after the death of Asoka.

## 2.4 THE SANGAM AGE

The farther southern India, which is separated from the Deccan by the rivers Krishna and Godavari, had a history generally independent of that of the rest of India. It was essentially the land of the Tamil race and speech. Therefore it was known in ancient times as Tamil country. The Tamils had developed an advanced civilisation of their own, wholly independent of northern India. We get information about the early Tamils from Sangam literature. The term *Sangam literature* is generally applied to early Tamil works, which are eight

anthologies such as *Purananuru*, *Ahananuru*, and *Kurunthogai*; ten idylls such as *Mullaippattu*, *Nedunalvadi*, and *Madurai Khanchi*; eighteen minor works such as *Tirukkural* and epics such as *Silappadikaram*, *Manimeghalai* and *Kundalakesi*. The age of these compositions has not yet been determined conclusively by the scholars.

The Sangam was a college or assembly of Tamil poets held probably under royal patronage. Sangam literature is a collection of Tamil heroic poems which were the products of Tamil folk but were collected and compiled by the Sangam. These poems signify the tradition of bards who roamed about singing in praise of their patron chiefs.

### The Sungas

Pushyamitra Sunga, who slew his master, Brihadratha, usurped the throne of Magadha and established the Sunga dynasty in 188 B.C., by crowning himself as sovereign. Bana refers to Pushyamitra as *Anarya*. The Sungas were closely connected with Vidisa (near Ujjain), which was probably their original home. We get information about Sungas from the Malavikagnimitra of Kalidasa, the grammarian Patanjali, the Agadhya Sanskrit inscription of Dhanadeva and the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela.

Pataliputra continued to be the capital city under the Sungas also. In or about 168 B.C. *Kharavela*, the king of Kalinga, invaded Magadha and defeated Pushyamitra. The treasures of Pataliputra were seized by Kharavela. He also took the statue of the first Jaina (Rishabhadeva) which had been taken from Kalinga by the Nanda king some three centuries back.

During the later part of his reign, Pushyamitra had to face a Greek army under the lead of King *Menander*. But the Greek king was forced to retire. Pushyamitra is said to have performed an Asvamedha yajana which has been mentioned by Patanjali. Pushyamitra was succeeded by his son, *Agnimitra*, who assisted his father as his viceroy at Vidisa. Agnimitra, the hero of *Malavikagnimitra of Kalidasa*, ruled for a short time and was succeeded by *Sujyeshtha*. But the next important ruler Bhaga ruled for about 32 years. During the time of Bhaga, a Garuda monolith was erected at Besnagar by Heliodorur. The last ruler of this dynasty was Devabhuti, who was murdered by his Brahmin minister, Vasudeva Kanva, who proclaimed himself as sovereign.

### The Satavahanas

The *Satavahanas* were also called the *Andhra dynasty*. During the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, the Andhras occupied the deltas of the Godavari and Krishna rivers. They possessed a strong military force which, according to V.A. Smith, was second only to the army of the Mauryan emperor, Chandragupta. The capital of the *Andhras* is believed to have been *Srikakulam*. We come to know of the Andhras from Asoka's edicts. According to those edicts, the Andhras were the residents in or adjoining the outer circle of the Mauryan empire. After the death of Asoka, the Andhras asserted their independent power under the government of a king called *Simuka*. The next king was his brother *Krishna*. He extended his power upto Nasik, including the Konkan. The inscription

at Nanaghat mentions the statues of *Simuka*, Krishna and Satakarni I and of Queen Naganika. The Andhras must have defeated the Marathas and their conquests were consolidated by Satakarni I's (the third ruler) marriage with Naganika. Satakarni is said to have performed two horse-sacrifices. One of his predecessors slew the last of the Kanvas. About the Andhras, the Malavikagnimitra of Kalidasa and the Kamasutra of Vatsyayana give some information. The Saka conquest of Malwa and Maharashtra eclipsed for some time the power of the Andhras. But their fortunes were re-established by Gautamiputra Satakarni.

### The Kushans

The *Kushans* were one of the five clans into which the *Yuechi tribe* was divided. A nomadic people from the Steppe of North Central Asia, living in the neighbourhood of China, the Kushans first occupied Bactria or north Afghanistan where they displaced the Sakas. Gradually, they moved to the Kabul valley and seized Gandhara by crossing the Hindukush, replacing the rule of the Greeks and Parthians in these areas. Finally, they set up their authority over the lower Indus basin and the greater part of the Gangetic basin. Their empire extended from the Oxus to the Ganga, from Khorasan in Central Asia to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. A good part of Central Asia, now included in the former USSR, a portion of Iran, a portion of Afghanistan, almost the whole of Pakistan, and almost the whole of northern India were brought under one rule by the Kushans. This created a unique opportunity for the co-mingling of people and cultures, and the process gave rise to a new type of culture which embraced five modern countries.

The chief of the Kushana sect, by name *Kadphises I*, imposed his authority successfully on his colleagues and established himself as the sole monarch of the *Yueh-Chi nation* in about 40 A.D. He defeated the Greeks and the Parthians, who were controlling the north-western frontier of India. He occupied Kabul and issued coins in his name. He called himself *king of kings*. He followed Buddhism. He was succeeded by his son, *Kadphises II*, also known as *Wima Kadphises*. Kadphises II followed his father's policy of conquering India. He penetrated as far as Varanasi and annexed the country as far as Mathura. He assumed titles, like 'the lord of the whole world'. His bilingual (Greek and Indian) gold and copper coins indicate that he worshipped Shiva.

### 2.5 SANGAM ADMINISTRATION

The Kushans strengthened the idea of the divine origin of kingship. The *Kushan kings* were called *sons of god*. This title was adopted by the Kushans from the Chinese, who called their king the *son of heaven*. It was used in India naturally to legitimatise the royal authority. Similar ideas are found in the work of the Brahmana law giver, Manu.

They also introduced the Satrap system of government. The kingdom was divided into provinces each under a military governor called *Mahakshatrapa*. Governors with lower status were called *kshatrapas*. These governors issued their own inscription and also minted their own coin.

The foreigners also introduced the practice of military

governorship. This was done by the Greeks, who appointed their governors called *Strategos*. Military governors were necessary to maintain the power of the new rulers over the conquered people.

### Religion

Some of the foreign rulers were converted to *Vaishnavism*, which means the *worship of Vishnu*, the god of protection and preservation. The Greek ambassador Heliodorus set up a pillar in honour of Vishnu near Vidisa in Madhya Pradesh around the middle of the second century B.C. A few other rulers adopted Buddhism.

The Kushana rulers worshipped both Shiva and the Buddha, and the image of these two appeared on the Kushana coins. Several Kushana rulers were worshippers of Vishnu. This was certainly the case with the Kushana ruler Vasudeva, whose very name is a synonym for Krishna, who was worshipped as an incarnation of Vishnu.

### Trade, Commerce and Economy

The movement of foreigners into India established firmly the basis of regular trade contact between Central Asia and India. As a result, India received a good deal of gold from the Altai mountains in Central Asia. Gold also may have been received in India through trade with the Roman empire. The Kushans controlled the *Silk Route*, which started from China and passed through their empire in Central Asia and Afghanistan to Iran, and Western Asia which formed part of the Roman empire in the eastern Mediterranean zone. This route was a source of great income to the Kushans, and they built a large prosperous empire because of the tolls levied from the traders. It is significant that the Kushans were the first rulers in India to issue gold coins on a wide scale.

### Society and Culture

The Sakas and Kushans added new ingredients to Indian culture and enriched it immensely. They settled in India for good and completely identified themselves with its culture. Since they did not have their own script, language or religion, they adopted these elements of culture from India. They became an integral part of Indian society to which they contributed considerably.

### Art and Architecture

Indian craftsmen came into contact with Central Asia, the Greeks and the Romans, especially in the north-western frontier of India in Gandhara. This gave rise to a new kind of art known as *Gandhara Art* in which images of the Buddha were made in the *Graeco-Roman style*. The hair of the Buddha was fashioned in the Graeco-Roman style. Mathura produced beautiful images of the Buddha, but it is also famous for the headless erect statue of Kanishka whose name is inscribed on its lower part. It also produced several stone images of Vardhamana Mahavira.

The Shaka-Kushana phase registered a distinct advancement in building activities. Excavations have revealed several layers of construction, sometimes more than half a dozen, at various sites in north India. In them we find the use of burnt bricks for flooring and that of tiles for both flooring and roofing. But the use of 'surkhi' and 'tiles' may not have

been adopted from outside.

### Literature

The foreign princes patronised and cultivated Sanskrit literature. The earliest specimen of *Kavya* style is found in the inscription of *Rudradaman* in *Kathiawar* in about 150 A.D. From now onwards inscriptions began to be composed in chaste Sanskrit, although the use of Prakrit in composing inscriptions continued till the fourth century A.D. and even later.

It seems that some of the great creative writers such as *Asvaghosha* enjoyed the patronage of the Kushans. *Asvaghosha* wrote the *Buddhacharita*, which is a biography of the Buddha. He also composed *Saundarananda*, which is a fine example of Sanskrit 'kavya'.

### 2.5 SATAVAHANAS' PATTERN OF ADMINISTRATION

The *Satavahana* rulers strove for the royal ideal set forth in the Dharmasastras. The king was represented as the upholder of dharma. To him were assigned a few divine attributes. The Satavahana king is represented as possessing the qualities of mythical heroes such as *Rama*, *Bhima*, *Kesava*, *Arjuna*, etc. This was evidently meant to attribute divinity to the Satavahana king.

The Satavahanas kept some of the administrative units found in Asoka times. Their district was called *ahora*, as it was known in the time of Asoka. Their officials were known as *amatyas* and *mahamatras*, as they were known in Mauryan times.

But, we noticed certain military and feudal traits in the administration of Satavahanas. It is significant that the *Senapati* was appointed provincial governor. The administration in the rural areas was placed in the hands of *gaulmika*, who was the head of a military regiment consisting of nine chariots, nine elephants, 25 horses and 45 foot soldiers.

The head of the army platoon was, therefore, posted in the countryside to maintain peace and order.

The Satavahana kingdom had three grades of *feudatories*. The highest grade was formed by the king who was called *Raju* and who had the right to strike coins. The second grade was formed by the *maha bhoja*, and the third grade by the *senapati*. It seems that these feudatories and landed beneficiaries enjoyed authority in their respective localities.

### Religion

The Satavahana rulers claim to have been Brahmins, and they represented the march of triumphant Brahmins. Satavahanas referred to themselves as unique *Brahmins* who crushed the pride of the Kshatriyas. From the very beginning, kings and queens performed the Vedic sacrifice, such as the 'asvamedha, vajupeya', etc.

They also worshipped a large number of Vaishnava gods such as Krishna, Vasudeva and others. They paid liberal sacrificial fees to the Brahmins.

### Satavahanas and Architecture

In the Satavahana phase, many Chaityas and monasteries were cut out of the solid rock in the north-western Deccan or