

AGE OF EMPIRES (B.C. 321 – 650 A.D.)

**M. A. History First Year
Semester – I, Paper-II**



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Unit I. The Mauryan empire-Chandragupta I and Bindusara-Asoka and His Dhamma the Mauryan Administrative System-Economic Conditions-Trade-Arts and crafts- Fall of the Mauryan Empire.

Unit II. The Indo and Bactrian Greeks-The Kushana Empire-Kanishka II-The Satavahna of Deccan And South India-The Sakas – Kharavela of Kalinga-The Satavahana Imperial Administration The Early Pandya, Chola and Chera Kingdoms of South India.

Unit III. The Early Guptas and their Rise to Power-Chandragupta I-Samudragupta and the Imperial Expansion-Chandragupta II-Skandagupta, Budha Gupta and Puru Gupta –The Gupta Administration Beginnings of Feudal Trends-Trends –The Cultural Flourishing In the Gupta Period-Art and Architecture.

Unit IV. The Huna Invasions-The Later Guptas-The Mukharis-The Pushyabhutis-Harshvardhana The Chalukyas of Badami-The Early Pallavas.

Unit V. Economic and Social Developments-The Mahayana and Vajrayana forms of Buddhism – The Decline of Buddhism-Buddhist contribution to Indian Culture, Art and Architecture The Puranic Theism and the Beginning and Growth of Temple Architecture.

Suggested Readings

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14. ---do--- Perspectives in Social and Economic History of Early India
15. ---do--- Urban Decay in India. c. 300-1000.

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AGE OF EMPIRES
UNIT- I
LESSON- 1

CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA AND ASOKA

Objectives:

- To understand the political career of Chandragupta Maurya
- To understand the greatness of king Asoka in Indian history

Chandragupta Maurya

Early life:

Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of Mauryan dynasty in India. He seemed to have belonged to an ordinary family. According to the Brahmanical tradition he was born of Maura, a sudra woman, and that is why, he was called a Maurya. But according to the Buddhist tradition he belonged to a Kshatriya clan called Mauryas living in the Neplese terai. He got his education under the guidance of Chanakya, and with his organized a vast military.

Conquests:

The chief conquests of Chandragupta Maurya were as under: 1. Conquest of Punjab: Punjab was ruled by the Greeks in those days. Philip was working as the representative of Alexander there. He was murdered in 325 B.C., and it caused dissension and confusion in the state. Chandragupta, with the help of Chanakya drove out the Greeks from Punjab and annexed it to his empire.

2. Conquest of North-Western India: The next territory that became Chandragupta's target was North-Western India. Soon he conquered and occupied it.

3. Conquest of Magadha: Magadha was the most powerful state in northern India. It was ruled by the Nandas who had 6 lakh infantry, 10,000 cavalry, 2000 chariots each, led by four horses and 3000 elephants. Chandragupta along with Chanakya declared a war against the Nandas and killed the king Ghananand and his family. This made Chandragupta the indisputed master of the northern India. So immediately after the conquest of Magadha, he occupied the throne in 324 B.C.

4. Conquest of Bengal: Chandragupta now advanced towards Bengal and soon he was successful in capturing it.

5. War against Seleucus: Seleucus was the General of Alexander. After Alexander's death, he wanted to recover all those Indian provinces, which Alexander had conquered. In 305 B.C., he had to fight a war against Chandragupta in which Chandragupta came out victorious and Seleucus had to sign a treaty with him.

6. Other Conquests: Besides the above-mentioned conquests, Chandragupta also conquered the territories of Mysore and Saurashtra.

Character and Achievements of Chandra Maurya

Character of Chandragupta Maurya. Chandragupta Maurya was the first historical emperor of India. Some of the chief qualities of his character are given below:

1. Fond of Hunting. Chandragupta was fond of hunting. Forests were especially reserved for him where the king could go for hunting. Common men were not allowed to poach in these forests. During hunting, his escorts were mainly women warriors. He always took special interest in chariot race, horse race and animals fights.
2. Lover of Beauty and Luxury. Chandragupta was a great lover of beauty and luxury. His capital city of Pataliputra was a beautiful city. His own palace was unique in beauty and spaciousness. There were clusters of trees, lakes and fountains etc. attached to it. He lived in style and led a life full of luxury.
3. A Great Diplomat. Chandragupta was a great diplomat. His qualities as a diplomat are revealed in his successful maneuvering in winning over friendship of Chanakya and the confidence of the Punjab chiefs and to capture the throne of Magadha with their help. Thus eventually he became the emperor of India. All these achievements clearly prove that he was a great diplomat.
4. A Just King. Chandragupta Maurya was a just king. There were several courts to give justice to the people. Deterrent punishments were awarded to the criminals so that the crimes were rare. There was a secret force to help in the detection of crime.
5. A Benevolent Despot. Chandragupta was a benevolent despot. He was the foundation head of all powers. The punishments were heavy. Taxes were numerous. The administration was harsh. But Compiled by: Mr. Riyaz Kathjoo (Dean Academics "GVEI") Editor: Junaid Qadri the king himself was not cruel. He had taken all these measures for the welfare of his subjects for maintaining peace and order. Chandragupta was a kind and generous king and he never bothered even for his own comfort in his resolve to provide all comforts to his people. He was a despot who always looked to the welfare of his subjects.

Achievements of Chandragupta Maurya

Chandragupta was a great, able, brave, courageous and warlike king. He occupied a high place in Indian history. He was a great nation-builder. He was the first to found in India a united, strong and mighty empire. He is usually considered as the first historical emperor of India. He drove the alien invaders out of the country and introduced a new and an efficient system of government. He was undoubtedly the mightiest ruler of his time and one of the most lustrous stars in the firmament of monarchy.

1. As a Conquer. Chandragupta was a great conqueror. Though born in a poor family, he rose by dint of his courage to found a strong and extensive empire. He brought to an end the vestiges of the foreign rule. A wretched person as he was, derived out of Magadha, he was so successful as to become the first emperor of the great Indian empire. His empire extended from Brahmaputra to the far south.
2. As an Administrator. Chandragupta was not only a great conqueror and a diplomat but he was also an efficient and able administrator. He not only ruled a vast empire but also administered it well.

ASHOKA THE GREAT

Ashoka's Accession and his Early Rule:

Ashoka was the third and the most popular of the Maurayan kings. He was born in about 302 B.C. During his father's reign (Bindusara's reign) he served as the governor of Taxila and Ujjain and had thus got enough experience of administration. He succeeded to the throne after his father's death in 273 B.C.

Extent of Ashoka's Empire:

Ashoka's empire was a very vast one. It extended from the Brahmaputra in the east to the Hindukush in the north-west and the Arabian Sea in the west and from the Himalayas in the north to river Pennar in the south. Some portions of Nepal and Kashmir also formed a part of Ashoka's empire. Outside India, it included the provinces of Kabul, Herat and Kandhar. It was thus the biggest empire in ancient India.

Ashoka's Dharma:

Though Ashoka himself followed Buddhism, he preached only good things of human conduct. His „Dhamma“, which is the Prakrit form of the Sanskrit word „Dharma“ was not dogmatic but a set of moral principles. Main Principles of Ashoka's Dhamma

1. Respect of Elders – In one of his edicts, Ashoka says obedience must be tendered to the father and the mother. In the same way, the student must show respect to the teacher.
2. Proper Treatment of Younger – Elders, superior and officers should be polite and kind to their younger, inferiors and subordinates.
3. Ahimsa – Ashoka not only forbade the slaughter of animals but himself gave up hunting and flesh-eating.
4. Tolerance – In one of his edicts, Ashoka says there should not be honour to one's own sect or condemnation of another sect. Other sects should also be honoured.
5. Truthfulness – A man should speak the truth at all times. It is better than various religious ceremonies.
6. Charity – One should give education to the illiterate, money to the poor and the knowledge of Dhamma to everyone.
7. Pure Life - Ashoka favoured a pure and simple life. Anger, cruelty, pride and jealousy are great sins.

Thus Ashoka's Dhamma consisted of principles which were common to all religions. Compiled by: Mr. Riyaz Kathjoo (Dean Academics "GVEI") Editor: Junaid Qadri
Ashoka's Measures to spread Dhamma (or Buddhism) Ashoka adopted the following measures to spread his Dhamma or Buddhism:

1. He himself set an example before his people. He himself gave up hunting and taking of meat.
2. He engraved the principles of his Dhamma on rocks and pillars so that all should read them carefully.
3. He used Pali, the language of the people, to carry his message in all corners of his empire.
4. He directed his officers to follow these principles and preach his religion among the common people.

5. He appointed Dhamma Mahamatras whose duty was to improve the general life of his people.
6. Ashoka himself toured his empire and visited holy places.
7. He sent monks to preach the religion of the Buddha to far-off countries. His own son, Mahendra, and his daughter, Sanghmitra, went to Sri Lanka.
8. Ashoka called the Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra to remove differences among different groups of the Buddhists.

The Kalinga War, 261 B.C.

The Kalinga War was the important event of Ashoka's reign, which was fought in the third year of his accession. Ashoka had inherited a vast kingdom but did not include the Kalinga region on the Bay of Bengal and between the rivers Godavari and Mahanadi. Ashoka marched at Kalinga as the head of huge army in 261 B.C. He could succeed only after a fierce war and unlimited carnage. No less than hundred thousand people were killed, more than hundred thousand were taken prisoners and several millions died of disease and epidemic.

Results or Impact of the Kalinga War:

Such a large scale carnage and bloodshed had deep effect on Ashoka's mind and he started hating himself. Smitten by conscience he changed his course of life. Now he was a totally changed person and he also changed his administrative principles. "The Kalinga war proved a turning point in the career of Ashoka and produced results of far reaching consequences.":

1. Now he adopted a policy of Dharmavijaya instead of the policy of imperialist expansions and conquests. Instead of conquering other territories he embarked upon the mission of leading people to the path of righteousness which became the very breath of his life.
2. He also became inclined towards Buddhism. Probably without this war, he would have never been a Buddhist nor staunch preacher of the Buddha's ideals.
3. Before the Kalinga War, Ashoka like his father and grandfather was fond of hunting, flesh eating and other pleasures of worldly life. But this war made him devote his mind and energies towards the well-beings of his own people. Now he spent his time in mitigation of the sufferings of his people and their service became the chief aim of his life.
4. The Kalinga War had also some ill-effects on his state policy. It harmed his martial skill. The large Mauryan army without any wars or conquests became indolent and weak.
5. The Kalinga War expanded his empire still further and now it included the whole of Northern India, the Southern India upto Mysore, Nepal, parts of Kashmir and outside the territorial limits of India, it extended upto Kabul, Herat, Baluchistan and Bactria.

When Ashoka ascended the throne he had no interest in Buddhism. He lived a life of pleasure like his father and grandfather. But the Kalinga War proved a turning point in his life and he sought refuge in the teachings of the Buddha. Influenced by the magnetic personality of Upagupta, he also became a member of the Buddhist Sangha and devised various measures to spread his faith.

Measures for the Spread of Buddhism:

Ashoka dedicated his whole life, time, energy and money – to the cause of spreading the message of Buddha and took the following measures in this direction:

1. **Personal Ideals:** The first thing that Ashoka did was to personally set an example by following the ideals that he preached to his people. He gave up eating meat, hunting, watching amorous dances etc. and began to lead a simple, religious life.
2. **Adopting Buddhism as the State Religion:** Ashoka also declared Buddhism as the state religion. In those days, wise people believed that a benevolent king was the god incarnate, thus they did not hesitate in following his religion as well.
3. **Administrative Measures:** Ashoka geared his whole administrative machinery towards this end of spreading the religion of Buddha. He directed all his officers and other functionaries to spread that religion.
4. **Wide Publicity:** Ashoka got the tenets of Buddhism inscribed on pillars and rocks. He also got the pillars erected on popular highways so that the travelers might read and follow the ideals.
5. **Pilgrimages to the Holy Buddhist Places:** Ashoka visited all the holy places associated with Buddha's life. He visited Gaya where Buddha attained knowledge, the Lumbini Garden, where he was born, Sarnath where he gave his first discourse; Kapilvastu, where he reunited the world and Kushinagara where he attained Nirvana.
6. **Dharma Mahamatras:** Ashoka appointed a class of officials called Dharma Mahamatras, whose duty was to spread teachings of Buddhism. These Mahamatras did a lot of work in making Buddhism popular.
7. **Construction of Viharas or Monasteries:** Several monasteries or Viharas were built for the Buddhist monks, Bhikshus, which proved quite helpful in propagating the Buddhism faith. The Buddhist scholars were helped generously out of the state exchequer.
8. **Work of Public Utility:** As a true followers of Buddhism, Asoka build roads and planted shady trees on either on either side of the roads, dug wells and built hospitals for both men and animals. All these works made both Asoka and Buddhism popular.
9. **Third Buddhist Conference:** To sort out differences that had crept among the followers of the Buddha, Ashoka summoned conference of the Buddhist scholars in 252 B.C.at Pataliputra. The conference was held for 19 months and succeeded to a great extent in resolving differences among the Buddhist scholars. It also brought about an awakening among the Buddhist Bhikshus.
10. **Despatching Buddhist Scholars to other Countries:** Ashoka sent Buddhist missionaries not only to different parts of India but to other countries as well. These missionaries carried the message of Buddha to Myanmar, Sri Lanka, the Himalyan Kingdom, Egypt, Syria, Macedonia and Greece etc.

Ashoka's concept of Dhamma:

Ashoka wanted to raise the moral tone of his people. So he picked up some of the great principles of Ethics from various religions and these principles collectively styled as Dhamma were as under:

1. **Respect to Elders:** Ashoka held that one should respect one's parents, elders, superiors and teachers.

2. **Proper Treatment of Youngsters:** The second cardinal principles of Ashoka's Dhamma was that the superiors should be kind and polite to their dependants, inferiours, servants and slaves etc. And the rich should help the poor.
3. **Ahimsa:** Ahimsa formed an important doctrinal element of Ashoka's Dhamma. According to it, none should slaughter animals and injure the feeling of any human beings.
4. **Life free from Sins:** Man should lead a life free from sin. He should keep himself away from ail sinful acts like jealousy, anger, vanity and lying etc.
5. **Charity:** Another important principle of Dhamma was charity. But the true charity was to impart knowledge of principles of Dhamma to others.
6. **Truthfulness:** Ashoka's Dhamma also demanded that people should always speak the truth even at the cost of material loss.
7. **Toleration:** Ashoka considered all religions as equals. So we must give our regard to all the religions.
8. **True Ceremonials:** A man, according to Ashoka's Dhamma should lead a highly moral life and perform all kinds of noble deeds. In fact, these are the true customs.
9. **Theory of Karma:** According to Ashoka, everyone has to bear the fruit of his past action. So one must always do noble deeds.
10. **Self-analysis:** Ashoka emphasized that all should look into themselves in order to become morally high. This is the way that relieves man of all his bad habits.

Decline of Mauryan Empire:

1. **Weak Successors:** Ashoka's successors such as Dashratha, Sampati, Brihadratha were weak, and were incapable of holding the reins of such a vast empire.
2. **Vast Empire:** The Mauryan Empire under Ashoka became very vast and could be controlled only by such capable rulers as Ashoka and Chandragupta Maurya. Their weak successors lacked their qualities and thus failed to hold the empire together.
3. **The Law of Succession:** There was no law of succession among the Mauryans. And the death of a ruler signaled the war of succession. Even Ashoka succeeded to the throne only after the slaughter of his 99 brothers. These civil wars eroded the power of Mauryas.
4. **Internal Revolts:** The death of Ashoka marked the beginning of innumerable rebellions. Many provincial governors declared their independence. Consequently, Mauryan Empire began to fall like a house of cards.
5. **Lack of Finance:** Money holds a key to the efficient administration. But Ashoka emptied the exchequer for the spread of Buddhism and works of public welfare. Consequently, it affected the efficiency of administration and failed to crush the revolts.
6. **Atrocities by the Officials:** The Mauryan administration in far-flung areas was below the mark. The state officials committed atrocities on the people. These atrocities gave rise to revolts which shattered the Mauryan Empire completely.
7. **Lack of Military Strength:** After the war of Kalinga, Ashoka adopted the policy of non-violence and gave up war altogether. So he paid little attention to strengthen his military power. Consequently; the Mauryan Empire began to weaken military.
8. **Foreign Invasion:** The foreigners, too, took advantage of the declining Mauryan Empire and led expeditions against the weak Mauryan rulers. This particularly caused the fall of Mauryan Empire.

9. Enmity of the Brahmanas: Ashoka, by embracing Buddhism, gave a direct affront to the Brahmanas who developed an innate hatred for the Mauryas and their empire. So immediately after the death of Ashoka they began to work for the destruction of the Mauryan Empire and succeeded eventually in overthrowing it.

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Model Questions

1. Write a note on the political achievements of Chandragupta Maurya
2. Discuss the character of Chandragupta Maurya
3. Estimate the character of emperor Asoka
4. Write an essay on religious policy of king Asoka

AGE OF EMPIRES
UNIT- I
Lesson- 2

Mauryan Administration

Objectives:

- To understand the uniqueness of Mauryan administration
- To understand various administrative units of Mauryan administration
- To understand different categories of officers and employees in Mauryan administration

Introduction:

Mauryan administrative system has a great recognition in the world. Mauryans have introduced a strong and able administrative mechanism during ancient India. It is also viewed that Mauryans have followed certain Buddhist values in their administrative policies. The following are the sources of history which gave us information about the mauryan period.

1. **Account of Magasthense:** The chief source of history of the Mauryan Age is Accounts of Magasthenses i.e. the book named Indica. Although the book is not available in full but some parts of it are found in some books of Greece. Magasthenses throws light on the following features of India. There was no check on the emperor of the Mauryan age. He was the chief of the army and the judiciary. Patliputra was the capital of the Mauryan Empire. The administration of the State was done by six councils. The subjects were divided into seven castes. The people of every caste were occupied in special trades.

3. **Mudrarakshsa:** „Mudrarakshsa“ also throws light on the life of the mauryans. It is a historical play, which was composed in the 15th century. The famous writer of the Gupta period, Vishakhadatta wrote it. The book tells how Chandragupta put an end to Nanda dynasty, how he established his empire with the help of Chanakya and how he made friendship with Porus. The „Mudrarakshsa“ also tells us about the caste of Chandragupta Maurya.

4. **Puranas:** The Puranas are also a rich repository of information. They tell us that the rulers of Nanda dynasty were Sudras. Chanakya ended them and put Chandragupta on the throne. Jain and Buddhist Traditions: The Jain and Buddhist literatures have also given us a glimpse into the Mauryan Empire. The „Mahavams“, the „Deepvams“ and the „Mahabodhivams“ can be mentioned in this regard. The „Kalpsutra“ of the Jains is also noteworthy. This book tells that Chandragupta Maurya had become a follower of the Jainism in the last years of his life. The Buddhist scriptures tell that Ashoka was very

cruel before the adoption of the Buddhism. But, later, he became a benevolent king. The Buddhist literature tells us that Ashoka had summoned the third Buddhist Council.

5. **Arthashastra**, written by Koutilya deals with various aspects of the arts of government is a huge work of great historical significance. It was compiled by Kautilya, a great scholar and prime-minister at the court of Chandragupta Maurya. He has described the principles of administration in his book. This work not only provides us information about the Mauryan period but throws ample light on the administration and other achievements of Chandragupta Maurya. It also tells us about the society in the Mauryan period. The most remarkable thing about this book is that the principles of administration described in it. It still serves as guiding principles for the modern politicians.

Concepts

1. Dhamma: Emperor Ashoka presented the practical form of Buddhist principles for the moral uplift of the people. In history it is known as Dhamma or "The Law of Piety."

2. Rajuka: Rajukas were a type of officials appointed by Ashoka. They could punish as well as reward the people. Compiled by: Mr. Riyaz Kathjoo (Dean Academics "GVEI") Editor: Junaid Qadri

3. Bherigoshha: Bherigoshha means the declaration of war and conquering people by wars.

4. Shramanas: Shramanas was sect in the time of Ashoka.

5. Dharamam-hamatra: Dharamam-hamatras were the officials appointed by Ashoka for the propagation of religion.

6. Dharmapravartika: Dharmapravartika was a name given to king. This name was given by Kautilya. He called the king Dharmapravartika or the organizer of the social order.

7. Tirthas: Senior officials were called Tirthas during the rule of the Mauryas. This category included ministers, priests, commanders-in-chief and crown princes. They were paid in cash.

8. Pana: Pana was a kind of silver coin which weighed three-fourth of tolas. All higher officials received as much as 48 thousand panas while the junior officials were given 60 panas.

9. Samaharta: Samahara was the official who assessed taxes in the Mauryan period.

10. Sannidhata: Sannidhata was the chief custodian of the state treasury and store house during the rule of the Mauryas.

6. **Inscriptions**: in additions, there are inscriptions which give us information of that age. Ashoka made inscriptions on pillars, stones and in caves. They impart information regarding the administration, religious policy, education system and character of Ashoka. The Rudradaman and Junagarh inscriptions tell that the empire of Chandragupta Maurya was extended in the south also.

7. **Other Sources** - Coins: in addition, the coins also give us a historical background of the

Administrative Divisions:

1. Central Government:

The Central Government. The constituents of Central Government were the King, the Council of Ministers and the high officials. The King possessed the supreme authority. He was the fountainhead of all civil and military administration. He led a splendid life and lived in a spacious place. But he never forgot his duty towards his people. There was a council of ministers to aid and advice the king. Each minister was entrusted with a special department to look after. There were several officials like superintendents or Adyakshas, Amatyas, Rajukas and Pradeshilaks to help the king and the ministers in discharging their duties. Their conduct was watched by a class of special official called „Dharma Mahamtras, who themselves were men of proven honesty and noble character.

2. Provincial Administration:

The whole Mauryan Empire was divided into four provinces, for the purpose of efficient administration. a) The Central Province had its capital at Pataliputra and was administered by the king himself. b) The North-west Province had its capital at Taxila. c) The Western Province had its capital at Ujjain. d) The southern Province had its capital at Swarnagiri. All these provinces were administered by governors who were usually of the royal family. The conduct of these governors and other officials was strictly watched by specially appointed spies who reported even the smallest happening in the empire to the king. The Provinces were further divided into districts which were administered by the „Sthaniks“. The next units of administration were similar to modern tehsils, which were groups of four to ten villages and were administered by the „Gupas“. The village head was called the „Gramika“. 3. Municipal Administration. There was a special administrative set up for cities like Pataliputra. There was a council of thirty members to look after the administration, which were divided into six boards. Each board consisted of five members to perform its functions which were as follows:

- (1) The first Board looked after the development of craft and industries and fixed the wages of the workers and artisans and helped them in time of need.
- (2) The Second Board was in charge of the foreigners and looked after their comforts. It also provided them whatever they needed and kept a strict vigil on their activities.
- (3) The third Board kept a record of births and deaths for the purpose of efficient administration and proper taxation.
- (4) The Fourth Board was entrusted with the task of regulating trade. It also checked weights and measures used by the traders and punished the offenders.
- (5) The Fifth Board kept supervision on the quality of the manufactured goods.
- (6) The Sixth Board was responsible for collecting taxes on the sale of goods.

3. Income and Expenditure:

Land Revenue was the major source of income which varied from 1/4 to 1/6 of the total produce: depending on its fertility. The other sources of income were taxes on mines, income from forests, toll-tax, ferry duties and fines etc. This income was used on expenditure in connection with the king and his court, salaries to the armies and officials, construction of roads and hospitals, charity, irrigation, projects etc. In this way, heads of income and expenditure were well regulated.

4. The Judicial System.

The Mauryan kings gave a special interest to the administration of justice and themselves looked it. In the villages justice was dispensed with by the Panchayats while in cities, the cases were decided by the city courts, which were competent to try both the citizens and the officials. The cases against the decisions of the local courts were heard by the Provincial Courts, while the king was the highest court of appeal. He heard appeals against the Provincial Courts. Punishments were severe. Fines, flogging and chopping of hands etc. were common while in extreme cases death sentence was also awarded. Ashoka made these punishments somewhat lenient. The judicial system was so efficient that offences like theft were very rare. In this connection Megasthenes writes that average daily theft in Pataliputra with a population of about 6,00,000 did not exceed eight pounds. Compiled by: Mr. Riyaz Kathjoo (Dean Academics "GVEI") Editor: Junaid Qadri

5. Works of Public Utility.

Whatever projects were undertaken by the Mauryan rulers, they were aimed at promoting the public welfare. Dividing the empire in small units, introduction of efficient judicial system, awarding severe punishments to offenders, setting spies on dishonest functionaries and appointment of Dharma Mahamatras by Ashoka are evidence of their desire to promote the public welfare and to protect their interests. They also constructed canals and dug tanks of irrigation, constructed roads for the development of trade and planted trees on either side of the roads.

6. The Military Administration

Chandragupta kept a big army, which included 6,00,000 foot soldiers, 3,000 cavalry men, 9,000 elephants and 8,000 chariots. Each elephant and chariot was manned by three or four soldiers respectively. In this way, his army was about 7,00,000 strong. They were given cash salaries. Only men of tested bravery and patience were recruited as soldiers. The king was the commander-in-chief of his armies, who led them in war. There was also a separate department of thirty members for the administration of army. This department was divided into six Boards which looked after the functions of (1) Admiralty (2) Transport and Supplies; (3) Infantry; (4) Cavalry; (5) Chariots and (6) Elephants. The different wings of the Mauryan army were well-equipped with latest weapons.

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Model Questions:

1. Write an essay on administration of Mauryans
2. Discuss the nature of Mauryan administration

AGE OF EMPIRES

UNIT –II

Lesson-1

THE INDO AND BACTRIAN GREEKS AND KUSHANS

Objectives:

- To understand the political background of the Indo- Bactrian Greeks, Kushans and the kingdoms in south India
- To understand the political history of Indo- Greeks, Satavahanas, Sakas, Kharavela of Kalinga, Pallavas, Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms

Introduction:

Bactria and Parthia were the two districts of the Empire of Seleucus. Sometimes about 250 B.C., both Bactria and Parthia revolted against Antiochus II, the grandson of Seleucus. Neither Antiochus II nor any of his immediate successors was strong enough to put down the revolts and consequently. Both Bactrians was Diodotos I and that of the Parthians was Arsakes.

Sources:

Some narrative history has survived for most of the Hellenistic world, at least of the kings and the wars; this is lacking for India. The main Greco-Roman source on the Indo-Greeks is Justin, who wrote an anthology drawn from the Roman historian Pompeius Trogus, who in turn wrote, from Greek sources, at the time of Augustus Caesar. Justin tells the parts of Trogus' history he finds particularly interesting at some length; he connects them by short and simplified summaries of the rest of the material. In the process he has left 85% to 90% of Trogus out; and his summaries are held together by phrases like "meanwhile" and "thereafter", which he uses

very loosely. Where Justin covers periods for which there are other and better sources, he has occasionally made provable mistakes. As Develin, the recent annotator of Justin, and Tarn both point out, Justin is not trying to write history in our sense of the word; he is collecting instructive moral anecdotes. Justin does find the customs and growth of the Parthians, which were covered in Trogus' 41st book, quite interesting, and discusses them at length; in the process, he mentions four of the kings of Bactria and one Greek king of India.

Menander I (155–130 BC) is one of the few Indo-Greek kings mentioned in both Graeco-Roman and Indian sources. In addition to these dozen sentences, the geographer Strabo mentions India a few times in the course of his long dispute with Eratosthenes about the shape of Eurasia. Most of these are purely geographical claims, but he does mention that Eratosthenes' sources say that some of the Greek kings conquered further than Alexander; Strabo does not believe them on this, but modern historians do; nor does he believe that Menander and Demetrius son of Euthydemus conquered more tribes than Alexander. There is half a story about Menander in one of the books of Polybius which has not come down to us intact.

There are Indian literary sources, ranging from the *Milinda Panha*, a dialogue between a Buddhist sage Nagasena and King Menander I, which includes some incidental information on Menander's biography and the geography and institutions of his kingdom, down to a sentence about Menander and his attack on Pataliputra which happens to have survived as a standard example in grammar texts; none is a narrative history. Names in these sources are consistently Indianized, and there is some dispute whether, for example, Dharmamitra represents "Demetrius" or is an Indian prince with that name. There was also a Chinese expedition to Bactria by Chang-k'ien under the Emperor Wu of Han, recorded in the *Records of the Grand Historian* and *Book of the Former Han*, with additional evidence in the *Book of the Later Han*; the identification of places and peoples behind transcriptions into Chinese is difficult, and several alternate interpretations have been proposed.

There is also significant archaeological evidence, including some epigraphic evidence, for the Indo-Greek kings, such as the mention of the "Yavana" embassy of king Antialcidas on

the Heliodorus pillar in Vidisha, primarily in Indic languages, which has the same problems with names as the Indic literary evidence. But the chief archaeological evidence is the coins.

There are coin finds of several dozen Indo-Greek rulers in India; exactly how many is complicated to determine, because the Greeks did not number their kings, and the eastern Greeks did not date their coins. For example, there are a substantial number of coin finds for a King Demetrius, but authors have postulated one, two, or three Demetrius, and the same coins have been identified by different enquirers as describing Demetrius I, Demetrius II, or Demetrius III. The following deductions have been made from coins, in addition to mere existence:

- Kings who left many coins reigned long and prosperously.
- Hoards which contain many coins of the same king come from his realm.
- Kings who use the same iconography are friendly, and may well be from the same family,
- If a king overstrikes another king's coins, this is an important evidence to show that the overstriker reigned after the overstruck. Overstrikes may indicate that the two kings were enemies.
- Indo-Greek coins, like other Hellenistic coins, have monograms in addition to their inscriptions. These are generally held to indicate a mint official; therefore, if two kings issue coins with the same monogram, they reigned in the same area, and if not immediately following one another, have no long interval between them.

All of these arguments are arguments of probability, and have exceptions; one of Menander's coins was found in Wales. The exact time and progression of the Bactrian expansion into India is difficult to ascertain, but ancient authors name Demetrius, Apollodotus, and Menander as conquerors.

The Bactrian Greeks:

Before his revolt, Diodotos I had ruled over Bactria and Sogdiana for a long time as a Governor of the Seleucid emperors. As a satrap, he had helped Antiochus I against Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt. Diodotos I was so powerful that he was feared by his neighbours and Arsakes had to keep a large army on a war-footing on account of fear from him.

Diodotos I was succeeded by his son Diodotos II. The latter made an alliance with the king of Parthia. The result was that both Bactria and Parthia were saved from Seleucus II. The rule of Diodotos II seems to have ended some time before 212 B.C. He was not only removed from the throne by Euthydemus but also killed after his dethronement.

Euthydemus:

Euthydemus I himself had no peace. He himself was involved in a long war with Antiochos, the Great, of Syria. Finding his very existence at stake, Euthydemus I approached Antiochus for an honourable settlement. It was contended that he himself was not a rebel but had put the children to the rebels to death. If peace was not made between Bactria and Syria, there was every likelihood of both of them being destroyed by the Scythian barbarians who were always on the look out to fish in troubled waters. The importance of a strong and independent Bactria as a buffer state was emphasized. Antiochus was very much impressed and he not only recognized the independence of Bactria but also married one of his daughters to Demetrius, the son of Euthydemus. We do not know whether Bactria under Euthydemus carried her arms towards the South beyond the Hindu-Kush or not. However, it appears that parts of Arachosia and the Provinces of Paropamisus and Aria were conquered during his reign. It is not possible to say as to when exactly Euthydemus died but probably that happened in about 190 B.C. It was under the able guidance of this energetic and powerful ruler that Bactria rose to the height of her glory. She was feared and respected by her neighbours, including Parthia.

Demetrius:

Euthydemus was succeeded by his son, Demetrius. The latter was destined to play a prominent part in the history of Bactria and India. Demetrius was the person who was responsible after Alexander for carrying Greek arms into the interior of India. His Indian expedition became the first of a series of subsequent Bactrian invasions of India. India's intimate contact with the Greeks began with the career of Demetrius.

Demetrius crossed the Hindu-Kush Mountains with a large army sometime in the early part of his reign. He conquered portions of the Punjab and Sindh. He probably founded cities for the purpose of effective administration of the newly acquired territories. Demetrius settled Greek garrisons in particular localities to protect his flank and rear during his Indian advance, and those

must have helped the establishment of the settlements of the Bactrian Greeks later on. It is not possible to fix the exact limits of the advance of Demetrius into the interior of India but on account of his absence from Bactria for a long time, his position became weak and Eucratides was able to capture the throne of Bactria.

Eucratides:

Not much is known about Eucratides who made himself the master of Bactria after the overthrow of Demetrius. However, he carried on the struggle with the successors of Demetrius in Bactria and India. While Eucratides was returning home after one of his conquering expeditions in India, he was attacked and murdered by his son. The latter drove his chariot over the body of his father and ordered the dead body to be thrown away. This happened in about 155 B.C.

Heliocles:

Heliocles has been almost unanimously regarded as the immediate successor of Eucratides. It is generally believed that the Scythians or Sakas were responsible for driving Heliocles out of Bactria. The rule of Heliocles ended sometime after 135 B.C.

After the loss of Bactria, the Yavanas continued to rule in central and Southern Afghanistan and North-Western India. Their rule in those regions was characterized by internecine fighting amongst the various princes belonging to the houses of Demetrius and Eucratides. We can gather from the coins the names of more than thirty Indo-Bactrian Greek rulers, including Menander.

Appollodotus:

The classical writers mention Appollodotus twice in association with Menander. It appears that he was an elder contemporary of Menander. He was probably his younger brother. We are not certain about the extent of his empire.

Menander:

Menander was the greatest of the Indo-Greek rulers. He was born in a village 200 Yojanas from Sakala which was his capital. Sakala is modern Sialkot in Pakistan. We are not in a

position to state the exact nature of the connection of Menander with the house of Euthydemus. In the Milindapanha, he is described as belonging to a royal family. However, it appears that he was a commoner. It is possible that he was connected by marriage with the house of Euthydemus. The view of Prof. Rapson is that Menander married Agathocleia, the daughter of Demetrius.

THE KUSHANA EMPIRE

The first Kushan ruler was Kujula Kadphises, who may be identified with the Yabgu of Guishuang named Qiu Jiuque in Hou Han shu. Numismatic evidence shows that Kujula Kadphises continued to imitate posthumous types of coinage of the last Indo-Greek ruler in central Afghanistan. Other copper coins issued by Kujula Kadphises copy the royal portrait on the obverse from gold coins of the Roman emperor Augustus (31 BCE - 14 CE). The image of the seated Roman emperor is transformed into a Kushan ruler, who is identified as Kujula Kadphises in Greek and Kharosthi legends. As the Kushans progressed further into northwestern India, Kujula Kadphises adopted the title "Great King, King of Kings" on coins patterned on those of Saka and Parthian rulers. More than 2,500 coins of Kujula Kadphises were found in the latest strata of excavations at the site of Sirkap at Taxila, before the main settlement was shifted to Sirsukh during the period of Kujula Kadphises' successors. Although an absolute chronology is very difficult to establish for the long reign of Kujula Kadphises, numismatic evidence reflects the growth of Kushan hegemony following the reign of the Indo-Parthian ruler Gondophares (after 46 CE)

Under the rule of the Kushan, northwest India and adjoining regions participated both in seagoing trade and in commerce along the Silk Road to China. The name Kushan derives from the Chinese term Guishang, used in historical writings to describe one branch of the Yuezhi a loose confederation of Indo-European people who had been living in northwestern China until they were driven west by another group, the Xiongnu, in 176–160 B.C. The Yuezhi reached Bactria (northwest Afghanistan and Tajikistan) around 135 B.C. Kujula Kadphises united the disparate tribes in the first century B.C. Gradually wresting control of the area from the Scytho-Parthians, the Yuezhi moved south into the northwest Indian region traditionally known as

Gandhara (now parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan) and established a capital near Kabul. They had learned to use a form of the Greek alphabet, and Kujula's son was the first Indian ruler to strike gold coins in imitation of the Roman aureus exchanged along the caravan routes.

The rule of Kanishka, the third Kushan emperor who flourished from the late first to the early/mid-second century A.D., was administered from two capitals: Purushapura (now Peshawar) near the Khyber Pass, and Mathura in northern India. Under Kanishka's rule, at the height of the dynasty, Kushan controlled a large territory ranging from the Aral Sea through areas that include present-day Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan into northern India as far east as Benares and as far south as Sanchi. It was also a period of great wealth marked by extensive mercantile activities and a flourishing of urban life, Buddhist thought, and the visual arts.

The Gandhara region at the core of the Kushan Empire was home to a multiethnic society tolerant of religious differences. Desirable for its strategic location, with direct access to the overland silk routes and links to the ports on the Arabian Sea, Gandhara had suffered many conquests and had been ruled by the Mauryans, Alexander the Great (327/26–325/24 B.C.), his Indo-Greek successors (third–second centuries B.C.), and a combination of Scythians and Parthians (second–first centuries B.C.). The melding of peoples produced an eclectic culture, vividly expressed in the visual arts produced during the Kushan period. Themes derived from Greek and Roman mythologies were common initially, while later, Buddhist imagery dominated: some of the first representations of the Buddha in human form date to the Kushan era, as do the earliest depictions of bodhisattvas.

Tetradrachm of Kujula Kadphises (30–80 C.E.)

According to the Hou Hanshu (compiled by Fan Ye in the fifth century): "the prince of Guishuang (Badakhshan and the adjoining territories north of the Oxus), named Kujula Kadphises attacked and exterminated the four other princes. He set himself up as king of a kingdom called Guishuang."

He invaded Anxi (Parthia) and took the Gaofu (Kabul) region. He also defeated the whole of the kingdoms of Puda, and Jibin (Kapisha-Gandhara). Qiujiuque (Kujula Kadphises) was more than 80 years old when he died. Those conquests probably took place sometime

between 45 and 60, and laid the basis for the Kushan Empire which was rapidly expanded by his descendants. Kujula issued an extensive series of coins and fathered at least two sons, Sadaṣkaṇa, known from only two inscriptions, especially the Rabatak inscription, and apparently never have ruled, and apparently Vima Taktu. Kujula Kadphises had been the great grandfather of Kanishka.

Vima Taktu (80–105)

The Rabatak inscription mentions Sadashkana, leaving out mention of Vima Takt. He had been the predecessor of Vima Kadphises, and Kanishka I, expanding the Kushan Empire into the northwest of the Indian subcontinent.

Vima Kadphises (105–127)

Vima Kadphises was a Kushan emperor from around 90–100 C.E., the son of Sadashkana and the grandson of Kujula Kadphises, and the father of Kanishka I, as detailed by the Rabatak inscription.

Vima Kadphises added to the Kushan territory by his conquests in Afghanistan and north-west India. He issued an extensive series of coins and inscriptions. He was the first to introduce gold coinage in India, in addition to the existing copper and silver coinage.

Kanishka I (127–147)

The rule of Kanishka, fifth Kushan king, flourished for at least 28 years from c. 127. Upon his accession, Kanishka ruled a massive territory, covering virtually all of northern India, south to Ujjain and Kundina and east beyond Pataliputra, according to the Rabatak inscription.

He administered the territory from two capitals: Purushapura (now Peshawar in northern Pakistan) and Mathura, in northern India. He, along with Raja Dab, has been identified as the builder of the massive, ancient Fort at Bathinda (Qila Mubarak), in the modern city of Bathinda, Indian Punjab.

The Kushans also had a summer capital in Bagram (then known as Kapisa), where the "Begram Treasure," comprising works of art from Greece to China, has been found. According to the Rabatak inscription, Kanishka had been the son of Vima Kadphises, the grandson of

Sadashkana, and the great-grandson of Kujula Kadphises. Kanishka's era began in 127, used as a calendar reference by the Kushans for about a century, until the decline of the Kushan realm.

Vasishka:

Vasishka had been a Kushan emperor, who had a short reign following Kanishka. His rule extended as far south as Sanchi (near Vidisa), where several inscriptions in his name have been found, dated to the year 22 (The Sanchi inscription of "Vaksushana" – i.e. Vasishka Kushana) and year 28 (The Sanchi inscription of Vasaska – i.e. Vasishka) of the Kanishka era.

Huvishka (140–183)

Huvishka had been a Kushan emperor from the death of Kanishka in 140 C.E. until the succession of Vasudeva I, about 40 years later. His rule was a period of retrenchment and consolidation for the Empire. In particular he devoted time and effort early in his reign to the exertion of greater control over the city of Mathura.

Vasudeva I (191–225)

Vasudeva I ruled as the last of the "Great Kushans." Named inscriptions dating from year 64 to 98 of Kanishka's era suggest his reign extended from at least 191 to 225 C.E. The last great Kushan emperor, the end of his rule coincides with the invasion of the Sassanids as far as northwestern India, and the establishment of the Indo-Sassanids or Kushanshahs from around 240 C.E.

Kanishka II

Vasudeva was succeeded by Kanishka II, probably around the year 225 CE or soon thereafter, and he reigned for approximately 20 years. The empire was already under attack from the Sasanians in the northwest, and it appears that Kanishka II lost some ground in this struggle. Nevertheless, he continued to issue coins in the region, so it is not clear how much territory he lost and exactly when he did so. Perhaps the area north of the Hindu Kush was lost but the area south of the mountains was retained.

Attributing coins to Kanishka II is not easy. Most coins come without a clear and complete circular legend, so we must rely on the few examples that do have readable legends.

The copper coinage is particularly difficult because the king's name is never on the flan ... we must rely on other clues. One interesting aspect of this coinage is that, while Kanishka the Great's name was always presented in the genitive case as KANηϐKI, Kanishka II's name is always presented in the nominative as KANηϐKO

THE SAKAS

The Sakas or Scythians were nomadic tribes who originally belonged to Central Asia. In about 165 B.C. they were turned out of their original home by the Yech-chi. The Sakas migrated to the South-West and fought against the Greek kingdom of Bactria. Most of the Sakas settled down in the valley of the river Hilmand and established small states there. One of those settlements is still known as Sakistan or Seistan. With the passage of time, more Sakas come from Central Asia and consequently those who had settled in the North-West crossed the Hindu-Kush and Sulaiman ranges to settle in Northern India. They came into conflict with the Parthians. Some of the Saka chiefs joined service under the Parthians and were even appointed Governors or Satraps of the various provinces of the Parthian kingdom.

According to Dr.J.N.Banerjea, most of the Saka invaders come to India by an indirect route. They did not come through the Khyber Pass. After crossing the Hindu-Kush, they entered the northern borders of Gedrosia and then entered into the Indus Valley through the Bolan Pass. In India, the Sakas adapted themselves to their new environments and began to adopt Indian names and religious beliefs. They entered into matrimonial relations with the Indians.

On the basis of the information got from coins, two or more lines of Saka kings ruling over the northern, north-western and western parts of India have been recognized by scholars. Some of the Saka chiefs are known from Kharoshthi and Brahmi inscriptions. The two main royal lines of the Sakas known from the coins are those of Maues in the Punjab and its adjoining lands and of Vonones and his associates in Arachosia or Kandhar and Gedrosia and Drangiana or Baluchistan regions. Maues and probably Azes are mentioned in a few Kharoshthi inscriptions. However, neither Vonones were roughly contemporary rulers. The view of Dr.V.A.Smith was that Maues and Vonones were Parthians by race. Dr.J.N.Banerjea concedes that there are some Parthian elements associated with those rulers. The names Vonones I and Vonones II are

Parthian names. The title of “King of Kings” prefixed to the names of the kings belonging to the Vonones and Maues groups is also Parthian.

Maues: Maues ruled from about 20 B.C. to 22 A.D. He cut off his relations with the „Great King of Kings“ of east Iran. He extended Saka suzerainty over large parts of North-Western India. He also took up the title of „Great King of Kings“. The occupation of Gandhara by Maues is suggested by the Taxila inscription. By his conquests, Maues drove a wedge between the two Indo-Greek kingdoms. The sakas extended their power up to Mathura during his reign.

Azes: we learn from coins that Maues was succeeded by Azes. He ruled from about 5 B.C. to 30 A.D. It is possible that Azes was the son-in-law of Maues. He not only ruled over the territory of Maues but also extirpated the independent rule of the house of Euthydemus.

Azilisis: Azilises was the son of Azes. For some time, he ruled jointly with his father and after his death, he became the sole ruler. He ruled from about 28 A.D. to 40 A.D.

We have come across some coins which bear the names of both Azilises and Azes. It is contended that Azes ruled from about 35 A.D. to 79 A.D. It is also suggested that Azilises I was succeeded by Azes whose successor was Azilises II. Azes I is considered to have been the founder of the Vikram Era starting from 58 B.C.

About the beginning of the first century A.D., the Parthian Empire had under its control Heart, the country of Anauoi, Drangiana, Sakastan and Arachosia in the east.

Gondophernes: Azes II was succeeded by Gondophernes or Gondophares. His name indicates that he was a Parthian by race. We learn from coins that Gondophernes with one Gudda was ruling, probably somewhere in Arachosia, as the Viceregal associate of Orthagnes, before he became king himself. Gondophernes gradually extended his power in different directions and became an emperor. He used some of the coin-types of Orthagnes which may point to his control over east Iran. It is maintained that he conquered certain districts of the Kushan empire. His success against the Sakas in India was more conspicuous.

The name of Gondophernes is associated with St.Thomas, the apstle of the Parhians. However, the genuineness of the traditions is not accepted by scholars. According to Dr.V.A.Smith, the whole story is pure mythology. The geography is as mythical as the tale itself. Its interest in the eyes of the historians of India is confined to the fact that it proves that the real Indian king. Gondophernes was remembered agter his death and associated in popular belief with the apostolic mission to the Indins and so with the Parthians. It is permissible to believe that a Christian mission actually visited the Indo-Parthians of the North-Western frontier during his reigh, whether or not that mission was conducted by St.Thomas in person. It is to be noted that there is no trace of the subsequent existence of a Christian community in the dominions ruled by Gondophernes.

Abdagases seems to have been the immediate successor of Gondophernes. He was succeeded by Pacores. His reign was very short. We come across the coins of another king named Sanabares. The end of the Parthian rule in India is marked by several groups of small coins. However, foreign domination of the Northern and North-Western parts of India did not end with the extinction of the Parthians. The latter were succeeded by the Kushan.

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QUESTIONS:

1. Kanishka was a patron of Art & Letters. Do you agree with this?
2. Describe main features of Administration during Chola Period.
3. Who were Sakas? Throw light on their History in India.

Age of Empires

Unit- II

Lesson-II

THE SATAVAHANAS

Early Satavahanas:

The founder of the Satavahana dynasty was Simuka. He and his successors established their authority from the mouth of the Krishna to the entire Deccan plateau. According to the Puranas, the Satavahana king killed the last Kanva ruler of Magadha and presumably took possession of his kingdom.

The earliest of the Satavahana kings to receive wide recognition was Satakarni I, and this was due to his policy of military expansion in all directions. He is the Lord of the west who defied Kharavela of Kalinga and against whom the latter campaigned. His conquests took him north of the Narmada into eastern Malva, which at the time was being threatened by the Shakas and the Greeks.

Satakarni I gained control of the region of Sanchi, and an inscription there refers to him as Rajan Shri Satakarni. His next move was in the southerly direction and on conquering the Godavari valley he felt entitled to call himself Lord of the Southern Regions" (Dakshina – pathapati).

The description of Satakarni I as („Dakshina -pathapati) in the Nanaghat inscription of Nayanika proves that the Satavahana dominion was not confined to western Deccan alone, but included other areas of the Deccan and beyond Satakarni I performed two Asvamedha sacrifices and one Rajasuya sacrifice.

Later Satavahanas:

After the reign of Satakarni I, the Satavahanas were driven out of the western Deccan by the Shakas of the Kshaharata clan. Coins and inscriptions of the Shaka Chief Nahapana have been found around Nasik, indicating the Shaka dominance in the area towards the close of the first century A.D. or the beginning of the second.

But it must have been soon after this that the Satavahanas regained their western possessions, for the coins of Nahapana are often found over-struck by the name Gautamiputra Satakarni, the king who was responsible for re-establishing Satavahana power in this region by driving out the Shakas.

Gautamiputra Satakarni (A.D. 106 -130) is said to have destroyed the power of the Shakas and the pride of the Kshatriyas, promoted the interests of the twice-born and stopped the mixing of the four varnas. His achievements are recorded in glowing terms in the Nasik prasasti by his mother Gautami Balasri.

He ruled over a wide area extending from the Krishna in the south to Malwa and Saurashtra in the north and from Berar in the east to the Konkan in the west. To the Buddhists he made munificent donations. His patronage to Brahmanism is revealed by the epithet „Ekabrahmana“.

The Satavahana Rulers and their Conquests:

There were about 19 Satavahana rulers of whom the most important were Simuka who conquered Magadha and Krishna who occupied Nasik. Sri Satakarni conquered Berar and Madhya Pradesh. Little is known about their successors for about a century except Hala the 17th ruler of this dynasty.

Shri Gautamiputra Satakarni conquered Malwa, Kathiawar, Gujarat and part of the Rajputana. Shri Pulumavi had perpetual conflict with Rudradaman. The last king was Yagya Sri Satakarni who was a strong ruler. He waged wars to recover the territories conquered previously by the Saka rulers.

KHARAVELA OF KALINGA

The chief source of information about emperor Kharavela is the Hathigumpha inscription at Udayagiri caves, near the modern city of Bhubaneswar. According to the inscription, Kharavela belonged to the Chedi clan, and was a lineal descendant of the sage king Vasu. Apart from this eulogistic descent amounting to a myth, several historians have tried to speculate the origin of Kharavela. However, in absence of any material evidence to the converse, Kharavela has been accepted as being from an Oriya descent. Etymologically, the name Kharavela is the "Salty shore".

In Northwestern India, there is a clan of Jats named Khārvēl claiming descent from Kharavela during his north-western conquests. Similarly, Air has been stated as a clan that originated from a Nagavanshi ruler named Airawat. However, deep and multi-disciplinary research is required to arrive at the exact origin of Kharavela.

SOUTH INDIAN PANDYA, CHOLA AND CHERA KINGDOMS

Evidence in the forms of documents and inscriptions do not appear often in the history of ancient South India. Although there are signs that the history dates back to several centuries BCE, we only have any authentic archeological evidence from the early centuries of the common era.

During the reign of Ashoka (304–232 BCE) the three Tamil dynasties of Chola, Chera and Pandya were running in the south, probably with late megalithic phase material culture. These areas (known as Tamilakam- "Land of Tamils"), while not part of Ashoka's empire, were in friendly terms with the Maurya Empire.

Pandvas:

The Pandyas were one of the three ancient Tamil dynasties (Chola and Chera being the other two) who ruled the Tamil country from pre-historic times until the end of the 15th century. They ruled initially from Korkai, a sea port on the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula, and in later times moved to Madurai. Pandyas are mentioned in Sangam Literature (c. 100 – 200 CE) as well as by Greek and Roman sources during this period.

The early Pandyan dynasty of the Sangam literature went into obscurity during the invasion of the Kalabhras. The dynasty revived under Kadungon in the early 6th century, pushed the Kalabhras out of the Tamil country and ruled from Madurai. They again went into decline with the rise of the Cholas in the 9th century and were in constant conflict with them. Pandyas allied themselves with the Sinhalese and the Keralas in harassing the Chola empire until they found an opportunity for reviving their fortunes during the late 13th century. Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan expanded their empire into the Telugu country and invaded Sri Lanka to conquer the northern half of the island. They also had extensive trade links with the Southeast Asian maritime empires of Srivijaya and their successors. During their history Pandyas were repeatedly in conflict with the Pallavas, Cholas, Hoysalas and finally the Muslim invaders from the Delhi Sultanate. The Pandyan Kingdom finally became extinct after the establishment of the Madurai Sultanate in the 14th century. The Pandyas excelled in both trade and literature. They controlled the pearl fisheries along the south Indian coast, between Sri Lanka and India, which produced one of the finest pearls known in the ancient world.

Cholas:

The Cholas were one of the three main dynasties to rule south India from ancient times. Karikala Chola was the famous king during the early centuries of the common era and managed to gain ascendancy over the Pandyas and Cheras. The Chola dynasty however went into a period of decline from c. 4th century CE. This period coincided with the ascendancy of Kalabhras who

moved down from the northern Tamil country displacing the established kingdoms and ruled over most of south India for almost 300 years.

Vijayalaya Chola revived the Chola dynasty in 850 CE by conquering Thanjavur and made it his capital. His son Aditya I defeated the Pallava king Aparajita and extended the Chola territories to Tondaimandalam. The centers of the Chola Kingdom were at Kanchi (Kanchipuram) and Thanjavur. One of the most powerful rulers of the Chola kingdom was Raja Raja Chola. He ruled from 985 to 1014 CE. His army conquered the Navy of the Cheras at Thiruvananthapuram, and annexed Anuradhapura and the northern province of Ceylon. Rajendra Chola I completed the conquest of Sri Lanka, invaded Bengal, and undertook a great naval campaign that occupied parts of Malaya, Burma, and Sumatra. The Chola dynasty began declining by the 13th century and ended in 1279. Cholas were great builders and have left some of the most beautiful examples of early Dravidian temple architecture. Brihadisvara Temple in Thanjavur is a fine example and has been listed as one of the United Nations' World Heritage sites.

Chera:

The Chera kingdom was one of the Tamil dynasties who ruled the southern India from ancient times until around the 12th century CE. The Early Cheras ruled over the Malabar Coast, Coimbatore, Erode, Namakkal, Karur and Salem Districts in South India, which now forms part of the modern day Indian states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Throughout the reign of the Early Cheras, trade continued to bring prosperity to their territories, with spices, ivory, timber, pearls and gems being exported to the Middle East and to southern Europe. Evidence of extensive foreign trade from ancient times can be seen throughout the Malabar coast (Muziris), Karur and Coimbatore districts.

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Model Questions

1. Write about the achievement of King Kharvela. Which inscription has made him immortal?
2. Vividly describe the Satavhana rule in South India
3. Write an essay on south Indian Kingdoms Chera, Chola and Pandya.

AGE OF EMPIRES
UNIT -III
LESSON - I

RISE AND GROWTH OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

Objectives:

- To understand the background of the Gupta empire
- To understand political history and live of Gupta Kings

Introduction:

After the break-up of the Mouryan Empire, the Satavahanas and Kushans emerged as the two large powers. The Satavahanas acted as a stabilizing factor in the Deccan and the South to which they provided political unity and economic prosperity on the strength of their trade with Roman Empire. The Kushans performed the same role in the North. Both these empires came to an end in the mid-third century.

On the ruins of the Kushan empire arose a new empire that established its sway over substantial part of the former dominions of the Kushans. This was the empire of the Guptas, who may have been of vaishya origin. Different titles are recommended for the different varnas by the Dharmashastras. The title shaman or auspicious is recommended for the Brahmana, varman or armour for the Kshatriya, Gupta or hidden (also protected) for the Vaishya and dasa or servile for the Shudra. Although the Gupta Empire was not as large as the Mourya Empire, it kept North India politically united for over a century from AD 335 to 455. The original kingdom of the Guptas comprised up and Bihar at the end of the third century, up appears to have been a more important province for the guptas than Bihar, because early Gupta coins and inscriptions are largely found in that state. If we exclude some feudatories and private individuals whose inscriptions are largely found in mp, up stands out as the most important area in relation to finds of Gupta antiquities. Up therefore seems to have been the place

from where the Gupta's operated and fanned out in different directions probably with their centre of power at prayag, they spread in to the neighboring regions.

Theory of the Allahabad origin of Gupta Kingdom

S.R. Goyal⁶⁰ propounds the view that the Guptas originally belonged to the Allahabad region of Eastern Uttar Pradesh on the basis of the arguments summarized below.

1. The Chandragupta –I – Kumaradevi coins, constituting the earliest of the Gupta gold coin series, have been mostly discovered in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, and no coin of this type has been found in Bihar.
2. Whereas as many as fourteen hoards of the Gupta gold coins have been unearthed in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and Bihar have yielded two apiece.
3. The hoards of the Gupta gold coins, found in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, contain generally speaking the coins of the early Gupta kings, unlike those from Bengal and Bihar where we find mostly the issues of the later Gupta rulers.
4. Of the fifteen inscriptions of the first hundred and fifty years of the Gupta rule, as many as eight belong to Eastern Uttar Pradesh, while Magadha and Bengal claim two and five respectively.
5. The Bhitari pillar inscription recorels the installation of a divine image to perpetuate the memory and argument the religious merit of his father by skandagupta. Such a pious act would have been enacted at a place within the homeland of dynasty.
6. The discovery of Harisena's prasasti at Allahabad points out Eastern Uttar Pradesh as the home territory of Guptas.
7. The prominence of the Kausambi style in the Gupta script is a pointer to the same direction.
8. The popularity of the Ganga-Yamuna motif in the Gupta art brings to the fare the importance of Prayaga as the centre of the original Gupta-Kingdom.
9. The proposed location of the home province of the Guptas in Eastern Uttar Pradesh is compatible with the Chinese evidence which includes Sarnath in the dominions of Sri Gupta.
10. Kausambi, Bhita, Gadhwa and Jhansi, all included in the Allahabad region, have yielded a large number of the Gupta antiquities.

But as one carefully goes through the aforesaid arguments one is hardly convinced of the soundness of their logic and of the viability of the theory based on them. The provenances of the Chandragupta-Kumaradevi coins are not slowly confined to Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Both Hajipur and Gaya in Bihar have yielded a solitary coin of this type, while two such pieces have been found at tanda in Rai Bareilly district in North Western Uttar Pradesh. What is interesting to note is that even in Eastern Uttar Pradesh the Chandragupta I-Kumaradevi coins have not been found in complete isolation but in the company of these of some later rulers. If the provenances of coins have any bearing upon the limits of a particular kingdom, they are indicative of the Jurisdiction of the latest king represented in the series of coins from those particular places. Therefore, discovery of the Chandragupta-I –Kumaradevi coins in association with those of some latter rulers. If the provenances of coins have any bearing upon the may prove the political hold of the latest Gupta king of the group over the places of their findings but it does indicate neither the kingdom under Chandragupta-I nor the dominions of Maharaja Gupta.

The numerical superiority of the Gupta hoards of coins in Eastern Uttar Pradesh is not a conclusive proof of the location of the original territory of the Guptas within the area. None of the hoards, discovered as yet, does appear to be contemporaneous with the reign of the first two Gupta kings, and the earliest of those from Eastern Uttar Pradesh could not have been buried earlier than the reign of Samudragupta, while the majorities were deposited still latter.

The statement that the coins, as found in the Gupta hoards from Eastern Uttar Pradesh are earlier than those found in the hoards in Bengal and Bihar does not seem to be valid in the view of the fact that the vast majority of the hoards in Eastern Uttar Pradesh are found to preserve the coins of some later Gupta rulers as well. The coins of Samudragupta and a few specimens of the Chandragupta-I-Kumaradevi type in the hoards of Gupta coins from Eastern Uttar Pradesh is no less striking. As has already been held, the date of a particular hoard of coins is determined by that of the latest issues it contains, and since these hoards contain the coins of Ghatotkacha's successors, the discovery of such hoards does not provide us with any clue in regard to the fixation of the limits of the Gupta Kingdom under Maharaja Gupta and his immediate successors.

It is true that of the first hundred and fifty years of the Gupta rule, the majority of inscriptions have been unearthed in Uttar Pradesh but it does not necessarily point out the region as the cradle of the Gupta dominions. The fallacy of such an argument is clearly established when it is remembered that Bihar was the homeland of the Mouryas, and yet all the known inscriptions of Asoka have been found outside this region. Varendra, North Bengal was the home land of the pala kings. But all the inscriptions of the early rulers of the house, with a very few exceptions, have been discovered in Bihar.

The installation of an image in memory of his father by Skandagupta at Bhitari does not conclusively prove the inclusion of Eastern Uttar Pradesh in the homeland of the Gupta. This evidence may at best be interpreted as alluding to the association of Kumaragupta-I, with that place but there is hardly any room for stretching the imagination too far.

The argument that the provenance of prasasti forms a part of original habitat of the kings eulogized, lacks conviction for the same logic, stemming from the Mehrauli iron pillar inscription, which is in all probability, an eulogy of Chandragupta-II, Vikramaditya, would extend the limits of the original Gupta territory to the Punjab in the north or to Bihar in the east.

As regards the interpretation of the Ganga-Yamuna motif in the Gupta art as a proof of Prayaga being the nucleus of the original Gupta kingdom, it may be observed that there is no positive evidence to imply that the two rivers define the heart land⁶³ of the Gupta empire or that the said motif was initiated in prayaga⁶⁴. Further, the Gupta kings are not known to have evinced predilection for the popularization of a regional motif. The Gupta art marks a synthesis of different art idioms and if any regional style is the Gupta art, it was the Kusana style⁶⁵ of Mathura, and not the one originating in the Allahabad region.

The Gupta antiquities have doubtless been unearthed at Kausambi but as compared to such sites as Mathura, Sanchi, Udayagiri and Besnagar which were later additions to the Gupta dominions, the sculptural workshops at Kausambi or at any other place in the Allahabad-Sangam area, were more or less idle in the early Gupta period, and it was only after A.D. 450⁶⁵ that they increased in output.

The Gupta were possibly feudatories of the Kushans in up, and seem to have succeeded them without any considerable time-lag. At many places in up and Bihar, Kushan antiquities are immediately followed by Gupta antiquities. It is likely that the Guptas learnt the use of the saddle, reins, buttoned coats, trousers, and boots from the Kushans. All these gave them mobility and made them excellent horsemen. In the Kushan Scheme of things horse-chariots and elephants had ceased to be important, horsemen playing the central role. This also seems to have been the case with the Guptas on whose coins horsemen are represented. Although some Gupta Kings are described as excellent and unrivalled chariot warriors, their basic strength lay in the use of horses.

The Guptas enjoyed certain material advantages. The centre of their operations lay in the fertile land of Madhya Pradesh covering Bihar and up. They were able to exploit the iron areas of Central India and South Bihar. Also, they took advantage of their proximity to the areas in North India that conduct the silk trade with the eastern Roman Empire, also known as the Byzantine empire. Given these favorable factors, the Guptas established their rule over Angang (along the Ganges in the mid Gang tic basin), Prayag (Modern Allahabad), Saketa (modern Ayodhya), and Magadha. In the course of time, this kingdom became an all India empire, the Kushan power in North India came to an end around AD230, and then a substantial part of Central India fell under the rule of the Murundas, who were possibly kinsmen of the Kushans. The Mundas continued to rule till AD 250. Twenty five years later, in about AD 275, the Gupta dynasty comes to power.

Chandragupta I (AD 319-34):

The first important king of the Gupta dynasty was Chandragupta I. He married a Lichchavi princess, in all probability from Nepal, which strengthened his position. The Guptas were probably Vaishnavas, and hence marriage into a Kshatriya family lent them prestige. Chandragupta I seem to have been a ruler of considerable importance because he started the Gupta era in AD 319-20 which marked the date of his accession. Later many inscriptions of the Gupta era came to be dated in this era.

Samudragupta (AD 335-80):

The Gupta kingdom was enlarged enormously by Chandragupta's son and successor Samudragupta (AD 335-80). He was the opposite of Asoka. Asoka believed in a policy of peace and non aggression, but Samudragupta delighted in violence and conquest. His court poet Harishena wrote a glowing account of the military exploits of his patron, and in a long inscription, the poet enumerates the peoples and countries that were conquered by Samudragupta. The inscription is engraved at Allahabad on the same pillar that carries the inscriptions of the peace-loving Asoka.

The places and the countries conquered by Samudragupta can be divided into five groups. Group one includes the princes of the Ganga Yamuna doab who were defeated and whose kingdoms were incorporated into the Gupta Empire. Group two includes the rulers of the eastern Himalayas states and of some frontier states such as Nepal, Assam and Bengal, which were made to feel the weight of Samudragupta's arms. It also covers some republics of Punjab. The republics which flickered on the ruins of the Mouryan Empire were finally crushed by Samudragupta. Group three includes the forest kingdoms situated in the Vindhya region and known as Atavika rajyas which Samudragupta brought under his control. Group four includes twelve rulers of the eastern Deccan and South India who were conquered and liberated. Samudragupta's arms reached as far as Kanchi in Tamil Nadu, where the Pallavas were compelled to recognize his suzerainty. Group five includes the names of the Shakas and Kushans, some of them ruling in Afghanistan. It is said that Samudragupta swept them out of power and received the submission of the rulers of distant lands. The prestige and influence of Samudragupta spread even outside India. According to a Chinese source, Mehandravarma, the ruler of Sri Lanka, sent a missionary to Samudragupta for permission to build a Buddhist temple at Gaya. This was granted and the temple was developed into a huge monastic establishment. If we are to believe the eulogistic inscription at Allahabad, it would appear that Samudragupta never knew defeat, and because of his bravery and generalship he is called the Napoleon of India. There is no doubt that Samudragupta forcibly unified the greater part of India under him, and his power was felt in a much larger area than that of his predecessors.

Chandragupta II (AD 380-412):

The reign of Chandragupta II saw the high water mark of the Gupta Empire. He extended the limits of the empire by marriage alliance and conquest. Chandragupta married his daughter Prabhavati to a Vakataka prince of the Brahmana caste and ruled in Central India. The Prince died, and was succeeded by his young son. Prabhavati thus became the virtual ruler. As testified to by some of her land charters, which batter the influence of the eastern Gupta writing, she promoted the interests of her father Chandragupta. Thus Chandragupta exercised indirect control over the Vakataka kingdom in central India, and this afforded him great advantage, with his great influence in this area. Chandragupta II conquered Mathura from the Kushanas more importantly. He occupied western Malwa and Gujarat, which had for about four centuries been under the rule of the Shaka Kshatrapas. The conquest gave Chandragupta control over the western sea coast, famous for trade and commerce. This contributed to the prosperity of Malwa, and its chief city Ujjain. Ujjain seems to have been made the second capital by Chandragupta II.

The exploits of king called Chandra are glorified in an iron pillar inscription fixed near Qutub Minar in Delhi. If Chandra corresponds to Chandragupta II, it would appear that he established Gupta authority in North – Western India, and in a substantial part of Bengal. However, the epigraphic eulogy seems to be exaggerated.

Chandragupta II adopted the title of Vikramaditya, which had been first used by an Ujjain ruler in 58-57 BC as a mark of victory over the Shaka Kshatrapas of western India. This Ujjain ruler is traditionally called Shakari or the enemy of the Shakas. The Vikrama Samrat or era was started in 58-57 BC by Shakari. However, Chandragupta II proved to be a greater Shakari and vikramaditya. The court of Chandragupta II at Ujjain was adorned by numerous scholars including Kalidasa and Amarasimha.

It was during Chandragupta's reign that the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien (AD 399-414) visited India and wrote an elaborate account of the life of its people.

Kumaragupta -I:

Chandragupta -II was succeeded by his son Kumaragupta -I, who assumed the title of "Mahendraditya" and enjoyed a long reign of forty years

(spreading from 414 to 455 A.D.). He was also a great ruler and was able to keep intact his empire including the newly acquired provinces of western India, like all other great rulers he performed the "Aswamedha Yagna " or "Horse-sacrifice" ceremony which was confirmed by "Aswamedha coins" the discovery of his 1395 coins unanimously confirm his extension towards the South. His period is also regarded as forming part of "The Golden Age" of Guptas, towards the middle of the fifth century A.D. the reign of the Kumaragupta-I, was disturbed by the revolt of Pushyamitra tribe and the in various of the Hunas. But his greatest achievement was his repulsing the attack of the Pushyamitra. Hunas were also defeated by the crown prince Skandagupta.

Kumaragupta-I was a successful ruler who kept intact the vast empire inherited from his father and also maintained peace and prosperity within its frontiers. The suppression of Pushyamitras rebellion and the defeat of Hunas by his crown prince prove that the military strength of the empire also remained intact under him.

Skandagupta:

After the death of Kumaragupta-I, Skandagupta succeeded in 455 A.D. and reigned for twelve years i.e. 455 to 467 A.D. Skandagupta was engaged in hostilities against his enemies almost from the beginning of his reign. But he proved himself a capable general. He defeated the hostile Pushyamitras. But, while he was busy in fighting against the Hunas, probably, the Vakatakas ruler Narendrasena occupied Malwa. However, the rest of the territories of empire was kept intact by him. He had defeated the Hunas once as the crown prince but they were yet threatening the empire with the penetration into the Indian territories. Skandagupta valiantly fought with them and defeated them so severely about 460 A.D. that they could not dare to attack the empire for nearly fifty years.

Skandagupta has been regarded as the last great Gupta ruler. The empire began to decline after his death and the family could not produce a single ruler who could successfully check this decline. The Hunas war, and possibly other battles which are only vaguely mentioned in official records must have proved a great strain on the financial resources of the empire. This is reflected in the coins of Skandagupta. The Nalanda and Gaya grants of Samudragupta are the earliest record that throw light on the Agrahara grants. Dwagrahara grants were for the

secular parties or persons such as writers, merchants etc., who administered them for religious purposes. It shows us that the process of empire building started by Samudragupta was nearly completed so far at least as North India was concerned. The command of Skandagupta was obeyed by his Governors of Bengal and Kathiawar peninsula.

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Model Questions:

1. Write an essay on the origin of Guptas
2. Explain the political career of the Guptas

AGE OF EMPIRES
UNIT-IV
LESSON-I
HUNAS AND LATER GUPTAS

Objectives:

- To understand the Huna invasions in North India
- To understand the rule of later Guptas

Introduction:

The Hunas or Huns were a fierce race, which lived in central Asia on the border of China. Plundering and killing was their main occupation and maintained a great army for making plundering raids on their enemies and for their security. They had a conflict with Yuechis and drove them away from western China. Starting from their Hanes; they also migrated and advanced towards the west and were divided into two main streams the Hunas who moved towards Europe were called Black Hunas and another came to Persia and India known as white Hunas. The white Hunas attacked Persian Empire. In 484 A.D. the Huna king Akschounwar killing the last king of Persia called Firoz and ruled over Persia, and started on their campaign towards India. The Hunas first invasion took place during the reign of Kumaragupta but prince Skandagupta defeated them and drove them back. But they continued to pour into India during the reign of Skandagupta. After the death of Skandagupta, the Hunas started attacking India more frequently and fiercely.

Toramana:

The first known Huna prince was Khinkhila. His successor, Toramana the leader of Hunas is known from many inscriptions. His father Laelih led the Hunas to India and achieved success in capturing Malwa in 510 A.D.

Toramanda coins are found in Malwa. He is supposed to have led raids upon the cities of Kasi, Kausambi, probably under his leadership, the Hunas destroyed the Buddhist monasteries in Gandhara and the university of Taxila. Toramana's empire extended from central Asia to central India. Some historians compared him with Menander and Kanishka. The important details are given in "Arya Manjusri - Mula - Kalpa" and "Rajatarangini" or Kalhana to estimate, Toramana's victories over Malwa and Kashmir were greatest achievements and he adopted Hinduism, started to worship the sun and Siva. He dies in 515 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Mihirakula.

Mihirakula:

Toramana was succeeded by his son Mihirakula. He is described as a monster or cruelty or violent. According to Hieun Tsang, in the early years of his reign, he had leanings towards Buddhism and destroyed various temples, Bodhi-gharas and Viharas. He was defeated by Yasovarman of Malwa and Narasimhagupta Baladitya of the Gupta dynasty. His capital was Sialkot, Afghanistan, Punjab, Malwa and Rajputana formed the parts of his empire but he too could not reign for a long time. He died in 542 A.D. After which the political impact of the Hunas subsided.

Effects of the Huna Invasions:

The Huna attacks caused a major blow to the Gupta authorities in Northern India and Western regions and it accelerated the pace of the decline of the Guptas. During the period of the destruction the Gupta subordinates gained power and asserted independence. The political unity of India came to an end. Peace and prosperity was replaced by chaos and confusion. The Hunas destroyed many palatial buildings, viharas and stupas which caused a big loss to Indian art and culture. The weak and inefficient successors of Skandagupta could not succeed in checking the attacks of the Hunas.

The followers of Toramana and Mihirakula settled down in India and soon gave up their nomadic habits. The Hindus did not like the barbaric way of

life or the Hunas and were not agreed to mingle with them. After the downfall or Mihirakula, they adopted Hindu religion and merged themselves in the India society, which resulted new castes came into existence, making caste system more rigid. They were gradually attracted by Indian religious. The Huna settlers adopted Hindu customs and manners and by virtue of their profession or army came to be treated as Kshatriyas. The native rulers of India entered into matrimonial alliances and gave birth to new castes. Finally the Huna invasions marked not only destroyed the political unity of India but also effected our culture and civilization.

Decline of the Hunas:

After the death of Mihirakula the empire declined, his successors were weak and inefficient. They could not maintain the Hunas Empire. They were defeated by Turks and Iranians in central Asia. In India Rajputs also destroyed their power.

The Later Guptas:

The Guptas were the most powerful ruling families of North India. The term Gupta used as the suffix to their names and their matrimonial alliance with the Licchavis. The Gupta race their descent from Sri Gupta, the founder of the Gupta dynasty, Skandagupta died in 467 A.D, the last great ruler of the Gupta dynasty, the downfall of the Gupta dynasty began because one of the successors of Skandagupta was inefficient. However, the later Gupta rulers ruled for a period of eighty years after the death of Skandagupta, yet they failed to resist the invasion of the Hunas.

The Later Gupta rulers:

Purugupta:

Skandagupta died in 467 A.D, he was succeeded by his brother Purugupta. He was old and ruled for a period or six years only. The Bhitari seal which is evident that he was the follower or Buddhism.

Kumaragupta -II:

Narasimhagupta was succeeded by his son Kumaragupta-II. The detailed account or Narasimhagupta reign is not available. He had ruled for a short period or not more than three years.

Buddhagupta:

After the death or Kumaragupta-II, he ascended the throne in 478 A.D. He was one or the important later Gupta rulers and ruled for a period about 20 years. The important inscriptions during his period were Iran pillar inscription, the Damodar copper plate inscription and the saranath inscription. Hieun Tsang stated that he granted financial assistance to the vihara or Nalanda. He assumed the title or "Paramadevata – Paramabhataraka – maharajadhiraja – Sri Prithvipati".

Vinayagupta:

Some scholars says that Tathagatagupta and Vinayagupta are two names or the same person. According to Hieun Tsang Vinayagupta was successor or Buddhagupta. The Gunaighar copper plate mentions the name or Vinayagupta.

Vishnugupta:

He was the son of Kumaragupta -III, many tribes like Gandas, sulikas revolted against the reign of his father [kumaragupta-III] perhaps. He had ruled till 550 A.D. He was the last ruler of the Gupta dynasty. After the Vishnugupta, the Gupta Empire lost their prominence and disappeared. The power of the later Gupta rulers becomes very insignificant.

The Maukharis:

The Maukharis were the Samantas of the Guptas, who were living in Bihar. As their Gupta overlords disappeared they rose to prominence at Kanuj. Hariharan was the founder of the Maukhari kingdom. The Maukharis must have started gaining political powers towards the end of the 5th century A.D. from the Asirgarh copper seal we get the names of (a) Hariharman, (b) Adityaharman, (c) Isvaraharman, (d) Isanaharman (f) Sarvavarman, who had ruled over Kanuj in Uttar Pradesh. The kings had the title of "Maharaja" whereas Isanaharman is called "Maharajadhiraja", Harivarman son Adityavarman married Harshagupta, daughter of king Krishnagupta of Magadha. Adityavarman's son, Isvaravarman was a considerable power. The early Maukhari kings had established family ties with the later Guptas.

Isanaharman's Hara inscription won victories over the Andhras, Sulikas and Gandas. It appears that the Vishnukundis who were ruling in Andhra interfered in the politics of the North but without any success.

Isanaharman's son and successor, Sarvavarman defeated and killed Damodaragupta of Magadha and enhanced the power of his family.

The last of the Maukhari kings was Grahavarman who was married to Rajyasri, the daughter of Prabhakaravardhana of Thaneshwar and sister of the famous ruler Harshavardhana. The Malwa king Devagupta attacked Kanuj and killed Grahavarman bringing the Maukhari kingdom to an end.

SUGGESTED READINGS:

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2. Basham, A.L. : The Wonder that was India.
3. Majumdar, R.C. (Ed.) : The age of Imperial Unity.
4. Narain, A.K. : The Indo-Greeks, 1957.
5. Rawlinson, H.G. : Bactria
6. Tarn, W.W. : The Greeks in Bactria and India. 1951.
7. Banerjee, G.N. : Hellenism in Ancient India, Calcutta, 1920.
8. Jairazbhoy, R.A. : Foreign Influence in Ancient India, 1963.
9. Rapson (Ed.) : Cambridge History of India, Vol.I.

10. Krishna Rao, B.V. : Early Dynasties of the Andhradesha, 1942.
11. Smith, V.A. : Early History in India.
12. Sastri, K.A.N. (Ed.) : Comprehensive History of India, Vol. II.

Model Questions;

1. Write an essay on Huna invasions
2. Explain the political conditions during the later Guptas

AGE OF EMPIRES

UNIT-IV

LESSON- II

HARSHAVARDHANA AND HIS TIMES

Objectives:

- To understand the political career of Harshavardhana
- To understand the rule of Badami Chalukyas and Pulakesi- II
- To understand the rule of Early Pallavas

Sources:

There are numerous sources of information on Harsha's reign. Some historical sources of information were:

Bana's – "Harsha Charita":

This is important source of Harsha's reign. Bavabhatta was the author of the book. He was the court poet of Harshavardhana. This book deal with the life of harsha and his achievements.

Harsha's won works:

Harsha was a great writer whose works known as "Ratnavali", "Priyadarshika" and "Magananda". These books give a lot of information on the history of Harsha's period.

Inscriptions:

Banskhera Inscription:

Madhuban Plate :

Sovepat Plate :

Hieun Tsang's Account:

Hieun Tsang came to India in the 7th century A.D. He visited several places during the reign of king Harshavardhana. He wrote a book known as "si-yu-ki" or "the

records of the western world". This book deals the political, social, religious and economic conditions of India during those days.

The Pushyabhutis – Harshavardhana:

The rise of the family of pushyabhutis which first ruled from Thaneshwar in Haryana and later from Kanuj in Uttar Pradesh. The kingdom of Thaneshwar was established towards the close of the 5th century A.D. by a dynasty descent from the illustrious pushyabhuti. The Banskhera and Madhavan plates and royal seals mention five earlier rulers among whom the first three are given the title of Maharaja. The third in the line, Adityavardhana married the princess Mahasenagupta of Magadha and consolidated his kingdom. His son Prabhakaravardhana took the imperial title Maharajadhiraja and greatly extended his power. He saved his kingdom from the Huna invasions and assumed "a lion to the Huna deer". His empire extended over the whole of Punjab and or Malwa. He had two sons Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana and daughter named Rajyasri. He established matrimonial relations with the Maukharis by marrying his daughter Rajyasri with Grahavarman.

Harshavardhana –[606 -647. A.D.]:

Harshavardhana was the ablest and the greatest king of the pushyabhuti dynasty. He was the last great Hindu ruler of North India.

Early life: He was born in 590 A.D. He received a good education and was quite efficient in warfare. He was young at the time of his accession to the throne in 606 A.D. He was surrounded by serious problems and paid serious attention to his difficulties. The Malwa king killed grahavarman and took Rajyasri as a prisoner Rajyavardhana marchar against the enemies and defeated the Malvas but was killed through treachery by sasanka, the Ganda king, now it was Harsha"s responsibility to seem revenge and in due course of time, he was able to establish a strong empire.

Accession of Harsha-606 A.D:

Harsha ascended the throne in 606 A.D. He had to face a number of difficulties. His immediate task was to rescue his sister and average the death of his brother. He also entered into an alliance with Bhaskaravarman, the king of prag Tyaotisha [Assam] as both had a common enemy in sasanka, the king of Ganda [Bengal]. First he led an expedition against Kanuj. The alliance with Bhaskaravarman was a master stroke of diphrmacy which exposed sasanka to attacks from the west and from the east simultaneously, meanwhile, Harsha heard that his sister Rajyasri effected an escape from prison with the help of Madhanagupta and fled away to the vindhyan

forests. Harsha succeeded in tracing her out. According to Hieun Tsang's account he subsequently fought the rulers of Vallabhi and Gurjaras in the west. Chalekyas in the Deccan and Magadha and Ganda in the east.

The Vallabhis remained a strong power during the reign of Harsha. We find the names of fine Vallabhi kings who were contemporaries of Harsha. He maintained matrimonial alliance with Vallabhi's also mentions Pulakesin's military success against Harshavardhan. Around 634 A.D. Harsha attempted to cross the Narmada with a view to conquer the Deccan. At this time the Chalekya king of Badami, Pulakesi-II, stopped his progress towards Deccan. [A eulogy of Prasasti or Pulakesi-II, placed on a temple was at Aihole].

Sasanka of Ganda appears to be the most formidable opponent of Harshavardhana, Sasanka's kingdom which probably included Bengal, Magadha and a part of Orissa. It was only after Sasanka's death around 637 A.D. that Harsha invaded Northern Bengal and established his authority in Magadha.

In 643 A.D. He conquered the Kongoda [Ganjam] region whose ruler had been a vassal of Sasanka.

There are no authentic details regarding the expeditions of North.

Harsha ruled for a period of 41 years and is said to have died about 647 A.D.

Extent of his empire:

According to Majumdar – "The emperor's army had overrun almost the whole of Northern India from the snowy mountains of the North to the Narmada in the South and from Ganjam in the East to Vallabhi in the west---- even the most powerful of Harsha's enemies, viz, the Chalukya's of Badami in the Deccan, bears witness to his suzerainty over the whole of Uttarapatha of Northern India" [Khurana, K.I. Ancient India, p.277].

The evidence of Hieun Tsang's account and the reliable inscriptions show his empire included the provinces of Eastern Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa, some of the whole of Uttarapatha".

Harsha's Administration:

He was not only a great conqueror but also a good administrator. He toured from province to province. In his administration he was assisted by council of ministers. His empire was divided into Bhuktis, Vishayas and Gramas. Bhukti means provinces were ruled by Maharaja's or local hereditary rulers. Vishaya means districts – Vishayapati was the district officers. Grama means village gramika was village head.

The provincial administrator was known as uparika.

Revenue:

Sales tax and tolls were the important sources of state revenue. He collected 1/6 of the produce as revenue officials received grants of lands instead of salaries.

Punishments:

The punishments were severe, Bavabhatta has mentioned – prisoners were released on the king's birthday. Hieun Tsang writes. The government is honestly administered and the people live together on good terms the criminal class is small. Harsha maintained a huge army comprised 5,000 elephants, 20,000 cavalry and 60,000 infantry.

Harsha's charity:

He was the follower of Asoka and built rest houses for food, drink and medicine. He held an assembly at Prayaga. Princes came from different parts of the country. The last assembly was known as famous Kanauj assembly during this assembly, the Chinese pilgrim, Hieun Tsang gives a vivid account of the proceedings. He made large endowments to the famous university of Nalanda, where Hieun Tsang studied for several years. The teacher of Nalanda was well talented. The revenue of 100 villages was remitted for the purpose of education.

Estimate:

He was a great conqueror and empire builder. He wrote Nagananda, Ratnavali and Priyadarshi and encouraged education. He made large endowments. He imbibed the qualities of Asoka and Samudragupta.

The Chalukyas of Badami:

The history of the Chalukyas can be classified into three main divisions:

1. The early western Chalukyas of the Chalukyas of Badami [6th -8th centuries A.D.]
2. The later western Chalukyas of the Chalukyas of Kalyani [7th -12th centuries A.D.]
3. The Eastern Chalukyas of the Chalukyas of Vengi [7th -12th centuries A.D.]

Origin:

The origin of Chalukyas is a subject of controversy. The scholars hold different views on their origin. Dr. V.A. Smith held "they were of foreign origin" Dr. D.C. Sarkar disagrees the foreign origin and opines that they belonged to a „Kannada family". According to the mythological account the Chalukyas were born from the palm of

Brahma. However, the chalukyas were the first to consolidate the political unity of Deccan after the fall of the Satavahanas. The term chalukya with its variants, salki, saluki, chaliki, chalka and chalikya occurs in the early inscriptions of the Deccan. According to nagarjunakonda inscriptions, we find reference to the ruler of Hiranyarastra [region of Cuddapah] as chaliki Remmanaka, who is taken by many as the eponymous chalukya. This view finds support to the Eastern chalukya traditions which speaks of Hiranyarastra as the home of the first chalukya. The findings at nagarjunakonda of the temple of Hariti, the family goddess of the chalukyas support the Southern origin of the chalukyas.

Jayasimhavallabha was the founder of the chalukya dynasty. He was a vassal of the vakatakas. He was succeeded by his son Ranaraga, but there is no sufficient details are available to his reign. The credit for the foundation of the Badami kingdom goes to Pulakesin –I, who was the third ruler of the dynasty. The chalukyas rose to power and prominence during his reign.

Early Rulers:

Pulakesin – I-[535 -566, A.D]:

He was very learned king and had knowledge of the puranas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. He performed Ashwamedha sacrifice and assumed the titles “satyasreya”, “sri – Prithvi-Vallabha”.

Kirtivarman – I [567-597 A.D.]:

He ascended the chalukyas throne after Pulakesin –I, he fought with the kadambas of Bavavasi, the Mouryas of Konkan and the Nalas of Nalavadi [ballary] and extended the power of chalukyas. He was the conqueror of vanga, anga, kalinga, Magadha and pandya etc., D.C Sarkar says that the chalukyas was extended during the reign of Kirtivarman –I.

Mangalesa [597-610 A.D.]:

He was the younger brother of Kirtivarman – I, he succeeded the chalukyas throne after the death of his brother. He assumed the title “Parama Bhagavata”. During his reign a war waged between Mangalesa and the Kalachuris and continued for a long time but ultimately the kalachuri ruler was defeated. He was very ambitions and wanted to perpetrate himself in power. Mangalesa declared his son as his successor. Therefore, Pulakesin fought with him, killed him and ascended the throne in 610 A.D.

Pulakesin-II [610-642 A.D]:

He was the greatest of the Badami chalukya"s. He was a great conqueror and led many victorious campaigns both North and South subjugating many peoples. He assumed the titles "prithvi-vallabha", "parameshwara" and "parama Bhagavata". He captured Bavavasi from the western gangas, reduced the capital of the Mouryas of konkan, and subdued the latas, Malavas and Gurjaras. The Ganga ruler Duravinta konganivarda, married his daughter with Pulakesin -II and established relationship with him.

He adopted the policy of "divide and rule". Govinda and Appayika were his chiefs. They created disturbance in the kingdom. During their nature Pulakesin -II, favoured Govinda and defeated Appayika with his help. He not only saved the Chalukya Empire from internal dissensions and external invasions but also adopted an aggressive policy to extend his territory. The important and notable achievement of Pulakesin-II, about the year 630 A.D. was his victory over Harshavardhana, "the lord of Uttarapatha". Both Pulakesin -II of Badami and Harshavardhana of Kanuj were contemporaries and each of them was trying to establish his superiority over the other. Pulakesin -II, fought a fierce battle against Harshavardhana and achieved victory over him. It is considered as one of the greatest achievements of Pulakesin -II.

Poet Ravi kirti composed the Aihole inscription, which gives detailed account of the conquests of Pulakesin -II. From this inscription we come to know about the sweep of his authority over the entire Deccan.

After this victory he led an expedition across the Krishna river which culminated in the battle of pullalur where pallava Mahendravarman was defeated.

War with Pallavas:

During the last days of his reign hostilities broke out between Pallavas and Pulakesin -II, this resulted the death of Pulakesin -II. In 642 A.D. he took expedition into the Pallava kingdom. But he was defeated by Pallava Narasimhavarman and driven back; Narasimhavarman pursued the chalukyas army and arranged his father"s defeat by killing Pulakesin, in battle and by sacking Badami. After the crushing defeat of Pulakesin -II, by the Pallava ruler, the Chalukya Empire began to decline.

Successors of Pulakesin -II:

Vikramaditya -I [655-681 A.D]:

The ascending of Vikramaditya to the throne of chalukyas proved to be beneficial for them. He restored order in his kingdom and tried to avenge his father"s

death by leading successful expeditions into the Pallava kingdom. In the North, Vikramaditya won victories. [He credited victory over Siladitya –II, the pratihara king]. He finally defeat at the hands of Pallava Parameshwaravarman. He assumed the titles of “satyasreya”, “ranarasika”, “parameshwara” and “prithvi – vallabha”. He established his sway over the cholas, the cheras and the pandyas.

Vinayaditya -681-696 A.D:

He was a great warrior. He defeated the lord of Uttarapatha, probably Yasovarman of Kanuj and captured his pali dhvaja. He also adopted the titles as his father had.

Vijayaditya [696-733 A.D]:

Vijayaditya ascended the chalukya throne after the death of his father. He acquired the Ganga-Yamuna symbol from the rulers of Kanuj. He was not only a great conqueror but also a lover of art and literature.

Vikramaditya –II [733-747 A.D.] and kirtivarman –II [748-760 A.D.] were the last rulers of the chalukyas of Badami. Vikramaditya-II defeated the Pallava Nandivarman and entered kanchi where he made rich donations to temples. The remarkable achievement of Vikramaditya-II reign was the repulsion of an Arab invasion. The chalukyas viceroy, Avani-Janayasa Pulakesiraja defeated the inhading Arabs and drove them back. Vikramaditya honoured Pulakesiraja with the title “solid pillar of Dakshinapatha” which he richly deserved. In the last years of Vikramaditya-II, reign, the crown prince Kirtivarman-II, raided successfully the Pallava kingdom and returned with a rich booty.

During the time of Kirtivarman-II, the empire became very weak with this time the chalukyas feudatories rose to prominence and powerful. Dantidurga, the leader of the Rashtrakutas defeated Kirtivarman-II and occupied large portions of the Chalukyas Empire. Kirtivarman-II made another attempt during the reign of Rashtrakuta Krishna to destroy the Rashtrakuta power. But he was defeated and over thrown.

The chalukyas kings were the orthodox Hindus and promoted Vedic Dharma. They performed Vedic Yagnas like “Aswamedha” and “Vajapeya”. They constructed several temples. The temple architecture was at its Zenith. The famous temple towns are Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal. Aihole was known as city of temples. These temples marked the best specimens of temple architecture. It is estimated that some of the caves of Ajanta and Ellora were during the Chalukya period. The best example: In cave no-I, Pulakesin-II, the chalukyas ruler has been painted, receiving an

ambassador of Persia.

Jainism was also prevalent during the reign of the Chalukyas. Ravikirti, who composed the Aihole inscription, was a follower of Jainism. Vijayaditya, Vikramaditya –II were also patrons of Jainism. Vijayaditya-I granted a village to a Jain teacher Niravadya Udayadeva. This indicates the place of Jainism was next to Hinduism during the reign of Chalukyas. Buddhism was not popular. It is practically disappeared due to short of patronage.

The Early Pallavas:

Origin:

There is a matter of controversy about the origin theories of the Pallavas. Some of them seek a native home for the Pallavas and the others trace their foreign origin. According to Dr. V.A. Smith the origin of the Pallavas “constitutes one of the mysteries of Indian History”. According to Dr. J. Dubreuil, B.L. Rice etc., hold that “the Pallavas were the descendants of those Greek partisans, who lived North-Western frontier of India after the invasion of Alexander”.

Mr. Rasanayagam held the view that the Pallavas were the Chola-Naga alliance and seeks to locate their home in the South. This view is based on the great Tamil classic “Manimekalai”.

According to Dr. Jayaswal that the Pallava dynasty was a branch of the royal dynasty of Vakataka Brahmins, who were in army service.

The Mahavamsa of Ceylon refers to Pallavabogga as a stronghold of Buddhism located in the modern Palnadu in the district of Guntur.

The Mahavamsa of the 4th century A.D. refers to a territorial division by name Pallavabogga. This Pallavabogga fits well with the Pallavanadu or Palnadu of the Guntur District.

After the collapse of the Satavahan Empire the Pallavas migrated to the Palnadu region as indicated by their inscription basing on the language used in the inscriptions, the Pallavas are classified as those of Prakrit charters and Sanskrit charters. The Prakrit charters included the Manchikallu inscription of Simhavarma, the Maidavolu inscription of Yuvamaharaja Sivaskandavarma, the British Museum plates of Vijayaskanda issued by Charvadevi. The Sanskrit charters included the Ongolu plates of Vijayaskandavarma, the Vesanta and Sakrapattavan inscriptions of Simhavarma, Nedungaraya and Uruvapalli inscriptions of Vishnugopa, the Udayendaram inscription of Kumaravishnu.

Political History:

Simhavarma:

Simhavarma was the first ruler, who established his power in Palnadu in the Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh. His Manchikallu inscription informs donations in the temple of Jeevasivaswam. The pallavas of simhavarma live established their independent rule.

Sivaskandavarma:

Sivaskandavarma, son of Simhavarma ruled between 310-345 A.D. During his time the pallava kingdom extended from the river Krishna to the river Kaveri. He performed Aswamedha, Vajapeya, Agnisthana etc., sacrifices and obtained the “sarvahauma” status. During his time the coastal regions including the Guntur were under the control of Yuvamaharaja Buddhavarma. During his time, Mayura Sarman of the Kadamba family invaded the pallava territories. It was during this combat that Sivaskandavarma must have lost his life.

Kumaravishnu:

Kumaravishnu appears to have come to power in about 350 A.D. The ongolū inscription mentions that Kumaravishnu performed an Ashwamedhayaga and restored the pallava power. The events related to Skandavarma –II [370-385 A.D.] and Viravarma [385-400 A.D] are not clear. They were succeeded by Vijayaskandavarma-III, [400-436 A.D], who defeated the kandara kings and extended the pallava empire again up to the South bank of the river Krishna.

Skandavarma – III:

Simhavarma-II, son of Skandavarma-III ruled between [436-480 A.D]. He maintained very big titles like “samaravalabda Vijayasesha”. During his time Govindavarma of the Vishnukundin family occupied the karmarashtra, and he successfully drone away Vishnukundins.

After Simhavarma, Skandavarma-IV ruled for about ten years. He was succeeded by nandivarma. During this time Renati Cholas were the subordinates of the pallava power. He was succeeded by Buddhavarma and Kumaravishnu –III. The early pallava rule has come to a close around 550 A.D.

C. Sivaramamurti is of the opinion that Mahendravarma-I of the greater pallava live is the son of pallava Simhavishnu and the Vishnukundin queen. The live of kings starting from Simhavarma is popularly known as Mahapallavas.

Suggested Readings

1. Majumdar, R.C. (ed) : A Comprehensive History of India, Volume –III.
2. Majumdar, R.C. (ed) : History and culture of the Indian people.
3. Khurana, K.L. : Ancient India
4. Basham, A.L. : The wonder that was India
5. Hanumantha Rao, B.S.L : Indian History and culture Volume –I.
Basaveswara Rao, K.

Model Questions:

1. Write an essay on the place of Harshavardhana in Indian history
2. Explain the political career of Pulakesi- II
3. Discuss the rule of early Pallavas