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INDIAN PRE-HISTORY

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- The idea of pre-history is barely 200 years old. And so is the word pre-history; it was first used by M. Tournal in 1833.
- Dr. Primrose rediscoverd Indian pre-history by discovering prehistoric implements (stone knives and arrow heads) in 1842 at a place called Lingsugur in Karnataka.
- Robert Bruce was another person who enriched our knowledge about Indian prehistory when he discovered a large number of prehistoric sites in South India and collected Stone Age artifacts.
- These early efforts could not place India on the prehistoric map of the world.
- Sir Mortimer Wheeler's efforts in 1921, resulted in our knowledge of the entire pre historic culture sequence of India, putting India firmly on the world map of prehistory.
- As regards the early man; no fossils of early man have been found in the entire subcontinent, but their presence is indicated by stone tools dated around 250,000 BC. Earliest traces of human activity in India go back to the second Inter-Glacial period between 400,000 and 200,000 B.C.
- From their first appearance to around 3000 B.C. humans used only stone tools for different purposes. Based on the tool mining traditions, this period is therefore known as the Stone Age and the entire Stone Age culture has been divided into 3 main stages i.e. Paleolothic (early or Old Stone Age), Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) and Neolithic (New Stone Age).

Palaeolithic Age
(500,000 B.C.–8000 B.C.)

- The Palaeolithic Age commenced from the time when the earliest man learnt the art of making stone tools. The greatest achievement of the earliest man could be traced to his learning as to how to make a fist hatchet, the spear and the fire.
- In India, the Palaeolithic Age developed in the Pleistocene period or the Ice Age and was spread in practically all parts of India except the alluvial parts of Ganga and Indus.
- Food gathering and hunting were the main occupations of the people of this phase and Palaeolithic men learnt to use animal skins for wrapping their dead bodies.
- Man during this period used tools of unpolished, undressed rough stones and lived in caves and rock shelters. They had no knowledge of agriculture, fire or pottery of any material and mainly used hand axes, cleavers, choppers, blades, scrapers and burins. Their tools were made of a hard rock called 'quartzite' and hence Palaeolithic men are also called 'Quartzite Men'.
- Homo sapiens first appeared in the last of this phase and the Palaeolithic man belonged to the Negrito race.
- Sir Robert Bruce Foot discovered the first Palaeolithic stone tool in the Indian sub-continent near Madras in 1863 A.D. The discovery of Indian Pre-history got a boost after the Yale-Cambridge expedition in 1935 under De Terra and Patterson.
- The Paleolithic stage has been divided into Lower Palaeolithic (250,000-100,000 B.C.), Middle Palaeolithic (100,000-40,000 B.C.) and Upper Paleolithic stage (40,000-10,000 B.C.) primarily based on tool typology and technology and also according to the nature of change in the climate.
- The tools of the lower Paleolithic stage are mainly hand axes, cleavers, choppers and chopping tools and covered the greater part of the Ice Age. In this period the climate became less humid.
- The middle Paleolithic age tools are mainly based on flake industries.
- The upper Paleolithic stage is characterized by burins and scrapers and a warm and less humid climate.
- Agewise the lower Paleolithic extended upto 100,000 years ago, middle Paleolithic extended upto 40,000 years ago and upper Paleolithic up to 10,000 BC.
- The Son and the adjacent Belan valley (Mirzapur, UP) provide a sequence of artifacts from lower Paleolithic to Neolithic.
- Situated around Bhimbedka hill, in central India near Hoshangabad on the Narmada River, the caves and rock shelters have yielded evidence of Paleolithic habitation.
- At Bhimbetka near the Narmada, a series of rockshelters have been excavated from caves. This site lacks in Chopper and Abbevillian hand axes.
- During middle palaeolithic age, Pithecanthropus or Homo erectus evolved. But this cultural stage was dominated by Neanderthal Man.

- The upper Palaeolithic culture belongs to the last phase of the Ice Age. This culture is marked by the appearance of new flint industries and the evolution of Homo sapiens or the modern man.
- At Chopani-Mando in the Belan valley of the Vindhyas and the middle part of the Narmada valley, a sequence of occupation from all the three stages of the Paleolithic to Neolithic stage have been found in sequence. Chopani Mando is an important site where fossil animal bones have been found.

Mesolithic Era (8000 B.C.–6000 B.C.)

- Although major changes began to appear around 10,000 B.C. the Mesolithic era seems to have started around 9000 B.C. and 8000 B.C. with the folding up of the Ice Age and continued at certain places till 4000 B.C.
- In this age, climate changes brought about changes in the fauna and flora and made it possible for human beings to move to new areas. Since then there haven't been major changes in the climate.
- The Mesolithic era is characterized by the reduction in the size of well established tool types from the archaeological point of view with a decrease in size of some artifacts and the presence of a higher proportion of 'geometric' microliths.
- Microliths, first discovered from the Vindhyan rock shelters by C.L. Carlyle in 1867; are the characteristic tools of the era comprising of pointed, cresconic blades, scrapers, etc. all made of stone. These are very small in size with their length varying from 1-8 cm. Blackened blade, core, point, triangle, lunate and trapeze are the main Mesolithic tools. However some tools used earlier like choppers, burins and scrapers continue.
- The hunting implements are spears with multiple barbs apparently obtained easily by attaching microliths. The crude material is chert, agate, carnelian and quartz.
- Bagor, a Mesolithic site in Rajasthan on the river Kothari is the largest Mesolithic site in India also from where systematic burials of skeletons have been found.
- Tapti, Narmada, Mahi and Sabarmati river basins in Gujarat have yielded many Mesolithic sites.
- Langhnaj in Gujarat is the first discovered site in the arid zone to demonstrate the development of a Mesolithic culture.
- The site of Chopani Mando in Allahabad provides a continuous sequence from late upper Palaeolithic to late Mesolithic stage with crude handmade pottery. Here round hut floors were found.
- In Peninsular India the Mesolithic industry is based on milky quartz. A new feature in the tool industry is the appearance of 'D' shaped, transverse arrowhead.
- A large number of animal bones were found in the rock-shelters of Adamgarh in Madhya Pradesh which indicate domestication of animals only, not a pastoral economy.

Lifestyle

- The age represents the hunting-gathering nomadic pastoral stages of human social evolution as the people lived on hunting, fishing and food gathering. At a later stage, they also domesticated animals.
- The people of this age achieved their special adaptation as early as 8000 B.C. which coincides with the same in both Europe and Africa.
- The last phase of this age saw the beginning of plane cultivation.
- The Palaeolithic age does not yield any information about the religious practices of the people but with the Mesolithic age the first archaeological information about them becomes available. The burials and rock paintings give us ideas about the development of religious practices.
- Some Mesolithic sites like Bhimbetka, Adamgarh, Pratapgarh and Mirzapur are famous for their rich art and paintings. Animals are the most frequent subjects of all these paintings with the most frequently represented ones being deer or antelope whereas paintings of tigers and monkeys are rare.
- Animal headed human figures also appear.
- This is also the period when we find evidence of carefully burying the dead, which shows the beginning of belief in life after death.

Neolithic Era (6000 B.C.–1000 B.C.)

- In the world context, the Neolithic age began around 9000 B.C. but in the Indian context it began in 7000 B.C. Mehrgarh in Baluchistan is the only site belonging to that period.
- Regular Neolithic attributes have been found from around 5000 B.C. and in South Indian context Neolithic settlements appeared around 2500 B.C.
- The principal features of Neolithic culture are crop cultivation, animal husbandry and settled life. The last two coming into existence in the last phase of Mesolithic culture.
- During this period people depended on stone implements but used stones other than quartzite for making tools which were more lethal, more finished and more polished. The phase is known for grinding and polishing of tools.
- The stone tools can be studied under two groups: (a) Ground and polished stone implements and (b) small and chipped stone tools.

- Ground and polished stone implements are associated with the Neolithic culture because of their links with food-producing stage and domestication of animals.
- Small and chipped stone tools had been continuing from earlier Mesolithic levels which are generally termed as microliths.
- The Neolithic people at certain point of time started making potteries. On this basis Neolithic culture has been divided into aceramic Neolithic and ceramic Neolithic ages.
- At certain Neolithic levels we get the evidence of use of metal (copper being the earliest metal). Such levels are termed as Chalcolithic level.
- Important sites of this age are Burzahom and Gufkral in J&K (famous for pit dwelling, stone tools and graveyards in houses), Maski, Brahmagiri, Tekkalakota in Karnataka, Paiyampatti in Tamil Nadu, Piklihal and Hallur in Andhra Pradesh, Garo hills in Meghalaya, Chirand and Senuwar in Bihar (known for remarkable bone tools), Amri, Kot diji, etc.
- In Baluchistan , sites of Neolithic age include Kili Ghul Muhammad, Rana Ghundai, Anjira, Siah-damb and Mundigak.
- In the Indus system the most Neolithic site is at Mehrgarh in the Kacchi Plain regarded as the 'bread basket' of Baluchistan. The Neolithic stratum at Mehrgarh seems to have emerged from a locally established Mesolithic substratum.

Lifestyle

- In the northern Himalayas, the best known Neolithic site is Burzahom in Kashmir where the earliest occupation was characterized pit dwellings with conical roofs. The site also gives evidence of a rectangular chopper of a kind not known in India.
- In Burzahom sometimes dogs and wolves were found buried with their owners.
- Later on, there comes evidence of mud brick houses, copper arrow heads and a number of burials and graves with goods. This phase also yield a stray painted pot showing a typical early Indus buffalo deity.
- Gufkral, literally 'the cave of the potter' is another important Neolithic site in Kashmir where the earliest seize yield pit dwellings without pottery. However in subsequent phases coarse grey pottery was used and a large number of bone tools occur.
- People domesticated sheep, goats and oxen and animal remains of early periods corroborate it.
- Cultivation of wheat, barley, fruits, corn like ragi and horsegram and lentils have been reported from the beginning and between 6000 B.C. and 5000 B.C. there was a pattern of subsistence based on wheat, barley, sheep, goats and cattle.
- The remains of charred grains of paddy husk and wheat are quite visible at Chirand in Bihar, the hand-made pots as well.
- The people of Kachar Hills of Assam lived in mud-walled houses and their hand-made pots were decorated with basket impressions.
- Koldhiwa and Mahagara lying south of Allahabad have thrown evidence of many strata of circular huts alongwith a crude handmade pottery. The most interesting find is evidence of rice suggested around 5440 and 4530 B.C. which is the oldest evidence of rice not only in India but also anywhere in the world.
- Instances of earlier cave dwelling have also been discovered with walls decorated of scenes of hunting and dancing.
- Neolithic man also knew the art of making boats and could weave cotton and wool to make cloth.
- In the later phase of the Neolithic stage people led a more settled life and lived in circular and rectangular houses made of mud and reed.

Chalcolithic Period

- The end of the Neolithic period saw the use of metals of which copper was the first. A culture based on the use of stone and copper arrived called the Chalcolithic phase meaning the stone-copper phase.
- The first full-fledged village communities evolved in the Chalcolithic phase which was chronologically antecedents to Harappan people. Rafique Mughal of Pakistan named there settlements as Early Harappan culture.
- Though some Chalcolithic cultures are contemporary of Harappan and some of pre-Harappan cultures but most Chalcolithic cultures are post-Harappan.
- Though Chalcolithic cultures mostly used stone and copper implements, the Harappans used bronze (an alloy of copper and tin) on such a scale that Harappan culture is known as a Bronze Age Culture.
- Apart from stone tools, hand axes and other objects made from copperware were also used.
- The evidences of relationship with Afghanistan, Iran and probably Central India and visible at Mehargarh.
- The Chalcolithic culture at many places continued till 700 B.C. and sometime around 1200 B.C. the use of iron seems to have begun in the Chalcolithic level itself. The use of iron subsequently revolutionized the culture making progress and by 800 B.C. a distinct Iron Age came into existence.

- The Chalcolithic people used different types of pottery of which black and red pottery was most popular. It was wheel made and painted with white line design.
- The Chalcolithic people were not acquainted with burnt bricks and generally lived in thatched houses. It was a village economy.
- They venerated the mother goddess and worshipped the bull.

Sites

- Important sites of this stage are spread in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, etc.
- The Chalcolithic culture in Rajasthan is known as Banas culture after the river of the same name and is also known as Ahar culture after the typesite.
- In the Malwa region the important Chalcolithic sites are Nagda, Kayatha, Navdatoli, and Eran. Mud-plastered floors are a prominent feature of Kayatha.
- The Kayatha culture is characterized by a sturdy red-slipped ware painted with designs in chocolate colour, a red painted buff ware and a combed ware bearing incised patterns.
- The Ahar people made a distinctive black-and-red ware decorated with white designs.
- The Malwa ware is rather coarse in fabric, but has a thick buff surface over which designs are made either in red or black.
- The Prabhas and Rangpur wares are both derived from the Harappan, but have a glossy surface due to which they are also called Lustrous Red Ware.
- Jorwe ware too is painted black-on-red but has a matt surface treated with a wash.
- The settlements of Kayatha cutlure are only a few in number, mostly located on the Chambal and its tributaries. They are relatively small in size and the biggest may be not over two hectares.
- In contrast to small Kayatha culture settlements those of Ahar cultures are big. At least three of them namely Ahar, Balathal and Gilund are of several hectares.
- Stone, mud bricks and mud were used for the construction of houses and other structures.
- Excavations reveal that Balathal was a well-fortified settlement.
- The people of Malwa culture settled mostly on the Narmada and its tributaries. Navdatoli, Eran and Nagada are the three best known settlements of Malwa culture. Navadatoli measures almost 10 hectares and is one of the largest Chalcolithic settlements.
- It has been seen that some of these sites were fortified and Nagada had even a bastion of mud-bricks. Eran similarly had a fortification wall with a moat.
- The Rangpur culture sites are located mostly on Ghelo and Kalubhar rivers in Gujarat.
- The Jorwe settlement is comparatively larger in number.
- Prakash, Daimabad and Inamgaon are some of the best known settlements of this culture. The largest of these is Daimabad which measured 20 hectares.
- From Mesolithic culture onwards, all the culture types coexisted and interacted with each other.

Lifestyle

- The Chalcolithic people built rectangular and circular houses of mud wattled-and-daub. The circular houses were mostly in clusters. These houses and huts had roots of straw supported on bamboo and wooden rafters. Floors were made of rammed clay and huts were used for storage also.
- People raised cattle as well as cultivated both Kharif and Rabi crops in rotation. Wheat and barley were grown in the area of Malwa. Rice is reported to have been found from Inamgaon and Ahar. These people also cultivated jowar and bajra and so also kulthi ragi, green peas, lentil and green and black grams.
- Religion was an important aspect which interlinked all Chalcolithic cultures. The worship of mother goddess and the bull was in vogue. The bull cult seems to have been predominant in Malwa during the Ahar period.
- A large number of these both naturalistic as well as stylised lingas have been found from most of the sites of Chalcolithic settlements. The naturalistic ones may have served as votive offerings, but the small stylised ones may have been hung around the neck as the Lingayats do today.
- The Mother Goddess is depicted on a huge storage jar of Malwa culture in an applique design. She is flanked by a woman on the right and a crocodile on the left, by the side of which is represented the shrine.
- Likewise the fiddle-shaped figurines probably resembling Srivatsa, the symbol of Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth in historical period represent a mother Goddess.
- In a painted design on a pot, a deity is shown with dishevelled hair, recalling Rudra.
- A painting on a jar found from Daimabad shows a deity surrounded by animals and birds such as tigers and peacocks. Some scholars compare it with the 'Shiva Pashupati' depicted on a seal from Mohenjodaro.

- Two figurines from Inamgaon, belonging to late Jorwe culture, are identified as proto-Ganesh, who is worshipped for success.
- Several headless figurines found at Inamgaon have been compared with Goddess Visira of the Mahabharata.
- Fire-worship seems to have been a very widespread phenomenon among the Chalcolithic people of Pre-historic India as fire-altars have been found from a large number of Chalcolithic sites during the course of excavations.
- The occurence of pots and other funerary objects found along with burials of the Malwa and Jorwe people indicate that people had a belief in life after death.
- The Chalcolithic farmers had made considerable progress in ceramic as well as metal technology. The painted pottery was well made and well fired in kiln, it was fired at a temperature between 500-700°C.
- In metal tools we find axes, chisels, bangles, beads, etc. mostly made of copper. The copper was obtained, perhaps, from the Khetri mines of Rajasthan.
- Gold ornaments were extremely rare and have been found only in the Jorwe culture.
- An ear ornament has been found from Prabhas in the Godavari valley also.
- The find of crucibles and pairs of tongs of copper at Inamgaon in Maharashtra shows the working of goldsmiths.
- Chalcedony drills were used for perforating beads of semi-precious stones.
- Lime was prepared out of Kankar and used for various purposes like painting houses and lining the storage bins, etc.

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INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

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Origin and Phases

- The Indus Valley civilization was an ancient civilization thriving along the Indus river and the Ghaggar-Hakra river in what is now Pakistan and north-western India. Among other names for this civilization is the Harappan civilization in reference to the first excavated city of Harappa.
- An alternative term for the culture is Saraswati-Sindhu civilization based on the fact that most of the Indus Valley sites have been found along the Ghaggar-Hakra river.
- R.B. Dayaram Sahni first discovered Harappa (on Ravi) in 1921. R.D. Banerjee discovered Mohenjodaro or 'Mound of the Dead' (on Indus) in 1922. Sir John Marshal played a crucial role in both these.
- Harappan civilization forms part of the proto history of India i.e. the script is there, but it cannot be deciphered and belongs to the Bronze Age.
- The Indus valley civilization gradually developed to a full-fledged civilization which has been established through a continuous sequence of strata named as Pre-Harappan, Early Harappan, Mature Harappan and Late Harappan stages or phases.
- The long term indigenous evolution of this civilization which obviously began on the periphery of the Indus Valley in the hills of eastern Baluchistan and then extended so far into the plains, can be documented by an analysis of four sites which have been excavated in recent years: Mehargarh, Amri, Kalibangan and Lothal which reflect the sequence of the four important phases or stages in pre and proto history in the north-west region of the Indian sub-continent.
- The sequence begins with the transition of nomadic herdsmen to settled agriculturists in eastern Baluchistan (First Phase), continues with the growth of large villages and the rise of towns in the Indus Valley (Second Phase), leads to the emergence of the great cities (Third Phase), and finally, ends with their decline (Fourth Phase).
- Mediterranean, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloids and Alpines formed the bulk of the population, though the first two were more numerous.
- More than 100 sites belonging to this civilization have been excavated.
- According to radio-carbon dating, it spread from the year 2500-1750 B.C.
- Copper, bronze, silver and gold were known but not iron.

Geographical Extent

- Covered parts of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan and some parts of Western U.P. It extended from Manda in Jammu in the north to Daimabad in the south and from Alamgirpur in western U.P. to Sutkagendor in Baluchistan in the west.
- Major sites in Pakistan are Harappa (on river Ravi in west Punjab), Mohenjodaro (on Indus), Chanhu-Daro (Sindh), etc. In India the major sites are Lothal, Rangpur and Surkotda (Gujarat), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), Banawali (Hissar) and Alamgirpur (western U.P.)
- The largest and the latest site in India is Dholavira in Gujarat. Dr. J.P. Joshi and Dr. R.S. Bisht were involved in it.

Town Planning

- The Indus Valley people were primarily urban people. Elaborate town-planning following the Grid System. Roads were well cut dividing the town into large rectangular or square blocks. Lamp posts at intervals indicate the existence of street lightening. Flanking the streets, lanes and by-lanes were well-planned houses. The streets were quite broad varying from 9 feet to 34 feet in breadth.
- Burnt bricks of good quality were used for building material except in Rangpur and Kalibangan. Elsewhere in the contemporary world mud bricks were used. No pottery-kiln was allowed to be built within the four walls of the city.
- Houses were often of two or more storey, of varying sizes but were quite monotonous – a square courtyard around which were a number of rooms. The windows faced the streets and the houses had tiled bathrooms. It is especially noteworthy that almost every house had its own wells, bathrooms, courtyards, drains and kitchens.
- There was a good drainage system and drains were made of mortar, lime and gypsum and covered

with large brick slabs for easy cleaning which shows a developed sense of health and sanitation. Every house had its own soak-pit which collected all the sediments and allowed only the water to flow into the street drain. House drains emptied themselves into the main drains which ran under the main streets and below many lanes. There were special trenches constructed outside every city for the rubbish to be thrown in them.

- The towns were divided into two parts: Upper part or Citadel and the Lower part. The Citadel was an oblong artificial platform some 30-50 feet high and about some 400-200 yards in area. It was enclosed by a thick (13 m in Harappa) crenellated mud brick wall. The Citadel comprised of public buildings whereas the lower part comprised of public dwellings.
- In Mohenjodaro, a big public bath (Great Bath) measuring 12 m by 7 m and 2.4 m deep has been found. Steps led from either end to the surface, with changing rooms alongside. The Great Bath was probably used for ritual bathing.
- Lamp posts at intervals indicate the existence of street lighting.
- There were special series constructed for the travelers and a system of watch and word at night also existed.

Political Organization/ Municipalities

- There is no clear idea of the political organization of the Indus valley people. Perhaps they were more concerned with commerce and they were possibly ruled by a class of merchants.
- Also there was an organization like a municipal corporation to look after the civic amenities of the people.

Economic Life

Agriculture

- The Indus people sowed seeds in the flood plains in November, when the flood water receded, and reaped their harvests of wheat and barley in April, before the advent of the next flood which indicated agriculture and knowledge of calendar reading.
- The people grew wheat, barley, rai, peas, sesamum, mustard, rice (in Lothal), cotton, dates, melon, etc. The Indus people were the first to produce cotton in the world.
- In Kalibangan, fields were ploughed with wooden ploughs.
- Domestication of animals was done on a large scale. Besides the cattle, sheep, pigs, camels, cats and dogs were domesticated. Horses weren't in regular use but elephant was. Remains of horse at Surkotda and dogs with men in graves in Ropar have been discovered.
- Produced sufficient to feed themselves. There was no exchange of foodgrains/export or import.
- Food grains were stored in granaries. Eg. In Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

Trade and Commerce

- Well-knit external and internal trade. There was no metallic money in circulation and trade was carried through Barter System.
- Weights and measures of accuracy existed in Harappan culture (found at Lothal). The weights were made of limestone, steatite, etc. and were generally cubical in shape.
- 16 was the unit of measurement (16, 64, 160, 320).
- Flint tool-work, shell-work, bangle-making (famous in Kalibangan), etc. were practiced. Raw materials for these came from different sources: gold from north Karnataka, silver and Lapis Lazuli from Afghanistan and Iran, copper from Khetri and Baluchistan, etc.
- Bead making factories existed in Chanu daro and Lothal. They were items of export.
- A dockyard has been discovered at Lothal. Rangpur, Somnath and Balakot functioned as seaports. Sutkagendor and Sutkakoh functioned as outlets.
- The inland transport was carried out by bullock carts.
- Every merchant or mercantile family probably had a seal bearing an emblem often of a religious character, and a name or brief description, on one side. The standard Harappa seal was a square or oblong plaque made of steatite stone. The primary purpose of the seal was probably to mark the ownership of property, but they may have also served as amulets.
- The Mesopotamian records from about 2350 B.C. onwards refer to trade relations with Meluhha, the ancient name of the Indus region. Harappan seals and other material have been found at Mesopotamia. There were also instances of trade with Sumer, Babylonia, Egypt, etc.

Art and Craft

- The Harappan culture belongs to the Bronze Age and bronze was made by mixing tin and copper. Tools were mostly made of copper and bronze. For making bronze, copper was obtained from Khetri in Rajasthan and from Baluchistan and tin from Afghanistan.
- The people of this culture were not acquainted with iron at all.

- The Indus Valley people had achieved a great skill in drawing the figures of men, animals and various other objects of nature and were fully conversant with the art of craving with figures on ivory, soap-stone, leather, metal and wood proving their artistic acumen.
- Cotton fabrics were quite common and woolens were popular in winter.
- One male figure or a statue shows that generally two garments were worn and the female dress was more or less like that of a male.
- The Indus valley people were very fond of ornaments (of gold, silver, ivory, copper, bronze and precious stones) and dressing up. Ornaments were worn by both men and women, rich or poor. Women wore heavy bangles in profusion, large necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, figure-rings, girdles, nose-studs and anklets. The Harappans were expert bead makers.
- They were fully conscious of the various fashions of hair-dressing and wore beards of different styles.

Harappan Seals

- Potter's wheel was in use. The Indus Valley Pottery was red or black pottery and the people indulged in dice games, their favorite pastime being gambling.
- The Harrapans most notable artistic achievement was their seal engravings especially those of animals. The red sandstone torso of a man is particularly impressive for its realism. However the most impressive of the figurines is the bronze image of a dancing girl (identified as a devdassi) found at Mohenjodaro.
- Maximum number of seals discovered is made of steatite with the unicorn symbol being discovered on the maximum number of seals.
- For their children, the Harappans made cattle-toys with moveable heads, model monkeys which could slide down a string, little toy carts and whistles shaped like birds all of terracotta.

Religious Life

- The main object of worship was the Mother Goddess or Shakti. But the upper classes preferred a God – nude with two horns, much similar to Pashupati Shiva. Represented on the seal is a figure with three horned heads in a yogic posture, surrounded by an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros and below his throne is a buffalo. Near his feet are two deer. Pashupatinath represented the male deity.
- The elaborate bathing arrangement marking the city of Mohenjodaro would suggest that religious purification by bath formed a feature of the Indus Valley people.
- Phallus (lingam) and yoni worship was also prevalent.
- Many trees (pepal), animals (bull), birds (dove, pigeon) and stones were worshipped. Unicorns were also worshipped. However no temple has been found though idolatry was practiced.
- At Kalibangan and Lothal fire altars have been found.
- Although no definite proof is available with regard to disposal of the dead, a broad view is that there were probably three methods of disposing the dead – complete burial (laid towards north), burial after exposure of the body to birds and beasts, and cremation followed by burial of the ashes. The discovery of cinerary urns and jars, goblets or vessels with ashes, bones or charcoal may however suggest that during the flourishing period of the Indus valley culture, the third method was generally practiced. In Harappa, there is one place where evidence of coffin burial is there. The people probably believed in ghosts and spirits as amulets were worn.
- Dead bodies were placed in the north-south orientation.
- It appears from excavations that the people of this culture were well-versed with surgery. For example, some evidences have come from both Kalibangan and Lothal hinting at head surgery. Otherwise, they used to take recourse to black magic, amulets etc.

Script

- The script is not alphabetical but pictographic (about 600 undeciphered pictographs).
- The script has not been deciphered so far, but overlaps of letters show that it was written from right to left in the first line and left to right in the second line. This style is called 'Boustrophedon'.

End/Decay

- The Harappan culture lasted for around 1000 years.
- The invasion of the Aryans, recurrent floods (7 floods), social breakup of Harappans, Earthquakes, successive alteration in the course of the river Indus and the subsequent drying up of the areas in and around the major cities, etc. are listed as possible causes for the decline of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Important Sites of the Indus Valley Civilization

1. Harappa

Harappa is situated in Montogomery district of

Punjab (Pakistan). Excavations at the site have led to the following specific findings:

- Two rows of six granaries with brick platforms; 12 granaries together had the same area as the Great Granary at Mohenjodaro.
- Working floors, consisting of rows of circular brick platforms lay to the south of granaries and were meant for threshing grain.
- Evidence of coffin burial and cemetery 'H' culture.
- The dead were buried in the southern portion of the fortified area, called cemetery R-37.
- Single room barracks just below the walls of the citadels for the labourers and factory workers.
- It has been identified with Hari-Yupiya which is mentioned in the Rigveda.
- Evidence of direct trade and interaction with Mesopotamia.
- Discovery of a red sandstone male torso and
- Stone symbols of female genitals.
- Almost 36% of the total seals excavated in the Indus Civilization are excavated from Harappa alone.
- Other discoveries include Bronze image of an 'ekka' (vehicle) and a seal with the representation of the sign of 'swastika' on it.

2. Mohenjo-daro

Also known as the 'Mound of the dead', it lies in Larkana district of Sind (Pakistan). Some of the specific findings during the excavations of Mohenjodaro include:

- A college, a multi-pillared assembly hall.
- The Great Bath
- A large granary (the largest building of Mohenjodaro) which suggests extreme centralization as the ruling authorities must have first brought the agricultural produce here and then redistributed it.
- A piece of woven cotton alongwith spindle whorls and needles.
- Superficial evidence of a horse or an ass.
- A pot-stone fragment of Mesopotamian origin.
- Evidence of direct trade contact with Mesopotamia.
- A bronze dancing girl.
- Evidence of violent death of some of the inhabitants (discovery of human skeletons put together).
- A seal representing Mother Goddess with a plant growing from her womb, and a woman to be sacrificed by a man with a knife in his hand.
- A bearded man
- A seal with a picture suggesting Pashupati Mahadev.
- This city is also an extreme example of conservatism, as despite having been flooded almost nine times, they never tried to shift to a safer place. Rather, they came back to the original site whenever the water table receded. Nor did they ever try to build strong embankments to protect themselves from floods.

3. Alamgirpur

- The famous Harappan site is considered the eastern boundary of the indus culture. Although the caves found here resemble those at other Harappan sites, other findings suggest that Alamgirpur developed during the late-Harappan culture.
- The site is remarkable for providing the impression of cloth on a trough.

4. Kalibangan

Kalibangan was an important Harappan city. The word Kalibangan means 'black bangles'. A ploughed field was the most important discovery of the early excavations. Later excavations at Kalibangan made the following specific discoveries:

- A wooden furrow
- Seven fire altars in a row on a platform suggesting the practice of the cult of sacrifice.
- Remains of a massive brick wall around both the citadel and the lower town (the second Harappan site after Lothal to have the lower town also walled.
- Bones of a camel.
- The skull of a child found suffering from hydrocephalus.
- A tiled floor which bears intersecting designs of circles.
- A human head with long oval eyes, thick lower lips, receding forehead and straight pointed nose.
- Evidences of two types of burials:
  - Burials in a rectangular grave and
  - Burials in a circular grave.

5. Kot-Diji

Kot-Diji is known more as a pre-Harappan site. It gives the impression of a pre-Harappan fortified settlement. Houses were made of stone. The remains of Kot-Diji suggest that the city existed in the first half of the third millennium B.C. Excavations at the site suggest that the city was destructed by force.

6. Lothal

Lothal was an important trade centre of the Harappan culture. The town planning in Lothal was different from that of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. The city was divided into six sections. Each section was built on a wide platform of unripe bricks. Each platform was separated by a road with width ranging from 12 feet to 20 feet. Excavations at Lothal led to some specific discoveries which include:

- Remains of rice husk (the only other Harappan city where the rice husk has been found is Rangpur near Ahmedabad).
- An artificial dock yard.
- Evidence of a horse from a doubtful terracotta figurine.
- Impressions of cloth on some of the seals.
- Evidence of direct trade contact with Mesopotamia.
- Houses with entrances on the main street (the houses of all other Harappan cities had side entries).
- A ship designed on a seal.
- A terracotta ship.
- A painting on a jar resembling the story of the 'cunning fox' and the 'thirsty crow' narrated in Panchatantra.
- Evidence of double burial (burying a male and a female in a single grave) found in three graves whereas in Kalibangan one such grave has been found.
- Evidence of games similar to modern day chess and
- An instrument for measuring 180, 90, 45 degree angles (the instrument points to modern day compass).

7. Amri

- Amri also gives evidence of pre-Harappan settlement. However it lacks the fortification plan of the pre-Harappan phase. A spectacular feature of Amri is that it gives the impression of existence of transitional culture between pre and post Harappan culture.
- Important findings at Amri include the actual remains of rhinoceros, traces of Jhangar culture in late or declining Harappan phase and fir altars.

8. Chanhu-daro

- Excavations at Chanhu-daro have revealed three different cultural layers from lowest to the top being Indus culture, and the pre-Harappan Jhukar culture and the Jhangar culture.
- The site is especially important for providing evidences about different Harappan factories. These factories produced seals, toys and bone implements.
- Through excavations, the evidence of bead maker's shops has come to light.
- It was the only Harappan city without a citadel.
- Some remarkable findings at Chanhu-daro include bronze figures of bullock cart and ekkas, a small pot suggesting an inkwell, footprints of an elephant and a dog chasing a cat.

9. Ropar

- Ropar is a Harappan site from where remains of pre-Harappan and Harappan cultures have been found.
- Buildings at Ropar were made mainly of stone and soil.
- Important findings at the site include pottery, ornaments, copper axes, chert blades, terracotta blades, one inscribed steatite seal with typical Indus pictographs, several burials interred in oval pits and a rectangular mud brick chamber.
- There is also an evidence of burying a dog below the human burial (Though the practice was prevalent in Burzahom in Kashmir, it was late in the Harappan context.

10. Banawali

- Situated in Hissar district of Haryana, Banawali has provided two phases of culture during its excavations: the pre-Harappan (Phase I) and the Harappan (Phase II).
- Though Phase II belonged to the Harappan period, chess board or grid pattern of town planning was not always followed as in other Harappan sites.
- The roads were not always straight nor did they cut at right angles.
- It also lacked another important feature of the Harappan civilization – a systematic drainage system.
- High quality barley has been found in excavations.
- Other important material remains include ceramics, steatite seal and a few terracotta sealing with typical Indus script, ear rings shaped like leaves of a peepal tree and terracotta bangles.

11. Surkotda

- Situated in Kutch (Bhuj) district of Gujarat and excavated by J.P. Joshi in 1972, Surkotda was an important fortified Harappan settlement.
- This site is important because it provides the first actual remains of horse bones.
- A cemetery with four pot burials with some human bones has also been found.
- A grave has been found in association with a big rock (megalithic burial), a rare finding of the Harappan culture.

12. Sutkagendor

- Sutkagendor situated in Sindh (Pakistan) was an important coastal town of the Indus civilization.
- Excavations of Sutkagendor have revealed a twofold division of the township: the Citadel and the Lower City, it is said that Sutkagendor was originally a port which later cut off from the sea due to coastal uplift.

THE VEDIC CIVILIZATION

- We know about the Aryans in India from the various Vedic texts, especially the Rig Veda, which is the earliest specimen of the Indo-European language and the chief source of information on the history of this period.
- Many historians have given various theories regarding the original place of the Aryans. However, the Central Asian Theory given by Max Muller, is the most accepted one. It states that the Aryans were semi-nomadic pastoral people around the Caspian Sea in Central Asia.
- They entered India probably through the Khyber Pass (in the Hindukush Mountains) around 1500 B.C.
- The holy book of Iran 'Zend Avesta' indicates entry of Aryans to India via Iran.
- The early Aryans did not have to look routes to Indian sub-continent; for the Harappans had crossed the high passes of the Hindukush and reached the middle course of the Amu Darya where they had set up a trading post at Shortughai.
- In the Rigvedic period, the nobles were advised to eat from the same vessel as the *vis* for success.
- Metal came to be known as Ayas and Iron as Krishanayas (Black Metal).
- The Vedic texts may be divided into two broad chronological strata: the Early Vedic (1500-1000 B.C.) when most of the hymns of the Rig Veda were composed and the Later Vedic (1000-600 B.C.) when the remaining three Vedas and their branches were composed.

Early Vedic or Rigvedic Period (1500-1000 B.C.)

- The Rig Veda is a collection of prayers offered to Agni, Indra, Varuna and other gods by various families of poets and sages.
- From Rigveda, we come to know that there were 33 gods that time who were divided into three categories viz., heavenly gods, atmospheric god, and earthly gods. Varuna, Surya, Aditi, Savitri were heavenly gods. Indra, Rudra, Maruts etc. were atmospheric gods. Agni, Soma, and Prithvi were earthly gods.
- Four rivers of Afghanistan are clearly described in the Rigveda. These are: Kubha, Krumu, Gomati (Gomal), Suvastu (swat).
- It consists of ten Mandala or books of which Book II to VII is the easiest portion. Book I and X seem to have been the latest additions.
- In the Rigvedic period, the dead man's soul is said to depart to the waters of the plants.
- Since the Aryans came through the mountains, which were considered the dwelling places of their gods, these are repeatedly mentioned in the Rigveda. Meru, a mountain beyond the Himalayas, is a happy divine abode in the Mahabharata and the Puranas.
- The Rig Veda has many things in common with the Avesta, which is the oldest text in the Iranian language. The two texts use the same names for several Gods and even for social classes.
- The history of the later Vedic period is based mainly on the Vedic texts which were compiled after the age of the Rig Veda. These include the three Vedas – Samveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda and the Brahamanas, the Aranyakas, the Upanishads and the Sutras.
- The collection of the Vedic hymns or mantras were known as Samhitas.
- For purposes of singing, the prayers of the Rigveda were set to tune and this modified collection was known as the Samveda Samhita.
- The Yajurveda contains not only the hymns but also the rituals which have to accompany their recitation.
- The Atharvaveda is completely different from the other three Vedas. It contains charms and spells to ward off evils and diseases. Its contents throw light on the beliefs and practices of the non-Aryans. Atharvaveda is the most valuable of the Vedas after the Rig Veda for the history and sociology.
- All the Vedic literature is together called the Shruti and they include apart from the four Vedas, the Brahamanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads.
- The Brahamanas are a series of texts that followed the Vedic samhitas. Each Veda has several bhramanas attached to it. These are ritual texts.
- Brahamanas attached to the Rigveda are Aitareya, Kaushitaki (composed by Hotri priest). Brahamanas

attached to Samveda are Jamini, Tandyamasha, Panchavis, Chhandogya (composed by Udgatri priest). Brahamanas attached to Yajurveda are Satpatha Brahmana (composed by Adhvaryu priest). Brahamanas attached to Atharvaveda are Gopatha Brahamana.

- The Brahamanas throw light on the socio-political life of the Aryans and form a sort of explanation of their religion, especially sacrifice. They also contain ritualistic formulae for the respective Vedas and its priests.
- The Aranyakas are forest books that are treaties on mysticism and philosophy and are concluding portion of the Brahamanas. They explain the metaphysics and symbolism of sacrifice. They lay emphasis not on sacrifice but on meditation. They are infact opposed to sacrifice and many of the ritualistic practices. Their stress is on moral virtues. They form a bridge between the way of the works (karma-marga, advocated by the Brahamanas) and the way of knowledge (gyan-marga, advocated by the Upanishads). Some important Aranyakas are Aitreya Aranyaka, Kaushitaki Aryanka and Taittiriya Aranyaka.
- The Upanishads contain philosophical speculations. They are generally called Vedanta which means the end of the Vedas. One reason is that they came at the end of the Vedic period or that they were taught at the end of the Vedic instruction. These texts were compiled around 600 B.C. and criticized the rituals and laid stress on the values of right belief and knowledge. They emphasized that the knowledge of the self and the atma should be acquired and the relation of atma with Brahma should be properly understood.
- The ten Upanishads are: Ishopanishat, Kenopanishat, Kathopanishat, Parshnopanishat, Mandukopanishat, Koushikopanishat, Thaittariyopanishat, Chandogyopanishat and Brihadaranyaopanishat. These are commentaries appended to the Aranyakas and deal mainly with philosophy and religion.
- The Smriti are the auxiliary treatises of the Vedas or their supplements. It refers to that literature that has been passed on from one generation to the other. Manusmriti written by Manu is the oldest of all the Smritis.
- The Puranas are 18 in number, of which the Bhagawat Purana and Vishnu Purana are the most important.

Geographical Spread

- The early Aryans settled in eastern Afghanistan, modern Pakistan, Punjab and parts of western U.P. The whole region in which the Aryans first settled in India is called the Land of Seven Rivers or Sapta Sindhava (the Indus and the five tributaries and the Saraswati).

Political Organization

- The political organization was of monarchial form. The tribe was known as Jan and its king as Rajan. He was the leader in battle and protector of the tribe. His office was not hereditary and was selected among the clan's men. The Rajan was not an absolute monarch, for the government of the tribe was in part the responsibility of the tribal councils like sabhas, samitis, gana and vidhata. Even women attended gana and vidhata only.
- Many clans (Vish) formed a tribe. The basic social unit was the Kula or the family and the Kulapa was the head of the family.
- The king was assisted by a number of officers of which Purohita was the most important. Next important functionary was the Senani (leader of the army) even though there was no regular or standing army. The military technique of the Aryans was much advanced. The Aryans succeeded everywhere because they possessed chariots driven by horses.
- There was no regular revenue system and the kingdom was maintained by voluntary tribute (Bali) of his subjects and booty won in battle.

Social Life

- The term Varna was used for colour, the Aryans being fair and the Dasas dark.
- Family was the basic unit of society and was patriarchal in nature. But women enjoyed equal power with men. Marriage was usually monogamous and indissoluble, but there are a few instances of polyandry, levirate and widow marriage. There are no examples of child-marriage. The marriageable age seems to have been 16 to 17.
- Both dowry and bride price were recognized during the Early Vedic period.
- The word 'Arya' came to refer to any person who was respected.
- Aryans were fond of soma, sura, food and dresses. Soma was drunk at sacrifices and its use was sanctified by religion. Sura was purely secular and more potent and was disapproved by the priestly poets.
- Throughout the Vedic period, education was imparted orally. Unlike the Harappans, the Aryans do not seem to have a system of writing.
- The Aryans loved music and played the flute, lute and harp. There are references to singing and dancing girls. People also delighted in gambling.

They enjoyed chariot racing. Both men and women wore ornaments.

Economy

- Their bronze smiths were highly skilled and produced tools and weapons much superior to those of Harappa culture. There were artisans like carpenters, weavers, cobblers, potters, etc.
- Aryans followed a mixed economy – pastoral and agricultural – in which cattle played a predominant part. Most of their wars were fought for cow (most important form of wealth). Cattle were in fact a sort of currency and values were reckoned in heads of cattle (man's life was equivalent to that of 100 cows), but they were not held sacred at the time. The horse was almost as important as the cow.
- Standard unit of exchange was the cow. At the same time coins were also there (gold coins like Nishka, Krishnal and Satmana). Gavyuti was used as a measure of distance and Godhuli as a measure of time.
- Reference to money lending first occurs in Shatapatha Brahmana, which describes a usurer as Kusidin.
- Lived in fortified mud settlements.
- Physicians were then called 'Bhishakas'.
- The staple crop was 'yava' which meant barley.

Religion

- The Aryans personified the natural forces and looked upon them as living beings.
- The most important divinity was Indra who played the role of warlord (breaker of forts – Purandar and was also associated with storms and thunder).
- The second position was held by Agni (fire-god). He is considered an intermediary between gods and men.
- Varuna occupied the third position. He personified water and was supposed to uphold the natural order (Rta). He was ethically the highest of all Rigvedic gods.
- Soma was considered to be the god of plants. Maruts personified the storms.
- Some female deities are also mentioned like Aditi and Usha, who represented the appearance of dawn.
- Didn't believe in erecting temples or idol worship. Worshipped in open air through yajnas.
- Aryans didn't worship animals – only gods in man's form.
- The Asvamedha sacrifice concluded with the sacrifice of 21 sterile cows.
- From Brihadaranyaka Upanishad we get the first exposition of the doctrine of transmigration of soul.

Later Vedic Period/Painted Grey Ware Phase (1000-600 B.C.)

Geographical Spread

- They reveal that the Aryans expanded from Punjab over the whole of western U.P. covered by the Ganga-Yamuna doab.
- In the beginning, they cleared the land by burning; later with the use of iron tools which became common by 1000-800 B.C.
- In Later Vedic period, many great cities like Videha, Kaushambhi, Kasi, Ayodhya, Hastinapur and Indraprashtha etc. had sprung up.

Political Organization

- Tiny tribal settlements were replaced by strong kingdoms.
- The earliest legend on the origin of kingship occurs in the Aitareya Brahmana, one of the Later Vedic texts, perhaps of the 8th or 7th century B.C.
- During the Rigvedic period the Aryans had built only small kingdoms, as they were always busy fighting the non-Aryans. But now they had crushed the resistance of the non-Aryans and had established such powerful kingdoms as Kuru, Panchala, Kosala, Magadha, Kasi and Anga.
- Powers of the king who was called the Samrat increased. Importance of assemblies declined. Women were no longer permitted to attend assemblies and the term 'Rashtra' indicating territory first appeared in this period.
- The establishment of vast empires led to the growth of the royal power.
- The Sabha and the Samiti were now not powerful enough to check the power of the kings. The office of the monarch had now become more or less hereditary.
- A regular army was maintained for the protection of the kingdom.
- In the Rigvedic period we hear of three main assistants of the king, i.e., the Purohita, the Senani and the Gramini. But now in addition to these officials many new assistants of the king were present. References of Priest (Purohita), Commander in chief (Senapati), Charioteer (Suta), Treasurer (Sangrihita), Tax collector (Bhagdugha), Chief queen (Mahisi) and the Great companion (Aksavapa).

- The centre of gravity was the king and not the priest. If there was any difference between the ruler and the priest, it was the priest who yielded.
- Kings of various grades are mentioned in the Vedic hymns. For example, the Rajaka was inferior to a Raja who in turn was inferior to a Samrat.
- Political affairs, religious and social matters were discussed by the speakers in the local assemblies. These speakers sought the help of spells and magic herbs to stimulate their eloquence in debate (Pras) and overcome their rival debaters (Pratiprasita).

Social Life

- The four fold division of society became clear initially based on occupation which later became hereditary; Brahmins (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaishyas (agriculturists, cattle-rearers, traders) and Shudras (servers of the upper three).
- Women enjoyed freedom and respect but their status deteriorated compared to earlier time.
- The institution of gotra appeared in this age first time. Gotra signified descent from common ancestors.
- In this age also Chariot racing was the main sport and gambling the main pastime.
- The excavations at Hastinapur in Meerut, dating back to about 900 B.C.-500 B.C. have revealed settlements and faint beginning of town life. It may be called a proto-urban site.
- Later Vedic period, especially from around 800 B.C.- 500 B.C., is also the Sutra period. Sutra means formula. Grihasutra contained social rituals including sixteen sanskaras through which individual had to pass from conception to cremation.
- Woman was now gradually losing her position of importance in the religious and social sphere. The king and the nobility had now begun to marry more than one wife and the birth of a daughter was now regarded as source of misery.
- Higher education was, however, imparted to women. The re-marriage of a widow was prevalent and the practices of sati, child-marriage, purdah and child infanticide were not heard of.
- Now in place of four main varnas many new castes were born, leading to the complexities of the caste system.
- The life of an ordinary man was now, however, divided into four stages popularly known as the four Ashramas.

Types of marriages

- **Brahma:** Marriage of a duly dowered girl to a man of the same class.
- **Daiva:** Marriage in which the father gave his daughter to a sacrificial priest as part of his fees.
- **Arsa:** Marriage in which a token bride price of a cow and a bull was paid to the daughter's father.
- **Prajapatya:** Marriage in which the father gave the girl without any dowry and without demanding bride price.
- **Gandharva:** Marriage often clandestine, by the consent of the two parties.
- **Asura:** Marriage by purchase.
- **Rakshasa:** Marriage by capture.
- **Paishacha:** Marriage involving the seduction of a girl while sleeping, etc.
- **Anuloma marriage:** was the marriage of higher varna man with a lower varna woman.
- **Pratiloma marriage:** was the marriage of a lower varna man with a higher varna woman.

Important Vedic Rituals

- **Asvamedha:** A king performed this sacrifice which meant control over the area in which the royal horse ran uninterrupted. The ceremony lasted for three days at the end of which the horse sacrificed was performed. The Asvamedha sacrifice concluded with the sacrifice of 21 sterile cows.
- **Vajapeva:** A chariot race was performed in which the king must win the race (it was fixed). It was meant to re-establish the supremacy of the king over his people.
- **Rajasuya:** A sacrifice ceremony which conferred supreme power on the king.
- **Ratnahavimsi:** A part of Rajasuya ceremony where different royal officials (ratnins) invoked different gods and goddesses.
- **Upanayana:** An initiation ceremony to confer dvija status to boys of the higher varnas in their eighth year.
- **Pumsayam:** A ceremony to procure a male child.
- Garbhadhana: A ceremony to promote conception in women.
- **Culakarma:** A ceremony, also known tonsure performed for boys in their third year.
- **Semontannayam:** A ceremony to ensure the safety of the child in the womb.
- **Jatkarma:** A birth ceremony performed before the cutting of the umbilical cord.

Pottery

- Though the Later Vedic phase has been identified with the Painted Grey Ware pottery culture, but the fact is that this type of pottery constitutes only about 3-15% of the total pottery found.

- The later vedic people used four types of pottery: black and red ware, black-slipped ware, painted grey ware and red ware.
- Red ware for commoners was most popular and has been found almost all over western U.P. However, the most distinctive pottery of the period is known as Painted Grey Ware which comprised bowls and dishes, used either for rituals or for eating by upper classes.

Economy

- During Later Vedic period, Krishnala berry was unit of weight and this probably led to the use of coinage. The Nishka replaced cow as a unit of value. The Satamana mentioned in the Brahmanas was a piece of gold weighing a hundred Krishnalas.
- Rigveda mentions only gold and copper or bronze but Later Vedic texts mention tin, lead, silver and iron.
- In addition to the cultivation of barley, wheat and rice, many new grains such as sesame (Tila) and beans began to be cultivated during this period and great progress was doubtlessly made in the methods of cultivation

Religion

- Rituals and formulae became prominent in the cult of sacrifice.
- According to the scheme of four stages, life did not begin with one's physical birth, but with the second birth which was after the investiture ceremony or Upanayana. The age of Upanayana was 8 years for Brahmanas, 11 years for Kshatriyas, and 12 years for Vaishyas.
- Shatpatha Brahmana says that east, west, north, south; all should be given to priests as fee.
- Indra, Varuna, Surya and Agni lost their importance. Prajapati (the creator) became supreme. Vishnu came to be conceived as the preserver and protector of the people.
- Some of the special orders came to have their own deities e.g. Pushan responsible for well being of the cattle, became the God of the Shudras.
- Towards the end of the period, began a strong reaction against the sacrificial cults and rituals with the composition of the Upanishads which valued right belief and knowledge more than anything else.

The Vedic Literature

The Vedas

- The word 'veda' comes from the root 'vidi' signifying knowledge.
- Vedas are also known as 'Shruti' (to hear) as they were passed from generation through verbal transmission.
- Harappa is known in Vedas as 'Haryupriva'.
- They are four in all – rigveda, samaveda, yajurveda and atharveda.
- The first three Vedas are known as 'Tyari' or 'trio'. Each veda is further subdivided into Samhitas.
- The phrase 'Arya' and 'Shudra' appearing in the Vedic literature perhaps meant only to distinguish those who were theoretically qualified for the fire-cult from those who were not.

Rig veda

- Oldest religious text in the world. Must have been composed around 1700 B.C.
- A collection of hymns. Were recited at the time of sacrificial rites and other rituals with utmost devotion.
- Contains 1028 hymns (1017+11 valakhilyas) and is divided into 10 mandalas.
- II to VII are the earliest mandalas, each of which is ascribed to a particular family of seers (rishis) – Gritsamada, Visvamitra, Vamadeva, Atri, Bhardwaj and Vashistha. VII Mandala is ascribed to the Kanvas and Angiras. IX is the compilation of Soma hymns. I and X are considered the later additions.
- The X Mandala contains the famous Purushsukta which explains that the four varnas (Brahmans, Ksatriya, Vaishya and Shudra) were born from the mouth, arms, thighs and feet of the creator, Brahma.
- Words in Rig Veda: Om (1028 times), Jan (275 times), etc. 250 hymns are dedicated to Indra while 200 are dedicated to Agni.
- The third Mandala contains the Gayatri Mantra (addressed to the sun/Savitri – goddess associated with Surya).
- Saraswati is the deity river in Rig Veda and is referred to 8 times while the Sindhu/Indus is referred to 18 times.
- There is a reference to prison (urva) in the Rigveda and also to fetters of iron. Ordeal of the red-hot axe is mentioned only once in the Chhandogya Upanishad as part of criminal procedure.

Samveda

- Derived from the root 'Saman' i.e. 'melody'. It is a collection of melodies.
- It has 1603 verses but except 99 all the rest have been borrowed from Rig Veda.

- Contains 'Dhrupada Raga' which is the oldest of the ragas.

Yajurveda

- Deals with the procedure for the performance of sacrifices.
- There are two main texts of Yajurveda: White Yajurveda (or Shukla Yajurveda) and Black Yajurveda (or Krishna Yajurveda). The former contains mantras and the latter has commentary in prose.

Atharvaveda

- Entirely different from three other Vedas.
- Divided into 20 kandas (books) and has 711 hymns – mostly dealing with magic (along with personal problems of people).
- Atharvaveda refers to king as protector of Brahmanas and eater of people.
- From the point of view of Vedic rituals, Atharvaveda is the most important.

The Brahamans

- They explain the hymns of the Vedas in an orthodox manner.
- Each Veda has several Brahmans attached to it.
- The most important is 'Satpatha Brahmana' attached to Yajurveda which is the most exhaustive and important of all. It recommends 'One Hundred Sacred Paths'.

The Aranyakas

- Called 'forest books', written mainly by the hermits living in the jungles for their pupils.
- These are the concluding part of the Brahmanas.
- Deals with mysticism and philosophy. Opposed to sacrifice and emphasized meditation.
- Form a bridge between 'Way of Work' (Karma Marg) which was the sole concern of the Upanishads and the 'Way of Knowledge' (Gyan Marg) which the Brahmanas advocated.

The Upanishads

- The word means 'to sit dowm near someone' and denotes a student sitting near his guru to learn.
- Called Vedanta (the end of the Vedas) firstly because they denote the last phase of the vedic period and secondly because they reveal the final aim of the Vedas.
- They are the main source of Indian philosophy.
- There are 108 Upanishads.
- They also condemn the ceremonies and the sacrifices.
- They discuss the various theories of creation of the universe and define the doctrine of action (karma).
- Mandukyu Upanishad is the source of 'Satya Mevya Jayate'.

Smritis

- Explains rules and regulations in the vedic life.
- Main are Manusmriti, Naradsmriti, Yagyavalkyasmriti and Parasharsmriti.
- Dharmasutras contain social laws popularly known as 'Smriti'. Earliest Dharmasutra is the Manusmriti which is also called Manav Darshan.

Vedangas

- Six Vedangas are Shiksha which deals with pronunciation, Kalpa which deals with rituals, Vyakarana which deals with grammar, Nirukta which deals with etymology or phonetics, Chhanda which deals with meter and Jyotisha which deals with astronomy.

Epics

- The period that lies between the Rigvedic period and the rise of Buddhism in India i.e., 2000 to 700 B.C. has been designated by some as the Later Vedic Period and by some as Epic Age.
- Though the two epics – the Mahabharata and the Ramayana were compiled later, they reflect the state of affairs of the later Vedic Period.
- The Mahabharata, attributed to Vyasa is considered older than the Ramayana and describes the period about 1400 B.C.; compiled from the tenth century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. It is also called Jaisamhita and Satasahasri Samhita and has one lakh verses and is divided into eighteen books with the Harivansa attached to it at the end.
- The Ramayana attributed to Valmiki has 24,000 verses. Its composition started in the fifth century B.C. and passes through five stages; the fifth stage ending in the 12th century A.D.

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BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

Causes for the Growth of Buddhism and Jainism

- The Vedic rituals were expensive and the sacrifices prescribed were very complicated and had lost their meaning.
- The caste system had become rigid.
- Supremacy of the Brahmins created unrest.
- All the religious texts were in Sanskrit, which was not understandable to the masses.

Buddhism

Buddhism is the middle way of wisdom and compassion. It stands for three pillars:

- Buddha – its founder
- Dhamma – his teachings
- Sangha – order of Buddhist monks and nuns.

Five Great Events of Buddha's Life and their Symbols

- Birth – Lotus and bull
- Great renunciation – Horse
- Nirvana – Bodhi tree
- First Sermon – Dharmachakra or wheel
- Parinirvana or death – Stupa

The Buddha

- Also known as Sakyamuni (the Sage of the Sakyas), Jina (the Victorious) or Tathagata (one who has reached the truth).
- Born in 563 B.C. on the Vaishakha Poornima Day at Lumbini (near Kapilavastu) in Nepal.
- His father Suddhodana was the Saka ruler.
- His mother (Mahamaya, of Kosala dynasty) died after 7 days of his birth and he was brought up by his stepmother Gautami.
- Buddha was married at 16 to Yashodhara and enjoyed married life for 13 years and had a son named Rahula.
- After seeing an old man, a sick man, a corpse and an ascetic, he decided to become a wanderer.
- Left his palace at 29 (with Channa, the charioteer and his favourite horse, Kanthaka) in search of truth (also called 'Mahabhinishkramana' or the Great renunciation) and wandered for 6 years.
- He first meditated with Alara Kaiama. But he was not convinced that man could obtain liberation from sorrow by mental discipline and knowledge. His next teacher was Udraka Ramputra. He then joined forces with five ascetics – Kondana, Vappa, Bhadiya, Mahanama and Assagi, who were practicing the most rigorous self-mortification in the hope of wearing away their karma and obtaining final bliss.
- For six years he tortured himself until he was nothing but a walking skeleton. But after six years he felt that his fasts and penance had been useless so he abandoned these things and the five disciples also left him.
- Attained Nirvana or Enlightenment at 35 at Uruvela, Gaya in Magadha (Bihar) under the Pipal tree.
- Delivered the first sermon at Sarnath at Deer Park where his five disciples had settled. His first sermon is called 'Dharmachakrapravartan' or 'Turning of the Wheel of Law'.
- Attained Mahaparinirvana at Kushinagar (identical with village Kasia in Deoria district of U.P.) in 483 B.C. at the age of 80 in the Malla republic. His death is said to have been caused by a meal of pork (sukramad-dava), which he had taken with his lay disciple Chunda at Pavapuri.
- His last words were: "All composite things decay. Strive diligently!" This was his "final blowing out" (Parinirvana). His body was cremated and his ashes were divided among the representatives of various tribal societies and King Ajatshatru of Magadha.

The Dhamma

The Four Great Truths

- Dukkha – The world is full of sorrow and misery.
- The cause of all pain and misery is desire and attachment.
- Pain and misery can be ended by killing or controlling desire.

- Desire can be controlled by following the Eight Fold Path.

The Eight Fold Path

The central theme of Buddha's teachings is the eight-fold path (Astangamarga) prescribed by him which consist of:

- **Wisdom** – Right Faith, Right Thought,
- **Moral Discipline** – Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Speech,
- **Mental Discipline** – Right Effort, Right Remembrance and Right Concentration.

Belief in Nirvana

- When desire ceases, rebirth ceases and nirvana is attained i.e. freedom from the cycle of birth and death by following the eight-fold path.
- According to Buddha the soul is a myth.

Belief in Ahimsa

One should not cause injury to any living being, animal or man.

Law of Karma

Man reaps the fruits of his past deeds.

The Sangha

- Consists of monks (Bhikshus and Shramanas) and nuns.
- Bhikshus acted as torch bearer of the Dhamma.
- Apart from Sangha, the worshippers were called Upasakas.

Buddhist Councils

The monks gathered four times after the death of the Buddha and the effect of these events had their effect on Buddhism.

- First Council – At Rajgriha, in 483 B.C. under the Chairmanship of Mehakassaapa (king was Ajatshatru). Divided the teachings of Buddha into two Pitakas – Vinaya Pitaka and Sutta Pitaka. Upali recited the Vinaya Pitaka and Ananda recited the Sutta Pitaka.
- Second Council – At Vaishali, in 383 B.C. under Sabakami (king was Kalasoka of Shishunaga Dynasty). Followers were divided into Sthavirmadins and Mahasanghikas.
- Third Council – At Pataliputra, in 250 B.C. under Mogaliputta Tissa (king was Ashoka). In this the third part of the Tripitaka was coded in the Pali language.
- Fourth Council – At Kashmir (Kundalvan) in 72 A.D. under Vasumitra (king was Kanishka). Vice Chairman was Ashwagosha. Divided into Mahayana and Hinayana sects.
- In Mahayana, idol worship is there. It became popular in China, Japan, Korea, Afghanistan, Turkey and other South East countries.
- Hinayana became popular in Magadha and Sri Lanka. It believed in individual salvation and not in idol worship.
- Apart from these two there is third vehicle called Vajrayana, which appeared in the 8th century and grew rapidly in Bihar and Bengal. They did not treat meat, fish, wine, etc. as a taboo in the dietary habits and freely consumed them.
- Fifth Council – In Mandalay, Burma (now Myanmar) in 1871 and was presided over by Theravada monks in the reign of King Mindon.
- Sixth Council – In Kaba Aye in Yangoon in 1954, was sponsored by the Burmese Government.

Buddhism after Buddha

- Of all the religious remains of between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D. so far discovered in India, those of Buddhism far outnumber those of any other religion viz., Hinduism, Jainism etc together.
- Hieun Tsang (the Chinese traveler), in the 7th century A.D. found that the Lesser Vehicle or Hinayanism is almost extinct in most of India, and only flourishing in a few parts of the west.
- From Nalanda, the missionary monk Padmasambhava went forth to convert Tibet to Buddhism in the 8th century A.D.
- In the 6th century AD, the Huna King Mihirkula destroyed monasteries and killed monks.
- A fanatical Shaivite king of Bengal, Sashanka, in the course of an attack on Kannauj in the beginning of the 7th century A.D., almost destroyed the Tree of Wisdom at Gaya.
- As late as the 5th century A.D., written scriptures were rare and the pilgrim Fa-hien was hard put to find a copy of the Vinay Pitaka.

Buddhist Literature

Buddhist literature in Pali language is commonly referred to as Tripitakas i.e. 'Threefold Basket'.

- Vinaya Pitaka are the rules of discipline in Buddhist monasteries.
- Sutta Pitaka is the largest and contains collection of Buddha's sermons.
- Abhinandan Pitaka is the explanation of the philosophical principles of the Buddhist religion.

- Mahayana and Deepvamsa are other Buddhist texts. They provide information about the then Sri Lanka.
- Jatakas are the fables about the different births of Buddha.
- The fundamentals of Buddhist teachings are contained in the "Dhammacakka-Pavattana Sutta (Sermon of the Turning of the Wheel of Law). Buddha first taught this to his first disciples at Benaras. This contains the Four noble truths and the Noble eight-fold path, which are accepted as basic categories by all Buddhist sects.
- Among the chief Mahayana texts is the Lalitvistara, a flowery narrative of the life of Buddha. This test was utilized by Sir Edwin Arnold for The Light of Asia, a lengthy poem on the life of Buddha, which enjoyed much popularity at the end of the last century.

Causes of Decline of Buddhism

- It succumbed to the Brahmannical rituals and ceremonies such as idol worship, etc. which Buddhism had earlier denounced.
- Revival of reformed Hinduism with the preaching of Shankaracharya from ninth century onwards.
- Use of Sanskrit, the language of intellectuals in place of Pali, the language of the common people.
- Deterioration in the moral standards among the monks living in the Buddhist monasteries.
- Attacks of Huna king Mihirkula in the sixth century and the Turkish invaders in the 12th century A.D. which continued till the 13th century A.D.

Jainism

- Founded by Rishabhanath, the first Tirthankara.
- There were 24 Tirthankara (Prophets or Gurus) and all of them were Kshatriyas. Rishabhanath's reference is also there in the Rigveda. But there is no historical basis for the first 22 Tirthankaras. Only the last two are historical personalities.
- The 23rd Tirthankara Parshwanath (symbol: snake) was the son of King Ashvasena of Benaras. His main teachings were: Non-injury, Non-lying, Non-stealing, Non-possession.
- The 24th and the last Tirthankara was Vardhman Mahavira (symbol: lion). He added celibacy to his main teachings.

Vardhman Mahavira

- He was born in Kundagram (district Muzaffarpur, Bihar) in 599 B.C.
- His father Siddhartha was the head of Jnatrika clan. His mother was Trishla, sister of Lichchhavi Prince Chetak of Vaishali.
- Mahavira was related to Bimbisara.
- Married to Yashoda and had a daughter named Priyadarsena, whose husband Jamali became his first discipline.
- At 30, after the death of his parents he became an ascetic.
- In the 13th year of his asceticism, outside the town of Jrimbhikgrama, he attained supreme knowledge (Kaivalya).
- From now on he was called Jaina or Jitendriya and Mahavira and his followers were named Jains. He also got the title of Arihant i.e. worthy.
- At the age of 72, he attained death at Pava, near Patna in 527 B.C. Mahavira survived the death of his chief rival Gosala and probably also that of the Buddha, and died of self-starvation at the age of 72 in the little town of Pava, near the Magadhan capital Rajagriha. It is said that at the time of Mahavir's death at Pavapuri, the kings of the two clans viz., the Mallas and the Lichchhavis, celebrated the lamp festival in his honour.
- After the death of Mahavira, during the reign of King Chandragupta, a severe famine led to the great exodus of Jain monks from the Ganga valley to the Deccan, where they established important centres of their faith. This migration led to a great schism in Jainism. Bhadrabahu who led the emigrants insisted on the retention of the rule of nudity which Mahavira had established. Sthulabhadra, the leader of the monks who remained in the north allowed his followers to wear white garments, owing to the hardships and confusion of the famine. Hence arose two sects of the Jains: the Digambaras (sky-clad i.e. naked) and the Svetanbaras (white-clad).
- Our knowledge of Jainism after Mahavira is meager. There were eleven 'Gandharas' but only one of them named Sudharman survived the master and became the first pontiff. He died 20 years after Mahavira.

Teachings of Mahavira

- Rejected the authority of the Vedas and do not attach any importance to the performance of the sacrifices.
- He believed that every object even the smallest particle possesses a soul and is endowed with consciousness. That is why they observe strict non-violence.

- The Jains reject the concept of the Universal soul or a Supreme power as the creator or sustainer of the Universe.
- Jainism does not deny the existence of Gods but refuses to give Gods any important part in the universal scheme. Gods are placed lower than the Jina.
- Universal brotherhood (non-belief in the caste system).
- In Jainism, three Ratnas (Triratnas) are given and they are called the way to Nirvana. They are Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct.

Jain Councils

- According to a Jain tradition, an oral sacred literature had been passed down from the days of Mahavira, but Bhadrabahu was the last person to know it perfectly. On Bhadrabahu's death, Sthulabhadra called a Great Council at Pataliputra which was the First Jain Council held in the beginning of third century B.C. It resulted in the compilation of 12 Angas to replace the former 14 Purvas. The Digambaras rejected this canon and declared that the original one was lost. Thus, there was a great urgency to devise new scriptures.
- The Second Council was held at Vallabhi (Gujarat) in the 5th century A.D. under the leadership of Devridhigani. It resulted in final compilation of 12 Angas and 12 Upangas.

Other Important Facts

- Jainism reached the highest point in Chandragupta Maurya's time. In Kalinga it was greatly patronized by Kharavela in the first century A.D.
- Various factors were responsible for the decline of Jainism in India. They took the concept of Ahimsa too far. They advised that one should not take medicine when one fell sick because the medicine killed germs. They believed that there was life in trees and vegetables and so refrained from harming them. Such practices could not become popular with the common man.
- Lack of patronage from the later kings.
- Jain literature is in Ardh-Magadhi and Prakrit dialects.
- Due to the influence of Jainism, many regional languages emerged out, like Sauraseni, out of which grew the Marathi, Gujarati, Rajasthani and Kannada languages.

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THE MAHAJANAPADAS

- From the 16th century onwards, the widespread use of Iron in eastern U.P. and western Bihar created conditions for the formation of large territorial states.
- The new agricultural tools and implements enabled the peasants to produce more and the extra produce was collected by princes to meet military and administrative needs.
- With this the 'Janapadas' started giving way to 'Mahajanapadas' and the land between the Himalayas and the Narmada was divided into 16 Mahajanapadas which are mentioned in the Buddhist literature 'Anguttar Nikaya'.
- These are Kamboj, Gandhara, Kuru, Panchal, Chedi, Avanti, Matsya, Sursena, Koshla, Vatsa, Malla, Vajjis, Anga, Magadha, Kashi, Asmaka. Of these, Magadha, Kosala or Avadh, Vatsa and Avanti were more important.
- Some of these were ruled by hereditary monarch but others were republican or oligarchial states, ruled either by representative of the people as a whole or by nobility.
- Of the non-monarchial clans, the most important was the Vajjis confederacy of eight clans, the most powerful of which were the Lichchavis ruling from their capital at Vaishali.
- There were matrimonial relations between the rulers of Magadha, Kosala, Vatsa and Avanti, but they did not prevent them from fighting with one another for supremacy.
- Ultimately the Kingdom of Magadha emerged as the most powerful and succeeded in founding in empire.

Magadha Empire (6-4 B.C.)

- Magadha embraced the former districts of Patna, Gaya and parts of Shahabad and grew to be the leading state of the time.
- It's success was attributed to its geographical position i.e. proximity to rich iron deposits which yielded effective weaponry and the benefits of the fertile Ganga soil.
- Also elephants were first used in war.
- Archaeologically 6th century B.C. marks the beginning of the NBPW (Northern Black Polished Ware); a glossy, shining type of pottery. This marked the beginning of the Second Urbanization in India.

Haryanka Dynasty

The Haryanka Dynasty was originally founded in 566 B.C. by the grandfather of Bimbisara, but the actual foundation in the true sense is credited to Bimbisara.

Bimbisara (544 B.C.-492 B.C.)

- A contemporary of Buddha, he conquered Anga (east Bihar) to gain control over the trade routes with the southern states.
- His capital was Rajgir (Girivaraja) and he strengthened his position by matrimonial alliances with the ruling families of Kosala, Vaishali and Modra (3 wives).
- The earliest capital of Magadha was at Rajgir, which was called 'Giriraja' at that time. His capital was surrounded by 5 hills, the openings of which were closed by stone walls on all sides. This made Rajgir impregnable.

Ajatshatru (492 B.C.-460 B.C.)

- Bimbisara's son who killed his father and seized the throne.
- Annexed Vaishali and Kosala (annexed Vaishali with the help of a war engine which was used to throw stones like catapults. Also possessed a chariot to which a mace was attached, thus facilitating mass killings). Kosala was ruled by Prasenjit at the time.

Udayin (460-444 B.C.)

- He founded the new capital of Pataliputra situated at the confluence of the Ganga and the Son.
- It is said that Udayin was among the five successor kings who had acquired throne by patricides; the people of Magadha finally outraged by this, deposed the last of the five in 413 BC and appointed Shishunaga, a viceroy of Benaras, as king.

Shishunaga Dynasty

- Founded by a minister Shishunaga who was succeeded by Kalashoka. The dynasty lasted for two generations only.

- Their greatest achievement was the destruction of the power of Avanti and its final incorporation into the Magadhan empire.
- The most famous event was, the capital was shifted to Vaishali.

Nanda Dynasty

- It is considered first of the non-Kshatriya dynasties.
- It was founded by Mahapadma Nanda who added Kalinga to his empire from where he brought an image of the Jina as a victory trophy. He claimed to be the Ekarat – the sole sovereign who destroyed all the other ruling princes.
- That the Nandas controlled some parts of Kalinga (Orissa) is borne out by the Hathigumpha Inscription of King Kharavela, assigned to the middle of the first century B.C.
- Alexander attacked India during the reign of Dhana Nanda who was called Agrammesor Xandrammems by Greek writers, in 326 B.C.
- The Nandas were fabulously rich and extremely powerful; maintaining an infantry of 2,00,000 soldiers, 60,000 cavalry and 6,000 war elephants which supposedly checked Alexander's army from advancing towards Magadha.
- They had developed an effective taxation system, built canals and carried out irrigation projects and had a strong army.
- Nandas are described as the first Empire builders in India. The first Nanda king is described in Puranas as the "destroyer of all Kshatriyas and a second Parasurama or Bhargava etc".
- The Nandas were overthrown by the Maurya Dynasty under which the Magadhan empire reached the apex of its glory.

Foreign Invasions and Persian Conquests of India

- During 6th century B.C. northwestern India had been isolated from the developments in the rest of India and closer connections with Persian Civilization, being politically a part of the Achaemenied Empire.
- A little before 530 B.C., Cyrus (the Achaemenid emperor of Persia) crossed the Hindukush mountains and received tributes from the tribes of Kamboja, Gandhara, and the trans-Indus region.
- During the lifetime of Buddha, the powerful Achaemenian emperor of Persia Darius I (522-486 B.C.) captured a portion of Punjab and Sindh. The Behistun Inscription of 519 B.C. states that Gadara (Gandhara) was a province which sent teak.
- Herodotus, the famous Greek historian, considered as father of history, mentions Gandhara as the 20th satrapy or province, counted amongst the most populous and wealthy in the Achaemmenid Empirre.
- The Indian provinces provided mercenaries for the Persian armies fighting against the Greeks in the years 486-465 B.C.
- Alexander came to India in order to reach the easternmost parts of Darius's empire, to the 'problem of ocean', the limits of each were a puzzle to Greek geographers and to add this fabulous country to his list of conquests.
- Herodotus mentions about a naval expedition dispatched by Darius under Skylax (517 B.C.) to explore the Indus. Herodotus says: "the population of the Indians is by far the greatest of all the people that we know; and they paid a tribute proportionately larger than the rest".
- Xerxes utilized his Indian provinces to secure an Indian contingent to fight his battles in Greece.
- There were 'Gandharians' as well as 'Indians' in his contingent. The former bore bows of reed and short spears for fight at close quarters, while the latter, clad in cotton also bore similar bows and arrows tipped with iron. These Indian troops were the first Indians to fight in Europe.
- The Persian Empire set the model for Mauryas as far as Imperial pretensions are concerned. The prevalence in the North-West of Kharosthi script which is only a localized adaptation of Aramaic and written from the right was perhaps a vestige of Persian rule.

Alexander's Invasion

- Alexander was the son of Philip of Macedonia (Greece) who invaded India in 326 B.C. At that time North-west India was split up into a number of small independent states like Taxila, Punjab (kingdom of Porus), Ghandara, etc. Except Porus who fought the famous Battle of Hydaspas (on the banks of Jhelum) with Alexander, all other kings submitted meekly. Ambhi (Omphis), the king of Taxila, submitted to Alexander in about the same time. Later, impressed by Porus, Alexander reinstated him in power. Then Alexander captured the tribal republic of Glauganikai (Glachukayanaka) with its 37 towns.
- When Alexander reached Beas his army refused to go further, forcing him to retreat. To mark the farthest point of his advance, he erected 12 huge stone altars on the northern banks of the Beas.

Remaining in India for 19 months, Alexander finally died in Babylon in 323 B.C.

- Alexander's invasion opened up four distinct lines of communication (3 by land and 1 by sea) thus exposing India to Europe.
- Due to this cultural contact, a cosmopolitan school of art came up in Gandhara which was characterized by sensuous art and continued till the Gupta Age.
- It also paved the way for the unification of north India under Chandragupta Maurya by weakening the small states.
- But the immediate effect of this expedition was the destruction of tribes, which had survived from earlier times.
- The earliest instance of 'Jauhar' in recorded history occurred when Alexander encountered the Sibis (a rude tribe clad in skins) and the Agalassoi (Agrasrenis). The latter suffered terribly for daring to resist the invader. The people of one town to the number of 20,000 men, women, and children set their dwellings ablaze and threw themselves into the flames.

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THE MAURYANS

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A CIVIL SERVICES CHRONICLE INITIATIVE

Rise of the Mauryans

- Closeness to the source of natural resources like iron ores enabled the Magadhan princes to equip themselves with weapons.
- Agricultural tools of iron, which increased production and added to royal taxation alongwith the alluvial soil of Gangatic plains and sufficient rainfall which were very conducive for agricultural practices.
- Rise of towns and use of metallic money boosted trade and commerce, which increased royal revenue.
- Use of elephants on a large scale in its war supplied by the eastern part of the country added to the military power.
- The unorthodox character of the Magadhan Society as a result of racial admixture.

Historical Sources

- The history of Mauryas, unlike that of the earlier ruling houses, is rendered reliable by a variety of evidences drawn from such sources as the Buddhist and the Jain traditions; the Kalpasuta of Jains and the Jatakas, Dighanikaya, Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa of Buddhists respectively.
- The Arthashastra of Kautilya, the Greek accounts, the first decipherable inscription of Ashoka (deciphered by James Princip in 1837) and the archaeological remains.
- The Puranas and Mudrarakshasa of Vishakhadutta though belong to a later date, throw light on the history of the Mauryans alongwith Patanjali's Mahabhashya.

Chandragupta Maurya

- Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of Mauryan dynasty. Also known as Sandrocottus (kind towards friends) by Greek scholars.
- Brahmanical sources (Mudrarakshasa) say that the name Maurya was derived from Mura; a Shudra woman in the court of Nandas, and Chandragupta was son or grandson of the woman.
- Vishnu Purana also mentions him of low origin i.e. a Shudra. But the Buddhist and Jain sources ascribed him a Kshatriya status.
- His early career is shrouded in mystery. According to Justin, a Greek writer, he overthrew Nandas between 325-322 B.C. According to Plutarch, he met Alexander in Punjab and implicitly invited him to attack Nandas but offended him by his boldness of speech.
- Chandragupta occupied Magadhan throne in 321 B.C. with the help of Chanakya (Kautilya).
- He had allied with a Himalayan chief Parvartaka.
- He defeated Seleucus Nicator, then Alexander's governor in 305 B.C. who ceded to Chandragupta the three rich provinces of Kabul, Kandahar and Heart in return for 500 elephants.
- Seleucus probably gave one of his daughters to Chandragupta and sent his ambassador, Megasthenes to the Mauryan Court, who wrote an account (Indica) not only of the administration of the city of Pataliputra but also of the entire Mauryan Empire.
- The Greek writer Justin calls Chandragupta's army as a "Dacoits gang".
- According to the Jain work Parishista-parvan, Chandragupta converted to Jainism in the end years of his life and went to south near Sravanbelgola with his Guru Bhadrabahu. It is said that he starved himself to death here.
- According to the same text, Chanakya made Chandragupta enter into an alliance with Paravartaka (king of Himvatakuta) and the allied armies besieged Pataliputra.
- Vishakhadatta wrote a drama Mudrarakshasa (describing Chandragupta's enemy) and Debi Chandraguptam in 6th century A.D.

Bindusara

- Bindusara was the son of Chandragupta and was known as Amitraghata (slayer of foes), besides the master of the land between the two seas – Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Succeeded Chandragupta in 297 B.C.
- He continued friendly links with Syrian king Antiochus I and is stated to have requested him for a present of figs and wine together with a sophist to which Antiochus sent figs and wine but replied that Greek philosophers were not for export.
- He also received a Greek ambassador Daimachos from Antiochus I.

- Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt also sent an envoy Dionysius to Bindusara's court.
- History credits him with the suppression of a revolt and further for the redressal of grievances against the misrule of wicked bureaucrats (dustanatyas).
- According to Tibetan Lama Taranath and Jain legends, Chanakya was the minister of Bindusara.
- There was a council of ministers of 500 members in the court of Bindusara, which was headed by Khallatak.
- Bindusara did not make any territorial conquest and towards the time of his death he joined the Ajivika sect.

Ashoka

- Ashoka (273-232 B.C.) had served as governor of Taxila and Ujjain previously.
- Ashoka is called 'Buddhashakya and Ashok' in Maski edict and 'Dharmasoka' in Sarnath inscription. He was also known as 'Devampriya' i.e. beloved of the Gods and 'Piyadassi' i.e. of pleasing appearance.
- His empire covered the whole territory from Hindukush to Bengal and extended over to Afghanistan, Baluchistan and the whole of India with the exception of a small area in the farthest south comprising of Kerela. Kashmir and Valleys of Nepal were also included and was the first empire to do so. Assam was not included in his dominion.
- The Kalinga War fought in 261 B.C. and mentioned in XIII Rock Edict changed his attitude towards life and he became a Buddhist.
- He inaugurated his Dharmayatras from the 11th year of his reign by visiting Bodhgaya.
- In the 14th year of his reign he started the institution of Dhamma Mahamatras (the officers of righteousness) to spread the message of Dhamma.
- During his reign the policy of Bherighosha (physical conquest) was replaced by that of Dhammaghosha (cultural conquest).
- In course of his second tour in the 21st year of his reign he visited Lumbini, the birth place of Buddha and exempted the village from Bali (tribute) and the Bhaga (the royal share of the produce) which were reduced to one eighth.
- He organized a network of missionaries to preach the doctrine of Buddhism both in his kingdom and beyond. He sent them to Ceylon, Burma (sent his son Mahindra and daughter Sangamitra to Ceylon) and other South-east Asian regions notably Thailand.
- Ashoka's Hellenistic contemporaries were Antiochus II of Syria, Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt, Magas of Cyrene, Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia and Alexander of Epirus. These are mentioned in his thirteenth Rock Edict.
- Ashoka was the first Indian king to speak directly to the people through his inscriptions, which seem to be the earliest specimens of Prakrit language in India.
- They are mostly engraved on rocks and found not only in Indian subcontinent but also in Afghanistan. These inscriptions communicate royal orders. These inscriptions were composed in Prakrit and were written in Brahmi script throughout the greater part of the empire. But in the north-western part they appear in Aramaic and Kharoshthi script.
- In his inscriptions following languages have been used: Brahmi, Kharoshthi, Aramaic, Greek, etc.
- The Ashokan inscriptions were generally placed on ancient highways and threw light on the career of Ashok's policies and the extent of his empire.
- Tarai pillars show Ashoka's respect for Buddhism.
- Ashoka in his fifth rock edict mentions that he had several brothers and sisters. Two of these brothers are named in Divyavadana as Susima and Vuigatasoka, whom the Sinhalese chronicles, name as Sumana and Tishya. The former was step-brother of Ashoka. Ashoka's mother was Subhadrangi.
- Ashoka does not call himself by his personal name Ashoka in any of his inscriptions except two: these are Maski and Gujarra inscriptions.
- Ashoka died in 232 B.C. and with him departed the glory of Mauryan Empire.

Ashokan Edicts

• Major Rock Edicts

These are related to administration and ethics.

1st Rock Edict: It puts prohibition on animal sacrifices in festive gatherings. Interestingly, only three animals (2 peacocks and 1 deer) could be used for the royal kitchen as well instead of hundreds of them used earlier.

2nd Rock Edict: It mentions about the medical missions sent everywhere for both men and animals by Ashoka. It mentions Chola, Chera, Pandaya and Satyaputra and has also a list of herbs and trees to be planted in different areas.

3rd Rock Edict: In the 12th year of Ashoka's inauguration the edict enjoins a quenquennial humiliation.

4th Rock Edict: In the 12th year of Ashoka's reign

compares the past condition of the kingdom with that of the present.

5th Rock Edict: It, for the first time, mentions about the appointment of the Dhamma-mahamatras to look after propagation of Dhamma. They were appointed in the 13th year of Ashoka's consecration.

6th Rock Edict: It shows his concern for the people's grievances for round the clock consultations or any type of appeal and that the mahamattas should communicate to him all the matters concerning public business even if he is in his harem. It announces the appointment of pativedakas, custodies morum and criminal magistrates.

7th Rock Edict: It contains the kings desire to obliterate diversities of religious opinions and tells us that Ashoka, after ten years since his consecration, visited Bodhi tree, ended all pleasure tours and instead, concentrated on the Dhamma tours.

8th Rock Edict: It contrasts the carnal enjoyments of former rajas with the harmless enjoyments of the king – visits to holy places, almsgiving, respect to elders, etc.

9th Rock Edict: It shows the uselessness of all other ceremonies except the Dhamma as it includes ethical concepts within its fold. It basically continues the Dhamma discourse.

10th Rock Edict: In this edict, Ashoka shows the lack of any worldly desire except the desire to propagate Dhamma and to see people following it.

11th Rock Edict: It suggests to people that the gift of Dhamma is the best gift or the chiefest of charitable donations as it brings gain in this world and merit in the next. It is at Dhauli and Girnar.

12th Rock Edict: It expresses Ashoka's concern for the well-being of all other sects. In this he prefers to advance the essence of all the doctrines. He also requests all the officers to internalize this basic philosophy behind propagation of Dhamma.

13th Rock Edict: In this edict, Ashoka shows his remorse for the devastation caused by his Kalinga War. The killing of so many families made Ashoka take resort to cultural conquest (Dhammavijaya) rather than even think in the future about any war and aggrandizement. It is incomplete.

14th Rock Edict: It states that this inscription of Dhamma was engraved at the command of the beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi. It exists in abridged, medium length and extended versions for each classes has not been engraved everywhere. It summarises the preceeding and is complete in itself.

• Separate Edicts

First Separate Edict (Dhauli and Jaugada): Addressed to officers of Tosali and Samapa. One royal officer will tour every five years to see that men are never imprisoned or tortured without good reason. The prince of Ujjain shall send out a similar group of officers, but at intervals not exceeding three years, similarly at Taxila.

Second Separate Edict: Addressed to the prince at Tosali and the officials at Samapa, it states that the officers shall at all times attend to the conciliation of the people of the frontiers and to promoting Dhamma among them.

• Minor Inscriptions

Queen's Edict: On the Allahabad pillar, the gift of the second queen, the mother of Tivara, Karuvaki for dispensing charity or any other donation.

Barabar Cave Inscription:

(i) In 12th year the Banyan cave given to Ajivikas.
(ii) In 12th year cave in Khalitika mountain given to Ajivikas.
(iii) The king Piyadassi, consecrated since nineteen years.

Kandhar Bilingual Rock Inscription: Greek version - king refrains from eating meat and his hunters and fishermen have stopped hunting. Aramic version - very few animals were killed by Ashoka. Fishing prohibited.

Bhabru Inscription: The king of Magadha, Piyadassi shows deep respect for the faith in Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. This edict confirms Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism.

Rummindei Pillar Inscription: In 20th year Piyadassi visited Lumbini and here exempted people from land tribute (udbalike) and fixed contribution at 1/8 (atthabhagiya).

Nigalisagar Pillar Inscription: On 14th year the stupa of Buddha Kanakamuni was enlarged to double in size.

Schism Edict: At Kaushambi (Allahabad pillar), Sanchi and Sarnath. All dissenting monks and nuns to be expelled and made to wear robes and the laymen and officials are to enforce this order on confession (upostha) days addressed to officials of Kausambi and Pataliputra.

• Pillar Edicts

1st: On 27th regional year. His principle is to protect thorough Dhamma to administer according to Dhamma, to please the people with Dhamma to guard the empire with Dhamma.

2nd: Dhamma is good and what is Dhamma? It is having few faults and many good deeds: mercy, charity, truthfulness and purity.

3rd: One only notices one's good deeds, does not

notice one's wicked deeds, one should notice this and think. Cruelty, harshness, anger, pride and many are indeed productive of sin.

4th: In the 26th year, appointment of Rajukas over hundreds and thousands, with independent authority over judgement, there should be uniformity in judicial procedure and punishment. Men who are imprisoned or sentenced to death are to be given three days respite.

5th: In the 26th year, prohibition of killing specific animals and burning forest; cattle and horses are not to be branded. Twenty five releases of prisoners have been made.

6th: Mention of major rock edicts, which have been issued in 12th year, to honour all sects.

7th: Only in the Delhi-Topara pillar, Rajuka, Ajivikas and Nirgrantha (Jainas) were mentioned in this edict. Dhamma is better advanced by persuasion than by legislation.

The Mauryan Empire after Ashoka

- Vishnu Purana gives the names of his seven successors but with no details, probably the empire was divided into two eastern and western parts.
- The western being ruled by Kunal and later for sometime by Samprati where Indo-Greeks began to make early inroads, and until 180 B.C. had virtually supplanted the later Mauryas.
- The eastern part being ruled by Brihadratha from Pataliputra. He was the seventh king in succession from Ashoka.
- He was killed by his commander in chief Pushyamitra Sunga, who ascended the throne in 187 B.C. The royal dynasty founded by him is known as Sunga Dynasty.

Mauryan Administration

- A vast and highly centralized bureaucratic rule with the king as fountain head of all powers. The king claimed no divine rule, rather it was paternal despotism. Kautilya called the king Dharmapravartaka or promulgator of social order.
- The highest functionaries at the centre called tirthas and were paid fabulously. They were Mantri, Purohita, Senapati and Yuvaraja. Besides the two chief officers at the Centre were Sannidhata (treasurer) and Samaharta (tax collector).
- Kautilya again and again emphasized the importance of Mantriparishad.
- Kautilya mentions 27 superintendents (adhyakshas) mostly to regulate economic activities. The famous were as follows.
  - **Sitadhyaksha:** Super-intendent of crown land.
  - **Panyadhyaksha:** Super-intendent of Commerce.
  - **Pautavadhyaksha:** Super-intendent of weight and measures.
  - **Sulkadhyasha:** Superintendent of tolls.
  - **Samsthadhyaksha:** Super-intendent of market.
  - **Akaradhyaksha :** Super-intendent of mines.
  - **Rajuka :** Superintendent to look after Justice.
- Except the capital Pataliputra, the whole empire was divided into four provinces controlled by a viceroy either a prince or a member of the royal family. Provinces were sub-divided into districts and had three main officers.
- Pradesika responsible for the overall administration of the district. Rajuka was responsible for revenue administration and later judicial particularly in rural areas and was under Pradesika.
- Sub-district consisted of a group of villages numbering 5 to 10 and was administered by 'Gopa' (accountant) and 'Sthanika' (tax collector). The villages were administered by the village head man who was responsible to the Gopas and Sthanikas.
- The administration of capital Pataliputra has been described by six boards consisting of five members each being entrusted with matters relating to industrial arts, care of foreigners, registration of births and deaths, regulation of weights and measures, public sale of manufactured goods and the last with collecting toll on the articles sold, this being one tenth of the purchase price.
- Mauryans had a big army and there is no evidence of its reduction even by peace loving Ashoka.
- According to Pliny, Chandragupta maintained 600,000 foot soldiers, 30,000 cavalry and 900 elephants.
- According to Megasthenese, the army was administered by six committees consisting of five members each taken from a board of 30 members. The six committees or the wings of army were: the army, the cavalry, the elephants, the chariots, the navy and the transport.
- Spies operated in the guise of sanyasis, wanderers, beggars, etc. and were of two types 'Sanstha' and 'Sanchari'. The former worked by remaining stationed at a public place and later by moving from place to place. These spies were integral to the Mauryan administration. They collected intelligence about foreign enemies and kept an eye on numerous officers. The 'prativedikas' were the special reporters of the king.
- Land revenue was the main source of income of the state. Peasants paid ¼ of the produce as Bhaga and extra tax Bali tribute. According to Arthashastra,

the land belonged to the king, irrigation tax was also levied by the government.

- Besides other taxes like Pindakara (assessed on group of villages), 'Kara' (levied on fruits and flower gardens), Hiranya (paid only in cash) were also collected.
- Industrial arts and crafts proliferated as a result of swift communication through a network of good and long roads and incentives given by the government.
- A striking social development was the employment of slaves in agricultural operation on a large scale.
- The sale of merchandise was supervised.
- No banking system but usury prevailed. It seems that the punch-marked silver coins, which carry the symbols of peacock and hill and regent formed the imperial currency of the Mauryas.
- Megasthenes noticed the absence of slavery. But it is contradicted by Indian sources.
- Kautilya recommends the recruitment of Vaishyas and Shudras in the army, but their actual enrolment is extremely doubtfull.
- In addition to the four regular castes, he refers not less than five mixed castes by the general name Antyavasayin who lived beyond the pale of Aryan society.
- The position of Shudra improved somewhat for hitherto agricultural laborers and domestic slaves. They could now own land.
- In the Mauryan period, stone culture emerged as the principal medium of Indian arts.
- Tamralipti was one of the most important maritime trading centres during the Mauryan times. It was situated on the Eastern coast.
- The animals, which are carved on the Mauryan pillars, are: Bull, Lion, Elephant.
- According to Arthashastra, a man could be slave either by birth, by voluntarily selling oneself, by being captured in war or as a result of judicial punishment. Megasthenese did not find slaves in India.
- Puranas have called Kautilya as 'dvijarshabh' i.e. superior brahmana. Chanakya spent last days of his life doing meditation in the forests near Magadha.
- 'Sishtas' were learned men during Mauryan times.
- The trade links between India and Egypt were so developed that Ptolemy had established a port named Bernis on the Red sea. India exported turtle skin, pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, cotton and costly wood to Egypt.

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POST MAURYAN KINGDOMS

CHRONICLE IAS ACADEMY
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The Age of the Sungas and the Satvahanas

In eastern India, Central India and the Deccan, the Mauryans were succeeded by a number of native rulers such as the Sungas, Satvahanas, etc. In north-western India they were succeeded by a number of ruling dynasties from Central Asia.

The Sunga Dynasty(185 B.C to 73 B.C)

- The Sunga dynasty was founded by Puhsyamitra Sunga, a brahman of the Sunga family. His dominion extended up to Narmada river in the south and included cities of Patliputra, Ayodhya and Vidisha.The capital was Patliputra
- Divyavadana and Taranatha depict Pushyamitra as a veritable enemy of the Buddhists.
- A short Sanskrit inscription from Ayodhya mentions two Ashvamedhas performed by Pushyamitra and one of his viceroys who was also his relative.
- He also defeated the Bactrian king Demetrius.
- The Sungas are mentioned by name in a brief inscription found at Barhut. In this they are clearly associated with the kingdom of Vidisa. Perhaps they inherited from the Mauryas a small part of their empire.
- The Yajnas marked the revival of Vaidika Dharma in India.
- The fifth king was Bhagabhadra, whose court was visited by Heliodorus, the Greek ambassador.
- A Sunga king Agnimitra was the hero of Kalidasa's Malavikagnimitram.
- Patanjali's classic Mahabhasya was written at this time.
- The last ruler of Sunga dynasty, Devabhuti was killed by his minister Vasudeva in 73 B.C.

The Kanva Dynasty

- The Kanva dynasty was founded by Vasudeva, a Brahman who killed the last Sunga king Devabhuti in 75 B.C.
- After a span of 45 years Kanvas were overthrowned by Andharas or Satvahanas of the Deccan.
- Susaraman was the last ruler.

The Chetis of Kalinga

- The Hathigumpha inscription (near Bhubhaneshwar, Odisha) of Kharavela, the third ruler of the dynasty gives information about the Chetis.
- Kharavela pushed his kingdom beyond the Godavari in the South.
- He was a follower of Jainism and patronized Jain monks for whom he Constructed udayagiri caves.

The Satvahanas or the Andhras

- In Deccan and in central India the Mauryans were succeeded by the Satvahanas around first century B.C. and ruled for about 300 years with its capital at Paithan or Pratisthan on the Godavari in Aurangabad district.
- The Matsya Purana gives a list of 30 kings in the Satvahana line and states that their rule altogether lasted for 460 years. The Vayu Purana gives a shorter list of about 300 years of the Satvahana rule.
- Bana describes the Satvahanas as the 'Lord of the three oceans- Trisamudradhipati
- Simuka was the first important ruler and founder and the greatest competitor of the Satvahanas was the Sakas.
- The fortunes of the family were restored by Gautamiputra Satakarni, who defeated Sakas and set up the capital at Paithan.
- The name of the mother of Gautamiputra Satakarni (A.D. 30-104) was Gautami Balasari. She has recorded in glowing terms in an inscription at Nasik the achievements of her son. It was a matrilineal society.
- Saka-Satvahana conflict was very frequent in these centuries and they fought with each other to have control over the important trade routes in north India.
- Trade particularly with Roman empire was very brisk, as is indicated by numerous Roman and Satvahana coins.
- The Satvahanas may have used gold as bullion, for they did not issue gold coins; they issued mostly coins of lead. They also used tin, copper and bronze coins.
- The Satvahanas were the first rulers to make land grants to the Brahmans. The called themselves

Brahmans and worshipped gods like Krishna, Vasudeva, etc. and performed vedic rituals. However they also promoted Buddhism by making land grants to the monks.

- The two common constructions were the Buddhist temples that were called 'Chaitya' and the monasteries which were called 'Viharas'. The most famous Chaitya is that of Karle in western Deccan.
- The districts were called 'Aharas' as in Ashoka's times and similarly their officials were known as 'Amatyas' and 'Mahamatras'.
- They started the practice of granting tax free villages to Brahmanas and Buddhist monks.
- The official language was Prakrit and the script was Brahmi as in Ashokan times. A Prakrit text Gathasaptasati or Gathasattasai is attributed to a Satvahana king Hala.

Central Asian Contact

The Indo-Greeks

- With the decline of Mauryan empire a series of invasions from Central Asia began around 200 B.C.
- The first to cross the Hindukush were the Indo Greeks, who ruled Bactria.
- Demetrius, the king of Bactria invaded India about 190 B.C. and arrested considerable part of Mauryan dynasty in the north–west.
- The most famous Indo–Greek ruler was Menander (165–145 B.C.), who is said to have pushed forward as far as Ayodhya and reached Pataliputra. His capital was Sakala (Sialkot).
- Menander, who was also known as Milinda, was converted to Buddhism by famous scholar Nagasena (Nagarjuna). The conversation between the two is recorded in a book named Malindapanho (Questions of Milinda).
- The Greek introduced features of the Hellenistic art in north-west part of India which is also known as Gandhara art.
- They also introduced practice of military governorship. They appointed their governors called Strategos.
- The Greek ambassador called Heliodorous set up a pillar in honour of Vishnu at Vidisha (Madhya Pradesh).
- The term Horshastra used for astrology in Sanskrit had been derived from the Greek term horoscope.

The Sakas or Scythians (90 B.C.)

- The Greeks were followed by the Sakas, who controlled much larger part of India than the Greek did.
- There were five branches of the Sakas with their seats of power in different parts of India and Afghanistan.
- They were full-fledged independent rulers. Curiously enough called themselves Kshatraps, a sankritised form of Persian Satrap or Governor.
- The King of Ujjain in 58 B.C. is said to have defeated the Saka and styled himself Vikramaditya. An era called the Vikram Samyat is reckoned from the time of his victory over the Sakas.
- The most famous Saka ruler was Rudradaman I (130-150 A.D.), who ruled in western India and is famous for repairing the Sudarshan Lake in Kathiawar, built during the regin of Chandragupta Maurya. It is recorded in the first ever long inscription in chaste Sanskrit in Junagadh which was issued by Rudradaman and highlighted his achievements.

The Parthians

- The Sakas were followed by Parthians. Special interest is attached to Gondophernes, in whose reign St. Thomas is said to have come to India to propagate Christianity and converted him to his faith.
- The Parthians originally lived in Iran and invaded in the beginning of the Christian era, from where they moved to India. In comparison to the Greeks and Sakas they occupied only a small territory in north-west India in the first century.

The Kushans

- The Parthians were followed by the Kushanas who were also called Yuchis or Tocharians.
- Wima Kadphises established the Kushana authority as far as Varanasi in the east, credited for issuing a large number of gold coins.
- Kanishka (78-144 A.D.) extended his empire from Oxus to the eastern borders of U.P (Benaras) and Bokhara in north to Ujjain in the south.
- He was a great patron of Buddhism and the 4th Buddhist council is said to have been held under his patronage.
- He patronised Asvaghosa, the writer of Buddhacharita, the biography of Buddha and Sutralankar and also patronised Charaka, the great authority in Medical Science who wrote Sasruta alongwith Nagarjuna who wrote Madhyamik Sutra.

- Purushpura (Peshawar) was the capital of Kushanas. Mathura seemed to be their second capital.
- Kanishka controlled the famous 'silk route' in Central Asia, which started from China and passed through his empire in Central Asia and Afghanistan to Iran and Western Asia which formed the part of Roman empire.
- Kanishka started an era known as Saka Era which commenced from 78 A. D.
- The Kushanas were the first ruler in India to issue gold coins on a wide scale with higher degree of metallic purity than is found in the Gupta period.
- The Gandhra school of art received the royal patronage of Kushanas.
- There is a Buddhist story which says that the King of Pataliputra, unable to raise the large indemnity imposed on him by Kanishka, surrendered to him the alms-bowl of Buddha, the poet and philosopher Ashvaghosha, and a marvelous cock.
- According to a legend, the Buddhist philosopher Ashvaghosha was especially invited from Oudh to attend the fourth Buddhist Council for systematizing and codifying Buddhist texts.
- The fourth Buddhist Council was held under the patronage of Kanishka at the Kundalavana monastery in Kashmir, but there is another account, which locates it in the Kuvana monastery at Jallandhar.
- According to Hiuen Tsang, the council was summoned by Kanishka on the advice of the venerable Parsva and he made Vasumitra its President and Ashvaghosa its Vice-President.
- This council prepared an encyclopedia of Buddhist philosophy called the Mahavibhasha, which survives in a Chinese translation. The language employed was Sanskrit.

Trade and Commerce

- The Greek sailor Hippalus discovered monsoons in the year 46-47 A.D. and this discovery proved a boon for South Indian merchants as it accelerated the trade activity of south India with the western world.
- Manu's code, which is perhaps the most important code of conduct of the Hindus, belongs to these centuries of post-Mauryan phase only.
- The guild system was reaching its peak during these centuries due to opening of many trade routes for the merchants and also because of great demand of Indian products in the western world in these centuries. The kings also preferred to have deal with the guild heads, as that would permit the kings to have regular sources of income.
- India received a huge amount of gold due to its Central Asian contacts that actually came from the Altai Mountains.
- The control of the silk route by the Kushanas in the first century of the Christian era was very significant from the point of view of the increasing prosperity of India in these centuries. Indian traders took great advantage of the Kushana control over the area through which the West Asia bound goods had to go through.
- The Central Asians introduced better cavalry and better technologies to be used by the Indians later. As is evident from the contemporary sources, the Sakas, Kushanas, etc. were excellent horsemen and thus Indians were familiarized with the use of toe stirrup, etc.
- The Jain Prakrit text the Kalakacharya kathanak states that the Saka kings used to be called Shahi.
- In the period between 2nd centuries BC to 2nd century A.D., craft working made great progress, and so did cloth making, silk weaving, making of arms, etc. Mathura was known for a special type of cloth called sataka.
- The Kushanas issued largest number of copper coins in north and north-west India.
- Most important town in this phase was Ujjain, as it was at the nodal point of two most important routes; one came from Koshambi and the other one from Mathura.
- Indo-Greeks were the first to issue coins that can be directly attributed to kings or dynasties as before this the coins could not be attributed to any dynasty with surety.
- They were also the first to issue gold coins in India that increased in number during the period of the Kushanas.

Art and Culture

- The post Mauryan period is an epoch of great sculptural achievements that marks the freedom from the overpowering influence of the court in the history of the Indian art.
- The reliefs on the gateways of the Stupa at Bharhut were executed during the reign of the Sungas. Here, the Bodhisattvas were represented in the human forms according to the needs of the stories. But Buddha is represented only in terms of the symbols viz., Bodhi tree, the vajrayana, the footprints, the wheel, the parasol, etc.
- At Sanchi, the human figures become much more graceful and the power of the composition and the narration is more advanced than at Bharhut.
- The Sanchi sculptures include the Jataka stories and many historical themes like Bimbisara leaving

Rajagriha to meet Buddha, or Ashoka's pilgrimage to the Bodhi tree, etc.

- The caryatids of Sanchi are among the finest renderings of the feminine figurines.
- The Barhut stupa, Amravati stupas were created during this phase. The stupa implied a place where the relic associated with Buddha was kept.
- The purpose of the Hathi-gumpha inscription was to record the construction of residential chamber for Jaina ascetics on the top of the Udyagiri hills.
- Semi-divine or divine status of the kings also occurs in these centuries. Kushanas introduced this practice.
- Both Gandhara schools of art and the Mathura school belong to this phase. The Gandhara art was completely influenced by the Greek and Roman styles while the Mathura art form had completely indigenous origins.
- The great period of the Mathura art also begins with the Christian era, and its most prolific reached its zenith under the Kushanas.
- It is at Mathura that we for the first time come across making of images of the various Indian divinities. The cult image gets introduced. It is the first art form in India that was quite dominant in its Indian ethos unlike the Gandhara art, which had a lot of influence from the Greeco-Roman features.
- The central Asian contact introduced the use of burnt bricks for flooring and that of tiles for both flooring and roofing.
- The Sakas and Kushans introduced turbans, tunics, trousers, heavy long coats, caps, helmets and boots used by warriors.
- In the religious field, the Greek ambassador Heliodorus set up a pillar in honour of Vasudeva near Vidisa in M.P.

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EARLY HISTORY OF SOUTH INDIA

CHRONICLE IAS ACADEMY
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Megalithic Culture and the Pre-Sangam Era

- The Neolithic-Chalcolithic amalgam which seems to have been round about 2000 B.C. continued upto about the middle of the first millennium B.C.
- It was then overlapped by the Megalithic culture inhabited by the megaliths builder. They are known not from their actual settlement which is rare but from their graves, these are called megaliths because they were encircled by big pieces of stones.
- About the beginning of the Christian era the Megalith culture in South India was overlapped by what has been called 'Andhra culture' on account of the occurrence of Andhra coins.
- This is the time when south India had a large volume of trade with Roman world.
- Again the culture and economic contacts between the north and the south paved the way for the introduction of material culture brought from the north to the Deep South by traders, conquerors, Jainas, Buddhist and some Brahaman missionaries.
- The Vindhya Range was recognized as the southern limit of the Aryan land. Manu states distinctly that the country between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas and between the eastern and western oceans comprised Aryavarta, the abode of the Aryans.
- The Suttanipatta of the Buddhist canon records that teacher Bavari left Kosala and settled in a village on the Godavari in the Assaka country in Dakshinapatha.
- His pupils are said to have gone north to meet Buddha and their route lay through Patitthana (Paithan) in the Mulaka country, Mahishmati (Mandhata) on the Narmada, and Ujjain. Bavari is said to have been learned in the Vedas and performed Vedic sacrifices.
- Kautilya speaks of the pearls and muslins of the Pandyan country. The name of the Pandyan capital Madura recalls Mathura of the North, and Greek accounts, as we have seen, narrate the story of Herakles (in the context, Krishna) setting his daughter Pandaia to rule over the kingdom bordering on the southern sea.
- In the Mahabharata, the story of Rishi Agastya's connection with South India comes into prominence.
- In later Tamil tradition, Agastya's southerly march is accounted for by the interesting legend that on the occasion of Shiva's marriage with Paravati, Agastya had to be sent to the South to redress the balance of the earth which had been rudely disturbed by the assemblage of all the gods and sages in the North.
- In the Ramayana, as they are on their way to Agastya's ashrama, Rama tells his brother Lakshmana how Agastya intent upon the good of the world, overpowered deadly demon, thereby rendered the earth habitable.
- A beam of Indian cedar found in the place of Nebuchadnezzar (604-562 B.C.), the teak logs found in the temple of the Moon God at Ur at levels belonging to about the same age or a little later, and the Baveru Jataka which relates the adventures of certain Indian merchants who took the first peacock by sea to Babylon, all confirm the existence of active maritime intercourse between South India and its western neighbours.
- The Assyrian and Babylonian empires traded with India by sea from their ports on the Persian Gulf and continued to receive gold, spices and fragrant woods from India.
- In Chinese history, there are many references to maritime traders bringing typical Indian products to China as far back as the seventh century B.C.
- The Arthashastra of Kautilya gives some information of value about the trade between the North and the South in the age of the early Mauryan Empire.
- The kingdoms of South India, together with Ceylon, are mentioned in the second and thirteenth rock edicts of Ashoka. The list in the second edict is the more complete and includes the names of Chola, Pandya, Satiyaputa, Keralputa and Tambapanni (Ceylon).
- The short Damili inscriptions found in the natural rock caverns of the South have many features in common with the similar but more numerous records of Sri Lanka and are among the earliest monuments of the Tamil country to which we may assign a date with some confidence.
- The stories of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana

were well-known to the Tamil poets, and episodes from them are frequently mentioned.

- The Tolkappiyam states that marriage as a sacrament attended with ritual was established in the Tamil country by the Aryans.

Sangam States

1. Chera Kingdom

The monarchies of the Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas were believed, at least in subsequent ages, to be of immemorial antiquity, and the poems of the Sangam attest the anxiety of all of them to connect themselves with the events of the Great War between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. The first Chera monarch we hear of is Udiyanjeral (AD 130) who is said to have fed sumptuously both the armies of Kurukshetra, and thereby earned for himself the title 'Udiyanjeral of the great feeding'.

The son of Udiyanjeral was Nedunjeral Adan who won a naval victory against some local enemy on the Malabar cost, and took captive several Yavana traders whom for some time he subjected to harsh treatment, for reasons that are not clear, but subsequently released after obtaining a heavy ransom. He is said to have fought many wars and spent many years in camp with his armies. He won victories against seven crowned kings, and thus reached the superior rank of an Adhiraja. He was called Imayavramban –'He who had the Himalaya for his boundary'- a title explained by the claim that he conquered all India and carved the Chera emblem of the bow on the face of the great mountain- an instance of poetic exaggeration not uncommon in these poems. His capital is called Marandai. He fought a war with the contemporary Chola king in which both the monarchs lost their lives and their queens performed Sati.

Adan's younger brother was 'Kuttuvan of many elephants' who conquered Kongu and apparently extended the Chera power from the Western to the Eastern sea for a time. Adan had two sons by different queens. One of them was known as 'the Chera with the Kalangay festoon and the fibre crown', the crown he wore at his coronation is said to have been made of Palmyra fibre and the festoon on it contained Kalangay, a small black berry. It was not altogether to be despised for the crown had a golden frame and festoons of precious pearls, but why the king had to wear such an extraordinary tiara is not explained anywhere. He is said to have won successes against the contemporary Adigaiman chieftain Anji of Tagaddur and to have led an expedition against Nannan whose territory lay to the North of Malabar, in the Tulu country. He too was an Adhiraja wearing a garland of seven crowns.

The other son of Adan was Senguttuvan, 'the Righteous Kuttuva' (c.180), celebrated in song by Paranar, one of the most famous and longest lived poets of the Sangam Age. Senguttuvan's life and achievements have been embellished by legends of a later time of which there are no traces in the two strictly contemporary poems, both by Paranar - the decade on the king in the 'Ten Tens', and a song in the Purananuru. The only material achievement they celebrate is a victorious war against the chieftain of Mohur. Paranar also says that Senguttuvan exerted himself greatly on the sea, but gives no details. He was given a title for driving back the sea, and this is taken to mean that he destroyed the efficiency of the sea as a protection to his enemies who relied on it. If this is correct, he must have maintained a fleet. For the rest, we only learn that he was a skilled rider on horse and elephant, wore a garland of seven crowns as Adhiraja, and was adept in besieging fortresses, besides being a great warrior and a liberal patron of the arts.

The epilogue to the decade adds a number of new articulars, the most important bearing on the establishment of the Pattini Cult, i.e., the worship of Kannagi as the ideal wife. The stone for making the image of Pattini, the Divine chaste wife, was obtained after a fight with an Aryan chieftain and bathed in the Ganges before being brought to the Chera country. All these events are narrated with numerous embellishments and in epic detail in the Silappadikaram, though whether this poem derives from the epilogue to decade, or the epilogue from the epic, is more than we can say. The antiquity and popularity of the story of Kannagi and Kovalan and the probable existence of other and earlier versions of the Kannagisaga which preceded the Silappadikaram are fairly well-attested, and it is not unlikely that Senguttuvan took the lead in organizing the cult of Pattini, and was supported in his effort by the contemporary rulers of the Pandya and Chola countries and of Ceylon as the Silappadikaram says.

Altogether five monarchs of the line of Udiyanjeral belonging to three generations are mentioned in the Padirruppattu, the number of years they are said to have ruled totals 201, while another three monarchs of the collateral line are said to have reigned for a further 58 years in all. Their reigns surely cannot have been successive, and we must therefore postulate a very considerable degree of overlapping. The Chera Kingdom must have been a sort of family estate in which all the grown-up males had a share and interest what Kautilya calls kula-sangha, a family group, and considers a very efficient form of state organization.

A similar clan-rule might also have prevailed in Chola and Pandya kingdoms in this period. Such an assumption for the Cholas would be the best means

of explaining Senguttuvan's interference in a war of succession in which nine Chola princes lost their lives, it would also furnish a natural explanation for the occurrence in the Sangam poems of so many royal names, all to be accommodated within four or five generations.

Contemporary Chera Rulers

The heroes of the last three decades of the 'Ten Tens' and their ancestors must be taken to have ruled contemporaneously with the kings of the house of Udiyanjeral. The first to be heard of among them are Anduvan and his son Selvakkadungo Vali Adan, both praised by the poets in general terms for their valour and liberality, the father is said to have been a well-read scholar and the son performed many Vedic sacrifices. Famous among the minor chieftains who were their contemporaries were Ay and Pari, both celebrated in several poems by a number of poets. Ay was the patron of a Brahmin poet from Uraiyur, and Pari befriended and patronized another Brahmin, Kapilar, who repaired to the Chera court only after Pari's death. There he was welcomed by Anduvan's son whom he praised in the seventh decade of the 'Ten of Tens'.

Ay was one of the many Vel chieftains ruling in several parts of the Tamil country. The Vels claimed to have issued from the sacrificial fire pit legends of their connection with Vishnu and Agastya, and of one of their ancestors having shot down a tiger which was about to attack a sage in the midst of his penance legends, very similar to those of the Hoysalas in later times.

The country he ruled lay round about the Podiya hill, the Southernmost section of the Western Ghats, and the Greek geographer Ptolemy says that one 'Aioi' was ruling in the country which included Cape Comorin and Mount Bettigo. Ay seems to have been a dynastic name borne by all the kings of the line as a prefix to their personal names. The patron of the Brahmin poet of Uraiyur was also called Andiran, a Sanskrit word meaning hero. His country is described as fertile and teeming with elephants, which he presented liberally to his cloth of very fine texture given to him by a Naga chieftain Nila.

Andiran seems to have been a man of peace, while the excellence of his country and his liberality from the theme of a large number of poems, there is only one casual reference to his success in the battlefield when he is said to have once pursued the Kongar to the Western Sea. On his death, the poet says, Andiran was welcomed in the abode of the gods and the drum in Indira's palace reverberated at his arrival.

Pari, the life long friend and patron of Kapilar, was another Vel chieftain also noted for heroism and generosity. His principality lay in the Pandya country round the hillock known as Kodungunram or Piranmalai. The fame of Pari's liberality was echoed in a later age in the Shaiva saint Sundarmurti's lament: 'there is no one ready to give, even if an illiberal patron is exalted in song to the level of Pari'. Pari's country is said to have comprised three hundred villages round the fortified hill at the centre.

The fertility of the land, the strength of the hill, and the ruler's liberality are praised in many charming poems, not only by Kapilar. Kapilar stood by Pari through thick and thin when his hillock was closely intercepted by the three crowned kings of the Tamil land. Kapilar's intelligence went far to aid Pari's heroism in prolonging the resistance, for instance, several other poets say that Kapilar trained a large number of birds (parrots according to one) to fly out from Pari's beleaguered fortress into the open country behind the enemy's lines and bring in corn to feed the city and the army for several months! But the inevitable end came, and in a short poem Pari's two daughters thus bewailed the occurrence: 'in those days we enjoyed the moonlight happily with father, and our enemies could not take our hill. Now, this day, in this bright moonlight, kings with victorious war-drums have captured the hill, and we have lost our father.' The reference to the victorious drum is ironical, as Pari was not killed in open fight but by treachery.

After Pari's death, Kapilar took charge of his two unmarried daughters and tried without success to get them suitably married. Of what happened subsequently there are different accounts. A note at the end of one of the poems in the Purananuru records that Kapilar, after the death of Pari, left his daughters in the charge of Brahmins and committed suicide by starvation. The tradition recorded in a Chola inscription of the eleventh century, however, is very different, it mentions only one daughter who Kapilar had given in marriage to the Malaiyaman before the former entered the fire to attain heaven. And there exist many songs by Kapilar on Malaiyaman Tirumudikkari of Mullur, the excellence and easy defensibility of his country, and his liberal patronage of poets and minstrels.

Whatever may be the truth about the marriage of Pari's daughter or daughters, it is certain that Kapilar neither committed suicide by starvation nor by entering fire soon after the death of his friend and patron. In fact, he repaired to the court of the Chera Prince Selvakkadungo Vali Adan, the son of Anduvan, because he was reputed to possess all the great qualities of Pari. Kapilar celebrated Adan in song and was sumptuously rewarded for his effort.

Adan's son was Perunjeral Irumporai (c. 190) renowned for his overthrow of the stronghold of

Tagadur (Dharmapuri in Salem District), the seat of the power of the Adigaiman chieftains. He is also said to have subjugated a rebellious shepherd leader named Kaluvul and captured his fortress. He was learned, performed many sacrifices and begot heroic sons worthy of succeeding him. His wise and righteous conduct was such as to induce his Purohit to renounce the things of the world and retire to a life of asceticism.

Adigaiman, also called Neduman Anji, the opponent of Irumporai and Lord of Tagadur, was one of the 'seven patrons' and the supporter of the celebrated poetess Auvaiyar who has left many songs about him and some about his son Pogutteline. Evidently patron and poetess did not get on well at first start, for one poem gives expression to Auvaiyar's vexation at having waited a long time for a present. Soon, however, a perfect understanding grew up between them, the poetess is all praise for the hero and his achievements in the field, and undertakes a diplomatic mission to the Tondaiman on his account.

On his side, Anji showed his devotion by many valuable presents, including a rare myrobalan fruit believed to prevent the ailments of old age and to assure longevity. According to Auvaiyar, Adigaiman was born of a family, which honoured the gods by puja and by sacrifices, which introduced into the world the sweet sugarcane from heaven, and ruled the world with great ability for a very long time. Adigaiman fought with success against seven opposing princes and destroyed amongst other rebellious strongholds that of Kovalur. The Chera invasion of Tagadur, however, is not mentioned by Auvaiyar in her poems, evidently because she did not like to advert to the misfortunes that befell her patron, the event formed the theme of a poem of later times, the Tagadur Yattirai, now known only from quotation in other works. Adigaiman was aided by the Pandya and Chola monarchs against the Chera, but their help made no difference to the result. The war led to Adiaman's acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the Chera on whose behalf he subsequently led an expedition against Pali, the capital of Nannan, where, after inflicting great losses on Nannan, known as Nimili or Minili. Auvaiyar laments his death without mentioning its occasion, and bewails the desolation of the days that remained to her after Adigaiman had earned his title to a hero-stone, a clear statement that he fell on the battlefield.

The last Chera prince mentioned in the extent portions of the 'Ten Tens' is Kudakko Ilanjeral Irumporai (c. A.D. 190), a cousin of the victor of Tagadur. He is said to have fought a battle against 'the two big kings' (Pandya and Chola) and Vicci, to have captured five stone fortresses, to have defeated the big Chola who ruled at Potti and the Young Palaiyan Maran, and to have brought to the ancient city of Vanji much booty from these campaigns.

The mention of the Vani River flowing near the Chera capital shows that Karuvur was in fact Vanji. The discovery of Chera inscriptions near Karur, and of thousands of Roman coins in Karur and its neighbourhood and Ptolemy's statement that the inland city of Korura was the Chera capital also point to the same conclusion. The recent arch aeological excavations at this site, especially the find of Roman amphorae pieces conclusively prove the identity of modern Karur with the Vanji of the Sangam Age. The attempts to locate it in at Tiruvanjaikkalam in Kerala may now be discarded.

Another Chera prince deserving mention is 'Sey of the elephant look' who had also the title Mandaranjeral Irumporai (c. A.D. 210). After one battle, he was captured by his contemporary Pandya ruler Nedunjeliya, the victor of Talaiyalanganam, but regained his freedom in time to prevent his enemies at home from deposing him.

2. Chola Rulers

Among the Cholas, Karikala (A.D. 190) stands out pre-eminent. He is described in a poem as the descendant of a king (not named) who compelled the wind to serve his purposes when he sailed his ships on the wide ocean-possibly a reference to the early maritime enterprise of the Cholas. Karikala's father was Ilanjetceni 'of many beautiful chariots', a brave king and a hard fighter. Karikala means 'the man with the charred leg', a reference to an accident by fire, which befell the prince early in life. Other explanations for the name were invented in later times, however, and it has also been taken to be a compound word in Sanskrit meaning either 'death to kali' or 'death to (enemy) elephant'. Early in life he was deposed and imprisoned.

The plucky war in which Karikala escaped and re-established himself on the throne is well portrayed by the author of Pattinappalai, a long poem on the Chola capital Kaveri-Pattinam, in the Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls). One of his early achievements was the victory in a great battle at Venni, modern Kovil Venni, 15 miles to the east of Tanjore. This battle is referred to in many poems by different authors. Eleven rulers, velir and kings, lost their drums in the field, the Pandya and the Chera lost their glory. The Pandyan ruler was wounded severely on his back which was the greatest humiliation for a warrior, and from a sense of profound shame he sat facing the north, sword in hand, and starved himself to death. Venni, thus, marked a turning point in the career of Karikala. His victory meant the breaking up of a widespread confederacy that had been formed against him. Another important battle he fought was at Vahaip- parandalai, 'the field

of vahai trees', where nine minor enemy chieftains lost their umbrellas and had to submit.

As a result of his victorious campaigns, says the poet of Pattinappalai 'the numerous Oliyar submitted to him, the ancient Aruvalar carried out his behests, the Northerners lost splendour, and the Westerners were depressed conscious of the might of his large army ready to shatter the fortresses of enemy kings, Karikala turned his flushed look of anger against the Pandya, whose strength gave way the line of low herdsmen, was brought to an end, and the family of Irungovel was uprooted'.

The Aruvalar were the people of Aruvanad, the lower valley of the Pennar, to the North of the Kaveri delta. Karikala is said to have prevented the migration of people from his land to other regions evidently by offering them inducements to stay.

Karikala's wars thus resulted in his establishing a sort of hegemony among the 'crowned kings' of the Tamil country and in some extension of the territory under his direct rule. The description of Kaveri-pattinam and its foreshore, which takes up so much of the Pattinappalai, gives a vivid idea of the state of industry and commerce at this time. Karikala also promoted the reclamation and settlement of forestland, and added to the prosperity of the country by multiplying its irrigation tanks. The poems also bear evidence that the king, who was a follower of the Vedic religion, performed sacrifices and lived well, enjoying life to the full.

In later times, Karikala became the centre of many legends found in the Silappadikaram and in inscriptions and literary works of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They attribute to him the conquest of whole of India upto the Himalayas and the construction with the aid of his feudatories of the flood banks of the Kaveri. The famous scholar Naccinarkkiniyar, probably follows a correct tradition when he says that Karikala married a Velier girl from Nangur, a place celebrated in the hymns of Tirumnagai Alvar for the heroism of its warriors. More open to suspicion is the story in the Silappadikaram about a supposed daughter of Karikala's, named Adi Mandi, and her husband, a Chera prince called Attan Atti. Earlier poems which mention their names and some of the incidents attest only the relation between Adi Mandi and Atti, but not that between her and Karikala, nor the Chera descent of Atti. Both husband and wife were, according to the early testimony, professional dancers.

Tondaiman Ilandiraiyan, who ruled at Kanchipuram was a contemporary of Karikala and is also celebrated by the poet of the Pattinappalai in another poem in the 'Ten Idylls'. Ilandiraiyan is said to have been a descendant of Vishnu and belonged to the family of Tiraiyar given by the waves of the sea. There is no hint anywhere of his being related to Karikala or of his political subordination to the Chola power. Nor is it clear whether it was to him or to some other member of his line that Auviaiyar went as Adigaiman's ambassador. Ilandiraiyan was himself a poet, and there are four extant songs by him, one of them on the importance of the personal character of the monarch in the promotion of good rule.

This understanding of the political conditions of the Sangam age may not be closed without the mention of two other Chola rulers, both opponents of the Cheras in war. One was Ilanjetceni of Neydalanganal who captured two fortresses from the Cheras known by the names of Seruppali and Pamalur. Another was Senganan, the Chola monarch famed in legend for his devotion to Shiva, figures as the victor in the battle of Por against the Chera Kanaikkal Irumporai. The Chera was taken prisoner, asked for drinking water when he was in prison, got it rather late, and then, without drinking it, confessed the shame of his position in a song. Subsequently, Poyagaiyar, a friend of the Chera monarch, is said to have secured his release from the Chola prisons by celebrating the victory of Senganan in a poem of forty stanzas the Kalavali. According to this poem, the battle was fought at Kalumalam, near Karuvur, the Chera capital. Senganan became the subject of many pious legends in later times. It is possible that this monarch who, according to Tirumangai, built 70 fine temples of Shiva, lived somewhat later, say in the fourth or fifth century A.D.

3. Pandyan Kings

The Pandya king Nedunjeliyan distinguished by the title 'he who won the battle at Talaiyalanganam' may be taken to have ruled about A.D. 210. This ruler was celebrated by two great poets Mangudi Marudan alias Mangudi Kilar and Nakkirar, each contributing a poem on the monarch to the 'Ten Idylls' (Pattuppattu) besides minor pieces in the Puram and Abham collections.

From the Maduraikkanji of Mangudi Marudan and elsewhere, we learn something of three of Nedunjeliyan's predecessors on the Pandyan throne. The first is an almost mythical figure called Nediyon ('the tall one'), whose achievements find a place in the 'Sacred Sports' of Shiva at Madura and among the traditions of the Pandyas enumerated in the Velvikudi and Sinnamanur plates. He is said to have brought the Pahruli River into existence and organized the worship of the sea.

The next is Palsalai Mudukuduni, doubtless the same as the earliest Pandya king named in the Velvikudi grant and about whom there are several poems. He is a more life like figure than Nediyon, and is said to have treated conquered territory harshly. He

also performed many sacrifices, whence he derived his title Palsalai meaning 'of the many (sacrificial) halls'. It is not possible to say what distance in time separated these two kings from each other or from their successors.

The third ruler mentioned in the Madduraikkanji was another Nedunjeliyan, distinguished by the title 'he who won a victory against an Aryan (i.e., North Indian) army'. The tragedy of Kovalan's death at Madura occurred in his reign, which according to the Silappadi-karam caused the king to die of a broken heart. A short poem ascribed to this king puts learning above birth and caste.

Nedunjeliyan of Talaiyalangam came to the throne as a youth and soon after his accession, he proved himself more than equal to a hostile combination of his two neighbouring monarchs and five minor chieftains. There exists a simple poem of great force and beauty in which the youthful monarch swears an oath of heroism and victory in the ensuing fight. Despising his tender years and hoping for an easy victory and large boot, his enemies invaded the kingdom and penetrated to the heart of it, but, nothing daunted, Nedunjeliyan readily took the field, pursued the invading forces across his frontier into the Chola country and inflicted a crushing defeat on them at Talaiya-langanam, about eight miles North- West of Tiruvalur in theTanjore district. It was in this battle that the Chera king 'Sey of the elephant eye' was taken captive and thrown into a Pandyan prison. By his victory Nedunjeliyan not only made himself secure on his ancestral throne, but also gained a primacy over the entire state system of the Tamil country. He also conquered the two divisions (Kurram) of Milalai and Mutturu from Evvi and a Velier chieftain and annexed them to his kingdom.

The Madduraikkanji contains a full-length description of Madura and the Pandyan country under Nedunjeliyan's rule. The poet gives expression to his wish that his patron should spread the benefits of his good rule all over India. He makes particular mention of the farmers and traders of a place called Muduvellilai (unidentified) as among his most loyal subjects for many generations. He also refers to the battle of Alanganam, calls his patron Lord of Korkai and the warlord of the Southern Paradavar hinting that the people of the pearl- fishery coast formed an important section of his army.

Passing over the many contemporaries of Nedunjeliyan-Pandya and Chola princes and the poets who mention them and their achievements, we must now notice a rather protracted civil war in the Chola kingdom mentioned by Kovur Kilar and other poets. This war was between Nalangilli (also called Sectcenni) and Nedungilli. The latter shut himself up at Avur, which was being besieged by Mavalattan, the younger brother of Nalangilli. In one poem, Kovur Kilar says that if he claimed to be virtuous, Nedungilli should open the gates of the fort or if he claimed to be brave, he should come into the open and fight. He did neither, but caused untold misery to the people of his beleagured city by shuting himself up in a coward manner. Another poem dealing with the siege of Uraiyur by Nalangilli himself, once more Nedungilli being the besieged, is more considerate and impartial, it is addressed to both princes and exhorts them to stop the destructive war, as whoever loses would be a Chola, and a war to the finish must necessarily end in the defeat of one party. A third poem relates to a somewhat piquant situation.

A poet, Ilandattan by name, who went into Uraiyur from Nalangilli, was suspected by Nedungilli of spying. As he was about to be killed, Kovur Kilar interceded with his song on the harmless and upright nature of poets and thus saved him. Another poem hints at internal dissensions in the royal family at Uraiyur, which induced Nalangilli's soldiers to rush to war in utter disregard of women. Civil war seems, indeed, to have been the bane of the Chola kingdom in this age: Senguttuvan, as we have seen, was called upon to intervene in another war at an earlier time.

A thorough change in the political map of South India and the definite close of an epoch seem to be clearly implied in the Sirupan-arruppadai by Nattattanar, one of the Pattupattu ('Ten Idylls'). The poem has Nalliyakkodan for its hero and he may be taken to stand right a territory, which included Gidangil, a village near Tindivanam. We may assign to him a date about A.D. 275, and in his day the poet says that charity had dried up in the capitals of the three Tamil kingdoms, and all ancient patrons of learning and the arts were no more! There may well be some exaggeration here, but clearly Vanji, Uraiyur and Madura must have passed the meridian of their prosperity and entered on a period of decline.

Sangam Polity

Hereditary Monarchy: Hereditary monarchy was the prevailing form of government. Disputed successions and civil wars were not unknown, as we have seen, and sometimes caused grave misery to the people. The king was in all essential respects an autocrat whose autocracy, however, was tempered by the maxims of the wise and the occasional intercession of a minister, a poet or a friend. The sphere of the state's activity was, however, limited, and in a society where respect for custom was deep-rooted, even the most perverse of autocrats could not have done much harm, indeed it must be said that the general impression left on the mind by the literature of the age is one of containment of the part of the people

who were proud of their kings and loyal to them.

As the people took the king for their model, it was his duty to set up a high moral standard by his personal conduct. In many poems he was exhorted to keep a strict mastery over his passions in order to rule successfully. He was to be liberal in his patronage of religion, arts, and letters. He was to show paternal care for his subjects and to be impartial as among different sections of them. He held a daily durbar (nalavai) at which he heard and set right all complaints. The onerous character of the royal task is emphasized by a poet who compares a king to a strong bull, which drags a cart laden with salt from the plains to the uplands, another affirms that the king, much more than rice or water, is the life of the people.

Brahmins were assigned an important role in the state. They were the foremost among those (surram) on whose assistance the king relied in his daily work, and the highest praise of a monarch was to say that he did nothing, which pained the Brahmins. Agriculture was the mainstay of polity and the basis of war, and a good king was believed to be able to command the course of the seasons. The ideal of the 'conquering king' (vijigishu) was accepted and acted on. Victory against seven kings meant a superior status, which the victor marked by wearing a garland made out of the crowns of the seven vanquished rulers.

The most powerful kings were expected to undertake a digvijaya, which was a conquering expedition in a clockwise direction over the whole of India. The idea of a Chakravarti, 'wheel-king', whose digvijaya was led by the march of a mysterious wheel of gold and gems through the air, is mentioned in one of the poems in the Purananuru. Another poem in the same collection mentions the companions of a king who committed suicide when the king died-an early anticipation of what later became a widespread institution under such names as Companions of Honour (Abu Zayd), velaikkarar, garudas, sahavasis, apattudavigal and so on.

General Administration: The Sabha or Manram of the king in the capital was the highest court of justice. The sons of Malaiyaman were tried and sentenced, and later released by the intercession of Kovur Kilar, in the Manram of Uraiyur, and Pottiyar, after the death of his friend Kopperunjolan, could not bear the sight of the same Manram bereft of him. The elders were doubtless expected to have laid aside their personal quarrels when they attended the sabha to help in the adjudication of disputes. We may infer that the assembly was used by the king for purposes of general consultation as well. The Kural, clearly a post Sangam work, definitely regards the Sabha as a general assembly dealing with all affairs. Even less specialized, and more entangled in the social and religious complex of village life was the Manram.

Each village had its common place of meeting, generally under the shade of a big tree, where men, women and children met for all the common activities of the village, including sports and pastimes. There may also have been a political side to these rural gatherings, the germ out of which grew the highly organized system of village government, which functioned, so admirably in later Chola times.

Revenue System: Land and trade were the chief sources of the royal revenue. The Ma and Veli as measures of land were already known. Foreign trade was important and customs revenue occupied a high place on the receipts side of the budget. The Pattinappalai gives a vivid account of the activity of customs officials in Puhar (Kaveri-Pattinam). Internal transit duties on merchandise moving from place to place were another source of revenue, and the roads were guarded night and day by soldiers to prevent smuggling. Moderation in taxation, however, was impressed on the rulers by many wise saying of the poets. If their word may be trusted, booty captured in war was no inconsiderable part of royal resources. The king's share of the produce of agriculture is nowhere precisely stated.

War Policy: The streets of the capital cities were patrolled at nights by watchmen bearing torches, and the prison formed part of the system of administration. Each ruler maintained an army of well-equipped professional soldiers who no doubt found frequent employment in those bellicose times. Captains of the army were distinguished by the title of Enadi conferred at a formal ceremony of investiture where the king presented the chosen commander with a ring and other insignia of high military rank.

The army comprised the traditional four arms-chariots (drawn by oxen), elephants, cavalry and infantry. Swords, bows and arrows, armour made of tiger skins, javelins, spears and shields (including a protective cover for the forearm) are among the weapons of offence and defence specifically mentioned. The drum and the conch were employed on the field for signaling and the former to summon soldiers to arms. Each ruler and chieftain certainly had a war drum among his insignia. Not only was it carefully guarded, but also it was bathed periodically and worshipped with loud mantras. The occasions for war were numerous, but we need not suppose that the refusal of one king to give his daughter in marriage to another was as a frequent cause of the war as capturing enemy's cattle. Brahmin messenger might be sent with a formal declaration before hostilities started.

The military camp was often an elaborate affair, with streets and roads and a separate section for the king guarded by armed women. In this camp the hours

of day and night were announced by watchers of water clocks, the gnomon was employed to indicate midday and a drum beaten early morning. Campfires kept off the cold when necessary, and there were towers at important points from which a regular watch was maintained against surprise from the enemy.

Death in battle was welcome to the soldier and even to his mother, for it was held to lead him straight to heaven. To the warrior, a peaceful death in bed was looked upon as a disgrace, and in the families of ruling chieftains the body of a man who died otherwise than in war was cut with the sword, and laid on darbha grass, and mantras were chanted to secure him a place in the warriors, heaven (virasvarga).

Soldiers who fell in war were commemorated by hero-stone which bore inscriptions detailing their names and achievement, these stones were often worshipped as godlings. Wounded soldiers were carefully attended to, their wounds being cleaned and stitched where necessary.

Kings often took the field in person and delighted to rejoice with the common soldiers in their successes. On the other hand, if a king was killed or even seriously wounded in the midst of the fight, his army gave up the struggle and accepted defeat. The vanity of the victor often inflicted deep personal humiliations on his vanquished foe, the memory of which rankled and brought on further strife. The crown of defeated kings furnished the gold for the anklets of the victor, while a woman's anklet and a garment of leaves were forced on the defeated party who was compelled to wear them, his guardian tree was destroyed and its trunk converted into a war-drum for the victor. The conquered country was at times ruthlessly laid waste, even cornfields not being spared.

The Kalavali is one of the most detailed descriptions we possess of a battlefield in the Tamil country, and the poem supplies in a casual way much interesting information of military affairs. The soldiers, infantry and cavalry alike wore leather sandals for the protection of their feet. The nobles and princes rode on elephants, and the commanders drove in pennon chariots. The poet says that women whose husbands were killed bewailed their loss on the field of Kalumalam, unless this is more rhetoric, we must suppose that women, at least of the higher orders, sometimes accompanied their husbands to the fields.

Society & Economy

- **Cultural Fusion :** The most striking feature of this age was its composite character, it is the unmistakable result of the blend of two originally distinct cultures, best described as Tamilian and Aryan, but it is by no means easy now to distinguish the original elements in their purity. Some of them may be recognized, however, to have clearly originated in Northern India and made their way into the South during the period of its Aryanization and later.

It is doubtless that there was a profound fusion or cultural synthesis between the Sanskritic culture of the North and the Tamil Culture of the South in this period. The contemporary literature affords unmistakable evidence of the friendliest reception accorded in the Tamil country to the rich and varied culture of the North. The fertility of the lands watered by the river Cauvery is a recurring theme in the Tamil poetry.

The literary text 'Purananooru' retains the trace of the society before it was Aryanized. It says that there were no other Kudis (Tribes) than the four viz., Tudiyan, Panan, Paraiyan and Kadamban, and no God worthy of worship with the offering of paddy.

The stories of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana were well-known to the Tamil poets and episodes from them are frequently mentioned. The claim of each of the three Tamil kings to feed the opposing forces on the eve of the Great Battle has been noted already. The destruction of the three metallic forts of the Asuras (Tripura) by Shiva, King Sibi giving away the flesh of his body to save a dove that was pursued by a vulture, and the struggle between Krishna and the Asuras for the possession of the Sun are among other legends alluded to by the authors. The presence of a great fire underneath the ocean, Uttara-Kuru (the Northern country) as a land of perpetual enjoyment, Arundhati as the ideal of chastity, the conception of the threefold debt- Rinatraya with which every man is born, the beliefs that the cakora bird feeds only on raindrops and that raindrops turn into pearls in particular circumstances, are instances of other Sanskritic ideas taken over bodily into the literature of the Sangam period. The Tolkappiyam is said to have been modelled on the Sanskrit grammar of the Aindra School.

- **Forms of Marriage:** The Tolkappiyam states that marriage as a sacrament attended with ritual was established in the Tamil country by the Aryans. It is well-known that the earliest Dharmashastras mention eight forms of marriage as part of the Aryan code itself, the result of a blend between Aryan and pre-Aryan forms that prevailed in the North. These eight forms are mentioned in the Tolkappiyam and other works and much ingenuity is spend in accommodating them to Tamil forms.

The Tamils had a relatively simple conception of marriage, they recognized the natural coming together of man and woman, and the natural differences in the manifestations of love, possibly due ultimately to differences in the physical conditions of the different parts of the country. Natural love between a man and a women, along with its different forms of expression was designated as the five tinais. They

had also names for unilateral love, Kaikkilai and improper love, perundinai. Although the people of South India were fully acquainted with eight forms of marriage, yet they did not paid special attention to Vedic rituals and sacrements. Monogamy was the approved form that a common man had to follow. However, persons of prosperous status could marry and keep more than one wife. Tamil damsels enjoyed the liberty to marry persons of their choice.

- **Social Groups:** Differences in status and economic conditions were accepted by all as part of the established order, and there is little evidence of any tendency to protest or revolt against them. The poets describe with equally intimate touches the unlettered Malavar who thrive on robbery in the Northern frontier of the Tamil land, the hunters (eniyar) with their huts full of bows and shields, the homes of shepherds who produced full quantities of curds and ghee for sale, and those of learned Brahmins versed in the Vedas and performing their daily ritual duties, including the entertainment of guests.

Apparently, Brahmins ate meat and drank toddy without incurring reproach. One poem in the Purananuru affirms that there are only four castes (kudi), viz. tudiyan, panan, paraiyan and kadamban, and only one god worthy of being worshipped with paddy strewn before him, namely the hero-stone recalling the fall of a brave warrior in battle. These castes and this worship were of very great antiquity, perhaps survivals from pre-Aryan times. The practice of erecting hero-stones and of offering regular worship to them continued throughout the Sangam Age and many centuries after. Foreigners (Yavanas) were numerous in the ports on the seacoast like Tondi, Musiri and Puhar (Kaveri-pattinam), which they visited for trade. Although unable to speak Tamil, they were employed as palace-guards in Madura and on police duty in the streets. Curiously, wrought lamps and wine in bottles figure prominently among the articles of trade brought to India by the Yavanas.

- **Food & Beverages:** No occasion was lost for holding feast and the poets are most eloquent in their praise of the sumptuous fare to which they were so often asked. One poet declares to his patron: "I came to see you that we might eat succulent chops of meat, cooled after boiling and soft like the carded cotton of the spinning women, and drink large pots of toddy together.' Another speaks of wine poured into golden goblets by smiling women decked with jewels in the court of Karikala. Among drinks particular mention is made of foreign liquor in green bottles, of munnir ('triple water') a mixture of milk from unripe coconut, palm fruit juice and the juice of sugar-cane, and of toddy, well-matured by being buried underground for a long time in bamboo barrels. The habit of eating betel leaves with lime and areca nut perhaps came into use only after the Sangam Age.
- **Position of Widows:** Women are said to have given up eating greens and bathing in cold water when their husbands fell in battle. The lot of widows was a hard one; they had to cut off their hair, discard all ornaments, and only eat the plainest food. No wonder, perhaps, that some wives preferred to die with their husbands and earn fame as satis. The tonsure of widows, it may be noted by the way, like the tying of the tali and the marriage ceremony, was obviously a pre-Aryan Tamil custom taken over and perpetuated into later times.

The heroism and devotion of the sati were doubtless applauded by public opinion, but the practice was certainly not encouraged, much less enforced. The perfect wife was held to be one who, at the death of her husband, entered the burning pyre with as little concern as if she were entering cool water for a bath.

- **Other Social Activities :** In the sphere of religion and ethics the influence of Northern ideas is most marked. The practice of walking some distance to escort a departing guest was observed by Karikala who went on foot for a distance of 'seven steps' (saptapadi) before requesting him to mount a chariot drawn by four milk-white steeds. The slaughter of a cow, the destruction of a foetus, and the killing of a Brahmin were accounted heinous offences, though ingratitude, according to the established code, was held to be even worse.
- **Funeral Rituals:** No single method was adopted for the disposal of the dead; both cremation and inhumation with or without urns are freely mentioned. A widow offered a rice-ball to her dead husband on a bed of grass (darbha) and the pulaiyan had a part to play in this funeral ritual. Sati was fairly common though by no means universal.
- **Life Style & Culture:** The richer classes dwelt in houses of brick and mortar, the wall often bore paintings of divine figures and pictures of animal life. Royal palaces were surrounded by gardens tastefully laid out. Houses and palaces were constructed according to rules laid down in the shastra, care being taken to start at an auspicious hour carefully determined before hand. The Nedunalvadai, one of the 'Ten Idylls', contains a detailed description of the women's apartments in the palace of Nedunjeliyan, their walls and pillars and artistic lamps manufactured by the Yavanas. This is followed by an account of the equipment of the bedroom in the palace, its ivory bedsteads and superior cushions. High life even in those early days was thus no stranger to refined luxuries. The wife was highly honoured and was held to be the light of the family. The common folk dwelt in humbler structures in the towns and villages,

while outcastes and forest tribes lived in huts of sorts, which are also described in the poems. The making of rope charpoys by Pulaiyans and the use of animal skins as mats for lying on deserve to be noted. The Pattinappalai gives a vivid account of the life of the fisher folk of Puhar, the Paradavar, including some of their holiday amusements.

Valuable hints on popular beliefs and customs are scattered among the poems. There was much faith in omens and astrology. One song mentions the portents, which preceded the death of 'Sey of the elephant look'. A woman with disheveled hair was a bad omen. There were fortunetellers who plied a busy trade. Children were provided with amulets for warding off evil, and rites were practiced which were supposed to avert the mischief of demons (pey), to bring about rain, and produce other desired results.

The banyan tree was considered to be the abode of gods, while eclipses were held to be the result of snakes eating up the Sun and the Moon. Crows were believed to announce the arrival of guests, and particularly the return of the absent husband to his lonely wife, and were fed regularly in front of royal palaces, as well, perhaps, as in every household. Mass feeding of the poor was also known.

- **Trade & Commerce:** Trade, both inland and foreign, was well organized and briskly carried on throughout the period; Tamil poems, classical authors and archaeological finds in South India all speak with one voice on this subject. The great port-cities were the emporia of foreign trade. Big ships, we are told, entered the port of Puhar without slacking sail, and poured out on the beach precious merchandise brought from overseas. The extensive bazaar of the great city was full of tall mansions of many apartments each with doorways, with verandahs and corridors.

The family life of the rich merchants were carried on in the upper floors, while the lower ones were set apart for business. Besides the flags waving on the masts of ships in harbour, various other kinds of flags advertised the different kinds of merchandise as well as the fashionable grog-shops. Saliyur in the Pandya country and Bandar in Chera are counted among the most important ports in the poems.

Horses were imported by sea into the Pandyan kingdom, and elsewhere. The repairing of merchants ships after their voyages are mentioned, as also lighthouses. People from different countries gathered in the ports, and life in them was truly cosmopolitan. The Yavanas sailed their large ships to Musiri (Cranganore) bearing gold, and returned laden with pepper and 'the rare products of the sea and mountain' which the Chera king gave, so far the evidence of the poems.

The author of the Periplus (75 A.D.) gives the most valuable information about this trade between India and the Roman Empire. He mentions the ports of Naura (Cannanore), Tyndis – the Tondi of the poems, identified with Ponnani – and Muziris (Musiri, Cranganore), and Nelcynda very near Kottayam, as of leading importance on the west coast. Muziris abounded in ships sent there with cargoes from Arabia and by the Greeks. Nelcynda was part of the Pandyan kingdom. Bacare (Porakad) was another port on the same coast.

This trade increased in volume after Hippalus, an Egyptian pilot showed the possibility of large ships sailing with the monsoon straight across the ocean instead of small vessels hugging the coast and exposing themselves to many risks. Other ports of South India mentioned by the author in order are Balita (Varkalai), a village by the shore with a fine harbour (Korkai) where were the pearl fisheries of the Pandyan kingdom worked by condemned criminals; Camara (Kaveripattinam), Poduca (Pondi-cherry, Arikamedu) and Sopatma (Markanam).

There were three types of craft used on the east coast, ships of the country coasting along the shore, other large vessels made of single logs bound together, called sangara, and those which made the voyage to Chryse and to the Ganges which were called Colandia and were very large. He mentions Argaru (Uraiyur) as the place to which were sent all the pearls gathered on the coast and from which were exported muslins called Argaritic. About the ports on the east coast he adds: 'There are imported into these places everything made in Damirica, and the greatest part of what is brought at any time from Egypt comes here.' He notes further that a great quantity of muslins was made in the region of Masalia (Andhra country), and ivory was a special product of the country further North, Dosarene (i.e. Dasarna, Odisha).

The large quantities of gold and silver coins struck by all the Roman emperors down to Nero (A.D. 54-68) found in the interior of the Tamil land testify to the extent of the trade, the presence of Roman settlers in the Tamil country, and the periods of the rise and decay of this active commerce. Its beginnings may be traced to the reign of Augustus, if not to an earlier time, as a phenomenally large number bearing his stamps (and that of Tiberius) have been found.

In that reign, despite 'emphases' from the Pandya ruler, this commerce was by no means extensive or economically important. Soon, however, it assumed new and unexpected proportions and ceased to be a mere trade in luxuries.

After the death of Nero, the trade was not so much confined to the Tamil land as before, but spread more evenly along the Indian coasts, and was conducted by barter rather than with money, the emperors subsequent to Nero not being so well represented in the coin finds.

Towards the end of the second century A.D. the direct trade between the Egyptian Greeks of the Roman Empire and India declined, the traffic passing into the hands of the Arabians and, still more, the Auxumites of East Africa. A new era commenced with the rise of Constantinople in the fourth century A.D. Roman coins reappeared in South India, and embassies were received by Constantine from the people of the Maldives and Ceylon among others. Ceylon was becoming important in the trade of the Indian Ocean at this time, but the activities of the Byzantine period bear no comparison with those of the earlier age, which had drained the Roman Empire of much of its treasure and evoked protests from the financiers of the empire as well as its moralists.

The trade of the early Roman Empire had wide ramifications and was bound up with much exploration and colonization on the part Greeco-Romans and Indians. When, after a long eclipse, the power of the Chola kings revived in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the seafaring instincts of the people had not deserted them and that, in the favourable conditions then obtaining, they attempted tasks more venturesome than anything they had achieved in the earlier age.

Internal trade was also brisk. Caravans of merchants with carts and pack animals carried their merchandise from place to place and from fair to fair. Salt was an important commodity of trade and salt merchants moved with their families in carts provided with spare axles against contingencies. Barter played a large part in all transactions.

- **Cultivation & Crafts:** The land was fertile and there was plenty of grains, meat and fish; the Chera country was noted for its buffaloes, jackfruit, pepper and turmeric. The little principality of Pari abounded in forest produce like 'bamboo-rice', jackfruit, valli root and honey. Many rural activities like the cultivation of ragi and sugarcane and the harvesting and drying of grain are described in the Sangam poems in a vivid and realistic manner.

Agriculture was the mainstay of the national economy, and most of its operations were carried on by women of the lowest class (kadaisiyar) whose status appears to have differed little from that of the slave. The bulk of the land was owned by Vellarar, the agriculturists par excellence, who commanded a high social rank. The richer among them did not plough the land themselves, but employed labourers to do it. Besides owning land, they held official posts in the civil and military administration, and the titles vel and arasu in the Chola country and Kavidi in the Pandya were applied to them. They not only enjoyed the jus connubi with royal families, but also shared with the king the duties of war and the pleasures of the chase and of the table. The poorer vellalars did not shun manual labour, but worked on their own small farms, as do the peasantry everywhere.

Spinning and weaving of cotton, and perhaps also of silk, had attained a high degree of perfection. Spinning was then, as always, the part-time occupation of women. The weaving of complex patterns on clothes and silk is often mentioned in literature and, according to the Periplus, Uraiyur was a great centre of the cotton trade. The poems mention cotton cloth as thin as the slough of the snake or a cloud of steam, so finely woven that the eye could not follow the course of the thread. Scissors and needles were known and employed in cutting hair and in dressmaking; a kind of hair pomade (tagaram) is mentioned also.

Religious Beliefs

The Vedic religion had struck root in the South must have become clear from the references to the costly sacrifices performed by the monarchs of the age. Brahmins devoted to their studies and religious duties held a high position in society, and a song of Avur Mulam Kirar portrays in much detail the life of Vinnandayan, a Brahmin of the Kaundinya-gotra who lived in Punjarur in the Chola country. The followers of the Veda had often to engage in disputations with rival sectaries, and many are the references to such disputations proclaimed by the flying of flags and carried on with much gesticulation of the hands. The rival sects are not named, but they were doubtless Jainism and Buddhism, which became more prominent in the succeeding age. From all, Hinduism was the dominant creed in this age. The worship of Subramanya (Murugan) and the legendary achievements of that deity are often alluded to. Other members of the pantheon were Shiva, Balarama, Vishnu, Krishna, Ardhanarisvara and Anantasayi.

The details of Vishnu worship with tulasi (basil) and bell are set forth in the Padiruppattu, and the custom is mentioned of people starving in the temple to invoke the grace of the god. Women went with their children to offer worship in the temples in the evenings. Asceticism was honoured and tridandi (triple staff) ascetics are particularly mentioned.

The worship of Murugan was of ancient origin and embodied some indigenous features like the velandal, an ecstatic dance in his honour. Indra also came in for special worship on the occasion of his annual festival held in Puhar.

The epic poems of the post-Sangam period show that music and dancing were intermingled with religious rites from early times, the worship of Korravai by the hunters, of Krishna by the shepherdesses and of Murugan by the Kuravas being the most striking instances of this. A temple of Sarasvati is mentioned in the Manimekalai, which also alludes to the Kapalikas, as austere class of Shaiva ascetics. ●●●

THE GUPTA PERIOD

- After the breakup of Mauryan empire, the Satavahana and Kushana emerged as two large Political Powers.
- The Satavahana acted as a stabilizing factor in the Deccan and south to which they gave political unity and prosperity.
- The Kushanas performed the same role in the north.
- Both these empires came to an end in the middle of the 3rd century A.D.
- Kushana power in North India came to an end in about 230 A.D. and after that, a good part of central India fell to Murundas who continued to rule till 250 A.D.
- The Guptas finally overthrew Kushanas in about 275 A.D.
- On the ruins of the Kushana empire arose a new empire which established its way over a good part of the former dominions of both the Kushanas and the Satavahanas.
- This was the empire of the Guptas who may have been of vaishya origin.
- Little is known of the early Guptas; first known ruler was 'Sri Gupta' probably ruling over a small portion of north Bengal and South Bihar.
- He was succeeded by his son Ghatotkacha. Both adopted the title of Maharaja.
- He married a Lichchavi princes Kumara Devi and had her portrait engraved on his coins.

Chandragupta I (319-335 A.D.)

- Chandragupta was the first Gupta king who minted silver coins after defeating Saka satraps of Ujjain and also in the name of his queen and the Lichchhavi nation.
- Chandragupta I seems to have been a ruler of considerable importance because he started Gupta Era in A.D. 319-20 which marked the date of his accession.
- He emphasized his power and prestige by marrying Kumara Devi, Princess of the Lichchhavi nation of Nepal.
- He acquired the title of Maharajadhiraj.

Samudragupta (335-375 A.D.)

- Samudragupta (335-380 A.D.), called the 'Napoleon of India' by Vincent Smith, enlarged the Gupta Kingdom enormously.
- The Allahabad pillar inscription composed by Harisena, his court poet enumerates the people and countries that were conquered by Samudragupta, which had been divided into 5 groups.
- 12 Kings were defeated in course of Samudragupts's dakshinapath campaign, who reached as far as Kanchi and Pallava ruler Vishnugupta was compelled to recognise his suzerainty. But he reinstated all the 12 kingdoms as tributary states.
- Virasen was the army commander in the famous Southern campaign of Samudragupta. In Allahabad inscription Samudragupta describes him as the hero of hundred battles.
- In one of his coins he called himself 'Lichchhavi duhitra' (daughter's son of the Lichchhavis).
- He performed Asvamedha Yajna to claim imperial title and struck gold coins of yupa type to commemorate the occasion.
- He maintained the tradition of religious toleration, granted permission to Buddhist king of Cylon, Meghavarman to build a monastry at Bodh Gaya; so, he was called 'Anukampavav'.
- He was a great patron of art, adopted the title of 'Kaviraja'. Poets like Harisena and Vasubandhu adorned his court; on some gold coins he was shown playing the Veena.
- On one of the coins Samudragupta is represented as playing flute. He also patronized the Buddhist scholar Vasubandhu and studied Buddhism under him.
- Though a follower of the Brahmannical religion and follower of Vasudeva, he was tolerant towards other faiths. He received a missionary from the ruler Meghavarman of Sri Lanka, seeking his permission to build a Buddhist temple at Gaya, which he granted.

Chandragupta II (380-413 A.D.)

- Samudragupta was succeeded by Ramgupta but Chandragupta II killed him and married his queen Dhruvadevi.
- Chandragupta II was also a great conqueror like his father and his reign saw the high water mark of the Gupta empire. Mehrauli Iron pillar inscription

claims his authority over North- Western India and a good portion of Bengal.

- Chandragupta II's daughter Prabhavati was married to the Vakataka King, Rudrasena II who died very soon.
- The sea-borne trade with Europe brought Chandragupta II in close contact with Europe through Egypt.
- Chandragupta is represented as killing a lion on his coins unlike his father who is shown killing a tiger.
- Though Fa-hien (the Chinese pilgrim) travelled extensively in Chandragupta's empire and records the prosperity during this time, it is interesting to note that the Chinese pilgrim never recorded the name of the king because he was totally pre-occupied with the study of Buddhism.
- Chandragupta II Vikramaditya was the first among the Gupta kings to issue gold coins.

  These coins were modelled on the silver coins issued by the Sakas of western and central India.
- Virasena's Udyagiri cave inscription refers to his conquest of the whole world.
- He defeated the last of the Saka ruler Rudra Simha III and annexed the territories of western Malwa and Gujarat. He was also called 'Vikramaditya'. He also took the title of Simhavikrama.
- Chandragupta II made Ujjain the second capital of the empire.
- He strengthened the empire by matrimonial alliance, married his daughter Prabhavati to a Vakataka Prince Rudrasena II, he himself married a Naga princes 'Kuber Naga'.
- He was also a man of art and culture, his court at Ujjain was adorned by 'Navratna', including Kalidasa, Amarsinha, Fa-hien, Acharya Dinganaga, etc.
- Virasena was the Court Poet and Minister of Chandragupta II.
- Fa-hien, the Chinese traveller, came during the time of Chandragupta II.

Kumaragupta I (413-455 A.D.)

- He assumed the title of Mahendraditya.
- Founded the Nalanda University.
- He was a worshipper of Lord Kartikeya (son of Lord Shiva).
- Kumargupta I introduced a new type of coins of gold. One of them figures the God Kartikeya ridding on his peacock on the reverse, and the king feeding a peacock on the obverse.
- The first Huna attack took place during Kumargupta I. He was very old that time. The aged Kumargupta died when the crown prince was still in the field in A.D. 454 or 455.
- Kumargupta performed Asvamedha sacrifices, but we do not know of his any military success, though he maintained the vast empire intact.
- Towards the close of his reign, the empire was attacked by the Pushyamitra tribe.
- By 485 A.D. the Hunas occupied eastern Malwa and a good portion of Central India.
- Although the Huna power was soon overthrown by Yasodharman of Malwa, the Malwa prince successfully challenged the authority of the Guptas and set up pillars of victory commemorating his conquest of almost the whole of Northern India.

Skandagupta (455-467 A.D.)

- One of the gold coins of the king Skandagupta depicts the king as standing with a bow in one hand and an arrow in the other with a Garuda standard in front of him. To his right is Goddess Laxmi facing the king with a lotus in her hand.
- He restored the Sudarshana Lake.
- Skandagupta repulsed the ferocious Hunas twice, this heroic feat entitled him to assume the title of Vikramaditya.
- Sakandagupta's successors proved to be weak and could not resist the Huna invaders, who excelled in horsemanship and possibly used stirrups made of metal.

Fall of the Gupta Empire

- The weak successors of Skandagupta could not check the growing Huna power and feudatories rose in Bihar, Bengal, M.P., Vallabhi, etc.
- Mihirkula was the most famous Huna King. Hieun Tsang mentions him as a fierce persecutor of Buddhism. He was defeated by Yashodharman, one of the feudatories of the Guptas in Malwa.
- Later Guptas of Magadha established their power in Bihar, alongside them the Maukharies rose to power in Bihar and U.P. with their capital at Kannauj, the Maitrakas of Vallabhi established their authority in Gujarat and Western Malwa.
- In North India the Pushyabhutis of Thaneshwar established their power in Haryana and they gradually moved to Kannauj.
- The Gupta state may have found it difficult to maintain a large professional army on account of the growing practice of land grants for religious and other purposes, which was bound to reduce their revenues.
- Their income may have further been affected by the decline of foreign trade.
- Loss of Western India deprived the Guptas of rich revenues from trade and commerce and crippled them economically.

- The migration of a guild of silk weavers from Gujarat to Malwa in A.D. 473 and their adoption of non-productive professions show that there was not much demand for silk.
- Decline of trade led to decay of towns, the post-Gupta period witnessed the ruin of many old commercial cities.
- The later Guptas, though they ruled in Magadha till about the eight-century, were not genealogically connected to the Imperial Guptas.

Trade and Economy

- Kalidasa gives good description of the market towns.
- The volume of trade with China greatly increased during Gupta period and the Chinese silk was called 'Chinansuka' in India.
- Indian muslin was said to have created a great demand in the city of Rome.
- At Kaveripattinam, the Yavana section of the city overflowed with prosperity.
- At Arikamedu, a sizeable Roman settlement and a Roman factory was discovered (it was known for Muslin).
- Barygaza or Broach was the largest port on the western coast.
- Glass production started in the Gupta period.
- Indian embassies visited the Roman Empire in the reigns of Aurelian, Constantine, Julian, and Justinian, and Alexandria became an important meeting place for the inhabintants and traders of India and Rome.
- Varahmihira paid tribute to Greek astronomers by saying that they deserve as much respect as our own rishis.
- Indians were the first in the world to advocate the internal use of mercury. It is mentioned by Varahmihira along with iron. The Indian surgeon performed lithotomy and could remove the external matter accidentally introduced into the body e.g. iron, stones, etc.
- Gold coins were called Dinars and silver coins were called Rupyakas.

Political Organization

- In contrast to the Mauryas, the Gupta kings adopted pompous titles such as 'Parmeshwar' 'Maharajadhiraja' and 'Param-bhattaraka' which signify that they ruled over lesser kings in their empire.
- Element of divinity in kingship; kings compared with different gods and were looked upon as Vishnu, the protector and preserver.
- Kingship was hereditary, but royal power was limited by the absence of a firm practice of primogeniture.
- Council of ministers existed; evidence of one man holding several posts like Harisena and posts becoming hereditary.
- The most important officers were Kumaramatyas.
- The empire was divided into 'Bhukti' placed under the charge of an 'Uparika'.
- Bhuktis were divided into districts placed under the charge of 'Vishaypati'.
- The sub-districts were called 'Peth' and the villages were under 'Gramika' or 'Mahattar'.
- The Guptas did not maintain a vast bureaucracy like that of the Mauryas.
- 'Kumaramatyas' were the most important officers who were appointed by the king in the home provinces.
- Chariots receded into the background and cavalry came to the forefront.
- In judicial system, for the first time civil and criminal laws were clearly defined and demarcated.
- The most salient feature of the Gupta rule is personal liberty. The people were left largely to follow their own ideas and pursue their own intentions.
- The Vakataka empire in the Deccan was more centralized and united than the Satavahanas, though the Vakatakas continued the same administrative system and practices as it was during the Satavahanas.
- In the Gupta period land taxes increased in number, and also those on trade and commerce.
- A large part of the empire was administered by feudatories, many of whom had been subjected by Samudragupta.
- The second important fedual development in administration was the grant of fiscal and administrative concessions to priests and administrators. Salary was not paid in cash.
- Religious functionaries were granted land called 'Agarhara', free of taxes for ever, and they were authorised to collect from peasants all taxes, which could have otherwise gone to the emperor.
- Land revenue was about 1/7 of the produce payable either in cash or kind.

Social Organization

- The Aryan pattern of society based on 'Varnashram Dharma' made its final assertion. Land grants to Brahmanas suggest Brahaman supremacy.
- Caste proliferated into numerous sub-castes, firstly, as a result of assimilation of a large number of

foreigners into Indian society, and secondly due to absorption of many tribal people in Brahmanical society through process of land grants.

- Though women were idealized in literature, mother goddesses were worshipped, but in reality they were accorded lower postion viz. pre-puberty marriage, denial of education, treated as an item of property, etc. Though they were allowed to listen to the Epics and the Puranas, like the Shudras.
- The position of the Shudra somewhat improved but number of untouchables and the practice of untouchability increased.
- The first example of Sati came from Eran of 510 A.D. Sati system was very rare in the Gupta period, almost the only recorded instance in the age being that of the Goparaja's wife in A.D. 510. came to light from Eran (M.P.).
- The Vakataka period (roughly from about A.D. 250-250) coincided with the most creative period of Mahayana Buddhism.
- Nagarjuna established the Shunyavada philosophy, he infused a new life into Buddhism and helped the eventual development of the Advaita school in the Hindu Vedanta.
- It is very likely that Kaildasa lived for some time in the Vakataka court, as a part of the 'Meghadduta' must have been composed there.
- Patanjali tells us that the maidservant and the shudra women were meant for satisfying the pleasure of upper classes.

Religion

- Many legal text books were written during this period such as the Bhagwad Gita, Yajnavalkaya Smriti, Narada Smriti, Brihaspati Smriti, etc.
- Hinduism acquired its present shape, Brahma, Vishnu & Mahesh emerged as the supreme deity.
- Devotional Hinduism got perfection and Bhagvatism became more popular, centred round the worship of Vishnu or Bhagvat. History was presented as a cycle of 10 incarnations of Vishnu.
- Theory of Karma and idea of Bhakti and Ahimsa became the foundation of Bhagvatism.
- Idol worship in the temples became a common feature.
- Concept of incarnations or Avatara of Vishnu preached.
- Various female deities such as Durga, Amba, Kali, Chandi, etc. came to be regarded as mother goddesses.
- Four ends of life were enumerated-Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, first three collectively called 'Triverga'
- Six schools of philosophy were perfected.
- Buddhism no longer received royal patronage in the Gupta period.
- Fa-hien has given the impression that this religion was in flourishing state.
- But really it was not so important in the Gupta period as it was in the days of Ashoka and Kanishka.

Science and Technology

- Gupta period is unparalleled for its achievements in the field of mathematics and astronomy.
- Brahmagupta in 7th century developed rules for-operating with zero and negative quantities, he began to apply algebra to astronomical problems. He wrote Brahmasphutic Siddhanta in which he hinted at the law of gravitation.
- Prominent astronomers were Aryabhatta and Varahamihira. Aryabhatta was the first astronomer who wrote Arya-bhattiyam, found the causes of lunar and solar eclipses, calculated the circumference of the earth in Suryasiddhanta, which is still almost correct.
- Aryabhatta described the value of first nine numbers and the use of zero in Aryabhattiyam. He also calculatd the value of pie and invented Algebra.
- He was first to reveal that the Sun is stationary and the earth revolves round it.
- Varahamihira's well-known work was 'Brihatsamhita', it stated that the Moon rotates round the Earth and the Earth rotates round the Sun.
- He also wrote 'Panch Siddhantika' which gives the summary of five astronomical books current in his time.
- Romaka Siddhanta, a book on astronomy was also compiled and was perhaps influenced by Greek ideas.
- Vagbhatta was the most distinguished physician of the ayurvedic system of medicine.
- Palakapya wrote Hastyagarved, a treatise on the diseases of elephants.
- Dhanvantri was famous for Ayurveda knowledge.

Literature

- Sanskrit language and literature made much headway during this period. This was the language of scholars.
- From this time onward we find greater emphasis on verses than prose.
- Although we get a good deal of Brahmanical religious literature, the period also produced some of the earliest pieces of secular literature.

- The greatest Sanskrit poet and dramatist of the Gupta age was Kalidasa, his important works were-Meghdutam, Abhijana Shakuntalam, Kumarsambhava, Raghuvamsa, Ritusamhara, Malvikagnimitra, etc.
- Vishakhadatta produced the 'Mudrarakshasa' and the 'Devichandraguptam'.
- Apart from Kalidasa others were Sudraka who authored Mrichchakatikam, Bharavi wrote Kiratarjunia, Dandin's Kavyadarshana and Dasakumaracharita. To this period belong the 13 plays written by Bhasa. Most famous was Charudatta.
- Vishnu Sharma wrote Panchatantra and Hitopdesh.
- All the literary works of this period were comedies and character of higher and lower classes did not speak the same language: women and shudra featuring in these plays used Prakrit.
- Both the Ramayana and the Mahabharata along with various Puranas and Smrities were finally compiled.
- Amarsimha wrote 'Amarkosha'.

Art and Architecture

- The Gupta craftsmen distinguished themselves by their work in iron and bronze. Several bronze images of the Buddha were produced.
- In the case of iron objects, the best example is the famous Iron pillar found at Mehrauli. It has withstood rain and weather for centuries without rusting.
- This period marks the beginning of temple architecture.
- Dasavatara temple at Deogarh in Jhansi is the finest square temple with a low and squat shikhara (tower) above.
- The temple at Bhitargaon near Kanpur is made of brick.
- Phenomenal development in sculptural representation of divinities at its best. Best example is provided by the stone sculpture of Naranarayan from Dasvatara temple, Deogarh.
- Metal sculpture of a high degree is testified by the over two metre high bronze image of Buddha recovered from Sultanganj near Bhagalpur.
- Gupta stone sculptural art was related to the Mathura school.
- Painting reached its zenith with regard to aesthetic and technical standard as is furnished by the Ajanta Painting.
- Their themes were borrowed from Jataka stories i.e. previous incarnations of Buddha and from other secular source— 'dying princes', 'Mother and Child etc.
- Buddha sitting in Dharma Chakra mudra belongs to Sarnath and the Buddha images of Bamiyan, Afghanistan belong to the Gupta period.
- Images of Vishnu, Shiva and some other Hindu gods featured for the first time in this period.
- The Ajanta painters excelled in the depiction of human and animal figures.

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LATER GUPTAS (7-12 CENTURY)

By the middle of the 6th century a line of Gupta rulers with the same surname, but not connected in the official geneology with the line, ruled in Magadha. In fact, the name ending "Gupta" may have been chosen and cherised by the Later Guptas in an attempt to bring the family closer, in the eyes of the people, to well-established Imperial Gupta dynasty. Krishna Gupta (480-502 A.D.), the founder of the dynasty, and his two successors, Harsha Gupta and Jivita-Gupta may be regarded as feudatories of the main Guptas. The dynasty came into its own with the accession of Kumar Gupta, who made his kingdom more than a mere principality. Malwa was the chief centre of Later Guptas until the rise of Harsha.

Mahasena Gupta was the most famous ruler of this dynasty, probably, he defeated the Maukharis. He associated himself with the rising Pushyabhuti dynasty and giving in marriage his sister to Aditya Vardhan, the grand father of Harsha. Thus, Mahasena Gupta, with the help of Pushyabhuti, recovered his kingdom and got victory over Kamarupa (Assam). Mahasena Gupta's two sons were sent to Thaneshwar to be companions of Harsha and the third son remained at Malwa. Harsha's empire included Magadha which he entrusted to the Madhava Gupta, the first son of Mahasena Gupta.

Thus, actually two lines of Later Guptas came into existence. The Guptas of Magadha continued to prosper.

But the story of Malwa is different. The Gupta ruler of Malwa Deva Gupta attacked Maukhari king Graha Varman and killed him. Graha Varman had married Rajyashri, the sister of Rajya Vardhan and Harsha Vardhan. Rajya Vardhan marched to Malwa, killed Deva Gupta and annexed the territory to his dominions. Thus, the Malwa branch of the Later Guptas came to an end.

The Maukharis

In the second half of the sixth century, Kanyakubja (Kannauj) rose to the prominence as the capital of the Maukharis. The first three kings of this dynasty are given the simple title of Maharaja. The fourth king Ishana-Varman (550-560 A.D.) took the title of Maharajadhiraja. He followed an aggressive expansionist policy. After defeating the Andhras, the Sulivas and the Gauda, he came into conflict with the Later Guptas of Magadha. He was succeeded by Sri Sarva Varman, who firmly established Maukharis supremacy in Madhya-desha. The next famous ruler of this dynasty was Graha Varman, who married Rajyashri of the Pushyabhuti family of Thaneshwar. The wicked king of Malwa killed Graha Varman and imprisoned Rajyashri. The kingdom of Kannauj was combined with that of Thaneshwar of Harsha Vardhan.

The Pushyabhutis

The first three rulers of this dynasty i.e. Nara Vardhan, Rajya Vardhan and Aditya Vardhan are given the simple title of Maharaja. It shows that these rulers were initially feudal-lords under Gupta Kingdom and subsequently the Huna kings. Aditya Vardhan's son Prabhakara Vardhan (A.D. 583-605) was the first ruler of the dynasty to assume the title Param Bhattarak Maharaja–dhiraja. He defeated Hunas, Sindhu kings, Gurjaras, the Lord of Gandhara and the kings of Malwa. His desire for conquest was eventually carried out by his younger son Harsha Vardhan.

Prabhakar Vardhan had made a matrimonial alliance with the Maukharis by giving in marriage his daughter Rajyashri to Graha Varman. As a result of this engagement, the Maukhari nobles, on the death of their last king Graha Varman, requested Harsha, the reigning Pushybhuti king to unite his kingdom with the Maukhari kingdom and rule from Kannauj. Prabhakar Vardhan was succeeded by his elder son Rajya Vardhan, but shortly he was killed in a battle with Shasanka of Gauda (Bengal). He was succeeded by Harsha Vardhan, his younger brother who was actually elected to the throne by the Mantri parishad.

Harsha Vardhana (606-647 A.D.)

- Hieun-Tsang informs us that Harsha was reluctant to take the responsibilities of kingship.
- He belonged to the Pushyabhuti family and was the son of Prabhakar vardhan, originally the feudatories of the Guptas.
- Rajyavardhan succeeded Prabhakaravardhan. Grahavardhan, the Maukhari ruler of Kannauj and husband of Rajyasri (daughter of Prabhakara) was murdered by Devagupta, the ruler of Malwa

who in alliance with Sasanka, ruler of Gauda and Bengal occupied Kannauj and imprisoned Rajyasri. Rajyavardhan undertook a campaign against Devagupta and killed him but was deceived and killed by Sasanka.

- Harsha now succeeded his brother at Thaneswar. He brought most of north under his control and assumed the title of 'Siladitya'.
- Originally belonged to Thaneswar, but shifted to Kannauj which after his death was won from his successors by the Pratiharas.
- Brought '5 Indies' under his control – Punjab, Kannauj, Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa.
- Harsha used to celebrate a solemn festival at Prayag, Allahabad at the end of every 5 years.
- He was a great patron of learning and established a large monastery at Nalanda. Banabhatta, who adored his court wrote Harshacharita, Parvatiparinay and Kadambari. Harsha himself wrote 3 plays: Priyadarshika, Ratnavali and Nagananda.

Buddhism during Harsha's reign

- Puranavarman of Magadha, the last of the race of Ashoka, was one of the vassals of Harsha. He is reputed to have brought back to life the bodhi tree, cut down to its roots by Shashanka, by watering its roots with the milk of hundred cows.
- Harsha's brother and sister were ardent Hinayana Buddhists and he himself developed strong leanings towards Mahayana Buddhism after he came in contact with Hieun-Tsang.
- Though the Chinese traveller Hieun-Tsang counted nearly 200,000 Buddhist monks, yet it is clear that Buddhism was clearly on the path of decline against the resurgent Puranic Hinduism.
- In Harsha's time, Jainism was prevalent only in the places like Vaishali and eastern Bengal.
- In spite of losses due to accidents and robbery, Hieun-Tsang took with him to China 150 pieces of Buddha's bodily relics; many images of teachers in gold, silver and sandalwood and 657 volumes of manuscripts, carried upon 20 horses.
- In this period, Tantricism in both Hinduism and Buddhism came to the forefront.

Political Organization and State Administration

- Nothing is known of the city of Kannauj after the death of Harsha until A.D. 730, when Yasovarman, who may have been a Maukhari king, was ruling there. Yasovarman was a famous monarch who sent an embassy to China in A.D. 731.
- Samanta system emerged in the post-Gupta period and by the time of Harshvardhan, it was widely prevalent all over North India.
- Harsha relied more on personal supervision than on an organized bureaucracy.
- There seems to have been a council of ministers, which wielded real power on occasions.
- According to Hieun-Tsang, the officers received their salaries in kind, in grants of land, and were paid according to their work.
- Treason against the king was punished by lifelong imprisonment. Taxation was light and 1/6 was the royal share of the land revenue from the people.
- The existence of a department of records and archives shows the enlightened character of the administration.
- Harsha governed empire on the same line as the Guptas did except that his administration had become more feudal and decentralised.
- Land grants continued to be made to priests for special services rendered to the state.
- In addition Harsha is credited with the grant of land to the officers by charters as in case the Agrahara lands.
- The Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang informs us that the revenues of Harsha were divided into four parts.
- One part was earmarked for the expenditure of the king, a second for scholars, a third for the endowment of officials and public servants and a fourth for religious purpose.
- He also tells us that ministers and high officers of the state were endowed with land. The feudal practice of rewarding and paying officers with grants of land seems to have begun under Harsha. This explains why we do not have too many coins issued by King Harsha.
- In the empire of Harsha, law and order was not well-maintained.
- The Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang, about whom special care may have been taken by the government, was robbed of his belonging, although he reports that according to the law of the land severe punishments were inflicted for crime.
- Robbery was considered to be a second treason for which the right hand of the robber was amputated. But it seems that under the influence of Buddhism, the severity of punishment was mitigated and criminals were imprisoned for life.
- Harsha is called the last great Hindu emperor of India, but he was neither a staunch Hindu nor the ruler of the whole country.
- His authority was limited to North India, except Kashmir-Rajasthan, Punjab, Utter Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa were under his direct control, but his sphere of

influence spread over a much wider area.

- It seems that the peripheral states acknowledged his sovereignty. Harsha was unable to extend his power in eastern and southern India.
- In eastern India he faced opposition from the Shaivite king Shashanka of Gauda, who cut off the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya. But Shashanka's death in 619 put an end to this hostility.
- Harsha's southward march was stopped on the Narmada river by the Chalukyan king Pulkesin II in 620 A.D., who ruled over a great part of modern Karnataka and Maharashtra with his capital at Badami in the modern Bijapur district of Karnataka. Pulskesin II bestowed the title of 'the lord of the entire north', on him.
- Events towards the end of Harsha's reign are described in Chinese sources.
- T'ang Emperor of China Tai-Tsung sent an ambassador to Harsha's court in 643 and again in 647. On the second occasion the Chinese ambassador found that Harsha had died and that the throne had been usurped by an undeserving king.
- The Chinese ambassador rushed to Nepal and Assam and raised a force with which the allies of Harsha defeated the usurper, who was taken to China as a prisoner.
- The kingdom of Harsha Vardhan disintegrated rapidly into small states after his death. The three border states of Assam, Nepal and Kashmir resumed their independence. Northern India was divided among several Rajput States.
- Village was divided into groups of 10 for the purpose of assessment in the Deccan and in the groups of 12 or 16 in the northern region.
- The power and privileges of the feudatories were clearly on the rises in this period and the biggest casualties were the lower classes and women.
- The relationship between the village authorities and the feudatories was clearly defined. Brahmanas were granted tax-free lands as well as many privileges along with it.
- The beginning of the practice of making religious grants roughly synchronizes with the date of the earliest epic and the Puranic description of the Kaliyuga or the age of social crisis.
- Grants of land were made to the priests and the temples, and later to royal officers, along with fiscal and administrative immunities, which undermined the authority of the state.
- The fiscal concessions accompanying the land grants included the royal right over salt and mines, which were royal monopolies in the Mauryan period and evidently signs of sovereignty.
- Now, villages were granted in perpetuity to the beneficiaries, often with administrative rights.
- The recipients of land grants in north India were empowered to punish thieves and other criminals; in central and western India from the fifth century onwards, they were also given the right to try the civil cases.
- The transfer of magisterial and police powers together with fiscal rights to the donees not only weakened the royal authority, but also led to the oppression of peasants and inhabitants of the gift villages who were asked to obey their new masters and carry out their orders.
- Several inscriptions indicated the emergence of serfdom, which meant that the peasants were attached to their land even when it was given away. Perhaps this began in South India in the earlier period because a third century Pallava grant informs us that four sharecroppers were asked to remain attached to their land which was given to the brahmanas.

Hieun-Tsang's Account

Hieun-Tsang (or Yuan Chwang) was the most celebrated of all the Chinese pilgrims who came to India. He visited India in the first half of the seventh century A.D. and spent about 15 years (630-645) in the country. During this period he travelled all over the country and observed everything very minutely. No doubt he came to this country with the chief aim of collecting the Buddhist scriptures and visiting all those places connected with the Lord, but his clever eyes left nothing unnoticed. He retuned to his country with a lot of material concerned with the Buddhist faith (such as Buddhist relics, images of Buddha and about 657 volumes of manuscripts), but above all he carried with him the memories of this land. After reaching his homeland, he translated all his memories in the book-form entitled 'Si-yu-Ki' or the Records of the Western world. This book is an invaluable source of information regarding Harsha and the political, social, religious and economic conditions of India during his reign (or in the first half of seventh century A.D.).

According to Dr. V.A. Smith, this book is a treasure house of accurate information, indispensable to every student of Indian antiquity and has done more than any archaeological discovery to render possible the remarkable re-association (revival) of lost history. From Hieun-Tsang's account, the following important information is derived regarding Harsha and the condition of India during his time:

• **Kingdom of HarshaVardhan:** Hieun-Tsang spent about eight years in Harsha's court and consequently he had written in detail about his character and personality. According to Hieun-Tsang, Harsha was a very generous king who used to give a major por-

tion of his revenue in alms to the poor, the needy and religious men. He had built a large number of rest houses, hospitals, stupas, monasteries, and other works of public utility. He was a very dutiful king who never felt tired while serving his people. In the very words of Hieun-Tsang, "He was indefatigable and forgot sleep and food in the discharge of his duties." Again, "the day was too short for him. He was the busiest of men and devoted all his time to promote the welfare of his people."

About Harsha's religious views, he writes that in the beginning he was a worshipper of Shiva and the Sun and later on he became a follower of Buddhism. Then, he devoted all his energies for the spread of his faith. Hieun-Tsang writes that Harsha led a very luxurious life and often bathed in vessels of gold and silver. Harsha's capital Kannauj was known all round for its lofty structures, beautiful gardens, tanks to clear water and museum of varieties collected from strange lands. It was a great cosmopolitan town with one hundred Buddhist monasteries and about two hundred deva temples; it had greatly grown in its importance under Harsha.

• **Political Condition and Administration:** Hieun-Tsang has written in detail about Harsha's administration and the political condition of India during his times. He has every praise for Harsha's administration. Harsha fully knew that in order to make the life of his subjects happy, a good deal of personal supervision was most essential, from time to time he himself used to go from place to place in order to punish the evil-doers and reward the good.

Harsha's government was based on benign and generous principles. Hieun-Tsang further writes, "The government is generous, official requirements are few, families are not registered and individuals are not subject to forced labour-contribution". Taxes were very light. The source of income was the land-tax which was 1/6 of the total produce. The royal income was spent in a very systematic way. Its one-fourth part was spent on government, one-fourth on the maintenance of the public servants, one fourth to reward the learned and the rest portion was reserved for distributing gifts among holymen.

The penal code was very severe and sometimes hands, ears or nose were also cut off. Fines were also inflicted and trial by ordeal was also known, though it was awarded very rarely. Hieun-Tsang, however, writes that roads were not so safe as he himself was thrice looted and once even his clothes were snatched away from him.

According to Hieun-Tsang, there was a special department of keeping records of all the important events of the state. In these records, good and bad events were recorded and instances of public calamity and good fortune are set forth in detail. Hieun-Tsang says that Harsha had maintained a powerful and well-equipped army which was over two lakhs. It was comprised of 50,000 infantry, 6,000 elephants and 100,000 horsemen.

• **Socio-economic Condition:** From certain casual remarks of Hieun-Tsang, we can form an idea of the social and economic conditions of India during Harsha's reign. About the dress and general appearance of the people, he writes that they wore simple dress comprising inner clothing and outward garment which did not involve any tailoring work. They were, however, very fond of ornaments. Again, he writes that most of the people go bare-footed and shoes are rare. The food of the people was very simple and pure. They generally took milk, ghee, rice, grain and vegetables. Onions and garlics were rarely used and the use of meat was not so common.

About the architecture or house planning of the people, Hieun-Tsang writes that their walls were generally built of brick, and often coated with chunam. The roofs were sometimes made of thatched reed matting but generally there were wooden flat roofed rooms which were often covered with tiles, burnt and unborn. Their floors were purified with cow dung and strewn with flowers of the season. Their houses, in short, were 'sumptuous inside and economical outside.' According to Hieun-Tsang, the architecture of public building and Buddhist monasteries was very remarkable.

The people in those days had a high sense of cleanliness. According to Hieun-Tsang, "They are pure on their own accord and not from any compulsion. Before every meal they must have a wash, the fragment and remains are not served up again. The food utensils are not passed on." Persons who followed unclean or disreputable occupations (like butchers, fisherman, executioners and scavengers) had to live outside the city.

The people also led a high moral life. They were hospitable, honest, generous and charitable. They were afraid of doing any thing wrong and sinful. According to Hieun-Tsang, they are of pure moral principle.

Hieun-Tsang has thrown a good deal of light on the social customs of the people. The caste-taboos had become very rigid and usually the people married within their castes. According to him, 'Relations whether by the father's or mother's side do not inter marry.' The accursed purdah-system did not exist but the practice of sati was, however, practiced by the people. Harsha's own mother Yasomati died as a sati.

The chief occupation of the people was cultivation of land, domesticating animals, adopting various other

occupations including industries, trade and commerce. Trade was carried on both by sea and land-routes with many neighbouring countries, such as China and Persia. The medium of exchange comprised not merely gold and silver coins, but also cowries and small pearls.

• **Religious Condition:** Hieun-Tsang was a religious pilgrim and so he wrote in detail about the religious condition of India in the first half of the seventh century A.D. There were three religions-Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism that were flourishing side by side in India in the seventh century A.D. About Buddhism, Hieun-Tsang nowhere writes that it was on the decline, but from his account that ancient seats of Buddhism like Gaya and Kapilvastu were ruins, historians have derived the conclusion that Buddhism was declining day by day. But still in every big town there were many monasteries where about 10,000 monks lived. There were many Indian rulers (like Harsha) who patronized Buddhism. In addition to the two main sects-the Hinayana and the Mahayana-Buddhism had further been split up into 18 different sub-sects.

About Hinduism, Hieun-Tsang writes that it was gaining strength. India was known in China as 'the country of the Brahmans.' Hinduism had greatly regained its superior status since the day of the Imperial Guptas. The predominance of Hinduism was further demonstrated by the popularity of Sanskrit which, according to Hieun-Tsang, had begun to be commonly used both in speaking and writing. The Buddhist teacher had also developed a great fondness for this language of the gods.

Though Indian people followed different religions according to their likings, yet they practiced complete religious toleration. The followers of different faiths lived peacefully. Harsha, no doubt, had become a Buddhist, but he did not become a religious persecutor. While showering favours and distributing money, he never made any distinction between a Buddhist monk and a Brahman priest.

• **Educational System:** From Hieun-Tsang's account, we come to know that there was well-organised system of education during the reign of Harsha. Elementary education was given in temples and monasteries where students resided with their teachers. The higher education was provided by some well-known centres of education which resembled more or less the modern universities. Some of the well-known universities then existing were those of Taxila, Ujjain, Gaya and Nalanda.

The most important university was that of Nalanda which had its own six-storyed building. It was a university of international fame and students from various foreign countries usually came here for study. There were about 1,510 Professors in all who imparted knowledge to about 10,000 students. No fees were charged from the students and even food, accommodation and clothes were provided free of cost to them. The expenditure of this university was met by the rich donations made by many Indian rulers and rich people. Moreover, about 100 villages and their revenues were attached with this university for meeting out its expenses. Harsha is also said to have made rich endowments to this university. Such a university perhaps did not exist any where else on the surface of the world.

• **Harsha's Assemblies:** Hieun-Tsang has given a vivid description of Harsha's assemblies. Harsha called a special assembly at Kannauj to honour Heiun-Tsang and to give wide publicity to the doctrines of the Mahayana faith. In this assembly a heated discussion took place between the Brahmans and Hieun-Tsang. In the end, Hieun-Tsang won the day and a special procession was organized to honour him on his success. Again Hieun-Tsang writes that Harsha used to distribute alms among the learned, religious men, the poor and the needy on a large scale. One of such assemblies was held in 643 A.D. which was attended by Harsha himself. On the first day, Harsha worshipped Buddha, on the second day the image of Sun and on the third day adoration was offered to Shiva.

After these adorations to various deities Harsha began his work of distributing wealth and offering gifts to the Buddhist monks, Brahman heretics, and the poor, the orphans and the destitute. He exhausted all his treasury so much so that he had to borrow his personal clothes from his sister Rajyashri.

The Vakatakas

- The Vakatakas came to control parts of the Deccan and Central India till the rise of the Chalukyas.
- The founder of this Brahmin dynasty was Vindhyasakti.
- The most important king was Pravarasena I who performed 4 Ashvamedha yagnas.
- He was succeeded by Rudrasen I, Prithvisen I and Rudrasen II respectively.
- Chandragupta II married his daughter Prabhavati to the vakataka king Rudrasen II.
- Rudrasen II was succeeded by Divakarasena, Damodarasena or Pravarasena who composed a Prakrit work titled Setubandha in glorification of Rama, though he was a devotee of Shiva.

The Abhiras

- On the downfall of the Satvahanas, the Abhira

Ishvarasena established himself in northern Maharashtra. He started an era in A.D. 249. It is known as Kalachuri-Chedi or Abhira era.

- According to Puranas there were 10 Abhira kings.
- From an inscription it seems that Kathika was the family name of the Abhiras.

The Shakas of Mahishaka

- It was founded by Mana after the decline of the Satvahanas in the Deccan.

The Traikutakas

- Appear to be the feudatories of Abhiras at first.
- First ruler was Indradutta, who was followed by Dahrasena, Vyaghrasena and Madhyamsena.
- Aniruddhapura was the capital of this kingdom.
- Vikramsena was the last known king of this dynasty.

The Rashtrakutas

- Founder was Dantidurga.
- Originally district officers under Chalukyas of Badami.
- Their king Krishna I is remembered for constructing the famous rock-cut Kailasha temple at Ellora. It was constructed in the Dravidian style and elaborately carved with fine sculptures.
- Their King Amoghvarsha is compared to Vikramaditya in giving patronage to men of letters. He wrote the first Kanadda poetry named Kaviraj marg and Prashnottar Mallika. He built the city of Manyakheta as their capital.
- Their king, Krishna III set up a pillar of victory and a temple at Rameshwaram after defeating the Cholas.
- Rashtrakutas are credited with building the cave shrine of Elephants. It was dedicated to shiva, whose image as Mahesh (popularly known as Trimurti) counts among the most magnificent art creations of India. The three faces represent Shiva as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, and only Shiva is represented in 3 faces and not Brahma, Vishnu, etc.

Kalachuris

- In early period the Kalachuris were known as Haihayas with Mahishmati as their capital.
- Krishnaraja, the earliest known chief of this dynasty was succeeded by his son Buddharaja.

The Gangas

- Also called Chedagangas of Orissa.
- Their King Narsimhadeva constructed the Sun temple at Konark.
- Their King Anantvarman Ganga built the famous Jagannath temple at Puri.
- Kesaris, who used to rule Orissa befor Gangas built the Lingaraja temple at Bhubaneshwar.

The Palas of Bengal

- In the middle of the 8th century, the Pala dynasty came into power. Its founder was Gopala (750 A.D.) who was elected to the throne as he had proved his valor and capability as a leader.
- Suleiman, an Arab merchant had termed the Pala kingdom as Rumi.
- Gopala was an ardent Buddhist.
- He was succeeded by Devapala. He extended his control over Pragjoytishpur (Assam). He was a Buddhist.
- Balaputradeva, a King of Buddhist Sailendras ruling Java asked Devapala for grant of 5 villages to endow a monastery at Nalanda. He granted the request and appointed Vikramaditya as Head of Nalanda monastery.
- Devapala's court was adorned with the Buddhist poet Vijradatta, the author of Lokesvarasataka.

The Senas

- They ruled Bengal after the Palas.
- Its founder was Samantasena. His grandson Vijayasena (son of Hemantasena) brought the family into limelight.
- The famous poet Sriharsha composed the Vijataprasasti in memory of Vijayasena.
- He was succeeded by Ballalasena. He wrote Danasagara and Adbhutsagara.
- He was succeeded by Lakshmanasena, Jayadeva. The famous Vaishnava poet of Bengal and the author of Gita Govinda lived at his court.
- His reign saw the decline of Sena power. The invasions of Bakhtiyar Khalji gave it a crushing blow.

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POST-GUPTA PERIOD IN SOUTH INDIA

CHRONICLE IAS ACADEMY
A CIVIL SERVICES CHRONICLE INITIATIVE

From the middle of the sixth century A.D., the history of South India is virtually the story of mutual conflicts among three powers, each seeking constantly to extend its empire at the expense of its neighbours. This went on for about three hundred years. The three powers were the Chalukyas of Badami, the Pallavas of Kanchi and the Pandyas of Madurai.

All of them rose into prominence in the sixth century, but the Chalukyas quit the stage about a century earlier than the two other powers, their place on the political map being more or less exactly filled from the middle of the eighth century by their successors, the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta (Malkhed). Besides the main house of Badami, the Chalukyas established themselves in two other branches, more or less independent of the main line: the Chalukyas of Lata and the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. Together with the Gangas of Mysore, the Eastern Chalukyas took sides in the conflicts of the three kingdoms, sometimes with decisive results. The Cholas of the Tamil country had practically disappeared except that a line of Telugu rulers bearing their name and claiming a traditional connection with their capital at Uraiyur ruled in the area now known as Rayalaseema.

Political conflict was, however, no obstacle to cultural growth. A vast and many-sided Hindu revival checked the spread of Jainism and Buddhism, created a great volume of soul-stirring devotional literature and advanced philosophic speculations. Under the stimulus of this religious impulse, remarkable advances were registered in architecture, sculpture, painting and music. All these influences overflowed into the numerous Hindu colonies across the sea.

Imperial Cholas

Vijayalaya Chola, who was probably a Pallava Vassal, rose out of obscurity during the middle of the 9th century C.E. Making use of the opportunity during a war between Pandyas and Pallavas, Vijayalaya rose out of obscurity and captured Thanjavur in 848 C.E.

Sundara Chola

The Chola power recovered during Sundara Chola's reign. The Chola Army under the command of the crown prince Aditya Karikala defeated the Pandyas and invaded up to Tondaimandalam in the north. Uttama, son of the previous Chola king Gandaraditya forced Sundara Chola to declare him heir apparent. Uttama Chola's reign was conspicuous for the lack of any major initiatives and he was replaced by the great Rajaraja Chola in 985 C.E.

Rajaraj Chola

Although the early Chola monarchs had captured parts of Tondai-nadu, Kongu-nadu and Pandi-nadu, the empire had shrunk to the area around the Kaveri Delta in the year 985, when the 7th Chola monarch, Rajaraja, born Arulmolivarman, assumed the throne.

Rajaraja immediately embarked on a campaign of territorial expansion and captured Pallava and Pandya territory. He successfully fought the Chera rulers of Kerala and extended his rule over parts of modern Karnataka. He captured the island of Sri Lanka as a province of the Chola empire; it remained under direct Chola rule for 75 years. Rajaraja built temples in his own name in all these areas. He conquered the Maldive Islands in the Indian Ocean and sent missions to the Indonesian Shrivijaya empire. He encouraged the Shailendra monarch of Java to build a Buddhist monastery at the Chola port of Nagapattinam.

Rajendra Chola

Rajaraja's son Rajendra (r. 1012-1044) further consolidated Chola power. He created a Chola viceroyalty in Madurai, appointing his son as the first Chola-Pandya viceregal prince. Rajendra next attacked the Western Chalukyas and their allies. Rajendra's reign was marked by his expedition to the river Ganges (c. 1019 C.E.). The Chola army dashed through the kingdoms north of Vengi and engaged the Pala king Mahipala and defeated him. The victorious Chola army returned with the waters of the holy Ganges. In a series of campaigns he marched to north as to the river Ganga (Ganges). He brought back some of its sacred water in golden pots, emptied these into into a tank named Chola-ganga and adopted the title of Gangai-konda (Capturer of the Ganges). However, he did not assume control over the Ganges region. The relationship with Shrivijaya deteriorated to the point that Rajendra sent a naval expedition against the kingdom in order to enforce acknowledgement of Chola suzerainty. He sent two diplomatic missions to China.

In 1070, after three of Rajendra's sons and one grandson had succeeded him, a new line of Chalukya-Cholas was established when the Eastern Chalukya prince Rajendra II (r. 1070-1125) ascended the throne. His mother and grandmother were Chola princesses. Rajendra II assumed the title of Kulottunga (Star of the Dynasty). During his reign, Sri Lanka gained independence from the Chola rule. However, trade flourished with Southeast Asia. Another Chola embassy was sent to China, together with 72 merchants. Trade with Shrivijaya was active too. The reign of Rajendra II was one of peace and prosperity.

The Chola empire held together well until the end of the reign of Kulottunga III in 1216. However, it was not as extensive as in the days of Rajaraja I and Rajendra I.

As the Pandya monarchs to the south increased in strength and a group of feudatory chieftains aggressively pursued power in the 13th century, the Chola Empire shrank to the region around Thanjavur. The Chola dynasty came to an end in 1279 when Rajaraja III died and the Chola territory was easily absorbed into Pandya rule.

Chola Chalukya Wars

The History of Cholas from the period of Rajaraja was tinged with a series of conflicts with the Western Chalukyas. The Old Chalukya dynasty had split in to two sibling dynasties of the Western and Eastern Chalukyas. Rajaraja's daughter Kundavai was married to the Eastern Chalukya prince Vimaladitya. Stemming from this Cholas had a filial interest in the affairs of Vengi. Western Chalukyas however felt that the Vengi kingdom was under their natural sphere of influence. Several wars were fought and neither could claim mastery over the other. Cholas never managed to overwhelm the Kalyani kingdom and the frontier remained at the Tungabhadra River. These wars however resulted in a lot of bloodshed and the death of at least one monarch (Rajadhiraja Chola).

Administration

The whole empire was divided into 'Mandalam'(province) and these in turn into'Valanadu' or Kottam and Nadu. Village was the basic unit of administration. The cholas are best known for their local self-government at village level. Each village had an assembly to look after the affairs of the village. The general assemblies were of three types:

1. Ur- a general assembly of the village consisting of tax paying residents.
2. Sabha or Mahasabha – consisted of a gathering of the adult men in the Brahmana villages called 'Brahmadeya' and agarhara village granted to the Brahmanas and of the and was restricted to the Brahmans of the villages.
3. Nagaram was found in trading centres alone.

The 'Uttaramerur' inscription (10th Century) describes how the local Sabha functioned. There was a close contact between the Central authority and the village assemblies. The Chola officials had only a supervisory role over these assemblies. The Mahasabha possessed the proprietary rights over community lands and controlled the private lands within its jurisdiction. The judicial committee of the Mahasabha, called the 'nattar' settled both civil and criminal cases of dispute.

Famous committees of the Mahasabha:

- Variyam: Executive Committee of Sabha
- Tottavariyam: Garden committee
- Pon-Variyam: Gold committee
- Eri-Variyam: Tank Committee
- Alunganattar: Executive Committee of Ur
- Nyayattar: Judicial Committee
- Udasin-Variyam: Committee of Ascetics
- Samstua-Variyam: Annual Committee

Chalukyas of Vatapi/ Badami

This dynasty rose to power in the Deccan from the 5th to the 8th century AD and again from the 10th to the 12th century AD. They ruled over the area between the Vindhyachal and the Krishna River. The Chalukyas were the arch enemies of the Pallavas, another famous dynasty of the south.

Pulakesin I

A prominent ruler of the Chalukya dynasty was Pulakesin I. He founded the city of Vatapi (modern Badami in Bijapur district of Karnataka) and made it his capital. He is said to have performed Ashwamedha Yagna to attain supremacy as a ruler. The kingdom was further extended by his sons Kirtivarman and Mangalesa who waged many wars against the Mauryan rulers of the neighbouring Konkan region.

The best known specimens of Chalukyan art are the Virupaksha temple, (built by Queen Lokamahadevi in 740 AD to commemorate her husband's victory over the Pallavas), and the Mallikarjuna temple both at Pattadakal, Karnataka.

Pulakesin II

Pulakesin II, son of Kirtivarman was the greatest ruler of the Chalukya dynasty, who ruled for almost 34 years. During his long reign, he consolidated his powers in Maharashtra and conquered parts of the Deccan stretching from the banks of the Narmada to the region beyond the Kaveri. His greatest achievement was his victory in the defensive war against

Harshavardhan (A north Indian emperor with his capital at Kannauj) in the year 620 AD. In 641 AD, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, visited the kingdom and paid glowing tributes to the king for his efficient and just rule.

Pulakesin II was defeated and killed by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman in 642 AD. His capital Vatapi was completely destroyed. Pulakesin was succeeded by his son Vikramaditya who was also a noble and just ruler. He renewed the struggle against his enemies and managed to restore the former glory of his dynasty to a certain extent. The Chalukyas were ousted by a chieftain Dantidurga, who laid the foundation of Rashtrakuta dynasty.

Considered the greatest of the Chalukya rulers of Badami not only because of the problems he had to face while coming to the throne, but also because of his subsequent military as well as diplomatic achievements.

- He had to wage civil war against his uncle, Mangalesa, who refused to hand over the power.
- Though Pulakesin succeeded in defeating and killing his uncle, this civil war shook the young kingdom and rebellions began to appear on all sides. But he was quite successful in the suppression of these rebellions. He defeated the rebel feudatory, Appayika, and pardoned his confederate, Govinda, when the latter offered his submission.
- Establishment of his suzerainty over the neighbours such as Kadambas of Banavasi, the Alupas of south Kanara, the Gangas of Mysore, and the Mauryas of north Konkan. Apart from the above rulers, the Latas, Malwas and Gurjaras also offered their submission to him because of their fear of Harshavardhana of Kanuaj.
- His clash with Harsha, in which he was able to check Harsha's design to conquer the Deccan.
- Conquests in the eastern Deccan-southern Kosala, Kalinga, Pistapura and the Banas of Rayalaseema offered their submission after their defeat at the hands of Pulakesin.
- Conflict with the Pallavas of Kanchi-his first expedition against the Pallav kingdom, which was then ruled by Mahendravarman I was a complete success, and he annexed the northern part of the Pallava kingdom. But his second expedition against the Pallavas, however, ended in complete disaster for himself as well as his own kingdom. The then Pallava ruler, Narasimhavarman I, who succeeded Mahendraverman, not only drove back Chalukya armies, but also invaded the Chalukya kingdom, killed Pulakesin II and captured Badami.
- Diplomatic achievement-he sent an embassy to the Persian king, Khusrau II, in AD 625 and also received one from him. The reception given to the Persian mission is, in fact, depicted in one of the famous Ajanta cave paintings.
- Visit of Hiuen Tsang – the description given by this Chinese pilgrim of the kingdom of Pulakesin is quite useful in knowing the social and economic conditions under the Chalukya rulers of Badami.

Chalukyas of Kalyani

Another branch of the Chalukyas established their supremacy under their ruler Tailpa II (973-997 A.D.), who was probably a feudatory of the Rastrakutas. He fought successful wars against the Latas of Gujarat, Kalchuries of Chedi, Parmars of Malwa and the Cholas of the South. The Parmara ruler Munja died fighting him. Tailpa II died in about 997 A.D. His two immediate successors Satyasraya (997-1008 A.D.) and Vikramaditya V (1001-1016), however, suffered defeats at the hands of Rajaraja Chola and Bhoja Parmara respectively. The next Chalukya ruler Jayasimha II (1016-1042 A.D.) routed Bhoja Parmara but was in turn defeated by the Chola ruler Rajendra Chola I at the battle of Musangi. It was Somesvara who laid the foundation of a new town of Kalyani which henceforth became the capital of the Chalukyas. Vikramaditya VI won a great name for his dynasty by his allround conquests and cultural activities. He defeated the Hoyasala King (Vishnuvardhana) of Mysore and Rajendra Chola II and recovered some of the lost territories of his dynasty. The famous poet Bilhana and Vigyanesvara, the author of the well known work "Mitakshara" flourished during his reign. After Vikramaditya VI's death in about 1126 A.D. the Chalukya power began to decline rapidly. Many feudatory chiefs asserted their independence and in about 1190 A.D. Somesvara IV, the last ruler of this dynasty, was overthrown by the Yadavas of Devagiri.

Contribution of the Chalukyas

Art and Architecture

- They developed the Deccan or Vesara style in the building of structural temples, which reached culmination, however, only under the Rashtrakutas and the Hoyasalas.
- It was the Chalukyas who perfected the art of stone building, that is, stones finely joined without mortar.
- Under their auspices, the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Brahmins competed with each other in building cave temples.
- Though the cave frescoes began earlier, some of the finest specimens belonged to the Chalukya era. The murals that were executed on the walls dealt with not only religious themes but also with secular

ones. In the first monastic hall at Ajanta, we notice a painting depicting the reception given to a Persian embassy by Pulakesin II.

Temples: The temple-building activity under the Chalukyas of Badami can be broadly divided into two stages. The first stage is represented by the temples at Aihole and Badami. Aihole is a town of temples and contains no fewer than 70 structures, of which four are noteworthy.

- Ladh Khan temple is a flat roofed building.
- Durga temple was an experiment seeking to adopt the Buddhist chaitya to a Brahmanical temple.
- Hucimaligudi is very similar to the Durga temple, but smaller than it.
- The Jaina temple of Meguti shows some progress in the erection of structural temples, but it is unfinished.

Of the temples at Badami, the Melagitti Sivalaya is a small but finely proportioned and magnificently located temple. A group of four rock-cut halls at Badami (three of them Hindu and one Jaina) are all of the same type. The workmanship in the caves is marked by a high degree of technical excellence. Though the front is very unassuming, the interior is treated with great skill and care in every detail.

The second stage is represented by the temples at Pattadakal. There are about ten temples here, four in the northern style and six in the southern style. In the Deccan both styles were used. There was even a tendency to combine the feature of the two styles.

- The Papanatha temple is the most notable among the temples of the northern style, it also reveals attempts to combine northern and southern features in one structure.
- The Virupaksha temple was built by one of the queens of Vikramaditya II. Workmen brought from Kanchi were employed in its construction. Hence it is a direct imitation of the Kailasanatha temple which had come into existence in Kanchi some decades earlier.
- The Sangamesvara temple, which was built some years before the above one, is more or less in the same style.

Pallavas of Kanchi

The Pallavas were the first well-known dynasty which came into power in the South after the fall of the Andharas. But nothing definite is known about their origin. For about two hundred years from 550 to 750 A.D., the Pallavas were the dominant power in the South. Their rule extended over a vast region including the modern territories of Madras, Arcot, Trichnopoly and Tanjore but the whole of the South was under their influence. There were several branches of these Pallavas who ruled form different quarters such as Badami or Vatapi, Ellora and Kanchi. The most powerful dynasty of the Pallavas was the one which had its capital at Kanchi. The earliest Pallava ruler about whom we have some reliable information was Vishnugopa of Kanchi. With Simha Vishnu (575-600 A.D.) begins the most glorious epoch of the Pallava history. He is said to have defeated rulers of the three Tamil States of Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas and also the ruler of Ceylon. Mahendra Varman (600-625 A.D.) had to fight a deadly and long drawn battle with the Chalukyas. Mahendra Varman was a great patron of art and literature. Formerly he was a Jain by faith but later on he was converted to Shaivism and then he built a large number of rock cut temples at various places (Dalavanur, Pallavaram, Vallam, etc.) in honour of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. Mahendra Varman was succeeded by his son Narasimha Varman (625-645 A.D.) in about 625 A.D. He is perhaps the most important ruler of the Pallava dynasty. He defeated the Chalukya ruler Pulakesin II in about 642 A.D. and took hold of his capital Badami or Vatapi. He also fought successful wars against the Cheras, Cholas and the king of Ceylon. It was during his reign, that the celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hieun-Tsang visited Kanchi in about 642 A.D. and stayed there for sometime. Narsimha Varman was a great builder like his father. He built many rock-cut temples and laid the foundation of a new city, which was known as Mahabalipuram. He beautified this city with many wonderful shrines, the chief among them was the Dharmaraja Ratha.

After the death of Narsimha Varman in about 645 A.D. the Pallava empire began to fall with a rapid speed. The successors of Narasimha Varman continued their rule upto the end of 9th century A.D. when under Aparajita Varman (876-895 A.D.) their territory was annexed by the Cholas in about 895 A.D.

The Pallavas with their capital at Kanchipuram were a hereditary Hindu dynasty. They ruled between the 4th and the 9th Century. Under the Pallavas, their vast kingdom was exposed to increased influence of Sanskrit and the culture associated with it. During this period the cults of Shavism and Vaishnavism became deeply embedded in the Tamilian culture.

Art and Architecture

The development of temple architecture, particularly Dravida style, under the Pallavas can be seen in four stages.

Mahendra Group: The influence of the cave style of architecture is to be seen in this group. Examples; are the rock-cut temples at Bhairavakonda (North Arcot district), and Anantesvara temple at Undavalli (Guntur district).

Narasimha Group: They comprise the rathas or monolithic temples, each of which is hewn out of a single rock-boulder. These monolithic temples are found at Mamallapuram. The rathas, popularly called the Seven Pagodas, are actually eight in number. They are (1) Dharmaraja, (2) Bhima, (3) Arjuna, (4) Sahadeva, (5) Draupadi, (6) Ganesa, (7) Pidari and (8) Valaiyankuttai.

Rajasimha Group: There are five examples of this group – at Mahabalipuram (Shore, Isvara and Mukunda temples), one at Panamalai in South Arcot, and the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi. Among all these, the most mature example is the last one.

Nandivarman Group: This group mostly consists of small temples except the Vaikunthaperumal temple at Kanchi and in no way forms an advance on the achievements of the previous age. But they are more ornate, resembling the Chola architecture. The best examples are the temples of Muktesvara and Matangesvara at Kanchi, the Vadamalisvara at Orgadam (near Chingalput), and the Parasuramesvara at Gudimallam (near Renigunta).

The Pallavas also contributed to the development of sculpture in south India. The Pallava sculpture largely is indebted to the Buddhist tradition. It is more monumental and linear in form, thus avoiding the typical ornamentation of the Deccan sculpture. The best example is the 'Descent of the Ganga' or 'Arjuna's Penance' at Mahabalipuram.

Religion

The Pallavas were orthodox Brahmanical Hindus and their patronage was responsible for the great reformation of the medieval ages. Most of the Pallava kings were devotees of Shiva, the exceptions being Simhavishnu and Nandivarman who were worshippers of Vishnu. Mahendravarman I was the first to be influenced by the famous Saivite saints of the age. Besides worshipping Siva, he also showed reverence to other Hindu gods. Pallavas were tolerant towards other religions like Buddhism and Jainism. However, some of the sects like Buddhism were losing their former glory to Saivism. The Vedic tradition in general bossed over the local tradition. Sankaracharya in fact gave this stimulus to Vedic tradition.

Tamil saints of the sixth and seventh centuries AD were the progenitors of the bhakti movement. The hymns and sermons of the Nayanars (Saivite saints) and Alvars (Vaishnavite saints) continued the tradition of bhakti. Saivite saints were Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar, and others. Most remarkable thing about this age was the presence of women saints such as Andal (an Alvar).

Education and Learning

Education in the early days was controlled by the Jainas and Buddhists. The Jaina institutions were located at Madurai and Kanchi. But soon Brahmanical institutions superseded them. Ghatikas or Brahmin institutions were attached to the temples and mostly confined to advance study. In the eighth century AD the maths also became popular. A math was an omnibus institution because of its being a rest-house, a feeding centre and also an education centre. In all these institutions, Sanskrit was the medium of instruction, because it was also the official language.

Early Pandya Kingdom

The Pandya kingdom started its career about the same times as the Pallava or a little later, but we know little of the history of its first two monarchs, Kadungon (560-90) and his son Maravarman Avanisulamani (590-620). There is no doubt, however, that they put an end to Kalabhra rule in their part of the country and revived the Pandyan power. The third, Sendan or Jayanta Varman, imposed his rule on the Chera country and adopted the title of Vanavan. The rock-cut cave temple at Malaiyadikurichi in Tirunelveli district was excavated by him. His son was Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman (650-700), whose inscription has been recently found in the Vaigai bed at Madurai, which points to his long and prosperous rule. He is identical with Nedumaran, the victor of Nelveli, celebrated in Tamil literature.

A great soldier, he fought many battles for the extension of Pandya power, among which his conquest of Nelveli is specially mentioned in epigraphs.

Political History

Arikesari Parankusa was succeeded by his son Koccadaiyan, also called Ranadhira (c. 700-30). This monarch waged aggressive wars against his neighbours and extended the Pandya power into the Kongu country. He also suppressed a revolt of the mountain chieftain Ay who occupied the hilly country between Tirunelveli and Travancore. His reign ended about 730, and his son Maravarman Rajasimha I succeeded him. Early in his reign Rajasimha formed an alliance with Chalukya Vikramaditya II, espoused the cause of Chitramaya, and after inflicting a number of defeats on Nandi Varman Pallavamalla besieged him in a place called Nandigram, i.e., Nandi-puram, near Kumbakonam. The able Pallava general Udayachandra, who encountered the Pandya forces in many battles, raised the siege of Nandigrams, beheaded Chitramaya, and thus made the Pallava throne secure for his monarch. He also dealt with other enemies of Pallavamalla like the Sabara king Udayana and the Nishada chieftain Prithivivyaghra who were probably acting in collusion with the Chalukya, Vikramaditya II.

Rajasimha I was succeeded by Nedunjadaiyan, popularly known as Varaguna Maharaja I, in the year 765 A.D. He gave a crushing defeat to Pallava ruler Nandi Varman II and his allies. He had the credit to annex the whole of the Kongn country. He also defeated Adigaiman of Tagadur or Dharmapuri and sent him into confinement at Madura. He fixed his camp at Idavai in the heart of the Pallava kingdom. Varaguna I had still other successes to his credit. He led an expedition into Venad, South Travancore, attacked the strongly fortified port of Vilinam and brought the country under his rule.

He also waged successful war against the Ay chieftain of the intervening mountainous country who had perhaps been friendly to the ruler of Venad. As a result of these wars, Pandya sway extended well beyond Tiruchirapalli into the Tanjore, Salem and Coimbatore districts, and all that lay South was under him. The expansion continued under his son and successor Srimarra Srivallabha (815-62) who invaded Ceylon in the reign of Sena I (831-51), ravaged the Northern province and sacked the capital. Eventually Sena made terms with the conqueror and the Pandya forces quit the island. Srimara had next to deal with a formidable combination formed against him again under the leadership of the Pallavas. But he was defeated on the bank of the River Arisil.

Srimara's defeat at Arisil was, however, not an isolated event. His aggressive campaigns which had earned for him the title Parachakrakolahala (Cofounder of the Circle of his Enemies) naturally roused the hostility of his neighbours. Sena II (851-855) of Ceylon, nephew and successor of Sena I, had allied himself with the Pallavas and a Pandya prince who sought his aid. This prince was probably Srimara's son whose claim to the throne had been overlooked when his step-brother Viranarayana was made yuvaraja (c.860). Sena sent an expedition into the Madura kingdom at about the same time as the battle of Arisil and the invasion was a complete success. The capital was sacked, Srimmara died of his wounds, and his son Varaguna Varman II was enthroned in his place by the Simhalese commander in chief (862). Varguna II had to acknowledge the overlordship of Nripatunga.

Vijaynagara Empire

This was the most famous empire in the history of southern India. The Vijayanagara empire lasted for three centuries, thus indirectly checking the expansion of Islamic powers in the region. According to legends as well as historical sources, two brothers named Harihara and Bukka (Sons of Sangama, a chieftain at the court of the Hoysala rulers) had founded city of Vijayanagara on the southern bank of the river Tungabhadra in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Two famous sages Madhav Vidyaranya and his brother Sayana became the main source of inspiration for the foundation of a Hindu empire in the region.

Harihar became the first king of the newly founded empire. After his death Bukka succeded him. Bukka sent an emissary to China in 1374 as a diplomatic move. After Bukka's death, Harihara II (son of Harihar) ascended the throne. He expanded his domains by conquering almost the whole of southern India, including Mysore, Kanara, Chingalpet, Trichinopally and Kanchivaram (modern Kanchipuram). A staunch worshipper of Lord Shiva, Harihara II was fairly tolerant towards the followers of other faiths too. He became the first king of the Vijayanagara empire to assume the title of Maharajadhiraj Rajaparmeshwara (the mighty, sovereign, king of kings).

In 1486, Vir Narasimha of Chandragiri, (who belonged to the Tuluva dynasty) took over the reigns of the Vijaynagar empire. His son Krishanadev Raya has been acclaimed the greatest ruler of Vijayanagara and one of the most famous kings in the history of India. A great warrior, he almost invariably won the wars which he waged throughout his period of kingship. He was known to have treated even his vanquished foes with honour.

During the period 1511-1514, he captured southern Mysore, Shivasamudram fortress and Raichur (Karnataka), defeated Gajapati, the erstwhile king of Orissa and captured Udaigiri (Orissa), in that order. Still later, he captured Vishakhapatnam and abolished the authority of the rulers of Orissa. His most outstanding achievement was the defeat inflicted on one of the Bahamani rulers, Ismail Adil Shah on 19th March 1520. This landmark event put an end to the Muslim dominance in the southern part of the country.

During his later years, Krishnadeva Raya strongly focused on the organization of his empire and improving its administration. In order to maintain friendly relations with foreign powers (who were beginning to gain a foothold in India) particularly the Portuguese, he granted some concessions to the Portuguese governor Alphonsde de Albuquerque.

The reign of Krishanadev Raya also witnessed tremendous growth and development in the spheres of literature, music, art and culture. Raya himself was an accomplished poet, musician, scholar and extremely well-versed in Sanskrit, Telugu and Kannada. He patronized many poets and authors notably the Ashtadiggajas (literally: poets of a gigantic stature) of Telugu language.

The famous scholar and wit Tenali Rama adorned his court. During this period there was also a spurt in art and architecture. The famous Vithalswami

temple and the Hazara temple (literally a thousand) both at Hampi built during his reign are magnificent specimens of Hindu Temple architecture, executed in the Vijaynagar style of architecture.

The Vijayanagar empire witnessed the arrival of European traders (especially the Portuguese) in India. Krishnadeva Raya encouraged foreign trade which necessitated the use of currency. The coins of the Vijayanagara Empire were chiefly made with gold and copper. Most of the gold coins carried a sacred image on one side and the royal legend on the reverse. Some gold coins bore the images of Lord Tirupatis.

Bahamani Kingdom

According to historical records, a rebel chieftain of Daulatabad, near Ellora, Maharashtra, which was under Muhammad Bin Tughalaq, founded the Bahamani kingdom. This chieftain, Allauddin Hassan, who was a man of humble origins, assumed the name of Gangu Bahamani, in memory of his Brahmin mentor. His kingdom comprised parts of present day Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh. South of his kingdom lay the Vijayanagara Empire against which it had to fight continuous wars for political reasons.

The most remarkable ruler of the Bahamani kingdom was Firuz Shah Bahamani (1397-1422 AD), who fought three major battles against the Vijayanagara Empire without any tangible results. He was a great scholar, well-versed in religious and natural sciences. He wanted to make the Deccan the cultural centre of India.

According to his court poet Ferhishta, Firuz Shah was a true Muslim in spirit, notwithstanding his vices - fondness for wine and music, both strictly forbidden by Islam. Firuz Shah was compelled to abdicate in favour of his brother Ahmad Shah I, who successfully invaded Warangal and annexed most part of it to his empire. The conquest of Warangal proved to be a shot in the arm of the Bahamanis. The kingdom gradually expanded and reached its zenith under the prime ministership of Mahmud Gawan (1466-1481 AD).

Mahmud Gawan arrived and settled down in Bidar from Persia in the year 1453. A great scholar of Islamic cultural traditions, he established and funded a Madarassa (college) which was modelled along the lines of the universities of Samarkand and Khorasan (both in Central Asia).

One of the major problems faced by Gawan was the unending dispute among the Bahamani nobles, who were divided into Deccanis (old timers) and Afaqis or Gharibs (newcomers).

Since Gawan himself was a newcomer (of Persian origin), he failed to win the confidence of the Deccanis. His policy of conciliation failed to stem the ongoing strife amongst the noblemen. In 1482, Gawan,a septugenarian was executed by Sultan Muhammad Shah, the last ruler of the undivided Bahamani Empire.

After Gawan's death, the raging internal factions grew more intense and various governors declared their independence. The kingdom finally got fragmented into five parts--- the Adil Shahis of Bijapur, the Qutub Shahis of Golconda, the Nizam Shahis of Ahmednagar, the Barid Shahi of Bidar and lastly the Imad Shahis of Berar.

The five kingdoms came together to wage a war against the mighty Vijayanagara Empire and inflicted a death-blow to it in 1565. A few years down the line, the Imad Shahi kingdom was conquered by Nizamshahis in 1574 AD; the Barid Shahi kingdom was annexed by Adil Shahis in 1619 AD.

Shahi kings

These kingdoms continued to play a dominant role in the politics of the region till they were eventually merged in the Mughal empire in the 17th century. After the death of Shivaji, Aurangzeb, the Mughal emperor, marched southwards, finally annexing Bijapur in 1686 A.D and Golconda in 1689 A. D; this sounded the death knell of the Bahamani kingdom.

The Bahamani period witnessed the upsurge of secularism and communal harmony. Hazrat Banda Nawaz (1321-1422 A.D) the great Sufi saint was patronized by the Bahamani kings and his Dargah located at Gulbarga in Karnataka, is a famous pilgrimage for both Hindus and Muslims alike.

In the field of architecture, the Bahamani rulers evolved a distinct style by drawing heavily from Persian, Turkey, and Arabic architectural styles and blending it with local styles. One of the largest and most famous domes in the world, the Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur and the majestic gateway Charminar at Hyderabad and the Golconda Fort near Hyderabad are the hallmarks of Bahamani architecture. The main source of income of the Bahamanis was the cultivated land, with the administration revolving around the assessment and collection of land revenue.

The Bahmanis of the Deccan ultimately left behind a rich, composite cultural heritage of Indo-Islamic art, language, besides Islamic faith and traditions.

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ART & ARCHITECTURE IN ANCIENT INDIA

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Art of sculpture

Ancient India witnessed remarkable progress in the art of sculpture. The three important schools namely- Gandhara, Mathura and Amravati grew and progressed during ancient India. Each of these schools has occupied a commanding place in the field of Indian sculpture and has contributed towards its growth and fulfilment.

Gandhara School

The Gandhara Art (50 B.C. - 500 A.D.) has been called by several other names, i.e., Greeco-Roman, Greeco-Buddhist, Indo-Greek etc., because it clearly exhibits the influence of Roman, Greek or Hellenistic art. The patrons of this art were not the Greeks but the Shakas and the Kushanas, who carried on and protected the traditions and culture of their Hellenistic predecessors in this region. The art flourished in the North Western frontier of India, the region called the Gandhara Pradesh and therefore, it has been named as the Gandhara School of Art. And as the Hellenistic influence on this art is undeniable, it has been called the Greeco-Roman or Indo-Greek Art. Besides as it was inspired by Buddhism, it has also been called Greeco-Buddhist Art. Thus the impression of this art was primarily Buddhism and its creators were mostly Indians, though it was influenced by foreign art.

The art pieces of Gandhara School have been found at Bimaran, Hastnagar, Sakra Dheri, Shah-ji ki dheri, and at the various sites of Taxila. Most of them have been kept in the museum of Peshawar and Lahore. Amongst these art pieces the image of the Buddha are the best specimens. The other earliest specimens are the headless standing image of Buddha and standing Hariti figure. They were executed in stone, stucco, terracotta and other types of day, and appear to have been invariably embellished with gold leaf or paint.

Viewing them from a critical point, it is concluded that the Gandhara School progressed during 150 years of its beginning; it deteriorated in the second century A.D. In its later stage it was affected by the Mathura school and, when finally grown up, it affected the art of sculpture in China and Central Asia. Its chief characteristic is the realistic representation of human figures, distinguished muscles of the body and transparent garments. It is marked by the representation of thick drapery with large and bold foldings. It is also known for rich carving, elaborate ornamentation and complex symbolism. The images of the Buddha were so beautifully made that they look like the image of Apollo, the Greek god of beauty.

Now the majority of the scholars believe that the Mathura School stands higher than the Gandhara School and that it was free from the influence of Gandhara Art. Yet the Gandhara School of art has been recognised as one of the best school of Indian sculpture and the images of the Buddha which were built under its patronage are among the best possessions of Indian art. Dr. A.L. Basham comments "The Buddhas of Gandhara School though perhaps lacking in the spirituality of those of the Gupta period, are gentle, graceful and compassionate, while some of the plaques are vivid and energetic."

Mathura School

The school of art that developed at Mathura (U.P.) has been called the Mathura School (150-300 A.D.). Its origin has been traced back to the middle of the second century B.C., but it was only in first century A.D. that its genuine progress began. It flourished here for centuries and acquired the highest position in the field of sculpture. It was so popular that at a later stage the images, which were built here, were exported to Taxila and even Central Asia in the West and to Shravasti and Sarnath in the East. It also provided the basis for further progress of the art of sculpture. The art of sculpture of the Gupta Age, has been accepted as a developed form of the Mathura School. The Mathura School was somewhat influenced by the Gandhara School in the first half of second century A.D. The images of the Buddha of the Gandhara Art were copied here but in a more refined way. The Gandhara composition is also evident in certain reliefs and decorative motifs. In turn, it also influenced the Gandhara School of art. The school was directly influenced by Roman art as well because of its direct links with the Roman Empire by sea route. But whatever foreign influence it had, it was slowly given up by the coming of the Gupta Age. It was perfectly free from it.

A standing female figure of Amohini, the standing

statue of Kanishka kept in the museum of Mathura, the statue of a slave girl kept in the museum of Benaras and a large member of figures and images in stone of the Buddha and Boddhisattavas, Yakshas and Yakshinis, males and females found at Mathura and its nearby region, have been regarded as the finest piece of the art of sculpture. In the early stages the school was inspired by Jainism. Afterwards the images of the Buddha replaced them, which clearly exhibits the influence of Buddhism on it. Not only were statues of emperors prepared by sculpture, but the great majority of their creation consisted of nude or seminude figures of female Yakshinis or apsaras in erotic attitudes. The Mathura artists also carved out images of Brahmanical divinities. Popular Brahmanical gods, Shiva and Vishnu were represented alone and sometimes with their consorts, Parwati and Laxmi respectively. Images of many other Brahmanical deities like Brahma, Surya, Balram, Agni, Kartikeya, Kubera etc. were also executed in stone. The distinguishing feature of the Mathura School was that the stone which the craftsman used was mostly spotted red sandstone found at Fatehpur Sikri near Agra.

The royal statue of Kushana kings were found near Mathura exhibit foreign influence. The most striking statue is that of emperor Kanishka, though it lacks its head. It is drapped in the dress of central Asia, a long coat and quilted boots. It is grand and solid from the physical point of view, though technically it lacks a sense of depth. The same way, the early Buddha and Bodhisattavas of Mathura School are fleshy figures and possess no expression of spirituality. But, afterwards, religious feeling and spirituality were exhibited in them. Then the images exhibited not only a firm, masculine and energetic body, but also one with grace and religious feeling. The attempt to display spiritual strength by a circle behind the faces to the images began with Mathura School. Yet the most remarkable piece of the Mathura Art are its beautiful female figures. Most of these figures are nude or semi nude, have full round breasts, full heavy lips and slender waists. Besides, posture of their body, head and hands and legs are definitely erotic. Thus, their aim is frankly sensual.

Amravati School

In the region between the lower valley of the rivers Krishna and Godavari in the South are the districts of Amravati and Guntur where another school of sculpture called the Amravati School (150-400 A.D.) flourished. The region had become an important centre of Buddhism as early as 2nd century B.C. and it provided the first incentive to this school. By the middle of the 2nd century A.D. the school matured itself and beautiful sculptural pieces were created. The school exerted great influence not only on the later South Indian sculpture but as its productives were carried to Ceylon and South-East Asian countries, it also influenced sculptural art of those countries. The Amravati School serves as a link between the earlier arts of Bharhut, Gaya and Sanchi on the one hand and the later Gupta and Pallava Art on the other.

Accepting freely the principle of art for the sake of art, the craftsmen of Amravati School created beautiful human images, of course, images of the Buddha were built and the great stupa of Amravati was adorned with limestone reliefs depicting scenes of the Buddha's life and surrounded by free standing figures of Buddha, but figures and statues of males and females exceed them in number and quality. The same way, though this school successfully depicted lone, compassion, devotion and sacrifice yet the physical beauty and the sensual expression commanded its art. The figures and statues carved under this school have been regarded as the best among the contemporaries not only from the point of view of their size, physical beauty and expressions of human emotions, but also from the point of view of composition. The figures and images are so composed that they seem to be inter-linked with each other and present before an onlooker not distinct figures and images but a well composed painting depicting a scene or an event.

The art of Amravati is frankly naturalistic and sensuous. The female figures in different moods and poses (standing, sitting, bending, flying, dancing etc.) are its best creations. The forms of Yakshinis and the dancing girls have full breasts, heavy lips and living flesh and they exhibit infinite love, grace and beauty. Even men, animals and vegetations have been treated elegantly. And images and figures of even more than sixteen feet in height were built here. Here feminine beauty has been depicted more successfully than compared to Mathura. Its main centres were Amravati, Nagararjuna Konda and Jaggayapeta. Its artists mainly used white marble for the construction of figure and images.

The school of Mathura and Amravati closed that chapter in the art sculpture which had started at Bharhut, Gaya and Sanchi. The school of Mathura accepted a human being as a distinct entity and emphasis was laid on the depiction of physical beauty through art. The Amravati school forged ahead it. While the Mathura school failed to exhibit sensuous desires markedly, the Amravati School succeeded in that. Thereby, for the first time, Indian Art of sculpture came closer to the physical and emotional need of man. By now, Indian Art had reached in a new stage in which physical, sensual and emotional elements found expression. Hence, the primary aim of the art no longer served religion but human beings. Art is the mirror of any society. The change

of attitude in art was a part of change in attitude of society in general.

Cave Architecture

Ajanta Caves

Concurrent with the emergence of the production of Hindu structural temples throughout the Gupta domains, Mahayana Buddhists entered into an extraordinarily active period of cave excavation at a number of sites, primarily in the Western Ghat mountains of the Deccan. The initial resurgence of cave monastery excavations occurred under the Vakatakas.

Under their ambitious and successful King Harisena (c.460-478), these princelings of Central India became powerful contenders in the constant struggle for political supremacy. The king was probably not a Buddhist and it is not known whether or not he actively patronized the creation of monastic establishments, but his ministers and some of his feudatory princes were devoted followers (upasakas) who lavishly provided for the sangha. Harisena, having secured much of the Western Deccan, established a peaceful set of conditions for a brief but spectacular florescence at the site of Ajanta, where more than twenty caves, many of them major achievements of architecture, sculpture and painting in their own right, were excavated during the Vakataka period. Dramatically cut into the curved mountain wall above the Waghora River, the caves constitute virtually complete monastic entities, including living quarters, devotional areas and assembly halls. Although the ephemeral objects used by the monks in their daily lives are gone, the caves provide important insights into Buddhist theory, practice and religious expression in art of the period.

Except for the few caves belonging to an early phase of activity, all the caves belong to the Vakataka period. Walter Spink, the leading authority on Ajanta's later phase, argues convincingly that other writers are erroneous in their contention that such extraordinary achievements must have taken many decades, if not centuries, to produce; instead, he suggests that a brief intense period of fervent activity corresponding primarily to the relatively short span of Harisena's reign accounted for the production of all the later caves. In general, the earliest Vakataka artist activity occurred near the centre of the site (the pre-Vakataka nucleus) and the latest activity took place towards the two extremes.

Only two Chaitya halls were excavated during the Vakataka phase at Ajanta. Since one of them, cave 19, was primarily completed towards the beginning of the Vakataka resurgence and the other, Cave 26, towards the end, they may be used to demonstrate the general artistic direction during this brief span of time. Cave 19 is fairly securely dated to the first part of the Vakataka florescence on the basis of an inscription on the veranda of Cave 17 that refers to gandhakuti (fragrant hall) to the west of it, which must be Cave 19. The Cave 17 inscription also refers to Harisena as the ruling prince, clearly indicating that the excavations were carried out while he was in full power, in contrast to the inscription in the later apsidal chaitya hall, Cave 26, which suggests that Harisena's position was considerable weakened. The epigraph further describes the donor's lavish expenditure on Cave 17 as "such that little should men (the poor?) could not even grasp in their imaginations, " and indeed, this statement might be used in general to describe the munificent patronage that Ajanta enjoyed during the latter half of the fifth century.

Cave 19 consists of a courtyard with accompanying cells as well as the chaitya hall itself. Its elaborate façade contains a single entrance into the cave, marked by a pillared portico that projects from the wall of rock. The large circular window above the portico with its rock-cut rafters reveals the heritage of early chaitya halls that had been based on wooden proto-types, Cave 9 at this very site must have served as a model. However, the decoration around the opening, with its ornamented crest and the "flaps" at the side, reveals that the window is in the form of the fully developed chandrasala seen frequently on Gupta temples.

Little trace of the earlier Chaitya hall façade is visible on the rest of the exterior, however, for its decorated pilasters, cornices and other architectural features create a kind of grid within which are numerous sculptures, primarily of Buddha figures.

Symmetrically placed attendants flank the arched window. Delicately posed and beautifully dressed, the figures suggest the highest achievements of fifth century art. Below, two panels to each side of the door are created by carved pilasters, the two inner compartments and two outer niches containing comparable but not identical subjects. Nearest the entrance the cave on the right, a large representation of Sakyamuni Buddha offers his rightful inheritance (that is, the promise of Buddhahood) to the small figure of his son, Rahul. To the left of the door, a comparable Buddha makes a similar gesture, again offering the promise of Buddhahood.

However, in this case, the identity of the scene is not certain. It may depict the Buddha's descent from Trayastrimsa, and thus the promise of Buddhahood to Utpali, the female nun turned male devotee who was the first to greet the Buddha upon his descent. Or, it might represent Dipamkara Buddha, a Buddha of the remote past who predicted to the future Sakyamuni, then a youth named Sumedha, that he

would attain Buddhahood in a future life.

In either narrative, the underlying message in the promise of Buddhahood, a poignant message to the monk worshipper whose life was devoted to attain the state. In their positions flanking the door and facing inward, the figures seem to offer the same gift the right to Buddhahood to the devotee entering the cave. A crown held above the head of each of the two Buddhas indicates their nature as manifestations of the Universal.

The figures themselves are gracefully posed in relaxed attitudes of the type seen in Gupta formulations of approximately the same date at other sites. Like Buddhas at Sarnath and Mathura, they wear clinging, diaphanous garments revealing the forms of the bodies beneath. Huskier and fuller bodied than their north Indian counterparts, however, these figures reflect a Western Deccan convention and figure type.

Next to these compositions are reliefs that also portray comparable although not identical subjects. The scene to the right of Rahula's inheritance shows a similar architectural construction containing another standing Buddha, but in this case, instead of rounded from the stupa above, there is a seated Buddha. This interchangeability or equivalency between the Buddha and the stupa was seen in Andhra Pradesh at Nagarjuna-konda, where paired chaitya halls contained respectively a Buddha and a stupa.

The interior of the cave appears lavish compared to the stark interiors of early Chaitya halls. Thick pillars, closely set and carved with vertical or diagonal flutes, crowd the interior, while above sculpted panels showing Buddha figures rim the hall. Rafters, still suggestive of the structural prototypes of the rock-cut halls are carved in the ceiling above. The main objective of veneration, the stupa, differs greatly in form from those of earlier periods, which where generally simple domes atop a one-or-two-stepped drum.

Much more vertical in appearance and with an almost spherical dome, the stupa rests on a base with offset sides. At the front, a pilastered torana encloses a sculpted representation of a standing Buddha, while the remaining surface of the stupa is carved into units that may have once contained painted representations.

Above the dome, the harmika contains a depiction of seated Buddha and above are three chattras that in turn support a miniature stupa. Around the hall, the Buddha figures in the frieze and in the centre of the bracket capitals of the pillars may represent some of the Buddhas of the various buddhalokas (Buddha worlds) presumed by Mahayanists to exist throughout the universe. Orderly in their arrangement, the figures are part of a highly decorative scheme, elaborately carved with foliated and architectural motifs. All of these were originally fully polychromed, as was the entire interior of the cave.

The decoration of Cave 26 demonstrates the final burst of exuberance at Ajanta. An inscription identifies the donor of the cave as the Bhikshu Buddhabhadra who dedicated it to the deceased Bhaviraja, a Minister of the Asmaka feudatories of the Vakatakas.

The reference to the Asmakas in the inscription and the lack of mention of the Vakatakas suggest that while these ambitious rivals had perhaps not yet overthrown the Vakatakas, they were on the brink of doing so, thus putting the date of the dedication of this cave very near to the end of Ajanta's florescence.

Much larger and more elaborate than Cave 19, Cave 26 anticipates the Buddhist and Hindu monuments that were created later in Western India during the sixth century with their colossal scale and dramatically ambitious schemes. Sprink has shown that the cave itself was only part of a much grander conception, for it served as the focal point of a scheme that included two upper wings and two lower wings.

The façade of Cave 26 has suffered considerable damage, but it is still possible to reconstruct something of its original appearance. Instead of a portico like that at Cave 19, a series of steps leads upto a low plinth and what would have been a covered veranda (now largely destroyed) serving as a transition between the courtyard preceding the cave and the chaitya hall itself. A chandrasala window and rows of carved figures decorate the façade and are similar to those elements of Cave 19. The interiors of the two caves also reveal major differences. Scale alone creates a vastly granduer impression on the visitor to Cave 26, while the treatment of the pillars, carved frieze, and beamed ceiling are highly reminiscent of similar features in Cave 19; the grander scale permitted even greater richness. Carved representations of Buddhas and bodhisattvas and architectural features decorate the stupa, in contrast to the plain (but perhaps once painted) surfaces of the stupa in Cava 19.

The Buddha on the front of the stupa sits in pralambapadasana, the so-called "European pose" characterized by the pendant legs. This pose seems to be associated with the figures carved towards the end of the Vakataka phase at Ajanta, although the reasons behind the introduction of this form remain unclear. It is possible that such figures are depictions of Maitreya, the future Buddha, who is characteristically shown in this pose when serving as a major icon.

An examination of the frieze above the pillars confirms the greater elaboration and detail of this cave as compared to that of Cave 19. A relative reduction in the scale of the Buddha figures and

their niches allowed for greater multiplicity of the figures as well as increased ornamentation of the surrounding elements.

The walls of the ambulatory passage around the perimeter of the cave are also resplendent with numerous carvings, many of which probably constitute votive offerings by individual donors. The most impressive sculpture in the pradaksinapatha is a reclining figure showing the Buddha's great decease (parinirvana) extending for seven meters along the left sidewall. This colossus, surrounded by mourners, has a profound effect on the visitor to the cave and anticipates the increasingly grand scale that dominates cave architecture of subsequent centuries.

Another impressive scene from the life of the Buddha in the ambulatory passage is a depiction of the Maravijaya. In contrast to the more simple compositions seen at Cave 19, this scene is filled with numerous subsidiary details. Mara's hosts surround the central Buddha figure, who is, curiously, depicted with his right hand in varadamudra, not the expected bhumisparsa. Undoubtedly more costly than Cave 19, Cave 26 with its ubiquitous carving and plentitude of detail is indicative of the final phase at Ajanta, which was brought to a close due to the declining fortunes of the Vakatakas and clearly not a diminution of vigor in the art.

Like the chaitya hall, the vihara was transformed during the Vakataka phase at Ajanta. In contrast to early Buddhist viharas, the later examples display a wealth of sculptural and iconic forms. The most notable addition to the vihara concept is the creation of shrine areas at the rear of the viharas that contain impressive images of Buddha figures.

The incorporation of the Buddha shrine into the vihara format transforms the excavation from a mere dwelling place for monks into a metaphor for a Buddhist paradise in which a Buddha preaches the dharma to the resident bodhisattvas who are in the process of attaining perfection and are awaiting their final rebirths. In Mahayana Buddhism monks take the vow of a bodhisattva (relinquishing their own attainment of Buddhahood until all sentient beings are saved) and progress through the various stages of bodhisattvas (which they have become through the process of taking the vows), reside listening to the teachings of the Buddha.

This interpretation is supported by certain passages in the veranda inscription of Cave 16, a vihara, which states that Varahadeva, the minister of Harisena, realizing that life, youth, wealth and happiness are transitory. For the sake of his father and mother, caused to be made this excellent dwelling to be occupied by the best of ascetics (the dwelling) which is adorned with windows, doors, beautiful picture-galleries, ledges, statues of the nymphs of Indra and the like, which is ornamented with beautiful pillars and stairs, and has a temple of the Buddha inside, [Resembles] the places of the lord of gods [Indra] and is similar to a cave in the lovely Mandara mountain. The comparison of the vihara to a palace, especially that of Indra, which is located significant, for the paradisiacal metaphor of the viharas is carried out in their decoration, especially in painted ceilings.Even within the brief period of the Vakataka florescence at Ajanta, the vihara underwent a number of modifications.

Cave 17, approximately contemporary with Cave 19 on the basis of the Cave 17 inscription and the internal evidence of style, is a standard Mahayana vihara, having a pillared veranda as a transition between the exterior and the interior and a squared central space surrounded by cells. The slight irregularity of the disposition of the monk's cells seems to reflect the cave's chronological position at the start of Ajanta's Vakataka phase, as does the fact that the enshrined Buddha is completely detached from the walls so that it could be circumambulated.

While essentially similar to Cave 17, the plan of the later Cave 2 demonstrates the modifications that took place during this brief but active period. Here, the arrangement of the walls has become standardized and the Buddha in the main shrine is now set against the rear wall of that chamber, precluding circumambulation. Growing complexity, perhaps associated with the religious functions, is also seen in the multiplication of cells at the front of the cave where double-chambered shrine areas are created in place of the single cells as in the Cave 17.

The culmination of these developments is visible in the plan of the upper storey of Cave 6, which has the essential features of Cave 2, note the increasing ritualism in religion had led to the creation of shrine areas, complete with antechamber and interior cell, in the of the side walls. Other cells have also been converted into shrines, such as at the right front and right rear of the hall where sculpted Buddha groups have been added to the cells although there is no doubling up of cells.

The increased complexity of the religious message is also visible in the main shrine of this cave where, in addition to the central Buddha image and his bodhisattvas and other attendants, representations of the six manusi Buddhas who preceded Sakyamuni in his final incarnation are now placed along the side walls of the interior of the shrine so that the devotee is virtually surrounded by large Buddha figures.

An interior view of Cave 2 shows the general

appearance of a Mahayana vihara at Ajanta. Lavishly carved pillars and doorways decorate the interior and carry out the iconographic message. All architectural features, including walls, ceilings and pillars were fully painted.

The shrine doorway, carved with panels containing mithuna couples, ressembles in format those found on contemporary Hindu temples, even to the presence of river goddesses at the top of each jamb. The enshrined Buddha sits in vajraparyankasana and displays. The specific form of the mudra has the thumb and forefinger of the right hand forming a circle that joins the little finger of the left hand. By analogy with mudras of a slightly later date, it may be suggested that the little finger on the left hand pointing to the circle formed in the right indicates the fourth, or most esoteric, level of the teachings.

Like other Buddhas from Ajanta's late phase, the figure suggests ties to Gupta modes at Sarnath, Mathura and other sites, but has the very full, rounded body proportions typical of the Central Indian and Western Deccan modes.

An interesting feature of Cave 2 is the presence of sculpture groups in the shrines flanking the main Buddha shrine along the rear wall of the cave. The shrine at the right rear of the cave bears large sculpted images of Pancika and Hariti, while that to the left contains figures of two male yakshas. These small shrines demonstrate the complete integration of the architectural, sculptural and painted realms at Ajanta, for not only were the carved images fully polychromed with the same paint used in the murals on the side walls, but the murals themselves depict subjects that complement the sculptured forms. In this case, the painted figures on the sidewalls seem to approach the central carved figures. This somewhat illusionist use of the painted walls creates a dramatic effect on the human visitor to the shrine, who feels himself an active participant in the drama being portrayed by the painted and sculpted forms. Nowhere is it more clear that paint served a vital role in completing the iconographic programs and decorative schemes of South Asian monuments, in spite of the fact that it has rarely been preserved.

Because of the preservation of its paintings, Ajanta is a virtually unique document in the history of pre-Muslim Indic art. Enough painting remains in many of the caves to indicate that the iconographic program of the paintings was systematic and an integral part of the overall scheme of the cave and not simply decorative.

A number of styles of painting may be discerned in the caves, demonstrating that a variety of techniques and methods were employed by the artists. Rather than indicating that the painting was done at different periods, however, the variety of styles suggests individual hands of artists.

In general, significant differences exist between ceiling paintings and wall paintings in format, coloration and even technique. The central spaces of the vihara ceilings that have survived are painted in grid-like patterns containing floral and abstract motifs as well as some animal and human scenes. The stylized format is probably a reference to the paradisiacal realms, laid out in garden-like divisions.

White is abundantly used in the ceilings, although not on the walls, and this may have been to help reflect light in the dim interiors. In contrast to the predominance of earth tones used in the wall paintings, the ceilings are more brightly coloured. The animal and plant forms depicted on the ceilings are frequently painted in a flat manner, with little modeling or shading, and the forms thus appear almost as silhouettes against the background. Directly above important images, in antechambers, and at certain other specified locations round mandalic patterns with concentric bands of foliated and floriated patterns are found. An especially fine example from Cave 2 bears pairs of vidyadharas at the four corners.

The programs of wall paintings include, in various caves, scenes of Buddhas, attendants and jataka tales. In general Buddhas are represented in or near the ante-chamber to the shrines, while Jatakas occur in the main hall. A scene showing Buddhas with groups of devotees located in the antechamber to the shrine in Cave 17 suggests a strict hierarchic arrangement created by the use of three registers like divisions.

The Buddhas may be identified as forms of Maitreya: in the top register, he is shown preaching in his heavenly paradise, Tusita, in the centre, he is depicted descending from Tusita and welcoming his de votees into his earthly paradise, Ketumati; below, he is seen preaching in Ketumati. As in other ante-chamber paintings, this composition appears more formal than those of the more free-flowing Jataka scenes of the main cave area, a feature that may relate to their greater iconic rather than narrative function.

Light coloured figures are silhouetted against the dark background and a separation between the Buddha's space and that of the attendant figures is maintained. An interesting feature visible here and in numerous other painting at Ajanta is the treatment of landscape, especially mountain forms, in crystalline, cubical shapes similar to those seen approximately contemporaneously in sculpture. These, however, seem to project into the viewer's space rather than recede behind the picture plane, creating a dynamic relationship between the viewer and the painted world.

In contrast to the more formal arrangement of the

ceilings and antechambers, the walls of the main halls are alive with very free flowing compositions and figures arranged in asymmetrical, crowded groupings. Earth tones, many of which were derived from local minerals found in the region around Ajanta, harmonize the forms and provide the main totality.

Several means of creating form seem to have been available to the Ajanta artist. For example, the body of the bodhisattva to the right of the entrance to the antechamber to the main shrine in Cave I, is created primarily by the use of modulation of colours rather than through use of line. Highlighting of certain areas, such as the nose or brow, helps to bring forth the form of the dim interior although light and shadow are not used in what might be called a scientific manner or to elucidate three-dimensionality. That is, shading and highlighting were used at will by the artists to enhance their creations without regard for light as a phenomenon of the physical world, subject to certain empirical laws.

Even the forms of the bodhisattva's body are beyond the rules of the material world, and indeed, by freeing the figures from such regulation, the artists seem to capture the essence of the Buddhist religion, with its skepticism toward phenomenal existence. While clearly human in inspiration, the part of the bodhisattva's body are likened to other objects; his brow, for example, takes the shape of the archer's bow, his eyes are like lotus petals, and his torso is shaped like that of a lion. Such metaphors appear in textual descriptions and were often quite literally translated into visual terms. Similar metaphors are sometimes used in the creation of parts of the body of Buddha figures.

Numerous Jataka tales are represented on the walls of the Ajanta caves. Some, which must have been important in the specific sectarian beliefs of the monks in residence, are repeated a number of times in the various caves and many of them treat human rather than animal incarnations of Shakyamuni Buddha. Often, several episodes from specific stories are shown, although these are generally not arranged in sequence on the walls.

A detail from the Mahajanaka Jataka depicted in Cave I shows Prince Mahajanka surrounded by a bevy of beautiful women, crowned and bejewelled and thus representing the epitome of princely life and possibly reflecting contemporary patterns of dress and life during Gupta and Vakataka times. However, the Buddhist message of the story is clear, since Mahajanaka relinquishes his princely life in favour of the life of a recluse. With his hands in gesture of discourse similar to Dharma-chakara mudra, he is depicted announcing his intention to give up his kingdom.

The facial features of the figures, with the highly arched brows and elongated lotiform eyes, resemble the treatment of the bodhisattva at the rear of the cave and may reflect an ideal based on contemporaneous concepts of beauty. The forms of the body are outlined with a darker chroma of the same hue as the body itself. The animated positions and stances of the figures lend liveliness to the composition, typical of the Jataka representations at Ajanta in general.

Often, scenes at Ajanta take on an almost secular character, although all may be justified as being part of a Jataka or other Buddhist context.

A woman on a swing in Cave 2 belongs to a depiction of the Vidhurapandita Jataka and may be identified as Irandati, the Naga princess central to the story. Here, the highlighting technique used freely at Ajanta creates the impression of a glow over the surface of her skin. The narrow waists, full breast and hips of the women in the composition display the same feminine ideal that is found throughout most periods and styles of Indic art. As is true throughout most of the Ajanta paintings, the three quarter facial view is preferred in this composition, creating a suggestion of depth and volume for the forms. The brownish red back ground strewn with flowers serves as a conventionalized landscape in this and other scenes, but as in most of South Asian art, the artist depends on the figures to tell the story, to create a sense of life, and to carry the mood; architectural and landscape elements are employed only to add a setting or structure to the scene, not to create an ambience or to stimulate the physical world.

In addition to walls and ceilings, virtually every portion of the caves was painted, including doorframes and pillars. Flat surface without carving were often completed in paint, which, when lost, leads us to forget that these portions were important parts of the decorative scheme.

A Pillar from Cave 17 shows a pair of music making dwarves inhabiting the square base. Different in treatment from the figures already discussed, these dwarves are created by the use of a prominent black outline that defines the contours and details of their forms. Such line drawings are found throughout the Ajanta paintings, sometimes appearing in compositions that make use of the shading and highlighting techniques and thus it seems that such a method was simply one of the techniques available to artists to use as they chose. The skill of the Ajanta artist as draftsmen is evident in compositions such as this.

As vital documents of Buddhist art, the Ajanta caves can hardly be overestimated. In a short burst of incredible artistic activity, the patrons, together with the sculptors, painters and iconographers, provided a concise illustration of the general tendency

in Indic art towards embellishment and elaboration of the highest quality.

Bagh Caves

A closely related and contemporaneous group of cave at Bagh provides further evidence of Mahayana cave architecture. Although some distance away in the Narmada Valley, architectural, sculptural, and painting affinities, with the caves at Ajanta are probably much more than purely coincidental since, according to the Dasaku-maracharita (the ten princes) written by Dandin in the seventh century, the Vakataka King Harisena had a son who ruled over the Bagh region. Spink claims that this son must have ruled prior to 480 A.D., for by that time, one Maharaja Subandhu, who is known from a copper plate inscription found at Bagh, was ruling the region and the Vakataka line had collapsed. Spink estimates period of florescence at Bagh to have occurred between 470 & 480 A.D.

Much ruined due to water seepage and rock falls affecting the soft, friable sandstone, the caves preserve little of their former beauty. In plan, Cave 2 greatly resembles Mahayana viharas at Ajanta, although four central pillars are present, undoubtedly included for structural purposes due to the weakness of the rock. The central pillars, much more massive appearing than pillars at Ajanta, are treated differently from others in the cave, having a spiraled fluting and being round rather than being square or consisting of square and round sections.

The specious antechamber to the shrine bears sculptures of Buddhas and bodhisattvas on the side and rear walls. In style, these figures are part of the broadly defined Gupta mode, but differ from their Ajanta counterparts in their more slender bodies and more attenuated appearance. Instead, they seem more closely allied to northern and north-central Indian styles of the Gupta period. This is not surprising considering Bagh's location nearer to the epicentre of the Gupta art traditions.

A very important characteristic of this and other caves at Bagh is the presence of a stupa rather than a Buddha image as the main object of veneration in the shrine. This feature has led some scholars to conclude that the Bagh excavations predated those at Ajanta and that they represent a state of transition between the use of a stupa and that of a Buddha image as an object of veneration.

However, it is clear from images such as that in the shrine of Cave II at Ajanta, where a representation of the Buddha is part of a stupa, that the symbols are identical and interchangeable and do not necessarily have chronological implications, at least by this date, when both Buddhas and stupa's abundantly survive as part of the standard, artistic vocabulary.

The paintings at Bagh, known today only in fragments and from copies, bear a great deal of resemblance to their contemporary counterparts at Ajanta. Indeed, Subandhu's inscription found in the debris of Cave 2 calls the monastery Kalayana (Abode of Art), suggesting something of the original splendour of the site.

Kanheri Caves

During the late fifth and sixth centuries, artistic activity at Kanheri was resumed. A number of old caves were modified and many new excavations were begun, bringing the total number of caves at the site to over one hundred and making Kanheri the most extensive caves site in India. It is likely that the resurgence of artistic activity was initiated due to patronage by the Traikutakas, who came into control of the region upon the collapse of their former overlords, the Vakatakas, as a copper plate inscription found in front of Cave 3 and datable to around 494 A.D. suggests.

A pair of colossal Buddhas, one at either end of the verandah of this great second century chaitya hall, was part of the refurbishing of that cave during the late fifth century, a date suggested by the style of the images as well as the paleography of an associated inscription referring to one such dedication. More than seven meters in height, each figure stands in an arch with vidyadharas bearing garlands above, and each displays veranda mudra, the gesture of gift bestowal or offering, which may be interpreted as an invitation to enlightenment.

Stylistically, the figures reflect the massive, full form of Ajanta representations and it is possible that artists who had worked at Ajanta, or their descendants had moved to Kanheri to begin work there.

While architecturally many of the new caves excavated during this phase at Kanheri are rather plain, a number of extremely important images were produced, serving as vital documents of developments in the Buddhist religion. Cave 90, a monument of perhaps the early to middle sixth century is a simple, single, chamber abundantly carved with sculptures and could have been donated for merit rather than as a hall for initiations or rituals.

The original shrine images are lost, but on the side walls two important sculptures show in graphic form arrangements that had been developing for a long time. On the viewer's left wall is a Buddha scene, while on the right wall is a depiction of Avalokitesvara as protector of the faithful. As an iconographic statement, each marks a significant departure from earlier examples.

Properly speaking the composition of the Buddha scene is a specific schematization through which the religious practitioner achieves both understanding

and reintegration with the Universal. In this case, the central figure demonstrates the dharmakaya aspect of Buddhahood, the Universal, and is perhaps properly called Sarvavid (universal knowledge) Vairocana. This identification does not negate the interpretation of this figure as the historical Buddha Sakayamuni as well, since the two are identical in the ultimate sense.

In the four corners of the composition, four smaller images identical to that in the centre represent the four Jinas who, together with the central Buddha, comprise of the five Jina mandala (panchajina). These Buddhas are the personifications of the essence of the Universal (jnana) who emerge from the four quarters (that is, all directions) to impart knowledge to the initiate.

They represent the so-called sambhogakaya (or bliss body), which together with the nirmanakaya and the dharmakaya comprise the three kayas of the Buddhist trikaya system. As imparters of knowledge, they represent the teaching modality of Buddhism.

These Buddhas, in later art differentiated by specific mudras and vahanas, are Aksobhya (east), Ratnasambhava (south), Amitabha (west), and Amoghasiddhi (north), each shown here in dharmachakra mudra and pralambapadasana.

Along each vertical side of the composition is a row of four Buddhas, together representing the eight manusi Buddhas, the nirmanakaya, who are charged with the responsibility of teaching the Buddhist religion to the beings of the mundane world.

Beneath the central figure, attending the stalk upon which his lotus pedestal reset, are depictions of Indra and Brahma with female consorts, and nagas and nagins below, both groups shown as essentially subordinates of the main figure. Flanking the Buddha is a pair of bodhisattvas, each also having a female companion. By the sixth century, female images had emerged as an important part of Buddhist Mahayana iconographic conceptions, at Kanheri as well as at numerous other sites in South Asia. In Buddhist theory, the female personifies the concept of prajna, or transcendental knowledge, while the male denotes upaya, the practice necessary to lead the practitioner to the attainment of that knowledge. The combination of two is the Buddhist enlightenment, symbolized in later Buddhism by yuganaddha (sexually joined) couples. Thus, the concept of mithuna, which had long been a motif in Buddhist art, is integrated into an expression of one of the most essential and fundamental beliefs in the religion.

The icon of Avalokitesvara as protector of the faithful is of a type that occurs widely in the western caves in a similar format. However, this version is unique in that it depicts Avalokitesvara as protector against ten perils (rather than the usual eight) and includes numerous subsidiary figures. Above the head of the central figure is the primo generic source of the entire icon, the dharmakaya, in this case Vairocana, attended by two bodhisattvas. Avalokitesvara is flanked by his two female consorts, Tara (to his right) and Bhrkuti (to his left). Tara, whose name means "star," and the North Star implicitly, represents the fixed point of universality towards which the devote progress, while Bhrkuti name, 'abundantly full hall,' refers to the achievement of the fully enlightened mind.

In this litany, Avalokitesvara offers the devotee promise of salvation from the various perils depicted on the sides of the composition, including attack by elephants, lions, robbers and similar disasters. While the lay worshiper might accept these perils in a literal sense and invoke Avalokitesvara for protection against the specific threat, an advanced practitioner would understand these on a metaphorical level, each danger representing a potential hindrance on his path to Buddhahood. The wild elephant, for example, would be seen as the wild mind in need of taming, that is, the mental discipline necessary to achieve the Buddhist goal. Such litany scenes served as proto-types for examples found in Inner Asia, China, Japan, and the Himalayan regions.

A representation of a highly unusual form of Avalokitesvara attending a seated Buddha in Cave 41 indicates advanced and esoteric Buddhist practices at Kanheri.

Dating from approximately the late fifth or early sixth century, the images show the bodhisattvas in an eleven headed (ekadasamukha) form which while found frequently in later Buddhist art outside of South Asia as in Nepal, Tibet, China and Japan, is not known in the Indic realm except at a rather late date in Kashmir and the eastern regions. This image is thus the only artistic documentation for the view that this iconographic type originates in India. It may be inferred from art as well as literature that the eleven heads, consisting of ten bodhisattva heads topped by a Buddha head, represent the dasabhumikas, or the ten stages of achievement of the bodhisattva along with the final attainment of Buddhahood.

Aurangabad Caves

Not far from Ajanta, at Aurangabad, a number of Buddhist caves were carved during different periods, while two of these caves (1 and3) belong to the Vakataka period and were excavated contem-poraneously with the late Mahayana phase at Ajanta, others were created in the latter half of the sixth century and thus represent a stylistic and iconographic advancement from the earlier monuments. Spink suggests that these caves (6,7 and 9) were carved when the

region had come under the control of the Kalachuris, who, he believes, were also responsible for the major Hindu excavations at Jogesvari, Manda¬-pesvara and Elephanta. Cave 7, dating from around 560, seems to combine the ritual need for circumambulation seen in the early Vakataka phase at Ajanta with the preference for placing the shrine Buddha against the rear wall of the chamber by creating an ambulatory passage around the entire shrine.

The sidewalls of the passage-way open into a series of cells while the rear wall contains two subsidiary shrines. The ground plan suggests that the principal shrine had simply been moved forward into the main hall of a typical Mahayana vihara, although this may not in fact be the way in which this form evolved. The shrines at the rear of the prakadsinapatha, as well as the primary shrine, each contain a sculpture of a Buddha seated in pralamabapadasana and displaying dharmachakara mudra.

The caves of the post-Vakataka phase carry out the iconographic program and larger monumental figures. The front wall leading into the circumambulatory passage from the veranda, for example, bears a sizable panel of a litany of Avalokitesvara to the left of the central door of another bodhisattva to the right.

These figures demonstrate a stylistic departure from the earlier Vakataka style, having a new tautness to the contours of their bodies, fuller shoulders and swelling hips.

They are best compared to figures such as the dvarapalas from Mandasor, the sculptures at Elephanta or others of the sixth century. The hair style of Avalokitesvara, with its tendril like curls and high piled up appearance, is characteristic of sixth century conventions, further showing departure from Gupta and Vakataka trends, in addition, the treatment of the lintel of the doorway with its multitude of miniature shrines anticipates the architectural elaboration seen in several later North Indian regional styles.

Similar stylistic developments may also be seen in the treatment of female figures, as in the important panel of the left of the door to the central shrine or the figure group inside the shrine, along the left wall. The voluptuous figures are full breasted, round hipped and have swelling thighs. In the group inside the shrine, the figures seem life-like, a feeling enhanced by the suggested movement and animation of their poses, which marks a departure from the quietude of figures in the Gupta and Vakataka periods and anticipates the active, dynamic figures of subsequent centuries. The elaborate coiffures are again characteristics of the sixth century.

It may be noted that the vidyadharas are set against clouds that are indicated by a scalloped form that is seen widely throughout the Deccan in the sixth century and is especially a characteristic of Early Western Chalukya sculptures. In some respects, the female figures are also very close to those seen in Early Western Chalukya Art.

The presence of prominent female imagery, especially females as attendants to bodhisattvas or Buddhas, demonstrates the growing importance of sexual symbolism in Buddhism, associated with Tantric or Vajaryanic sects. The group to the left of the central shrine door shows Tara, the principal consort of Avalokitesvara, accompanied by two female reflections or aspects of her who are in turn accompanied by dwarves.

The dwarf at the left is very similar to the Saivite dwarves attending the Maheshvara image at Elephanta reinforcing the suggestions of the approximate contemporaneousness of two monuments. This figure, the only male in the entire composition, has a hair arrangement consisting of five topknots that represent the five bijas (sound essences) of the panachajina mandala (the mandala of the five Buddhas). In both his maleness and his ascetic quality, he represents upaya, the action necessary to attain Buddhahood, and the other dwarf, a female to Tara's left, personifies prajna (wisdom), which is part of jnana, the knowledge needed for Buddhahood.

The image thus reiterates the basic Mahayana concept, but it is one step further removed, since the practitioner must unite Tara with Avalokitesvara to achieve karuna, and only then can he integrate Avalokitesvara with Vajrapani to reach bodhi. In another sense, the central figure of Tara is not different from a Buddha, with garland bearing vidyadharas above and personifications of knowledge and compassion at her side.

The spectacular female group consisting of a dancing woman accompanied by six female musicians on the left wall of the main shrine is dramatic evidence for female and sexual symbolism in Buddhism. The shrine is based on the type that was developed in the last phase at Ajanta with the central Buddha figure accompanied by sculpted depictions of the six manusi Buddhas, but goes beyond the earlier formulation with the addition of this important panel and the figures on the opposite wall consisting of a Bodhisattva, his female companion and a dwarf. In one accepts the musicians in the group on the left wall at face value, as accompanists to the dancer, the main figure that needs interpretation is the dancer herself.

Bharatnatyam, the classical form of Indian dance was in advanced stages of development by the sixth

century and already included an extensive vocabulary of gestures, each with a relatively explicitly meaning to be interpreted by the audience. According to Bharatnatyam literature, the gesture made by the left hand of the Aurangabad dancer is ardha pataka, 'half flag,' with the palm upwards, a sign that has a dual meaning: at one level, it represents two, both, or any sort of duality, but on another, it symbolizes a long or tall, slender object that would be known from the context of the story line being portrayed in the dance. Since the gesture is directed towards the genital area, it may be intended to suggest the male member and perhaps the sexual act itself. In light of this and other evidence at the site, it is clear that tantric forms of Buddhism were in practice at Aurangabad in the sixth century.

Sexual imagery, which eventually culminates in the representation of figures in inter course (yuganaddha) was long misunderstood by scholars as a degeneration of Buddhist ideals. However, the total emotional and physical involvement of the individual with the partner during sexual activity is a metaphor in Indic religious thought for the mystical union with the Universal; the combining of the male and female into a totally integrated unity was seen to symbolize the active path to enlightenment.

In practice, sexual activities did become part of the religious rituals of certain Buddhist and Hindu sects, but these were kept secret and were restricted to esoteric practices since it was feared that imitations would lack understanding and might misinterpret the activities as simple orgiastic pleasure seeking. Indeed, it was recognized that one of the pitfalls of the path of yuganaddha was to sink into a lustful quest for pleasure.

It is appropriate that the female figure is dancing, since, in Indic thought, dancing is one of the arts necessary for the accomplished sexual partner and constitutes one aspect of sexual foreplay. The full-fledged forms of the females suggest their desirability, the intensity of desire being likened to the fervor with which the religious goal should be pursued. In texts, the female partners are described as being sixteen years of age and in the full bloom of youth. It is evident that the artists attempted to convey such a notion in their sculpture.

Ellora Caves

The final phase of development of Buddhist caves in Western India is seen at Ellora, a site near Ajanta and Aurangabad that had already become an important Hindu centre in the last half of the sixth century. Although the specific patronage of the Buddhist caves is not known, they were probably excavated during the seventh century, when the Early Western Chalukyas had achieved supremacy in the Deccan, though not necessarily in this region.

A number of the Buddhist caves at Ellora seem to recapitulate some of the basic architectural and iconographic formats found at other sites, but others suggest innovative and advanced Buddhist thinking. Cave 5, the earliest Buddhist cave at Ellora, is a large rectangular hall, about thirty-five meters in length, with surrounding small cells, a shrine in the centre of the rear wall, and two other shrine areas in the centres of the side walls.

The expansion of the two side shrine areas may be seen as further development of the plan of Cave 6 (upper) at Ajanta, although here the main hall has become elongated. Both the rectangular, axial format and the addition of cross-axis shrines are features that developed in Hindu monuments of the preceding century, such as the Shiva cave at Elephanta. The treatment of the pillars with their cushion capitals further suggests such a connection.

A key feature in this cave (found also in a similar cave at Kanheri, but preserved nowhere else in South Asia) is the double row of stone benches extending almost the full length of the hall, within the rectangle of pillars. Such benches are typical of the seating pattern used in ritual recitation in later Tantrism and Zen Buddhism outside of India and suggest that benches made of ephemeral materials might possibly have been used in vihara and chaitya type caves or free standing buildings for centuries, but that their memory is preserved only in the rock-cut examples at Ellora and Kanheri.

The vast scale and ambitiousness of the later Buddhist caves is seen in Cave 12, the so-called Tin Thal, a three storey excavation, each floor of which is larger than any single cave at Ajanta. Its plain and austere façade belies the richness of sculptural decoration within. This cave complex, one of the last Buddhist excavations to be carried out at Ellora, may have been created in the late seventh or even the early eighth century. It is entered through a rock-cut gateway that leads to a spacious courtyard preceding the cave.

Each floor of the cave is different in plan and format. The first floor consists of a rectangular pillared hall entered on the long side with a large pillared antechamber and shrine extending on axis with the entrance to the rear. Small cells are placed at the sides and rear of the main hall. While the second storey is essentially similar in concept (although not in details such as the number of pillars or cells), the cross-axis leading from the front centre of the cave to the shrine at the rear is emphasized by the treatment of pillars and the addition of an extension of that axis towards the façade side of the cave. A veranda has also been

included along the front of the cave to provide access from the staircase at the front left to the centre of the cave for proper entrance. The top floor has pillars arranged in a transverse manner, lacks subsidiary cells, and has a relatively small antechamber preceding the shrine.

The main shrine on each floor contains the now familiar set of images, a Buddha attended by two bodhisattvas (Avalokitesvara on his right and Vajrapani or Manjuvajra, a form of Manjusri, a bodhisattva who personifies wisdom, who carries a vajra on a lotus, on his left). But in addition, the eight bodhisattvas often grouped together in a configuration known as the eight-bodhisattva mandala (astabodhisattva mandala) also appear in the shrines, four on each side on the central Buddha.

Each bodhisattva is clearly identified by the attribute held in his left hand. Other representations of the eight bodhisattvas, identical in meaning, but taking on a much more mandalic appearance, are found in other locations in the cave. In these, the eight bodhisattvas surround a central Buddha in a nine square diagram.

The presence of three storeys or levels is one of the most significant features of this cave. While earlier excavations in the Western Deccan might have had multiple storeys, these were not necessarily harmonized into a single scheme. Cave 6, at Ajanta, for example, consists of two separate excavations that are different in date and may have had little inherent unity.

In Ellora Cave 12 and its neighbour Cave 11 are the result of single, unified, pre-planned arrangements, possibly related to Buddhist practices in which three stages might be identified: an initiation or introductory phase, as more advanced practice, and finally, the stage for the true acharyas, or highly developed spiritual masters. Such use of levels in architecture is found in Nepali Buddhism, and it is probable that the Nepali practice was based on an Indic precedent such as this.

The full range of the iconographic program that is richly carved on all three levels of the cave can only be sampled in a brief survey such as this; the complexity and richness is an indication of the late phase of Mahayana cave architecture and developments that had been occurring in the Buddhist religion. For example, the upper story of Cave 12 has large images of Buddhas along the side walls representing the Buddhas of the ten directions (four cardinal directions, zenith, nadir and the four intermediate points) a standard reference in Buddhist literature to the universality of Buddhahood- who comes to an initiate during abhisheka ("head sprinkling," or initiation) to confer jnana on him.

One example shows a typical figure, deeply carved so that it is almost in the round, surrounded by a tableau of figures, including bodhisattvas and vidyadharas. Increasingly, after the painted caves at Ajanta, sculpture was used to create a greater effect on the devotee who was literally surrounded by human size and much larger religious images as he moved through such caves.

To either side of the entrance to the shrine antechamber are representations of the manusi Buddhas. In contrast to the earlier Vakataka depictions, these figures have a stiff, dry, inanimate quality characteristic of much of the later Mahayana sculpture at Ellora, thus representing the crystallization of form that characterizes many post-Gupta artistic idioms, and indicating that perhaps something had been sacrificed in the fervor to achieve gigantic scale.

Temple Architecture

Stone Temples

As part of the growing popularity of Hinduism, temples dedicated to various Hindu deities were constructed throughout northern and north-central India during the Gupta period. Usually, these structures are classified according to certain physical characteristics as well as their relationship to later forms. Regional patterns may have accounted for some of the differences between temple types, but, in addition, ritual needs of growing Hindu religion, as well as sectarian differences, necessitated the development of individual types.

Some of the forms reflect structures that must have existed prior to the fifth century but which have been lost, and others may have been completely innovative. A few selected examples suggest the richness of the developing forms.

One such example is the Vishnu temple at Deogarh commonly (and mistakenly) called the Dasavatara because it was originally thought that the iconographic program referred to the ten incarnations (dasavatara) of Vishnu. Although the patrons and donors involved in its erection are not known, on stylistic grounds, the structure may be dated to the early sixth century. In many ways, the form of the temple shows considerable advancement in the development of Hindu temple architecture, a factor that has led some to conclude that its date is much later.

The form of the tower is one of the most interesting and highly debated features in this regard, since it's tall apparently curvilinear shape anticipates the developed northern style sikhara. Its damaged state, however, precludes full analysis, and thus the place of this temple in the development of the northern style sikhara may never be known.

The main shrine occupies the centre of a square plinth that is accessible on all four sides by staircases with semicircular base sometimes referred to as moonstones. Originally, four smaller subsidiary shrines were present, one at each corner of the plinth, so that the temple is of the panchayatana (five-shrine) variety. Each shrine was probably dedicated to a different Hindu deity, although their identities are unknown because the structures are totally destroyed except for their bases. Further, it is impossible to determine the original forms of the buildings, although they may have been miniature versions of the main temple.

The temple is oriented to the west, where the impressive, decorated doorway to the shrine is located. In contrast to the early Gupta-type entrance seen at Udayagiri, the Deogarh doorway is a greatly elaborated ensemble. The lintels and jambs have been multiplied, and these are replete with well-ordered foliate motifs, mithunas, guardian figures, and the river goddesses, Ganga and Yamuna placed respectively at the top left and right of the doorway and clearly defined by their makara and tortoise vehicles.

At the centre, above the entranceway, is a panel showing Vishnu in an unusual form, seated atop the coiled body of a serpent with the open serpent hood behind his head while Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu massages his foot, and two other forms of Vishnu himself appear, the man lion or the Narasimha and the dwarf or the Vamana. The multiple figures in this small relief demonstrate the growing complexity of Vaishnavite iconography, and perhaps provide a clue to the original dedication of the temple.

Before entering the single-celled shrine through the decorated doorway, ritual practice probably required the devotee to circumambulate the temple to view the three major sculptural panels on the exterior. Each of the three relieves decorating the main body of the temple is placed in a niche that consists of decorated lintels and jabs flanked by pilasters.

The subject matter of the sculptures reveals of the order in which the devotee would view them. In this case, the viewing order of the major sculptures would be the relief of Vishnu Narayana as Anantasayana or Sesasayana on the South, that of Nara and Narayana on the east, and the sculpture of Gajendramoksa on the North, thus moving the devotee in a counter clockwise direction (Prasavya). This assertion, which is contrary to the commonly held belief that in Hindu worship circumambulation is always performed in a clockwise manner (pradaksina), is based on the internal message of the reliefs, their accompanying elements, and an analysis of circumambulation practices in Hindu rituals.

An indication that the devotee began his worship on the South is clearly seen in the depiction of Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, on a pilaster to the left of the Anantasayana relief.

As the 'Overcomer of Obstacles,' Ganesha is invoked at the start of worship, and became a standard element in the iconographic programs of Hindu temples and painting cycles throughout South Asia. The Ananatasayana subject itself signifies the beginning, for it is concerned with the birth of Brahma from the navel of Vishnu.

Since Brahma is the creator of the universe, his own birth signifies the beginning of the creations of the creator. In this form, Vishnu is called Narayana (Moving on the waters, or abode of man) as He rests on the serpent in the primeval waters, and He is described as older than the oldest. In the relief, the four-armed Vishnu seems to rest comfortably on the coiled body of the serpent Sesa (Remainder), who is also called Ananta (endless), and whose hood arches behind Vishnu's head like a halo. The God's wife Lakshmi (Goddess of fortune) is considered to be the mediator between the devotee and the Lord.

Garuda stands just to the viewer's right of Lakshmi, wearing his snake ornaments. In the centre, above, Brahma can be identified his antelope skin garment, his three faces (the fourth is implied) and his sitting atop a lotus after having just emerged from Vishnu's navel. He is flanked by the airborne figures of Indra and Karttikeya to his right, respectively mounted on their vahanas, the elephant and peacock, and to his left, Shiva, with his wife Parvati on his vahana Nandi and another unidentified figure.

Below, a separate slab bears deeply carved representations of five males and one female. These are Madhu and Kaitabha at the left with the four personified attributes of Vishnu at the right. Madhu and Kaitabha were two demons that sprang from Vishnu's ear, while he was asleep, and were about to kill Brahma (who was emerging from Vishnu's navel), when Vishnu destroyed them. In this relief, the four personifications of Vishnu's weapons (ayudhapurusas) are juxtaposed with the two demons as if to show Vishnu's might against them, although the elegant positioning and grace of the figures hardly suggest an impending battle. From the right, the personified weapons are Gadadevi, (the female, recognized by the mace emerging from the top of her head), Chakrapurusa (recognized by his chakra (wheel) hair ornament), Dhanuspurusa (who positions his right arm as if it were a bow), and Khadgapurusa (who prepares to draw his sword). On the east, the major reliefs show two saints Nara (viewer's right) and Narayana (viewer's left), who bring the message of divine love and devotion as an instrument of spiritualization.

These two, who are considered to be the fourth of the twenty-two minor incarnations of Vishnu, were the sons of Dharma (Righteousness) and his wife Ahmisa (Non-violence). They performed austerities as part of their devotions, and their ascetic nature is indicated in the relief by their lack of jewellery and by the wearing of their hair in topknots (jatamukuta). Like other ascetics who have forsaken the comforts of society, they appear in a wilderness setting suggested by the rocky landscape with deer and lions beneath and bowers of tree above. The figures hold peaceful attributes in their hands, including the rosary, as symbols of their devotion. A female figure in the centre above is Urvashi, who was created when Narayana struck his thigh to demonstrate that he could not be tempted by celestial nymphs and that he was steadfast in his devotion.

The niche on the North depicts the story of Gajendramoksa, concerning a king who had been changed into an elephant (Gajendra) as a curse. One day, while wadding in a lotus pond, a water beast seized the leg of the elephant and a tug of war ensued between them that lasted for a thousand years. Finally, the elephant invoked Narayana and was saved. The moment just after deliverances is depicted clearly in the relief, for the water beast (here a naga accompanied by his nagini) is depicted in anjali mudra, paying respect to the victors. Essentially, the story is a parable about a devotee who had been cursed because his untrained intellect was like an elephant's and his subsequent deliverance through faith, which represents the attainment of moksha and serves as a model to the worshipper at the temple. A crown born aloft by vidyadharas above signifies this final achievement.

The overall message of the temple is thus clearly indicated in the sculptural program, revealed through a sequential arrangement of the reliefs, for the Anantasayana represents the beginning, Nara and Narayana denote the means through which moksha may be achieved, and the Gajendramoksha story expresses the final result.

In contrast to earlier Gupta temples, sculpture has a much more important role in the overall scheme of the monument, including the major reliefs as well as the decoration of the doorway. Still, sculpture is confined to certain areas of the temple and a balance is struck between ornamentation and the simplicity of the architecture.

The rather large blocks of stone used to construct the temple are easily visible, as there has been no attempt to disguise them with the temple decoration. The beauty of the monument is carried out in the grace and delicacy of the sculptures themselves, which represent a high point in the development of Indic art, reflecting what has come to be known as the Gupta ideal. Smooth body contours, relived by moderate amounts of jewellery, peaceful facial expressions, graceful poses and elegant hairstyles characterize the figures. Each composition is carefully balanced, and seems to come alive with the deep, three-dimensional carving.

The so-called Parvati temple at Nachna-Kuthara is approximately contemporaneous with the Vishnu temple at Deogarh, c. A.D. 500 or perhaps slightly later, and like it, is a notable achievement of Gupta Art. The name Parvati is undoubtedly a late appellation, for the temple was probably originally dedicated to Shiva, its forms offer insight into a completely different temple format in use at the time, however, for it is a double-storied structure resting on a plinth with an enclosed passage, the outer walls of which are lost.

This building is apparently the earliest surviving example of a structural temple with an enclosed circumambulatory passage, and thus it is the oldest known temple of the sandhara class of Hindu temples that are in fact characterized by this feature. Light was admitted into the ambulatory by three windows, one on each side except that of the entrance, which was open, and some light was also admitted into the main shrine through windows in the ambulatory passage wall. The second story covered only the temple shrine (not the passageway) and may have contained a representation of a deity. Perhaps specific ritual needs necessitated the double story form.

No signs of a sikhara or other high superstructure exist although the original forms of the roofs of the temple are unknown. The doorway of the structure, which is oriented to the West, is among the finest in all Gupta Art, and in general, the trellis like carved windows and miscellaneous sculptures found at the site testify to a high quality of workmanship. An interesting feature of the plinth is the deliberately rusticated blocks of stone that have been carved to resemble a rocky landscape, complete with animal life. The depiction of such stylized landscape, although unusual in this location, is also seen in the paintings of Ajanta and in carved renditions of stylized landscape, for example, in the Nara-Narayana relief at Deogarh. Here, a reference to the temple as a replica of Kailasha, the mountain abode of the God Shiva, seems to be implied.

Brick Temples & Terracottas

Although brick and terracotta have been popularly used since the early discovery of pottery techniques in ancient India, the fragile nature of the material has led to the construction of a number of important monuments, some of which have survived.

The bricks temple at Bhitargaon is one of the best-preserved examples, in spite of the fact that it was damaged by lightning in the last century. Its date is difficult to fix as there is no inscriptional or other evidence of its dedication, but on stylistic ground, a date of the first half of the fifth century might be suggested. Burnt bricks joined by mud mortar were used in the construction of the building, and the walls reached a thickness of more than two meters.

The temple faces east, as may be determined by the remains of a portico on that side, and it rests upon a square plinth (jagati). Each side of the temple has a projecting bay, creating what is known as a triratha (three ratha) design. The number three is obtainend by counting the two sections to the left and right of the bay, which form the wall of the structure itself, as well as the outer surface of the bay, which runs parallel to them. In five rathas, seven rathas, and other systems where additional bays extend out from the centre of each preceding bay, the count expands to include the length of all new parallel wall sections formed. Such offsetting of the walls of a temple became a standard feature in many later schools of architecture. A secondary shrine chamber is present above the main shrine, although this feature is not readily apparent from the exterior because of the rising, vertical shape of the sikhara, which is one of the earliest extent examples of a northern style tower. Niches on the exterior of the body of the temple and the superstructure contained sculpted panels, some of which are missing and many of which are partially destroyed. An interesting feature of the construction in this building is the use of true arches in the shrines and the porch in preference to the usual Indic corbelled vault. From examples like this, it is evident that ancient Indians knew of the arch at an early date, but elected to use it only on certain occasions, preferring trabeated forms. The type of sculptural decoration used in such a temple is perhaps best seen in a number of terracottas that are better preserved from other temples, such as that at Ahicchatra.

Most impressive among them are the nearly human size representations of the river goddesses, the entrance to the Shiva temple, probably dating from the late fifth or early sixth century. Although these figures have been heavily restored, their original animation, which perhaps exceeds that seen in contemporary stone carving and may be due in part to the nature of the terracotta medium, is preserved.

Their positions, turning inward towards the devotee who would enter a doorway, provide a sense of immediacy to the viewer. The costumes, with the heavy drapery folds and tight bodies, and the very fully modelled facial features suggest a departure from the more tranquil, delicate forms of Gupta stone sculpture. Each goddess, now easily recognized by her respective vahana, the makara and the tortoise, holds a water vessel and is attended by a diminutive figure holding chattra aloft.

Other terracotta recovered from Northern India hint at what must have been the widespread and highly develops art of terracotta sculpture in the Gupta period. In contrast to the surviving terracotta's from the prehistoric and early historic periods, Gupta terracottas are often large (though not always as large as the two river goddesses from Ahicchattra).

Many formed panels that were used as decoration on temples. One such architectural fragment shows the God Vishnu riding atop his winged vehicle, the birdman Garuda. Only Vishnu's two left arms are preserved, one holds a bow while the other brings his characteristic conch to his lips, as if the god is blowing it like a trumpet. The conch, whose fleeting sound sometimes serves as a symbol of the transience of the physical world, here probably indicated a war call, for the god and his companion seem to be in battle ready positions that suggest that the relief represents an attack on an unseen adversary. Although its find spot is not known, the piece is of a type generally identified with the Uttar Pradesh region, and such works are generally attributed to the site of Ahicchatra or, alternatively to Bhitargaon, two of the most well known and well preserved sites that have yielded Gupta-period terracottas in Northern India. But it is likely that the monuments at these two centres were not unique at the tie of their creation, and that sculptures like this may document a broadly-based style and art from current throughout North-Central India.

The curly hair-style of Garuda suggests aesthetic associations with stone art of the Gupta period, though the techniques used by the terracotta artist differ considerably form those of his fellow craftsmen who worked in stone. The outlines of the eyes and eyebrows, for example, have been created simply by using a sharp tool to incise in wet clay, creating a sense of dynamism and calligraphic line that is not apparent in works produced by the slower and more pains taking process of stone carving.

A second terracotta sculpture also probably intended to be used as architectural adornment and also probably from the Uttar Pradesh region, shows Rama, the hero of the Ramayana and his younger brother, Lakshmana, as if in conversation. Rama came to be considered the seventh incarnation of Vishnu and stories narrating events involving him are commonly included in the repertoire of subjects adorning

a Vaishnavite temple. However, as a cult deity, he never achieved the stature of other depicted in art, and he is generally shown, as here, in a two-armed form that stresses his human, rather than his godly, characteristics.

The panel apparently records the period narrated in the Ramayana when, after Rama had been banished from the kingdom to which he was rightful heir, he lived in the company of forest dwellers, rather than princes; their earlobes, stretched from years of wearing heavy ornaments, are unadorned, and their hair is tied into simple topknots. The figures are strikingly naturalistic and life-like, an impression perhaps partly created by the terracotta medium.

One of the most dramatic and realistic of all the terracottas surviving from the Gupta period represents a Shaivite deity. The relief, broken at the waist of the figure, is from Saheth-Maheth, Shravasti, Uttar Pradesh, and shows an ascetic whose divine nature is indicated by the presence of four arms. His emaciated body, matted locks and pile up hair style (jata), as well as his lack of jewellery (especially noticeable due to the distended, pierced earlobes that conspicuously lack earrings), all signify his ascetic nature.

A very problematic monument that may be discussed along with terracotta remains of the Gupta period is the Mahabodhi temple at Bodh Gaya. Much of its present appearance is due to renovations as recent as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although the essential elements may have been determined as early as the late-Kushana or Gupta periods.

As it now stands, the temple consists of a large central shrine surmounted by a large tower, surrounded by four smaller shrines. These are thought to have been added fairly recently, although certainly, the concept of the panchayatana format was well-developed by the Gupta period as demonstrated by the Vishnu temple at Deogarh.

The present tower is probably much taller than the original superstructure, and its pyramidal profile, which differs from the typical, curved, northern-style sikhara, is possibly also the result of later modifications. The type of brickwork and use of certain vaulting techniques suggest ties to Iranian methods, possibly introduced into the Indic region by the Kushanas.

Chalukya Art

The most splendid achievement of the Chalukyas was recorded in the realm of art and architecture. They evolved a new style, which is known as the "Chalukyan architecture". It has been described as belonging to the Vesara style, a combination of the South Indian or Dravida and the North Indian or Nagara Styles. The Chalukya art zone of Karnataka has been described by K. V. Soundara Rajan as "The Prayaga of coalescing formal trends in temple styles." Moreover, the building activities of the period were, as Percy Brown observes, "clearly the result of an enthusiasm which was religious in origin and in intensity of purpose."

The Chalukya monuments are broadly grouped into two classes: (a) the rock - cut halls, and (b) the structural temples. The excavated rock - cut halls are found at Badami and Aihole. There are four such cave temples at Badami. Of them the earliest and the largest is cave No. III excavated during the reign of Mangalesa and dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The other caves are of smaller dimensions, and the Cave No. IV is a Jaina temple. The Badami caves have three common features, namely, a pillared verandah, a columned hall and a small square cellar or Garbhagriha, cut deep into the rock.

The cave temples of this age contain some impressive sculptural specimens like Tandavamurti, Harihara, Ardhanarishvara, Nataraja, Mahishasura Mardini and so on. The depiction of Vishnu in his Varaha incarnation is so full of vitality, vigor and charm that Zimmer wrote, "The age in which it was fashioned was one of those rare moments in the history of art in which versatility and restraint were perfectly balanced". There are two excavated temples at Aihole, one Shaiva and the other Jaina. It is said that the Chalukya genius in excavating cave temples inspired the Pallavas.

Structural temples were built in large numbers during this period. The boom in temple building activity, which the Chalukya rule witnessed is said to have continued right up to the 13th Century A. D. The three important centres of Chalukyan architecture are Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal. Of these Aihole has been described as "the cradle of the Indian architecture", and it alone consists of 70 temples. The Gaudaragudi and the Ladhkhan temple are the oldest buildings of the Aihole group. The Ladhkhan temple is a comparatively low, flat - roofed building, fifty feet square. There of its sides are completely enclosed by walls, and from its fourth side, forming its eastern front, there is projected an open-pillared porch.

The Durga temple, according to Percy Brown, "is a Brahmanical version of the Buddhist Chaitya hall, adopted to suit the service of the former creed". It contains a new feature, namely. A vestibule or antarala, which is an intermediate chamber between the cell and the main hall. It also had a shikhara over the Garbhagriha, but now it has fallen. The Huchchimalligudi is something of an abridged form of the Durga temple. There are other important temples in Aihole, which represent various stages of archi-

tectural evolution, like the Kontigudi, Allibasappa temple, the Meguti temple, Huchchappayya gudi and Tarappagudi.

At Badami there are a few important structural temples like the Naganatha temple and the Malegitti Sivalaya. At Pattadakal there are ten temples - four in the northern style and six in the Dravidian style. Important temples of Pattadakal are the Papanatha temple, the Sangameshvara temple, the Virupaksha temple, Mallikarjuna temple, the Galaganatha temple, the Kashi Vishveshwara temple, the jambulingeshvara temple and the Kadasiddeshvara temple. Among them the most famous is the Virupaksha temple. It was built at the orders of Lokamahadevi, the senior queen of Vikramaditya II to commemorate his victory over the Pallavas. It has many features similar to the Kailasanatha temple of Kanchi.

The Chief architect of the temple was Sri Gundan Anivaritachari, who held such titles as "Anikapuravastu Pitamaha" and "Tenkanadesiya Sutradhari". According to Percy Brown, "There is a bold beauty in the appearance of the Virupaksha temple as a whole, which is best seen in the exterior". The main building measures 120 feet, and the studied grouping of its parts produces a very pleasant total effect. The heaviness of the stone work is relieved by an increase in the amount and quality of the sculpture, which includes the representations of Shiva, Nagas and Naginis and the scenes from the Ramayana. As Percy Brown observes, "The sculpture flows into the architecture in a continuous yet disciplined stream…. The Virupaksha temple is one of those rare buildings of the past in which the spirit still lingers of the men who conceived it and wrought it with their hands".

The scholars have identified a few examples of the Chalukya painting. "The Temptation of the Buddha" and "the Persian Embassy" in Cave No. I at Ajantha have been assigned to this period. The Caves of Badami too have a few fragments of paintings to offer. But they are not well - preserved. Nevertheless, they enrich the proud heritage of Chalukyan art, which has so much to present in terms of variety, novelty, grace and beauty.

Pallava Art

As in case of many other ruling families in South Asia, the Pallavas were known in history long before they rose to prominence. They may be traced as far back as the second century A.D., but it is not until the latter half of the sixth century that the family and its history become less enigmatic, with both inscriptions and art monuments in stone appearing to initiate a steady tradition that lasted approximately two hundred years. The Pallavas were heirs to the Andhra region, but expanded their territories to include much of the Tamil area to the South.

At times, their empire also reached into the Deccan and to the frontier of Orissa. The figure style visible in their art shows clear ties to the earlier Buddhist traditions developed under the Satavahanas and Iksvakus, although the Pallavas were Hindus, primarily Shaivite. The origins of their architectural forms, however, are more difficult to assess, since precedents in ephemeral materials are unknown and earlier stone monuments in the Pallava regions are scarce.

It has been suggested that a strong, traditional use of stone as a medium for funerary monuments in the South, as seen in the long megalithic tradition, led to a reticence to employ it in temple architecture prior to the Pallava period. Perhaps a study of some of the caves in the Vijayavada region may some day-shed light on the origins of Pallava stone monuments.

The burst of artistic energy under the Pallavas, however, cannot be understood simply in terms of precedents, for the Pallava empire was blessed with a number of strong rulers, several of whom imposed their personalities on the production of art. Religious developments, particularly Bhakti cults, must have played a major role in providing impetus to artistic developments.

In particular, the Alvars, a group of Tamil Vaishnavite poet saints, and the Shaivite Nayanars stimulated religious thought, which may have affected the production of art and temple architecture. Four of the Alvars came from the Pallava country and their devotional (bhakti) hymns, which were concerned with the personal experience of the deity rather than metaphysics, must have had great impact on the society.

1. Early Phase

It is usually assumed that the early phase of Pallava architecture consisted primarily of rock-cut monuments, while the later phase is dominated by structural buildings. As a general rule, this is true, at least in terms of the surviving examples. However, there is evidence to suggest that structural monuments were produced virtually from the inceptions of the Pallava tradition and perhaps the two phases should be considered shifts in emphasis rather than total abandonment of one from and the supplanting of another.

Various stylistic designations of Pallava art and architecture are traditionally associated with specific rulers, who may have been responsible for the inception of certain stylistic changes.

In general, the developments of the Pallava period include a progression from rather simple forms to ones of greater complexity. This progression has

been attributed to the growing accumulated skill on the part of the artisans over the centuries in working the hard granite stone native to the region. However, it is likely that the increased complexity in style and growing elaboration of detail and iconographic forms were also part of the pan-Indic development of post-Gupta periods, which in general may be said to be characterized by such a transformation. Compared to northern developments, however, the southern style maintains a much greater simplicity and the changes are subtler.

The earliest body of surviving architectural monuments of the Pallava period belongs to the reign of Mahendra Varman I, whose rule in the first three decades of the seventh century coincided with that of Pulakesin II of the Early Western Chalukyas. Originally a Jain, Mahendra Varman was converted to Shaivism by Saint Appar, and this fact is visible in the primarily Shaivite dedications of monuments associated with him.

One monument of the reign of Mahendra I is a cave temple at Manappattu, which is called Laksitayatana (temple of Laksita) in its dedicatory inscription. The name Laksita is a well-known epithet (biruda) for Mahendra I, and thus, the royal patron, who is also called Vichitrachitta (curious Minded) in the epigraph, may be identified.

The inscription further reveals that the cave was dedicated to the Hindu trinity- Brahma, Vishnu- and Shiva and calls it a brickless, timberless, metalless and mortarless mansion. The latter statement is generally taken to mean that the usual temple would have been a structural building, made of some of the materials enumerated in the inscription, and thus it appears that Mahendra I was the initiator of a new stone tradition. Whether or not this is the case, the use of stone was truly unusual at this time, judging from the lack of extant remains.

The façade of the cave has a low wide, rectangular appearance with two central pillars and a pilaster at each side flanked by large sculpted representations of door guardians. The niches in which the guardian figures appear repeat the shape of the space between the columns of the facade with their square bottoms and tops, octagonal central portions and bracket like capitals.

A second row of pillars and pilasters within the cave divides the interior of the main hall into two lateral sections, while three identical shrines for housing the images of the trinity (no longer present) to whom the cave is dedicated are placed along the rear wall.

The shallowness of the excavation, though not so pronounce as in other Pallava examples, and the lateral sectioning is reminiscent of Early Western Chalukya examples and also suggests ties coast of India, such as the Undavalli caves or, further North, much earlier examples from Khandagiri/Udayagiri in Orissa.

The simplicity of the cave and lack of decorative carving in general characterizes this early Pallava phase, for the dvarapalas comprise almost the sole sculptural enhancement. These slender, animated figures show stylistic affinities to the earlier traditions of the Satavahanas and Ikshvaku, demonstrating that the Pallavas were indeed the heirs to the Andhra-region traditions.

Characteristic of Pallava dvarapala depictions, the difference between the left and right guardians is pronounced, for they are placed in different postures. The near profile positioning of the body of the left guardian, possibly deriving from the highly mobile postures of Ikshvaku representations, anticipates the still more animated and freely moving figures to be seen in the Pallava Art.

Also characteristic of Pallava dvarapala type is the fierce appearance of the figures, most easily visible in the bulging eyes of the sample to the left of the façade.

Also safely attributable of the reign of Mahendra I on the basis of inscriptional evidence is the upper cave temple at the hill fort in the heart of the city of Tiruchirappalli called Lalitankura's cave after another biruda of Mahendra's. Its façade, which faces South, is essentially a refinement of the Mandagappattu type, with an extra pair of pillars, a broader intercolumniation (which makes the pillars appear very slender), and carved medallions decorating the facts of the pillars.

Although the devotee enters the cave between two central pillars, the main axis of the temple extends laterally. This was apparently done so that the shrine could be placed on the east, in spite of the fact that the façade was on the south. Such problems in orientation, which were often extremely complex in rock-cut architecture, may have been one of the reasons for the eventual abandonment of cave excavations by the Hindus in favour of structural temples, although not before they went on to produce some of the most remarkable achievements of South Asian Art.

The plan shows that the cave consists of two chambers: a larger pillared hall (Mandapa) and a cubical shrine. A pair of dvarapalas flanks the entrance to the shrine, each figure appearing in the animated, slightly twisted posture typical of Pallava examples. At the opposite end of the hall, to the west, located where the entrance would probably have been if this were a structural example is a relief showing Shiva as Gangadhara (Bearer of the Ganges River).

As Gangadhara, Shiva is shown receiving in his hair the heavenly Ganges River as it came to earth as a result of the penance performed by one Bhagiratha, who wished to use the holy water to purify the ashes of his deceased uncles. The lengthy inscription in the cave located on the pilasters adjoining the Gangadhara panel suggests through the use of double entendre that the choice of this subject was deliberate and significant.

In particular, a play on the word Kaveri, which refers both to the Kaveri river in full view of the cave and to a courtesan, suggests a parallel between Shiva and Mahendra I, for Kaveri is described as the beloved of the Pallava king just as Ganga was the beloved of Shiva. This implies equation between Shiva and Mahendra I and their respective river goddesses is significant in light of other Pallava inscriptional and artistic evidences.

2. Mamalla Phase

The most famous phase of Pallava Art was that apparently inaugurated during the reign of King Narasimha Varman I, who is known most popularly by his epithet Mamalla I. This son of Mahendra Varman I succeeded his father around the fourth decade of seventh century.

A memorable ruler, Mamalla I sent naval expeditions to Sri Lanka, defeated the Early Western Chalukyas under Pulakesin II, and captured Badami in 642 from the Chalukyas (in retaliation for his father's earlier defeat by Pulakesin II), in addition to defeating other South Indian ruling families. During his reign, the Chinese pilgrim Hieun-Tsang visited Kanchipuram, then a major Pallava city and capital.

Although the seaport city of Mamallapuram was named after Mamalla I, he was not its founder, for Roman coins found in the area and descriptions by early classical writers much as Ptolemy indicate that the town had been famous as a seaport at least since the beginning of the Christian era. In addition, although it has often been assumed that the majority of monuments at the site belong to his reign, this idea has been increasingly challenged.

However, he should be credited with stimulating the development of Mamallapuram (City of Mamalla) as a great seaport, vital in the dissemination of South Indian culture to South-east Asia and commercially important in the Indian Ocean trade network. Most of the monuments at Mamallapuram are rock-cut, carved out of the boulders and cliffs that abound in the area. These include caves, monoliths and large sculpted reliefs, although some structural buildings were also erected.

The site, which covers several square miles, is virtually a stone city in which boulders and rock faces have been carved into buildings, animals, sculpted reliefs and other forms. In spite of the popularity of the site as tourist resort, and its mention in virtually every general book on South Asian Art, it has never been thoroughly studied, analyzed and examined in order to determine the sequence of monuments and their place in the development of Pallava art and architecture.

The vibrancy and animation of Pallava Art is perhaps nowhere better seen than in the Varaha mandapa at Mamallapuram. Thought to belong to the period of Mamalla I, this cave exhibits both the elaboration of sculptural and iconographic elements and the refinement of architectural features associated with the reign.

A feature of Pallava architecture seen here, and one, which comes to fruition in Early Chola monuments, is the presence of tank preceding (or later, surrounding) the monument itself. The use of tanks or other artificial reservoirs of water seem to have played an important role in Pallava iconographic.

One aspect of such symbolism may have been a reference to one of the practical aspects of kingship, that of providing public irrigation reservoirs. Here, the tank extended across the entire front of the cave, so that when it was full of water, the devotee would have had to cross the water to reach the cave. The façade is based on earlier examples, such as those from the reign of Mahendra I, but here the pillars and pilasters are slandered, providing a more open appearance, and bear cushion-type capitals reminiscent of Early Western Chalukya types. The seated lions at the bases are a typical Pallava characteristic, and may be seen as a precedent for the later animal pillars of South Indian temples. The cave consists of the rectangular hall and a shrine that projects forward into the space of the hall bearing representations of dvarapalas on the front surface, each of which is contained in a niche as is typical of the South Indian style.

The simplicity of the architectural features, such as the plain niches with large figures, characterizes the Pallava style, which, in contrast to the usual Northern and Deccan styles, is virtually devoid of subsidiary elements like vine scroll, gem motifs and similar designs.

Four major sculptural panels dominate the interior of the cave. Following a pattern visible in Hindu art as early as the Gupta period, the reliefs seem to have double meanings, referring both to the deities represented as well as to achievements of the king, presumably Mamalla I. The left wall of the cave bears a representation of Varaha resting the earth goddess on his upraised knee. Vishnu as Trivikrama is depicted on the right wall.

In the Trivikrama incarnation, Vishnu assumed the form of the dwarf Vamana, who extracted a promise from Bali, King of Asuras, that he could have territorial control over the amount of space he could cover in three paces. Vamana then assumed a gigantic form and covered the earth world with his first stride, the mid-world between heaven and earth with his second and with his third, stepped upon the head of Bali, thereby sending him to the nether world of the Asuras. As metaphors, the Varaha and Trivikrama subjects, while not unique to Pallava Art, might have been deliberately chosen to refer to specific achievements of the king, presumably the defeat of Pulakesin and the avenging of the defeats to the Pallavas under his father. The rear walls of the cave bear images of Gajalakshmi on the left and Durga on the right, suggesting the notions of prosperity (Gajalakshmi) and once again victory (Durga). An interesting aspect of the Durga relief is the figure at the front left of the composition who is in the act of self-immolation by decapitation. Such figures are found during the Pallava period and later in South Indian art, generally in relationship to Durga images and may be related to rituals detailed in at least one Hindu text.

Each relief is characterized by essentially naturalistic scaling, in contrast to what is often seen in Indic sculptures and by considerable special complexity. In this latter sense, strong ties to the Iksvaku tradition are suggested.

This earlier Indian dynasty from the Andhra region inherited by the Pallavas used sophisticated devices to imply illusionistic space that were perhaps originally or partially inspired by Roman art, in the Varaha relief, this complexity is seen in the two figures at the left who turn inward and are shown in a rear/profile view. In the relief of Durga, one figure is shown from the rear while another is depicted in profile. Although arbitrary adjustments of scale to suit the hierarchic needs prevail in South Asian Art, essentially naturalistic means are used here to achieve emphasis.

In the Gajalaksmi panel, for example, the central figure is emphasized by being placed above the others on a throne but is depicted in the same scale as other figures. In all the reliefs the elements are carved in a fairly three-dimensional manner; space exists around each figure and the effect is almost as if the deities and their attendants were indeed in the presence of the worshipper. The slender figures, with their narrowed, tapered limbs, betray the Andhra heritage of Pallava Art and anticipate the typical style of the South Indian Tamil area to be continued into the reign of the Cholas and even to the still later Vijaynagar kings.

Each of the caves at Mamallapuram is unique. The variety of iconographic types represented in them indicates an already established wealth of imagery. This suggests that these excavations were modelled after structures that no longer exist but which might have revealed the formative stages of architectural development.

The Trimurti cave, for example, consists of three similar shrines entered directly from the exterior with no porches or mandapas, but unified by the carving of the exterior of the rock into temple facades with architectural niches containing figurative sculpture. The name Trimutri literally means 'triple form.' But here it refers to the Hindu trinity of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. Shiva is the most prominent of the three in this conception, since His is the central shrine, flanked by those of Brahma (viewer's left) and Vishnu (viewer's right). The slightly larger size of the central shrine and its projecting form emphasize its preeminence. A fourth worship area is designated at the right of the façade where a set of steps leads to an image of Durga, although an excavated shrine is not present.

Durga is shown in an eight-armed form standing frontally and atop the buffalo head of the defeated Mahisa in a format typical of Pallava representations of the subject. Each door to the three shrines is flanked by a pair of male figures who serve as dvarapalas. The back wall of each of the small rectangular shrines is decorated with a large relief representing the deity to whom the shrine is dedicated. In the case of the Shiva shrine, a stone linga is also placed on the floor in front of the image.

This practice of caving the rear wall of the shrine is typical of Pallava monuments and contrasts with often bare-walled shrines found throughout Northern architecture.

In Pallava shrines the linga is usually carved of a different stone than that of the shrine itself, and in the case of cave monuments, the linga is added rather than rock-cut. The façade of this excavation contrasts with that of the Varaha cave in that it is not pillared. Instead, it replicates an actual vimana, that is, a shrine with its superstructures, and is better compared to the freestanding monoliths found nearby at Mamallapuram. The date of this cave is unknown but its form suggests that it was excavated in the middle to late seventh century.

A highly unusual cave has been excavated not far from the heart of Mamallapuram about five kilometers away at Saluvankuppam, a village that certainly lies within the ancient boundaries of Mamallapuram. This excavation, the so-called Yali (Vyala) cave is distinguished by the eleven vyala (horned lion) heads

that form a kind or ring around the central excavated chamber and its two flanking niches. To the viewer's left of this area but also on the face of the rock are carved elephants shrines atop their backs. Although the main show no trace of any original images within, these small shrines each bear a much worn depiction of a four-armed deity.

The original purpose and meaning of the cave, however, remains unknown. Further, the date of the excavation is uncertain, although it is probably a monument of the late seventh or early eighth century.

In addition to the variety of architectural types seen in the caves of Mamallapuram, numerous religious subjects were interpreted anew by the Pallavas in sculpture and other were introduced for the first time. A representation of Durga battling the demon Mahisa in the so-called Mahisasuramardini cave, for example, is unlike any other depiction of this scene known in earlier Hindu art. Durga sits astride her lion vahana while Mahisa, depicted as a human figure with a buffalo head, appears at the right, as if recoiling from her attack.

Fallen warriors of Mahisa's army appear at the right and lean in the direction of retreat, while Durga's forces advance from the left. The naturalistic rather than hierarchic scaling of the figures, including Durga herself, who is not even as large as her opponent, heightens the sense of emotion and drama of the scene. In addition, the figures are in animated and logical poses that further increase the sense of actuality. In composition such as this, the Pallava sculptors achieved a striking balance between the world of nature and the realm of the divine.

The most impressive sculptural composition at Mamallapuram is the famous relief that has been alternately identified as the descent of the Ganga River or Arjuna's Penance. This striking work is believed to have been carved during the reign of either Mahendrvarman I or that of his son Mamalla. Measuring nearly thirty meters in length and approximately fifteen meters in height, it contains a myriad of figures, animals and other subjects, all of which are carved on approximately life sized scale. A major aspect of the composition is the natural feature, which has been skillfully incorporated into the design and subject matter of the carving.

Arguments for the interpretation of this impressive scene as either the Descent of the Ganga River or Arjuna's Penance are convincing in each case. Both stories are found in Indian literature, although different versions appear in various texts.

A strong case for the Descent interpretation is presented by the central cleft of the composition, with its naga inhabitants, as a representation of the holy river, the Ganga itself, in the rainy season, a now lost receptacle is believed to have filled with water, which could then fall down the cleft into a tank as a kind of living reenactment of the sacred descent. Some scholars believe that the tank, at the base of the relief, would have served as a royal bathing pool for the king himself.

The arguments for the Arjuna story are less compelling, thought still substantial. In this tale, Arjuna, one of the five Pandava brothers of the Mahabharata, performed served austerities in order to enlist Shiva's aid (literally, his weapons) in achieving victory in the pending war between the Pandavas and the Kurus. Since Arjuna's penance was performed on the bank of a river, the arguments can be made that this subject is represented in the Mamallapuram relief.

Both the Descent and Arjuna's Penance interpretations would be served well by the figures at the top of the relief, just to the left of the cleft. The penance-performing individual, with arms raised and balanced on one leg, could represent either Bhagiratha, whose penance brought the Ganga to earth, or Arjuna, whose penances earned him the aid of Shiva's weapons.

Shiva, who appears next to the ascetic in a four art form, attended by his dwarves (ganas), performs the varada mudra, or gift bestowal gesture, with his front left hand, a gesture that would be appropriate to either story.

In each case, too, secondary meanings relating to the Pallavas themselves, of the type inferred in other contexts for Pallava art, might be suggested. A later Pallava inscription mentions that the Pallavas resembled the Descent of the Ganga as it (too) purified the whole world.

Considering the prominence already accorded the Gangadhar a murti icon in Pallava art, considerable credibility is given to this interpretation. Alternately, Arjuna, the hero of the Mahabharata and leader of the Pandavas, might serve as a symbol of the Pallavas themselves for just as Arjuna sought Shiva's aid in the war against the Kurus, the Pallavas sought victory in their continuing competition with the Early Western Chalukyas.

In light of such strong but conflicting evidence, it might be argued that both meanings simultaneously were intended by the creators of this remarkable relief. However, this suggestion, too, would need further substantiation.

Important features of the relief included the large elephants at the lower right, the small shrine with a representation of a deity, the ascetics worship at the shrine if to converge at the cleft. Considerable naturalism in pose and individuality in facial features is seen in the figures, reflecting some of the concern with naturalism seen elsewhere in Pallava Art.

As is generally true in the Indian art, the figures are the principal elements of the compo-sition; it is the figures that create the volumes and dynamism, rather than arbitrary devices, such as systems of perspective or landscape elements, which could be used to render a context.

Other monuments at Mamallapuram include the nine freestanding monolithic building scattered throughout the site. A series of five concentrated in one group near the sea gives the visitor the remarkable sense of waling through a petrified city.

The origin of the idea of producing complete replicas of structural buildings, complete both inside and outside. But, apparently, this mode never became as popular as the cave format, which did not require the completion of exterior details other than that of the façade. Usually, these monoliths have been called rathas; a complete misnomer since they are clearly not intended to represent temple carts (rathas), but are more properly termed vimanas, for each is a distinctive shrine. The major group of five monoliths has been traditionally named for the five Pandava brothers (two of whom have been assigned to one shrine), and their common wife, Draupadi, although this iconographic interpretation is clearly erroneous.

Each monolith is unique, yet the five seem to form a coherent group and must have been carved at about the same time, probably during the reign of Mamalla I. Four of the buildings were apparently carved out of what was once a single outcropping of stone, not separate boulders, as has often been stated. The fifth, which is not in a line with the others, was carved out of a smaller adjoining boulder.

Three large animal sculptures of a lion, an elephant, and a reclining bull, are also associated with the vimanas. The highest part of the major boulder was at the South, where the so-called Dharmaraja ratha is located, and then, the form tapers to the smaller, so-called Draupadi shrine at the other end. From unfinished examples of rock-cut shrines at Mamallapurm, it may be inferred that the workmen proceeded from top to bottom, completing each section as they went and using the uncut rock beneath as a platform upon which to work.

The buildings are important not only their own right but as documents of what must have been the contemporary freestanding temple architecture of the Pallavas.

As such, they provide vital information regarding the genesis of South Indian architectural forms and indicate that within a short time after the Gupta period, clear distinction between northern and southern modes were already present, although all of the stages in these development have not been traced. It should not be inferred that Mamallapuram examples represent the beginning of the tradition; rather, they are manifestations of what must have been already widespread forms.

The smallest and simplest of the group is the Draupadi monolith, which is in fact a shrine dedicated to Durga, distinguished by its curved roof, which is believed to have been modelled after that of a thatch proto-type. Square in plan, this single celled, one story shrine shares a low plinth with the adjacent Arjuna ratha. The exterior wall decoration consists of pilasters at each of the four corners and niches containing image. The two niches flanking the door to the interior contain life-size female door guardians (dvarapalikas). The single niches on the three remaining sides, each contain a representation of Durga. The rear wall of the interior of the shrines bears a panel showing Durga, standing, being adored by worshipers, one of whom is performing a self decapitation like that seen in the Durga relief in the Varaha cave.

The freestanding lion vahana of Durga is located outside the shrine. The distinctly feminine nature of the sculptural program of this small temple contrasts with the other monoliths, which are male oriented and suggests the growing emphasis on female imagery.

In the Trimurti cave, Durga's importance is apparent from the fact that a separate niche had been provided for her. Here, an entire shrine is allotted to her worship. Ultimately, South Indian architects create a separate temple dedicated to the female principle within the compound of the main temple, the so called Amman shrine, already visible in nascent form in Pallava monuments. As in Buddhism of post-Gupta ages, Hinduism of the later periods is characterized by increasing emphasis on the female principle or female energy (shakti).

Arjuna's ratha is not much larger than the Durga shrine sharing its plinth but it is significantly different in appearance. The pillared front of this square shrine is reminiscent of the format seen in Pallava cave architecture. However, the super-structure clearly reflects the form of a structural building. The two-tiered roof is pyramidal in shape and is capped by a dome-like element called a sikhara, which is, in this case, octagonal.

In South Indian architecture, the term sikhara refers only to this crowning member and not, as in northern India, to the entire tower comprising the superstructure of the vimana. Each of the levels of the roof is decorated with a design of miniature barrel vaulted roofs (sala) interspersed with chandrasalas (essentially a rounded arch of the type formed by the end of a sala), as well as plastered niches, some of which contain half-length figures. These figures

give the impression that they are partially hidden due to the viewer's perspective from below, and like the freely moving figures in the other niches, again show the realism characteristic of Pallava Art.

The two sides and rear of the lower story are carved into a series of niches containing figures, each separated by pilasters with bracketed capitals. This format, of figures contained within niches separated by pilasters and in fact, the plastered wall in general, is typical of South Indian temple architecture from this period forward, contrasting strongly with the wall treatment that characterizes North Indian monuments of the later periods.

The two sidewalls have six niches each, although in both cases, the panel nearest the front has been left unsculpted, while the rear has only five niches.

Male attendants appear at the corners of each, while the central niches contain images of principal deities of the iconographic program: Vishnu in the North, Shiva leaning in Nandi in the South and a male figure riding an elephant in the East.

This figure has been traditionally identified as Indra on his elephant mount or sometimes, Subrahmanya (known also as Murugan), son of Shiva, who is associated with the elephant in South India. While both of these interpretations bear some credibility, another suggestion is that the figure represents Aiyanar-Sasta, a hunter god, known only in South India.

Not only does Sasta commonly ride an elephant, but also the depictions of Shiva and Vishnu on the shrine reinforce the Sasta, interpretation since the god is believed to be the son of Shiva and Vishnu, a birth which occurred when Vishnu took the feminine form known as Mohini.

The suggestion of the union between Shiva and Vishnu, which led to the birth of Sasta, is strengthened by the presence of mithuna couples in the niches flanking the principal niches. While mithunas are common in many other regional schools of South Asian Art, their near absence in Pallava depictions suggest that their inclusion here was for the specific purpose of amplifying the iconographic program of the shrine.

Bhima's ratha is a two storied, oblong building with a barrel-vaulted roof. The main image within, although never finished, was intended to be a representation of the reclining Vishnu Anantasayana for which such an elongated structure is appropriate.

Entered on the long side rather than the short side, this building provides a completely different effect than the barrel-roofed Buddhist pillared halls; the somewhat similar roof form may imply only a common architectural proto-type rather than direct influence of one religion upon another. As in the case of the Arjuna ratha, chandrasalas and miniature barrel-vaulted shrines decorate the upper levels of the monument. The pillared façade, with seated lion bases, typifies one Pallava architectural format. Even though it is unfinished and contains virtually no sculpture, this monument provides valuable information about a rare form in Hindu architecture.

The Dharmaraja ratha is the tallest of the group, but it too remains unfinished. The inscriptions on the shrine present conflicting evidence regarding the date of its excavation, for while the name Narasimha and a number of birudas suggest that the monument was begun during the reign of Narasimha Varman I (Mamalla I), other epigraphs refer to later kings. However, it is possible that the additional names were inscribed after work on the shrine was abandoned, for the rather unified style of the monument suggests that it was the product of a fairly concentrated effort, and thus a monument of the reign of Narasimha Varman I.

Similar in concept to Arjuna's ratha although larger and more elaborate, this shrine also depicts in the rock-cut form what must have been a popular style of free standing monument and demonstrates what was a fully developed southern style of architecture during this period.

Each of the four sides, if completed, would have had a pillared façade flanked by niches containing sculptures. The southern style superstructure has three stories that diminish in size as they ascend, forming a pyramidal profile, each roof is decorated with the barrel-vaulted shrines (sala) and chandrasalas and the whole is capped by an octagonal sikhara.

Like the Arjuna ratha, this building is a clear replica of the vimana of a southern-style structural temple, which would, in general, be preceded by a mandapa and which might typically be enclosed in a rectangular compound. This form the basis for what will be seen in Chola, Vijyayanagar and Nayak period monuments.

While decidedly shaivite in iconography and dedication, the overall scheme of the monument has yet to be established. One image depicts Narasimha-Varman I himself, identified by an inscription. It is possible that his presence was significant in determining the purpose of the building, for although the king appears in a two-armed form befitting his human nature; he stands in the stiff frontal manner appropriate for deities, with no flexion to his body (Samabhanga). Other portraits of Pallava kings, sometimes even accompanied by their wives, occur in the art of Mamallapuram. But those at the Adivaraha cave, more relaxed postures and as accompaniments to the divine subjects carved in the other compositions of the cave.

Here, Narashimha Varman is almost indistinguishable in his general demeanor from the deities carved as part of the same iconographic program. His depiction, then, must have served a role that was integral part of the meaning of the monument as a whole.

The placement of his image on the south face of the building may be revealing in this respect, for in Hinduism, South is the quadrant of Yama, the god and judge of the dead. Later South Indian inscriptions of the Cholas reveal that specific funerary monuments called pallippadai were erected for royal personages. Although conclusive evidence is lacking, this Pallava building may be an early example of just such a building.

Another important image of the Dharmaraja ratha is a sculpted panel in the shrine of the third storey, which shows Shiva with his wife, Uma (a form of Parvati), and their son, Skanda, in a group known as Somaskanda. Here, images of Brahma and Vishnu flank the figures.

The Somaskanda subject becomes a popular Pallava icon that in later contests served as a metaphor for the Pallava royal family. Since this is the earliest Somaskanda image known, it is possible that it was introduced as part of the royal symbolism associated with this monument in general. The roughly carved surfaces of this sculpture seems to indicate that the work would have been completed by plastering and painting as well.

The last of the group, the Nakula-Sahadeva ratha, is not in line with the other four, and unlike them, it faces South, not West. Because it lacks figure carving, it is not possible to determine anything about its iconography and how it relates to the other four shrines. However, its forms are extremely important for the understanding of the development of South Indian architecture. Its apsidal shade documents a rare type among the surviving examples of Hindu temples, but one that is clearly related to Ikshvaku proto-types like the temple at Chejerla.

That this building is decidedly southern in styles is seen in the plastered walls (here, with empty niches) and in the tiered roof with chandrasalas and barrel vaulted salas. A sala roof caps the whole. It may be noted that although the exterior rear of the shrine is rounded, the interior cell is squared.

The rock-cut monuments of Mamallapuram, which have only been sampled here, demonstrate conclusively a well-developed architectural and iconographic vocabulary by the 7th century A.D.

This implies a tradition of some long standing that must predate such remains. The variety of architectural types, seen in the different roofs, wall treatments (including plastered wall with and without sculptures,) and other features all suggest that these forms had been developing in the early Pallava period and earlier, although the complete evolution is not known. Yet, as preserved, like petrified replicas of vanished monuments, they provide important basis for the understanding of South Indian developments to follow.

Rajasimha Style

Freestanding structural temples of the Pallava period provide further information about religious and artistic developments. The so-called Shore Temple at Mamallapuram is thought to be a product of the reign of Narasimha Varman II Rajasimha, who ruled from about 700 and who is credited with giving a minor impetus to the production of structural temple, consisting as it does of three distinct worship areas, suggest that it was not the product of a unified or added to after its initial construction, although possibly still within the reign of the one king.

A plan of the temple shows a small square Shiva shrine, containing a linga and representation of Somaskanda, on the western side of the temple, complex and slightly to the north.

The main temple also dedicated to Shiva and containing a linga and relief of Somaskanda in the central shrine, faces east and consists of a rectangular walled enclosure, the main shrine and its antechamber, and a circumambulatory passage between the wall and the central building.

A third shrine, dedicated to Vishnu as Anantasayana, is aligned with the central shrine and is located at the western end of the main temple, connecting two Shiva shrines into a single unit. The sculpture of Anantasayana was carved in situ from an existing rock and this may explain part of the peculiarity of the plan. Access to the Vishnu shrine is possible only from the southern side of the circumambulatory passage around the large Shiva shrine. The temple (if this term may be used to describe all three units as a whole) is thus oriented both to the east and the west and is apparently dedicated to both Shiva and Vishnu. Obviously, the east-facing Shiva shrine is the most important as indicated by its size and the fact that it has the highest superstructure.

A much smaller tower appears atop the western Shiva shrine, while none is present over the Vishnu shrine. An entrance through the temple wall on the east and another leading into the rectangular temple compound on the west may be proto-types for the monumental gateways (gopura) that will characterize South Indian temples in later periods. The compound itself is much ruined due to the ocean spray and blowing sands that poses a continual threat to

the monument but enough remains on the west to suggest that water had been channelled into a series of passages and pools. A related use of water was seen at the varaha mandapa, and both of these anticipate Chola-period designs. The Shore Temple is decidedly southern in style, as may be seen in the pyramidal shape of the superstructure and plastered wall treatment. The towers in this case are far taller and slenderer than the superstructure of the Dharmaraja ratha, although this may not indicate a general trend of the period. Sculptures of dvarapalas, lions and other figures were fairly abundant at the Shore Temple, but the sea air has rendered all of them into virtual shadows of their original forms.

Another monument, more securely attributable to Narasimha Varman II Rajasimha's reign, some forty-kilometer away from Kanchipuram, is less enigmatic. Inscriptional evidence on this Shiva temple clearly indicates that Narasimha Varman II Rajasimha was the builder of the structure and that he named the deity enshrined in it (and by implication, the temple) after him, calling in Rajasimha Pallavesvara, in keeping with a practice that was to become very popular in South India.

Commonly called the Rajasimhesvara, it is also known as Kailashnath (referring to Shiva as Lord of Mount Kailasha), a name that may have arisen from a verse in one of its inscriptions, which states that the temple touches the cloud with its top and robs Kailasha of its beauty.

The temple scheme includes a large rectangular enclosure containing more than fifty chapels surrounding the main structure. A second row of small shrines at the east end of the temple compound suggests that at some time, perhaps after Rajasimha's initial period of construction, a second compound was to have been built, but this was never completed. At the eastern end, aligned with the front of the inner compound wall, a smaller shrine, also dedicated to Shiva, was built by Rajasimha's son Mahendra Varman III.

Like his father, Mahendra Varman named the deity of the structure he had built for himself, and it is called Mahendrasvara or Mahendravarmanesvara in an inscription. Unlike the separate elements of the Shore Temples, this smaller shrine was probably part of the original conception of the temple, for here a clear break has been allotted for it in the wall, and it is probable that the son had the shrine built, while his father was engaged in the original project. Mahendra Varman's structure is topped by a sala roof, but the main sanctuary, Rajasimha's dedication, bears a typically tired southern form tower. The main building consists of a principal central shrine with its linga and enclosed circuma-mbulatory passage, surrounded by nine smaller shrines, with the two at the eastern end now accessible only through a pillared hall that was added at a later date. A detached mandapa to the east of shrine area was part of the original conception but is now attached to the main building owing to the addition of the intermediary mandapa.

An important feature of this temple complex is the presence of gopuras (gateways) and proto-types in the enclosure walls. On the west, the central pavilion is in fact a gateway (although sealed off at present) and is distinguished from the other pavilion in the row by its decoration and sala form. Directly opposite the central shrine in the walled enclosure on the south and north are chapels that are also visibly different from the others in the row in their shape, size and the presence of the sala roof.

These are clearly shrines, not gateways, but serve as precedents for what will ultimately be the placement of gopuras in line with the main shrine and for the evolution of the gopura form out of shrines with sala roofs. The largest of all the chapels aligned with the main shrine, Mahendra Varman's temple on the east, also has a barrel roof and serves as the equivalent of the other three pavilions, although much grander.

In contrast to later gopuras, this structure cannot be traversed; instead, the devotee is diverted to one side or the other in order to enter the main courtyard. A small gopura on the east provides access to the fore court of this shrine. The alignment of the four chapels-cum gopuras is clearly with the main shrine of the temple rather than with the centre of the respective walls of the rectangular compound; this practice explains the often asymmetrical appearance of the placement of gopuras in later monuments.

In contrast to early Pallava monuments, which are generally rather simple in their architectural and sculptural embellishment; this temple complex is rather lavishly decorated. One major sculptural motif particularly associated with Rajasimha's reign is the rampant lion, which appears almost ubiquitously as part of the façade decoration of the shrines in the compound wall. Plaster and paint on the chapel walls in particular from post-Pallava redecorations of the temple have obscured much of the other sculptural work. However, a panel showing ganas and other creatures on the base of the temple and only thirty centimeters in height demonstrates the high quality of carving that must have characterized the workmanship at the temple. These animated figures, crisply carved and delicately modelled, may be classed with the finest of Indic sculptures.

By far the most common icon enshrined in the walls of chapels is Somaskanda. While this subject

may have been introduced into Pallava art earlier, it was certainly popularized during the reign of Rajasimha. A clue to the importance of Somasakanda in the art of Rajasimha's time occurs in an inscription at the temple stating that 'just as Guha (Skanda, also called Subrahamanya or Kumara) took birth from the supreme lord (Shiva)' thus from lord Ugradanda there took birth a very pious prince (subrahamanyahkumarah), the illustrious Atyantakama, the chief of the Pallavas. This the Pallava king Paramesara I and his son Rajasimha, each referred to by one of his alternate names, are likened to Shiva and his son in what appears to be another Pallava synthesis of the divine and kingly realms.

The Rajasimhesvara temple at Kanchipuram displays any of the essential characteristics of the evolving southern architectural style. Some of this contrast sharply with those of the developing idioms of the north and Deccan. The storeyed pyramidal form of the tower above the shrines, the use of a rectangular enclosure wall with gopuras, and distinctive wall treatment using niches with or without figures and pilasters are all-important features. These characteristics form the basis of later southern styles, although their treatment could be elaborated upon and modified.

Historically, another aspect of this temple deserves mention. Inscriptions of the pillars of the deatched mandapa record that the Early Western Chalukya king, Vikramaditya II, visited the temple, and was apparently so impressed by it that he did not carry off its treasures as spoils of war but instead allowed them to remain at the temple.

Points to remember

- Under Ashoka (or the Mauryas) all branches of the fine arts — architecture, sculpture, art of polishing, art of engineering and art of jewellery —made a great progress.
- The buildings that were constructed by the Mauryas put the foreign travellers to mere astonishment, because of their beauty, design and execution.
- These buildings were mostly that of wood and so most of them could not come down to us but the Greek writers have left us impressive accounts of them.
- They tell us that the royal palaces constructed by the Mauryas were 'the finest and grandest in the whole world.'
- The Chinese traveller Fahein also remarked, that these palaces are so beautiful and excellent that they appear to be the creation of gods rather than of men.
- The Mauryas, and especially Ashoka, built a large number of stupas throughout their empire to enhrine the relics of Buddha.
- Buddhist traditions credit Ashoka with building of 84,000 stupas.
- A stupa is a dome- like structure which is resting on a round base and is made of brick or stone.
- Some of these stupas still survive and rouse our curiosity even upto this day.
- The most famous are those of Sanchi and Barhut.
- The Sanchi Stupa is at present 77½ feet high and 121 ½ feet in diameter.
- A massive stone railing, supposed to be added later on encloses the whole structure.
- Ashoka is also credited to have built many monasteries and cave dwellings for the monks.
- The caves were cut out of hard rocks but their walls were softened and polished in such a manner that they still shine like a mirror.
- According to Kalhan, the author of Rajtarangini, it was Ashoka who laid the foundation of Srinagar.
- Another town supposed to have been buit by Ashoka was Devapattan in Nepal.
- The art of sculpture (or stone-cutting) reached a high watermark under Ashoka.
- The pillars, figures of animals and birds, and statues cut out of solid rocks are also exquisite in their beauty that they have won general admiration throughout the world.
- Ashoka's pillars are perhaps the best example of the Mauryan art.
- These pillars are 50 to 60 feet in height and about 50 tons in weight.
- How such high and heavy pillars were chiselled out of one single rock is still a wonder.
- The stone is chiselled and cut with such an accuracy that it is generally said that they appear to have been designed by giants and executed by jewellers.
- Each pillar is surmounted by a capital or a head which is decorated with figures of animals like the lion, the bull, the elephant or the horse.
- The high artistic merits of the figures, which exhibit realistic modelling and movements are of a very high order.
- The Capital of the Sarnath pillar is the most magnificent.
- The figures of four lions, standing back to back, are so natural and exquisite that they have been praised all over the world.
- According to Dr. V.A. Smith, "It would be difficult to find in any country an example of ancient animal-sculpture superior or even equal to this beautiful work of art, which successfully combines realistic

modelling with ideal dignity and is finished in every detail with perfect accuracy."

- This sculpture of four-lions has been adopted by the modern Indian currency.
- The walls of the caves, that have been found near Gaya, are so brightly polished that they shine like a mirror.
- The pillar which now stands in Feroze Shah Kotla bears such a fine polish that some observers have been misled to the belief that it was made of metal rather than of stone.
- For instance, Bishop Habere remarked after seeing this pillar, "It was a high black pillar of cast metal."
- During the reign of Ashoka huge blocks of rocks were cut and chiselled into monolithic and exceptionally fine pillars, some of which were 50 tones in weight and about 50 feet in height.
- These huge blocks of rocks were perhaps cut from the Chunar hills of hard stone.
- How these pillars were taken to such distant places is nothing less than a miracle.
- A high degree of knowledge of engineering must have been required both in cutting these huge blocks and later on removing them hundreds of miles away, sometimes to the top fo a hill.
- In 1356 A.D. Feroze Shah Tughlak decided to remove the Topra pillar from Ambala district to Delhi.
- It is said that he had to prepare a special carriage with 48 wheels and employ about 8,400 men to carry this one single pillar.
- In other words, he employed about 200 men to move a single wheel.
- This example would clearly indicate that the art of engineering had greatly developed in the Mauryan period.
- The art of jewellery also made a great progress during the Mauryan period.
- In the Taxila ruins some very fine specimens of ornaments belonging to the Ashoka's period were found.
- Their study revealed artistic beauty of the highest order.
- The Greeks had a great hand in the development of the so-called Gandhara School of Art which developed on the North-West.
- Now, in place of symbols for depicting Lord Buddha, his life like statues and images began to be made in large numbers.
- The later Gandhara school, depicting on stones, scenes from the life of Buddha is beyond doubt inspired by Hellenic ideals.
- The Gandhara art is sometimes called the Greeco Buddhist art because while its subjects and ideas remained Indians, its style, physical features and dress were all after the Greek fashion.
- It has been pointed out by some historians that the Indians also learnt the construction of caves especially the rock-cut caves from the Greeks.
- Some of such caves can still be found in this country especially in the North-West of India.
- The Indian architecture is supposed to be some what affected by the Greeks but nothing definite can be said in this direction because no notable building belonging to the Indo-Bacterian or Indo-Parthian rulers has yet been unearthed except some 'unembellished (unde-corated) walls of some houses and a temple at Taxila.'
- Some decorative styles were no doubt adopted by the Indian architects and builders from their Greek contemporaries.
- The Gandhara school of art occupies a high place in the history of the Indian Art.
- At one time it was thought that India had only one school of art, and that was the Gandhara school of Artd.
- It is even believed that this school of art produced far-reaching effects on the art of such distant countries as China, Japan and Central Asia.
- As most of the statues and sculptures made under this school have been discovered in Gandhara, this art has come to be called Gandhara school of Art, after the name of the country of its origin.
- The Gandhara style might have been originated under the Indo-Bactrian and Indo-Parthian rulers but it was under Kanishka that it made a rapid development.
- Under this school of art life-like statues of Buddha began to be made in large numbers whereas under the older schools (of Sanchi and Bharhut) no statues and images of Buddha were made.
- His existence was shown only by symbols such as foot-prints, the Bodhi-tree, a vacant seat or the umbrella.
- In this school a great care was taken to show the physical features, muscles and moustaches, etc. of a figure in as natural a way as was possible.
- Much attention was paid in depicting each and every fold and turn of the dress.
- Rich ornaments, costumes and drapery were used most enthusiastically in this school and much attention was paid to imparting physical beauty to the artistic specimens.
- A great importance was attached to refineness and polish in the Gandhara School of art.

- The technique and forms applied were Greek in nature but the ideas, inspirations and subjects were all Indians.
- Chalukya rulers were not only great conquerors but also great builders and patrons of art. They were mostly Hindus by faith and so they build a large number of beautiful temples in honour of the Hindu gods- Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, etc.
- Some of these temples have life- like statues of these deities, which are superb both in their design and execution.
- The Chalukya rulers built various types of temples- some of them are excavated out of soil rocks. Some are brick- temples while there are others which are 'structural buildings of stone finely joined without mortar.
- The Vishnu temple at Badami, the Jain temple at Meguti, the Vishnu temple at Aihole, the Shiva temple at Pattadakal, the temple of Kasivivesvara at Lakkundi, the Mahadeva temple at Ittagi and the Saraswati temple at Gadag are some of the most important temples built by the Chalukya monarchs.
- Almost every little town within the Chalukya empire has got some remains of one temple or the other.
- According to Prof. N.N. Ghosh "There is hardly a village (within the Chalukya boundaries) that has not some remains of the Chalukyas, both the early and the later ones, were great builders."
- All these temples referred to above have special qualities of their own. The one built at Badami presents one of the earliest examples of the Chalukya art.
- The temple, which was built by Mangalesa Chalukya towards the end of the 6th century A.D. in honour of Vishnu is completely excavated out of solid rocks and shows the Chalukya art at its great height.
- Another stone temple of great merit is at Meguti. According to Prof. Ghosh "It shows the art of stone-building in its perfection."
- The Vishnu temple at Aihole is not only the best preserved temple but it is also the most important temples from the historical point of view.
- It contains the famous Aihole Inscription of Vikramaditya II, which has thrown a good deal of light on the Chalukya dynasty.
- This temple is also known for its extraordinary fine sculptures and tow superb high flying statues of Devas which are excellent in design.
- The Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal, according to Havell, 'combines the statelines of the classic design of Europe with ferried (burning) imagination of Gothic art.'
- This temple also bears an inscription of great importance.
- The Mahadeva temple at Ittagi also bears an inscription and has elaborately designed pillars.
- The Kasivisvesvara temple at Lukkundi and Saraswati temple at Gadag are two other elaborately decorated temples of the Chalukyas.
- An important characteristic of the Chalukyan temples is that every attempt is made to decorate every part of them and consequently there is 'crowded abundance of minute details which covers the surface.'
- The Chalukya rulers also patronised the art of painting. Both Ajanta and Ellora were situated in their dominions, and at least some of the famous Ajanta cave frescoes were probably executed in the time of the Early Chalukya rulers.

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HISTORY (UPSC QUESTIONS)

1. The Jain philosophy holds that the world is created and maintained by
   (a) Universal Law
   (b) Universal Truth
   (c) Universal Faith
   (d) Universal Soul

2. The "dharma" and "rita" depict a central idea of ancient Vedic civilization of India, In this context, consider the following statements:
   1. Dharma was a conception of obligations and of the discharge of one's duties to oneself and to others.
   2. Rita was the fundamental moral law governing the functioning of the universe and all it contained.

   Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. With reference to the history of Indian rock-cut architecture, consider the following statements:
   1. The caves at Badami are the oldest surviving rock-cut caves in India.
   2. The Barabar rock-cut caves were originally made for Ajivikas by Emperor Chandragupta Maurya.
   3. At Ellora, caves were made for different faiths.

   Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 and 3 only
   (c) 3 only
   (d) 1, 2 and 3

4. The Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang (Hiuen Tsang) who visited India recorded the general conditions and culture of India at that time. In this context, which of the following statements is/are correct?
   1. The roads and river-routes were completely immune from robbery.
   2. As regards punishment for offences, ordeals by fire, water and poison were the instruments for determining the innocence or guilt of a person.
   3. The tradesmen had to pay duties at ferries and barrier stations.

   Select the correct answer using the codes given below.
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 and 3 only
   (c) 1 and 3 only
   (d) 1, 2 and 3

5. Some Buddhist rock-cut caves are called Chaityas, while the others are called Viharas. What is the difference between the two?
   (a) Vihara is a place of worship, while Chaitya is the dwelling place of the monks
   (b) Chaitya is a place of worship, while Vihara is the dwelling place of the monks
   (c) Chaitya is the stupa at the far end of the cave, while Vihara is the hall axial to it
   (d) There is no material difference between the two

6. Which one of the following describes best the concept of Nirvana in Buddhism?
   (a) The extinction of the flame of desire
   (b) The complete annihilation of self
   (c) A state of bliss and rest
   (d) A mental stage beyond all comprehension

7. Which of the following characterizes/ characterize the people of Indus Civilization?
   1. They possessed great palaces and temples.
   2. They worshipped both male and female deities.

3. They employed horse-drawn chariots in warfare.

Select the correct statement/ statements using the codes given below.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1, 2 and 3

(d) None of the statements given above is correct

8. Which of the following statements is/are applicable to Jain doctrine?
   1. The surest way of annihilating Karma is to practice penance.
   2. Every object, even the smallest particle has a soul.
   3. Karma is the bane of the soul and must be ended.

   Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

   (a) 1 only

   (b) 2 and 3 only

   (c) 1 and 3 only

   (d) 1, 2 and 3

9. Consider the following Bhakti Saints:
   1. Dadu Dayal
   2. Guru Nanak
   3. Tyagaraja

   Who among the above was/were preaching when the Lodi dynasty fell and Babur took over?

   (a) 1 and 3

   (b) 2 only

   (c) 2 and 3

   (d) 1 and 2

10. Consider the following historical places:
    1. Ajanta Caves
    2. Lepakshi Temple
    3. Sanchi Stupa

    Which of the above places is / are also known for mural paintings?

    (a) 1 only

    (b) 1 and 2 only

    (c) 1, 2 and 3

    (d) None

11. With reference to the history of philosophical thought in India, consider the following statements regarding Sankhya school:
    1. Sankhya does not accept the theory of rebirth or transrmigration of soul.
    2. Sankhya holds that it is the self-knowledge that leads to liberation and not any exterior influence or agent.

    Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

    (a) 1 only

    (b) 2 only

    (c) Both 1 and 2

    (d) Neither 1 nor 2

12. In the context of cultural history of India, a pose in dance and dramatics called 'Tribhanga' has been a favourite of Indian artists from ancient times till today. Which one of the following statements best describes this pose?

    (a) One leg is bent and the body is slightly but oppositely curved at waist and neck

    (b) Facial expressions, hand gestures and make-up are combined to symbolize certain epic or historic characters

    (c) Movements of body, face and hands are used to express oneself or to tell a story

    (d) A little smile, slightly curved waist and certain hand gestures are emphasized to express the feelings of love or eroticism

13. With reference to the guilds (Shreni) of ancient India that played a very important role in the country's economy, which of the following statements is/are correct?
    1. Every guild was registered with the central authority of the State and the king was the chief administrative authority on them.
    2. The wages, rules of work, standards and prices were fixed by the guild.
    3. The guild had judicial powers over its own members.

    Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

    (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 3 only

    (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

14. With reference to the scientific progress of ancient India, which of the statements given below are correct?
    1. Different kinds of specialized surgical instruments were in common use by 1st century AD.
    2. Transplant of internal organs in the human body had begun by the beginning of 3rd century AD.
    3. The concept of sine of an angle was known in 5th century AD.
    4. The concept of cyclic quadrilaterals was known in 7th century AD.

    Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

    (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 3 and 4 only
    (c) 1, 3 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

15. With reference to the history of ancient India, which of the following was/were common to both Buddhism and Jainism?
    1. Avoidance of extremities of penance and enjoyment
    2. Indifference to the authority of the Vedas
    3. Denial of efficacy of rituals

    Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

    (a) 1 only (b) 2 and 3 only
    (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

16. The Nagara, the Dravida and the Vesara are the
    (a) Three main racial groups of the Indian subcontinent
    (b) Three main linguistic divisions into which the language of India can be classified
    (c) Three main styles of Indian temple architecture
    (d) Three main musical Gharanas prevalent in India

17. With reference to Dhrupad, one of the Major traditions of India that has been kept alive for centuries, which of the following statements are correct?
    1. Dhrupad originated and developed in the Rajput kingdoms during the Mughal period.
    2. Dhrupad is primarily a devotional and spiritual music.
    3. Dhrupad Alap uses Sanskrit syllables from Mantras.

    Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

    (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
    (c) 1, 2 and 3 (d) None of the above is correct

18. With reference to the religious history of medieval India, the Sufi mystics were known to pursue which of the following practices?
    1. Meditation and control of breath
    2. Severe ascetic exercises in a lonely place
    3. Recitation of holy songs to arouse a state of ecstasy in their audience

    Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

    (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
    (c) 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

19. Lord Buddha's image is sometimes shown with the hand gesture called 'Bhumisparsha Mudra'. It symbolizes:
    (a) Buddha's calling of the Earth to watch over Mara and to prevent Mara from disturbing his meditation
    (b) Buddha's calling of the Earth to witness his purity and chastity despite the temptations of Mara
    (c) Buddha's reminder to his followers that they all arise from the Earth and finally dissolve into the Earth, and thus this life is transitory
    (d) Both the statements (a) and (b) are correct in this context

20. The religion of early Vedic Aryans was primarily of
    (a) Bhakti
    (b) image worship and Yajnas
    (c) worship of nature and Yajnas
    (d) worship of nature and Bhakti

21. What was the immediate reason for Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade India and fight the Third Battle of Panipat ?

(a) He wanted to avenge the expulsion by Marathas of his viceroy Timur Shah from Lahore

(b) The frustrated governor of Jullundhar Adina Beg Khan invited him to invade Punjab

(c) He wanted to punish Mughal administration for non-payment of the revenues of the Chahar Mahal (Gujarat, Aurangabad, Sialkot and Pasrur)

(d) He wanted to annex all the fertile plains of Punjab up to the borders of Delhi to his kingdom

22. Why did Buddhism start declining in India in the early medieval times ?

1. Buddha was by that time considered as one of the incarnations of Vishnu and thus became a part of Vaishnavism.
2. The invading tribes from Central Asia till the time of last Gupta king adopted Hinduism and persecuted Buddhists.
3. The Kings of Gupta dynasty were strongly opposed to Buddhism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

23. Among the following, who was not a proponent of bhakti cult ?

(a) Vallabhacharya

(b) Tyagaraja

(c) Tukaram

(d) Nagarjuna

24. There are only two known examples of cave paintings of the Gupta period in ancient India. One of these is paintings of Ajanta caves. Where is the other surviving example of Gupta paintings ?

(a) Bagh caves

(b) Ellora caves

(c) Lomas Rishi cave

(d) Nasik caves

25. Mahamastakabhisheka, a great religious event is associated with and done for who of the following?

(a) Bahubali

(b) Buddha

(c) Mahavir

(d) Natraja

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HISTORY (UPSC QUESTIONS) (ANSWERS)

CHRONICLE IAS ACADEMY
A CIVIL SERVICES CHRONICLE INITIATIVE

1 (a)
2 (c)
3 (b)
4 (b)
5 (b)
6 (c)
7 (c)
8 (d)
9 (b)
10 (b)
11 (b)
12 (a)
13 (c)
14 (c)
15 (b)
16 (c)
17 (b)
18 (c)
19 (d)
20 (c)
21 (a)
22 (a)
23 (d)
24 (a)
25 (a)

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HISTORY (SAMPLE QUESTIONS)

1. Consider the following statements about the taxes charged by Delhi sultans and select the correct answer:
   (i) Zakat was a tax on the property and land of Muslims.
   (ii) Jizya was a tax imposed on non-Muslims for the protection given by the state to their lives and property.
   (iii) Kharaj was a land tax imposed on both Muslims and non-Muslims peasants.

   Codes:
   (a) i and ii only
   (b) i and iii only
   (c) ii and iii only
   (d) All of the above

2. Consider the following statement select the correct answer:
   (i) Nyaya is one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy based on system of logic.
   (ii) According to the Nyaya School, there are exactly four sources of knowledge -perception, inference, comparison, and testimony.
   (iii) According to the Nyaya School, knowledge obtained through each of these sources will always be valid.

   Codes:
   (a) i and ii only
   (b) i and iii only
   (c) ii and iii only
   (d) All of the above

3. Consider the following statements:
   I. Tanjore painting is an important form of classical South Indian painting native to the town of Tanjore in Tamil Nadu.
   II. These paintings are known for their elegance, rich colours, and attention to detail. The themes for most of these paintings are Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and scenes from Buddhism mythology.

   Select the correct answer code from the below:
   (a) Only I is correct
   (b) Only II is correct
   (c) Both I and II are correct
   (d) Neither I nor II are correct

4. Consider the following statements and select the correct answer:
   i. Zen Buddhism is a form of Buddhism in China, Korea and Japan that lays special emphasis on meditation.
   ii. Zen Buddhism places much more emphasis on scriptures than some other forms of Buddhism.

   Codes:
   (a) i only
   (b) ii only
   (c) Both
   (d) None

5. Which of the following land classification in Dahsala system developed by Todar Mal under the Mughal rule are correctly matched?
   (i) Polaj - land cultivated annually.
   (ii) Parauti- land left fallow for a short period (1 or 2 years).
   (iii) Chachar - land left fallow for 3 to 4 years.
   (iv) Banjar - land uncultivated for 5 years or more.

   Codes:
   (a) i, ii & iii
   (b) ii, iii & iv
   (c) i, iii & iv
   (d) i, ii, iii & iv

6. Consider the following statements:
   1. Jainism believes that life is both endless and subject to impermanence, suffering and uncertainty. These states are called the tilakhana, or the three signs of existence.

2. According to the Buddhism liberation is achieved by eliminating all karma from the soul.

Select the correct answer from below:

(a) Only 1 is correct

(b) Only 2 is correct

(c) Both 1 and 2 are correct

(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

7. Consider the following statements:
   1. Kathakali is the only Indian dance form in which the entire body, both skeleton and muscles, down to even the smallest facial muscle are used to portray emotion.
   2. The Hastha Lakshandeepika is a classical text and forms the basis of hands and arms movement in Kathakali.

Select the correct answer code from the below:

(a) Only I is correct

(b) Only II is correct

(c) Both I and II are correct

(d) Neither I nor II are correct

8. Consider these statements regarding 'Mahajanpadas:
   1. Ancient Buddhist texts like Anguttara Nikaya make frequent reference to sixteen great kingdoms and republics (Solas Mahajanapadas).
   2. Mahajanpadas had evolved and flourished in a belt stretching from Gandhara in the northwest to Anga in the eastern part of the Indian subcontinent and included parts of the trans-Vindhyan region.
   3. Each of these Janapadas was named after the Kshatriya tribe (or the Kshatriya Jana) who had settled therein.
   4. The first Buddhist Council was held in Pataliputra,capital of Magadha Mahajanpad. Later on, Rajagriha became the capital of Magadha.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) Only 1 and 2

(b) Only 1, 2 and 3

(c) Only 2, 3 and 4

(d) Only 1, 3 and 4

9. Consider the following statements in the context of Dravida temple architecture:
   1. The chief feature of the Dravida style is the Vimana or the storey.
   2. Chola temples are famous for their richly ornamented gateways called the gopurams.

Which of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only 1

(b) Only 2

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

10. Consider the following statements in the context of Buddhism:
   1. Hinayana is the more orthodox and conservative school of Buddhism which is believed to be more close to the adwaitic tradition of Hinduism.
   2. Mahayana is the more advanced and modern school of Buddhism which is believed to be closer to the Dwaita tradition of the Puranic Hinduism.
   3. Vajrayana is the Tantric tradition in Buddhism which originated in Tibet and eastern part of India and drew inspiration from the occultist traditions of Vedic Hinduism.

Which of the above statements are correct?

(a) 1 and 2

(b) 2 and 3

(c) 1, 2 and 3

(d) Only 3

11. Match the following:

	Department	**Function**
1.	Vazarat	A. Finance
2.	Rasalat	B. Religious affairs
3.	Diwan-e-insha	C. Military
4.	Diwan-e-arz	D. State correspondence

Codes:

	A	**B**	**C**	**D**
(a)	1	2	3	4
(b)	1	2	4	3
(c)	2	1	4	3
(d)	2	1	3	4

12. Consider these statements:
    1. Kanishka is renowned in Buddhist tradition for having convened a great Buddhist council in Kashmir.
    2. Kanishka also had the original Gandhari vernacular, or Prakrit, Buddhist texts translated into the language of Vedic (chaste) Sanskrit.
    3. Along with the Indian emperors Ashoka and Harsha Vardhana and the Indo-Greek king Menander I (Milinda), Kanishka is considered by Buddhism as one of its greatest benefactors.
    4. Kanishka is said to have been particularly close to the Buddhist scholar Mahakshyapa, who became his religious advisor in his later years.

    Which of the above statements is /are incorrect?
    (a) Only 1 and 4
    (b) Only 2 and 4
    (c) Only 1 and 3
    (d) Only 2 and 3

13. Find the correct chronology of the following Mughal emperors
    1. Farrukh Siyar
    2. Jahandar Shah
    3. Muhammad Shah
    4. Ahmad Shah Bahadur

    Codes:
    (a) 2 - 1 - 4 - 3
    (b) 1 - 2 - 4 - 3
    (c) 2 - 1 - 3 - 4
    (d) 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

14. Consider the following statements:
    1. Pattachitra refers to the folk painting of Odisha, in the eastern region of India.
    2. Themes of the Pattachitra are chiefly on Lord Jagannath, Radha-Krishna and Jainism.

    Select the correct answer code from the below:
    (a) Only 1 is correct
    (b) Only 2 is correct
    (c) Both 1 and 2 are correct
    (d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

15. Which among the following books were written by Harshavardhan?
    1. Ratnavali
    2. Priyadarshika
    3. Nagnanda
    4. Kavirajmarg
    5. Harshacharita

    Codes:
    (a) 1 & 2 only
    (b) All
    (c) 1, 2, 3 & 4 only
    (d) 1, 2 & 3 only

16. The Vakataka Empire was the contemporaries of the Gupta Empire. Consider the following statements regarding the Vakataka Empire:
    (i) They formed the southern boundaries of the north and ruled over an area which roughly forms today's states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
    (ii) Some of the Ellora Caves were built under the patronage of the Vakataka rulers.
    (iii) They were eventually overrun by the Chalukyas.

    Which of these statements are true?
    (a) (i) only
    (b) (i) and (ii)
    (c) (i) and (iii)
    (d) All of the above

17. Which of the following statements regarding Vedas is/are correct?
    (i) The seventh mandala of the Rig Veda contains the famous Purushasukta which explains the 4 varnas.
    (ii) Shatapatha Brahamana literature is attached to Yajur Veda.

    Codes:
    (a) i only
    (b) ii only
    (c) Both i and ii
    (d) None of them

18. Consider the following statements regarding the administrative arrangement during Mughal emperor Akbar's reign, and choose the incorrect ones:

(i) The revenue department, headed by a wazir, was responsible for all finances and management of jagir and inam lands.

(ii) The head of the military, mir bakshi, was appointed from among the leading nobles of the court. The mir bakshi was in charge of intelligence gathering, and also made recommendations to the emperor for military appointments and promotions.

(iii) The mir saman was in charge of the imperial household, including the harems, and supervised the functioning of the court and royal bodyguards.

(iv) The judiciary was a separate organization headed by a chief qazi, who was also responsible for religious beliefs and practices.

Codes:

(a) Only (i)

(b) Only (ii)

(c) Only (iii) and (iv)

(d) None of the above

19. Which of the following statement is/are correct?

(i) Aihole inscription is related to Pulakesin II of the Chalukya Dynasty.

(ii) Pallavas initiated the Dravida style of temple architecture.

(iii) The founder of the Chalukyas of Vatapi was Jayasimha.

Codes:

(a) i and ii

(b) i and iii

(c) All of them

(d) None of them

20. Consider the following statements in the context of the Bhakti movement in south India?

1. One of the important regional movements of the Bhakti tradition in Karnataka was founded by Basava who established the Virashaivas sect also called as Lingayats.
2. Under Chola kings two important sects developed in Bhakti tradition - the Nayanars (following the Vaishnava tradition) and Alvars (following the Shaiva tradition).
3. Andal the famous woman poet of south India belonged to the Nayanars tradition.

Which of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only 1

(b) 2 and 3

(c) 1 and 2

(d) 1, 2 and 3

21. Consider the following statements regarding the Vijayanagar Empire:

1. The Vijayanagara Empire was an empire based in South India, in the Deccan Plateau region. It was established in 1336 by Harihara I and his brother Bukka I of the Sangam Dynasty.
2. It lasted until 1646 although its power declined after a major military defeat in 1565 by the Deccan sultanates.
3. The empire is named after its capital city of Vijayanagara, whose ruins surround present day Hampi, now a World Heritage Site.

Which of the statements are false?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 and 3

(c) All of the above

(d) None of the above

22. Which is not true of the Mauryan Administration?

(a) Pataliputra was looked after by six committees.

(b) Government officials used to visit their areas for inspection.

(c) Officers were given land for their maintenance.

(d) The heads of various departments were called "Adhyaksha".

23. Who among the following anticipated Newton by declaring that all things gravitate to the earth?

(a) Aryabhatta (b) Varahamihira

(c) Buddhagupta (d) Brahmagupta

24. Match the following:

A. Early Paleolithic	1.	Chopper-Chopping tools
B. Middle Paleolithic	2.	Blades
C. Upper Paleolithic	3.	Geometric tools
D. Mesolithic	4.	Flake

	A	**B**	**C**	**D**
(a)	1	3	2	4
(b)	2	3	4	1
(c)	1	4	2	3
(d)	3	4	2	1

25. Which of the states in India has the largest number of Harappan sites after independence?

(a) Haryana (b) Gujarat

(c) Rajasthan (d) Punjab

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HISTORY (SAMPLE QUESTIONS) (ANSWERS)

CHRONICLE IAS ACADEMY
A CIVIL SERVICES CHRONICLE INITIATIVE

1 (d)
2 (a)
3 (a)
4 (a)
5 (d)
6 (d)
7 (a)
8 (b)
9 (c)
10 (c)
11 (b)
12 (b)
13 (c)
14 (a)
15 (d)
16 (c)
17 (b)
18 (d)
19 (c)
20 (a)
21 (d)
22 (c)
23 (d)
24 (c)
25 (b)

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