

K.N.GOV'T ARTS COLLEGE (W) AUTONOMOUS, THANJAVUR - 7

I - M.A - HISTORY

SUB.CODE – 18KPIHO1

SOCIO ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF INDIA - UPTO 1206 C.E

UNIT : I, II,III,IV,V

GEOGRAPHY OF FEATURES

India lies on the Indian Plate, the northern part of the Indo-Australian Plate, whose continental crust forms the Indian subcontinent. The country is situated north of the equator between 8°4' north to 37°6' north latitude and 68°7' east to 97°25' east longitude. It is the seventh-largest country in the world, with a total area of 3,287,263 square kilometres (1,269,219 sq mi). India measures 3,214 km (1,997 mi) from north to south and 2,933 km (1,822 mi) from east to west. It has a land frontier of 15,200 km (9,445 mi) and a coastline of 7,516.6 km (4,671 mi).

On the south, India projects into and is bounded by the Indian Ocean—in particular, by the Arabian Sea on the west, the Lakshadweep Sea to the southwest, the Bay of Bengal on the east, and the Indian Ocean proper to the south. The Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar separate India from Sri Lanka to its immediate southeast, and the Maldives are some 125 kilometres (78 mi) to the south of India's Lakshadweep Islands across the Eight Degree Channel. India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands, some 1,200 kilometres (750 mi) southeast of the mainland, share maritime borders with Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia. Kanyakumari at 8°4'41"N and 77°55'230"E is the southernmost tip of the Indian mainland, while the southernmost point in India is Indira Point on Great Nicobar Island. The northernmost point which is under Indian administration is Indira Col, Siachen Glacier. India's territorial waters extend into the sea to a distance of 12 nautical miles (13.8 mi; 22.2 km) from the coast baseline. India has the 18th largest Exclusive Economic Zone of 2,305,143 km² (890,021 sq mi).

The northern frontiers of India are defined largely by the Himalayan mountain range, where the country borders China, Bhutan, and Nepal. Its western border with Pakistan lies in the Karakoram range, Punjab Plains, the Thar Desert and the Rann of Kutch salt marshes. In the far northeast, the Chin Hills and Kachin Hills, deeply forested mountainous regions, separate India from Burma. On the east, its border with Bangladesh is largely defined by the Khasi Hills and Mizo Hills, and the watershed region of the Indo-Gangetic Plain.

The Ganga is the longest river originating in India. The Ganga-Brahmaputra system occupies most of northern, central, and eastern India, while the Deccan Plateau occupies most of southern India. Kangchenjunga, in the Indian state of Sikkim, is the highest point in India at 8,586 m (28,169 ft) and the world's third highest peak. The climate across India ranges from equatorial in the far south, to alpine and tundra in the upper regions of the Himalayas.

Sources

Sources for the study and writing of history refer to a variety of material remains and texts that has been found through excavations; preserved through the ages and translated, respectively. These sources are of immense value for a systematic, logical, and unbiased study of ancient India, their value cannot be over emphasized. There is an abundance of source material to make a proper and scientific study of ancient History of India.

Sources have been categorized in three

- ◆ categories - Archaeological Sources
- ◆ Literary Sources
- ◆ Foreigner's Account.

The various excavations carried out at numerous sites are ample proof that there is an abundance of archaeological source material in India. Archaeology in India is a science of recent growth but their contribution and importance is incomparable. These sources give more reliable and authentic information in comparison to other sources. Due to their solid structures they are quite unalterable which dependable and free from subjective bias. They can also be dated very accurately, while the same cannot be said for other sources.

Inscriptions

- ◆ Coins
- ◆ Monuments
- ◆ Seals
- ◆ Sculptures and paintings

These are various written works which can be categorized as religious texts (Brahminical, Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain texts), historical works, non-religious texts like drama or plays and works related to polity is also considered as literary sources. These literary sources provide us with a number of information regarding ancient India.

Religious Texts

- ◆ Hindu Religious Texts

Buddhist Religious Text

Jain Religious Text

Non Religious Texts

- ◆ Grammatical Works

Historical Accounts

Political and Administrative Accounts

There are a number of travellers throughout the expanse of ancient times who had written about India. They provide us with invaluable information through the eyes of an outside observer. These texts from the travellers of Rome, China, Greek and various other places are a rich source for ancient Indian History.

Greek Accounts

- ◆ Roman Accounts
- ◆ Chinese Accounts
- ◆ Tibetan Accounts
- ◆ Arabic Accounts

Indus civilization

Indus civilization, also called **Indus valley civilization** or **Harappan civilization**, the earliest known **urban culture** of the Indian subcontinent. The nuclear dates of the civilization appear to be about 2500-1700 BCE, though the southern sites may have lasted later into the 2nd millennium BCE.

Harappa - Mohenjo-daro

The **Hindu** texts known as the **Vedas**, as well as other great works of Indian tradition such as the ***Mahabharata*** and ***Ramayana***, were already well known to Western scholars but they did not know what culture had created them. Systemic racism of the time prevented them from attributing the works to the people of India, and the same, at first, led archaeologists to conclude that Harappa was a colony of the **Sumerians** of Mesopotamia or perhaps an Egyptian outpost.

Wheeler's work provided archaeologists with the means to recognize approximate dates from the civilization's foundations through its decline and fall. The chronology is primarily based, as noted, on physical evidence from Harappan sites but also from knowledge of their trade contacts with Egypt and Mesopotamia. Lapis lazuli, to name only one product, was immensely popular in both cultures and, although scholars knew it came from India, they did not know from precisely where until the Indus Valley Civilization was discovered. Even though this semi-precious stone would continue to be imported after the fall of the Indus Valley Civilization, it is clear that, initially, some of the export came from this region.

- **Pre-Harappan - c. 7000 - c. 5500 BCE:** The **Neolithic period** best exemplified by sites like Mehrgarh which shows evidence of agricultural development, domestication of plants and animals, and production of tools and ceramics.
- **Early Harappan - c. 5500-2800 BCE:** Trade firmly established with Egypt, Mesopotamia, and possibly **China**. Ports, docks, and warehouses built near waterways by communities living in small villages.
- **Mature Harappan - c. 2800 - c. 1900 BCE:** Construction of the great cities and widespread **urbanization**. Harappa and Mohenjo-daro are both flourishing c. 2600 BCE. Other cities, such as Ganeriwala, Lothal, and Dholavira are built according to the same models and this development of the land continues with the construction of hundreds of other cities until there are over 1,000 of them throughout the land in every direction.
- **Late Harappan - c. 1900 - c. 1500 BCE:** Decline of the civilization coinciding with a wave of migration of the Aryan people from the north, most likely the Iranian Plateau. Physical evidence suggests climate change which caused flooding, drought, and famine. A loss of trade relations with Egypt and Mesopotamia has also been suggested as a contributing cause.
- **Post Harappan - c. 1500 - c. 600 BCE:** The cities are abandoned, and the people have moved south. The civilization has already fallen by the time **Cyrus II** (the Great, r. c. 550-530 BCE) invades India in 530 BC.

The people seem to have been primarily artisans, farmers, and merchants. There is no evidence of a standing army, no palaces, and no temples. The Great Bath at

Mohenjo-daro is believed to have been used for ritual purification rites related to religious belief but this is conjecture; it could as easily have been a public pool for recreation. Each city seems to have had its own governor but, it is speculated, there must have been some form of centralized government in order to achieve the uniformity of the cities. John Keay comments:

Harappan tools, utensils, and materials confirm this impression of uniformity. Unfamiliar with iron - which was nowhere known in the third millennium BC - the Harappans sliced, scraped, beveled, and bored with 'effortless competence' using a standardized kit of tools made from chert, a kind of quartz, or from **copper** and **bronze**. These last, along with **gold** and **silver**, were the only metals available. They were also used for casting vessels and statuettes and for fashioning a variety of knives, fishhooks, arrowheads, saws, chisels, sickles, pins, and bangles. (10)

Among the thousands of artifacts discovered at the various sites are small, soapstone seals a little over an inch (3 cm) in diameter which archaeologists interpret to have been used for personal identification in trade. Like the cylinder seals of Mesopotamia, these seals are thought to have been used to sign contracts, authorize land sales, and authenticate point-of-origin, shipment, and receipt of goods in trade long distance.

Indo-Aryan Migration to Vedic Civilization

- The Aryans were a semi-nomadic pastoral people.
- The original homeland of the Aryans is a matter of debate with different experts suggesting different regions from where they originated.
- Some say they came from the area around the Caspian Sea in Central Asia (Max Muller), while others think they originated from the Russian Steppes. Bal Gangadhar Tilak was of the opinion that the Aryans came from the Arctic region.
- The Vedic Age started with the Aryan occupation of the Indo-Gangetic Plains.
- Meaning of the word Arya: Noble.
- They spoke Sanskrit, an Indo-European language.
- They led a rural, semi-nomadic life as compared to the Indus Valley people who were urbanised.
- It is believed that they entered India through the Khyber Pass.

Vedic Civilization

Early Vedic Period or Rig Vedic Period (1500 BC – 1000 BC)

Initially, the Aryans lived in the land known as “Sapta Sindhu” (Land of the Seven Rivers). These seven rivers were: Sindhu (Indus), Vipash (Beas), Vitasta (Jhelum), Parushni (Ravi), Asikni (Chenab), Shutudri (Satluj) and Saraswati.

Political structure:

- Monarchical form of government with a king known as Rajan.
- Patriarchal families. Jana was the largest social unit in Rig Vedic times.
- Social grouping: kula (family) - grama - visu - jana.
- Tribal assemblies were called Sabhas and Samitis. Examples of tribal kingdoms: Bharatas, Matsyas, Yadus and Purus.

Social structure:

- Women enjoyed a respectable position. They were allowed to take part in Sabhas and Samitis. There were women poets too (Apala, Lopamudra, Viswavara and Ghosa).
- Cattle especially cows became very important.
- Monogamy was practised but polygamy was observed among royalty and noble families.
- There was no child marriage.
- Social distinctions existed but were not rigid and hereditary.

Economic structure:

- They were pastoral and cattle-rearing people.
- They practised agriculture.
- They had horse chariots.
- Rivers were used for transport.
- Cotton and woollen fabrics were spun and used.
- Initially, trade was conducted through the barter system but later on, coins called ‘nishka’ were in use.

Religion:

- They worshipped natural forces like earth, fire, wind, rain, thunder, etc. by personifying them into deities.
- Indra (thunder) was the most important deity. Other deities were Prithvi (earth), Agni (fire), Varuna (rain) and Vayu (wind).
- Female deities were Ushas and Aditi.
- There were no temples and no idol worship.

Later Vedic Period or Painted Grey Ware Phase (1000 BC – 600 BC)

During this time, the Aryans moved eastwards and occupied western and eastern UP (Kosala) and Bihar.

Political structure:

- Kingdoms like Mahajanapadas were formed by amalgamating smaller kingdoms.
- King's power increased and various sacrifices were performed by him to enhance his position.
- Sacrifices were Rajasuya (consecration ceremony), Vajapeya (chariot race) and Ashwamedha (horse sacrifice).
- The Sabhas and Samitis diminished in importance.

Social structure:

- The Varna system of social distinction became more distinct. This became less based on occupation and more hereditary.
- The four divisions of society in decreasing social ranking were: Brahmanas (priests), Kshatriyas (rulers), Vaishyas (agriculturists, traders and artisans), and Shudras (servers of the upper three classes).
- Women were not permitted to attend public assemblies like Sabhas and Samitis. Their position in society diminished.
- Child marriages became common.
- Sub-castes based on occupation also emerged. Gotras were institutionalised.

Economic structure:

- Agriculture was the chief occupation.
- Industrial work like metalwork, pottery and carpentry work also was there.
- There was foreign trade with far off regions like Babylon and Sumeria.

Religion:

- Prajapati (creator) and Vishnu (preserver) became important gods.
- Indra and Agni lost their significance.
- Importance of prayers diminished and rituals and sacrifices became more elaborate.
- The priestly class became very powerful and they dictated the rules of the rites and rituals. Because of this orthodoxy, Buddhism and Jainism emerged towards the end of this period.

Vedic Literature

- The word 'Veda' originated from the root 'vid' which means spiritual knowledge/subject of knowledge/means of acquiring knowledge.
- The four Vedas are: Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva.
- Rig Veda was composed during the Early Vedic Age. The other three were written in the Later Vedic Age.
- Rig Veda - this is the oldest religious text in the world. It contains 1028 hymns and is classified into 10 mandalas.
- Yajur Veda - this deals with the ways to perform rituals.
- Sama Veda - deals with music. Indian music is said to be originated from Sama Veda.
- Atharva Veda - contains spells and magical formula.
- Other Vedic texts were the Brahmanas (explains the meaning of sacrifices); Upanishads (also called Vedantas, 108 in number, source of Indian philosophy); and Aranyakas (books of instructions).
- The great Indian epics of Mahabharata and Ramayana were also composed during this period.

Jainism in India

Jain doctrine teaches that Jainism has always existed and will always exist, Like most ancient Indian religions, Jainism has its roots from the Indus Valley Civilization, reflecting native spirituality prior to the Indo-Aryan migration into India. Other scholars suggested the Shramana traditions were separate and contemporaneous with Indo-Aryan religious practices of the historical Vedic religion. In August 2005, the Supreme Court of India ruled that Jainism, Sikhism (and Buddhism) are distinct religions, but are inter-connected and inter-related to Hinduism, so these three are part of wider broader Hindu religion, based on the historic background on how the Constitution had come into existence after. However, in the 2006 verdict, Supreme Court of India found that the "Jain Religion is indisputably not a part of the Hindu Religion".

Jainism traditionally known as *Jain Dharma*, is an ancient Indian religion. Jain dharma traces its spiritual ideas and history through a succession of twenty-four leaders or *tirthankaras* .with the first in current time cycle being Lord Rishabhanatha, whom the Jain tradition holds to have lived millions of years ago, the twenty-third *tirthankara* Parshvanatha whom historians date to 8th or 7th century BCE, and the 24th *tirthankara*, Mahāvīra around 500 BCE. Jains believe that Jainism is an eternal *dharma* with the *tirthankaras* guiding every cycle of the Jain cosmology.

The main religious premises of the Jain dharma are *ahiṃsā* (non-violence), *anekāntavāda* (many-sidedness), *aparigraha* (non-attachment) and *asceticism* (abstinence from sensual pleasures). Devout Jains take five main vows: *ahiṃsā* (non-violence), *satya* (truth), *asteya* (not stealing), *brahmacharya* (sexual continence), and *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness). These principles have affected Jain culture in many ways, such as leading to a predominantly vegetarian lifestyle. *Parasparopagraho Jīvānām* (the function of souls is to help one another) is its motto and the *Ṇamōkāra mantra* is its most common and basic prayer.

Jain dharma is one of the world's oldest religions and has two major ancient sub-traditions, Digambaras and Śvētāmbaras, with different views on ascetic practices, gender and which texts can be considered canonical; both have mendicants supported by laypersons (*śrāvakas* and *śrāvikas*). The religion has between four and five million

followers, mostly in India. Outside India, some of the largest communities are in Canada, Europe, and the United States. Jain Dharma is growing in Japan, where more than 5,000 ethnic Japanese families have converted to Jainism in the 2010-2020 decade. Major festivals include *Paryushana* and *Daslakshana*, *Ashtanika*, *Mahav r Janma Kalyank*, and *Dipawali*.

History of Buddhism

The **history of Buddhism** spans from the 6th century BCE to the present. Buddhism arose in the eastern part of Ancient India, in and around the ancient Kingdom of Magadha (now in Bihar, India), and is based on the teachings of Siddhārtha Gautama. The religion evolved as it spread from the northeastern region of the Indian subcontinent through Central, East, and Southeast Asia. At one time or another, it influenced most of the Asian continent. The history of Buddhism is also characterized by the development of numerous movements, schisms, and schools, among them the Theravāda, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions, with contrasting periods of expansion and retreat.

Siddhārtha Gautama

Siddhārtha Gautama was the historical founder of Buddhism. The early sources state he was born in the small Shakya (Pali: Sakka) Republic, which was part of the Kosala realm of ancient India, now in modern-day Nepal. He is thus also known as the *Shakyamuni* (literally: "The sage of the Shakya clan"). The republic was ruled by a council of household heads, and Gautama was born to one of these elites so that he described himself as a Kshatriya when talking to Brahmins. The Early Buddhist Texts contain no continuous life of the Buddha, only later after 200 BCE were various "biographies" with much mythological embellishment written. All texts agree however that Gautama renounced the householder life and lived as a sramana ascetic for some time studying under various teachers, before attaining nirvana (extinguishment) and bodhi (awakening) through meditation.

For the remaining 45 years of his life, he traveled the Gangetic Plain of central India (the region of the Ganges/Ganga river and its tributaries), teaching his doctrine to a diverse range of people from different castes and initiating monks into his

order. The Buddha sent his disciples to spread the teaching across India. He also initiated an order of nuns. He urged his disciples to teach in the local language or dialects. He spent a lot of his time near the cities of Sāvattihī, Rājagaha and Vesālī (Skt. Śrāvastī, Rājagṛha, Vāiśālī). By the time of his death at 80, he had thousands of followers.

The years following the death of the Buddha saw the emergence of many movements during the next 400 years: first the schools of Nikaya Buddhism, of which only Theravada remains today, and then the formation of Mahayana and Vajrayana, pan-Buddhist sects based on the acceptance of new scriptures and the revision of older techniques.

Followers of Buddhism, called **Buddhists** in English, referred to themselves as *Sakyan-s* or *Sakyabhikṣu* in ancient India. Buddhist scholar Donald S. Lopez asserts they also used the term *Bauddha*, although scholar Richard Cohen asserts that that term was used only by outsiders to describe Buddhists.

After the death of the Buddha, the Buddhist sangha (monastic community) remained centered on the Ganges valley, spreading gradually from its ancient heartland. The canonical sources record various councils, where the monastic Sangha recited and organized the orally transmitted collections of the Buddha's teachings and settled certain disciplinary problems within the community. Modern scholarship has questioned the accuracy and historicity of these traditional accounts.

The first Buddhist council is traditionally said to have been held just after Buddha's Parinirvana, and presided over by Mahākāśyapa, one of His most senior disciples, at Rājagṛha (today's Rajgir) with the support of king Ajāthaśatru. According to Charles Prebish, almost all scholars have questioned the historicity of this first council. It is said to have caused the first schism of the Sangha into the Sthavira (Elders) and Mahasamghika (Great Sangha). Most scholars agree that the schism was caused by disagreements over points of vinaya (monastic discipline). Over time, these two monastic fraternities would further divide into various Early Buddhist Schools. The Sthaviras gave birth to a large number of influential schools including the Sarvāstivāda, the Pudgalavāda (also known as *Vatsīputrīya*), the Dharmaguptakas and the Vibhajyavāda (Theravādins being descended from these).

The Mahasamghikas meanwhile also developed their own schools and doctrines early on, which can be seen in texts like the Mahavastu, associated with the Lokottaravāda, or 'Transcendentalist' school, who might be the same as the Ekavyāvahārikas or "One-utterancers". This school has been seen as foreshadowing certain Mahayana ideas, especially due to their view that all of Gautama Buddha's acts were "transcendental" or "supramundane", even those performed before his Buddhahood.

In the third century BCE, some Buddhists began introducing new systematized teachings called Abhidharma, based on previous lists or tables (*Matrka*) of main doctrinal topics. Unlike the Nikayas, which were prose sutras or discourses, the Abhidharma literature consisted of systematic doctrinal exposition and often differed across the Buddhist schools who disagreed on points of doctrine. Abhidharma sought to analyze all experience into its ultimate constituents, phenomenal events or processes called *dharmas*.

During the reign of the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (273-232 BCE), Buddhism gained royal support and began to spread more widely reaching most of the Indian subcontinent. After his invasion of Kalinga, Ashoka seems to have experienced remorse and began working to improve the lives of his subjects. Ashoka also built wells, rest-houses and hospitals for humans and animals, he also abolished torture, royal hunting trips and perhaps even the death penalty. Ashoka also supported non-Buddhist faiths like Jainism and Brahmanism Ashoka propagated religion by building stupas and pillars urging, among other things, respect of all animal life and enjoining people to follow the Dharma. He has been hailed by Buddhist sources as the model for the compassionate chakravartin (wheel turning monarch).

Another feature of Mauryan Buddhism was the worship and veneration of stupas, large mounds which contained relics (Pali: *saṅgī*) of the Buddha or other saints within. It was believed that the practice of devotion to these relics and stupas could bring blessings. Perhaps the best-preserved example of a Mauryan Buddhist site is the Great Stupa of Sanchi (dating from the 3rd century BCE).

According to the plates and pillars left by Aśoka (the Edicts of Ashoka), emissaries were sent to various countries in order to spread Buddhism, as far south as Sri Lanka and as far west as the Greek kingdoms, in particular the neighboring Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, and possibly even farther to the Mediterranean.

Theravadin sources state that Ashoka convened the third Buddhist council around 250 BCE at Pataliputra (today's Patna) with the elder Moggaliputtatissa.^[17] The objective of the council was to purify the Saṅgha, particularly from non-Buddhist ascetics who had been attracted by the royal patronage. Following the council, Buddhist missionaries were dispatched throughout the known world.

Mahājanapadas

The **Mahājanapadas** were sixteen kingdoms or oligarchic republics that existed in Northern ancient India from the sixth to fourth centuries BCE during the second urbanisation period.

The 6th-5th centuries BCE is often regarded as a major turning point in early Indian history; during this period India's first large cities arose after the demise of the Indus Valley Civilization. It was also the time of the rise of sramana movements (including Buddhism and Jainism), which challenged the religious orthodoxy of the Vedic Period.

Two of the Mahājanapadas were most probably ganatantras (oligarchic republics) and others had forms of monarchy. Ancient Buddhist texts like the *Anguttara Nikaya* make frequent reference to sixteen great kingdoms and republics which had developed and flourished in a belt stretching from Gandhara in the northwest to Anga in the eastern part of the Indian subcontinent. They included parts of the trans-Vindhyan region, and all had developed prior to the rise of Buddhism in India.

Archaeologically, this period has been identified as corresponding in part to the Northern Black Polished Ware culture.

The term "Janapada" literally means the *foothold of a people*. The fact that *Janapada* is derived from *Jana* points to an early stage of land-taking by the Jana people for a settled way of life. This process of settlement on land had completed its final stage

prior to the times of the Buddha and Pāṇini. The Pre-Buddhist north-west region of the Indian sub-continent was divided into several Janapadas, demarcated from each other by boundaries. In Pāṇini's "Ashtadhyayi", *Janapada* stands for country and *Janapadin* for its citizenry. Each of these Janapadas was named after the Kshatriya people (or the Kshatriya Jana) who had settled therein. Buddhist and other texts only incidentally refer to sixteen great nations (*Solasa Mahajanapadas*) that existed prior to the time of the Buddha. They do not give any connected history except in the case of Magadha. The Buddhist Anguttara Nikaya, at several places gives a list of sixteen great nations:

1. Anga
2. Assaka (or Asmaka)
3. Avanti
4. Chedi
5. Gandhara
6. Kashi
7. Kamboja
8. Kosala
9. Kuru
10. Magadha
11. Malla
12. Machcha (or Matsya)
13. Panchala
14. Surasena
15. Vriji
16. Vatsa (or Vamsa)

The Maurya Empire

The **Maurya Empire** was a geographically extensive Iron Age historical power based in Magadha and founded by Chandragupta Maurya which dominated the Indian

subcontinent between 322 and 185 BCE. Comprising the majority of South Asia, the Maurya Empire was centralized by the conquest of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, and its capital city was located at Pataliputra (modern Patna). The empire was the largest political entity that has existed in the Indian subcontinent, extending over 5 million square kilometres (1.9 million square miles) at its zenith under Ashoka.

Chandragupta Maurya raised an army, with the assistance of Chanakya, author of Arthashastra, and overthrew the Nanda Empire in c. 322 BCE. Chandragupta rapidly expanded his power westwards across central and western India by conquering the satraps left by Alexander the Great, and by 317 BCE the empire had fully occupied northwestern India. The Mauryan Empire then defeated Seleucus I, a diadochus and founder of the Seleucid Empire, during the Seleucid-Mauryan war, thus acquiring territory west of the Indus River.

At its greatest extent, the empire stretched along the natural boundary of the Himalayas, to the east into Bengal, to the west into what is present-day Balochistan, Pakistan and the Hindu Kush mountains of what is now eastern Afghanistan. The dynasty expanded into India's southern regions by the reign of the emperor Bindusara, but it excluded Kalinga (modern Odisha), until it was conquered by Ashoka. It declined for about 50 years after Ashoka's rule, and dissolved in 185 BCE with the foundation of the Shung dynasty in Magadha.

Under Chandragupta Maurya and his successors, internal and external trade, agriculture, and economic activities thrived and expanded across South Asia due to the creation of a single and efficient system of finance, administration, and security. The Maurya dynasty built the Grand Trunk Road, one of Asia's oldest and longest trade networks, connecting the north of the Indian subcontinent from east to west. After the Kalinga War, the Empire experienced nearly half a century of centralized rule under Ashoka. Chandragupta Maurya's embrace of Jainism increased socio-religious reform across South Asia, while Ashoka's embrace of Buddhism and sponsorship of Buddhist missionaries allowed for the expansion of that faith into Sri Lanka, northwest India, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Egypt, and Hellenistic Europe.

The population of the empire has been estimated to be about 50-60 million, making the Mauryan Empire one of the most populous empires of antiquity. Archaeologically, the period of Mauryan rule in South Asia falls into the era of Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW). The *Arthashastra* and the Edicts of Ashoka are the primary sources of written records of Mauryan times. The Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath is the national emblem of the modern Republic of India.

Chandragupta Maurya

After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE, Chandragupta led a series of campaigns in 305 BCE to retake satrapies in the Indus Valley and northwest India. When Alexander's remaining forces were routed, returning westwards, Seleucus I Nicator fought to defend these territories. Not many details of the campaigns are known from ancient sources. Seleucus was defeated and retreated into the mountainous region of Afghanistan.

The two rulers concluded a peace treaty in 303 BCE, including a marital alliance. Under its terms, Chandragupta received the satrapies of Paropamisadae (Kamboja and Gandhara) and Arachosia (Kandahar) and Gedrosia (Balochistan). Seleucus I received the 500 war elephants that were to have a decisive role in his victory against western Hellenistic kings at the Battle of Ipsus in 301 BCE. Diplomatic relations were established and several Greeks, such as the historian Megasthenes, Deimakos and Dionysius resided at the Mauryan court.

Megasthenes in particular was a notable Greek ambassador in the court of Chandragupta Maurya. According to Arrian, ambassador Megasthenes (c. 350 - c. 290 BCE) lived in Arachosia and travelled to Pataliputra. Megasthenes' description of Mauryan society as freedom-loving gave Seleucus a means to avoid invasion, however, underlying Seleucus' decision was the improbability of success. In later years, Seleucus' successors maintained diplomatic relations with the Empire based on similar accounts from returning travellers.

Chandragupta established a strong centralised state with an administration at Pataliputra, which, according to Megasthenes, was "surrounded by a wooden wall pierced by 64

gates and 570 towers". Aelian, although not expressly quoting Megasthenes nor mentioning Pataliputra, described Indian palaces as superior in splendor to Persia's Susa or Ectabana. The architecture of the city seems to have had many similarities with Persian cities of the period.

Chandragupta's son Bindusara extended the rule of the Mauryan empire towards southern India. The famous Tamil poet Mamulanar of the Sangam literature described how areas south of the Deccan Plateau which comprised Tamil country was invaded by the Maurya army using troops from Karnataka. Mamulanar states that Vadugar (people who resided in Andhra-Karnataka regions immediately to the north of Tamil Nadu) formed the vanguard of the Mauryan army. He also had a Greek ambassador at his court, named Deimachus. According to Plutarch Chandragupta Maurya subdued entire India, Justin also observed that Chandragupta Maurya was "in possession of India"; this is corroborated by Tamil sangam literature which mentions about Mauryan invasion with their south Indian allies and defeat of their rivals at Podiyil hill in Tirunelveli district in present-day Tamil Nadu.

Chandragupta renounced his throne and followed Jain teacher Bhadrabahu. He is said to have lived as an ascetic at Shravanabelagola for several years before fasting to death, as per the Jain practice of *sallekhana*.

Bindusara

Bindusara was born to Chandragupta, the founder of the Mauryan Empire. This is attested by several sources, including the various Puranas and the *Mahavamsa*. He is attested by the Buddhist texts such as *Dipavamsa* and *Mahavamsa* ("Bindusaro"); the Jain texts such as *Parishishta-Parvan*, as well as the Hindu texts such as *Vishnu Purana* ("Vindusara"). According to the 12th century Jain writer Hemachandra's *Parishishta-Parvan*, the name of Bindusara's mother was Durdhara. Some Greek sources also mention him by the name "Amitrochates" or its variations.

Historian Upinder Singh estimates that Bindusara ascended the throne around 297 BCE. Bindusara, just 22 years old, inherited a large empire that consisted of what is now, Northern, Central and Eastern parts of India along with parts of Afghanistan and Baluchistan. Bindusara extended this empire to the southern part of India, as far as what is now known as Karnataka. He brought sixteen states under the Mauryan Empire and thus conquered almost all of the Indian peninsula (he is said to have conquered the 'land between the two seas' - the peninsular region between the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea). Bindusara did not conquer the friendly Tamil kingdoms of the Cholas, ruled by King Ilamcetcenni, the Pandyas, and Cheras. Apart from these southern states, Kalinga (modern Odisha) was the only kingdom in India that did not form part of Bindusara's empire. It was later conquered by his son Ashoka, who served as the viceroy of Ujjaini during his father's reign, which highlights the importance of the town.

Bindusara's life has not been documented as well as that of his father Chandragupta or of his son Ashoka. Chanakya continued to serve as prime minister during his reign. According to the medieval Tibetan scholar Taranatha who visited India, Chanakya helped Bindusara "to destroy the nobles and kings of the sixteen kingdoms and thus to become absolute master of the territory between the eastern and western oceans". During his rule, the citizens of Taxila revolted twice. The reason for the first revolt was the maladministration of Susima, his eldest son. The reason for the second revolt is unknown, but Bindusara could not suppress it in his lifetime. It was crushed by Ashoka after Bindusara's death.

Bindusara maintained friendly diplomatic relations with the Hellenic world. Deimachus was the ambassador of Seleucid emperor Antiochus I at Bindusara's court. Diodorus states that the king of Palibothra (Pataliputra, the Mauryan capital) welcomed a Greek author, Iambulus. This king is usually identified as Bindusara. Pliny states that the Egyptian king Philadelphus sent an envoy named Dionysius to India. According to Sailendra Nath Sen, this appears to have happened during Bindusara's reign.

Unlike his father Chandragupta (who at a later stage converted to Jainism), Bindusara believed in the Ajivika sect. Bindusara's guru Pingalavatsa (Janasana) was a Brahmin of the Ajivika sect. Bindusara's wife, Queen Subhadra (Queen Dharma/ Aggamahesi) was

a Brahmin also of the Ajivika sect from Champa (present Bhagalpur district). Bindusara is credited with giving several grants to Brahmin monasteries (*Brahmana-bhatta*).

Historical evidence suggests that Bindusara died in the 270s BCE. According to Upinder Singh, Bindusara died around 273 BCE. Alain Daniélou believes that he died around 274 BCE. Sailendra Nath Sen believes that he died around 273-272 BCE, and that his death was followed by a four-year struggle of succession, after which his son Ashoka became the emperor in 269-268 BCE. According to the *Mahavamsa*, Bindusara reigned for 28 years. The *Vayu Purana*, which names Chandragupta's successor as "Bhadrasara", states that he ruled for 25 years.

Ashoka

As a young prince, Ashoka (r. 272-232 BCE) was a brilliant commander who crushed revolts in Ujjain and Takshashila. As monarch he was ambitious and aggressive, re-asserting the Empire's superiority in southern and western India. But it was his conquest of Kalinga (262-261 BCE) which proved to be the pivotal event of his life. Ashoka used Kalinga to project power over a large region by building a fortification there and securing it as a possession. Although Ashoka's army succeeded in overwhelming Kalinga forces of royal soldiers and civilian units, an estimated 100,000 soldiers and civilians were killed in the furious warfare, including over 10,000 of Ashoka's own men. Hundreds of thousands of people were adversely affected by the destruction and fallout of war. When he personally witnessed the devastation, Ashoka began feeling remorse. Although the annexation of Kalinga was completed, Ashoka embraced the teachings of Buddhism, and renounced war and violence. He sent out missionaries to travel around Asia and spread Buddhism to other countries.

Ashoka implemented principles of *ahimsa* by banning hunting and violent sports activity and ending indentured and forced labor (many thousands of people in war-ravaged Kalinga had been forced into hard labour and servitude). While he maintained a large and powerful army, to keep the peace and maintain authority, Ashoka expanded friendly relations with states across Asia and Europe, and he sponsored Buddhist missions. He undertook a massive public works building campaign across the country. Over 40 years of peace, harmony and prosperity made Ashoka one of the most

successful and famous monarchs in Indian history. He remains an idealized figure of inspiration in modern India.

The Edicts of Ashoka, set in stone, are found throughout the Subcontinent. Ranging from as far west as Afghanistan and as far south as Andhra (Nellore District), Ashoka's edicts state his policies and accomplishments. Although predominantly written in Prakrit, two of them were written in Greek, and one in both Greek and Aramaic. Ashoka's edicts refer to the Greeks, Kambojas, and Gandharas as peoples forming a frontier region of his empire. They also attest to Ashoka's having sent envoys to the Greek rulers in the West as far as the Mediterranean. The edicts precisely name each of the rulers of the Hellenic world at the time such as *Amtiyoko* (Antiochus), *Tulamaya* (Ptolemy), *Amtikini* (Antigonos), *Maka* (Magas) and *Alikasudaro* (Alexander) as recipients of Ashoka's proselytism. The Edicts also accurately locate their territory "600 yojanas away" (a yojanas being about 7 miles), corresponding to the distance between the center of India and Greece (roughly 4,000 miles).

Decline

Ashoka was followed for 50 years by a succession of weaker kings. He was succeeded by Dasharatha Maurya, who was Ashoka's grandson. None of Ashoka's sons could ascend the throne after him. Mahendra, his first born, was on to spread Buddhism in the world. Kunala Maurya was blind hence couldn't ascend the throne and Tivala, son of Kaurwaki, died even earlier than Ashoka. Another son, Jalauka, does not have much story behind him.

The empire lost many territories under Dasharatha, which were later reconquered by Samprati, Kunala's son. Post Samprati, the Mauryas slowly lost many territories. In 180 BCE, Brihadratha Maurya, was killed by his general Pushyamitra Shunga in a military parade without any heir. Hence, the great Maurya empire finally ended, giving rise to the Shunga Empire.

Reasons advanced for the decline include the succession of weak kings after Aśoka Maurya, the partition of the empire into two, the growing independence of some areas within the empire, such as that ruled by Sophagasenus, a top-heavy administration

where authority was entirely in the hands of a few persons, an absence of any national consciousness, the pure scale of the empire making it unwieldy, and invasion by the Greco-Bactrian Empire.

Some historians, such as H. C. Raychaudhuri, have argued that Ashoka's pacifism undermined the "military backbone" of the Maurya empire. Others, such as Romila Thapar, have suggested that the extent and impact of his pacifism have been "grossly exaggerated".

Shunga coup (185 BCE)

Buddhist records such as the Ashokavadana write that the assassination of Brihadratha and the rise of the Shunga empire led to a wave of religious persecution for Buddhists, and a resurgence of Hinduism. According to Sir John Marshall, Pushyamitra may have been the main author of the persecutions, although later Shunga kings seem to have been more supportive of Buddhism. Other historians, such as Etienne Lamotte and Romila Thapar, among others, have argued that archaeological evidence in favour of the allegations of persecution of Buddhists are lacking, and that the extent and magnitude of the atrocities have been exaggerated.

Establishment of the Indo-Greek Kingdom (180 BCE)

The fall of the Mauryas left the Khyber Pass unguarded, and a wave of foreign invasion followed. The Greco-Bactrian king, Demetrius, capitalized on the break-up, and he conquered southern Afghanistan and parts of northwestern India around 180 BCE, forming the Indo-Greek Kingdom. The Indo-Greeks would maintain holdings on the trans-Indus region, and make forays into central India, for about a century. Under them, Buddhism flourished, and one of their kings, Menander, became a famous figure of Buddhism; he was to establish a new capital of Sagala, the modern city of Sialkot. However, the extent of their domains and the lengths of their rule are subject to much debate. Numismatic evidence indicates that they retained holdings in the subcontinent right up to the birth of Christ. Although the extent of their successes against indigenous powers such as the Shungas, Satavahanas, and Kalingas are unclear, what is clear is that Scythian tribes, renamed Indo-Scythians, brought about the demise of the Indo-Greeks from around 70 BCE and retained lands in the trans-Indus, the region of Mathura, and Gujarat.

Megasthenes mentions military command consisting of six boards of five members each, (i) Navy(ii) military transport (iii) Infantry (iv) Cavalry(v) Chariot divisions and (vi) Elephants.

The Empire was divided into four provinces, with the imperial capital at Pataliputra. From Ashokan edicts, the names of the four provincial capitals are Tosali (in the east), Ujjain (in the west), Suvarnagiri (in the south), and Taxila (in the north). The head of the provincial administration was the *Kumara* (royal prince), who governed the provinces as king's representative. The *kumara* was assisted by Mahamatyas and council of ministers. This organizational structure was reflected at the imperial level with the Emperor and his *Mantriparishad* (Council of Ministers). The Mauryans established a well developed coin minting system. Coins were mostly made of silver and copper. Certain gold coins were in circulation as well. The coins were widely used for trade and commerce.

Historians theorise that the organisation of the Empire was in line with the extensive bureaucracy described by Kautilya in the Arthashastra: a sophisticated civil service governed everything from municipal hygiene to international trade. The expansion and defense of the empire was made possible by what appears to have been one of the largest armies in the world during the Iron Age. According to Megasthenes, the empire wielded a military of 600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, 8,000 chariots and 9,000 war elephants besides followers and attendants. A vast espionage system collected intelligence for both internal and external security purposes. Having renounced offensive warfare and expansionism, Ashoka nevertheless continued to maintain this large army, to protect the Empire and instil stability and peace across West and South Asia. Even though large parts were under the control of Mauryan empire the spread of information and imperial message was limited since many parts were inaccessible and were situated far away from capital of empire.

Local government

Arthashastra and Megasthenes accounts of Pataliputra describe the intricate municipal system formed by Maurya empire to govern its cities. A city council made up of thirty commissioners was divided into six committees or boards which governed the city. The first board fixed wages and looked after provided goods, second board made arrangement for foreign dignitaries, tourists and businessmen, third board made records

and registrations, fourth looked after manufactured goods and sale of commodities, fifth board regulated trade, issued licenses and checked weights and measurements, sixth board collected sales taxes. Some cities such as Taxila had autonomy to issue their own coins. The city counsel had officers who looked after public welfare such as maintenance of roads, public buildings, markets, hospitals, educational institutions etc. The official head of the village was Gramika (in towns Nagarika). The city counsel also had some magisterial powers.

For the first time in South Asia, political unity and military security allowed for a common economic system and enhanced trade and commerce, with increased agricultural productivity. The previous situation involving hundreds of kingdoms, many small armies, powerful regional chieftains, and internecine warfare, gave way to a disciplined central authority. Farmers were freed of tax and crop collection burdens from regional kings, paying instead to a nationally administered and strict-but-fair system of taxation as advised by the principles in the *Arthashastra*. Chandragupta Maurya established a single currency across India, and a network of regional governors and administrators and a civil service provided justice and security for merchants, farmers and traders. The Mauryan army wiped out many gangs of bandits, regional private armies, and powerful chieftains who sought to impose their own supremacy in small areas. Although regimental in revenue collection, Maurya also sponsored many public works and waterways to enhance productivity, while internal trade in India expanded greatly due to new-found political unity and internal peace.

Under the Indo-Greek friendship treaty, and during Ashoka's reign, an international network of trade expanded. The Khyber Pass, on the modern boundary of Pakistan and Afghanistan, became a strategically important port of trade and intercourse with the outside world. Greek states and Hellenic kingdoms in West Asia became important trade partners of India. Trade also extended through the Malay peninsula into Southeast Asia. India's exports included silk goods and textiles, spices and exotic foods. The external world came across new scientific knowledge and technology with expanding trade with the Mauryan Empire. Ashoka also sponsored the construction of thousands of roads, waterways, canals, hospitals, rest-houses and other public works. The easing of many over-rigorous administrative practices, including those

regarding taxation and crop collection, helped increase productivity and economic activity across the Empire.

In many ways, the economic situation in the Mauryan Empire is analogous to the Roman Empire of several centuries later. Both had extensive trade connections and both had organizations similar to corporations. While Rome had organizational entities which were largely used for public state-driven projects, Mauryan India had numerous private commercial entities. These existed purely for private commerce and developed before the Mauryan Empire itself.

The **Shunga Empire** was an ancient Indian dynasty from Magadha that controlled areas of the central and eastern Indian subcontinent from around 185 to 75 BCE. The dynasty was established by Pushyamitra Shunga, after the fall of the Maurya Empire. Its capital was Pataliputra, but later emperors such as Bhagabhadra also held court at Besnagar (modern Vidisha) in eastern Malwa.

Pushyamitra Shunga ruled for 36 years and was succeeded by his son Agnimitra. There were ten Shunga rulers. However, after the death of Agnimitra, the second king of the dynasty, the empire rapidly disintegrated: inscriptions and coins indicate that much of northern and central India consisted of small kingdoms and city-states that were independent of any Shunga hegemony. The dynasty is noted for its numerous wars with both foreign and indigenous powers. They fought the Kalinga, the Satavahana dynasty, the Indo-Greek Kingdom and possibly the Panchalas and Mitras of Mathura.

Art, education, philosophy, and other forms of learning flourished during this period including small terracotta images, larger stone sculptures, and architectural monuments such as the stupa at Bharhut, and the renowned Great Stupa at Sanchi. Shunga rulers helped to establish the tradition of royal sponsorship of learning and art. The script used by the empire was a variant of Brahmi script and was used to write Sanskrit.

The Shunga Empire played an imperative role in patronising culture at a time when some of the most important developments in Hindu thought were taking place. Patanjali *Mahābhāṣya* was composed in this period. Artistry also progressed with the rise of the Mathura art style.

The last of the Shunga emperors was Devabhuti (83-73 BCE). He was assassinated by his minister (Vasudeva Kanva) and is said to have been overfond of the company of women. The Shunga dynasty was then replaced by the subsequent Kanvas. The Kanva dynasty succeeded the Shungas around 73 BCE.

The Shunga dynasty was a Brahmin dynasty, established in 185 BCE, about 50 years after Ashoka's death, when the emperor Brihadratha Maurya, the last ruler of the Maurya Empire, was assassinated by his *Senānī* or commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra Shunga, while he was reviewing the Guard of Honour of his forces. Pushyamitra Shunga then ascended the throne.

Pushyamitra Shunga became the ruler of Magadha and neighbouring territories. His realm essentially covered the central parts of the old Mauryan Empire. The Shunga definitely had control of the central city of Ayodhya in northern central India, as is proved by the Dhanadeva-Ayodhya inscription. However, the city of Mathura further west never seems to have been under the direct control of the Shungas, as no archaeological evidence of a Shunga presence has ever been found in Mathura. On the contrary, according to the Yavanarajya inscription, Mathura was probably under the control of Indo-Greeks from some time between 180 BCE and 100 BCE, and remained so as late as 70 BCE.

Some ancient sources however claim a greater extent for the Shunga Empire: the *Asokavadana* account of the *Divyavadana* claims that the Shungas sent an army to persecute Buddhist monks as far as Sakala (Sialkot) in the Punjab region in the northwest:

... Pushyamitra equipped a fourfold army, and intending to destroy the Buddhist religion, he went to the Kukkutarama (in Pataliputra). ... Pushyamitra therefore destroyed the sangharama, killed the monks there, and departed. ... After some time, he arrived in Sakala, and proclaimed that he would give a ... reward to whoever brought him the head of a Buddhist monk.

Also, the *Malavikagnimitra* claims that the empire of Pushyamitra extended to the Narmada River in the south. They may also have controlled the city of Ujjain. Meanwhile, Kabul and much of the Punjab passed into the hands of the Indo-Greeks and the Deccan Plateau to the Satavahana dynasty.

Pushyamitra died after ruling for 36 years (187-151 BCE). He was succeeded by son Agnimitra. This prince is the hero of a famous drama by one of India's greatest playwrights, Kālidāsa. Agnimitra was viceroy of Vidisha when the story takes place.

The power of the Shungas gradually weakened. It is said that there were ten Shunga emperors. The Shungas were succeeded by the Kanva dynasty around 73 BCE.

The **Kanva dynasty** or **Kanvayana** was a Brahmin dynasty that overthrew the Shunga dynasty in parts of eastern and central India, and ruled from 75 BCE to 30 BCE.

Although the Puranic literature indicates that the Kanva Dynasty ruled from the former capital of the Shung Empire in Pataliputra, Magadha in Eastern India, their coins are primarily found in and around the region of Vidisha in Central India, which had also been the capital of later Shunga rulers.

The Kanva dynasty was established by Vasudeva Kanva in 75 BC. Vasudeva was initially a minister of the Shunga Emperor Devabhuti, who then assassinated the former emperor and usurped the throne. The Kanva ruler allowed the kings of the Shunga dynasty to continue to rule in obscurity in a corner of their former dominions. There were four Kanva rulers. According to the Puranas, their dynasty was brought to an end by the Satavahanas.

Kharavela (also transliterated **Khārabēja**) was a king of Kalinga in present-day Odisha, India, who ruled during the second century BCE. He was the most prominent and best-known king of the Mahameghavahana dynasty, which is also known as the Chedi dynasty by some scholars based on a misreading of his father's name (Cheta-rajā).

The primary source for Kharavela is his rock-cut Hathigumpha inscription. The inscription is undated, and only four of its 17 lines are completely legible. Scholars have interpreted it differently, leading to speculation about his reign. The inscription credits the king with welfare activities, patronage of the arts, repair works, and mighty military victories which make historians agree that Kharavela was one of Kalinga's strongest

rulers. He is believed to have been a follower of Hinduism, although the Hathigumpha inscription describes him as a devotee of all religions.

Hathigumpha inscription

Possible statue of a Yavana/ Indo-Greek warrior with boots and chiton, from the Rani Gumpha or "Cave of the Queen" in the Udayagiri Caves on the east coast of India, where the Hathigumpha inscription was also found. 2nd or 1st century BCE.

- In the very first year of his coronation (His Majesty) caused to be repaired the gate, rampart and structures of the fort of Kalinga Nagari, which had been damaged by storm, and caused to be built flight of steps for the cool tanks and laid all gardens at the cost of thirty five hundred thousand (coins) and thus pleased all his subjects.
- In the second year, without caring for Satakami (His Majesty) sent to the west a large army consisting of horse, elephant, infantry and chariot, and struck terror to Asikanagara with that troop that marched up to the river Kanhavemna.
- Then in the fourth year, (His Majesty) the Vidhadhara tract, that had been established by the former kings of Kalinga and had never been crossed before. The Rathika and Bhojaka chiefs with their crown cast off, their umbrella and royal insignia thrown aside, and their Jewelry and wealth confiscated, were, made to pay obeisance at the feet (of His Majesty).
- And in the fifth year, (His Majesty) caused the aqueducts that had been excavated by king Nanda three hundred years before, to flow into [Kalinga] Nagri through Tanasuli.
- And in the seventh year of his reign (the Queen) of Vajiraghara, blessed with a son attained motherhood.
- In the 8th year of his reign, he attacked Rajagriha in Magadha and forced a Yavana king to retreat to Mathura:

"Then in the eighth year, (Kharavela) with a large army having sacked Goradhagiri causes pressure on Rajagaha (Rajagriha). On account of the loud report of this act of valour, the Yavana (Greek) King Dimi[ta] retreated to Mathura having extricated his demoralized army."

Gandhāra Art

Gandhāra was an ancient region in the Peshawar basin in the far north-west of the ancient Indian subcontinent, corresponding to present-day north-west Pakistan and east Afghanistan. The centre of the region was at the confluence of the Kabul and Swat rivers, bounded by the Sulaiman Mountains on the west and the Indus Rivr on the east. The Safed Koh mountains separated it from the Kohat region to the south. This being the core area of Gandhara, the cultural influence of "Greater Gandhara" extended across the Indus river to the Taxila region and westwards into the Kabul and Bamiyan valleys in Afghanistan, and northwards up to the Karakoram range. During the Achaemenid period and Hellenistic period, its capital city was Pushkalavati (Greek: Πευκελαώτις), modern Charsadda. Later the capital city was moved to Peshawar by the Kushan emperor Kanishka the Great in about 127 AD.

Gandhara's existence is attested since the time of the Rigveda (c. 1500 - c. 1200 BC),¹ as well as the Zoroastrian Avesta, which mentions it as *Vaēkərəta*, the sixth most beautiful place on earth created by Ahura Mazda. Gandhara was one of sixteen *mahajanapadas* (large conglomerations of urban and rural areas) of ancient India mentioned in Buddhist sources such as Anguttara Nikaya. Gandhara was conquered by the Achaemenid Empire in the 6th century BC. Conquered by Alexander the Great in 327 BC, it subsequently became part of the Maurya Empire and then the Indo-Greek Kingdom. The region was a major centre for Greco-Buddhism under the Indo-Greeks and Gandharan Buddhism under later dynasties. It was also a central location for the spread of Buddhism to Central Asia and East Asia. It was also a centre of Hinduism.

Famed for its local tradition of Gandhara (Greco-Buddhist) Art, Gandhara attained its height from the 1st century to the 5th century under the Kushan Empire. Gandhara "flourished at the crossroads of Asia," connecting trade routes and absorbing cultural influences from diverse civilizations; Buddhism thrived until the 8th or 9th centuries, when Islam first began to gain sway in the region. Pockets of Buddhism persisted in Pakistan's Swat Valley until the 11th century.

The Persian term *Shahi* is used by historian Al-Biruni to refer to the ruling dynasty that took over from the *Kabul Shahi* and ruled the region during the period prior to Muslim

conquests of the 10th and 11th centuries. After it was conquered by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1001 AD, the name Gandhara disappeared. During the Muslim period, the area was administered from Lahore or from Kabul. During Mughal times, it was an independent district which included the Kabul province.

Art of Mathura

The **Art of Mathura** refers to a particular school of Indian art, almost entirely surviving in the form of sculpture, starting in the 2nd century BCE, which centered on the city of Mathura, in central northern India, during a period in which Buddhism, Jainism together with Hinduism flourished in India. Mathura "was the first artistic center to produce devotional icons for all the three faiths" and the pre-eminent center of religious artistic expression in India at least until the Gupta period, and was influential throughout the sub-continent.

Chronologically, Mathuran sculpture becomes prominent after Mauryan art, the art of the Mauryan Empire (322 and 185 BCE). It is said to represent a "sharp break" with the previous Mauryan style, either in scale, material or style. Mathura became India's most important artistic production center from the second century BCE, with its highly recognizable red sandstone statues being admired and exported all over India. In particular, it was in Mathura that the distinctive Indian convention of giving sacred figures multiple body parts, especially heads and arms, first became common in art around the 4th century CE, initially exclusively in Hindu figures, as it derived from Vedic texts

The art of Mathura is often contrasted with the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara, which developed from the 1st century CE. In particular there is a debate about the origin of the Buddha image and the role played by each school of art. Before the creation of an image of the Buddha, probably around the 1st century CE, Indian Buddhist art, as seen in Bharhut or Sanchi, had essentially been aniconic, avoiding representation of the Buddha, but rather relying on its symbols, such as the Wheel of the Law or the Bodhi tree.

Mathura continued to be an important centre for sculpture until Gupta art of the 4th to 6th centuries, if not beyond. After this time much of the sculpture was of Hindu figures.

Kanishka

Kanishka I or **Kanishka the Great**, an emperor of the Kushan dynasty in the second century (c. 127-150 CE), is famous for his military, political, and spiritual achievements. A descendant of Kujula Kadphises, founder of the Kushan empire, Kanishka came to rule an empire in Bactria extending to Pataliputra on the Gangetic plain. The main capital of his empire was located at Puruṣapura in Gandhara, with another major capital at Kapisa.

His conquests and patronage of Buddhism played an important role in the development of the Silk Road, and in the transmission of Mahayana Buddhism from Gandhara across the Karakoram range to China. Around 127 CE, he replaced Greek by Bactrian as the official language of administration in the empire.

Earlier scholars believed that Kanishka ascended the Kushan throne in 78 CE, and that this date was used as the beginning of the Saka calendar era. However, historians no longer regard this date as that of Kanishka's accession. Falk estimates that Kanishka came to the throne in 127 CE.

The Gupta Golden Age

The Gupta Golden Age occurred during a time of political unification under a Hindu dynasty, with significant developments in art, literature, science, medicine and more. Chess was created at this time, although a different game from what we know now; and Indian thinkers developed ideas critical to modern mathematics.

Sanskrit reemerged as the common literary language, and the courts of the Gupta rulers became centers of patronage and production. The famous (or infamous) *Kama Sutra* reached its final form in this period. Although westerners think of it primarily as a sex manual, taken as a whole it is more about love and pleasure generally through good living. Large numbers of plays and poems were created. One notable playwright

was Vishakhadatta, who likely was a statesman who turned to plays; his *Mudrarakshasa* (the Signet/Seal of the Minister) tells the story of Chandragupta Maurya.

Indian science and medicine thrived at this time. The **Sushruta Samhita** is an important collection and redaction on medicine and surgery, discussing diagnosis, pathology, pharmaceutical drugs, and surgery. The text noted different opinions about medicine and biology, and collectively it is one of the great classic texts of medicine.

Aryabhata (476-550) was a mathematician and astronomer who is credited with devising the concept (though not the numeral) of 'zero'. He also wrote on geometry, approximating Pi and devising the concepts of sine and cosine, all of which would be critical to the later development of algebra and trigonometry. Varahamihira (505-587) was another astronomer and mathematician, who improved Aryabhata's tables and worked on optics and the movement of the planets. Perhaps one of the greatest contributions was the development of Indian numerals - what are known in the west as Arabic numerals - but they originated in South Asia, before being adopted by the Persians and then in the west. These numerals, along with the decimal place system, allowed more extensive and easier calculations (have you ever tried multiplying or dividing using Roman numerals).

The Gupta rulers supported Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain monasteries and temples, and the architecture of the period is what people most associate with South Asia; Mathura and Gandhara were major centers of artistic and architectural development.

Decline of the Gupta Empire

The Gupta Empire declined precipitously under Chandragupta II's successors. By the middle of the fifth century a new and dangerous enemy to the empire appeared: nomadic-pastoralist warriors from the Eurasian steppe. These invaders were called Huna or Huns by the Indians, and today are commonly called Hephthalites or White Huns (to

distinguish them from the other Huns, who were attacking the Roman Empire around the same time). In the year 480 AD, the Huns launched a full-scale invasion of India. By the year 500 AD, the Huns had overrun the Gupta Empire. Though the Huns were eventually driven out of India, the Gupta Empire would never recover. The Gupta Dynasty retained only its home territory of Magadha in the chaos, and it had permanently lost control of the rest of India. The

subcontinent once again became a patchwork of independent states. However, the legacy of the Gupta Empire, and the cultural renaissance it presided over, has continued to be a source of inspiration for India up to the present day. Summary: Chandragupta I ascended the throne. He expanded Gupta power from a local kingdom of Magadha to a powerful empire. His son, Samudragupta the Great, conquered much of India for the Guptaroyal family in the kingdom of Magadha to a powerful empire. Samudragupta's son and successor, Chandragupta II, presided over the zenith of Empire. He also sponsored art, music, and other cultural expressions. Some of the great artists and thinkers that flourished in the time of Chandragupta II include Kalidasa, one of the greatest authors of Sanskrit poetry and drama, and Aryabhata, a brilliant and influential mathematician and astronomer. In the fifth century, the Gupta Empire was overrun by the Huns. Though the Huns were eventually driven out of India, the Gupta Dynasty permanently lost control of India, which returned to a patchwork of independent states.

Harsha

Harsha (c. 590-647 CE), also known as **Harshavardhana**, was an Indian emperor who ruled North India from 606 to 647 CE. He was a member of the Vardhana dynasty; and was the son of Prabhakarvardhana who defeated the Alchon Huna invaders, and the younger brother of Rajyavardhana, a king of Thanesar, present-day Haryana. At the height of Harsha's power, his Empire covered much of North and Northwestern India, extended East till Kamarupa, and South until Narmada River; and eventually made Kannauj (in the present Uttar Pradesh state) his capital, and ruled till 647 CE. Harsha was defeated by the south Indian Emperor Pulakeshin II of the Chalukya dynasty in the Battle of Narmada when Harsha tried to expand his Empire into the southern peninsula of India.

The peace and prosperity that prevailed made his court a centre of cosmopolitanism, attracting scholars, artists and religious visitors from far and wide.^[3] The Chinese traveller Xuanzang visited the court of Harsha and wrote a very favourable account of him, praising his justice and generosity. His biography *Harshacharita* ("Deeds of Harsha") written by Sanskrit poet Banabhatta, describes his association with Thanesar, besides mentioning the defence wall, a moat and the palace with a two-storied *Dhavalagriha* (white mansion).

Harshavardhana Administration

Harsha was the head of the all administrative, legislative, judicial and the first commander in the chief of the army. He earned the titles of Maharajadhiraja and Parambhattaraka. He was assisted by a council of ministers, and advised the king on internal and external administration. Avanti was the officer to look after war and peace. Singhanada was the commander in chief of army. Kuntala the head of the cavalry. Skanda Gupta head of war elephants. Samanta Maharaja the head of civil administration.

Division of Empire

The empire was divided into the provinces then into districts (vishayas). The last unit was the village. The principle officer of the province was Uparika and district was Vishayapati and village was Gramika, other officials referred in Harshacharita are Bhogapati, Ayuktaka, Pratipalaka and Purushas. Harsha used his feudatories for administration called as Mahasamanta or Samantamaharaja. High officials are not paid in cash, but assigned as jagirs. Hence jagirdari system existed (feudalism).

Features

1. Harsha reduced administrative expenditure of the state.
2. He reduced to burden of taxation on his subjects.
3. Hence spend larger part of income of the state for public works.

ECONOMY

Income of the state

The primary income of the state was bhaga 1/6th of the product was paid in kind. Hirnya, Bali, Sales-Tax, toll tax, presents from feudatories were other income. The main expenditure was maintenance of king, household, palace, army salary of civil officers, charity and public welfare works. He organised religious assembly once in 5 years and left over in treasury was used to give charity. Even his personal belongings were given as charity.

Army

He had a strong standing army at the centre. It had cavalry, infantry, chariots and war elephants. According to Hiuen Tsang and Harsha he had 60,000 war elephants 30,000 cavalry, 1,00,000 infantry. The commander was Baladhikrta, Maha-Baladhikrta for cavalry it was Vrahadasvatara, Maha-senapati for armed forces, supreme commander was the king.

Justice

Administration of justice was severe during the period of Harsha. The usual punishments were imprisonment for life, loss of limbs, ordeals by fire and water also existed.

Administration and Matrimonial Alliances:

He made matrimonial alliances with rulers of neighbouring states to extend his power and influence. His daughter Dhruvasena-II was married to the ruler of Gujarat. He also had matrimonial alliances with Bhaskar Varman of Kamarupa.

Estimate of Administration

Harsha provided fair and good administration to his subjects. But was considered inferior to the Guptas and Mauryas. He gave everything to charity, maintained peace and took many public welfare schemes. He was a kind generous and his subjects were happy and prosperous.

Harshavardhana

Social Condition

The four-fold division existed in Hindu society, there were subdivision emerging. The position of women and protested by higher class. There was no purdah system, consumption of meat, onion was avoided.

Economic Condition

It was an empire of prosperity, agriculture, industry and trade both in internal and external flourished. Cities like Peshwas, Taxila, Pataliputra and Mathura were destroyed by Hunas. But places of Bannaras, kannuj were prosperous. Kannuj was the capital city hence it was extreme prosperous and well protected. It had large building, beautiful gardens, and swimming pools. It was inhabited by rich cultured and highly learned people. People had interest in literary activities and fine arts.

Religious Conditions

Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism were still popular religions in India. Hinduism had many temples of various god and goddesses. Vishnu and Shiva were the most popular gods of Hindus. Prayag and Banaras were main centres of Hinduism. The Mahayana Buddhism centres were Kashmir, Jallundar, Kanyakubja and Suretपुर. Nalanda was the centre of Buddhism learning. Hence mutual toleration existed and Hinduism was the most prominent religion. He erected many Buddhist Stupas, and monasteries. Buddhist monks were invited annually to discuss their problems. He prohibited slaughter of animals like Asoka. Free distribution of food, medicine to the poor existed. He had tolerance to all religion. At prayag religious assembly was constituted once in every 5 year. He conducted six such assembly. There was an assembly at Kannuj to honour Chinese pilgrim Hiuan tsang and continued for 21 days.

Education and Literature

Harsha himself was a scholar he wrote 3 plays, Nagananda, Ratnavali and Priyadarsika. As Sanskrit was the predominant religion he wrote in Sanskrit. He was a patron of learning and scholars. He spend $\frac{1}{4}$ th of his income for education and learning. He patronised Hiuan Tsang and Banabatta, the authors of Harshacharita and Kadambari. Scholars Mayura, Divakara, Jeyasena were in his court. Universities of Nalanda and Valabhai were the centres of learning. Huan Tsang described the students and teachers of the University lead a life of sanyasins, who were in search of truth. Nalanda was the most celebrated institution students from all part of the country gathered for education and learning. Nearly 5000 students received free education and nearly 1500 teachers in the university. It was not only the centre of Buddhist. Hindus text were also taught. Tsang received education for 5 years. Nearly 1000 lectures delivered every day in the university. Seminars were also conducted. Harsha helped in growth of learning and education. India was the most educated country at that time.

Indian Culture in Foreign Countries:

Indian culture spread to foreign countries during the period of Harsha. Hindu religion became popular in countries of South East Asia. Buddhist monks and scholars went as far as Tibet and China for propagation of Buddhism. The noted scholars who went to China were Kumarajiva, Paramathra, Sindhakara and Dharamdeva. The prominent scholars who went to Tibet were Padma Sambhava, Kamalashila, Sthirmati, Santha Raksita. The scholars translated Buddhist text into local languages of people. Hence Buddhism and Hinduism flourished to different parts of the world.

An Estimate of Harsha

Banabhatta and Huan Tsang described Harsha as one of the greatest rulers of north India. He is said to be the greatest empire-builder. He was a brave military leader. A patron statesman. Hence established a vast empire in North-India. Though he had strong enemies through diplomatic alliances was able to strengthen his position. His entry into Deccan was checked by Pulikesin-II, the Chalukya king of south. But still was powerful to have an extensive empire. He was a capable commander of military and a great conqueror. He was a capable, scholarly, tolerant king. Harsha worked hard for the welfare of his subjects, donated free food and medicine to the poor and destitute. He has carried out a lot of welfare and administrative measures. He patronised education and learning. Nalanda during his time was a great centre of learning. Hence he is regarded as a capable ruler and held a responsible position in ancient India. The successors of Harsha were all short-lived.

Hiuen Tsang on India

The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang visited India during the time of Harsha. He wrote 'Si-Yu-Ki' or Record of the Western Countries, it is known as the best source to know about the socio-cultural condition of India at that time. His main aim was to study Buddhism and collect its religious texts. He stayed in India for 14 years. From Taxila, went to Kashmir, Mathura, Kannauj, Sravasti, Ayadhya, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara and stayed at Nalanda for 5 years. He left India in 644 A.D.

He wrote on the city life of India, wrote about the type of trees and contributed with wood, brick and clay. He said Kannauj as Indians used cotton, silk, wool and wrote Indians were lovers of education, literature and fine arts. He praised about the administration of Harsha, he spent $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Revenue for religious purposes. He said land Revenue formed $\frac{1}{6}$ of the total Revenue. About the army of Harsha, Religion of Harsha. Social life, economic and trade.

It Sing: He studied in Nalanda University and stayed in India between 673-688 came as pilgrimage, He wrote the book titled 'A record of the Buddhist religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago.

The Gupta dynasty and its successors had declined by the end of the 6th century and several changes took place in the Deccan and Southern India. By the time the Vakatakas had collapsed the early Kaluchuris dynasty established itself around 520 A.D and flourished till 600 A.D. The Kaluchuris are noted for *Pasupata Saivism*, a religious movement in the Deccan and South Asia. They excavated the Jogeswari caves, Mandapeshwara, Elephanta and the *Dhumar Lena* at Ellora. They were overtaken by the Western Chalukyas of Karnataka. The Kadambas of Banavasi ruled in South Karnataka and were also overtaken by the Western Chalukyas, who were Dravidian and ruled from Badami (ancient Vatapi) and called *Badami Chalukyas*. Their ruler Pulakesin I fortified the area of Badami in 543 A.D. Pulakesin II was its most notable ruler. He defeated Harsha on the banks of the Narmada. He expanded the kingdom to the northern limits of the Pallava kingdom. However in 642 A.D Pallava king Narasimhavarman occupied Badami for some time. Pulakesin died fighting. However the Chalukyas regained power under Vikramaditya I. Later Vijayaditya (696-733) ruled for 37 years and built many temples. Vikramaditya II ruled 733 - 744 A.D and was victorious over Pallava king Nandivarman II. He was a kind ruler, made temples at Kanchipuram too. Thus this early Chalukyan dynasty ruled most of the Deccan for 200 years; from mid 6th century to mid 8th century. They were overthrown by the Rashtrakutas. This dynasty is remembered for its rock-cutting sculpture and later structural temples. The rock cut tradition is found at *Aihole* and *Badami* in Karnataka.

Chalukyan Art

Chalukyan art of ancient India reaches a classical zenith at the group of monuments at Aihole in the present state of Karnataka in southern India. An amazing example of rock cut temple architecture built by the Chalukyas datable to 550 A.D. is the *Ravana Pahadi*. These Chalukyas were called the Early Western Chalukyas by historians. The Deccan became an interface between the upper north and south below in the Indian peninsula. The Ravana Pahadi cave has a simple facade with two *dwarapalas* and dwarves. The cave has a central *mantapa* (hall) with shrines by its sides. At the back end is a *linga* within a sanctuary. The mantapa is at a lower level than the shrines and sanctuary. The cave walls and ceiling including the corners of the main mandapa or hall have superb sculptures. A multi armed representation of Lord Shiva as Nataraja along with the *saptamatrikas*. Legend has it that

the *saptamatrikas* were created during his battle with Andhakasura. The figures are slim and their garments have striations which are incised on stone. The cave has a figure of Durga as *Mahisasuramardini* depicting her with her with one left hand and folded leg crushing the bull. She holds her weapons including the trident or *trisula* which is very prominent.

Durga temple at Aihole has an apsidal and oblong plan and is part of a fort or *durg*, hence its name Durga. It was built during the late 7th and early 8th centuries by the Early Western Chalukyas. There is a circumbulatory passage around the temple having pillars, some with sculptures. There is an entrance area, a *mandapa* or hall and an inner shrine. The inner shrine has a narrow circumambulatory path. The temple has a small porch approached by two staircases. The inner wall of the temple has many sculptures.; Durga as *Mahisasuramardini* having eight arms. A *shikhara* is present on the temple's east-side over the shrine. The temple might have been dedicated to Lord Vishnu as many of his *avatars* are carved on the temple like Varaha and Narasimha.

The Chalukyas who ruled over Upper Deccan (7th Century AD.) were greatly interested in temple architecture. Followers of Hinduism, they built a number of rock-cut cave-temples and structural temples of brick dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. The important stone temples are the Vishnu temples at Badami and Aihole and the Virupaksha or Shiva Temple at Pattadakal in Bijapur District. The Vishnu temple at Badami was built by Magalesa of the Chaluya Dynasty and contains the Aihole inscription of Vikramaditya II which gives us a lot of information about the Chalukyas. The cave temples especially those at Badami contain fine sculptures of Vishnu reclining on Sesha Nag, Varaha the Boar, Narasimha or the half-lion and half-man and Vamana the dwarf.

The temples at Aihole are closed square mandaps standing on a basement. They have a hall with four central pillars supporting a flat roof. The sloping periphery of the roof is supported on two rows of pillars, the one on the periphery shorter than the other. The space between the two rows of pillars is closed by perforated stone-slabs. The main mandap contains a Nandi. The flat roof has another shrine, the walls of which are made of slabs. The sloping roof helped to drain off the rain water.

The Virupaksna temple at Pattadakal is the earliest temple complex of the Chalukyas. It consists of a high vimana, mandaps and smaller shrines around the courtyard enclosed by a wall. The front and rear walls have large gopura entrances. The smaller shrines are two-storeyed and have vaulted halls. The main square structure has a tall four-storeyed vimana. The mandapa pillars are richly sculptured. The temples at Pattadakal represent both the Northern and Southern style of architecture. .

The large cave temples excavated by the early Chalukyas are located in Badami, Aihole, Ellora and in the Guntur and Krishna districts of Andhra Pradesh. Of the three brahmanical caves at Badami two are dedicated to Vishnu and one to Shiva. These temples consist of a rectangular pillared verandah, a square pillared hall with a small shrine cell at the back. Excavated in an axial plane, they have flat roofs like the mandapa type temples. Wide entrances, tall pillars with cushion type capitals supporting the roof and overhanging eaves are the main features of these cave temples. Figures of animals, humans and divine beings adorn the brackets.

The two cave temples at Aihole are dedicated to Shiva and have rock-cut lingas in them. The cave temples at Ellora are also dedicated to Shiva and contain images of Mahesa, Linga and Nandi. One of the caves is double-storeyed. The cave temples in Andhra Pradesh contain relief sculptures of Ganesha, Brahma, Vishnu, Linga and Nandi.

The Rashtrakutas Art and Architecture

The Rashtrakutas contributed much to the architectural heritage of the Deccan. Art historian Adam Hardy categorizes their building activity into three schools: Ellora, around Badami, Aihole and Pattadakal, and at Sirval near Gulbarga. The Rashtrakuta contributions to art and architecture are reflected in the splendid rock-cut cave temples at Ellora and Elephanta, areas also occupied by Jain monks, located in present-day Maharashtra. The Ellora site was originally part of a complex of 34 Buddhist caves probably created in the first half of the 6th century whose structural details show Pandyan influence. Cave temples occupied by Hindus are from later periods.

The Rashtrakutas renovated these Buddhist caves and re-dedicated the rock-cut shrines. Amoghavarsha I espoused Jainism and there are five Jain cave temples at Ellora ascribed to his period.¹ The most extensive and sumptuous of the Rashtrakuta works at Ellora is their

creation of the monolithic Kailasanath Temple, a splendid achievement confirming the "Balhara" status as "one among the four principal Kings of the world". The walls of the temple have marvellous sculptures from Hindu mythology including Ravana, Shiva and Parvathi while the ceilings have paintings.

The Kailasanath Temple project was commissioned by King Krishna I after the Rashtrakuta rule had spread into South India from the Deccan. The architectural style used is *Karnata Dravida* according to Adam Hardy. It does not contain any of the *Shikharas* common to the *Nagara* style and was built on the same lines as the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal in Karnataka.^{[168][169]} According to art historian Vincent Smith, the achievement at the Kailasanath temple is considered an architectural consummation of the monolithic rock-cut temple and deserves to be considered one of the wonders of the world. According to art historian Percy Brown, as an accomplishment of art, the Kailasanath temple is considered an unrivalled work of rock architecture, a monument that has always excited and astonished travellers.

While some scholars have claimed the architecture at Elephanta is attributable to the Kalachuri, others claim that it was built during the Rashtrakuta period. Some of the sculptures such as *Nataraja* and *Sadashiva* excel in beauty and craftsmanship even that of the Ellora sculptures. Famous sculptures at Elephanta include *Ardhanarishvara* and *Maheshamurthy*. The latter, a three faced bust of Lord Shiva, is 25 feet (8 m) tall and considered one of the finest pieces of sculpture in India. It is said that, in the world of sculpture, few works of art depicting a divinity are as balanced. Other famous rock-cut temples in the Maharashtra region are the Dhumer Lena and Dashvatara cave temples in Ellora (famous for its sculptures of Vishnu and Shivalaleela) and the Jogeshvari temple near Mumbai.

In Karnataka their most famous temples are the *Kashivishvanatha* temple and the Jain Narayana temple at Pattadakal, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Other well-known temples are the Parameshwara temple at Konnur, Brahmadeva temple at Savadi, the Settavva, Kontigudi II, Jadaragudi and Ambigeragudi temples at Aihole, Mallikarjuna temple at Ron, Andhakeshwara temple at Huli (Hooli), Someshwara temple at Sogal, Jain temples at Lokapura, Navalinga temple at Kuknur, Kumaraswamy temple at Sandur, numerous temples at Shirival in Gulbarga, and the *Trikuteshwara* temple at Gadag which was later expanded by Kalyani Chalukyas. Archeological study of these temples show some have the stellar (multigonal) plan later to be used profusely by the Hoysalas at Belur and Halebidu. One of the richest traditions in Indian architecture took shape in the Deccan during this time which Adam Hardy calls *Karnata dravida* style as opposed to traditional Dravida style.

Mahmud of Ghazni

Mahmud of Ghazni (2 November 971 - 30 April 1030) was the first independent ruler of the Turkic dynasty of Ghaznavids, ruling from 999 to 1030. At the time of his death, his kingdom had been transformed into an extensive military empire, which extended from northwestern Iran proper to the Punjab in the Indian subcontinent, Khwarazm in Transoxiana, and Makran.

Highly Persianized Sultan Mahmud continued the bureaucratic, political, and cultural customs of his predecessors, the Samanids, which established the ground for a Persianate state in northwestern India. His capital of Ghazni evolved into a significant cultural, commercial, and intellectual centre in the Islamic world, almost rivalling the important city of Baghdad. The capital appealed to many prominent figures, such as al-Biruni and Ferdowsi.

Mahmud ascended the throne at the age of 27 upon his father's death, albeit after a brief war of succession with his brother Ismail. He was the first ruler to hold the title Sultan ("authority"), signifying the extent of his power while at the same time preserving an ideological link to the suzerainty of the Abbasid Caliphate. During his rule, he invaded and plundered the richest cities and temple towns in medieval India seventeen times, and used the booty to build his capital in Ghazni.

Following the defeat of the Indian Confederacy, after deciding to retaliate for their combined resistance, Mahmud then set out on regular expeditions against them, leaving the conquered kingdoms in the hands of Hindu vassals and annexing only the Punjab region. He also vowed to raid and loot the wealthy region of northwestern India every year.

In 1001 Mahmud of Ghazni first invaded modern day Afghanistan and Pakistan and then parts of India. Mahmud defeated, captured, and later released the Shahi ruler Jayapala, who had moved his capital to Peshawar (modern Pakistan). Jayapala killed himself and was succeeded by his son Anandapala. In 1005 Mahmud of Ghazni invaded Bhatia (probably Bhera), and in 1006 he invaded Multan, at which time Anandapala's army attacked him. The following year Mahmud of Ghazni attacked and crushed Sukhapala, ruler of Bathinda (who had become ruler by rebelling against the Shahi kingdom). In 1013, during Mahmud's eighth expedition into eastern Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Shahi kingdom (which was then under Trilochanapala, son of Anandapala) was overthrown.

In 1014 Mahmud led an expedition to Thanesar. The next year he unsuccessfully attacked Kashmir. In 1018 he attacked Mathura and defeated a coalition of rulers there while also killing a ruler called Chandrapala. In 1021 Mahmud supported the Kannauj king

against Chandela Ganda, who was defeated. That same year Shahi Trilochanapala was killed at Rahib and his son Bhimapala succeeded him. Lahore (modern Pakistan) was annexed by Mahmud. Mahmud besieged Gwalior, in 1023, where he was given tribute. Mahmud attacked Somnath in 1025, and its ruler Bhima I fled. The next year, he captured Somnath and marched to Kachch against Bhima I. That same year Mahmud also attacked the Jats of Jud and defeated them.

Christoph Baumer notes that in 1026 CE, Jats "inflicted heavy losses" on the army of Mahmud while it was on its way from Somnath to Multan. Later in 1027 CE, he avenged the attack by Jats, who had also been impervious to "forced Islamisation" for the last three centuries, by ravaging the fleet of Jats in the Indus river. Even though Jats had a bigger fleet than Mahmud, he is said to have around 20 archers on each of his 1400 boats, who were stocked with "special projectiles" carrying naphtha, and Jats' fleet was blazed by them.

The Indian kingdoms of Nagarkot, Thanesar, Kannauj, and Gwalior were all conquered and left in the hands of Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist kings as vassal states and he was pragmatic enough not to neglect making alliances and enlisting local peoples into his armies at all ranks. Since Mahmud never kept a permanent presence in the northwestern subcontinent, he engaged in a policy of destroying Hindu temples and monuments to crush any move by the Hindus to attack the Empire; Nagarkot, Thanesar, Mathura, Kannauj, Kalinjar (1023) and Somnath all submitted or were raided.

Muhammad Ghori

Muhammad Ghori born **Shihab ad-Din** (1149 - March 15, 1206), also known as **Muhammad of Ghor**, was the Sultan of the Ghurid Empire along with his brother Ghiyath ad-Din Muhammad from 1173 to 1202 and as the sole ruler from 1202 to 1206. He is credited with laying the foundation of Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent, which lasted for several centuries. He reigned over a territory spanning over parts of modern-day Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Northern India, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Mu'izz ad-Din took the city of Ghazni in 1173 to avenge the death of his ancestor Muhammad ibn Suri at the hands of Mahmud of Ghazni and used it as a launching-pad for expansion into northern India. In the meantime, he assisted his brother Ghiyath in his contest with the Khwarazmian Empire for the lordship of Khorasan in Western Asia. In 1175, Mu'izz captured Multan from the Hamid Ludi dynasty, and also took Uch in 1175. He also annexed the Ghaznavid principality of Lahore in 1186, the last haven of his Persianised rivals. After

consolidating his rule in North-West domain Mu'izz al-Din wish to invade heart of Northern India which was then under control of Rajputs.

A confused struggle then ensued among the remaining Ghuri leaders, and the Khwarizmi were able to take over the Ghurid Sultanate in about 1215. Though the Ghurids' empire was short-lived, and petty Ghurid states remained in power until the arrival of the Timurids, Mu'izz's conquests laid the foundations of Muslim rule in India. Qutbu I-Din Aibak, a former slave (Mamluk) of Mu'izz, was the first Sultan of Delhi.

After having helped his brother in expanding the western frontiers of the Ghurid Empire, he began to focus on India. Mu'izz's campaign against the Qarmatians rulers of Multan in 1175 had ended in victory. He turned south, and led his army from Multan to Uch and then across the desert towards the Chaulukya capital of Anhilwara (modern day Patan in Gujarat) in 1178. On the way, Mu'izz suffered a defeat at the Battle of Kayadara , during his first campaign against an Indian ruler. Gujarat was ruled by the young Chaulukya ruler Mularaja II ; the Chaulukya forces included the armies of their feudatories such as the Naddula Chahamana ruler Kelhanadeva, the Jalor Chahamana ruler Kirtipala, and the Arbuda Paramara ruler Dharavarsha. Mu'izz's army had suffered greatly during the march across the desert, and the Chaulukyas inflicted a major defeat on him at the village of Kayadara (near to Mount Abu, about forty miles to the north-east of Anhilwara). The invading army suffered heavy casualties during the battle, and also in the retreat back across the desert to Multan. However, Mu'izz was able to take Peshawar and Sialkot.

In 1186, Mu'izz, along with Ghiyath, ended the Ghaznavid dynasty after having captured Lahore and executed the Ghaznavid ruler Khusrau-Malik.

Mu'izz shortly returned to Ghor, and along with the rulers of Bamiyan and Sistan, aided his brother Ghiyath in defeating the forces of Sultan Shah at Merv in 1190. He also annexed most of the latter's territories in Khorasan.

FIRST BATTLE OF TARAIN

In 1191, Mu'izz proceeded towards Indian Sub-continent through the Khyber Pass in modern-day Pakistan and was successful in reaching Punjab. Mu'izz captured a fortress, Bathinda in present-day Punjab state on the northwestern frontier of Prithvirāj Chauhān's kingdom. After appointing a Qazi Zia-ud-Din as governor of the fortress, he received the news that Prithviraj's army, led by his vassal prince Govind Tai were on their way to besiege the fortress. The two armies eventually met near the town of Tarain, 14 miles from Thanesar in present-day Haryana. The

battle was marked by the initial attack of mounted Mamluk archers to which Prithviraj responded by counter-attacking from three sides and thus dominating the battle. Mu'izz mortally wounded Govind Tai in personal combat and in the process was himself wounded, whereupon his army retreated and Prithvirāj's army was deemed victorious.

According to Rima Hooja and Kaushik Roy, Govind Tal was wounded by Ghori, and later fought at the second battle of Tarain, where he was killed.

SECOND BATTLE OF TARAIN

On his return to Ghor, Mu'izz made preparations to avenge the defeat. According to Firishta, the Rajput army consisted of 3,000 elephants, 300,000 cavalry and infantry (most likely a gross exaggeration). Minhaj-i-Siraj, stated Mu'izz brought 120,000 fully armored men to the battle in 1192.

Prithviraj had called his banners but hoped to buy time as his banners (other Rajputs under him or his allies) had not arrived. Before the next day, Mu'izz attacked the Rajput army before dawn. Rajputs had a tradition of fighting from sunrise to sunset. Although they were able to quickly form formations, they suffered losses due to surprise attack before sunrise. The Rajput army was eventually defeated and Prithviraj was taken prisoner and subsequently executed.

