

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ  
ಮಾನಸಗಂಗೋತ್ರಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು ೫೭೦ ೦೦೬



KARNATAKA STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY  
Manasagangotri, Mysore - 570 006

# HISTORY M P P

001

## MASTERS' PREPARATORY PROGRAMME



**BLOCK - 1**

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ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಇರುವ ಅವಕಾಶಗಳನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ಶಿಕ್ಷಣವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಜಾತಂತ್ರೀಕರಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆರಂಭಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ನೀತಿ 1986

*The Open University system has been initiated in order to augment opportunities for higher education and as instrument of democratizing education.*

**National Education Policy 1986**

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ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯವು ದೂರಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹುಮಾಧ್ಯಮಗಳನ್ನು ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.  
.....ವಿದ್ಯಾಕಾಂಕ್ಷಿಗಳನ್ನು ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಪಾದನೆಗಾಗಿ ಕಲಿಕಾ ಕೇಂದ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುವ ಬದಲು, ಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು ವಿದ್ಯೆ ಕಲಿಯುವವರ ಬಳಿ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುವ ವಾಹಕವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಡಾ. ಕುಳಂದೈಸ್ವಾಮಿ

*"The Open University system makes use of Multimedia in distance education system.  
..... it is vehicle which transports knowledge to the place of learners rather than transport to the place of learning.*

**Dr. Kulanidai Swamy**

### ವಿಶ್ವ ಮಾನವ ಸಂದೇಶ

ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಮಗುವು ಹುಟ್ಟುತ್ತಲೇ - ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ. ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತಾ ನಾವು ಅದನ್ನು 'ಅಲ್ಪ ಮಾನವ'ನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಅದನ್ನು 'ವಿಶ್ವಮಾನವ'ನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುವುದೇ ವಿದ್ಯೆಯ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವಾಗಬೇಕು.

ಮನುಜ ಮತ, ವಿಶ್ವ ಪಥ, ಸರ್ವೋದಯ, ಸಮನ್ವಯ, ಪೂರ್ಣದೃಷ್ಟಿ; ಈ ಪಂಚಮಂತ್ರ ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಬೇಕಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಂದರೆ, ನಮಗೆ ಇನ್ನು ಬೇಕಾದುದು ಆ ಮತ ಈ ಮತ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಮನುಜ ಮತ. ಆ ಪಥ ಈ ಪಥ ಅಲ್ಲ; ವಿಶ್ವ ಪಥ. ಆ ಒಬ್ಬರ ಉದಯ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ; ಸರ್ವರ ಸರ್ವಸ್ವರದ ಉದಯ. ಪರಸ್ಪರ ವಿಮುಖವಾಗಿ ಸಿಡಿದು ಹೋಗುವುದಲ್ಲ; ಸಮನ್ವಯಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಸಂಕುಚಿತ ಮತದ ಆಂತರಿಕ ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಭೌತಿಕ ಪಾರಮಾರ್ಥಿಕ ಎಂಬ ಭಿನ್ನದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಅಲ್ಲ; ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನೂ ಭಗವದ್ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಕಾಣುವ ಪೂರ್ಣದೃಷ್ಟಿ.

ಕುವೆಂಪು

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### **Gospel of Universal Man**

Every Child, at birth, is the universal man. But, as it grows, we turn it into "a petty man". It should be the function of education to turn it again into the enlightened "universal man".

The Religion of Humanity, the Universal Path, the Welfare of All, Reconciliation, the Integral Vision- these *five mantras* should become View of the Future. In other words, what we want henceforth is not this religion or that religion, but the Religion of Humanity ; not this path or that path, but the Universal Path ; not the well-being of this individual or that individual, but the Welfare of All ; not turning away and breaking off from one another, but reconciling and uniting in concord and harmony ; and, above all, not the partial view of a narrow creed, not the dual outlook of the material and the spiritual, but the Integral Vision of seeing all things with the eye of the Divine.

**Kuvempu**

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**Karnataka State  
Open University**  
Manasagangotri,  
Mysore - 570 006.

**History  
MPP**

# **BLOCK**

## **1**

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### ***Indian History and culture to 6th century A.D***

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### Block - 1

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# **BLOCK - I**

## **INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE TO 6TH CENTURY A.D**

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### **UNIT - I**

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#### **NATURE AND SCOPE OF HISTORY - SOURCES OF INDIAN HISTORY**

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## **1.0 OBJECTIVES**

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From the study of this unit you will be able to

- ◆ know the meaning of history
- ◆ have an idea of the various definitions of history
- ◆ understand the nature of history
- ◆ know the scope of history
- ◆ learn the uses of history
- ◆ describe the sources of history
- ◆ find out the importance of sources
- ◆ explain the archeological and literary sources

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

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In this unit we are going to understand the meaning definitions, nature and scope as well as use of history. Besides we are also going to study the sources of history where the archeological and literary sources referred.

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## **1.2 MEANING OF HISTORY**

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It is highly necessary to begin study our course of history with a unit on understanding the meaning history. It is our idea is to made it clear the meaning of the word 'history'. 'History is a German Word 'Geschichte' meaning an intelligible and significant narrative of past events. According to some historians history is a Greek Word, which means inquiry, research, exploration or information. For a long time history was taken to mean a record of the facts. Hence it is clear that history which is a record of unique events in the life of mankind. It is not only the conserving and understanding of what has happened but also the completion of what has been going on at present. The complete process involves a march towards human destiny.

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## **1.3 DEFINITIONS OF HISTORY**

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Historical method is a technique developed to present the past events in their correct perspective. It trains scholars in the art of history. Before we discuss the techniques of writing history, we should know something about the question of what is history and what is the nature of historical

explanations. To define a subject is not an easy task. Sir John Adams says that even if we ask a philosopher to define a dog well on pain of death he might as well lose his life. History which is a record of unique events in the life of mankind is a stir and a vibration of life. It is not only the conserving and the understanding of what has been happened, but also the completing of what has been going on at present. The completing process involves a march towards destiny. Man looks at a wilderness when he was a savage and even as he looks he beholds a garden which could be created out of the rich soil. He is having an eye not merely on the ditches and uneven surface of the past but also on the prospect of building a beautiful mansion for the future. Hence the nature and scope of history are too vast and complex. Let us begin with a few definitions of history.

Greeks were the earliest to define history. It was Dionysius who gave us an idea that "history is philosophy teaching by examples. According to him history offers us the quintessence of human experience whose study has universal value. When lesson are drawn from real life, and when these lessons are ordered to form a coherent whole, we have history. Aristotle says that history contrasts research in to the facts with the logical work of explanation. This definition is significant as the from 'contrasts' bring to our mind the relative value of each fact which must be studied with the purpose of explaining how one is related to other in permanent and systematic manner. He also further suggests that history is an account of the unchanging past. The past its nature can never change. Polybius and Thucydides think that history is a story of things worthy of being remembered. **Sir Francis Bacon** define history as a discipline which makes men wise, wisdom is the ability of distinguish between right and wrong. History produces a sobriety which he calls wisdom.

**Professor finlay** says 'History is any sequence of events traced in their relations'. **Professor Maitland** says, what men have done and said, above all what they have thought that is history. In its wider sense history is a method of explanation of the present by reference to the stage it has passed.

**G.I. Reneir** says that history is the story of men having in societies. History is thus the growth of man's mind, man's intelligence and how he used discover better ways of

living and to build up orderly societies which he calls civilization or culture. **Carlyle** regards history as a record of human accomplishment and that the lives of great men form the substance of history. In other words history is nothing but the biography of great men.

**Lecky** says that history is the record and explanation of revolution. The emphasis in this definition is on ideological and moral values, and not on factual or contingent factors. **Burke** thinks that history is a preceptor of prudence and not of principles. **Seelay** says that history is past politics and politics is present history. **Lord is Acton** said that history is the unfolding story of human freedom. **A.L. Rowse** said that history is essentially the record of the life of men in societies in their geographical and their physical environment. **Seignobos** says that history is essentially a science of reasoning since all historical knowledge is indirect. **E.H. Carr** thinks that history mean interpretation. **Earnest Bernheim** gave a significant definition that history is a science that investigates and presents in their contexts of Psycho-physical causality, the facts determined by space and time of the evolution of men in their individual as well as typical and collective activity as social beings. Accordingly it is a science and it is quite different from fiction. It's main job is to search, explore, investigate and enquiry with the intention of presenting the fruit of this search in the proper context which is defined as one of casualty. A history has to go to the root of the problems to explain the origin of the facts which lies in the combination of mental and material factors determined at a particular point of time and in a particular place. The facts that are thus investigated relate to the progress or change in the position of man so far as his individual or collective activity is concerned.

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#### 1.4 NATURE OF HISTORY

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In the past, history was only a catalogue of events explained in a descriptive manner. Now we study history in a critical and scientific manner where in historian thinks of himself instead of repeating stories found in old books. Now history becomes a study of reality. The function of the historian is neither to love the past nor to be free from the past but to master the past in order to understand the present. Most of the scholars agree the history is the story of experience of



men. History is a social science and it is not merely an art of arranging and narrating past events but a deep study of the fundamental forces that determine the course of human progress. The forces that influence human mind and shape the course of human action are uniform all over the world. A historian is greatly engaged in finding out what happened how it happened and why it happened. History can be of events or of the memory of events

There is a continuity of growth and development in human society and history takes note of these developments in order to present them in their proper context of time and space. Some scholars think that history repeats itself but others deny this idea. Some scholars hold that all history is contemporary history where by the past and the present are linked in one chain of common process.

History is regarded as exceedingly dynamic. It concerns itself with the ever changing drama of life, and is related to the rise, growth and decay of a culture. **E.H. Carr** is of the opinion that history is an unending dialogue between the present and the past. History calls for imagination which varies from person to person. **Lord Acton** holds the view that the greatest achievement of history is to develop and perfect and arms conscience.

The nature of history changes according to the prevailing philosophy of history and from historian to historian. For instance the Indians do not like the writings of colonial masters on Indian history where they like to write the history themselves. There those we may expect the patriotic error etc. When **Karl Marx** enumerated his ideology of economic determinism, he gave a different slant to history through his materialistic interpretation of the subject. Another approach in history the use of history as an interpretation of the past in order to predict how the future. Historians concern with the issues of what, how and why of problem. History is dynamic and never static and it moves in time. This movement in time has been considered by different cultures in different ways. Some call it Cyclical, others call it linear and third group calls it a progress.

Thus the nature of history is very complex it lends itself to various explanations. No one branch of history is more than a single glimpse at a vast complex of phenomena.

History is an unending dialogue between the present and the past. It goes on changing the nature of its interest to man from time to time. **Namier** has beautifully summed up the nature of history. "The functions of the historian is akin to that of the painter and not of the photographic camera, to discover and set forth to single out and stress that which is of the nature of the thing and not to reproduce indiscriminately all that meet the eyes what matters is history is the great outline and the significant detail what must be avoided is the deadly morals of irrelevant narrative. History is therefore necessarily subjective and individual."

The view that history repeats itself is not correct, for historical records do not repeat since every fact is unique. Identical facts occurring at different times are not the same facts but similar facts. Similar historical situation can recur. There could be a revolution, a reformation, a colonization, a political upheaval, a social change and an economic transformation, but all these cannot be identical. Traveyan is a right when he says that history repeats itself and history never repeats itself are both equally true. It is not always true that a political or social revolution is followed by military despotism. George Washington was not a military despot although he led a political revolution.

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## 1.5 SCOPE OF HISTORY

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Now the scope of history is widened and new areas are being included in its study. History is assuming three dimensions. Instead of the study of kings and dynasties, wars and conquests, more human conception is now envisaged which includes society, economy and the day today life of men women and children. History is the study of the culture of man.

History performs for main functions. One is the collection of data and the other is the interpretation of the data to explain the fundamental forces of history. It is the study of objectivity and scientific besides it is also study of subjectivity and artistic. The scope of history is not merely furnishing of a catalogue of events but critical and analytical study in order to draw useful and contractive inferences. In other words main interpretation of facts. The scope of history is to enquire into the origin of the past and the determine relationship and comparisons. **Toynbee** says that great

moments of history were not those when empires were built up and great statesmen played their vital role but the periods of depressions which led important movements. History has to consider all discoveries, inventions and adventures, but primarily the social life of men, his political achievements, his cultural attainments, his constitutional arrangements and his economic endeavours form the main scope of history. Even the commoner is also attracted attention of the historians who played an important role from the pyramids of Egypt to skyscrapers of modern times, he has played an important part behind the scene and hence deserves to be brought in increasing measure within the scope of history. Beside, we have universal history, which takes into account the significant activities of entire mankind.

Thus, the historian takes interest in great variety of subdivision of history. He takes interest in good many subjects of neighbouring disciplines such as economics, politics, sociology, Psychology and literature. With literature he has very close affiliation as history often becomes literature. From the 19th century the scope of history has been much widened. The 19th century called "The Century of history" has humanized history and made it a centre of reality and of thought.

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## **1.6 SOURCES OF INDIAN HISTORY**

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To reconstruct the history of any country historian needs the source materials. These sources are available in the form of archaeological and literary forms. Even for Indian history also sources are very very important. Fortunately enough, we have enough source materials for the study of Indian history and culture.

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## **1.7 CATEGORIES OF SOURCES**

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For the convenience of our study and research we have divided the source materials into several categories. But all these broadly divided into two i.e., Archeological sources and Literary sources. The archaeological sources are further divided into excavations, epigraphy or inscriptions, numismatics and monuments. The literary sources are categorized into two i.e., Indigenous literature and Foreign literature. Let us study these in detail.

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## **1.8 ARCHEOLOGICAL SOURCES:**

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In the unit we will be able to know the importance of the archeological sources for the reconstruction of history. Archeology is the science of antiquity. It is a study of the remains of the past. It bridges the gap between history and prehistory and supplies the most important evidence for the reconstruction of history. Archeological sources are indispensable to understand the splendid achievements of Indian culture through the ages. Archeological sources can be studied under four divisions i.e., excavation, epigraphy, numismatics and monuments.

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### **1.8.1 EXCAVATIONS**

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With the Establishment of the Archaeological Department excavation conducted continuously at several places. It yielded good results at Saranath, Sanchi, Patna and other places. The Epoch making excavation was done in 1922, when they discovered the Harappan culture which has been aptly described the romance of archaeology. Formerly it was presumed that the so-called Aryan settlers brought civilization to India. But the excavation at Harappa and Mahenjodaro sites thoroughly altered the knowledge of ancient Indian history. India came to be regarded as one of the cradles of ancient civilization and rank herself with those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The recent research at Lothal, Gujarat and other places prove the continuity and prevalence of the civilization over a vast area. The recently discovered objects at Gauhati reveal the spread of the Harappan culture as far as Assam. The Archeological excavation and exploration in various South East Asian Countries establish the cultural expansion of India over these countries. Much work is yet to be undertaken in the field of different parts of India which will definitely yield precious informations.

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### **1.8.2 EPIGRAPHY**

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Epigraphy is the study of inscription. They are the sources of highest value for the reconstruction of the history of ancient Indian. Inscriptions engraved on stones, rocks, Pillars and copper plates. They are in the languages of Sanskrit and Pali and also the mixed dialects or the languages of the

South India like Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. Many thousand of inscription start with the memorable edicts of the Mauryan emperor Asoka, Who is some time called his own biographer. Inscriptions are divided into two classes i.e., official and private. The official records are mostly produced by the court poets and they are landgrants. The most famous example is the inscription of Samudragupta engraved on an Asoka Pillar at Allahabad. It describes the achievements of the emperor. It is the Chief document of his memorable reign. The Aihole inscription of Pulakesi II, the Chalukya emperor belongs to the same type. The Talagunda pillar inscription of Kakustravarman, the Belur Temple inscription of Hoysala Visnuvardhana are the other important examples of this kind. One Kudiyamalai inscription of Mahendravarman throw much light on the development of Karnataka music. Similarly Mandasari inscription of Gupta period are very useful in bringing to light the organization of the guilds.

Some of the inscription also brought the knowledge of the existence of dynasties which do not figure in any other sources. The place of the inscription help the historian to a great extent in determining the Jurisdiction of a king. In conclusion we may say that the epigraphic records of ancient India have been the principal sources of our information regarding the political history and inscription have also proved to be of great value of supplementing literary evidence in regard to the social, religions and economic condition of India. Infact they throw light on all aspects of culture.

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### 1.8.3 NUMISMATICS

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Numismatics is the study of Coins. Coins constitute another important sources of information regarding ancient Indian history. They are useful for testing the accuracy of the informations supplied by literature, but occasionally they offer facts of independent value. Coins containing dates are very great assistance in the fixation of Chronology coins also gives us the names of the kings, besides religious and economic conditions reveals indirectly. Because of these coins only the history of the Bactrian, Parathian and Seythian princes of India were recorded. Guptas issued variety of coins is gold in majority and rarely silver coins. These Gupta Coins

corroborates the knowledge of the social and economic condition derived from other sources. To conclude we can know about the economic conditions of the people and the extent of various kingdom of from these coins.

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#### **1.8.4 MONUMENTS**

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The ancient monuments are of great importance in tracing the history and evolutions of Indian art. The art of a country is generally regarded as the fair index of its culture. A large number of antiquarian remains such a buildings, statues, terracotta, ornamental and decorative objects discovered in different parts of India furnish a lot of information to reconstruct the history of Indian Art. The Monuments remains of the Harappan Culture have shown the great skill of the people in town planning. Apart form Monumental remains of Harappan culture thousands of temples constructed in historical times are remaining intact in different parts of the country are immensely useful in tracing the development of Indian art. They enable the students of history to gain a good idea of the evolution of architecture, Sculpture and in some cases painting also. The Satavahana, Chalukya, Pallava, Chola and Hoysala temples are not only known for the super architectural and Sculptural beauty but also they depict in Myriad forms of beauty. The Ajanta and Ellora Caves are the outstanding testimonials to the high degree of perfection that ancient Indian Monuments have thus considerably helped towards a proper appreciation of the life and spirit of India.

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#### **1.9 LITERARY SOURCES**

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One of the other sources for the reconstruction of the history is the literary sources. It is one of the potential sources which gives us lot of information regarding the historical facts. Literature also throws a lot of light on the kings and their achievements including the social, economic, religious and also cultural informations.

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##### **1.9.1 INDIGENOUS LITERATARY SOURCES**

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The Indigenous Literary sources are divided into three subdivisions i.e., religious, semi historical and historical works. The Rigveda is the earliest literary source. Later on entire

strata of Vedic literature were composed. This literature consists of the four Vedas. Brahamanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Sutras, Ramayana and Mahabharata epics, Puranas etc. The Vedic literature throws considerable light on different aspects of social and economic conditions, marriage, caste system, occupation, social customs, and religious conditions, including the political organization and geographical conditions. The great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata contain lot of information pertaining to social and religious life of the people. The Mahabharata is regarded as an encyclopedia of ancient Indian culture. It consists of a detailed accounts relating to religion and philosophical systems. It deals with the fine art like music, dance, Painting and architecture. In shantiparva it deals with the state, king, political theories as well as law and administration.

The Puranas which were once discarded by scholars as baseless legends consists of very useful historical information. On account of the painstaking study by E.E pargitor the value of the puranas are recognized as the sources of history by the scholars. The famous seer vyasa is said to have composed eighteen major and eighteen minor puranas before the composition of Mahabharata. Among the eighteen major Purvanas, Vayupurana, Vishnu Purana, Bhavishya Purana and Padma Puranas are the earliest works and others were composed at different centres. Some of the puranas contains reference to the origin of the Nanda and Mauryan dynasties. Some of these also contains Chapters on Philosphy, Art and Architecture, social history and political organization. Another class of work called the Smritis of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Brihaspathi, Narada and others also contains a lot of information in relating to the origin of state, kingship and administration of justice.

The Buddhist and the Jain worker are also useful in the reconstruction of the history of India. The Buddhist works which are mostly written in Pali like Suttapitaka, Digannikaya, Majji Manikaya, Divyavdana and the Various other Jatakas and Jain works like Acharanagsutra consists of valuble historical information. They are very useful to reconstruct the religious history of ancient India.

We have many literary works which speaks of historical events. The works of Panini, Patanjali, Kalidasa, Vishakadata, Sudraka, Bharavi and others works contains reference to historical events. Many works composed in Tamil during the Sangam period throw much light on the political, social and economic conditions of South India. Thirukkural, which has immortalised the name of Thiruvalluar contain chapters on political and social organizations. It discusses the duties of the kings and other officers. Further it has a practice among the ancient Indian kings to maintain court poets. The court poets composed works referring to the achievements of their patrons. Although the works of the court poets are fully exaggerations, they supply valuable historical information and hence they may be regarded as semihistorical works. Harshacharita of Bana, Gadayudda of Ranna, Vikramankadeva Charita of Bilhana, Kalingattupparani of Jayagondar, Prithviraja charita of Chandbardari and other literary works contain valuable historical information. Bana in his Harshacharita trace the origin and early history of the Vardhana dynasty and narrates the achievement of Sri Harsha Vardhana. This work is also helpful to reconstruct the social and religious history of the period. Arthasarta consists of one hundred and fifty chapter which divided into three parts. The first part deals with the kings, his council and the various departments. The second part consists of the civil and the criminal law. The third part consists of an elaborate account of interstate law, Diplomacy and War. It is an authoritative work on ancient Indian Polity and Social organizations. Kalhana's Rajatarangini or the Annals of Kashmir is an authoritative work on ancient Indian polity Kalhana completed his work in 1149 - 50. He traces the history from the very early period. He refers of Asoka and Kanishka. The author culled out information from all available sources. This careful and painstaking study and approach are note worthy. In spite of a few draw backs, Kalhana's Rajatarangini, has been regarded as a historical work. Though the idigenous literary accounts are defective from the point of view of political history and archeology they are main sources of information for the reconstruction of ancient Indian history and culture.



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## 1.9.2 FOREIGN LITERARY SOURCES

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The prosperity and culture of India attracted foreign merchants, conquerors and the pilgrims from the time immemorial. The accounts left by the foreign travellers, traders and epilogues are highly useful to reconstruct the history of ancient India. In fact, the indigenous sources are supplemented to a great extent by the account of the foreign travellers. With the Persian conquest of Sindh and Punjab, the contact between India and the West increased. Herodotus who never visited India refers to the Persian conquests of North Western India. Our information regarding Alexander's invasion is derived solely from the accounts left by Greek and Roman writers like Quintus, Eurtus, Diodorus, Arrian, Plutarch and others. The Indica of Megasthenes which is the quotation of the authors like Arrian, Strabo & Justin and others throw light on the political and social institution of the Mauryan period. Chinese travellers like Fa-hien and Hieun Tsang left for us valuable account about this country. Taranath, a well known, Tibetan historian, furnishes the useful information on Buddhism. Muslim authors inform us how gradually Muslim armies conquered India. Alberuni also contributed to reconstruct the history of India as well as the social and religious conditions of Hindus in the period of decadence. Among the early Muslim chroniclers Alberuni, Sulaiman, Almasudi, Hasan Nizami and Ibnut Authir deserve special mention.

The Arab and Persian scholars also give us valuable accounts relating to India from the 8th Century A.D. India attracted the attention of the Arab writer Alberuni who accompanied Sultan Muhamad of Ghazni of India is the most famous incident among the Arab and Muslim writers. He took himself to study the Indian culture and civilization. He learnt Sanskrit. His book 'Alhind' or 'India' is the most accurate and comprehensive account of India. This book is an admirable survey of Indian Mathematics, physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, Geography, Philosophy, religion, rites, customs and social ideas. 'Alhind' supplies valuable information to reconstruct the history of India. Sulaiman and Almasud wrote on the Rastrakutas.

Chinese pilgrims like Fahien, Hieuntsang and Itsing visited India, learnt Sanskrit and Pali and left behind the account of the Social and religious conditions of India. Their works like Siyuki of Hieuntsang describes political conditions of India in the 7th Century. Harsha and Pulakesi II, Nalanda, and other information referred in it. Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa of Mahanama of ceylon are also useful. About Sufi Movements ShaikAli Hujwin Shaik Nizamuddin, Amir Hasan, Sijzi and letters of Shaikh Sarafuddni Yahya wrote lot of information. Isami, Badauni Sirhindi are the persons spoke about the Delhi Sultans. Along with this also thrived Bhakti Movement. The Modern works like "An out line of religious literature of India by Yusuf Hussain and J.N. Faruqsiyar and R.G. Bhandarkar's Vaisnavism. Shaivism and Minor religious system are some of the important work on Bhakti Movement. Tarachand's influence of Islam on Indian Culture is a work which deals with the impact of Islamic religion and culture on Indian Society.

For the study of Western influence 19th Century renaissance and awakening of Muslims We have to depend on Published works of Modern period. Asia and Western influence by K.M Panikkas treats the subject, Western influence on Indian Culture from a Critical Angle. We have also Malley's Modern India and the west and Dodwell's A sketch of history of India 1858 - 1918 For the same period. We have some, published primary works like Devendranath's autobiography which deals with Brahmasamaj. Kesava Chandra sen's lecture on Indian is a collection of the lectures. The light of truth by Dayanada Saraswathi and the complete works of Swmay Vivekananda are some of the other important works, for the study of socio-religious movement of this period for a proper understanding of Muslim awakening with last quarter of the 19th century Tahdeeb-ul-Akhlaq gives us many informations. The improvement in Manner and Moral a Urdu Magazine Published by Sir Syed Ahamad Khan is very helpful. This magazine was devoted to the cause of social and religious, upliftment of Muslims. Among Modern works Cantwell smiths Modern Islam in India and G.F. I Grahams biography on Sir Syed Ahmed Khan gives a lot of information for this period.

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### 1.10 LET US SUM UP

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In this Unit an attempt was made to

- ◆ understand the meaning, definitions, nature and scope of history
- ◆ to know the sources and its division which are helpful for the reconstruction of Indian history and culture

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### 1.11 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

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1. Discuss the meaning and definition of History
2. Explain the nature and scope of history
3. What are the sources available for the reconstruction of history ?
4. Critically evaluate the value of the Archaeological sources of India

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### 1.12 BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

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- |    |                  |   |                                 |
|----|------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Carr E.H         | : | What is history                 |
| 2. | Colling Wood R.G | : | The Idea of History             |
| 3. | Ali Sheik B      | : | History : its theory and method |
| 4. | Romila Thaper    | : | History of India Vol I          |
| 5. | Majumdar R.C     | : | Ancient India Vol I             |
| 6. | Lunia B.N        | : | An Evolutin of Indian Culture   |

**Dr. A. Somashekar**

Notes

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

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## UNIT - 2

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### HARAPPAN CULTURE AND VEDIC AGE

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Discovery of Harappan Culture
- 2.3 Major Sites and Script
- 2.4 Town Planning and Architecture
  - 2.4.1 Self Assessment Questions
- 2.5 Political Life
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  - 2.22.4 Education
- 2.23 Economy
- 2.24 Religion
- 2.25 Let us Sum Up
- 2.26 Self Assessment Questions
- 2.27 Books for Further Studies

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## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit you should be able to :

Describe how Harappan Culture discovered

- ◆ List out the major sites of this Culture
- ◆ Explain the town planning and architecture

Understand the political life

Describe the social structure of the period

Understand the economy of the culture

- ◆ Know the religious life of the period

Under stand the Vedic Age

Know about the Aryans

List the Vedic Texts

Understand the polity of the Vedic Period

Describe the society and culture

- ◆ Know the Economy

Understand the religious Condition

Describe the Science and technology

Understand the later Vedic Age

Know the polity, society and economy of the Later Vedic Period

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## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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In the previous units you have already discussed the nature and scope of history and also the source for reconstruction of the history of India. Now in this unit you are going to study Harappan culture and the Vedic and later Vedic Age. You will be introduced to some of the important feature of the Harappan Culture and the Vedic and later Vedic Age.

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## 2.2 DISCOVERY OF HARAPPAN CULTURE

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The Remnants of this culture traced back as early as 1856, When some of the engineers who dugged earth to put up Railway lines in the north- western region where they come across bricks belonging to this culture and they used

these bricks for the railway line construction. They did not understand its antiquity. In 1861, Alexander Cunningham discovered some seals at Harappa (in Punjab) and thought the writing was in Brahmi. Later in 1922, Archeologists like Sir John Marshal, along with Dayaram Sahni and R.D. Bannerjee found a Buddhist stupa at Mohenjodaro. With this they came across the trace of the ancient culture and excavation continued at Harappa and Mohenjodaro. Number of articles found on the sites of Harappan culture and our history is depended mostly on these findings. The script of this culture is not deciphered. The study of this great culture is not adequate and complete. So many question like to political organizations, language social structure and other aspect are still to be discovered.

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### 2.3 MAJOR SITES AND SCRIPT

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Harappan People were lived in town and there were number of towns which are very big and also with all city infrastructures. Some of the major sites are as follows:

**Mohenjodaro** is known as the 'mound of the dead' and it is situated in the plains lying between the river Indus and Nara Canal Larkhana District of Sindh. There flowed another river mehtan, but it was disappeared subsequently. Here the valley has been very fertile and the surrounding region was called "Nakhilstan" or the 'Garden of Sindh' It is believed that this site was built some five thousand years ago and rebuilt no less than seven times".

**Harappa** is located in Montgomery district some historian say that Harappa has been larger than Mohenjodaro in size but Percival Spear says that it was the same size of three miles in circumference. At present it is a ruined city. Regarding its antiques, some historian regard Harappan culture older than that of Mohenjodaro, but the view is not support by many historians.

**Ropar, Jaisalmer and Lothal** : The excavation in Ropar (the present Punjab) Jaisalmer (Rajasthan) and Lothal (near Ahmadabad) lead to existence of some cities which belongs to the Harappan Culture.



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## SCRIPT:

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Harappan people knew reading and writing. About 530 seals were discovered at Harappa, Mohenjodrao and they throw light on the literacy of the people. Their script was pictographic. It was written from right to left and from left to right on alternative lines. According to Stuart piggot 250 different symbols were used by them. Many beautiful figures were carved on seals. They included the figures of animals, plants, and human beings among them the statue of the Yogic pose and an image of dancing girl are specially attractive. But so far it has not fully deciphered.

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## 2.4 TOWN PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

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The Harappan people lived in cities and towns of different dimensions. A large number of sites have been noticed. Mohenjodaro and Harappa were the big cities. The town planning of the Harappan culture has been regarded as one of the wonders of ancient world. Lot of skills were shown in the town planning. The cities were well panned. Scientifically laid out and well looked after. They had wide roads, and streets which crossed each other at right angles divided the city in to oblong blocks. The residential houses were built on both sides of the lanes in straight lines generally houses were small and consisted of two rooms and a court yard, but some of them were quite big bit and had two or even more storeys. All these houses were made of burnt bricks, each house had a well, a bathroom, a kitchen and drains. The bathroom was always on the street side of the buildings for the quick disposal of water. The floor and courtyard of the houses were paved.

Some very large buildings, with big halls have been unearthed. They were probably used as assembly hall, public offices, meeting places or palaces . No temples have however so far been found here. At Mohenjodaro a very big bath has also been found. It measures 54 meters by 33 meters and its outer wall is about 21/2 meters thick. In the centre is a swimming pool, 12 meters by 7 meters and 2 1/2 meters deep with a height of steps leading down to the floor which is cemented it has small rooms along its four sides. A big well situated near by was used to fill the pool with fresh water. There is a big covered drain to empty the pool. It appears the

people were exceedingly fond of bathing. A remarkable feature of the Harappan culture was the perfect drainage system. Each house had a drain which carried the dirty water in to the street drain, the street drains emptied themselves into the main draining canal which carried the water out of the town. The drains were covered with bricks and regularly cleaned. The drainage system was, in fact, unique and does credit to the administration. No other country of the world at that time could boast of such a system

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### **2.4.1 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTION**

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1. Write a note on the discovery of Harappan Culture
2. Critically analyse the town planning and structure of Harappan Culture

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## **2.5 POLITICAL LIFE**

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Since no written records are available nothing is known about the political life of the Harappan culture. One view is that there was a centralized government. Their weapons of war that have been discovered are mostly made of stone. These weapons consist of spears, daggers, bows and arrows, maces, slings etc.

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## **2.6 SOCIAL LIFE**

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The people of Harappan Culture were very simple and highly cultured. They had a wonderful social life.

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### **2.6.1 FOOD**

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The Harappan people knew the art of growing cereals. They used wheat, rice, barley, milk, dates, fish, eggs and animals' flesh for food. They used some vegetables and fruits. Their staple food was wheat and Barley, grains of which have been found in some of the houses

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### **2.6.2 DRESS AND ORNAMENTS**

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We get some idea of their dress from the statues and paintings that have been discovered. They used both cotton and woollen clothes. There was no special difference between the dresses of men and women. It consisted usually of two garments, one worn round the waist and the other round the chest.

Both Men and Women used the Ornaments consists of silver, gold, copper, Brounze, boneshell and many precious and semiprecious stones like Jade, Crystal, agate and carnation etc. They wore ear rings, necklaces, Finger rings, bangles, fillets etc. poor women wore the ornaments made up of shell or terra-cotta. Women also used face powder perfumes, Creams, lipsticks, etc., to add to their beauty. There was no purdah system in them.

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### **2.6.3 AMUSEMENTS**

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Among the amusements, the Harappan people themselves engaged in hunting, fishing and rearing wild animals and birds as pets. They played indoor games like dice and chess. They also enjoyed singing dancing and painting. A bronze status of a girl in the dancing pose has also been discovered at Mohenjodaro. Their children played with toys and marbles. We find they used rattles, whistles, small clay carts, model of animals and other things.

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### **2.6.4 EDUCATION AND SCRIPTS**

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Harappan people were the lovers of reading and writing. They used pictorial writing consisting of human and animals forms. Several seals have been discovered which bear inscription on them, but they have not been deciphered so far.

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## **2.7. ECONOMIC LIFE**

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The Harappan people seem to have been rich, properous and peace loving. They carried on the following occupations.

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### **2.7.1 AGRICULTURE**

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Agriculture was the main occupation of the Harappan people. They produced wheat, barley, rice, dates and cotton. They also grew fruits. Their fields lay along the banks of the river and were watered by floods. We don't know whether sulphus agricultural produces were Marketed. For the purpose of storage of agricultural produce they constructed many granaries. They used humped bull, buffaloes in agriculture.

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### **2.7.2 CRAFT PRODUCTION**

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Harappan people used vessels which were of two types i.e., earthen and Metallic Earthen wares were generally plain and some time painted and glazed also. Metallic articles were needles, Knives, axes, fishhooks, and razors. They were made of copper and bronze, because ivory was totally unknown to them. Combs were made of bones and ivory spindles, wheeled carts, Chairs baked clay dolls, whistles and dice pieces both tubular and cubical were present almost in the house.

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### **2.7.3 ANIMAL REARING**

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Harappan people reared cows, buffaloes, goats and sheep for milk, They domesticated long horned humped bulls, cattle, camels, elephants, pigs, fowls and dogs. They used to hunt wild animals which include monkeys, tiger, rhinoceros. Fishing was also their other occupation.

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### **2.7.4 TRADE AND COMMERCE**

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Harappan people had a good trading activities. They had trade exchange with the entire parts of India. The main modes of transport on land was the solid wheeled bullock cart and the boats used on the rivers and the sea. They had trade contract with the western countries like Mesopotamia, Egypt, Crete and Sumer both through land and sea. There was a brisk trade with Kashmir and South India. They used to import Terracotta from deccan and Kathiawar Copper from Rajasthan and Persian and many precious stones from middle east and Tibet. Their brisk trade benefit was from the cotton. All the trading family used to have their own symbol in their trade and trading articles.

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### **2.7.5 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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1. What are the main occupations of Harappan people?
2. Discuss the economic and trade activities in the Harappan Culture

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### **2.8 RELIGIOUS LIFE**

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There is no authentic sources regarding the religious life of the Harappan people. We find neither temples nor shrines or altar in our discovery. There are number of seals, statues and other objects are available. There speaks about the faith and beliefs of the Harappan culture.

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### 2.8.1 DEITIES

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Harappans worshipped Shiva, Sakti, animals, trees and faith in amulets and the practice of yoga. The people also worshipped Mother Goddess which was practiced widely. Many figures of Mother Goddess found on pottery and seals. Male gods also worshipped. The Statue identified as lord Shiva and regarded as Mahayogi and Pashupathi. Bull was worshipped and considered as sacred. Many present day forms of worship and religions concepts were already in existence. So there was a organic relationship between the Harappan culture and the Hinduism. They worshipped peepal tree, and crocodiles. Dove was looked upon as a sacred bird. Demons or semi-god aresuggested from figurés fighting with animals. Sun was considered as one of the greatest Gods. They also believed magic, superstitions and wore amulets for some protections. They believed the concept of hell and heaven.

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### 2.8.2 RITUALS

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Harappan people practiced Bhakti cult. From some of the seals it is concluded that Harappan people knew the subtle doctrine of transmigration of soul together with their belief in the world above or the sky world to which, they held spirits retreat after death. Their faith in doctrine of transmigration is similar to that of the vedic arjans.

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### 2.8.3 FUNERAL SYSTEM

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Not much is known about the funerary customs of the Harappan people. The discovery of the cemetery (burial ground) at Harappa goes to show that these people buried their dead. They cremated the dead bodies and sometimes they buried the dead along with some offerings cremation were done on the river banks. They believed swarga and Naraka concepts.

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## 2.9. LET US SUM UP

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In this unit we have been able to

1. Trace the emergence of Harappan culture
2. Understand the wonderful town planning and Architecture
3. Know the food habits, agriculture, craft production, trade and commerce and other brisk activities.

4. See the religious conditions, worship of god and animals
5. Understand the scripts cremation and burial and other activities of the Harappan people.

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### **2.10 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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1. Mention the major sites of Harappan Culture
2. List the two important monuments of Harappan culture.
3. Discuss the economic and social conditions of Harappan people
4. Name the deities and the religious observation of Harappans
5. Write short note on
  - a. Sir John Marshal
  - d. Drainage System
  - c. Indus Seals
  - d. Indus scripts

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### **2.11 VEDIC AGE**

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In this unit we shall bring out the main features of socio-economic, political and religious life that Marked in the Vedic culture. Vedic culture cannot studied under one unit and therefore, in order to understand the various changes that took place. We shall have to study the age with two broad phases i.e., the early vedic age (2500 - 1000 B.C) and the later vedic age (1000 - 600 B.C)

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### **2.12 ORIGINAL HOME OF THE ARYANS**

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Advent of the 'Aryans' was the most important event in the history of India. Good number of literature gives us lot of information about the Aryans. There are different view regarding the original home. Macdonell viewed that they are from South Eastern Europe. A.C. Dass regards that they are natives of India. There are other scholars who put forward their arguments that the Aryans are from central Asia or Arctic region.

Most famous German scholar Max Muller's central Asian theory heldsway for quite a long time. According to Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Roman, German and Celtic Languages and the speakers of these languages must long ago

were dwelt together. Some of the primary words, has relationship as same in these language. The 'Pita' and 'Mata' of Indian are same as the Persian 'Padar' and 'Madar' the Latin 'Pater' and 'Mater' and English 'Father' and 'Mother', Max Muller held that the main Aryan stream had flowed towards the north west Migrating through Asia Minor or Greek and Italy while one of these branches had come to India through the north western passes.

Balagangadhar Tilak the India Patriot who wrote 'Arctic home of the vedas' argues that the tract between the North pole and the Arctic circle was the cradle of the Aryan race. Geologists have proved that in prehistoric times that region had a congenial climate and perpetual spring and Tilak's theory based on a close comparison of the Flora (plants) and fauna (animals) of the region with those mentioned in Rigveda and the zend Avesta. A.C. Dass in his "Rig-Vedic India" has tried to place the old Aryan home land in the ancient 'Sapta Sindhu' (Modern Punjab) saying that all the flora and fauna of the Rigveda and other old books were found in the ancient Punjab. But this theory has not been taken very seriously.

The Generally accepted view inclines to South - East Europe. Macdonell says that Common trees i.e., Oaks, beeches, willows and animals i.e., horses and cows with which Aryan books shown familiarity could them be found only in South India Europe i.e, in the plains of Austria and Hungary. But even this view has not found universal acceptance. Therefore we have to depend upon the Max Muller's central Asian Theory.

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### **2.13 ARYAN MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT**

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The Aryans were fair with a long forehead straight nose, well developed fore heads and high facial angle. Their advent on the Indian soil has been variously dated from 5000 B.C or even earlier to 1500 B.C Jacobin and Tilak, from astronomical reference with vedas hold that the Aryans were in India. In 4000 B.C Max Muller assumes that the Rigvedic culture began in ancient Punjab some 5000 years back. Thus the scholars estimates differs by thousand of year. The generally accepted view is that the Aryan occupied Punjab about 1200 B.C

The Aryan Migration to India was gradual. They did not come in one Stream and occupied the whole of North India at one stroke. They were not invader but peaceful emigrants. A study of the Rigveda reveals that they first occupied the 'Sata Sindhu' or Seven Tributaries of the Indus mentioned in the Vedas i.e., Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Saraswathi and Indus. In the earlier stages they had occupied the Gangetic plain though the Veda refer occasionally to Yamuna, The Aryanas were opposed by the inhabitants of India people of Puras and Durgas are stated to have offered a shift resistance to the invaders. They are contemptuously spoken in the Vedas as Dasas and Dasyus or Slaves. Gods are stated to have gone to the assistance of the Aryans to fight the enemies and it is significant that the supreme god of the Vedas was Indra. Indra is described as the Shaker of the cities. He is stated to have destroyed many cities. The Vedic hymns constantly refers to the wars between several tribes. The Pre-Aryan inhabitants were completely conquered by the Aryans who intermixed with vanquished. The Aryans also often fought among themselves. The Rigveda mentions the great victor of the Bharata king over fellow Aryan kings. But the enmity with the Dasyus was a bond of unity among the different Aryans was a bond of unity among the different Aryan tribes Gradually the Aryans, became lords of North Western India, later moving to eastward and further north finally occupying the Madhya Desh, Aryavaratha from the Himalayas to the Vindhya. As years rolled on Indo-aryans became absorbed in the population of the country.

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## 21.4 VEDIC LITERATURE

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"Veda" means knowledge. The Word Veda comes from the root 'Vid' which means to know. The term denotes work containing knowledge. The most sacred knowledge, whose authority is not to be questioned whether the religion or philosophy or social customs. To some Veda means revelation made to our seers by the supreme. All the Ancient Wisdom of the Aryans contained in their sacred literature is collectively termed "Vedic Literature".

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### 2.14.1. VEDAS AND OTHER TEXTS

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These are four vedas. They are Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajuarveda, and Atharvaraveda. Rigveda is the oldest with ten Mandalas or chapter arranged according to the name,



Rashis or according to the subject matter. It contains 1028 hymns. Samaveda or book of Chants contains 1549 hymns, meant to be sung in Sama sacrifices by a special group of Brahmans. But more of its hymns are in the Rigveda and the rest in other vedic texts. The Yajurveda or "Book of Sacrificial prayers" with two divergent texts. The black and white tells us how sacrificial ceremonies were to be performed. The Atharve veda considered less sacred than the other three, contains magic formula, mantras dealing with charms and spells to control demons and spirits'. It's 20 books contains 731 hymns, some of which are praise of god. There are also other texts namely Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Upavedas, Vedangas, and Dharma Shastras. The vast Aryan literature is divided into two (a) Shruti portion - which is Hindus believed to have been revealed by god to the certain rishis who for generation, transmitted that knowledge orally and (b) smritis written by Mortals. The former comprises the Vedas, Brahmanas Upanishads and Aranyakas, the Upavedas, Vedangas, Dharma Shastras and the Sutra's found in the latter group.

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## **2.15 POLITY**

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The territory of Afghanistan, North Western frontier province (now in Pakistan) Punjab, Kashmir, Parts of Sindh and Rajasthan and eastern India upto the river Sarayu was occupied by the Aryans during the early Vedic age. Political life is discussed in detail in the vedas in Upanishads and the other vedic texts Especially Rigveda speaks lot on the polity of the Aryans.

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### **2.15.1 TRIBAL LIFE**

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In the early Vedic period, Aryans lived in Gramas or Villages. Each village consisted of the number of families. The head of the village was called Gramani but the affairs of the village were managed by an elected panchayat. Several villages made up of a vis or settlements and a number of settlements formed a Jana or tribe. At that time there were several such tribes. Most of the tribes were monarchical but some were republican. The most information of the tribes were Bharatas. They lived between the Saraswathi and Yamuna.

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### **2.15.2 KING AND HIS OFFICERS**

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Every tribe had a king or chief who was called Rajan. Most of the times he was hereditary, some times he was elected. He was expected to be an embodiment of Dharma and he had a highly virtuous life. This chief duty was to protect the life and Properties of his tribes. He was assisted by several officials, called perohit or Royal priest, Senani or commander in chief and Gramani or head of the village. For his clean administration king had two elected bodies called Sabha and Samiti. The Sabha was the council of Tribal elders and Samiti was probably the assembly of the whole tribe. Both of these bodies worked in unison and exercised check on the power of the king.

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### **2.15.3 JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION**

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Though the king enjoyed supreme Judicial powers major part of the Judicial administration was carried out by the head of the village in the Village. Gramani used to perform the Judicial function, both Civil and criminal duties. Laws and Punishments were severe but capital punishment was rarely executed. Cattle lifting was the chief crime, but there were other crimes like theft, cheating highway robbery and other activities.

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### **2.15.4 MILITARY ADMINISTRATION**

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Aryans were wonderful fighters. They had a senani or commandor in chief to look after the army during the war and peace. Their Military code was of a high order. They never attacked an unarmed or wounded enemy. It was considered as a great sin. It was also prohibited to use poisoned arrows or make of a hidden attack. The chief offensive weapons were bows and swords, lances, spears and axes. The soldier used helmets and shields. Rajan and other chief officers fought from Chariots but the common soldiers fought on foot. Drums and trumpets used as war music.

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## **2.16 SOCIETY AND CULTURE**

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Aryans were simple, religious and hard working people and were hospitable and truthful. They lived in village in the open air with the flocks and herds. Gramani looked after their welfare. Their culture was pastoral.

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### 2.16.1 FAMILY

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Family was the basis of their society. Their family was patriarchal where, father was the head of the family. He was known as "Grihapati" who had a joint family when he grew old he entrusted the task of running the family to his eldest son and his sons, wife and devoted himself to the worship of god. Their houses were clean airy and open and were often made of wood or bamboo with thatched roofs.

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### 2.16.2 STATUS OF WOMEN

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In Vedic Society Women were held in great respect. They were the mistresses of the household. No religious ceremony was in order unless the wife also took part in it. Their education was encouraged women like Visvavara, Ghoshala, Apala composed hymns. Girls were married at their proper age. The practices like Sati and Child marriages were not in existence. But widow remarriage and the dowry system were prevalent. Monogamy and polygamy was practiced. There was no purdah system. Women learnt language literature fine arts like dance and music. They were permitted to attend the Sabha meetings.

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### 2.16.3 FOOD AND DRESS

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The food of the Aryans was very simple and nourishing. They were fond of milk products like milk, ghee, curds, butter, besides they used to consume barley, vegetables, honey and fruits. They were both vegetarian and non-vegetarians. Eating fish was common. They were consuming Soma and Sura.

Their Dress. Consists of the cotton and woollen garments. Men grew long beards and mustaches. They wore gold and silver ornaments like necklace, ear rings, bracelets, anklets etc.

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### 2.16.4 CASTE SYSTEM

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There was no rigid caste system. The society was divided into castes on the basis of their professions i.e. Kshatriyas, Brahmanas, Vyshyas and Shudras. There was a distinction between the Aryan and the non Aryans based on colours. The Aryans were fair-skinned and considered themselves superior while the non Aryans were dark-skinned and were

regarded as inferior. This was to say the beginning of the caste system. There was however some intermingling of the two races by marriages.

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### **2.16.5. EDUCATION AND AMUSEMENT**

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There was no writing in those days, so the instruction was oral. A great stress was laid on Character building. Importance was laid on the morals character and wisdom. Boys and girls received education from the gurus.

Aryans had many amusements. They knew singing and could play a several musical instruments like flute lyre cymbals, drums etc. Every village has its musician or bard. Aryans were also fond of hunting wild animals (Elephants, lions and deer etc.) dicing wrestling boxing dicing listening to the bards and chariot racing. Women were particularly fond of music and dancing. Dicing (gambling) was a popular amusements

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## **2.17 ECONOMY**

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Aryan civilization was a rural one. The people lived in villages and led a pastoral life. They followed agriculture, Cattle rearing. There were artisans and they were engaged in trade and commerce.

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### **2.17.1 AGRICULTURE**

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The principal occupation of the Aryans at first was rearing cattle but gradually agriculture became more important. They plough the land and grew crops. The crops were barley wheat, rice, beans, millet and pulses, cotton and oil seeds were also cultivated. Irrigations was carried on the canal, lakes and wells. The use of manure was also known. The Aryans also reared cattle. They also kept horse, sheep, goats and oxen.

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### **2.17.2 INDUSTRIES AND HANDICRAFTS**

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Aryans engaged in Industries. They grew cotton and oil seeds and established its industries Iron was known and it as used enormously. Industries like cloth, weaving tanning leather and making ornaments was very common. There were number of artisan class like carpenters, black smiths , goldsmiths tanners, Weavers, potters. They were very familiars with copper and gold.

They were cattle rearers cow was their main sources of income and the oxes used in the agriculture. Besides they used to get milk products from cow. They used to domesticate buffalo, sheep, horse, monkey and other animals

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### **2.17.3 TRADE AND COMMERCE**

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Aryans were also engaged in trade and commerce. They followed barter system. Gold coin Niska was in use. The trade was largely in the hands of people called 'Pani' who were probably no Aryans. The trade was carried on both by land and water. Chariots on wagons and land and boats were used on water. They also used pack Rorses, Oxes and Asses. Cow was the Standard of value Existence of international trade is in doubt.

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## **2.18 RELIGION**

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The religion of the Aryans called the Vedic religion was very simple. It was based on the teachings of the Vedas which were their sacred books.

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### **2.18.1 NATURE WORSHIP**

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Aryans were the nature lovers. They were impressed by the powers of Nature. e.g., the Sun, Air, Water, fire etc. and worshipped them as gods and goddesses so that they might be pleased with them and might grant them their prayers. The gods however, were given greater importance than goddesses. Varuna, the god of sky. Indra the god of thunder and rain and Agni the god of fire, were subjects of special worship. Usha was the lovely goddess of the dawn. Thus their religion was nature worship.

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### **2.18.2 RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES**

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The Worship of the Vedic god and goddesses was carried on by sacrifices and prayers. Offering of milk, ghee, some and grain were made of them. Hymnes were chanted on them. Worship was performed in the open air Yajna or havan was an essential part of the aryan religion. In those days there were no temple and no idol worship. Aryans believed that there was divine power. They believed in one god. They believed in life after death i.e. transmigration of soul, according one's own conduct of life.

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## **2.19 SCIENCE AND ART**

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Aryans made progress in science and Art. They had some knowledge of diseases and Medicine and used herbs and drugs to treat diseases. They also knew a little of astronomy. The aryaans knew the art and architecture. They built some palaces and stone castles. They were also well versed in poetry and composed of fine hymns. Besides they were also fond of music and dancing.

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## **2.20 LATER VEDIC AGE**

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During this period aryaans migrated towards the East up to Bengal and the far south and the seat of their civilization shifted to the territory between the rivers saraswathi and Ganga.

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## **2.21 POLITY**

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The political condition of the Aryans in this period was more developed than that in the early vedic period.

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### **2.21.1 POWERFUL KINGDOMS**

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During this period the small tribal settlements of the Vedic period were replaced by powerful kingdoms. It was because some powerful tribes had conquered their weak neighbours. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata mention many such kingdoms. e.g Kurus panchala, Koshala (Oudh) Videha (North Bihar) Kashi, Matsya, etc., of these 'Kurus and Panachalas were the most important. There were also many small republics. But there were no big empires yet.

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### **2.21.2 HEREDITARY MONARCHY**

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The power of the kings increased very much and kingship became hereditary. The kings now became more powerful Monarchs. They increased their own power and influence and ruled over vast, territories. Instead of Rajan they came to be called samrat. Ashwamedha and Rajasuya sacrifices also came to be performed by the kings to display their might. With the growth of the royal power, the number of officials also greatly increased. The importance of the Sabha and Samiti declined. The kings lived in great splendour and administered. Justice with the help of small councils. The kings were not absolute, he was controlled by the veto power of the people.

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### **2.21.3.ARMY**

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A regular army was maintained. It consisted of the four categories. Cavalry, infantry chariots and elephants. The commander in chief was incharge of the whole army. Bows and arrows, spears swords, and maces were the chief weapons of war. Soldiers also used arm our.

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## **2.22 SOCIETY**

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Certain notable changes appeared in the social life of the Aryans. What was practiced in the Rigvedic period became concrete and complicated now.

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### **2.22.1 TOWNS AND CITIES**

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People as in the early Vedic period, Still lived mostly in villages, but many big cities like Ayodhya Indraprastha, Mathura etc came into being.

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### **2.22.2 VARNASHRAMADHARMA**

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The most important change in the social life during this period was the emergence of the Varnashramadhrama. The caste systems became more defines and rigid. The Brahmins were held in high esteems and they became rather arrogant. But the laboring classes and the Sudras came to occupy a very low position and were looked down upon. The Sudras were even regarded as impure. The Kshatriyas, however began to regard them selves no less important than the Bhahamans. Moveover the span of life which was expected to be of one hundred years was divided into four stages called Ashramas i.e, Brahmancharya, a Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. But cannot be said how many of the Hindu house holders practised this ideal.

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### **2.22.3 STATUS OF WOMEN**

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Women enjoyed great freedom and received education on Vedas. Some women like Maitreyi and Gargi in the Ramayana period were highly educated. There was no Purdah and child marriage was unknown. But women had not much freedom in the matter of their marriages. Only the girls of royal families chose their husband. This custom called Swamyamvara. Girls were fond of dance and music. Widow remarriage was allowed.

But the positing of women was not so high it had deteriorated. Women could not attend the meeting of the Sabha though they could attend religion assemblies. Polygamy and polyandry were both in vogue. Women hence to depend more and more on their husbands. The Sati system begun in Punjab tewe Women received education. The birth of girl child not liked by the Parents.

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#### **2.22.4 EDUCATION**

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Education was free and probably universal. There were several Ashramas in the forest where the learned Brahmanas lived with their students and taught them. The students too served their teacher with great devotion. The Bhardwaj Ashram of the time of Ramayana is still to be seen in Allahabad. Valmiki also had an Ashram. Drona charya was the great teacher of kurupandavas and he had his own Ashrama during the Mahabharata to times. The main courses of study were the vedas upanshads, Grammar, logic and law. The teaching was oral.

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#### **2.23 ECONOMY**

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The Chief occupation of the people as in the early Vedic period were agriculture and Cattle rearing but trade and industry had also made great progress. Many crafts were practised. The merchants were organized into guilds. The most common unit of value was Nishka, but there were other units also excavated. Trade both by land and sea was also carried on.

The chief Sources of Government income was land revenue which was one sixth of the produce and was usually paid in kind. There were several other taxes, but they were not oppressive.

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#### **2.24. RELIGION**

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In the epic or later vedic period religion was not so simple as it was during the Rigvedic period. The Vedic religion had undergone great changes. The Worship of the Vedic gods like Varuna, Mitra, Indra etc. was replaced by the worship of new gods and goddesses that has assumed human form. The



chief gods were the trinity consisting of Brahma, the creator Vishnu, the preserver and Shiva the destroyer. Rama and Krishna also came to be worshipped as the avatars of Vishnu. Vedic gods lost much of the importance.

The religious ceremonies became more important and they were considered as necessary for the attainment of salvation. Moreover they had become so complicated that only learned purohiths could perform them. For this reason the priestly class rose in importance and Brahmins came to enjoy special honours. Instead of offering prayers and singing hymns elaborate Yajnas in which animals sacrifices became more prominent. The people believed in Karma. Transmigration of soul and Mukti i.e. release from rebirth. There were people who had no faith in sacrifices. They spent their time in forests thinking over the wonders and mysteries of the universe. Their ideas are contained in the Upanishads.

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## 2.25 LET US SUM UP

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After Studying this unit we have been able to

- ◆ Understand the original home of the Aryans, their migration and also their settlement
- ◆ Know different kinds of Vedic literature
- ◆ Understand Aryan polity, economy, Society, and Religion
- ◆ Know the changes in polity, economy, society and religion under the later Vedic period.

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## 2.26 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTION

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1. Write a note on the original home of the Aryans and their settlement
2. Critically analyse the Vedic literature and their importance
3. Discuss the society and economy of the Vedic period
4. Discuss the Religious conditions during the Vedic Period
5. What are the changes that took place in the polity, society and economy during the later Vedic period ?

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**2.27. BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

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1. Lunia B.N : Evolution of Indian Culture
2. Mukherji R.K : Ancient India
3. Romila Thaper : A History of India Vol I
4. Saran P and Bhandari : The March of Indian History
5. Sathianatha Iyer R : A History of India
6. Three Authors : An Advanced History of India

**Dr. A. Somashekar**

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## UNIT - 3

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### JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

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#### STRUCTURE

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Jainism and Mahavira
  - 3.2.1 Teachings of Mahavira
  - 3.2.2 Spread of Jainism
- 3.3 Buddhism and Gauthama Buddha
  - 3.3.1 Teachings of Gauthama Buddha
  - 3.3.2 Spread of Buddhism
  - 3.3.3 Decline of Jainism of Buddhism
  - 3.3.4 Contributions of Jainism and Buddhism
- 3.4 Summary of the Unit
- 3.5 Books for Study.

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### 3.0 OBJECTIVES

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After working through this unit you should be able to know.

- ◆ The life and the penance of Mahavira and Gautham Buddha
- ◆ The main Principles of Jainism and Buddhism
- ◆ The Contributions of Jainism and Buddhism to Indian Culture
- ◆ Causes for the Decline of these two Religions.

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

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The Sixth Century B.C., witnessed a great religious changes in the world. During this period there was a spiritual unrest in the society all over the World. It was an age of revolt against the rigid order of things. The main objective of this revolt way to provide spiritual approach rather than materialistic approach. The thinkers of this age were great intellectuals. They were against religious superstitions. They wanted to reconstruct the society on a new basis and also initiate changes in religion. As a result of this the revolts occurred in different parts of the world. During this period India also witnessed religious ferment. It was not lagging behind during this great movement. Hence Jainism and Buddhism took their birth in India.

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### 3.2 JAINISM AND MAHAVIRA

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Jainism was one of the oldest religions. It was preached by 24 Thirthankaras. Vrishabadeva was the first Thirthankara. The twenty third Thirthankara was Parsvanatha. Vardhamana Mahavira was the last and 24th Thirthankara. He established an order of monks to propagate his faith. He gave definite shape to the religion by giving a specific code or rules. Hence Jainism became very popular in India.

Vardhamana Mahavira was generally regarded as the real founder of Jainism in India. According to Jaina traditions Mahavira was born at Kundagrama near Vaisali in 599 B.C., in Modern Bihar. The parents of Mahavira were Siddhartha and Trishala.

Mahavira belonged to a highly aristocratic family. He received education in all branches of Knowledge. At a proper age he married a princess named Yeshoda and they had a daughter named *Priyadarshini*. At the age of thirty he was

destined to sorrowful, painful and heart rending scenes of the death of his own parents. Being dissatisfied with the worldly life, Vardhamana left the palace when he was thirty and became an ascetic in search of truth. After Vardhamana became an ascetic for continuous period of twelve years he wandered from place to place in search of true knowledge. After twelve years he realised the spiritual value of self fortune and nudity. In his 42nd year he attained the highest spiritual knowledge called Kevalajnana, Kevalin (Omniscient) Jaina (Conqueror) Vardhamana like a hero practiced self torture and coolly suffered torture from others and came to be known of Mahavira, the great hero.

Mahavira became the head of a sect called Nirgranthas. His followers were called Jains.

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### 3.2.1 TEACHINGS OF MAHAVIRA

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Mahavira accepted the principles of Parswanatha and added a few more principles. The main principles of Jainism are: 1) One should speak the truth 2) One should not injure any living being 3) One should not possess property 4) One should not steal and 5) One should maintain chastity or Brahmacharya.

Mahavira did not accept the supremacy of the Vedas. The Jains also do not believe the vedic theory that god created this world or exercise any control over it. Mahavira advocated a holy ethical and elevating code of life and severe asceticism and extreme penance for the attainment of the *Moksha*.

The main theory of Jainism is that the *Jina* or soul is externally pure but matter or Putkala flows into the soul and thus *samsara* is created and the soul regains its purity, there is *Moksha* or Bliss. Right faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct are the *triratnas* or three gems of Jainism. The Jains regarded the all objects animate or inanimate, possess various degree of consciousness Jainism stress much importance on the doctrine of Ahimsa.

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### 3.2.2 SPREAD OF JAINISM

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Mahavira attracted many followers and successfully founded the Jain Church. He had Eleven immediate disciples, known as *Ganadharas*. Only one of them known as Sudharman survived Mahavira. Sudharaman became the head of the Jain Church. The history of the Jaina church nearly for

150 years after the death of Mahavira is not clearly known. However, the Jaina Kalpasutra of Bhadrabahu contains some reference relating to the activities of Jaina Church.

The 6th Thera Bhadra Babhu was the Contemporary of one of the Mauryan Emperors wrote the Jaina Kalpasustras. It is stated that during the 1st year of Chandragupta Maurya Hence occurred a severe famine in Magadha. BhadraBahu along with Charagupta Maurya and many other followed come to Karanataka and settled in Sravanabelagola in Hassan District. There is a Basadi called Chandragupta Maurya in Sravanabelagola which commemorates this event. It is believed that the Mauryan emperor who accompanied Bhadrabahu to Sravanabelagola was Samprathi Chandragupta who was the grand son of Asoka Maurya. He is said to have ended his life in Sravanabelgola.

Jainism which entered South India in about 5th Century. B.C was patronized by many royal dynasties. During the Sangam period , the Pandyas and the Cheras Patronised Jainism. Many Jaina Scholars composed works in Tamil. The later Gangas of Talkad were staunch supporters of Jainism. Famous Jaina teachers like Simbanadis Kundakunda, Pujoyapada and other's wrote many works in Sanskrit. The colossal status of Gommata was erected in Sravanabelagola in the 10th Century by Chavundarya. Jainism also enjoyed patronage during the Rastrakuta and the Hoysala period. The Rastrakuta and the Hoysala period. The Rastrakuta Emperor Nripatunga Amoghavarsha was a follower of Jainism, Under the royal patronage, Pampa, Ranna, Ponna, Janna, and others great poets wrote many Kannada Works.

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### **3.3 BUDDHISM AND GAUTAMA BUDDHA.**

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Buddhism is one of the greatest religions which originated in India. Buddha was the founder of this religion. He was regarded as a great moral teacher of Mankind.

Buddha was born in the Lumbini Garden near Kapilavastu which was situated in the Basti district of Uttar Pradesh in 567 B.C., to Suddhodana the ruler of Kapilavastu and Mayadevi. His earlier name was Gautam because his mother Mayadevi died 7 days after his birth and he was brought up by his aunty Prajapathi Gauthami. Every care was taken to bring up the Prince who was very intelligent but took the least care of worldly affairs.

One day while accompanying his charioteer he came across some very heartrending sights of suffering. Agony, death and diseases effected the life of Siddhartha. He realized that this world was full of misery and should be renounced. He left his house and broke all the worldly ties. He went from place to place and practiced rigid austerities and great penance. One day he sat under a Pipal tree at Buddhagaya. With a vow he would not leave that place till he attained peace of mind and supreme knowledge.

The deep concentration and Meditation led to discovery of the ultimate truth. He became "The Buddha as the enlightened one". To the right of the Bodhi tree now stands the Maha-Bodhi temple the centre of attraction for all Buddhists in the World. Buddha spent his remaining 45 years in preaching the truth and freeing the suffering mankind from the agonies of the world, and died at the age of 80 in 487 B.C., at Kushinagar.

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### **3.3.1 TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA**

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Buddha taught for 45 years through lectures, conversations and parables. His teachings were very simple, they dealt with practical life and did not contain Philosophical and vague dogmas. His main teachings were the four noble truths and eight fold path. According to Buddha there are four noble Truths : This world is full of misery and sorrow, the main cause of all this misery and sorrow is desire. The desire and lastly the desire can be suppressed or killed only by following the eight - fold path.

The eight fold path which every Buddhist is expected to follow consists of the following eight principles

1. Right belief
2. Right Thought
3. Right Speech
4. Right Action
5. Right living
6. Right Effort
7. Right re-collection and
8. Right Meditation

This path is sometime called the middle path because on the one hand Buddha hated the two dogmatic and worldly life of the Brahmans and on the other he disliked the grim Ascetecity of the Jains. He avoided extremes and followed the middle path. Buddha had no faith in costly sacrifices where animals were scarificed in large numbers. He rather denounced their performance. He believed that all outward show in useless in the attainment of *Nirvana*. According to Buddha if there should be any distinction in the society it should depend on one's actions rather than on one's birth. A wicked person must be denounced, thought he may be a Brahman, and a noble Sudra is worthy of praise. These Principals Buddha Preached in great earnest.

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### 3.3.2 STREAD OF BUDDHISM

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Buddhism spread with rapid speed in India and abroad like China, Japan, Burma, Ceylon and other foreign countries. The Buddhist councils, Hinayana and Mahayana sects and other facts were responsible for its popularity.

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### 3.3.3 DECLINE OF BUDDHISM

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Although Jainism and Buddhism spread rapidly in India and far off countries it gradually began to decline and eventually disappeared from the land of its birth. Various causes have been attributed for its decline in India.

1. Hinduism is one of the reasons for the unpopularity of Jainism and Buddhism in India. Hinduism incorporated the best ideals of Buddhism and the Buddha came to be regarded as an *Avatar* of Lord Vishnu. Hence Buddhism has become indistinguishable from the other forms of Hinduism in India.
2. Corruption in Buddhist Sangha is another reasons for the decline of Buddhism. At the Beginning the Buddhist monks led a very pious and ousters life and so they became the centre of attraction. But slowly and slowly the Bhikshus became degenerated,easy - going and even immoral.
3. The inclusion of nuns in the Sanghas had a very disastrous effects on the Popularity of Buddhism.
4. Split in Buddhism was also one reason for the decline of Buddhism. Later on Buddhism was divided has Hinayanism and Mahayanism and sixteen other smell sects. Their Mutual jealousies led to decline of Buddhism.



5. Loss of royal patronage is also one of the reason. Buddhist emperors like Ashoka, Kanishka and Harsha Vardhana of Thaneshwar Patronised the Buddhishm, after that Buddhism could not get the royal patronage. This consequently led to its downfall.

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### 3.3.4 CONTRIBUTIONS OF JAINISM AND BUDDHISM TO INDIAN CULTURE

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The contributions of Jainism and Buddhism to Indian culture is remarkable. It produced for reaching impact on the political, social, religious and Cultural life of India. It helped a lot in the maintenance of peace in India for a very long time. Under the influence of the principle of Ahimsa Many ruler's like Asoka, gave up the policy of territorial expansion and thus the atmosphere of peace reigned supreme for a very long time. The spread of Jainism and Buddhism led to the rise of a vast amount of literature which though written from the religious point of view, has helped a lot in forming an idea of the religious social and political life of the ancient Indians.

The contributions of Jainism and Buddhims to the filed of art are great many. Buddhists. Built a large number of Viharas, Stupas, Monastries etc., and created a large number of statues, Pillars etc. Under Kaniska the Gandharva School of Art made rapid progress and some very beautiful statues of Buddha were erected by this school. In the field of literature the contribution of Buddhism is of no less importance. A large number of books dealing with Jainism and Buddhism were written in Prakrit, the popular language of the people. These books are an in valuable treasure of Indian Literature. A large number of Buddhist Missionaries went to foreign countries and spread the faith of lord Buddha in those lands. They acqudated the cultural as well as economic intercourse of India with many Asiatic countries. In this way Jainism and Buddhism led to the spread of Indian Culture Outside India.

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### **3.4 SUMMARY OF THE UNIT**

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1. Jainism and Buddhism Came into Existence in 6th Century B.C. in India.
2. The Simplicity of Jainism and Buddhism attracted several common people to embrace their religion.
3. As a result of these two religions in India the rigid Hindu religion under went sever simplification.
4. The Origin of New religions paved the way for equality among the section of society without any distinction.
5. The new religions influenced education culture, Art and Architecture in India.
6. Many important ruler's like Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka, Kaniska, Harshavardhana Became the follower's of these Religions.

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### **3.5 BOOKS FOR REFERENCE**

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1. Dr. R.C. Majundhar - Ancient India
2. Dr. Bapat - 2500 Years of Buddhism
3. Romila Thapar - History of India Vol - 1
4. B.N. Luniya - Evolution of Indian Culture.

**Dr. Mahadevi**

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## **UNIT - 4**

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### **MAURYAN ERA**

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#### **STRUCTURE**

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Chandragupta Maurya
- 4.3 Bindusara
- 4.4 Ashoka
  - 4.4.1 The Kalinga War
  - 4.4.2 Ashokas Dharma
  - 4.4.3 Founder of the Welfare State
- 4.5. Administrative System of Mauryan's
  - 4.5.1 Central Administration
    - 4.5.1.1 Municipal Administration
    - 4.5.1.2 Military Administration
    - 4.5.1.3 Law and Justice
  - 4.5.2 Provincial Administration
  - 4.5.3 District Administration
  - 4.5.4 Mauryan Economy
  - 4.5.5 Mauryan Society
  - 4.5.6 Cultural Conditions Under Mauryan
  - 4.5.7 Decline of the Mauryas
  - 4.5.8 Summary of the Unit
  - 4.5.9 Books for Study.

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## 4.0 OBJECTIVES

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After working through this unit you should be able to know:

- ◆ The Political condition in India before the establishment of Mauryan Dynasty
- ◆ The Achievements of Chandragupta Maurya, founder of Maurya kingdom.
- ◆ Life and achievements of Ashoka
- ◆ The Kalinga war and Ashoka's religious policies
- ◆ Mauryan administrative system and their contributions to Indian culture.

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## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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Earlier to the existence of Mauryan Dynasty there were political instability in India. The frequent wars between tiny states of India was very common feature. Such wars, instability and unstable political conditions were favorable for foreign invades in India. The Persians and Greeks were the pioneers of invading India in the western part of India. It was in that situation Chandragupta Maurya, established Mauryan Empire in fourth century B.C.

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## 4.2 CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA (324-288)

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Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of Mauryan dynasty. He ascended the throne of Magadha in 324 B.C. He was the first emperor of India.

Chandragupta Maurya in his youth served as a general of the Nanda army. During this time he planned to overthrow the last Nanda ruler from Magadha, but he failed in that and fled from Magadha kingdom. He met Alexander in Punjab and persuaded him to invade Magadha and putting an end to the Nanda ruler. Soon after he came under the influence of Chanakya who was insulted by the Nanda ruler he was on the look out for a suitable instrument to wreak his vengeance on Nandas. Hence Chandragupta Maurya joined Chanakya for the overthrow of Nanda Dynasty. Thus Chandragupta Maurya with the assistance of Kautilya, brought the fall of Dhanananda, the last Nanda Sovereign, and established the Mauryan Empire.

Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander, invaded in 305 B.C., was ruling in Punjab and Sindh. The people of Punjab and Sindh were revolted against the Greek rule. In that situation Chandragupta Maurya along with Chanukya drove out the Greek and occupied Punjab and Sindh in 322 B.C.

After taking Punjab he raised a powerful army with the help of Parvataka king of Himavastkuta he attacked Magadha. In the battle both, the Nanda ruler and king Parvataka died. This made Chandragupta Maurya an undisputed master of Northern India. In the war between Chandragupta Maurya and Seleucus a treaty was concluded which was favorable to the Indian emperor. Seleucus gave his daughter in marriage to Chandragupta. A Greek envoy Megasthenes was sent to the Mauryan court. In return Chandragupta Maurya presented him with 500 Elephants. Towards the close of his reign his empire extended from Bengal to Hindukush and from Himalayas to Vindhya.

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#### **4.3 BINDUSARA (301 - 273 B.C)**

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Chandragupta Maurya was succeeded by his son Bindusara called Amitragata (Slayer of enemies). He retained undiminished empire inherited from his father. When revolt occurred in Taxila, he sent his son Ashoka to crush them. Bindusara's empire embraced greater part of Northern India as well as a large part of South India. Chanukya, the chief minister of Chandragupta Maurya, continued the work as the minister of Bindusara. Bindusara maintained his father's policy of friendly relations with Hellenistic power in the west. According to Buddhist records the reign of Bindusara was 28 years.

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#### **4.4. ASHOKA'S ACCESSION (273 - 236 B.C)**

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Ashoka the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya and son of Bindusara, was the most illustrious king of the Mauryan Dynasty. He was born in about 302 B.C. During his father's life time he had been the governor of Taxila and Ujjaini and so he had gained enough experience as an administrator. After the death of his father in about 273 B.C he succeeded the Mauryan throne. At the time of his coronation, Ashoka assumed the titles of "Devanampriya" (Beloved of Gods) and "Priyadarsi" (Beautiful One).

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#### 4.4.1 THE KALINGA WAR (261 B.C)

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The Conquest of Kalinga by Ashoka was the most important event of his reign. Ashoka had inherited a vast empire from his grand father and father, but Kalinga the Modern Province of Orissa was not still in his empire. Ashoka, who believed in the traditional policy of conquest and aggression could not tolerate the existence of an independent state on the borders of his empire. Ashoka invaded this territory in 261 B.C

The Kalinga war proved to be a turning point in the career of Ashoka. After the Kalinga war, he became a Buddhist, the era and military conquest ended giving place to the new era of spiritual conquest of *Dharmavijaya*.

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#### 4.4.2 ASHOKA'S DHARMA

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The Conquest of Kalinga proved to be the turning-point of Ashoka's life. The slaughtes of men in the war affected him so deeply that he vowed never to wage war and made up his mind to conquest people by winning their hearts. The teachings of Buddhism was responsible for this changes in Ashoka's heart. Under the influence of a Buddhist monk called Upagupta, he embraced Buddhism and become an ardent Buddhist and the greatest patron of Buddhism. For the spread of Buddhism Ashoka adopted many measures. He himself went on toures of the country to preach Buddhism to the people. He gave up "Vihara yatras" and went on 'Dharma Yatras'. He directed his officers like Yuktas, Rajukas, Princes and Pradeshikas to go on toures and to preach his dharma to the people in addition to their official duties. He appointed many officers namely **Dharmamahamatras** for the spread of Buddhism. Ashoka was responsible for holding the third Buddhist council to extend for Buddhist doctrines. He sent missionaries to the various parts of the country and abroad.

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#### 4.4.3 FOUNDER OF THE WELFARE SATE

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Ashoka was the greatest figure in the History of India. His regin marked a new epoch in the political and cultural history of India. He ruled his empire for about forty years. He never neglected his duties as a king. He wished to be the father of his people rather than a conqueror. He says the Kaling Edict that "All men are my children and just as I

desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness in this world and the next so also I desire the same for all men".

Ashoka spent all his days in doing public duties. He made himself accessible at all hours to urgent calls as stated in his sixth major rock edict. "At all times - whether I am eating or am in the Women' apartments or is my inner apartments or at the cattle shed where I may be, my officials should keep me in touch with public business. He said "For the welfare of all folk, is what I must work", He not only initiated spiritual welfare of the people but also struggled for securing the economic well being of his subjects. Thus Ashoka maintained peace and prosperity over his vast empire. Ashoka was succeeded by his two grand sons namely Dasaratha and Samprathi.

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## 4.5 ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF MAURYANS

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The Mauryan empire had an efficient system of administration at the central, provincial and local levels.

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### 4.5.1 THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

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The Central Administration of the imperial government can be classified under the following heads - kings, council of minister's city administration army, revenue, law and Justice.

The form of government in the Maurayan period was monarchy. The king was the supreme authorized of the state policy matter and important decision were taken by him. His power's were unlimited he was the commands in chief of the army, highest court of appeal, chief executive officer and ultimate source of legislation. The whole power was centralized in the hands of the king. The king was assisted in the discharge of his kingdom duties by a small body of ministers called the *Mantrins*. They were selected from among the general body of Government officials called the *Amatyas* for their devotion, trustworthiness and approved services.

In addition to the Mantrins there was a council of Adviser's styled the **Mantri parishad** who were especially consulted in times of emergency. The member's of the **Mantri parishad** also attended the king on ceremonial occasions. These advisers were recruited from all kinds of Amatyas, or high and low officials of the state whose opinion was considered of some value on matters of public importance.

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#### **4.5.1.1 MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION**

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The administration of the city was carried on by a city council (Municipal Committee) of 30 members divided into six committees of 5 members each.

The first committee looked after industry and crafts. Its function included Checking adulteration, fixing the wages etc.

The second committee looked after the foreigner and its function included providing lodging, medical attendance, security etc.,

The third committee over saw the registration of birth and deaths.

The fourth committee looked after trade and commerce. It enforced the use of duty stamped weights and measures.

The fifth committee inspected the manufactured goods. It kept a strict watch to distinguishes between new and second hand goods or old goods.

The sixth committee collected taxes on the goods sold, the rate of tax being  $\frac{1}{10}$  of the prices of the goods.

All the members of the six committees in their collective capacity looked after the repair of public buildings, supervision of markets, temples, harbors and public works.

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#### **4.5.1.2. THE MILITARY**

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Kautilya has referred to the four limbs of the Army namely - Infantry, Cavalry, Chariots and Elephants, each under a commander.

Megasthenes mentions six boards of 5 members of each to look after the military administration. The first board was in charge of Navy. The Second board was concerned with transport and supply. The third board dealt with the Infantry. The fifth board was in charge of war chariots and the sixth board was a concerned with War Elephants. Kavtilya has outlined the recruitment policy, war plans, fortifications etc.,



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### 4.5.1.3 LAW AND JUSTICE

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The king was the head of Justice, but there was special tribunals of justice both in cities and the country presided over by the Mahamatras and Rajukas. There were two types of courtes, *Dharmastheya* and *Kantaka-Sodhana*, very roughly corresponding to the modern civil and criminal courts. Petty cases in village were undoubtedly decided by the headmen and the village elders.

Dharmasthaniya courts were civil courts to settle dispute over marriage contract gifts, in heritance, boundary etc. The Kantakasodhana courts were criminal courts which decided cases of thefts, robbery, murder, sex-offence etc.

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### 4.5.2 PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

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The extensive empire of the Mauryas could not controlled by one Central Government and so the empire was divided into provinces. Provinces into districts and districts into villages.

Important provinces were put under the control of the princes of royal blood and they were called Kumaras. For example Ashoka was a kumara of Ujjaini and Taxila before becoming the king. Kumara was assisted by a council of ministers. In addition to the provinces under Kumaras, there were other provinces under Governors who were called Mahamatras.

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### 4.5.3. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

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The revenue and general administration was carried on in the districts by Stanikas. Gopas worked under them. Their functions of Gramikas include, demarcating village boundaries, maintaining records of land used for various purposes, recording income and expenditure of the people etc. The Gramikas were local people who were assisted by village elder or Grama-vriddhas . The Villages did have a certain amount of autonomy.

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### 4.5.4 MAURYAN ECONOMY.

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The Mauryan empire which untied the diverse areas of the vast country. Promoted the development of the country's economy by extending commercial and cultural contacts with

neighboring countries. The Mauryan age was marked by the spread of iron, the development of agriculture, crafts, trade, currency and the growth of towns.

The economy of Mauryan period was predominantly agrarian. The majority of population were agriculturists and lived in villages. The king was the owner of all land. Two types of land revenue were introduced in the Mauryan period. One is rent for the use of the land and another was assessment on the produce. The assessment was different from one region to another region. The land holders had to pay into government treasury one-sixth to one-fourth of the produce of the land.

Besides agriculture which was the main profession, trade and Industry flourished well. Trade and commerce, customs duties, taxes on markets, fees for licenses, taxes on roads, taxes on guilds, taxes on liquor and gambling fines from law court were other sources of income to the state.

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#### **4.5.5 MAURYAN SOCIETY**

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The people of Maurya dynasty were happy and prosperous. On the whole they were self sufficient. The vast majority of the people and the ruler's upheld the social conventions and customs. Varna and Asrama two characteristic of the vedic society continued in the Mauryan period. No one was allowed to marry out his own caste.

Megasthenes the Greek ambassador gives an account of the caste system in Mauryan society. The Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras were the four main castes.

The Brahmins had maintained their high status in the society. They served as priests or Purohitas. They were the chief advisors to the rulers and tutors to crown princes.

Kshatriyas were mostly the ruling class, and army was in their hands. They possessed large estates, enforced the Varna laws and political power was concentrated in their hands.

The Vaisyas whose occupations was agriculture, cattle rearing and trade improved their status owing to the economic development of the country. They formed trade guilds and through them they controlled urban institutions. they resented against their inferior social states and they supported Buddhism and Jainism.

Sudras were dissatisfied with their low status. They were debarred from Sacraments and even from hearing Sacred texts. Their relations with the higher castes was strained and Brahmanas did not conceal their contempt for the Sudras.

Women were held in high esteem; but they were not given independence. Polygamy was practised by rulers and nobles. The higher sense of morality of the people is also testified by Megasthenes who observes. "Truth and Virtue they hold alike in eastern, hence they accord no special privileges to the old unless they possess superior wisdom". The harmony of these ends of life formed the background of social life in ancient India.

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#### **4.5.6. CULTURAL CONDITION UNDER MAURAYA'S**

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The age of the Mauryas witnessed a high point of cultural achievement, Ashoka's reign forms one of the brightest chapters in the history of India.

Ashoka's Dharma was one of the important ingredients of Mauryan culture. The principal religious sects were the Brahmanas, Buddhists and Jains. Buddhism had become the most popular religion under the Patronage of Ashoka. Education in Mauryan times was fairly and widely spread. Schools and higher educations were maintained by state and public charities. Teaching was mainly the duty of Brahmanas, Takshila, Ujjaini and Varanasi were the famous universities. The contents of education was both literary and religious. The Dharmaśāstras, Grammar, Economic and politics were widely studied.

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#### **4.5.7. DECLINE OF THE MAURYAS.**

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The Mauryas ruled over the empire of India till about 185 B.C. When they succumbed to internal dissensions and invasions from abroad the Greek king Demetrius invaded India in 180 B.C. and wrested from the Mauryan emperor Brihadratha, a considerable portion of his empire northwest. This loss gave a terrible blow to the power and prestige of a Mauryan empire. Taking advantage of this state of confusion, Pushyamitra, the commander-in-chief of Brihadratha, made a plot against his master, killed him and ascended the throne. According to some scholars, Ashoka was responsible for the downfall of the great empire.

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#### 4.5.8 SUMMARY OF THE UNIT

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1. The Mauryan age was significant period in Indian history. The whole Northern India was under an efficient and centralized government.
2. Ashoka was the only king in the History of the world who gave up war after a great victory and attempted to banish the war.
3. Ashoka was an accomplished monarch. He was a great patron of men of letters.
4. Mauryan economy was good enough, agriculture received great impetus.
5. Buddhism gained great Vigour, in the reign of Ashoka.

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#### 4.5.9 BOOKS OF STUDY

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- |    |               |   |  |
|----|---------------|---|--|
| 1. | R.K. Mukerjee | - | Chandragupta and his times                   |
| 2. | V.A. Smitha   | - | Ashoka, The Buddhist Emperor of India        |
| 3. | Romila Thapar | - | Recent Perspectives of early Indian History. |

**Dr. Mahadevi**

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## UNIT - 5

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### GUPTA'S ERA

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#### STRUCTURE

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Political History of Guptas
  - 5.2.1 Samudra Gupta (330 - 380 A.D)
  - 5.2.2 Chandragupta - II
  - 5.2.3 Later Guptas
- 5.3 Administrative System of Guptas
- 5.4 Economic, Social and Religious conditions of the Guptas
- 5.5 Literature
- 5.6 Art and Architecture
- 5.7 Science
- 5.8 Books for Study

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## 5.0 OBJECTIVES

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After working through this unit you should be able to know:

- ◆ The political history of Guptas
- ◆ Achievements of Samudra Gupta and Chandragupta II
- ◆ The Administrative System of Guptas
- ◆ The Economic, Social, Cultural and religious conditions of Guptas

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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The Guptas established a large empire with imperial traditions, the first empire being that of the Mauryas. The Gupta emperors, particularly Samudra Gupta and Chandragupta II were the great conquerors and able administrators. During this period notable development took place in Indian literature, art and architecture and science.

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## 5.2 POLITICAL HISTORY OF GUPTAS

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After disappearance of Kushans in the history of India, many independent states came into existence. In the third century A.D., the Guptas must have appeared as a small political power in Magadha region. The amalgamation of Gupta and the Lichchavi dynasties in the early years of the 4th century A.D. led to the foundation of a great empire.

Sri Gupta was the founder of Gupta dynasty. He was succeeded by Ghatotkaja. These two kings are described as Maharajas. After the death of Ghatotkaja, his son Chandragupta I ascended the Gupta throne in 320 A.D. He was the first independent ruler of this dynasty. He married the Lichchavi Princess Kumaradevi. His matrimonial alliance provided him the much needed power and support. He undertook Military campaign to expand his kingdom. He conquered the Gangetic Valley, Vaisali, Kingdom of the Lichchavis. At the time of his death Chandragupta I possessed a powerful kingdom, though his possessions were not very extensive. His kingdom was confined only to Gangetic valley. He ruled like his predecessors, from the imperial city of Pataliputra. He issued gold coins in his name and called himself Maharajadhiraja.

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### 5.2.1 SAMUDRA GUPTA (330-380 A.D)

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After the death of Chandragupta - I his son Samudra Gupta became the king of Gupta Kingdom. He was a great soldier and a capable administrator. As a young prince he had been trained properly in the art of warfare and administration. Hence at the time of his death Chandragupta -I had nominated Samudra Gupta his successor to the Gupta throne.

The Allahabad pillar inscription is the most valuable source for the study of Samudra Gupta's personality and achievements. The inscription caused by Samudra Gupta is in Sanskrit and was composed by the Harisena, who was his commander. This inscription tells us about Samudra Gupta's education and his Military Campaign.

Samudragupta was a great Soldier. After his accession to Gupta throne, he undertook a series of expeditions. Some of these expeditions were military campaigns and some were Dharma vijayas, the campaigns to establish the rule of righteousness. In the Northern campaigns, he removed some kings and destroyed others. In his northern campaigns he defeated nine kings. First he defeated Achutha and Nagasena. Achutha was the king of Ahichchakra kingdom. He also defeated Ganapathinaga of Mathura. After these campaigns and expansion of his empire he turned his attention to South Indian Campaign.

In Southern India Samudra Gupta defeated 12 kings and made them to accept his overland ship. They were king of *Atavika kingdom*, *Kosala kingdom*, *Vyasaraja of Mahakantara*, *Swamidatta of Kottur*, *Damana of Yarandapalli*, *Vishungopa of Kanchi*, *Nilaraja of Avamuktha*, *Hasthivarman of Vengi*, *Vgraasera of Palaka*, *Kubera of Devarashtra*, *Dhananjaya of Kustalapura* and Many others. The defeated kings accepted to pay annual tributes to Samudra Gupta. Samudra Gupta's empire extended from Panjab in the West to Bay of Bengal in the east of Vindhya Mountain ranges in the South.

After South Indian Campaign, he undertook the second North Indian campaign to extend his empire. In this Campaign, he defeated Rudradeva, Chandravarman, Balavarman, Nagadatta and Nandin. Thus Samudragupta extended his kingdom from Northern India to Southern India.

With these extensive military campaigns, the name of Samudragupta spread all over the subcontinent. To commemorate these victories, he performed *Ashwamedha yaga* and assumed the title of "*Ashwamedha Parakrama*". To celebrate this victories, he also issued gold coin. Apart from being a great soldier he was also a trendsetter in the areas of cultural development. To commemorate various accomplishments in his career as the Gupta emperor he issued seven types of gold coins. He was a great patron of art, literature and fine arts, The Allahabad pillar inscription says that he assumed titles like *Kaviraja* and wrote *Krishnucharitra* in sankrit. He was a great Vaishnavite and a devotee of Lord Vishnu. Yet he was tolerant of other religions.

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### 5.2.2 CHANDRAGUPTA - II (380 - 414 A.D)

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After the death of Samudra Gupta his son Chandragupta II ascended the throne in 380 A.D. He was also known as Vikramaditya. During his reign, Gupta empire became more powerful and enlarged. He had a great forethought and strengthened the position of the guptas by establishing matrimonial alliances with contemporary powers. He have his daughter Prabhavathi to king Rudrasena II of the Vakataka dynasty. Chandragupta also wom over to his side the Nagas through matrimonial alliance. Thus, under Chandragupta II the Gupta empire extended to coasted areas, consequent of which great development took place in the areas of trade and commerce Ujjaini was a great trading centre as well as a cultural centre.

Chandragupta - II patronized art and literature. Many Historians opine that the 'NineGems" adorned his court, The 'Nine Gems' are Kalidasa, Dhanvanthari, Varahamihira, Amarsimha, Vararuchi, Shankhu, Kshapanya, Vethalabhata and Ghatakarpana.

During the region of Chandragupta II a famous Chines traveller Fahien, visited his kingdom. He has left behind a description of the life and conditions of the people in the Gupta empire.

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### 5.2.3 LATER RULER'S

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Chandragupta II was succeeded by his son Kumara Gupta who ruled between 415 A.D and 455 A.D Fissiporous tendencies set in during the reign of Kumara gupta. he was



succeeded by Skanda Gupta who ruled from 455 A.D to 467 A.D. Purugupta ruled after Skandagupta for short while. Internal problems afflicted the gupta empire. Buddhagupta who succeeded Purugupta in 477 A.D., continued the imperial tradition. But simultaneously Kukara Gupta also was a ruling monarch in 474 A.D. Many powerful vassals did not accept the impair and naturally the central authority weakened considerably. The vakataka ruler Narendrasena attacked the Southern plank of the Gupta empire and acquired some territories which was a signal for the disintegration of the Gupta empire. After Budhagupta, the Gupta empire broke into smaller independent kingdoms.

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### 5.3 ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF GUPTAS

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Gupta Administration was a centralized system where the king was the supreme head. Kingship was hereditary and occasionally succession to throne was contested among legal heirs. The kings of this age were not only doughty fighters, rough soldiers and war - lords, but also great lovers of learning and fine arts. Kings were, the centre of all military political administrative and judicial powers of the kingdom. They governed with the assistance of a ministry but the ultimate responsibility of a final decision rested with them.

The Guptas often their own commanders in chief and they used to led important military campaigns. All viceroys, governors and military and civil officers were appointed by and responsible to them. The provincial governors and their subordinate officers were under their control and guidance. They shared their powers with ministers and other high state officers who were expected to guide and control the king, if he was acting against the established laws and customs of the kingdom.

The king was assisted by a council of ministers in the administration of the empire. *Mantri*, *Senapathi*, *Dandanayaka* were some of the common ministers mentioned in the inscriptions. The empire was divided into provinces called "Bhukthis". Bhukthis were presided over by Uparika or Goptris. Bhukthis were further divided into Vishayas, which was under the control of *Vishayapathi*, *Vishayas* was further divided into *gramas*, whose head of administration was *gramadhyaksha*. This officer was assisted in his duties by a council of older called *Panchamandala*.

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## **5.4. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELIGIONS CONDITIONS OF THE GUPTAS**

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### **5.4.1 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

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Agriculture, industries and trade and commerce was the main sources of the Guptas economy. The development of agriculture during the Guptas period had been continued on traditional lines. Several varieties of rice, wheat, barley were the main crops produced during this period. Oil seeds of different kinds, cotton, betel-leaves and nuts, Vegetables and sugarcane were also produced during this period. Rainfall was the main water sources for the agriculture. However the wells, tanks and canals were also used for agriculture.

The contemporary evidence throw light on the flourishing nature of many industries like the textile, iron, leather, ivory and many other industries. The inscriptions give in great detail the guild organization of this period. Varanasi, Mathura, Kaimarua and the Pundra country were the famous centres of the textile industry.

Trade and commerce was also increased in the Gupta period. Ganga and Yamuna rivers were the water ways for the trade. Tamralipi, a thriving port in Bengal was the gateway for trade with south-east asian countries.

Indias principal objects of trade with the outside world were spices like long Pepper, costus, cardamom and other aromatics. Sandal wood, fine textiles and saffron were also exported to the western countries. Raw-silk yarn and silks-robés were exported to western countries.

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### **5.4.2 SOCIAL CONDITION**

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Social Conditions underwent rapid changes during the Gupta period. The caste system continued with less rigidity. People changed their professions to suit their needs. The priestly and artisan classes taking to the professions of arms, and members of the Kshatriya caste figuring as marchants, and some times Vaishyas as rulers. Thus, the professions were not very rigidly determined by caste. This is proved by a number of authentic instance of Brahmana and Kshatniyas adopting the occupations of the classes below them, and Vaisyas and Sudras following those of the classes above them.

In the next place we have in the Gupta period authentic example of intermarriage between Varnas, not only in the anuloma but also in the pratiloma order in the contemporary Sanskrit drama and prose romances we find Brahmans and Kshatriyas even marrying the daughters and female slaves of courtesan. It follows from the above that the Smritis law in the general was far from processing the rigidity of later times.

The joint family system was a common feature of this period, property rights were also family systemized during this period. In an cestrol property father and sons came to have equal rights and in father's property all sons had equal rights. However a son born to a high caste man by a Sudra women was not entitled to equal share in the property. Animal Sacrifice and meat eating were common.

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### 5.4.3 RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

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During the age of Gupata, the religions was rich, varied and vigorous. The most noticeable features in the religious life of the people during this age were the growing importance of Bhakti, the love of fellowers of different sects and toleration of the opinions and faiths of others. The austere ideal of the impersonal god was replaced with personal god called by various name like Vishnu, Shiva, Devi etc., for the purpose of Bhakti is an important element of Vaishnavism and Saivism.

The Gupta rulers were the followers of Vaishnavism. They extended royal patronage to Vedic religion. Hence Hinduism became once again the most popular and powerful religion of the land. The *Dashavataraa* of Vishnu become a common conviction. Buddha also was considered as an incarnation of Vishnu like that of Krishna. Saivism was also a popular from of religion during this period.

Buddhism was another major religion of this period. However, with the resurgence of Hinduism, Buddhism was on the declining side. Mahayana Buddhism was popular though according Fa-hien, Hinayana Buddhism also flourished in some parts of the Gupta empire. Nalanda was developing as a great Buddhist learning centre along with Saranatha, Mathura, Vallabhi and Pataliputra.

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## 5.5 LITERATURE

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Gupta period witnessed the production of master pieces of literature, particularly in Sanskrit. Sanskrit became the court language and received great royal patronage. The literary accomplishments of Samudra Gupta have been depicted in the Allahabad pillar inscription. He had assumed the title "Kaviraja". His commander Harisena was also a famous poet and authored the Allahabad inscription. Chandragupta II was a great patron of art and literature. Great men of letters of the age called "Navaratnas" adored his court. Among them Kalidasa was most outstanding. His "Kumara Sambhava" and "Raghuvamsha" are considered as great Sanskrit works. "Shakuntala", "Malavikagnimitra", "Vikramorvastri" are the famous plays. "Meghadoota" and "Ritu Sambara" are other works of Kalidasa. Vishaka Datta was another famous poet who wrote the play called "Mudrarakshasa" and "Devi Chandra Gupta". "Mrichchakatika"; another famous work was produced by Shudraka. Many Puranas were also written during the period. In this way the Gupta period witnessed a great court in the production of literature.

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## 5.6 ART AND ARCHITECTURE

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The achievements of Guptas in the field of art, architecture and fine arts are noteworthy. Ajantha, Mathura, Banaras, Pataliputra were the major centres of Gupta art and architecture.

The glories of the Gupta age proper (350 - 650 A.D) have been made permanent through the visible creations of its art. The age saw an unprecedented artistic activity all over India. By the efforts of centuries techniques of art were perfected. Definite types were evolved and ideals of beauty were formulated with provision. The Greek influence on Indian art is completely disappeared in the Gupta period and became entirely and purely Indian.

The Gupta architecture continues the tradition of the old and at the same time marks the beginning of a new age. The Stupas and the rock cut caves continue the old forms,

but possess striking novelty. The Dhamekh stupa at Suranath Probably of the Sixth Century A.D consisting of a circular stone drum with a cylindrical mass of brick works above it and rising to a height of 128 ft., shows the final form of evolution of this type of Structure. Another notable groups of rock-cut monasteries and chaitya halls are those of Ellora.

The Structural chaitya halls and the Hindu temples follow the old traditions. Small flat roofed temples, sometime surrounded by pilloried halls, are characteristic of the early Gupta period, and the small but elegant temple at sanchi furnished a good example.

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## 5.7 SCIENCE

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The Gupta period also stands out in the history of Indian science. In fact this period witnessed the high water mark of early Indian achievement. The formulation of the theory of zero surely one of the most revolutionary discoveries in the field of thought and India's greatest legacy to the world in the shpare of the practical knowledge and the consequent evolution of the decimal system are to the credited to the thinkers of the age. The Science, Mathematics, Astronomy including astrology were cultivated with much success. Aryabhata was the most famous writer of those subjects.

The author of *Aryabhatiya* and *Suryasiddhanta* in which he for the first time laid down that the earth moved around its axis, analysed the causes of Solar and Lunar eclipses. Varahamihira, the author of *Brihatsamhita*, Varitnble encylopeadia of ancient learning dealing with astronomy, Botany, geography, women, animals, etc. Bramhagutpa who anticipated Newton by dulan of that "all things fall to the earth by a law of nature, for it is the nature of the earth to attract and keep things". Medicine flourished and medical education was imparted on the lines of Charaka and Shustruta. Vagbhata was the greatest physician of the age. Truly it could be said that the scholars of the Gupta period were gifted with an insatiable scientific curiosity, a desire to go forward in seeking knowledge and a courage in facing conclusion which is almost modern in its out look.

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## 5.8 BOOKS FOR STUDY

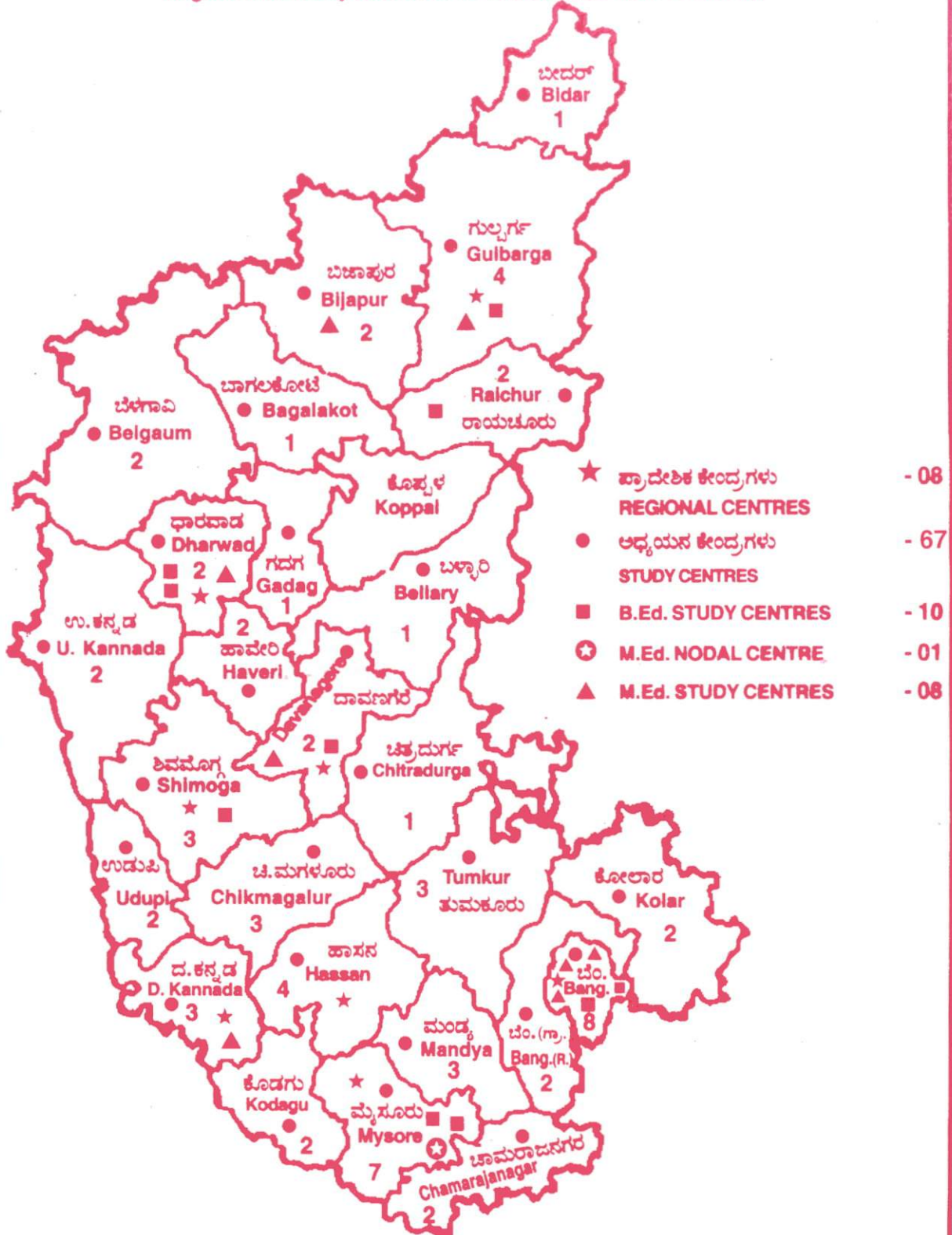
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1. Majurndar, R.C - The age of imperial unity
2. Luniya, B.N - Evolution of Indian Culture
3. RomilaThapar - History of India Vol. 1

**Dr. Mahadevi**

ಆದೇಶ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಕರಾಢುಁ/ಸಿಪಾಁ/4-813/2007-08, ಜೈತ್ರ ಂಟಿರ್‌ಫೈಸಸ್, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ತಾ|| 08.06.2007  
ಕಾಗದ : 60 ಜಿ.ಁಸ್.ಁಂ. - ಁಂ.ಪಿ.ಁಂ. ಢುಖಿಫುಟಿ 170 ಜಿ.ಁಸ್.ಁಂ. ಆರ್ಟ್  
ಪರಿಢಾಣ : 500 ಫುತಿಗಲು (ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 1ರಿಂದ 500)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯದ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳು  
Regional and Study Centres of Karnataka State Open University



(ಸಮೂಹೀಕರಣ ಅಂಕ - ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಒಟ್ಟು ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.)  
(The Number indicate the total number of study Centres existing in that districts.)

