



UNIT

4

Intellectual Awakening and Socio-Political Changes

Learning Objectives

- To understand the transition of society from 6th century to 2nd century BC (BCE)
- To familiarise ourselves with the essence of new religious faiths: Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivika in India, Zoroastrianism in Persia, and Confucianism and Taoism in China
- To become aware of the circumstances that led to the formation of states with a focus on Magadha Empire
- To understand the socio-political changes of the pre-Mauryan and Mauryan states



Introduction

A new civilisation began to develop in northern India, with the revival of trade and urbanization during the sixth century BC (BCE). In this period of major political and social changes in north India, Buddha and Mahavira were born. In the century following their death, Buddhism and Jainism took root as major religions in India. This meant that new religious orders were coming up with many followers, propagating new beliefs and philosophies. Similarly Zoroastrianism in Persia and Confucianism and Taoism in China became popular during this period.

4.1 Religion in the Sixth Century BC (BCE)

The new civilisations that emerged in the new Iron Age had certain common features. They were characterised by the proliferation of new crafts, growth of long-distance trade, building of cities and towns, rise of universalistic religions and evolution of a code of conduct. Sixth century BC (BCE) was, therefore, a period of exceptional development

in all spheres of life such as material, cultural and intellectual. About this time, we find that a number of prominent men, great thinkers and founders of new religions lived, making it a period of great historical importance. Philosophical and religious thinkers such as Confucius in China, Zoroaster in Iran and Mahavira and Buddha in India gained popularity in sixth century BC (BCE).

4.2 Confucianism and Taoism

In the sixth century BC (BCE), two great thinkers were born in China: Confucius and Lao-Tse. They laid down the systems of morals and social behaviour for individuals and communities. But after their death, temples were built in their memory and the philosophy they taught was developed into a religion. Known as Confucianism and Taoism respectively, their books were held in great reverence in China. Confucianism exerted a big influence on not only the political class of China but also on the common people.



Confucius (551–478 BC (BCE))

Confucius was born in the Shantung province of China in 551 BC (BCE). He studied history, poetry, philosophy and music. He is the author of five important works: (1) *The Book of Records*, which is chiefly ethical, providing guidelines for the regulation of human society; (2) *The Book of Odes*, illustrating the sound principles of morality in songs; (3) *The Book of Changes* dealing with metaphysics; (4) *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, a code of political morality; and (5) *The Book of History* narrating the events and legends of the early religions of China.



Confucius

Five Cardinal Principles of Confucius' Ethics

1. Humaneness
2. Righteousness
3. Propriety
4. Wisdom
5. Trustworthiness

Confucius said that wisdom grows from the family, and that the foundation of society is the disciplined individual in an orderly family. The superior man, according to him, is not merely intelligent or scholarly, but his character should be exemplary. The superior man of Confucius possesses three virtues: intelligence, courage and goodwill. Though Confucius insisted on children obeying parents and wife her husband, he also clearly proposed that "when the command is wrong a son should resist his father and a minister

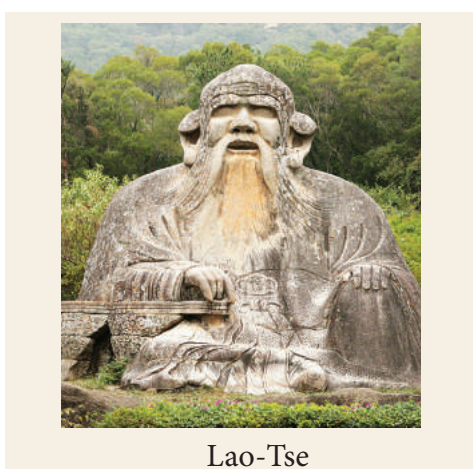
should resist the prince.” When asked about government, he said that there are three requisites for it: “There should be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment and confidence of the people in their ruler.”

Taoism

Lao-Tse, the greatest of the pre-Confucian philosophers, was 53 years older than Confucius. Lao-Tse was born in 604 BC (BCE). Disgusted with the intrigues of politicians and the prevailing corruption of his time, he left China to live in a peaceful abode. Lao-Tse wrote a book in two parts, running into 5,000 words. He then disappeared from the place and no one knew where he died. His book *Tao Teh Ching* is a guide to the conduct of life.

Teachings of Lao-Tse (Taoism)

- The cause of human unhappiness in the world is human selfishness. Selfishness creates unlimited human desires, which can never be satisfied.
- In nature, all the things act in a natural way. The law of human conduct must correspond with nature.



Lao-Tse

- Humans live a life under the regulation of someone. This is because they have acquired knowledge and have not remained innocent. On the basis of their acquired knowledge, they have built up an urban civilisation and have made themselves unhappy.

4.3 Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism is one of the oldest of the revealed world religions. It remained as the state religion of three great Iranian empires, which flourished from the 6th century BC (BCE) and dominated much of the Middle East. Zoroaster of Persia is the founder of Zoroastrianism. Zoroaster was pained to find his people worshipping primitive deities. He revolted against it and proclaimed to the world that there is one god, Ahura Mazda (the Lord of Light).

The holy book of Zoroastrians is *Zend Avesta*. It is a collection of sacred literature of different epochs, containing religious hymns, invocations, prayers, confessions, laws, myths and sacred reminiscences. The doctrines and rituals of the Zoroastrians have much similarity to those of the Vedas.

Teachings

Zoroaster taught that the great object of religion, state or society is the cultivation of morality. The highest religious conception is purity of thought, word and deed. He asserted that Ahura Mazda has seven qualities: (1) light; (2) good mind; (3) right; (4) dominion; (5) piety; (6) well-being; and (7) immortality. Ahura Mazda is omniscient (knows everything), omnipotent (all powerful) and omnipresent (is everywhere). In Zoroastrianism, sacrifice and image worship were discarded. Fire was worshipped as a symbol of the deity and considered the highest form of worship. Charity was made an essential part of religion, and service to the poor was particularly emphasised.

4.4 Impact of Iron Technology in India

In the Gangetic valley, people learnt to produce crops more than that was required for subsistence. So, another section of people took up some professional crafts as their livelihood. Like the farmers, these craftsmen also had

to rely on a group of people who collected raw materials and distributed the craft products. Early urbanisation happened in two ways. One was as a result of some villages specialising in black smithy, pottery, carpentry, cloth weaving and the like. The other was on account of the congregation of specialised craftsmen in villages close to where the raw materials were available and where markets were present. Such a concentration enabled villages to evolve into towns and exchange centres. Vaisali, Shravasti, Rajagriha, Kausambi and Kashi were some significant commercial centres of the Gangetic plain.

4.5 Religion: Post-Rig Vedic

Three more Vedas –Yajur, Sama and Atharva –were composed after the Rig Veda. Manuals of rituals called *Brahmanas*, specifying rhyming words to be sung, and two commentaries on certain Rig Vedic hymns called *Aranyakas*, containing knowledge to be learnt secretly in the forest, and the Upanishads, were compiled in the upper Gangetic plain during 1000–600 BC (BCE).



4.6 Jainism and Buddhism

In the Gangetic plain, iron plough agriculture required the use of bullocks. But the indiscriminate killing of cattle for Vedic rituals and sacrifices caused resentment. The founders of Jainism and Buddhism did not prescribe killing as a religious rite. They secured their livelihood mostly by alms. Celibacy and abstinence from holding property made the new teachers much more acceptable than the Brahman priests. The people's resentment about the expensive and elaborate Vedic rituals, animal sacrifice and the desire for wealth eventually took them towards Jainism and Buddhism.

Mahavira and Buddha lived a life of purity and exemplified simplicity and self-denial. They lived in the times of Bimbisara and Ajatashatru, the famous kings of Magadha. The commercial development of the northern cities like Kaushambi, Kushinagara, Benaras, Vaishali and Rajagriha added importance to the Vaishyas who turned to Buddhism and Jainism in their eagerness to improve their social status.

Jainism

Mahavira: Birth and Life

Vardhamana Mahavira was born in 599 BC (BCE) at Kundagrama near Vaishali. His mother was Trishala, a Lichchavi princess. He spent his early life as a prince and was married to a princess named Yashoda. The couple had a daughter. At the age of thirty, he left his home and became an ascetic. For over twelve years, Mahavira wandered from place to place, subjecting himself to severe penance and self-mortification. In the thirteenth year of his asceticism, he acquired the highest knowledge and came to be known as Jaina (the conqueror) and Mahavira (great hero). Jains believe that Mahavira came in



Mahavira

a long line of Tirthankaras and he was the twenty fourth and the last of them. Rishabha was the first Tirthankara and Parshvanath the penultimate or the twenty third. Mahavira travelled extensively as a preacher in the kingdoms of Magadha, Videha and Anga. Magadha rulers Bimbisara and Ajatashatru were influenced by his teachings. Thousands of people became his followers. After 30 years of preaching, Mahavira died at Pawapuri in 527 BC (BCE) at the age of seventy two.



The statue of Bahubali (known as Gomateswara, 57 feet)

at Shravanabelgola in Karnataka is the tallest Jaina statue ever carved out in India.



Bahubali

Teachings of Mahavira

The three principles of Jainism, also known as Tri-ratnas, are the following:

1. Right faith: Belief in the teachings and wisdom of Mahavira.
2. Right knowledge: Acceptance of the theory that there is no God and that the world existed without a creator.
3. Right action: It refers to the Mahavira's observance of the five great vows: (a) ahimsa, (b) honesty, (c) kindness, (d) truthfulness and (e) not coveting or desiring things belonging to others.

Spread of Jainism

In order to spread his new faith, Mahavira founded monasteries. The Jaina monks who led a very austere life. In North India, this new faith was patronised by rulers such as Dhana Nanda, Chadragupta Maurya and Kharavela. There was a notable followers of Jainism in Karnataka and western India during the 4th century BC (BCE). Jainism encouraged the public spirit among all who embraced it. Varna system practiced by Brahmins was challenged. People were spared from the costly and elaborate rituals and sacrifices. Mahavira believed that all objects, both animate and inanimate, have souls and various degrees of consciousness. They possess life and feel pain when they are injured.

Split in Jainism

In course of time, Jainism split into two branches, namely the Digambaras (sky-clad) and the Svetambaras (white-clad).

Decline of Jainism

The lack of royal patronage, its severity, factionalism and spread of Buddhism led to the decline of Jainism in India.



Jaina Kanchi : Jainism was one of the major faiths in the Tamil region during the 7th century AD (CE). The Pallava king, Mahendravarman was a Jain. Under the influence of Appar he got converted to Saivism. Close to the present town of Kanchi there is a place called Jaina Kanchi where you find many Jain temples. One of the important temples is the Thiruparuthikundram temple, where the ceiling is painted with the life story of Mahavira.

Buddhism

Gautama Buddha: Birth and Life

Gautama Buddha was the son of Suddhodana, the chief of a Kshatriya clan of the Sakyas of Kapilavastu in present-day Nepal. His given name was Siddhartha. As he belonged to the Sakya clan, he was also known as 'Sakya Muni'. He was born in 567 BC (BCE) in Lumbini Garden, near Kapilavastu. His mother, Mayadevi (Mahamaya), died after a few days



Gautama Buddha

of his birth and he was brought up by his step-mother. In order to divert his attention towards worldly affairs, his father got him married at the age of sixteen to a princess called Yashodhara. He led a happy married life for some time and

had a son by name Rahula.

One evening, while Siddhartha was passing through the city, he came across an old man who had been abandoned by his relatives, a sick man crying with pain and a dead body surrounded by weeping relatives. Siddhartha

was deeply moved by these sights. He also saw an ascetic who had renounced the world and found no sign of sorrows. These 'Four Great Sights' prompted him to renounce the world and search for the cause of suffering. In 537 BC (BCE), he left his palace and went into the forest in search of truth. In the course of his wanderings, he sat under a peepal tree for several days until he attained enlightenment. The place where he attained enlightenment, the Mahabodhi temple, still exists in Bodh Gaya (Bihar).

After his enlightenment, Buddha decided to impart his knowledge to the people. He went to Varanasi and gave his first sermon at Saranath. He preached in the kingdoms of Magadha and Kosala. A large number of people became his followers including his own family. After forty five years of preaching, he breathed his last in 487 BC (BCE) at Kushinagar (near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh) at the age of eighty.

Teachings of Buddhism

- (i) **Four Great Truths:** (1) There is suffering and sorrow in this world. (2) The cause of human suffering is desire and craving. (3) This pain or sorrow can be removed by suppressing desire and craving. (4) This is to be achieved by leading a disciplined life or by following what Buddha called the 'Noble Eight-fold Path'.

- (ii) **Attainment of Nirvana:** According to Buddha, a person should aim at attainment of nirvana or the highest bliss, and it could be achieved by any person by leading a virtuous life and by following the Noble Eight-fold Path.

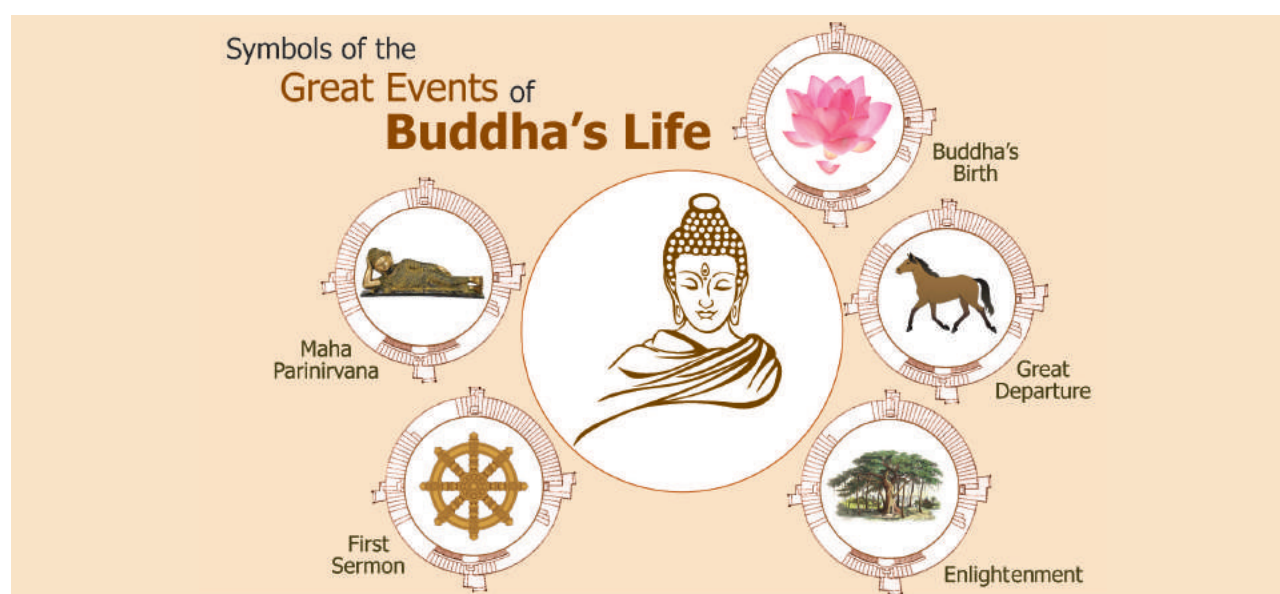
- (iii) **The Noble Eight-fold Path:** Buddha preached a new path to attain the purest state of mind: (1) right views, (2) right aspirations, (3) right speech, (4) right action, (5) right livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right mindfulness and (8) right contemplations or meditation. Buddha preached that he who practices the eight-fold path can attain the highest and purest state of mind.

Spread of Buddhism

Buddha, in order to carry his message to different parts of India, established the Buddhist *sangha* or the Holy Order of Monks. The *bikshus* (monks) and the *bikshunis* (nuns) were enlisted for spreading the faith and they were required to lead a life of purity and poverty. Buddhism spread to Central Asia, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Southeast Asia, as well as the eastern countries of China, Mongolia, Korea, Japan and Vietnam.

The Split in Buddhism

During the reign of Kanishka, the Buddhist monk Nagarjuna initiated reforms





in the way Buddhism was being followed. As a result, Buddhism was split into two as *Hinayana* and *Mahayana*.

- (i) The **Hinayana** (Lesser Vehicle) was the original creed preached by Buddha. The followers of this form regarded Buddha as their guru and did not worship him as God. They denied idol worship and continued with the people's language, Pali.

DO YOU KNOW? When Buddha's closest disciple Ananda asked Buddha whether women can become monks. Buddha said, Yes, if women can follow the path of renunciation, they can become monks and completely enlightened just as men.

- (ii) In **Mahayana** (Greater Vehicle), Buddha was worshipped as God and Bodhisattva as his previous avatar. The followers made images and statues of Buddha and Bodhisattva and offered prayers, and recited hymns (**mantras**) in their praise. Later, they wrote their religious books in Sanskrit. This form of Buddhism was patronised by Kanishka.

Decline of Buddhism

Buddhism declined in India due to the following reasons:

1. Buddhism was popular in the beginning because it was preached in people's language (Pali). The later texts were written in Sanskrit, which was difficult for the common people to understand.
2. The split in Buddhism into Hinayana and Mahayana was another vital reason. Image worship in Mahayana made no difference between Hinduism and Buddhism.
3. Buddhism lost its royal patronage during the reign of Guptas.
4. Further, the invasions of Huns and Turks almost wiped out Buddhism.

4.7 Other Heterodox Sect

Ajivika

The period that produced Buddhism and Jainism also witnessed the birth of a sect known as Ajivika. Its founder was Gosala (Maskariputra Gosala), a friend of Mahavira. For some time, they were together. Later, Gosala moved away and founded the Ajivika sect. As an atheistic sect, Ajivikas rejected the karma theory, which postulated that the condition of men is determined by their past actions. Gosala argued that acts of charity and piety can, in no way, influence this finality.

Ajivikas had a small presence in southern India. Under the Cholas, a special tax was levied on them. Three Tamil texts, the *Manimekalai* of Buddhists, the *Nilakesi* of Jains and the *Sivajnanasiddhiyar* of Saivites, contain the outlines of Ajivika doctrine.

Gana-sanghas

There were two distinct forms of government at the time of Mahavira and Buddha: monarchical kingdom and clan oligarchies or *Gana-sanghas*. The Gana-sanghas provided a polity alternative to the kingdoms. Vedic rituals and the rules of *varna* were not followed. The Gana-sanghas consisted of either a single clan, such as the Shakyas, Koliyas and Mallas, or a confederacy of clans, such as the Vrijiis and the Vrishnis (a confederacy located at Vaisali). The Gana-sanghas had only two strata: the Kshatriya rajakula, ruling families, and the dasa-karmakara, the slaves and labourers.

4.8 Rise of Kingdoms

The 6th century BC (BCE) witnessed the establishment of kingdoms, oligarchies and chiefdoms as well as the emergence of towns. From the largest of the chiefdoms emerged kingdoms. Many tribes of Rig Vedic period such as Bharatas, Pasus, Tritsus and Turvasas passed into oblivion and new tribes such as the Kurus and Panchalas rose into prominence. Sixteen *mahajanapadas* are listed in the Buddhist texts.



Linguistic and cultural commonality prevailed in the *janapadas*, whereas in the *mahajanapadas*, different social and cultural groups lived. With the emergence of kingdoms, the struggle for supremacy among different states occurred frequently. Sacrifices such as Rajasuya and Asvamedha were performed to signify the imperial sway of monarchs over their rivals. The Rig Vedic title of 'Rajan' was replaced by impressive titles such as Samrat, Ekkrat, Virat or Bhoja.

Northern India extended from the Kabul Valley in the north to the Godavari in the South. It witnessed the rise of sixteen states known as *Mahajanapadas* or sixteen great states: Kasi, Kosla, Anga, Magadha, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Assaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja.

Growth of Royal Power

The king enjoyed absolute power. The *sabha* of the Rig Vedic period ceased to exist. The king sought the aid and support of the *samiti* on matters like war, peace and fiscal policies. However, in spite of the existence of the assemblies, the power of the king kept increasing. The *Satapatha Brahmana* describes the king as infallible and immune from all punishments. The growth of royal power was reflected in the enlarged administrative structure. The king was now assisted by a group of officers such as *Bhugadugha* (collector of taxes), *Suta* (charioteer), the *Aksharapa* (superintendent of gambling), *Kshattri* (chamberlain), *Gorikartana* (king's companion in the chase), *Palogola* (courtier), *Takshan* (carpenter) and *Rathakara* (chariotmaker). In addition, there were the ecclesiastical and military officials like the *Purohita* (chaplain), the *Senani* (army general) and the *Gramani* (leader of the village). In the later Vedic period, *Gramani*, who acted both a civil and military officer, was the link through which the royal authority was enforced in the village. The king administered justice and occasionally delegated

his judicial power to *Adhyakshas* (royal officials). In the villages, *Gramyavadin* (village judge) and *Sabha* (court) decided the cases. Punishments for crimes were severe.

The Rise of Magadha Kingdom

The polity followed in kingdoms was different from that of *gana-sanghas*. Kingdoms operated with a centralised government. Political power was concentrated in the ruling family, which had become a dynasty, with succession becoming hereditary. There were advisory bodies such as *parishad* (ministers) and *sabha* (advisory council). The *sabha* collected the revenue and remitted it to the treasury in the capital of the kingdom, from where it was redistributed for the public expenses, such as maintenance of army and salaries to state officials.

Of the kingdoms mentioned in the literature of the period, Kashi, Kosala and Magadha are considered to be powerful. The only republic that rivalled these kingdoms was the *Vrijiis*, whose capital was Vaisali. In the struggle for control for the Gangetic Plain, which had strategic and economic advantages, the Magadha kingdom emerged victorious. Bimbisara was the first important king of Magadha. Through matrimonial alliances with the high-status Lichchavi clan of Vaishali and the ruling family in Kosala, Bimbisara went on to conquer Anga (in West Bengal now), thereby gaining access to the Ganges delta.

Bimbisara succeeded in establishing a comprehensive structure of administration. Village was the basic unit of his administrative system. Apart from villages (*gramas*), there were fields and pastures as well as wasteland and the forests (*aranya*, *khetra* and *vana*). Each village was brought under a *gramani* (headman), who was responsible for collecting taxes and remitting them to the state treasury. Officers appointed to measure the land under cultivation and assess the value of crop were to assist the *gramani* in his task. Land tax (*bali*) was the main source of revenue to the kingdom and the share of the produce (*bhaga*) was determined

proportionate to the extent of land cultivated. The term *shadbhagin* – one who is entitled to a share of one-sixth – referred to the king. Thus, a peasant economy came into being at Magadha.



Iron plough agriculture led to the rise of empires Assiriyian in Iran and Magadha in India.

Ajatashatru, the son of Bimbisara, is said to have murdered his father and ascended the throne in 493 BC (BCE). He continued his father's policy of expansion through military conquests. The capital city of Magadha was Rajagriha, which was surrounded by five hills, providing protection to the kingdom from external threats. Ajatashatru strengthened the Rajagriha fort and also built another fort at Pataligrama on the Ganges. It served as the exchange centre for the local produce and later became the Mauryan capital of Pataliputra. Ajatashatru died in 461 BC (BCE) and he was succeeded by five kings. All of them followed the example of Ajatashatru by ascending the throne by killing their parent. Fed up with such recurring instances, people of Magadha appointed the last ruler's viceroy Shishunaga as the king. After ruling nearly for half a century, the Shishunaga dynasty lost the kingdom to Mahapadma Nanda who founded the Nanda dynasty. The Nandas were the first of non-kshatriya dynasties to rule in northern India.

4.9 Mauryan Empire: State and Society

Mauryan Kings

Vishnugupta, who was later known as Chanakya or Kautilya, fell out with the Nanda king and vowed to dethrone him. Chandragupta perhaps inspired by Alexander of Macedonia, was raising an army and looking for opportunities to establish a kingdom of his own. On hearing the news of Alexander's death, Chandragupta stirred up the people and with their help drove away the Greek garrison that Alexander had left at Taxila. Then he and his allies marched to Pataliputra

and defeated the Nanda king in 321 BC (BCE). Thus began the reign of the Mauryan dynasty.

During Chandragupta's reign, Seleucus, the general of Alexander, who had control over

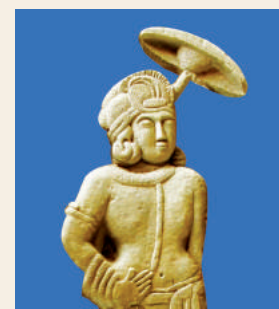


Chandragupta Maurya

countries from Asia Minor to India, crossed the Indus only to be defeated by Chandragupta. Seleucus's envoy, Megasthenes, is said to have remained in India and his account titled *Indica* is a useful record about Mauryan polity and society.

After gaining control over the Gangetic plain, Chandragupta turned his attention to north-west to take advantage of the void created by Alexander's demise. These areas comprising the present-day Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Makran surrendered without any resistance. Thereupon Chandragupta moved to Central India. According to Jaina tradition, towards the end of his life, Chandragupta, who had by now become an ardent follower of Jainism, abdicated his throne in favour of his son Bindusara.

Bindusara, during his rule, succeeded in extending the Mauryan empire upto Karnataka. At the time of his death, a large part of the subcontinent had come under Mauryan suzerainty. Ashoka succeeded Bindusara in 268 BC (BCE). Desirous of bringing the remaining parts of South India into his empire, Ashoka waged a war against Kalinga in the eighth year of his reign. The people of Kalinga fought bravely, but they were defeated after a large-scale slaughter. This war and slaughter affected Ashoka so much that he decided to give up war. Ashoka became



Emperor Ashoka

an ardent Buddhist after meeting the Buddhist monk Upagupta and propounded his Dharma. The only true conquest, he proclaimed, is the conquest of self and the conquest of men's hearts by the *dhamma* (Pali) or *dharma* (Sanskrit). He issued edicts, which were carved out in the rock.

There are 33 edicts, including 14 major rock edicts, 7 pillar edicts and 2 Kalinga edicts, apart from Minor Rock edicts and Minor Pillar inscriptions. They form the reliable sources to know about the Mauryan Empire, in particular the dharmic rule of Ashoka.

In one of his Kalinga edicts, he tells us his horror and sorrow over the deaths which the war and conquest caused. In yet another edict, he makes it known that Ashoka would not tolerate any longer the death or captivity of even hundredth or thousandth part of the number killed and made captive in Kalinga.

Ashoka's passion for protecting life extended to animals as well. Hospitals were constructed for them and animal sacrifice was forbidden. Ashoka sent his son Mahendra and his daughter Sanghamitra to Ceylon to spread his message of Dharma there. Ashoka died after ruling for 38 years.

Our national emblem with four lions is a replica of the Ashoka Pillar of Saranath.

Mauryan Administration

The Mauryan state in its early years undertook some measures that were positive for the development of society. The state raised taxes to finance a huge standing army and a vast bureaucracy. The Mauryans had

evolved a very efficient system of governance. The king, as the head of the administration, was assisted by a council of ministers. There were *mahamatris*, who functioned as secretaries to the ministers. The person in charge of revenue and expenditure was *samaharta*. The empire was divided into four provinces and these provinces were administered by governors, who were usually princes or from the royal family.



The district was under a *sthanika*, while *gopas* were in charge of five to ten villages. The municipal (Pataliputra) administration was under a *nagarika*. Six committees with five members each carried on their duties under him.

- They were to take care of the foreigners.
- To register the birth and death of the citizens
- To look after trade and commerce,
- To supervise different manufactures
- To collect excise duties and custom duties

Like the city or town administration, the military department was also managed by a board of 30 members, split into six committees, with five members in each of them. At the village level, there was *gramani*, whose responsibility was maintaining the boundaries, keeping the records of land and a census of population and livestock. In order to keep a vigil over the entire administration, including the conduct of officers, a well-knit spy system was evolved and put in place. Justice was administered through well-established courts in all major towns and cities. Punishment for crimes was severe.



Chandragupta's minister Chanakya is credited with a book titled *Arthashastra*, which gives a detailed account of the Mauryan administration.



The state used the surplus appropriated for the development of the rural economy by founding new settlements, granting land and encouraging the people to settle as farmers. It also organised irrigation projects and controlled the distribution of water. There was state control of agriculture, mining, industry and trade. The state discouraged the emergence of private property in land and banned its sale. The Mauryan state gave further boost to urban development. It secured land trade routes to Iran and Mesopotamia, as well as to the kingdoms of northern China. *Arthashastra* refers to Kasi (Benares), Vanga (Bengal), Kamarupa (Assam) and Madurai as textile centres. The distribution of black polished ware of northern India as far as South India is indicative of the extent of trade during the Mauryan rule. Trade contributed to urbanisation in a big way. New cities such as Kaushambi, Bhita, Vaishali and Rajagriha had sprung up in the *doab* region.

Educational Centres

Monasteries and temples served the purpose of imparting education. Nalanda was a great monastery built by the Magadha Empire. Educational centres offered Buddhist and Vedic literature, logic, grammar, medicine, philosophy and astronomy. Even the science of war was taught. Nalanda became the most renowned seat of learning in course of time. It was supported by the revenues of 100 villages. No fees were charged to the students and they were provided free board and lodging.



Nalanda University

Recap

- Sixth century BC (BCE) was a period of material, cultural and intellectual development.
- Confucius' ethics in China and Zoroastrian religion in Persia, Mahavira's Tri-ratnas and Buddha's eight-fold path in India created a new awakening and provided a moral code of conduct to humanity.
- Sixth century BC (BCE) was also a period that witnessed the rise of Mahajanapadas. The sixteen such chiefdoms are listed with the focus on Magadha as a powerful kingdom.
- The Mauryan dynasty was founded by Chandragupta Maurya with the aid of Chanakya.
- The Mauryan administration and the greatness of Ashoka with particular reference to his dhamma is highlighted.



EXERCISE



I. Choose the correct answer

1. Identify the founder of a new sect who exemplified simplicity and self-denial.
(a) Buddha (b) Lao-tze
(c) Confucius (d) Zoroaster
2. The Magadha king influenced by the teachings of Mahavira
(a) Dhananandha
(b) Chandragupta
(c) Bimbisara
(d) Shishunaga



3. The northern India extended from the Kabul Valley in the north to the Godavari in the south witnessed the rise of Sixteen States.
- (a) Mahajanapadas
 - (b) Gana-sanghas
 - (c) Dravida
 - (d) Dakshinapatha
4. Tri-ratnas are the three principles taught by
- (a) Buddha
 - (b) Mahavira
 - (c) Lao-tze
 - (d) Confucius
5. The account which throws light on Mauryan polity and society
- (a) Marco Polo
 - (b) Fahien
 - (c) Megasthenes
 - (d) Seleucus
6. (i) Under the Magadha king the mahamatryas functioned as secretaries to the ministers.
- (ii) Accounts of Megasthenes titled Indica is a useful record about Mauryan polity and society.
- (iii) Nanda's attempt to build an imperial structure was cut short by Ashoka who founded the Mauryan kingdom.
- (iv) According to tradition, towards the end of his life Chandragupta became an ardent follower of Buddhism.
- a) (i) is correct
 - b) (ii) is correct
 - c) (i) and (ii) are correct
 - d) (iii) and (iv) are correct

II. Fill in the blanks

1. _____ is a collection of sacred literature of different epochs, containing prayers, confessions and myths.
2. In the Gangetic plain _____ agriculture required the use of bullocks.
3. Jains believe that _____ came in a long line of Tirthankaras and he was the twenty - fourth and the last.
4. The place where Buddha attained enlightenment has been built into the Mahabodhi temple that still exists in _____.
5. The rock edicts form the reliable source to know about the Mauryan empire in particular the Dharmic rule of _____.

III. Find out the correct statement

1. a) The introduction of Bronze tools made easy the removal of dense forest cover from the banks of the Ganges.
b) Ajivikas had a small presence in western India.
c) The clusters where particular clansmen were dominant came to be known were Pre-Mauryan states.
d) Of the kingdoms mentioned in the literature of the period Kashi, Kosala and Magadha are considered to be powerful.
2. a) Ajatashatru was the first important king of Magadha.
b) Bimbisara succeeded in establishing a comprehensive structure of administration.
c) The Mauryas were the first of non-Kshatriya dynasties to rule in northern India.
d) Nanda's attempt to build an imperial structure was cut short by Ashoka.



IV. Match the following

1. Eight-fold path - tallest Jaina statue
2. Bahubali - a code of political morality
3. The Spring and Autumn Annals - sacred literature of laws and myths
4. Zend Avesta - first Tirthankara
5. Rishabha - path to attain the purest state of mind

V. Answer the following briefly

1. Write about Hinayana and Mahayana.
2. Elaborate the term “Tri-ratnas”.
3. What do you know of Ajatasatru?
4. What does the Edict of Kalinga convey?
5. Highlight the steps taken by Ashoka to spread Buddhism.

VI. Answer the following in detail

1. Discuss the five cardinal principles of Confucius
2. Compare and contrast the principles of Jainism and Buddhism

FUN WITH HISTORY

Student Activities

Prepare a case study of Asoka's Edicts.

Enact a drama about the life and teachings of Buddha.

Assignment with teacher's guidance

List out the countries where Buddhism exists in the world and mark on the world map.

Prepare a clay model of Sanchi Stupa, Dharmachakra.



REFERENCE BOOKS

1. A. Shah, *Glimpses of World Religions*. Jaico Books
2. Romila Thapar, *Early India*. Penguin
3. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*. Penguin
4. A.L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ajivikas: A Vanished Indian Religion*. Oxford University Press
5. V.A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*. Oxford University Press