1. Division of Ancient History and Sources

1.1 Division of the Past

Historians divide the human past by the kind of evidence that survives. Ancient Indian history is studied in three broad phases.

Phase	Evidence	Example
Prehistory	No written records; only **archaeological remains** such as stone tools	Stone Age cultures
Protohistory	Writing exists but is **not yet deciphered**; archaeology gives most knowledge	**Harappan (Indus)** civilisation
History	Written records that **can be read** and checked	From the Vedic and Mauryan periods onwards

Remember

- **Epigraphy** is the study of inscriptions; **palaeography** is the study of ancient writing; **numismatics** is the study of coins.
- The Harappan script is still undeciphered, so the Indus civilisation is called **protohistoric**.
- Dates are given in **BCE** (Before Common Era) and **CE** (Common Era); **BP** means Before Present.

1.2 The Stone Age Cultures

Age	Rough period	Tools and life	Important sites
Palaeo-lithic (Old Stone Age)	From about 2 million years ago to about 10,000 BCE	Hunter-gatherers; **hand-axes, cleavers, choppers**, later flakes and blades; discovery of **fire**	Bhimbetka (MP), Attirampakkam (TN), Hunsgi (Karnataka), Belan valley (UP), Kurnool caves (AP)
Meso-lithic (Middle Stone Age)	About 10,000 to 6,000 BCE	**Microliths** (tiny stone tools); hunting, fishing and herding; **early animal domestication**; rock paintings	Bagor (Rajasthan), Adamgarh (MP), Sarai Nahar Rai and Mahadaha (UP), Langhnaj (Gujarat)
Neo-lithic (New Stone Age)	Began about 7000 BCE in the north-west; later elsewhere	**Polished stone tools**, farming, pottery, **settled villages**, domesticated animals	Mehrgarh (Balochistan), Burzahom (Kashmir), Koldihwa and Chirand (north India), Maski and Brahmagiri (Karnataka), Utnur (AP)
Chalco-lithic Copper-Stone Age)	About 3000 to 1000 BCE	Use of **copper along with stone**; painted pottery; village farming; no iron	Ahar-Banas (Rajasthan), Malwa (MP), Jorwe, Inamgaon and Daimabad (Maharashtra)
Iron Age	From about 1200 BCE	Iron tools and weapons; forest clearing and the spread of farming	Painted Grey Ware sites, Hallur (Karnataka), Megalithic sites (see Chapter 10)

Points to remember

- **Robert Bruce Foote** found the first Palaeolithic tool in India at **Pallavaram** near Madras in **1863**; he is called the father of Indian prehistory.
- **Bhimbetka** (Madhya Pradesh) has caves with rock paintings from the Mesolithic period and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site (2003).

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- The **Narmada skull** from Hathnora was discovered in **1982** by Arun Sonakia.
- **Mehrgarh** (Balochistan, Pakistan) shows the earliest farming in South Asia and is a forerunner of the Indus civilisation.
- **Burzahom** (Kashmir) had pit dwellings, and pet dogs were buried with their owners.
- **Koldihwa** (Uttar Pradesh) gives early evidence of rice cultivation.
- **Daimabad** is the largest site of the Jorwe culture, known for its bronze objects; **Inamgaon** is a well-planned Chalcolithic village on the Bhima river.

1.3 Sources of Ancient Indian History

Source	What it gives
Archaeological	Excavated sites, buildings, tools, pottery, seals and ornaments
Inscriptions	Dated, official records of rulers, gifts and events
Coins	Rulers' names, titles, religion, economy and trade
Literature	Religious texts, epics, chronicles, plays and technical works
Foreign accounts	Descriptions by Greek, Roman, Chinese and other travellers

1.4 Archaeological Sources

- The **Asiatic Society** was founded in **1784** in Calcutta by **Sir William Jones**. He identified **Sandrocottus** in Greek accounts with **Chandragupta Maurya**, which gave Indian history its first firm date.
- The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** was set up in **1861** with **Alexander Cunningham** as its first Director General; he is called the father of Indian archaeology.
- **John Marshall** (Director General 1902 to 1928) led the work that revealed the **Indus civilisation** (announced in 1924).
- **Mortimer Wheeler** (Director General 1944 to 1948) brought the **stratigraphic method** of digging layer by layer; he excavated **Arikamedu** (1945) and **Harappa** (1946).
- The **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958** protects monuments; the ASI works under the Ministry of Culture.

Dating methods

Method	Use
Radiocarbon (C-14) dating	Measures the decay of carbon in organic material such as wood, bone and charcoal; developed by **Willard Libby** (1949); half-life about 5,730 years
Stratigraphy	Deeper layers are older than upper layers
Dendro-chronology	Dating from tree rings
Thermo-luminescence	Dating of fired clay such as pottery and bricks

1.5 Inscriptions (Epigraphy)

Inscriptions are the most reliable source because they are dated and were made at the time of the events. They are carved on rocks, pillars, caves, temple walls and copper plates.

Scripts

Script	Key Points
Brahmi	Written **left to right**; mother of most Indian scripts. Used in **Ashoka's inscriptions**; deciphered by **James Prinsep in 1837**
Kharosthi	Written **right to left**; derived from **Aramaic**; used in north-west India (Ashoka's Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra edicts)
Harappan script	Undeciphered; seals read in **boustrophedon** style (alternate lines in opposite directions)

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Script	Key Points
Greek and Aramaic	Used in some Ashokan inscriptions in Afghanistan, such as Kandahar

Important inscriptions

Inscription	Significance
Ashoka's edicts	Rock edicts, pillar edicts and minor edicts in Prakrit; mostly Brahmi; Rock Edict XIII describes the **Kalinga war**; the earliest deciphered royal inscriptions
Piprahwa vase	A Buddhist relic vase inscription in Brahmi; often cited as one of the earliest Brahmi records
Hathigumpha inscription	Of **Kharavela** of Kalinga, in Odisha
Junagadh rock inscription	Of **Rudradaman I** (about 150 CE); one of the first long Sanskrit inscriptions; mentions repair of the **Sudarshana lake**
Besnagar Garuda pillar	**Heliodorus**, a Greek ambassador, calls himself a devotee of Vasudeva; evidence of **Bhagavatism**
Allahabad Pillar inscription	A **prashasti** (praise poem) of **Samudragupta** by **Harisena**
Mehrauli iron pillar	Records a king **Chandra**, usually identified with Chandragupta II
Aihole inscription	Of **Pulakeshin II** by **Ravikirti** (634 CE); mentions his victory over Harsha
Copper-plate land grants	Record gifts of land and village administration, especially from the Gupta period onwards

1.6 Coins (Numismatics)

- **Punch-marked coins** (**karshapanas**) are the earliest Indian coins (from about the 6th century BCE), usually of silver, with symbols but **no inscriptions**.
- **Indo-Greek** rulers issued the first coins with the **ruler's portrait and a legend**.
- The **Kushans** issued many gold coins; **Vima Kadphises** started them.
- **Gupta** gold coins are called **dinaras**; Samudragupta issued the "Veena" type.
- **Satavahana** coins were mostly of lead.
- Roman coin hoards in south India show active **Indo-Roman trade**.

1.7 Literary Sources

Brahmanical literature

Text	Key Points
Vedas	Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva; the main source for the **Vedic age**
Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads	Rituals, forest texts and philosophy
Epics	**Ramayana** and **Mahabharata**, giving views of society and politics
Puranas	18 Mahapuranas; give **genealogies of dynasties**
Dharmashastras and Smritis	Laws and duties, such as the **Manusmriti**
Arthashastra	By **Kautilya (Chanakya)**; deals with administration and statecraft in the **Mauryan period**
Ashtadhyayi	Grammar by **Panini**; also gives social and geographical information
Mahabhashya	By **Patanjali**; refers to **Pushyamitra Shunga**
Mudrarakshasa	Play by **Vishakhadatta** about **Chandragupta Maurya** and Chanakya

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Text	Key Points
Malavikagnimitra	Play by **Kalidasa** with a theme from the **Shunga** dynasty
Harshacharita	Biography of **Harsha** by **Banabhatta**
Rajatarangini	By **Kalhana** (12th century); history of Kashmir; regarded as the first real historical work in Sanskrit

Buddhist and Jain literature

Text	Key Points
Tripitaka	Three "baskets": **Vinaya** (monastic rules), **Sutta** (teachings) and **Abhidhamma** (philosophy), in Pali
Jataka tales	Stories of the Buddha's earlier births; show **social and economic life**
Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa	Sri Lankan Pali chronicles; give information about **Ashoka** and Buddhism in Sri Lanka
Milindapanha	Dialogue between the Indo-Greek king **Menander (Milinda)** and the monk **Nagasena**
Buddhacharita	Life of the Buddha by **Ashvaghosha**
Jain Agamas and Kalpasutra	Jain canon; the Kalpasutra is by **Bhadrabahu**
Bhagavati Sutra	Jain text that, like the Buddhist **Anguttara Nikaya**, lists the **sixteen Mahajanapadas**

Sangam literature

- Early Tamil poetry and grammar: **Tolkappiyam**, **Ettuthogai** (eight anthologies), **Pattuppattu** (ten idylls) and **Pathinenkilkanakku**.
- Two Tamil epics: **Silappadikaram** by **Ilango Adigal** and **Manimekalai** by **Sattanar**.
- Source for the **Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas**, society and trade with Rome.

1.8 Accounts of Foreign Travellers

Writer	Origin	Account
Herodotus	Greek	Called the "Father of History"; his Histories say India was a Persian province under the Achaemenids
Megasthenes	Greek	Ambassador of **Seleucus Nicator** at **Chandragupta Maurya's** court; wrote **Indica** (survives only in quotations); described **Pataliputra**
Strabo and Arrian	Greek and Roman	Strabo wrote **Geography**; Arrian wrote on Alexander and India
Pliny the Elder	Roman	**Natural History**; complained of gold flowing from Rome to India
Ptolemy	Greek	**Geography** (about 2nd century CE); describes Indian places
Periplus of the Erythraean Sea	Greek	By an unknown sailor in the 1st century CE; describes Indian ports and trade
Fa-Hien (Faxian)	Chinese	Visited India in the time of **Chandragupta II** (about 399 to 414 CE); wrote **Fo-kuo-ki**
Hiuen Tsang (Xuanzang)	Chinese	Visited in the time of **Harsha** (629 to 645 CE); wrote **Si-Yu-Ki**; studied at **Nalanda**; called "Prince of Pilgrims"

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Writer	Origin	Account
I-Tsing (Yijing)	Chinese	Came in the late 7th century CE; studied at Nalanda and described Buddhist monks' life
Taranatha	Tibetan	Wrote a history of Buddhism in India (early 17th century)
Al-Biruni	Arab-Persian	Wrote **Tahqiq-i-Hind** in the 11th century, with Mahmud of Ghazni

Quick Recall

- Prehistory: no writing; protohistory: writing not deciphered (Harappa); history: writing deciphered.
- Bruce Foote, 1863, Pallavaram: first Palaeolithic tool. Mehrgarh: oldest farming in South Asia.
- ASI: 1861, Cunningham; Marshall announced the Indus civilisation in 1924; Wheeler introduced stratigraphy.
- Brahmi (left to right) was deciphered by James Prinsep in 1837; Kharosthi runs right to left.
- Punch-marked coins are the earliest Indian coins; Kushans and Guptas issued gold coins.
- Rajatarangini (Kalhana) is the first real historical work; Arthashastra is a source for the Mauryas.
- Megasthenes (Indica), Fa-Hien (Chandragupta II) and Hiuen Tsang (Harsha) are the key foreign writers.

2. Indus Valley Civilization

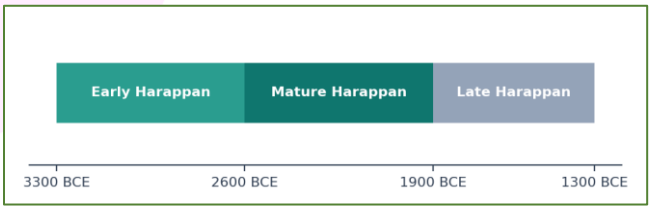
2.1 Introduction

The **Indus Valley Civilization** is the earliest urban culture of the Indian subcontinent. It is also called the **Harappan Civilization**, after **Harappa**, the first site found. It belongs to the **Bronze Age** and was contemporary with the civilisations of Mesopotamia and Egypt. It is **protohistoric**, because its script has not been deciphered.

Discovery

Year / Person	Contribution
1826	**Charles Masson** first described the mounds of Harappa
1921	**Daya Ram Sahni** began excavation at **Harappa**
1922	**R. D. Banerji** found **Mohenjo-daro**
1924	**John Marshall**, Director General of the ASI, announced the discovery to the world
1946	**Mortimer Wheeler** excavated Harappa and dated the civilisation by layers
After 1947	Many sites in India were found: **Ropar** (1953), **Lothal** (1954, S. R. Rao), **Kalibangan**, **Dholavira** (found by J. P. Joshi in 1967-68; excavated by R. S. Bisht)

Chronology



The three phases are **Early Harappan (about 3300 to 2600 BCE)**, **Mature Harappan (about 2600 to 1900 BCE)** and **Late Harappan (about 1900 to 1300 BCE)**. Older books give different dates: Marshall suggested 3250 to 2750 BCE, and Wheeler 2500 to 1500 BCE.

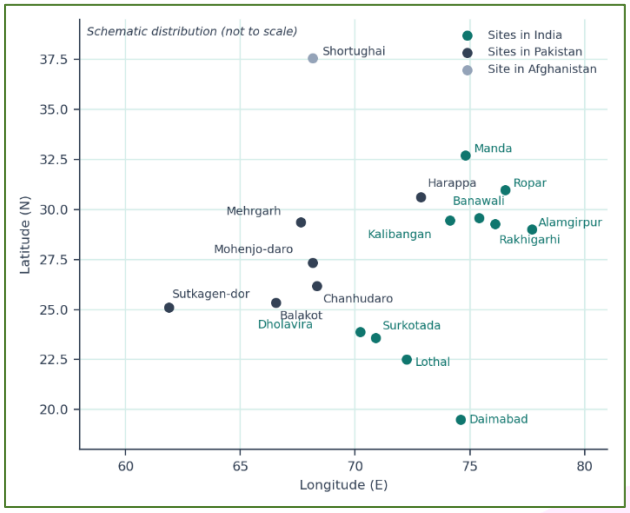
2.2 Extent and Important Sites

- It is the **largest** of the early river-valley civilisations in area, covering more than a million square kilometres in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan.
- **Northernmost site**: **Manda** (Jammu). **Southernmost**: **Daimabad** (Maharashtra). **Westernmost**: **Sutkagen-dor**

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(Makran coast, Pakistan). **Easternmost**: **Alamgirpur** (Uttar Pradesh).

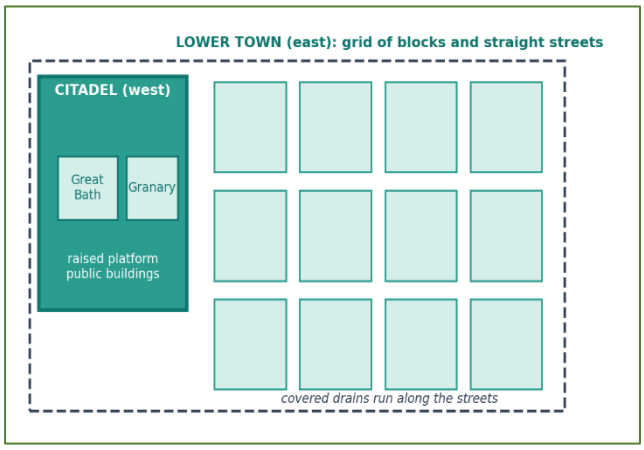
- The **Indus** and the dried **Ghaggar-Hakra** (often linked with the Sarasvati) were the main river systems.



Site	River / Place	Key Findings
Harappa	Ravi; Punjab (Pakistan)	Granaries, workmen's quarters, **Cemetery R-37**, a red sandstone male torso; later **Cemetery H** culture
Mohenjo-daro	Indus; Sindh (Pakistan)	Largest site; **Great Bath**, granary, bronze **"Dancing Girl"**, steatite **"Priest-King"**, **Pashupati seal**. The name means "mound of the dead"
Chanhudaro	Indus; Sindh	**No citadel**; bead-making and craft centre; discovered by **N. G. Majumdar** (1931)
Kalibangan	Ghaggar; Rajasthan	**Earliest ploughed field**, fire altars, camel bones, black bangles; excavated by **B. B. Lal and B. K. Thapar**
Lothal	Bhogava; Gujarat	**Dockyard**, bead factory, rice husk, fire altars, double burial; **S. R. Rao**
Dholavira	Kutch; Gujarat	**Three-part city**, stone-built, water reservoirs, a large **signboard** with ten signs; **UNESCO World Heritage Site (2021)**
Rakhigarhi	Haryana	**Largest Harappan site in India**; a DNA study of a skeleton was published in 2019
Banawali	Haryana	Barley; **toy plough**; both Harappan and pre-Harappan layers
Surkotada	Kutch; Gujarat	First **actual horse bones** reported at a Harappan site (J. P. Joshi)
Ropar	Sutlej; Punjab	First Harappan site excavated in independent India (1953, Y. D. Sharma)
Mehrgarh	Baloch-istan	Neolithic precursor, about 7000 BCE; earliest farming in South Asia

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Site	River / Place	Key Findings
Shortughai	Afghan-istan	Harappan trading post for **lapis lazuli**



2.3 Town Planning

- Most cities had a **raised citadel (west)** for public buildings and a **lower town (east)** for homes.
- Streets ran in a **grid**, cutting each other at **right angles**.
- Bricks were **burnt (baked)**, in the ratio **4 : 2 : 1** (length : width : thickness).
- A well-planned system of **covered drains** ran along the streets, with house drains joining them.
- Houses had **bathrooms and wells**; many were multi-roomed and built around a courtyard.
- **Dholavira** had three parts (citadel, middle town and lower town) and smart water harvesting; **Chanhudaro** had no citadel.
- No palaces or temples have been clearly identified.

Important structures

Structure	Details
Great Bath (Mohenjo-daro)	A large water tank (about 12 m by 7 m and 2.4 m deep) made watertight with bitumen; probably for ritual bathing
Granaries	Large storehouses at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, near the citadels
Dockyard (Lothal)	An artificial brick basin linked to the sea by a channel
Fire altars	At Kalibangan and Lothal
Stadium and reservoirs (Dholavira)	Water storage cut in rock and large open ground

2.4 Economy

Agriculture and animals

- Crops: **wheat, barley**, peas, sesame, mustard, dates and melon; **cotton** was grown (the Greeks called it **sindon**); **rice** is found at **Lothal** and **Rangpur**; **millets** at Rangpur and other Gujarat sites.
- The **plough** is shown at **Kalibangan** and Banawali (toy). **Canal irrigation** and dams (**gabarbands**) were used in some regions.
- Animals: **humped bull**, buffalo, sheep, goat, pig, dog, cat and camel; the **elephant** was known. The **horse** was not a regular part of life.

Craft, trade and weights

- **Bronze** (copper and tin) and **copper** were used; **iron was not known**.
- **Bead-making** (carnelian, steatite, shell) at **Chanhudaro and Lothal**; shell work at **Balakot**.
- Trade with **Mesopotamia** (the Indus region was called **Meluhha**), **Dilmun** (Bahrain) and **Magan** (Oman); trade was mainly by barter.
- **Seals** were of **steatite**, mostly square with an animal (the **unicorn** is the most common) and a short inscription.
- **Weights** were cubical (chert), in a ratio of 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 and so on, with **16** as a basic unit. An **ivory scale** from Lothal shows accurate measuring.

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- **Raw materials**: copper from Rajasthan (Khetri) and Oman; tin from Afghanistan; lapis lazuli from Badakhshan; carnelian and steatite from Gujarat and Rajasthan.

2.5 Script, Society and Religion

Topic	Key Points
Script	About **400 signs**; **pictographic**; written in **boustrophedon** style; still **undeciphered**. Attempts include those of **Iravatham Mahadevan** and **Asko Parpola**
Society	Mostly urban; signs of **social differences** in house sizes; a ruling or merchant elite probably managed trade and cities. No clear evidence of kings or armies
Mother goddess	Many **terracotta female figurines**
Pashupati seal	A horned figure seated in yogic posture surrounded by animals; **John Marshall** called it **Proto-Shiva**
Nature worship	**Pipal tree**, humped bull, snakes; **phallus and yoni** stones
Burials	Usually **extended** burials with pots and ornaments; **double burial** at Lothal; **Cemetery R-37** at Harappa
Art	**Bronze Dancing Girl** (lost-wax method), **steatite Priest-King** bust, terracotta toys and animals

Remember

- **Not known to the Harappans**: iron, the regular use of the horse, large-scale temples, and coined money.
- **Cotton** was first produced here, and the **cubical weights** were uniform across the cities.
- **Mohenjo-daro** is the largest site overall; **Rakhigarhi** is the largest in India.

2.6 Decline

Theory	Explanation
Aryan invasion (Wheeler)	Mohenjo-daro skeletons seen as massacre victims; now **widely rejected**, since the skeletons belong to different times
Floods (Marshall, Mackay, Raikes)	Layers of silt at Mohenjo-daro suggest flooding, possibly from tectonic changes
Climate change and drying of rivers	The monsoon weakened and the **Ghaggar-Hakra dried up**; the most accepted explanation today
Decline of trade	The fall of trade with Mesopotamia weakened the cities
Epidemics and ecological stress	Over-use of land and disease may have added to the pressure

The cities slowly declined and the civilisation **did not end suddenly**. **Late Harappan** cultures continued in villages, such as **Cemetery** at Harappa, the **Jhukar** culture in Sindh and the **Ochre Coloured Pottery** culture in the Ganga-Yamuna region.

Quick Recall

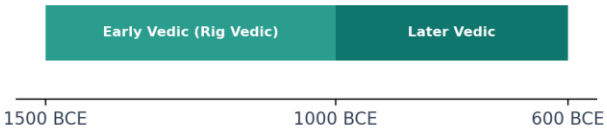
- Harappa 1921 (Daya Ram Sahni); Mohenjo-daro 1922 (R. D. Banerji); announced 1924 (Marshall).
- Mature phase: about 2600 to 1900 BCE; Bronze Age; script undeciphered (about 400 signs; boustrophedon).
- Citadel in the west, lower town in the east; grid streets; bricks 4 : 2 : 1; covered drains.
- Great Bath: Mohenjo-daro; dockyard: Lothal; ploughed field: Kalibangan; signboard and UNESCO status: Dholavira.
- Manda: north; Daimabad: south; Sutkagen-dor: west; Alamgirpur: east.
- No iron; the horse was not regular; no clear temples; cotton first grown here.
- Decline: mainly climate change and drying of the Ghaggar-Hakra; Aryan invasion theory is rejected.

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3. Vedic Age

3.1 The Aryans and the Vedic Period

The **Vedic Age** is named after the **Vedas**, the oldest literature of India. It is divided into the **Early (Rig) Vedic** period and the **Later Vedic** period. The people who composed the Vedas called themselves **Aryas** and spoke an **Indo-European** language (Vedic Sanskrit).



Theories on the original home of the Aryans

Theory / Scholar	Home suggested
Max Muller	**Central Asia**
B. G. Tilak	**Arctic region** (book: *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*)
Gordon Childe and Nehring	**Southern Russian steppes**
Dayananda Saraswati	**Tibet**
A. C. Das	**Sapta Sindhu** (India itself)
P. Giles	**Hungary / Danube valley**

Remember

- The **Boghaz-koi inscription** (about 1400 BCE, Anatolia, present Turkey) mentions the Vedic gods **Indra, Mitra, Varuna and the Nasatyas**; it is used as evidence of Aryan movement.
- The **Rig Veda** is the main source for the Early Vedic period; the other Vedas, Brahmanas and Upanishads are the sources for the Later Vedic period.
- Archaeologically, the Later Vedic period is linked with **Painted Grey Ware (PGW)** culture (about 1100 to 500 BCE).

3.2 Vedic Literature

Vedic texts are called **Shruti** ("that which is heard") because they were passed on orally. Later works such as the epics and Puranas are **Smriti** ("that which is remembered").

Veda	Key Points
Rig Veda	Oldest; **1,028 hymns** in **10 Mandalas**. **Mandalas II to VII** are the oldest "family books"; **I and X** are later. **Gayatri Mantra** (Mandala III, to Savitri, by Vishwamitra); **Purusha Sukta** (Mandala X, origin of the four varnas); **Nasadiya Sukta** (creation)
Sama Veda	Hymns set to music (melodies); the basis of **Indian music**
Yajur Veda	Rules and formulas for sacrifice; **Shukla** (White) and **Krishna** (Black) Yajur Veda
Atharva Veda	Charms, magic and medicine; shows beliefs of ordinary people

Text	Key Points
Brahmanas	Explain rituals. **Aitareya** (Rig), **Shatapatha** (Yajur), **Panchavimsha** (Sama), **Gopatha** (Atharva)
Aranyakas	"Forest texts" for hermits; a link between rituals and philosophy

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Text	Key Points
Upanishads	Philosophy of **Atman (soul) and Brahman (universal soul)**, karma, rebirth and moksha
Vedangas	Six limbs: **Shiksha** (phonetics), **Kalpa** (rituals), **Vyakarana** (grammar), **Nirukta** (etymology), **Chhanda** (metre) and **Jyotisha** (astronomy)
Upavedas	**Ayurveda** (Rig), **Dhanurveda** (Yajur), **Gandharvaveda** (Sama), **Shilpaveda** (Atharva)

Famous lines from the Upanishads

- **Satyameva Jayate** (truth alone triumphs): **Mundaka Upanishad**; India's national motto.
- **Tat Tvam Asi** ("you are that"): **Chandogya Upanishad**.
- **Aham Brahmasmi** ("I am Brahman"): **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad**.

3.3 Early Vedic (Rig Vedic) Period, about 1500 to 1000 BCE

Geography

The Aryans lived in **Sapta Sindhu**, the land of seven rivers: the **Indus and its five Punjab tributaries, with the Sarasvati**. The **Sarasvati** was the greatest river ("Nadi-tama"). The **Ganga** is mentioned only once and the **Yamuna** a few times.

Rig Vedic name	Modern name
Sindhu	Indus
Vitasta	Jhelum
Asikni	Chenab
Parushni (Iravati)	Ravi
Vipasa	Beas
Shutudri	Sutlej
Kubha	Kabul
Gomati	Gomal
Krumu	Kurram
Suvastu	Swat

Polity

Feature	Details
Form of state	**Tribal monarchy**; the **Rajan** (king) was a war leader, helped by the tribal assemblies; kingship was mostly hereditary
Social-political units	**Kula** (family) → **Grama** (village) → **Vish** (clan) → **Jana** (tribe)
Assemblies	**Sabha** (council of elders), **Samiti** (assembly of the whole tribe) and **Vidatha** (the oldest; religious, social and military matters). Women also took part in the Vidatha
Officials	**Purohita** (chief priest), **Senani** (army chief), **Gramani** (village head), **Vrajapati** (pasture officer), **Spasha** (spy)
Revenue	No regular taxes; voluntary gifts called **Bali**; no standing army
Battle of Ten Kings (Dasarajna)	On the **Parushni (Ravi)**; **Sudas** of the **Bharata** clan (priest **Vasishtha**) defeated a union of ten tribes; the Purus were among those defeated

Economy and society

- Economy was mainly **pastoral**; **cattle** were the main wealth (words such as **Gavishti**, search for cows, meant battle; **Godhuli** was a time of day).
- **Agriculture** was secondary; **barley (yava)** was the main crop. **Iron was unknown**; **Ayas** meant copper or bronze.

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- **Barter** was the main trade; **Nishka** was a gold ornament; **Panis** were traders.
- Society was **tribal and patriarchal**; **varna** (colour) divided Aryans and Dasas; the **Purusha Sukta** (a late hymn) mentions four varnas, which were **not yet hereditary**.
- **Women** had a respected position: they attended assemblies and some, such as **Lopamudra, Ghosha, Apala and Vishwavara**, composed hymns.

Religion

Deity	Role
Indra	Most important; god of war and rain; **Purandara** (destroyer of forts); about 250 hymns
Agni	Fire god and messenger between gods and humans; about 200 hymns
Varuna	Guardian of **Rita**, the cosmic order
Soma	God of the Soma plant; all of Mandala IX
Surya, Savitri, Ushas, Pushan, Vayu, Maruts, Ashvins, Aditi	Other nature gods and goddesses
Worship	Nature worship through **simple sacrifices** (yajna); **no temples or idols**; prayers for cattle, sons and victory

3.4 Later Vedic Period, about 1000 to 600 BCE

Geography and polity

- The Aryans moved east into the **Ganga-Yamuna doab**, then to **Kosala, Kashi and Videha**. The centre was **Kuru-Panchala**. The **Kurus** were formed when the **Bharatas and Purus** merged.
- Region of **Aryavarta** was described as the area between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas.
- Small tribal kingdoms grew into larger **janapadas** (territorial states). The king was stronger, and the idea of **territory (rashtra)** grew.
- The **Sabha and Samiti** lost importance; the **Vidatha** disappeared.
- Kings performed **Ashvamedha** (horse sacrifice for supremacy), **Rajasuya** (coronation) and **Vajapeya** (chariot race), to show power.
- Officials: **Bhagadugha** (collector of the royal share), **Sangrahitri** (treasurer), **Akshavapa** (accountant), **Suta** (charioteer), **Gramani**.
- Revenue: the **Bali** became a regular tax, and the king had a **share (Bhaga)** of the produce.

Economy

- **Agriculture** became the main occupation; **wheat, rice (vrihi), barley, pulses and sesame**; the plough and manure were used.
- **Iron** appears: **Krishna Ayas** or **Shyama Ayas**; iron tools at **Atranjikhera** and other PGW sites helped forest clearing.
- Crafts included metal working, pottery, weaving and carpentry; trade grew, with the first signs of **coins**, such as Nishka, Satamana and Krishnala.

Society

- The **four varnas** became **hereditary**; Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were dominant; **Shudras** were at the bottom.
- **Gotra** (a group claiming descent from a common sage) appeared; marriage within the gotra was forbidden.
- The four **ashramas**: **Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa**; the **Jabala Upanishad** mentions all four.
- The position of women **declined** (child marriage began, and they were kept away from assemblies), though learned women like **Gargi and Maitreyi** appear in the **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad**.

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Religion and philosophy

- **Prajapati** (the creator), **Vishnu** and **Rudra** became important; **Indra and Agni** declined; **Pushan** became the god of the Shudras.
- Rituals grew complex and priests (Brahmanas) became powerful.
- The **Upanishads** criticised rituals and stressed **knowledge (jnana)**, the **Atman-Brahman** link, **karma, rebirth and moksha**.
- **Four Purusharthas** developed later: **Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha**.

3.5 Early and Later Vedic Compared

Feature	Early Vedic	Later Vedic
Main texts	Rig Veda	Sama, Yajur, Atharva Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanishads
Area	Punjab and Sapta Sindhu	Ganga-Yamuna doab and the middle Ganga plain
Polity	Tribal chief; strong assemblies	Territorial kingdom; powerful king; weaker assemblies
Economy	Pastoral; barter	Agriculture; iron; early coins
Metal	Copper and bronze (Ayas)	Iron (Krishna Ayas)
Society	Varna based on occupation; fluid	Hereditary varnas; gotra; ashramas
Women	Respected; attended assemblies	Position declined
Deities	Indra, Agni, Varuna	Prajapati, Vishnu, Rudra
Worship	Simple yajna; no temples	Complex rituals, sacrifices; Upanishadic thought

Quick Recall

- Early Vedic about 1500 to 1000 BCE; Later Vedic about 1000 to 600 BCE; PGW and iron in the Later Vedic period.
- Rig Veda: 10 Mandalas, 1,028 hymns; Mandalas II to VII are oldest; Gayatri Mantra: Mandala III.
- Early Vedic: Sapta Sindhu; tribal monarchy; Sabha, Samiti, Vidatha; Bali; Indra, Agni, Varuna.
- Battle of Ten Kings: on the Ravi (Parushni); Sudas (Bharata) with Vasishtha.
- Later Vedic: Kuru-Panchala; Ashvamedha, Rajasuya, Vajapeya; hereditary varnas; four ashramas.
- Satyameva Jayate: Mundaka Upanishad; Aham Brahmasmi: Brihadaranyaka; Tat Tvam Asi: Chandogya.
- Six Vedangas: Shiksha, Kalpa, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Chhanda, Jyotisha.

4. Religious Movements

4.1 Why New Religions Arose in the 6th Century BCE

- **Rituals and sacrifices** of the Later Vedic religion became costly and complex; animal sacrifice harmed farming, because cattle were needed for the plough.
- **Brahmana dominance** and rigid **varna** rules angered **Kshatriyas**, and **Vaishyas** who had grown rich through trade but had a low rank.
- **Iron tools, agriculture, trade and towns** in the middle Ganga plain created new groups and new ideas.
- Preachers used the **common language** (Pali and Prakrit) instead of Sanskrit, and many wandering teachers (**shramanas**) attracted followers.

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Heterodox sects

Sect / Teacher	Key Ideas
Ajivikas (**Makkhali Gosala**)	**Niyati** (fate): everything is predetermined and human effort cannot change it; patronised by **Bindusara** and **Ashoka**, who gave them the **Barabar caves**
Charvakas / Lokayata (**Brihaspati**)	**Materialism**: only the visible world exists; rejected the soul, rebirth and rituals
Purana Kassapa	**Akriyavada**: actions have no moral result
Ajita Kesakambali	Materialist: the body ends with death
Pakudha Kaccayana	Everything is made of seven eternal elements
Sanjaya Belatthiputta	**Scepticism**: refused to give a definite answer to questions
Mahavira and the Buddha	The two most successful teachers; founded **Jainism** and **Buddhism**

4.2 Jainism

Jainism has **24 Tirthankaras** ("ford-makers"). The first was **Rishabhanatha (Adinatha)**, symbol the bull. The **23rd, Parshvanatha**, was a prince of Varanasi who taught **four vows (Chaturyama)**. The **24th, Mahavira**, is the real founder of the faith as it is known.

Life of Mahavira

Event	Details
Birth	About **540 BCE** at **Kundagrama** near **Vaishali** (Bihar); **Vardhamana**; father **Siddhartha** of the **Jnatrika** clan; mother **Trishala**, a Licchavi princess
Family	Wife **Yashoda**; daughter **Priyadarshana**
Renunciation	Left home at **30** and did penance for **12 years**
Enlightenment	**Kevala Jnana** (omniscience) at **Jrimbhikagrama** on the **Rijupalika** river, under a sal tree; he became **Jina** (conqueror) and **Mahavira** (great hero)
Death	At **Pavapuri** near Rajgir at about **72**, around **468 BCE**
Disciples	**Gandharas** led by **Sudharma**

Teachings

- **Five Mahavratas (great vows)**: **Ahimsa** (non-violence), **Satya** (truth), **Asteya** (no stealing), **Aparigraha** (no possessions) and **Brahmacharya** (celibacy). **Brahmacharya** was **added by Mahavira** to Parshvanatha's four vows.
- **Triratna**: **right faith, right knowledge and right conduct**.
- **Karma** and rebirth; **moksha** is release from the cycle by removing karma. **No creator god**; **Jiva** (soul) and **Ajiva** (matter).
- **Anekantavada** (many-sidedness of truth) and **Syadvada** (the doctrine of "may be").
- Strict **asceticism** and extreme non-violence; farmers found it hard to follow.

Councils and sects

Item	Details
First Council	At **Pataliputra** (about 300 BCE) under **Sthulabhadra**; compiled the **12 Angas**
Second Council	At **Vallabhi** (Gujarat, about 512 CE) under **Devardhi Kshamashramana**; fixed the final canon
Digambara	"Sky-clad" (naked monks); followed **Bhadrabahu**, who moved south to Karnataka with **Chandragupta Maurya** (traditionally to **Shravanabelagola**)

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Item	Details
Svetambara	"White-clad" monks; followed **Sthulabhadra** in the north
Language and texts	**Ardhamagadhi Prakrit**; **Agamas**; the **Kalpasutra** is by Bhadrabahu

Patrons and sites

- **Patrons**: Chandragupta Maurya, **Kharavela** of Kalinga, the **Gangas**, **Rashtrakutas**, **Chalukyas** and **Kadambas**.
- **Shravanabelagola** (Karnataka): the **Gommateshwara (Bahubali)** statue was built under the **Ganga** minister **Chavundaraya** (981 CE).
- **Dilwara temples** (Mount Abu), **Khajuraho** Jain temples and the **Udayagiri-Khandagiri** caves (Odisha).

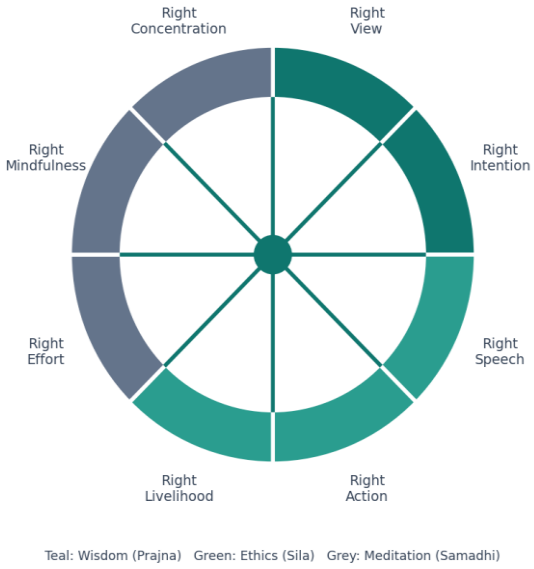
4.3 Buddhism

Life of Gautama Buddha

Event	Details
Birth	About **563 BCE** at **Lumbini** (Nepal) in the **Shakya** clan; father **Suddhodana**, mother **Mayadevi**; raised by **Mahaprajapati Gautami**. (Some modern scholars suggest later dates.)
Family	Wife **Yashodhara**; son **Rahula**
Four sights	An old man, a sick man, a dead body and an ascetic
Great Renunciation (Mahabhinish-kramana)	Left home at **29** with his charioteer **Channa** and horse **Kanthaka**
Enlightenment (Nirvana)	At **35** at **Bodh Gaya** (Uruvela), under a **pipal tree** on the **Niranjana (Phalgu)** river
First sermon (Dharmachakra Pravartana)	At **Sarnath (Isipatana)** to five disciples
Death (Mahaparinirvana)	At **Kushinagara** at **80**, about **483 BCE**
Great events and places	**Lumbini** (birth), **Bodh Gaya** (enlightenment), **Sarnath** (first sermon), **Kushinagar** (death)

Teachings

- **Four Noble Truths (Arya Satya)**: life is **suffering (dukkha)**; suffering has a **cause (trishna, craving)**; suffering can **end (nirodha)**; the **path** to its end.
- **Eightfold Path (Ashtangika Marga)**: the **middle path (Madhyama Pratipada)** between luxury and extreme self-denial.
- **Five precepts (Panchasila)**: no killing, stealing, lying, intoxicants or sexual misconduct.
- **Anicca** (impermanence), **Anatta** (no permanent soul), **karma** and rebirth; the goal is **Nirvana**.
- **Triratna**: **Buddha, Dharma and Sangha**.
- Rejected **Vedic authority**, rituals and caste; stressed **ethical living**.



Sangha

- Order of monks (**Bhikkhus**) and nuns (**Bhikkhunis**); lay followers were **Upasakas and Upasikas**.

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- **Mahaprajapati Gautami** was the first woman to join; **Ananda** pleaded for women's entry.
- Language: **Pali**. Chief disciples: **Ananda, Sariputta, Moggallana, Upali and Mahakassapa**.
- Royal patrons: **Bimbisara, Ajatashatru, Prasenajit**, later **Ashoka, Kanishka and Harsha**.

Buddhist councils

Council	Place	Patron / President	Outcome
First (483 BCE)	**Raja-griha**	**Ajatashatru** / **Mahakassapa**	**Vinaya Pitaka** (Upali) and **Sutta Pitaka** (Ananda) compiled
Second (about 383 BCE)	**Vaishali**	**Kalashoka** / **Sabakami**	Split into **Sthaviravadins** and **Mahasanghikas**
Third (about 250 BCE)	**Patali-putra**	**Ashoka** / **Moggaliputta Tissa**	**Abhidhamma Pitaka** compiled; missionaries sent abroad
Fourth (about 72 CE)	**Kundal-vana** (Kashmir)	**Kanishka** / **Vasumitra** (Ashvaghosha vice-president)	Split into **Hinayana** and **Mahayana**; **Sanskrit** used

Sects of Buddhism

Sect	Key Points
Hinayana (Theravada)	Original, strict teaching; Buddha as a teacher; **Pali**; salvation through own effort; spread to **Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia**
Mahayana	Buddha as a **god**; **idol worship**; ideal of the **Bodhisattva**; **Sanskrit**; spread to **China, Korea and Japan**. Philosopher: **Nagarjuna** (**Madhyamika, Shunyavada**)
Vajrayana	**Tantric** practices; rituals and mantras; strong in **Tibet** (**Padmasambhava**), Bengal and Bihar
Yogachara	Philosophy of **Asanga and Vasubandhu**
Logic	**Dignaga** and **Dharmakirti**

Remember

- **Tripitaka** (Pali): **Vinaya** (rules), **Sutta** (teachings), **Abhidhamma** (philosophy).
- **Jataka** tales: stories of the Buddha's earlier births.
- **Buddhacharita**: by **Ashvaghosha**. **Milindapanha**: dialogue of **Menander and Nagasena**.
- Universities: **Nalanda, Vikramashila, Taxila and Odantapuri**.

Art and architecture

- **Stupas**: dome-shaped mounds with relics: **Sanchi** (UNESCO site, 1989), **Bharhut**, **Sarnath**, **Amaravati**.
- **Chaityas** (prayer halls) and **Viharas** (monasteries) cut in rock at **Karle, Bhaja, Ajanta, Ellora and Nasik**.
- Early Buddhism showed the Buddha through **symbols**: wheel, footprints, empty throne and Bodhi tree; images began with **Mahayana**.

Decline in India

- Revival of **Brahmanism** and the **Bhakti** movement; **Shankaracharya** revived Vedanta.
- **Corruption** in monasteries and the rise of **Vajrayana** rituals, which lost the original simplicity.
- Loss of royal support; invasions of the **Huns** and later the **Turks**, who destroyed **Nalanda** (about 1200 CE).

4.4 Jainism and Buddhism Compared

Feature	Jainism	Buddhism
Founder	Mahavira (24th Tirthankara)	Gautama Buddha

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Feature	Jainism	Buddhism
God	No creator god	Silent on a creator god; no soul
Soul	Every being has a soul (**Jiva**)	**Anatta**: no permanent soul
Path	**Triratna** and strict asceticism	**Eightfold Path**, middle way
Ahimsa	Extreme; includes all living things	Moderate; stresses compassion
Language	Ardhamagadhi Prakrit	Pali
Spread	Mostly in India (west and south)	India and **across Asia**
Sects	Digambara and Svetambara	Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana

4.5 Buddhist Sites of Andhra Pradesh

Site	District	Key Points
Amaravati (Dhanyakataka)	Palnadu	**Mahachaitya** (great stupa) with fine marble carvings; major **Satavahana-period** centre
Nagarjunakonda (Vijayapuri)	Palnadu	**Ikshvaku** capital; Buddhist monasteries and stupas; many sites moved to an island after the **Nagarjuna Sagar** dam
Bhattiprolu	Bapatla	Among the **earliest stupas in Andhra**; relic caskets with **Brahmi** inscriptions
Jaggayyapeta	NTR	Stupa with inscriptions and sculpture
Salihundam	Srika-kulam	Important Buddhist complex including **Hinayana** and **Vajrayana** remains
Thotlakonda and Bavikonda	Visakha-patnam	Hill-top Buddhist monasteries and stupas near the coast

Quick Recall

- Mahavira: 24th Tirthankara; born near Vaishali; Kevala Jnana at Jrimbhikagrama; died at Pavapuri; Brahmacharya was his addition to the four vows.
- Triratna (Jainism): right faith, knowledge and conduct. Digambara and Svetambara split after Bhadrabahu's migration to the south.
- Buddha: born at Lumbini (Shakya); enlightened at Bodh Gaya; first sermon at Sarnath; died at Kushinagar.
- Four Noble Truths; Eightfold Path; Madhyama Pratipada; Panchasila; Triratna: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha.
- Councils: Rajagriha, Vaishali, Pataliputra, Kundalvana; the 4th (Kanishka) split Hinayana and Mahayana.
- Ajivikas: Makkhali Gosala, niyati, patronised by Ashoka (Barabar caves). Charvaka: materialism.
- Andhra: Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, Bhattiprolu, Jaggayyapeta, Salihundam, Thotlakonda.

5. Mahajanapadas

5.1 Background

- In the **Later Vedic period** tribes settled on land and became **janapadas** (territories). In the **6th century BCE** larger and stronger janapadas grew by conquering their

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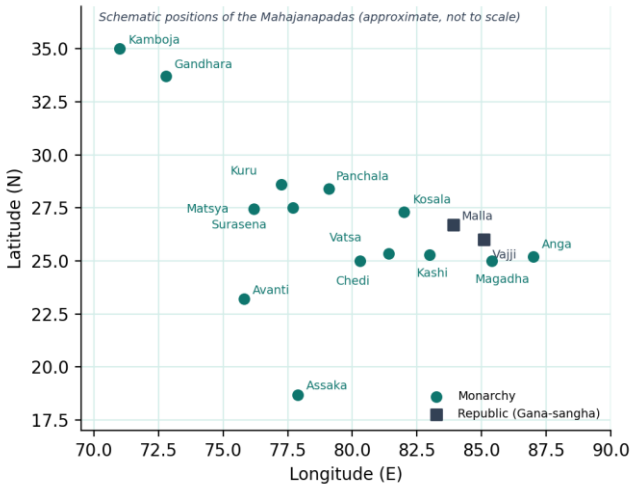
neighbours and were called **Mahajanapadas** ("great realms").

- This was the period of the **Second Urbanisation** (the first was the Harappan). **Iron tools**, rice farming, trade and **punch-marked coins** supported towns and kingdoms in the middle Ganga plain.
- Archaeologically the period is linked with **Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW)**, which marks the growth of cities.

Sources

Source	Information
Anguttara Nikaya (Buddhist)	Lists **sixteen Mahajanapadas**; the list most used in textbooks
Mahavastu (Buddhist)	A similar list of the sixteen
Bhagavati Sutra (Jain)	Also gives a list of sixteen, with some different names (such as Vanga and Malaya)
Panini's Ashtadhyayi	Mentions many janapadas of the north-west

5.2 The Sixteen Mahajanapadas



Maha-janapada	Capital	Region	Key Points
Anga	**Champa**	Bhagalpur and Munger (Bihar)	Conquered by **Bimbisara** of Magadha; Champa was a trade centre
Magadha	**Rajagriha** (Girivraja); later **Pataliputra**	South Bihar	Became the most powerful; Rajagriha had hills for defence and nearby iron
Kashi	**Varanasi**	Varanasi region	Famed for cloth and learning; **absorbed by Kosala**
Kosala	**Shravasti** (north); **Saketa/ Ayodhya** (south)	Eastern Uttar Pradesh	King **Prasenajit**; Buddha spent many rainy seasons at Shravasti
Vajji	**Vaishali**	North Bihar	A **confederation** of eight clans, including the **Licchavis**; a **republic**
Malla	**Kushinara** and **Pava**	Gorakhpur region	A **republic**; the Buddha died at Kushinara
Chedi	**Shuktimati**	Bundelkhand	Linked with the Shishupala of the Mahabharata
Vatsa	**Kaushambi**	Near Prayagraj	King **Udayana**; a rich trade centre on the Yamuna
Kuru	**Indraprastha**	Delhi-Meerut region	Once powerful (Mahabharata) but weak by the Buddha's time
Panchala	**Ahichchhatra** (north); **Kampilya** (south)	Rohilkhand	Kanyakubja (Kannauj) was a part
Matsya	**Viratanagara**	Jaipur-Alwar region	A small kingdom of little importance by then

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Maha-janapada	Capital	Region	Key Points
Sura-sena	**Mathura**	Around Mathura	Home of **Krishna** in tradition; early supporters of Buddhism
Assaka (Ash-maka)	**Potali / Potana**	Banks of the **Godavari**	**Only Mahajanapada in South India**
Avanti	**Ujjain** (north); **Mahishmati** (south)	Malwa	King **Chanda Pradyota**; strong because of **iron** mines; later taken by **Shishunaga**
Gan-dhara	**Taxila**	Peshawar and Rawalpindi region	Trade and learning centre (Taxila); **Pukkusati** was its ruler in Bimbisara's time
Kam-boja	**Rajapura**	North-west (Hindu Kush region)	Famous for **horses**

Remember

- **Only one** of the sixteen, **Assaka**, was in the south, on the Godavari.
- **Vajji and Malla** were **republics**; the others were **monarchies**.
- **Four powerful states**: **Magadha, Kosala, Vatsa and Avanti**. Magadha finally defeated the other three.

5.3 Monarchies and Republics

Feature	Monarchies	Republics (Gana-sanghas)
Head	Hereditary king (**Raja**)	**Elected** chief (often called **Raja** or **Ganapramukha**); some had a council of such chiefs
Assembly	Royal court and advisers	Assembly of clan leaders in a **Santhagara** (hall); decisions after debate and **vote**
Examples	Magadha, Kosala, Vatsa, Avanti	**Vajji (Licchavi), Malla, Shakya, Koliya**
Fate	Grew into empires	Mostly conquered by Magadha; **Ajatashatru** defeated the Vajjis

Other republics outside the sixteen

Republic	Capital / Area	Notes
Shakyas	**Kapilavastu**	Home of the **Buddha**; Lumbini was in their land
Koliyas	**Ramagrama**	Neighbours of the Shakyas; the Buddha's mother belonged to this clan
Bhaggas	**Sumsumara-giri**	Near Vatsa
Bulis	**Allakappa**	Held a share of the Buddha's relics
Kalamas	**Kesaputta**	Where the Buddha taught the Kalama Sutta
Moriyas	**Pipphalivana**	Linked with the ancestors of the Mauryas in Buddhist tradition
Videhas	**Mithila**	Part of the **Vajji** confederation; King Janaka in the Later Vedic age

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5.4 Polity, Economy and Society

- **Kings** kept **standing armies** and officials and collected **regular taxes**: **bali** (tribute), **bhaga** (a share of produce, about one-sixth) and tolls.
- **Fortified capitals** were built; wealth from trade and agriculture strengthened the kings.
- **Trade routes**: the **Uttarapatha** (north-west to Pataliputra and the east) and the **Dakshinapatha** (towards the Deccan).
- **Guilds (shrenis)** of artisans and merchants grew; rich merchants were called **Shresthis** and **Gahapatis** (householders).
- New cities: **Rajagriha, Shravasti, Champa, Kaushambi, Ujjain, Varanasi, Vaishali and Taxila**.
- The **monarchies** favoured Brahmanical rule, while the **republics** gave more support to **Buddhism and Jainism**; both Mahavira and the Buddha were born in republican clans.

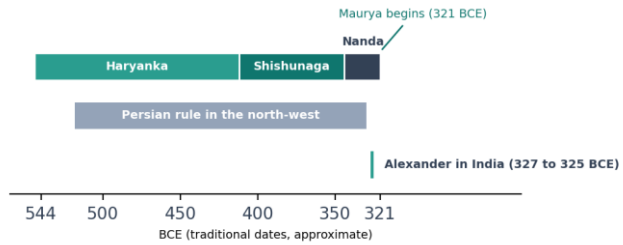
Quick Recall

- Anguttara Nikaya: the list of 16 Mahajanapadas; Assaka was the only southern one (Godavari).
- Magadha: Rajagriha, then Pataliputra; Kosala: Shravasti; Vatsa: Kaushambi; Avanti: Ujjain; Kashi: Varanasi; Gandhara: Taxila.
- Republics: Vajji (Vaishali) and Malla (Kushinara and Pava), plus Shakya, Koliya and others.
- Four strong states: Magadha, Kosala, Vatsa, Avanti; Magadha won.
- Second Urbanisation: iron, NBPW and punch-marked coins.
- Taxes: bali, bhaga (one-sixth), tolls; guilds (shrenis) and shresthis.

6. Rise of Magadha

6.1 Why Magadha Became Powerful

- **Geography**: it lay in the fertile **middle Ganga plain**, between the **Ganga, Son and Champa** rivers, which gave rich crops and easy river transport.
- **Iron**: nearby **iron ore** mines (in present Jharkhand) gave strong weapons and farm tools.
- **Elephants** were available from the eastern forests; they formed a powerful part of the army.
- **Strategic capitals**: **Rajagriha** was ringed by hills; **Pataliputra** stood at the meeting of the Ganga, Son and Gandak, controlling trade and defence.
- **Strong and ambitious rulers** and a society less bound by Vedic orthodoxy (it was regarded as "impure" in the Vedic texts) that freely supported new ideas.
- **Trade and taxes** from river routes and the new towns provided money for large armies.



The dates shown are the **traditional** ones; sources differ by a few years.

6.2 Haryanka Dynasty (about 544 to 412 BCE)

Ruler	Key Points
Bimbisara (also **Shrenika**; about 544 to 492 BCE)	**Founder** of the dynasty and a contemporary of the **Buddha and Mahavira**; capital **Rajagriha (Girivraja)**. Conquered **Anga** and defeated its king **Brahmadatta**

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Ruler	Key Points
Marriage alliances	**Kosaladevi**, sister of **Prasenajit** of Kosala (brought **Kashi** as dowry); **Chellana**, a Licchavi princess of Vaishali; **Khema**, a princess of **Madra** (Punjab)
Other contacts	Sent the physician **Jivaka** to the king of Avanti, **Pradyota**; exchanged envoys with **Pukkusati** of Gandhara
Ajatashatru (also **Kunika**; about 492 to 460 BCE)	Killed his father Bimbisara. Fought **Kosala** (Prasenajit) and **Kashi**; defeated the **Vajji confederacy (Licchavis of Vaishali)** after a long war using the **Rathamusala** (a chariot with blades) and **Mahashilakantaka** (a catapult for stones). Fortified **Pataligrama**
Under Ajatashatru	The **First Buddhist Council** was held at **Rajagriha** (483 BCE); the Buddha died in his reign
Udayin (about 460 to 444 BCE)	Shifted the capital to **Pataliputra** (at the confluence of the Ganga and Son)
Last rulers	**Anuruddha, Munda and Nagadasaka**; each murdered his father. The people deposed **Nagadasaka**, and a minister, **Shishunaga**, became king

6.3 Shishunaga Dynasty (about 412 to 344 BCE)

- **Shishunaga** defeated **Avanti** (the successors of Pradyota) and annexed **Avanti and Vatsa**, which ended the long Magadha-Avanti rivalry. His capital was at **Girivraja** first, later also **Vaishali**.
- **Kalashoka (Kakavarna)** held the **Second Buddhist Council** at **Vaishali** (about 383 BCE); he was murdered, and Pataliputra remained the main capital.
- The dynasty was ended by the **Nandas**.

6.4 Nanda Dynasty (about 344 to 321 BCE)

Point	Details
Mahapadma Nanda	Founder; called **Ekarat** ("sole ruler") and **Sarvakshatrantaka** ("destroyer of all Kshatriyas"); sometimes called the "**second Parashurama**"
Origin	Of **low birth** (as per the Puranas, the son of a Shudra woman) and the **first non-Kshatriya dynasty** of Magadha
Conquests	Annexed **Kalinga, Panchala, Kuru, Kashi, Surasena, Asmaka** and others; the **Hathigumpha inscription** of Kharavela mentions a Nanda king who took a Jina image from Kalinga and built a canal
Army	Greek writers speak of about **200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 chariots and 3,000 to 4,000 elephants**; the fear of this army is said to have made Alexander's soldiers refuse to advance east of the Beas
Dhana Nanda	The last Nanda (**Agrammes or Xandrames** in Greek accounts); very rich, but unpopular because of **heavy taxation**
End	Overthrown by **Chandragupta Maurya** with the help of **Chanakya (Kautilya)** about **321 BCE**
Other	Patronised **Jainism**; the Jain minister **Shakatala** and **Sthulabhadra** are associated with them

Remember

- **Bimbisara**: Rajagriha; marriage alliances. **Ajatashatru**: defeated the Vajjis; used **Rathamusala** and **Mahashilakantaka**. **Udayin**: Pataliputra.
- **Shishunaga** ended the rivalry with Avanti. **Nandas**: first **non-Kshatriya** dynasty; the largest empire before the Mauryas.
- Magadha capitals in order: **Rajagriha (Girivraja) → Pataliputra**.

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6.5 Persian (Achaemenid) Invasion

Point	Details
Cyrus the Great (558 to 530 BCE)	Reached the north-west frontier of India (the Kamboja and Gandhara region)
Darius I (522 to 486 BCE)	Conquered **Gandhara** and the **Indus valley (Hindush)** about **518 BCE**; the **Behistun inscription (about 520 BCE)** names Gandhara and later inscriptions at **Persepolis** and **Naqsh-i-Rustam** name Hindush
Indian satrapy	The **20th satrapy**, the **richest** of all; **Herodotus** says it paid **360 talents of gold dust** a year
Xerxes	Indian soldiers served in his army in Greece, and also fought for **Darius III** against Alexander at **Gaugamela (331 BCE)**
Scylax of Caryanda	Greek sailor sent by Darius to explore the **Indus** to the sea

Effects of Persian contact

- **Kharosthi script**, derived from **Aramaic**, came into use in the north-west.
- **Trade** between India and Persia grew; coins such as the **daric** were known.
- The **Persian influence** is seen in **Mauryan art**: polished stone pillars with bell-shaped capitals, and **Ashoka's** edicts in a style like Persian royal inscriptions (the word **dipi** for writing has a Persian origin).
- The title **satrap** later became **kshatrapa** (used by the Shakas).
- The Persian rule ended with Alexander's defeat of Darius III.

6.6 Alexander's Invasion (327 to 325 BCE)

Event	Details
Background	**Alexander of Macedon**, son of **Philip II**, defeated Darius III at **Gaugamela (331 BCE)**, then crossed the **Hindu Kush** into India in **327 BCE**. The north-west was divided into small, quarrelling states
Taxila	Its ruler **Ambhi (Omphis)** submitted and helped him
Battle of the Hydaspes (Jhelum), 326 BCE	**Porus (Paurava)** fought bravely but was defeated; Alexander **restored his kingdom** because he admired him
Cities founded	**Nicaea** (victory) and **Bucephala** (after his horse **Bucephalus**)
Retreat	At the **Beas (Hyphasis)** his tired soldiers **refused to go further**; he turned back
Return	Sailed down the **Indus** with a fleet under **Nearchus**, and marched back through the **Makran (Gedrosia)** desert; died in **Babylon** in **323 BCE**
Time in India	About **19 months**

Effects of Alexander's invasion

- Opened **direct land and sea routes** between India and Europe; later Greek settlements remained in the north-west.
- **Destroyed many small states** in the north-west, which helped **Chandragupta Maurya** unify the region.
- Cultural contact started the later **Gandhara art** (Greek and Indian).
- **Greek accounts** (Arrian, Plutarch, Curtius, Justin, Diodorus) are important sources; they give firm dates for Indian history.
- It had **no lasting political impact**; Alexander's officers soon lost control after his death.

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Quick Recall

- Haryanka: Bimbisara (Rajagriha), Ajatashatru (defeated Vajjis; Rathamusala), Udayin (Pataliputra).
- Shishunaga: annexed Avanti; Kalashoka held the Second Buddhist Council at Vaishali.
- Nandas: Mahapadma Nanda (Ekarat; Sarvakshatrantaka); Dhana Nanda (Agrammes) overthrown by Chandragupta in 321 BCE.
- Darius I: conquered Gandhara and Hindush about 518 BCE; the 20th satrapy; Kharosthi came from Aramaic.
- Alexander: Hydaspes, 326 BCE; Porus; Ambhi of Taxila; soldiers refused at the Beas; died in 323 BCE.

7. Mauryan Era

7.1 Sources

Source	Information
Arthashastra (Kautilya)	Treatise on statecraft, administration, economy and war; found by **R. Shamasastry** in **1904** at Mysore. Parts were written later than the Mauryan age
Indica (Megasthenes)	Greek ambassador of **Seleucus Nicator**; survives only in quotations; describes Pataliputra and Mauryan society
Mudrarakshasa	Play by **Vishakhadatta** on Chandragupta and Chanakya
Buddhist and Jain texts	**Dipavamsa, Mahavamsa, Divyavadana** (Ashoka); Jain account of Chandragupta's last years
Ashokan inscriptions	The most reliable source for **Ashoka** and his Dhamma
Junagadh inscription of Rudradaman	Mentions **Pushyagupta** (Chandragupta's governor), who built the **Sudarshana lake**, and Ashoka's governor **Tushaspa**
Archaeology	**Kumrahar** (80-pillared hall) and **Bulandibagh** at Pataliputra; NBPW pottery; punch-marked coins

7.2 Chandragupta Maurya (about 321 to 297 BCE)

- **Origin**: Buddhist texts link him with the **Moriya** clan of **Pipphalivana**; some texts call him of low birth. His adviser was **Chanakya (Kautilya or Vishnugupta)**.
- About **321 BCE** he overthrew **Dhana Nanda** and took **Pataliputra**.
- He conquered the north-west after Alexander left. In **305 BCE** he defeated **Seleucus Nicator**, who gave up **Aria (Herat), Arachosia (Kandahar), Gedrosia (Baluchistan) and Paropamisadae (Kabul)**. In return, Chandragupta gave **500 elephants**; a marriage alliance and the posting of **Megasthenes** followed.
- His empire stretched from the **Hindu Kush to Bengal** and from Kashmir to **Saurashtra** (Junagadh inscription); he probably also held parts of the Deccan.
- Jain tradition says he became a **Jain monk** under **Bhadrabahu**, moved south to **Shravanabelagola** and died by **sallekhana** (fasting) about **297 BCE**.

7.3 Bindusara (about 297 to 273 BCE)

- Called **Amitraghata** ("slayer of foes"; **Amitrochates** in Greek).
- He followed the **Ajivika** sect.
- **Deimachus**, ambassador of **Antiochus I** of Syria, stayed at his court; he asked Antiochus for sweet wine, dried figs and a philosopher (the Greek king sent the first two but not the third).
- He put down a revolt at **Taxila** (sent **Susima**, and later **Ashoka**) and extended the empire in the Deccan.

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7.4 Ashoka (about 268 to 232 BCE)

Point	Details
Title	**Devanampiya Piyadassi** ("beloved of the gods"); the name **Ashoka** appears in the minor edicts at **Maski, Gujjara, Nittur and Udegolam**
Early life	Viceroy of **Taxila** and then **Ujjain**; mother **Subhadrangi**; after a war of succession he was crowned about **268 BCE** (four years after becoming king)
Queens and children	**Devi** of Vidisha (sons **Mahendra** and daughter **Sanghamitra**), **Karuvaki** (son **Tivara**; named in the Queen's Edict), **Padmavati** (son **Kunala**)
Kalinga war	About **261 BCE** (eighth year of rule): **1 lakh killed and 1.5 lakh deported** (Rock Edict XIII); deep remorse led to **conversion to Buddhism** and the policy of **Dhamma**
Missions	**Mahendra and Sanghamitra** went to **Sri Lanka** (to King **Devanampiya Tissa**); missionaries to Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Epirus and Cyrene
Third Buddhist Council	At **Pataliputra** under **Moggaliputta Tissa**
Pilgrimages	Visited **Bodh Gaya** (10th year) and **Lumbini** (20th year; **Rummindei pillar**: reduced the land tax to one-eighth)
Extent	From **Afghanistan (Kandahar)** to **Bengal** and south to **Karnataka**; the **Cholas, Pandyas, Satiyaputras and Keralaputras** stayed outside

Remember

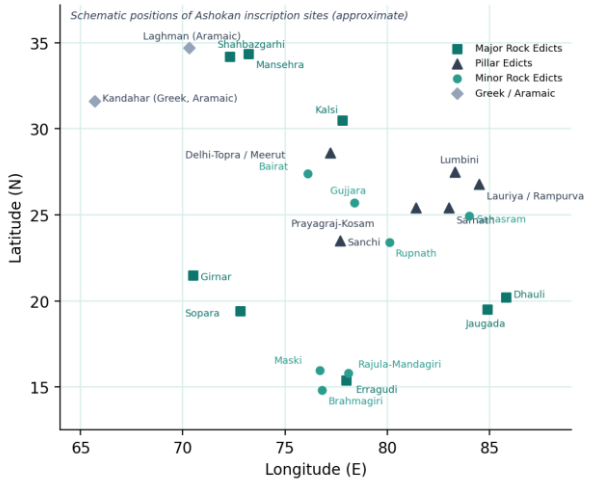
- **Rock Edict XIII** names the **Andhras and Pulindas** among the peoples on the empire's borders, and five Greek kings: **Antiochus II (Amtiyoka)**, **Ptolemy II (Turamaya)**, **Antigonus Gonatas (Antikini)**, **Magas (Maka)** and **Alexander of Epirus (Alikasudara)**.
- Ashoka's **Dhamma** was a **moral code**, not a new religion.

Ashoka's Dhamma

- **Principles**: non-violence, tolerance of all sects (**Rock Edict XII**), respect for parents, elders and teachers, kind treatment of servants and slaves, charity, truthfulness and self-control.
- **Dhamma-vijaya** (conquest by moral force) replaced **digvijaya** (conquest by war); **Dhamma yatras** replaced pleasure tours.
- **Dhamma-mahamattas** were appointed in the **13th year** of his reign to spread Dhamma.
- **Welfare**: hospitals for humans and animals, roads, wells, rest houses and shade trees (**Pillar Edict VII**); ban on many animal sacrifices; royal kitchen cut meat use.
- **Officials**: **Rajukas, Pradeshikas and Yuktas** toured every five years (Rock Edict III).

7.5 Ashokan Inscriptions

Ashoka's edicts are the **earliest deciphered royal inscriptions** of India. They are written in **Prakrit**, mostly in **Brahmi**; those of the north-west are in **Kharosthi**, and some at Kandahar are in **Greek and Aramaic**. **James Prinsep** deciphered Brahmi in **1837**.



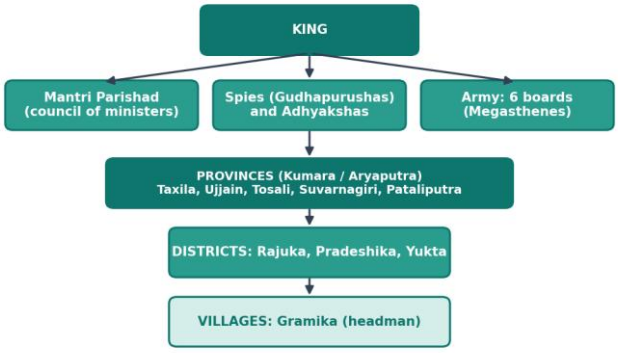
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Type	Sites
Major Rock Edicts (14)	**Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra** (Kharosthi), **Kalsi** (Uttarakhand), **Girnar** (Gujarat), **Sopara** (Maharashtra), **Erragudi** (Kurnool, Andhra), **Dhauli and Jaugada** (Odisha). At **Dhauli and Jaugada**, Edicts XI to XIII are left out and **two Separate Kalinga Edicts** are added
Minor Rock Edicts	**Maski, Brahmagiri, Siddapura, Jatinga-Rameshwara, Nittur, Udegolam** (Karnataka), **Rajula-Mandagiri and Erragudi** (Kurnool, Andhra), **Rupnath, Gujjara, Sahasram, Bairat** (Rajasthan)
Pillar Edicts (7)	**Delhi-Topra, Delhi-Meerut, Lauriya-Araraj, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rampurva** and **Prayagraj-Kosam**. Delhi-Topra and Delhi-Meerut were later moved to Delhi by **Firoz Shah Tughlaq**; Delhi-Topra carries all seven edicts
Minor Pillar Edicts	**Sarnath** (Schism Edict), **Sanchi**, **Kaushambi** and the **Queen's Edict**; **Rummindei (Lumbini)** and **Nigali Sagar** in Nepal record his visits
Cave inscriptions	**Barabar and Nagarjuni** hills: caves given to the **Ajivikas**

The 14 Major Rock Edicts in brief

Edict	Subject
I	Ban on **animal sacrifice** and festive gatherings (samaja)
II	Medical care for **humans and animals**; names the Chola, Pandya, Satiyaputra, Keralaputra and Tamraparni (Sri Lanka) kingdoms
III	Officials to tour every **five years**
IV	Results of Dhamma; Dhamma over war drums
V	**Dhamma-mahamattas** appointed (13th year)
VI	Prompt attention to public business; **Prativedakas** (reporters)
VII and XII	**Tolerance** towards all sects
VIII	**Dhamma yatras**; visit to Bodh Gaya (Sambodhi)
IX, X, XI	Dhamma ceremonies, true glory and Dhamma gifts
XIII	**Kalinga war** and Dhamma-vijaya; Greek kings; the Andhras and Pulindas
XIV	Summary; the edicts are engraved in different lengths

7.6 Mauryan Administration



The state (Saptanga)

Kautilya describes seven parts of the state: **Swami** (king), **Amatya** (ministers), **Janapada** (territory), **Durga** (fort), **Kosha** (treasury), **Danda** (army) and **Mitra** (ally).

Level	Details
Centre	King, helped by the **Mantri Parishad**; **Mahamatras**; high officials called **Tirthas** (18 in the Arthashastra); **Samaharta** (chief of revenue) and **Sannidhata** (treasurer); heads of departments called **Adhyakshas**
Espionage	A spy network (**gudhapurushas**), wandering (sanchari) and stationary (sansthana)
Provinces	Run by royal princes (**Kumara or Aryaputra**): **Uttarapatha** (Taxila), **Avantiratha** (Ujjain), **Prachyapatha** (Tosali), **Dakshinapatha** (Suvarnagiri) and the **core region** (Pataliputra)
District	**Rajukas** (also judges), **Pradeshikas** and **Yuktas**
Village	**Gramika** (headman); the **Gopa** kept accounts of groups of villages

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Level	Details
City (Megasthenes)	A board of **30 members in six committees** (industry, foreigners, births and deaths, trade, manufactured goods, sale tax of one-tenth)
Army (Megasthenes)	Six boards of five members (infantry, cavalry, elephants, chariots, navy, transport); Pliny gives **600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry and 9,000 elephants**

Economy

- **Land revenue** (**bhaga**) was generally **one-sixth to one-fourth** of the produce; other taxes included **bali, pindakara, sulka (tolls) and pranaya** (emergency tax). **Sita** was crown land.
- Agriculture was the base; the state supervised irrigation; the **Sudarshana lake** at Girnar was built.
- **Trade routes**: the **Uttarapatha** (Taxila to Pataliputra) and the **Dakshinapatha**; ports such as **Tamralipti and Bharuch**.
- **Currency**: silver **punch-marked coins** (**pana**), also copper coins; the **state controlled mines, salt and weaving**.
- **Pataliputra** (Palibothra) had a wooden palisade with 64 gates and 570 towers, with a wide moat; the palace was admired by the Greeks.

Society

- **Megasthenes** described **seven castes** (philosophers, farmers, herdsmen, artisans, soldiers, overseers and councillors), which is not accurate for the Brahmanical four varnas.
- He wrote that there was **no slavery** in India; the Arthashastra shows **slaves (dasas)** existed, but they had some legal protection.
- **Women** served as spies and bodyguards.

7.7 Mauryan Art and Architecture

Type	Examples and Features
Pillars	**Monolithic**, polished sandstone (from **Chunar**), 30 to 40 feet; **shaft, lotus capital, abacus and animal** (lion, bull, elephant, horse). **Sarnath Lion Capital**: four lions with the **Dharmachakra** on the abacus; it is the **national emblem** (adopted 1950)
Stupas	**Sanchi** (the original brick stupa is Ashokan; enlarged later); tradition says Ashoka built **84,000 stupas**
Rock-cut caves	**Barabar and Nagarjuni** hills (Bihar): polished interiors; the **Lomas Rishi cave** has a wooden-style front; given to the **Ajivikas** by Ashoka and **Dasharatha**
Sculpture	**Didarganj Yakshi** (polished sandstone; Patna), **Parkham Yaksha** (Mathura), **Dhauli elephant** (Odisha)
Popular art	Terracotta figurines and **NBPW** pottery
Palace	**Kumrahar** (80 pillars) at Pataliputra

Remember

- Scholars debate **Persian influence** on Mauryan pillars: the polish and bell-shaped capitals are compared with Persepolis, but the use of Indian symbols and stone is seen as **indigenous**.
- **Court art** (pillars, palaces) was made under the state; **popular art** (terracotta, caves, small stupas) grew from common life.

7.8 Decline of the Mauryas

Cause	Explanation
Weak successors	After Ashoka came **Dasharatha, Samprati, Shalishuka** and others, and finally **Brihadratha**
Financial strain	A huge army and bureaucracy, and heavy gifts to the Sangha
Oppression by officials	Revolts at Taxila were caused by the harsh officials

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Cause	Explanation
Division of the empire	Provinces became independent under weak rulers
Brahmanical reaction (H. P. Shastri)	A reaction to Ashoka's pro-Buddhist policy; many historians **reject** this view
Invasions	Pressure from the Bactrian Greeks in the north-west
End	**Pushyamitra Shunga**, the commander, killed **Brihadratha** at an army review about **185 BCE**

Quick Recall

- Chandragupta (321 to 297 BCE): defeated Nandas; Seleucus treaty 305 BCE (500 elephants); Megasthenes; died at Shravanabelagola.
- Bindusara: Amitraghata; Ajivika; Deimachus.
- Ashoka: Kalinga war about 261 BCE; Rock Edict XIII; Dhamma; Dhamma-mahamattas (13th year); Mahendra and Sanghamitra to Sri Lanka.
- Andhra edicts: Erragudi and Rajula-Mandagiri (Kurnool); Andhras mentioned in Rock Edict XIII.
- Edicts: Brahmi (Kharosthi in the north-west); Prinsep deciphered in 1837.
- Arthashastra: Saptanga theory; Samaharta; gudhapurushas; Provinces: Taxila, Ujjain, Tosali, Suvarnagiri.
- End: Brihadratha killed by Pushyamitra Shunga, 185 BCE.

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