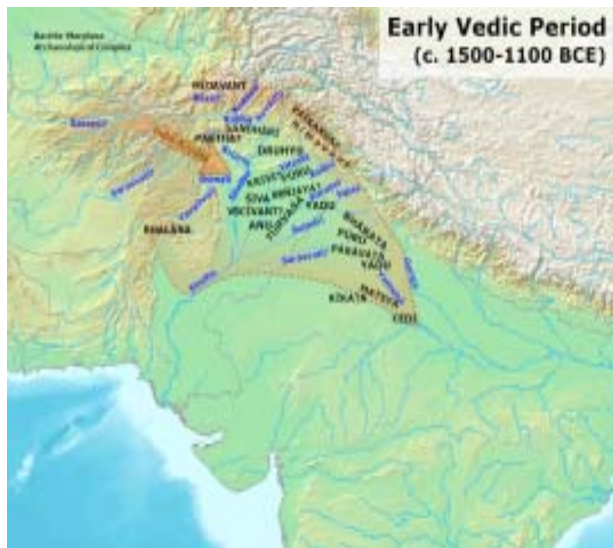


Indian Culture and Heritage

Part-II

- Vedic Age (1500 BC-600 BC)
 - Buddha Age (600 BC-400 BC)
 - Mauryan Age (400 BC-200 BC)
 - Post-Mauryan Age (200 BC-300 AD)
 - Gupta Age (300 AD-600 AD)
 - Post-Gupta Age (600 AD-750 AD)
 - Early Medieval (750 AD-1200 AD)
- **Underline the changes -**
- **Political:** ★ 1. State, Empire, Dynasty and Ruler
2. Administrative structure
 - **Economic:** Craft and industry, trade, monetary transactions and urbanization.
 - **Social:** Varna and caste, condition of women, shudras and untouchables.
 - **Cultural:** Religion and Philosophy, Language and Literature, Art-Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music and Dance, Science and Technology.

■ **Vedic Age (1500 BCE to 600 BCE) – State, Empire, Dynasty And Ruler**



The term 'Arya' signifies a linguistic group rather than a racial group. The Vedic Aryans originated outside of India. It is believed that around 1500 BCE, the Vedic Aryans migrated from Central Asia, passing through West Asia, Iran, and Iraq before reaching India. The Mitanni or Boghazkoi inscriptions from 1400 BCE provide details about the arrival of the Aryans. This inscription mentions gods such as Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and Nasatya.

Initially, an attempt was made to explain the arrival of Aryans within the context of the Aryan invasion, but that concept has been largely rejected. Instead, the immigration theory has gained acceptance. In other words, the Vedic Aryans entered India through a gradual process of migration from outside the country. This suggests that the Vedic Aryans arrived in various phases, as multiple small groups. One such group, known as the 'Panchjana', comprised five tribes: Yadu, Druhu, Anu, Puru, and Turvasu. In addition to them, there was the 'Bharata' clan, which was the most significant and powerful, and this clan was closely associated with Agni.

The Rigvedic Aryans led a semi-nomadic lifestyle and their territory extended across

various regions, including Eastern Afghanistan, Punjab, Haryana, Kashmir, Rajasthan, and Western Uttar Pradesh. We gather information about the geographical expansion of the Rigvedic Aryans from the names of rivers mentioned in the Rigveda. The Mujuvant mountain, identified with the Himalayas, is mentioned in the Rigveda. It is likely that the Yamuna River served as the eastern border for the Rigvedic Aryans, as it is mentioned three times in the Rigveda compared to the Ganga, which is discussed only once. The region between the Sutlej River and the Yamuna River is referred to as 'Brahmavarta' in the Rigveda.

■ **Later Vedic Age (1000 BCE-600 BCE):**



During the later Vedic period, the Vedic Aryans expanded their presence into the upper Doab region, encompassing the Ganga and Yamuna rivers. In this region, the Kuru Janapada emerged, with rulers such as King Parikshit and Janmejaya leading the dynasty. Janmejaya notably performed two Sarpa Satra yajnas. Concurrently, the Panchal kingdom was established in the central part of the Upper Doab, under the rule of Pravahan Jaivali. As this period progressed, civilization expanded further into the middle of the Ganga valley. The Kaushal state was situated along the banks of the Saryu River, while Kashi flourished on the banks of the

Varanavati River. Subsequently, Videha Madhav founded the Videha kingdom along the banks of the Sadanira River (Gandak). The Satapatha Brahmana text provides information about these kingdoms.

■ **Buddha Age or Mahajanapada Age (600 BCE-400 BCE)**



The 6th century BC marked a significant era of transformation in the Ganga valley. It was during this time that the tribal society began to organize itself under a political system, giving rise to the establishment of large states known as Mahajanapadas. According to the Buddhist text Anguttar Nikaya, there were 16 Mahajanapadas, of which 14 were monarchies, and the remaining two were republics. The following is the list of these Mahajanapadas:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| A | - | Avanti, Anga, Ashmaka |
| C | - | Chedi (near Yamuna river) |
| G | - | Gandhara |
| K | - | Kashi, Koshala, Kuru, Kamboja |
| M | - | Magadha, Malla, Matsya |
| P | - | Panchala |
| S | - | Sursena |
| V | - | Vajji, Vatsa |

Among these Mahajanapadas, Magadha, Avanti, Vatsa, and Koshala emerged as the most powerful. Geographically, Kamboja and

Gandhara were located in the northwest, Anga in the east, and Ashmaka near the Godavari River in the south. However, Magadha Mahajanapada further assimilated 14 other Mahajanapadas during its expansion, leading to the establishment of the first empire in India, the Magadha Empire.

• **Extent of Magadha Empire -**

The Magadha Empire extended from the Beas River in the northwest to the Godavari River in the south. The expansion of the Magadha Empire can be attributed to both material factors and the role of its rulers. Regarding material factors, the availability of iron reserves, a formidable military backed by elephants, and the economic prosperity of the Magadha region played significant roles. Simultaneously, the ambitious rulers played a crucial part in the empire's expansion, as outlined below:

- **Bimbisara**-The history of the dynasty becomes clear starting from the time of Bimbisara, who was associated with the Haryanka dynasty. Bimbisara emerged in the mid-6th century BCE and placed a strong emphasis on military expansion. He expanded the territory of Magadha by conquering the Anga Mahajanapada and receiving Kashi as dowry from the Kosala kingdom.
- **Ajatashatru** -Bimbisara's successor, Ajatashatru, continued the tradition of Magadha imperialism. Firstly, after 16 years of relentless efforts, he conquered the Vajji Sangha and assimilated it into the Magadha Empire. Furthermore, he achieved success against the Kosala Mahajanapada and merged Kosala with the Magadha Empire.
- **Udayana** - Ajatashatru 's successor, Udayana, laid the foundation of Patliputra city.
- **Shishunaga** - Under his reign, the Magadha Empire experienced significant expansion. Shishunag succeeded in his military

campaign against Avanti, a powerful Mahajanapada, and annexed it to the Magadha Empire. This victory ended a struggle that had persisted for 100 years.

- **Mahapadmananda** - The establishment of the Nanda Dynasty marked a period of further progress for the Magadha Empire. Mahapadmananda emerged as a powerful ruler, leading the empire to expand towards the east and successfully conquering Kalinga.

The Magadha Mahajanapada emerged as the first kingdom in India to extend from the Beas River in the northwest to Bengal in the east, and from the Godavari River in the south.

■ Political upheavals in the northwest and invasions of Iranian and Greek:



Around 516 BC, the Achaemenid emperor Darius I invaded North-West India, conquering the territory. Herodotus, a Greek scholar, informs us that he received 307 talents of gold annually as revenue from the Indian region.

After the fall of the Persian Empire, Alexander the Great emerged and launched an invasion of North-West India. He crossed the Indus River and encountered minimal resistance from Ambhi, the ruler of Taxila, surrendered without a fight. Continuing his campaign, Alexander defeated King Porus between the Jhelum and Chenab rivers. During this period, both monarchy and republic systems existed in the north-west, including entities such as Kath, Saubhuti, Ambashtha, Malava, and

Kshudrak. Alexander's army successfully reached the banks of the Beas River. Beyond this river, the boundary of the mighty Magadha Empire began, which was under the rule of the Nanda dynasty at that time. It is believed that Alexander's troops refused to proceed further and requested his return. Before leaving India, he distributed the conquered territories among his associate rulers.

- As an illustration, he allocated the area between the Jhelum and Beas rivers to Porus, the central region encompassing the Indus and Jehlum rivers to Ambhi, and the western region beyond the Indus River to Governor Philip. Greek soldiers were stationed in these cities to ensure control and security. Shortly after his return from India, Alexander passed away.

■ Maurya Age (400 BCE-200 BCE)



- **Chandragupta Maurya (323 BCE – 298 BCE)–**

Chandragupta Maurya is widely regarded as the founder of the Maurya dynasty, known for his remarkable establishment of a vast Maurya Empire. This remarkable achievement unfolded through several significant stages:

1. During the initial phase, Chandragupta Maurya, supported by his mentor Chanakya, seized the opportunity presented by

Alexander's absence and effectively incorporated the region between the Indus and Beas rivers in the north-west into his empire. The work 'Mudrarakshasa' by Vishakadatta provides valuable information about this pivotal event.

2. In the second phase, around 321 BC, Chandragupta Maurya successfully deposed the Magadha ruler Dhananand and established his control over the Magadha Empire. This marked a significant expansion of the empire's territorial boundaries, extending southward all the way to the Godavari River.
3. During the third phase, around 305 BC, Chandragupta Maurya achieved a decisive victory over Seleucus Nicator on the banks of the Indus River. This triumph resulted in the acquisition of the vast territories of Ariana, encompassing regions such as Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and Balochistan. The Maurya Empire's north-western boundary was further expanded to include the Hindukush region. Additionally, Chandragupta Maurya established diplomatic relations with Seleucus, and the appointment of ambassador Megasthenes to the Pataliputra court symbolized the strengthening of the diplomatic ties.
4. In this phase, Chandragupta Maurya consolidated the empire's influence in the south by annexing the region that extended from the Godavari River to Brahmagiri in Karnataka. This territorial expansion solidified the Mauryan Empire's control over the southern territories, further strengthening its dominion.

- **Bindusara (298 BCE-273 BCE)**

Bindusara, the successor of Chandragupta, maintained diplomatic relations with neighboring western kingdoms. It is believed that he made three specific demands from Antiochus I, the contemporary ruler of Syria: figs, wine, and philosophers. While Bindusara

received two of these items, the Syrian ruler declined to send a philosopher, citing a conflict with his country's laws. Dymachus, a Syrian ambassador, served in Bindusara's court, highlighting the existing diplomatic ties between their kingdoms. Bindusara also established connections with Ptolemy, the ruler of Egypt, as evidenced by the presence of Dionysius, Ptolemy's ambassador, at his court.

The nature of Bindusara's interactions with southern neighbors remains unclear, and the extent of his involvement in the conquest of peninsular India is a subject of scholarly debate. While some scholars attribute this achievement to Bindusara, there is ongoing discussion regarding the true extent of his role.

- **Ashoka (269 BCE-232 BCE)**

In the ninth year of his reign, Ashoka conquered Kalinga, acknowledging its crucial significance. After this victory, he altered his imperialistic approach, no longer focusing on territorial acquisition but emphasizing the management of the territories already under his control. Consequently, the Mauryan Empire expanded considerably, spanning from the Hindukush region in the northwest to Bengal in the east, and as far as Brahmagiri in the south. This vast empire became an exemplary model for future generations.

■ Post-Mauryan Age (200 BCE-300 AD)



During this period, a multi-state system emerged, replacing the centralized Mauryan Empire. These states can be categorized into three groups: the successor states of the Mauryas, the states formed as a result of foreign invasions, and formation of Independent states.

- **The successor states of post Mauryan -**

1. **Shunga Dynasty (185 BCE-75 BCE) -**

Pushyamitra Shunga seized the throne in 185 B.C., after assassinating Brihadratha, the last Mauryan king. As the Brahmin commander of the Mauryas, Pushyamitra established a new era of power. According to the Puranas, he was succeeded by ten rulers from the Shunga dynasty, with Bhagbhadr and Agnimitra being the most prominent among them. Agnimitra was the main character in Kalidas's drama, 'Malavikagnimitram.'

During Bhagbhadr's rule, the Greek King Antialcidas sent his envoy, Herodotus, to the royal court. In tribute to God Vasudeva, Bhagbhadr commissioned the construction of a 'Garudadhvja', also known as a 'Garuda pillar'. The Shunga dynasty's last king, Devabhuti, met a tragic end at the hands of his Brahmin minister, Vasudev, who subsequently ascended to the throne.

2. **Kanva Dynasty -** Vasudev was the founder of the Kanva dynasty, which lasted for a span of 45 years until 30 BC. During this period, the dynasty saw four nominal rulers: Vasudev, Bhumimitra (also known as Bhumitra), Narayan, and Susharman. Eventually, the Satavahanas overthrew the Kanva dynasty.

- **States established by foreign invasions—** North-West and North India were frequently invaded by Central Asian tribes, leading to the establishment of new states by these invaders.
- **Indo-Greeks -** Two Indo-Greek dynasties, led by Demetrius and Eucratides, concurrently

ruled over India. They established their capitals in Sakala and Takshashila, respectively. Our knowledge of these dynasties primarily comes from their coins, as they were the first to issue coins in the name of their rulers. One of the most renowned Indo-Greek rulers was Menander, whose dialogue with the Indian sage Nagasena is documented in the Buddhist text called the 'Milindapanho'. Menander's empire is believed to have stretched from Jhelum to Mathura, with Sialkot serving as his capital.

- **Shakas -** The western branch of the Shakas ruling in India held great importance among the various branches. Rudradaman, a notable ruler associated with this branch, played a crucial role in its history. He took upon the task of restoring the Sudarshan Lake and erected the Junagarh inscription, which stands as the first Sanskrit inscription. In this inscription, Rudradaman is celebrated as the 'Bhrasht-Raj-Pratishthapak' or the restorer of a fallen kingdom. Similar to the Gupta emperor Samudragupta, Rudradaman also revitalized the kingdoms of defeated rulers, demonstrating his exceptional leadership abilities.

- **Parthian -** Gondophernes, the ruler of this dynasty in India, coincided with the visit of the first Christian saint, St. Thomas, to the country.

- **Kushana -** The Kushans were associated with the Yuchi tribe, and under the leadership of Kujula Kadphises (Kadphises I) and his successor, Vima Kadphises, the tribe was organized, laying the foundation for the Kushan Empire. Vima Kadphises achieved a significant victory over the Parthians, expanding his rule over the Indus Valley and the Mathura region. As a Shaivite, Vima Kadphises depicted images of Shiva, Trishul, and Nandi on his coins. However, the most renowned ruler of this dynasty was Kanishka.

His coronation in 78 AD marked the beginning of the Saka Samavat calendar. Kanishka established two capitals, Purushpur (Peshawar) and Mathura. During his reign, the fourth Buddhist Council took place at Kundalvana in Kashmir, leading to the development of Mahayana Buddhism as a separate branch and its subsequent spread to West and Central Asia under Kanishka's patronage. Kanishka's empire extended from Khurasan in Central Asia to Banaras in North India. He also held control over a portion of the famous Silk Route, actively participating in trade along this route that connected the Roman Empire and the Chinese Empire.

- **Formation of Independent States-**

- **Satavahana State** – This dynasty was founded by Simuka, but the most renowned ruler of this dynasty is considered to be Gautamiputra Satkarni, who reigned in the second century. Information about his rule is derived from the Nasik inscription of his mother, Gautami Balashri. The last significant ruler of this dynasty was Yagyashree Shatkarni. Initially established in the Maharashtra region, the dynasty later expanded its influence to Andhra and Karnataka. However, the dynasty experienced a decline in the third century. Following this decline, the Vakataka state emerged in the Maharashtra region, while the Ikshvaku state was established in the Andhra region. Vindhyashakti was the founder of the Vakataka state, and his son Pravarsen, a powerful ruler, assumed the title of 'Emperor' (Smrat). During this time, the Vakataka empire extended from the central province and Bundelkhand in the north to the northern Hyderabad in the south. After Pravarsen's rule, the empire was divided into two parts. One part was established at Nagpur under the leadership of his son Gautamiputra, while the other was situated at Vatsagulma in Berar under Sarvasen and his successors.

Rudrasen II, a ruler from the Nagpur center, was married to Prabhavati Gupta, the daughter of the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II.

- **Kalinga State** – The Hatigumpha inscription, discovered in the hills of Udayagiri near Bhubaneswar in Puri district, provides valuable information about Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga. Kharavela is regarded as a great ruler, and his military and cultural achievements are mentioned in this inscription. It serves as the primary source for understanding his reign. According to the inscription, the Chedi dynasty was founded by a person named Mahameghavahana, and Kharavela emerged as the greatest ruler of this dynasty. He ascended to the throne at the age of 24 in the year 24 BC.
- **Chola, Chera and Pandya kingdoms** -In the southernmost region, we find references to the Chola, Chera, and Pandya kingdoms during this era. Information about these kingdoms is derived from Ashoka's inscriptions, where he mentions the Cholas, Cheras, and Keralaputras. However, the process of state formation actually began in the first and second centuries. We gain insights into these kingdoms from early Tamil literature known as Sangam literature, that's why they are also referred to as the Sangam states.

- **Gupta Age (300 AD-600 AD)**



- Chandragupta I** - The real founder of Gupta dynasty Chandragupta I, who expanded the Gupta kingdom in North India from the Prayag region. In 319-20 AD, he initiated the Gupta Samvat to commemorate his victory. Chandragupta I strategically strengthened his diplomatic and political standing through matrimonial alliances. He married Princess Kumar Devi of the Lichchavi dynasty, gaining the support of this influential state in North India. The significance of this marital alliance is evident from the fact that Kumar Devi's name was inscribed on his coins, and later, Samudragupta also adopted the title of grand son of Lichchhavis (Lichchhavi Dauhitaar).
- Samudragupta (335 AD – 380 AD)** – Samudragupta was an exceptional conqueror who expanded his empire across India, reaching from the Himalayas in the north to the Vindhya Mountains in the south, and from the Bay of Bengal in the east to eastern Malwa in the west. The details of his conquests are chronicled in the Allahabad inscription (Prayag Prashasti), authored by his court writer Harishena. According to the inscription, Samudragupta's conquests can
- be divided into five distinct stages. In the first stage, he decisively defeated nine states in the Gangetic basin, including Vidisha, Ahichchhatra, and Champavati. Moving on to the second stage, he successfully conquered several republics in Punjab and the neighboring regions. Progressing to the third stage, he emerged victorious over the forest states known as 'Satvika.' In the fourth stage, he consolidated his power by incorporating twelve states in the Deccan region. Finally, in the fifth stage, he triumphed over foreign states in the North-West region, including the Shakas, Murundas, and Devaputra Shahanshahi. V.A. Smith aptly referred to him as the Napoleon of India.
- Chandragupta II or Chandragupta Vikramaditya (380 AD-412 AD)** - Samudragupta achieved a significant victory over Saka ruler Rudrasingha III, and on this occasion, he introduced silver coins to commemorate his triumph in Gujarat. The iron pillar at Mehrauli provides us with insights into the accomplishments of a ruler named 'Chandra,' who is commonly identified as Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Chandragupta Vikramaditya further strengthened his position through strategic matrimonial alliances. He married a princess from the Naga dynasty, and it is believed that Prabhavati Gupta was their offspring. Additionally, he arranged a marriage between his daughter and Rudrasen II, the ruler of the Vakataka dynasty. Following the demise of the Vakataka ruler, Prabhavati Gupta theoretically held power, but in practice, the Vakataka kingdom became absorbed into the Gupta empire.
- Kumaragupta I (412 AD-454 AD)** - Kumaragupta I, the eldest son of Chandragupta I and Dhruvadevi, is recognized for his reign during which he maintained the extensive Gupta empire without engaging in further

conquests. His rule is noted for its efficient governance, as depicted in the Mandsaur records. Additionally, Kumaragupta I is credited as the founder of Nalanda University.

- **Skandagupta (454 AD- 467 AD)** - Skandagupta, a worthy successor to Kumaragupta, faced the first invasion of the Hunas during his reign. However, he emerged victorious in defeating the Hunas, and this triumph is well-documented in the Junagadh inscription. Like his predecessors, Skandagupta was a versatile emperor, demonstrating remarkable governance skills. To ensure the welfare of his subjects, he initiated the restoration of the Sudarshan Lake, originally constructed by the Mauryan emperor. This thoughtful endeavor effectively resolved the issue of water scarcity for the inhabitants of the Saurashtra province.

The Gupta Empire experienced its downfall in the mid-6th century AD, leading to the emergence of several kingdoms in its aftermath. Notable among these were the Pushyabhuti dynasty in Thaneshwar, the Maukhari kingdom in Kannauj, the Maitraka dynasty in Vallabhi, and the Uttaragupta kingdom in Bihar. These kingdoms rose on the remnants of the Gupta Empire, shaping the course of regional history.

■ Post-Gupta Age (600 AD-750 AD)

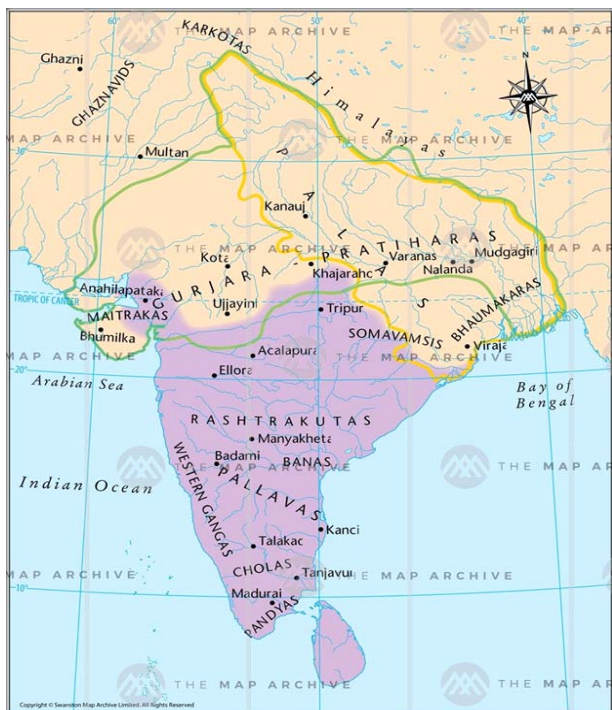


During this era, a vast empire was established in North India under the rule of Harshavardhana, while in South India, the Chalukya and Pallava states emerged as significant powers.

- **North India** - Following the demise of his brother Rajyavardhan, Harshavardhana (606 AD-647 AD) ascended to the throne of the Pushyabhuti dynasty in North India. Additionally, upon the passing of his brother-in-law, he also assumed rulership over Kannauj. These acquisitions significantly enhanced his power and enabled him to establish a vast empire in North India. Initially, he faced conflicts with Shashanka, the ruler of the Gaur region in Bengal. It was only after Shashanka's demise that Harshavardhana was able to conquer the Gaur region. However, his ambitions to expand further into South India were thwarted when he suffered defeat at the hands of Pulakesin II, the Chalukya ruler.
- **South India** – In South India, the Chalukya dynasty emerged as a formidable power in Maharashtra, while the Pallava dynasty flourished in southern Andhra Pradesh and northern Tamil Nadu. The founder of the Chalukya dynasty was Pulakeshin I, but it was Pulkeshin II who became the most renowned ruler of this dynasty. On the other hand, Simha Vishnu established the Pallava dynasty. Notable rulers of the Pallava dynasty include Mahendravarman, Narasimhavarman I, Narsimhavarman II, alias Rajsingh. Among them, Narsimhavarman I achieved a significant victory by defeating the Chalukya ruler Pulkeshin II and capturing their capital, Badami. In commemoration of his triumph, he assumed the title of 'Vatapikonda'.
- South India comprised both fertile and less fertile regions, leading to disputes between the two kingdoms over the highly fertile Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab region. In this

series of events, Pulakeshin II triumphed over the Pallava ruler Mahendravarman, seizing control of the Vengi region. In response, Narasimhavarman I defeated Pulakeshin II, capturing his capital and assuming the title 'Mahamalla' to commemorate this victory. The illustrious city of Mahabalipuram was established in Narasimhavarman I's honor. Eventually, internal conflicts led to the downfall of both dynasties.

■ Early Medieval (750 AD- 1200 AD)



North India:-

- Palas** - Following the demise of Harshavardhan, there was a period of unrest in northern India. Subsequently, the Palas emerged as a significant power in the eastern region, with Gopala establishing the Pala dynasty. Notable rulers of this dynasty include Dharmapala and Devpala. The Palas patronized Buddhism and played a crucial role in the development of important universities such as Odantapuri, Vikramshila, and Sompura under the reign of Dharmapala. Additionally, the Pala rulers actively participated in the Tripartite struggle, alongside the Pratiharas and the Rashtrakutas, in their efforts to gain control over Kannauj.
- Pratiharas** - Nagabhatta was the initial founder of the Pratihara kingdom, followed by significant rulers such as Vatsaraja, Nagabhata II, and Mihir Bhoja. The Pratiharas established themselves as a powerful dynasty, maintaining their control over Kannauj through relentless struggles with the Palas and the Rashtrakutas.
- Rajput Kingdoms** - As a result of prolonged conflicts, both the Pala and Pratihara kingdoms experienced a decline, paving the way for the emergence of smaller kingdoms on their remnants. These new states came to be known as Rajput states, marking the beginning of the Rajput period. The prominent Rajput states that emerged during this time were as follows:
 - Hindushahi Dynasty near Peshawar in the northwest** -The Rajput dynasty, led by significant rulers like Jaipal and Anandpal, engaged in a prolonged battle with Mahmud of Ghazni in order to safeguard the security of the north-western region. Bhima was the last ruler of this dynasty.
 - Tomar Dynasty of Delhi** - Anangpal Tomar, a ruler from the Tomar dynasty, was the founder of Delhi, also known as Dhillika. Afterward, the control of Delhi passed on to the Chauhan dynasty.
 - Chauhan dynasty** - The Chauhan dynasty, associated with Shakambhari, ruled over Ajmer and Delhi. During the reign of Vigraharaja II, an important ruler, Delhi came under the control of the Chauhans. Prithviraj Chauhan, a great ruler of this dynasty.
 - Solanki dynasty of Anhilwara, Gujarat** - Bhima II, a ruler of the Chauhan dynasty, achieved victory over Mohammad Ghori.
 - Chandel State** - The Chandel dynasty was established in Mahoba, Jhansi, and Kalinjar in central India. Prominent rulers of this dynasty included Gandadeva, Dhangadeva, and Vidyadhara. They led a coalition of

Rajput states in opposition to Mahmud of Ghazni.

- **Gahadwal dynasty** - Following the decline of the Pratiharas, the Gahadwals established their rule in Kannauj. Notable rulers of the Gahadwal dynasty included Chandradev, Madanpal, and Jaichand. Govindchand was the founder of this dynasty.
- **Paramara Dynasty** –The Gahadwal dynasty was founded by King Upendra or Krishnaraj. Bhoj Parmar, a renowned ruler of this dynasty, was a great patron of art and literature.

South India

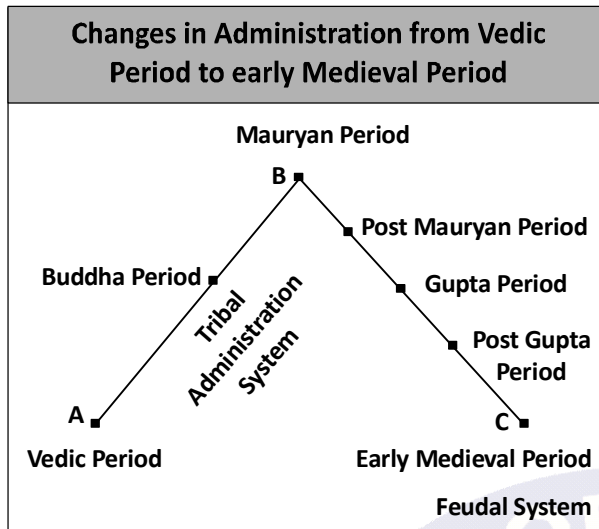
- **Maharashtra region** – The Rashtrakuta dynasty was established in this region during the mid-8th century. Its founder was Dantidurga, who gained power by overthrowing the last Chalukya ruler, Kirtivarman II. Dantidurga's uncle, Krishna I, succeeded him and constructed the famous Kailash temple at Ellora. The dynasty witnessed the reign of several influential rulers, including Dhruva, Govind II, Indra III, and Krishna III. These rulers expanded their territory in the south and engaged in a tripartite struggle with the Palas and Pratiharas for control over Kannauj in the north.
- The dynasty came to an end when Karak II, the last ruler, was overthrown by his commander, Tailap II, who established a new dynasty. Known as the Later Chalukyas, they traced their lineage back to the old Chalukyas. While the old Chalukya capital was Badami, the new capital became Kalyani. The noteworthy rulers of this dynasty included Someshwar, Satyashraya, and Vikramaditya-V.

Extreme South

- **Cholas** – The Chola dynasty was founded by Vijayalaya (850 AD - 875 AD). He was

succeeded by Aditya I, who expanded the kingdom by removing the last Pallava ruler, Aparajit, from the throne. Parantaka I succeeded Aditya I. Although he defeated the Pandya ruler, he suffered a defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakuta ruler Krishna III in the battle of Takkolam, resulting in the loss of half of the territory.

- The Chola dynasty experienced a revival under Rajaraja I (985 AD - 1014 AD). Rajaraja I achieved victories over his neighboring kingdoms and even conquered northern Sri Lanka. He renamed the northern part of Sri Lanka as Mummadicholpuram, after his own title, 'Mummadichol'. Rajendra I, the successor of Rajaraja I, continued the policy of expansion. He conquered all his neighboring regions and eventually conquered the entire island of Sri Lanka. In a northern campaign, he successfully captured Bengal and commemorated his victory by constructing a temple named Gangaikondacholapuram.
- Furthermore, the Cholas conducted a successful naval campaign against the powerful Southeast Asian kingdom of SriVijaya or Shailendra. Their naval forces established control from the Indian Ocean to the Bay of Bengal.
- By the middle of the 13th century, both the Later Chalukya Empire and the Chola Empire had disintegrated, giving rise to several new kingdoms that emerged in their wake. These kingdoms were established on the remnants of these once-powerful empires.
 1. Yadava Dynasty in Devagiri
 2. Kakatiya Dynasty in Warangal
 3. Hoysala Dynasty in Dwarasamudra
 4. Pandya Dynasty in Madurai



The above diagram shows that the process of administrative centralization in ancient India witnessed significant developments from the Vedic age to the Maurya age. This centralization was driven by various factors such as economic expansion, increased resources of the states, and the establishment of a taxation system. Consequently, it led to the organization of a strong army and an efficient bureaucracy.

However, with the introduction of land grants, the strength of administrative centralization weakened. There was a decline in the number of officials, reduction in the number of intermediaries, and a weakening of the king's army base from the Maurya age to the Early Medieval period. These changes marked the emergence of Indian feudalism, and they can be categorized into distinct periods.

■ RigVedic Age :

During the Rigvedic period, the concept of the state was based on the people (Jana) rather than territory (janapada), mainly because the Rigvedic Aryans led a nomadic lifestyle. In the Rigveda, the king is referred to as 'Jansya Gopa,' indicating that the king's identity was closely tied to his clan. During this period, a formal taxation system was not established. The primary source of state income came from the war, as loot acquired during battles.

Although references to a voluntary tax called Bali can be found, it was not a regular tax but rather a form of voluntary contribution. The Rigvedic period did not witness the development of an independent bureaucracy or a permanent army. While some officials are mentioned in the Rigveda, their numbers were relatively small compared to later periods. Examples of such officials include Yuvraj, Senani, Purohit, Gramini Vishwapati, and others.

The Rigveda mentions several institutions such as Sabha, Samiti, Vidatha, and Gana. These councils served as platforms for discussions on the interests of the people, military campaigns, and religious rituals. The Sabha consisted of elderly individuals and held some judicial powers. The Samiti was an educational institution and worked as an electoral college for the king. Vidatha, the oldest institution of the Aryans, was associated with military operations. The king sought the support of Sabha and Samiti, indicating their significance. Gana represented the institution of a republic.

In terms of administration, the smallest unit during this period was the Griha or Kula (family). Above the Kula was the village, followed by the Visha, and finally the Jana, which served as the highest unit of administration.

■ Later Vedic Age :

The introduction of agriculture during the later Vedic period brought about an increase in the state's resources, leading to an enhanced position for the king. The king's stature was elevated as specific formalities and religious rituals became associated with the role. This period also witnessed a relatively well-established tax system. The voluntary tax known as 'Bali' transformed into a mandatory tax. Additionally, the details of taxes such as bhag (representing the 16th part of land revenue) and shulka (referring to the tax on goods) were established.

However, despite these changes in the administrative system, a separate bureaucracy outside the kinship and standing army failed to develop. As a result, there was an increase in the number of officials. Later Vedic texts mention the existence of 12 'Ratnins' or high officials.

The janapada, or territorial unit, emerged as the largest administrative division during this time. The major tribal institutions faced setbacks, with Vidatha and Gana disappearing, while Sabha and Samiti already lost their power and significance.

■ **Buddha Age :**

During this period, the resources of the state experienced growth due to the expansion of the agricultural economy and the onset of the second urbanization. As a result, the tax system became fully established. Notably, an official known as Rajjughrahak is mentioned, indicating that land revenue was determined after land measurement.

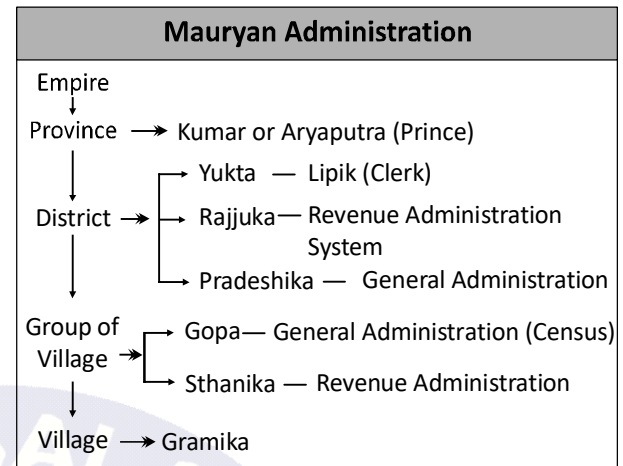
The power of the king was augmented by the existence of a standing army and a professional bureaucracy. For instance, Bimbisara was the first king to establish a standing army and was referred to as 'Shrenik Bimbisara'. This period also witnessed the development of writing, which can be discerned from royal documents. An official known as 'Akshapataladhikrita' was specifically associated with these royal documents. Additionally, the Village (Gram) was established as the smallest administrative unit during this period.

■ **Maurya Period :**

During this period, the ruler held supreme authority over the state. The Mauryan rulers adopted the title 'Devanampiya'. The Mauryan Empire was prosperous and abundant in resources, leading to an increase in the number of officials. A strong army was established, and administrative centralization was strengthened.

Kautilya's Arthashastra is considered a major source for studying the Mauryan period. However, other sources such as Megasthenes' Indica and

Ashokan inscriptions also provide valuable information. In Arthashastra, Kautilya outlines 18 Tirtha (departments) and 27 Adhyaksha (officials) in the central administration.



The Mauryan administration was characterized by a large-scale bureaucracy, and four provinces were existed during this period. The head of the province was called Kumar or Aryaputra, who likely belonged to the royal family. A Council of Ministers assisted and advised the ruler (Kumar), but this council possessed discretionary powers, including the ability to directly transmit important information to the ruler without informing Kumar.

District officials such as Yukta, Rajjuka, and Pradeshika are also mentioned. These officers were appointed by the central administration. Pradeshika held the highest position and was responsible for assessing district income and maintaining law and order. Rajjuka focused on the land revenue system and village welfare, and also had judicial authority. Yuktas served as secretaries and accountants.

At the lower level, a cluster of villages formed a unit of administration. Officials known as Gopa and Sthanika were appointed for this level. Gopa officials were involved in conducting the census and Sthanika was responsible for tax collection, which demonstrated the state's centralization efforts in identifying taxpayers.

Megasthenes mentions certain officers in his text, such as Agronomoi, who were responsible for road construction, and Astronomoi, who

served as city commissioners.

■ Post Mauryan Age :

Features :-

1. The Shaka, Kushan, and Satavahana rulers defeated Indian kingdoms but allowed them to remain as subordinate rulers, creating a situation of a state within a state. This led to certain consequences:

- (i) One of the consequences was the adoption of different royal titles by the great rulers to distinguish themselves from the subordinate rulers. The impressive titles assumed by the Kushan rulers, such as Maheshvara, Sarvalokeshvara, and Shahanushahi, indicate the presence of numerous minor kings under their authority who provided military services to them.
- (ii) This system resulted in the emergence of many autonomous units under the state, which later formed the basis of the feudal system.
- (iii) This type of victory was termed Dharma Vijay in the Kautilyan Arthashastra.

2. To counter the decentralization tendencies during the post-Mauryan period, a tendency to incorporate divine elements into the monarchy emerged. The kings began to be compared with gods. For instance, the Satavahana rulers compared themselves to gods, while the Kushanas adopted the title Devaputra (son of god). Additionally, the Kushan rulers had their idols placed in temples, such as the one built at a location called Maat in Mathura.

3. The Satavahana rulers introduced land grants in the first century CE, but these grants were primarily religious grants bestowed upon Brahmins or Buddhist monks. The grants conferred only the right of revenue, not the right of administration. Several factors motivated the implementation of land grants during this period.

One motivation was the opportunity to promote agricultural expansion in remote areas through these grants. This was made possible

because a portion of the granted land was previously uninhabited. Additionally, the kings sought to enhance their power and influence through land grants. This allowed for the spread of Aryan culture into tribal regions as well.

■ Gupta Age

The Gupta administration serves as a transitional phase, bridging the gap between the Mauryan administration and the early medieval administration. During this period, the king's titles expanded, but his actual power diminished due to the presence of intermediaries and middlemen. The state sought to limit its responsibilities through land grants, and the participation of local elements in the Gupta administration increased.

Key Features:

- 1. The king held the highest position in the administration. The king assumed grand titles such as 'Parama Bhattacharaka' and 'Maharajadhiraja,' which did not signify an increase in the king's power but rather indicated the presence of subordinate rulers and feudatories.
- 2. 'Divine kingship' gained prominence, with kings comparing themselves to gods. In the 'Prayag-Prashasti,' Samudragupta likened himself to important deities like Indra, Varuna, Antaka (Yama), and Dhanda (Kuber).
- 3. Several significant officials were mentioned in the central administration, including Kumaramatyā (highest officials), Sandhivigrahaka (foreign minister), Dandanayaka and MahaDandanayaka (judiciary), BalAdhikrit and MahabalAdhikrit (military), Vinayasthithapak (religious affairs), Pratihara and Mahapratihara (palace security), etc.
- 4. During this period, offices became hereditary, and an official could hold multiple positions simultaneously. For instance, Harishena held the posts of Mahadandanayaka, Sandhivigrahaka, and

Kumaramatyia simultaneously.

5. The empire was divided into provinces known as Bhukti. An official called Uparika or Uparika Maharaja was appointed to govern the province. The term 'Maharaja' was associated with Uparika in both Damodarpur and Eran inscriptions, suggesting that provincial authorities enjoyed more autonomy compared to earlier periods.
6. Provinces were further divided into districts or Vishaya. The district administration appointed an officer named Vishayapati or Kumaramatyia. In most cases, the District Officer was chosen by the Uparika or Uparika Maharaja.
7. At the lower level, the administrative units consisted of a group of villages called Vithi or Petha. The officer in charge of these units was known as Vithi Mahatamya. The lowest unit of administration was the "Grama," which was under the control of the Mahattar.
8. An important characteristic of the Gupta administration was the involvement of regional elements in local governance. At the district level, there existed a district council known as the "Vishaya Adhikarana" or "Vishaya Parishad." At the Vithi level, there was the Vithi Parishad, and in the cities, there were Nagar Parishads or Adhishthana Adhikaranas. The following individuals were mentioned as members of these institutions: Nagar Shreshthi (chief financial officer), Sarthavaha (chief merchant), Pratham Kulika (chief craftsman), and Pratham Kayastha (chief clerk). Similarly, at the Vithi level, there were the Kutumbin (peasant) and Mahattar (village headman) mentioned.

■ Post Gupta Age –

Features :

1. The practice of elevating kingship to a divine status persisted in this era, with rulers adopting grand and prestigious titles.
2. In this period, government officials started receiving their salaries in the form of land grants due to a scarcity of currency caused by declining trade. For instance, during Harsha's reign, ministers and officials were remunerated with land grants instead of cash.
3. A feudalization of the bureaucracy occurred during this time, as even feudal officers were appointed to important administrative positions.

■ Early Medieval Period –

Features :

1. The concept of divine kingship continued to prevail.
2. The kings continued to use impressive titles.
3. Certain feudal lords assumed the positions of officials, while officials themselves began adopting feudal titles.
4. Temples and Mathas received extensive land grants during this period.
5. The number of military grants also increased, with rulers like the Palas, Pratiharas, and Rajputs granting land to numerous feudatories who, in turn, provided military services. Thus, all the characteristics of Indian feudalism emerged in the early medieval period.
6. The Cholas introduced local self-government in South India during this era. This system involved the participation of local elements in the administration. This can be seen in the Uttaramerur inscription, where institutions such as Nattar were established at the Nadu level, while 'Ur' and 'Sabha' were formed at the village level.

