```
                Evolution of Language
      North India (Language of Aryan Group)
                        ↓
  . . . . . . . . Sanskrit . . . . . . . .
                        ↓
  . . . . . . . First Stage Prakrit (Pali) . . . . . . .
                        ↓
  . . . . . . Second Stage Prakrit (Prakrit) . . . . . . .
                        ↓
  . . . . . . . Third Stage  (Apbhransh) . . . . . . .
                        ↓
             Modern Language
                        ↓
Assamia, Odia, Bangla, Hindi, Gujrati, Marathi, Punjabi
                        ↓
        Awadhi, Brajbhasha, Khadi Boli
                        ↓
             Official Language
```

■ The Relation between Language and Literature

Language serves as the medium of expression, while literature becomes the embodiment of emotions. Emotions find their expression solely through language, making literature the conveyer of these emotions. In this analogy, if language acts as the vehicle, then literature assumes the role of the passenger.

■ The Relation between Language and Script

Language serves as a medium of expression, allowing us to convey our thoughts and emotions. In turn, literature embodies these emotions, giving them tangible form. Language can exist without a script, but a script cannot exist without language. When language is spoken, it finds its written counterpart in the form of a script.
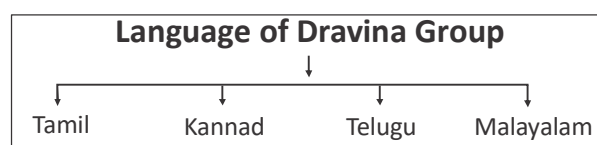
■ What was the status of the evolution of language?

The major languages of North India are known as Aryan languages, with Sanskrit being the oldest among them, in its earliest form called Vedic Sanskrit. Language development is believed to progress alongside societal development. Similarly, linguistic coordination occurs parallel to social coordination. Thus, when the Vedic Aryans came into contact with non-Aryans, the recitation of Sanskrit (Dhwani

Shastra) was also influenced, leading to the development of secular Sanskrit alongside Vedic Sanskrit. Around the 4th century BCE, the renowned scholar Panini wrote the grammar text 'Ashtadhyayi' with scientific rules for Sanskrit language, establishing it as a standard and prestigious language. Generally, when a language acquires a grammatical foundation, it tends to become standardized. However, this can also hinder further development as the general public may struggle to adhere to grammar rules.

As a result, Sanskrit became incomprehensible to the general public due to its complex structure. It had 8 declensions and 3 genders, resulting in 24 forms for each word. This complexity made Sanskrit difficult for common people, leading to the development of another language called Pali or Prakrit. Over time, Prakrit underwent three stages of development: first Prakrit, second Prakrit, and third Prakrit. The first Prakrit, known as 'Pali,' the second as 'Prakrit,' and the third as 'Apabhramsa.' Each stage simplified the language by reducing declensions and introducing prepositions. This simplification made Prakrit easier for common people to understand and speak. As Prakrit continued to evolve, it also diverged into regional dialects like Shauraseni and Ardhamagadhi. Despite these changes, grammar was developed for each stage. In the 8th century, the development of Apabhramsa began, and a scholar named Hemchand provided grammar for this language. It was from this point that Hindi emerged and further evolved. Hindi became a modern Aryan language with various regional forms known as dialects, including Awadhi, Braj Bhasha, Khadi Boli, and Hindi itself.

■ Dravidian language

```
        Language of Dravina Group
                    ↓
     ↓          ↓          ↓          ↓
   Tamil     Kannad     Telugu    Malayalam
```

- **Tamil** – The development of the Dravidian group of languages is evident in South India, with Tamil being the oldest among them. Tamil emerged around 200 BCE and its earliest evidence is found in cave inscriptions. It subsequently flourished in the Sangam literature. Over the centuries, Tamil continued to evolve, encompassing the region of Tamil Nadu and South Andhra Pradesh.

- **Kannada** - Kannada, the second major Dravidian language after Tamil, originated in the region of Karnataka. Jain monks played a significant role in its early development, and the Rashtrakuta rulers made valuable contributions to its evolution.

- **Telugu –** This language was developed in the Andhra region. It made considerable progress as a literary language during the Vijayanagara period.

- **Malayalam -** Malayalam, the predominant language of Kerala, experienced significant literary development until the 14th century.
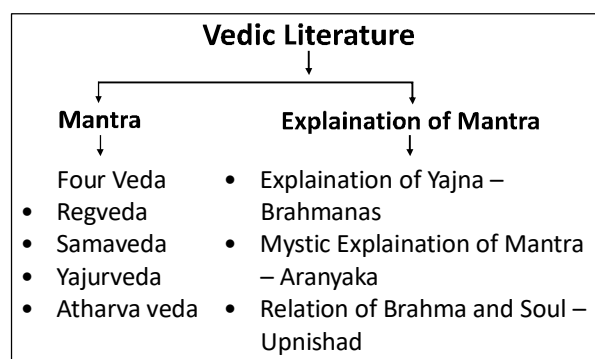
■ Development of the script

The Indus script, the oldest script in India, remains undeciphered. The Brahmi script, developed around the 6th century BCE, is evidenced in the inscriptions of Ashoka, a Mauryan emperor. Ashoka's inscriptions, written in Brahmi script, spanned from North India to South India. In the northwest, Aramaic, Kharosthi, and Greek scripts were also employed in Ashoka's inscriptions.

During the Gupta period, a script called 'Kutilakshar' emerged and underwent development. Later, in the 10th century and onwards, the Devanagari script was developed, which is now used for writing many Indian languages.
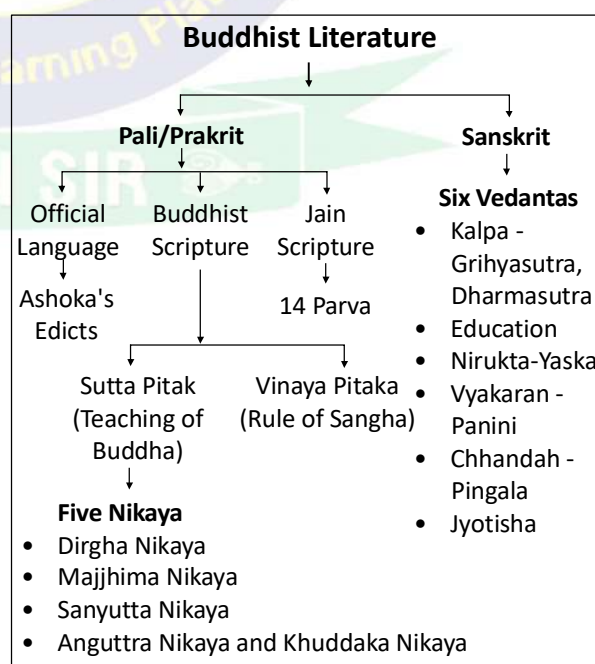
■ Development of literature
• Vedic Literature (1500-600 BCE):-

```
                    Vedic Literature
                          │
            ┌─────────────┴─────────────┐
         Mantra            Explaination of Mantra
            │                       │
        Four Veda        • Explaination of Yajna –
        • Regveda          Brahmanas
        • Samaveda       • Mystic Explaination of Mantra
        • Yajurveda        – Aranyaka
        • Atharva veda   • Relation of Brahma and Soul –
                           Upnishad
```

Vedic literature is divided into two categories: Mantra and Brahman. Mantras are compiled in the four Vedas: Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda. The Yajurveda emphasizes rituals, the Samaveda focuses on music, and the Atharvaveda contains medicinal knowledge.

Brahman refers to the explanation of mantras. Mantras are interpreted in three ways: Brahmanas, which provide ritualistic interpretations; Aranyaka, which offer mystical interpretations through asceticism in the forest; and Upanishads, which explore the unity of Brahman and Jiva, elucidating the relationship between the individual self and the universal self.

• Buddhist literature:-

```
                    Buddhist Literature
                          │
            ┌─────────────┴─────────────┐
        Pali/Prakrit                  Sanskrit
            │                             │
  ┌─────────┼──────────┐            Six Vedantas
Official  Buddhist   Jain           • Kalpa -
Language  Scripture  Scripture        Grihyasutra,
  │           │         │             Dharmasutra
Ashoka's      │      14 Parva       • Education
Edicts        │                     • Nirukta-Yaska
              │                     • Vyakaran -
     ┌────────┴────────┐              Panini
  Sutta Pitak    Vinaya Pitaka      • Chhandah -
  (Teaching of   (Rule of Sangha)     Pingala
  Buddha)                           • Jyotisha
      │
  Five Nikaya
  • Dirgha Nikaya
  • Majjhima Nikaya
  • Sanyutta Nikaya
  • Anguttra Nikaya and Khuddaka Nikaya
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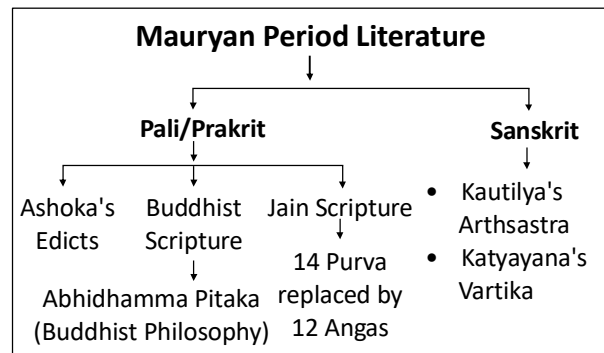
Sanskrit literature -During this period, Sanskrit texts continued to be composed. The Vedic literature written in Sanskrit is known as Shruti, believed to be divine knowledge heard by saints. Additionally, the literature produced during this time is called Smriti, based on human memory without direct divine revelation. Six Vedangas are associated with this period: Kalpa Sutra, Shiksha, Jyotis (Astrology), Chandas (Verse), Vyakaran (Grammar), and Nirukta. The Kalpa Sutras can be categorized into three types: Shrauta Sutras (ritual manuals), Grihya Sutras (domestic rituals), and Dharma Sutras (legal and ethical principles). The Sulva Sutra is also connected to the Shrauta Sutra.

Pali literature - Since Pali language was the language of the people, Mahatma Buddha used Pali for the propagation of Buddhism. Tripitaka, consisting of Sutta Pitaka, Vinaya Pitaka, and Abhidhamma Pitaka, was compiled during this period. The teachings of the Buddha were compiled in the Sutta Pitaka, while the Vinaya Pitaka contained the rules of the Sangha. The Abhidhamma Pitaka expressed Buddhist philosophy. The Sutta Pitaka was divided into five Nikayas:

1. Dirgha Nikaya
2. Majjhima Nikaya
3. Samyutta Nikaya
4. Anguttara Nikaya
5. Khuddaka Nikaya, which included the Dhammapada and Theragatha (poems of monks and nuns).

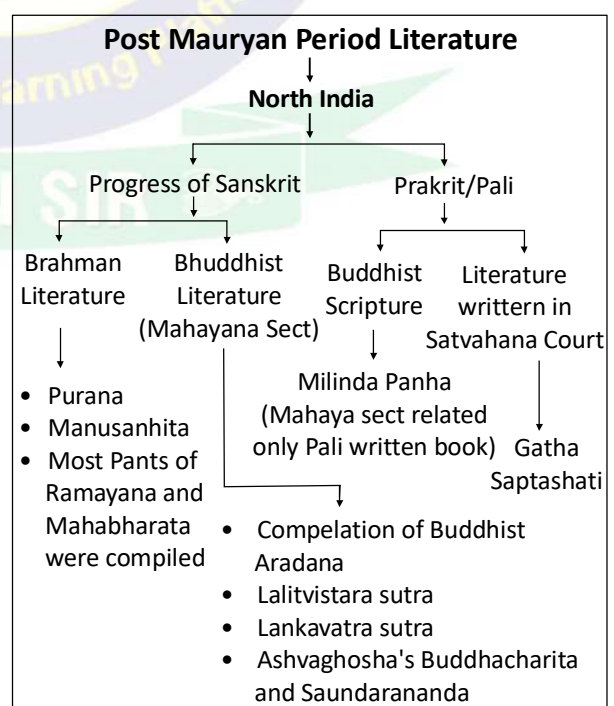**Prakrit Literature** -Literature pertaining to Jainism was compiled in the Prakrit language.

- **Mauryan Period (400 BC-200 BCE):-**

Mauryan Period Literature

↓

Pali/Prakrit   **Sanskrit**

- Ashoka's Edicts
- Buddhist Scripture ↓ Abhidhamma Pitaka (Buddhist Philosophy)
- Jain Scripture ↓ 14 Purva replaced by 12 Angas
- Kautilya's Arthsastra
- Katyayana's Vartika

During the Maurya period, the significance of the Pali/Prakrit language increased, leading to its official recognition. Ashoka's inscriptions, as well as Buddhist and Jain literature, were written in Pali/Prakrit. The Abhidhamma Pitaka, the third section of the Tripitaka, was composed in Pali during this time. Additionally, the Mahavastu treatise was written in Pali, while Jain literature was composed in Prakrit. Early Jain literature was classified into 14 varnas, which later evolved into 12 Angas.

However, this does not mean that the compilation of Sanskrit texts came to a halt. Sanskrit literature continued to be compiled, with notable works like Kautilya's Arthashastra and Katyayan's Vartika also produced during this period.
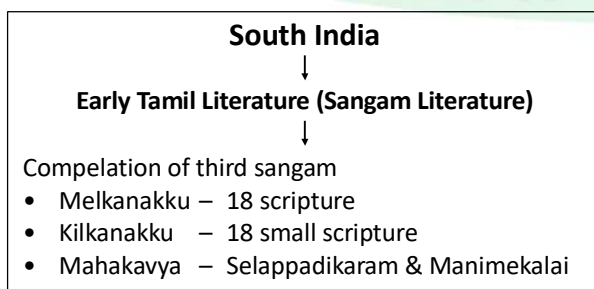
- **Post-Mauryan period (200 BC—300 AD):-**

Post Mauryan Period Literature

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North India

Progress of Sanskrit   Prakrit/Pali

Brahman Literature   Bhuddhist Literature (Mahayana Sect)   Buddhist Scripture   Literature writtern in Satvahana Court

- Purana
- Manusanhita
- Most Pants of Ramayana and Mahabharata were compiled

Milinda Panha (Mahaya sect related only Pali written book)   Gatha Saptashati

- Compelation of Buddhist Aradana
- Lalitvistara sutra
- Lankavatra sutra
- Ashvaghosha's Buddhacharita and Saundarananda

Sanskrit- During this period, the significance of Sanskrit began to rise in royal courts. This process commenced with the Junagadh inscription of Rudradaman, which is considered the largest Sanskrit inscription in India. Notably, foreign dynasties like the Shakas and Kushans established their rule in India, alongside indigenous dynasties such as the Satavahanas. These dynasties sought legitimacy in Indian society, leading them to patronize the Brahmin cult and Sanskrit.

Simultaneously, Buddhism underwent a transformation, giving rise to the development of the Mahayana branch alongside the Hinayana branch. The Mahayana branch shifted from using Pali to adopting Sanskrit as its language. Consequently, while Hinayana literature was recorded in Pali, Mahayana literature was composed in Sanskrit. Thus, Jataka tales, which recount the Buddha's previous births, were written in Pali, whereas Avadanas, which narrate the life of the Buddha, emerged in Mahayana literature during this era. Sanskrit also witnessed the works of scholars like Ashvaghosha, who wrote important texts such as Buddhacharitra and Saundarananda.

Pali/Prakrit -Pali/Prakrit language continued to be widely used among the general public. The only text related to the Mahayana branch found in Pali is the Milindapanho. Similarly, Prakrit also received patronage in the Satavahana court, where the ruler Hala wrote a work in Prakrit called GathaSaptashati under a pseudonym.

South India

↓

Early Tamil Literature (Sangam Literature)

↓

Compelation of third sangam
• Melkanakku – 18 scripture
• Kilkanakku – 18 small scripture
• Mahakavya – Selappadikaram & Manimekalai

Tamil Literature - The early form of Tamil literature is known as Sangam literature, which derives its name from the "Sangam," meaning the conference of poets. According to Tamil mythology, three conferences of poets took place in Madurai and its surrounding region. The first conference supposedly had only gods and sages participating, and many compositions were written. However, all these compositions were lost due to a sea storm. The gods and sages convened a second conference, during which numerous compositions were compiled, but these too suffered a similar fate. The only surviving composition from these conferences was Tolkappiyam, a Tamil grammar book.

Subsequently, the third Sangam was held, and during this period, the Ettuthokai, consisting of eight texts, was compiled. Additionally, a collection of ten rural songs was written, which is compiled in a book known as Pattupattu.

Upon analyzing the Sangam literature, we can observe various stages of development within it.

1. Melkanakku Literature (Narrative Literature) – The third Sangam compiled the Melkanku literature, which consisted of eight books and ten rural songs. This literature focused on expressing love and admiration for the king.

2. Kilkanku Literature (Preaching Literature) – This group comprises 18 short texts, with Tirukural and Naldiyar being prominent among them. These texts have undergone a transformation from narrative to didactic, reflecting the influence of Jain philosophy. As a result, Kilkanku shows more influence from the North compared to Melkanakku.

3. Epics- The epics Silappadikaram and Manimekalai had a significant impact on the North, as Tamil poets were more inclined towards composing shorter poems. When they ventured into writing epics, they were influenced by the Mahabharata and Ramayana from the North. Moreover, the influence of Buddhism on these epics is evident, as they reflect the concept of nirvana in their themes and perspectives.

According to recent research, it is now known that the Sangam texts were compiled in the first

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millennium AD, contrary to the earlier Tamil myth. These texts hold great significance as they provide valuable insights into the political, economic, social, and religious life of South India. They shed light on the establishment of the South Chola, Chera, and Pandya dynasties, as well as the ongoing power struggles between them. In terms of economics, the texts offer information about trade with the Romans. On the social front, they reveal the influence of the northern society on the southern society, highlighting the prevalence of the varna system and the subordinate status of women, similar to the northern region. Additionally, the Sangam literature portrays a synthesis of northern and southern religious practices, showcasing the integration between the gods and goddesses of both regions. For instance, the southern deity Murugan is associated with the northern deity Kumar Kartikeya, while the goddess Korravai from the south is identified with Durga from the north.

Question: Though not very useful from the point of view of a connected political history of South India, the Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable vividness. Comment.

[200 words, UPSC-2013]

Answer: The Tamil tradition mentions three conferences of Tamil scholars known as Sangam, and the literature produced in these conferences is referred to as Sangam literature. However, in reality, this literature was composed in the early centuries of the Christian era. Due to the lack of other reliable study materials, Sangam literature serves as the primary source for understanding the history of the Far South. While it provides better insights into social and economic history, its contribution to political history is limited.

Sangam literature offers information about the Chola, Chera, and Pandya dynasties, providing genealogical details of these rulers. However, the authenticity of these genealogies is questionable, and some claims made by rulers appear exaggerated. For instance, a Chera dynasty ruler boasted of conquering territories up to the Himalayan Mountains in the north. As a result, the reliability of Sangam literature as a source for studying political history is diminished.

On the other hand, Sangam literature offers valuable knowledge of social history. Early Sangam literature, specifically the Ettuttokai, reveals that southern society was organized based on the Kutti system, which bears similarity to the Chaturvarna system prevalent in the north. It indicates ongoing cultural exchange and suggests attempts to adopt the Chaturvarna system in South India, although without complete implementation. Additionally, Sangam literature highlights the subordinate status of women in the far South, reflecting the situation in North India during that period.

Sangam literature also provides significant insights into the economy. It categorizes the economy into five sectors (Tinai) and delineates various professions within each sector. Importantly, it offers extensive information on Roman trade, including detailed lists of imports and exports during the early centuries of the Common Era. Furthermore, Sangam literature indicates the level of urbanization achieved in the Sangam economy.

Overall, Sangam literature stands as a vital source for understanding the social and economic history of the Far South, making a notable contribution to our knowledge in these areas.

■ **Gupta Literature (300 AD - 600 AD):-**

The Gupta period is often referred to as the 'Golden Age' because of its remarkable art and literature. When the Gupta Empire was established, Sanskrit became the official language and saw significant advancement. The literature of that time can be divided into two main categories: (i) Religious literature (ii) Secular literature.

● **Religious Literature:** During the Gupta period, religious literature witnessed the

compilation of numerous Puranas. Additionally, this era marked the final compilation of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Furthermore, several important texts like the Gita, Yajnavalkya Smriti, Narada Smriti, and Brihaspati Smriti were composed during this period.

• **Secular Literature:** In addition to religious literature, the Gupta period also witnessed the composition of works that explored various aspects of human life. Notably, the writings of Kalidasa hold a prominent position in this category. Kalidasa is renowned for his creation of seven books:Raghuvansh, Kumar Sambhav, Meghdoot, RituSamhara,, Malavikagnimitram, Vikramorvasiyam, and Abhijnana Shakuntalam.

'Raghuvansh' is an epic consisting of 19 verses, which describes and praises the ancestors of Lord Rama, as well as their subsequent generations. Kumarasambhava consists of 17 verses, depicting nature and narrating the story of Kartikeya's birth. 'RituSamhara' mentions six seasons, while 'Meghdoot' tells the story of a separated Yaksha restless for his beloved.

Malavikagnimitram is a five-stage play that narrates the love story of Malavika and Agnimitra. 'Vikramorvashiyam' narrates the love story of Urvashi and Pururva. Finally, 'Abhijnanasakuntalam' describes the story of love, separation, and reunion between King Dushyant of Hastinapur and Shakuntala.

Apart from Kalidasa, the works of other scholars also hold significance during this time. Some notable examples include Visakhadatta's Mudrarakshasa and Devichandraguptam, Shudraka's Mrichchakatikam, and Bharavi's Kiratarjuniyam. Additionally, texts related to mathematics, medicine, and astrology were compiled during this period. Chandravyakaran, composed by Chandragomin, Vishnu Sharma's Panchatantra (Moral stories), Kamandaka's Neetisara, Aryabhatta's Aryabhattiyam (Mathematics), Varahmihir's Panchasiddhantika (Astrology), Vagbhatta's Ashtanghridaya and Ashtangsamgraha (medicine), Palakpya's Hasty Ayurveda (veterinary), and Amar Singh's Amarkosh or Naam-Linganushasan (Dictionary) are some examples of such texts.

• **Pali/Prakrit:** While Sanskrit received patronage in the royal court, Prakrit continued to be widely spoken by the common people and retained its significance as a vernacular language. Interestingly, even in Gupta-era Sanskrit literature, Prakrit was used for the dialogue of women and Shudras.

• **Post Gupta literature**

North India: Following the decline of the Gupta Empire, a powerful kingdom emerged in North India under the rule of Harsha. During Harsha's reign, there was considerable support and encouragement for the advancement of education and literature. Sanskrit continued to receive patronage in Harsha's court. Harsha himself composed three Sanskrit plays: Ratnavali, Priyadarshika, and Nagananda. Additionally, Banabhatta, a court writer, is credited with writing the texts Harshacharita and Kadambari. Another scholar named Mayur wrote a collection of 100 verses known as 'Mayur Shatak'.

Prakrit: In the post-Gupta period, literary works in addition to Sanskrit began to emerge in the vernacular Prakrit language. Notably, remarkable epics such as Swayambhukrit Paumchariu were written during this time. Unlike Sanskrit, which was a formal language, Prakrit, being the spoken language of the people, had numerous variations that were influenced by geographical and regional factors.

South India: During the same period, significant contributions were made in the field of literature by the Chalukyas and Pallavas in South India. According to Hiuen Tsang, the people of the Chalukya kingdom had a strong inclination towards learning. Sanskrit was extensively used in Chalukya texts, showcasing its highly developed form. The inscriptions of Mahakuta and Aihole exemplify the refinement of ornate

prose and poetry respectively. Pulakeshin-II Samant Gangraj Durvinita composed a grammar book called 'Shabd Avatar'. Similarly, Jainendra-Vyakaran and Somdevsuri recited famous texts named Yashastilakacampu and 'Nitivakyamrita'.

The reign of the Pallava kings witnessed significant literary advancements in both Sanskrit and Tamil languages. The Pallava ruler Mahendravarman himself was a renowned scholar and composed books such as 'Mattavilasa Prahasana' and Bhagwatajjukam. In the court of the Pallavas, Dandi composed 'dashakumaracharita and kavyadarsha. Additionally, Tamil language and literature were encouraged by the Alvar and Nayanar saints during this period.

Pre-Medieval Literature

After the decline of Harsha's empire, the regional states emerged in North India, known as the 'Rajput period.' The Rajput rulers played a significant role in promoting Sanskrit literature. Additionally, encouragement was given to Apabhramsa and Hindi languages. During this time, some Rajput kings themselves were highly accomplished scholars. Notable among them were Parmarvanshi Mujja and Bhoj. Mujja was a distinguished poet who had eminent literary figures such as Padmagupta, the author of 'Nava-sahasanka-charita ,' and Dhananjaya, the author of 'Dashrupak,' residing in his court. Bhoj was a profound scholar and his poetic talent was well-recognized. He authored treatises on various subjects including medicine, astrology, grammar, and architecture. Remarkable among his works are Shringar Prakash, Saraswati Kanthabharan, Kurmashatak, Samarangana Sutradhara, Yuktikalpataru, and Shabdanushasan.

In Sanskrit literature, significant works include Rajasekhara's Kavya-Mimamsa, Balaramayana, Viddhasalabhañjika, Shriharsha's Naishadha Charita, Jayadeva's Gita Govinda, Vilhana's Vikramankadevacharita, Somdev's Kathasaritsagara, and Kalhana's Rajatarangini.

These works hold special importance and are noteworthy contributions to Sanskrit literature.

- **Folk Language and Literature:**

In addition to Sanskrit, the rulers of this period also extended their patronage to Apabhramsha and Hindi literature. The era witnessed the composition of many 'Rasokavyas' or poetic narratives. Notable examples include Parmal Raso, Visaldev Raso, and Prithviraj Raso. Furthermore, early Hindi literature emerged from Apabhramsa and flourished during this time. In addition, it is worth mentioning significant works such as Someshwara's Manasollasa, composed by the Western Chalukya king, Lakshmidhar's Krityakalpataru, Vijnaneshwar's Mitakshara, and Jimutavahana's Dayabhaga among other notable contributions.

- **Dravidian Literature**

The Dravidian language group comprises Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam languages. In the early medieval period, significant contributions to the development of these languages were made by the Chola rulers, as well as the Nayanar and Alvar saints in South India. Tamil literature during the medieval aspect of Hindu India primarily consists of the Tevaram and Tiruvachakam by the Saiva Samaya Acharyas and the Naalayira Divya Prabandham by the Vaishnava Alvars. Kamban, Ottakuttan, and Pugalendi were revered as the greatest poets of their time and made significant contributions to Tamil literature. Among them, Kamban gained immense fame for his Tamil rendition of the Ramayana.

During this era, Kannada language literature also flourished in South India. The oldest known work in Kannada is believed to be the Vaddaradhane, composed by a Jain scholar named Shivakotiacharya, possibly before the 8th century CE. The renowned Rashtrakuta king Amoghavarsha composed the Kavirajamarga around 850 AD. The tenth century witnessed the notable contributions of three celebrated Kannada poets: Pampa, Ponna, and Ranna.

Pampa's Adipurana narrates the history of the first Tirthankara, while Pampa's Vikramarjuna Vijaya and Ranna's Sahasabhima Vijayam are proverbial poems based on the Mahabharata.

In comparison, the literary traditions of Telugu and Malayalam are relatively more recent. The earliest surviving works by Telugu authors date back to the twelfth century, while the era of Malayalam literature begins with Thunchathu Ezhuthachchan in the seventeenth century.

Question- Religious harmony lies at the core of ancient Indian culture. examine.

Answer-Freedom of religion and belief has been a fundamental aspect of Indian culture, with ancient Indians enjoying a level of freedom that was rare in the contemporary world. Several characteristics of Indian religion and philosophy can be observed during ancient times:

1. **Diversity of religious sects:** People and thinkers had the freedom to choose their own religion, preventing the establishment of a monopoly by any single religious sect. Brahmins, Buddhists, Jains, Ajivakas, Tantrists, and proponents of Bhakti all coexisted and thrived.

2. **Emphasis on non-violence:** Most religious sects placed a strong emphasis on non-violence, promoting peace and compassion as core values.

3. **Concept of karma and reincarnation:** The belief in karma and reincarnation fostered patience and tolerance among the people, emphasizing the consequences of one's actions and the idea of rebirth.

4. **Sense of unity among different religious sects**: There was an exchange of ideas and beliefs between different religious sects. For example, Buddha was recognized as an incarnation of Vishnu, and the concept of 'Harihara' was used to connect Vishnu and Shiva, highlighting the unity between different deities and religious traditions.

5. **Freedom of religious thought:** In ancient India, religious proponents were not persecuted for their beliefs, unlike figures such as Socrates or Jesus Christ. This aspect has been acknowledged and praised, with Amartya Sen referring to ancient Indian intellectuals as 'Argumentative Indians.'
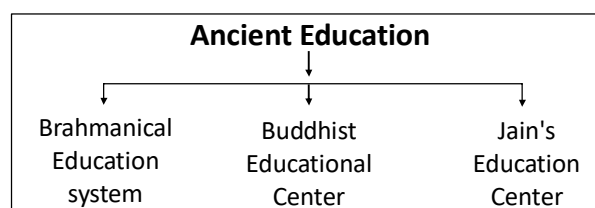
6. Various dynasties supported multiple religious sects, fostering an atmosphere of religious diversity and harmony. In contrast, contemporary Europe witnessed conflicts and bloodshed driven by differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

In conclusion, the spirit of religious harmony and unity is deeply ingrained in ancient Indian religion and philosophy.

Ancient Education

The Upanishads proclaim that knowledge is the key to liberation, serving as a source of enlightenment and empowerment. However, when we delve into the ancient education system, we are reminded of Michel Foucault's assertion that "knowledge is power." Ancient philosophers also emphasized the connection between intelligence and strength with the statement "Buddhiryasya Balamatasya."
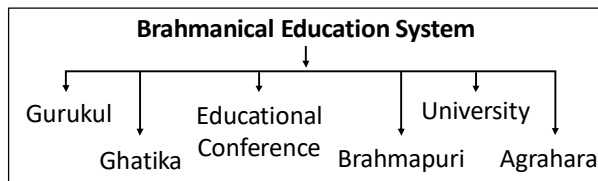
In ancient times, various religious sects played a significant role in the development of education. As a result, there were differences in the forms and methods of imparting knowledge, depending on the particular religious sects involved.


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                  Ancient Education
        ┌──────────────┼──────────────┐
        ↓              ↓              ↓
   Brahmanical      Buddhist        Jain's
   Education        Educational     Education
   system          Center          Center
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■ **The Brahmanical Educational Institute**

Special emphasis was placed on the study of texts and philosophy in Brahmin education. The primary focus of this education system was

on theoretical learning. Unfortunately, women and Shudras faced discrimination within the Brahmin education system. During this period, various types of educational institutions were prevalent.
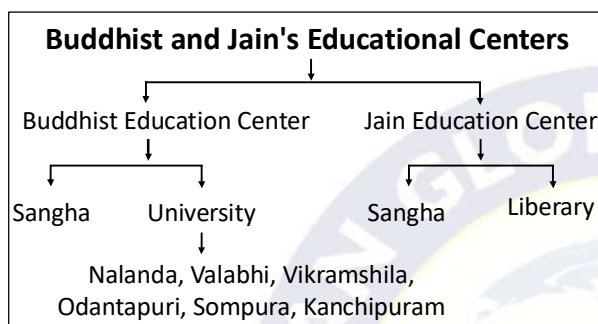
```
              Brahmanical Education System
                        |
      _____
     |              |              |              |
   Gurukul      Educational    University
        |       Conference
      Ghatika              Brahmapuri   Agrahara
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- **Gurukul-** Gurukuls were established by Brahmin Acharyas, and these institutions were often secluded, either located away from the general population or in forest settings. Gurukuls primarily catered to the elites and upper castes. The curriculum in Gurukuls focused on the study of Vedas, Upanishads, and philosophy, with a strong emphasis on the moral and intellectual development of the students.

- **Educational Seminar-** Kings and scholars would frequently organize academic gatherings and invite scholars from distant regions with the primary objective of promoting higher education. During one such seminar, a debate ensued between sage Yajnavalkya and Gargi. It is said that after emerging victorious in this debate, Videha Madhav generously donated 1000 cows to sage Yajnavalkya, adorning the horns of each cow with two golden feet.

- **Brahmin Educational Center** – Around 400 BCE, Taxila is believed to have flourished as a center of Brahmin education. Numerous Indian scholars received their education from this prestigious university. For instance, notable figures such as the eminent physician Jivaka, head acharya Chanakya, and renowned scholar and grammarian Katyayana were associated with Taxila University. Its influence even extended beyond India to foreign regions. However, in the modern context, Taxila did not achieve the status of a university like Nalanda, and it declined and fell after the Huns' invasion in the 5th century.

- When we examine the reasons for the differences between Takshashila and Nalanda University, one significant factor emerges – the former was established as a center of Brahmin education, while the latter was established as a center of Buddhist education. Buddhism being a widely practiced religion globally, Nalanda University had an easier path towards gaining university status. Additionally, there were other notable distinctions between the two institutions. Nalanda University implemented a disciplined and structured curriculum, whereas Takshashila College lacked a clear curriculum and fixed timeframe for completion. Teachers at Takshashila based their teaching methods on personal beliefs and experiences, and students were taught in different groups. In essence, the students were not considered a collective group but rather individuals under the guidance of specific teachers.

- **Ghatika (temple) as a center of education** – In the early medieval period, temples or "ghatikas" also emerged as centers of learning.

- **Agrahara and Brahmadeya (Brahmpuri) as centers of education** –Agrahara and Brahmadeya played significant roles in the development of education in ancient times. Under Agrahara, land grants were provided to groups of Brahmins who were responsible for managing free education for the people. Villages where the entire community consisted of Brahmins were known as Agraharas. Brahmadeyas, on the other hand, were villages where Brahmins settled in a specific part and also contributed to the spread of education.

- **The curriculum of Brahmanical Education-** Primarily focused on the study of Vedic literature, religion, philosophy, logic, mathematics, ethics, epics, grammar, astronomy, sculpture, medicine, and shipbuilding. This approach aimed to

establish a balance between religious and secular subjects. Graduates of this era were expected to have expertise in the Vedas and 18 crafts.

- **Limitations**- it is important to note the limitations of this education system. It was characterized by inequality and discrimination, as lower-caste individuals and women were denied access to this education.

■ **The Buddhist and Jain Education Center**

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Buddhist and Jain's Educational Centers
                      ↓
          ↓                       ↓
Buddhist Education Center   Jain Education Center
          ↓                       
    ↓          ↓             ↓          ↓
Sangha    University      Sangha     Liberary
               ↓
    Nalanda, Valabhi, Vikramshila,
    Odantapuri, Sompura, Kanchipuram
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Buddhist and Jain education centers developed alongside Brahmin education centers with distinct characteristics. Firstly, Buddhist and Jain education was administered by Buddhist Sanghas, which were situated near settlements rather than in isolated areas like Brahmin centers. Additionally, the use of Pali and Prakrit, the vernacular languages, facilitated better communication with the common people.

Secondly, Buddhist and Jain education centers provided educational opportunities for Shudras and women, promoting inclusivity and accessibility. Unlike Brahmin education, which often excluded these groups, Buddhist and Jain institutions embraced their participation.

Thirdly, while Brahmin education primarily focused on theoretical knowledge, Buddhist and Jain educational institutions emphasized practical education and vocational skills. These institutions imparted knowledge of various crafts, including the teaching of 18 crafts and 64 arts.

Overall, the Buddhist and Jain education centers distinguished themselves through their location, language, inclusivity, and emphasis on practical education, offering an alternative approach to learning compared to the Brahmin education system.

- **Different types of educational institutions-**
1. **Sangha as the Center of Education:** The Sangha played a central role in both Buddhist and Jain education, serving as the focal point for learning and dissemination of knowledge.

2. **Colleges and Universities:** The Jain education system did not emphasize the establishment of colleges and universities, whereas in Buddhist education, there was a special emphasis on their development. Due to Buddhism's status as a world religion, Buddhist centers had greater potential to evolve into universities.

- **Important Buddhist Educational Institutions:**
1. **Nalanda University:** This renowned university was established during the Gupta period, and Kumaragupta I, a Gupta ruler, made significant contributions to its development. It quickly evolved into a university and attracted scholars from China and Southeast Asia. According to the accounts of Chinese travelers, such as Huein tsang and Etsing, Nalanda University had a large student population, with estimates ranging from 10,000 to 3,000 students.

2. **Vallabhi:** Located in Gujarat, Vallabhi emerged as a prominent center of Buddhist education in the 7th century. The Maitrak rulers of Vallabhi played a key role in its development. It also gained recognition as a university, attracting scholars from outside India. However, its decline began with the Arab invasion in the 8th century, although it was later revived by the successors of the Maitraka rulers.

3. **Vikramshila:** Situated in the Bhagalpur region of Bihar, Vikramshila University became an important hub of Buddhist

learning. It was founded by Dharmapala, the founder of the Pala dynasty, in the 9th century and continued to flourish for the next four centuries. Vikramshila University also attained the status of a university.

4. **Kanchipuram:** Under the patronage of the Pallava rulers in South India, Kanchipuram developed as a center for Buddhist education. It also experienced the influence of the Brahmin education system. Scholars such as Huein tsang and Dighadhnag were associated with the Kanchipuram center of learning.

• **Construction of Libraries:** Jains prioritized the construction of libraries instead of establishing colleges or universities. The scriptures refer to educational donations as Mahadan, which encompassed activities such as self-reading, encouraging others to read, self-writing, and encouraging others to write.

Question- Taxila university was one of the oldest universities of the world with which were associated a number of renowned learned personalities of different disciplines. Its strategic location caused its fame to flourish, but unlike Nalanda, it is not considered a university in the modern sense. Discuss. [UPSC-2014]

Answer – Takshashila, the oldest educational center in India, held significant importance, but it was Nalanda that gained greater renown. One key factor contributing to this distinction was Nalanda's development as a prominent hub of Buddhist education. Being a globally recognized religion, Buddhism propelled Nalanda to become a renowned university.

In contrast, Takshashila, despite being a notable center of Brahmin learning, did not achieve true university status. It offered instruction in philosophy, grammar, medicine, and other subjects. Distinguished figures such as the renowned physician Jivaka, the author of important grammatical works Vartika, Katyayana, and the prominent diplomat Chanakya were associated with this institution. Furthermore, its location in a strategically significant area likely played a role in shaping public sentiment against Alexander the Great's invasion. However, Takshashila failed to attract scholars and researchers from outside India.

On the other hand, Nalanda drew a multitude of scholars and researchers from East Asia to South-East Asia due to its allure as a center of Buddhist education. The inclination towards Buddhism naturally led them to Nalanda. Another distinguishing feature between the two institutions was that Nalanda University adhered to a disciplined and well-defined curriculum, whereas Takshashila College lacked such clarity. Additionally, students at Takshashila were divided among different teachers.

Acknowledging the historical importance and cultural value of Nalanda University, the Indian government, in collaboration with various other nations, has made the decision to revive this prestigious institution. The objective behind this revival is to harness its potential as a tool for soft power projection. By revitalizing Nalanda University, the aim is to showcase India's rich intellectual heritage, promote cultural exchange, and strengthen diplomatic ties with other countries.

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